

# Dominion Churchman.

THE ORGAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CANADA.

Vol. 9.]

TORONTO, CANADA, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1888.

[No. 51.]

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## Dominion Churchman.

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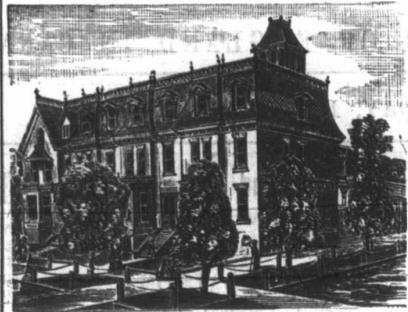
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issue of "Preference Terminable Bonds" and
"Terminable Bonds," or either such issues, and
issuing new bonds for the same, or a larger
amount in place of either or both of such issues,
and to declare the railway of the Company to be
a work for the general advantage of Canada, and
for such other powers as may be required rela-
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## LESSONS for SUNDAYS and HOLY-DAYS.

- Dec. 23.—**FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.**  
Morning—Isaiah xxx. to 27. Revelation xi.  
Evening—Isaiah xxxii., or xxxiii. Revelation xii.
- Dec. 25.—**CHRISTMAS DAY.**  
Morning—Isaiah ix. to 8. Luke ii. to 15.  
Evening—Isaiah vii. 10 to 17. Titus iii. 4 to 9.
- Dec. 26.—**ST. STEPHEN, THE FIRST MARTYR.**  
Morning—Genesis iv. to 11. Acts vi.  
Evening—2 Chronicles xxiv. 15 to 23. Acts viii. to 9.
- Dec. 27.—**ST. JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST.**  
Morning—Exodus xxxiii 9. John xiii. 23 to 36.  
Evening—Isaiah vi. Revelation i.
- Dec. 28.—**INNOCENTS' DAY.**  
Morning—Jeremiah xxi. to 18. Revelation xvi.  
Evening—Baruch iv. 21 to 31. Revelation xviii.

THURSDAY, DEC. 20, 1888.

## CHRISTMAS DAY.

"Oh, blessed day which givest the eternal lie  
To self and sense and all the brute within;  
Oh, come to us, amid this war of life;  
To hall and hovel come; to all who toil  
In senate, shop or study; and to those  
Who, sundered by the waters of half a world,  
Ill warned and sorely tempted, ever face  
Nature, brute, powers and men unmanned to brutes.  
Come to them, blest and blessing Christmas day,  
Tell them once more the tale of Bethlehem;  
The kneeling Shepherds and the Babe Divine;  
And keep them men indeed, fair Christmas day."

—Rev. Charles Kingsley.

## CHRISTMAS SUPERSTITIONS.

BY THE EDITOR.

WE can hardly be surprised at the number and variety of superstitious ideas and customs associated with Christmas Day. The event this Festival commemorates stands alone in history, as the one most removed from the ordinary phenomena of life, of which we have any knowledge, or imagination could conceive. It has been the policy of the enemies of the Catholic Church to banish the remembrance of Christmas from among men, because the FACT this day of days celebrates refuses to blend with their artificial systems of theology, and witnesses against their narrow schemes with a terrible earnestness which they cannot endure. Hence the utter neglect of Christmas by certain so-called Churches; hence the glory with which this Festival is surrounded by the Catholic Church.

We are not apologizing for the following superstitious notions, we simply record them as illustrations of the supernatural atmosphere surrounding this day in early times. First then we note that it

was believed in olden days that if any portion of the Christmas decoration be left in a family pew on Candlemas day, a death will soon occur in that circle. The dread of this is not wholly extinct, as there are living persons, very aged ones, who take the utmost care to clear away all traces of Christmas in good time from their places in church. Herrick, whose quaint allusions to old customs are so interesting, writes:

"Down with the ivy, holly, all,  
Wherewith ye dress the Christmas hall;  
For look, how many leaves there be  
Neglected there (maids trust to me)  
So many goblins you shall see."

We are disposed to think that this arose out of an exaggerated form of reverence for Christmas and its belongings, so that the churches would be cleared of decayed leaves and berries whose corruption and unsightliness might not desecrate the church they had adorned. A little of this feeling is wanted here. We have seen Christmas decorations hung up all the year through, so losing all appropriateness and teaching. We say "teaching" with emphasis, for church decorations ought to teach Church doctrine, and through the eye touch the heart or inform the mind.

Another strange fancy is peculiar to the South of England. Young girls will pluck a rose on midsummer day and hide it out of sight until Christmas Day. It is thought that if unseen between these days it will bloom afresh at Christmas, and when worn at church will draw to them their future husband. There is a symbolism in this, we fancy, which we leave our young lady readers to guess at. Certain we are that no rose plucked in summer ever lived in winter, but as certain are we that there is a beauty as that of a rose, which blooms with ever brightening sweetness from Christmas to Christmas, drawing love by its irresistible charms all through life on earth and on from heavenly midsummers to eternal Christmas Days undimmed. This belief in the power of Christmas over flowers had a very curious form in connection with a tree in Buckinghamshire, said to have been a siip from the celebrated Glastonbury thorn. It was believed that this thorn blossomed on Christmas Day. When the "style" was changed in the last century, Christmas Day was put forward to 6th January. To test the correctness of the change some thousands of persons went to inspect the tree to see if it blossomed. Of course it did not. They therefore refused to go to church, or to receive friends or recognize the new order of dates. To avoid rioting the clergy of that district promised to observe "Old Christmas Day" as before the change of style. We can remember when in Yorkshire the old day was kept up with Christmas festivities in diminished glory. It yet serves to mark the end of the social period of Christmas, after which the churches are stripped of their holly and houses of the season's decorations. We need not sneer at the good old folks' clinging to the old date for Christmas which science changed. For in this age there are persons who keep up "old time" in spite of "standard time" being established. It seems inevitable that those who believed in roses and thorns blooming at Christmas, should connect the day with the heavenly bodies and the weather. A warning moon, an unseen moon, nearness to a new moon, at Christmas all were good omens for harvest. So also was a sunny Christmas good for

apples, or a windy one for grain, while a wet one foretold a wet year. The Meteorological Department, we fear, do not take much stock in these old superstitions. There can hardly be a doubt, however, that they were based upon observations of coincident facts. It is not uncommon even to-day for persons to draw general and very wide conclusions indeed from such casual coincidences as those which gave rise to weather notions. Indeed there are some notions very popular amongst those who ought to know better, which have arisen from, and are merely supported by, chance occurrences quite as disconnected as Christmas Day and the next harvest.

The foregoing relate to very foolish but quite innocent notions. There was, however, a very cruel custom in Kerry, of hunting wren and killing these birds with sticks on Christmas Day—surely a sad profanation of the day, when under the rafters where birds nested, the Lord of Glory received the homage of the brute creation amongst whom He was cradled. The tradition was that a wicked fairy drew men and boys after her, until they fell into the sea. At last a deliverer arose, and the fairy was compelled to assume the form of a wren, so this poor, innocent bird was hunted cruelly from bush to bush on each Christmas Day. The habit was so senseless and so brutal that some years ago it was stopped by authority. We should rejoice to see a stop put in Canada by the law to the utterly brutish practice of men and boys sallying forth gun in hand on all public holidays to kill or wound any and every bird they get within range. It is not sport, it is a mere gratification of a sanguinary, savage instinct which sees in life only something to destroy.

It is a relief to turn from so sad a picture, to the amusing one of men watching, as they yet do in Yorkshire, by the beehives on Christmas Eve, both old and new style, and listening for the bees to hum, as they are supposed to do, a hymn of praise to the Babe of Bethlehem. Some yet hold that the bees tell which is the true Christmas Eve. We prefer the almanac, but do not propose to even say a harsh word of those who believe in even the insects He has created rejoicing on His birthday—being in this more noble than some of His professed disciples. A somewhat similar belief obtains as to bells. Where the churches," says one author, "are said to have been swallowed up by earthquakes or the sea, the old Church bells are said to ring deep down every Christmas morn. and people put their ears to the ground to catch the mysterious chimes." At a Northamptonshire village the people used to visit a valley near by to listen to the Christmas chimes of sunken bells, swallowed by an earthquake. So also near Blackpool, Lancashire, dismal chimes are believed to come over the sea from a church which was swallowed up by the waves. We have heard such sounds coming out of the earth, not from any mysterious bells, but from colliers passing the dinner hour in ringing changes on hand-bells. There may be a symbolic meaning in this listening. If in the quiet hours of a Christmas night we put our ears in close contact with the earth we shall hear ringing down the line of eighteen centuries past the joy-bells of the Church of Jesus, ringing in Christian hearts all along the ages grateful jublations of welcome to each Christ-

mas Day, and as we listen the ear quickens until with earth-flowing melodies chimes in the heavenly peal, "Peace on earth, Good-will to man."

We read of these quaint old customs, sayings, notions, beliefs in odd books. we remember some of them is mixed up with our early childhood, or with our intercourse with rural people, or gather them from the talk of the passing generation, who are taking with them almost the last shreds of these superstitious ideas and observances. We comfort ourselves with the assurance that we are better than our fathers, wiser, less prone to fanciful superstitions as to days, signs, and interpretations of natural phenomena. This, however, is not all gain. We have also lost the restful simplicity of the days gone by, the spirit of calm trust in Providence, the spirit of watchfulness day by day for signs of divine guidance, or censure, or reward, the spirit which gave to nature poetic attributes, and made the heart of man responsive to all the music of creation.

God grant we may ever keep Christmas Day sacred from the gross materialism of the age. May it be our joy to hold it as the day of days, consecrated by the Incarnation of Him who on this day became God-Man, that we might become God-like men, and, following His Christmas example, devote our Christmas Days to blessing and peace-giving.

#### A CHRISTMAS SERMON.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR CLARK, M.A.

St. Luke ii. 14.—"Let us now go even unto Bethlehem."

It was the shepherds who were "abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night" who spoke these words. The angels had told them, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord," and "Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger;" and they hastened to behold the Hope of Israel in the place of which they had been told.

There were many reasons to account for the interest which the Israelite felt in the village of Bethlehem. It was in itself but small and unimportant; but in historical interest it was second only to Jerusalem itself. It was close to Bethlehem that Rachel died, where Benjamin was born. It was in the neighbouring corn-fields that Ruth gleaned, and slept at the feet of Boaz; and it was here that the Lion of Judah, David, the warrior and the king, first saw the light. But it was not on account of these historical memories that the humble shepherds now turned their footsteps towards the village of Bethlehem, nor is it for these reasons that we are now recalling their words, and the thoughts which they suggest. They went in search of their newborn King and Saviour; and we are going in their footsteps, knowing indeed far more than they knew on that first Christmas morning, far more than they ever knew of Him whom they hastened to welcome, and yet needing to learn of them the lesson of simple, humble, and ready faith-needing to go to Bethlehem to greet and adore Him who, although He now reigns in heaven as our King, yet never forgets His life of humiliation on earth—never forgets Bethlehem, or Nazareth, or the plains of Galilee, or the streets of Jerusalem, and would not that we should forget them. Let us therefore with ready minds say with the shepherds: "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem," that we may learn some of the manifold lessons which Christmas Day may teach us.

I. And first we may learn the faithfulness of God in the fulfilment of His promises. A thousand

years before the voices of angels smote the air of this Christmas morn, the founder of the royal house of Judah had fallen asleep. And to him a promise had been given of One who should sit upon his seat for evermore. But not then for the first time was such a promise given. To Moses, to Abraham, to Noah, yea, to Adam 4,000 years before, one had been foretold who should bruise the head of the serpent. And the promise had been repeated in many different forms. But now for 400 years the voices of the prophets had been silent, and mockers might well ask where was "the promise of His coming." The answer, full and complete, is before the eyes of the shepherds at Bethlehem. He is the seed of the woman, He is the Son of David, He is born in the city of David according to the words of Micah. "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise." With Him a thousand years are as one day. At last the fullness of the time has come; and God sends forth His Son, born of a woman, "a Saviour who is Christ the Lord."

II. But we may also go to Bethlehem, to learn the deep self-humiliation of the Son of God. Who is it that is this day born into the world? It is the co-eternal and co-equal Sion of the Most High. It is the Word, that Word which was from the beginning, which was with God, who is God, Who is now made flesh, that He may dwell among us, and that we may behold the glory of the only-begotten of the Father. And what are the circumstances of His Birth and manifestation? To whom is His appearance announced? Where is He first beheld by the eyes of men? Who are His attendants at His first appearing? We know how we should have answered these questions if we had been guided by mere probabilities and not by facts. Surely to the kings and rulers of the earth the first announcement must be given of His advent who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Surely attended by the angels of God, who are commanded to worship Him, or at least by the prophets and saints who have announced His appearing. Far otherwise was the manifestation of the Son of Mary. It was to humble shepherds abiding in the fields by night, and keeping watch over their flocks, that the assurance was given, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord. It was in Bethlehem, not in Jerusalem, the renowned capital of the Holy Land, but in that "Bethlehem Ephratah," "little among the thousands of Judah," a mere suburban village of Jerusalem, that the Son of Man, the second Adam, first saw the light. And not only in Bethlehem, but in its meanest abode—not in His own Mother's home, not even in the poorest chamber of the village inn, the Prince of Peace was "laid in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." Surely this is the festival of the poor and lowly. However hard or poor an earthly lot may be, it is not more humble than the first dwelling place of the Saviour of the world.

III. But we do not go to Bethlehem only that we may learn the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, inasmuch as He, though He was rich, for our sakes became poor; but also that we may remind ourselves how we through His poverty are made rich. This poor, humble Bethlehem has gained for itself a name beyond the name of all the greatest cities upon earth. "And thou Bethlehem Ephratah," the Prophet Micah had said, "although thou be little among the thousands of Judah," speaking of Bethlehem according to its natural position and features, but St. Matthew, in quoting the words of the prophet, gives them a new meaning. He can say, and with equal truth. "And thou Bethlehem in the land of

Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel;" and the ancient hymn has adopted the thought of the evangelist:

Earth has many a noble city:  
Bethlehem, thou dost all excel;  
Out of thee the Lord from heaven  
Came to rule His Israel.

Small it was, says an old writer, in the circumference of its walls, in the number of its inhabitants, in the splendour of its situation; yet not small, but great and glorious as the birth-place of the Messiah. Jerusalem indeed may boast of the majesty of its temple, Babylon in the strength of its walls, Athens in its wisdom, Tyre and Sidon in their wealth and the value of their merchandise, Rome in its triumphs, Nineveh in the size and splendour of its buildings; but to Bethlehem alone belongs the glory, a glory which excels that of all the others, of being the birth-place of Christ. And this change which has thus passed upon the name and fame of the city of David, is it not symbolical of that which Christ has done for man. "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.

God grant that we may this day go even to Bethlehem, and learn these sacred lessons—a lesson of humility, and a lesson of thankfulness and joy and hope; for these are the two great lessons which are set side by side before us in the birth of our Lord.

#### CHRISTMAS IN GERMANY.

Among the nations of the world the Germans tower aloft like a colossal statue, which the man who has a true idea of greatness must ever regard with a mixture of awe and admiration. In all ages of the world's history they have been more or less the world's wonder. The Roman soldier, reared amid all the refinements of Italy, was forced to respect the barbarians of huge frame, that with blue eyes flashing with fire, sprang from the forests and swamps of Germany, rushing upon the perfectly trained and equipped cohorts with a valour that must have carried all before it, had there been any equality in arms and organization. Throughout the middle ages, as act after act of the great world-drama is put upon the stage, it is the German nation that plays the heaviest part in every scene. In modern times, through the excellence of her schools and universities, Germany has led the way in every department of school learning and literature, being, as it were, the parent fire at which other nations have kindled their lamps. In our own days, those people unacquainted with German history, not knowing the military prowess for which the nation has ever been distinguished, had come to regard the typical German as a professor in spectacles, poring all day over books, with a huge pot of beer beside him, and a pipe in his mouth, through the never ceasing fumes of which the whole scene is scarcely visible. But France, that was supposed to be the greatest military power of Europe, throws down the gage of battle, and after a few desperate conflicts, the spiked helmet is an object terribly familiar in the most sequestered villages in the country, and under its dome we recognize the features of our spectacled friend whom we supposed to be buried in his books and unseparably wedded to his pipe and beer. But while the German nation thus excites our awe and admiration by its colossal stature upon the world stage, and the just pre-eminence in arms and

literature that its qualities of heart and head procure for it, we should endeavour more than we do to make our way behind the scenes, and see the sacred influences that contribute to the generation and organization of this life that throbs with such stupendous energy and result. The German does not spring up from the earth to defy the world in scholarship and arms. Like ourselves he is born and developed in the sacred retirement of home, and the prodigies he performs are the outcome, more or less, of the influences that are there brought to bear upon him. Viewed then as contributing in some degree to that marvellous manhood, any of Germany's domestic institutions have for the students of human nature a peculiar value and interest. There is no institution which is so deeply rooted in the heart of the German people as the celebration of Christmas. We will then conduct our readers into a home in one of the towns of central Germany, in which it must be presumed that there are several children, for what would the celebration of Christmas be without the glee of happy childhood? Christmas is essentially the children's festival in England, but this is so to a much greater extent, if possible, in Germany. But if we are going to witness the celebration of Christmas in the bosom of a German family, it will be necessary to give a short historical sketch of the festival and its observances, as some things that we see will be otherwise scarcely intelligible.

For the origin of many customs now observed at Christmas we must go far back into the middle ages. Some of them are relics of heathen rites and ceremonies. We find that the 25th of December came to be observed as the day of our Lord's nativity first in the Church of Rome, towards the end of the 4th century. Just at this time used to occur a number of heathen festivals, the celebration of which was closely bound up with the social and domestic life of the Romans. First came the *Saturnalia*, which commemorated the golden age. At this festival distinctions between masters and servants were abolished, and presents sent to friends and relations. This festival was followed by the *Sigillaria*, or children's festival, at which children were presented with little images. Then followed the *Brumalia*, the festival of the shortest day, when the sun, then at the winter solstice, was, as it were, born anew. Now the early Christian teachers found it very difficult to wean their converts from cherished superstitions and observances, which continued to linger on, even after the people had changed their creed. They adopted the policy, therefore, of grafting Christian upon heathen festivals, partly with the view of drawing Christian people away from taking any share in old heathen ceremonies, partly in hope of winning over the pagans themselves to Christian observances. Great facilities of doing so were afforded by the ease with which ideas underlying the heathen festivals of the season could be connected with the ideas that group themselves around our Lord's nativity. Did they call to mind the golden age when there was no distinction between man? Then was not the true golden age brought in by the Incarnation of our Lord, whereby fellowship between man and God was restored, and all men, bond and free, made equal in His sight. Did those festivals celebrate the new birth of the sun? Christ was the Sun of Righteousness, and He had been born into the world. In this manner the Feast of the Nativity, which in many parts of the East had been united with that of the Epiphany, was transferred to Dec. 25th. The custom of making presents, and of making the day a festival for

children especially, became a Christian usage along with it. It was felt that the time when God gave to men the gift of his Eternal Son, men also ought to be animated by a spirit of love and good-will towards each other. The origin of the Christmas tree must be looked for in a very different quarter.

From Rome with her marble palaces and temples, her triumphal arches, and vast amphitheatre, we pass with all the speed of thought to the wild forests of Germany. Here our forefathers were wont to meet at their feast of Yule, the winter solstice, and amid the snow-covered pine trees to kindle huge bonfires in honour of their Gods. Afterwards when times had changed, and civilization had advanced, they no longer met in the woods, but in memory of old days carried the tree inside the house. During the middle ages Christmas was celebrated in Germany with gay fantastic *mysteries* or *miracle plays*; the gloom which spread over religion at this period of the world's history being unable to damp the joyous spread of the people at Christmas tide. The mysteries, though they subsequently degenerated into coarse buffoonery, were in their origin essentially religious. The church tried to bring vividly before the people the sacred narratives of Christ's birth and life. To this end striking scenes of the Gospel history were represented to the eye rather than described to the ear. The theatres were the churches which even in daylight, with their majestic height and endless columns, their carved stone and stained glass, produced grand contrasts of light and shade, but which at night produced an effect more striking still when the blaze of innumerable lamps and torches could all be turned on one central object, that stood in magnificent contrast with the surrounding gloom. The actors were always at hand; different parts were assigned to priests and deacons. And besides these there was the choir of men and boys. The mysteries were acted at the chief festivals of the church—on Palm Sunday the entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem; on Good Friday the story of the Passion; and at Christmas the scene of the shepherds watching their flocks, the visits of the wise men from the East, the massacre of the innocents. A description of the last named, which we take from Dean Melman, many serve as a specimen of these mediæval mysteries.

The ceremony opened with a procession of children in white robes who marched through the long cloister of the monastery, chanting: "How glorious is Thy kingdom! Send down, O God, Thy Lamb." Immediately a man bearing the Lamb, takes his place at their head, leading them up and down. In the mean time an Angel alights upon the manger, singing: "Joseph, Thou Son of David" and commanding him to flee into Egypt. Herod who is seated on his throne in all the splendor of Oriental attire, is informed by his armour-bearer of the departure of the wise men. He bursts out into wrath and delivers the fatal sword to the armour-bearer. The children are still following the steps of the Lamb and sweetly chanting "Hail, Lamb of God! O hail!" The mothers entreat mercy, but in vain. While the children are dying, an Angel descends and cries: "Ye who dwell in the dust, awake and cry aloud." The Innocents answer: "Why, O God dost Thou not defend us from bloodshed?" The Angel answers: "Wait but a little time till your number is full." Then enters Rachel, with two women comforting her. As they lead off the sad mother, an Angel sings the antiphone: "Suffer little children to come unto me." At the voice of the Angel all the children enter the choir, and take up their song of triumph. Next Herod disappears, and Archelaus is seen on the throne. The Angel summons Joseph from Egypt, Joseph breaks out into a hymn to the Virgin; and finally the whole congregation unites in singing the *Te Deum*.

Down to the present day traces of the mysteries are preserved in Germany. This, we believe, is a universal custom that at Christmas the Roman Catholic Churches are decorated with an image of the infant Christ lying in a cradle, surrounded by the Virgin Mary, St. Joseph and the magi, together with bulls and cherubs, and the shepherds, with their flocks in the back-ground. These representations which are often got up with much artistic

taste while still retaining something of quaint old fashioned simplicity, are the delight of young and old, who flock to see them in great numbers, especially on Christmas eve, when the whole scene is gayly illuminated with tapers.

We are at last drawing near to the main subject of the paper viz: The observance of Christmas in family circles. But we should deem ourselves guilty of an almost unpardonable slight, were we not to make mention first of *St. Nicholas* (*Santa Claus*) who in many places acts as a forerunner of Christmas tide. On Dec. 6, the day consecrated to his memory, loud ringing and knocking are heard at the outer door followed by the sound of ponderous footsteps coming up stairs. Then among the terrified children comes in the saint, bearing a small basket of gifts and a birch rod, a gloomy threatening countenance and a hunch back being the most striking features of his personal appearance. Some of the children are inclined to make faces at him but do not like the look of his birch rod. He addresses each child individually, rebukes him for his chief failings and if he is guilty of anything particularly naughty gives him a taste of his rod. After he has heard the children sing and say their prayers he relents somewhat and scatters the contents of his basket freely about the room, sometimes giving a sharp blow to a boy who is over eager in snapping up the gifts. The presents consist of apples, nuts, gingerbread, copybooks and the like, nothing of any great value: for Nicholas, the children will tell you, is a poor man and cannot afford to give handsome presents. We may add that St. Nicholas was Archbishop of Myra in the fourth century and was conspicuous by his acts of piety and benevolence. He came to be regarded as the special patron of children, but we can scarcely doubt that in the German popular representations the benignant character of the Saint is cruelly belied. Be thus as it may, the appearance of Nicholas acts as a wholesome corrective on sundry naughty children. For now Christmas is at the doors, and there is much anxiety lest the Christ-child should bring a rod as a token of his displeasure, instead of the much coveted gifts. We must observe that by a beautiful union of the religious and secular state of the Christmas joy and happiness, the German children are taught not to regard their parents and friends as the givers of the Christmas presents, nor any mysterious mythical personage but the Infant Christ himself *das Christkindchen*, who is the author of all Christmas joy. In the meantime the children are busy each devising and writing down a *Wunschzettel*, or list of all the things that he would like to be the happy possessor of. This document the parents take charge of, and forward it to the Christ-child who selects from the articles enumerated those which he deems suitable. It is needless to say that these articles are of a very miscellaneous character indeed, ranging as they do from a horse, or even a baby sister, down to a new cap or a box of soldiers. All festivities centre round Christmas Eve. The very name for Christmas is *Weihnachtstende*, 'sacred night,' points to this; for it is then that the Christ-child flees in at the window bearing the sacred tree and all the gifts.

The senior members of the family assist the Christ-child in arranging the presents and lighting the tapers of the tree. The children are assembled in an adjoining apartment which is often darkened, and who can tell of the beating of hearts, of the keen expectation, and fervent longing among these little ones? Yet no one dares to steal prematurely into the festal room, for it is well known that the Christ-child will blow out the eyes of any such inquisitive intruder. At length the preparations are completed, and the Christ-child takes his departure through the open window. The bell now rings, and immediately the juveniles rush into the great room, eager and joyous. There, on a long table in the centre of the room stands the Christmas-tree, every branch of it lighted with a bright taper, and covered with little pieces of cotton wool to represent snow-flakes. Generally the tree is also laden with apples, gilded nuts, sweetmeats, and ornaments of various kinds. A little bit of the tinsel with which the nuts have been gilded, lies in the doorway. The youngest child picks it up and whispers: "That has fallen

off from the wings of the Christ-Child." For a moment there is silence, all being wrapt in admiration of the brilliancy and beauty of the scene. Then amid joyful acclamations and congratulations, the presents are distributed. It is found that the Christ-Child has assigned to each member of the party a special place at the table, where he will discover all his presents placed together, marked with his name, and accompanied by the invariable donation of a large piece of gingerbread in the shape of a heart covered with almonds. Nor are the servants forgotten: dressed in their best clothes, they come in with the rest of the company, and receive liberal allowances of linen and cloth, together with a dish full of apples and cakes. But what soon begins to attract more attention than anything else, is a large toy, such as a grocer's store or doll's kitchen, amply supplied with every delicacy, which is given to all the children jointly, and around which they soon congregate and commence operations. Shortly after New Year's Day, when all the supplies have been sold off, and all the delicacies cooked and consumed, this toy with all its glories passes away again into fairy-land, to be welcomed back the following Christmas with joy no less intense.

In the meantime the tapers have burnt down, and the very little children go into raptures when they see the twigs and needles of the dear tree beginning to take fire and hear them snap. There is some excitement and emulation as to who shall be able to blow out the topmost lights; then the whole company tramps out of the room again, and unites around the festal board. Devotional exercises or the reading of the Gospel story of the Lord's Nativity bring the day to a close.

So strong is the attachment of the Germans to Christmas and its joys that even when lying on the bed of sickness they will not unfrequently have a little Christmas-tree set up by their side, and will have all the gifts which loving friends have sent in placed together on the bed, while their hearts are filled with true childlike joy. We have heard of a Lutheran pastor who, being confined one Christmas to his sick chamber, summoned the poor children of his parish, made them little presents such as his slender means enabled him to do, and then spoke to them in simple, hearty words about the dear Child Jesus.

As may be expected, customs vary considerably in different parts of the country. In some places the children are in the habit of making little presents to their parents. Preparations are made for three or four months before Christmas; the boys save up their pocketmoney to buy these presents, or set to work with the fretsaw; the girls busy themselves with their needles. What the present is to be is kept a profound secret; and the children have many contrivances to conceal it, such as working when they are out on visits, or getting up before daybreak. Then on Christmas Eve one of the parlours is lighted up by the children, the parents are brought in, and each child presents his little gift with kisses and embraces. These scenes are often very touching, the mother weeping aloud for joy and tenderness, and even the father stifling a sob which seemed to be rising within him.

In a few places of Northern Germany which are not favoured by the visits of St. Nicholas, Christmas Eve witnesses the arrival of another distinguished personage from the land of mystery, *Knecht Rupert, i. e.,* the servant Rupert. He makes his appearance with a white gown, a mask, and a large flax-wig, announces that his Master, Jesus Christ, has sent him with presents, and is received with great pomp and ceremony by the senior members of the family. He then makes inquiries into the behavior of each child, and bestows upon them handsome presents; or—if the picture of their character has been very dark—he gives the parents a rod, recommending them to use it frequently. But, to do justice to the rising generation of the Fatherland, this very rarely takes place.

On the morning of Christmas Day all flock to the churches, and very solemn and impressive it is to hear the grand old chorals of the Lutheran Church sung by thousands of voices, accompanied by the organ and the sound of trumpets. The feast of the Nativity was brightened during the Middle Ages by many beautiful outpourings of devotion in the form of hymns, and many of these have been

successfully paraphrased by more recent German poets. Yet there is probably no Christmas hymn which exhibits more beautifully both the depth and the simplicity of German piety than that of Luther:

Gelobet seyst du, Jesus Christ,  
Dass du Mensch geboren bist  
Von einer Jungfrau: das ist wahr,  
Des freuet sich der Engel Schaar  
Und jauchzet: Hallelujah.\*

But enough: we fear that we must have already wearied the patient reader; so wishing him a Christmas no less joyous than those which we have attempted to describe, we bid him farewell.

—By S., written for DOMINION CHURCHMAN.

#### TO THE LAITY.

We very earnestly commend the offertory on Christmas Day to the liberality of our lay brethren. There are few clergy to whom the gifts of Christmas are not most welcome. Indeed these gifts are almost a domestic necessity to the clergy, for the provision of seasonable comforts for themselves and their families. If your pastor has done his work, as you think, more than usually well in the past year, show that you gratefully appreciate his zeal. If, as you judge, he has been lacking in some points, stir up his dormant energy by your generosity. If, as you feel, he has not shown to you or yours the attention you expect, or done you any wrong, bring him to penitence and a more pastor like spirit by your loving Christmas gifts, which will act as a sacred balm to heal all sores, and bless alike giver and bestower.

Make then the parsonages of our Canada ring with happy thanks and happy thoughts, all hearts therein stirred into the sweetness of gratitude, and the joy of sympathetic recognition, by the love gifts of the flock of Jesus, our blessed Saviour, born on Christmas Day to those whom He has sent to shepherd you.

#### A CHRISTMAS STOCKING.

They put me in the great spare bed, and there they bade me sleep:  
I must not stir; I must not wake; I must not even peep!  
Right opposite that lonely bed, my Christmas stocking hung;  
While near it, waiting for the morn, my Sunday clothes were flung.

I counted softly, to myself, to ten, and ten times ten,  
And went through all the alphabet, and then began again;  
I repeated that Fifth Reader piece—a poem called "Repose,"  
And tried a dozen other ways to fall into a dose—  
When suddenly the room grew light. I heard a soft, strong bound—

'T was Santa Claus, I felt quite sure, but dared not look around.

'T was nice to know that he was there, and things were going rightly,  
And so I took a little nap, and tried to smile politely.

"Ho! Merry Christmas!" cried a voice; I felt the bed a rocking;

'T was daylight—Brother Bob was up! and oh! that splendid stocking!

#### THE PURITANS AND CHRISTMAS DAY.

An allusion was made by a correspondent in our issue of the 6th to the famous year, A. D. 1662, when the Puritan ministers who held possession of the pulpits of the Church of England, were compelled to restore these pulpits to their lawful owners. It is to all lovers of civil and religious freedom, as well as to lovers of the Church, a source of earnest gratitude to God, that the insufferable tyranny of Cromwell and his army were so soon overthrown, and the national liberties restored in both church and state. Christmas Day should ever be a day of thanksgiving to

\* Christ, to Thee be praises due  
Who wast born as man to-day  
Of a Virgin: Yes, 'tis true.  
Angel hosts in bright array  
Hallelujah sing away.

English Churchmen for the deliverance of their country and their Church from this unscrupulous and ungodly oppressor. We quote the following from Macaulay's History: "The Puritans interdicted, under heavy penalties, the use of the Book of Common Prayer, not only in churches, but in private houses. It was a crime in a child to read by the bedside of a sick parent, one of those beautiful Collects which had soothed the griefs of forty generations of Christians. Clergymen of respectable character were not only ejected from their benefices by thousands, but were frequently exposed to the outrages of a fanatical rabble. Churches and sepulchres, fine works of art and curious remains of antiquity were brutally defaced."

While carrying on these barbarous tyrannies, putting even to the sword men, women and children who dared to show a love for their Church and their country, Cromwell larded and interlarded his letters and speeches with scriptural phrases, adding thereby a deeper element of guilt to his crimes. But, alas! for our fallen nature, some few read these pious words and straightway excuse all the deeds they were intended to cloak. "Talk only like a Saint, then we will excuse you acting like a Demon," expresses the policy of some even in these days, for an act of terrible criminality, the taking of God's money, sacred to the work of evangelization, for building up a private fortune, has been fully condoned by some because he who did this fearful wrong, like Cromwell, talked and wrote in support of their party in scriptural phrases with pharisaical pride and unction. As the Passover Feast to the Israelites, so to us should Christmas recall the memory of our Church and our nation's delivery from the Pharaoh Puritan, who was driving our ancestors back to Atheism and Popery, and who has debauched all succeeding generations by his example of using gospel words to cloak the works of darkness. Macaulay says in his history (chap. 11): "Perhaps no single circumstance more strongly illustrates the temper of the precisians than their conduct respecting Christmas day. Christmas had been, from time immemorial, the season of joy and domestic affection, the season when families assembled, when children came home from school, when quarrels were made up, when carols were heard in every street, when every house was decorated with evergreens, and every table was loaded with good cheer. At that season all hearts not utterly destitute of kindness were enlarged and softened. At that season the poor were admitted to partake largely of the overflowings of the wealth of the rich, whose bounty was peculiarly acceptable on account of the shortness of the days and of the severity of the weather. At that season the interval between the landlord and tenant, master and servant, was less marked than through the rest of the year. Where there is much enjoyment there will be some excess: yet, on the whole, the spirit in which the holiday was kept was not unworthy of a Christian festival. The Long Parliament gave orders in 1644, that the twenty-fifth of December should be strictly observed as a fast, and that all men should pass it in humbly bemoaning the great national sin which they and their fathers had so often committed on that day by romping under the mistletoe, eating boar's head, and drinking ale flavoured with roasted apples. No public act of that time seems to have irritated the common people more. On the next anniversary of the festival formidable riots broke out in many places. The constables were resisted, the magistrates insulted, the houses of noted zealots attacked, and the proscribed service of the day openly read in the churches."

As we to-day are enjoying the blessed privileges of united worship in commemoration of the Incarnation, by which the breach between man and God was healed, and in our homes are rejoicing in peace and happy reunions, and loving messages from afar, let us not forget to thank God for having delivered our Church and our nation from the ruthless Puritan oppressors, who sought to stamp out this joyous festival, and who, had they triumphed, would have made the religion of Jesus Christ hateful to mankind.

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TWO CHRISTMAS CARDS.

BY MISS M. W. SIBBALD, GEORGINA.

Old Sally Spry lived alone in a garret, in an old English town. For years but one very pleasant thing had befallen the solitary woman, which was that once when she was lying sick in a hospital ward, a strange lady had looked upon her with compassionate eyes and spoken to her a few words of kindness.

Sally never forgot that lady, and longed with her whole heart to see her again; but as yet she had not obtained her desire. The lady was not a regular visitor at the hospital, and the poor old creature had never caught another glimpse of her.

Sally Spry was by trade a buyer and seller of old rags, and every week-day she might have been met carrying a huge bag on her back, with which she called at any house that was likely to furnish her with something to help her fill it. It was at a house of the grander sort that Sally bought, one day, some very fine linen rags, which, the other contents of her bag, she carried for sale to the paper manufactory, where she was told by the man who sorted them that they would help to meet the demand for Bristol board, which would soon be wanted for Christmas Cards.

And sure enough, those very rags after having been thrown into a strong lye, and crushed by a machine adapted for the purpose, formed the pulp, out of which was made a piece of card-board, bought by a certain Mary Berkeley, who illuminated upon it the following lines, taken from Keble's "Christian Year":

"Like circles widening round,  
Upon a clear blue river,  
Orb after orb, the wondrous sound,  
Is echoed on for ever.  
Glory to God on high, on earth be peace,  
And love towards men, of love-salvation  
and release."

Then, with a sure and skilful hand, she caused to spring as it were from the golden "L" an exquisitely painted group of flowers, in which waved the convolvulus and the lily of the valley, while a damask rose formed a blaze of beauty in itself.

Little Nellie Berkeley, who was in the room, ran up to the table at which her sister was working, just as the latter was putting the last touch to her picture.

"How lovely! Mary," exclaimed the child. "I am sure Mr. Burns will pay you a great deal of money for that card."

"No he won't, Nell," replied Mary with a smile; "he won't give me a penny for it."

"Not give you a penny for it!" repeated Nellie. "What do you mean, Mary?"

"Only that I am going to send it to somebody who shall never give me money for it," answered Mary.

"Do I know the person it is for?" asked her sister.

"I don't think you have ever seen her," said Mary, "but you have often heard of her. Indeed, if it were not for her, my dear Nell, I am afraid you would find nothing in your stocking on Christmas morning."

"Oh! I know whom you mean now," cried the child; and she went up to her sister and whispered a name in her ear.

"You are quite right," said Mary.

On the very day that Mary Berkeley painted the Christmas card we have described, Sally Spry, to her inexpressible joy, had seen her dear lady of the hospital going out of a certain door; and through making certain enquiries, had ascertained her name, and where she lived.

But Sally at first made no further use of her dis-

covery than to often hang about 10 Bertram street in the hope that even though unrecognized, she might get another look at the sweet face which she would always remember to her dying day. But in this, the old woman was destined to be disappointed; some way or other, the form for which she watched, never passed when she waited for it.

And so time went on till the day before Christmas-eve, when as she was passing through a back street, the eyes of Sally Spry were attracted by an object displayed in a dingy shop-window. This was a very ordinary piece of paper (also manufactured, though Sally did know not that, from some of her own rags) which had acquired the dignity of a Christmas-card through having on it the representation of a robin on a holly bough, printed in the coarsest of colors, which ran into one another without any regard to the boundaries of outline; while below was the motto, "The Compliments of the Season." A sudden idea struck Sally as she



FINISHING THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

looked at this mean picture, and she went in and asked its price. It was only a half-penny so Sally bought it together with a sheet of letter-paper, and a stamped envelope.

On Christmas morning a delicate looking woman lay on a couch in an elegantly furnished room. She was no longer young but her refined face was one that people loved to look at. Everybody who knew Mrs. Wilmot felt she was a good woman. From her youth up she had loved her God with a love which had gone on increasing with her years. Her adoration of her Creator was causing her pain to-day. It was making her ask herself whether she had even given her dear Lord and Master any pleasure. She thought that perhaps she had done a few things for his sake; but could she be certain that they were things wanted done? It might be, He would rather they had been left undone. She lay back thinking over this matter and the more

she thought the sadder she grew. But just when Mrs. Wilmot had come to the sorrowful conclusion that the Lord could find no pleasure in the work of her hands, her maid entered with her Mistress's breakfast.

"A merry Christmas, madam, and a happy New Year," said the girl.

Mrs. Wilmot thought sadly that she was feeling the very reverse of merry, but she managed to answer in a cheerful tone of voice, "The same to you, Polly."

"The postman has just been here, madam," the maid went on, "and he thanks you for remembering him, and he wishes you the compliments of the season. But he hasn't brought you much, however ma'am; one Christmas card, as I think it is; and what I am sure must be a begging letter, ma'am, for it is directed all crooked, and the envelope is a yellow one, and not very clean."

"We must never judge too much from appearances," said Mrs. Wilmot archly, "you yourself look so smart to-day Polly, that a stranger might imagine you were too grand to do anything, and yet I find you a very useful creature."

Polly smiled a bright appreciative smile at Mrs. Wilmot's remark, and left the room. When she had gone, Mrs. Wilmot looked down on the two envelopes lying on the silver salver which held her breakfast. There was indeed a marked contrast in the appearance of the two. She opened the elegant looking one first, and after having looked with delight on the exquisite painting it contained, proceeded to read the accompanying note.

Mary Berkeley," the letter said, "takes the liberty of sending Mrs. Wilmot the enclosed card as a slight and very inadequate expression of the intense gratitude which the artist feels towards one, whose kind exertions on her behalf, have procured for her the employment which enables her to provide the comforts that are much needed by a suffering mother."

Mrs. Wilmot's eyes glistened as she read this note; she had almost forgotten the circumstance of having once befriended the writer of it.

After having again admired Mary Berkeley's beautiful design, Mrs. Wilmot opened the other envelope, and could not help smiling when she saw the rude picture it held; but her smile banished as she read the words scrawled on the coarse paper wrapped around it, they were these:

"I hope I am not making too free mum to send you this poor card, but once when I was ill, you looked kind on me, and I can't forget it mum."

Mrs. Wilmot's eyes had filled with tears while reading Mary Berkeley's note; she sobbed aloud when she had finished the other. That uncouth token of gratitude for a mere kind look, sent her by a stranger of whom she did not even know the name, touched her to her heart's core.

Suddenly, too, it flashed upon her that the question which had been troubling her that morning was answered. Each of those Christmas-cards was the offering of a grateful heart. But one was a lovely picture, the other merely a coarse daub, and yet did she despise the last? No indeed, she rather felt a peculiar tenderness for the poor cheap thing. Was God then, less touched by gratitude than she was. Ah no it could not be, and her heart was comforted. That same winter, Mrs. Wilmot was prostrated by an illness from which she was slowly recovering, when one day Polly said to her,

"If you please ma'am, the old woman who always comes to ask after you, is here. I could hardly get her into the kitchen though it is cold outside. But I told her you wanted to see her,

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and would be vexed if she didn't stay; so at last she came in. Shall I bring her up ma'am; she looks rather dirty to come in here."

"Bring her up certainly," said Mrs. Wilmot, "I feel strong for me to-day, and I am most anxious to speak to her."

So Sally Spry, for she it was ushered into Mrs. Wilmot's presence trembling but rejoicing. She looked at the lady for a moment with an eager thought timid expression, and then cast down her eyes.

"I wanted to see you very much" said Mrs. Wilmot, "that I might thank you for coming so often to enquire after me; and also I wished to know whether you had ever seen these before," and she drew out from between the leaves of her bible a common looking Christmas card, and a badly written note. Sally's face changed at the sight of them.

"Don't be vexed, mum," she said, "please don't be vexed; but I sent 'em."

"Vexed; no," replied Mrs. Wilmot; "it made me cry for joy to think that a look of mine could comfort any one who was sick."

"Why, mum," said Sally, delighted, "you knowed azackly what I meant by sending that 'ere card."

"Yes," answered Mrs. Wilmot. "And what is more, Sally, your card told me that God too knows exactly what we mean when we give to Him or do for Him what we can."

#### A D V E N T.

BY J. R. NEWELL, LONDON.

He comes, who on His natal day  
Inglorious in a manger lay,  
Where lowing herds were first to see  
God clothed in meek humanity.

He comes, who trod the path of life  
'Mid thorns and briars, storm and strife,  
Whose words were truth, whose thoughts  
were pure,  
Whose deeds were mercies ever sure.

He comes, whom Israel's rulers bought,  
Whom Pilate's soldiers set at naught,  
He who scourged and mocked by turns,  
Who wore the plaited crown of thorns.

He comes, who agonizing cried,—  
The Innocent, the Crucified:  
Who on Mount Calvary's awful height  
Expired,—and heaven was veiled in night.

He comes—but now in fearful form,  
Begirt with lightning and with storm:  
Before whose face, whose glance before,  
The heavens depart and are no more.

He comes—oh! let His saints rejoice,  
And hail Him with triumphant voice;  
He comes to bring His wanderers home,  
And, even so, Lord Jesus, come!

#### A CHRISTMAS DAY IN THE WEST INDIAS.

To the Anglican clergy, meanwhile, whom I met in the West Indies, I am bound to offer my thanks, not for courtesies shown to me—that is a slight matter—but for the worthy fashion in which they seem to be upholding the honour of the good old Church in the colonies. In Port of Spain I heard and saw enough of their work to believe that they are in nowise less active—more active they cannot be—than if they were sea-port clergymen in England. The services were performed well; with a certain stateliness, which is not only allowable but necessary, in a colony where the majority of the congregation are coloured; but without the least foppery or extravagance. The very best sermon, perhaps for matter and manner, which I ever heard preached to unlettered folk, was preached by a young clergyman—a West Indian born—in the Great Church of Port of Spain; and he had no lack of hearers, and those attentive ones. The Great Church was always a pleasant sight, with its crowded congregation of every hue, all well dressed, and with the universal West Indian look of comfort; and its noble span of roof overhead, [all cut from island timber, another proof of what the wood carver may effect in the island hereafter. Certainly distractions were frequent and troublesome, at least to a new-comer. A large centipede would come out and take a hurried turn round the Governor's seat; or a

bat would settle in broad daylight in the curate's hood; or one had to turn away one's eyes lest they should behold—not vanity, but—the magnificent head of a Cabbage-palm just outside the opposite window, with the black vultures trying to sit on the footstalls in a high wind, and slipping down, and flopping up again, half the service through. But one soon got accustomed to the strange sights; though it was, to say the least, somewhat startling to find on Christmas Day, the altar and pulpit decked with exquisite tropical flowers; and each doorway arched over with a single pair of cocconut leaves, fifteen feet high.

The Christmas Day Communion, too, was one not easily to be forgotten. At least 250 persons, mostly coloured, many as black as jet, attended; and were I must say for them, most devout in manner. Pleasant it was to see the large proportion of men among them, many young white men of the middle and upper class; and still more pleasant, too, to see that all hues and ranks knelt side by side without any distinction. One trio touched me deeply. An old lady—I know not who she was—with the unmistakable long, delicate, once beautiful features of a high-bred West Indian of the "Ancien Regime," came and knelt reverently, feebly, sadly, between two old Negro women. One of them seemed her maid. Both of them might have been once her slaves. Here at least they were equals. True equality—the consecration of humility, not the consecration of envy—first appeared on earth in the house of God, and at the altar of Christ: and I question much whether it will linger long in any spot on earth where that house and that altar are despised. It is easy to propose an equality without Christianity; as easy as to propose to kick down the ladder by which you have climbed, or to saw off the bough on which you sit. As easy; and as safe.—Rev. C. KINGSLEY.

#### OLD CHRISTMAS GAMES.

One of the interesting features of a Christmas in olden times was the varied assortment of games which were so heartily joined in by both old and young assembled round the blazing hearth. Most of these merry pastimes have long ago passed away; only a few, such as snspdragon, hide-and-seek, &c., being known by the present generation out of the long list of Christmas games formerly kept up. Thus, an old game played especially at Christmas was "hot cockles," a species of blind-man's-bluff, in which the person kneeling down, and being struck behind, was to guess who inflicted the blow. It is described by Gay in the following lines:—

As at hot cockles once I laid me down,  
And felt the weighty hand of many a clown,  
Buxoma gave a gentle tap, and I  
Quick rose, and read soft mischief in her eye.

In an old tract, "Round About Our Coal Fire; or, Christmas Entertainments," published in the early part of the last century, mention is made of a game called "Questions and Commands." The writer says that the commander may oblige his subjects to answer any lawful question, and make the same obey him instantly under the penalty of paying any such forfeit as may be laid on the aggressors. "Handy-dandy" was much in request at this season. One of the party concealed something in his hand, making his neighbours guess in which one it was. If the latter guessed rightly he won the article; if wrongly he lost its equivalent. It is alluded to in "Pier's Ploughman," and it is, perhaps, noticed by Shakespeare where King Lear (Act iv., sc. 6) says to Gloucester:—"Look with thine ears; see how yon' justice rails upon yon' simple thief. Hark, in thine ear; change places; and, heed-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief?" Browne, too, in one of his "Pastorals," tells how boys

With the pibbles play at handy-dandy.

A childish diversion also usually introduced at Christmas in by-gone days was the "Game of Goose." It was, says Strutt, played by two persons, although it readily admitted of many more, and was well calculated to make the young people sharp at reckoning the produce of two given numbers. The table for playing "Goose" was about the size of a sheet almanac, and divided into sixty-two small compartments arranged in a spiral form, with a large open space in the centre marked with the number 63; the other departments were denoted by numbers from one to sixty-two, inclusive. The game was played with two dice, each player throwing in turn, and so on, until the game was completed. The number 63 had to be reached exactly, and should the player exceed it he had to reckon back, and throw again in his turn.

Another game seems to have been "Fox i' the Hole," and is thrice mentioned by Herrick, but not once explained:—

Of Christmas sports, the wassail-bowl,  
That's tossed up, after fox i' the hole.

A diversion which often caused much laughter was

"Dun in the Mire." A log of wood was brought into the room; this was "Dun," or the cart-horse, and a cry was raised that he had stuck in the mire. Two of the company then advanced, either with or without ropes, to draw him out. When unable to do so, they called for further help, until finally all the parties joined in the game, when Dun was, of course, extricated. No small merriment arose from each person's sly efforts to let the log fall on his neighbour's toes. It is frequently alluded to by old writers, and by Shakespeare in "Romeo and Juliet," (Act i., sc. 4), where Mercutio says to Romeo:—

Tut, dun's the mouse, the constable's own word,  
If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire.

Some doubt exists as to the precise nature of a game designated "Shoeing the Wild Mare," and mentioned by Herrick, where he speaks of—

Christmas sports, the wassail-bowl,  
Of blind-man's-buff, and of the care  
That young men have to shoe the mare.

"It appears," says Brand, "that the wild-mare was simply a youth so called, who was allowed a certain start, and who was pursued by his companions, with the object of being shod, if he did not succeed in outstripping them." Then there were "cap-verses," wherein one gave a word, to which another found a rhyme; a past-time once very popular.

Among other references to old Christmas games may be quoted the "Paston Letters," in which a letter dated Dec. 24, 1484, relates how Lady Morley, on account of the death of her lord, directing what pastimes were to be used in her house at Christmas, ordered that "there were none disguisings, nor harping, nor luting, nor singing, nor none loud disports; but playing at the tables, and chess, and cards; such disports she gave her folks leave to play, and none other."

Of old Christmas card-games may be mentioned that known as "Post-and-Pair," to which Ben Johnson refers in his "Masque of Christmas":—

Now Post and Pair, old Christmas' heir,  
Doth make a gingling sally;  
And wot you who, 'tis one of my two  
Sons, card-makers in Pur-alley.

It is, too, among the diversions described by Sir Walter Scott, in his graphic picture of Christmas Eve in "Marmion," and is mentioned by many of our own old writers. Three cards are dealt to all, the excitement of the game consisting in each person's vying, or betting, on the goodness of his own hand. It would seem that a pair of royal aces was the best hand—hence one of its names, "Pair-royal"—and then other cards according to their order, such as kings, queens, &c. Thus it much resembled our modern game of "Commerce." Another game of cards was "Ruff," known also as "Double-Ruff," or "Cross-Ruff," one of its most popular names being "Trump." It is mentioned in "Poor Robin's Almanack" for 1698:—

Christmas to hungry stomachs gives relief,  
With mutton, pork-pies, pasties, and roast-beef;  
And men at cards spend many idle hours,  
At loadum, whisk, cross-ruff, put, and all-fours.

This game was much the same as whist; and was played two against two, and occasionally by three against three. Noddy, too, we are told, was also much in demand, being noticed by Middleton, where Christmas, speaking of the games of the time as his children, says:—"I leave them wholly to my eldest son Noddy, whom, during his minority, I commit to the custody of a pair of knaves and one-and-thirty." In "Poor Robin's Almanack" for 1755 it is thus noticed:—

Some folks at dice and cards do sit,  
To lose their money and their wit,  
And when the game of cards is past,  
Then fall to at Noddy at the last.

There is some doubt as to what game was meant, some think cribbage, and others "Beat the knaves out of doors."

Such were some of the old games practised at Christmas-tide; and the importance that was attached to these diversions may be gathered from the fact that every large household had its Lord and Merry Disports, whose duty it was to arrange the merry makings every season; a custom which was extended to our Universities and Inns of Court. At the present day, when Christmas is shorn of so many of its former glories, some of these old fireside games might with advantage be revived, thereby creating harmless mirth and fun.

If there were no enemy, there could be no conflict; were there no trouble, there could be no faith; were there no trial, there would be no love; were there no fear, there could be no hope. Hope, faith and love are weapons, and weapons imply foes and encounters; and relying on my weapons I will glory in my sufferings.—Dr. Newman.



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\$15 Overcoat for \$9.  
\$10 Overcoat for \$6.  
\$8 Overcoat for \$5.  
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\$3.00 All-Wool Pants for \$1.50.  
\$3.50 All-Wool Pants for \$2.00.  
\$4.50 All-Wool Pants for \$3.00.  
\$6.00 All-Wool Pants for \$4.50.

This is a grand opportunity to purchase Winter Clothing at from Thirty to Forty per cent. below regular prices. SALES FOR CASH ONLY.

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128 to 132 KING STREET EAST,

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## GREAT SILK SALE!

—OF—

Black and Coloured Silks,  
Satins, Velveteens, &c.

At much below regular prices, and far below those of any other House in the city either wholesale or retail, and what we ask is this, that the public who read this advertisement will call and examine our stock and see prices, and if they are not lower than those of any other House in the city, don't buy.

We are showing a splendid line of Evening and Street Shades, at FIFTY CENTS per yard. These Goods are worth from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per yard, and cannot be bought for less money in the city.

We are showing Pim's best Irish Poblins, in Black, Blue, Seal, Heliotrope, Salmon, Pale Blue and Grenat, at FIFTY CENTS per yard. These goods cost more than double the money.

In Black Silks we are showing startling value Heavy Gros Grain Silks at 60c., 70c., 80c. and 90c. per yard. The same goods are sold retail on King Street at from 90c. to \$1.35 per yard.

This is an opportunity that ladies should take advantage of, and one that gentleman, who are inclined to be indulgent (during the Holiday Season), should also avail themselves of, the prices quoted during this sale being far below wholesale figures.

## MANTLES! MANTLES!

Magnificent Display of

## MANTLES AND DOLMANS

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### New Show Room!

Ladies' Cloth Mantles, handsomely trimmed, at \$2.50, \$3.50, \$4.50, \$5, \$6, \$8, \$10, \$12, \$15 and up.

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Ladies' Ulsters in Tweeds, Beavers and Astrakhan, at \$1.25, \$2.50, \$3.50, \$4.50, \$6, \$7.50, \$9, \$10, \$13 and up. The largest and choicest Stock of Ladies' Ulsters in the city.

Ladies will find it to their interest to visit our Show Rooms, which are the handsomest and best lighted in Canada.

## PETLEY & PETLEY,

128 to 132 KING STREET EAST,

TORONTO.

"THE PATH TO CHURCH."

The land is still. Poor Robin's notes all quiver  
 For very cold: a plaint his piping seems.  
 The bony trees too frozen are to quiver,  
 And ice like rocks oppresses all the streams.  
 'Tis Christmas morn. Last midnight every ringer  
 From the chill belfry shook the powdered snow;  
 He clanged the earliest bell—the first joy-bringer!  
 And now he clears, his apple-cheeks a-glow,  
 The Path to Church.

Why smiles he not? Why finds he no enjoyment  
 In labour that wins largesse full and free?  
 Is it he deems the day for such employment  
 Is long, long past for one as old as he?  
 It may be. Yet—absolve me for a sinner  
 If I misread those wrinkles on his face—  
 Has he a premonition of his dinner?  
 And would he smile if he could forthwith trace  
 The Path from Church?

The moss is thicker on that roof, and greyer  
 Those time-worn walls since first he crept within,  
 A little lad, and heard the parson's prayer,  
 And, dumb with mystic joy, the organ's din.  
 Through boyhood, manhood, till this moment, daily,  
 How many feet now still have walked that way?  
 He thinks, perchance, and as the faint smiles fail he  
 Stolidly trims, this bountiful dear day,  
 The Path to Church.

By no means meditative is his servant—  
 That sturdy urchin—whose one wild desire  
 (I grieve to say the aspiration's fervent)  
 Is that some injury befall the squire!  
 He blows the bellows with those blue-cold fingers,  
 And bans the organist in whispers grim—  
 Rather than pipes inflate for haughty singers  
 The sweeping and garnishing give him  
 Of the Path to Church.

The comely maiden at the child's touch tarries,  
 To look at Robin, clamorous for crumbs;  
 His breast almost as ruddy as the berries  
 That tell the little folk when Christmas comes.  
 As, with those myriads who from lowly lintel  
 And lofty mansion, issue forth to-day,  
 By thy sweet spirit, Christmas! made more gentle,  
 These happy children take their quiet way—  
 The Path to Church.

BYRON WEBBER.

[Christmas greetings across the ocean to an old friend, B. W.—Ed. D. C.]

TESSIE'S MERRY CHRISTMAS.

The December afternoon was cold and gloomy everywhere, but in the wide, handsome city streets the neat sidewalks and the fine houses had a look at least of wealth and comfort. Here on the top of a high hill, where were crowded a cluster of wretched hovels, the misery and cheerlessness of the scene were intensified by the dull sky and the chilling wind.

These squatter houses were huddled one against another as if so they might keep each other up, some of them, despite this friendly support, leaning over at an alarming angle. The old snow was trodden to mud in devious paths that crossed the hill in irregular directions. On the bits of fence which surrounded some of the more ambitious habitations were hung wretched articles of clothing. A miserable goat was regarding some of these as if wondering whether any of them would serve for a meal. The only way to reach this curious hamlet was by a path which led deviously up the rocks from the street below. These rocks, indeed, formed the reason of the existence of this refuge for poverty. They rose in a jagged pile thirty feet above the regular grade of the city, and thus had made the lots on which they stood, for the present, undesirable property by reason of the cost of building there. So that, although in the midst of a closely-built neighborhood, this block was yet, unimproved.

The path leading upwards, always rough and difficult, was wet and slippery now, and the little girl who was climbing it found it slow and laborious work. She was a bit of a child, not more than seven years old, shabbily dressed in a crimson cashmere frock of fine quality and delicate make, and wearing a battered straw hat. From under this looked out a sweet, delicate face, with gentle blue eyes and soft fair hair, a face of unmistakable refinement, despite the fact that it was stained and soiled and had a wofully pinched and hungry look. Over her arm she carried a basket, which was carefully covered, and which she guarded from any harm in her upward scramble, even falling down herself rather than permit her precious burden to drop.

As the little thing, panting with her struggle,

reached the top of the hill, she was suddenly confronted by the goat, who, finding no nutriment in the forlorn rags he had been sniffing, was strolling about in search of other amusement. He had long felt a grudge against the child because of her red dress. He never saw it without becoming enraged, and now, as he caught sight of the frightened little face and the crimson frock, he squared himself and dropped his head with a dangerous look in his unreasoning black eyes.

At soon as she saw her old-time foe, the little girl began to cry. Clutching the basket more tightly than ever, she said,

"Go away, naughty Billy!" and then, as the creature took a step nearer to her, she shrieked in terror, "Ellen! Ellen!"

As the point she had reached there was a large rough rock which shelved over somewhat on one side, and just as the goat rose in the air and butted ahead dangerously, the child by a sudden spring crouched under this, crying more than ever, and calling, whenever she could get breath, "Ellen! Ellen!" in pitiful, half-stifled tones. It was very damp and muddy where she crouched, her clothes were getting wetter every moment, and she was shivering with cold and terror. But amid all her distress she hugged the basket closely to her, seeming to derive some feeling of comfort from its contact.

The goat's hoofs could be heard crunching about on the rock above for some minutes, but after awhile they jumped down and trotted away. The little girl cautiously peeped out, and seeing that her enemy had disappeared, she scrambled out of her hiding place and began to move towards one of the hovels. But the goat had only gone a short distance, and before she could reach any shelter he came running towards her with awkward and belligerent leaps. Seeing now no chance of escape, a panic of terror overcame the poor little girl, and she uttered shriek after shriek, even in this extremity, however, putting her basket on the side away from the goat. Her cries were not unheard, and just as the goat had almost reached her, a stout girl of fourteen came running out from behind a near house. She was armed with a large stick, which she brandished threateningly as she cried,

"Shoo, Billy! git out, you breast, git out!"

The goat retreated, and Ellen caught the sobbing child in her arms.

"Poor dear little darling Tessie," she said in a tender voice, "Did the naughty old Billy frighten my sweet pet?"

"O, I so scared," sobbed the child, as soon as she could speak, "I so scared!"

"Yes, dear, so you was; but he can't touch you no more," said Ellen, soothingly. "Come along home now, it's nice and warm there. Here, let me take your basket."

But Tessie clung to it. "No, no, Ellen, I must carry it myself;" and as she held the beloved possession to her heart her sobs died away to an occasional convulsive gulp.

The two girls passed on, hand in hand, to a curious structure that they called their home. It was originally a large packing box, which had been; by the addition of a few boards, made into a tiny house for these two little waifs. Kind hearted Patrick Flynn who worked as a carpenter when he was sober enough, had patched up the box, which he had begged from a big warehouse. It had been placed against Patrick's shanty in such a position that the pipe from the cooking stove in his cabin should pass through one corner of it, thus giving it quite a comfortable degree of warmth. Then Patrick had set in a square of glass on one side for a window, and so within this tiny habitation, four feet wide by eight feet long, the children had made a home.

The furniture in these narrow limits consisted of a table and two low stools. There was a roll of bedding which at night was laid out on the floor, but during the day was piled up in a corner. Into the wall there were driven a few pegs on which hung a few articles of clothing, and there were pinned up for ornaments half a dozen chromo advertisements.

Miserable as the place was, however, it was warm and dry; and when Ellen had brought Tessie into it, and closed the door, the little thing began to brighten up.

"I sold ten boxes of matches, Ellen," she said, with her pretty eyes quite shining, "and one gentleman gave me a quarter."

"Did he, Tessie? O, how nice! and I done well, too, to-day. I sold all my papers first off. I'll put the money away in our bank."

As she spoke Ellen drew an old box from under the table, and put out her hand to take from Tessie the basket which she still held. But the little thing, as she touched it, kept hold of it, looking at Ellen with timid depreciating eyes.

"What is the matter, Tessie?" Ellen asked curiously. "What makes the basket so heavy?" and, as she lifted the cover and dimly discerned something moving, she cried out,

"Why, in the name of senses, what have you got in it?"

"It's my 'Kittie,'" said Tessie, hurriedly; "I so lonesome, Ellen, all day in the streets, I jess t'ought I could take my Kittie with me, and she's been real good, Ellen. She hasn't meowed only once, and I guess maybe that was why the gentleman gave me that quarter. He stopped to buy some matches, and he heard Kittie, and then he laughed and gave me the money, but he didn't take any matches."

Ellen kissed the little pleading face that was up-turned to her.

"You cunning little thing," she said. "Well, you can play with Kittie now while I get our supper."

Tessie took the little white kitten out of the basket and carressed it for a while in happy forgetfulness, Ellen laid out on the table a piece of cheese and some bread, and the two children were just about to begin to eat, when the door opened and a stout Irish woman appeared. It was Mrs. Flynn, and in her hand she carried a steaming teapot.

"The crathers!" she exclaimed, as she saw the two children sitting demurely at the table. "I thought you'd be after atin' your bit o' supper, and I've brought yez a sup o' tay. 'Twill be so comfortable like this cowl'd night."

Ellen thanked the good woman, and Tessie said with a little bow and smile, that were curiously well-bred despite her torn clothes and dirty face.

"It is very kind of you, Missus Finn."

"Ah, she's a lady, sure; the Vargin persarve her!" said Mrs. Flynn, and as by reason of the narrow limits of the house she could not remain without keeping the door open, she added:

"Troth, me room's better nor me company, 'tis broad I am, the saints be praised, but the doore is better to kepe the wind out."

As she went away, Tessie looked at Ellen and said wistfully: "She said I was a lady, but I know I aint any more, 'cause I so dirty. My mamma say every day when I have my baff, little ladies love to be clean."

The blue eyes filled with tears, and the small mouth trembled as she added pitifully, "Ellen, do you think I ever see my mamma any more?"

How many times in the last few months the little creature had asked the same question! Poor Ellen never knew how to answer it except by hugs and kisses. Now she comforted little Tessie as well as she could. She had no great love for cleanliness herself, but to please her little companion she got some water and washed her hands and face before she made up the poor bed in which, at last, Tessie fell asleep with the kitten by her side.

Ellen was herself a waif who had run away from the service at which she had been placed from an orphan asylum. She found she could earn more money and be more independent by telling newspapers than as the drudge of cruel employers, and she was tolerably well established in her trade, at which she held her own with ready wit and rude courage, when one night she found Tessie crying in the street. The child could give no account of herself except that she had run away from a bad old woman who beat her, and who had taken her away from her mamma. From her confused description her mamma lived in another city—at least she had been brought a long way on the cars, she said.

Ellen's heart was touched with pity; she was alone and so was Tessie; she liked her because she had run away like herself, and she resolved to adopt the homeless child. It was after this she had set up house-keeping in the packing-box, and contrived to make a home, such as it was, for herself and her small protégée.

Ellen was, in her way, very kind and very careful of Tessie; she would not allow her to go far away to sell matches, or anywhere but in certain streets that she knew, and where she could be often under Ellen's own eye. And so the poor little thing had become somewhat used to her new life, which was at least better than her wretched existence with the wicked old woman who beat her.

There was one house that Tessie often passed, but never without fear and trembling. It was a very grand house, with a coach-house beside it, and in the coach house lived a dog, of which Tessie was as much afraid as she was of the goat. The day she took her kitten with her she would not go by it at all, she was so afraid that the wicked dog would smell out her pet and tear it in pieces.

The weather grew very severe after this, and Ellen felt it absolutely necessary to buy for Tessie some sort of garment to protect her from the cold. After inspecting the stock of several second hand dealers with whom she was acquainted, she came home one evening in triumph with a queer little overcoat, which had evidently once been the property of a boy. It was much frayed on the seams, and the lining was ragged; but Ellen displayed it triumphantly to Tessie whom she found curled up with her kitten in one corner of their shanty. The little thing was quite blue with cold, and begged to be allowed to wear it all the time.

"Yes, I want to see how you look in it," said Ellen with great pride, as Tessie put it on. It only cost fifty cents. I bought it off an old villain that wanted a dollar for it, but I got it for fifty cents, and it's real good and warm."

"It isn't very pretty," Tessie replied, evidently not sharing her companion's admiration. "I member last winter I had a blue velvet coat."

"Did you really, Tessie? Blue velvet!" said Ellen in awe-struck admiration. "You must have been awful rich!"

Clad in this odd garment, a few days later, Tessie was on the wide avenue trying to sell matches. She walked along, saying every now and then, "Matches, matches!" as Ellen had taught her, but not meeting with much success until she reached the big house where the bad dog lived. Seeing that the coach house door was shut, she ventured by, though not without hastening her steps; but just as she got in front of the wide entrance, a man whose cigar went out, stopped her and bought a package of matches. This transaction so absorbed Tessie's attention for a moment that she did not notice that a carriage was driven up to the sidewalk, until a rough voice cried: "Get out of the way, you little beggar."

She turned a frightened face, to see that it was the grand footman who lived in the fine house, and that under the carriage was the dog that she was afraid of—a dreadful dog with one black eye and one white one, and black and white spots all over his body. To Tessie's terror, he seemed quite a demon, and without a word she fled, her feet winged with fear.

She did not notice two ladies who were in the carriage, one handsome, well-dressed, happy-looking; the other pale-faced, with sad eyes, and wearing deep mourning. As Tessie turned, she started from her seat.

"O, Maria," she cried, seizing her companion's arm, "did you see that child?"

"I did not notice him, Theresa," replied the other. "My dear sister," she added very kindly. "Do not agitate yourself so needlessly. Do you not see that this is a little boy?"

The pale lady, who in her excitement had sprung from the carriage, looked after the tiny running figure. Yes, it must be a boy in that poor ragged overcoat, and with a deep sigh she said:

"I suppose I am foolish to fancy that every child near Tessie's age is my lost darling, but something about this one made me think of her so strongly!"

As they slowly walked up the steps her companion said gently:

"I am afraid it is hardly likely she is here in New York when you lost her so far away. You must try, dear, not to think of it all the time."

The poor lady had been brought to the great city to distract her mind. As if anything could distract the mother's heart from mourning for her child.

Meantime, Tessie ran on until she was around the corner, and then, as she began to feel very tired and hungry, and as it was getting late in the afternoon, she started for her poor home.

She made her way on, comforted by selling two more boxes of matches, and had so got over her terror and was quite happy when she reached the street below the rocks.

At the foot of the path, all over the sidewalk, a crowd of boys was collected, evidently much excited, while from the rocks above the goat looked down with evil curiosity. Tessie paused, wondering how she could get through or by this throng, when from the very heart of it where the boys were pressing one on another with sticks and stones in their hands, came the discordant cry of a cat, and a small white object scrambled up the rocks.

"It's my Kittie! O, it's my Kittie!" said Tessie, and she flung herself into the midst of the swaying pushing boys.

"Oh, you bad things!" she cried passionately. "Let me by! It's my Kittie! Cruel wicked boys!"

With all the might of her small strength she pushed and struggled to reach her pet, her basket dropping in her distress, her hat falling back, her blue eyes flashing. Just then a well-directed stone struck the cat, and with another cry it fell down the rocks.

"My Kittie! my Kittie! you've killed my Kittie!"

This was all that Tessie could say. Tears were blinding her eyes. But rescue was close at hand. At this moment a sudden shower of newspapers descended well-directed missiles among the boys. One here and one there, folded into hard wads and flung with wonderful precision and force, they struck the boys in the face or on the head, producing confusion in the ranks, and, immediately after, Ellen, throwing what remained of her papers as a broadside into the astonished enemy, followed this up by charging upon them like a young fury.

"Cowards! cowards!" she cried. "Aint you ashamed of yourselves? All of you big bullies trying to kill one little kitten! Get out! Go away! Be off with you!"

Every word was accompanied by a blow, and the boys amazed and disconcerted, most of them only mischievous, and manly enough not to hit a girl, slunk away, so that

Ellen passed through them like a small whirlwind, seizing Tessie with one hand on the way, and with the other picking up the trembling kitten.

This afternoon's adventure was quite disastrous to the two companions. Tessie had lost her basket with all its contents, and Ellen had destroyed her whole afternoon's supply of newspapers. The little kitter, too, was seriously hurt, so that, although it lived, it could only limp about with a broken leg, and poor Tessie shed many tears over the suffering of her pet.

The day before Christmas found the children very poor. They had no money in their bank; it had all been used to set Tessie up in business again. Ellen, however, who was always cheerful, thought that the great feast would bring generosity to all hearts, and that Tessie would be sure to do well.

She washed the little thing's face carefully, and combed out her fair hair, so that the ringlets hung below her crumpled hat.

"Now, dear, you had better stay out pretty late," she said, as she kissed Tessie good bye. "Christmas Eve there'll be a good many in the streets; but don't wait till it's real dark, you know, only just kinder dim."

Obedient to these instructions, Tessie walked till she was very tired, but as she sold so many boxes of matches, and had a good deal of money given her also, she kept on until the twilight began to gather and the glow of gas shone from the houses.

She thought at last that she must go home, and her shortest way lay past the big house where the dog lived. Still, he was not not always there when she went by, and so she boldly walked on until she got opposite the windows of the parlor. There she paused, spell-bound. The curtains and blinds were pushed back, and she could see rising high up almost to the ceiling, a Christmas tree, all ablaze with lights and glittering with beautiful things. The little candles shone with a soft glow, their yellow lustre falling on bright colored balls and motto papers full of candy, and Tessie could just see the head of a lovely wax doll.

So absorbed was she in the contemplation of these delights that she never noticed a pale lady in black who came to the window and looked with sad eyes into the street. The lady stood in shadow, but the light streamed full on Tessie's upturned face.

There was a cry inside, but at this moment a low growl beside her startled Tessie, and with a scream of terror she turned to fly.

Too late, however. The dog, who was not bad at heart, but like all aristocratic dogs had a dislike for shabbily dressed people, snapped at her and caught a bit of her dress in his teeth. Poor Tessie was at the end of her forces, tired, cold and hungry. This attack overcame what was left of her strength, and with a shriek of utmost fear, she fell on the sidewalk in a dead faint.

It was the grand footman himself who drove the dog off in the midst of a crowd of eager, excited faces, and then stooped and raised in his arms the poor dilapidated little figure. They carried her in, and laid her, in all her wretched rags, on a sofa in the beautiful parlor, under the lights of the Christmas tree, and the pale lady bent over her, kissing her white face and her soiled blue hands, crying with tears of joy:

"It's my Tessie, my darling child, my little one! God has given her back to me."

For a few moments Tessie laid so still that they were in terror lest her feeble life had gone from her; but at last, as her mother clasped her in her arms and warmed her in her bosom, she opened her blue eyes and cried with swift joy:

"Mamma! Mamma!"

While Tessie's mother was yet hugging her, and her aunt and cousins were looking at her with kindly smiles, there was a wild ringing at the front door bell, a summons so peremptory and long continued that the ding dong of the silver gong resounded even in the parlor, and the grand footman, going to answer the door, was presently heard in violent altercation with some one.

"She's in here and I will come in! I shall in spite of you, you stu k up monkey!" shouted a shrill voice.

Tessie started from her mother's arms.

"It's Ellen," she cried, "Ellen, who took care of me. Dear good Ellen!"

And to be sure, Ellen came flying into the room with belligerent eyes. But when she saw how it was, and all the story was told to her, she would have turned sadly away only that Tessie clung to her, and her mamma said:

"Yes, darling, Ellen shall go back with us to our home and live with you always."

"And my Kittie too," said Tessie, "my dear little white Kittie!"

Neither were good Patrick Flynn and his wife forgotten. A generous present went to them next morning. Indeed, every friend in Squatter Town was bountifully remembered; while in all the wide city on Christmas day were no happier creatures than Tessie and her mother, Ellen and the little lame white kitten.

—[Little Devereux Blake in Dio Lewis's Monthly.]

I have no sympathy for those who would make the Sabbath a day of gloom. I would have the sun to shine brighter and the flowers to smell sweeter, and nature to look fairer, on that day than on any other. I would have the very earth to put on her holiday attire on the blest morning on which our Saviour rose from the dead.—Guthrie.

#### A CHRISTMAS WISH.

Brave chime the bells on this time-honored day,  
Telling of love before the birth of Time;  
Soon will their falling cadence die away  
In Southern skies, in Northern fog and rime.

But let their echoes waken in the heart  
A song the shepherds heard in hush of night;  
Truly, each simple legend breathes a part  
Of truth, which lasts for aye, if read aright.

And may the "Peace on Earth" men lightly  
break,  
Be kept as heaven's gift throughout the land,  
And harmony the place of discord take,  
Helping our brother with an outstretched hand.

So from each Christmas home would incense rise,  
Rare as the magi's frankincense and gold,  
For men's fair deeds are in the Father's eyes,  
"Good" as Creation, ere the world grew old.  
C. R. W.

#### CHRISTMAS BOOKS.

Our readers who desire prizes for Sunday School, or gifts to libraries, or Christmas gifts to young people, will find an immense stock to choose from, especially suitable for these purposes, at Messrs. Rowsell & Hutchison, King St., Toronto. They keep a large number of the S. P. C. K. books, and a heavy stock of well assorted selections from other Church publishers. Besides this varied magazine of Church and general literature, Messrs. R., H. & Co. are showing a splendid variety of illustrated books, prayer books, devotional works, Bibles, &c., &c., in fine bindings. A visit to this store should be paid to see the Christmas attractions.

#### A USEFUL DOG.

Jack the railway dog has been for some years well known at one of the Gloucestershire railway stations. One of his earliest exploits was diving under a train to pick up a half sovereign which a gentleman had dropped and restoring it to him; and since then he has been noted for his cleverness in finding pence, whether hidden or mislaid, and many similar accomplishments. His chief interest, however, was in traffic both by road and rail, for his vociferous barking always gave the first intimation of the approach of a train, and he never suffered a cab to drive away without jumping on the box as if to superintend the arrangement of the luggage and see that all was right. The ringing of the arrival and departure bell he regarded as his especial work, and was greatly distressed if any one else performed it. Latterly, however, he was getting old, and his sight must have begun to fail him, for in jumping off a departing carriage early this year he did not clear the wheel, and was consequently run over and killed on the spot. He is buried close to the station which he knew so well.

#### THE CHRISTIAN YEAR.

Advent tells us, Christ is near:  
Christmas tells us, Christ is here!  
In Epiphany we trace  
All the glory of His grace.

Those three Sundays before Lent  
Will prepare us to repent;  
That in Lent we may begin  
Earnestly to mourn for sin.

Holy Week and Easter, then,  
Tell Who died and rose again:  
O that happy Easter Day!  
"Christ is risen again," we say.

Yes, and Christ ascended, too,  
"To prepare a place for you:"  
So we give Him special praise,  
After those "great Forty Days."

Then He sent the Holy Ghost,  
On the Day of Pentecost,  
With us ever to abide:  
Well may we keep Whitsuntide!

Last of all, we humbly sing,  
Glory to our God and King,  
Glory to the One in Three,  
On the Feast of Trinity.—Church Times.

A CHILD OF THE GREAT CITY.

It was a clear, cold afternoon in December, and people who were exposed to the keen, frosty air seemed anxious to hurry on and get under shelter. Every one seemed busy and self-engrossed, and hastened through the crowded London streets, pushing and jostling each other with scant politeness. The thoroughfares were especially crowded to-day, for it was not only Saturday afternoon, but the Saturday before Christmas Day, which this year fell on a Monday. So housekeepers and heads of families had double duty to do, and hastened on with their business, often enough with bag or basket heavily laden. People were driving to and from the neighbouring railways in cabs crowded with luggage, and others were almost as rapidly traversing the roadway on foot. At Ludgate Hill the traffic was so excessive, and the noise so incessant, that although the bells of St. Paul's were beginning to ring for Evensong, the self-centred interest of the passengers was so great that scarcely any one heard the call, or paid the least attention to it if they did.

One traveller, however,—out of many,—stopped abruptly as he crossed at the foot of the hill, from Fleet-street, on his way towards Farringdon-street, hesitated a moment, and then rapidly turned round in the direction of the cathedral, soliloquising as he went:

"Yes, I'll just spare time for that; I never could resist the sound of those bells; and even then I can catch the 5.30 train from King's Cross. I've not seen the dear old place for so long that it will be quite refreshing, and Mildred will forgive me for being a little later. Hollo! what's that?"

For in his meditative soliloquy he had not given heed to his steps, and as the people thronged and pushed him, he did not observe, under the dark shadow of the Railway-bridge, that he was stumbling against a boy's figure crouched against the wall, with his arms clasped round his knees, looking like a huge bundle.

"Please it's me," replied a voice, in answer to the question, "but it don't matter; nothing don't matter to me, and if it did they'd say as how it didn't."

Raymond Desmond, just arrived from his country curacy, for a brief holiday at home, pulled up at once, and looked down on the miserable object before him, with a great depth of compassion in his kind, blue eyes.

"Why doesn't it matter, my boy? I'm very sorry if I hurt you."

"Bless yer honour! that were nothing," said the boy, emphatically, but without looking up, or altering his position. "A shove here and there don't matter to me now; I just don't care for nothing, and no one don't care for me."

"I'm afraid you are an idle lad, to sit loitering here at this busy time."

"I'll be up and about in a bit, but my head come bad agin, and when the bobby sees me, he'll be for a moving me on; they're allers a moving me on, but I don't never reach nothing, that I don't."

The words ended with almost a sob, and Raymond's heart smote him for his former speech.

"Poor boy," he said, "why don't you go home then?"

"Home," he repeated, bitterly, "I ain't got no home; I don't live nowhere now, but I just gets along as I can, a selling o'lights and papers mostly. I've been a sitting watching the people; what's up to 'em all I can't think! they're a moving on, too, like me. Where's they all going to?"

"Don't you know that at Christmas time every one is busy?" answered Raymond. "There, put that in your pocket," he added, drawing out a shilling, "and try to be an honest boy."

It was all he could do, but he passed on portmanteau in hand, and hurried up the hill with a saddened heart, although he had not noted the puzzled wistful look on the boy's face as he lifted his eyes to his when he thanked him

for others; and in Him and for Him, seeking to diffuse happiness to those around? And as this thought shot through Raymond's mind, he, with his usual promptitude, immediately put into practice for himself the impulse which had been given him, and instead of indulging in the new escritoir which he had promised himself, he kept the money in his pocket, inwardly resolving that it should be added to that which he had intended giving towards the fund for the Orphanage, which his sister had so much at heart. So he mounted the steps to the cathedral, cheered and invigorated, and did not think scorn of his resolution, because it had been prompted by the enquiry of an ignorant boy; he was the rather moved to compassion for him, since he knew that even he, poor and ignorant as he was, was one of those for whom the Lord of Glory was born, as at this time. And with the remembrance came a deep desire to help him, and a strange regret that he had left him so abruptly, and done so little for him. Yet

what could he have done? what could he now do, even if he saw him again? surely nothing, but to offer for him a prayer.

The beautiful service so engrossed him, that when he left the cathedral he thought no more of the matter, and was hurriedly proceeding down the hill when, as he turned the corner at the foot, a hand was stretched out in front of him, and the boy stood before him, begging to carry his portmanteau.

"You've paid me already, yer honour," he said, looking up anxiously, "and I'd serve you a turn if I could."

"All right," said Raymond, giving him the bag, and rather pleased at seeing him again; "I'm going to the railway station, but you must keep close to me, lest I lose sight of you."

"I'll not lose sight of yer honour, now I remember yer face; I've travelled over a good bit of ground, but I ain't never found no one as give me such a kind word as you."

Raymond looked at him more attentively; the large dark eyes spoke volumes of grateful affection.

"I wonder what I can do for him," he said to himself, involuntarily, "Where are you going to night?" he asked.

"Just anywheres, according to what I earns. Nothing don't matter to me, now, since Wingy died; no one ain't nothing to me, and I ain't nothing to nobody."

And as he spoke, Raymond saw him lift his hand to brush off two big tear-drops that had rolled down his tanned face.

"And who was Wingy?" he asked, gently.

"She was the thrush with the broken wing, as the boys took the nest from; and she let me take her up, she did, and carry her home; aye, but she did love me, she did. But, poor thing, she didn't thrive, and no wonder, in the old bit of a cage; she were so lonesome too, and one day, when I come home from a selling papers, she was quite dead."

Here Rover? was so overcome by the sorrowful remembrance that his voice broke in a sob.

"Poor boy! And that was the only friend you knew," said Raymond, pityingly. "Yet



WHAT'S IN THE CHRISTMAS-BOX.

for the money. Yet the interview haunted him, and the words "Where's they all going to?" kept repeating themselves again and again.

Oh! where? with what aim? It was a rough unlettered question, but it struck Raymond forcibly. Where were all these eager, hurrying travellers going indeed? Hastening in search of pleasure, ease and comfort, and luxurious living? Going to squander their substances in the way most agreeable to themselves, in the mere personal gratification of the moment? Going to spend their money—that one of all God's gifts, so little recognised, and so grudgingly acknowledged as His—on self and selfish pursuits, or even more, on carnal appetites and desires? or where they going rather, to offer it to the Holy Child in Bethlehem manger, by giving it to His poor, and, by exercising self-restraint, and practising self-denial, to enjoy the pure and innocent pleasure of spending it

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you had another Friend, if you had only known Him. A friend who once was a little Child, homeless and lonely."

"The Child you told them about in big room, what came from a beautiful great City? They said as how this ere wor a great beautiful City, but it ain't been beautiful to me: leastways, I ain't seen nothing beautiful."

Raymond looked at him fairly bewildered, and he began to wonder if the boy was in the full possession of his senses.

"When did I tell anybody about the City?" he asked, looking fixedly at him.

"Right away down in the country, where the birds was; when you telled the boy that God took care on 'em, even the sparrows. I used to watch 'em as I come along, and I minded me what you said; and they'd sing to me, as I give them the crumbs o' bread."

"What is your name, and what place in the country did you come from?" asked Raymond, getting more interested in him, but still greatly puzzled at his statements.

"They used to call me Ragged Rover down there, near Copswood; but I ain't called nothing now, though I'm a deal raggeder," he added, with a doleful glance at his jacket.

"Copswood! you lived near Copswood?" exclaimed Raymond; "and you heard me speak at the Orphanage?" He added, a sudden thought rushing through his mind. "And who did you know down there?"

"Didn't know nobody much, 'cept Maister Greeves, as I worked for, and the boys as took the nest. Father, he died afore I come to Copswood, and I ain't got no mother."

"Poor boy, then you are quite alone?" exclaimed Raymond, meditatively. "And you worked for Mr. Greeves, you say? Then I can learn all I may want to know from him," thought the young clergyman, beginning to put into execution the idea he had formed, of taking the boy home with him, and sending him to his sister's Orphanage.

"Here, this way, my lad," he said, as they reached the station. "What will you do if I take you back to Copswood with me to-night?"

"Copswood to-night, with ye?" repeated Rover, in utter amazement. "Does yer honour mean it?" he asked, opening his eyes in inexpressible surprise.

"Certainly I do, if you will pay attention to what I say. Come along, and keep close to me, and do exactly what I tell you."

He was a sorry-looking object, as Raymond was well aware, and painfully conscious of; and for this reason he had stooped to the indignity, as he considered it, of travelling third-class, that he might be the less open to remark. But there were so many people about, and all were so engrossed with their own concerns, that he was but little noticed, and the boy himself was so bewildered at the novelty of his position, and so confused with the noise of the train, that he was very quiet. But he presently asked, as if from a sudden recollection, whether they were all going to the beautiful City, and if they would see the Holy Child?

"Alas! no; for many of those travellers thought nothing at all about the City, or even remembered Him Who once came down from it, and who will some day come from it again. It was only the few who looked up into the clear, bright sky, where the quiet stars were shining, and in spirit rejoiced, as did the holy men of old, who were guided by the Christmas Star, "with exceeding great joy."

"It is not every one, Rover," answered Mr. Desmond, "who can see that Holy Child; only those who want to love Him, and who try to do good. And even then we can't see Him, as you can see me, but only by faith. You don't know what that means yet, I am

afraid, but you will know more I hope, before another Christmas."

"Like what they had down at Copswood, all bright and shining, with toys and books?"

"That was a Christmas-tree. But have you never heard the meaning of Christmas Day? Never head of the Lord Jesus Christ?" asked Raymond, inexpressibly shocked at his ignorance, and grived that one in a Christian land should have been so long neglected.

Rover slowly shook his head.

"Haven't you ever been to Sunday-school?" asked Raymond, "and heard about God's love for us—for all of us?"

"Father and me we didn't stay long enough anywheres, but I heard what you said about Him caring for the birds."

"Then if He cares for them, don't you think He cares much more for you? Has no one ever told you that it was Jesus Christ the Son of God, Who was born as a little Child, for you and me, because He loved us? and that that is what Christmas means?"

"For me and you?" asked Rover; "for both on us? He don't need to give the same to me as He do to you. There ain't no one as cares for me."

"Indeed but there is, my poor Rover," replied Mr. Desmond, earnestly; "you have the same kind Friend that I have, and I am taking you with me now, that I may teach you to know and love Him."

"You's my friend," said Rover, shyly shifting his eyes to his face.

Raymond gave him akin smile in reply, and after that he thought it best to be silent, and leave the first few words of simple teaching to work by a Power unseen.

—The Penny Post.

#### AT A LOVED ONE'S GRAVE.

We mourn our loved ones, visit oft the spot  
Where in firm faith that they will rise again,  
We lay the dear forms which we cherished so,  
And place the sacred cross, their hope in life, in  
death their trust,

'Mid flowers they loved, when here. But what endeared them to us,  
Made them so precious, lies not beneath the green mound

Where we kneel in prayer for resignation to God's will

In taking what we fondly used to call our own;  
But which He only lent us for a while, to cheer life's journey.

The casket is but there, the precious gem has left it

To reunite, when the Blest Saviour summons each to each.

Oh, if it were not for the hope assured, that we should meet

And know our loved ones in a better world—  
We ill could bear the heart-felt loneliness; when they have left us

It must be endured to know the sorrow—

'Tis strangely sad how soon those dear in life  
Are oft it seems forgotten: the place that knew them  
Here, knows them no more, and, ere while,  
The blank is scarcely noticed—save by some lone one,

Who oft in loving memory recalls each feature,  
look,

The very tone of voice, which never can be heard again on earth.

Yes, we love our dear ones, but 'tis selfish love;  
For when they have, at God's bidding, laid their weapons down,

Their warfare ended, and the victory won,  
We wish them on life's battle-field again; but if  
At earnest prayer they could return, they would not  
Leave the blissful, holy calm where there is no more sea.

The haven reached, the anchor safely cast—  
Far rather would they watch to welcome us  
Where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

Let us poor voyagers still amid the waves, so hard to buffet with,  
Brace every nerve to gain the promised shore,  
Which we can never reach without The Pilot,

Who alone can steer our frail bark thro' the breakers, which else

Would wreck us—If He is at the helm the Port is sure;

The winds are hushed, the wearied waters rest Obedient at His bidding—"Peace, be still."

S. F.

#### A WORD ABOUT CHRISTMAS.

When what was designed to be a pleasure becomes a burden, it is time to stop and examine it carefully and see if it is the thing itself which has grown to be such a weight, or whether it is simply an awkward manner of carrying it. Certainly there must be something wrong in any celebration of Christmas which results in serious fatigue of mind and body. During the first three months of the year, nothing is more commonly given as a reason for ill-health than an overstrain during the holidays. "She got so worn out at Christmas," or "She worked too hard in finishing her Christmas presents," or "The week before Christmas she was tired out with shopping," are excuses which appear as surely as January and February come. The question must occur sometimes to every one, whether all this worry and wear of heart and hand and brain are really worth while. Is there not some better way of celebrating this day of days than for women to wear themselves out in making or buying pretty trifles for people who already have more than they can find room for? Setting aside all effort of eyes and fingers, the mental strain is intense. Merely to devise presents for a dozen or more people, which must be appropriate and acceptable, and which they do not already possess, and which no one else is likely to hit upon, is enough to wear upon the strongest brain; and when one's means are not unlimited, and the question of economy must come in, the matter is still more complicated. The agony of indecision, the weighing of rival merits in this and that, the distress when the article which is finally decided upon does not seem as fascinating as one had hoped, the endless round of shopping, the packing to send to distant friends, the frantic effort to finish at the last moment something which ought to have been done long ago, result in a relapse when all is over into a complete weariness of mind and body which unfits one for either giving or receiving pleasure. Now, when all this is looked at soberly, does it pay? It is a remarkable fact that, although Christmas has been kept on the twenty-fifth day of December for more than a thousand years, its arrival has been as unexpected as if it had been appointed by the President. No one is ready for it, although last year every one resolved to be so, and about the middle of December there begins a rush and hurry which is really more wearing than a May moving.

It seems to be a part of the fierce activity of our time and country that even our pleasures must be enjoyed at high pressure. While it is almost impossible, in matters of business, to act upon the kindly suggestions of intelligent critics that we should take things more leisurely, surely, in matters of enjoyment, we might make an effort to be less overworked. Cannot the keeping of Christmas, for example, be made to consist in other things than gifts? Let the giving be for the children and those to whom our gifts are real necessities. As a people we are very negligent in the matter of keeping birthdays. If these festivals were made more of in the family, especially among the elder members, we should not find that we were losing the blessedness of giving and the happiness of receiving, even if we did omit presents at Christmas time. In many large families a mutual understanding that the Christmas gifts were all to be for the children would be an immense relief, although, perhaps, no one would be quite willing to acknowledge it. Sometimes a large circle of brothers and sisters can unite in a gift, in that way making it possible to give something of more value, and at the same time to lessen the difficult task of selection.

Above all things, if you give presents, be more anxious to give something which "supplies a want" than to send some pretty trifle which can only prove in the end an additional care. A little forethought and friendly putting of yourself in another's place will make this possible. In the great world of books something can be found to suit every taste. Flowers are always a graceful gift, and can never become burdensome by lasting after one has grown tired of them. There are numberless other things which can be procured without a wear and tear of mind and body which make the recipient feel as David did of the water from the well of Bethlehem, that what cost so much was too valuable to be accepted.

Susan Anna Brown, in *The Century*.

Humility is to make a right estimate of one's self. It is no humility for a man to think less of himself than he ought, though it might rather puzzle him to do that.—*Spurgeon*.

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## BABY JESUS.

Baby Jesus, who dost lie  
Far above that stormy sky,  
In Thy mother's pure caress,  
Stoop and save the motherless.

Happy birds! whom Jesus leaves  
Underneath His sheltering eaves;  
There they go to play and sleep,  
May not I go in to weep?

All without is mean and small,  
All within is vast and tall;  
All without is harsh and shrill,  
All within is hushed and still.

Jesus, let me enter in,  
Wrap me safe from noise and sin.  
Let me list the angels' songs,  
See the picture of Thy wrongs;

Let me kiss thy wounded feet,  
Drink Thine incense, faint and sweet,  
While the clear bells call Thee down  
From Thine everlasting throne.

At Thy door-step low I bend,  
Who have neither kin nor friend;  
Let me here a shelter find,  
Shield the shorn lamb from the wind.

Jesus, Lord, my heart will break:  
Save me for Thy great love's sake!

—Rev. Thos. Kingsley

## A COUNTRY CHRISTMAS.

The bright moonlight sleeps on the long range of hills and the stars glitter in the clear atmosphere; the window is open, and as the curtain sways softly in the air that has nothing of winter in it, we hear, a long way off, curious sounds of music, that appear mystic and beautiful in the middle of the night. Presently they come nearer. We can hear that "Starry night, stilly and bright," is the carol, and we recognize our pet tenor, and Mary Smith's soprano, and we know exactly where the notes will be too high for them, and where they will go off in a shrill squeak: and as we lie awaiting the fiasco, that no amount of patient teaching could make them avoid, we feel horribly guilty, for to our tuition is due the fact that they are singing at all. And under our window, to do us honour, extra voice is put into the carol; and we feel inclined to shriek wildly and grovel abjectly under the bed-clothes, when we suddenly realise the danger is over, and the carol ended victoriously. There is a pause—a clearing of throats: a handful of gravel alights on our dressing-table, and "Wish you Merry Christmas, Sir," is shouted: then we hear footsteps crunching away on the gravel; the avenue gate swings for a good ten minutes, aggravating us immensely; and presently next door, uprises "Stilly night" once more, and once more do we await in agony that especial high note. So it goes on all through the town. We recognize the scroop of the rectory gate, that always moves surlily on its hinges. We know exactly when the Doctor's house is reached, for they are not allowed to reach the second line there, owing to that hard worked functionary rising in wrath and promising them any amount of physic when called in, as he inevitably will be, to attend them for bronchitis, caught in their present occupation, if they don't go away; and by the time we know they are safely shouting their worst at that particular portion of the town where dwells our arch-enemy, we almost exult in the harsh note that by now must be inevitable, and, exulting, fall asleep, to be awakened once more by the sound of the bells ringing in Christmas morning.

It is now quite dark. The atmosphere seems tremulous with chimes; our own particular peal leading the way, followed across the hills by another chime, and then another comes swaying along from a father church, standing grand and solitary, gazing down on the wonderful, unchanging sea; then a monotonous trio from a tiny edifice in the cleared, stripped wood speaks out—ding-dong bell, ding-dong bell; the chapel-of-ease joins it too; and as we gaze across the darkness, where a low red line in the east speaks of the coming dawn, it is easy to imagine the spirits of Christmas singing joyfully as they float hither and thither on the chimes, that literally appear to fill the clear, keen air. The red dawn spreads; splitting up here a great grey bank of clouds, there a soft white line of mist; the sparrows twitter uneasily; two or three starlings emerge from the chimneys in the empty cottage opposite; and down in the garden a jolly little robin is pouring out his jovial little soul in honour of the day. It is a green Yule; there is nothing Christmassy about it, save a deli-

cate powder of frost that quickly creeps away before the spreading sun. We find a couple of primroses in the rockery, and should not be surprised to discover a snowdrop; but we do not, and have to content ourselves with a dozen violets and meagre bunches of lauristinus not yet out in blossom, and have to seek in an apology for a conservatory for anything brighter—though we cast a greedy eye at our Christmas roses, that, protected from dirt and wet by a hand-light, turn their beautiful pale faces up to ours, looking like a very perfect animated Christmas-card. By this time the real Christmas-cards have arrived; for we are superior in our country town to the usual delays, and have our portion delivered us at our breakfast-table; and we are a good hour before all those belonging to the household are severally admired or criticised. Of course heaps of people have sent us cards that are now doubtless heaping opprobrium on our devoted heads because we have forgotten them; and heaps of other people who ought to have sent them, and who are just now revelling in ours, are, we hope, conscience-stricken, and resolving to make to us at New Year what they should have remembered at Christmas.

Then comes the walk to Church, made bearable to the children by the thought of the decorations, which are always an immense fund of joy to them—berries, unexpected string, scissors, and knives being often found in our pew, forgotten in the heat and scurry of putting last touches to the fabric; and a delightful amount of excitement being caused by the wonder whether wreaths will catch fire, or sprigs fall on the bald heads of the patriarchs and the fine bonnets of the ladies as they sit through the service. The pews are very full indeed on Christmas Day. All the boys and girls are home from school; strange pale London faces are visible in the squire's, the rectory, and sundry other pews; everyone is anxious to see if other folks' children have done better or grown more while they have been away than their own have; and most of the afternoon is taken up with mooning down the lane towards the harbour discussing these and other topics of vital interest with friends, all of whom politely urge the superiority of your children, and are deeply offended if you placidly accept what you consider a bare statement of facts, without insisting, in your turn, on their Tommy's superior stature, or their Jane's extra number of accomplishments.

It is an unwritten law in the country that no stranger is asked to dinner: each family keeps distinct. Anyone hardy enough to leave the roof-tree for an alien shelter would be considered a dangerous atheist, or, at least, guilty of attempting to undermine that sacred institution—an Englishman's home; for Christmas is only Christmas if all these observances are duly kept. Into the somewhat dreary blank of the evening the mummers break, and are received with a rapture that must somewhat astonish them. We rush en masse into the front kitchen, seriously embarrassing the domestics all arrayed around the fire entertaining friends who are allowed to leave their homes, and sitting on flour bins, tables, or anything we can obtain, await the entrance of the troupe. They are preceded by an ancient person, who strikes awe into the boldest of us; he has a large simulated hump, a sheepskin hangs over his back and covers his face, two holes being slit for his eyes; and he stumps about, leaning on an immense club, with which he clears a circle for the rest. On his head he wears a venerable tall hat, decorated with ribbons, and ribbons are twisted around his arms and legs. Indeed ribbons play a mighty part in the attire of the rest, who seem all ribbons; their heads are decorated with great square erections like the old grenadier cap, and wooden swords, and a general air of uniform, casts a military aroma over the performance. This is one of the most curious descriptions, and commences with a chant, of which it is impossible to understand one word; then the old man comes forward and makes a statement, also completely unintelligible; and then, one by one, the company is engaged in combat with the tallest actor, who represents a curious mixture, as far as we could gather, of Napoleon I. and St. George of England, and who invariably conquers his foe. All the time the fray lasts the non-combatants keep up their extraordinary chant, and every now and then the old man comes forward and makes a statement that we take on faith, for distinguish a syllable we certainly cannot. It could not be the Dorset twang, for we had an audience versed in that vernacular, but was some curious dialect, made evidently purposely unintelligible to keep the mystic entertainment strictly within the district that provided us with the mummers. No amount of praise or judicious questioning elicited any information, and, at last, we came to the conclusion that the words were really lost, and that nothing was left except the rhythm of the sentences, handed down from father to son, from generation to generation. The only thing we did discover was that the old person, who was exactly like the chorus in a Greek play, was supposed to represent Father Christmas, into whose bag, slung

over his shoulders, we were to drop our contributions, while he looked the other way, and that all they knew themselves was that they did the performance just as the old folk had been used to do it, and with that we had to be content.

With the mummers Christmas in the country ceases to be Christmas; for Boxing Day sees a general exodus from within the walls of the town. Everyone who can goes shooting, from the grocer's apprentice, with his muzzle-loader aimed at a sparrow, to my Lord and the pheasants; and the female portion stays at home to nurse the juveniles who have over-eaten themselves, or pays visits to compare experiences and presents; all awakening next day to an ordinary routine that lasts—bar fair-times—until Christmas comes round again.—J. E. Panton in *Illustrated News*.

## HANG UP BABY'S STOCKING.

Hang up the baby's stocking,  
Be sure you don't forget—  
The dear little dimpled darling  
She ne'er saw Christmas yet;  
But I have told her all about it,  
And she opened her big blue eyes,  
And I'm sure she understands it,  
She looks so funny and wise.

Dear! what a tiny stocking,  
It doesn't take much to fold  
Such little pink toes as baby's  
Away from frost and cold.  
But then, for the baby's Christmas  
It never would do at all;  
Why, Santa Claus wouldn't be looking  
For anything half so small!

I know what we'll do for the baby—  
I've thought of the very best plan—  
I'll borrow a stocking of grandma,  
The longest that ever I can;  
And you'll hang it by mine, dear mother,  
Right here, in the corner,—so,—  
And write a letter to Santa,  
And fasten it on the toe.

Write: "This is the baby's stocking  
That hangs in the corner here;  
You have never seen her, Santa,  
For she only came this year;  
But she's just the blessedest baby—  
And now before you go  
Just cram her stocking with goodies  
From the top clean down to the toe."

## BOOKS RECEIVED.

A Review of Home, and Huxley on Miracles, by Sir Edmund Beckett, 17 cents, Optics without Mathematics, by Rev. T. W. Webb, M. A., F. R. A. S., 50 cents. The Fathers, for English readers, St. Hilary of Poitiers, and St. Martin of Tours, by Dr. Cazenore, 66 cents. Salvonic Literature, by W. A. Morfill, M. A., 85 cents.

The above are published by the Christian Knowledge Society, and can be had of Messrs. Rowse & Hutchison, Toronto. They will all be found very suitable for presents to young people.

COLONIAL HANDBOOKS, with maps, list of clergy, &c., by the same Society. These are very cheap useful little books. Persons having friends coming out, or who are sending for servants &c., should get them one of these handbooks before they start.

The Great Dilemma, six lectures on Christ, His own witness or His own accuser, by Rev. H. B. Otley, M. A., published by Kegan, Paul, Trench & Co., London. \$1.00. 2nd edition. We cordially recommend this work. It amplifies and enforces a well known evidential argument with much force, and will be a valuable study to the young, and interesting to all. A critical Bibliography of the "Greek New Testament, as published in America," by Dr. Hall. Published by Pickwick & Co., Philadelphia. \$1.25.

Pray to God at the beginning of all thy works, that so thou mayest bring them all to a good ending.—*Xenophon*.

Never fear to bring the sublimest motive to the smallest duty, and the most infinite comfort to the smallest trouble.—*Phillips Brooks*.

I tell you in all sincerity not as in the excitement of speech, but as I would confess before God, that I would give my right hand if I could forget that which I learned in evil company.—*John B. Gough*.

MAIDEN MEDITATIONS.

As the twilight lingers
When the day is done;
As the Christmas echoes
Cheer the year begun;

ROSE.

OUR FIRST CHRISTMAS IN BRANDON.

BY L. M. FORTIER, LAY READER.

Christmas Day, 1881, found us still in the "day of small things" in Brandon. The "oldest inhabitant" had then been here but six months, and though our streets had assumed a certain degree of regularity and most of our pioneer citizens had advanced from tent life to a more comfortable existence in shanties or small houses, and a few had got about them the requirements of home, our beloved Church was still without a fitting "habitation."

We had held our first service on the eleventh Sunday after Trinity in the then unfinished dining room of the Royal Hotel, which was filled on the occasion with a congregation of "all sorts and conditions of men," fifty-seven in number, and one solitary woman—the writer's wife. Having no instrument, the musical portion of this service was confined to a few well-known hymns, but these were sung with great heartiness and enjoyment, and I am sure that for many years to come that first church service in Brandon will be remembered with pleasure by those who took part in it.

At Christmas we were even worse off in regard to "quarters," but we had made some advances in other respects. A small reed organ had been secured, and was to be used for the first time on that day. An efficient little choir, too, with its fair quota of female voices, had been formed and supplied with music; but above all we were favored by the presence of a priest, the Rev. N. C. Martin, and thus the great privilege was afforded us of uniting with our brethren of the faith throughout the world in celebrating the Holy Eucharist, "the one service that, with the barest accessories, never loses aught of dignity and beauty."

Mr. Durst's store was utilized as our church. Sheets were hung over the shelves and spread upon the show cases to hide the clocks and watches. Chairs were borrowed from the Queen's Hotel opposite to seat the congregation. The post office in one corner of the shop was our vestry; a cabinet from the writer's office, covered with a white linen tablecloth, was made to do duty as an altar for the occasion, and a sewing machine served as both reading desk and lectern.

The worst thing we had to contend with was the cold. With the thermometer a good many degrees below zero, and a "disorderly" coal stove, it can be imagined that we did not have as comfortable time at church as many of our friends in Ontario. Poor Mr. Martin suffered most, and in the middle of the service found it necessary to hunt up his mits and put them on; and almost at the last word of the Benediction he put on his fur cap, pulled it well down over his ears, and thus vested, in surplice, fur cap and mits, went though the 'cabby's' exercise for restoring warmth to the body while the congregation dispersed.

Many changes for the better have taken place with us since then. Our fondest hopes for the prosperity of our city have been more than realized. We have now a population of 3,000 souls, excellent streets many fine buildings and comfortable houses, and the church has kept abreast of the general advance. We have a beautiful little Gothic build-

ing (St. Matthew's) capable of seating 300 people; an energetic rector, the Rev. J. Boydell; a fine choir and well attended and hearty services; a properly furnished and well cared for altar and sanctuary; frequent celebrations of the Holy Eucharist, and sound Catholic teaching from the pulpit. A year ago we relinquished all aid from the mission Board, and have since been a self-sustaining congregation. We have passed successfully through trying financial and other difficulties, and we now feel that our foundations are strong and well laid, and that, God willing, we have a bright and prosperous future before us." —The Canadian Missionary.

FITS, FITS, FITS.

successfully treated by World's Dispensary Medical Association. Address, with stamp for pamphlet, Buffalo, N. Y.

CONVERSATION.

One use of conversation is to refresh ourselves, and for relaxation, and therefore it is by no means necessary that we should always be speaking upon grave subjects, or such as require much application of mind; but it is quite easy to talk on points in which we may do good to others, or receive good from them, which at the same time it will be a refreshment to us to talk of. It is a great mistake to suppose that religious conversation is conversation on subjects connected with religion. Indeed, very often such conversation is the least religious, if, that is, it should be considered in a harsh controversial, contentious spirit; or, again, with any affectation, or putting on a tone and feelings which are not genuine. Indeed, it is most dangerous to speak on such subjects when we speak of them in a wrong spirit, or at a wrong time, or when persons are not likely to be the better for them. Our conversation, St. Paul teaches, should be seasoned with a religious spirit as it were with salt, which affects the whole, but of the presence of which we are scarcely conscious.

Whether our conversation be useful to others or not, we should at all events take care that it does them no harm; that it stimulates no evil passions, encourages them in nothing that is wrong in conduct or principle; that it does not tend to set persons at variance with each other, or to hurt the good character of any. We should study to speak with meekness and love; to repress all anger and bitterness, to check the expression of anything which we are not sure is true, or which we are not obliged by duty to say if it be hurtful to any one, remembering above all the example of Him, who spoke as never man spake.

ADVICE TO CONSUMPTIVES.

On the appearance of the first symptoms—as general debility, loss of appetite, pallor, chilly sensations, followed by night-sweats and coughs prompt measures for relief should be taken. Consumption is scrofulous disease of the lungs; therefore use the great anti-scorfula, or blood-purifier and strength-restorer, Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. Superior to Cod liver oil as a nutritive, and unsurpassed as a pectoral. For weak lungs, spitting of blood, and kindred affections, it has no equal. Sold by druggists the world over. For Dr. Pierce's pamphlet on Consumption, send two stamps to World's Dispensary Medical Association, Buffalo, N. Y.

A PARALYTIC STROKE.—W. H. Howard, of Geneva, N. Y., suffered with palsy and general debility, and spent a small fortune in advertised remedies, without avail, until he tried Burdock Blood Bitters. It purified and revitalized the blood, caused it to circulate freely, and quickly restored him to health.

THE CANADIAN BUSINESS COLLEGE, Hamilton, Ont., (Mr. R. E. Gallagher) is one of the largest and most flourishing institutions of its class in this country. It has been attended this year by upwards of 250 students, representing all parts of the Provinces and States. Its teachers are thoroughly practical men.

RAILWAY ACCIDENT.—Frank Spink, Wilton Avenue, Toronto, some time ago received a bad injury by an accident on the G. T. R. The severe contusions were quickly healed by the use of Haysard's Yellow Oil.

CHRISTMAS IN THE WOODS.

Children, get your garlands O!
Lustily the north wind's blowing;
Soon, you know, 'twill cease to snow,
Amber in the west is glowing.

Children, come! The air is full
Of those six-leaved, crystal lilies;
(Haste, your evergreens to pull!)
Stemless stars and amaryllis.

Deeper in the woodland hie,
Like a flock of robins calling!
Surely, dears, you need not fly
From a shower of blossoms falling.

Heyday, children, carol O!
Seeking glossy leaf and berry
In a lightsome whirl o' snow,
Makes a Christmas merry, merry! —Wide Awake.

CLOSE QUESTIONS.

Your tempers. How are they? Do they become impatient under trial; fretful, when chided or cross; angry, revengeful, when injured; vain, when flattered; proud, when prospered; complaining, when chastened; unbelieving, when seemingly forsaken; unkind, when neglected? Are you subject to discontent, to ambition, to selfishness? Are you worldly? Covetous of riches, of vain pomp and parade, of indulgence, of honor or ease? Are you unfeeling, contemptuous of others, seeking your own, boasters, proud, lovers of your own selves? Beware! These are the sediments of the old nature! Nay, if they exist in you, in however small a degree, they are demonstrative that the old man of sin is not dead. It will be a sad mistake if you detect these evils within and yet close your eyes to them and continue to make professions of holiness. These are not infirmities; they are indications of want of grace. —Bishop Foster.

AN EYE TO BUSINESS.—Petley & Petley are always on the alert to secure bargains for their patrons. On Tuesday they purchased a large stock of superior ready-made clothing at much below the cost of manufacture, and will offer the same for sale at their stores at from thirty to forty per cent. below regular prices.

THE BEST PROOF.—"I sell more Burdock Blood Bitters than I do of any other preparation in stock," says B. Jackes, druggist, Toronto. If the reader will ask any druggist in the city he will get a similar answer to his query—a proof that it is the most popular medicine for the blood, liver and kidneys known.—The Globe.

CHRISTMAS ENTERTAINMENT MATERIAL.
Prize Christmas Cantata, with music, etc., 25 copies for 50c. Sample, 5c.
Hallowe'en, Ten feet, 75c.
12000 feet, \$1.25. Santa Claus Masks, for Santa Claus face, long white beard, 40c. Entertainment Tickets, blanks in color, 50c. per 100 (sample free).
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THE CENTURY
PROGRAMME FOR 1883-'84.

THE programme for the fourteenth year of this magazine, and the third under the new name, is if anything more interesting and popular than ever. With every season, THE CENTURY shows a decided gain in circulation. The new volume begins with November, and, when possible, subscriptions should begin with that issue. The following are some of the features of the coming year:

A New Novel by George W. Cable, author of "Old Creole Days," etc., entitled "Dr. Sevier," a story of New Orleans life, the time being the eve of the late Civil War. "Life in the Thirteen Colonies," by EDWARD EGLESTON, separate illustrated papers on subjects connected with the early history of this country.

Three Stories by Henry James, of varying lengths, to appear through the year. The New Astronomy, untechnical articles, by Prof. S. P. LANGLEY, describing the most interesting of recent discoveries in the sun and stars.

A Novelette by H. H. Boyesen, author of "Gunnar," etc. A vivid and sparkling story. The New Era in American Architecture, a series of papers descriptive of the best work of American architects in Public Buildings, City and Country Houses, etc. To be profusely illustrated.

A Novelette by Robert Grant, author of "Confessions of a Frivolous Girl," etc., entitled "An Average Man,"—a story of New York. The Bread-winners, one of the most remarkable novels of the day, to be completed in January.

"Christianity and Wealth," with other essays, by the author of "The Christian League of Connecticut," etc., on the application of Christian morals to the present phases of modern life.

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"Garfield in England," extracts from his private journal kept during a trip to Europe in 1867.

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There will be papers on outdoor England by JOHN BURROUGHS and others, a beautifully illustrated series on Dante, a number of papers by the eminent French novelist, ALPHONSE DAUDET, articles on art and archaeology by CHARLES DUDLEY WARREN and others, illustrated papers on sport and adventure, short stories by the leading writers, essays on timely subjects, etc., etc.

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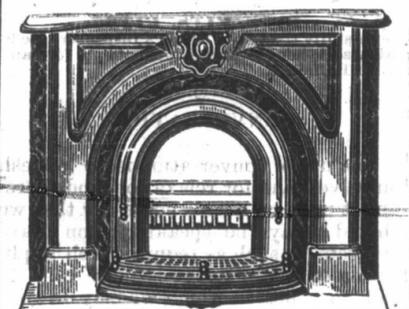
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When the children are admitted into the hall, vestry, or parlor, they see on the platform, or at one end of the room, a long table, covered to the ground with a red or white cloth brilliantly lighted with candles at the corners. After an opening song, or piano music, a gentleman enters, bearing under his arm a thin box about three feet in length by two feet in with, and six inches in height. This he places upon the table; and after standing it carelessly on its edge, lays it down with the front side towards the audience. The cover is tightly fastened with a common brass hook in the front edge, and has hinges at the back. A little girl comes forward from the audience and carefully unclasps the hook, when the lid of the box flies open with great force, and a tall Santa Claus figure, with flowing wig and beard, in a red fur-trimmed robe, springs up and makes a funny little speech, after which he bows low to the little girl, and hands her a present marked with her name. Then he disappears as mysteriously as he appeared, and the little girl fastens him down with a clasp.

This is repeated by one after another until the gifts have been all distributed, when the box is carried away again. If time does not serve for every child or person to open the wonderful box, after awhile a whole class or division may receive their presents from Santa Clause without his departure; but in small family parties it will be far more fun to let each child unclasp the box for himself. Sometimes Santa Claus may seem unwilling to go down into his box, and some gentleman may find it needful to push him down very hard, and at the

end of the performance, he may be so obstinate that the gentleman may find it necessary to push down the right hand only to see the left rise up very stiffly, then as he pushes down that, the right rises in turn, and finally having pushed all but the head down, he finds it so obstinate that he is compelled to take it off and pack it by the side of the figure before he can close the lid so as to carry off the box in the same way that he brought it in.

This very effective scene can be easily prepared, as the table is made of a frame only, on which the cloth is tacked, the front and sides being lined, so that they will not be transparent. This frame consists of four posts thirty inches high, with a strip of light wood three inches wide, and six feet long, nailed at the top and bottom of the posts, and with strips of the same width and four feet in length at the sides. Across the top of these two other strips are nailed, two and one half feet apart, to hold the box. These upper strips are placed between the top strips so that the table-top will be level, and the cloth overlaps the edges of each; and cloth of the same color is drawn tightly over a little frame which fills the space when the box is not on the table.

This box is without a bottom, and is made of pine wood of the dimensions given above: that is, three feet by two, and six inches in height, with hinged cover and clasp. The operator, dressed in costume described, wears a wire mask, which can be bought at any toy shop. The wig of white flax is kept in place by a wire frame which rests on the shoulders, so it will keep its form when the real head is withdrawn, leaving the false one in the hands of the one who tries to push it into the box. A short set of steps enables Santa Claus to rise up quickly, raising the lid with his head. A very small boy should be also hidden under the table to pass up the presents to the operator.

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PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS.

It may seem to some a little early to begin to think of Christmas now, but to others it is already late, for they have been laying things by against that day for the last two months at least.

Often at Christmas time, after presents are received, we indulge in little confidences with our friends about what we should have liked, or having received many things that are just right in themselves, there seems to remain but one thing to complete our happiness and we say so, and it was of this weakness the lady often took advantage to provide for the coming year. We might think she would sometimes miss it in this way, and find herself as Christmas approached, in possession of a quantity of goods altogether out of date, and totally unfit for the purpose she had intended them. This might have been the case with an injudicious purchaser, but this woman knew what was stable, and what was of passing value. For instance, standard works of great authors or copies of famous pictures cannot greatly depreciate in one year. And the friend who wanted Shakspeare, Milton or Dante last year, and did not get it and had been unable to get it since, would not appreciate it less, but rather more for having waited for it. And there are many other things of this character, which if this woman chanced to find while shopping she purchased and put aside for the time to come. But it is now so near the holiday that there is no risk to run even by less thoughtful purchaser. Almost every woman knows by experience how much more expensive Christmas shopping becomes when put off till the last moment, partly because in her fear of failure to find what she wants, and lack of sufficient time to hunt for it, she will often take less desirable things that cost more; and again, the shopkeeper knowing her necessity, frequently takes advantage of it, to get fancy prices for his goods. Then there are innumerable articles of woman's own work which (in spite of all the fun that has been poked at minister's slippers) are more appreciated by men than anything she might buy. Of course judgment should be used in deciding what the articles shall be, for while a woman will appreciate a trifle solely for the sentiment associated with it, few men save very young lovers will often take the time to examine "stored treasures." Yet they all appreciate a gift. We call to mind a case of a man who has used the same plain little affair for holding shaving papers for the last twelve years. His wife gave it to him, and has since made it her business to see that it was kept full of paper. And the comfort he has derived from this little convenience, and the loving, grateful thoughts of his better half it has suggested as he found it refilled again and again, are vastly more than many presents costing extravagant sums, but without the useful quality this possessed could possibly have produced for this

busy man. And where children are concerned, home-made articles often come in play, pleasing the little people as well as more expensive ones, thus leaving you with the means to make many more hearts happy than you possibly could do with the same money, unaided by skilful hands. But time is required for these things—much to plan, and more to execute, and we who have not begun to think of these things have already lost precious time.—York Herald.

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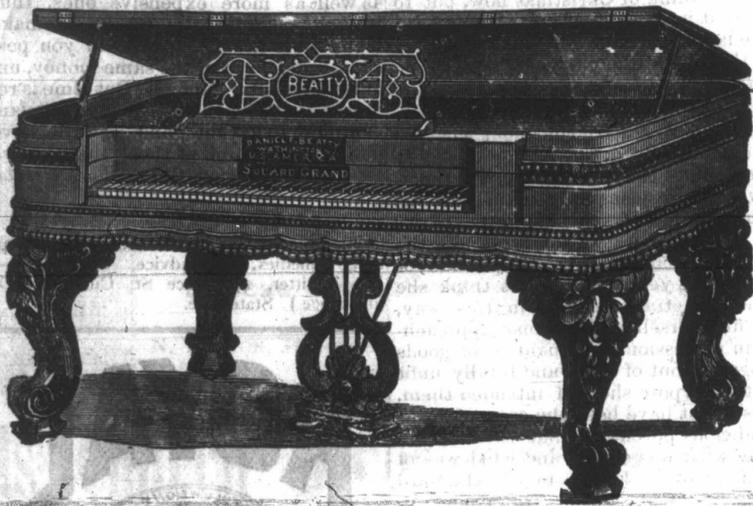
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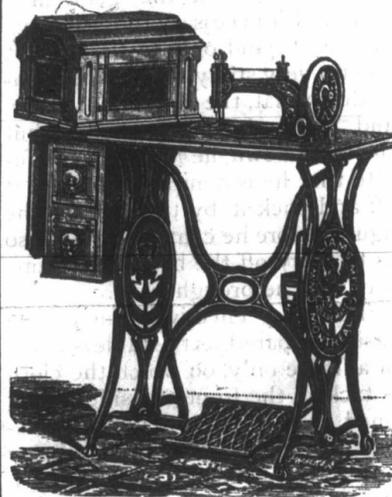
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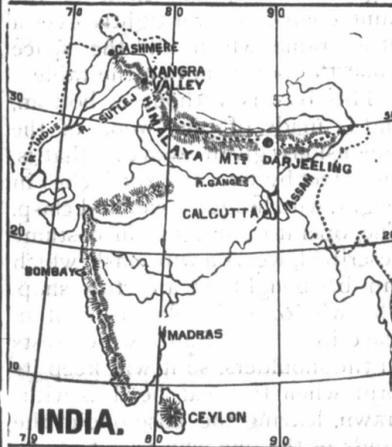
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