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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. III.

TORONTO, JANUARY 13, 1883.

No. 1.

LAND'S END.

THE engraving shows the remarkable cape at the extreme, south-west of England, known as Land's End. It consists of stern granite crags, against which the ceaseless surges of the broad Atlantic have been dashing for ages. Some idea of their gigantic size may be inferred from the diminutive appearance of the figures on the sea shore, and in the little boat. The clouds of seabirds which make the lonely rock their home will be observed. Near by is an inn bearing the inscription, "The First and Last Inn in England." A deep poetic interest is given to this scene from the fact that here it was, far out on the precipitous crags with the surges of the ocean breaking at their base on either side, that Charles Wesley composed that noble hymn containing the lines—

Lo! on a narrow neck of land,
Twixt two unbounded seas I stand,
Secure, insensible;
A point of time, a moment's space
Removes me to that heavenly place,
Or shuts me up in hell.

O God my inmost soul convert!
And deeply on my thoughtful heart
Eternal things impress:
Give me to feel their solemn weight,
And tremble on the brink of fate,
And wake to righteousness.

These reflections will be very appropriate as we have just crossed the "narrow neck" between the old and new year, and indeed every day and hour of our lives.

"Work for me!" exclaimed Mrs. Barton. "What can such a little tot as you do? Why, you are smaller than my Bessy, and I don't believe Bessy is old enough yet to be of much use in housework."

"I'm older than I'm big, ma'am. I'm almost eight, an' I can wash dishes, run errands, an' mind the baby."

"Where do you live, and why do

But the little one drew back, saying, "Mother wouldn't want me to beg."

"O mamma! do let her come help nurse run after Eddy, she says she is all tired out every night," said Bessy, eagerly.

Mrs. Barton looked from one to the other, and thought, "Suppose it was my child wanting food." Then she said, "Come, we'll go back, and you

Montana to see her parents. Bessy begged permission to accompany her mother, and in a short time they found the tenement house where, in one room, the family lived. The sick father lay upon a straw mattress on the floor, and beside him sat his wife, sewing on some coarse garment, while a little girl, smaller than Susy, held a pale, sickly baby in her arms, rocking to and fro, trying to hush its cries. There was no fire, although the weather was freezing.

Mrs. Barton told them that she had met Susy, and had heard of their trouble from her, and had now come to see how she could help them.

She listened to the story of the accident, and how gradually all their money was used up; then she gave them enough to buy food and wood for their present need, and said she had engaged Susy to run after her two-year-old boy, and she would see what more she could do to help them.

When they left the house Mrs. Barton said to Bessy, "Now, dear, we will go buy your toys."

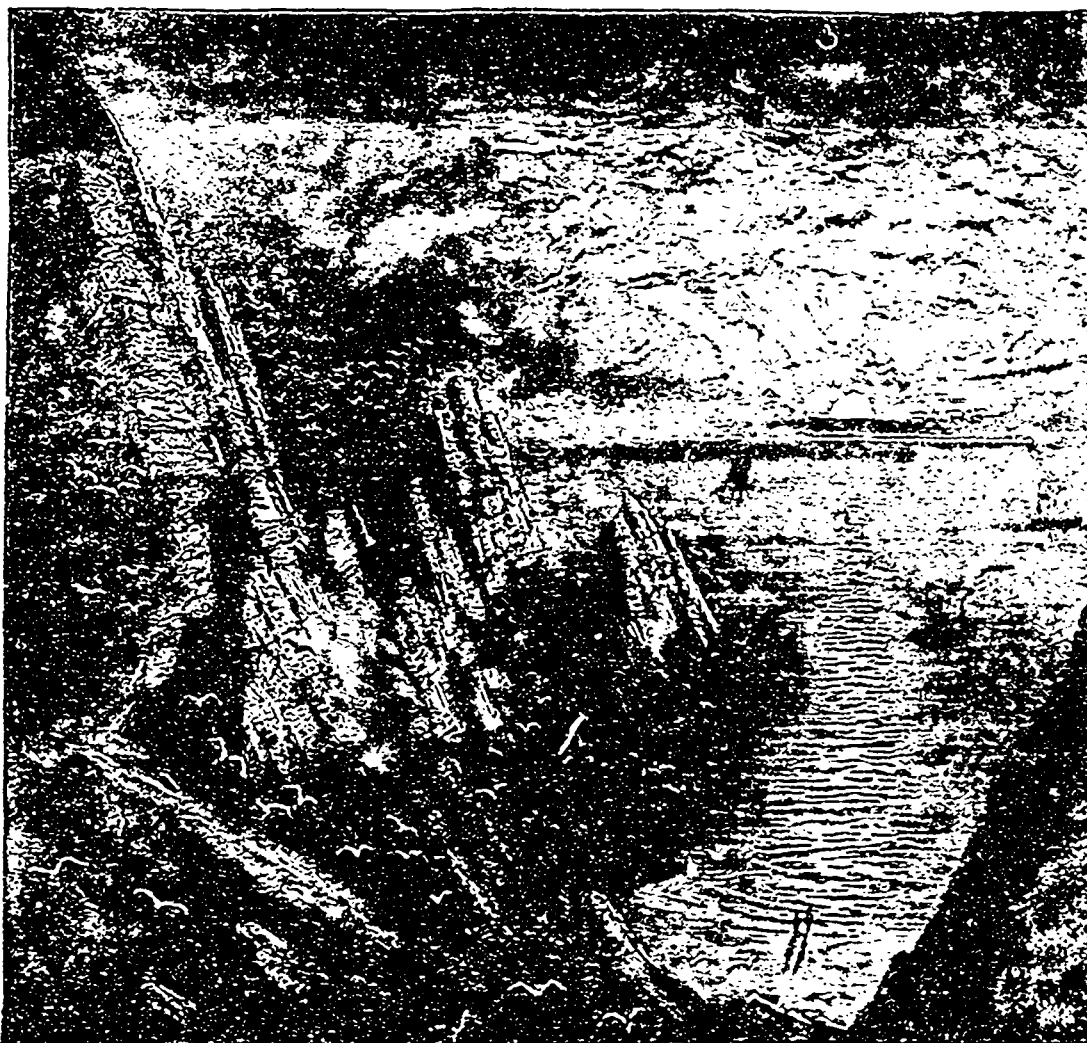
"But, mamma, I think I'd rather give the money to those poor people. When papa read that verse this morning, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive,' I thought I'd never find it so, yet now I believe it would be a great deal nicer to see how happy it would make them."

"Wait till to-morrow, love, and think it all over, and if you still want to give it to those poor children you shall decide what to get them."

Early the next morning Bessy ran into her mother's room, saying, "Mamma, I've such a nice plan for Mrs. Davis and all, if you will only consent. You know that our old gardener is gone, the cottage at the gate is empty, all but John's room. Why couldn't we bring them there to live? Then Mrs. Davis could take care of John's meals, and Susy could go home every night."

"I declare, that is not a bad plan, Bessy. I'll talk with your papa about it, but don't tell Susy till we decide."

The next day Bessy's parents gave their consent, and Mrs. Barton had



LAND'S END, CORNWALL

HOW BESSY BARTON SPENT NEW YEAR'S.

BY M. A. ROE.

THITTLE Bessy Barton and her mother had just left their beautiful home on the main street of Clayton Village, one morning, a few days before New Year's, and were on their way to buy some toys at Mr. Dayton's large store, when another little girl, poorly clad, with a thin, pale face, stopped them, and said: "Please, ma'am, mayn't I do some work for you?"

"You want a place?" asked the lady gently, won by the earnest blue eyes that looked so pleadingly into hers.

"We live down at the Montana factory. You see, father got hurt in the machinery last fall, an' mother can't take care of us all, so I thought I'd hire out. Oh, ma'am, we're so poor! I—haven't had any breakfast."

The voice hesitated, and tears came into her blue eyes.

"I'll give you a quarter to buy one," replied Mrs. Barton, opening her purse.

shall have a good warm breakfast, then help amuse the baby. If you do well, I may hire you by the week. What is your name?"

"Susy Davis. O ma'am, I'll do my best, for we are to be turned out of our room by the middle of next week if mother don't have the rent."

"Well, we will see how you behave," replied Mrs. Barton, as they returned to the house. There she told the old nurse Susy's story, and what she wanted her to do, and said that she intended going right down to

the rooms put in thorough order. It was not a very difficult thing to do, for the old gardener had not been long gone, and Bessy enjoyed herself much in setting things right.

Early New Year's morning Bessy went with her mother to tell them of the happy change in their prospects. Mrs. Davis wept for joy, and her husband, when told that the plan was all Bessy's, put his hand on her head, saying, "God bless you, my child; you have no doubt saved my life by your kindness, for I feel sure I shall get well and strong there."

Before night they were moved into their new abode, where a good fire was burning, and where over the mantel, in letters of evergreen, were the words "Happy New Year. Welcome home." Bessy and Susy were waiting to receive them, and Bessy instantly drew Mrs. Davis to the cupboard, where was a generous supply of things for them to begin house-keeping with.

"These I bought with my money, instead of toys," said Bessy triumphantly; "and I never had a happier New Year's Day."

She had proved the truth of the text "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

A NEW YEAR'S GIFT.

BY MISS F. E. WINSLOW.

"What can I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; If I were a wise man, I would do my part; What I can I give Him—give Him my heart."



HE words were on a Christmas card, and they had a peculiar fascination for Mabel Grosvenor. When they had first come to

her from a friend on Christmas morning, she could not have said that she fairly understood their meaning. She puzzled over the quaint old English letters as they ran in and out to accommodate themselves to the design of the card, and finally she placed it among many others—Christmas and birthday cards and photographs of friends—in the lower half of the frame of the mirror which adorned the bureau in her comfortable bedroom. There were many other words among the collection well worthy of notice—choice selections from poets, mottoes of advice from eminent philosophers, loving wishes for happiness for the coming year from dear friends, sent to the girl who seemed to have everything on earth to ensure happiness; and yet among them all, as she came in and out, in gay preparations for pleasure during those Christmas holidays, these words only seemed to burn themselves into heart and brain: "Poor as I am, poor as I am."

"What can I give Him, poor as I am?"

Poor! Why, what girl of her acquaintance had more than she? Her feet sank at every step into rich carpets. Thick satins, furs, and plushes wrapped her delicate form whenever she went out; and as to mental advantages, books and pictures surrounded her, and the best schools and masters of the great intellectual city had been employed in her behalf. And now in her dawning womanhood she stood, prepared, it seemed, for almost any sphere of life or society she might choose to enter, and yet,

"poor as I am" in the presence of the Christ whom the Christmas season had been bringing nearer and nearer to her heart.

What were all these gifts? When He was in this world, the great earthly possessions of the young man who came to Him were as nothing in His eyes; Herod's wealth and Caesar's power had been as dross to this simple peasant of Galilee; the learning and wisdom of the Pharisees and scribes, with their famous teachers, had been utterly rejected by Him. Mabel felt that to come to Him with an offering of earthly gifts—money or education only—would be worse than useless. Yes, in anything that made life worth the living, Mabel was poor, and yet there was one gift He never despised, one offering He never rejected; the poorest and the richest of the sons of men could bring this gift to Him, sure of His loving acceptance of it, and of His glad appreciation of its value.

On the first day of the new year, Mabel felt that out of her poverty this one thing was hers to give, and she began the year with the words of her Christmas card transmuted into a glad personal acceptance.

"What I can I give Him—give Him my heart."

It was a bright Saturday afternoon of the first week in January, and a shivering girl, slight and tall, apparently about sixteen years of age, stood on the corner of Westminster Street, idly looking into the window of a book-store. There was a gaunt, hard, tired look about her, young as she was; and as Mabel Grosvenor stepped up in her bright, fresh clothes, a look of positive dislike and malice came over the girl's face. It was not that the girl knew Mabel, but the evident prosperity of her appearance and bearing grated upon her; the contrast between it and her own seedy apparel becoming all the more apparent to her. As Mabel scanned a list of books in the window, the girl began to wonder how she would look in a plush sack of wine color, and a hat with two long plumes curled about it; and it was not only the looks; a girl who wore such things must have everything warm underneath, and plenty of food at home—things of which poor Ethel was very much in need.

Just then Mabel turned and looked at her, and Ethel began again to study the Christmas card she had been languidly regarding when Mabel's arrival on the scene attracted her attention. Now for the whole week Mabel had been thinking, "To give Him one's heart means all—everything; all I can do and be belongs to Him. How can I show that I love Him? What can I do to teach other people to love Him too?" And when she saw the poor girl standing by her side, she longed to help her in some way. Her poverty would, perhaps, be easier to bear if she knew of Jesus and felt sure she belonged to Him. So hurrying into the store, Mabel purchased the card which had been of so much service to herself, and came out to find the girl still standing before the window.

"Do you like the card? Would you care to have one?" she said; and the girl, starting at being spoken to by a stranger, and half inclined to feel offended, was disarmed by the pleasant smile and kind words. They walked along together as Mabel tried

to tell her in a few words what the verse on the card meant.

"Yes, I know. I went to a Sunday-school in the village we lived in before we came here," said the girl.

"How long ago was that?" asked Mabel.

"Oh, 'most a year. Mother came down here to get more work to do, and when we first came, we all went to school; and then mother got sick and couldn't sew, and I stayed at home to take care of her."

"And did she get well?" asked Mabel.

"No," said the girl, her reserve quite melted by the interest of the other; "she died in November. A woman in the same house helped us, and I stayed at home to cook and mend the boys' clothes; and then, when the money we had was all gone, I got a place to tend in a store before Christmas. Now that the holidays are over, I have no more work to do and the children can't go to school 'cause their clothes are all worn out. Jim, he is ten, and sells newspapers; and that's all we have."

Here was work for Mabel to do. She went home with the girl, and found the children huddled in bed in a room without a fire. It was easy for her, with a well-filled purse, to provide food and warmth and clothing for this young family, but it was not so easy for her to give time and thought to their needs. Many a concert and art gathering dear to her heart were given up to find time for her new and absorbing pursuits which began to grow still dearer to her. She had given her heart to Christ, and time and effort, strength and money, followed as mere accessories to the gift. For Ethel she obtained a piece to take care of children during the early part of the day, so that she could return home in time to be with her brothers when school was out.

Encouraged by the real friendship of Mabel, Ethel began to grow into something of health and cheerfulness. There was no reason she could see beyond the one of pleasing the Master of whom she delighted to speak, which could have induced a girl of Mabel's position to give up time and pleasure for her good; and so, through her, Ethel learned to love Christ, something of whose character she saw reflected in her friend's life.

They were both connected with a mission school, one as teacher, the other as scholar. Mabel soon began to find Ethel a valuable assistant in bringing in the girls of her neighbourhood. The young teacher gave herself to them, studied their needs, and helped them as no one had done before. Ere the year was out, she had reason to believe that some of them were leading Christian lives, and helping others to begin in a similar way.

Again the New Year came with its renewed question to Mabel, "What can I give Him?" and with it the same old answer, "Son, daughter, give Me thy heart." The same heart, indeed, and only that, had Mabel to give, but was it no more of a gift than when the year before she had laid it untried upon the altar of her Lord? Yes, more and richer in the lessons it had learned of love for Him and work for His children, greater and more fit for an offering to Him who went about doing good, in that it had acquired something of the spirit of the

life-long example of Him who freely gave Himself to the needs of His brethren in a complete sacrifice of self.

CHRISTMAS.

[These two Christmas poems were crowded out of our last number. But they will not be amiss even now, and will bring back, as it were, the flavour of the holidays. Ed.]

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.

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

We offer thee no lie nor dath, Our gifts to man we give; Dear Lord, on this Thy day of birth Oh, what dost Thou receive!

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

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

—Rose Terry Cooke.

CHRISTMAS TWILIGHT.

HERE is no hearth this Christmastide But some dear face is missing that was wont To make the joy and sunlight of our lives Sweeter to us than all the world beside.

In twilight hours the pain is ever keen, And yet there comes a thought of trembling joy, How bright the welcome when at last we gain The things on earth long hoped for though unseen.

—Methodist Magazine.

THE FISK JUBILEE SINGERS.

THIS remarkable company of coloured singers is now making its third tour through Canada, and we can with great confidence commend them to the patronage of the religious public. There are so-called companies of Jubilee singers whose concerts are a mere burlesque on the beautiful slave melodies of the south. But these singers are Christian ladies and gentlemen, and most of them have been themselves slaves, and are the children of slave parents. Their songs are most touching and beautiful, and recall Longfellow's verses.

Loud he sang the Psalm of David: He, a negro, and enslaved, Sang of Israel's victory, Sang of Zion, bright and free.

And the voice of his devotion Filled my soul with strange emotion; For its tones by turns were glad, Sweetly solemn, wildly sad.

The following letter was written by Rev. Dr. J. H. Vincent, under date of Sept. 7th, 1882:

Too much praise cannot be awarded the original Fisk Jubilee Troupe of Singers. They are beyond all praise. For artistic finish, for native simplicity, for that peculiar magnetic power which wins and charms, and holds, for spiritual earnestness that tells in the expression of the face as well as in the tones of the voice, this company has no equal. They have spent two seasons at Chautauqua, and I want them again for 1883.

OUR NEW YEARS.

ONE by one, one by one,
The years march past, till the march
is done;
The old year dies to the solemn keel,
And a merry peal from the changing bell
Ushers the other, one by one,
Till the march of the years shall at last be
done.

Bright and glad, dark and sad,
Are the years that come in mystery clad;
Their faces are hidden and none can see
If merry or sorrowful each will be;
Bright and sad, dark and glad,
Have been the years which we all have had.

Fair and subtle, under the sun
Something from us each year has won.
Has it given us treasures? Day by day
It has stolen something we prized away;
We meet with fears, and count with
tears
The buried hopes of the long-past years.

Is it so? And yet let us not forget
How fairly the sun has risen and set;
Each year has brought us some sunny
hours,
With a wealth of song and a crown of
flowers.
Power to love and time to pray
Its gifts have been ere it passed away.

We hail the new that has come in view;
Work comes with it, and pleasure too;
And even though it may bring some pain,
Each passing year is a thing of gain;
We greet with song the days that
bring;
Do they bring us trouble? 'Twill make us
strong

With smiles of hope, and not with tears,
We meet our friends in the glad new years;
God is with them, and as they come
They bear us nearer our restful home.
And one by one, with some treasure won,
They come to our hearts till they all are
gone.

—Marianne Farningham.

CHRISTMAS IN HISTORY.

BY REV. J. L. HURLBUT, A. M.

THE observance of Christmas, appropriate as it is, and now so world-wide, does not rest upon either a divine command or an apostolic precedent. There is no allusion in the New Testament to any annual Church festivals, and the early history of the Church does not mention the celebration of any day in commemoration of Christ's birth until about 180, A. D. There was for a long time no uniformity in the date of the festival, which was held variously from January to May. It is remarkable that one of the earliest references to this day, at which all the world now rejoices, should be a sad story of the age of persecution. When Diocletian was emperor of the Roman world, between 284 and 305 A. D., on one occasion, while holding his court at Nicomedia, he learned that the Christians of the neighborhood, with their children, had assembled in their church to celebrate the birth of Christ. He ordered the doors to be closed, and the church to be set on fire. His soldiers stood around to keep the sufferers within the burning building, until church and Christians fell in the flames together.

Perhaps the reasons why Christmas Day was not observed earlier in the history of the Church were, among others, that the Gospels do not assign any day in the year for the birth of Christ; that the death and resurrection of Jesus were fixed by the calendar, were more important in the plan of redemption than his birth, and hence more generally observed by the early Church; and that there was no Jewish

feast at the time of Christmas to be transferred into a Christian festival.

But the observance of a day in honour of Christ's birth grew more and more general in the Church, and about 380 A. D., in the time of Theodosius the Great, the twenty-fifth of December was finally fixed by the European Churches, and was accepted by those in the East. Why that particular date was taken cannot be known with certainty. There is the best of evidence that the birth of Jesus took place, not in the winter, but at a time in the year when shepherds and their flocks may be found together in the fields at night in Judea.

The festival of Christmas grew up at Rome, where it took the place and time of the old Saturnalia, or winter holidays of the heathen city. Indeed, many of the Christmas customs, and some of these the most beautiful, are said to have a heathen origin, and were simply transferred from the false worship to the true. Thus, hanging the houses with green was a heathen rite in Northern Europe from the earliest ages, and the lighting of tapers, and giving of presents, which seem to us to recall the midnight manger and the gifts of the magi, are yet as old as Rome itself. The holly-berries and the misletoe take us back to the Druid worship of the ancient Britons, and the yule-log, rolled in state into many a baronial hall, is a reminiscence of the German yule feast in commemoration of the sun's return at the winter solstice. Thus, as the water-jars at the marriage-feast were laden with wine at the Saviour's look, so the harmless elements of the primeval faiths took on a new meaning and beauty when touched by the Gospel of Christ.

LITTLE BEPPO.

A DULL, leaden sky. All day the snow-flakes have steadily fallen, and now, as night approaches, not a vestige of the frozen earth remains. Beppo walks wearily along, his beloved guitar held closely under his arm. He sees the lights in happy homes; he sees the children, with their faces pressed against the panes, watching with delight the fall of flakes, for to-morrow will be Christmas and the snow will aid Kriss Kringle in his visit; and a sad smile lights up his dark face, for the snow that brings happiness to them brings him deepest sorrow.

As the little wanderer strolls on, he thinks of that land of mellow sunshine far over the sea, and of the happy home he had before his parents died; and, in contrast to this, he thinks of the home he has now, and of the wicked *padrone* who took him from his cherished country.

These last thoughts arouse him to a sense of business, and, clinking the few cents in his pockets, he takes up his position at the entrance of a theatre which is ablaze with light. Then, blowing his breath upon his stiff, cold fingers, he plays a few wild, sweet notes upon his instrument—a prelude to "Home, Sweet Home." He watches the gayly attired people pass into the warm building, but none seem to notice the little figure shrinking in the shadow. None save the gruff, burly policeman who roughly grasps his shoulder and says "Come, young un, move along now!"

And Beppo, utterly disheartened, moves on. It has been a poor day for

business; he does not dare to go home with the few cents he has earned; and now the stern mandate of the officer has cut off his last chance of getting more.

He pauses under a gas-lamp, and, by its flickering rays, he counts his cents over. Just ten—enough for coffee and rolls; and he crosses over to a little restaurant, and is soon indulging in a bit of extravagance. Supper over, he plans where he shall sleep.

He remembers a box filled with straw which he has seen in his wanderings. He wends his way towards it, and, when ten strikes from the tall church-tower near by, Beppo is calmly asleep, his guitar pressed tenderly upon his breast.

* * * * *

Twelve o'clock. As the last stroke reels out upon the frosty air, Beppo awakes from a troubled dream. His sharp ear catches the sound of voices, and he remains almost breathless.

"How are you going to work the job?" says some one in a hoarse whisper.

"It's as easy as rolling off a log," replies his companion. "The girl leaves the kitchen window unlatched, and we're in the house as nice as you please. Have you brought all the tools?"

"All in this bag," rejoins the first, and Beppo, wide awake now, hears something jingle.

"Then, ho for old Howland's silver!" chuckles the second, and the two move off.

Beppo hears their footsteps die away. He comprehends it all,—that there is to be a robbery,—and wonders how he can prevent it. The name Howland he has heard before, and he knows that he may be the means of saving much.

He arises from his cramped position, and, stretching himself, reaches for his guitar. Then, shivering as the piercing winds strike through his tattered clothing, he glides swiftly down the street—on until the bright light of a police-station greets his vision.

In broken sentences, he tells his story to the sergeant in charge, and the latter at once sends two officers out to investigate the matter.

Beppo knows that he has done his duty—he can do no more. Unnoticed, he steals out into the dark street. Two or three blocks passed, a strange feeling comes over him. The snow falls so fast that he can scarcely see before him. Sick and dizzy, he gropes his way up the steps of a private residence and falls fainting in the door-way.

* * * * *

The *Herald*, two days after, contained among its advertisements the following:

IF THE LAD who gave the valuable information that led to the frustration of designs upon a Fifth Avenue house, will send his address to A—H—, Herald office, he will hear of something to his advantage.

And the following in its local department:

FROZEN TO DEATH.

Yesterday morning, while Mr. John Smith, of Blank street, was searching for his paper in the door-way, his attention was drawn to a little figure half covered by the snow. A guitar was tightly clasped in his hands. A doctor was immediately summoned and stimulants were given, but to no avail. The poor little fellow was quite dead. He was subsequently identified as Beppo, who, with his instrument, was quite well known among people in the lower district.

St. Nicholas.

A WINTER SONG.

Oh, Summer has the roses
And the laughing light south wind,
And the merry meadows lined
With dew, dawning peacocks,
But Winter has the spruces,
And the witching frosty nights

Oh, Summer has the splendour
Of the corn fields wide and deep,
Where scarlet poppies sleep
And wary shadows wander,
But Winter to his care
With diamonds everywhere.

Oh, Summer has the wild bees
And the ringing, singing note
In the robin's tuneful throat,
And the lark talk in the trees,
But Winter has the lull
Of the merry Christmas time.

Oh, Summer has the lustre
Of the sunbeams warm and bright,
And rains that fall at night
Where reds and lilacs cluster;
But deep in Winter's snow
The fires of Christmas glow.

St. Nicholas.

HOW TO MAKE THE BEST OF A HOLIDAY.

It is well to have these seasons of rest from study and work—these times of joy and innocent recreation. They give us delight in looking forward to them, and pleasure in remembering them when they are gone. The old man never forgets the happiness he had when these seasons came to him in his childhood. They give him joy even now, in his old days, when he thinks of them.

How to make the best of a holiday is often a very important question. We ought to get all the good out of it we can; but in this world joy and sorrow so often lie near each other that we need care lest, in the pursuit of joy, we step over the boundary line, and find ourselves in the field of sorrow. Many a holiday begun in sunshine has ended in a storm.

Selfishness will spoil any holiday, or any other day; so that the very means which some foolish people take to obtain enjoyment brings them only grief. We get a great deal more happiness by trying to make other people happy than by selfishly thinking of ourselves only.

Especially on Christmas, the day of days, ought we to try to be unselfish; for this day celebrates the birth of him who was the most unselfish being the world ever saw. Because of God's great gift to men in the person of his Son, and because this Son gave himself to the world, we ought on Christmas-day to see what we can do to make others happy. This is the most appropriate way of keeping Christmas.

What we do on Christmas will be a good thing to do on every other day of the year. To make others happy it is not necessary to neglect our work and try to do theirs. That might be mere meddlesomeness, and, in any case, is uncalled for. We must do our own work, and make it a part of that work to help others in every way we can. This is often an easy matter. A kind word, a gentle look, a loving deed, do not cost much, yet they accomplish much, but whether they give little labour or much, our duty is still the same. Unselfishness will help us to enjoy life as though it were all a holiday.—*Classmate.*

HAPPY NEW-YEAR.

THE Old Year has passed, with its joys and its sorrows;
The New Year has come, with its hopes and its fears;
And now, on its threshold of unknown to-morrows,
Dear friends, we would wish you "a happy New-year."

We ask not for honour, we look not for treasure;
These last but a moment, they soon disappear.

Though ours were silver and gold without measure,
Oh, these could not bring us "a happy New-year."

We know not what cares may e'en now be before us;
We know not what joy or what grief may be near;

We know not what voice may be missed from our chorus
When next we shall wish you "A happy New-year."

But we know that the smile of our Father in heaven
Brings sunshine to sorrow, dispels every fear.

He will not withhold who a Saviour has given;
And, oh! may he send you "A happy New-year."

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLKS:
Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, JANUARY, 13, 1853.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS, AND MISSIONARY MEETINGS.

ALL over the country the missionary meetings are now being held. The late General Conference recommended, "That it be an instruction from this General Conference to all Superintendents of Circuits that they be required to promote, as far as possible by co operation with the Sunday-school officers, the formation, in connection with each Sunday-school, of a Juvenile Missionary Society in accordance with the principles and constitution of the Blake System above mentioned, or of some other approved system, for the collection of missionary money, the diffusion of missionary information, and the cultivation of a missionary spirit.

"Also that Superintendents of Circuits be requested to secure, as far as possible, the presence of the Sunday-school in a body at the missionary meeting, and their participation in its services by singing missionary hymns

and presenting their missionary offerings; in the firm conviction that such participation will increase the popular interest in those meetings, and will be of great reflex benefit to the schools."

We hope that this recommendation will be largely adopted. The most successful missionary meetings we have ever attended have been those where the Sunday-school scholars were present and took part by singing missionary hymns, and presenting their missionary offerings. The presence of the young folk will secure the presence of their parents and friends. A high degree of missionary enthusiasm is thus created, and the young are brought into sympathy with the grandest of causes. We have often felt pained at missionary meetings by the almost total absence of the young people as though it were no concern of theirs. As a result the older folk were frequently comparatively apathetic as well. In contrast with this is the story we have heard of a boy who was trudging through the mud to a missionary meeting. "Well, my little man," said the preacher, "where are you going through the mud?" "To the missionary meeting," was the reply. "What do you know about missions?" continued the preacher. "Oh, I have a share in the concern," the boy proudly replied. That boy as he grew up would feel an intelligent interest in all missionary subjects.

Now we want all our young people to feel that they "have a share in the concern." That they are helping along the good cause. That it is theirs as much as the older people's. And let superintendents and teachers arrange that the schools, as such, shall look forward to the missionary meeting and prepare for it, and help all they can to make it a grand success.

It needs to be continually repeated that the Sunday-school lessons need study, on the part of both teachers and scholars, quite as much, at least, as the week-day school lessons. In every well regulated family the parents see to it that the children study their common school lessons, and the young always get an inspiration from any interest shown by parents in their studies. The same is true of the Bible lessons, and surely parents are inexcusably remiss who do not see to it that these are studied. And as parents equally with their children need, and may be profited by, Bible study, it is at once becoming and beautiful that these lessons be studied together by all in the family. Here is a prime way of spending part of the long evenings.

EVERY family should have in it at least one copy every month of the S. S. BANNER, as a valuable, and, in our own schools, almost indispensable, help in studying these lessons. We, therefore, would impress upon pastors, superintendents, and teachers the importance and feasibility of accomplishing this. What a help it would be in the spiritual intelligence and enlargement of the Church! See to it, as a splendid good work with which to close the old year and open the new! Appoint a committee of active persons to canvass the congregation, and do it. Sixty five cents cannot be spent by each family to better advantage. Specimens free on application.

LETTER FROM REV. THOMAS CROSBY.

Missionary at Port Simpson, Pacific Coast.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,—You will be glad to know that we reached our mission home safely, and right thankful we were to be here. Our children found some parts of the journey very wearisome, but all enjoyed the kind welcome of the people and quiet of home.

I have made several visits to outposts since our return, making about 600 mile's journey in all, mostly by canoe. I hope you are all doing what you can to help us to get the mission steamer. We need it much, and I cannot get it built till I have money enough. I need at least \$1,000 more. I know some are busy. In Tilsonburg there is a little band of Christian boys who have agreed to give one-tenth of all the money they receive to God. One of them sent me a dollar lately to be used for the benefit of the Indians. A d this was money that he had saved out of his own earnings.

We have heard too from the Queen's Avenue Sunday-school, London. Five dollars of "self-denial money" have been sent for the boat. Thirty-seven cents of this represents the careful earnings of a little boy eight years old who thought this the best way to invest his money. In Brantford also the boat has not been forgotten; some dear little girls there sends us the proceeds of a bazaar, \$16 35. I hope all the children of our Sunday-schools will do something for the mission ship.

I have just returned from a visit to Kit-a-Mat, 160 miles from Port Simpson, where I spent some days. We have had a little church here for several years, and a native teacher. The bell of their church was broken so they subscribed for a new one, blankets, articles of clothing, and various things made up the list. These people are poor, but many of them love the cause of God.

I was rejoiced, while saddened, to hear of several very happy deaths that had occurred among them. One little boy I must tell you about who died very happy under very trying circumstances. His name was We-nestle, which means "fighting black fish." His family were great fighters, and their crest was the black fish. His Christian name was Peter. His mother was a widow with but another child, a little girl, besides himself. They belonged to a heathen tribe, but came to live at Kit-a-Mat where the children attended our Mission school. Peter had been sickly, but was some stronger, and though only about twelve years old could use a gun very well. One day in winter he and his mother went some miles from home to hunt ducks. Ducks then were plenty, but they kept pretty well out of the way of Peter's gun. He had brought down only one when, as the Indians often do, they took some evergreen boughs and covered the canoe and themselves and floated on like a drifting tree. But the canoe was now top heavy, and at the next shot it capsized. The gun was lost, but Peter and his mother both managed to cling to the upturned canoe. The tide was rising and drifting them towards the shore, but the beach was a rocky one with no possible landing place. At last Peter saw a chance, and leaving the canoe swam to shore and scrambled on to the rocks,

but his mother was still on the canoe. And now Peter became terribly distressed about her, he ran to and fro on the bluffs through deep snow crying and praying for his mother while she was driven about in the surf. After several hours of this terrible suspense the mother, by a merciful Providence, was driven into a little nook in the rock-bound shore where she could get ashore. Her boy, now overjoyed to see her safe, exhausted with fatigue and excitement, ran wildly to the edge of the bluff, and then threw himself down to his mother's arms crying, "Oh, mother, mother, are you here! I am dying, but do not fear, I have prayed for you and God will help you," and then he expired. Here was the poor woman with her dead boy in her arms with no help near; the canoe was gone, night coming on bitter cold, the tide rising fast. She tore strips from her blanket and tied to the boys wrists, and holding these kept his body from floating away while she herself clung for her life to a projecting shrub on the side of the rocks. Here she spent a terrible night sustained only by her trust in God, a trust strengthened by the dying assurance of her boy. Morning came but no help; the tide fell and rose again, but before another night overtook her a passing canoe rescued the now exhausted woman, and she took her poor boy to bury him in the Christian village. Poor little Peter!

Dear young friends, have you the simple trust that this little boy had, and will you not do all you can to send the blessed Bible to those who have not heard it?

We have come to the long evenings. How shall they be spent? By all means at home, as a rule. Make the home comfortable, warm, light, cheery, happy; so much so that the young people will not be anxious to go elsewhere. Provide food for the young people's minds and for their right fancies and enjoyments, even more carefully than you do for their bodies. Have picture-books and papers, games and fun, as well as more sober reading and study. Let the elder members of the family enter into the feelings and fun of the younger ones, if the latter are to be expected to join in the more sober and instructive pastimes of the former. "Rejoice with them that do rejoice." "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." "By love serve one another."—Augsburg Teacher.

FROM the fact that there were no Sunday-school Lesson Notes in the first number of HOME AND SCHOOL, some persons have thought that there would be none. They must have overlooked the explanation given in that paper, that the first number was published so long before the new year that it was impossible to insert in it the lesson notes, but that future numbers would have full lesson notes entirely different from those in PLEASANT HOURS or SUNBEAM.

THE Superintendent of a Sunday-school which distributes nearly a thousand periodicals monthly remarked to us the other day that he had found our Canadian Sunday-school papers to be cheaper and more satisfactory than any imported, and that he intended to give very large orders for them.—The Wesleyan, Halifax.



RATS CARRYING AN EGG UPSTAIRS.

THE BOY'S COMPLAINT.

"Oh, never mind; they're only boys.
Tis thus the people say,
And they hustle us and jostle us,
And drive us out the way.

They never give us half our rights;
I know that this is so;
Ain't I a boy? and can't I see
The way that these things go!

The little girls are petted all,
Called "honey," "dear," and "sweet,"
But boys areuffed at home and school,
And knocked about the street.

My sister has her rags and dolls,
Strewn all about the floor,
While old dog Growler dares not put
His nose inside the door.

And if I go upon the porch
In hopes to have a play,
Some one calls out, "Hallo, young chap,
Take that noisy dog away!"

My hoop is used to build a fire,
My ball is thrown aside;
And mother let the baby have
My top because it cried.

If company should come at night,
The boys can't sit up late;
And if they come to dinner, then
The boys, of course, must wait.

Our Lesson Helps for the first half of 1883 will have the Catechism lessons for each Sunday, abbreviated, that is, the parts to be committed by all will be printed as supplemental lessons. This is to give all the scholars a better chance.

WONDERFUL RATS.

THE sagacity of the rat in the pursuit of food is marvellous. Indeed, he is so cunning, and works with such almost human ingenuity, that the accounts of his efforts, which are perfectly correct, are sometimes looked upon as mere fables. It is known that rats will carry eggs from the bottom to the top of a house, lifting them from stair to stair, the first rat pushing them up on its hind, and the second lifting them with its fore legs. They will extract the cork from a flask of Florence oil, dip in their long tails, and repeat the manoeuvre until they have drawn off every drop. Not long ago a rat was seen to mount a table on which a drum of figs was placed, and straightway to tip it over, scattering its contents on the floor beneath, where a score of his expectant brethren were waiting the result of his daring and ingenuity.

A CERTAIN clergyman who left a notice in his pulpit to be read by the preacher who exchanged with him, neglected to denote carefully a private postscript, and the congregation were astonished to hear the stranger wind up by saying, "You will please come to dine with me at the parsonage."

We beg to acknowledge a receipt of \$7 for Children's Hospital from Miss Perry and other friends at Violet.

THE NEW YEAR.

THERE is something very suggestive in the old Roman idea of the *God of boundaries*. For, the lines that are drawn upon our life, as time passes away, and the future becomes the past, can scarcely be too closely scanned.

"Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours,
And ask them what report they bore to Heaven;
And how they may have borne more welcome news."

And, therefore, the passing away of one year, and the coming of the next, must challenge the very grave consideration of every thoughtful mind. For that has gone that can never be recalled; and that has come that will never pass away. We can no more get back to where we stood, nor be what we were when the year commenced. Something has occurred about us which is irreversible; and something has taken place in us, which we cannot change.

And when we speak of the flight of time, do we not use words expressive of an idea that is not strictly true?

"It is not time that flies:
Tis we; 'tis we are flying,
It is not Time that dies;
'Tis we, 'tis we are dying!
Time and Eternity are one—
Time is Eternity begun."

For is not time that which is measured by periods—because we are imperfectly developed? And is not eternity that which has no measure, because we have attained our development? Does spirit ever grow old? Does thought ever decay? And is a spiritual nature subject to the measurement of days and weeks and years? Therefore, the measurement—by the revolution of heavenly bodies—of the periods of our existence here, and as we are now constituted, is simply a tribute of acknowledgment of our imperfect state. It will not be our experience when we are clothed upon with our spiritual bodies.

Will it be said, does not the Apostle assert that time is short?

Of course he does. But not in the sense of short as opposed to long. The truth he is teaching has no connection with that. Literally, his expression is "The time that remains is shortened." Shortened, as the furlled sail is. As the corpse, wrapped around with the grave-clothes of the ancients, was. It is true of "the time," or dispensation that remains. It is shortened, furlled in, wound around with limitations, both of good and evil. The vessel with the furlled sail is the symbol of the dispensation or "the time" in which we are called to do our work. Everywhere it is one of limited powers. There is no evil that is not checked. There is no good that is not hemmed about with opposing evil.

And the voice of the passing year

is, that we are so much the nearer to the close of this state of things. The era of the shortened sail, and the furlled-in powers, is drawing to its close. Its sands are fast running out. Bye-and-bye we shall reach the land of the living. "In a little while" we shall enter upon our perfected state, and that which is in part shall be forever done away.

Meanwhile, with strangely impressive eloquence, the passing year calls upon us,

a. To place a right estimate upon the events by which we are surrounded. Because "the time is shortened," we should "let our moderation be known to all men." We must not be unduly elated by prosperity, nor cast down by adversity or trial.

b. To be faithful in doing the work that yet remains to be done. The command is, " Occupy till I come " And the declaration is, "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing!"

It is just the message of the new year to every one of us. Shall we wisely and reverently heed it?

A BOY'S RELIGION.

IF a boy is a lover of the Lord Jesus Christ he cannot lead the prayer-meeting, or be a Church-officer, or a preacher, but he can be a godly boy, in a boy's way, and in a boy's place. He ought not to be too solemn or too quiet for a boy. He need not cease to be a boy because he is Christian. He ought to run, jump, play, climb, and yell like a real boy. But in it all he ought to show the spirit of Christ. He ought to be free from vulgarity and profanity. He ought to eschew tobacco in every form, and have a horror of intoxicating drinks. He ought to be peaceable, gentle, merciful, generous. He ought to take the part of small boys against large boys. He ought to discourage fighting. He ought to refuse to be a party to mischief, to persecution, to deceit. And above all things he ought now and then to show his colors. He need not always be interrupting a game to say that he is a Christian; but he ought not to be ashamed to say that he refuses to do something because it is wrong and wicked or because he fears God or is a Christian. He ought to take no part in the ridicule of sacred things, but meet the ridicule of others with a bold statement that for all the things of God he feels the deepest reverence—*Royal Road*.

"MY LADS, BE HONEST."

DR LIVINGSTONE, the famous explorer, was descended from the Highlanders; and he said that one of his ancestors, a Highlander, one day called his family around him. He was dying; and he had his children around his death-bed. He said: "Now, my lads, I have looked all through our history as far back as I can find it, and I have never found a dishonest man in all the line; and I want you to understand you inherit good blood. You have no excuse for doing wrong. My lads, be honest."

MEN look at the fault of others with a telescope—at their own with the same instrument reversed, or not at all

REQUIRED READING, S. S. R. U.

STORIES FROM CANADIAN HISTORY*

BY THE EDITOR.

LUNDY'S LANE.



VERY possible provision that wise foresight could suggest was made for the defence of the Niagara Frontier towards the close of the war of

1812-15. Fort George was strengthened and re-occupied. A new fort—Fort Mississauga—with star-shaped ramparts, moat, and stockade, had been constructed at the mouth of the river. Its citadel is a very solid structure, with walls eight feet thick, built of the bricks of the devastated town of Niagara. A narrow portal with a double iron door admits one to the vaulted interior of the citadel, and a stairway, constructed in the thickness of the wall, conducts to the second story or platform, which is open to the sky. Here were formerly mounted many heavy guns, and the fire-place for heating the cannon-balls may still be seen.

One day toward the latter part of July,—It was the twenty-fifth of the month, a day for ever memorable in the annals of Canada,—early in the morning a convoy of schooners and barges, filled with armed men, was seen gliding up the Niagara River, their snowy sails gleaming beyond the fringe of chestnuts that bordered the stream. The Union Jack floating gayly at the peak, and the inspiring strains of "Britannia Rules the Wave" swelling on the breeze as the fleet approached, gave the assurance of welcome reinforcements to the struggling army in the field.

And right welcome those reinforcements were that day. Disembarking at Queenston landing, and climbing the steep hill, they marched through smiling orchards and green country roads to the bloody field of Lundy's Lane, where many of them ended life's march for ever.

We shall depend for the further record of that eventful day on the narrative of Zonas, as subsequently reported, with all the vivid touches of personal experience and eye-witness. With bandaged head and one arm in a sling he sat at the kitchen table, explaining to his father and some neighbours the fortunes of the fight. His story, disentangled from the interruptions of his auditors, was as follows. "You see," he said, making a rude diagram of the battle on the supper-table with the knives and forks, "General Riall took up a strong position on Lundy's Lane early in the day, with the regulars and the Gleggarr militia; and Lieutenant Colonel Robinson commanded the sedentary militia. The enemy lay on the other side of Chippewa Creek, and didn't move till late in the afternoon. If they had come in the morning, they could have crushed us like an egg-shell," and he suited the action to the word, by crushing into fragments one that lay upon the table.

"But we got it hard enough as it

* It was found impossible to finish this series of sketches in PLEASANT HOURS for 1882. They will be concluded in two or more numbers of the present year.

was. General Winfield Scott,* began pounding away at us with his artillery just before sundown. We expected to be reinforced before long, so we determined to hold the hill where our own battery was planted at any cost. The sun went down; it got darker and darker; still the cannon flashed their tongues of flame, and the deadly rattle of the musketry went on without a minute's pause for three mortal hours. The Yankee sharpshooters crept up in the darkness behind a screen of barberry bushes growing in the panels of a rail fence, and at a volley picked off all the gunners of our battery but three. Then, with a cheer, they rushed forward with the bayonet, and wrestled in fierce hand-to-hand fight with our infantry for the guns, which were alternately taken and re-taken on either side.

"Our troop of dragoons was ordered to charge up the hill and re-capture the guns. I had only time to lift up my heart in prayer, and say 'Lord have mercy upon us,' when a round shot struck my horse. He reared straight up and fell backward, partly falling upon me. All at once everything got black, and I heard not a sound of the din of battle that was raging round me. After a while, I don't know how long, it seemed like hours, I became aware of a deep thunderous sound that seemed to fill the air and cause the very earth to tremble, and I knew it was the roar of the Falls. Then I felt an intolerable aching, as if every bone in my body was broken. I opened my eyes and saw the moon shining through the drifting clouds. I was parched with thirst and raging with fever, and felt a sharp pain piercing my temple. Raising my arm to my head, I found my hair all clotted with blood from a scalp wound.

"Just then I heard a rattle and a cheer, and galloping down hill full in the moonlight, right toward the spot where I lay, a brass field-gun fully horsed, the drivers lashing the horses with all their might. I was afraid they would gallop over me, and raised my arm to warn them aside. But they either didn't see or couldn't heed, and on came the heavy cannon, lurching from side to side, the polished brass gleaming in the moonlight like gold. I heard a deep shuddering groan as the heavy wheels rolled over a wounded man beside me, crushing the bones of his legs like pipe stems. As the plunging horses galloped past, one iron-shod hoof struck fire against a stone just beside my head. In the momentary flash I could see the hoof poised just beside my face. I remember I noticed that it had been badly shod, and one of the nails was bent over the edge of the shoe. By a merciful Providence, instead of dashing my brains out he stepped on one side, and I received no further hurt. After the roar of the battle had ceased, while the solemn stars looked down like eyes of pitying angels on the field of slaughter, I managed to crawl to the road-side and wet my parched lips with some muddy water that lay in a cattle track. In the morning Trueman found me and took me off the field, and here I am laid up for one while. I pray God I may never see another battle. It is a sight to make angels weep and devils rejoice, to see men

* Afterwards Commander-in-Chief of the United States armies.

thus mangling each other like wild beasts of prey."

"Amen!" said his father. "Even when it is just, war is the greatest of calamities; and when unjust, it is the greatest of crimes."

Sadder still was the story told by Neville Trueman to Katharine Drayton, as he conveyed to her the dying message of Captain Villiers. The Captain was gallantly cheering on his company, when a bullet pierced his lungs. He fell from his horse and was bore to the rear, and carried into the little Methodist Church, which had been turned into a temporary hospital. Here Neville Trueman was busily engaged in far different ministrations from those which were the wont of that consecrated spot. The seats had been removed, and beds of unthreshed wheat sheaves from the neighbouring harvest-fields were strewn upon the floor.

As the bleeding form of Captain Villiers was brought in, Neville saw by his deathly pallor and his laboured breathing that he had not many hours to live. He sat down beside him on the floor and took the hand of the dying man, which he softly caressed as it lay passive in his grasp. Opening his eyes, a wan smile of recognition flickered over the pallid countenance. He tried to speak, but in vain. Then he pointed to his breast pocket, and made signs which Neville interpreted as a wish that he should take something out. He obeyed the suggestion, and found the copy of Wesley's Hymns given him by Katharine Drayton, but now, alas! dyed with the life-blood of a loyal heart.

"Tell her," said the dying man, but he faltered in his speech. Then, with difficulty opening the book, he turned to a passage where the leaf was turned down and a hymn was marked with the letters "H. V.," the initials of Herbert Villiers. The hymn was that sublime one beginning—

"Now I have found the ground wherein
Sure my soul's anchor may remain:
The wounds of Jesus, for my sin
Before the world's foundation stain;
Whose mercy shall unshaken stay,
When heaven and earth are fled away."

The dying eyes looked eagerly at Neville as the latter read the words; but when he replied, "Yes, I will tell her, and give her back her book enriched with such a sacred recollection," a look of infinite content rested on the pallid face.

"I bless God I ever met her," faltered the failing voice. "Tell her," it continued with a final effort, "Tell her—we shall meet again—where they neither marry—nor are given in marriage—but are as the angels of God in heaven!" And with a smile of ineffable peace the happy spirit departed from the carnage of earth's battles to the everlasting peace of the skies.

The fellow-officers of Captain Villiers erected over the grave in which their comrade was buried, beneath the walls of the humble Methodist Church, a marble slab commemorating his valour and his heroic death. With the lapse of five-and-sixty years, however, its brief inscription has become well nigh illegible through the weathering of the elements, and the grave has become indistinguishable from the mouldering mounds on every side around it. But beneath the funeral hatchment of his father, on the chancel walls of Melton-Mowbray Church, is a marble shield

charged with a cross enguled and a wyvern volant, and a record of the untimely death of the hope and bastion of the house on the banks of the far-off Niagara.

NEW YEARS THOUGHTS.

BY THE LATE MRS. J. B. LADY, U. S. A.

FAREWELL, Old Year! the rustle of whose garment,
Fragrant with memory, I still can hear
For all thy tender kindness and thy bounty
I drop my thankful tribute on thy bier

What is in store for me, brave New Year,
hidden
Beneath thy glistening robe of ice and
snows?
Are there sweet songs of birds, and breath of
lilacs
And blushing blooms of June's sweet Eden
rose?

Are there cold-winds and dropping leaves of
autumn,
Heart-searching frosts, and storm-clouds
black and drear?
Is there a rainbow spanning the dark heaven?
Wilt thou not speak and tell me, glad New
Year?

As silent art thou of the unknown future
As if thy days were numbered with the
dead;
Yet, as I enter thy wide-open portal,
I cross thy threshold with glad hope, not
dread.

To me no pain or fear or crushing sorrow
Hast thou the power without His will to
bring;
And so I fear thee not, oh, untried morrow!
For well I know my Father is thy King.

If joy thou bringest, straight to God, the
giver,
My gratitude shall rise; for 'tis His gift:
If sorrow, still, mid waves of grief's deep
river,
My trembling heart I'll to my Father lift.

If life's full cup shall be my happy portion,
With thankful joy I'll drink the precious
draught;
If death, my waiting soul across Life's ocean
But little sooner to my home 'twill waft.

So, hope lit New Year, with the joys
uncertain,
Whose unsolved mystery none may foretell,
I calmly trust my God to lift thy curtain;
Safe in His love, for me 'twill all be well.

A SAD MARRIAGE.

A STORY is told of a young wife's luckless choice of a heartless wretch of a husband. She was the daughter of a clergyman, and in her own right enjoyed a competency. She married a fast young fellow who also owned a modest fortune. He promised to leave his wicked ways, and for a time after his marriage did so, but liquor conquered him and he soon forgot his promises. One step after another brought him to want, and then he commenced to pawn his own, his wife's, and his child's articles of wear. The baby's cot went for drink and the bed his wife lay upon also. At length the unfortunate lady was compelled to seek support and shelter at the House of Industry and Refuge. She is said to be now dying of consumption, superinduced by the crime of the man who had promised to protect and love her. He is a wanderer on the streets and elicits as much indignation as compassion from those who know him and his wretched history.

A LADY, when admiring the stars on a bright night in a tropical climate, was suddenly asked in the most innocent way by her little son of five years old if those were the nails that held up heaven.

TOO DEEP FOR THAT.

"Y. S." said Farmer Brown,
Bringing his hard fist down
On the old oak table.

"They say that men can talk,
From Paris to New York,
Through a sunken cable!

"Tis perfectly absurd;
For to hear a single word
No man is able;
And it's clear enough to me
That this wispspr of mystery
Is a foolish fable.

"The news we get from Rome
Is all made up at home,
'Tis my conviction.
And that you see will account
For the terrible amount
Of contradiction.

"Yes," said Farmer Brown,
Bringing his hard fist down
On the old oak table
"My wife and I have tried
The experiment; we tied
A good stout bit of cable

"To the fence just over there
And the rocker of this chair;
And we couldn't do it,
Though we screamed ourselves as hoarse
As tree toads; but of course
Not one word went through it!

"Don't talk to me I pray,
Of fresh news every day
Through sunken cables:
Sea-yarns are always tough,
And I have heard enough
Of such old fables!"

THE HIDDEN CLOCK.

FOR THE NEW YEAR.

ONE lovely summer evening I was walking with a friend down a quiet street, when our attention was arrested by what we thought a curious sight. The day had been very hot, and most of the houses that we passed had the windows wide open to admit the air, which was now beginning to be pleasantly cool. In one house the lower sash was thrown up, and, as we walked by, we could see the pendulum of a clock that was on the wall, but the blind drawn over the upper part of the window hid the face from our sight.

"How singular that pendulum looks!" I said; "it is swinging away as if it were all alone, and were just going backwards and forwards to amuse itself."

"Yes," said my friend, "it is strange to watch that moving thing without seeing the other part of the clock. Do you know what it makes me think of?"

"Of what?" I asked.

"Well," said my companion, "somehow that pendulum, which we see while the clock is hidden, seems very much like our life on earth: slowly, regularly passing from us a day at a time. Each day seems like one tick of the clock, and each New Year like the striking of another hour. Now, as I look at that pendulum, there are some things that I know about the clock, and others that I cannot tell. I know there is a clock on the wall, and that, at some time, it has been set going, and that at another definite period it will stop. I know too that the clock did not set itself going, and without its permission every hour brings it nearer to the point when the weights will run down, and it cannot help stopping. But I cannot say how many times it has yet to tick. It may be that for several hours longer the pendulum will swing backwards

and forwards, or, perhaps, the weights are nearly run down, and it has only a few more minutes to remain in motion.

"And I know just about as much and as little as to the duration of my own life. I was 'set going,' so to speak, without any consent or control of my own; I shall not be asked when I have had enough of life. We talk about time passing more swiftly as we grow older, and so it seems to do, though, in many cases the longer people live the harder it is for them to realize that they are coming nearer to the point when time shall be no longer. Yet we cannot really lessen the speed, or arrest the flight of our days. Some times we wish very much that they would pass quickly. Look at that sailor-boy, who is coming home from his first voyage. He hopes in a few days to be in port, and soon to meet his friends. How he wishes that the vessel would sail more swiftly, and the days fly more quickly, till he reaches his home! But "time and tide" do not haste, more than they wait for any one. Look at him again after a few weeks are over, and his holiday on shore is nearly spent. In a few days he must join his ship; he would give a good deal now to keep back the days from rushing on at such a rate; but he is just as unable to stop them now as he was to quicken their speed when he longed for the day to come that he should be free.

"Is there not something very solemn in the thought of the days that come and go swiftly and silently without asking our leave, and all the more so because such tremendous consequences depend upon the manner in which we employ them?"

The pendulum has ticked away many hours and days since that summer evening. The clock may be worn out now; but the lesson of that hidden clock has not been forgotten by either of us. The great clock of Time is *nearer run down* than it was then.

One bright New Year's morning a young lady paused in her country walk and entered a cottage where a good old woman lived. "A Happy New Year to you, Mrs. —!" was her cheery greeting. "The same to you," was the hearty response; "and I would like to say, Spend it to the Lord." This was quite a new idea to the young lady; the words kept coming up in her mind, till she began to wish to share the life that her poor old friend enjoyed; a life that could not be useless, because it was given to One who employs the least and the weakest, and better still, she sought till she found the way to live that life. What is the way? Do you really wish to know? Then wake up, and be in earnest, and come very humbly to God, asking him to help you. Ask Him, too, to forgive you for all the years you have squandered in idleness, or spent in open rebellion against Him; and for Christ's sake to receive you, and "create in" you a "clean heart." Then, if you thus put God in the centre of your life, so that His glory is the mainspring of your actions, you will not feel uneasy about the flight of time; for—

"It matters little at what hour of the day the righteous fall asleep,
Death cannot come to him untimely who is fit to die."

Try every day of this year to make somebody better and happier.

CANADA'S "BEST INTERESTS."

REV. D. L. BRETHER, under date of Nov. 16th, writes from Milton to the *Globe* thus.

Recently a deputation from the Licensed Victuallers' Association, consisting of Mr. Hodge, the President of that Association, and some other prominent members, waited upon Sir John A. Macdonald at Ottawa to seek his help in the direction of legislation in behalf of the traffic of which he is guide, counsellor, and friend. He assured Sir John that the legislation he and his friends sought would be "for the best interests of the country as well as the trade." I thank Mr. Hodge for this statement. "For the best interests of the country," says every citizen of this Dominion, and if "the trade," i. e. the liquor traffic, is not inimical to any of the interests of this country, but identical with and helpful to them, then we also say, "for the best interests of the trade." Legislation that seeks the best interests of the country cannot be against a legitimate, necessary, and honourable trade, but must be helpful to it. One of the points on which Sir John's aid was sought was to use his influence to secure the removal of the Saturday night restrictive clauses from the "Crooks Act." Can Mr. Hodge show that it would be for the best interests of the country to keep saloons and tavern bars open until eleven o'clock every Saturday night? What are the best interests of the country? Are not its social, moral, and religious interests among its best? Would it help any community socially to have the saloons open on Saturday nights? Would it make home happier, socially, for the husband, and father, and sons, to drink several glasses of beer or whiskey? Would it keep innocent laughter and mirth and song in that family? Would husband and father, and sons, spend the balance of the evening at home more contentedly because of it? Opening these saloons on Saturday evening, would it improve the morals of a community? Is a man more moral during his indulgence in and after drinking of liquor than he was before it? Does it make a family more moral to have the father or son come home under the influence of drink? Would it help a man to go to the house of God on Sabbath and worship more devoutly by drinking liquor on Saturday nights? Would his children be cleaner, better fed and clothed, and more interested in the study of the Sunday-school lesson on the sacred subject of the Crucifixion? Would the home service of prayer and song be more devout and spiritual because the husband spent an hour in a dram shop on Saturday night? Would this legislation help the pecuniary interests of the country? Let us ask, would it help the finances of the family? By how much would it not lessen the proceeds of a week's hard and honest labour, and for no profit? The money spent for beer or whiskey would mean so much less food, so much less clothing, and less home-comforts of many kinds. Whatever touches the homes of a nation touches the nation in its vital parts. The natural and necessary tendency of drink is to make the home poor and immoral and irreligious. This demand for legislation is an attack upon the homes. The best interests of "the trade" then are antagonistic to the best interests of the country. Just as "the trade" prospers, poverty

and crime increase. The ratio of its growth measures the ratio of the increase of sorrow to a people. Let every citizen aid in seeking legislation for the best interests of the country, and he must perforce aid in obtaining the passage of a law that will entirely suppress the traffic in all intoxicating liquors. "The best interests of the country" are all in the direction of temperance and prohibition. "The best interests of the trade" are in the arrest of these moral forces. Let us protect our country and our homes from the grasp of the liquor traffic, for whosoever it puts its fingers it leaves blood marks.

THE YEAR HAS GONE.

THE year has gone, and with it many a glorious throng
Of happy dreams. Its mark is on each brow,
Its shadows in each heart. In its swift course

It waved its sceptre o'er the beautiful,
And they are not. It laid its pallid hand
Upon the strong man, and the haughty form
Is fallen, and the flashing eye is dim.

It trod the hall of revelry, where thronged
The bright and jovous, and the tearful wail
Of stricken ones is heard where erst the

song
And reckless shout resounded. It passed
O'er

The battle-plain where sword and spear and shield

Flashed in the light of midday, and the strength

Of serried hosts is shivered, and the grass
Green from the soil of carnage, waves above
The crushed and mouldering skeleton. It came

And faded like a wreath of mist at eve;
Yet ere it melted in the viewless air
It heralded its millions to their home
In the dim land of dreams.

George D. Prentiss.

"NAKED, AND YE CLOTHED ME."

We have met with a beautiful story, how a Russian soldier, one very cold piercing night, kept duty between one sentry-box and another. A poor working man, moved with pity, took off his coat and lent it to the poor soldier to keep him warm; adding, that he should soon reach home, while the soldier would be exposed out of doors for the night. The cold was so intense that the soldier was found dead in the morning. Sometime afterwards the poor man was laid on his death-bed, and in a dream saw Jesus appear to him. "You have my coat on," said the man. "Yes, it is the coat you lent me that cold night when I was on duty, and you passed by. 'I was naked, and you clothed Me.'"

A WASHINGTON correspondent was going through the basement of a public building in that city recently, when an official directed his attention to an old man who was employed looking after the engine that runs the elevator. This man was once prominent as a member of the House of Representatives. Afterwards he was Lieutenant-Governor of his State. Then he was returned to Congress. During the war no member did more to get large appropriations for the soldiers, and he had probably more connection than any other one man with the present internal revenue laws, and the repealed income-tax laws. He could have made millions when the tax was put on whisky, but he did not, for he was in the secret. To shorten the thing up, he drank himself out of Congress and all the way down to this cellar, where he receives eighteen dollars per month, as a substitute for the regular engineer.

DONT LEAVE THE FARM

COME boys, I have something to tell you come near I would whisper it low— You are thinking of leaving the homestead; Don't be in a hurry to go.

The city has many attractions, But think of the vices and sin; When once in the vortex of fashion, How soon the course downward begins.

You talk of the mines, boys— They are wealthy in gold no doubt; But ah! there is gold in the farm, boys, If only you'll shovel it out.

The mercantile trade is a hazard The goods are first high and then low Better risk the old farm a while longer? Don't be in a hurry to go.

The farm is the safest and surest, The orchard is loaded to-day; You're as free as the air in the mountains And monarch of all you survey.

Better on the farm a while longer, Though the profits come in rather slow, Remember you've nothing to risk, boys, Don't be in a hurry to go.

LESSON NOTES

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

A. D. 30.] LESSON III. [Jan. 21.

THE BELIEVING PEOPLE.

Acts 2. 37-47. Commit to memory verses 38-41.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized. Acts 2. 41.

OUTLINE.

1. Earnest Seekers v. 37-40.
2. Glad Believers v. 41-43
3. United Christians. v. 44-47.

TIME.—A. D. 30, on the same day with the events of the last lesson.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

EXPLANATIONS.—Then heard—The people who listened to Peter's address. Pricked in their heart—Were touched in their conscience by the truth, and felt that they were sinners. What shall we do?—They meant to ask how they might be saved. Repent—Turn away from sin and toward God. Be baptized—As a sign of faith in Christ, and a confession before all men that they were Christ's disciples. For the remission of sins—To have sins forgiven through faith in Christ as the Saviour. Receive the gift of the Holy Ghost—A promise that God's Spirit would come upon them as well as the disciples. The promise—God's promise of salvation through Jesus Christ. To your children—To their descendants, those who should come after them. After off Peter here meant the Jews in other lands, but it was equally true of the Gentiles. Our God shall call—All who may hear the call of God through those who preach his word. Testify—He claim the truth of the Gospel. Exhort—Urge people to do their duty. Unto another generation—The people who had crucified their Saviour, and were opposed to his Gospel. Gladly—Glad to have the opportunity of seeking Christ. Baptized—In token of their faith in Christ and union with his people. Disciples—Teaching, or instruction. Fellowship—They went with them as friends. Breaking of bread—Taking their meals together, and doubling making every meal a celebration of the Lord's Supper. Prayers—The daily worship of the disciples in the temple, and also in the "upper room" where they had met. Fear—Reverence for Christ and respect for his followers. Wonders and signs—Miracles, one of which is related in the next chapter. All things common—Each brought what he owned into a common stock. This was not required by the Gospel, but done freely. Parted them—They gave to such as were in need. In Eastern lands the poor are very many. Eat their meat—Their daily food. Singleness of heart—With sincere, pure heart, not anxious for the future, but living wholly for Christ's cause. Having favour—Their glad, happy religion made people love them and honour Christ. The Lord added—All who are truly brought into the Church are added by the Lord. Should be saved—This should be "the saved," meaning those who were saved by turning to the Lord.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson may we find—

1. How we should receive the Gospel?

2. How we may keep the Gospel?
3. How we may make others love the Gospel?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What did Peter tell the people to do on the day of Pentecost? To repent and be baptized. 2. To whom did he say that God had given the promise of salvation? To them and their children. 3. How did the people receive Peter's words? With joy and gladness. 4. How many were on that day added to the Church? Thresh thou and people. 5. How did the believers show their love to each other? by giving as each needed.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Repentance from sin.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

6. Who was the mother of Christ? The mother of Christ was Mary, a virgin of the house of David.

A. D. 30.] LESSON IV. [Jan. 28.

THE HEALING POWER.

Acts 3. 1-11 Commit to memory vs. 6-8.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing. Isa. 35. 6.

OUTLINE.

1. The Beautiful Gate. v. 1-5.
2. The Blessed Gift. v. 6-11.

TIME.—A. D. 33, a few days after the events of the last lesson, no events being named between them.

PLACE.—The Temple at Jerusalem.

EXPLANATIONS.—Went up together—These two disciples were friends, and generally went together. The hour of prayer—This was at the hour when the sacrifice was offered in the afternoon. The ninth hour—About three o'clock, the first hour being at sunrise and the twelfth at sunset. Lame from his mother's womb—One who had been born a cripple. They laid daily—He was brought by his friends, as he could not walk. Gate of the temple—A gate between two of the courts of the temple. Called Beautiful—It is not known which gate this was. Gifts of money. Them that entered in—People who worship God are generally more willing to give than others. Who, seeing—This man was like the sinner in helplessness, need, and the fact that he was outside the house of God, for no cripple was allowed to enter within. Fastening his eyes—Looking on him intently. Look on us—In order to obtain the man's fixed attention. Silver and gold... none—The apostles were poor men, but rich in the power of Jesus. Such as I have—The power given from God. In the name of Jesus—He did not speak of his own power, but as the messenger of his Lord. Rise up and walk—The command was to do what seemed impossible, but in obeying power was given from on high. Lifting him up—As an encouragement and help. Entered... into the temple—Now healed, he had a right to go into the house of God. Praising God—He knew that the work was from God and not from men. People saw him—It was a time of day when great crowds were worshipping in the temple. Saw him walking—A person who had never walked could not do it at once without long practice, except by divine power. Knew that it was he—Because he was well known as a beggar. Had Peter and John—He clung to them in grateful love. Parable... called Solomon's—A well known parable on the east side of the temple. Perhaps Peter led the crowd toward it as a good place for preaching to them.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson do we find—

1. That Christ's followers love to pray?
2. That there are better things than silver and gold?
3. That there is power in Jesus' name?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Whom did Peter and John meet at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple? A lame man. What did Peter say to him? "Rise up and walk." 3. In whose name did he say this? In the name of Jesus Christ. 4. What did the lame man do? "He leaping up stood, and walked." 5. What did this miracle show? The power of Jesus' name. DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Faith in Christ.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

7. Who was the supposed father of Christ? Joseph the carpenter was supposed to be the father of Christ, because he married his mother, Mary.

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