

Technical and Bibliographic Notes / Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

Coloured covers/
Couverture de couleur

Covers damaged/
Couverture endommagée

Covers restored and/or laminated/
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée

Cover title missing/
Le titre de couverture manque

Coloured maps/
Cartes géographiques en couleur

Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)

Coloured plates and/or illustrations/
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur

Bound with other material/
Relié avec d'autres documents

Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin/
La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distorsion le long de la marge intérieure

Blank leaves added during restoration may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming/
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées.

Additional comments:/
Commentaires supplémentaires:

Coloured pages/
Pages de couleur

Pages damaged/
Pages endommagées

Pages restored and/or laminated/
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées

Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées

Pages detached/
Pages détachées

Showthrough/
Transparence

Quality of print varies/
Qualité inégale de l'impression

Continuous pagination/
Pagination continue

Includes index(es)/
Comprend un (des) index

Title on header taken from:/
Le titre de l'en-tête provient:

Title page of issue/
Page de titre de la livraison

Caption of issue/
Titre de départ de la livraison

Masthead/
Générique (périodiques) de la livraison

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	12X	14X	16X	18X	20X	22X	24X	26X	28X	30X	32X
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVI.]

TORONTO, DECEMBER 19, 1896.

No 51.

O Little Town of Bethlehem.

BY PHILLIPS BROOKS.

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent hours go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The ever-lasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to-night.

For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

O Holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us we pray!
Cast out our sin and enter in;
Be born in us to-day.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell,
Oh, come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!

CHRISTMAS IN POVERTY ROW.

"Merry Christmas, Haldy."

"The same to you," replied the pale-faced little cripple, whose eyes brightened at sight of two happy children who burst into the room where he sat.

It was Christmas Day, and Ben Brown and his little sister Greta had come to bring their holiday present to the little lame boy.

Three years before, little Harold Wilson had been taken down with typhoid fever, and his poor mother thought she was going to lose her dear boy. However, the little fellow recovered, and in time was able to be out again. One day, not long before the Christmas holidays, he thought he would like to go down to the school to watch the boys at play. He had not been near the old school for nearly two months, and his little heart was longing to be back again.

So this morning the little lad had started off in great glee at the thought of seeing the old school, the teachers, and the boys again.

When he appeared on the playground he was hailed with delight by some of his companions, but, I am sorry to say, most of them were too busily engaged in their sports to take notice of the little invalid. Some of the boys were playing a pretty wild game of "tag," when one big, rough fellow ran against Harold and knocked him down.

Poor little fellow! he was still in a very weak condition, and when picked up from the fall, it was found that one of his feeble little legs was broken. He was taken home as carefully as possible, for the pain was intense, and put to bed where he had to remain many weeks. The doctor was called in, and after a thorough examination of the injured leg, sorrowfully shook his head, and said that he feared little Harold would be a cripple for life.

It was at the time of his first Christmas as a lame boy, that Ben and Greta found him out. They were passing by the cottage in which he lived, when they heard sharp cries, followed by dull moanings, as of a child in pain. Poor Greta's heart was so stirred by hearing these sad sounds that she would not go on until she had found what was the matter. So Ben stepped up to the door and knocked. Presently a tired, anxious-looking woman appeared, and being touched by the sympathetic inquiry of the children, invited them to come in and see her poor suffering child.

That night the children got their father to buy a little Christmas tree, which they could carry on the morrow, Christmas Day, to the sick boy.

Bright and early were they up the next morning, looking over all the good things which Santa Claus had brought them. They emptied their stockings and laid all the presents in a pile. And a goodly pile they made. Then they proceeded to pick out some of the very nicest toys, and fastened them to the little tree.

Presently their papa and mamma appeared, and asked what they were doing. They said they were preparing the tree to take to a new friend, and when they told about their visit of the day before, you may be sure their loving parents did not object, but were glad to see their children taking of their very best to give to one who had no Christmas gifts.

Every year since they have carried a

MADE ONE JOYFUL CHRISTMAS.

A little newsboy got on the New York elevated train at Park Place and, slipping into one of the cross seats, was soon asleep. Presently two young ladies came in and took seats opposite. The child's feet were bare, his clothes ragged, and his face looked pinched and drawn, as if he were hungry. His face was dirty, but seeing that his cheek rested against the hard window-sill, one of the young ladies slipped her muff under his head. An old gentleman in the next seat smiled at the act, and without saying anything held out a quarter to her, with a nod towards the boy. She hesitated a moment, and then took it; as she did so,

CHRISTMAS GIFTS AND CHRISTMAS GETS.

"Last day of school—how jolly!" said Clifford Lane, as he trotted across the snowy fields to the red school-house under the hill. Little puffs of vapour followed his words, circling above him in the freezing atmosphere. "One more day of school, one more day after that to finish up things, and then hurrah for Christmas eve!"

It was much too cold to waste warm breath on the inhospitable air, and Cliff, ramming his hands into his pockets, went on with his pleasant thoughts, keeping his mouth shut.

"I've got all my presents ready, except one," he said to himself. "How surprised mother is going to be when she sees her cutting table. She doesn't know what a good workman I am. Harry's sled is a little beauty, though it needs another coat of paint, if I had time, and—hello, Sam, I almost ran over you, sonny; what do you tumble under people's feet for?"

Cliff was crossing the mouth of a lane that led to a row of rather dilapidated cottages, near the red school-house, when he ran into Sam Heck, a much smaller boy. Sam was not nearly so well enveloped in cap and comfort and mittens and boots as Cliff, and to judge by his expression, he had not much Christmas in his bones as yet.

"What were you laughing about, all by yourself?" asked Sam.

"Was I laughing? Oh, I was just thinking about Christmas, and how jolly it would be."

"What do you expect to get?" Sam asked with an envious sigh.

"Get? Oh, I don't know. I wasn't thinking about that. I was thinking of the Christmas gifts I had locked up in the wood shed for the folks at home, and nobody knows anything about them; I'm a master hand at keeping a secret. Specially a Christmas secret."

"I never gave anybody a Christmas gift in my life," said Sam soberly.

"Gee-whizz! You don't say so! Why, Sam, you don't know what you've missed, it's lots of fun."

"I never had anything to give," said the little boy honestly, and by this time they were at the school door.

The last day of school is always a rather hard time, hard for teacher and hard for scholar, but this was the very hardest day Cliff had struck for some time. It wasn't the lessons, though, that bothered him, it was Sam Heck's touselled red head. The idea of his never having had the pleasure of giving a Christmas present in his life!

"If there was only a little more time," argued Cliff with his selfish self; "but if I stop to help him, I can't finish father's present." Then a better self answered, way down in his heart, "He never had a Christmas present to give in his life."

Aren't you glad the old selfish self got knocked in the head?

Sam, said Cliff, as with a mighty whoop and roar school broke up, "hurry over to my house directly after dinner, and I'll show you how to make something real nice for your mother, a sure enough Christmas gift."

Cliff had one less present to give than he meant to have, but little Sam Heck had the best Christmas of his life.—Sabbath-school Visitor.

A very Merry Christmas to you!



CHRISTMAS IN POVERTY ROW.

tree to little "Haldy" laden with many of their own Christmas presents. But not only to the lame boy have they carried sunshine on Christmas Day, but to many other poor children, and besides themselves they have ten or twelve companions who have banded with them to shed sunshine in the homes of the poor and needy. For these little sunshine workers have learned the glorious lesson, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

"Hark, the glad sound! the Saviour comes!

The Saviour promised long!

Let every heart prepare a throne.

And every voice a song."

a woman across the car held out some pennies, and almost before the young lady realized that she was taking a collection, everyone in the car had given her something for the poor boy. She added something herself, and quietly sliding the money into the pocket of his ragged coat, took her muff gently from under his head without waking him, and giving to the passengers who were in the secret a nod of thanks, left the car. If the newsboy had ever read fairy stories he doubtless thought some good fairy had visited him in his sleep when he found the money in his pocket. Well, the young lady was a good fairy, and the best of it is, there are many such sitting about in all our great cities, bringing happiness to wretched hearts and Christmas cheer to homes darkened by poverty.

The Song of a Shepherd Boy at Bethlehem.

BY JOSEPHINE PRESTON PEABODY.

Sleep, thou little Child of Mary,
Rest thee now.
Though these hands be rough from
shearing,
And the plough,
Yet they shall not ever fall thee,
When the waiting nations hail thee,
Bringing palms unto their King
Now I sing.

Sleep, thou little child of Mary,
Hope divine.
If thou wilt but smile upon me,
I will twine
Hosannas for thy garlanding.
Thou'rt so little to be King,
God's desire!
Not a bribe
Shall be left to grieve thy brow,
Rest thee now.

Sleep, thou little Child of Mary,
Some fair day,
Wilt thou, as thou wert a brother,
Come away
Over hills and over hollow?
All the lambs will up and follow.
Follow but for love of thee,
Lov'st thou me?

Sleep, thou little Child of Mary,
Rest thee now.
I that watch am come from sheep-stand,
And from plough.
Thou wilt have disdain of me,
When thou'rt lifted royally,
Very high for all to see:
Smilest thou?

OUR PERIODICALS:

PER YEAR—POSTAGE FREE.

The best, the cheapest, the most entertaining, the most popular.

Christian Guardian, weekly.....	\$1 00
Methodist Magazine and Review, 96 pp., monthly illustrated.....	2 00
Christian Guardian and Methodist Magazine and Review.....	2 75
Magazine and Review, Guardian and Onward together.....	3 25
The Wesleyan, Halifax, weekly.....	1 00
Sunday School Banner, 65 pp., 5vo., monthly.....	0 60
Onward, 8 pp., 4to., weekly, under 5 copies.....	0 60
5 copies and over.....	0 50
Pleasant Hours, 4 pp., 4to., weekly, single copies.....	0 30
Less than 20 copies.....	0 25
Over 20 copies.....	0 24
Sunbeam, fortnightly, less than ten copies.....	0 12
10 copies and upwards.....	0 15
Happy Days, fortnightly, less than ten copies.....	0 12
10 copies and upwards.....	0 15
Dew Drops, weekly, per year.....	0 07
Per quarter.....	0 02
Berean Leaf, monthly, 100 copies per month.....	5 50
Berean Leaf, quarterly.....	0 06
Quarterly Review Service. By the year, 24c. a dozen; \$2 per 100; per quarter, 6c. a dozen; 60c. per 100.	

WILLIAM BRIGGS,

Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto.

C. W. COATES, S. F. HURSTIS,
2176 St. Catherine St., Wesleyan Book Room,
Montreal. Halifax, N.S.

Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, DECEMBER 19, 1896.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING.

There is no need to study the almanac in order to be made aware of the fact that Christmas is coming. Everybody knows it instinctively, for when a friend approaches there is something in his proximity which communicates itself to us, and if Father Christmas is not our friend, who is? Besides, there are hosts of visible signs. Is there not a keen coldness in the air? Is not the ground covered with snow? Has not everybody bought a new pair of skates, or dusted the old ones? and is not the frozen surface of every pond as gay as a fair? And then only to pass through the streets is to see the preparations for Christmas. Are not the shops like pictures? Is there not plenty of good fare for the person or the mind, for the house or the household? Apples and anti-macassars, beef and books, cheese and church-music, dolls and dresses, embroidery and emblazonment, furs and fables, geese and goodies, hams and hampers, illustrations and illuminations, and nobody knows what beside, all proclaim in unmistakable terms the good news that Christmas is coming. Besides, are not the children home from school and the grandchildren coming? And are not gray heads and black alike busy in laying plans for the successful production of a charade, or the happy performance of Blind Man's Buff? Is not everybody concerned about the satisfactory disposal

of holly and mistletoe? and are not all the little ones eager to prove that their feet have grown, and that they must have larger stockings, both on that account and also in case Santa Claus should visit them? Yes; it is quite evident that Christmas is coming, and we are all making ready. The adults are preparing little surprises for the children, and the children have been hoarding their coppers that they may prepare surprises for their elders. And we are all going to be together as far as possible, and vexing differences are to be forgiven and forgotten, and care is going to be put to sleep, and we are drawing so close to one another that love shall grow warmer and faith stronger, while we sing in harmony the young, shrill voices and the quivering old ones—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good-will to men."

CHRISTMAS IN OTHER LANDS.

I am going to tell the young folks something about the way the children keep Christmas in other countries besides their own. So let us begin with that far-off end of Europe, Norway and Sweden, where the Christmas season is called the Julefred, or Yule-peace. At Julefred all the courts are closed, and every one stops disputing and quarrelling; and if people are feeling angry

horses of the "Christ-child," as he comes flying through the air with his krippa full of presents; but the Italian children go gravely with their parents to churches and cathedrals, to see the bambino, or child, who presents them with their Christmas gifts.

The Spanish children hide their shoes or slippers in the bushes on Christmas eve, and find them filled with fruit and sugar-plums on Christmas morning.

In France the young people stand their shoes in a convenient place for the good Noel to drop gifts in. Sometimes if the shoes of a bad boy are among them, he finds a whip in one in the morning, and he must be a stupid fellow who cannot take so sharp a hint.

Very different is the feeling of the German child. He waits with feelings of mingled awe and pleasure for the coming of two important personages, the "Christ-child" and the "Knecht Ruprecht." The latter person questions naughty children, and threatens them with punishment, till the "Christ-child's" intercession saves the culprit, and wins its pardon; then these two Christmas apparitions lay down their burdens of gifts, and depart.

In some parts of Germany the good Saint will have a Christmas tree brilliantly illuminated with wax candles, to hang his gifts upon; he is not satisfied simply with the stocking in the chimney,

"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear."

BY EDMUND HAMILTON SEARS.

We shall never tire of reading this magnificent hymn. It will go down through the ages until the coming of the millennium:

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth,
To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good-will to men,
From heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled;
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lonely plains
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

With all the woes of sin and strife,
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love song which they bring:
Oh, hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!

And ye, beneath life's crushing load
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way,
With painful steps and slow,—
Look now; for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing;
Oh, rest beside the weary road
And hear the angels sing!

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

DECEMBER 27, 1896.

Hymn 24.

"God rest ye, little children, let nothing
ye affright,
For Jesus Christ your Saviour was born
on Christmas night.
Along the hills of Galilee the white
flocks sleeping lay,
When Christ the Child of Nazareth was
born on Christmas Day."

LOVELY SEASON.

Everybody loves the Christmas season. It is the time for family reunions. Those who have long been separated, again enjoy each other's society, and spend a few pleasant hours together, and, so to speak, live their lives over again. Then, too, it is the season when presents are given and received. Friendships are thus renewed and ripened. Children and young people especially rejoice at the approach of Christmas, as on the morning of that day they are sure to awake early and see what Santa Claus has brought them. This very fact should make children love Jesus, for the season which is kept in remembrance of his birth is to them the happiest season of the whole year.

THE ASSOCIATIONS OF THE NATIVITY.

Born in Bethlehem. This word means a house of bread. This is truly significant, inasmuch as Christ calls himself "the bread of life." What bread is to the body, to give it sustenance and support, Christ is to the soul. He feeds us with living bread.

ATTENDANTS.

Angels chanted the hymn of his nativity on the plains of Bethlehem. What a glorious song it was—"Peace on earth, good will toward men." The doctrines preached by the Saviour, and the precepts which he laid down, to guide mankind, all have the tendency to promote peace among mankind, and bring "glory to God in the highest."

THE SHEPHERDS.

The occupation of the shepherds often required their attendance in the night season. While they were thus engaged, they received the glad tidings of the birth of the Saviour. Truly these were glad tidings. What can we conceive so likely to produce joyous feelings as the news of the Saviour being born.

THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE NEWS.

All people. The shepherds were the representatives of mankind, at this time. They first learned the news, but it was not to be confined to them. The whole family of man were embraced in the tidings of the Saviour's birth. The news has reached us. Children are the lambs of the flock. No other system of religion makes such provision for the welfare of children as Christianity does. Christ always bestowed special attention on them, and even when the disciples would have kept them from coming to Christ, he said, "Suffer them to come." He loves them, and commanded the disciples to feed the lambs. Will not our readers love the Saviour?



A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

with each other, or children are, they make it up, and are loving and kind, and there is a deal of feasting and good-humoured merriment. On Christmas eve the shoes of all the family are cleaned very carefully, and brightly polished, and set in a row before the hearthstone to indicate that during the coming year everything will be peaceful and pleasant in the family. In the country places almost every family that can, spreads a table with the good cheer of the season, and then the doors are left open, so any one may come in and eat and drink and be merry. The way that the presents are given is very peculiar—the person who wishes to give a present wraps it up in a quantity of straw, or paper, or rags, and slyly flings it in at the open door or window when no one is in sight. Isn't that a droll way?

In Belgium the children fill their shoes with beans and carrots on Christmas eve, and set them in the chimney-place for the good Saint's horse. In the morning they expect to find them filled with sweetmeats and fruit in return for their good behaviour.

In Holland the children hang up their woollen stockings by the tiled chimney-piece, and then go soberly to bed, quite sure that good St. Nicholas will visit them, provided they do not disturb him in his visit.

Bohemian children listen anxiously on Christmas eve for the chariot and white

and it is from this whim of his saintship that the custom has spread into other countries, and come over to our own. The Christmas-tree of to-day, however, is only a successor to its prototype, the ancient legendary ygdrazil, or eternal tree, which has its roots in earth and its top in heaven.

The English child's Christmas has none of the delightful features we have described, except the Christmas-tree lighted with tapers and hung with gifts; but he has the Christmas-boxes, and the evening is spent in all sorts of sports, such as snapdragon, blind man's bluff, and some more modern games.

Holland gave us Americans the good-natured Santa Claus, with his sled and reindeer careering over the housetops, bringing his goodly store of Christmas gifts.

In Germany the schoolboys and choristers make the midnight air ring with their merry carols. The "three kings of the East, the angel Gabriel, and the star-singers" parade the streets; and similar processions go about in Italy, France, and Spain. In former years, and perhaps even now in some localities in England, the Christmas waits, young lads, make the air vocal with lovely Christmas carols; but in our country these are reserved to be heard in church and Sunday-school, and sometimes they ring out in chimes from the church steeple.

Santa Claus' Sister.

BY JULIA ANNA WOLCOTT.

We stood at a crowded counter,
Little Geraldine and I;
There was only a day before Christmas
And hundreds were waiting to buy.

The shelves and the cases were covered,
And the counters were piled up high,
With the loveliest things for presents
Ever seen by a mortal eye.

There were books with most beautiful pictures,
And the strangest, most wonderful toys,
That were brought from over the ocean
On purpose for girls and boys.

There were dolls that could waltz and play tennis,
In dresses of satin and silk;
And horses to wind and set trotting,
And cows that you really could milk.

There were dogs that could bark like the live ones,
And birds of most brilliant wing,
With springs hid away 'neath their feathers,
That would make them fly upward and sing.

But the eyes of the child who stood by me
Had wandered away from all these,
And the sparkling Christmas angels
And the miniature Christmas trees,
And were scanning the faces about us—
The faces that huddled and pressed,
And looked weary and cross with the effort
Of getting in front of the rest—

When, grasping my hand, she whispered,
With eager, childish grace,
'Oh! that must be Santa Claus' sister,
She's got such a Christmas face!'

I looked where her eyes had lighted,
And, lo! in a threadbare gown,
Stood a queer, little, bent, old woman,
With a face that was wrinkled and brown.

But the eyes that beamed out from it
Were radiant with love and joy,
As, from 'mong all the beautiful objects,
She selected one poor, cheap toy.

And the worn, brown face was illumined
With a smile of good-will toward men,
That told, more plainly than words might,
She was keeping Christmas then.

I glanced at the forms about me;
There were women in rich attire
Whose unearned gold enabled
The purchase of each desire.

There were those of delicate feature,
Of gentle breeding and race;
But the queer, little, bent, old woman's
Was the only "Christmas face."

In shame, from my own I hastened
To smooth the impatience and frown,
As I looked at "Santa Claus' sister,"
In her faded, threadbare gown.

And I blessed both the child and the woman,
For their Christmas sermon sweet,
As I pressed through the throng of shoppers,
And on in the crowded street.

**HOW THE TREE SAVED THE TOWN.
CHRISTMAS IN HOLLAND.**

BY FRED. MYRON COLBY.

Holland, sunk below the sea-level, and defended by its dykes against the mad waves of the German Ocean, is the queerest little country in Europe; and Haarlem, on the river Spaarne, is one of the queerest and quaintest of Dutch cities. Its picturesque buildings and narrow streets still speak of the wars and tumults of the Middle Ages. Wars were frequent then, and each one seems to have left its scar or its heraldry on the city's livery. Three hundred and seventeen years ago this December, the city lay in leaguer. An army of thirty thousand Spaniards, led by the cruel Duke of Alva, besieged the place, which was defended by about four thousand men—Dutchmen and Germans. The Spaniards had inundated in blood the ruins of two cities—Zutphen and Naarden; but these horrors, instead of intimidating the courageous defenders of Haarlem, only inspired them with new ardour.

At the end of the first month's siege, the city still resisted firmly, and the thirty thousand men encamped beneath its walls began to doubt if they should ever win it by force, and resolved to resort to stratagem. Christmas eve, 1572, was chill and dark

and wintry. The snow lay to the depth of several inches; and the wind, which sweeps without obstacle over the plains of Holland, blew sharply. The Spanish camp lay silent and in darkness—not even the midnight mass seemed to put the people in motion. In the city, however, there were many houses lighted.

The German soldiers had brought from the fatherland the custom now generally observed throughout Christendom of lighting a tree in the evening, and hanging it full of gifts, to be distributed among the various members of the family; and as these auxiliaries were quartered in private houses, not a few of the citizens had introduced the novel feature in connection with the other Christmas rites.

One of these houses was situated near the gate called St. John, and a little behind the ramparts. It was owned and occupied by Arnold Van Merk, a citizen of note, and a prominent officer in the forces of the city. Domiciled under his roof was a German officer, Captain Karl, and several soldiers, besides his own family, which consisted of his wife and six children.

Van Merk's house was one of the highest in the city. From the upper story one could look out upon the ramparts, and above them over the camp of the Spaniards, and to the flat country beyond. The window of this room was of that large style which may still be seen in Dutch houses, and through which, by means of a pulley and cord, provisions and merchandise are raised to the roof chambers. Ordinarily it was secured by large and heavy shutters. Without this window the tree could not have saved the town.

Cold and cheerless as the night was out of doors, in the mansion of the Van Merks there were warmth and comfort. There was nothing present to remind one of the siege and its horrors save the armour and the arms hanging upon the walls, and the packages of lint scattered around. In almost every house in Haarlem the women made lint to bind the wounds of their brave brothers.

Van Merk and his guest, Captain Karl, came home very late. They were officers of the night, and had been the round of the city, finding everything in good order, and the enemy quiet. At their own door they were halted, and asked for the countersign.

"Holland, Orange and Liberty."

And with these words the two men entered the great house. It was one of Captain Karl's own German soldiers who was standing on guard; and several others were busying themselves in getting ready the mystic tree, which was placed in the upper chamber of the mansion. Although it was midnight, the Van Merk children were sitting up, impatiently waiting the summons which was to reveal to them the glories of this wonderful tree. Karl had promised them a grand surprise—and children never forget promises.

"All is ready," came the signal down the stairway.

"Follow me, then," cried Captain Karl. Up three flights of stairs they mounted, the older folks walking gravely behind; the younger ones, eager and impatient, in advance. What a marvellous sight it was to their wondering eyes! In the middle of the great room stood the tree, a lofty fir, blazing with light, and decorated with a glorious array of costly gifts. The illumination dazzled them. Never before had the star, the shepherds, the angels, and the Holy Child in the manger, seemed so real.

The children clapped their hands and cried for joy. They dared not approach the tree. It seemed a sacrilege to touch the branches, so brilliant, so mystic, so wonderful, with their load of precious things. Even the old soldiers were affected by the sight. To the joy of a festival was added that other joy still more sweet, of feeling themselves true brethren, united by a common peril and a common love.

Captain Karl led his young companions, one by one, to the tree, and took the gifts from the branches.

It was in the midst of this merriment that a terrible shout arose from the street below. Then fierce war-cries were heard, and the clashing of swords. They knew what it meant in a moment. Their blanched lips gave utterance to two words—"The Spaniards!" and then the men grasped their swords, and prepared to sell their lives dearly.

The enemy were indeed at hand. In the darkness and silence of the winter night they had scaled the wall, murdered two of the sentinels, and, before the third could give the alarm, hundreds of Spanish men-at-arms were on the ramparts, and other hundreds were following them. The city seemed lost. The atrocities of Zutphen and Naarden were to be repeated unless a miracle was interposed. It was at this moment that Captain

Karl, as if inspired, suddenly dashed open the shutters of the great window, and threw upon the crowded Spaniards the blaze from those hundred lighted candles on the Christmas-tree.

So suddenly and so unexpectedly did those fires burst out upon the darkness, that the Spaniards imagined they had fallen into a snare. This belief was strengthened by seeing the armed soldiers standing in the midst of the illuminated room, clad in armour, and with weapons glittering in the light.

A panic seized them, and without pausing to investigate, they drew back, and hastened down the ramparts in headlong confusion. The first arrived stumbled over the last, and numbers rolled, pell-mell, into the trenches. In a few seconds the wall was clear, the lighted tree shone upon a frightened multitude flying in disorder toward the camp.

Three hundred years have passed since that Christmas night, but the story of that first Christmas-tree is not forgotten. It lives in the nation's history; while at every firoside in Haarlem, when the Christmas-tide comes round, is the story told of how the city was saved in the olden time by Captain Karl's Christmas-tree. And if you were there to-day you would be told the story, and pointed to the city's arms and motto, which are these: A branching fir-tree, decorated and blazing with burning tapers, with the German legend, "Ein Feste Burg," the words with which Luther began his famous hymn—

"A mighty fortress is our God."

CHRISTMAS FEASTING IN OLD TIMES.

There are certain dishes which are peculiarly dedicated by custom and tradition to the Christmas feast. The plum pudding is almost the sole survivor of a long list of equally savoury ones. There was the boar's head, always the herald of the feast, and always seasoned with mustard. Next in importance was the peacock. The skin was carefully stripped off, with the plumage adhering; the bird was then roasted; when it was done and had cooled, it was served up again in its feathers, and, with gilded beak, was sent to the table. Sometimes the whole body was covered with gold leaf, and a piece of cotton, saturated with spirits, placed in its beak and lighted as it made its gorgeous entry. The noble bird was not served by common hands; that privilege was reserved for the ladies most distinguished by birth and beauty. Geese, capons, pheasants, and pies of carps' tongues also helped to set out the Christmas table in days gone by.

AFTER MANY DAYS.

From the New York Herald comes the following incident of genuine gratitude: A physician who recently moved up town took an evening paper from a small newsboy, and dived into his pocket for the change.

"That's all right, doctor," remarked the little fellow. "I won't take no money. Don't you remember Jimmie, that you cured last winter with the fever?"

Then the physician recognized in the tall and sturdy boy a little lad whom he had pulled through a fever without payment. "But that's all right, Jimmie," he said, "and you must certainly let me pay you for the paper."

"No," said the boy, "I won't. Where are you living up here, doctor? I want to come and see you."

He has not turned up yet to see the doctor, but every morning and evening he slips a paper under the door, and to have a proper understanding in the beginning, with the first paper he scribbled a little notice: "Please, doctor, except these papers allus from Jimmie."

THE CLOCK.

"Come, hurry up!" said the second-hand of a clock to the minute-hand; "you'll never get around in time if you don't. See how fast I'm going," continued the fussy little monitor as it fretted round on its pivot.

"Come, hurry up!" said the minute to the hour hand, utterly oblivious of being addressed by the second-hand. "If you don't be quick, you'll never be in at the stroke of one."

"Well, that's just what our young friend there has been saying to you."

At this point the clock pealed forth the hour as the hour-hand continued, "You see we're all in time—not one of us behind. You take my advice—do your own work in your own way, and leave others alone." Moral.—Mind your own business.

**OUR
Christmas
Booklets**

3 CENTS EACH

Shade and Sunshine. With verses by F. R. Havergal. Nicely illustrated.
Sunny Crowns. Design of a Crown, with verses by F. R. Havergal

5 CENTS EACH

Puppydom. Design of figure of a Dog. Verses by L. Riley.
The Lord is my Shepherd. Psalm xxiii. Illustrated by Baroness Von Beckendorf.
Under the Mistletoe. Christmas verses by Helen Burnside.
Familiar Friends. Verses by "Helen of Troy." Nicely illustrated.
Christmas Verses. A poem by Charles Mackay. Landscape and floral designs.
New Year Blessings. Beautifully illustrated by C. Noakes, Albert Bowers and others.
Kittendom. Design of a Kitten. By Grace Floyd. Illustrated by Helena Maguire.
A Bunch of Lilies. A poem by E. Dawson, with landscape illustrations.
Trusting Jesus. A poem by M. A. Spiller.
The Will of God. By Cecilia Havergal. Coloured pictures.

8 CENTS EACH

Beneath thy Wings. Verses by Mrs Harriet Beecher Stowe. Illustrated by Bertha Maguire and others.
Home, Sweet Home. Words and music illustrated by W. S. Coleman.
In Days of Old. By Frederick Langbridge. Illustrated by Pauline J. Saunter.
A Christmas Carol. By Louisa Anthony. Illustrated by Frank Corbyn. Price and others.
Sun of My Soul. Pansy design. Verses by John Koble.
A Sonnet to Nature. Very fine engravings by Annie Simpson.
Three illustrated poems. Board covers. Finely illustrated:—
The Star of Bethlehem.
The Dear Homeland.
Christians, Awake.

12 CENTS EACH

Jewelled Booklets.
Good Cheer. A poem by Charlotte Murray. Beautifully illustrated.
Wondrous Love. By Lily Oakley.
Homeland Melodies. By Charlotte Murray.
Sheltering Wings. By E. A. Knight. Each tied with silken cord and enclosed in box.

15 CENTS EACH

Jewelled Booklets.
Another Year. By F. R. Havergal.
Heavenly Hope. By C. F. Alexander.
All-Powerful. By F. R. Havergal.
God's Afterward. By Charlotte Murray.
Heart's Ease. By Coombes Davies.
Trust. By F. R. Havergal.
Fond Wishes. By Coombes Davies.
The Homes of England. By F. Hemans.
Onward. By Charlotte Murray.
Each tied with silken cord and enclosed in envelope.

20 CENTS EACH

Heartsease. Landscapes and flowers. Instead. By Lucy A. Bennett.
Bonnie Dundee. Illustrated poem.
With Every Good Wish. Illustrated poem.
To Greet You. Selections from the poets. Illustrated.
Good Fortune Speed You. Selections from the poets. Illustrated.

25 CENTS EACH

Light and Truth. Poem by C. Murray
My Presence. Poem by F. Thornton.
Steadfast and True. Poem by Fairlie Thornton.

40 CENTS EACH

(Each enclosed in box.)
Christmas Bells. Poem by H. W. Longfellow. Elegant cut design.
The Bridge. By H. W. Longfellow. Exquisite cut design.
Pansies. Bunches of pansies, beautifully reproduced in natural colours, with suitable verses.
Deep-blue Violets. Exquisitely coloured bouquets of violets, with suitable verses.
I Wonder What the Clover Thinks. Sprays of clover, with appropriate verses.

WILLIAM BRIGGS,

Methodist Book and Publishing House,
Toronto.

C. W. COATES, MONTREAL.

S. F. HUESTIS, HALLOWELL.

Christmas Day.

God bless the boys and girls to-day,
With mercy, grace and peace:
Dear Saviour, lead them on their way,
And make their joys increase.

Let Christmas mercies from above
Fill all their homes with joy,
And with thy tender, precious love,
Bless every girl and boy.

JAMES' CHRISTMAS EVE.

Tiere was good coasting on Upton's hill the night before Christmas. James and Frank English, with their caps pulled over their ears and their good warm mittens on, hurried home from school to get their sleds, and ran away to the hill.

"There's a whole lot of townies," said James as he came in sight of the hill, "and Mike Maloney is among them. If he runs into me again I'll make it hot for him."

"Mike doesn't mean bad," said Frank, "he's wild and the coasting just makes him crazy."

"Mean or not, he'd better keep clear of me," said James.

The brothers were soon enjoying the fun. The second time down Mike was behind James.

"Will ye look out there!" cried Mike.

"You'd better look out yourself," said James, but Mike was too near him and with a bump knocked him off his sled. In a moment James was after him and gave him a sharp blow. He then gave Mike's sled a kick and off went the runner. Mike began to kick at James, but Frank came running up and picked up Mike's sled. Mike was now crying and Frank tried to wipe his tears. "Take a turn on mine," said he, but Mike would not be consoled but went off with his broken sled.

"Oh, how cold his hands were!" said Frank to James. "I felt like giving him my mittens; and he'll probably get scolded for breaking his sled."

"I don't care," said James, but he did not enjoy the coasting much.

As the boys went home they heard singing in the stone church, where the Christmas Anthem was being practised. They just stepped into the vestibule to listen. "Peace on earth, peace, peace," it was all the singers seemed to say.

"Oh, come on," said James; but at home it was the same. Mamma and Effie were singing, "Peace on earth, Peace on earth."

James pretended to look at some pictures, but the true Christmas spirit was making him ashamed of what he had done. Presently he went up to Frank.

"Come on," said he. "I've got fifty cents, and there's sleds at Gordon's for that, and we'll get one for Mike."

"Oh, I'll give half," said Frank, "and won't we have a jolly Christmas!"

There is no happy Christmas for those who are angry with others. James found this out, for when he left the new sled with Mrs. Maloney, saying, "This is for Mike; I broke his sled," he began to feel light-hearted. He was no longer angry. He could understand the angel song. "Peace, good will to men."

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

FOURTH QUARTERLY REVIEW.

DECEMBER 27.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his com-

mandments: for this is the whole duty of man.—Eccles. 12, 13.

THE LESSONS OF THE QUARTER

TITLES AND GOLDEN TEXTS

1. S. A. K.—Keep the charge—
2. S. W. C.—The fear of the—
3. S. W. and W.—Them that honour—
4. T. P. of S.—My son, if—
5. B. the T.—Except the Lord—
6. T. T. D.—The Lord is in—
7. G. B. upon S.—The blessing of—
8. R. of O.—In all thy—
9. T. F. of S.—Behold, a greater—
10. S. S.—Let him that—
11. C. A. I.—For the drunkard—
12. T. B. of C.—And the angel—

QUESTIONS.

1. What promise had David made about his successor? Where was Solomon made king? Who anointed him?
2. Where did the Lord appear to Solo-

10. What led Solomon to sin? Which commandment did he break? What did his sin lead to?

11. Why should we look to the end? What three evils ruin character? What must we pay for the blessings of temperance? Who are the happiest parents?

12. From where did the wise men come? Why was Herod troubled? Who had prophesied about Bethlehem? What did the wise men do when they found Jesus? Why did they not return to Herod?

An austere looking lady walked into a furrier's recently, and said to the yellow-headed clerk:

"I would like to get a muff."
"What fur?" demanded the young clerk.

"To keep my hands warm, you slumping idiot," exclaimed the young lady.



THE BIRDS' CHRISTMAS TREE.

mon? What offer was made him? What did he choose? What else was promised him?

3. Tell of Solomon's riches, of his wisdom, of his fame.

4. Why was the Book of Proverbs written? Is fear useful? Whose advice should we heed? What does sin lead to?

5. Why was David not permitted to build the temple? Who sent a message to Solomon? What bargain did they make?

6. How had God shown his presence with the Hebrew fathers? What did Solomon value more than wealth? Should our zeal be steady?

7. When did the Lord appear to Solomon the second time? How did God testify his acceptance of the temple? What warning did he give Solomon?

8. Does religion tend to secure long life? Why should we trust in God? On what condition will he guide us? How are we to honour God? Of what is correction a proof?

9. How far did the Queen of Sheba come? What convinced her of Solomon's greatness? What did she say about the report she had heard? What presents did she make?

The Christmas Sheaf.

BY PHOEBE CARY.

"Now, good wife, bring your precious hoard,"
The Norland farmer cried,
"And heap the hearth, and heap the board
For the blessed Christmas-tide.

"And bid the children fetch," he said,
"The last ripe sheaf of wheat,
And set it on the roof o'erhead,
That the birds may come and eat.

"And this we do for his dear sake,
The Master, kind and good,
Who of the loaves he blest and brake,
Fed all the multitude."

And all the hours glide swift away,
With loving, hopeful words,
Till the Christmas sheaf, at break of day,
Is alive with happy birds.

Note.—In Norway the last sheaf from the harvest-field is not threshed, but it is reserved till Christmas eve, when it is set up on the roof as a feast for the hungry birds.

Methodist Magazine and Review

FOR 1897.

VOLS. XLV. AND XLVI.

WITH 300 FINE ENGRAVINGS

Price, \$2.00 a year. \$1.00 for Six Months

ILLUSTRATED ARTICLES.

Following the Flag Our New Way Round the World.

Cabot's Discovery of Canada. Round the World With the Union Jack.

The Unspeakable Turk. The Dead Cities of the Zuyder Zee.

Canadian Caricature Art. In the Black Belt.

Norard of the Dogger. By Rev. J. G. Life in a Swiss Canton. [Angwin.]

The Land of the Sky. The Appian Way and its Memories

Glaciers, their Formation and Action. Rival England.

Through Bulgaria. By the Editor. Life in a Lighthouse. By Rev. W. T. D.

The Land of the White Elephant. The Crusade of the Children.

Across Siberia. The Story of the Atlantic Cable. With Garibaldi's Red Shirts.

CHARACTER SKETCHES.

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS

The Queen's Long Reign. By Sir Edwin Arno d.

The Poacher Turned Preacher. By Rev. Princess Alice of England. [R. Cade.]

A Yankee on the Bosphorus. By the Editor. The Slave and His Champions. By Rev.

Dr. Lambly. "One and All," A Cornish Sketch. By Dr. Pascoe.

Count Zinzendorf, the Friend of Wesley. John Wesley—An Appreciation. By Dean Farrar.

The White Fields of France. By Rev. T. J. Parr, B.A.

A Mediaeval Saint and Sage, Bernard of Clairvaux. By Rev. Prof. Wallace.

The Bach Family—A Musical Study. The Ladies of Port Royal. By the Editor.

Mary Stuart—A Vindication. A Life of Faith; or, George Muller, of Bristol.

Oberlin and Neff—Swiss Pastors. John Gossner and His Work.

Prof. Maria Mitchell. By Miss A. Taylor. Icelanders in Manitoba. By Miss C. Hind.

SERIAL AND SHORT STORIES.

The Mills of God. A Serial Story. The Boer's Daughter. A Tale of Majuba

Phillip Strong. A Serial Story. [Hill] My Three Months in Gaol. By W. T. Stead

Some Tyne Folk. By Dr. Joseph Parker. Across the Continent on Foot. By John Jessop.

The Gold Boom in Cariboo. By Rev. A. Browning.

The Log of a Sky-Pilot. By Mary S. Hancock.

The Miseries of a Palace. By Miss N. Kerr. Some Sailor Yarns. By Rev. J. G. Angwin

Life in a Convent. The Cow-Boy Preacher. By Rev. Dr. Maclean.

The Legend of the Holy Bones. By Anthony More.

The Story of Petrarch and Laura. Her Trial Sermon—A Lancashire Idyl

POPULAR SCIENCE PAPERS.

Light, a Branch of Electricity. By Prof. C. H. Chant.

Britain's Hole in Science. By Prof. Willmott.

Recent Scientific Progress. By Prince the Reign of King Trolley. [Kropotkin]

Wonders of the Heaven. By M. Flammarion. The Unseen Universe.

The Curiosities of the Microphone. By Miss N. Brock.

The Early Ages of the Human Race.

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS TOPICS.

The Bible of the Early Christians. By Rev. Principal Shaw.

Applied Christianity. By Rev. W. H. Hincks, LL.B.

Life and Character in Early Christian Centuries.

Prohibition in Canada. By F. Spence. Through Prison Bars. By Rev. Dr. Lathern.

The Politics of God. By Rev. C. H. Huestis, M.A.

Manners and Morals of the Eighteenth Century. By W. Baskerville, Ph.D.

The Church and Social Problems. By Dean Farrar.

Prison Gate Work. By Miss C. A. N. Sanderson.

The Turkish Janissaries. By Rev. H. MacMillan, LL.D.

Deaconess Work in Canada. By Miss Scott. The Sunday-School and the Church. By Rev. A. Lucas.

MISSIONARY SKETCHES.

MANY OF THEM FULLY ILLUSTRATED.

Our French Work. By Rev. T. G. Williams. Indian Missions in British Columbia. By Rev. J. Green.

City Mission Work in Canada. By Rev. H. H. Fish.

Vikings of the North. By Dr. Grenfell. St. Paul, the Prince of Missionaries.

The Congo for Christ. By Rev. J. S. Wil-Zenana Work in India. [Hamson, D.D.]

Our Chinese Missions. By Dr. V. Hart. A Lone Woman in Africa. By Miss May Tweedle.