

## After Christmas.

I have lately heard a secret.  
Heard it too from truthful lips;  
Santa Claus, the shy old fellow,  
Makes his "after-Christmas" trips.

I've been told he has discovered  
Many things that cause him pain.  
Discontent and hateful envy—  
Thoughtful love bestowed in vain.

He has seen his choicest presents  
Torn and broken and defaced;  
Santa Claus, though rich and lavish,  
Frowns on willful, wicked waste.

All unseen he watched some children  
In their pleasant home at play  
With the very toys he gave them  
On the Merry Christmas Day.

Johnny's rocking-horse was splendid!  
Gaily decked in red and gold;  
Katy's doll as fair a creature  
As a child could wish to hold.

Johnny's horse was kicked and battered,  
Just because it couldn't neigh!  
Thought his papa might have bought him  
Two live horses and a sleigh!

Katy wished her doll was larger;  
Wished its eyes were black, not blue;  
Finally grew vexed and threw it—  
Broke its lovely head in two!

Santa Claus looked grave and troubled,  
Shook his head and went away;  
"I'll remember this," he muttered,  
"On another Christmas Day!"

Then he peered in distant places,  
Where he was not wont to go;  
Where the hungry shivering children  
Never any Christmas knew.

And his heart was sad and sorry  
That he could not help them all;  
And he thought in grief and anger  
Of the broken horse and doll.

As he took his onward journey  
He was seen to drop a tear,  
And I remember that he whispered,  
"I'll remember this next year!"

But he has so much to think of,  
And so many things to get  
Can't the Johnnies and the Katies  
Think of it if he forget?

## A Brave Lad.

A few years ago, a boy who was left without father or mother, went to New York alone and friendless, to get a situation in a store as errand boy until he could command a higher position; but this boy had been in bad company, and got in the habit of calling for "bitters" and cheap cigars.

On looking over a paper, he noticed that a merchant on Pearl street, wanted a lad, and he called there and made his business known.

"Walk into my office," said the merchant, "and I will attend to you soon."

When he had waited upon his customer, he took a seat near the lad, and espied a cigar in his hat.

"My boy," said he, "I want an honest and faithful lad, but I see you smoke cigars, and in my experience I have found cigar-smoking lads to be connected with various evil habits, and if I am not mistaken you are not an exception to the rule. You will not suit me."

Johnny hung down his head, and left the store, and as he walked the street a stranger and friendless, the counsel of his mother came forcibly to his mind, who, upon her death-bed had called him to her side, and placing her hand upon his head, and said to him:

"Johnny, I am going to leave you. You will know what misery your father brought upon us, and I want you to promise me before I die, that you will never touch a drop of the poison that killed your father."

The tears trickled down Johnny's cheeks. He went to his lodgings, and throwing himself upon his bed, gave vent to his feelings in sobs that were heard all over the house.

But Johnny had more courage, and before an hour had passed, he had made up his mind never to touch another drop of liquor nor smoke another cigar. He went back to the merchant and said:

"Sir, you very properly sent me away this morning, for habits that I have been guilty of; but I have neither father nor mother, and although I have done what I ought not to do, I have made a solemn promise never to drink another drop of liquor nor smoke another cigar; and if you will only try me, it is all that I can ask."

The merchant was struck with the decision and energy displayed by the boy, and at once employed him.

At the expiration of five years this boy was a partner in the business, and he is now worth ten thousand dollars.

## A True Story.

"I wish my boy was back with me again," exclaimed a mother with eyes suffused with tears. She was a widow. Her husband had been taken from her, leaving her in charge of several small children, among whom was one son old enough to be of much service to his mother in the way of her support and that of her family. Right manfully did he discharge this responsible position for a while, and thus he was a great comfort to his mother. He labored industriously and was attentive, remaining at home at night with his mother and the rest of the family. Then it seemed to be a happy little home. How proud that mother was of her son! Happy for that boy and all the family had he continued that way.

But the tempter entered and led away that boy by night, sometimes into evil company; home became not so attractive, but more congenial associates were sought among those "that stand in the way of sinners," until one night, with an evil companion, he committed

such a crime as necessitated his secret departure from home as a means of safety. His sorrow-stricken mother, now for the first time learned of his evil associations, which robbed her of the affection and support of a son who had given her great comfort and much hope for the future. While she supposed he was resting in his bed refreshing himself for the labors of the next day, he was leaving a kind mother, without means of support to herself and helpless children, without no kind good-by and parting kiss. It was hard to treat his unsuspecting mother so unfeelingly. She could not think that her own boy could be such an ingrate. It was her own boy whom she loved, and yet she could but love him. Yes! those big tears told of a mother's love, of a heart that would never give up her boy. The longings of her heart were, "If only my boy would come to me again!"

Dear boys, would you break your mother's heart, make those wrinkles upon her face grow so fast—her hair to grow prematurely gray—her heart to grow sad—her eyes to be red with weeping? This is the way to do it. Just act as if you had forgotten all her care for you, how she watched over you by day and by night, nourished you, clothed, protected and prayed for your happiness, that you might be an obedient honorable boy, just because she loved you even more than her own life. Just treat her as if you cared nothing for her. Go away with evil companions—especially at night—those lonely hours when you might comfort her so much, and as you take your last leave, don't give her a parting kiss, and your work will soon be done. She will love you till her aching heart ceases to beat and her body is laid in the grave. Boys, "if sinners entice thee consent thou not," "the companion of fools shall be destroyed; evil pursue sinners." "Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land." Such cruelty to a mother will be punished. A boy whose heart is so hardened to all the better feelings of humanity will be open to the worst temptations of the devil, and his course is likely to be a rapid one down to death. Think how many broken-hearted mothers there are to-day in the world, saying in their sorrowing hours, "If my son would only come back to me!"

Think of your mothers, boys! make their hearts glad, for they have other things enough to make them weep without sorrowing over a wayward, unfeeling son.

## Jim's Temptation.

BY A. L.

It was Saturday afternoon, and Jim Hermann was just finishing his work for the day, when Bob Henderson made his appearance at the door of the yard, and saluted him with:

"Hallo, Jim, are you going skating with us? The boys sent me up to see if you were coming."

"I'll have to go and ask mother," said Jim. "I'm half afraid she won't let me, for I heard her say this morning, that she hardly thought the ice was strong enough."

"Come along then without asking," said Bob.

"No, Bob, I would not like to go if mother did not want me to," replied Jim, "but I will go in and see what she says." Jim entered the house and in a few minutes afterward, rejoined his companion.

"Mother says I can go down to the pond, but I mustn't go on the ice."

"I don't see any harm," said Bob; "but come along, the boys are waiting for us."

When they reached the corner of the street, they found the rest of the boys waiting for them, as Bob had said; so they all proceeded at once to the pond, about half a mile distant. When they reached the pond, the boys who had skates began to put them on, while those who were not so fortunate as to have skates began to make a "slide," excepting Jim who stood on the bank watching them. While he was thus watching, Frank Hunter came along and said:

"Hallo! Jim, are you going on the ice?"

"No. I promised mother I would not."

"Why there's no danger, Jim, and I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll let you try my new pair of skates. I got them for a Christmas present, and I haven't used them yet; I have to go down to the village on an errand and you can have them till I come back."

Jim could not resist the offer. He cast a look of admiration at the new pair of skates hanging over Frank's shoulders and said he would like to try them for a little while.

Frank gave him the skates and went on his errand. Jim put them on and soon joined the boys who had skates in a game of tag.

Bob Henderson was skating as fast as he could, trying to overtake Jim and tag him. When Jim, in his endeavor to get away from him, unconsciously went too near a part of the ice that was broken up. There was a cracking noise, a splash, and Jim disappeared through the ice into the cold water. As soon as Bob saw him going through he gave the alarm. In an instant all was confusion. Some of the boys ran away, while others approached the spot where he had gone down, but were warned by the cracking of the ice to go no nearer. Will Jones, cooler than the rest, remembering that he had seen a long board, lying on the bank, went to get it, and with the assistance of another boy, managed to bring it to the spot where the boys were watching where Jim had disappeared. Laying this over the broken part of the ice, one of the boys crept out on it. He had about reached the middle when he saw a black object rising to the surface, which he recognized to be Jim's body. He grasped it with both his hands and with the aid of two of his companions, succeeded in lifting it from the water.

As Jim's house was the nearest house to the pond, the boys thought it would be best to carry him there. When they reached the house, they found Dr. Leonard, who had been on a visit to see Mrs. Hermann, about to depart; but when he saw Jim, you may be sure he

remained to give his services. Mrs. Hermann was wild with grief, and she could do nothing but wring her hands and cry: "Oh, doctor, save my boy!"

"I'll do my best," said Dr. Leonard, as he directed the boys to lay Jim before the fire, and began to pull off the wet clothes; "the first thing is to rub him dry and get him into a warm bed." Under the good treatment of Dr. Leonard, Jim recovered in a few days.

One day, just as he had awakened from a sound sleep, he observed his mother sitting by the window, and calling her to his bedside, he said: "Mother, will you forgive me for disobeying you?" The mother clasped him to her breast, and said: "Yes, my son, with all my heart, but there is some one else to ask. Ask God to forgive you, and give you power to resist temptation." And the mother knelt down by the bedside and prayed with her son.

## A Perfect Trust.

A gentleman was walking one evening with his little girl, upon a high bank, beneath which ran a canal. The child was pleased with the look of the glistening water, and coaxed her father to take her down to it.

"The water looks so pretty. Please, papa, do take me down there," she said.

The bank was very steep, and the road a mere sheep path. In getting down, the gentleman had to take hold of his little girl's arms and swing her from point to point. While doing this, she would sometimes be hanging in the air directly over the water. Yet she only laughed and chuckled, but was not the least bit afraid, although she really seemed to be in danger.

At last they got down the bank, and reached the tow-path in safety. Then taking up his daughter in his arms he said:

"Now, tell me, Sophy, why you were not afraid when you were swinging in the air, right over the water?"

Nestling her plump little cheek upon her father's face, she said:

"Papa had hold of Sophy's hand; Sophy couldn't fall!"

This was very sweet. Here was a perfect trust. And this was just the feeling that David had toward God when he said, "What time I am afraid I will trust in thee." Sophy would have screamed with terror to find herself hanging over the water in the canal, unless she had confidence in the person who had hold of her arms. But it was her father—her kind, loving father—who held her, and so "what time she would have been afraid, she trusted in him." And this is the feeling that we ought to have toward God. The thought of his power should lead us to trust in Him.

## Smiles.

A colored brother rose in prayer-meeting and said: "My dear bruddern, I feel's if I could talk more good in five minutes dan I could do good in a year."

"When is a man a coward?" asked a teacher.

"When he runs away from a cow," answered a pupil.

A young lady who has a telegraph operator with red hair for a beau, calls him her "electric spark."

Boarding school miss—"O Charlie! I expect to graduate at next commencement." "Graduate! what will you graduate in?" "Why, in white tulle!"

Little Amy admitted a visitor, and left him standing in the hall, while she called up-stairs: "Sister Mary! Sister Mary! come quick! The most boochiful gentleman has come to see you!"

"Is that a friend of yours?" asked a gentleman, pointing to a party who was sailing rapidly down the street. "Can't tell you till next Saturday," returned the individual addressed. "I've just lent him five dollars."

Young ladies will petition Congress to pass an enabling act, to enable the old folks to go to bed at nine o'clock Sunday evening.

Learned Professors have occasionally been outwitted by the sayings of the simple. Dr. Hill, an Edinburgh Professor of the last century, met in the suburbs of the city an inoffensive creature, who was generally regarded as imbecile. Somewhat irritated by the creature's intrusion on the privacy of his walk, the Professor said to him: "How long, Tom, may one live without brains?" "I dinna ken," said Tom, "how lang hae ye lived yersel?"

Geography and grammar strive with each other to form the pith of the following clever puns: Which is the coldest river? The ice is (Isis). There is another colder—the icier (Iser).

A pious French priest recently gave out an announcement as follows: "If it rains in the morning the procession will take place in the afternoon; and if it rains in the afternoon the procession will take place in the morning."

At a funeral in Ireland the clergyman had not been informed of the sex of the deceased. He accordingly leaned over to the sexton and said: "Shall I say 'brother or sister here departed?'" "It's neither, sir," whispered the man; "shure he was only an acquaintance!"

A lady taking tea at a small company, being very fond of hot rolls, was asked to have another. "Really, I cannot," she modestly replied. "I don't know how many I have eaten already." "I do," unexpectedly cried a juvenile upstart, whose mother had allowed him a seat at table. "You've eaten eight; I've been counting!"

Mrs. Partington again "Poor man!" said the old lady, "and so he's really gone at last! Ninety-eight, was he? Dear, dear! to think how that if he'd lived two years more he'd have been a centurion."

## Fireside Pastimes.

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM C. BURNHAM, A.B.

Contributions of good original puzzles and answers are solicited from every reader of the VISITOR for this department. All communications should be written only on one side of the paper, marked "For Fireside Pastimes" and addressed to William C. Burnham, VISITOR Office, No. 85 Germain St., Saint John, N. B.

## DIAMOND PUZZLE.

- 1 a consonant in Maine.
- 2 large.
- 3 a white insoluble powder.
- 4 to scatter.
- 5 a Grecian general.
- 6 a Mexican bird.
- 7 a piece of metal used as a reward of merit.
- 8 a certain quantity.
- 9 in Spain.

Jemseg, N. B.

A. T. D.

## LETTER PUZZLE.

My first is indispensable in music.  
My second an exclamation.  
My third stands for a silver coin.  
My fourth is in every man's house.  
My fifth is in student.  
My whole is ancient prophet.

Canning, N. S.

S. EDDIE MARCH.

## WORD SQUARE.

1. A Roman Emperor.
2. To issue.
3. Vivid.
4. A Roman Emperor who committed suicide.

Jemseg, N. B.

A. T. D.

## NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

I am composed of 20 letters.  
My 1, 6, 5, 4, 8 is the sediment of liquors.  
My 16, 13, 12 is trouble.  
My 2, 26, 17 is a curve.  
My 2, 7, 14 is a small island.  
My 3, 9, 10 is a horse.  
My 20, 11, 19 is an animal.  
My 8, 15 is a pronoun.  
My whole is an old adage.

Moncton, N. B.

Tom.

## CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

1. In sweet, not in tart.
2. In sleigh, not in cart.
3. In week, not in day.
4. In milk, not in whey.
5. In book, not in brief.
6. In mutton, not in beef.
7. In mite, not in small.
8. In talk, not in brawl.
9. In draught, also in haul.

My whole is the mother's name, whose son blasphemed the name of the Lord.

## POETICAL TRANSPOSITIONS.

Snam files a boko of shtiroy,  
Het veales foehire rea ysad,  
Eth tlelers rolliam losely oinjed,  
Eht litte si dgos srapiel.

Oxford, N. S.

STEPHEN H. BROWN.

Answers next week.

## ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S PASTIMES.

To Numerical Enigma.—Napoleon Bonaparte.  
To Double Cross-Word Enigma.—Father, Agamemnon; Daughter, Iphigenia.

To Diamond Puzzle.—

A  
A A R  
A A R O N  
R O D  
N

To Half Word-Square.—

D I A M E T E R  
I N T E R I M  
A T T A I N  
M E A S E  
E R I E  
T I N  
E M  
R

To Enigma.—Mary.

To Drop-letter Puzzle.—Better late than never.

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A. T. D. Your Numerical Enigma is very good; and it shall soon appear.

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