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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. VIII.]

TORONTO, DECEMBER 22, 1888.

[No. 26.]

The Star.

BY SUSAN COOLIDGE.

They followed the star the
whole night through ;
As it moved with the mid-
night they moved too ;
And cared not whither it led,
nor knew,
Till Christmas Day in the
morning.

And just at the dawn in the
twilight shade
They came to the stable, and,
unafraid,
Saw the blessed Babe in the
manger laid
On Christmas Day in the
morning.

We have followed the star a
whole long year,
And watched its beacon, now
faint, now clear,
And it now stands still as we
draw near
To Christmas Day in the
morning.

And just as the wise men did
of old,
In the hush of the winter
dawning cold,
We come to the stable, and
behold
The child on the Christ-
mas morning.

And just as the wise men
deemed it meet
To offer him gold and per-
fumes sweet
We would lay our gifts at
his holy feet,
Our gifts on the Christmas
morning.

O Babe, once laid in the ox's
bed,
With never a pillow for thy
head,
Now throned in the highest
heavens instead,
O Lord of the Christmas
morning !

Because we have known and
have loved thy star,
And have followed it long
and followed it far,
From the land where the sha-
dows and darkness are,
To find thee on Christmas
morning.

Accept the gifts that we dare to bring,
Though worthless and poor the offering,
And help our souls to rise and sing
In the joy of thy Christmas morning.

Those who make our great and useful men are
trained in their boyhood to be industrious.



THE STAR.

WHAT THE DAY SIGNIFIES.

To thousands the holy Christmas Day has but a
low significance. To many it is but a single cessa-
tion from their usual business. To many it means
the giving or receiving of gifts. To others it means
visiting or receiving visits, and enjoying great

dinners. To many others still the day means a time
of carousal, of drinking and drunkenness, of noise
and tumult, often of bloody fights, and even of
murder. Alas! how the blessed day has been
degraded from its high and wonderful meaning!

It is the day which the angels once celebrated,
when in joyful troops they came down the star lit
pavements of heaven, when the night became
as bright as the day by the fluttering of innumera-
ble wings of light, and when such songs as men
had never heard before thrilled the air with
music whose echoes have sounded down all through
the ages since. It is the day on which the holy
Son of God took upon himself the form of a
humble babe, when he condescended to our
human estate, and became one of us, that he
might link our humanity to God. This is the event
and that the day which our Christmas anniver-
sary celebrates. Let the day, then, be kept with
gladness and sincerest joy, in memory of God's
wonderful love in giving to the world "The Un-
speakable Gift." — *S. S. Messenger.*

"STICKING TO IT."

A good story is told of a young man who con-
sulted an old gentleman who had been very suc-
cessful in business, as to the best business in which
to engage. In answer to the question, "What had

I best do?" the old man replied, "Stick." The
young fellow explained that he had wished to know
what he had best do to make money. Again he was
told, "Stick." "Stick at what?" was asked. "Oh,
that is a matter of little consequence. Take almost
any line of business you like, but stick to it.

The Temperance Star.

BY MRS. J. S. T.

The streets were rife with joyous life,
For the Christmas time was near;
But into our room came a home
That crept no sign of cheer.

As I sat alone in the darkness,
And looked through the coming year,
My heart was full of sorrow,
And my eyes were full of tears.

Then I thought of the shepherds that kept their flocks
On the plains of Galilee,
How their hearts sent up that longing cry
For the Christ that was to be.

And I thought how the glory of God came down,
Till the night shone like the day;
Of the wise men's journey by night, and the star
That guided them all the way.

And my heart sent up its longing cry
To the God who answered them;
"Lord, into the dark night of my life
Send a Star of Bethlehem!"

I heard a step far down the walk—
A firm and ringing tread;
It reminded me of John's glad step,
The day that we were wed.

The moon slipped in and spread her robe
Upon the poor bare floor,
Till I thought of the streets in the City of Light,
And—John stood at the door!

There was a new light in his eyes,
So tender and so proud;
And a ribbon shone on his ragged coat,
Like a star against a cloud!

A little, silken, bright-blue star,
That lighted all the gloom,
And changed to a palace, grand and fair,
The dingy little room.

We did not speak a single word,
But we knelt by the children's bed:—
"God help me to keep it always bright!"
Was all the prayer he said.

The moon crept through the narrow pane,
And fell like a blessing down;
It touched wee Mary's flaxen hair,
Till it shone like a silver crown.

It kissed the baby where he lay,
In his lowly cradle bed.
"Think God for the Star that rose to-night!"
Was all that my full heart said!

DICK'S CHRISTMAS.

BY ADELINE SERGEANT.

"Do you think father will go out to-night, Annie?"

"I s'pose he will, Dick."

"And to-morrow night?"

"Yes, Dick."

"But to-morrow's Christmas Eve."

"I know it is," said Annie, with a patient sigh.

"And next day Christmas. Oh!" said Dick, stretching out his little thin arm on his wretched bed. "I think that father might stay at home on Christmas. Don't you think so, Annie?"

"'Taint right for us to say what father ought to do," said Annie, softly.

"But it is right to say what we'd like him to do, ain't it?" asked little Dick, wisely. "And maybe I'll tell him so myself, some day."

"O, no, Dick, you mustn't do that!" said Annie, in a tone of some alarm; "he'd knock you about, and make you cry."

"Ah, but when I'm a big, big man," said Dick, "then I know what I would say to him—"

A fit of coughing interrupted the little fellow's speech. Annie brought him some water, and laid the thin coverlet tenderly over him. Then she stood beside the bed until the paroxysm was past.

"Keep quiet, Dick, dear," she said anxiously; "you know the doctor said you was to be very still."

"But I am *weerry* still," said Dick, looking up at her with his bright eyes, which were as eager and as cheery as those of any bird upon a bough. He was six years old, but so wasted and worn by illness that he was small and light—like a child of half his age. He had had whooping-cough in the autumn, and seemed never to have recovered from the complaint.

For the last few days he had scarcely left his bed, and Annie, the eleven-year-old sister, who had acted almost a mother's part toward him, had been growing very uneasy at the sight of his declining strength. Their mother was dead, and their father had long been addicted to intemperate habits. When sober, he could earn good wages; but his money had, more and more of late, been spent at the public house, so that the home, which might have been a happy one, was wretched and uncomfortable; and the children, whom he ought to have cared for, were in want of the commonest necessary of life.

John Morris lived with these two children in a couple of small rooms on an upper story of a large house in London. The surroundings of this home were not beautiful; but he might have made its interior much more bright and satisfactory to the eye. As it was, a good deal of the furniture had been pawned. There was seldom food enough in the cupboard, or coal enough for the fire; and now that Christmas Day was drawing on, it went to Annie Morris's heart to think that little Dick would have so little to mark that day as a joyous one—so little to make it different from other days. For herself she did not so much care; but she wanted everything that was good and beautiful for Dick.

She bent her thoughtful face over a sock she was trying to mend, and Dick lay on his bed and watched her. Presently he said again:

"I know what I would say to him."

"What would you say?" asked Annie.

"I would say, Father, you have two little children—or two children, for you are not very little, are you, Annie?—and God meant you to take care of them. You ought to stay at home and make them happy, instead of going to the public-house."

"You wouldn't say that really, though, would you, Dick?" said Annie, with some anxiety, for it would do no good—and I s'pose it wouldn't be quite right."

"I won't say it, then," said Dick, in a docile tone. After a pause, however, he added: "I do wish, though, that he would stay at home with us on Christmas Day."

Annie did not wish it, perhaps, so much as Dick. She was more afraid of her father than Dick was; she had experienced the effects of his madness, when "the drink was in him," more painfully than little Dick had ever done. John Morris was often very affectionate with Dick, when he had not been drinking, and Dick was fond of him.

The kettle was boiling, and the tea was made, when Morris came in from his work. He was in a sullen mood, and scarcely spoke in answer to Dick's greeting. For Dick's bed was made up in the room that served as sitting-room and kitchen all in one. He could be kept warmer in that way, and Annie could attend more easily to his wants. So, while his father ate his evening meal in silence, Dick lay and watched him out of his bright blue eyes.

When the meal was finished, Annie went into the next room, and Morris sat moodily by the fire. He was aroused from his meditations by the sound of a childish voice.

"Father," said Dick, "are you a-goin' out to-night?"

"What's that to you?" growled Morris.

"Oh, nothing," replied Dick, cheerfully; "only I wanted to know."

"Well, then, yes, I am; if it's any pleasure to you."

"And to-morrow night, father, which is Christmas Eve?"

"How can I tell! Yes, most likely. There ain't much comfort to be got in a hole like this."

"And Christmas Day too, father?"

"What do you want to know for?" asked his father.

"Oh, I thought I'd just ask," said Dick, meekly. "I didn't know. I was wonderin' what sort o' Christmas ~~we~~ was to have, that was all."

"I s'pose," said Morris, in a savage tone, "that you expect me to go and spend my money in buying plum-puddings and oranges, and things o' that sort. Well, I ain't a-going to do it. I've got no money to waste. So you'll have to do without."

"Yes, father," said Dick. Then, with the baby simplicity which sometimes took his father by surprise, he added, meditatively, "No money to waste! Poor father! You'll have to do without your beer, then?"

Morris turned in his chair, glared at his little son for a minute or two, and then, with a muttered ejaculation of rage, walked straight out of the room. If Dick had looked less small, less white, less frail, than he did at that moment, his father would have struck him in his anger. But the child looked quite unconscious of having said anything amiss, and was so tiny, and delicate withal, that Morris restrained himself. But Dick's words contained in reality, a terrible satire upon Morris's mode of life, and, as such, the man resented it.

He could deny his children the Christmas fare—the roast beef and plum-pudding, which English boys and girls anticipate as a sort of national feast to which they have an undoubted right—but he could not deny himself the drink that had been his ruin! For once he saw the matter in its right light. Little Dick had revealed the truth to him in its native hideousness.

Morris felt ashamed of himself. He went along the street with his hands in his pockets, his hat pressed down over his forehead, his eyes bent upon the ground. He was half resolved to give up the public-house once and for all, to sign the pledge, and spend his money in comforts for his children; but he was only *half* resolved. While in this state of indecision, he was accosted by a comrade and old acquaintance.

"Why, Jack," said his friend, "I haven't seen you for an age, old man! Come in, and have a drink."

Morris looked up. They had met near the door of a low public-house, which he already knew rather too well. "Thankee, mate," he said, "but I can't come in to-night."

"Can't come in! Why not? Come, you're not going to desert us yet, are you? Just for five minutes. I won't keep you longer, if you are in such a hurry."

"Well, just for five minutes," said Morris. And he followed his friend into the public-house.

The usual results came about. Morris was not content with one glass—with two glasses—with three. Before the night was over, he and his friend were both disgracefully drunk and noisy; and, by midnight, Morris found himself locked-up in the station-house until morning.

In the morning he was brought before a magistrate, severely reprimanded, and fined twenty shillings—in default of the fine, to be imprisoned for twenty-four hours. Morris could not pay the fine, he had spent all his money, and he had no option

but to go to jail. There was, indeed, as he afterwards remembered, some money due to him for a piece of work that he had just completed; but he did not know how to get it, and would have been loth to let his employer know of his condition. There was nothing for it but to go to prison, and to remain there until the twenty four hours should be passed. He would not be free again until nearly noon on Christmas Day.

Meanwhile, poor little Annie and Dick passed a miserable night. They had never known their father stay out so long before, and they had no money for food or firing. When the next morning did not bring news of him, Annie went out to make inquiries. She asked as many of his acquaintances as she knew whether they had seen him; but she did not happen to hit upon any who could give her the information she desired. She went also to three of the public-houses that he sometimes visited, but she did not know of that particular one which her father had entered with his friend. "There were so many," as Annie said, despairingly, to herself; so many flaring gin-palaces and taverns and public-houses, that she did not know which to visit first. So she gave up the search, and came back to her little brother.

Dick's cough was worse. He was feverish, too, and seemed exceedingly weak and ill. Annie resolved not to leave him again. She would stay with him and nurse him, and not go in search of her father, who was certain, so Annie thought, to come back sooner or later. So she made some tea, and toasted some bread at the tiny fire, and sang to little Dick until he fell asleep. Every time she heard a footstep on the stair she started and trembled with excitement—it was her father, perhaps, and he would have money in his pocket wherewith to buy food and fuel; for the weather was bitterly cold, and the stock of wood and coal was nearly exhausted. There was a little bread and a few spoonfuls of tea in the cupboard; but when these were done there was no money to buy more. Would father never, never come!

Dick opened his eyes after a time, but they were glazed and dim. He spoke, but there was no sense in what he said. Annie ran for the landlady, and asked her advice. The landlady shook her head. "He's dying, my dear; you may be sure of that," she said. "It's want of proper food, I expect, more than anything else. I'll send you up something for him—a pudding nicely flavoured with brandy, now—"

"Oh, not brandy, please," cried Annie. "I'm teetotal, and so is he."

"A mite like that!" exclaimed the landlady indignantly. "Well, I never! Here's gratitude!" and she flounced off to her kitchen with an angry brow. Whether she was really offended, or whether she forgot her promise, Annie could not tell—but the pudding never came.

So the day wore on. It was Christmas Eve, and the shops were gaily decked; and many fathers and mothers were buying pretty things for their children in warm, comfortable homes. But these two children sat in a cold garret; one ill, the other hungry, miserable—without fire and without food. It was a pitiable sight; and it is sad to think that many children are brought to like misery by their parents' self-indulgence.

Christmas Day dawned at last; and when the joy-bells were ringing, and the bright wintry sunlight streamed into the dull little room, Dick opened his blue eyes, and looked once more at Annie.

"Is it Christmas?" he asked.

"Yes, Dick."

"And is there roast beef and plum-pudding for dinner?"

"No, Dick; I'm afraid not."

"Well, I'm rather glad," said Dick, gravely. "for I couldn't eat it if there was. I'm glad for myself, I mean. Is father in?"

"No, not yet."

"What a funny Christmas Day!" said Dick.

Annie was silent. After a little pause, Dick's weak voice was heard again.

"Annie, I don't think much of Christmas after all. People say it's a jolly time—I think, Annie, maybe there's a better sort of Christmas—away—far away—up in heaven— His voice broke, and sank away into silence, but he smiled to himself, as though he had happy thoughts.

"No, Dick, no. You're not going to leave me!" said Annie, replying to what she knew he meant, rather than what was actually said.

"I don't know," said Dick. "I think heaven must be a warm, pleasant place, not like this. Annie. It's so cold here—not much like Christmas Day, is it?"

There was a dark figure in the doorway. A man came in and stood by the bed, listening. Dick saw him first, and nodded.

"Merry Christmas, father," he said, in his weak, little voice; "though it don't seem much like Christmas to any of us, do it?"

"May God forgive me!" said Morris hoarsely, as he realized, in one rapid glance, the state of desolation which his own actions had brought about. "Grant me my child's life, and I will give up the drink! I will serve thee as I never served thee hitherto! But give me back my child!"

The prayer was heard. Little Dick, although seriously ill and very weak, did not die. Kind friends were found to help the erring but repentant father; and in course of time—in another home, away from his bad companions—Morris became noted as a steady, serviceable workman, a kind father, and an earnest Christian.

Annie and Dick, with bright eyes and rosy cheeks, had now a truly happy home; but, throughout their happiness, father and children alike preserved a vivid remembrance of that Christmas-day which proved the turning-point in their lives, and was, therefore, in very truth, one of the most profitable Christmas Days that they ever spent.

John Morris passes the festive season now much more after the usual fashion, though without strong drink; but there is no Christmas Day that he will ever remember with more thankfulness than the one in which he came home from prison to hear his little boy saying, in his weak, patient voice, "It don't seem much like a merry Christmas to any of us, do it?"

But Dick's Christmas greetings are now spoken in a much merrier style.

BAD BOOKS.

NEVER, under any circumstances, read a bad book; and never spend a serious hour in reading a second-rate book. No words can overstate the mischief of bad reading. A bad book will often haunt a man his whole life long. It is often remembered when much that is better is forgotten: it intrudes itself at the most solemn moments, and contaminates the best feelings and emotions. Reading trashy second-rate books is a grievous waste of time also. In the first place, there are a great many more first-rate books than ever you can master; and in the second place, you cannot read an inferior book without giving up an opportunity of reading a first-rate book. Books, remember, are friends—books affect character; and you can as little neglect your duty in respect of this as you can safely neglect any other moral duty that is cast upon you. Keep the mind pure, and the life will be pure.

Led by the Star.

BY CARLOTTA PEERY.

Led by a star they came
And knelt at his feet,
Bringing their gold and myrrh,
And incense sweet.
No royal sign he wore,
No robe nor ring,
Yet in their souls they knew
He was the King.

Waiting their flocks by night,
Marvelous strains
Came to the shepherds on
Judaea's plains.
Swift from the lips of that
Mystical throng,
Down to their waking hearts,
Came the glad song.

And what was the song that was sung on that wonderful
far off morning,
When the voice of the heavenly hosts gave the dutiful
shepherds warning?
What was the gift that was given to the world that day,
as far
To the place where the young Child lay, the wise men
followed the star?

Glory to God on high—the infinite majesty proving,
Peace and goodwill to men, the sign of an infinite loving;
A gift from the soul of love—unmeasured by earthly price,
The song of homage and truth, and beauty and sacrifice.

The star the wise men saw with hope in its gracious
beaming,
The star of a deathless love, still chimes for a world's
redeeming;
And still to the deepest depths the heart of the world is
stirred
By the song that so long ago the Judean shepherd's heard.

Sweetly the self-same strain may rise from lips that falter;
Weakest of hands may bring the choicest of gifts to the
altar;
'Gainst the truest and best of giving there's never a bolt
nor bar,
Wise and simple alike may follow the shining star.

Peace and goodwill to men; O bells in the steeple, ring it!
Peace on earth and goodwill; O brother to brother, sing it!
Up to the mountain tops and down to the vales below,
On and on, forever let the Christmas message go.

Ring out, O bells! O songs
Uplifting, glad and sweet,
Your music to all time belongs,
So long as hearts shall beat!
Sing, heart, the perfect strain,
Again and yet again;
The immortal song of praise to God
And love to men.

It is customary at this season to make good resolutions. These resolutions are so frequently broken, that sneering at them has also become a custom. Pick up almost any newspaper next Tuesday or Wednesday, and you will be pretty sure to find a number of small jokes at the expense of the penitents who have been "swearing off." That many New Year's resolutions should be treated in this way is not a matter of wonder. Many of them are thoughtlessly made and quickly broken. Still, the making of such resolutions is a hopeful thing. It shows that the maker has within him a desire—feeble it may be, but still a desire—to be a better man, and to lead a better life. That desire is a good thing. A man is never in a more hopeless condition than when he has no desire to be or do better. The New Year's resolution shows that the man who makes it thinks at least once a year. He takes stock, and tries to form a reasonably correct estimate of himself. That, too, is a good thing. There is little hope for a man who does not think seriously once a year. Instead, then, of belittling New Year's resolutions, let all look upon them as good as far as they go—as evidence that the maker still measures himself morally, and has a desire to do and be better.—*Canadian Presbyterian*

Old Santa Claus.

Old Santa Claus is a merry wight,
And his reindeer merrily go
Over cottage roofs by the moon's pale light
Through December's frost and snow;
He comes from a land of cold and night,
But he comes good gifts to bring,
And hearts grow warm as amid the storm
His sleigh-bells merrily ring.

The children's stockings hang up in line,
Where the ruddy embers glow;
While the bright stars shine with a light divine
On our human joys and woe;
And many a curly head nestles with hope
On its pillow of soft repose,
As this merry wight through the winter night
On his journey of love still goes.

For each Christmas bell doth a story tell
Of One who was cradled of old
In a manger rude, where the oxen stood
The promised Child to behold;
And the bells ring clear for the glad new year,
With a hope that shall never cease,
That their notes ring out old fear and doubt,
Ringing in an age of peace.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, DECEMBER 22, 1888.

OUR SUNDAY-SCHOOL PERIODICALS FOR 1889.

WE are thankful for the greatly increased patronage of our Sunday-school periodicals during the past year. We hope for its continuance in still increased measure. Their circulation has reached over 300,000, and is rapidly increasing. We believe that our several periodicals will be more helpful and more interesting than ever before. Neither money nor labour shall be spared in making them the best, the most attractive, and the cheapest lesson helps and Sunday-school papers in the world.

The Sunday-School Banner will continue to adopt every improvement that can be desired for increasing its efficiency as a teacher's help. A series of attractive frontispieces, giving full-page engravings of some striking scene in Bible lands, will be presented, and also, as opportunity offers, smaller engravings on the text. In order that every teacher in every school of the Methodist Church may have the aid of this unsurpassed teacher's monthly, its price will be uniformly sixty cents a copy, whether taken singly or in any quantity. This gives the individual teacher an equal advantage with the school which can take a

large number. Thus five cents a month will place in the hands of a teacher *twelve times thirty-two pages—384 pages a year*—of rich, full, concise, practical lesson notes and teacher's hints, adapted for the several grades of the Sabbath-school, and well printed in clear type on good paper.

Pleasant Hours was never so popular as during the past year. We are determined that the next year it shall be better still. It will have two serial stories, "In Pilgrim Street," and "Life in a Canadian Parsonage," by the Editor. While retaining the same general features, it will introduce marked improvements of illustration and context.

Home and School will be of the same general character as PLEASANT HOURS, but of a somewhat superior grade, and more varied home reading. It will give, with nearly all the original pictures, the substance of H. M. Stanley's large \$5 volume, "Across the

Dark Continent." The mysterious fate of the great explorer will give to this series an intense interest. These papers are, for size, and price, and excellence, the *cheapest in the world*. We challenge comparison. They are even ordered from the United States and Australia, as superior to anything that can be produced for the price in those countries. Issued on alternate Saturdays, they furnish a paper for every Sunday in the year. They both abound in choice pictures, poems, stories, and sketches, in temperance and missionary sentiment, and in loyalty to Queen and country. Many schools circulate these papers instead of library books—finding them fresher, brighter, more attractive, and much cheaper.

The Sunbeam, the companion paper to HAPPY DAYS, will be brighter, better, and more beautiful than ever, with a superior grade of pictures, and will be issued every fortnight. It is just what the little folk of the primary classes need—full of pretty pictures, short stories, poems, and easy lesson notes.

Happy Days is of the same grade and same size and price as the SUNBEAM, and is issued on alternate weeks, so that, with our four papers, schools have one for every Sunday, both for senior and primary classes.

The Berean Quarterly. This is one of the cheapest and most attractive lesson helps we publish. Each number contains sixteen pages—sixty-four pages a year—with lesson notes, lesson hymns, catechism questions, open and closing exercises, a descriptive index of names and places with the pronunciation marked, and a piece of choice music. In quantities of five and over, post free, 6 cents each per year.

The Berean Leaf will contain all the lesson notes of the quarter, but it has not space for the opening and closing exercises, nor for the descriptive index. Price, \$5.50 per 100, post free.



A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

The Quarterly Review Service gives review questions, responsive readings, hymns, etc. Very popular. By the year, 24 cents a dozen; \$2.00 per 100; per quarter, 6 cents a dozen; 50 cents per 100.

The above rates are all post paid. Specimens will be sent *free* to any address. Send orders early, that we may promptly meet the increased demand.

Graded Lessons. Schools desiring graded lessons will find them in these papers. The simplest of all for the primary classes in the SUNBEAM.

For the great intermediate mass of scholars, the lessons in PLEASANT HOURS will be best suited. For the advanced classes, very full lesson notes in the SUNDAY-SCHOOL BANNER will be found in every way adapted.

Good and Cheap Reading for Advanced Classes. To meet a growing demand for attractive and instructive reading for families and young people, the METHODIST MAGAZINE has been greatly popularized in character and increased in amount of reading. A well written series of articles illustrative of the Lands of the Bible, and of Eastern customs, etc., etc., with over 100 fine engravings, will appear—of great value to every Sunday-school teacher and scholar—also many other copiously illustrated articles, short stories, and the like. In order that every school may obtain these articles, a special reduced rate is offered. For this rate write Rev. W. Briggs, Toronto; Rev. S. F. Huestis, Halifax; or, C. W. Coates, Montreal. Several schools have taken from two to ten copies for a number of years, as being cheaper, fresher, and more attractive than books. See advertisement of full contents.

GREAT minds have purposes; others only have wishes.



HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING.

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING.

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

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

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

CHRISTMAS BOOKS.

At Christmas time the great publishing houses vie with each other in getting out handsome gift books. We know none that succeed in issuing more attractive books, at a moderate cost, than the Worthington Publishing Company, of New York. "Worthington's Annual" is an old favourite. This year it is handsomer than ever. It is a large quarto, the illuminated cover of which represents the Four Seasons. Every page has an engraving—half of them full-page, and printed in colours. It will delight the little folk. Price \$1.50.

"Worthington's Natural History" is another handsome quarto, all about household pets, or less familiar animals, with short stories describing their habits. Few things are more instructive and interesting than books of this sort. Price \$1.50.

For older readers we have, from the same house, a stout octavo of 350 pages, entitled "How! or, Spare Hours Made Profitable, for Boys and Girls." By Kennedy Holbrook. Price \$2.00. It is intended not merely for Christmas time, but for spare hours all the year round. It tells ingenious boys and girls how to make all manner of toys and puzzles and games; and how to perform simple experiments, and the like. The following may serve as specimens of the many things young folks are taught how to do:—

To make Christmas presents, a large variety; to make leather work, and papier mache and repoussé work; to make and stock an aquarium; to make a camera obscura, a panorama, a windmill, a yacht, a boomerang, an Æolian harp, etc.; to make and operate simple electrical apparatus, and a hundred things besides. Numerous pictures explain just how it is done. The book will develop the inven-

tive genius and constructive skill of any boy or girl, and will make them familiar with the laws of Nature and the principles of mechanics.

These books are all published by the Worthington Company, New York, and will be sent, post-paid, for the above marked prices, by William Briggs, Methodist Publishing House, Toronto.

"FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

"ONE of Raphael Tuck & Sons' Calendars for the year 1889 is really a gem. It is in book form, and designed by J. Pauline Santer, with couplets by Helen M. Burnside. January shows two little girls who come timidly along drawing behind them a little waggon full of dolls; they hold one another by the hand and look as pretty as they are innocent, their hair fluttering in the breeze and falling in masses over their foreheads, their chubby little faces aglow with good nature and even dolls laughing. Their appeal—"Could we stay this year with you?"—could not be refused by any one. They evidently stay the year, for in the pages that follow they are shown in various occupations, feeding the birds, plucking wild flowers, rollicking in the grassy fields, and sitting by the seashore, making little rivers in the sand. On the page between June and July there is a picture of a milestone almost hidden by the flowers, but on which the inscription 'Half Way,' can be seen. Throughout the Calendar they are dressed in costumes appropriate to the different months of the year. In April they take refuge from the showers 'neath umbrellas; in May they fall asleep among the daisies in the field as they murmur:

"Nodding, nodding, to and fro,
In the grass the daisies grow."

"In December they depart, muffled up to protect themselves from the cold, their satchels on their arms; and as the hands of the clock point to midnight they say:

"We hope you have had a pleasant year."

"The last page of the Calendar has a candle burnt almost to the bottom, and is just dying out, indicating the close of the year."

This charming Calendar Book for 1889 has 18 pages of colour and monochrome illustrations, gold edged, silk cord and tassels.

A Dainty Gift—to be had at all first-class stores throughout the United States, or mailed to any address on receipt of 50 cents. Address

RAFAEL TUCK & SONS,
"Art Stationer." 298 Broadway, New York.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

THE Editor of PLEASANT HOURS wishes the hundred thousand boys and girls who read its pages—for such is his estimate of their number—all the best wishes of the season. God intended us to be happy, even merry. "A merry heart doeth good like medicine," says Solomon. "Is any merry, let him sing psalms," says St. James. And if ever we should be glad and make melody in our hearts, it is at the season which reminds us of God's great Christmas gift to man—the unspeakable gift of his dear Son. Bring, therefore, dear boys and girls, like the Magi of old, your best Christmas gifts to the feet of Jesus—not "gold and frankincense and myrrh," but the offering of your hearts and of your lives.

Vainly we offer each ample oblation;
Vainly with gold would his favour secure;
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
Dearest to God are the prayers of the poor.

In addition to all the other Christmas carols we give in this number, we add the following, which we hope many a boy and girl will learn by heart:—

No war nor battle's sound
Was heard the world around;
No hostile chiefs to furious combat ran;
But peaceful was the night,
In which the Prince of light
His reign of peace upon the earth began.

The shepherds on the lawn,
Before the point of dawn,
In social circle sat; while all around,
The gentle, fleecy brood,
Or cropped the flowery food,
Or slept, or sported on the verdant ground.

They saw a glorious light
Burst on their wondering sight;
Harping in solemn choir, the robes arrayed,
The helmed cherubim,
And sworded seraphim,
Are seen in glittering ranks, with wings displayed.

Sounds of so sweet a tone
Before were never known,
But when of old the songs of morning sung,
While God disposed in air,
Each constellation fair,
And the well-balanced world on hinges hung.

"Hail, hail, auspicious morn!
The Saviour Christ is born!"
Such was the immortal seraph's song sublime;
"Glory to God in heaven!
To man sweet peace be given,
Sweet peace and friendship to the end of time."

TWO MILLION READERS

are a great many to claim for one publication, but it is undoubtedly true that as many read *The Youth's Companion* every week. It has a world-wide reputation, and is sent all over the globe where the English language is spoken or read. The reason for its large circulation is found in its exceptional value. It is always safe, pure, entertaining and instructive. Its influence upon growing boys and girls can hardly be overestimated. It is remembered affectionately by their parents who read it a generation ago.

Any new subscriber to *The Companion* who will send \$1.75 at once, can have the paper free to January 1, 1889, and for a full year from that date. This offer includes four holiday numbers, for Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's and Easter, all the Illustrated Weekly Supplements, and the Annual Premium List with 500 illustrations. Address *The Youth's Companion*, Boston, Mass.

THE integrity of the upright shall guide them; but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.

"In the Field with Their Flocks."

BY FREDERICK WILLIAM FABIAN.

In the field with their flocks abiding,
They lay on the dewy ground;
And glimmering under the starlight,
The sheep lay white around.
When the light of the Lord streamed o'er them,
And lo! from the heaven above,
An angel leaped from his glory,
And sang his song of love.
He sang that first sweet Christmas
The song that shall never cease.

CHORUS.

"Glory to God in the highest,
On earth, goodwill and peace."

"To you in the city of David,
A Saviour is born to-day!"
And sudden a host of the heav'nly ones
Flashed forth to join the lay!
Oh, never hath sweeter message
Thrilled home to the souls of men,
And the heavens themselves had never heard
A gladder choir till then;
For they sang that Christmas carol,
That never on earth shall cease.

And the shepherds came to the manger,
And gazed on the holy child,
And calmly o'er that rude cradle
The Virgin Mother smiled;
And the sky in the starlight silence
Seemed full of the angel lay:
"To you in the city of David
A Saviour is born to-day."
Oh, they sang, and I ween that never
The carol on earth shall cease.

THE BOY CHRIST.

BY MARY ALLAINE.

NEARLY two thousand years ago a tiny baby lay in its bed at Bethlehem. Warm, rosy, smiling, dimpled, as we know babies; yet in all time there has never been so wonderful a baby as this one. Centuries before he was born prophets foretold his coming, and kings and wise men and all the faithful of one nation had prayed for and looked for his birth. Angels announced his coming, singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and goodwill toward men." The shepherds heard, and soon found the infant Christ, and worshipped him. Wise men in the East followed the great star till it stood still over the place where the baby was. When they found him they, too, knelt and worshipped him, and presented their gifts to this wonderful baby, who was the Prince of Peace, the Son of God.

Wonderful Christ-child! As this baby was helpless like other babies, so it grew like other babies. It had birthdays, days that no doubt Mary, the mother, remembered in the way that all Hebrew mothers remembered their children's birthdays. The Christ-child was one and two years old, and began to walk and talk, just as our babies do; then three and four and five, beginning to learn in the way that all Hebrew children of his time were taught; but we know nothing of this wonderful Christ child until he was twelve years old. Read the second chapter of Luke, beginning at the thirtieth verse, and you will read what occurred when he was twelve years old. Now he was a boy, and lived a boy's life. We have no reason to doubt that he played as other boys played, learned as other boys learned, was a favourite, no doubt, among boys, for he won men to him when he became a man. No doubt he and John were very happy together when they met. This we know—that Christ as a boy must have been a manly boy. He could never have done a mean action, he was honest and true, firm to do what he knew was right, and his influence must have been for good among those brought in contact with him. No doubt he helped the little boys; was tender and

gentle toward the sick and feeble. He was a peacemaker, because he was a child of God. His lovely eyes responded, grew bright with sympathy and luminous with tenderness, when he found those who needed his care. No voice was ever raised in pain for one moment because of any action of his.

His mother! Oh, the depths and richness of love he gave his mother! Do you not remember, in that dreadful hour on the cross, how tenderly he left her in the care of the friend he loved best? In his agony he did not forget her. As a boy he remembered her comfort, her wishes, what she enjoyed, and when he returned from the hillsides about his home no doubt he brought her bunches of flowers and clusters of berries. No thought that he need hide from her ever found a resting-place in his heart. No comparison that would cause her to tremble for her boy was chosen by him. Pure, tender, simple, honest, helpful, studious, and manly was the boy-Christ. He was always tender to mothers and gentle with children.

Luke tells us "the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom." Strength and wisdom are the fruits of honesty, truth, studiousness, gentleness, helpfulness. If the most wonderful boy that ever lived—the boy who was King of all the world—excelled in these qualities, are they not worth your cultivating? Can you not follow the boy-Christ, and grow into the image of the man-Christ?

Twelve years old! On his way, walking over the dusty road, to that wonderful city, Jerusalem! Twenty-one years after, in this city, he prayed his Father to forgive his enemies when they crucified him as a criminal, this pure, holy Christ-child. In this same city he was stoned. Twelve years old! and he asks his mother, "Wist ye not I must be about my Father's business?" and then he began preparing for his work—so quietly, so humbly, that we know nothing of it. The most wonderful work that was ever done? and we do not know how he prepared. Yet we do. By their fruits ye shall know them. What were the fruits of Christ's boyhood, early manhood? The life he has made known to us—acts of kindness to the sorrowful, the sick, the blind, the helpless—yes, the sinful. Standing alone in the face of the whole world, at the peril of his life, to protest against sin and wickedness and oppression and uncleanliness. He knew no fear when it was right for him to raise his voice against evil. He never turned any away who needed his help. And, remember, Christ gave people the power to help themselves. That is the best help—what the world needs to-day most. Christ's boyhood was the seedtime of which his manhood was the flower and the fruit.

Wist ye not I must be about my Father's business? is a question that should be in every boy's heart. Who is this Father? God. Christ was the Son of God, and how often he tells us that we are the children of the Father! When he tells his pupils he is going to leave them, he says, "I go unto my Father and your Father." Christ is the Elder brother. When they told him that his mother and brethren were waiting to see him, he said, "They that do the will of my Father are my brethren."

Remember, the boy-Christ was but twelve years old when he asked the question, "Wist ye not I must be about my Father's business?"

If we see a precept in Christ's teaching that bears hard on the flesh, let us remember there is somewhere a promise to encourage obedience to it, and there is also the example of the Master himself for us to follow. Let us always connect the promise and the example with the precept.

A STORY FOR CHRISTMAS EVE.

Most children have seen a Christmas-tree, and many know that the pretty and pleasant custom of hanging gifts on its boughs comes from Germany; but perhaps few have heard or read the story that is told to little German children respecting the origin of this custom. The story is called *The Little Stranger*.

In a small cottage on the borders of a forest lived a poor labourer. He had a wife and two children. The boy's name was Valentine, and the girl was called Mary; they were obedient, good children, and a great comfort to their parents. One winter evening this happy little family were sitting quietly round the hearth, the snow and the wind raging outside, while they ate their supper of dry bread, when a gentle tap was heard on the window, and a childish voice called from without, "O let me in, pray! I am a poor little child with nothing to eat and no home to go to, and I shall die of cold and hunger unless you let me in!"

Valentine and Mary jumped up from the table and ran to open the door, saying, "Come in, poor little child, we have not much to give you, but whatever we have we will share with you."

The stranger-child came in and warmed his cold hands and feet at the fire, and the children gave him the best they had to eat. After supper they said, "You must be tired, too, poor child; lie down on our bed; we can sleep on the bench for one night."

So they took their little guest into their sleeping-room, laid him on the bed, covered him over, and said to each other, "How thankful we ought to be we have warm rooms and a cosy bed, while this poor child has only heaven for his roof and the cold earth for his sleeping-place."

When their father and mother went to bed, Mary and Valentine lay quite contentedly on the bench near the fire, saying, before they fell asleep, "The stranger-child will be so happy to-night in his warm bed."

These kind children had not slept many hours before Mary awoke, and softly whispered to her brother, "Valentine, dear! wake, and listen to the sweet music under the window!"

Then Valentine rubbed his eyes and listened. It was sweet music indeed, and sounded like beautiful voices singing to the tones of a harp:

"O, Holy Child, we greet thee! bringing
Sweet strains of harp to aid our singing.

The children listened, while a solemn joy filled their hearts; then they stepped softly to the window to see who might be without.

In the East was a streak of rosy dawn, and in its light they saw a group of children standing before the house clothed in silver garments, holding golden harps in their hands. Amazed at this sight, the children were gazing still out of the window, when a light tap caused them to turn round. There stood the stranger-child before them clad in a golden dress, with a gleaming radiance round his curling hair. "I am the little Christ-child," he said, "who wanders through the world bringing peace and happiness to good children. You took me in and cared for me this night when you thought I was only a poor child, and now you shall have my blessing for what you have done."

A fir-tree grew near the house; from this he broke a twig, which he planted in the ground, saying, "This twig shall become a tree, and shall bring forth fruit year by year for you."

No sooner had he done this than he vanished, and with him the little choir of angels. But the fir-branch grew, and became a Christmas-tree, and on its branches hung golden apples and silver nuts every Christmas tide.

Such is the story told to German children concerning their beautiful Christmas trees, and though we know that the real little Christ child can never be wandering cold and homeless again in our world, inasmuch as he is safe in heaven by his Father's side, yet we may gather from this story the same truth which the Bible plainly tells us, that any one who helps a Christian child in distress, it will be counted unto him as if he had indeed done it unto Christ. — *Children's Prize.*

A Christmas Song.

THOU Holy Child of Bethlehem,
Who in a manger lay;
We thank thee for thy wondrous love,
And bless thy name to day.
For children all in every clime
Where thy dear name is known,
Rejoice in that great love of thine,
Which makes them all thine own.

Immanuel! The Prince of Peace,
We worship thee, our King;
And like the wise men from the East,
Most precious gifts we bring.
We come with loving, grateful hearts,—
We bow before thy face,
And whilst we give ourselves to thee,
Oh give to us thy grace.

A CHRISTMAS LESSON FOR THE PRIMARY CLASS.

BY MRS. W. F. CRAFTS.

WHICH do you like best, fairy stories or true stories? Fairy stories are always wonderful; but true stories are even more wonderful sometimes than fairy stories. I will tell you a true story about what came out of a night.

What a night that was! It was dark, just like all other nights. The stars were shining in the sky. The sheep and lambs were lying down in sleep. The good, kind shepherds were keeping watch over their flocks, for fear the wolves and lions that go about in the darkness would come and steal some of their sheep and lambs. All at once the shepherds saw a bright light about them, and an angel standing by them. The shepherds were so frightened by the great light at night, and by the angel, that they tried to cover up their eyes by putting their faces close down to the ground. Then the angel spoke to them, and told them not to be afraid, for he had brought them good news, even that God's Son had come into the world to make a way for people to go to heaven. Perhaps the shepherds looked up then, and asked the angel to tell them where they could find God's Son. Perhaps the shepherds thought God's Son would be great and strong and beautiful. No, said the angel; you will find him a little babe, "wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger." The manger was the trough in which the hay was put for an ox or a cow.

How wonderful it was that the God who had made all things should come again to the world as a little baby, so that he might show children the way to heaven!

When the angel had told the shepherds where to find Jesus, the whole sky seemed to be full of angels who sang the good news that Jesus was born. Oh, how beautiful must have been their song!

When the angels had finished their song, the shepherds started to find Jesus. They went into Bethlehem, and in a stable they found the Babe, with Mary his mother, and Joseph her husband. The shepherds told what the angel had said, and about the song of the angels, and about the star which had shown them the way. Then the shepherds, when they had seen the little Jesus, went

back to their flocks, praising God for what they had seen and heard.

That wonderful night was the first Christmas. Now I am wondering if you cannot tell me what came out of that wonderful night that has filled the whole world. You are always so joyful at Christmas time, I think you surely might tell me one thing—joy. We have so much joy at Christmas time because we get so many presents, and give so many too. I am not at all well pleased that a sort of fairy called Santa Claus has come into Jesus' place. I fear that some little children think only about Santa Claus at Christmas time, and forget that all their happy times have come out of that first Christmas night, when Jesus was born. Little boys and girls, men and women too, in all parts of the world, feel the joy of that first Christmas in their hearts.

Now let us think of something else that came out of that first Christmas night which is filling the whole world. I wonder if any of you read in the papers, as I have done, about how all the poor children in the city had warm clothes, and plenty of good food, and toys of all kinds, given to them on Christmas Day. Perhaps some of you gave money to help those poor ones have a happy Christmas. This "goodwill" toward everybody has grown out of that first Christmas night.

We are talking about what came out of that first Christmas night that is filling the whole world. There is a verse in the Bible which says: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Away off in China, India, Japan, and the islands of the sea, as well as in our own land, and in every nation, there are some who love him because he first loved them. The love of God, then, which Jesus brought into the world on that first Christmas night, has gone into every part of the world.

And what came out of that Christmas night for the Lord Jesus himself? Days of childhood, when he grew in wisdom and in stature; days of toil in the little town of Nazareth, when he was known only as the carpenter's son; days of wandering, sad and lone, when he said: "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head;" a night of sorrow in the garden, when he sweat as it were great drops of blood because of the anguish of his soul. Out of that first Christmas night grew days of persecution, when he was crowned in mockery as a king, and spit upon, and reviled, and at last was crucified, dead and buried, and on the third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father, whence he shall come again to judge the world. But how glorious he will be then! And what great rejoicing there will be, for the dead will be made alive; and those who loved and served the Lord Jesus while they lived, he will take back to heaven to be with him forever—all because "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—*S. S. Times.*

A NEW HEART.

AN anecdote was published many years ago concerning the Indian Chief Teedyuscung, King of the Delawares. One evening he was sitting at the fireside of a friend. Both of them were silently looking at the fire, indulging their own reflections. At length the silence was broken by the friend, who said, "I will tell thee what I have been thinking of. I have been thinking of a rule delivered by the Author of the Christian religion, which, from its excellence, we call the Golden Rule."

"Stop," said Teedyuscung, "don't praise it to me, but rather tell me what it is, and let me think for myself. I do not wish you to tell me of its excellence, tell me what it is."

"It is for one man to do to another as he would have the other do to him."

"That's impossible—it cannot be done," Teedyuscung immediately replied.

Silence again ensued. Teedyuscung lighted his pipe, and walked about the room. In about a quarter of an hour he came to his friend, with a smiling countenance, and, taking the pipe from his mouth, said:

"Brother, I have been thoughtful of what you told me. If the Great Spirit that made man would give him a new heart, he could do as you say, but not else."

Thus the Indian found the only means by which man can fulfil his social duties.

A Wish.

O to have dwelt in Bethlehem,
When the star of the Lord shone bright;
To have sheltered the holy wanderers
On that blessed Christmas night;
To have kissed the tender way-worn feet
Of the mother undetiled,
And with reverend wonder and deep delight,
To have tended the Holy Child!

Hush, such a glory was not for thee;
But that care may still be thine,
For are there not little ones still to aid
For the sake of the Child divine?
Are there no wandering pilgrims now
To thy heart and thy home to take?
And are there no mothers whose weary hearts
You can comfort for Jesus' sake?

"Child Jesus Came From Heaven."

CHILD Jesus came from heaven to earth,
The Father's mercy showing;
In stable mean he had his birth,
No better cradle knowing;
A star smiled down the babe to greet!
The humble oxen kissed his feet,
All praise to thee, all praise to thee,
Child Jesus!

O soul with sin and grief cast down,
Forget thy bitter sadness!
A Child is come to David's town,
To bring the joy and gladness!
Oh, let us haste the Child to find,
And child-like be in heart and mind,
All praise to thee, all praise to thee,
Child Jesus!

THE TEST OF LOVE.

"SINCE you gave your heart to God last spring, Jennie," said a pastor to a little girl, "you think that you have been a Christian. Can you tell us why you think so?"

"Because, sir," she said, after thinking a moment, "Jesus says, 'If ye love me, keep my commandments;' and I want to keep his commandments more than anything else."

"Yes, my dear child. By this we know that we love him when we keep his commandment." You say, Jennie, that you feel your sins are all forgiven. Will you tell us how you know? May you not be mistaken?"

She stood a moment, and then said, "I know that Jesus surely says that if we ask him he will forgive."

"Yes; we have his own sure word. And now, Jennie, suppose some one should ask you how to be a Christian, could you answer? Suppose one of the little girls at school should ask you how she could be a Christian, could you tell her?"

"I would tell her just to trust Jesus, and obey him," she said, quickly.

LESSON NOTES. FOURTH QUARTER.

D.C. 1491.] (Dec. 30)

TEMPERANCE LESSON.

Num. 6. 1-4. Memory verse 3.

GOLDEN TEXT.

For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. Luke 1. 15.

OUTLINE.

- 1. Separation from Sin. 2. Consecration to God.

TIME.—1491 B.C. PLACE.—Mount Sinai.

EXPLANATIONS.—Shall separate to vow a vow—Or, shall solemnly vow a vow. A Nazarite One separated; such a one assumed voluntary obligations, sometimes for a month, sometimes for a lifetime, not to use wine, not to touch a razor to his head, but allowing the hair to grow, and to have no contact with a dead body. Liquor of grapes—A drink made from grape skins. The kernels—A sour drink was made from the stones of grapes. The husk Cakes were made from the husk.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What was a Nazarite? A man consecrated to God. 2. Who gave the law to govern the lives of Nazarites? The Lord gave it to Moses. 3. In what were they for examples to us? In their total abstinence from wine 4. Who was the most shining example in history of absolute total abstinence? John, the Lord's herald 5. What prophecy was made concerning him? "For he shall be great," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Temperance.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK.

A. D. 26] LESSON I. [Jan. 6

THE MISSION OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Mark 1. 1-11. Memory verses, 6-8

GOLDEN TEXT.

The voice of one crying in the wilderness. Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Mark 1. 3. TIME.—26 A.D. The opening of the year preliminary to Christ's public work, called the year of preparation or obscurity.

EXPLANATIONS.—The beginning of the Gospel—The beginning of the story, rather, which is the Gospel. Gospel means good news; the beginning of the story of how the "good news" came to men. In the Prophets—In the books which had been written and left by the prophets, and which were a part of the Jewish Scriptures. The voice of one, etc.—This means, I am the man who was to cry in the wilderness, as foretold that some man should, "Prepare ye," etc. Make his paths straight—Or, make straight the paths for his feet; that is, help him to go about his work with directness and certainty. Baptism of repentance—A symbolic act, announcing the purpose of the one baptized to live a changed life. Remission of sin—This remission was to come from Jesus the Christ, and was not made sure by John's baptism. All the land of Judea—All the inhabitants of the land. This shows how powerfully John preached. Cloth with camel's hair—Clothing made from stall woven from camel's hair, which was a coarse material common among the peasants. A girdle of a skin—This is another evidence of his poverty. He would have the girdles worn by his more opulent countrymen, but cut his own from the skin of beasts. Eat locusts and wild honey—Still another proof of how poor he was, and that in his fare he was allied to the wandering Bedouins. Latchet of whose shoes—The thong by which the sandal was fastened to the foot; to unloose it was a menial's office.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

- How do we learn in these verses— 1. That we should turn from our sins? 2. That we should be baptized? 3. That we should honour Christ as God's Son?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. About what does Mark the evangelist write? The Gospel of the Son of God. 2. How did it begin? In the preaching of John. 3. What did he preach? The baptism of repentance. 4. What prophecy did his preaching fulfil? "Prepare ye the way," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Repentance.

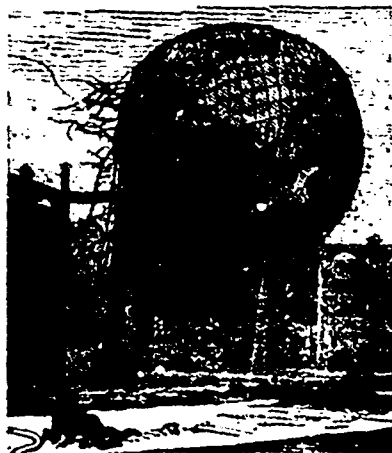
CATECHISM QUESTION.

1. What do you mean by religion? Our whole duty to God our Creator.

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