

Our Young Folks.

FOR THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

THE BEST CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

It was the day before Christmas, and the children were all preparing the presents; each one a present for every other one in the family. Although little Annie (as we shall call her) was but nine years old, and attending school at the time, she had employed her spare moments for months in preparing the gifts: nor was it her intention to confine them to her family, but grandma and uncles and aunts were also to be included in the list. Papa's slippers, which cost her so much labour, perhaps more than all the rest together, were finished, and returned from the shoemaker's all complete. Annie felt then that her task was done, and that the pleasure of presenting the gifts the next morning would amply repay her for all her toil.

After retiring that night she said to herself—"Now I have a present ready for every one I love dearly." After a moment's reflection she added, "except Jesus—and I love Him—I wish I could send Him a present." Musing in this way she fell asleep, but was first to waken in the morning. She was in great trouble. She felt that her best friend had been neglected by her, and presently began to sob with grief.

But just then a new and happy thought took possession of her—the thought was this: "I will give myself to Him," and kneeling at her bedside she said, "Dear Jesus I have no present for you, but myself—take me," and that Saviour who said "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not" was pleased with the gift and gave her in return such joy as she never before experienced, and as she gave her friends the paltry gifts that morning she added, "I have given myself to Jesus."

More than a dozen years have passed away, Annie is now now a "sunbeam" Christian woman and the wife of one of our ministers, and says she will ever remember with joy the bright Christmas morning on which she and her Saviour exchanged gifts.

SINS FORGIVEN.

The first joy the Christian feels is the knowledge of his sins forgiven. A little girl knelt to pray, but the memory of a wrong done that day came between her soul and Christ. She had disobeyed her father. She rose and went to his room. "Papa," said she, as the tears filled her eyes and choked her voice, "I have come to tell you something that I did that was wrong to day. I want you to forgive me."

"My dear child," was the answer, "I do not want you to tell me; I forgive you freely without."

He dried away her tears and sent her back rejoicing. As she knelt once more for her Heavenly Father's blessing the readiness of her earthly father to forgive her was to her a type of the divine forgiveness. She realized that "God pardons like a father—He kisses the offence into everlasting forgetfulness."

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SANTA CLAUS.

BY S. H. MANCHIE.

When Winter comes forth in his mantle of white,
And Jack Frost holds in check all the streams,
Oh, 'tis then that our little one hangs up his sock
And of Santa Claus' merry face dreams.



HOLIDAY TIME.

He dreams of the reindeer speeding through space,
Urged on by the Saint, old and merry,
With his great fur coat and his snowy white hair
Enwreathed with the bright scarlet berry:

Of the funny old sleigh they draw through the air
With its burden of Christmas toys,
That the merry old Saint, the little one knows,
Will leave for the best of the boys.

He fancies he hears them pawing the snow
On the roofs of the houses hard by,
And closes his eyes, lest this best of all saints
Should see him awake and pass by.

A noise at the chimney-place rouses him quite.
His desire gets the better by far
To get just a peep at the things that are brought,
When who should he see but—his Ma!

The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good.

A HUNGRY man might as well be expected to abstain from food, or a thirsty man from drink, as a Christian from prayer.

A MERCHANT'S STORY.

A member of a large mercantile firm recently gave me a bit of his early experience. He said: "I was seventeen years old when I left the country store where I had 'tended' for three years, and came to Boston in search of a place. Anxious, of course, to appear to the best advantage, I spent an unusual amount of time and solicitude upon my toilet, and when it was completed I surveyed my reflection in the glass with no little satisfaction, glancing lastly and most approvingly upon a seal ring which embellished my little finger, and my cane, a very pretty affair, which I had purchased with direct reference to this occasion.

"My first day's experience was not very encouraging. I traversed street after street, up one side and down another, without success. I fancied to wards the last that the clerks all knew my business the moment I opened the door, and that they winked ill-naturedly at my discomfiture as I passed out. But nature had endowed me with as good degree of persistency, and the next day I started out again. Towards noon I entered a store where an elderly gentleman stood talking with a lady at the door. I waited till the visitor had left and then stated my errand. 'No, sir,' was the answer given in a peculiar crisp and decided manner. Possibly I looked the discouragement I was beginning to feel, for he added in a kinder tone, 'Are you good at taking a hint?' 'I don't know,' I answered, while my face flushed painfully. 'What I wish to say is this,' said he, smiling at my embarrassment—'If I were in want of a clerk, I would not engage a young man who came seeking employment with a flashy ring on his finger and swinging a fancy cane.'

"For a moment mortified vanity struggled against common sense, but sense got the victory, and I replied, with rather a shaky voice I am afraid, 'I am very much obliged to you,' and then beat a hasty retreat. As soon as I got out of sight I slipped the ring into my pocket, and walking rapidly to the Worcester depot I left the cane in charge of the baggage-master 'till I called for it.' It was there yet for aught I know. At any rate I never called for it. That afternoon I obtained a situation with the firm of which I am now a partner.

"How much my unfortunate finery had injured my prospects on the previous day I shall never know; but I never think of the old gentleman and his plain-dealing, without feeling, as I told him at the time, 'very much obliged to him.'"

THERE never was a day that did not bring its opportunity for doing good; that never could have been done before, and never can be again.