

# Sunday Reading.

## THAT CHRISTMAS DAY.

A Little Story of the Season for the Children to Read.

Piggie and Dot were twins, four years of age, staid, grave little creatures. They had been down to take "muzzy" to the village school, where she daily taught forty girls, and as they trudged home, Piggie—as became his sex—protected Dot by holding her hand closely in her own.

It was the first week of December, and Dot, whose tongue seldom had any rest, was chattering about Christmas and its joys, describing an ideal doll and a box of candies she would like to have.

Piggie was silent, because he had understood his "muzzy" when she had told them on Sunday that, as she had lost all her money, as well as they had lost a father during the year, she could not give any presents, nor would Santa Claus visit them; she could barely get warm clothes and food enough for her darlings.

Dot had heard all this, and felt a sort of anger against her dear "dad," who was so happy in Heaven, while her "muzzy" often cried and was sad; still she expected Santa Claus.

Near their home they met Mr. Sutton, the clergyman, with a white-haired gentleman; they stopped the children, Mr. Sutton saying, "These are her young-ones—the twins." The old gentleman talked to them and Dot, being of a communicative disposition, told him how soon it would be Christmas, and even described the doll she wanted. Here Piggie solemnly said, "She can't really have it; dad is dead, and 'muzzy' is too poor to give us Christmas treats; not even Santa Claus will come this year."

The gentleman asked Piggie what she wanted. "I want things for 'muzzy'—books, and furs, and nice things; and I ask God for them when I'm in bed," said Piggie, breathlessly.

"She will have them, dear, and dollie will come, and Santa Claus also," said the gentleman.

"Are you Dad?" asked Dot, solemnly; whereat Piggie got red and scolded her.

Mr. Sutton asked what Dot meant, found they asked God at night for what they wanted, and as the gentleman said they would have them, Dot thought he must be God.

The gentlemen exchanged a look, smiled on poor Dot, and told her to keep on asking God for all she wanted.

That night, as the twins knelt at their mother's side, she was somewhat startled at the Christmas gifts which they peremptorily asked for. She thought it best to say nothing at that solemn moment; but as she tucked up her darlings, her questions brought from Piggie the account of the "beautiful old gentleman, Dot thought was God." Accustomed to hearing romances from her little ones, the wise mother kissed her pets, and hurried off to the others without a word.

Christmas Eve came with its holidays and snow. The window of the little cottage, where "muzzy" and her children lived, shone rosy with lamplight, and through the uncurtained window one could see the prettily decorated room, the simple tea-table, the five sweet children, the sunny-haired mother, and even hear the ripple of boyish laughter at some remark of hers.

A knock at the door brought the eldest boy to open it, when in came Mr. Sutton and Santa Claus! Into the sitting-room they went, Santa in blanket, toque and snow-shoes and carrying two big sacks.

Mr. Sutton laughingly said he had come to show Santa Claus their house; then out of the sacks, in two heaps, came groceries, furs, dresses, books, toys and dolls. Amid shrieks of joy and laughter from the children, as they examined their gifts, the three elders disappeared. But shortly after in came the radiant mother all alone, weeping and laughing; then what fun they had, what games and songs, what a supper, too.

Christmas morning! Never had the children had such a breakfast; Dot and Piggie whispered solemnly to each other that God had forgotten nothing.

Another knock, and the tall, white-haired gentleman entered. Catching the mother in his arms, he kissed her under the mistle-toe-bough; and then with one swoop he gathered the five wondering children within his arms and knees, kissing them and saying he was "muzzy's" uncle, home from abroad, and they were all going to live with him and be happy.

Then, indeed, was there "peace on earth" in that cottage on Christmas Day.

## The Spirit of Christmas.

This is the month when the newspapers abound in articles describing Christmas gifts that can be made by clever fingers; when the shops are overflowing with rich and beautiful gifts ready-made; when the streets are thronged with shoppers, and the out-going and incoming mails are heavily laden, for the whole world becomes tributary to Santa Claus. In all this bustle and confusion the spirit of Christmas is something lacking. The faces of the shoppers have a worried, driven look, as if punished by a sense of duty, more than by the pleasure of giving. On all sides one hears complaining. "Oh, it's so hard to know what to give, so-and-so has everything already

that money can buy"; or, "I must spend at least five dollars on this friend, she never gives less than that for my gift, though I really cannot afford it this year." This person would consider it an insult to send a friend a five dollar bill as a return gift, and yet this is exactly the spirit in which her gift is made. Your rich friend will value it she be a true friend—any little token you send her, because of the giver, if she knows you are grateful to her for her rich and beautiful gift, for real gratitude is something her money cannot buy. If the Sunday schools of wealthy churches whose members have a surfeit of Christmas gifts at home, would only have a tree or a festival not for themselves, but for the poor—let the children give it themselves—and hand out the gifts, not simply give the funds—they will all enjoy it, and realize that it is indeed more blessed to give than to receive.

## AS A CHRISTMAS EVE.

Why a Little Girl was Glad she had Stayed Home.

"Mamie, you must remain at home tonight; mother is not well, and I dare not leave her alone."

"Oh, papa! it is the children's party at the Mission Hall this evening, I could not be absent."

"I cannot help that, my dear, your sick mother needs you; remember, duty, like charity, should begin at home."

Mamie perfectly understood the uselessness of disputing her father's decision, but she rebelled against any arrangement that interfered with the work she engaged in.

Mamie was in her seventeenth year, and an ardent enthusiast in all church work and benevolent enterprises. To do her justice, the girl had heartily endeavored to make the children's gathering a success. The little ones loved her, and her sweet smile seemed to spread happiness wherever she moved—except in her own home.

The invalid mother could not bear to exact any sacrifice from her eldest daughter; she preferred hours of solitude to watching Mamie's sullen face when requested to remain at home. Not that Mamie did not love her mother; indeed, neither of the younger children were so demonstrative in their evidences of affection, after which Mrs. Raymond would sigh as heedless Mamie would hurry away on some errand of mercy or outside usefulness.

Mamie is not a singular character by any means. Who has not known girls who would go miles out of their way to serve a stranger, or send assistance to people in foreign lands, while close beside them existed cases of extreme misery and distress?

Within the home circle, there are those unto whom is due tender services and unmeasured love; yet, for such, sacrifices are often counted dear, and kindness and affection are doled out in grudging morsels.

Mamie, who delighted in works of public benevolence, shrank from the unromantic, every-day duties of filial obligation. Most reluctantly the girl entered the invalid's chamber, but her morose expression quickly changed to one of alarm. Surely that ghastly face upon the pillow was not her mother's! In a moment her sympathy was aroused; tenderly she sought to restore the drooping woman; and when her mother's eyes looked into hers again, Mamie uttered a prayer of devout thankfulness.

That Christmas eve! Will Mamie ever forget it? Through the long years 'twixt then and now, she looks back with gratitude to the stern command that bade her relinquish pleasure for duty, for on that night they conversed as mother and daughter had never done before. Heart to heart, they realized how much each needed the other's love. It was then the daughter learned that her mother's days were numbered; soon, none knew how soon, her burden of suffering must be laid down.

With words of consolation did that dying woman soothe her weeping child. With her good night kiss Mamie prayed for her mother's blessing; and, when on the morrow Mr. Raymond told his children that during the solemn hours of the night God had called their mother, amidst her passionate mourning, Mamie vowed that hereafter "home should ever be first" and she kept her vow.

## The Birthplace of the Saviour.

Bethlehem to-day is a very picturesque hill town. Thirty years ago visitors estimated its population at 3,000, but now Baedeker puts it down at 8,000. It has shared the activity and the progress which have visited the entire region. "The houses are uniformly of stone," says Mr. Charles A. Dana, in some recent notes of a visit to Palestine, "and when we sought to approach the great church of the nativity we found the principal streets torn up in the process of laying down sewers, and were obliged to get down and go on foot. The church is a vast and complicated pile of buildings, the Latins and the Armenians having constructed chapels and monasteries about the original edifice, which is in the hands of the orthodox Greek communion. Here, as in Jerusalem, a guard of Turkish soldiers constantly attends in the entrance of the church to keep the disagreeing sort of Christians out of violent quarrels with each other. The church dates back to the

first half of the fourth century. The architecture of the interior is simple, severe and most impressive, but some of the attached chapels are crowded with crucifixes, lamps of gold and silver, pictures and tapestries that bewilder the eye with their variety and splendor."

## THE POOR'S CHRISTMAS.

We Should all try to Make it Pleasant for Them.

The merry Christmas chimes will soon be heard throughout our great Dominion, and vast numbers will turn their thoughts to the time when the Saviour of men was born—the time when the angelic hosts proclaimed "Good tidings of great joy," followed by a grand chorus of voices, "Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Soon our colleges, seminaries and public schools will be closed for a time, and young men, young women and children will have a period of relaxation and time to arrange for holiday fun and amusements in their homes and elsewhere.

Soon broken families will be united for a season, and there will be rejoicings and merry-making. Everyone—from the children to the hoary-headed grandparents—will be filled with kindly thoughts and feelings, and, not only to those near and dear to them, but to the poor and friendless as well.

It has often occurred to us that the poor, destitute, friendless, and the widows and orphans, all of whom may be found within easy reach of our bright and happy homes, do not receive that attention care and aid that should be extended by those who have enough and to spare of the good things of this life.

This failure to relieve the wants and necessities of others, and to cause joy to flow at a season when all souls should be happy, is not always due to indifference, hardness of heart or an uncharitable disposition. Our failures in this direction are too often the result of want of thought, forgetfulness and a too deep and almost selfish fascination and interest in what concerns the enjoyments and pleasures of our friends and our own firesides.

The truth is, there are thousands of men and women who are ever ready to assist the needy, and who delight, especially at this season, to have their attention called to work of a charitable nature.

We think it may be safely affirmed that our Canadian people, who are in a position to assist their less fortunate brothers and sisters, are as large-hearted and generous as any in the world, and that it only requires quiet and gentle admonition to arouse their noble and generous feelings toward those in need.

## The Origin of Christmas Carols.

The word carol is supposed to be a compound of the Saxon words cantan, to sing, and rola, an interjection of joy. The ancient burthen of the song was "Rola, Rola, Tol de Role," which is not unusual, even at this time, in common low songs, or in songs of a burlesque kind. The custom of singing an hymn on the morning of the nativity of Jesus Christ, is of very old standing in the Christian Church, and the carol is supposed to be an imitation of the "Glory be to God on high, etc." which was sung by the angels, as they hovered over the fields of Bethlehem, in the morning of the nativity. The carol, it appears, however, was not only in practice on Christmas day, but on the days appropriated to the honor of saints, as St. Stephen's day, St. Andrew's day, Childermas, etc. It was customary also, according to Tertullian (who lived about the year 200), "among the Christians, at their feasts, to bring those who were able to sing into the midst, and make them sing a song in honor of God, either taken out of the Holy Scriptures, or of their own composition."

## Christmas and Christmas Boxes.

This took its name from the word mitto, I send. This mitto was a kind of remembrance or rather dictator which said, "send gifts, offerings, etc., to the priests, that they may intercede for you"; hence it was called Christmas: thus far the etymology of the word is indisputable, and every one who has attended to the minutiae of Sacred History must know the fact as here related. The origin of the boxes was: Whenever a ship sailed from any of those ports under the authority of the See of Rome, a certain Saint was always named, unto whose protection its safety was committed; and, in the ship there was a box, and into that box every poor person put something, in order to induce the priests to pray to that Saint for the safe return of the ship.

## A Female Missionary.

How Mrs. Reynard discovered the "missing link," set Marion to work selling bibles in St. Giles, and in so doing founded, unwittingly, the London Bible and Domestic Female Mission—this story has become classic in the history of home missions, and needs no retelling. The work so remarkably originated in 1857 has taken deep root, and goes on vigorously today, although the beloved founder has passed to her reward. There are now 125 bible-women visiting from house to house among the London poor, while, in addition, there are eighty bible-women nurses trained to minister to the sick and injured, and to teach poor women how to nurse. Moreover, there are eleven visiting superintendents and nurse pioneers giving their whole

time to organizing districts, seeking out fresh cases, conducting mothers' meetings, and lending effective aid to the whole work. Thus, with some central agents, there are 230 earnest Christian women devoting to carrying the gospel into poor homes, and winning for it an entrance by those kindly and loving offices a true woman knows so well how to render. Moreover, each district has a lady superintendent, who takes the oversight, and seeks to make poor women feel that someone cares for them.

## Messages of Help for the Week.

"Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." Psalm 107: 8, 9.

"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" Ezekiel 33: 11.

"I planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into a degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me? For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me." Jeremiah 2: 21.

"It is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Romans 13: 11.

"It behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Hebrews 2.

"Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give them light." Ephesians 5: 14.

"Meditate upon these things." 1 Timothy 4: 15.

## A Cruel Answer.

### A Montreal Lady Plainly Told That There Was No Hope for Her.

### Discharged from the Hospital as Incurable.

### A STRIKING PROOF OF THE VALUE OF PAINE'S CELERY COMPOUND.

### Bright's Disease Banished and a Life Saved.

"Paine's Celery Compound saved my life, and I will always greatly remember the fact."

Mrs. P. Kelly, No. 68 William street, Montreal, made the above statement with a wonderful degree of thankfulness and joy, after being cured of a most dangerous disease that had firmly laid hold on her, and defied the best efforts of physicians.

Suffering from Bright's disease, Mrs. Kelly was taken to the hospital in order to secure the most approved treatment known to the medical faculty. After spending some time in hospital, Mrs. Kelly became worse, and the physicians plainly told her that she was incurable, and she was discharged—sent home to die.

When hope had almost fled, when the body was weak and frail, and life almost extinguished, Mrs. Kelly heard the glad news of Paine's Celery Compound—was told what it had done for others who had been pronounced incurable, and she at once determined to try its powers.

After using three bottles of the life-giving Compound, Mrs. Kelly felt that there was a wondrous power to infuse new life. The medicine was continued from day to day, until a perfect cure was effected.

Mrs. Kelly, now as strong as she ever was in life, wishes to direct the attention of other sufferers to the medicine that cured her. She writes as follows:—

"I am of opinion that I shall be conferring good upon my fellow creatures by informing them of what Paine's Celery Compound has done for me in the past."

"Two and a half years ago I had a severe pain in my left side, which became serious and alarming. I was informed afterwards by my doctor that I had Bright's disease, indeed this was generally acknowledged by all who knew me."

"I was under the doctor's care and taking medicine for a long time without receiving any relief. Getting worse I was sent to the Montreal General Hospital, where I was treated by the best doctors. After remaining in the hospital for some time, I was sent away, as they told me there was no cure for me."

"I continued doctoring at home for nearly a year, but grew weaker and frailer. At this time I was urged by my brother-in-law to try Paine's Celery Compound. The first bottle used gave me great relief. I continued the use of the Compound, and today can truly say that I am perfectly cured, and feel as strong as ever before in my life. Paine's Celery Compound saved my life, and I will always gratefully remember the fact."

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Here it is that marvelous results come from the use of South American Nervine Tonic. Starting from the established scientific fact that the life and healthfulness of every part and organ of the body has its origin in the nerve centers, which are located in the base of the brain, this great discovery, South American Nervine, acts at once upon the nerve centers. It does not serve simply as a soothing draught, or a temporary stimulus to the injured and diseased organs. It gives the needed strength at the nerve centers, and this done, the whole system is toned and built up.

Evidence on this point might be presented by the volume. The subjects of such a cure are found all over this fair Dominion. Mr. W. F. Bolger, of Renfrew, Ont., tells us in a letter over his own signature, and dated May 10, that he has been troubled with indigestion of a most aggravated character. Terrible weakness, as well as agonizing suffering followed. South American Nervine was brought under his notice, and he decided on giving it a trial. The result in his own words is this: "I found very great relief from the first couple of bottles; my appetite came back and I soon became strong. I can honestly say that I consider South American Nervine a remarkable medicine. It cured me of my suffering, which seemed incurable, and had baffled all former methods and efforts." Language cannot be too strong or positive when used in setting forth the merits of this remarkable, scientific remedy. It has cured many of the most desperate cases of indigestion and nervous diseases in the Dominion.

For sale by Chas. McGregor, 37 Charlotte St.; Hazen J. Dick, 148 Charlotte St.; Clinton Brown & Co., Cor. Sidney and Union; E. J. Mahoney, 38 Main St.; A. C. Smith & Co., 41 Charlotte St.