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No. 12



THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

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Bethlehem

BY PHILLIPS BROOKS.

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to-night.

For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth!

How silently, how swiftly,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where weak souls will receive him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

A Child's Christmas Planning

Where there are children in the family, the elders are often so absorbed in the Christmas preparations for them, in plans for trees and frolics, in talk of Santa Claus and the expected gifts, that the danger is in not allowing the little ones to share the preliminary joy of giving. Of course, we mean to begin to encourage generosity in them as soon as they are old enough to make things, or to earn pennies for gifts. But why wait so long? Even very little ones may have the happiness of spending money and planning gifts. They have ideas of their own, too, as to appropriateness. In a private letter from a father, we find this illustrated. He writes about his little girl of three: "She has been given twenty-five pennies with which to buy presents for her friends, at one cent each. She has secured most of them, and has amused us much by her selections. She was confident that nothing would please her grandfather as much as a lump of sugar, so she purchased one cent's worth at the grocer's, and kept it in her drawer until the family package was ready to send."

Of course, this must mean a deal of bother to the parents, but it is worth while. Their child is looking forward to Christmas as the day when her gifts can be presented. She has the true Christmas spirit—far more so than the children whose only association with the time is of bulging stockings and a crowd of presents for their own enjoyment.—Congregationalist.

How to Make Imitation Snowballs

A Christmas-tree decoration which is easily and inexpensively made at home is snowballs. A coil of fine picture wire, a box of diamond powder and a bundle of cotton batting (not sheet wadding) are the materials needed. The wire is cut in various short lengths, a wad of the cotton thrust upon it, patted into shape to look like a ball, and the powder dusted over it from a perforated toilet powder box. The other end of the wire is bent over to form a fastening, and the ball is ready for the tree. It is effective to have the balls vary in size, from that of a small apple to a large orange.

One of Du Maurier's Punch cartoons portrays an aunt telling a story to her little nephew, winding up with this moral: "But my good little Tommy, you never got into the bath with all your Sunday clothes on, did you?" "No," said little Tommy, "but I will now, though, aunt."

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occupation for life. He knew his wife was lonely, and missed the companionship of her daughter very much. His own meditation had been, now if these young people should fit into our life we can befriend them and ourselves as well, for he was not unwilling to admit of his own loneliness.

Mabel and Fred had no intention of imposing on anyone's kindness or generosity, but determined to be independent, and after spending a few days with Dr. Grant, Mabel asked his advice in regard to procuring a suitable boarding place. The doctor promised to make some enquiries, and to let her know the following day. That evening he said to his wife: "Where do you think would be a good place for these young people to board?"

The young people were laughing and talking in the drawing-room, just across the hall from the library where Dr. and Mrs. Grant were chatting. Looking up, she said: "I almost wish they might remain here." "I feel something like that myself," said the doctor. "Mabel seems to be a jewel, and Fred a nice, quiet boy, just needing a father's guidance, but there are some difficulties hard to surmount."

However these were all adjusted, and to the surprise of Mabel and Fred, that night before retiring Dr. Grant called them into the library, and told them that it was his and Mrs. Grant's wish to have them remain with them. Mabel was to rent a room and piano down town to carry on her work as teacher of music. Everything being satisfactorily arranged, it was with a glad heart and happy mind that the two orphans laid their heads upon their pillows that night. We shall not follow the details of their lives further, though it would encourage us to know of how Mabel sowed the good seed.

In a sweet, bright and whole-souled way, she sowed missionary truth with such zeal that it soon bore fruit. In two years John, who was to have shared the burdens and profits of his father's large practice, offered himself as a medical missionary, and Harold entered the ministry. Another year rolled by with its seed time and harvest, its sowing and reaping for eternity, and Dr. Grant's two boys said good-bye to home, to friends, to fine worldly prospects, and sailed for China.

Dr. Grant said to Fred about this time, when out driving together one day, "Are you going into missions also, for I believe I have your sister to thank for my boys having gone." "No," Fred said. "Mabel has always been an enthusiast, and it has only been my mother's dying request for her to remain with me till I graduated, that has kept her from going herself; but I trust, sir, that you are not vexed with my sister." "No," Dr. Grant replied, "not vexed, for I hold all I have as in trust; but I fear I was disappointed that both should go, when I could have done well for them here. If we are God's children we must say, 'They will not mine be done,' cost what it may. How your sister has failed to influence you though is a wonder to me, for she certainly has no small amount of influence over you."

"I don't know how it is," said Fred, "except that I have never felt called. When we were children Mabel would say, 'I'm going to be a missionary and go far away,' and I would say, 'I'm going to be a missionary too, and stay at home,' and then we would argue. Mother or father would then interfere and tell how both were needed, and would so kindly explain the need of good and true men at home, and how noble it was to be a home missionary. That appealed to me, sir, and I intend to be one." "God bless you, Fred, I believe you will," and from that hour he was to Dr. Grant as his own son.

One evening in the early spring of the following year, Dr. Grant said to Mabel, "You need a holiday, and I propose a trip for you and Helen." "Thank you exceedingly, Dr. Grant, but I expect to take a long trip shortly." "And whither?" he kindly enquired. "Fred graduates in May, and he tells me you have most kindly offered to take him under your care, and I am going away in answer to the call that came into my heart years ago." "Not satisfied, I see," said the doctor, "to have sent no missionaries out, but must go yourself." Mabel blushed, but only replied, "to go as a missionary to foreign fields has been my heart's desire since my early childhood."

That evening Dr. Grant was writing to Harold, and we will just look over his shoulder at one sentence: "We are going to lose Mabel before very long, and your mother and I are exceedingly sorry, for she has become like a daughter to us. What are you and John thinking about, for I suppose

you are both looking for a suitable wife for a missionary?" When Harold read this, I'll never tell you whether he waited to finish the letter or not, for jumping up he said, "Well, I'm going to know for a certainty what John means. I have simply kept quiet because I thought he had first place." He thought of writing, but later decided to go and see his brother. They were five hundred miles apart and hadn't met for two years. John was, without doubt, surprised to have Harold drop down thus upon him, but he wasn't left long to wonder why, for as soon as they were alone Harold said, "Say, John, is Mabel Gordon to be your wife?" John was quiet for a moment, and then he said, "No, Harold, I'm sorry it cannot be. It is not my fault, but she said she couldn't be my wife before I left home." "You might have told a fellow, John, for I just held back for your sake." "Oh, well, Harold, it would have been all the same, for she finally confessed that the reason she could not accept me was because she loved another, that Johnston chap, I suppose." And thus the conversation on that subject ended.

As Harold travelled back to his field of work his heart seemed heavy, his mind clouded, and he tried to explain things, but they wouldn't fit. "They were going to lose Mabel," his father had said. Surely he knew Mabel too well to believe she would marry Johnston, and give up her long-loved desire for missionary work. Thus he reasoned. But by the time he reached home he had concluded that two years was long enough to be in the dark. John had said, "She loves another." That's what bothered him; but the hope, faint at first, stole into his heart, "What if I'm the other fellow?" and he determined to find out. He did, and to his own unbounded satisfaction rejoiced in the knowledge that he was "the other fellow."

First Mabel was to go to Harold, but to this plan Dr. Grant most determinedly objected. "We are going to have a real wedding," he said, "a girl like Mabel is worth coming after. Furlough or no furlough, Harold must come home." So it was, and Dr. Grant spared neither influence nor money, and a supply was found for Harold. At the wedding dinner Dr. Grant said, "At one time it looked as though there were to be three in the mission field from his home, but since two had been made one, arithmetic failed him."

How did Mabel accomplish so much? It's not very probable, you say. Why, it is happening all the time in the world about us. Take the boy who is an enthusiast in baseball, and how many boys does he soon win over to baseball. Indeed I have known a whole family to become interested through the zeal of one member of it. A man believes with all his heart in a certain enterprise, and how soon will he win others over to his way of thinking, and they invest large sums of money in it. So in life everywhere, if the heart is full to overflowing others will be touched and won.

London, Ont.

Honest Work

For one to live up to his convictions is to awaken opposition, for you are sure to cross somebody's path. The apostle well said, they who will live godly, righteous lives must suffer persecution. We see the truth of this statement every day. Those we expect better things of impugn our motives, misconstrue our actions, and misinterpret our words, as well as the spirit in which we perform our work. Owing to these things many are discouraged, and abandon their work for God and humanity as a hopeless task. Such persons are weak in faith. What they think to be insuperable, if challenged by a living and indomitable faith, would invariably yield, and victory would perch upon their banners. Of course, such persons counted the cost before they entered the arena; being nerved with a holy ambition to succeed, they claim the promises of God, and put on the armour with dauntless courage and are clothed upon with a giant's strength, and face their foes devoid of fear and ask no quarter. They attack and defy the combined powers of earth and hell, and by God's help they push the battle to the gate with a heroism which knows no defeat, saying: "If God is for us, He is more than all that can be against us." Conscious of their integrity, they dare to do right, though it may cost them no little sacrifice. The greater the struggle, the greater the triumph. No man who knows himself, however strong his arm or unfinching his courage, dares to go into the fight depending solely upon himself. God must be the strength of his heart; high and holy impulses must govern his actions, and humility must be the crowning virtue, the cardinal principle of his life.

The Mission of Laymen

BY REV. CHAS. JEFFERSON, D.D.

THE New Testament likes laymen. It knows nothing of that unique dignity and supernatural authority of the clergymen which have been the curse of the Christian world. The Church on the day of Pentecost was a democracy. From the days of Moses onward the deepest wish of Israel had been, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put his spirit upon them." Prophecy at its highest had dared to say that such a time was coming. Peter in his opening sermon declared that the dreams and prophecies of the ages were at last fulfilled. God had indeed poured out his spirit upon all flesh—upon women as well as men, upon the young as well as upon the old. All were prophets. All spoke for God. Upon each head there sat a tongue of fire. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost. The greatest word in the Book of Acts is "all." All were baptized; all spoke; all prayed; all spread abroad the good tidings; all participated in public worship; all exercised authority in Church government; all were thrilled by the rapture of a great love, ennobled by the weight of a great responsibility, and zealous in the performance of a great task. The Apostolic Church was mighty because it was a brotherhood, and all believers had all things common.

But into this new Garden of Eden a serpent crawled—ecclesiastical ambition. By s'ow advance the clergy encroached upon the rights of the laity, crowding laymen from the position given them by the Lord. The Church o. God ceased to be a brotherhood. It became a monarchy, with rulers and subjects. All authority passed little by little into the hands of the clergy. With the growth of the hierarchy the power and the glory of the Church of the Apostles vanished. The dark ages in which the hierarchy was supreme.

The Reformation in the sixteenth century was a triumph of laymen. Martin Luther could have done nothing had it not been for the laity of Germany. In England the head of the Reformation was a layman. It was largely by the energy of laymen that the English Church was reconstructed; and it was by the laymen of Cromwell's army that the Stuart despotism was crushed, and the history of political liberty was opened. The great event of the sixteenth century was the rise of the laity in the Christian Church. Modern history began when the laity resumed their rightful place in public worship. For a thousand years they had simply assisted at rites wrought for them by priestly hands. A new day dawned when "the people were called into the chancel," and public worship became a common prayer of the whole body of worshippers. The Book of Common Prayer is the monument of an immortal triumph. As soon as the Mass, which is a sacrifice wrought through priestly intervention, was superseded by the "communion service," laymen once more enjoyed the privilege which belonged to them in apostolic days, and tasted anew the blessedness of Christian fellowship. The stream of centuries was turned out of its channel by allowing laymen their New Testament rights as worshippers.

But the world awaits a new reformation. The Church to-day is not yet apostolic. It limps and halts. In the midst of vast opportunities it stands impotent and bewildered. Hundreds of ministers are sick at heart. Many of them have grown pessimistic. Occasionally one of them drifts into infidelity. The majority of them are discouraged. It would be a revelation to the world should clergymen speak out plainly what they know and suffer.

We shall never get out of the ditch until laymen realize that they also are successors of the apostles. They stand in the line of a great succession. They are called to be kings and priests unto God. The trouble now is that laymen in large numbers are not in the Church. Their names are in the Church book, but they themselves are not in the Church. Some of them are in their business, and others in their lodge, but too few of them are in the Church. No man is in the Church whose heart and mind are not in it. The Church is hungering for the thought and affection of her men. There is enough brain-power in every Church to solve all its problems if this brain-power were utilized. The problems will never be settled so

long as men think that paying their pew rent satisfies all the legitimate claims which organized Christianity makes upon them. The great need of the Church is not money, but life. With new volumes of mental and spiritual energy, money would flow in like a mighty stream. Laymen have won their rights as worshippers, they have not yet accepted their privileges as workers. This is the next step in the world's redemption.

According to the New Testament every Christian is a herald, a pastor, a missionary. Every follower of Christ is ordered into the vineyard. Unless he takes up his cross daily, he does not belong to Christ. But this is a page of the New Testament little heeded. "The fields are white unto the harvest, but the laborers are few." The minister goes into the field, and the majority of his people go somewhere else. This, in a sentence, is the running sore of Christendom. Why are churches half empty? Laymen do not work to fill them. Why are deficits so universal? Laymen do not plan to abolish them. Why does the Church make so few converts? Laymen do not talk on the subject of religion. Why does Church life flow in such feeble streams? Laymen do not pour their life into it.

The baptism for which the Church is waiting is the baptism of larger knowledge. We do not seem to know the things which belong unto peace. They are hid from our eyes. We do not comprehend what this means: "One is your Master, and all ye ar. brethren."

We stumble over this: "As my Father have sent me, even



ORILLIA METHODIST CHURCH

Decorations for the Toronto Conference Epworth League Convention, Oct. 18 and 17. The gentleman on the left is Rev. J. J. Ferguson, Pastor of the Church; the one on the right is Rev. S. T. Bartlett, Associate General Secretary of Epworth Leagues and Sunday Schools.

so send I you." We forget to whom this is spoken: "Go and make disciples of all nations."

We cannot say with Paul: "I rejoice in my sufferings, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ," because we do not realize that we, laymen as well as clergymen, are called to be "laborers together with God." And yet, it is a faithful saying: "For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."—From "Talks with Earnest People."

A Two-Handled Christmas Cake

BY REV. ROBERT STEPHENS.

AND so Christmas is near us once more. Yes, a few days and the days of Christmas-tide will be ours to enjoy.

How memory recalls the past as Christmas comes to our view! I am carried back to the days of boyhood when in the shipbuilding yard the last bit of work was done. Tools were all put out of the way, and we turned our faces toward our humble homes. Mine was one of the very humblest of them all. It was a house of three rooms; one downstairs and two up. The one downstairs answered for the kitchen, dining-room, sitting-room, reception room and parlor. The rooms upstairs were our bed-rooms. Toward such home on Christmas eve my feet started with joy, for the year's work was over once more. But what was there in such a home as mine that a boy could expect to find to make his Christmas happy? It was a poor man's home; and though he was sober and industrious in the extreme, yet the poor man did not receive more than just enough to pay the way of the family through the year.

My young heart could not expect costly presents—oh, no; extensive preparations for Christmas, such as I have seen since, were never thought of. What could dear old mother do to make her poor boy feel it was Christmas eve? Ah, yes, I see it now! There it is hanging over the fireplace against the wall. What is it? Why, it's a two-handed Christmas cake, and it was for me. Pointing her blessed finger to the cake on the wall, she would say, "My son, that is for you." At once—ah, yes, and they come back to me now as then—tears of gratitude to that blessed old mother for the two-handed Christmas cake, hanging to the wall. Memory takes up that little thing to-day, and as it does there comes to me:

1. Mother was in harmony with the great Christmas-time, in commemoration of the birth of Jesus into this world. And though as poor as a poor, hard-working man's wife could be, yet her heart took in the spirit of the event, and she would do something to remind her little son that she was in harmony with Christmas joys. It's a great thing to be in harmony with the Christmas spirit, and to express that feeling in deeds of kindness to others.

2. Then, as memory brings back the two-handed Christmas cake on the wall, I see old mother doing her very best for her son, who would return from the hard work in the shipbuilding yard. It was not much—oh, no; but it was that much. And it was her very best. My friend, let me ask you to do this for your children. It may not be much you can do, but let me ask you to be sure and do your very best for your children on this Christmas time, for they will recall this Christmas some time in the future. What shall there be in the chamber of their memories? Let them see a mother doing her very best to make them happy.

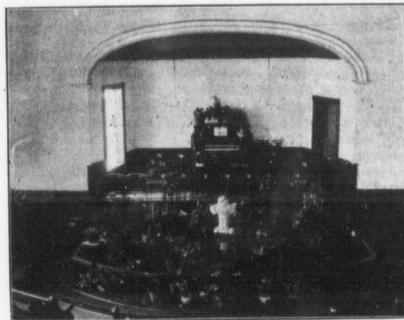
3. Then I see, as memory recalls the two-handed cake on the wall, that mother was doing something, not only for them to help her son, but she was engaged in a work that was going to continue for years to come, and it was going to be to her boy admonition, consolation, reproof, all through his life; for how could I be bad, how could I do wrong, with the actions of my blessed old mother planted in my memory! How could I get discouraged and give up the battle when I had before me the actions of a mother doing her very best? O my friends who have children, do your very best for them in your own home. Do you want to save your children from sin and to the right? Then make your home the best place this side of heaven for your children.

4. And then the two-handed Christmas cake that mother made and hung on the wall on Christmas eve was one of the deeds done by that blessed woman to hold her boy to the old home. Ah! this Christmas-time, my memory brings it all back to me. There stood the old home, humble, poor, at times suffering, but have I ever seen a place that now in life I turn to as to that old home? No. Parents, do you want to save your children? Of course you do. Then make your home attractive and happy. Cause your child to think there is no place like that home. It will not take much to do this. Do your very best to hold your children to your old home, and see to it that you labor to do something that will be planted in the memory of your child, so that when Christmas-time comes, wherever the child is, he may turn with tears in his eyes, as I am to-night, and think of the two-handed Christmas cake hung on the wall.

Church Decorations

EVERY well organized Epworth League has a "Floral Committee," whose business it is to send flowers to sick people, to strangers, shut-ins, etc., and to look after the decoration of the church on anniversary occasions, for conventions, rallies, etc. Scarcely any Committee of the League has greater opportunities of usefulness than the Floral Committee. Everybody loves flowers, and the personal attention that is involved in sending a bouquet is usually very much appreciated. The work of decoration may not be quite so important, but it helps wonderfully to make any special event a big success to have plants and flowers tastefully arranged in front of the pulpit. It brightens the services and develops an atmosphere of cheer and comfort.

The two most important things to remember in planning for decorating a church are, to have everything tastefully arranged, and to guard against over-decoration. It is well, if possible, to have some striking feature as a kind of centrepiece around which plants and blossoms can be grouped. In the accompanying illustration of the Burford Church, the *pièce de resistance* was a beautiful cross of white flowers, which was very much admired. Of course anything of this kind



DECORATIONS IN BURFORD METHODIST CHURCH
For Circuit Epworth League Rally.

costs a good deal of work, but there is a large amount of satisfaction when it is finished. Before any of the plants are put in position, there should be some kind of plan upon which to work, and perhaps an outline on paper.

To pile in plants wherever they can be placed, without regard to general symmetry, will produce a grotesque and ridiculous general effect. There will be a variety of opinion in the Committee, but if there is one person of superior taste it would be better to leave the plan entirely to her. Do not undertake to use every potted plant in the neighborhood, and do not fill every available inch of space. Some of the most beautiful displays are at the same time the most simple.

There are usually a number of people, who have plants which they would be willing to loan. Great care should be taken to preserve these from injury and return them promptly.

Visions of Childhood

A CHILD'S adventures in the world of romance have infinite charm and reality. Long before he has seen the ocean, a mountain, a waterfall, or a foreign city, he has "travelled in the realms of gold." He has sailed with Columbus and Captain Cook, and wintered with Franklin in the Arctic seas. He has ridden through the desert on a camel and slept by Indian camp-fires. He has seen Horatius buffeting the waves of yellow Tiber, and the Black Prince charging at Cressy. By the time I was twelve years old I knew the Pyramids and the Colosseum, I had seen Quintus Curtius leap into the gulf, and Caesar fall by Pompey's Pillar. I had fought with the Crusaders, and retreated from Moscow with Napoleon. Since those days I have visited many lands and seen the ways of many peoples, but the visions of my childhood have not been displaced.—F. W. Macdonald.

The Secret of Joy

BY REV. T. L. CUYLER, D.D., BROOKLYN, N.Y.

OUGHT every Christian to be happy? Yes; and he may be so provided that he seeks in the right quarter for his joys. Brave old Paul, who never uttered a whimper or a whine, sent from Nero's guardhouse this cheery message: "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice." He was too wise to exhort us to rejoice in money, for it is a variable possession; or in the society of our households, who may be snatched away at any moment. Our soul's joys, to be solid, must rest on something immovable. The one permanent, unchangeable joy is to have Christ Jesus in the heart, and to serve Him in the daily life, and to walk in the sunshine of His love.

A healthy joy is not a mere exhilaration or a rapture. Neither the mind nor the nerves could stand a continual ecstasy. I have observed that some people, who live on moods and frames and are shouting on one day, are very liable to be scolding or sulking on the next day. A strong bow loses its tension. Even spiritual exhilarations are apt to be followed by reactions. Just as soon as we hang our happiness on emotions or changing circumstances of any kind, we go up or we go down with the tide. The thermometer of our joy is at the mercy of outside atmospheres. But if an indwelling, strengthening and gladdening Saviour be in the heart, if we strive to keep His commandments and walk in the sunshine of His smiles, then we can expect to "rejoice evermore." No blow that does not strike Christ and a clear conscience away, can seriously disturb a healthy Christian's inward peace. Although his fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be on his vines, although his flock may be cut off in the fold, and there be no herd in his stalls, yet he rejoices in the Lord and joins in the God of his salvation.

Constant external prosperity is the lot of no man, and perfect sinlessness is the attainment of no man. But there is one thing which Christ's followers can do, and that is to keep themselves in the delightful atmosphere of His love. It is our fault and our shame if we spend so many days in the chilling fogs, or under the heavy clouds of unbelief, or in the contaminating atmosphere of conformity to the world. "Is it always foggy here on the banks of Newfoundland?" inquired a passenger of an old Cunard captain. "How should I know, madam? I don't live here."

The love of Christ is our sunshine, and there are three things which the Master enjoins upon us; if we fulfil them we have got the secret of spiritual joy. The first one is obedience. "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." The only real and tangible evidence of faith in Christ is obedience to Christ.

A lad leaves home for college and a good mother puts a Bible in his trunk, and says to him: "Now, my dear boy, you will read this every morning and night, and when you are reading it, and on your knees in prayer, your mother is with you." By and by he writes home from college that he is doing just what she bade him; and every time that boy opens his Bible and bends on his knees before God he is surrounded by the sweet atmosphere of his mother's love. He gains two blessings: strength to resist temptation and also the heart happiness of pleasing his devoted mother.

In like manner we who call ourselves Christians should abide in the bright, warm atmosphere of obedience to Him who laid down His life for us on the Cross, and commands us to lay our lives at His feet. We must heartily accept a whole Christ, both as Saviour and Lord, and accept Him without any reserve or limitations. He has a right to command; it is ours simply to obey. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do!" The way to do it we must leave with Him; and how to do it we learn by Bible study, by prayer, and by practice. Genuine, hearty obedience to a faithful Saviour is not a reluctant task-work; it becomes a source of grateful joy.

The second direction for keeping in the bright beamings of Christ's love is growth in strong, godly character. If you will turn to the short Epistle of Jude you will read these words: "Building up yourselves on your most holy faith, keep yourselves in the love of God." The construction of a Christian character is like the construction of an edifice.

Some church members never get beyond the foundation. Not far from my residence is the grass-grown foundation for a great cathedral—laid nearly thirty years ago, but no walls have yet risen upon it. Some people start with professing before the world their faith in Christ, and there they stop. They do not "add to their faith courage, temperance, meekness, patience, godliness, love," and all the other stones that enter into a solid and effective Christian life. Such self-student professors know nothing of the joy of growth in Christlikeness, and the joy of Christ's approving smile. They may be growing rich, or growing popular, or in self conceit; but there is no growth in grace. They make a wretched attempt to live in another atmosphere than the love of Jesus, and they attain to no more size and beauty and fruitfulness than the stunted plants and frost-bitten flowers that Nansen found on the dreary shores of the Kara Sea.

There is one more essential to a strong and happy life. Obedience to the Master's commandments and the building of a solid and useful and fruitful character cannot be done without the Divine help. Therefore the apostle says: "Praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God." Everyone who desires to be lifted into the sunshine of fellowship with Jesus must use the wings of fervent prayer. Such prayer keeps us in the love of Jesus, and it has wonderful power. Christ told His disciples that, if they would only abide in the pure atmosphere of His love, they might ask what they would and it should be done unto them. Do you use that golden key often to unlock the treasure chamber of blessing?

Finally, do you hunger for true happiness? Take Christ at His own words: "Lo! I am with you always." Then you can rejoice in Him always. Such joy is not only a privilege, but a duty; for a Christian to be spiritually wretched is a sin. Remember that it is not where you are, but what you are, that determines your happiness. Spiritual joy is a sign of heart-health; spiritual depression and complaining are signs of disease. When a baby frets and moans, the mother says: "Something is wrong; this child is sick." A sulky, selfish, complaining temper shows that we are not abiding in this love of Jesus.

We hope to be happy in heaven: why not now? Why parse the word heaven in the future tense? The unselfish service of Christ and of our fellow creatures is the beginning of paradise; the more we do for Him here, the more we shall have of Him up yonder. Open your ear to every call of duty; open every door and window of your soul to the instreaming light and love of Jesus, and your joy shall be full.

Christmas Carol

The earth has grown old with its burden of care,
But at Christmas it always is young.
The heart of the jewel burns lustrous and fair,
And its soul full of music breaks forth on the air,
When the song of the angels is sung.

It is coming, old earth, it is coming to-night!
On the snowflakes that cover thy sod,
The feet of the Christ-child fall gentle and white,
And the voice of the Christ-child tells out with delight
That mankind are the children of God.

On the sad and the lonely, the wretched and poor,
The voice of the Christ-child shall fall;
And to every blind wanderer open the door
Of a hope that he dared not dream of before,
With a sunshine of welcome for all.

The feet of the humblest walk in the field,
Where the feet of the holiest have trod,
This, this is the marvel to mortals revealed,
When the silvery trumpets of Christmas have pealed
That mankind are the children of God.

—Phillips Brooks.

A Christmas of Long Ago

BY L. M. MONTGOMERY.

"HURRAH!" cried Ted, jubilantly. "Christmas will be here in a week. I wish it came every month."

"Christmas will be extra nice this year because grandma is with us," said Alice, with a loving glance at the old lady with the silver hair and bright brown eyes, who was knitting by the fire.

Grandma smiled.

"This will be only the second Christmas of my life that I have spent away from my own home," she said. "The first one was sixty years ago, children, when I was a little girl of ten and went with my three brothers to spend Christmas with our grandfather and grandmother. We had a delightful drive. But it was a very different Christmas from your Christmas of to-day. We did not have your dozens of beautiful and expensive presents, nor your wonderful trees and decorations. Still, we thought our Christmas at grandfather's just about right."

"Tell us about it," pleaded the children, who loved to hear grandma talk of those far-away years when she was a little girl.

"When I came here last week I came on the train," said grandma; "but in those days there were no railroads near where we lived, and we drove the thirty miles to grandfather's the day before Christmas. It was cold and frosty, and there was plenty of snow. Mother wrapped us all warmly up in shawls and homespun caps and mufflers, and we did not mind the cold. We went on what was called a 'wood sleigh'—just board on runners. Father had put straw on it, and mother had spread a big rug over it. We all sat close together on this, and when the slews or the pitches were very bad we clung to the upright stakes in the corners, or the jingling iron chains that connected them.

"When we got to grandfather's at twilight, and trooped into the kitchen, such a fire as they had for us! You never see such fires nowadays. There was a big open fireplace taking up most of one end of the room, with just snug corners on each side of it. Grandfather had heaped it with great hickory logs, and they were blazing with delightful fierceness, sending a rosy glow out on our faces and lighting up the whole of the old-fashioned room with its low ceiling and long black rafters, from which hung festoons of dried apples and grandmother's assortment of herbs. Grandfather had tacked green boughs all around the room in honor of the season. At home we thought ourselves very modern because we had stoves; but we loved that splendid fireplace of grandfather's.

Such a pleasant evening as we had, all sitting about it—uncles, aunts and cousins—not needing even candlelight. The older folks told stories, and we children listened open-eyed, while we munched apples and cracked beech-nuts. Our dreams that night were haunted by Indians and bears galore.

We did not have Christmas trees then—we had not even heard of them. Before we went to bed, grandmother took our stockings and hung them along the chimney-piece in a dangling row. We had never hung up our stockings at home, for how could Santa Claus come down a stove-pipe and through a stove? But we were sure he could come down that splendid big chimney easy enough.

In the morning our stockings were full when we all came trooping into the kitchen. I don't know what you would have thought of our presents, but we were delighted with them. There was not a bought present among them—all were homemade. I got a pair of red mittens knitted in a fancy pattern, such as Aunt Emmy could knit; a scarf of shaded wool in blues, knitted in grandmother's famous 'checker-board pattern'; a big rag doll dressed in a piece of Aunt Ada's wedding dress, a white muslin apron with silk bows on the shoulders, and a bag of homemade candy. I remember there was a sled for each of the boys, and one of the elderwood whistles for the making of which grandfather was celebrated. I believed in Santa Claus wholeheartedly, and I begged grandfather to tell me if he had shown Santa how to make the whistles. I thought Mrs. Santa Claus must have known the fancy stripe and checker-board pattern.

The other children went to church with the grown-ups, for there was always service on Christmas morning then. I

stayed home to help grandmother with the dinner, for I was the oldest girl. I have never forgotten that big pantry with the stores of good things she had prepared and the plum pudding, cooked a fortnight beforehand, and bigger than I had ever thought a plum pudding could be. We set the table in the kitchen and, as a special privilege, I was allowed to place thereon the dishes of the set that had been part of grandmother's wedding plenishings. They were a handsome dark blue, and not a piece had been broken in forty years.

We did not have any elaborate decorations—none at all, indeed, except the two big dishes full of red apples, polished until they shone. But there was really no room for decorations; the good things to eat occupied all the available space. What delectable odors filled that big kitchen when the hungry guests came home from church. My brother Tom declared he smelt the roast goose four miles down the road!

Everybody had good appetites and did full justice to grandmother's Christmas cheer. We all sat around the table until late in the afternoon, talking, laughing, and telling stories. Finally, we girls helped grandmother wash the dishes, and then it was time to go home through the crisp, waning December afternoon, and Christmas at grandfather's was over, to be talked of and remembered vividly all through the winter. That was the nicest Christmas I ever spent, dearie."

"It sounds jolly," said Ted. "I wish we could have Christmases like that now."

Grandma smiled.

"You have just as good Christmases, although in a different way. You would have thought that celebration very simple and quiet, I am afraid. But remember, dearie, it's the spirit of Christmas that counts. It must be a spirit of goodwill and kindness and joy and love. We must never forget the real meaning of Christmas—never let it be dimmed by any false meanings, and then our Christmases will always be happy and blessed and long to be remembered, no matter where or how they are celebrated."

"That is true," said Alice, soberly. "We'll all try to make our Christmas the right kind, grandma."

"But I do wish we had a big fireplace," said Ted.

What to Read

It is generally better, says Hon. James Bryce, in *The Youth's Companion*, at least when one is old enough to have formed different tastes and come to know what are the lines of study one prefers, to read upon some regular lines rather than in a pure desultory fashion. To have a fresh curiosity, alive to all that passes in the world of letters or of science, is no doubt good; but to try to read even the few best books in more than a few branches is out of the question. The field of knowledge has now grown too wide and too much subdivided.

For most of us the safer plan is to choose some one, or at most some two or three, subjects, and so direct our reading as to concentrate it upon them, and make each book we study help the others, and carry us further forward in the subject. Read the works of the great authors before you read criticisms upon them. Let them make their own simple impression on your mind; and after they have done so, read what other people have said about them. If the book is sufficiently important, and you have time enough, you can afterwards plunge into the comments and criticisms, or may study the life of the author, and see what were the conditions which helped to mold him.

But the main thing is to read him in the first instance with your own eyes, and not through some one else's spectacles. Never, if you can help it, read a poor book. By a poor book, I mean a weak book, a thin book, a book in which the facts are loosely or inaccurately stated, or are ill-arranged, a book in which the ideas are either vague or commonplace. There are so many good books in the world, and we have so little time for reading them, that it is a pity and a waste of opportunities to spend any of that time on the inferior books, which jostle us at every turn, and often prevent us from noticing the good ones.

A Self-Made Christmas

BY HELEN BUTLER SMITH.

LETTY ASHWORTH, only eighteen, desperately homesick in an institutional boarding house, and almost at the end of her money! Is it any wonder that she saw everything through a blue haze? The fact that it was the day before Christmas aggravated the situation. She had sent every dollar she could spare up to her Vermont home to go into the ever-gaping mouth of the farm mortgage, and now in the midst of all the Christmas chatter and planning she felt an outcast—she who loved to give and could not.

"I haven't a single thing to give to anybody," she said to herself. "O dear! I do hope none of the girls will wish me a Merry Christmas. If they do, I shall just scream—or cry."

She looked about her cell-like room. It was very clean and very dreary; differentiated from the fifty other rooms in the Young Women's Home only by the faces in the photographs tucked into the mirror frame and hanging from the gas fixture. Her room-mate had gone home for the holidays, and although she was not specially fond of her, her absence added an atom to the general depression.

But it was breakfast time, and we must eat even if our hearts break, so Letty started for the dining-room three floors below. As she closed her door, a girl dashed out of a room near by and came running after her. At the top of the stairs the new comer tripped and would have fallen headlong but for Letty's quick grasp.

"Bless you, Miss Ashworth! you've saved my life this time," cried the girl, steadying herself by a hand on Letty's shoulder, while she stood on one foot and tried to untangle the other from a loop of dress braid. "I expected this wretched braid would bring me to grief before it was fixed. I've had a new braid in my work-basket for a week, and haven't had a minute to put it on. There!" freeing her foot by a sudden jerk which tore off still more of the braid. "Now I've got to get into another skirt," and she hurried back to her room.

Down in the dining-room an animated conversation rippled up and down the long tables. "Did you see those lovely combs at Hofner's—only fifty cents?"

"No, I shouldn't dare select a necktie for him. I'm going to give him handkerchiefs."

"Did you finish dressing your little sister's doll?" etc.

Letty bore it as long as she could, then, leaving her half-eaten breakfast, went back to her room. The underwear factory where she worked had shut down till after Christmas, to repair the engine, so she had the day before her. If she only had some money, what a nice chance to go round the stores and buy things; or to go home for Christmas. Home! The thought was too much, and the clouds began to drop rain.

There was a knock at the door, and the chambermaid came in.

"Why, what's the matter, Katy?" asked Letty, detaching herself from her own misery enough to notice the girl's swollen face and the dark circles round her eyes.

"It's an ulcerated tooth," groaned the girl. "Not a wink of sleep did I get all night."

"I'll take care of my room to-day," said Letty, "and I just as lief tend to the other rooms on this corridor. I'm not working to-day, and it will do me good to be busy about something."

As Letty went from room to room making beds and straightening rugs and chairs with the precision required in the Young Women's Home, somehow her heart grew lighter, and when she came to the room where a skirt with trailing braid was thrown over a chair, a pleasant thought came to her. Finding a new braid in the work-basket, she took the skirt to her room, rebound it neatly, darned a tiny tear, sewed on a loose hook, and pinning a Christmas greeting on it, hung it on the chair again.

As she finished her rounds she stopped at the laundry door. "You seem to be flying around in here," she said. "We're a little short-handed," said the laundress. "Katy helps us sort the clothes, but she has gone to bed sick, and it looks as if our work would run over into Christmas day." "Can you use a green hand?" asked Letty. "I've nothing to do, and I'd like to help. You can call my services a

Christmas present," she added with the first smile of the day on her face.

"'Twould be the best kind of a Christmas present. Come right in. Those clothes on the racks are ready to sort, and then be sent round to the rooms."

So Letty stood up to the long racks and sorted and folded with willing hands, and the neat piles of clothes disappeared like magic. And when the tables were cleared the laundry girls came up with smiling faces and said, "Thank you for our Christmas present, Miss Ashworth," and Letty went down to dinner with quite an appetite. And there a new chance of service presented itself. Two or three of the girls were bewailing belated errands which required daylight.

"Behold your slave!" said Letty. "Make out your lists, and I will go through them or perish in the attempt."

So, after dinner, Letty went hither and thither, matching ribbons and silks and tassels, and coming home with loaded arms, found a box from her Vermont home, a box filled with holly. If the waxen leaves suddenly gained a new lustre, the dewdrops which caused it were not wholly tears of unhappiness.

The day had been lived through, but the long evening was to be faced. Many of the girls had gone home for the holidays, and others were busy with their Christmas gifts, so Letty sat alone, the tide of homesickness rising high and higher. She heard the occupant of the next room come in and shut her door. "I wonder if Miss Wilbur is homesick, too," she mused. Miss Wilbur was a comparatively new comer, a silent, reserved girl who had no intimates in the Home. Letty had always stood a little in awe of her, but now she felt a sudden impulse to go to her.

"May I come in?" said Letty, as the door opened to her knock, showing the room to be in darkness. "I'm just dying of homesickness."

"Then there are two of us," said the other girl, extending her hand and drawing her in.

"You see," Letty hurried on, with a catch in her voice, "My mother is two hundred miles away, and it may be a year before I see her."

"My mother is farther away than that," said Miss Wilbur, "and I may be a good many years before I see her again"; and remembering the other's black garb, Letty understood.

For a time the two girls went together, and when their tears had lightened their hearts a little, they talked tenderly, of their homes and kindred, and came nearer together than in a year of ordinary intercourse. Then Letty had an inspiration.

"There are two or three of the girls I wanted to remember," she said, "there's Miss Crosby—she's going to the hospital in a few days, for an operation, and she dreads it awfully; and Gertrude Gray's brother has gone wrong and she's just broken hearted; and Milly Bishop's very sad over her broken engagement. I'm awfully short just now, but I have just thought of some bright pieces I have which would make little cushions or headrests, and I've plenty of fir balsam to fill them. Will you come in my room and help me?"

In a few minutes the girls were busy over their scraps of silk, and when the dainty little gifts were finished, Letty brought out her box of holly and fastened a spray on Miss Wilbur's shoulder, saying, "Now, let's make some big wreaths for our windows."

"Yes," said the other, "or"—

"Or what?" asked Letty.

"Wouldn't it be nice to put a piece at every plate, so all the girls could enjoy it? You suggested it, pinning this piece on me."

Letty caught at the idea at once. "We'll be breaking it up, and after everybody is abed, we'll go down and distribute it, and won't they wonder where it came from!"

A couple of hours later, the two girls crept noiselessly upstairs, and as they parted at Letty's door, Miss Wilbur stooped and kissed her cheek, whispering, "I believe you saved my heart from breaking to-night," and slipped into her room before Letty could answer.

When the girls trooped down to breakfast Christmas morn-

over to a minister living next door, who can hardly wait for it, Tom says. Anna has many of the numbers to read before they go to Tom, and so has Mrs. Roberts. So you can see the 'little candle' has spread its rays wide. The magazine is one who reads it is an education and an inspiration. Once more I thank you for the good it does me in my own life.

"I consider that Christmas gift one of the richest investments I ever made," said Mother Kendall, folding the letter carefully, and replacing it in its envelope.

"Tell us, Mother Kendall," said Bess, "what was the very best Christmas gift you ever received."

"The very best," returned Mother Kendall thoughtfully, looking over her glasses into the glowing embers of the fire—the very best gift I ever had came unexpectedly one Christmas evening. I can remember how the snow sparkled, and how the light shone out through the bare branches of the trees as we went up the street with a basket of home-made gifts for our poorer neighbors. On the way we stopped at the post-office, and there was the gift—a letter. In two minutes it made a wintry night "into a June garden blooming with roses."

"It was a love-letter," said Miss Melissa softly.—Frances Bennett Gallaway.

me sick to think of it.

"I have had a few nice Christmas presents," said Mary, with a soberness that set us all to laughing, and Mary smiled too, as she stirred the fire until the sparks brightened the dusky room. "What were they, Mary?" asked Bess, the curious one.

"Two plain linen, hemstitched handkerchiefs, a pair of stockings and a box of writing-paper were the most acceptable presents I ever had. They were so delightfully useful."

"The most precious Christmas present I ever had," said Bess, "was the tiny blue-and-gold copy of Miss Havergal's 'Forget-me-nots,' which Nora gave me. I have read it every day since, until it is ready to drop to pieces, but I shall have it rebound, and shall always love it more and more."

"I can remember some nice Christmas presents I have had," added Miss Melissa, sitting quietly in the corner. "There is a dear little volume of 'Gold Dust' in gold and scarlet which I would not part with for money; a silver ink-eraser and a pair of letter scales which have been my friends and companions for years; then a closet-door bag, so useful that I am glad of Christmas whenever I put anything into its capacious pockets."

"When I was a child," observed Mother Kendall, rounding the mitten she was busy knitting, "the Christmas-time was simply a joyous festival, with no weariness or anxiety about it. We were poor, and lived in a log house, and my mother had no money to spend, but she made a beautiful rag doll, which went into my stocking with a roll of bright calico pieces, a gilded cut-glass bottle which was still scented with perfumery, a paper of brown sugar and cinnamon, and a gingerbread man, brown and crisp, looking out at the top. I was as happy as any child to-day who receives loads of expensive toys, because each little gift, poor though it was, told me of mother's love."

"It is the loving thought that makes a gift shine," said Mary. "The most valued present I ever had is the etching Miss Melissa gave me of Ary Sheffer's 'Christ and St. John.' It speaks to me every day of love, and makes me better. Mother, shall we read Sarah's letter? You did enjoy it so much when it came."

"This letter from Sarah," explained Mrs. Kendall, "shows what rich returns in gratitude one may receive from a Christmas gift when well chosen."

"'I wish to thank you,' Sarah writes, 'for your kind gift of the magazine this year. I am sure you will like to know what a source of pleasure it has proved to so many. I have sent it each week to my brother Tom; and he has, in turn, handed

Christmas Chimes

Christmas Helpers

I went to the forest and asked of the trees,
As bowing and swaying, they bent to the breeze,
"Now, tell me, my brothers, now tell, if you please,
Just what can you do for Christmas?"
And straightway they answered, the dark, lofty trees,
As spicy and fragrant they waved in the breeze,
"We're trying our best to grow tall, if you please.
We're trying to grow for Christmas!"

I passed by the draper's and saw in a box,
Such masses of stockings, both plain and with clocks;
And eager I asked them, "Why, sweet little socks,
Now, what will you do for Christmas?"
And straightway they answered from out of their box,
Those stout-footed stockings, both plain and with clocks,
"We'll try to fulfil the first duty of socks—
We'll try to keep whole for Christmas!"

I entered the toy shop and said to the toys,

The Man Without a Christmas

"The man without a country" was in a pretty bad fix. But it isn't a circumstance to the man without a Christmas. And who is the man without a Christmas? The heathen who know not of the blessed Christ child, the poor children in city and country who have no Christmas presents and Christmas cheer to brighten and gladden their dreary lives? Yes, these are surely and sadly without a Christmas.

But there is another without a Christmas. He knows of the Christ child, but it brings him no peace; he has ample money for gifts, but it brings him no joy.

The man without a Christmas is the man with no joy in his heart, no love in his life, no gracious, generous impulses in his soul.

For him the Christmas bells ring out no peal of joy, the Christmas carols bring no message of peace and love. Selfishness sits on the throne of his soul. Greed has become both conduct and creed.

The poorest of earth, with the love of God in his heart and a trifling gift for child or friend in his hand, is honored and favored and blessed immeasurably above the man without a Christmas.—*Methodist Recorder.*

Happenings on Christmas Day

Christmas was first celebrated in the year 98, but it was forty years later before it was officially adopted as a Christian festival; nor was it until about the fifth century that the day of its celebration became permanently fixed on December 25. Up to that time it had been irregularly observed at various times of the year—in December, in April and in May, but most frequently in January.

Clovis, the first Christian king of France, was baptized on Christmas Day, 496.

The Pilgrim Fathers, who condemned all church festivals, spent their first Christmas in America working hard all day long, amid cold and stormy weather, and commenced the building of the first house in Plymouth, 1620.

It is a significant fact that no great battles were fought on Christmas Day. They have occurred on the 24th and 26th of December, but the anniversary of the advent of peace on earth has ever been observed by a cessation of hostilities.

In history Christmas has been a very remarkable day. It was on Christmas Day that Charlemagne was crowned Em-

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peror of the Holy Roman Empire in the Cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle.

On Christmas Day, in the year 1066, William the Conqueror was crowned King of England in Westminster Abbey.

For Queen Victoria Christmas was a fateful day. It was on Christmas morning in 1838 that her engagement to Prince Albert was announced. It was to spend Christmas at Osborne as a heart broken widow that she went twenty-three years later.

Nuggets

We keep Christmas truly only when we let the love of Christ into our hearts and lives. We write Anno Domini in our dates, but are we really making our years years of our Lord? It may mean very little to us that Christ was born in Bethlehem a great many Christmases ago; but if we keep Christmas as we may, it is not merely another anniversary of a great event in history—it is a real birth of Christ in our own hearts.

It is a good thing to observe Christmas day. The mere marking of times and seasons when men agree to stop work and make merry together is a wise and wholesome custom. It helps one to feel the supremacy of the common life over the individual life. It reminds a man to set his own little watch, now and then, by the great clock of humanity.

We trust that our readers will set themselves squarely against two things: the notion that one *must* give a Christmas present to every one of his friends, and the equally futile one that it is better to give a stupid and useless present than to give none. Foolish presents discredit Christmas. Gifts that are meant to pay debts or to buy friendship are a poor affair—unscriptural, unchristian, unavailing, unmeaning. Give sensibly and generously or not at all.

Go home for Christmas, young man. Warm the hearts and brighten the house of the father and mother who toiled for you so long by carrying to them the freshness and brimming interests of the big world where you now live and work. And ye fathers and mothers, have home dinners and home parties for your children. Don't let the young people have to go elsewhere for a "good time." Christmas is the real "home feast." No other kind of a Christmas is so good as a home Christmas.

Christmas is the sacrament of childhood. Little children look forward to it as theirs. They look back upon it as a memory that sweetens all the years to come. Had Jesus done nothing else than this, his mission would have been the noblest that ever marked the life of man.

Hymns You Ought to Know

XI.—The Day is Over

Now the day is over,
Night is drawing nigh;
Shadows of the evening
Steal across the sky;

Jesus, grant the weary
Calm and sweet repose;
With Thy tenderest blessing
May our eyelids close.

Grant to little children
Visions bright of Thee;
Guard the sailors tossing
On the deep, blue sea.

Comfort every sufferer
Watching late in pain;
Those who plan some evil
From their sins restrain.

Through the long night watches
May Thine angels spread
Their white wings above me,
Watching round my bed.

When the morning wakens
Then may I arise
Pure, and fresh, and sinless
In Thy holy eyes.

—Sabine Baring-Gould.

In the Heart of the Home

It was night-time, and the sheep were folded fast on Bethlehem's hills when He came, bringing to the world the picture that has ever since been the inspiration of art. A common enough picture, it is true. One sees it at the door of every poor man's cottage—the mother and her babe. It was into the heart of the home Jesus came. And it is at the home door He is knocking this Christmastide. Great philanthropic enterprises have their place, but it was the home the Son of God entered first when He came to dwell with men. God pity any hearts this Christmas time who have wandered away from the old fireside, and forgotten it either in the race for gain or in paths of sin. As our feet turn homeward this Christmastide may we bear such love and brightness as we never did before.

Blessed be the man or woman whose Christmas bounty reaches out toward lonely, obscure and unfortunate folk. Not all of them are poor.—*Congregationalist*.

THE CANADIAN EPWORTH ERA

PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT TORONTO, ONT.

REV. A. C. CREWS, - - Editor.
REV. WILLIAM BRIGGS, Publisher.**SUBSCRIPTION PRICE**, 50 cents per year, payable in advance. For every five subscriptions received, one free copy of the paper will be sent.**SUBSCRIPTIONS** should be sent direct to the office of publication, addressed to REV. WILLIAM BRIGGS, Wesley Buildings, Toronto; or to C. W. COATES, Methodist Book Room, Montreal; or Rev. S. F. HUESTIS, Methodist Book Room, Halifax, N.S.**ALL ORDERS** for Topic Cards, Pledge Cards, Charters, Epworth League Reading Course, or other League Supplies, should be sent to one of our Book Rooms at Toronto, Montreal or Halifax.**COMMUNICATIONS** for this Paper, News Items, etc., should be addressed to the Editor, REV. A. C. CREWS, Wesley Buildings, Toronto.

Editorial

This paper wishes all its readers a very pleasant Christmas time. Please say: "Same to you," by renewing your subscription for 1908. Nothing will be more acceptable.

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ACCORDING to the statistical returns of Sunday Schools presented to the last Conferences, there was a decrease of 63,508 in the number of periodicals published by our Book Room, supplied to our Sunday Schools. The mailing lists of the Book Room, however, indicate an increase of 12,719. This shows how unreliable our schedules are.

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WHAT extra-ordinary creations the ladies' fall hats are! The other day we saw a Salvation Army lassie with a sugar scoop bonnet standing alongside a society lady with a modern "picture hat," and some time was spent in deciding which headgear was the uglier. The conclusion was that the first prize for ugliness belonged to the hat. If ladies would refuse to wear these grotesque productions they would soon go out of style.

✕

WALKING along the main street of a town which was notorious for its muddy roads, in company with one of the citizens, he made the remark: "If we could get hold of the money that is spent in this place for tobacco, liquor, chewing gum, and shows of various kinds, we could pave every street in this town with the finest asphalt." No doubt this gentleman spoke the truth. What a pity it is that so much good money is wasted!

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EVERY Epworth League that is worthy of the name will, of course, make some effort to brighten and cheer the poor and unfortunate around them during the Christmas season; but we hope that the "Visiting and Relief Committee" will not exhaust itself with its holiday activities. The sorest pinch of the winter to poor people generally comes about the middle of February, and a little assistance then is much appreciated. Do not forget this.

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In many parts of the country Local Option campaigns are now on and the forces of temperance are pushing the battle vigorously. We trust that the members of the Epworth League will, whenever practicable, have a hand in this fight. While perhaps very few of them can take the platform on behalf of prohibition, there is much that they can do in a personal way and by scattering literature. Let every dy get to work. It would be a pity to lose by one vote that you might have influenced, wouldn't it?

PEDESTRIANISM seems to be the fad of the hour, just now, and the columns of our papers are full of the feats of men who have covered long distances in a short period of time. Like everything else, it is likely to be overdone. Walking is splendid exercise, and as such should be encouraged, but when young men undertake an almost impossible journey for the sake of winning a wager, they exhaust their powers, and gain the reputation of being "dead men walking." Four or five miles of walking, at a moderate pace, is a good deal for most people.

Quarterly Boards. In many cases they invite the minister they know least about, or the man who tickles their fancy with a single eloquent sermon is favored.

✕

As a rule the liquor men make no attempt to defend their business, for they know it is bad—thoroughly bad. They have recently departed from this plan of action and are publishing in a few of the newspapers advertisements in praise of beer as a beverage. They have, however, overshoot the mark by making wild and extravagant statements that cannot be sustained. They must think the people are exceedingly ignorant and gullible to believe that beer will not intoxicate, and that it is as valuable as milk as a food. These fallacies have again and again been knocked out. Many of the newspapers, we are glad to note, refused to print these advertisements, although "there was money in it."

MANY young people who are members of the Epworth League, or adherents of our Church in country towns and villages, come to Toronto to live, and very often fail to identify themselves with any of our city churches because they have no acquaintance, and feel diffident about going to a strange society or church. If League officers and pastors will kindly notify this office, giving name and address of new arrivals, we will see that they are reported to the most convenient church. The result will be that they will be called on and invited to the League and other church services and made to feel that this is the most important matter.

ABOUT this time of the year there is usually some discussion in regard to Santa Claus. There are those who would banish the jolly old fellow entirely from the world of childhood, and argue for absolute and literal truthfulness in regard to the identity of the generous donor who fills the stockings at Christmas time. We scarcely think, however, that very much harm has been done by the Santa Claus myth, and it has undoubtedly added much to the innocent pleasures of the holiday season. Care should be taken, though, not to make Santa Claus so prominent as to obscure the real significance of Christmas Day. It is an unfortunate thing when the young people come to regard the old man who drives the reindeer as the chief personage of the Christmas season.

In a previous number of this paper reference was made to a contribution for a good cause from "One who takes pleasure in giving the tenth." This has the right ring about it. Some people give a tenth of their income simply from a sense of obligation, but find little pleasure in it. If this method is adopted it ought to be carried out cheerfully, heartily, and even "bilarously." The same principle applies with equal force to all Christian service. There is danger of thinking and talking a little too much about our duty to Christ and His work, and losing sight of the great privilege that is ours. There is a good deal of significance in the line we sing sometimes:

"Let His work our pleasure be."

When we are in right relations with God, we ought to find a real pleasure in giving, praying, speaking and working for our Master.

It is a good thing to have always at hand what may be called "a spare-minute book," that can be opened when we have only a short time at our disposal. This, of course, will not be a heavy volume of philosophy, or theology, and it certainly need not be a novel. There are many very entertaining and profitable books like Irving's "Sketch Book," Hawthorne's "Mosses from an Old Manse," or Dr. Holland's "Gold Foil," which may be picked up for a few moments at any time, and

will always be entertaining, besides furnishing something to think about. The probabilities are, however, that most people spend their brief intervals while waiting for business or social appointments, or when listening for the dinner bell to ring, on newspapers or magazines.

Dr. Johnston used to advise young people never to be without a book in their pocket to read at by-times when they had nothing else to do.

IN acknowledging the receipt of six copies of our new book of Epworth League Methods, "Practical Plans," Rev. A. J. Terryberry of Southampton says: "The book fills a felt want among our young people. Many willing hands hang helpless in our Leagues simply for want of wise and wide awake suggestions. This book meets the need in splendid fashion. Each of our League officers has a copy and all are very much pleased with the many new things therein presented." Mr. Terryberry is a pastor who takes an active interest in his Epworth League and believes in supplying them with every possible help in doing their work. We hope many Leagues will copy this example and place the book in the hands of every officer.

PARENTS should gladly welcome every evidence in their boy's life that points to a growing interest in books. Wise provision for the lad's mental needs should be as carefully made as for his physical. Most boys hunger for books as much as for bread. Most parents provide the latter, but many begrudge the former. The worst parsimony is that which prefers an extra dollar in the pocket to an additional book on the shelf. And every boy should be encouraged to form a library of his own. It is a good sign when a boy works hard to turn a box into a book-case. He should be assisted in the stocking of his home-made shelves. Many an expensive and elaborate book-cabinet has represented less practical value in a rich man's mansion than the inexpensive home-made case in a poor man's cottage. Let the boy make his shelves if he wants to do so. The amount of book that he takes into mind and assimilates into character makes his library a good one. Give him books with this thought in view, and they will be his in a double sense, and of multiplied value to him.

What Can the Social Department Do?

By Miss Ismay E. Baker

IN this department as in all other departments of League work, we should feel seriously impressed that God has placed each of us in His world with our various talents to be developed, and that we exert an influence in this field of work quite as broad as in any other department of League work. Why not? Do we not in this work have a wider opportunity, not only of living the life acceptable to God, but of mingling that life with those in every walk of duty? If we are genuine social workers we cannot live to ourselves. We must brush against this one or that one, so that he may feel our sympathy, and reach out for our helping hand. We must touch the hearts and kindle the souls of those at our services,—yes, and make outsiders feel that we have a deep interest in their welfare, too. We live in a practical world, in a practical age, and our efforts to be effectual must be practical.

Perhaps as Leaguers our first duty is to the young people of the home community. In every community we meet young people of various dispositions and with ideals of different types. Ideals largely determine character, and it is a part of the business of the League to furnish ideals. We must touch the chord that makes the ideal. As social workers we must get to know our friends and encourage conversation on lofty subjects.

I am a firm believer in personal work as a means of bringing young people to the foot of the cross. Young people are free-hearted conversationalists on almost all common place topics, and I believe a quiet talk friend with friend, often proves the means of salvation. But we cannot reach this point of fitness for personal work in a day, no, sometimes not for many many days, nor can I reach all, nor can you reach all. The poet says, "Nature to each allots his perfect sphere," and I believe if we prayerfully look to God, He will lead us to fifty approach some souls in our midst, and lead them to see the depth of the highest and more useful life. In this work our friends must

Flowers, too, are dear as friends in the sick room.

If cut flowers cannot be obtained send a plant in bloom. The odor of the violets flew over the wings of the wind to be drunk by the weary multitude as they go through life with his own particular burden.

Again, those who are much on song depress much can be done in song. Children who are largely fond of music. Be thankful for frequent calls, and sympathies on the aged friends are whose eyes are growing to them.

We must be sunshiny. We must be sunshiny. We must be sunshiny. We must be sunshiny.

We should be on new-comers. When service, do not wait. These are dry formal hands with the strain it. There is a whole Invite the new come do not be too ager size up the League worth before being in too great a hurry to gain their membership, for after all it is not members but souls we are seeking.

The Floral Committee should see that some plant or cut flowers be placed in the church every Sunday, thus bringing a new touch with God's nature. Special services in the church should be marked by special effort on the part of the floral committee.

If decorations for social evenings are used let simplicity be a great expenditure of nervous energy and appreciated to pay the decorators for their work.

In the preparation of special social evenings, let the selection be carefully carried out. Some think that is indispensable, and office and a sandwich are nothing else will, advantageous twen-buld rather bend to

Surely the time we say, "The way to way of his mouth," me, we must not be song-faced Christians world and are often

the success of the depends upon the Vice-President. Get se who has large- with a broad sym- humanity, marked in social workers will or labor. To the y have no special I would say that us talents for cer- reach some soul of us may do much e lives lit by the e. The shaping of work. We lay the to joint. We give we set the finish. a thing of beauty The world is what then forward, in ward in the power the power of friend- power of freedom, of hope, forward in

Our Letter Box

The Discipline

One pastor writes that his young people have been taking up the study of the Discipline. He says: "I found the young people quite destitute of even a general knowledge of the Discipline, and endeavored to bring them into touch with the methods of our church government."

Courage Lacking

A young Epworth League member writes:

There is some good sound sense in these remarks.

There is some good sound sense in these remarks.

Like Other Places

A League President says that in their League they have "some very active members, and some very lazy ones." The latter class are usually designated as "indifferent," but perhaps the word used here is not far from the truth. Our friend need not feel that circumstances in his church are so very exceptional. As a matter of fact, conditions are similar in most places—a few very much interested, and a lot of others doing scarcely anything. The workers should seek in every possible way to rouse the drones from their dormant condition, not by scolding them, but by suggesting lines of work, and stimulating timid ones to undertake something useful.

"No One Came[Up]"

One of our League Presidents forwards the following letter which he had received from a young lady, one of the former members of his League, who had removed to another place:

"Mary and I went to League last night. I don't know whether we will go again or not. We went in, and there were some there, but no one at the door to speak to us, so we went and sat down. After a few minutes they began, had four hymns, a prayer, Bible reading, and a short talk by a young man on 'God's Omnipotence.' Afterwards we put on our coats—took our time about it—but no one came up to speak to us or anything, not even the pastor. It was a dry meeting, and not a bit home-like. They didn't start till 8.10, and we were out a few minutes before nine."

This reads a little like "Miss Smith's" experiences which have appeared in the Ladies' Home Journal. Really, Epworth Leaguers, we must not allow this kind of thing to happen in our meetings. It is altogether too serious a matter.

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The Sunday School

Much to Learn

There must be a generous welcome for everything that will bring the teacher into a better appreciation of the scholar. The right kind of a book may do this. Articles appearing in current Sunday-school and educational journals may aid just here. The Sunday-school teacher may learn much from the day-school teacher. This is one thing which the summer schools of many kinds undertake. More study of the scholar during the week may reveal many things of great value to the teacher.

The Home Life

One kind of child study which should be followed more generally by Sunday-school teachers is that requiring a large investment of sole leather. Let the teachers look into the home-life of their scholars, and their week-day surroundings, generally, for guiding hints in their work. The teacher knows far too little about his scholars, who know them only on Sunday, dressed in their best clothes, and thus having on their good manners. This and knowledge never comes to the person who sits down and calmly waits for it.

Lessons for Next Year

For 1908 there will be a graded series of Sunday-school lessons, in response to the request of a considerable number of Sunday-school workers.

1. THE BEGINNER'S COURSE, intended for scholars under six years of age. The lessons are largely topical, and take up such general themes as "Home Life," "God's Loving Care," "Giving Thanks to God," "Giving," "The Boy Jesus," etc.
2. THE INTERNATIONAL COURSE, which devotes the first six months to the Gospel of John.
3. THE ADVANCED COURSE, which follows the same general outline as the "International," but the lessons are treated differently.

The Need of Biblical Instruction

A teacher in the schools of a certain large city gave for one lesson the Scripture references mentioned in the "Mosaic of Venice," which the class was reading. Out of the forty-four students who wrote, only two pupils, one boy and one girl, answered the eight questions correctly. Two made no attempt, seven answered five out of eight, and the remaining thirty-three were ignorant of all but one or two of the characters mentioned.

The questions related to Abraham, Jacob, Hagar, Barabbas, Daniel, and others, and they brought out such written answers as these: "Abraham succeeded Moses in leading the children of Israel." "Abraham was the father of Christ." "Abraham was a Jew, father of Moses." "Abraham was a holly man of Jesus' time" (the spelling is preserved). "Jacob was a Jewish descendant." "Hagar was a Christian." "Hagar: I think Gentile's offspring." "Hagar: I think means hungry Christian." "Hagar: Think he must be some idle person." "Barabbas was a martyr." "Daniel was worshiped by the Jews."

Such answers prove the absolute necessity of better teaching in our Sunday-schools—and, we would add, in our homes and public schools also. A little decent information on such subjects could hardly be characterized as "sectarian instruction," or be thought of as involving a union of church and state.

Home Department in the Jail

Our pastor at Macleod, Alberta, has started a Home Department in the jail, and writes thus about it:

"I received the supplies for the Home Department in our jail.

"It was an experiment. I did not know how they (the prisoners) would take to it.

"But I never saw anything melt a crowd of men as they were melted when I mentioned the Sunday-school and told them I wanted them to be members of our Sunday-school. Those who had appeared most indifferent in the services previously seemed to break down and tears were very manifest. Seven signed the cards and took the 'Quarterly.' Can I get some more? Our Rally day was a great success. The programme furnished by the Sunday-school Department was excellent. Seven boys signed the pledge. Offerings for Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund, \$6.40. It was unique when our superintendent announced that seven of our scholars were in jail. But he made a good application of it."

A Golden Opportunity

Whatever may be the opinion of anyone concerning the different phases of work connected with the Sunday-school, no one will object to the statement that the school ought to be a training place for Christians. The approach of the advent season offers a golden opportunity for instructing the pupils concerning the meaning of Christmaste, and of training them in what they ought to do at that season. Should this opportunity be improved this year, and should the school continue to embrace similar opportunities as the years roll on, it will not take long in the church with which the school is connected, to develop a body of Christians who are well instructed concerning the meaning of Christmas, and who, because of their training, are prepared to live up to what they know. The writer is well aware of the difficulties that stand in the way of this instruction and training, but notwithstanding those difficulties he is of the opinion that a beginning should be made in the direction indicated, and that the effort should be carried on.

At least there could be more emphasis put upon the fact that the day celebrated is the anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ. Whatever is done to honor him on that day should be considered the proper thing. Whatever is done simply to satisfy one's desire for pleasure, or whatever is done from some selfish motive ought to be considered out of place on the day. In other words, if our young people were taught that above all things Jesus Christ was to be honored on the anniversary of his birthday, and that the best way in which to honor him is to try to imitate his example in all things, there would be less to complain of concerning the observance of our Christmas anniversary.

Veteran Sunday School Workers

IX.—Mr. William Harrison.

THE subject of this sketch was a charter member of the first Sunday School, organized in 1848, in the village of Richmond Hill, about twenty miles north of Toronto. He became a teacher in 1854, and had charge of the primary department for four years, when he was appointed secretary, holding this post for five years. He has been Bible class teacher for twenty-five years, and superintendent forty years consecutively, retiring in 1899. He has thus given 51 years of service to the one Sunday School.

Mr. Harrison has also occupied a number of important positions outside his own school, having been Secretary and President of the Yonge Street S. S. Teachers' Associat on, President of the East and West York S. S. Association, and the first President of the West York S. S. Association at its organization in 1891. He has also been Reeve of Richmond Hill, and is well known throughout the township.

Mr. Harrison was born in the city of Bath, England, in 1834, and came with his parents to Canada in 1843, locating in the neighborhood where he still lives. He ought to be in cordial sympathy with all the leading denominations, for he was baptized by the Congregationalists, trained up in "the way he should go" by the Episcopalians, received instruction in a Presbyterian Sunday School, and converted to God under the influence of Methodism.

At the present time he is past three score and ten, and is, where he began many years ago, a scholar in the Bible class in the same Sunday School.



Missionary

The Grandest Thing

What is the grandest thing of all ?

The work that awaits each day ;
The work that calls us on every hand
Is work that for us is truly grand,
And the love of work is our pay.

What is the highest life of all ?

"Thy living, day after day,
True to ourselves, and true to the right,
Standing for truth from dawn till night,
And the love of truth for our pay.

What is the grandest thing of all ?

Is it winning heaven some day ?
No, and a thousand times say no ;
"Thy making this old world thrill and glow
With the light of love till each shall know
Something of heaven here below,
And God's "Well done" for our pay.

—Jean Blewett.

A Christmas in Kiating, China

BY REV. C. W. SERVICE, M.D.

I must give you a brief account of our Christmas. On Sunday, at the request of one of my fellow-missionaries, I preached the Christmas sermon. It was a feeble effort, at least from a language standpoint, but it was delivered after much prayer for Divine help, so that I hope it was understood by and proved helpful to some.

On Sunday a special collection for the poor was taken. Of course, the greater part of it was given by foreigners, but the Chinese really did well. I suppose every boy and girl in the Sabbath-school contributed something. About twenty of the boys picked stones on the river bank to make a path, and thus earned what would be equal to about twenty-five cents. This they gave to the poor fun. It was indeed interesting to see with what zest these children all gave their mites. I thought of the "widow and her mite," for verily most of these boys and girls are themselves the children of poverty, and have but a few cash in excess of what are absolutely necessary. It is a stimulating sight to see these children Sabbath after Sabbath in our church for worship and study of the Bible. One feels that, in spite of the many discouragements, there is hope for China in these "little ones."

At the Christmas celebration given to the poor of the city, the Sunday-school scholars sang two hymns, which were previously read by two of our teachers ; another teacher read an appropriate Christmas portion of Scripture, a church member led in prayer ; another gave a short address explaining the meaning of Christmas and our motive in giving them cash, emphasizing especially that it was not to "gain merit ;" but that it was in fulfilment of the spirit of the Christ whose birth we were celebrating. His chief points were that God gave His Son ; Jesus taught that the rendering of a service to the "least of these my brethren" is doing it to Himself, and that Jesus gave His own life.

At the close of this short service, our guests were sent out one by one. Native assistants handed each his little string of cash. It was a pleasure to see them go happily out of the gate.

What a motley crew it was ! I can only give a few samples. Here is a very

old man who is said to be about a century old, and I can well believe it. He is very decrepit ; nevertheless he walked up to the church. He is also exceedingly

When we found him in his little hovel he was alone, cooking his afternoon meal. Here is an old woman, "stone blind," led by a little girl. Here is a woman carrying a little babe in a sling on her back and leading another little one by the hand. Here is another decrepit old man who is helped along by a "companion in distress." Here is an old man whose hearing is almost gone. When we found him in his house half a dozen boys spent some time yelling into his ears before he could comprehend the purpose of our visit. Here are several old women with typical Chinese "sore eyes," which are not very pleasurable to behold, I can assure you.

What a Little Girl Did

BY DR. W. F. ADAMS

The fact of our going to China had an influence upon our little niece. She thought of us and the work in China and longed to do something to help. She was only about eight years old but started to work to get up a bazar. In this way she made five dollars and sent it out to us. We felt that it was a sacred investment and thought and prayed for a long time as to how best to invest the amount for this earnest little girl. We wanted to be faithful stewards of her money. Finally we concluded to invest it in children, and waited until Christmas time. Then we bought cloth and sewed bags—two hundred—and put in an orange, some candy, nuts, a piece of cake, a picture card, and last but not least, a piece of foreign soap. They do not have soap like ours, and appreciate it very much. Then we went out onto the street and in the homes of the neighbourhood left little tickets, inviting all the children to come on Christmas morning to our Chapel. Here we had a short service, singing, a Christmas reading from the Bible, a few short speeches, and then I told the happy children that it was the thought and love in the heart of only one little girl, like themselves, away off on the other side of the world, that was giving to them this joy. And that it was because Jesus loved her, that she loved them and thought lovingly about them in this way. It was read to her in the life of those two hundred children.

This same little girl of ours wanted to do more than for the Chinese, and as we had told her about the Chinese boy we had taken into our home to educate and train as a preacher for Jesus, she thought that she would like to have a boy of her own out there to support also. So she got a few companions to assist and they prepared for another bazar, on a larger scale, as they now had a larger and more definite object in view. What wonders we can accomplish for Jesus, if we only have a direct object to work for. The bazar came off some time ago. It was a miserable day ; cold and raining, and so dismal that many could not attend. And so it was all a failure, and their hearts were terribly disappointed, and they decided never to do anything more again for the Chinese—for what was the use ! That is just the way things always go anyway when you want to do right and be something for Jesus, is it not ? Was that what they thought, and the result ? Not

a bit of it. God looks after His loving little children and although He does allow dark days to come to test our faith, in His courage, and He always works out the best thing, if we do not become discouraged. Just read a verse in Isaiah 42. 4. and make that your own. "I shall not fail nor be discouraged." Well, they made forty-five dollars that day, in spite of rain and cold, and so they have more than enough to support one boy for a year, and they want to do better next year, and the other girls are enthused and eager to have more to do for the Saviour. How much can you earn ? Use your brains and just try to do something that will be worthy of you and worthy of Jesus.

Toronto, Ont.

How a Christmas Gift Was Multiplied at Yuihsien, China

The people of China know nothing about Christmas. It is only when they have come under the influence of Christianity, and have learned of the world's Saviour, that they keep this great festival of the Christian church. Let me tell you how one of our missionaries in the great heathen city of Yuihsien, in far-off West China, spent a Christmas day, and strove to teach the people the meaning of Christmas in its truest sense.

Away back in Canada a friend of the missionary's wife had been thinking of her, and had planned to send her a Christmas gift. You know it is hard to send gifts so far, so instead of buying anything, money was sent, with the understanding that the missionary's wife was to spend it in any way she liked. What do you think she did ? She decided that she would give a dinner to as many as possible of the Chinese in this great heathen city. A Chinese caterer prepared the dinner, and the women of the mission house were entertained in the mission house, while over one hundred and fifty men had their Christmas dinner in the street chapel. Besides these about two dozen poor families were fed, so that over two hundred people had a share in the Christmas gift to the missionary's wife.

I do not need to tell you that she herself was very happy that Christmas day, because she was fulfilling the words of the Master when He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and that to over two hundred Chinese had been told the Christmas story and its message to them.

What Christ Gave

In a story a good man says, "It's very hard to know how to help people when you can't send them blankets, or coal, or Christmas dinners." With many people this is very true. They know not how to help others save in such ways. Yet the needs which these material things satisfy are the smallest needs of human lives. There are better ways of helping—with sympathy, hope, cheer, courage, inspiration, comfort. These are the blessings which most people need far more than they need blankets, or coals, or Christmas dinners.

So far as we know Jesus gave no money. He did not have it to give. Yet there never was in this world another such dispensation of true help as He was. He gave encouragement, instruction, love. He told people of higher things.

None of us are too poor to help help in the same way. We may not have silver and gold to bestow, but out of a warm heart we can give as much help which will mean far more than money. We should always keep a gentle heart, and thus we can be a blessing to many.

The Dead Sea

I looked upon a sea, and lo! 'twas dead,
Although by Hermon's snows and Jordan
fed.

How came a fate so dire? The tale's
soon told:
Al! that it got it kept, and fast did hold.

All tributary streams found here their
grave.
Because this sea received but never gave.

O, sea that's dead! teach me to know and
feel

That selfish grasp and greed my doom
will seal.

And, Lord, help me my best, myself to
give,
That I may others bless, and like Thee
live.

Enlarging His Borders

"No, Dr. Hull," said Martin Reed, "I don't believe in missions. Seems to me we have enough work piled up around us here."

"I'm sorry to hear you talk like that, Martin. You have been my right-hand man in so many ways since I began my pastorate here that I do not want a single grace denied you. You don't know how a man whose youth is gone covets other men's youth for the Master. But let's not have a difference to remember for the whole month of my vacation. Since you will not agree, we will change the subject."

They had stopped at the parsonage, and their eyes met with that heart-warming look of liking which is one of the most lasting sweets of life.

"Martin, I want you to do something for me. I suppose, like all well-regulated Christians, you pray at morning and evening. For one month I want you to pray a single time for yourself or your family."

"For what, then, Doctor?" Reed asked, uncomfortably.

"For whatever you please, Martin. But not one word for yourself or your family. I'll pray for them and for you, if you like, and give you free range. Don't skimp your usual praying-time—that's all."

Reed laughed to himself as he went on. "I don't know what he is after, but he is trying some experiment with his finger on my spiritual pulse. He can't find out anything, though, unless I tell him."

When the two met a month later, the minister as brown as a ripe pear from his vacation, Martin answered his question before he asked it.

"I believe in missions now, Dr. Hull."

"That warms me. But how did it happen?"

"Why, you happened it, and you know it."

"Tell me about it."

"Well that first night, when I went to pray before I slept, I found that I had nothing to say. Doctor, I tell you it frightened me to discover that in all God's full world I could find nothing worth praying for but myself and my mother and Grace. I got through somehow, but it made me think—and I didn't sleep very well."

"We have never had family prayers at our house, though, perhaps—but that's another story. Well, the next day Uncle Daniel Burt came for a week's visit, and of course he held family prayers. And equally, of course, he called on me, as the man of the family, to pray. I was up a stump. When I knelt down my head and my heart were as empty as a new cup. You see, I couldn't very well pray for spiritual blessings on a saint like Uncle Dan and leave myself out. So I devoted the time to civic affairs. I didn't

realize how much I had agonized over the mayor, until, as soon as prayers were over, I saw Uncle Daniel seize the paper and look through it for sensational developments at the city hall. He didn't find anything, and on the way downtown he said innocently, 'Sonny, what kind of mayor is Jane Briggs' son making?' I told him the best kind—best we've had since I've been voting; but my face got pretty red."

Reed looked up slyly at the minister, whose laughing eyes in his grava face were like a bit of sunshine in a shady place.

"The next morning I prayed for the poor, and for our institutions of learning, but, Dr. Hull, I felt something lacking: I felt an emptiness, a sense of limitation. Hereafter, I had begun with myself and radiated a little way, but now I wanted to be able to say, 'God bless the world—all but me,' and I was not able. But you see, I had to acquit myself somehow before Uncle Daniel, so I went to the Psalms for suggestions, and here the first thing I saw was the heathen giving to

Christ for His inheritance, and that the multitude of the isles are to be glad, because the Lord reigns. How many times I have passed those things by looking for something 'for me,' something 'personal'—in my littleness not seeing that these promises are 'personal' to millions of folks Christ died for."

"After that I asked Uncle Daniel to do the praying, and it pleased him—he thought it was offering him the whole of the apple instead of half, because he was company. And, somehow, I saw that I had missed it; and I kept still and envied Uncle Daniel while he lavished himself on the whole creation."

"Well, Doctor, in short, you showed me the selfishness of my prayers, and God showed me the way out. I believe now in the world for Christ. And I'd like to pray a little for myself, too, for I don't want to be the only man sitting down while all the rest are standing."

The minister spoke tenderly: "Pray all you like. You have entered into the secret, my friend."—Mary C. Johnson, in Epworth Herald.

How Margaret Learned the True Meaning of Christmas

BY CORA C. SIFTON.

The president of the Junior League was thinking. There was a deep furrow between her eyes as she absently turned over and over the little heap of silver coins on the table before her.

"Just three dollars and seventy-five cents," she said to herself, "and Blanche gave me such a lovely present last Christmas that I really ought to spend it all for her. I can't give her some poor scripply little thing. But suppose I spent two dollars and a half for her, and I couldn't do any less, then there are Edith and Ruth and Violet. Oh, dear, I'm glad Christmas comes only once a year!"

She gathered up the little heap of money, and thrust it into her purse, giving the lock an impatient little snap as she closed it. Then, with a glance at the clock, she hurried away.

Half an hour later, she was presiding at the weekly meeting of the Juniors in the cosy church parlor, and for the time being her perplexity was forgotten. Margaret thoroughly enjoyed her position as president. To have the Junior League best in every department was her great desire, and to-day she looked with sparkling eyes out over the little gathering of boys and girls. Though the day was dark and rainy, the room was full and every face was interested. Just after the opening prayer a lady came in, a stranger to Margaret. She was plainly dressed, but there was something very sweet and winning about her face. It was just before the meeting closed that the superintendent, with a whispered word to Margaret, rose and said, "Boys and girls, I am very glad to introduce to you Mrs. Grant, the wife of one of the missionaries. I just found out that she was in the city, and asked her to come and speak to us this afternoon. Next week is our missionary meeting, but as Mrs. Grant will not be here then, we are very glad to have here with us to-day."

Margaret never forgot the talk that followed. It did not seem like a missionary address at first, for Mrs. Grant spoke of the Christmas season, and how during the years of absence her heart had turned longingly homeward as the time approached. Then she spoke of the first Christmas and the wonderful Star shining over the Judean hills, guiding the Wise Men to the cradle of the One who was the Christmas Gift to the whole wide world. But the speaker's eyes grew misty here, as she told of the children in heathen lands who had never yet heard the story of Christmas.

"And, boys and girls, we have so much," Mrs. Grant continued earnestly. "Think of the money that we spend merely for show. Think of the presents that we so often give simply as a return, entirely losing sight of the real idea, the true meaning of Christmas."

Margaret started and flushed guiltily. How did Mrs. Grant know what she had been considering before the meeting? She did not hear the next few sentences, but when she finally recovered herself, the superintendent was announcing a Christmas thank-offering for the next meeting. "Let us in some way show our gratitude that we have learned the story of the Christmas Gift to the world, and let us try to send the message to some who have never heard it," she said.

Margaret went home in a maze. Could she do it? Could she take the money that she had intended to spend on Christmas gifts to her four friends, and send it to help make Christmas for some one else?

"What will the girls think of me?" she murmured, "and yet they know I love them all. Oh, I don't know what I ought to do."

Then her head sank lower as she tried to picture herself in the condition of one of Christ's needy ones without a knowledge of Him and of His great love. Then it was that Margaret, for the first time since entering into the truest meaning of the Christmas season, and the struggle was over.

It was a very thoughtful little maiden who knocked on Edith's door a few minutes later. Margaret felt that she must confide in her friends. But what was her surprise to find that Edith had been thinking along the same line.

"I am afraid my Christmases have been dreadfully selfish, Margaret," she confessed, "and I am so glad that Mrs. Grant showed us our mistake to-day. I know the girls will all want to help, but what the work did not stop with the girls, and when the Christmas offering was taken it was found that the Juniors had contributed fifty dollars as a Christmas gift to the boys and girls who have no Christmas."

But Margaret felt her happiness complete when on Christmas morning, in addition to letters full of love and good wishes from her four friends, she opened one from Mrs. Grant, thanking her in the name of the little ones "for whom Christ died."

Toronto, Ont.

From the Field

Toronto Conference League

The Biennial Convention of the Toronto Conference Epworth League at Orillia, was a gratifying success. The programme was an exceedingly practical character, and those who attended were greatly helped and inspired. We regret that we have not space to report this convention in detail, but hope to give our readers some of the good things said, in our next number.

The following officers were elected:
President—Mr. F. L. Farewell, Toronto, Elm street.

1st Vice—Mr. Jno. Simpson, Orillia.
2nd Vice—Miss Rundle, Toronto, Sherbourne street.
3rd Vice—Mr. W. W. McBrain, Orillia.
4th Vice—Miss Edith Beasley, Weston.
5th Vice—Mrs. (Rev.) Harton, Tottenham.

Secretary—Mr. P. G. Price, Toronto, Elm street.
Treasurer—Miss Eva Madden, Cookstown.
Representative to General Board—Mr. N. M. Squire, Toronto.

Napanee and Tamworth Districts

The Annual Epworth League Convention of Napanee and Tamworth Districts was held in the Western Methodist Church, Napanee, on Friday, Oct. 18th. The day was beautiful and the attendance good. The reports showed faithful, encouraging work done during the year. Earnest and practical addresses were given by Rev. Dixon and Messrs. Denyes and Hooper. The Leaguers were delighted to welcome their beloved representative in the foreign field, Rev. R. Emberson, and listened with interest and profit to two very fine addresses from him.

The following were the officers elected:
Hon. President—Rev. R. Duke, Newburgh.
President—Rev. E. Farnsworth, Yarker.
1st Vice—Miss E. Baker, Napanee.
2nd Vice—Mr. M. Denyes, B.A., Newburgh.
3rd Vice—Miss Stella Vandervoort, Deseronto.
4th Vice—Miss Myrtle Wood, Tamworth.
5th Vice—Mrs. H. A. Baker, Colebrook.
Secretary—Mrs. F. L. Hooper, Napanee.
Treasurer—Mr. Delbert Sexsmith, Kingsford.

Conference Representative—Rev. R. Strike, Deseronto.

Norwich District

The Annual Epworth League Convention for the Norwich District was held in Norwich Methodist Church, Nov. 7, 1907.

Rev. S. T. Bartlett, Asst. Gen. Sec. of Epworth Leagues, gave an enthusiastic address, as did also Revs. J. H. Collins, Oakland; A. W. Shepperson, Teeterville, and C. R. Morrow, Delhi.

Mr. Bartlett also conducted a Round-Table Conference, which was much enjoyed and proved very helpful to all present, especially Leaguers.

Miss Hattie Sabine, Otterville; Mrs. Workman, Tillsonburg, and Miss Bertha McLeod, Norwich, gave excellent papers, and Miss Walker, missionary from Sehore, India, gave an interesting talk of her work there.

The meeting was a great success, with a good attendance.

The following officers were elected:

Hon. President—Rev. J. H. Robinson, Norwich.
President—Rev. A. W. Shepperson, Teeterville.

1st Vice—Miss Hattie Sabine, Otterville.
2nd Vice—Miss Berta McLeod, Norwich.
3rd Vice—Mr. Stanley Vanderburg, Norwich.
4th Vice—Mrs. C. L. Poole, Burgessville.
5th Vice—Mrs. Workman, Tillsonburg.
Secretary—Treasurer—Miss Clara Morrow, Delhi.
Conference Representative—Rev. J. H. Collins, Oakland.

Birtle District

The Annual Convention of the Birtle District Epworth League was held at Hamiota on Tuesday and Wednesday, Oct. 29th and 30th, and the sessions were full of power and instruction.

Rev. B. W. Allison gave a strong, manly talk.

The Rev. W. A. McKim Young spoke on "The Missionary Problem of the 20th Century," in an effective and forceful manner. Two able and interesting papers on aspects of mission work in China were read. Miss Weston dealing with educational work, and Miss Galtridge with medical work.

Rev. W. E. Egan conducted a conference on Epworth League work. A paper from the Rev. T. Y. Williams on "The Teaching of the Epistles to the Corinthians," was very suggestive. "The Gospel of Christ our Trust" was the subject of an address from the Rev. B. W. Allison, after which he conducted a missionary conference. It was decided to make a canvass of every League in the District and aim at raising \$800, which amount would enable the District to support its own missionary.

The report of the Nomination Committee was unanimously accepted, and the Rev. W. E. Egan was installed as President for the coming year. Rev. W. R. Hughes, Ph.B., gave a fine address on "The Message of the Movement."
Rev. T. W. Bailey gave an address on "The Place of the Epworth League in our National Life." This brought to a close a successful and inspiring convention.

Milton District

The Twelfth Annual Epworth League Convention of the Milton District was held in the Methodist Church, Burlington, on Tuesday, Oct. 8th, 1907.

The following speakers took part in the programme: Rev. S. T. Bartlett, Associate Secretary S. S. and E. L. Dept.; Rev. Mr. Prichard, returned missionary from Japan; Rev. R. J. Treleven, Hamilton, and others.

The following officers were elected for the year:

Hon. President—Rev. Dr. Ross, Oakville.
President—Rev. G. K. Bradshaw, Freeman.
1st Vice—Mr. Norman Gilbert, Merton.
2nd Vice—Mrs. S. R. Bews, Milton.
3rd Vice—Miss Ethel Hones, Drumming.
4th Vice—Miss Mary Horning, Waterdown.
5th Vice—Miss T. Sumner, Oakville.
Secretary—Miss Norma A. Harrison, Burlington.
Treasurer—Mrs. W. J. Ellis, Palermo.

London Conference League

We have not received any report of the London Conference Epworth League Convention, held recently at St. Thomas, but understand, from delegates who were present, that it was one of the best ever held. Rev. S. T. Bartlett was present and delivered several very helpful addresses, which were much appreciated. The following officers were elected:

President—Rev. W. E. Millson, Kingsville.
1st Vice—Rev. A. J. Langford, Dresden.
2nd Vice—Robert Alway, St. Thomas.
3rd Vice—Miss F. Scott, Highgate.
4th Vice—Rev. A. J. Thomas, Bridgen.
5th Vice—Miss M. Smith, St. Thomas.
Secretary—Rev. J. E. Millyard, Birr.
Treasurer—Miss B. Powell, London.
Representative to General Board—T. B. Shillington, Blenheim.

Welland District

The School and Convention of the Welland District was a decided success. Good attendance, interested delegates, and a fine programme combined to make the occasion a memorable one.

The following officers were elected:
President—Rev. W. J. Brandon, Port Colborne.

1st Vice—Mr. F. E. Misener, Marshville.
2nd Vice—Miss Josephine McCallum, Stromness.
3rd Vice—Mr. W. G. H. Gilpin, Dunnville.
4th Vice—Miss Daisy Gordon, Welland.
5th Vice—Miss Lillie Vanalstine, Crowland.
Secretary—Treasurer—Mr. B. A. Pattison, Fenwick.
Conference Representative—Rev. D. A. Walker, Wellandport.

A Prosperous Prairie League

The following letter is from the President of the League at Kisbey, Arcola Circuit, Saskatchewan, which shows the good work an organization of this kind can do in a new country:

"Our League is doing very nicely. This is a country League, held in a good-sized school house, half way between two preaching appointments (within 4 miles of four preaching appointments), in quite a new settlement. Our meetings are held on Sunday evening. Attendance is splendid, from 60 to 75 every evening. We have a membership of 35, 20 active and 15 associate. Our young people were all inexperienced until we began League work here three years ago, but are loyal workers, so we find that our meetings are quite interesting. Many of our young people do not attend church services anywhere, so we feel a great responsibility, and the great need of keeping our pledge ever before us."

Sherbrooke E. L. of C. E.

The Corresponding Secretary of the Sherbrooke Methodist E. L. of C. E., of Montreal, writes:

"We are progressing both spiritually and financially.

"During all last fall, winter and spring we had bright, interesting meetings and a good attendance. One evening was taken up by some of the theological students, four of whom gave us short but inspiring addresses, which helped us.

"Another meeting was conducted by the Literary Department, when Tennyson was the subject matter. Another was led by one of our city deacons, who gave a splendid talk on the work done among the poor and sick of this city.

"Instead of holding our League during

July and August we formed the choir for the open air service that was held each fine Sabbath evening after the regular church service.

"For the first meeting in September of this year we held a 'Rally Night' for old and new members. Invitations were printed on pictorial postals. We thought that these would not likely be lost, and so the evening would be kept in mind. About one hundred turned out. We had an enjoyable evening with a social hour at the close. Prof. C. E. Bland was the speaker.

We have also a small printing press belonging to the League and operated by one of our members.

"We are able to issue each week an invitation circular announcing the Monday evening meeting, topic, leader, etc., and we find it quite a help in our work."

Wingham District

The 10th Annual Convention of the Epworth Leagues of Wingham District was held in the Methodist Church, Brussels, on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 15th and 16th.

Pastors and Leaguers in goodly numbers were on hand to take part in the Convention, and to receive help from the papers and discussions on practical subjects. The Convention opened on Tuesday evening and closed on Wednesday afternoon at 5.30. The Brussels League had the church nicely decorated and served meals in the basement of the church, thus enabling the members of the Convention to become better acquainted. Reports from the various Leagues were read by delegates, and indicated prosperity in almost every case. Increased interest is being taken in missionary and evangelistic work.

At the close of the Convention a meeting of the new Executive was held and arrangements made for aggressive work throughout the district during the incoming year.

The officers elected are as follows:
Hon. President—Rev. H. W. Locke, Kincardine.

President—W. J. Fawcett, Brussels.
Secretary—Treasurer—Rev. G. W. Rivers, B.A., B.D., Belgrave.

1st Vice—D. C. Taylor, Lucknow.
2nd Vice—Rev. T. E. Sawyer, Lucknow.
3rd Vice—Miss Susie Pearson, Ethel.
4th Vice—Walter Hall, Wingham.
5th Vice—Mrs. (Rev.) Finlay, Whitechurch.

Conference Representative—Rev. T. W. Blatchford, B.A., Ripley.

Pembroke District

The Sunday School and Epworth League Convention of the Pembroke District was held in the Methodist Church, Renfrew, on October 1st. There were three sessions. Papers or addresses were given on the following subjects: "The Sunday School as a Factor in the Life of the Young People," "How Can the Life of the Young People be Found in the Epworth League?" "The Missionary Spirit in the Sunday School and How to Develop It," and a review of Coe on "The Religion of a Mature Mind." Besides the above, conferences were conducted on "Our Young People's Work," "The Possibilities of the Organized Bible Class," and "Our Young People's Reading." From the programme one can judge how practically instructive the Convention proved. It was resolved to introduce, where possible, into our Sunday Schools the Forward Movement for Missions. Rev. S. T. Bartlett was present at all sessions, and proved himself a most efficient leader in young people's work. The District League was re-organized with the following officers:
Hon. President—Rev. F. G. Lett, Pembroke.

President—Rev. Roy M. Pounder, Renfrew.
1st Vice—Dr. H. E. Elliott, Colden.
2nd Vice—Mr. Fred. C. Ross, Bromley.
3rd Vice—Rev. C. D. Baldwin, Westmeath.
4th Vice—Miss Philp, Arnprior.
5th Vice—Miss Mildred Armstrong, Shawville.
Secretary—Treasurer—Rev. H. W. Burnett, B.D., Colden.
Representative on Conference Executive—Rev. George A. McIntosh, B.D., Micksburg.

Pictou District

The Annual Convention of the Pictou District Epworth Leagues met at Wellington on October 3, the President, Rev. J. M. Whyte, of Conson, presiding.

It was an occasion of very great interest and helpfulness.

Both the afternoon and evening sessions were well attended, and were full of instruction and information.

Encouraging reports were received from many of the Leagues of the district, showing the interest taken in this "blessed work."

The principal speaker was the Rev. S. T. Bartlett, Associate Secretary of Sunday-schools and Epworth Leagues, who conducted a very interesting and instructive conference on Sunday-school problems, in the afternoon, and delivered a most helpful and inspiring address on "The Sunday-school and Epworth League as Evangelistic Forces," in the evening.

The following are the officers-elect:
President—Rev. D. S. Houck, Bloomfield.

President—E. B. Cooke, Northport.
1st Vice—Miss Bessie Dorland, Wellington.

2nd Vice—Rev. H. H. Cragg, B.A., Chisholm.

3rd Vice—Mr. Arnold Way, Bethel.
4th Vice—Mrs. M. Weese, Albany.

5th Vice—Miss M. Pettigill, Pictou.
Secretary—G. A. Smith, Pictou.
Treasurer—Miss Jones, Albany.

Representative to Conference Executive—Rev. J. M. Whyte, Conson.

Representative to Summer School—Rev. F. H. Howard, Rednersville.
District Correspondent with Dr. Winch—Rev. H. H. Cragg, B.A., Chisholm.

Brighton District

The 13th Annual Convention of Brighton District Epworth Leagues was held in the Methodist Church, Brighton, on Friday, Oct. 4th, 1907.

The Convention consisted of three sessions, all of which were very well attended, and were exceedingly helpful to all present. A Bible study by Rev. L. S. Winch on "The Temptation of Christ" was splendid. The addresses on Junior League work, temperance and general Epworth League work, were full of earnestness and proved very beneficial.

Miss Olive Johnson, the retiring Missionary Vice-President, received a hearty resolution of appreciation for her services in the past. The new Executive's watchword for this year is "Forward."

Total collections for the day, \$10.75. Nineteen Leagues reported on the District, also five Junior Leagues. Total amount raised for Forward Movement, \$625.00.

The selections given by the male choir were well rendered and were much appreciated by all.

Rev. S. T. Bartlett closed the Convention with a stirring and helpful address, urging the Leaguers to more prayer and careful handling of the Word of God, and also to be more in earnest, because of the fact that time is fleeting and souls are dying.

The following officers were elected for the year 1907-08:

Hon. President—Rev. Geo. Brown, Colborne.

President—Mr. Wm. Ketchum, Brighton.
1st Vice—Rev. Wesley Down, Trenton.
2nd Vice—Miss Blanche Groff, Smithfield.

3rd Vice—Rev. L. S. Wicht, Brighton.
4th Vice—Mrs. Rev. C. W. Barrett, Castleton.

5th Vice—Mrs. Rev. S. C. Moore, Trenton.

Conference Representative—Rev. W. P. Rogers, Wooler.

Secretary—Treasurer—Richard M. Patterson, Lovett.

British Columbia Conference

During the visit of Rev. J. A. Doyle to the western coast, an effort was made to organize the young people into Conference and District Leagues. Advantage was taken of the Provincial Christian Endeavor Convention, which met in Victoria during the month of September, to have a denominational rally at which the matter could be discussed. A very excellent programme was prepared by Rev. W. H. Barracough, B.A., at very short notice, and a whole day was spent in the discussion of practical methods of work among young people. At the afternoon session the question of the formation of a Conference-Epworth League was brought forward, and there seemed to be a unanimous opinion that the time was ripe for organization. Mr. Doyle gave his advice and assistance, and the following officers were elected:

Hon. President—Rev. A. M. Sanford, B.A., D.D., President of Conference.

President—Rev. H. Barracough, B.A., New Westminster.

1st Vice—Mr. W. R. Manson, Nanaimo.
2nd Vice—Rev. Jno. Robson, B.A., Nanaimo.

3rd Vice—Miss I. Aubin, Victoria.
4th Vice—Rev. J. P. Westman, Vancouver.

Secretary—Rev. A. E. Roberts, Victoria.

Treasurer—Mr. L. C. Kyle, Vancouver.

Representative to the General Board—Rev. A. M. Sanford.

On Wednesday, Oct. 16th, the first meeting of the Executive took place in the President's study, 474 Princess street, Vancouver, when matters of importance were discussed. It was decided to make a thorough canvass of the Upper Country districts with a view to seeing what could be done to increase the number of Leagues on the various fields, and also to arrange, if possible, for that part of the Conference to undertake the support of a missionary. The Victoria District was aiming at that object for this year.

Vancouver and Westminster Districts were trying for the same ideal, and this would leave the four districts of the Upper Country to unite in the support of a third missionary for the Conference.

It was resolved to ask the Leagues to take one offering for the work of the Conference Executive as soon as possible. A committee was appointed to look into the suggestion of elocutionary competitions to take place in the Leagues and Districts as advisable. The question of Forward Movement for this year was brought up, but no decision made, this being left over till the next meeting of the Executive in February, 1908.

The Victoria District met for organization the same afternoon that the Conference League elected its officers, and after ballot the following officers were elected:

Hon. President—Rev. S. J. Thompson, Victoria.

President—Mr. W. R. Manson, Nanaimo.
1st Vice—Miss I. Aubin, Victoria.

2nd Vice—Mr. H. Smith, Victoria.
3rd Vice—Mrs. A. W. Dever, Duncan.
4th Vice—Miss Monteith, Victoria.
5th Vice—Rev. A. E. Roberts, Victoria.
Secretary—Miss S. Whitehead, Victoria.
Treasurer—Rev. R. Wilkinson, Lady-smith.
Campaigner—Rev. Jno. Robson, B.A., Nanaimo.

The District Executive met and planned aggressive work on missionary lines, and it was decided to ask at once that a missionary be apportioned to the District, and that Rev. Jno. Robson visit the Leagues as soon as possible and urge all to take part in this effort for increased missionary liberality.

What the Prairie Can Do

Rev. M. M. Whiting writes:—"On August 9th we organized an Epworth League at Grand Plains, an appointment thirty miles from Saskatoon, which has until this summer been the nearest market. We have an enthusiastic executive, and even through the busy harvest rush we have had a service every week, and God has blessed us wonderfully. We have at present 36 members, 13 active members; we are taking 13 copies of Era also, and we have raised for local expenses \$16. Everyone is much interested in Bro. Carson, our West China missionary representative, and we are starting the Forward Movement with a will. Just now we are preparing for a rousing Temperance concert in November, and we are looking forward to a year of great blessing."

Owen Sound District Epworth League Convention

The summer is over, and the young people have returned to their work after their vacation. The call to "Rally to the work" was sent out by President Wellwood and his Executive weeks ago, and the result was that a splendid Epworth League Convention was held at Chatsworth on Monday and Tuesday, September 23rd and 24th.

The convention opened Monday evening with two excellent addresses, one on "The Devotional Work in our League," by Rev. W. J. Tribble, and "The Literary Work in our Leagues," by Rev. D. D. Franks. Both of these addresses bristled with good points as to the best ways and means of improving the work along these lines in our Leagues.

Tuesday morning, although the weather was very unfavorable, a large number gathered in the basement of the church at 7.30 for the sunrise prayer and praise service. This service was conducted by Rev. Mr. Kemp, his subject being "Courage." This was a great blessing to all who attended, and was a stimulus to the whole convention.

At 9.30 Tuesday morning the convention received the reports of the different Leagues, which showed improvement all along the line, particularly in the "Forward Movement." After the general business meeting the Rev. J. S. I. Wilson, chairman of the district, preached a very earnest and helpful sermon from the words, "Be of good courage, and let us play the man."

Tuesday afternoon Mr. Jas. A. Matheson gave a very instructive paper on the "Forward Movement," tracing its growth from its origin to the present day, after which Rev. Dr. Crews conducted a round-table conference. Dr. Crews took up the League work under all its departments, and gave many very valuable suggestions. The evening session was very largely attended. The Rev. W. N. Chantler spoke on Missions, dealing with China, North-West, and Japan. He was followed by Dr. Crews, who addressed the convention

on "The League That Counts," and we are sure, after hearing his excellent address, all the Leagues on the district will count this year.

The people of Chatsworth were very hospitable, and the choir added much to the enjoyment of the convention by furnishing suitable music, and all the delegates returned home feeling that it was good to have been there.

The following officers were elected for the year:

Hon. President—Rev. J. S. I. Wilson, Markdale.

President—Rev. J. R. Wilkinson, Rocklyn.

1st Vice—Mr. H. J. Armstrong, Markdale.

2nd Vice—Miss Edith Connor, Pleasant View.

3rd Vice—Mrs. W. H. Thurston, Fiesherston.

4th Vice—Miss Annie Kilborn, Owen Sound.

5th Vice—Miss S. A. Squire, Brookholm.
Secretary—Treasurer—Miss Mabel Primmer, Owen Sound.

Representative to Conference Executive—Rev. W. J. Tribble, Corbetton.

Galt District

The Tenth Annual Convention of the Galt District Epworth League, which was held in the Hespeler Methodist Church on Thanksgiving Day, was the most successful and profitable in the history of this organization. The twelve Leagues in the district were represented by large delegations, and the proceedings throughout were of unusual interest to League workers.

The reports presented by the various Leagues showed that the total membership is 536, an increase of 32 over last year. The missionary contributions also showed a substantial increase.

A beautiful banner was presented to the Berlin Epworth League, which organization showed the highest percentage of increase of membership and the missionary contributions during the year, having a percentage of 78.

Secretary A. A. Eby's report was presented, and gave a general review of the work of the League in the district. He was the recipient of kind words of appreciation by a number of delegates.

The following officers were appointed for the ensuing year:

Hon. President—Rev. R. J. Elliott, Waterloo.

President—J. J. Hodgson, Ayr.

1st Vice—R. B. Hamilton, Linwood.

2nd Vice—Miss E. J. Wood, Berlin.

3rd Vice—Miss E. K. Egerton, Galt.

4th Vice—G. Baker, Hespeler.

5th Vice—Miss A. Luchhardt, Elmira.

Secretary—Allan A. Eby, Berlin.
Treasurer—Miss S. Moeck, Waterloo.

Representative to Conference Executive—Rev. J. E. Peters, Sheffield.

At the evening session inspiring and edifying addresses were delivered by Rev. S. T. Bartlett and Rev. A. P. Quirnbach.

The visiting delegates to the Convention were entertained in a very hospitable manner by the Hespeler Leagues.

St. Thomas District

The Epworth Leagues of this district have had the most successful year in their history. The district was campaigned during the year by the enthusiastic president and his associates. The annual Summer School was held at Port Burwell. Those who had the privilege of attending will never forget the spiritual power manifested during the whole week.

The most largely attended and enthusiastic convention the district has ever held

met in Aylmer on October 3. There was an attendance of over 130 registered delegates. Excellent reports were given by the district officers and by the local Leagues. Various phases of Sunday-school and Epworth League work were intelligently discussed. The climax of the convention was reached when the following motion was unanimously adopted:

Moved, Resolved, R. Gandy, D.D., seconded by Rev. Joseph Philp, D.D., that we as a convention of Epworth Leagues of the St. Thomas District believe that the time has come when we should undertake the support of another missionary, and we respectfully request the Missionary Board to assign an additional missionary for this district. We further request that we have assigned to us one of the young men to be appointed to our missionary work in China, and that when appointed he be allowed to visit the Leagues on our district in campaign work.

When it is remembered that two years ago this district was only raising about \$600 for missions, this action is very noteworthy. The officers elected for next year are:

Hon. President—Rev. Joseph Philp, B.D., Aylmer.

President—Mr. Robert Alway, St. Thomas.

1st Vice—Miss A. A. Waite, Aylmer.

2nd Vice—Rev. I. A. McKelvie, Luton.

3rd Vice—Miss Edna Jones, Boxall.

4th Vice—Rev. E. Poulter, Vienna.

5th Vice—Miss Margaret Smith, St. Thomas.

Representative to Conference Committee—Rev. R. A. Miller, Corluth.

Secretary—Treasurer—Mr. Joseph Steadman, St. Thomas.

Just a Line or Two

The League of Wellington St. Church, Brantford, has started a Reading Circle. The Tottenham Epworth League sends out its invitations to regular services on a post card.

The League at Harriston has recently placed a \$450 piano in the church, and paid for it, too.

An Epworth League has been re-organized at Armstrong, B.C., with an enrollment of 32 members.

The Literary Committee of Grace Church League, St. Thomas, send ten new subscriptions to the Era, with a promise of "more to follow."

We have received a copy of the Arden (Manitoba) Circuit plan, by which we note that the Epworth Leagues of the Circuit occasionally take charge of a church service.

All through last summer the attendance at the Hespeler League averaged 100. On one Sunday morning we had 105, 100 were 113 present, 60 young men and 63 young women. Can any League beat this?

Nearly 500 people attended a mock parliament, held recently, by the boys of the Bowmanville Epworth League, when the Asiatic immigration question was ably discussed. This League believes in doing something new every now and then.

A District League Rally was recently held at Newcastle under the direction of Mr. W. B. Moore, District President. The specially interesting feature was the presence of Mr. and Mrs. G. B. Sparling, who said good-bye, previous to leaving for China.

The officers of the Bay of Quinte Conference Epworth League are sending out "The Bay of Quinte Era," to all pastors and League Presidents within the Conference, with a view to developing interest in the coming Conference Convention in Lindsay. Any League not receiving a copy will be supplied on application to Mr. F. R. Foley, Bowmanville.

Among the New Books

Fedora's Failure. By Lucie E. Jackson. Illustrated. Published by Messrs. Ward, Lock & Co., London, Eng.

This is a delightfully interesting story for children, concerning the sweet pleasures of childhood, its real sorrows, and its joyous excitement. Many wholesome truths are brought out, and the moral is not too painfully apparent. The book is not difficult to exert a healthy influence.

The Handman and His Ship Stories. By William J. Hopkins. With 40 illustrations, by Diantha W. Horns. Published by L. C. Page & Co., Boston.

This is a series of simple stories for little folks, beginning in the old-fashioned way: "One upon a time." It tells about the building of a ship, how it was launched and rigged for its voyage, and concerning its many adventures upon the mighty deep. It is a most interesting book for young children.

How to Study the English Bible. An experience, a method, an illustration. By Rev. James A. Gray, D.D. Price, 25 cents. Diphant, Anderson, & Ferris, Publishers, Edinburgh and London.

Dr. Gray is well known for the special attention which he has given to the synthetic study of the Bible. This little book is largely an account of his own simple method of Bible study. There is nothing abstruse or technical about it, but anybody can adopt it with profit and pleasure. The reading of this book cannot fail to do good.

The Red Feathers. A book of remarkable adventures, where the world was young. By Theodore Roberts. Illustrated and decorated by Charles Livingston Bull. Published by L. C. Page & Co., Boston. Price, \$1.50.

These are indeed "remarkable adventures," without the slightest probability, but in this respect they do not differ so very much from many of the novels of the day. Boys and girls who like fairy tales will be pleased with this story, which tells about wonderful deeds of magic among the Indians in Newfoundland, "long, long ago."

The Young Acadian. or, The Raid from Beaujour. By Charles G. D. Roberts. Illustrated by Blanche McKanus. L. C. Page & Co., Publishers, Boston. Price, 50 cents. Copy Corner Series.

The scene of this pretty story is laid in Nova Scotia, or Acadia as it was first called, at the time when Britain came into possession of that country. The real inwardness of the difficulties between the French settlers and the English, ending in the expulsion of the Acadians, is shown to have been the agitations of the French officials and priests. The tale is of a brave French lad who saved a little English girl from a massacre. It is well told.

Ancient Hebrew Literature. Vol. I. The Old Testament, Law and History, Genesis to Judges. Vol. II; Law and History, I Samuel to Nehemiah. Vol. III; Prophecy and Poetry, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, etc. Vol. IV; Wisdom Literature, Narratives, etc., including Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Ruth, etc. "Everyman's Library." Price, 25 cents per volume.

This is rather an unusual edition of the Scriptures, and of the Apocryphal books intermingled with the canonical writings. It looks a little strange to see a Bible without any verse divisions, and indeed without any chapter separations, although these are indicated at the top of the page. This arrangement is, however, helpful in getting at the real meaning. There was a time when many people thought that the chapter and verse divisions were all divine, and that the Bible would not be the Word of God without them, but that time is past.

Turkey and the Turks. An account of the lands, the people, and the institutions of the Ottoman Empire. By S. S. Monroe. Published by L. C. Page & Co., Boston.

A beautifully-bound and splendidly-illustrated volume descriptive of the Ottoman Empire. Two chapters are devoted to the history of the Empire, one to its rise and one to its decline, but the principal part of the book is devoted to a description of the country, the customs and activities of the people, the reader being introduced to the street scenes, bazaars, baths, khans, fountains, dervishes, etc. It is an exceedingly interesting and instructive book.

An Irish Saint. The life story of Ann Preston. By John Potts, D.D. With introduction by Rev. John Potts, D.D. Wm. Briggs, Publisher.

The subject of this sketch, who was generally known as "Holy Ann," was a simple-minded old lady who lived in Toronto for many years, and was noted for her saintly life, and devotion to God. She believed absolutely in receiving answers to prayer, and many striking cases of this kind are recorded. The author declares that Holy Ann could read the Bible, although she never learned in the ordinary way, but could not read any other book. The reader can believe this or not just as he pleases, but the book is quite interesting all the same.

Tarbell's Teacher's Guide to the International Sunday-School Lessons for 1908. By Martha Tarbell. William Briggs, Publisher, Toronto. Price, \$1.00; by mail, postpaid, \$1.15.

This is really a very suggestive and helpful series of expositions on the Sunday-school Lessons for the coming year. The words and phrases of each lesson are explained; suggestive thoughts are presented from helpful writers; light is given from Oriental life; the historical and geographical background is revealed, and personal thoughts suggested with subjects for Bible class discussion.

The book is particularly rich in illustrative material which is so valuable in securing and retaining attention, and contains a number of maps, charts, diagrams, reproductions from early Christian art and from paintings, by Tissot and other modern artists.

The Haunters of the Silence. A book of Animal Life. By Charles G. D. Roberts. With illustrations by Charles Livingston Bull. Published by L. C. Page & Co., Boston. Price, \$2.00.

This is a work of fiction, and yet absolutely true. The stories about animals, birds and fishes are fictitious as to details, but are true to life in their description of the habits and modes of life of these "Haunters of the Silence," showing that the author must have made a very close study of them. These animals do not talk and act like human beings, as they are sometimes ridiculously made to do, but crawl through the forest, swim, fight and go through all sorts of interesting adventures.

It is one of the most attractive books we have ever seen, and is prepared in very fine style, with many magnificent full-page illustrations. As a gift volume it is ideal.

Clementine's Highwayman. A Romance. By Robert Nelson Stephens and George Herbert Westley. Published by L. C. Page & Co., Boston. Price, \$1.50.

A story which illustrates the wild and lawless condition of London in 1742. It is as full of adventure "as an egg is full of meat."

Autumn Leaves. By M. A. Maitland. In paper covers. William Briggs, Toronto, Publisher.

A little book of a dozen pages, containing about as many poems of more than ordinary merit. The first one, "Autumn Leaves," begins thus:

"Over the earth they drift fo-day,
Gold and crimson and russet brown;
Fleeced and spattered as though in play,
Nature had thrown her colors down."

It will make a very nice gift booklet.

Peabody's Select Notes on the International Sunday-School Lessons for 1908. By Rev. F. N. Peabody, D.D., and Prof. Amos R. Wells, M.A., 386 pages. Cloth, \$1.25; cloth, interleaved edition, \$2.00. The W. A. Wide Company, Boston, Mass. Toronto: William Briggs.

This splendid commentary on the International Sunday-school Lessons appears for the 34th time, which is a fairly good test of its value.

Over a million and a half of these books have been sold during a generation and each year it has been noted for the absolute fullness of the material incorporated into the scholarship has been accurate, broad, and fresh in every respect, while it has gained a large army of friends through its practical character, for the material given has been tried and proved. The quality which has been most apparent has been the suggestive and wise arrangement whereby teachers could appropriate its contents most readily and use it most effectively. These qualities are particularly noticeable in the volume for 1908, which renders it as complete and valuable a book for Sunday-school workers as experience and the highest grade of scholarship can make it. Each year new departments have been added to meet changing conditions, and this year we notice the introduction of a large number of suggestive questions, given not in a new department by itself, but interwoven with the information presented, and in sprightly question and answer form, just as they would be used in the class. In these busy teaching days, when all that he desires in a nutshell, while to him who can devote more time to the study of the lesson, this volume offers a tremendous range for personal research.

In addition to the accurate maps, chronological tables, and small pictures which have always run through the volume, the publishers have added this year four beautiful full-page illustrations in color, which are instructive and most pleasing to the eye. Every Sunday-school teacher and every student of the Bible should own a copy of this volume.

"Practical Plans"

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Devotional Service

DEC. 15.—CONFIDENT TESTIMONY FOR CHRIST.

Luke 12; Acts 4, 13-33.

HOME READINGS.

- Mon., Dec. 9.—Testimony through the Spirit, 1 Cor. 12, 1-3.
 Tues., Dec. 10.—A test of sainthood. 1 John 4, 1-6.
 Wed., Dec. 11.—Union with God. 1 John 4, 13-16.
 Thurs., Dec. 12.—Confession and salvation. Rom. 10, 5-11.
 Fri., Dec. 13.—Confession and courage. Mark 8, 31-38.
 Sun., Dec. 14.—A good confession. Acts 7, 51-60.

EXPOSITORY HINTS.

"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John" (Acts 4, 13).

Peter and John had the true courage that comes by faith. They knew they were in the right, and felt confident that God would see them through. If they had doubted, their boldness would have fled.

"They marvelled" (v. 13). True religion is the wonder of men. Their astonishment was the natural effect of the appearance of a true Christianity differing so greatly from its surroundings, of an effect disproportionate to the apparent cause.

"Had been with Jesus" (v. 13). This was the secret of their courage. They had caught the spirit of the Master. They had been pupils in His school and had learned of Him.

"Whether it be right" (v. 19). The apostles' heroism was based on righteousness. "Whether it be right" was a rebuke to those who were only consulting the interests of Judaism or their own. In any course of conduct the first question to ask is, "Is it right?"

"In the sight of God" (v. 19). All is right which is right in His sight. The apostles referred to the only true authority. What could the Sanhedrin be to such men?

"We cannot but speak" (v. 20). That which the Christian has heard is worth repeating. It is the nature of faith to incline to speech. There is an inward impulse for honest Christian testimony.

"With great power gave the apostles witness" (v. 33). In what did this great power consist? (1) In the great number of the witnesses. (2) In the well-known character of the apostles. (3) In that there was among them consistent boldness, and substantial agreement. (4) In that their testimony was accompanied by the blessing of God, and produced wonderful results.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS.

If you meet a man who is possessed of an error he will publish it. Why should we who have the truth not publish it also?

It is a bad thing to ostentatiously parade religion, but it is a base thing for a Christian man to be ashamed of it.

We cannot be honest to Christ unless we are bold for Him. He is either worth we can lose for Him, or He is worth nothing.

The true Christian will have an inward conviction that Christ is the Saviour of the world. To confess Him is to let that conviction be expressed in some form or other.

Not to confess Christ is to be disobedient to His clear command, and it may

possibly throw the weight of our influence on the wrong side.

Fellowship with Christ is essential to courageous testimony for Him. The boldness of Peter and John was explained by the fact that they "had been with Jesus."

Dr. Babcock rightly declared that "we are here to represent Christ—to present Him again, to re-present Him."

If you and I have not seen God we cannot bear witness to God.

Martin Luther used to say, "My true disciples do not believe in Martin Luther, but in Jesus Christ."

As we must render an account of every idle word, so must we likewise of our idle silence.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Not long ago an officer was accosted by a brother officer thus: "You're the right kind of a Christian, not hitting people about their souls." The first had been converted, but up to that time had been too timid to utter any articulate testimony. As his friend left him that day he began to reason with himself: "Well, if that man thinks I am the right kind of a Christian, it is about time I was looking about me and considering my ways." From that hour he began to boldly confess Christ, and labor for souls.

A very good but quiet and reserved man was on his death-bed, said: "I have been a man of few words and still tongue. Oh, if I had my life to live over again I would speak for Jesus as I have never been accustomed to do."

D. L. Moody says: "In a prayer meeting in Boston which I once attended, most of those who took part were old men, but a little tow-headed Norwegian boy, who could only speak broken English, got up and said: 'If I tell the world about Christ, he will tell the Father about me.' He wrote itself upon my heart and I have never forgotten what the little boy said."

When the Empress Eudoxia sent threatening messages to Chrysostom in Constantinople to desist from his pungent reproofs, the golden-tongued preacher replied: "Tell the Empress that Chrysostom fears nothing but sin."

"If you really study God's word I believe you will get so full of it that you can't help but speak it out. The reason why so many don't care to work for God is, that they are so empty that they cannot find anything to say. You cannot bring water out of a dry well. There are two ways of getting water: one is by pumping. Now, many Christians are like these pumps; you have to pump a long time before you get anything. The other kind of well is what they call artesian; they just dig down until they come to the very fountain itself, hundreds of feet below, then up springs the water into the air; they don't need any pumping then. I wish Christians would be like artesian wells, ever springing up to eternal life."
 —D. L. Moody.

Gideon Ouseley was impressed with the thought that he ought to preach Jesus Christ to the people; he hesitated for a time till he thought he heard a voice saying: "Gideon, do you know the nature of the evil of sin?" He said: "Yes, I do." "Do you know the remedy?" "Yes, I do." "Then go and tell it."

A gentleman, sitting in an arbor in the middle of a wood, saw an ant running along in front of him. Knowing that ants are fond of sugar he placed a lump within its reach. The ant soon discovered it and began sipping, but it had scarcely partaken of it when, to his great surprise, it scampered off and disappeared. A short

time after it returned, followed by two or three hundred of its friends, to enjoy the sweet morsel. And so it is with those who have tasted the joy of salvation. No sooner does one become precious to their souls, than like Peter and John, they "cannot but speak" of Him to others.

QUOTATIONS.

To avow our convictions will help to give them definiteness and precision. So long as a conviction remains vaguely lodged within us, unexpressed, it need not be very sharply defined; but bring it out, put it into shape, set it in words, and lo, it is at once a fuller and clearer conviction, owing to the very effort to avow it. Yea, moreover, conviction unavowed becomes feebleness.—G. Clemence, D.D.

Every word of God will fulfil its mission. All we have to do is to help to send it on its mission.—A. T. Pierson.

There can be no beautiful, symmetrical unfolding of the new life without constant acknowledgment of Him who is that life.—Francis E. Clark.

This whole land would be swept with the Christian life as no section of the world has ever been swept with it, if men made it their business to talk Christ.—Robert E. Speer.

The hardest place to begin is at home, in your own church, your own family; but that is what God wants us to do.—D. L. Moody.

QUESTIONS.

Would we like Christ to represent us as we represent Him here?

Have we placed our powers of speech at the orders of Him who gave us that power?

Do we fear men's sneers more than God's disapproval?

Are we glad of a chance to speak for Christ, do we always speak of it as "a cross"?

What may be lost to the world through our silence?

DEC. 22.—THE MAGNIFICAT: A CHRISTMAS SONG.

Luke 1, 46-55.

HOME READINGS.

- Mon., Dec. 16.—Micah's song. Mic. 5, 1-4.
 Tues., Dec. 17.—Zechariah's song. Zech. 14, 20, 21.
 Wed., Dec. 18.—"The Sun of righteousness." Mal. 4, 2, 3.
 Thurs., Dec. 19.—The angels' song. Luke 2, 13, 14.
 Fri., Dec. 20.—Zachariah's song. Luke 1, 68-79.
 Sat., Dec. 21.—Simeon's song. Luke 2, 29-35.

FOREWORD.

The Bible contains accounts of three remarkable women whose lips broke forth into a song of pious exultation and profound gratitude. Miriam (Exod. 15, 2), Hannah (1 Sam. 2, 1), and Mary, mindful of the honors and benedictions with which she is about to be crowned as the mother of the Messiah. This magnificent is certainly a beautiful bit of poetry. Among all the poetic compositions which are the treasure of the world to-day, is there one hymn which in its chaste and wondrous beauty surpasses the magnificent? It strikes us with wonder that a peasant woman of Galilee should be able to chant in so exalted a strain. But never before was there such a theme. It has been said that "a pure heart makes the best psalter," and Mary spoke out of the abundance of hers. This song is in

its substance the fit utterance of all hearts in whom Christ is born, the hope of glory.

EXPOSITORY HINTS.

"My soul doth magnify the Lord" (v. 46). Mary sings of the incarnate Saviour and rejoices that this Saviour was to be born of her. This choice poem is a hymn of faith.

"The low state of His handmaiden" (v. 48). Her lowliness does not make her stay her song, but imparts a sweeter note into it, as if she had said: "The less worthy I am of His favors, the more sweetly will I sing of His love."

"From henceforth" (v. 48). She is glad with her whole heart that the chance is going to be given her to become a blessing. She is ambitious, not to be rich or famous, but to do good.

"He that is mighty" (v. 49). She does not magnify herself but the Lord. Observe how she passes from the consideration of her personal privilege to the universal goodness of God. She declares the general providence of God towards all persons.

"Hath done me great things" (v. 49). The burden of the magnificent is the greatness of God and her own littleness, the marvellous condescension of the Almighty in stooping so low to visit one so poor and humble as she was.

"His mercy" (v. 50). God gives his favors through His mercy and not through His justice.

"He hath put down the mighty" (v. 52). The coming of Jesus means: 1. The exaltation of the lowly. 2. The putting down of the mighty. The exaltation of the hungry. 4. The leaving empty of those who regard themselves as spiritually rich.

ERRORS REGARDING THE VIRGIN MARY.

In dwelling upon the character of the Virgin Mary there are two errors to be avoided.

1. The error of the Roman Catholic Church—"marioratry," that is, the exaltation of Mary to a position that no created being can occupy, a position scarcely inferior to Christ Himself, appealing to her to bring influence to bear upon her son, as though any one could be more tender and sympathetic than the all-merciful High Priest, who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities."

2. On the other hand there is the opposite error which is doubtless a reaction from this undue exaltation of the Virgin, which goes to the opposite extreme, and almost dreads the very mention of her name, denying to her the respect which is surely due to her.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS.

When one's life is really magnified as Mary's was, the first evidence is a desire to magnify the Lord.

The magnificent is full of humility and exaltation and is therefore a prophecy of Christianity.

The higher the building, the lower must be the foundation; the lower the life the more profound the humility.

The Christ-filled life is not only blessed itself, but it blesses others, to the end of time.

God usually bestows His largest blessings upon the humble and thankful heart.

It is only those who hunger for righteousness who can be filled. Those who are satisfied with themselves are sent empty away.

If you cannot magnify God, it is probably because you are magnifying yourself. When you sink in your own estimation, God will rise in your esteem.

Magnifying God is an occupation for all people. None are too humble or too lowly to do this. The soul may sing though the voice cannot.

Whenever Christ has entered into the human heart, a new song has been put into the mouth of the believer. Christianity in the heart means music in the life.

A true woman's highest aspiration is not a wish for power or fame, but an earnest desire that she should bless others and be blessed in blessing.

QUOTATIONS.

Magnifying the Lord is an occupation for all of us who know the Lord and have been born into His family. It is an occupation which can be followed by all sorts of people, and which can be followed in all places. You need not go up to the church to magnify God, you can do it at home. You may be tossed about upon the sea in a storm, but you may trust His name, be calm, and so magnify Him.—C. H. Spurgeon.

God delights in joy, and His desire for His people is that they should be trustful and joyful, and this both for their own sakes and for His glory. God needs vigorous workers, and He can only have these by bestowing on them a joy adequate to the greatness of the work. It is the apostles went forth to work for God, and they found that the joy of the Lord was their strength.—H. Bonar, D.D.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Gibbon felt the power of Marv's words, when, as he tells us in his autobiography, he sat musing amid the ruins of Rome, while they were chanting the vesper service in what had once been the temple of Jupiter, and the idea of writing the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" first presented itself to his mind. That which met his eye was a comment on the language of the magnificent as it fell upon his ear. "He hath put down the mighty from their thrones."

DEC. 29.—CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP AND MISSIONS.

SUGGESTED PROGRAMME.

(Canadian Hymnal Used.)

Hymn 298.

Prayer.—That we may recognize that we are stewards and not owners.

Scripture Lesson.—Use the texts in Prayer and Giving.

Hymn 115.

Address.—The Christmas Message and Missionaries Its Messengers.

Hymn 301.

Address.—God's great gift to the world—Our relation to God as givers.

Doxology.

Benediction.

HELPS.

The Christian Steward, October number, free.

Money: What It Is and What It Can Do, 5 cents.

Suggestions for Christian Stewards, 5 cents.

The Law of Christian Stewardship, 5 cents.

The Missionary Bulletin.

Order from F. C. Stephenson, Methodist Mission Rooms, Toronto.

PRAYER AND GIVING.

When you turn to the word of God you will find in Acts x. 4, that alms-giving and prayer are very closely associated together, in fact, they are the two branches from the one stem of the moral law of

God. The moral law of God divides into these two sections, love to God, love to our fellow-men. The man who has love to God will pray, and his prayer is set forth as income acceptable to God. The man who loves his fellow-men will give, and his alms-giving also, in Philippians iv. is likened unto income, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing unto God. You will tell me that it is not the fact that every prayer may be thus likened to income. True, when a man's prayer is merely performed, it cannot be likened unto income ascending up sweetly to heaven. And so an alms-giving which simply looks upon every appeal, whether from the suffering or from our minister on their behalf, as extortion, cannot be regarded as sweet income ascending up to heaven. But this is what our alms-giving is meant to be, an act of worship towards God Himself.

GOD'S RIGHT TO OUR MONEY.

How then is this to be brought about? St. Paul, in that First Epistle, to the Corinthians, xvi. 2, seems to put us upon the right way. He tells us that your alms-giving should be systematic, that of everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." He did not wish when He came to Corinth to have to preach a charity sermon. He did not wish to have to harrow their feelings with a description of the sorrows of the poor saints at Jerusalem. He wished rather that their giving should be systematic, each man laying by him in store as God had prospered him. And the reason for His desire was, in the first place, that thus they might recognize God's right to the silver and their gold. They would not give simply upon impulse, because their feelings were touched, but because they would recognize that God had a right to their money.

SEVEN WAYS OF GIVING.

First—The Careless Way: To give something to every cause that is presented without inquiring into its merits.

Second—The Impulsive Way: To give from impulse—as much and as often as love and piety and sensibility prompt.

Third—The Lazy Way: To make a special offer to earn money for benevolent objects by fairs, festivals, &c.

Fourth—The Self-denying Way: To save the cost of luxuries, and apply them to purposes of religion and charity. This may lead to asceticism and self-complacence.

Fifth—The Systematic Way: To lay aside as an offering to God a definite portion of our gains—one-tenth, one-fifth, one-third or one-half. This is adapted to all, whether rich or poor, and gifts would be largely increased if it were generally practiced.

Sixth—The Equal Way: To give to God and the needy just as much as we spend on ourselves, balancing all our personal expenditures by our gifts.

Seventh—The Heroic Way: To limit our own expenditures to a certain sum, and give away all the rest of our income. This was John Wesley's way.—By Dr. A. T. Pierson.

THE LOVE OF MONEY.

I know of nothing that so dwarfs and shrivels and hardens the soul as the love of money. It is a form of scorching idolatry that literally dries up the fountains of human sympathy, rendering man regardless of, and irresponsive to, the sufferings and balancings of his fellow-men. Dickens' vivid picture of Old Scrooge is no exaggeration of the effects of covetousness on human character. He describes the victim of this all-consuming disease as "a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner!

Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek and stiffened his gait. A frosty ring was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he ice'd his office in the dog-days, and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas."—The Christian Steward.

JAN. 5.—SONGS OF THE HEART. I. WHAT IS TRUE BLESSEDNESS?

Ps. 1. Matt. 5. 2-12

(A NEW YEARS CONSECRATION SERVICE.)

HOME READINGS.

Mon., Dec. 30.—Blessed like Abraham. Isa. 51. 1-3.
Tues., Dec. 31.—The marriage supper. Rev. 19. 5-9.
1908—
Wed., Jan. 1.—Knowing Christ. Matt. 16. 15. 17.
Thurs., Jan. 2.—Hearing the joyful sound. Ps. 89. 15-18.
Fri., Jan. 3.—Blessed in belief. Luke 1. 39-45.
Sat., Jan. 4.—Blessed in forgiveness. Ps. 32. 1-5.

FOREWORD.

Perhaps there is no subject upon which opinions differ so widely as what constitutes true blessedness or happiness. Many think that it is to be obtained by self-indulgence, and they seek to gratify every desire, only to be disappointed. God's word teaches that happiness comes as a result of self-denial, self-control and self-culture.

The psalmist tells us first that the happy man is known by the things that he does not do. Do you want to seek a happy man? The psalmist tells you that there are certain directions in which you need not look. You will not find him in the counsel of the ungodly, in the way of sinners, or in the seat of the scornful. This seems to take in the whole territory of the devil, for if you take these things from the Satanic empire there is nothing left. The Psalmist therefore distinctly tells us that the happy man is not to be found among the ungodly; and then he goes on to show how real happiness is to be secured.

EXPOSITORY HINTS.

V. 1. "Walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly." This is where men commence to go astray, by forming evil companionships; by walking with those who go with giddy and unscrupulous acquaintances.

V. 1. "Standeth in the way of sinners." He makes rapid progress. At first he merely walks in the counsel of the careless, but he soon becomes accustomed to evil and stands in the way of open sinners. We are not surprised to learn that very soon he has taken his seat with the scornful.

V. 2. "But his delight," etc. Man must do something. If you tell him not to do certain things and leave him, then you have not benefited him very much. He cannot sit still and do nothing.

V. 2. "His delight." The study of God's word is not irksome to him, for he finds real pleasure in it. It is always new to him. The main thing about a man is "his delight." What does he like best? Where is he most at home? Where do his tastes and inclinations set? That determines the man. The current of his being will be settled thereby.

V. 2. "Day and night." The Bible will abundantly repay the closest study. You will never read it through or exhaust it.

The more we study it the more it increases in manifold beauty.

V. 2. "His delight is in the law of the Lord." These words are not to be taken in a narrow sense. The picture is not that of a man sitting with an open Bible before him. The idea is that of a man who sees the law of the Lord in all nature, all history, all life, everywhere and always. Reading of the book, too, of course, there must be.

V. 3. "He shall be like a tree," etc. A man's life should be rooted in God's law, and in God's service. It should not be as a plucked flower, but as a flower unplucked, growing on the eternal stem. Sever yourself from God's law and you cannot grow.

V. 3. "Rivers of water." The Christian is sometimes planted in the desert, but God always sends him the streams of living water to nourish him. Paul found such rivers in a Roman prison.

V. 3. "His leaf shall not wither." Righteous men should have beauty of character. Christian men should be as much distinguished by a beautiful demeanor as by any other characteristic.

CHRIST'S BEATITUDES.

Christ's idea of blessedness differs materially from that of the world. The world's beatitudes are:

Blessed are the rich, for they can purchase anything they desire.

Blessed are the powerful, for they can have their own way.

Blessed are the handsome, for they are much admired.

Blessed are the educated, for they exercise great influence.

Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward, here and now.

Jesus does not, however, refer to any of these things. His catalogue includes an entirely different list of persons. No doubt, many found their enthusiasm damped by the strange truths that He uttered.

V. 3. "Blessed are the poor in spirit." To be poor in spirit is to be conscious of need. It is a state of dependence upon God.

V. 4. "They that mourn." They mourn because they are poor in spirit. Those who have a sense of moral poverty, who feel that they are miserably poor while they ought to be rich toward God. They are weighed down by a sense of imperfection and failure.

V. 5. "The meek." Poverty of spirit is humility looking Godward—a grace before God. Meekness is humility looking manward—a grace before men.

V. 6. "They which do hunger." There is such a thing as soul hunger. Spiritual food is as necessary to our happiness as bread to the body.

V. 7. "The merciful." Through the influence of this grace of mercy we shall act toward others without injury or wrong, and help our fellow men by deeds of philanthropy and kindness.

V. 8. "The pure in heart." Purity of heart is the result of all that has gone before. It springs from that purifying which is the answer of God to our poverty of spirit, mourning and longing. We say that water, air, or gold are pure when free from mixture with any foreign elements. So purity of heart means singleness of moral aim, freedom from all alloy of insincerity.

SUGGESTIVE HINTS.

How can I be happy? The first psalm and the beatitudes spoken by our Saviour tell the whole secret of happiness, and the destiny of the blessed man.

A man who goes in search of happiness will in all probability never find it.

"Happiness," cried the philosopher of antiquity, "consists in the extinction of the desires." "Happiness," rejoins the modern man of pleasure, "lies in the gratification of them." The Christian idea is that happiness consists in the control and regulation of the desires.

The miser finds his happiness in some act of meanness by which he has saved a shilling. The philanthropist finds delight in the opportunity of giving away a thousand dollars to a benevolent object.

Virtue and happiness are mother and daughter. Pope says:

"Know then this truth, enough for man to know—
Virtue alone is happiness below."

If you have not learned to shelter your positive goodness behind a barrier of negative abstinence there will be little vitality and little fruit in your Christian life.

QUOTATIONS.

Don't trouble about happiness for a moment. Be true, be right, be holy, be meek—and happiness will come as a matter of course. But if we begin at the other end we shall never get blessedness; it will vanish from us.—Dr. Jos. Parker.

The Saviour shows himself to be "Christus Felicitator," the true Lord of happiness. Obedience to His laws secures that felicity which, without Him, is a fitful and uncertain thing.—The Culture of Pleasure.

There is no such thing as finding true happiness by searching for it directly. It must come, if it come at all, indirectly, or by the service of the love, the happiness we give to others.—Ralph Waldo Trine.

In a world like this, there is so much wickedness, and so many men who do not live after the highest pattern, no good thing will ever be achieved unless we have learned to say, "No, this I will not do because of the fear of the Lord."—Alexander Maclaren.

The first duty of a youth who has determined to be true to God is to make choice of his surroundings. To a large extent he can do this; he may have to work with those who are described in this psalm—ungodly, sinners, scornful—but he can be with them as little as possible, and this is half the battle. Compelled to be in the world, he can resolve not to be of the world.—A. H. Walker.

JAN. 12.—THE TRUE CENTRE OF LIFE.

John 15. 1-10

HOME READINGS.

Mon., Jan. 6.—Christ our Righteousness. Jer. 23. 5. 6.
Tues., Jan. 7.—Christ our Maker. Ps. 102. 24-27.
Wed., Jan. 8.—Christ our Saviour. Hos. 1. 1-7.
Thurs., Jan. 9.—Christ the Word. John 1. 1.
Fri., Jan. 10.—Christ our Judge. 2 Tim. 4. 1-5.
Sat., Jan. 11.—Christ our Preserver. Col. 1. 9-17.

FOREWORD.

The method of Christ's teaching seems to have depended largely on chances and every-day happenings. Seeds of truth were blown from Him by every breeze of circumstance. This allegory was probably suggested by a trellis vine outside the window. It would appeal to the people quite readily, as the country was full of

vineyards. No less than five of our Lord's parables refer to the vine.

EXPOSITORY HINTS.

V. 1. "I am the true vine." Christ wished to represent the permanent spiritual union of His disciples with himself, and therefore selected a perennial and not an annual plant—a cultivated plant, yielding fruit on every branch.

V. 2. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit." If we do not bring forth fruit, our grace, not being exercised, is withdrawn and lost. We are actually cut off from Christ, as an unfruitful branch is lopped off from the vine.

V. 3. "He purgeth it." In the East the vine dressers wash the leaves and shoots and clusters each by itself in turn so as to keep off the dust and mould. They cut away also the dead branches, and keep the whole vine under discipline.

The word "purgeth" includes all the means that are necessary to secure the fruitfulness of the vine, and the removal of all hindrances. Its root idea is freedom from all that is false, noxious or useless.

V. 4. "Abide in Me, and I in you." This relationship is much closer than that of the Shepherd and the sheep. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself." All the vital juices of the branch and its power to bear fruit come from the vine. So we are indebted to Christ for every good desire, every good word, every good deed. He is our life.

V. 5. "Without Me ye can do nothing." A sense of dependence upon Christ, instead of paralyzing human effort, becomes the source of its power. It enables the soul to look up and confidently exclaim with the apostle: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The busy life of men which is not lived in union with Jesus Christ, is like a long row of figures which amount to zero.

V. 6. "And is withered." The cast-off branch withers; whatever remains of sap it might have had so long as it hung on, ever so slightly to the vine, now quickly dries up. Judas was a fearful example of this. He withered in one day.

V. 7. "If ye abide," etc. Here we have the conditions of prevailing prayer. His words abide in us by our (1) knowing them, (2) believing them, (3) remembering them, (4) observing them.

V. 8. "Herein is my Father glorified," etc. All profound emotions must display themselves in action. A Christ-like life is the strongest manifestation of God to the world. The good man's life becomes a Bible which in the clearest tones proclaims the presence of His Lord.

V. 9. "Continue ye in My love." What emphasis our Saviour puts upon faithful continuance in His love! How He rings the changes on the words "abide" and "continue"! My duty starts out in the service of Christ with great demonstrations of affection, but after a time they "become weary in well-doing."

V. 10. "If ye keep my commandments." The test of love is not mere talk, but simple and constant obedience. This is the form in which Christ wants love to be expressed.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS.

There may be plenty of activity, and yet barrenness. We may "bring forth" a great deal of ourselves, and because it is of ourselves it is no fruit.

The spiritual vine, like the natural, brings forth its fruit in a cluster, and only when each of the members of that cluster is fairly and symmetrically developed is there true fruitfulness.

In the natural world, branches of the vine which are not good for that to which they are intended, for

the bearing of fruit, are good for nothing. These are trees which may be turned to secondary uses, but not the vine.

After all, the pruning knife is only one of the instruments of culture. Soft rain and genial sunshine are the larger experience of the vine. And so even in hard times our afflictions are not one to a thousand of our blessings.

God prunes that He may remove rank and useless qualities, and secondly to develop latent graces.

In nature, growth is often unsymmetrical. Some graces are unduly developed, and exist side by side with defects that mar the beauty. To repress the evil and stimulate the good qualities of His people, God subjects them to the pruning of His providence.

Our union with Christ should be constant. Twelve times in this allegory is the word "abide" used.

QUOTATIONS.

To continue in Christ's love is to continue in cherishing those affections, and doing those actions which are well pleasing in His sight, and to continue in a humble assurance that He regards us with favor.—T. G. Horton.

Christian fruitfulness in order to glorify God must be abundant. The glory of the husbandman does not arise from his fields or vines bearing fruit, but much fruit. A few ears of corn in the one nearly choked with weeds, or here or there a branch or berry, much shrivelled, rather dichotomous than honors him.—J. Hawes, D.D.

Our only possibility of bearing any fruit, worthy of our natures, is by vital union with Jesus Christ. If we have not that there may be plenty of activity and mountains of work in our lives, but no fruit. Only that is fruit which pleases God, and is conformed to His purpose concerning us, and all the rest of our busy doings is no more fruit than a man should bear than cankers are roses, or than oak galls are acorns.—A. Maclaren, D.D.

First of all be, and then do; receive, and then give forth. This is the Christian way of mending men, not tinkering at this, that, and the other individual excellence, but grasping the secret of total change in communion with Him.—J. J. Wray.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

When Mr. Cecil was walking in the Botanical Gardens of Oxford, his attention was arrested by a fine pomegranate tree, cut almost through the stem near the root. On asking the gardener the reason of this, "Sir," said he, "this tree used to shoot so strong that it bore nothing but leaves. I was obliged therefore to cut it in this manner, and when it was almost cut through then it began to bear plenty of fruit."

"What think you of our need of the Lord Jesus?" said Gotthold. "For my part my soul is like a hungry and thirsty child, and I need His love and consolations for my refreshment. I am a wandering and lost sheep, and I need Him as a good and faithful shepherd. My soul is like a frightened dove pursued by the hawk, and I need His wounds for a refuge. I am a feeble vine, and I need His cross to lay hold of, and wind myself about. I am a sinner, and I need His righteousness. I am naked and bare, and I need His robe of glory and innocence for a covering. I am in trouble and alarm, and I need His solace. I am ignorant and I need His teaching; simple and foolish, and I need the guidance of His Holy Spirit."

Sheep do not come and bring their fodder to their shepherd, and show him how much they eat; but, inwardly con-

suming and digesting it, they make it appear by the fleece, which they wear upon their backs, and the milk which they give.

There must be a living union of each branch to the vine. Sometimes flowers are bound to sticks with a bit of wire, so that they seem to grow on long stems, but there is no life in the mere mechanical contact.

A vine would never be so stupid as to examine itself thus; but suppose it should call out, "Roots, do you enjoy being down there in the soil? Yes, we enjoy being here in the soil." "Yes, we enjoy you like to be out there in summer?" "Yes, I like to be out here in summer." "Leaves, are you fond of waving in the sun and air?" "Yes, we are fond of the sun and air." And, satisfied, it says, "I am an excellent vine." The gardener standing near exclaims, "The useless thing! I paid ten dollars for the cutting, and I have pruned and cultivated it, and for years looked for the black Hamburg grapes that would be there, but it has yielded only leaves." He does not care that the roots are in the soil, but stem the sun. It makes no difference to him though every leaf spread itself broad as Sahara in its barrenness. It is fruit that he wants.—H. W. Beecher.

They say at Mentone the citron harvest lasts from the 1st of January to the 31st of December. Women may be seen almost every morning of the year stepping down the rocky mountain paths with large baskets upon their heads filled with the fruit. Pastors may well wish that their churches were always in such bearing order, and Sabbath School teachers may sigh for such perpetual fruit. To secure nearer home, may not each one of us long for like perpetuity of fertility in our own souls? It would be a grand thing to be evermore working, and at the same time planning new effort, and preparing material for new enterprises. Mentone owes its lemons to its warm sun, and to its sheltered position close under the great rocks. Here is a secret for us all. To dwell in communion with Jesus is to abide in the sunshine, and to be shielded from every withering blast.—C. H. Spurgeon.

QUESTIONS.

What fruit should Christians bring forth?

At what season of the year should spiritual fruit appear?

What helps are provided to encourage fruitage?

Have our lives been as fruitful as they ought to be?

If not, why not?

If what are the conditions of prevailing prayer?

A Good Paper for Family Reading

The contents of The Youth's Companion are chosen with a view to the interest of all tastes and ages. The father, as well as the son, enjoys the tales of adventure; the mother renews her girlhood in the stories for girls, while the paper always abounds in stories, long and short, which may be read aloud in the most varied family group to the keen pleasure of all.

Full illustrated Announcement of The Companion for 1908 will be sent to any address free with sample copies of the paper.

New subscribers who at once send \$1.75 for 1908 (adding 50 cents for extra postage on Canadian subscriptions) will receive free all the remaining issues of 1907 besides the gift of The Companion's Four-Leaf Hanging Calendar for 1908 in full color. The Youth's Companion, 144 Berkeley street, Boston, Mass.

The Junior Epworth Era

Edited by Rev. J. T. Bartlett, Associate General Secretary of Sunday Schools and Epworth Leagues, Sackville, N.B.

A Birthday Verse

(Sing to Tune of Auld Lang Syne.)

"Dear Father, let Thy blessing rest
Upon our little friend,
Thy tender love hath followed (her),
And shall unto the end.
We pray Thee that (her) life may be
To loving service given,
And that we all may dwell at last
With (her) at home in heaven."

Weekly Top cs

DEC. 15.—GOD'S KINGDOM. (Missionary Meeting.) Dan. 7: 14; Zech. 8: 7, 8; Matt. 6: 10; Rev. 11: 15.

1. God's Kingdom means the rule of God in the hearts of His people. When we are taught to pray "Thy Kingdom come" we mean that we want to see the day come when God's love shall reign in all hearts. 2. So this Kingdom is a spiritual one. It is founded on love. Those who belong to it honor its laws because they love the King. They obey Him out of a loyal and heartfelt spirit of affection, not because they fear His frown and condemnation. 3. This spiritual kingdom set up in our hearts calls for righteousness in our lives. We want to be right for the Kingdom's sake as well as our own. The King is righteous, His laws are righteous, His subjects are righteous, and everywhere the Kingdom grows righteousness is seen among the people. 4. This Kingdom of righteousness is spreading and will continue to spread until it fills the earth with "the Glory of the Lord." It is not local or limited to a few. All people everywhere are to hear of it and have the privileges of belonging to it brought to them. 5. It is not to be a temporary or short-lived Kingdom. It shall be everlasting. It is to endure for ever—"as long as the sun." Is it in our hearts? Are we members of it? Do we love the King with all our "might"? Are we praying for its universal extension? Do we work as well as pray. It is ours to make known to others until it is given to all people.

DEC. 22.—MISSIONARY TRIP AROUND THE WORLD.

CHRISTMAS THANK-OFFERING.

Hymn 301.

Prayer for the children in many lands who do not know about Christmas. Reading of the Scriptures—Matt. 2: 1-12. Readings by the guides. Telling the names of the great missionaries learned about during the trip. A Christmas story told by one of the Juniors.

Hymn 303.

What can we do to send the Christmas message to other children? The Japan Orphanage, the children's ward in the Chentu Hospital, the French Methodist Institute, Montreal, all need our help.

Hymn 372.

Prayer—That we may learn the real meaning of Christmas.

The Mizpah Benediction.

HELPS.

There will be found in all the church papers helps for this programme. It is suggested that the superintendent select a Christmas story and explain the meaning of Christmas to the children.

A picture of our seventy Forward Movement missionaries (21 x 28), suitable for framing, will be sent free on application by the superintendent, to each society taking the trip.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE GUIDES.

FIRST GUIDE.

Christmas is the very best time in all the year, so we are all glad to be home in time to take part in the fun. When we think of Christmas we think of Christmas trees, of Santa Claus and our stockings hung for him to fill, of going to grandma's and of the good things to eat that she always makes. We think, too, of what we are going to give to make other people happy, and the more we think about making other people happy the more we feel like Christmas.

SECOND GUIDE.

I shall tell you why we keep Christmas; it is in memory of the birth of the Lord Jesus, who was born over nineteen hundred years ago in Bethlehem of Judea. You all remember the beautiful story of the first Christmas, but you will be glad to hear it again:

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

"And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

About Your Looks

Every boy and girl ought to want to look well. It is all very well to say that "beauty is only skin deep," or that "handsome is that handsome does," but after all one's looks have a great deal to do with one's influence. Ugliness ought never to be at a premium. In all the works of nature, God speaks to us of beauty, and we should copy nature in always appearing at our best. All boys may not be equally handsome. All girls may not be equally pretty. But both boys and girls may be careful of their personal appearance, and keep themselves trim and tidy, and never appear in either dirt or disorder. And the outward form is beautified by the inward spirit which gives expression to the countenance and makes an otherwise plain face glow with the brightness of a beautiful smile. It is not so much the shape of your face—the "cut of your countenance"—that makes your looks attractive or disagreeable to others. It is the spirit that shines out of your eyes, that smoothes or puckers your brow, that makes the corners of your mouth turn up or down, that decides whether you are good or ill-looking. We may not be able to change our looks from without very much, but we can change them from

"For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men."

THIRD GUIDE.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," is what we read in the third chapter of John, and the sixteenth verse; so that Jesus was God's great Christmas gift to the world. He came to bring peace on earth and goodwill to men. The angel said: "I bring you good tidings of great joy," and the good tidings were that the Saviour had come. We have been around the world and know that there are many people who have not heard about Jesus; they know nothing of Christmas, nor God's great love gift; they know nothing about making other people happy at Christmas time.

FOURTH GUIDE.

How can we send the message of "Good will toward men and peace on earth," to those who have not heard it? One way is to save our money to send a missionary to them. A better way would be to go ourselves with the message, but we are not old enough, so we must send our money now. We have found out about a great many men while on our missionary trip who went with a message from God to people who didn't know anything about Him. Do you remember some of these messengers. Let us repeat their names. We are sorry that our trip is over, but glad to tell us to be sent deputations to many mission fields during next year.

within. A sour-tempered boy will carry his glum and cross face with him. A glad and happy heart will wreath the face with smiles and scatter warmth all around like the sunshine. "A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance." And if we live right and look on the bright side we shall have a merry heart. Here is a nice bit of good sense:

"The inner side of every cloud
Is bright and shining.

I therefore turn my clouds about,
And always wear them inside out,
To show the lining."

If we ways do that we shall look bright and cheerful, and others will perhaps not say, "What a handsome child that is," but better—"What a happy face that child has." Some people look so black and sour that one would almost think they had been "born under a thunder-cloud and baptized in vinegar." Such people make us miserable. Don't be of that kind. Whether you "feel like it" or not, make yourself smile, and you will be none the poorer in looks or heart or influence for carrying a cheerful countenance. Take good care of your "looks."

DEC. 29.—LESSONS LEARNED FROM THIS YEAR'S MEETINGS. (Memory Meeting.) Ps. 86, 11.

The summary of the year's missionary studies should have been learned last week. The meeting this week may very profitably be spent in gathering together some helpful lessons for personal profit, e.g., arrange beforehand with as many of your Juniors as possible in the hour at your disposal to give in a few sentences such lessons as are suggested in the following:

What brave queen teaches us true courage, and how?

What old-time Jew shows us a noble example of faithfulness?

What are the chief lessons taught in the First Psalm?

What is the Shepherd Psalm? (Let all repeat it together.)

What is the longest Psalm, and what is it all about?

What have you learned about true wisdom?

What kind of words should we speak, and why?

What little faults spoil many lives? How should we cure them?

What is our duty to the Sabbath Day? Name four things about Daniel?

Tell four things about Jonah?

What is the one great lesson taught us by the old prophets?

What are three great things that God expects of us?

What is our chief work for God? Tell five things about God's Kingdom.

Such a summary, if carefully prepared, will make a splendid meeting.

JAN. 5.—PREPARING THE WAY FOR CHRIST. Matt. 3: 1-6. (Consecration Meeting.)

Arrange your programme so that some one of your more advanced members may tell the story briefly of John the Baptist—his character (Lu. 1, 15), his mission (Lu. 1, 17), his childhood (Lu. 1, 26), his call (Lu. 3, 2), his preaching (Lu. 3, 7-18). The great message of John was "Repent," "Prepare." His ministry was that of a herald who went before to get everything in order, or ready, for the King who was coming. Christ was that King. He came. Many did not receive Him. Many more seemed to welcome Him. Only a few were really true to Him. Find out why. We are to "prepare the way of the Lord" in our own hearts first. Cast out everything that He cannot own and use. Make a clear way for Him. Give Him a place in our homes where we cannot dwell except if we are unkind, or unmanly, or disagreeable. Make way for Him everywhere. He wants His love to be in every heart, in every home, in every town, in every country. He comes to bless us. Then we can be a blessing to others. John was a messenger for Christ. Stay with Him ever after. John carried on his message. He went as he was sent. Should not we each do the same? Let us all give Christ a glorious "right of way" everywhere.

Westmoreland Ave. Junior League

The Westmoreland Ave. Junior League of this city is in a very flourishing condition. The superintendent and officers are very faithful, energetic and enthusiastic in the good work. It is in truth a missionary League. Last year they raised for the Forward Movement \$85, and this year their aim is \$100. On the evening of Oct. 29th they gave an excellent missionary concert. The programme was varied, but all along the missionary line, and was very popular with the large assemblage present. To inspire the boys and girls with the true missionary spirit, as well as make them enthusiastic in this good cause, we know of nothing better

than such a concert as this. Also we believe it is the greatest help to the missionary cause among the older members of the congregation.

The Roll of Honor

One of the most helpful departments of our work is unquestionably the Roll of Honor. In order to belong to this roll the Juniors must be present at church one service each Sunday, at Sunday School, and at the Junior society, for three months. At the end of that time they are decorated with the little silver Junior pin, and their names are recorded on the roll of honor chart with a silver star affixed opposite each name. When they have won four silver stars, a green star is added to denote a full year's work. We use the roll of honor chart issued by the United Society of Christian Endeavor. It does not exactly suit our plan, as it is arranged by months; but it is the best procurable.

In our society we have members who hold their pins for years; in fact, ever since the plan was adopted. The pin is the property of the society; the winner only holds it for three months. At the end of that time, if he still shows a perfect attendance, the pin is retained; if not, it is forfeited and must be worn again.

We have at present forty-five Juniors on our roll of honor. We make it as easy as possible for them by allowing them to send a text of Scripture in case of illness, or absence from home. When absent from church they must attend church, Sunday School, and Junior meeting where they are visiting. If a member of the roll of honor should move away while wearing the pin, it would be given to him as a souvenir of membership.

We find the interest in this plan increases with the passing years; the novelty does not wear off. As a result, our Juniors are not fair-weather Christians, but can be depended upon in all sorts of weather. Thus the habit of attending church, Sunday school and prayer meeting is formed in early life, which will mean much for the individual and the church in later years.

After testing this plan for many years, I have great pleasure in recommending it to all Junior superintendents as a splendid aid to the superintendent in securing regular attendance and developing character.—By Sadie M. Whitworth. Brockville, Ont.

Some Impressions of a Visitor

During the past few weeks, in connection with our regular Sunday services in various places, we have been privileged to "look in" and enjoy the meetings of some Junior Leagues. Not all the Leagues hold their meetings on Sunday; but as these did, the opportunity for observation was improved. In St. James' Church, we found a limited constituency of children, but even so, a promising Junior League, under the personal guidance of the pastor is aiming to hold the growing young disciples, and on the Sunday afternoon we were there the spirit of reverence and devotion was manifest. In Brockville we were delighted to find a splendid company of boys and girls assembled at 10 a.m. for an hour's service before the regular Sunday morning sermon. Miss Reynolds, the devoted superintendent of this League, has the assistance of some earnest and evidently capable young people in the work, and the conviction was borne on the mind of the visitor that a League so conducted cannot fail to contribute largely to the spiritual life and power of the whole church. Coming westward to Toronto we were much pleased to meet with over eighty bright Juniors in North Parkside Church. All of them remained, and judging from the preaching service, for a finer lot of children in this morning service we have seldom seen.

The genial presence of the pastor in the Junior meeting from 10 to 11 may have a good deal to do with this. When in St. Thomas, though the morning was very wet, we enjoyed talking to about 35 Juniors in Grace Church at the morning service. They were as attentive, intelligent, and wonderful as their elders. Under the guidance of Miss Smith, 6th vice-president for London Conference, we expect to see a large increase of Junior Societies in this section of our church. Again, at Aylmer, we met the Junior League before the morning preaching, and although this, too, was on a rainy Sunday, about 40 were present, and seemed to enjoy the service very much. The impressions made on our mind were varied; but in each instance the conviction was received—"this is foundational work, and in the doing of it the Juniors respond with affectionate and loyal minds and hearts to the call of the Master." Such labor cannot be in vain. The children need Christ, the church needs the children, and Christian children in the church are essential to the growth and perpetuity of the Kingdom." The Junior League is doing grand service in some places. Is it your neighborhood?

Superintendents' Exchange

We desire to get our superintendents of Junior Leagues into personal correspondence with one another. Already a promising start has been made. All that is necessary is for you to send your name and address to Mr. Bartlett. He will put you in correspondence with another worker, and thus you may prove mutually helpful by the exchange of ideas, plans, etc. How can you help? Some Junior League leaders will avail themselves of this easy way of improving their work and of helping others? Send your name and address to Sackville, N.B., to-day.

Post-Card Exchanges

This is for the Juniors themselves. If your League would like to exchange post-cards with some other League, just send the names and addresses of your superintendent, president, or secretary to Mr. Bartlett, at Sackville, N.B. Then he will tell you what to do. Some Junior Leagues are at it already and have had some good services from it. Write to-day and get in correspondence with some other League before Christmas.

Fenelon Falls Juniors meet every Thursday after 6 o'clock, except during July and August, when 7 o'clock is the hour. The pastor has usually attended and assisted in the study of the Topic. The Leaguers grow their own flowers, bring them to the meeting, and then distribute among the sick. A Scrap-book Committee has charge of everything they think may be made useful in the meetings. The Missionary Trip and Systematic Bible Studies are also observed. To encourage a full, regular, attendance, and good order, the League has been divided into sections, the "Rainbows" and "Sunbeams" each having its own banner and color. They sit together in sections, and marks are given for attendance, deportment, etc. The banner of the side most in evidence is carried in the parade. At the end of each three months the side having the least marks gives the others a social. This idea works out well and is being quite frequently used in some modified form in various places. Try it!

A Junior Epworth League has been organized at Broadview, Sask., with an attendance of twenty-five. The League meets every Thursday at 4 p.m. Mrs. G. W. Hinds is the superintendent, and judging from the attendance at the meetings the parents and children are greatly interested, and appreciate the work which is being done.

The Two Stockings

BY J. W. YEAGLEY.

Two little stockings side by side,
Hung on the chimney wall,
Hung in the joyous Christmastide,
Awaiting Santa's call;
One it was made of lambskin's fleece,
And one of cotton threads,
The little owners, wrapped in peace,
Slept in their quiet beds.

Within one stocking was inclosed
A note to Santa Claus,
In which the writer said, "I s'posed
I ought to tell the cause,
Why I, the only child that's here,
Have hung, as I have done,
Two stockings for you, Santa dear,
Instead of one.

"One stocking is a little girl's,
Sweet as the summer skies,
Whose tresses hang in golden curls
About her merry eyes;
Her father's dead, her mother's ill,
And playthings she has none,
No little joys her heart ere thrill,
Her home's a cheerless one.

"The other stocking's mine, but then
I easily can wait,
Until some time you come again,
My patience won't abate;
And do not think my soul you'll mar,
—Or make my heart to grieve,
For I have heard 'tis better far
To give than to receive.

"And now, please, Santa, if you will,
And you have sought to spare,
From out your store our stockings fill,
Which we left hanging there;
But if your stock is getting low,
And you should be hard run,
Then let my little stocking go,
And fill the cotton one."

Old Santa down the chimney swung,
Clad in his furry coat,
And found the stockings for him hung,
—And read the little note;
And as he read the tear-drops fell,
Suffused his loving eyes,
"The little darlings!" said he, "Well!
I'll give them both a prize.

"I'll fill both stockings to the brim,
I'll make them overflow,—
The little maid has learned of Him
Who came long years ago,
Who taught us to ourselves deny,
To render others good,
—And ne'er forget the golden tie,
Of human brotherhood."

The Turning Point

A child looks on Christmas as the turning point in his calendar, so the nations count time from the first Christmas as if nothing which happened before was worth recording, as if the years before seemed like long rows of ciphers with no numeral preceding them to give them value, as if the world was beginning anew. Every time men use the abbreviations A. D. on their letter heads, they testify to the fact that Christ's coming was worth recording, as if the years before seemed like long rows of ciphers with no numeral preceding them to give them value, as if the world was beginning anew. Every time men use the abbreviations A. D. on their letter heads, they testify to the fact that Christ's coming was worth recording, as if the years before seemed like long rows of ciphers with no numeral preceding them to give them value, as if the world was beginning anew. Every time men use the abbreviations A. D. on their letter heads, they testify to the fact that Christ's coming was worth recording, as if the years before seemed like long rows of ciphers with no numeral preceding them to give them value, as if the world was beginning anew. Every time men use the abbreviations A. D. on their letter heads, they testify to the fact that Christ's coming was worth recording, as if the years before seemed like long rows of ciphers with no numeral preceding them to give them value, as if the world was beginning anew.

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