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# The Presbyterian Review.

Vol. XII.—No. 24.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 19, 1895

\$1.50 per Annum

## A Song of Christmastide.

What are the sweet bells pealing,  
What do their echoes say,  
Far o'er the peaceful meadows,  
Wak'ning the sleeping day?  
What is that song of gladness  
Caught from the Heav'nly strain,  
Borne in the starlit dawning,  
"Christmas has come again!"?

What are the snowflakes bringing  
Down to the earth once more?  
Flowers from the hands of angels  
Far from the heavenly shore,  
Falling amid the shadows,  
Pointing the road above,  
Hailing the gladsome Yuletide,  
The Christmastide of love.

Ah! there are songs of gladness,  
Good will, and peace for aye,  
As in the distant dawn-time,  
As on that Christmas-day,  
When, from the angel-chorus,  
Echoed the deathless strain:  
"Glory to God in the Highest,  
Peace be on earth again."

## Merry Christmas.

Before our next issue, Christmas—that day on which the heart of the Christian pulsates with ineffable joy—will have come and gone. Let kindly interchange of friendly interest strengthen the bond of mutual love. Let every home—no matter how humble—be brighter and every heart happier for its rising sun, and in its serene setting may it leave us with a deeper devotion, and a more general "good-will" that shall promote peace throughout the earth. And meanwhile let us not forget the Babe of Bethlehem. His influence is moving mightily upon the world to-day. His power shall yet prevail over superstition and infidelity, and then the flowery vales and the vine-clad hills and the blooming isles, like recovered Edens, and the happy continents, from sea to sea shall sing, from shore to shore shall ring, from the deepest depths shall cry, from the highest heights reply, and thrill the enchanted sky with the good news on earth and the glad tidings from heaven "that Christ Jesus came into the world."

Ring the joy-bells again, join the angels refrain,  
Hallelujah, hallelujah, peace, good-will to men'

## Christmas Day.

Christmas comes fragrant with memories of the past. We remember how in days gone by we looked forward to the happy time of re-union, back from school, in the dear old home full of joy and peace; and now that time has rolled on we look at our own little ones, as they cluster round us, and one almost feels as one once did. The snows of time may have whitened the hair, but the heart feels young and fresh still, beside the crib at Bethlehem where the Infant Saviour lies.

Old faces have gone, old voices are stilled, yet around our sorrow shines a halo of glorious light, as we ponder on the past, with the Incarnate by our side.

Dwellers in country places, take heart. This day God knows all about your daily work. As you tend your sheep and oxen, as you go amongst your horses, remember Jesus was born in a manger, and your lowliest labors will be hallowed by that thought.

Humble may be our calling, but it was to shepherds the glad tidings came, and still in the silent night of trial the good news, the Gospel, comes, that a Saviour, who knows all your life and your work, has been born.

In winter time He was born, and so still full oft in life's wintry days the Saviour is born, and peace falls upon the weary hearts.

We have grasped each other's hands and given the cheery greeting, "A Happy Christmas!" all in memory of that time "when shepherds watched their flocks by night"; and God be praised, even as then, so in our lives the heavens have opened, and glad tidings of great joy have been poured into our heart.

But shall we not go further, and say: "I have heard the angel's song, but have I done as the shepherds did: have I gone to Bethlehem—gone to find Christ, Him of whom all these glorious things are spoken?"

Christmas festivities, what are they, without Christ?

There lies a palette, all covered with glorious tints, and there stands an easel, with the canvas, but all is useless till the living hand of the artist comes, and then the picture grows, till at last it stands finished in all its beauty.

Christmas joys lie around us; our souls are here, but we must have more: we must have the Living Hand of Jesus to make the picture complete.

If we take not heed, we can get a certain sort of joy at this time, but no peace—that peace which passeth all understanding. Let us go, then to the crib, and behold the King in His Beauty, the Beauty of Humility and Innocence. Take your life there, and see if it is humble. God lends us talents, and we grow proud of them, as if they were our very own; others stride on through life with uplifted heads, scorning the less fortunate.

Pride is the most contemptible of all things, when it lifts its head and rules us; let us be off to Bethlehem, and see God's idea of true nobility, and what the Lord of lords did for your sake, and more, look back on your own childhood and what you were then, and then what you are now. "Can it be," sighed a great man, "that that innocent child I remember years ago was myself?" Many another soul may echo that bitter cry as this Christmas is compared with the Christmas of long ago.

Let childhood's festival speak, and make us child-like in our faith and trust, and, like another rod, strike stony world-worn hearts and make the waters flow.

Rejoice, and in your joy make others join. Let some poor neighbor or some sick one be the better for your presence, for wherever Jesus is there must be joy, and whoever has been in His presence must be as Moses when he came down from the Mount—living witnesses of the glory of God.

Around whirls the busy, noisy world, yet just as there is an instrument by which you can hear one note if it is sounded, never matter how many other sounds there may be at the same time, so you have in your hands a Spiritual Resonator, and at all times, no matter how loudly the noises of the world clang around, you can hear the angel song of peace and joy, and this will give you what we wish you dear Reader, with all our heart—a happy, holy Christmas-tide.

# The Presbyterian Review.

Issued EVERY THURSDAY, from the office of the Publishers, Rooms No. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

TERMS, \$1.50 per annum.

All communications for either Business or Editorial Departments should be addressed PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, Drawer 1664, Toronto, Ont.

ADVERTISING RATES.—Under 3 months, 15 cents per line per insertion; 3 months, \$1.00 per line; 6 months, \$1.75 per line; 1 year, \$3.00. No advertisement charged at less than five lines. None others than unobjectionable advertisements taken.

Toronto, December 19, 1895.

## CHRISTMAS CHEER AND CHRISTMAS CHARITY.

THERE are many people both in the Church and out of it, who will not own to any special regard for Christmas as a religious festival, who yet gladly welcome it as a season of good cheer and a time for the promotion of good will among men. It is well that they should do so, for there is much in it that is most worthy of being encouraged. However it has come about, there is a sentiment of kindness in the air, good wishes are more frequently as well as more heartily expressed, the handshake is warmer, the heart is merrier, the laughter of children is more grateful. Care is thrown aside bitterness melts away, and all the world grows brighter. Surely whatever one's early training or prejudice may have been, none but a poor heart can fail to rejoice in the increased happiness which such things bring, and every generous soul will cheerfully swell the tide of common kindness and happy joy that rises this once at least in all the year. None of us are so good and Christlike that we can afford to lose the moral and spiritual uplift that such a sentiment may bring, even though we are sure that it cannot last away. A distinguished Canadian surgeon once said that he was in the habit of reading some of Dickens' Christmas Stories every Christmas week for the sake of the heart warming it gave him. He felt he was the better for it all the year.

It does little good however to yield to such sentiments, still less to stimulate them deliberately either by religious services or otherwise, unless they receive some expression in outward acts. Generous impulses that find no outlet soon stagnate in the soul and breed spiritual malaria. Like water they must flow forth from the fountain if they are to continue fresh and wholesome. The further afield they go too the better for ourselves. It is well to express good will in some tangible form to the members of our own families, to our friends and to our dependants; it is better still to express it to our enemies, if we have any, or to the needy who are sure to be not far off if we care to find them.

Happily in our young country dire poverty is as yet the exception rather than the rule, even in our largest cities. But unhappily with our long and severe winter, those whom poverty does overtake are apt to suffer more keenly than elsewhere. Their claim is therefore a peculiarly strong and pressing one. It becomes us to heed it and afford such relief as we can. The present winter bids fair to be an unusually hard one. The distress among the poor, cannot fail to be correspondingly greater.

Nor let us be too particular in demanding evidence of worthiness on the part of the needy before we open our hearts and our purses to them. If we have aught to give, let us for this time at least give with the open hand of trust rather than with the niggard hand of caution. What if some on whom we bestow our bounty should prove undeserving? The questions as to the best method of discovering true need and as to the best method of relieving it when dis-

covered are difficult ones, and if we stay our hand until they are settled to our satisfaction the opportunity will have gone by, and for many deserving ones it will be too late to do anything at all. At this season many are wont to permit themselves more indulgence than at other times. There is more of social rejoicing, more gratification of the æsthetic taste, more eating and drinking. Much of it is harmless enough, but some of it is sheer waste. Let us feel free to indulge our generous feelings also without fear of subsequent regret, and if there is to be any waste let us at least have the satisfaction of knowing that it has been lavished on others as well as on ourselves. The day is coming when the fact that we have given even a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple will obtain for us an abundant reward.

## CHRISTMAS AND MISSIONS.

We have again reached the merry season, the air is electric with Christmas greetings and young and old an expectant as to what the good gifts are to be, "On earth peace and good will to men." How far does the Christmas cheer, with which we are familiar, reflect the Spirit of the Angel song. The Heavenly choir saw in the Incarnation, heralded by them, the "Unspeakable gifts" offered not to any limited circle of friends, but to *men*. "God so loved the *world* that He gave His only begotten Son."

When our Lord was taken up and a cloud received and hid Him from the gaze of the awed disciples, "Unto the uttermost parts of the earth," was the farewell word spoken by Him and it remained indelibly fixed upon memory and heart. They lent their energies towards the execution of that commission, the bestowment of Christmas cheer upon the whole brotherhood of man. It was a world-wide commission, the publication to all mankind of the Advent of the world's Redeemer, every returning Christmas should thrill the soul with gladness, that He has come, that we might have life and have it abundantly. But our joy, cannot terminate upon ourselves, if we are in the fellowship of this joy. If our sympathies do not extend beyond our own family circles, we have caught but little of the Christmas spirit. The song of universal redemption should make the welkin ring as it did on that night when the shepherds watched their flocks. The most worthy expression of that song, is the foreign mission enterprise of the Church, the effort made, however feebly, to publish "unto the uttermost parts of the earth" the "glad tidings of great joy." In this effort is better illustrated the heroic graces of Christian life than in any other work ever undertaken, "some have wrought at foundations out of the sight of men. Some have left monuments of long-suffering toil in languages reduced to writing and in translations of the Word of God. To others it has been given to illustrate in some heroic way the "patience of hope." It is said that at the opening of the American Board's work in India more missionaries died in the first twenty years than there were converts made. The men sent by the London Missionary Society to the South Seas spent fourteen years of self-denying service before a single native's voice was heard in prayer and it was only after twenty two years of toil that they were made glad by the baptism of the first convert." Yet they knew that the promise of the Advent of a Saviour must be fulfilled and the nations redeemed. Days of discouragement have been followed by brighter days and these are but intimations of what is to be. We trust all who rejoice in His coming will think of such as have not heard His Name, and be partakers in the rejoicings of the Saints when the harvest is gathered in. Let the memories of the past stimulate

to prayerful diligence and each returning Christmas will add to the exceeding weight of glory that awaits His own.

#### UNIFORMITY IN PUBLIC WORSHIP.

We publish in this issue a letter from Mr. Sandford Fleming, which is to be followed by others, on the subject of Uniformity in Public Worship. This is a question that has in the past been considerably discussed, and the General Assembly has so far recognized the need of some action as to appoint a Committee to take the matter into consideration. It is accordingly a living question and one in which no Presbyterian can fail to take interest. Before anything can be done there must be the freest and fullest discussion and something like unanimity reached. The Assembly will never be guilty of the folly of seeking to impose upon an unwilling church anything that savors of liturgy. Even the preparation of such, for voluntary use, would be profitless, unless supported by a reasonable majority of the membership. Hence the necessity of free discussion. We shall be glad to open our columns to brief communications on this subject—now introduced by Mr. Fleming. We emphasize the word *brief*, for space will not allow great length, and we would like to hear from a considerable number who may have thoughts to express.

#### REV. DR. REID.

It will be a matter of deep regret for the Church to learn that Rev. Dr. Reid's health is not in a satisfactory condition. Not that there is cause for alarm, but it had been hoped that the partial relief afforded at last General Assembly from the constant strain upon his health of his onerous duties, by the appointment of the Advisory Committee, would have arrested the growing infirmities of old age a little longer. No man has served the Church more faithfully nor is held in higher esteem than Rev. Dr. Reid, and when the time comes when it will be found necessary that he should withdraw entirely from his office he will be followed to his retirement by the affection and respect of many thousands of his fellow-church members. The Advisory Committee and the Finance Committee held a meeting last week, for the purpose of considering whether it was necessary to make any additional provision to those now existing for the efficient discharge of the duties devolving upon Dr. Reid's office. The conclusion arrived at was that in the meantime the work could be carried on satisfactorily by the office staff already engaged upon it, with the assistance of the Finance Committee and Dr. Reid together as the controlling authority.

#### YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES.

QUESTIONS have just been sent out to the Young Peoples Societies of the Church by the Assembly's Committee. They are forwarded through Presbyteries, and ought soon to be in the hands of the Societies, as the answers are to be returned before the 18th of February. Any Society which may be overlooked will receive a copy by applying to the Convener of its Presbytery's Committee or to the Clerk of Presbytery, where no Committee has yet been appointed. The Committee are extremely anxious to hear from every Society throughout the Church. Only thus can they supply a complete report to the Assembly next June. The Questions are few, but comprehensive, being arrayed under the five headings; Designation, membership, Meetings, Work, and Moneys. They cover the year 1895, the Committee being desirous that Societies should close their year on 31st December, as is the practice of congregations. A circular to Presbytery Convener accompanies the Questions and asks for a report of Presbyterian organizations as well as a full summary of Societies in congregations. The Com-

mittee will be glad to hear from such "Union" Societies as may choose to send a report. These reports will be used so far as they give information as to the young people of our Church. The Committee do not contemplate reports from Mission Bands already reporting to the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society.

#### COLIGNY COLLEGE, OTTAWA.

The Church is to be congratulated on possessing such an Institution for the higher education of the daughters of her families. Coligny College has been a marked success as to thoroughness of teaching and also as to its general *Morale*, so that the best of our families desiring a superior education and refined culture for their daughters send them there with the fullest confidence.

The term just ended has been a most successful one, the number of day pupils and boarders being large. The next term begins on Tuesday, 7th January. We learn that there are openings for two or three resident pupils. Those desiring admission should without delay correspond with Rev. Dr. Warden, Montreal.

**Manitoba College.** An appeal on behalf of Manitoba College sent by a warm friend of that

most deserving institution, for publication last week, before the collection of last Sabbath day, reached us too late for insertion in last issue, and would not be timely this week. Attention will, however, be drawn, in an early issue, to the important work entrusted to Manitoba College, to the necessities of that work and to the exceptional claims which it has on the liberality of the Church as a whole.

**Bad News from China.** The news from China this week will bring sorrow to many a heart in the Church.

Dr. Glover and four of his fellow-missionaries are reported as dangerously ill and at the point of death. The news causes all the more anxiety in that details are wanting, the mere fact having been so far, communicated. Dr. Glover and his sister are under the direction of the Christian Alliance of New York; they are natives of Toronto and before leaving for China were connected with Central Presbyterian church in this city. The brief cablegram does not describe the trouble, but contains a request for the prayers of the Church for the sufferers, which doubtless will be widely granted.

**Lottery Tickets.** Here's a queer mixture. Down in Mexico, according to the *Mexican Herald*, the lottery is utilized as a means for securing the favor of Almighty God. That is to say, some of the Catholic clergy have introduced the scheme of selling to the faithful tickets at ten cents each in a lottery that has some marvelous prizes, among which are nothing less than masses for the souls of the dead. In one church, the other day, 7000 tickets were sold at ten cents each, netting \$700. The prizes were four principal ones, and there were twenty minor ones. The first prize was thirty masses, which the lucky winner could apply to the extraction from purgatorial torment of some relative, or, lacking that, of some friend. We fear some of our priestly friends have taken contracts for the future world in which Almighty God is made to appear as a party, but which he will decline to recognize. And masses based on the lottery principle seem to be one of them.

There are seasons when, for the moment at least, the power of the world seems to drop. A strange and awful sense of responsibility comes upon us. We long for a higher and nobler life. The vanity of the world, the worth of virtue, the goodness of God, and the peace of a trusting and devout heart are revealed to us. It is a heavenly vision open before the soul. These hours, when the soul is freed from its bonds and holds communion with truth and God, . . . are blessed hours, which, if obeyed, shall raise the soul upward to heaven.

### The Grace Of Giving.

Right reason, as well as Scripture, teaches us that the spirit and the motive of the giver is more important than the gift, and that the grace of giving must precede the act of giving, to secure divine approval. "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." God judges our gifts and all our doings by our motives and purposes. What He chiefly cares for is not the gift, but the "willing mind." He loves the cheerful giver.

In our appeals to others for liberal giving, whether for purposes of private charity or in behalf of the great agencies of the Church, we should have respect, not merely to the amount of the gift, but to the spirit of the giver. He who can induce others to give much for good objects, does well, but he who prompts them to give cheerfully, does better. The blessedness of giving is much more apt to slip through our hands than the material contribution. The gifts are visible; the cheerfulness of the giver's heart is an unseen thing. The fear or favor of man may urge us forward to the liberal act, but the love of Christ can alone win us over to the willing mind.

A revived, enlarged liberality and service such as are now required to put into successful motion the benevolent agencies of the Church, can only be the result of a quickened love and devotion in the hearts of the disciples of Christ. If Christians will open their hearts wide for the entrance and indwelling of the Holy Spirit; if they will so welcome the presence of Christ by faith, as to be filled with all the fulness of God—there must also follow as a necessary result the willing mind for giving and for doing; the cheerful, glad surrender of soul and body to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

### "Give Me thy Heart.."

Every generous act must be as Shakespeare says of "the quality of mercy," "not strained." No deed is admirable which is done by other constraint than the constraint of love. Innumerable songs have been written to bubbling fountains, but it is hard to compose an ode upon the town-pump. A silver cloud floating in the depths of a sapphire sky is a scene that kindles the fancy more than does a cable car dragged along by the clutch of "a grip."

Every really beautiful life is moving freely of its own volition toward some glorious end. No soldier lives in song who fights for a shilling a day instead of for a flag. The Christian life which comes up to the Bible ideal is one that is "given" to God, not one that is bought by promises or forced by fear.

There can be between Christ and the soul no pre-nuptial agreement by which certain reservations are settled and certain rights held back. Jesus Christ does not enter into any bargain which like a modern marriage requires four lawyers to execute the settlements before the vows are spoken. And yet there are people who wish to become Christian "provided" it does not forbid this, or exclude that, or shut out something else; just as the ardent lover is not too ardent nowadays, but reserves his club rights before assuming the responsibilities of a husband. The lover who calculates too exactly the cost of a wedding-ring is not likely to make the best benedict. In all real love there must be a certain abandon and courage else it will be found pinchbeck and not gold.

The Christian life is far from being a joint-stock company with "limited" liabilities as to the stockholders. It must be all or nothing. Christ's soldiers are not militia whose duties are bound by state lines, but regulars whose duty is wherever the flag is. It is this which makes the relationship between the Redeemer and the redeemed so sacred. Relationships are tender in proportion to their intimacy. Monte Rosa and the Matterhorn stand leagues apart, robed in snow and jeweled with glaciers; but two hillocks on the prairie are found to run down to the same valley and into each other's embraces, garlanded with anemones in May and wild roses in June and golden-rod in October. The Christian life which consists in paying pew rent and a dollar a year for missions

brings little sweetness with it; but if one would know what that life really means let him give his whole heart to God, and his soul will blossom into song.

### The Evening Service.

Pastors and Sessions in many of our churches are often perplexed as to what shall be done to get the people out to the evening service. There is a sad indifference to the second service, and that it ought to be removed goes without saying. It is not, however, confined to the world's people, but characterizes those who wear the name of Christ. Go into many of our churches on the Sabbath night, and how few, comparatively speaking, of the members of the church are present. Why is it? The people in one community may say that the pastor is responsible, because he fails to make the service attractive, but if this be so, why is it that in scores of other communities the same state of things prevails, where pastors whose pulpit powers cannot be discounted, endeavor to make this service interesting? Pastors may be in some case responsible for lack of popular interest in the Sabbath evening service—they may not exhibit a sufficient degree of interest in it themselves—but we are persuaded that no small measure of responsibility rests with Christian people themselves. A great many of them have in some way come to feel that one service on the Sabbath is sufficient for them. Hence their pews are vacant at the night service, and the result is that the interest in the second service is very seriously diminished upon the part of the public in general.

Can a minister be justly criticised, if, under such circumstances, he begins to exhibit less interest in the evening than in the morning service? He certainly cannot be expected to take a lively interest in "a beggarly account of empty benches." If all the communicant members who can possibly attend should regularly turn out to the evening service, the effect in every direction would be most inspiring and beneficial. They can do it, and they ought to feel that the interests of their church and of the cause of the Master require it at their hands. How this delinquency was cured in a certain church, is tersely exhibited in the following statement, which we commend to the earnest attention of all our readers:

"The evening service on Sunday in a certain congregation was poorly attended. People thought they could not come out twice on a Sunday to church. The officers talked the matter over. Their talk resulted in a pledge to each other that they would never absent themselves willingly from the evening service, and that they would urge every one they saw to plan a second attendance. The parents talked it over. They found that their children were not in the habit of spending the evening religiously or profitably, and they determined to set them an example of an earnest devotion to spiritual concerns. They began going twice a day the Sabbath after. The young men talked it over. They concluded that it was their duty to attend both services, and to bring at least one young man apiece with them. The young ladies talked it over. They thought that if they could go to a concert or party at night, it could not do any harm to be at church after sunset. They decided that they would go regularly, and take each a young woman with them. The minister did not know what to make of it. He began to flatter himself that he was a latent Spurgeon. The attendance was increasing every week. Strangers seeing the direction of the crowd, followed. It became the most popular church in the city."—*Mid-Continent*.

### The Young Man and the Church.

The closeness of the relation of the young man to the Church is measured by the closeness of the relation of the Church to the young man. It is a reciprocal arrangement; in all relations there must be mutuality, and the strength of the tie which binds on one side is determined by the tenacity with which it holds on the other.

Take the condition of the emancipated young man, the man who passes from his home to a strange community and is there confronted with the problem of Church connection. When at home he may have belonged to the Church, constrained thereto at an early age by the presence of parental influence. To him Church attendance had probably become a habit, a perfunctory duty, a necessary sequence to his Sunday breakfast. When, however, on the verge of manhood

he travels to another region other influences are brought to bear and, if he possesses any individuality, any original force of character whatever, he is scarcely likely to continue attendance upon Church, and especially upon a strange Church, merely in obedience to a previously acquired habit. If he form new Church connections, he is impelled thereto by some definite purpose, and if he possesses any nobility of character, or conception of Christian duty that purpose is the fulfilment of the responsibilities which devolve upon him as a Christian man. When that is the case the Church has for him a definite relation; it has a definite meaning. It is not merely a place to make pleasant acquaintances or to form Christian friendships. Such may result but they are distinctly secondary. He does not join for any such purpose, but in order to complete the larger life which he believes lies before him.

It is the opportunity afforded him for carrying on that work which devolves upon him as a Christian. Without its aid he would be a solitary unit, and his influence ordinarily small. From it he derives impetus, his own religious life is quickened, his powers of doing good are strengthened, because he has behind him the potential force of the Church, which both aids and impels. It is the means that God has placed at his disposal of carrying on the mission confided to him as a follower of Christ. The tie, therefore, that binds him to the Church is of the closest character; he owes to it every sentiment of Christian allegiance.

The young man is the arm of the Church; his relation to it is similar to that which subsists between the member and the body. Further, his relation is that of a trustee the trust being the mission which Christ has confided unto the Church as his representative on earth, and which must be shared by all Christian Churches, together with the heritage derived from the founders (and builders of the particular Church who gave of their energy and substance to surround it with those material accessories which should make it an active, living force. The beneficiaries are the great hosts of other young men, the community at large, that great mass of the people who are unreached by any direct religious influence. In this relation he is positively identified with the Church, a part of it, all her interests are his interests, everything that concerns her welfare demands his attention and anything which might detract from her prestige as a centre of united Christian activity should call for his uncompromising opposition.

#### The Story of a Hymn.

A party of tourists formed a part of a large company gathered on the deck of an excursion steamer that was moving slowly down the Potomac one beautiful evening in the summer of 1881. A gentleman who has since gained a national reputation as an evangelist of song, had been delighting the party with the happy rendering of many familiar hymns, the last being the sweet petition so dear to every Christian, beginning, "Jesu, lover of my soul." The singer gave the first two verses with much feeling, and a peculiar emphasis upon the concluding lines that thrilled every heart. A hush had fallen upon the listeners that was not broken for some seconds after the musical notes had died away. Then a gentleman made his way from the outskirts of the crowd to the side of the singer, and accosted him with, "Beg your pardon, stranger, but were you actively engaged in the late war?" "Yes sir, the man answered, courteously, "I fought under Gen Grant." "Well," the first speaker continued, with something like a sigh, "I did my fighting on the other side, and think, indeed, am quite sure, I was very near you one bright night eighteen years ago this very month. It was such a night as this. If I am not very much mistaken, you were on guard duty. We of the South had sharp business on hand, and you were one of the enemy. I crept near your post of duty, my murderous weapon in my hand. The shadows hid me. As you passed back and forth you were humming the tune of the hymn you have just sung. I raised my gun and aimed at your heart, and I had been selected by my commander for the work because I was a sure shot. Then out upon the night rang the words:

'Cover my defenceless head  
With the shadow of Thy wing.'

Your prayer was answered. I couldn't fire after that. And there was no attack made upon your camp that night. You were the man whose life I was spared from taking." The singer grasped the hand of the Southerner, and said with much emotion, "I remember that night very well, and distinctly that feeling of depression and loneliness with which I went forth to my duty. I knew my post was one of great danger, and I was more dejected than I remember to have been at any other time during the service. I paced my lonely beat thinking of home and friends and all that life holds dear. Then the thought of God's care for all that He had created came to me with peculiar force. If He so cared for the sparrows, how much more for man, created in His own image, and I sang the prayer of my heart and I ceased to be alone. How the prayer was answered I never knew till this evening."—*Selected.*

#### Remember Your Own Faults.

In our criticism of others, let us remember that we have faults which our friends have to excuse. How much would be left of us if all those who see inconsistencies in us should chip away from our character and reputation? It is an invariable rule that those who make the roughest work with the names of others are those who have themselves the most imperfections. The larger the beam in your own eye, the more anxious are you about the mote in somebody else's eye. Instead of going about town slashing this man's bad temper, and the other man's fastness, and this woman's hypocrisy, and that one's indiscretion, go home with the Ten Commandments as a monitor, and make out a list of your own derelictions.

#### Christmas Decorations.

Eben E. Rexford contributes an article upon Christmas decorations, mainly as applied to churches, in the December *Ladies' Home Journal*. He treats the subject from the standpoint of one having a thorough knowledge of the value and application of different shrubbery and material, and a pronounced talent for obtaining harmonious, artistic and striking results. He details comprehensively the different materials that can be used, and how best employed, outlining a number of decorative schemes. Addressing himself directly to church decoration committees, he emphasizes the importance of thoroughly planning the decorative scheme before anything is done about trimming the church. "Unless this is done the result is almost sure to be unsatisfactory, because it is without a definite plan, and everything is done in a haphazard way. Always decide upon some scheme of decoration that can be explained to those with whom you work, so that all will have an intelligent idea of it, and can work toward the embodiment of that idea in what is done. If possible, have a sketch made of the effect you have in mind, so that a better idea can be gained of the scheme decided on than can be given by a verbal description. Not only does this insure more artistic results than the method usually employed, which is simply without method, but it helps to expedite matters."

A popular minister in Fifeshire, in the good old times, used at Christmas to be inundated with hampers filled with good things. On one occasion an enormous turkey was sent to him by the thoughtful kindness of a neighboring farmer; but as the minister's family had already provided for the Christmas dinner, the bird was sent to the market and sold. A passer-by, seeing this fine specimen of poultry, said, "What a splendid turkey! Just the thing for the minister's Christmas dinner." To the minister it was again sent. The provident wife sent it again to the market, and sold it again for a handsome sum. Another friend, similarly struck with the splendid proportions of the turkey, purchased it, and sent it to the minister. The good woman, not wishing to fly in the face of Providence, said at last: "It is clear that the Lord means us to have this turkey," and with the approbation of the family, it formed part of the Christmas dinner.

## Christmas.

BY MARGARET E. SANDER.

Merry, merry Christmas!  
The little children sing it,  
And from every spire and steeple  
The glad bells ring and ring it!  
The gateway or its morning  
Is resonant with praise;  
And chorals at its evening  
Unnumbered voices raise.  
No day so set to music  
In all the year of days,  
As Christmas, Merry Christmas,  
With its sheaves of lofty praise.

Merry, merry Christmas.  
Ago-long the sad world sought it,  
Until from out the heart of heaven  
The holy angels brought it.  
Then all the earth grew brighter  
By the shine of one sweet Star,  
The lighted torch that sent its beams  
Oh! glad and wide and far.  
Then bent a fair young Mother  
Above a little Child,  
And the angels sang their glorias  
While that happy Mother smiled.  
Then Christmas, Merry Christmas,  
Came hither, came to stay,  
When the Star, the Star, stood over  
The place where Jesus lay.

## "No Heart for Christmas."

BY MARION HARLAND.

The phrase occurs in two letters that lie upon my desk. They are in all things else very unlike. The first and the longer of the two is from a woman whom acquaintances cite as one of fortune's favorites. She has a beautiful home and beautiful children fill it; she has wealth which she delights to dispense among those who need it, and she further brightens the world by a presence as generous and fair as the sunshine. Her very handwriting bespeaks character and intellect. The four words I have quoted fall, as by their own heaviness, into the closing paragraph of pages that sparkle with fun and fancy. It is as if a golden goblet full of bitterness, had been carried high and steadily until an unexpected jar, or it may be, a weary turn of the bearer's wrist, sent a few dark drops splashing down upon the paper.

"The children's brains have the topsy-turvyness inseparable from the season," she writes. "I dutifully shut my eyes when I open cupboards and drawers, and seal my ears to stage whisperings that go on in corners. The air is thick with mysteries many, and young brows are bent by portentous plaus. I who seem to joy in their joy, hide the heaviest secret of all. I have no heart for Christmas. The holiday season and the weeks that usher it in are one long agony. God grant me grace not to let my darlings guess at the truth!"

Between and under the lines, as through a lattice from which the view is over the same, I see the long, sore mound where the widow will lay on Christmas Eve, by stealth, not to dampen her children's spirits, holly and laurestinus and such roses as she always used to find on Christmas morning beside her plate.

The unformed chirography of the second letter belongs to the day when the mothers of the passing generation insisted upon having a fine point to their quill pens as essential to "a lady-like hand." The characters are pale, and I catch myself wondering, in turning the ruled sheet to the light, why women of the writer's age and mental caliber never chance to buy black ink.

"Only Husband and Me are left in the Old Home," I read. "None of our eight children can be with us at the Holy days. Five of them are in Heaven. The other three are scattered over the face of the earth. Sam is in Chicago, Mary is travelling in Italy; Frank is in New Orleans. Their Father and me, we sat by the fire in the sitting-room last night, and looked at the Chimney-piece where the stockings and socks used to hang of a Christmas-eve, and we said to one another. 'we haven't got no heart for Christmas, this year. Don't let's keep it.' When the hono is so near br. ke up, the Holydays ain't holydays."

Of course I know what I ought to write to each of these women, separated by social position and education as widely as if they were residents of different planets, yet sisters, in love, in longing, and in suffering. So many Christmas stories, and so many holiday homilies have been run in one groove that the reader of this four-foot-on-a-fender chat anticipates each step of the "ought-to-be." The sad hearted should forget selfish sorrows, and the lonely their yearning in present action for others' good. The route by which self-oblivion is said to be reached is as well-known and is

beaten as hard as the road to post-office and church in any country-town where the people read the Chautauquan course after the manner of to-day, and pray after the manner of their fore-fathers. The story of the freezing soldier who restored the circulation of his own blood by chafing the frozen limbs of his comrades, has been used to point this moral until point and edge are blunted.

True, the blessed fact abides that giving of one's-self to him who is faint and weary, builds up, instead of impoverishing, the giver. Obedience to the homely rule of trying to forget how badly off we are by ministering to those who are yet more wretched, has lightened many a heavy spirit and healed the smart of countless wounds.

I have no such prescription ready at hand while the mournful eyes of these two women seem to look into mine. The open sheets are to me the revealed depths of stricken souls that refuse to be comforted by human counsel. Representative souls they are, haunted ceaselessly by recollections of what will be no more for them on this side of heaven. The joy-bells of Christmas Eve have an undertone of desolation to their ears. The happiest days of the year are the saddest to them. Close to their side, and thronging their knees, are shadowy forms that shut out the light of Christmas candles and Christmas Sunlight. For them,

"It is time for memory and for tears."

God help them! God help us all as memory reviews the tender grace of days for which we would barter years of the life that now is ours. The years that, in passing, have strown ashes upon our heads, have scattered them more thickly upon hearts and hopes. It is not weak sentimentality that makes us feel it would be glad season more glad. To smother reminiscence and to rebuke tears, is stoicism, not Christian resignation. They who have gone from our sight have a right to their place in our affections and in our homes at this trusting-time. They were given to us to have and to hold. The Father does not mock us by snatching away that which He bade us love ourselves. Our treasures are in His ward and keeping, but they are still ours. Forgetfulness would be ingratitude to the Giver; to cease to love and long for the departed would be fickleness. To the eyes of the mother-heart the row of little stockings, limp at nightfall, fat and mishapen at dawn, is unbroken. She could show you where the baby's pink socks were hung on his first Christmas Eve, and where the eldest boy persisted in driving a particularly stout nail to support the prospective weight of the stocking that came up to the knee of a long leg to meet his knickerbockers. Do not let her try to tell you where and when the gaps in the goodly line began to come. The smell of the roses that blushed upon the breakfast-cloth beside the wife's plate, is as present to her imagination as when her silent kiss repaid the donor. Her children are the very pulse of her heart, but their voices will never again sound as sweet as when upborne by deep, manly tones. Talk as bravely as we may of the work of Time the Healer, there is a look in the eyes with which we try to reassure one another that tells of wounds forever raw, and a void we do not hope to fill.

We bring gay spirits to other festivals. Christmas touches finer and fuller chords. Since the rounding of the grave that cast the first lasting shadow over our lives, we have learned by heart a new and ineffable meaning in "I believe in the communion of the saints." We observe the Yule-tide as a sacrament in the sense given to the term by the early Fathers of the Church; "the visible sign of an invisible grace." Unseen guests are with and of us. The chimes that girdle the globe with music on Christmas-night are not lost in heartless space. Even where.

"Loyal hearts and true  
Stand ever in the light;  
All rapture through and through  
In God's most holy light."

one element of that thorough rapture must be the memories that unseal our tears, and which bring tender smiles to their eyes. They must think and talk of us on the Holy Birthday as we think and talk of them, but with a difference the thought of which should change mourning into thanksgiving. For them the puzzle and the pain, the fever and the fret, the storm and stress,—sad alliteratives that make up the major part of our lives,—are eternally overpast.

While we ponder upon these things and keep them in our hearts, our Christmas-sacrament becomes a Feast of Commemoration. It is the true All-Souls' Day.

"Alas, for him who never sees  
The stars shine through his cypress trees.  
Who hath not learned in hours of faith  
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,  
That Life is ever Lord of Death  
And Love can never lose its own."

Interior.

## Christmas in Many Lands.

## CHRISTMAS IN CANADA.

Written for the Review.

The Hand that is laid so softly and kindly upon the hearts of all the world at Christmas-tide, stilling its cries, calming its fears, soothing its pains, uplifting its hopes, subduing its animities, drawing it nearer to the bosom of God and binding all the families of men into one vast brotherhood, is felt in Canada most clearly and most profoundly. It is a wondrous feeling that steals in upon all men, and takes possession of them, as if by sovereign right, and rules over them with undisputed sway. It is itself a witness to the first Advent of the Lord from Heaven, of whom the Herald Angels sang, "Glory to God in the Highest, On Earth Peace, Good Will to Men." It is a season of unwonted joy and gladness. And to it Canada is most susceptible and responsive. Indeed, to Canadians Christmas is their one universal holiday. Other red letter days in the Calendar such as the Queen's Birthday, Thanksgiving, and New Years Day are only partially observed, but Christmas is observed by all. All creeds and all nationalities within the bounds of the Dominion celebrate Christmas as sympathetically and as thoroughly as though they were to the manner born. Even Scotchmen who at home never kept a Christmas, but sacredly kept the New Years Day and Auld Hanzel Monday, are found in Canada converted to the observance of a day that erstwhile they would have regarded as rank popery. In this new land of promise all its unhallowed associations have fallen away from it, and it is only a delightful reminiscence of the coming of Christ into our nature to effect our redemption. It brings peace in its bosom and good will on its lips. It is a day of good deeds. Men lose their selfishness for a time, and give clear indications of how much better they might be. Then those less favored in their earthly lot are thought of, and suitable gifts are sent to them. Clothing for the naked, food for the hungry, presents for the friendless. Even in the goals the prisoners are fed with dainty dishes by the best men and women of the place. All society is thrilled by a strange love, and what is more, its actions reveal it. It throws aside its reserve, it forgets for the nonce its conventional rules, and acts in a heavenly charity. The lines in haggard faces are smoothed out, the burdens of troubled hearts are shared and lifted, the accentuated differences in Society are lost sight of, and the rich salute the poor with kindly greeting, and the poor recognize the rich without the hard and bitter touch of envy.

It is the day of family reunions, and friendly gatherings. The boys and girls come home and sit together once again beneath the family roof tree. The friends of yore renew the sacred bonds to keep their hearts mellow throughout the uncertain future. It is above all, the children's day, far from across the sea St. Nicholas or Santa Claus has come with his long grey beard, and his shoulders burdened with store of candies, toys and games, to stuff into the stockings hung up beneath the mantle piece over-night, in answer to the letters that have been sent up the chimney by the little ones who wish for particular gifts.

Their faith in the old dutch saint is unflinching and firm. We have seen in our Canadian towns as an advertisement, a man dressed up as Santa Claus, driving about his sleigh with jingling bells, and towering behind him dolls, and toys and carts and story books to rouse desire in every little rosy onlooker. No greater disappointment could come to a Canadian child, than that Santa Claus should miss his way to his stocking.

Religious service is held in many churches, principally the Episcopalian and Roman Catholic and Methodist. If in other denominations reference to the day is made it is usually on the Sabbath. How far the offertory keeps up the religious observance of the day we cannot tell—but in many churches the offertory is for the officiating clergyman.

We love Christmas for its humanizing effect, for its arrest laid on the evil elements of our nature, and its encouragement and scope given to the better elements to come forth into clear manifestation, and therefore trust it shall ever remain Canada's one great holiday and festive occasion.

## CHRISTMAS IN AUSTRALIA.

The average Australian has no recollection of snow-clad fields at Christmas time, and the Yule log is not for him.

His recollections are rather of a day when the sweltering heat makes him glad to seek the shade and take life gently. It is a day which nevertheless he does not willingly pass by. The fern fronds are placed over the door, with here and there a belated wattle blossom, while flowers of the season find their place—the choice products of the conservatory in the hall of the city merchant, and the equally delicious bunch of wild flowers in the far-off cabin of the bush man.

The Christmas Carol, as it really is, we know not, though the air is balmy and the nights are beautifully fine, and there is every inducement to serenade and sing the sweet songs of the Nativity. But we reserve our carol singing for Church on Christmas Sunday, if we recognize the old time custom at all.

There are many drawbacks to Christmas keeping in this new land. We lack the old associations, and religious thought about the day is not very clearly defined.

The one point where the Australian joins "hands across the sea" with his brethren of the old world is this, that to him Christmas is essentially a time of "good cheer." He has learnt but few couplets, but he is well up in the one that sings of "Christmas coming once a year," and he knows the second line better than the first.

It is a time of holiday making. On Christmas Eve as many of the city people as can get away do so, and the hearts of Traffic Managers are made glad by the heavily-laden trains that leave our great centres with wearied workers making inland for a day or two or going to the seaside for a look at old ocean.

The coach, the buggy and the saddle back are all pressed into the service at the railway end, and by midnight you may safely say that all Australia is in the place where it has determined to "keep Christmas."

And on the morrow everyone seems determined that it shall be a day of cheer, even unto profusion and subsequent indigestion. Let depression come and retrenchment be severe—that is for the morrow of the New Year—the day of the turning over of the new leaf. On this day it is willed that the board shall be bountifully spread. Your Australian is a liberal man, and he is generous to others. Moved by the kindly spirit which enters the hearts of English-speaking people at Christmas time, and is unto them as an annual conscience, he goes out to see how his poor neighbor may be faring.

And the very poorest do well on this day. Our daily papers are filled with Christmas appeals, which ever meet with a goodly response. At the Old Colonists' Home or the Asylum, the aged man and his wife who have sought refuge for a few more days from the blasts of misfortune that have been too keen for them, sit down to the well-remembered fare, and after dinner talk of the happy days gone by. For one day in the year their old worn hearts are tenderer, and life seems pleasant again.

But away from the mansion of the city or the busy seaside watering place—out north the stockrider and the shepherd dream of home. They find it horribly dull, if the truth must be told, for the heart sickness is upon them, and the poor fellows find it indeed, as one of them has sung, "the dreariest day of all the dreary year."

But the great lack at Christmas is the lack of the true home gathering. Heimgang is not as sweet a sound for us as it might be. Here and there the young Australian will be found on his way to see the old folks, but he makes a prosy business of it. It takes him half an hour to tell all he has to tell before he goes to bed. In the morning he walks round the garden with "the old man"; then lights his pipe for the fifth time as he lies down under the big mulberry tree and wonders when dinner will be ready.

But, for this one there are dozens who scatter. Christmas Day is a holiday, and not much at that. It holds us socially to old associations, if at all.

The great thought of Christendom that "unto you is born this day in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord," troubles us but little, unless Christmas Day should happen to fall on Sunday. It has no special hold upon us nationally. We have as yet no national day, though we have fixed the date. But even that has no heroic story to make it noble as when a nation celebrates the throwing off of an oppressor's yoke. It is a holiday, and simply tells that in the peaceful ongoing of the nations another young giant has been born.

Yet let us not forget that even Christmas does mean something to us, and as we rejoice in our native sunshine and our glorious sky, let us think of those beyond the sea and sing to them:—

"But cold winds bring not Christmas-tide or budding roses June,  
And while 'tis night upon your side we revel in the noon.  
Kind hearts make Christmas; June can bring blue sky or clouds  
above;  
The only universal Spring in that which comes of love."

## CHRISTMAS IN ENGLAND.

"Christmas comes but once a year,  
And when it comes it brings good cheer."

The old couplet, so often on the lips of Englishmen at Christmas time, whether as an incentive to jollity or an excuse for it, gives the note of the felling with which Christmas is



regarded in England. It indicates the supreme place the day holds among the festal days of the year. It is a reminiscence of a time when holidays were not so common in "Merrie England" as they are now, and when the great holiday of the birth of Christ was treasured and made the very most of.

Though a heart full of Christmas can make good cheer in the dullest weather, yet Christmas weather has much to do with Christmas cheer. When the day is without mist or rain, it is matter of thankfulness. When it is clear with a hard frost, it is a cause of sober joy. But when, following a week of keen weather, a good fall of snow has gently down through the unvest air a day or two before, lying gifted on the trees and the hedge rows and the meadows, and then a frost comes on Christmas Eve, and makes the snow crisp and firm and sparkling, then the soul of the season goes into the blood, and the Christmas greetings ring with a heartiness that means that Christmas is going to be merry indeed. Men say to one another: "A real, old-fashioned Christmas, sir!"

Though Christmas stands alone as the crown of the year's gladness, it is waited on by days that go before and prepare for it. There is the choosing of the cards and the gifts that carry the assurance of goodwill. There is the hanging up of the stocking which Santa Claus will come and fill when eyes that tried to keep awake to catch him are at last weighed down with drowsy head. There is the practising of the ringers who make themselves ready to send out across the snow when the hour comes, the music of the "merry, merry bells of Yule." There is on Christmas Eve the visit of the waits who sing, sweet and low, so that their song is as if heard in a dream.

God rest you, merry gentlemen,  
May nothing you dismay,  
For Christ a little child was born  
Upon a Christmas Day."

There is the hanging of the mistletoe and the weaving of the holly round the Christmas hearth. Above all, there is the preparation of the heart and mood; for Christmas is the season when all family quarrels are healed, and those who have been unfriends shake hands and renew friendship, and neighbors who have been unneighbourly come close to each other—the season of peace and goodwill to all mankind.

Christmas divides Englishmen into three classes. There are those, and they are an increasing number, who look upon Christmas Day as a mere holiday, in the sense of a playday, and who spend Christmas as they spend any other holiday, in resting, in pleasuring, in feasting. There are others who regard it as a holy day, on which they must go to church, though they may not darken a church door till Christmas Day comes round again; others of them keeping the whole day sacred as the Fast Day used to be kept in Scotland. And there are others again to whom it is both holy day and holiday; who in the morning attend service, in which the hymns and the lessons and the sermon have in them the spirit of the season, and spend the rest of the day in making merry with friends; closing the day by taking the children to a sacred concert, or to hear the Christmas oratorio "The Messiah."

Christmas observances are changing in England with the changing years; but the feeling wrought into the very nerves of the people by religious custom and tradition, going back into a dim past that no one can tell the beginning of, is still there, and makes the prayer in the "In Memoriam" a not altogether empty one—

"Rise happy morn, rise holy morn,  
Draw forth the cheerful day from night:  
O Father, touch the east and light  
The light that shone when Hope was born."

#### CHRISTMAS IN IRELAND.

Christmas in Ireland is observed very much as Christmas in England. It is the great home-festival of the year. The sons and daughters, children and grand-children, gather round the Christmas fire. The mistletoe in the hall is as attractive to young Irish hearts and lips as it is to those of colder blood. Roast beef, roast turkey, plum pudding, and mince pies, appear and disappear as in less cultured lands.

The one distinctive feature connected with the Christmas season which I remember from a boyhood spent in the South of Ireland is the custom of "hunting the wren." On the morning after Christmas Day—known to the devout people of Southern Ireland as St. Stephen's Day—you are very sure to be awakened by the noise of singing before your door or beneath your bedroom window. You look out and see a company of men and boys singing a curious song, of which I only remember the following verse.

The wren, the wren, the king of all birds,  
St. Stephen's Day he was caught in the furze;  
Although he is little, his family is great,  
So we pray you, good mistress, to give us a treat.

You also observe that one of the carollers carries a holly bush,

docked out with fantastic ribbons, in the midst of which the poor wren is (or is supposed to be) a prisoner. If the singing is good, the interview between the awakened household and the awakening choristers usually ends in the bestowal of the customary "Christmas-box."

In the Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries in Ireland (1890-91, p. 240), the Rev. James O'Laverty, P.P., M.R.I.A., tells how a similar custom of hunting the swallow and afterwards begging, prevailed among the boys of ancient Greece (see also Liddell and Scott's Greek Lexicon under *Chelidonias*). Father O'Laverty says that the origin of all these customs must be referred back to the infancy of the Indo-European nations, and the various festivals celebrated by them at sundry seasons of the year, and that it is therefore useless to seek for that origin in Ireland.

The most plausible explanation is that which is given in Brand and Hazlitt's Popular Antiquities of Great Britain, where we read:—

"This singular custom is founded on a tradition that in former times a fairy of uncommon beauty exerted such undue influence over the male population, that she, at various times, induced by her sweet voice numbers to follow her into the sea, where they perished. At length a knight-errant sprung up who discovered some means of countervailing the charms used by this siren, and even laid a plot for her destruction, which she only escaped by taking the form of a wren." But a spell was laid upon her, and though she escaped instant annihilation, it was decreed that she must ultimately perish by human hands. Hence the annual pursuit of her by men and boys.

I should add that "the wren-boys," as they are called, are, so far as I can find, unknown north of Dublin, or even in the neighborhood of Dublin itself. Like many another quaint old Irish custom, they were banished by English influence beyond the region of "The Pale." But their memory remains with me amid other memories of the dear old Emerald Isle. Still, far away under the Southern Cross, I fancy I can hear their kindly voices and see their merry Irish faces lit with the gladness of the Christmas time.

I dreamed of wanderings in the woods amongst the holy green;  
I dreamed of my own native cot, and porch with ivy screen;  
I dreamed of lights for ever dimmed—of hopes that can't return—  
And dropped a tear on Christmas fires, that never more can burn.

#### CHRISTMAS IN SCOTLAND.

Christmas in Scotland? Why—that is just Christmas in England, with, however, less of the Church element in it. Still the very name of Christmas sends a throb of joy and expectancy throughout the land as a time when families reunite—when clerks and employes run home to see the old folks—and when the student turns his back on *Alma Mater* to spend a week with his real *Mater*—the dear old lady with the white hair that awaits him in his distant home!

From a social point of view, Christmas in Scotland is very much what it is elsewhere, with its good cheer, its warm hospitality, its mirth, its jollity—yes, even to the evergreens and the mistletoe!

But you ask: "What did we do before Christmas was so generally kept?" Had we no national festival in its stead? Well, yes. New Year's Day was the great Scotch festival. I can remember the zest with which as a boy I looked forward to it, and the various enjoyments that were usually associated with it. I can remember too some things that were scarcely enjoyments, though they were meant to be so. In particular I would refer to "First-fittin'." It was dying out in my boyhood, and long since it has passed away altogether. But all the more I may just say a word about this old custom. It sprang from the root of kindness—the desire to be the first to wish their friends "A happy New Year!" Hence the name "First-footing;" that is, trying to be the first foot that crossed a friend's threshold. And in this in itself there was no harm. There was harm, however, in its accompaniments, for the visitor invariably carried with him a bottle of whisky, and *nolens volens* everyone who did not wish to be set down as unfriendly must needs "taste" and exchange "the compliments of the season," "A guid New Year to you!" "And the same to you, and wishing you many o' them!" The last observant of the custom that I remember was an old man of well-nigh eighty years, who, long after it had ceased and determined so far as the community generally was concerned, through the force of habit still was first-foot in the houses of his nearest neighbours. When he died, "First-fittin'" died with him in my native parish.

But do not suppose that the observance of New Year's Day in Scotland was bound up with drinking. Far from it. Even in my boyhood I can remember little excess, whilst the tone of so ciety on this subject has been rising ever since. Drinking bouts date

further back. And while there are still exceptions, as there ever will be, yet as a rule the public sentiment is wholesome.

As to how the day was spent largely depended on the weather. When this was favourable, various outdoor sports were resorted to; but we considered it a special delight when a "black" frost gave smooth ice. Then on neighbouring loch or dam New Year's Day was celebrated in grandest style. From far and near friends met on the ice, and souter and blacksmith, dominie and farmer, laird and minister joined in the "Roaring Game,"—a republic in which all minor distinctions disappeared, and the best man was the man who could plant his stone on the T and guard it with his next!

#### CHRISTMAS IN WALES

Readers may have heard of the "Welsh Plygain." It was a religious service held in all the churches in Wales, at three o'clock on Christmas morning, to watch the dawn commemorative of the coming of Christ, and the daybreak of Christianity. This beautiful service of song, prayer, praise, and thanksgiving was generally held throughout the Principality at that early hour fifty years ago. The Plygain is still kept up in some of the remote parts of Wales, but the hour has been changed from three to six, seven, or eight o'clock, and the present Plygain bears but few of the characteristics of the old Plygain of the Cymry. The older folks who remember the service, when in its full swing about half a century since, say that sometimes they started at one or two in the morning—the time depending upon the distance to be traversed to the place of meeting. Sometimes the distance was two, three, or more miles and in that case a large party met at a certain point and picked up others on the way, so that by the time they reached the church or chapel a good number was congregated together. It was a rule that those families living nearest the place of meeting should receive the friends from a distance to breakfast immediately after this early service. This repast was substantial and exceptionally welcome after the long and cold walk, followed as a rule, by a lengthy service of from two to three hours.

On Christmas Day, and during Christmas week every year, in various districts in Wales, it is customary to hold local Eisteddfodan (my readers will understand that only one National Eisteddfod is held annually, and that in one of the three summer months). At these Welsh gatherings, prizes are given to the best competitors in music, literature, including poetry and prose, and art. Prizes are also given for the best specimens of knitting of hand-spun, and hand-woven goods. Special preaching services are also held, and large congregations assemble to hear some of the leading preachers of the Principality.

#### CHRISTMAS IN GERMANY.

There is a charm about Christmas-tide in Germany which one does not experience anywhere else.

To the visitor, the novel mode of its celebration affords unexpected pleasure, while to the native-born its associations are more lasting than any other childhood memories, and remain fresh and green in spite of age or foreign clime. There is no experience more painful to a German than the first Christmas spent away from the Fatherland. I have a vivid recollection of the utter loneliness and God-forsaken feeling which possessed me the first Christmas I spent in the Australian bush, some fifteen years ago.

The observance of Christmas is nationalised in Germany, and its manifold peculiar delights are heartily enjoyed alike by old and young, rich and poor.

There, as among the Jews, festive days are reckoned from sundown to sundown. The days being very short, the celebrations usually begin about four o'clock on what we term "Christmas Eve." Before that time the finishing touches have been given to the household decorations, and everyone appears in their best at the first family feast. This feast takes place from four to ten o'clock, according to rank. On the farms, as in other homes of humble society, this meal forms a bond of union between master and men, when, in fact, no wine is too good to wash away past grievance, and all eat and drink once more as the best of friends. At this time, too, it is customary for master and mistress to distribute presents to their workmen and servants.

Every home has its own Christmas-tree laden with gifts, and decorated with artistic confectionary such as only Germans can make.

The unveiling of this tree constitutes the children's chief joy, in which every member of the household participates.

Christmas day proper is observed with unusual sacredness and solemnity. Everybody goes to Church—some for the first and only time during the year. Churches, therefore, are crowded, and for that reason, if for no other, everyone enjoys being there.

So far as my recollection goes, no visitors are expected on

Christmas day, but the following day—"Second Christmas day" as it is termed—is alive with parties and pleasures of all kinds.

The English, we are told, "take their pleasures seriously;" the Germans certainly do not. German custom seems to say, "Pleasure is as natural as work, therefore be as thorough in your pleasures as in your other duties," hence every citizen of the Fatherland takes his pleasure without scruples of conscience.

Another distinctive feature of Christmas in Germany is, that its manifold delights are shared by the poorest, whose cupboards are well stocked by their more prosperous neighbors. As for the juveniles, I doubt whether the joys of wealthier children can at all compare with theirs. In anticipation of Christmas cheer for them, every Hausfrau lays in stock a considerable supply of confectionary, for which, according to custom, the children call from house to house, until their white calico bags are stuffed to almost equal in size their round-faced owners. This German confectionery is made in a variety of shapes, such as trees, fruit, flowers, animals, or men, and all may be put on a string.

Each child's ambition is to get the most, and the probable result is eagerly inquired into by the children themselves, who call at each others' houses for that purpose.

They often exchange their various kinds of confectionary, much as their English cousins do their marbles.

The festive season over, another matter of rivalry among the children is to see who can make their stock of sweets last the longest. It may surprise my young readers to learn that some of these Deutsche Kinder manage to keep some into the second month of the year.

Christmas in Germany, is usually accompanied by plenty of ice and snow, which greatly enhance the festive pleasures. Should the weather be dry and frosty there is always a good deal of sleighing across land and water, regardless of roads, fences, or gates—all levelled by the "beautiful snow."

Should the atmosphere be moist so that the snow will adhere, the German spirits are not damped, since their pleasures are not lost, but only changed. What now would make walking and sleighing difficult, makes snow-balling easy. The children especially hail with delight these fresh diversions, and they may be seen by the score in the snow fashioning Father Christmas in his native spotless white, ornamented with bright glass eyes, white nose, ears, eyes, and moustache are readily supplied by moist mud from the tip of the finger.

Needless to say, this snow-Father appears in all shapes and sizes, according to the skill and ambition of his young artists, who, like some bigger children, begin their sport by admiring and cheering their self-made god, and vary the amusement by pelting him and knocking him out of shape with snow balls.

Should the weather permit, skating on the ice affords an wearying pleasure to old and young.

To be in Germany at Christmas and not be full of happiness is almost an impossibility.

To be at work, to do things for the world, to turn the currents of things about us at our will, to make our existence a positive element, even though it be no bigger than a grain of sand in this great system where we live—that is a new joy of which the idle man knows no more than the mole knows of sunshine, or the serpent of the eagle's triumphant flight into the upper air. The man who knows, indeed, what it is to act, to work, cries out: "This alone is to live."

#### A Christmas Greeting.

I wish a merry Christmas  
To every home on earth;  
May lowly cot, may palace hall  
Re-echo genial mirth  
May children's laughter gaily ring,  
And happy voices gladly sing  
A fond and joyous welcoming  
To merry, merry Christmas!

I pray a holy Christmas  
May come to every heart;  
A time of sweet tranquility  
From troublous care apart.  
An hour for thoughts to soar above  
For heart to realize the love  
And grace divine that, like a dove,  
Brood o'er this holy Christmas.

God send a blessed Christmas  
To every patient life;  
A little resting from the toil,  
A surcease of the strife.  
May Faith breathe words of gentle cheer,  
Hope point to roses blowing near,  
And tender love and friends sincere  
Make this a blessed Christmas!



#### CHRISTMAS GUESTS.

The quiet day in winter beauty closes,  
 And sunset clouds are tinged with crimson dye,  
 As if the blushes of our faded roses  
 Came back to tint the sombre Christmas sky.

We sit and watch the twilight darken slowly,  
 Ities the last gleam upon the lone hillside:  
 And in the stillness growing deep and holy,  
 Our Christmas guests come in this eventide.

They enter softly: some with baby faces,  
 Whose sweet blue eyes have scarcely looked on life:  
 We bid them welcome to their vacant places:  
 They won't be peace, and never knew the strife.

And some with steadfast glances meet us gravely,  
 Their hands point backward to the paths they trod:

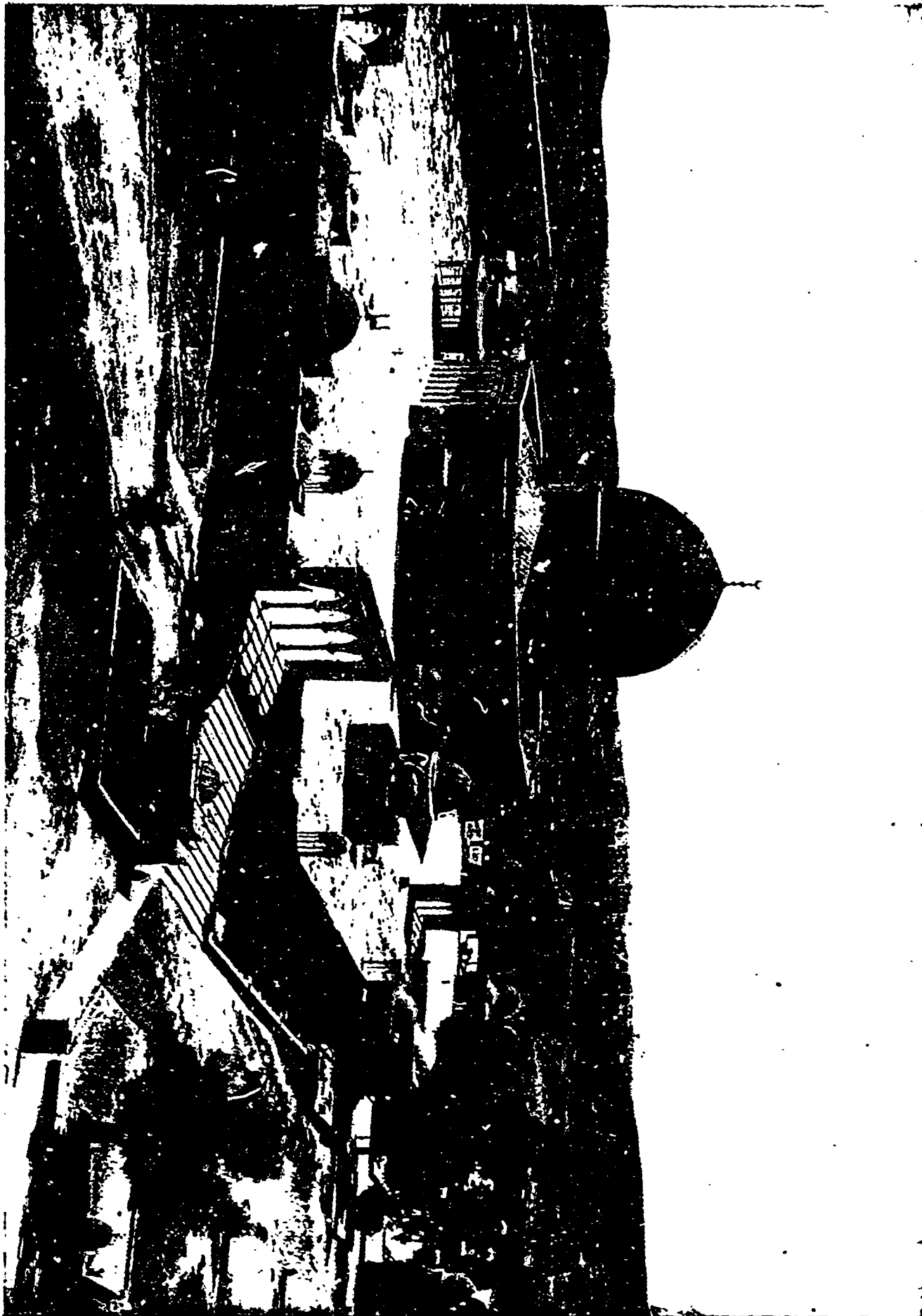
Dear ones, we know how long ye struggled bravely,  
 And died upon the battle-field of God.

And some are here whose patient souls were riven  
 By our hard words and looks of cold disdain:  
 Ah, loving hearts, to speak of wrong forgiven  
 Ye come to visit our dark world again!

But one there is, more kind than any other,  
 Whose presence fills the silent house with light:  
 The Prince of Peace, our gracious Elder Brother,  
 Comes to his birthday feast with us to-night.

Thou who wast born and cradled in a manger,  
 Hast gladdened our poor earth with hope and rest,  
 O best beloved comest not as a stranger,  
 But tarry, Lord, our friend and Christmas guest.

—Good Words



**THE SITE OF THE TEMPLE** We take here the best general view of the temple plateau that I have ever seen, and I have studied it. It was not taken by the artist of this expedition, but from about 100 feet of our old tent by the American consul in Jerusalem. It was taken on a hillside in the neighborhood, and we get nothing more of a comprehensive view of the temple site with the mountains round about Jerusalem. We see in the picture the mosque of Omar and beyond us to the southwest, with its smaller dome, the mosque of Aksa. We see little prayer houses and mosques, walls, stairways, trees casting their dark shadows, the smaller domes and the distant hills. We are able to form a very satisfactory idea of the area in which stood the temple of Solomon a thousand years before Christ, and on which stood the temple of Herod, into which our party entered at

the time of the royal visit when we killed our horse. What some have said upon us as we look upon these sacred precincts. It was here, in fact, that Abraham himself offered Isaac, and as we look upon the scene the memory of all the names of Jewish and of Christian history are recalled. One of the most striking features of the temple is, that it was much more difficult than now to gain access and when the Moslems were in guard the place was more difficult to enter than in these days. We took a circuit through all the courts and came to the very spot where the temple stood. In 1870 we arranged our visit with a large company and found the old Moslems who had been from place to place in Jerusalem, and we found no sign of disappointment on any face within the wall.

From Eschylus' *Agamemnon*, "Earth's Footstep, the Man's Gait," which represents the human figure as a whole, and the feet as the feet of the gods, as they are supposed.



### Daisy's Christmas Shopping.

One afternoon shortly before Christmas, a little girl named Daisy Edmonds sat before an open bureau drawer in her own little room, counting over the Christmas presents which she had bought or made for other people. She had taken good care to lock the door so that her brothers, Carl and Harry, should not surprise her by entering suddenly and getting a peep at the pretty things she had been carefully hiding for days. Very tenderly she lifted out one package after another, unfolding the soft wrappings and gazing with admiring eyes upon each object in turn.

There were the dainty work-bag for mamma, the smooth ivory paper-cutter for papa to cut the pages of his new magazine with, two lovely games for Harry and Carl, and a box of candy for each of them beside. Then there were the braided lamp-mat which she had worked herself for grandma, the perfumed handkerchief-case for Aunt Annie, picture-books for her two baby cousins, and two smart neckties apiece for the cook and waitress. She also had a little remembrance for each of her play-mates, and for her teachers both in the day school and Sunday school.

While turning over the leaves of the booklet she had chosen for her Sunday school teacher, Daisy suddenly stopped short and caught her breath. It came to her like a flash that she had forgotten to get presents for her minister and his wife, both of whom she loved dearly.

"Oh, how could I forget my dear kind Mr. and Mrs. Bradford!" she exclaimed, her sunny face clouding over for an instant. Then hurriedly locking up her treasures, she hid the key behind a vase on the mantel and took out her purse to see how much money she had left. Alas! her little hoard of Christmas money had melted away entirely, all but two cents.

Immediately she started to go and ask her mother to give her more money, but at the head of the stairs she paused. She was a thoughtful little girl, and remembered that she had already asked twice for more money for her Christmas shopping; and the last time, she remembered that her papa had looked rather grave, and mamma had explained to her afterward that his business was troubling him and that it made him feel sorry not to give his children as liberal a sum as usual to spend in holiday gifts.

"I must make the two cents do, some way," she said firmly. "I can't ask for more money, and hurt papa's feelings." So she skipped down-stairs, put on her fur jacket and tam-o'-shanter, and started off once more for Miss Crinkle's attractive shop where she had made nearly all her purchases. It was a small town in which Daisy lived, and a few moments' walk brought her to Main Street. She walked about some time among the fascinating things at Miss Crinkle's, trying to find some little thing that cost only one cent. Finally she saw some handsome penholders in a case. They were black, and ornamented with gold, with gold pens in them.

"Oh, a pen would be just the thing for Mr. Bradford to write his sermons with!" she said to herself. But when she found that they were a dollar and a half her heart sank. A happy thought came, however, immediately after.

"How much would a steel pen cost; just the pen, without the penholder?" she asked bravely.

"Oh, steel pens are ten cents a dozen, or a cent apiece," replied the clerk.

"Very well, I will take one," said Daisy.

While she was picking out a nice bright one, she suddenly remembered that the long pins with black heads, such as her mamma wore to fasten on her hat, also cost but one cent. She had bought some 'ere for her only a short time before. It would be a very suitable present for Mrs. Bradford, she thought; so she asked for one, and when both her small purchases were rolled up in tissue-paper she ran home with a light heart.

"I won't tell mamma what I've got, till afterward," she said, "because she may feel badly that I couldn't get something nicer for them. Anyway, they are very useful presents, and beside mamma said that any gift no matter how small, was valuable if only real heart love went with it," and so Daisy dismissed the subject from her thoughts.

Mr. and Mrs. Bradford were just getting up from the breakfast table on Christmas when Daisy Edmonds appeared in the doorway, looking like a little picture, with a bunch of holly berries in her hand.

"I've come to wish you a merry Christmas," she said, "and to bring you each a very little gift. I hope you will find them useful, if they aren't much of a present; but a great deal of love goes with them, and mamma says it's the love that makes the present valuable. Perhaps you will write one of your sermons with this, Mr. Bradford, some time," and she looked shyly into his face as she handed him the bright, new pen.

"Why, Daisy, a brand new pen!" the minister exclaimed, "Why, that's exactly what I was needing. How could you guess!" and the little girl was suddenly taken up into his strong arms. "I shall write my very best sermons with it, yes indeed, dear child; and let me tell you that the text of one of them shall be your own sweet self," and as he bent to kiss her, Daisy thought she saw tears shining in his eyes, which seemed to her a very funny thing to happen.

"And I shall tie a ribbon on my Christmas hat-pin so that it will not get mixed with the others in my pin-cushion," said dear, kind Mrs. Bradford, and I shall be very choice of it and only wear it with my very best bonnet!"

So they petted and praised and thanked her and made her feel so happy.

When she got home and told her papa and mamma the whole story, to her surprise they both hugged and kissed and praised her, too; and for just a moment she



thought she saw tears shining in their eyes also. But as they were smiling all the time, and laughing and looking at each other in a happy way, Daisy felt sure that they must be what she called "happiness tears," and was gladder than ever that she had managed to make the two cents do, without troubling dear papa and mamma about it in any way.

FANNIE LOUISE WEAVER in Dec. "Youth's Companion."

### Cambric Tea.

My mamma says that cambric tea,  
Is good for little girls like me  
Who makes it very white and thin  
Instead of putting cambric in.  
It really is a delicious drink,  
And doesn't taste as you would think.



THE CATS CHRISTMAS STORY.

Sous-Main.

## Looks into Books.

**THE COMMUNION REGISTER.**—Second edition: revised and improved. By Rev. Louis H. Jordan, M.A., B.D. Montreal, W. Drysdale and Co. Price, \$2.50.

A minister is greatly aided in the faithful discharge of his pastoral duties, if he keep himself informed as to the regularity or irregularity of the attendance of the memberships upon the Communion Services. To this end every Session should provide itself with a good Official Record, and delegate one of its number to keep the same constantly posted. Mr. Jordan's undertaking to supply such a Register has been entirely successful, the present edition being a revision of the Roll Book already well-known in our Canadian congregations. The scheme of arrangement is such that the Register may be adopted to a great variety of circumstances, and to the conditions governing the celebration of the Communion by Denominations other than Presbyterian. The blank Statistical Tables are a special feature, and will prove of great service: for they enable one to perceive at a glance the precise state of the Roll at any particular date. They reveal thus, in their initial stages, those evidences of declension or growth of which the successful pastor needs constantly to be aware.

**THE PASTOR'S DIARY AND CLERICAL RECORD.**—Non-Denominational. Twelfth edition. By Rev. Louis H. Jordan, B.D. Montreal, W. Drysdale and Co. Prices: cloth, 75c; leather \$1.00.

Mr. Jordan says in his preface:—"It has long been felt that, in order to the easy and efficient discharge of ordinary pastoral work a suitable Pocket Companion is simply indispensable. Frequent attempts have therefore been made, both in Britain and America, to prepare a Diary which, while sufficiently compact and brief would also be comprehensive in its contents, and so arranged as to admit of ready reference. This little Book, accordingly, aims to avoid the faults of its predecessors, while at the same time it attempts to supply their defects. It is sent forth in the hope that it may prove a convenient and useful aid to those who are engaged in the work of the minister." We are glad to know that this Handbook,—formerly published in New York, but now controlled by Hunter and Co, Edinburgh,—has already found its way into the hands of many of our ministers. It is decidedly the most complete and handy little *cademecum* that we know of.

**MEMORIALS OF FOREIGN MISSIONARIES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, U.S.A.,** by William Rankin, late Treasurer of the Foreign Mission Board. Cloth 8vo, pp. 468, price \$2.00. The Presbyterian Board, Philadelphia. N. T. Wilson, Toronto.

This is a necrological record of missionaries in the foreign service of the American Presbyterian Church, who have passed away in the service. In this volume dealing with more than 250 names the sketches must necessarily be brief. They consist chiefly of a judicious selection of the memorial notices that appeared in the various church papers in connection with the death of each. This method has the advantage of giving a condensed statement of essential facts from the most authentic sources. For most of the notices were written by those most intimate with the life and work of the departed missionaries, in their several spheres of labor. Though there is this diversity of authorship, it is all of a remarkably high order.

The names are arranged in alphabetic order for ease of reference. There is also an index or summary by missions, from which the names of deceased missionaries in any field can be learned at a glance.

The introductory chapter, written by Rev. J. C. Lowrie, D.D., for a former manual, has been retained as it sets forth in a most interesting way, the prompting causes and sustaining motives for all this heroic devotion to the work of Foreign Missions.

Appended to these brief sketches are notices of the five deceased Corresponding Secretaries of the Board, and a narration of events at Futtelgori in the Sepoy revolt of 1857, relating to the eight martyred missionaries.

There is great variety in these records. Some were called to lay down their labors at the very beginning, others were spared to old age. Some excelled as teachers others as preachers, organizers or field workers, showing the great diversity of vessels our Lord employs. Some died peacefully on their beds in the midst of loving family and friends, others were murdered by savages, others again and again, perished alone on the open field with no eye but God's looking on.

In every case the record shows that men and women were thoroughly devoted to the cause of Christ and preferred to serve him in laboring for the salvation of heathen, to any other work. Death is met calmly and cheerfully. Nor is there any tone of discouragement or defeat.

No volume issued in recent times has higher apologetic value in showing how the Grace of God sustains the heart in the face of the greatest dangers and severest trials, how the truth of God never loses its lustre, but is held with stronger grasp at the very gates of death.

The reading of this book will act as a spiritual tonic to many, in the home land, who are discouraged by difficulties or dangers. It will prove profitable and inspiring to all who wish to find a narrative of the triumphs of redeeming love.

While constituting a precious memorial of those who have gone it will fire the hearts of many in the years to come, to go out and do likewise.

The book is produced in very substantial workmanship and should find a place in every Presbyterian family in Canada. We predict for it a large and continued sale.

**THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.**—Addresses delivered in Toronto by the Rev. Andrew Murray D.D., and revised by the author for publication. Price 85 cts. Fleming H. Revell, Co. Toronto.

To all who listened to the eminent South African divine when in Toronto this little volume will come as a delightful remembrance of those days of rich spiritual blessing. It contains his seven addresses on the Christian life, each of which is in itself and mine of wealth to any seeking a closer walk with God, and a knowledge of those deeper truths which we may experience although we do not fully understand. The titles of the addresses tell more of the contents than we can say in the brief space at our disposal,—“Daily Fellowship with God, Privilege and Experience, Carnal or Spiritual, Out of and Into, The Blessing Secured, The Presence of Christ, and A Word to Workers.” We recommend this book unreservedly to all eager to possess the fitness of life which is in Christ Jesus.

**BRINGS IMMORTALITY** and other Poems by MacKenzie Bell (second edition). London and New York, Ward Lock and Bowden. Cloth, uncut leaves, Price 3s 6d.

Some of these poems have the rare quality of remaining in the memory. The volume contains much that lovers of genuine poetry will cherish. Throughout one is struck by the evidence given of a sympathetic personality expressing itself in clear and well-turned strains. Everywhere the workmanship is good, the spirit serene, the standpoint generous.

**ZEROLA OF NAZARETH,** by Louis Barron. Cloth, illustrated, 50 cts. Chas. J. Musson, Toronto.

For mechanical and literary excellence this is one of the most admirable of the new fall books. In every sense it is artistic. The heroine is a young Jewess, as beautiful as only those of that oriental nation know how to be, who is loved by two men, one a youth of her own race, the other a descendant of Cleopatra. Some of the scenes of the story are quite exciting, and some are very pathetic. Zerola is a lovely character though intensely human, and her story is romantic and charming. Admirers of “Ben-Hur” will be highly pleased with “Zerola of Nazareth.” The two tales are somewhat similar, but yet quite different.

**JACOB FAITHFUL,** by Capt. Marryat. New edition, cloth, small leaves. New York and London, Macmillan & Co. Toronto, The Copp Clark Co. Ltd. Price \$1.50.

Another volume in the same series of reprints is Capt. Marryat's well-known *Jacob Faithful*, which Thackeray called his “beloved” Jacob Faithful, and which made him remember with a great deal of pleasure and gratitude a fit of the fever and ague on board a Mississippi steamer, during which he amused himself with it from morning to sunset. It is, indeed, just the book to beguile a heavily hanging hour or so, bright, cheerful, entertaining, carrying the brave and honest hero in most delightful fashion up from the humble sphere of his boyhood to a position of usefulness and honor, and ending as it should, with the orthodox “and so they were married, and lived happy ever after,” of all the comfortable old stories before “realism” came in. The numerous illustrations, by Henry Brock, are drawn with much spirit and delicacy, and supplement the lively narrative very pleasantly.

**MACMILLAN'S COLONIAL LIBRARY.**—All uniform in style. Cloth \$1.25 Toronto, The Copp Clark Co., Ltd.

Rolf Boldrewood, whose “Robbery Under Arms” has proved such a success, has written another book on much the same order published in the *Colonial Library*, under the title “The Crooked Stick; or, Pollie's Probation.” It opens well, and in that scrimmage with the Australian bushrangers, followed not long after by a veritable cloud-burst so welcomed by the parching plantations, we thought we were going to have a story of rare interest. But it peters out and loses much of its flavor of originality. Among the

additions to this library may be mentioned "A Long Vacation," by Charlotte M. Young; "The Vagabonds," by Margaret L. Woods; "Chapters from Some Memoirs," by Mrs. Richie; "The Raiders," by S. R. Crockett; "The Ralstons," by E. Marion Crawford; "Seething Days," by Caroline O. Holroyd, etc.

**TWO GALLANT REBELS: A Story of the Great Struggle in La Vendie.** By Edgar Pickering. With six illustrations by W. H. Overend. Crown 8vo, cloth, elegant, \$1.25. London, Blackie & Sons. Toronto, The Copp Clark Co. Ltd.

These two rebels are two English youths who are shipwrecked and cast ashore in La Vendie, a province of France. Here they are rescued by the inhabitants, and in gratitude for this assistance they join the Vendians in their revolt against the French Republic. The two young fellows maintain the English character for pluck in the various ambushes and battles in which they take part; and even when captured and condemned to the guillotine they contrive to escape by sheer reckless daring.

**HIS FIRST KANGAROO: An Australian Story for Boys.** By Arthur Ferres. With 6 illustrations by Percy F. S. Spence. crown 8vo, cloth, \$1.25. London, Blackie & Son. Toronto, Copp Clark Co. Ltd.

This is a story of adventure on an Australian cattle station. Dick Morrison accepts an invitation to spend a holiday in the bush, and has a good time. A band of bush-rangers also make things lively, for on one occasion the station is "Stuck up," while a young Scotsman is kidnapped and rescued with difficulty. The story is full of healthy out-of-doors adventure, in fresh and attractive surroundings.

**COUSIN GEOFFREY AND I,** by Caroline Austin. With 6 page illustrations by W. Parkinson. New edition. Crown 8vo, cloth extra \$1.00. London, Blackie & Sons. Toronto, Copp Clark Co. Ltd.

"Miss Austin's story is bright, clever, and well developed"

**A MUSICAL GENIUS by the Author of the "Two Dorothys."** Illustrated by John H. Bacon. \$1.25. London, Blackie & S. n. Toronto Copp Clark Co. Ltd.

Hero Ricardo has a genius for the violin and is adopted by a wealthy musical amateur who has discovered his special gift. The lad studies hard, and fulfils the highest expectations of his new friend. But he never quite forgets his humble unselfish brother the conjurer; and when he is called upon to make choice between affection for his brother and a wealthy home, he quickly chooses the former. The charm of this tale is in its naturalness, and in the engaging self-sacrifice of the two noble brothers.

**SAMANTHA IN EUROPE, a Great Now Book,** by Josiah Allen's Wife's. 700 Pages of Fascinating Interest. Over 100 Comical Drawings, by the famous Artist and Cartoonist, C. de Grimm. New York and Toronto, Funk & Wagnalls Co. Price, cloth, full gilt 2.50, half Russet \$4.

One has not had time to weary of an occasional half hour with Samatha at the World Fair before this new and in many respects the most interesting of Miss Halley's series (as we may call them) is in their hands. She uses her talents in the interest of all that is good, launching the keen shafts of satire right and left at fashionable follies and society sins. The tendency of her books is good, and they are sources of amusement which have few equals. And yet there is nothing overstrung in her humorous hits. She is at times, also, intensely pathetic, so that one does not tire of her writings. Her wondrous pathos and humor have made her eminently successful as a writer of bright, humorous stories. But the strong feature of Miss Holly's humor is its moral tone. It is decidedly good and healthy. She has always spoken out bravely on behalf of religion, temperance, and missions as well as the minor morals of society. We will conclude with the following from Senator Henry W. Blair, "I read everything from the pen of Josiah Allen's Wife just as soon as I can get it. I have often thought, when wearied out with grave and exhausting labors, that one great reason why I wanted to live—in fact, why I continue to live—is that Miss Holley writes a book occasionally and that I read it, and keep on reading the old one until a new one comes. Her works are full of wit and humor, and yet are among the most logical, eloquent, pathetic and instructive productions of our time."

#### ALONE WITH GOD.\*

Interest will centre around this little book on account of the esteem in which the author is held both in Canada and in the United States. Rev. David Mitchell was the first pastor of Central Presbyterian Church Toronto. On account of failing health he has been obliged to retire from active work in the ministry, and in his little book we have the fruits of the first few

months of his retirement. It would have been expected that the sermons would have been prefaced by a sketch of the author but in this we have been disappointed. An excellent portrait of Mr. Mitchell and a good picture of the Scotch Presbyterian Church Jersey City, the scene of his closing labors. The volume contains fourteen of Mr. Mitchell's best sermons, with appropriate selections of poetry, one from his own pen, another by his second daughter. Of the sermons perhaps the most impressive are the "Alone with God," and "The Christian Race." The other sermons all bear marks of Mr. Mitchell's literary ability and form excellent family reading.

"Alone with God, Children Dying in Infancy, and other sermons, a memorial volume by Rev. David Mitchell, Jersey City N. J.: Albert Datz, Toronto: Wm. Campbell, 15 Toronto street. Price, postage free \$1.25.

#### THE BOOK BUYING SEASON.

To the constant frequenter of the book shops the evolution of the last fifteen years has come so slowly as to be almost imperceptible but to one whose duty has called him far from the maddening crowd for half a dozen years, and this week finds himself in the goodly City of Toronto in search of souvenirs and gifts for distant friends and in the course of his wanderings visits the modern book-store. The change is so marked from grave to gay that he scarce recognizes the old familiar place amid the varied color and design of modern book-making.

As an illustration of this modern development, we might perhaps instance the Flowing H. Revell Co., corner Temperance and Yonge streets, who at all times have kept abreast of the trade and this season have excelled their former efforts. We will not dwell upon the large stock of standard and miscellaneous books which crowd their shelves nor to the piles of "From Far Formosa" and "Auld Lang Syne" which greet one on entering the door but pass on to the tables laden with dainty novelties, booklets, cardlets and calendars which appear in almost endless varieties. This might certainly well be called the Calendar year from the variety in both price and design of the goods offered. Of these, first we might mention, the "Calendar of the Sea" which is moveable and very attractive while others worthy of note are "Dickens' character," "He careth for you," "My Times are in Thy Hand," "Month by Month," "From Season to Season," "The Varying Year" and "Gems from Shakespeare," while the little ones are remembered in the "Calendar of Cats," "Calendar of Elves," "Our Little One's Calendar" and "Onward and Upward."

It is almost impossible to enumerate the variety of booklets offered, but attention is called to "The Good Shepherd," "Abide with Me," "Resting" and "Not Changed but Glorified." Among the small books convenient for mailing purposes we notice two particularly adapted for young people, viz., "Young Men's Faults and Ideals" and "Girls Faults and Ideals," both by J. R. Miller, D.D., and "The Blessing of Cheerfulness" in white and gold by the same author.

#### DECEMBER MAGAZINE ARTICLES YOU SHOULD READ.

"Sir John Lubbock and the Religion of Savages," by Rev. Jas. Carmichael, in the *Popular Science Monthly*.

Tissot's "Life of Christ," by Edith Cones in the *Century*.

"Letters to Young Friends," by Robert Louis Stevenson in *St. Nicholas*.

"Laurens—Alma-Tadema, R.A.," by Cosmo Monkhouse in *Scribner's*.

"From the Hebrides Isles," by Fiona MacLeod, in *Harper's*.

"Mr. Herbert Spencer," a character sketch by one who knows him, in *Review of Reviews*.

"Christianity vs. Millstone," by G. Goldwin Smith, in *North American Review*.

The publications of the S.S. Committee are to hand and reflect credit upon the Committee and it is to be hoped that substantial support will be given to them in their labor of love. The *Home Study Quarterly* for the three grades is carefully worked out and cannot fail to be of help to teachers. We have also much pleasure in announcing that the Rev. Prof. Ross, of Presbyterian College, Montreal, has kindly consented to write the notes on Redford's "Evidences" for the *Teachers' Monthly* beginning with January. While minister of Knox Church, Perth, and convener of the S.S. committee of the Presbytery of Lanark and Renfrew, Mr. Ross was a warm supporter of the committee's work, and we congratulate ourselves on being able to secure his closer connection with it in a capacity for which he is so eminently qualified.

The pocket edition of Charles Kingsley's Works—issued monthly 75 cts. per vol.—Pub. 8 vol. buckram, London and New York. MacMillan & Co. Toronto, The Copp Clark Co Ltd.

This series will conclude all Kingsley's Works—including his poems most of which are to be complete in one vol.—"Westward Ho" and "Two Years Ago" being 2 vol. each. These little books are beautifully printed and will make a most attractive and acceptable Holiday Gift.



## FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL

International S. S. Lesson.

LESSON XIII.—REVIEW.—DEC. 29.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thy Kingdom Come."

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Evolving the Kingdom.

ANALYSIS.—The following excellent and most suggestive analysis of the Quarter's work is taken from the *Westminster Teacher*.

The Golden Text suggests the Review thought. In the first lessons of the quarter, Israel is under the theocracy, and so directly under King Jesus; then follow the two Kings, Saul and David, given to the people in response to their earnest request. The lessons can be grouped around the

## THREE KINGS.

I.

1. Jesus' Care for His Own.
2. Jesus Conquering.
3. Jesus' Ancestry.
4. Jesus Calling.

II.

5. Eben-ezer.
6. Saul Chosen King.
7. Saul Rejected.
8. Sin of Strong Drink.

III.

9. David Anointed King.
10. David's Great Victory.
11. David's Friend.
12. David's Greater Son.

PERIOD AND PLACE.—This Quarter's lessons extend over about four hundred years, from B. C. 1443, the beginning of the period of the Judges, to 1055, the close of the reign of Saul. If we include the lessons for the past six months, the period is four hundred and fifty years, beginning with the year at Sinai, 1491 B. C.

Palestine proper, the land west of the Jordan, extends from Mount Hermon on the north to the southern end of the Dead Sea, about 180 miles, which is also the length of the coast line. It is twenty-five miles wide at the north, and sixty from the Dead Sea to the coast through Gaza. It has an area of about 6,600 square miles, a little less than Massachusetts. But the tribes at this time occupied also a large area east of the Jordan, so that the whole domain of the twelve tribes was about 12,000 square miles.

WHAT DOES GOD'S KINGDOM DEMAND FROM ITS SUBJECTS?

- XII. Peace—Luko ii. 8-20.
- XI. Fellowship—1 Sam. xx. 32-42.
- X. Faith—1 Sam. xvii. 38-51.
- IX. Spirituality—1 Sam. xvi. 1-13.
- VIII. Temperance—Isa. v. 11-23.
- VII. Obedience—1 Sam. xv. 10-23.
- VI. Humility—1 Sam. x. 17-27.
- V. Repentance—1 Sam. vii. 5-15.
- IV. Purity—1 Sam. iii. 1-13.
- III. Decision—Ruth i. 14-22.
- II. Courage—Jud. vii. 13-23.
- I. Fidelity—Jud. ii. 1-16.

*Huribut's Notes.*

## CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

The power that comes with one consecrated Young People's Society is well shown by the example of the Presbyterian Endeavorers of Glenolden, Penn. The eleven delegates to Boston returned home fired with zeal for personal work. An evangelistic committee was appointed, and outdoor services have been held regularly on Sunday evenings. The first seven services resulted in more than fifty conversions.

## For a Better Year.

First Day—More prayer—1 Chron. xxviii. 6-10.

Second Day—More Love—Josh. xxii. 1-6.

Third Day—More trust—Pa. cxliii. 5-12.

Fourth Day—More gratitude—1 Chron. xxix. 10-22.

Fifth Day—More cheer—Pa. xxxiii. 1-22.

Sixth Day—More helpfulness—Luko vi. 27-35.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC, Dec. 29.—"HOW NEXT YEAR MAY BE MADE BETTER THAN THIS HAS BEEN, Phil. iii. 7-14.

The topic calls for retrospection and anticipation. By a knowledge of what the past year has been we may plan how to make the next one better. Let these two thoughts run through all the exercises—the prayers, hymns, and testimonies. Speak of the past year's mercies, and the purpose to live more gratefully in the future, the past failures and the resolves to profit by their lessons, the unrealized hopes and the determination to be more earnest in realizing them, the past sins and the resolve by God's grace to live purer and holier lives. Tell of the possibility of making next year better than this, of the Lord's promise to be with us, and of the divine resources pledged for this very purpose. Let prayer be

offered asking forgiveness for the sins of the past year and seeking help for the future that it may be better. Place on the blackboard Phil. iii. 13, 14, and let the members rise and repeat it in concert.

The seventh annual meeting of the Toronto Christian Endeavor Union was held last week in the Westminster Presbyterian Church, the retiring President, Mr. H. G. Hawkins being in the chair. After a song service and devotional exercises, the Secretary, Miss L. Wiggins, presented her report, which showed the last year to have been a very satisfactory one as regards the work of the union, which now includes sixty societies. Of these 25 are Methodist and 21 Presbyterian. The total membership is 4,071. Cooke's Presbyterian Church has 405, but the banner offered for the greatest proportionate annual increase was awarded to the Parkdale Methodist Church Christian Endeavor Society, the membership of which has grown from 114 to 310. The Church of the Covenant, Devonport road, won the banner given for the largest attendance at the annual meeting. The President-elect, Mr. S. J. Duncan Clark, was introduced and spoke briefly. The other officers for the ensuing year are Miss C. Gray, Corresponding Secretary; Miss A. Hall, Recording Secretary; Miss Austin, Treasurer; Mr. E. C. Austin, Editor; Mr. F. D. Mills, Junior Superintendent, and Mr. Asson, Missionary Superintendent. Interesting addresses were delivered by Mrs. A. O. Rutherford, President Dominion W. C. T. U., and Rev. W. W. Weeks of Walmer Road Baptist Church. The choir sang several selections during the evening, and others also contributed to the musical portion of the programme. The attendance at the meeting was very good, all the various societies being well represented.

## Devotional Reading of the Bible.

The Bible is the richest treasury of thought that the world possesses. No one can read its pages with an unprejudiced mind, even though not believing in its inspiration, without being struck with the vastness of its themes and the masterly way in which they are handled. From the time when Moses, ignoring the speculation of the Egyptians as to a future life, set the people to thinking so intensely about the possibilities of their life that for a thousand years they seem hardly to have thought of the future, to the time when John, gathering up nearly all that is impressive in the imagery of the past, and going beyond the impressive pictures, gave to the world a series of word—or mind—pictures that show as nothing else has ever done, how to make the silent speech if pictures tell what words can never express and thus unfolds the vision of a life beyond the grave through one who had actually risen from the dead, the writers of the Bible have shown their power to handle vast themes in ways ordinary men would never think of, and yet in ways the most efficient.

If we wish to read a book for the thought it contains the Bible is the most profitable in all the world to read. As poetry also, or as literature the Bible excels all other books. But the Christian gains the most profit when he reads the Bible for the devotional purposes. We often receive letters which contain some very valuable information. Then again we receive those that are models of style, or those that are treasures of thought, or those that contain some seed thoughts. These and many others of similar kinds are filed away where they will be easy of access for purposes of reference. Again we receive letters that may be entirely valueless in all these respects, but they are laid where we can place our hand upon them in a moment, and when we are alone, and when we are surrounded by our choicest friends, when we are joyous or when we are sad these letters are brought forth to brighten the hour. Why? Because they were written by a friend, and bear the impress of that friend and bring him vividly before our thought.

Now the Bible is God's letter to me, written just as much to me as though there were no other person in the universe to whom He had intended to write. Its thirty thousand promises are mine just as much as though intended for no one else. But best of all the Eternal Spirit is ever beside me while I read, not to unfold the hidden thoughts, for God designs that these should be kept for me until I am "able to bear them," but to unveil His love.

Deeply profitable are the moments I employ in trying to unravel the thoughts that were given by inspiration of God, but far more profitable the hours I spend alone with the divine Spirit and the word He moved holy men of old to write.

Many Christians, in a very important way, will go to heaven alone. Others will there be surrounded by scores whom they have pointed to the Saviour. The first class will have been saved but without having saved others. The second class will bring sheaves with them.

## Church News

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

### Montreal Notes.

On Sabbath, the 8th inst., Taylor church celebrated the 10th anniversary of the induction of the pastor, the Rev. Thomas Bennett, and the first of the opening of their new church building. The Rev. Principal MacVicar preached at the evening service to a large congregation. On entering their new building a year ago the congregation, which up to that date had received a grant from the Augmentation Fund, undertook to become self-supporting, and the first year has been a most successful, although a trying and anxious one for the pastor and board of management. Additions to the membership roll are steadily being made, the young people are working heartily and everything points to a useful future. The ten year's pastorate of Mr. Bennett have been marked by progress both temporal and spiritual from the beginning. He has great cause for rejoicing, and supported by a hard working session may take courage and go on till the church is clear of debt.

The ladies of Calvin church held a successful sale of work on Thursday, the 12th inst., during the afternoon and evening. During the progress of the sale orchestral music was discoursed by the Batto brothers to the great delight of the company present.

At the annual meeting of the Point St. Charles Bible Society held a few days ago, a most interesting and effective address were delivered by Sir William Dawson. The late principal of McGill University has always taken a deep interest in the work of this society, and for many years past has been president of the Montreal Auxiliary. He is regularly present at the meetings of its Executive Committee and has done much to keep it in a thoroughly active condition.

THE REV. DR. BARCLAY delivered a lecture last week in Valleyfield on Savanarola which was much appreciated by a most attentive audience. This was one of a series of lectures arranged for the winter by the authorities of the Presbyterian church.

At the monthly meeting of the Brakino Church Auxiliary of the Woman's Missionary Society held on Monday, the 9th inst., a most interesting address was given by Miss Lyman, who was for a number of years a missionary in India under the American Board, but was compelled to return owing to the climate which proved too severe for her health. She appeared in a native costume and, assuming the character of a Hindoo lady, gave a most graphic account of the ordinary life, experiences and social customs of a native woman as if they had been her own. It was done with perfect naturalness and brought the facts home to the minds of her audience in the most vivid way. Miss Lyman, who belongs to one of the best known families in Montreal, after her return from India made herself responsible for the cost of a native chapel, and has already largely succeeded in raising the amount.

A MEETING was held on the afternoon of the 9th inst. at the residence of Mrs. Grier, 58 Redpath street, for the purpose of interesting the ladies belonging to the different churches of the city in the Loper Mission of India, a non-denominational effort for ameliorating the condition of that unhappy class for which an appeal was recently made by the Rev. David Herron. It is hoped that something substantial may be done for a deserving cause which has a pathetic claim on the sympathy of the whole world.

### British Columbia Notes.

THE new church at Central Park, Burnaby, is to be opened on December 22nd. The Rev. A. B. Winchester is expected to officiate. The ministers of Vancouver take turns in supplying this new field.

THE Rev. James Douglas, of Moosomin, has arrived and occupies the pulpit of Mount Pleasant church, during the vacancy. Arrangements for a pastor are in progress.

THE ladies of St. Andrew's, Westminster, gave a concert on December 3rd. Result, good concert, large audience and considerable money to aid in reducing debts on the manse.

AN interesting concert was given in Zion church, Vancouver, December 5th.

THE Rev. G. R. Maxwell delivered the first part of his famous lecture, "The Seven Stages of Matrimony," in Richmond church, December 2nd. Mr. Maxwell is racy, witty and wise. As a lecturer he holds not only front rank, but the only place on the coast.

ON Sabbath, December 1st, First church, Vancouver, was crowded to hear Mr. Maxwell on "The Survival of the Fittest." As a thinker and preacher everybody declares the minister of First Vancouver to be fitted to occupy the best church in the Dominion.

THE Rev. D. A. MacRae, of Nanaimo, preached a sermon on Nov. 14th, on the "Law of Physical and Moral Evolution." His text was "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

THE F.M.C. erected a Chinese church in Union Mines. The teacher, Mr. Hall, was supported by Mr. Randall, a working engineer in the colliery, who gave \$30.00 a month for Mr. Hall's support. Mr. Randall has gone to China, and Mr. Hall is left without any support, except what is given from the pocket of Mr. Winchester. Unless Mr. R. P. McKay can waken an interest in the committee this most valuable work must collapse. There are thirteen hundred Chinese at Union, and unless our church can do something at once, the work should be handed over to another church. Twenty-five dollars a month will retain Mr. Hall's services. If the F.M.C. is unable to give a sum like this then some of the Lord's stewards in the church might feel honored in sending winter supplies for this much needed work.

A new Congregational church has been formed in Victoria. We wonder if this is the result of the erection of a new Central Presbyterian church in that city. Union is in the air.

THE new Japanese church and hospital in Richmond has been a great success. For ministering to mind and body, soul, spirit and flesh the Japs raised themselves \$673.80. Self-help is good help, and these Japanese Christians shame Canadians in the grace of giving.

THERE are six Japanese Christians members of our church at Union, who were baptised by Mr. McIntyre. Others are waiting for baptism till a new minister is settled. The missionary among the two hundred Japs there is compelled to earn his living as a cook, to enable him to preach the Gospel to his brother Japs. An application has been made to our church to take this work under our wing.

THE Chinese mission in Vancouver is now located at the corner of Carroll and Dupont. As a result the school and preaching services has largely increased in numbers, and Mr. Colman is asking for more teachers from the churches.

### General.

PARTIES wishing a hearing at Alvinston and Euphemia will communicate with Rev. John H. Graham, Watford.

THE Rev. J. P. Mullen gave an interesting lecture entitled "Rambles in Great Britain," in Knox church, Harrison, on last Tuesday, to a large audience.

CANDIDATES wishing a hearing in the congregations of Kinlough and Rivordale, apply to the moderator of session, Rev. J. Macdonald, Glamis P.O., Ont.

AT Port Dalhousie Presbyterian church a most successful series of evangelistic services are being held by Mr. Thos. A. Rogers. The church is well filled every night.

A COURSE of lectures will be given, this winter, in the Presbyterian church, Valleyfield. The Rev. Dr. Barclay, of St. Paul's, Montreal, continued the series last week by delivering his admirable address on "Savanarola" to a very attentive audience.

PRESBYTERY of Orangeville will meet at Orangeville, Jan. 7th, at 10.30 a.m. Woman's Foreign Mission Society meets same day and place. A Presbyterian Society of Christian Endeavor will be organized next day.

AT a meeting of the Presbytery of Orangeville, held on 5th inst., Mr. McKenzie's resignation of the pastoral charge of Orangeville congregation was considered. On account of the strong pressure of the congregation

and Presbytery he agreed to reconsider his decision and report at next regular meeting.

WE regret to learn that the Rev. Hugh McKellar, his son and daughter, and Miss McDiarmid, his sister-in-law, are all down with typhoid fever. We unite with Mr. McKellar's many friends in sympathy, and hope that they may soon be completely restored to health.

THE choir of Bonar church, Toronto, gave their first annual concert in the church on Tuesday evening, 10th Dec., the pastor, Rev. Alex. Macgillivray, presiding. The soloists assisting were Messrs. M. Chester, F. Macpherson, F. J. Williams and Mr. Jas. Richardson, of the Toronto College of Music, and Miss A. Redway, with Miss Alexandrina Ramsey, of New York, elocutionist, all of whom acquitted themselves well, Miss Ramsey being particularly happy in her selections and rendering. The church was crowded to the doors, and the concert was a great success. Since its re-organization in March last, under the leadership of Mr. Arthur H. Greene, organist, this choir, now composed of over thirty voices, has made marked improvement in its choral singing, and Bonar church may be congratulated upon now having one of the best choirs in the East End.

ON the evening of Thanksgiving Day the W.F.M.S. auxiliary of St. Andrew's church, Sonya, held their usual annual thank-offering meeting in the school-room of the church. There was a large gathering of the ladies of the congregation. A good programme of readings, recitations and music was rendered, and refreshments served towards the close of the meeting. When the envelopes containing the offerings were opened, and the verses expressive of gratitude read, which formed a very interesting part of the proceedings, the sum of \$34 was found to have been realized. Altogether a very pleasant and profitable evening was spent. The Ladies' Aid Society of the same church deserve great praise for providing and setting in place two outside lamps at the entrances to the church, and also a beautiful hanging lamp for the pulpit, as well as numerous acts of such a helpful character during the past four and a-half years.

WHEN it became known in Elkhorn that Brandon Presbytery had agreed to accept the resignation of the Rev. Mr. Fortune, the Presbyterians decided to show their affection for their pastor, and appreciation of his labors among them in a very tangible manner. A large number of people gathered in the town hall, where a very enjoyable time was spent. During the evening Mr. G. T. Rogers addressed the meeting. In the course of his remarks he expressed the regret which the congregation felt at Mr. Fortune's leaving. He referred to the complete harmony which had existed between pastor and people, and also to the progress made by the congregation in every branch of work. The membership had grown from forty-two to one hundred. A new church had been erected at Woodville, which had been paid for all but \$50. Moneys had been raised for the Schemes of the Church which had not been done formerly. A Y.P.S.C.E. had been organized at two of the stations. There was much reason, he said, to thank God for the success which attended the labors of their pastor. Mrs. R. M. Coombs on behalf of the congregation presented Mr. Fortune with a beautiful silver tea service. Mr. Fortune replied in fitting terms. After discussing the good things provided, a pleasant evening was brought to a close by singing the doxology.

ON Friday evening, Nov. 29th, the good people of the South Mountain congregation, presided over by the Rev. J. F. Macfarland, B.A., made his home-coming from the west with his bride the occasion of a grand reception. The happy couple were met at the station by a committee of the young people, and escorted to the manse where a large gathering from all parts of the congregation was waiting to receive them. The supper served at 6.30 p.m. to 135 guests was a most delicious one, and called forth very warm praise for the ladies who had provided the sumptuous repast. After the wants of the inner man had been satisfied the bride was introduced to the company, and a very pleasant time was spent socially. Towards the close of the evening the united congregations presented their pastor with an address of welcome and congratulation, which was read by the Rev. D. G. S. Connery, M.A., of Winchester, while their appreciation and esteem

were manifested in the more tangible manner of a handsome gold watch and chain, the cost of which was contributed to by every family of the congregation. On behalf of the Y. P. M. T. Society of South Mountain, Miss F. Cochrane read an address of welcome to Rev. J. F. and Mrs. Macfarland, while Miss J. Graham, in the name of the same society, presented the bride with a beautiful hall lamp. Happy and felicitous addresses were given by Revs. J. S. Lidsline, Brewster's Corners; C. E. Sills, South Mountain; H. J. McDermid, Kemptville; J. M. Kulloch, Morwood, and D. G. S. Connery, Winchester. Altogether a most enjoyable time was spent, and the company dispersed after singing the doxology.

A very pretty wedding took place at Virden on the evening of Tuesday, the 12th ult., the participants being the Rev. D. G. W. Fortune and Miss Lizzie Huston, both late of Elkhorn. The ceremony took place at the residence of the bride's sister, Mrs. J. H. Schmidt, and was performed by the Rev. Dr. Robertson, assisted by Rev. W. Beattie, of Virden. There was a large gathering of friends of both. Among the presents was a silver tea service presented to Mr. Fortune by his late congregation in Elkhorn. Mr. Fortune first came to Elkhorn as missionary in the fall of '87 and labored till the summer of '88. When he came here services were held in the old schoolhouse a small and inconvenient place. Mr. Fortune realized this and though here only ten months he by his exertions, assisted financially and otherwise by the residents of the town, had the satisfaction of seeing Elkhorn's first Presbyterian church built. It was the recollection of Mr. Fortune's energies at that time that prompted the congregation in June, 1892, and at the expiration of Mr. Fortune's college course to forward to him a unanimous call to come to them as their pastor. Mr. Fortune accepted and during the time he has been among us has shown no lack of his old time powers of work for his Master in the pulpit and out of it. When Mr. Fortune came services were held in Woodville and Mossiel schoolhouses every alternate Sabbath. Woodville schoolhouse soon became too small for the purpose of worship and the residents of that locality determined to build a church, with such help as only Mr. Fortune could give. This was soon accomplished and Woodville has now its own church and one of the best congregations for a country district in the west. His people here were grieved to lose him but our loss is another's gain and we wish him good luck and God speed in his future ministry and life. In his wife he has a true Christian helpmate, one who for several years was a faithful worker in this part of the Master's vineyard.

#### Presbytery of Toronto.

The Presbytery departed from its usual custom and held its December meeting in Chalmers' church, Toronto. In the absence of the moderator, through the illness of a relative, Rev. W. A. Hunter was appointed moderator, *pro tempore*. The committee appointed to meet with College Street representatives reported the affairs of the congregation as most ably managed, but so heavy a liability rests upon the congregation that its interests should be especially considered for some years to come. The committee appointed to visit Toronto Junction congregation reported that a satisfactory arrangement of its financial affairs had been secured, and brighter prospects were in sight. Mimico congregation received permission to moderate in a call. A committee was appointed to secure suitable connection for Swansea mission with some neighboring congregation. The Church of the Covenant asked permission to secure a new site, and the clerk was instructed to notify neighboring sessions. W. Stables Smith was received by certificate from the Presbytery of Halifax and his name forwarded to the Committee on Probationers. Dr. Chipway being present was heard in the interests of French Evangelization. In the evening a conference was held upon the subjects of Sabbath Observance and Systematic Benevolence. Mr. J. A. Paterson and Mr. J. K. Macdonald opened the conference upon Sabbath Observance, the former presenting priority of the unwritten over the written law upon the subject, the necessity for legal in addition to moral sanction, and the claim our Sabbath laws have upon us because of the price at which they have been purchased. Mr.

Macdonald pointed out the necessity there is for creating a healthy public opinion upon this subject, and pointed out the necessity of the Sabbath for man's physical, his moral and his spiritual nature. Principal Caven opened the conference upon the subject of Systematic Benevolence starting from the principle that all we have is the Lord's, he pointed out that God requires us to give back part, and then traced the principle upon which this portion is to be given as it appears, first, in Old Testament, and second in the New Testament Scriptures. He was followed by Mr. R. S. Gourlay, who spoke from the standpoint of one who had practised systematic giving and had found it moral strength, of moral growth, and of moral self-respect. He strongly urged that all be trained to give, and that it should not be left to the head of the house alone. After resolutions heartily endorsing the speakers had been passed, and the thanks of the Presbytery tendered to the ladies of Chalmers' church who had provided supper for the Presbytery, the Presbytery adjourned till the second Tuesday in January, 1896. A special meeting was held on Tuesday, the 17th inst.—R. O. Tinn, Clerk.

#### Presbytery of Westminster.

REGULAR meeting held in St. Andrew's, Westminster, Dec. 3rd, at 2.30 p.m., seditur Rev. J. Buchanan, moderator, and Messrs. Maxwell, McLaren, Dunn, McElman, Magee, Cameron and Scouler, ministers, and several elders and students. The clerk reported refusal of call to Mount Pleasant by Mr. Carmichael. Rev. E. D. McLaren was instructed to moderate in a call when the people were ready. A grant for \$100 was recommended to Church and Music Fund for Central Park, a loan for \$400 also for Upper Chiliwack, and Presbytery agreed to ask balance of grant for Mount Lehnau. Assembly's remit re representation to General Assembly was approved. Nomination to professorship in Knox College was delayed. Rev. J. A. Mathieson, of Calgary, was present and was a corresponding member. Presbytery agreed to meet in St. Andrew's, Vancouver, on first Tuesday of December at 2 o'clock.

#### Presbytery of Stratford.

THIS Presbytery held its regular meeting within Knox church, Stratford, on Tuesday, Nov. 12th. The moderator, Mr. W. W. Crow, constituted the court with devotional exercises and prayer. There was a fair attendance of members. The first item of business was a request from Mr. Jno Campbell for extension of leave of absence from his charge of Granton and Lucan. Under medical advice, he desired to go, for a stay of some months' duration, to Southern California. Mr. Campbell's request was granted; and Mr. Alex. Grant, of Knox church, St. Marys, was appointed moderator of session of Granton and Lucan, during his absence. Mr. Drumm, as convener of the Committee on Young People's Societies, submitted the following questions:—1. Shall we form a Presbyterian Y. P. S.? 2. Shall we authorize a Presbyterian Convention of Y. P. Societies? To both questions an answer of assent was given. At a subsequent stage of proceedings, a draft constitution for the "Presbyterian Young People's Union" was submitted by the Committee on Y. P. S., and on motion, duly made, was adopted by the Presbytery. Mr. Leitch introduced the subject of a call from Knox church, Mitchell, to Mr. W. H. Bradley, minister of Alvinston in the Presbytery of Sarnia. The call was accompanied by a guaranteed offer of \$1000 per annum, with free manse, and an annual vacation of four Sabbaths. Mr. Leitch's conduct in the premises was approved. The call was sustained and ordered to be forwarded in due course to Mr. Bradley. The Presbytery of Sarnia was requested to hold a *pro re nata* meeting and issue the call at the earliest convenient time. Dr. Hamilton was named to prosecute the call before Sarnia Presbytery. Mr. Pyke introduced the matter of a call from the united congregations of N. Easthope and Hampstead, to Mr. Jno. L. Robertson, minister, lately from Scotland. The guaranteed stipend was \$750 per annum, with manse and glebe. Mr. Pyke's conduct was approved. The call was sustained and placed in the hands of Mr. Robertson, who was present. At his request, time for consideration was granted him. The matter of making nominations for the vacant chairs in

Knox College, was deferred for consideration till the next regular meeting; as also the remit from Assembly agent the reduction of representation from Presbyteries in the Supreme Court. The next regular meeting was appointed to take place in Knox church, Stratford, Tuesday, January 14th, 1896.—W. M. McKIBBIN, Clerk.

NOTE.—Since the meeting Mr. Robertson has declined the call.

#### Presbytery of London.

THIS Presbytery met in Knox church, St. Thomas, on Nov. 12th, Rev. D. L. Dewar, moderator. The minutes of last regular and special meetings were read and sustained. The docket was also read and accepted. Rev. J. Campbell, a minister without charge, being present, was asked to sit and correspond. Mr. Geo. Sutherland, as convener of the commission appointed to visit Aylmer congregation, gave in the following report:—The Commission find that the Aylmer congregation is much reduced, both numerically and financially, owing to the removal of several families from the bounds, that the deficiency in the running expenses of the congregation, have consequently accumulated to nearly five hundred dollars (\$500). The Commission find that the congregation is contributing more than the average over the Church, for the support of ordinance; but yet express a desire to aid in the removal of this debt. The Commission therefore recommend that the Presbytery aid them in endeavouring to accomplish this object. On motion of Mr. W. J. Clark, seconded by Mr. J. A. Macdonald, it was agreed to receive the report, adopt the recommendation, and authorize Mr. Johnson, treasurer of the Presbytery, to apportion the sum of \$400 among the congregations of the Presbytery, on the basis of the Presbytery Fund assessment. The Commission also reported, that they had given authority to the surviving trustees of the Port Burwell church property, to dispose of the church building. The report was received and adopted. Mr. D. L. Dewar reported that he had interviewed the trustees of the church property of E. Williams. The trustees desire to leave the matter, in the meantime, undisturbed; promising that the property will be safely guarded in the interests of the Church. The report was received, and the Committee continued and instructed to act in the matter with discretion. The clerk read circulars from the Home and Foreign Mission Committees, allocating to the Presbytery its proportionate share for these respective schemes. After some discussion the following motion was agreed to:—That congregations be instructed to allocate the moneys contributed to the Schemes of the Church, according to the requirements of each scheme. The clerk read a circular from the Knox College Alumni, in connection with the appointment of Professors for the College. On motion of Mr. J. A. Macdonald, duly seconded, the nomination of Professors for Knox college was laid over till the January meeting of Presbytery. Messrs. Clark and Johnston, of London, reported the action taken by the ministers and congregations of London, for extending Presbyterianism in the city. The report was received, and the thanks of the Presbytery tendered to the brethren and congregations who are taking part in this matter. The following were appointed a Committee on "Church Work and Life," Rev. E. H. Sawers, convener; Messrs. A. Miller, N. Lindsay, J. G. Stuart, ministers; D. R. McKenzie and C. B. Souer-villo, elders. Leave to moderate in a call at Dorchester and Crumlin was given Mr. Currie, moderator. Rev. John Campbell was received as a minister without charge, or letter of transference from Montreal Presbytery. The clerk was authorized to give liberty to the congregation of Wardville, to sell the site of their former manse on receiving a requisition from the congregation. Provisional arrangements for the induction of Mr. Grant into Thamesford, in the event of his accepting the call, were made as follows:—The moderator of Presbytery to preside, Mr. Leitch to preach, Mr. Munro to address the minister, and Mr. Johnston the congregation. The Presbytery adjourned to meet in First Presbyterian church, on second Tuesday of January, at 10.30 forenoon, for conference, and 3.30 p.m. for business. Presbytery conference at Glencoe, on second Tuesday of December, at 10.30 a.m. The Presbytery closed with the benediction.—GEORGE SUTHERLAND, Clerk.

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The establishment of regular Bible Training Schools free of all charge for tuition and under competent instructors is one of the most hopeful signs of the times and many young people who could not otherwise obtain training are being prepared and sent forth as qualified workers to the field. At the day classes the attendance has been nearly forty, while at the evening classes it has been over a hundred regularly enrolled students.

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A branch of the Student Volunteer Movement has been formed in the school and is doing good work.

It is pleasing to know that a number of the students have already decided upon their field of labor in the foreign field. The new term begins on Monday, 6th January, and promises to be the best the school has yet had.

In addition to the regular progressive daily work of the school the following lectures will form part of the course. "History of Christian Missions" and "The Epistle to the Hebrews," Rev. Elmore Harris; "The Acts of the Apostles," Rev. T. B. Hyde; "Dispensational Truth," Rev. Dr. Parsons; "After the Exile," Rev. Dr. McTavish and the Rev. Dr. Stiffler, of Crover Theological Seminary is expected to lecture both to the day and evening classes in the early part of February.

Friends wishing information should apply to Mr. Wm. Ferguson, secretary, 681 Spadina Avenue, Toronto.

**The Money-Lender.**

In all ages in civilized countries and more especially among the ancients the money-lenders, being a usurer, was looked upon as one of the lowest and most despised of all classes. Burlesqued in story, cartooned in statuary and portrayed in his most unenviable light upon the stage, it was hardly to be wondered at that in the middle ages popular sentiment and hatred to the verge of persecution was apparent on every hand. Like many ancient abuses modern civilization and thought has evolved out of the ancient evil the modern good, and many a bread-winner and his family have had reason to thank God for the timely assistance of the modern money-lender particularly in the direction specially taken up by some societies to assist them in becoming owners of their own home.

To the corner of small wages the purchase of a house is perhaps his ambition, yet in the ordinary way it becomes almost impossible. His earnings for years perhaps made as a first payment upon the property leaves an accumulation in shape of mortgage maturing some years hence which is in many cases a mill-stone around his neck. To meet this want philanthropic and thoughtful financiers many years ago introduced the plan of monthly or weekly payments covering in a period of years not only interest but principal.

Illustrating one of these more approved plans of investment might be taken the York County Loan and Savings Company, with its headquarters, Confederation Life Buildings, Toronto, and under the able management of Mr. Joseph Phillips, who is President. This Company has from the first aimed to encourage a system of weekly and monthly saving, and also the purchase of homesteads. For instance, take the working man who wishes to purchase a little cottage, of say \$500, he can, by the small payment of \$3.45 per month (a little more than the rent of the cottage would come to), in eleven years, nine months and three weeks have his home free of encumbrance. Of course should his circumstances permit a larger payment, the time required to secure it would be proportionately reduced.

Their plan of monthly shares, too, is well worthy of consideration by parents who wish to teach their children the value of small savings. Take, for instance, the boy of sixteen who could, from his earnings, save \$1.25 a week, which would in the year amount to \$65; in ten years, or at an age when he would be likely to settle in life, he would have to his credit \$1,000. Would it not be well for more of our people to acquaint themselves

with the character and advantages of this and like organizations, for it is easier to acquire the habit of saving before one is twenty than afterwards.

**Valuable Pointers on Life Insurance.**

"Benjamin Franklin was not only a philosopher, but he was, in a sense, a financier, although he never joined the millionaire coterie. Benjamin always talked horse sense, though. He said: "It is a strange anomaly that men should be careful to insure their houses, furniture, ships and merchandise, and yet neglect to insure their lives, surely the most important of all to their families, and far more subject to loss."

"Whimsical women often oppose the insurance of their husband's lives just for a freak, or from pique, or to be odd. When the husband dies uninsured they do feel rather odd, surely. It would have been better for them to feel even. Now, wouldn't it?"

"Create a competence for your old age, if you can afford an endowment. But do not neglect a straight life for your family under any circumstances. It will be sinful for you to do so."

"You should gauge your life insurance in accordance with your yearly earnings. Life insurance proffers protection to the maximum income, the minimum income, and the moderate one as well. Let not the wealthy man despise the insurance day of small things, nor the poor one think the prize of life insurance beyond his reach."

"Praise is due, of course, to the man who keeps his life insured, even for a nominal sum. 'Half a loaf is better than none.' But the man who deserves the fullest praise is he who keeps his life insured completely and fully."

"It is a mighty good idea to get your life insured, but we can tell you a better one: Keep it insured. Don't miss paying a premium, 'on your life.'"

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27	14 70	48	27 55
28	14 95	49	28 55
29	15 20	50	29 60
30	15 50	51	30 75
31	15 80	52	32 10
32	16 15	53	33 70
33	16 55	54	35 50
34	16 95	55	37 80
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DECEMBER—31 Days.

Day	Event
1	UNFULFILLED PROPHECIES
1	Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness (Isa. 9:1).
2	All nations shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord (Isa. 60:1).
3	Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth (Isa. 65:17).
4	Our God shall come, and shall abide with us (Isa. 63:1).
5	I will come again, and receive you unto Myself (John 14:3).
6	All things shall melt (Isa. 34:4).
7	They shall look on them that they have pierced (Ezek. 36:37).
8	I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea (Isa. 34:4).
9	He that sowed the seed shall reap (Isa. 55:10).
10	The Lord will send the ark of the covenant (Isa. 54:17).
11	He that sowed the seed shall reap (Isa. 55:10).
12	The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose (Isa. 61:1).
13	The One that shall see Thy right iniquities (Isa. 40:2).
14	I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and say in my people (Isa. 65:19).
15	All the ends of the earth shall fear Thee (Ps. 72:8).
16	Be glad and rejoice for the Lord will do great things (Isa. 40:5).
17	Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents (Isa. 40:5).
18	I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth (Isa. 40:5).
19	I will raise them from the power of the grave (Isa. 40:6).
20	They shall see the glory of the Lord and shall be glorified (Isa. 40:5).
21	Ye shall receive a crown of glory that shall not fade (Isa. 62:3).
22	Ye shall be called by My name (Isa. 62:10).
23	Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents (Isa. 40:5).
24	The Lord shall be King over all the earth (Ezek. 1:28).
25	The Lord hath purposed in His mind the price of His glory (Isa. 48:13).
26	Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents (Isa. 40:5).
27	It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom (Matt. 13:12).
28	The Kingdom of the Lord shall be revealed in power (Isa. 40:5).
29	Ye shall receive a crown of glory that shall not fade (Isa. 62:3).
30	Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents (Isa. 40:5).
31	All the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord (Isa. 60:1).

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Angelic strains are borne upon the wind  
Of "peace on earth, good-will to all man-  
kind";

See! yonder star of promise that doth bring  
Our eager footsteps to earth's now-born King,  
There pay we homage to the Holy Child  
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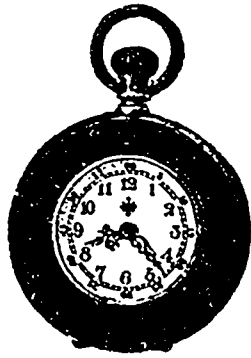
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