

HAPPY DAYS

Vol. XX.

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No. 25

THE GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFT.

BY ELIZABETH P. ALLAN.

The Christmas tree was up in the Carlyles' parlor; the tapers were fastened upon its branches, and the pretty gilt and silver ornaments, the frosted balls, the colored glass stars and drops were spangling it all over with sunshine.

Twilight came creeping on, but, oh! so slowly, thought the children; for the tree was not to be lighted until evening. Papa would get home from the city about dark, with the presents to hang on the tree.

"It seems a thousand years till dark," exclaimed Dick.

"Let's get mamma to tell us a story," suggested Nanine, "that will make time fly."

"A story?" said mamma, leaning back in the big arm-chair, pretty tired, as mammas generally are on Christmas Eve: "I don't know anything to tell you a story about."

"Tell us about a farver givin' his chillens Twistmas pwesents," suggested Robin, whose little head was full of that delightful unknown present his "farver" was bringing him through the twilight.

This seemed to make mamma think of something.

"There was a Father once long ago," she said, "who had a Christmas gift for his children—a very precious one; it was a jewel worth more than all the world, for whoever once laid his hand on that jewel would never die, but would live for ever.

"The Father sent this Gift to his children one Christmas Eve, and sent noble

ambassadors along to tell them about it. Now what would you expect the children to do, Dick, when they heard of their Christmas present?"

"Jump about six feet, this way," cried Dick, making a flying leap in the air,

gentle smile. She saw they had not found anything but a sort of fairy story in her words.

"And what does Nanine think these children of the Father could do when they received this glorious gift?"

"I know what they did, mamma," said Nanine, for she was older and wiser than the boys, and knew the story of the first Christmas-night at Bethlehem by heart. "Some of the children received the present with joy, but some would have nothing to do with it."

"Think of that, children," said mamma, "suppose when papa comes in with your presents you turn your back, and leave them hanging on the tree, and never touch them, and never thank him, what would poor papa do?"

"He'd det some ovver little chillens, 'an not have us any more," suggested Robin.

"That is the way people treat God," said mamma, "when they refuse Christ for their Saviour. He is God's great Christmas Gift to us all, and we must not forget to say, 'Fank you, Farver,' as Robin says, every day as well as Christmas Day."

Mamma's story was done; but what was that clicking sound? The front-yard gate! And the next minute three pair of feet pattered down the stairway, and three young voices shouted, "Father has come!"

A Frenchman is teaching a donkey how to talk. What we want in this country is a man to teach donkeys not to talk.



THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS.

across the hearth-rug, startling old Tabby almost out of her senses.

"What do you think the children of that good Father would do, Robinhood?"

"I fink they would say, 'Fank you, farver,'" said the little boy at mamma's knee.

The mother looked at them with a

CHRISTMAS COMES.

Dark are the days when the year grows old.

Dark and dreary the winter cold;
And far away on the frozen marsh
The wild bird's cry sounds shrill and harsh;

And the dry reeds bow to the north wind's blast,
And the black skies frown, and the snow falls fast.

But the Lord was born in the winter time,

And the joy-bells rang with a tender chime;

For his love has kindled a warmer glow
Than the golden days of summer know.
And we love the Christ-child's birthday dear,

Best of all the days of the year.

Into the darkness he brought the light,
Sun who rose at dead of night,
When the angels came to the cradle stall
To worship the child who is Lord of all.
Sorrow and sin and poverty sore,
He turns to glory for evermore.

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Happy Days.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 16, 1905.

CHRISTMAS BELLS.

Mildred Thorpe was going on an errand. An odd errand it seemed too.

"Why, mother dear, it seems so silly to carry a bunch of holly to an old woman. What can she want with it?"

"Never mind, Mildred, take the basket, and don't lose out the holly, whatever you do," answered her mother, with a gentle sigh, as she closed the door against the reluctant little girl.

Suddenly the chimes from the church steeple rang out:

Glory to God in the highest,
Glory to God, glory to God,
Glory to God in the highest,
Peace on earth, good will to men.

Mildred's face lightened. "I love the chimes," she said, and she began to sing, "Ring, Happy Bells, Across the Snow." She hardly noticed how fast the time went until she found herself opposite the little house where her mother had sent her.

"Ah, my holly, my beautiful Christmas holly!" the old woman exclaimed, as soon as Mildred was inside the tiny room. "Your mother never forgets. Christmas would not seem Christmas to me without the holly. You'd like to know why I love it so? I wasn't always poor. I lived in the South, and on our lawn grew great trees of holly. At Christmas the whole house used to be trimmed with the bright green leaves and the red berries. My home has gone, my children are dead—your mother used to play with them, and she knew how they loved the holly. I see my happy days again when I look at the bunch of holly."

She lifted out the bunch lovingly. Underneath was an envelope, which Mildred left upon the table, then slipped softly out.

There was money in the envelope which would help to make the dear old woman comfortable for a long time.

The bells were still ringing.

"I'm glad that Jesus has a mere beautiful home in heaven prepared for the dear old woman who has lost her earthly home," thought Mildred.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD.

"When papa and I were driving to-night, we saw Little Red Riding Hood," said Mrs. MacKay, as she perched Teddy on the arm of the sofa, while Rhea scrambled up on her knee.

"Nellie had pulled us up a long hill and was going slowly over the top, when we saw, sitting near the roadside, a little lady in a black and white suit, and a red hood.

"While we were watching her, she rose and went into her home, a little wooden house close to the roadside, and do you know we could hear the little ones making a great fuss inside."

"Really, mother?" asked Jack.

"Really, Jack!"

"It was a pussy," said Rhea, who had sat with folded hands. "Pussy," lisped Teddy. "Cats haven't red heads," said Jack.

"She searched about, and at last came to a stump and ran around it, tapping it hard with—"

"Oh, I know," said Jack, "a red-headed woodpecker."

"Yes, Jack, and we saw her nest. Close to the roadside stands a tall, bare tree-trunk. A branch had been broken off some fourteen feet from the ground, and in this had been pecked out a little round hole, and in there, with a real wooden roof and wooden walls, live the little red-headed family.

"The little birdies have their little red heads tucked under their mother's breast now and are fast asleep, and it is quite time my curly-headed birdie was safe in his nest," said mamma, "and before we sleep we will ask our loving Father to care for the little family up in the tree trunk, and to fill the hearts of little boys with love for all his creatures, that they may do them no harm. We know God loves the little birdies, and little boys," and she took her wee boy in her arms.

"Little girls, too," said Rhea, as she slipped off her mother's knee, giving her place to Teddy.

"And big boys, mother," said Jack.

"Dad is love," whispered sleepy Teddy.

THE LARK'S FESTIVAL.

The Chinese are very fond of having birds as pets. In almost every house one sees a bird-cage hanging up, and very pretty the cages are, the birds inside looking cheerful and well cared for.

When John Chinaman walks abroad he takes his bird-cage with him, just as we take our dogs; so that, like the fine lady who was in the habit of riding a white horse to Banbury Cross, the Chinaman has "music wherever he goes."

Once a year, in the middle of April, the festival of Paak-tai is held in Canton. Of the people who throng this temple each brings with him a lark in a cage. The cages are hung from bamboo poles, fastened across the ceiling of the temple, which is brilliantly lighted up for the occasion. The birds usually number several hundreds, and every cage is carefully covered up.

At a given signal all the coverings are removed. The astonished larks, thinking that they have overslept themselves, and for once the sun has caught them napping, make up for lost time by bursting all together into a thrilling and glorious chorus of song, which they keep up for about two hours, to the keen delight of the people present.

"JUST LOVED ME."

Two little four-year-olds were at play on the lawn when the tiny girl slipped and fell. In a moment her small companion had helped her to her feet again, and stood with his arm about her until her sobs ceased.

"What did your little cousin do for you when you were hurt?" asked the mother a few minutes later.

"Nuffin'; he just loved me."

WHAT DECEMBER SAYS.

Open your hearts ere I am gone.
 And hear my old, old story;
 For I am the month that first looked down
 On the beautiful Babe of glory.
 You must never call me lone and drear:
 Because no birds are singing;
 Open your hearts, and you shall hear
 The song of the angels ringing.

Open your hearts, and hear the feet
 Of the star-led wise men olden;
 Bring out your treasures of incense sweet
 Lay down your offerings golden;
 You say you look, but you see no light
 Of the wonderful Babe I'm telling;
 You say they have carried him off by
 night
 From Bethlehem's lowly dwelling.

Open your hearts and seek the door
 Where the always poor are staying;
 For this is the story, for evermore,
 The Master's voice is saying:
 Inasmuch as ye do it unto them,
 The poor, the weak, and the stranger,
 Ye do it to Jesus of Bethlehem—
 Dear Babe of star-lit manger!

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT FROM
 ISAIAH TO MALACHI.

LESSON XIII.—December 24.

THE CHARACTER OF THE MESSIAH.

Isa. 9. 1-7. Memorize verse 6.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.—Matt. 1. 21.

THE LESSON STORY.

Isaiah was a prophet of the Lord, who lived seven hundred years before Christ came. A prophet is one to whom the Lord shows things which are to come, and Isaiah was given eyes of the spirit which could look down the long line of the ages and see the Lord Jesus Christ coming to live in human form among the creatures he had made. In this lesson he tells of the "great light" which shone upon the people who had long walked in darkness. He knew that the Holy One who was coming would bring the light of truth and love. The light that Isaiah saw showed him very clearly what our wonderful Lord is like, and he tried to describe him in the beautiful names which he gives to him. Look at them for a moment—"Wonderful," "Counsellor," "The mighty God," "The everlasting Father," and "The Prince of Peace." Some one has written a beautiful song which begins, "A wonderful Saviour is Jesus my Lord!" Is it not wonderful that he can save even the

worst of sinners? A counsellor is a wise friend who can tell us just what to do, and that is what Jesus is. And he is a "mighty God," the God who made all things, and he is the Father of all, and has the heart of a loving father. How sad a thing is war and strife in the world! But they would cease if only Jesus the Prince of Peace lived in all hearts. Though this mighty One came as a child, Isaiah said that he was the ruler of all things, and that his kingdom would grow greater and stronger all the time, and this is true. Think of these names—"They belong to my Saviour."

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGEST.

1. Who was Isaiah? A prophet of the Lord.
2. When did he live? Seven hundred years before Jesus was born.
3. What could he see? That Jesus was coming.
4. How could he see this? God showed it to him.
5. What did Isaiah say the world was? A dark place.
6. What causes darkness in hearts? Sin.
7. What drives away the darkness of sin? The light and love of Jesus.
8. How did Jesus come to earth? As a little child.
9. What is one of his names? The Prince of Peace.
10. When are hearts full of peace? When Jesus lives in them.

LESSON XIV.—December 31.

REVIEW.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Thou crownest the year with thy goodness.—Psa. 65. 11.

Titles and Golden Texts should be thoroughly studied.

TITLES. GOLDEN TEXTS.

- D. and B. The face of—
 D. in the L.'s D. The angel of—
 R. from C. The Lord hath done—
 R. the T. The temple of—
 P. through G.'s S. Not by might—
 E. P. for Her P. The Lord preserveth—
 E.'s J. to J. The hand of our—
 N.'s P. The effectual—
 W.'s T. S. Let him that—
 N. R. the W. of J. Watch—
 R. and O. the L. Blessed are they—
 P. for the M. I will send my—
 The C. of the M. Thou shalt call—

THE TWO LITTLE STOCKINGS.

BY SARAH KEABLES HUNT.

Two little stockings hung side by side,
 Close to the fireplace, broad and wide,
 "Two?" said Saint Nick, as down he came,
 Loaded with toys and many a game.
 "Ho! ho!" said he, with a laugh of fun,

"I'll have no cheating, my pretty one; I know who dwells in this house, my dear; There's on y one little girl lives here." So he crept up close to the chimney-place And measured a sock with a sober face. Just then a wee little note fell out And fluttered low, like a bird about. "Aha! what's this?" said he in surprise, As he pushed his specs up close to his eyes And read the address, in a child's rough plan,
 "Dear Saint Nicholas," so it began,
 "The other stocking you see on the wall I have hung for a child named Clara Hall— She's a poor little girl, but very good! So I thought, perhaps, you kindly would Fill up her stocking, too, to-night, And help to make her Christmas bright. If you've not enough for both stockings there Please put all in Clara's; I shall not care." Saint Nicholas brushed a tear from his eye,
 "God bless you, darling," he said with a sigh,
 Then softly he blew through the chimney high,
 A note like a bird's when it soars on high,
 When down came two of the funniest mortals
 That ever were seen inside earth's portals.
 "Hurry up!" said Saint Nick, "and nicely prepare
 All a little girl wants where money is rare."
 Then, oh, what a scene there was in that room!
 Away went the elves, but down from the gloom
 Of the sooty old chimney came tumbling low
 A child's whole wardrobe from head to toe.
 How Santa Claus laughed as he gathered them in
 And fastened each one to the sock with a pin!
 Right to the toe he hung a blue dress.
 "She'll think it came from the sky, I guess,"
 Said Saint Nicholas, smoothing the folds of blue
 And tying the hood to the stocking, too.
 When all the warm clothes were fastened on,
 And both little socks were filled and done,
 Then Santa Claus tucked a toy here and there
 And hurried away to the frosty air,
 Saying, "God pity the poor and bless the dear child
 Who pities them, too, on this night so wild!"
 The wind caught the words and bore them on high
 Till they died away in the midnight sky,
 While St. Nicholas flew through the icy air,
 Bringing "peace and good-will" with him everywhere.



CHRISTMAS EVE.

What a proud old turkey this is! He goes strutting about as though he owned the whole world, and as if he was not afraid of any one. Poor old fellow! if he could only know that "pride goes before a fall." He seems to be saying to this happy family who are watching him with amusement, "Well, you are not going to have me for dinner to-morrow." If he could only know that the old farmer intends killing him later on I fancy he would be more humble.

CHRISTMAS-TIME.

I feel so happy I cannot keep still!
Just one more day, and 'twill be Christmas Day;
And all the house is full of secrets now,
And everybody whispers what they say.

When I go in the door, unless I knock,
Or rattle with my hand upon the latch,
Mamma hides something underneath her chair,
And aunty jumps up, something else to snatch.

John's got a ball for Bess and yesterday
He let me bounce it on the playroom floor,
And how we laughed when Bess came running up
To ask about the racket at the door!

I've made a heart-shaped pin-ball for papa.
And aunty's book-mark now at last is done;
She has not seen it, and she cannot guess
What I have for her—oh, it is such fun!

To-night, when nurse went down to get our tea,

I watched the man lighting the lamps below,
And saw them twinkling up the long, long street,

Like a procession of stars down in the snow.

When jingle, jingle, straight up to our door
Came through the dusk a horse and waggon, too,

A man jumped out with bundles in his arms,
And to the stair top all we children flew;

Then Jennie took them in; but ere we saw,
Mamma ran up the stairs and drove us back:

But Bob said he was sure he saw a sled,
When, naughty boy, he peeped out through the crack!

To-morrow night I shall not go to sleep,
But watch the chimney, Santa Claus to see;

I think he is papa, but now he lives
In the spare room, and aunty keeps the key.

SOME KOREAN CUSTOMS.

Korean peasants have some queer customs regarding the days they celebrate. New Year's Day is the great day of the year with them, and their special way of observing it is by appearing in clean garments. If it is possible they buy new raiment for the occasion—a whole outfit—without spot or tarnish of any sort. But if not new, it must be perfectly clean and fresh, and whole.

This is all very well, and appropriate for the new year, but unfortunately their zeal for cleanliness ends there. They do not realize that clean clothes are desirable at other seasons of the year. Some of them wear the garments put on at the beginning of the year the whole twelve months without change.

Another peculiar custom in vogue among Korean merchants is their desire to hold on to their goods instead of trying to dispose of them, as is the case with us. If you should enter a store in Korea and inquire the price of some article, the dealer would name his price. But if upon hearing this you should decide to take six or a dozen of the same grade of articles, up would go the price at once—to double or perhaps quadruple the one originally mentioned. Our storekeepers at home are in the habit of throwing off a little on the price to induce customers to enlarge their orders; but among Koreans there seems to be a disposition not to let their stock run down, because of the trouble of renewing it.

THE BEST WISH.

When Doris was about five years old, she and her three little cousins were in the nursery one day, and the other children began discussing what they would be when they were grown up.

"I'll be a princess!" cried May. "and I'll wear a gold crown, and a lovely dress all covered with gold stars."

"I'll be a candy-man," said Bob, "because then I can eat all the candy I want."

"I'd like to be a President's wife," said Ada. Her home was in the United States, and that was the grandest thing she could think of.

"What do you want to be, Doris?" inquired their grandmother, who was present at the time. The little girl hesitated a moment, and then replied, "I'll just be a mother and nothing else."

Grandma thought that this ambition was the best of all, for to be a good mother is to have more influence than even a king on his throne may possess.

THE CHRISTMAS SNOWBALL.

Paul and George made it. First they made a little snowball in their hands, then they rolled it in the snow that lay on the ground. The snow was not very deep, so they took their little shovels, and made a path of quite deep snow to roll the ball in. When it was done they stuck some holly in it and called it the birds' Christmas pudding. How nice it would have been if they have put some seeds in it for "plums." The birds like the bright red holly berries, but they are not good to eat.

Never let a day pass without doing something for Jesus.