



over the land will be turning homeward with the

Babe of Bethlehem who was born in a manger and lived a homeless life upon earth bath set the solitary in families, and given us homes.

Happy school girls have been eagerly counting the days until the bollday recess, when they will go home, carrying many dainty gifts of their deft handlwork to the loved ones there. Eager boys from college halls will go back to the fireside where un; lous prayers have risen daily for their welfare since first they went away. Young men from the marts of commerce and the paths of trade will put the city, with its manifold temptations and cares, behind them to find rest and strength in the old country home.

Middle-aged men and women will go to the homes of their childhood to meet again brothers and sisters in famlly gatherings, and to cheer once more with their presence the belated pilgrims who still tarry below, divided between the children who have gone before and those who still meet once a year around the parental hearthstone.

What joy, what memories, what hopes the Christmas time will waken And to some the merry season will bring new pangs of sorrow-griefs they never knew before. Since last Christmas dear old parents have gone home to God, and children who used to gather about them will not go to the old homestead this year, because so much of the home that was there has vanished into the heaven. mothers will watch for sons who will Bereaved husbands come no more. will walk alone the ro tils of the children's rooms, trying vainly to be both mother and father in preparing the surprises for the little ones on Christmas morning. And stricken wives will do their best to keep the little ones from feeling too keenly this first Christmas since the husband died, that "papa is dead." Thousands of little ones will know as they have not known before the losses which the year has brought them.

Good men and women will thank God for the homes behind them, and for the good home before; and wayfaring outcasts will stop to think of golden days gone by, and to wonder if somehow they will not one day find a resting place. And so, with all classes, the season should be one of tenderness and love and thankfulness. Rev. W. A. Candler, D. D.



into little piles on the corner of the plane. There were six pfles, but somehow Lenny was not quite satisfied; and when Esther came in she saw a queer little scowl on the white forehead.

"Oh, what a lot of money," she said, smiling, "are you going to buy a velocinede?" "That's my Christmas monsaid Len; "the pennies for not seing late to breakfast, and the dollar grandma gave me, and my five centses for bringing in wood. I suppose there's at four dollars." "Two dollars and they-four cents," said Esther count-

And it won't divide good," said This pile is for papa, and this na; I'm going to buy papa a and this is for granding, to reach the masses.

buy a cap with roses in it; and this is the baby's. I'm going to get her a whole lot of chocolate creams and peanuts; and this is for you, Esther, only I shan't tell what I am going to buy." Lenny stopped, and Esther We almost hear the distant bells tried very hard not to laugh at the thoughts of papa with a ring and mamma in a red necktie. "But there's another pile, Lenny," she said. "Yes, that's just the trouble; seems to me I ought to have some of my money myself. I can tell you I worked hard for that money, Esther."

"Well, then, this pile is yours, is

"Yes, I thought so," said Len, slowly, "only the minister said we should! He brings the gifts of sweets and toys, remember to save some of our gifts for the poer. I think poor folks and heathen are an awful bother. Esther."

And Len looked up defiantly, as if ready to endure all that Eather might say in answer to such a shocking sentiment. To his great surprise Esther said quietly, "So do I, Lenny; sometimes I feel about discouraged when I think what a bother they are."

Lenny's fat hand reached out and transferred the sixth pile to his

"There's lots of folks taking care of them, too, and giving them money and things" he said.

"Yes," said Esther, "there are people in the great cities who spend their whole time looking after these poor persons, visiting teem at their homes. begging fuel to keep them from freezing, and food to keep them from starying, getting them into hospitals when they are sick, and teaching them to work. They don't do this for pay, but just for the dear Lord's sake, and they



WHAT A BOTHER THEY ARE.

keep on at work until they are worn out and die, and then someone else takes it up. Oh, it is a dreadful both-

and fingered the money doubtfully. "And there are people who go out in the new countries, and live in miserable little cabins, and have scarcely enough to eat or to wear, and no money to buy books, or papers, or Christmas presents, or to send their children to school, all because they are trying to teach the poor people about Jesus, and keep them from growing as wicked and lawless as the heathen themselves. What a bother it must be to give up everything so."

Lenny's hand crept into his pocket and laid about half the money back upon the piano, but Esther went on as if she had not seen him.

"And then there are the heathen just think how many men and women have left their homes and their friends. and gone away to try to win those poor. ignorant creatures from worshipping idols, and murdering their children and their sick friends, and leaving their poor old parents to starve to death. Just think, Lenny, of the fathers and mothers who have seen their dear children dying in these unhealthy regions, or had to send them away from them to save their lives of the martyrs that have given up their own lives, all for these heathen. I think they are a dreadful bother. And when, besides this, I remember how much trouble they have been to God, and how much they have cost Him, I am sure they must be precious or He never would have given His Son to save them. For if we would give all we have, our money and our lives, we never could give so much as God gave-for them and us, Lenny." Lenny's lips quivered a little, but he laid the rest of the money down with a bang, as he said "There, Esther, you needn't talk any more; that's God's money in this pile and I guess I wouldn't be mean

Rev. Dr. Curry, Peabody and Slate: Funds' agent in the south, is moving to have Alabama townships levy specd mamma a red necktle like lal tax for more and better schools to

enough to touch it."



ETHINKS I hear the rumbling As time sweeps on its way to-

night. And feel the thrills that And almost set thoughts to flight.

would not look adown the track That measures all life's weary years; Nor would I call one moment back With all its train of pain and tears.

Yet I may look with hopeful sight, Expectant of that fairer day When darkness vanishes in the light Of coming Christmas' hallowed ray.

Oh, Christmas Day! The guileless heart Of childhood thrills with roseate

dreams Of merry hours; the larger part Of bliss is what to them it seems.

As reindeer steeds prance through the snow:

And eager urching haste to tell How swiftly they come and go. How through the winter's snow and

The aged driver, clad in furs, Heeds not the cold nor chimney's

Piled to profusion in his sleigh; Gifts for the girls and for the boys,

But comes as sure as roll the years.

And gifts for older ones than they. But when he comes, the boys and girls in sweetest dreams are being led Through dreamland's castles; on their

The light of Christmas cheer is shed. Night passes on; the day is born,

The gladsome hours of joy begun; Another auspicious Christmas morn Has come to magaify the "Acointed One."

The Christmas Festival.

To-day in every land where Christ is known, and by believers of every name, Christmas is becoming more and more the festival of festivals in which all rejoice. It is 'not only pre-eminently the children's festival, but at Christmas we all become children again in the home, in the school, in the orphanage, in the pulpit, and in the pew -all the people and all the children catch the inspiration of the angels' song on the plains of Bethlehem. Ignorance and prejudice melt away in the presence of the Manger, and the universal heart is filled with good will to high and low, to rich and poor alike. Not only the patient on the hoapital couch, but even the prisoner in his penal cell, feels the thrill of the

The Season of Good Will.

Bethlehemic story.-Lutheran Evange-

The love that is in the world is little larger after each Christmas Day. "Good will toward men"--is not that the keyword of the song that was the fullaby of His manger-cradle and the melodious harmony of His life? We may differ much about Him, but on one point there will be a substantial agreement-He brought into our human life a new governing force; that is to say, he elevated to the first place Lenny's hand crept into his pocket the spirit of love, and fellowship, and good will. The heart of man ascends the throne wherever Jesus of Nazareth is known and loved. If our forms of manifesting affection by gifts be often empty, yet is there in them a large measure of this genuine and uniting



Christmas to Exhibit the Christ Life.

A day set apart to the expression of patriotic feeling helps to strengthen that feeling; so a season which associates itself with the mission of Christ may be used to exhibit something of the Christ life. It is a good thing for others to know that we are thinking about them. There are, indeed, daily opportunities of expressing such feelings and giving such positive expression of sympathy, but when the custom of so using a certain time has grown up, we may use it with all other opportunities to good advantage, and all the more because there are hearts turning toward us.

If our belief is wrong, our eternity

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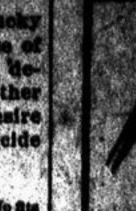
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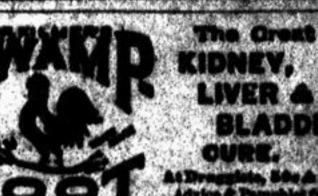
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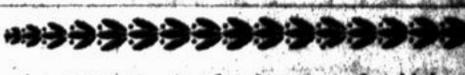
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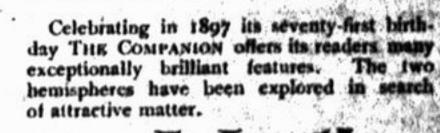
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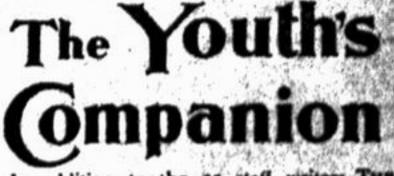




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