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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVIII.]

TORONTO, DECEMBER 31, 1898.

[No. 33.]

AMONG THE ZUNI.

Among the most striking objects of interest in the National Museum at Washington are a number of models of the structures of the Zuni people of Pueblo and elsewhere in New Mexico. Comparatively little was known of their inhabitants till Mr. Frank Cushing, a gentleman on the scientific staff of the Smithsonian Institute at Washington, made a tour of exploration among them. He lived for some months in their houses, gained their confidence, learned their language, and published in *The Century* an interesting account of his adventures among the Zuni. Their villages seem like one vast continuous structure, and are thus described by Mr. Cushing:



AMONG THE ZUNI.

"Imagine," he says, "numerous long, box-shaped adobe (sun-dried brick) ranches connected with one another, in extended rows and squares, with others piled upon them lengthways and crossways, in two, three, even six stories, each receding from the one below it, like the steps of a broken stair-flight—as if it were a gigantic pyramidal mud honeycomb with far outstretching base—and you can gain a fair conception of the architecture of the Zuni. Everywhere this structure bristled with ladder-poles, chimneys and rafters. The ladders were long and heavy, and leaned at all angles against the roofs. The chimneys were made of bottomless earthen pots set one upon the other, and cemented with mud. Wonderfully like the holes of an ant-hill seemed the little windows and doorways which everywhere pierced the walls of this gigantic habitation; and like ant-hills themselves seemed the curious little round-capped ovens

which stood here and there along these walls or on the terraced edges."

The Zuni are an Indian tribe of a considerable degree of civilization. They cultivate the soil with a remarkable success and keep in corrals or stock-yards of cedar posts and sticks a quantity of sheep and cattle, and raise poultry.

The bird's-eye view of the village from the topmost story is thus described: "Spread out below were the blocks of smoothly plastered, flat-roofed adobe houses, red and yellow as the miles of plain from which they rose, pierced by many a black sky-hole, and ladder-poles, and smoke-bannered chimneys were everywhere to be seen. The whole mass was threaded through and through by narrow, often crooked, passage-ways or streets, some like tunnels, leading under the houses from court to court, or street to street. All over the terraces were women, some busy in the alleys

or at the corners below husking great heaps of many-coloured corn, buried to their bushy black bare heads in the golden husks, while children romped in and out, over and under the flaky piles. Others, bringing the grain up the ladders in blankets strapped over their foreheads, spread it out on the terraced roofs to dry. Many in little groups were cutting up peaches, placing them upon squares of white cloth, or slicing pumpkins into long spiral ropes. In one place a woman was gracefully decorating some newly-made jars with heaps of the rude but exquisite bric-a-brac scattered around her—while over, in a convenient shadow, sat an old blind man, busy spinning on his knee with a quaint bobbin-shaped spindle.

whorl." The Zuni are especially skilful in the manufacture of earthenware. The shapes of their pottery are graceful, and the decorative designs with which they are ornamented are particularly elegant. They are well-burned in kilns made for the purpose. The character of some of these will be observed in our engraving.

In order to study their manners, customs, and institutions, Mr. Cushing took up his abode among them for some time, and was on the whole treated with much kindness. They were much averse, however, to have him sketch their portraits, as they conceived that some disastrous effect would result therefrom. When sketching some of their strange dances and religious ceremonies, a good deal of opposition, not without some show of violence, was exhibited. For the feasts accompanying these religious rites great preparations were made. "Oxen," says Mr. Cushing, "were slaughtered by the dozen, and sheep by the hundred." The dancers wore hideous masks in the shape of the heads of hogs and other animals.

The superior intelligence of these people warrants the opinion that they would well repay missionary effort for their conversion to Christian civilization.

Mr. Cushing lived among them long enough to study their strange habits and to win their confidence. Then a few of them accompanied him on his journey home, allowed people to look at them, and carried back some water from the Atlantic Ocean for a strange rite of their own.

The rooms are large, as shown in our engraving; the walls whitewashed and the floor of plastered mud. Their water jars are finely decorated. They show such taste and skill in their pottery that if they lived in the north we should call them "china crazed." The women in the left-hand corner of the cut are grinding corn, and the string of dried fruit upon the wall opposite is probably of peaches, of which they have a great abundance.

In contrast with these comparatively civilized Zuni, we give a cut of the half-naked India of Arizona, and of the scarcely more civilized Mexican, their southern neighbours.

NEW YEAR'S THOUGHT.

It was New Year's morning, and the snow that had been falling fast all night lay thick and white on the streets. Merry sleigh bells rang out their "Happy New Year" bright faces passed and repassed, joyous laughter chimed in with the glad day, and as I gazed out from my window upon the passing crowd, I could not help comparing with the snow that was fresh in the morning, but trodden under foot ere nightfall: I thought "How many of those merry voices will be smothered in drink, and what a heart-burden there will be carried to many a father and mother! It makes one shudder to think of the sin committed at the beginning of the New Year—the time for good re-

solutions, and the day to put them into practice. How freely the wine flows! and how few young men resist the tempter in the form of a handsome lady, who says, "Just one glass in my honour! And fast on to that glass follows many glasses, until the glorious New Year becomes a blank to them.

Oh, why is the woman so often the tempter! She who was made the man's helpmeet, but who, too often, proves his curse. Oh! you tempters, think of the end, think of what you are doing against your God, yourself, and the world, think of the homes you are helping to blight, and henceforth be a blessing to your sex, and never curse your high position of womanhood by using it to help the devil in his work. Rather help every one to keep good resolutions made on the coming of the New Year and let your merry voice and bright eyes and happy encouraging words be the only stimulants offered by you on New Year's Day.



ARIZONA INDIAN.



TYPICAL MEXICAN.

The Old Year and the New.

Listen to the midnight bell,
Tolling out the old year's knell,
O'er our hearts there comes a spoll
As we sadly say "Farewell"
And we ponder o'er the past,
Eyes are dim and overcast,
Silently falls many a tear,
As we part with thee—Old Year!

Seasons come and seasons go,
Summer flowers and winter's snow,
Like the ocean's ebb and flow—
Joy and pain, and weal and woe!
Birthday greeting—glad and gay—
Wedded hearts are linked for aye,
Not a churchyard—but a mound,
Tells what reaper Death hath found.

Yet we welcome thee, New Year,
And approach thee without fear;
Though we know not what may be
Portion'd out for us in thee.
Let us hope, and watch, and pray,
Growing wiser day by day;
Learning lessons from the past—
As this year may be our last!

Though the dear Old Year must go,
Shrouded in a sheet of snow!
May the snow an emblem be
Of the New Year's purity!
As our footsteps in the snow
Show the path we wish to go,
May each day our record be—
Coming nearer, God, to thee!

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Pleasant Hours:

PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 31, 1893.

THE GIRL'S OWN ANNUAL.

This goodly quarto comes in all the splendour of crimson and gold. It makes us wish we were a boy again, to have time to revel in its stirring stories of adventures in many lands and on many seas. It will nurture sturdy patriotism and cultivate a sense of that British imperialism engirdling the globe which is being realized more and more year by year. The wealth of well-drawn pictures, many of them coloured plates, the numerous cartoons and "funnygraphs" give a very appetizing notion of the fun in store for its boy readers.

It is not all fun either, for there is lots of solid sense and useful information interspersed, talks on electricity, photography, reading, telegraph, animal life, how to take care of birds and dogs. Among the stories are one by that boys' prime favourite, G. A. Henty, "Among Malay Pirates;" also "A Belgian Hare," a school story, by Rev. A. N. Malan, M.A., F.G.S.; "Simon Hart," a strange story of science and the sea, by Jules Verne; "A Bedawan Captive," by Alfred Colbeck; "Nic Revel," by G. Manville Fenn, and "Reaping the Whirlwind," a tale of the Mormon border." This, like the other issues of the Religious Tract Society, is a book which parents may confidently place in the hands of their young folk with the assurance that they will get from it only good, and develop robust and many Christian character.

"The Boy's Own and Girl's Own Annuals." London. The Religious Tract Society. Toronto. William Briggs. Price, \$1.75.

THE GIRL'S OWN ANNUAL.

This is a companion book in size, shape, and price to the Boy's Own, but it is somewhat sedate and less bolsterous—no pun intended. Indeed, it is quite young-ladylike, has pages of music, fancy work, art papers, cookery recipes, house-keeping hints, home nursing, and health hints, nature studies, "frocks for to-morrow," and other feminine frivolities so dear to the hearts of girls. Indeed, it has quite a grown-up character. The serials are, "Dr. Andre," by Lady Margaret Majendie; "The Grooves of Change," "If Loving Hearts Were Never Lonely," "In Spite of All," "Sisters Three," and many short stories, sketches, poems, and pictures galore, several of them coloured plates,—everything to develop a beautiful womanhood. The marvel is how so much good reading can be furnished for so small a price.

BRAINERD AND THE RATTLE-SNAKE.

BY REV. ZOERTON R. YOUNG.

After David Brainerd, the missionary to the Indians in the early days of New England, had succeeded in winning to Christ quite a number of the Indians of some of the tribes, his great heart went out in loving sympathy to a fierce tribe that had become very much soured and embittered against the whites. The white man's fire-water and greed in the early days of the country's history very much hindered the progress of genuine Christianity among the original inhabitants of this great continent.

This savage tribe, to which Mr. Brainerd resolved to carry the Gospel, lived in a place that was considered far away in the forest fastnesses. From this retreat they used to make their stealthy raids upon the white settlers, who were coming into the new country.

To win these savage Indians to Christ so aroused Brainerd's ardour that, although he was in feeble health, and was opposed by his warmest friends, he resolved to go among them alone and unarmed, and tell the story of the love of God for all the human race.

Bidding farewell to his friends, some of whom wept at his departure, and all of whom declared they would never see him alive on earth again, he turned his face toward the wilderness, and began the long journey to the haunts of that savage tribe. He carried with him a little tent, and the few essentials he needed for existence in the forest while prosecuting his missionary work. He did not wish to increase their opposition to him by being a burden upon them.

Day by day he travelled on. He was never very strong, and so could not make much progress, burdened as he was. However, without being molested by any one, at length he reached the vicinity of the principal village of the tribe he was seeking. Here among the trees he pitched his little white tent, and then, ere he went the remaining distance that stretched between him and the wigwams of the Indians, he resolved to spend some time in prayer for another blessed assurance of the divine approval upon his attempt.

But while he was alone with God in his tent, other eyes had been upon him. The sharp eyes of some Indian hunters had been watching him as he wearily moved along, and then finally decided upon his camping-place. They, while hid from his notice, had watched him as he pitched his tent, and had then hurried away to the village, and had told the chief and warriors what had been seen of the doings of the white man.

Of course, there was a great deal of excitement among them. A hasty council was held, and the audacity of this white man, coming in this manner into their country, and even daring to pitch his tent without their consent, was intolerable; and so it was unanimously decided that he must be killed. So a band of warriors was sent off with orders instantly to kill and scalp the rash white man, who had dared to invade their hunting-grounds.

Indians do not require much preparation for such expeditions, and so it was not long before those appointed for this work were ready and off. It did not take them long to reach the vicinity of the little white tent, which could be observed in the distance among the trees.

Indians do not fight like the soldiers or warriors of other nations. They prefer to act by stealth and cunning rather than by coming shoulder to shoulder, like civilized soldiers, in making their attacks upon their enemies. The ambush is ever preferable to the attack in the open ground. To get behind a tree or rock, and from that position to assail their foes, is ever their ambition.

So in this case, although informed that there was only one white man to at-

tack when they reached the neighborhood of Mr. Brainerd's tent they hid themselves in sheltered places, and waited for the white man to come out, that they might shoot him with their bows and arrows.

But while they waited, the man of God continued long in prayer. Doubtless he felt that at this critical time, when he was about to face these wild savages, he needed much of the companionship and help of Him who has said, "My presence shall go with you," and for that he pleaded, and would not be satisfied until he had received assurance that he should be prospered in his work.

The Indians had not his patience, and so they became tired of watching, and, after a whispered consultation among themselves, it was decided that three or four of them should noiselessly approach the tent and find out all that was possible about the white man, and then return and report to the others. Quietly and cautiously they approached the little tent, and, as everything was still, they at length reached it unobserved.

Cautiously looking in through the partially open curtains of the doorway, they saw the missionary on his knees, with his back toward them. So absorbed was he in his devotions that he was utterly unconscious of their presence. To them he seemed to be engaged in earnest conversation with some other person, whom they could not see, but who must surely be visible to him, or he would not continue to talk so earnestly to him.

As they gazed and listened, their superstitious natures were awed and subdued, and they felt that they dare not injure him; and still, in silence most profound, they watched him as though riveted to the spot.

But, look! What is that? A great rattlesnake pushes its ugly head under one of the side curtains of the little tent, and comes gliding in. It moves along, and goes straight for the feet and legs of Brainerd. Over them it crawls, and, rearing itself up parallel with the kneeling man's back, it seems to threaten to strike its deadly fangs into his neck. However, it does nothing of the kind, and after a few more movements it glides out of the tent, under the curtain on the opposite side from that on which it entered, and disappears in the long grass.

The startled Indians, with hands on their tomahawks, had watched the movements of this venomous snake with intense but suppressed excitement. They knew well the nature of those poisonous snakes. That it had not stung the man over whose legs it had crawled was to them a great mystery. Here was something that completely amazed them. Noiselessly they drew back and joined their impatient comrades in the forest, and with much quiet, rapid words, and many gestures, described to them what they had witnessed at the tent. These also, when they heard the story, were strangely excited by it, and it was unanimously decided to return to the village, and report to the chief and tribe what they had heard and witnessed.

In the meantime the missionary had been so engaged in prayer and communion with God that he knew nothing of the visit of the snake, or of the savage warriors who had come to destroy him. He had been so absorbed in his audience with Deity that he was oblivious to everything else. Obtaining the assuring answer, which perhaps came to him as to one of old, "My presence shall go with you," he rose from his knees, and taking his Bible with him, proceeded to the village, little knowing how he would be welcomed by the wild savage people, received him as one under the immediate protection of those who had tried to dissuade him from venturing among them.

To his great astonishment and delight, it seemed as if the whole village, headed by the chief, came out to meet him, and welcomed him as if he were a long-absent, and now much-welcomed, friend. They treated him with great respect, and receive him as one under the immediate protection of the Great Spirit, whom it would be madness on their part to injure.

To his teachings they gave heed, and in time many of them were converted, and there was wrought a moral transformation that continued.

Toronto, Ont.

A story is told of James Garfield, an American President, which is worth remembering. He had risen slowly to fame and at last he was elected by the many, many thousands of American people to be their President. Through all the years of toil, his mother had cheered him and struggled to help him on, and now she stood by him in the day of his exaltation. Then James Garfield did a noble act. Before all the greatest and noblest of American citizens he turned to his mother and im-

printed a kiss upon her aged and wasted face. It was a kiss of honour; it was a kiss of love. In the moment of his greatest triumph he remembered his mother, he was not ashamed of acknowledging her, though she had known poverty and hardship.

It is one of the deepest disgraces that can ever come to a boy that he is thoughtless of his mother's comfort, or ashamed to let it be known that he "thinks the world of her."

A Boy's Year.

BY AGNES LEX.

As I watch the old year go,
In my memory, like a show,
I can see the months pass by,
One by one, before my eye;
See them in the leafy street
Of the garden at my feet;
See them pass, and hear them talk,
And how slowly some would walk!

Just a boy with all his might,
Seeing all with all his sight,
Playing hard with all his strength,
Reaching out to life's full length
Eager in a race to run,
With a heart that beat for fun,
Slow to freeze and quick to thaw—
Was what January saw.

Just a poor form, sick and bound,
Fleeing February found.
Cried she, "Follow, and rejoice!"
But I hardly heard her voice,
March blew softly in my ear,
Then more loud, my heart to cheer.
But I scarcely saw her pass,
Stepping o'er the frozen grass.

April tried to comfort me;
Laughed, and sang a merry glee.
How her face with kindness shone!
Yet she'd melt in tears anon.
Then my wayward tears would start
Till I cried with all my heart,
Cried as lonely fellows may,
On a cloudy April day.

But, behold! again I smiled,
For I saw a beautiful child,
And I called (I knew her form
In the yellow sunshine warm)—
"Give me, May, oh, give me, do!
Just a little violet blue!"
Then below my window, see!
Lovely violets bloomed for me.

June, the summer's own delight,
Left me roses red and white.
And July her rich perfume
Wafted through my little room;
Beckoned me, the livelong days,
To her quiet woodland ways.
And I whispered, "Dear July,
I am coming, by-and-bye!"

August glided, one sweet night,
Down the path of Northern Light,
Till, with laugh and sudden bound,
Lighted she on mortal ground.
While from wide-flung upper bars
Angels pelted her with stars.
And I longed to join their mirth,
Looking down upon the earth.

Ah, September, sad and wet!
How shall I her face forget?
Darkest month of all my thought,
For the dreadful dream she brought
As I lay one candle light,
How the rain fell down that night!
Some one whispered in the rain,
"He will never walk again!"

Yet I hailed October well,
Tingling from the hickory dell,
Where she left the boys at play,
Midst the nuts and barberries gay.
Heaping up the tangled maze
For the crackling bonfire's blaze,
"Oh," I thought, "do they recall
One whose laugh once led them all?"

In the cold November blast,
Called I, as Hope came at last,
To the leaves of brown and red,
Skipping, skeltering ahead:—
"Come day, little leaves, maybe
You shall run a race with me;
You shall see my faster feet,
As they twinkle up the street!"

Dear December, clad in white,
She that brought that Holy Night,
Songful came, and tarried long,
With a message in her song,
Sweetest month of all of them,
For her Star of Bethlehem!
Yes, and in my life's dark cup,
Look, my starlight filtered up!

New Year's Day! with snow and sleet
Once again beneath my feet!
New Year's Day—my pulses swing,
Till, for very strength, I sing!
Hail the New Year back again!
All the pageant months of pain,
Safely in my heart secured,
It is sweet to have endured!

No one is true to God who is false to himself.

Who Wants to Die This Year ?

Each year's a book, with pages white,
That we so blindly fill,
One lies within our hands to-night,
To blot and mar at will.
With many secret thoughts indulged,
Till stumbling-blocks we rear,
Our hopes and fears are all divulged,
Who wants to die this year ?
Do you ? Do I ?
Who wants to die
This year ?

God gives the years that still have come,
And we have called our own.
They held unnumbered joys for some,
Or else all joy had flown.
We use the moments, one by one,
Without much thought or fear
But, oh, we have so little done !
Who wants to die this year ?
Do you ? Do I ?
Who wants to die
This year ?

This year ! Twelve fleeting months from
now,
'Twill be last year as well,
Eternity can yet endow,
And all life's story tell,
Though short or long for us the time,
Our landscape bright or drear,
The question holds, both prose and
rhyme :

Who wants to die this year ?
Do you ? Do I ?
Who wants to die
This year ?

Ah ! death will many millions seek !
Their hour must come in turn.
To-morrow, next day, week by week,
We'll of their goings learn.
We cannot stay, though stay we would,
Our end may be so near !
Are we living as we should ?
Who wants to die this year ?
Do you ? Do I ?
Who wants to die
This year.

BOB'S BEST NEW YEAR.

BY REV. J. F. COWAN.

"Yes, I suppose that's so. A feller ought to try and do better and better every year, and I do in my mind, you know; but these things are harder to get up every year," and he looked with growing disgust at the paper at his elbow on the table, on which there were a few preliminary scrawls; "besides, they don't count in a week or so, 'cause a feller can't always feel this way. If he could, crickety, what a chap he would be! I would like to be such a boy just for one year—indeed I would; but the bother about it is, I'll go and forget all about that the first time I don't feel like getting up in the morning, or something goes wrong with the old sums, or I have to mind the baby, or do errands on Saturday afternoon, or—oh! hum, yu-um!"

Then Bob gazed at the paper very steadily for a long time, without attempting to put anything on it. And what was on it stared back at him, as if the two were trying to look each other out of countenance; and I don't know how long this game would have lasted, only Bob all at once saw a picture on the paper that he didn't know of before.

He didn't believe it had been there before—yes, it must have been, though. It didn't look so much like a picture, either, as a real scene. There was a boy in a frizzled ulster just like his own, and ear-tippets. It must be himself, for there was not another boy in town who could put his hands upon the town pump and go over it in that way! Oh, yes! mother had said: "To-morrow there'll be no school, and I wish you would run over to Aunt Eunice's and tell her to be sure and come to the Mite Society quilting Thursday; then you might as well go on to Farmer Oldham's, and let him know that we expect the barrel of Rhode Island greenings; and father wants his every-day boots left at Smither's, to be half-soled; and, if it's pleasant, you can fix the box on your sled, and give baby a little fresh air;" and all the time he knew, if mother didn't, that every boy in town who had a sled, would be on Low Gap Hill to coast—for there never was such coasting since the oldest boy could remember.

But there he was—Bob Graham—going down the road toward Aunt Eunice's, and his lips actually puckered, too, for a whistle! He kept right on down the road until he came where there was no snow on the ground and the grass was green and the birds singing in the trees. "Humph! I didn't know spring was coming so soon. I suppose those garden beds will want weeding by this time. Mother will expect a grand howl over it, but I'll try whistling instead. And at it he went. By the time he was done, some of the lettuce was big enough for use, and he filled his hands with salad

for dinner. "Mother will be surprised to find it here in time. I guess it must have provoked her when I came poking in about the time the last course was on the table!"

Then he carefully washed his hands and face, and was in time to sit down with the rest, and while father was waiting for Norah to bring the soup, he didn't once drum on the bottom of his plate with his finger nails. There were strawberries and cream for dessert—Bob's special favourite. He was careful not to overrun his saucer with cream; and he didn't pass his dish up the second time until he saw that everyone else had been helped; and he didn't smack his lips, though he thought the berries were never so luscious and sweet.

"I'd like to go chestnutting this afternoon," he said, as he was about to rise from the table.

"Then it'll be a good day for the squirrels, for the buggy must be washed to go to town to-morrow," said the busy doctor, taking up his medicine-case to make some village calls.

"I don't allow any one to be a better friend of the squirrels than myself," said Bob, much to his mother's surprise, and, whistling, he got the bucket and sponge, and put on his overalls without being told.

When he got that about done, he saw a pile of kindling that the man had hauled that day, and he knew that his father would have to hire a man to cut it up and put it away. "Hello!" he said to himself, "I guess father needs all his money to get us new winter suits and pay for our schooling. Suppose I just whack that stuff up, and toss it into the wood-shed! I am getting big enough to be of some account—though I haven't heard father come over that in so long that I'd almost forgot how it sounded." He felt half ashamed now that his father had ever had to remind him of such a thing.

The snowflakes were falling by the time Bob's afternoon work was done, and when he got up the next morning the ground was covered. He knew that before he jumped out of bed—by the window-sill. It was one of those mornings when any boy liked to hug the blankets pretty close, and wait for the house to get warm before he ventured out; but, "Hello!" said Bob; "I guess there'll be some of the fleecy white to toss about this morning, and I don't know of any fellow better able to do it than I. I'll just play I'm one of those cyclone snowploughs they have on the railroads out West, and won't I have fun!" When he had made paths to the stable and pump, and got the front walk pretty well under way, something about the chimney of the little house back on the alley struck him—there was no smoke coming from it.

"It must be that Granny Milliken is snowed in this morning. Bet a cent she can't get to her wood-pile. Heigh ho! I know what I'll do; there's that kindling—I'll just take a handful and start her fire for her; and pretend I have the contract for clearing away the snow-drifts on the Union Pacific road, and fix her sidewalks and paths, just to show Jay Gould how much he needs me. My! but it does give a fellow a glow and an appetite for his breakfast! Mother! what have you got that's good, and enough of it to satisfy a giant?" And Bob laughed such a hearty laugh that it put all the household—who had been shivering and dreading to go out into the cold—into the best of humour.

"I declare," said Aunt Eunice, "it does one good to hear that boy laugh. Didn't he use to whine in the morning about getting up! What a difference a year has made in him!"

"Yes," said mother, "Robert's a great deal more manly than he used to be. This year has made a great difference in him. I have noticed it ever since last New Year's."

"I think, decidedly, that this has been the best year our boy has ever had," said his father. "He has been such a comfort to me."

Bob felt himself blush, and a tingling sensation as though the blood was rushing pell-mell all through his veins, his elbow began to tingle, and kept it up until he was sure something had hit his funny-bone; then it got into his hand, and that member pricked as if a hundred pins had been thrust into it. He pinched it with the other hand to see what the matter was, and it was as cold as a lump of lead, and felt just like some other man's hand. What was the matter? Oh! he had made a head-ress. of it so big that it was completely dead and cold. He raised his head and rubbed his eyes. Yes; he had been asleep there, with his elbow on the table—and, what was that staring him in the face? Why, nothing in the world but that old paper on which he had set out to write his New Year's resolutions, and there wasn't one bit more written than when

he— Yes! he must have been asleep, and dreaming it all.

Just then the clock struck nine. "And it was ten minutes of nine when I got as far as, 'Have resolved as follows.' Did I dream all that whole year in ten minutes? Well, anyway, it was the best year of my life, and if I didn't live it, I mean to, and that's all the New Year's resolutions I mean to write."

WHICH WAS THE HERO?

When the first call for troops reached the village last spring, John Black struck his spade into the ground and turned toward the house. "I'll go!" he said to himself.

But as he neared the farmhouse he stopped. There was his old mother and poor crippled Jenny. How could he leave them?

He had given up marriage for these two; he had drugged all his life. But here was great work to be done—a chance really to live; or to die nobly. The thought set the hot blood rushing to his heart. He would go. He could send his pay home to his mother and Jenny.

But up the road just then came his brother. His face was red. He was panting. "Cuba libre!" he shouted. "I'm going to enlist, John."

"To enlist? And Nancy and the children?"

"I told her to pack up and come to you. You'll have to look after them. It will be hard scratching for seven, I know, but I'll never again have such a chance to see something of life."

"You've no right to shirk your duty to your wife and children," said John, sternly.

But Will only laughed.

Nancy and the four children came home, without a penny, and John drugged faithfully for them all summer. Nobody suspected he had wanted to go. His mother and Nancy and the whole village watched Will's course with delight and pride. He was their hero, their fearless patriot.

He was slightly wounded before Santiago and came home on furlough. He thrilled with exultation as he stepped out of the train and saw a crowd of people come to welcome him. He was helped into a landau, over the back of which was an American flag. His townsmen had come to do him honour. He felt that he was hailed as a favourite son. He nodded carelessly to his brother.

"Hello! Jogging on as usual!" he said.

John drew back out of the crowd. The old doctor, seeing his face, laid his hand on his shoulder.

"There will be another coming home of men one of these days, who have been on a longer fight than that in Cuba," he said, quietly. "And then God will reward the heroes, unknown as well as known, who have given life and service for him and for his needy children."—Youth's Companion.

NEW YEAR CUSTOMS IN OLDEN LANDS.

BY LEIGH YOUNG.

"Ring out, wild bells, across the snow,
The year is going—let him go;
Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring out the false, ring in the true."

This shall be unto you the beginning of months, and on it ye shall keep the feast-day," was the command to the Hebrews in the centuries long gone.

And so the beginning of the months, or New Year's Day—as in our English tongue we call it—has ever, among all nations, been regarded as a time to be set apart.

The Jew, Mohammedan, Christian, Buddhist, Chinese, and Roman, although differing as to the time from which they reckoned the beginning, all agreed as considering it as the season of seasons, and celebrate it by religious ceremonies, as well as festal rejoicings, differing as widely as their different faiths.

The early fathers of the Church, in reprobation of the immoral practices of the pagan festivities, prohibited to Christians all rejoicing, and directed that the year be opened with prayer, fasting, and humiliation. The result of this mandate was a combination of the two—the early morning being reserved for the religious exercises, while the evening hours were given up to revelry.

The Hindus call the first day of the year, "The day of the Lord of Creation." It is sacred to the god of wisdom, to whom they sacrifice kids and deer, while they keep the festival with illuminations and general rejoicing.

The Chinese begin this year at the time of the spring equinox, and the festival with which they usher it in is one of

their most splendid celebrations. All the people, including the Emperor, mingle together, and unite in thanksgiving for mercy received, and prayer for a genial season and an abundant crop. On that day all the shops are closed, and for several days no business is done, save the selling of candles, sweetmeats, and nuts.

The families collect in their houses on New Year's Day, and make offerings to their household gods, of rice, wine, fruits, incense, and sweets of every description. After the "gods" have consumed the spiritual essence of the offerings, then the people are at liberty to enjoy the more earthly remains.

This ceremony concluded, feasting and fireworks make the order of the day. Red is a symbol of joy, and the presents of coins that are received must be strung on a red band to bring good luck.

The festivities are kept up for fifteen days, and end with the Feast of Lanterns, when every variety of style and shape that the imagination can conceive, or the skillful fingers of a Chinaman construct, is fashioned out of paper and bamboo, and made to do duty as a lantern. They are round, flat, square, oval—men, animals, and monsters; the angelic face of a cherub, or the grinning features of a fiend—the more grotesque the better—some roll over and over on the ground while the light within scintillates like a kaleidoscope; others, shaped like houses and coaches, trundle along the ground.

Those of us who have been in China town, in San Francisco, on the Fete Day, will never forget the odd, wild, and interesting spectacle which the streets present. And if the reproduction, five thousand miles away from home, is so amusing, we can but wonder what it would be on its native heath; and if we ever have the good fortune to fulfil the desire of our hearts, and put a girdle around the world, we shall time our sojourn in Canton to take in the Feast of Lanterns.

In the Middle Ages, when books were few, and travel—except to the crusading countries—little known, an adventurous voyager, Marco Polo, went abroad "strange countries for to see," and penetrated to the court of the Khan of Tartary, and has left us his experiences "writ in a large book." Somewhat the same reputation he has left behind him, which clings to Herodotus, the father of history. But we are not of the number of the iconoclasts, who would tear down all ornamentation, and leave only the framework of the great building which the ages have been erecting since the foundation of the world. What would history be without its tales and myths? So we pore over the malevolent genius of the fairy tale.

In the time of Numa Pompilius the day was dedicated to Janus, the double-faced deity, who faced the future while he looked back upon the past. And it was with somewhat the same idea that now in many nations, the bells are solemnly tolled as the old year is departing, and thus ring out more joyously as the new year is ushered in.

And we, with the same end in view, hold our midnight watch-meetings, when we review our deeds of the past, which are behind us, and face the unknown new year, of which we know but this: that "Our Father is its King." And as we enter upon its untried paths, with their uncertain joys, and it may be certain pains, let us look upward in happy trust and confidence, sure in the knowledge that, whatever of change the New Year may have in its keeping—

It can bring with it nothing
But God can bear us through."

On Guard.

BY PRISCILLA LEONARD.

You have a little prisoner,
He's nimble, sharp, and clever;
He's sure to get away from you
Unless you watch him ever.

And when he once gets out, he makes
More trouble in an hour
Than you can stop in many a day,
Working with all your power.

He sets your playmates by the ears,
He says what isn't so,
And uses many ugly words,
Not good for you to know.

Quick, fasten tight the ivory gates,
And chain him while he's young!
For this same dangerous prisoner
Is just—your little tongue.

Faith in God is a dead form if it do not bring forth the fruit of penitence and obedience.—Murphy.

When we measure our spiritual success by our own power, we are vanquished before we fight.—Bishop Hall.

New Year's Fancies.

Bright New Year, what bringest thou?
Glad New Year, what singest thou?
Gifts of health and wealth and life,
Songs with love and pleasure rife—
Gifts like these I'd have thee bring me,
Songs like these I'd have thee sing me,
Glad New Year, what bringest thou?

Don't thou come with lengthening days
In thy train, and pleasant ways
All untrodden for my feet,
Filled with flowers fine and sweet?
As each step of mine advances,
Shall I find my idle fancies
All fulfilled with glad amaze?

Ah! Not so; the old paths lie
Still before me steep and high;
Still the snow-storms and the sleet
Thicken round my tolling feet;
Yet beyond this dreary whiteness
I can see the azure brightness
Of the spring-time in the sky.

Glad New Year, whatever thou
Bringest to me, waiting now—
Chill of winter, breeze of spring,
Warmth of Summer—everything
I accept, nor ask a reason,
Pledging, spite of bitter season,
Sweet New Year my solemn vow.

NEW YEAR'S WINE.

It is unfortunate that a custom so pleasing should have associated with it suggestions of evil; but, though sad, it is true that New Year's Day is a time of temptation. There are young men and old men, whose smothered appetite is roused by the smell of liquor, and whose good resolutions one taste of wine is as dangerous as a candle in a powder magazine. Ladies who, in arranging their tables, have supplied wine or stronger drink, can do real good by correcting their bills of fare.

The importance of this advice may be illustrated by an incident which occurred three years ago. A family of this city served wine to their guests, but when the two sons of the family came, the bottles were slipped to one side. The boys started on their round, with the sisterly admonition, "Now, you won't take anything!" To a caller who had just refused pressing offers of sparkling liquor from this same sister, the admonition had a strange sound, and he said, "Do you so much fear the effect of a little wine on your brothers?" "No; but when they begin, they don't know where to stop." The door opened, and half a dozen persons—two being mere boys—came in. They all took wine; and the aforementioned caller had not even time to suggest that their sisters might be anxious lest they would not know where to stop. The caller saw them later in the day, and they were unmistakably tight. He saw, also, the two boys whose sister's caution he had heard, and they too were drunk. He has seen them since in the same condition, and knows that one of the two is the slave of strong drink, and physically and morally a wreck.

We do not know that New Year's wine is responsible for this ruin, or that it led to the ruin of the boys to whom his sister served it, but we are sure that many a young man dates his movement on the downward grade from liquor served on New Year's Day. We are glad to believe that the custom of thus tempting men is on the decline, and equally glad if any word-blows we give will help it out of good society.—Herald and Presbyter.

NOW IS YOUR TIME.

BY THE REV. JAMES COOKE SEYMOUR.

It is good to be a Christian—it is better to be a Christian early—early in life. It is best to be a Christian all the time. "Possession is nine points of the law." Let Christ have those nine points of advantage. That is, give him your heart while you are young—very young. Give God the first chance to make a man of you. Early piety preempts the soul for

God and heaven. God will fill you with himself—so full that evil will find it hard to get a lodging place.

"Habit becomes second nature." No doubt of it. And it is just as true of good habits as of bad. The iron chains of bad habits need be no stronger than the golden chains of good ones.

We can habituate ourselves to all sorts of good things just as well as to all sorts of evil things. Every good life has a history and every bad one, too. It is not pleasant reading to turn over the leaves of a Godless life, especially when the book is one's own life has written.

Evil deeds are not so easily forgotten. They have an unpleasant way of reminding us of their existence. They resurrect themselves unbidden from the long dead past. Their memory is a cumulative sorrow, that does not get less, but greater as the years roll by.

Good deeds have a similar faculty. They come back to us again in vivid reality but only to bless. They grow more beautiful and more inspiring and comforting each time they reappear. They are angel visits often sent to cheer us in darkness and weakness and trouble.

"The memory of the just is blessed." That is true in life as in death. It is true as others review our good lives, and just as true as we review our own.

The years of youth are not golden—they are worth far more than gold. Each year, each month, each day, is a pearl, a gem of priceless value. Don't throw away all this untold wealth of opportunity in sin.

little town near the Jordan is to be carefully distinguished from the Bethany of the Mount of Olives, where Lazarus and Mary and Martha lived.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Christ's first disciples.—John 1. 35-42.
- Tu. Christ's first disciples.—John 1. 43-51.
- V. The second call.—Matt. 4. 18-25.
- Th. True discipleship.—Luke 9. 18-26.
- F. Teaching the disciples.—Matt. 5. 13-20.
- S. Friends of Jesus.—John 15. 12-21.
- Su. Reward.—Matt. 19. 23-30.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Looking upon Jesus, v. 35, 36.
What three persons saw Jesus approaching?
What did John say to his disciples? Golden Text.
Why did he call Jesus a "lamb"?
What had he said the day before? Verse 29.
2. Following Jesus, v. 37-40.
Who at once followed Jesus?
What question did Jesus ask?
What was their answer?
What did Jesus bid them do?
How long did the disciples stay?
Who were these two disciples?
Who are now commanded to follow Jesus?
3. Leading to Jesus, v. 41-46.
Whom did Andrew lead to Jesus?
Whom did he say he had found?
What did Jesus say about Peter's name?
Whom did Jesus summon the next day?
Where was Phillip's home?

another follower. There was Nathanael. He said to him, "We have found the One Moses said was coming." When Nathanael wondered how One so good could come from that poor little town of Nazareth, Phillip only said, "Come and see." That was the way to find out.

Oh, if people would only come and see how it is! Oh, if they would only spend a day with Jesus! Wouldn't they learn enough of him to want to follow him always? Well, we have this day. Shall we spend it learning of Jesus? That is what we are here for in his house.

Song for the New Year.

BY ELIZA COOK.

Old Time has turned another page
Of eternity and truth;
He reads with a warning voice to age,
And whispers a lesson to youth.

A year has fled o'er heart and head
Since last the yule log burned,
And we have a task to closely ask—
What the bosom and brain have learned.

O let us hope that our sands have run
With wisdom's precious grains!
O may we find that our hands have done
Some work of glorious pains!

We may have seen some loved one pass
To the land of hallowed rest;
We may miss the glow of an honest brow
And the warmth of a friendly breast.

But if we nursed them while on earth
With hearts all true and kind,
Will their spirits blame the sinless mirth
Of those true hearts left behind;

No, no! It were not well nor wise
To mourn with endless pain;
There's a better world beyond the skies
Where the good shall meet again.

Have our days rolled on serenely free
From sorrow's dim alloy?
Do we still possess the gifts that bless
And fill our souls with joy?

Are the creatures dear still clinging
Near?
Do we hear loved voices come?
Do we gaze on eyes whose glances shed
A halo round our home?

O, if we do, let thanks be poured
To him who hath spared and given,
And forgot not o'er the festive board,
The mercies sent from heaven!

Then a welcome and cheer to the merry
New Year,
While the holly gleams above us!
With a pardon for the foes who hate,
And a prayer for those who love us.

Don't take up everything. The Lord seldom gives one great, outside mission; he never gives half a dozen at a time.—Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney.



THE DYING YEAR.

Full knee-deep lies the winter snow,
And the winter winds are wearily
sighing;
Toll ye the church bell sad and slow,
And tread softly and speak low,
For the Old Year lies a-dying.

Give Christ a cordial welcome to your heart this hour. Let sin go. It will never do you any good. Take Christ and a holy life and a heavenly home as your portion. Now is your time. Say "I will," and God will say "I will," too. And the day of your spiritual rativity has come.

Paisley, Ont.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.

LESSON II.—JANUARY 8.

CHRIST'S FIRST DISCIPLES.

John 1. 35-46. Memory verses, 35-37.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Behold the Lamb of God.—John 1. 36.

OUTLINE.

1. Looking upon Jesus, v. 35, 36.
 2. Following Jesus, v. 37-40
 3. Leading to Jesus, v. 41-46.
- Time.—A.D. 27. Probably on Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath.
Place.—Bethabara, or Bethany (according to the Revised Version), but this

Whom did Phillip seek out?
What did he say to Nathanael?
What question did Nathanael ask?
What was Phillip's answer?
What did Jesus say of Nathanael's character?
What was Nathanael's question of surprise?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- Where in this lesson are we taught—
1. Whom we should seek?
 2. When we should seek Jesus?
 3. That we should lead others to Jesus?

COME AND SEE.

Jesus said to Phillip, "Follow me." Phillip obeyed, and soon wanted to bring



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