

Christmas Eve.

God bless the little stockings
All over the land to-night,
Hung in the choicest corners
In the glow of crimson light!
The tiny scarlet stockings
With a hole in the heel and toe,
Worn by wonderful journeys
The darlings have had to go.

And heaven pity the children,
Wherever their homes may be,
Who wake at the first gray dawning
An empty stocking to see!
Left in the faith of childhood
Hanging against the wall,
Just where the dazzling glory
Of Santa's light will fall!

Alas! for the lonely mother
Whose home is empty still,
Who has no scarlet stockings
With childish toys to fill;
Who sits in the swarthy twilight
With her face against the pane,
And grieves for the little baby
Whose grave lies out in the rain!

O, the empty shoes and stockings,
Forever laid aside!
O, the tangled, broken shoe strings
That will never more be tied!
O, the small graves at the mercy
Of the bleak December rain!
O, the feet in the snow-white sandals
That never can trip again!

But happier they who slumber
With marble at foot and head,
Then the child who has no shelter,
No raiment, nor food, nor bed.
Yes, heaven help the living!
Children of want and pain,
Knowing no fold nor pasture—
Out to-night in the rain!

Merry Christmas.

Dainty little stockings
Hanging in a row,
Blue, and gray, and scarlet,
In the bright glow.
Curly-pated sleepers,
Safely tucked in bed;
Dreams of wondrous toy-shops,
Dancing through each head.
Funny little stockings
Hanging in a row,
Stuffed with sweet surprises,
Down from top to toe;
Skates, and balls and trumpets,
Dishes, toys and drums;
Books, and dolls and candies,
Nuts and sugar-plums.
Little sleepers waking;
Bless me, what a noise!
Wish you Merry Christmas,
Happy girls and boys!

Harry's Christmas.

BY MRS. K. WALLACE.

It takes but a few strokes of the artist's pencil to picture the desolation and wretchedness of the drunkard's home. There are the bare walls, through whose crevices the winter wind drifts the snow, and piles it in little heaps across the fireless hearth; there are the few broken chairs, the leafless table, upon which no other food except a few potatoes or a scanty loaf ever finds its way; there are the children shivering with half-clad bodies, quarreling perhaps over the last remaining crust. The pale-faced wife is waiting with trembling the coming of him whose step was once hailed with delight. It is a sad picture, but not overdrawn—it is too true to life.

But this is only the result of a few rapid strokes of the artist's brush. Who can describe the heart-ache of the young wife when she first meets her husband reeling home in a state of intoxication, and so on day after day and week after week, until all hope had well-nigh fled? Can we know the hunger of the little ones, who have cried for bread when not a crust had the mother to give? This is beyond our skill; none but our Heavenly Father, who heareth every cry of distress, will know the real wretchedness of the drunkard's home.

It was such a home as this in which Harry Marston lived with his two sisters. They were the unfortunate children of a father who regarded not their tears, but spent for rum the money that should have clothed and fed them. Harry was eight years old, and aided his mother and sisters, as many a child of twice his years would not have attempted. Their wretched home was in a dirty and obscure street in a large city, and the only outlook from the dingy window was upon scenes of distress as great as their own. Harry was a newsboy, and every morning, no matter how cold, would tie his ragged comforter about his neck, shuffle on a pair of shoes three times too large for him and full of holes, and drawing his scanty clothes closer around him, would hurry down to the office for his morning supply of papers; after which he would be found on the busy street crying his old song of "Papers—morning papers!" while he would shift the bundle from one arm to the other to better warm the blue fingers in his pockets.

It was the day before Christmas, and Harry had hoped, by saving his pennies, to buy something for their dinner the next day. He had risen early that morning before the great

city was astir, and tip-toed past his father, who lay drunk on the floor, and started out to begin his day's work. It was a busy day for him, and more than one bright nickel found its way to his pocket. Evening found his bundle of papers all sold, and he found he had nearly two dollars. O how proudly he turned to go home, feeling rich with his little store. He had not gone far when a rough voice he knew too well, accompanied by a shake, brought him to a sudden stop.

"See here, boy, have ye any money?"
Poor Harry! Here was an end to his plans. The tears filled his eyes as he vainly tried to slip from the vice-like grasp of his father.
"Come—none of yer whimpering; fork it over! I must have it!"
"Father, began he, I haven't much, and I was going to get something for dinner, so we can have Christmas again as we used to."

"Christmas be bothered! I want it," and with these heartless words he emptied the little pocket and staggered away, leaving the boy penniless and well-nigh heart-broken. Sadly he walked toward the hovel called home, and lifting the latch entered, and going directly to his mother buried his face in her lap and sobbed.

"Mother, it's no use trying. I can't do anything nor have anything but it must all go for whisky," and the tears flowed afresh as he told her the whole story.

Softly the mother smoothed the tumbled hair, while she tried to comfort him in his great sorrow. Poor mother! hope had long since died in her heart, but she lived in her boy—he was her sole support.

Twilight deepened into night, and after eating his scanty meal he crept away to bed with such a heavy heart as none but a drunkard's child can know. Let us follow the wretched father to the haunt of sin. Entering the door he immediately walked to the counter, when his attention was arrested by a conversation between the landlord and his wife concerning the dinner next day, for which great preparations were being made. For the first time in years his deadened conscience gave a throb of remorse, as he thought of the family at home with nothing to eat on the coming day, while his money went to help load the table of the whisky-seller with luxuries. Putting the money back in his pocket he turned into the street and walked rapidly on, not knowing whither he went. A great conflict was going on in his mind, but the good angel triumphed, and an hour later found him on his way to his own home with bundles for his Christmas dinner such as had not found their way to his dwelling for years.

Harry was awakened next morning by the bells ringing out on the frosty air, "Peace on earth, good will to men." Hastily dressing he found, to his great surprise, his father sober and kindling a fire in the broken stove, while his little sisters were eagerly devouring such rosy apples as he had wished for them. The day was like a dream to Harry. The father, although restless, had remained at home, not daring to trust himself in reach of the old temptation. When evening came he started out but soon returned, and tossing a paper into his wife's lap sank down and wept like a child. Catching the paper from his mother's hands Harry read, "Temperance Pledge," and his father's name in bold letters at the bottom. Clapping his hands, he danced for joy, shouting:
"O this is a merry Christmas, mother; this is 'Peace on earth' to us. Goodbye to cold and hunger now; father's signed the pledge!" and in his childish enthusiasm he caught his father round the neck and pressed a kiss on the poor man's lips. Lifting his face toward his wife, the penitent father, with choking voice, exclaimed:
"Wife! children! so help me God, I'll never, never touch rum again, and from this Christmas-day I'll be a better man," and he kept his word.

Harry and his two sisters were sent to school, and, through many years, peace and prosperity smiled on that once desolate home.

Not Good Enough.

Nothing is good enough that is not as good as it can be. The verdict "good enough," says a well known writer, which in boyhood passes the defective task, will become "bad enough" when the habit of inaccuracy has spread itself over the life.
"You have planned that board well, have you, Frank?" asked the carpenter of an apprentice.
"O, it will do," replied the boy.
"It don't need to be very well planned for the use to be made of it. Nobody will see it."

"It will not do if it is not planned as neatly and as smoothly as possible," replied the carpenter, who had the

reputation of being the best and most conscientious workman in the city.
"I suppose I could make it smoother," said the boy.
"Then do it. 'Good Enough' has but one meaning in my shop, and that is 'perfect.' If a thing is not perfect it is not good enough for me."

"You haven't made things look very neat and orderly here in the back part of the store," said a merchant to a young clerk.

"Well, I thought it was good enough for back there where things can not be seen very plainly, and where customers seldom go."

"That won't do," said the merchant, sharply, and then added, in a kinder tone, "You must get ideas of that kind out of your head, my boy, if you hope to succeed in life. That kind of 'good enough' isn't much better than 'bad enough.'"

The girls who don't sweep in the corners or dust under things, and the boys who dispose of tasks as speedily as possible, declaring that things will "do" if they are not well done, are the boys and girls who are very likely to make failures in life because the habit of inaccuracy has become a part of their characters.

The old adage, "What is worth doing at all is worth doing well," is as true as it was when first spoken, and it will always be true.—*Youth's Companion.*

BATH BUNS.—Take two quarts flour, set a sponge as for bread, when risen, add one-half pound butter, one pound white sugar, four eggs; mix together and let it rise, then cut in pieces size of half a tea cup, and set to rise again in a tray; ornament with small pieces of citron stuck in, and small lumps of white sugar sprinkled on top, or any kind of small sweeties. Bake in a moderate oven.

PANCAKES.—One pint milk, two eggs, one tablespoon sugar, one cup flour, one teaspoon baking powder, one cup cream, pinch of salt; sift flour, salt and powder together, add to it the eggs beaten with sugar and diluted with milk and cream; mix thoroughly. Have a small round frying pan, melt a little butter in it, pour in about one-half cup batter, turn pan around so that batter will cover it, put on hot fire, turn and brown on the other side, butter each side, sift on powdered sugar, roll and sift sugar over the top.

Young Folks' Column Edited by C. E. BLACK, ST. JOHN, P. O. N. B.

Devoted to Puzzles, Solutions, Stories, Letters, and other work.

{ PUZZLERS' PARADISE }

{ The Mystery Solved.—No. 49. }

No. 261.—

(a) C (b) F
A L E E R A
C L A R A F R A N K
E R A A N T
A K

(c) Z
T E A
Z E B R A
A R T
A

No. 262.—

1. SUMMER 2. CIRCLE
U N E A S Y I T U R E A
M E T H O D R U L E R S
M A H O N E C R E D I T
E S O N O R L E R I D O
R Y D E R S E A S T O N

No. 263.—Longfellow. No. 264.—Ostrich.

No. 265.—1. "The elders of the daughters of Zion sit on the ground and keep silence." 2. 2 Kings 16:10.

N. J. 266.—

(1) 2 Kings 22:14. (2) Ps. 70:4
(3) Ezek. 16:10. (4) Dan. 5:27.
(5) Ruth 2:19.

{ The Mystery—No. 52. }

N. B.—Now is the time to send in your Puzzles, etc. Let all write.

*** A MERRY CHRISTMAS ***

TO YOU ALL.

— o —

No. 278.—DIAMONDS.

(BY "PHILOMATH," QUEENS.)

1. A letter; an animal; a division of France; comes yearly; a card; sooner than; vowel.

2. A vowel; priest's robe; beasts; relating to insects; German dance; too late; tend; to increase; a letter.

No. 279.—NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

(BY "GERANIUM," Central Hampstead.)

My 4, 2, 3, 12, is a tale spun out.

My 5, 11, 9, 10, is something we take three times a day.

My 4, 13, 6, 3, is a period of time.

My 12, 9, 7, is a small horse.

My 8, 11, 2, 10 is a quantity.

My 10, 2, 5, 11 is unsound in limb.

My 7, 9, 1, 13 is any kind of sport.

My 7, 10, 2, 3, 11 is a piercing look.

My whole is the name of a woman mentioned in the Scripture.

No. 280.—AN ANCIENT RIDDLE.

(CONT'D. BY J. E. BARBOCK, Carleton.)

1. Adam God made out of dust,
But thought it best to make me first
So I was made before the man,
To answer God's most holy plan.

2. My body, God did make complete,
But without arms, or legs, or feet;
My ways and acts He did control,
But to my body gave no soul.

3. A living being I became,
And Adam gave to me my name;
I from his presence then withdrew,
And more of Adam never knew.

4. I did my mother's law obey,
Nor from it ever went astray;
Thousands of miles I go in fear,
But seldom on the earth appear.

5. For purpose wise, which God did see,
He put a living soul in me,
A soul from me my God did claim,
And took from me that soul again.

6. For when from me that soul had fled,
I was the same as when first made;
And without hands, or feet, or soul,
I travel on from pole to pole.

7. I labour hard by day and night,
To fallen man I give great light;
Thousands of people's young and old,
Will by my death great light behold.

8. No right nor wrong can I conceive,
The Scriptures I cannot believe;
Although my name therein is found,
They are to me an empty sound.

9. No fear of death doth trouble me,
Real happiness I ne'er shall see;
To Heaven I shall never go,
Or to the grave, or hell below.

10. Now when these lines you slowly read,
Gow search your Bible with all speed;
For that my name's recorded there,
I honestly to you declare.

No. 281.—DROP-VOWEL PUZZLE.

(BY "PANSY," Fredericton Junction.)

"v-r-br-nch-n-m-th-b-r-th-n-fr-t-h-t-k-th-w-y; nd-v-r-y-br-nch-th-b-r-th-fr-t-h-p-r-g-th-t-th-t-m-y-brng-f-rth-m-r-fr-t."

No. 282.—ENIGMA.

(BY CARRIE WADE, Cross Creek.)

In are, not in is;

In head, not in tail;

In ten, also in nine;

In ant, not in fly;

In man, not in boy;

Whole is a company.

No. 283.—TRANSPPOSITION.

BY SORRETTA M. LONDON, Good's Corner.

"Apkes otnielv noefo traohne."

No. 284.—C ARADE.

(BY L. F. BARNES, Bath.)

My first is a young girl;

My second is a verb;

My third is a small mouthful;

My fourth is a garden fruit;

My whole is a large river in the U. S.

—The Mystery Solved in three weeks.—

—The Mystical Circle.—

JULIA E. BARBOCK, Carleton, St. John, has our hearty thanks for the puzzle sent which we rec'd by the hand of your father, whom we were pleased to meet. Sorry you could not get time to write a story. Try yet. May God bless you. Merry Christmas.

SUSANNA M. SHAW, Somerville, has our thanks for kind words. She says: "I enjoy reading the INTELLIGENCER very much. It is getting better every year. It is good reading for old or young. I wish the editors success in all their labours of love and good words and work." The editors spare no pains, I am sure, to make every issue more interesting and better. No. 266 correctly solved. Never send your communications under a fictitious name, but address as at head of Column. Happy Christmas.

*** ANOTHER CHRISTMAS TIDE HAS ROLLED AROUND. WE WISH YOU ONE AND ALL A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS.***

C. L. CURRIER, Upper Gasquetown, correctly solves No. 266. Write often. Merry Christmas.

—MERRY XMAS TO YOU ALL!—

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