

Christmas Comes But Once a Year.

BY ALFRED DELWYN.

Christmas is coming, ho, ho, and ho, ho,
Now bring on your holly, and do not
move slow,
We'll deck the whole house with the
branches so green;
On wall and on picture the leaves shall
be seen.

On merry the time when all meet to-
gether,
In spite of the cold, and the wind, and
the weather;
When grandparents, uncles, and cousins
we see,
All gathered around the mahogany-tree.

It stands in the hall, that mahogany-tree,
And very nice fruit it will bear, you'd
agree,
Could you look on the turkeys and pud-
dings and pies,
That on Christmas Day feast—something
more than our eyes.

The poor and the needy, they come to our
door,
And carry off with them a bountiful store
Of all the good things that we have for
ourselves,
In cupboard and cellar on tables and
shelves.

When dinner is ended, what sound do we
hear,
From the holly-decked parlour ring merry
and clear?
'Tis Uncle Tim's fiddle! The tune is a
call
To all the good people to come to our
hall.

They come, old and young, and partake
the good cheer,
For Christmas dawns on us but once in
a year;
Then hand up the holly, and let us pre-
pare
The house for the frolic in which we
must share.

the following which we hope many a
boy and girl will learn by heart:

Nor war nor battle's sound
Was heard the world around;
No hostile chiefs to furious combat ran;
But peaceful was the night,
In which the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began

The shepherds on the lawn,
Before the point of dawn,
In sacred circle sat; while all around,
The gentle, fleecy brood,
Or cropped the flowery food,
Or slept, or sported on the verdant
ground.

They saw a glorious light
Burst on their wondering sight;
Harping in solemn choir, in robes ar-
rayed,
The helmed cherubim,
And sworded seraphim,
Are seen in glittering ranks, with wings
displayed.

Sounds of so sweet a tone,
Before were never known,
But when of old the songs of morning
sung,
While God disposed in air
Each constellation fair,
And the well-balanced world on hinges
hung.

"Hall, hall, auspicious morn!
'The Saviour Christ is born!'
Such was the immortal seraphs' song
sublime;
'Glory to God in heaven!
To man sweet peace be given,
Sweet peace and friendship to the end of
time."

that the power that moves the watch is
equivalent to only four times the force
used in a sea's jump; consequently it
might be called a four sea-power. One
horse-power would suffice to run 270,-
000,000 watches.

Now the balance-wheel of a watch is
moved by this four sea-power one and
forty-three one-hundredths inches with
each vibration—three thousand, five hun-
dred and fifty-eight and three-quarter
miles continuously, in one year.

It doesn't take a large can of oil to
lubricate the machine on its thirty-five-
hundred-mile "run." It requires one-
tenth of a drop to oil the entire watch
for a year's service. But it has great
need of that one-tenth of a drop.

If you would preserve the time-keeping
qualities of your watch you should take
it to a competent watchmaker once every
eighteen months.

THE THIRST OF THE SOUL.

Every one knows what it is to be
thirsty. How uneasy we feel! If it
be long continued, how great the distress
it causes! The lips are parched, the
throat is dry! We cannot work or play
or do anything well, while thirst is strong
upon us. Yet we know less about it
than those do who live in other lands.
There the heat of the sun is great; often
no water can be found; those who jour-
ney wander to and fro in search of it.
If none be found, the thirst grows fierce,
the strength of the strongest goes, and
even life itself must perish.

The Bible tells of a little boy who was
once thus perishing for want of water.
He had wandered with his mother far

A Search for Santa Claus.

BY JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

A little maid of summers fow—
Though many wintry days she knew—
Went trudging through the city street,
Unmindful of the snow and sleet,
So strong the purpose in her mind,
The friend of little ones to find,
The good old Santa Claus.

She saw the holiday display,
And heard the other children say
That Santa Claus would bring them this
Or that, and she would surely miss
A share in all the Christmas joys:
No dolls! no candles, cakes, or toys!
Alas! no Santa Claus!

What should she do? He must be near!
He always was this time of year!
And she would know him should she meet
Him face to face upon the street;
And so she took her station there,
Upon the busy thoroughfare,
To search for Santa Claus.

Some wondered at her eager look;
While others passed, nor notice took
Of those soft, pleading eyes, that gazed
Up in their faces, much amazed
That of the many on review
There was not any person who
Resembled Santa Claus.

Darker the shadows grow apace,
And tears rolled down the maiden's face
At thought of wretchedness and gloom
That centred in the garret room,
Where she must seek her wonted rest,
And for the day give up the quest
For dear old Santa Claus.

A hand was laid upon her head:
"What ails thee, little one?" then said
A kindly voice of manly tone:
"Why out so late? and all alone?"
Her story then she briefly told,
And at its close she whispered bold,
"Is your name Santa Claus?"

He answered, "Yes." 'Twas Christmas
Eve;
His wife would many gifts receive,
But none she'd hold more dear, he
thought,
Than this poor wail he swiftly caught
Within his arms; then homeward sped;
And, as he dropped the burden, said,
"A gift from Santa Claus!"

No longer doomed the streets to roam,
The beggar-child has found a home,
With loving hearts; and should you say,
She'd answer you with cheeks aglow,
"What did you get on Christmas Day?"
"Oh, lots of goodies! for, you know,
I live with Santa Claus!"

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH.

HIS COMING WELCOMED.

DECEMBER 25, 1898.

(Matt. 2. 1-12.)

We have read a few weeks ago of the
promise made in Eden four thousand
years before the birth of Jesus, how that
bright and morning star shone amid the
darkness and guided the race during its
wanderings of these thousands of years.
At length to the plous Magi in far off
Persia's land appeared the star of Beth-
lehem guiding them the hundreds of
miles over desert, mountain, and moor
till it brought them to the city of Jeru-
salem, to the little town of Bethlehem,
to the lowly cattle shed in which Christ
was born. All heaven as well as earth
seemed moved.

"Angels, from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship,
Worship Christ, the new-born King."

Then was heard the sweetest song ever
sung, "Glory to God in the highest, peace
on earth, good will to men." Then came
to Mary, the Virgin Mother of our Lord,
and to the blessed Babe of Bethlehem the
offerings of the lowly shepherds, and
the richer offerings of the three kings of
the Orient. God had strangely and won-
derfully fulfilled the promise he had made
so many years before.

One of the most useful institutions in
England, or in the world, is the Orphans'
Home, which has for nearly thirty years
been under the management of Dr. Bar-
nardo. During the entire time nearly
twenty-six thousand stray children have
been rescued and trained in the institu-
tion under his care. He now has under
his supervision eighty homes, twenty-
four mission branches, and three hos-
pitals. There are in all these at the
present time about five thousand orphans
and other destitute children.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 17, 1898.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

The Editor of Pleasant Hours wishes the hundred thousand boys and girls who read its pages—for such is his estimate of their number—all the best wishes of the season. God intended us to be happy, even in war. "A merry heart doeth good like medicine," says Solomon. "Is any merry, let him sing psalms," says St. James. And if ever we should be glad and make melody in our hearts, it is at the season which reminds us of God's great Christmas gift to man—the unspeakable gift of his dear Son. Bring, therefore, dear boys and girls, like the Magi of old, your best Christmas gifts to the feet of Jesus—not "gold and frankincense and myrrh," but the offering of your hearts and of your lives.

"Vainly we offer each ample oblation;
Vainly with gold would his favour secure;
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor."

In addition to all the other Christmas carols we give in this number, we add



HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing.

Hark! the herald angels sing,
'Glory to the new-born King,
Peace on earth, and mercy mild;
God and sinners reconciled.'

Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim
Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.

FACTS ABOUT OUR WATCHES.

A Boston jeweller, in a recent advertisement of his watches, includes these facts, which are worth knowing:

A watch is the smallest, most delicate machine that was ever constructed of the same number of parts. About one hundred and seventy-five different pieces of material enter into its construction, and upwards of twenty-four separate operations are comprised in its manufacture.

Some of the facts connected with its performance are simply incredible, when considered in total. A blacksmith strikes several thousand blows on his anvil in a day, and is right glad when Sunday comes around; but the roller jewel of a watch makes every day, and day after day, 432,000 impacts against the fork, or 157,680,000 blows in a year without stop or rest, or 3,153,600,000 in the short space of twenty years.

These figures are beyond the grasp of our feeble intellects; but the marvel does not stop here. It has been estimated

into the wilderness, their water was spent, and she had laid him down under a shrub to die. What was the boy's name? and the mother's? Who came to their help? How was the trouble put away?

There is another kind of thirst than this. An eager wishing and longing for anything we have not got is like thirst. We all wish for something or other at times; and with some this wish is strong as a raging thirst. Often, too, it is a wish for what is not good, or the wish for what is right may become hurtful. Some are eager for pleasure, or honour, or riches, or to be thought highly of. The thirst for these things is so strong in some that they care not always how they are got, and so harm and "hurtful snares" may come to themselves and to others.

But we may thirst for what is better than any of those things—for happiness and peace and quiet rest of heart. Where can these be got? How shall that thirst be satisfied? The verse, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink," answers these questions. It is Jesus who says this. What does it mean? How can a soul be at peace? Will riches bring it? No; many who are rich have it not. Will health or honour or power or pleasure bring it? Not always; for often there is no peace when these abound. What, then, brings peace? Only the favour and love of God. What keeps that away? It is sin. How can sin be got rid of? Jesus only can do this. Do you desire peace? Do you thirst for safety and comfort, and happiness now and forever? Hear the voice of Jesus still saying, "Come unto me, and drink."