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SUNBEAM

Vol. XX.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 30, 1899.

No. 26.

THE NEW YEAR.

Little children, don't you hear
Some one knocking at the door?
Don't you know the glad New Year
Comes to you and me once more.

Comes with treasures ever new,
Spread out at our waiting feet;
High resolves and purpose new
Round our lives to music
sweet.

Ours to choose the thorns
of flowers,
If we but mind our duty.
Spend aright the priceless
hours,
And life will glow with
beauty.

Let us then the portals
ring,
Heaping high the liberal
cheer,
Let us laugh, and shout,
and sing.
Welcome, welcome, glad
New Year.

JEM.

BY E. L. S. THOMPSON.

Only a little boy herding cows from early in the spring until the snows of winter fell. "Jem" everybody called him. If he had any other name, he did not know what it was. He wore a red flannel shirt; the cuffs were torn off. His brown arms and brown hands needed soap-suds as badly as the soiled and ragged shirt.

"I've lived in as many States as I'm years old, an' I'm twelve. Pap (that's my dopted father) is a mover, he is!"

"Does your father work?"

"No, ma'am, he don't! Work makes him sick. He 'lows to rest up awhile, cos' Patty an' I like to work."

"Who's Patty?"

"That's pap's sister. She smokes a pipe an' drinks beer pap gets in a tin bucket. I 'low they'd both be better 'ithout the pipes 'an the beer. Seems like smokin' an' drinkin' makes 'em cross an' ugly; an' Sundays they don't act like 'twas Sunday at all."

"Have you ever been to school?"

Jem's face brightened up at once. "Yes; out in Iowa I lived with Mrs. Bales, an' she sent me for a year. She died, an' Patty, who was in the same house, said sho'd keep me. I went another time 'fore that, but I can't remember how old I was. I can read, but my writin's like hen tracks."

"A boy told me one day to milk the cows and get what I wanted. I wouldn't do it. They're not my cows. I'm awful hungry sometimes, but I never steal. Pap says beer's good for me, but I won't drink it. I know it ain't true, or he'd be decenter than he is. I come out of the 'sylum first, but Mrs. Bales she said my father was a soldier an' my mother a nice woman. I don't forget what she told me, either. I'm goin' to school some day. I'm gettin' awful old, though, and I'm ashamed of my rough ways." Jem's bright brown eyes smiled back at the lady who had given him the dinner.

The very next day she went to see "Pap" and "Patty," who said they were willing to give up the boy if they were paid a certain sum.

When Jem was bathed, his hair cut, and he was dressed in a new suit of clothes he looked so well that three or four persons offered to adopt him. Pap and Patty said "keepin' him at work had been the makin' of him," and that they were going to get him back. Mrs. Lynn had adopted Jem by law, and the Wolleys asked for him in vain. They were going to sell Jem's time to a showman, but they were too late with their wicked plans.

In Jem's travels from State to State he had picked up a variety of knowledge. He knew about birds and

trees and rocks and animals, though he could not give the book names. How fast he learned! From the foot of the class the little herd-boy soon went to the head. God had raised up friends to aid him, and he will make a useful man."

Little Mary was reproving her younger brother for fibbing. "Now, Russell," she said, drawing down her face, and frowning threateningly on the tiny culprit, "dust you remember, never, never, to tell another of your wrong-side-out stories to me."



"A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL."

A NEW YEAR.

"It's coming, boys,
It's almost here,
It's coming, girls,
The Grand New Year'
A year to be glad in,
Not to be bad in;

A year to live in, to gain and give in;
A year for trying, and not for sighing;
A bright New Year Oh, hold it dear!
For God who sendeth, he only lendeth."

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Sunbeam.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 30, 1899.

BILLY'S CRUTCH.

"Will you please buy my geranium, sir?"

If a musical voice, a bright face, and a beautiful plant, all belonging to a young girl with dimpled cheeks and laughing blue eyes, will not bring a man to a standstill, then it must be that he is hurrying through the world too fast and wants nothing to come into his life that will gladden his heart and renew his youth.

I came to a full stop and would not have missed that sight for a great deal. As the girl stood there on that bright October morning it was difficult to tell where the sunshine left off and where the girl began. They seemed made for each other; it was a perfect match, with the dividing line hard to discern.

"Have you any objection to tell me your name?"

"Oh, no, sir. My name's Gertrude Wilson."

"What a beautiful geranium you have there!"

"Isn't it lovely?"

"Indeed it is, and the finest I ever saw. Where did you get it?"

"About three years ago a lady left a slip lying on the seat in a horse-car. I took it home, got the richest dirt I could find, put

it in this old paint-can, and then set the slip in it, and it began growing right away. I've given it plenty of water to drink, and kept it in the sunshine as much as possible."

"Why, I should think you would love it very dearly."

"Love it! I guess I do love it. It seems just like a part of myself."

"Well, my dear, if you love it so much, pray tell me why you want to sell it?"

"Oh, I wouldn't let it go if I did not want to help God answer Billy's prayer. Don't you think it splendid to help answer somebody's prayers?"

"How do you know I believe in prayer?"

"Oh, I am sure you do, for you have such a prayerful look."

She broke out into a merry laugh, and I joined her in it as I said: "Yes, I do believe in prayer. Now, tell me who Billy is?"

As I made this request a joyous look came into her face, and her large blue eyes shone with delight; and as the dimples deepened in her cheeks I beheld a picture that was worth going a long way to see.

"What, Billy? Oh, he's the nicest and best little fellow in all the city. Why, he is goodness, sunshine, and music all in one lump. Somebody let him drop when he was quite young and broke his hip, and ever since he has been a cripple. But his leg is the only crooked thing about him. My mother says that Billy's mother was the best Christian she ever knew. Well, when she died last year everybody in our tenement-house wanted to adopt Billy, so you see, he belongs to all of us. He pays his way by selling newspapers, and no one with good legs can get around livelier than Billy can with a crutch. But yesterday his crutch caught in a hole in the sidewalk, broke in two and let him fall. He managed to get into the house, and was not hurt. Well, last night, just as I was going to bed, I heard Billy praying. His room is next to mine, and only a board partition between—so I could hear it all. Oh, I shall never forget his words as he said: 'Dear Lord, I've never complained about my broken hip, and I am willing to go through life with it, but I can't get on without a crutch. I've no money to get another, and I don't know who to ask, so please, dear Lord, send me another one. Mother always told me to go to you when I was in trouble, and so I come now. Please, dear Lord, answer my prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.'

"I laid awake a good while thinking of that prayer, and it was the first thing I thought of this morning, and I began wondering if I couldn't do something to help God answer Billy's prayer. Well, while I was wondering, I saw my geranium, and then I said, 'Oh, maybe I can sell it and get enough to buy another crutch!'"

"Now you know who Billy is, and why I want to sell my geranium. Won't you please buy it?"

I was greatly moved and interested, and I'll own up to a great deal of moisture about my eyes as I inquired, "How tall is Billy?"

"Oh," she quickly responded, "I've got the measure of his old crutch, if that is what you mean."

"Yes, that is just what I mean; so if you please, Gertrude, we'll go and see about a crutch."

It did not take us long to find a store where such things were to be procured, nor a great while to get the keeper of the store as much interested as I was in the girl's story. Just the right kind of a crutch was found, and a minimum price was put upon it."

"Well," I said, "I'll give you that much for the geranium, Gertrude, and it is very cheap at that."

"Oh, thank you," she said, and her eyes fairly danced with gladness. "I'll take the crutch, please, but Billy mustn't know a word about where it came from. Isn't it just splendid to help God answer Billy's prayer?"

The moisture in my eyes didn't subside one bit, as I said: "I want you to do me a favour, Gertrude. I am hundreds of miles away from the place where I live, and I can't carry this plant around with me. Would it be too much trouble for you to keep it for me?"

"What, do you want me to take care of it for you?"

"Yes, my dear, if it will not be too much trouble."

"Oh, you splendid man, you! I'll be glad to do it, and I'll take just as good care of it as I did when it was mine."

I carried the plant, while she carried the crutch, and after reaching the house, Billy was called in to see me while Gertrude smuggled the crutch into his room and came back with a face as happy as a face could be, but never betraying to Billy, by word or look, that she had been answering Billy's prayer.

To sum it all up, Billy got a new crutch, and he is the happiest cripple in the big city. Gertrude helped answer his prayer, and a happier girl doesn't live. I own the handsomest geranium bush I ever saw, and the one who takes care of it for me is as proud as I am of the plant.

LADY LAZY BONES.

Little Lady Lazy Bones
Lives in city Shirk;
She would have a fit, I fear,
If you mentioned work.

Little Lady Lazy Bones
Yawns the livelong day;
She can hardly be induced
To take part in play.

Little Lady Lazy Bones
Sighs in discontent;
She is certain that for her
A luckier lot was meant.

Little Lady Lazy Bones
Never wins a prize,
Never learns the pleasure that
In emulation lies.

Little Lady Lazy Bones
Finds to her disgrace,
In the ledger book of life
She fills a cipher's place.

NEW YEAR'S DAY.

Now, pussy, I've something to tell you,
You know it is New Year's Day,
The big folks are down in the parlour,
And mamma is just gone away.

We are all alone in the nursery,
And I want to talk to you, dear,
So you must come and sit by me
And mak believe you hear.

You see there's a new year coming,
It only begins to-day;
Do you know I often was naughty
In the year that is gone away?

You know I've some bad habits,
I'll just mention one or two;
But, really, there is quite a number
Of naughty things that I do.

You see I don't learn my lessons,
And oh! I do hate them so;
I doubt if I know any more to-day
Than I did a year ago.

And, Pussy, when people scold me,
I'm always so sulky then;
If they only would tell me gently
I never would do it again.

O Pussy! I know I am naughty,
And it often makes me cry;
I think it would count for something
If th y knew how hard I try.

But I'll try again in the New Year,
And oh! I shall be so glad
If I only can be a good little girl
And never do anything bad.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER, 1900.
STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

LESSON I [Jan. 7.]

THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

Luke 2. 1-16. Memory verses, 8-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

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

CAN YOU TELL?

Where was Jesus born? Luke 2. 4. Who was the Roman Emperor at this time? Luke 2. 1. What did he say should be done? Why? He wanted to know how many were in his empire. Where must each Jew be enrolled? In the place to which his tribe belonged. Where did Joseph and Mary go? Why? Luke 2. 4. Why was Jesus born in a stable? Who soon heard the good news? Who told the story to the shepherds? Why was this honour shown them? They longed for his coming. What was the angels' song.

DAILY STEPS.

- Mon. Read the lesson verses from your Bible. Luke 2. 1-16.
- Tues. Find a prophecy fulfilled in Christ. Mi. 5. 2.
- Wed. Learn what Jesus came to do. Golden Text.
- Thur. Why was Bethlehem called David's city. 1 Sam. 17. 12, 15.
- Fri. What was the song the angels sang. Luke 2. 14.
- Sat. Find how you may get and keep heavenly peace. Isa. 26. 3.
- Sun. Read Hymn 756 in Hymnal.

LESSON II. [Jan. 14.]

THE CHILD JESUS VISITS JERUSALEM.

Luke 2. 41-52. Memory verses, 49-52.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.—Luke. 2. 52.



THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

CAN YOU TELL?

What do we know of the childhood of Jesus? Luke 2. 40. Where did he go when he was twelve years old? What was a Jewish boy called at this age? "A son of the law." What did this mean? That he was old enough to think for himself, and to attend the religious feasts. What was the sign of his sonship? What are these little boxes called? Phylacteries. What did the people do during the feast? They went *de y* to the temple. Do you think Jesus loved to be there? What could he see there? The priests, the altars, the sacrifices, the great curtains that hid the Holy Place, and the old rabbis. What happened after the company started for home? How long did Mary and Joseph search for Jesus? Why did he say he stayed behind? Where did he get such wisdom and knowledge? What

is there to help you in the story of the boy Jesus?

DAILY STEPS.

- Mon. Find what Simeon said about the child Jesus. Luke 2. 28-32.
- Tues. Learn who besides prophesied about Jesus. Luke 2. 36-37.
- Wed. Read the lesson verses very carefully. Luke 2. 41, 52.
- Thur. Find why the Passover feast was kept. Exod. 12. 14-18.
- Fri. Find a lesson for you in the lesson verses. Luke 2. 51.
- Sat. Trace the journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem on the map.
- Sun. Think—what did Jesus mean by his "Father's business"?

IN A TIGHT PLACE.

A number of boys were playing "hide and seek" on the streets of a city. A large joint of sewer-pipe lay above ground. One of the little urchins was looking for a hiding-place. He came up to the pipe, looked in, and thought a moment. It was dark and deep. "What a splendid place to hide!" he whispered to himself. He tried to drag himself in out of sight. The casement was small, but onward he went. The middle was reached. There he lay, still as death. The comrades were searching for Johnnie, but the boy could not be found. He thought it time to bestir himself, but in neither direction could he move. He began to yell most lustily. His companions heard him, but none of

them could go in for him. Then they brought a rope, and threw it in. He grasped it, they pulled, and soon Johnnie was once more enjoying freedom. He had learned a lesson. Let all the boys learn it. Keep out of tight places. And no place is so tight as a bad habit. Chewing tobacco, drinking beer, reading bad novels, using bad words—get encased in any of these, and you cannot get out, nor can your best friend pull you out. Christ alone can help you.

Kind hearts are the gardens,
Kind thoughts are the roots,
Kind words are the blossoms,
Kind deeds are the fruits;
Love is the sweet sunshine
That warms into life;
For only in darkness
Grow hatred and strife.

AT THE DOOR.

"We will watch the old year out to night,
And the new year in," Ned cried.

Then three year old Baby Winnie
Crept up to her mother's side,
And out from under her curly pate,
Where queer little questions grow,
Came. "Mamma how do ve new years
come?
And where do ve old ones go?"

And mamma, with a bright smile, told her,
"My dear little Winnie-
wee,

"That is very hard to
answer.

You shall watch with
us and see."
And so when night drew
the curtains dark
And snug upon every
side,
Little Win climbed into
her high chair,
Her blue eyes bright
and wide.

But the minutes passed so
slowly,

With so many in an
hour,
That long before it was
over

She felt the Sandman's
power;
And two little fringed
white curtains
Were drooping low and
lower,
When there came a timid
summons
Against the outer door.

She was wide-awake that
instant,

And gazing all around
When once again she
heard it

That gentle, asking
sound.
Mamma knew 'twas Dog
Rollo;

Not so did Baby Win
"Oh, mamma, hear ve
New Year
A stratchin' to get in!"

"Yes," said Betsy, "and we will have
to talk in our sleep. And that will be
ever so jolly, too."

The tired mother overheard every word
said, and smiled at their loving thought-
fulness. "How kind of them!" she said
to herself. "I must be very careful not
to go out and startle them. If they should
become frightened when asleep, with dishes
in their hands, then in all probability they
would drop them; and what a calamity
that would be! I think I had better stay

have been a fairy? Surely it could not
have been Betsy and Peggy, for they—
are fast asleep! Just hear them snore!"

Then how the little girls laughed!
laughed right out in their sleep.

"Aro you saro, mamma," asked the
roguish Betty, "that you did not wash 'em
up, and not know about it?"

"Quite saro!" laughed mamma.

Then the little girls got up and danced
about. "We know, mamma!"

"O, do tell me, quick!" said mamma.

"Why two little girls
dreamed they were awake,
and did them up with their
eyes closed."

"Well, that was nice!"
said mamma, taking the two
little girls in her arms and
hugging them. "You helped
mamma lots to-day."

Then the two little girls
went out to the barn to hunt
for eggs.

"Wasn't it splendid?"
said Betsy.

"O, it was just lovely!"
responded Peggy.

And that is what mamma
told papa at night when he
came home.

—o—

THE DELIGHTS OF BOYHOOD.

"I'd like to be a boy
again, without a wife or
care, with freckles scattered
on my face and hayseed in
my hair; I'd like to rise at
four o'clock and do a hundred
chores, and saw the wood
and feed the hogs and lock
the stable doors; and herd
the hens and watch the
bees, and take the mules to
drink, and teach the tur-
keys how to swim, so that
they wouldn't sink; and
milk about a hundred cows
and bring in wood to burn,
and stand out in the sun
all day, and churn and
churn and churn; and wear
my brother's cast-off clothes,
and walk four miles to
school, and get a licking
every day for breaking some
old rule; and then get home

again at night, and do the chores once
more, and milk the cows and feed the hogs
and curry mules galore; and then crawl
wearily upstairs to seek my little bed, and
hear dad say: "That worthless boy! he
is not worth his bread." I'd like to be a
boy again; a boy has so much fun; his
life is just a round of mirth from rise to
set of sun. I guess there's nothing
pisanter than closing stable doors and
herding hens and chasing bees and doing
evening chores.

—o—

Read nothing from which you cannot
learn something.



The Old Year and Young Year.

Said the year that was old,
"I am cold, I am cold,
And my breath hurries fast
On the wild winter blast
Of this thankless December.
Ah, who will remember,
As I, shivering, go,
The warmth and the glow
That arose like a flame
When I came, when I came?"

Said the year that was young—
And his light laughter rung—
"Come, bid me good cheer,
For I bring with me here
Such gifts as the earth
Never saw till my birth;
All the largess of life,
Right royally rife,
With the plans and the schemes
Of the world's highest dreams."

A DREAM PLAY.

BY CHARLES H. DORRIS.

The teething baby boy was cross and
peevish, and a very tired mother was try-
ing to rock him to sleep. Betsy and Peg-
gy, the ten-year old twins, were also put-
ting their children to sleep.

"Peggy," said Betsy, as she laid their
last child in its little doll crib "let's play
we are dreaming, and go out and do up
the dishes for mamma."

"Let's do!" responded Peggy. "And
O, Betsy, we'll have to walk in our sleep.
That will be so nice."

in this room. I shall just drop down be-
side little Frank and take a nap myself."

The little dream workers did beautifully.
Even mamma could not have washed,
rinsed, and set away the dishes any better
than did Betsy and Peggy. When the
last crumb was brushed up and the kitchen
and dining-room put in shape, then the
little sleeping girls went back and lay
down beside their own drowsy little chil-
dren. They snored so loudly that mamma
woke up and came into the dining-room.

"Why! why! why!" she exclaimed;
"who has washed my dishes for me?
Could it have been the dolls? Could it