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# HOME AND SCHOOL

Do unto others  
As ye would  
that they  
should  
do unto  
you.

RULW. SMITH - CO. TORONTO.

Vol. V.]

TORONTO, DECEMBER 17, 1887.

[No. 26.]



THE CHRISTMAS BELLS.

### The Christmas Bells.

I HEARD the bells on Christmas-day  
Their old familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet  
The words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come  
The bellies of all Christendom  
Had rolled along  
The unbroken song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till ringing, singing on its way,  
The world revolved from night to day,  
A voice, a chime,  
A chant sublime  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed throat,  
The cannon thundered from the moat,  
And with the sound  
The carols drowned  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent  
The hearth-stones of a continent,  
And made forlorn  
The households born  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bent my head;  
"There is no peace on earth," I said;  
"For hate is strong  
And mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
"God is not dead; nor doth he sleep!  
The wrong shall fail,  
The right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good-will to men!"  
—Longfellow.

### Santa Claus.

ST NICHOLAS is the patron saint of children, and on the continent of Europe, the eve of his day (December 6) is always a very festive occasion. The children look forward to it with great eagerness, and no child thinks of going to bed on that night without hanging up a stocking at its bed-head for the gifts—which the saint lavishes with a bountiful hand. According to the older custom, in the smaller villages, the presents intended for the children were all sent to one person, who, in high buskins, a white robe, mask, and an enormous wig, becoming the bugbear of all the children, and known as Knecht Rupert (Servant Rupert), goes from house to house. He is received by the parents with great pomp and reverence, calls for the children, and bestows the intended gifts upon them according to the character which he hears from the parents after severe inquiries. Rupert is the servant of St. Nicholas, and sometimes only accompanies the saint, who himself bestows the presents. The gifts having been bestowed, Nicholas orders Rupert to put the children who have been naughty into his great bag, and carry them off for punishment. The shrieks and terror thus caused have created much misery among the children; and in Munich and some other places the authorities have very properly made such tragedies illegal.

In this country we have transplanted this custom to Christmas eve. The name of St. Nicholas has been corrupted into Santa Claus, who is also called Krish Kinkle, or more com-

monly Kris Kingle. This latter is a corruption of Christ Kindlein (literally, Christ infant), and is supposed to be derived from the fact that a representation of the infant Saviour in the manger formed part of the decorations prepared for the children at Christmas. Rupert is transformed into Pelsnichol (Nicholas with the fur) in allusion to his dress of skins.

### The Zulu Chief.

#### A CONTRAST.

THE Zulus, or the inhabitants of Zululand, a large province in South Eastern Africa, are a fierce and savage people. In January, 1879, war between Cetowayo, the Zulu King, and the English Government commenced, and continued until Cetowayo, was made a prisoner and sent to England.

It was during this war also that the Prince Imperial, son of the late Emperor Louis Napoleon and the Empress Eugenie, was surprised and killed by the Zulus. You will remember it, and the grief of his widowed mother at the death of her only son.

The houses of the Zulus are shaped like bee hives, covered with thatch, with an opening on one side about two feet high, which answers the purpose of door, windows, and chimney, and no floor but the cold, damp earth.

The kraals, or villages, consist of a number of these huts, built in a circle, with the open space in the centre for cattle.

Near one of these Zulu kraals lived an English missionary, Rev. John Allsopp, who was in the habit of preaching to and teaching the people of the village, as well as those in the country about it.

At one time the principal chief of the tribe in which he lived sickened and died. The custom there is that, when any great man dies, a number of men and women, generally slaves, are buried alive or killed, for it is believed that their spirits accompany him to the other world, to wait upon him. So, when a messenger came early to tell Mr. Allsopp that the chief had died, he felt very sad, for he knew what it might prove to many; and he knew also how careful the Zulus were to follow the customs of their ancestors. But he mounted his horse and rode to the kraal, to see the young chief whose father had just died; and on his way he passed several hills, on which he saw a number of people sitting in great terror, fearing lest they were to be killed or buried alive at this time. It was a pitiful sight!

When Mr. Allsopp reached the kraal, the young chief took him to see his father, and there the dead man was, sitting, not lying, with his blanket thrown over him.

He went back into the open space in the centre, and, as he and the young man stood together, with clasped hands and tears in their eyes, the latter said:

"My father is dead. Who will guide me and tell me what I shall do?"

Mr. Allsopp said to him:

"My friend, you have heard the Gospel, and know your duty. Shall the news go throughout South Africa and to Christian nations that you will shed the blood of your people? Or, that you are a man of mercy, and will show your power to do what is right? Give me your word."

As the good missionary said this, the prayer went silently up from his heart to the God who always hears us, that he would incline this young man to save the lives of the poor people in his power. You have read the beautiful Bible story of the Prophet Nehemiah, who was cup bearer to King Artaxerxes, in the royal palace of Shushan in Persia. How he prayed to the King of Kings in his heart, as he stood in the presence of his master, the King of Persia, and presented his request to return to Jerusalem to rebuild it; and how quickly the answer came!

So it was in this case. Mr. Allsopp's prayer was answered, for the chief looked steadily in his face and said:

"Umfundisi" (or missionary), "not a man shall die."

The missionary took him by the hand again, and answered:

"I believe you. The chief has spoken. Not a man shall die. Farewell."

"Doubt me not," he replied; "not a man shall die."

And he was true to his word, for after Mr. Allsopp left him he sent for the men who had been selected to die, and who would have been slain in a few minutes, and said to them:

"You know that the old councillors and the witch doctors would have you die; but I say, No. Go and live upon such a hill; there you will be safe, and nobody shall harm you."

And so it was. It was a brave act for the young chief, for it was different from all the customs of the Zulus, and no omission of this kind had ever taken place before.

This shows also how the love of Jesus will soften the wildest and most savage, making them gentle and courteous.

Let us do all we can to send them the Bible.—Mrs. E. S. West.

### How to Interest People in Missions.

THE Rev. F. J. Stanley, writing from Leadville, Colorado, says: "I interest my people thus: I make large maps on heavy paper, 6ft. by 8ft., with a heavy carpenter's pencil. Then fill the black-board full of telling figures; fill myself full of telling facts; and then, with pointer in hand, pour forth mission intelligence for an hour. The result is, our large auditorium, holding several hundred, is filled on the last Wednesday evening of the month, and I am more than repaid when people tell me they never knew what missions were before, and they

are so interested that they wish I would lecture longer than an hour, and oftener than once a month. The intelligence produces Christian liberality. The fact is, we pastors are more to blame than the people. We do not interest ourselves or them in this work; hence the sadly barren results."

### Giving in 1888.

READER, your giving is what we are thinking of, and ours no less. Now is the time to prayerfully settle, the Lord helping, what it shall be for the year we have lived to begin, and may not live to end. If this year is to be the best for the world thus far, since the Lord ascended, one element going into that result will be the generous gifts of the Lord's people. The last year witnessed the withdrawal of many generous hands from the Master's work on earth, because he took to himself his own. Many generous legacies were paid into the treasury of the Lord. Many noble workers finished their course.

Were it not that he, whose is the kingdom, constantly renews the ranks and fills the vacant place, there would be disaster following swiftly upon disaster, as the years go by. He may be calling you to step into some one of these places of large and grave responsibility,—e.g., to give as Mr. Dodge used to give. There is somebody that can, and doubtless ought so to do. But for us all, be our share little or great, that we do according to the ability that God giveth, is vital to us and to his cause.

That is a beautiful principle we have seen emphasized somewhere, "When the Lord gives we give." That is well as to the time when. Then, we have it in hand; if we wait till to-morrow it may be spent. Then, the heart is duly affected with gratitude; to-morrow it may not be so susceptible to yesterday's benefits. Waiting till to-morrow to say what shall be done with to-day's gifts gives opportunity for selfishness to bestir itself and allure to some needless indulgence or some ambitious investment. "When the Lord gives we give." If we can also say, "As the Lord gives we give," the due measure is reached; as the apostle puts it, "As the Lord hath prospered." And will we do that, with his help, this year? Have we formed the purpose, and will we see to the performance with conscientious fidelity?

Such an attitude on the part of every disciple would put funds enough at the disposal of the Lord's work at home and abroad. There would be more large givers, and a great many more givers of sums little and great. And this is worth striving for, if we are ambitious, for Christ's sake, to make 1888 the red letter year of the nineteenth century thus far. Settle it for yourself, and then get one new giver to join you.

## The Nativity: Christmas Hymn.

NIGHT of wonder, night of glory;  
Night all solemn and serene,  
Night of old prophetic story,  
Such as time had never seen;  
Sweetest darkness, softest blue,  
That these fair skies over know.

Night of beauty, night of gladness:  
Night of nights—of nights the best,  
Not a cloud to speak of sadness,  
Not a star but sings of rest:  
Holy midnight, beaming peace,  
Never shall thy radiance cease.

Happy city, dearest, fairest,  
Blessed, blessed Bethlehem!  
Least, yet greatest, noblest, rarest,  
Judah's over sparkling gem;  
Out of thee there comes the light  
That dispelleth all our night.

Now thy King to thee descendeth,  
Borne upon a woman's knee;  
To thy gates his step he bendeth,  
To the manger cometh he;  
David's Lord and David's Son,  
This his cradle, this his throne.

He the lowliest of the lowly,  
To our sinful world has come;  
He, the holiest of the holy,  
Cannot find a human home.  
All for us he yonder lies,  
All for us he lives and dies.

Babe of weakness, child of glory,  
At thy cradle thus we bow;  
Poor and sad thy earthly story,  
Yet the King of Glory thou;  
By all heaven and earth adored,  
David's Son and David's Lord.

Light of life, thou livest yonder,  
Shining in thy heavenly love,  
Naught from thee our souls shall sunder,  
Naught from us shall thee remove.  
Take these hearts and let them be  
Throne and cradle both to thee!

—Horatius Bonar, D.D.

## Christmas in Germany.

The ideal Christmas is in Germany. All classes, the old and the young, Emperor and peasant alike, enjoy the festival. Yet it is distinctively the day of the children, and as such has been celebrated by Germany's greatest bards, from Klopstock to Otto Rognetto; and Goethe, Schiller, and even such a grim cynic as Heine, have enshrined the day in undying verse. The German idea of the day, too, is one of sacred sentiment. The lesson taught to the young is, that the offerings of the Christmas-tree are from the Saviour, testifying his love for little children.

The Weihnacht man (Christmas man), is supposed to distribute his favours to the good children; but so impartial is he in apportioning his gifts, that all children are good. Thus the religious instinct is cultivated in a most beautiful and telling way, and the anniversary is indeed a happy one for the children of Germany, where the Christmas-tree had its birth, and where all the delightful festivities of Christmas, as known in England and Canada first took root.

As it is a boast of the Jews that they founded the family, so it may be a proud one of the Germans that they have given to children a day in the year, the approach of which they always eagerly await.

Many tender and touching stories of this Saxon outgrowth are told in many forms of German and Norse literature, to the delight of the young; but, perhaps, Hans Andersen has done more to hit the children's fancy in this regard than any author of our time. There is also a beautiful poem by Hebel, "Christ Boun," which celebrates the ceremonies on Christmas-eve, and which gives an adequate idea of that sentimental side of the German nature which shines so resplendently in the poetry, painting, and music of the Fatherland.

## A Visit to a Japanese Temple.

BY REV. W. C. KITCHIN.

WHAT Mecca is to the Mohammedan world, Asakusa is to the Japanese; what St. Peter's is to Rome, the Temple of Kuanon is to Asakusa. He who has not seen the shrine of the "Thousand-armed Goddess of Mercy," has not beheld the cultus of the most popular deity in the Japanese pantheon. Asakusa, once a distinct village, later a suburb, and now a district of Tokio, is classic ground. Here, comprised within a surprisingly small area, are to be found illustrations of all that is pious in the eyes of paganism, and all that is revolting to natural morality. In a word, Japan in miniature can here be studied. Here is the most famous temple in the empire, thronged from dawn till dark with the devotees of a false faith. Close by, places of pleasure and haunts of sin abound. Right at hand are the execution grounds, red with the blood of countless criminals. In this terrible region are laid the plots of many native poems and novels. More visited than any other locality in Tokio, perhaps in all Japan, its character is fittingly described by Bishop Wiley: "Here have been murders, suicides, revenges, debaucheries, etc., enough to curse the whole empire."

Shortly after my arrival in Japan, I visited, in company with a number of friends, this celebrated centre of worship. Through three miles of dirty streets, lined on either side with open shops and dingy wood-coloured and weather-beaten fronts, we rolled in our jinrikishas, drawn by fleet-footed coolies. Alighting at the outer gateway of the grand entrance to the temple, we walked along a broad stone paved avenue, through an inner gate and up to the huge temple, with its lofty front and imposing roof, sweeping upward from the caves in broad parabolic curves. "Ancient, holy and dirty," is the usual verdict passed by tourists upon this venerable sanctuary; and I saw no reason why I should differ from the majority. On both sides of the avenue above mentioned are ranged hundreds of booths, where is offered for sale every toy the imagination of babyhood ever conceived of. Pleasure and piety in Japan go hand in hand. Religion and recreation are twin sisters; and in these latter days to visit

a temple is synonymous with going on a pleasure excursion, and at Asakusa every day is held in high festival. Around the temple, beautifully adorned with trees and flowers, are the public gardens, where the worshipper, turning from the altar of great Kuanon, can indulge in any pastime, "wise or otherwise," good, bad or indifferent, to which his inclination may draw him.

Coming, going, meeting, crossing each other's paths, surging backward and forward, swaying this way and that, this living torrent of heathenism in motion at early morn and ceasing only with the daylight, rolls on and on day after day, week after week, through months and years unceasingly. Turn now from the thronging multitudes without to the temple's idols and worshippers within. At the head of the broad flight of stone steps leading into the temple courts, on either side of the entrance, stand two hideous figures, mammoth-sized and fierce featured, representing the male and female principles in the Chinese philosophy; for the goddess of mercy herself is an imported deity, having been introduced into Japan some thousand years ago by the Chinese. In a stall in the temple are kept the Albino ponies, sacred to the divinity, and numerous figures of gods and demigods are ranged throughout the temple; conspicuously among these the statue of one of Buddha's disciples, worshipped here as the god of healing, and whose nose and hand are entirely rubbed off from the pressure of suffering hands through scores, and doubtless hundreds, of years. The main altar is inclosed behind a stout wire screen, before which stands a huge cotter, to receive the offerings of the faithful, and no Japanese worships until he has thrown in his mite. Pay, pray, play, is paganism's programme for its people.

In the courts of this heathen temple what a babel of sounds! What grotesque sights! Clouds of pigeons, whose homes are in the upper portion of the temple, even over the sacred altars, sweep down on whirring wings to pick up a handful of rice flung to them as a "heave-offering" by some pious hand. People of all ages, prostrate or kneeling in their worship; the murmuring of prayer, the clashing of gong and drum, the loud, shrill chanting of the priests, the tinkling of bells, the cooing of doves; gay laughter from the young and hilarious, sighs and sobs, mingling with the rush and roar of the multitude, ever advancing and always receding—the whole scene makes, from its very weirdness, a profound impression upon a Christian missionary who for the first time sees it. Yet even in the very centre of Japanese paganism, appears a ray of hope. The most popular temple is dedicated to a goddess of mercy, and close by her altar stands the god of healing. Do we not perceive in this fact the evidence of a hungering and thirsting upon the part of this people for more than human sympathy, more than human compas-

sion? And may we not hope that when the loving character of our Christ becomes more fully known to them, they will turn with gladness from their idols to fall at the feet of the Great Physician and Shepherd of his people?

## A Christmas Mission.

SUCH a stormy Christmas morning as it was! The snow lay in great drifts along the village streets, and was still falling—the white flakes whirling and flying until they almost blinded one. God help the poor on such a day!

Margaret was very happy that Christmas morning, in spite of the storm without, for everything within her home was so cosy and beautiful and loving; so many gifts had been showered upon her that she scarcely knew whom to thank first.

"I have too much," she said; "everybody is too good to me," and the blue eyes glistened with tears.

She was just going to breakfast when she overheard the servants talking of a poor woman, who had been found the night before, in a miserable shanty, without food or fire. Immediately Margaret must know where to find her. They told her as well as they could. Before they knew what she was about, she had a basketful of nourishing food and dainties packed, and in a few moments was prepared to go out in the storm.

"Miss Margaret, it is not fit for you to be going out in this storm," said Ellen, the cook; "you will get your death."

"I guess not, Ellen," said Margaret, laughing rather soberly. "If some people can stand this weather without food and fire, I certainly can in my comfortable clothing."

"But you have not had your own breakfast."

"Do you think that I could enjoy it while I knew that some one was starving? Why, Ellen, every mouthful would choke me."

She soon found the poor creature she was seeking, to whom she seemed an angel as she entered the door and came to the wretched pallet upon which she lay. And so she was an angel—one of God's "messengers" sent to cheer and comfort one of his weary children.

Margaret soon found a neighbour to build a warm fire, and make things as comfortable as possible under the circumstances, while she herself saw that the poor woman ate a good breakfast.

She then left her, promising to come again soon. She wondered why it was that the way home seemed so short and the air so much warmer. Was it not because she had received in her heart the blessing of him who said: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me?"

Will you not make some one happy this Christmas that you too may receive the blessing of the Christ-child?

### Christmas All the Year.

BROWNTIRASHIER.

"CHRISTMAS comes but once a year"—  
So I've heard the children say,  
But methinks that life to me  
Is one endless Christmas day.  
With each day new joys are born—  
With each hour new blessings given,  
Jesus to my heart each day,  
Born anew, comes down from heaven.

Christmas, when the flowers of spring  
Breathe their sweetness all around;  
Christmas, when the autumn leaves,  
Brown and golden, strew the ground;  
Christmas in the summer bright;  
Christmas in the winter drear:—  
In the heart that loves the Lord  
There is Christmas all the year.

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## Home and School

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

TORONTO, DECEMBER 17, 1887.

**\$250,000**  
**FOR MISSIONS**  
**FOR THE YEAR 1887.**

### Christmas-Day.

THE word Christmas is taken from two words—*Christ* and *mass*—and is named in honour of him who was born on Christmas-day. Mass is the name given to the communion service by the Roman Catholic Church.

The time of the Christmas festival was not always on the 25th of December. It was at first the most movable of the Christian festive days. It was celebrated by different Churches in different months; some in May, some in April, and others in January. It is said—but there is no certainty about it—that Pope Telesphorus, who died A.D. 138, instituted or began it. The first certain traces of it are found in the reign of the Emperor Commodus, from A.D. 180 to 192. The time was not fixed until in the fourth century, when St. Cyril of Jerusalem obtained from Pope Julius I. an order to inquire into the time of Christ's birth. Although there could be found no positive evidence that the day we keep was the true birthday of Christ,

yet there was an agreement by all to keep it on that day. Since that time Christmas has always come on the 25th of December.

The celebration of such a day ought to be joyous, and blessed with good cheer. The first Christmas-day was begun with such carols as no singers on earth can render. The choir consisted of a multitude of the heavenly host, who had been members of the heavenly choir at least 4,000 years. What wonderful music they made, and what a wonderful song they sang!

"Glory to God in the highest,  
And on earth peace among men,  
in whom he is well pleased."

The reason given for this glorious caroling was announced by an angel to the shepherds on the plains of Judea, who were frightened at his appearance. This is what he said to them:—

"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Let us take up that carol and the joyful tidings with rejoicing. Let us sing them and tell them to all whom we can reach by song, or speech, or gifts.

The best way to have a merry Christmas is to be glad in the Lord. The only way to be glad in the Lord is to make room in our hearts for Jesus. He is waiting patiently. Let us sing in all sincerity:

"Oh, come to my heart, Lord Jesus,  
There is room in my heart for thee."  
—S. S. Messenger.

### Special Christmas Numbers.

THE Christmas and New Year's Numbers of HOME AND SCHOOL and *Pleasant Hours* will be full of Christmas pictures, poems, and stories. Every scholar in our schools should have a copy. They will be sold at the rate of \$1.00 per one hundred, post free to any address.

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THE Buffalo *Christian Advocate* says of a recent number of the *Canadian Methodist Magazine*: "This is the strongest and brightest number we



"ON EARTH—PEACE!"

have seen of this excellent magazine. We have no magazine on this side that takes its place, and we believe that if its merits were more fully known in this country, it would receive a very generous patronage. It is the best magazine for a Christian family of which we have any knowledge." Toronto, Ont. \$2.00 a year.

### Christmas-Trees.

VARIOUS suggestions have been made as to the origin of the Christmas-tree. One writer suggests its being traceable to the ancient Egyptians and their palm trees, which produces a branch every month, and it is therefore held to be emblematical of the year. Another thinks it is derived from the Buddhists; as it is an old Buddhist custom, still observed in Asia, for people at certain festivals to stick a tree in the ground and suspend offerings and presents on its branches. The ground for this supposition is the fact that, in the fifth century, certain forms and ceremonies appertaining to Buddhism were introduced into the church at Rome. The Germans may be said to claim it as peculiar to themselves, as being indicative of their attachment to Christianity; they identify it with the apostolic labours of St. Maturnus, one of the earliest, if not the very first of the preachers of the gospel among them. They have a legend of his sleeping under a fir-tree, and of a miracle that occurred on that occasion. With them the fir-tree is the genuine Christmas-tree,—“like their faith, it is ‘ever green,’ in storm as in sunshine, in winter as in summer; and it is emblematic, with its fruits and ornaments, both of the tree of

knowledge in Paradise and the still more sacred ‘tree of Golgotha.’” The most plausible supposition is, that it is derived from the Roman Saturnalia. The Christmas-tree—such as we now see it, with its pendant toys and ornaments—is distinctly described in a single line of Virgil. In Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, there is an engraving “from an ancient gem representing a tree with four *oscilla* hung upon its branches.” Any one looking at it will see at once that it is an exact representation of a “Christmas-tree.”

### Christmas.

THERE seems to be an instinct in human nature which prompts us to observe anniversary days,—to commemorate events which to us have more than a passing significance. Some of these anniversaries are joyful, and some are sad, while in others lights and shadows mingle, like sunshine falling through a mist of tears. Some are milestones telling how far we have travelled on a way that is never trod but once; others are Ebenezers, commemorating some signal mercy; others again are only gravestones telling of some hope that lies buried below. And yet, whatever their character, such days are not without their uses. Rightly employed they help us to “remember all the way the Lord” our “God hath led” us “these forty years”—more or less—“in the wilderness,” and remind us that we are swiftly nearing the time when, if life has been wisely lived, they will all merge in the one long, bright, happy day that knows no close.—*Outlook*.

## CHRISTMAS



## Bethlehem's Watchtower.

[THERE was an old stone watchtower, called Eder's Watchtower, on the plain of Bethlehem, near where the shepherds are supposed to have seen the angels on the night of Christ's birth.]

I love the soft in-coming tide,  
That breaks in showers of silver spray;  
I love the dawn that opens wide  
The flood-gates of the living day;  
I love the harvest voice that speaks  
From each green blade of growing corn;  
I love the first fair beam that breaks  
Across the heart in sorrow's morn;  
But fairer than the silver tide,  
And fairer than the morning's flood,  
The light on Bethlehem's meadows wide,  
Where Eder's ancient watchtower stood.

O little town of Bethlehem,  
Where Christ, the perfect man, was born,  
The memories are dear to them  
Whose earth-shod feet are travel-worn;  
The angel's song thy Shepherds heard  
Is echoing along the years;  
Thou hast an ever-welcome word  
For human woes and human fears.  
Oh, fairer than the silver tide,  
And brighter than the morning's flood,  
The light across thy meadows wide,  
Where Eder's ancient watchtower stood.

The plains of life are cold and gray,  
Like those beneath the Syrian stars,  
Our lips are dumb when they would pray,  
Our hopes are all defaced with scars;  
The promise of a perfect world  
So faintly gleams on distant hills  
That faith from her strong tower is hurled  
And wild despair her bosom fills;  
But thou, dear town of Bethlehem,  
Dost promise to our darkened race  
That heaven's fairest diadems  
The forehead of mankind shall grace.

And we are glad this Christmas time  
That first upon thy starlit hills,  
Where purple Syrian harkbells climb  
And drink the freshness of the rills,  
There shone the sacred Christmas light,  
And echoed far the angels' song  
That rings forever through the night  
Of human misery and wrong.  
Oh, fairer than the silver tide,  
And brighter than the morning's flood,  
The light on Bethlehem's meadows wide  
Where Eder's ancient watchtower stood.

"WHAT have you decided to be, Mac?" "A man first, and a good one if possible; after that, what God pleases."

## Bethlehem.

BY UNCLE RIO.

THE entrance into the month of December leads us to think of Bethlehem in Judea. The picture on this page represents that ancient and noted place. There is no place in all the world to which Christians look at this time with so much interest as to Bethlehem. The reason for this is not its size, its beauty or business importance. The cause of all this great interest in that old town is the birth in one of its manglers, eighteen hundred and eighty-seven years ago, of a child who became the greatest man this world has ever seen. Every one of our readers knows that his name is Jesus, the dear Christ-child whose birth angels celebrated with one of the

grandest songs ever heard on earth.

Bethlehem is one of the oldest towns in Palestine. It was already in existence when Jacob returned from Padan-aram with his family and possessions. Its earliest name we find in Genesis 35:19, to be Ephrath. It is also called Ephrathah. The name Bethlehem was not given to it until after the children of Israel were brought out of Egypt into the land of Canaan.

If you wish to know how the people of Bethlehem lived in those early times you can find out by reading the book of Ruth. It was also there that David lived with his father when Samuel was sent by the Lord to anoint him to be king of Israel. It will be a good exercise in Bible study to take a concordance and find all the passages relating to this noted place. Many interesting things in Bible history occurred there.

## A Christmas Legend.

IT was Christmas-eve. The night was very dark, and the snow falling fast, as Hermann, the charcoal-burner, drew his cloak tighter around him, and the wind whistled fiercely through the trees of the Black Forest. He had been to carry a load to a castle near, and was now hastening home to his little hut. Although he worked very hard, he was poor, gaining barely enough for the wants of his wife and four little children. He was thinking of them when he heard a faint wailing. Guided by the sound he groped about, and found a little child, scantily clothed, shivering and sobbing by itself in the snow.

"Why, little one, have they left thee here all alone to face this cruel blast?"

The child answered nothing, but looked piteously up in the charcoal-burner's face.

"Well, I cannot leave thee here. Thou would'st be dead before the morning."

So saying, Hermann raised it in his

arms, wrapping it in his cloak, and warming its little cold hands in his bosom.

When he arrived at his hut, he put down the child and tapped at the door, which was immediately thrown open, and the children ran to meet him.

"Here, wife, is a guest to our Christmas-eve supper," said he, leading in the little one, who held timidly to his finger with his tiny hand.

"And welcome he is," said the wife. "Now, let him come and warm himself by the fire."

The children all pressed round to welcome and gaze at the little newcomer. They showed him their pretty fir-tree, decorated with bright coloured lamps in honour of Christmas-eve, with which the good mother had endeavoured to make a *fete* for the children.

Then they sat down to supper, each child contributing of its portion for the guest, looking with admiration at its clear blue eyes and golden hair, which shone so as to shed a brighter light in the little room: and as they gazed, it grew into a sort of halo round his head, and his eyes beamed with a heavenly lustre. Soon two white wings appeared at his shoulders, and he seemed to grow larger and larger, and then the beautiful vision vanished, spreading out his hands as in benediction over them.

Hermann and his wife fell on their knees, exclaiming, in awe-struck voices: "The holy Christ-child!" and then embracing their wondering children, in joy and thankfulness, that they had entertained the heavenly Guest.

The next morning, as Hermann passed by the place where he had found the fair child, he saw a cluster of lovely white flowers, with dark green leaves, looking as though the snow itself had blossomed. Hermann plucked some, and carried them reverently home to his wife and children, who treasured the fair blossoms and tended them carefully in remembrance of that wonderful Christmas-eve, calling them chrysanthemums; and every year, as the time came round, they put aside a portion of their feast and gave it to some poor little child,

according to the words of the Christ: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."—*Good Cheer.*

## Bethlehem.

O BETHLEHEM, sheltered amid the bleak hills  
That round thee like sentinels stand—  
My thoughts, to-night, sweep o'er the  
shadowy space,  
By wide arching centuries spanned.

And poising anear, on the gray rugged slopes  
That up from thy bosom arise,  
I gaze on the vision, whose splendor outshone  
The glory of midsummer skies.

I hear the new song of the angels, that sent  
Its notes o'er valley and hill.  
And with its bright echoes of gladness,  
awoke  
The night with its jubilant thrill.

I follow the path of the shepherds, that led  
Thro' narrow and starlighted ways—  
The glow of the vision, o'erhanging the walls,  
The air still aquiver with praise.

And passing thy gateway, pause reverently,  
where,  
Within the dim light, I behold  
The Kingly "Young Child," o'er whom  
angels rejoice,  
By seer and by psalmist foretold.

Not clothed with the might of omnipotent  
strength,  
That weigheth the limitless spheres;  
Not crowned with the infinite glory that  
filled  
Eternity's unnumbered years:

But wrapped in weak babyhood's helplessness  
now,  
And crowned with a sweet mother-love,  
And cradled within a rude manger, he lies  
Whose word all the ages shall move.

I turn from the scenes of this long hallowed  
place,  
The scenes with such strange marvels  
filled,  
The fields still alight with the radiance from  
heaven,  
My heart with God's tender love thrilled.

And lo, the chill resonant air is astir  
With chimes of the joy-burdened strain,  
Rung out from the heart of the merrie Christ  
bells,  
And echoed from hillside and plain.

Ring out, O ye merrie bells. Scatter abroad  
Your message of peace and good will;  
Ring on through the ages, and let your bright  
waves  
Their aisles with your melody fill.  
—*Anna M. Hubbard.*

HEAVEN is heaven because it is the  
Father's house—the parent-home and  
the sacred hearth of the universe.



BETHLEHEM.

## A Christmas Hymn.

WHAT shall I give to thee, O Lord?  
The kings that came of old  
Laid softly on thy cradle rude  
Their myrrh, and gems, and gold.

The martyrs gave their hearts' warm blood;  
Their ashes strewed thy way;  
They spurned their lives as dreams and dust,  
To speed thy coming day.

We offer thee nor life nor death;  
Our gifts to man we give;  
Go, O Lord, on this thy day of birth,  
O, what dost thou receive?

Thou knowest of sweet and precious things  
My store is scant and small;  
Yet wert thou here in want and need,  
O, what would I give thee all!

Show me thyself in flesh once more;  
Thy feast I long to speed;  
To bring the water for thy feet,  
The ointment for thy head.

There came a voice from heavenly heights:  
"Unclose thine eyes and see,  
Gifts to the least of those I love  
Thou givest unto me."

—*Rose Terry Cook.*

## Santa Claus.

"PLEASE, sir, you Santa Claus?"

The small voice rang out, shrill and eager, on the crisp evening air, and J. P. Fernald, senior member of the firm of Fernald & Co., turned and looked down into the child's animated face, uplifted with an anxious inquiry shining through the large, dark eyes, made larger and seemingly darker by want and poverty.

"Santa Claus—I—ha' ha' that is a joke," said Mr. Fernald, good naturedly, viewing the immense bundle in his arms, from which protruded a doll's foot through an opening in the paper that enveloped it, and whose uneven surface bore a wonderful resemblance to Santa Claus' mysterious package.

"Well, my little man, it does look like it. But how did you find me out?"

"Oh, sir," cried the child, with an expression of rapt admiration on his small, pinched face, "I knew you in a minute, 'cause you look just like your picture in the toy-shop windows. There's the long, white whiskers, an' the white hair, an' the fur cap, an' the great overcoat an' the bundle of toys you're a-goin' to give to the rich children to-night. I've stood on the corner here ever so long, a-waitin' for you to come along. I knew you'd come down this street sure, 'cause the rich children live here."

The child talked rapidly, catching his breath between the sentences, as though frightened at his boldness in addressing so great a personage as Santa Claus.

"And what did you want to see me for, my little man?" said Mr. Fernald, taking both the little blue-veined hands into one of his great warm ones.

"I wanted to tell you where we live, sir. I guess you don't know, 'cause you never find us, an' Tom—Tom's my big brother—he's most twelve years old, an' helps ma lots. He earns much as fifty cents some days, an' ma don't know how she'd ever

get along 'bout Tom. Well, Tom says that you don't care one bit 'bout the poor little children; that you'd just as lief they'd starve on Christmas-day as any other day; but you must 'cuse Tom, sir. He works hard and gets tired, and then he's cross. When I looked at your picture in the toy-shop windows, I said to myself, 'Bobby Brown, don't you believe it of Santa Claus. He does care for all the children, only he don't know where to find you, that's all.' Was I right, sir?"

"I think you were, my boy. I certainly do not know where you live," said Mr. Fernald, in an unsteady voice, for the child's trusting faith in Santa Claus, who had never brightened a Christmas for him, touched the rich man's heart as it had not been touched for many a month.

"I'll tell you where I live, an' how many there is, an' everything," cried Bobby, breathlessly, "so 't you can't 'stake the place. My l' won't Nelly be glad 't you found us. I won't tell Tom that I hinted, 'cause he'd say it wasn't perhte of me to do it. But you see, sir, I just couldn't let this Christmas go by 'bout finding you, 'cause Nelly—Nelly's a little thing, sir, only five last summer—an' Nelly is talking all the time 'bout a Christmas dolly, an' she really thinks you'll bring her one, an' it makes poor ma cry to have her tell what she'll do with her dolly. You won't forget the doll for Nelly, sir?"

"No," said Mr. Fernald, writing something in a little book. "Step into the store with me, my boy. It will be more comfortable for you. I see your clothes are thin."

"Yes, sir, they wear out faster 'n ma can mend 'em. Little Paul's only four, sir, an' I guess he'd like some candy best of anything; an' maybe, if 'tis n't too much, an orange, too. You'll remember little Paul, sir?"

"Yes, yes; I've got him down. Now, who else?"

"There's Tom, sir. Tom is such a good brother, an' has to be out in the cold all day. I do wish Tom could have some warm mittens; an' his shoes are most gone, but I guess the mittens will do. He'll be awfully glad to get 'em. Is Tom's name down?"

"Yes, Tom's name is down." Mr. Fernald looked up, waiting for the child to continue his requests.

"That's all, sir, 'ceptin' ma, and ma needs 'most everythin'; but I guess she needs a shawl most."

"But you, my little man; is there nothing you wish for?"

"No, sir, I don't need anything. I'll be so glad to see the rest, an' I'll have my secret 'bout meetin' you, for my Christmas. Oh, it'll be the jolliest Christmas ever was! An' won't ma wonder, an' won't Tom be s'prised, an' won't Nelly dance about! I guess Tom 'll change his mind 'bout you pretty quick, sir."

Bobby nodded his head emphatically, and his eyes twinkled like stars.

"Now tell me where you live, Bobby," said Mr. Fernald, with a warm glow at his heart.

The child gave the directions very minutely. Then Mr. Fernald sent him home, and I doubt if there was a happier child in all the land than Bobby Brown.

Mr. Fernald then retraced his steps, visiting a clothing establishment, a shoe store, a toy-shop, the confectioner's, the baker's, the grocer's—and at each place, after giving his order, he requested that the things be sent the first thing in the morning to a certain address, and left at Mrs. Brown's room, with Santa Claus' compliments.

Bobby tossed restlessly in his bed that night. How could he sleep with such a wonderful secret on his mind? At every sound he started nervously, and listened attentively until the sound had ceased. Toward morning he fell asleep, and was only awakened by Tom kindling a fire in the old stove.

"Has he come yet?" cried Bobby, springing out of bed.

"Who?" asked Tom.

But Bobby pretended to be too busy about his wardrobe to heed Tom's question. He felt chagrined that he had so nearly betrayed his precious secret.

Mrs. Brown, with a weary sigh, put the last potato in the oven, and wondered where the dinner for those hungry little mouths was to come from. Her faith in God's care was sorely tried at times. Poor woman! her burdens were heavy to bear.

Suddenly there came a knock at the door.

"It's him!" cried Bobby, springing forward to open it.

"Here's a basket for the Widow Brown, which Santa Claus sent from the grocery, with his compliments," said the man, thrusting a large basket in at the door, and disappearing before a question could be asked.

Before the contents were half taken out, another rap came at the door, and another basket was thrust in.

"From the bakery, with Santa Claus' compliments," said the man, briskly, slamming the door behind him.

Such a basketful of good things as that one was! The children stood about it in wide-eyed wonder, until little Paul broke the spell by snatching a handful of brown ginger cookies.

"Santa Claus' compliments," announced a voice at the door, and a large bundle, which proved to be good stout shoes for the children all around, was thrust in; and before the door could be closed, more bundles followed.

By this time the little ones were capering about the room in the wildest delight. Tom stood with the stove handle in one hand, and an expression of blank amazement on his face—a perfect statue of surprise. Mrs. Brown had sunk into a chair, and with clasped hands and tearful eyes was viewing the presents, which seemed literally to shower down upon them, and which meant so much of comfort and happi-

ness to her little family. Bobby was the only one who did not seem to be surprised at the generous display. Nor did he cease to regard the door with anxiety until the doll and candy, together with other surprises and toys not mentioned by him in his conversation with Santa Claus, had made their appearance.

"Where did they all come from?" gasped Mrs. Brown, in perplexity. "There must be some mistake."

"No, there ain't!" cried Bobby enthusiastically; "Santa Claus sent 'em."

"But there isn't such a person, Bobby."

"Yes, there is. I saw him last night," said Bobby, trying a jack-knife which had his name on a card attached to the handle. "There's good stuff in it," he added, sending a long shaving off from a piece of pine stick. "I told him where we lived, an' he said he'd try to find us this year."

"Who could it have been?" murmured Mrs. Brown.

"Santa Claus, of course," said Bobby, emphatically. "He's a jolly old man—looks just like his picture, too."

And Mr. Fernald, as he placed a diamond ring on the finger of his granddaughter, thought of the humble home his bounty had blessed, and how much more that gift was prized than the one which now sparkled on the hand of her who had never had a wish unsatisfied.

"It pays to be Santa Claus," he soliloquized. "It pays in here," laying his hand over the place where a warm heart throbbed beneath; "and I believe I'll make a general Santa Claus of myself next year, for the benefit of poor little children whom the usual Santa Claus fails to find."—*Rose H. Thorpe.*

## Backbone.

One thing which Christians, as well as others, need at the present day is backbone. Not a backbone like a ramrod, that cannot yield or bend, but a well articulated spinal column which is strong enough to hold a man upright and keep him from being crushed beneath the burdens that press upon him. These are days of easy-going piety, and men are too often ruled by compromise rather than by conscience.

Says Mr. Spurgeon: "Oak has given place to willow. Everybody has grown limp. Out of the generality of limpness has come an admiration for it. A man cannot speak a plain word without being accused of bitterness, and if he denounces error he is narrow-minded: for all must join the universal admiration society or be placed under ban and be howled down."

Now, in such a condition of things as this there is special call, not for stubbornness and crustiness, but for a gentle, patient, unyielding conscientiousness and firmness, which anchors the soul to the everlasting rock, and causes the heart to rest on him who is the way, the truth, and the life, and who will never leave nor forsake us.

## Christmas.

HANG up the vine and the holly,  
Sign the crosses over the door,  
That joy coming in with the Christmas,  
May go from the place nevermore.

Gather love gifts for the children,  
Guard well the mystical way,  
That the Christ-child comes at the midnight  
To bless with bright favours the day.

Bring in good cheer and be merry,  
Rejoice and ring out glad song  
The stars of a Bethlehem desert  
Look down on a Christ happy throng.

Go ye in hovel and highway,  
Guests to bring in to the feast;  
Angels shall unawares greet ye  
In those the world counteth as least.

Sound the sweet Christ loving anthem—  
Echoes will bring it on high—  
To the angels made joyous forever  
By Christmas of love in the sky.

Bow down and worship the Spirit  
Of the feast, the invisible King;  
Lo! he cometh in scarlet and purple  
To gather a world's offering.

## The Growth of the Christmas Tree.

SOME one has said, "The Christmas-tree, like liberty, loves lands where the snow 'lies," and it would seem so to-day; but there is little doubt that, although Germany may rightfully claim to be the Christmas birth-place of this enchanting shrub, the custom is far older than is generally supposed, and its cradle was in a warm and sunny clime, even in the land of the obelisk, and on the banks of the sluggish, yellow Nile. In Egypt, however, the palm—that calendar tree, that puts forth a fresh shoot every month—was the gift-tree, and the ceremony was at full force at heathen festivities many hundred years before the birth of Christ.

From Egypt the pretty custom passed into Italy, where the fir-tree took the place of the palm, and every December was illuminated with burning candles in honour of the sun-god Saturn; while during the *Sigillaria*, a feast closely following the *Saturnalia*, Italian mothers hung the green boughs with small waxen figures, such as we use to deck our Christmas-trees, but representing mythological characters. These were afterwards distributed among the happy, dark-eyed little Roman children, who received their *Sigillara*, as these tiny images were called, with the same joy you do your glittering balls and sugar toys.

A sun in honour of Apollo crowned the Roman tree where we place the Star of Bethlehem; and our figures of Santa Claus, flying angels, and the fair little Christ-child, are but Christian substitutes for the heathen Phœbus and his flocks. Poetical Germany was very quick to adopt the lovely practice, to add beauty to its *Juel Fesi*, or mid-winter Whul-feast; which in time was merged into yule-tide, or the Church, and pagan gods and goddesses gave way to more holy devices.

That the Germans sometimes substitute pyramids for trees, and that the

evergreens used are of pyramidal shape, have been considered strong proofs of their Egyptian origin.

The Christmas seed thus planted grew and flourished, and has been wafted over the seas to England and America, until now, in New York, as well as in the "Fatherland," whenever

"The merry bells, chiming from Trinity,  
Charm the ear with their musical din,  
Telling all throughout the vicinity  
Holiday gambols are now to begin,"

thousands of Christmas-trees burst forth in all their glory, and, like Jack's bean-stalk, spring up, bud, blossom, and shake down their wondrous fruit all in a single night, while to the thoughtful they are curiously symbolical.

First, the evergreen itself, typical of the "Tree of Life;" the gleaming tapers proclaim the "Feast of Lights;" the overflowing horns and cornucopias represent plenty and good cheer; banners, balls, and bells are remnants of the gay holiday pageants of the olden time; the presents are moments of the "great gift to mankind;" while the waxen angels and the band of children carolling round the sparkling bush, recall the heavenly choir that sang the first Christmas carol upon the first Christmas-eve.—*Harpur's Young People.*

## Santa Claus.

SANTA CLAUS was one of the oldest ideas of the Celtic west in pagan times, as he was of the pagan east before. In Christian times he was still regarded with religious reverence, sitting—as he had sat for ages in Egypt and elsewhere—in the arms of his mother. Santa Claus was, in fact, the child Jesus in the middle ages; and throughout that period the festive creed of Germany, and all Celtic Europe, was that he visited all family dwellings of good Christians on the eve of his anniversary, and brought with him gifts and presents for the children. The truth of this original belief is plainly enough indicated by the word "claus," which, in the gothic or ancient German, means "child" and "son." Santa Claus formerly meant the Holy Child.

## Then and Now.

FIFTY years ago the tinder-box was as indispensable as was, and is, the tea-kettle that still sings on the hob in the kitchen. As an old acquaintance it is worth describing. It was more or less coarsely ornamented, and of various forms. Ordinarily, it was an oblong wooden box, some six or eight inches long, and three or four in width, and was divided into two parts by a partition. In one of these was fitted a loose lid with a central knob, to drop in as a "dampor" on the tinder; and in the other were kept the flint, steel, and bunches of brimstone matches. The "tinder" was scorched or half-burned linen rag. The flint and steel being struck together emitted sparks, and

then, as soon as a spark had fallen upon and ignited the tinder, the brimstone end of the "match" was applied to it and lit. The matches were thin slips of deal five or six inches long, and perhaps a quarter of an inch wide, cut to a point at each end, and dipped in melted brimstone; they were hawked about the country by itinerant vendors. The fumes of the sulphur emitted a scent by no means pleasant to the olfactory nerves; in fact, the stench was strong enough to find its way from the kitchen to the attic of a lofty mansion. From the match thus ignited a candle was lit, of mutton fat usually, of "moulds" where greater cost could be afforded. There were never candles on the table without the snuffer-tray and snuffers. It is almost as necessary to describe the snuffers as the tinder box, for they are nearly as much of the past, when match-girls were members of a large profession instead of subjects for artists who would picture the olden time.

In those days, lighting by gas was a novelty that was making its way into public favour slowly, and against furious storm of opposition, although in the unsafe, miserably lit streets of London tottered at night feeble old creatures with staves and lanterns, who were by a fiction styled "watchman," but whom the public knew best as "Charlies." They came mostly from the workhouse, and their shelter between sunset and sunrise was a narrow rickety sentry box, to overturn which, with its aged and decrepit occupant, was a favourite sport of all the "bloods" in town. Lamplighting was a profession; but the streets were so "dark with light," that on the opposite side, if the street were at all broad, you could not tell whether it were a man or a woman who was passing. Familiar to me in my youth were the old oil lamps, those makers of darkness visible in our thoroughfares which the now sovereign king, gas, has displaced. It is strange, but true, that one of the most bitter opponents to the introduction of gas was Sir Walter Scott, who denounced the "pestilential innovation" in a public speech. But the northern wizard speedily recognized the magic of the new light-giver, and changing with the times, took a prominent part in the formation of a gas company, causing Abbotsford to be lit with the "dangerous and deleterious air."—*S. C. Hall.*

Out of every night God is making a path by his hand for the morning, and for you; and out of every day God is making a bed of darkness for the night, and for you.

Fix your heart upon Jesus, your burden-bearer. Resolve that whatever burden comes during the year, you will immediately take it to him. See that you meet every trial with sincerity of heart, asking not so much that it may be removed as that you may have grace to bear it.

## FOURTH QUARTERLY REVIEW.

Dec. 25.

## CHRISTMAS DAY.

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

## REVIEW SCHEME.

LESSON I. *The Centurion's Faith.* Matt. 8. 5-13.—What request did the centurion make? Of what honour did he think himself unworthy? What did Jesus say about his faith? (GOLDEN TEXT.) What blessing did his faith bring to his servant?

LESSON II. *The Tempest Stilled.* Matt. 8. 18-27.—What Teacher was more homeless than foxes or birds? In what peril were the disciples on the sea? What rebuke did Jesus give them? (GOLDEN TEXT.) What quieted the storm? What amazed the disciples?

LESSON III. *Power to Forgive Sin.* Matt. 9. 1-8.—What sick man was brought to Christ? What words of cheer did Jesus speak to him? What did the scribes charge Jesus with doing? What was proven by his healing the paralytic? (GOLDEN TEXT.) How were the people affected?

LESSON IV. *Three Miracles.* Matt. 9. 18-31.—What miracle of healing was wrought by touching a garment? Who was the first person raised from the dead by Jesus? What prayer did two blind men utter? What answer did Jesus give? (GOLDEN TEXT.) What result followed? To whom did they tell the story of their cure?

LESSON V. *The Harvest and the Labourers.* Matt. 9. 35-38; 10. 1-8.—What did Jesus say about the harvest and the labourers? What prayer did he command? How many did he choose as apostles? What two things did he send them to do? What command did he give them about their work? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

LESSON VI. *Confessing Christ.* Matt. 10. 32-42.—Whom does Jesus promise to confess in heaven? (GOLDEN TEXT.) What divisions did Jesus come to set up in families? Who is not worthy of him? What guest was honoured when the apostles were entertained? What promise does he utter about a cup of water?

LESSON VII. *Christ's Witness to John.* Matt. 11. 2-15.—What question of doubt did John ask? What answer did Jesus give? What witness did Jesus bear to John's rank among men? What did he say of him on another occasion? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

LESSON VIII. *Judgment and Mercy.* Matt. 11. 20-30.—What cities did Jesus upbraid for their unbelief? What thanksgivings did he offer? What invitation did he utter? (GOLDEN TEXT.) Of whom does he ask the world to learn?

LESSON IX. *Jesus and the Sabbath.* Matt. 12. 1-14.—What charge of law-breaking did the Pharisees make against the disciples? What royal example did Jesus cite in defence? Who is Lord of the Sabbath? In answer to what question did Jesus work a miracle? What did he settle by his work and words? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

LESSON X. *Parable of the Sower.* Matt. 13. 1-9.—From what pulpit did Jesus preach to the people? What was the form of his teaching? In what place did seed fail to bear fruit? What came from the good ground sowing? What is the seed that is meant? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

LESSON XI. *Parable of the Tares.* Matt. 13. 24-30.—To what is the kingdom of heaven likened? Who sowed tares in the field? How long were they permitted to grow? What, then, would the reapers do? When is the harvest, and who are the reapers? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

LESSON XII. *Other Parables.* Matt. 13. 31-33, 41-52.—What two parables of growth did Jesus utter? What two parables of treasure? What parable of judgment? When is the judgment, and what will it effect? (GOLDEN TEXT.) Whom will every wise teacher be like?

## FIRST QUARTER, 1888.

## STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

A. D. 29] LESSON I. [JAN. 1.

## HEROD AND JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Matt. 14. 1-12. Memory verses, 10-12.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.—Matt. 14. 12.



OUTLINE.

- 1. Herod.
- 2. John.

TIME.—29 A. D., during the period of the later Galilean ministry.

PLACES.—Capernaum, Machabrus.

RULERS.—Tiberius, emperor at Rome; Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judaea. Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea.

CONNECTING LINKS. In the last lesson of last year we were studying parables that Jesus had spoken at some time earlier than the immediate time to which we had come in his history. We now return to the historical narrative. Jesus had made his second visit to offer the gospel to the people of Nazareth, had sent forth the twelve on their tour of preaching, and was tarrying now for a few days at his home in Capernaum, when the disciples of John came to him with the tidings of their teacher's death. The story which they told is given in our lesson.

EXPLANATIONS. — Tetrarch — A Greek word meaning a ruler over the fourth part of a country. It is not so used here, for properly this Herod ruled over one of three parts into which the country was divided. It means simply ruler. *Fame of Jesus*—This was caused by the wonderful miracles he had been working. *His servants*—Members of his court—courtiers. *Risen from the dead*—Herod is said to have been a Sadducee, but his conscience put his intellectual beliefs to flight. *Mighty works*—Miracles. *In prison*—In the castle of Machabrus. *Counted him as a prophet*—It was four hundred years since a prophet had been seen in Judaea, and the common people welcomed and loved this one. *Herod's birthday*—The anniversary of his accession to the throne. *Danced before them*—Probably one of the lewd dances of the Oriental monarchies; a wicked thing at best, and very shocking to the sense of right of a Jew. *With an oath*—Not simple profanity, but a vow made by the gods, whom he would call to witness that he would keep it.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Herod.

- By what official title is Herod known?
- What report came to him?
- For whom did he mistake Jesus?
- What did he say of John the Baptist?
- What had Herod done to John?
- For whose sake was John put in prison?
- What unlawful act had John denounced?
- Why did not Herod at once put him to death?
- How did the people regard John?
- What event on Herod's birthday pleased him?
- What reward did he promise the dancer?
- What did she ask?
- Why did she make this request?
- How was the king affected by the demand?
- Why did he keep his promise?

2. John.

- What did Herod then do to John?
- What was done with the prophet's head?
- What was done with the body?
- To whom did the disciples tell the story?
- What relation was John to Jesus?
- From whom are we sure of sympathy in all our sorrows?
- What ought we to do with all our troubles? Psa. 55, 22.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- Where in the lesson are we taught—
- 1. That a guilty conscience makes men fearful?
- 2. That sinners hate those who rebuke their sins?
- 3. That Jesus is the true Comforter of those who are in trouble?

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

Learn how many Herods there are in the New Testament history, and how they were related. Find other instances of people being (1) put in prison, or (2) put to death, by a Herod.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

- 1. Who were guilty in the putting to death of John the Baptist. Herod, Herodias and her daughter.
- 2. How did Herod show that he felt guilty? He said, "John is risen."
- 3. What was the power in Herod's life that made him think that John had risen? A guilty conscience.
- 4. Is there any power greater than a condemning conscience to which the sinner must answer? God is greater than our hearts.
- 5. What act of loyal love offsets this story of hate? "And his disciples came and took up," etc.

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