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# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. VII.]

TORONTO, DECEMBER 24, 1887.

[No. 26.]

## 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 enquire 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.

(Continued on page 205.)

## Tribute for Our King.

WHAT shall we bring the Stranger,  
Born upon Christmas Day?  
A star the heavens lend him,  
Angels with songs attend him,  
Turn not, O earth, away.

The souls of men are weary;  
On blinding paths they go;  
The nights hang murky and dreary,  
All sounds are full of woe.  
Yet high the herald splendour breaks,  
The choral melody awakes;  
For in the Christmas morn  
Is the Deliverer born.

Draw near, ye sin-defiled,  
Look on this sinless Child!  
He comes to such as ye—  
Captive, to set you free;  
Wounded, to heal your pain;  
Lost, to reclaim again.

What shall we bring? Our gold is dust,  
His own always, ours but in trust.  
Our honour, to enrich his fame,  
Who bears o'er all the highest name?  
What can these poor hands bring  
Unto creation's King?

Love he will own and take,  
For his most holy sake.  
He in whose boundless heart  
Love's purest currents start,  
Asks of each soul again its store;  
Asks the one guerdon meet  
Poured at his blessed feet,  
Rich for love's sake himself made poor.

## WHAT A DOLLAR DID.

A TORONTO CHRISTMAS STORY.  
BY THE EDITOR.

WELL, 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 the 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 purchasing 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 for 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 stubby 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 promises, 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 Hymn.

NIGHT of wonder, night of glory;  
Night all solemn and serene,  
Night of old prophetic story,  
Such as time had never seen;  
Sweetest darkness, softest blue,  
That these fair skies ever knew.

Night of beauty, night of gladness;  
Night of nights—of nights the best,  
Not a cloud to speak of sadness,  
Not a star but sings of rest:  
Holy midnight, beaming peace,  
Never shall thy radiance cease.

Happy city, dearest, fairest,  
Blessed, blessed Bethlehem!  
Least, yet greatest, noblest, rarest,  
Judah's ever sparkling gem;  
Out of thee there comes the light  
That dispelleth all our night.

Now thy King to thee descendeth,  
Borne upon a woman's knee;  
To thy gates his step he bendeth,  
To the manger cometh he;  
David's Lord and David's Son,  
This his cradle, this his throne.

He the lowliest of the lowly,  
To our sinful world has come;  
He, the holiest of the holy,  
Cannot find a human home.  
All for us he yonder lies,  
All for us he lives and dies.

Babe of weakness, child of glory,  
At thy cradle thus we bow;  
Poor and sad thy earthly story,  
Yet the King of Glory thou;  
By all heaven and earth adored,  
David's Son and David's Lord.

Light of life, thou livest yonder,  
Shining in thy heavenly love,  
Naught from thee our souls shall sunder,  
Naught from us shall thee remove.  
Take these hearts and let them be  
Throne and cradle both to thee!  
—Horatius Bonar, D.D.

A CHINESE WATER-CARRIER.

MANY boys and girls in Canada are not accustomed to see men carrying water in the streets. Living in large towns where the water is supplied by the Waterworks Company, and having taps in every house, you do not need men to carry buckets of water to your homes. And perhaps you sometimes are delighted to see the water-carts scattering water on the streets, so as to settle the dust.

But in Chinese cities, towns, and villages, we see men carrying water. The buckets are made of wood, and the handles do not move, but they are strong and not likely to break from the bucket when carried by the pole and ropes. The pole rests on the buckets, but when used it is on the man's shoulder, with one bucket hanging by a rope in front, and the other bucket behind him. Years ago, in Leicestershire, I used to see persons carrying water with a yoke; and in London I have seen milkmen carrying milk with a yoke; but this is of a different shape, being a straight piece of planed wood, about three inches wide and five or six feet long. Very often a piece of bamboo is used, but it is not so strong as the wooden ones, although it bends more and is perhaps easier to the shoulder. I have seen burden-carriers with a large leathern

collar on their shoulders, so as to prevent their being chafed.

Have you seen a Chinaman? What is that round his head? Perhaps some girl will reply, "a pig-tail." Well, I don't think that is a nice name for it, and I am sure that the Chinaman would not. It is a *queue*. "Never saw the word before," do you say? then look in the dictionary, and you may see that it is a French word, corresponding to our English *cue*, which means the end or tail of a thing. In China the men's heads are shaved, except a piece of the back part, and that part of the hair is left to grow very long, and is plaited into a *queue*.

They do not wear shoes or stockings. Sometimes the weather is so hot that they prefer to go without, and at other times the roads are so dirty, that even persons who are wearing them take them off and go bare footed, so as not to spoil their shoes and white stockings. They have also strong boots with large nails, some of which reach to the knees. I was a little surprised a week or two ago to hear an English Missionary say that he had walked many miles in China with bare feet. He has a relative in England named Lord Radstock.

Much of the water requires clearing; that from the rivers being muddy. For this purpose they stir a little alum in the water jars, which causes the mud to settle at the bottom. In this neighbourhood they do not often drink cold water, and the boiling of course has a good effect. Most foreigners in China have filters in their houses, so that we are able to get clear water for drinking.

Some of you may perhaps wonder how much the Chinese water-carrier gets for carrying water. That depends on how far it has to be carried. Sometimes they charge three cash for two buckets of water, carried perhaps two hundred yards or more. I have paid twenty cash for two buckets of the River Yangtse water carried a mile. At the present rate of exchange one hundred cash are worth fourpence of English money.

Many boys and girls, aye, and millions of men and women in China do not know of Jesus and his salvation. But he has told his disciples to preach the good news to every creature, and some of us have come to China for this purpose. Have you read the fourth chapter in John's Gospel, about Jesus speaking to a woman who went to fetch some water from a well? He told her about God being a Spirit, and how he may be worshipped, and many of the people in that neighbourhood afterwards heard the Saviour, and believed on him. And now he gives us the privilege of telling our fellowmen and women about him, and helping them to obtain eternal life.

How full and free are God's words in Isaiah lv. and Revelation xxii. 17. Shall we not obey his invitations and commands?

Perhaps some of you will come to China across the waters of the sea, and hasten on the glad day when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord. (Isaiah xi. 19.)—C. W. M.

THE HAPPY EXPERIENCE OF BRO. PERKINS.

WHEN I was a young man, my mother said: "Look here, James, I want you to get religion and be a preacher." "A pretty preacher I should make," said I, "without talent or learning. You may pray till doomsday but that will never come to pass." "Well, I shall see you converted, James, and I shall hear you pray." "No," said I, "you never will." But, glory to God! she did, and I have been preaching to the world ever since, and telling what a blessed Saviour I have found. I have never stopped for fifty-six years, and I am going to follow it up on this line till I hear the blessed summons—"Child, come home." I shall never know till I am on the other side what Jesus has saved me from. I was one of those wild young men willing to go into anything to have a good time, and when Jesus saved me he did a mighty miracle. God never did a greater miracle than to take such a poor sinner as I was and place his feet on the rock, and put a new song in his mouth. Glory to God in the highest for what he has done for my soul!—*Glad Tidings.*

"I KNOW A THING OR TWO."

"My boy," said a father to his only son, "you are in bad company. The lads with whom you go indulge in bad habits. They drink, smoke, swear, play cards, and visit theatres. They are not safe company for you. I beg you to quit their society."

"You needn't be afraid of me, father," replied the boy, laughing. "I guess I know a thing or two. I know how far to go, and when to stop." The lad left his father's house, twirling his cane in his fingers and laughing at the "old man's notions."

A few years later, and that lad, grown to manhood, stood at the bar of a court, before a jury which had just brought in a verdict of guilty against him for crime. Before he was sentenced he addressed the court, and said among other things, "My downward course began in disobedience to my parents. I thought I knew as much of the world as my father did, and I spurned his advice; but as soon as I turned my back on my home, temptations came upon me like a drove of hyenas, and hurried me to ruin."

Mark that confession, ye boys who are beginning to be wiser than your parents.

"This is capital ale," said an old toper: "see how long it keeps its head." "Ah," said a bystander, "but consider how soon it takes away yours."

Here and There.

We sit beside the lower feast to-day—  
She at the higher.  
Our voices falter as we bend to pray;  
In the great choir  
Of happy saints she sings, and does not tire.  
We break the bread of patience, and the wine  
Of tears we share.  
She tastes the vintage of that glorious Vine  
Whose branches fair  
Set for the healing of all nations are.

I wonder is she sorry for one pain,  
Or if, grown wise,  
She, wondering, smiles, and counts them  
Idle, vain,  
Those heavy sighs,  
These longings for her face and happy eyes.  
Smile on then, darling! As God wills is best.

We loose our hold,  
Content to leave thee to the deeper rest,  
The safer fold,  
To joy's immortal youth while we grow old;  
Content the cold and wintry day to bear  
The icy wave,  
And know thee in immortal summer there,  
Beyond the grave;  
Content to give thee to the Love that gave.  
SUSAN COOLIDGE.

LINCOLN'S SEA-SICKNESS.

THOUGH there are many remedies, so-called, for sea-sickness, yet medical science, we believe, refuses to put forth any of them, either as preventives or as cures. Prominent among the remedies which keep their promise neither to the ear nor to the hope are wine and spirits. An anecdote of President Lincoln, related in the *Century*, shows that he knew the uselessness of these remedies.

When he visited General Grant at City Point, in 1864, he was met on his arrival by the general and his staff. When asked how he was, the President replied, "I am not feeling very well. I got pretty badly shaken up on the bay coming down, and am not altogether over it yet."

"Let me send for a bottle of champagne for you, Mr. President," said a staff officer; "that is the best remedy I know of for sea-sickness."

"No, no, my young friend," replied the President; "I've seen many a man in my time sea-sick ashore from drinking that very article."

That was the last time any one screwed up sufficient courage to offer him wine.

I CANNOT consent as your Queen to take revenue from that which destroys the souls and bodies of my subjects.—*Queen of Madagascar to those who proposed she should receive a revenue from strong drink.*

At this holiday season of the year some of you may be invited to drink that which will harm you. Some people say they never get drunk but once a year, and that is at Christmas time; and they may tell you that wine or beer or punch will not do you harm. Make up your mind to say "No" to every such invitation. "Dare to do right, dare to be true." Be bold and brave as Daniel was, who could say "No" to a king.



**A Christmas Carol.**

God rest ye, all good people,  
That hearken to our lay,  
And hear the word  
That Christ our Lord  
Was born upon that day.

We lift our voices gladly,  
And gladly do we sing  
Of that same night  
That showed to light  
The promise he did bring.

When angels sang to shepherds,  
That kept their flocks that day,  
And bade them seek  
Where, mild and meek,  
The infant Jesus lay.

So when our life grows older,  
And brings its winter's night,  
May angels sing  
And to us bring  
Our Lord, his truth and light.

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**Pleasant Hours:**

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 24, 1887.

**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



(See first page.)

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.

**BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEARS' GIFTS.**

THE great publishing houses vie with each other in bringing out for the holiday season elegant and often costly gift books. But we know of none that present such an extended range of beautiful books, in such a variety of styles and at so moderate a price, as the famous Boston Publishing House of Lee & Shephard, No. 10 Milk Street, next door to the historic Old South Meeting House. They have selected for publication, in various styles of binding, and with beautiful illustrations, a number of the standard hymns and poems specially appropriate to the holiday. We have before us a number of these. One of the most beautiful of these is Alfred Domett's grand Christmas hymn, "It was the calm and silent night." The engravings contrast the pomp and pride and splendour of pagan Rome, with the lowliness of Bethlehem and the sublimity of the Incarnation. Another is that grandest of hymns, "It came upon the midnight clear, That glorious song

of old" (No. 141 in our hymn book), with its troops of angels sweeping through the sky. Then we have Tennyson's immortal New-year's hymn, "Ring out wild bells to the wild sky," with its beautiful engravings of English winter landscape. Then there are a number of hymns dear to the heart of universal Christendom: "Abide with me," "Rock of ages," "Nearer, my God, to Thee," "My faith looks up to Thee," "Home, sweet home," "The breaking waves dashed high," "Oh why should the spirit of mortal be proud,"—a great favourite of Abraham Lincoln's,—Gray's immortal "Elegy," and "Curfew must not ring to-night." These are published in quarto, cloth, full gilt, for \$1.50; in alligator, in neat box, same price; also in "Golden Miniature" style, i.e., old gold cloth, with bright gold vignette, and in delicately tinted flexible covers, tied with silk ribbon, for 50 cents each. Thus, for little more than the cost of a good Christmas card, you get one of these beautiful books with from 12 to 20 engravings. They may be ordered through the Methodist Book Rooms, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax.

**HOLIDAY GREETING.**

A MERRY CHRISTMAS and a Happy New Year to each and every one of our boys and girls!

The Christ-child seems very near to us at this season, when we celebrate his birth, and sing our glad songs in praise of him, and declare our love for him in kindly acts toward one another. You know it was the dear Christ who said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

If we love him we shall love one another, and every creature God has made. And it will not be love "in word" only, but "in deed and in truth."

And so we can ask nothing better for our young readers than that they may love one another so much that all may know they are indeed Christ's disciples!

This will make sure a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

"A bright, a blessed Christmas,  
And a glad New Year be thine,  
And may the Sun of Glory  
Upon thy pathway shine;  
Each season show the clearer  
The path thy Saviour trod,  
And each Christmas find thee nearer  
The Paradise of God!"

**Our Christmas Offering.**

We come not with a costly store,  
O Lord! like them of old—  
The masters of a starry lore,  
From Ophir's shore of gold;  
No weepings of the incense tree  
Are with the gifts we bring;  
No odorous myrrh of Araby  
Blends with our offering.

But faith and love may bring their best,  
A spirit keenly tried  
By fierce affliction's fiery test,  
And seven times purified;  
The fragrant graces of the mind,  
The virtues that delight  
To give their perfume out, will find  
Acceptance in thy sight.

**THE LEADING FEATURES**

of the *Youth's Companion* announcement for 1888, just published, are its six illustrated serial stories, by Trowbridge, Stephens, and others, its two hundred short stories and tales of adventure, its articles by eminent writers, including the Right Hon. Wm. E. Gladstone, Professor Tyndall, Gen. Lord Wolseley, Louisa M. Alcott, Gen. George Crook, and one hundred other popular authors. The *Companion* has two million readers a week. By sending your subscription now, with \$1.75, you will receive it free to January 1, 1888, and a full year's subscription from that date.

WHICH of your boys, the heaven of your heart and life, will you give in order that your city may be lighted with gas or brilliant with electric light? Which child can you spare to help your city grade and pave its streets? How long will you consent to tread on sidewalks that the blood of souls has enabled your city to lay for your convenience.—Mary J. Aldrich

"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



Ellie was sufficiently expectant, "It was a lovely grove. The trees were large, with long drooping branches, which were loaded with dolls' clothes. There were elegant silk dresses, with lovely sashes of every colour—"

Just here Ellie 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. 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

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

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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 leading to the door."

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

"Inside the house was just cosy 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 were 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 himself," added Lilly, gravely, "but then he apologised 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 Ellie 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, 'Lillian! Lillian!' 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 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.

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."

Ellie, 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."

"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 seven years longer.

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

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part of the park. 'Dasher' and 'Vixen' were nowhere to be seen.

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While I was resting he went on with his observations.

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

"Two bad ones for Isaac Clappertongue; 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 greenhouse, 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 with out my own meals in order to make a record of table 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 mother 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 ma 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 landed 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."

So Lill answered, "Yes, mamma," and ran to the piano.

Effie 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 travelled in that direction she found Santa Claus Land had moved.

#### A Christmas Surprise.

THEIR mother was decking a Christmas tree;

She covered the branches with cotton for snow,

And the sparkling ice which hung from the boughs

Was nothing but twisted glass, you know.

The children saw it, and whispered low:

"Poor mamma," said Jack, "she means all right,

And wishes to please us, but she can't go To get real snow and the ice so bright."

"But we will surprise her Miss Molly said, "We'll fix her a tree as it should be done. You get the hatchet and I'll get the sled, There's time before tea if we only run."

They chopped out a shrub from a neighbouring hedge,

Well-laden with snow and with glittering ice,

And tugged it home on their little sledge, Keeping as quiet as well-bred mice.

They stowed it away by the parlour door, This "real" surprise for their mother dear,

And chuckled merrily o'er and o'er, Then slept till the sun rose bright and clear.

Alas! by morning their hopes had fled, For what they had left as an arctic tree Had melted while they were safely in bed, And deluged the room like a tropical sea.

The surprise, to be sure, had worked like a charm;

And as the conspirators stood by the fire, Said Molly to Jack, "Well, 'twasn't much harm.

But cotton, I s'pose, is a little bit drier."

#### A WORD TO OUR PATRONS.

We have sometimes been told that we Methodists are not a very learned people—that we may be pious, but that we are not at all literary, and rather lack "culture." Well, our record as a Church in providing sound and wholesome religious reading for the people—reading of all grades, from the simple child's paper to the great weekly *Guardian* or monthly *Magazine*—is something of which we are not ashamed. These have been saturated through and through with the religious spirit, they have held up loyally the banner of Christianity, and while maintaining love and charity to all, they have been true to the doctrines and institutions of Methodism. They were not established to make money, or even to promote æsthetic culture, but to do good to the mind

and heart and soul of our people; to brighten their lives, to uplift their thoughts, to better fit them for usefulness on earth and for happiness in heaven. Perhaps this is one reason for their success—for the Divine blessing which has caused their prosperity.

The increase in the circulation of our Sunday-school periodicals during 1887 has been remarkable, amounting to 23,779, and the aggregate issue has reached the enormous figures of 284,000 copies, or a total number of over 44,000,000 pages a year, or 150,000 pages for every working day in the year.

We think it no small credit to our Church, no small tribute to its love of good literature, that it has maintained for fifty-eight years the ablest religious weekly in the country—the grand old *Guardian*, never so vigorous as now—that has maintained in the Maritime Provinces for thirty-seven years the well-edited *Wesleyan*, that it has a Sunday-school literature, in quality and extent of circulation equalled by no Church of its size in the world; and that in the difficult field of a monthly *Magazine*—a field strewn with the wrecks of numerous previous attempts in this line—it has reached such a signal success; and that with this number we complete the twenty-sixth volume of a *Magazine* which many leading journals in Great Britain, the United States, and Canada, assure us is a credit to our country.

It is an amazement to our Methodist friends in the United States that, where they have failed, with their great numbers and great wealth, in several attempts to support a monthly *Magazine*, we in this newer and poorer country have so remarkably succeeded—and that at a time when the numerous and excellent English and American monthlies of the day make success the more difficult. Much as has been achieved, we are not yet satisfied. We wish every volume, every number, to be an improvement on that which has preceded it. We think this has largely been the case in the past. We purpose to make it still more in the future. We ask the hearty co-operation and help of every loyal Methodist. We want the renewal of every subscription, and we want each patron to endeavour to secure at least one new subscription. For the first time in our history we offer the December number free to all new subscribers. Show your own copy—or our announcement to some neighbour, speak well of the *Magazine* if you think it deserves it; or send us the addresses of any whom you would like to subscribe.

"I FELT so nervous, mamma," said a little girl, referring to an incident of the previous day. "What do you mean by 'nervous,' my dear?" "Why, mamma, it's just being in a hurry all over."

#### Remember the Poor.

I've been watching from my window  
And peeping from my door  
At the throngs of little children—  
The children of the poor,  
I see their hungry faces,  
Their rough and tangled hair,  
And I wonder if they ever know  
A loving mother's care.

I see their looks of sadness,  
As the Christmas days come in,  
And the merry bells are ringing  
For the pleasures to begin.  
I know for them no table  
With dainty food is spread,  
And over them no Christmas-tree  
Its happy light will shed.

Poor little ones, how pitiful,  
How sad their lot must be!  
How good that ours is different—  
Glad, happy you and me.  
We have our homes, our parents,  
Our gifts and blessings rare;  
And all these gathered round us  
Without our thought or care.

I wonder if, to-morrow,  
From out our crowded store,  
We cannot choose some treasure  
To scatter to the poor?  
Some toy, or simple garment,  
Our eyes might never miss,  
Would yield them hours of comfort,  
And fill their hearts with bliss.

Then hie away, dear children,  
Search closet, box, and bag;  
Who starts the first will be the best—  
And surely none will lag!  
See who will find the largest store—  
Not one thing will be lost—  
Our blessed Lord said, long ago,  
Who gives receives the most.  
*Chicago Inter-Ocean.*

#### "HOME, SWEET HOME."

In the spring of 1863 two great armies were encamped on either side of the Rappahannock River, one dressed in blue and the other dressed in gray. As twilight fell the bands of music on the Union side began to play the martial music, "The Star Spangled Banner" and "Rally Round the Flag;" and that challenge of music was taken up by those upon the other side and they responded with "The Bonnie Blue Flag" and "Away Down South in Dixie." It was horns in upon the soul of a single soldier in one of these bands of music to begin a sweeter and a more tender air, and slowly as he played it they joined in a sort of chorus of all the instruments upon the Union side, until finally a great and mighty chorus swelled up and down our army—"Home, Sweet Home." When they had finished there was no challenge yonder, for every band upon that further shore had taken up the lovely air so attuned to all that is holiest and dearest, and one great chorus of the two great hosts went up to God; and when they had finished from the boys in gray came a challenge, "Three cheers for home!" and as they went resounding through the skies from both sides of the river, "something upon the soldiers' cheeks washed off the stains of powder."—*Frances Willard.*

The world's threatenings should drive us to God's promises.



**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 wide, 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 face,  
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!

**A SOCIAL PARTY IN JAPAN.**

We were invited to a social party at the house of a Japanese gentleman. We reached the house with our interpreter about six o'clock. The host met us in sweeping robes of silk. He prostrated himself on the floor, resting on his knees and the palms of his hands. He bowed his forehead to the floor full fifteen seconds—that was preliminary. The head jerks up, down again to the floor; that was welcome—eight seconds. Head up again; "hope you are well,"—bump on the floor—four seconds. Head up—head down—"hope you will enjoy yourself"—two seconds. Head, knees all up, and mine host had welcomed us formally and heartily. Of course my interpreter did likewise at every motion.

This was only the beginning. The lady of the house next paid her *devoirs*; fewer, but politely long. Next came in succession her two pretty daughters. How could we resist them? Barbarian as we were, we actually fell on our hands and knees, and muttering all kinds of bad Japanese, returned their welcome. During the course of the evening all of the company—about twenty-seven in number—were introduced and even though we only bowed to the gentlemen, kow towing to the ladies, our neck was tired. Refreshments were served shortly after our arrival. The orthodox fashion is to begin to eat

about 6 and leave off at 10 o'clock. First came tea, clear, aromatic, delicious. Sugar and milk would be ashamed of themselves in it. Then came sweet cakes, sugar plums, sugar jelly, etc., served in trays lined with fine, white paper, under which were red and gilt paper cords. After this, servants brought in little lacquered black tables or stands, four inches high and one foot square, until twenty-seven little tables were ranged. The gentlemen sat in three sides of a hollow square, the ladies in a side room in a like manner. In a Japanese house all the partitions are sliding frames covered with paper. These can be removed in a few moments, and the whole house be made into one room, as in this case. The first course was soup, served in finely lacquered bowls, drunk like water. The solid part was taken out with chopsticks. Soup and tables are now taken out and two enormous dishes or bowls, fully three feet in diameter and one in depth are brought in on two larger low tables about six inches high and are flanked by at least two hundred little dishes—cups, plates, teapots, and all are of play-house size in Japan. All the company sit on the floor, or rather on their heels. Trained from childhood to this position they can sit on their heels for a day and not be wearied. In a few minutes each guest has on the floor before him nearly a dozen of the play-house dishes filled with food, and with them a pair of chopsticks. Flasks, bottles or small kettles of hot *sake* (rice wine) are also brought in and then begins the eating and drinking.

All the company seem very happy; they are chatting and talking at a rate that fully atones for the lack of railroads in Japan. Four or five hired singing-girls are present and have been dispensing the *sake* during the evening. After one or two songs one of the girls danced. This does not mean that she danced like an American girl. Japanese dancing consists simply of posture and gesture. The dancer stands, moving only hands, arms, head, and occasionally the feet. Many of the gestures are made with the fan. One easily learns to see method in it but it is apt to be monotonous.

At 10 o'clock the token was given that refreshments and the evening was nearly over by removing all the small plates and broken meats and replacing them by the little tables again on which were hot soup, cold rice, mushrooms and pickles. This invariably is the last course, and is the signal of getting ready to depart, though the departure does not take place for nearly an hour afterward. Tea winds up the evening. We bade our host good-bye after the usual prostrations on his part and that of my interpreter.—*Home Journal*.

THE Sabbath is the golden clasp which binds together the volumes of the week.

**"Home Sweet Home."**

'Twas Christmas-eve, the snow fell fast,  
And whitened all the earth,  
Without was gloom and misery,  
Within each house was mirth;  
As shivering in the bitter cold,  
In London's streets so wide,  
A weary man trod sadly on  
At this gay Christmas-tide.

No friends, no home, no money his,  
No shelter for his head,  
He knew not where the mortal dwelt  
Who'd share with him his bread;  
Ah, me! what sadder fate than this,  
To be of home bereft,  
To know that every hope has fled,  
And but despair is left?

And as he sadly trod the street,  
Hungry and wan and cold,  
A blazing light within a room,  
And merry voices told  
That happy folks were keeping there  
The joyous Christmas-time,  
And joy's bells were ringing out  
With their entrancing chime.

**MORNING BIBLE READING.**

THE best time for Bible reading is in the morning. The mind and body are fresh after the repose of the night, and the highest powers of thought may be brought to bear upon the chapter selected. But, with most people, each recurring morning brings its own pressing tasks. Business care, the daily toil, and the duties of the household, are the first and most engrossing concerns. Some hours must pass, with many, before they can find time to sit down to any quiet reading. Let the plan be honestly tried of taking some words from God's book for the first meditation of the morning. Make for the next month a fair, steadfast trial of the plan of studying the Bible when your faculties are at mental high-water mark. You wonder at the familiarity of this or that friend with the Psalms, the Epistles, the Gospels. It has been gained a little at a time, by patient daily reading—thoughtful and prayerful reading, too, which was hived by the soul as something worth treasuring. We shall all gain immeasurably in our influence, as well as in our own comfort, by giving more of our unwearied thought to the Holy Book. A few tired, sleepy, worn-out moments at night, and those only, are almost an insult to the Master whom you profess to serve.—*Church Advocate*.

**"STOP AWHILE."**

THERE is growing in Africa a thorn called "stop awhile." If a person once gets caught in it, it is with difficulty he escapes with his clothes on his back; for every attempt to loosen one part of his dress only hooks more firmly another part. The man who gets caught by this thorn is in a pitiable plight ere he gets loose. You would not like, would you, boys, to be caught in this thorn.

And yet many, I fear, are being caught by a worse thorn than the "stop awhile." Where do you spend your evenings? At home, I hope, studying your lesson and attending your mother's words; for if you have formed a habit of spending them on the streets with bad boys, you are caught in a thorn far worse.

**LESSON NOTES.**

FIRST QUARTER, 1888.

STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

A. D. 29.] LESSON I. [JAN. 1.

HEROD AND JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Matt. 14. 1-12. *Comment to mem. vs. 10-12.*

GOLDEN TEXT.

And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.—Matt. 14. 12.

OUTLINE.

1. Herod.
2. John.

TIME.—29 A. D., during the period of the later Galilean ministry.

PLACE.—Capernaum. Machærus.

RULERS.—Tiberius, emperor at Rome; Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea; Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Tetrarch*—A Greek word meaning a ruler over the fourth part of a country. It is not so used here, for properly this Herod ruled over one of three parts into which the country was divided. It means simply ruler. *Fame of Jesus*—This was caused by the wonderful miracles he had been working. *His servants*—Members of his court—courtiers. *Risen from the dead*—Herod is said to have been a Sadducee; but his conscience put his intellectual beliefs to flight. *Mighty works*—Miracles. *In prison*—In the castle of Machærus. *Counted him as a prophet*—It was four hundred years since a prophet had been seen in Judea, and the common people welcomed and loved this one. *Herod's birthday*—The anniversary of his accession to the throne. *Danced before them*—Probably one of the lewd dances of the Oriental monarchies; a wicked thing at best, and very shocking to the sense of right of a Jew. *With an oath*—Not a simple profanity, but a vow made by the gods, whom he would call to witness that he would keep it.

**QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.**

1. Herod.
  - By what official title is Herod known?
  - What report came to him?
  - For whom did he mistake Jesus?
  - What did he say of John the Baptist?
  - What had Herod done to John?
  - For whose sake was John put in prison?
  - What unlawful act had John denounced?
  - Why did not Herod at once put him to death?
  - How did the people regard John?
  - What event on Herod's birthday pleased him?
  - What reward did he promise the dancer?
  - What did she ask?
  - Why did she make this request?
  - How was the king affected by the demand?
  - Why did he keep his promise?
2. John.
  - What did Herod then do to John?
  - What was done with the prophet's head?
  - What was done with his body?
  - To whom did the disciples tell the story?
  - What relation was John to Jesus?
  - From whom are we sure of sympathy in all our sorrows?
  - What ought we to do with all our troubles?

**PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.**

- Where in the lesson are we taught—
1. That a guilty conscience makes men fearful?
2. That sinners hate those who rebuke their sins?
3. That Jesus is the true Comforter of those who are in trouble?

**HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.**

Learn how many Herods there are in the New Testament history, and how they were related. Find other instances of people being (1) put in prison, or (2) put to death, by a Herod.

**THE LESSON CATECHISM.**

1. Who were guilty in the putting to death John the Baptist. Herod, Herodias and her daughter.
2. How did Herod show that he felt guilty? He said, "John is risen."
3. What was the power in Herod's life that made him think that John had risen? A guilty conscience.
4. Is there any power greater than a condemning conscience to which the sinner must answer? God is greater than our hearts.
5. What act of loyal love offsets this story of hate? "And his disciples came and took up," etc.



A.D. 29] LESSON II. [JAN. 8.  
THE MULTITUDE FED.  
Matt. 14. 13-21. Memory verses, 19-21.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life. John 6. 35.

TIME.—29 A.D., following last lesson.  
PLACE.—Near Bethsaida, at the north-east of the Sea of Galilee.

RULERS.—Same as in the last lesson.

CONNECTING LINKS.—Just after this news of the death of their Master's friend and forerunner had reached him, the disciples returned from their ministry attended by great multitudes, many of whom were on their way to Jerusalem to the passover, which was near. Jesus was compelled for retirement and peace to go into a desert place apart, and here, thronged by the multitudes, he wrought the miracle of this lesson.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Departed thence*—From Capernaum. *Went forth*—From his seclusion on the east side of the sea. *Evening*—The Jews had two evenings; one began at three of the afternoon and lasted till six o'clock; this is the evening here meant. The second evening commenced at six o'clock, and is the one meant in verse 23. *The time is now past*—Two or three interpretations are given. It seems most natural to suppose it means the hour is past for the evening meal. *Five loaves*—Thin bread-cakes, baked after the Jewish manner in the shape of a plate. *Blessed and brake*—This was a custom common for the head of the family among the Jews. *Baskets*—Traveling-baskets, or such as were carried by the people upon their journeys.

## QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. *The Master.*

What caused Jesus to go into a desert place apart?

How did he go?

Who followed him?

How did the people go?

How was Jesus affected when he saw the multitude?

Why was he moved with compassion? Mark 6. 34.

What did he do for their sick?

2. *The Miracle.*

At evening what request did the disciples make?

Why did they wish the people sent away? What did Jesus command the disciples to do?

How much food had the disciples? What were they told to do with the loaves and fishes?

What command was given to the people? What did Jesus do with the food? What did the disciples do with it?

What portion of the people ate, and with what result?

What shows that each had enough? How much remained after all had eaten? How many people were there?

Of what better bread does the Golden Text tell.

## TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where are we taught in this lesson—

1. That Jesus has sympathy with human need?

2. That he has power to supply our daily need?

3. That it is our duty to help the needy as far as we can?

## HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

Find in the other Gospels five particulars about this miracle which are not named by Matthew.

Find another instance of feeding the multitude, and compare the two miracles.

## THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What made Jesus leave Capernaum and go over the sea? Sorrow for John's death.

2. What made Jesus leave his retirement and come forth to the people? Compassion for the perishing people.

3. What did they seem like to him? "Like sheep having no shepherd."

4. Of what was his miracle a symbol? Of his spiritual relation to men.

5. In what words did he express that relation? "Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life."

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Divine compassion.

## CATECHISM QUESTION.

3. Who is the great Teacher of religion? Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Redeemer.

4. What do you call his religion? Christianity.

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