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About 7 per cent. of the English people still sign their name with a cross.

A Christmas morning service may now be regarded as general throughout England.

France has more persons over 60 years of age than any other country. Ireland comes next.

According to the Bishop of Ripon, it is said that a man may become a good golf player in seventy years.

As early as September orders were placed in Wisconsin, U.S.A., for 50,000 Christmas trees to be shipped to Europe.

It is said of Professor Max Muller that he has conversed and corresponded with more men of note than any living person.

The Rev. Dr. Ross Taylor, who has been nominated for the Moderatorship of the General Assembly, received the congratulations of the Glasgow Presbytery.

In view of the increase of Christian Endeavorers in the army, a special C. E. ring has been prepared for the use of the C. E. soldiers, who are not able to wear other badges.

Eight sections at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1900 will be devoted to the "history of the religions of the world, with the belief of all the known races of men, past and present."

The biggest idol in the world is Dia Buten, the Japanese god, which is over 60 feet high. The image is made of copper, tin, mercury, and gold, and has been worshipped for more than twelve centuries.

Each day of the week has served as a day of rest somewhere. Sunday among Christians, Monday with the Greeks, Tuesday with the Persians, Wednesday with the Assyrians, Thursday with the Egyptians, Friday with the Turks, and Saturday with the Jews.

Miss Charlotte M. Yonge, the authoress, is trying to secure subscriptions for the suggested memorial to Charles I., the restoration of the ruined church at Carisbrooke, where he once worshipped. This seems to be a counterblast to the erection of the Cromwell statue. So far only one-fifth of the sum required has been contributed.

The National Council of Christian Endeavor met in London lately. A considerable part of the business transacted was in connection with the World's Convention, to be held next July at Wembley park, where a huge encampment, as well as a number of large tents for the meetings, will be erected. One enthusiastic Endeavorer has described this "canvas city" as a foreshadowing of "the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven."

A remarkable case of zeal for knowledge was discovered at Gilmorhill the other day. One student was asked to explain why he was absent from a certain examination. He explained that he was working on an engine-driver and had to run a train for a couple of hours in the forenoon, and thus managed to get up to his class; but as he had to go back to finish out his twelve hours' day he had no more spare time. This student, in spite of the tremendous handicap he has had to face, has worked his way through most of the arts classes with a view to graduation.

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Note and Comment

Rev. Samuel Houston, M. A., late of Kingston, has been appointed lecturer on emigration to the Dominion by the Canadian Government.

At Emperor William's desire the Ministry of Culture has issued an order directing all Prussian universities and common schools to celebrate the new century.

Emperor William is confident that the proposal to increase the strength of the navy is popular with the electorate, and he believes that the new Reichstag will provide for a great fleet for Germany.

The official organ of the Russian Department of Trade and Manufactures announces that the Moscow Insurance Company has received permission to operate abroad, and intend to conduct business in the United States.

Said the keeper of Canterbury jail: "I have had twenty thousand prisoners pass through my hands since I have been keeper of the jail; but, though I have inquired, I have not discovered one tectotal among them."

Captain Dreyfus has taken a villa in Cairo and will spend the winter there with his family. He is reported to be growing stronger continually and his physicians say that a winter of rest in a mild climate will make him a well man.

Always bright, the January number of Foreign Missionary Tidings is of unusual interest. Mrs. J. MacGillivray, B.A., discharges her duties as editor with good judgment and ability. This issue contains a touching account of the famine in India from the pen of Dr. Margaret McKellar.

An amusing story comes from the Cape and is told by The Engineer. The station master at a junction on the way to De Aar was notified of a "goods train" arriving. It came and disgorged, not goods, but armed marines. Later on steamed up an armored train with blue-jackets and having guns covered with a tarpaulin and ironically labelled "Fruit."

Following is a list of W.F.S. life members for December: Miss Jean Main, Hamilton; Mrs. Walter Beatty, Pembroke; Mrs. Agnes Alquire, Lunenburg; Mrs. Ford, Toronto; Miss Skinner, London; Miss Thornton, Whitby; Miss Login, Guelph; Mrs. Jones Lister, Toronto; Mrs. Duncan McIntosh, Almonte; Miss Fraser, Portage La Prairie.

If, as some think, Mr. Rudyard Kipling has been the subject of too much laudation, a wholesome corrective is afforded in the keen and biting treatment which he receives at the hands of Mr. Robert Buchanan, in the paper called "The Voice of 'The Hooligan'" which The Living Age for Jan. 6 reprints from the Contemporary Review. The true estimate of Kipling lies somewhere between the extreme of laudation and such unsparing criticism as this.

Excavations carried on at Beneventum under the direction of Prof. Baccelli, have revealed in perfect preservation a theatre as large as that of Pompey or Marcellus at Rome. This, it is said, is the British Architect, quite the most important discovery of the official searches in recent years, though at Rome and at Pompeii something noteworthy is unearthed almost every day. The theatre is built of great blocks of travertine.

The coming performance of the "Passion Play," which should begin on May 3, 1900, is now beginning to attract public attention. Those who had the great pleasure of attending the play in 1880 or 1890 were surprised by the artless simplicity of the native inhabitants of this little Bavarian village. If they should visit the town to-day, however, they would find that all is changed. The old stage is all that remains of the theatre. A gigantic steel framework is now being erected to shelter the audience. It reminds one of the camping tabernacles and convention halls in America. Instead of billeting strangers upon the inhabitants, as was formerly the custom, extensive preparations are being made to entertain them, and the talk of the town is how many foreigners will be induced to visit Ober-Ammergau during the period of the play. The names of the actors have not been announced as yet.

The century, says Christian Work, bids fair to go out as the century came in, with the countries of Central and South American in a state of upheaval and chronic rebellion. The people of these countries and especially those of Spanish origin, have apparently made very little progress in the art of self-government since they set up their so-called republics. Their popular elections are a farce, their presidents being usually selected by the arbitrament of arms rather than by a majority of votes. It is really wearisome trying to keep up with their variegated and turbulent history. During the past twelve months rebellions and insurrections of various degrees of bloodiness and savagery have occurred in Columbia, Venezuela, Bolivia, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Salvador, and some of them are still in progress. The probabilities are that Cuba would have a similar experience if the United States would withdraw her forces and give the island that independence which some Cuban politicians are insisting she should now have. Far better a strong government from the outside than no government at all from the inside.

A pretty little ceremony took place lately in Westminster Abbey. It had been noticed by Mr. Tom Bryan that lovers of Tennyson and other poets pilgrimed to the Poet's Corner on birthdays and death-days and placed there their willing tribute. Yet not "the meed of one melodious tear" fell to the lot of Robert Browning's tomb. What should happen, then, on Tuesday but that a little deputation went in devoted procession to the Abbey, when two little girls, distinguished in the Browning essay and recital competition at Browning Hall laid reverently a wreath of laurels and lay upon Robert Browning's tomb, the day being the tenth anniversary of Browning's death. In the afternoon a large gathering of women took place at Browning Hall, and in the evening some members of the Kyrle Society rendered with much taste and ability a well-chosen programme of 'Browning' music, vocal and instrumental, most of the songs being poems either of Robert Browning or Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The pity of it was that so meagre an audience assembled to listen.

The Presbyterian Quarterly, representing the Presbyterian Church (South) does not hesitate to express its admiration for other churches, as the following shows. The reference is to the address of Rev. Dr. Johnston, of London, at the Pan-Presbyterian Council at Washington: "The pulpit of the New York Avenue Church is spread eagle... but the spread eagle met his match at last. Dr. Thompson, home mission secretary of the Northern Church, spoke on Tuesday night of the great work the Northern assembly is doing. It is a magnificent work, and the temptation was a great one to make as fine a display as possible before the visitors from abroad, as well, as those from the South. But Canada's turn came next, and Canada was represented by a tall black-bearded, clear-voiced speaker, full of native eloquence, and loyal to his church. Somehow as he proceeded, the home mission work just before mentioned grew smaller and smaller until it became insignificant. It was the most complete triumph of the council, and when Dr. Johnston sat down the Canadian church had taken the position as the model home mission church, and the spread-eagle above alluded to, as it heard the closing periods of the address, quietly and despairingly folded its wings."

A new experiment, says Christian Work, is to be tried by Belgium, the outcome of which will be awaited with considerable interest. The Belgian Chamber of Deputies has passed a new Electoral bill which involves a new departure, in that it gives proportional representation, and is the outcome of the bitter struggle between Liberals and Clericals. Oppositions to the latter had become so strong that this bill was framed in part to prevent a revolution. The effect will be, of course, to give any party, minority political representation. But it is claimed on behalf of the bill that it will destroy the party system in Belgium by doing away with its majorities, so that selection of the ministry from all shades of political opinion make the Government more truly national than it could otherwise be. This claim at best seems chimerical. If we want to see how this dispersion of responsibility works, we have only to turn to France and Italy, and even to Germany. In these countries there is not minority representation but the line of political cleavage is a zigzag one, running between different groups and sects, the leaders of which are always ready for intrigue and bargain on the basis of spoils. Government by majority, as in this country and in England, whatever its shortcomings, is far preferable.

The Independent of New York records the fact that by the incoming of the New Year all the workers in the cotton factories of the North will be enjoying an increase of wages amounting to more than \$5,000,000 in a year. This general advance is due chiefly to the action of Matthew C. D. Borden, of New York, the owner of the largest cotton mill in Fall River. Nearly all of the companies in that city had sought to end a controversy with their employes by offering them an increase of 5 per cent. to take effect on January 1. While the workers were considering this offer Mr. Borden gave notice the day before Thanksgiving that his 4,000 employes were to receive an increase of 10 per cent. on the 1st. Thirty-six corporations in Fall River were obliged to follow his example and during the past ten days the movement has spread from the 28,000 mill hands of that city through all the cotton factories of New England until now 140,000 employes already have received the additional 10 per cent. The American Woolen Company has also ordered a similar increase for the 20,000 employes in its twenty-six mills and from Augusta, Ga., comes the news that the wages of 8,000 workers in the cotton mills there will be increased on January 1. The window glass workmen 10,000 of whom have been idle for several months, will take hold again on the 30th inst. with an advance of 6 per cent in their pay.

Our Young People

RETURN.

The Parable of the Prodigal.

Topic for January 14.—“In the Far Country.”—Luke 15:11-24.

“I came to call sinners to repentance.”

A Foolish Young Man.

BY D. L. MOODY.

There are thousands of young men to-day who are in the far country, just as the prodigal was. They have loving parents to welcome them home, but they prefer what this world has to give them.

I think this young man was to be pitied. He asked his father for his portion, but what a small portion he got! He took the money, but did not take the love that went along with it. He only took the smallest part of the gift.

Think what he left—what he lost!

He left a good home, where every one loved him. And if there is one thing a young man needs it is a loving mother in a good home. This young man's mother is not mentioned. Perhaps she was dead. If she had been alive, she might have kept him from going off. Almost the best gift God gives us is a true mother.

Then, he left a loving father. Young men are very likely to thing lightly of their fathers, and to call them old fogies. I pity a young man who speaks disrespectfully of his father. If this young man had followed his father's advice, he would have been saved a lot of misery. But he thought he knew better. He never lost his father's love, but he shut himself out from all the benefits of it.

Then, he lost all his self-respect, and the good opinion of others. This is what sin leads to! He got so low down that he was glad to take care of pigs. When he was rich, he had lots of friends, but now that his money was gone, did they do anything for him? No they turned and laughed at him, and probably called him extravagant. Nobody trusted him and the best he could do was to feed pigs.

Last of all, he had lost everything for which he had given up home and father and honor and friends. That is the way the world often does. We give everything we have, self-respect and happiness, everything, to enjoy something the world has, and before very long the world deprives us of that. It is pretty hard for a man to drive a bargain with the devil. The world gives none of its presents for more than a little while.

Now let us look at some of things he gained when he came home. He didn't gain his father's love, because he had had that all the time. He only came back into its warmth again. We can't get away from God's love, but we can shut our hearts to it.

Then he came to a home where every one loved him. Money may buy us

service and houses and certain kind of friends, but it can't buy us a home. The prodigal found 'he fatted calf' and the best robe waiting for him, shoes for his feet and a ring for his hand.

But best of all, he found what he had been looking for so long, happiness. It was what he went away from home to get, but he didn't find it in the far country. The Bible says nothing about happiness until he gets home; then it says, “they were merry.”

Many of us make this same foolish mistake to-day. We wander far away from God into a far country looking for happiness when we can only find it with God.—Christian Endeavor World.
East Northfield, Mass.

Coming Back.

To the Father's house they are coming back,

The sons who were scattered wide and far,
And all their beautiful upward track
Is white in the beams of the Morning Star.

They have broken the ties that bound them fast
In the alien lands where their hearts have been,
To the dear old home they return at last,
To the patient Father who bids them in.

There are some who wandered, and lost the way
In the brilliant hours of their early youth:
There are some who have striven many a day
With weapons of evil against the truth.

They found but husks where they sought for food:
The fairest fruit had a bitter taste;
And the phantom lights their feet pursued,
Lured to the snares of a barren waste.

So they're coming back to the Father's house
To the Father's love, that has waited long,
To the Father's heart, that will hear their vows,
And turn their grief to a happy song.

O sorrowful children! rebels still,
Who stay in the gloom of your little faith,
Return with these, from the desert's chill,
To the better life, from the shade of death.

For the Father's house has room for all,
And crowding there from the east and west
The weary ones who have heard the call
Of love divine, are crowned and blessed.
—Margaret E. Sangster.

For Daily Reading.

Mon., Jan. 8—Strayed from the fold, Matt. 18: 10-14
Tues., Jan. 9—Evil and good paths, Deut. 11: 22-32
Wed., Jan. 10—The saving voice, Heb. 3: 7-15
Thurs., Jan. 11—Turning towards home, Isa. 75: 6-9
Fri., Jan. 12—God's welcome, Ps. 143: 1-13
Sat., Jan. 13—The heavenly home, John 14: 1-6
Sun., Jan. 14—Topic. In the far country, Luke 15: 11-24

“That's Thee, Jem!”

At a popular English watering place, a troop of young men called “Ethiopian Serenaders” with hands and faces blackened, and dressed in grotesque costumes, ranged themselves for an exhibition, one

day, before the door of an earnest Christian tradesman, who had in his window an assortment of Bibles for sale.

After they had sung some comic and some plaintive melodies, with their own peculiar accompaniments of gestures and grimaces, one of the party, a tall and interesting young man, who had the air of one who was beneath his proper station, stepped up to the door, tambourine in hand, to ask for a few pennies from the people. Mr. Carr taking one of the Bibles out of the window addressed the youth:—

“See here, young man,” he said “I will give you a shilling, and this book besides, if you will read a portion of it among your comrades there, and in the hearing of the bystanders.”

“Here's a shilling for an easy job!” he chuckled out to his mates; “I'm going to give you a ‘public reading!’”

Mr. Carr opened at the fifteenth chapter of Luke, and, pointing to the eleventh verse, requested the young man to commence reading at that verse.

He took the book and read: “And he said, A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.”

There was something in the voice of the reader, as well as in the strangeness of the circumstances, that lulled all to silence, while an air of seriousness took possession of the youth, and still further commanded the rapt attention of the crowd.

He read on: “And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.”

“That's THEE, Jim!” ejaculated one of his comrades. “It's just like what you told me of yourself and your father!”

The reader continued: “And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.”

“Why, that's thee again, Jem!” said the voice. “Go on!”

“And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into the fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him.”

“That's like us all!” said the voice, once more interrupting. “We're all beggars, and might be better than we are! Go on; let's hear what came of it.”

The young man read on, and as he read his voice trembled: “And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father.”

At this point he fairly broke down, and could read no more. All were impressed and moved.

That day, that scene, proved the turning point of the young prodigal's life. He sought the advice of the Christian friend who had thus providentially interposed for his deliverance. Communications were made to his parents, which resulted in a long-lost and dearly loved child's returning to the familiar earthly home; and still better in his return to his heavenly father.—C. E. World.

Some Quaint Hymns.

By REV. A. T. KEMPTON, M. A.

This is indeed an age of improvement. Every product bears the stamp of the refiner, from the production of the hand to the expression of the thought of the head and the heart. Our sacred songs have been undergoing this process of selection and rejection, too. Some of those that have been rejected are exceedingly quaint and curious. Like many a poem on Love or Spring, they were "fearfully and wonderfully made." How "strange and awful" must have been the sound as these old hymns were sung in that drawing, nasal twang to some of the most minor of all minor funeral tunes. In a book published one hundred and two years ago by William Northrup, in Connecticut, I find this quaint old hymn, written for the L. M. tune. It was evidently the favorite hymn of the book. The page upon which it was printed had been thumbed and turned until it was ready to fall from the book. In several copies of the same hymn book I found that this hymn bore the marks of the most use. Do you wonder that they loved to sing it? It has the same old-fashioned beauty that a dear old great-grandmother still holds, whose birthday came in the same year that this hymn was born. It belongs to another age and people and time, but welcome to us as a voice from the past. It read as follows:

"CHRIST THE APPLE TREE."

"The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit and always green.
The trees of nature fruitless be
Compared with Christ the Apple Tree.

"This beauty doth all things excel,
By faith I know but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see
In Jesus Christ the Apple Tree.

"For 'Happiness I long have sought,
And pleasures dearly I have bought;
I missed for all and now I see
'Tis found in Christ the Apple Tree.

"I'm wearied with my former toil,
Here I shall set and rest awhile;
Under the shadow I will be
Of Jesus Christ the Apple Tree

"With great delight I'll make my stay,
There's none shall fright my soul away;
Among the sons of men I see
There's none like Christ the Apple Tree.

"I'll sit and eat this fruit divine.
It cheers my heart like spirit's wine;
And now this fruit is sweet to me,
That grows on Christ the Apple Tree.

"This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,
It keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in haste to be
With Jesus Christ the Apple Tree."

Among the old hymns I find that they had a kind of a Doxology before the words of our familiar "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," ever saw the light. This was evidently the most familiar and the most used. Certainly such rasping metre and rhythm must have done great violence to even so good a sentiment.

"Praise the Lord, ye Gentiles all,
Which hath brought you into this light.
O praise Him all ye people mortal,
As is most worthy and right."

Is it any wonder that these awful hymns grated on the ears of Wesley and

Watts? In one of the very old collections of hymns, horrible, humorous and otherwise, appear the following stanzas, among many others of the same kind;

"'Tis like the precious ointment
Down Aaron's beard did go;
Down Aaron's beard it downward went,
His garment skirts unto."

"Why dost withdraw thy hand and aback,
And hide it in thy lap?
Oh pluck it out, and be not slow
To give thy foes a rap."

"The race is not forever got
By him who fastest runs;
Nor the battle by those people
Who shoot the longest guns."

We cannot repress smiles, but these were grand and inspiring hymns in those days.

"Ye monsters of the bubbling deep,
Your Maker's praises shout;
Up from the sand, ye codlings, peep,
And wag your tails about."

When Watts complained of such hymns, one old man snapped out, "Well, you give us something better, then." Soon after he handed the old man the following hymn. It is a good contrast, and it was a good answer:

"Behold the glories of the Lamb
Amidst His Father's throne;
Prepare new honors for His name,
And songs before unknown.

Christian Work.

That Christian is in a sad state who becomes too busy to be holy. Far too many of us may well ask:

"Have we any room for Jesus
In the life we live to-day?
Not much room for our Lord Jesus
Has there been, or will there be;
Room for Pilate and for Herod—
Not for him of Cavalry.
Room for pleasure—doors wide open—
And for business—but for him
Only here and there a manger
Like to that of Bethlehem."

—Cumberland Press.

'Tis only after anguish
That perfect peace is won,
And contrite hearts can murmur,
"Thy will, not ours, be done."

—Susie M. Best.

Pregnant Thoughts.

The heavenly life must have heavenly food; nothing less than Jesus Himself is the bread of life: "He that eateth Me shall live by Me."—Andrew Murray.

We must have life from and in Christ, or we lack life. We must feed on Christ daily, or we famish. This is the truth of truths in the gospel.—H. Clay Turnbull, D.D.

"Bethlehem" signifies "The house of bread." When the babe was born and laid in the manger, then the store was found for the world of famishing souls.—Charles S. Robinson, D.D.

Secure a good name to thyself by living virtuously and humbly; but let this good name be nursed abroad and never be brought home to look upon it. Let others use it for their own advantage—let them speak of it if they please; but

do not thou use it at all but as an instrument to do God's glory and thy neighbor more advantage. Let thy face, like Moses', shine to others, but make no looking-glass for thyself.—Jeremy Taylor.

Bread eaten to-day will not nourish to-morrow, neither will past experiences of Christ's sweetness sustain the soul. He must be "our daily bread" if we are not to pine with hunger.—Alexander McLaren, D. D.

Literary Notes.

The Abbey on the moor by Susie E. Jackson. This is a bright little story of a child whose father dies leaving her to the guardianship of a friend. The troubles of the little Sybil on account of the fact that her guardian's wife disliked her, and the way in which these troubles ended, make up a very readable story, Sybil is a lovable character.—Copp Clark Company, Toronto; Thomas Hudson & Sons, London, Edinburgh, New York.

Sermons on the International Sunday School Lessons for 1900 by the Monday Club. This book will be of great interest and value to all Sunday school teachers. It consists of a sermon on each of the lessons of the year written by different clergymen. The sermons are short and most suggestive, and the book will prove of great use to those who are endeavoring to make the lesson attractive; while those who are not teachers will also enjoy these well-written little sermons. The Pilgrim Press, Boston, Chicago.

A new work which Mr. Fisher Unwin will publish at an early date is likely to astonish scientific and classical scholars by attempting to demonstrate from the writings of the ancients, that the basis of all our modern scientific knowledge was familiar to the philosophers of pre-Homeric times, and that latter day discoveries are simply a development of the ideas and principles formulated by the leaders of thought who flourished anterior in the Christian Era. The new work bears the title "The Gods of Old and the Story that they Tell."

A confident to-morrow by Brander Matthews. This is "the love story and literary apprenticeship of a young westerner who seeks his fortune in New York, and finds it both in love and literature, after many struggles and hardships." The theme is an interesting one and the author handles it well, making us understand something of the life of the literary man in New York. The author is perhaps on the whole more successful in his short stories. The red and gold binding and the illustrations go to make up an attractive volume.—Harper & Brother, Publishers, New York City.

"Chillingfield Chronicles," Miss Helene Gingold's latest work, will be published by Mr. Fisher Unwin, London. It is a presentation of English life during the reign of Queen Anne. The story is told by an English country gentleman of good family, and the record of his life and the lives of those near and dear to him is drawn against a background of the frivolous fashionable life of the period. Although primarily a character study, the novel, nevertheless, deals copiously in incident and exciting adventure, and is the most complete, as it is the most extensive, effort Miss Gingold has yet accomplished. The volume is to contain a photogravure portrait of the authoress.

The Lion and the Unicorn by Richard Harding Davis. It is quite unnecessary to praise Richard-Harding Davis. His work is to well known to need praise and this volume contains some of his best work. The Lion and the Unicorn consists of five short stories, some of which have appeared in the magazines. The story that gives the title of the book is the longest and perhaps the most interesting, though The Man with One Talent is very strong and very striking. One cannot help being interested in Davis' characters. The volume is a very neat one, well bound, and with a number of splendid illustrations by H. C. Christy. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

THE
Dominion Presbyterian

IS PUBLISHED AT

10 Campbell Street, Belleville, Ont.
232 ST. JAMES ST., MONTREAL & TORONTO

TERMS:

\$1.50 per Year; \$1.00 in Advance.

The receipt of subscription is acknowledged by a change of date on address label.

The Mount Royal Publishing Co.

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Manager.

All communications intended for the editor should be addressed to Belleville.

The editor can not undertake to return unused Mss.

Correspondents are asked to note that anything intended for the first issue should reach the office on Tuesday morning.

Thursday, January 4th, 1900.

Already many of the gifts received at the Christmas season have grown stale. They were given and received in a selfish spirit. There was no love behind the gift, and, in itself, the costliest acknowledgment of a custom is a poor thing.

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A second contingent will soon be on the way to Africa. The number of volunteers is embarrassing. Four contingents could be sent as easily as one, were the desire to serve the only requisite. In selecting both officers and men it should be remembered that these men will represent Canada and that the eyes of every nation will be upon them.

◆ ◆ ◆

What does the New Year hold for us? Just what we are willing to take out of it. A path lies through it, every step of which holds treasure for each of us. It is possible for each to find his path and keep it, but not alone. One has promised "I will guide thee with mine eye upon thee," and He is ready to keep His promise.

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Nothing else will so completely deaden the moral sense as the love of gain; even a degrading animal passion will not so completely quench the spark of humanity as greed of gold. The experience of the past week, in which a cable lie concocted to make gain by the ruin of others, is only a glaring instance of an every day event. For money men will not only sell their own souls, but will if possible, tread on the souls of others.

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We have little sympathy with the spirit that when visiting the toy department of one of our great stores, cries out against

the waste of time and money it indicates. We had rather see a little face radiant with joy over a toy that may be thrown aside in a week, than experience the satisfaction of storing up the money it would cost in a bank for the little one. Why should we not make life a joy-giving experience, not on one day of the year, but each day of it?

A Backward Glance.

Many are looking back over the trail these days. For some it stretches far back into the 18—'s, crosses the sea and has its beginning at the threshold of a home in a great valley, far up on a hillside, or, it may be, in a busy city. To them, that early bit of the trail looks clear and well-defined, and they can almost hear the voices of those they see moving about it again. They will talk to you about it, and tell you how the Christmas or the New Year was kept there. They do not speak much of that part that lies between then and now, for mists seem to cover it, as if it was deep in a valley, where the air is not clear. The trail, as we see it in looking back is not straight, nor is it level. Often it seems to double back upon itself, as if we had grown confused, and wandered in a circle. It saddens us to note how much time has been lost in these aimless wanderings, and how much farther forward the trail might have stretched to-day, how much nearer it might have been to the goal of our life, had we kept straight on. Then, too, it has often dipped down into the shadowed valley, sometimes gradually, again with a startling suddenness. For some of us these valleys worked a loss that has been irretrievable, so far as the present life is concerned. One entered the shadow with us, but we came out alone, wildered, weary and saddened, with ever a backward glance to where we have left what we knew as a loved one. By force of faith we turn our faces upward, but often, very often, the heart goes back to the shadowy trail.

To many of us there is one spot on the trail, that means more to us than any other part. At that point Another came into our life, and from that hour He has walked with us. We have wandered from His side, but He has drawn us back again. And from that day the character of the trail has changed. It is less uncertain in direction, and it has been gradually climbing upwards. To-day, we look down from the height upon the way by which we have come. There have been deep valleys since that hour, but that Other has entered them with us, and led us through, and as to-day we look back into them they are full of a wondrous light. For many of the shadowed parts, perhaps in some measure for all of them, we are profoundly thankful. Some are full of a dark mystery still, but as we climb higher

we believe that these will be filled with the warm love-light.

We have learned to know that One who came into our life at that point farther back, and we are learning to love Him. At one time we would have asserted our love for Him boldly, but now, we would rather say, we are only learning to love. For His love to us is so illimitable, that it makes us ashamed of our poor love to Him. We dare not call that love which we are giving. As we turn from the trail that stretches back into life, and looks out upon that which so soon loses itself in the opening life, the trail is indistinct, but we look up into His face and are not afraid. Life means more for us than ever it did before. It will make heavier demands upon us than it ever yet has done. Looking up to Him, His glance seems to ask us "Are you ready?" And putting our hand in His we say—"We are ready."

D. L. Moody.

Dwight L. Moody is dead. Such was the message flashed over the wires and posted on thousands of bulletin boards on Friday afternoon last. He was a man greatly beloved and highly honored of God in the work of bringing sinners to Christ. It was characteristic of him that he strove hard with death, and sought hard to save his life for further service. Only when he recognized that it was the will of his Master that he should yield, did he discontinue the struggle.

Mr. Moody believed in a Christian who was ready to use every atom of strength possessed, in Christian service. None put greater value upon prayer than he did, but he had a supreme contempt for the one who did nothing but pray and wait. Pray and wait, hold yourself in readiness to move instantly at the Lord's bidding when you have cried unto him, was his unvarying counsel to anxious enquirers after Divine help. God works for man through man, fairly expresses the attitude of his life towards prayer and its answering.

Mr. Moody was not a great speaker in the common acceptance of the phrase. He was singularly homely and direct in presentation of the truth. But he had a marvellous knowledge of human value. He seemed to see clear through the outer covering, down into the hidden mysteries of men's actions and words, and he never hesitated to lay hold on these and bring them out into light. Many a man or woman has started back appalled at the hideous reflection of their own image, when Mr. Moody removed the mask, and they stood self-revealed. Then this great-hearted man would preach unto them Jesus, able to cleanse, heal, and cure.

Few men possess such wonderful executive ability as he possessed. He was a born leader. At times he seemed autocratic, but the true leader must, at times,

assert himself. Certainly Mr. Moody held the reins, and if he gave them into the hands of a deputy, and things did not go smoothly, he promptly took them in his own hands again with little ceremony and no apology. And yet there was not a trace of egotism about him. Few men could stand in the swirling current of popular applause where he has stood, and, while not indifferent to it, contrive to turn even this to advantage in saving souls. To be an instrument in the salvation of human souls was his passion. He fought for them all his life—to bring them to Christ, to keep them for Christ. How greatly God has honored him in his life! How blessed must have been the entrance of such a servant into the presence of Him who never forgets!

"With one Accord, in one Place."

Next week is the "Week of Prayer." In response to the call of the Evangelical Association it will be so observed throughout Christendom. In many places it has been the custom for the various Evangelical bodies to unite on successive evenings for united prayer. As a rule such meetings have been far from encouraging. The small attendance and listless attitude may be due, in small part, to the season in which the meetings fall, but, in large part, they are due to the disposition of Christian people. Such an opportunity to manifest a spirit of real unity affords a better test of the spirit of brotherliness in the churches than any number of conventions to discuss Church Unity. As one glances about the sparse audience, and listens to the lifeless petitions, and watches the rapid separation of the constituent element at the close of each meeting, one sees the real strength of the bond of brotherly love that is supposed to be drawing Episcopalian and Methodist and Presbyterian and all the rest to one common centre.

It does not need such a manifestation as next week will afford to reveal to Him whose prayer is—"that they all may be one"—the hollowness of our stout assertion that we are one heart, but some such outward sign is needed to convince men. How long will even the "God of Patience" suffer such mocking at our hands? Surely there is need of a week of humiliation and heart-searching, and strong appeal for forgiveness and cleansing on account of this our sin.

A Good Appointment.

For some time the Ontario Sabbath School Association has been considering the propriety of appointing an Associate Secretary to share the organization work with Rev. Alfred Day, and to take charge of the office work. The last Convention, held at Galt, practically decided that such an officer should be appointed, and instructed the Executive Committee of the Association to secure a suitable man.

The executive accordingly advertised for applicants, and was embarrassed by the number of those who considered themselves eligible for the position. After a judicious eliminating process some half-dozen remained, and, out of these, after very careful consideration, the Committee chose Mr. Thomas Yellowlees for the position.

We congratulate the committee for the choice made, and offer also, our congratulations to the new Associate Secretary. For many years he has been a faithful ruling elder of our church, and a member of Erskine Church Session. He has conducted the William St. Mission, which is under the care of that congregation, with singular energy and ability, and has on several occasions been called upon to conduct services for the ministers in and about Toronto.

In his new field Mr. Yellowlees will find opportunity to use his business training to good advantage, and his evangelism will make his work effective in the field. We bespeak for him a cordial reception and hearty cooperation in this important work to which he has been appointed.

The Ecumenical Conference.

During the closing week of the Old Year a neat pamphlet was laid upon the desks of the ministers of all the churches. It announced the great Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions that is to meet in New York on April 21, and continue in session till May 1. It will be remembered that the last of these great conferences was held in London, England, in 1880.

At the approaching conference representatives will be present from all parts of the world into which missionary enterprise has gone. Our own church has several representatives on the general committee; Rev. Dr. Moore and Rev. R. P. Mackay, the Convener and Secretary of our Foreign Mission committee. Mr. Hamilton Cassels and Rev. Alex. Falconer are also representatives.

Already a draft of the topics to be considered has been issued, and these cover a wide, a practical and an intensely interesting field. In view of the undercurrent of expectancy that prevails in the church at present the approaching conference has an unusual interest. An appeal, and we trust it will be known, is now being made to the churches, to make the intervals between the present and the opening of the conference one of special prayer for an outpouring of Divine Grace during its meeting. The great "forward movement" of which so many are vaguely thinking may take definite shape if we come together, from all corners of the field, animated by one spirit, and moved by one Divine impulse.

High Church Presbyterians.

The nineteenth century propounds the query, "Is Protestantism Dying?" In reply it says: "It is no exaggeration to say that Protestantism is rapidly disintegrating, and is losing its hold as a teaching power." The writer as good as affirms that nobody to-day holds by the Westminster Confession, or the Augsburg Confession, or the Book of Concord, or the Thirty-nine Articles, and quotes the remarkable statement of an American Bishop, writing in the Churchman, to the effect that the clergy are not bound even to believe the statements they make in the prayers of the church service in the Prayer Book, and places it beside the statement of Harnack, the rationalistic German professor, who said that Lutheran ministers of the state church, who were obliged to accept the Apostles, Creed, were not required to believe it further furnishes us with the highly interesting information that "Protestantism as a system of positive religious belief is dying out, and that its professors are, for the most part able to continue in its ministry only through some device of casuistry which, in any other matter, would be considered by themselves, dishonest and dishonorable." His attack comes nearer home to us when he says: "As we see Presbyterian churches adorned with images in stone and glass it is hard to believe that the spiritual ancestors of these same Presbyterians during the great rebellion broke our stained-glass windows as monuments of superstition." We are going, he says, in a markedly ritualistic direction. Out and out ritualism, we are told, is being introduced into the churches once delivered from such abominations by John Knox.

Such sensational criticism as the above may be very interesting to alarmists, but to cool-headed observers it cannot be otherwise than amusing. Whatever liturgical tendencies are apparent among Presbyterians, in Canada at any rate, are harmless, and deserve to be fostered, for in them lies the hope of the redemption of our worship from a prevalent confusion and baldness,—from all those characteristics, in short, which led Matthew Arnold to assert that Presbyterian worship was the most dismal thing imaginable.

—W. M. M.

State of the Funds.

The Rev. Dr. Warden sends us the following comparative statement of receipts for the schemes of the church, from the beginning of the ecclesiastical year, 1st April, to 31st December, 1888 and 1889:

SCHEMES.	1888.	1889
Home Missions	\$20,904.61	\$18,926.92
Augmentation	3,751.48	2,159.67
Foreign Missions	35,102.07	37,072.49
French Evangelization	8,139.15	8,442.45
Pointe aux Trembles	2,477.95	1,809.39
Widows' and Orphans' Fund	1,643.08	1,951.06
Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund	2,812.58	3,492.15
Assembly Fund	2,071.49	2,397.89
Knox College	2,258.92	1,525.18
Queen's College	356.55	200.46
Presbyterian College, Montreal	839.66	186.69
Manitoba College	829.97	829.12

The Assembly of last year instructed that all contributions be sent in prior to 28th February.

The Quiet Hour

The Birth of Jesus.*

BY REV. W. G. JORDAN, D. D.

These studies open the New Year with a presentation of the fact, which was for the world the opening of a new era, namely the birth of the Child Jesus. About two thousand years ago this great event came quietly into the world's life, and we are only beginning to realize its supreme significance. Standing apart from all the poms and noises of the day it was in due course revealed as a matter of eternal meaning. A great contrast runs through the narrative—even this, that an event which moved so little the world's natural life should stir such far-reaching and wonderful waves of influence in the heavenly sphere. That birth which was practically unnoticed in the social circles of the Roman and Jewish world awakened the angelic songs of thankfulness and promise. He who came in this quiet way fulfilled the great hopes which had inspired noble men in the past and also brought still larger hopes for the future.

The historian first links the birth of the Savior with common life of world, and then goes on to show how it was bound to the life of heaven. We cannot now enter into historical discussion raised by Luke's reference to the "enrolment" which took place when Quirinus was governor of Syria. Sufficient to say that the thorough investigation which has been given to his writings in recent times shows that this evangelist is one of the most careful and painstaking of historians. We are now concerned rather with the spiritual significance of the facts than with the harmonizing of minute details.

The movement of Providence appears here both directly and indirectly and in neither case does it appear as a vulgar, worldly sensation. The direct vision and song from heaven was not a public display any more than the quiet birth of the lowly child; it came only to a few simple watchful souls, who carried the songs in their hearts. But how thankful we ought to be that its inspiring strains have been allowed to echo down the ages. Not all the savage din of war has drowned it; it is still the ideal and the hope of god-fearing and peace-loving men.

Not only does God's greatest gift come into the world quietly, it comes in lowly form, the form of a little child. As we think of it now we cannot conceive of any form more appropriate. The life of a little child is a common wonder; many a child from the time of Moses to our own day has carried in its heart God's greatest gift to its generation. A life apparently weak and uncertain has grown to be a great power for good, and in the life of our Lord is a still greater example of this simple sublime fact. He came into human

life by the usual way of birth and passed out through the common gate of death, but in so doing He shed light on life and gave a new and blessed meaning to death. At the very beginning of His mortal career He begins to teach us the great lesson that man must be measured not by his circumstances but by his inward being. A simple child He lay in the cradle; there was no halo of glory round His head; the glory was only present to the eye of faith. The mother's heart beat with joy and her confidence in God was strong.

The song also was not overpowering. It was not thrust upon an unwilling world. It came to lowly men who kept watch under the Syrian sky and though they caught its words they did not discern all its fullness of meaning. An agnostic once said that who ever sang this song it was fit to be sung by angels. Yes, that is true; the song carries its own evidence as angelic. It stills the fear of affrighted men who think perhaps that every opening of heaven must be an opening for judgment, it heralds the Saviour, it is an evangel, a word of good tidings to the weak and sinful; it brings a sign that may stagger the proud but is acceptable to the lowly, who look well into the meaning of life. The contents of the song are in harmony with all this; glory to God in the highest places and on this lowly earth peace to men of good will. Peace is our great need and He is the Prince of Peace. Peace can only come when men give the glory to God that is due unto His name and real peace can only come to him of good will, for peace does not mean merely quiet circumstance but rest of heart, that peace with God and self which enables men to fight the real battle of life, the peace which is both glory and strength.

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Visit of the Child Jesus to Jerusalem.*

The life of the parents has large influence upon that of their children; the young people must grow up, and growing they should exchange a mere traditional faith for an independent personal life, a life which having grown out of the past presses forward to a great future. That is true, but let us now begin with this other truth that the parent-life controls and guides the child life. "His parents went up year by year to Jerusalem to the feast of the Passover." They were religious patriotic people and found the yearly pilgrimage both a duty and a delight. The words of generations before: "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go unto the house of the Lord, our feet are standing in thy gates O Jerusalem," found a glad echo in their hearts. We feel that there is a great appropriateness in this, he that was to sanctify the whole

life of man must himself grow up in the sanctity of a pure home. As a child he was taken to the temple and now as a boy "a Son of the law" he goes to Jerusalem himself to realize a fuller communion with the Church of his fathers. The feast is now over, and the parents having full confidence in their Son resume the homeward march, supposing that he was some where in the band of returning pilgrims. This turns out not to be the case and they turn back to the city to seek him, wondering why he who had always been so careful and attentive had wandered away. The interval was to them a time of uncertainty and anxiety, but soon they found Him in the place where they should have sought for Him at first, in the school of the Temple. There He was an eager disciple sitting among the teachers hearing and asking them questions.

We are not to think of the child Jesus as a youthful prodigy, or as a marvel of precocity. He was an intelligent boy and the time had come for Him to take an interest in the history and law of His people and we are sure that He acted with becoming modesty, the real lesson of this passage as we shall see points in that direction. He had been fully absorbed in the tendency that was given, and it was well that He who was to be the Great Teacher should learn what was taught to the men of His time, what message the church had still to give. We can even go further and recognize in this boyish forgetfulness a perfectly human feature of His life. In the moment when He asserts Himself there flashes out an intimation of the strenuous consecrated life that would be manifest in the coming years but the great thing to be noted now is His submission of self to parental authority. But we are anticipating; note first the reply to the parental reproach. Behold thy father and I seen thee sorrowing. No doubt this cry of the mother who loved Him caused pain and regret to His youthful heart. He had given them the trouble of seeing Him, but surely they might have known where to find him. They knew His character and interests, they might have known that He would be spending His time in harmony with the purpose of His pilgrimage seeking a fuller knowledge of the church and its life. According to the character of a man or a boy you know where to find him, each man or boy gravitates to his own place. If we have character and are seeking high life we may expect our friends to recognize this and seek us where we ought to be. Such confidence we have a right to expect from parents and friends.

"Did ye not know that I would be in my father's house or about my father's business?" Thus early He grasps the thought of the "must" that encircles His life and makes it a life of sacrifice and service. His mother can not understand that, all at once, only through the teaching of the future which brings a cross to the mother's heart as well as to the life of the Son can she learn to understand all its meaning. To her it was a word of mystery and we cannot think that His youthful mind grasped all its meaning. It was a flash, a fore-token of the great life to come.

Immediately afterwards He shows that He has learned the first lesson of life, to

*S. S. Lesson for Jan. 7th:—Luke ii: 1-6.

*S. S. Lesson for Jan. 14th: Luke ii: 41-52.
Golden Text—"Luke ii: 52.

obey. "He went down to Nazareth and was subject unto them." He will not set religion in opposition to the claims of home-life. This only word that we have from His boyhood is followed by years of silence. These years of obscurity were years of patient service and of real preparation. He went down and was subject unto them, and then we hear no more for almost twenty years. Tradition has tried to fill up the space and legend has crowded it with vulgar marvels. It is better as it is, to teach these two great lessons, that obedience is the first thing for the boy to learn who would be a useful man and that silent years are important years for the making of a fruitful life. There are no lessons more important for to-day, the life of children is in danger of becoming noisy and artificial in many cases they are allowed to rule before they have learned to obey, and their life is spent in public before it has learned private strength and self-restraint, this takes away its charm and robs young life even of its real joy. It was good for the boy Jesus to go up to Jerusalem. He had looked forward to this visit with keen expectation and youthful enthusiasm, it was natural that he should linger among sacred scenes of which He had heard so much, but it was more important still that He should show an example to the boys of the future in this, how to learn the first lesson of life, the lesson of obedience. "And He went down with them and came to Nazareth and was subject unto them."

A Master Musician.

There is an old legend of an instrument which hung upon a castle wall. Its strings were broken. It was covered with dust. No one could put it in order or play upon it. But one day a stranger came to the castle. He saw the instrument. Taking it down, he brushed the dust from it, tenderly reset the broken strings, and then played upon it; and the wonderful music filled the castle. Every human soul in its unrenewed state is such a harp with broken strings. It is capable of giving forth richest melodies, but first it must be restored. And no human skill can do this. It is not culture merely that we need, not education alone, not self-discipline only. One must come who can mend the broken instrument, reset the strings and put them in tune, and then play upon it. The only one who can do this is the maker of the harp, the Lord Jesus Christ. We must submit our lives to him. He can take our sinful hearts and change them. He can bring the jangled strings of our life into tune, so that when His fingers play upon them they will give forth sweet music.—Ex.

And what does your anxiety do? It does not empty to-morrow, brother, of its sorrow; but, ah! it empties to-day of its strength. It does not make you escape the evil; it makes you unfit to cope with it when it comes. It does not bless to-morrow, and it robs to-day; for every day has its own burden. God gives us power to bear all the sorrows of His making; but He does not give us power to bear the sorrows of our own making, which anticipation of sorrow most assuredly is.—Ian Maclaren.

Hold On, Boys!

Hold on to virtue; it is above all price to you in all times and places.

Hold on to your good character; for it is and ever will be your best wealth.

Hold on to your hand when you are about to strike, steal, or do any improper act.

Hold on to the truth, for it will serve you well and do you good throughout eternity.

Hold on to your good name at all times, for it is much more valuable to you than gold.

Hold on to your temper when you are angry, excited, or imposed upon.—Ex.

For Dominion Presbyterian.

An Aging Minister.

BY W. M. M.

Our minister is growing old,
I heard a member say;
His intellectual faculties
Show signs of decay,
His strength is failing visibly
And his alofted span
Of usefulness is nearly run;
We want another man.

'Tis now well on to twenty years
Since he was set apart.
To labor for the cause of Christ
With body, mind and heart;
And he has never spared himself
Since first his work began;
And now it's telling on him fast;
We want a younger man.

His salary was never large;
He needed all he got
To keep a coat upon his back
And something in the pot,
His family is growing up;
It worries him to plan
Their education and support;
We want a younger man.

I turned and said: Ungrateful wretch,
The fault is none of his;
Upon your shoulders rests the blame,
And woeful blame it is,
If you would care for him aright,
As well you know you can,
You would not need to turn him out;
He'd be a younger man.

For Dominion Presbyterian.

Psalms 1. A New Version.

BY W. M. M.

Happy the man who hath not in
The wicked's counsel trod,
Nor stood in sinners' way, nor set
With those who scoff at God;
But in God's law doth take delight,
And meditate both day and night.

He shall be like a stately tree,
That firmly hath its root
Beside the water streams and doth
In season yield its fruit;
His leaf shall wither not, and all
What'er he doeth prosper shall.

Not so the wicked, but like chaff
Which wind doth drive away;
They in the judgment shall not stand,
Nor with the righteous stay;
For God the way of those doth know,
But those shall to destruction go.

A Hero.

A few years ago, a fire broke out in a charming little Swiss village. In a few hours the quaint frame houses were destroyed.

One poor man was in greater trouble than his neighbors even. His home and cows were gone, and so also was his son, a bright boy of six or seven years. He wept and refused to hear any words of

comfort. He spent the night wandering sorrowfully among the ruins.

Just as daybreak came, however, he heard a well-known sound, and, looking up, he saw his favorite cow leading the herd, and coming directly after them was his bright eyed little boy.

"Oh, my son, my son!" he cried, "are you really alive?"

"Why yes, father. When I saw the fire I ran to get our cows away to the pasture lands."

"You are a hero, my boy!" the father exclaimed.

"But the boy said: 'Oh, no! A hero is one who does some wonderful deed. I led the cows away because they were in danger, and I knew it was the right thing to do.'

"Ah," cried the father, "he who does the right thing at the right time is a hero."—Can. Baptist.

Feeding on Christ.

To feed on Christ is to get His strength into us to be our strength. You feed on the corn-field, and the strength of the corn-field comes into you and is your strength. You feed on the corn-field, and then go and build your house, and it is the corn-field in your strong arm that builds the house, that cuts down the trees, and piles the stone and lifts the roof into its place.

You feed on Christ, and then go and live your life, and it is Christ in you that lives your life, that helps the poor, that tells the truth, that fights the battle, and wins the crown.—Bishop Brooks.

The final result in the contest with evil is not a doubtful one, but the Savior Himself warns us against expecting the final victory too soon. We must not, therefore, neglect duty and declare "My God delayeth His coming." It is rather for us to watch diligently, that we at least may be found faithful when the cry is "maranatha."

Christ gives life to the world, not directly, but through His disciples. . . . Not with His own hands does He feed the multitude, but through the believing service of the Twelve. . . . Every one of us who has received life from Christ has thereby in possession what may give life to many other human souls.—Marcus Dods, D. D.

Said one believer: "I had been a long time in the church before I found out that prayer is something which one can make a business of." A growing experience of the divine life will constantly discover something new in prayer as a spiritual and moral force. Experience will show that prayer is a refuge in emergencies, a habit at appointed times, and a state of continuous living.

The parent who fails to develop in his child a fondness for good books and religious papers, is making one of the most serious mistakes of his life. It is a ruinous economy to deny the family the weekly visit of the church paper, even though its purchase may call for the exercise of some self-denial; for the paper will prove an invaluable helper in instilling right principles and developing noble characters.

Ministers and Churches.

OUR TORONTO LETTERS.

In the majority of churches the services on the 24th were arranged with special reference to Christmas. In almost all there was special music, the Methodist churches vying with the Anglican and the Roman Catholic in this respect. In our own staid way we followed the throng, and weary hearts in our congregations were gladdened by the bright Christmas praises. It is a hopeful sign that our special music continues to maintain less of the element of elaborateness and more of the element of real worship each year.

In many of the churches a more or less direct reference was made to the death of Dwight L. Moody. It is generally felt that a great leader has gone from us. There is just a shade of uneasiness lest the many enterprises for good that Mr. Moody has been directing may suffer. As a rule, these are well manned, and the work will continue on the old lines. Of course, all will miss the inspiration of Mr. Moody's personality, but many of the workers are thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the man who has hitherto led them.

Many homes have been brightened by friendly gifts of Christmas cheer during the past week. This is good so far as it goes, but would it not be possible to follow up the gift with some friendly interest in those to whom they have been given? If but one home were permanently brightened, not by repeated gifts, but by friendly counsel, during the coming year, how much would be gained by it.

At the meeting of Presbytery on Tuesday next a call will be presented, addressed to the Rev. A. Mahaffy, of Milton, by the Fort Elgin congregation. Mr. Mahaffy has given no intimation of his intention, but the call is a very unanimous one. Should he accept, the Milton congregation will lose an excellent minister, and the Toronto Presbytery will lose a loyal member. His answer will be awaited with little anxiety.

It was natural that Christ as the Prince of Peace should be the subject of many of last Sabbath's sermons. Perhaps it was also to be expected that the war in South Africa should be used to illustrate the evils of strife, and, by contrast, the benefits of peace. It may have been a surprise to some of the congregations to hear Britain's position in this war so unreservedly endorsed by the messengers of peace, and the Boer position correspondingly condemned. As one read the extracts from sermons preached on Christmas Eve, it made most inharmonious Christmas reading.

In spite of the unpleasant weather there was a good attendance at Massey Hall on Sabbath afternoon last. The songs by the Whyte Brothers were greatly appreciated. Rev. A. C. Courtice, of the Christian Guardian, dealt effectively with the oft-repeated assertion that the Scriptures favor the traffic in strong drink. Referring to the three instances most frequently used—our Saviour making wine at the marriage feast, our Saviour using wine in the institution of the Lord's Supper, and Paul's advice to Timothy to use wine—Mr. Courtice admitted that the use of such wine as our Saviour made was a defensible action in connection with a marriage feast; that the use of wine such as our Saviour used in instituting the Lord's Supper was defensible when observing the Communion; and that the use of wine for medicinal purposes was permissible for one who had hitherto been a total abstainer. But an unbridgeable gulf lies between that position and the endorsement of the liquor traffic.

The college halls and class-rooms are again deserted, save for a few, who, for various reasons, have decided to spend Christmas in their "digs."

A good deal of sympathy is sometimes expended on these forlorn young men, who, on the whole, put in a pretty good time during the Christmas vacation.

On the 5th day of January, 1875, the Rev. Alex. Gilray began his ministry in College St. Church, Toronto. He was their first pastor, it was his first pastoral charge. It was but a little one then, even among those that have since grown great in the congregations of the city. It was then far out, on the outskirts of the city, which has since grown up to it and past it, with two other congregations now between it and the outskirts.

They too have grown, pastor and people together. The little one that numbered less than fifty all told has now 867 upon its roll, and the small roughest schoolroom has made way for a substantial brick church with seats for 1,200 and one of the model Sabbath school rooms of the city. And the pastor has grown. The quarter of a century of service has left its mark upon him. At times the Master, with whom he has walked, has spoken very plainly with His servant. As one who looks into the eyes of a

friend the minister of College St. has looked into the face of his Lord at times, and his ministry is richer, fuller, more fraught with the Divine message than ever before.

Mr. Gilray does not seek for the praise of man, and yet not reflecting man, who looks back through those 25 years, and estimates them at all fairly, can withhold his praise. He has done a magnificent work, and he will do better yet. He is a better general than ever before, and in the first quarter of 1900 can lead his people with more assured confidence. And we believe they will follow him to better things.

The minister of Ilmor St. spent a very happy hour on New Year's morning. He looked happy and with good reason. He had announced a brief service to be held on New Year's morning in the lecture room of the church. At 10 o'clock the hour appointed, the lecture room was full, and the doors of the side rooms were thrown open. It was an inspiration to a minister at the threshold of a new year, to find such a body of Christian people gathered in response to his call.

The service was simple, giving an impression of spontaneity that put everyone at ease. Prayers were offered by those in the audience, and they seemed to give voice to our need, and put our desire into form for us. The portion of scripture read contained the motto for the year—"With a perfect heart and a willing mind," and the brief addresses of the pastor centred about these two phrases. It was not a great address, the newspaper reporter would dismiss it with a line, but it was singularly helpful, and more than one will recall it often ere the year closes.

We read in the morning paper of another New Year service. It began at 11 o'clock on Sabbath night and continued till past midnight. A famous tenor from an American city had been secured for the occasion and the service was an enjoyable sensation, doubtless. But we had rather have the memory of the simple service where we found help.

In many of the Toronto churches the week of prayer is being specially observed. The meetings of the Evangelical Alliance will be attended, but in addition many will meet for special prayer and intercession on at least three of the evenings of the week. A spirit of earnestness and expectancy is everywhere noticeable, and there is also evident a tone of confidence when speaking of the expected blessing.

After the usual campaign of personal abuse and trickery the city has again chosen its Chief Magistrate and his Councilors. The annual election, with its attendant scenes, is a pitiable spectacle. No one pretends to believe that the man who occupies the Mayor's chair is chosen because he is the fittest man to direct the affairs of the city. He may be the fittest available, and even that is open to very grave questioning. Is it not possible to find a man who would command the confidence of all? Is it not time that our city, which has a name for right doing, should assert herself, and make her voice heard over the voice of the vociferating mob? Clean government is needed. It is within our reach. It is our own fault if we do not obtain it.

WESTERN ONTARIO.

Benton Presbyterians have raised \$410 towards the Century Fund.

Rev. Hugh Cowan, of Dawn, has accepted a call from the Shakespeare congregation.

The next regular meeting of the Chatham Presbytery will be held in Windsor, March 13 at 10 a.m.

The Knox Church choir, Galt, held its 23rd New Year's concert this year. The concert is invariably good.

The resignation of Rev. Alex. Leslie, of East Oxford and Blenheim Presbyterian churches, has been accepted.

The offerings at the Presbyterian anniversary services, Stayner, conducted by the Rev. Dr. McTavish, of Toronto, amounted to \$200.

Rev. J. S. Scott, of St. Andrew's Church, Brantford, spent New Year's Day in the hospitable precincts of Knox Church, Manse, Galt.

Rev. B. B. Williams, of Guelph, who is a preacher of more than ordinary ability, has been invited to occupy the pulpit of the Presbyterian Church, Chesley, for some time.

On Wednesday, Dec. 2), the East Oxford Sabbath School held a most successful and enjoyable Christmas entertainment, when the Christmas gifts were distributed among the children. At the close

of this part of the programme, the pastor, Rev. Alex. Leslie, who is about to leave his charge, was presented with a handsome fur coat and his wife with a pair of gauntlets. An address was read by Mr. Adam Armstrong, expressing the regret felt by the congregation at the resignation of Mr. Leslie.

The anniversary services of St. Andrew's Church, Hillsdale, were conducted on Dec. 21 by Rev. R. P. McKay, Foreign Missionary Secretary. The tea and concert given on Christmas night realized over \$75. The present church edifice was erected in 1893, shortly after the present pastor, Rev. J. B. Skene, entered on his work. The building cost \$5000 and it is expected that the whole debt will be wiped out by the close of the Century. A manse costing \$1,660 was also built, and is now free from debt.

A pleasant feature of church life in Knox congregation, Galt, is the annual reception in the lecture room on the afternoon of New Year's Day. The attendance on Monday last was large, the young people—as it should be—being distinctly in evidence. Much interest was evoked by the presence for an hour of the eight months old daughter of Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Knowles, the first child born in the Manse in the history of the congregation. It goes without saying that she was the centre of an admiring circle of well wishers, and behaved beautifully. The social was a great success and the ladies of Knox retained their well earned reputation as bountiful providers of choice viands.

The Thamesford congregation is still hearing candidates. This is a good charge. A modern looking, well built manse was recently erected at a cost of \$1000, so that the new minister can take possession of a comfortable home. The church, a solid brick edifice, is well situated on a commanding site, overlooking the town. A strong session is made up of the following elders: Jas. Patterson, Roderick Young, John Mackay, Alex. Mackay, Alex. Bain, John Mackay, Sr., and W. H. Sutherland. Mr. James Patterson is Chairman of the Board of Management, and with him are associated W. H. Sutherland, Geo. Smetzing, Alex. Ross, John Muir, Alex. Muir, Adam Gordon, William Sutherland, Duncan McMillan and Andrew Hogg. This charge has had a series of faithful ministers; and the pulpit is now vacant through the resignation of Rev. Dr. Smith, now minister of Knox Church, St. Catharines.

St. Andrew's Church, Strathroy, is undergoing extensive alterations and will be reopened on Dec. 14. The interior has been raised nearly three feet, making room for a large, well-lighted lecture hall with all the necessary rooms adjoining. The church has been re-seated; a gallery has been erected; the pulpit platform, with its neat reading desk, is modern, and proper provision has been made for the choir and organ, the last named being a pipe instrument fully suited to the requirements of the congregation. The whole interior of the church has been tastefully decorated, and electric lighting will be introduced. The total cost will amount to nearly \$6,500—a debt that will be reduced year by year until wiped out. The elders are Messrs. W. H. Murray, George Thompson, Jas. Walker, Wm. Ireland, Thos. Banks, J. W. Scott, Thos. Dunsmore, and L. W. Cadly. On Mr. Murray has devolved much of the work of overseeing the alterations in the church, and he has been unsparing of his time in this connection. The work, when completed, will be a lasting monument to his devotion to the interests of the church. It is but fair to add that members of the session generally have well seconded all of Mr. Murray's efforts.

EASTERN ONTARIO.

Rev. J. P. MacInnes has accepted a call to the large Presbyterian Church in Ripley.

The next meeting of the Presbytery of Lindsay will be held at Woodville on March 20, at 11 a. m.

The new Presbyterian Church at Burnstown, Renfrew county, will be opened on the 7th of January.

Rev. Orr Bennett, of Hawkesbury, lectured in Vankeek lately, for the W. F. M. S. His subject was "A trip through Georgia."

Rev. A. C. Reeves, of Lakefield, has received a call to Campbellford, to succeed Rev. Robert Laird, M. A., now pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Brockville.

Rev. Dr. Herridge, of St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa, has found it necessary on account of ill health, to give up his work for a time. At present he is in the Maritime Provinces.

Rev. A. S. Grant preached in St. Andrew's

The Inglenook

Serena's Little Girl.

BY ANNIE HAMILTON DONNELL.

Miss Annissa carefully folded up the last one, and added it to the little pile.

"There, that's the fourth one," she said complacently, "and one's just as neat looking as another. There isn't a mite of elance. The little dear will look nice as a pin in 'em all. I always did say, if I ever had a little girl, I'd dress her in nice, long-sleeved tiers."

A certain wistfulness had crept into Miss Annissa's gentle voice. A certain little vista of quiet, well-behaved little girls in long-sleeved "tiers" opened before her. They stood in an even row, ranged according to ages. They were the little girls Miss Annissa had never had. She saw them sometimes, and in her heart she mourned for them as mothers mourn lonelinessly over a little row of graves. But now the vision faded quickly. It was different now.

And I'd have her wear a little round comb to push her hair back, a red one. I always said that, too. I'm glad I made Maiah Nye hunt till she found one. She said they weren't worn now; well, I know somebody who'll wear one!"

She smiled happily, nodding her gray head to the Irish time of her thoughts. Miss Annissa had never been quite so happy in her life before. In the drawer where she laid away the pile of calico aprons was a little round red comb. She touched it once or twice awkwardly, with her finger-tips. "I'd rather her hair'd be curly," she murmured; "but I suppose it won't really make a mite of difference. I guess I can love Serena's little girl without any curls!"

Serena was Miss Annissa's cousin; and years ago, before the gap of time and distance opened between them, they had been a great deal to each other. Now, on the far side of the gap, Serena had died and bequeathed her little child to Miss Annissa. The legacy had come to her unexpectedly, a very little time ago. There had been just time to make the neat little calico "tiers."

"Bassettsville, O., 3:20 P. M.," the telegram had read (Miss Annissa had read the figures in dollars and cents, unconsciously). "The child will arrive on the fourteenth inst., via Coast Line."

That and the terse, formal letter that preceded it were all that Miss Annissa had to go by; the rest she had woven of her own fancy to suit herself.

"Lawyer's letters ain't real human, anyway," she thought. "You can't make much out of 'em on account of so many 'whereases' and 'aforesaid's.' I really do wish the Lord had spared Serena long enough to write about the little girl herself. I should have liked to call her by her name the first time I saw her."

In her heart—it was part of her woven fancy—she had named the child Serena, and had given her Serena's mild, blue eyes and fair, wavy hair. It made her feel a little acquainted already.

The "fourteenth instant" was to-day. Allowing fifteen minutes for Cornelius Quinn to stop and gossip at the postoffice, the stage would lumber up to the neat, little white house of Miss Annissa's at a quarter past five o'clock. It was five now. The supper was already set out on the kitchen table on the best blue and white china. Miss Annissa fluttered out frequently, and re-arranged the cups and plates with nervous fingers. Her ears were strained to hear the groan of Cornelius Quinn's wagon-wheels—hark!

"They're coming!" she gasped softly. It was

one of the few crises in Miss Annissa's placid life. She hurried to the door, and stood with her hands out, waiting.

"Whoa—back!" shouted Cornelius Quinn, loudly up the gravel path to Miss Annissa.

"I've come," he announced briefly.

He was little and stocky and freckled. It was not Serena's face that looked out from under his crop of red-brown hair. Serena's!—there was no part of stately, fair Serena in this little, homely boy! Miss Annissa gazed down at his brief, shabby little trousers in speechless horror. Her eyes refused to rise above them. She drew in her breath with a shivering sigh. This was Serena's little girl!

"I've come," repeated the child with diminished eagerness. In his soiled, weary little face was the first dull premonition of unwelcomeness. "But I—I reckon it's a mistake, ma'am," he went on fidgeting with his clumsy little shoes on the walk.

Miss Annissa's eyes left the shabby, abbreviated trousers, and descended to the heavy shoes. She groaned under her breath. "Yes," she said, "I guess it's a mistake." She was remembering the little long-sleeved tiers and the little round red comb with sudden, sharp pain. Serena's little girl would never wear them.

But she rallied under Cornelius Quinn's curious stare and even gave the boy a certain stilted welcome. It had to answer; the little fellow accepted it gratefully, and with a child's quick forgetfulness made himself at home.

Miss Annissa put away the dainty blue and white cups and plates, and called him to supper. She had taken her bitter disappointment with stoical resignation, but in her soul there was rebellion.

The days went on—enough of them to make a summer. Miss Annissa was gentle and kind to Serena's little boy, but she went about with cotton in her ears and vague unrest in her heart. The boy's noise fretted her; and his little, honest, homely face failed to appeal to her love. Even his love and devotion to her did not touch her. She mourned continually for Serena's little, gentle, well-behaved girl. It wore upon her strangely; and when she caught a sudden cold late in the fall, she succumbed to it weakly. It made terrible inroads upon her slender strength, and presently she was very sick indeed.

Maiah Nye shut up her little shop and came to nurse her. The little white house was full of the awe and hush of illness, and Serena's little boy stole about in his stocking feet, on tiptoe. He was very, very quiet. He pleaded with Maiah to be allowed to sit in the sick room, and many and many a time Miss Annissa awoke from a restless sleep to see him sitting there quietly, with his small brown hands folded. In the delusion of fever she took him for Serena's little girl, and babbled to him happily.

"I'm glad you've got here," she said. "Dear land knows I've been waiting long enough! There was a boy, I can't tell, maybe it was a dream,—but I thought he came instid of you, little Serena; He was a little mite of a homely thing. He wore such heavy shoes—I dreamed they made my head-ache, stomping round so, all day long. He couldn't help it, but I'm glad you've got here—dear land, how glad I am!"

She was very often delirious. One day she started up in bed excited, and pointed to the boy with her thin, hot forefinger.

"Where's your tier? Why don't you put your tier on that I made for you, little Serena? It's in the lower chest-drawer—and the red comb. I got 'em

all ready for you—why don't you put them on?"

The child slipped away out of the room. When he came back Miss Annissa was asleep. He came tripping clumsily over the folds of a long calico tier. It got in his way uncannily; its sleeves reached to his little cracked knuckles. A stiff ruff of red-brown hair made a halo around his face, pushed upright by a little round red comb. He slipped into his seat at the foot of the bed hurriedly. Maiah's face twitched with laughter in spite of herself, and a flush of embarrassment reddened the boy's forehead. But after that he wore the tier and the round comb always, even away from the bedroom. He was trying to get used to them. In his heart he had made the great sacrifice. "Dear, good Lord," he prayed at night, "I love her—she don't love me, but she's good to me. If you'll let her live, dear Lord, I'm willin' to wear the girl's things always. I'm willin' to, dear Lord. Please let Miss Annissa live!"

And Miss Annissa lived. Through a terrible day she struggled for her life, and at its end awoke, fragile and like a little child, to her first clear consciousness and to life. The boy was sitting at the foot of the bed. She lay and looked at him a very long time. Gradually the meaning of him in his little, crumpled tier and red-brown halo—and the wistful love in his plain little face—arrayed themselves as clear facts in her mind. She understood at last, and with the understanding was born her love for Serena's little boy. It swept over her in a warm, sweet wave. There was healing, there was strength in it. She called the child to her by and by.

"Dear boy!" she whispered weakly, and drew him down and kissed him.

"Now take them off. I want my boy again. I want just you," she said.—Christian Endeavor World.

The Worth of Christmas Service.

Christmas time is a wearing season, there is no denying the fact. It demands a greater outlay of time, money and patience than any other event of the year, and tired mothers, cousins and aunts sometimes ask in despair, Is it worth while? To such a question, born of the vexation of the hour, there can only be an affirmative reply, for those who try to make Christmas a happy period in prosaic year are working for the future as well as for the present.

The time soon draws near when children spring up, almost in a night, to manhood and womanhood, quickly scatter out from under the home roof, and happy are they if they carry with them the memories of a season full of unmixt pleasure. At no time does the mind revert to the past more surely than on a holiday occasion, and the life never grows so busy or the mind so absorbed that they cannot at times return to the happy scenes of long ago, and in fancy live them over again.

The plea is often urged as an excuse for not making a merry Christmas that the children have grown up, and there is no occasion for further merry-making; yet there are always other children who need to be made happy. Christmas is essentially a children's festival, because, to quote the words of one who did much to exalt the sentiment of Christmas giving, "It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty founder was a child Himself." Any work done for the little ones, whether they belong to the home circle, or for those who are too forlorn to have any circle, brings its own reward, and the one who seeks to make a bright spot in the lives of the humblest or the least, grows happy herself with that reflected happiness which is sometimes the best. The Presbyterian Banner.

The world began with a paradise, and ends with one. It began with one in a corner, and ends with one which will stretch from where the sun rises in the morning to where he ends on the rocky deep. It began with two tenants and ends with countless millions.—Rev. Dr. Watkinson.

Misty-mindedness.

"She is the dearest woman in the world," lamented her friend, "but she is so misty-minded!"

It was only too true. The woman in question was warm-hearted, charitable and well-meaning in all the relations of life, but she was a trial to all who knew her because of her ingrained habits of inexactness, of unpunctuality and of general vagueness of mind.

Misty-mindedness is the feminine counterpart of absent-mindedness. That masculine failing, however, is usually the accompaniment of genius. The man who, with his head in the clouds, listens with upturned face to the music of the spheres cannot be expected to remember to pay his butcher's bill or order the coal.

Pasteur at a dinner party dipped his cherries one by one into his glass of water and carefully wiped them, explaining that they were covered with microbes, and then with a fine unconsciousness drank off the glass of water.

A famous archbishop, also dining out, forgot that he was not at his own table, and remarked loudly to his wife, "This soup is again a failure, my dear."

The great theologian, Neander, would walk to his class room with a broom under his arm instead of an umbrella, or wander through the streets of Berlin unable to recall the situation or number of his own house. A United States Senator was observed not long ago, at a Presidential dinner, to pull from his pocket in place of his handkerchief a huge blue woolled sock and unconsciously wipe his heated brow.

Such absent-mindedness brings only an indulgent smile, but feminine misty-mindedness is another matter. This does not imply genius, only indefiniteness. Its possessor may, and indeed usually does, go through life in gentle unconsciousness, but her friends live in an atmosphere of exasperation.

There is more than one woman who habitually rustles down the church aisle just as the sermon begins and says smilingly after to her pastor: "You must excuse my being always late. You know in the church where I formerly attended the service began at eleven and it seems more natural to me to come at that hour than at half past ten."

The wife of one of our most distinguished novelists has a most hospitable heart and frequently invites her friends to dine informally, but she then forgets all about the matter. When they appear in her drawing room at the time named, she smilingly observes:

"Now did I ask you to dinner? Well, well, I'd quite forgotten it, but I'm delighted to see you. Just wait one moment while I put on my bonnet, and we will run around the corner to the restaurant and have a charming evening together."

A number of college girls became interested in settlement work in a city near by, and invited one hundred Jewish children to spend a day in the college grounds. A simple luncheon was prepared by the girls, consisting of milk and unlimited supplies of sandwiches. Unfortunately, the sandwiches were all made with ham, and a certain chill was thrown over the feast as one by one the conscientious but disappointed little Israelites opened them and laid aside the meat.

A young girl came to her aunt in despair, with a beautiful cloth suit covered with tarry oil. "Never mind," comfortingly observed the elderly and experienced matron, "vaseline will take it all out." The girl industriously rubbed the skirt well with the vaseline, but saw no improvement. In despair she called the aunt to look at the garment, now a mass of grease. "Mersey!" gasped her distressed relative. "Did I say vaseline? I meant gasoline."

Mrs. Deland tells of a woman who attempted to congratulate her on a recent book. "Oh, I do want to thank you for your stories! I have never read anything more delightful than your Old Chestnut Tales."

It is the misty-minded woman who keeps her appointments a day too late; who goes to the wrong

station to meet her friend arriving in an unknown city; who cannot understand how her bank account can possibly be overdrawn when she still has unused checks in her book. She never learns what is the trouble. Her gentle soul is perpetually being hurt by critical, impatient, even fault-finding words, uttered in moments of indignation by her nearest and dearest; she forgives them, for she never cherishes a feeling so definite as anger, but she painfully wonders why they were said, since she had intended to do just the right thing.

Several writers have sounded the note of warning. Dr. Johnston is quoted as having said, "If a boy says he looked out of this window when he looked out of that whip him." Kaskin has emphasized the necessity of training children in accuracy of observation and of speech. Emerson sums it up in his Essay on Punctuation: "The discomfort of unpunctuality, of confusion of thought, of inattention to the wants of to-morrow, is of no nation. Scatter-brained and afternoon men spoil much more than their own affair in spoiling the temper of those who deal with them."

After all it is a matter of definiteness. Exact knowledge of the things of every day life, of money, of time, of engagements, is what is needed. It would seem easy enough for one to be practical, to be punctual, to be accurate, but it is not easy. Doubtless, to her own dismay and her neighbors' exasperation, the misty-minded women will always be with us, and will continue to wander vaguely, smilingly, exasperatingly through life. The Congregationalist.

For Dominion Presbyterian.

December Snowdrops.

BY H.L.G.

Why, dear little snowdrops, you're made a mistake,

In thinking the beautiful spring time is here;
'Tis only December! Why did you awake
And peep through the ground at the close of the year?

Pull down your white caps and fall gently asleep,
Lest not to the soft, siren breezes that play,
They'll only deceive you and leave you to weep,
'Tis winter that's coming, so hide you away.

And wait till the snow and the frost winds are past,
Nor murmur because you must patiently rest,
'Tis better than perishing out in the blast,
God's time, little snowdrops, is always the best.

Tobogganing with an Elephant.

Elephants are so clever, and so often the winners in an encounter with men, that it is a pleasure to copy a story from Chums concerning one that was fairly outwitted. This was an African elephant—taller, lighter and nimbler than the Asiatic. Like most elephants when roused, he was equal to any gymnastic feat. This is the story:

An English sportsman, "out after elephants," had wounded a magnificent specimen. Unfortunately for him the wound was slight and the animal, greatly infuriated, turned and charged him.

It was a terrifying sight. With its enormous ears spread out like sails, and emitting shrill notes of rage, the monster came thundering over the ground like a runaway locomotive. The hunter fired another shot, but missed; his nerve was shaken, and throwing down his rifle he sought safety in flight.

Near at hand was a steep hill, and to this he directed his steps, for being but slightly acquainted with the climbing powers of the elephant, he thought his pursuer might be baffled by the steepness of the ascent. It was a terrible disappointment to find that the elephant could climb a hill as quickly as he could, good runner as he was.

He would have been overtaken if he had not thought of a really ingenious expedient. He knew that elephants never run, or even walk, down a steep incline, but always crouch, gathering their feet together, lean well back and slide down. Just as the ferocious animal had got within a few yards of

him, therefore, the wily hunter suddenly doubled and ran down the hill again.

Quick as a flash the elephant turned, gathered itself together, and, trumpeting with baffled rage, slid down after its victim. The hunter had just time to spring out of the way as the great beast came tobogganing after him, smashing the trees and shrubs, and carrying everything before it like an avalanche.

Then once more the hunter dashed to the top of the hill, while the elephant, unable to stop itself, went careering down to the very foot, where, apparently understanding that it had been outwitted, and feeling very sore and disappointed, it rose to its full height and walked wearily back to its native woods.

People Who Live in Nests.

Travellers who have returned from the heart of Africa and the Australian continents, tell wonderful stories of nest-building people who inhabit the wilds of those countries.

In the bushmen of Australia, we find, perhaps, the lowest order of men that are known. They are so primitive that they do not know enough to build even the simplest forms of huts for shelter.

The nearest they could approach to it is to gather a lot of twigs and grass, and, taking them into a jungle, they built a nest for a home, much as does a bird. The nest is usually built large enough for a family, and if the latter be very numerous, then the nests are of a very large size.

Into this place they all turn and snuggle and curl up together like so many kittens. Sometimes the foliage will grow together and form a sort of natural covering, but there is never any attempt at constructing a protection from the rain storms, and it is a marvel how they endure them.

When there is a particularly good piece of jungle for home sites, it will be quickly appropriated for the purpose, and sometimes hundreds of these nests will be found together in the bush, as it is called.

But though the bushmen of the Australian colonies are the very lowest in the scale of ignorance, they possess a rare instinct that equals that of many animals, and is in its way as wonderful as man's reason.

It is almost impossible for them to be lost. Even if they be led away from their home blindfolded for miles, when released they will unerringly turn to the right direction, and though these are very similar, they never make a mistake.—Christian Observer.

Well Done, But Not Worth Doing.

A Norwegian named Bella Kutridge has just accomplished a difficult task, to which he has dedicated four years of his life. Four years ago, when he was eighty-one, and in order to find an occupation at once intelligent and useful for his leisure time, he set to work to write as many words on a postal card as it would hold. He made it a point not to use a magnifying glass or spectacles, but to use common pens and to write plain. He wrote one thousand words easily, and by interlinations the number of words increased to three thousand, and afterward to six thousand. At the end of the third year, by writing smaller, he managed to get twenty thousand words on the post card. Then he resolved even to surpass this feat. Having read a novel, he found that it contained forty-six thousand words. The indefatigable old gentleman thereupon determined to copy it on a post card. He worked at his task three months and attained his object. He is now eighty-five years of age, and he thanks Providence for having allowed him to finish his task. He can sleep in peace; his work in this world is finished.—Independence Belge.

"Among so many, can He care?
Can special love be everywhere?
I asked; my soul bethought of this,
In just that very place of His
Where He hath put and keepeth you,
God hath no other thing to do!"

—Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney.

World of Missions.

Trusting Him.

I cannot always see the way that leads
To heights above ;
I sometimes quite forget He leads me on
With hand of love ;
But yet I know the path must lead me to
Emmanuel's land,
And when I reach life's summit I shall know
And understand.

I cannot always trace the onward course
My ship must take ;
But, looking backward, I behold afar
Its shining wake
Illumined with God's light of love, and so
I onward go,
In perfect trust, that He who holds the helm
The course must know.

I cannot always see the plan on which
He builds my life,
For oft the sound of hammers, blow on blow,
The noise of strife,
Confuse me till I quite forget He knows
And oversees,
And that in all details with His good plan
My life agrees.

I cannot always know and understand
The Master's rule ;
I cannot always do the tasks He gives
In life's hard school ;
But I am learning with His help to solve
Them one by one,
And when I cannot understand, to say
" Thy will be done "

—World-Wide Mission.

Religious Awakening in France.

In a district in South Central France not far from Lyons, where for years, perhaps for centuries, there has not been one Protestant Christian, there has recently come tidings of a remarkable movement towards Protestantism. A year ago an evangelist was sent to this Catholic stronghold, namely, to the village of Le Mottel, four miles from Chavagnac Lafayette. Now he has gathered together a Protestant congregation of over a hundred and fifty persons. Besides being asked to remain among the people as their pastor, he has been sought by the people of twenty-two neighboring villages to come and tell them the story of the Gospel. In the manufacturing town Langeac, near by, the same evangelist has built up a church of about two hundred members, many of whom were formerly atheistic Socialists. It is believed that the same startling success may attend Protestant ministrations in other parts of France which have hitherto known only the traditional rebound from superstition to atheism. The more rational reaction from ecclesiastical tyranny and ceremonialism, the turning to Protestantism, not atheism, is seen in the fact that the reformed churches of France are quite unable to supply pastors for all the demands now being made upon them. We should aid the Protestants of France, not only to give the Gospel to their countrymen, but also to establish churches with resident pastors, thus definitely occupying that place which only organized Christianity can satisfactorily fill.—The Missionary Review.

The Aggressions of Islam in India.

There are few regions in India where Christian missions have been carried on more vigorously, or, on the whole, more successfully, than Tinneveli, and yet it is there that Mohammedanism has had recently its most signal triumphs. Six hundred Hindus in one village were converted to Islamism in one day, and the example thus set was quickly followed in other places. What has set this current flowing? A very curious influence. It is said that the Shanars, a very low caste, are very numerous in Tinneveli, and have been of late extremely prosperous. This prosperity has made them ambitious,

Many of them built fine houses for themselves and sought to make out that they had a right to worship in temples, from which they had hitherto been excluded. The result was a riot, in which they were badly treated by their fellow religionists of a higher caste and this has driven them to seek relief in a different faith altogether. "In accepting Islam the Shanars enter at once into the fellowship of the proudest and most united of the 'castes' of India—a corporation which not only never fails to defend its converts, but never dreams of giving them an inferior place."—Free Church Monthly.

Chinese Emigration.

The countries about the China Sea are full of Chinese. By their superior energy and business ability they have absorbed the trade of these lands, and pushed into the background the indolent and shiftless people of these regions. There are some 2,700,000 of Chinese in Siam out of a total population of 8,000,000. In Bangkok, the capital of that kingdom, the Chinese number 300,000 in a population of 500,000. In Singapore, that flourishing British colony in the Straits of Malacca, two-thirds of the real estate is owned by the Chinese, and they

occupy positions of influence and honor, some of them being members of the legislative council. Most of the coasting trade on the Malayan peninsula is in the hands of the Chinese, they are scattered in all the settlements and plantations on the seaboard. Fifty-five thousand Chinese arrived in Singapore from China in one-quarter three months. From this center they are distributed to the Dutch and native territories. In the city of Manila, on the Luzon, there are 20,000 of them. Most of the artisans in Java are Chinese. The Chinese form an important part of the population of the British settlement of North Borneo. They are found in great numbers in Rangoon and in other coast towns of Burma. In Saigon and the ports of French Cochinchina, most of the trade is carried on by Chinese merchants.—Baptist Missionary Magazine.

How can the sense that the living God is near to our life, that He is interested in it and willing to help it, survive in us, if our life be full of petty things? Absorption in trifles, attention only to the meaner aspects of life, is killing by aggressive unbelief.—George Adam Smith.



How to be Healthy In Winter.

Winter is a trying time for most people—especially so for delicate ones. Colds, la grippe and pneumonia find them easy victims.

Do you catch cold easily? It shows that your system is not in a condition to resist disease. You will be fortunate if you escape pneumonia.

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DIVIDEND No. 81.

Notice is hereby given that a dividend at the rate of 6 per cent per annum upon the capital stock of the company, has been declared for the half year ending December 31, 1899, payable on and after the 2nd day of January, 1900, at the office of the company, corner of Victoria and Adelaide streets, Toronto.

The Transfer books will be closed from the 16th to the 31st of December, both days inclusive.

By order of the Board.

S. C. WOOD,

Managing Director.

Toronto, Dec. 4, 1899.

Health and Home.

Stewed Cabbage.—Shred a small head of cabbage, and stew it until tender in just enough water to keep it from burning, having it closely covered to keep it in the steam. When it is done add salt, pepper, butter and a cupful of cream; let it come to a boil and serve hot.

Chicken Salad.—Chop moderately fine one chicken cooked tender, the whites of twelve hard-boiled eggs, and three medium-sized pickled cucumbers; mash the yolks fine, add two tablespoonfuls of melted butter, one teaspoonful of mustard, salt and pepper, and one-half cupful of cider vinegar. This may be mixed the day before using.

Pumpkin Pie.—To secure the necessary dryness, the pumpkin for pies should be peeled and steamed until tender. For a single pie take a cupful and a half of steamed pumpkin sifted through a sieve, one cup of boiling milk, half a cupful of sugar, one egg beaten to a foam, half a teaspoonful of salt, and a fourth of a teaspoonful of cinnamon. Line deep plates with thin pastry, fill with the custard, and bake half an hour, or until the pie swells in the center and is brown.

Frothed Chocolate.—Scald one pint of milk in the double boiler; dissolve one level teaspoonful of cornstarch in a little cold milk, add it to the scalded milk and cook for ten minutes, stirring occasionally. Scrape or grate four squares of bitter chocolate, add two tablespoonfuls of sugar and two tablespoonfuls of water and set at the side of the fire here it will slowly melt. When quite dissolved and glossy add gradually one pint of boiling water, stir over the fire for two minutes and add to the milk. Cook in the double boiler for five minutes, then while still over the fire, beat vigorously with an egg beater for five minutes. Send at once to the table and serve with a tablespoonful of whipped cream in each cup.

Cleanomania.

Don't be to clean! Be temperate in all things. Mind that your zeal for keeping things tidy—exemplary enough in moderation—doesn't develop into fanaticism.

The over-ordely woman makes life a martyrdom to her household. She wonders, for instance, how a girl so nice as you can be so heedless about the shades. If there's any one thing she does stickle for, it is shades on a level! And she'll proceed conscientiously to exclude your pet path of sunshine, or the expanse of view you love better than all the level shades in the world, by drawing the blind down on a mathematical line with all its fellows.

For her there is nothing too sacred to be interrupted by a sudden onslaught upon an accidental fly. Excuse her, please, for breaking in; but flies are one thing impossible to tolerate. Pardon her, as she darts towards an invisible snudge or film of dust somewhere; some people never seem to see such things, but for herself, well—then a complacent sigh.

In bad weather the boys may not bring their visitors indoors. Aren't there the playgrounds and the barn? And isn't it her duty to teach them neatness?

"Oh, Bobby, how I wish I had a nice dirty mother like yours," one little, restricted chap was overheard to exclaim wistfully, to a more fortunate companion.

Bobby, proudly accepting the impeachment, returned with superiority, "I guess you do, Jack. I wouldn't swap mothers for a farm. My mother's too busy being comfortable and good and jolly to think so much about 'clean' like yours. My! won't you be glad when you are big an' can be all the dirty you want!" Which carries a moral to "over-particular" mammas.

Cleanliness is a good thing, an estimable thing, but it isn't the whole of life. Remember that "The body is more than meat, and the body than raiment," and that the hygiene of minds and souls is quite as important as the hygiene of material things.—*An Observer.*

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