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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. III.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 15, 1883.

No. 25.

WINTER SPORTS IN CANADA.

THIS fine picture gives a graphic view of some of the magnificent moose and caribou deer of the forests of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and British Columbia. The favorite time of hunting them is in the deep snow of winter, when the hunter on his snow-shoes can skim over the surface while the moose breaks through. The moose has a habit of treading down the snow within a certain area, called a moose yard, till he has

which soon distances his pursuers, and, but for the sagacity of the Indian guide in picking out the trail, would almost always escape.

The largest moose that I ever saw, measured six feet and nearly five inches at the withers, and from the withers to the top of the skull, twenty-seven inches. The head measured two feet and five inches from the muffle to a point between the ears, and nine inches between the eyes. The horns weighed forty-five pounds, and measured four feet and three inches from tine to tine

the weight of his body until the coveted branches are within his reach.

The senses of smelling and hearing are very acute, his long ears are ever moving to and fro, intent to catch the slightest sound, and his wonderfully constructed nose carries the signal of danger to his brain, long before the unwary hunter has the slightest idea that his presence is suspected. When alarmed, this ponderous animal moves away with the silence of death, carefully avoiding all obstructions, and selecting the moss-carpeted logs and swales,

in Canada, which will appear in the *Methodist Magazine* during 1884—only \$2 a year, or *Magazine* and *Christian Guardian* together only \$3.50.

KEEP THE BOYS HAPPY.

INVENT every possible amusement to keep your boys happy at home, evenings. Never mind if they do scatter books and pictures, coats, hats and books. Never mind if they do make a noise



WINTER SPORTS IN CANADA.—(Specimens of several full-page Engravings of Canadian subjects to appear in early numbers of the "Methodist Magazine")

eaten all the tender shoots of the trees, and then he moves on to fresh fields and pastures new.

The mode of hunting which generally prevails is that of still-hunting, or creeping upon the moose, which is undoubtedly the most sportsman-like way. Still-hunting can be practised in September, and all through the early winter months, until the snow becomes so deep that it would be a sin to molest the poor animals. The moose possesses a vast amount of pluck, and when once started on his long, swinging trot, his legs seem tireless, and he will stride over boulders and wind-falls at a pace

at their widest part, and at their greatest width the palmated parts measured thirteen inches. The horn, at its junction with the skull, was eight inches in circumference. The great length of its legs and prehensile lip are of much benefit to the moose, and wonderfully adapted to his mode of feeding, which consists in peeling the bark from, and browsing upon, the branches and tender shoots of deciduous trees. When the branches or tops of trees are beyond its reach, he resorts to the process termed by hunters "riding down the tree," by getting astride of it and bearing it down by

through which he treads his way with a persistence that often sets at defiance all the arts and endurance of even the practised Indian hunter.

We do not know whether the picture is intended to give a portrait of our friend A. W. Lauder, Esq., M.P.P.; but if not, the seated figure is enough like him to pass for one. The broad snow-shoes and the toboggan-like sleigh will be observed, also the big ass-like ears, and broad heavy horns of the gigantic moose, and the more slender and branching horns of the caribou deer. This picture is one of several equally fine illustrated scenes

around you, with their whistling and hurrahing. We would stand aghast, if we could have a vision of the young men gone to utter destruction for the very reason that having cold, disagreeable, dull, stiff friends at home, they sought amusement elsewhere. The influence of a loving mother or sisters is incalculable. Like the circle formed by casting a stone in the water, it goes on and on through a man's life. Circumstances and worldly pleasures may weaken the remembrance for a time, but each touch upon the chord of memory will awaken the old time music, and her face, her voice, and her loving

words will come up before him like a revelation.

The time will come, before you think, when you would give the world to have your house tumbled by the dear hands of those very boys; when your heart shall long for their noisy steps in the hall, and their ruddy cheeks laid up to yours; when you would rather have their jolly whistle than the music of Thomas or the songs of Nilsson, when you would gladly have dirty carpets, aye, live without carpets at all, but to have their bright, strong forms beside you once more. Then play with them and pet them. Praise Johnny's drawings, Betty's music, and baby's first attempt at writing his name. Encourage Tom to chop off his sticks of wood, and Dick to persevere in making his hen coop. If one shows a talent for figures, tell him he is your famous mathematician; and if another loves geography, tell him he will be sure to make a good traveller or a foreign minister. Go with them to see their young rabbits and chickens and pigeons—and down to the creek-fall to see the flutter-mill in full operation. Have them gather you mosses, and grasses, and bright autumn leaves, and decorate their room when the snow is over all the earth. And you will keep yourself young and fresh by entering into their joys.—*Selected.*

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

WHEN marshalled on the nightly plain,
The glittering hosts bestud the sky,
One star alone of all the train
Can fix the sinner's wandering eye.
Hark, hark to God, the chorus breaks,
From every host, from every gem,
But one alone, the Saviour speaks,
It is the Star of Bethlehem.

Once on the raging seas I rode,
The storm was late, the night was dark,
And rudely wildly blew the wind
That tossed my foundering bark;
Deep horror then my vitals froze,
Death struck, I ceased the tide to stem;
When suddenly a star arose,
It was the Star of Bethlehem."

SANCTUS KLAAS, OR ST. NICHOLAS.

BY J. K. BLOOMFIELD.



A GOOD deal of lively talk has been going on during the past month, among the young people, as to the coming of Santa Claus, or St. Nick, and what he was likely to bring in his pack. And even those of older growth will hang up their stockings with the little ones, near the grate or chimney corner, with a certain sort of faith that they, too, will be remembered. But why St. Nick should especially favor chimneys or stockings, is difficult to tell. But so it is, and this absurd notion is spread far and wide over a broad continent. And certainly he does not disappoint the trusting little ones. In France, it is said, the children put their dainty little shoes on the hearth Christmas eve, with the hope that during the night they may be filled with sugar-plums by the "Bon Homme Noel," twin brother, we imagine of Santa Claus. In Germany, they have many mysteries going on for days, in preparation for Kriss Kringle. Child-

ren everywhere, in fact, eagerly watch for the coming of the mysterious being who is to bring them all that heart can desire. And they scamper off to bed early, that they may not be found up and about in the way, when he makes his appearance. How they tremble, too, if conscious of having been naughty, for fear all they will find in the morning will be a stick as a gentle hint as to what they deserve. Still they picture him as too good and jolly to punish them quite so severely.

Some austere people think it wrong to thus deceive children. "If not telling an actual untruth, it is implying one," etc. Not a bit of it! They would not be undecieved, or lose their pleasure, their real fun in getting ready for Santa Claus, for a good deal. You can't long deceive their wise little heads, either. Don't you suppose they are as ready to exclaim as any one much older: "How can an old man drive up the side of a house, over the roof, and down the chimney?" And yet they, with all loyalty and apparent faith, keep up the mystery as though Santa Claus was a real person. And they will be just as eager, year after year, to prepare for his coming, and repeat with spirit, as though they had actually seen him, the lines of Moore:

"His eyes, how they twinkled! His dimples,
how merry!
His cheeks were like roses—his nose like a
cherry,
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard on his chin was as white as the
snow;
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a
wreath;
He had a broad face, and a little round belly
That shook, when he laughed, like a bowl
full of jelly;
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old
elf:
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of
myself."

It is through the above lines, and the portraits drawn of him by the good burghers of New Amsterdam, nearly two hundred years ago, that we imagine Santa Claus to be a sturdy, kind, jolly old Dutchman. But there was once long ago a veritable St. Nicholas, of a different make and character. At least we find that "there was many hundred years ago, in the age of Constantine, a saintly bishop by the name of Nicholas, at Petara, in Asia Minor," who was one of the early bishops of Myra in Lycia.

In the meantime, his anniversary was to be kept, and the children in the little hymn they used to sing in his honor were permitted to address him as "goodt heyligh man"—good holy man.

In Catholic countries he has long been regarded as the patron saint of the young, and particularly of scholars. In England we find his feast was celebrated in ancient times with great solemnity in the public schools. On the vigil of his feast, December 6th, a person of the appearance and costume of a bishop, assembles the children of a family, or a school, and distributes among them—to the good children, gilt-nuts, sweetmeats, and other little presents, as the reward of good conduct.

This good saint flourished in the third century, and is thought to have met with persecutions under Diocletian. He died in 326; but it was not until towards the eleventh century that his supposed relics were conveyed from the East to Bari, in the Kingdom of Naples. And it is considered a curious fact that in Roman churches the

anniversary of this translation, May 8th, is still observed as a festival in his honor.

In art, St. Nicholas is represented as clad in Episcopal robes and carrying either three purses, three golden balls, or by him three children; referring to three different stories relative to the saints' charities and mercy for others.

In Flanders and Holland the school-children put out their shoes and stockings in the confidence that Santa Claus, or Knecht Clobes, as they call him, will put in a prize for good conduct, before morning. And thus he became the patron of the young, and especially so of school-children.

You now have the history, or origin, as near as it can be ascertained, of Sanctus Klaas, or St. Nicholas. But don't, we beg, be over-wise in your own conceit, to the disappointment of others. "Keep dark," as far as the children's pleasure is concerned. Let them, as long as possible, enjoy fairy tales, and the coming of a mythical St. Nick down the chimney to fill their stockings. But in a kind, loving way, you may tell them why it is that once a year such great preparations are made for gift-making and receiving, and why we should all rejoice and be "merry" (light-hearted) over the advent of Christ—God's greatest gift to His children, old and young.

"GREAT JOY."

THERE'S a song in the air,
There's a star in the sky,
There's a mother's deep prayer,
And a baby's low cry,
And the star rains its fire, while the beautiful
sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King.

There's a tumult of joy
O'er the wonderful birth,
For the Virgin's sweet boy
Is the Lord of the earth.
Aye, the star rains its fire, and the beautiful
sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King.

In the light of the star,
Lie the ages impearled;
And that song from afar
Has swept o'er the world.
Every heart is aflame, and the beautiful sing,
In the homes of the nations that Jesus is King.

We rejoice in the light,
And we echo the song
That comes down through the night,
From the heavenly throng.
Aye, we shout to the lovely evangel they bring,
And we greet in His cradle our Saviour and
King.

—J. G. Holland.

GOD IN THE HEART.

A POOR wounded boy was dying in the hospital. He was a soldier, but a mere boy for all that. The lady who watched by his bedside saw that death was coming fast, and, placing her hand upon his head, she said to him, "My dear boy, if this should be death that is coming upon you, are you ready to meet your God?" The boy's dark eyes opened slowly and a smile passed over the young soldier's face as he answered, "I am ready, dear lady, for this has long been His kingdom;" and as he spoke he placed his hand upon his heart. "Do you mean," questioned the lady gently, "that God rules and reigns in your heart?" "Yes," he answered; but his voice sounded far off, sweet and low, as if it came from a soul already well on its way through the "dark valley and shadow of death." And still he lay there with his hand

above his heart, even after that heart had ceased to beat and the soldier boy's soul had gone up to its God.

CHRISTMAS SONG.

I 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."

CHORUS.

Glory to God, the sounding skies
Loud with their anthems sing;
"Peace on the earth, good will to men,
From heaven's eternal King."

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 lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its babel sounds
The blest angels sing.
Chorus.—Glory to God, etc.

But with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring,
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!
Chorus.—Glory to God, etc.

This day shall Christian tongues be mute,
And Christian hearts be cold!
O catch the anthem that from heaven
O'er Judah's mountains rolled!
When nightly bursts from seraph harps
The high and solemn lay,—
"Glory to God; on earth be peace;
Salvation comes to-day!
Chorus.—Glory to God, etc.

CARD-PLAYING.

WHAT accomplished writer, the late Dr. Holland, of Springfield, Mass., said: "I have all my days had a card-playing community open to my observation, and I am yet to be made to believe that that which is the universal resort of the starved in soul and intellect, which has never in any way linked to itself tender, elevating, or beautiful associations—the tendency of which is to unduly absorb the attention from more weighty matters—can recommend itself to the favor of Christ's disciples. The presence of culture and genius may embellish, but it can never dignify it. I have at this moment," said Dr. Holland, "ringing in my ears the dying injunction of my father's early friend, 'Keep your son from cards. Over them I have murdered time and lost heaven.'"

Fathers and mothers, keep your sons from cards in the home circle. What must a good angel think of a mother at the prayer-meeting asking prayers for the conversion of her son whom she allowed to remain at home playing cards for "pastime?"—*M. P. Gaddis.*

The London *Spectator* furnishes the text for a volume in this sentence: "It has always seemed to us that the testimony of those little words, 'why,' 'because,' 'will,' 'must,' 'can,' 'ought,' to a class of notions, which, if they represent true illusions, could hardly have got into our minds at all, is decisive as against the philosophy either of pure agnosticism or pure fatalism."

CHRISTMAS CHIMES.

I HEARD the bells on Christmas lay
Their old, familiar carols play
And mild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men'

And thought how, as the day had come,
The bellies of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men'

The ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolving from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime,
Of peace on earth, good-will to men.
—*Longfellow.*

Nowell! Nowell! in this halle,
Make mery I praye nowe alle;
On that chylde may we calle.

Christ was born on Christmas day,
Wreath the holly, twine the bay.

To Thee then, O Jesus,
This day of Thy birth,
Be glory and honour through heaven and
earth;
True Godhead Incarnate, Omnipotent Word;
O come, let us hasten
To worship the Lord.
—*Carol.*

The time draws near the birth of Christ;
The moon is hid, the night is chill;
The Christmas bells from hill to hill
Answer each other in the mist.
—*Tennyson.*

This is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heaven's eternal King,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring.
—*Milton.*

Sweet the Christmas bells are ringing,
Sweet the clear young voices singing,
For the Child is King
Earth looks like a child in white,
Crowded with frosty jewels bright,
For His welcoming.

It is the Christmas time;
And up and down, 'twixt heaven and earth,
In glorious grief and solemn mirth,
The shining angels climb.
—*Mrs. Muloch-Craig.*

Be merry all, be merry all,
With holy dress the festive hall;
Prepare the song, the feast, the ball,
To welcome merry Christmas.
—*Spencer.*

His place of birth a solemn angel tells
To simple shepherds keeping watch by night;
They gladly thither haste, and by a quire
Of squadron'd angels, hear His carol sung.
—*Milton.*

O! lovely voices of the sky
Which hymned the Saviour's birth,
Are ye not singing still on high,
Ye that sang, "peace on earth?"
To us yet speak the strains
Wherewith, in time gone by,
Ye blessed the Syrian swains,
O! voices of the sky!
—*Mrs. Hemans.*

The happy Christmas comes once more,
The Heavenly Guest is at the door;
The blessed words the shepherds thrill
The joyous tidings: peace, good-will!
—*From the Danish.*

How bright thy lowly manger beams!
Down earth's dark vale its glory streams,
The splendour of thy natal night
Shines through all time in deathless light.
—*From St. Ambrose, by Franck.*

Wherefore from his throne exalted,
Came He on this earth to dwell;
All his pomp, an humble manger,
All his court, a narrow cell;
"From that world to bring to this,
Peace, which of all earthly blisses
Is the brightest, purest bliss."
—*Violante De Ceo.*

Let us ne'er, since He was poor,
Turn the needy from our door—
Poverty is holy;
For His sake at Christmas-tide,
Gladly we will all provide
For the poor and lowly.
—*Bond.*

"It is the calm and solemn night;
A thousand bells ring out, and throw
Their joyous peals abroad and smite
The darkness-charmed and holy now!

The night that erst no name had worn,
To it a happy name is given,
From that stable lay, new born,
The peaceful Prince of earth and heaven,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago
—*Alfred Dommett.*

"Be this, good friends, our carol still,
Be peace on earth, be peace on earth,
To men of gentle will."
—*Thackeray.*

Christmas, the joyous period of the year
Now with bright holly all the temple strow,
With laurel green and sacred mistletoe.

O thou whose glorious and contracted light,
Wrapt in night's mantle, stole into a manger,
Since my dark soul and brutish, is Thy right,
To man, of all beasts be not Thou a stranger.
—*Herbert.*

"The heart must ring thy Christmas bells,
Thy inward altars raise;
Its faith and hope thy canticles,
And its obedience praise."
—*Whittier.*

How shall we celebrate the day
When God appeared in mortal clay,
The mark of worldly scorn;
When the archangel's heavenly lays,
Attempted the Redeemer's praise,
And hailed salvation's morn!
—*Chatterton.*

Without the door let sorrow lie,
And if for cold it hap to die,
We'll bury it in a Christmas pie,
And ever more be merry.
—*Old Carol.*

And all the bells on earth shall ring
On Christmas day, on Christmas day;
And all the bells on earth shall ring
On Christmas day in the morning.
—*Carol.*

Midnight scarcely passed and over,
Drawing to this holy morn,
Very early, very early,
Christ was born.
Sing out with bliss, his name is this,
Emmanuel,
As was foretold in days of old
By Gabriel.
—*Neale.*

LUTHER'S BIRTHDAY.

THE Luther celebration has been the most extraordinary tribute ever paid to the memory of any great man. The name of Luther is imperishably enshrined in the hearts of his countrymen and of the world—"A star forever shining in the firmament of fame."

In Germany the enthusiasm was immense. High and low, rich and poor—Emperor, Prince and peasant all were animated by the same spirit. Perhaps the most striking of all was the celebration on Nov. 10th, at Eisleben, the town where the immortal Reformer was born in 1483, and where he died in 1546. The air rang with Luther's hymn, "A mighty fortress is our God," intoned by over 40,000 human voices, mingled with the drums and trumpets of half a dozen military bands. The scene was most impressive, and symbolical of the solemnity, force and earnestness of the German people. Every house in Eisleben was literally covered with evergreen wreaths, festoons, miniature flags, Chinese lanterns, and crystal reflectors, giving the place the appearance of a forest. The Emperor and Crown Prince attended service at the church of St. Nicholas. The historical procession was a wonderful affair in numbers and in its elaborate artistic designs and ornaments. Nothing more strikingly evinces the triumph of Luther's principles and work than the places where his birth was celebrated. In every country, where a free Gospel has touched and quickened the hearts of men, the day was honoured. The sons

of Italy and Spain, long kept down under the dark shadow of the Papacy, united with the Briton and the German in acclamations of thankful joy for religious liberty and an open Bible. In Rome, the high place of Papal influence, all the Protestant churches celebrated the occasion by appropriate services. A leading Roman journal, not tinged with Protestant sympathies, had an able article paying cheerful tribute to Luther's influence in promoting civil and religious liberty. Surely the world moves. The celebration at Toronto was a great success. A chorus and orchestra of 200 rendered Luther's Hymn and other Luther music, and stirring addresses were given. An interesting exhibition of Luther's literature, portraits and pictures, and of ancient bibles and other books was also held.—*Guardian.*

METHODIST UNION IN CANADA.

OPINION IN ENGLAND.

THE Methodists of British America have set a good example to other Methodists the world over. They have agreed, with remarkable unanimity and cordiality, to efface the distinctions which kept them separate, and to come together as one body, holding one faith, united in one organization. The differences that have thus been abolished were of a very minute and shadowy character. Their origin might be traced, historically, but they had long lost all pertinent reason, all constraining validity, all intelligible meaning, for people of the present day. Meet and right it is, therefore, that henceforth throughout the Canadian Dominion, from the shores of Newfoundland to those of Alaska, from Beumuda to the furthest inhabited part of the Hudson's Bay Territory, there will be only one Methodist Church. The full strength of the united body will be 1,633 ministers and 157,752 full members with 12,141 persons on trial. It will have also 2,807 Sunday-schools. It is obvious that such a body, thoroughly homogeneous, animated by a fervid spirit, and faithful to Wesley's pointed and oft-repeated admonition to his preachers, "Your business is to save souls," must exert an influence far exceeding the sum of what could have been put forth by it when existing in a fragmentary form. This should facilitate the imitation of the Canadian achievement in Australia, where tentative proceedings with that end in view have been begun, and in the United States, where the vexed question of slavery has ceased to be a cause of unnatural separation. What hinders that at home the same thing should not be done, and done quickly?—*London Christian World.*

BRINGING IN THE BOAR'S HEAD.

A CHRISTMAS feast in olden times was never thought to be complete unless a boar's head graced the platter in the centre of the oaken table. No picture of England under the old Saxon kings would be finished without a description of one of those wild revellings which attended this annual festival, where prince, courtier and retainer mingled together, and for a time forgot their pride of birth and station. The bring-

ing in of the boar's head was attended with great pomp and ceremony. It was carried in by one called the Master of Revels, who was followed by a procession of minstrels and bards, playing and singing songs in its honor

"The boar is dead—
Loe, here is his head,
What man could have done more
Than his head off to strike,
Me'eager like,
And bring it as I doe before

The honor of bringing in the boar's head was considered so great that one historian gravely tells us how it was bestowed once upon a young prince, a son of Henry II. by that monarch himself. At the table it was served in a "silver platter with minstrelaye."

"THEY PRESENTED UNTO HIM
GIFTS, GOLD AND FRANK-
INCENSE AND MYRRH."

—*Matthew ii. 11.*

WHAT will you give to Jesus
For a birthday gift to-day?
Have you nothing on this His birthday morn
At His dear feet to lay?
Has He given thee nothing to show His love?
Think! Why was the Saviour born?
Oh! have you no gift for Jesus
On this His birthday morn!

What will you give to Jesus,
Your dearest and truest Friend?
Think of His bygone mercies,
Oh! His love which knows no end!
And have you no gift for Jesus—
Nothing to show your love?
Oh! bring some gift to the Master,
Your love to-day to prove!

Oh! have you no gift for Jesus?
Search, and your heart will know
What will best please your kindest Friend,
The One who loveth you so!
He will look o'er His golden treasures,
And His heart will be so sad
If no gift from you whom He loves so much
Shall be found to make Him glad.

What shall I give to Jesus
For a birthday gift to-day?
What can I bring to my best Friend
At His dear feet to lay?
He has given so many gifts to me,
Since first I called Him mine,
That I never enough can show my love
For all His grace divine.

What can I give to Jesus?
Other friends on their birthday morn
Accept of the tokens of friendship,
Nor greet them with unkind scorn;
And shall I give nothing to Jesus,
My dearest and truest Friend,
Whose birthday recalls all His wondrous love
From which all my blessings descend!


What shall I give to Jesus!—
Small though the gift, and poor,
Surely he will accept of it,
And know I can give no more;
Surely he will not refuse to take
The offering that I bring,
So I must some tiny token of love
Give to my gracious King.

O Jesus! I come with my offering,
The gifts which Thou lovest the best,
I would bring myself, O my Saviour!
And this will include all the rest.
Myself, and my all, O Jesus!
Thou wilt not refuse to take,
But wilt smile with Thine own sweet approval,
For thine own dear mercy's sake.

And so as I see around me
The suffering and the sad,
I must go forth and soothe their sorrows,
And make the lonely ones glad.
I must give my gold and my service
To those who in need may be,
And Thou'lt say, "Inasmuch as ye did it to
these,
Ye have done it unto Me."
—*Fairlie Thornton.*

A LITTLE boy who wouldn't run to the store for his mother until he had a drink of water, pleads in extenuation of his disobedience that "even a river couldn't run when it was dry."

CHRISTMAS MORNING.


 HIME, merry bells the night has fled!
 Wake rich and poor! this happy morn
 The Christ who suffered in our stead,
 God's precious gift to man, was born.
 O, open wide our hearts to-day,
 While Christ stands waiting at the door,
 We would not drive God's gift away—
 Our God's best gift to rich and poor—
 Come, dwell within, and knock no more.

Like the shepherds long ago,
 They who watched on Bethlehem's plain,
 Watched their flocks from plundering foe,
 Listen to the sweet refrain—
 "Peace on earth, good-will toward men!"

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

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

TORONTO, DECEMBER 15, 1883.



CHRISTMAS TIDE.

IT is Christmas-tide the world over. We celebrate this most joyous time of all the year in our most joyless and inclement season. Winter has thrown her icy mantle over us, and

"The sun comes late to the pallid sky,
 And does not come to stay;
 The snow gleams cold on the barren plains,
 The year is old and gray."

Perhaps to those who have earthly comforts, Christmas is all the more joyous from the contrast within doors and without, but to those who measure their coal by the peck, and through whose thin walls the cold wind fiercely pierces, there can be no great joy, even on the anniversary of our Saviour's birth. Had all who profess the name of Christ the true Christian spirit,

there would be fewer of such unfortunates—less need to say, with Hood,

"Alas! for the rarity
 Of Christian charity,
 Under the sun."

But Christmas is not confined to our cold climate. Christmas will be celebrated all around the world where Christian missionaries have gone to tell the story of our Saviour's birth. Then forget not the brother upon whose hearth the fire burns low, who sees only his present misery—

"Even God's providence
 Seeming estranged."

Forget not the little children whose pinched faces tell of an age of sorrows. Forget not those who have gone to foreign lands to carry the good news of the gospel. Forget not those who are beginning to understand what it is to have a Saviour, and those who yet do not know of His wondrous love. Forget not the sinful, those in prisons, those sunk in sin, seemingly beyond redemption. Remember that for all of these Christ was born and died, as well as for us.

"Sound over all waters, reach out from all lands,
 The chorus of voices, the clasp of hands;
 Sing hymns that were sung by the stars of the morn,
 Sing songs of the angels when Jesus was born."

CHRISTMAS ALL THE YEAR.

DICKENS says, "I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year," and perhaps this, which he said at another time, is the reason why he wants to keep it all the year: "I have always thought of Christmas time as a good time: a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time."

The true Christmas is all this and more. It is a time when we not only remember our friends and—enemies, if we have them, lovingly and forgivingly, but when we do it for the sake of One who loved us when we were far from him.

Any Christmas joy that does not find its spring and source in Jesus, the Holy Babe of Bethlehem, is not the true joy.

Let us look to him, dear little friends, as the One who carries all the world's hope and joy in himself, and be sure that he wants to fill our hearts out of his own great heart. Our hearts are little cups, which can only hold a few drops at best, but he loves to have us hold them up to be filled, and he loves to fill them! Shall we believe it, and in this way have a Merry Christmas all the year?

ALTHOUGH we printed a very large edition of the special Luther number of PLEASANT HOURS, so great was the demand for it that the entire edition was soon exhausted and cannot now be furnished. The Christmas numbers of PLEASANT HOURS and *Home and School* will be of special interest, full of Christmas pictures, poems and stories. Only \$1 per 100. Send orders early to make sure of getting them. Schools sending new orders now for S. S. papers for 1884 will receive the numbers for the rest of the year gratis, including the special Christmas numbers.

H. T. GOSSILIN will oblige by sending his address to the editor of PLEASANT HOURS.



CHRISTMAS PARTY.

CHRISTMAS PARTY.

COME, join our game of blind-man's buff!
 Come, girls and boys: we'll not be rough.
 The bandage round my eyes be tight,
 Be sure the blind man has no sight:
 Now turn him with a one, two, three!"—
 "Ah, blind man, now you try to see!"

"Indeed I cannot see at all:
 Don't let me run against the wall.
 Who's this I've caught here by the shoulder?"
 "Tell truly, or you must not hold her."
 "'Tis Amy Summer."—"There, you're wrong:
 So let her go: 'tis icy Long."

"Who's this I have here by the arm?
 Keep still, sir, or you'll come to harm,—
 'Tis Charley Bateman."—"Yes 'tis he.
 Now, Charley you must blinded be.
 The bandage round your head we tie:
 We'er ready, sir! now mind your eye."

"Oh, ho, what curly head is this?
 Do I not know the lit le miss?
 Why, I could tell her 'mid a dozen:
 'Tis Daisy Dale, my little cousin.
 These hands, this ribbon, tell the tale:
 Yes, I am sure 'tis Daisy Dale."

So little Daisy has to yield,
 And, as the blind man, take the field.
 Whom does she catch? Now guess your best:
 'Tis one much taller than the rest,
 Taller and fairer too, by far,—
 So Daisy thinks,—'tis dear mamma!

CHRISTMAS LEGENDS.

THERE is in the home life of the Canadian, especially farmer, at Christmas time, much that brings close to the mind the picture of the birth in the lowly manger. Many traditions still live about mysterious occurrences during the Christmas night, and these linger still with all their charm, with all their mellowness of primeval devotion among the homesteads on the verge of the forest or the cottage upon the bleak prairie. The infant's birth took place in a rude manger, among the stalled cattle, when, according to the general belief, cold night-winds blew, and the Divine Babe and His mother were but feebly protected in a chilly manger. One old tradition in particular, tells that at the moment of the child's birth the cattle in the manger fell upon their knees. How often by the lantern's light through the cold night have not little ones crept out to the barn where the cattle were in their stalls as the hands of the clock neared the hour of midnight, to see if the cattle were kneeling; for the tradition relates that at the precise moment in each year since the babe was born all dumb animals, in reverence, fall upon their knees. There was another tradition, too, which

Shakepeare puts in the mouth of *Marcellus* in "Hamlet," that during the night of the nativity the cock crew from dark to dawn:

"Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
 Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
 This bird of drawing sineth all night long,
 And then they say no spirit dares stir abroad;
 The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
 No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
 So hallowed and so gracious is the time."

CHRISTMAS AT SEA.

THEY stood beside the helmsman at the wheel, the lookout in the bow, the officers who had the watch; dark, ghostly figures in their several stations; but every man among them hummed a Christmas tune, or had a Christmas thought, or spoke below his breath to his companion of some bygone Christmas-day, with homeward hopes belonging to it. And every man on board, waking or sleeping, good or bad, had had a kinder word for one another on that day than on any other day in the year, and had shared to some extent in its festivities; and had remembered those he cared for at a distance, and had known that they delighted to remember him.

We beg to call the special attention of all Sunday-school teachers to the announcement of our S. S. Periodicals for 1884 in this number of the *Banner*; and the Announcement of the *Methodist Magazine* in the PLEASANT HOURS for December 1—the best we have ever made. Several schools have for several years taken Magazines for circulation instead of libraries, being much cheaper, fresher, and more attractive. Special rates to schools given on application. *Home and School* will contain many S. S. items, hints on teaching, etc., of special interest to S. S. workers—every one of whom should have it. Only 30 cents a year.

The first of January will be the 400th anniversary of the birth of Ulrich Zwingli, the great Swiss Reformer, who was born seven weeks after Luther, and was tragically slain in his 43rd year on the field of battle. The next number of PLEASANT HOURS will contain a memorial account of his life and labours. He should be duly commemorated, together with his more famous fellow-Reformer, Martin Luther.



THE STAR IN THE EAST.

THE GUIDING STAR.

AS with gladness men of old
Did the guiding star behold;
As with joy they hailed its light,
Leading onward, beaming bright;
So, most gracious Lord, may we
Evermore be led to Thee.

As with joyful steps they sped
To that lowly manger-bed;
There to bend the knee before
Him whom heaven and earth adore;
So may we with willing feet,
Ever seek thy mercy-seat.

As they offered gifts most rare,
At that manger rude and bare;
So may we with holy joy,
Pure and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to Thee our heavenly King!

Holy Jesus! every day
Keep us in the narrow way;
And, when earthly things are past,
Bring our ransomed souls at last
Where they need no star to guide.
Where no clouds Thy glory hide.

THE MAGI AND THE STAR.

BY WILLIAM IRVIN, D.D.

HERE is nothing in all the story of Jesus more fascinating than the episode of the Magi. It weaves old Chaldean mystery, and the lore of the stars, and the cheer of Christmas-tide, into one divine enchantment. It starts questions in directions of absorbing interest, which are forever asked and never fully answered. Who and what were the Wise Men? What was the star? How was the guidance managed? How and where and with what success did the sages afterwards bear witness for Christ? Walter Scott and Daniel Defoe and Scheherazade and Shakespeare and Milton, all together, have not had a tithe of the readers that have been drawn to this brief and strange old Christmas tale. It never wears out. It is fresh and new forever. Let the sedatest Christian read it for the thousandth time, and the old glamour will fasten on him. Stranger than the shell of ancient romance, mightier than the magnetic touch of an eastern talisman.

The story suggests some great lessons, which, however familiar, never lose its own perennial freshness.

In the coming of these heathen sages, there is a pledge and promise that all the heathen shall seek Jesus and find Him. That is the Church's hope and expectation. Some hold that it never will be done until Jesus comes again. Others say that it has been belated by the Church's remissness and sloth. But, without agreement as to the when and the how, all Christians agree as to the certainty of the result itself. And the appearance of the Wise Men in Bethlehem is a sign and an earnest of it. They were, no doubt, better and wiser than most of their countrymen. But they were none the less heathen. Nothing seemed more unlikely than that they should hear of a Saviour's coming, or even then should bestir themselves to seek Him. And yet, over all that dark and weary way, with strange insight and persistence of faith and hope, they journeyed to the side of the infant Jesus. And so some day shall all the nations come. They sit now in darkness and the death-shadow; but the Day-Spring from on high shall visit them, and the sun of righteousness shall rise in their heavens. The first fruits pledge the rich, ripe harvest. The first green tree in spring ensures that all the naked branches will soon don emerald robes. The first ripe autumn fruit sets one looking for the orchard's ruddy and golden treasures. So, from the three Magi, we forecast the ingathering of the countless Gentiles. As we see their prostrate worship, we expect the bowing of every pagan knee. Their low-voiced words to the wondering Mary over her sleeping Babe seem like the first faint notes of the ever-swelling acclaim in which at last every tongue shall confess that Jesus is the Lord.

So again, it is shown here that they who seek Jesus always find Him. It must have seemed a silly and hopeless enterprise for these men to set out from a far land to seek for an infant lying in a strange country under the sole guidance of a wandering star! They were very likely laughed at, reasoned with, wept over. And yet a

Divine hand led them safely and surely to their goal. And it is still so to-day. A man may seek wealth and live in poverty. He may seek renown and die obscure. He may seek happiness and find vanity and vexation. But let him in earnest seek Jesus and nothing in all the world is so sure as that he will find Him.

Then, how that star was honoured when it was used to guide men to Jesus! If we could be sure that it was the united lustre of the planets Jupiter and Saturn, as some say, we could hardly look at them without thinking of the noble use they served. In all their mighty orbits and shining centuries, they never went so glorious a way before or since as that in which the Wise Men followed them. If the star could be identified, men would count it illustrious as it blazes on the brow of night; eager angels would point it out to each other, and the glorified would sound its praises in the new song. And yet, any follower of Jesus, if he will, may win just such honours. God now uses, not stars in the heaven, but men on the earth, to lead sinners to the Saviour. And when the meteors of the world's brief show are all extinct and forgotten, "they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars, forever and ever."

And that star is shining still. No astronomer has found it out amid the host of heaven; but the Star of Bethlehem never sets and never wanes. It gleams on human ways to-day as brightly as it then did on the road from Persia to Palestine. That dawn has come near high noon. That midnight has vanished before the Day-Star. Men are now still more brightly led by the Word which is a lamp to their feet. The shadow of death is turned into morning whenever human eyes turn from the gloom of unpardoned sin to behold "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

What better can we do at this Christmas time than to follow the Wise Men to Bethlehem, and then to do as we think they must have done when they went away?

THE YULE LOG.

AMONG the sports of Christmas Eve in "Merry England," and also in some parts of the continent, was the burning of the Yule log, or clog as it was commonly called. The log selected for this purpose was generally the root or butt of a tree. In an old English poem mention is made of the Yule clog, brought from the neighbouring forest and laid on the cottage floor until each member of the family had stood on its centre and sung a Yule song before it was consigned to the flames. According to an ancient authority, this Yule clog was to be lighted with a brand of the last year's clog which had been carefully preserved for the purpose. During the ceremony of lighting a song was sung.

With the last year's brand
Light the new block, and
For good success in his spending,
Or your psalters play
That sweet luck may
Come while the log is tending.

It was a superstitious notion that the burning of this log had a sanctifying influence over the household, and served to drive away evil spirits. It was also strictly enjoined upon those who performed the ceremony of lighting, that their hands should be clean.

"Wash your hands or else the fire
Will not tend to your desire.
Unwashed hands, ye maidens, know,
Dead the fire, though ye blow."

While the log was burning the company gathered round and danced and sang right merrily by the light of the glowing embers, or amused themselves with jest and story until the day broke.

To our readers, to our friends far and near, and to all to whom these words shall come, we wish a Merry, Merry Christmas. Be happy for once, if you never were before, on this coming Christmas day. Be good, be kind, be charitable. Know the blessedness of giving; the happiness that comes to those who seek to make others happy. Do not let Christmas pass without doing something that will cause a gleam of happiness to enter some human heart. What a blessed and comforting thought it is that wherever we are, whatever may be our condition, though homeless and friendless we may be, Christmas has one gift for us far richer and rarer than earth's choicest treasures are. It is a gift that all may claim and yet it is ours alone—the love of Jesus and salvation through His blood. For "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

A CORRESPONDENT in Quebec makes an inquiry about a vile slander which he says the Roman Catholics are taught to believe about Luther. That slander is sufficiently refuted by the statements on Luther's marriage and home life, on pages 171 and 172 of the Luther number of PLEASANT HOURS.

THE absence of telegraph operators recalls the story of the old darkey who, hearing the instrument suddenly begin to click while the operator was away, stepped up to it, and, putting his mouth to it, shouted with all his power of lung: "De oppahratah isn't h'yar!"

THE BOY OF TARSUS
A LEGEND OF ST. PAUL.

BY MARGARET J. PRESTON.

THE rabbi stroked his beard of snow,
And reverently began to roll,
With careful foldings, calm and slow,
The wrappings round the sacred scroll.

The solemn ritual had been read;
And turning with an aspect meek,
"I: any hath a word," he said,
"Unto the people, let him speak."

Whereon, a youth with eagle eye
And pallid vehemence of face,
Born of impatience stern and high,
Stepped forward for a little space.

With nostril wide dilated, lips
He might not silence if he would,
Tense to his very finger-tips,
With fragile form erect he stood.

The people turned their wondering gaze
Upon him, till a waiting hush
Gathered on every up-turned face.
They saw that some keen passion's rush

Flooded his speech, as when the snows
Of his own Taurus plunge amain
Upon the Cydnus as it flows
Across Cilicia's stretch of plain.

"Oh, men!" he cried. "What time ye learn
Such truths, I marvel that your souls
Should not be fired until they burn
With the white heat of altar coals!"

"Why should we Hebrews hide our faith,
Trembling before the victors' rods?
No God but one our Scripture saith,
Yet Tarsus hath its thousand gods!"

"Behold what temples crown our heights!
What heathen shrines infest our ways?
See ye their sacrificial rites!
Hark, how they hymn Apollo's praise!"

"While we whose hearts therewith grow sad,
Sit with dumb lips that make no moan.
Who raves the courage Moses had
Before the kingly Pharaoh's throne?"

"Who dares to show a David's zeal
Right in our proud Proconsul's eyes?
Who hath a Daniel's strength to kneel
And own the power that Rome defies?"

"Would God that out of Shiloh now
The Prophet promised long might come,
To smite these altars till the bow;
To strike these lying wonders dumb.

"Forgive me if I wrong you, though
My words are words of truth, yet wild;
For ye are ancient men and know
Wisdom, and I am but a child."

The boy sank back. The people gazed
With curious eyes, as if they feared
Fonatic zeal his brain had crazed;
The rabbi stroked his snowy beard,

Saying: "Take heed. Our faith one day
May feel a new reformer's rule.
This stripling goes next moon, they say,
To study in Gamaliel's School."

CHRISTMAS.

"**G**OD be thanked for the bright
Christmas day!" many have
said, as the sunlight and
gladness of its pleasant hours
have fallen upon their lives. And not
only the young have said these words,
but many whose lives are crowned with
age have grasped at the golden sun-
beams that gild the glad Christmas
time. Perhaps there is no season in
all the weary march of years so fraught
with happiness for all classes as this
mid-winter holiday. The hearts of
the aged seem to grow young again,
and the young gain higher and brighter
heights of pleasure and enjoyment.

Clouds and sadness flee away at the
coming of summer glory in the midst
of winter's gloom. The voices of
sorrow are hushed, as the joybells ring
out in their silvery sweetness. The
dark powers of anguish and despair are
for once held in check by the invisible

chain of silver and gold. Glad songs
and floating melody come over the
tranquil waters, where moaning tem-
pests have lingered so long. Sweetness,
beauty and sunshine all mingle lovingly
together, to make up the crowning
glory of the day.

Who can tell the secret of this glad
day?

Who can point out the invisible
power that makes it so beautiful?

Is it the "ivy green" and winter
flowers twined gracefully together in
fantastic forms? Is it the many offer-
ings of friendship and love? Is it the
Christmas carol and grand anthem
that float out beautiful melody? Is it
because this glad day comes in the
midst of the gloom and desolation of
winter? Is it because all are joining
in this scene of rejoicing? Perhaps
these things help to render the scene
beautiful, yet they do not constitute
the central glory of it. The sweet love
of Christ is the hallowed power that
beautifies the day. The festive hours
are ushered in, in memory of His
coming to redeem the world, and the
joy and gladness of that great day still
floats down the tide of ages.

There was joy when he came, and
there will ever be glad joy as the Re-
deemer's birthday comes with the
years. We can well afford to be
joyous as Christmas breaks upon us
with its hallowed joys. We can well
afford to bestow our "love offerings"
upon others, when we have received
by the coming of Christ a gift of untold
worth.

Oh! royal day, full of brightness and
precious memories, we will keep thee
sacred for ever.—*Mrs. M. A. Holt.*

LETTER FROM MR. CROSBY.

PORT SIMPSON, Oct. 18th, 1883.

Dear Dr. Withrow,—You will be
good enough to say through the
PLEASANT HOURS that the much-needed
money for the Mission Boat is still
coming. One dear, good sister sends
\$5 of a birthday present, from Toronto.
A dear friend (do not know the name)
from Barrie sends \$5 with words of
cheer. God bless them! And then
the dear little self-denial class in Lon-
don have again remembered us by
sending \$5 more to the boat; and a
dear sister, also from one of the London
churches sends \$2. These are very
cheering. Crowds of work from the
fact that we did not get our mail for
seven weeks, and a want of sufficient
money prevented me from building this
fall, so we expect to start early next
spring. It will cost more than we
first thought, but as the hand of God is
in it we shall get it soon I think. I
hope soon to hear from some of our
friends in British Columbia. I should
like to write more.

DOUGLAS JERROLD was a compositor;
Charles Dickens, a reporter; John Kit-
to, editor of the "Pictorial Bible," a
shoemaker; Dr. Livingstone, a factory
operative; and Wm. Gifford, the
founder of the "Edinburgh Review,"
and one of the most powerful journal-
ists of his day, a cabin-boy and after-
ward a shoemaker's apprentice.

THE most terribly disappointed
person we have seen during the present
century, was the young lady who took
sixteen pieces of music to a friend's
house, and who was not asked to sing
during the whole evening.

SANTA CLAUS' STEP-BROTHER.

BY HOPE LEDYARD.



It was the week before Christ-
mas. The stores were all
decked in Christmas greens,
the streets were alive with
busy, happy-looking people.
Were there many that felt
as Mr. Linn did, as he
looked in the shop windows
and noted the crowd of merry shop-
pers? Were there others that said,
half bitterly: "Christmas is all non-
sense, when the children are gone or
grown up."

Not that Mr. Linn was a lonely,
crusty old bachelor. Not at all. On
the very day in question he had bought
a handsome present for his wife, ex-
pressed another to his sister, and
directed his customary Christmas note
to his pastor, enclosing the customary
check. He had subscribed to all the
Christmas charities—knew that many
poor children would feast, at least on
one day, because of him; but yet he
felt "left out" and alone, lonely and
old, more and more keenly each Christ-
mas season.

"Sister Mary, tell me again about
the Christmases you had when papa
was here. How late mamma is, and
I did so hope she'd bring home some-
thing nice. I'm so hot and so thirsty!
Quick, Mary, tell me about your
Christmas when you had the tree, or I
must cry."

Mary Hartley, a girl of fourteen,
took the poor little sick sister in her
arms, and, rocking her gently, told
again the story, of which Lily never
seemed to tire.

"I was just eight years old that
year—just your age, Lily, and I was
very proud of having discovered (as I
thought) that there was no such per-
son as Santa Claus—that papa and
mamma filled my stockings. But papa
was not at all glad that I did not be-
lieve in the dear old saint, and kept
telling me that, if I did not believe in
Santa Claus, the jolly little man would
leave me out altogether. But I
thought I knew better, and said I
would not be a baby any more. Such
tales would do for little two-year-old
Lily.

"So, though you, little, cunning
baby, would trot to the chimney and
call out: 'A big dolly, Santa Klaus,'
I never condescended to call for a
thing and only told papa and mamma
what I wished for. Papa looked very
grave, and told me that he was afraid
Santa Claus would leave me out alto-
gether.

"Christmas Eve I hung up my
stocking next to your little red one.
Mamma and papa hung theirs, calling
up the chimney for Santa Claus. But
I would not call. It was baby non-
sense.

"Oh! Lily, I shall never forget
getting up very, very early the next
morning to see my presents. It was
quite dark, only a glimmer of light
from the gas in the hall. I felt of
one stocking. It was your little one,
stuffed full. Then I got hold of
another one; but it was short and
large. Papa's sock. Then another:
but that was so very long I knew it
was mamma's. I began to feel fairly
frightened. Had Santa Claus taken
my stocking away? No. I got hold
of it, at last. No wonder my hand
had passed it over. It was empty.

"Oh! Lily, I was so disappointed:

and I was frightened, too. I believed
in Santa Claus then. I thought he
must have come, and left me out to
punish me. I crept back to bed, a
very miserable little girl. And, just
think, Lily, we had everything then.
Why, we had had chicken and oyster
pie, I remember, the night before, and
there was a dish of oranges and ban-
anas on the sideboard. I didn't think
them anything."

The sick child smacked her feverish
lips, while her sister forgot her story
and thought sadly how glad she would
be for just that despised dish of fruit
now, for her pet. But Lily roused
her from her useless longings and she
went on:

"You woke up by and by, and
brought your stocking and all your
toys for me to see. There was not
one thing for me. But you were so
sweet I almost forgot my disappoint-
ment, and, when papa came in, shouted
'Merry Christmas' as cheerily as you.

"Then I remembered, as I looked
at papa, and I felt ashamed. I saw
how foolish and grown up I had been,
and half understood how much better
it was to keep childish, as papa wished
me to be.

"Santa Claus did come, papa,' I
said, 'and was angry with me. I
haven't got a thing!' And then I
burst into tears. Mamma came to the
door and said something about it
being 'too bad,' and papa looked half
sorry and half laughing.

"It's not quite so bad as you
think,' he said. Santa Claus has left
you a note. I found it in my stock-
ing. I suppose he thought you would
not look for anything from him, and
so he put it in mine. I took the note
eagerly and pulled it out of the en-
velope, and there—I couldn't read a
word of it. And I was so proud of
'reading writing.'"

"But papa was looking over my
shoulder and told me that it was
written in German. This was what
it said:

"If the little maiden who cannot
believe in Santa Claus will trust him
enough to open the library door, quite
alone, at five o'clock on Christmas
afternoon, she may see him for a
moment."

"I was rather frightened, but I
resolved to open that door. It would
never do not to get Santa Claus to
forgive me, as I told papa; and he
said so too. So by a quarter of five I
was in the hall, waiting for the big
clock to strike. It was dark, I knew,
in the library, and my heart beat fast
as I thought of going in the big, dark
room alone, to see the old man whom
I had vexed by my disbelief. I begged
mamma to come too; and she said:
'Henry, you might let me.' But papa
said: 'It is not me, my dear. It is
Santa Claus. If Mary wishes to make
it up with him and ever get any pre-
sents, she must obey orders.' So I had
to open it alone, and, just as the clock
struck five, I took hold of the door-
handle, and—I was so frightened I
couldn't open it. Then I took both
hands, and said: 'One, two, three,
four, ready!' as if I were taking
medicine, and pushed open the door.

"Oh! Lily, instead of a great, dark
room, there stood a lovely tree, all
ablaze with lights and glistening with
bright-coloured balls. I saw nothing
else for a moment; but there, in the
shadow behind the tree, stood an old
man. I felt so sorry and ashamed.

He was standing quite still. I felt he was waiting for me, so I went straight to him and I knelt down before him. I don't know what made me. I suppose I had some notion about kneeling to a saint.

"Please, Santa Claus, I'm truly and really sorry. I'll call you next Christmas; indeed, I will," I said. And I almost sobbed, I felt so ashamed, for I saw just the things I wished for on that tree—a pair of skates and a doll's carriage.

"The old man had a long, white beard and did not speak very clearly. Papa said afterward he supposed he talked German. But he put his hands on my head and said: 'Be true and brave, little one!' And when I looked up he was gone. I ran and called the others. Mamma brought you at once; but papa did not come for quite a long time, and I was afraid he would not see my wonderful tree before the lights were put out."

"Oh! wasn't it just lovely!" sighed Lily. "And you believe in Santa Claus now, Mary; don't you? Katy Dermott says she doesn't."

"Yes, I believe in the dear old saint. You see what he'll do for you, darling. Perhaps he's met mamma on her way home."

The elder sister tried to speak confidently; but how her faith faltered and hope died as she realized that the next day would be Christmas Eve, and there was not an extra dime to buy a present for the sick child. But she would not enlighten the little one. There was time yet. Could not she herself do something to earn a present for Lily?

Mrs. Hartley came in just as Lily, soothed by the story and the hope of a visit from Santa Claus, had fallen asleep.

The mother had been teaching music and had taken home some fine sewing, that she had finished that day; but there was no good news. The lady had not left the money for her. She was to call again.

"Let me go this evening, mother, dear, just this once."

"Alone, at night, Mary?"

"Oh! it is Christmas time and every one is so kind. I will keep in the brightly lighted streets. Do, mother, and then we can get Lily a present to-morrow."

"Well, child, go, if you will. She might go out to-morrow, and then all chance would be gone."

So Mary was off, a secret purpose, formed to guard against any further disappointment, making her heart beat loud with fear and nervousness.

"It is for Lily. I must be her Santa Claus, as dear papa would be, if he were here. O God, help me! Help me to be brave."

She walked rapidly on to the row of elegant houses where she was to call. She knew them well. How pleasant and home-like the second one looked, with children romping in the parlour! Now she walked slowly, trying to decide. Which should it be? The house where the children were or that next one? That was almost dark, but for the glow from the grate-fire, which shone through the window. A man was sitting looking at the fire. Would he care to hear

"Carol, brothers, carol!"

The girl was startled at her own voice, it sounded so loud. What if some man should come up the stoop

and speak to her! But she was singing for Lily; she must be brave.

Inside, Mr. Linn sat thinking of the past, wishing he could live it over again; the days when he was a poor boy and had to work hard to "earn money for Christmas." Now there was money, but where was the delight that a half dollar gave him forty years back?

Ah! if their little one had only lived! That baby that had only seen three Christmas nights! Hark! Some one is singing outside—the very carol baby had learned to sing in baby fashion the last Christmas she was with them:

"At the merry table,
Think of those who've none."

What a sweet, clear voice for a street-singer, and what expression! There were tears in that voice. He would listen at the door.

The front door was open, the singing suddenly ceased, and Mary Hartley stood trembling, almost fainting before Mr. Linn.

"Why, bless my soul! A girl! A—young lady, I really believe! Come in, my dear, come in. I want you to sing again. I will call my wife."

"Here's a child for Christmas, at any rate," he muttered, as he pulled Mary into the warm parlour and hurried off for his kind old wife. She trotted down, full of sympathy and interest; but Mr. Linn would have no questions asked until Mary had finished her carol. It was the truest kindness, making the young girl feel she had something to do.

"That was just lovely!" said Mrs. Linn, "and you were very good to sing it. But you must not sing in the street. It is bad for the voice and not safe, my dear. You don't think it so, do you, father?"

"No, indeed; but this girl's voice has not been used in the street before, I'll venture to say. Why, bless my soul, mother, she's fainting."

In a moment Mary's wraps were loosened, she was laid on the sofa, the good couple noting the little refinements of dress which betokened a lady's daughter, even though so poor, and her story was listened to with tender sympathy.

"So that Lily might believe in Santa Claus! My dear, you are a perfect godsend. I don't mean it irreverently. I'm just aching to be Santa Claus myself. Now, keep your secret. Go straight home and tell Lily that Santa Claus is surely coming."

The old people would not hear of Mary walking home. She must go in a cab, at least, to the corner of her block. So, while Mary called three doors off for her mother's money, Mr. Linn found a cab and stood ready to take her home on her return to their house. Mary was in haste to be off, lest mamma might worry.

It was hard work to keep her secret; but not at all hard to keep alive the spark of hope which burned in Lily's heart that Santa Claus might visit their little home. The child would believe in Santa Claus, in spite of all, and now Mary, to her mother's great astonishment, was firm in her belief.

"Your dear father would be satisfied with you now; but I fear you will be grievously disappointed," she said to Mary.

"Oh! wait and see," was all Mary's answer.

It was nine o'clock on Christmas Eve when a knock came at the Hartley's door. Lily was up and dressed, and Mary persuaded her to open the door.

"May! mamma! He's come! It's Santa Claus himself. Oh! did you know papa is gone and we have so little? Oh! you dear, good Santa Claus!" cried Lily, dragging in a portly old gentleman, who fairly staggered under a load of bundles and baskets, while some things were laid at his feet.

Mary, laughing heartily, pulled in a box of groceries. Santa Claus dropped his bundles and parcels and hurried off; but he said to Lily, in very good English:

"I must be off, my dear!" There were presents of all kinds. Dresses, or, rather, stuff for dresses, a shawl, gloves, books, groceries, fruit, turkey, pies, and a note for Mary. This said:

"We want so much to have a real Christmas that we must have you all at our house for Christmas dinner. Tell Lily I'm a half-brother of Santa Claus, and that he asked me to invite you all."

"Very respectfully,
"GEORGE LINN-CLAUS."

When Lily heard of an invitation to visit Santa Claus' half-brother, she fairly screamed with delight and thought wonders would never end. Mrs. Hartley had to be told the truth, but for a long time Lily fully believed that (though it was not generally known) Mr. Linn, their kind, devoted friend, was actually Santa Claus' half-brother.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING.

"CHRISTMAS is coming!" the children cry,
Clouding the weeks that are hurrying by;
Dear little children, who live at home,
And do not guess what it is to roam
From morn to night, with stockingless feet,
Up and down through the ice and sleet.

"Christmas is coming!" thinks little Tim;
But what can the Christmas do for him?
His home is a cellar, his daily bread
The crumbs that remain when the rich are fed,
No mother to kiss him when the day is done;
No place to be glad in under the sun.

That wonderful old fellow, old "Santa Claus,"
Who never is idle a moment, because
He is kept so busy with piling the toys
Into the stockings of girls and boys,
No wonder he sometimes forgets, you know,
Into the homes of the poor to go.

But, dear little children, you understand
That the rich and the poor all over the land
Have one dear Father, who watches you,
And grieves or smiles at the things you do.
And some of His children are poor and sad,
And some are always merry and glad.

Christmas will bring to you many joys—
Food and plenty, frolic and toys;
Christmas to some will bring nothing at all;
In place of laughter the tears will fall.
Poor little Tim to your door may come;
Your blessings are many—spare him some.

The Christmas bells will sweetly ring
The songs that the angels love to sing,
The song that came with the Saviour's birth,
"Peace, good will, and love on earth."
Dear little children, ring, I pray,
Sweet bells in some lonely heart that day.

A GREENHORN went to a menagerie to examine the wild beasts. Some gentlemen present expressed the opinion that the orang-outang was a lower order of the human species. Hodge did not like the idea, and expressed his contempt for it thus: "Pooh! he's no more human species than I be!"

ADVENT SONG

DOWN through the vanished ages,
Along the shores of time,
We hear "the old, old story,
Like some melodious chime,
Millions of silent voices,
Have sung the glorious hymn,
Glad eyes have caught its rapture
Whose light in death is dim.

The old the grand old story,
Of our dear Saviour's birth,
The light, divine and holy,
Which cheered the darkened earth
Jesus, enshrined in glory,
Oh! fair and wondrous child,
Upon whose infant brow
The earth and heaven smiled.

To-day we stand with shepherds,
Beneath Judea's skies,
We hear from angel voices
Triumphant strains arise.
We watch the star whose beauty,
Doth guide us onward—where
With deepest awe and wonder—
We find Messiah there.

Within a lovely manger,
Is cradled his dear head
In poverty and suffering
His infant tears were shed:
Oh earth! is this the welcome
To your Redeemer given!
Is this your royal greeting,
Christ, the King of Heaven!

"GIRLS" AND "YOUNG LADIES."

BENJAMIN F. TAYLOR, the poet, has written a letter to a young girl at the Lowville (N. Y.) Academy, in which he mixes up poetry and good advice in equal doses most charmingly. What Mr. Taylor says will bear repetition.

I call you a girl, but it is not the fashion any more. The girls are gone, and there is nobody left but young ladies. I like girls best. There used to be a flock of Carolines in Lowville, and as fair a flock as ever wore muslin. There were Caroline Collins, Caroline Northup, Caroline Davan, and ever so many more. There were Cornelias, Janes, Elizabeths, Marys and Paulinas. They were all girls, and they never scorned the title. Now they would be Carries, and Nellies, Lizzies, Mamies, Jennies and Cornies, and young ladies withal, every daughter of them. Let us not end our names in "ie." Let us not forget that affecation is the art of being a fool according to rule. Let us learn to work worsted cats of impossible pink, if we must, but let us know how to make Indian pudding and a golden loaf of corn bread as well. Let us all talk French if we can, but let us avoid "slang" as we would pestilence and famine. Pure and undefiled English never sounds so musically as it does from the unadulterated lips of a genuine girl. Let us learn the exquisite art of keeping young. You read of Roman rules. I think I have heard Tyre, Tadmore and Thebes mentioned once or twice, but there is nothing so ancient in all this world as an old dilapidated heart. It is everybody's duty, especially every girl's, to keep young. Now to you and your classmates:

Dear girls, I pray you read the Book of Ruth,
That old love story, beautiful as truth;
Of one who lives in everlasting youth,
And say with her to Truth, "Forever true."
"Thy God my God, and thy people mine!"
So shall you keep in loving step with time,
And life's sweet cadence prove a perfect rhyme,
And when at last the song is done,
And level shines the dying sun,
Another dawn will show its early light,
And bid "good morn," though you have said
"good night."

WHAT SHALL WE BRING!

WHAT shall we bring the stranger,
Born upon Christmas day!
A star the heavens lend Him,

The souls of men are weary,
On binding paths they go,
The night hangs murky and dreary,

Draw near, ye sin-defiled!
Look on the meek Child!
He comes to such as ye,—

What shall we bring! Our gold is dust,
His own away, ours but in trust!

Love He will own and take,
For His most holy sake;
He in whose boundless heart

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

B.C. 1056.] LESSON XII. [Dec. 23.

DEATH OF SAUL AND JONATHAN.

1 Sam. 31. 1-13. Commit to memory vs. 11-13.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The wicked is driven away in his wickedness,
but the righteous hath hope in his death.

OUTLINE.

- 1. Defeat and Death. v. 1-3.
2. Suicide and Shame. v. 4-10.
3. Burning and Burial. v. 11-13.

TIME.—B.C. 1056.

PLACE.—Mount Gilboa, on the border of
the plain of Esdraelon.

EXPLANATIONS.—Men of Israel fled—The
people suffered for the sins of their king whom
God had forsaken Followed hard—Pressed
closely in the battle. Slew Jonathan—His
death was honourable and made the kingdom
more secure for his friend David. Archers
hit him—His great height made him an easy
mark. At our oar—A servant who carried
the large shield and some weapons. Lest
these uncircumcised—The Philistines. Abuse
me—Torture him as they had Samson. Sore
afraid—His respect for the king kept him
from doing as he asked. Fell up in it—Not a
noble end for the Lord's anointed. Other side
of the valley—Opposite to the battlefield.
Forsook the cities—So the centre portion of
the land fell into the power of the enemy.
Strip the slain—Take away their armour and
plunder the bodies. Cut off his head—To
show their triumph. House of their idols—As
before in the life of Samson, the idol-temples
were places of meeting and feasting. Fastened
his body—Hung up by cords or nailed up.
Wall of Bethshan—In the Jordan valley.
Inhabitants of Jebesh-gilead—A city east of
the Jordan, which Saul had delivered from
the Ammonites (chap. 11.), so that their act
now was one of gratitude. Went all night—
Lest liable to attack than by day. Burnt them
—So that the enemies could not carry them
away again. Fasted—In token of grief.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson may we learn—
1. That failure comes to those who forsake
God!

- 2. That the innocent suffer with the guilty!
3. That a noble deed is remembered!

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Where was Saul's last battle field? On
Mount Gilboa. 2. Who were there slain?
Saul and his three sons. 3. How did Saul
die? He killed himself with a sword. By
whom was his body rescued from the Philis-
tines? By the men of Jabesh-gilead. 5. Who
became king after Saul's death? David.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The results of
for aking God.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

50. Had not other believers in Christ power
to work miracles also?

Other believers in Christ beside the Apostles
had also power to work miracles; for Jesus
Christ communicated very great gifts and
powers to them, by laying on of the hands of
the Apostles.

FOURTH QUARTERLY REVIEW.

Dec. 30.

REVIEW SCHEME.

[TO THE SCHOLAR.—1. Read over the
lessons of the quarter carefully. 2. Learn and
repeat the TITLES and GOLDEN TEXTS.
3. Learn the answers in the LESSON CATE-
CHISM. 4. Study these questions until you
can answer them readily 5. Find something
in each lesson of the quarter for yourself to do
or to be.]

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Lesson I. Eli's Death. 1 Sam. 4. 10-18.—
Who was Eli? How was the ark of God
taken? What happened to Eli's sons? What
is the GOLDEN TEXT? How did Eli die?
How can children save their parents from
sorrow?

Lesson II. Samuel the Judge. 1 Sam. 7.
8-17.—What did Samuel urge the people to
do? For what did he call an assembly?
Who came against the Israelites? How were
they delivered? What memorial did Samuel
set up? What did he say of its name?
[GOLDEN TEXT.] How may we have God's
help?

Lesson III. Asking for a king. 1 Sam.
8. 1-10.—When did the Israelites ask for a
king? Why did they ask? How did Samuel
feel when they asked? What did God say?
Upon whom may we put confidence? [GOLDEN
TEXT.]

Lesson IV. Saul Chosen King. 1 Sam.
10. 17-27.—How was Saul chosen? Where
was he found? How did he appear? What
did the people say? [GOLDEN TEXT.] Who
went with Saul to his home?

Lesson V. Samuel's Farewell Address.
1 Sam. 12. 13-25.—Wherein did Samuel say
that the people had done wrong? How did
he show them their sin? What did he urge
them to do? [GOLDEN TEXT.]

Lesson VI. Saul Rejected. 1 Sam. 15.
12-26.—Why was Saul rejected? What was
his act of disobedience? How did he try to
excuse it? What did Samuel say to him?
[GOLDEN TEXT.] How may we please God?

Lesson VII. David Anointed. 1 Sam. 16.
1-13.—Who was David? By whom was he
anointed? What was David doing when he
was called? What is the GOLDEN TEXT?
How did Samuel know who to anoint? What
kind of people does God choose?

Lesson VIII. David and Goliath. 1 Sam.
17. 38-51.—Who was Goliath? How was
David armed? How did Goliath feel towards
David? What did David say? [GOLDEN TEXT.]
What was the result of the battle? How may
we have victory over temptation?

Lesson IX. David's Enemy Saul. 1 Sam.
18. 1-16.—Why did Saul become David's
enemy? How did he show his hate? Who
loved David? Why did David win the love
of the people? [GOLDEN TEXT.] How may
we be loved by all?

Lesson X. David's Friend, Jonathan.
1 Sam. 20. 32-42.—How did Jonathan show
his friendship for David? What was the
token arranged between them? What agree-
ment did they make with each other? What
is the GOLDEN TEXT? Who is the best of
all friends?

Lesson XI. David Sparing his Enemy.
1 Sam. 24. 1-17.—Whose life did David spare?
What was Saul doing at the time? How did
David show his kindness? What did he
afterwards do? How did his words affect
Saul? What is the command of Christ in the
GOLDEN TEXT?

Lesson XII.—Death of Saul and Jonathan.
1 Sam. 31. 1-13.—Where did they die? How
did Jonathan die? How did Saul die? What
was done to Saul's body? How was it after-
wards rescued? What is the GOLDEN TEXT?
Which of the two classes in the GOLDEN TEXT
would you choose?

Special Quarterly Service.—Topics: The
benevolence of the Church. 1. Money and
the need of the Church. 2. The duty of
giving 3. The rewards of liberal giving

WHEN the small boy is pursued by
the dog in the melon patch, and there
are no trees handy, he sings: "Oh, for
the garden wall!"

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