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# SUNBEAM

Vol. XX.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 2, 1899.

No. 24.

## ANGEL AND IMP.

One is a little angel,  
An angel full of grace,  
For he makes almost beautiful  
A homely, careworn face;  
The other is an imp perverse,  
Who keeps an evil vow  
To make as ugly as he can  
The smoothest, whitest brow.

You know the angel and the imp;  
You know them both so well  
Their dictionary names it seems  
Superfluous to tell;  
And yet, to make my riddle clear,  
I'm forced to write them down:  
The angel is a smile, of course;  
The little imp, a frown.

## THE SHINTO RELIGION OF JAPAN.

BY REV. FRANK S. DOBBINS.

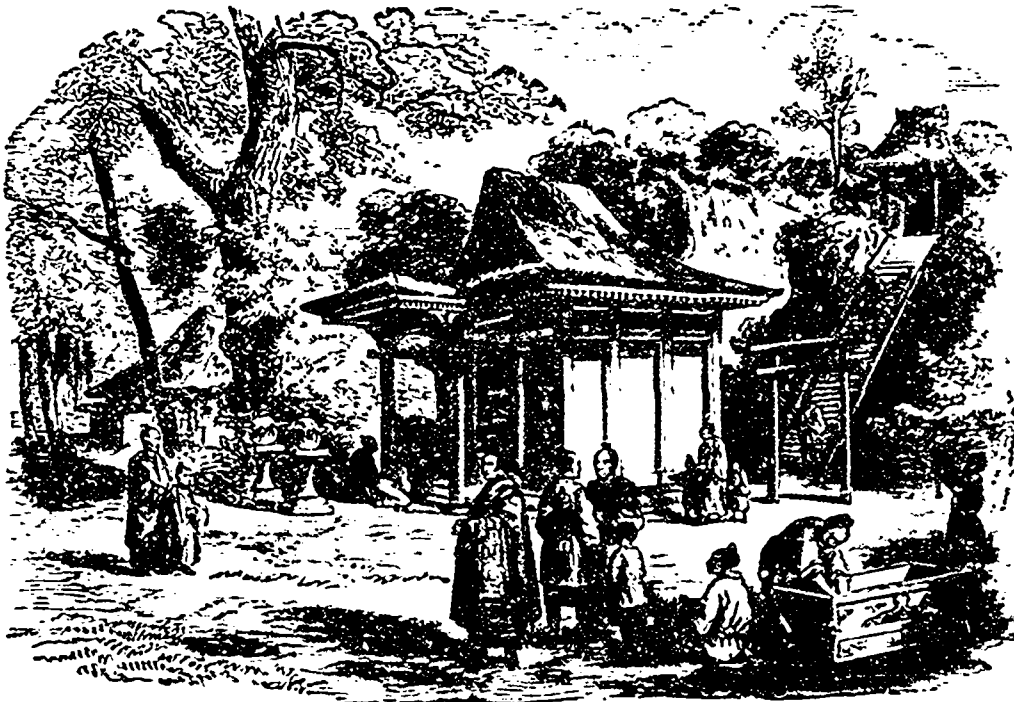
The Shintoism of Japan is an ancient system of nature worship. As far as Japan can be said to have a national religion, Shintoism is that faith. Buddhism has more followers, but Shintoism claims the Royal Family and nobility among its adherents, and it derives some support from Government aid. The Mikado is esteemed the chief of the religions of the Shintoists, and the head of the religion. The sacred books of the Shintoists are the chronicle of the history of ancient Japan. These books were committed to writing more than eleven hundred years ago, though they were composed before that many hundreds of years.

These works are full of stories about the gods; some of them not fit to be read to decent ears. The books describe the creation of the world as beginning in Japan, where the god Izanagi dipped



JAPANESE WEAVING.

his long, jewelled spear into the ocean, and from the drops which trickled from it, the country of Japan was formed. After this other lands were formed, and then the god Izanagi made eight million lesser gods to occupy the country. The Mikados are believed to be the direct lineal descendants from the god Izanagi.



SHINTO TEMPLE, JAPAN.

In the Shinto temples the only object of worship is a metal mirror. There is a very pretty story connected with this, which is described in the sacred books of the Shintoists. At Ise, which is the Mecca of Shintoism, in the centre of the innermost shrine of the most sacred temple is a box, said to contain the very mirror in which the Sun-goddess looked. On festival days this box—but not the mirror—is exhibited. Strictly speaking, the mirror is the only object of worship in a Shinto temple. Strips of paper (representing the clothing used by the Sun-goddess) are used in worship.

The temples are very plain structures, built of wood, with roofs of thatch. They contain no idols, and have no relics. Once in a while one sees in an outer room, or in the temple enclosure, some images of animals. In 1874 the Government sought to revive Shintoism, and ordered the priests and temple keepers to avoid the use of any Buddhist forms of worship, and to practice only pure Shinto.

Before the temples, or one side of them, stand the peculiar gateways made of two upright posts with two horizontal beams on the top. These are called "torii," or "rests," and were originally used for the cocks to roost upon to awaken the sun-worshippers. The worshipper passes through the "torii," and standing in front of the temple (he never enters it) strikes his hands together, and then kneels in prayer. It is a very vague sort of worship, indeed, a vague sort of religion. Prominent Japanese scholars do not feel sure that it is a religion at all, so uncertain is its history and teaching.

Every scholar should pray for his teacher every day, should give something in the class-offering every Sabbath, and also attend the church.

## DRARY'S HYMN.

I cannot think but God must know  
About the thing I long for so.  
I know he is so good, so kind,  
I cannot think but he will find  
Some way to help, some way to show  
Me to the thing I long for so.

I stretch my hand - it lies so near,  
It looks so sweet, it looks so dear,  
"Dear Lord," I pray, "O, let me know  
If it is wrong to want it so!"  
He only smiles. He does not speak.  
My heart grows weaker and more weak  
With looking at the thing so dear  
Which lies so far and yet so near

Now, Lord, I leave at thy loved feet  
This thing which looks so near, so sweet;  
I will not seek, I will not long,  
I almost fear I have been wrong;  
I'll go and work the harder, Lord,  
And wait till by some loud, clear word  
Thou callest me to thy loved feet,  
To take this thing so dear, so sweet.

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## Sunbeam.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 2, 1899.

## HOW IT HAPPENED.

A boy returned from school one day with a report that his scholarship had fallen below the usual average.

"Well," said the father, "you've fallen behind this month, have you?"

"Yes, sir."

"How did that happen?"

"Don't know, sir."

The father knew, says the teller of the story, if the son did not. He had observed a number of cheap novels scattered about the house, but had not thought it worth while to say anything until a fitting opportunity should offer itself. A basket of apples stood upon the floor, and he said: "Empty out those apples, and take the

basket and bring it to me half full of chips."

Suspecting nothing, the son obeyed, "And now," the father said, "put those apples back in the basket."

When half the apples were replaced, the son said: "Father, they roll off, I can't put in any more."

"Put them in, I tell you."

"But, father, I can't put them in."

"Put them in! No, of course you can't put them in. Do you expect to fill a basket half full of chips, and then fill it with apples? You said that you did not know why you fell behind at school. I will tell you. Your mind is like that basket; it will not hold more than so much, and here you have been for the past month filling it up with chip dirt—cheap novels."

## JOHNNY'S TEARS.

Johnny had a great trial. He was sitting on the floor looking over all his pictures, and baby toddled up and tore one right across, one of the prettiest. Johnny called out, "O mamma, see what baby has done!" and began to cry.

"Johnny," said mamma, as she took baby away, "did you know that tears are salt water?"

Johnny checked a sob and looked up.

"No," he said, with great interest; "are they? How did you find out, mamma?"

"Oh, somebody told me so when I was a little girl, and I tried a tear and found it was true."

"Real salt water?" asked Johnny.

"Yes; try and see."

Johnny would very gladly have tried if he could have found a tear. By that time there was not one left, and his eyes were so clear and bright it was no use hoping for any more that time. He looked at the torn picture, but it did not make him feel bad any more. All he could think of was whether tears tasted like salt water.

"Next time I cry I will find out!" he determined.

That very afternoon, while climbing over the top of the rocking-chair, he fell and got a great bump. It was too much for any little boy, and too much for Johnny, and he was just beginning to cry loudly when he happened to think what a good chance this was going to be to catch some tears. He put up his finger, too quick, in fact, for there had not a tear come yet worth mentioning, and now that his thoughts had wandered from the bump, he could not seem to cry about it any more. So that chance was lost.

"I can't get a single tear to taste of, mamma!" he said ruefully.

## A BOY'S DIARY.

A mother describes in the *Interior* how she came to look upon the rubbish in her boy's drawer as his unwritten diary and the basis of his autobiography. She said to him one day: "My son, your bureau drawer is full of rubbish; you had better clear it out."

Yes, that would be his delight; so we began.

"This horseshoe is of no use."

"Oh, yes it is; I found it under grandpa's corn-crib, and he let me have it."

"These clam-shells you'd better break up for the hens."

"Why, mamma, I got them on the beach, you know, last summer!"

"And this faded ribbon, burn it up."

"Oh, no! That was our class badge for the last day of school, and I want to keep it."

"Here is that old tin flute yet? Why do you heap up such trash?"

"That is a nice flute that Willie gave me two Christmases ago. Didn't we have a splendid time that day?"

"Well, this bottle is good for nothing."

"Oh, yes it is. That is the bottle I used for a bobber when we went fishing at Green's Lake. A black bass pulled that bottle away under water!"

Then the mother thought that to destroy these historical relics would be to obliterate pleasant memories.

## SPEAK TRULY.

"Ella, I heard you tell Jessie that you did not care if you never saw her again."

"O well, mamma, I did not mean exactly that; I just said it."

"Just said it? But why did you say it unless you meant it? What is it to say one thing and mean another? And a little while ago I heard you tell Roy that you thought him the meanest boy on earth. Do you really think you had such a boy for a brother?"

"Why, no, mamma; I did not mean that."

"You must think first before saying such things, Ella. Yesterday you said that you were tired of pudding for dinner, and never wanted any more as long as you lived. You know that you did not say what you meant, nor mean what you said. This morning you told Maggie that you were not going to practice any more to-day; yet you know that I told you that you must certainly do another half-hour before tea; and you know that I meant what I said. I have heard you lately declare positively that you would not do certain things, when you knew, if you stopped to think, that you were not speaking the truth. I am distressed."

"I only said these things, mamma; I did not mean them, though."

"Do not say again, 'I just said them,' daughter. Stop saying what you do not mean, and speak truly. The law of truth must be in your mouth as well as in your heart."

God promises wonderful things to his children, the very things that people the world over are seeking peace and purity and joy and abundant life; and God's promises cannot fail. Why, then, do so few, comparatively, hold the wonderful gifts? Is it not because our longing and striving for them is so intermittent? A stray wish now and then will not avail us much; but those who "hunger and thirst" after righteousness shall be filled.

A HINT.

If you should frown and I should frown  
While walking out together,  
The happy folks about the town  
Would say: "The clouds are settling down,  
In spite of pleasant weather."

If you should smile and I should smile  
While walking out together,  
Some folks would say: "Such looks beguile  
The weariness of many a mile  
In dark and dreary weather."

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

LESSON XI. [Dec. 10.]

LESSONS IN GIVING.

Mal. 1. 6-11 and 3. 8-12. Memory verses,  
3. 10.

GOLDEN TEXT.

God loveth a cheerful giver.—2 Cor. 9. 7.

DO YOU KNOW?

Who was Malachi? When did he live? Of what had he much to say? Of the coming of Christ. Where is the prophecy of Malachi? It is the last book of the Old Testament. To whom did God speak through Malachi? To the people of Israel. Who had led the people back from their idol worship? Ezra and Nehemiah. What had they now grown to be? Careless and forgetful. Whom did they forget? God, their great King. What did God say about their offerings? That they offered the blind, and the lame, and the sick. By whom was this forbidden? By God, in his law. What kind of an offering should we give? A pure offering. How may we rob God? What will he do if we give him all? He will pour us out a rich blessing.

DAILY HELPS.

- Mon. Read the lesson verses. Mal. 1. 6-11; 3. 8-12.
- Tues. Learn how God hates a corrupt offering. Mal. 1. 12-14.
- Wed. Learn how God should be worshiped? Mal. 1. 11.
- Thur. Find how God will purify. Matt. 3. 7-12.
- Fri. See how the good and the bad will be separated. Matt. 25. 31-46.
- Sat. Learn how we may be made pure. Matt. 3. 1.
- Sun. Read how to give. 2 Cor. 9. 6-11.

LESSON XII. [Dec. 17.]

FRUITS OF RIGHT AND WRONG DOING.

Mal. 3. 13 to 4. 6. Memory verses, 16-18.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.—Gal. 6. 7.

DO YOU KNOW?

Why could Malachi see such wonderful

things? Because God showed them to him. Why were they all written in this book? So that we might see and know them too. What two kinds of people are there in the world? Why does it often seem to us that bad people have a good time? Because we cannot see the end. Who can see the difference between the righteous and the wicked? The one who knows and loves God. What does God say the wicked are like? Stubble. What is stubble good for? To be burned up. What shall rise upon the righteous? The Sun of righteousness. Who will tread down the wicked? The good. Who is promised to come before Christ? Elijah, or John the Baptist.

DAILY HELPS.

- Mon. Read the lesson verses. Mal. 3. 13 to 4. 6.
- Tues. Find another complaint about the words of the people. Mal. 2. 17.
- Wed. Learn what God says about the wicked. Psalm 11. 2-6.
- Thur. See the confidence of a good man. Psalm 27. 1-5.
- Fri. Find why we should speak for God. Psalm 66. 16.
- Sat. Read what Christ said about John the Baptist. Matt. 11. 9-14.
- Sun. Learn the Golden Text.

A QUEER HIDING-PLACE.

Once a Bible was baked in a loaf of bread. That was in a far-away country called Austria. Some wicked men came into the house to find the Bible and burn it up, but the woman who owned it was just going to bake bread; so she rolled her Bible up in a big loaf and put it in the oven. When the men went away she took out the loaf, and it was not hurt a bit. That was a good place to hide a Bible, wasn't it? But I'll tell you of a better place still. David knew of that place when he said, "Thy word have I hid in my heart."

BEAUTY.

One morning when little Elsie woke up she fairly screamed with delight, for there, just by her bed, was the dearest little kitten, sitting in a basket smiling at her.

I wish I could tell you all the good times Elsie and Beauty, as she named her kittie, had together, but I shall only try to tell one sad adventure. He followed Elsie's mother to church one evening, and after amusing himself in cat fashion by turning somersaults and chasing after his tail, he thought he'd try to make some friends, so he walked over to a little girl and pulled at her dress, and she, instead of speaking kindly to him, scowled at him, so poor Beauty, having his feelings hurt, quickly ran over behind a pew and cried softly.

He thought the people in that church were so cross he would not speak to any one else, and he curled up and took a cat nap. When he woke up the church was dark and cold and every one gone. And there poor Beauty had to stay for nearly two whole days, with nothing to eat but

an occasional church mouse, until poor Elsie, who had hunted him everywhere else, finally looked through the Sunday-school window, and there she saw Beauty sitting on the top of a pew, sweetly smiling. I am afraid Beauty won't want to go to church soon again.

"I CANNOT HELP IT."

Do you ever make use of this phrase, dear young folks? You will all plead guilty, we fear, and we older folks are very apt to do the same.

There is our friend Ruthie, the dressing-bell rings, and she hears it; she is conscious that she ought to spring up at once; that everything will go wrong if she does not; but still she lies, with folded hands, for "a little more sleep, and a little more slumber."

Late at breakfast, hurried in preparing for school, Ruthie meets her mother's reproachful look with, "I cannot help it; I mean to get up every morning as soon as I am called, but, before I know it, I'm asleep again—I can't help it!"

Donald is charged with an errand which he is to attend to on his way to school, and, of course, Donald means to do it; but something diverts his mind, and, as has often been the case before, he forgets all about it until too late. "There! it's too bad, but I cannot help it!" he says and so comforts himself for this one more "sin of unfaithfulness."

HOW A BOY MEASURED A TREE.

He was not a boy in a book, he lives in our house. He seldom says anything remarkable. He eats oatmeal in large quantities, and tears his trousers, and goes through the toes of his boots, and loses his cap, and slams the doors, and chases the cat, just like any other boy. But he is remarkable, for he asks few questions and does much thinking. If he does not understand, he whistles—an excellent habit on most occasions. There was much whistling in our yard one summer. It seemed to be an all-summer performance. Near the end of the season, however, our boy announced the height of our tall maple-tree to be thirty-three feet.

"Why, how do you know?" was the general question.

"Measured it."

"How?"

"Foot-rule and yardstick."

"You didn't climb that tall tree?" his mother asked anxiously.

"No'm: I just found the length of the shadow, and measured that."

"But the length of the shadow changes."

"Yes'm; but twice a day the shadows are just as long as things themselves. I've been trying it all summer. I drove a stick into the ground; and when the shadow was just as long as the stick I knew that the shadow of the tree would be just as long as the tree, and that's thirty-three feet."

"So, that's what you have been whistling about all summer?"

"Did I whistle?" asked Tom.



WINTER MORNING—READY FOR A WALK.

### WINTER MORNING -READY FOR A WALK.

Who is afraid of the cold, I would like to know? With her warm cloak and muff this fine specimen of Young Canada laughs at the snow and is ready for a romp and frolic, although the flakes fill the air. Our

bracing northern climate is the best in the world to make boys and girls vigorous and strong.

### THE BIBLE ON THE CHAIR.

A boat's crew from a ship wrecked off one of the Fiji islands were afraid for

their lives. On reaching land they dispersed in different directions. Two of them found a cottage, and crept into it, and as they lay there wondering what would become of them, one suddenly called to his friend, "All right, Jack, there is a Bible on this chair! no fear now!"