

CHRISTMAS BELLS.

BY MARY D. BRIME.

Ring out, ring out, ye Christmas bells!
Ring out from tower and steeple,
And tell your story far and near
To all earth's joyous people.
Ring out for peace throughout the land;
Ring for good-will to nations,
Ring for the glory of our Lord
And all his grand creations!

Bring heart to heart, and hand to hand,
On this bright day of gladness,
Let smiles forever dry the tears
In eyes which weep for sadness.
O merry bells of Christmas-tide,
How many hearts are singing
The happy songs of that dear love
Which you are gayly ringing!

Then ring, ring, ring! nor weary grow
Of jubilate telling;
For hearts are keeping time with you
Where peace, good-will are dwelling.
Far may your message spread, and may
The world take up the story,
And every human soul give praise
To Him who dwells in glory.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK:

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.O., Editor.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 12, 1885.

TESTIMONY OF MINISTERS CONCERNING OUR S. S. PAPERS.

WE reprint the following testimonials of leading ministers of our Church—and they could be supplemented by many others—in the confidence that they may demonstrate, if there be need in any case for that, that the authorized S. S. periodicals of our own Church are better adapted for our own schools than any foreign ones can possibly be. *Home and School* and *Happy Days* are not mentioned in these testimonials from the fact that they were not in existence at the time these opinions were written. Since that time all our periodicals have been greatly improved.

The Rev. Dr. Sanderson, to whom is due the honour of issuing the first Sunday-school papers in Canada—a quarter of a century ago—being himself both their editor and publisher, writes:

“From that time to this I have been deeply interested in our S. S. issues, and though progress has been evinced, yet never till now have our S. S. papers, in every respect, given unqualified satisfaction. Now they

do. There is nothing left to be desired, save their introduction into all our schools. They have no superior—not one Very few S. S. papers, either in England or America, are all equal to them. In illustration, matter, and price, they are in the front rank; and they should be in every Methodist S. S. in the Dominion. The papers are an honour to us, and will prove a great blessing to the Church.”

The Rev. Dr. Potts, of Toronto, writes:

“I have examined the Sunday-school papers submitted to me, and beg to say that I think they are well adapted to our Methodist schools. They evince good taste in the pictorial department; they are patriotic; they are instructive in matter; they are interesting in literary style, and they are true to the teachings of our Church. Their intrinsic worth and loyalty to the Church should place them in every Methodist school in the Dominion.”

Rev. Professor Shaw, of the Wesleyan Theological College, Montreal, writes:

“The PLEASANT HOURS and the Sunbeam appear not only to be unmarred by any objectionable matter, but also to have much positive merit in the combination of spirituality and patriotism with raciness of style and an instructive method of description. I regard them as most excellently adapted to the Sabbath-schools of Canadian Methodism. I have heard them commended by several Sunday-school superintendents, and disparaged by none. Even if they were independent publications, and not published with the authorization given them by our Church, still it would be very advantageous to any school to have them introduced.”

The Rev. W. Galbraith, D.C.L., writes:

“During the past few years I have seen dozens of Sunday-school papers, but I have met with none which I regard equal for our schools to the PLEASANT HOURS and the Sunbeam. They abound with charming, interesting, and profitable reading matter for the young. They are free from the extravagant and trashy tales so common in Sunday-school papers. They benefit head and heart, and breathe a spirit of true loyalty to Church and State. All our schools should have them.”

The Rev. LeRoy Hooker, of Ottawa, writes:

“With no degree of reserve, I commend to all our people the Sunday-school periodicals published by our Church. If we wish our children, when they shall have become men and women, to be devoted to Canada—to the Methodist Church, nothing can be plainer than that Canadian and Methodist literature should enter largely into the composition of their mental and spiritual food.”

The Rev. J. G. Laird, ex-President of the Toronto Conference, writes:

“My children are delighted with them. They will also cultivate a spirit of attachment to our Church,



A GERMAN CHRISTMAS TREE.

and awaken an interest in all our Christian and evangelistic enterprises. They ought to be in all our Sabbath-schools.”

See full announcement of our Sunday-school periodicals in *Home and School* for Dec. 19.

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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 merry. “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 the following, which we hope many a boy and girl will learn by heart:—

No 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 social 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 arrayed,
The helmeted 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.

“Hail, hail, auspicious morn!
The Saviour Christ is born!”
Such was the immortal seraph’s song sublime;
“Glory to God in heaven!
To man sweet peace be given,
Sweet peace and friendship to the end of time.”

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

GERMANY is the land of the Christmas tree. Nowhere else does it grow so vigorously, or bring forth such copious fruit. But it has been transplanted into nearly all lands, and throughout Canada, at this snowy wintry season, in many happy homes this wonderful tree will bring forth its wonderful fruit. In our picture we note several specially German features—the house-father as they call him, pulling away at his big porcelain pipe, like an overgrown baby at a sucking-bottle; the bust of Bismarck, the Iron Chancellor, on the wall; the youngster with the spiked helmet and drum, exhibiting even in babyhood the warlike German spirit; the odd-shaped waggons and toys, and above all, the TREE, with its tapers, and trinkets, and love-gifts for every one, and the Angel of the Annunciation at the top. Is it not a pretty family group? Thank God for Christmas which brings us joyful tidings of peace on earth, and good-will to men, to both lofty and lowly, and especially to love-gifts to children everywhere.