

Family Reading.

Making Christmas Wreaths.

Gather the box, the fir, and the pine,
And brightest of berries red;
To welcome the day the Child divine
First lay in his cradle bed.

Cover with wreaths the walls at home,
And hang them up everywhere,
Let them swing down from the temple
dome,
And wherever there's space to spare.

For Christmas day is, of all the year,
The brightest and cheeriest day,
With its glorious tidings of great good
cheer

That opens a new, glad way.

A way of escape from doubts and fears,
That stirred in our hearts such strife;
A way, though it's through a vale of
tears,
Yet ends in eternal life.

Gather the brightest your hands can find,
And tinge them with songs of joy;
For only thoughts that are sweet and
kind
Should come to such blest employ.

Once the dear head was crowned with
the thorns,
That hatred and malice wore;
But our wreaths to welcome the Christ-
mas morn,
Are the fruitage of faith and love.

Bells across the Snow.

O Christmas, merry Christmas,
Is it really come again?
With its memories and greetings,
With its joy and with its pain.
There's a minor in the carol,
And a shadow in the light,
And a spray of cypress twining
With the holly-wreath to-night.
And the hush is never broken
By laughter light and low,
As we listen in the starlight
To the bells across the snow.

O Christmas, merry Christmas,
'Tis not so very long
Since other voices blended
With the carol and the song!
If we could but hear them singing
As they are singing now,
If we could but see the radiance
Of the crown on each dear brow,
There would be no sigh to smother,
No hidden tear to flow,
As we listen in the starlight
To the bells across the snow.

O Christmas, merry Christmas,
This never more can be;
We cannot bring again the days
Of our unshadowed glee;
But Christmas, happy Christmas,
Sweet herald of good-will,
With holy songs of glory,
Brings holy gladness still,
For peace and hope may brighten,
And patient love may glow,
As we listen in the starlight
To the bells across the snow.

Select Serial.

CHRISTIE'S OLD ORGAN.

BY MRS. O. F. WALTON.

CHAPTER VIII.

MADE MEET FOR HOME.

How different everything seemed to
Treffy after his doubts and fears had
been removed! The very attic seemed
full of sunshine, and old Treffy's heart
was full of brightness. He was forgiv-
en, and he knew it. And, as a for-
given child, he could look up into his
Father's face with a smile.

A great load was taken off little
Christie's heart, his old master was so
happy and contented now; never im-
patient at his long absence when he
was out with the organ, or fretful and
anxious about their daily support. Old
Treffy had laid upon Jesus his load of
sin, and it was not hard to lay upon
Him also his load of care. The Lord
who had borne the greater burden
would surely bear the less. Treffy
could not have put this feeling of trust
into words, but he acted upon it. There
were no murmurings from old Treffy
now, no forebodings. He had always
a bright smile and a cheerful word for
Christie when the boy returned tired
at night. And whilst Christie was out
he would lie, very still and peaceful,
talking softly to himself or thanking
the dear Lord for His great gift to
Him.

And old Treffy's trust was not dis-
appointed. "None that trust in Him
shall be desolate."

The clergyman's gift was not the
only one they received that week.
Christie had come home in the middle
of the day to see how his master was,
and was just preparing to start again on
his rounds, when they heard a gentle
rustling of silk on the stairs, and a low
knock at the door. Christie opened it
quickly, and in walked little Mabel
and little Mabel's mamma. They had
brought with them many little comforts
for old Treffy, which Mabel had great
pleasure in opening out. But they
brought with them also what money
cannot buy—sweet, gentle words and
bright smiles, which cheered old Treffy's
heart.

The lady sat down beside Treffy,
and they talked together of Jesus; the
old man loved to talk of Jesus now, for
he was able to say, "He loved me and
gave Himself for me."

And the lady took a little blue Tes-
tament from her pocket and read a
chapter to Treffy. She had a sweet,
clear voice, and she read so distinctly
that he could understand every word.

Little Mabel sat quite still whilst her
mamma was reading, then she got up
and ran across the attic.

"Here are my snowdrops," she said,
with a cry of joy, as she caught sight
of them in the window-sill. "Do you
like them, Master Treffy?"

"Ay, little missie," said the old man,
"I do, indeed; and me and Christie al-
ways think of the little prayer when we
look at them."

"Wash me, and I shall be whiter than
snow," repeated Mabel, reverently.
"Has He washed you, Master Treffy?"

"Yes, missie," said Treffy, "I believe
He has."

"I'm so glad," said little Mabel,
"then you will go to 'Home, sweet
Home,' won't he mamma?"

"Yes," said her mother, "Treffy and
Christie have found the only road
which leads home. And oh! she said,
the color coming into her sweet face.

"What a happy day it will be when we
all meet at home! Wouldn't you
like to see Jesus, Treffy?" asked the
lady.

"Ay," said old Treffy, "it would be
a good sight to see His blessed face
I could almost sing for joy when I think
of it, and I haven't so very long to
wait."

"No," said the lady, with a wistful
expression in her eyes, "I could almost
change places with you, Treffy; I
could almost wish I were as near to
'Home, sweet Home.' But that would
be selfish," she said brightly, as she rose
to go.

But little Mabel had discovered the
old organ, and was in no haste to de-
part. She must turn it "just a little
bit." In former days, old Treffy would
have been seriously agitated and dis-
tressed at the idea of the handle of
his dear old organ being turned by a
little girl of six years old. Even now
he felt a small amount of anxiety when
she proposed it. But his fears vanish-
ed when he saw the careful, deliberate
way in which Mabel went to work.

The old organ was perfectly safe in her
hands. And, to Mabel's joy, the first
tune that came up was 'Home, sweet
Home.' Very sweetly it sounded in
old Treffy's ears. He was thinking of
no earthly home, but of 'the city
bright,' where he hoped soon to be.

And the lady was thinking of it too.

When the tune was finished, they
took their leave, and Christie looked
out of the window, and watched them
crossing the dirty court, and entering
the carriage which was waiting for them
in the street.

It had been a very bright week for
Christie and for old Treffy.

And then Sunday came, and another
service in the little mission-room.
Christie was there in good time, and the
clergyman gave him a pleasant smile
as he came into the room.

It was the third verse of the hymn
on which the clergyman was to preach
to-night. They sang the whole hymn
through before the sermon, and then
they sang the third verse again, that all
of them might remember it whilst he
was preaching.

"Lord make me from this hour,
Thy loving child to be,
Kept by Thy power,
Kept by Thy power,
From all that grieveth Thee."

And the clergyman's text was in
Colossians i. 12, 'Meet to be partakers
of the inheritance.' He repeated it
very slowly, and Christie whispered it

softly to himself, that he might be able
to teach it to old Treffy.

'Meet to be partakers of the inheri-
tance.' What is the inheritance?
asked the clergyman. "My dear
friends, our inheritance is that city
bright of which we have been speaking
so much, 'Home, sweet Home,' our
Father's home. We are not there yet,
but for all Christ's washed ones there
is a bright home above. Jesus is pre-
paring it for us; it is our inheritance.
Oh," said the clergyman, very earnestly,
'I wonder how many in this room
have a home up there. You may have
a wretched, uncomfortable home on
earth; is it your only home? Is there
no home for you in the bright city; no
home in heaven?'

"You might all have a home there,"
said the clergyman, "if you would only
come to the fountain, if you would only
say from the bottom of your heart,
'Lord, wash me, and I shall be whiter
than snow.'"

And Christie smiled when the clergy-
man said his little prayer, for he
thought of the snowdrops. And the
clergyman thought of them, too.

Then Mr. Wilton went on to say
that he wished, to-night, to speak to
those who had come to Jesus! who had
taken their sin to Him, and who had
been washed in His blood.

"That's me and old Treffy," said
Christie to himself.

"My dear friends," said the clergy-
man, "all of you have an inheritance;
you are the sons of a King; there is a
place in the kingdom waiting for you.
Jesus is getting that place ready for
you, and I want to show you to-night
that you must be made ready for it—
meet or fit for the inheritance. One
day, the Prince of Wales will be the
King of England. This kingdom is his
inheritance. As soon as he was born he
had a right to it. But he has been
educated and trained with great care,
that he may be meet for the inheri-
tance, that he may be fit to enjoy it,
and able to use it. If he had had no
education, if he had been brought up in
one of these dismal black courts, though
he might have a perfect right to be
King, still he would not be able to en-
joy it; he would feel strange, uncom-
fortable, out of place."

"Just so," said the clergyman, "is it
with our inheritance. As soon as we
are born again we have a right to it,
we become sons and daughters of the
King of kings. But we need to be
prepared and made meet for the inheri-
tance. We must be made holy within;
we must be trained and taught to hate
sin and to love all that is pure and
holy. And this is the work of God's
Holy Spirit."

"Oh! my friends, will you not ask
for the gift of the Holy Spirit to renew
your heart? It will not be all done in a
day. You came to Jesus to be wash-
ed from the stain of sin. He did that
at once; He gave you at once the right
to the inheritance. But you will not be
made holy at once. Little by little,
hour by hour, day by day, the Holy
Spirit will make you more and more
ready for the inheritance. You will
become more and more like Jesus.
You will hate sin more; you will love
Jesus more; you will become more
holy. But, oh! let no one think," said
the clergyman, "that being good will
ever give you a right to the inheritance.
If I were to be ever so well educated,
if I were to be taught a hundred times
better than the Prince of Wales has
been, it would never give me a right
to be King of England. No, my
friends, the only way into 'Home,
sweet Home,' the only way to obtain a
right to the inheritance, is by the blood
of Jesus. There is no other way, no
other right."

"But, after the dear Lord has given
us the right to the kingdom, He always
prepares us for it. A forgiven soul
will always lead a holy life. A soul
that has been washed white, will always
long to keep clear of sin. Is it not so
with you? Just think of what Jesus
has done for you! He has washed
you in His blood; He has taken your
sins away at the cost of His life. Will
you do the very things that grieve Him?
Will you be so ungrateful as to do that
which will offend Him?"

"Oh! surely not; surely you will say,
in the words of the third verse of our
hymn—

"Lord, make me from this hour
Thy loving child to be,
Kept by Thy power,
Kept by Thy power,
From all that grieveth Thee."

And the clergyman's text was in
Colossians i. 12, 'Meet to be partakers
of the inheritance.' He repeated it
very slowly, and Christie whispered it

And surely you will ask Him very
eagerly to give you that Holy
Spirit who alone can make you holy.
And when the work is done," said the
clergyman, "when you are made meet,
made fit for the inheritance, the Lord
will take you there. He will not keep
you waiting. Some are made ready
very quickly. Others have to wait
long, weary years of discipline. But
all the King's sons shall be ready at
last, all shall be taken home, and shall
enter upon the inheritance. Will you
be there?"

And with that question the clergy-
man ended his sermon, and the little
congregation broke up very quietly,
and went home with thoughtful faces.

Christie lingered near the door till
the clergyman came out. He asked
very kindly of old Treffy, and then he
put a few questions to Christie about
the sermon; for he had been afraid
whilst he had been preaching that he
had not made it so clear that a child
might understand. But he was cheer-
ed to find that the leading truth of the
sermon was impressed on little Chris-
tie's mind, and that he would be able to
carry to old Treffy something, at least,
of what he had heard.

For Christie was taught of God, and
into hearts prepared by the Holy
Spirit the seed is sure to sink. The
Lord had prepared them for the word,
and prepared the word for them;
and the sower has only to put his
hand into the basket and scatter the
seed prayerfully over the softened soil.
It will sink in, spring up, and bring
forth fruit.

The clergyman felt the truth of this
as he walked home. And he remem-
bered, where it was written, 'The
preparation of the heart is from the
Lord.' "That is a word for me," well
as for my hearers," he said to himself.
Lord, ever let Thy preparation go be-
fore my preaching."

No Room in the Inn.

On Christmas eve, long ago, there
were sounds of joy and music in the
city. At midnight, they rang the
Christmas bells, and at sunrise the notes
of the children's glad Christmas carol
floated on the still air, like the song of
spring-time birds, so soft and sweet
were their tones, as they sung:

"Once o'er the fields of Bethlehem,
Rang out a glory song;
The hills that heard it sung to them,
Re-echo it along;

That wondrous sound, that psalm of
praise,
Good tidings ever blest,
Forevermore the echoes raise,
"Oh, Christus natus est!"

Thus it dawned, the glad Christmas,
and wonderful gifts it brought to the
thousands of dwellers in the great city;
but the most wonderful of all was to
Hiram Venn!

Hiram Venn, whose lot in life was
hard, not from the pressure of poverty
—for wealth had surrounded him from
infancy—but because, with scarce an
effort to stay their inward march, he
had admitted into his heart evil
thoughts, and they had sown broadcast
there their seeds of distrust, envy and
malice; surely, such seed-sowing
must make any man's lot hard.

But as never yet was there a winter
without days of sunshine and cheer, so
there never yet was a life that did not
know some hours lit up by the glim-
mering of better things; and these
glims of light, they had fallen across
Hiram's pathway more than once.
Even when a child, he had hearkened
to the beautiful story of that long-ago
night, when first in the Eastern horizon
had shone the star of the Christ-child.
And again in his youth, Hiram had
listened to the story of that love with-
out compare; and as he had listened
then, almost he had resolved to walk
in the path-way guarded by that
heaven-born Star, which ever to the eye
of faith, goes before the trusting soul
"a cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by
night." But Hiram's youth time re-
solve had been only an 'Almost thou
persuadest me.'

Hiram tarried out late on the Christ-
mas eve night. He was a lonely old
man; for though ready to do his
slightest bidding, servants went to and
fro in his stately residence (it was not
a home that great house where Hiram
Venn lived), there was no smile of love,
no word of welcome to greet his return,
As he passed up and down the crowded

thoroughfares, now and then he paused
to look in the gayly lighted shop-win-
dows, to watch the happy gift-seekers,
and the eager salesmen. And
walking as he did, amid the happy
scene, and yet not mingling in it, Hir-
am asked himself:

"Why all this gift exchanging; all
this good-cheer keeping at the Christ-
mas time? And so overgrown was the
old man's heart with weeds, no space
was there for a Christmas blossom to
upspring, and whisper the answer:
'They give, because on Christmas day
they celebrate God's unspeakable gift
to man, the coming of the Light; and,
as the broken words, the disjointed sen-
tences of little children are full of mean-
ing to parent's ears, so these inter-
changes of tokens of kindness are full
of meaning to the Father, who recog-
nizes that by them his children are say-
ing though it be imperfectly, that they
are trying to live out the angel's song:
'Good will to men, kindness to all!'

When Hiram wandered of the crowded
streets, he turned into a broad avenue,
and there he found something to linger
for, too; for sounds of gladness rang
out from many a brilliantly-lighted
home, through the half-drawn curtains
of which he caught glimpses of the
happy Christmas keepers; and again,
with the dull sense of being outside of
it all, he asked himself.

"Why these family greetings; why
the reunion of friends; why the em-
bracing, too, in the Christmas joy,
those who have no claim of kindred
or friendship?"

And no answer his heart gave; for
old Hiram Venn had long ago silenced
the voice that whispers, 'Out of love to
Christ love to man is born, and love
that is freely received yearns to freely
give,' hence this, reaching out to em-
brace, in the Christmas joy, not only
known, but unknown people; hence
this 'peace on earth.'

From the avenue Hiram passed into
a narrow street, and so busy was he
with his own thoughts, he hardly ob-
served where he was going, until sud-
denly his steps were arrested by the
falling of a broad beam of light across
his path, and he stood before an open
door, through which men and women
were passing—plainly dressed men and
women—some with weary steps, some
with pale, poverty-pinched faces. It
was not such a company as Hiram was
wont to join, and yet he passed in and
made one of them; and the very first
words he heard on entering that mis-
sion chapel contained, as the bud con-
tains the flower, the setting of Hiram's
Christmas gift; 'There was no room in
the Inn.' These were the words—

words so few they filled but half a verse
in Luke's narrative, and yet to Hiram
Venn they were life-laden. All in a
minute—memory is so swift of wing—
they wafted him back to the days of his
childhood, and he seemed to hear his
mother's voice telling of the night when
Christ was born—Christ, who loves
little children; and then, quickly as
passing scenes of panoramic view, he
was a youth, listening to the same story
—the story of the Christ who came on
earth, bringing pardon for sin, strength
for weakness, help for trial, love for
sinners; and Hiram remembered—

though he was an old man, with hair
white as the snow, with form bowed
with his many years, as the vine is bent
beneath the autumn fruit—how his
heart had glowed in his youth, with a
half resolve to follow the guidance of
that Savior; but, breaking in on these
wakened memories, like the note of an
alarm-bell loud and clear, rang out in
Hiram's heart the words the preacher
uttered, 'No room in the Inn—no room
in the Inn.'

Were they just addressed to him—
those words? Did they mean, as en-
trance had been denied at Bethlehem's
Inn, so he, Hiram Venn, had shut the
Lord of life out from his heart—shut
him out and barred it—that heart-door
—with the words, 'No room in the
Inn? and—for questions would not be
silent in Hiram's heart that Christmas-
eve night—what had crowded the
Christ out? With what had he filled
his heart, that over its portal was writ-
ten, 'No room in the Inn?'

Ah! bitterly groaned the old man, as
before him in swift array passed the
emptiness of the treasure he had gar-
nered, and almost aloud he murmured:
'No room in the Inn, no room; and
it is late, too late, to open the door now.

—too late! Thus Hiram's soul was
revealed to himself that night; thus
he saw that the threshold and door
were barred by sin.

But only men say, 'Too late'; and
even as Hiram sighed, like the note of
far-off music, he heard the voice calling,
'Come to me.' Behold I stand at
the door and knock; if any man hear
my voice, and open the door, I will
come in unto him, and sup with him,
and he with me.

And old Hiram—Hiram Venn—the
man who all his life long had shut his
heart's door against the heavenly love,
softly as a little child whispers, 'I am
sorry, to a tender mother, murmured,
'Lord pardon me, for Christ's sake; I
believe, help thou my unbelief.' And
as he thus murmured, the closed door
of his heart opened wide, and Christ
came in—there to abide. 'Come in,'
for the asking.

Think you not Hiram Venn was a
blessed Christmas day? Think you
not his gift—the gift of pardon for sin
—the most wondrous of all, the gifts
that made glad hearts in the great city,
on the Christmas morning, the morn-
ing heralded with ringing bells and
singing children.

It was long ago all this happened.
Many and many a Christmas has since
passed, and now we stand close to an-
other; our gifts of love and kindness
are well-nigh prepared; our homes are
already hung with the Christmas ever-
greens; we have made ready to cele-
brate the birthday of our Christ.

But have we, one and all, as we have
thus made ready the outward signs of
our gladness, made ready our hearts
too?

In Herod's palace, on the night when
Christ was born, there were sounds of
revelry and mirth; and only a furlong,
or two off from that place was Bethel-
hem's manger; and yet among the
merry throng that crowded Herod's
hall, there was no one who saw the
Eastern Star arise. Will it be thus
with any of us? Will we enter into
the joy and mirth of keeping this hol-
iday, and yet stay outside of the sight
of the Christmas Star? As we look
into our own hearts, do we find traced
there the words Hiram Venn found in
his, 'No room in the Inn—no room for
Christ?'

Thank God, if we do thus find; yet
though the hour be the twelfth, there
is still time to open the door—time to
make ready a welcome for the Lord;
for only a moment it takes to ask,
'Christ forgive, only a moment to hear
the answer, 'He that cometh unto me,
I will in no wise cast out.'—Christmas
Evergreens.

The Model Subscriber.

BY WILL CARLTON.

"Good morning, sir, Mr. Editor, how
are the folks to-day?"
I owe for next year's paper—I thought
I'd come and pay.
And Jones is agoin' to take it, and this
is his money here;
I shut down lendin' it to him; and then
coaxed him to try it a year.

"And here's a few little items that hap-
pened last week in our town;
I thought they'd look good for the paper,
so I jotted them down;
And here is a basket of peaches, my
wife picked expressly for you,
And a small bunch of flowers from Jen-
nie—she thought she must send
something, too."

The editor sat in his sanctum, and
brought down his fist with a thump.
"Bless that dear old farmer," he mur-
mured, "he's a regular jolly old
trump."
And 'tis thus with our noble profession,
and thus it will ever be still.
There are some who appreciate our
labor, and some who perhaps never
will.

In Prayer we have two intercessors,
—one in heaven one in the heart;
Christ for us, the Spirit within us;
Christ at the mercy-seat, the Comforter
in the suppliant's breast. Every be-
liever soul is a chapel, an oratory,
where this heavenly guest is both prop-
het and priest. "Your body is the
temple of the Holy Ghost," and it is in
prayer, if ever, that we are filled with
all the fulness of God.—A. C. Thomp-
son.

Wet boots when taken off, should be
filled with oats. This will prevent
shrinkage, and the boots will dry in
their proper shape.

Mr. George Pearce, school teacher,
of Sackville, Essex, planted a peck of
White Elephant potatoes last spring,
and obtained therefrom 37½ bushels.
The secret of such an enormous yield
is a piece of rich soil, good cultivation,
and one eye planted in each hill.