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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

VOL. XIX.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 30, 1899.

No. 21.

A New Year.

BY MARGARET E. SANOSTER.

Just at the turn of the midnight,
When the children are fast asleep,
The tired Old Year steps out by himself,
Glad of a chance to be laid on the shelf,
And the New Year takes a peep

At the beautiful world that is waiting
For the honours that he will bring;
For the wonderful things in his peddler's
back,
Weather, all sorts, there will be no lack,
And many a marvellous thing.

When the children awake in the morning,
Shouting their "Happy New Year,"
The Year will be started well on
his way,
Swinging along through his first
white day,
With the path before him clear.

Twelve long months for his
journey;
Fifty-two weeks of a spell;
At the end of it all he'll step out
by himself,
Glad of a chance to be laid on
the shelf,
At the stroke of the midnight
bell.

LOST AND FOUND.

BY MARY MURRAY.

"Are you crying, Molly?"
Tommy asked from his little cot.
Molly raised her head from
under the clothes. "I want
muvver, Tommy, I do want
muvver so much. I'm very lone-
some," and her voice died away
in a faint wail.

"Don't cry, little Molly, I'll
come in your bed and muvver
you," Tom said, sliding to the
floor, and passing the uncurtained
nursery window. "God has
hung out his lamp, Molly," he
said solemnly. "He knows we
feel lonesome, perhaps mother's
told him."

Molly tumbled out of her cot,
too, and stood beside him, angel-
like in her white nightgown,
looking with bright, rapt eyes at
the sailing moon. But soon her
former trouble returned, and
great tears rolled down her
cheeks.

"I want muvver," she sobbed.
Tommy took her golden head
in both his arms and pressed it
hard to his breast. "There,
I'll muvver you," he said, bravely
trying to keep back his own
tears. "Let's get into your
bed, Molly, and I'll tell you
something. I'll never hit you
again, Molly—mother didn't like
us to quarrel."

"I'm not crying about that,"
Molly said, scrambling back into
her cot, "cause I know it was
only play. But my dolly's broke
her arm, an' I don't know what
to do for her."

"Poor little Molly," Tom said,
stroking her hair as he had seen
his mother do. "Stop crying,
and I'll tell you something—something
very nice."

Molly choked down her sobs, and sat
up in bed, with Tom's arms around her,
and the broken doll on her knee. "What
is it, Tommy?" she asked.

"Gran'pa told it me," said Tom. "It's
about Moses."

"Little baby Moses in the bulrushes?"
Molly asked, eagerly. She loved the
picture in the great Bible they looked
at on Sundays.

"Yes; Moses when he was a man. It's
not all about Moses, though; it's a plan
of mine, Molly, to get mother back
again."

"Oh! Tommy, how nice!" Molly cried,
clapping her hands in joy.

"Yes; I've thought about it a lot, Molly,
and we'll do it to-night," said Tom.
"You can come, too."

"Where?" Molly asked excitedly.

Gran'pa told me as we walked home
from church last Sabbath—you were with
nurse, you know, last Sabbath morning—"

"Yes, Tommy."
"Well, we passed a big holly tree, and
gran'pa told me it was called 'Christa
thorn,' and that God showed himself to
Moses in a burning holly tree. And I've
thought, and 'thought, and thought," he
said, earnestly.

"Yes, Tommy," said Molly.
"Well let's go and ask God to send
mother back. P'raps he'll hear us bet-
ter there, and I can find the way."

"Won't it be cold, Tommy?" Molly
said, shivering.

"God'll warm us. And maybe he'll
burn up the tree, like he did for Moses,"

ments as the shadows they cast on the
frozen snow, had left the house far be-
hind, and hand-in-hand were speeding
rapidly in the direction of the holly tree.
It was not long before they reached it,
but not before Molly had fallen and
bruised her knee badly and become wet
with the snow. Tommy cheered her as
well as he could with the manful cour-
age of seven years.

"I am sure God will hear our prayer,
Molly," he said. "See, here is the holly.
We must kneel down and clasp our
hands."

"Do you think God will light it at
once?" Molly asked in awe-struck tones.

"No, we must wait a bit," Tom said,
and side by side they knelt under the

again." And then he bent down and
kissed Tommy to comfort him, for the
little boy was crying. Never before had
Tommy felt how much his grandfather
loved him, for the old clergyman had
half-forgotten how to show his affection
until to-night, and the little boy stole
his hand into his, and squeezed it tightly.
Molly had fallen asleep in her grand-
father's arms, and they walked in silence
back to the house. Lamps were blazing
in the windows, and the hall door was
wide open, sending out a stream of golden
light into the night. As they entered, a
girl came running forward to meet them.
"Father, thank God you have found
the children!" she cried, warmly. "I
have only just arrived, and when I went
upstairs their beds were empty. Is this
Molly?" and she began to kiss the sleep-
ing child.

Molly awoke, and clasped her round the
neck, blinking sleepily into the beautiful
face bending over her.

"Is it muvver come back?" she whis-
pered.

A great tear splashed down on her face.
"No, my darling, I am only your aunt,"
the girl answered sadly.

Tommy came forward and took her
hand.

"God has sent you till we go to
mother," he said, reverently.

The Old Year.

BY E. A. D.

"Mother," said Esther May,
Ere it was New Year's Day,
"The picture which you hung,
Upon my bedroom wall,
I do not like at all;
It shows the new year young,
And beautiful and gay,
The old year bent and gray,
His visage lined with care—
So different are the pair
Who pass each other by,
That I could almost cry."

"How should the old year look?
Now, let me understand!"
The mother said, and took
Gently her little hand.

"He ought to look more wise,
And clearer in the eyes;
About him he should wear
A glad, triumphant air,
Like one who has done well;
His breast should not be thin,
But ought to rise and swell,
And just when enters in
The new year, he should smile,
Encouragingly, while
He calls: 'Come, have no fear,
Follow on, little new year,
For I have gone before,
And opened many a door.'"

"Ah, truly, you are right,"
Answered the mother mild,
'And always in your sight,
May it be thus, my child,
Each year that onward goes,
Seeming but to disclose
Some farther hope, some door,
Discovered not before."

"Now, what is that noise?" said the
glad New Year,
"Now, what is that singular sound that
I hear?
As if all the paper in all the world
Were rattled and shaken and twisted and
twirled?"

Oh, that, said the jolly old earth, "is
the noise
Of all my children, both girls and boys,
A-turning over their leaves so now,
And all to do honour, New Year, to you."

In the Transvaal and Swaziland Dis-
trict the Wesleyans have some forty-
three missionaries and assistant mission-
aries, 100 paid agents, and ten times that
number who render gratuitous service.
The chapels and other preaching places
number 426, whilst the membership, in-
cluding those on trial, is 12,200, with
nearly 8,000 children in the schools—
Recorder.



LOST AND FOUND.

he answered, firmly. "Don't be afraid,
Molly, I'll take care of you."

Molly began to cry. "I'm frightened,
Tommy," she whispered, "and I'm wery,
wery cold."

"Oh, we'll put on our clothes first, I'll
dress you, Molly. And maybe God'll
help poor Dolly's arm, too, if we ask
him."

"Do you think he will? I'll take
dolly with me," Molly answered. They
had soon dressed themselves and crept
down the dimly-lighted staircase into the
hall. Sounds of singing came in faint
waves from the kitchen, for it was
Christmas Eve; but no one noticed the
children's exit, for their grandfather was
visiting a sick parishioner, and their
nurse had gone to the kitchen to enjoy
herself with the others.

In a few minutes, the two little figures,
almost as black in their mourning gar-

snow-hidden boughs. As they waited,
the moon hid behind a cloud, and a few
feathery flakes of snow began to fall.

"Lord, we're waiting, please," Tommy
cried. But no answer came, save the
chill wind hurting and creaking through
the boughs, and shaking down snow on
the suppliant little ones, so they shut
their eyes tightly and waited a while
longer, half dreading and half hoping to
open them. The sound of approaching
footsteps fell on their ears, and Tommy
rose jubilantly.

"It is coming now, Molly," he cried.
It was only their white-haired grand-
father returning from his visit. He
lifted Molly in his arms, his eyes filling
with tears at the thought of their faith-
ful request, as they explained their plan
to him.

"Hush, my darlings," he said tenderly.
"In God's own time you will be together

THE NEW YEAR.

BY FRANCES HILDY HARVAL.

New merces, new blessings, new light on thy way:
New courage, new hope, and new strength for each day:
New notes of thanksgiving, new chords of delight:
New songs in the morning, new songs in the night:
New wine in thy chalice, new altars to adore:
New fruits for thy Master, new garments of praise:
New gifts from his treasure, new smiles from his face:
New streams from the fountain of infinite grace:
New stars for thy crown, and new tokens of love:
New glories of the glory that awaits thee above:
New light of his countenance, full and unpriced,
All this be thy joy - thy new life in Christ

OUR PERIODICALS:

Table listing various periodicals such as Christian Guardian, Methodist Magazine, and their respective prices.

them to attempt the ascent. One bright morning, when I thought they were all busy with their games, I started on my expedition. I gently made my way up the face of the hill till I came to a point where the path forked, one path striking directly up the other ascending in a slanting direction. I hesitated for a moment as to which of the two paths I would take, and was about to take the precipitous one, when I started by the warning cry, "Be shouting, 'Father take the safest path, for I am following you'!"

Years have passed since that, to me, memorable morning, but though the years go on, the little fellow's cry has never left me. It taught me a lesson, the full force of which I had never known before. It showed me the power of our unconsidered words, and it showed the terrible possibility of our leading those around us to ruin, without intending or knowing it; and the lesson I learned that morning I am anxious to impress upon those to whom I may come.

WILLIAM BRIGGS,
Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto.

Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK
REV. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 30, 1899.

HOW TO HELP THE TWENTIETH CENTURY FUND.

At Arthur, Ont., on October 8, the Twentieth Century Thanksgiving Fund was fully explained and earnestly presented to the congregation. Some little girls of one of our families, Evelyn, Edna and Valda Gilrue, enquired and shared the facts. They wished to know how they could earn a dollar for the fund. Their father proposed that they should gather apples and pick up potatoes, and before the next Sunday, two of them had earned their dollars. Good for the girls! If these children are a fair index of the men and women of the twentieth century, there is a bright outlook for Methodism and the world. Could not thousands of children in the Dominion earn a dollar each before October 1, 1900?

A NEW YEAR'S COUNSEL.

During one of my holidays in North Wales I was staying with my family near a range of hills to which I was strangely attracted. Some of them were slanting, and easy to climb, and my children rejoiced to accompany me to their summit. One, however, was higher than the others, and its sides were steep and rugged. I often looked at it with longing desire to reach the top. The constant companionship of my children, however, was a difficulty. Several of them were very young, and I knew it would be full of peril for

But though life be short, it is of infinite importance. Though time be fleeting, on it most momentous issues hang. It is the seed-time of eternity. It is the probation of an endless future. The seed that we sow today, which shall spring a harvest of everlasting joy, or the baleful seeds of sin from which shall grow a bitter cup of unending remorse and shame.

"Oh, 'tis solemn living,
When we know each hour is giving
Radiance or night of darkness, to the
soul's eternal yearning"

A NEW YEAR.

"It's coming, boys
It's almost here;
It's coming, girls,
The grand New Year!
A year to be glad in,
Not to be had,
A year to live in, to gain and give in;
A year for trying, and not for sighing;
A bright New Year! Oh, hold it dear!
For God who sendeth, he only leaveth."

This is what some one wrote just before a New Year celebration. It agrees with me very appropriate to the season. Whether this new year will be a "grand" one or not depends on ourselves. We can make it what we please. We shall certainly have grand opportunities if we improve the new year will be to us "happy" all the way through. If we slight them we cannot expect either happiness or success.

It is astonishing how many good resolutions are made at the beginning of every new year. There was Jack Jones, for instance, who had been very negligent of his lessons for a long time. He was content to slumber about, and he could get through his examinations by "a tight squeeze," as he called it. Just before the Christmas holidays Jack's teacher had a plain talk with him about his neglect, and he received kindly, and promised to "turn over a new leaf" as soon as he came back to school. The first day after the vacation Jack's teacher reminded him of his promise, and the boy hesitated, but he fully intended to carry it out. And so, no doubt, he did; but unfortunately he lacked firmness and decision; and thus, when his cousin Will asked him after school to go skating, he readily consented, satisfying himself that there would be time enough for study after the fun was over. But he became so interested in his play that it was dark when he reached home, and he was obliged to study much after supper. He went to bed early, resolved to get up unusually early, and study hard. But he slept unusually late, and went to school unprepared.

What was the matter with Jack? His intentions were good, but he lacked that noble self-denial without which no one can hope to succeed. The new year of 1899 will be a happy one, if we are ready to do our very best every day, whether the year is new or old, and then we shall not feel called upon to make good resolutions only to be broken. The resolutions we have quoted above deserves to be remembered. Our time is lent to us by God for a good and a wise purpose. It is not to be trifled away, but to be diligently improved. God, who lends it to us, will one day call us to give account of it. We ought, therefore, so to improve it that when this account is rendered, it shall be found that we have been wise, and good, and useful in the world.—Angelus.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTION AND HOW HE KEPT IT.

"This being the first day of the year A.D. 1899, it is just and right that I should make resolutions for the day. Therefore be it

"Resolved, that during the coming year I will strive as far as possible to do unto others as I would be done by. Signed, 'Edward, my son,' this 1st day of January, 1899."

"There now, that's done right up in a business manner, I think," said Ned, proudly surveying the paper. "I expect it will be pretty hard work," he added and ran.

"Edward, my son," said his father, directly after breakfast, "will you clean off the walks—the first thing this morning?"

"Oh, dear!" Ned was beginning, when he thought of his resolution and answered promptly.

"Yes, father, I'll see to it at once," and started off with a merry whistle. His father looked in surprise for Ned had been much given to whining when asked to do anything. When he came in, his mother asked

him to go on an errand for her, and he went at once, notwithstanding he was anxious to get to his work. "Tis of no account," he said, "I'll be back before Christmas, and in which he was much interested. When he did get a chance to read he found his sister was reading the book. "Give me my book," he cried. "No, Ned, it's right in the middle of a chapter, and it is so interesting! I might just flush this chapter!"

"No," he answered crossly. "You had no right to get my book. There was no time for her respectful face, he thought. "Now, I guess that's not just as I'd be done by," and added: "Well, finish the chapter, then, Nellie."

"Oh, Ned, I wish my little brother, 'wont you show me how to spin my new top?"

"Not now, Freddie, I'm reading, don't you see?"

"But I'm lonesome," pleaded the little fellow, "and I can't do it right."

"Come here," said Ned, suddenly recollecting himself. And in a few moments the little fellow was as happy as could be, while Ned afterwards found that he was fine sport, and Ned's sled was recognized as the swiftest on the hill. It's queer how boys will tug up a long, tire-some hill just for the sport of riding down it. "Suppose you had no work half as hard they would think themselves awfully abused. But they always have and they always will, I guess (and girls, too, for that matter), and Ned was no exception."

No one noticed a poorly dressed lad who had no sled, and stood shivering with the cold, and wistfully watching the merry-makers. Ned saw him, and thought, "I have no ride at all, but it's none of my business." And his sled when he reached the top went merrily down the hill again.

But he was not easy as he climbed back again. "Suppose you had no sled and he had one," whispered a small voice, "what would you like him to do? Your sled is large enough for two. Why not take him on with you?"

"Supposing it wouldn't do as you'd be done by?"

By this time he reached the top of the hill. "Here, you," he called to the boy.

"Wouldn't you like to ride?"

"Wouldn't he? His cheeks flushed and his eyes sparkled."

"Well, come, jump on then," And away they went.

Not once but many times they went (for Ned never did things by halves), and he acknowledged to himself that somehow he felt less happier, and the boy was such a sport.

"Come next Saturday and you can ride some more," he said, when he started for home, and his new friend promised as he ran joyfully off.

"I'm glad that night as he thought over the day, "it may be a much harder way, but it's also much nicer, and I think I'll keep right on for the year."

NEW BOOKS.

"The Queen's Twin, and Other Stories." By Sarah Orne Jewett. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Toronto: William Briggs. Price, \$1.25.

Sarah Orne Jewett, herself a "queen" of happy, healthy story-telling, has again written a book of the same name. It is sold in her own inimitable way. Her style is always attractive, and her characters quaint and interesting. Those who are acquainted with dear old "Tis" will find in this volume. She is as devoted to her herbs as ever, and finds them as efficacious in the cure of every human ill as when we first found her describing them in "The Country of the Pointed Firs."

Each story in the book is wrought with delicacy, and with an appreciation of character rarely found. Her stories are written by quaint, mannerisms of language, and the minor chord of pathos is frequently struck. Her last story is a most beautiful Thanksgiving idyl.

"Dorothy and Her Friends." By Ellen Orne Kirk. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Toronto: William Briggs. Illustrated.

Another story of our dear little Dorothy Deane comes from the pen of Ellen Orne Kirk. It is peopled with many happy children. It treats of the marvelous influence for good that can be exerted by quiet, unassuming story-tellers who are determined not to live for self, but to try to help others. It is a book well worth the time of boys and girls to read.

English Robin's New Year.

On the snowy branch of the holly-bush
A gay little redbreast sings:
"Happy New Year to all, to all," says he,
Oh! loudly his greeting rings
And in the warm nursery, way high up,
From the window-pane looks down
A dear little girl with sunny hair,
And a boy with eyes so brown.

To robin they call, "Ho! ho! little bird,
Why singing so gully, pray?
The snow is so deep, the wind is so keen,
You'll freeze with the cold to-day."
"Icicles hang on the mistletoe bough,
And snow on the meadow lies,
But I fear not the cold this New Year's morn."
The brave little bird replies.

"For God he is good, and God he is love,
He made the land and the sea;
And the God that sees when the sparrows fall,
Will also take care of me."
Then he eats with a thankful heart the crumbs
That the small white hands let fall,
And sings from his swing in the holly-bush,
"Happy New Year to all, to all!"

TURNING A NEW LEAF.

BY LILLIE MONTFORT.

It was the last day of the year, and there had been a week or two of bitterly cold weather, with a heavy fall of snow. This morning dawned bright and beautiful, and the sunlight played on the long icicles that hung from the roofs, and brilliantly illuminated the snow-laden branches of the trees. It had not at present much dissolving power, but as the sun reached the zenith there would no doubt be a rapid thaw. So said James Turner, who in woolen comforter and gloves was industriously sweeping the snow from his doorway, and making a path by which himself and neighbours could cross over to the village shop. I suppose it is really very rude to look in at people's windows, and yet I should like you to take a peep in at Mr. Turner's cottage window and admire Little Johnnie; he is sitting on a footstool near a fire, and indeed everything about him is bright. There was no one else in the room, but that did not signify. Having finished his sweeping, James Turner opened the cottage door and asked, "Where's your mother, Johnnie?"

"Upstairs, father," was the reply.
"Never mind; I'm going to send poor little Tim in to have a warm at that fire."
"All right, father," said Johnnie.
"Send him along."

Little Tim came in shivering, with ragged clothing and bare feet. He was of the same age as Johnnie, but much smaller in size, and very pale and fragile-looking. His eyes sparkled when he saw the comfortable-looking Johnnie, and he exclaimed, "Oh, how nice it is!"

"Come along, Tim," said Johnnie.
"Here is plenty of room. Oh, my! how cold you are! Put your hands on my porringer, and that will warm them proper."
Tim accepted the invitation, and it must be confessed that when he held the outside of the porringer his eyes fell longingly on the bread and milk it contained.

"Have you had your breakfast?" asked Johnnie.
"No!" said Tim sadly; "my mother has nothing for me this morning."
"Oh, my!" said Johnnie again. "Well, never mind; eat that up quick."

And poor little Tim emptied the porringer, and basked in the warmth of the fire until strange questions suggested themselves, and, child-like, he asked them: "Where do you get your milk?"

"We buy it of Old Styles. Where do you get yours?"
"We never have any. My mother never has any penny for it. I wonder why some people have money and others have none."

Johnnie was puzzled now, but at last he said thoughtfully: "I know why you have no money; it is because your father has not turned over a new leaf."

Tim looked puzzled now, but Johnnie continued: "A good long while ago I had no socks or shoes, and my mother had no money, and father was often cross with her; but one day we had such a jolly supper that I wondered about it, and I asked if we should ever have another as good, and father said, 'Yes, Johnnie, plenty of them, for I have turned over a new leaf; and since then we have had fires and milk, and pudding, and clothes, and I have a Sunday suit in the cupboard. To-morrow we shall have a New Year's gift, and it is to be a clock; and it all

comes from father turning over a new leaf."

Just then Mrs. Turner came downstairs, and with true kindness spoke to little Tim, and then asked Johnnie if he had given Tim any pictures to look at.
"No, mother," said Johnnie; "we have been having a serious talk."

Mrs. Turner looked amused, but she asked, "What has Johnnie been saying to you, Tim?"

"He has told me about the new leaf, and I shall ask my father to get one."

"Poor little fellow! it will be a happy thing for you if your father will alter. God help you all this winter."

Mrs. Turner found some clothes that her own little son had outgrown, and they were plenty large enough for her neighbour's child, and the little boys were both delighted with the change in Tim's appearance; but as Mr. Turner was coming home to dinner now, they sent Tim to his mother, to tell all his wonderful story, and to give her a new shilling as Mrs. Turner's New Year's gift.

That same night Tim Raglan the elder came home earlier than usual, and apparently in good spirits.

"To-morrow will be New Year's Day, mother," he said jocularly. "Will you stand treat?"

"I wish I could," she said; "but, Tim,

was, 'I wish father would turn over a new leaf.' About an hour afterward there was a gentle knock at Mrs. Raglan's door, and to the poor woman's joyful surprise she found it was Mrs. Turner.
"I thought you would like to know your husband is in our house and having a chat with mine. Your good times are coming. I've brought you a few sticks for your fire, and a little bit of tea; now you cheer up, and when we send him in you make him as comfortable as you can God help you!"

Poor Mrs. Raglan was unable to speak, but she speedily lighted her fire and put on the kettle, and then slipped over to the shop and got a loaf and a rasher of bacon, changing her new shilling for the purpose. And sure enough Timothy Raglan returned to his cottage in a penitent state of mind. Very timidly he spoke of his resolutions to turn over a new leaf, but he had made it, and James Turner had promised to help him in every possible way. He found it hard sometimes, but he said he prayed to God for grace to keep his vow, and every day it was easier; and now he could not live without prayer, neither could he go without his comforts very willingly; but the new leaf is still new, and he means to keep it.

Well, to finish my story. Let me tell

somebody that can talk like a silver tongue."

"No, Miss Mary said it wasn't that sort, I asked her, she said this tongue was made out of real silver, that came out of the mines, and you know what Miss Mary says goes."

Henry awing himself down to the ground. "I might as well go along," he said.

There was more than one boy at the meeting that afternoon who had come to hear about the silver tongue, and after the hymns and prayers and Bible reading and after the four companies had marched up and deposited their silver and copper bits in four little red boxes, Miss Mary began her story.

"Once there was a little boy who died and went to heaven."

My! How the boys' faces fell! they didn't want to hear a story about a boy who had died. But whether they did or not, Miss Mary kept right on:

"I can't tell you all the joy and gladness and beauty he found there, but before he had been long walking those green pastures, beside the still waters, he met a bright creature, who came up and crowned him with a fadeless wreath."

"I have been keeping it for you," she said, smiling.

"For me?" said the newcomer in surprise: "why for me?"

"Because it was through you that I learned of our dear Redeemer, and trusted in him."

"Where did you live when on earth?" asked the boy.

"I lived in China, in a boat on the river, I had no other home. But I got sick, and my father took me to the foreigner's hospital. It was there I heard of Jesus and his love."

"But I was never there," said heaven's latest comer, "you have made a mistake." He tried to give her back the fadeless crown, but could not stir one of its bright leaves.

"Oh, I know you were not there," answered the Bright One, "you did not speak to me with your lips, but by a silver tongue. Don't you remember saving up your bits of silver until your box was full, and then sending it to a hospital in China? It was your money that kept me there until my body was well, and until my soul was saved by believing on Jesus. And after you had told me of the blessed Saviour by your silver tongue, I went out and told my companions with my lips of the Friend I had found."

"Suddenly, a fair band of angelic ones circled round these two: 'Welcome, welcome,' they cried; 'if it had not been for your silver tongue, we might never have known that Jesus died for us. Welcome to this happy land.'"

The story was ended, and all the little boys were sitting still and quiet. "The Boys' Mission Band will meet on the first Sunday afternoon of next month," said Miss Mary. "Be sure you all come, and don't forget to bring your silver tongues."

FRENCH CHILDREN.

The French boy at his games and pleasures, on the way to school, with his black leather portfolio, dashing through the park on horseback, playing in the gardens at the various French games with his companions—the French boy, poor or rich, scholar or apprentice, in dress and manner a very different being from our own little fellows in Canada.

He wears his trousers short, very full, and drawn in at the knee by an elastic band. His suit is a sailor-suit. His legs, in the coldest winter weather, are often bare. On his head is a cap, over his shoulders is thrown a hooded cape. His suit is covered by a black apron, gathered in around his waist by a leather belt. Such is the schoolboy dashing across the park and boulevard, an especially picturesque figure in a city where all is picturesque.

As to the little girls, they are perfectly charming! With their nurses they sit up and down the avenue, their pretty dresses, flying ribbons, and big hats making bright spots of colour. These are the rich little maidens. Then there are the Jeannes and Marias and Catharines of the people, in soberer clothes, coarse blue stockings, stout laced boots, their dresses covered by the inevitable black apron. Hatless they go, winter and summer, to school, the neat pig-tails bobbing behind as the child carries home a long loaf of bread, or joins her little friends on a bench in the gardens, where the groups sew and chatter as sharply as the sparrows twittering around.

The French children are at once cheerful and sedate, polite and useful—a good combination, it seems to me! Indeed, it is hard to say which are most attractive—the flowers of Paris or the little people, for both make the city streets gay, winter and summer.



THE BIRTH OF JESUS. (SEE LESSON).

come and show yourself to your father."
Tim came willingly, and his clothes were felt and admired, until nobody could say any more about them.

"Ah!" said Tim the father, "some people do get on. I remember when Jem Turner's wife had an empty cupboard, and no money for firing."

"Yes," said little Tim, "Johnnie told me about it; and he says they have plenty now, because his father turned a new leaf."

"What does he mean by that?" asked Raglan; but his countenance showed that he knew well enough what it meant.

"Couldn't you turn a new leaf, father?" said the little boy, looking with pleading eyes into his father's face. "It would be nice to have bread and milk for breakfast in a nice hot porringer. Why, father, Johnnie says they buy their milk from Old Styles, and it's just delicious. Could you turn a new leaf, father?"

"I am afraid not," said the man huskily; and he hastily left the room and the cottage.

Mrs. Raglan feared he had gone off to the public-house, and scolded little Tim for letting his tongue run so fast; and so at the close of what had been to Tim a wonderfully happy day, he crept to his comfortless bed, sad and heavy-hearted. Poor Tim! His last conscious thought

you little Tim woke up and smelled the bacon cooking, and in a great hurry jumped out of bed and called out, "Mother, they are cooking the New Year's dinner in at Johnnie Turner's."
"Poor little chap!" said Raglan.
"Come here, Tim, and hear the glad news. I am going to turn over a new leaf."

On his father's knee little Tim sobbed out his thankfulness, and thought how soon his home would be like Johnnie's, and what a good thing it was to have a new leaf to turn.—Home and School.

THE SILVER TONGUE.

BY ELIZABETH P. ALLAN.

"Aren't you going to Mission Band this time?" Tom Graves was standing at the foot of a slim young maple tree, calling up to Henry Miley, who was perched among its bare branches.

"No, I'm not going," answered Henry, shortly.

"Better come, Miss Mary is going to tell us something real strange."

"What sort of thing?" Henry came down to the lowest branch to hear.

"It's about a silver tongue."

"Pshaw! That's just a fake. I know what they mean by a silver tongue; it's

The Magical Door.

There is a door in the wall of the ages—
A door that no man sees;
For the angel who writes in the Book of
Time,

Is the keeper of the keys.
Once in the year it opens,
At the solemn midnight hour,
When the children sleep, and the old
clocks keep
Awake in the tall church tower.

And then, as it swings on its hinges,
Whoever might peer inside
Would catch a glimpse of the centuries,
That behind the silence hide,
Egypt, and Rome, and Tyre,
All in that mythical place,
Where the old years rest that were once
possessed
By the wonderful human race.

The shadowy door swings open,
And a pilgrim enters in,
Flowed with a twelve-month's struggle
In this world of strife and sin.
Wait him a farewell greeting!
He will pass no more this way—
This weary year who must disappear
In the haven of yesterday.

The door still swingeth open,
And outward another comes,
With a stir of banners and bugles
And the beat of friendly drums.
His hands are full of beauty—
The cluster, the song, the sheaf,
The snowflake's wing, and the budding
spring,
And the foam on the crested reef.

This is the New Year, darlings,
Oh, haste to give him cheer;
Only the Father knoweth
The whole of his errand here.
This is the New Year, darlings,
A year for work and play,
For doing our best, and for trusting the
rest
To the maker of night and day.
—From "Little Knights and Ladies."

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER, 1900.

LESSON I.—JANUARY 7.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

Luke 2. 1-16. Memory verses, 8-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he
shall save his people from their sins.—
Matt. 1. 21.

OUTLINE.

1. The Providential Method, v. 1-7.
2. The Angelic Message, v. 8-14.
3. The Confirmation of the Message, v. 15. 16.

Time.—The very end of B.C. 5 or the
early part of B.C. 4.

Place.—Bethlehem of Judea.

LESSON HELPS.

1. "Caesar Augustus"—Caesar was the
emperor's title or titular name. "All
the world"—The Roman empire, which
included continental Europe, the northern
shore of Africa (then fertile and teeming
with population), and what is now Turkey
in Asia. "Taxed"—Registered; he de-
creed that a census should be taken.

3. "Every one into his own city"—This
was a thoroughly Hebrew way of doing
things; the "house and lineage" of each
man—that is, his family and ancestry—
were more valuable to him than gold and
silver; and what had been once the an-
cestral inheritance was always regarded
as the family home. The Roman method,
unmodified by Jewish prejudices, would
have been to enroll each person at his
place of residence.

4. "Up"—"Up" in both senses, for
his journey was a steady ascent, and led
him from a comparatively remote pro-
vince to the centre of the nation. "The
city of David"—Bethlehem, which was
David's birthplace. "House and lineage"
Better, "house and family."

5. "To be taxed"—"To enroll him-
self." "His espoused wife"—"Who was
 betrothed to him."

7. "Swaddling clothes"—At that time
the universal clothing of babes; they were
long folded bands, tight and unwholo-
some. "Laid him in a manger"—Prob-
ably the stone trough out of which cattle
fed. This would be revolting to an Am-
erican or Englishman, but hardly so to an
oriental.

8. "The same country"—The fields
around Bethlehem. "Watch over their

stock"—To guard from robbers and wild
beasts.

9. "Came upon them"—The words ex-
press a sudden, surprising coming.

11. "A Saviour"—One who saves men.
"Christ"—The word means "anointed,"
and is the same as the Hebrew word
Messiah.

12. "This shall be a sign"—The sign
was not miraculous, but the prediction of
it was.

13. "Saying"—"It is not clear whether
these clauses were sung as a continuous
strain, or whether they were heard in
single floating fragments, or by alternate
responses."—Whedon.

14. "Glory to God in the highest"—
The highest measure of praise for God's
great love to men. "On earth peace"—
The more fully Christ is accepted among
men the greater will be peace. "Good
will"—The word used here is one which
both our Lord (Matt. 11. 26; Luke 10. 21)
and Paul (Eph. 1. 5; Phil. 2. 13) use of the
divine will in its aspect of benevolence.

Who accompanied him on the journey?
What happened while they were at
Bethlehem?

Where was the child laid? Why?
What name was given the child, and
why? Matt. 1. 21, 25.

2. The Angelic Message, v. 8-14.
What night watchmen were on duty
near Bethlehem?

Who suddenly appeared to them?
Of what were they afraid?
What did the angel say to comfort
them?

What was his good news?
What "sign" did he give them?
Who suddenly joined the angel?
What was their song of joy?
Of whose good will was the birth of
Jesus a pledge? John 3. 16.

3. The Confirmation of the Message, v.
15, 16.

Where did the angels go?
What visit did the shepherds suggest?
Does this indicate doubt, or faith?

**Ring Out the Old.**

Ring, New Year bells, ring loud and clear,
With merry peals so full of cheer,
Ring in the boy that's first at school,
Ring out the dunce-block and the fool,
Ring in the boy that's bright as day,
That loves to work and loves to play.
Ring out the idler and the drone,
Ring out the grumblers every one,
Ring out the boy who will not lend

A willing hand to help a friend.
Ring in new school-books and new toys.
Ring out all things that ruin boys.
Ring out the smoker and the smoke,
Ring out old habit's ugly yoke.
Ring out the swearer from the street,
Ring out the fighter and the cheat.
Ring out the child that doesn't care,
Ring in good children everywhere.

15. "Let us now go"—Words not of
doubt, but of trust. "Even unto Beth-
lehem"—Probably no very great dis-
tance.

16. "Found"—The word means dis-
covered after search.

HOME READINGS.

- M. The birth of Jesus.—Luke 2. 1-9.
Tu. The birth of Jesus.—Luke 2. 10-20.
W. Simeon's prophecy.—Luke 2. 25-35.
Th. Mary's thanksgiving.—Luke 1. 46-55.
F. The Divine Word.—Heb. 1. 1-9.
S. Divinity and humanity.—John 1. 1-14.
Su. The Saviour.—1 John 4. 7-14.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The Providential Method, v. 1-7.
Of what decree does the lesson tell, and
by whom was it issued?
Who then ruled in Syria?
Where did the people go for their tax-
ing?
From what city and province did Joseph
come?
Where did he go to be taxed?
Why did he go to Bethlehem?

What did they find when they came?
When should we see 'cous? Isa. 55. 6.

PRACTICAL TEACHING.

- Where in this lesson are we shown—
1. The fulfilment of prophecy?
2. That angels are interested in our
welfare?
3. That God's glory is man's highest
good?

A BOY'S RELIGION.

If a boy is a lover of the Lord Jesus
Christ, says a wise writer, though he
can't lead a prayer-meeting, or be a
church officer or a preacher, he can be a
godly boy, in a boy's way and a boy's
place. He ought not to be too solemn
or too quiet for a boy. He need not
cease to be a boy because he is a Chris-
tian. He ought to run, jump, play,
climb, and shout like a real boy. But
in all he ought to be free from vulgarity
and profanity. He ought to eschew to-
bacco in every form, and have a horror
of intoxicating drinks. He ought to be

peaceable, gentle, merciful, generous. He
ought to take the part of small boys
against large ones. He ought to refuse
to be a party to mischief, to persecution,
to deceit; and, above all things, he ought
now and then to show his colours. He
need not always be interrupting a game
to say that he is a Christian, but he
ought not to be ashamed to say that he
refuses to do something because it is
wrong and wicked, or because he fears
God, or is a Christian. He ought to
take no part in the ridicule of sacred
things, but meet the ridicule of others
with a bold statement that for the things
of God he feels the deepest reverence.

A Prayer for the New Year.

Dear Master, for this coming year
Just one request I bring;
I do not pray for happiness,
Or any earthly thing;
I do not ask to understand
The way thou leadest me;
But this I ask: Teach me to do
The thing that pleaseth thee.

A quiet lot in life is mine,
Made up of little things;
Teach me to do as unto thee
The duties each day brings.
Faithful in that which is the least,
Dear Master, I would be,
Thus making all my daily work
The thing that pleaseth thee.

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