

The Old Year and the New.

Listen to the midnight bell, Tolling out the old year's knell, O'er our hearts there comes a spoll As we sadly say "Farewell"

Seasons come and seasons go, Summer flowers and winter's snow, Like the ocean's ebb and flow— Joy and pain, and woe and woe!

Yet we welcome thee, New Year, And approach thee without fear; Though we know not what may be Portion'd out for us in thee.

Though the dear Old Year must go, Shrouded in a sheet of snow! May the snow an emblem be Of the New Year's purity!

OUR PERIODICALS:

Table listing various periodicals such as 'The Christian Guardian', 'The Wesleyan', 'The Sunday-School Banner', etc., with their respective prices and frequencies.

WILLIAM BRIGGS, Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto. C. W. COVENS, 2176 St. Catherine St. Montreal.

Pleasant Hours:

PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, DECEMBER 31, 1895.

THE GIRL'S OWN ANNUAL.

This is a companion book in size, shape, and price to the Boy's Own, but it is somewhat sedate and less bolsterous—no pun intended. Indeed, it is quite young-ladylike, has pages of music, fancy work, art papers, cookery recipes, house-keeping hints, home nursing, and health hints, nature studies, "frocks for to-morrow," and other feminine frivolities so dear to the hearts of girls.

BRAINERD AND THE RATTLE-SNAKE.

BY REV. ZOERTON H. YOUNG.

After David Brainerd, the missionary to the Indians in the early days of New England, had succeeded in winning to Christ quite a number of the Indians of some of the tribes, his great heart went out in loving sympathy to a fierce tribe that had become very much soured and embittered against the whites.

This savage tribe, to which Mr. Brainerd resolved to carry the Gospel, lived in a place that was considered far away in the forest fastnesses. From this retreat they used to make their stealthy raids upon the white settlers, who were coming into the new country.

To win these savage Indians to Christ so aroused Brainerd's ardour that, although he was in feeble health, and was opposed by his warmest friends, he resolved to go among them alone and unarmed, and tell the story of the love of God for all the human race.

Bidding farewell to his friends, some of whom wept at his departure, and all of whom declared they would never see him alive on earth again, he turned his face toward the wilderness, and began the long journey to the haunts of that savage tribe. He carried with him a little tent, and the few essentials he needed for existence in the forest while prosecuting his missionary work.

Day by day he travelled on. He was never very strong, and so could not make much progress, burdened as he was. However, without being molested by any one, at length he reached the vicinity of the principal village of the tribe he was seeking. Here among the trees he pitched his little white tent, and then, ere he went the remaining distance that stretched between him and the wigwams of the Indians, he resolved to spend some time in prayer for another blessed assurance of the divine approval upon his attempt.

But while he was alone with God in his tent, other eyes had been upon him. The sharp eyes of some Indian hunters had been watching him as he wearily moved along, and then finally decided upon his camping-place. They, while hid from his notice, had watched him as he pitched his tent, and had then hurried away to the village, and had told the chief and warriors what had been seen of the doings of the white man.

Of course, there was a great deal of excitement among them. A hasty council was held, and the audacity of this white man, coming in this manner into their country, and even daring to pitch his tent without their consent, was intolerable; and so it was unanimously decided that he must be killed. So a band of warriors was sent off with orders instantly to kill and scalp the rash white man, who had dared to invade their hunting-grounds.

Indians do not require much preparation for such expeditions, and so it was not long before those appointed for this work were ready and off. It did not take them long to reach the vicinity of the little white tent, which could be observed in the distance among the trees.

Indians do not fight like the soldiers or warriors of other nations. They prefer to act by stealth and cunning rather than by coming shoulder to shoulder, like civilized soldiers, in making their attacks upon their enemies. The ambuscade is ever preferable to the attack in the open ground. To get behind a tree or rock, and from that position to assail their foes, is ever their ambition.

So in this case, although informed that there was only one white man to at-

tack when they reached the neighborhood of Mr. Brainerd's tent they hid themselves in sheltered places, and waited for the white man to come out, that they might shoot him with their bows and arrows.

But while they waited, the man of God continued long in prayer. Doubtless he felt that at this critical time, when he was about to face these wild savages, he needed much of the companionship and help of Him who has said, "My presence shall go with you," and for that he pleaded, and would not be satisfied until he had received assurance that he should be prospered in his work.

The Indians had not his patience, and so they became tired of watching, and, after a whispered consultation among themselves, it was decided that three or four of them should noiselessly approach the tent and find out all that was possible about the white man, and then return and report to the others. Quietly and cautiously they approached the little tent, and, as everything was still, they at length reached it unobserved.

Cautiously looking in through the partially open curtains of the doorway, they saw the missionary on his knees, with his back toward them. So absorbed was he in his devotions that he was utterly unconscious of their presence. To them he seemed to be engaged in earnest conversation with some other person, whom they could not see, but who must surely be visible to him, or he would not continue to talk so earnestly to him.

As they gazed and listened, their superstitious natures were awed and subdued, and they felt that they dare not injure him; and still, in silence most profound, they watched him as though riveted to the spot.

But, look! What is that? A great rattlesnake pushes its ugly head under one of the side curtains of the little tent, and comes gliding in. It moves along, and goes straight for the feet and legs of Brainerd. Over them it crawls, and, rearing itself up parallel with the kneeling man's back, it seems to threaten to strike its deadly fangs into his neck. However, it does nothing of the kind, and after a few more movements it glides out of the tent, under the curtain on the opposite side from that on which it entered, and disappears in the long grass.

The startled Indians, with hands on their tomahawks, had watched the movements of this venomous snake with intense but suppressed excitement. They knew well the nature of those poisonous snakes. That it had not stung the man over whose legs it had crawled was to them a great mystery. Here was something that completely amazed them. Noiselessly they drew back and joined their impatient comrades in the forest, and with much quiet, rapid words, and many gestures, described to them what they had witnessed at the tent. These also, when they heard the story, were strangely excited by it, and it was unanimously decided to return to the village, and report to the chief and tribe what they had heard and witnessed.

In the meantime the missionary had been so engaged in prayer and communion with God that he knew nothing of the visit of the snake, or of the savage warriors who had come to destroy him. He had been so absorbed in his audience with Deity that he was oblivious to everything else. Obtaining the assuring answer, which perhaps came to him as to one of old, "My presence shall go with you," he rose from his knees, and taking his Bible with him, proceeded to the village, little knowing how he would be welcomed by the wild savage people, received him as one under the immediate protection of the Great Spirit, whom it would be madness on their part to injure.

To his great astonishment and delight, it seemed as if the whole village, headed by the chief, came out to meet him, and welcomed him as if he were a long-absent, and now much-welcomed, friend. They treated him with great respect, and receive him as one under the immediate protection of the Great Spirit, whom it would be madness on their part to injure.

To his teachings they gave heed, and in time many of them were converted, and there was wrought a moral transformation that continued.

Toronto, Ont.

A story is told of James Garfield, an American President, which is worth remembering. He had risen slowly to fame and at last he was elected by the many, many thousands of American people to be their President. Through all the years of toil, his mother had cheered him and struggled to help him on, and now she stood by him in the day of his exaltation. Then James Garfield did a noble act. Before all the greatest and noblest of American citizens he turned to his mother and im-

printed a kiss upon her aged and wasted face. It was a kiss of honour; it was a kiss of love. In the moment of his greatest triumph he remembered his mother, he was not ashamed of acknowledging her, though she had known poverty and hardship.

It is one of the deepest disgraces that can ever come to a boy that he is thoughtless of his mother's comfort, or ashamed to let it be known that he "thinks the world of her."

A Boy's Year.

BY AGNES LEX.

As I watch the old year go, In my memory, like a show, I can see the months pass by, One by one, before my eye;

Just a boy with all his might, Seeing all with all his sight, Playing hard with all his strength, Reaching out to life's full length

Just a poor form, sick and bound, Fleeting February found. Cried she, "Follow, and rejoice!" But I hardly heard her voice,

April tried to comfort me; Laughed, and sang a merry glee. How her face with kindness shone! Yet she'd melt in tears anon.

But, behold! again I smiled, For I saw a beautiful child, And I called (I knew her form In the yellow sunshine warm)—

June, the summer's own delight, Left me roses red and white. And July her rich perfume Wafted through my little room;

August glided, one sweet night, Down the path of Northern Light, Till, with laugh and sudden bound, Lighted she on mortal ground.

Ah, September, sad and wet! How shall I her face forget? Darkest month of all my thought, For the dreadful dream she brought

Yet I hailed October well, Tinging from the hickory dell, Where she left the boys at play, Midst the nuts and barberries gay.

In the cold November blast, Called I, as Hope came at last, To the leaves of brown and red, Skipping, skeltering ahead:—

Dear December, clad in white, She that brought that Holy Night, Songful came, and tarried long, With a message in her song.

New Year's Day! with snow and sleet Once again beneath my feet! New Year's Day—my pulses swing, Till, for very strength, I sing!

No one is true to God who is false to himself.