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# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 28, 1895.

[No. 52.]

Vol. XV.]

## The Magi.

THEY came from the East, from the source of light  
When ages ago the day was born;  
Whence rides the sun in his wondrous might,  
His chariot wet with the dew of morn.  
They turned from the sun to track a star,  
But never for this did their zeal grow less;  
And they hailed at last, after journeying far,  
The glorious Sun of Righteousness.

They came from the East, the land of spice,  
And laden with perfumes rich and rare;  
A fragrant and precious sacrifice  
Like incense of humble and holy pray'r,  
They found a flower in Bethlehem's inn  
Far sweeter than in the Orient grows;  
Unsoil'd of earth, untouch'd of sin,  
Was the bud of Sharon's lovely Rose.

They came from the East, and of kingly state,  
Their peers had been in their native land;  
Yet now for them all it was meet to mate  
With the lowly carpenter's family band.  
For in that infant meek and fair,  
They marked the signs of lofty birth;  
And gladly they gave him homage there—  
The rightful King of all the earth.

## SNOWBALLING.

A good round of snowballing at play-time is delightful. We have no sympathy with those boys who think it fun to "shy" a snowball at an old lady's umbrella, for they will be afraid of the first policeman they meet; neither have we any fancy for the boy who will snowball a timid girl; and we scorn still more the boy who will take a mean advantage of a shivering little fellow who cannot defend himself; but we enjoy the sight of a fairly-divided group of boys who have chosen sides and make merry in the play-ground. Our young friends in the picture are having a high time of it, two of them defending the snow fort against the other two. All went on merrily enough till one boy on the attacking side lost his temper and wanted to fight. It was a pity he had not better self-control, for the other boys were so ashamed of him that they rolled him over and over in the snow, and almost made a snow man of him. The real temper and disposition of boys come out very soon in the play-ground. We wish boys would learn to control their temper always. We used to write in the old "copy-book" days, "Anger is a weakness of the understanding." It surely is that. A boy who is soon angry has a weak understanding, and something worse.

If we could whisper in the ears of all our school-boy friends, we would say, "Be brave, noble, good-tempered boys, and never take a mean advantage of the weak, the cripple, or the timid. Learn in early life that the noblest conquest ever made is the conquest of your own heart."

## A NEW YEAR'S LAGGARD.

BY CHARLES N. SINNETT.

"THERE, don't be looking from the window any longer, Martha. We've got a lot of extra cooking to do, though I don't suppose that any one will think of making us a New Year's call. It is bad enough to be slow and puttering in the old year. But to begin as a New Year's laggard is still worse."

Granny Holcomb did not speak that sharply, though. There was a sad, pitiful ring in all the words. She seemed to be looking across the hills toward the old cemetery more than at her granddaughter.

The girl started nervously, though. The bright colour swept into her pale cheeks as she turned away from the west window.

"Yes, grandmother," she answered, pleasantly.

But to herself she confessed, "I am, indeed, a New Year's laggard. There is Nathan Perry going over the hill. It's more than two months ago that I made up my mind to urge him to go to our Epworth League meetings. And I haven't said a word to him yet."

She knew that the young man was hurrying along, and would soon be out of sight among the trees of the hollow.

"I don't want you to help me with the work here," Granny said, quickly. "You've been kept in the house a good deal lately. You need the fresh air more than I do. I wish you would run down to the store and get me some spice."

"There is old Peter Murdock," Martha quickly thought. "He will meet Nathan. If he stops for only a few moments he will have something to say to him against the church and its work. And it always seems as though Nathan was greatly influenced by him. He will not be in the right frame of mind to listen to anything which I may say."

But, though her hands shook and her heart beat fast, she resolved as she went on to speak to the young man about his duty of attending the Epworth League.

She was sure that he knew why she seemed so nervous when she came up to him. And how his eyes twinkled, as they

"Yes, that's it," Martha laughed back to him.

Nathan was so surprised at her success in controlling her nervousness that he said, "You—you think I could help there?"

"We all do. You could help in the singing. And then you could speak and pray. You do not do things by halves when you are interested in them. And you must think much about leading an earnest Christian life."

"Well, you must have read my mind," the young man said, with a thoughtful look upon his face. "I did not dream any one guessed what I was thinking. I've been a great laggard about doing my duty."

"And I, too," said a trembling voice, as a man stepped out of the thick spruce bushes at Martha's side.

"Why, Mr. Holcomb!" said Nathan; "I am so glad you've got back again."

"Father!" was all that the girl could utter.

"Yes, I've come back," the man said, as he grasped her hand. "And I came back last New Year's Day. But it didn't seem to me as though I was as right and true as I ought to be. I've prayed and worked hard for the Lord all this year. But my courage failed about making myself known, after I've been a wanderer from home these ten years. So I slipped into the woods here and hid. But you've been so brave, Martha, to speak out to him as duty called you—oh, I could see how hard it was—that! feel I can keep in the right by your help."

"I'm sure you can," said Nathan, "and I shall run in and see you often as I go to the young people's meeting."

"How strange that I thought I saw Peter Murdock coming to hinder Nathan from heeding my words," spoke Martha, with the tears of joy shining in her eyes. "And it was my dear father with a heart full of love for the Master! I do believe that grandmother felt that her prayers for you were answered, she's been getting so many good things ready."

"Felt she'd forgive—forgive her New Year's laggard," said Robert Holcomb, with happy thanksgiving.—*Epworth Herald.*

## HOW SHALL SANTA CLAUS COME.

OLD SANTA CLAUS has so many young friends to visit, that it has been necessary to provide for him the very swiftest conveyances. Accordingly, a hundred years ago, we all, by common consent, voted him the use of a beautiful sleigh, with swift reindeer—which could outrun horses—to draw it. But lately the reindeer have been out-done in speed by railroad cars, by electric cars, and even by bicycles. One rider, the other day, made a mile in less than two minutes on a bicycle. What think you? Would we do well to take away that old sleigh from Santa Claus,—it must be nearly worn out by this time. And then sometimes Christmas fails to have snow ready for him—and provide for the old fellow a brand-new bicycle? Or would it be better to build a railroad track up to the 'land of perpetual snow,' so that he can bring a much larger load of good things than his old worn-out sleigh will hold?

Avoid any action or word which may not be in harmony with the will of God.



SNOWBALLING.

Again the girl's cheeks reddened. That trip would give her a splendid opportunity of speaking to Nathan of his duty. Her path to the store would lead her to meet the young man in the grove.

But something seemed to whisper to her, "You've neglected to speak to him for such a long time. You're nervous too: it all will do no good."

And Martha quickly spoke, "Why, grandmother, I can help you here and go on the errand too."

But granny said firmly, "I must have the spice now, my dear."

And away went Martha down the hill. Would it be of any use to ask Nathan to come to the young people's meetings when she had waited so long to ask him?

That sharp question came to her again as she walked on. The answer seemed to be plainly before her eyes as she looked away to the south end of the spruce woods.

always did when he was ready to make her merry, teasing answers.

How quickly he spoke up, too. "A happy New Year, Martha. Glad to see you out; was afraid, after that big Epworth League meeting which you had at the old church last week, that we shouldn't see anything more of you for a long while."

"Peter met him! Peter met him!" was the truth which the girl's heart seemed to beat out with its quick pulsations.

She was silent a few seconds. Then though her voice shook some, she said plainly, "I am sure you will be at our next meeting, Nathan."

"What makes you think that?" he laughed.

And before an answer could be made he added, "Guess it must be because you think you read my mind as clearly as I see how afraid you were to speak to me about coming."

## A Christmas Song.

THE shepherds were keeping their watch by night,  
In the field with their flock abiding;  
And soft on the fleece of the lambs fell the light  
Of a new risen star  
From deserts afar  
The wise ones to Bethlehem guiding.

What startles the watchers? A rustle of wings,  
And a radiant figure above them.  
The lambs are afraid, and the white, woolly things  
With tremulous bleat  
Nestle close to the feet  
Of the faithful shepherds who love them.

"Fear not!" comes the message, exultant and strong,  
"Good tidings of joy I am bringing!"  
And lo! with the song of a heavenly throng—  
"Peace on earth! for this morn  
A Saviour is born!"—  
The hillsides of Judah are ringing.

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## Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 28, 1895.

## A REAL BOY.

A REAL, true, hearty, happy boy is about the best thing we know of, unless it is a real girl, and there is not much to choose between them. A real boy may be a sincere lover of the Lord Jesus Christ; even if he cannot lead the prayer-meeting, or be a church officer, or a preacher, he can be a godly boy in a boy's way and place. He is apt to be noisy and full of fun, and there is nothing wrong about that. He ought not to be too solemn or too quiet for a boy. He need not cease to be a boy because he is a Christian. He ought to run, jump, play, climb, and shout like a real boy. But in it all he ought to show the spirit of Christ. He ought to be free from vulgarity and profanity.

No real, true boy chews, or uses tobacco in any form, and he has a horror of intoxicating drinks. The only way he treats tobacco is like the boy who was jeered and laughed at by some older ones because he could not chew. His reply was: "I can do more than that: I can eschew it." And so he did all his life.

A real boy is also peaceable, gentle, merciful, generous. He takes the part of small boys against large boys. He performs a kindly act whenever an opportunity presents itself. He renders assistance to a younger child who may stand in need of help. He discourages fighting. He refuses to be a party in mischief, persecution, and deceit. And, above all things, he is never afraid to show his colours. He need not always be interrupting; but he ought not to be ashamed to say that he refuses to do anything because it is wrong and wicked, or because he fears God or is a Christian.

A real boy never takes part in the ridicule of sacred things; but meets the ridicule of others with a bold statement that for all things of God he feels the deepest reverence. And a real boy is not ashamed to say that father or mother will not like it if I do so and so. It is only your sham, milk-and-water, half-and-half boys who are afraid to do right. Everybody respects the real boy, and every one despises the sham, smoking, tobacco-loving coward, who is afraid to do right for fear of a little ridicule.

## A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS.—A Happy New Year to you all! Does it seem a very long time since you gave and received New Year greetings a year ago? That will depend on whether the year has been bright and happy or just the reverse. When the days fly fast we are joyful and gay. Has the record of the past year been one which you enjoy to look back upon? If you have woven into the thread of each day's life something which will make you stronger, better and more Christlike, then you can say yes. If you have made mistakes, and done wrong things, you can at the opening of the new year just resolve with God's help not to repeat them.

Do you know what I think is the secret of a Happy New Year? I mean why it is called *Happy*? Because we can throw off all the burden of the past year, settle up accounts and begin fresh.

Just at this time is the best opportunity to invite that boy or girl friend, whom you know, and who has not yet come into our "home protection" army to sign the pledge. While resolving for ourselves let us help others to resolve too.

A little New Year rhyme which I read somewhere comes to my mind. It runs like this:

"New Year, we bid you welcome!  
New resolves have come with you;  
We shall start with fresh endeavour—  
Will you kindly help us through?"

"Will you help us to be thoughtful?  
Will you make us hate the wrong?  
Will you help to make us patient,  
Honest, loving, pure and strong?"

"Dear New Year, you'll aid us, won't you?  
You are young like us, you know—  
As we journey on together  
Help us each to stronger grow."

—Aunt Jane, in *Union Signal*.

## CIGARETTES.

Do you care to know how they are made? I think I can enlighten you. An Italian boy only eight years old was brought before a justice in New York City as a vagrant, or, in other words, a young tramp. But with what did the officer charge him? Only with picking up cigar stumps from the streets and gutters. To prove this he showed the boy's basket, half full of stumps, water-soaked, and covered with mud.

"What do you do with these?" asked his Honour.

What do you think was his answer?

"I sell them to a man for ten cents a pound, to be used in making cigarettes."

Not a particularly agreeable piece of information, is it, boys?

In our large cities there are a great many cigar-butt grubbers, as they are called. It certainly is not a pretty name, though very appropriate; for it is applied to boys and girls who scour the streets in search of half-burned cigars and stumps, which are dried, and then sold to be used in making cigarettes.

But this isn't all, nor even the worst of it. These cigarettes have been analyzed, and physicians and chemists were surprised to find how much opium is put into them. A tobacconist himself says that "the extent to which drugs are used in cigarettes is appalling." "Havana flavouring" for this same purpose is sold everywhere by the thousand barrels. This flavouring is made from the tonka bean, which contains a deadly poison. The wrappers, warranted to be rice paper, are sometimes made of common paper, and sometimes of filthy scrapings of rag-pickers, bleached white

with arsenic. What a cheat to be practised on people!

Think of it, boys. The next time you take up a cigarette drop it as you would a coal of fire. The latter would simply burn your fingers; but this burns up good health, good resolutions, good manners, good memories, good faculties, and often honesty and truthfulness as well.

A bright boy of thirteen came under the spell of cigarettes. He grew stupid and subject to nervous twitchings, till finally he was obliged to give up his studies. When asked why he didn't throw away his miserable cigarettes, the poor boy replied, with tears, that he had often tried to do so, but could not.

Another boy of eleven was made crazy by cigarette smoking, and was taken to an insane asylum in Orange County, N.Y. He was regarded as a violent and dangerous maniac, exhibiting some of the symptoms peculiar to hydrophobia.

The white spots on the tongue and inside the cheeks, called smoker's patches, are thought by Sir Morell Mackenzie to be more common with users of cigarettes than with other smokers.—*Sunday-School Visitor*.

## "JESUS IS COLD."

BY ADJUTANT ARCHIBALD.

AMONG the Saxons the custom prevailed of burning the yule-log at the Christmas-tide. One of their legends says, "A selfish man who had plenty of money but no sympathy was keeping his Christmas all alone, and out of a deference to the day he kept a little log burning with a very feeble flame. As he shivered in the chilly atmosphere of his desolate room, he fell asleep and dreamed. In his dream he heard a voice which drew his attention to a beautiful Child who stood near him, and said, "Jesus is cold."

With an impatient movement the selfish man stirred the fire a little and said, "Why don't you go down to the farm-house in the lane? You'll be warm enough there."

"Yes," replied the Child, "but you make me cold, you are so cold."

"Then what can I do for you?"

"You can give me a gold coin."

With a great deal of reluctance the money chest was opened and a gold coin was given the Child.

He took it; instantly the dingy room became bright and cheerful as the Child hung up some laurel and holly, saying, "These are for life," and placing two candles on the shelf said, "These are for light," and stirred the fire, saying, "That is for love." Then the door was thrown open, and a poor woman and sick man and orphan children entered, and were seated at a bountiful repast, while the Child kept saying, "Jesus is warm now," and the selfish man found that he also was enjoying the scene, so that he presently confessed, "I think that I'm warmer too."

Then the Child suddenly disappeared, and in his place there was a Divine Presence, and solemnly the words were pronounced, "Although I am in heaven, I am everywhere, for everywhere is heaven, if I am there. I cannot suffer as I once suffered, but whenever my children are cold, or hungry, or persecuted, or neglected, I suffer with them, and whenever they are warm, and fed, and sheltered, and loved, I rejoice with them."—*The Young Soldier*.

## A JUNIOR CLASS-MEETING.

"How shall I conduct a Junior League class-meeting?" This question came to me from Minnesota not long ago, and a suggestion I found in the *Epworth Era* helped me to answer it.

Use that invaluable ally, the blackboard. Write upon it the following questions: "What has God done for me?" and "What do I desire of the Lord?" Explain to the children the fact that these desires refer to spiritual blessings, and then call upon the Juniors in turn to answer these two questions.

The chief thought of each answer is written on the blackboard, and, when all have spoken, a season of prayer follows, that God may grant these desires.

A class-meeting conducted in this way

can hardly be a failure. The children will find it much easier to speak of their spiritual needs if it is thus made simple to them, than it would be if they were called upon to relate their experiences like mature Christians.

Junior superintendents, try the blackboard class-meeting, and you will be surprised to find what a depth and variety of experience these Christian children have.

I will add a prayer, which may be profitably used at the close of such a meeting as I have described. It may be written on the blackboard and read aloud by the Juniors, or it may be taught, line by line, and repeated by the children in concert.

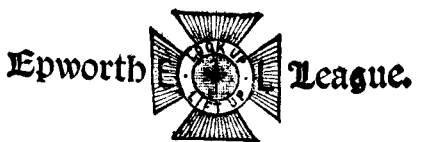
## A NEW YEAR'S PRAYER.

I want my heart made pure, dear Lord,  
I want to know and love thy Word;  
To be all glorious within,  
Freed from each spot and stain of sin.

I want the New Year's opening days  
To fill with love, and prayer, and praise.  
Some little thing to do for thee,  
For thou hast done great things for me.

I want some other soul to bring  
To thee, my Saviour, and my King.  
Thou wilt not, Lord, my prayer deny,  
For thou canst all my wants supply.

In Jesus' name our prayer we raise,  
Whose guiding hand has blessed our days.  
And may we, Lord, in godly fear  
Serve thee through all this coming year?  
Amen!



JUNIOR LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

January 6, 1896.

HIS CREATURES.—Colossians 1. 16.

The meaning of this verse can only be understood by carefully considering the context. The supreme majesty of Jesus Christ is here set forth. He is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person. All the titles claimed by God the Father, are equally the property of the Son. He is more than man and possesses all the attributes of the God-head. All things were created by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. You cannot mention any creature either in heaven or earth, visible or invisible, but what owes its existence to him who "spoke as never man spoke." He spoke and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast.

The creative power of the Son of God enhances the importance of redemption, for while it was something "great to create a world, it was greater to redeem." The gift of Christ in redemption was of inestimable value. The Apostle Paul speaks of it as an "unspeakable gift." We should meditate upon Christ, and our meditation should be sweet, for he is the fairest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely. As we contemplate him as the Creator of the boundless universe, we are constrained to exclaim:

"Lord, what shall earth and ashes do?  
We would adore our Maker too!  
From sin and dust to thee we cry,  
The Great, the Holy, and the High."

Should not we who are the subjects of his love adore him above all others, for of all the creatures whom his hands have made, mankind only have been redeemed. Christ gave himself for us. He designs to make us a "peculiar people." We are his representatives and should glorify him. Let every Junior Epworth Leaguer sing aloud:

"Birds of the air exalt thy fame  
And shall I silent be?  
No, Lord, thy goodness I'll proclaim  
And give my heart to thee."

THE nearer you live to God, the less influence will evil people have over you, and the less will they seek your company.

PUPIL: "The climate of Patagonia is both mountainous and moisturous."  
Teacher: "What do the people live on?"  
Pupil: "On the seacoast, on the guano, and other animals."

Archie's Christmas Gift.

BY EMILY BAKER SMALLE.

TWENTY-ONE, two, three, four and five!  
Just a quarter sure's I'm alive!  
And that will buy the funniest doll,  
Rubber and worsted, for Baby Moll.

That takes all of my ready cash,  
And breaks my bank all into smash;  
You little tin bank, you're never full;  
I can't work much nights after school.

These days are so short the light don't last,  
And Christmas is coming so fast,  
I won't ask father to give me a cent;  
He works too hard for bread and rent.

But mother must have a Christmas gift;  
O dear! who'll give a fellow a lift?  
Dear mamma! her hair is pretty and brown,  
And her smile so sweet, with never a frown.

I'll get her something, I will! I will!  
But how'll I get it's the question still.  
I know!—I've got such a splendid plan;  
'Tis good enough for a grown-up man.

I think my present will be just grand;  
'Tis this: I'll write, in my nicest hand,  
A pledge that liquor I'll never drink;  
That I'll never swear—and then, I think,

I'll write that tobacco I'll never use,  
In tobacco pipes or tobacco chews,  
I'll get an envelope clean and white,  
And on it mamma's name I'll write.

And I'll copy it out so nice and fair,  
And sign my name at the bottom there;  
"Archibald Spinner!" Oh, what a name!  
But grandpa wears it, and 'tis no shame.

"Archibald!" Mamma will like it so,  
"Archie!" she says when I'm good, I know,  
But I think 'twill please her—I know it will!  
Her dear brown eyes with tears will fill.

But behind the tears there will be for me,  
The happy twinkle I love to see.  
So, "Archibald Spinner," the road is long,  
You must make your mind up good and strong,

Before you put down in black and white,  
The pledge that the angels in heaven will write.

Yes, I'm going to do it! I've counted the cost:  
There is all to gain, and nothing lost.

Now Christmas may come—come slow, or come fast—  
I'm ready to meet it, ready at last;  
Who in this town has a finer show  
Than "Archibald II." I'd like to know!

MAY'S CHRISTMAS GIFT.

BY JAY.

It was Christmas week, and as I looked at the sewing on the table, and thought of all the other work that must be accomplished in the next two days, my fingers fairly flew over the garment I was finishing, while I was mentally engaged in planning how to make a very small sum go a great way in my house-keeping expenses. As I thought it all over the problem became more difficult, and I had concluded to do without some needed articles myself, when my little six-year-old girl came in where I sat so busily sewing and thinking.

"Mother,"  
"What is it, darling?" I asked.  
"Mother," she spoke so seriously and so unlike my laughing May that I stopped and looked at her. Encouraged by having gained my attention, she went on. "You know that this is Christmas, and I want to give a Christmas present; I want to give a doll to poor Nanny McDermott."

"Who is Nanny McDermott, May? I never heard you speak of her before. Is she in your class at school?"

"O! no, mother; Nanny's a poor Irish girl, and her mother's dead, and she has no one to teach her at home, so she had to go into a lower grade; but I see her in the playground at recess, and she looks so sad and lonely, I want to give her a doll to play with, for her mother's dead;" and the big blue eyes filled, as she spoke of the desolate child who had no mother.

For the fiftieth time that day I sighed, "Oh! if I had only five dollars that were not imperatively needed!" But I had not fifty cents to spare; so I said, as gently as I could, "I should love to get the doll for Nanny; but, my darling, I haven't the money."

Her face brightened, and she said eagerly, "You know, mother, I have some money Cousin Tom gave me last summer; and, besides, old Auntie Heywood paid me for

carrying in her light wood. I don't want to give your money. I have it in the little blue box upstairs, and I'll run and get it."

She came back in a moment, and poured the contents of the blue box into my lap. She had just one dollar and two cents. Her face beamed with delight as she said, "That's enough to buy the doll, and Nanny will be so glad! Will you come up town now, mother, and help me to buy it? I saw some beautiful ones in Smith's store window yesterday, and you know they might be sold if we waited till to-morrow; and please carry the money, mother; I might lose it."

How could I go, when I had so much to do, and the daylight waning fast? But I could not cloud that happy face by refusing, and I had so little to give her that I felt my boundless love and sympathy must never fail her; so, if I had to sit up half the night to make up for it, I would give an hour of my precious time; so I answered cheerfully, "Yes, darling; get your wraps, while I put on my bonnet and shawl."

She was soon ready, and as we walked up the village street together I held the little hand, in its coarse mitten, close to mine, and often tenderly pressed it, that she might be quite sure she was very dear to me. She did not laugh nor skip, as is her custom, but walked quietly, I had almost said solemnly, by my side, for her childish heart sympathy with the want she tried to cheer. As I looked down at the fair curls and big blue eyes of my darling I thought how happy I should be could I surround her with Christmas gifts, or even get her warmer clothing. Loving mothers, who are poor, know my feelings that afternoon.

When we reached the toy-shop we were both disappointed, for the "beautiful dolls" cost more than she could pay. At last we found some that looked very well, indeed, for the money, and she bought one for ninety cents. It had curly hair, dark eyes, and phenomenally red cheeks, and was dressed in a neat wrapper. May carried it home as proudly as if it were worth a hundred dollars, and put it away in the box with her Sunday clothes, there to wait for Christmas.

On Christmas Eve she pinned up her small stocking behind the stove in the sitting-room. Several times that day mysterious little parcels had arrived at our house, all from kind friends who, in their own fortunate homes, had not forgotten ours. There was a pretty red purse, with ten cents in it, and a tiny china tea-service, from old Auntie Heytiny china tea-service, from old Auntie Heytiny wood; a bound volume of *Saint Nicholas*, from Cousin Tom; a tiny candelabra with a box of wax tapers, from the Sabbath-school teacher, and bunches of raisins, and some oranges from a neighbour almost as poorly off as ourselves. Of course, all these things could not be squeezed into such a small stocking, so I put her high chair underneath to catch the overflow. There never was a happier child than my May when I carried her down, before daylight next morning, and she saw all her treasures. The lighted wax tapers and the bright oranges were particularly effective, and she thought the tea-dishes almost too pretty to play with.

After breakfast she said she would take the doll to Nanny, so she wrapped it up carefully and set out on her loving errand. When she returned I asked her if Nanny had pleased with her Christmas present.

"O! yes, mother; but she was so surprised we didn't say anything when I put the dolls into her cold hands. Only she said, 'Is this really for me?' and I said, 'Yes; I give it to you for your own, to keep for it's Christmas;' and then I went away, and then she called after me, 'Thank you, May, ever so much; and that's all. But I saw her home, and she's awfully poor, and I'm so glad I gave her that doll.'"

May did not mention the matter again, and the incident was quite forgotten, till one cold, blustering March evening we were startled by hearing the cry of "Fire!" and heard the fire-engine going swiftly to the opposite side of the village. Shortly after, a neighbour called to say that McDermott's cabin had caught fire, and little Nannie was so badly burned that she could live but a few hours. It was indeed true, for before midnight poor lonely Nannie was lonely and desolate no longer,—she had joined her mother.

When May came home from school next day she told me that her teacher had been with Nannie from the time of the accident till her death.

Teacher said that Nanny's sister had left her playing with her doll, and had gone to call her father to supper. Coming back she saw the blaze and shouted "Fire!" They soon put it out, but somehow Nanny was badly burned. Teacher said she knew them all, and didn't seem to suffer much. She asked them to put the doll May Bentley had given her at Christmas on the pillow, and died with it beside her. I wish teacher

hadn't said my name before them all, for all the girls looked so surprised they hadn't heard about me. A good many of them are going to the funeral to-morrow, but I couldn't bear to see her dead."

"Why, May," I said, "Nanny is far happier now than she has ever been. She has her mother now, and will never cry for her again; and she's away from all cold and hunger. Happy child! no more suffering for her."

May looked out of the window, far away. "I know that," she said softly, "but I'm glad I gave her the doll, mother."  
"So am I, darling."—*Christian Work.*

TO BOYS WHO SMOKE.

If boys who smoke would only be sensible and see the folly of it, how much better it would be for them and others! Can you not see, do you not know, that you are going through a great deal of misery to do something you do not really like? You are enduring with a patience worthy of a better cause the suffering of a martyr, in order to acquire a useless, bad habit; and trying to cultivate a taste that makes you sick. Why should you treat yourself so meanly? You know perfectly well that you do not smoke because you enjoy it. It is only when you think some one (but assuredly not your parents) is looking at you. You always do this with an air of intense self-consciousness. Everybody, including yourself, knows that you are on exhibition. And it is such a pitiable, cheap show, too. You think people are admiring you, which they are not. Why, so far from exciting admiration in the minds of the beholders, if you boys could hear the remarks which people make when they see you smoking, you would never again try a cigarette where human eyes could perceive you.

Moreover, it makes you disagreeable company. When you bring into society the horrid taint of stale tobacco in your hair and clothes, your absence is always more gratefully welcome than your presence. So don't smoke, boys. It makes you stupid, so it does not help you in your studies; it is injurious to the heart, so it does not aid you in athletic sports. It does not do you one particle of good; it makes you appear silly and ridiculous; it is as disagreeable and offensive to yourselves as it is to anybody else; you do not get a bit of comfort and real pleasure out of it, and you all know it—so pray do not smoke!

PATting THE IRON HORSE.

The overland train had arrived at Oakland, Cal., and the great iron engine was throbbing and puffing after the long trip over mountain sides and rocky defiles, lofty trestles and marshy stretches.

The din in the depot was deafening, but out of the chaos of sounds a sweet, girlish voice was heard welcoming home her parents, who had arrived on the train. She was a little golden-haired beauty, scarcely seven years of age, with a loving nature, to which she gave full vent in the impulsive way she welcomed her parents back. At last they took her by the hand and proceeded toward the waiting ferry-boat.

As they passed by the engine attached to the train, the little one broke away and ran up to the big, black machine and patted the driving wheels affectionately with her small, white hands. Then, looking up at the smokestack, she said: "You ing up at the smokestack, you have good, big, old, iron horse, you have brought back papa and mamma safe over the great mountains to their little girl, and I want to thank you, even if you don't care for me because I am so little. And care for me because I am so little. And wistfully toward the grimy engineer and fireman, who were looking down at her. "I love you all." Then she kissed her hand to them and was gone.

"Bill," said the engineer to his fireman, "what was that?"  
"Peared like an angel," said the fireman, echoing the other's thought.

Just then a fleeting sunbeam came stealing through a chink in the depot and stole by the engineer into his cab. There was a strange look on his face for an instant, and when he turned his head there were two light streaks on his dust-begrimed cheeks.—*Sunday-school Visitor.*

"STRAIGHTENING OUT THE FURROWS."

"Boys," he said, "I've been trying every day of my life for the last two years to straighten out furrows, and I can't do it!"

One boy turned his head in surprise toward the captain's neatly-kept place.

"Oh, I don't mean that kind, lad. I don't mean land furrows," continued the captain, so soberly that the attention of the boys became breathless as he went on:

"When I was a lad about the age of you boys, I was what they called a 'hard case'; not exactly bad or vicious, but wayward and wild. Well, my dear old mother used to coax, pray and punish—my father was dead, making it all the harder for her—but she never got impatient. How in the world she bore with all my stubborn, vexing ways so patiently will always be to me one of the mysteries of life. I knew it was troubling her, knew it was changing her pretty face, making it look anxious and old. After awhile, tiring of all restraint, I ran away, went off to sea—and a rough time I had of it at first. Still I liked the water, and I liked journeying around from place to place. Then I settled down to business in a foreign land, and soon became prosperous, and now began sending her something besides empty letters. And such beautiful letters as she always wrote me during those years of absence. At length I noticed how long they grew—longing for the presence of the son who used to try her so, and it awoke a corresponding longing in my own heart to go back to the dear, waiting soul.

"So when I could stand it no longer, I came back, and such a welcome, and such a surprise! My mother is not a very old lady, boys, but the first thing I noticed was the whiteness of her hair and the deep furrows on her brow, and I knew I had helped to blanch that hair to its snowy whiteness, and had drawn those lines in that smooth forehead. And those are the furrows I've been trying to straighten out.

"But last night, while mother was sleeping in her chair, I sat thinking it all over, and looked to see what progress I had made.

"Her face was very peaceful and the expression contented as possible, but the furrows were still there! I hadn't succeeded in straightening them out—and—I—never—shall—never!

"When they lay my mother—my fair old sweetheart—in her casket, there will be furrows in her brow; and I think it a wholesome lesson to teach you, that the neglect you offer your parents' counsel now, and the trouble you cause them, will abide, my lads, it will abide!"

"But," broke in Freddie Hollis, with great troubled eyes, "I should think if you're so kind and good now, it needn't matter so much!"

"Ah, Freddie, my boy," said the quavery voice of the strong man, "you cannot undo the past. You may do much to atone for it, do much to make the rough path smooth, but you can't straighten out the old furrows, my laddies, remember that!"

"Guess I'll go and chop some wood mother spoke of; I'd almost forgotten," said lively Jimmy Hollis, in a strangely quiet tone for him.

"Yes, and I've got some errands to do!" suddenly remembered Billy Bowles.

"Touched and taken," said the kindly captain to himself as the boys tramped off, keeping step in a thoughtful, soldier-like way.

And Mrs. Bowles declared a fortnight afterward that Billy was "really getting to be a comfort!"

Then Mrs. Hollis, meeting the captain about that time, remarked that Jimmy always meant to be a good boy, but he was actually being one.

"Guess your stories they like so much have morals to them now and then," added the gratified mother, with a smile. As Mrs. Hollis passed, Captain Sam, with folded arms and head bent down, said softly to himself:

"Well, I shall be thankful enough if a word of mine will help the dear boys to keep the furrows away from their mothers' brows; for once there, it is a difficult task straightening out the furrows."



WINTER SCENE.

Winter Song.

BY M. N. B.

No more the little birdies sing,  
The trees their rustling leaves have lost,  
The snow lies deep o'er everything  
The air is full of frost.

Oh, now the Winter time has come,  
Bringing to us bright Christmas Day,  
The babbling brook with ice is dumb  
And children with their snowballs play.

We bid the leaves and flowers good-bye,  
And let the birdlings southward go,  
For when the Spring again draws nigh,  
They'll all come back to us, we know.

All seasons bring their gifts of love,  
To each Canadian girl and boy,  
Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter prove,  
The world is running o'er with joy.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE.

B.C. 6.] LESSON I [Jan. 5.

THE FORERUNNER OF CHRIST.

Luke 1. 5-17. Memory verses, 15, 16.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways.—Luke 1. 76.

TIME.—B.C. 6.

PLACE.—In the temple at Jerusalem.

RULERS.—Augustus Caesar, emperor of Rome. Herod the Great, king of Palestine; he was the first of the seven Herods mentioned in the New Testament; had a brilliant reign, and died a miserable death at Jericho.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Luke 1. 5-17.
- Tu. Luke 1. 59-66.
- W. Luke 1. 67-80.
- Th. Exod. 30. 1-10.
- F. Mal. 3. 1-6.
- S. Mal. 4.
- Su. Matt. 11. 7-14.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. *The Home*, v. 5-7.  
What Herod is mentioned in the lesson?  
How were the priests divided?  
What is said about the piety of Zacharias and Elizabeth?  
What was a great trial to a Jewish home?  
Why was this?
2. *The Vision*, v. 8-12.  
How was it decided what work a priest should do in the temple?  
What fell to the lot of Zacharias?  
When was the incense offered?  
What did the people do while the priest ministered?  
For what did Zacharias pray?  
Of what was the angel's coming a sign?  
How long since angels had appeared in Israel?  
Mention some who were afraid of an angel?  
Tell of cases where angels tried to remove fear.
3. *The Promise*, v. 13-17.  
How was John to be great?  
From what was he to abstain?  
What gives joy and strength?  
What was John to do for Jesus?  
How did he resemble Elijah?  
When is Christ precious?

To-morrow you have no business with. You steal if you touch to-morrow. It is God's. Every day has in it enough to keep every man occupied, without concerning himself with the things that lie beyond.

You cannot deceive God either by mock humility or by pride; he knows you better than you know yourself.

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- Happy Days. Landscape and poetical selections. Twelve cards ..... 20
- Motto Calendar. Floral sprays and Scripture text. Twelve cards ..... 20
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- Mizpah. Landscapes and Scripture verses. Twelve cards ..... 35
- Our Onward Way. Landscapes, flowers and Scripture texts. Twelve cards ..... 35
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