

PROGRESS.

EDWARD S. CARTER, EDITOR.

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ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, DEC. 22.

CHRISTMAS.

The time draws near the birth of Christ. Once more the grandest festival of the Christian year is close at hand, and thousands of hearts are beating high in anticipation of coming pleasure. Now the great majority of the people of Christian lands are looking forward to pleasant social reunions, to festive cheer and the interchange of tokens of love and friendship, while many in making provision for the happiness of others are proving the superiority of the blessedness of giving over the blessedness of receiving. Christmas is essentially a home holiday. Its popularity never wanes, and it has resisted better than any other festival the assaults of this iconoclastic age. It matters not that modern wise men of the east differ in regard to whether the day we celebrate is or is not the true anniversary of the birth of Christ, for it is the fact and not the date which is the more worthy of remembrance. The Christmas festival commemorates the glad tidings of great joy announced by the angelic herald; it is founded on the principles of peace and good will, and it will continue to be observed and cherished when other holidays are forgotten.

SIR JOHN THOMPSON'S HUMOR. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD'S humor was such an evident part of the makeup of his disposition, that even an obituary notice of him which did not make some allusion to his joviality would seem incongruous. So in the volume concerning his life and times which has recently appeared, much stress was laid on this particular faculty. Even grave editorials upon this work have checked their sobriety long enough to tell "some of JOHN A.'s yarns."

But Sir JOHN THOMPSON, perhaps because he so wisely and gravely filled the office of minister of justice, has never been considered anything of a humorist. He certainly did not pose as such; perhaps he remembers the fate of the somewhat celebrated United States politician who, according to his own account, "would have been president" if he "hadn't been quite so lunny." But surely it is an unfair assertion—that of a contemporary—that "Sir JOHN THOMPSON, unlike Sir JOHN MACDONALD, was utterly devoid of humor."

That Sir JOHN THOMPSON appreciated humor, and stored it up in his mind, is evident from the charming account of him that FAITH FENTON wrote, which is reprinted in other columns of to-day's PROGRESS. That he was, in a quiet way, can be considered a humorist himself, can be proved by a few of what LINCOLN called "little stories."

A member of a committee which was collecting subscriptions for some good work, reported the results to Sir JOHN THOMPSON, who mentioned a name of a member of a legal profession and asked what he had done. The committee member remarked: "Well, he may be a good lawyer, but he's no gentleman; he didn't give us a dollar." "You make your mind easy on that point," replied Sir JOHN, "he's no lawyer." Perhaps the most humorous thing in connection with this incident is that Sir JOHN afterwards made that lawyer a judge.

A sort of grave judicial humor of which Sir JOHN THOMPSON was master, is that connected with putting others in the wrong out of their own mouths. It is a variety of humor that is unpleasant to, and yet is appreciated by, the victim. An Ontario conservative member of the House of Commons called on Sir JOHN at his house to urge that no action be taken on the Manitoba school appeal. "What would you do if you were in my place," said the minister of justice, "and these people, believing they had a right of hearing, came to you for a hearing?" "Well," said the member after a pause, "I think I would hear what they had to say, but—" "That," interrupted Sir JOHN, smiling at the apopospis, "is precisely what we intend to do, and that is all we have so far determined to do."

Speaking of his career as shorthand reporter on a political tour last year, Sir JOHN said: "Why, I remember men who withdrew their friendship from me for life because I had not given them as much space for a speech as they thought their speeches deserved."

It is extremely likely that the reader of the foregoing anecdotes will feel something like the countryman who heard a lecture by Rev. JOSEPH COOK, whereas he thought that he was listening to one by MARK TWAIN. When asked, after the lecture, if MARK was "funny," the countryman remarked, "Waal—yes; he was funny, but he wasn't so darned funny."

Doubtless Sir JOHN THOMPSON was not as much of a humorist as Sir JOHN MACDONALD, but that he was not "utterly devoid of humor" is proved by the above anecdotes. The remark concerning his shorthand experience may possibly not be a humorous hyperbole, but it would be in that case none the less humorous for being the straight truth, unadorned by figures of speech. That humor, judiciously used, is by no means to be despised as an adjunct of law and statesmanship, is undoubtedly true. Often during a parliamentary session, the wittiest argument is the strongest one. A lawsuit in England was settled recently because of the point drawn by one of the lawyers from the ridiculous trial-scene in "Alice in Wonderland." The jokes of that serious "man of destiny," ABRAHAM LINCOLN, detracted nothing from his dignity, while settling many a disputed point of the many that were brought before him in his law practice and during the war. It is true that Secretary SEWARD objected somewhat to Mr. LINCOLN'S joking in the most serious times, and, immediately after the last meeting of LINCOLN with his cabinet, the day after the president's receiving a promonition of his death in a terrible dream, which frozes all the humor out of his genial soul, alluded to the meeting as "a most satisfactory one, because Mr. LINCOLN did not make a single attempt at levity." But perhaps Mr. SEWARD'S objections were humorously due to the fact that often when Mr. SEWARD would be preparing a reply to annoying deputations, Mr. LINCOLN would be quietly perpetrating one of his jokes, after which Mr. SEWARD would find that his carefully studied reply was entirely unnecessary. And it should be remembered that one of the greatest cabinet meetings ever held in the United States opened by the president's reading a sketch by PETERBURY V. NASHBY. At that same meeting LINCOLN read the proclamation that knocked the shackles off the slave.

Whether Sir JOHN THOMPSON should be considered a humorist or not, his success was not to any great extent due to his humor. But humor was a potent factor in the greatness of both ABRAHAM LINCOLN and JOHN A. MACDONALD. A Christmas article by ROBERT J. BURDETTE "brimful and bubbling over" with humor and sense, is one of the things that the reading world expects at this time every year. The "Christmas sermon" of this humorist preached two years ago is one of the wisest and wittiest things ever written concerning this season of peace and good will and good sense. The Christmas article written by M. BURDETTE for the last number of the Ladies' Home Journal is, for the most part, wise and witty, but there is one glaring flaw in it. It speaks flippantly of the prayer beginning "Now I lay me down to sleep." GEORGE W. PECK, the creator of "Peck's Bad Boy," who as a humorist is immeasurably inferior to BURDETTE, and who generally inclines far more to vulgarity and profanity than the "my son" philosopher, once severely rebuked a would-be funny paper which credited that popular child's evening hymn to "GEORGE W. PECK, in Peck's San." The scathing rebuke of the western writer was a powerful and touching bit of writing, and showed clearly the sacrifice of speaking lightly of a hymn that has been a sacred thing to many not only in childhood, but all their lives, and which has been the last prayer of many a loved one.

This is the first stanza of a seven-versed poem which appeared in the Toronto Empire this week. The author is "S. R. S.," and the place and time at which it was written are "Guelph, Dec. 14." "S. R. S." has evidently experienced that peculiar thought-transference sometimes known as telepathy. The transmitter was evidently not in good working order in this case, being very slow. What it lacked in speed, however, it made up in accuracy, for the seven verses are the old familiar ones. The last time that they were extensively quoted in Canada was on the occasion of the agitation towards raising the flag on Canadian schoolhouses, in which agitation the Empire took a more prominent part than any other journal in Canada.

In connection with the death of the novelist, essayist and poet who died lately, it is interesting to recall the advice to young newspaper men of one of the foremost editors and critics in America. While referring to Dr. JOHNSON'S remark that the writer desiring a good style should "spend his days and nights in the study of ADDISON," the great editor advised the

young men to leave ADDISON alone until they had spent their days and nights in the study of ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON. Perhaps the most touching of all the Christmas cartoons is one in Life which represents a poor little girl asleep in the snow. A vision of SANTA CLAUS is floating in the air, and the jovial saint is sadly saying: "Poor little thing, I never visit her except in her dreams."

The Christmas Donaboe's is under a new editorial management—that of Mr. Michael J. Dwyer. He makes a vigorous appeal for an American Westminster Abbey, wherein to bury the great men of the United States. "Christmas-tide in Acadia" is what will particularly appeal to the people of this part of America. In answering the question, "Has Business Really Revived?" John H. Rice calls attention to some elementary economic facts which are too often ignored.

The "Winter holiday number" of the Delineator—that for the month of January—opens with "The Arena Schottische," a charming piece of music. Messrs. Macaulay Bros. & Co. have our thanks for this number, which also contains many helpful hints to ladies concerning dress, and other things of much interest to all.

By Jay Bee. A suitable sutor finds little difficulty in pressing his suit. Some tailors are successful in this respect. Bachelors are considered suitable, so also are chimney sweeps although their soot does not always suit. Deprive man of conscience and new laws would have to be enacted. When laziness overtakes a man, he never undertakes at anything. A man with lots of time on his hands is inclined to let it pass, and in so doing, little thinks what achievements he might accomplish if he kept up with it. It is characteristic of fashion to change, but it is not the fashion for character to do likewise. Reputation and character are not necessarily allied. If there were no death, divorce would be more excusable and reasonable. Education is knowledge in detail. Brainy peddlars are not necessarily lawyers. A small man may be a big liar, so may a large one, all sizes count when it comes to fishing. Policemen are a (re)stive kind of people. Collection plates should be of the same nature as the street car conductor's, take nothing but silver. A sound deaconer would then be unnecessary. Merry Christmas.

LADIES AT DRILL. The music room of the Morley Conservatory and Ladies' College was well filled on Wednesday afternoon with delighted auditors and spectators. The recitations, duets and solos were charmingly rendered by some of the young ladies of the school. An action song entitled "The Merry Peasant" was an appreciated novelty. To particularly mention any of these exercises is unnecessary; they were all good. Perhaps the most telling feature of the programme was the military drill. It showed that if young ladies are not as strong in fighting as young men, they are at least more scientific. The various movements were executed with the greatest ease. The young ladies and gentlemen taking part in the drill were the Misses Haydon, Miss Alice Hanington, Miss Ethel Pender, Miss Kate Beverly, Miss Florence Brown, Miss Ethel Owen-Jones, the Misses Taylor, the Misses Simonds, Miss Lottie Vassie, Miss M. Hatheway, Miss Nellie Smith, Miss Isaacs, Miss Coughlan, Miss McGalligan, and Miss Marion Peters, Masters Jones, Hayden, Vassie, Coughlan, Blair, Palmer, Gard, Parker.

THE DEATH OF THE LATE MAJOR ODELL. Major Odell of the 2nd Oxfordshire Light Infantry (52nd), died at Rawalpindi on the 8th ult. He was the only son of the late Honorable William Hunter Odell of Rockwood, Fredericton, and Halifax, N. S. and a great grandson of the Reverend Jonathan Odell, the Loyalist Rector of St. Ann's church, Burlington, N. J. who was afterwards secretary of the province of New Brunswick. Major Odell was born on May 6, 1852, entered the army in December, 1871, and was employed on special service with the commissariat department during the Zulu War of 1879-80. He was transport officer to the headquarters staff under Sir Garnet Wolstey during the operations against Sekukuni, and present at the capture of the chief's strong-hold, for which he had the medal with clasp, and in 1891 was with the Wuntho expedition to suppress a rising in one of the native states not taken over with Upper Burmah. He was Adjutant of his regiment from 1881 to 1887, and reached the rank of Major in March, 1892.

THE VACANT OFFICES. The registrarship of deeds and probate are vacant, and there is some speculation as to who will be appointed. The rumor that Mr. Vernon McLellan, the son of the late registrar and the present deputy, will be appointed registrar of deeds, meets with general approval. The registrarship of probate will probably go to Mr. A. I. Trueman, whose supreme court reporter-ship will fall into the capable hands of Mr. John L. Carleton.

THE DEAD COUNCELLOR. (Toronto Mail, 14th.) As when a woman's warmest mother-love With her child's love commingles, as deep with deep, Glad in a new heart-knowledge from above, On her dear breast the tired child falls asleep;

So in the grandest hour of all his pride, With a loved country's love at his command, From his great heart swept a responsive tide; He rests upon the lap of Motherland.

He rests upon the lap of Motherland. Mr. John. HARRY ALBRO' WOODWORTH.

A Wish. O, to go back to that year again, Its dewy nights in starlit gleam, Brown-eyed twilight with hair aflame, Lush, sweet meadows in violet's sheen, To linger where pines stood whispering, Weaving their shadows, purpled deep; Night-dream silence, the hour would bring, Golden-eyed stars their watch would keep. But now, beloved, the sky is drear, With bits of blue, a dash of pearl, Brown and lemon, just over there Where you see clouds of night uncurled— The trees like ghoulis in spectral mist, And dim is the gold, for everywhere Autumn has claimed, and elapsed, and kissed, And left me naught but a mute despair. SEAWEED.

THE CHRISTMAS BABY. Hoot! ye little rascal! ye come in on me this way, Crowding yourself amongst us this blustering winter's day. Knowin' that we already have three of ye, and seven more to make yourself out a Christmas present of heaven? Ten of us have we now, sir, for this world to abuse; An' Bobbie he have no wastcoat, an' Nellie she have no shoes, An' Sammie he have no shirt, sir, (I tell it to his shame), An' the one that was just before ye we ain't had time to name! An' all of the banks be smashin', an' on our poor folk all; An' bobbie he whittles the wages when work's to be had at all; An' Tom he have cut his foot off, an' lies in a wooden plight, An' all of us wonders at merrin' as what we shall eat at night; An' but for your father an' Sandy a-fudin' somewhat to do, An' but for the preacher's woman, who often helps us through, An' but for your poor dear mother a-doin' twice her part, Ye'd be starvin' us all in heaven afore ye was ready to start! An' now ye have come, ye rascal! so healthy an' fat an' so sound, A weightin', I'll wager a dollar, the full of a dozen with yer mother's eyes a-fashin', yer father's dozen and build, An' a good big mouth and stomach all ready for to be filled!

No, no! don't cry, my baby! Hush up, my pretty one! Don't get my chaff in your eye, boy—I only was just in fun. Ye'll like us when ye know us, although we're cur, we folks; But we don't get much victuals, an' half our livin' is jokes! Why, boy, did ye take me in earnest? Come sit down my baby; I'll tell ye a secret, I'll name ye after me, Ye shall have all yer brothers an' sisters with ye to play, An' ye shall have yer carriage, an' ride out every day! Why, boy, d'ye think ye'll suffer? I'm gettin' a trifle old, But I'll be many years yet before I lose my still, An' if I should fall on the road boy, still, them's yer brothers, tere, An' not a rooze o' em ever would see you harmed a hair! Say! when ye come from heaven, my little name-sake dear, Did ye see, amongst the little girls there, a face like this one here! That was yer little sister—she died a year ago, An' we all of us, we could all like babies when they laid her under the snow!

Hang it! if all the rich men I ever see or knew Came here with all their traps, boy, an' offered 'em for you, I'd show 'em to the door, boy, so quick they'd think it odd, Before I'd sell to another my Christmas gift from God! —From "Fairy Legends."

THE SECRET OF THE LORD. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him —Psalm 25, 14. The flute mind may look in vain, The knowledge infinite to gain, And scorners bold shall never know Where streams of knowledge freely flow. Locked is the heart, the ear, the mind, The soul is cold, the eye is blind, Faith, simple faith, sees all in love, And humbly bows to God above, Looks on the stars an' seeks to trace His gracious hand in boundless space, Admiring with a searching eye The grandeur of the vaulted sky, Adoring still that wondrous power, Which guards and keeps each day and hour, God will his secret now impart, To those who fear with loving heart, And will enlighten, guard and bless, Filling the soul with righteousness. FENO.

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VERSES OF YESTERDAY AND TODAY

That Beautiful Santa Claus. It was on a Christmas midnight, A night in the old times gone; I woke from sleep and saw a light, And heard one step alone. Along the mantle fell the ray Of a taper's yellow glow; And Santa Claus stood plain as day By the stocks hung in a row. Outside the wintry storm grew wild, And the music of the rain Sang softly of a new born child, In a manger cradle laid. I thought how wise men came and went, Leaving their gifts of love; When unto them afar was sent Bright starlight from above. There robed in white, the taper's gleam On a sootied face was thrown; While still I lay as in a dream, My waking all unknown. I saw the loving hands move on, Would I might see them now, To fill the socks up one by one, And hear that footstep slow.

That Santa Claus, that taper flame, How o'er the silent years; It shows a face and one dear name, Seen through a mist of tears. That Santa Claus, that midnight form, That well rememb'red score; Has been a rainbow when a storm, Life's bright days fall between. Could I but press those lips to mine, Or feel them on my brow; What love would from that taper shine, And bless me even now. But that dear Santa Claus no more Walks by the mantle side; That rooster found an open door Beyond the surging tide. Full of a wild and wintry gale, Has swept my heart since then; And broken mast and shred-torn sail, Revealed sad wrecks of men. But that dear Santa Claus is white, My soul can never leave; When winter brings the glad some night, And holy Christmas eve. Pansy Porch, Dec. 1894. CYRUS GOLDB.

The Secret of the Lord. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him —Psalm 25, 14. The flute mind may look in vain, The knowledge infinite to gain, And scorners bold shall never know Where streams of knowledge freely flow. Locked is the heart, the ear, the mind, The soul is cold, the eye is blind, Faith, simple faith, sees all in love, And humbly bows to God above, Looks on the stars an' seeks to trace His gracious hand in boundless space, Admiring with a searching eye The grandeur of the vaulted sky, Adoring still that wondrous power, Which guards and keeps each day and hour, God will his secret now impart, To those who fear with loving heart, And will enlighten, guard and bless, Filling the soul with righteousness. FENO.

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NEW XMAS GOODS. Are being daily Opened at C. FLOOD & SONS. Xmas Present, Solid Silver Brush, Comb, and Mirrors, Onyx Tables, Smoker's Sets, Ladies' Dressing Cases in Silver and Leather Princess and Banquet Lamps, a very choice assortment. Also our assortment of choice China cannot be equalled, and we have to day opened a large assortment of Royal Hanover Bohemia and Vienna Ware, which are all new and choice. We have a large assortment of Choice Gift Books, also all the new Juvenile Books including The Boys' and Girls' Annuals, Leisure Hours, "Sunday Home." In addition to our assortment of atractive goods we have lots of inexpensive goods including Dolls and Games. All last season's goods at much reduced prices. C. FLOOD & SONS.

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Forth from his highland home, Bubbled forth a crystal spring; Dashing through spray and foam, Or sandier and love to sing, Lashing the rocks in vain, It danced around the mountain side, Oo, oo, with might and main, And swelling a-cw with conscious pride. Shining at aged reek, It flowed along green, mossy glades, Heedless of many shocks, And in sweet musical charades Stays for Miss Whirlpool's dance, To rove and wood and dale— 'Round, 'round and 'round they prance, A sweet, romantic tale. But where the land's less steep, With surroundings chill and cold, Battling Sige Eim's feet, Its rugged face was shining gold. Murmuring to pebble banks, All nature to invest, Done with its "quips and cranks," For it there was no rest. Now a deep, steady stream It seeped now in a forest deep— Start as a preacher's theme, All quiet and still and all asleep. Into the great St. John, For just an hour or so, Mighty and deep and long, To lull the stream as usual! Thence to the boundless sea, With silvery glance of love, Lesing identity, It was the moon's true love, Where is the Nashwaak's maze? In shoeny haze and dreamy maze? Why does the waviest mean At the moon's and stream's strange ways? Just here it would be in order to say that the above conundrum about the wavellet and the moon is beyond our power to answer and for a reply to the knotty problem we would refer the co-authors to the equally celebrated author of that beautiful and sublime sonnet, "What are the Wild Waves Saying, Sister?" P. JAY.

A Considerate Girl. Flora—I can't decide on a Christmas gift for Arthur. Reginald—Give him yourself. Flora—He made me promise not to give him an expensive present. Mr. Kunnoodle—And now wouldn't you like me for a Christmas present? Miss Alert—Certainly, if you'll hang yourself on the Christmas tree.