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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVI.]

TORONTO, DECEMBER 12, 1896.

No. 50.

Christ's Birthday.

BY SUSAN COOLIDGE.

How did they keep his birthday then—
The little fair Christ so long ago?
Oh! many there were to be housed and
fed,
And there was no place in the inn, they
said.
So into the manger the Christ must go,
To lodge with the cattle and not with
men.

The ox and the ass, they munched their
hay,
They munched and they slumbered, wonder-
ing not,
And out in the moonlight, cold and
blue,
The shepherd slept, and the sheep
slept, too,
Till the angel song and the
bright star ray,
Guided the wise men to the spot.

But only the wise men knelt and
prayed,
And only the shepherds came to
see,
And the rest of the world cared
not at all,
For the little Christ in the oxen's
stall;
And we are angry and amazed,
That such a dull, hard thing
should be.

How do we keep Christ's birth-
day now?
We ring the bells and we raise
the strain,
We hang up garlands every-
where,
And bid the tapers twinkle fair,
And feast and frolic; and then
we go
Back to the same old lives again.
Are we no better, then, than
they,
Who felled the new-born Christ
to see?
To them a helpless babe; to us
He shines a Saviour glorious.
Our Lord, our Friend, our All,
yet we
Are half asleep this Christmas
Day.

A CHILD'S DEVOTION.

If Phoebe Gray had thought
only of herself, she would not
have ventured out that terrible
night. But love for her father
made her forget herself. So she
stood close to the lamp-post on
the corner, and looked up and
down the street. Far down, a
red light shone from a tavern
window.

"Maybe he's there," she said
to herself; and as the words fell
from her lips, off she ran to-
wards the light as fast as she
could go. Sometimes the wind
and rain dashed so hard in her
face, that she had to stop to get
her breath; but still she kept on,
thinking only of her father. At
last she got to the tavern door,
pushed it open, and went in.

A sight to startle the noisy, half-in-
toxicated men, was that vision of a little
child, drenched with the rain that was
pouring from her poor garments, coming
in so suddenly upon them. There was
no weakness or fear in her face, but a
searching, anxious look that ran eagerly
through the company.

"Oh, father," leaped from her lips, as
one of the men started forward, and,
catching her in his arms, hugged her
wildly to his bosom, and ran with her
into the street. If Mr. Gray's mind was
confused, and his body weak from drink,
when Phoebe came in, his mind was
clear and his body strong in an instant;
and when he bore her forth in his arms,
strange to say, he was a sober man.

"My poor baby!" he sobbed, as, a few
moments afterwards, he laid her in her
mother's arms, and kissing her passion-
ately, burst into tears; "my poor baby!
It is the last time."

And so it was the last time. Phoebe's

love had conquered. What persuasion,
conscience, suffering, shame, could not
do, the love of a little child had wrought.
Oh, love is very strong.

Phoebe did not think beyond her father.
Love for him had made her fearless of
the night and the storm. But God made
her the instrument of still wider good.
Startled and touched by her sudden ap-
pearance and disappearance, the company
of men who had been drinking in the
bar-room, went out, one after another,
and sought their homes. One of them,
as he came in fully an hour earlier than
he was in the habit of doing, and met
the surprised look of his weary and
suffering wife, said:

"Jane, I saw a sight just now that I
hope I shall never see again."

FROGS AS BAROMETERS.

Hans was in the garden making mud-
pies. Suddenly he heard his father
call.

"Hans, come here, I want to speak to
you."

"What is it, father?" cried Hans, get-
ting up from the ground, where he had
been playing, and going over to the win-
dow where his father was.

"Hans," said he, "I want you to find
a tree-frog for me—like those you hear
in the evening."

"What do you want a tree-frog for?"
asked the boy.

"I'll show you," replied his father;
"but get me the frog first."

So Hans ran off, wondering, to the back

what his father was about to do. When
he reached the work-room, he saw on the
table a jar, which, to him, looked sus-
piciously like one of his mother's pro-
serve jars, and beside it lay a small lad-
der, about six inches long, made of
wood, and having four steps, each an inch
wide.

His father took the ladder and placed
it in the jar, the top and bottom resting
against the opposite sides. He then put
the frog in the jar, and screwed the top
down, making the unfortunate frog a
prisoner.

"Now," explained the father, when he
had finished, "I have a barometer.
When the weather is to be clear and fine,
Herr Frog will go up the ladder, step
by step, till he gets to the top; but if a
storm threatens, or the clouds are lower-
ing, he will gradually descend to the bot-
tom and remain there till the storm or
rain is past. His position on the ladder,
you see, will show the kind of weather
we are liable to have for the next twenty-
four hours."

This style of barometer is much used
in the lowlands of Germany, and, strange
as it may seem, they are said to be better
forecasters of the weather than any bar-
ometer that can be bought, as the frogs
seldom make a mistake in their indica-
tions.—Frank Leslie's Monthly.

ENTERTAINING THE CHRISTMAS GUEST.

It was Christmas eve. The night was
very dark and the snow falling fast, as
Herman, the charcoal-burner, drew his
cloak tighter around him, and the wind
whistled fiercely through the trees of the
Black Forest. He had been to carry a
load to the castle near by, and was
hurrying home to his little hut. Al-
though he worked very hard, he was poor,
gaining barely enough for the wants of
his wife and four little children. He
was thinking of them when he heard a
great wailing. Guided by the sound, he
groped about and found a little child,
scantily clothed, shivering and sobbing
by itself in the storm.

"Why, little one, have they left thee
here all alone to face the cruel blast?"

The child answered nothing, but looked
up piteously into the face of the charcoal-
burner.

"Well, I cannot leave thee here. Thou
wouldest be dead before the morning."

So saying, Herman raised the child in
his arms, wrapped it in his cloak and
warmed the cold hands in his bosom.
When he arrived at his hut, he put the
child down and rapped at the door, which
was immediately thrown open and the
children rushed to meet him.

"Here, wife, is a guest for our Christ-
mas eve supper," said he, leading in the
little one.

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

The children all pressed round to wel-
come and gaze at the little new comer.
They showed him their pretty fir tree,
decorated with bright-coloured balls in
honour of Christmas eve.

Then they sat down to supper, each
child contributing of its portion for the
guest, looking with admiration at its
clear blue eyes and golden hair; and as
they gazed it grew into a sort of halo
round his head, and his eyes beamed
with a heavenly lustre. Soon two white
wings appeared at his shoulders, and he
seemed to grow larger and larger, and
then the beautiful vision vanished,
spreading out his hands as in benediction
over them.

Herman and his wife fell on their
knees, exclaiming in awe-struck voices,
"The Holy Christ-child!" and then em-
braced their children in joy and thank-
fulness that they had entertained the
heavenly guest.

Jones.—"Have you noticed the new
styles of tan slippers?"

Brown.—"Yes, I've noted them; but
the style is not new. My mother had a
pair of tan slippers when I was a mere
boy, which I warmly remember."



THEM'S TEMPERANCE CRUSADE.

"What was it?" asked the tired wo-
man.

"A little thing, not so old as our
Jenny, all drenched with rain—just think
what a night it is—looking for her father
in a gin-shop." It made the tears come
into my eyes, when her poor, drunken
father caught her up in his arms, and
ran out with her tightly clasped to his
bosom. I think it must have sobered
him instantly. It sobered me, at least.
And Jane," he added with strong feeling
in his tones, "this one thing is settled—
our Jenny shall never search for her
father in a gin-shop. I'll stop now,
while I have a little strength left, and
take the pledge to-morrow."

Nor was this all. Another of the men
present when Phoebe came for her father,
was so affected by the scene that he, too,
stepped out of the dangerous path in
which his feet were treading, and by
God's grace walked henceforth in the
safer ways of sobriety.

of the yard, where there were a great
number of fruit trees growing.

Here he searched for some time un-
successfully.

"It's always the way," said he to him-
self. "If I didn't want one I could find
a couple of dozen in quick time."

At last, as he was about to give up the
search, he found one—a big green fellow
—sitting quietly in an old hollow stump,
its coat so mingling with the colour of the
wood that he would have passed it by
had it not utter a croak of displeasure at
being disturbed.

With a cry of delight the boy picked it
up by the hind leg, for, though Hans was
not a cruel boy, he was sometimes
thoughtless, and then he was a little
afraid of frogs. He carried it to his
father, who stood waiting for him on the
porch.

Mynheer Voost took the frog from his
son, and went into the house, closely fol-
lowed by the boy, who was anxious to see

A Noble Pledge.

I pledge my brain God's thoughts to think ;
My lips no fire or foam to drink
From alcoholic cup, nor link
With my pure breath tobacco's taint ;
For have I not a right to be
As wholesome and as pure as she
Who, through the years so glad and free,
Moves gently onward to meet me ?
A knight of the New Chivalry,
Of Christ and temperance I would be,
In nineteen hundred, come and see.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK
Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 12, 1896.

HOW ARE DRUNKARDS MADE?

In various ways Here is one "Now, you watch those children. They'll drink half that beer before they get home, and their mother will scold me for not giving a good pint, and I've given nearly a quart," said the bartender of a down town saloon the other day to a Herald reporter, referring to two little girls of six and eight, thinly clad, who came for a pint of beer. The reporter did watch the little ones. They had scarcely got outside the saloon door when the one that carried the tin pail lifted it to her lips and took a draught. Then her companion enjoyed a few swallows. A little further on they entered a tenement house hallway, and both again took a sip.

"I have lots of such customers," said the bartender, when the reporter returned to the saloon to light his cigar. "Girls and boys and women form half our trade. We call it family trade. It pays our expenses. Our profits come from the drinkers at the bar. But I tell you what, half the children who come here drink. That's how drunkards are made. Their parents send them for beer. They see the old folks tittle, and begin to taste the beer themselves. Few of the children who come in here for beer or ale carry a full pint home. Sometimes two or three come in together, and if you'll watch them you'll hear one begging the one who carries the pail for a sip. We must sell it, however, when their parents send for it. We are bound to do so. Business is business. We don't keep a temperance shop."

HOW HARRY WON THE PRIZE.

BY G. C. ARMSTRONG, B.A.

Here is a true story of a Canadian boy—a story to cheer and to stimulate boys who are enjoying the advantages of early struggles in preparing themselves for life.

Harry was brought up on a large farm in Ontario. He knew no holidays. He attended school regularly. His out-of-school hours and Saturdays were given to a boy's duties on the farm. Nature rewarded his industry with a clear mind and a sturdy frame.

It is well "to build castles in the air." ;? we set to work to construct them on more solid foundations. Harry had dreamt of his future. His books and his school were dear to him. He drank eagerly at the fountain.

When the hero of our story was twelve years of age, he was sent to the school in the adjoining village, some two miles away. The master of the school offered a prize for punctuality. It was to be

given to the pupil who should be neither late nor absent during the year. In his long, lonely walks to and from school, Harry determined to win this prize.

The year wore on. November came and the "new boy" was almost alone in the race. But the crisis was at hand.

One Thursday morning, Harry's father told him that he was going that day to the family shoemaker's, some miles distant. "Your boots need half-soiling," said his father, "you had better remain at home to-day, and let me take them with me." Now Harry had but one pair of boots, a long-legged, kip-skin pair, a country boy's pride. What was he to do? The boots must go. He could not go bare-footed, as it was too late in the season. Harry gives up his boots, but not his determination to win. He repairs to the attic and selects two shoes cast off by other members of the family. They are whole, but they are not mates. One is narrow in the toe, the other is broad, and both much too large.

Eight o'clock arrives, and he is ready for school without consultation with any one. How many times the battle with Harry's natural pride was fought and won on the way to school that morning we shall not tell. The forenoon passed and the shoes were not observed. But with noon came their discovery. All the school came to gaze, and a merciless fire of comment fell upon his sensitive ears. The day is over and courage has been given to bear the railery in silence.

The closing day has come. The prize for punctuality is awarded to Harry. Loud applause greets the winner, but none knew the price of the victory.

Harry is now a man and fills an honourable position in life. He has won many honours since that day, but few have given him the pleasure of his first prize. He treasures it as one of the inspirations of his life.

Toronto.

DRINKING TEARS.

In several places in the Psalms, the metaphor is used of the beverage of tears, but how often in real life is the custom of drinking the tears of their wives and children fulfilled in the lives of intemperate husbands and fathers.

Josh Speeler, an old toper of long standing and capacity, on being invited by some of his boon companions to "Take a drink," replied, "Boys, I don't drink without you take what I do." The "boys" were surprised.

"Perhaps he wants to run some castor oil in on us," said one.

"No, I'm square."

They agreed, and ranged themselves along the bar. All looked at Speeler.

"Mr Bartender," said he, "give me a glass of water."

"What? W-a-t-e-r?"

"Yes, water. It's a new drink to me, boys, I admit, and it's a scarce article around here, I expect. But let me tell you about it. A few days ago a party of us went fishing. We took a fine share of whiskey along, and had a jolly time: 'Long towards evening I got powerful drunk, and crawled off under a tree and went to sleep. The boys drank up all the whiskey and came back to town. They thought it a good joke 'cause they left me out there drunk, and told it around the town with a big laugh. My son got hold of the report and told it at home. I lay under that tree all night, and when I woke in the morning my wife sot right thar side o' me. She said nothin' when I woke up, but turned her head away, and I could see she war a-cryin'. 'I wish I had suthin' to drink,' says I. Then she took a cup wot she had fetched with her, and went to a spring that was near and fetched it full. Just as she was handin' it to me she leant over to hide her eyes, and I saw a tear drop inter the cup. I tuk the cup and

ten men with scoop shovels to throw away money as fast as we are wasting it for grog.—Observer.

The Boy With the Barley Loaves.

BY CHRISTIAN BURKE.

We do not even know his name,
His lineage, or his age,
And yet he lives in deathless fame
Upon the Gospel page.

The people 'round the Master pressed,
The sick, the poor, the sad—
He stands distinct from all the rest,
A little fisher lad.

We cannot guess what prompts his thought,

That those five loaves he brings ;
Two fish he may himself have caught
He carries on his strings.

He waits with patient, upraised head,
The hungry crowd he sees ;
The fish are here, the barley bread,
And yet what use are these ?

Still, all he has his Lord may take,
And then it must be well—
The Master took, and blessed and brake,
And wrought his miracle !

O glad child-heart, so sure and swift
The perfect way to choose,
O happy hands that bore the gift
The Master deigned to use !

We lose the lad amid the throng,
No more of him we know,
Nor if his life were short or long,
Nor what its joy or woe.

Only in one recorded place,
The veil is backward cast,
To let that innocent boyish face,
Smile on us from the past.

Thus to an age of noisy claims
One lesson more is given :
The fair deeds live, the actors' names
Are only known in heaven !

**JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.
PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.**

DECEMBER 20, 1896.

Hymn 118.

"O hope of every contrite heart,
O joy of all the meek,
To those who ask, how kind thou art,
How good to those who seek !"

For the name of the author of the hymn and of the tune, see last lesson.

DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST.

He is truly the hope of every contrite heart. Hope is the expectation of future good. Where can men fix their hopes with certainty, but only on Christ? He is the firm, immovable foundation, on which the hope of the church, for time and eternity, is fixed. There is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we can be saved. Some entertain the idea that riches will make them happy, but how often these make themselves wings and flee away; and even when they abide they do not yield satisfaction or abiding comfort. Others look to scenes of pleasure, and suppose that by revelling in them, happiness will be sure to follow. But how all these fail, like the crackling of thorns under a pot. There is nothing certain but what Christ supplies.

CONTRITE PERSONS.

Jesus is the hope of all such. But who are the contrite? Those who are deeply penitent, that is, those who under a sense of having grieved God, are sorry for their misconduct, and mourn before him, and repent as in dust and ashes. The publican felt thus, when he stood afar off—that is, away from the holy place in the temple—and "smote upon his breast," in token of the anguish which he felt within, and prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner." We see a marked difference between the prayer of the Pharisee and that of the publican. The Pharisee felt no sense of guilt, he rather boasted of his righteousness, and thanked God that he was different from other men.

APPLICATION.

Do our Epworth League young people feel the contrite spirit? They may not, at least, we trust that they have not committed gross sins, but a review of their short lives will bring many things to their remembrance which will produce sorrow, and prompt them to say, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." How delightful is the promise, "To that man I will look, even to him who is of a humble and contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Take Jesus Christ as your Saviour, and you will find him to be the fairest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely.



SKATERS ON THE ICE AT MONTREAL.

Skating Song.

Hurrah for the wind that is keen and chill,
As it skirts the meadows and sweeps the hill!
Hurrah for the pulses of swift delight
That tingle and beat in the winter's night,

When over the crystal lake we glide,
Flying like birds o'er the frozen tide!

Hurrah for the lad with the sparkling eye,
For the joyous laugh and courage high!
Hurrah for the health that is glad and strong,

So that life is gay as a merry song;
For the motion fearless, smooth and fleet,
When skates are wings to the flying feet!

Hurrah for the landscape broad and fair,
Spread boldly out in the brilliant air!
Hurrah for the folds of the sheeted snow,
On the mountains high, in the valleys low!

Hurrah for the track where the skaters glide,
Fearless as over a highway tried!

Who chooses may boast of the summer-time;
Hurrah, we cry, for the frost and rime,
For the icicles pendant from roof and eaves,

For snow that covers the next year's sheaves!

Hurrah for the gleaming, glassy lake,
Where the skaters bold their pleasure take!

They say that Scott did not make as great a success as he should of his "Ivanhoe." Perhaps he didn't advertise it as extensively as he does his Emulsion.

drank, and raisin' my hands to heaven,
I vowed, God helpin' me, I'd never drink
my wife's tears again as I had been doin'
in' for the last twenty years, and that I
was goin' to stop. You boys know who
it was that left me."

**LIQUOR ARITHMETIC OBJECT-
LESSON.**

"Boy at the head of the class, what is the United States paying for liquor as a nation?"

"Nine hundred millions annually."

"Step to the blackboard, my boy. First take a rule and measure this silver dollar. How thick is it?"

"Nearly an eighth of an inch."

"Well, sir, how many of them can you put in an inch?"

"Between eight and nine."

"Give the benefit of the doubt; call it nine. How many inches would it require to pile these \$900,000,000 in?"

"One hundred million inches."

"How many feet would that be?"

"Eight million, three hundred and thirty-three thousand, three hundred and thirty-three feet."

"How many rods is that?"

"Five hundred and five thousand and fifty rods."

"How many miles is that?"

"One thousand, five hundred and seventy-eight miles."

"Miles of what?"

"One thousand, five hundred and seventy-eight miles of silver dollars, laid down, packed close together, our national liquor bill would make. This is only one year's grog bill."

Reader, if you need facts about this temperance question, nail that to a post and read it occasionally. It would take

Christmas Choices.

DIALOGUE.

BY MARY L. WYATT.

Leader.

Tell me, dear children, if you had lived
In beautiful Bethlehem town
When the Saviour left his heavenly home
And to our earth came down,
What part you would like to have taken
then
In the joyous welcoming,
When shining star and singing host
Proclaimed the birth of a King ?

Three boys.

We would like to have been the Wise
Men three,
Who travelled from lands afar,
And came to the place where Jesus was
By the light of the guiding star.
But we need not travel to-day as far
As the Wise Men did of old,
To seek the place where the Lord abides,
For he lives in our hearts, we're told.

A fair little girl, looking upward.
I should like to have been the beautiful
star,
That shone so pure and bright,
And showed them the way
Where the Christ-child lay.
On that first glad Christmas night.
But I can be now a beautiful star,
And guide other feet to him,
If I love him and pray
To our Father each day
That my light may never grow dim.

Boy.

I would like to have gathered with others
there
In his birthplace strange and wild,
And offered my gifts of gold and myrrh
To the beautiful Holy Child.
But I can seek him, and give him to-day
An offering better far,
For a warm and loyal youthful heart
Is better than treasures are.

Several boys.

We should like to have been the shep-
herds good,
Who heard the angels say,
While the heavenly glory shone around,
"Your Saviour is born to-day."
But we can set ringing the Christmas
bells
And bid all the earth be gay,
Because of the message the angel brought
Long ago, on that Christmas Day.

One boy.

I should like to have been on that starlit
night,
A faithful shepherd boy,
To have heard as I tended the little
lambs
The angels' song of joy
But if I am always a faithful boy,
And bring little lambs to his fold,
I shall hear, in my heart, the angels sing
A song that shall never grow old.

A group of girls and boys.

We should like to have been with the
heavenly host,
Who sang in the midnight still,
"Glory to God in the highest be,
And peace, and to men goodwill."
But, to-day, we can carol the same glad
song,
In a chorus so loud and clear,
That the echoes shall travel till all the
world
Of this wonderful Saviour shall hear.

GIDEON OUSELEY'S SUCCESS.

"Musha, father, who is that strange
gentleman? Who is he at all?"
"Deed I don't know; sure he's not a
man at all, at all, that can do what he's
done; sure he's an angel!"
Some time after the above occurrence,
"a peasant saluted him with 'God bless
yer honour!'" To whom the horseman
replied, "The same to you, honest man!"
and then asked, "Would you like to have
God's peace in your heart, and stand
clear before the Great Judge when he
comes to judge the world?"
"O sir!" replied the peasant; "glory
be to his holy name! I have this peace,
and I praise him, that I ever saw yer
honour's face."
"You have this peace?" said Ouseley;
"how did you get it? and where did
you see me?"
"Do ye mind, sir, the day at the berrin'
(burying) whin the priest was saying
mass?"
"I remember the day well; what about
it, poor man?"
"O good gentleman!" answered the
peasant, "you told us thim, plainly, the
way to get the peace, and I wint at waust
to Jesus Christ, my Saviour, and blessed
be his hol' name, I got it, and it's in my
heart iver since."
He once encountered a pilgrim who had

climbed Croagh Patrick for the good of
his soul, whom he accosted in his usual
kind manner, and asked where he had
been.

"Sure, sir, I was at the Reek," the name
by which the place was known
"And what, poor man, were you doing
there?"
"I was looking for God, yer honour."
"Looking for God! Where is God?"
"Sure, he is everywhere," answered the
man.
"When the sun shines in your own
cabin door, where would you go to find
the daylight? Would you go forty miles
to look for it?" asked Ouseley.
"O sir, the Lord help us, I wouldn't."
"Then why go forty miles on your feet
to look for God, when you could find him
at your own door?"
"Oh, thim, gintleman, the Lord pity us,
it's thue for ye, it's thue for ye intirely."

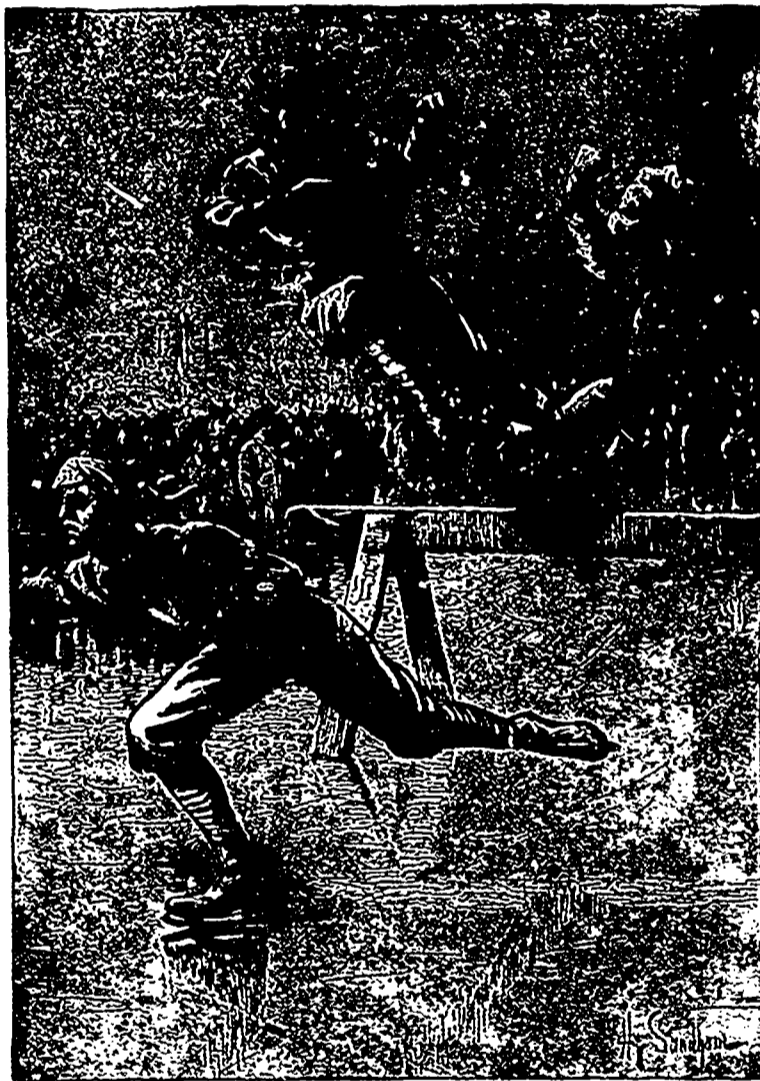
Song of the Skater.

BY J. CAWDORE BELL.

"Sliding, gliding,
Faster and faster,
The glare ice scratching
As onward we go;
Guiding, providing
'Gainst all disaster,

THAT LITTLE BOOK.

On the evening of the second day of
one of the great battles which marked
the mighty struggle between the North
and the South, and after the grassy plain
had been fought over by the contending
lines of infantry, and was thickly strewn
with dead and wounded men, dismantled
guns, broken down ammunition waggons,
discarded muskets and other evidences
of the heat of the contest that had swept
over the pretty greensward and convert-
ed it into a field of carnage and blood—
about four o'clock on this evening, an
order was sent to the General in com-
mand of the cavalry and the horse artil-
lery to press forward and convert the
slow retreat of the enemy into a rout.
Quickly the bugles sounded the advance,
which, beginning with a trot, soon be-
came a gallop, till much of the field had
been crossed; then, as the lines of the foe
came into sight, the grand charge began—
five thousand horsemen with sabres
flashing in the summer sun, the troops
yelling, the artillery thundering along
over dead and dying, the earth fairly
trembling under the hoofs and wheels of
the vast host as it swept on up the slope
of the ridge on which the guns of the
enemy were posted, and which were
belching out their sheets of fire and hail



ICE SPORTS AT MONTREAL.

Length of slide matching
Track clear of snow.

Whirling, twirling,
Quicker and quicker,
New figures cutting
Out, one by one—
List to their skirling,
As the skates flicker,
Opening and shutting
On work well done.

Roeling, wheeling
Round the sharp corner,
Forward then dashing
On a new track;
Haughtily feeling
Scorn of the scorner,
For weaklings gnashing
Their teeth at our back.

Here we go rollicking,
Three, four together,
Arm in arm linking,
Marking good time;
Jolly our frolicking,
Spite of the tether,
Clinking skates, thinking
That care is a crime.

Left right, left right!
Easy now, easy!
Slower and slower,
And all in line;
Fine sight, fine night,
Though somewhat breezy,
Vote of thanks throw her,
Pale Miss Moonshine!

of iron right into the face of the coming
squadrons, who with a mad yell, and
whirling sabres, soon cut down or cap-
tured the gunners who could not escape,
and broke the lines of their support.
A wild stampede followed, which was
soon converted into a confused flight,
each moment worse confounded by our,
and their own, captured guns, turned up-
on them as they fled over the Southern
plain. It was in this grand and resist-
less charge that for an instant as I passed
near a little mound of earth which had
been thrown out of a drain, I noticed
stretched upon it a wounded soldier, a
mere boy. He lay upon his back, and
was holding up a little book with both
hands; time only was there for one glance
at the poor fellow, but it was long
enough to show that he had fought his
last battle, and that soon his life would
be gone. His gaze was fixed on that
open book. For him the boom of can-
non, the roar of musketry, the shouts of
the victor, and the flight of the van-
quished had no voice that could engage
his soul, now holding its last earthly
communion with the Crucified One
through the word of that book.
Never while I live, will I forget that
one glance at the dying boy and the evi-
dent absorption of his whole soul; not in
the great scenes enacting about him, but
in the words of Jesus. He was some
mother's boy, who, when he left home for
the last time, had been given, by her,

that little book. She would watch for
his return in vain; soon his body would
be buried in the shallow trench with
many others. Thoughts of mother and
home may have come to him in that
solemn moment, but it was with his
mother's God and of his heavenly home
he then communed.
We know that only one book of all the
libraries of earth could have then had a
message for that soul, when the grandest
and most awful scenes of earth could no
longer have any interest for one who
was about to join in the exultant song of
victory with the bright convoy of angels
who issued forth from the open gates to
welcome him into the rest that remaineth
over the river under the shade of the
trees.—Christian Observer.

**ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTMAS
FESTIVAL**

The Christmas festival seems to have
first been devoted to the children in Ger-
many and the north of Europe. Here
St. Nicholas, a real personage, lived, a
bishop in the time of Constantine and
died December 8th, 343. For a time
Christmas was here celebrated on the
6th of December, but later transferred to
December 25th, to correspond with the
practice in other countries. The patron
saint of the children, known as St.
Nicholas in Germany, is called Santa
Claus in Holland, and Samiklaus in
Switzerland. In Austria he is known as
Niklo or Niglo, and is followed by a
masked servant called Krampus, while in
the Tyrol he goes by the name of Holy
Man, and is accompanied by St. Lucy,
who is the girls' saint, and also some-
times by a little girl representing the
Christ-child. At times St. Nicholas is
accompanied by a masked bug-bear, who
carries rods for the naughty children, in-
stead of presents. The Christmas tree
in its present relation to this festival
originated with the Germans, but a
similar ceremony was much earlier con-
nected with pagan rites of a different
kind. In the Protestant districts of Ger-
many, Christmas is celebrated with the
Christmas trees very much as with us,
by the giving of presents between parents
and children, and brothers and sisters,
and a more sober scene often follows the
Christmas tree, when the mother takes
occasion to tell the daughters, while the
father tells the sons, what has been most
praiseworthy in their conduct, and also
those things of the opposite nature.

LONDON "BOBBIES."

Tall, stalwart, fine-looking fellows, they
are towers of strength to the bewildered
traveller, and the extent and accuracy
of their information is only equalled by
their courtesy in imparting the same.
And then, what a blessed thing it is to
see a policeman's baton that really means
something, that carries with it authority
because that behind it is the solid sup-
port of all the best people of the com-
munity! Therefore it is that their name
is a "terror to evil-doers," and in con-
sequence this great city is a wonderfully
safe place to go about in. It is to me a
never-failing source of delight to pause
a moment at the intersection of two
crowded thoroughfares such, for in-
stance, as Tottenham Court Road and
Oxford Street—and watch the evidences
of power centred in one blue-coated
figure, always standing at the focal point
where traffic is busiest. A calm wave
of his hand—and lo, the ponderous busses
are motionless, and the cab horses are
jerked backward, and the hurrying teams
stopped short in their wild career, and
all for what? Perchance merely that
some timid woman, and three children
under four years of age, may scurry
across the street like frightened rabbits.
Even in fashionable Hyde Park I have
seen the officer stop the procession of
gorgeous carriages merely that two beg-
gars might cross the road. Such sights
must rather take aback those who come
from "the land of the free" expecting to
see a people "ground under the heel of a
titled aristocracy," etc.

CHRISTMAS CHANGES.

The Yule log has given place to the
steam radiator, the furnace register and
the baseburning heater, but we who are
warmed by any of these means on Christ-
mas eve, are quite as likely to enjoy
Christmas as were our forefathers and
foremothers, who used to celebrate its
festivities when gathered about the old-
time fire-places. There have been
changes in heating apparatus, but human
nature and Christmas remain as they
were and will probably so remain after
the present apparatus has been displaced
by electric heaters. We grumble about
our furnaces, our radiators and our stoves
and will probably grumble about our
electric heaters, but in Yule log times
our ancestors were often roasted on one
side and frozen on the other.

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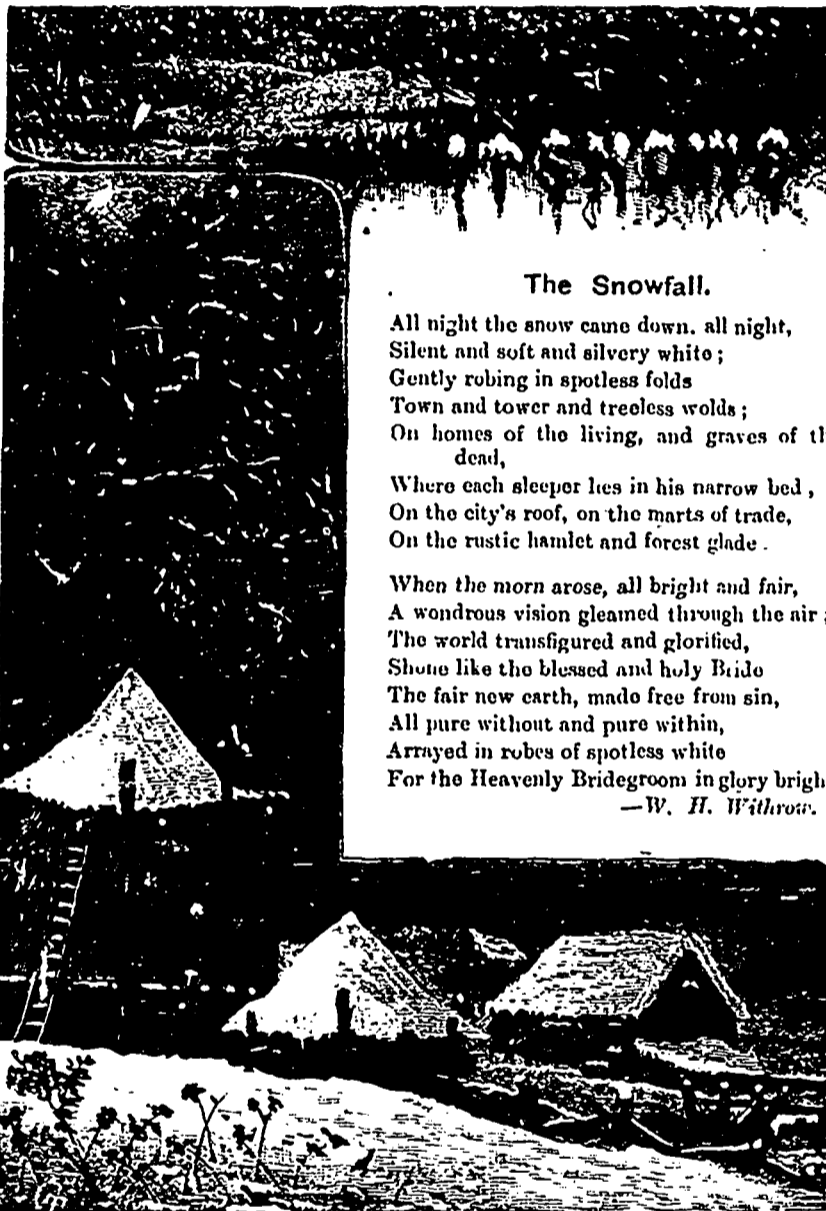
Where There's Drink, There's Danger.

Write it on the liquor store,
Write it on the prison door,
Write it on the ginshop sign,
Write, ay, write this truthful line,
"Where there's drink, there's danger."

Write it on the warehouse gate,
Write it on the schoolboy's slate,
Write it in the copybook,
That the young may at it look,
"Where there's drink, there's danger."

Write it on the churchyard mound
Where the drink-clain dead are found,
Write it on the gallows high,
Write it for all passers-by,
"Where there's drink, there's danger."

Write it underneath your feet,
Up and down the busy street,
Write it for the great and small,
In the mansion, cot and hall,
Where there's drink, there's danger."



The Snowfall.

All night the snow came down, all night,
Silent and soft and silvery white;
Gently robing in spotless folds
Town and tower and treeless wolds;
On homes of the living, and graves of the dead,
Where each sleeper lies in his narrow bed,
On the city's roof, on the marts of trade,
On the rustic hamlet and forest glade.

When the morn arose, all bright and fair,
A wondrous vision gleamed through the air;
The world transfigured and glorified,
Shone like the blessed and holy Bride
The fair new earth, made free from sin,
All pure without and pure within,
Arrayed in robes of spotless white
For the Heavenly Bridegroom in glory bright.

—W. H. Whitrow.

Write it on your ships which sail,
Borne along by steam and gale,
Write it in large letters plain,
O'er our land and o'er our main,
"Where there's drink, there's danger."

Write it in the Christian's home,
Sixty thousand drunkards roam
Year by year from God and right,
Proving with resistless might,
"Where there's drink, there's danger."

LESSON NOTES.

LESSON XII.—DECEMBER 20.

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

Matt. 2. 1-12. Memory verses 10, 11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.—Luke 2. 10.

Time.—B.C. 4. How long after our Lord's birth we do not know.
Place.—Bethlehem of Judea, a village south of Jerusalem.

DAY BY DAY WORK.

Monday.—Read the Lesson (Matt. 2. 1-12). Learn the Memory Verses.

Tuesday.—Read about a visit to Egypt (Matt. 2. 13-23). Learn the Golden Text, Time, and Place.

Wednesday.—Read an account of angels singing (Luke 2. 8-20).

Thursday Read Simeon's prophecy

(Luke 2. 25-35).

Friday.—Read about a wise child

(Luke 2. 36-40). Answer the Questions.

Saturday.—Read a sketch of Christ's mission (1 John 4. 7-14).

Sunday.—Read what John thought of Christ (John 1. 1-14). Study Teachings of the Lesson.

QUESTIONS.

I. The King Sought, verses 1-8.

1. What Herod is mentioned here? Who were the wise men? From what country did they come? What did their seeking Christ show? 2. How did they find Jerusalem? Will God guide all earnest seekers? Why did they seek Jesus? How would people regard such a journey? 3. Why was Herod troubled? 4. Whom did he call together? 5. What prophet had spoken of Bethlehem? 6. How does Christ rule? 7. What should we learn from Herod's cunning? 8.

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