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The Presbyterian Review

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Toronto Dec. 17, 1896.

A HOLY AND HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

Glory fills the skies,
While the world is sleeping,
Angels' starry eyes
Watch and ward are keeping.
Hark! good-will and peace,
Angel tongues are singing,
Songs that never cease
O'er the earth are ringing
Lo! the rising star
Yonder skies adorning
Soft and bright afar
Breaketh Christmas morning!

THE JOYFUL SEASON.

CHRISTMAS-TIDE has been called "the Joyful Season"; and no doubt there is greater cheer and good-will among men during that period than at any other period of the year. Would that this feeling were everywhere caused by a real sense of the priceless blessings of redemption. There are devout people whose hearts are touched by the wondrous love manifested to men in the event which Christmas celebrates, but, alas, how comparatively few regard Christmas as a season for religious duty and acknowledgment. We are well aware of the fact that the date of Christ's birth is not known and that the 25th of December has been appointed merely as a convenient time for the observing of the festival, yet, since that date has been so widely accepted, and since the avowed object of the celebration is to commemorate the birth of the Saviour, the observance thereof ought to be in the proper spirit; and if the Church cannot recognize Christmas as a Church festival it is surely meet that Presbyterians who observe the day should seek to do so in a manner consistent with the professed object of Christmas. How Christmas was regarded by the fathers last century is set forth in the following interesting passage:

"In the early Church, in the time of the holy Apostles and their pious followers, more pains were taken to keep in mind the crucified and risen Jesus, than to increase the number of public festivals. More attention was given to a righteous life in Christ, to the sincere heart-knowledge of the Saviour, to His spiritual birth by grace in the soul of the believer, to the power of His resurrection manifesting itself within, to the fellowship of His sufferings and death, than to a nice and inquisitive determination of the year and day in which the Sun of Righteousness began to send abroad His beams of blessing and of salvation. Had the

Apostles or their immediate followers had as much curiosity in these things as learned men in the Church since have manifested (whose differences even to the present day are sufficiently known), they might have saved these latter much time, trouble, and racking of brains. But since those holy men were not minded to leave us anything on this point, it is probable that the uncertainty in which the learned yet grope will continue until the Lord Himself shall come, when neither Supper of Remembrance nor Day of Remembrance will be needed, but the Lord Himself and His heavenly light will be to His elect all in all."

Rev. Dr. Smith gives the following brief account of the introduction of Christmas: "The old heathen feast of Saturn began on the twenty-fifth of December. The Church could not uproot it; it transformed it. And the transition was not difficult. The Saturnalia were the days of the returning sun. The winter Solstice was passed, and in the just noticeable increase in the height of the sun in the heavens, was the promise of a new year. The sun was one of the earliest deities, and one almost universally worshipped. In primitive times he was regarded as a living person. His retreat to the south was interpreted as a threat. It seemed as if he were going to leave his dependents to the cold and to the darkness. Hence the joy with which his return was hailed, a joy rising to delirium and manifesting itself often in the wildest excesses. But the Christian's Sun is Jesus. He is the Source for light. What more fitting than that His advent should be celebrated on the Day of the Return of the Sun? It can hardly be doubted that this was the line of reasoning on which Pope Liberius proceeded when he introduced Christmas to take the place of the Saturnalia. And it is not unlikely that the Egyptian Gnostics, as well as the Egyptian Christians, were influenced by similar arguments. The Egyptian feasts are, to be sure, not so well-known to us as those of the Romans. But it has been pointed out that in an old Roman calendar the sixth of January is named the Egyptian Day, not unlike their great festival. And it is conceded that the feast of Osiris (one form of the sun god) fell during the ten days ending on January 7th. We shall hardly be wrong in assuming that one of these days was chosen as the Christ festival for the same reason which influenced Pope Liberius a hundred and fifty years later. The Birthday of the Unconquered, as the heathen Romans named the twenty-fifth of December, might be fixed on a little different date in Egypt. But the Gnostics, which had no scruple in applying to Christ many of the names and attributes of the Egyptian Sun-God, would be strongly moved to make the birthday of one the birthday of the other."

The feature most noticeable in connection with Christmas is the giving of presents, and the interchange of tokens of good-will. The verse reads, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men."

Christ the greatest of all gifts is given freely, and His love inspires kindness, tenderness and liberality.

Let our gifts at this season be tokens of good-will to our fellowmen, and of our thanksgiving to God for the priceless gift of saving grace. And let our gifts be to the poor. The poor and the needy ought to be remembered. The bounties of providence are ours in trust and at no season ought the heart to melt as readily as at Christmas-tide. And the empty coffers of the Church should not be forgotten, for it is the privilege and duty to give freely of our means as a thank-offering to God.

A POINT SCORED.

It may happen that no immediate vote will be taken on the Sunday car question in Toronto, notwithstanding the recent untoward events. Mayor Fleming evidently overestimated his powers when he believed he could carry the Anti-Sunday car men with him in his proposed agreement. He has found it impossible to hold the confidence of his erstwhile friends, and his emphatic declaration that he is hostile to Sunday cars has not proved satisfactory. The question is now in the hands of a committee of Aldermen where it may remain until after the municipal elections. Many amendments will be proposed and carried, which the company will reject, or at least seek to compromise upon and as the time until the elections is brief, it is unlikely that Mayor Fleming can go to the people with a definite scheme of a Sunday and an Island service and meanwhile, the Lord's Day Alliance have done noble service. The deputation to the Aldermen made an admirable impression. Both Mr J. A. Paterson, and J. K. Macdonald spoke forcibly and to the point. Their statements have done much to place the whole question before the people in a clear light and we expect good results. It was well that the labour interests were taken up. The church and Sabbath lovers have an especial interest in the working classes and are in their proper sphere in defending labours' domain. And the workmen will not forget the fidelity with which their cause is upheld by the Alliance. The duty of the hour is to be on the alert; to be vigilant and well-prepared for any surprise that may be sprung upon the public in connection with this question. The attitude of the Aldermen ought to be observed and the hostile ones reckoned with at the polls.

SEPARATE SCHOOLS IN JAMAICA.

Even Jamaica has its separate school grievance. Until recently the schools there were practically undenominational. Yielding to Roman Catholic pressure the Board of Education has now passed the following official minute. "Provided that hereafter no new denominational schools will be recognized and placed on the Government list for receipt of Government grants-in-aid, with the exception that when there are twenty or more Roman Catholic children and no Roman Catholic school within a reasonable distance, a school can be established if the parents should desire it, such school to be solely for Roman Catholic children; and provided further that the same right and on the same condition be conceded at the discretion of the Board of Education to any other minority of the like number, declaring their inability on conscientious religious grounds to make use of the available school accommodations in their neighborhood; and provided further that the cost in grants to schools established and recognized under these conditions shall in no case exceed the amount per child in average attendance that would be due from the Government if the school had an average attendance of eighty; provided further that no school shall in any case receive any grants under the resolution unless it complies in all respects except attendance in certain cases, with the requirements of the code."

Strong opposition has been aroused by this minute and as it must receive legislative sanction before becoming operative it will be strenuously resisted. These arguments

are being used against it. First, that it is an abandonment of the non-denominational public school system hitherto prevailing; second that an additional and unnecessary burden will be placed upon the taxpayer; third, that it will introduce an element into politics which will prove disturbing and injurious to government. The objectors have probably studied the school problems of Canada and from them learned the danger to the peace of the State which must result from separate or denominational schools. At any rate, the people of Jamaica are on the threshold of a lively separate school agitation. In an appeal against the proposed change one writer says: "The Board has to be met by strong and determined resistance, it is not enough to say, in this case, it is wrong and ought not to be done but our position must be it is wrong and shall not be done if we can help it. And it behoves those who agree with the protest of Mr. Williams to take steps to resist the Board's reactionary proposal at each stage. The law has up till now given equal rights to all denominations and special favors to none. I do not think that any denomination has been so much as named in either the education law or in the code hitherto, and no grant has been given to any denomination that was not earned upon terms open to all. Why should it be otherwise? Surely the conscience clause is sufficient protection for Roman Catholics or any other sect."

But the Roman Catholics and their friends of the Board of Education are not idle. They have searched for precedents and have found that separate schools exist in Ontario. Our example here has been urged as one that ought to be followed, although the Roman Catholic population in Jamaica is comparatively small and there is no deadlock of legislation as was at the root of the Ontario-Quebec arrangement which has developed into our Separate School System.

The experience of Jamaica but still further illustrates the ceaseless activity of Rome in pushing her educational interests wherever there is an opening.

THE PULPIT.

Who has more councillorship than the preacher? Ever and anon does a paragraph appear, in which the faults of the pulpit are assailed and the sapient conclusion suggested, if not reached, that the days of the preacher are numbered. With so much literature at their disposal, they say, the people have no further use for feeble and unprofitable preaching. It would be folly to deny that many sermons are both feeble and unprofitable. With two or three sermons a week and the thousand and one claims upon a minister's time, how could it be otherwise? It is not given to every man to be either great or clever, and yet we do not hesitate to affirm that, the ordinary run of sermons are intellectually and morally on a higher plain than nine-tenths of the literature read by the masses of the people. The clergy have no monopoly of the common-place. You can find it in abundance in the news paper, or magazine or even books that have attained to coveted popularity. In the pulpit as in all other departments of intellectual and moral effort giants occasionally appear, and not less frequently here than elsewhere. The world would be depleted of its best thought, if emptied of the utterance of the pulpit from the days of Augustine and Chrysostom down to Arnold and Frederick Robertson. In what other profession could an equal amount of strongest thought and choicest expression be selected?

Yet it would be unjust to dwell too exclusively upon the great preachers. The chief work of the pulpit has been done by the quiet, unambitious, unknown men, who do not strive nor cry, but toil on in unrequited faithfulness. Only when the secrets of hearts are made known will it be known how many lives have

been blessed and souls saved by these humble toilers, who seek not the world's recognition, even resists it when proffered.

The real function of the pulpit is the conversion and edification of man. The sermon is not the primary element in the sanctuary service. The church is a house of prayer, "prayer is the end of preaching"—the sanctuary has attained its highest function when men are brought near to God, in holy adoration and praise. The sermon is for the purpose of arousing the careless, encouraging the feeble ones, bringing the wanderers home, and this chiefly by reiterating the Father's love. The pulpit has been in the past the defender of the liberties of the people against the aggression of tyrants. John Knox stood before Queen Mary as fearlessly as John the Baptist before Herod, or Luther before Charles V. at the Diet of Worms, and it was by their sermons they moved the world. It was by preaching that Savonarola moved the hearts of men in the midst of the corruptions of Florence, and Whitefield and the Wesleys awakened England out of the sleep of death. To discount preaching is to display ignorance of history, and of the methods of Providence. From the days of Noah, the preacher of righteousness, down to the present time, the mightiest force in the world, because of its strength and universality, has been the human voice, rebuking, awakening, and inspiring—preaching righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. The preacher occupies the vantage ground, and need we remind him bears the responsibility.

NATIONAL REFORM IN THE U. S.

Much is expected of the great convention held yesterday and to-day at Chicago, in the interests of national reform. The convention was under the auspices of the United Presbyterian church which at the last meeting of the General Assembly adopted this resolution. "Believing that a crisis is at hand in the work of National Reform, because of the fact that an amendment to the constitution of the United States has been formulated and is in the hands of a committee of Congress, and will be before Congress for adoption or rejection during the coming year, and whereas this crisis calls for special efforts on the part of friends of this reform, and we believe there are many in all parts of the church who would regard it a privilege as well as a duty to contribute to this cause in the present emergency, therefore we recommended that a contribution be given by each congregation of our church during the coming year and as early as possible." The committee charged with bringing this subject prominently before the church issued an earnest appeal to the ministers, opening with the following significant words: "As stated in the above action, our nation is in a great crisis. This is not a question between political parties, but between us as a nation and our God. We need to have wrought into the heart and life of our citizens and of our nation the truths embodied in the President's truly Christian Thanksgiving Proclamation, namely, 'that we owe gratitude to the God of nations for all our blessings; that we are prone to turn away from God's teachings; and to follow with sinful pride after our own devices; and that we should through the meditation of Him who taught us how to pray implore the forgiveness of our sins and the continuation of Heavenly favor.' Is it not just now, after the intense excitement of a presidential campaign, and while the great moral crisis in our national life still calls to most earnest effort, a fitting time to press upon our nation the duty of honoring our Saviour and King, in the assurance that He will honor us?"

The situation described in these sentences might apply to all countries with more or less force, and we draw attention to the appeal and action of a neighbouring church, as an encouragement to those here and

elsewhere who are doing what lies in their power to quicken the public conscience and to deepen the sense of responsibility of the Christian citizen as to the sway of righteousness in the affairs of the community.

MANITOBA COLLEGE.

The claims of Manitoba College on the liberality of the church are of the strongest possible character. Of late years the work accomplished by the college has been pretty thoroughly discussed throughout the eastern provinces and Ontario and is therefore fairly well known. But amid the many calls on the church no interest can afford now-a-days to be overlooked in the religious press, and Manitoba College is certainly an institution that is dear to the heart of the church. Perhaps no briefer statement could be put before the reader than that contained in a letter addressed to friends of the college appealing for a liberal collection, and from which the following extract is taken: "The College is entitled to the support of the Church as a whole on two grounds, first, that it is, in common with other institutions in Winnipeg of a like character, giving a Christian direction to higher education in the north-west of the Dominion, and second, that it is doing a great deal to make our mission work both more effective and less expensive. Many fields have been supplied with ordinances which, without the services of the students attending Manitoba College, must have been left without supply, and the whole field has been wrought at greatly less cost. The large sum of \$5,462 is stated to have been paid by the Home Mission Committee last year for the travelling expenses of students and preachers to the Northwest and British Columbia. Without the supply from Manitoba College this amount must have been almost doubled. The staff of the College even with the aid supplied during the summer session by the Professors of Eastern Colleges, is quite inadequate in view of the large amount of work to be overtaken. The appointment of a Professor of Systematic Theology, who should at the same time be qualified to take a share in the philosophical teaching of the Arts' course, is urgently required, and it is with the view, very specially, of making the appointment of such an addition to the staff possible at an early date, without incurring debt, that it is so desirable to have the contributions of congregations to the College, both east and west, made larger, and in the east especially, more general." The facts speak for themselves. The collection will be made next Lord's Day and there ought to be a generous offering.

THE LAST OF THE ROMANS.

Two prominent ministers have disappeared from the scene of their life-long labors in the Highlands of Scotland, recently. One, Rev. Dr. W. Ross Taylor, of Thurso, was removed by death, leaving behind him a noble example of activity, and diligence in the pastorate and of evangelical elevated and able preaching in the pulpit. Few ministers, even in the Highlands were more beloved, and few deserve the esteem of their people better. Dr. Taylor occupied the position of Moderator of the Free Church, and his son is one of the leaders of that Church in Glasgow, also named Dr. Walter Ross Taylor, who as a delegate to the Pan-Presbyterian Council at Toronto will be pleasantly remembered in Canada. The other minister is Rev. Dr. Aird, Creich, a veritable landmark, and a man whose name is a household one, not only in Scotland, but wherever the Gaelic-speaking race has spread in every clime. Dr. Aird was a father to his people; he he was pastor in spiritual things and adviser in their more important worldly concerns to an unusual extent. An eloquent preacher, and a man of deep sympathies, he occupied a position of vast influence and with his retirement has disappeared the last of the great leaders

of a generation ago of the church in the Northern Highlands. The men upon whom the mantle of "Forintosh" fell were Drs. Kennedy Aird, MacKay and MacCall. Dr. Aird still survives, but in his eighty-fourth year he has retired and has taken up his abode at Manchester, England, with relatives, where he intends to spend the remainder of his days.

OHUROH FINANCES.

At this season of the year it is customary for many people to cast up an estimate of the amounts to be given by them to church and charity during the coming year. This custom is in the direction of systematic giving and ought to be encouraged, and it is to be hoped that it is with the view of getting helpful information for this purpose that so many independent enquiries are being made as to the details of the various church funds. The interest thus shown is unusual, and evidently the result of the appeals made for needful funds in order that the work of the church may not suffer. We give a specimen letter by a respected minister, believing it to have been indited in a truly friendly spirit. Addressing the PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW he says:

"In your issue of date Dec. 3rd there appears what seems to be the official statement of the "amount required for current year" for schemes of the church. The first item on the list is a staggerer, to those of us who are watching details of expenditure from year to year, and who would like to be taken into the confidence of the committees. My purpose in writing is to ask what is the reason for requiring \$80,000. for Home Missions, for the current year, seeing that the committee closed last year with a balance at credit of \$5,210.35 and were able to meet all charges with \$70,127.27. I have taken some interest in Home Missions but I see no reason for an advance of \$15,210.35 to be expended at present on this department of the church's work.

"Furthermore I find from Blue Book app. 1 page 85 that the "Grant desired per Sabbath from H. M. Committee for year ending 1st April 1897" amounts to \$1,166.48 or for 52 Sabbaths a total of \$60,656.96 which total includes the sum of 567.30 for travelling expenses and special grant.

"Now Sir, I am anxious to know what extra work the committee is going to do, to use up the additional \$24,000, which they ask. According to the church agent, management expenses amount to 5% of the total expenditure. Taking that as the correct estimate, and the report as presented to the General Assembly as to the "Grants desired" there is an explanation in order for about \$22,000.

"I am also desirous of knowing the why and the wherefore of the different treatment meted out to the Colleges. Montreal, Queen's and Manitoba is to get \$14,000 between them, and Knox is to get \$18,500 including a deficit of \$6,576.

"Now, Mr Editor, do not think me too inquisitive. I know there is an explanation forthcoming but I can hardly conceive what it is likely to be, and hope you will help me to understand these matters."

As our correspondent remarks there is an explanation and it will be forthcoming. The work of the committees, the actual needs of the field will always prove interesting reading, and cannot be too often brought before the church. What may be taken for granted, in the meantime, is that not one cent is asked for in excess of what the necessities of the work require.

Religion in Ontario Schools. Our attention has been drawn by a contemporary to the fact that religion is being taught in the public schools at Kingston, Ontario.

In connection therewith the Inspector of schools has reported that the prescribed Scripture lessons, International S. S. series, are read, the golden text, commandments, Apostles' creed and Beatitudes are committed to memory; that some of the classes are reading the sermon on the Mount and memorizing the twenty-third Psalm. At first objections were made concerning certain words and phrases contained in the creed, but since these have been explained the Inspector has not heard of any dissatisfaction.

For the Poor Armenians. A contribution of \$3.00 to the Armenian Fund from Rev. A. G.

Jansen, Durham, has been received by the Editor and handed over to Dr. W. B. Geikie, the Treasurer of the fund, whose exertions in the good cause have been so signally rewarded. We shall be glad to receive contributions from our readers and to remit them to the Treasurer.

The Week of Prayer. Attention is called to the announcement of topics for the Week of Prayer. The ground covered is comprehensive and it is to be hoped that united prayer will be made the world over for blessing from on High.

Unitarianism versus Christianity. The question of the Christianity of Unitarians has come up in England in

connection with an application to a Unitarian provincial assembly by a young theistic preacher for a certificate of fitness for the Unitarian ministry. In the course of investigation it appeared that Mr. Voysey, while bearing a high personal character and well qualified to do good work, had declared that he was "not a Christian and in the ministry would not profess Christianity." In the discussion the Rev. Robert Spears, editor of *The Christian Life*, and Dr. Herford Brooke protested against his acceptance by the committee, while others urged acceptance and argued for unlimited theological freedom. The matter was up for full discussion at a meeting of the Assembly, but was deferred to the meeting of the National Triennial Conference to be held at Sheffield next year.

Expelled from Ecuador. At one time or other the Jesuits have been expelled from almost every country in the world, but they never seem to learn anything from experience. The latest news is that they have just been ordered to leave the eastern portion of the Republic of Ecuador though it is an exclusively Roman Catholic country. The reason given for this drastic action is the old one, that they are intermeddling with politics and stirring up sedition against the government because they could not otherwise get things all their own way. As to the merits of the quarrel we have no information. It is quite possible that Alfaro, the President of the Republic may be in the wrong, but, judging from the past, the chances are that the Jesuits have richly deserved their fate.

The only Remedy To those interested in the conversion of Roman Catholics, the little magazine published in New York by Father O'Connor, named the converted Catholic, is a welcome visitor. Seldom does it fail in valuable suggestion and in pithy comment. On a pressing question of the day a recent number says:—What can be done for the Roman Catholics in our day and generation who are not satisfied with their faith and who are in danger of losing all faith in religion? The educated classes in the Roman Catholic countries of Europe have lost faith. We are a young nation here and comparatively few of those European infidels have come to us. But we will raise our own crop in the children of the superstitious Roman Catholics whose hearts the false religion cannot satisfy. Give them the Bible and tell them of Christ and they shall be saved.

Notes from the North.

Written for the Review.

BY W. M. G.

IV.

About two hours steaming after leaving Viborg, brought us to Cronstadt, the famous rendezvous of the Russian navy, and the most important fortress in the Empire. It is formed by an island of some nine miles in length in the Gulf of Finland which is situated in the middle of a channel, where the shores narrow to a short distance from each other. The passage between the north side of the island and the mainland, is filled with shoals and is practically impassable, and the trade of St. Petersburg is done by the south channel. As the *Tornea* approached the entrance to the harbor, which is formed by the artificial contraction of the sides of the channel, many large granite, casemated forts rising out of the sea were passed. They looked grim and frowning enough, but whether such fortifications are of much account as against the guns of the modern first class battle ship, is a matter of doubt. They seemed, however, during the Crimean war to be sufficient to prevent any attack on the place by the wooden ships of the allied fleet. Here we saw many Russian ironclads and gunboats, chiefly of a style which might be called antiquated, when compared with the latest creations of the British dockyards. The Imperial Yacht, which has cost the grateful country several millions of roubles was a prominent object among the many large vessels which thronged the port. The town itself is a busy place in summer, but in winter, when the harbor is frozen, is almost deserted. On passing through this marine gateway, our steamer entered a large basin of shallow water, not more than eight or nine feet in depth extending from Cronstadt, to St. Petersburg, a distance of twenty miles and having a width of apparently about the same distance. Steamers, until within a few years ago, discharged at Cronstadt, and their passengers and cargoes were forwarded by rail to St. Petersburg. Now however, a channel has been dredged along this lagoon, deep enough to permit large vessels to pass to the new harbor at the capital. Along this artificial passage, which is buoyed and staked out by poles, our vessel made her way till we arrived at what is called the Marine Canal. This is not a canal in the ordinary acceptation of the term, but rather a channel, about four miles in length, running between two embankments, which connects the waters of the Gulf with those of the Neva. It is formed, evidently for the purpose of providing a deep water way into the city. After leaving this canal, we entered the Neva, and at half speed steamed into the city until we neared the first bridge. We were surprised to find the river so large, and apparently the scene of so much commercial activity. For a considerable distance before coming to the wharf, the quays which are massively constructed of granite, were lined with steamers, and many large ship building yards were passed. Not a few of these were for the construction of war ships, and a good many rather formidable looking craft were either on the stocks or recently launched. During the seven months when the port is clear of ice, the harbor is visited by about 3000 steamers of which three fourths are British. On landing at the wharf on the north side of the Neva, the steamer was immediately boarded by two sets of uniformed officials, one being the customs officers, and the other, the police. Before the customs officers overhauled our baggage, we were all marched into the saloon, and having produced our passport from the Foreign office duly vided by the Russian Consul in London, the police officer after questioning us as to whether we carried explosives, endorsed a certificate on our passport, and handing it back to us, delivered us over to the customs officers, whose examination was not of a very serious character, and who discharged their duty good humoredly. We were then permitted to land. Our first experience in the various formalities attendant on our thus being granted permission to put our feet on the soil of Holy Russia impressed us with the rigid officialism which was afterwards observable on every hand. We have read of priest ridden countries, but it appeared to us that Russia might be spoken of as an official ridden land. Everything is regulated by police instructions and the consciousness of official supervision is ever present to the mind. While this is the case, it must be admitted that certain benefits arise in regard to the conduct of civic affairs, for to the passing visitor St.

Petersburg seems a remarkably clean, quiet, and orderly city. It may have been the result of reading or imagination on the part of the writer, but it certainly seemed that there was an air of repression about the people entirely absent in Sweden. Sitting in the gardens of the square of St. Isaacs, in the long evenings, we watched the people as they strolled about, or sat on the garden seats, and could not divest ourselves of the idea that they seemed to be taking their pleasure rather constrainedly. The very children seemed to have nothing of the merry spirit of childhood. When sitting, as we did almost every evening, in these gardens, we observed an individual who invariably took a seat not far from us. He seemed intent on a book with which he made but little progress, but we caught him now and again carefully scrutinising us. He may have been a police emissary, for such abound everywhere, and there may have been a Nihilistic air about us.

On landing we secured droskies, and drove at once to the Hotel D'Angleterre. These droskies are the national conveyances of Russian cities, and their number in St. Petersburg, is legion. They are small victorias, holding two persons, and are mounted on very low wheels. The driver occupies a small seat in front, and his dress consists of a long dark blue coat, reaching nearly to his feet, of coarse material, and around his waist is a red woollen sash. He wears on his head a very low crowned black beaver hat, with the brim turned up at the sides, and on his feet are heavy boots, reaching nearly to his knees. The uniform is universal and a visitor can with difficulty, distinguish one driver from another. These tiny vehicles are drawn by one small horse, and drive rapidly over the rough cobblestone pavement of the streets. On our way to our hotel we crossed to the south side of the river by a fine bridge, and thence drove easterly along the English Quay, which is lined by the magnificent residences of the ambassadors, grand dukes and nobility. Turning southerly for a short distance we passed the great building of the Ministry of War, and entering the square of St. Isaacs, were driven to our hotel which faced the gardens in front of the vast cathedral. The hotel prices were reasonable, and the food well cooked and abundant. The servants here, as elsewhere in Russian hotels, receive no wages, and live on the guests. In many cases they pay for the privilege of obtaining gratuities. In the reading room we had the leading daily papers of London, as also *Punch*, *The Illustrated London News*, and *The Graphic*, but hardly a day passed without our seeing passages in these papers deleted by the censors:—so careful is the paternal government to prevent the intrusion of liberal views. Police interference again presented itself, for our passports were again demanded for transmission to the Russian Foreign office. We did not again receive them till the officials there had satisfied themselves about us. The police had another scrutiny of our credentials, and not until twenty-four hours of our announced time of departure did we again get them, with permission to leave endorsed on them.

Our first visit was naturally paid to the great church opposite our bedroom windows, named after the Russian saint, Isaacs. This magnificent structure ranks among the great temples, such as St. Peters and St. Pauls. It is built in the form of a Greek cross, with four similar facades, each being in the form of a Greek temple. The entablatures are supported by 112 pillars, each a monolith of granite, 60 feet in height, having a diameter of 7 feet, and weighing 128 tons. They rest on bronze bases, and have richly adorned capitals in the Corinthian style of the same material. On the north frieze are inscribed the words, "The king shall rejoice in thy strength," on the south, "Mine house shall be called a house of prayer," on the east "In Thee do I put my trust, let me never be ashamed," and on the west, "To the King of kings." The church has five domes, the central one rises to a height of 296 feet, and like the others, is richly gilded. The gilding of the central dome required 200 pounds weight of gold. The diameter of the dome is 66 feet, and the dome is supported by 24 pillars of granite, which rise from the level of the roof to a height of 36 feet. They are of granite, and each weigh 64 tons. The immense quantity of iron and bronze used in the construction of the building was manufactured by the Scotch house of

Baird, who had at one time extensive foundries in St. Petersburg. The structure rests on made ground, and literally a forest of piles each 22 feet in length was sunk under its foundations. The cost of this piling was \$1,000,000. The interior, with the exception of the richly gilded sanctuary, is not decorated, but in that part are found enormous columns of malachite and lapis-lazuli. These columns are constructed, it is true, on a basis of copper, and only overlaid with these substances, but when you find that the price of an ordinary penholder of lapis-lazuli is \$12.50, some idea may be formed of the cost of these great columns. The construction of the church was finished in 1858, at a total cost of \$16,000,000.

The great bell boomed out the call to worship from four in the morning, at intervals all day, and a small bell, sounding like a tin pot and rung with great rapidity, sometimes accompanied the rich and deep tones of the grand bell. What was the object of this discordant element, which was so incongruous with the solemnity of the deep tones of the other bell we could not discover. We were told simply that it was a call to prayer. The ringing of this wretched bell at four a.m., quite near his bedroom, does not inspire very devotional feeling in the wearied tourist. The general effect of the building is imposing, although from the quantity of dark red granite, bronze and gold employed in its construction, it has a somewhat hard and metallic appearance, and wants the softness of the gothic cathedrals.

We attended service in St. Isaacs one Lord's day. The service began at 10 a.m., and lasted till 1 p.m., and as there was not a seat of any kind in the edifice, we in common with all the congregation, stood during the whole time. In Athens, we observed in the churches, supports, like the arms of chairs projecting from the walls, about the height of the arm pits. Weakly persons could lean against the walls and throwing their arms over the supports find some rest. In St. Isaacs, there is no such assistance to lazy or feeble folk, but all had to stand unsupported during the service. There were no reserved places, and all worshippers rich and poor, men and women, soldier and civilian, old and young, stood, for the time at least, in perfect equality in the presence of the Almighty. This equality in the house of God, may possibly account to some extent, for the curious democratic feeling which exists among the Russians, side by side with an autocratic government. Several thousand worshippers were present, and of them three-fourths were men. No books of any kind were used by the congregation, and no movement was made by any one, save when some one moved by special devotional feeling, knelt down and touched the marble floor with his forehead. The congregation took no part in the service, but maintained a devout attitude throughout. No instrumental music was used; its absence was not missed. Indeed the sound of the grandest organ would have been out of place, among the tremendous bass voices of the singers. The alto and soprano voices could scarcely rise above the swell of these extraordinary volumes of sound. That the human voice was capable of producing such marvellous effects is inconceivable to any one not having listened to them. The service seemed one long chant, save when one of the priests read large portions of scripture. The general character of the chant was plaintive and sounded as if it were intercessory. The voice of the reader beggars description. It was indeed a voice of thunder, yet clear, resonant, and without a suspicion of huskiness.

A screen constructed of stone, between two of the columns which support the dome, closes the view of the congregation from the large window in the north arm of the cross forming the plan of the church. This window is filled with a gigantic figure of our Saviour, clad in a scarlet robe. At a point in the service, near its commencement, bronze doors in this screen are opened, and this imposing figure is suddenly disclosed, and stands out illumined by the sun light, amid the gloom of the church, as the central object presented to the worshippers. Along the base of this opening in the screen, are ranged seven golden candlesticks, with lighted candles. They apparently rise to about the level of the ankles of the great figure of Christ, who

thus appears to be walking forth in a blaze of glory, among the seven churches. For about two hours and a-half every one in the great edifice, and they were numbered by thousands, had this resplendent picture before them, as the one object for their contemplation. The sonorous swell of the marvellous voices, sometimes rising in triumphant storms of music, and again sinking into the almost inaudible appeal for mercy, together with the constant presentation of the sublime figure of the Redeemer, left an impression on our minds never to be forgotten.

At Chrystmasse Tyde.

RUGENIA PRUDEN, IN THE HOME MAGAZINE.

"Two sorrow Thynges there be—

Ay, three;

A Nests from which yo Fledglings have been taken,
A Lambe forsaken,
A redde leaf from yo Wilde Rose rudely shaken.

Of gladdo Thynges there be more—

Ay, four;

A Lark above yo olde Nests blythely singing,
A Wilde Rose clinging
In safety to a Rock, a Shepherde bringing
A Lambe, found, in his arms, and Chrystmasse
Bells a ringing."

HOLLY AND MISTLETOE.

According to an ancient tradition all the plants rejoice at the coming of Christmas; some bursting into blossom afresh in commemoration of the day. Partly for this reason perhaps as well as on account of the good cheer and joyousness of the occasion, all the Christian world of to-day decorates its houses and churches with flowers and plants for this fesal season.

No decoration seems complete without a little holly, no chandelier trimmed that has not a sprig of mistletoe suspended from it.

The use of the holly is said to have originated with the Romans, who were in the habit of sending boughs of holly and evergreens to their friends during the time of the Saturnalian festival which occurred about the same time of year as did Christmas. Oak boughs would have been used instead doubtless, had the festival not come at the time of year when the oak was naturally bare of foliage, and the beautiful holly with its shining green leaves and glowing red berries seemed the most fitting substitute.

In the course of time decorating became almost a part of the people's religious faith, so much so that the monks came to speak of holly as the holy tree.

The use of the mistletoe came from the Druids, those primeval priests who are well known to have held the oak in great veneration, and as that tree is the best loved home of the mistletoe, it may be that its connection with the sacred tree first gained for it notice and respect.

Many are the legends in which these two plants appear. One from the Norseland tells us that long years ago when gods and goddesses visited the earth, there was one god, the Apollo of the Norsemen, beloved by all, both men and gods, Baldur the Good. He is represented as having been the wisest, the most amiable, the most beautiful, in every way the most charming character. His very presence made continual sunshine, a brilliant light being said to stream from his body, and for this reason the whitest of the Northren flowers is named Baldurs-brow.

But Baldur did not possess immortality, which caused no anxiety until he became impressed through dreams, that he was to lose his life. When he told the gods of these dreams they became exceedingly troubled. At once they held a council and endeavored to decide upon some course which might insure to them the safety of their favorite. After deliberation, they sought the assistance of Thor to make him immortal.

He told them that their desire would be accomplished when every animal, plant and mineral should have sworn not to hurt or injure him. In order to secure this result, his anxious mother, Freyja (in whose honor we have our week-day named Friday) descended to the earth and received a promise from all created things, animate and inanimate, everything except one little insignificant plant which had attached itself to the

gnarled branches of an old, old oak. The seeming weakness and powerlessness of the plant led Freyja to pass it by unsworn.

How often mortals make a life mistake in disregarding the small things of life. Only the sorrow which follows can show the evil of such negligence, and prove over and over that nothing is too insignificant for notice.

Baldur's admirers supposing Freyja's mission so successful that no harm could possibly come to the god of mirth and merriment, and he ever ready to afford them amusement and pleasure, allowed himself to be set upon as a target for them to practice upon and show their skill. Some hurled stones and darts while others hewed at him with swords and battle-axes. Thor threw his mighty hammer which rebounded without having inflicted a mar or scratch. Each god in turn flung his missile, but Baldur stood erect and smiling through it all. Hovering near was Loki, the spirit of evil, whose whole aim was to do mischief, and to mar the happiness of the gods. Always envious and wrathful, he was angered still more as he looked upon the fair-haired god surrounded by his worshipping divinities, and invulnerable to all harm. He determined to find out what it all meant. Changing into the form of a beautiful woman he went to the home of Freyja, the goddess-mother, was cordially received, and being asked whence he came, answered from where the gods made a target of Baldur the Good without hurting him. "Aye," said Freyja, "neither metal nor wood can harm Baldur as an oath has been given by all that they will not." In astonishment Loki said, "what! all things?" "Yest all but one little plant called mistletoe that grows upon the oak. That was two young and feeble to give an oath."

Loki at this disclosure was filled with a malicious satisfaction, and cherishing a wicked purpose in his heart, left Baldur's mother, who had been the innocent betrayer of her son, and went straight for the mistletoe. Having plucked a branch from the seemingly inoffensive little plant and fashioned it into the form of an arrow he went back and having again made himself invisible placed the murderous weapon in the hands of a blind god who was taking no part in the sport. The afflicted one pleased at being able to join in the game threw the missile, his arm being guided by the evil Locki.

The instant the point pierced his heart the beautiful Baldur fell dead, and great was the consternation among the gods, great the satisfaction in the breast of the envious Loki.

Some of the blood that spurted from the wound fell upon a holly, near which he was standing, and ever since its berries have been red, while the mistletoe was so grieved that such disaster had come through her that she has ever since born fruit like tears.

But the evil one was not so easily victorious, for combining all their forces and magic power the gods restored their favorite to life, and in order that the mistletoe should ever after be powerless to do him harm, it was placed under the care of his mother, Freyja. The one condition of her supremacy was that it should never touch the earth.

For this reason mistletoe is always hung from the ceiling, and when boys and girls pass beneath it, they give each other the kiss of peace and love thus showing that this plant is no longer an instrument of evil.

GOODWILL.

BY SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.

Goodwill! Consider this
What easy, perfect bliss
If, over all the Earth the one change spread
That Hate and Fraud should die,
And all in amity,
Let go rapine, and wrath, and wrong, and dread.

What lack of Paradise
If in angelic wise,
Each unto each, as to himself, were dear?
If we in souls deserted,
Whatever form might hide,
Own brother, and own sister, everywhere?

Till these things come to pass!—
Nay, if it be—alas!—
A vision, let us sleep and dream it true!
Or—sane, and broad awake—
For its great sound and sake,
Take it, and make it Earth's; and peace ensue!

A CHRISTMAS SERVICE.

THE DIVINE CHRISTMAS GIFT.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, etc.—Isa. ix. 6.

I. The gift of Christ as a child, a son, (a) a gift of love, (b) of supreme beauty and joy, (c) of universal fitness to our wants, (d) of eternal enrichment, for ever increasing in value, (e) ensures all other gifts needful. "How shall he not with Him also freely give us all things?"

II. The fitness of Christ's infancy to the world, beauty and pathos of His being committed, a babe, to a human bosom. Our child relation intimates the fruit of the race's soul travail. Christ born in every family where faith is, and in every heart where love welcomes. Marvels of His nature and errand.

III. Gift how received. Many make merry Christmas while shutting Christ out in the cold. "No place in the inn."

Happy those who welcome Him. Christ formed in us the hope of glory.

TRUE CHRISTMAS JOY.

Why is Christmas a glad season? Custom has set the day apart for one of special rejoicing—we wish one another a happy or a merry Christmas. Is it only because it is a conventional holiday, when, by common consent, work and its attendant drudgeries are put on one side, and all conspire to forget the ills which are meanwhile still gathered at the door? Then Christmas is only an imposition—a sham—a hollow truce with crying evil and perpetual sorrow—an enforced holiday, in the midst of whose mirth a false note rings, and many a jarring chord breaks in upon the melody; for sadness will steal in upon your memories whether you will or not, and many an eye will fill with tears whether you will or no. "If only he were with us, our joy would be complete." But he is on the far and stormy sea, or in some sultry clime, or lying in the quiet grave. "How she would have rejoiced, but she has passed from earth's joys and earth's sorrows to the borders of the tearless land!" Yes, memory is busy in the festivals, and the eyes that glisten to-day will not glisten wholly for joy.

Are we all false in a measure? Or are we all proud, and put on the air of gladness, and speak the words of a joy we only half feel, or perhaps, just feel we ought to feel, no more?

What do we need? We want a joy which is deep based. Not a holiday gladness, shouted in with the cry of carol, or the jargon of waits; but a joy, high-sounded from heaven itself—sung by heavenly voices, and tuned to angel harps—a joy which outleaps all time and space, because springing from a source which earth's troubles, losses, and pains cannot corrupt—a joy which, like a warm current, flows from out a sunny south to melt down to freshness and brightness again the icy griefs and frost-bound pains of the past.

THE CHRISTMAS CHIMES.

"The Christmas chimes are pealing, softly pealing; the joyous sounds are ringing; ever louder and clearer, ever nearer and nearer, like a sweet toned benediction falling on the ear. Glad ringers are pulling the ropes, and in one grand swell of melody Christmas, with its old yet ever new and marvellous mysteries, bursts triumphantly upon the world once more.

The houses are decked with holly, the yule log burns brightly, the gray swallows sweep away, the sun is up, the bright-eyed children who have lain awake all night listening for the patter of old Saint Nick's tiny steeds on the roof, only to fall asleep at the eventful moment, wake hurriedly to find the stockings running over with toys and sweet-meats.

"Beautiful and right it is that gifts and good wishes should fill the air like snow flakes at Christmas tide. And beautiful is the year and its coming and in its going; most beautiful and blessed because it is always the Year of Our Lord.

"I do not know a grander effect of music on the moral feelings than to hear the full choir and the pealing organ performing a Christmas anthem and filling every part of the church with triumphant harmony."

The Christmas Angel.

BY THE REV. HENRY VAN DYKE, D.D.

It was the hour of rest in the Celestial Country. All the silver bells that mark the flow of eternity in that land where time is unknown were softly chiming down the streets of gold, and across the sea of glass, and over the meadows of asphodel. At the sound of their chiming all the angels who had been working turned to play, and all who had been playing sprang joyously to work. Those who had been meditating alone came together in companies to talk. Those who had been singing and making music began to listen. And those who had been far away on errands to the earth and other stars came back to Paradise, flocking as doves to their windows.

They had no need of restoration from weariness, for the inhabitants of that country never say, I am tired. But the law of changes hold true even in heaven, and happiness consists of an endless variety of labor and repose, society and solitude, music and stillness. In heaven also they say:

If life were only music,
Our hearts would sometimes long
For one sweet strain of silence
To break the endless song.

Far sweeter sounds the singing
For intervals of rest,
While thoughts of God are ringing
Unspoken through the breast.

It was in one of the quiet corners of the broad green valley called the Field of Peace, where the little Brook of Bright Hope flows smoothly down to join the great River of the Water of Life, that I thought I saw a company of angels, returned from various ministries on earth, reclining on the fragrant turf where cyclamens and arbutus and violets and fringed orchids and pale lady's tresses, and all the sweet-smelling blossoms that are separated in the lower world by the seasons, were woven together in a harmony of perfume, and solacing themselves with friendly converse. There were three of them who seemed to be leaders among their companions, distinguished not only by a more radiant and powerful aspect, but also by the gravity of their speech and the reverence with which the others listened to them. They were talking of their earthly tasks, of the troubles and miseries that they had seen among men, and of the best way to cure them.

"The lower world is full of unrighteousness," said the tallest and most mighty of the angels, clad in shining armor, and girded with a long, sharp, two-edged sword, by which I knew that he was Michael, the strong champion of the heavenly armies, and executor of divine judgments. "The earth is tormented with injustice, and the great misery that I have seen among men is that the hand of the evil is stronger than the hand of the good. The cruel are more powerful than the kind. The unjust override the just, and trample on them. The good cannot defend themselves against the wicked. I have seen the tyrant kings crushing the helpless people. I have seen the happy fields trampled into bloody mire by the rush of conquering armies. I have seen the honest pillaged by violence, and the meek oppressed with cruelty. I have seen that as soon as the flowers of purity and love begin to spring on the earth, the heel of brutal force treads them down the hand of hatred tears them up and destroys them. The evil, as it seems to me, can be redressed only by force—more power to the righteous, strength to defend the helpless, strength to punish the wicked, strength to put down all injustice, strength to uphold the truth everywhere, and make the law of righteousness triumph. O that the law of our great King might be thundered out over this rebellious earth! O that the armies of the good might be equipped with new valor and armed with new might! O that we, the hosts of God, might be summoned, arrayed, dispatched, as we were once, against the rebel angels, to mingle in the wars of men, to make the good victorious, and destroy all evil, and maintain peace with the sword! Then would the salvation of God be manifest and the earth redeemed. We would break the fetters of the slave and shatter the thrones of tyrants. We would chain the cruel and violent. We would stand guard, with glittering weapons, about the bed of innocence, and defend helpless virtue, make liberty everywhere by enforcing law, and keep the peace of God with the sword of the angels."

As he spoke, his strong hand pressed the hilt of his mighty blade, and it moved and glistered, throwing rainbows of light around it, like spray from the sharp prow of a moving ship. Bright sparks of heavenly ardor flashed from the eyes of the listening angels; a martial air passed over their faces, as if they waited and longed for the call to warfare. But no silver trumpet rang from the battlements of heaven, no celestial drum-beat echoed

over the smooth mead. Only the sound of the Brook of Bright Hopes was heard tinkling and gurgling among the roots of the grasses and flowers, and far off a faint cadence of song in the City of God.

Then another angel spoke, and made answer to Michael. He also was tall and very strong. But his strength was of the mind rather than of the hand. His face was clear and shining, and his eyes like flames of fire. Of flame also were his garments, clinging closely about him, as the fire envelops a torch burning where there is no wind; and his wings, spiring to a brilliant point far above his head, were like the flame of a mighty lamp. By this sign I knew that it was Uriel, the angel of the sun, wisest and sharpest-sighted of all the spirits that surround the throne.

"I do not hold the same thought nor cherish the same desire," he said, "as the great archangel Michael. For I remember how often power has been given to the good, and how often it has been turned aside and used for evil. I remember how often angels of God have fought upon the side of chosen nations, and how often pride has followed success, and oppression has been the first-born child of victory. I remember how many of the liberators of men have become the tyrants of those whom they have set free, and the champions of liberty have been transformed into the soldiers of fortune. Power corrupts itself, and force cannot save.

"Do you not remember, Prince Michael, how you led the hosts of Israel, and gave them victory over every foe, except the enemy within the camp, whom you could not conquer? And how they became the oppressors of the nations against whom they had fought for liberty? And how the vices of the tribes of Canaan survived their conquest and overcame their conquerors, so that the people of Israel, who had destroyed the idols of their enemies, learned afterwards to worship them, and caused their children to pass through the fire of Molech, and offered sacrifices to Baalim and Ashtaroth.

"Power corrupts itself and force cannot save. Was not Persia the destroyer of Babylon, and did not Persia's tyranny soon need to be destroyed? Did not Greece break the yoke of the East, and has not the yoke of Greece been broken by the heavier hand of Rome? And are there no tyrannies, no cruelties, no iniquities under those immense eagle-wings that now overshadow land and sea? Listen!"

There was silence in the Field of Peace. A faint wind blew for a moment over the encircling hills, and with it there came a sound confused and distant, as of the clanking of chains on the wrists of prisoners, and the sighing of millions of slaves, and the weeping of many children, and the blows of hammers nailing men to their crosses. Then it ceased, and Uriel continued:

"Power corrupts itself, and force cannot save. The earth is full of ignorance, and knowledge alone can deliver it. It is because men do not understand evil that they love it. Sin is folly in action, and unrighteousness is a blind giant. It is because men are ignorant that they destroy one another and themselves. If there were more light in the world, there would be less sorrow. When light prevails everywhere, sorrow will cease. The world must be saved by wisdom—wisdom to understand the forces of nature, the secrets of philosophy, the laws which bind man to man. O that the great source of wisdom, our King, would enlighten the earth, inspire holy men to write infallible scriptures for every race, send forth floods of knowledge, and pour rivers of understanding through the world! And if He would send us His angels, to instruct His creatures, how gladly would we go to fulfil His will! We would whisper the word of counsel and restraint in the ears of the erring, and tell knowledge to one perplexed, and gather the young and ignorant around us in holy schools of learning. Then folly would vanish like a mist, and the sun of wisdom would shine on all men, and the salvation of the world would appear."

A soft murmur of applause followed his words, and looks of eager intelligence flashed around the circle as the messengers of light listened to its praise.

But the third archangel shook his head and smiled in dissent, as if he knew the weakness of knowledge.

"Who was it," said he turning to an angel near him, "to whom you were sent long since with counsel? Was it not to Balaam the son of Beor! And did not even the ass profit more by your instructions than the man? And who was it," said the archangel, turning to Uriel, "that was the wisest of all men, that searched out and understood the many inventions that are found under the sun? Was it not Solomon, the unhappy child of

fortune, unable by his wisdom to save even himself from disgrace and death? Knowledge is not holiness nor peace. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit. I know it, because I, of all the angels, have communed most often and dwelt most frequently with men, since the day when God sent me to instruct Adam in Paradise."

Then I looked at him more closely, and recognized the beauty of the archangel Raphael, that sociable spirit whom the poet once described:

A seraph winged; six wings he wore, to shade
His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast,
With regal ornament; the middle pair
Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
And colors dipped in Heav'n; the third his feet
Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
Sky-tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood,
And shook his plumes, that Heav'nly fragrance filled
The circuit wide.

"I know too well," he continued, while the smile upon his face changed to a look of sympathy and compassion "the impotence of power to deliver those who are in the chains of selfishness, and the feebleness of knowledge to open the eyes of those who are blinded by their own sins. I believe only in the power of love and in the wisdom of kindness. What alone can save the world is for men to be made like God. When they love one another and help one another, then they will deliver one another from evils. How much of human sin comes from disease and want! How much of human violence comes from poverty and hunger! The cruelest oppression is when the strong keep the weak under their feet; and the bitterest pride is when the wise and learned despise the simple; and the greatest folly is when the rich think that they are like gods, and the poor think that God is not. If men would only help one another! If the rich would give to the poor, and the wise instruct the ignorant, and the powerful defend the helpless! If they would learn how to heal diseases and comfort sorrows and make life beautiful for all men! If there were houses of healing where the sick could be nursed and tended! If there were houses of refuge where the desolate could be protected! If there were joyous fellowships in which men should meet together, as of one family, and each should be happy in the other's good! But how can that ever be? Even the gods that men make for themselves are cruel and greedy and tyrannical and false. How can the only being that will save the world be brought to pass? How can human nature learn the meaning of humanity? How can man be made like the 'God of Love'?"

The question sent a deep silence around the circle like the lull of the wind that follows the sunset. And suddenly through this silence, like the song of a wood-thrush from its hermitage in the forest, a voice came ringing: "I know it, I know it, I know it!" Clear and sweet—clearer than the smallest silver bell upon the city's battlements, and sweeter than the harp that led the music in the angel choir—was that jingle, slender voice, thrilling through the odorless and translucent twilight which in heaven takes the place of night.

Nearer and nearer it rang, coming down the valley: "I know it, I know it, I know it!"

Then from between the gently smiling hills where the Brook of Bright Hopes rises, appeared a young angel, like a little child, with floating hair, clad in white, with green wreaths twined about his shoulders, and a tiny glittering star upon his forehead. As thistle-down, blown by the wind, dances lightly across the water, so he danced down the little stream, singing clear above the murmuring waters: "I know it, I know it, I know it!"

All the angels rose in wonder and amazement. Multitudes of others came, flying swiftly to the place from which the strange new voice was sounding. Rank within rank, in concentric circles, they stood upon the sloping flowery banks of the brook, while the child-angel danced into the midst of them, singing: "I know it, I know it, I know it! How shall men be made like God? By God Himself becoming man."

At this all the angels looked one at another in wonder and awe, and drew more closely about the child-angel, as those who hear strange tidings.

"How can this be?" they asked. "Is it possible? How can God become a man?"

"I do not know," said the child-angel. "I only know that it will surely be so."

"But if God becomes a man," said Raphael, "He will be at the mercy of men; the cruel and the wicked will oppress Him. He will suffer.

"I know it," said the child-angel, "and by suffering He will know the meaning of all sorrow and pain; and He will be able to

comfort every one who cries, and His tears will be for the healing of all broken hearts; and for His sake, and by His example, men will learn to be kind to each other."

"But if God becomes a man," said Uriel, "men will despise Him; the wise and learned will look down upon Him, and speak contempt of Him."

"I know it," said the child-angel, "and He will not answer them; but to the mock and lowly He will give true wisdom."

"But if God becomes a man," said Michael, "men will oppress and persecute Him; they may even take His life, since he will be no stronger than they."

"I know it," said the child-angel; "they will nail Him to a cross. But when He is lifted up, He will draw all men unto Him. From the cross He will stretch out His pierced hand to change the world."

"But how do you know these things," cried the other angels, "and who are you?"

"I am the Christmas-angel," he said, "and this is Christmas Day. To-day the Son of God is born a child of man, to make the sons of men children of God. And I must fly quickly, before the dawn rises on the world, to bring the glad tidings to those happy men who have been chosen to receive them first."

So saying, the child-angel sprang swiftly over the bound of heaven, and passed downward toward the night-shadow of the earth like a shooting-star that darts in splendor through the misty air leaving no track behind.

The other angels, as if drawn by an invisible attraction, followed after him—a multitude of dazzling, fluttering shapes, more brilliant than a rain of jewels falling from the sky.

But the child-angel went far more swiftly than all the others, because of the certainty of gladness in his heart. And as others followed him, they wondered who had been favored and chosen to first receive the great, the wonderful message.

"It must be the Emperor of the world and his generals," said they.

But the flight passed over Rome.

"It may be the philosophers and writers of learned books," said they.

But the flight passed over Athens.

"Can it be the High Priest and the King of the Jews?" said they.

But the flight turned away from Jerusalem. It floated out over the hill country, the great throng of silent angels keeping close together, as if perplexed and wondering, the Christmas angel darting on far in advance, as if he knew the way through the darkness.

The villages were all sleeping and still; but in one place there was a sound of low voices talking in a stable, a sound as of a mother soothing her babe.

All over the pastures a light veil of snow was spread, and on the loneliness of hill and vale the stars looked down, sparkling with secret joy. And there were in that country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo! the angel of the Lord came unto them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all nations. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men. And the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go, even to Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass. And I said to myself, I also will go with the shepherds to Bethlehem. Then I heard a great voice as of a bell, which said, Come! And when it had sounded twelve times, I awoke, and knew that it was a dream. And yet it seemed to me to be true.

CHRISTMAS EVERYWHERE.

Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-night!
Christmas in lands of the fir tree and pine,
Christmas in lands of the palm tree and vine,
Christmas where snow peaks stand solemn and white,
Christmas where cornfields lie sunny and bright!

Christmas where children are hopeful and gay,
Christmas where old men are patient and grey,
Christmas where peace like a dove in his flight
Broods o'er brave men in the thick of the fight:
Everywhere, Everywhere, Christmas to-night!

Then let every heart keep its Christmas within,
Christ's pity for sorry, Christ's hatred of sin,
Christ's care for the weakest, Christ's courage for right,
Christ's hate of the darkness, Christ's love of the light;
Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-night!



THE CHRISTMAS VISIT.—"A BREAK-DOWN."



SANTA CLAUS.

M. WALKER

CHRISTMAS TIDE.

"A merry Christmas!" How the old words waken
A thrill and a throb for many a Christmas fled,
For hopes fulfilled not, that the years have taken
Into their keeping, like the tears ye shed.
"A merry Christmas!" Let the happy chorus
Bring a new thrill, now freedom, now delight;
Past pain makes present joy but sweeter for us,
E'en as the dawn of morning after night.

"A merry Christmas!" Be ye thankful ever
For friendship that is left, warm, sure and strong,
For love that fills your hearts with high endeavor.
Live life anew. Ye do the Past no wrong.

"A merry Christmas!" Life has halting places,
Where ye may pause in all the busy strife
To comfort those whose sorrow stricken faces
Tell their own story in the book of life.

"A merry Christmas!" Raise on high the holly,
With spirits leaping at the sound of mirth,
Far nobler than all sorrow is your folly
That sheds "good will" and gladness o'er the earth.

HARRIET KENDALL.

A CHRISTMAS INCIDENT.

One of the pleasantest incidents of the Christmas that has just passed was the trip to four of the hospitals of the city by the choir boys of Grace church, which

was made on Christmas eve. It left behind it rays of sunshine for the unfortunate men and women, who had life made brighter for them by the sweet song of the boys as they paid a brief visit to the temporary homes of the sufferers.

The Presbyterian Hospital was the last one on the route, and there had been so many delays on the road that it was late when they reached there, says a writer in The Chicago Inter Ocean. The lights in most rooms had been extinguished, and the patients had many of them dropped into a disappointed sleep, for they had been told that the boys from Grace church were coming to sing for them, and when they fell to sleep at nearly midnight it was with the feeling that they had been slighted and that the boys had neglected to come. The effect of the glorious music as it swelled through the corridors could not have been more beautiful if it had been pre-arranged. Patients started from their sleep and wondered if they were not in another land.

It was during the visit to the Presbyterian Hospital that happy Christmas eve that one of life's daily tragedies, so common in a great hospital, was being enacted. The pathetic incident as related by the attendants at the hospital is best told in Professor Roney's own words:

"It was nearly midnight. The minute hand of the hospital clock had but to creep around the arc of a circle ere the bells would proclaim the birth of another Christmas day. The flushed and earnest faces of the choir boys told that the fatigues of the evening and their ministrations of song at the three other hospitals had not dimmed their ardor, nor their boyish happiness in giving pleasure to others. Their childish voices rang through the long corridors and up the stairways again and again, and the rapt attention, the exclamations of delight, and the gentle clapping of invalids' hands which came through the opened doors of the darkened wards, proved that the hosannahs of the children proclaiming the birth of the Christ-child had startled from sleep many a patient sufferer, and shortened the weary watches of the night for those whose pain brought them no such sweet unconsciousness.

"In a room down the corridor lay a woman afflicted with a hopeless malady which a recent surgical operation had failed to cure. For many hours she had been unconscious, and the nurse had watched in vain for some favorable sign of hope. The children sang:



"Look! the flash of a wing, then a glorious light,
And an angel appears all apparored in white.
His glad tale to the shepherds he tells, while afar
Fall the words, soft and clear as the light of a star:
Glory to God in the highest!
Peace on earth and good-will unto men.

"The patient opened her eyes. Consciousness gradually returned. 'What's that?' she asked.

"The choir boys of Grace church are singing Christmas carols," said the nurse. The song went on:

"Still those far away voices repeat their refrain,
And like perfume of flowers is wafted the strain:
Glory to God in the highest!
Peace on earth and good-will unto men.

"The tired eyes became illumined with the inspiration of the song, which had brought the spirit back to consciousness from what had seemed the sleep of death. She partly raised herself and listened. The song had changed. Bishop Phillips Brooks' tender carol was now echoing through the stillness of the great building:

"We hear the Christmas angels,
The great, glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!

"'Are they singing for me?' she asked, in delight.

"'Yes, they are singing for you.'

"But the little choristers, seriously intent upon their sweet mission, and all unconscious of the delights the hand of fate was throwing upon the pathetic midnight tragedy, had begun another song. It was the carol of all others dear to Christian hearts:

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

"'O! how beautiful! How beautiful!' And they are singing for me! The thin white hands were clasped and the tear-bedimmed eyes looked afar off in rapture, as if unseen angel hands had unveiled for her vision alone some fair glimpse of Paradise. The boys sang:

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

"'So beautiful! But it sounds so far away!' she faintly said. Sight and sense were vanishing. The childish voices were as near as ever, but the sounds came fainter and fainter to her dying ears.

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

"The inspired story of the centuries was nearly finished. The invitation of the closing lines came like a benediction to her dying spirit, while her eyes saw, if others did not, an angel 'bend on hovering wing.'

"'Beautiful! Singing for me. But—it's—going—further—away!'

"For lo, the days are hastening on,
By prophets seen of old,
When with the ever circling years
Shall come the time foretold,
When the new earth and heaven shall own
The Prince of Peace their King,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing.

"A faint smile and that was all. The light faded out of the patient's eyes, their eyelids slowly closed, the head sank back upon the pillow. The song and a life were ended.

"The clang of the city bells ushered in the birthday of the Prince of Peace, while the choristers sung their parting 'Merry Christmas!' and cheerily bade 'Good-night' to the crowd of nurses and attendants who had followed them through the building, while the faithful nurses prepared the lifeless clay for its last long sleep until

"The whole world sends back the song
Which now the angels sing.

"It was a scene of contrast for a poet and painter. The whole range of fiction furnishes not an incident more exquisitely pathetic. Its nearest prototype lies in the close of Goethe's 'The Sorrows of Werther,' where on Christmas eve the heart-broken lover expires in Charlotte's arms, while from the street come the happy voices of the Parisian children chanting their 'Noel! Noel! Noel!' to the sleeping world."

How good it is for those who are bereaved and sorrowful that our Christian festivals point forward and and upwards as well as backwards; that the eternal joy to which we are drawing ever nearer is linked to the earthly joy which has passed away



THE LITTLE FOLK.

A CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS STORY.

BY MARY MURRAY.

"Are you crying, Molly?" Tommy asked from his little cot. Molly raised her head from under the clothes. "I want muvver. Tommy, I do want muvver so much. 'I'm very lonesome," and her voice died away in a faint wail.

"Don't cry, little Molly, I'll come in your bed and muvver you," Tom said, sliding to the floor, and passing the uncurtained nursery window. "God has hung out His lamp, Molly, he said solemnly. "He knows we feel lonesome; perhaps mother's told Him."

Molly tumbled out of her cot, too, and stood beside him, angel-like in her white nightgown, looking with bright, rapt eyes at the sailing moon. But soon her former trouble returned, and great tears rolled down her cheeks.

"I want muvver," she sobbed.

Tommy took her golden head in both his arms and pressed it hard to his breast. "There, I'll muvver you," he said, bravely trying to keep back his own tears. "Let's get into your bed, Molly, and I'll tell you something. I'll never hit you again, Molly—mother didn't like us to quarrel."

"I'm not crying about that," Molly said, scrambling back into her cot, "'cause I know it was only play. But my dolly's broke her arm, an' I don't know what to do for her."

"Poor little Molly," Tom said, stroking her hair as he had seen his mother do. "Stop crying, and I'll tell you something—something very nice."

Molly choked down her sobs, and sat up in bed, with Tom's arms round her, and the broken doll on her knee. "What is it, Tommy?" she asked.

"Gran'pa told it me," said Tom. "It's about Moses."

"Little baby Moses in the bullrushes?" Molly asked, eagerly. She loved the picture in the great Bible they looked at on Sundays.

"Yes; Moses when he was a man. It's not all about Moses, though; it's a plan of mine, Molly, to get mother back again."

"Oh! Tommy, how nice!" Molly cried, clasping her hands in joy.

"Yes; I've thought about it a lot, Molly, and we'll do it to-night," said Tom. "You can come, too."

"Where?" Molly asked excitedly.

"Gran'pa told me as we walked home from church last Sabbath—you were with nurse, you know, last Sabbath Morning—"

"Yes, Tommy."

"Well, we passed a big, big holly tree, and gran'pa told me it was called 'Christ's thorn,' and that God showed Himself to Moses in a burning holly tree. And I've thought, and thought, and thought," he said, earnestly.

"Yes, Tommy," said Molly.

"Well, let's go and ask God to send mother back. P'raps He'll hear us better there, and I can find the way."

"Won't it be cold, Tommy?" Molly said, shivering.

"God'll warm us. And maybe He'll burn up the tree, like He did for Moses," he answered, firmly. "Don't be afraid, Molly, I'll take care of you."

Molly began to cry. "I'm frightened, Tommy," she whispered, "and I'm wery, wery cold."

"Oh, we'll put on our clothes first; I'll dress you, Molly. And maybe God'll help poor dolly's arm, too, if we ask Him."

"Do you think He will? I'll take dolly with me," Molly answered. They had soon dressed themselves and crept down the dimly-lighted staircase into the hall. Sounds of singing came in faint waves from the kitchen, for it was Christmas Eve; but no one noticed the children's exit, for their grandfather, was visiting a sick parishioner, and their nurse had gone to the kitchen to enjoy herself with the others.

In a few minutes, the two little figures, almost as black in their mourning garments as the shadows they cast on the frozen snow, had left the house far behind, and hand-in-hand were speeding rapidly in the direction of the hollytree. It was not long before they reached it, but not before Molly had fallen and



bruised her knee badly and become wet with the snow. Tommy cheered her as well as he could with the manful courage of seven years.

"I am sure God will hear our prayer, Molly," he said. "See, here is the holly. We must kneel down and clasp our hands."

"Do you think God will light it at once?" Molly asked in awe-struck tones.

"No, we must wait a bit," Tom said, and side by side they knelt under the snow-hidden boughs. As they waited, the moon hid behind a cloud, and a few feathery flakes of snow began to fall.

"Lord, we're waiting, please," Tommy cried. But no answer came, save the chill wind hurrying and creaking through the boughs, and shaking down snow on the suppliant little ones, so they shut their eyes tightly and waited a while longer, half

dreading and half hoping to open them. The sound of approaching footsteps fell on their ears, and Tommy rose jubilantly.

"It is coming now, Molly," he cried.

It was only their white-haired grandfather returning from his visit. He lifted Molly in his arms, his eyes filling with tears at the thought of their faithful request, as they explained their plan to him.

"Hush, my darlings," he said tenderly, "in God's own time you will be together again." And then he bent down and kissed Tommy to comfort him, for the little boy was crying. Never before had Tommy felt how much his grandfather loved him, for the old clergyman had half-forgotten how to show his affection until to-night; and the little boy stole his hand into his, and squeezed it tightly. Molly had fallen asleep in her grandfather's arms, and they walked in silence back to the house. Lamps were blazing in the windows, and the hall door was wide open, sending out a stream of golden light into the night. As they entered, a girl came running forward to meet them.

"Father, thank God you have found the children!" she cried, warmly. "I have only just arrived, and when I went up stairs their beds were empty. Is this Molly?" and she began to kiss the sleeping child.

Molly awoke, and clasped her round the neck, blinking sleepily into the beautiful face bending over her.

"Is it my ever come back?" she whispered.

A great tear splashed down on her face.

"No, my darling; I am only your aunt," the girl answered sadly.

Tommy came forward and took her hand.

"God has sent you till we go to mother," he said, reverently.

Looks into Books.

Among the latest editions to two popular libraries, issued in Canada by the Copp. Clark Co. Ltd., may be mentioned "Rodney Stone" by A. Conan Doyle, which is the new volume of Bell's Indian and Colonial Library, and a new book by F. H. Costello, "Master Ardick, Buccaneer," which is number 204 of Appleton's Town and County Library. One of the great advantages of these series of books is that the reader has certain guarantee of the character of the work from the fact that they are issued in these libraries. The Messrs Appleton and George Bell & Sons exercise the greatest care in the selections made.

LIVING TOPICS CYCLOPEDIA, volume two. New York, John B. Alden.

No cyclopedia is ever complete; the latest and best is good only so far as it goes. As soon as published, it wants making over—it lacks what is newest and most important.

This volume of the Living Topics Cyclopedia is demonstrative evidence of the statements above made, and of their great importance. There is nothing in these pages which you would not wish to find in your cyclopedia—there is virtually nothing here which you will find in any other cyclopedia.

Though this volume does not comprehend all knowledge on all "living topics," it certainly is good as far as it goes, and presents a vast amount of valuable information not elsewhere accessible, and of nearly universal interest.

To give the Living Topic Cyclopedia its greatest possible value a new edition will be issued every month, new facts being added close to the date of publication. At intervals of from one or two years the work will be, thus, made practically new, from beginning to end.

The most experienced journalist, and the best trained cyclopedists and scholars will best appreciate the great labor and expense of issuing such a work as this. They will know it needs generous and prompt patronage, at a good price, to sustain it.

W. Williamson, of Port Hope, has published a handsome booklet entitled: "What a friend we have in Jesus," and other hymns, by Joseph Scriven, with a sketch of the author by Rev. Jas. Cleland. Price 15c.

The authorship of this hymn was unknown until a recent period, but it is now ascertained, as the Memoir shows, to have been undoubtedly written by Mr. Scriven.

THE CANADIAN ALMANAC for 1897 is now out, this being the fiftieth year of the publication of this useful handbook. It is larger than ever, having grown to 354 pages. Among the new features are a short history of Canada, giving the main events in Canadian history, chronologically arranged, and historical diary of the years 1895-96 and an interesting article on the King's Loyalists. The regular departments of the almanac are up to date, among them being a valuable postoffice gazetteer of the

Dominion, giving the name of every place in Canada, with the railroad or steamship lines on which located or the nearest railway station. The official directory has been carefully revised, and contains full lists of clergy, militia, Government officials both Dominion and Provincial, county and municipal officers, schools and colleges, barristers and solicitors, notaries, etc. Among other information is a list of banks and branches, customs tariff and an article on the government of all countries in the world, by Dr. Bourinot. The usual mass of statistics and astronomical calculations is given, and the almanac contains a number of engravings of prominent persons and public buildings.

A. S. Barnes & Co. (156 Fifth Avenue, New York) publish for the holidays this year "The Externals of Modern New York," by Mrs. Burton Harrison (110 pages, small quarto, cloth, gilt top, one volume; price, \$3 00), a beautifully illustrated book on fine paper with embossed cover. In it the author tells the story of the last fifth of a century by "thumb nail" sketches of the various departments of the city's work, and by a brief summary of progress in social development.

They also publish a new edition of the "History of the City of New York," by Mrs. Martha J. Lamb (three volumes, cloth, 8vo; price, \$15.00), containing the chapter on "The Externals of Modern New York," by Mrs. Harrison.

The *Homiletic Review* for December seeks to follow up the Twentieth Century's call to Christendom for a general revival of religion by an article from Dr. Cunningham Geikie to show that we are really now in the twentieth century of the Christian era, according to the true date of our Saviour's birth. Sir William Dawson publishes as his testimony in favor of Religion an address delivered at a devotional service held in connection with the last meeting of the British Association at Liverpool. Dr. McCurdy illustrates the reign of Manasseh from recent archaeological discoveries. The various sections are full of suggestions fitted to be helpful to the preacher and pastor, including Christmas sermons and themes suitable to the season. Funk and Wagnalls, New York, etc. \$3.00 a year.

McClure's Magazine for December contains an account of Nansen's hard adventures in getting 195 miles nearer the North Pole than any other man. It is written by Cyrus O. Adams of the *New York Sun*, one of the best geographical authorities in the country; and is illustrated with portraits of Nansen and his associates, views of his ship within and without, and other pictures.

The witty Max O'Rell will contribute to the next volume of "The Youth's Companion" some gossip reminiscences of his school-days in France.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

SOMETHING LEARNED.

DAILY READINGS.

First Day—A lesson of trust—Pa. lxii. 8.

Second Day—A lesson of joy—Hab. liii. 17, 18.

Third Day—A lesson of hope—Heb. vi. 17-19.

Fourth Day—A lesson of faith—Luke xvii. 5, 6.

Fifth Day—A lesson of bravery—1 Cor. xvi. 13.

Sixth Day—A lesson of prayer—Jas. i. 5-8.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC, Dec. 27.—"What spiritual truth have you learned this year?" Pa. xc. 1-17.

The close of the year gives us a hint, and almost compels us to look back upon our past. And not merely on the year now expiring, but upon the whole past, in which this special year only appears as a single number unseparated from its connection with the whole.

The closing year is time for inventory. Merchants will soon take account of stock. Gains and losses will be summed up, and the year's results declared. Wordly estimates regard wordly things. But God's word presents a higher standard. Enlightened judgment prizes spiritual truth more than necessary food, and values it above thousands of gold and silver. This ninetieth Psalm which prescribes our topic, deals with realities. Life's relations all converge in its destination. It is that which decides its significance and result. The great comprehensive truth is the supremacy of the spiritual. All truth is spiritual, for truth is God, and God is a spirit. Truth is not isolated. It is related and continuous. From any segment of a circle the whole may be described; and so one truth involves the sphere of truth. One truth accepted and obeyed implies an obedience of spirit, which can only come from soul loyalty to God. It has not been a lost year if one has learned the arithmetic of life, so to number the days as to apply the heart unto wisdom. The mere laying up of earthly treasures is "bury

idleness." Spirit I truth inspires the prayer: Establish thou the work of my hands. "Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

The first step towards wisdom is to detest our past error and see the folly of our previous life. No change for the better will ever be effected in us until we know our workness and our sinfulness, we learn wisdom by the eloquence of folly, as a child learns to walk by the hard lessons of many a fall. The bitterness of sorrow for sin teaches us the wisdom of holiness; and the true lessons of wisdom are never learned till we gain the habit of looking at our own insignificance by the side of the majesty and eternity and holiness of God, in whose eyes a thousand years are but as yesterday, seeing that is passed as a watch in the night and before whose radiant purity the angels themselves veil their faces.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR AND CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.

BY PRESIDENT MERRILL E. GATES, LL.D.,
President of Amherst College.

From the village of Nazareth a path leads to the hill-crest not far away, from which the look westward at sunset catches a distant view of the broad stretching sea. Often that pathway to the hill must have drawn up its inviting slope the thoughtful, helpful boy whose life in a carpenter's cottage at Nazareth made that little family circle the most wonderful of all earthly homes. And while the young carpenter was learning to "consider the lilies of the field how they grow," and from silent meditation as He walked was drawing strength and poise for His redeeming life-work for men, this outlook to the limitless sea-level must have helped to lead out His thought to the far-reaching effects of His work for the race He was to redeem.

It is a great power in the life of a young Christian when he gets early in life a broad view of the far reaching scope of Christ's work for men, of its necessity, its beneficent results, and its imperative call to every Christian to "be about His Father's business" by helping on this mission work for which Christians are "in the world."

For his usefulness as a citizen, too, it is a great gain when the Brotherhood of the entire race becomes a reality in a young man's thought. Not the narrow man who imagines that love for his own people involves hatred of all others, but the man who sees the place of his own nation in working out beneficent results for the whole race, is the truest patriot. And the view that came to Peter on the housetop of the tanner's home by the sea at Joppa is the view of his fellow men which most surely transforms the follower of Jesus Christ into the likeness of Him who came to seek and to save the lost. There is a lighthouse at Joppa rising from the roof of the house which occupies the site assigned by tradition to the home of "the tanner." For the world, a transforming light has rayed out from the housetop vision in which God there gave Peter that view of the race which has in it the heart of mission-impulse. "God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean."

To see the essential worth of every human life is to long to be helpful to every brother whom you can reach for good, by word, deed, or gift. And the young Christian who comes early under the power of this longing and this purpose will love missions, will work for missions, and will grow broader in his sympathies, his intelligence, and his activities, because of his broader outlook upon life. To learn of foreign missions involves becoming interested in geography, history, comparative politics, comparative philology, and a comparative study of religion. It is a distinctively liberalizing and humanizing interest, intellectual as well as spiritual. And the secret of successful endeavor for missions lies in awakening an interest by *definite study of particular mission fields and of great missionary lives*. More knowledge is the secret of greater interest in this great theme.

For the full development and the usefulness of the individual, the seaward breadth of view is most helpful; and for the development of the Christian church, it is most important that her younger members early receive, and always retain, the mountain-top outlook upon Christian work. "Look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount," is the command of God not only for the shaping of the natural instruments and surroundings of tabernacle worship, but for the shaping of the lives which He chooses as His instruments, but instructs us, that each may fashion his own life "after the Pattern." And we look to the societies of Christian Endeavor with the confident hope and the earnest prayer that the future of the church, to be determined largely by the present ideals of the members of these societies, may be characterized by the breadth of Christian view and the depth of Christian feeling which come to the church of Christ only when she is faithful to her Lord's command, "Go, make the disciples of all nations."

(Continued next week.)

FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

International S. S. Lesson.

LESSON XIII.—REVIEW OF THE QUARTER.—DECEMBER 27.
Studies in Old Testament History.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."—Ecc. xii. 13.

INTRODUCTION.—The lessons of this quarter give the general accounts of Solomon's reign. He began upon the successes of his father. While his heart remained loyal to the true worship of God, he had prosperity. He was made a blessing to other nations. He was superior to any other man, because of the gifts God had bestowed upon him. Yet his reign closed in sadness, because of his sin, though his own tribe was spared from the rule of a servant because of God's promise to David.

TEXT.—B.C. 1015, 1014, 1000, 1002, 991, 990, 934, 975, 4.

PLACES.—Jerusalem. Gihon. Gibeon. Canaan. Lebanon. Mt. Morian. Bethlehem.

PERSONS.—David. Bath-sheba. Solomon. Nathan. Zadok. Benaiah. The Cherethites. The Pelethites. The Lord. Ethan. Heman. Chalcol. Darda. Hiram. Israel. Queen of Sheba. Solomon's wife. Jeroboam. Rehoboam. Herod. Wise Men. The Sanhedrim. The Holy Family.

Lesson I. "Solomon anointed King."—The news reached the dying king's ears that there was a scheme in favor of Adonijah being king. He appointed the time and place, and arranged the programme for the anointing service of Solomon, and thus secured his nation against trouble and vexation after his death. Gratitude fills the heart of God's anointed. Prayer and praise come naturally from the lips, when the soul is melted by divine grace. Lesson II. "Solomon's wise choice"—is an example worthy of imitation. When visited in a dream at Gibeon, by the Lord, and invited to ask what he desired, he contrasted his ability with his responsibilities, and prayed for wisdom, the best gift. When his petition was granted, he rendered praise and thanksgiving to God in offering sacrifice at Jerusalem. Peace is the gracious result of faithfulness to God. Lesson III. "Solomon's wealth and wisdom"—gives us a glimpse of Israel when every man dwelt safely under his own vine and fig tree, throughout the entire land, and Solomon excelled all other men in wisdom. Wisdom cries out against every evil way. Lesson IV. "The Proverbs of Solomon"—is a rich cluster of precious truths, given in instruction and exhortation as a father speaking to his son. Right purposes, plans and friendships are endorsed by the blessing of God. Lesson V. "Building the Temple"—Solomon entered into contract with Hiram, king of Tyre, a friend to David, and by his help secured materials for the building. He sealed his friendship with his father's friend by a league. Lesson VI. "The Temple Dedicated"—teaches that God dwells where His people are devoted to His cause. Solomon addressed the people while his heart overflowed with thanksgiving to God, and prayed that he with them all, might so continue their walk with God as to keep His blessing. Gracious invitations from God indicate His sincere interest in the welfare of His children. Lesson VII. "God's Blessing upon Solomon"—records the account of God's second visit to Solomon, in a dream at Jerusalem, where He reviewed His promise to David, and blessing upon Solomon, adding to that a warning against idolatry. Rewards are promised to the faithful. Lesson VIII. "Rewards of Obedience"—is taken from the Book of Proverbs, and is rich in its promises to those who fear, honor and trust God, and are cheerful under chastisement. The search for wisdom has its rich reward. Lesson IX. "The Fame of Solomon"—records the account of the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon. She was instructed and enlightened in the true religion. Integrity to God has its practical tests. Lesson X. "Solomon's sin"—gives a sad picture, which might cast a gloom over all his former greatness, were there not some assurance that he repented, and was forgiven. Seasonable advice results in good to those who receive it. Lesson XI. "Cautions against intemperance"—are the instructions, warning and exhortation of faithful parents to their children and are God's words to His children. Divine guidance brings men to their highest enjoyments. Lesson XII. "The Birth of Christ"—describes the way in which the wise men found Christ and how Herod was troubled.

SUBJECTS:—I. Solomon anointed King, 1 Kings i. 28-39. II. Solomon's wise choice, 1 Kings iii. 5-15. III. Solomon's wealth and wisdom, 1 Kings iv. 23-34. IV. The Proverbs of Solomon, Prov. i. 1-19. V. Building the Temple, 1 Kings v. 1-12. VI. The Temple Dedicated, 1 Kings viii. 54-63. VII. God's blessing upon Solomon, 1 Kings ix. 1-9. VIII. Rewards of Obedience, Prov. iii. 1-17. IX. The fame of Solomon, 1 Kings x. 1-10. X. Solomon's sin, 1 Kings xi. 4-13. XI. Caution against Intemperance, Prov. xxiii. 16-25. XII. The birth of Christ, Matt. ii. 1-12.

PSALM V.

David prayeth, and professeth his study in prayer. 7 David, professing his faith, prayeth unto God to guide him.

To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David.

GIVE ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation.

Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.

My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.

The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.

Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.

But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.

Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness, because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face.

For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue.

Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: Let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.

PSALM VI.

David's complaint in his sickness.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David.

LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed.

My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?

Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake!

For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.

Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.

Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping.

The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer.

Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed suddenly.

PSALM VII.

David prayeth against the malice of his enemies.

Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the LORD, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.

LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:

Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver.

O LORD my God, if I have done this; if there be iniquity in my hands;

If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:)

Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. Selah.

Arise, O LORD, in thine anger, lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and awake for me to the judgment that thou hast commanded.

So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore return thou on high.

The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.

O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.

My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.

God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.

If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.

He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.

Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.

He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made.

His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.

I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high.

PSALM VIII.

God's glory magnified by his works, and by his love to man.

To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of David.

LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

Vertical column of small text containing various biblical references and marginal notes.

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Church News

[All communications to this column ought to be sent to the Editor immediately after the occurrences to which they refer have taken place.]

Montreal Notes.

The Rev. Dr. Robert Campbell has just completed the thirtieth year of his pastorate in St. Gabriel Church, and the occasion is being celebrated with appropriate services. On Sunday morning last he preached an historical sermon reviewing his work in the congregation and the changes that had taken place in that period. The city had increased its population threefold, the membership of the congregation had grown to fivefold what it was then. Of the 108 names on the roll at the beginning 26 still remained in the congregation, and a good many more were still alive, though now connected with other congregations in the city or elsewhere. He had baptized 833 and received 1,560 to communion with the church. He had married 882 and buried 515. He had preached 2,520 sermons and held 1,250 week day services. For the last twenty years he had scarcely missed a service through ill-health. For a good many years past Dr. Campbell has been the senior Presbyterian pastor in the city, and he bids fair to hold his place for a long while to come, for he is still as active as multitudes of much younger men. His figure is a familiar one both on the golf field and in the curling rink, while he is also an enthusiastic naturalist and enjoys many a long tramp in search of botanical specimens for his collection. The special services will be continued on Sunday next, when Principal Grant is to preach both morning and evening. Congratulations will be brought at a congregation social on Monday evening, when the other churches are likely to be represented.

Arrangements have been made for the opening of a new suburban mission in Verdure, a municipality adjoining the city on the lower Lachine road. The mission meantime will be under the session of St. Mathew's Church. A new house just finished has been placed at their disposal for the present but it is hoped that a suitable site for a church building may be secured in the near future. The population is growing rapidly, and the increase is largely Protestant.

Anniversary services were held in the Presbyterian Church at Richmond on Sunday last. The preacher for the day was the Rev. Prof. Ross, of the Presbyterian College, who gave two able discourses. Under Dr. Kellock's ministry the congregation is making good progress, and maintains its position as one of the most vigorous and prosperous in the Presbytery of Quebec.

Mr. H. J. Dulcis has just been appointed as missionary in charge of the bilingual field of Lake Megantic and Dittfield. Though of French extraction Mr. Dulcis' mother tongue is English, but he has learned the French language in order that he may be qualified for work among his fellow countrymen.

At the communion service in Erskine Church last Sunday morning, twenty-four new members were received, six of these were on profession of faith, the remainder represent families that have recently come to the city or removed to the neighborhood of the church.

During the past two or three weeks more than the usual amount of sickness has prevailed among the Presbyterian ministers of the city and vicinity. Mr. Gideon, of Montreal West, has just recovered sufficiently to resume his duties. Several members of Mr. Dwyer's family have been in the Civic Hospital from slight attacks of diphtheria. Mr. Heine was unable to take his services last Sunday, and his pulpit was filled from the Presbyterian College. Mr. Boyd, of Beauharnois, has been suffering for the past month from an attack of bronchitis. Fortunately none of these cases are such as to occasion any special anxiety, but even slight illnesses interrupt the continuity of Christian work, and disarrange plans to the great regret of the pastors themselves, as well as of their people.

General.

Rev. Nell MacPherson, M. A., B. D., Petrolia, has received a call to St. Paul's Presbyterian church, Hamilton.

Dr. Moore, of Ottawa, has been nominated for the Moderatorship of next assembly by the Presbytery of Paris. Rev. E. C. Currie, a graduate of Queen's, of the class of '90, received a call from the Presbyterian congregation at Delhi, Ont.

A very pleasant social was held in Knox church, Ayr, on the evening of December 1st. (The social was held in honor of the Rev. John Thompson's pastorate for twenty-five years.)

The usual monthly meeting of the Toronto Auxiliary to the Leper Mission will be held (D.V.) Monday next, 3.30 p.m., at 632 Church street. All are welcome.

Two Chinamen became members of Bank street Presbyterian church, Ottawa, at the communion service, Dec. 6th. The names of the two Celestials are Yesh Shu and Mark Chung. They are both members of the Chinese class in connection with that church.

The Scot.—At Home and Abroad is the subject of a lecture to be delivered by John Imrie, The Scottish Canadian Poet, in the College street Presbyterian church, Toronto, on Monday evening, Dec. 21st.

Under the pastorate of the Rev. W. M. Reid, in the settlement in Leaksdale and Zephyr, there has been a marked increase in the number attending the Sabbath services, and quite a number of new members have been added to the church. The Thanksgiving offering for the Armenians was \$23.00.

The annual thankoffering meeting of the W. F. M. Society of the Presbyterian Church, Lethbridge, was held on Friday, Nov. 13th. The week before the meeting invitations, with thank-offering envelopes enclosed, were sent out to all the ladies of the congregation. The weather was very cold, so that only a few ladies were present to enjoy the programme and tea which followed, but the envelopes brought or sent to the meeting spoke volumes for the liberality of the congregation. The offering amounted to some twenty-five dollars (\$25.00).

At the eighth annual rally of the Toronto Christian Endeavor Union, held in the Central Presbyterian Church, Toronto, Dec. 10th, the following officers were elected: Pres., J. C. Atkinson, of Broadview Ave. Congregational Church; Vice-Pres., chairman of the districts; Rec. Sec., W. A. Bowker, Northern Congregational; Cor. Sec., Miss Cecilia Gray, College Street Presbyterian Church; Treas., Miss A. M. Hall, Cecil Street Church of Christ's Deputies, Press Editor, W. H. Bryce, Central Presbyterian; Missionary Supt., H. Asson; Junior Supt., Frank D. Mills.

Mr. N. W. Rowe delivered an able address against Sunday cars.

The new Presbyterian Church at Palmerston was opened recently with appropriate ceremonies, the sermon being delivered by Dr. McKay, Woodstock. The Palmerston Presbyterian people, in 1894, erected a new church, which was opened in January of that year by Dr. Cochrane, of Brantford. In January, 1895, the first anniversary sermon was to have been preached by Rev. Dr. McKay, of Woodstock, and this event also was to have been a most auspicious occasion. Dr. McKay chose for his text, "A Church on Fire," and sent it on a couple of weeks ahead. Bills were printed and posted up around the town, but the sermon was never preached, for on the morning of the first anniversary, the edifice was burned to the ground. It was a very remarkable coincidence. Rev. John M. Auld, pastor of the church, has an enterprising and hard-working congregation and quite a large sum has been raised to pay off the indebtedness of the new building.

Evangelical Alliance.

Topics suggested for the week of universal prayer, January 3-10, 1897.

Sunday, Jan. 3.—Sermons.—"The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him."—Lam. iii. 25.

Monday, Jan. 4.—Praise and Thanksgiving: For the countless mercies that have crowned the past year. Humiliation and Confession of Sin: For slothfulness in Christ's service. Prayer, for more entire consecration of heart and life, for a more steadfast "looking for

the coming of the day of God."

Tuesday, Jan. 5.—The Church Universal.—Prayer that the whole Church of Christ may be more separate from the world.

Wednesday, Jan. 6.—Nations and their Rulers.—Prayer for the speedy evangelization of the nations, for Sovereigns and Rulers, and for all that are in authority; that cruelty and oppression may cease, that protection may be extended to the Armenian Christians, the Stundists, and all who are suffering grievously for Christ's sake.

Thursday, Jan. 7.—Foreign Missions. Praise to God for the "open doors" in nearly every part of the world. Prayer, that the hearts of Mohammedans and heathen may be opened to receive the Gospel; that the Church of Christ may fully realize her responsibility with regard to those who are still in darkness.

Friday, Jan. 8.—Home Missions.—Praise for increased activity amongst God's people, and for many tokens of the power of the Holy Spirit accompanying the names used. Prayer, for the blessing of God to rest abundantly upon all Evangelistic efforts; for work amongst Soldiers and Sailors; and for the better observance of the Sabbath.

Jews.—Praise for the wide circulation obtained for the Hebrew New Testament, and for the encouraging work amongst Jews. Prayer that there may be such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Jews as has never been witnessed since Apostolic times.

Saturday, Jan. 9.—Families and Schools. Thanksgiving, for Families bound together by the love of Christ; for the earnest work carried on by many Students in our Universities and Colleges. Prayer, that Parents may more constantly seek to bring up their Children in the fear and love of God, that greater prominence may be given in Christian households to the study of God's EWord and to united prayer.

Sunday, Jan. 10.—Sermons on Foreign Missions.

The Cinematographe.

By the record of tickets sold during the three visits of the cinematographe to Toronto no fewer than 25,800 people have seen the exhibition, and yet 96 Yonge street, west side, continues to be practically besieged all day long. One feature of the cinematographe exhibition is that the management is not niggardly in the number of views shown. On the programme a series of 24 is announced to be given at each entertainment, but half a dozen of the humorous variety are thrown in. Each afternoon the hall is well filled with ladies and children, but in the evening there is an equal sprinkling of ladies and gentlemen. In the morning many early shoppers attend, except on Saturdays, when heads of families take advantage of the few hours before lunch to avoid the throngs of later in the day.

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