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"AND THOU, BETHLEHEM." We love to think of Bethlehem, That little mountain town To which on earth's first Christmas Day Our blessed Lord came down. A lowly manger for his bed, The cattle near in stall, There, cradled close in Mary's arms, He slept, the Lord of all. If we had been in Bethlehem, We too had hasted, faint To see the babe whose little face Knew neither care nor pain. Like any little child of ours He came unto his own, Though cross and shame before him stretched His pathway to his throne.

If we had dwelt in Bethlehem, We would have followed fast, And where the star had led our feet Have knelt ere dawn was past. Our gifts, our songs, our prayers had been An offering as he lay, The blessed babe of Bethlehem, In Mary's arms that day.

Now breaks the latest Christmas morn! Again the angels sing, And far and near the children throng Their happy hymns to bring. All heaven is stirred! All earth is glad! For down the shining way The Lord who came to Bethlehem Comes yet on Christmas Day. —Margaret E. Sangster.

The Christmas Idea.

The ordinary features connected with the history of Christmas need not be repeated at this time. It will be helpful, however, if larger and better ideas concerning what Christmas means and what it ought to teach, are entertained year by year. In general, Christmas means the revelation of divine love through an individual life. That idea begins with the conception of God as an All-loving Father. Whatever is best in the idea of fatherhood should appear in all our conceptions of God. Fatherhood on his part demands that the relations between Himself and His children should be intimate, tender, constant, and helpful. God's strength should be expected as a constant help, supplementing the weakness of His children. God's love and mercy should be apprehended as the basis of redemption and help. The wisdom of God should be sought as a constant instructor and guide, for children who are comparatively ignorant and liable to go astray. By some such analysis as this, we ought to rise to the idea that however and whenever God is revealed, He appears as the Ever-Living, All-Loving and All-Merciful Father of men. Christmas brings the message that such a Father has been revealed in a babe, in a boy, in a man, Jesus, the Christ. God must be revealed to us in lives of individual men in order that our true relation to

Him can be grasped, and in some good degree, comprehended. The deepest philosophy and the highest demands of religion unite in the Babe of Bethlehem. Much that is best in human experience centers in the birth of children. The glory of parenthood, the innocence of babyhood, and the promises which gather around a new life, ought to secure many of the richest and most helpful experiences in human life. It was neither chance, nor the abstract fulfillment of prophecy, nor the realization of the dream of the "Wise men" which brought the Babe of Bethlehem. God, the Father of all, by the self-imposed obligation of His own love, came into touch with all the world, through that Babe, as he could not come in any other way. Hence Christmas time and the Christmas idea touch all babyhood and glorify all parenthood as no other idea connected with religion does. It must be that the Christmas idea will always enfold, emphasize and glorify babyhood, childhood, and motherhood.

Jesus the Child.

THE record we have of the life of Jesus from babyhood to manhood is brief almost to nothingness. Nevertheless, what little we know is so lighted up by the manhood of Jesus, the Christ, that his life as a youth will always have deepest meaning and richest lessons for the young. Thus it is that the Christmas idea and the Christmas time have peculiar and lasting interest for children and for young people who are entering into the duties and responsibilities of adult life. At this point the Christmas idea reaches with no uncertain hand into the whole field of immortality. As soon as life begins to make choices and establish character, it takes hold of the life beyond, even though knowledge of that life and clear conceptions of what it will be, are meagre. One can not be conscious of the results of actions which grow from personal choices without taking hold of the far distant but eternal result which moral choice always involves. Thus it is that the deepest consciousness of personal obligation is awakened by right conceptions of Christmas. These deeper experiences of humanity flow from the right conceptions of Christmas, naturally. Parents and teachers can illustrate and enforce them in many ways, thus adding to the enjoyments of Christmas, best of moral and religious lessons.

Redemption

HOWEVER the word redemption may be defined, and whatever theory one may build concerning it, Divine love must always unfold into the idea of our redemption as children of God. This is not only from sin and its consequences, but from those temporary and earthly hindrances and environments which make the spiritual side of life

incomplete, while we tabernacle here. A Divine Father, loving, wise, compassionate, and forgiving, places Himself under obligation to redeem his children. The idea of Christ as Redeemer, as one who unfolds and exemplifies the redeeming love of the Father, ought to be a permanent part of the Christmas idea. It should be a direct call to repentance, obedience and much loving service. Christmas, if rightly apprehended, will be, in a common phrase, "a time for conversions." Every heart which enters into a just conception of Christmas, will realize proportionate need of Divine help, Divine cleansing,—redemption. The RECORDER attempts this analysis of Christmas for the sake of teachers, preachers, parents and others whose influence, expressed in words and in life, determines the conception which young children gain of Christmas, and of what it means. It is a gratifying fact that those who conceive of Christmas from the higher standpoint, are careful to teach children the blessedness of giving for others, as well as of receiving for themselves. For example, in many of our Sabbath Schools, the public services and the private instruction connected with Christmas, are turned toward the development of the spirit of helping others. Children bring gifts for those who are less fortunate than themselves, and are taught that they best serve Christ who blesses them, by bringing something for others whom Christ loves. Family life will always cultivate gift-giving to its own immediate members, at Christmas time. This is well. Christmas time should be made a glad and glorious one to each child in each home, because of something received; but the cultivation of selfishness must be avoided by adding the thought of being helpful and generous, and cultivating the expression of it, so that the child will give from his own store of blessings, something for others. While the fact of receiving gifts centers in the family, the RECORDER urges that the giving of gifts be taught and encouraged through such public services as naturally come in the Sabbath School and the church, at Christmas time.

Forgetting Imperfect Views.

PROTESTANTS, especially the Puritan branch, rejected Christmas because of false teachings with which it had become associated. The lower conceptions, which are indeed undesirable, are best eliminated, by the incoming of higher conceptions like those we have spoken of above. We shall have very little need to condemn what has been false and imperfect in connection with Christmas if the higher and better ideas are developed and enforced. In this case, as always, the imperfect, the incomplete, and the false are removed by the incoming of something better. To denounce evil is comparatively useless, when the

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good that ought to be is not brought in that it may take the place of that which is denounced. The truth which appears in the words of Christ, when he said: "The good seed is the children of the kingdom," finds full application at this point. Whatever has been objectionable in Christmas will disappear like snow before the sunshine, if the better idea of Christmas, as an expression of Divine love and the presence of God in human life, be rightly apprehended. Let the children of God labor for this, and the light of Divine love will glow with increasing redemptive power, with the coming of each Christmas time.

Extravagant Giving.

THE giving of costly and unnecessary gifts at Christmas time should be discouraged. Such gift-giving is more a social fad than a true expression of the Christmas idea. Gifts at Christmas should combine usefulness and pleasure, based on intrinsic value. Let your gifts embody something permanently valuable which the recipient needs. If this is not the case, a large part of the moral value is lost. Each gift should aim toward the strengthening and unfolding of those desirable elements of character which are naturally associated with the idea of Divine love unfolded in Christ, for our uplifting and redemption. This thought forbids all frivolity and ludicrousness connected with Christmas-giving. This is an important item with children, and doubly so if the gifts be given at a public service in the House of God. Great care should be taken lest public entertainments in the house of worship, at Christmas, or Thanksgiving, form associations and create memories in the minds of children which lessen or prevent the sense of respect and reverence which are an important part of religious training. As to costly and unnecessary gifts, a great daily newspaper of December 16, says: "It is already a foregone conclusion that this will be one of the most prosperous holiday seasons ever enjoyed by New York business men. An estimate that \$20,000,000 is now being spent by Greater New York for Christmas presents can be safely classed as conservative. No other city is spending anything like this sum. According to a leading Fifth Avenue jeweler, fully \$5,000,000 is being spent on Christmas jewels in this city. This same authority also estimated that if one includes all the holiday gems sent over the country from this distributing point, fully \$10,000,000 is being spent here for jewels. The call for diamonds is greater than ever before, he vouchsafed, owing largely to the fact that the gem royal is constantly increasing in value. Furs of the best quality are running diamonds a close second in the race for favor. One furrier, who has buying and selling agencies in all the great fur centers, including St. Petersburg, believed it would require a million dollar blanket of Government notes to cover the new furs New York will wear on Christmas or the day following." Such an expenditure for useless ornamentation is a form of wickedness. That there are five hundred carloads of toys on sale for Christmas time, in New York, to make children happy, is some compensation for the shameful waste on diamonds and gems. Whatever is done, let it be kept in mind that the central thought of Christmas time should be God's redeeming love. This was unfolded in the babe, the boy, the man: Jesus, the Christ of God. That revelation sanctifies motherhood, glorifies babyhood, ennobles boyhood, and consecrates manhood and womanhood to high and holy service.

Christmas is a time for joy, but not for folly. It is time for gifts, useful and needful, not for extravagance and foolish show. The atmosphere of Christmas should be religious in the largest and best sense of the word.

Influence of the Pulpit.

Nor long ago, Professor Russell of New York University addressed the Presbyterian Minister's Association of New York upon, "The Preacher as a Pleader." Prof. Russell declared "that the waning power of the pulpit is one of the most lamentable signs of the times." His remarks emphasize the necessity of asking whether the intellectual pre-eminence of the pulpit is gone. One can not deny that our larger colleges and universities are no longer noted for the number of students who are in training for missionary work, or for service in the pulpit. The careful observer is compelled to ask whether the claim is true that the pulpit no longer attracts brightest minds and that "Theological Seminaries swarm with intellectual and moral weaklings." It is probably true to a lamentable degree that some students for the ministry are injured because they receive "the bounties of the pious of past ages," by way of help in pursuing their studies while preparing for the ministry. Still deeper examination would be likely to show that some important elements of success are lacking in the men who are thus "pauperized" and who enter the ministry without sufficient consciousness that "the laborer is worthy of his hire," and can therefore, speak freely as truth and necessity require, without fear of financial results. However, excellent may be the character of men occupying the pulpits, the cause of truth and righteousness demands the highest elements of real oratory and of power on the part of the preacher as a "pleader." What Dr. Russell calls "dreary monologue and complacent soliloquy," is not worthy of a competent preacher of the Gospel. In this connection it is doubtless true that "admiring friends of the preacher" fail to stimulate him to best efforts, because they praise weak and commonplace utterances. Vigor and power in the pulpit depend mainly upon the themes which preachers choose. The central message of the Gospel is not simply salvation from sin, for the individual. It is the redemption of the world from sin and its consequences through repentance, holiness of life and actual service for God and humanity. Dr. Russell illustrated his remarks by quoting the words of the country deacon, who said to his pastor, who had prayed long and loudly for power, "What you need, Doctor, is not power; it is ideas." Let it be granted that this illustration is extreme, yet the truth remains that the power of the pulpit comes largely from the themes of the preacher. The dullest of men are likely to respond to truth, plainly put. They are glad to be moved by something higher than the current of everyday thought which surrounds them. Honest men are willing to be stirred and condemned by truths which they must acknowledge, even if they do not already obey them. When such criticisms as those set forth by Prof. Russell are discounted, in a good part, enough remains to justify the demand for greater vigor of thought and larger conceptions of duty, in the average sermon. Comparatively, at least, the pulpit does not exercise the power that it did in the earlier history of this country; but comparisons with the past are not the most important considerations in this case. The really important consideration is what God and truth now require from the pulpit. Let the past bury itself, so far as

comparisons are concerned. But the present ought to rise above the past and meet the demands of these years with such vigor as comes from intrinsic and pertinent truth. The RECORDER urges its readers to remember that the preaching demanded at this time must apply truth to the present, and that no consideration of the past is valuable which does not focus the lessons of former centuries under the light of present demands. Criticisms like those of Prof. Russell,—and they are by no means infrequent,—ought to stimulate every preacher until the power of his words and the pointedness of his themes combine to prove that the influence of the pulpit is being renewed, and that the utterances of Christian ministers are worthy of the truth which they unfold and apply to the present needs of men.

"About Recorder Subscriptions."

A REPORT will be found on another page, showing what the women of Milton, Wis., have already done concerning subscriptions for the RECORDER. The report is so commendable and the example which the women of Milton have set is so excellent, that we ask all our readers to give it attention. The appeal to each individual subscriber which the RECORDER made last week ought to increase interest in each community and thus forward the efforts that the women may make to carry out the plan suggested at the late Conference. The RECORDER is thankful, in advance, for all aid that the women may give in this direction. It is a work common to all and in which everyone ought to be equally interested. The fact that the RECORDER is not a money-making paper and that all efforts to advance the circulation of it are in the interests of the denomination, and not of the paper itself as a business enterprise, justifies us in urging attention to this whole question. We take pleasure in thanking the women of Milton who have opened the campaign so wisely and well, and we believe that there will be a general response throughout the denomination. There are not many ways in which the women of the various churches can serve the cause of Christ and the interests of the denomination better than by extending the circulation of the RECORDER.

Summary of News.

Congress adjourned on December 21, 1905, to convene again on January 4, 1906. Comparatively little legislation has been accomplished up to this time. Progress has been made toward what promises to be better legislation in the matter of railroad rates. The agitation of that question in Congress has stimulated action in the Courts, and a number of important cases have been instituted against railroads and shippers, since Congress convened. Taken as a whole, that question has been placed before the people in an attitude and to an extent which promises good results both for the railroads and for the people. An Emergency Bill has passed both Houses making additional appropriations for work on the Panama Canal. Meanwhile the discussion of methods and of administration connected with that work has increased. Several important reforms or additional arrangements seem to be demanded. The Canal project is so great and involves so many new experiences, that various modifications and temporary delay will be unavoidable at the beginning of the enterprise. Everything, however, indicates that the canal will be built and that a great enterprise for which the

world has been waiting, will be duly accomplished by the United States.

Considerable disturbance has occurred in the city of Shanghai, China, during the week past. This seems to have grown out of questions connected with foreign affairs, and the rioters of Shanghai attacked the foreign settlement. German, English and American warships landed marines, and at the present writing the trouble seems to be subsiding. Still the situation is too uncertain to assure tranquility or an immediate settlement. The situation emphasizes what the RECORDER has before called attention to, namely, growing unrest on the part of Chinese concerning the interests of foreign governments and of foreign residents, everywhere in that empire. It is a fact of no small moment that during the outbreak in Shanghai the Japanese were unmolested. There was also evidence that they sympathized with the Chinese rioters.

Governor La Follette of Wisconsin has resigned during the past week, that he may accept an appointment as United States Senator. The Governor has shown himself a vigorous factor in Wisconsin politics and it is not unlikely that similar characteristics will appear, should he reach Washington.

Mr. and Mrs. William Asher, evangelists from Chicago, who have heretofore been at work in Western cities, and recently in Newark, Paterson and Jersey City, N. J., began work in the slums of New York,—the Tenderloin district,—on December 20. Good seems to have followed their work in other places and all who favor the purification of the dark places of the earth will hope that still greater success will crown their efforts in New York.

Abraham H. Hummel, of New York, who has been a noted and successful criminal lawyer, has been convicted, during the week, of conspiracy in the Dodge-Morse divorce case, and sentenced to the State Prison for one year, together with a fine of five hundred dollars, which is the maximum for his crime. This is commended most, by those who have been most familiar with his past history.

Three important banks in the city of Chicago suspended during the past week. The Clearing House of Associated Banks of that city came to the rescue and a financial panic was averted. Reckless speculation was the cause of the trouble.

For some time past there has been great suffering among the unemployed poor of the city of London. On December 17, two or three thousand of them attended the service at St. Paul's Cathedral. This is the first expression of the kind made in that city for twenty years. The ragged and motley crowd presented a strong contrast with the fashionably dressed worshippers on that occasion. The preacher made "sympathetic references to the problem of the unemployed." Reports indicate that there is an unusual amount of suffering in that city among those who are in want of employment and who are accustomed to live from day to day upon the low wages for which they are always compelled to labor.

The two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin will occur on January 6, 1906. It will be well if the story of his life, especially of his early life, is recalled and the important lessons of thrift, economy and manhood which it contains, are pressed upon the attention of the young men of this day.

The plans worked out by Secretary Taft for the building of railroads in the Philippines are likely to be fulfilled. These plans involve the construction of at least twelve hundred miles of railroad in the chief islands of the Archipelago. There can be no doubt that the development of such railroads will give great impetus, not only commercially, but to the advance of civilization, and to those good results which naturally attend it.

Affairs in Russia have not improved during the week, and in many respects they are more threatening than at any time before. The disturbance in the Baltic Provinces, which was reported last week, continues. It does not seem possible that anything like the old order of affairs can ever be restored in Russia. The Baltic Provinces, for example, if they remain a part of the empire, will secure much greater freedom, if not actual independence. Even Siberia and other half-civilized portions of the empire are sharing in the unrest. While the disturbance among the outlying provinces is a serious matter, revolution at Moscow and other places in the heart of the ancient empire, make the situation still more grave. While all the facts are not known, outside of Russia, it is evident that the former autocratic influence favors revolution, so far as it may be necessary to overthrow the liberal policy of the Czar, and to break down the new methods which Premier Witte has been commissioned to carry forward. The people evidently apprehend this, and the present revolution is clearly a fight to the finish between the old autocracy and the people. A general political strike which seems to be more wide-spread and better organized than any heretofore undertaken, was begun on December 20. Political and economical questions are so combined that organizations of workmen are the natural way in which revolutionary movements develop. Whatever may be the immediate results, from week to week, it is evident that the struggle between the people and tyranny will go forward until various forms of readjustment are secured. How much the better interests of the empire will suffer before peaceable readjustments are attained, will depend mainly upon the course pursued by the representatives of the old system. That the Czar desires better things is evident. That he has not personal power to secure that which he favors, without the aid of the people, is also clearly evident. Better things and the larger good must wait, while Russia struggles upon the battle-field of her own discord, where old wrongs are being opposed and long-delayed justice for the people is seeking recognition and victory.

THE COMPARATIVE MERITS OF WRITTEN AND EXTEMPORE PRAYER.

[This paper by Mr. Hardin comes to the RECORDER with the following note from one of our valued correspondents.

"I send a paper read before our Allegany County Ministers' Club by the bright pastor of the Cuba Presbyterian church. I, as well as others, liked it so well that I asked for it for the RECORDER. I hope you will see fit to publish it."

The RECORDER commends the paper to preachers and theological students, especially, and to all who pray.]

In this discussion we shall limit ourselves to the subject of so-called public prayer. It is of no concern to us what form of prayer a man uses in the sacred realm of private communion with his Maker. But the consideration of the comparative merits of written and extempore prayer in public is not only of great interest and of the highest

importance to religion but is also peculiarly pertinent in these days. For it is undeniable that the drift in public worship among nearly all the Protestant churches has for some time set towards the use of set forms and liturgies. Whether this tendency is significant for good or for evil in true religion is a matter to be considered later. The fact remains that not only have those churches which are liturgical in their worship prospered but that also those churches which have been generally counted as non-liturgical have, in many cases, devised forms of worship, some of which are both "fearfully and wonderfully made," but which point significantly to the desire, sometimes misguided, for embellishment of public worship.

The rustling leaflets on which the order of services for the day, or the notices, are printed, and which, to the irreverent mind strongly suggest theatre programs, are to be found in a multitude of congregations every Sunday, and display a variety almost as great as the leaves of the forest. Only this last spring the special committee, appointed a year ago for the purpose, reported to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., a book of prayer, known as "The Book of Common Worship," to be recommended for voluntary use in the churches. This book contains definite forms of morning and evening worship, and of baptism, burial, marriage, etc., together with a large assortment of prayers for different occasions. These last are largely culled from the treasury of the historical and immortal prayers of Christendom. Observe that the use of such forms of worship and of such prayers is purely optional; anything of the kind in any way mandatory being against every precedent in Presbyterianism. But the fact that such a book was conceived and brought forth is of significance. This, together with the evident trend towards ritualism in a multitude of non-liturgical churches, would seem to show that Christians find a certain use and value in set forms of public worship and, in particular, of written prayer. What then, are the merits of written prayers?

In such a ritualistic church as the Catholic the use of formularies has a doctrinal significance. This significance is practically ignored and rejected by the Protestant churches. But to the Catholic the method of worship is of the utmost importance and vitality. "Alteration of ritual would invalidate the sacraments, causing spiritual death to the worshipper, and bringing ecclesiastical penalty upon the priest." If we accept this doctrine, the most important concession has been made to the exclusive value and indispensableness of written prayer, and to say anything further in its defence would be gratuitous. But Protestants do not accept this doctrine. This argument in defence of written prayer is inconclusive. Other reasons for showing its peculiar merits must be adduced.

First, then, the value of written prayer is to be found in its dignity and reverence. These qualities are undeniable and clothe public prayer with a majesty that benefits the worshiper. Whatever difference of opinion there may be regarding the true value of private prayer, as to whether that consists in its subjective or objective force, we are constrained to admit that the chief value of public prayer is in its subjective force. The minister prays not merely that God may hear him, but that the people may too. What he says therefore *viva voce* should be of such a nature as to lead and uplift the people to a worshipful frame of mind. The better he can do

this, the greater power does his prayer possess as public prayer. He can best accomplish this by approaching the Most High with thoughts and words that are both dignified and reverent. Unquestionably the thoughts and language embodied in those prayers that centuries of Christian experience have heartily endorsed, and that have survived the ravages of time by reason of their intrinsic worth, furnish a form that well serves his turn.

What possible improvement could be made in both thought and language upon that sublime invocation found in the "Book of Common Order," beginning—O God, light of the hearts that know Thee, and life of the souls that love Thee, and strength of the thoughts that seek Thee; from whom to be turned away is to fall, to whom to turn is to rise, and in whom to abide is to stand fast forever—or that beautiful Collect for Peace beginning—"O God, who art the Author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom?" Surely such prayers stand as a living rebuke to those unpremeditated prayers which, too often, are marred by what Dr. Bethune calls, "the unchastened promptings of the mind and uncorrected effusion of the heart."

Written prayers have the merit of conciseness. They say what they mean to say and get through. Breath is not wasted upon them nor are the thoughts of the worshippers led all over creation in their endeavor to follow the minister, who seeks for divine blessing by the use of superfluous and vain repetitions as the heathen do. Written prayers serve as an excellent corrective to the devout extravagance of many Christians who imagine that that shall be heard for their much speaking.

Again, many written prayers possess the merit of rich and inspiring association. For all their early date in Christian history they have survived because they have been found tried and true. They express the greatest thoughts of many generations of some of the greatest Christians. They bear the marks of tribulation, anguish, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword. They wear the crown of triumph and have proved conclusively that no creature can separate the believer from the love of God in Christ his Lord. So to-day, when devout men pray, say, that famous prayer of Chrysostom, the yjoin hands across the gulf of time with the glorious past and realize more fully the doctrine of the Communion of Saints.

Lastly, written prayers have this excellence, that they furnish the worshippers immunity from the mental and spiritual shortcomings of the minister. All men cannot, or at least, do not pray equally well in public; and frequently worship is seriously handicapped by the uninspiring, and sometimes uninspired, utterances of an ignorant, weak and immoral man. Written prayer gives assurance to the worshipper wherever he attends church and however weak the sermon may be or unworthy the minister, that he will hear something in the course of public worship that will rise above the limitations and imperfections of the existing circumstances.

But we shall be unfair to our theme if we do not, with candor, set forth the limitations and disadvantages under which written prayer labors. First, we notice the lack of versatility and resourcefulness. However rich a treasury of prayers may be, conditions are sure to arise which cannot be fully met by existing prayers. The Protestant Episcopal Church has recognized this

fact and has wisely met it by the comparatively recent Canon which repeals the one that limited ministers to the use of written prayers, thus opening the way for free prayer if the need or desire arise. It is notorious that a few years ago when the king was dangerously sick, while from a multitude of non-conformist churches were made beautiful and appropriate prayers for his recovery, his loyal subjects in the congregations of the established church were unable to adequately voice their common fears and hopes because there was no prayer in the book suitable for the emergency. Prayer, like language and law, is, or should be, a progressive thing, meeting from time to time the new issues and requirements both of society and of the individual. Like language and law, it does well to respect precedent and all honorable usage, but, like these also, by reason of its very growth, it must constantly slough off much that becomes obsolete, and adopt new forms as new conditions arise. There are some prayers that can never grow old. Not till God's kingdom shall have fully come will the prayer of our Lord become antiquated. But prayers of this kind are few. Surely the spiritual needs of the twentieth century cannot be fully met by the prayers of the Reformation Period or of the Middle Ages or of the Patristic Era, however beautiful, appropriate and powerful they were in their day.

Again, the use of stated and unchanging forms of prayer, unless vigilantly, relentlessly and sternly guarded against, tends to formalism in worship, spiritual inertia, and one of the subtlest forms of idolatry. Said the Dean of Canterbury some time ago in a sermon—"The emptiness of many of our churches shows the need of changes in our services. We alone of all churches go on reciting the Athanasian Creed, most unsuitable for public recitation, most uncharitable and most repulsive to thousands of those who hear it. Our liturgy, as many clergy testify, is what the people do not want and cannot understand. It is too iterative, too long, too mechanical, too formal. And although fifty years ago Convocation agreed that some modification is needful for the peoples' spiritual necessities, we go on as if smitten with paralysis, and nothing is done." A severer indictment could scarcely be imagined. But there is truth in it. For the very qualities that lovers of liturgy praise, namely, its definiteness and familiarity, are the very things that may defeat the end of true and spiritual worship. The mind tends to fixed habits of thought and expression. Men get into ruts in religion as well as in other matters. And the temptation is to rest in these ever deepening ruts to the discouragement of spiritual initiative and energy. Moreover, most churches that rejoice in a majestic and historic liturgy have been repeatedly called to fight against the growing spirit of ritualism and of that real ecclesiastical idolatry that tends to magnify the visible means of grace at the expense of direct and true devotion to God, and to worship the creature rather than the Creator. The exclusive reading of prayers tempts a man to become lazy in his religion. The more he depends, in public worship, upon what other men, however noble and saintly they were in their lives, and how apt and inspiring in their worship, have thought and written, the less spiritually self-reliant he becomes; and he who should be the prophet of the Most High gravitates gradually into the mere priest.

(To be continued.)

THE SOUTH-WESTERN ASSOCIATION.

Since the planting time of this vine in God's vineyard, in 1887, beside the benefit of local

watering from home ministrations it has been blessed by occasional visitations of religious agencies from abroad, in the form of Association-gatherings. Of these, none has been more thoroughly a blessing than the one that closed its sessions on Sunday evening, December 17, 1905. While the delegates from our own and other Associations were not numerous, good use was made of them in program assignments, giving a prominent place to sermons, praise services and devotional meetings, the business being largely accomplished through committees. The several delegates from other Associations, consisting of Brethren Geo. B. Carpenter of Rhode Island, representing the Missionary Society, I. L. Cottrell of the Eastern, Central and Western, and Wayland Wilcox of the North-Western Associations, were every one an inspiration. Their ringing words of cheer and exhortation found hearty response in their hearers. So also with our Brother Randolph of Fouke, who, in addition to his excellent sermons, gave us vivid accounts of his work on that missionary field with headquarters at Fouke, Ark. We can understand now how much of labor and anxiety, and even sacrifice of many of the amenities of comfortable home life, it costs to be a missionary in the Southwest,—a live and large-hearted one, at least. These things were ascertained through a series of questions to which he was subjected, resulting in a much clearer understanding of what is being done.

The time of four days and evenings was well filled. It was all profitable and pleasant. An occasional musical variation was inserted, here and there, Brother Wilcox of Chicago leading valuable aid. So far as possible the home church arranged its business to accommodate the time demanded by the Association, though there were several whose time is not their own. The weather was delightful, the time auspicious, the hungry hearts receptive as well as responsive, and we felt then, as now, that the ministry of the Holy Spirit was strongly in evidence, resting upon us, as a benediction. The next session will be held at Gentry, Ark. P.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

BY EDWARD HERBRUCK, D. D.

The log-fire in the chimney-place is burning brightly this evening. It warms my body just as the thought of the coming Christmas warms my heart. The light of the logs, however, is circumscribed by the walls of my room, but the light and warmth of Christmas encircles the globe. It was intended to do that. One could no more confine the song of the angels to one country than he could confine the light of the sun to one mountain or valley. So this Christmas Eve I sit and think, and there is no time like this to unlock one's thoughts. My mind has been in all portions of the globe. Wherever there are men, whether it be among the snow and ice of Greenland or under the tropic sun, they need the courage which Christmas brings to all who have heard of Christ. I am aware of the fact, too, that there are men who would erase this day from their experience, if it were possible, because it brings into their hearts a note of sorrow. But suppose there is no fire on their hearth, suppose it is dark in their homes by reason of affliction or adversity, that cannot exclude the warmth and sympathy that comes from other lives. Some poet has written:

"Make the Christmas merry!
Tell again the story,
Full of light and glory,
Of the Christ-Child's birth.

Make the Christmas merry!
Ye, who serve and know him,
To the people show him,
King of heaven and earth.

"Make the Christmas merry!
Comfort the sad-hearted,
Bring the joy departed,
Back to men again;
For the love of Christmas,
For Christ's sake, make blessed
Those who are distressed—
Turn their loss to gain."

What is it that brings such a glow to the heart as the Christmas season comes? Is it the mere fact that hearts grow tender and friends far separated meet again in the old home and recall memories sad and pleasant of the long ago? There certainly must be more than this to make the season so dear to millions of men and women. To the outward eye the vision of the world that comes to me is not such as would indicate peace and goodwill. I think of the many burdens of men, burdens because of poverty or affliction, the myriad cares and longings—longings many of which can never be realized. Then there are sorrows and heartaches, and the unrest of individuals and nations. What are all these but the manifestation of the need of something that can still the troubled waters?

Sometimes, when I look upon the world with its turmoil and pain, I wonder whether there is a panacea for all this, and whether the time will ever come when the lion shall lie down with the lamb, and the devil be chained so that he can no more disturb. But when the true significance of Christmas comes to my mind, I feel sure that for every sorrow Christ has a cure. The very joy of the season magnifies the miseries of men, and it is not until they know what Christmas means, and they have had a vision of the Christ, the Peace-Bringer, will their souls be satisfied. I call to mind Alexander Smith's vision of the world as he looked upon it many years ago: "The Cross leads generations on. Believing as I do that my own personal decrease is not more certain than that our religion will subdue the world, I own that it is with a somewhat saddened heart that I pass my thought around the globe, and consider how distant that triumph yet is. There are the realms on which the Crescent beams, the monstrous many-headed gods of India, the Chinaman's heathenism, the African's devil rites. These are, to a large extent, principalities and powers of darkness with which our religion has never been brought into collision, save at trivial and far-separated points, and in these cases the attack has never been made in strength. And is not the public air which European nations breathe at this moment, as it has been for several years back, charged with thunder? Europe is bristling with five million bayonets; and this is the condition of the world for which the Son of God died." This is a dark vision, but in spite of the wars and strifes of nations and the petty bickerings of individuals, the world is rolling out of darkness into light.

I sometimes wonder to what extent we are responsible for the miseries of our fellow-men. The man who sits by his warm fire this Christmas Eve, while in his own immediate neighborhood children are shivering in the cold, wanting food, and having no thought of Christmas save as a memory, to what extent is he responsible for their poverty? The man who has lost faith and hope, to whom this Christmas cheer is but a mockery, how far am I responsible for his condition? Have

I made the religion of the Christ so hateful by my selfishness that he has been driven away from it? It may be possible. There is no selfishness in Christ. Blessed hope which this day inspires! It is the world's one great day. A day which no single nation can arrogate to itself, for the Christ has gone to the end of the earth, and though sin and misery abound, and shadows still hover over the valleys of the world, he from his lifted-up cross cries: "I will draw all men unto myself."
—*Christian Work and Evangelist.*

THE PRESERVATION OF CHRISTMAS.

The first time we visited London there was a line of busses starting from the vicinity of our hotel whose conspicuously displayed signs puzzled us. Each vehicle had upon its top, in the fiercest of lettering, "The Monster." To the lair of what particular dinosaur did this line run? We turned the leaves of our guidebook many times in vain. But presently when we confessed to an old Londoner the curiosity which was consuming us, he laughed and replied, "Why, a certain locality in South London has been called 'The Monster' since before the birth of its oldest inhabitant. I believe that some hundreds of years ago, long before the Reformation indeed, there was a 'monastery' in that section whose name gradually degenerated, and now, for no one knows how long, that part of the city is known as 'The Monster' instead."

Unfortunately, names are not the only things that get weatherworn in the course of time. Institutions themselves become air-slacked and crumble into little heaps of dust. Drums are beaten and guns are fired, but only the antiquary remembers what it is all about. The feast is still kept, but no one living can tell who the saint was whom it is supposed to commemorate. The church is lighted, but it is to exhibit a fairy scene or a Brownie's picnic. Presently, unless we have a care, we shall possess a Fourth of July without a flag, and it may be even a Christmas without a Christ.

What shall we do this year; keep "the" feast or only "a" feast? Nothing else grades off so rapidly as a holiday. Nothing requires more rational care and conscientious purpose to preserve its spirit than the celebration of an anniversary. That we and the generations to come after us may be properly impressed by some great historic event, we set aside a day for its commemoration. But we try to express and cultivate our grateful emotions by functions which have little or no direct relation to the event. We celebrate the birthday of the nation by the roar of guns, the abundance of our harvests by a family reunion, the heroism of our dead soldiers by athletic contests, and the birth of the Saviour by a distribution of presents and the giving of public entertainments. All of which is just and reasonable, provided the celebration does not first obscure and then kill off the purpose of the festival. The creeper which first adorns the oak tree, if unchecked in its growth, destroys it, and the ivy which now veils a wall, later conceals and then disintegrates it.

It is not otherwise with the accessories of any anniversary. The very means which we employ to make the day brighter than its fellows, unless kept in control, will suck the life from it. The name may survive long after the reality has disappeared, and the letter remain to mock the vanished spirit.

The Puritan antipathy to Christmas was not wholly a matter of temperament. Even by those organizing those entertainments, the mediaval

Christmas plays were designated as "mummies." The attraction of the day was not the infant Christ who "in the beauty of the lilies was born across the sea," but the painted mime who amid derisive cheers staggered onto the stage and was with boisterous violence dragged off again. The day had been smothered by its adornments. The life had long since flown, and nothing but the cadaver remained. The best thing we can do with it now, said the Puritan, is to bup it.

Happily for us and for our children, Christmas has had a resurrection. But it would be a thousand pities were it called from the grave only to repeat the process of its decay and dissolution. But if we would keep it, we must not kill it by its own wreaths. A Christmas which is observed with closed churches and open vaudeville is doomed. The Sabbath-school festival—and every Sabbath-school should have one—need not be converted into a prayer meeting, but it should not be turned into a Punch-and-Judy show. The Christ, "conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary" must animate it, all parts of it, or it will again become an offense. Without the spiritual presence of him who was born at Bethlehem, it will sink out of sight, engulfed in its own sports—which at first were only unrelated to religion, then repugnant to religion and finally destructive of religion. If it ceases to be the monastery, it will become The Monster. It can not long remain merely an amusement; it must by its very nature be either a blessing or a ban.

It is for this reason we should be glad to see the day observed with worship in all our churches. It need not be exalted to a place beside the day which commemorates our Lord's resurrection, but the birth of our Saviour can not be properly observed by rites purely secular, even though they be domestic and benevolent. Let the Sabbath-school festival be sweet with the Christ-presence. Let the songs be carols, not catches from "The Wizard of Oz." Let each gift speak from "The Wizard of Oz. Let each gift speak of Himim "from whom all blessings flow." Let the Spirit of Christmas pervade the Christmas festival, and it will be found that no day is so bright as that which his presence illumines, and no feast so long and lovingly remembered as that at which he was the honored guest.—*The Interior.*

NAMES OF FABRICS.

Muslin is named for Mosul in Asia.

Serge comes xerga, the Spanish for a certain sort of blanket.

Bandanna is derived from an Indian word signifying to bind or tie.

Calico is named for Calicut, a town of India, where it was first printed.

Alapaca is the name of a species of llama from whose wool the genuine fabric is woven.

The name "damask" is an abbreviation of Damascus; satin is a corruption of Zaytown, in China.

Velvet is the Italian "vellute," woolly, and is traceable farther back to the Latin vellus, a hide or pelt.

Shawl is from the Sanskrit sala, which means floor, shawls having been first used as a carpet tapestry.

Cambric comes from Cambral; gauze, from Gaza; baize, from Bajac; dimity, from Damietta, and jeans, from Jean.

Blanket bears the names of Thos. Blanket, a famous English clothier who aided the introduction of woollens into England in the fourteenth century.—*Philadelphia Bulletin.*

Missions.

G. B. CARPENTER, Acting Corresponding Secretary, Ashaway, R. I.

Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel. Mark 16: 16. "How shall they go except they be sent?" Rom. 10: 15.

Jesus, who made his disciples "the light of the world," commanded them in his last words, to "go" and "preach." There can be no mistake as to how the disciples understood the command. It brought them under responsibility for the salvation of others; and in obedience to it, they "went everywhere preaching."

Paul the persecutor,—who helped to murder one of the deacons, for preaching—but who was afterwards converted, understood the command of Christ in the same way as did the apostles, "and straightway he preached Christ." Indeed, all the disciples from the day of Pentecost to the close of the story, recognized the obligation to either "go and preach," or to "send the gospel into regions beyond." If the gospel was ever to reach and save the world, they must do the work. They felt that everything depended on them.

Christ's followers to-day enjoy the blessings of Christianity because the early disciples were true to their Master's command. We all feel that if they had failed to preach and teach and send the gospel, the entire world would be in darkness to-day, and we should be ignorant of the gospel message that fills our lives with hope and joy. We also feel that if the early Christians had been indifferent, had they shirked all responsibility for the spread of the gospel, they would have been guilty in the sight of God; and millions of souls now saved would have died without hope. This is undoubtedly true.

My brother, are not you the light of the world to-day just as certainly as were the disciples of old? If they would have been guilty for neglecting to go or send, are not we equally guilty if we are indifferent to the Macedonian cry for help? Will God approve of our deeds, if we allow men to go to ruin for want of the gospel, without doing all in our power to enlighten them? You admit that if the gospel of Christ was to reach the heathen and the unbelievers of their day, the early disciples were the only ones who could preach it, and everything depended upon them. Is not the relation between Christians and heathen to-day exactly the same as it was then? Are not those who know not Christ just as dependent upon Christians for light to-day as of old? Will not many precious souls be lost if we fail to do our duty in regard to Christ's command? If so, will God excuse us in the day of accounts, or shall we find the blood of lost souls upon us? Certainly, we who believe to-day are responsible for the progress of God's kingdom; and if believers are indifferent to the command to go or send, the cause of Christ must suffer.

Oh, what a blessing would come to all our churches if this spirit could prevail to-day. The reflex influence of such a grace abounding, would start a revival of religion in every church, and God alone could measure the good such offerings would bring to all our mission fields both at home and abroad. As it now is, instead of the people urging their gifts upon the leaders, and entreating them to accept greater offerings than the leaders have dared to hope, the Board must plead, and plead almost in vain, only to find the offerings so small and so disappointing, that the work has to be stopped, or great debts incurred. This is too bad. Who is there that does not feel that it is too bad? How easy it would be to better it, if each one would do his duty! It would not be hard upon anybody, when this grace abounds; and the work would move gloriously forward. Men talk about lost arts; I greatly fear that the church has lost one of the New Testament graces. What a glorious record the coming winter would make, if right now—this very week—all Christians would take a new start in the grace of liberality for God's cause. Why not do it? Come, let us

all generations, to save souls through human agency, and countries in darkness always have to wait until Christians awake to a sense of their obligations, and begin to do something for those who are without. Each individual Christian is one of God's agents. You, my brother, by indifference to this great truth, can retard the progress of God's kingdom by just so much as you are able to do but fail to do. If each individual would realize this great truth, and do his part toward sending the gospel, what an impetus would be given to the work of Missions! Supposing every Seventh-day Baptist was to-day a constant and systematic giver to the cause of Missions, would our Board be so handicapped in its work, as to make retrenchment necessary? As it now is, the good work has to cease in many fields, and the Board is helpless under the burden of debt. If each one would heed the command to go or send, and would give as God has prospered him, the work could go on, and the Board would be free from debt. Everybody would feel better satisfied, and great spiritual gain would come to the individual lives, and to the churches they love.

all join in obedience to the command to send the gospel to all the world. Let it not be a mere momentary start, but the beginning of a systematic and regular work, that will keep a constant stream flowing into our Missionary treasury.

"PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

The commands of the apostle Paul are terse, comprehensive, practical, and in strictest accord with the teaching of Christ. The apostle proved to his complete satisfaction very soon after his conversion, that Jesus was the Christ, the son of God; that he died upon the cross, was buried, rose from the dead, ascended to the right hand of the Father, and that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. From that time he was thoroughly consecrated to the winning of souls to become disciples of his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, and by reason of the divine call given him, to endure persecution for Christ's sake. Paul is one of the wisest counselors in all matters relating to the dissemination of the gospel, and we may safely follow his precepts and example.

It is a laudable purpose that seeks improved ways for promoting our denominational interests. Inasmuch as Christ gave himself for us, it behooves every disciple to give his best endeavor to the Master's service. In such work, to wait for others is assured failure. Each man's duty belongs solely to himself, and Christ is his only all-sufficient aid. Our denominational work is so important, extended and varied, that separate departments of service have been organized as an expression of the judgment of those most interested, that the best results can thus be obtained. To this end the Missionary, Sabbath Tract, Education, Woman's, Sabbath School and Young People's Boards have been established. In each department, there are important and abundant demands for earnest, consecrated and patiently persistent endeavor. The common endeavor in all these departments, is to recognize Jesus as the head of our household of faith; the unseen guest in every assembly; the silent listener to all our deliberations. This is the sacred bond of union that can make the departments harmonize in one purpose, as Jesus prayed that his disciples might be one, even as he and the Father are one. It is the self-denying spirit of the apostle for the purpose of winning souls for Christ, that we should emulate. He counted it a joy to endure persecution and hardship, if thereby he could win one soul from sin and death to righteousness and eternal life. But he plainly saw that without brotherly love and harmony it was impossible to please God. In proof, read 1st Corinthians; Chapter 13. Even rash and unguarded criticism is often intensely destructive to the good we desire to do. It breeds discord, strife and discouragement, retards progress, and severely wounds consecrated workers. The gospel everywhere emphasizes the necessity of cherishing patience, perseverance and loving kindness as essentials to the success of good work.

W. L. CLARKE.

QUERY.

Would it be wise to place upon the pledge cards of every department for 1906 the full list of the Boards that are at work for our common cause? One person has decided to place the Sabbath School Board upon his weekly list for next year, and still the school of which he is a member has this year given that department a full month's

contributions, and because of a recent call from the Board, has added \$10.00 thereunto. If those who have thoroughly matured plans that in their judgment are better for promoting our work than those now in use, it seems to the writer that it would be well for them to plainly announce them in the SABBATH RECORDER, thus giving opportunity for the denomination to consider them, prior to taking them as recommendations for approval by the General Conference. Each Board may well make its department in the SABBATH RECORDER replete with vigor and zeal in the endeavor to advance its special work, giving whatever of time and talent it can to this purpose. But to some minds it appears more appropriate to bring proposals for radical changes, or complicated surprises before the people for consideration and individual decision, prior to presenting them to the General Conference for consideration. It would tax the wisdom of a judge of the Supreme Court to be sure of giving a just and proper decision concerning an important and complicated new matter, if envied by the overflowing enthusiasm of the General Conference. Rather let the matured judgment of the denomination bring the ripened fruitage before the General Conference. "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

W. L. CLARKE.

IF THIS WERE TWENTY CENTURIES AGO.

If this were twenty centuries ago,
And three wise men should seek my house and say:
"We bring glad tidings! Christ is born to-day;
Arise and follow yonder star, whose glow
Will lead you to the Child!" would I obey
If this were twenty centuries ago?

From out my urn of precious hoarded things,
Would I make haste to pour the richest share
For him? The sweetest of my perfumes spare
To bathe the feet of the young King of kings?
Or break the costliest ointment on his hair,
From out my urn of precious hoarded things?

Alas! I dare not say this would I do,
Since I have slighted many another guest
That came from God, have stayed from many a quest
That would have led me to the good and true,
To slumber on with head upon my breast;
Nay, nay! I dare not say this would I do.

My best resolves like shifting shadows are;
Each day some holy light shines on unsought,
And while my silly, fluttering wings are caught
By the world's rosy candle, Christ's own star—
How can I tell?—might beckon me for naught;
My best resolves like shifting shadows are.

And when Christ comes again—as come he will—
And wise ones hasten forth with rapt delight
To welcome him and own his kingly right,
Will men be questioning and doubting still,
As when upon that first, far Christmas night—
When Christ shall come again, as come he will?
—The Christian Work and Evangelist.

In truth thou art a sinner; thou art subject to
and entangled with many passions. Of thyself
thou always tendest to nothing; speedily art thou
cast down, speedily overcome, speedily confused,
speedily dissolved. Thou art weaker than thou
art able to comprehend.

There are some people who turn gray, but do not grow hoary, whose faces are furrowed but not wrinkled, whose hearts are sore wounded in many places, but are not dead. There is a youth that bids defiance to age, and there is a kindness which laughs at the world's rough usage. These are they who have returned good for evil. * * * Whom the gods love die young, and they die young because they never grow old.

Woman's Work.

MRS. HENRY M. MAXSON, Editor, Plainfield, N. J.

OLD YEAR MEMORIES.

Let us forget the things that vexed and tried us,
The worrying things that caused our souls to fret;
The hopes that, cherished long, were still denied us
Let us forget.

* * * * *
But blessings manifold, past all deserving,
Kind words and helpful deeds, a countless throng,
The fault overcome, the rectitude unswerving,
Let us remember long.

The sacrifice of love, the generous giving,
When friends were few, the handclasp warm and strong,
The fragrance of each life of holy living,
Let us remember long.
Whatever things were good and true and gracious,
Whatever of right has triumphed over wrong,
What love of God or man has rendered precious,
Let us remember long.

So, pondering well the lessons it has taught us,
We tenderly may bid the year "Goodby,"
Holding in memory the good it brought us,
Letting the evil die.

—Susan E. Gammons, in *Christian Endeavor World*.

INQUIRY.

"Will you kindly tell us, through the RECORDER, the cost, per year, of keeping a native Bible-woman in China,—also, the cost of keeping one pupil in our boarding school a year?"

"I ask you to answer through the RECORDER because I know there are others just as ignorant as myself; for last summer, when it was my privilege to visit one of our large churches, I could find no one who could answer these questions. I regret being so far from my own people, but would like to keep at least as well informed about my own as I am about the Methodist Episcopal and Presbyterian churches."

Thirty dollars (\$30.00) a year supports a Chinese girl in the boarding school, and for many years we sent seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) a year for each of our Bible-women. One of these voluntarily relinquished even this sum, that she might be able to say to her country women, when charged with being a Christian because of financial gain, that she received absolutely *no salary*. Can we find anywhere a nobler example of disinterested devotion to the cause of Christ, or of stronger faith in the loving, providing care of the Saviour in whom she trusted?

Many touching things come to the treasurer, in connection with remittances sent to the Board. One, recently, was sent in memory of a deceased husband and a pastor, both of whom were able, earnest workers, and whose work it was sought to continue; another came from a warm-hearted sister, whose death occurred in October last, and one of whose last requests was that a sum of money should be sent to Dr. Palmberg for her house.

Surely, money so consecrated, with God's especial blessing, should accomplish much for the spread of the Gospel of Christ.

MRS. L. A. PLATTS,
Milton, Dec. 17, 1905.

CHRISTMAS.

Christmas not only links our own time with past ages, but it is an inspiration in itself. The beautiful story that connects it with the Christian religion throws a halo of light around it. Little children, whose faces are now seen all aglow with happy anticipation, stir the hearts of men and women, for we never outgrow the memories of childhood. The picture of a fireplace, with a small stocking hanging beside it, and a baby

sleeping in its crib, can move the busiest man to pause for a moment. It is the children's day, and angels of good will and mercy are supposed to come down to earth and care especially for them. Good old Santa Claus, never worn out through all the centuries that have come and gone since his birth, reappears, hale and hearty as ever, though robbed of all mystery and dignity by being put everywhere to the trade of "sandwich-man." The simplicity of the day is in a measure lost, but things have happened to Christmas before in history, and it has survived them.

The Puritans decided not to recognize this holiday in their new life, probably because of the extent to which it had become a high carnival in England. Around the yule-log in the inns a noisy crowd held their revels. Even the churches were likely to be invaded by some boisterous singer, and misrule was the order of the day. So our forefathers set their faces steadily against it, but the white-winged angel of Christmas only held back and waited for the days to come, when she could rule in peace, and love and good order.

Holidays are like windows, they let in the light and the air, and freshen up the whole year. The world will never let them go. Henry VIII. once decreed a "still Christmas," and Cromwell, during his reign, ordered the usual merriment to cease. No carols to be sung in the feudal halls! No holly and ivy to be seen at the windows! King Charles restored the festivities, and great was the rejoicing that followed.

The early Christians held their Christmas beneath the Applan way, in the catacombs of Rome, with lighted torches to guide them through the darkness, and in the shadow of persecution they met to hallow the birth of Christ. There they gave utterance to exalted sentiments, and rose above the fear of a martyr's death. An old man among them, who had been condemned by the Roman officers, is said to have prophesied for the future of Christianity: "This roof hides our stars, but they are shining still. So shall the light of our religion glow among the hosts of the righteous, who are to appear through all the ages, for the Star of Bethlehem will never set."—Boston Transcript.

MRS. GIBSON'S EXPERIMENT.

"No, I didn't say anything to Reuben about it beforehand, for fear he might be moved to ridicule the whole thing or else out and out forbid it; and as I had signed a contract of obedience nearly twenty-five years ago in the old church, which is not outlawed yet, it is about as binding in one case as in another, I suppose.

"However, I've never had any scruples against walking around it, when prudence seemed the better part of valor, and so, as I said before, I never mentioned my plan but fixed upon a time for carrying it out, when Reuben had gone off for a few days to look after some stock.

"You see, I had been chairman of the programme committee of our missionary meeting for the last year, and was almost tired to death as well as out of patience. We had worked very hard, the committee I mean, at getting up something each time which would interest the people and not be the least bit ratty and, if I do say it myself, with the exception of once or twice, we spread quite a tempting menu before them.

"We had heard a convincing paper read one day, about not always having the same things to eat for breakfast, dinner and tea, which the writer beautifully applied to programmes, and we, as a committee, profited by the hint.

"I haven't time now to tell you one-half of

what we had in all these months; it would really take less time, I suppose, just to mention what we have not had. I judge this by the way those head women talked out at the big missionary meeting in the city. They brought along a lot of plans all marked out with a cross, like Marion Harland's Cook Book recipes, which meant that they had been tried and proved satisfying. How those delegates took notes on them. All but me! I just sat and never touched a pencil to them, because we had had every one of them long ago.

"Well, after all of our efforts, there has not been a quorum (excepting when we had the free lunch) at any of our meetings. I asked Mariha Bainbridge one day on the street why she didn't come, and she tossed her head and said, 'there were reasons.' And then it struck me for the first time, that as the others were to all appearance, in the long run, as reasonable creatures as Martha, they might have reasons too. So I made up my mind to ask them to give their reasons, and if they were not too mighty to handle, I would pass them over to the parson, and maybe he might get a bundle of edifying sermons out of them.

"I started early in the afternoon, as there were a number of places to call at, and it wasn't long before I was sitting, as cosy as could be, in Lucretia Sloane's sunshiny kitchen, and she doing up the family mending.

"Why don't I come to the missionary meeting?" laughed Lucretia, 'that is easily answered. It is because you persist in holding it on a Saturday. I have,' she continued solemnly, 'to leave something undone if I go out on Saturdays!' Here I saw her look complacently at her bright stove and illuminated tea-kettle. 'Hold it of an evening, or almost any other day in the week, and I would make an effort to be there.'

"Pretty solid reason," says I to myself, as I jot down in my note-book 'Wrong day,' before knocking on Polly Jones' door.

"To tell the truth, Sister Gibson," says Polly, 'I always forget about the missionary meeting until the bell rings, and then it is too late to get ready. And sometimes I can't place the bell. What is going on at our church,' I say to myself, 'that they are ringing the bell?' Then all at once I remember the announcement of the Sunday before.

"The entry I make this time is: 'Indifference,' with a large capital.

"At the next place Mrs. Van Campus said: 'My dear Mrs. Gibson, you make your programmes too long. Really, I feel as exhausted the last time I was there as though I had personally walked those weary miles, and endured the dreadful things which those good creatures you tell of profess to having experienced. The whole thing was enervating in the extreme to a person with my nervous temperament, and—'

"I don't know how long she might have continued, but as I had no spare time I left her talking, while I went down the street studying to myself what to write about her case. I made it 'Selfishness,' for I believe that quality keeps more people out of enjoyment, and plunges more of them into nervous prostration than any other word of its size in the whole dictionary.

"Mrs. Lamb, being quite outspoken, said she stayed away because she couldn't afford to go. 'I pay my yearly dues,' said she, 'and I disapprove of the collection-box being passed around. A mite-box at the door, for left-handed offerings, is more Scriptural as well as more drawing,' said she.

"And now I and my note-book were in a quandary until I concluded to place the word 'Justice' in front of Sister Lamb's name.

"Miss May Lillian Blake had had her feelings hurt; somebody had lacerated them. I told her it was better in all such cases to remember, firstly, the source, and secondly, the *bigness of the cause*; and after studying for a time on the secondly, the firstly would settle itself naturally. 'It speaks well for any circle of women,' I added, 'to be able to run a society as long as this has been going, with no more serious conflict and jealousy than we have had.' I have half a notion that May Lillian will come back, and I wrote 'Hypersensitive' before her name.

There were a good many who were afraid to come for fear the leader might ask them to do something, and they 'trembled so' at the sound of their own voices in such places. Moreover they were fearful lest they might call some of those foreign words the wrong way.

"You poor dears," said I, 'would it be a crime if you did? If you can keep up with all of those names, and they are changing-right along, I reckon you will be the first one. Of course if you feel a weakness about the English words, Webster's Dictionary is a powerful tonic.' My note-book agreed with me on 'Timidity' this time, although I did feel like singing along with John Bunyan:

"Who would valorous be,
Let him come hither;
Let him quite constant be
Come wind or weather;
Then fancies'll fly away,
He'll not fear what men say"—

and so on; but not having much voice for singing, I refrained. Before I had been all around, as a matter of course I found a great many people who 'did not believe in missions,' and others who were skeptical about the money ever reaching its destination.

"That evening, though tired, I took time by the forelock and sorted out the reasons I had collected, fastening a fitting text of Scripture to each, for it did not seem quite just to give the parson so much sudden material without accompanying it with a little lift.

"In front of 'Wrong day' I wrote 'Careful and troubled about many things.' Beside 'Indifference' I put 'Because thou art neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.' 'Selfishness' fitted many texts but I thought 'Let him deny himself' was the best. When it came to finding a text for 'Justice' it was harder, but Isaiah helped me out: 'My people doth not consider,' that was it. 'Hypersensitive's' text was 'Be not overcome with evil.' 'Timidity's' was good, too, 'According to the proportion of faith.' There is so much back of these words. You can find them in the twelfth of Romans.

"As for the unbelieving ones, I had no time to waste with them, knowing if they would only read their Bibles a little oftener, a regular good conscientious read, they would drop such ideas.

"I had not more than gotten my texts arranged before I heard Reuben's step on the walk, getting home sooner than he had expected; so I told him the whole transaction after all.

"Somehow or other I never could keep anything back from that man."—*Woman's Work for Woman.*

Oh, for faith and strength to win every battle we begin!

Oh, for patience to put though every task we planned to do!

A PRAYER.

These are the gifts I ask
Of thee, Spirit serene:
Strength for the daily task,
Courage to face the road,
Good cheer to help me bear the traveller's load,
And, for the hours of rest that come between,
An inward joy in all things heard and seen.

These are the sins I fain
Would have thee take away:
Malice, and cold disdain,
Hot anger, sullen hate,
Scorn of the lowly, envy of the great,
And discomfort that casts a shadow gray
On all the brightness of the common day.

—Henry Van Dyke.

MENTAL JAUNDICE.

AN AFFLICTION WHICH IS ESPECIALLY HARD ON THE PATIENT'S FRIENDS.

A new disease of at least a new name for an old disease, has been discovered by a noted brain specialist of London. It is mental jaundice. Worrying over trifles is one cause. Greed, pride and prejudice are others. Whatever the cause,

the effect is to make one look upon this beautiful world of ours with discontent and to find continual fault with our fellow travellers toward the grave, writes Robert Webster Jones in the September *Housekeeper*. "Let a person once become infected with this disease," says the specialist, "and nothing but the most rigorous measures will effect a cure. I believe mental jaundice is on the increase, especially among the upper classes.

It is the source of more unhappiness, to the patient as well as to those about him, than almost any other disease. Physical jaundice produces yellowness of skin which, after a while becomes yellowness of the eyes. This produces a condition of the eye which makes the patient see everything yellow. Mental jaundice is analogous. Its victim sees nothing in its true colors or proportions. Everything is distorted by his diseased mental condition."

What is the remedy? The specialist does not say, but it may be assumed that the cure rests almost wholly with the patient. Optimism may be made a habit as well as pessimism. It is well within any one's power to open the windows of his soul and let in the sunshine. Cheerfulness produces both mental and physical health. Let us avoid getting into that condition which invites mental jaundice. It is best combated by a smile on the face and a song in the heart.

HOLLY BERRIES.

Bring the glowing holly berries,
Snow is lying deep;
All the gay and blooming flowers
Till the springtime sleep.
Let them grace our happy homes
With their crimson light,
Mingling with the sombre fir,
And the laurel bright.

When I see the holly berries,
I fancy that I hear
Merry chimes and carols sweet
Ringing in my ear.
Christmas with its blazing fires
And happy hearths I see;
Oh! what merry thoughts can cling
Round the holly tree.

—Unknown.

Life is not the work of one year, but of many. It is not a link, but a chain. It is a book of many chapters, but it is a continuous story, and each chapter is related to all the others. The excellencies and the unfoldings of life are but the developments of the plots begun in the early chapters. The last is dependent on the first. If there is to be a climax of goodness in the closing chapters there must be goodness in the preface and the introduction.

ORDINATION OF DEACONS.

On November 21, 1905, a council was called by the Little Genesee Seventh-day Baptist church to ordain Dr. O. E. Burdick and Mr. G. H. Crandall as deacons. Seven churches were represented by delegates. Dr. A. E. Main was elected chairman and H. Eugene Davis secretary. Rev. L. C. Randolph led in the opening prayer, after which the choir sang the anthem "Be Thou exalted." The examination of the candidates was conducted by Dr. Main, in which both gave a brief statement of their Christian experience, which, in both instances, commenced in early life in Christian homes. They expressed a firm faith in the Bible and in Christ as the Saviour of men. Although they felt unworthy, still they wanted to be faithful to duty. After the examination came the following program:

Ordination Sermon, Rev. A. G. Crofoot.
Anthem, "Teach me O Lord."
Consecrating Prayer, Rev. S. H. Babcock.
Welcome to Candidates, Deacon Roger Crandall.

Charge to Candidates, Rev. L. C. Randolph.
Charge to Church, Rev. O. D. Sherman.
After the right hand of fellowship by all elders and deacons present, the benediction was pronounced by Rev. S. H. Babcock.

H. EUGENE DAVIS, Sec.

December 22, 1905.

MARION HARLAND IN BETHLEHEM.

The little city of Bethlehem is set upon a hill which is crowned by the Church of the Nativity, writes Marion Harland in the December *Lippincott's*. The Grotto, which all sects of believers have agreed upon as the birthplace of our Lord, is directly under the church and entirely dependent for light upon artificial means. A silver star is set into the pavement of a semicircular niche, above which is an altar adorned with the usual churchly symbols. By the light of fifteen colored lamps suspended under the altar we read the inscription in Latin:

"*Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary.*"

The long line of pilgrims prostrated themselves, one by one, and kissed the star, some with dropping tears—all, silently—solemnized beyond the range of speech. It did not add to our solemnity to be shown the manger, decorated with lace and an embroidered altar-cloth, and defended from sacrilegious fingers by a gilded railing. The really impressive things were occasional glimpses of the rough stone walls and roof of the ancient stable, visible here and there between the gaudy decorations.

The service of Christmas-Eve began at half-past ten at night and concluded at half-past two in the morning! At midnight a lullaby from the organ preluded the supreme moment of the occasion—the sudden folding back of a curtain above the altar, revealing a manger-cradle and a big wax doll. The exultant outburst of organ and choir in a magnificent Gloria in Excelsis accompanied the stately processional of the entire staff of priests and acolytes, chanting and swinging censers, while they bore up one aisle and down another, back to the high altar, the same doll, dressed in cambric and lace, and nestling in the embrace of the richly apparelled bishop.

Every incident of our last night in Jamal's camp in Beth-lehem recurs to me with peculiar distinctness. How, as the darkness deepened, the red, blinking eyes of the charcoal craters of the wonderful portable stove presided over by our accomplished chef in the door of the kitchen—the night being breezeless—shone upon the

under side of the olive boughs over our heads, while our quiet talk went on of what had happened in the old town behind us.

We spoke longest of David's Greatest Son, and of the Birth that was to draw the eyes and thoughts of all nations to the little city on the hill-top in the land of Juda.

At midnight, kept wakeful by the rush and burden of thought, I arose to look from the tent door upon the watchful stars that here have a conscious majesty I had never recognized elsewhere, and wondered anew where, amidst the glittering hosts "marshalled on the nightly plain" had flashed the Star of Beth-lehem. For the last time in our eventful series of journeying we saw the dawn redden the Mountains of Moab, the thin crescent of the waning moon dying, while we gazed, before the brightness of the coming sun.

I shall always be grateful that that night of ineffable calm and the beauty of the new day are prominent among the pictures conjured before my mental vision, as at the wave of an enchanter's wand, by the name of "Ephrath—which is Beth-lehem."

CHRISTMAS IS HERE.

Sing a song of Christmas,
Santa Claus is here,
Everyone is happy,
Hearts are full of cheer.
Sing a song of Christmas,
All the girls and boys,
Stockings by the chimney,
Bulging out with toys.

Sing a song of Christmas,
It's a jolly time,
Merry bells are ringing,
Joyful carols chime.
Sing a song of Christmas,
Every little one,
Christmas tree and holly,
Help to make the fun.

PLANTS THAT HIDE.

In a recent number of the *Popular Science Monthly*, Professor W. J. Beal, of the Michigan Agricultural College, gives the following interesting facts concerning the peculiarities of certain plants in their efforts to escape destruction by animals. He says:

"A famous plant collector in Mexico and the arid regions of the United States, speaks of a native grass of northern Mexico, *Muhlenbergia Texana*, as such a favorite with all grazing animals that it is usually exterminated, or nearly so, except when growing under the protection of thorny shrubs, usually mesquite bushes. In Arizona, during the winter and spring, the Indians bring it long distances into the town to sell."

He adds: "How many times I have contended with the horrid mesquite bushes to gather an armful of this grass to carry joyfully to my hungry and jaded horses. In such cases, the thorns, spines, and, perhaps, bitter taste of the bushes, not only protect the young growth and leaves of certain plants, but furnish shelter for other tender and nutritious herbage.

"In arid regions, especially, similar instances of protection by thorn bushes are numerous."

Again, some plants retire beneath the surface of the ground at the close of the growing season, especially in regions subject to drought or cold, remaining secure beneath the surface for months in the form of bulbs, tubers, and root-stocks. At such times they are nearly sure to escape destruction by animals. Examples are Solomon's seal, Dutchman's breeches, May apple, goldenrod and artichoke. Other plants are protected by water, and of these Professor Beal says:

"Not only the flowers of many species of plants as they project above the surface of the water are protected from most unwelcome insects, but the whole plants as well. Mud turtles, certain fishes, water snails, larvae of insects, eat aquatic plants, but most other animals are unable to reach them in such places.

"Water plantain, wild rice, pond lilies, arrow-head, pickerel weed, pondweed, lizard's tail, bulrush, burreed, cat-tail flag, water dock, and many more of their associates, root at the bottom with leaves floating on the surface or projecting above.

"Innumerable low forms, known as algæ, are at home in lakes, ponds and streams, or on the surface of the water, while other kinds thrive in salt or in brackish water. These aquatics find protection below the surface or by extending above it, not only from numerous animals, but they have no competition with others which can grow only on dry or moist soil."

JOKING ON DENOMINATIONAL PECULIARITIES.

How often at clubs and religious gatherings, too, the chief stock in trade is the well-worn joke on a creed or a denomination! I have indulged in that sort of nonsense myself, and I am done with it. Anything that is held sacred by my brother I will not ridicule. It's time to call a halt. Our thoughtlessness has caused many a heartache.

"There is not the same degree of sensitiveness that formerly existed in regard to denominational peculiarities, and the jokes that one sometimes hears in public do not rasp and rankle as formerly," writes an editor whose opinion I value. "Still, we think there is far too great a tendency even now to make light of distinctions that are dear to Christian hearts. Because such fooling is not resented is no sign that it does not hurt. The denominations stand for great ideas in the religious world; these ideas are precious and full of meaning to some people, or else the denominations would not be perpetuated. The Westminster Catechism is not a mere matter of black marks on white paper to the Presbyterian; the history of John Wesley and the truths for which Wesley stood are not matters of little moment to the Methodist; the amount of water used is not a subject for banter with most Baptists; John Robinson and the Pilgrim Fathers are not regarded as fair game for the funny paragrapher or after-dinner speechmaker by the average Congregationalist. It is a sign of a lack of good taste, to say the least, to insist on perpetrating such alleged witticisms."—*John Willis Baer in the Interior.*

AGE AND BRAIN WORK.

The belief of Sir James Crichton-Browne that brainworkers, achieve their best work in later middle age is easily confirmed by glancing at the careers of a few of the grand old men who are still with us, many of whom are as busy as in their younger days, says the *London Chronicle*. Lord Roberts at 73 is still worth £5000 a year to the nation as one of our imperial defenders; Lord Kelvin at 81 may startle us with further generalizations on the mysteries of science, Sir William Huggins at the same age still explores interstellar spaces, while the activity of the octogenarian Duke of Rutland and Lord Wemyss is as effective as ever in preserving the privileges of our old nobility.

The universal idea of a level-headed man is one who agrees with you.

Prosperity is not without its thorns, nor adversity without its roses.

Children's Page.

A CHRISTMAS EVE THOUGHT.

If Santa Claus should stumble,
As he climbs the chimney tall,
With all this ice upon it,
I'm 'fraid he'd get a fall
And smash himself to pieces—
To say nothing of the toys!
Dear me, what sorrow would that bring
To all the girls and boys!
So I'm going to write a note
And pin it to the gate,—
I'll write it large, so he can see,
No matter if it's late—
And say, "Dear Santa Claus don't try
To climb the roof to-night,
But walk right in, the door's unlocked,
The nursery's on the right!"

—St. Nicholas.

KITTIE AND FRANK'S CHRISTMAS AT SEA.

BY ELANOR SCOTT.

Kittie and Frank had always been used to a Christmas with a Christmas tree and stockings "hung by the chimney with care," and cold weather, with perhaps snow, and a chance for a sled-ride. But the year they were nine and five years old, they had the most unusual kind of a Christmas. They were on a big sailing vessel, miles and miles from any land; there was no possibility of getting a tree. Santa Claus and his deer would surely have drowned if they had tried to reach them, and, besides, there was really no chimney fit for him to come down. There were not any stores where there would be a chance to help Santa Claus hunt up his supplies. And the weather was hot,—oh, so hot! Kittie and Frank had not dared to go out in the sunshine for several days.

But when Christmas Eve came, they hung their stockings by their berths (Kittie's berth was right over Frank's), and then they whispered a good while, wondering how anything could possibly be put in them, and they dropped asleep more than half afraid they would find them still empty in the morning.

While they sleep, we will take a look at the other people on the ship. There were not very many, only the children's father and one other passenger, a young man, besides the kind old captain, the mates, sailors, and the cook. But there were a number of animals. The captain had a pink-and-gray parrot, which came from away over in China, where some one who spoke "pigeon English" had taught it to say "Polly wants chow-chow." Then there were two monkeys, some white cockatoos, some chickens and ducks, and three big black pigs. But the best of all was a tiny deer, which came from Java. It was full grown, but hardly any larger than a fox-terrier. You can imagine how cunning it was, with its tiny little hoofs that pattered about the deck.

The sun had hardly begun to send his first messengers up from the edge of the water when Kittie and Frank opened their eyes, and began feeling for their stockings; and how they shouted when they found them full,—yes, full to overflowing,—and Kittie's had a package tied on the outside of the toe.

Kittie climbed into Frank's berth, and they sat tailor-fashion as they opened their treasures. Each took out a package neatly tied, one marked "Kittie, from the chickens," and one "Frank, from the monkeys," and each with the words "Wishing you a Merry Christmas."

Quickly they untied the strings, not saying a

word in their eagerness, and found, when the first paper came off, there was another inside. And, when it came off, another inside of it, and still another, and another, until their faces began to grow solemn with the dreadful thought that maybe there was nothing but paper, after all. But no. Frank gave a squeal of delight. The monkeys had sent him what they loved best,—a banana, and, in another minute, Kittie found some rice from the chickens; and the monkeys gave Kittie a big lump of brown sugar, and there were crackers from Poll Parrot, and corn from the pigs, and sweet potatoes from the dear little deer, and seed from the cockatoos, and a tiny bottle of fresh water from the ducks. Each had given of his own best store. Then there were some bright pieces of money from some of the grown people, and the bundle on the outside of Kittie's stocking contained a little book of Longfellow's poems, on the fly-leaf of which was written under the names.

CHRISTMAS, 18—

Ship "Etta Loring."

Therm. 82 degrees.

Lat. 5 deg. 35 min. So.; Lon. 24 deg. 30 min. W.

So, if you will look on your maps, you can find exactly where all this story happened.

About eleven o'clock in the morning, the cook sent for the children, and said that early that day, almost before light, he had heard a strange little voice calling his name, and on following the sound, and looking over the railing into the ocean, he saw a tiny gray-haired man, who called for a rope to be thrown him. This the cook did, and pulled the little fellow on deck, where he stood dripping and shivering so that his teeth chattered, and he begged to be allowed to get in the oven to dry and warm himself. The cook said "Yes," so in he crawled and shut the door, and the cook went about his work. An hour or so later, the cook suddenly remembered the little man, and rushed to the oven fearing to find him burned to a crisp, but he had gone. In his place, he had left a nice round cake, with a straight line of icing down the middle, and Kittie's name on one side and Frank's on the other.

When the children had heard all the story and admired the cake, the cook cut it exactly by the straight line, and each took a half and began to eat. Pretty soon Frank's teeth came to something so hard that he could not bite it, and he said, "Mine has a bone in it." But, when he looked, he found a bright ten-cent piece, and soon Kittie found one in hers.

When they finished eating, they hugged the cook,—real bear hugs,—and thanked him, although he insisted that he had nothing to do with the cake, and the wee man of the ocean had left it.

Now you can believe the cook's story or not, as you like, but the rest is a true account of a Christmas far out on the big rolling sea.—*Sunday School Times.*

CHRISTMAS-TIDE.

Snow time, sad time,
The world is growing old,
The shadows fall across the wall,
The nights are wan and cold,
When lo! the joyous songs arise
Of angels in the starry skies.

Child time, glad time,
The world is young again,
The starlight streams, the holly gleams
Upon the frosted pane.
Grant us, O Lord, a place beside
The baby Christ at Christmas-tide.

—Willis Boyd Allen in *Harper's Bazaar.*

LESLIE'S CHRISTMAS SURPRISE.

All the mothers who could be coaxed into coming were in the schoolroom that last day of school before the Christmas holidays admiring the tree they had heard so much about. Mr. Stone, the janitor, kept bringing in chair after chair, till the platform and the whole front of the room were crowded. And even then some mothers who came sat in little seats in front of the desks in the first row, while the children behind them tried hard not to giggle.

The children had made all the decorations of the tree themselves, and it was gay with colored paper boxes, handkerchief cases, baskets, calendars, sachets, and trays of different sorts. Each was marked with the name of the one who made it. Afterward, of course, they would be given to mothers or sisters as gifts.

Everywhere were bright, eager faces. But in spite of the Christmas cheer, one little face looked unhappy and sad. Leslie Snyder had no mother to come and hear her recite; and she had been ill for several weeks and had just come back to school. She had no gifts on the tree and had not helped with its decoration.

"All the other girls' mothers are here," she thought, with an ache in her heart. "But who cares for me? And I haven't anything on the tree, either. Oh, I wish I'd stayed home!"

Perhaps Miss Nelson noticed her wistful face; for when a great knock at the door made everyone jump, she said quietly—and Leslie could hardly believe her ears:

"Leslie, dear, will you open the door, please?"

Leslie went bashfully forward; and when she opened the door she started back and cried out, "Oh! Oh!" For there stood a big, jolly old Santa Claus, all in a long fur coat and with rosy cheeks and white beard. He patted Leslie on the head and called her a good girl; and Leslie blushed with pleasure, and the other girls and boys all envied her?

Old Santa made a little speech and then began reading off the names on the pretty things on the tree. Leslie felt so happy that she did not much mind now even if she had no gifts, when—"Leslie Snyder!" called Santa Claus, holding out a beautiful blue and silver basket, dangling by long blue ribbon handles!

Leslie went forward, astonished, and had hardly reached her seat again when her name was called once more.

"Why, they aren't mine," she thought. "What shall I do?"

Again and again her name was called, till Santa Claus said, kindly, "What an industrious little girl this is!"

Leslie tried to explain, but he was busy with the other gifts and did not hear.

When the lines passed out, Leslie still sat in her seat with her little desk heaped high with beautiful gifts. As soon as Miss Nelson had said good-bye to the last of the children and mothers, Leslie brought up all her treasures and laid them on her teacher's desk.

"There's been a mistake, Miss Nelson," she said slowly. "They're beautiful, and I'd like to keep them, but they don't belong to me. I wasn't here, you know."

"Indeed they do belong to you, dear," Miss Nelson said, slipping her arm around Leslie and kissing her. "Your little friends made them all for you because you were ill. And if you run out in the hall now, I think you'll find them waiting, ready to tell you just who made every one, and to wish you a Merry Christmas!"—*Written for Dew Drops by Jean Dalton.*

Young People's Work.

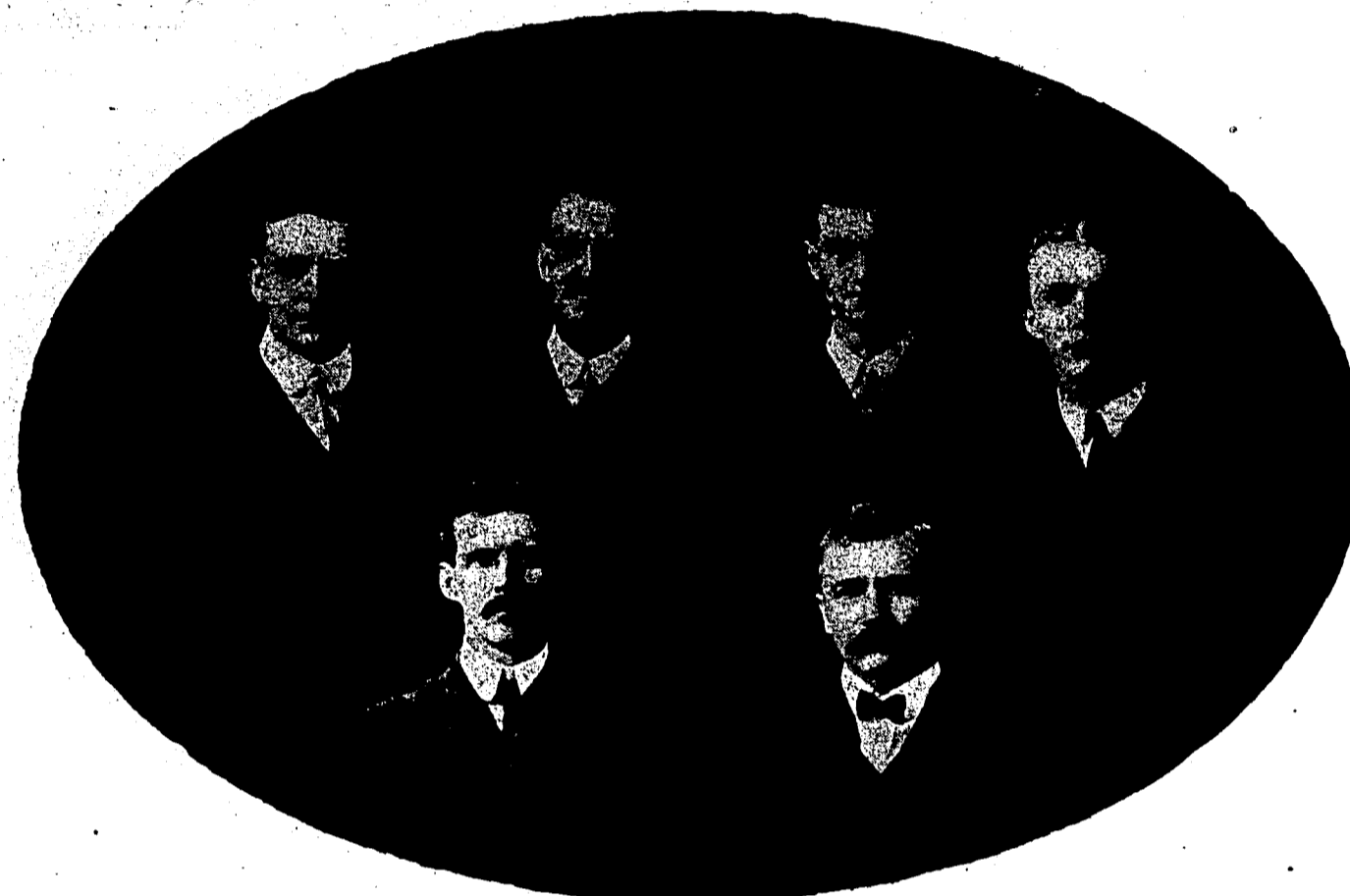
LESTER C. RANDOLPH, Editor, Alfred, N. Y.

HOW SOME YOUNG MEN KEEP THE SABBATH.

We give below specimens of three classes of young men. (1) How a traveling man keeps the Sabbath.

In a recent personal letter from Herbert Burdick of Alfred, N. Y., he incidentally stated, how he keeps the Sabbath when on the road. I wrote back asking for the privilege of using extracts from his letter. He says:

"I have to spend these two days (Sabbath and Sunday) in reading, writing and studying. At times I get a little lonesome and would like to



visit with some friend, so this is why I am talking to you. I always try to attend services at some church on Sunday and get what good I can, but I fear that I do not get the spiritual help that I do when worshipping on the Sabbath-day.

Yesterday (Sabbath) afternoon, being so warm and pleasant, I walked about a mile out in the country and then into a field and sat down under a large oak tree and spent the afternoon reading from the Psalms and New Testament; also enjoyed very much reading the September number of the *Endeavor*, which mother had sent me. It was very interesting to me to read over and call to mind the many things said and done by different ones at Conference. I am sure that I got a great deal of good out of those meetings, and feel that I have been spiritually strengthened."

(2) How an employer keeps the Sabbath.

In the great city of Chicago is a Seventh-day Baptist employer, W. M. Davis by name. He usually employs from two to four men to travel on the road, besides his office force. His office closes Friday night at sunset; and now his traveling men all stop work on the Sabbath. The time was when they did not. It happened like this: Pastor W. D. Wilcox entered Mr. Davis' office one day and said, "Will, I am glad of the strong stand you take on the Sabbath question. You keep it and your employees keep it." "Hold on," said Will, "I have one man traveling on the road who works on the Sabbath." "Is that so?" said the pastor. "Say, Will, I didn't think that of you." And Will thought to himself, "Well, I'll fix this up right as soon as the pastor goes." The pastor went. Mr. Davis sat down and wrote a letter something like this: "Dear Sir:—You will have to quit working on the Sabbath or come off the road." The man quit working on the Sabbath and stayed on the road.

And now see here, if one employer can close up his business on the Sabbath another can. You can, if you will. And that's all there is about that.

(3) How two young men work for themselves and keep the Sabbath.

In this issue we give the picture of one of the Milton college quartets. The back row consists of the following: Nelson, Wells, Polan, Johnson. In front, the good looking man is Evangelist Seager. The one on his right is "Yours truly." The picture was taken by Clifford Coon, photographer, in Farina, Ill., and the half-tone engraving was made by Arthur Burdick of Farina, Ill., who is now a student of the Effingham School of Photography and Engraving. These

half Israelite of Tyre, and worker in brass, upon the house of Jehovah; David's dedicated silver and gold put into the treasuries, 7: 13-51.

Third day. The ark and other holy things brought to the temple; the ark placed in the oracle; the cloud of divine glory; Solomon's address to the assembled elders, tribal heads and provinces, 8: 1-21.

Fourth day. Solomon's dedicatory prayer, and benediction; the closing sacrificial feast, 8: 22-66.

Fifth day. Divine promises and warnings; Solomon's gift of twenty cities to Hiram, king of Tyre; the levy of Canaanites for bond servants, and of Israelites for other positions; Pharaoh's daughter comes to her house; the king observes the three annual feasts; his navy, manned in part by Hiram's servants, 9: 1-28.

Sabbath. The heart of the king turned from God by his idolatrous wives; his kingdom to be rent; providential adversaries in Hadad of Edom, Rezon of Syria, and Jeroboam the Ephraimite; the prophet Ahijah's message to Jeroboam; his escape from Solomon's murderous intent, to Egypt; Solomon's death after a reign of forty years, 11: 1-43.

Y P W

WHAT WILL KEEPING THE COVENANT DO FOR ME, AND WHAT WILL BREAKING IT DO?

A paper by M. Myrtle Crouch, read before the Christian Endeavor Society, Edelstein, Ill., on Sabbath, November 4, 1905.

When we make our Christian Endeavor covenant with Christ we are making a promise to Him, which will require of us thoughtfulness, faithfulness, earnestness, and closer relationship with Christ, if we keep it as it should be kept. Our Christian Endeavor pledge is the promise.

What will keeping the covenant do for me?

If I strive to do whatever Christ would like to have me do, it will help me to be a more earnest worker for his cause; to do anything for him, whether it is easy or not, or just what I would have chosen. Little things will become as important as larger ones. By doing them I will be the more able to do the greater things, and what seemed to be mountains will gradually grow smaller and my faith in Christ will grow stronger. By reading my Bible every day my thoughts for a time will be lifted away from self and earthly things, will bring me near to his teachings and show me the better and happier way to live. "Every word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in him." The love of God is shown in the beautiful promises He has made to us; and in the sacrifice of His only Son that we might be saved. The many examples of His love and guidance that I can see around me, and have found in my own life will help me to trust Him and desire to serve Him more.

Praying every day will always bring me nearer to my Father in heaven. How thankful I am that I can take all my trials, troubles, temptations, everything to Him in prayer. How many times He has helped me, when without Him I would not have known what to do. He will hear our prayers wherever and whenever we pray. Striving to keep the Sabbath, attending church and taking part in the Christian Endeavor meetings will give me new lessons to learn each week, center my thoughts on higher things and help me to live a better Christian life.

THE READING AND STUDY COURSE IN BIBLE HISTORY.

You may begin this course any time and any where. Do it now. Send your name and address to Mrs. Walter L. Greene, Dunellen, N. J., and so identify yourself more fully with the movement and give inspiration to others who are following the course.

Total enrollment, 187.

(Note these questions and answer them as you follow each day's reading. We suggest that you keep a permanent note book and answer them in writing at the close of the week's work.)

1. What is your impression of the character of Hiram of Tyre?
2. What was the substance of Solomon's address to the people?
3. What lesson do you learn from the life of Solomon?

VI. Period of One Kingdom. (Continued.)
First day. Solomon's own magnificent house,
Second day. The extensive labors of Hiram, a

What will breaking the covenant do for me?

"I could not break it in part and not grow careless as to the rest. If I cease to trust in Christ, that will weaken me for anything else that I attempt to do. How would I know that what I was trying to do was right? Who could I trust if I could not trust Christ? When I cease to read my Bible I am giving up one of the best ways of knowing what to do. If I try to be a Christian, to help others to know their Heavenly Father, and do not read my Bible and pray, how can I help them? How will they know that what I tell them is true, if I can not show them from God's word and prove my statement? If I grow careless about prayer, I am growing farther away from Christ and giving up the best and most helpful privilege that I can have. Where can I find that sweet assurance, and relief from a troubled heart and mind if I do not pray? My aims in life, to a certain extent, would be changed and the standard of my ideals would be lowered. When I fail to trust in Christ, to read my Bible, pray, and to do what He would have me do, would I be apt to attend church services very much? Would my influence do others as much good, and even if I failed only in one or two things, could I live the right kind of a Christian life? The best answer I can give is to ask all who have taken Christ as your Saviour and have known the many blessings of a Christian life, and of serving Him, how would life look to you? Would your hopes and plans in life look as alluring, if all this was taken away?"

A BIT OF GOLDEN GOSSIP.

"Mr. Crofoot is growing, and is a man of a good deal of judgment. His brave bearing in sending his wife and children away increased our admiration for him. He is well thought of by others and holds high place in the Y. M. C. A., etc."

There is nothing we more enjoy hearing than a generous, warm-hearted tribute given by one Christian worker to another. The above words were not intended for publication; but are taken from a private letter written by one of our own missionaries in China. The spirit of loving co-operation among our missionaries is good to see. They each have positive opinions and strongly marked individuality; but each has an appreciation of the others, and a disposition to act as one; these are some of the secrets of the success of our work there.

A STRONG LITTLE CHURCH.

The Verona Church has called our Corresponding Secretary, Alvah Davis, to ordination. Brother Davis was one of our best student evangelists. Clayton A. Burdick, after a visit to Western Pennsylvania, where he had been working with the quartet, spoke of him as "the little giant." Our young people will remember this ordination occasion with deep interest and most cordial wishes. Verona is one of our strong little churches.

ALBION, WIS.

A recent happening of interest was the visit of the Evangelistic quartette from the Milton (Wis.) Y. P. S. C. E. The quartette and several members of the society came over on Friday, Dec. 8, and assisted in the Sabbath evening prayer meeting. Their presence was also appreciated, and their gospel singing enjoyed at the Sabbath service. In the evening, at the Christian Endeavor meeting, their enthusiasm and inspiring testimonies gave us a real uplift. Later, the same

evening they gave a fine concert of vocal and instrumental music, with readings, under the auspices of the Albion Y. P. S. C. E., which netted a pleasing sum of money to be applied on the evangelistic work of the Young People's Board.

Our Y. P. S. C. E. is active and earnest, and a decided increase in the interest of the prayer meeting is noticed. The Music Committee is conducting a series of musical socials, where the young people gather to learn new songs from the hymn books. They are looking forward to the purchase of new books in the near future. The Good Literature Committee has been making arrangements for the distribution of tracts to our own congregation, as suggested by the Young People's Board. The Prayer Meeting Committee is putting earnest thought and careful preparation on its work. A large gathering greatly enjoyed the denominational meeting of Dec. 1. The leader conducted a brief Bible reading, bringing out some of the Scriptural reasons for our position on the question of the Sabbath. A black-board exercise was given by one of the members, who used an outline drawing of one of our Seventh-day Baptist churches to illustrate the need of a firm and sure foundation for denominational belief. Some of the foundation stones shown were "a full gospel," "the ten commandments," "temperance," "Sabbath reform," "missions," "evangelism." The spire was our "faith," which points upward to the Father. The doors to the church are "confession" and "baptism." Other speakers touched upon some of the things our Young People's Board are directing, the steadfastness needed and exhibited by our faithful lone Sabbath-keepers, and the tolerance and Christian fellowship we should all show toward other denominations.

Home News.

ALBION, WIS.—A visit which was greatly appreciated during the week ending Dec. 16, was from the Acting Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Board, Mr. George B. Carpenter. On his way home from the South-Western Association meetings at Hammond, La., Mr. Carpenter spent a few days at the parsonage; on Sabbath morning he delivered an address before the congregation. His inspiring and uplifting message found a welcome in all hearts, and many expressions of appreciation for this, as well as his presence in the Sabbath evening prayer meeting and at Christian Endeavor meeting, are heard on every hand. We are always ready with a warm welcome for the consecrated workers in our beloved Zion, and grateful for the inspiration and encouragement of their presence.

Albion is showing substantial indications of a healthy growth and material prosperity. The past season has brought our share of the wonderful crops, and well-filled barns, sleek cattle, and abundant provisions in basket and store give ample security for a comfortable winter. Three new houses have been put up this year, painting and repairing done, new barns erected, a feed mill started and several new families have settled here. Our general merchant, Dea. M. Crosley, has just taken a partner into his business, Mr. Hugh Stewart, of West Hallock, Ill., who, with his family, has established his home in Albion. These form a valuable acquisition to our numbers.

Several deaths, during the year, have saddened our hearts, but in our loneliness we can look up with a bright faith that each of these loved ones

died triumphant in the belief of a happy future.

The Sabbath School is to celebrate the birth of our Lord by an entertainment on Christmas Eve, when they will give the cantata, "The Coming of the King." The children are gathering their pennies into tiny Christmas barrels, and on that evening, the barrels will be opened and the offering dedicated to the home of Mr. Palmborg and little E-ling, in far-away Lieu-oo, China. The children have felt much interest in the baby girl, ever since last Christmas, when they sent her the contents of their missionary barrels as a Christmas gift.

FAYETTEVILLE, N. C.—Thanksgiving Day was probably never so universally observed in the Southern States as it was on November 30, 1905. The services at the Cumberland Church were much enjoyed by those who were present, and each had something to be thankful for. Rev. J. H. Biggs has assisted a Freewill Baptist minister in two revival meetings this year, one in July, the other in October. He also read Scriptures and prayed with some of the families. At one of the meetings five persons professed conversion. There have been many hundreds of cases of diptheria in this county since early autumn, but the disease is abating now. It was confined principally to the younger members of the families, though a few adults had it. The physicians were so successful in treating it by the use of antitoxin the fatality was very small. We have not had any hard cold weather yet, no sleet or snow, and only three or four light freezes.

In naming some of the business opportunities at Hope Mills, I did not state that there are also some good farms not very far from the town, which can be bought at reasonable prices. The soil is easy of cultivation, and, with proper management, some of it can be brought to a high state of productiveness. One of the poorest waste places between here and Fayetteville, by the raising of small fruits and vegetables for northern markets has been made to "rejoice and blossom as the rose."

Our climate is pleasant—neither very hot nor very cold—and generally healthful, except in the swamps. As the RECORDER says, it seems to become more and more necessary that Seventh-day Baptists should colonize or settle in communities of like faith, and we would be glad if some of those who may be seeking new homes would come here and help us to build up at least one strong church. Capitalists are buying up lands all over this state, and as a consequence lands are increasing in value.

The RECORDER is always so full of good things I cannot help wishing, every time I lay it down after reading it, that every Seventh-day Baptist could and would read it.

EMILY P. NEWTON.


Dec. 13, 1905.

ABOUT RECORDER SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Following the suggestions made at the late session of the General Conference concerning RECORDER subscriptions, the Woman's Board is recommending the local women's societies to canvass their respective churches in that interest. The women of Milton have now nearly completed a canvass of this church and society, and will, in due time, make a detailed report to the Woman's Board. Meanwhile they have asked me to make some general statements through the RECORDER, which I take pleasure in doing.

The whole number of families in this society may be stated as one hundred, the number varying a little more or less, according to the way in

A MATTER OF HEALTH

ROYAL

BAKING POWDER
 Absolutely Pure
HAS NO SUBSTITUTE
 A Cream of Tartar Powder,
 free from alum or phosphatic acid

ROYAL BAKING POWDER CO., NEW YORK.

which a family, partly Sabbath-keeping, is estimated.

The RECORDER is read in eighty of these families, or a little over eighty per cent. of the whole. In five or six cases, two families read one paper, so that the number of families subscribing is about seventy-five per cent. of the whole. The canvass will add six new subscribers which are included in the foregoing estimate. Of the twenty-five per cent. of non-subscribers, about one-half, or twelve and one-half per cent. of the whole number, do not feel able to take it, and the other one-half do not care to take it. There are a few families yet to be heard from, and some more, not now subscribers, may yet become subscribers. Some plan may be agreed upon by which those who are not able of themselves to take the paper, may become enabled to do so, thus increasing the percentage of subscribers and readers.

The canvass among subscribers reveals an almost unanimous wish that the date to which a subscription is paid be printed on the label, so that the subscriber, with his paper before him, may always know when his subscription will expire. The change in the date upon the label would thus serve as a receipt for money and for renewals. Many of the older subscribers regret the discontinuance of the custom of publishing, week by week, the list of receipts, which not only served the purpose of an individual receipt to the person renewing his subscription, but was also a sort of general directory to the whereabouts, etc., of many of his former associates, friends or acquaintances of whom, otherwise, he might have no knowledge. The writer has in mind a woman who lived entirely away from Sabbath-keepers for the last twenty-five or thirty years of her life, but who was thoroughly well acquainted with the history and movements of our people. Her almost only source of information was the SABBATH RECORDER, and no small part of that came from the published list of receipts, together with the notices of marriages and deaths.

Another wish, very largely expressed, is that when a subscription expires, and is not promptly renewed, the paper to that address should be discontinued.

These questions, no doubt, the managers have had under consideration. Perhaps a voice from the people may help to settle some of them.

L. A. PLATTS.

MILTON, Wis., Dec. 19, 1905.

Popular Science.

H. H. BAKER.

Good News From the North. The Magnetic Pole Found and Located.

The report sent out by the Dundee whalers that the ship, Gjoa, had been crushed in the ice near Boothia Felix, and to which we referred week before last, was not reliable, as is now shown by Captain Roland Amundsen, who has arrived at Fort Egbert, Alaska. Captain Amundsen reports that he found the true magnetic pole and located it on King William Island. Having accomplished that object for which the expedition was sent, he set sail for the Northwest passage, via Behring Strait, and thence to San Francisco. The Gjoa was stationed in a harbor on the south shore of King William Land, for nearly two years, in the neighborhood of the magnetic pole. Having succeeded in passing through the Peary archipelago, reaching King Point about fifty miles southeast of Herschel Island near the mouth of the Mackenzie River, and the cold weather coming on, and ice forming, Captain Amundsen concluded to abandon the hope of reaching San Francisco this fall, and decided to leave the ship for another winter in the Arctic regions; she is now in safe quarters in the vicinity of King Point. The distance from Herschel Island to the nearest government telegraph station on the Yukon River in Alaska, as the crow flies, is about three hundred miles. Captain Amundsen undertook this journey by sledges, which must have been a pretty rough route, as it took about six weeks to accomplish it. We are pleased to know that his health is good, his ship safe, his instruments intact, his record secure, and all hands comfortable. We understand that there is reason to believe that the magnetic pole has actually shifted since Sir James Ross made his discoveries some sixty years ago. How that may have affected us we have not yet been enabled to see, but by patiently waiting, we hope to find out when Peary sends his next report. We learn also that Captain Amundsen will remain in Alaska at Eagle City for a short time and then visit Fort Yukon for mails, and then return to his ship in the vicinity of King Point. Dr. Fridtjof Nansing (who undertook to drift with the ice across the North Pole and thus capture it, but failed,) anticipates that the Roland Amundsen expedition has proved to be a great success.

A Way to Weld Copper Discovered.

Mr. Stephen Baird of Chittenden, Vt., a gunsmith, after forty years of labor, has discovered a method of welding copper, a thing never before accomplished, so far as known. Repeated experiments indicate a complete success; and we hope that Mr. Baird may prove a great benefactor in the use of copper, as Mr. Bessemer has in the use of pig-iron.

How many Christmas days have there been? Hundreds—yes, nearly two thousand. We do not know exactly when people began celebrating the birthday of our Lord, or how they did it, but through many centuries the day has been handed down to us, each one coming new with its blessed message of peace on earth, good-will to men. So let each one of us greet it with loving hearts, doing our best to make it a day of rejoicing to others.

The loudest gong may call one to the poorest dinner.

WHAT THE SHEPHERDS SAW.

A romancer would never have chosen humble shepherds feeding their flocks on the starlit plains to receive the first announcement of the glad tidings of the birth of the Christ-child. They would have come first to a king or at least to a priest; the glory from the skies would have filled some great temple and the glory from above would have shone around some of earth's great potentates first of all if the story had been manufactured by some skilful romancer. But no, simple shepherds heard the good news first. They were the messengers of the tidings of great joy.

How large a part in Bible biography the shepherds have had! Abel was a shepherd, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. Job had great flocks and herds, and David, the greatest of Israel's kings, was called from the sheepfold. The Shepherd Psalm has comforted more millions than any other piece of writing that ever was penned, and our Lord himself does not hesitate to call himself the Good Shepherd.

So here at the beginning of the Christ history the shepherds play an important part. They were not extraordinary shepherds; we hear nothing about them after their announcement of the good tidings. They had not in them the making of kings and patriarchs and poets and prophets, but they were simply everyday working men, caring for their flocks as best they could, apparently expecting no divine revelation, for they were amazed and afraid when the glory of the Lord shone round about them.

They were doing their simple duty, too, when the great good news came to them. They did not have on their ascension robes, nor were they straining their eyes toward the heavens. But in their rough garments of sheepskin, while they were caring for their flocks, as perhaps every night throughout all their lives they had been doing, the mightiest revelation which ever came from God to man was given them.

Thus God ever comes to man with His best gifts and revealings. The path of lowly duty is the path of light and leading, if only humble and teachable souls are walking in that path, ready to see the light when it shines, ready to do the duty when it is revealed. Let us note how the angels treat the shepherds. First, they comfort them and dispel their fears; then they reveal their great good tidings; then they give the proof that their message is true. "Fear not," they say to the trembling peasants who were "sore afraid" (and no wonder!) at the glory of the Lord and the supernatural visitor. "Fear not," exhorts the angel; "I bring you no tidings of distress; the heavenly portents tell not of earthly disaster, but bring good tidings, great joy, and for all the world." How the angel seems to add joy to joy! Not only are the tidings good, but great and universal. This, indeed, is the message of the coming Christ fitly spoken. Good tidings, joyous tidings, universal tidings. Now the shepherds were calmed and reassured. There is nothing so comforting as good news. Their fright was forgotten; their hearts were set at rest by the gracious words; and they were ready to listen to the message. "There is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." Good tidings, indeed, for the shepherds and for all the world.—*Christian Endeavor World.*

"Do you like a brass band?" he asked, as they were listening to the music in the park. "Oh, yes," she said, "a brass band is very nice, but I think I would rather have a gold one."

Sabbath School.

CONDUCTED BY SABBATH-SCHOOL BOARD.

Edited by

Rev. WILLIAM C. WEITFOOD, Professor of Biblical Languages and Literature in Alfred University.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS, 1905.

Jan. 13. The Wise Men Find Jesus Matt. 2: 1-12
 Jan. 20. The Shepherds Find Jesus Luke 2: 1-20
 Jan. 27. The Baptism of Jesus Mark 1: 1-11
 Feb. 3. The Temptation of Jesus Matt. 4: 1-11
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 Feb. 24. Jesus' Power to Forgive Matt. 9: 1-13
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 Mar. 17. Review.
 Mar. 24. Temperance Lesson Prov. 23: 29-35

LESSON I.—THE SHEPHERDS FIND JESUS.

For Sabbathday Jan. 6, 1906.

LESSON TEXT.—Luke 2: 1-20.

Golden Text: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."—Luke 2: 11.

INTRODUCTION.

The Third Gospel was written by Luke, the beloved physician, the companion of Paul in his missionary labors at Philippi and elsewhere. This Gospel is the longest of the four; for although Matthew has more chapters he has not as many verses or words. This Gospel is noteworthy for prominence which it gives to women, to prayer, and to parables. To this Gospel also we are indebted for the most that we know about the infancy of our Lord. Our present lesson gives us a sublime picture of the nativity of Jesus. Our Evangelist has in some measure prepared us for this miraculous event by telling us of the circumstances in connection with the birth of John the Baptist, and also by speaking of the annunciation to Mary by the angel Gabriel.

The love of God is shown in the gift of his Son born upon earth as the Babe of Bethlehem. One might have imagined that the Son of God would become incarnate as an heir in the most princely family of the earth, but our Saviour was really born amidst circumstances of the greatest simplicity, and the first to welcome his coming were not the potentates of this world, but the humble shepherds who fed their flocks upon the hills near the little village of Bethlehem.

TIME.—Very likely in the latter part of the year that is commonly called B. C. 5. Possibly it was upon the 25th of December, but this day was not observed as Christmas till the latter part of the fourth century. (The tradition in regard to the precise date is therefore of no value).

PLACE.—Bethlehem and vicinity. About six miles south of Jerusalem.

PERSONS.—The Infant Jesus; Mary and Joseph; the shepherds and the angels.

OUTLINE:

1. The Birth of Jesus. v. 1-7.
2. The Message to the Shepherds. v. 8-12.
3. The Shepherds Visit Jesus. v. 13-20.

NOTES.

1. *In those days.* The reference is indefinitely to the time of chap. 1. *Caesar Augustus* was the first Emperor of Rome, and resigned from B. C. 27 to A. D. 14. *All the world should be enrolled.* That is, all the inhabited world, or the Roman empire. The Romans were wont to consider their empire as including all the world worth mentioning. The enrolment was probably for the purpose of taxation, although that is not necessarily implied in the word.

2. *This was the first enrollment made when Quirinius was governor of Syria.* There is a considerable difficulty in reconciling this statement with the data of profane history. It seems probable that Quirinius was not actually governor of Syria in B. C. 5, and even if he were governor of Syria, he would not be exercising authority over Judea to any marked extent during the lifetime of King Herod. He was certainly governor of Syria in A. D. 6 and following years, and may not improbably have completed then the details of a census which he had begun as a subordinate official years before. The word that is translated "governor" in this verse supports this theory, for it means exercising official leadership, and might

easily refer to some one of less authority than governor who had charge of the matter of the census. Since Luke is beyond question an accurate historian in other particulars, it is folly to say that this statement is unreliable when we have no real proof for such a conclusion. The name "Cyrenius" as given in King James' Version is the Greek form of the Latin name *Quirinius*.

3. *And all went to enrol themselves,* etc. The usual Roman method of taking a census was to count each man wherever he happened to be (like our custom in America), but the Jews preferred to register by families, and were therefore allowed to journey to their ancestral homes. The Romans were ever ready to cater to the national prejudices of conquered peoples in any matter that did not interfere with the strength of their government.

4. *Out of the city of Nazareth.* It is interesting to notice that it is from Luke's Gospel alone that we know that the holy family dwelt at Nazareth before the birth of Jesus. Compare Matt. 2: 23. *To the city of David.* In the Old Testament, Zion, the citadel of Jerusalem is often called the city of David, but that David's home was in Bethlehem is mentioned in 1 Sam. 17: 12 and elsewhere.

5. *To enrol himself with Mary.* While there are some that hold that Mary also was to be enrolled, the far more likely view is that she went up with Joseph because she wanted to do so. We should therefore have a comma after "himself." This passage gives no hint as to whether Mary was also of the house of David or not.

7. *Her firstborn son.* This expression does not certainly imply that Mary bore other children afterward, but if our Evangelist had wished us to notice that she had no other children but Jesus, he certainly missed the opportunity of saying so in this connection. *Swaddling clothes.* The usual garment for an infant in that time. *In a manger.* Tradition has it that this manger was in a cave which was used as a stable, but this tradition is not well supported. In Palestine then as now the horses and cattle were sometimes in the house along with the family. *No room for them in the inn.* That is, because of the great crowd of people coming to be enrolled. We need not infer that there was lack of hospitality.

8. *Keeping watch by night over their flock.* There is a tradition that this was the flock from which the lambs were supplied for the regular sacrifices of the temple service. The circumstance that the flocks were kept out all night is not conclusive against the traditional theory that the time was December.

9. *The glory of the Lord.* That is, the brightness that indicated the divine presence as often in the Old Testament. Compare the brightness of Saul's vision near Damascus. It is no wonder that they were overcome with fear.

10. *I bring you good tidings.* This is all one word in the original and has the same root as the word translated "Gospel." *To all the people.* The word "the" should not be omitted as in King James' Version. The joy was for all the chosen people of Israel. It was of course to be extended to others through their becoming chosen of God.

11. *A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.* They had had Saviours before, but this one is the promised Messiah, the Anointed One of Jehovah, the promised Prince of David's line.

12. *And this is the sign unto you.* They are given a sign of the truth of the message. They are to find a babe under certain peculiar circumstances.

13. *A multitude of the heavenly host.* The message of the angel is suddenly reinforced by a chorus of the angelic host.

14. *Glory to God in the highest,* etc. The Revised Version follows a text which differs from the received text by one letter, and makes the angels' song two lines instead of three, as in King James' Version. The later rendering has better manuscript authority, and is supported by the fact that it is much more symmetrical. The three portions of the two lines balance.

In the highest — glory — to God.

Upon earth — peace — to men of good pleasure.

15. *Let us now go even unto Bethlehem.* They show their faith by their immediate action. They

knew where to go, for the angel had told them that the Saviour was born in the city of David.

16. *The babe lying in the manger.* This circumstance is particularly mentioned as it served as a sign to them.

17. *They made known concerning the saying.* We are to infer that they spoke not only to Joseph and Mary, but also to others who happened to be present about the vision and message that had come to them.

19. *Mary kept all these sayings,* etc. Mary's conduct is in contrast with that of the people. They were talking the matter over and expressing their astonishment, while she was reticent about the special revelations to herself and was treasuring up in her heart every new wonder in regard to her son.

THE INN OF THE STAR.

When the gray year plods down
 Toward the end of the hill,
 Where the white little town
 Lies asleep; wonder-still,
 Then he mends his dull pace,
 For a ray, streaming far,
 Strikes a gleam on his face
 From the Inn of the Star.

Then the staff is set by,
 And the shoon from his feet,
 And the burden let lie,
 And he sitteth at meat;
 Old jests round the board,
 Old songs round the blaze,
 While the faint bells accord
 Like the souls of old days.

In the sweet bed of peace
 He shall sleep for a night,
 And faith, like a fleece,
 Lap him kindly and light;
 Then the wind, crooning wild,
 Mystic music shall seem,
 And the brow of the child
 Be a light through his dream.

And we, too, follow down
 The long slope of the hill:
 See, the white little Town,
 Where it shines, wonder-still!
 Be our hopes quenched or bright,
 Be our griefs what they are,
 We shall sojourn a night
 At the Inn of the Star.

—The Churchman.

MESSAGE OF THE NEW YEAR.

I asked the New Year for some motto sweet,
 Some rule of life with which to guide my feet.
 I asked and paused; he answered soft and low,
 "God's will to know."

"Will knowledge then suffice, New Year?" I cried,
 And ere the question into silence died,
 The answer came: "Nay; but remember, too,
 "God's will to do."

Once more I asked: "Is there no more to tell?"
 And once again the answer softly fell:
 "Yes; this one thing, all other things above—
 God's will to love."

Speak a shade more kindly than the year before
 Pray a little oftener; love a little more;
 Cling a little closer to the Father's love;
 Thus life below shall liker grow to life above.

Cause for Crying.—Mother. "How the wind cries and groans in the tops of the make a louder noise than that if you had all pine trees!" Little boy. "I guess you'd those needles in you."

"They say," said Willie's mother, as they were watching the "Armless Wonder" wind his watch, write his name, and do other remarkable things with his toes, "that he can play the piano; but I don't see how."

"That's easy, mamma," replied Willie. "He can play by ear."

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FELLING THE GREAT REDWOODS.

In computing the lumber value of a redwood tree a liberal allowance must be made for loss through breakage in falling and for expense in handling the enormous logs. The standing balance of the tree must first be considered, and whether it can be swerved from its natural course to a better landing. A trough is leveled and cleared of stony obstructions, and an "undercut" is made directly in line. This is hewn deep enough so that when the crosscut saw has all but completed its work from the opposite side the weakened foundations will direct the fall of the tree to the bed that has been prepared for it. It is sometimes evident that half the tree cannot be saved and it would seem that such trees at least should be left standing. But three sixteen-foot logs were saved from one recently fallen that measured fifteen feet through, six feet from the ground; and one leaning over the Millwood store, that had to be spiked and cabled one hundred feet from the ground, failed to pay even the expense of felling. At the yard the lumber is drawn off to the sorting-tables a carload at a time, and in less than thirty minutes the train of empties is ready for another trip. Men quickly sort the pine, cedar, and redwood into heavy and light, the former being hauled to the yard to season for a month, while that which will readily float is held by ten-inch clamps and thrown into the flumes that course through the yard. Each clamp of boards has a rope loop at either end, and below the yard, where the flumes converge, these clamps are tied into strings of six redwood to five pine each. The redwood when green is much heavier than either cedar or pine, but is the lightest when dry. These strings then start on a perilous voyage of fifty-two miles, with a drop of over 4,000 feet in the first thirteen miles. At the old mill site, two miles below the yard, a man is kept busy day and night shoveling sawdust into the flume to assist in chinking up the cracks all the way down. Sixteen miles from the yard the water runs comparatively slowly, and here the strings of clamped boards are fastened into rafts of eight strings each, and are headed on by men who live in huts built on the side of high trestles that support the flume. After fourteen hours in the flume the boards arrive at the Sangar, where they are piled in the yards, and where the redwood is sold at from \$40 to \$90 per thousand. Boards measuring eighteen inches or more in width are all hauled from Millwood by wagon; as they cannot be handled to advantage in the flume.—*Leslie's Weekly*.

"MY SOUL DOTH MAGNIFY THE LORD."

My soul shall be a telescope,
 Searching the distant bounds of time and space,
 That somehow I may image, as I grope,
 Jehovah's power and grace.

My soul a microscope shall be,
 In all minutest providences keen
 Jehovah's patient thoughtfulness to see,
 And read His love between.

My soul shall be a burning-glass,
 That diligence to worship may succeed,
 That I may catch God's glories as they pass,
 And focus to a deed.

So, even so,
 A mote in His creation, even I,
 Seeking alone to do, to feel, to know,
 The Lord must magnify.

—*Christian Endeavor World*.

The happiest people in the world are by no means those who have the most to be happy with, but those who are most aware of what they have, and who make the most of it.

DEATHS.

WRIGHT.—Mrs. Christiana Eliza Wright, eldest daughter of Deacon George and Anna Newton, deceased, was born in New Hanover Co., N. C., June 23, 1835, and died at the home of her son, W. G. Wright, in Cumberland Co., N. C., Nov. 18, 1905. She was the fourth of twelve children, all of whom professed faith in Christ in early life and united with the Missionary Baptist Church. She is survived by three brothers and two sisters. In 1855 she was married to Calvin Wright, and removed to Texas. Left a widow in 1859, with a little son, she returned to the state of her birth and made her home with her parents, near Fayetteville. After the marriage of her son, she lived with him and with her parents, tenderly ministering to them as they neared the end of life's journey. Most of the time during her last illness, she was at her old home, with her brother, Rev. D. N. Newton, and her sister's Phebe and Emily. She began keeping the Sabbath in 1885, and was one of the six constituent members at the organization of the Cumberland Seventh-day Baptist church, in Nov., 1887, and remained a loved and faithful member until death. Kind and generous, she rarely refused anything that was asked of her, which was in her power to grant. Though nearly helpless for almost two years, from heart trouble and paralysis, she was uniformly patient and cheerful, and frequently, when suffering, would say: "Meekly wait and murmur not." About midnight, two or three nights before she fell sweetly asleep in Jesus, she sang the hymn, "Alas, and did my Saviour bleed." While we mourn the loss of our dear sister, it is a sweet satisfaction to believe that she has gone to be with Jesus in the bright mansions above where we hope to meet her with our other loved ones in "The Sweet By and By."

E. P. N.

Special Notices.

The Battle Creek Seventh-day Baptist church holds its services every Sabbath at 11.30 o'clock, in the Peterson Block, No. 33, 3rd floor, Washington street, Battle reek, Mich. Sabbath school at 10.30. Visitors are most cordially welcomed, and Seventh-day Baptists who may be stopping in the city are especially invited to attend.

JNO. KOLVOORD, Elder,
 E. D. STILLMAN, Clerk.

SEVENTH-DAY Baptists in Syracuse, N. Y., hold Sabbath afternoon services at 2.30 o'clock, in the hall on the second floor of the Lynch building, No. 120 South Salina street. All are cordially invited.

THE Seventh-day Baptist Church of Chicago holds regular Sabbath services in the Le Moyne Building on Randolph street between State street and Wabash avenue, at 2 o'clock P. M. Strangers are most cordially welcomed. W. D. WILCOX, Pastor,
 5606 Ellis Ave.

THE Seventh-day Baptist Church of New York City holds services at the Memorial Baptist church, Washington Square South. The Sabbath-school meets at 10.45 A. M. Preaching service at 11.30 A. M. A cordial welcome is extended to all visitors.

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