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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OL' & YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. VI.]

TORONTO, DECEMBER 25, 1886.

[No. 26.]

Christmas Gifts.

CHRISTMAS gifts for thee, fair and free!
Precious things from the heavenly store,
Filling thy casket more and more;
Golden love in divinest chain,
That never can be untwined again;
Siv'ry carols of joy that swell,
Sweetest of all in the heart's lone cell,
Pearls of peace, that were sought for thee,
In the terrible depths of a fiery sea;
Diamond promises sparkling bright,
Flashing in farthest-reaching light.

Christmas gifts for thee, grand and free!

Christmas gifts from the King of love,
Brought from his royal home above;
Brought to thee in the far-off land,
Brought to thee by his own dear hand.
Promises held by Christ for thee,
Peace as a river flowing free,
Joy that in his own joy must live,
And love that Infinite love can give,
Surely thy heart of hearts uplifts,
Carols of praise for such Christmas gifts.

—Francis Ridley Havergal.

GETTING READY FOR CHRISTMAS.

CHRISTMAS is generally a very busy time. Children are anxious to have home attractive, and make many sacrifices for a pleasant time. These darling children scarcely able to get through the snow are carrying home an evergreen. How glad they are that the Merry Christmas time is so near at hand. Their home will be full of pleasure when this little tree bends under the good things kind parents will hang upon it. It would be well for more parents to encourage children to decorate home and have a tree on which to hang presents for the dear little ones. What merry times these are when all the household gather around the Christmas tree. Give the children this day out of the year which they will remember with pleasure. Get ready in time to celebrate Christ's birth in the home in such a way as shall be profitable and entertaining.

SOME one was praising the English public schools to Charles Lamb, and said: "All our best men were public-school men. Look at our poets. There's Byron, he was a Harrow-boy—" "Yes," interrupted Charles, "and there's Burns—he was a plow-boy."

CHRISTMAS IN A SWEDISH HOME.

LET us enter this house at noon on Christmas Eve. In every place you will find that all is ready for Christmas. In the drawing-room stands a tall pine tree, richly dressed with all sorts of pretty things. At the top is

dishes at all, a sort of dried fish soaked in brine, called "lut fisk," and a very curious soup called "busbas."

After dinner we visit an orphan home, to see the joy of the children gathered round their Christmas-tree receiving their gifts. How joyfully they sing, and listen to my father,

that we should not walk in darkness. We sing beautiful hymns at the piano, some of them written by Martin Luther for his own children at Christmas. My father reads to us the second chapter of St. Luke, and then we take our places round a table to receive our Christmas presents.

In some families they fling the gifts through the door, but we wrap them up in paper and put them in great baskets. My father reads the names and verses written on the parcels and gives them to their owners. What exclamations of surprise and delight! The fire casts its ruddy blaze over the whole scene, and we peel our apples, crack our nuts, and chat till we go to bed to dream about the happy Christmas Eve.

At three o'clock on Christmas morning the church bells begin to ring merrily. At five we all go to church, which is brilliantly lighted with hundreds of candles. What a charming sight it is in the clear frosty night; you would, I am sure, like to see it. Perhaps you would be able to see a splendid "Northern Light" trembling in the sky. Thousands of bright stars are twinkling, and amidst the immense walls of snow and the dark trees with thickly frosted boughs stands the old church with light streaming from the windows.

In every window in our home stand many candles. Once we put the lighted Christmas tree on the veranda. Now we see troops of people in their quaint bright costume coming with blazing torches in their hands to worship in the temple of the Lord.

How mighty and strong does the thanksgiving hymn sound from the crowded church, "Be greeted, holy morning hour!"

Christmas time flies rapidly. There are meetings, feasts for the Sunday school children, friendly visits. We are only sorry that the happy season lasts no longer. — *English Paper.*

MAKE life a ministry of love, and it will always be worth living



GETTING READY FOR CHRISTMAS.

a white flag with the words of the angels printed on it: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will to men." The names of our Saviour given in Isa. 9. 6, are printed on others. The flags of many nations are there, and you very likely will find your American flag among them.

The dinner of this day is very funny. You would certainly not like the

who speaks to them about the Holy Child in the manger!

On our return we find the coffee-table waiting for us, and we gather round it, but all are impatient to get the meal over, for after it we go to light the candles on the tree.

Each one repeats some words from the Bible about the great Light who came into the world to shine for us

A Christmas Legend.

When the shoemaker of Antwerp came to
 he,
 And in fear and trembling faced the Lord
 most High,
 To the question stern and awful, "What
 hast thou
 for the King of earth and heaven done
 to-day?"
 "Lord," he answered, "others serve thee,
 I alone
 Have no talent, naught to offer at thy
 throne;
 Only this one thing to thee, Lord, dare I
 tell,
 I have pleased the children, and they love
 me well."

Then the awful hush that followed in the
 sky
 Suddenly was broken by a pleading cry;
 By the voices of the children that arose
 In the streets throughout the city, praying
 thus

"Dear Lord, we are lonely. The monks and
 the saints

In the city abound,
 But since the shoemaker died not a man
 Have we anywhere found
 Who can play the games that the children
 love,

And play them so well,
 Or tell us the tales of the olden time
 He only could tell

There is no one to sing us the merry old
 songs

As he used to do,
 Or to whittle us toys, for the rest forget
 to w

(If they ever knew)

Dear Lord, there are holy monks and to
 spare

In the streets of our town;
 Take one of them up to heaven, and send
 The shoemaker down!"

Came the sudden wondrous shining of the
 smile that lights the skies,
 As the King of heaven answered, "Labourer
 in my vineyard, rise!

Though thou didst it for the children, thou
 hast done it unto me,
 While a child on earth is living, thou its
 living saint shalt be!"

Still we find the little children; still their
 saint lives on the earth;

And when comes the glorious evening of the
 Christ-child's holy birth,

With strange power of speech and motion
 passes he from hand to hand,
 Scattering blessings for the children every-
 where with eager hand.

Where no other saint may enter he comes
 in without a word,

And his coming and his presence mean the
 coming of the Lord!

—Eva L. Ogden.

A GIFT OF GOD.

Grandmother's Christmas Story.

BY ROSE TERRY COOKE.

"For the a walt — stand in thy lot."

'Twas an awful Winter. We folks
 that live way up amongst the mountains
 gets used to cold and snow, but the's
 a differ betwixt Winters for all that,
 and I never saw such a one as 'twas
 when we got our gift from God. But I'd
 better begin to the beginning. Eben
 and me was, so to speak, pioneers in
 the region we settled in; 'twas way
 up on Wild Cat River, as far above
 Jackson as Jackson is above Conway,
 but there wasn't no settlement betwixt
 us and Gorham in them days. that is
 to say only a few houses huddled to-
 gether thirty miles apart, like sheep in

a storm. But we was further'n that
 from anybody. I wonder now, being
 old and broke up with work and rheu-
 matiz, how we done it, but somebody's
 got to begin, always, and we were
 young and strong and poor. Eben's
 folks had ten children, so it behooved
 him to play round and get off his old
 father's hands. I hadn't anybody but
 Eben. I was an orphan and bound
 out to his mother, and as far as I
 knows I hadn't kith nor kin. Miss
 Dart was always good to me, I will say
 it, I had to work, but so did she, and she
 made of me pretty near as much as
 though I'd been her own. She had
 three girls of her ten, but they come
 last, so they couldn't help any. Eben
 and me always fellowshipped, and when
 it come to it that he made up his mind
 to clear up a spot in the north woods
 and make his home up there, he asked
 me to go along and I said I would.
 I'd been to sugar camps too much to be
 afraid of living in a bark sha. +v, and
 then I set by Eben considerable. So
 we went up one day in the spring.
 By stage as far as we could, then hoss-
 back, for his folks giv us a hoss and
 a cow, so I rode one and he drove
 'tother, first by a sort of a road and
 then up a track to where the' was an
 intervale and a big spring; he'd been
 up there the year before and built a
 big shanty an' a barn, and sowed corn
 into the intervale, an' backed the most
 of it down to the road, an' so to the
 nearest mill, so's we had meal and
 milk to live on, but we had to sell the
 hoss, once ploughin' was done, we
 couldn't keep him. Dear me! how I
 talk. But when I think of them old
 times seems as though I couldn't stop.

Well, days and years went on; we
 had six children born up there in the
 woods, boys all of 'em and by the time
 the oldest was twenty the' was a
 travelled road went up to Canady,
 along 'tother side of the river. And
 we had a considerable nice farm; he'd
 cleared an' planted an' set out apple
 trees and put up a saw mill, and we
 had a plenty to eat and drink and do;
 but the land was too straight for us,
 same as it was for the sons of the
 prophets in Scripiter, for there was Joseph
 was 20 and 'Liab he was a'most 19
 and John he was 17 and Lorenzo was
 twin to him. The' was two more, but
 they died; that made it kind of hard
 for me, 'twas so lonesome to lay 'em
 away out in the lot, with nothin' to
 tell if 'twas cats or children lay under
 them heaps!

Well, Joseph got oneasy; there
 really wasn't enough for four of 'em
 to do, so he took a feyer to go off and
 settle for himself out in Ohio and 'Liab
 wanted to go with him, so we didn't
 hinder 'em, and they went and done
 well; and now I've got great grand-
 children comin' up on good farms out
 in the Western county that I havn't
 never seen; and now I'm a'most 90
 'tisin't likely as I ever shall see 'em;
 but thou I don't know 'em and my
 boys is gray headed old men.

John and 'Renzo stayed by the stuff,

but one Fall they was out in the woods
 a choppin' and a tree fell the wrong
 way and caught 'Renzo's leg under a
 bough on't and broke it dreadful. We
 had to send thirty miles for a naternal
 bone setter, and he said 'twas a terrible
 bad fracture, and the boy'd go limpin'
 all his days, if he didn't have to go in
 crutches.

That come hard; 'Renzo was a'most
 19 then, an' he an' John was like two
 wild creturs together when work was
 done, skylarkin' and jumpin' fences,
 and trappin' and fishin'; and now all
 that was done with. I suppose I sot
 thinkin' of it one day, for 'Renzo turn-
 ed his head on the pillow and said,
 kind of smilin', "I can fish, anyway,
 mammy!" I thought I should have
 bawled right out then but I didn't.

Well, 'twas harder when he got out
 o' bod and found what he couldn't do,
 and it kip' gettin' harder; and John
 seemed to feel just as bad as he did;
 so that Winter he went off a lumberin'
 over to the Maine woods and we three
 was left there by ourselves; and when
 John came home in next May he give
 us to understand, seein' Lorenzo was
 limpin' round now with a stick, that
 he had took a farm on shares with
 a feller that bossed his job at lumberin'
 and would strike out for himself if pa
 would give him his time. He wouldn't
 ha' said a word about it if 'Renzo had
 been helpless, but he was to let Jim
 Marsh know how 'twas as quick as
 ever he found out. Eben give in and
 I had to, but I did feel real put about
 for Lorenzo, cut off in the spring of his
 youth, as you may say, and set by,
 whilst all the rest was goin' off abroad
 and settin' up homes for themselves.

I kind of mistrusted there was some-
 thin' back of farmin' to John's idee of
 goin' off, so I asked him who was goin'
 to keep house for 'em; and he looked
 out o' the winder and said "Sary"
 was.

"Who's Sary?" says I, innocent as
 a biled turnip.

"Oh, she's Jim's sister."

"A maiden lady?" says I.

"No," says he, sharper'n barberries;
 "She's a gurl."

I didn't say no more.

Well there we was. 'Renzo got
 smart enough that Summer to milk
 and plant the garden and chop some
 wood in the shed: and he liked to fuss
 round with the fowls some, and come
 hayin' he raked after the cart quite a
 little; but he had real low spells,
 'specially if we hapened to hear about
 the other boys, which we did sometimes
 in the Summer season.

I felt real bad for him: seemed as
 though I couldn't blame him none, and
 I'd lived too long to think of blamin'
 the Lord. But I ain't one of them
 that hush up things and slide round 'em.
 I like to lock trouble in the face and
 see just how long and broad 'tis, and
 what it's good for, and then I can set to
 and bear it the best I can. So I said
 one day to 'Renzo, who was sittin' on
 a log out in the chipyard, lookin' as
 downhearted as a sheared sheep,

"'Renzo," says I, "speak it out," says
 I, "'twon't be half so bad if you fetch
 it to the sunshine." The tears ran
 right over then. I'd opened the gates
 when the pond was full.

"Mother," says he, when he'd ketch-
 ed hold of himself again, "sometimes
 it does seem as though I couldn't bear
 it. I shan't ever go out into the world
 like the other boys and have a home
 and a wife."

"No," says I, "'tain't likely you
 will. But you'll have a home here,
 'Renzo. Pa calculates to lease you the
 home farm, seein' as you got crippled
 workin' on it. And if you will be
 best off to have a wife there'll be one
 for ye."

"I don't know where," he said,

"No more do I; but the Lord does,
 and what he's give ye to do now is to
 'stand in the lot,' as Scripiter says, and
 do what you can where you be."

'Renzo'd got religion two years be-
 fore in a camp meetin' down to Bart-
 lett, so I wasn't talkin' to a deaf
 ear.

"You cheer up 'Renzo, and read
 your Bible and look at the birds with-
 out barn or storehouse are fed," as
 hymn book says; ain't you of more
 valoo than them?"

Lorenzo looked up kind of cherk.
 "Mother," says he, "you'd ought to
 have been a doctor and a minister too;
 I feel better a' ready."

I laughed and went off; when you've
 druv the nail up to the head 'tain't no
 use hammerin'. Well, the Fall went
 by, and 'Renzo kep', on gettin' more
 and more handy with his leg, if you
 can say 'tis gettin' handy with a leg,
 and his sperrits got up, and he was
 real cherk. Eben owned up that 'twas
 a terrible help to hear him whistlin'
 round again.

"I hain't said nothin'," says pa, "but
 mebba I've felt the more."

'Twas December before sleighin' set
 in, but on the twenty-third day it put
 into snow and blow. I tell you that
 was a storm. The weather was as
 cold as cold could be. 'Twas all that
 Eben and 'Renzo could do to feed the
 critters, they had to shovel as they
 went and shovel as they come.

"It snow and blew," as the sayin'
 is, all day the twenty-fourth; and one
 time in the evenin', 'Renzo said it
 seemed as though he heered bells, but
 I didn't, but then I'm hard of hearing
 anyway, and so is Eben.

Twenty-fifth it stopped, and pa set
 out to see if he could drive a ox sled
 down to mill, but he couldn't no ways,
 but he sees somethin' atop of the drift
 clear out in the road. He hollered to
 'Renzo to fetch the shovel, and betwixt
 'em they dug out apparently a dead
 body wrapped up in cloak and hood
 and shawls, so they knowed 'twas a
 woman. They fetched her in just like
 a log, and laid her on the floor before
 the fire, and she was white and still as
 the dead. Pretty soon she began to
 gasp and open her eyes, and I said to
 the men folks if they'd get out of the
 way she'd probably be less scared

when she came to. The first word she spoke was: "Father!"

"I've sent all the men folks off, dear," says I.

Then I warmed some milk and fed it to her and finally I got her into my bed, with a jug o' hot water to her feet, and she fell asleep; 'twas a wonder she wasn't froze, but I suppose bein' so deep in the drift was the reason.

But when she woke up wasn't she real pretty looking? She was about seventeen, and had the longest, softest, shiniest dark hair that ever you see, and big eyes as brown and soft as a robin's, and for all she was pale 'twas a hullsome paleness, and when she laughed or ran about outdoors there was a little rosy colour come and go in her cheeks till she looked the most like an apple blossom of anything I ever see.

Well, when she could talk she told us that she lived up in Canada on a farm; that her mother had died two years back, and her father got an idea he could get work in Boston, where 'twould be more folksy for him and her than in Canada, and they'd started for the States in their pung seein' they lived off any stage road, and they calculated to sell the pung and the pony when they got to some town.

So they came along till they got ketched in the storm and the last she knew the pung upshot and the pony run, her father holdin' on to the lines, but she fell out; 'twas snowin' real hard, as I said, but she set out to follow the road, and in the dark turned off onto the bridge and got to our fence, and didn't know no more till she found herself by our fire.

Well! the snow set in again that day, and we couldn't go to look up her father. It wasn't no way possible.

She said her name was Dora Wilson. "Least ways that is my calling name, madam; my christened name is Theodora, mother's name; she said it meant 'the gift of God,' and she was an only child, like as I am, so they gave her the name. The old priest, Father Lachine, at L'Hiver, used to call me 'la Diou donne,' and that means it, too." So the Winter went on, and the drifts never melted till Spring, and Dora came to be just as though she belonged to us.

Well, Spring came, and an awful freshet, and after awhile when the water was down Eben heered that a dead man had been found caught in the dam the week before, and a Canada pony and a pung was found too in a hemlock thicket just above. The pony'd been froze to death there, for 'twasn't thawed out when a logger come across it, prospectin' for lumber. So we told Dora we guessed she was a gift of God to us; and she was sure enough.

'Twas a year from the day she come that she an' Lorenzo was married, and when the minister'd done it 'Renzo said:

"My Dear Dora?"

"Yes; your Christmas gift from God, Renzo, and you are mine."

For she'd told us about Christmas; we hadn't ever kep' it; but we do now. Then 'Renzo stepped up and kissed me.

"Mother!" says he. "God grant I may stand in my lot to the end of my days."

Christmas Day.

BY NORA PERRY.

WHAT'S this hurry, what's this flurry,
All throughout the house to-day!
Everywhere a merry scurry,
Everywhere a sound of play.
Something too, 'a matter, matter,
Out of doors as well as in,
For the bell goes clatter, clatter,
Every minute—such a din!

Everybody winking, blinking,
In a queer, mysterious way;
What on earth can they be thinking,
What on earth can be to pay?
Bobby peeping o'er the stairway,
Bursts into a little shout:
Kitty, too, is in a fair way,
Where she hides, to guggle out.

As the bell goes cling-a-ling-ing,
Every minute more and more,
And swift feet go springing, springing,
Through the hall-way to the door,
Where a glimpse of box and packet,
And a little rustle, rustle,
Makes such sight and sound and racket,—
Such a jolly bustle, bustle,—
That the youngsters in their places,
Hiding slyly out of sight,
All at once show shining faces,
All at once scream with delight.

Go and ask them what's the matter,
What the fun outside and in—
What the meaning of the clatter,
What the bustle and the din.
Hear them, hear them laugh and shout then,
All together hear their say,
"Why, what have you been about, then,
Not to know it's Christmas day!"

CHRISTMAS.

"God be thanked for the bright Christmas day!" many have said, as the sunlight and gladness of its pleasant hours have fallen upon their lives. And not only the young have said these words, but many whose lives are crowned with age have grasped at the golden sunbeams that gild the glad Christmas time. Perhaps there is no season in all the weary march of years so fraught with happiness for all classes as this mid-winter holiday. The hearts of the aged seem to grow young again, and the young gain higher and brighter heights of pleasure and enjoyment.

Clouds and sadness flee away at the coming of summer glory in the midst of winter's gloom. The voices of sorrow are hushed, as the joybells ring out in their silvery sweetness. The dark powers of anguish and despair are for once held in check by the invisible chain of silver and gold. Glad songs and floating melody come over the tranquil waters, where moaning tempests have lingered so long. Sweetness, beauty and sunshine all mingle lovingly together, to make up the crowning glory of the day.

Who can tell the secret of this glad day?

Who can point out the invisible power that makes it so beautiful?

Is it the "ivy green" and winter flowers twined gracefully together in fantastic forms? Is it the many offerings of friendship and love? Is it the Christmas carol and grand anthem that float out beautiful melody? Is it because this glad day comes in the midst of the gloom and desolation of winter? Is it because all are joining in this scene of rejoicing? Perhaps these things help to render the scene beautiful, yet they do not constitute the central glory of it. The sweet love of Christ is the hallowed power that beautifies the day. The festive hours are ushered in in memory of his coming to redeem the world, and the joy and gladness of that great day still floats down the tide of ages.

There was joy when he came, and there will ever be glad joy as the Redeemer's birthday comes with the years. We can well afford to be joyous as Christmas breaks upon us with its hallowed joys. We can well afford to bestow our "love offerings" upon others, when we have received by the coming of Christ a gift of untold worth.

Oh! royal day, full of brightness and precious memories, we will keep thee sacred forever.—Mrs. M. A. Holt.

THE CHRISTMAS-GUEST.

"HAVE you a guest-chamber, a place of rest for those who may come?"
"For my friends."

"Has it comforts for those who are worn—some nook of rest for those who have been wearied by the way?"

"All that love can furnish."
"Is there an open door?"
"Night and day."
"And you keep it for these alone?"
"For these alone."

"Then let me tell you. A King, your King, is coming to be your guest. In the stillness of the early Christmas-morning he will come, your King, your Saviour. Will there be an open door and some one waiting there to welcome him?"

"Alas! I have no room."
"No room? But you said you had a guest-chamber."

"It is my heart. It is not good enough for him."

"He will come into it just as it is. You need not hang richer curtains at the windows, nor lay a thicker carpet, nor make softer beds."

"But it is occupied."
"Are there guests in it?"

"Yes, it has other guests. The King can not stay with them."

"You hang your head. What are they?"

"Pride."
"And that alone?"
"Anger."
"Another?"
"Envy."
"Another?"
"Wilfulness."

"Another?"

"Oh, so many! Selfishness in all its forms. Their faces are evil, and the face of the King is holy. Theirs are dark, and his is the light itself."

"But will you not turn them out? Will you not make room for the King? He will come in if you will have it so. Will you let him, your King, go past your door—he who has so much to bestow on you who need so much? Turn out those guests that would drive him away robed of scepter and crown. Did you not say that door was open?"

"It is open, and those guests have gone!"

"Gone because the King, that Christmas guest, has entered, his forgiving, loving presence filling the chamber of your heart."—S. S. Classmate.

Christmas Time.

I FEEL so happy I cannot keep still!
Just one more day and 'twill be Christmas day,
And all the house is full of secrets now
And everybody whispers what they say.

When I go in the door, unless I kneel,
Or rattle with my hand upon the latch,
Mamma hides something underneath her chair
And Auntie jumps up, something else to snatch.

John's got a ball for Bess, and yesterday
He let me bounce it on the playroom floor,
And how we laughed when Bess came running up
To ask about the racket at the door.

I've made a heart-shaped pin-ball for papa,
And Auntie's book-mark now at last is done;
She has not seen it and she cannot guess
What I have for her—O it is such fun.

To-night, when nurse went down to get our tea,
I watched the man lighting the lamps below,
And as they twinkling up the long, long street,
Like a procession of stars down in the snow,

When jingle, jingle, straight up to our door
Came through the dusk a horse and wagon too,
A man jumped out with bundles in his arms
And to the stairtop all we children flew;

Then Jennie took them in, but ere we saw,
Mamma ran up the stairs and drove us back,
But Bob said he was sure he saw a sled
When, naughty boy, he peeped out through the crack!

To-morrow night I shall not go to sleep,
But watch the chimney, Santa Claus to see,
I think he is papa, but now he lives
In the spare room, and Auntie keeps the key,

And all the bundles Jennie puts in there—
To-morrow how the bells will ring all day!
O dear! how I do wish Christmas would come,
And Santa Claus, and never go away

—Lilla C. Perry

MIND your tongue! Don't let it speak nasty, cruel, unkind, or wicked words.

Star of the East.

BY MRS. L. V. HAULMAN.

Star of the East! thy radiance gleams
Adown the solemn years to-day;
As when his word first gave thy beams
To guide upon their joyful way
The *Magi* from a distant land
Across the deserts burning sand.

Star of the East! thy fires yet glow
As glowed they on that solemn night
When shepherds worshipped, bending low,
And far the city lay, a-light
With thy soft beams, whose touch did fret
Each sacred spire and minaret.

Star of the East! thy crimson ray
Hath pierced the gloom of troubled years
Undimmed; along thy shining way
The flower of love and faith appears.
Touched with thy glow the old year dies,
Bathed in thy light the new shall rise.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, DECEMBER 25, 1886.

\$250,000
FOR MISSIONS
FOR THE YEAR 1887.

WE bid our readers herewith a merry Christmas. Let the day, in every home and in every heart, be one of gladness. Let gladness reign in the domestic joys that mark the day, in the giving forth of gifts and good wishes, the good wishes as acceptable as the gifts. Let gladness reign in the ministering to those whose lives are narrow and hard, especially to those children to whom it is one of the very few bright days of the year. Let gladness reign in the thought pre-eminently of him whom the day commemorates, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, born a human child in Bethlehem of Judea. For all our joys must trace their roots back to the manger cradle, all our best hopes and highest anticipations must brighten themselves in the light that shone there.

CHRISTMAS ALL THE YEAR.

A POST has sung about the happy Christmas time:

"The poor will many a care forget;
The debtor think not of his debt;
But as they each enjoy their cheer,
Wish it were Christmas all the year."

Christmas is of all seasons the time of good cheer; the time of hearty, loving thought for one another; the time of giving and forgiving, and in this sweet and real sense it may, and should, last all the year.

Shall it not be so with our young readers? Resolutions, however good they may be, will not be of much use, may be, but the Christ of the Christmas stands ready to be with us all the year round, and he can make us thoughtful; he can so really give himself to us that we shall love to give cheer and help to each other; he can make it easy to forgive, because he forgives much. Let us have the dear Christ in our hearts all the year, and then we shall have the Christmas spirit all the year, since

"The star that shines in Bethlehem
Shines still, and shall not cease;
And we listen still to the tidings
Of glory and of peace."

NEW CHRISTMAS BOOKS.

THE Christmas books become hand-somer every year. We thought that the enterprising Worthington Publishing Company had last year reached the perfection of handsome books for the little folk. But this year they have surpassed themselves. The following books are really works of art, and instead of the jingling "Mother Goose" rhymes, we have simple and dainty poems, which, with the pictures, will refine and cultivate the taste of the young readers fortunate enough to become the possessors of these books.

The first one we notice is "From Meadow-Sweet to Mistletoe," by Mary A. Lathbury—an elegant large quarto, with numerous beautiful fine pictures. Price \$2.50. Both pictures and poems are by the accomplished young lady, whom thousands of Chautauquans will remember as the writer of several ringing Chautauquan songs. Each double page contains on the right hand the picture of some natural object, flowers, or birds, or butterflies, and on the left a charming little picture allegory, which is described in such verses as all young people will love. The pictures are produced by photogravure process on a tinted ground—very graceful and elegant. We are especially charmed with that of the babes in a shell sailing o'er the wide, wide sea, and that entitled "Angels."

Another beautiful book is "Christmas Elves; or, The Day Fairies," by Agnes Carr Sage. It is a somewhat smaller quarto of 128 pages. Price \$1.75. It tells how the fairies, Monday, Tuesday, and the rest, came to the little lame Lisa Kinkle, and told her wonderful stories that beguiled the weariness

of the sick girl's imprisonment. It is intended for younger children than either the last or next mentioned book, and the pretty illuminated cover and droll pictures will fascinate the little folk.

"Under Blue Skies," by Mrs. S. J. Brigham, is another dainty book of poetry with numerous coloured pictures. The blending of flower life and child life in both pictures and poems is very gracefully done. Price \$2.00.

For older readers we have from the same House a stout octavo of 350 pages, entitled "How? or, Spare Hours Made Profitable for Boys and Girls." By Kennedy Holbrook. Price \$2.00. It is intended not merely for Christmas time, but for spare hours all the year round. It tells ingenious boys and girls how to make all manner of toys and puzzles and

games; how to perform simple experiments, and the like. The following may serve as specimens of the many things young folks are taught how to do:—to make Christmas presents—a large variety; to make leather work, and papier mache and repoussé work; to make and stock an aquarium; to make a camera obscura, a panorama, a windmill, a yacht, a boomerang, an Æolian harp, etc.; to make and operate simple electrical apparatus, and a hundred things besides. Numerous pictures explain just how it is done. The book will develop the inventive genius and constructive skill of any boy or girl, and will make them familiar with the laws of nature and principles of mechanics.

These books are all published by the Worthington Co., New York, and will be sent post paid for the above marked prices by William Briggs: Methodist Publishing House, Toronto.

A CHRISTMAS-GREETING.

WHILE the bells ring out notes sweeter and grander than on other days, while songs are merrier and thrill with a richer music, while hearts beat quicker and pulses throb with a warmer glow, while all the world feels the impulse of a new and bounding gladness, we join our voice in the general jubilation, and wish to all our readers the merriest, gladdest Christmas they have ever known. May the thought of the blessed Christ-child in the manger, whose birth into the world enkindled the angelic rapture, awaken every heart to gratitude and loftiest praise.



A REAL CHRISTMAS.

ALL the children, as they passed Mr. Christian's shop, stopped and looked at the array of good things arranged in fancy boxes, and especially at the row of Christmas-trees standing outside on the pavement.

"That's mine," said little Jenny Paradine, pointing to one at the end of the row.

"Ah, that's yours, is it?" said the grocer, Mr. Christian himself, who happened to be leaning against the door-way.

"It's neither too big nor too little," said Jenny; "and it's all roundy, and so green! Yes, that's the one I'll take."

"I suppose I am to keep it for you, eh?" said Mr. Christian. "You are not going to take it back with you!"

"No, sir," said Jenny, politely. "I'll take it the day before Christmas, sir. Phil will come for it, if I ask him. And by that time all the things will have grown out on it, I suppose."

"Grown out on it?" said Mr. Christian questioningly. "What do you mean by that, eh?"

"Why the dolls and the candies and toys and cakes," said Jenny, not at all abashed by the fact that the other children had gone on, and that she was left to talk to Mr. Christian alone. "There's one in a toy-store down the street—it's just covered!"

"Bless the child!" said Mr. Christian, looking at her in amazement. "So you think the things grow on the trees, do you? Well, well!"

"They grow on in a night," said

(Continued on sixth page.)



"And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds." Luke 2: 16-17.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.

Jenny, mysteriously, getting nearer to the tall grocer. "All of a sudden the tree gets bright—O so bright and shining! and then the presents grow out. I've dreamed it just like that, and Phil says it really happens."

"There, there, said Mr. Christian, hastily, as a customer came in, "run away, child; I've no time to talk to you."

"But you'll keep my tree for me," said Jenny, lingering.

"O yes, I'll keep it—till some one buys it," he added under his breath, but Jenny did not hear that. She tripped down the street, quite content and happy, and full of the good news to tell some one.

There was no one to tell it to but Phil. Phil was the pea-nut boy at the corner. He took his meals at Mrs. Paradine's, and Jenny loved him very much. Jenny was only six, and Phil was fourteen, a big, strong boy, who many a time had taken Jenny up in his arms and carried her, when her round, fat legs were tired of toddling up and down the uneven pavement. Many a time, too, on cold winter days, had Phil tucked her down into the corner between the wall and the warm pea-nut roaster, where, covered up to her nose with an old shawl, she had watched the busy throng of people pass by. Jenny's mother was always out at day's working, and there were no brothers and sisters for her to stay with. She was big enough now to go to school, when her mother had time to patch her clothes so that she was fit to be seen, but the most of her time was passed with Phil.

"I'm to have a real Christmas this year, Phil!" cried Jenny, running up to him. "A real one, like what you've told me about! My tree is at Mr. Christian's, waiting for the things to grow on it!"

"Did he say so?" asked Phil, turning his round, good-natured face away from the apples he was polishing on the sleeve of his coat, and looking kindly down on Jenny.

"He said he'd keep it for me," said Jenny. "Such a pretty one, Phil! But you're to go Christmas-eve and fetch it home!"

"Well, that beats all," said Phil. "I never know people to give 'em away before, though to be sure they gives the presents off the tree, and that ain't much different."

"Never mind, this year I'll have my tree," said Jenny, brightly; and then she turned the pea-nut roaster two or three times, and ran home.

Every day after that, when Jenny passed Mr. Christian's grocery, she stopped to see if her tree was safe. Sometimes she saw Mr. Christian himself, and smiled up at him confidently. When she thought nobody saw, she touched the tree, and put her hand lovingly over its prickly green branches, and sometimes she kissed it. Nobody knew how she loved it, for she only talked about her love for it to the tree itself, and she thought that it under-

stood her, and was almost alive. One by one the other overgreens were sold; and two days before Christmas, Jenny's tree remained there alone.

"To-morrow it will be mine!" said Jenny to herself, and she went back two or three times that afternoon to look at it. The last time, she saw a cart backed up to the sidewalk, and Mr. Christian lifting something green into it. Jenny ran, with a beating heart and a wild sense of fear. Could it be her Christmas-tree that was being taken away? The cart was driving off as she reached the spot, but not before she saw that her fears were realized.

"Oh, my tree!" she cried; "my own dear tree! It's going, it's going! O bring it back, bring it back!" She fell into such bitter crying and sobbing that the passers-by stopped and turned to look at her, as she went flying up the middle of the street, over the slippery cobblestones, through mud and blackened snow, among all the carts and waggons, after the cart that held her tree.

"Is the child crazy?" said a gruff voice beside her; and a long arm reached out, encircled her, and lifted her back to the sidewalk again. The arm gave her a shake as it set her down on her feet. "I'll have you arrested if you run in the streets like that. Do you want to be killed? Good-for-nothing young ones, let loose to get into no end of mischief, and break their precious necks, and me to blame for it of course! Ain't there no one to look after you?"

"I'll look after her," said Phil, taking Jenny from the big policeman. "Come, Jen." He took the poor, panting, sobbing little thing up in his arms, and patted her round, tear-stained cheek tenderly. Phil would have liked to cry too, but he was too big. But his heart swelled as he went past the shops, with Jenny still in his arms, and saw the windows so gay with pretty things, and people crowding in and out the doors, buying presents, heaps of presents, for the children at home.

"Christmas for everybody!" he said to himself, with a thrill of bitterness. "It's for rich people, like everything else." Then something came over him that warmed his heart—perhaps because Jenny lay so near it—and he thought: "Love isn't only for rich people, any way. And he was poor that they tell about on Christmas day."

"Now you just stop crying, Jen," he said. "I'm just going to make you have a Christmas any way!"

"You can't," said Jenny, wearily. "I haven't any tree!"

"O we'll get it some way," said Phil, who didn't in the least know how, but who felt as if he could fight lions.

When they reached the tall tenement-house they were met by Mrs. Paradine at the top of the long dark stairway.

"Bless my lamb, what's been bothering of you!" she asked, as she put

her arms around Jenny, and kissed her.

"It was my tree!" said Jenny, with a gasp of remembrance. "They took it away."

"Ah, to be sure," said Mrs. Paradine.

"And her heart it was just about broken," explained Phil; "but we're going to make it all right. You naver't got such a thing as a nice evergreen tree about here, Mrs. Paradine, have you?"

"Eh, what?" said Mrs. Paradine, with such a start that Phil fairly jumped too. "Why," she continued, more calmly, "you can see for yourself, without asking me silly questions like that. Sit down and eat your supper, both of you, and talk afterward."

They obeyed, but Phil ate his meal absent-mindedly, with his eyes roving around in every corner of the small, clean room. All of a sudden he sprang up. "I've got it, Jenny," he cried. "It's the broom! And the old knot-hole in the little table that I've had my eyes on every day this blessed year—why 'twas made for it."

Phil pulled the little table from the corner, Jenny in a fine state of excitement meanwhile, and in a twinkling the broom-handle was stuck through the hole, and bound fast with a rope, and propped up with a flat-iron. "Now you just wait!" said Phil, and ran off, to return again with two apples, a small toy elephant, and some sprigs of holly.

"I bought the elephant and the apples myself," he said in answer to Jenny's gratified cry; "and the green stuff I picked out of an ash-barrel. Now ain't this a Christmas?"

"Yes!" cried Jenny. "And we'll put my old, old dolly on the tree too, for Christmas-trees always have dollies on them. Let me put something on myself, Phil!"

"Well, you stick this holly in," said Phil, good-naturedly, putting a block of wood under her feet to make her a little higher. "Are you satisfied now, Jenny?" he asked.

"Yes, most," said Jenny. "It does make it like Christmas, doesn't it? but I'd like to call up all the children in the street below, and give 'em things off my tree."

"They wouldn't go round," said Phil, shaking his head.

"You let it be," said Mrs. Paradine. "I heard once of a tree made some like that, and by morning—Christmas morning, mind you—it had grown from floor to ceiling, and was covered with shiny things and toys till you couldn't number 'em."

"But it couldn't happen really," said Phil.

"Well," said Mrs. Paradine, "that's neither here nor there. Do as I bid you, Phil and Jenny. Good-night, and a merry Christmas to you."

Jenny had the strangest dreams that night. She thought the room was all full of branches, that grew thicker and

deeper and greener every minute, and there was a rushing sound like wings. And very, very early in the morning when it was still dark, Jenny got up in her bare feet, and crept across the bare floor toward her tree. The sun had not yet risen, but the light of the street-lamp fell in through the window and shined on Jenny's round, wonder-stricken eyes—what! A tree that reached from floor to ceiling; a beautiful, glittering thing, in whose deep greenness lingered the scent of the fresh woods, and whose branches stretched out a welcome to her, a welcome laden with silver and gold and the brightness of the very stars themselves.

"O my dear Lord Jesus Christ!" said Jenny, under her breath. "It must be your very own tree that you've sent me yourself." She crept forward to touch it, and prove that it was real and no dream, and then she gave a loud cry: "Mother, mother, O come! O Phil, get up and come! and everybody, everybody come! For here's my tree."

They all came—Patty and Polly, Ned and little Mike, from the floor below, and the six Finnertys from the floor above, and the mothers and fathers too. And Mrs. Paradine was laughing and crying together, and trying hard to answer all the questions that poured in upon her.

"It was a young lady," she said, "that came here yesterday, and said she had been watching Jenny and Phil, unbeknownst to them, and had seen Jenny's taking on about a tree at the grocery-store, and heard her talking about it when she thought no one was by. And she said she was rich, and had no one to please but herself, and she would like to make some one happy at this blessed time, and she was around looking for places to suit, and she thought this was one of them. 'And,' she says, 'the tree will be here in half an hour, if you've no objection, and a man later on to tie the things on it, and I wish you a merry Christmas, ma'am.' And she shook my hand and smiled up into my face, and before I could say a word she was gone. And the tree came, and afterward, when all of you had gone to bed, a man to dress it; but when I asked him the young lady's name, he only shook his head, and said he had orders not to tell—that she liked to do good like that, and no one the wiser for it."

"She was just an angel," said Phil, drawing a long breath; "a regular-built angel; that's what she was! Here, you stupid little beggars, what are you all standing gaping at that tree for? Don't you know it's Christmas morning, and we've got a real merry Christmas for once in our lives! There's turkeys under that tree, and pies behind 'em, enough for all of us. Just you all take hands and go round that tree, and sing 'Christ was born on Christmas-day' over and over again, as if you meant it, for we've got a real Christmas at last!"—Selected.

Willie's Christmas Prayer.

It was the night before Christmas, and golden-haired Willie knelt down to his evening prayer. He'd been thinking all day—now don't call him silly— Of old Santa Claus driving a pair of the cunningest reindeer, with toys a big sleigh full, and smiles on his broad face bewitching and playful, swooping down through the keen snowy air.

And while "Now I lay me" he whispered in fancy, He saw the bright vision again. Toys, reindeer, old Santa Claus, all at a glance he recalled as he ended; and then, with troops of glad hopes through his little brain flocking, He prayed, "And let Santa Claus fill my stockings Just as full as he can. Amen."

Jumping quick into bed, the dear little fellow In a jiffy was sound asleep, When, lo! all at once a clear light, soft and mellow, Began through the chamber to creep. But Willie saw nothing save piles of nice candies, Drums, trumpets, tin soldiers, and queer jack-a-dandies, That danced through his slumbers deep.

Yet still, when the beautiful light, like a glory, Fell full on his face as he dreamed, He saw from the fire-place, as in the old story, Dear Santa Claus come—so it seemed; And he laughed—in his sleep—as the funny old chappie, So round and so rosy, so jolly and happy, Upon him with gentle smile beamed.

But when, with a wink, the dear, merry old fellow, With hair and long beard white as wool, All sorts of nice things—red, green, blue and yellow— Began from his pockets to pull, Willie woke from sheer joy, and, behold! it was morning, And there hung his stockings, the chimney adorning, And some one had crammed them choke full.

DON'T LET IT PASS.

Don't let the old year pass away without a direct appeal to your scholars upon the subject of their personal duty to God. This is the month when the Christmas-glory descends again from the skies, and covers the hill-tops of Bethlehem. Heaven reaches down to earth. The mind of youth is tender, like the soil softened by the rains of spring. Then the old year is about to give way to the new. It is a moment when the soul retravels the paths of the past, and there is regret for wanderings. It is a time when the soul, confronting the future, with all its possibilities of loss, trial, sickness, and death, shrinks from this unknown country. Heaven comes near, and beckons with its lights, while earth has its wakings. At this impressive juncture of God's providences, at this turning-point in the way, with wise, tender, faithful appeal, you may meet your class. Your words may be like the angels meeting them in blessing.—*S. S. Journal.*

SAY JUST WHAT YOU WANT.

BROTHERN asking renewal of grants of papers for poor schools will confer a favour by stating just what are the needs of the school, and what they can raise toward the grant. Letters frequently come containing money and saying, Please continue same grant as last year, but giving no date nor any clue by which that order can be found. Then, though this is his very busiest season, the Secretary has to look over the record of all the grants for the year, or to search through several hundred names in several voluminous mailing sheets with great loss of time, where a line or two from the brother asking the grant, and who knows all the facts of the case, would save all this time and trouble. Brethren, please say just what you want now, and don't make us search out the record of what you wanted a year ago.

WHAT DO YOU READ?

The world is full of books and papers of all sorts and kinds. Especially do story books and story papers abound. The boy or girl who has a taste for reading can easily indulge it, for reading matter is so abundant and so cheap.

But this, while it looks like a great good, may prove to be a great evil. Young folks whose experience in life is small may easily get false and wrong views through the books or papers they read. How often we read in the daily papers of boys who have run away from home, imagining they were going to be very brave and romantic like some young heroes of whom they had read in their dime novels! Now and then, too, the case of some poor, misguided girl comes to light, who has been led astray by the false views of life she has gathered from her reading.

"What do you read?" then, becomes a question of importance to all our boys and girls. Many of the illustrated papers and books sold at the news-stands are thoroughly bad.

Never, never, never read one, without asking some good friend to examine it. Never, never read a book which you feel like keeping out of sight. There are plenty of good, pure books, which will make you wiser and better; plenty of books full of life and interest, which will teach you what true life is, and which will speak to you in good English, without introducing the slang of the streets.

"Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, think on these things."

The whole duty of man is embraced in the two principles of abstinence and patience; temperance in prosperity, and courage in adversity.

AFLICTIONS are the medicine of the mind. If they are not palatable let it suffice that they are wholesome. It is not required in physic that it should please, but heal.

Tim and the Christmas Carols.

BY MRS. LUCY MARIAN BLINN.

The bells of Old Trinity merrily rung, Swung and rung in the belfry high; In the choir below the choristers sung, "The Christ is come; let your tears be dry."

Outside in the darkness, all alone, Rubbing his poor little shivering feet, Making a bed of the pitiless stone, The beggar-boy Tim heard the message sweet.

The clamouring bells, with their noisy joy, The voice of the singers, clear and loud, Fall on the ears of the drowsy boy; He rose and followed the moving crowd.

He stopped in the door of the beautiful aisle, And whispered low with a frightened air, His blue eyes wandering the while, "Is Christ, the lover of children, there?"

"If he is, will you tell him that poor little Tim is waiting outside in the cold and storm, And would like to come in, if he may, to him? It's so lovely in there; so light and warm."

The sweet bells changed with melodious din, And the singers caught up the music wild; "Open your hearts and take him in; The Lord of glory comes—a child!"

The melody ceased; the bells' glad sound Melted and died in the starlight dim; But the dear Christ-child had sought and found A home in a heart for poor little Tim!

In addition to the full announcement for the Magazine for 1887 given in another column, we have received the promise of a series of papers, by the Rev. Geo. G. Bond, M.A., ex-President of the Newfoundland Conference, entitled "Vagabond Vignettes," being sketches of places seen in Belgium and Germany during a recent tour, as well as some others in the United Kingdom. Also "Stray Sundays," papers on preachers heard and services attended abroad. Also some character sketches of Newfoundland Methodism, entitled, "Captain Sam's Two Easter Sundays."

Brother Bond will be remembered as the author of that charming story of out-port Methodism in Newfoundland, "Skipper George Notman of Caplin Bight," and all who read it will be glad to hear from its accomplished author again.

Shoe or Stocking?

In Holland, children set their shoes, This night, outside the door; These wooden shoes Knecht Clobes sees, And tills them from his store.

But here we hang our stockings up On handy hook or nail; And Santa Claus, when all is still, Will plump them, without fail.

Speak out, you "Sober-sides," speak out, And let us hear your views; Between a stocking and a shoe, What do you see to choose?

One instant pauses Sober-sides, A little sigh to fetch— "Well, seems to me a stocking's best, For wooden shoes won't stretch!" —*Edith M. Thomas.*

The Angels' Song.

It came upon the midnight clear, That glorious song of old, From angels bending near the earth To touch their harps of gold: "Peace on the earth, goodwill to men From heaven's all-gracious King!" The world in solemn stillness lay To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come With peaceful wings unfurled; And still their heavenly music floats O'er all the weary world; Above its sad and lowly plains They bend on hovering wing, And ever o'er its babel sounds The blessed angels sing.

But with the woes of sin and strife The world has suffered long; Beneath the angel-strain have rolled Two thousand years of wrong; And man, at war with man, hears not The love-song which they bring, O hush the noise, ye men of strife, And hear the angels sing!

And ye, beneath life's crushing load Whose forms are bending low, Who toil along the climbing way With painful steps and slow, Look now! for glad and golden hours Come swiftly on the wing. Oh! rest beside the weary road, And hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on, By prophet-bard foretold, When with the ever-circling years Comes round the age of gold; When peace shall over all the earth Its ancient splendours fling, And the whole world send back their song Which now the angels sing. —*Edmund H. Sears.*

MEASURING THE HEIGHT OF A TREE.

THERE is a very simple way of measuring the height of a tree, which can be practised by anyone on a sunny day or in bright moonlight. All the apparatus that is necessary is a straight stick, of any length. Draw a circle with a radius (half the diameter) of a little less than the length of the stick, say two inches from its end, and moving the other end around, making the circle with a knife or a chip. Then place the stick in the ground exactly in the centre of the circle, perfectly upright, and press it down until the height of the stick is exactly the same as the radius of the circle.

When the end of the shadow of the stick exactly touches the circle, then also the shadow of the tree will be exactly in length the same measurement as its height. Of course, in such a case, the sun will be at an exact angle of 45 degrees.

Measurements of this kind can be best effected in the summer, when the sun is powerful, and has reached to a good height in the heavens, and when the trees are clothed with living green, so as to cast a dense shadow.

To many to whom this idea may not have occurred, it might be made annually a matter of interest thus on warm summer days to take the height of prominent trees, and so to compare growth from year to year.—*Youth's Companion.*

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

* B.C. 4004.] LESSON I. [Jan. 2.

THE BEGINNING

Gen. 1. 26-31, & 2. 1-3. Commit to mem. vs. 1. 3.

GOLDEN TEXT.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Gen. 1. 1.

OUTLINE.

- 1. The Creator. 3. The Creation.

TIME.—B.C. 4004. Creation.

PLACE.—As yet all is uncertain and shadowy. Man is just made a living soul. Before him is the boundless creation. The spot of his habitation is too small to consider in the midst of the infinity about him.

EXPLANATIONS.—Let us make man—Many think that this is the earliest Scripture warrant for the doctrine of the Trinity, and that "us" means Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In our image—Not with a physical likeness, but likeness in character and spiritual powers; and chiefly with the endowment that distinguishes man from all other animal creations, the freedom of the will. Have dominion . . . over all the earth—Man is often called the "lord of creation." Here is the warrant for the title. The gift has never been revoked. He rested on the seventh day—He ceased from his creative work after the sixth great period had seen man produced as the crown of creation. It is still the seventh day or great period, since the beginning of which there has been no addition to created existence. Blessed the seventh day—This, probably, shows that God commanded the observance of one day in seven as a rest-day from the very beginning of human life on the earth.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

What do you learn concerning God's estimate of man—

- 1. From the account of his origin? 2. From the work given him to do? 3. From the rest-day provided for him?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What is said in the GOLDEN TEXT? "In the," etc. 2. In whose image was man created? In the image of God. 3. What did God give to man? His blessing. 4. What did God say to the first man and woman? Be fruitful and multiply. 5. What was the condition of the world when God first created it? It was very good. 6. What great truth do we learn from the creation? The goodness and power of God.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The eternal God.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

1. How did all things come into being? By the will of God; who created all things and brought all into their present order. [Gen. i. 1; Psalm xxxiii. 9; Heb. xi. 3.]

B.C. 4004.] LESSON II. [Jan. 9.

SIN AND DEATH.

Gen. 3. 1-6, 17-19. Commit to mem. vs. 17-19.

GOLDEN TEXT.

By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin. Rom. 5. 12.

OUTLINE.

- 1. Sin. 2. Death.

TIME.—The earliest ages of the race. Man's story has begun. How long after creation, we cannot tell. It is enough to know it was the time in man's history when his free-will made its first wrong choice, and began a struggle for the whole race.

PLACE.—"A garden eastward in Eden." Much has been written as to where this was. No one knows, but most writers and students think it was near the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

EXPLANATIONS.—The Serpent—Satan in the form of a serpent. "Almost throughout the whole Oriental world the serpent was used as an emblem of the evil principle." The woman—The only woman then in the

* This date is from Usher's chronology. It does not mean that we believe it to be the absolute date of the creation, but it is simply used as convenient in arranging facts relatively.

world, Eve, the helpmeet for the man. Yea, hath God said—A question, as if the asker were in doubt as to whether God had so said. But the question shows that he knew that man was on trial. Eye shall be opened—An appeal to the curiosity of human nature. A suggestion that God had not given or shown them all that there was to be had or seen. Be as gods—Better, "be like God," that is, as wise in all respects as God himself. Knowing good and evil—Man came by listening to the words of Satan to what otherwise he would never have known—the difference between good and evil. Doing the evil brought the knowledge. Satan spoke so much truth. Cursed is the ground—Not cursed is man; there is a gleam of mercy in this, for the serpent was cursed directly. In the sweat of thy face—Labour, ordained by God and man's blessing, and a thing needful for him, is now to be in weariness and sorrow. And unto dust . . . return—An absolute picture, long before there was any death, of what should happen when man's body should die.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

What are we taught in this lesson—

- 1. About the origin of evil? 2. About the nature of sin? 3. About the cause of death?

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THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Through whom did sin enter into the world? Through Satan. 2. In what form did he appear to Adam and Eve? In the form of a serpent. 3. To what sin did he tempt them? To eat the forbidden fruit. 4. How does the GOLDEN TEXT state the results of the first sin? "By one," etc. 5. What does this lesson teach us? The danger of disobeying God.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The fall of man.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

3. When did God create man? After the creation of the earth, God made man to be the chief of his creatures upon it.

Isaiah xlv. 11, 12. Thus saith the Lord, . . . I have made the earth, and created man upon it.

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