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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

RALPH SMITH & CO.

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. IX.]

TORONTO, DECEMBER 21, 1889.

[No. 26.

Hanging the Holly.

BY MRS. J. B. HILL.

LET us keep the day with gladness,
Weaving the holly gay
Into a wreath to crown the Babe
Who in the manger lay,
When shepherds watched their flocks by night
And the stars shone with wondrous light.

O happy, blessed Christmas-tide!
That day so long ago
When Immanuel veiled his glory
To save the world from woe;
And conquered death, the grave, and sin,
That we might rise and reign with him.

And now he wears the kingly robes,
And waves the victor's palm,
For the Babe of Bethlehem is our Lord—
Praise him in joyful psalm
For the love which brought our Lord to earth,
And that Christmas day which saw his birth.

A TRUE CHRISTMAS STORY.

BY DOROTHY HOLROYD.

"CHRISTMAS!" said Arthur moodily; "I wish there was no such thing as Christmas!" and when a ten-year-old boy has such moods and such wishes, something is wrong, without a doubt.

He was a delicate little fellow, with big brown eyes and soft silky hair—some mother's darling, one would have said, if it had not been ten o'clock of a December night, when such darlings are generally tucked away in warm, white beds, dreaming of Santa Claus and his wonderful reindeer.

Instead of that, Arthur

was waiting at the junction for an avenue car, while a shrill wind whistled round his slim legs and mocked at the scant protection of a turned-up coat-collar and woollen scarf, for overcoat he had none. No visions of "Comet and Cupid and

Dunder and Blitzen" danced through his head; even the frosty tinkle of the car-bells had a jaded sound to him, as though the horses—poor things!—were almost as tired as he.

The car was nearly empty. It was too early for

at this time of the night?" was the abrupt question which followed.

"Home from work," said Arthur laconically.

"And what sort of work can such a child as you do to keep him till this hour?"



HANGING THE HOLLY.

theatre-goers to be crowding back, and too cold to tempt people out except for some definite purpose.

Arthur dropped a demoralized-looking bit of yellow pasteboard into the ticket-box, dug his poor little cold toes down into the straw, and settled himself with as much comfort as the circumstances would permit. It was good just to be able to sit still and rest; he was too tired even to take an interest in his fellow-passengers. There were not many of them—only a coloured woman with a big basket of clean clothes that she was carrying home, and an old gentleman with keen blue eyes and bushy eyebrows who sat in the corner just opposite.

Arthur regarded them both with complete indifference. He had seen just as many men, women and children that day as he wanted to see; people, to him, meant only one more or less to make trouble.

But the old gentleman in the corner was far from being so indifferent. This tired child in knee-breeches and with no overcoat was enough to give one a heart-ache that would last all through Christmas-time, and what sort of a Christmas could one have with a heart-ache for company?

Arthur lifted his heavy eyelids with a touch of surprise as the old gentleman rose and crossed over to the vacant space by his side.

"Where are you going

"Door-boy at Baumberg's," was the brief answer.

At another time he might have resented being called a child, but to-night he was too tired. Besides, his throat ached, and there was a queer, heavy feeling about his head. It had been hard work to push that heavy door to and fro for the crowds of Christmas shoppers all day long. He had shivered and flushed alternately between the keen winter winds and the blast of heat from the great steam-radiator at his back, and now it was after ten o'clock. Small wonder that Christmas-time had no glad tidings for him!

The bushy, gray eyebrows frowned ominously as the third question was asked: "How much do they pay you?"

"Two dollars a week."

"And you live on that?"

"Mother gets sewing sometimes when she's well enough;" and then the car swung around a circle, and Arthur reached up, dizzily, to pull the strap.

He heard a muttered something about "Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children," and it surprised him a little to find himself carefully assisted down the slippery step and across to the sidewalk: "Which way?"

The questions were almost as short now as Arthur's answers had been.

"Down South C," he said, clinging to his new friend with a strange sense of confidence and protection; and yet, a few moments later, when the little tumble-down house was reached, he would have been inclined to think he had fallen asleep in the car and dreamed it all, but for the fact of a big silver dollar that certainly had not been in his pocket when he left the store.

The broad corridors of the Patent Office re-echoed the busy hum of work. Down in the mail-room the great piles of letters were being sorted and distributed; busy messengers were running to and fro up and down the marble staircases; young men bent over long tables and made queer drawings of wheels and spikes and odd-looking machinery; typewriters clicked industriously through "specifications" and "amendments"; and hundreds of pens scratched untiringly over patent-head blanks and books of record. It was Christmas Eve, and tomorrow would be a holiday.

Outside in the corridor more than one man waited an audience with the commissioner, but Dr. Baker held his place resolutely. "I tell you, Mr. Commissioner," he was saying, "that I intend to have a Christmas gift from the Government before I leave this building, so you might as well give me what I want first as last."

The commissioner laughed.

"Take it easy, Baker! You can't expect to move the wheels of Government with one little shove. We can't do things in such a hurry; but I'll see about it."

"Oh yes—the first vacancy; I know what 'seeing about it' means. No, sir; I want a messenger's commission to take over to the secretary for signing at once, if you please. Promote somebody if you can't give me the place any other way."

Mr. Commissioner laughed again. Perhaps he too felt Christmas in his bones.

"If there's no other way of getting rid of you, I suppose I must," he said. "Well, have your own way, but, ten chances to one, I'll have to dismiss him before he's been in a month. It's risky business taking a boy in out of the street after that fashion."

"I'll answer for him," replied Dr. Baker gravely, and went his way with the coveted slip of paper.

He stopped at Baumberg's that afternoon, but to brown-eyed, sad-faced little boy stood behind

the plate-glass door; a freckle-faced youngster, upon whom the cares of life did not seem to weigh heavily, filled the position instead. For a moment the doctor paused, wondering if he had made a mistake, and his bushy eyebrows knit with an expression of annoyance.

"Where is Arthur Palmer?" he asked gruffly.

"Dunno!" The little doorkeeper lifted a turned-up nose and a pair of impertinent eyes toward his questioner. "Sick, I reckon. I've got his place, anyhow."

"Keep it, then," said the doctor impatiently, "and much good may it do you!" with which he strode out into the street again and made his way rapidly toward the avenue.

The surging crowd at the corner brought him to a sudden halt, much to his discomfiture. He could not see why Pax & Co.'s window should always be thronged. Did all the world run wild on the question of clothes? As if in answer to this un-Christmas-like thought, a waxen manikin stretched out confiding arms to call attention to the red-ticketed overcoat it wore.

"Only six dollars!" said the doctor, frowning again. "I wonder how long it would take to find a clerk to wait on me?"

In the little tumble-down house on South C street Arthur had tossed and turned on a sick-bed all day, while his mother sat over a handful of fire, stitching with tired fingers, and wondering how it would be possible for them to live if this day's illness should really cost Arthur his place.

"I think God forgets," said Arthur bitterly. "Everybody else does, I know."

His mother sighed. She hardly knew how to be hopeful herself, but it hurt her to know the child's bitter feeling. "The widow's cruse was filled," she said slowly, "and the ravens fed Elijah—No, Arthur; God never forgets, but sometimes it seems long to wait."

And just then—such things do happen in real life once in a while—the jingling old bell rang, and Mrs. Palmer opened the door to find a modern edition of Santa Claus standing there, his bushy gray hair powdered with snow, his keen eyes twinkling frostily, and looking very anxious to get rid of the big bundle he held in his arms. It was like a fairy-tale, Arthur said; but fairies in olden times did not bring such prosaic things as overcoats, unless they were *invisible coats*, you know, and though Mr. Pax is a wonderful outfitter, he does not keep things of that sort yet. Moreover, no invisible coat ever disclosed such a magical paper as that Arthur pulled out of the breast-pocket. It had a queerly-twisted monogram up in one corner, and below that it read:

"Department of the Interior,
Washington, Dec. 24, 18—.

"Arthur Palmer, of Washington, District of Columbia, is hereby appointed a messenger in the Patent Office, at a salary of three hundred and sixty dollars per annum, to take effect when he shall file the oath of office and enter on duty—*vice* John Andrews, promoted.

— — —, Secretary."

"Is it really true?" he gasped, sitting up in bed and clutching the paper with feverish, trembling hands. "Oh, mother, God doesn't forget, after all."

The doctor's eyes twinkled with a suspicious gleam: "So you thought he forgot, did you? I've thought so once or twice myself, but I've lived a good many more years in this world than you have, my boy, and I know he always remembers in his own good time."

Three hundred and sixty dollars! It seemed to Mrs. Palmer that the age of miracles was not yet past. Was this any less wonderful than the

widow's cruse? Thirty dollars every month instead of eight, and no more night hours for her delicate boy to keep! The change from Baumberg's store at seven o'clock in the morning till seven, eight, nine, ten at night, to the seven hours a day which is all the Government requires, seemed to be too good to be true. But it is true, every word of it, and by-and-by our boy will be promoted; and with no work to do after four o'clock, why should he not study till he can pass the Civil Service examinations, until in course of time he becomes a "Mr. Commissioner," or even a "Mr. Secretary," himself? Who knows?

But the best of all the good things that have come to him through Dr. Baker is the sure belief that God never forgets.

The Star.

BY SUSAN COOLIDGE.

THEY followed the star the whole night through;
As it moved with the midnight they moved too;
And cared not whither it led, nor knew,
Till Christmas day in the morning.

And just at the dawn in the twilight shade
They came to the stable, and, unafraid,
Saw the blessed Babe in the manger laid
On Christmas day in the morning.

We have followed the star a whole long year,
And watched it beckon, now faint, now clear,
And it now stands still as we draw near
To Christmas day in the morning.

And just as the wise men did of old,
In the hush of the winter dawning cold,
We come to the stable, and behold
The Child on the Christmas morning.

And just as the wise men deemed it meet
To offer him gold and perfumes sweet,
We would lay our gifts at his holy feet—
Our gifts on the Christmas morning.

O Babe, once laid in the ox's bed,
With never a pillow for thy head,
Now throned in the highest heavens instead,
O Lord of the Christmas morning.

Because we have known and have loved thy star,
And have followed it long and have followed it far,
From the land where the shadows and darkness are,
To find thee on Christmas morning,—

Accept the gifts that we dare to bring,
Though worthless and poor the offering,
And help our souls to rise and sing
In the joy of thy Christmas morning.

THE EPWORTH LEAGUE.

Question. Is it necessary for a local branch of the Epworth League to undertake the literary and social work as well as the distinctively religious activities of a young people's society?

Answer. The conditions of membership in the Epworth League are very liberal. Plans are provided in the "model constitution" for the organization of all the young people of the Church for active work in all proper ways. This arrangement was made in order to suit the varying demands of the different societies. But it is not a cast-iron system to which all affiliating leagues must adapt themselves. If your society is purely a "praying bond," devoted with entire consecration to strictly religious work, it has just the same rights in the Epworth League as that branch which adds to its religious activity those social and literary pursuits which should grow out of spiritual strength, and should themselves contribute to the fellowship of the Church and mutual improvement of its membership. The social and literary departments are not indispensable, but in most cases they will be found a helpful addition to the religious work.

The Story of the First Christmas Day.

BY ALFRED M. LYNES.

LONG ago, my dearest children,
Runs this tale of Christmas day,
Lived a race of Hebrew people
In a country far away.

In their land there was a village—
Bethlehem an ancient town;
Here was born the great King David,
Here lived men of much renown.

Now these Hebrews had been promised
By their prophets—men benign,
That to them would come a Saviour,
Born of David's royal line.

As a sign of his appearing
"Alas!"—said these prophets wise—
"Shall a star of wondrous beauty
Brightly beam in Eastern skies."

Long, long years they had been waiting
For this promised Saviour's birth;
He, they thought, would re-establish
David's reign upon the earth.

Now there comes an evening peaceful;
Nature slowly falls asleep;
From the pastures, homeward wending,
Shepherds lead their flocks of sheep.

Weary caravans of camels
Up the hillside slowly steal;
In their stalls the large-eyed cattle
Patient wait their evening meal.

At the great well of the village,
Maidens stand their jars to fill;
While their talk and merry laughter
Echo through the highway still.

Fast and faster falls the evening;
Faint and fainter grows the day;
Darkness covers vale and mountain;
Now the light has passed away.

In the fields along the valley,
Just outside the village line,
Are the wise men and the shepherds
Watching for the promised sign.

High above them brightly twinkling,
Glow the lanterns of the sky;
From the walls the faithful watchmen
Call the hours passing by.

Soon the watchers see with gladness,
Shining in the sky afar,
Growing brighter every moment—
Beaming there—the promised star!

And its beams like golden rain drops,
Through the darkness streaming down,
Fall upon a stable lowly
In that little peaceful town.

In the manger of the stable,
Close beside his mother mild,
Sleeping softly, sweetly dreaming,
Lies the new-born Christmas child.

From the fields, and through the gateway,
Haste the watchers to the place
Where the little child is lying,
Born of David's royal race.

To the place arrive the wise men;
In their hands rich gifts they bear;
These they offer as their welcome
To the Saviour lying there.

Through the doorway step they softly;
Silent steal they to the place,
And with love and adoration
Gaze they on the baby face.

O'er the stable poor and lowly,
O'er the manger where he lies,
Hover angels, softly chanting
Heaven's sweetest lullabies.

In the street outside the stable,
Shepherds this glad carol sing:
"Hallelujah! about the tidings,
Unto us is born a king!"

Like an echo of their carol,
Come to singers on the street,
Borne by breezes from the desert,
Wondrous strains of music sweet.

Near and nearer, swells the music;
Grand and grander, grows the strain;
Now o'er desert, village, mountain,
Bursts the hymn of glad refrain:

"Glory be to God in heaven!
Peace on earth; to men, good will;
Christ is born; the great Messiah!
He God's promise will fulfil."

Thrilled with rapture and emotion,
Shepherds hear this wondrous song,
 Sung by all the choirs of Heaven,
Angel voices clear and strong.

Now the sunbeams of the morning
Through the darkness make their way;
Soon the sun in royal splendour
Greeted the first known Christmas day.

Then all Nature wakes from slumber;
Morning carols sing the birds;
Back again to fields and pastures
Shepherds lead their flocks and herds.

From the Jordan to far Egypt,
Over plains and deserts drear,
Fly the tidings of the morning—
"Christ the Prince of Peace is here!"

In the homes upon the mountains,
In the homes along the sea,
Happy people sing "Hosannas,"
Make the day a jubilee!

This, dear children, is the story
Of the first glad Christmas day,
When to earth there came dear Jesus,
He who in the manger lay.

But before I close this story,
Let me tell you how this child
Lived and grew to perfect manhood,
One most holy, tender, mild.

How he fed the poor and hungry;
How he healed the sick and blind;
How he passed his life of sadness
Doing good to all mankind.

Of his death, and his ascension
To God's home in Heaven above,
Where ten thousand holy angels
Welcomed him with songs of love.

There beside the crystal fountains,
There where streets are laid with gold,
There where mansions are of jasper,
Dwell the Shepherd and his fold.

Some day, children, there he'll call you;
There as angels you'll be known;
There'll you'll sing your Christmas carols,
There beside the big White Throne.

A CHRISTMAS LEGEND.

It was 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 the castle near, and was now hastening home to his little hut. Although working very hard, he was poor—gaining barely enough for the wants of his wife and four little 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 all 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 would'st 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, who held timidly to his finger with his tiny hand.

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

The children all pressed round to welcome and gaze at the little 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 *fête* 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 little 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 on 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 had blossomed. Hermann plucked some, and carried them home to his wife and children, who treasured the fair blossoms, and tended them carefully, in remembrance of that wonderful Christmas-eve, calling them *Chrysanthemums*; and every year, as 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."—*St. Nicholas.*

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

THERE is a serious aspect to this season—the close of the old year and the beginning of the new. It is a time for looking back on the past—its many mercies and blessings, its shortcomings and failures and sins—and for looking forward into the future. Oh, thank God for all his goodness! Seek his pardon for all you have done amiss, and ask his grace to help you to begin the new year in newness of life.

You know not what the year shall bring to you of joy and sorrow, or it may be sickness or death. But put your hand trustfully in God's, and go forward where he leads, and no scath nor harm can happen you. It is a precious treasure. Oh! use its golden moments well, and may it be for each one of you the very happiest year that ever you have known!

It's coming, boys, it's almost here:
It's coming, girls, the grand New Year!
A year to be glad in, not to be sad in;
A year to live in, to gain and give in;
A year for trying, and not for sighing;
A year for striving, and hearty thriving;
A bright New Year, oh, hold it dear,
For God who sendeth, He only lendeth,
The grand, the blessed, the glad New Year!

I wish you happy New Year!
Dear bright-eyed girls and boys;
May all its days and hours be
Filled full of wholesome joys.

I wish you happy New Year!
With health and true success,
And the best of all good fortune—
The power to aid and bless.

The Christmas Carol.

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

THE wide world round, what songs to-day
The little children sing!
O'er northern coast and southern bay
Their cheery voices ring,
Till carol, carol, sweeps along
Through aisles of churchly gloom;
Wherever surges childhood's throng,
A tide of flowers in bloom.

And carol, carol swiftly sounds
O'er many a castle wall,
And dearest music fills the bounds
Of many a cottage small;
For never straw-roofed cot so mean
But children make it fair,
And palace home of king or queen
Without their life is bare.

The carol of the little Child
Who came the earth to bless,
Whose presence hushed its passions wild,
Whose look is tenderness,
Whose star the hoary wise men led
O'er hill and vale to see,
Soft sleeping in a lowly shed,
The Babe on Mary's knee.

Oh, little children, carol sweet
From lips untouched of guile!
The very snow-flakes kiss your feet,
The clouds before you smile.
Sing in the happy Christmas dawn,
Sing when the west is gray;
Bright shines the path you journey on
This merry Christmas day.



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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, DECEMBER 21, 1889.

NEXT YEAR'S PAPERS.

THE series of Sunday-school papers for 1890 will exhibit marked improvement on any yet issued. Better cuts and better ink will mark mechanical progress.

A series of fine biblical cuts, illustrating the whole of the lessons in the Gospel of Luke throughout the year, will add greatly to the value of the papers.

A story of great interest, by the Editor, "Life of a Canadian Parsonage," will be a conspicuous feature in PLEASANT HOURS for the year.

Other short stories, and articles of interest, will appear; and much attention will be given to the new "Epworth League," including Epworth League stories, which will prove an attractive feature.

PRESENTS FOR CHRISTMAS.

THAT is a beautiful custom which has come to prevail so widely—the exchanging of presents at Christmas-tide. The significance, however, would be greatly heightened if we would always give or receive presents as in some sense a symbolizing of that greater Gift which God gave to the world in his Son. Certainly no one would discourage the giving of gifts at Christmas.

The custom is happily productive in stimulating kindly thought and feeling between kindred and friends. In many instances the preparation of a gift for some esteemed friend implies many days—even weeks and months—of diligent labour. And how busy the thoughts! and how equally busy the tender impulses of the heart, while deft fingers are engaged upon some piece of delicate or useful work! By this are the thoughts of the heart to be symbolized and represented; and he who receives the gift should think far more of the treasures of kindly feeling it represents than of the gift itself.

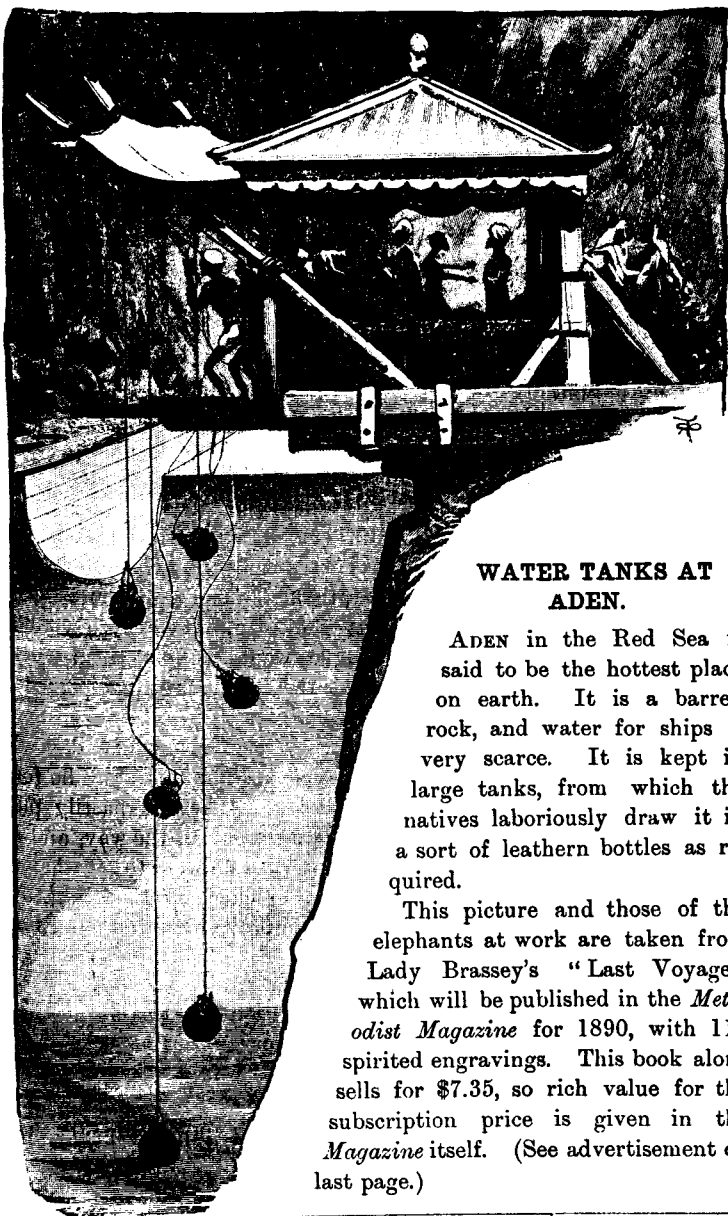
Then, there are often those whose heart-strings and purse-strings seldom relax, to whom Christmas brings a special occasion, and a consequent relaxing that is really more blessed to the giver than to the receiver of gifts.

But all this giving of gifts would acquire a worthier significance if the thought were associated

with the Unspeakable Gift which in the giving enriched all the world.

THE Epworth League has made wonderful progress in American Methodism during the past six months. It has now 1,300 chapters and 60,000 members. It is evidently destined to become a powerful aid to the Methodist Church. An American divine computes that within the next four years at least half a million of Methodist young people will enter the League. If the present rate of progress is kept up, we shall certainly see great results in the near future. No similar movement has ever so taken hold of the heart of the Methodist Church in both the United States and Canada.

WE have received answers to the Temperance Arithmetic Questions in PLEASANT HOURS from Bertha Bowes, Thessalon, Algoma; George Smithkins, Cairngorm, Ont.; Alice Brown, Morley, Ont.; Clara Ross, Freulton; R. J. Bayne, Listowel; John Nelles, Kippen; Ella Pearson and Annie Alderson, Kintore; A. Tappenden, Guelph; Annie Wright, Galt; W. Chapman, P. E. I.; Wm. Sandercock, Pilot Mound, Man.; Edith Tillock, Carterton Place; Evie Eldon, Kintore; Walter Rogers, Atwood; and many others.



WATER TANKS AT ADEN.

ADEN in the Red Sea is said to be the hottest place on earth. It is a barren rock, and water for ships is very scarce. It is kept in large tanks, from which the natives laboriously draw it in a sort of leathern bottles as required.

This picture and those of the elephants at work are taken from Lady Brassey's "Last Voyage," which will be published in the *Methodist Magazine* for 1890, with 116 spirited engravings. This book alone sells for \$7.35, so rich value for the subscription price is given in the *Magazine* itself. (See advertisement on last page.)

THE EPWORTH LEAGUE.

We have never known any movement so take hold on the heart and soul of the young people of Canadian Methodism as the Epworth League has done. From Newfoundland to British Columbia the greatest interest is manifested, and numerous branches are springing up.

One of the most enthusiastic Methodist mass meetings we ever saw was that held in its interest in the Metropolitan Church, Toronto, described elsewhere.

writes: "The hope of our country is in the young. To have them convinced of the need and importance of the Christian, literary, and social work, which it is the aim of the Epworth League to inculcate, will not only mean happiness in the home, but prosperity to the nation. I trust, therefore, that we may expect from its working the very best results."

J. J. Maclaren, Esq., Q.C., LL.D., writes: "It seems to me that the League is admirably calculated to further the very desirable ends proposed, and I have confidence that it will serve in a very substantial way, not only to wisely direct valuable energies of our young people that are now being largely frittered away for want of such direction, but also to arouse forces that have hitherto remained latent, and to press them into the service of Christ and the Church."

The Rev. W. Galbraith, LL.B., writes:

It is received with a universal chorus of approval by the ministers and most earnest Christian workers of our Church.

The following are a few of the many strong endorsements it has received:—

The Rev. Dr. Carman, General Superintendent, writes: "I am with you in conviction, desire, and purpose, in this grand movement, so happily supplementary to, and co-operative with, our Sunday-school and Church work. We must say to the people, 'Move forward'; and this League in its gradations will, under God's blessing, prove a noble preparatory training for our youth."

The Rev. Dr. Potts says: "I am very anxious that our Church should have some better provision for Young People's Associations, and I think the Epworth League about the best kind of organization for our Church. I shall be delighted to hear that you have launched the scheme, and shall do all in my power to help to make it a success."

The Rev. Dr. Sutherland, Missionary Secretary, writes: "The movement enlists my warmest sympathies, and it will have any support that I can give. The general plan of the League seems to be admirable, affording scope for all kinds of talent, and giving every one something to do."

The Hon. Senator Macdonald

"I have full sympathy with the plans and purposes of the League. I regard it as one of the most important movements that have ever been made for the improvement and elevation of our young people."

The Rev. Hugh Johnston, D.D., who has organized the first League in Toronto, writes: "My heart, my head, my whole being, is in sympathy with the Epworth League movement. It has come upon the Church like an inspiration. It is like the ringing of a trumpet blast, summoning our young people to band themselves together under its standard. It meets every demand—intellectual, spiritual, and social. I trust that every church in the city will organize at once, and that branches will spring up everywhere."

ELEPHANTS AT WORK.

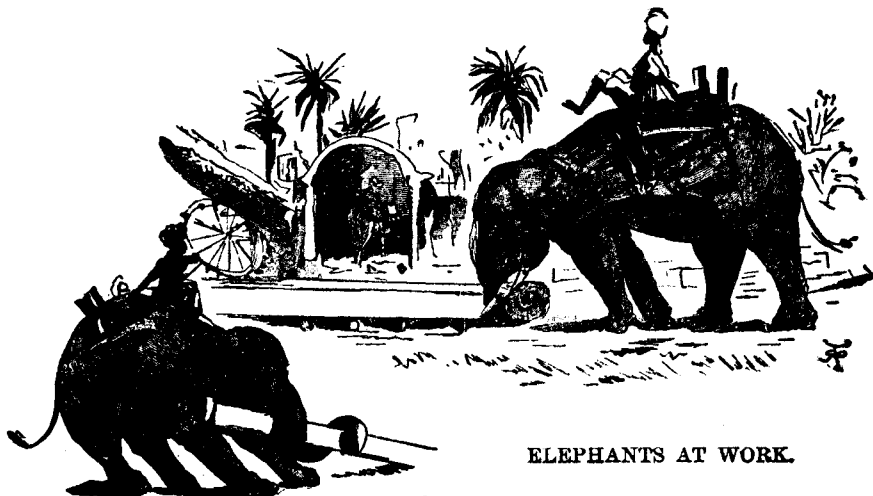
IN that admirable book, Lady Brassey's "Last Voyage," that accomplished lady writes thus on this theme: "Left the yacht about seven o'clock. Mr. Hodgkinson took us to see a timber-yard, where elephants are extensively used. It was a wonderful exhibition of strength, patience, and dexterity. The docile creatures lift, roll, and push the logs of timber to any part of the yard. They pile it up into stacks high above their heads, seizing one end of a log with their trunk, placing it on the pile of timber, and then taking the other end of the log and pushing it forward, finally placing it on their heads, and sending it into its place. They work undisturbed amid the buzz of circular saws and machinery, where it would seem almost impossible for animals of such huge proportions to escape injury. They carry their intelligence to the point of rigidly enforcing the rights of labour. Nothing will persuade an elephant to do a stroke of work, after he has heard the workmen's dinner-bell, during the hour of mid-day rest, to which he rightly considers himself entitled. Their mental powers seem, indeed, to be very nearly on a level with those of the human workmen, with whose efforts their own are combined. No less than two thousand elephants were formerly employed in the yard of the Bombay and Burmah Company. Steam machinery is now rapidly superseding elephants, for each animal requires at least three men to look after him."

NEVER did any soul do good but it came readier to do the same again with more enjoyment. Never was love, or gratitude, or bounty practised but with increasing joy, which made the practicer still more in love with the fair act.

IF for five years England would give up the use of drink, at the end of that time she would be such a paradise that you would hardly know the country again.



ELEPHANTS AT WORK.



ELEPHANTS AT WORK.

A Christmas Carol.

BY MRS. ANNA M. HUBBARD.

AWAY on a slope of the Bethlehem hills,
All out in the shadows so gray,
While shepherds of Judah were watching their flocks
And waiting the dawn of the day,

They saw, coming down from the heavenly heights,
Across the bright fields of the skies,
An angel all clothed in the splendour of light,
That filled them with fear and surprise.

No wonder they trembled and felt sore afraid,
So strange was the beautiful sight;
The glory that shone round the angel had wrapt
The hillside in Heaven's own light.

But "Fear not," the angel exultingly said,
"For tidings of great joy I bring:
To you, in the city of David, this day,
Is born your Redeemer and King."

And so in great haste the good shepherds then went,
And found where a young mother kept
Her watch o'er a manger, that strange cradle bed,
Where safely her dear baby slept.

How glad was the angel, as down thro' the skies
He hastened, the tidings to bring;
How glad were the shepherds, out on the hillside,
To hear of the birth of their King.

I think that the angels remember that song,
That first over Bethlehem broke,
And surely the shepherds can never forget
The gladness its echoes awoke.

And "Glory to God in the highest," to-night,
Is ringing o'er Heaven's bright plain;
And back from the earth, decked with holly and green,
Is echoed the joyous refrain.

EPWORTH LEAGUE.

ENDORSED BY A MONSTER METHODIST MEETING.

(We abridge the following from a two-column report in the Toronto Globe.)

A MONSTER Methodist mass meeting was held in the Metropolitan Church, to inaugurate in Toronto a movement for the formation of branches of the Epworth League.

The audience was large and evidently in sympathy with the outlines of the scheme. The speakers had carefully posted themselves as to detail, and knowledge had begot in them enthusiasm of a contagious variety.

Both of these results were largely due to the earnest work of the Secretary of the League, Rev. Dr. Withrow, who has an abounding faith in the project, and an unbounded capacity for eliciting enthusiastic aid.

The Epworth League is the parent society. Any Young People's Society in the Methodist Church can become an affiliated branch of the Epworth League. The work of the League is divided into six departments, each under the charge of a committee. The departments are: (1) Christian Work, (2) Literary Work, (3) Social Work, (4) Entertainment, (5) Correspondence, (6) Finance.

Hon. J. C. Aikins presided, and had about him on the platform Revs. LeRoy Hooker, Dr. Withrow, Dr. Potts, Dr. D. G. Sutherland, Dr. Dewart, Dr. Stafford, Dr. Parker, Dr. Shaw, Dr. Harper, Messrs. Edward Gurney, James L. Hughes, Warring Kennedy and others.

Hon. J. C. Aikins, ex-Governor of Manitoba, briefly opened the meeting by saying that he was heartily in sympathy with the undertaking. The hope of the future, in his opinion, lay in the young of the land. The object of the Epworth League was the fullest cultivation of their youth, and he thought it would have much to do with the final development of the land.

Dr. Withrow read letters of apology from Rev.

Dr. Carman, General Superintendent; Hon. John Macdonald, Rev. Dr. Johnston, Rev. Wm. Galbraith, Rev. Alex. Sutherland, and Dr. J. J. Maclaren, all warmly commending the objects of the League, and wishing it the greatest success.

Dr. Withrow said the Methodist Church had done much for Sunday-schools on this continent and in the Old World to educate the young. But there was found to be a link missing in the chain. The period between the Sunday-school and the membership of the Church was not sufficiently cared for. The Epworth League proposed to supply the missing link, and to organize young Methodism into Christian bands, to teach them not only a general knowledge of the Bible, but also the particulars of the various books. Whatever was pure and lovely it would be the object of the League to place before the youth of the Church. The Epworth League sought to enlist the youth of the Church in a nobler crusade than any of chivalry, with the motto, "Look up, lift up." "For the good that you can do." That was the desire of those who wished to see this new method of Church work established. He would have them understand that they wished not to have them supersede the existing Church societies, but to link together all the existing societies. And the objects of the League were not merely amusement, not merely improvement, but also religious, embracing all departments of the Church work. The first object was to rally the Church around the pastor, and he had naturally been placed in the centre of the organization. Then he would have an assistant, and again an inner circle of advisers. It also laid its hands upon the amusements of the people and brought them into harmony with the Church.

Mr. Warring Kennedy followed the energetic Secretary with a concise and telling address. He pointed out that the Epworth League was a growth, a development and adaptation of new methods to old work. If the Church will not find employment for its young, the world will. He reviewed the objects of the League as set out by Dr. Withrow, and closed by pointing out the great advantage membership would be as a passport to any person going to another city.

Rev. Dr. Dewart made a capital and inspiring address. He felt, like the previous speakers, a hearty sympathy in the objects of the League, and believed the present meeting would have a most important result. One of the first objects of the League he understood to be a closer study of the Word of God. In all the study of literature, light and otherwise, at the present time, there was not that study of the Bible that there should be. The times demanded not only sincere piety, but also intelligent Christians. The League embraces more; it embraces a study of all good literature. The best kind of reading was that about men and women who had either done something great or had written of great things. There were in the history of Methodism treasures of biography almost unknown to the people, which could not be read without stimulating to nobility of thought. There were men who had lived stirring lives—Wesley himself, Coke, Adam Clark, and many other leaders of Methodism. Their biographies could be read with the greatest interest, and would show that the people of the present day were hardly worthy the good and great men who have gone before. One good result of this movement would be a more intelligent attachment to the Methodist Church. At the present time, when various tendencies were abroad making for the loosening of the links binding the youth to the Church, the League would have a good effect in staying that tendency. He hoped that here, as in the States, the League

would become popular and bring forth fruit to the honour and glory of God.

Rev. Dr. Potts began his remarks by saying the meeting was both an inspiration and a prophecy. When many of those present had passed to their reward, the people working the Epworth League all over the Dominion would look back to the first meeting of the League in Canada with gratitude. There was no reason why there should not be as many Epworth Leagues as Sunday-schools in the Church. It would benefit the flower of Canadian Methodism, and be a connexional bond between the young people of the Church all over the Dominion. He found four reasons for the launching of the League. It would give the youth of the Church a more loyal feeling for Methodism. In the second place the League would tend to a greater intelligence of the young people. It would tend also to increase the spirit of sociability among them. Lastly, the League would tend to a more beautiful and more practical Christian consecration. He had many young people who asked what they could do of the Church's work. The League would supply them with a guiding hand. For these reasons he supported the objects of the League.

Mr. Edward Gurney related how one day when he dropped into his friend Simpkins' store he found Simpkins' boy in charge. The lad hastily put a "fool-killer" (a cigarette) out of the way, and laid his book on the counter, as he went to get what was desired. The customer picked up the book to see what the lad read to improve his mind, and found it was entitled

EDWARD SEAWAVE;

or,

THE PRIVATEER'S LAST PRIZE.

Some of the chapters that fell under his eye were headed,

A Runaway Match,
A Murder,
A Shipwreck,

and oh! the horrors therein detailed. He went away with the Epworth League working on his mind. Subsequently he felt that he ought to speak to Mr. Simpkins about the style of his boy's reading, and dropped in on him one day unexpectedly. He found Mr. Simpkins so interested in a newspaper that he did not look up. Stepping forward to see what so fascinated his friend he found upon the face of the paper, in the largest type, such headlines as these:—

Dunned at His Wedding,
Jem Smith and Jackson to Have a Mill,
Society Will Shiver,
Different Views of Divorce,
How Sam Jones Drove the Devil Out of a Virginia Village.

He felt it was no use to speak to that man about his boy's reading, and so, after asking him his opinion of the viaduct scheme, he escaped. There was a lesson he thought in this Simpkins family, and it was for them to apply it in the right place.

Rev. Dr. Stafford said that in the Epworth League he found one indication that they, as a Church, were ready for the new development of the age. They all saw on the streets evidence of the need of giving some attention to the spare moments of the young. If he could not convert a man he would try to get him to come a little way, and in this League he saw a very effective way of leading the young people of the Church in the right direction.

James L. Hughes believed that we had come to the work phase of Christian life, and he did not

think that one side of man could be developed in the best without the development of all. In the League he was glad to see that it was work all round. He emphasized the value of work, which he described as the great source of all kinds of growth, and for this he prized the Epworth League, which, in his opinion, was the best organization in existence for getting young Christians at work.

Rev. D. G. Sutherland said a characteristic of the present day was that the young people are beginning to take a greater interest in the Church's work than formerly. To do the work of the Lord it was necessary that they should have training, and the earlier that training was begun the better would they be. The best soldiers of Alexander the Great were the men born and reared in the army, and early trained to use the weapons. Canning in his oratory, Napoleon in his military career, and others of the great men of the past, had their powers developed when boys.

Ald. Boustead hoped that after this meeting there would be a League formed in every church in Toronto.

Just before the singing of the closing hymn Rev. LeRoy Hooker announced that a League in connection with the Metropolitan Church would be formed at the close of the prayer-meeting.

A resolution strongly endorsing the League and recommending it to the churches was passed.

The League was also strongly endorsed by a meeting of over thirty ministers of the city, and by the Methodist Sunday-school Teachers' Association.

THE WRECK AT THE CLIFF.

BY THE REV. EDWARD A. RAND.

"HARK, Dave!"

Dave, sitting by the stove early one Christmas morning, heard Grandmother Pond say a second time,

"Hark!"

"What is it, grandmother?"

"Thought I heard a roaring."

"The sea, grandmother! It was banging against the cliff all day yesterday. Fearful breakers!"

"I dare say."

She rose and went to the window, near which, on a stand, the old-fashioned candlestick still held its burning tallow taper; but above the cold, dark sea there were signs that the sun would soon have a multitude of tapers shining in the great window of the east for the benefit of that particular Christmas.

"How is grandfather?" asked Dave.

"Well, his rheumatiz keeps him in bed; makes him nervous. Did it snow much during the night?"

"I haven't been out, grandmother, to see."

"A snow-storm is bad for folks at sea," she sighed.

Dave knew the meaning of this. She was thinking about her sailor-boy, John, off somewhere. Only the heavenly Father could tell just where John was. John was Dave's uncle, but the two had not seen each other for years. Dave was an orphan, recently coming to live with his grand parents. He now said:

"Don't I wish I had a lot of money, grandmother!"

"Why, Dave?"

"I'd make a home for sick sailors. I would let any one come that did not have a home, and could not make one for himself."

"Yes, yes; that would be Christian."

Grandmother then sighed again.

"Lot of 'em, Dave, that haven't any home. But there! that's what the Saviour wanted, you know, when he came to Bethlehem. And he was

only a little baby," added the tender-hearted grandmother.

"You ought to have heard the sermon Sunday, grandmother."

"What was it?"

"The minister said—said if we helped poor people and people without a home to get one, feed them, you know, when hungry, that would be like—like giving the Saviour a home—like taking him into the house."

"I wish he would come, I'm sure,—come to-day."

"Hark, grandmother! there is that noise you heard, I do believe. Sounds like—like—"

"A gun," said grandmother. "I don't see what it is."

"I'll just step out and see."

When Dave rose, one would have noticed that the boy was a cripple. He took up two crutches lying on the floor by the side of his chair. He put on his old felt hat, mounted his crutches, and went out of the room.

Pound, pound, pound! went his crutches down a long entry to the back door. Dave opened it, closed it after him, and then the house was silent.

"A kind-hearted boy as ever was!" said his grandmother, as the echo of the crutches died away.

Dave could not, like other boys, take as many steps as he wished; and he now shortened his route by going through the barn. He wanted to reach the cliff near which was his grandfather's little farm. At the foot of the cliff the great sea tumbled and foamed and roared. As ugly a place in a storm as ever you saw.

"Bang-g-g!"

Dave's heart almost stopped when he heard it.

"That is a gun from a wreck, and—and I think I can see the—the masts above the edge of the cliff! Oh, dear!"

Dave was right.

When he reached the edge of the cliff, he looked down upon the deck of a vessel not more than seventy-five feet from the shore! Oh, how the sea raged and frothed about that wreck! Ten millions of wolves, with white, foaming jaws, seemed to be springing at her, to tear her in pieces and drag her away, howling incessantly as the work of destruction went on. No boat could have lived in that tumult.

"I—I—I'll wave a crutch!" thought Dave.

"They can see that!"

Yes, Dave thought he saw somebody toss up his arms when that crutch was brandished on the brink of the cliff.

"Now, now I must get the people here," said Dave. "Don't I wish I had other boys' legs!" He lacked them though, and so could not go the shortest and most direct way; but he chose that which would be the least arduous, though the longest, and this took him again through the barn.

But who came from one of its hay-mows, rubbing his sleepy eyes open? A stranger and a tramp?

"Who—what—" began Dave.

"What are you making so much noise for, boy?"

You woke me up from a good night's sleep."

"Oh—oh!" said Dave, not stopping to ask for explanations, but proceeding at once to his story.

"There's a wreck down under the cliff!"

"What, what? A wreck?"

The stranger started. In an instant he threw away all his burden of sleep. He sprang off with the alertness of a deer. He rushed to the cliff, looked down a minute, and then ran back.

"Here, boy! Rouse all the neighbours! And where's your grandfather's rope? There's a tackle here, somewhere, isn't there? Got a big basket?"

Dave answered these questions. He showed

where various lines and ropes were stowed, where the tackle was, where a big basket stood in one corner. Then he hobbled off to rouse the neighbours.

"Wonder who that is!" thought Dave. "He is a young man,—isn't old any way. Slept in grandfather's barn too! Wonder who he is? Oh, there's a fisherman! He will help me get people. It's Jotham Smith! Jo-thum!" he began to shout. "There is a wreck at the cliff! Jo-thum! Jo-thum!"

It did not take Jotham Smith long to give the alarm. When the aroused neighbourhood reached the cliff, they saw a line reaching to the battered vessel. The stranger, tying a light line to a big spike he found in the barn, had sent it to the vessel. The crew pulled on the line, to which their rescuer had attached a firm rope. Its successor was a strong stretch of hemp almost of the size of a cable. Occasional shouts from the imperilled crew reached and stimulated their solitary ally. When helpers reached him, he was dragging out the tackle from the barn.

"Hurrah!" shouted Jotham the fisherman.

"Here we are! Everybody take hold! Why," he said to the stranger, "guess you are a sailor, a rigger, or suthin'! See here! Don't I know you?"

"I feel at home, any way," said the stranger.

"To the rescue!" he shouted. "Somebody bring that basket! Come on!"

To the cliff went all the apparatus; and finally, between the cliff and the vessel's mainmast-head, ran grandfather's basket. Soon a man came back in it.

"Wish ye a merry Christmas!" cried Jotham.

"Wish you a good many!" said this arrival from the sea. "If it hadn't been for you, we should have had an awful Christmas out there."

Back went the basket for the next man. Dave had hobbled to the house, and told grandmother and grandfather everything that happened. Grandfather in bed just held up his hands to God and prayed for the shipwrecked crew. Grandmother flew about. She warmed up the fore room. She brought Christmas pies from her pantry. She fetched dry clothing from the closets. She made hot coffee. Oh, it was a wonderful Christmas! Every time a poor drenched sailor arrived, grandmother felt that the sailor's Saviour had come to be sheltered and made comfortable. By the time all the rescued had arrived, the old farmhouse, with the grandmother stirring about and the grandfather on his bed, seemed to those loving hearts so full of the Saviour's presence that the spot became a very Bethlehem, angels' songs echoing in the air.

"Don't you want that man to come in, grandmother,—that stranger who has done so much?" asked Dave.

"Oh, yes, Dave! Bring him in!"

When he entered, grandmother threw up her hands, began to cry, and then took him in her fond arms.

"Why, John!" she sobbed.

"Yes, mother; I was wrecked, the other day, on the Jersey coast, and have been travelling afoot to get here, but did not come till in the night, and thought I would not rouse you, but make port in the old barn, and be a kind of Christmas present for you in the morning. If it hadn't been for the crutches going through the barn, I might have been sleeping now, and not helped about the wreck."

A boy's heart leaped to think his crutches had done some good Christmas morning. He too had heard the angels' song of good will to men.

BETTER suffer wrong than do wrong.

The King's Daughter.

SHE wears no jewels upon hand or brow,
No badge by which she may be known of
men;

But, though she walk in plain attire now,
She is a daughter of the King, and when
Her Father calls her at his throne to wait
She will be clothed as doth befit her state.

Her Father sent her in his land to dwell,
Giving to her a work that must be done;
And since the King loves all his people well,
Therefore she, too, cares for them, every
one.

Thus when she stoops to lift from want and
sin,
The brighter shines her royalty therein.

She walks erect through dangers manifold
While many sink and fall on either hand.
She needs not summer's heat nor winter's
cold,

For both are subject to the King's com-
mand;
She need not be afraid of anything,
Because she is the daughter of the King!

Even where the angel comes that men call
Death—

And name with terror—it appals not
her;

She turns to look at him with quickened
breath,

Thinking, "It is the royal messenger!"
Her heart rejoices that her Father calls
Her back to live within the palace walls.

For though the land she dwells in is most
fair,

Set round with streams, like picture in its
frame,

Yet often in her heart deep longings are
For that "imperial palace" whence she
came;

Not perfect quite seems any earthly thing,
Because—she is a daughter of the King!

LESSON NOTES.**FOURTH QUARTER.****TEMPERANCE LESSON.**

B.C. 1000.] [December 29.

Prov. 23. 29-35. Memory verses, 29-32.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging;
and whosoever is deceived thereby is not
wise. Prov. 20. 1.

OUTLINE.

1. Woe, v. 29, 30.
2. Warning, v. 31-35.

TIME.—Sometime during Solomon's reign
many of the proverbs were produced. We
follow the common chronology of our Eng-
lish Bible (A. V.) and call the year 1000
B.C.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

An isolated lesson, having no relation to
the lessons of the quarter.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Woe, sorrow, contentions,*
etc. All these are as distinct characteris-
tics of drunkenness to-day as then. *Bab-*
bling—Maudlin talk of the drunkard.
Wounds without cause—Gotten in drunken
quarrels. *Mixed wine*—The Oriental na-
tions all drank their wine largely mixed
with water, but sometimes with aromatic
spices to make it stronger. *Wine . . . red . . .*
giveth colour . . . moveth aright—All these are
indications of the quality of the wine.
An adder—Some sort of very venomous
serpent.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. The evils of intemperance?
2. The wisdom of total abstinence?
3. The wickedness of drunkard-making?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Against what sin is this lesson directed?
"Against the sin of intemperance." 2.
What is intemperance? "Excess of any
kind." 3. What particular excess is here
denounced? "Excessive use of intoxicating
drinks." 4. What warning do the Scrip-

tures pronounce against the seller of in-
toxicating drinks? "Voe unto him that
giveth his neighbour drink." Hab. 2. 15.
5. What warning to the user of these
drinks? "Wine is a mocker," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The deceitful-
ness of sin.

**THE GRAY HEAD BY THE
HEARTH.**

A PRIVATE letter from a lady who
is spending the year among the pea-
sants of Tyrol says, "The morning
after our arrival we were awakened
by the sound of a violin and flutes
under the window, and hurrying down
found the little house adorned as for a
feast—garlands over the door and
wreaths on a high chair which was set
in state.

"The table was already covered
with gifts brought by the young people
whose music we had heard. The
whole neighbourhood were kinsfolk,
and these gifts came from uncles and
cousins in every far-off degree. They
were very simple, for the donors are
poor—knitted gloves, a shawl, baskets
of flowers, jars of fruit, loaves of
bread; but upon all some little mes-
sage of love was pinned.

"Is there a bride in this house?"
I asked of my landlord.

"Ach, nein!" he said. "We do
not make such a pother about our
young people. It is the grandmother's
birth-day."

"The grandmother, in her spectacles,
white apron, and high velvet cap, was
a heroine all day, sitting in state to
receive visits, and dealing out slices
from a sweet-loaf to each who came.
I could not but remember certain
grandmothers at home, just as much
loved as she, probably, whose dull, sad
lives were never brightened by any
such pleasure as this; and I thought
we could learn much from these poor
mountaineers."

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