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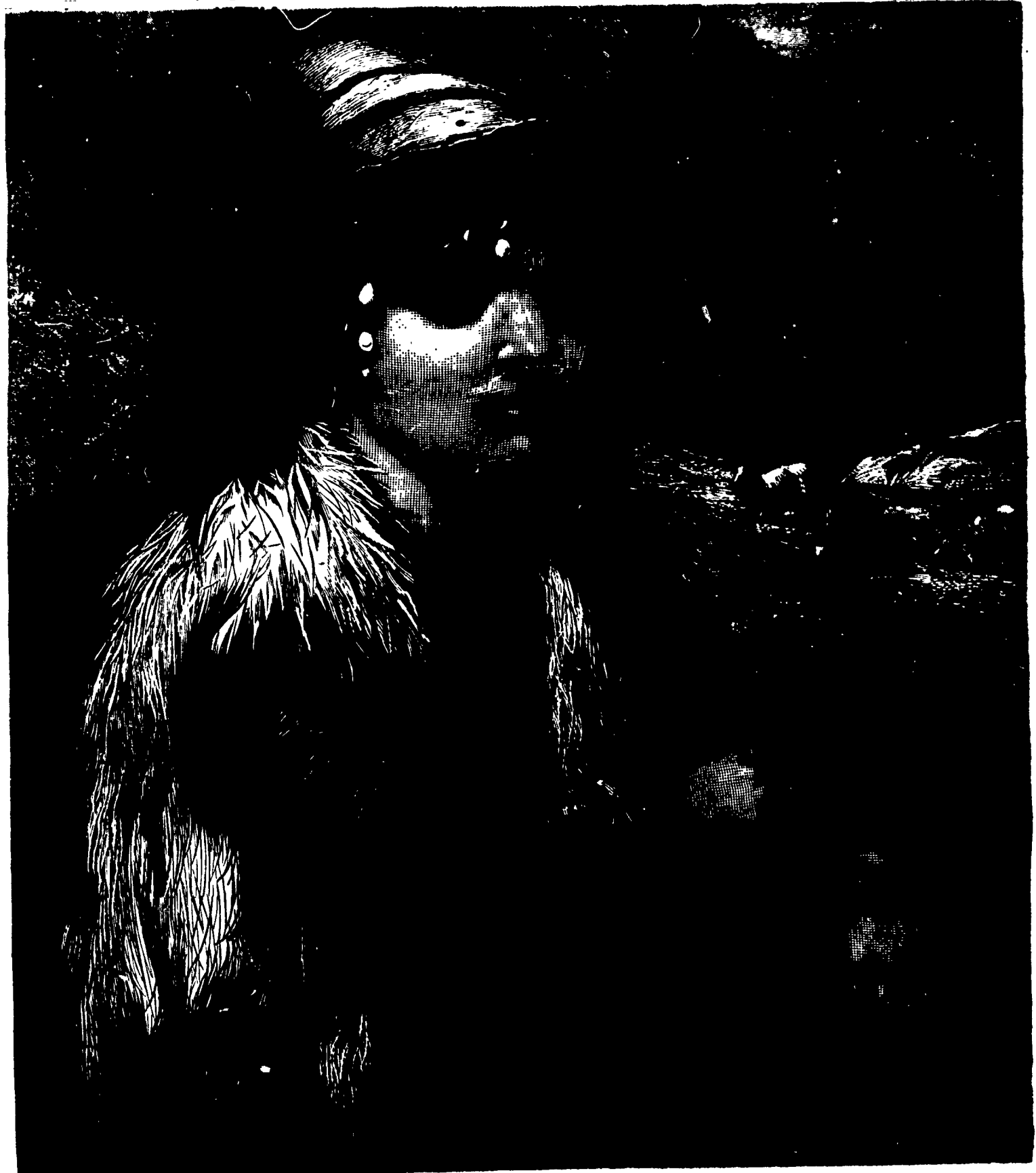
HOME & SCHOOL



Vol. I.]

TORONTO, JANUARY 6, 1883.

[No. 1.



UNITED CHURCH
ARCHIVES

ITALIAN GOATHERD.—(See next page.)

Christmas Day.

BY MRS. HELEN E. BROWN.

TELL me, why is Christmas Day
The day for songs and mirth?
It calls to mind the happiest
That ever dawned on earth;
The day when God sent angels down
To sing the Saviour's birth.

What's the song for Christmas day,
The glad, the sweet refrain?
"Glory to God" in heaven above,
"Peace and good-will to men;"
Let all the joy-bells peal it out
Again and yet again.

How shall children on the day
To please their Lord above?
By singing songs of thankfulness,
And doing deeds of love;
By bearing high the olive branch
Of peace, like Noah's dove.

Will He let such little ones
His wondrous mercy tell?
Yes, we may carry wide the news,
And this will please Him well—
The blessed news that Jesus came
To save our souls from hell.

Italian Goatherd.

HIGH up in the slopes of the Alps, where cattle can with difficulty find a footing, great flocks of goats pasture on the sweet, rich herbage. They are wonderfully sure-footed, and will climb from ledge to ledge, and leap from crag to crag, in a manner that makes it appear wonderful that they do not slip and get dashed to pieces. The chamois-goat especially reaches heights almost inaccessible to man. Only the boldest and most skilful hunters can reach them in their far-off haunts.

But this is not the sort of goat of which our handsome young goatherd in the picture has charge. They are a domestic sort which are kept for their milk and for the cheese which is made from it. It is the little fellow's task to look after them all day, and if they wander too far to recall them by his horn or pipe, and in the evening to bring them down from the mountain pasture to the *chlets*, where they are milked and housed. He wears, you see, a rough jacket of goat-hair, and on his head a coarse felt hat. At his side is a leathern-bottle, which he fills in the morning with goat's milk or with the pure water of the clear mountain streams, and we well know how refreshing they are. On his shoulder is his long, light, springy alpenstock, by means of which he can leap the streams, and climb from crag to crag almost as nimbly as his four-footed friends the goats. The Italian fondness for jewellery is seen in the earrings he wears, and in the coins which dangle on his forehead and cheeks. This is, doubtless, all he owns. Handsome as he looks, he can neither read nor write; but he is learned in the mountain lore, and knows all the paths and passes of the neighbourhood, and his blithe carol can be heard as he roams with his shaggy flock over the grand mountain slopes, climbing to the very skies. He maintains his health and good looks on very homely fare, at which Canadian boys and girls would be apt to turn up their noses—black barley bread, hard goat cheese, and pure water, or, as a luxury, goat's milk.

To the Old Year.

FAREWELL, Old Year!—a last, a long farewell!
Who shall live out the next no tongue can tell;
For, wrapped in darkness, to but One alone
Is the dim pathway in the future known.
Then, while we live, may each with constant care
For higher, nobler, better life prepare;
So that, when time's perplexities are o'er,
Our souls may dwell with God for evermore.

Christmas Carols.

AN IRISH CHRISTMAS STORY.

BY ELIZA KERR, AUTHOR OF "BELIEVE BLOOM," ETC.

THE snow lay deep in Askeaton Lane, on the broad pasture fields, on the round hills stretching away to the south, brought into unusual prominence by their white dress against the dark grey snow-laden sky.

It had been snowing all the morning, and all the hawthorn bushes and brown briars in the hedge bent under their weight of snow. It lay in deep ridges by the farm gates and railing, in piles against the trunks of the blackened trees, in a smooth spotless sheet over the corn lands where the September mown had seen the reapers and the gleaners busily at work.

In the kitchen of the farm-house a great fire was burning, and round the walls and hanging from the ceiling were festoons and wreaths of holly and ivy, with here and there scarlet berries glancing out amid the gleaming green. The pleasant old house was in festive attire, for to-day was the twenty-fourth of December, and would not to-morrow be the Christmas? Beside the big red fire sat a young girl in an arm chair, the many shawls and wraps in which she was enveloped showing plainly that she was an invalid, even if the fact of her resting there so quietly, while all around her was cheerful bustle and activity, did not denote it more clearly. Presently the mistress of the farmstead stood beside the arm chair.

"Is it not pleasanter here than in your bedroom, my dear?" she asked, gently, as her hands caressed the weary head lying against the pillows.

"It is not so lonely," was the answer, given with a long-drawn sigh; "but all this decoration and fun reminds me too strongly of what my illness has taken away from me. Last year I was as active as little Nellie there; now I must lie here and only look at the fun;" and hot tears fell from the girl's eyes.

"But, Kathie, mavourneen, you are so much better than you were. In another six months the doctor thinks you will be quite restored to health. Keep up, dear heart, even if it does seem a bit hard on you. Here comes Nellie, breathless and tired, I am certain."

"Oh, mother, it's such fun, and I love Christmas!" exclaimed the bright-haired, laughing little maiden of six years, as she sat down on the floor at her sister's feet.

"Not for the fun alone do you love it, I hope, child!" said the mistress, softly. "You know why we rejoice so much to-day!"

"Yes," slowly and reverently; to-morrow will be the birthday of Christ. And oh, I do love birthdays to come;" with a swift return to her merry laughing tone.

"Suppose you sing 'Hark, the herald angels sing' for Kathie, while I go and look after the pudding;" whispered the mother then, thinking to give pleasure to the invalid.

The little one folded her hands, and commenced at once in her child's voice the sweet old carol. When she came to the words—

"Light and life to all He brings,
Risen with healing in His wings."

Kathie interrupted the singing by exclaiming bitterly: "not much light, or life, or healing He has brought me his birthday."

"Don't you like 'Hark, the herald angels'?" questioned Nellie, in deepest amazement.

"Yes, child; finish it," impatiently. "And when you've done, tell mother I want something to eat; not that she'll give me anything I'll care in the least for. If I only had a fresh herring roasted on the wood there, I'd like it; but, of course, there's no hope of my getting it," fretfully.

"Would you love it very much, Kathie? Better than apples or pudding?"

"Yes, far better than apples or pudding;" with scornful earnestness.

"Well, why don't you get the fish-woman to bring you one?"

"Because they've no notion of fishing for herring now."

"Could any one get the fish out of the sea?"

"Yes, of course, But all the same, the women don't catch the fish, its the men in the boats."

"But couldn't women and children get fish in the sea too?" persistently.

"I suppose they could. But you're bothering me, child; have done with your silly questions."

Nellie obediently grew silent, but a sudden idea flashed through her busy little brain, and the more she thought upon it, the clearer and more easy of realization it seemed. Still pondering intently, she rose from the floor and went out of the big kitchen, quite forgetting to sing the last verse of the carol. But Kathie never heeded the omission; she was wondering if her mother would allow her to remain by the fireside until the sleeping hour.

Out into the snow-covered lane stepped Nellie, her blue cloak round her, and the little fur hood covering her shining curls. In her hand, carefully hidden from view, was a short rod and black cord, to the end of which was a hook, such as boys use to catch the tiny fishes in the rock pools. She pattered along bravely, for she was in a hurry to get back before supper time. The sea was away the other side of the hills, not more than a mile and a quarter from Askeaton Lane, but to the little feet unaccustomed to such tiresome work, the way appeared interminable. When she reached the shore she meant to fasten a bit of mussel to the hook, as she had often watched her brothers do, and then drop the cord into the water to catch the herring Kathie so much desired.

Nellie was a true child, not older than her six years, and she was very fond of her sister, who had been her nurse and playfellow since the little maiden's birth until sickness had laid a heavy hand on the girl, changing her, for the time, into an exacting, dissatisfied invalid. Kathie, in all her sixteen years, had never known what sickness meant, and she could not now grow accustomed to it, or resigned to the will of the good Lord. But Nellie never noticed this change in her beloved sister; she only knew that Kathie could not play with her as usual, so she learned to play by herself.

As she trugled along, holding her cloak with one hand, for the wind was so rude and inquisitive, she thought how pleased Kathie would be when she got the herring, and how she would laugh, and say it was good to have a little sister that could catch fish even

as the men did. And so at last the bare boulders were reached, where the Atlantic waves were softly flowing in to the white strand.

"I must look for the mussel first," said she, half aloud, as she climbed cautiously over the stones, and peeped into the holes where the little fishes lived. So eager was she in her search, she forgot that the sea weed was slippery, and suddenly she fell, without any warning, over the edge of a high rock down to a piece of soft strand, hidden by projecting boulders. Although startled, she was scarcely hurt, so she jumped to her feet at once.

"What are ye doin' here?" demanded a gruff man's voice.

Looking round in the direction of the sound, Nellie perceived to her astonishment men and women seated round a blazing fire of wood and dried seaweed. Lying on the fire was a sheep divested of its woollen coat roasting, or rather burning, slowly.

"I'm looking for a mussel to put to my hook to catch a herring for Kathie," replied the child, fearlessly. She did not understand that there was any reason for fear, so she felt none.

The women looked at one another and laughed, but all the men scowled angrily.

"She's the youngster up at Mrs. Molloy's, an' she'll tell we're roasting her mother's sheep."

"Niver a bit of it," answered one of the women. "She's too young intirely to understand. Let her go her ways an' fish for the herrin'," with another hearty laugh.

"Yis, an' she'll tell her mother what she saw. Of course she will; what has understandin' to do wid it?"

"Thin we can put out in the boat as we intinded, an' land at the other creek, an' out up the sheep there into bits to bring home for our Christmas dinners decently."

"We'll put out in the boat surely, but we must take her along wid us, I tell ye," angrily.

"An' what'll ye do wid her when ye've got her there I'd like to hear!"

"Set her on the road beyant the hills, an' she'll be so flustered at bein' so far from home alone she'll forgit all about us."

"Do what ye will, but ye must take her tender. Remember yer own childer. Will ye come wid us in the boat, acushla?" turning to the perplexed child, "an' we'll git ye a herrin' for the sister."

"Will you?" joyfully. "But you won't be long!" doubtfully. "I must be back before supper or it'll be no use."

"Yis, yis, sure ye'll back in a minit, there's the boat, come along."

Half reluctantly Nellie went with the woman, but shrank back a moment when she saw the blackened sheep carried between two of the men.

"It'll not hurt ye, mavourneen, don't fear."

Once seated in the little canoe, the gentle motion caused by the waves soothed her alarm, and she began to enjoy her novel situation.

"You are not fishing for the herring," she remarked, presently, when the boat had gone some way.

"Not yit, honey," answered the woman, Mary Ryan. "Have ye iver a bit of a song to sing us while we'er waitin'?"

"Won't the singing frighten the herring?"

"No; sing away."

Accustomed to be obedient, Nellie folded her hands in her lap as she had done in the big kitchen, by the side of the blazing fire, and chaunted—

"Hark! the herald angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King,

in her sweet, small voice.

The snow began to fall again silently, and the waves tossed the little bark hither and thither with increasing violence,

"Better for ye to be helpin' to get the boat in, than listenin' to such rubbish," angrily said the men, as they exerted themselves vainly to row into the creek to which they were now drawing near. "We'll throw the child overboard, for she's the cause of all the bother. Maybe we'll be drowned even. If we kape tossin' up an' down here we'll surely be drowned."

"Thin row into the creek be all manes, but ye needn't think to hurt the child, for we won't let ye," said Mary Ryan, decidedly.

The other women assented vehemently. "Sure she's a swate craythur to be able to sing like that. Ye needn't think we'll let ye hurt her, boys."

"I'd like to know how we're to land!" said Mary Ryan's husband, sullenly, as the wind began to sound threateningly through the overhanging cliffs and caves, and the great white foam mountains rushed with headlong speed against the frail conoe.

Meanwhile Nellie, all unknowing of the peril in which she was, and forgetting for a time the herring which was to be caught, sang happily, in an undertone, another Christmas song her mother had taught her, as her eager hands tried to seize the foam stream flowing on past the boat.

"We are dead men, for sure," groaned the rowers, despairingly, as they noted how they drew no nearer to the land, but rather were drifting out to sea.

"There's too many in her; we'll throw the child out," menacingly spoke Bill Ryan.

"Oh! listen now, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!"

concluded Nellie, in a clear, audible voice.

The man drew back in wonder, and stared at the little singer, while a sudden silence fell upon them all, and they ceased for a moment to struggle with the waves.

"She spakes true, though it's the words of the carol she's sayin'," whispered Mary Ryan. "Throw the sheep out an' thin pull all together as if ye mint it, an' not wan this way, an' wan another way. Ye're too angry to row right."

Without a word she was obeyed, for life was very dear to these reckless fishermen now that they seemed about to lose it. Very soon the steady, regular rowing turned the canoe inland, and at last it grated on the shingly strand. The women uttered thankful ejaculations, while the men looked at the great white waves from which they had escaped, and said nothing.

"We'll take her home to her mother, an' this is the last time ye'll iver have us women wid ye in stalin'. Ye had better come along an' tell Missis Molloy all about it, an' maybe she'll let us off for the sheep."

But this the men absolutely refused

to do, not hindering their wives, however, when they climbed over the rocks and on out to the dark, snow-covered road, Mary Ryan carrying Nellie.

"You said I was to have a herring for Kathie," said the little one, in an aggrieved tone.

"Sure 'twas too stormy, honey," answered the woman, soothingly. "I'll bring ye some another time, now we must go home."

The little head sank back overcome by sleep, and the rest of the road was traversed in silence.

All was excitement when the four women came near the farm-house, but Mary Ryan went boldly forward and placed her sleeping burden in the arms of the half-distracted mistress. Then she told her story, concealing no portion of it. Mrs. Molloy entered the warm kitchen, and bade the women sit down and partake of supper. "You have given me back my darling; it is the least I can give you in return."

"But, missis, we stole yer sheep."
"Never mind, this is Christmas, when every offence should be forgiven, and peace and good-will prevail."

"Thin it's ye're a decent woman, an' it's thim same tachtin's that saved us all this night from a worse crime than stalin'."

Thereupon Mrs. Molloy read aloud the story of Christ's birth from the Book; and when she had concluded, she promised the repentant women work on her farm, and gave them food enough to last them for two days.

Meanwhile, Kathie was weepingly caressing her recovered sister, and mentally resolving with God's help, to be more patient, and less swift to utter petulant, hasty words.

"Now, if my child is not too sleepy, she might sing one verse of her carol before we all go to rest," whispered the mother, as she lifted the little one into her lap. Then, out over the snowy ground with the track of many foot-steps, and across the trees and hedges bowing under their weight of snow, rang the jubilant words—

"Hark! the herald angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King."

Wine on New Year's.

THOUSANDS of tables will be spread with refreshments on New Year's Day. Not in one city only, but in many, the custom of making friendly calls will be observed. Ladies are not disposed to abandon the practice of setting a table, although it is a pleasure rather than otherwise to find on calling that no refreshments are offered. Wines and other intoxicating drinks ought to be dispensed with universally, totally, and forever. Happy New Year needs no help from the exhilarating cup. Hundreds of young men, and many young women, are made drunk on that day by the social use of wine. Every consideration of taste, of civility, of good sense, of religion, and morals, should enforce the duty of withholding intoxicating drinks from those who call on New Year's Day.

Well would it be if all the pulpits in every place, would give a note of warning, a hint, at least, that may save one young man from the temptation that so easily besets him on that day when he runs his race from house to house. A little here and a little there make the muckle that muddles and fuddles his head, and makes him first a fool and then a drunkard.

A Christmas Parable.

FROM THE ORRMAN OF BUCHART.

'Tis Christmas Eve, and bright
Shines out the cheerful light
From a large, happy home.
When, amid mirth and song,
A small tumultuous throng
Of laughing children come.

With mournful, longing eyes,
Watching their glad surprise
Through the bright window-pane.
A child, less happy born,
Stands homeless and forlorn,
Without, 'mid wind and rain.

He saw the lighted tree,
And heard the mirth and glee,
The laughter and the noise;
Shivering and lonely, gazed,
As the children, joy-amazed,
Received their gifts and toys—

And, as he gazing stands,
Upon his frozen hands
The hot tears quickly fall;
"Each child has got to-night
A tree, a gift, a light—
Only not I, of all.

"I, too, once joyfully
Saw our own Christmas tree,
Lit by my mother's hand;
But now, far from my home,
Lonely and sad I roam
In a cold, strange land.

"Will no one let me in?
And give to me a gleam
Of all your light and mirth?
For me, who am so small,
Is there no place in all
This wide and happy earth?"

"Will no one let me in!
Is it so great a sin
Homeless to be, and poor?
I crave no feast or toy—
Only to see the joy
Of Christmas time once more.

"Will no one let me in?
He gave a timid ring
At many a door and gate;
But no one heard the sound,
The laugh and song went round
And none cared for his fate.

"O holy Christ above,
No mother have I to love—
No father—only thou!
Thou, who art ever near,
Oh, be my guardian here,
For all forget me now!"

And when his prayer is said,
He lifts his drooping head,
And looks forlornly round.
The tears upon his cheek
Are frozen:—faint and weak
He sinks upon the ground.

See, all in snowy white,
Bearing a shining light,
Down through the silent street
There comes another Child;
His glance is grave and mild;
How low his voice and sweet!

"Lo! I am Christ the Lord,
By heaven and earth adored:
I shared an earthly lot,
As Child,—all children love,
And not forgetful prove
When others have forgot.

"My promise holdeth sure:
Alike to rich and poor
My love is freely given.

I heard thy feeble cry
Above the minstrelsy
Of angel choirs in heaven.

"Poor, homeless child, for thee
I now will light a tree
Here in the lonely night.
None in the houses there
Could seem to thee so fair
Or ever shine so bright!"

He pointed up on high,
Where shining in the sky,
Deck'd with all glorious things,
There seem'd a tree, and now
Upon the topmost bough,
Angels with outspread wings!

How near, yet, oh, how far,
Shines each fair taper star:
The child no more is sad;
But as he watched them gleam,
As in a happy dream,
His heart felt calm and glad

It's not a dream—for see!
The angels on the tree
Bend down into the night,
And in their loving arms
Bear him from earthly harms
Up to the light.

He needs no more to roam,
For Christ has call'd him home,
Who said, "Forbid them not:
And 'mid that angel train
Sorrow, and want, and pain
Are soon in joy forgot.

Christmas for the Birds.

BY ROBIN MERRY.

A VERY pretty custom prevails in some parts of Germany. At Christmas a high pole is erected, and on the top is placed a plump sheaf of wheat. The birds at once discover it, and presently cluster about it and peck from it their feast of grains. In our own country, where the winters are often long, and snow for many weeks covers the ground, much kindness might be shown to the birds at very little cost. The advantages of doing this are great. The multiplication of birds is one of the greatest blessings as a country grows older. In the severe winters many of these pretty creatures, which have escaped the cruelty of the fowler's gun, perish from the cold.

At our own home great pleasure is constantly enjoyed from the presence of the birds in winter. The heavy American ivy-vines, which cover the sides of our buildings, provide both shelter and an abundance of berries, and the crumbs from the tables are carefully hoarded for them. The result is that the birds are amongst our most constant visitors. The snow-bird the English sparrow, and as spring approaches, the blue birds, all share with us the pleasure of their company.

If our young readers will make friends with the sparrows, they will learn to come at their call, and perch on their hands, and receive the food they provide for them.

Christmas Plants.

Among the plants usual to Christmas in England are the rosemary, the holly, and mistletoe. Gay says:

"When Rosemary and bays the poet's crown,
Are bawled in frequent or a through all the town,

Then judge the festival of Christmas near—
Christmas, the joyous period of the year.
Now with bright holly all your temples strow
With laurel green and sacred mistletoe."

Christmas Bells

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

I HEARD the bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South,
And with the sound
The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearthstones of a continent,
And made forlorn
The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said;
"For hate is strong
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
God is not dead; nor doth He sleep!
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men!

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Home & School:

A PAPER FOR YOUNG FOLKS.

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

TORONTO, JANUARY 6, 1883.

Our New Sunday-School Paper.

AT the request of the Sunday-School Committees of the three Western Conferences, this paper is prepared to be issued on alternate weeks with *Pleasant Hours*. There are many schools which want a paper for every Sunday, and to procure one, have been compelled to take the *British Workman*, *Band of Hope Review*, or some other periodical—sometimes American papers, which are hostile to the institutions of our country, and offensive to our patriotic feelings. In order to meet the want that has been felt, and to supply our own schools with our own papers, it has been decided to issue a new paper, the same size and price as *Pleasant Hours*, and in every way its equal, if not its superior. After discussing and rejecting many names, it has been decided to call it

"HOME AND SCHOOL."

The name indicates the double purpose which will be kept in view in its publication—to make home happy, and to make the Sunday school more and more a grand success. It will be, it is confidently anticipated, the handsomest paper ever issued in the Dominion. It is determined to greatly improve the character also of *Pleasant Hours*, using better paper, better ink, and better engravings, so that these two papers may defy competition, and prove themselves the best papers in the world for our Sunday-schools.

While seeking to combine all the excellences of *Pleasant Hours*, HOME AND SCHOOL will also have special features of its own. Great prominence will be given to the subject of Christian missions, especially those of our Church, both in Japan and among the Indian tribes of the North-West and the Pacific Coast. Special attention shall also be given to Temperance, and a series of boys' and girls' temperance lessons will be a feature of much importance. A series of sketches will also be given of HOMES OF THE POOR, with striking engravings that will touch every heart. Puzzles for the fireside, short stories, choice poems, everything that can refine and delight will be furnished, to make the winter nights and summer days cheery, and beautiful, and bright.

That our young people, and their friends, may get acquainted with the men whom the Methodist Church delights to honour, there will appear from time to time, portraits of some of the leading ministers and laymen, who have occupied prominent positions. This first number contains a portrait and sketch of the Rev. GEORGE DOUGLAS, LL.D., who for the past four years has discharged, with such success, the important duties of President of the General Conference. Special prominence will be given to the Sunday-school Lessons; and Lesson Notes, different from those given in either *Pleasant Hours* or *Sunbeam*, will be given for every Sunday in the year.

Now, such a paper as this will require a very large circulation to prevent a loss, when it is published at so low a price. We hope the schools, for whose benefit it is begun, will arrange to send as large and as early orders as possible. We hope that this paper will go to many places where we have no schools, and will be helpful to the cause of God and of our own Church by carrying religious intelligence, and the light and joy of Christian hope and happiness to many a home and many a heart; and that it may be abundantly blessed of God to his honour and glory.

Remember the very low price. Single copies, 30 cents a year; less than 20, 25 cents; over 20, 22 cents; over 100, 20 cents.

The Yule Log.

In the North of England they have at Christmas their *Yule log*, or *Yuletide log*, which is a huge log burning in the chimney corner, while the Yule cakes are baked on a "girdle," or griddle, over the fire; little lads and maidens assemble nightly at some neighbouring friend's to hear the goblin story, and join in "fortune-telling," or some game. There is a part of an old song which runs thus:

"Now all our neighbours' chimneys smoke
And Christmas logs are burning;
Their ovens they with baked meats choke,
And all their spits are turning."



THE DE WITT MEMORIAL CHURCH SUNDAY-SCHOOL ROOM, NEW YORK.

A Model Sunday-School Room.

ONE sweltering hot night, last summer, we were returning from church in New York, and our route homeward led us through one of the most crowded and squalid parts of the city. Men and women were sitting at the doors of their houses, trying to catch a breath of air in the narrow streets, and the children were playing on the crowded foot-paths and cobble-stones. The corner taverns were all ablaze, and sounds of carousing came through the ever-swinging doors. It seemed like a darker heathendom in the midst of Christianity—as if no man cared for the souls of these poor people.

Just then I caught sight of what seemed to be a star beaming brightly far ahead, and as I approached it took the form of a brightly illuminated cross. It was the cross on the spire of the De Witt Memorial Church, whose Sunday-school room is shown in the above engraving. It seemed to me a promise and prophecy—that the cross of Christ should bring light and salvation to the weary multitudes who are the prey of vice and sin.

This church, which cost \$60,000, was built by Mr. and Mrs. Morris K. Jessup, "in memory of their beloved parents." There is preaching in English and German every Sunday, and several services during the week; prayer-meetings, Bible-classes, Mothers'-meetings, Sewing, and Singing-school—everything that will elevate and bless the people. Every day a sweet chime of bells rings out the call to prayer. Special attention is given to the Sunday-school, whose large and handsome room connects by sliding doors with the church. What a bright, beautiful, convenient, commodious room it is! On the left, as the engraving shows, on the main floor are the Bible-class rooms and an intermediate department, all easily separated from each other and from the rest of the school by sliding doors. Above these rooms is the gallery for the primary department, which can be shut off by itself in the same manner. This gallery will easily accommodate 300 little ones, while 400 or 500 others can be gathered on the main

floor. The ceiling is blue, a fountain surrounded with growing plants, plashes and tinkles, while a fireplace at the end of the room, during the winter days, will send out its warmth and radiance. The two large windows at the angles of the room are emblematical, the one representing Christ blessing little children, and the other the child Jesus in the carpenter's shop, subject to his parents. The room is seated with chairs, which can be grouped for the convenience of classes, or arranged to face the school platform or the church pulpit, as circumstances may demand.

The Wondrous Star.

THE Magi came from lands afar,
From Araby and Malabar,—
For in the East they saw a star
That filled their soul with awe;
They knew the midnight heavens by heart,
Just as the seaman knows his chart,—
But ne'er till now, in any part
This wondrous star they saw.

There was a meaning in its light,
That told of One whose radiance bright
Should pale all suns of day or night;
And this they pondered o'er.
While hastening to Jerusalem;
The stranger star that beckoned them,
Heaven's fair auroral diadem,
Still moving on before.

But when they came to Bethlehem's hill,
Lo! suddenly that star stood still!
Then felt the wise men, with a thrill,
The Christ they sought was found.
The lowly inn they enter now,
And meekly worshipping, they bow
Before the holy Babe, whose brow
With lambent light was crowned.

Then all their treasures they unfold,
Myrrh, frankincense, and precious gold,
The gifts they gave to kings of old—
For Him they own as King;
They bless Him for His human birth,
The God that came from heaven to earth
On missions of a nobler worth
Then angels' songs can sing.

So, on this Christmas jubilee,
The gifts, O Christ, we bring to Thee,
Are hymns of choral harmony,—
Of warm adoring love;
And prayers that Thou wilt be our Light,
Our constant Star in Life's dark night,
To guide our onward steps aright,
Safe to Thy home above.

—Caroline May.



REV. GEORGE DOUGLAS, *Ex-President of the General Conference.*

The Rev. George Douglas, LL.D.

BY THE EDITOR.

IN the beautiful village of Ashkirk, near the romantic Tweedside, and seven miles from Abbotsford, in Roxburghshire, Scotland, was born, on October 14th, 1825, the subject of this sketch. He came of sturdy Presbyterian stock, and his youth was nourished on the lofty teachings of the Word of God, the Shorter Catechism, and the Westminster Confession; and, doubtless, his young soul was often stirred by the heroic traditions of Flodden Field and of Dunbar, which were both near by, and by the ballads of Chevy Chase, and of the border war.

In 1832 the Douglas family came to the City of Montreal, and in an excellent school, kept by the Rev. Mr. Black, Presbyterian minister, in Laprairie, young George continued his education. In course of time he became a clerk in a book-store, and probably hence derived that love of literature which has been a characteristic of his life. He was in time promoted to the dignity of book-keeper. But a thirst for knowledge possessed his soul, and he entered in the School of Medicine of his adopted city, and pursued part of the prescribed course.

In the year 1843, the great crisis of his life-history took place. Being then a young man in the eighteenth year of his age, he was led by the providence of God to attend the ministry of the Rev. William Squire, in the old Methodist Church on the corner of St. James and St. Francois Xavier Streets. Under the faithful preaching of that man of God, whose memory is even yet fragrant in the hearts of many, he became convinced of sin, and was enabled to exercise that faith which saveth the soul, and feel that love which casteth out all fear. He forthwith identified himself with the Church in which he had been brought to God, and joined a class led by the now sainted John Mattheson, of which he himself afterwards became leader. Mr. Mattheson delighted to tell how he overcame George's diffidence about speaking in public and leading a class, by calling

upon him on one occasion, when the class-room was crowded, to speak, and then, when he was telling his experience, Mr. Mattheson slipped in behind him into his seat, and said, "Now, George, lead the class." From this there was no escape, as he occupied the floor without any possibility of getting a seat.

The talents and consecrated zeal of the young convert were such that soon the voice of the Church summoned him to public service for the Master. Overcoming his natural diffidence, he was induced to perform the duty of a local preacher. This he did with such success as to be highly acceptable to the

Wesleyan congregations of Montreal, accustomed as they were to the preaching of men of distinguished abilities. It was evident that God had called this young man to the office of the Christian ministry as his life-work. And he was not disobedient to the Divine call. In 1848, being then in his twenty-third year, he was received as a probationer for the ministry. The following year he was recommended by the Lower Canada District to attend the Wesleyan Theological Institute, at Richmond, England. But scarcely had he reached that famous school of the prophets than he was designated to missionary work in the Bahamas District of the West India Mission. He was "specially ordained" at St. John's Square, London, in the spring of 1850, by the venerable Thos. Jackson, Dr. Alder, and others, and sent to the Bermuda Islands. After a year and a half's residence in that semi-tropical climate his health failed, and the germ of his subsequent life-long affliction was planted. He returned, therefore, to Montreal the following year. Of his ministerial life of thirty-two years, twenty-two years have been spent in that city—eleven of them in pastoral work, nine at the head of the Theological College, and two without a charge on account of ill-health. His other fields of toil have been Kingston, Toronto, and Hamilton, in each of which places he laboured for three years, witnessing many souls to his ministry in the prosperity of the work of God under his charge.

In 1869, in recognition of his distinguished abilities, the University of McGill College conferred upon him the well-merited degree of LL.D. Dr. Douglas is a man whom his brethren in the ministry have ever delighted to honour. And right royally has he represented his Church and country in the presence of the great religious gatherings and foremost orators of the day. His manly presence, his deep toned voice, his broad sweep of thought, and majestic flights of eloquence, have stirred the hearts of listening thousands, and done brave battle for the cause of God. He has also filled with eminent

ability the office of co-delegate of the old Canada Conference, President of the Montreal Conference, and Vice-President and President of the General Conference of the Methodist Church in Canada.

Not the least of the important labours of the Rev. Dr. Douglas is his fostering care and wise presidency of the Wesleyan Theological College, Montreal. To this he has given the energies of his ripest years. The arduous duties of the principal's chair he has discharged with heroic fortitude, even while enduring a martyrdom of physical suffering. That his useful life may long be spared to bless the Church and the world, will be the prayer of all who know him either by reputation or in person.

The Christmas Dress.

BY MRS. C. A. LACROIX.



MRS. THALBERT bought a beautiful sky-blue silk dress, and gave it to her only daughter for a Christmas present. It was taken to the dressmaker's, made, and brought home on Christmas eve.

The young Thalia tried it on, and was delighted to find that it was a most perfect fit.

While counting out the change for the work, Mrs. Thalbert remarked, "It is very cold this evening. Thalia go and get a glass of wine for the gentleman who has brought your dress. You will find it in the little cupboard in the small pantry below. Be sure and take a light with you, for it is already dark there."

Thalia returned presently with a bottle, poured out a glass, and waited politely before the man, to serve him again if he should wish. But having taken a mouthful, the poor fellow, in fright of poison, threw it out of his mouth quicker than it went in.

Thalia had been too dilatory to obey her mother concerning the taking of a light, and instead of wine she had laid her hand on and brought the ink-bottle. Now her beautiful blue dress was all sown over with spots of black ink so badly that she could never wear it. The poor girl shed many hot tears of sorrow and disappointment, but her mother said to her, "Now you see what comes from disobedience; to-morrow you must go to church in your old dress, and to make you obedient another time, I shall not buy you another dress until the year brings round another Christmas."

If Thalia's mother had been a teetotaler she would have had no wine in the house, and poor Thalia would have saved her dress. Wine is a mocker, and to drink it, or to give it to friends on Christmas or New Year's Day—or indeed, at any time—is a great wrong. Let the children's cry be, "Down with strong drink! Huzzah for cold water!"

The Year is Old—So Old!

THE year is old—so old!
The nights are long and dark and dreary;
The fretting winds are never weary;
They fret against my window pane,
"The burden of their sad refrain,
"The burden of their sad refrain,
The year is old—so old!

The year is old—so old!
The mountains tell it to the river,
Their sides deep rent by seam and shiver;
The rivers sobbing as they flow,
Repeat it in the vales below.
The wild sea waves take up the strain,
And ocean bears it back again.
The year is old—so old!

The year is old—so old!
O voices of the dreary night!
O sleepless watchers for the light!
O hills that lift your hoary heads
Above the ice-bound river beds!
O winds that wail round nameless graves!
O sobbing, sighing, wild sea waves!
The year is old—so old!

The year is old—so old,
O hearts that breathe and eyes that weep
O'er buried hopes that treasures keep!
Prepare the shroud and winding sheet,
And softly walk with reverent feet,
The year is old—so old!

Old Hannah.

"HANNAH says the cattle fall upon their knees at twelve o'clock Christmas eve," said Minnie Grant to her aunt, as they sat waiting for the child's bedtime.

"Hanna is a superstitious old Scotch woman," returned the aunt; "she believes all that she has ever heard, without reason or questioning; but that is happier than to doubt every thing, as many people do. I suppose that idea about the cattle came from an old Latin poet, who speaks of them as cherishing the new-born Child with their warm breath, and falling down before the majesty of his glory. There are many human beings who never show this reverence that is attributed to the beasts; they might learn a lesson from old Hannah's superstition."

Aunt Ellen was thoughtful and quiet for a moment, then she said, "It would not be so very wonderful for the dumb creatures to prostrate themselves before such a sublime mystery as God manifest in the flesh, when, through the instrumentality of an angel, an ass was once caused to fall down before it, and to speak as with man's voice."

"Hannah will put her new 'besom' behind the door to-morrow morning, and a chair in the door-way with bread and cheese upon it," said the little girl; "she thinks it will bring prosperity to the family."

"If we try to make clean our hearts, and to sweep out all evil things from them, as we sweep the house with a new broom; and if we use hospitality and charity to all the poor and needy who come to us, it will indeed bring prosperity, and God's richest blessing," replied Aunt Ellen. "There is a good deal of significance in many of these old customs. It would be pleasant to use them if we always thought of their meaning."

"And Hannah has made me a 'Yule baby' from some of the bread dough," said the child.

"That is to remind you of the blessed Babe, who is to us the bread of everlasting life. If we do not feed upon his love and his word and his Holy Spirit, we can no more live the Christian life than these bodies could live without our daily bread. I like Hannah's customs when rightly understood."

Christmas in Heaven.

WHAT is she doing in-heaven to-day,
The babe that I buried a year ago!
I laid my beautiful treasure away,
Out of my arms in December's snow;
The wind from the north blew sharp and
cold,
The flakes fell white on the coffin lid—
They said she was wearing a crown of gold—
I thought of the curls in darkness hid.

Out of the mist of that terrible pain,
I watched while they covered my lovely
dead;
Stunned and deafened in my heart and brain,
How far, far off seemed the words they
said;
With tender look and with gentle tone
They spoke of the land beyond the sky,
And whispered that God had but claimed his
own;
"She was mine, and not His," was my
soul's reply.

Dear, patient Saviour, who long ago
Didst bear with thy servant's unbelief,
Thy love is unchanged to-day, I know—
Forgive the thoughts of that passionate
grief!
I feel it was best that Thy hand should lead
My little white lamb to the heavenly
shore;
O blessed shepherd! Thy flock doth feed
In pastures that bloom for evermore!

And so on these days of the closing year,
I can think in peace of the child I love!
Perhaps when the Christmas time draws
near,
They keep the feast in the home above;
Perhaps the angel who led the song,
The sweet, new song which the shepherds
heard,
Sings it again in the baby throng,
Repeats the dear story, word for word.

Or perhaps the Magi who saw the star,
Tell how it brightened their lonely way;
In mystic beauty it gleamed from afar,
The morning star of the Lord's own day.
And Mary may take up the story then,
And tell how they knelt in the stable
straw,
When the Light of the world and the Hope of
men
As a little child in her arms they saw.

Or better than these, does the Saviour take
The babes to His bosom, and talk to them
Of how He loves them, and how, for their
sake,
He came to the manger in Bethlehem!
Perhaps they look up, and their happy eyes
With loving wonder behold the grace,
The light of the infinite sacrifice
Shine down from our Master's most blessed
face.

Perhaps—perhaps—but at least I am sure
That my child is at home with the saints
in light;
Only the gentle, the good, and the pure
Are talking with her on this Christmas
night.
And so I give thanks though my eyes are
filled
With such tears as my darling will never
shed,
I know it is e'en as our Father willed;
With Him I can leave her—my precious
dead.

—N. Y. Observer.

Sam.—A Christmas Story.

BY MARGARET EYTINGE.

LATE in the afternoon, the day
before Christmas, Katie Burns,
sitting in a low chair by the
basement window, raising her eyes from
the wax doll she was dressing for Cousin
Maud, beheld an elfish face pressed
against the window-pane. Katie opened
the window.

"Who—what are you?" she asked
in surprise; for the little creature
looked like something unearthly, with
its straggling black hair, its brown
skin, and dark, wild, hungry-looking
eyes. On its left arm hung a battered
tin pail, and in its right hand it car-
ried a box of matches.

"I'm Sam," replied the queer little
stranger, in a wonderfully sweet voice,
"an' I were a-lookin' at that baby you

was a-holdin.' Aint it pooty? Want
to buy any matches?"

Kate shut the window, and opened
the door. "Come in," she said.

The half-frozen mite hesitated; but
Kate with a smile pointed to the bright
fire in the dining-room. That proved
a temptation indeed! In a moment
the waif was down on its knees
on the hearth-rug, and its tiny thin
hands stretched out towards the glow-
ing coals. Kate went to the store-
room, cut a piece from a mince pie,
and gave it to the wee match-seller.

"Eat that," she said, and then tell
me all about yourself."

Sam ate "that," looking alternately
at the fire and the "pooty" doll. But
the last crumb disappeared, and the
story was not begun.

"Where do you live?" said Kate.
"Most o' ther time, in a big bar'l
wot stan's on its side in front of the
lager-beer s'loon.

"Where else do you live?"
"In a cellar 'long 'o Mom Peanuts.
She's good, she is; she sot me up in
bizness this mornin', she did; an' I'm
to have half the money, I am. Want
ter buy any matches?"

"Have you any parents?" asked
Kate.

"What's them," said Sam.
"Any father and mother, I mean."
"Oh, daddy and mammy? They's
dead. Daddy was a I-talyon, he was,
an' he played on a organ. I was four;
now I am seven. Mammy died last
Christmas, she did. She was no
I-talyon; she used to kiss me, an' I
had bread an' milk every day, I had."

"Tell me more about your mother,"
said Kate.

The child's dark eyes lit up, until
they were positively beautiful. "She
looked like you, she did; blue eyes
like yourn, and shiny hair like yourn,
too. 'An' Sam, you musn't steal; 'an'
Sam, you musn't tell lies; 'an' Sam,
you must say every night before
you go to sleep, Please, dear God, take
care of poor orfun Sam, that's wot she
sed. Want ter buy any matches?"

Just then Kate heard Uncle John's
step in the hall.

"Oh, uncle, come here, please," she
said.

"Bless my heart, Katie," said he,
"what have you brought in now?"

"A poor little thing who has no
father nor mother, and no home but a
barrel or a cellar."

"Want ter buy any matches?" said
Sam, and the big black eyes were
solemnly fixed on Uncle John's face.

Uncle John, burst out laughing.
"How do you sell 'em, Bub?"

"I aint no bub," said Sam, gravely.
"I'm a sis," and moved towards the door.

"Come back, don't go," cried Kate,
"Didn't you say your name was Sam?"

"Sam's my short name. My long
un's Samuella; so there now."

"Who gave you that funny name?"
asked Kate.

"It aint a funny name, it aint,"
said the small girl indignantly. "My
mammy giv' me that name, she did.
She had a white figger, with wings,
a prayin', an' its name was Samuel,
an' she liked it. It's broke now, an'
so my name's Samuella, an' they calls
me Sam. Want ter—

"Yes, all of them," interrupted
Uncle John. "How many are there?"

"They's twelve three cents' worth,
an' two boxes for three cents, an' cheap,
I tell you," answered Sam.

"Have you any change?" asked
Uncle John.

"Nine cents," said Sam, "an' that's
all it is."

"Well, here's a dollar bill; bring
me the change to-morrow; and now go
home, for it is getting quite dark."

Sam took the money, opened the tin-
pail, and counted out the boxes of
matches with a gravity wonderful to
see. Kate put an apple tart in the
dirty little hand.

"Why not bread and butter?" asked
Uncle John, with a twinkle in his eyes.

"Oh, everybody gives bread and
butter," said Kate. "If I were a
beggar—"

"I aint no beggar," interrupted Sam.

"I beg your pardon," said Kate.
"If I were in the match business, I
should like apple tarts and mince pie
once in a while for a change, I'm sure."

Sam took up her empty pail, "Good-
bye, I'll fetch the change to-morrow
mornin'," she said and away she went.

"Bet he, I mean she, never comes
back," said Uncle John as he heard
the arca gate close.

"Oh, Uncle," said Kate earnestly,
"if you had heard her talk about her
poor dead mother, who told her never
to lie, never to steal, and to pray every
night, you wouldn't say so."

"Well, well," said Uncle John, "if
she does come, we'll give her something
nice for her Christmas."

Christmas day beamed bright and
clear, and the morning hours hastened
on to noon, and the afternoon hours to
evening, but no Samuella. "Let's
forget it to-day, because it's merry
Christmas," said Kate to Uncle John,
who was almost as disappointed as she
was herself. "To-morrow we'll fret
and scold about it. But I do wish she
had come."

"So do I," said the old gentlemen.

The servant appeared, "Miss Kate,"
she said, "there's a small child down-
stairs, I don't know whether it's a girl
or boy, want's to see you. I told him
again and again she couldn't; but he
won't go."

Away flew Kate, and there, sure
enough, in the lower hall, covered with
snow and trembling with cold, stood
little Sam.

"Couldn't come before. Mom Pea-
nuts bin sick; had to take care of her.
She's most well now. Here's his
change; and here," taking a chicken
made of red barley sugar from the
bosom of the ragged jacket, "is suthin'
I brought for your Christmas present."

"Mamma! Uncle John! Go, Lena
and bring them here, quick," cried
impulsive Kate, the tears filling her
beautiful blue eyes, and taking Sam
by the hand she fairly dragged her
into the dining-room. Mamma and
Uncle John came.

"See Uncle," said Kate trium-
phantly, "she has come, through snow
and storm, to bring your money."

"Couldn't come to-day!" said Sam.

"And, oh, mamma!" Kate went on,
"she's brought me this little candy
chicken for a Christmas present."

Uncle John was at this moment
seized with such a violent cough that,
after it was over, he was obliged to
take out his handkerchief and wipe
his eyes.

"And I think," said Kate, speaking
with great earnestness, and looking
very beautiful, "that Sam is a Christ-
mas present herself—sent from God to
me. Mamma, dear, may I take her?"

Mamma's only reply was a kiss.
Lena led the Christmas present away,
and Katie went back to her guests,
whom she had well-nigh forgotten.

An hour afterwards Uncle John led
into the parlor a quaint-looking little
girl, with nicely-braided hair, dark,
brilliant eyes, and a sweet, shy smile.
She was a tiny thing, and in her red
woollen dress and cunning, doll-like
white apron, looked, so all the children
said, "as pretty as a picture." It was
Ella. "Sam" had disappeared for-
ever—*Christian at Work.*

A Marvelous Escape.

THERE was a happy home preparing
for Christmas in a village on the borders
of a large forest. The sons and daugh-
ters had all gathered, except Alexis,
the third son, who was living at a town
many miles away. But he was expect-
ed that evening, and had written to
say he should take a sleigh, and drive
over as early as he could; and they all
looked out eagerly for him.

Meantime Alexis was in fearful
danger. That morning he had taken a
sleigh, and driven off over the frozen
ground. It was very pleasant at first;
the air was keen but the sun shone
brightly, and his heart was full of joy
thinking of the dear ones he hoped
soon to see. He pulled the thick
buffalo-skin rug closely over him, and
urged the horse on as fast as it would
go. In the middle of the day he stop-
ped at a large village he came to, and
had some dinner, while his horse was
changed, and then he started once more
on his journey.

The day had changed dark clouds
hung about, and Alexis feared there
might be more snow, but two or three
hours would, he hoped, bring him to
his home. He had gone more than
half way when he noticed that his
horse trembled very much, and almost
stopped, and then flew along the snow
as if terrified. Alexis looked round to
see what caused the fright, and to his
unspeakable horror he saw a large wolf
coming along at a rapid trot, its tongue
hanging out, and its dreadful teeth
showing.

There was no need to urge the horse
to go faster, and Alexis did not dare
to alter his course, for fear he should
get more among the haunts of the
wolves; they did not come often into
this beaten track, he knew, and he
supposed that this solitary one must
have been forced into the public road
by hunger. Alexis shuddered to think
that he and his good horse might both
have to furnish a meal for the dreadful
creature. He kept one hand firmly on
the reins, for he felt if the sleigh upset
it would mean certain death; and with
the other hand he felt for his pistols,
which were in a leather case in the front
of the sleigh.

He had only just time to reach them,
when the wolf gave a bound, and clung
on to the sleigh! For a moment Alexis
thought all was over. But the thick
rug prevented the wolf from biting
very deeply, and in less time than you
can read this, Alexis fired off his pistol
and shot the wolf in the throat; another
shot, and the creature fell off the sleigh
—dead. How thankful our traveller
was, I cannot tell you. He did not
stop to look at his enemy; indeed, the
horse tore on as if frightened out of its
wits, and I doubt if Alexis could have
stopped it if he had wished.

When he arrived at home, his friends
were greatly alarmed to see him come
in such a state: his arm was bleeding,
and his face pale and agitated. But
on hearing the whole story, they could
only lift up their hearts in thanksgiving
to God for such a marvellous escape!

At the Door of the Year.

The corridors of Time
Are full of doors—the portals of closed years;
We enter them no more, though bitter tears
Beat hard against them, and we hear the
chime

Of lost dreams, dirge-like, in behind them
ring
At Memory's opening

But one door stands ajar—
The New Year's; while a golden chain of
days

Holds it half shut—The eager foot delays
That presses to its threshold's mighty bar;
And fears that shrink, and hopes that shout
around

Around it wait and crowd.

It shuts back the unknown,
And dare we truly welcome one more year,
Who down the past a mocking laughter hear
From idle aims like wandering breezes blown?
We whose large aspirations dimmed and
shrank

Till the year's scroll was blank.

We pause beside the bed.
Thy year, O God, how shall we enter in?
How shall we thence Thy hidden treasures
win?

Shall we return in beggary, as before,
When Thou art near at hand, with infinite
wealth,

Wisdom and heavy health!

The footsteps of a child
Sound close behind us. Listen! He will
speak.

His birthday bells have hardly rung a week,
Yet has He trod the world's press undetiled.
"Come with Me!" hear Him through His
smiling say,

"Behold, I am the way!"

Against the door His face
Shines as the sun. His touch is a command;
The years unfold before His baby hand!
The beauty of His presence fills all space,
"Enter through Me," He saith, "nor
wander more;

For lo! I am the door."

And all doors openeth He,
The New-born Christ, the Lord of the New
Year,
The threshold of our locked hearts standeth
near;

And while He gives us back love's rusted key,
Our future on us with His eyes has smiled,
Even as a little child.

Harry's Christmas.

IT takes but a few strokes of the
artist's pencil to picture the deso-
lation and wretchedness of the
drunkard's home. There are the bare
walls, through whose crevices the
winter wind drifts the snow, and piles
it in little heaps across the fireless
hearth; there are the few broken
chairs, the leafless table, upon which
no other food except a few potatoes or
a scanty loaf ever finds its way; there
are the children shivering, with half-
clad bodies, quarreling perhaps over
the last remaining crust. The pale-
faced wife is waiting with trembling
the coming of him whose step was
once hailed with delight. It is a sad
picture, but not overdrawn; it is too
true to life.

But this is only the result of a few
rapid strokes of the artist's brush.
Who can describe the heartache of the
young wife when she first meets her
husband reeling home in a state of
intoxication, and so on day after day
and week after week, until all hope
has well-nigh fled? Can we know the
hunger of the little ones, who have
cried for bread when not a crust had
the mother to give? This is beyond
our skill; none but our Heavenly
Father, who heareth every cry of dis-
tress, will know the real wretchedness
of the drunkard's home.

It was such a home as this in which
Harry Marsten lived with his two
sisters. They were the unfortunate

children of a father who regarded not
their tears, but spent for rum the
money that should have clothed and
fed them. Harry was eight years old,
and aided his mother and sisters, as
many a child of twice his years would
not have attempted. Their wretched
home was in a dirty and obscure street
from the dingy window was upon
scenes of distress as great as their
own. Harry was a newsboy, and
every morning, no matter how cold,
would tie his ragged comforter about
his neck, shuffle on a pair of shoes
three times too large for him and full
of holes, and drawing his scanty clothes
closer around him, would hurry down
to the office for his morning supply of
papers; after which he would be found
on the busy street crying his old song
of "Papers—morning pa-pers!" while
he would shift the bundle from one
arm to the other to better warm the
blue fingers in his pockets.

It was the day before Christmas,
and Harry had hoped, by saving his
pennies, to buy something for their
dinner the next day. He had risen
early that morning before the great
city was astir, and tiptoed past his
father, who lay drunk on the floor, and
started out to begin his day's work.
It was a busy day for him, and more
than one bright nickel found its way
to his pocket. Evening found his
bundle of papers all sold, and he
found he had nearly two dollars. Oh,
how proudly he turned to go home,
feeling rich with his little store. He
had not gone far when a rough voice,
he knew too well, accompanied by a
shake, brought him to a sudden stop.
"See here, boy, have ye any mon-
ey?"

Poor Harry! Here was an end to
his plans. The tears filled his eyes as
he vainly tried to slip from the vice-
like grasp of his father.

"Come—none of yer whimpering;
fork it over! I must have it!"

"Father!" began he, "I haven't
much, and I was going to get some-
thing for dinner, so we can have Christ-
mas again as we used to."

"Christmas be bothered! I want
it," and with these heartless words he
emptied the little pocket and staggered
away, leaving his boy penniless and
well-nigh heart-broken. Sadly he
walked towards the hovel called home,
and lifting the latch entered, and going
directly to his mother, buried his face
in her lap and sobbed.

"Mother, it's no use trying. I can't
do anything nor have anything but it
must all go for whiskey," and the tears
flowed afresh as he told her the whole
story.

Softly the mother smoothed the tum-
bled hair, while she tried to comfort
him in his great sorrow. Poor mother!
hope had long since died in her heart,
but she lived in her boy—he was her
sole support.

Twilight deepened into night, and
after eating his scanty meal he crept
away to bed with such a heavy heart
as none but a drunkard's child can
know.

Let us follow the wretched father to
the haunt of sin. Entering the door
he immediately walked to the counter,
when his attention was arrested by a
conversation between the landlord and
his wife concerning the dinner next
day, for which great preparations were
being made. For the first time in
years his deadened conscience gave a
throb of remorse, as he thought of the

family at home with nothing to eat on
the coming day, while his money went
to help load the table of the whiskey-
seller with luxuries. Putting the
money back in his pocket, he turned
into the street and walked rapidly on,
not knowing whither he went. A
great conflict was going on in his
mind, but the good angel triumphed,
and an hour later found him on his
way to his own home with bundles for
the Christmas dinner such as had not
found their way to his dwelling for
years.

Harry was awakened next morning
by the bells ringing out on the frosty
air, "Peace on earth, good will to
men." Hastily dressing, he found, to
his great surprise, his father sober and
kindling a fire in the broken stove,
while his little sisters were eagerly
devouring such rosy apples as he had
brought for them. The day was like a
dream to Harry. The father, although
restless had remained at home, not
daring to trust himself in reach of the
old temptation. When evening came
he started out but soon returned, and
tossing a paper into his wife's lap, sat
down and wept like a child. Catching
the paper from his mother's hands,
Harry read, "Temperance Pledge," and
his father's name in bold letters at the
bottom. Clapping his hands, he
danced for joy, shouting:

"Oh, this is merry Christmas, mother;
this is 'Peace on earth' to us. Good-
bye to cold and hunger now; father's
signed the pledge!" and in his childish
enthusiasm he caught the father round
the neck and pressed a kiss on the
poor man's lips. Lifting his face to
ward his wife, the penitent father,
with choking voice, exclaimed:

"Wife! children! so help me God,
I'll never, never touch rum again, and
from this Christmas-day I'll be a better
man," and he kept his word.

Harry and his two sisters went to
school, and through many years, peace
and prosperity smiled on that once
desolate home.

By-Gone Christmas Customs.

THE manner in which this period of
the year has been observed has often
varied. The observances of the day
first came to be pretty general in the
Catholic Church about the year 300.
By some of our ancestors it was viewed
in the double light of a religious and
joyful season of festivities. The mid-
night preceding Christmas day every
person went to mass; on Christmas day
three different masses were sung with
much solemnity. Others celebrated it
with great parade, splendour, and con-
vivality. Business was superseded by
merriment and hospitality; the most
careworn countenance brightened on
the occasion. The nobles and the
barons encouraged and participated in
the various sports; the industrious
laborer's cot, and the residence of proud
royalty equally resounded with tumul-
tuous joy. From Christmas day to
Twelfth-day there was a continued run
of entertainments. Not only did our
ancestors make great rejoicings on, but
before and after, Christmas day. By a
law in the time of Alfred, the "twelve
days" after the nativity of our Saviour
were made festivals. Thus we have
the origin of Twelfth day. It appears
from Bishop Holt that the whole of the
days were dedicated to feasting.

Our ancestors' various amusements
were conducted by a sort of master of
the ceremonies, called the "Lord of

Misrule," whose duty it was to keep
order during the celebration of the dif-
ferent sports and pastimes. The uni-
versities, the lord mayor and sheriffs,
and all noblemen and gentlemen, had
their "lords of misrule." These "lords"
were first preached against at Cam-
bridge by the Puritans, in the reign of
James I., as unbecoming the gravity of
the university; but the custom was too
generally practiced to be suddenly
checked.

The custom of serving boars' head at
Christmas bears an ancient date, and
much ceremony and parade were occa-
sionally attached to it. Henry II.,
"served his son (upon the young prince's
coronation) at the table as server, bring-
ing up the boar's head with trumpets
before it."

The custom of strolling from street
to street with musical instruments and
singing, seems to have originated from
a very ancient practice which prevailed,
of certain minstrels who were attached
to the king's court, and other great
persons, who paraded the streets, and
sounded the hour—thus acting as a sort
of watchmen.

Boys and Girls' Temperance Lessons.**LESSON I.****Alcohol.**

QUESTION. What is Alcohol?

ANSWER. Alcohol is a clear, colour-
less, inflammable fluid.

Q. What one thing does it most
resemble in appearance?

A. Water.

Q. We said that Alcohol was clear
and colourless. What do these words
mean?

A. Clear means pure, unmixed; and
colourless means something that we
can see through, as we can through
glass or the air.

Q. We said that Alcohol was in-
flammable. What does this mean?

A. It means that it will burn. You
put some of it in a saucer and touch it
with a lighted match, and it will be
covered with a blue flame, and in a
short time the Alcohol will be gone
and the saucer dry.

Q. Is there any scent in Alcohol?

A. There is. You can smell it at a
distance of several yards.

Q. How does alcohol taste?

A. It has a fiery burning taste.

Q. What effect does it have upon
the skin?

A. If you put it on the tender part
of your arm, and hold it there a little
time, the skin will grow red and you
will feel a smarting pain.

Q. Suppose you hold your tongue in
a saucer of alcohol, what will be the
effect?

A. It will burn and smart, and the
tongue will be made sore.

Q. Suppose you swallow some of it,
how will it affect the throat and
stomach?

A. You cannot swallow it unless it
is mixed with water.

Q. Why cannot you swallow it?

A. Because when unmixed it is so
fiery and burning, that the throat will
not allow it to pass into the stomach.

Q. But suppose you could swallow
it—what then?

A. It would burn your throat and
stomach as it did your arm and tongue.

*We purpose giving a series of these Temperance
Lessons, which, we hope, will train up our boys and
girls to be thorough teetotalers.

The First Christmas.

THEY came a little child to earth
Long ago,
And the angels of God proclaimed his birth
High and low.

Out in the night, so calm and still,
Their song was heard,
For they knew that the Child on Bethlehem's
hill
Was Christ the Lord.

Far away in a goodly land,
Fair and bright,
Children with crowns of glory stand,
Robed in white.

They sing, the Lord of heaven so fair
A child was born,
And that they might his crown of glory share,
Wore crown of thorn.

In mortal weakness, want, and pain,
He came to die,
That the children of earth might in glory
reign
With him on high.

And evermore in robes so fair
And undefiled,
Those ransomed children his praise declare
Who was a child.

Puzzledom.



WONDERFUL

HERE is a curious optical illusion. The reader should look intently at the little star in the centre of the above picture while counting twenty-seven seconds. Then instantly look at some small spot on the wall or ceiling for the same length of time and he will see the likeness of General Grant. Or, after looking at the picture, the eyelids may be closed and the eyes kept fixed, and the same result will be produced. Can any of our readers explain this illusion? If you do not see the portrait the first time you try, try again, and you will soon see it very distinctly.

1. CHARADES.

First, a pool; second a measure of land. Whole, a physician to Henry VIII.

2. BURIED CITIES.

Isabel, Fast day will soon be here.
Nell, I'm all tired out.
Amos, we go to Europe next month.

3. HOUR-GLASS.

A form; a sacred song; the whole; a letter; cold; a book of the Old Testament; to interpose. Centurion name a prophet.

4. HALF-SQUARE.

A country; a body of water; to restrain; pale; an article; a letter.

Bible Alphabet.

HERE is an alphabet that will make you study. Get out your Bible and turn to the places. When you have found them read and remember:—

A was a monarch who reigned in the East.—Esther i. 1.
B was a Chaldean who made a great feast.—Daniel v. 1-4.

C was voracious when others told lies.—Num. xiii. 30-33.
D was a woman, heroic and wise.—Judges iv. 1-14.
E was a refuge, where David spared Saul.—1 Sam. xxiv. 17.
F was a Roman, accuser of Paul.—Acts xxvi. 24.
G was a garden, a frequent resort.—John xviii. 1-2; Matt. xxvi. 36.
H was a city where David held Court.—2 Sam. ii. 11.
I was a mocker, a very bad boy.—Genesis xvi. 16.
J was a city, preferred as a joy.—Psalm cxxxii. 6.
K was a father whose son was quite tall.—1 Sam. ix. 1-2.
L was a proud one who had a great fall.—Isaiah xiv. 12.
M was a nephew, whose uncle was good.—Col. iv. 10; Acts xi. 24.
N was a city, long hid where it stood.—Zech. ii. 13.
O was a servant, acknowledged a brother.—Phil. i. 16.
P was a Christian greeting another.—2 Tim. iv. 21.
R was a damsel who knew a man's voice.—1 Kings xi. 4-11.
T was a sea-port where preaching was long.—Acts xx. 6-7.
U was a teamster, struck dead for his wrong.—2 Sam. vi. 7.
V was a cast-off and never restored.—Esther i. 19.
Z was a ruin, with sorrow deplored.—Psalm cxxxvii.

A Christmas Legend.

IT was a Christmas Eve. The night was very dark and the snow falling fast, as Hermann, the charcoal burner, drew his cloak tighter around him, and the wind whistled fiercely through the trees of the Black Forest. He had been to carry a load to a castle near, and was hastening to his little hut. Although he worked very hard, he was poor, gaining barely enough for the wants of his wife and children. He was thinking of them, when he heard a faint wailing. Guided by the sound he groped about and found a little child scantily clothed, shivering and sobbing by itself in the snow.

"Why, little one, have they left thee here alone to face this cruel blast?"

The child answered nothing, but looked piteously up in the charcoal burner's face.

"Well, I cannot leave thee here. Thou wouldst be dead before the morning."

So saying, Hermann raised it in his arms, wrapping it in his cloak and warming its little cold hands in his bosom. When he arrived at his hut he put down the child and tapped at the door, which was immediately thrown open, and the children rushed to meet him.

"Here, wife, is a guest to our Christmas Eve supper," said he, leading in the little one, which held timidly to his finger with its tiny hand.

"And welcome he is," said his wife. "Now let him come and warm himself by the fire."

The children all pressed round to welcome and gaze at the new comer. They showed him their pretty fir tree, decorated with bright-coloured lamps in honour of Christmas Eve, which the good mother had endeavoured to make a fete for the children. Then they sat down to supper, each child contributing of its portion for the guest, looking

with admiration at its clear blue eyes and golden hair, which shone so as to shed a brighter light in the room; and as they gazed it grew into a sort of halo round his head, and his eyes beamed with a heavenly lustre. Soon two white wings appeared at his shoulders, and he seemed to grow larger and larger, and then the beautiful vision vanished spreading out his hands as in benediction over them.

Hermann and his wife fell upon their knees, exclaiming in awe-struck voices:—"The holy Christ-child!" and then embraced their wondering children in joy and thankfulness that they had entertained the Heavenly Guest. The next morning as Hermann passed by the place where he had found the fair child, he saw a cluster of lovely white flowers, with dark green leaves, looking as though the snow itself blossomed. Hermann plucked some and carried them reverently home to his wife and children, who treasured their fair blossoms and tended them carefully in remembrance of that wonderful Christmas Eve, calling them Chrysanthemums; and every year, as the time came round, they put aside a portion of their feast and gave it to some poor little child, according to the words of the Christ: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

How a Christmas Card Saved a Life.

MERRY Christmas time was drawing near, and I wanted some pretty illuminations to give away, so I went one morning to where I knew I should find a beautiful variety.

While I was looking over a multitude of mottoes, and making my choice, I noticed a lady near me, apparently bent on the same errand. After a few minutes, as she seemed unable to find what she was seeking, I asked her if there were any among those I had chosen which she particularly liked.

She thanked me pleasantly, and said she had selected all she wished except one, and she felt sure of finding it among the unsorted cards, for it had been published, she thought, by the Tract Society only the year before.

"It is one with purple pansies—heart's ease, you know—and the verse,

'Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.'

I want it for a special use," she said; and then added impulsively, "Those words saved a life—a soul—last Christmas. You don't wonder they are precious!"

Then, in a few words, she gave the outline of the story of one who had, through terrible trials, lost faith in human love, truth, and honour, and, worst of all, in his misery, had made shipwreck of his faith in God.

It was Christmas Day. He started to leave the house with the full purpose of committing suicide. The children were just coming home from a Sunday-school Christmas-tree, eager and happy with their pretty presents. He stole out through a room from which they had passed, so that no one might see him leave the house. Lying on the floor, just where he must step to cross the threshold, was a card with purple pansies and the words, "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." Startled, thrilled to his soul, he could not pass by that

message from heaven facing him, as it to drive him back from his wicked, cowardly purpose. Faith in God and his love came back, and with it came courage and strength to take up the burden of a bruised and shattered life. God did care for him, and was a very present help in trouble.

The story touched me deeply, and has often recurred to me since, though I have never seen the lady again, and know nothing further of the circumstances. It always comes back with special force whenever I had to choose Scripture verses to give away. Since we have the promise, "My word shall not return unto me void," may we not rightly ask God's peculiar blessing on these little messengers, which go to so many homes we may never enter?

I could not help thinking that, perhaps, some one had been praying "in secret" for God's blessing on that very message.

The hand of God was so clearly in it all, guiding the choice of the text, providing that this one and no other should be given to the little child, that her chilled fingers should carry it safely through the streets, and then drop it at the very moment, and in the only place, where it would save a life, that it seemed to me that it would be for his honour to repeat the story of his loving care, which came to me so strangely.

May it be the Father's message to some other poor troubled heart, assuring him of the faithfulness of him, "will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able; but will, with the temptation, make a way of escape, that we may be able to bear it." May it remind him of One who was wounded for our transgressions, and on whose tender, human heart we may to-day cast all our sins and our sorrows and our cares, and be sure that he will care for us.—M. L. Demarest.

A YALE student, who was to be a foreign missionary, was rather jeeringly asked by a classmate six years ago for "the first bushel of idols" he should persuade the heathen to give up. He went to Japan, and has already collected and sent home barrels full, which were furnished for the purpose by converts.

THE following verse was once inscribed on a church in Halifax, N.S., the basement of which had been used as a wine saloon:

There's a spirit above, and a spirit below,
A spirit of joy and a spirit of woe;
The spirit above is the spirit divine,
The spirit below is the spirit of wine.

A MEMBER of the rhetorical class in a certain college had just finished his declamation, when the professor said: "Mr. —, do you suppose a general would address his soldiers in the manner you spoke that piece?" "Yes, sir, I do," was the reply, "if he was half-scared to death, and as nervous as a cat."

Lesson Notes.

ON this page, hereafter, the Lesson Notes, different from those of either PLEASANT HOURS, or SUNSEAM, will appear. We have been unable to furnish them for this specimen number, published as it is so many weeks before the date which it bears. These Lesson Notes will be very copious, very clear, and very helpful for the study of the Scripture Lessons.