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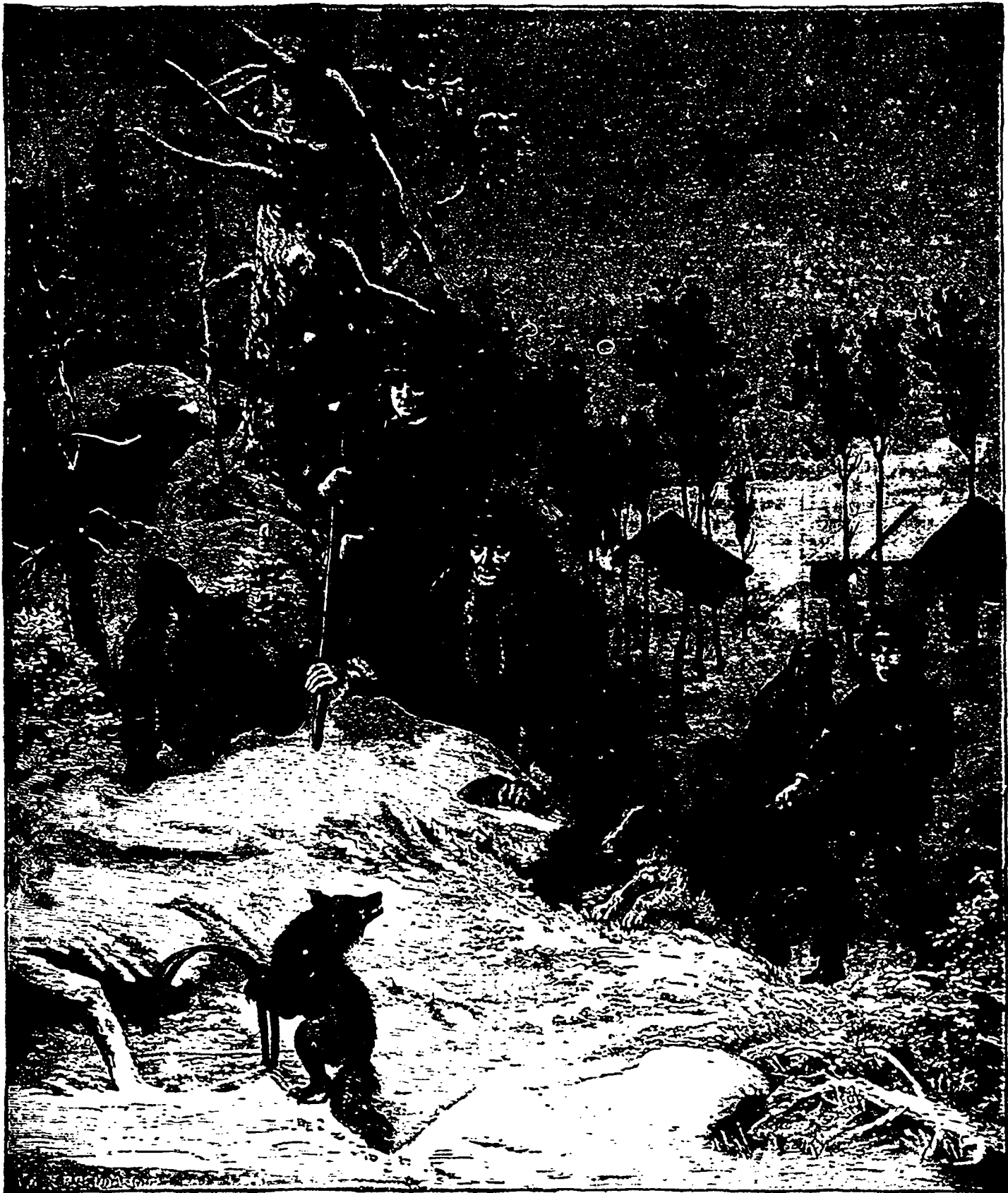
THE SABBATH LEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SER. 3.—VOL. VI.

TORONTO, JANUARY 9 1886.

No. 1



WINTER IN NORWAY.—(SEE NEXT PAGE.)

NEW YEAR'S HYMN.

“**F**EAR that lies before us,
What shall thy record be,
As thy short months roll o'er us,
And swift thy moments flee?
Now thou art fair and spotless
As childhood's opening hour,
Thy bud so pure and stainless,
Say! what shall be thy flower?”

“Thou bring'st now hope to cheer us,
New visions fair and bright,
Of higher aims and conquests,
And purer, clearer light,
New strength for fresh endeavour,
New purpose, firm and high,
New dreams of holy pleasures
Which wait us in the sky.”

“So, year by year, in mercy,
To us it hath been given,
To climb from our past failures
Up one step nearer heaven.
To strive each year our journey
Upon our pilgrim way
That each new fair to-morrow
Be better than to-day.”

“Lord, grant us grace to serve Thee
In serving each and all;
Our hearts keep warm and trustful,
Protect us lest we fall;
And if this year's last moments
On earth we may not see,
We know no harm will reach us,
For we shall be with Thee.”

WINTER IN NORWAY.

This is a characteristic Norwegian scene. During the long cold winter, wolves and foxes prowl around the settlement to such a degree that the Government offers a reward for their heads. The people, therefore, try in every way to catch or kill them. One of the most successful ways is by means of a trap, concealed beneath the snow, as in the picture. Poor fox, I feel sorry for him, beset by dog, and trap, and gun, and men, and boys. In the background are seen the queer barns, or stabburs, as they call them. A magnificent book on Norway, with elegant illustrations, has just been published by the London Tract Society. The editor of the PLEASANT HOURS has succeeded in getting several of these cuts, and will print them in an article on Norway and its People in an early number of the *Methodist Magazine*.

FIRST STEPS.

How nice it was in the baby to begin to walk on New Year's Day! The children said that to one another a great many times. “So cunning,” and “So queer,” and “Just as though he knew it was the day for beginning things.”

“Why?” asked Nell, “what do you begin on New Year's Day?”
“O, resolutions and things,” Josie said. “I always decide on New Year's to take new starts, and be different, you know.”

“And the day after New Year's you take to break the resolutions, don't you?” The children laughed, but the mother said: “Don't make light of Josie's resolutions; it is a great deal better to try, even if you fail, than it is to think nothing about it and make no effort to do right.”

She sighed as she spoke. There was a shadow in this mother's life that made her end many things with a sigh.

“He copied father!” said Josie, going back to the baby. “Didn't you notice how earnestly he watched this morning, when father was pacing off the length of the library? Little Will looked at his feet all the time, and then he crept up by a chair and tried

it. I believe that was the first time he thought of walking.”

Then they laughed again, but the mother sighed, and the father, who was holding out his hands to the baby, looked at her gravely.

“Mother has her sober look on,” said Fannie. “What are you thinking mother? That baby will walk into mischief as fast as he can?”

“No,” she said, smiling now. “I was only thinking how sure the little sons and daughters are to copy father and mother, and how careful we ought to be to take the right steps.”

Father did not stay long, after that. The children gathered around him, begging that he would come home early to let them have a nice New Year's evening together, but he did not promise, and after he had kissed them all, and gone away, the mother looked graver than before.

“I don't like New Year's Day,” said Josie, “and I don't think men ought to go calling without their wives. When I have a wife I will take her along.”

And then the mother felt that Josie was growing old enough to understand the meaning of the shadow in their home. New Year's Day, and New Year's calls were temptations to her husband. He came home late, and gloomy, if not positively cross, and his breath smelled strongly of wine, and he spent the next day in bed, with a throbbing headache. It was not simply once a year that these experiences came, either; they were growing more frequent of late. Would the sons in this home copy their father's steps? This was the heavy shadow that so often darkened the mother's heart, and was already creeping over the children.

The New Year's dinner was on the table—an extra dinner, for the shadow on the mother's heart was not allowed to show much in her life—and baby was fastened into his high chair, and the noisy merry group were about to sit down, when their father's step was heard in the hall.

Mother's face grew pale. Father never dined with them on this day; his round of calls was not completed in time, and besides, he always stayed away from the children's eyes when he had been drinking wine. Had the dreaded hour come when he had fallen too low to remember this?

She half arose to go and meet him, then sat down again. He came into the dining-room, steady step, clear eyes, smiling face. The glad children fluttered around him. “Did you come home to take dinner with us, father?” and “O, father! are you going to stay?” This was a treat, indeed! Business held him during the usual week days, and fashion on New Year's, so the dinner-table saw little of this father. “I've come to stay,” he said, kissing his wife, and then the baby. He left a glad light in the mother's eyes, for there was no smell of wine about him.

“Well, sir,” he said to the baby, “have you forgotten how to walk, old fellow?” Then the eager children:

“O, father, he has been practising all day. And we all think he is copying you, for he tries to take long steps, just as you did this morning.”

“I must take care how I step,” said the father, and he looked over at his wife. “Shall I teach him to copy father?” he asked her.

But she could not answer, and her

eyes filled with tears. O, if she only dared to have her babies copy him in all things!

“I have brought you a New Year's present,” he said, and he leaned forward and pushed across the table a slip of paper.

“Is it a check,” said the eager children, peeping from every side.

“Yes,” he said, smiling; “it is a check on a Resolution Bank, and I mean to keep it honoured. I've been copying Josie to-day, and making resolutions. Josie, my boy, we won't break them to-morrow, nor the next day, will we? If the baby is going to copy us, we must be careful.”

Then the mother, through her tears, read the check, and said “Thank God!”

I, the undersigned, do solemnly promise never to taste again anything that can intoxicate, so help me God.
Signed this New Year's Day, 1884.

JOSIE WARD HOWE

“O, but father, said Josie, “perhaps you will have to taste it, for medicine, you know.”

And when the mother heard his decided answer, “I never will, my boy,” she said again “Thank God.”

So the baby was not the only one who took a first step that day.—*The Pansy*.

CHARMING GIRLS.

The most charming woman in Queen Victoria's court, a few years ago, was one whose features were homely and whose eyes were crossed. The secret of her attraction lay in a certain perpetual freshness, in her dress, turn of mind and her temper.

Jane Welsh Carlyle, when an old, sickly, ugly woman, could so charm men, that a stranger meeting her accidentally in a stage coach followed her for miles, post haste, to return a parasol which she had dropped. The charm lay in her bright vivacity of manner, and the keen sympathy which shone through her features.

Margaret Fuller also possessed this magnetic sympathy, in spite of her enormous egotism. Men and women, the poor and the rich, felt themselves drawn to open their hearts and pour out their troubles to her. Yet Margaret was an exceptionally homely woman.

The popular belief among young girls is that it is only a pretty face which will bring to them the admiration and love which they naturally crave. No books, it is said, have a larger sale than those written that give rules for beauty, recipes to destroy fat or freckles, and to improve the skin or the figure.

Now, no recipe will change the shape of a nose, or the colour of an eye. But any girl by daily baths, and wholesome food, and by breathing pure air, can render her complexion clear and soft. Her hair, nails and teeth can be daintily kept. Her clothes, however cheap, can be fresh and becoming in colour. She can train her mind, even if of ordinary capacity, to be alert and earnest; and if she adds to these a sincere, kindly, sunny temper, she will win friends and love as surely as if all the fairies had brought gifts at her birth.

But it is no use for a woman whose person is soiled and untidy, and whose temper is selfish and irritable at home, to hope to cheat anybody by putting on fine clothes and a smile for com-

pany. The thick, muddy skin and sour expression will betray her.

“John,” said an artist the other day to a Chinaman who was unwillingly acting as model, “smile. If you don't look pleasant I'll not pay you.”

“No use,” grumbled the washerman. “If Chinaman feels ugly all the time, he looks ugly,” which is true of every other man and woman in the world as well as of John Chinaman.

Hawthorne's weird fancy that our secret weakness or sin should hang like a black veil over our faces between us and other men, is true in fact.

Every hidden propensity or vice, every noble trait or feeling, leaves its marks on the features, the expression, the eyes. Day by day and hour by hour, line after line, here a little and there a little, it is recorded on the face as on the tablet, and when we reach middle age there is the story of our lives plainly written, so that he that runs may read. It is not cosmetics, nor rouge, nor depillatories, girls, that will make your faces as you grow older; but the thoughts and words and deeds that have given you the ugliness of Hecate, or “the lineaments of gospel books.”—*Youth's Companion*.

CONQUEROR'S BAND.

“**T**HE world's a battle-field, boys,
Beyond's the promised land;
The war is all around, boys—
Who'll join the Conqueror's Band?”

There's wrong to trample down, boys,
That right may rule the land;
The trumpet calls to arms, boys—
Who'll join the Conqueror's Band?”

Hearts true as steel we need, boys,
High purpose and strong hand;
Each mind and eye alert, boys—
Who'll join the Conqueror's Band!”

Then if we're true and brave, boys,
The foe will sink as sand,
And high will swell the song, boys,
Led by the Conqueror's Band.

THE TRUE SOLDIER.

THREE boys were talking of the work which they hoped to do when they grew to be men.

Said Harry, “I want to be a doctor, like Uncle George, and help folks to get well when they are sick.”

“I want to be a merchant,” said Arthur, “and have a great store and make myself rich. I can help a great many people if I have plenty of money.”

“I don't want to be a doctor or a merchant,” said Walter. “Let me be a soldier, a real soldier, not a play one?”

Aunt Fanny was standing in the window and heard the talk. She smiled at Walter.

“God grant that you may indeed be a real soldier, my boy,” she said.

“Why, Aunt Fanny! I thought that ladies were always afraid of war,” said Walter.

“The real soldier,” said Aunt Fanny, “will fight with other weapons than guns and swords. He will fight sin and wrong-doing with the weapons which God will give him. He will never run before the enemy, because he will know that God is on his side. He will be brave and strong and true, because he will be sure that the great Captain is looking at him, and is ready to reach out his hand to save him from defeat. Such a soldier I hope you will be.”

THE OLD YEAR.

JUST like an old friend, whom we miss
From his accustomed place,
Another year has passed away,
And we—we miss his face.

‘Tis true he was not always bright—
At times he made us sad;
But then, by God’s most loving will,
More often we were glad.

And, now the year has passed away,
We think—but all in vain—
How many good things we would do
Had we the time again.

We all have wasted precious hours
We might have spent for God;
We know we have not sought to tread
Where Christ our Master trod.

And, looking back through days and months,
If we to self be true,
We can but see that we have done
The things we should not do.

What wonder, then, we grieve awhile,
Now the Old Year is dead!
What wonder that we all lament
The time so quickly sped!

And yet we should not weep or sigh:
The past is past for aye!
But the New Year is ours to use
In better, holier way.

Oh, let us then delay no more,
But use God’s gifts aright;
Not trusting in our feeble strength,
But in the Father’s might!

And then, it may be, when this year
In turn his course hath run,
The still small voice at last may say:
“Well done, brave heart; well done!”

IS THE PILOT AT THE HELM?

‘Twas not long ago that I happened to be at the pier-head, when a vessel, an English bark, was expected to enter the harbour. As I stood among the little knots of sailors, I was rather astonished at the unusual excitement which seemed to pervade them.

“It’s madness, sheer madness!” I heard one weather-beaten old tar say; “he’ll never do it with this sea on.” “What is madness, my friend?” I asked.

“Why, sir, the captain has no pilot on board. He says he can put into port right enough himself, without any help. Look you!” he broke off in great excitement, “she’ll be against the rocks! He no more knows how to take this ere narrow harbour than a baby.”

The sky was lead colour, a high sea was running, the pier loomed dark and gaunt in the waning light. It did, indeed, seem madness at such a time to have attempted to enter without the aid of some one experienced in the peculiarities of the entrance. Yet there stood that too reliant captain, boastfully directing the man at the wheel. And I could picture to myself the sparkle of triumph which, no doubt, deepened in his eye as we watched him pass safely first one dangerous point, and then another.

But the harbour was difficult to make, and a strong east wind was causing a very heavy sea to strike against the pier. Suddenly we saw the bark caught by a huge wave. Losing steerage way she was driven sheer against the solid masonry; then, raising higher on another great sea, she fell violently off, and with a terrific crash dashed bodily on to the jagged rocks outside. All took place with such terrible rapidity that it was some moments before either we or the hapless crew comprehended the danger of her position. Then we perceived that she had received some serious injury;

for she began slowly to keel over. There was a wild hurrying to and fro of the crew, from a dozen voices rose the loud cry, “Help! help!”—for death, in its most appalling form, stared them in the face. Alas for that all too presumptuous confidence! What would not the captain have given now for the assistance he spurned but one short half hour ago! We could hear his voice above the noise of the waves and the crashing of the spars, calling loudly for the life-boat—for anything or any one to come to his aid. With much difficulty he and his men were rescued, and then the devoted vessel was left to go to pieces upon the reefs. A few hours later there was not a trace to be seen of the gallant bark *Stella*, save a few planks and timbers which were ever and anon washed ashore.

How grievous! thought I. All this distress and ruin, all this loss of property and vexation of spirit, all this fear and wild excitement—because the pilot was not on board.

I wended my way home, treading softly; for my mind was busy with the exciting scene I had just witnessed.

As you embark this First of January for another year’s voyage, dear young reader, with God’s help resolve that you will not set sail until you have honestly asked and answered this question: *Have I the Pilot on board?*

To some of you, perhaps, the sea is still smooth; no rude waves leap around you; all is very fair and bright. Then ask the Pilot to come and share the brightness of your voyage. He will make it all the brighter; aye, and he will make the brightness last; for it is he alone in whom is the gladness of everlasting sunshine.

To others, the sea may already be troubled. The waves rise high, the wind blows roughly, dark rocks loom threateningly ahead, trouble and fear have overtaken your fragile little barks. Now is the time to place grateful, loving confidence in his power, his compassion, his guidance, and his protection.

He waits but till you ask him; for one step you take towards him, he will take two; for he loves you with wondrous love.

Then with his dear hand at the helm, with his loving presence by your side, you will have that good thing which I earnestly and lovingly pray may be your glad portion, not this alone, but every succeeding year, and all the year through: A most happy New Year. For happiness comes along with the Pilot at the helm.

PREACH THE GOSPEL.

THE other day a dear little girl with the softest of yellow curls and the sweetest of rosy faces, lifted her blue eyes and looked into mine, while she said, “Won’t you please tell me about Jesus when he was on the earth?”

So I told her one story after another, and at last the beautiful words of our Saviour, just before his ascension, when he told his disciples to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”

“Didn’t you say that all the people who loved Jesus were his disciples?” she said, looking a little puzzled.

“Yes, dear.”

“And the people that love him now are his disciples too, then?”

“Yes, certainly they are.”

“But they don’t all do as Jesus told

them, do they, or else there wouldn’t be so many little heathen children. Why don’t they tell everybody ‘bout Jesus, when he is so good, and told them to?”

“Why, dear, I don’t know,” I said slowly. How could I tell the dear child, with her simple faith and love, that I was afraid it was because they did not care enough for the Lord to heed his command and obey it?

“I should think they would,” she said, and then lifting her eyes up towards the sky, “Oh, I guess Jesus is looking down from heaven to see if they are telling other people ‘bout him, and I wonder what he thinks when he sees they don’t do as he told them to. Don’t you believe he thinks they don’t really love him?”

“Dear child,” I answered, “I am afraid that he does think so, indeed.”

Then I thought within myself of the Saviour’s agony in the garden and on the cross; of the love and yearning in his tender heart for the souls of men; of his sympathy with their sorrow, and the great price which he paid for their redemption.

Then of his command to them to spread his name through all the earth, and the promise that his presence should be with them all through their times and labour for his sake; and I said in my heart:

“Oh little one, your words are true, for it is but the slightest proof we can give of our love and allegiance to Christ, when we obey his command and tell to those around us the joy we ‘have found in believing;’ and, as one of the hearers of God’s Word, extend to them the invitation to ‘come,’ where he shall ‘give them rest;’ and can we say that we love him, and will he own us as his disciples, if selfish even in spiritual things, we do not share with others, the joy which is ours?”

THE BLANK BOOK.

AN old man and a golden-haired boy sat together. A book lay before them. Its binding was bright and new, its pages blank.

“This book is yours,” said the old man; “and each page represents a day. It is for you so to write in it that the book, when full, may not be less fair than it is now with its leaves white and spotless.

The boy took the gift joyfully, confident that it would be better, not worse, for his handiwork.

A year passed away. The old man called for the book. The child came slowly with hanging head, and gave it up reluctantly. Every page was defaced with crooked lines, or smeared with unsightly blots.

“Oan I not rub them out?” said the boy sadly.

The old man shook his head. “Marks made on these pages are indelible,” he said, “they must always remain. But you may try again. See, here is another book.”

The child looked up, and then sighed. “I cannot write well, he said, “unless you guide my hand.”

A book is set before each one of you, boys and girls, and every day you will fill a page. What will you write? Shall selfish thoughts, deceitful words, unkind acts disfigure the pages?

They certainly will, unless you ask him who opens this fresh volume before you to guide your hand.

OLD AND NEW YEAR.

NEW YEAR met me somewhat sad,
Old Year leaves me tired,
Stripped of favourite things I had,
Balked of much I desired;
Yet farther on my road to day,
God willing, farther on my way.

New Year, coming on apace,
What have you to give me?
Bring you peace or bring you strife,
Face me with an honest face.
You shall not deceive me.
Be it good or be it ill, be it what you will,
It needs shall help me on my road,
My rugged way to heaven please God!

THE LANGUAGE OF THE RED INDIANS.

ONE singular fact in the infinite diversity of language. Not only every tribe, but every band, of which there are sometimes fifty in a single tribe, has its own dialect or jargon, perfectly unintelligible to all who do not belong to the band. In all times the Indians have disdained to learn even a few words of an enemy’s language. Stranger yet, the Cheyennes and Arapahoes for three quarters of a century have been firm friends, camping and hunting together and making war upon the same enemies at the same time. The children constantly romp and play together in the common camp. Yet not one in ten of either tribe can hold the most ordinary conversation in the language of the other. Unable to speak each other’s language, the Indians of the West have constructed a wonderful sign-language by which they hold intercourse. Gestures, signs, are more or less natural to every one. Among the plain Indians none have they reached their most wonderful development. So complicated and elaborate is the sign-language, consisting of countless gestures and movements, the slightest variation in which marks wide differences in the meaning, that only a few Indians in a tribe are complete masters of it, and the masses can only use it slightly. The signs do not indicate letters nor words, as with the deaf and dumb, but ideas. There is one sign to indicate hunger, another for “stop talking,” another for summer, and so on infinitely. Yet an expert sign-talker will either make or interpret a long speech, which consists of an infinite number of signs, following each other with lightning like rapidity. Two strange Indians will meet on horseback, each unable to understand a spoken word of the other, and while holding the reins with the left hand will converse for hours with their right, telling stories or relating their experiences without a single misunderstanding.

AN APT ILLUSTRATION.

“BUT, doctor, I must have some kind of stimulant,” cried the invalid, earnestly: “I am so cold, and it warms me.”

“Precisely,” came the doctor’s answer. “See here, this stick is cold”—taking up a stick of wood from the box beside the hearth, and tossing it into the fire. “Now it is warm, but is the stick benefited?”

The sick man watched the wood first send out little puffs of smoke, and then burst into flames, and replied: “Of course not; it is burning itself.”

“And so are you when you warm yourself with alcohol; you are literally burning up the delicate tissues of your stomach and brain.”—Selected.

THE OLD YEAR.

NOTHING year has gone,
With swift and noiseless tread,
Winter and spring have glided on,
Summer and autumn sped—
Each season with its joys and pain;
And they will never come again.

I mourn its wasted time,
If I could live it o'er,
Its sad mistakes I'd try to shun,
Its wrongs would do no more.
But, no; the loss none can repair,
'Tis gone forever, the Old Year.

This only can I do:
Be sorry for the past,
And at my loving Saviour's feet
My weary burden cast.
He will blot out sin's crimson stain,
And strengthen me to try again.

And as a bright New Year
Comes with its hope and joy,
I'll seek to live aright, and all
My hours for God employ;
And this New Year will try to live
That it a record fair may give.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK:
Rev. W. H. WTHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, JANUARY 9, 1886.

\$250,000 FOR MISSIONS.

MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

1. OBJECT—To "preach the Gospel to every creature"
2. FIELD—All the Dominion—Newfoundland—Bermuda—Japan. "The field is the world"
3. OPENINGS—There are urgent calls for more missionaries among the Indians, and in the New Settlements, and Japan.
4. COST—The readjustment of the work consequent upon union, caused an increase in the number of Missions. The effort to sustain the brethren labouring on them, without absolute suffering, has entailed an indebtedness of \$21,000. To meet this year's expenditure—on a very low scale of allowances—an advance of one-third, at least, over last year's givings is imperatively necessary.
In view of all these facts we beseech you
5. GIVE—Cheerfully—Prayerfully—Liberal—"As God hath prospered you."
6. PAY—Promptly (at the Missionary Meeting if possible).—In any case, not later than end of March next.

7. "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"—1 John iii. 17.
One cent a day for each member would yield \$640 000 a year.

OUR SUNDAY-SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS.

THE following letter on this subject has been received:—I have just received some sample Sunday-school papers from our Book-room in Toronto, and a few days previously some samples from an American publication I consider our own papers far superior to the others, both in "make up" and "got up," that is, in the matter they contain, and the material and workmanship of the paper. In the editing of our Sunday-school papers, Dr. Withrow shows his eminent fitness for the position, in the variety, adaptability, and general usefulness of the interesting matter furnished in their pages. And our energetic Book Steward equally shows his qualifications for the position he holds, in the very elegant manner in which he gets out the papers.

Then the price, too, of our own papers, considering their size, is very low. I have often compared them with others, and find none cheaper.

Now, it does seem to me just carrying the thing a little too far for the agent of these American papers to send us samples of their papers enclosing another bundle, on the wrapper of which is printed the modest request to "Kindly hand to the Sunday-school superintendent." No, thanks; I respectfully decline the honour of acting as sub-agent in introducing these papers into our schools in preference to our own. Happily we are well furnished in this particular.

A LOYAL METHODIST.

HOLIDAY BOOKS.

ONE of the very handsomest holiday or birthday gift-books that we have seen is "Our Little Ones and the Nursery," by William T. Adams (Oliver Opt'c) Small 4to., pp. 384. Estes Lauroat, Boston. Price in illuminated covers, \$1.75. It consists of illustrated stories and poems for the little folk, by the best writers of juvenile literature. Its most striking feature, however, is its 370 beautiful pictures, not old and worn-out cuts, but new ones, made expressly for this book. It will make the dark days of winter bright with beauty. The angel singing the Christmas hymn, on page 29, is but a type of the many exquisite pictures here contained.

"Chatterbox for 1885," same publishers, is a little larger and a little cheaper. Price in boards \$1.25. This is an authorized reprint of the famous English "Chatterbox." It is intended for somewhat older scholars than "Our Little Ones," and has over 200 full page engravings by Harrison Weir and other famous English artists. It has a couple of continued stories, and no end of shorter sketches of boy and girl life. These two books will furnish a fund of wholesome winter reading for any family of young folk. For sale at the Methodist Book Rooms, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax, and at most book stores.

CANADIAN VS FOREIGN S. S. PAPERS.

AFTER examining specimens of our Sunday-school periodicals, the Toronto *Globe* publishes the following opinion:

"It is a ground for patriotic pride that Canadian schools need not send to the United States or any other country for illustrated papers, or any other Sunday-school supplies. The handsome papers published by the Rev. Wm. Briggs, Toronto, and edited by the Rev. W. H. Withrow, F.R.S.C., have been declared by those who have compared them with American publications claiming to be the "cheapest and best," to be "cheaper than the cheapest and better than the best." PLEASANT HOURS, *Home and School* for older scholars, and *Happy Days* and *Sunbeam* for younger ones, are, for excellence of illustration and contents, a credit to both publisher and editor. The same house issues a variety of lesson leaflets, quarterlies, monthlies, and, in fact, everything that schools require."

RESOLUTIONS FOR 1886.

I WILL obey my parents in all things.

I will be kind to my brothers and sisters and friends.

I will speak pleasant and not angry words to every one.

I will study my lessons every day without being told.

I will learn the Golden Text every Sunday.

I will ask Jesus every night and morning to help me to love him and to keep these resolutions.

To resolve, on New Year's Day and on birthdays, to live better is a good thing. If you have made resolutions in the past, and have not kept them, ask the Saviour to forgive you, and try again. When you were learning to walk, if you stumbled and fell you did not lie on the floor and determine never to try again, but you jumped up and persevered in the effort. So, if you fall sometimes as you try to walk in the straight and narrow way, you must not be discouraged, but must look up to Him who alone can keep you, and try again.

Littell's Living Age. The numbers of *The Living Age* for the weeks ending Dec. 5th and 12th have the following contents: Dawn of Creation and of Worship, by Rt Hon W. E. Gladstone, *Nineteenth Century*; The Great Lama Temple at Peking, *Gentleman's Magazine*; The Wealys at Epworth, *Longman's Magazine*; A Retrospect, *Fortnightly*; Grace, *Spectator*, Culture and Science, *Macmillan's Magazine*; and many other interesting articles.

For fifty-two numbers of sixty-four large pages each (for more than 3,300 pages a year) the subscription price (\$8) is low; while for \$9 we will send *The Living Age* and *Methodist Magazine* for a year, both postpaid.

"PLEASE to give me something, sir!" says an old woman. "I had a blind child. He was my only means of subsistence: and the poor boy has recovered his sight!"



PARSEE MERCHANT.

PARSEE MERCHANT.

THE Parsees are a very ancient stock in India. They are descendants of the ancient fire-worshippers, and still observe their strange rites. They are among the most successful and wealthy merchants of Calcutta and Bombay. One of their strange customs is that of exposing their dead to be devoured by vultures, in great structures called Towers of Silence, erected near the cities. This cut is one of many illustrating our Indian Empire, its cities, its palaces, its people, Indian missions, etc., which will appear in the *Methodist Magazine* during the year.

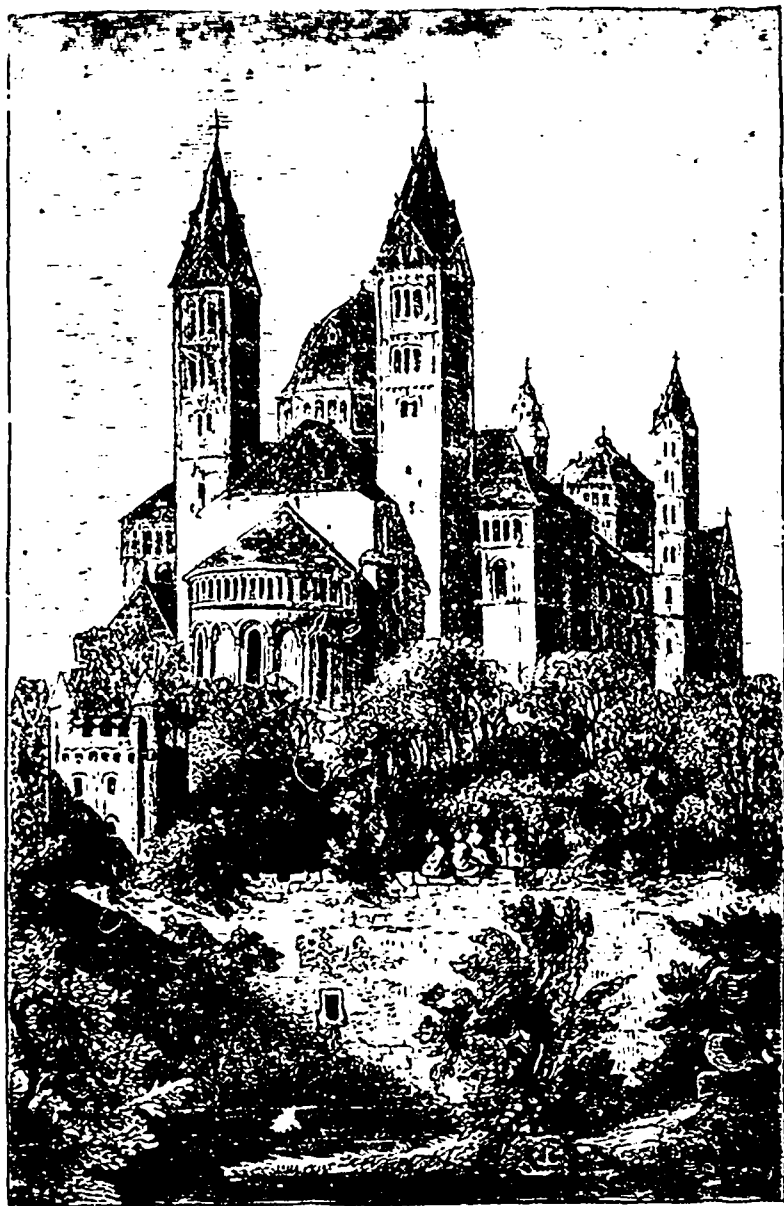
JAPAN ILLUSTRATED.

THE Rev C. S. EBY, M.A., returned missionary of our Church from Japan, gave a most interesting lecture on his mission field, for the benefit of the Woman's Missionary Society, Toronto. A daily paper thus refers to it: "Those who spent last evening in the lecture-room of the Metropolitan Church were given a golden opportunity of gaining an extensive knowledge of Japan and the Japanese, by means of dissolving views and explanations from Rev. C. S. Eby, who has been labouring for several years in the mission fields of Japan. The views embraced everything of interest connected with the work, habits, and peculiarities of the people, together with the natural beauty, principal products, and industries of the country." We hope that many of our people, both old and young, will have an opportunity of hearing this lecture, and seeing the views.

THE MISSIONARY OUTLOOK.

WE cordially commend the *Missionary Outlook*, edited by the Rev Dr. Sutherland, Missionary Secretary of the Methodist Church, to all our readers. They will find that its monthly visits will keep alive missionary sympathies in their hearts, and will give full information on missionary topics, especially those connected with our own Church.

FAITH is to believe what we do not see, and the reward of this faith is to see what we believe.



CATHEDRAL OF SPIRES.

THE CRUSADERS.

HUNDREDS of years ago a strange frenzy seized upon many people. They became possessed of the desire to go to the Holy Land, and rescue the tomb of our Saviour from the unbelievers who ruled in that land. Priests went about the country stirring up the people, and great armies were raised of men who went in the name of the Lord to wrest this holy place from the hands of the Turks.

Great suffering and great loss of life was the result. One of the saddest stories in history is that of the Crusade of the Children. An army of tender children was gathered, and went out, led on by wild enthusiasts, fully believing that this was the work which the Lord had given them to do! We need scarcely say that the poor, deluded children suffered and died in great numbers, and the object for which they gave their young lives was not gained.

Our Lord calls us to follow him in spirit, and if we do this we shall carry a cross, and walk over many rough ways, but he will be with us to lead us, and we shall find the cross itself a blessed burden.

Let us be thankful that we live in this day of light, when we are taught that it is not by works, but by simple, lowly, loving lives of obedience, that we can best serve and please our Lord and Master.

Ever follow that which is good.

CATHEDRAL OF SPIRES.

NOWHERE has Gothic architecture reached a grander development than in these old Rhine cities; and one of the finest minsters in the world is, I think, that of Speyer. Beautiful without and within—it is a glorious poem, a grand epic, a sublime anthem in stone. Even the grandeur of St. Peter's wanes before the solemn awe which comes over the soul beneath those vast and shadowy vaults. The one represents the perfect triumph of human achievement; the other the deep religious yearning and the unsatisfied aspiration of the spirit: the one, the cold intellectual work of the Southern mind; the other, the awe and mystery, and sublime emotions, of the Northern soul. These clustering columns; these dim, forest-like vaults; these lone drawn aisles; the solemn gloom irradiated by glimpses of glory through the many-coloured robes of apostle and prophet, saint and angel, in the painted windows, so like the earthly shadows and the heavenly light of human life and history—these wake deep echoes in the soul, as no classic or renaissance architecture ever can.

The old Romanesque Cathedral is 431 feet long. The vaulted roof rises to the height of 105 feet, and four lofty towers are weathered with the storms of well-nigh a thousand years. It is one of the finest specimens of Romanesque architecture in Germany. Here the German emperors were buried for hundreds of years, till their

tombs were ransacked by the soldiery of Louis XIV. Just a hundred years later, to the very day, the tombs of the French kings at St. Denis were similarly despoiled by German soldiers. It is from the protest of the Lutheran princes at the diet held in this church by Charles V, in 1529, that the name Protestant is derived.

THE BOOK OF HUMAN LIFE.

LIFE is a volume,
From youth to old age,
Each year forms a chapter,
Each day is a page.

Reader, what kind of a volume are you writing! Is each succeeding page better than the one before it! Strive to make it a grand and noble work. As you would read a book that especially interests you, and makes you feel a desire to re-read it in order to more fully grasp its hidden beauties, so let your life-work be, that at its close each will have a desire to study your character, so as to be benefited by the noble acts, kind words, and pure thoughts, which so beautify and ennoble it.

An author or poet re-writes his work or poem many times before he is satisfied with it. He then, perhaps, lays it aside for a little while, when it receives its final judgment. So it is with every one of us. We are writing our character every hour, every day, and every year, but what is written has been written and can never be recalled. Unlike the author or poet, we cannot re-write it; therefore, guard your every act, word and thought. Every hour comes to us charged with duty, and the moment it is past, returns to heaven to register itself, and when our life-work is done we are laid aside for a time to await the resurrection morn, the final judgment. Many a volume will be criticized on that day. God is the judge—an impartial, just critic. May there be none consigned to the fire as worthless trash, unfit to read.

Let us write our volumes carefully and prayerfully, and on the examination of our books may each and every one receive the smile and approval of our Heavenly Father, as He pronounces the verdict, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of thy Lord, prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

BOYS AND THEIR MOTHERS.

SOME one has written beautifully to the boys in the following manner. Here is a whole sermon in a few sentences:

"Of all the love affairs in the world, none can surpass the true love of the big boy for his mother. It is pure and noble, honourable in the highest degree to both. I do not mean merely a dutiful affection. I mean a love that makes a boy gallant and courteous to his mother, saying to everybody plainly that he is fairly in love with her. Next to the love of a husband, nothing so crowns a woman's life with honour as this second love, this devotion of a son to her. And I never yet knew a boy to 'turn out' badly who began by falling in love with his mother. Any man may fall in love with a fresh-faced girl, and the man who is gallant with the girl may cruelly neglect the worn and weary wife. But the boy who is a

lover of his mother in her middle age is a true knight who will love his wife as much in the bereaved autumn as he did in the daisied spring time."
—S. S. Foster.

MISS SMILEY'S LESSON.

IN the summer of 1879 I descended the Rhigi with one of the most faithful of Swiss guides. Beyond the services of the day, he gave me unconsciously, a lesson for life. His first care was to put my wraps and other burdens up on his shoulders. In doing so he called for all; but I chose to keep back a few for special care. I so found them no little hindrance to the freedom of my movements, but still I would not give them up until my guide—returning to where I was resting for a moment, kindly but firmly demanded that I should give him everything but my alpenstock. Putting them with the utmost care upon his shoulders, with a look of intense satisfaction he led the way. And now, with freedom, I found that I could make double speed with double safety. Then a voice spoke inwardly. "O foolish, wilful heart! Hast thou indeed, given up thy last burden! Thou hast no need to carry them." I saw it all in a flash, and then, as I leaped lightly from rock to rock down the steep mountain-side, I said within myself. "And ever thus will I follow Jesus, my guide, my burden bearer. I will cast my care upon him, for he careth for me."

THE YEARS.

THE years roll on—the happy years
That held no thought of coming tears.
When full and clear arose life's song,
When years were gay and hope was strong.

The years roll on—the solemn years
With all their freight of care and fears—
Of burdens borne, of woes we brave,
Of hands unclasping at the grave.

The years roll on—the varied years—
So much of light and dark appears
Along this chequered path of life,
The days of dalliance or of strife.

The years roll on—the tender years
The time can soften bitterest tears,
And memory, with her gentle palm,
Lays on the aching heart a balm.

The years roll on—the blessed years—
For heaven's light our darkness cheers,
And 'mid the changes of our lot,
Who walketh with us changes not.

Though years roll on, and day by day
The sands of life wear fast away,
Guide, Saviour, even to the shore
Where time and change shall be no more.

THE last little war in which Great Britain felt it her duty to engage has been short, sharp and decisive. The Burmese campaign has been an unchecked march to Mandalay and complete victory. Annexation of Upper Burmah will soon follow. It is open to doubt whether the war was absolutely necessary, but there is no denying that its results will be highly beneficial to the conquered province. If Thebaw and his chief men are half as black as they have been painted, their mischievous rule then has come to an end. The poor people they so cruelly misgoverned have obtained a great deliverance, and their condition will be much improved. One purpose will, no doubt, be served by the war; a new impetus will be given to missionary effort among the Burmese

A YEAR.

BY MRS. H. E. LEWIS.

WHAT is a year? 'Tis but a wave,
On life's dark rolling stream,
Which is so quickly gone that we
Account it but a dream:

'Tis but a simple, earnest thrub
Of Time's old iron heart,
Which, tireless now, is strong as when
It first with life did start.

What is a year? 'Tis but a turn
Of Time's old brass wheel;
Or but a page upon the book
Which time must shortly seal.

'Tis but a step upon the road
Which we must travel o'er;
A few more steps and we shall walk
Life's weary road no more.

What is a year? 'Tis but a breath
From Time's old nostrils blown,
As rushing onward o'er the earth,
We hear his weary moan.

'Tis like the bubble of the wave,
Or dew upon the lawn,—
As transient as the mist of morn,
Beneath the summer's sun.

What is a year? 'Tis but a type
Of life's oft changing scene,
Youth's happy morn comes gaily on,
With hills and valleys green.

Next summer's prime succeeds the spring,
Then autumn with a tear,
When comes old winter—death, and all
Must find a level here.

GRACIE'S NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS.

BY NELLIE GEORGE HALLETT.

GRACE sat by the table writing with a great deal of care in a small, red-covered, gilt-edged book, when Willie came bounding into the room to tell her that the boys and girls were getting up a coasting party. The brother and sister were twins, and shared their joys, their sorrows, and their secrets. Willie's news was delayed by his curiosity to know what Gracie was doing, and this is what she told him: "This is the diary that Aunt Carrie sent me, and I thought I would begin it with some New Year's resolutions." "Let me see them," said Willie, and the little girl handed him her book, as she would not think of having anything that her brother could not see. These are the resolutions that she had written: "Resolved, First, to get up as soon as I am called in the morning; second, to be perfect in my lessons; third, to give up to Willie." Willie read these words aloud and then laughed, at which Gracie coloured and reached out her hand for her book. "Pooh, Grace, what's the use of writing down such little things?" "I thought I ought to write about things that are hard for me to do; and you know I love a little nap in the morning, and it is so hard for me to study those dry old lessons when there are such lovely fairy tales to read, and I don't like to give up to you, Willie, sometimes, I mean."

Willie looked sober and made no reply. "Why do we make resolutions at New Year's, Willie?" "Oh, because it's the beginning of the year. Don't you know how well we always get our lessons the first of the term? It's nice to begin anything right." "And to end it right, too," suggested Grace. "That doesn't come till the last of the year," and Willie whirled around on his heels, with a boy's carelessness of the future. "But, Grace, what I started to say was that if I took the trouble to write down resolu-

tions, I'd have something worth while. I'd resolve to do or become something great or wonderful. Of course, one can manage all these little things." Gracie made no answer, but knit her pretty brows, not knowing how to take this new idea.

"Children!" They were both startled, for they had not noticed that their father was sitting in the recess of the bow window. Gracie flew across the room and perched herself on her papa's knee, while Willie followed a little more reluctantly. Mr. Harding pushed back the blind that they might have a clear view out of the window. "Willie," said he, "do you remember how interested you were last summer in watching the building of that house across the way?" "Yes, papa." "What did they do first?" "They put in the foundation." "And then what?" "Built the brick wall." "How did they build it?" "I don't understand what you mean, papa." "How many bricks did they lay at a time?" "Only one." "Why didn't they do something great and wonderful, and put up the whole wall at once?"

Willie's cheek grew red as he saw the application of his father's illustration, while Grace looked up with much interest. "If my little girl keeps those resolutions all the year, she will have added a new story to a house that is to last forever. The first will help her to form good habits; the second will be the performance of a duty, which always renews our strength; the third will be a victory over her own self. And good habits, duties well-done, and self-mastery, all help to make character. We are building every day—not houses that the winds and storms of time can overthrow—but characters that are to go with us through this life, and be all that is to live on through eternity." The children looked very grave, for their father spoke earnestly and seriously. "Many a boy, Willie, has started out with the resolution to do something great and wonderful, and has made his life a failure, because he looked past the little things that lay just before him, to catch sight of some great possibility in the far distance. 'Wings for the angels, but feet for men,' says Holland, and so we can reach the end only by patient plodding, laying one brick upon another until the whole is finished. And that is why I think Gracie's resolutions are wise, because they have to do with her everyday life. And every duty done, every victory over self, every little help in the formation of a true and noble character, are like additional pieces of armor, fitting us to gain new victories, and to battle with new foes."

"And what about the end of the year, papa," asked Gracie. "That will depend on you and all the days between now and then. You have one to help you, remember, and can keep your resolutions only by the word of his grace, which is able to build you up."

At a Dublin Mansion House dinner, one of the livery servants went up to a gentleman who was carving a joint of beef, and said: "I'll trouble ye, if ye please, for a slice for me master. 'Certainly! How does your master like it?' 'Bedad!' cried the valet, 'how can I tell ye how he likes it until he has tasted a bit!'"

BANDS OF MERCY.

BY ROBIN MERRY.

"BLESSED are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." These are among the golden words spoken by our Saviour in his sermon on the mount. How many of my readers think they were intended to apply only to human beings? How many think they were intended for all living creatures—to birds, animals, insects, fishes, every form of life that God has made? When you throw a stone at that sparrow perched on a limb, and the poor innocent bird fell dead to the ground, did it occur that God was noting what you did? Do you remember the words of Jesus when he said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your father's notice?" That is what Jesus said, and that is just what God does. He looks with displeasure upon every act of wantonness or cruelty toward any of his creatures.

And here the editor takes pleasure in mentioning that in various places societies have been organized for the prevention of cruelty to animals, and that very marked results in the diminution of cruelty have followed. In many places also "Bands of Mercy" have been organized. These are frequently formed in the Sunday-schools, the entire school resolving to form itself into such a band. The pledge taken is very simple, and may be kept by any one, child, man or woman. Here are the words of the pledge:

"I will try to be kind and merciful to all living creatures; and I will try to persuade others to be the same."

Any boy or girl taking this pledge will think a moment before performing an act of cruelty, or inflicting unnecessary pain upon any animal, whether great or small, strong or weak. And when he sees others engaged in acts of cruelty he will naturally try to prevent their harsh conduct. I am sure that God looks with approbation upon every effort to protect his creatures from needless pain. Will you organize a "Band of Mercy" in your Sunday-school? Or where you cannot do that, will you get as many of your young friends as you can to join you in organizing a band?—*Children's Friend.*

IT PUT HIM IN PRISON.

THE giving of intoxicating liquor as a medicine has often produced life-long disaster. A gentleman called on an influential friend of his and said: "I wish you would go and see my son Charlie, who is in prison."

The friend was surprised that there should be any need for such a request, and asked: "How is it your son is imprisoned?"

The father replied: "You had better ask him yourself, for I would rather not tell you."

The friend went to the prison and found the young man, to whom he said: "Tell me frankly what brought you here?"

"Well," he answered, "I have been robbing my employer."

"What made you rob him?"

"I wanted money for theatres, cigars, and brandy, and as my salary was not enough I took my master's money."

"But," said the gentleman, "you were a Band of Hope boy, and therefore what did you want with brandy?"

The reply of the young man was a sad one, and showed that the evil began years back. Said he: "When I had a fever in my fourteenth year, the doctor ordered my mother to give me brandy; she did so, and I never lost my taste for it, and that," said he crying bitterly, "has brought me here."

What a sad case! The appetite formed then followed him and became his master; made him forget the teaching of his Band of Hope, his solemn promise not to drink, and brought sorrow, suffering and shame to him and to those he loved.

And yet the case is only one of many just as sad. Hundreds have been ruined in body and soul by brandy and wine taken at first as medicine. Thousands are cured of all manner of sickness and disease without them, and some other drugs can be given in place of harmful, poisonous alcohol.

We have another boy in mind who was likewise taken very sick. His father, who was a strict total abstinence, was away from home at the time, and the doctor who was called in told the boy he must take brandy. The boy objected, and said he could not do it, for his father did not believe in it, and the boy had promised he never would touch strong drink in any form. The doctor urged him to yield to his advice, for without the brandy he might not live.

To this the noble boy replied: "I will die then, for I will not drink what my father has told me is wrong."

We are glad to say he did not die, but recovered, and without the brandy, and is to-day more firm in his belief that liquor-drinking is wrong than he was then. We want more of such boys.—*Exchange.*

THE BIRD'S VISIT.

THAT elegant and accomplished German writer, Dr. Krummacher, relates a beautiful incident which occurred in his neighbourhood, in which a poor man, who owed a debt he was unable to pay, was delivered out of his distress by a song bird.

The man was sitting, early in the morning, at his house door, expecting an officer to come and distrain him for a small debt; and whilst sitting thus, with his heavy heart, a little bird flew through the street, fluttering up and down, as if in distress, until, at last, quick as an arrow, it flew over the man's head into his cottage, and perched itself within a cupboard.

The man caught the bird, and placed it in a cage, where it immediately began to sing very sweetly.

Suddenly some one knocked at the door. It was the servant of a respectable lady, who said that the neighbour had seen a bird fly into his house, and she wished to know if he caught it.

"Oh, yes; here it is!" And the bird was carried away.

A few minutes after the servant came again.

"You have done my mistress great service," she said; "she values the bird highly. She is much obliged to you, and requests you to accept this trifle with her thanks."

It proved to be the exact sum he owed; and when the officer came, he said: "Here is your money; now leave in peace, for God has sent it to me."

TRUTH IS MARCHING ON.

We are toiling through the darkness, but
our eyes behold the light
That is mounting up the eastern sky, and
beating back the night;
Soon with joy we'll hail the morning when
our Lord will come in might,
For Truth is marching on.

He will come in glorious majesty to sweep
away all wrong,
He will heal the broken-hearted, and will
make His people strong;
He will teach our souls His righteousness,
our hearts a glad new song,
For Truth is marching on.

He is calling on His people to be faithful,
prompt, and brave,
To uplift again the fallen, and to help from
sin to save;
To devote themselves for others, as Himself
for them He gave,
For Truth is marching on.

Let us fight against the evil with our faces
toward the light,
God is looking through the darkness, and He
watches o'er the fight;
And His joy will be our recompense, His
triumph crown the right,
For Truth is marching on.

IN HIS SIGHT.

Mrs. M. E. BRADLEY.

LITTLE Mabel French was walking home from school, one day, with her books and slate hanging from her arm by a leather strap. She looked smiling and happy, as if her thoughts were pleasant, as indeed they were. She had been head girl in her class that week, had not missed a single lesson, or been tardy, or had a fault mark for misconduct. When her teacher hung the pretty silver medal, with "Excellence" on it, around her neck, she said, kindly:

"I am very glad to give you this medal; for you have deserved it. You have set a good example to all the class this week."

So Mabel was hurrying home, very proud and happy, to show her medal to her mother, and repeat the teacher's praises. And her mind being so occupied, she did not pay much attention to what was in her way in the street. The consequence was, that little Ned Fuller, who was chasing a barrel hoop up the street as Mabel walked down, ran into her unawares. And then "there was a circus," as Ned would have said; for Mabel tripped over the hoop and fell sprawling on the sidewalk; and Ned, in all his rage, tumbled above her, while her slate and books were scattered in wild confusion. Ned being a boy who was used to rough tumbles, picked himself up with a laugh.

"Beg your parding, missis," he said merrily, offering his hand to help her rise. "Was it me that spilt you, or you that spilt me? We come together so sudding, I'm blest if I know."

"It was you that did it, you nasty beggar!" screamed Mabel in a fury, striking his hand away from her. "You did it on purpose too; and I'll tell my father to have you locked up in jail. Let my things alone!"—as Ned, in spite of her hard words, got on his knees to gather up her books and slate. "Don't you dare to touch them with your black hands!"

Poor Ned looked up in wonder at the angry face and the bitter words; and the book that he had taken up dropped out of his hands. At which Mabel was more furious than before.

"You wicked, wicked boy!" she screamed, stamping her foot with rage.

"You've dropped it in the mud again. Take that now! and that! and that!"—and with every word came a blow from her double fists; while the red, scowling face looked so ugly that no one would have guessed it belonged to the smiling little girl who had just won the silver medal for "excellence."

"I didn't mean no harm, miss," said poor Ned, humbly, as he shrank away from the blows, and still more from the cruel words. "I'll wipe the mud off on my shirt, if you'll let me."

But Mabel only ordered him fiercely to get out of her sight; and the poor ragged boy, whose bare knees were more hurt by the fall than Mabel's, jumped off sorrowfully; while the little girl, full of anger and self-importance, hurried home to make her complaint of "that nasty, rude beggar boy." But which one, do you think, was rude and naughty in his sight who looks at the hearts of children, and not their clothes? I think our Heavenly Father would have given the medal for excellence to poor little Ned, who followed his Saviour's example, and "when he was reviled, reviled not again," rather than to little Miss Mabel, in all her finery. What do you think?

LITTLE MARY AND HER FATHER.

ABOUT a quarter of a century ago, a little girl led a rough, unlettered man—her father—to the Sunday-school. He was nearly forty years of age, ignorant, rough in appearance and rude in speech. He hated the church, he despised the Sunday-schools; but, when little Mary took him by the hand, he could not resist. Some one spoke kindly to him after the school was over. He was led first to believe in Christian friendship, then in Christ Himself. Once in Christ, old things passed away, all things were new. His personal habits were changed. He began to learn to read; he wanted to read the Bible; then he began to exhort; and so came to be a Sunday-school evangelist. That ignorant man became the greatest Sunday-school missionary the Christian Church has ever yet known.

Father Paxton loved children almost as he loved his Saviour. He founded about fifteen hundred Sunday-schools—more than any one man ever established before. What a great, ceaseless orator he was! Brimful of good humour, hearty, earnest, tireless in his zeal, he carried sunshine wherever he went. Through his own personal effort nearly seventy thousand children were gathered into Sunday-schools. So it appears that when little Mary, now a woman grown, was leading her father up to the Sunday-school that Sabbath morning, she was leading a train of multiplied thousands up the shining way that leads to God.

A hundred churches grew out of these schools; churches of various denominations, for Father Paxton joined hands with all who love our Lord, and his heart knew nothing of sectarian jealousies. His theology was learned direct from the Bible, from a careful study of God's Word, from communion with the Most High, and from looking into the face of his Master in the silent watches. Need we add that such a man was orthodox? All such men preach a common, simple faith. How wonderfully he grew in sweetness and in Christian grace! How heartily he united all

Christians with him! He lifted every one to a higher plane. He was genial and cheerful and full of that good humour that makes the heart merry and is followed by no sadness or regret.

USING AN OPPORTUNITY.

"MARSDEN, how is it that of late you bring such exact translations? You have woke up wonderfully in your Latin! Is it all square?"

"All square, sir—it is all my own doing."

"I am glad of it, my boy! You are progressing."

This was the master at a large school, looking over the Latin translation of John Marsden, erstwhile not a promising scholar.

When Marsden got out of school, he told one of his boon companions: "I got over the doctor fine to-day. All my Latin was good, because I've a key to the translations, which I took out of our second master's private room when I was sent there for his knife, the other day. I call it using an opportunity." "So do I," said his friend; "one of the devil's very best, too."

It is a court of justice, and men are talking with bated breath of the colossal forgeries committed by one John Marsden, a bank manager. He is being tried, and all wait in breathless fear for the verdict. The jury come into court, give the result of many days' patient trial—the prisoner is found "guilty," and sentence is passed upon him—a life-long servitude in prison!

"Ah!" sighs some one outside the court, as the verdict becomes known, "it began by copying some off a school-fellow's slate, and stealing a Latin Key to do his translations. He called it 'using an opportunity,' and see how it has ended—in forgery and disgrace!"

Boys, young men, beware of the first downward step! Sin is easy at first, but at last "it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." You are, largely, what you make yourself. While sin is under your feet, you are its master; but when you have allowed it "just this once" to assert itself, it has begun to master you, and will not stay until it has accomplished your utter ruin and death. Let the resolve of each one of us be, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

SILENCED.

HE is a wise man who knows when to refrain from answering a fool, and when to answer him according to his folly. There was a discreet old deacon who possessed this gift. In the same village with the deacon there lived a blacksmith who delighted in retailing slanderous reports about professed Christians. It was his habit, when a religious man came into his smithy, to call out to his workman: "I say, Tom, have you heard that story about Brother B.? They do say the old fellow has had a pretty bad fall from grace."

Then the blacksmith would tell some wicked scandal about a Church-member, usually ending with the exclamation, "That's one of these fine Christians we hear so much about!"

One day the old deacon called at the shop. The blacksmith, as usual, began to retail the misdeeds of some

member of the Church, chuckling as he talked.

"Mr. A.," interrupted the deacon, after listening for a few minutes, "did you ever read the story in the Bible about the rich man and Lazarus?"

"Yes, sir, many a time, but what of it?"

"Well, you remember what it says about the dogs, don't you.—how they came and licked Lazarus's sores? Now, do you know that you remind me of those dogs!—you're so fond of licking the sores of Christians."

The blacksmith was so annoyed by the jokes of the loungers in his shop about "dogs who lick sores," that he seldom after that indulged in slanderous reports about religious people.

THE WAY TO CONQUER.

"I'll master it," said the axe, and his blows fell heavily on the iron, but every blow made his edge more blunt, till he ceased to strike.

"Leave it to me," said the saw, and with his relentless teeth he worked backward and forward on its surface till they were all worn down or broken, then he fell aside.

"Ha! ha!" said the hammer, "I know you wouldn't succeed; I'll show you the way;" but at his first fierce stroke off flew his head, and then the iron remained as before.

"Shall I try?" asked a soft small flame. But they all despised the flame; but he curled gently around the iron, and embraced it, and never left it till it melted under his influence.

There are hearts hard enough to resist the force of wrath, the malice of persecution, and the fury of pride, so as to make their acts recoil on their adversaries; but there is a power stronger than any of these, and hard indeed is the heart that can resist love.

—Exchange.

GIVE YOURSELF.

SAID a mother to me one day, "When my children were young, I thought the very best thing I could do for them was to give them myself. So I spared no pains to talk with them, to teach them, to read to them, to pray with them, and to be a loving companion and friend to my children. I had to neglect my house many times. I had no time to indulge in many things which I should have liked to do. I was so busy adorning their minds and cultivating their hearts' best affections that I could not adorn their bodies in fine clothes, though I kept them neat and comfortable at all times. I have my reward now. My sons are ministers of the gospel, my grown-up daughter a lovely Christian woman. I have plenty of time now to rest, plenty of time now to keep my house in perfect order, plenty of time now to indulge myself in many ways, besides going about my Master's business whenever he has need of me. I have a thousand beautiful memories of their childhood to comfort me. Now that they have gone out into the world, I have the sweet consciousness of having done all I could to make them ready for whatever work God calls them to do. I gave them the best I could—myself."

A little boy watched a bee crawling on his hand till it stopped and stung him, when he said, "I didn't mind it walking about, but when it sat down it hurt awful, so it did!"

I'VE SIGNED THE PLEDGE.

I've signed the pledge,
I've signed the pledge,
And I shall never taste
The cup of death, no matter where,
Or when, or by what hand so fair,
Before me it is placed.

I've signed the pledge,
I've signed the pledge,
And I will never touch
The ruby wine, the log beer,
The bright champagne, the cider clear,
Though tempted e'er so much.

I've signed the pledge,
I've signed the pledge,
And would I ever dare
To offer poison to a friend,
And from my hand his soul to send
To shame and dark despair?

I've signed the pledge,
I've signed the pledge,
I've promised God on high,
With angels listening to my vow,
And, by His grace—He hears me now—
I'll keep it till I die.

HABITS OF INDUSTRY.

Among the greatest misfortunes that come to any one are habits of idleness, and among the greatest blessings that can come to any one are habits of industry. Idleness is not confined to the low and degraded, the men and women of loathsome and forbidding appearance, whose very presence is an advertisement of their vicious life. There are many persons living in the midst of abundance whose lives are of but little use in the world because they only consume or waste what others provide, and contribute nothing to the general stock of human welfare. There are thousands of young men and young women who never earn a single dollar by producing it by real labour of any kind. They allow themselves to be wholly dependent on the industry and resources of parents or friends. As a rule their lives are of correspondingly little value.

Every young person, boy or girl, young man or young woman, should learn to become independent by learning to make their own living. It does not follow that they must leave home; if the resources of their homes are abundant, but they should learn to be independent and work their own way, and so be equipped if disaster or need should come.

Industry is God's order. He commands and commends industry, and he hates idleness. God himself is the busiest worker in the universe. The eternal Mind and the eternal Hand are ever busy in creating and in sustaining the millions of worlds and caring for their innumerable inhabitants.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

B.O. 606.] LESSON III. [Jan. 17.

THE FAITHFUL REHABITES.

Jer. 8 12 13. Commit to mem. vs. 18, 19.

GOLDEN TEXT.

For unto this day they drink none, but obey their father's commandment. *Jer. 35. 14.*

OUTLINE.

1. Obedience, v. 12-14.
2. Disobedience, v. 15.
3. Consequences, v. 16-19.

TIME, PLACE, same as in Lesson II.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Word of the Lord*—Some spiritual revelation by which the prophet was shown what God would have him say made him able to speak the word of the Lord. *I have spoken unto you*—Not Jeremiah, but God by His prophets through all

the ages. *Other gods*—Baal, Astarte, and the other heathen gods whom the people so often worshipped. *Shall not want a man*—Shall not be without a representative in the world. There are more total abstinence men in the world to-day than ever before; representatives not by blood, but in the principle of Jonadab.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where may we learn from this lesson—

1. The blessedness of obedience!
2. The consequences of sin!
3. God's faithfulness to his promises!

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. From whom were the Rechabites descended? From Jonadab the son of Rechab. 2. What command did Jonadab give to his family? To drink no wine. 3. What was said of his descendants in the GOLDEN TEXT? For unto, etc. 4. What promise did God make to this people? That they should never pass away. 5. What examples do we find in the Rechabites? Temperance and obedience to parents.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Rewards and punishments.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

5. Are there any other religions in the world? There is only one Divine Teacher, and only one true religion; but there have been many false teachers, and there are many false religions.

[1 Corinthians viii. 6, 6; Ephesians iv. 5.]

B.O. 587.] LESSON IV. [Jan. 24.

CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH.

2 Kings 25. 1-12. Commit to mem. vs. 11, 12.

GOLDEN TEXT.

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. *Psa. 137. 1.*

OUTLINE.

1. A Besieged City, v. 1-3.
2. A Captured King, v. 4-7.
3. A Destroyed City, v. 8-10.
4. A Captive People, v. 11, 12.

TIME.—587 B.C. End of kingdom of Judah. In Greece, the 48th Olympiad. Year of Rome, 166.

PLACE.—Same as in Lesson II, also Riblah. EXPLANATIONS.—*Tenth month*—Perhaps our January. *People of the land*—All the inhabitants of the country around had fled into the city for safety when Nebuchadnezzar approached. *City was broken up*—Its defences were carried, and breaches made in the walls. *Fellers of brass*—Rather bronze; or, some metal made by composition, but not our brass. *The house of the Lord*—Solomon's temple. *The king's house*—David's royal palace.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where are we taught from this lesson—

1. The danger of evil doing!
2. The cruelty of wicked men!
3. The fate of a people who forget God!

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. How long did the kingdom of Judah last? Four hundred years. 2. What was the cause of its destruction? The wickedness of its people. 3. What was the name of its last king? Zedekiah. 4. By whom was it destroyed? By the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar. 5. What became of Jerusalem and the temple? They were burned. 6. Where were the people of Judah taken captive? To Babylon. 7. What did they say, as given in the GOLDEN TEXT? By the rivers, etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The wages of sin.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

6. How did Jesus Christ show that he was a teacher sent from God? By performing signs and wonders such as could be performed only by the power of God. [John iii. 2.]

"Doctor," said a wealthy patient to his physician, "I want you to be thorough and strike at the root of the disease." "Well, I will," said the doctor, as he lifted his cane and brought it down hard enough to break into pieces a bottle and a glass that stood upon the sideboard. It was his last professional visit to that house.

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