

Pages Missing

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THE STAR.

BY FRANCES ERIN ALLISON.

Dear Mother Earth another Christmas Day
Is added to thy jewel casket old;
Thy children throng on every traveled way
With gifts of myrrh and frankincense and gold.

Again the age-worn story they repeat;
'Tis heard afresh by every listening ear,
Again the Star of Bethlehem they greet,
The heavenly chorus crowns the parting year.

And as the stately centuries pass along,
Dearer and dearer does the story grow,
Dearer the star, dearer the angels song,
The blessed family in the manger low.

Thy children all from care and grief beguiled
Seek with their gifts to-day a little child.

THE ORIGIN OF CHRISTMAS.

Long before the Christian era December 25th was religiously observed by the "sun-worshippers." On that day is about the first perceptible return of the sun to the northern hemisphere. His return would drive away the frosts and snows, warm up the frozen earth, and clothe the earth in beauty and luxury. The people looked upon the sun as a god, an intelligence, withdrawing to the south just long enough to let the people see what their home, the world, would be without his presence. His return on December 25th they hailed with delight. They rejoiced. They sent presents to their friends. They held their religious feasts, with music, mirth and dancing. Sometimes to great excess these feasts were carried. When Christ came, and His doctrine was preached among the "sun-worshippers," many were converted to Christianity. To break off their old habits was very difficult. When December 25th came, it brought the "sun-feast." There was the enticement to go and mingle. The Christian leaders were not slow to see what the influence would be, so they gave the day a Christian significance. They met in their meeting-houses. They gave presents to each other. They talked of Christ, the spiritual Sun, who had come to give light to and warm the spiritual world. He was the "light of the world." "The people which sat in darkness saw a great light," and "light had sprung up." "The light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not." "The worlds were made by Him." Therefore the sun was made by Him. The sun-worshippers "worshipped the creature more than the Creator," but the Christians worshipped the "Creator, who is blessed for evermore." The superiority of this over that was soon made visible, and the masses were released from idolatry. It mattered not whether December 25th was the birthday of Christ or not, the effect was the same.—The Voice.

OVER LAND AND SEA.

At the beginning of the present century the Bible could be studied by only one fifth of the earth's population. Now it is translated into languages which make it accessible to nine tenths of the world's inhabitants.

By arrangements with a large body of New York pastors special services have for several weeks past been held in that city at different points and particularly in Cooper Union under the conduct of Mr Moody. So great is the

interest awakened by these meetings that they are likely to be continued for some time longer. Mr. Moody is reported as saying that he had never known New York to be stirred religiously as it is to-day. The interest seems to be rapidly spreading beyond the confines of the city and many pastors within a radius of fifty miles propose to begin daily evening services.

It is not often that there assembles in a parish church a congregation of worshippers so august as that which assembled in Crathie Church on Sabbath, 27th September. In the Royal pews there were present Her Majesty the Queen; the Emperor of Russia, whose rule extends from the Baltic to the Pacific, and who has 5,000,000 of soldiers at his command, and the Empress; the Prince and Princess of Wales, the Duke and Duchess, of York, with other members of the Royal Family. In the same congregation there were present the Marquis of Salisbury, Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, and M. de Staal, the Russian Ambassador to Britain. It was to a congregation including these august personages that Dr. Colin Campbell of Dundee preached, his text being—"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory."

Glasgow, Scotland, shows what a stronghold of Presbyterianism it is by the fact that it has two hundred and seventy-five Presbyterian churches. Their influence is felt for good in every department of life in that busy, thriving and wide awake city. They have it in their power to make themselves a still greater blessing among all classes of the growing population.

Dr Macadam Muir, the popular incumbent of our ancient Cathedral Church says the *Christian Leader* is strongly of opinion that a young 'centiate when he gets a church should throw himself heartily into the work and not be always looking for something better. A needed hint this to young preachers, certain of whom might well be distinguished "Solicitors, general,"—with such pertinacity do they beset vacant congregations with their attentions.

The Moderator-Designate of the Free Church for 1897 is the Rev. Professor A. B. Davidson, D. D., LL. D., of the New College. He is one of the foremost of living Hebraists, his *Hebrew Grammar* being the text-book, we should think, in all the Divinity Halls of the country. His contributions to the Old Testament exegesis and criticism numerous and highly prized. It is a remarkable coincidence that Dr. Mair and Professor Davidson were born in the same year, and in the same district of Aberdeenshire, attended Marischal College at the same time, and competed together for the same scholarship, graduated together with honors, and are now in the same year brought together as Moderators of their respective Churches.

The Very Rev. Dr. Donald Macleod has received from a lady the sum of £100, which she has distributed among the Schemes as follows:—Foreign, £20; Home, £10; Colonies, £10; Jews, £10; Endowment, £10; Small Livings, £10; Synod in England, £10; Highlands, £10; Life and Work, £10.

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RETROSPECTIVE.

THE wane of the year is a time for looking back as well as forward. Beyond question the present and future hold out life's promise and life's hope, yet both present and future are rooted deeply in the past, and the past has its precious lessons to us all. How has the year about to be numbered with the past been spent by us? Have we faithfully striven to fulfil the resolutions of a year ago? Let us look back. This is a seasonable time for examination. It is not too late to retrieve many possible mistakes; it is not too late to add to our credit account for 1896:

No question is of greater importance in this connection than how our vows of self-consecration have been kept. Have we promised and forgotten? Nay, tried and failed? There is still time for repentance and trust for forgiveness and grace. The Christians work ought to begin at his own heart. How has our heart been towards God during 1896?

Next, how have we discharged our duties to our families? Have the fruits of grace shed their sunshine in the home, warming into a kindly glow the sympathies and affections of parents and children and sweetening the sacred relations of domestic life. If there be anything lacking, there is still time to resolve and to do. Leave it not until the New Year. Do you reply "what can be done in one short week?" Much. Family prayer, family worship, every day is within easy reach. Make a beginning to-day where these have fallen into disuse. Understand one another perfectly in the home; restore good feeling; let there be a devout humbling before God. These be great things that can be done this year.

We owe a duty to the Church and to the congregation with which we are connected. It is a timely question to ask with what loyalty and diligence we have discharged this duty. Congregational work offers a wide field. There are the various agencies, visiting, mission work, teaching, and so forth. Now every member and adherent ought to be a worker. It is a glorious privilege and just as certainly a glorious responsibility. There is no gainsaying this condition of Christian life. We must serve God in the vineyard. And the scope is limitless,—the diffusing of a spirit of kindly brotherhood, the bringing of a friend to hear the good news, the praying for souls. There need be no excuse nor pretence of a want of opportunity.

Then there is the great and necessary work of the Church at large. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has been greatly privileged. She has carried on her work earnestly, diligently and wisely. She boasts not; but he who runs may read. And she has to be thankful that not for years has the spirit of enquiry as to the management of her affairs been more in evidence than during these past few months. That spirit is a

proof of the awakening interest in the work of the Church by the younger members who have not had experience of her system, and therefore naturally and commendably seeks for information respecting details. But great work needs great outlay, great outlay of brains, and of money. The systematic giver knows how and how much he has contributed since January last. Make up the leeway, there is still time. Carry no balance forward to burden the New Year's effort. Let there be liberal, very liberal offerings on the last Sabbath of 1896. No Christmas or New Year's gift will be better bestowed than the dollar to the Church next Lord's Day.

And there are the solemn duties of citizenship. The great affairs of state have engaged attention this year. Will the part we played bear examination? If so let our patriotism be strengthened; if not, now is the time for repentance and new resolve. But nothing that is of public import is too insignificant to be neglected and at this season municipal interests claim a place in our thoughts. As we would happily end the old and begin the new, let us stand true to conscience in the discharge of all our public duties.

CHURCH FINANCES.

We published last week a letter from a minister regarding the official statement issued of the amounts required this year for the Schemes of the Church.

We learn that the Agent of the Church before issuing his Annual Estimate Circular corresponds with the respective committees and colleges and that the figures given are those supplied by the authorities themselves. The sums specified for Montreal, Queen's and Manitoba Colleges may therefore be assumed to be correct.

The amount asked by Knox College this year is \$18,500. This is rather under than over the amount that will be required. The expenditure of the College last year was \$19,278. The appointment of the two new Professors by the General Assembly will add at least \$3,000 to this amount for the current year, making say \$22,278. Add to this the deficit of last May—\$6,576—and we have \$28,854 as the total amount required for the year. From this has to be deducted the interest received from investments. Supposing this to be the same as last year—\$8,466—then upwards of \$20,000 would be required from the congregations of the Church. Strict economy is, however, being exercised so that it is hoped that \$18,500 may suffice. The amount asked is by no means an exaggerated estimate. It is hoped that every congregation may help to make it up.

The sum asked for Home Missions—\$30,000—is far from being the exaggerated estimate our correspondent supposes it to be. He has left out of his calculation a very important factor. Over and above the grants per Sabbath to fields, there was expended last year upwards of \$16,000 in travelling expenses of missionaries, salaries of mission superintendents, expenses of committee, printing, interest, salary of agent etc., etc. He has entirely overlooked these \$16,000. Adding these to the grants per Sabbath, we have upwards of \$76,000. The lump sum granted Manitoba and British Columbia is this year nearly \$1,500 larger than last year; this sum will be still further increased because of the increase made by last Assembly to the salaries of missionaries in British Columbia; the number of ordained missionaries employed in the older Provinces is this year greater than ever and as many of them take the place of catechists etc., the expense on the Home Mission

Fund is necessarily increased. In addition to all this a considerable number of new fields have been occupied since the beginning of the year. It is not easy in advance to form a strictly accurate estimate of the amount needed for Home Missions. Allowance ought always to be made for unexpected expenditure and for the extension of the work and this does not appear to have been unduly done in the estimates for the present year. If the \$80,000 asked by the committee is not got, they may be unable to pay the grants in full and to occupy the new fields that are constantly opening up. But for the Old Country grants last year the Fund would have been greatly behind. These cannot be relied upon for the future and, consequently, largely increased contributions are required from the congregations of our own Church.

PASTORAL EFFICIENCY.

The true test of a pastor's efficiency says the *New York Observer*, should, of course, be the spiritual impulse communicated under the divine blessing to the souls under his charge. But this is a highly organized and complex life of ours, and it is impossible for the church to escape the demand for business-like methods. Souls, of course, cannot be saved by organization or energy or that quality which men of business denominate "push," but as society stands and as the church is conducted, it is inevitable that business like capacity shall make itself felt just as truly in the church as in the world. And hereby hangs the delicate question, How far should mere clerical ambition or scholarly taste influence any young man in making his choice in favor of the Christian ministry?

Perhaps the most difficult question for human solution is apparently one of the simplest—whether the love of human souls is a dominant power in the breast. It is entirely safe to say that without such a feeling, intense and constant, the exercise of the ministerial office is a mockery. We cannot believe that such a postulate would be anywhere disputed; yet is it safe to apply that most crucial test to the rank and file of the ministry of to-day? We do not say that the commercial spirit—the desire to do as well as possible for one's self and one's family—is paramount with the ministry of this age. The charge of simony is too awful to be lightly bandied. But we do say that this is the greatest single temptation of the average Christian minister, especially as it comes in so innocent a garb—Satan transformed into a veritable angel of light. The minister who would be struggling with Hebrew roots and delving into intricate problems of theology while the ground was slipping under him in his congregation would be justly blamed. But the average worldly judgment goes a step further than this. It has a high estimate of the managerial quality in a minister. It admires a man who has a fair working knowledge of society, has some influence in the world of politics or sociology, knows how to turn a current event into an interesting pulpit or lecture discussion, can talk like a man of business with trustees, elders or vestrymen concerning proposed improvements to the church, figures occasionally, it may be, some leading magazine on ethical subjects, is invited now and then to deliver a baccalaureate address at some prosperous college, is known as a man of mark at synods, conferences or conventions—is, in short, a wide-awake, up-to-date man.

But there is a danger in this, and the point is, How great is the danger and how must it be met? It would be unsafe and revolutionary to make a minister's businesslike qualities a necessary reproach. Some men, fervent in prayer and earnest in doing the master's work, are yet gifted with the arts of popularity and practical usefulness. The mere anchoritic or ascetic spirit in the ministry cannot be too strongly

guarded against. The world needs practical men, and so does the church. But the power of the world over the church is something fearful. The tendency to pull away from supernatural and be matter-of-fact and ephemeral in aims, is the peculiar peril of our modern civilization. This, danger, too, must increase. The centres of churchly influence are in crowded cities where business is conducted necessarily on stringent lines. Finesse, flattery, the constant suppression of one's impulses, the constant wearing of masks, are found essential to those who would conceal their own natural defects and show their best possible side to the world. Vast numbers of people are placed in relations of practical subserviency to the tastes and whims of others, and if they relax at all do so in off hours. This spirit of self-sacrifice to self-interest—the "getting along" faculty—is by very many recognized as a positive virtue, and nothing is more swiftly condemned than the impulsiveness or want of discipline and purpose which keeps some men poor and lightly esteemed throughout their whole career. The consciousness of this thrall in which men's minds and hearts are held in business, will most naturally make itself felt in things spiritual. The same general law of self-restraint, of putting the best foot forward, of striving to please, will mingle with the very closet impulses of the most sincere and earnest Christian minister, especially under the complex surroundings and constant social and business pressure of an incumbency in a great city. The man who wants to preserve his candor and sincerity, his love for the souls of those whom he serves, and not merely for their applause, must dwell close indeed to the oracles. For such the closet life must, indeed, be one of great heart-searching. Such a man will realize that no amount of popular idolatry or incense following his footsteps can possibly be an indorsement in the eyes of an all-seeing God. He will realize that a worldly-minded, self-seeking Christian minister is a contradiction in terms. He will pray most earnestly to be delivered from this frightful spiritual peril of which Saint Paul was doubtless thinking when he spoke of the danger of himself becoming a castaway.

The spiritual condition of the Christian minister is about the most serious problem which the church has to meet—not merely his original sincerity in entering the ministry, and certainly not his skill or eloquence as a sermonizer or his ability to raise big amounts by forceful appeals, but his nearness to God. If he should not dwell near the throne of grace, who should? What lay example will be as certainly and closely scrutinized as his? And spirituality in a Christian minister is an essence. It is as different from mere morality as can well be imagined. It is something which will be felt, or else its absence will be felt. People do not ask whether the minister is a strictly moral, upright man or not. They assume all that. It is a dreadful scandal to the church if he is not. They do not ask just how fervent he is, but they watch him. They do it unconsciously, and they form their estimate often unconsciously. No human being can assume a love of souls. A prayer without inspiration has the false ring. It would be better for any man who is conscious of being cold and dead to be honest about it, and not to assume a spiritual fervor which he cannot feel. But how urgent the call from heaven itself that he should wake from such spiritual torpor, that he who was set to guide others in the way of life shall not be found sleeping by the way, successful, popular, an organizer, a "promoter," and yet a spiritual castaway!

GLAD CHRISTMAS BELLS.

BY MARGARET DOORIS.

Glad bells I hear, across the valley ringing;
How sweet they chime, how joyfully and clear!
To every home this Christmas day they're bringing
The message of good will of peace and cheer.

I stand to hear, and watch the snow-fields glistening,
While thought takes flight, and backward rolls each year,
With shepherds on the Bethlehem plains I'm listening;
Though vague and dim, as scenes in dreams appear.

With them I hear the heavenly hosts rejoicing,
"The Saviour Christ is born, oh! wherefore fear;"
"Glory to God on High," glad bells are voicing,
The reign of all good will and peace is here.

Glad bells I hear, Christ's love to man they're telling;
Not ours the power to fathom love so dear;
We stumbling try, like little children spelling,
And slowly learn the lesson year by year.

The True Christmas Song.

"O blessed song of peace, greeting a sin-stained earth!
Let sinful warfare cease for this the Saviour's birth
For this each gentle heart its glad good-will doth bring,
For this the heavens part and God's bright angels sing."

The angelic song: "On earth peace, good will toward men," has been echoed longingly all down the ages. Longingly, because of the strife inseparable from a mortal career. Eventually the earth's rough contact brings a sigh for peace of an enduring kind. The verse above speaks of "sinful warfare." And should it be asked what kind of warfare may this mean, we think the question could fittingly be answered by a line or two from some verses published years ago in war times. It is anything

"akin to whatsoever
Is at enmity with God."

Introspection reveals a discouraging array of faults and shortcomings that would effectually daunt endeavor toward greater purity of life were it not for the helps and assurances counteracting the powers of evil. For no other reason do we as Christians so gladly hail the anniversary of the Saviour's birth as for the hopeful, inspiring sense of a helpful divine presence that comes with the welcome day. Years of maturity are sure to bring contact with many of the world's disturbing elements, and Peace, holding her pinions afar, looks a sublime possession to the tempest tossed soul.

In the midst of business perplexities, in the midst of wearing family cares, comes this gladsome day, with its song of cheer and its chiming of joyous bells. It marks a spot in the year's decline when darkness settles early and the dawn comes reluctantly—when the record of another twelve months is nearly completed, and a new division of time about to be entered upon. And amidst the conflicting influences of every-day struggles and experiences, the Christ day calls a halt, drawing the mind away from merely secular, ordinary considerations, and bringing home the sweet story of how once there was suddenly with a visible angel of God a "multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.'" Yet the coming of this Prince of Peace in one sense brought a sword and set at variance the contending powers of evil. It confronted men with their own evil deeds, and laid bare the sins and transgressions coming between man and his Maker. At the same time the coming of the Christ proclaimed a royal law of liberty for all, who in simplicity of heart and true repentance, would accept the peace Christ came to establish between God and man. Wrapped up in the short word "peace" are those of mighty import. It means forgiveness, repentance and salvation, all secured through believing on the Son of Man. There doubtless are extravagances indulged at this precious time it were better should be repressed to a degree, and to some the mere festivities of the day may be all that are thought of; yet we cannot but rejoice that the spirit pervading the air at Christmas time is reaching everywhere. It is felt as never before in the worshiping assembly, in the homes of the rich and the humble abodes of the poor. The expectant eye of the servant is not disappointed as it turns toward the master or mistress from whom may come a kindly gift. The patient invalid looks not in vain for the flowers or the delicacy half longed for in the wearisome house of pain. Peace broods over the hospital wards as friendly offerings from many generous hands proclaim the kind of spirit that is abroad, the loving spirit brooding everywhere.

What wonder if the blessed influences of the Christ day should soften and assuage many of the disappointments and adverse happenings of the year! If trouble is near and adversity not easily to be warded off, yet these things do not necessarily reach to the soul or inner life, affecting its sacred peace, or loosening the safe anchorage of faith.

In families and communities the song of peace the angels sang may hush all sounds of turbulence or strife. The "strife of tongues" would soon cease were the song taken up of good will toward men. Oh, it cannot be in vain that midst the chilling winds and snows of winter comes this precious holiday with Peace and Good Will as its motto and offering. It is established as a day of gifts because of the great gift to the world of Christ, the only begotten Son of God the Father. It is a small nature indeed in which is stirred no desire to make some return for a love-offering. And no one need be told what return from men would be most acceptable to God for the great Redeemer and His love sent to the world on Christmas Day. A heart at peace with its Maker is simply a heart that has yielded itself to the loving sway of "the man of Galilee."

"Oh I give us ears quick to catch the strain
Of that Christmas long ago;
Fill our souls with the joy of thy wondrous reign;
Let our doubting spirits know
The peace thou dost bring where thou comest to dwell,
O Hope of the world, King Immanuel!"

SUNDAY BOOKS FOR THE YOUNG.

Few problems connected with Sabbath observance are more perplexing to the average Christian parent than the selection of suitable Sunday books for the children and youth of the household. In the prohibition of games and of the usual activities of young life upon that day, reading becomes almost the only resource. The supply of books which shall contain enough of the serious and religious element to promote spiritual development, and at the same time attract by the interest of the narrative, is thus a matter of first importance. For there is no doubt whatever that upon the kind of Sunday reading permitted to children, and particularly to the age which immediately follows childhood, depends in great degree the spiritual and moral stamina of the man or woman. The mind is then in its most plastic stage, and if it imbibes loose ideas of what may be done on the Sabbath, even in the matter of reading, the moral sensibilities are likely to be irreparably blunted. Wrong Sabbath reading is only too often the beginning of lifelong wrongdoing. The conscience is demoralized by a freedom which can with safety be allowed only to the mature judgment.

The wise choice of Sunday books, then, may well press heavily upon the discretion and conscience of parents. True, the enormous output of children's literature in recent years has in a way simplified selection. Those of us whose memories cover forty or fifty years remember when choice was confined within very narrow limits. The Pilgrim's Progress, The Book of Martyrs, and the story of the persecution of the Covenanters were the alternatives to a few missionary annals, largely descriptions of itineraries, and the earlier religious papers in which dry sermonizing and controversy were the rule and narrative interesting to youth the exception. Outside of these were the debatable books whose suitability for Sunday reading was a standing problem with parents and children alike. In the stricter households their prohibition was absolute, and the time that would have been given them occupied with an afternoon nap. Even where this restriction did not obtain, parents were always haunted with a distracting doubt as to the wisdom of their decision. On the other hand, the young were injured by the division of their consciences between the sense of right and the yearning for distraction. And as yielding to the latter involved at least an imaginary sin, the commission of real sins was made easier.

But the difficulty is no longer one of inadequate supply of Sunday books, but of wise selection. For not only has the production of such books for the young enormously increased, but the old rigid division between what is secular and what is religious has largely disappeared. The strict Sabbatarians of half a century ago would look askance at some of the books now published as Sunday reading for the young. Story books find place in Sunday-school libraries

between which and the better class of historical romances and love tales little difference can be discerned. Many of the most popular writers of so-called religious stories for children, introduce into them but little more of the spiritual element than they do into their week-day tales. The strictly Sunday magazines and the great majority of religious journals print secular articles side by side with those on religious and ecclesiastical topics. And it must be assumed that parents in putting these publications into the hands of children, do not subject them to a dangerous strain upon conscience by prohibiting the reading of a portion of their contents. The problem is thus one of choice. And as latitude has greatly increased, wise choice is necessarily difficult. But it may be overcome by remembering that undue strictness is likely to work more harm than laxity, and by recognizing the fact that the spiritual and serious element in life is not to be found in theological treatises alone, but in all the higher forms of secular literature.

It is the insistence of many, we know, that to label a certain class of books as Sunday books is to make a distinction positively injurious to the young. They urge that a book unfit to be read on the Sabbath is injurious if read on other days, and that to set aside the more spiritual and serious books for Sunday reading is to increase frivolity during the rest of the week. There is some truth in this, and if the judgment of all communities and individuals were mature, the distinction would not be necessary. But the right use of the Sabbath depends upon an enlightened conscience, and as the degree of enlightenment differs in communities and individuals, they need moral training. Civil laws are created for the purpose of fixing a certain conception of conduct in the public mind, their highest value being reached when the habits of mind and life have become so well ordered by their observance that they are no longer restrictive. In like manner, the restriction of the Sabbatical law and other kindred enactments have for their purpose the training of the community to the conception of moral law, and that training must begin in the family. The father who by such training has developed into a thoughtful manhood, may well claim "not to be judged in respect of days." But the liberty to which he has attained may not safely be given to childhood and youth, which in their thoughtlessness and lack of spirituality, need a discipline with which he may dispense. Without distinction between their week-day and Sunday reading and engagements their conception of moral law would be blunted, and the value of the Sabbath as "a school-master to bring us to Christ" be wholly lost.—*New York Observer*.

FRENCH GENIUS FOR PROTESTANTISM.

An interesting article in a recent number of *Le Signal*, the religious daily of Paris discusses the character of French Protestantism, taking the stand that the genius of the French people is for this very thing. The writer appeals to history with the question whether there be in the world anything more noble, more estimable, more virile than the Protestantism of French history. It was by inward necessity that the French Reformation took place, and it was not because of the nature of things, but by an outward combination of circumstances that France did not then become a "greater Switzerland, with its Catholic cantons and its Protestant cantons, and a constitutional monarchy governing all, awaiting the time when the development of ideas should bring about logically a Republican form of government."

The writer appeals to facts in support of his contention, which, though novel, have in them nothing strange to those who remember the history of the Huguenots, "that reformed Protestantism has been the foundation of the true France, the firm and compact rock upon which her house would have been most solidly built. Whether we will own or deny it, modern France, progressive, liberal France, springs from nothing else. Who sustained the crown against the demagoguery of the League, and the French national political system against Italian and Spanish politics? Who conquered and saved the throne of the first Bourbon? Who protected it afterward against the house

of Austria? What might have prevented the Spanish war of succession? What philosophy would have ended with the Constituent Assembly and not have gone on to the Terror? What religion might have saved Gallicanism its repeated checks, from Philip the Fair to Father Hyacinthe, including Charles VII. and Bossuet?"

The writer goes on to show that the highest benefits to French science, arts, government, have been due to Protestants. "The fathers of French surgical science, of French agricultural science, of French physical science, of the French colonial system, its most inspired naval commander, its most creative artist, all were Protestants, and so were a long roll of leaders in the educational and industrial worlds; in French diplomacy, as well as the best known men of letters and of learning. From all these and many other instances he argues, and not ineffectually, that Protestantism is quite accordant with the genius of the French people. The article is written, of course, to stir up the sons of the Huguenots to appreciate their own importance in the development of France. We of a Protestant nation may carry the thought out to its logical sequence. Since the genius of France is for Protestantism, she can only fulfil her true destiny when she has become Protestant. And if now she is leader of the world in science, thought, in all that is ideal as contrasted with material good, how much more will she bless the world when once she has come into her own, and finds herself free to work according to her true nature.

HINTS FOR A CHRISTIAN HOME.

1. We may be quite sure that our will is likely to be crossed during the day; so let us prepare for it.
2. Every person in the house has an evil nature as well as ourselves, and therefore we are not to expect too much.
3. Look upon each member of the family as one for whom Christ died.
4. When inclined to give an angry answer, let us lift up our heart in prayer.
5. If from sickness, pain, or infirmity, we feel irritable, let us keep a very strict watch over ourselves.
6. Observe when others are suffering, and drop a word of kindness.
7. Watch for little opportunities of pleasing, and put little annoyances out of the way.
8. Take a cheerful view of everything, and encourage hope.
9. Speak kindly to dependents and servants, and praise them when you can.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

The following letter, handed us by the kindness of the Rev. R. P. Mackay speaks for itself, words cannot deepen the pathos of these appalling facts, children rescued at this time might be the instruments of mighty blessing in days to come. The great ingathering amongst the Telugus began in a time of famine may this prove a blessing in disguise.

INDORE, October 3rd, 1876.

MY DEAR MR. MACKAY:—

Col. Barr spoke to me of the famine that is already making itself felt here. Wheat is selling at two cents a pound, and north of us at two and a-half cents a pound; and yet we are just on the edge of it. What it will be when it has time to assert itself, it is hard to realize. He asked if we would be willing to take charge of the children that will in large numbers probably be deserted by their parents. To this I said that so far as we had means, we would do so, and that I would write to ask you how far you thought we should undertake this work. He has already sent us two boys, whom we are seeking to train as best we can. Will you kindly let me know, as soon as you can, what you as a committee think of the matter? To the south of us, they are dying in large numbers; and so one society in Bombay has taken up the work and has removed there, at least, one batch of fifty girls. Some of them died on the way, and all had, when they reached Bombay, to be fed with milk and that very sparingly, for several days. Last evening I went around some of our Christians about the time they were cooking their food, and was pained to find in some cases, how nearly to starvation they are. There will be much suffering before the next rains, even amongst them. The Ledingbams, with their new baby, and Misses Oliver and Ptolemy, reached here on Saturday, and we intend to have the Communion on Sabbath. I hope it may be a helpful service. It is still very hot through the day; but we have it quite cold at night, and so we shall soon probably have it cooler through the day too,—the cold season. Work is going on as usual.

Yours very sincerely,
JOHN WILKIE.

Notes from the North.

BY W. M. C.

Written for the Review.

V.

The general appearance of St. Petersburg is that of a city built to order. As a matter of fact it was laid out, and built according to the instructions of its founder Peter the Great, who, in 1703 founded the city, in order, as he said, "to have a window from which he could look out on Europe." Physically, the site was wholly unsuited for the erection of a great city, as the ground was marshy, and unfit to support the weight of great buildings. Looking at St. Petersburg from the summit of the dome of St. Isaac's, it looks like a city built on the floods. On the west lie the waters of the Gulf of Finland almost on the level of the streets, and on the east stretches the expanse of Lake Ladoga, while the Neva branches out into numerous streams as it enters the Gulf. Peter, in the execution of his design, employed relays of 40,000 men, gathered from all parts of his empire. With infinite labor, and at great cost, the ground was made for the site of the new city, and raised above any supposed danger from inundation. This unfortunately was not altogether prevented, and on several occasions the town has been partially submerged. The danger arises from the north-west wind blowing the waters of the shallows between Cronstadt and St. Petersburg into the mouth of the Neva. It is said that if this wind continued for twenty-four hours the waters would rise thirteen feet and the greater part of the city would be flooded, and if it blew for forty-eight hours the city would be destroyed. The streets are wide and paved with cobble stones, save where in some of the leading thoroughfares, a strip of asphalt has been laid down in the centre. Numerous large squares, or rather spaces, occur in the plan, all of which are laid with cobble stones. A few of these have gardens in the centre, but in most instances, they are mere expanses of causeway. The government offices, such as the Foreign Office, the War Office and the Admiralty are huge structures erected in a semi-classical style. These buildings, as are the majority of the street edifices, are overlaid with stucco, blocked out, so as to resemble stone. The principal street is the Nevsky Prospect, which extends from the Monastery of St. Alexander Nevsky to the Admiralty, a distance of upwards of three miles. The street which is one of the great streets of Europe is very wide. The houses are lofty, and except where the continuity is broken by the Dowager Empress' palace, and the Kazan Cathedral, is one long line of shops and offices. The stores are frequently in two, and sometimes in three tiers. The shops for the sale of the finer classes of goods are usually on the second storey, as the ground floors, from the low level of the city, are damp. The signs are quite as large as anything found with us but the displays in the windows are very inferior to those seen in our streets. The street is usually so crowded with vehicles of all kinds, that although it is very wide, it is sometimes impossible to find an opportunity to cross. The buildings on the side streets are also lofty, but very few passengers are found in these streets, and the transition from the rush and movement of the Nevsky to the quietness found round the corner of a side street, is remarkable. It has been said that St. Petersburg is too large for its inhabitants. This seems true, for the 1,000,000 of population seem lost in the multiplicity of its streets and avenues.

The monastery which forms one end of this great street is a wonderful institution. It was commenced by Peter the Great in commemoration of a victory over the Swedes. It contains no fewer than fifty four churches besides gardens, monastic houses and cemeteries. The great church contains the catafalque of St. Alexander Nevsky, which is made of silver, and weighs 3250 pounds. Many of the noble families of Russia are buried within its precincts, and the whole monastery is regarded as of great sanctity. It is the seat of a metropolitan, and the number of monks associated with it is very large. The Russian ecclesiastics are of two classes, the monks, or black clergy, and the popes or priests, and great jealousy exists on the

part of the latter against the former. The priests think that all the good benefices, and other ecclesiastical preferments, are given to the monks. Every priest must marry, but should he lose his wife, he must remain a widower. The Greek church maintains that a bishop must be the husband of one wife, and holds that the apostolic injunction prohibits second clerical weddings. From this matrimonial limitation comes the saying, "Dear as a priest's wife." There seems to be as much adoration given in Greek Churches to pictures or "ikons" as they are called, as we find accorded to images in Roman Catholic Churches. These ikons abound in churches, and are found in private houses, railway stations, shops and in fact in all unexpected places. They consist of pictures of saints, which are covered with gold plates, in which are cut openings for the faces and hands. These openings are in many cases surrounded by jewels of enormous value. These pictures are set on easels or stands, and before them numerous votive tapers are constantly burning. The faithful kiss the glass over these ikons, and prostrate themselves before them. The Greek church differs from the western churches on the doctrine of the Procession of the Holy Spirit, maintaining that the Spirit proceeds only from the Father, and not from the Father and the Son. It repudiates the authority of the Pope, and the Vatican Decree of infallibility of 1870, has widened the breach between the churches. The Greek Priest does not, like his western brother, presume to forgive sins, but says simply "may the Lord absolve thee." Although overlaid with much superstition, there yet is in the Greek Church, much fervent piety and godliness of life.

The Kazan Cathedral which stands on the Nevsky, is also a famous church. Its exterior is remarkable for its semi-circular colonnade of pillars, erected in imitation of that extending from St. Peter's in Rome. Its interior is of great splendour, and is adorned with vast quantities of lapis lazuli and malachite. The ikonostas and balustrade are of pure silver, the gift of the Don Cossacks after the campaign of 1812. The name of the Almighty is inscribed on diamonds over the door of the Sanctuary, and an ikon of the virgin, is adorned with jewels which cost \$75,000. Displayed in this church are many military trophies, flags, and standards taken from the French and Swedes, and also the Marshall's baton of Davoust.

Another object of interest on the Nevsky is the bazaar known as the Gostinnoi Duor. It consists of a large number of small shops which cover a block extending between four streets. Here are exposed for sale goods of all kinds, chiefly of the smaller class, and consisting largely of cheap articles of German manufacture. These shops, as indeed almost all the stores in St. Petersburg, are disappointing.

(To be Continued.)

Looks into Books.

For holiday gifts nothing is more appropriate, and, in most instances, more acceptable than a good book. This year the bill of fare presented, particularly for the younger members of the household is the most complete that has been offered for some years. We have during the last few weeks given notices of a number of books suitable for such presents, but would like to add ere Christmas arrives four of the latest books issued by the well-known firm of T. Nelson & Sons, Edinburgh, controlled in Canada by The Copp Clark Co., Ltd. First of these might be mentioned "Every Inch a Sailor" by Gordon Stables, of the Royal Navy a writer who will doubtless be remembered by many of the young folks who have read and been entertained by his "As We Sweep Through The Deep." This book is beautifully illustrated, the price being \$1.75. Next comes "The Hermit Princes" a tale of adventure in Japan by Eleanor Stradder, author of "Doing and Daring" and "Lost in the Wilds of Canada" the price being 80c. E. Everett-Green's new book "Dominique's Vengeance," a story of France and Florida should prove of more than ordinary interest to the residents on this side of the Atlantic. This book contains five full page illustrations, is handsomely bound and sells for \$1.25. The sign of the Red Cross, a tale of old London by the same writer is another book which may safely be put in the hands of the girls of the household, being not only interesting but brings before the reader, in a most interesting manner, many historical events connected with an earlier period of the world's metropolis.

"Around the Hearthstone" or Hints for Home Builders by Wm. M. Thayer. Edinburgh, T. Nelson & Sons. Toronto, The Copp Clark Co. Ltd., cloth, gilt \$1.75.

This book is not a treatise upon family government, it is simply hints to home-builders. Many volumes have been issued upon the family, discussing a multitude of themes relating thereto. Here the author presents some of these topics in the briefest space, aiming at nothing more than practical hints—all that is needed to place the true friend of the home upon the alert. A hint is as good as a treatise, to the home-builder who is anxious to build well.

THE CALL OF PETER AND JOHN.

BY REV. PHILIP A. NORDELL, D. D.

An Exposition of Lesson one in *The Bible Study Union Sunday School Lessons* on "The Three Great Apostles." (Mark i. 16-20; iii. 13-19; Luke v. 1-11; John i. 20-42.)

Jesus Christ came not only as a great religious teacher, but as the source of spiritual life. This teaching and life must of necessity be imparted in the first place to choice men who were capable of receiving it because deeply in sympathy with it. Jesus therefore surrounded Himself, as all great teachers have done, with a group of disciples whom He could train and qualify for the most momentous enterprise ever committed to human hands.

THE THREE GREAT APOSTLES.

Of the life and activity of the greater number of men whom our Lord chose as His personal followers practically nothing is known. Only two are prominent during His ministry, and in connection with the establishment of the primitive church in Judea. And these two, Peter and John, are soon eclipsed by the magnificent achievements of Paul, the new Apostle to the Gentiles. The greater part of the apostolic history revolves about these three, or rather two; for John, aside from his writings, is little more than a shadow at the side of Peter after the ascension of Christ. These three apostles not only represented the most potential factors in the establishment and extension of the early church, but the largest and most permanent influence, aside from the work and words of their Master, that has come down to later ages. The writings of Paul have been the inexhaustible source of Christian theology, while the writings of John have borne the spiritual life of believers into mystical altitudes of intuition beyond the reach of logic. Peter wrote but little, yet by a singular fate, his fame has acquired colossal proportions in connection with the prelatial assumptions of the Church of Rome. The lives of these three pillars of the Christian Church will engage the attention of the students of this series of lessons during the coming year.

THE EARLY LIFE OF PETER AND JOHN.

Very few allusions to the early life of Peter and John occur in the Gospels, and none at all in their writings. They were Galilean fishermen who seem to have been in fairly good circumstances, and to have received at least the degree of instruction commonly imparted to Jewish boys. Peter was married, and occupied a house at Capernaum. That this fact of his marriage should be explicitly noticed in regard to Peter alone of all the apostles is a little singular, since it is he who is lifted by later traditions into the ecclesiastical headship of that portion of Christendom which insists with unrelenting firmness upon the celibacy of the clergy. That Peter and John belong to that God-fearing class who constituted Isaiah's "holy seed," an Israel within Israel, may safely be assumed. They too, like many other devout souls, waited for the consolation of Israel. Such expectation would lead them to cultivate familiarity with the ancient oracles which embodied and stimulated their national hopes. This eager expectancy would also prepare them to view with profound interest the work of the great Judean prophet whose thunder-tones were then arousing the degenerate nation to a preparation for the Messiah's coming. With the boldness and fire of a new Elijah he exposed and denounced the sins of his people. In view of the judgments with which the Messiah was certain to begin the establishment of His kingdom he called them to immediate repentance. His appearance and ministry shook the land like an earthquake. So deeply were these Galilean fishermen moved by his burning words that they were baptized by him and joined the company of his followers or disciples. This discipleship became a preparation for their subsequent discipleship to Him whose impending advent at this "voice in the desert" proclaimed.

THREE STAGES OF CONSECRATION.

Three steps or stages are to be noted in their consecration to the service of Christ. First, the acceptance of Him as the promised Messiah at that memorable meeting by the Jordan where Jesus, having "fulfilled all righteousness," was pointed out by His baptizer as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Secondly, in the call to become "fishers of men," which involved a complete renunciation of home and business, and a close attendance upon Jesus during the remainder of His ministry; and, thirdly, the appointment to become apostles upon whom would rest the establishment and organization of the Redeemer's kingdom when His local earthly ministry would be replaced by His universal spiritual presence. In this consecration of themselves to His service, Peter and John learned the lesson of prompt and unquestioning obedience, and in the miraculous draught of fishes they were taught the additional lesson that such obedience in the face of even the most unpromising circumstances is the condition of certain and amazing success. Though the vision of

an earthly kingdom and material rewards long floated before their fancy, they learned little by little to count all worldly good as insignificant in comparison with the joy and blessedness of doing their Master's will.

MISSION FIELD.

THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA—A HOLY ALLIANCE.

The following appeal has been issued by a Committee representing Foreign Mission Boards in the United States and Canada and is signed by twenty representative men whose names we do not print for want of space. This Epistle to the Churches speaks for itself, and deserves prayerful attention. We like the proposal:—The United States and Canada joining hands for the conquest of the world for Christ.

New York, Dec. 1, 1896.

To the Pastors of United States and Canada:—

Beloved Brethren:—The Twentieth Century of the Christian era is upon us, and yet millions have never heard the name of Christ. The darkness of heathenism still enwraps nearly two-thirds of the population of the globe.

The "marching orders" of the Church are explicit and imperative. "Go." There is no suggestion of limitation. "Into all the world." The terms are universal. "Preach the Gospel to the whole creation." Any narrower conception of the Mission of the Church is a belittling of our faith. Any smaller endeavor is unworthy of the Christian name.

The opportunity for world-wide evangelization was never so great as at present. Ability has kept pace with enlarging opportunity. The Christian Church has the man and the means. Her responsibility has, therefore, proportionately increased. Yet, on fields long occupied and white unto harvest, the supply of laborers is utterly inadequate. The established work is crippled. Reinforcements are needed. Advance is impossible until gifts are enlarged, while the Church at home is suffering from the very "Heresy of inaction."

In the hope of quickening the Church to a due conception of its blessed privilege and solemn responsibility in the sacred enterprise of missions, we issue this appeal, and as the representatives of the Foreign Mission Boards in the United States and Canada, we suggest the enclosed Plan of Campaign.

The appeal is first to pastors. It has long been an axiom with our Mission Boards that where there is a Missionary pastor there will be a Missionary Church. The plan contemplates united action. It seeks a concentration of Christian thought in the theme of paramount importance. It aims to secure the cumulative force of a series of meetings. To ensure the attainment of these ends, we ask your prayerful and hearty co-operation.

Yours in fellowship of service,

(Signed.) E. D. CHIVERS,
Secretary.

PLAN OF CAMPAIGN.

1. A sermon on Missions from every evangelical pulpit on Sabbath, January 10th, 1897.

The Evangelical Alliance has designated this day on its programme for the Week of Prayer for preaching upon the Great Commission. Matthew xxviii. 18-20.

2. A Mid-Week Prayer Meeting for Missions. It is earnestly desired that the prayer meeting following the Sabbath sermon be devoted to prayer for enlargement and blessing in the work of Foreign Missions.

3. District Missionary Rallies, in the larger cities on Thursday evening, January 14th. For this meeting let the city be divided into districts, and a Local Committee appointed in each district to make all necessary arrangements.

4. An Inter-denominational Mass Meeting in the interest of Missions. We suggest that on Friday evening, January 15th, unless some other evening be better suited to local convenience, an Inter-denominational Mass Meeting be held in the largest hall or church in every town in the United States and Canada. In arranging for this meeting, do not wait for some one else to move, but confer at once with brother pastors, and select the most efficient laymen in your city or town to serve with you on a Committee of arrangements. Be sure also to enlist your Young People's Societies in this movement, placing as much responsibility upon them as you think advisable.

We suggest that you make announcement of the campaign at once through the local press, and thus insure that no other meetings shall be fixed for that week which will interfere with this plan. Your own denominational board will gladly respond to your call for literature to aid you in preparation for the work.

Thoughts by the Way.

FORGET ME NOT.

When Sir Jacob Astley, who commanded the Royal Infantry at Edgehill, was about to charge, he uttered this prayer, "Lord, if I forget Thee, do not Thou forget me."

Ready equipped for life's mystical battle,
Helmet fastened and sword in hand,
Half afraid of the loud death-rattle,
On the edge of a hill of spears I stand,
One of a band;

This is my war-cry—"Do not forget me,
Lord of the battle, God of might;
Do not forget me, though I forget Thee;
Lord, stand by me, and help the right."

Stand by me now! I halt to listen
To beating drum and to clashing sword;
Forests of weapons flash and glisten,
And forth I go in the name of the Lord,
Strong in His word.

Do not forget me, O God of power!
Do not forget me amid the fight;
Though I forget Thee in this dread hour,
Still stand by me and help the right.

Closer and closer they press around me,
Men who scorn me and foes who hate;
And at times when the fire and the smoke surround me,
I am alone and desolate;

But for Thee I wait.
Do not forget me, O God of heaven!
Do not forget me amid the night;
Let the strength of my foes to-day be riven,
Stand by me, God, and help the right.

Thee, O Lord, would I look to ever;
Thou art my Captain evermore;
But still as I fight in my mad endeavor
My ears are deafened with shriek and roar;
So o'er and o'er

I can but cry to Thee: "Do not forget me,
Do not forget me, O God of might!
Though in the battle I should forget Thee,
Still stand by me and help the right."

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM.

That man leads the most angelic life whose life is fullest of adoration, and thankfulness, and praise, but none except the Lord's redeemed can lead that life. None will cry: "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good," who have not first tasted that "mercy which endureth forever." And just as there is no real gratitude which does not come down from above, so there is no acceptable thank-offering which does not go up through a mediator. "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD.

She breathed a prayer to the Master,
A feeble, broken prayer,
And yet its answer bore away
Her neighbor's load of care.

She spoke a word for the Master,
A simple little word,
And yet a lonely sin-sick soul
Found comfort as she heard.

She did a deed for the Master,
'Twas but a humble deed—
And yet it fitted perfectly
A weary sister's need.

She gave her mite to the Master,
A mite was all she had—
And yet, oh, wondrous power of love,
It made the Master glad!

Every human soul has a complete and perfect plan cherished for it in the heart of God—a divine biography marked out which it enters into life to live. This life, rightly unfolded, will be a complete and beautiful whole, an experience led on by God and unfolded by his secret nurture as the trees and flowers by the secret nature of the world. We live in the divine thought. We fill a place in the great, everlasting plan of God's intelligence. We never sink below His care, never drop out of His counsel.

The soul that knows the sweetness of His presence and His face shining on it will account no place nor condition hard, providing it may be refreshed with that; as the saints have been in caves and dungeons enjoying more of that light in those times, when other comforts have been abridged. Then they have had a beam from Heaven into their souls in their darkest dungeon far more worth than the light of the sun, and all the advantages the world can afford.

AN ANSWERED PRAYER.

O give me a message of quiet,
I asked in my morning prayer;
For the turbulent spirit within me
Is more than my heart can bear.
Around there are strife and discord
And the storms that do not cease,
And the whirl of the world is on me,
Thou only canst give me peace.

I opened the dear old Bible
And looked at a page of psalms,
Till the wintry sea of my trouble
Was soothed by its summer calms.
For the words that have helped so many,
And that ages have made more dear,
Were strong in their power to comfort,
And they brought me my word of cheer.

They did not find it easy,
Those writers of long ago,
To live in this world of sorrow
And its lights and shades to know.
They were often sad and weary,
Their hearts were sore afraid,
But they knew in whom they trusted,
And they were not quite dismayed.

Like music of solemn singing
Their words came down to me:
"The Lord is slow to anger,
And of mercy great is He.
Each generation praiseth
His works of long renown.
The Lord upholdeth all that fall
And raiseth the bowed down."

That gave me the strength I wanted
I knew that the Lord was nigh
All that was making me sorry
Would be better by and by.
I had but to wait in patience,
And keep at my Father's side,
And nothing would really hurt me,
Whatever might betide.

I found that when He gives quiet
No other can trouble make;
Pardon and peace and safety
Lie in the path I take.
So, stronger to carry the burden
I met my day of care,
For my heart was lightened and joyous
With the peace of an answered prayer.

Marianne Farningham.

The tiniest daisy that smiles so sweetly at our feet owes its existence to the patient pushing upward of the small germ against all the obstacles of soil and stones; and, were it conscious it might tell a tale of daily difficulty and danger sturdily met and bravely overcome. So in humanity itself all that is finest and most beautiful is intertwined with difficulty.

WHEN GLAD JOY COMES.

When cruel sorrow comes, we kneel and pray
For strength to bear, for patience to endure,
For courage high, for faith serene and sure
For light to guide us in the darkened way.

But when joy comes, with song and laughter sweet,
With bounty in her hands and prophecy
Of better things that we shall know and be,
And casts her treasures at her happy feet.

Rarely we own unto our soul the need
Of grace to bear the blessing that she brings;
Of strength to listen to the song she sings,
Of clear, sure light to walk where she doth lead.

Yet he who joy's glad journeyings doth share
Who knows her bounty and her bounty, hath
(Not less than he who walks in Sorrow's path)
The sorest need of humble, trustful prayer.

Let us serve God in the sunshine, while He makes the sun shine.
We shall then serve Him all the better in the dark, when He sends the darkness. It is sure to come. Only let our light be God's light, and our darkness God's darkness, and we shall be safe at home when the great nightfall comes.

HE KNOWS!

He knows!
Yes, Jesus knows! just what you cannot tell
He understands so well!
The silence of the heart is heard,
He does not need a single word,
He thinks of you;
He watcheth, and He careth too,
He pitieth, He loveth! All this flows
In one sweet word; "He Knows!"

A CHRISTMAS HYMN.

It was the calm and silent night !
 Seven hundred years and fifty-three
 Had Rome been growing up to might,
 And now was queen of land and sea.
 No sound was heard of clashing wars,
 Peace brooded o'er the hushed domain ;
 Apollo, Pallas, Jove, and Mars,
 Hold undisturbed their ancient reign
 In the solemn midnight,
 Centuries ago.

'Twas in the calm and silent night,
 The senator of haughty Rome,
 Impatient, urged his chariot's flight,
 From lordly revels rolling home ;
 Triumphal arches, gleaming, swell
 His breast with thoughts of boundless sway ;
 What rocked the Roman what befell
 A paltry province far away,
 In the solemn midnight,
 Centuries ago ?

Within that province far away
 Went plodding home a weary boor :
 A streak of light before him lay,
 Fallen through a half-shut stable door
 Across his path. He passed, for nought
 Told what was going on within ;
 How keen the stars, his only thought—
 The air, how calm, how cold, and thin,
 In the solemn midnight,
 Centuries ago !

O strange indifference ! low and high
 Drowned over common joys and cares ;
 The earth was still but knew not why,
 The world was listening unawares.
 How calm a moment may precede
 One that shall thrill the world forever !

To that still moment none would heed
 Man's doom was linked no more to sover,
 In the solemn midnight,
 Centuries ago.

It is the calm and silent night !
 A thousand bells rings out, and throw
 Their joyous peals abroad, and smite
 The darkness—charmed and holy now !
 The night that erst no name had worn—
 To it a happy name is given ;
 For in that stable lay, new-born,
 The peaceful Prince of earth and heaven,
 In the solemn midnight,
 Centuries ago.

ALFRED DOMETT.

CHRISTMAS AS AN ANSWER TO PRAYER.

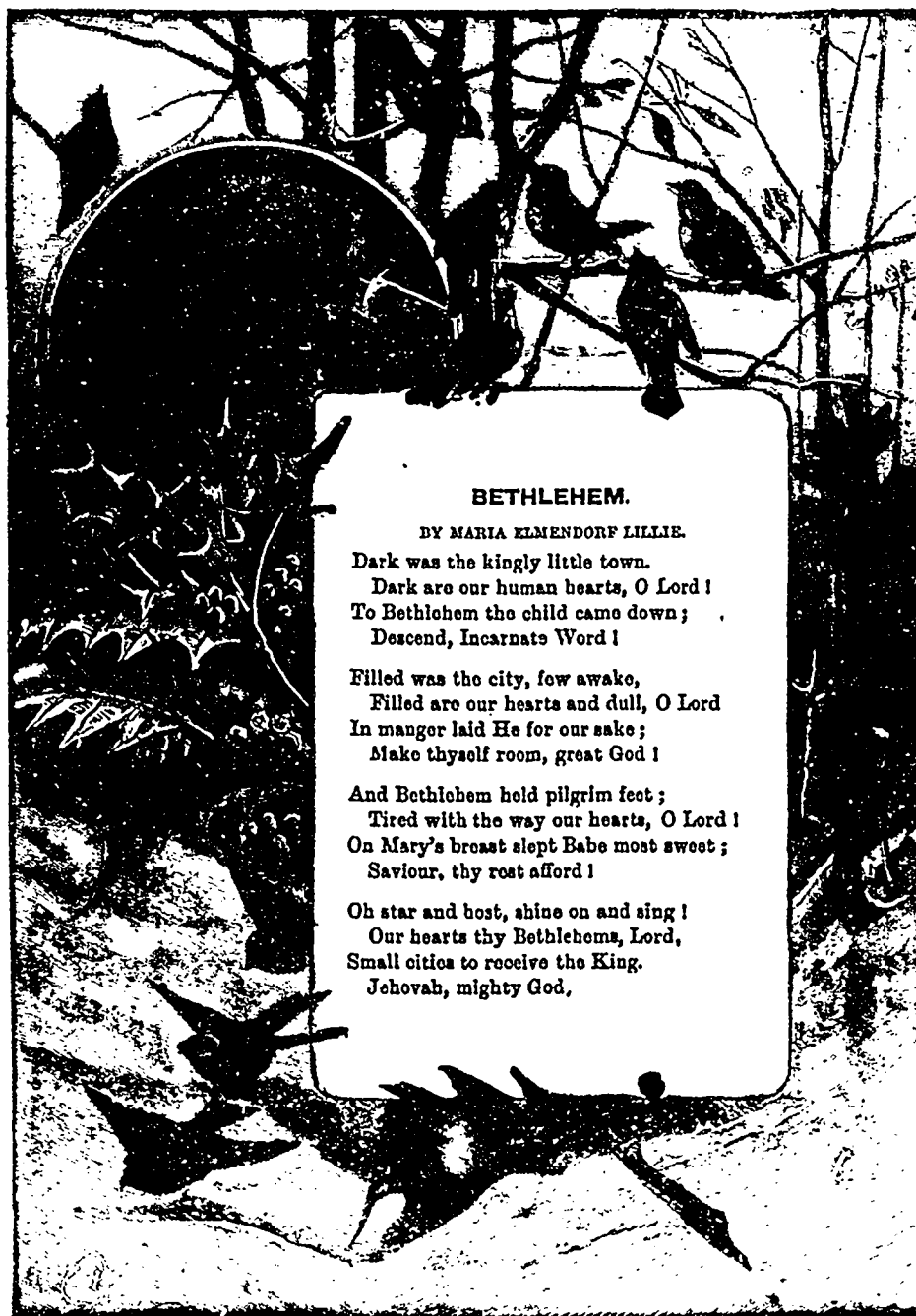
The fact that the birth of our Lord was an answer to prayer often is overlooked. For centuries, however, devout Jews had been imploring Jehovah to send them a Messiah. They rested their faith on the divine promises. They realized their bitter and increasing need of a Redeemer. They feared the utter demoralization of their people under the stern oppression of the Romans. That they looked for and doubtless prayed for a temporal deliverer, some irresistible conqueror, is not wholly surprising in view of their history and circumstances. With whatever motives offered and in spite of no matter how great misconceptions there can be no question of the sincerity of their petitions.

That the divine answer to their prayers was not what they expected does not alter the fact that the birth of our Lord was this answer. God loves to hear prayer, and there must be something in the very ignorance

and error of those who pray for what would do them more harm than good which touches the wise and tender heart of our Heavenly Father deeply and would impel Him, did He need prompting, to bestow that which He sees to be required. The birth of the Christ meant for the Jews, although few of them appreciated it, the real, the best, the only fitting answer to their prayers.

Christmas still comes as an answer to prayer. We ask God daily for pardon, help, and peace, or His watchful care, for such opportunities as may be best for us. Our needs are manifold, and we tell Him of them. Christmas, rightly understood, is His answer. Its recurrence is the assurance that He has heard us. It reminds us of what He has done for the world through nineteen centuries and of what He has done for ourselves during our own lives. It reminds us that His love never fails, that His care never relaxes, and that whatsoever is best for us He stands ready to grant.

The setting of a great hope is like the setting of the sun. The brightness of our life is gone. Shadows of evening fall around us, and the world seems but a dim reflection,—itself a broader shadow ; we look forward into the coming lonely night. The soul withdraws into itself. Then stars arise, and the night is holy.



BETHLEHEM.

BY MARIA KLEMENDORF LILLIE.

Dark was the kingly little town.
 Dark are our human hearts, O Lord !
 To Bethlehem the child came down ;
 Descend, Incarnate Word !

Filled was the city, few awake,
 Filled are our hearts and dull, O Lord
 In manger laid He for our sake ;
 Make thyself room, great God !

And Bethlehem held pilgrim feet ;
 Tired with the way our hearts, O Lord !
 On Mary's breast slept Babe most sweet ;
 Saviour, thy rest afford !

O! star and host, shine on and sing !
 Our hearts thy Bethlehems, Lord,
 Small cities to receive the King.
 Jehovah, mighty God,

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

This department is conducted by a member of the General Assembly's Committee on Young People's Societies. Correspondence is invited from all Young People's Societies, and Presbyterial and Synodical Committees. Address: "Our Young People," PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, Drawer 2464, Toronto, Ont.

Y. P. S. PRESBYTERY OF KINGSTON.

A convention of the Young People's Societies of the Presbytery of Kingston was held on Dec. 14th, in the John street Presbyterian Church Belleville. There was a good attendance of delegates, to whom the Rev. Mr. W. Maclean, M. A., who presided, extended a hearty welcome.

The following delegates were present:—The Rev. D. O. McArthur, Melrose; the Rev. J. A. Claxton, St. Columba; the Rev. J. D. Boyd and Miss Mary Strachan, Zion Church, Kingston; the Rev. J. Gandier, Newburgh; the Rev. W. S. McTavish, Deseronto; the Rev. Mr. Binnie, Lansdowne; the Rev. H. Gracey, Gananoque; the Rev. Mr. Houston, Cook's Church, Kingston; Mr. Andrew Milne, Miss Maggie McAlejohn, and Jennie Ralston, Burnbrae; Mr. H. Rollins, St. Columba; the Rev. D. G. McPhail and Miss Mary E. Illsey, St. Andrew's, Picton; Miss Winnifred Robinson, St. Andrew's Consec; Miss Gertrude Davis, Miss Jean Elliott, Miss Lizzie Smyth, and Mr. Wm. McIndoe, Deseronto.

The Rev. W. S. McTavish, B.A., was appointed Secretary pro tem.

Reports from Young People's Societies at different places were read, among them being Burnbrae, Zion Church, Kingston; St. Andrew's, Picton; Church of the Redeemer, Deseronto; Lansdowne; St. Peter's, Madoc; Consec; St. Andrew's, Gananoque; Camden East; Newburgh; Chalmers' Church Kingston; John street, Belleville; St. Columba and St. Paul, Madoc; Melrose; Cook's Kingston, all of which reported a healthy state and signs of success.

An interesting and comprehensive programme, including the reading of papers and discussions, was given during the afternoon, closing with a vote in favor of leaving the formation of a Presbyterian union an open question.

The spacious church was well filled at the evening session. The Rev. T. J. Thompson, M.A., pastor of the church, occupied the chair, and led in the opening devotional exercises. There was also a short song service.

The Epworth League of Bridge street Church attended the meeting in a body.

Miss Gertrude Davis, of Deseronto, read a report of the work done in her society, and the paper was most instructive.

The chairman led an open conference on "What practical work is done in our society?" and several delegates took part in the discussion.

"Terms of membership in the Presbyterian Church" was the subject of an excellent address by the Rev. J. Moore, B.A., of Burnbrae.

The Rev. Mr. MacGillivray, M.A., Kingston, followed with an address on "Order and Liberty in Presbyterian Polity."

The Rev. Mr. McTavish answered the questions in the question drawer, and after roll call of the societies a short consecration service followed. During the evening Miss Lang and Miss Milne sang solos.

WANTED, A GIRL.

A girl who will be as agreeable to her own brothers and sisters as she is to the brothers and sisters of other girls.

A girl who helps to make home a pleasant place for all.

A girl who can, if need be, wash dishes, make beds, and do necessarily disagreeable things with peace in her heart and a song on her lips.

A girl who can think, walk, swim, row, work with brain and brawn—not a hot-house plant.

A girl who is not afraid of a bath-tub nor a wash-basin.

A girl who combs and brushes her hair, and does not forget finger nails or teeth.

A girl with a place for all of her belongings, and who can keep each in its place.

A girl who hates dirt—who hates it bad enough to get rid of it.

A girl who understands how to run a sewing-machine, and how to wash, starch and iron her own dresses.

A girl who can say "no" and not mean "yes."

A girl who does not know more in one minute than her mother has learned in all the years of her life.

A girl whose only lovers are father, mother, brothers and sisters, until she is old enough to know and to understand the

depths of life's master passion—love.

Wanted, such a girl by mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, lovers, everybody.

A STORY OF CARLYLE.

Dr. John Hoare, in a recent letter to the "Athenaeum," told a story of Carlyle's childhood, which until then had been unprinted.

When he was a boy of six, he was left alone in the old stone cottage one cold winter's day, when a feeble old man knocked at the door asking for food.

There was nothing to give the stranger, and, had there been, Thomas would not have dared to touch it. The Scotch honesty implanted in him was too stern for that; but his heart was wrung with the sight of the old man's hunger and cold. He brought him in, seated him by the fire, and then, dragging a stool up to the dresser, got his clay "penny pig" from the shelf. It held his savings for a year.

"I smashed it," Carlyle said, telling the story when he himself was an old man, "and gave the beggar all that was in it. And, he added, his face glowing at the recollection, 'I never know before what the joy of heaven was like.'"

Disappointment and dyspepsia had soured and belittled his nature, but the glow of that first generous moment shone through half-a-century to prove how noble in impulses he once was.

Man never shows that he is made in God's image as clearly as when he tries to help his fellow-man. Why are not children given oftener this Divine pleasure?

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

PRAYER.

DAILY READINGS.

First Day—How Jacob prayed—Gen. xxxii. 21-32.

Second Day—How Moses prayed—Exod. xxxiii. 12-33.

Third Day—How David prayed—Pa. cxlii. 1-7.

Fourth Day—How Jonah prayed—Jonah ii. 1-10.

Fifth Day—How Elijah prayed—1 Kings xviii. 25-39.

Sixth Day—How Christ prayed—Hob. v. 1-10.

PRAYER MEETING TORO, Jan. 3.—"What prayer should do for the Christian.—1 Kings viii. 22-40.

PRAYER, THE CHRISTIAN'S REFUGE IN TROUBLE—Prayer is the saint's exercise field where his graces are breathed; it is as the wind to the air, it brightens the soul, as bellows to the fire which clears the coal of those ashes that smother it. The Christian, while in this world, lives in an unwholesome climate; one, while the delights of it deaden and dull his love to Christ, another while, the trouble he meets in it damps his faith on the promise. So that the Christian should away to prayer and breathe an atmosphere of true faith and waiting upon God.

PRAYER, A BLESSING—Prayer, when engaged in, in spirit and in truth, free from pride and the troublings of the passions, contains within itself its own answer, in the heavenly calm and repose which it communicates. When thus spread out before God, heaven itself seems to descend upon the soul, as we have seen the sky reflected on the bosom of a tranquil lake spread out beneath it.

ELEVATING INFLUENCE OF PRAYER—Sometimes a fog will settle over a vessel's deck and yet leave the topmast clear. Then a sailor goes up aloft and gets a look-out, which the helmsman on deck cannot get. So prayer sends the soul aloft, lifts it above the clouds in which our selfishness and egotism befog us, and gives us a chance to see which way to steer.

Prayer should be the key of the day, and the lock of the night.

Let your prayers be as frequent as your wants, and your thanksgivings as your blessings.

Prayer is the door to heaven's treasure-house, and faith the key which will unlock it.

Prayer is the ladder between earth and heaven.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR AND CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.

BY PRESIDENT MERRILL E. GATES, LL.D.,

President of Amherst College.

(Continued from last week.)

Whatever other work our Christian church may leave undone we cannot be truly Christian and suffer mission work to languish. There are not two classes of Christians in the church; one the class of missionaries who have been sent by their Master to win souls, and the other class all other Christians who are not missionaries, and so have not been sent, not commissioned, to win souls for Christ. All Christians are sent of God to win men to Him through Christ. "Ye are My witnesses," says Christ to His disciples. Every Christian is under obligation to be a missionary, one sent from God to win men to God. "To seek and to save

that which was lost" was our Saviour's mission from heaven to earth, and is now our Saviour's commission to every believer, given from heaven to be carried out on the earth.

Interest in missions is not an immaterial, accidental feature in the life of some churches, which other churches may or may not feel, as they may choose. On the contrary, an interest in missions is the test of the life of a Church.

Without an interest in missions, no Christian Church has the true life of Christ. To say that such or such a church "is a strong church, but takes no interest in missions," is like saying that such a man "is a strong man," but has only one lung and a weak heart! If a Church is the Church of Christ, it has life eternal. It knows Him whom to know is life eternal. If we know Him, if we know how He blesses and enriches life, we cannot rest content and inactive while so many of our fellow men are without the precious and enriching knowledge. In proportion as a Church of Christ knows the Saviour of men and His Spirit, it uses every means He has given it to make Him known to others. If our Churches do not fully use their means for this most Christian end, they are not giving evidence that they have in them the life of Christ. No other form of activity can be substituted for this, the essential work of the Church. So to hold up Christ before the world that the presentation of Christ's life and teachings through the life and work of Christians shall perpetually draw men to Christ, is the first great duty of the Church.

Who has ever known a Church which was weakened, spiritually, morally, or financially, by giving too much to missions? Who has not known many a Church which has been dwarfed in growth, chilled and killed (if it ever had true life) because a small, self-centred view in their giving has limited its members to the "maintenance of its own ordinances?" There is no fear for the other financial interests of a Church which gives generously to missions.

No sign of the times is more encouraging than is the growing interest in mission work on the part of the great body of members of the Christian Endeavor societies. The world seems smaller in its distances to those whose memory does not reach back to a time when the continents were not traversed by time-annihilating trains, when electric cables did not underlie the oceans where lines of swift steamers ply so constantly that a visit to antipodal mission fields is now a mere pleasure excursion. The world seems smaller, and yet the value of each man upon it seems greater, we trust, to the younger members of our Christian Churches, as the heart-beat of love for Christ is felt in the thrill of Endeavor round the globe. Each new generation comes into the life of the Church as God's divinely commissioned re-enforcement for all good causes.

And in that mission work which we must believe to be supremely important in the plan of Him who made the missionary commission His parting message and command to His Church, we look to the societies of Christian Endeavor to give steady support and new impulse to the efforts of Christ's people. It was my privilege but three years since to be present at the annual sessions of one of our national missionary societies, at a meeting which Dr. F. E. Clark in addressing it characterized as the first meeting at which any one of our general missionary societies had planned to put its mission work before the Christian Endeavor societies in a meeting called especially for them. How steadily the missionary interests has spread among Christian Endeavor societies within these last three years!

Will not these young Christians assume a work of their own, in helping to pay off the debts that cripple our missionary boards? And shall not the systematic benevolence (the giving from principle, as an act of worship, which makes Christian Endeavor efforts), turned toward our mission boards, be accompanied by those larger, freer, more generous visions of what is possible which mark the divine power of youth, and by Christian Endeavor shall not our mission work be broadened, deepened, and enriched?

FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL

International S. S. Lesson.

LESSON I.—CHRIST'S ASCENSION.—JANUARY 3.

(Acts i: 1-14.)

GOLDEN TEXT:—"While he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.—Luke xxiv. 51.

TIME AND PLACE.—A. D. 30. Mount Olivet.

PERSONS.—Jesus. Eleven Disciples. The Women and Mary.

INTRODUCTION.—The Acts was written by Luke. It contains the history of Christ's infant Church, and is the connecting link between the Gospels and the Epistles. It has been called The Gospel of the Holy Spirit, and The Gospel of the Resurrection. It covers a period of thirty years, from the Resurrection to the

second imprisonment of Paul. It was written after Paul's imprisonment before the destruction of Jerusalem. It was probably written at Rome under Paul's direction. Paul and Luke were companions and fellow-laborers.

THOUGHTS.—Christ's ministry upon earth was a life-long example of the way to live acceptably before God. Teaching was not His first or chief office. He first lived in the most diligent practice of all the duties which He afterwards set forth to others, when He had entered the Office of Teacher. He lived His own doctrine, lived as He taught, performed all that He commanded. He is not only our divine Master but our divine example. Luke's first history to Theophilus was the Gospel concerning Christ, His Person, and His Work, and this knowledge of the person of Jesus Christ was the best and right instruction for a teacher to give first. The history of the apostolic church occupied the second place, and rightly so. As Jesus began, so would he teach us: First, to be in life what God commands; then are we free to declare the same unto others. We must first know God, then witness for Him. After a good beginning a glorious progress may follow. Before His death, Jesus prepared His disciples for that advent, and talked with them of the "promise of the Father," telling them that except He went away the Comforter would not come. From the words of prophecy, the words of John, and the words of Jesus, the disciples were assured that the Holy Ghost should be sent to them. When Christ triumphed over death, and came forth a risen Saviour, He made Himself known to His followers. He walked, talked ate and drank with them. When once assured that their Saviour was risen, they again heard Him speak of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; but now He directed His instructions and commands to prepare them for their more extensive work. It was the last stay of the Shepherd among His sheep, time enough to remove every doubt of His resurrection, and to direct them in their preparation for their apostolic mission, when they should be guided by Him through the Holy Spirit; when His physical presence should give place to the indwelling presence of the Comforter; and when they should carry the message of salvation to all nations, thus building up Christ's kingdom from every land. The forty days before the ascension were chosen by the Saviour in which to let His disciples more into the nature of the kingdom of God, as a kingdom of grace in this world, and of glory in the other. This would prepare them to receive the Holy Ghost. "The promise of the Holy Ghost was the most important communication which the Lord made to His apostles before His ascension."

The ascension of Jesus did not throw over the apostles the sadness which they experienced at His crucifixion. He ascended a living Saviour, leaving them assured that they were not to live without His care, but should be assisted by the Holy Ghost to carry out His commands. And before their eyes were turned from gazing upward toward heaven, the angel-messengers brought a sweet message of hope and comfort, declaring that Jesus should return in like manner as He went, not changed but as they last saw Him. Their next earnest desire was to receive the promised baptism, which would qualify them to go forth to spread the gospel truth. Nothing could be done until they received the baptism. Then most gladly would they return to Jerusalem, and seek the upper room where they might wait. The ascension was a fact. They were eye-witnesses to that fact. It was an epoch in their history, and in the world's history. From that time Jesus took His seat on the mediatorial throne. The time was at hand when the Gentiles should receive the offer of salvation; when all lines of distinction between nations and races should be destroyed, and the gospel should be preached to the uttermost parts of the earth. The ascension is a doctrine. It is the crowning point of the atonement; for when Christ returned to the Father He had completed all His earthly mission. He made the path from earth to heaven complete. He then began the work of an intercessor, and made the way for the descent of the Holy Spirit.

FIRST QUARTER.

- I. Jan. 3. Christ's Ascension. Acts 1. 1-14.
- II. " 10. The Holy Spirit Given. Acts 2. 1-13.
- III. " 17. A Multitude Converted. Acts 2. 32-47.
- IV. " 24. The Lame Man Healed. Acts 3. 1-16.
- V. " 31. The Boldness of Peter and John. Acts 4. 1-14.
- VI. Feb. 7. True and False Giving. Acts 4. 32 to 5. 11.
- VII. " 14. The Prison Opened. Acts 5. 17-32.
- VIII. " 21. The First Christian Martyr. Acts 6. 8-15; 7. 54-60.
- IX. " 28. The Disciples Dispersed. Acts 8. 1-17.
- X. Mar. 7. The Ethiopian Converted. Acts 8. 26-40.
- XI. " 14. Saul, the Persecutor, Converted. Acts 9. 1-12, 17-23.
- XII. " 21. Christian Self-Restraint. 1 Cor. 9. 19, 27.
- XIII. " 28. Review.

THE LITTLE FOLK.

ONE CHRISTMAS EVE.

Christmas was coming! but Mr. Eaden was gone, and the family had moved into a cottage by the river side, and many things were so different with them that not only the children, but mamma and Aunt Mary felt some anxiety about the coming festival.

"I don't believe we shall have any kind of a time Christmas," said Frank to his sisters. "Pa's gone, and mother says she cannot get much for us—only things to wear, that we should have any way."

"But danma's toming, and danpa," said Fannie, "and danma 'll tell 'ories, and I'll yide on danpa's foot."

"Yes," said Annie, "and drandmamma will make wag babies—ever so many; and funny bonnets—beautiful—with capes!"

"Papa used to fill up our stockings," Emma said, "and he'll think of us, I know, and Uncle Winchester will bring us some books. I'd rather have books than anything."

"Oh, yes! and grandma Eaden sent us a box last year and year before—oh, we shall have a merry Christmas! I'm not afraid. I'll go and ask mother if the box hasn't come already. She's always keeping it so private."

"Mother," said Frank, "won't Grandma Eaden send us something for Christmas?"

"I think so, Frank, but I would not count on it—we may be disappointed."

"Mother," persisted that young gentleman, "hasn't grandma sent the box?"

"No, my boy, but there is plenty of time. Christmas will not be here for a week."

For several days, every time Frank came into the house his first question was, "Mother, has any box come from grandma?" and he and the girls would have given up all hope of it if mamma had not always said, "I think Grandmamma Eaden will remember her grandchildren."

The box arrived at last, two days before Christmas, and it so happened that Mrs. Eaden was the only one who knew when it came; and she told only Aunt Mary. It happened, also, that master Frank on that day, omitted to ask his usual question, and began, instead, to peep about in the dark closets and private nooks to see if it had been hidden away, and as the time drew near he stopped talking about it, thinking there was no box coming.

"How should you like having your presents in the sitting-room on Christmas eve?" asked mamma when the children were together at dinner the day before. "Then you need not keep yourselves awake, or be feeling after your stockings in the dark, cold morning."

"First rate, mother!" said Frank, "and couldn't we have an illumination?"

"What is a numination?" asked one of the little ones.

"Oh, I know. It is lights in the windows," answered Emmie, to whom Frank had described the lighted windows he had once seen at Grandma Eaden's when on a visit there with papa. "Can we have it, mamma?"

"I think Aunt Mary and I will be able to illuminate one window. Which shall it be?"

They talked the important matter over, and decided on the one window at the side, rather than one of the front windows. It could be seen by people coming down the street, and the Leonards, who were the nearest neighbours, would have a good view, and that would be pleasant.

It chanced that in moving to the cottage, Mrs. Eaden had found a forgotten box of wax candles and tin holders that had been used for a similar purpose and might now be used in giving pleasure to the children. These were brought out and put in order, and Frank and Emmie helped in putting them into the window frames, talking all the time, while the younger ones looked on and wondered.

"I want you to stay in the dining-room, now, and

you may have a good game till it is time to set the supper table," said mamma. "Aunt Mary and I are going to arrange all the Christmas presents on the table before the illuminated window."

"Oh jolly!" said Frank. "But mother, is there anything from Grandma Eaden?"

"Yes, indeed, the box came yesterday."

"Where did you hide it, mother? I've looked everywhere."

"Only, when you ransacked the closet in the entry, you did not look under the baby-carriage, which is the first thing you could see."

"There? Well, I noticed that the carriage stood up higher than usual, but I never thought of that."

The little girls went dancing away in noisy glee, talking of things they hoped to have, and Frank soon joined them, leaving auntie and mamma to sort out and label the numerous packages.

Supper time was a festive occasion. Aunt Mary had prepared some favourite cakes and custards, and mamma brought out her best china and nicest preserves, and while they lingered at the table after auntie had excused herself, and mamma read the beautiful story about the shepherds watching their flocks by night on the hill-sides near Bethlehem, when the angel suddenly appeared and told them of the Saviour that was born; and of the glorious song that was sung by a multitude of heavenly beings who joined the angel as he talked with the shepherds.

Then Aunt Mary opened the door of the sitting-room, and the blaze of the candles filled them with astonishment. Emma and Frank almost tumbled from their chairs in haste, and mamma carried Fannie and led Annie after them to the table before the window, and showed them all their plates.

Never before had the children received so many presents. Frank had a book from papa, which was so unexpected that he was half wild, and Emmie was to receive "The Little Pilgrim"—that dear, delightful paper—through the year; Annie had a lovely little willow carriage for her dolly; Fannie had a doll that made her breathless for a second, and then she broke into smiles all over face—all from papa whom they dearly loved.

From grandma's box had come skates, and boots and striped stockings, and mittens, and cakes, and confections, and picture-books, and ruffles, and aprons, and gloves, and games; and from the other dear friends were hoods, and scarfs, and handkerchiefs, and dresses, and neckties, and—you must go into the shops at Christmas time to find out the rest.

There is no telling how pleased the young people were. Their voices made a merry noise in the house, to be sure; and if you had been at the window of the next neighbour's house, and seen Frank trying on his skates, and Emmie laying her things in order on the table, admiring each with all her heart, and Annie, with beaming looks, taking her doll to ride about the room, and Fannie affectionately wrapping her new scarlet scarf about her beautiful new doll, you would have said it was as pretty an illumination as you could wish to see.

Th: children were to sit up longer than usual, and they were very full of pleasure and full of curiosity about each other's presents, and of joyful anticipations, too. But they became calm after awhile, and talked about papa and their other friends; and after mamma had told them how the shepherds went to see the infant Saviour, they went quietly away to their beds,

Then mamma sat down and wrote papa a true and particular account of all the proceedings; and so passed by one Christmas eve.—Zion's Herald.

Low lies Thy cradled head,
Thou blessed Child Divine;
The wreath of thorns most twine around
That tender brow of Thine:
But love and life and home
Through Thine are dearer far,
And lives of mortal men may be
As pure as angels are.
Then join their angel lay,
With heart and voice rejoice,
Your Lord is born to-day!

Church News

[All communications to this column ought to be sent to the Editor immediately after the occurrence to which they refer have taken place.]

MONTREAL NOTES.

At the regular quarterly meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal held on Tuesday last the business was largely of a routine character and was transacted with despatch in two seditments. Special attention was, however, given to the matter of re-arranging certain congregations and missions in two different sections of the Presbytery with a view to their more efficient working in the future. It is now twenty one years since the union of the different Presbyterian churches of the Dominion, and it is happily quite possible to group together congregations and missions that formerly were affiliated with different branches of the Presbyterian family in order to make workable parishes. This occasionally involves some slight sacrifice on the part of a few of the people, and in order to carry their consent the matter has to be handled carefully. But when, as in this case, ministers who are likely to be affected by such re-arrangements declare their readiness to surrender their positions in order to facilitate the object, their self-sacrifice can hardly fail to commend it to the favorable consideration of the people. This has been proved to be practically true more than once already within the past few years and it is confidently expected by the Presbytery that it will be met in a worthy spirit by the several congregations interested, in the present instance as well.

Perhaps the most interesting report presented at the meeting was that by Mr Dewey regarding the Chinese work in the city which continues to make good progress. A successful daily morning school has been recently opened in charge of Miss Thomson and supported by Mr David Yule. A number of the Chinese scholars have recently returned home carrying with them favorable impressions and naturally increasing the interest in their native villages which it is hoped may be followed up by some active agency. Quite a number of others have, after a period of instruction, gone to different places in Canada or the United States. Some of these have written to Dr. Thomson, the missionary here, expressing their disappointment that the churches in these smaller places show no interest in them. Surely this fact only requires to be known to secure that wherever they may go some active Christian worker will look them up and at least give them an invitation to the services of the church. A number have applied to be received into Knox Church on profession at the next opportunity. The collections in the school for the past year have amounted to about \$500. and revenue from other sources of about the same amount is reported.

During the morning seditment of the Presbytery it became known that the illness of the Rev. J. M. Boyd of Beauharnois, referred to last week, had taken a dangerous turn, but no one supposed the end was so near. He passed away before the day was over, at the comparatively early age of fifty-five. He had ministered in this charge for fifteen years and previous to that time had been pastor at Demorestville, Ont., where he is still affectionately remembered. Mr. Boyd was a genial kindly man who carried sympathies with him everywhere. Though seldom taking much part in the business he will be much missed in the Presbytery as well as in his congregation and home. His remains were removed on Thursday for burial in Ottawa near which he was born and where a number of his relatives still reside.

The Methodist Church has suffered a serious loss in the sudden and unexpected death of the Rev. A. M. Phillips who was well known in Toronto. He died in the General Hospital from the effects of an operation performed a week ago for renal calculus. He was only forty nine years of age, but was recognized as one of the most thoughtful and original preachers in the denomination.

The mission in St. Gabriel Ward taken over by St. Paul's Church a few weeks ago to be worked by their young people already

shows a decided improvement from the careful visitation of the district. The Sunday school has grown from an average of twenty five to over a hundred and the Sunday evening service is largely attended. A reading room has just been opened which will be supplied with papers and magazines and placed at the disposal of the young men of the neighborhood for their use in the evening. It is also proposed to have occasional lectures and concerts.

At a social meeting in St. Gabriel church on Monday evening last to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of Dr. Campbell's induction as pastor. Congratulatory speeches were made by representatives of the Anglican, Methodist, Congregational, and Baptist Churches, as well as by several Presbyterians, including Dr. Wardrop, ex-moderator of the General Assembly. Before the meeting closed an illuminated address was presented to Dr. Campbell by Mr. James Harper on behalf of the congregation, and a handsome brass and marble piano lamp to Mrs. Campbell from the ladies. Both the pastor and his estimable wife have a warm place in the hearts of their people.

The lectures in the Presbyterian College closed on the 17th inst., and most of the students have left the city to spend the Christmas vacation at their homes or in supplying some of the more distant mission fields where their visits are heartily welcomed.

The Rev. F. M. Dewey, of Stanley St. Church, read an able paper at the last meeting of the Ministerial Association on "Christ and His teachings upon the Holy Spirit." The paper was followed by an earnest discussion on the importance of the Spirit's work being fully recognized.

The congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Martintown, left vacant a few weeks ago by the departure of the Rev. Mr. Burnet for Scotland, has given a unanimous call to the Rev. F. F. Lanzill, of Fort Erie, in the Hamilton Presbytery.

BRITISH COLUMBIA NOTES.

Rev. E. D. McLaren, of St. Andrew's, Vancouver, has been resting an inflamed knee for the past two weeks. He hopes to be able to occupy his pulpit once next Sabbath.

Rev. J. M. McLeod, of Zion church, in the same city, has just returned from an extended trip through the United States and the Eastern Provinces. As a result he looks remarkably well.

Another of our ministers, Dr. Campbell of Victoria, has been called Eastward by the serious illness of his daughter in Minneapolis. Rev. D. H. Reid of the American Presbyterian Church supplies the pulpit of the First church during the pastor's absence.

At a meeting of the Presbytery of Victoria on the 1st inst., Rev. W. B. Cumming was inducted into the pastoral charge of St. Andrew's, Nanaimo. He enters upon the work of the Master in the Coal City under most favorable conditions for one strong in body, mind and spirit. A call, very cordial and unanimous, from Wellington congregation to Mr. E. G. Perry, licentiate, was sustained by Presbytery and accepted—ordination and induction to take place on the 10th inst. Mr. A. E. Camp, a classmate of Mr. Perry, has also accepted a call to Eburne, in the Presbytery of Westminster. Thus the last vacancy in the Synod of B.C. has been filled—eight settlements having been effected during the year.

The Rev. James Barclay, D.D., of St. Paul's church, Montreal, has been nominated for the Moderatorship of the General Assembly by the Presbytery of Victoria.

An agreeable Thanksgiving social was recently held in the lecture room of St. Andrew's church, Victoria. Special cause for thanksgiving this congregation has in the happy removal of its heavy financial embarrassment. By the great liberality of one member the indebtedness was reduced to \$22,000 less than half its former dimensions. Arrangements have also been made whereby this sum will be gradually reduced and finally extinguished in ten years. More than the amount has been actually subscribed in sums varying from \$5 to \$3,000,

and \$12,000 has been secured by promissory notes. Truly in the midst of "hard times" such liberality speaks volumes for the hold which the Church has upon the affections of the people.

GENERAL.

A new Presbyterian Church is to be erected between Bonafield and Rutherglen stations.

At the anniversary of St. Paul's Church, Ottawa, Dec. 13th., the Rev. E. A. Scott preached two able and interesting sermons. During the services the new organ was used for the first time.

Rev. J. D. Fraser has decided to accept a call from St. Stephen's Church, St. John, N. B., as successor to Rev. Dr. McCrae, who has been appointed Principal of Morin College, Quebec.

The Rev. A. J. McMullen, B.A., of Cowal, has received a unanimous call to the congregations of Springville and Bethany, in the Presbytery of Peterboro'. Induction on New Year's Day in the Springville Church.

The members of the Y.P.S.C.E., and of the pastor's class, St. Andrews Church, London, (Rev. R. Johnston, pastor) has decided to contribute twenty five cents each towards the reduction of the Foreign Mission Deficit.

The Presbyterian Mission Band, Kemptville, held a most successful and enjoyable concert on Friday 11th inst., at which no \$35 were taken in. The children who filled the whole programme acquitted themselves admirably, doing credit to themselves and to those who trained them for the occasion.

The Rev. Mr. Innis was inducted into the pastoral charge of Boboaygeon and Dunsford, on Dec. 15. The service was very interesting and was largely attended by members of the congregation. Rev. A. O. Reeves, of Lakefield, presided. Rev. Mr. Potter, of St. Andrew's, Peterborough, preached the sermon. Rev. Dr. Torrance, of St. Paul's, Peterborough, addressed the minister, and Rev. Mr. Tanner, of Omemees, addressed the people.

A large number of people assembled at the Carleton Presbyterian church St. Johns N. B. recently to attend the re-opening of the church, which has been closed for over six weeks undergoing repairs. The pastor Rev. Mr. Burgess, preached an appropriate sermon from 11. John xiii 15. In the evening Rev. Mr. Rainnie of Calvin Presbyterian church, occupied the pulpit. The church was erected fifty years ago and of the five trustees who were then selected Mr. Jarvis Wilson alone is alive. He attended both services on Sabbath.

A very interesting event took place in the Presbyterian church, Treberon, Man., on Friday evening, Dec. 4. At the close of the thanksgiving service the congregation spent a social time together. Among the features of the evening was the presentation to Mrs. Christiana Fannie Robson of an address, signed on behalf of the congregation by Miss Jessie Ross and Miss Carrie Robertson, and a silver tea service and cake basket. Mrs. Robson, though completely taken by surprise, replied in suitable terms, thanking the congregation for their kindness.

The annual social of the Primary Sabbath School Teachers' Union of the Presbyterian Church was held last evening in Westminster Church, Toronto. Miss Russell, the President of the Association, occupied the chair, and a very pleasant programme was executed. Miss Readman, the Vice-President of the Association, took up the lesson for next Sunday, and instructed the teachers how they were to teach their various classes. An interesting address was delivered by the Rev. W. G. Wallace, pastor of Bloor Street Presbyterian Church.

PRESBYTERY OF BRUCE.

This Presbytery met in Paisley on Tuesday, Dec. 8th, at 1.30 p.m. Rev. J. R. Craigie, Moderator.

A deputation appeared from Inverhuron stating that no services had yet been given to the people in that section, and asking for an explanation of the resolution passed

at the previous meeting of Presbytery making provision for such services. It was pointed out that the resolution referred to instructed the Tiverton Session to arrange, on request from the people at Ioverburon, to have services held at Inverhuron when and wherever it was deemed by the people most suitable, and that said Session shall see that eligible ministers shall be secured as far as possible in compliance with the desire of the people.

Reports were received from ten Sessions asent payment of expenses of Commissioners to the General Assembly of the Presbytery Fund. Of those sessions report ng, eight approved of the proposal to pay such expenses, and two disapproved.

The matter was deferred until next regular meeting of Presbytery.

Mr. McLennan and Mr. T. Chisholm were appointed a deputation to visit Glamis in connection with Augmentation of Stipend Fund; and Mr. Kippan and Mr. R. C. Bruce were appointed to visit N. Brant and W. Bantnick in a similar capacity.

With reference to Remits from Assembly, that reduction of representation from $\frac{1}{2}$ to was approved of.

That proposing a central place of meeting for the Assembly was not approved of.

That referring to the abolishing of the billeting system was approved of, and it was agreed that a general fund should be organized out of which the expenses of Commissioners should be paid.

The Remit on Sabbath School Publications was left over till next meeting of the Presbytery.

The Remit proposing the formation of a Central Mission Board was not approved of.

The clerk read the report on Statistics which was received and laid on the table till next regular meeting of Presbytery. Presbytery adjourned to meet again in Paisley on the second Tuesday of March next at 1.30 p.m. J. Johnston, Clerk.

PRESBYTERY OF MAITLAND.

This Presbytery held a special meeting in Ashfield Presbyterian Church, on Nov. 30th. Rev. J. L. Murray, Moderator pro tem., and inducted the Rev. Alexander Miller lately of Moss, Presbytery of London, into the pastoral charge of the congregation there. There was a fair attendance of members of Presbytery, and a large congregation present, the church being comfortably filled with a highly interested and appreciative audience. Rev. Mr. Maxwell preached a sermon suitable to the occasion. The Rev. Mr. Sutherland delivered the charge to the newly inducted pastor in a most solemn and impressive address, and the Rev. Mr. MacLeod addressed the congregation on their duties toward their minister.

Mr. Miller enters upon the pastorate of this congregation under most favorable circumstances. This vacancy has been the shortest in the history of the Presbytery, being only two months, and the call is cordial and unanimous. A warm welcome was given by the congregation to their new minister by a hearty handshake, as they were retiring from the church. From this happy settlement good and great results are fondly hoped in the edification of believers, and the conversion of souls to Christ.—John MacNab, Clerk.

PRESBYTERY OF EDMONTON.

At Innisfail, Alta. N. W. T., on the 1st inst., a special meeting of the Presbytery of Edmonton, was held for the ordination of Rev. W. L. Atkinson, graduate of Manitoba College, and a Scintiate of the Presbytery of Orangeville, Ont., for the Innisfail Mission District in the room of Rev. David Spear, now removed to Manitoba.

The Presbytery was convened for 4 p. m., and immediately after the arrival of the members by the train from the north, it met in the church, and was duly constituted by the Moderator.

The members present were Rev. D. G. McQueen, Edmonton, Moderator; Rev. John Fernie, Lacombe; Rev. G. Vetter, Josephburg; Rev. Peter Naismith, Olds; and Rev. A. Forbes, Fort Saskatchewan Ministers, and Messrs. G. A. Reid, Lacombe, and McCure, Innisfail Elders.

Mr. Atkinson having passed very satisfactorily the usual trials they were duly sustained, and arrangements made

for his ordination at a public meeting of the Presbytery to be held in the church at eight o'clock in the evening. The Presbytery having been duly convened at the hour named, and after devotional exercises, conducted by the Moderator, the Rev. Pet. Naismith preached from Mark, iv., 30-32. After the usual questions to candidates for ordination had been duly and satisfactorily answered, Mr. Atkinson was ordained to the office of the Holy Ministry. The newly ordained minister was suitably addressed by the Rev. A. Forbes, and the people by Mr. Reid, elder from Lacombe.

On Wed. 2nd inst., the Presbytery met in the church for the transaction of emergent business.

A fraternal letter from the Presbytery of Calgary, of which the members of the Edmonton Presbytery lately formed a part was read, and is as follows: "To The Venerable The Presbytery of Edmonton.—The Presbytery of Calgary convened in Pincher Creek, at its regular semi-annual meeting, desires to express its gratitude to God for the extension of His kingdom, in this portion of His vineyard; and to wish the new Presbytery of Edmonton, formerly a part of this Presbytery, much prosperity in the work committed to its charge. At this our first meeting, since you have been separated from us, we miss your friendly faces, your kindly friendship, and your wise counsel. Separated from you in body, through faith in a common Saviour, we believe we are still united in spirit, and our prayer to God, our Father in Heaven is, that united in spirit we as two Presbyteries may carry forward with His blessing resting on us, the work which, hitherto, we have carried forward as one. On behalf of the Presbytery of Calgary, Jas. W. Morrow, E. G. Walter, Pincher Creek, 4th Sept., 1896."

The moderator and clerk of Presbytery were appointed a committee to answer this letter.

The Presbytery urged upon the Presbyterian Mission Station at Ponoka, the advisability of securing the title to the land for the church and manse; and the moderator was instructed to make arrangements for the dedication of the church at an early date.

Application for a loan of \$500 upon the new manse at Fort Saskatchewan, was made and duly sanctioned.

Much gratification was expressed on a letter being read from Prof. Baird of Manitoba College, Winnipeg, intimating that he sent as a gift a minute book, for the use of the new Presbytery.

The Rev. John Fernie, and the clerk were appointed a committee to acknowledge in suitable terms the receipt of this highly appreciated gift.

Mr. Atkinson, in room of Mr. Spear, was appointed convener of the committee on Young People's Societies.

The Presbytery agreed to recommend the Assembly's plan of study for young people's societies, to all the congregations and Mission Stations within its bounds.

A letter from Mr. Scott of the Record, having been read, the Presbytery recommended that every family should have a copy of this organ of the church.

It was resolved that where ever possible, an ordained man should have charge of adjoining students' fields.

Mr. Atkinson was instructed to make inquiries regarding the Icelandic settlements lying north of the Red Deer River, and to provide services if deemed advisable.

With regard to the application for a certificate by G. E. Dyer, a student of Queen's College, Kingston, Ont., who had been employed in the Red Deer Mission Field during the past summer, the Presbytery after hearing read the letter from the chairman of the Red Deer Managers, and the report of the convener of the Presbytery on Home Mission committee, in addition to the reports received at last meeting of Presbytery, basing its action on the last clause of Section 216, page 41 of Rules and Forms of Procedure, unanimously confirmed the former action of the Presbytery in declining to grant a certificate.

The moderator and clerk were appointed a committee with power to add to their number, to allocate to the various stations their proportions for the schemes of the church.

In the evening a public sederunt of

the Presbytery was held in the church. Addresses were given by Rev. G. Vetter, Mr. Reid, Mr. Forbes and the Moderator. The Presbytery then adjourned.

PARIS PRESBYTERY.

The Presbytery of Paris held its ordinary quarterly meeting in Chalmer's Church, Woodstock, Dec 8th, Rev. E. R. Hutt presiding as Moderator. A circular to Presbyteries from the Home Mission Committee, stating that \$79,100 was required for the year, and allocating \$4,300 of this to the Presbytery of Paris, was considered, and a list of amounts to be expected from congregations was agreed upon. A similar circular from the Foreign Mission Committee was read to the effect that \$77,120 will be needed to meet the obligations of the year, and Mr. Straith addressed the court on behalf of the Foreign Mission Committee. The proportion asked from Paris Presbytery is \$1,800.

A communication from the Presbytery of Guelph, relative to the transfer of Baden to said Presbytery was read and agreed to.

A call from Windham and Delhi, in favour of Mr. E. C. Currie, licentiate, largely signed and unanimous was reported by Mr. Millar. Commissioners having been heard, the call was sustained, and Mr. Currie's acceptance, having been intimated the ordination and induction was appointed to take place at Delhi, Dec' 22nd, at 2 p.m., the Moderator to preside, Mr. Cranston to preach, Mr. McGregor to give the charge and Mr. Millar to address the people. The trial subjects to be prescribed by Mr. McGregor and Mr. Hamilton.

Messrs. Leslie, Hardie and McMullen were appointed to consider the state of the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund and report to next meeting. Mr. G. C. Patterson was appointed to address the W.F.M.S. Presbyterial annual meeting at Ayr.

Messrs. Hardie, Millar and Hamilton were appointed to arrange for the conference on the reports of the standing committees at next meeting, which is to be held in Zion Church, Brantford, on the second Tuesday of March at 11 a.m.—W. T. McMullen, Clerk.

LUNENBURG PRESBYTERY.

The Presbytery of Lunenburg and Shelburne met at Lunenburg on Monday, Dec. 7th, at 10.30 a.m. Notices were read from the College Board, the Augmentation Committee, the Synod's Clerk and the Presbytery of Lanark and Renfrew. (Serious consideration was given to a letter from Dr. Morrison, calling attention of Presbytery to the congregations which had failed to contribute to certain schemes of the Church during the past year. During the present year the Presbytery will seek to secure a collection from its congregations for every scheme of the Church.

Mr. MacGillivray reported that he had not paid the appointed visit to Bridgewater, and in view of the additional information from the agent of the Church, he was instructed to fulfil his appointment at the earliest opportunity.

The Augmentation Committee grants Shelburne congregation at the rate of \$250 for the year ending March 31st, next.

The following amounts were allocated to the congregations of the Presbytery for the Augmentation Fund: Lunenburg, \$153; Bridgewater, \$70; Lashair, \$50; Mahone, \$50; Lockport, \$35; Shelburne, \$35; Clyde and Banington, \$35; New Dublin, \$20; Riverdale, \$15. The sum of \$15 was voted from the Presbytery Fund.

The following resolution was moved by Mr. Leck, and seconded by Mr. E. L. Nash and adopted: Whereas it has pleased Almighty God in His all-wise providence to lay his hand in affliction and bereavement upon the family of the esteemed father of this Presbytery, Rev. Henry Crawford, of New Dublin; we his brethren in the Presbytery, hereby desire to express our deepest and most sincere sympathy with him and his family, who have been bereft of a loving wife, and a kind and loving mother; and commend them to the Great Consoler and Comforter; that we record the removal of Mrs. Crawford with a deep sense of the loss sustained by that portion of the Church in which she labored so devotedly with her husband,

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Full information regarding the company's superior plans of insurance will be furnished on application to Wm. McCabe, Managing Director of the North American Life, head office, 22 to 23 King street west, Toronto, or to any of the company's agents.

Cinematograph.

MANAGER HILL has secured Association Hall for Christmas Day in order to accommodate the crowds who will, doubtless, wish to see the Cinematographs. This will not interfere with the exhibition at 98 Yonge street, which will go on as usual, the machine to be used in Association Hall having been specially imported for the purpose. In addition, on Christmas evening a grand concert will be given. Twenty-four or twenty-five of the best views of the Cinematographs will also be shown, forming an entertainment of the highest class.

An Item of Interest to All.

This particular season is one which brings with it the unwelcome colds, coughs and other ailments of the throat and lungs. They are in the air we breathe, and if great care and a good deal of thoughtfulness is not exercised we are liable to contract them to the discomfort of ourselves as well as others round about us. Prevention is better than cure, and an ounce of the former is worth at least a pound of the latter, figuratively speaking, but with all our care we some time or another during the winter months manage to have a cold. It is quite right to use all prevention possible, but when that has failed and the malady makes its appearance, it is then time to look for the cure.

We understand that a preparation manufactured by one of the largest medicine firms in Canada is now before the public, and giving extreme satisfaction in all cases of coughs and colds. It is guaranteed to cure the most distressing cough in a few hours time, and is recommended by thousands who have been benefited by its use. The name of this wonderful remedy is Piny Pectoral, and can be had of all dealers in medicine.

SOME one said recently that the value of the widow's mite was not in the mite, but in what was left.

Do our gifts imply sacrifice or do we give that which we can easily do without, the leftovers after personal desires are met? Said a woman in speaking of the daughter of a dear friend who had been adopted by the Board as a foreign missionary: "This comes home and makes me question if I could give my child. It is easy to urge self-sacrifice upon others, and it costs little to commend it in them. It is a different matter when it touches my own family or my own immediate circle."

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By order of the Board. JAMES MASON, Manager.
Toronto, Dec. 10th, 1896.

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