

A CAROL FROM OLD FATHER CHRISTMAS ADDRESSED TO DIOGENES.

Come forth from your anchorite tub, Old Man,
And join in our innocent glee:
Leave carping and sneering and cynical pride,
Lay lantern and pen and sour visage aside,
And come on a visit with me.

Bring gifts for the children and babes, Old Man,
You'll find it well worth the while;
There is wisdom more pure than philosophers know,
There's a radiance more bright than your lantern can throw
To be found in an infant's smile.

To no noisy revel I bid you, Old Man,
But a feast that the angels bring:
What matter though delicate viands be there,
You may, hermit-like, feed on the simplest of fare,
And drink of the crystal spring.

And then we will visit the poor, Old Man,
The sick and the blind and the lame:
To wipe from sad faces the tears as they flow,
Of widows and orphans to solace the woe,
Is a pastime that none can blame.

And then I would pray you to chant, Old Man,
Some soul-stirring Christmas rhyme—
Some tender old ballad of peace and of love,
With praises of Him who left Heaven above
For Earth at the Christmas time.

FOOD FOR REFLECTION.

DIOGENES is a Cynic—but he has a heart. He almost wished that he hadn't, when he read in the *Illustrations* of last Saturday the sad story of Eliza Reed and her three children. They were found "in a wretched room with broken windows, through which the snow had drifted. There was no furniture in it—not even a bed;—no wood—only a broken stove without pipes." Only God's light and air, and four starving human beings. Hood's dreary picture in the "Song of the Shirt" is even less dismal than this hideous reality:

"A shattered roof and a naked floor,
A table—a broken chair—
And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank
For sometimes falling there."

One of the children was an infant. Of the other two girls, the elder (who is four years of age) "had on only a thin calico dress—without shift, shoes or stockings—while the younger was entirely naked, and very nearly frozen to death." The unnatural father of these children (who is not married to their mother) was found by Detective Bouchard in the Exchange Hotel. They started in company to find some institution that would receive the two little girls, but were unsuccessful at the House of Industry, and also at the Nazareth Orphan Asylum. This Asylum admits only French Canadian orphans; and they were recommended to try the St. Patrick's Benevolent Institution. On their making application to Father O'Brien, "he declined to receive the children, because they were illegitimate."

DIOGENES is well aware that there are certain regulations in all Charitable Institutions, and that these, for the sake of order, must be duly observed. But he protests, in the present instance, against too strict an adherence to the *lex scripta*. It is true that, owing to their parents' sin, these two forlorn children were *illegitimate*: but cold, naked and starving, they were *legitimate* objects of charity. For

once Father O'Brien might have risen above *routine*, and Heaven, at any rate, would have condoned his offence. It would have been an honour to him to have been dismissed from his post for so pious a dereliction of duty. There are times when the rules of an Institution are superseded by the laws of humanity, and when slavish obedience to the former becomes deadly treason to the latter.

DIOGENES cut, lately, from an English newspaper, an account of another rejection by a Charitable Institution. It differs in its circumstances from the instance above cited, but, as a matter of fact, forms a worthy pendant to it.

There is a passage in Edward Wakefield's *England and America*, which describes a poor girl sitting, silent and despairing, before the gates of a Magdalen Institution. Being utterly destitute, she had applied at its door for food and employment, but had been repulsed with the answer that *she was not qualified*. The following report of the proceedings in a London Police Court is what DIOGENES previously referred to. It suggests that the incident related by Mr. Wakefield may possibly have been taken from real life.

Rachel Mayhew, "a good-looking girl, about seventeen or eighteen," was charged with robbery. She had stolen some goods in an open manner, and, escaping, had sold them to purchase food. It was found, on enquiry, that the girl had neither father nor mother living, and could not earn enough by her daily work to keep herself. She, too, had erred; but when she applied at the Magdalen, they said "She had not been gay enough." But they charitably gave her half-a-crown, and some bread and cheese, and sent her away. Her amount of sin had only qualified her to that limited extent, so she qualified herself for the further attention of charity by a little robbery; and this was effectual. The kind-hearted Magistrate—Police Magistrates generally become kind-hearted, if they are not so from the first—said that he would try to assist the girl by procuring her admission to a Reformatory; and, before the close of the day, he succeeded in placing her in one of the numerous "Homes" of London.

When the Cynic peruses stern facts, like this story of the Montreal children and that of the London girl, he retires into his Tub to meditate, smiling sadly, but at the same time—bitterly.

"IT IS BETTER TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE."

When Plenty Poverty endows,
'Tis Charity benign—
When Poverty on Want bestows
An alms, 'tis half divine.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Correct answers to the Acrostic in No. V. have been received from "Spectator," "Emily," "Rusticus," "J. W." and "Torontensis." For the benefit of those who have not succeeded in solving it, the answer is, "DIOGENES SUCCEEDS." Thus:

1	D	i	o	g	e	n	e	s
2	I		O		U			
3	O	s	r	i		C		
4	G	y	m	n	a	s	t	i
5	E	v			E			
6	N	i	o	b		E		
7	E	n			D			
8	S	u	c	c	e	e	s	

Communications have also been received from "T. M.," "Scottish Provincial," "Kincardine," and others, for which thanks are tendered. Correspondents are informed that DIOGENES absolutely declines to be made the vehicle for replies to attacks in other journals. "W. P." and "Verax" will please take note of this."