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CHRISTMAS DINNER.

This strange-looking picture combines a great variety of objects. In the first place we have the blessed star of Bethlehem, then the lovely angel figure who seems to be singing the immortal song, "Glory to God in the highest," and another angel bending over the sleeping children in their cot, dreaming no doubt of their fine Christmas-tree in the foreground with its strange fruit of Christmas toys and burning candles.

FATHER CHRISTMAS.

No one who has read of the Caristmas festivities of Old England can overlook the yule log, whose cheery blaze has enlivened so many English hearths. A heathen custom gave rise to this practice also. About the same period that we keep our great festival, the pagans used to celebrate "Yule-tide," or welcome to the new year. The word "yule" means festival of the sun. Those who helped to carry the yule-log were considered safe from the power of spells, and those who sat round the merry fire made up quarrels and were at peace. Twigs from the log, kept during the year, were be-



CHRISTMAS DREAMS.

lieved to be safeguards against charms.

In early times Christmas-tide was marked by much rejoicing and revelry. A man, who was styled "Lord of Misrule," was chosen to superintend the festivities. He would take up his abode in the house of a great lord, where he was followed by a numerous train, whom he ruled as king. Perhaps these revelries reached their highest pitch in the reign of Edward the Sixth.

We must not forget the feasts of this season. A boar's head is still seen on the King's table at Christmas. In olden days this dish, crowned with rosemary, was received by the guests with great respect, all standing when it was brought in.

The custom of carol-singing is thought to date back as far as the second century. The word "carol" means a song of joy. In Holland we find, in addition to carol-singing, the pretty custom of carrying from door to door a star representing that which once guided the Magi. Those who gaze on the star give the young men who bear it alms for the poor.

As we thus glance at the various ways in which men in all

circumstances have celebrated the birthday of the Son of God, do we not see that there is a blessed bond of sympathy amongst them all, a bond between the child rejoicing over its Christmas-tree and the unknown believers who sang the first carol long, long ago; the bond of a common belief that the Babe of Bethlehem holds the sceptre of the world. Our thoughts fly to the lowly manger where, drawn by Divine love, all nations, peoples, tongues meet to exclaim, in words whose complete fulfilment we see not as yet: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!"

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Sunbeam.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 12, 1903.

THEIR GOLIATH.

BY MAGGIE L. NICHOL.

After the Children's Service on Sunday morning the Linton family were driving home. Arthur, Harry, and Ralph rode in the democrat with their grandparents, and father and mother, with Jessie, a Scotch orphan lassie, who had lately come to make her home with them, were ahead in the buck-board.

Mr. Hay's sermon that morning had been about David, and he had said that boys and girls nowadays have giants to fight, too.

Six-year-old Ralph suddenly broke the silence by pointing ahead, and saying with a sigh, "Well, there's our Goliath." Grandma Linton was the only one who knew that the rosy-cheeked girl sitting on the back of the buck-board was what the chubby finger pointed at.

For she knew that the mischievous boys

took a delight in teasing the untaught girl, whose speech and manners, learned in Glasgow's streets, were so different from theirs.

Only the day before, their mother, going into the kitchen, had found Jessie sobbing in a corner, and the unwashed dishes standing beside the cold dish-water. The boys were nowhere to be seen! When they did come in, the sight of their mother's tired face made them feel so sorry that they promised not to tease Jessie again.

Grandma found, from their talk that night, that Harry quite agreed with his little brother, but ten-year-old Arthur said, "Mr. Hay told us our giants lived in our hearts; that laziness was the giant of some; being late for everything was another; that temper was one, and even forgetfulness."

"Well, temper is Jessie's then," said Harry, beginning to understand. And Ralph admitted that they could not fight a girl, so perhaps Jessie was not their Goliath after all. Grandma looked in just then, and said, "I don't think any of the giants you have mentioned trouble you as much as another one which has its home in so many boys' hearts. He does not seem a very great fellow, but he may cause a lot of unhappiness."

"It's something that makes us like to tease Jessie," mused Harry.

Grandma answered, "Suppose we call him 'Giant Love-of-Teasing.'"

Then Grandma Linton asked God to help the three boys to fight their Goliath, as, in days of old, he had helped David.

It took a long time, but at last Giant Love-of-Teasing left the hearts of Arthur, Harry and Ralph. Jessie is happy now, and works so well that the weary look has left the mother's face, and peace and happiness reign in the farm home.—*Jewels.*

HOME SUNSHINE.

Eight sorrowful little faces pressed against the windows looking out at the falling rain. Raindrops and clouds outside and teardrops and frowns inside—it was hard to tell which was the gloomier of the two.

"Why, what is the matter?" cried Aunt Sue, coming in fresh and rosy from her walk in the rain, and looking in surprise at the sad faces.

"Why, we all wanted to play croquet," said Mabel, sadly. "Our new set came last night, and we wanted to use it the first thing this morning; and now it is raining, and we can't go out or do anything but have a horrid time."

"Well, it is too bad if you must have a stormy day indoors as well as out," Aunt Sue answered. "Now, I should think that eight little cousins could make all the sunshine they wanted even if it did rain and

spoil their croquet-party. Why wouldn't a game of blindman's-buff be just as pleasant? You can have the large dining-room to play in, and move the table into the corner. There! I see some sunshiny smiles already. Now, don't let me see any more clouds on these dear little faces."

In a few minutes the raindrops pattered against the windows unheeded, for the children were enjoying their game. Even Frisk joined in the fun, and barked as noisily as if he were trying to swell the merry laughter.

Now, was it not far wiser to make sunshine at home than to mourn over the disappointment the rain brought.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Listen, children to the music

That the old church bells do make;

Ring out this Christmas morning,

For the dear Redeemer's sake;

'Tis his birthday, and we keep it

In this lovely land of ours:

In the farmhouse, cottage, mansion,

Pleasantly we pass the hours.

Long ago, in Bethlehem's stable,

Christ was born, the baby King;

"Peace on earth," the watching shepherds

Heard the holy angels sing.

And the music has not ceased,

But has through the ages rolled,

And "good will" among the nations

Has increased a thousandfold.

Let our hearts be full of sunshine,

Though the frost is on the pane

And old Winter, keen but kindly,

Comes to visit us again.

And with snowy robe he covers

All the bleak and barren ground,

And makes fairy forms of beauty

Where the leafless trees abound.

Ring, ye bells! 'tis sweet to listen;

Sing, ye waits, outside the door,

Echoes of that wondrous music

That was heard in days of yore.

Decorate the house with holly,

Let the bright red berries shine,

While we celebrate the birthday

Of our loving Lord divine.

COUNTING UP HER MERCIES.

Once there was a poor old woman sitting in a chimney-corner, and she always looked so happy that people wondered, who saw her bent, tired, old shoulders and her wrinkled face and her knotty, pain-twisted hands. At last somebody said:

"Granny, what are you doing there all day? How do you pass the time?"

"Counting up my mercies, dear!" she answered cheerily. "Such a blessed lot of 'em! You can't think how many new ones I find every morning!"

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"HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING."

HARK ! THE HERALD ANGELS SING.

Hark ! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new-born King,
Peace on earth, and mercy mild ;
God and sinners reconciled."

Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies ;
With angelic hosts proclaim
"Christ is born in Bethlehem."

Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

LESSON XII.—DECEMBER 20.

THE QUEEN OF SHEBA VISITS SOLOMON.

1 Kings 10. 1-10. Memorize verses 6-9.

GOLDEN TEXT.

When the righteous are in authority,
the people rejoice.—Prov. 29. 2.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

What was said of Solomon in many lands? That he was great and rich and wise. Who carried these sayings to them? Who came to find out for herself? Where was Sheba? South of Canaan. In what country may it have been? What did she come to get? Whose home did she wish to know more of? What did she bring as gifts? What did she ask? Could Solomon answer them? What did she think of the palace and the temple? What did she say of Solomon's wisdom? Do you think she felt paid for coming? How did she go home? What do you think she did with what she had learned? Are we as eager to learn as was the queen of Sheba?

swer them? What did she think of the palace and the temple? What did she say of Solomon's wisdom? Do you think she felt paid for coming? How did she go home? What do you think she did with what she had learned? Are we as eager to learn as was the queen of Sheba?

DAILY STEPS.

Mon. Read the beautiful lesson verses. 1 Kings 10. 1-10.

Tues. Learn what Jesus said about the queen of Sheba. Matt. 12. 42.

Wed. Who is greater than Solomon? Matt. 16. 16.

Thur. Learn what the queen thought of Solomon. Verses 8, 9.

Fri. Learn the Golden Text.

Sat. Learn what gift we may bring to God. Prov. 23. 26.

Sun. Learn the worth of wisdom. Prov. 8. 11.

THREE LITTLE LESSONS.

We have learned—

1. That wisdom is the real wealth.
2. That it pays to go far to find it.
3. That Christ brings it near to us.

LESSON XIII.—DECEMBER 20.

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST (CHRISTMAS LESSON.)

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

GOLDEN TEXT.

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

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

Where was Jesus born? In Bethlehem of Judea. What Roman ruled Judea? Herod. Who came to Jerusalem? What led them there? What

did they ask? Why was Herod troubled? What did the priests and scribes tell Herod? What prophet wrote of Bethlehem? Micah. Where did the wise men then go? Why did Herod wish to know if they found the Child? Did he wish to worship him? No. What did the star do? How did the wise men feel when they saw it? What did they find in the house? What did they do? What were their gifts? What did they dream that night? Which way did they go home? By way of Hebron.

DAILY STEPS.

Mon. Read a beautiful prophecy of Christ. Isa. 9. 6.

Tues. Find another about Bethlehem. Micah. 5. 2.

Wed. Read the lesson verses. Matt. 2. 1-12.

Thur. Learn what the name Jesus means. Golden Text.

Fri. Find who was also born in Bethlehem. 1 Sam. 16. 11, 12.

Sat. Read a story of the first Christmas. Luke 2. 8-19.

Sun. Find a beautiful name of Christ. Matt. 1. 23.

THREE LITTLE LESSONS.

We have learned—

1. That God once became a little child.
2. That it was because he so loved the world.
3. That he will save his people from their sins.

LESSON XIII.—DECEMBER 27.

REVIEW.

GOLDEN TEXT

The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him.—Psa. 103. 17.

Titles and Golden Texts should be thoroughly studied.

1. D. B. up the A. Blessed are they—
2. G's C. with D. Thy throne shall—
3. D's C. Create in me—
4. D's J. over F. Blessed is he—
5. D. and A. Honour thy—
6. D's G. over A. A foolish son—
7. D's T. in G. The Lord is—
8. The C. of S. D. Wine is a—
9. D's C. to S. Trust in the—
10. S's W. C. The fear of the—
11. The D. of the T. I was glad—
12. The Q. of S. V. S. When the righteous—
12. The B. of C. Thou shalt call—

God's memory where he keeps his children's gifts will be like many a mother's store of relics of her children—full of things of no value to others, but precious in his eyes for the love's sake that was in them.



CHRISTMAS WAITS.

CHRISTMAS WAITS.

Christmas this year will be a gay time indeed for the Braithwaite children. Papa is coming home to them at last. He has been away for three long years—thousands of miles away in British Columbia. He will come on Christmas Eve, and you may believe that Dora and Fred are eager to brighten the house for his home-coming. The butcher at the corner has given them some holly and mistletoe for decorations. They have stopped for a moment to look at an unusually big bright star in the west. "I wonder if that is the Star of Bethlehem?" said Fred. "No," said Dora, "you know the Star of Bethlehem just came to guide the Wise Men when they were on their way to Jesus. But that one's a beautiful star,

anyway. I guess we'll call it papa's home-coming star."

WHAT THEY DID.

"Hello!" cried Tom.
 "What is it?" asked Rose.
 "Come into the corner and I'll tell you," said Tom.

Then Rose and Tom put their heads together and whispered.

"Next Saturday will be Christmas," said Tom.

"We shall get lots of things," said Rose.

"The poor children over the way will not get anything," said Tom. "Just think, Rose, they never heard of hanging up stockings."

"Poor little tots!" cried Rose.

Then Tom and Rose whispered many other things. They ran to the playroom, and counted their toys, and put ever so many of these in a heap on the floor.

"We meant to keep them all our lives," said Rose.

"But now we have found something better to do with them," said Tom. "I wish that we had money enough for the other thing."

The night before Christmas they ran over the way and asked Grandmother Rule to lend them four stockings. They filled the stockings with toys and games and picture-books, and hung them at the foot of the bedsteads where the four children were asleep.

"Won't they be glad!" said old Mrs. Rule. "I will waken them at daylight."

"Grandmother Rule will open her eyes wide when she sees what is on the chair," whispered Rose. Mother and father had helped them with "money for the other thing," so that Rose and Tom could buy a big turkey too for the family over the way.

Hurrah for Christmas! What a glad day it was for all! But I should not be surprised to hear that Rose and Tom were made more glad by what they gave than by all the fine gifts that came to them.

Rose said, "Mother, I have chosen a beautiful text for the New Year—what Jesus said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

ROWENA.

BY CARRIE E. MORRISON.

I've got a little cousin,
 And Rowena is her name;
 Sometimes when she comes over
 We play just the 'cutest game.

We play the floor's a jungle,
 Like what Stanley tells about:
 Then from my ark of Noah
 We take the animals out.

And I get my little gun,
 And I shoot 'em with a stick;
 And then she says: "How cruel!
 I'm real 'fraid you'll make 'em sick."

But we set 'em up again,
 And she shoots at 'em a while,
 But she don't ever hit 'em;
 Says she's 'fraid she'd make 'em spile.

But I can't make up my mind
 What does make her shoot so queer.
 Do you s'pose she's 'fraid to hit,
 Or just can't unless she's near?

Little stones build up strong towers;
 little rills form mighty rivers;
 little insects build up the coral reefs;
 little stars make the heavens glorious.