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# BEAUSANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. I.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 24, 1881.

N. 10.

## LILL'S TRAVELS IN SANTA CLAUS LAND.

BY ELLIS TOWNE.



EFFIE had been playing with her dolls one cold December morning, and Lill had been reading, until both were tired. But it stormed too hard to go out, and, as Mrs. Pereline had said they need not do anything for two hours, their little jaws might have been dislocated by yawning

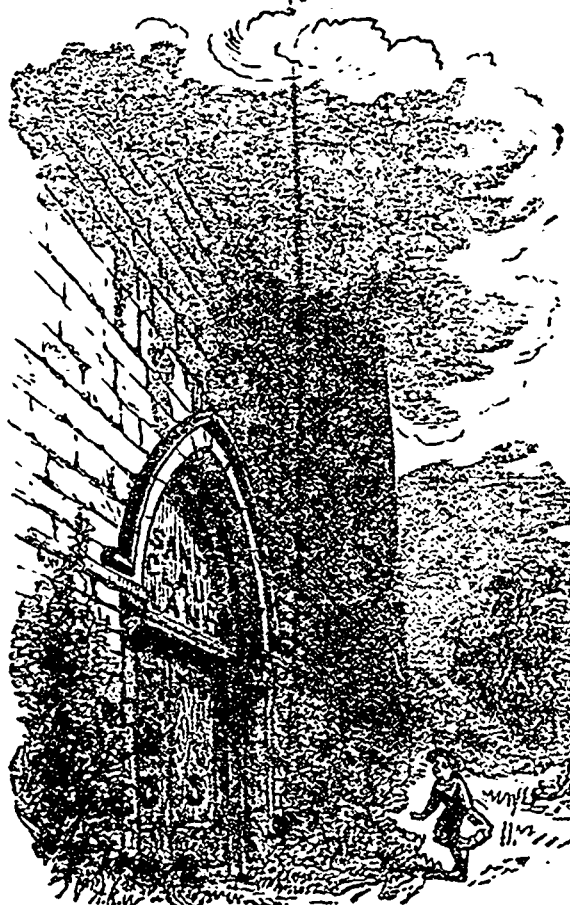
before they would as much as pick up a pin. Presently Lill said, "Effie, shall I tell you a story?"

"O yes, do!" said Effie, and she climbed up by Lill in the large rocking chair in front of the grate. She kept very still, for she knew Lill's stories were not to be interrupted by a sound, or even a motion. The first thing Lill did was to fix her eyes on the fire, and rock backward and forward quite hard for a little while, and then she said, "Now, I am going to tell you about my *thought travels*, and they are apt to be a little queerer, but oh, ever so much nicer than the other kind!"

As Lill's stories usually had a formal introduction, she began: "Once upon a time, when I was taking a walk through the great field beyond the orchard, I went 'way on, 'round where the path turns behind the hill. And after I had walked a little way, I came to a high wall—built right up into the sky. At first I thought I had discovered the 'ends of the earth,' or perhaps I had somehow come to the great wall of China. But after walking a long way I came to a large gate, and over it was painted in beautiful gold letters, 'SANTA CLAUS LAND,' and the letters were large enough for a baby to read!"

How large that might be Lill did not stop to explain.

"But the gate was shut tight," she continued, "and though I knocked and knocked and knocked, as hard as I could, nobody came to open it. I was dreadfully disappointed, because I felt as if Santa Claus must live here all of the year except when he went out to pay Christmas visits, and it would be so lovely to see him in his own home, you know. But what was I to do? The gate was entirely too



high to climb over, and there wasn't even a crack to peek through."

Here Lill paused, and Effie drew a long breath, and looked greatly disappointed. Then Lill went on:

"But you see, as I was, poking about, I pressed a bell spring, and in a moment—jingle, jingle, jingle, the bells went ringing far and near, with such a merry sound as was never heard before. While they were still ringing the gate slowly opened, and I walked in. I didn't even stop to inquire if Santa Claus was at home, for I forgot all about myself and my manners, it

was so lovely. First there was a small paved square like a court; it was surrounded by rows and rows of dark green trees, with several avenues opening between them.

"In the centre of the court was a beautiful marble fountain, with sugar plums and bon-bons tumbling out of it. Funny-looking little men were filling cornucopias at the fountain, and pretty little barefoot children, with chubby hands and dimpled shoulders, took them as soon as they were filled, and ran off with them. They were all too much occupied to speak to me, but as I came up to the fountain one of the funny little fellows gave me a cornucopia, and I marched on with the babies. (See illustration on fourth page.)

"We went down one of the avenues, which would have been very dark only it was splendidly lighted up with Christmas candles. I saw the babies were slyly eating a candy or two, so I tasted mine, and they were delicious—the real Christmas kind. After we had gone a little way, the trees were smaller and not so close together, and here there were other funny little fellows who were climbing up on ladders and tying toys and bon-bons to the trees. The children stopped and delivered their packages, but I walked on, for there was something in the distance that I was curious to see. I could see that it was a large garden, that looked as if it might be well cared for, and had many things growing in it. But even in the distance it didn't look natural, and when I reached it I found it was a very uncommon kind of a garden indeed. I could scarcely believe my eyes, but there were dolls and donkeys and drays and cars and croquet coming up in long, straight rows, and ever so many other things beside. In one place the wooden balls had only just started; their funny little heads were just above ground, and I thought they looked very much surprised at their surroundings. Farther on were china dolls, that looked quite grown up, and I suppose were ready to pull, and a gardener was hoeing a row of soldiers that didn't look in a very healthy condition, or as if they had done very well.

"The gardener looked familiar, I thought, and as I approached him he stopped work and, leaning on his hoe, he said, 'How do you do, Lillian! I am very glad to see you.'

"The moment he raised his face I knew it was Santa Claus, for he looked exactly like the portrait we have of him. You can easily believe I was glad then! I ran and put both of my hands in his, fairly shouting that I was so glad to find him. He laughed and said:

"'Why, I am generally to be found here or hereabouts, for I work in the grounds every day.'

"And I laughed, too, because his laugh sounded so funny; like the brook going over stones, and the wind up in the trees. Two or three times, when I thought he had done he would burst out laughing again."

Effie, too, laughed till the tears came to her eyes; and she could quite believe Lill when she said, "It grew to be so funny that I couldn't stand, but fell over into one of the little chairs."

"When Santa Claus saw that he said: "There, that will do. I take a hearty laugh every day for the sake of digestion."

(Continued on page 77.)

## CHRISTMAS.

BY BESSIE HILL.

Every home in Christendom  
A Babe is born this day,  
For some to worship, some to love,  
And some to turn away.

The light His blessed forehead sheds  
Is holy, and as bright  
As when it lit the manger-stall  
At Bethlehem in the night.

"Give me thy love" the Child doth plead,  
Up-smiling in our face,  
And as we answer, so He stills  
Our longing, with His grace.

Eternal Child, and Lord of All:  
Turn not Thy face away,  
But hide with us in household joy  
This holy Christmas day.

Oh! we did lose the star, dear Lord,  
The precious offering; waste;  
For we were prone to loiter, Lord,  
Or miss Thee in our haste.

But Thou hast sought for us: We kneel  
In reverent love, to pray  
Beside the Babe of Bethlehem,  
Who comes on Christmas day.

## WHAT A DOLLAR DID.

A TORONTO CHRISTMAS STORY.

BY THE EDITOR.



ELL. Mary; did Mrs. Thompson pay for the sewing?" asked Mrs. Morrison, a delicate-looking woman, wasted with sickness and care, yet scrupulously neat,

as was everything in her humble apartment.

"Yes, mamma," answered an intelligent, bright-eyed child, of a strangely mature expression of countenance. "At first she said to call again, but I told her you were sick and wanted some medicine, so she gave it to me; but see what a worn, crumpled, and dirty bill it is."

"Thank God, I can now get some syrup for my cough. I slept little last night, and I did so want to be up on Christmas Day. It grieves me, darling, that I cannot get you and little Freddy the presents you used to have before papa died. Go dear, to Mr. Wood's store, and get the medicine, it will soothe my cough, and I will do my best to make your Christmas, if not a merry one, as happy as I can."

"Oh, never mind, mamma, dear; it will be just splendid, and I will make a rag doll for Freddy, and he will think it ever so fine;" and the affectionate child hurried off to the store.

Wistfully the little girl eyed the brilliant dolls and toys and trinkets in the beautiful stores on Yonge street, that more happy parents than her's were purchasing to gladden bright eyes on the morrow, as with shouts of glee the well-filled stockings would be emptied almost before it was light enough to see them. But she bravely turned away, crushing down the longing in her heart, and purchased the soothing medicine, and a few, alas! too few, of the bare necessities of life—with precocious worldly wisdom making her worn and tattered dollar bill pay for as many articles as possible. Then, with a hoarded penny, buying a candy

toy for brother Fred, she hastened home through the wintry streets with more of real satisfaction in her little heart than many a pampered child of luxury who, surfeited with gifts, knows not the superior joy of giving.

Unnoticed, in the throng of customers that almost filled the store, stood the little son of a shoemaker, who lived in St. John's Ward, his feet exhibiting the proverbially wretched covering of the disciples of St. Crispin. As the storekeeper received the dollar from the hands of Mary Morrison, the widow's child, little Tom Needham repeated his request, "Please, sir, father wants the money for mending the boots."

"I'm too busy now, my boy," said the bustling storekeeper. But, as the little fellow turned disappointedly away, for he knew that his own chances of a Christmas dinner depended on being paid for the work, the busy salesman exclaimed, "Stay, here you are. This is just it;" and he handed him the tattered bill.

With a glad "Hurrah!" Tom burst into his father's squalid little shop, which smelt strongly of leather and wax, and was littered up with shreds and patches, and a disreputable-looking collection of old shoes. For Mr. Needham was rather a mender than a maker of these useful articles, now that almost everybody bought them at the stores ready-made from the great factories.

"Well, Tom, have you got it?" asked the rather dirty-looking craftsman, as he looked up wearily from his bench, pushing back his spectacles and revealing a brow furrowed by care, and a stubbly beard of a week's growth. The good man found the maintenance of a large family, with his decreasing business, year by year a more difficult task.

"Yes, father, here it is," shouted the light-hearted boy, not yet feeling the burden of poverty.

"Well, it is a seedy specimen," said the shoemaker, taking the soiled bill by the corner as if afraid of soiling it still more with his grimy fingers. "But it will get mother and the girls a good Christmas dinner, anyway, won't it, Tom?" and the toil-worn father went forth with loving thoughts to provide for the wants of his family. Though not much given to moralizing, he felt his lowly calling dignified and ennobled by his care for those who were, by God's providence, committed to his keeping.

The row of butcher's stalls on Yonge street was a sight to behold, with their noble roasts of beef and fat sheep and plump turkeys. But all these were too aristocratic for the shoemaker's purse; so he selected a more plebeian goose, and wended his way home with the apology for his unwonted extravagance:

"Christmas comes but once a year, and when it comes, it brings good cheer."

"Here, Tompkins," said the jolly butcher, as fat as one of his own prize sheep, to a meagre-looking man, who was selecting a cheap joint for his Christmas dinner, "here's a beef shank that will make a good pot of soup for your young kids at home; and here's that dollar I owe you for cutting wood. I don't like to go into Christmas owing anything, you know," and he handed him the bill he had just received from the shoemaker.

"Neither do I, Mr. Burroughs," said the meagre little man, with joyous alacrity. This will help me to pay my rent to Squire Bilton to-night. I shall eat my Christmas dinner, plain

as it may be, with better relish when I don't owe for the roof over my head;" and with a load of care lifted off his mind, he started for the Squire's house on Jarvis street to pay his rent.

At the end of an avenue of spiry spruces, that shivered in the wintry wind, stood the hospitable house. The warm light streamed from its curtained windows upon the frozen fountain and the arbour, dismantled of its summer covering of vines; and rich strains of music floated forth on the icy air as the Squire's young folks sang with merry glee a Christmas carol. A twinge of envy and discontent wrung the heart of the poor man as he thought of his own humble home and the scanty enjoyments of his children.

"Ah, Tompkins, is that you?" was the hearty greeting of the Squire. "Come for your Christmas-box, have you?"

"I came to pay my rent, sir," he replied, with a feeling of manly independence that made him feel at least an inch taller, as he produced the shabby bill, with others almost as bad, from his well-worn but scantily-filled purse.

"That's right, Tompkins; always pay as you go and keep out of debt. That's how I got along. But go into the kitchen. My wife has been putting up a basket of Christmas fixings for your youngsters. I always enjoy my own Christmas dinner better for knowing that my tenants are enjoying theirs. Somehow the thought of God's good gift to us kind of mellow and warms one's heart to every one." And the Squire's round, kindly face was wreathed with smiles that might have become Father Christmas himself.

As Tompkins left the house with a well-filled basket on his arm, his heart felt a good deal lighter, notwithstanding his heavy load. Not a particle of envy lingered in his bosom, but instead of murmuring at the allotments of Providence, he said to himself, "The Squire is a real good landlord, and deserves all the prosperity he enjoys. I wish there were more like him;" to which wish we heartily say "Amen!"

Shortly after, the kindly Squire, well muffled, walked down Yonge street, on charitable thoughts intent. While ordering a handsome hamper of toys and trinkets for his own family and the minister's children (he had previously ordered a parcel of books at the Wesleyan Book Room for their father), he did not forget the wants of his tenants and poorer neighbours, including the family of the sick widow, Mrs. Morrison, whom he had known in better days. Having given directions to deliver the parcels that night, as he paid for the toys and picture books for the widow's children, the storekeeper exclaimed—"Why, here is the identical dollar little Mary Morrison brought me this very night. I wonder where it has been since. It must have brought me luck, for I never did a better night's business. Here, Mrs. Flanighan, I'll make you a Christmas present of it," handing it to the Irish washerwoman, who had been waiting some time for her "Christmas-box."

"The blessings of the Holy Virgin and all the saints attend you; and long life, and a merry Christmas, and many of them to your honour," exclaimed the grateful creature, with many curtsies.

What became of the tattered bill further we know not. We think it was left at the baker's, and is, perhaps, going its rounds on its mission of

mercy yet, bringing joy and gladness to many a home.

The Christmas morning rose bright and clear. Little Freddy Morrison, for once, was up early, and soon roused the household by his tumultuous excitement. "Merry Christmas, mamma! Santa Claus did come after all, although you were afraid he wouldn't," and he emptied his well-filled stockings on his mother's bed. "And here is a book for Mary, too. I prayed God last night to send Santa Claus just as He used to when papa was alive; and so He has, you see."

"God has not forgotten us," said the widow, with her eyes glistening through her tears, as she clasped her children in her arms and covered them with kisses. "I will try not to forget His promise, that He will be a husband to the widow and a father to the fatherless."

It would have done one's heart good to see how the little Needham's enjoyed their savoury Christmas goose; and the young Tompkins' their rich beef broth and the "Christmas fixings" from the Squire's; and Mrs. Flanighan and her children their Christmas dinner, humble though it was. As the Squire sat down to his well-filled board, his rubicund face fairly shone with good nature, and he thanked God for Christmas, with its tender and sacred memories, and the kindly feelings it kindles in every heart.

And the agent by which all this happiness was communicated,—that soiled, and worn, and crumpled dollar bill,—was it not an angel in disguise? a messenger of mercy scattering blessings on every hand, and bringing gladness to many a heart?

## CHRISTMAS BELLS.

THIS is the day that Christ was born!  
Hark to the music sweet and wild,  
That wakens glad hearts and forlorn  
To greet the blessed Child!

O silver bells that ring so clear  
All the wintry morning gray,  
Rouse up the sleeping world to hear  
That Christ was born to-day.

Ring till the children start from sleep,  
Sweet with the dream of joy to be,  
And clap their little hands and leap,  
And shout aloud in glee.

Ring till the sorrowful ones of earth,  
Whose lives are spent in toil and tears,  
That leave, alas! no place for mirth  
In all the dreary years,

Shall hear the tender words He said—  
"Come unto Me all ye that mourn;"  
And gather strength anew to tread  
The path His feet have worn.

Ring loud, ring sweet, O Christmas bells,  
And tune each waking soul to prayer,  
The while your joyful psalm swells  
Upon the wintry air,

Through misty dawn and sunshine clear,  
Ring till the callous hearts of men,  
Stirred with the thought of Christ so near,  
Grow warm and soft again.

Ring till the tender impulse turns  
To pitying thought, to generous deed;  
Ring till the eager spirit burns  
To succour all that need!

And while ye ring with heart and voice,  
Glory to God let all men say,  
And every living soul rejoice  
That Christ was born to-day!

Men are sometimes accused of pride  
merely because their accusers would  
be proud themselves were they in their  
places.

CHRISTMAS.

WRAPPED in a mantle of fleecy snow,  
With jewels of icicles hanging low,  
And flashing on beard and hair,  
Old Christmas comes.

The dear old fellow, in regal state,  
As king of the people (who all await  
His coming with loyal joy),  
Is near us now.

His heralds approach—frost, wind, and snow,  
And quickly over the country they go,  
Proclaiming the old king near;  
And all are glad.

The rapid rivers, and bays, and lakes,  
Are bridges now, for His Majesty makes  
Even water own his sway,  
Reluctantly.

But does he come empty-handed? No!  
All over the land, wherever you go,  
His bounty is felt by all,  
Both rich and poor.

The rich, in their spacious and lofty halls;  
The poor, in their homes, where joy seldom calls.  
Are blessed with one happiness  
At Christmas-tide.

For poor the home, far poorer the heart,  
To which old King Christmas does not impart  
Some pleasures unknown before,  
Some Christmas joys.

Friends gladly gather from far and near,  
In the dear old homesteads, where hearty cheer  
And loving greetings from all,  
Tell Christmas is here.

The hand is pressed with a warmer clasp,  
And the dark frown falls, like an ugly mask,  
From the place it has clouded  
Alas, too long!

Foes become friends at this Christmas-tide;  
For all over the land, both far and wide,  
Sounds the grandest old chorus  
Of "Peace on Earth,


Good will toward men," 'mid the world's din,  
Rings the song down the ages, bringing in  
The Christ through whom we have them,  
And Christmas-time.

M. R. B.

MONTREAL, NOV. 1881.

HELEN'S CHRISTMAS QUESTION.

BY B. B.



It is Christmas Eve, and the quiet country, with the silvery moon and myriad stars above, is so cold, so bright, so still, that one can almost imagine it bears, like the shepherds of old on the birthnight of our Lord, the angel hosts of heaven proclaiming "Good tidings of great joy, for unto you is born a Saviour, Christ the Lord. Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men." How different the feelings and the scene in the noisy, bustling city, with its streets ablaze with light, and filled with eager hurrying throngs, some merely gazing at the wonders so temptingly displayed in the gorgeous show windows; others attempting, half-distracted by the noise, to choose the last gifts for the little stockings, already

hanging at the home fireside for Santa Claus! What a mystery seems to pervade the very air on Christmas Eve, and how much it increases the enjoyment of the "merrie time!" Half the pleasure of the little folks consists in wondering what Santa Claus will bring. And "grown-up children," too, spend more time in wondering than they are willing to admit, and think they have learned to hide it under an assumed air of indifference which they imagine says as plainly as words, "we don't expect anything," though what long faces they would wear if the morrow brought for them no tokens of love and remembrance! In a beautiful room, made bright and charming with all that wealth directed by cultured and refined taste can procure, sits, more lovely than them all, a happy mother, surrounded by her family, except the father and eldest son, who have not yet come in.

By a table sit Kate and Maud, two bright girls,

"Standing with reluctant feet  
Where the brook and river meet,  
Womanhood and childhood meet."

They are busily engaged in taking the last stitches, one in a dressing-gown for father, the other in a pair of richly embroidered slippers for brother Will. The last is a rising young lawyer and the pride of the family. On the floor behind the girls sit two ruddy boys of twelve and fourteen years, giving the finishing touches to a pair of brackets made by their own skillful fingers, and designed as a grand surprise to the fondly-loved mother. The boys, like the girls, are taught that a gift is prized, not for its intrinsic value, but as evidence of their skill and industry as well as affection. Ever and anon they peep furtively from their improvised hiding-place to see if "mother is watching." No; mother has learned long since that at times she must be both blind and deaf, and never betray that she sees the consternation caused by her unexpected entrance, or notices the work shoved hurriedly away, and a book hastily substituted, and studiously perused upside down. Nor was she thrown off her guard, even on that dreadful day when little May upset Kate's basket, and displayed an exquisite lilac shawl nearly completed, but suddenly saw a marvellous dog across the street, and drew both boys to her side by her amusing comments, though they could see nothing unusual in the canine specimen. But to-night she is really and truly deaf and blind to their proceedings, so deeply is she absorbed in telling the "old, old story" of Jesus' birth, and finding by the shepherds and wise men, to Baby May, who sits on her lap, listening with deepest attention to the glowing words in which she describes the shepherds, the dear little white lambs, the wondrously brilliant star, the angel voices, and, above all, the little chubby, dimpled, darling baby on the golden straw in the manger, among the huge horned oxen. Helen, a thoughtful girl of nine, listens with wide-open eyes, as deeply interested as Baby May, for it is a story that never loses its charm. But there is the opening door, and in come father and Will just one moment too soon for the busy workers by the lamp, and under the table go dressing-gown and slippers, with just one more stitch to be put in each. Kate tosses her sunny curls, and says, "Why didn't they stay away five minutes longer?" But thoughtful Maud says, "We ought to have finished

them this morning." For a while all is mirth, merriment, and noise, but Baby May soon grows weary, and, climbing again into mother's lap, begs to be told "just one time more" the story of the "wee, wee baby, and the great big oxen." All listen while the mother tells again the story to the lovely child, until at last the blue eyes close, and Baby May sleeps the happy dreamless slumber of innocent childhood. A silence falls around, which is broken by the thoughtful Helen, who says, "Mamma, I don't understand how Christmas can be Christ's birthday."

"Why not, my child?"  
"Because, when my birthday comes, I have all the presents, and no one else has any, and on your birthday you have the gifts, and it is the same on father's and the girls' and boys', but now every body else has presents except Jesus, and still you say it is his birthday. Have you got any presents ready for Him?"

The boys laugh and say, "That is just like Helen, always asking odd questions. I'd like to know how anybody can give Jesus a present!"

But with tears in her eyes, the gentle mother says: "My dear little Helen, you are right. I fear we have all lavished more time and thought on gifts for each other than on those for our dear Lord Jesus, who gave even his own life for us. Each one of us should give his heart anew to Jesus on his birthday morn, resolving to seek and love him more than ever, and serve him henceforth with all our souls."

Laying his hand tenderly on Helen's fair head, her father said, "I thank you, my child, for reminding us of our duty. Truly, 'out of the mouths of babes come words of wisdom.' Let us strive to make our hearts an acceptable offering by overcoming our besetting sins, and using the 'talents' committed to our keeping in his holy service. There is also another way of giving a birthday gift to our dear Jesus. Do you not remember his words, 'The poor you have always with you.' 'He that giveth to one, the least of these, giveth to me also.'"

On the hearts of all present little Helen's childlike questions sank deeply, but on none more than on the beloved eldest son, the pride and hope of all the family. Only that day had a poor desolate widow, once the spoiled child of fortune, now on the verge of starvation, came to him with a most piteous tale of worry, and besought him, for the sake of right, to aid her in rescuing the little all of her fatherless children from wicked men. But he had turned a deaf ear to her pleading, reasoning that it would be very troublesome, would offend some high in power, and could not possibly benefit him. To another temptation was he also gradually yielding, unsuspected by his proud, loving parents, but fast gaining strength on his noble, genial nature.

Hitherto had he trusted in his own strength, reasoning that he must not bring distress and disgrace on his fond family, that he must do nothing to sully his noble name and lose his high place in the world's esteem: but now he determined to give himself wholly to Jesus as a birthday gift, and humbly as a little child implore him to give him aid to resist evil in spite of all temptation, and courage to do right in his sight, though he should thereby incur the frown of the whole world.

The practical effect of Helen's question with him was shown in the note sent the sorrowing widow that he would do all in his power to obtain justice for her, and in the decided no uttered to all tempting friends.

Timely and appropriate gifts from the father and mother made many a desolate and poverty-stricken home bright and happy, and the girls were like ministering angels of mercy to more than one scene of sorrow and suffering. The little boys began by dividing their Christmas marbles and toys with the poor boys of the streets; and, never forgetting to prepare their hearts anew each year for a Christmas offering to the Saviour they so dearly loved, they grew to be great and good men, making the world better and holier by their noble lives.

Thus was a simple question from childish lips the source of endless good, and seemed indeed the word in season, like apples of gold in pictures of silver. To you I repeat little Helen's question, "Have you a birthday gift for Jesus!"

THE FOUR CALLS.

THE Spirit came in childhood,  
And pleaded, "Let me in;"  
But, ah! the door was bolted  
And barred by childish sin.  
The child said, "I'm too little;  
There's time enough; to-day  
I can not open." Sadly  
The Spirit went his way.

Again he came and pleaded  
In youth's bright happy hour.  
He called, but heard no answer;  
For, fettered in sin's power,  
The youth lay dreaming idly,  
And crying "Not to-day,  
For I must have some pleasure  
Again he turned away.

Again he came in mercy,  
In manhood's vigorous prime,  
But still could find no welcome;  
The merchant had "no time"  
To spare for true repentance,  
No time to praise and pray;  
And thus repulsed and saddened,  
The Spirit turned away.

Once more he called and waited.  
The man was old and sad;  
He scarcely heard the whisper—  
His heart was scared and bad.  
"Go! leave me. When I need thee  
I'll call for thee," he cried;  
Then, sinking on his pillow,  
Without a God he died!

GIBSON, the sculptor, described Queen Victoria as extremely affable, and even deigning to laugh heartily at some of his stories. One day he said to her, "Madam, I was a thief," "A thief," Mr. Gibson!" "Yes, madam; for when a child I stole an apple from the stall of an old woman with a wooden leg. My mother found me out, took me back to the old woman, and begged her to beat me with her crutch, which she did lustily. I never stole any more." "Ah!" replied her Majesty, "a great deal of sorrow was brought into the world by the apple."

SOME CHRISTMAS GEMS.

"As fits the holy Christmas birth,  
Be this, good friends, our carol still—  
Be peace on earth, be peace on earth,  
To men of gentle will."—Thackeray.

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



CHRISTMAS CAROL.

"GLORY to God!" the lofty strain  
The realm of ether fills;  
How sweeps the song of solemn joy  
O'er Judah's sacred hills!  
"Glory to God!" the sounding skies  
Loud with their anthems ring  
"Peace on the earth, good will to men,  
From Heaven's eternal King."

This day shall Christian tongues be mute,  
And Christian hearts be cold?  
O catch the anthem that from heaven  
O'er Judah's mountain rolled!  
When nightly burst from seraph harps  
The high and solemn lay  
"Glory to God! on earth be peace;  
Salvation comes to-day!"

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLKS:  
Rev. W. H. WITHROW, M.A., Editor.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 24, 1881.

CHRISTMAS GREETING.

My dear young friends, I wish you all a happy Christmas and a merry New Year. There is something very gladdening and cheerful about the annual return of this holiday season. It reminds us of God's great Christmas gift to the world. For God so loved the world that he gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Now, the only way to have a happy Christmas, or a happy New Year, is to accept God's great gift. There are some people who think that religion makes people dull and melancholy. There never was a greater mistake in the world. It is only those who know their sins are forgiven, and who enjoy the favour of God, who have a right to be happy. So, first of all, give God your young hearts. It is the best and richest offering you can give Him; better far than the offering of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, which the wise men brought to the blessed Babe of Bethlehem nearly nineteen hundred years ago.

Then, do not let Christmas pass without trying to make some one else happy. First of all, your parents and brothers and sisters and friends. Your gifts to them may not in themselves be worth much; but the wealth of love which they may reveal will make them more precious than gold. Then, there are many poor, who have few to give them presents; perhaps orphan children, whose parents God has taken—remember them in the day of your joy, and by sharing your toys or picture-papers try to make them, too, feel something of the Christmas joy. To those who are forgotten and neglected, no season seems so sad as that when all others are rejoicing. If you want to know the greatest gladness Christmas can give, try, both at home and abroad, to make others happy, too.



(See first page.)

AUF WIEDERSEHEN.

THE Germans have a custom when they part, of saying *Auf Wiedersehen*, "Until we meet again." So say I now to all the boys and girls who read the PLEASANT HOURS. I hope that its visits during the year have, indeed, given many pleasant hours to the 50,000 young folk whom I have had the privilege of addressing from time to time. And I hope the pleasure has been mixed with profit, and that you are wiser, better, stronger in purposes of good and wise resolves than ever you were before. With most of our readers this is a sort of turning-point. Most of the subscriptions to this paper end with this number. It is possible that some, I hope a very few, of the subscribers may not renew for the coming year. But most of them, I trust, will continue to belong to the PLEASANT HOUR family. And, therefore, when I say "good-bye," in this last number of 1881, I say, also, *Auf Wiedersehen*—May we meet again during all the months of 1882. The paper will be better than ever. The Editor will tell some of the most stirring stories of the grand history of our own land, which he hopes will make you all proud that you are Canadians. Able pens than his will tell the story of Early Methodists, whose noble lives it will be well for us all to copy. The Rev. E. R. YOUNG, Rev. GEO. COCHRAN, and other missionaries of our Church, will tell thrilling stories of the strange scenes of heathen lands, and which I hope will quicken your sympathies with the grand missionary work of our Church. We will have Temperance; Stories; Facts and Figures; Choice Poetry; Ingenious Puzzles; Lesson Notes and Explanations; Handsome Engravings, and everything that is good. And now, once more—*Auf Wiedersehen!*

The December number closes the 14th volume of the *Methodist Magazine*. The illustrations on Art are very superior. The striking series of "Men Worth Knowing," and the "Story of the Catacombs," are concluded. The touching story of the Christian Martyr, and of old Roman life, will be published in book form, but they will cost almost as much as the entire Magazine. The account of the extraordinary career of Goodyear the Inventor, rivals anything in romance.

The announcement for 1882 is very attractive, embracing illustrated papers on Loiterings in Europe, Picturesque Canada, Italian Pictures, Bible Lands. Also two serials, "Life in a Parsonage," a Canadian story, and "Missionary Heroes," by the Editor. This is the best programme yet presented.

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The illustrated Christmas story for the little folk, in the present number, is reprinted from *Wile Awake*—the juvenile monthly, which is clubbed to the *Methodist Magazine* for \$1.50, instead of \$2.50, the regular price.

WHAT OUR FRIENDS SAY OF OUR S. S. PAPERS.

The Rev. Dr. SANDERSON, of London, to whom is due the honour of issuing the first Sunday-school papers in Canada—a quarter of a century ago—being himself both their editor and publisher, writes:

"From that time to this I have been deeply interested in our S. S. issues, and though progress has been evinced, yet never till now have our S. S. papers, in every respect, given unqualified satisfaction. Now they do. There is nothing left to be desired, save their introduction into all our Schools. They have no superior—not one. Very few S. S. papers, either in England or America, are at all equal to them. In illustration, matter, and price, they are in the front rank; and they should be in every Methodist S. S. in the Dominion. The papers are an honour to us, and will prove a great blessing to the Church."

The Rev. Dr. POTTS, of Toronto, writes:

"I have examined the Sunday-school papers submitted to me, and beg to say that I think they are well adapted to our Methodist schools. They evince good taste in the pictorial department; they are patriotic; they are instructive in matter; they are interesting in literary style, and they are true to the teachings of our Church. Their intrinsic worth and loyalty to the Church, should place them in every Methodist school in the Dominion."

Rev. Professor SHAW, of the Wesleyan Theological College, Montreal, writes:

"The PLEASANT HOURS and the SUNBEAM, appear not only to be unmarred by any objectionable matter, but also to have much positive merit in the combination of spirituality and patriotism with raciness of style and an instructive method of description. I regard them as most excellently adapted to the Sabbath-schools of Canadian Methodism.

I have heard them commended by several S. S. superintendents, and disparaged by none. Even if they were independent publications, and not published with the authorization given them by our Church, still it would be very advantageous to any school to have them introduced."

The Rev. W. GALBRAITH, of Brockville, writes:

"During the past few years I have seen dozens of Sabbath-school papers, but I have met with none which I regard equal for our schools to the PLEASANT HOURS, and the SUNBEAM. They abound with charming, interesting, and profitable reading matter for the young. They are free from the extravagant and trashy tales so common in Sunday-school papers. They benefit head and heart, and breathe a spirit of true loyalty to church and state. All our schools should have them."

The Rev. LE ROY HOOKER, of Ottawa, writes:

"With no degree of reserve, I commend to all our people the S. S. periodicals published by our Church. If we wish our children, when they shall have become men and women, to be devoted to Canada and to the Methodist Church, nothing can be plainer than that Canadian and Methodist literature should enter largely into the composition of their mental and spiritual food."

The Rev. H. F. BLAND, of Pembroke, writes:

"I have carefully examined the copies of the PLEASANT HOURS and the SUNBEAM sent me, and I think them well fitted to interest and instruct the young, and specially deserving of Methodist patronage."

The Rev. J. G. LAIRD, President of the Toronto Conference, writes:

"My children are delighted with them. They will also cultivate a spirit of attachment to our Church, and awaken an interest in all our Christian and evangelistic enterprises. They ought to be in all our Sabbath Schools."

We hope these testimonials—and they could be supplemented by many others—will demonstrate, if there is need in any case for that, that the authorized S. S. periodicals of our own Church are better adapted for our own Schools than any foreign ones can possibly be.

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"Then he added, in a whisper, 'That's the reason I live so long and don't grow old. I've been the same age ever since the chroniclers began to take notes, and those who are best able to judge think I'll continue to be this way for about one thousand, eight hundred and eighty-one years long or."

"I was greatly delighted to hear this, and I told him so. He nodded and winked, and



C 39

Just here Effie couldn't help saying "oh!" for she had a weakness for sashes. Lill looked stern and put a warning hand over her mouth and went on.

"There was everything that the most fashionable doll could want, growing in the greatest profusion. Some of the clothes had fallen, and there were funny-looking girls picking them up, and packing them in trunks and boxes. 'These are all ripe,' said Santa Claus, stopping to shake a tree, and the clothes came tumbling down so fast that the workers were busier than ever.

ly kind of place. A big chair was drawn up in front of the window, and a big book was open on a table in front of the chair. A great pack half made up was on the floor, and Santa Claus stopped to add a few things from his pocket. Then he went to the kitchen, and brought me a lunch of milk and strawberries and cookies, for he said I must be tired after my long walk.

"After I had rested a little while, he said if I liked I might go with him to the observatory. But just as we were starting a funny little fellow stopped at the door with a wheelbarrow full of boxes of dishes. After Santa Claus had taken the boxes out and put them in the pack he said slowly,—

"Let me see!" He laid his finger beside his nose as he said it, and looked at me attentively, as if I were a sum in addition, and he was adding me up.

leading to the door."

"Oh, it must have smelled like party," said Effie! and then subsided as she remembered that she was interrupting.

"Inside, the house was just cozy and comfortable, a real grandfatherly kind of place. A big chair was drawn up in front of the window, and a big book was open on a table in front of the chair. A great pack half made up was on the floor, and Santa Claus stopped to add a few things from his pocket. Then he went to the kitchen, and brought me a lunch of milk and strawberries and cookies, for he said I must be tired after my long walk.

"After I had rested a little while, he said if I liked I might go with him to the observatory. But just as we were starting a funny little fellow stopped at the door with a wheelbarrow full of boxes of dishes. After Santa Claus had taken the boxes out and put them in the pack he said slowly,—

"Let me see!" He laid his finger beside his nose as he said it, and looked at me attentively, as if I were a sum in addition, and he was adding me up. I guess I must have come out right, for he looked satisfied, and said I'd better go to the mine first, and then join him in the observatory. Now, I am afraid he was not exactly polite not to go with me

standing up at a window near the top, and I ran to the entrance and commenced climbing the stairs. It was a long journey, and I was quite out of breath when I came to the end of it. But here there was such a cosy, luxurious little room, full of stuffed chairs and lounges, bird cages and flowers in the windows, and pictures on the wall that it was delightful to rest. There was a lady sitting by a golden desk, writing in a large book, and Santa Claus was looking through a great telescope, and every once in a while he stopped and put his ear to a large speaking tube. While I was resting he went on with his observations.

"Presently he said to the lady, 'Put down a good mark for Sarah Butter-milk. I see she is trying to conquer her quick temper.'

"Two bad ones for Isaac Clapper tongue; he'll drive his mother to the insane asylum yet."

"Bad ones all around for the Crossley children,—they quarrel too much."

"A good one for Harry and Alice Pleasure, they are quick to mind."

"And give Ruth Olive ten, for she is a peacemaker."

"Just then he happened to look at me and saw I was rested, so he politely asked me what I thought of the country. I said it was magnificent. He said he was sorry I didn't stop in the green-house, where he had wax dolls and other delicate things growing. I was very sorry about that, and then I said I thought he must be very happy to own so many delightful things.

"Of course I'm happy," said Santa Claus, and then he sighed. "But it is an awful responsibility to reward so many children according to their deserts. For I take these observations every day, and I know who is good and who is bad."

"I was glad he told me about this, and now, if he would only tell me what time of day he usually took the observations, I would have obtained really valuable information. So I stood up, made my best curtsy, and said,—

"Please, sir, would you tell me what time of day you usually look?"

"Oh," he answered, carelessly, "any time from seven in the morning till ten at night. I am not a bit particular about time. I often go without my own meals in order to make a record of tabular manners. For instance, last evening I saw you turn your spoon over in your mouth, and that's very unmannerly for a girl nearly fourteen."

"Oh, I didn't know you were looking," said I, very much ashamed; "and I'll never do it again," I promised.

"Then he said I might look through the telescope, and I looked right down into our house. There was no other very busy and very tired, and all of the children teasing. It was queer, for I was there, too, and the badest of any. Pretty soon I ran to a quiet corner with a book, and in a few minutes mamma had to leave her work and call, 'Lilian, Lilian, it's time for you to practice.'

"Yes, mamma," I answered, 'I'll come right away.'

"As soon as I said this Santa Claus whistled for 'Comet' and 'Cupid,' and they came tearing up the tower. He put me in a tiny sleigh, and away we went, over great snow banks of clouds, and before I had time to think I was lauded in the big chair, and mamma was calling 'Lilian, Lilian, it's time for you to practice,' just as she is doing now, and I must go."

said it was 'all right,' and then asked if I'd like to see the place. I said I would, so he threw down the hoe with a sigh, saying, 'I don't believe I shall have half a crop of soldiers this season. They came up well, but the arms and legs seem to be weak. When I get to town I'll have to send out some girls with glue pots, to stick them fast.'

"The town was at some distance, and our path took us by flower-beds where some exquisite little toys were growing, and a hot-bed where new varieties were being propagated. Pretty soon we came to a plantation of young trees, with rattles and rubber balls, and ivory rings growing on the branches, and as we went past they rang and bounded about in the merriest sort of a way.

"There's a nice growth," said Santa Claus, and it was a nice growth for babies; but just beyond I saw something so perfectly splendid that I didn't care about the plantation."

"Well," said Lill, impressively, seeing that Effie was sufficiently expectant, "It was a lovely grove. The trees were large, with long drooping branches, and the branches were just loaded with dolls' clothes. There were elegant silk dresses, with lovely sashes of every color—"

The grove was on a hill, so that we had a beautiful view of the country. First there was a park filled with reindeer, and beyond that was the town, and at one side a large farm-yard filled with animals of all sorts.

"But as Santa Claus seemed in a hurry I did not stop long to look. Our path led through the park, and we stopped to call 'Prancer' and 'Dancer' and 'Donder' and 'Blitzen,' and Santa Claus fed them with lumps of sugar from his pocket. He pointed out 'Comet' and 'Cupid' in a distant part of the park; 'Dasher' and 'Vixen' were nowhere to be seen.

"Here I found most of the houses were Swiss cottages, but there were some fine churches and public buildings, all of beautifully illustrated building blocks, and we stopped for a moment at a long depot, in which a locomotive was just smashing up.

"Santa Claus' house stood in the middle of the town. It was an old-fashioned looking house, very broad and low, with an enormous chimney. There was a wide step in front of the door, shaded by a fig tree and grape-vine, and morning-glories and scarlet beans clambered by the side of the latticed windows; and there were great round roses on either side of the walk

himself," added Lilly, gravely, "but then he apologized by saying he had some work to do. So I followed the little fellow with the wheelbarrow, and we soon came to what looked like the entrance of a cave, but I suppose it was the mine. I followed my guide to the interior without stopping to look at the boxes and piles of dishes outside. Here I found other funny little people, busily at work with picks and shovels, taking out wooden dishes from the bottom of the cave, and china and glass from the top and sides, for the dishes hung down just like stalactites in Mammoth Cave."

Here Lill opened the book she had been reading, and showed Effie a picture of the stalactites.

"It was so curious and so pretty that I should have remained longer," said Lill, "only I remembered the observatory and Santa Claus."

When I went outside I heard his voice calling out, 'Lilian! Lilian!' It sounded a great way off, and yet somehow it seemed to fill the air just as the wind does. I only had to look for a moment, for very near by was a high tower. I wonder I did not see it before; but in these queer countries you are sure to see something new every time you look about. Santa Claus was

So Lill answered, "Yes, mamma," and ran to the piano. Elsie sank back in the chair to think. She wished Lill had found out how many black marks she had, and whether that lady was Mrs. Santa Claus—and had, in fact, obtained more accurate information about many things.

But when she asked about some of them afterwards, Lill said she didn't know, for the next time she had traveled in that direction she found Santa Claus Land had moved.

SOME CHRISTMAS GEMS.

"This happy day, whose risen sun Shall set not through eternity, This holy day when Christ, the Lord, Took on him our humanity."  
—Phæbe Carey.

"I will honour Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year."  
—Dickens.

"Christmas is the only holiday of the year that brings the whole human family into communion."  
—Dickens.

"It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child Himself."  
—Dickens.

"I have always thought of Christmas time as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time."  
—Dickens.

"The only time in the long calendar of the year when men and women seem, by one consent, to open their shut-up hearts freely."  
—Dickens.

"Christmas is a time in which the smory of every remediable sorrow, wrong, and trouble in the world around us should be active with us."  
—Dickens.

"There's a song in the air, there's a star in the sky, There's a mother's deep prayer and a baby's low cry; And the star rains its fire while the beautiful sing, And the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King."  
—J. G. Holland.

"'Tis the season for kindling the fire of hospitality in the hall, \* \* \* the genial flame of charity in the heart."  
—Washington Irving.

"With gentle deeds and kindly thoughts, And loving words withal, Welcome the merry Christmas in, And hear a brother's call."  
—F. Lawrence.

"Then pealed the bells more loud and deep, 'God is not dead; nor doth He sleep! The Wrong shall fall, the Right prevail, With peace on earth, good-will to men!'"  
—Longfellow.

"The belfries of all Christendom Now roll along The unbroken song Of peace on earth, good-will to men."  
—Longfellow.

"The poor will many a care forget; The debtor think not of his debts. But as they each enjoy their cheer, Wish it were Christmas all the year."  
—Thomas Miller.

"But the star that shines in Bethlehem Shines still, and shall not cease. And we listen still to the tidings Of Glory and of Peace."  
—Adelaide A. Proctor.

"Rejoice, our Saviour he was born On Christmas-day in the morning."  
Old Christmas Carol in "Sketch Book."

"Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes, Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated, The bird of dawn singeth all night long, So hallowed and so gracious is the time."  
—Shakespeare.

"Rise, happy morn! rise, holy morn! Draw forth the cheerful day from night, O Father, touch the East, and light The light that shone when Hope was born."  
—Tennyson.

WHY DECEMBER 25TH?



"FATHER," said Emma Sherman, "at prayers this morning you said we called this day Christmas because it was the day of the year on which Jesus was born. Is that strictly true?"

"I cannot say that it is," replied Mr. Sherman, looking at his daughter; but for more than fifteen hundred years the 25th of December has been accepted as the birthday of Jesus, and has been so celebrated by religious ceremonies."

"Why, father, that carries us back to within four hundred years of the birth of Christ!"

"Yes; and it seems that a tradition so old as that should have some good foundation."

"Is there any foundation, father?"

"Yes; the old writers, Justin Martyr, Chrysostom, and Tertullian tell us that in the public archives at Rome a registry existed of the census under Augustus Caesar, the Roman emperor, by which the Lord's birthday was established."

"How came it to be generally accepted as our Saviour's birthday?"

"Why, some time between the years 337 and 352 A.D., Julius, Bishop of Rome, appointed it to be so observed; and Chrysostom, who lived in Antioch in Asia, wrote in the year 386 that it was only within ten years of that time that the churches of the West had made known to the churches of the East that the 25th of December was the day of Christ's nativity. But he says the Christians at Rome had known it before, through the records of the taxing preserved at Rome, and which are mentioned in the second chapter of Luke. Before that time the churches of the East had celebrated the 6th of January as Christ's birthday. After that time (the end of the fourth century) all the churches, both in the East and in the West, have celebrated the 25th December as our Saviour's birthday."

"But, father, was it not too cold in December for the flocks and shepherds to be in the fields at night?"

"Not in that climate. Travellers tell us that the weather is very pleasant and agreeable in December in southern Palestine. The earth is fully clothed with rich verdure, and there is generally an interval of dry weather between the middle of December and the middle of February, so that the period about Christmas, though coming in winter and in the rainy season, is generally one of the loveliest periods of the whole year. Tobler, a traveller, says the weather about Christmas is favorable to the feeding of flocks, and is often most beautiful. During December the wind begins to blow from the south and south-west, which brings rain and warm weather, and thus hastens forward vegetation."

"So then, father, as far as we know, Christmas-day is as likely to be the real day of our Saviour's birth as any other?"

"Yes; it has most in its favor. And since it is now so generally observed as such, there is no likelihood nor necessity of any other day ever being substituted for it. God's great Christmas-gift to man was the infant Saviour. So we have established the custom of making gifts and performing acts of charity as a token of our good-will."  
—Kind Words.

HOLIDAY PUZZLES.

I.—CHARADE.

My first should be holy,  
And pure, and good;  
My second's far otherwise,  
I've understood.

My third is only  
An interjection:  
My fourth is a darling,  
So full of affection,

If only you add  
One letter, to make  
The spelling quite perfect,  
Without mistake.

My whole is somewhat  
Like my first 'tis true,  
With mirthfulness added,  
Benevolence, too.

Have you guessed this riddle quite through to the end?  
Then surely a welcoming hand you'll extend,  
And this worthy notable claim as your friend.

II.—PRIMAL ACROSTIC.

1. To meet in front.
2. Helps.
3. A garment.
4. Notices.
5. A work of stone.
6. A water-vessel.
7. Falsehoods.
8. Loiters.
9. Birds of prey.
10. A mass.
11. To attempt.
12. Fight.
13. A way.
14. Hotels.
15. A rim.
16. A missive.
17. A plaything.

The primals give three words to be said in taking leave of 1881.

III.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

Cross-words: 1, A morose person. 2, One who rules in sacred things. 3, An ecclesiastical court of Rome. 4, A contriver. 5, An aquatic animal. 6, A deep-toned musical instrument. 7, A bird. 8, A judgment. 9, A mountain of Asia. 10, A medicine for headache. 11, A sea-bird. 12, A puzzling question. 13, A theatre in ancient Greece. 14, A purple dye.

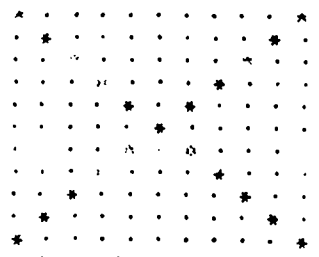
The primals name one of the best Christmas stories ever written. The finals name its author.

IV.—A HOLIDAY GREETING.

In the following quotations find a holiday greeting consisting of eighteen words, the numerals upon the left indicating the number of words to be read in each quotation.

- 1, 2. A fool must now and then be right by chance. —Couper.
3. It's guid to be merry and wise. —Burns.
4. With trembling fingers did we weave The holly round the Christmas hearth. —Tennyson.
5. With thee conversing I forget all time. —Milton.
- 6, 7. Plain living and high thinking are no more. 'i homely beauty of the good old cause Is gone. —Wordsworth.
8. For hope is but the dream of those that wake. —Prior.
- 9, 10. Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear. —Byron.
- 11, 12. A merry heart goes all the day. —Shakespeare.
13. Who that hath ever been Could bear to be no more? —Montgomery.
- 14, 15. Be thankful unto Him and bless His name. —Psalms 100. 4.
- 16, 17. A happy soul that all the way To heaven hath a summer's day. —Crashaw.
18. And the New-Year blithe and bold, my friend, Comes up to take his own. —Tennyson.

V.—DOUBLE DIAGONAL.



The diagonals, left to right, downward and upward, name an important anniversary in the year's calendar.

Cross-words: 1, A race or people, as determined by common language and character. 2, Hurtful. 3, Without fatigue. 4, A plant. 5, Proportional in its parts. 6, Solid. 7, One who engages in the barbarous business of buying and selling human beings. 8, Animals of the swine family peculiar to some of the Malay Islands. 9, Trampled upon. 10, An inhabitant of the earth. 11, Without exactness.

VI.—CHARADE.

First.

Novel and fresh is this, you'll see;  
'Tis what you like your books to be.

Second.

Going and coming, the old and the new,  
You can't tell what number 'll be given you.

Third.

The crier does this—sometimes too loud,  
I think he deserves to gather a crowd.

Total.

These, out of nothing, are always made,  
And, though not debts, are often paid.

ANSWERS for last Number:

I. CHARADE.—Florence Nightingale.

II. CROSS WORD ENIGMA.—Artaxerxes.

III. BIBLICAL ENIGMA.—And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

IV. DOUBLE ACROSTIC—

A rres T  
R idea U  
A mee R  
B ar K  
I cicl E  
A bbe Y

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, IN EASY VERSE.

(Author unknown.)

- 1 Thou shalt have no other Gods but me,
- 2 Before no idol bow the knee.
- 3 Take not the name of God in vain,
- 4 Nor dare the Sabbath-day profane.
- 5 Give both thy parents honour due,
- 6 Take heed that thou no murder do,
- 7 Abstain from deeds and words unclean,
- 8 Nor steal if thou art poor and mean.
- 9 Make not a wilful lie, or love it,
- 10 What is thy neighbour's dare not covet.

THE bird that soars on highest wing Builds on the ground her lowly nest; And she that doth most sweetly sing, Sings in the shade when all things rest; In lark and nightingale we see What honour hath humility.  
—Montgomery.



1881.

**FAREWELL, Old Year, with all thy**  
All thy experience told! [cheer,  
With mind more stored our time we'll  
hoard  
As misers hoard their gold.

Yet, not as they their talent lay  
Apart, but to abuse,  
Each moment we most joyfully  
Will for our Master use.

Father above, in kindly love  
Our guide and counsel be;  
Assistance lend that we may spend  
Our lives in serving Thee!

**THE STRANGE HARPER.**

A STORY OF CHRISTMAS.



**N** those mysterious old days when King History, having been well-nigh dethroned by Queen Fantasy, had to assume a monk's garb and take refuge in a convent library—those marvellous old days when (if at any time) our Nursery Iliads of the Sleeping Beauty, and the Giant Killer, and Valentine and Orson, must have taken place—those wild old days when England was governed by the Seven, and France by the mayors of the palace, and the greater part of Europe had no settled government at all—there stood in the kingdom of Northumbria, a stately castle called Cedwortha. In that castle were assembled, one Christmas eve, a large company round the board of Kenelm the Thane, to celebrate, not the anniversary of Christ's birth, but the heathen festival of Yule. The feast was ended, and the banqueters left the board, and assembled round the blazing "yule-log," on the hearth. It was a stormy night, the wind roared fitfully, and cracked the boughs of the great oak-trees that stood in the castle yard. Suddenly Hilda, the fair daughter of the Thane, looked up with an air of surprise, and exclaimed,

"Methought I heard music within."

"And I too," said Osmond, the betrothed of the maiden. All listened attentively, and between the gusts of wind the notes of a harper became distinctly audible. Kenelm sent out a servant to ascertain what wandering minstrel was abroad that inhospitable night: and in a few minutes an aged man was brought into the hall, his long white hair bedropped with icicles, and a snowy harp in his hand.

"Come hither, aged man," said Kenelm, leading him to the fire. "A minstrel is ever welcome at Cedwortha." Hilda at the same time removed the old man's harp from his shoulders, and the active hands of Osmond filled him a beaker of mead.

"An old man's blessing be upon ye all," said the venerable bard, with something that almost averted them in his gentle tones.

"But oh, my harp, my harp!" he exclaimed, as he strove to shake the snow from the strings. "The cold wind and melting snow will render my sweet companion dumb," he added, handling the instrument as tenderly as if it had been a living thing.

"Nay, fear not for thy harp, said Hilda; "I'll e'en dry the strings by this good yule fire; but who art thou? an I dare ask thee thy name; and how comest thou to be abroad to-night?"

"I am Cædmon the bard," was the reply; "and I am on my way to Jar-row town, but I lost my way at night-fall, and have wandered farther and farther into the forest, until, seeing in the far distance the friendly lights of your castle, I played a measure on my harp to give notice to those within that I was wandering abroad in the darkness."

"And now, good Cædmon," said Hilda, "as the strings of the harp are dry, perchance thou wilt e'en play us some lay?"

"Of what shall it be?" inquired Cædmon, taking his harp in his hand, and tuning it with as much delight as if embracing a long-lost child.

"Concerning the glorious gods; Odin, or Balder the Beautiful," replied Kenelm the Thane.

"Nay, rather of Thor the Thunderer," said Sigurd, a fierce and warlike chieftain; "such themes, methinks, were fit for such a night as this."

"Canst thou sing us the tale of Sigmund the Dragon-slayer," inquired the blue-eyed Hilda, "and how he broke through the fiery wall that guarded the sleeping lady, and woke her from her magic slumber?"

"Or a lay of the British Arthur," said Osmond; "him with whom our forefathers fought?"

"I know not songs like those," replied the aged harper; "but I would fain sing a melody fitted for this joyous season." Suiting the action to the words, he commenced a low, soft, exquisitely tender strain on his harp, which, though not sufficiently stirring for the taste of Kenelm's warriors, filled Hilda's heart (one peculiarly open to impressions of beauty) with feelings she had never experienced before—of peace and rest and yet of longing. The words he sang, too, seemed in keeping with the melody. They were these:

"Holy and blest is the night,  
Soft are the slumbers light  
Of all things around, save the pair  
Who tend the fair child with bright hair,  
And sweet is the rest of the babe

"Holy and blest is the night,  
Shepherds list with delight  
To the glad hallelujahs that sound  
From the seraphs that hover around,  
Who tell that the Saviour is near.

"Holy and blest is the night,  
Tender, loving, and bright,  
Sweet babe is the smile on thy face.  
It hath come the glad hour of our grace,  
The hour, blessed Lord, of Thy birth."

"'Tis a song for a lady's bower," said Kenelm, rather contemptuously.

"A lullaby for a babe," said Sigurd.

"But who is this," inquired Osmond, "concerning whose birth thy song speaketh? Some great leader or captain, perchance, or a minstrel, or a good and glorious king?"

"It is," replied Cædmon, "He who, at this time well-nigh 500 years ago, was born in far-off Palestine, Jesus of Nazareth. He is the desire of all nations; so that in every land, men feeling, longing, yearning after a deliverer like unto Him, divine yet human, immortal yet submitting to death, have devised some being out of their own fantasy. In well-nigh every religion concerning which we know aught, some deity, good and beloved, is slain by a cruel enemy, and mourned over by heaven and earth, by the whole realm of nature, by that which is without life in creation, as well as by man; but He is immortal—His being is indestructible; and in His time He appears again as new-born. Of this immortal

though dying divinity, do they perchance dream when, in the far south, they adore the sun that riseth and setteth again. Him it may be that they signify when, in some of the marvellous tales they tell of your Sigmund the Wadring they relate that he was of the race of the gods, though in appearance a man; was dead and yet lived again. In other lands I have heard that they told of a kind being, a son of the gods, whom they called Prometheus, who suffered unutterable agonies because he strove to bring down the fire of heaven to cheer and sustain humanity. And of another such being told our forefathers, in that sad, beautiful tale of the pure, young god of love and light, slain by his blind brother's shaft, the White Balder. Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."

Sigurd, whom the profound thoughts of Cædmon had totally failed to interest, made a gesture of impatience, and Kenelm thought this philosophy dangerous, as likely to lead to a new religion being introduced; but Osmond and Hilda were breathless with attention, and at last the latter said softly,

"Good Cædmon, tell us more concerning this Jesus of Nazareth."

Then once more tuning his harp, the missionary bard sang some simple melodies, or rather chants, in which the leading ideas of Christianity were unfolded. Most of the stern warriors in the hall fell fast asleep, for there was little in such music to stir the blood or kindle the imagination; and to most, even of those who listened, they were only as "a very lovely song sung by one that hath a pleasant voice." It was not so with Osmond and Hilda. To them Cædmon's visit was the commencement of a new life. He quitted Cedwortha early the following morning, but he left behind, in return for the hospitality he had received, the immortal seed in two young hearts.

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For 1882.



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## THE OLD YEAR.

NOW the gray Old Year is dying,  
Sadly winter winds are sighing  
Round him sad and low;  
Fast his sands of life are falling,  
Voices from the shadows calling,  
"Old Year, thou must go."

Old Year, there was cause for grieving  
In the life which thou art leaving,  
Cause for bitter tears—  
Tears for many a promise broken,  
Tears for words unkindly spoken  
In beloved ears.

Friends have failed us, hopes have perished,  
Precious hopes most fondly cherished,  
All with thee have gone.  
Though the past has thus bereft us,  
May the future that is left us  
For the past atone.

Oh! the years that have been wasted!  
All earth's pleasures have been tasted  
Pleasures that beguile—  
But with wild, unspoken longing  
For the purer visions thronging  
Round us all the while.

Friends, when time hath ceased forever,  
And from soul the body sever,  
In that awful day,  
Can we meet the dead year's faces,  
Bearing of our lives the traces  
Ne'er to pass away?

Carved as if in stone, revealing  
Every hidden thought, concealing  
Naught of good or ill  
Hear the Old Year gently pleading,  
"Oh! my solemn teachings heeding,  
Time is left ye still!"

For the gray Old Year is dying,  
Sadly winter winds are sighing  
Round his aged head;  
Fast the sands of life are falling,  
Voices from the shadows calling,  
And the Year is dead!

## LESSON NOTES.

## FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK.

A.D. 25.] LESSON I. [Jan. 1.]

## THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL.

Mark 1. 1-13 Commit to memory vers 9-11.

1. The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God;
2. As it is written in the Prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.
3. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.
4. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.
5. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.
6. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey.
7. And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.
8. I indeed baptize you with water; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.
9. And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.
10. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him.
11. And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.
12. And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.
13. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me. Mal. 3. 1.

## OUTLINE.

1. The Voice of One. v. 1-6.
2. The Mightier One. v. 7-13.

EXPLANATIONS.—Gospel—The word means "good news." Written in the Prophets—By Malachi, four hundred years before. Wilderness—The Judean region north of the Dead Sea. Repentance—A sincere turning away from sin to God. Remission of Sins—The forgiveness of sins in the favor of God. Camel's hair—A rough garment, made of cloth woven from the hair of the camel. Locusts—Such food as was eaten by the poor among the people. Mightier than I—Jesus Christ. Latchet of whose shoes—The thong or string fastening the sandal to the foot. Ba-tisao . . . with the Holy Ghost—Bestow a power from God upon his followers. Jesus . . . baptized—As a sign that he regarded himself one of the people, and to receive acknowledgment from John. He saw—John saw. See John 1. 32. The Spirit—The Holy Ghost from heaven. Voice—The voice of the Father, giving honor to Jesus as his Son. Driveth him—He went by a divine impulse. Forty days—Eating nothing during that time. Angels ministered—Supplied his wants at the close of his fast.

## TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

- Where in this lesson are we taught—
1. That we should repent of our sins?
  2. That we should confess our sins?
  3. That we should believe in Christ?

## THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.) 1. Who appeared as a messenger before the coming of Christ? John the Baptist. 2. What did he exhort the people to do? To repent of their sins. 3. What did he do to those who showed repentance? He baptised them in Jordan. 4. How did he proclaim Christ? As one mightier than himself. 5. What did he say that Christ would do? Baptize with the Holy Ghost.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION—The baptism of the Holy Ghost.

## CATECHISM QUESTION

13. Why was he called the father, that is, the pattern of believers? Abraham was called the father, that is, the pattern, of believers, because he believed certain promises of God, though contrary to the present appearance of things.

A.D. 27.] LESSON II. [Jan. 8.]

## JESUS IN GALILEE.

Mark 1. 14-23. Commit to memory v. 27-28.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light. Isa. 9. 2.

## OUTLINE.

1. The King's Message. v. 14, 15.
2. The King's Messenger, v. 16-20.
3. The King's Ministry. v. 21-28.

EXPLANATIONS.—Put in prison—By Herod, whom he rebuked for taking his brother's wife. Jesus came—From Judea, where he had wrought miracles. Time fulfilled—The time of God's kingdom, foretold by the prophets. Believe the gospel—Believe in Jesus as the Saviour. Fishers of men—As apostles and preachers of the Gospel, they were to save men and draw them after Christ. Straightway—At once, without delay; a word often used in Mark's Gospel. In the ship—A little boat on the shore. Synagogue—The place of worship and reading of the law. Doctrine—His teachings. Authority—He spoke in his own name, without giving any authority higher than his own. Scribes—See Descriptive Index. Unclean Spirit—An evil spirit, under Satan's power, was dwelling in the man and controlling his actions. Let us alone—A prayer to be allowed to stay in the man. I know thee—The evil spirit knew the divine power of Christ better than men. Rebuked him—Jesus would never receive the testimony of evil spirits. Came out—Left the man's body. Doctrine—Teaching. Fame spread—The teaching and the miracle both helped to make him famous.

## TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

- Where in this lesson do we learn—
1. That Christ calls men?
  2. That Christ's call should be obeyed?
  3. That Christ's words have power?

## THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.) 1. Where did Jesus begin his active ministry? In Galilee. 2. Whom did he call as his first disciples? Four fishermen. 3. How did he teach in the synagogue? As one having authority. What miracle did he work in the synagogue at Capernaum? He cast out an unclean spirit. 4. What was the result of his miracles

and teaching? His fame spread abroad. DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The divine authority of Jesus.

## CATECHISM QUESTION.

14. What were those promises? The promises of God made to Abraham were, 1. That he should have a son when he was a hundred years old. 2. That his children should possess the land of Canaan, wherein he had not a foot of ground. and, 3. That all nations should be blessed by his offspring, that is, Christ.

A.D. 27.] LESSON III. [Jan. 15.]

## POWER TO HEAL.

Mark 1. 29-45. Commit to memory v. 40-42.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

I am the Lord that healeth thee. Exod. 15. 26.

## OUTLINE.

1. In the Home, v. 29, 31.
2. In the City, v. 32-34.
3. In the Country, v. 35-45.

EXPLANATIONS.—Aton—At once. Took her by the hand—Giving power by his touch. Ministered—Waited upon them in the duties of the house. Divers—Different. Suffered not the devils to speak—Jesus did not wish to receive testimony from evil spirits. Before day—Early in the morning, while all is quiet and the mind is fresh. Prayed—All talking with God is prayer. Christ needed prayer, and so do we. Came I forth—Christ came from God to work for God. Leps—One having a disease called leprosy, which turned the body white like a corpse, and could not be cured. Lepers were compelled to live apart, and not to touch other people. Clean—Free from disease. Touched him—Jesus could touch him without harm to himself, but with healing to the leper. Say nothing—He did not wish to have such crowds coming to be cured of diseases that he would have no time to preach the gospel. Show thyself to the priest—There were some kinds of leprosy from which a man might become well. When a leper had recovered, he went to the temple, where he was carefully examined by the priests, in order to make it certain that he was well. Then he offered certain sacrifices, and afterward might go home and be with other people as a well man. Moses commanded—In Leviticus 14. A testimony—That is, to show that a miracle had been wrought. Began to publish—Told everybody, which was wrong, but not strange. Could no more—The crowd to be healed and to see miracles kept Christ from his work of teaching.

## TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson do we find—

1. An example of telling troubles to Christ?
2. An example of bringing friends to Christ?
3. An example of Christ's willingness to bless men?

## THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What miracle did Christ work for the mother of Peter's wife? He healed her of a fever. 2. What took place in the evening of the same day? Multitudes came to be healed. 3. What did Jesus do very early the next morning? He went out to pray alone. 4. Where did he then journey, preaching and working miracles? Throughout all Galilee. 5. What is shown in the third lesson? Christ's willingness to do good.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION—The compassion of Christ.

## CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

15. Why was Abraham called the friend of God? Abraham was called the friend of God because God made many visits to him, and he was very obedient to God. 16. Which was the first great instance of Abraham's obedience? The first great instance of Abraham's obedience was, that he left his own country at God's command, not knowing whether he was to go.

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