



## WANTED, A STORY.

### WORK FOR YOUNG CANADIAN WRITERS.

For the two best stories written on this picture, the publishers of the *Northern Messenger* offer two handsome prizes.

#### THE FIRST PRIZE

is a complete volume of Tennyson's Poems, and

#### THE SECOND PRIZE

a volume of "Songs of the Great Dominion," edited by Wm. Dow Lighthall.

#### THE CONDITIONS.

The stories must be written on paper the size of one half page or one quarter sheet of foolscap, must be written on one side of the page only, and contain not more than two thousand words. A *nom de plume* must be signed on the right hand upper corner of the first page, and the full name and address in a sealed envelope, with the *nom de plume* on the outside, must accompany the story. The paper must not be rolled or folded, but mailed flat. All under 21 years of age may compete, and stories must be in our hands before the first of February.

The picture is one offering a wide range to the imagination, especially at this season and we hope many hundreds of our young people will enter the lists. Address

"MESSENGER" STORY COMPETITION.

John Dougall & Son, Montreal.

### BY THE NURSERY FIRE.

In winning souls for Christ, what is said is not so important as the faith and prayer which goes with the effort. A correspondent of the *London Christian* tells the following little story for the encouragement of other mothers who find difficulty in personal religious conversation. She says:—

More than thirty years ago, when Mr. Reginald Radcliffe was preaching in Edinburgh, he asked at the close of a meeting if those who knew they were Christians would rise to their feet. I was just a school-girl then, but the arrow of conviction entered my soul, and, although no one spoke to me, and for some months I still remained without Christ, I had no rest until, one bright starry evening, in walking home from school, the verse came home to my heart, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Glory be to his name, he saved me. Once at Keswick, a few years ago, I waited at the tent door hoping to thank Mr. Radcliffe, but he had left the meeting. I shall thank him one day in heaven.

Now I have to tell you of a quiet Sunday afternoon when sitting by the fire in the gloaming, as mothers will do with their bairns round them, I and my boys were having one of our Sunday talks. An overwhelming longing came over me that my eldest boy, then fourteen years old, would come to Jesus, but I was so shy of speaking. At last I managed to say, "Jack! darling! have you settled this question for yourself?" and rising, I went off to my own

room thinking, "Oh dear! what a stupid, silly way I took, the Lord can never use me!"

Three years passed, and my boy was getting very near the Glory Land—three years in which I had watched and marvelled at his rapid growth in the Christian life, and at the marvellous grace and patience given to him in all his suffering, and his gradual laying down all the bright hopes and plans of his dawning manhood. Just about a week before we parted, he said to me, "Mother, dear! do you know when I came to Jesus first? I want to tell you, for it will comfort you when I am gone. Just that night by the nursery fire three years ago; don't you remember it?"

In the early morning of a July day, about a week later, his weary eyes saw the King in his beauty, and that very night, when I was lying down and resting with a little brother of Jack's beside me, about whom he was very anxious, this boy whispered to me, amidst a flood of tears, "Mother! I've given my heart to Jesus." He is still with us, spared to be an increasing joy as the days go by. I have told you this because it may help some one to speak a word for Jesus, even though they feel so weak. God takes the foolish things, and uses them for his glory, and he has made me feel such a rich mother, glory to his dear name.

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