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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. VI.]

TORONTO, DECEMBER 11, 1886.

[No. 25.]

THE TOBACCO NUISANCE.

BY THE EDITOR.

NOTHING that we know of, unless it be the still worse drink habit, makes a man so selfish, so disregarding of the rights and comfort of others as the tobacco habit. When I journey from home my life is often made a burden to me by reason of this almost universal habit. At home one can keep himself and person clear of the foul weed and its noxious emanations, but when travelling he is everywhere exposed to its poisonous fumes. Even in the elegant sleeping coach of the Canadian Pacific Railway which was my moving home for some days, upholstered as it was with all conceivable luxury, the most conspicuous article of furniture in each seat-section is an odious spittoon—"cuspidor" is, I believe, the polite word—with its hideous suggestions and associations. We have seen them even in pulpits in the South, and notwithstanding the presence of refined and delicate ladies, these abominations are in frequent use. Then, in each car the compartment commanding the best view of the magnificent scenery is dedicated to the smokers, and is furnished with more "cuspidors." From this den gentlemen emerge reeking with tobacco smoke, and sit down beside me to discuss politics, philosophy, religion, with tobacco-poisoned breath.

In Europe it frequently happens that attached to the very window out of which one looks on a lovely landscape, is a receptacle for cigar ashes, whose stale contents almost makes one sick with disgust.

In the ordinary passenger cars matters are still worse. In these there are no "cuspidors," and the filthy condition of the floor, after a three or four days' ride, can be more easily imagined than described.

In the emigrant car the condition of things is worst of all. Here unlimited smoking is permitted. To the reek of the foul tobacco and attendant nastiness of its own occupants, is added that contributed by passengers of the other cars, who come here to indulge

their odious habit. And this, although the car is the travelling home, often for day after day, of women and children, sometimes wayworn and sick with a long sea voyage, for whom there is no way of escape from these discomforts. Is it not then un-

at a country station, stood outside half frozen with the cold, rather than encounter the nastiness of the waiting room crowded with smokers; and the worst of it is that the sensibilities of smokers become so blunted that they are unconscious of the nuisance they

and holy God, and when you come to man's estate do not have to say in a very literal sense, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips." I covet for my native land deliverance from this ugly habit. I rejoice that in the last three years over 80,000 of the young people of our Sunday-schools have signed a pledge against the twin evils of liquor and tobacco. I hope that every scholar will sign that pledge, and that soon we shall have a generation of men free from the thralldom of this vile habit.

Christmas Greeting.

"SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME."

Come from near and come from far,
Come from all the lauds that are;

Come from lonely realms of snow,
Where no winds of summer blow.

Come from golden Palestine,
Vine-clad Alps and Appennine,
Fabled shore and pilgrim shrine.

Come from Asia's central sweep,
Africa's sand and jungle deep;
Come from Western prairies' sweep.

Come from islands of the sea,
Says the Christ-child, unto Me.
Every child is bidden free.

Come in. Come in.



MRS. LARSEN'S CHRISTMAS GIFT.

It was Christmas morning. The day was a bright one, and the boy had had more presents, especially of money, than ever before; nevertheless, as Harold lounged up and down the road, he was not wholly happy.

"It isn't exactly fair," he was saying to himself, "and yet I don't see how to help it. Wish I could think of some way."

This young worrypate was a stout-shouldered, open-faced lad of fourteen, and as he turned upon his heel at the end of the short path his eye took in a complete circle of mountains white with snow from base to summit.

Looking down the valley toward the right, he could trace the road for about a mile, until it disappeared behind a headland of granite, turning the sharp corner on a shelf the outer edge of which bordered upon the very brink of a precipice.

"Somebody'll pitch off there one o' these days," he said to himself, "if anything ever breaks loose on the car."

To the left the gulch sloped steeply to where, four or five miles distant, a vast pyramid of snow and rocks cut off the view, except that over its shoulder Harold could count the tips of half a dozen lofty peaks, shining like white marble against the intensely blue sky.

This was a silver-mining gulch far up among the summits of Wassatch Mountains. One of the richest mines was under the management of Harold's

manly, is it not brutal to inflict them? I write thus strongly as I sweep along in just such a train as I describe amid the grand scenery of the north shore of Lake Superior.

This is not pleasant reading I admit; but the reality is far worse. I have often, while waiting for the train

create. Have I and other non-smokers, especially women and children, not the right of protection from this nuisance?

I write on this unsavory topic to urge boys never to acquire this odious habit. Keep your bodies clean and pure, and fit for the service of a pure

father, who usually spent the winter in the East, or, at least, in Salt Lake City, making only two or three visits to the gulch during the colder half of the year.

This winter, however, the mine had called for close attention, and Mr. Morton had persuaded his family to stay with him in his snug cabin on the mountain, where Harold had found life by no means dull. "At any rate I'd like to give somebody a present this Christmas that would really make 'em feel glad I was around."

Just then a shout of excitement among the men and boys collected in holiday attire at the ore house aroused his attention, and made him run to join them, forgetting his somewhat romantic worries in an instant.

The mines in these mountains were all at great height, as silver lodes in the West are very likely to be, and the gulch itself was too steep and rugged to allow of building a railway into it. From its head, where the principal mines were clustered, to its foot, and a branch of one of the Utah railroads came up, there ran a tramway about eight miles long.

The grade of this road was very steep—perhaps 300 feet to the mile—and it was laid well up on the mountain-side, swinging in a great curve around the head of the gulch, then coming pretty straight down past where Harold lived, until it turned sharply around the rocky headland a mile below him, and followed the ins and outs of the hill side to its lower end.

This steep and winding tramway answered well enough, because all heavy loads came down, nothing going up except empty cars or light loads of provisions, and so forth. The cars were rude boxes about five feet long and half as wide, mounted on small low wheels. Three or four of them would be filled with ore somewhere up the track, and linked together into a short train. Then a man would mount the load, and loosen the brakes by moving a lever. Their weight would cause the heavy cars to start down hill at once, and would keep them running, the conductor controlling their speed by tightening or loosening the lever of the brake as he wished.

To go faster than ten miles an hour was thought unsafe, and when, as occasionally happened, a car broke loose and ran away down the grade alone, great damage was sure to follow.

The empty cars gathered at the bottom were hauled slowly up by tandem teams of mules, meeting and passing the down trains on side tracks. Harold's place was a sort of half way station.

In coming down, these cars ran swiftly by their own weight, and no trip could be more exciting. It was as good as coasting, and very much like it, except that you had a mule to pull you back.

To-day, of course, was a holiday, and no cars were supposed to be running,

yet surely there was one coming down the track from the head of the gulch. It could not be made out very well at first, but soon came into plain view, spinning along the great half-circle which the track took at the head of the valley.

"It's a runaway passenger-car!" yelled a man in the excited group with whom Harold was watching the escapade.

"There's somebody aboard—two of 'em!" was the next discovery. "Why don't they slow up? They'll jump the track sure, and it's no joke of a fall they'd get down the rocks along there."

"Maybe the brake's busted."

"No," Harold cried out; "it's Larsen's babies, and they don't know enough. I suppose they have been playing on the car, and turned it loose."

"Larsen's kids!" exclaimed the whole crowd. "They're gone 'coons."

What was to be done? If anything, it must be quickly.

The little car, rocking and jolting under its fearful speed, but holding to the track almost by a miracle, was spinning towards the group of men at a great rate.

In two minutes more it would be there, if before that time it had not leaped the track, and hurled into the ravine the two little girls who had sunk down between the seats, and were clinging to each other's necks in a frenzy of fright.

"Get a big rope," yelled one man. "Hold it in front of the car, and catch her in the slack."

Several men started at this suggestion to bring a cable. Perhaps the plan might have succeeded if it had been tried, but Harold felt, with a heart that almost stopped beating in horror, that the time was too short.

Then a thought struck him.

Beside the station was a side track, on which several ore cars were standing. He waited to ask nobody's advice, but sprang to the switch, opened it, and, with a strength he wondered at afterwards, pushed one of these empty cars forward upon the main track, closing the switch with one hand, and jogging the car with the other, he clambered in and began moving down the main track ahead of the runaway, which was chasing him like a thunder-bolt.

"I have half a minute the start," he said to himself, as he glanced back. "If only I can get well under way, I can catch it and slow up safely. If it overtakes me too soon, it'll bounce me off the track, and then—good-by all of us!"

He was rolling faster and faster every rod. His brakes were wide open, and already he was making twenty miles an hour—a perilous speed; but the babies behind him were running sixty, and one of their axles was ablaze.

Two seconds later they were so near that he could see the whites of their terrified eyes staring wildly from under their yellow curls. The lad never re-

membered how much he had disliked them half an hour ago. He was too full of the possibility of saving their lives and restoring them to their mother—a Christmas present worth even his making! In a twinkling now the wild car would strike his, and the dreaded precipice was hardly a rifle shot away.

"I am not going half fast enough," he thought, with an agonizing picture of home faces flashing across his eyes, and a fleeting temptation in his heart to leap out into the safety of a snow-bank and leave both cars to their fate. But he put this feeling away with the next thought, and fixed his mind on his work.

Grasping the upright handle of the brake with one hand, he clutched the grimy and creaking old box with the other, and waited the instant that should tell whether he was to catch and hold and slow down to safety that runaway passenger-car with Larsen's yellow-haired babies, or whether they all should go over the cliff together.

It seemed an hour, that brief second of expectation, while the headland loomed almost overhead. Then came a shock, a frightful lurch and rumble, a hard grip upon the jerking brake-rod, a blinding sort of pause, and Harold realized that he was still upright upon the track, that his car was grinding its way to a sudden stoppage at the curve, and that he and the babies were safe on the very brink of the awful rocks.

Perhaps you may not call this feat a very great thing to do; but the men up the gulch thought it was just that, and nothing less. None of them expected to see any one of the three come back alive from that fearful ride.

It happened just at the moment when Harold leaped into his car and pushed off, that his father came out of the house and caught a distant glimpse of him. Supposing his boy would be surprised and dashed to pieces before he could get out of the road of the runaway, and not waiting to be told that Harold knew this car was coming, and had placed himself in front of it to try to catch it, Mr. Morton ran down the rough tramway as fast as he could go, followed by the whole crowd.

Both cars shot quickly out of sight, but the men hastened on, fearing every moment to come upon a wreck. You can imagine something of their joy when they saw Harold, safe and sound, standing beside the passenger-car, comforting as well as he could the screaming infants who clung about his neck.

Mr. Morton folded his big arms tightly around the three, when the workmen pressed up to shake Harold's hand and slap him on the back, pretending not to see the tears on their Superintendent's weather-beaten cheek. Harold notified these, though, and again seized his father's hand.

"Does mother know?" he asked anxiously. "And will she fret? Bill Smiley,"—turning to one of the boys—"please run and tell her I'm all right."

"No—need of that," Mr. Morton exclaimed; "she doesn't know in what peril her brave boy has put himself."

"Brave?" Harold repeated, in a wondering tone. "Why, there wasn't anything else to do. It ain't worth bragging about."

That woke up a big miner who had heard plenty of boasting, but didn't often meet with modesty.

"Well, blow me over the range, if here ain't a feller as don't know he's got more sand than this 'ere whole chicken-hearted camp!"

So these dozen men made the rocky walls of that valley ring with such cheers as you would hardly expect to hear from three times their number. Harold was lifted on to the front seat of the car, beside the babies, while the excited men began to push him back up the track in the grandest style they could arrange on so short a notice.

Little Billy Smiley, taking a hint, scampered off ahead; and when the procession came near home Mrs. Morton was seen waiting. The men broke into a trot, and cheered again as the platform was reached, and the lad leaped off to be clasped in his mother's arms.

"I'm glad you didn't know, or wasn't around," Harold confessed to her; for then, perhaps, I should not have dared."

"There wa'n't none o' the rest of us had the nerve, madam," said the big miner; "and I tell you them kids would ha' gone over the cliff, sure as shootin' if it had't been for your son."

"Oh, you're all making too much of this little thing," Harold broke in. "But what about those same 'kids'?"

"Well, somebody would better take them home, I suppose," his father answered.

"Let's all go!" exclaimed Harold. "We can hitch up the mules and take you along, mother. You'll go, won't you?"

"If you would like it."

Five minutes later, therefore, the Mortons and several of the men had mounted the car, and were jogging up the snow-borded tramway.

When they reached the head of the gulch, where were the mines and the little settlement in which the Larsens lived, nobody was on the lookout, and apparently neither car nor children had been missed. So Mrs. Morton and Harold walked to the house, and knocked at the door, leaving the little ones outside. A voice called, "Come in," and they entered.

It was a bare, dark, log cabin of two small rooms, in the further one of which, as they knew, stood Mr. Larsen's bed. A half-dead fire smouldered on the hearth, and at first their dazzled eyes could distinguish nothing else, but they saw that this room also contained an extra bed, upon which lay the wife of the injured workman, as helpless as he.

"Are you sick, too?" exclaimed Mrs. Morton.

"Yes'm. I've bin sick since mornin'."

a week ago—could not wash nor work at all."

"Where is Ludovig!"

"He is gone to work up at de Sphread Eagle Mine—and dia is Grist-mas, too. It vas too bad—too bad."

"Then the money I gave you for presents for—" Mrs. Morton began to ask; but the poor woman interrupted her.

"Aah, my good frient, I had mit to puy some medicine. Und dese goot tings to eat vat you did send—vell, I dinks de shildren would been starved except for dese goot tings you sent. But dey're all gone already, und I don't know vat I shall do."

"Where are the babes now?"

"Oh, dey're oud to blay. Dey shtay too long, but dey must haf some fun. Bime-by dey haf mebbe to suffer too, shust like me."

At that instant the door was burst open, and a shock-headed boy who did not belong to the Morton party rushed in, shouting, "Oh, Miss Larsen, your kids has gone down the road on a runaway car, and they is both kill—"

At hearing the last words of the rude messenger, Mrs. Larsen had tried to spring up, but Mrs. Morton pressed her back upon the pillow, exclaiming: "The children are safe. They did go down the track, but they were saved."

To see the deep joy with which that poor mother welcomed back the lost little ones, and to feel what might have been the scene had they been brought to that distracted home dead instead of alive, was too much for the tender-hearted lad, and he began to poke the fire with tremendous vigour. The next thought was, supposing that he had failed, and that his had been the mother weeping over a lifeless child, and—But he couldn't stand this picture at all, and rushed out, exclaiming, "Awful smokey!" for fear somebody should misunderstand the water in his eyes and the chokiness in his throat.

More than one holiday has come and gone since then.

As for Harold—when, on Christmas, he goes to church and hears of him whose perfect manliness all men pattern after who try to make the best of themselves, nothing goes home to his feeling and his understanding like the record that of his own will Christ gave his life for the help of those who were weak and in trouble. "Greater love hath no man than this"—nor greater courage.

Christmas-Eve.

HEAVILY hung is our Christmas-tree,
Its boughs they glitter for you and for me,
The hemlock-branches piled with snow
In evergreen wood, bent not so low,
God giveth all. The ravens call,
He hears them. So let us begin
He hears always when children pray;
For he himself a child has been.

Dear Lord, we would not selfish be
All hearts are not as glad as we,
Remember then the poor to-night
And flood their darkness with thy light;
The hungry food, the wanderer lead,
The sorrowing soothe, the captive free;
And pity, we pray, on the children's day
All those who have no Christmas-tree.

Little Margary.

BY KATHERINE LEST STEVENSON.

THE Christmas bells were ringing,
Were ringing glad and clear;
And every home and every heart
Seemed filled with Christmas cheer;

When sad, pale little Margary
Stole forth the joy to see;
And, as she heard the bells' glad chime,
"Oh, ring," she cried, "for me!"

No Christmas joy was in her heart,
She had no warm bright home;
She shivered as the bells' glad peal
Rang from the tall church dome.

For sick, and desolate, and sad,
Was Margary that night,
When Christmas bells were ringing glad,
And Christmas fires burned bright.

She stole along the brilliant street,
She paused by many a door;
The light, and warmth, and gladsome cheer
But made her sorrow more.

She saw homes filled with brightness,
And children mad with glee;
"There is no mother's love," she said,
"No Christmas joy for me."

She sank at last, faint, weary,
Within the broad church door;
The bells were chiming overhead,
The storm raged wild before.

There, as the music sounded,
She felt no longer sad;
"I think the church must be my home,"
She said, "I feel so glad."

"Why, it's all warm around me,
All warm, and glad, and bright;
Are the bells calling for me?
Yes, yes, I see a light!

"I am going to my Christmas"—
Then all was still again,
While, overhead, the Christmas chimes
Still rang the mad refrain.

The sexton found her later,
And he grieved the sight to see—
But the Christmas joy shone on the face
Of little Margary.

HOW FATHERS CAN MAKE CHRISTMAS MERRY.

BY KNOXIAN.

A MERRY Christmas is a good thing. It makes people feel genial and generous and kindly. The most frozen natures thaw out a little during the Christmas season. A man that does not thaw out slightly at Christmas is a little iceberg. He should be sent on an expedition in search of the North Pole, and sent so far that he would have to stay there. The place for such a little human iceberg is North, among the large icebergs. The heads of every household should try to make Christmas a most enjoyable family day.

A merry Christmas, like a well-kept Sabbath, must be arranged for. The first thing in the way of successful arrangement is to get yourself in a good humour.

There are various ways in which a man may put himself into a presentable condition for Christmas. One good way is to meditate on the blessings you have enjoyed during the past year. You need not go out into the fields like Isaac to engage in the meditation. If the weather had been as cold in the East as in Canada Isaac would have done his meditation within

doors. Just think on Christmas eve of the blessings you and your family have enjoyed for the last twelve months—health, home, friends, food, raiment, reason, restraining grace, the privileges of the sanctuary and the hope of a better home in the land beyond. If you find that meditating does not stir up your gratitude, relieve you from worry, and take the acid out of your system, then take a little wholesome exercise among the poor. Go to that poor bed-ridden sufferer around the corner, who has lain there for years, and bring him or her some Christmas cheer.

Having made the necessary inward preparations for Christmas then turn your attention to the family. You see that woman working just as hard on Christmas morning as on any other. You took a good long snooze, but she had to take care of the children and arrange for the Christmas dinner. That is the woman whose ungloved hand you held at the marriage altar long years ago. She has changed a good deal since then. The bloom has left her cheek, but she lost it taking care of your house and children. She does not step so lightly now as she did then, but remember she has taken many a weary step in caring for your home. She has changed, no doubt, but not any more than you have changed—perhaps not quite so much. There was no smell of tobacco on your breath, or two days' growth on your unshaven chin when you began to visit that woman. You never spoke short or cross to her in those days—never. Now, if you can't afford to give her a nice Christmas present you can at least show her that you appreciate her efforts to make your home comfortable, and that you love her quite as much as when her step was more elastic and her cheek had more colour.

Have you any children in the house? Give each one a little present if you can afford the outlay. Years hence, when they are far from the old home spending Christmas among strangers, the little present may make them think of other days and perhaps keep them from evil. If you are so much engaged in business or have to attend so many meetings that you don't know the smaller children, try and get acquainted with them. Their mother will be happy to give you a suitable introduction. The little ones may be surprised at your conduct, but the surprise will do them good.

It might add a little to the enjoyment of your Christmas dinner if you invited a young friend or two in to help the family to demolish the Christmas turkey. Are there no well-behaved, deserving young men within your circle, who are far away from their homes? Do you not know of any worthy young ladies in situations, fighting their own way in the world that you might invite to share your hospitality? Your own boys and girls may not always be at home—they may not always have a home to be in, and you may yet see

the day when you will be very glad to hear that your son or your daughter has been invited to dine on Christmas with some respectable man in a distant town or city.

If you go out take the children with you. Give their mother a drive. It will make her think of old times and do her good. Spend the evening in the family. Don't steal away into another room and read your political paper, and selfishly suck a cigar or briar-root or old clay. Be one of the family for one evening.

And having spent Christmas day merrily in your home, gather the family around the family altar and commend them all to the great Father above. Remember the absent ones in the family prayer and ask God for grace to make your home better and brighter for the new year than it ever was before.—*Presbyterian.*

Edith's Christmas Morning.

THIS really now is Christmas day;
I am so glad so glad!
I wonder if in all the world
There's anybody sad.

But oh, dear me! I 'most forgot
That girl across the way;
Her father drinks, they're awful poor,
And once I heard her say
That Christmas day was like all days.
I'm 'fraid—I'd like to know—
But what's the use? It's too late now
If I had money, though,
I'd go and—but I've not a cent.

Now let me think: they say
If anybody has the will
They're sure to find the way,—
What can I give to that poor girl?
I just have this sweet doll
That Santa Claus has brought for me,
Besides this pop-corn ball,
And box of candy, nuts and cakes.

And still "where there's a will"—
But I'm real poor myself, I'm sure,
Yet she is poorer still,
And like enough has had no gift
This blessed Christmas morn.
I wonder if she's thought at all
That Christmas, Christ was born.

He did not think about himself,
But just of others thought.
I 'pose I could divide with her
These things that Santa brought—
I will! I'll give her half of them,
But then—here's this sweet doll,
I can't divide it, possibly;
I'll just give—give—it all.

GOD'S CHRISTMAS GIFT.

AMID our Christmas gifts we should not forget the best and greatest of all—God's gift of his own dear Son. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." O what a gift, on the first Christmas-day eighteen hundred and eighty-five years ago, was the gift of the Divine Child, the Babe of Bethlehem, the Son of God, to be the Saviour of the world! Dear children, let him be your Saviour. Love him. Trust him. Give him, as the best Christmas gift you can bring, your young and loving hearts.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, DECEMBER 11, 1886.

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IS FOR CHRISTMAS.

We are sure our readers will be pleased with the more clear and open appearance of the pages of PLEASANT HOURS. These are only specimens of the improvements we propose making from time to time. We intend to use, as our increased circulation will warrant the expense, better cuts and more of them, and cuts referring specially to Canadian subjects. This being the jubilee year of the reign of Her gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, we propose having a number of illustrated articles that will cultivate the loyalty and patriotism of all our young readers.

The *Methodist Magazine* also comes out in a handsome new cover, and presents for the year 1887 an announcement of unsurpassed interest. By condensing somewhat the printed matter, and adding a considerable number of pages, the amount of reading it will give will be increased by about 100 pages. It will have several articles of special interest to Sunday-schools—one

admirable one in the January number by the Rev. Dr. Carman, one of the General Superintendents, on the "Sunday-school as a centre of influence;" one by the Rev. J. Philp, M.A., on "Methodism and Sunday-schools;" valuable illustrated series on Bible Lands, and on mission work; numerous illustrated articles on Canadian life and scenery, by the Marquis of Lorne, the Editor, and others; and many other attractions too numerous to mention (See announcement on last page.) Several schools have for some years circulated from two to ten copies of the Magazine instead of Sunday-school libraries, as being fresher, more interesting, and more attractive. For this purpose the Magazine is given to schools at special rates, made known on application.

CHRISTMAS TIDE.

It is Christmas tide the world over. We celebrate this most joyous time of all the year in our most joyless and inclement season. Winter has thrown her icy mantle over us, and

"The sun comes late to the pallid sky,
And does not come to stay;
The snow gleams cold on the barren plains,
The year is old and gray."

Perhaps to those who have earthly comforts, Christmas is all the more joyous from the contrast within doors and without, but to those who measure their coal by the peck, and through whose thin walls the cold wind fiercely pierces, there can be no great joy, even on the anniversary of our Saviour's birth. Had all who profess the name of Christ the true Christian spirit, there would be fewer of such unfortunates—less need to say, with Hood,

"Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity,
Under the sun."

But Christmas is not confined to our cold climate. Christmas will be celebrated all around the world where Christian missionaries have gone to tell the story of our Saviour's birth. Then forget not the brother upon whose hearth the fire burns low, who sees only his present misery—

"Even God's providence
Seeming estranged."

Forget not the little children whose pinched faces tell of an age of sorrows. Forget not those who have gone to foreign lands to carry the good news of the gospel. Forget not those who are beginning to understand what it is to have a Saviour, and those who yet do not know of his wondrous love. Forget not the sinful, those in prisons, those sunk in sin, seemingly beyond redemption. Remember that for all of these Christ was born and died, as well as for us.

"Sound over all waters, reach out from all lands,
The chorus of voices, the clasping of hands;
Sing hymns that were sung by the stars of the morn,
Sing songs of the angels when Jesus was born."

OUR SUNDAY-SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS.

The following letter on this subject has been received. I have just to hand 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 "get 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 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.

We beg to acknowledge with thanks receipt of \$2.25 for the Crosby Indian Girls' Home, from a little girl in Chicago—Miss Fredda Smith. Received through W. G. Graham, Aurora. Other contributions for the same deserving object, or for the McDougall Orphanage, will be gladly received and forwarded.

Into Unknown Seas; or, The Cruise of Two Sailor Boys. By David Ker. New York: Harper Brothers. Price \$1.00.

Silent Pate; or, The Young Stowaways. By James Otis. Same publishers, and same price.

These books have both been devoured with fascinated interest by the many readers of that bright paper, *Harper's Young People*. They both abound more than sufficiently in adventure, but the second is more to our taste than the first. It has an element of pathos that is quite touching, and is not so sensational in character as the first. They are fresh, breezy books that will be read with avidity by all boys.



BATHING OFF THE YACHT "SUNBEAM."

In this year of special need will not all Sunday-schools fall into line, and each do something for the Missionary Fund? Many schools do nobly, but many others do nothing. This "ought not so to be." In accordance with the recommendation of the General Conference, let each Sunday-school be organized as a Juvenile Missionary Society. The income from this source is growing, but it might easily be doubled. Let our Sunday-school superintendents take hold of this matter, and see what can be done.—
Outlook.

BATHING OFF THE YACHT "SUNBEAM."

This cut shows Lady Brassey's children at sea bathing off the yacht *Sunbeam*. Secured by a rope held in their father's hand, they leaped from the deck into the water and swam around like young dolphins. This is one of 90 beautiful cuts, kindly presented by Lady Brassey to the Editor of the *Canadian Methodist Magazine*, to illustrate a series of articles which will run through the Magazine for 1887, describing her adventures "in the Trades, the Tropics, and the Roaring Forties."

SIR WALTER SCOTT'S "Christmas in the Olden Time" has been chosen as the text for six and twenty illustrations by E. H. Garrett, Harry Fenn, J. Steeple Davis, G. A. Teal, Henry Sandham, Childo Hassam and H. P. Barnes, engraved under the supervision of Geo. T. Andrews, for Cassel & Company to publish. The book has a genuine Christmas flavour; we hear the big logs crackling on the hearth, and smell the savory plum-pudding as we turn the leaves of this attractive volume.



THE FIRST SNOW.

What December Says.

OPEN your hearts ere I am gone,
And hear my old, old story;
For I am the mouth that first looked down
On the the beautiful Babe of glory.
You must never call me lone and drear
Because no birds are singing;
Open your hearts, and you shall hear
The song of the angels ringing.

Open your hearts, and hear the feet
Of the star-led wise men olden;
Bring out your treasures of incense sweet,
Lay down your offerings golden.
You say you look, but you see no light
Of the wonderful Babe I'm telling;
You say they have carried him off by night
From Bethlehem's lowly dwelling.

Open your hearts and seek the door
Where the always poor are staying;
For this is the story, for evermore,
The Master's voice is saying:
Inasmuch as ye do it unto them,
The poor, the weak, and the stranger,
Ye do it to Jesus of Bethlehem—
Dear Babe of the star-lit manger.

To our readers, to our friends far and near, and to all to whom these words shall come, we wish a Merry, Merry Christmas. Be happy for once, if you never were before, on this coming Christmas day. Be good, be kind, be charitable. Know the blessedness of giving; the happiness that comes to those who seek to make others happy. Do not let Christmas pass without doing something that will cause a gleam

of happiness to enter some human heart. What a blessed and comforting thought it is that wherever we are, whatever may be our condition, though homeless and friendless we may be, Christmas has one gift for us far richer and rarer than earth's choicest treasures are. It is a gift that all may claim and yet it is ours alone—the love of Jesus and salvation through his blood. For "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life."

SIXTIETH YEAR.

THE *Youth's Companion* celebrates this year its sixtieth anniversary. It might well be named the "*Universal Companion*," so widely is it read and so wisely adapted to all ages. Its contributors are the most noted writers of the world. Among them are W. D. Howells, J. T. Trowbridge, Prof. Huxley, the Duke of Argyll, the Marquis of Lorne and Prince Louise, Archdeacon Farrar, C. A. Stephens, Admiral David Porter, Lieutenant Schwatka, and many others. We do not wonder that the *Companion*, with such contributors, has nearly 400,000 subscribers. It costs but \$1.75 a year, and a subscription sent now is credited to January, 1888.

CHRISTMAS AT SEA.

THEY stood beside the helmsman at the wheel, the lookout in the bow, the officers who had the watch; dark, ghostly figures in their several stations; but every man among them hummed a Christmas tune, or had a Christmas thought, or spoke below his breath to his companion of some bygone Christmas day, with homeward hopes belonging to it. And every man on board, waking or sleeping, good or bad, had had a kinder word for one another on that day than on any other day in the year, and had shared to some extent in its festivities; and had remembered those he cared for at a distance, and had known that they delighted to remember him.

CHRISTMAS ALL THE YEAR.

DICKENS says, "I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year," and perhaps this, which he said at another time, is the reason why he wants to keep it all the year. "I have always thought of Christmas time as a good time: a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time."

The true Christmas is all this and more. It is a time when we not only remember our friends and—enemies, if we have them, lovingly and forgivingly, but when we do it for the sake of one who loved us when we were far from him.

Any Christmas joy that does not find its spring and source in Jesus, the Holy Babe of Bethlehem, is not the true joy.

Let us look to him, dear little friends, as the One who carries all the world's hope and joy in himself, and be sure that he wants to fill our hearts out of his own great heart. Our hearts are little cups, which can only hold a few drops at best, but he loves to have us hold them up to be filled, and he loves to fill them! Shall we believe it, and in this way have a Merry Christmas all the year?

CHRISTMAS LEGENDS.

THERE is in the home life of the Canadian, especially farmer, at Christmas time, much that brings close to the mind the picture of the birth in the lowly manger. Many traditions still live about mysterious occurrences during the Christmas night, and these linger still with all their charm, with all their mellowness of primeval devotion among the homesteads on the verge of the forest or the cottage upon the bleak prairie. The infant's birth took place in a rude manger, among the stalled cattle, when, according to

the general belief, cold night-winds blew, and the Divine Babe and his mother were but feebly protected in a chilly manger. One old tradition, in particular, tells that at the moment of the child's birth the cattle in the manger fell upon their knees. How often by the lantern's light through the cold night have not little ones crept out to the barn where the cattle were in their stalls as the hands of the clock neared the hour of midnight, to see if the cattle were kneeling, for the tradition relates that at the precise moment in each year since the babe was born all dumb animals, in reverence, fall upon their knees. There was another tradition, too, which Shakespeare puts in the mouth of *Marcellus* in "Hamlet," that during the night of the nativity the cock crew from dark to dawn.

"Some say that over 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
This bird of dawnning song, that night long
And then they say no spirit dare stir abroad,
The nights are wholesome, then no plants strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallowed and so gracious is the time."

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

THE very name of the Christmas Tree is suggestive of long evenings, bright fires, curtains drawn and merry faces gathered round the hearth. There is the decking of the tree and the distributing of the gifts which have occupied kind hearts and busy fingers, perhaps, for months past.

We always have our tree lighted in the early evening. It is pleasant, even in homes where late dinners are the rule, for the grand meal of the day to take place at an hour when old and young may sit down together. Then, when desert has been discussed, and the servants have had time to clear away, we contrive for a little interval, when all will be at liberty. There are many ways of distributing the Christmas gifts. Sometimes one of the boys dresses up like a veritable Father Christmas, and has his luggage brought in and unpacked beside the tree. He delivers each gift with a rhyming couplet, perhaps ingeniously hitting at some little peculiarity in the recipient, but always so kindly that the subject of the joke can laugh as heartily as any one else. At another time a long-ball is constructed of very strong card board, or perhaps framed of netted wire, covered with a substantial material inside and out, and that again with cotton wadding to imitate snow.

This may be rolled into the room, with a great fuss and apparent difficulty. Of course, it must be made to fall open in the middle, and the contents distributed by a little white faced tot, who acts as the benevolent fairy from Snowland, and the messenger of Father Christmas in scattering his favours.

It is not talking, but walking, that will bring us to heaven.

A Peep Into Santa Claus's Home.

SANTA CLAUS sat in his easy-chair,
And thoughtfully rumbled his silver hair;
His face wore a look of sad unrest,
And he heaved a sigh from his inmost breast,
A woe that told that his heart was faint.
Pray, what had come over the jolly old saint?

Around him lay scattered a goodly store—
Such playthings as never were seen before,
New books emblazoned in red and gold,
And dolls too dainty almost to hold—
In heaps and heaps to the ceiling piled,
But he looked on them all and never smiled.

For close at his elbow sat his wife,
And she spoke, in a voice with discord rife,
Of how she never could go away,
But was forced like a prisoner at home to stay;

And when she ended the doleful strain,
She straightway began it all again.

"Ah, Santa, well may you be content,
As you think of the Christmas merriment,
Of the happy children, whose shining eyes
Will sparkle with joy and glad surprise.
From the lips of all will your praise be heard,
But of me they never speak a word.

"And yet you know through the whole long year

I plan and work for their Christmas cheer.
I knit the mittens and worsted balls,
The hoods and scarfs; I dress the dolls;
I choose for the children sick or lame
Some curious puzzle or charming game.

"Then, say, is it just that I should stay
At home all alone on Christmas-day,
With never a friendly word of cheer
To break the silence that reigneth here,
While you, close-wrapped in your cushioned sleigh,
With your reindeer fleet speed away and away?

"But I've borne it as long as I shall—so there!

And you needn't answer me. I declare
This year shall the end of my trials be:
I go with you, or you stay with me.
So you'd better resolve, without more strife,
To divide your honours with your wife."

I listened no longer, but easily
Could I guess from this what the end would be.

"When a woman will," so the proverb goes,
And the rest of the stanzas each one knows.
So you needn't wonder, next Christmas-day,
To see Santa appear in a double sleigh.

—Ella W. Ricker.

HOW CHRISTMAS CAME TO WOOD'S HOLLOW.

BY ELLA G. G. PAGE.

MARION RICHARDS shut the door of the little red school-house on Friday night with a sigh of relief. Two days' holiday—no more school until next Monday; and with a thankful feeling for her weekly rest, she went down the rough steps, worn by the feet of many generations, and at the foot was confronted by the snarled head and ungandy form of Joe Stone, the most ragged and unruly of her scholars.

He evidently had waited to speak to her.

"Well, Joe," said she wearily, "what is it now?"

He fumbled at the sleeve of his ragged jacket for a moment, and worked his clumsy feet uneasily in the tight snow. Then he broke forth,—

"Teacher, what is Christmas, anyhow? Nan Jones said it comes week after next, and Lu Green said she had seen a tree on Christmas full of presents for everybody, but I wa'n't green enough to believe that, you bet;" and he winked one eye and grimaced at his hearer. "I told 'em I'd ask you, and they said I dassen't do it. What is it, anyhow?" and he looked half defiantly, half sheepishly, into the lady's face.

"Do you mean to say no one has ever told you about Christmas—what it is—in all your life?" queried the astonished girl. "Did not ever your father and mother"—she stopped, for Joe had broken out into a chuckle.

"Well," drawled he, "seein' my mother died when I was a baby, and dad spends his time mostly in jail, you see they hadn't time to tell me; or mebbe I was so young I've forgot it," and he laughed again.

Marion looked at him—only twelve years old, no mother, and worse than no father! Somehow his rags and dirt, that before had only disgusted her, now moved her to pity.

"Where do you live?" she asked him in a softer tone than ever had fallen on Joe Stone's ears before.

"Oh, the old shanty on the hill belongs to me. Granddad left it to me because he said dad would spend it all, and I live there and do chores for my meals when I can get 'em to do, and go without eating when I can't."

"Walk down my way with me," said Marion, turning abruptly to hide a sudden tear, "and I'll tell you all about Christmas;" and for the first time Joe walked beside a nicely-dressed, lady-like woman, and heard, too, for the first time, the wonderful Christmas story, told, as Marion Richards had the gift of telling a story, with force and pathos.

At the close Marion bade the boy a kind "good-night" and went up the gravel walk to the little white cottage of the Widow Storrs, where she boarded, with a strange sort of pity stirring her heart for the boy who had never heard of Christmas.

"Mrs. Storrs," said she that evening, as the two lingered over their fragrant tea and smoking biscuit, "don't they ever keep Christmas here at Wood's Hollow?"

"Keep Christmas here!" said the widow with a strong emphasis on the last word. "Why, no! I used to when my Eddie was alive. He always hung up his stocking—oh, dear!" She wiped her eyes on her clean apron and began more briskly: "No; nobody here has any time or money to spend on Christmas. Why did you ask?"

"Oh, Joe Stone asked me about it; he knew nothing about it, nor any of them except Lucy Green, and she not much. Mrs. Storrs, why cannot we have a Christmas tree for them—the children, I mean?"

"How would you get your tree? And, Miss Richards, where would you

put it? And how would you get the presents?" Mrs. Storrs became an interrogation point all at once.

"Oh, somebody would get it in the woods. I'd have it at the school-house. The presents I'd make," said Marion rising and answering all these questions briefly, and she sat down in a brown study.

When the widow sat down to her knitting she resumed the subject.

"There are only twelve scholars, and you would help me, wouldn't you, Mrs. Storrs? We could make a horn of plenty for each one and fill it with candy, and a little present besides, couldn't we?" and a coaxing tone and smile accompanied the words.

"Yes, I'll help, but you'd better have 'em here, so I can help make them behave."

"May I really have them here? That is just splendid! There are two weeks to work in. Let me see—mittens for Annette and Cora, that's easy. Mattie will like a doll. I'll make a rag one, paint the face, and put on real hair. I can give Emma Jayne—oh, she wants everything—an apron, a pair of stockings, something to wear anyhow. What on earth shall I give Lu Green? She is my best scholar, too big for dolls, and she has mittens. A book for Will and Ted each. I've just the right books at home, and I'll write to mother to send them. And Joe! Oh, dear! I wish there was a hardware store in Wood's Hollow!"

"What for?" said Mrs. Storrs, interested but somewhat bewildered by the energy and enthusiasm of Miss Marion.

"Oh, I heard Joe tell one of the boys the other day that he'd rather have a jack-knife than anything else in the world. He said he had never had one, and he is twelve years old."

"A knife?" said the widow slowly. She sat silent a moment, then rose, and taking a lamp from the shelf, went into an adjoining room. In a few moments she returned, bringing a long flat box which she placed in Marion's hand silently, and sat down in her accustomed place. Inside the box, when it was opened by Marion's slender fingers, lay a pocket-knife, a perfect beauty—four-bladed, ivory-backed, sharp and bright.

"What do you mean by this?" queried Marion, her eyes aglow and her face kindling.

"It was bought for Eddie many years ago, a few weeks before Christmas, but he was brought home drowned before that day came, so he never saw it. It has been in my box ever since. You may have it for Joe. He is an orphan, and perhaps if his mother had lived, he would have been a better boy. She was a slimpy sort of a thing, but she was pious. His father is a hard one. Will that do?" she asked with a smothered sigh.

"It is just the thing! How can I thank you!" exclaimed the delighted teacher. "Now Joe is provided for, and I will give Lu Green a picture of

Evangeline that I have up in my trunk. She likes such pictures, and I have a lot of worsted, too, for the mittens and things. Mrs. Storrs, Wood's Hollow shall have one Christmas, anyhow!"

And as the clock struck nine, she rose, still holding the knife, and taking her lamp she bade the widow good night.

Upstairs she opened her trunk and took out the engraving of Evangeline, the poet's dream of matchless constancy, and soliloquized: "How shall I frame this?" Just then she caught the golden shine of a picture frame hanging over her head. "I might take that, but my precious mamma deserves a golden frame; and yet Lucy never had a picture in her life, and she loves them so. I'll tell the story to them all about Evangeline. Yes, I'll take you out of your frame, mamma dear, and you shall have another some day. That's just right. Then there's that tidy I was making for Aunt Dell. She has hosts of tidies. I'll give that to Ann Jones; she likes bright colour, and they have a parlour with the prettiest, homeliest old rocking-chair in it, I ever saw. I'll make it larger so as to hide as much of that horrid chair as possible. I must send to mother for coloured paper for my horns of plenty and some other little fixings."

And she closed the trunk with a satisfied smile, and after a blessed chapter of the Book and a heartfelt prayer, the little teacher slept, to dream of gigantic Christmas trees and eager faces.

It was hard to say which were the more astonished, scholars or their parents, at the reception by each scholar of a nicely-written invitation to spend Christmas evening with their teacher at Mrs. Storrs. There were great debates over the proper answer to these invitations, which ended by following the advice of Lucy Green. Twelve answers exactly alike were sent to Miss Richards in various handwriting, from Joe Stone's scrawl to Mattie Jones' large printing capitals. They ran as follows, with different names:—

"Miss Lucy Green will be glad to visit Miss Marion G. Richards at Mrs. Storrs on Christmas.

"Your obedient servant,
"LUCY GREEN."

The form of signing was a brilliant idea of Ann Jones, and was thought to give style and elegance to the whole composition.

None of the children ever forgot that evening. The parlour was trimmed with evergreens and hemlock boughs. Marion had enlisted the two clerks in the one small store of the place into her service, and they, showing a suspicious readiness to oblige her, had brought a large load of Christmas greens to the house early in the morning. So the room was a woodland bower.

One mysterious corner was enclosed with a curtain of sheets, above which

shot up tall green hemlock boughs. What it was no one knew, and they forgot to guess, as Miss Marion brought out a box of games borrowed from Mrs. Storrs for the occasion, and commenced to teach the elders to play them with her, after giving the younger ones a box of blocks with which to build houses and castles. After a few merry games with Miss Richards, Mrs. Storrs invited them into the kitchen, where was a table set with cakes, oranges, sandwiches and milk, and in the centre an enormous frosted cake, which had come to Marion in the box from her mother the day before, and on the top, in raised sugar letters, were the words, "Merry Christmas."

The delighted children sat down, and any one who knows children need not be told whither the cakes and oranges went. Then the lovely pink letters were taken off, and one given to each child, "to be kept to remember me by," Miss Marion said, giving one also to Mrs. Storrs and laying one by for herself. The cake was cut, a great part of it eaten, and then they went back to the parlour again. Mrs. Storrs had slipped quietly away a few moments before, and lo! the curtain was gone, and in the corner stood a small but beautiful tree, bright with coloured horns of plenty and strings of popped corn, with a great gilt star on top and numerous bundles hanging amid its branches.

Lu whispered to Joe, "I told you folks had trees. That is Miss Richards'. Isn't she good to show it to us?"

Joe assented with a nod, and with the secret wish that he had a tree like it.

But Miss Richards stepped to the tree, and taking off a parcel, read the name "Ann Jones." Ann stood bewildered; but with a smile and the words, "That is yours to keep, Ann, with a Merry Christmas," the bundle was placed in her hands. That was a fruitful tree. There was a present for every one (including Mrs. Storrs and Marion, who had each placed a gift for the other, secretly, on the tree), with a large horn of plenty full of mixed candy, a string of popped corn, and an orange apiece besides.

Then when the tree was empty there came a quiet hour of story-telling by Miss Richards, beginning with Evangeline and ending with the wonderful story of the manger at Bethlehem. Then Mrs. Storrs and Marion tied on little hoods, and buttoned sacques, and hunted up caps and overcoats, and with a kiss for the girls and a hearty hand-shake for the boys, Christmas Day at Wood's Hollow was over. Joe lingered to the last, and as he raised his eyes at parting, with a suspicious moisture in them, he said, holding up the precious knife,—

"Miss Richards, I won't—never—be bad no more, to pay for this;" and though the grammar was poor, the unmistakable look of decision on the freckled face showed that he meant

what he said; and whatever Joe Stone meant to do, he usually did.

Many years afterwards, Marion, no longer Marion Richards, met in a large gathering a tall, keen-looking man, who, after cordially shaking hands, said to her, "Miss Marion, do you remember the knife you gave me years ago? I have it still. I won to-day my first law case, and I want to tell you that my first desire to be somebody, and my first knowledge of Christ, came from you as you sat telling the children of Wood's Hollow the story of Christian love of which you had just given us an example in our first Christmas tree.

And Marion answered him softly, "Ah, Joe; loving and doing are the only powers that shall yet conquer the world for Christ."

The Children's Day.

Yes! Christmas is the children's day.
Tho' all the world is blessed;
'Twas little children Jesus took,
And in his arms caressed.

He loves the little children best,
To them his care is given;
He blessed some of us on earth,
And some in his sweet heaven.

We may not understand it now,
His life of love and duty,
But we shall know it when we see
The King in all his beauty.

So we will love the precious gift
Sent down to us from heaven,
And try to do his blessed will,
To whom all praise be given.

O Christmas day, O children's day,
O precious, precious story;
For them we'll sing the Saviour's praise,
Till we shall sing in glory.

—J. R. Murray.

SANTA CLAUS.

SANTA CLAUS was one of the oldest ideas of the Celtic West in Pagan times, as he was of the Pagan East before. In Christian times he was still regarded with religious reverence, sitting, as he had sat for ages in Egypt and elsewhere, in the arms of his mother. Santa Claus was, in fact, the child Jesus in the middle ages; and throughout that period the festive creed of Germany and all Celtic Europe was that he visited all family dwellings of good Christians on the eve of his anniversary, and brought with him gifts and presents for the children. The truth of this original belief is plainly enough indicated by the word "claus," which, in the Gothic or ancient German, means "child" and "son." Santa Claus formerly meant the Holy Child.—Selected

We are not done yet with that "cent a day" idea; there is too much in it to let it die. According to the Report of the Committee on Statistics, presented to the General Conference, the membership of the Methodist Church now aggregate 197,000. Let some of our juvenile readers figure out what a cent a day from each of those will amount to in the course of a year.—Outlook.

CHRISTMAS TREES.

EVERY well-regulated family should have a Christmas tree. Children take delight in it, young people are to be pitied who do not enjoy it, and old people always love to watch the happy company about it. Next to the satisfaction of sitting under your own "vine and fig-tree" is the pleasure of gathering around the brightly lighted, wonderfully laden Christmas tree. Long may this green tree, with its marvellous fruits, flourish in our American homes, the centre of a merry throng, and of happy recollections! Because our churches and Sunday-schools have Christmas trees, do not think the home tree unnecessary. Cling to the old custom, and make the home circle the brightest, jolliest, dearest spot in all the world.

Christmas trees cause some trouble, to be sure. They usually insist on shedding their foliage, and then weep candle-grease in penitence, but "with all their faults we love them still," and would not banish them for these little frailties. The tree once admitted, how shall we deck it for the festive rites of Christmas-tide? A very pretty and at the same time inexpensive tree is what we may call

THE ARCTIC TREE.

A well-shaped hemlock shrub is best suited for this purpose. Fix it firmly in a broad low box. The idea is to give the shrub the appearance of a tree heavily loaded down with snow and ice. The snow effect is secured by tearing (not cutting) cotton batting into long narrow strips, and fastening them with thread or fine wire along the top of each branch. When this has been done, the tree will begin to look quite wintry. Now for the ice. Almost all large toy stores in cities have glass icicles in stock. Suspend these icicles along the snow-covered branches. The weight of the glass will cause them to droop quite naturally. Then over the whole tree sprinkle "diamond dust," a preparation of mica, to be had at almost any drug store, which will make the snow glisten and give the green of the tree a frosty look. Tinsel shreds also may be used to advantage. About the base of the tree an Arctic scene may be introduced. Cover the box with cotton to represent the snow-clad earth. Snow-houses may be made of the same material, and skilful fingers will find little difficulty in fashioning a few Esquimaux. A sledge and a half-dozen toy dogs will complete the scene. Over all sprinkle the magic powder. Pure white candles should be used to light the tree, which with its contrasts of dark green and snow white will make a fairy-like picture. If the glass icicles cannot be obtained a substitute may easily be found in small cylindrical glass beads, which are to be bought almost anywhere. Make strings of these on white thread four or five inches long, and hang them on the branches. Instead of the diamond dust, isinglass may be powdered very

fine in a mortar, but it is better if possible to obtain it already prepared. Tinsel may be bought in sheets and cut up into very narrow strips, but this too is better when made for the purpose. Give the "Arctic Tree" a trial. We are sure you will like it. Remember that it will appear to best advantage only when the room is darkened and the candles lighted.

Making Christmas Presents.

There's a subtle air of mystery about the house to-day;
There are whisperings and hidings, but not in merry play;
There's a sound of shutting boxes; there's a noise of scampering feet;
Then the children come with sober steps, with faces grave and sweet.

There are breakings up of savings banks, odd pennies from papa;
There are earnest consultations with aunt and mamma;
There are calls for scraps of satin, skeins of zephyr, shreds of floss;
There are searchings in thick folios for autumn leaves and moss.

The artists, too, are busy painting horse-shoes, tiles and shells;
I hear half-whispered comments, "Those lovely lily bells!"
"What colour is a Jessamine?" "I want a lighter blue,"
"I think I'd put a darker shade in that if I were you."

What quets all the busy tongues? they hardly dare reply
To the simplest of questions, but hesitate and try
To be strictly non-committal. "Hush-ah-ah! be careful now, don't tell."
There are smiles and words half spoken, but they keep their secrets well.

Lo! the mystery's unravelled, for upon the Christmas tree,
By the light of coloured tapers, fair and beautiful to see,
Books and statues, toys and vases, but the dearest gift of all
Are the work of tiny fingers, planned and made by children small.

See! cushions, book marks, pen wipers, of every size and sort,
And what if grandma's footstool has a leg a trifle short?
It is covered with a patch-work of a very crazy kind,
And the rick rack's very crooked—well! they tell me love is blind!

Here are lovely glowing pictures; can it be the leaves and fern
That we gathered in the autumn to such gems of art could turn?
Those "coloured outdoos" might not do for the French Academy,
But they hold the place of honour upon the Christmas tree.

No diamonds ever shone as bright as mother's eyes to-night,
And no gifts with money purchased could give such rare delight,
Though the stitches were uneven and the blunders not a few,
We only see the perfect work our children tried to do.

—Kate Llewellyn.

THE Lord Jesus is a jealous God. He is jealous of thy love, thy confidence, and thy company; therefore love him, trust him, and abide with him; be suspicious of all that would lead thee from him.

The Approach of Christmas.

It was the calm and silent night
Seven hundred years and fifty three
Had Rome been growing up to night,
And now was queen of land and sea!
No sound was heard of clashing arms,
Peace brooded o'er the hushed domain;
Apollo, Pallas, Jove, and Mars
Lied undisturbed their ancient reign,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago.

'Twas in the calm and silent night
The Senator of haughty Rome
Impatient urged his chariot's flight,
From lordly revel rolling home!
Triumphal arches, glancing, swell
His breast with thoughts of boundless
away;
A paltry province far away,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago!

Within that province far away,
Went plodding home a weary boor;
A streak of light before him lay,
Fallen through a half-shut stable-door,
And he paused, for naught
Told what was going on within:
How Leon the stars! his only thought;
The or how calm, and cold, and thin,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago!

Oh, strange indifferance!—low and high
Drownd over common joys and cares;
The earth was still, but knew not why;
The world was listening—unawares!
How calm a moment may precede
One that shall thrill the world forever!
To that still moment none would heed,
Man's doom was linked, no more to sever,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago!

It is the calm and silent night
A thousand bells ring out, and throw
Their joyous peals abroad, and smite
The darkness—charmed and hollow now!
The one that cast no blame had worn,
To it a happier name is given;
For in the stable lay, new-born,
The peaceful Prince of earth and heaven,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago!

LESSON NOTES.

A.D. 96-98.] LESSON XII. [Dec. 19.
THE GREAT INVITATION.

Rev. 22: 8-21. Commit to mem. vs. 16, 17.
GOLDEN TEXT.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be
with you all. Amen. Rev. 22: 21.

OUTLINE.

1. The Day of Destiny, v. 8-12.
2. The Tree of Life, v. 13-15.
3. The Last Words, v. 16-21.

TIME, PLACE.—Same as in Lesson IX.
EXPLANATIONS.—*The tree of life*—The
ever-living tree, that is always green and
always bearing fruit. See chap. 21. *Dogs,*
and swears, etc.—All people guilty of all
kinds of wickedness. *The morning star*
—the light-bringer, the herald of day. Jesus
was the light of the world. He ushered in
the true heavenly day. *The bride*—The
Church of Christ, typified by the city, the
new Jerusalem. See chap. 21: 9, 10. *The*
revelation of this book—This Revelation of
John is not all to be understood by men,
but it has been partly fulfilled, and, like all
God's prophecies, will yet all be.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where, in this lesson, are we taught—
1. The second coming of Jesus?
2. The sure reward of the righteous?
3. The fullness of gospel grace?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What did the angel say to John after
he had shown him the revelation? "Seal
not the sayings." 2. What was the message
of Christ? "Behold, I come quickly."
3. Who did he say are blessed? Those who
do his commandments. 4. To what are all

men invited? To take of the water of life.
5. What are the last words of the reve-
lation? "The grace," etc.
DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The gospel call.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

65. Into what state did the fall bring
mankind? By the fall mankind was brought
into a state of sin and misery.
Through one man sin entered into the
world, and death through sin; and so death
passed unto all men, for that all sinned.—
Romans v. 12.

FOURTH QUARTERLY REVIEW.

December 26.

REVIEW SCHEME.

Lesson I. *Jesus Betrayed.* John 18: 1-
14.—By whom was Jesus betrayed? Where
did Judas find Jesus? Whom did he take
with him into the garden? For whose
safety did Jesus plead? Who tried to
defend him? Before whom was Jesus
taken? (Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT.)

Lesson II. *Jesus Before Pilate.* John
18: 28-40.—Who brought Jesus before
Pilate? What did they desire Pilate to do?
What did Pilate say about Jesus? (GOLDEN
TEXT.) What proposition did he make?
Whose release did the Jews demand?

Lesson III. *Jesus Delivered to be Crucified.*
John 18: 1-16.—What insults were heaped
upon Jesus by the soldiers? What was the
demand of the Jews? What caused Pilate
to surrender Jesus? What title did he
give to Jesus? What did Pilate do at last?
(GOLDEN TEXT.)

Lesson IV. *Jesus Crucified.* John 19:
17-30.—Where was Jesus crucified? Who
suffered with him? What title was placed
over him? What was done with his
garments? To whom did he commend his
mother? What suffering caused his cry?
What were his last words on the cross?
(GOLDEN TEXT.)

Lesson V. *Jesus Risen.* John 20: 1-18.
—Who first sought the grave of Jesus?
What did she tell two of the disciples?
What did they find at the sepulchre? To
whom did Jesus appear in the garden? To
whom besides did he appear on the same
day? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

Lesson VI. *Thomas Convincd.* John
20: 19-31.—What disciple doubted the story
of the resurrection? What evidence did he
demand? Where did Jesus appear to him?
What test did he offer him? What was
Thomas's answer? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

Lesson VII. *Peter Restored.* John 21:
4-19.—Where did Jesus show himself again
to his disciples? Who first recognized
Jesus? What question was thrice asked of
Peter by Jesus? What was his command
to Peter? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

Lesson VIII. *Walking in the Light.* John
1: 5-10; 2: 1-6.—Who is the light of the
world? How may men walk in the light?
What blessing does this walk confer?
(GOLDEN TEXT.) What hope is there for
the sinner? Who is the sacrifice for all
sin?

Lesson IX. *John's Vision of Christ.*
Rev. 1: 4-18.—When did John have a vision
of Christ? What did he first hear? What
work did the voice bid John do? What did
he see? How did the Light affect John?
What did Jesus say of himself? (GOLDEN
TEXT.)

Lesson X. *Worshipping God and the
Lamb.* Rev. 5: 1-14.—What question did
the angel ask concerning the book? Who
was declared able to open it? Who joined
in the worship of the Lamb? What was
the song of the multitude? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

Lesson XI. *The Saints in Heaven.* Rev.
7: 9-17.—What is said of the number of the
saints in heaven? What was their song of
praise? How were the saints clothed?
What had been their condition on earth?
What did the angel say was their reward?
(GOLDEN TEXT.)

Lesson XII. *The Great Invitation.* Rev.
22: 8-21.—What did Jesus declare himself
to be? What is promised to the faithful
and obedient? What is the great invita-
tion? What is the final blessing of the
written word of God? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

WHERE we have a tent, God must
have an altar; where we have a house,
he must have a church in it.

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your pursuit.

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