

Dominion Churchman.

THE ORGAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CANADA.

Vol. 7.]

TORONTO, CANADA, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1881.

[No. 52.]

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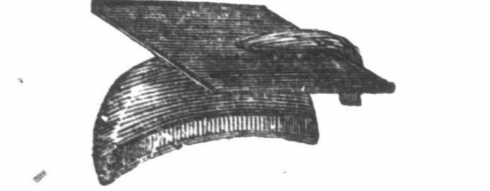
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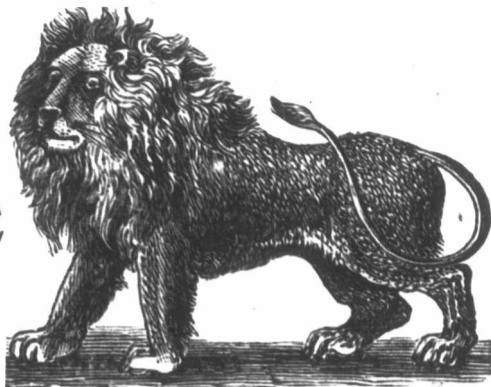
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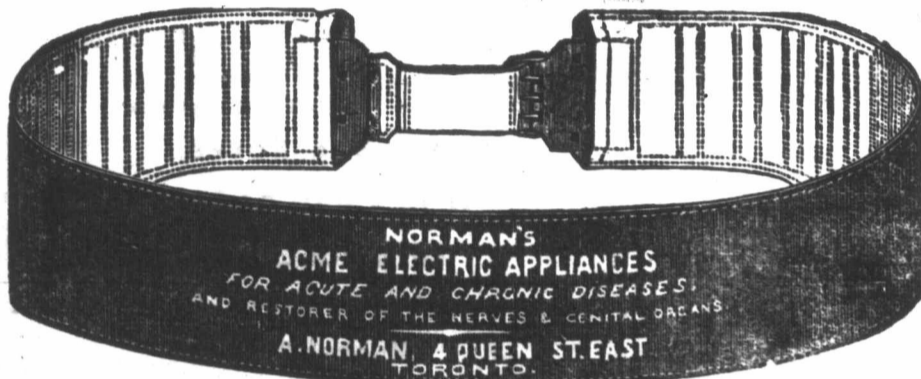
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Alex. S. Macrae, M.S.A., (of London, England)
BUSINESS MANAGER.

To Subscribers.

AS we are now approaching the end of the year, it becomes our duty to request our friends, who are in arrears, to pay up their subscriptions at once. As at this period a number are falling due, we trust they will now be paid promptly, as well as the next year in advance. In remitting, it would be highly desirable if each subscriber would make sufficient effort to send on in addition to his own subscription one or more from his friends or neighbours; so that we may be able to double our subscription list, and thus be placed in the same position as many of our subscribers will be in having a happy and prosperous New Year.

LESSONS for SUNDAYS and HOLY-DAYS.

Jan. 1. SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS:—
Morning...Isaiah 35.
Evening...Isaiah 38, or 40.
1. CIRCUMCISION OF OUR LORD:—
Morning...Genesis 17, v. 9. Romans 2, v. 17.
Evening...Deut. 10, v. 12. Colossians 2, 8 to 18.
The same Collect, Epistle, and Gospel to serve till Epiphany.
Christmas Preface at Holy Communion.
6. EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD:—
Morning...Isaiah 60. St. Luke 3, 15 to 20.
Evening...Isaiah 49, v. 13 to 24. St. John 2, to 12.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1881.

THE Bishop of Sierra Leone (Dr. Cheetham) has accepted the vicarage of Rotherham.

The Bishop of Truro has lately received the sum of £1000 towards the erection of his cathedral, from "M. N. D.," the gift being otherwise quite anonymous.

The Bishop of Oxford has recently opened the buildings which have just been erected at Saint Thomas's Sisterhood, Oxford, for the enlargement of that part of the Sisters' work which consists in the training of girls for service.

The registrar of the Diocese of York, Mr. Egerton-Vernon Harcourt, of Whitwell Hall, has placed at the disposal of Archbishop Thomson, the sum of £5,000 for the improvement of small benefices in the patronage of the see. Not long ago the same donor made over the sum of £10,000 for a similar purpose.

On Sunday night last a lecture was delivered before the Secular (infidel) Society, Toronto, on "Christianity of human origin." If these atheists had only attended lectures at the Protestant Episcopal Divinity School, they would have discovered that the students therein, candidates for the minis-

try, are taught that Christianity is of human origin, and that the true history of the Church is found in writings outside of the sacred Scriptures. Thus do extremes meet, and thus does a craze after popularity degrade and stultify Christian teachers. But what of those responsible for harmonizing a Divinity school with a Secular society? Surely the Bishop's crook is needed.

THE SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY.

THE Sonship of Messiah, and our consequent sonship through Him, in the use of the Sacrament He has appointed for [the purpose, are closely connected with the nativity of Him who was born of the Blessed Virgin. From the remotest depths of eternity (if, indeed, eternity can be spoken of as in any sense remote in regard to Him Who as He fills all space may possibly be also spoken of as equally present to every instant of endless duration)—from all eternity. The Son of Mary, in His higher nature, had been the resplendent outbeaming of the divine glory, the exact resemblance of His Hypostasis; and as the rays issuing from the sun are of the same substance and of the same duration as the sun itself, so was, and so is, Christ the Son, through the ages of endless duration one with the Father in essence and in eternal existence. His moral and spiritual, and divine nature of precisely the same character with those of the Father; and therefore in the days of His fleshly tabernacle on earth, He was able to say, in the fullest sense and with the greatest confidence:—"I and my Father are one." The statements made by Christ Himself are capable of no other interpretation but that which recognizes a divine Sonship, a oneness in nature and character with the Father, of angels and of men. And therefore it is that St. Paul tells us in the beginning of his Epistle to the Romans that it was by His resurrection from the dead that Christ was shown or declared to be the Son of God, and [that according to the Spirit of holiness, the Holy Spirit, or His divine nature. For it was the Resurrection that set the seal of truth on the pretensions of Christ to His divinity, His oneness with the Father; and so it was an irrefragable confirmation of the truth of all that He had advanced.

And the Sonship of Messiah directly secures the sonship of His people. It was in order to obtain the Headship of the body that He became man, that for thirty years and more He tabernacled on earth, died on the cross, and then triumphantly rose again. He is now the Head, we are the members. Through Him we become, in a right use of the means He has appointed for the purpose, sons of God, heirs of His blessedness, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, to a glorious immortality. Our sonship then as connected with the Sonship of Christ is that especially practical feature connected with the Incarnation which the Church brings before us now. It is prominently brought out in the Collect for Christmas Day, and in the Epistle of the Communion office for the Sunday after Christmas Day.

It happens that the festival of the Circumcision also falls at this time on the same day; and it should lead us to reflect on the conduct which the sons of God ought especially to adopt—"that our

hearts and all our members being mortified" from all worldliness and carnality, we may follow the "blessed will" of our Heavenly Father, and thus show ourselves to be the sons of God in the highest sense in which we are capable of becoming so, fulfilling the character pointed out by the Apostle John, when he says:—"He that is born of God sinneth not."

THE YEAR 1882.

THE Christian year begins at Advent. It is a that season we begin our preparation for the series of events connected with the Christian dispensation; and therefore it ought to be the most prominent part of the year for men who call themselves Christians. Such a recurrence ought to suggest a vast amount of thought as to the value of time and the preparation for the future, as well as considerations with regard to the use that may have been made of the time past.

But inasmuch as for nearly two centuries the secular year has begun on the festival of the Circumcision, it becomes desirable that those who did not start afresh in their efforts for the extension of the kingdom of Messiah, should do so now. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore now, if it was not done at the commencement of the Advent season—now, at the last warning note of the Church's tones, let us put on the armour of Light and do what we can for the spread of Messiah's kingdom.

There are many ways in which the work of the Church can be aided. These various ways will soon develop themselves to an attentive and inquiring mind, that is anxious for the prosperity of the Zion of our brightest and highest hopes, and desirous to hasten the coming of Messiah's kingdom.

THE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER'S CHARGE.

RECENTLY we had occasion to draw the attention of our readers to the primary charge of the first Bishop of Liverpool, Dr. Ryle. We then were obliged to express our regret at the tone and substance of that document, and also drew attention to the fact that Puritanism, which Dr. Ryle wishes to extend, is a total failure: Liverpool itself being a very striking instance. To-day our task is a much pleasanter one, that of expressing a large amount of satisfaction with the primary charge of Dr. Thorold, Bishop of Rochester, who belongs to the evangelical school of thought. Not that we agree with all he advocates, but the Charge may be regarded as one of the signs of the times, and shows us how widely the Catholic revival in the Church has extended. It proves, too, that a Low-Churchman may be induced to lay aside prejudice, and judge of various practices by their merits, and not by their origin, or in light of "party." The Charge is divided into six chapters, of which for the sake of our readers who may not see English papers we shall give a short summary.

Chapter I. contains a brief sketch of his four years' work since his appointment. Four diocesan societies have been formed and are now in good work-

ng order, of these the *Church of England Temperance Society* has ninety-eight branches; and the *Lay Helpers' Association* has twenty-four preachers, fifty-five readers, and 310 enrolled lay workers. Eighteen churches have been consecrated, five restored, and nine are now in process of construction. Of a bishop's work some idea may be given by the fact that Dr. Thorold received 19,527 letters of which he answered 13,378 with his own hand. He has confirmed 32,819 persons, and ordained 210.

Chapter II. describes the Diocese of Rochester as it now is. The population is 1,800,000, in 290 parishes, ministered to by 572 clergy. Of the 290 parishes 117 have weekly Communion, and 100 evening celebrations. In 1880 there were 31,468 baptisms, and 13,158 enrolled in the Temperance Society.

Chapter III. is devoted to "wants" which, from the large population, are many and varied. Thirty-four churches and thirty-nine mission chapels are needed at once. He urges private generosity in church building, and says he has had seven so built. When we see him advocating Brotherhoods and Retreats, we begin to understand how the Puritan fetters are loosening. But how could he do otherwise? He finds irreligion increasing, and so he writes that "if we would not see the mass of working people helplessly surrendered either to a gross animalism or dismal unbelief, we must throw our prejudice to the winds, and organize a brotherhood of Christian workers, which with resolute purpose, real sacrifice, and fervent devotion shall march under the Church's banner, preach her Gospel for the salvation of souls to Christ."

Chapter IV. is filled with *Counsels and Directions*, and opens with the following quotation from Canon Liddon:—

"That which really draws us to itself is the sight of a man who knows the value of truth, and who is strong in knowing it; strong enough to be perfectly courteous towards opponents, and to be withal entirely unyielding; strong enough to feel that he can afford to be, and is bound to be, considerate and tender."

Upon Holy Baptism and Confirmation the Bishop speaks words that every Canadian Churchman should ponder, especially those who call themselves Evangelicals. Referring to the number of children brought to the sacrament of responsibility, he says, "These occasions should be eagerly seized for explaining the doctrine of Baptism, pressing its privilege, and inculcating its responsibility." "A grave apprehension possesses me that comparatively few of us expound with sufficient precision, or press with adequate seriousness, what Baptism bestows, implies, and assures. Yet actually it lies at the very foundation of the Christian covenant; and to water down its vital value as an effectual, means of grace into a mere formal admission into Christ's visible body is to rob Christian parents of their irresistible claim on the divine Fatherhood, and to sap the faith of prayer."

His Lordship's words on Confirmation are cheering, as showing an appreciation of the sacramental character of that apostolic rite. Though we do not approve of evening celebrations as a rule, we must allow that the Bishop's argument is kind and charitable if not altogether convincing. One paragraph is so appropriate to our position in Canada that we cannot forbear quoting it: "Let those who prefer the eastward position as Catholic and rubrical, no longer be stigmatized by those who differ from them as playing at Popery. Let those who, because they honour their Lord, and desire in the highest way to edify His people, celebrate occasionally in the evening, if they think proper, as the

most convenient time for their flock, be no longer coarsely scolded by brethren, who deprecate the practice, as if they dishonoured Christ, or scoffed at antiquity." It is pleasing to notice how the Bishop draws attention to the rubrics of the Prayer Book. He says that where possible there ought to be daily service; baptisms in public; the elements for Holy Communion should not be placed on the Holy Table until just before the Prayer for the Church Militant; Holy Communion ought to be celebrated every Sunday and holy day; it is only unreasonable bigotry that identifies surpliced choirs with party.

Chapter V. discusses "*Church Problems*" of the day—Romanism, Ritualism, Church Courts, Non-Conformity, and Free Thought, in a broad, tolerant spirit. On Mission Services the Bishop says: "Our proper function is religion. The task of penetrating these millions with the ideas and consolation of the gospel is enormous, but not more enormous than glorious; and thinking out the task till it appals us, should only send us to our knees. We want many things, and must not only find the means, but train the instruments. Have services with suitable singing, that will, meet, stir and satisfy them. If the Church means to win the lower stratum of the working class she must not be too fastidious. During the last winter in South London the experiment was made of opening the Victoria Coffee Tavern, formerly, but no longer used as a theatre, for religious services conducted by Churchmen, for the working classes on Sunday evenings. The Bishop of the diocese opened the services, and the Bishop of Carlisle was good enough to close them. About the attendance there can be no doubt. It amply satisfied us. So also the serious and attentive behaviour of those who came."

"We must go after our brethren until we find them; they will not come after us. In the open air, and at their house door, and in cottage rooms, and under railway arches, wherever there is shelter or standing room, there the Church must be found. Our teaching must not be grandiose nor classical; with doctrine of course, but not too technical, with argument sometimes, but not in syllogisms. Flexibility, adaptation of style and matter to circumstances; humour and a gift of anecdote, homeliness, if it be not vulgar, all will tell. But even more, let there be an intense conviction of what we say, with a personal kindness as to those whom we love, and faith in the Spirit of God. Mission chapels, which we must multiply as fast as we can, are best built in the courts themselves, notwithstanding the urchins who kick at the doors."

"But most of all we want men. All sorts, for the Hall of Science wants one sort of mental gift, and a back slum of Southwark another. Not unites, but as I have said elsewhere and cannot help repeating, a fellowship of brothers, who can surrender trifles, and make sacrifices, and recognize differences, and forgive eccentricity, fired with the one enthusiasm of winning souls to Christ. Every well equipped army has its Uhlans; let the Church have hers. It is our great need; who will supply it?"

Chapter VI. deals with the future in a bright, hopeful spirit. While he is naturally a little afraid of Eucharistic devotion, and of the use of Confession, he thinks that there is more danger from laziness, selfishness, and worldliness. Noting these blemishes he exclaims,—"Yet how much there is to be thankful for, if we will only look back to see how the Church has grown both in devotion and energy, in unity and self-government, in organization and resources, during the last fifty years. The dignity and beauty of public worship, in which

all schools alike, (that one, perhaps, which least expected it) have made a prodigious advance, . . . the manly and ungrudging welcome now given by all intelligent believers to physical research, as a handmaid to the revelation of God; . . . the astonishing energy of the Church's school work; the increase of the permanent endowments of the Church, including glebe houses, and grants from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of £54,000,000; the increase of separate benefices from 10,718 to 13,617; the expenditure of no less than £25,548,703 on 8,871 new or restored churches since 1840, the eager zeal for the conversion of the indifferent and ungodly, with a profound faith in the grace of the Holy Ghost, as evinced in special home missions; the ever augmenting interest in missions to the heathen; last, but not least, the steady and indisputable and growing approximation of the various schools among us to each other, without compromise of principle or loss of honour; these are grounds of thankfulness for which the most cautious and humble may bless God."

Yes, thank God, we Churchmen in Canada do take courage, even here the clouds of mere party may yet dissolve. The watch cry by which Puritanism within the Church used to stir the embers of strife has surely lost its force; and our ranks once firmly united the Church must assume her rightful position as the Bride of Christ and the Light of the world.

CHURCH THOUGHTS BY A LAYMAN.

No. 37.

CHRISTMASTIDE.

THE Festival of Christmas has become associated with joys and delights so domestic that the deeper thoughts, the profounder lessons, the nobler spiritual aspects, it inspires, conveys, and wears, are overshadowed, much in the same way as the gravity, wisdom, devotion to high duties of a parent who holds a lofty position of honour in the world, are obscured in the family circle by the vivid recognition of him as the bond, the centre, and fountain of love. But Christmas is the most glorious as it is the most unique of festivals, it touches deeper chords of philosophy, it has more solemn, more awe-inspiring strains of religious music, and over all this grand harmony there floats the sweetest, tenderest melody that ever charmed the ear of man. Christmas never presents to him such a thought, nor suggests to his deadened spirit so stirring a reflection, but none the less does this festival rise before the infidel as an impregnable argument against his denials, and stands as an unanswerable rebuke by challenging him year by year, century after century, to solve the mystery of its existence by any mere human reasoning.

The Easter and Ascensiontide miracles stand amid a sacred group; they have also fictitious rivals and parallels. Christmas has no compeers or similars, sacred or profane; it stands as sublimely alone as His life whose earthly dawn it celebrates. It is in itself supernatural, above, outside of, unaccountable by human experience. Christmas is a miraculous memorial of a miraculous event. Let doubters reflect upon, let them count up until their brains reel, the unimaginable sum of births since the glory of motherhood fell upon woman. Let them take a narrower range by seeking to grasp the stupendous total of such births as have taken place in any one civilised land, then

let the question be put, "How comes it to pass that for eighteen centuries, the best, wisest, most learned, as well as the overwhelming mass of the undistinguished among civilised humanity have kept high festival on a day made sacred solely by the birth of a Jew peasant's baby!" One hears much of that word "rationalism." It would be well for those who use this as a flimsy veil to cover the utter lack of rational, common sense in their negative creed, to try to give us a rational, that is a reasonable answer to this question, the problem would be abandoned in despair.

On this Christmas eve, amid the solemn stillness, the steps to every bell tower in Christendom are being mounted by ringers. Soon as the chime of midnight ceases, the hill sides, the myriad aced plains, the calm valleys, the vast cities of Europe will be vocal with Christmas carillons. The Catholic Church holds at this hour a peal of bells ready for their music, her sons of many races stand around the belfry floor, one thought filling every mind, one emotion thrilling every heart. Hark! the hour bell's twelfth stroke fades into silence, then round after round, harmony lacing into harmony, on go the rolling bells beating out from their clanging sides a gladsome Christmas peal. Night is vocal with the carol of the bells, and watching souls take up their strain,

"JESUS CHRIST is born to-day. Hallelujah!"

Now from one point and now another mingling with the chimes, we catch the carollers' note of song, "Christians awake, salute the happy morn," the noblest of Christmas hymns in words as well as music. If happily we are in a Yorkshire town, there is added the rich colouring of instruments to the picture harmonies. As we lay listening to these bright instrumental strains, so solemn, so touching, coming up out of the darkness of a winter night, we realize how truly "All the works of the Lord" may praise their Maker, and how dead matter touched by God-given skill can stir the soul with thoughts too deep for tears, awaken sweet memories of the beloved dead, and open out bright anticipations of heavenly re-union in the eternal Christmastide. Sleep woos in vain the spirits of those whose hearts are tuned to these holy customs by immemorial usage or personal love of Him whose birth is the theme and occasion of all this festive music which heralds the dawn of Christmas Day. As morning breaks, the carollers hymn with the "tabret and harp" of modern days dies away. Then along the pavement we hear the faint clatter of tiny feet, the chirping hum of children's talk and glee, a piping voice is heard at the door, the keyhole possibly used to convey the message with which the little heart is full, from which comes up the incense of kindly good will, the happy neighbourly greeting, "I wish you a merry Christmas and happy New Year." So goes on the early morn, one shrill voice after another singing forth the season's good wishes; rich and poor blending sympathies, forgetting divisions in the atmosphere of brotherhood which fills the air.

Let Puritan sneer in concert with his Agnostic brother, let men scoff whose lives are a mere mill-horse round of money grinding, to the Christian world, to the Church Catholic and Apostolic, Christmas is irresistibly fascinating. As the influence of the sects weakens by the broadening culture which is their bane and which will be their ruin, Christendom will, if it be possible, raise the Festival of Christmas still higher in honour and love by recognizing it as the lamp of the Incarnation, the light by which our fallen race is led out of darkness to Him who on this holy day re-sancti-

fied humanity by assuming its conditions, thus supremely glorifying mankind by exhibiting, manifesting, setting forth before the universe the fact of our being indeed made in the image of God and capable of a Godlike-life.

Would that men would ponder over this Christmas fact, this Christmas lesson, that the cradle of Jesus in the manger was the cradle not of a creed, but of man's redemption. How insufferably paltry does the hair splitting, muddled metaphysics, chop logic and illiterate misreading of texts on which every sect is based and in which they all glory, glory in their shame; how mean is all this compared to the simple and tender, yet profound and sublime teaching of the Christmas Festival in the Church of Jesus. The Church strikes a chord this season which lies in the very heart's core of humanity, and thus all true hearts vibrate sympathetically when it is touched. The pathos of Mary's story, the Babe in the manger, have thrilled more deeply our race than all the works of literary genius ever penned. To obliterate Bethlehem from Art would leave a ghastly blank. In the elevation of the Incarnation to its due place lies the only hope of Christianity, for while the root is forgotten the plant will never flourish in fullest beauty. This is the secret of the ostentatious slighting of Christmas by the sects, the lesson of this season is alien to their dogmatism and its spirit is for them a spirit which would cast out their particular demon in preparation for the Spirit of Christ. Imagine the temper of men owning ostensibly Jesus as their Lord, who treat His Incarnation day with contempt, while they honour like a Sabbath the heathen day marking a new year, preparing to spend Christ's birth-day at work rather than in meditations upon His advent, loving better the mart than the sanctuary.

Let us who follow the Babe of Bethlehem take up then the festive strains and customary observances which are consecrated by fifteen hundred years of pious usage in the mother land. Let us leave the puritan churl to his avarice, and the Calvinist to his store and his desk, while we rejoice and are glad at the Church's call, "Let us go to the house of the Lord" to offer up to Jesus a memorial of love, and in His name and in His spirit cultivate those earthly affections of family and kind which have made Christmas not alone the Festival of the Church but by being the very bond of peace and the symbol of charity, is established as the most enduring, most joyous Festival of mankind.

THE REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

We quote a few extracts from the eighth "General Council (1) of the Reformed Episcopal Church."

"Bishop" Nicholson said in his report (p. 36): "As a Church we have been passing through a severely sifting process. . . . I cannot but think that God has been chastening us for our vanity, our ambition, our haste, to become, as a Church, a great power in the world. . . . In fine, I fear that while being outwardly Reformed Episcopalians, we have not been sufficiently so evangelically and spiritually."

"Bishop" Wilson, of Canada, says (p. 43): "The peculiar and afflictive circumstances through which our Church has been called to pass in Canada has arrested the previous signs of hopeful progress to a very considerable extent. Added to this the intelligent sympathy that was watching our movement, and causing in the minds of many a strong disposition to unite with us, has been temporarily withdrawn."

"Bishop" Sugden, of Great Britain says (p. 49): "It will occasion no surprise to those who have closely watched the course of events here in England to be honestly told that our progress during the past year has not been very marked. Our strength and

our wisdom, in matters simply ecclesiastical, have been to sit still. . . . Never was the advocacy of the principles of the Reformed Episcopal Church more needed. . . . Even in the Evangelical Churches the black academic gown is fast yielding to the surplice, and the people are betrayed by the facinations of a merely æsthetic and unspiritual service. Even if the work of the Reformed Episcopal Church in this country should prove but an interim work, a course of testimony, it will still issue in the purification of the Church of our fathers, and in the furtherance of the Gospel."

"Bishop" Latane says (p. 60): "In reviewing the work in the field especially assigned to me, I cannot but express the regret that so much valuable time was lost to it by my having to devote six months, immediately after my election, to the work in Canada. I was assigned to the work in the South at a very critical time in its history. In proof of this, let some of the facts be recalled. The church in Louisville, Ky., the first and for a long time the strongest organization within the jurisdiction of the South, had then very recently failed and been disbanded. The Bishop Cummins Memorial church, Baltimore, had barely escaped the auctioneer's hammer, and was still in a state of perfectly hopeless indebtedness. The church at Jacksonville, Florida, had suspended services and little remained of it but a half completed structure on a heavily mortgaged lot of ground. The church in Washington city had been rent in twain by miserable internal dissensions, and was practically worse than dead. And the other churches were in such a state of collapse that in the entire jurisdiction there was but one church, Christ church, Cumberland, Md., which was really self-supporting. The whole outlook for the Church in the southern jurisdiction was therefore most discouraging, as I very clearly saw, at the time of my acceptance of that charge, and of course it was still more so at the end of six months, when I found myself at liberty to give myself to the work there. Since then some eighteen months have passed, and though the ground previously lost has not been recovered, unquestionably the things that remained have been greatly strengthened. All our churches have taken deeper root and become more firmly established during the past winter, and especially have they recently been greatly encouraged and strengthened by a generous gift of \$12,000 to the Bishop Cummins Memorial church from Mrs. Thomas H. Powers. By this munificent gift, that church has been relieved of its most pressing burden and happily saved to the cause, and both the other churches in Baltimore greatly helped. We trust at the next meeting of the council you will receive, by the blessing of the Lord, a brighter and more cheering report from the missionary jurisdiction of the South."

The number of all the "Reformed Episcopal Church" is 72; number of "bishops," 10; showing plainly that however they differ from the Episcopal Church in doctrine and worship, they believe in episcopacy.

Diocesan Intelligence.

MONTREAL.

From Our Own Correspondent.

DUNHAM.—This parish has had a series of ecclesiastical engagements this week. This Bishop preached on Wednesday. On Thursday was held the visitation of the Ladies' College by the Lord Bishop and Ven. Archdeacon Lindsay, with other clergy of the deanery, and a brilliant gathering of talent and beauty for a social, literary, and musical entertainment in the evening. On Sunday his Lordship holds a confirmation in the parish church, and another in East Durham. In the evening he preaches again in the parish church, when he is to induct formally, the Rev. John Kerr, who has been actually in possession nigh unto six months. On the assumption that it will give an impressive lesson to the people on the due relation of clergyman and congregation to each other, the saying: "Better late than never," will probably apply.

The Coffee Room, first broached by the Cathedral Band of Hope, has taken shape, and is now in working order. The Ladies' Aid, in connection with the Cathedral, realized over \$800 by their bazaar. They took the field early, and have profited accordingly.

Great preparations are being made by the Independents and Methodists for the remembrance of Christmas by their Sunday-schools, so far as feasting and giving gifts to their children will tend to do so. In many places they out do Church people in this matter. As it has often been remarked of late years, great is the change that has come over them, es-

pecially the first, in this matter. The Methodists, indeed, have always kept Christmas, and of them we cannot say what can be said of the Independents and Presbyterians.

ONTARIO.

From Our Own Correspondent.

BROCKVILLE.—*St. Peter's.*—A confirmation, on Sunday, Jan. 29, at 11 a.m., and missionary meeting at 7 p.m. *St. James'*, Maitland, confirmation and missionary meeting at 3 p.m. *St. John's*, Prescott, missionary meeting on Monday, Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m., and confirmation on Tuesday, Jan. 31, at 11 a.m. Missionary meetings at Iroquois, Tuesday, Jan. 31, at 7 p.m.; Morrisburg, Wednesday, Feb. 1; Cardinal, Thursday, Feb. 2; Kempville, Friday, Feb. 3. At these meetings addresses on missionary work will be delivered by the Bishop of the diocese, and the Revs. W. Lewin, G. W. White, C. P. Emery, and R. Lewis.
W. LEWIS, Rural-dean.

His Lordship the Bishop has appointed the following standing committees for the ensuing year. The full list had not been made out at the time of our last issue.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:—The Very Reverend the Dean, Ven. Archdeacon Lauder, Ven. Archdeacon Bedford-Jones, Rev. Canon Mulock, Rev. Messrs. G. W. White, J. W. Burke, H. Pollard, Lewis, C. P. Emery, G. J. Lowe, and the clerical secretary; Messrs. J. A. Henderson, q.c., Dr. Bristol, Dr. Wilson, Judge Macdonald, A. J. Matheson, H. Hartney, R. T. Walkem, q.c., S. Keefer, D. Ford Jones, m.p., the lay secretary and the treasurer.

CLERGY TRUST FUND:—Ven. Archdeacon Lander, Revs. Messrs. Nesbitt, Lewis, White, Crawford, Bogert and the clerical secretary; Messrs. J. A. Henderson, q.c., d.c.l., A. J. Matheson, Judge Macdonald, R. T. Walkem, q.c., G. A. Kirkpatrick, m.p., q.c., J. Reynolds, and the lay-secretary.

ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE:—Rev. Rural-dean Kirkpatrick, Rev. Mr. Loucks, Rev. C. P. Emery, Rev. Mr. Nesbitt, Rev. Mr. Lewis, D. Collins, D. Ford Jones, m.p., J. A. Henderson, q.c., and the lay-secretary.

WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' FUND COMMITTEE:—Rev. Messrs. Lowe, Bogert, Tighe, White, Nesbitt, and the clerical secretary, Messrs. James Shannon, D. Ford Jones, m.p., D. Collins, Judge Macdonald, and J. Reynolds.

DIVINITY STUDENTS' FUND COMMITTEE:—Rev. Rural-dean Kirkpatrick, Rev. Henry Wilson, d.d., Rev. Rural-dean Bogert, Rev. F. W. Baker, the clerical-secretary, the lay-secretary, R. T. Walkem, q.c., G. A. Kirkpatrick, m.p., q.c., D. F. Jones, m.p., and James Shannon.

BOOK AND TRACT COMMITTEE:—Rev. W. B. Carey, Rev. Rural-dean Bogert, Rev. Henry Wilson, d.d., Rev. W. Lewin, Rev. Rural-dean Kirkpatrick, Rev. Canon Mulock, Rev. Canon Forest, Rev. T. Bousfield, the clerical secretary and the lay-secretary.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:—Ven. Archdeacon Bedford-Jones, Rev. S. Tighe, Rev. W. Lewin, the clerical secretary, the lay-secretary, the treasurer, Judge Macdonald, Dr. Wilson, and R. J. Matheson.

LAND COMMITTEE:—Rev. Rural-dean Kirkpatrick, J. A. Henderson, q.c., d.c.l., James Shannon, E. Rose, and R. T. Walkem, q.c.

FOREIGN MISSIONS:—Ven. Archdeacon Bedford-Jones, Rev. Rural-dean Kirkpatrick, Rev. Henry Wilson, d.d., Rev. C. P. Emery, Rev. K. L. Jones, b.d., Rev. G. Lewin, D. Collins, Dr. Smythe, R. V. Rogers, and S. Keefer, c.e.

OTTAWA.—Complaints are made that when the Holy Communion is celebrated in the churches in this city on festivals which happen to come on week days, the hour of half-past nine, which seems to be fixed upon for the purpose, is not a suitable time for business men to attend.

TORONTO.

Synod Office.—Collections, etc., received during the week ending December 17th, 1881.

WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' FUND.—*Payments under the new Canon:* Rev. Septimus Jones, \$11.25; Rev. C. J. S. Bethune, \$7.20; Rev. P. Tocque, \$5; Rev. C. L. Ingles, \$7.20; Rev. O. G. Dobbs, \$8.05; Rev. Wm. Jupp, \$11.60.

October Collections: Trinity College School Chapel, Port Hope, \$9.73; Uxbridge, \$24.59; Greenbank, \$1.86; Goodwood, \$1.25; Brooklin and Columbus, St. Paul's, \$2; St. Thomas, \$1.80; Cartwright, \$16.68.

MISSION FUND.—*Thanksgiving Collection:*—Uxbridge, \$14.95; Goodwood, \$1.06.

Missionary Service:—St. Mark's, Port Hope, \$5.

HORNING'S MILLS.—Rev. R. A. Rooney begs to acknowledge, with gratitude, the receipt of a number of Sunday-school Leaflets and copies of *Christian Soldiers*, from Mrs. Langstaff, through the Rev. O. P. Ford, and also the receipt of a box of very nice articles, and \$2.00 in money for Christmas tree from Mr. E. Wragge and family.

Churchwomen's Mission Aid.—Mrs. O'Reilly, 31 Bleeker-street, acknowledges, with thanks, the receipt of \$25 through the post for this Society, from "A Member of Holy Trinity Church."

MARKHAM.—The Rev. Anthony Hart has recently received a kindly and affectionate address from the members of his congregation, accompanied with a number of valuable presents suitable for the approaching season, for himself and family. Mr. Hart, in his reply, after thanking his people for this fresh token of esteem for himself and wife, referred to the many former acts of kindness he had received from his people, to the uniformly good relations which have ever subsisted between them as pastor and people, and said that now he felt himself under new bonds and obligations to do everything in his power to advance the temporal and spiritual interests of his people.

NIAGARA.

From Our Own Correspondent.

HAMILTON.—Receipts at Synod Office during the month of November, 1881.

MISSION FUND.—*Offering Collections:* Norval, \$2.25; West Flamboro', \$6; Burlington, \$5; Welland, \$4.90; Fonthill, \$2.20. *Parochial Collections:* St. George's, St. Catharines, \$148.57; *On Guarantee Account:* Cayuga, \$125.00; Saltfleet, \$42.50; Drew, \$12.50; Binbrook, \$78.81; Luther, \$27; Caledonia, \$108.84; West Flamboro', \$30; Drayton, \$15; Rockton, \$22.50.

WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' FUND.—*Offering Collections:* Waterdown, \$2; Aldershot, \$2; Louth and Port Dalhousie, \$5.71; Dunnville, \$7.

ALGOMA AND N. W. MISSION FUND.—*Offering Collections:*—Nanticoke, \$5.09; Cheapside, \$1.08; Stewarttown, \$5; Norval, \$5.40; Grantham, \$1.73; Homer, \$1.12; Merriton, \$1.21; St. Thomas, St. Catharines, \$16.46. *Thanksgiving Collections:* Dunnville, \$10.25; Grimsby, \$18.50; Louth and Port Dalhousie, \$6.05; Grantham, \$7.10; Homer, 75c.; Merriton, \$2.60.

DIVINITY STUDENTS' FUND.—*Offering Collections:* Waterdown, 50c.; Aldershot, \$1.80; Stewarttown, \$2; Norval, \$1.60; Niagara Falls, \$3.85; Amaranth and East Luther, \$5; Grantham, \$1.72; Homer, \$1.12; Merriton, \$1.20.

STEVENSVILLE.—The Archdeacon of Niagara lately visited this village to make arrangements to continue the Church services for the winter which have been held during the summer with marked success, and under the practical and earnest guidance of the Archdeacon, the Church people here readily secured the one hundred dollars, which is equal to \$200 per annum, and at the same time they made a present of \$54 to the clergyman who had been serving them during the summer. All this was done under the guidance of the archdeacon in a place where a Church service had not been held for ten years before, and furnishes another item of Church awakening in our midst for the Rev. Rural-dean Ball, and an instance of what one or two earnest Church workers can do when they set about it with a will.

HURON.

From Our Own Correspondent.

LONDON.—The annual concert was given recently by the pupils of the Hellmuth Ladies' College, in the presence of a large number of the friends of the institution. The interesting programme was admirably rendered. Before "God Save the Queen," the Bishop of Huron presented the Governor-General's silver medal to Miss Helen Roberts, of Charlottetown P. E. I., and to Miss Seaborne, of Thamesford, Ont., the College diploma. A congratulatory address, signed by the staff and pupils, was also presented to Miss Clinton, the lady principal, testifying in the warmest manner to her well-merited popularity. The term just brought to a close has been a remarkably successful one. More than 120 pupils (about 100 of these resident within the college), have attended the cours

of instruction, and their bright faces on this occasion bore cheering testimony to their health and happiness. They are now enjoying a well-earned vacation, and the writer is sure that your readers will heartily unite in wishing them one and all "a merry Christmas and a happy New Year."

THE meeting of the standing committee of the Synod of Huron last week was largely attended, forty-three members having been present and taken part in the proceedings. Mr. Gray, of Woodstock, having called the attention of the committee to the recent publications of anonymous pamphlets and letters which had been scattered throughout the diocese, a long discussion on the subject ensued. It was finally moved, seconded, and carried that these publications are designed to retard the growth of the Church, and whereas a clergyman of the Church admitted that he was the author of those publications, therefore resolved that they, the standing committee of the diocese, desire to put on record the following: This committee recommend that the Synod, by the adoption of a canon or canons, or amendment to existing canons, exercise a necessary and due supervision over its stipendiaries, that when in the judgment of the Synod it should be deemed well for the interest of the Church it should have the power through its executive head, the Bishop, to dispense with the service of any such stipendiary; and further, this committee would recommend that the said canon, or amended canon, should be made so comprehensive that the Synod should be empowered to take such steps as they may deem expedient for the most efficient work of the Church in the case of any clergyman of this diocese, whom after examination held by the Synod is not doing the work for which the Synod sent and pays him either from Synod or trust funds or the offerings of the people. This committee respectfully and affectionately assures our beloved bishop of the high and undiminished appreciation of his zeal and liberality, as well as of his integrity and impartiality, as under God the chief pastor and head of the Church in this diocese.

BELMONT.—A meeting in connection with the diocesan missions was held in this church on the evening of the 13th inst. Mr. Fortin, incumbent, presided. Excellent addresses were delivered by Rev. R. Fletcher, of London East, and Rev. G. G. Ballard, of Trinity church, St. Thomas. The meeting was very successful.

CRONYN MEMORIAL CHURCH.—There was a large assembly in the Sunday-schoolroom at the annual festival on Wednesday evening, Dec. 14th. The chair was occupied by V. Cronyn in the absence of the rector, Rev. J. B. Richardson, whose serious illness prevented him from being present. The Rev. J. P. Lewis, of Grace church, Toronto, having been introduced by the chairman, gave a brief address. The evening was passed very pleasantly. All enjoyed the charms of music and the social meeting of friends.

DUFFERIN COLLEGE.—December 13th was also a festive evening here. The hall was crowded with visitors to witness the closing entertainment given by the students before leaving for their Christmas holidays. The little stage having been refitted for the occasion looked very well. The music from the Dufferin College band was very favourably received. During the interval of the proceeding the Rev. Dr. addressed the meeting. The "Moir" gold medal was awarded to Master G. Aldrick, and a certificate of merit from his Excellency the Marquis of Lorne to H. W. Merritt, of St. Catharines.

LAMBTON.—The next meeting of the Ruri-decanal Chapter is announced to be held in Forest on the 4th and 5th prox., where a full attendance of the clergy is looked for. The sermon ad-clereim is to be preached by the Rev. David Armstrong, d.d., of Moore, and secretary of the Chapter. A meeting of a missionary character will be held, and addresses delivered by several of the clergy, and as the incumbent, the Rev. S. L. Smith, is one of our conservative and hard-working clergymen, no doubt he will work up his parish and have a large attendance at both the services and meetings.

SARNIA.—The Rev. T. S. Ellerby is considered a little better, but his medical advisers have grave doubts about his case, in fact, it is thought he will resign immediately—probably during the Bishop's visit this winter. The appointment of his successor will be in the hands of the Bishop. Two of the clergy of Huron are now ill from paralysis. Verily, there must be a cause. Can it be over-work of mind and body? If so, a remedy should be applied, either by reducing the size of our parishes or increasing the number of the clergy.

ST. MARY'S, PERTH CO.—The Ladies' Aid Association of St. James' church have been holding a bazaar in the old Town Hall. A very large number of useful articles have been sold at fair prices. The congregation of St. James' is not large, as this is a Scotch settlement, and the good folk hold the principles of John Knox pretty fast, though the solemn league is merely as a myth of Auld Lang Syne.

MOORE.—This parish is all alive just now in making more than ordinary preparations for Christmas and the holidays, and the young people are working hard in their department of church decorations, Christmas Tree arrangements, and Sunday-school festivals, so that for many years past we have not such an amount of activity and interest in church work as now, but the parish is too large for anything like organization, hence the incumbent finds it very difficult to give each part of the work that personal supervision which some would consider not only advisable but necessary. We work on, however, hoping for better days.

ALGOMA.

From Our Own Correspondent.

The Rev. W. Crompton, Aspdin P.O., begs gratefully to acknowledge the receipt of one dollar, which is according to request from "a Churchwoman," Toronto, placed to the credit of the church at Burk's Falls.

ROSSEAU.—The Rev. Alfred W. H. Chowne begs to acknowledge with thanks kneelers for the altar in the Church of the Redeemer from Mr. H. Ditchburn, Also 500 feet of dry lumber from Mr. Beeze for seating the church hall at Ulswater; \$10 from J. Miller Esq., M. D., per Mr. Buckenfield for the same church hall; a handsome gift of altar vessels from the Rev. W. R. Forster, Creemore, per W. B. Sanders, Esq., Stayner, for St. John's church, Ufford, township of Watt.

GRAVENHURST.—The Rev. Thomas Lloyd acknowledges with many thanks the receipt from C. W. M. A. of a box of articles for the Christmas tree; also clothing and bedding distributed among the people who suffered by the late disastrous bush fires.

EMSDALE.—On Sunday, December 4th, the church of St. Mark's was opened for divine worship; the weather was all that could be desired. A large and most reverent congregation assembled at ten o'clock for morning service, when Baptism and Holy Communion was celebrated, at which a goodly number attended. In the afternoon service was held at 2.30, when the attendance was good. There were present at morning and evening service friends from Burk's Falls, distance nine miles, where the Rev. Wm. Crompton has another church in course of erection. The building is frame, and has been erected chiefly through the exertions of our friend Mr. Crompton, which, as the rev. gentleman announced, makes his fourteenth church. The building is 24 x 40, with apse at east end vestry 10 x 12, south porch 8 x 10. The altar cloth (a handsome one) and communion vessels being the gift of friends in England. The building (although far from being finished) is warmed by two stoves, so as to hold service in it at all seasons of the year, and is entirely free from debt. Altogether, it is a day long to be remembered by the people of Emsdale.

RUPERT'S LAND.

From Our Own Correspondent.

WINNIPEG.—Christ Church.—This new church has been erected to take the place of the church of the same name, the congregation having become too large for the building. It is situated on Fonseca and Princess streets in the north ward. The general treatment is after the Early English pointed or lancet style, and when completed will have a nave and chancel 120 x 40 feet, with two transeps, each 30 x 30, a tower 26 feet square over all and 172 feet high, and a vestry 20 x 20 feet. The foundations rest upon oak piles 16 feet long, placed at close centres. The flooring is double, with a layer of tar felt intervening and plaster deafened, making a thoroughly warm one. At present the nave and chancel only are finished. They have space for 517 sittings. Several friends have ordered rich pictured stained glass for the main lights, which are temporarily filled with ground glass. Mrs. Mercer has promised one with the subject of Christ blessing little children, and Mrs. Crotty one of Christ walking on the sea. With

the addition of these the interior effect will be that of a dim religious light. The pulpit is an elaborate piece of Early English Gothic, not yet finished, and is presented by a friend. The font is of pure white marble, hexagonal in form, and designed to correspond with the tracery of the nave windows. The lectern is of very handsomely carved oak, executed in Winnipeg. The chancel arch is a distinguishing feature of the interior, having a height of 42 feet, and a span of 34 feet, resting in clustered shafts and bases with richly foliated caps. The height of the nave is 50 feet from ceiling to floor. The roof is paneled similarly to the chancel, stained and varnished. Gas pipes are laid throughout the building. On each side of the roof are four gablets which, with a louvre ventilator, will furnish sufficient outlet for impure air. Hot-air apparatus will be used in the spring. The external aspect of the portion erected is good; bricks for veneering will be obtained as soon as the weather will permit. The appearance of the west end is very fine, and is due principally to the large west window, 22 x 9 feet, which is filled in with tracery. Great praise is given to Rev. Canon Grisdale, Rev. Mr. Leslie, the ladies of the church, the congregation and its friends for their untiring efforts in erecting a building so creditable both to themselves and the city. The cost so far has been \$16,000. The architects were E. McCoskrie & Co.; the contractors, Selleck & Doidge, the painters Saunders & Grant, and Ashdown & Co. supplied gas fittings, etc. The marble font was given by the family of the late Rev. W. A. Moore, and is a memorial to him. The silver fontlet was given by G. G. Nagy; the texts by Rev. H. T. Leslie; the carpet for the chancel by Mrs. Alexander Logan; the communion linen, beautifully embroidered, and the alms dishes, were given by the ladies of St. John's Ladies' College; a silver chalice by Mrs. Chaplain, England; a pulpit by H. S. Crotty; the lectern by Bishop and Shelton; Mr. Harney lent a beautiful instrument for the opening services. At the opening service, which began at eleven o'clock, there were present the following clergymen: His Lordship the Bishop, Archdeacon Cowley, Revs. Canons Grisdale and O'Meara, S. Pritchard, S. P. Matheson, B.D., H. T. Leslie, B.A., O. Fortin, B.A., A. Stunden, B.A., A. G. Pinkham, R. Young, B.A., M. Jukes. Prayers were read by Rev. Canon Grisdale, Rev. E. Jukes, and his Lordship the Bishop. The lessons were read by Rev. S. Pritchard, and Rev. R. Young; the epistle by Ven. Archdeacon Cowley. His Lordship delivered a very appropriate sermon on Joshua xxiv. 15—"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," after which the Holy Communion was celebrated. On a subsequent day the opening services were continued, morning and evening. In the morning the Rev. Canon O'Meara preached. In the evening there was full choral service. The processional hymn, "Onward, Christian Soldiers!" was sung, Mr. Bush being organist. The anthem, "Oh! clap your hands together all ye people." Evensong was given by the Revs. H. T. Leslie, B.A., and Canon Grisdale. The Rev. S. P. Matheson, of St. John's College, preached on Habakkuk ii. 20: "The Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him." Since the opening of this new church the congregation has increased wonderfully. Last Sunday evening nearly every chair was occupied. The Bishop of Saskatchewan preached from the text, "Godliness is profitable." As usual his remarks were listened to with deep attention. He gave a brief account of Church work in the diocese, and in his closing remarks urged the people to give him a liberal offering for Emanuel College.

A very pleasing incident took place on Friday evening at the residence of W. G. Fonseca while the choir of Christ Church were assembled for the usual weekly practice. After the conclusion of the singing, Mr. Fonseca, as churchwarden, in appropriate terms presented Rev. H. T. Leslie, B.A., assistant minister, with a purse containing \$260, on behalf of the congregation, as a mark of the high esteem in which that gentleman is held. The Rev. Mr. Leslie was completely surprised by the presentation, and was in consequence at a loss for words to fully express his gratitude to the donors. It had always been his aim to work diligently for the great work he had undertaken, and such kindness had to some extent overwhelmed him, and he was at a loss to suitably acknowledge the compliment. He cordially thanked them for their very liberal testimonial.

Biblical Notes and Queries.

In reply to "Inquiry," "Is it necessary that a person baptized outside the Church of England, should be rebaptized in the Church of England before receiving Confirmation. I would observe: The office for the Public Baptism of infants commences with the question "Hath this child been already baptized or no?" The wis-

dom of inserting this precautionary question, will be sufficiently manifest if we consider that a second administration would be unreasonable, inasmuch as it would argue the invalidity of the first. Baptism is in no case to be iterated. The repetition of baptism is sacrilege, but hypothetical baptism in cases of doubt, does not come under this head. Hooker says:—"Iteration of baptism once given, hath been thought a manifest contempt of that ancient apostolic aphorism 'One Lord, one faith, one baptism;' baptism not only one inasmuch as it hath everywhere the same substance, and offereth unto all men the same grace, but one also for that it ought not to be received by any man above once." And in the VII. Sess. of the Council of Trent it is decreed, that if any one affirms, "that baptism administered even by heretics in the Name of the Trinity, with the intention of doing what the Church does, is not true baptism, let him be anathema." Bingham gives an account of the severe censures of the Church against iteration of baptism. Notwithstanding the decree of the Council of Trent, it is well known that the Church of Rome administers baptism a second time to those who conform to her communion from Protestantism. Some of the Irish Roman Catholic priests have stated to me that it is not iteration of baptism, as in such cases they use the conditional form, "If thou hast not been already baptized, I baptize thee, &c."

Bingham, in his "Scholastic History of Lay-Baptism," undertakes to show the necessity of supplying the defects of heretical and schismatical baptism, by Confirmation, or imposition of hands and prayer, upon men's reconciliation and returning to the Catholic Church, in proof of which he says: "That imposition of hands was thought so necessary for heretics upon their return, that even those who had received it before, in their heretical baptism received it again when they are reconciled to the Church." It has been the practice to reconfirm the Irish Catholic converts received into the Irish Church. Some of the English Clergy ventured to censure the proceeding, which called forth Dr. Stopford, late Archdeacon of Meath, who has furnished able arguments drawn from canon, law ancient and modern, Roman and English, in favour of the course which the Irish prelates have pursued. The late Bishop Hopkins, of Vermont, has been in the habit of administering confirmation to converts from Romanism, but on different grounds from those of Archdeacon Stopford. Bishop Hopkins says that what passes for confirmation in the Romish Church, is not such in fact because it wants the essential form of the laying on of hands. P. Tocque.

Answers.

ACTS II. 38. I cannot understand J. R. L. in any but a Sabellian sense—"He is too the Father in the Son, by the Holy Spirit, a full embodiment of the Godhead." This admits of no discussion, as being heretical. Again, "In baptizing I have used the Name of the Lord Jesus, as being the Name of the Father, &c." Is his meaning, that he so understands the formula; or, does he alter it into "in the Name of Jesus Christ?" Surely a clergyman dares not alter the words with which a sacrament is administered, against the authority of the English Church, to say nothing of the Church universal!

M. is under a mistake: I did not adopt as mine what I called "the common mode of reconciliation with St. Matt. xxviii. 19—that any one Sacred Person includes the whole Trinity." This is Bp. Wordsworth's explanation, in support of which he quotes Didym., Alex., Augustine; so that it is pretty safe from the charge of heresy. I still favour Dean Plumptre's view, which I hope will receive the critical attention of your readers. B. D.

Query.

ST. LUKE xxii. 34. "The cock shall not crow this day, until" &c. The article before "cock" is wanting in the Greek: I see two ways of accounting for the omission, but I know not which is the more certain. 1. The familiar bird whose note marked the familiar and technical divisions, the midnight and morning cockcrow, needed not the article to distinguish it. 2. The word may be taken as strictly indefinite, and the time as not the usual periods, but the varying and irregular cockcrowings which are sometimes heard before the exact time; thus—"Not a cock shall chance to crow, until" &c.

I should be glad to know what others think.

B. D.

** Owing to the marked improvement in all branches of industry, good harvest and good prices, almost every family would take the Churchman if our friends would make known our liberal offer.

In every parish a large number of new subscribers can be obtained if some friends will kindly make known our liberal offer.

Correspondence.

All Letters will appear with the names of the writers in full and we do not hold ourselves responsible for their opinions.

IS THE CHURCH VISIBLE OR INVISIBLE?

SIR,—This seems to me to be quite another question to the old one: viz., Are non-episcopal bodies parts of the Church? In fact the great majority of the members of non-episcopal bodies by their conversation and arguments claim that their bodies are parts of the Church, thus at once giving their opinion on the subject.

Some time ago the question arose in the Presbyterian Synod, "Is the Church of Rome still part of the Church, or has it excommunicated itself by error? This question arose out of another; viz., The Validity of Roman Orders; this shows us the idea this body had in its mind when speaking of "the Church." How any earnest student could miss seeing a visible Church in the New Testament is a mystery. What can such passages as the following mean, if the Church be not visible:—Acts v. 11, "Fear came on all the church." Acts viii. 1, "a great persecution against the church." Acts xx. 17, "the elders of the church." 1 Tim. iii. 5, to "take care of the church, &c." 3 St. John 10, "and casteth them out of the church." And there are several other passages which cannot be given. If the Church be invisible, what sympathy can there be among Christians? How can we "love the brotherhood?" for not being able to read the heart of another, how can we tell he is our brother in the faith? This is put very clearly by one of the most profound of Irish divines:—"One of the evils of this refinement of the Church into the ideal company of the elect is, that it cuts all the tenderest nerves of sympathy between godly men and the visible Church of God around them. It is impossible for them to sympathize on purely scriptural grounds, with a society which they have been taught to imagine is nowhere recognized in Scripture. It may be a valuable community, but it is not theirs. They admit it to be a useful machinery perhaps—a tolerable instrument as times go, for spiritual benefit . . . but not an immediate appointment of divine superintendance, dear for . . . Christ's sake. And thus . . . calculation takes the place of a bright and happy enthusiasm, the spouse is regarded as a useful slave, not as amid all her misfortunes the still cherished Bride of Christ. And thus instead of the topics that St. Paul has given us, and Isaiah, and the Lord himself, we have to descend to low calculations of economic utility."

I was always under the impression that I belonged to the Evangelical school, but I must own I never knew that the most dangerous doctrine of Plymouthism was held by the majority of "Low Churchmen"

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully,

Louville, Ont.,
Dec. 8th, 1881.

WM. BEAVEN.

ALGOMA

SIR,—It is a great pleasure to me to inform you that I have been enabled to complete the church of St. Mark at Emsdale, so far as to have services therein. We opened this church on Sunday, Dec. 4th. There was service in the morning at which I baptized an infant, and celebrated the Lord's Supper. We had twelve communicants. Evensong was held in the afternoon, and at both services we had excellent congregations. During the services I gave plain and simple explanations of everything connected with the church, such as (a) why built towards the East, (b) south porch, lectern, prayer desk, &c., &c., which appeared to be highly appreciated. It is now upwards of six years I first met the congregation at this place, and I can assure you we were, one and all, highly pleased that by God's gracious goodness we have been able to progress so far. To St. Mark's church, Hamilton, belongs the honour of being the first contributors to the good work, from whom also came the alms dish.

The church at Emsdale is entirely free from debt, funds having been sent me from England in answer to my appeals. They have also a beautiful set of vessels, a surplice and stole. The altar cloth is a valuable one sent from England. It is scarlet cloth, fringed with gold and green silk cord, and having along the bottom stars of Bethlehem embroidered with gold cord.

We had many people present at our opening services belonging to the sects, but all were very reverent and devotional.

I ought not to omit mentioning that \$50 of the money spent was raised by a member of the congregation, Mrs. McWilliams, during a visit she paid to the front

last summer. Members of the Church came from Burk's Falls, nine miles distant, and other places still more remote. As now invariably happens I was assailed by several men to go to different places, but felt compelled to tell them the simple truth which is this:—"From want of funds our Bishop cannot get clergymen; and as for myself I was receiving no encouragement whatever from the members of the Church outside of Muskoka in Canada. . . I had been constantly begging for bread for the children of God here in the wilderness, and I did not even get a stone, for they sent nothing. Burk's Falls church therefore must stand still." On the same Sunday evening I went down to Cyprus P. O., and there held service for a large congregation, about fifty adults, baptized two children. Of course I was begged of to come again, but really I did not feel that I could hold out any hopes of my doing so.

I have omitted to mention that I have not only secured the church site, but also three acres of ground at Emsdale, on which we are to erect a parsonage . . . when the kye come home.

Yours, &c.,

WILLIAM CROMPTON.

Travelling Clergyman, Dio. Algoma.
Aspdin P. O., Dec. 6th, 1881.

FORGIVENESS OF SIN.

SIR,—I think it strange that scholars of the Church of England should encourage private confession to ministers; any man who attentively reads St. Matt. vi. 12, and compares it with v. 15, will perceive, if he fulfil the required conditions the Father will forgive him, and if he forgive who shall condemn him?

Again, every physician is supposed to have a stock of medicines on hand to cure his patients. The Lord has sent forth physicians to cure many of the diseases to which flesh is heir, chronic diseases, as leprosy, &c., they cure by water, Acts ii. 33, &c.; relapses they cure by wine, St. Matt. xxvi. 28. He did not send them unprovided with remedies, but opened for all mankind a large dispensary. He told them these were the means of forgiveness, though, of course, they are supposed to understand who should be forgiven, or from whom they should withhold either water or wine, for by this means they retain a man in his sins. It has not, Lord be thanked, been left to any man, or body of men, to forgive whom they please, or to condemn whom they think fit; they can forgive only by the appointed means, or rather they can only use the appointed means for forgiveness: it is the Lord who remits sin by their ministrations. If they refuse to baptize any one, they retain him in his sins &c. In St. James v. 14, 15, the tense is to be observed; the Apostle does not say, if any will be sick among you; because he knew the apostolic gift of healing would not be continued in the Church. On seeing him repentant, I suppose they forgave him his sins by the appointed method for baptized persons: viz., the Lord's Supper. See also St. Mark xvi. 17, 18, (Remark the aorist or past-participle used as a noun, *pistiasasi*). I think clergymen now forgive as St. Paul did, that is, they forgive only in the person of Christ. But in this case others forgave before St. Paul did, so that they probably were public crimes (2 Cor. ii. 10), committed against the discipline of the Church.

Yours, &c.,

Wallacetown.

WM. MONSON.

Dec. 12th, 1881.

S. S. Teacher's Assistant TO THE INSTITUTE LEAFLETS.

No. 6.

THE Collect for Circumcision day is one of the oldest in our Prayer Book, being found in the "Sacramentary" of Gregory, A. D. 590. Some of the Collects, however, are one hundred years older so far as they can be traced back. Previously to that period, they seem to have used (instead of "Collects for the day") a hymn of praise or meditation on the subject of the Gospel for the day. The Eastern part of the Church Catholic have not yet introduced this custom of Collects, being greatly attached to the older forms of worship. It is a great point to feel that we are using "forms of sound words" which have been used by the saints, for so much as twelve or thirteen hundred years.

This festival of Circumcision falls always now on New Year's day: it was at first regarded rather as simply the "Octave" or eighth day after Christmas. It is not much more than one hundred years since New Year's day was changed from 25th March to 1st January; so that the festival had not at first any reference to the beginning of the year. It is, however,

an appropriate thought for the first day of our New Year—the first act of obedience in the earthly life of Christ, and it was His first taste of suffering, His first experience of blood-shedding. The First of January, or Kalends of January, used to be marked by a heathen observance called "Saturnalia"—a time of horrible riot and immorality. What a glorious change has the Church's Festival wrought in the New Year!

The festival of the "Circumcision of Christ" necessarily falls on the eighth day after Christmas, because the Jewish children were ordered to be circumcised on the eighth day after birth. The word itself means a "cutting around," because a cut was made in the flesh of the child, marking it in a peculiar way. It was, of course very painful, and the painlessness of baptism (which we use now instead of it) serves to distinguish the blessed character of the Christian "covenant," or agreement between God and man.

We must not suppose that God imposed this painful rite on His Jewish people, without their understanding it. The Old Testament shews that from the very first the "true circumcision of the Spirit" was understood to be typified by the rite. All religious rites or observances have religious meanings.

We must not forget to connect with this day, also, the fact that Christ then received His Name of "Jesus;" just as we receive our "Christian name" in baptism ever since—when we are "Christened," that is made Christ's own, His soldiers and servants unto our life's end. Let us not then forget that circumcision means for us obedience to Christ, keeping down our fleshly lusts.

THE PRESENTATION.

A great deal of the teaching of the Old Testament was what is called symbolical, that is, its spiritual realities were represented by outward signs and ritual acts. Thus the clinging taint of original and the corruptions of actual sin were represented by those ceremonial defilements connected with origin of life, and especially with its end. "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin hath my mother conceived me" (Psalm li. 5), "And the wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23), are the two facts represented by these symbolical acts. And so the mother was Levitically unclean for forty or for eighty days, according as her child was a son or a daughter, (Lev. xii.). After that she was required to offer for her purification a lamb for a burnt, and a turtledove or young pigeon for a sin offering—or, in case of poverty, two turtledoves or two young pigeons. We remember that the Mother of Jesus availed herself of that provision for the poor, when at the same time she presented in the Temple the Royal Babe her first-born Son. On bringing her offering she would enter the Temple through the gate of the Firstborn, and stand in waiting at the gate of Nicanor, from the time that the incense was kindled on the golden altar. Behind her in the court of the women, was the crowd of worshippers, while she herself, at the top of the Levites' steps which led up to the great court, would witness all that passed in the Sanctuary. At last, one of the priests would come to her at the gate of Nicanor, and take from her hand the poor's offering which she had brought. The morning sacrifice was ended, and but few would linger behind, while the offering of her Purification was actually made. She who brought it mingled prayer and thanksgiving with the service. And now, once more, the priest approached her, and sprinkling her with the sacrificial blood, declared her cleansed.

Her first born was next received at the hand of the priest with five shekels of silver, two benedictions being at the same time pronounced, one for the happy event which had enriched the family with a first born; the other for the law of redemption. The whole ceremony was intended to teach God's people that the new life belonged wholly to Him. It was on the part of the parents an acknowledgment of that truth; and a dedication of that life to Him. After this, when with grateful hearts and solemnized spirits, the Blessed Virgin descended those fifteen steps where the Levites were wont to sing "the Hallel;" a sudden light of heavenly joy filled the heart of the holy Simeon, and inspired his lips to utter the triumphant song "Nunc Dimittis." The practical lessons then which we learn from the ceremonies alluded to in to-day's lesson are:—

I. Our need of forgiveness, purification, cleansing from sin.

II. The duty of repentance, cutting off of sinful habits, pluck out right eye, cut off right hand.

III. The duty of giving our life wholly up to God's service.

Each of our present readers can send us one new subscriber without much trouble, and a great many can send half a dozen or more.

Quite a number of persons have availed themselves of our liberal offer. Others should do so at once.

Children's Department.

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

ADVENT IS OVER. Christmas is here. The holy song, chanted by angel voices on the Saviour's birthnight, above the fields of Bethlehem, will find its echo to-day in every region of the earth. It will be sung in stately cathedrals, and in quiet village churches, in lowly cottages, and on the wide ocean. Wherever Christ's Name is named, there is Christmas joy to-day. Anthems and carols are sung, churches are dressed with holly and bay, and holy solemnities are kept. Christian homes are decked with green boughs, and Christian families assemble together and rejoice. Every nation has its own way of showing Christmas joy. In England we have happy fireside meetings; our children sing carols, and receive presents; every body has a kind wish for his neighbour: and the rich are accustomed to show their gratitude for the blessings of the day by dispensing gifts to the poor. In northern countries, such as Sweden and Norway, where through the long dreary winters the horses and cattle are kept entirely within doors, a double allowance of food is dispensed to each, that the dumb creatures may share in man's joy. A sheaf of corn, too, is set upon a pole in front of every house, that the little birds may have plenty and rejoice. Throughout Germany a bright Christmas-tree shines in every home, whether palace or cottage, and tells of the Light of the world which lit up the stable at Bethlehem to-day. In India, where even at Christmas the weather is hot, I have been told that nosegays of gorgeous tropical flowers are placed in the churches on the stands for books, one for every worshipper. These pleasant customs are all good, if they are the genuine fruit of Christian joy in the heart: only we must take care, each one for himself, that our joy is Christian, and beware lest in our happiness we forget the great and glorious event from whence it took its rise. After the holy Child was born, and the angels had rejoiced, and the shepherds had worshipped, Mary, we are told, "kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart." This is what we should strive to do: one little girl I knew who was enabled to do so on the last Christmas day she spent on earth.

Agnes white was born in a small country village towards the south of England, and was sent early to its school. It was a homely, quiet place; its children had none but simple pleasures, and the most prized of them were gathered round Christmas-tide. You shall hear how they spent it. When the Advent Collect gave notice that Christmas was coming, preparations for the carol singing began in the school. First the words were learnt, and then the tunes, all the little hearts being set on the coming festival. School broke up on the 23rd of December; but the elder boys and girls were allowed to bring green boughs and dress up the school-room, while their elders were doing the same thing for the church. Very pleasant they thought it; and when it was over they sung through the carols, and ran home, their mistress telling them to mind and put on plenty of warm things against she saw them again. At seven o'clock they met at her door, glowing with their run in the cold air, the boys muffled up with gay worsted comforters, and the girls in cloaks, or their mothers' shawls. She arranged her little party, and taking the youngest child by the hand, walked with them to Squire Wilmot's house. They crept before his dining-room windows, and then began their liveliest carol. The shutters were soon thrown back,

and the windows opened. The ladies and gentlemen listened, and thanked them; then they handed biscuits and fruit out of window, and sent them elder wine. Wishing their friends a merry Christmas, the singers hastened away to the parsonage. They were expected there; so the windows were open, and two little heads peeping out of them. The carols over, the singers were brought into the warm room all gay with holly, and were feasted with cake and good things, till they were dismissed each with a Christmas present, the boys to run home, and the girls to keep by their mistress's side, till she dropped them one by one at their mother's door. Such was Christmas Eve! And the festival itself, how delightful it was! There were no lessons at morning school, but Christmas hymns, and texts, and there were pictures of Bethlehem and the holy Child; and the church was so beautiful, and the singing such a pleasure, and then the happy meeting with elder brothers and sisters at home, and the Christmas dinner and merry evening!

Eight of these bright seasons had Agnes White known since at five years old she first went to Hadley School; the ninth found her stretched on a bed of sickness. She had taken cold a few weeks before, inflammation of the lungs had followed, and was plainly bringing her to the grave. You shall hear how she passed her last Christmas on earth. Her kind schoolmistress, Mrs. Best was unable to go and see her till the afternoon service was over: she then hastened to her bed-side, and found her alone. A print of Bethlehem was pinned to her bed; her Bible, open at the second chapter of St. Luke, was in her hand; and the book-marker, which had dropped from it, bore the words—

"Unto us a child is born."

"A happy Christmas to you, my dear child!" said Mrs. Best. "I could not come sooner to say it; but I'm afraid it's dull for you alone." "Oh, no, mistress, not dull!" answered Agnes with a smile. "I heard the carol-singing last night: it was a good way off; but I knew the old words, and said them over till I went to sleep. I could not rest much—I never do now—but I shut my eyes, and then I seemed to see the stable at Bethlehem, and the child Jesus in the manger." "And what then, dear child?" asked Mrs. Best. "Then," said Agnes, in a low voice, "I prayed, 'By the mystery of Thy holy incarnation, by Thy holy nativity, good Lord, deliver us.'" Mrs. Best was silent a little; then she roused herself, and said, "And how has to-day passed, my dear?" "The children brought me their presents to look at to-day; and this one for me," said the little girl, pointing to the picture of Bethlehem. "Look, that is where Jesus Christ was born; and those are the fields where the shepherds watched their flocks by night; I do like to look at it. And mother has read me the lessons, and some of the prayers. Oh, no! it has not been a dull Christmas, though I did fret at first at not getting to church, or not going out carol-singing." "Perhaps," said her kind friend, "you have thought more about Jesus Christ and good things since you've been laid here, than when you were strong and well." Agnes was silent for a minute; then she whispered, "Well, I do." As the good schoolmistress walked home she said to herself, "I doubt that pretty lamb will never see another Christmas in this world. It is a happy thing she has made such good use of this one."

The little girl's death was even nearer than her friends expected,—she did not outlive that Christmas-tide. On New Year's Eve she suddenly broke a blood-vessel, and died before midnight. Her mother bent down, and could just distinguish the words, "Glory to God in the highest." [They were the last she uttered, and in a few minutes all was over.]

After morning prayers on the Feast of Epiphany, the mortal remains of Agnes White were laid to rest in the church-

yard through which she had so often trodden on her way to the house of prayer. A simple stone marks the spot, and is thus inscribed:—"Agnes White, died New Year's Eve, 185—, aged 13 years. 'Glory to God in the highest.'"

HOW IT ALL HAPPENED.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

It was a small room with nothing in it but a bed, two chairs, and a big chest. A few little gowns hung on the walls on the wall, and the only picture was the wintry sky, sparkling with stars, framed by the uncurtained window. But the moon, pausing to peep, saw something pretty and heard something pleasant. Two heads in little round night-caps lay on one pillow, two pairs of wide-awake blue eyes stared up at the light, and two tongues were going like mill clappers.

"I'm so glad we got our shirts done in time! It seemed as if we never should, and I don't think six cents is half enough for a great red flannel thing with three button-holes—do you?" said one little voice, rather wearily.

"No; but then we each made four, and fifty cents is a good deal of money. Are you sorry we didn't keep our quarters to ourselves?" asked the other voice, with an undertone of regret in it. "Yes, I am, till I think how pleased the children will be with our tree, for they don't expect anything, and will be so surprised. I wish we had more toys to put on it, for it looks so small and mean with only three or four things."

"It won't hold any more, so I wouldn't worry about it. The toys are very red and yellow, and I guess the babies won't know how cheap they are, but like them as much as if they cost heaps of money."

This was a cheery voice, and as it spoke the four blue eyes turned toward the chest under the window, and the kind moon did her best to light up the tiny tree standing there. A very pitiful little tree it was—only a branch of hemlock in an old flower-pot, propped up with bits of coal, and hung with a few penny toys earned by the patient fingers of the elder sisters, that the little ones should not be disappointed.

But in spite of the magical moonlight the broken branch, with its scanty supply of fruit, looked pathetically poor, and one pair of eyes filled slowly with tears, while the other pair lost their happy look, as if a cloud had come over the sunshine.

"Are you crying, Dolly?"

"Not much, Polly."

"What makes you, dear?"

"I didn't know how poor we were till I saw the tree, and then I couldn't help it," sobbed the elder sister, for at twelve she already knew some of the cares of poverty, and missed the happiness that seemed to vanish out of all their lives when father died.

"It's dreadful. 'I never thought we'd have to earn our tree, and only be able to get a broken branch after all, with nothing on it but three sticks of candy, two squeaking dogs, a red cow, and an ugly bird with one feather in its tail; and overcome by a sudden sense of destitution, Polly sobbed even more despairingly than Dolly."

"Hush, dear; we must cry softly, or mother will hear, and come up, and then we shall have to tell. You know we said we wouldn't seem to mind not having any Christmas, she felt so sorry about it."

"I must cry, but I'll be quiet."

So the two heads went under the pillow for a few minutes, and not a sound betrayed them as the little sisters cried softly in one another's arms, lest mother should discover that they were no longer careless children, but brave young creatures trying to bear their share of the burden cheerfully.

When the shower was over the faces came out shining like roses after rain, and the voices went on again as before.

"Don't you really wish there was a Santa Claus, who knew what we wanted,

and would come and put two silver half-dollars in our stockings, so we could go and see *Puss in Boots* at the Museum to-morrow afternoon?"

"Yes, indeed; but we didn't hang up any stockings, you know, because mother had nothing to put in them. It does seem as if rich people might think of poor people now and then. Such little bits of things would make us happy, and it couldn't be much trouble to take two small girls to the play, and give them candy now and then."

"I shall when I'm rich, like Mr. Chrome and Miss Kent. I shall go round every Christmas with a big basket of goodies, and give all the poor children some."

"Perhaps if we sew ever so many flannel shirts we may be rich by-and-by. I should give mother a new bonnet first of all, for I heard Miss Kent say no lady would wear such a shabby one. Mrs. Smith said fine bonnets didn't make real ladies. I like her best, but I do want a locket like Miss Kent's."

"Good-night, Dolly."

"Good-night, Polly."

Two soft kisses were heard, a nestling sound followed, and presently the little sisters lay fast asleep, cheek against cheek, on the pillow wet with their tears, never dreaming what was going to happen to them to-morrow.

Now Miss Kent's room was next to theirs, and as she sat sewing she could hear the children's talk, for they soon forgot to whisper. At first she smiled, then she looked sober, and when the prattle ceased she said to herself, as she glanced about her pleasant chamber:

"Poor little things! they think I'm rich, and envy me, when I'm only a milliner earning my living. I ought to have taken more notice of them, for their mother has a hard time, I fancy, but never complains. I'm sorry they heard what I said, and if I knew how to do it without offending her, I'd trim a nice bonnet for a Christmas gift, for she is a lady, in spite of her old clothes. I can give the children some of the things they want anyhow, and I will. The idea of those mites making a fortune out of shirts at six cents apiece!"

Miss Kent laughed at the innocent delusion, but sympathized with her little neighbours, for she knew all about hard times. She had good wages now, but spent them on herself, and liked to be fine rather than neat. Still, she was a good-hearted girl, and what she had overheard set her to thinking soberly, then to acting kindly, as we shall see.

"If I had n't spent all my money on my dress for the party to-morrow night, I'd give each of them a half-dollar. As I can not, I'll hunt up the other things they wanted, for it's a shame they shouldn't have a bit of Christmas, when they tried so hard to please the little ones."

As she spoke she stirred about her room, and soon had a white apron, an old carnelian heart on a fresh blue ribbon, and two papers of bonbons ready. As no stockings were hung up, she laid a clean towel on the floor before the door, and spread forth the small gifts to look their best.

Miss Kent was so busy that she did not hear a step come quietly up stairs, and Mr. Chrome, the artist, peeped at her through the balusters, wondering what she was about. He soon saw, and watched her with pleasure, thinking she never looked prettier than now.

Presently she caught him at it, and hastened to explain, telling what she had heard, and how she was trying to atone for her past neglect of these young neighbours. Then she said good-night, and both went to their rooms, she to sleep happily, and he to smoke as usual.

But his eye kept turning to some of the "nice little bundles" that lay on his table, as if the story he had heard suggested how he might follow Miss Kent's example. I rather think he would not have disturbed himself if he had not heard the story told in such a soft voice, with a pair of bright eyes full of pity

ooking into his, for little girls were not particularly interesting to him, and he was usually too tired to notice the industrious creatures toiling up and down stairs on various errands, or sewing at the long red seams.

Now that he knew something of their small troubles, he felt as if it would please Miss Kent, and be a good joke, to do his share of the pretty work she had begun.

So presently he jumped up, and opening his parcels, took out two oranges, and two bunches of grapes, then he looked up two silver half-dollars, and stealing into the hall, laid the fruit upon the towel, and the money atop of the oranges. This addition improved the display very much, and Mr. Chrome was stealing back, well pleased, when his eye fell on Miss Kent's door, and he said to himself, "She too shall have a little surprise, for she is a dear, kind-hearted soul."

In his room was a prettily painted plate, and this he filled with green and purple grapes, tucked a sentimental note underneath, and leaving it on her threshold, crept away as stealthily as a burglar.

The house was very quiet when Mrs. Smith, the landlady, came up to turn off the gas. "Well, upon my word, here 's fine doings, to be sure!" she said, when she saw the state of the upper hall. "Now I wouldn't have thought it of Miss Kent, she is such a giddy girl, nor of Mr. Chrome, he is so busy with his own affairs. I meant to give those children each a cake to-morrow, they are such good little things. I'll run down and get them now, as my contribution to this fine set out."

Away trotted Mrs. Smith to her pantry, and picked out a couple of tempting cakes, shaped like hearts and full of plums. There was a goodly array of pies on the shelves, and she took two of them, saying, as she climbed the stairs again, "They remembered the children, so I'll remember them, and have my share of the fun."

So up went the pies, for Mrs. Smith had not much to give, and her spirit was generous, though her pastry was not of the best. It looked very droll to see pies sitting about on the thresholds of closed doors, but the cakes were quite elegant, and filled up the corners of the towel handsomely, for the apron lay in the middle, with the oranges right and left, like two sentinels in yellow uniforms.

It was very late when the flicker of a candle came up stairs, and a pale lady, with a sweet face, appeared, bringing a pair of red and blue mittens for her Dolly and Polly. Poor Mrs. Blake did have a hard time, for she stood all day in a great store that she might earn bread for the poor children who staid at home and took care of one another. Her heart was very heavy that night, because it was the first Christmas she had ever known without gifts and festivity of some sort. But Petkin, the youngest child, had been ill, times were very hard, the little mouths gaped for food like the bills of hungry birds, and there was no tender mate to help fill them.

If any elves had been hovering about the dingy hall just then, they would have seen the tired mother's face brighten beautifully when she discovered the gifts, and found that her little girl had been so kindly remembered. Something more brilliant than the mock diamonds in Miss Kent's best ear-rings fell and glittered on the dusty floor as Mrs. Blake added the mittens to the other things, and went to her lonely room again, smiling as she thought how she could thank them all in a sweet and simple way.

Her windows were full of flowers, for the delicate tastes of the poor lady found great comfort in their beauty. "I have nothing else to give, and these will show how grateful I am," she said, as she rejoiced that the scarlet geraniums were so full of gay clusters, the white chrysanthemum stars were all out, and the pink roses at their loveliest

They slept now, dreaming of a sunny morrow as they were safely sheltered from the bitter cold. But that night was their last, for a gentle hand cut them all, and soon three pretty nosegays stood in a glass, waiting for dawn, to be laid at three doors, with a few grateful words which would surprise and delight the receivers, for flowers were rare in those hard-working lives, and kind deeds often come back to the givers in fairer shapes than they go.

Now one would think there had been gifts enough, and no more could possibly arrive, since all had added his or her mite except Betsey, the maid, who was off on a holiday, and the babies fast asleep in their trundle-bed, with nothing to give but love and kisses. Nobody dreamed that the old cat would take it into her head that her kittens were in danger, because Mrs. Smith had said she thought they were nearly old enough to be given away. But she must have understood, for when all was dark and still, the anxious mother went patting up stairs to the children's door, meaning to hide her babies under their bed, sure they would save them from destruction. Mrs. Blake had shut the door, however, so poor Puss was disappointed; but finding a soft, clean spot among a variety of curious articles, she laid her kits there, and kept them warm all night, with her head pillowed on the blue mittens.

In the cold morning Dolly and Polly got up and scrambled into their clothes, not with joyful haste to see what their stockings held, for they had none, but because they had the little ones to dress while mother got the breakfast.

Dolly opened the door, and started back with a cry of astonishment at the lovely spectacle before her. The other people had taken in their gifts, so nothing destroyed the magnificent effect of the treasures so curiously collected in the night. Puss had left her kits asleep, and gone down to get her own breakfast, and there, in the middle of the ruffled apron, as if in a dainty cradle, lay the two Maltese darlings, with white bibs and boots on, and white tips to the tiny tails curled round their little noses in the sweetest way.

Polly and Dolly could only clasp their hands and look in rapturous silence for a minute; then they went down on their knees and revelled in the unexpected richness before them.

"I do believe there is a Santa Claus, and that he heard us, for here is everything we wanted," said Dolly, holding the carnelian heart in one hand and the plummy one in the other.

"It must have been some kind of a fairy, for we did n't mention kittens, but we wanted one, and here are two darlings," cried Polly, almost purring with delight as the downy bunches unrolled and gaped till their little bits of pink tongues were visible.

"Mrs. Smith was one fairy, I guess, and Miss Kent was another, for that is her apron. I should n't wonder if Mr. Chrome gave us the oranges and money: men always have lots, and his name is on this bit of paper," said Dolly.

"Oh, I'm so glad! Now we shall have a Christmas like other people, and I'll never say again that rich folks don't remember poor folks. Come and show all our treasures to mother and the babies; they must have some," answered Polly, feeling that the world was all right, and life not half as hard as she thought it last night.

Shrieks of delight greeted the sisters, and all that morning there was joy and feasting in Mrs. Blake's room, and in the afternoon Dolly and Polly went to the Museum, and actually saw Puss in Boots; for their mother insisted on their going, having discovered how the hard-earned quarters had been spent. This was such unhopd-for bliss that they could hardly believe it, and kept smiling at one another so brightly that people wondered who the happy little girls in shabby cloaks could be who clapped their new mittens so heartily, and laughed till it was better than music to hear them.

This was a very remarkable Christmas Day, and they long remembered it; for while they were absorbed in the fortunes of the Marquis of Carabas and the funny cat, who tucked his tail in his belt, washed his face so awkwardly, and didn't know how to purr, strange things were happening at home, and more surprises were in store for our little friends. You see, when people once begin to do kindnesses, it is so easy and pleasant they find it hard to leave off; and sometimes it beautifies them so that they find they love one another very much—as Mr. Chrome and Miss Kent did, though we have nothing to do with that except to tell how they made the poor little tree grow and blossom.

They were very jolly at dinner, and talked a good deal about the Blakes, who ate in their own rooms. Miss Kent told what the children said, and it touched the soft spot in all their hearts to hear about the red shirts, though they laughed at Polly's lament over the bird with only one feather in its tail.

"I'd give them a better tree if I had any place to put it, and knew how to trim it up," said Mr. Chrome, with a sudden burst of generosity, which so pleased Miss Kent that her eyes shone like Christmas candles, and she said, "Put it in the back parlour. All the Browns are away for a week, and we'll help you trim it—won't we, my dear?" cried Mrs. Smith, warmly; for she saw that he was in a sociable mood, and thought it a pity that the Blakes should not profit by it.

"Yes, indeed; I should like it of all things, and it need n't cost so much, for I have some skill in trimmings, as you know." And Miss Kent looked so gay and pretty as she spoke that Mr. Chrome made up his mind that millinery must be a delightful occupation.

"Come on then, ladies, and we'll have a little frolic. I am a lonely old bachelor, with nowhere to go to-day, and I'd like some fun."

They had it, I assure you; for they all fell to work as busy as bees, flying and buzzing about with much laughter as they worked their pleasant miracle. Mr. Chrome acted more like the father of a large family than a crusty bachelor, Miss Kent's skillful fingers flew as they never did before, and Mrs. Smith trotted up and down as briskly as if she were sixteen instead of being a stout old woman of sixty.

The children were so full of the play, and telling all about it, that they forgot their tree till after supper; but when they went to look for it they found it gone, and in its place a great paper hand with one finger pointing down stairs, and on it these mysterious words in red ink:

"Look in the Browns' back parlour!" At the door of that interesting apartment they found their mother with Will and Petkin, for another hand had suddenly appeared to them pointing up. The door flew open quite as if it was a fairy play, and they went in to find a pretty tree planted in a red box on the centre table, lighted with candles, hung with gilded nuts, red apples, gay bonbons, and a gift for each.

Mr. Chrome was hidden behind one folding-door, and fat Mrs. Smith squeezed behind the other, and they both thought it a great improvement upon the old-fashioned Santa Claus to have Miss Kent, in the white dress she made for the party, with Mrs. Blake's roses in her hair, step forward as the children gazed in silent rapture, and with a few sweet words welcome them to the little surprise their friends had made.

There were many Christmas trees in the city that night, but none which gave such hearty pleasure as the one which so magically took the place of the broken branch and its few poor toys. They were all there, however, and Dolly and Polly were immensely pleased to see that of all her gifts Petkin chose the forlorn bird to carry to bed with her, the one yellow feather being just to her taste.

Mrs. Blake put on her neat bonnet

and was so gratified that Miss Kent thought it the most successful one she ever trimmed.

She was well paid for it by the thanks of one neighbour and the admiration of another; for when she went to her party Mr. Chrome went with her, and said something on the way which made her heart dance more lightly than her feet that night.

Good Mrs. Smith felt that her house had covered itself with glory by this event, and Dolly and Polly declared that it was the most perfect and delightful surprise party ever seen.

It was all over by nine o'clock, and with good-night kisses for every one the little girls climbed up to bed laden with treasures and too happy for many words. But as they tied their round caps Dolly said, thoughtfully,

"On the whole I think it's rather nice to be poor when people are kind to you."

"Well, I'd rather be rich; but if I can't be, it is very good fun to have Christmas trees like this one," answered truthful Polly, never guessing that they had planted the seed from which the little pine-tree grew so quickly and beautifully.

When the moon came to look in at the window on her nightly round two smiling faces lay on the pillow, which was no longer wet with tears, but rather knobby with the mine of riches hidden underneath—first-fruits of the neighbourly friendship which flourished in that house until another and a merrier Christmas came.

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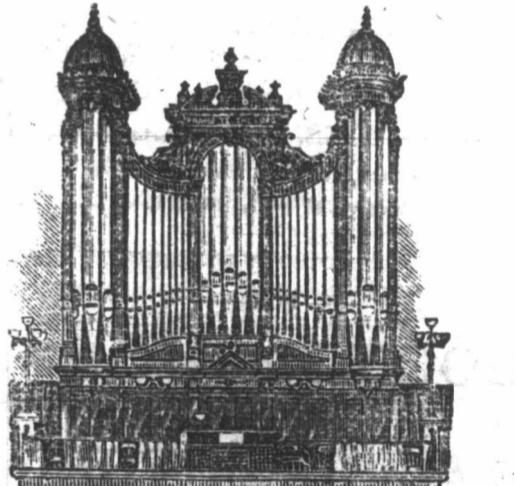


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