Andover News.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 21, 1890.

During the last year 8500 lives were saved and property valued at nearly $5,500,000 was rescued from destruction by the Life Saving Service at a cost of less than $1,000,000.

The Chicago Herald concludes that the population of foreign descent in North America may be broadly considered as belonging to three races—the African, the Latin and the Teutonic Aryan.

The tide of affairs in Japan is illustrated by the fact that, notwithstanding a reaction against all things foreign, eleven of the 300 men elected to the lower house of the new parliament are Protestant Christians, while several others nearly secured an election.

A newspaper in Oregon relates that Miss Sophia Ish, of Jacksonville, who inherited a fortune of $100,000 from her father decided it all to her relatives, because they objected to her marrying a poor man and then wedded the man of her choice, who had only manly attributes to recommend him.

By a vote taken in all the Methodist churches of the United States, a majority of the congregations have decided that women should be admitted as delegates to the General Conference of the denomination. New York city voted against the measure by a small majority; in Boston and vicinity only 25 votes were recorded against it.

The noble sport of wife beating still flourishes in England, notes the New York Journal. At a recent trial in Bristol a wife testified as follows: "We have been married for 23 years. He beat me the day after marriage, and there have never been three days at a time when he did not knock me down or whip me with a strap. I think he has beaten me 2000 times.

Lord Wolseley having claimed that the United Kingdom had not been invaded since William the Conqueror, the Atlanta Constitution deems it in order to remind him that in 1798 a French force of 1100 men invaded Ireland, marched 150 miles into the interior, and after several successful fights was captured by an army of 80,000 British soldiers.

A Buffalo physician who had examined under a microscope the straps to which the stand-up passengers of the street cars of that city hold on says that they are fairly reeking with bacteria of the most dangerous kind. The physician with a microscope in pursuit of bacilli, fever germs, microbes, bacteria and so on is always liable to excite an unnecessary alarm. But however real the danger in this case, it will not disturb the people of Chicago. They are too well hardened to the more serious perils of street car travel to mind a trifling billion or two of bacteria.

The action of the United States Express Company in refusing to carry money or transact any business for lottery organizations is to be heartily commended. It will probably entirely close up the Louisiana lottery except in the State where this institution has its home. It is quite certain now that the lottery cannot secure a renewal of its charter, which expires in 1892. Since the United States anti-lottery law has gone into effect the lottery managers cannot afford the large sums that they not long ago offered for the renewal of their charter. The Mexican lotteries have until lately been doing a great business in the Southwest, but with no means of getting communications before the public or money from it, their opportunities in this country must come to a close.

The fast new cruiser Philadelphia is the second of the name. The first bore a notable part in American naval history. In the war against the pirates of Tripoli (1801 to 1805) the gallant wooden cruiser Philadelphia was wrecked and captured by the Tripolitans. They turned her into a first-class war ship of their kind and placed her in the harbor with a Turkish crew aboard. In the dead of night, Feb. 16, 1803, Lieut. Decatur, with a force of eighty-three men, on board the Intrepid, a captured and remodeled Turkish war vessel, stole alongside the Philadelphia under pretense of being a friendly vessel in distress. They got near enough to the Philadelphia to set fire to her and blow her up, destroying her completely with a large number of the piratical force on board, and then sailed away safely. This exploit helped to make the fame of the American navy in those days.

TAKE HEART OF GRACE.

Take heart of grace, begin anew,
To-day's to-day, not yesterday,
And on its budding bloom the dew
Of early morning still doth play.

Take heart of grace, and gather up
This dewy sweetness of the morn,
Fill up with this your emptied cup,
And pledge the fair hours newly born.

Take heart of grace, and look before,
Instead of backward on the way,
Wash out the old regretful score,
The sorrowing sins of yesterday:

And let the old mistakes and pain,
Be cleansed with this refreshing dew,
And make beginning once again,
With hope and courage bright and new.

For what's the world and all its days,
But ours to try and try again,
Not ours to falter on its ways,
Not ours to fling aside for pain.

Take heart of grace then, day by day,
Take heart of grace and sing each morn,
"To-day's to day, not yesterday,
And all the world is newly born!"

—[Nora Perry in Youth's Companion.

SELINA'S TROUSSEAU.

BY EMMA A. OPPER.

Going home from the post office-office, Katy Gibson overtook Harlan Chapman, and gave a glad exclamation, "Oh, Harley!" and walked on with him in gay contentment, the state of affairs which caused the proceeding being just what was indicated; Katy was engagod to Harlan Chapman.

"This just came," she said, holding aloft a long package. "It's from Aunt Ann, and I know it's a sugar-spoon—I feel it; and Selina has got two already—one from Cousin Jotham and one from Uncle Sam. Also, to wit—two lamps and three clocks. We're looking for the third lamp and the fourth clock every minute."

Katie looked up at her tall lover with her charming, blue-eyed, bright-complexioned face radiant with the fun and good nature never absent from it.

When Harlan Chapman, whose family was one of the best and the best off in town, had engaged himself to Katy Gibson, whose father was only an indifferently successful millwright, his dignified relations had shaken their heads—till they had seen Katy Gibson. Then they had stared a little, smiled, beamed, patted her on the head, and congratulated Harlan.

"I can't realize it," said Kitty, with a sisterly sigh, "that day after to-morrow Selina will be Mrs. McLean and be going to West Lyme to live. Oh, dear, but she will! Almost everything's done—the cake and the dish-borrowing and the goodness knows what! I know my head's in a muddle. And it's this afternoon, you know, Harley," said Katy, giggling again, "that we're going after Selina's trousseau."

Selina's trousseau had been a joke of long standing. With one exception, every article of Selina's modest little outfit had been made by her own busy hands, or by Kitty's or her mother's willing ones.

The exception was the simple blue cloth gown which would serve double duty as bridal robe and traveling gown. That Selina had intrusted to Miss Green.

Miss Green's unpretentious shop was two miles away, and the Gibsons had never known a horse and buggy. Therefore, Harlan Chapman, who owned three horses and two buggies, had taken his prospective sister-in-law thither as often as a fitting was necessary, with Katy always a jolly third. And he and Katy had wrung unlimited fun out of it.

They called it Selina's trousseau, never referring to it otherwise. They spoke of Miss Green as Worth, and supposed Selina's trousseau to be valued at a thousand dollars. They dwelt upon the difficulty of getting it through the custom-house, and of the many descriptive columns which the New York papers would wish to publish about it, and of the annoyance certain to be suffered through greedy reporters clamoring reporters. They rung the changes mirthfully, and Selina had laughed till she was lame.

"You're going to take me up for it this afternoon, you know, Harley," said Katy.

And she looked up at her lover with a sudden little gasp.

Harley hadn't uttered a syllable yet.

"What's the matter, Harley?" she marveled.

"There's matter enough, Miss Gibson," said her lover, shortly, and Katy's heart stood still.

When had he ever called her Miss Gibson before?

He was a handsome fellow. And now his fine eyes were stern under their straight, dark brows, and his well-chiseled lips were firmly set.

"What is it, Harley?" said Katy, in a voice made feeble by dismay.

"I saw you last night, then," said her lover, "and I'd like to know where you'd been with Joe Martin. I saw you, I tell you!"

Katy raised a blank face.

"Oh, I know the whole business," Harlan burst forth. "I know he was going with you before I cut him out, and that he's been grumpy toward me ever since. Everybody's known that: everybody's known it was a fair and square deal, too. I wanted you and told you so, and you chose to take me; and I thought my troubles were over when you told me you could never love Joe Martin, and you'd told him so; and you did care for me, and you'd be true to me always."

If Katy had listened to the thrill of fondness and yearning in his voice! But what she heard was the accusing anger in it, and her guiltless heart rebelled.

"What I didn't know was that you hadn't got over liking him. I trusted you. I believed what you said, and I'd never have suspected you of keeping on with him to amuse yourself or make a fool of me—or goodness knows what you're after!"

"Harlan!" said Katy, warningly.

Her eyes were bright with indignation.

"Going out with him in the evening is keeping on with him," said her lover, sternly. "I saw you together last night. Did I, or didn't I?"

In his cold displeasure he was a whole leagues away from her, and Katy's chin went up, the brightness of her eyes increasing to a flash.

"You might have," she answered, calmly.

A hot flush rose to Harlan's cheek. He had to steady his voice before he spoke.

"I won't ask you where you had been or anything about it. I won't humble myself to that extent. Oh, I don't suspect you of much! I suppose he begged you to take a walk with him a little ways and talk over old times, and I suppose you hated to say no and went, and I suppose I might have heard all you said. But I don't like it! It was no way to treat me. You're engaged to me and no other fellow has a right to your company on any occasion—not without my knowing it. Have I so much as looked at another girl since I got your promise? No; and I never would have. You've no such notions, though. You suit yourself and Joe Martin. You've shown that you don't care a straw for me or my rights or my feelings!"

They stood at the Gibsons' gate. Katy's cheeks were pink, her hands tremulous with the shocked resentment she could not keep back. But she forced herself to say:

"Harlan—why, Harlan!—do you believe that?"

"Believe it?" said Harlan Chapman severely. "Do I believe my own eyes and your own admission? Believe it!"

They stood hotly facing each other for an instant.

"You will excuse me from my engagement with you this afternoon, will you not?" the young man demanded, stiffly.

"And from all other engagements—all!" his sweetheart flung back, and turned and ran into the house.

"Why didn't Harley come in?" said Selina, busy with some her button holes. "He'll—never—come in—again!" her pretty sister sobbed, burying herself in the sofa-cushion.

* * *

Harlan Chapman stalked home and ate his dinner, and sat down on the porch and read an article about trout-fishing in a late magazine.

He read it thoroughly, examining the illustrations attentively, and striving to glean all possible information. But when he had reached the tail-piece he somehow felt that he knew less about trout than about any other fish, flesh or fowl, under the sun.

He tossed the magazine from him. It slipped from the porch into the petunia-bed, but he did not bestir himself. There was no use in pretending, and so he gave it up.

He could think of nothing but Katy Gibson—Katie Gibson!

Funny how she had grown into his life till this breaking with her made him feel like a balloon sailing off alone from the face of the universe! Queer what habit could do!

He tried to quiet his stinging sensations with such like philosophical musings. But, making a dismal failure of it, he got up and strode up and down the porch.

He did not feel like a conquering hero exactly. He knew he ought to. He had been lightly—nay, wretchedly—treated by the girl of his heart. He had confronted her with his knowledge of it, and she had defiantly admitted it. Hence she was the girl of his heart no longer; a perfectly plain case—plainer than pleasing.

The young man fell, inconsequently, to thinking about a peculiar dimple which one particular grimacing laugh of Katy Gibson's always produced.

Catharine Eleanor Gibson! He had been used to fancy how that would look on their wedding-cards next winter.

Hm! How about Selina's trousseau, anyhow? How would she get it? It would make rather a balk, that. He had promised Selina to see it through and he had backed out, and it was rather rough on Selina.

Really, he hadn't anything against Selina. It was Katy, of course, and in strict justice Selina ought not to suffer by Katy's shortcomings.

He was wandering down the steps when that conviction forced itself upon him. He thought he would drive up and get Selina's trousseau, anyhow. He didn't see how he could decently get out of doing that much.

He put in the horse with alacrity. By the time he had done it he was quite in the spirit of the thing. It was more than he ought to do, anyhow. He drove out of the yard at a rattling trot.

It seemed odd not to have Katy with him—not to see her pretty, straight little profile against the dark-blue carriage-lining, and her yellow hair.

He congratulated himself that his shortest route was not past the Gibsons'. His horse would be sure to turn in there; he did so usually of his own accord.

Here was the lot where he had once stopped to get wild-roses for her; here was the house she always declared was top-heavy.

He will, things would remind him of her, of course, for some time yet. That was natural. And Miss Green's chimney was in sight.

Miss Green was watering her window plants. Mr. Chapman was a familiar figure now, and she nodded smilingly.

"Selina's trousseau?" said Harlan, eagerly. "Is it ready?"

"What?" said the dressmaker.

"Oh, Miss Gibson's dress, you know!" said the young man, blushing. "That's what we've called it, you know."

Miss Green laughed.

"I see. Well, it went just about twenty minutes ago. Miss Gibson's sister came and got it."

"Oh!" said Harlan, with several emotions distinct in his voice.

He went stiffly back to his buggy.

So Katie had tramped away up here and got it, without giving him a ghost of a chance to do it himself, as she ought to have known he would if she let it alone?

What nonsense to take a four-mile tramp for nothing when she knew he was always ready and willing! What was he thinking of, though? He had been ready and willing, but he remembered that all that was changed. She had been wont to command him prettily. Would she ever again?

A plague on Joe Martin and his impertinence, anyhow, to have interfered in the happiest affair the sun had ever shone on! Without doubt that had been his object exactly—to undermine things by sly degrees and win for himself the girl he had once used to vainly.

Harlan's heart bounded at that. Yes, vainly! Joe Martin had done his humble level best, and failed, and he had won the dear prize he had sought.

And she was a prize. The sweetest girl in town, and the brightest and the handsomest. Always with a daintily proud little corner of her own toward people in general—never to him. A girl with a rare mind and a warm heart, and a face like a fair flower. A girl any man could be proud to marry. And she had given herself to him, unhesitatingly, frankly.

By Jove! what if she had gone out walking with Joe Martin? Perhaps she hadn't been able to get out of it. Perhaps— Oh, he was ready and anxious to forgive her—to take her back! He never could get along without her. He had been a—

What he had been, he did not then specify. A far down the road before him he saw a sight which made him spring up and crack his whip over the horse's ears.

That he might overtake her had not occurred to him, but there she was, big bundle and all. Oh, how glad he was!

It was fortunate that Miss Gibson was just then passing a long stretch of empty fields, for anything more observant than birds and woodchucks might have been surprised to see a young man jump from his buggy, stride to the side of a pretty pedestrian, and seize her two hands in a tenderly vise-like grip.

Selina's trousseau tumbled to the ground.

"Harley!" Katy faltered, gasping.

"Yes, Harley!" he echoed, delighted that she used his familiar pet name. "Our engagement isn't off, Katy. Do you hear? Not a bit of it. I was a suspicious fool and a jealous bear, but you've got to forgive me. I won't ask you another word about it, and that'll prove that I'm sorry. I won't pry into that or anything else. I'll believe that you love me. Why, I know you do, and that will be enough."

But Katy did the inevitable thing—she burst out crying.

"It was my fault," she sobbed. "I was angry when I shouldn't have been. You did have a right to ask, Harley, and it kept me from saying a word."

"I didn't give you a chance."

"I should have taken it," said Katy. "I shouldn't have been so stiff and hateful. I'll tell you now. Harley, you'll laugh—you can't help it. It's so ridiculous-sounding after such a tragic time about it. Why, Harley, we were finishing up the frosting on the fruit-cakes and got out of powdered sugar, and I said I'd just run down to Paine's and get some. Selina wanted to put those cakes away last night; so I went. And, of course, when I happened to meet Joe Martin, he offered to go along, in the dark so, and that's how you saw us. Oh, Harley, I never would have gone walking with him—never! You might have known that."

"I did know it," Harlan avowed. "I was jealous and stupid."

"And about Joe, Harley—if you'll hear just this about him—"

"Anything!" said Harlan, happily, and feeling as though jealousy of Joe Martin or anybody else was too ridiculous to think of.

"He liked me, of course," said Katy, modestly. "but I'm sure he's getting over it. I think he's getting to like Fanny Henshel. I sew them driving once, and last night he spoke of her. There!"

"You're a darling!" said Harlan, in a species of happy growl.

"Selina's trousseau!" Katy shrieked, picking it up.

But it was entirely unhurt.

"Our trousseau, will be in order next," said Harlan. "January is rather distant, isn't it? Let's call it November."

"Oh, Harley!" Katy gasped, as she placed Selina's trousseau tenderly in the waiting buggy.—[Saturday Night.

How to Saddle a Horse.

"There is only one way to put a saddle on a horse," says Colonel Kearney. "I learned it when I was a member of the Texas rangers. It's a little thing, but it is worth knowing. I used to put my blanket on and it would look smooth and nice. Then I would put the saddle on and mount. After riding a few miles I would find the saddle slipping further and further back and would find it necessary finally to dismount and cinch up again. One day a cowboy said: 'Let me fix that saddle for you.' I got off and he put the blanket on just as I had done and then the saddle. Then he put his hands under the saddle and blanket and lifted them up and let them settle back into place. 'I found that when this was done the saddle would stick for a forty-mile ride.'—[Kansas City Times.

LIKE DOG KENNELS.

A Farmer's Home in Siam—Wife and Children.

One afternoon last December, writes Frank G. Carpenter in the American Agriculturist, I floated to a clearing on a house on the bank of the river. It looked more like two dog kennels about ten feet high tied together and built upon a raft of bamboo than anything else. It was tied to two poles driven deep into the bed of the river, and the raft was about two feet thick and made of these bamboo sticks laid cross wise like the corncob house of a baby. Along the edge of the stream and back into the country was the farmer's little plantation, consisting of perhaps five acres of rice fields and a little vegetable garden. The house consisted of three rooms with a ledge-like porch in front of it, and the raft extended out from the porch and upon it two yellow-skinned naked little babies were playing and laughing as they looked down into the waters of the mighty river within twelve inches of drowning. I stopped my boat at the front steps and entered. A short-haired old woman and a short-haired young woman were the only occupants, and they squatted flat on the floor and begged me to do likewise. There was not a bit of furniture in the house, and the cook stove consisted of a box about the size of a soap box, filled with ashes upon which a fire was smouldering and causing the kettle placed flat on the coals to simmer. This kettle with an earthen rice pot and a skillet formed the whole of the culinary utensils of this Siamese farmer's wife. I asked my guide to show me the bedroom of the family. He told me that all slept on the floor, and he picked up a little block made of bamboo splints tacked two pieces of wood so that the whole was of about the size of an ordinary loaf of bread and told me that this was one of the pillows they used. The women were very lightly attired. The younger girl had a Turkish towel around her shoulders, but the most striking features of their dress consisted of large silver anklets and bracelets. Both women were chewing the betel nut and the teeth of both were black and their lips were stained as though they were spitting blood. The elder woman offered me a chew and I tasted this mixture which is common throughout Indo-China. I found it bitter and disgusting. While I was waiting, a little four-year-old child came in, and its mother gave it to eat of the betel which it did with vigor, and then picking up a cigarette which lay at one side of the room, it sat at the coals and puffed away heartily. All Siamese men, women, and children smoke and chew, and there is hardly a farmer's wife in the country or a farmer's child so poor that it can not afford both tobacco and the betel nut. After waiting awhile the lord of the family came in. He was dressed much the same as the women and he had also short hair. It was dinner time and he asked me and my guide to take a bit with them. I declined myself but I watched the meal. The man, as is the custom in Siam, had the first bite. He took the rice which was steaming from the rice-pot and rolled the mass into a hard ball with his fingers and then crammed it into his mouth. This, with a vegetable curry, constituted the whole of the meal. The women ate after the man was through. After dinner all took a smoke, and I felt not highly impressed with the gastronomy of the Siamese farmers.

The Test of Death.

It has been recently stated that a prize is offered some years ago for the discovery of some means whereby the inexperienced might at once determine whether or not in a given case death had or had not occurred, was won by a physician who had discovered that if a light were placed behind the hand of the supposed dead person a scarlet tint would be apparent where the fingers touched each other, if life were not extinct; and that if no red glow was visible death had taken place. Dr. W. B. Richardson has written and say in which he states that although the test has its value, it is not by any means to be trusted as an unfailing indication of life or death. He gives the case of a person in a state of syncope to whom the test was most carefully applied. No the faintest sign of red coloration was seen between the fingers could be traced. If the recovery of the syncope was complete and was effected without any artificial aid. Dr. Richardson regards it as a good test, but is of the opinion that more certain proofs are:—The pulsation of the respiratory murmur; pressure on veins; the electric test for muscular irritability; the ammonia hypodermic test; coagulation of blood in the veins; rigor mortis, and decomposition.—[New York Telegram.

Light Without Fire.

To obtain a light instantly, without the use of matches and without the danger of setting things on fire is, according to the Mining and Scientific Press, an easy matter. Take a long vial of the clearest glass, put into it a piece of phosphorus about the size of a pea. Upon this put some pure olive oil heated to the boiling point, the bottle to be filled one-third full; then cork tightly. To use the light remove the cork. Allow the air to enter and then re-cork. The whole empty space in the bottle will become luminous and the light obtained will be as good as the light by which it was made. As soon as the light becomes dim open its power can be increased by opening the bottle and allowing a fresh supply of air to enter. In very cold weather it sometimes necessary to heat the vial between the hands to increase the fluidity of the oil, and one bottle will last a winter. This ingenious contrivance may be carried in the pocket, and is used by watchmen of Paris in all magazines where explosives or inflammable materials are stored.

SUNDAYS SERMON.

ONE OF REV. DR. TALMAGE'S STERLING DISCOURSES.

subject: "The Birth of Christ."

TEXT: "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem."—Luke ii., 15.

Amid a thousand mercies we give each other holiday congratulations. By long established custom we exhort each other to cheerful merriment. By gift, by Christmas tree which blossom and fruit in one night, by early morning surprise, by clusters of lighted candles, by children's processions, by sound of instruments sometimes more blatant than musical, we wake up the night and prolong the day. I wish you all, in the grandest, sweetest and best sense, a merry Christmas. The event commemorated is the grandest of the centuries. Christ's cradle was as wonderful as His cross. Persuade me of the first and I am not surprised at the last. The door by which He entered was as tremendous as the door by which He went out.

Twas just winter at the house where Jesus lived while He was in Africa. It was in Cairo, Egypt, the terminus of that terrible journey on foot which He took when Joseph and Mary fled with Him from Bethlehem to Egypt to escape the massacre of Herod. All tradition, as well as all history, points out this house in Cairo as the one in which these early fugitives lived while in Africa. The room is nine steps down from the level of the street. I measured the room and found it twenty feet long and seven and a half feet high. There are three shelvings of rock, one of which I think was the cradle of our Lord.

There was no window, and all the light must have come from lantern or cradle. The three arrived here from Bethlehem, having crossed the awful desert.

On the Mediterranean steamer going from Athens to Alexandria I met the eminent scholar and theologian, Dr. Lansing, who for thirty-five years has been a resident of Cairo, and he told me that he had been all over the road that the three fugitives took from Bethlehem to Egypt. He says it is a desert road, and that the forced journey of the infant Christ must have been a terrible journey. Going up from Egypt Dr. Lansing met people from Bethlehem, their tongues swollen and hanging out from inflammation of thirst, and although his party had but one goatskin of water left, and that was important for themselves, he was so moved with the spectacle of thirst in these poor pilgrims that though it excited the indignation of his fellow travelers, he gave water to the strangers. Over this dreadful route Joseph and Mary started for this land of Egypt. No time to make much preparation. Herod was after them, and what were these peasants before an irate king?

Joseph, the husband and father, one night groaning up from his mattress in great alarm, the beads of sweat on his forehead and his whole frame quaking. He then dressed the wounded feet of his wife and babe. They must set off, that night, right away. Mary put up a few things hastily, and Joseph brought to the door the best of burden, and helped his wife and child to mount. Why, those loaves of bread are not enough, those bottles of water will not last for such a long way. But there is no time to get anything more. Out into the night they go. Good-by to the dear home they expect never again to see. Their hearts break. It does not seem that ours be a big house in order to make us sorry to leave it.

Over the hills and down through the deep gorge they urge their way. By Hebron, by Pass, through hot sand, under a blistering sun the babe crying, the mother faint, the father exhausted. How slowly the days and weeks pass! Will the weary three ever reach the banks of the Nile? Will they ever see Cairo? Will the desert ever end? When at last they cross the line beyond which old Herod has no right to pursue their joy is unbounded. Five at last! Let them dismount and rest. Now they resume their way with new anxiety. They will find a place somewhere for shelter and the earning of their bread. Here they are at Cairo, Egypt.

They wind through the crooked streets, which are about ten feet wide, and enter the humble tenement where I have been to-day. But the terminus of the journey of these three fugitives was not as humble as their starting point at Bethlehem. If that journey across the desert ended in a cellar it started from a stable. Everything humble around that barn, but everything glorious overhead. Christ's birthplace was in the hostelry called the house of Chim Hom; the night with diamonded finger pointing down to the place; the door of heaven set wide open to look out from orchestral batons of light conducting the oratorio of the Messiah; on lowest doorstep of heaven the ministries of God discoursing of glory and good will. Soon after the wise men, wonder-struck astrologists kneel, and from leathern pouches chinkz the shekels and from open sacks exhale the frankincense and rustle out the bundles of myrrh. The loosened star, the unsnapped lozenge of celestials; the chill December night ablush with May morn; our world's last star, and another star twinkling down the sky that night to beckon the wandering home again, shall yet make all nations sing Christmas.

Brethren, no new lessons from the story yet but hackneyed by oft repeated? Oh, yes! Know in the first place, it was a side-seal approach that led the way. Why not a black door in the large of a band or finger point, leading down to the sacred birthplace? A cloud means trouble, and the world had had trouble enough. Why not a shaft of lightning quivering and flashing and striking down to the sacred birth-place? Lightning means destruction, a shattering and consuming power, and the world wanted no more destruction.

But it was a star, and that means joy, that means hope, that means good cheer, that means ascendency. A star! That mean means power, for did not the morning stars together when the portfolio of the world was opened? A star! That means defense, for did not the stars fight in their courses against Sisera and for the Lord's people? A star! That means brilliant commerce, for are not the righteous to shine as the stars forever and ever? A star! That means the opening of eternal joy. The day star in the heart. The morning star of the redeemer.

An unusual appearance that night may have been a strange conjunction of worlds. As the transit of Venus in our time was foretold many years ago by astronomers, and astronomers can tell what will be the conjunction of worlds a thousand years from now, and can calculate backward; and even infidel astronomers have been compelled to testify that about the year 1 there was a very unusual appearance in the heavens. The Chinese record it, of course entirely independent of the word of God, gives as a matter of history that about the year 1 there was a strange and unaccountable appearance in the heavens.

It may have been a meteor such as you have seen flash to the horizon. I saw two years ago in the northern sky a star shoot down with such brilliancy and precision that I had been on a hill as high as Bethlehem, on which the shepherds were, I could have marked within a short distance the place of the alighting. The Chinese record it, and the British museum has specimens of meteoric stones picked up in India, fragments flung off from other worlds, flying a fiery trail on this sky. So it may be as well at all improbable the stellar appearance on that night of which we speak. I only care to know that it was bright; that it was silvery, that it dashed and swayed and swung and halted with joy celestial, as though Christ in haste to save our world had rushed down without His crown, and the angels of God had hurled it after Him!

The wise men of of the East came to Christ. They were not fools, they were not imbeciles. The record distinctly says that the wise men came from the East. Were they Persian magi, or they were the alchemists, or they were the astrologists, and we say it with deprecating accentuation. Why they were the most splendid and magnificent men of the century. They were the naturalists and the scientists. They knew all that was known. You must remember that astrology was the mother of astronomy, and that alchemy was the mother of chemistry, and because children are brighter than the mother you do not despise the mother.

It was the lifelong business of these astrologers to study the stars. Twenty-two hundred and fifty years before Christ was born the wise men knew the precession of the equinoxes, and they had calculated the orbit and the return of the comets. Professor Smith declares that he thinks they understood the distance of the sun from the earth. We find in the book of Job that the men of olden time did not suppose the world was flat, as some have said, but that he knew, and the men of his time knew, the world was globular. The pyramids were built for astrological and astronomical study. Then, the alchemists spent their lives in the study of metals and gases and liquids and solids, and in filling the world's library with their wonderful discoveries. They were vastly wise men who came from the East, and tradition says the three wisest came—Casper, a young man; Balthazar, a man of middle age, and Melchior, an octogenarian. The three wisest men of all the century. They came to the manger.

So it has always been—the wisest men come to Christ, the brainiest men come to the manger. Who was the greatest metaphysician this country ever has produced? Jonathan Edwards, the Christian. Who was the greatest astronomer of the world? Herschel, the Christian. Who was the greatest poet ever produced? John Milton, the Christian. Who was the wisest writer on law? Blackstone, the Christian. Why is it that every college and university in the land has a chapel? They must have a place for the wise men to worship. Come now, let us understand in ounces and by inches this whole matter. In a post mortem examination the brain of distinguished men has been examined, and I will find the largest, the heaviest, the mightiest brain ever produced in America, and I will ask what that brain thought of Christ. Here it is, the brain weighing sixty-three ounces, the largest brain ever produced in America. Now let me find what that brain thought of Christ. In the dying moment that man said, "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief. Whatever else I do, Almighty God, receive me to Thyself for Christ's sake. This night I shall be in the land of joy and the presence of Jesus." So Daniel Webster came to the manger. The wise men of the East followed by the wise men of the West.

It was in closing December that He was born to show that this is a Christ of people in sharp blast, for people under clouded sky, for people with frosted nose, for people with thermometer below zero. That is the reason He is so often found among the destitute. You can find Him on any night coming off the moors. You can see Him any night coming through the dark lanes of the city. You can see Him putting His hand under the fainting head in the pauper's cabin. He remembers how the wind whistled around the caravansary in Bethlehem that December night, and He is in sympathy with all those who shiver poverty hear the shutters clatter on a cold night.

It was this December Christ that Washington and his army worshiped at Valley Forge, when without blankets they lay down in the December snow. It was this Christ that the Pilgrim Fathers appealed to when the Mayflower wharfed at Plymouth Rock, and in the years that went by the graves digged were more in number than the houses built. Oh, I tell you, we want a December Christ, not a Christ for fair weather, but a Christ for storm, for cold, with sickness, and chilling with disappointment, and suffocating with bereavement, and terrific with wide open graves. Not a springtime Christ, not a summer Christ, not an autumnal Christ, but a winter Christ. Oh, this suffering and struggling world needs to be hushed and soothed and rocked and lulladed in the arms of sympathetic Omnipotence! No mother ever with more tenderness put her foot on the rocker of the cradle of a sick child than Christ comes down to us, to this invalid world, and He rocks it into placidity and quietness as He says, "My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you."

Notice also the fact which no one seems to notice—that this Christ was born among the sheep, and the cattle, and the horses, and the camels in order that He might be an alleviating influence to the whole animal creation. It means mercy for overdriven, underfed, poorly sheltered, galled and maltreated animal creation. Hath the Christ who compared Himself to a dove no care for the cruelties of the pigeon shooting? Hath the Christ who compared Himself to a lamb no care for the sheep who are tied and contorted, and with neck over the sharp edge of the butcher's cart, or the cattle train in hot weather from Omaha to New York, with no water—fifteen hundred miles of agony?

Hath the Christ whose tax was paid by a fish, the coin taken from its mouth, no care for the tossing fins in the fish market? Hath the Christ who strung with His own hand the nerves of dog and cat no indignation for the horrors of vivisection? Hath the Christ who said "Go to the ant", no watchfulness for the transfixed insects? Hath the Christ who said "Behold the fowls of the air" Himself never beheld the outrages heaped upon the brute creation which cannot articulate its grief? This Christ came not only to lift the human race out of its trouble, but to lift out of pang and hardship the animal creation. In the glorious millennial time the child shall lead the lion and play with the cockatrice only because brute and reptile shall have no more wrongs to avenge. To alleviate the condition of the brute creation Christ was born in the cattle pen. The first bleat of the Lamb of God heard amid the tired flocks of Bethlehem shepherds. The white horse of eternal victory stabled in a barn.

But notice also in this account the three Christmas presents that are brought to the manger—gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold to Christ—that means all the affluence of the world surrendered to Him. For lack of money no more asylums limping on their way like the cripples, whom they helped, feeling their slow way like the blind people whom they sheltered. Millions of dollars for Christ where there are now thousands for Christ. Railroads owned by Christian stockholders, and governed by Christian directors, and carrying passengers and freight at Christian prices. George Peabody and Abbott Lawrences and James Lenoxes no rarity. Bank of England. Bourse of France. United States treasury, all the moneyed institutions of the world for Christ. The gold for Christ. Gold not merely paid the way of Joseph and Mary and the divine fugitive into Egypt, but it was typical of the fact that Christ's way shall be paid all around the world. The gold for Christ, the silver for Christ, the jewels of Africa, Nevada and Golconda for Christ. The bright, round, beautiful jewel of a world not akin to solitaire on the bosom of God.

But I notice that these wise men also shook out from the sacks the myrrh. The cattle came and they snuffed at it. They did not eat it because it was bitter. The pungent gum resin of the myrrh, called myrrh brought to the feet of Christ. That means bitter grief, bitter betrayal, bitter persecution, bitter days of suffering, bitter nights of woe. Myrrh. That is what they put into His ear when He was dying. Myrrh. That is what they put under His head in the wilderness. Myrrh. That is what they strewed His path with all the way from the cattle pen in Bethlehem to the mausoleum at Joseph's country seat. Myrrh. Yes, says the Psalmist, "All Thy garments smell of myrrh." That is what the wise men wrapped in the swaddling clothes of the babe. That is what the Marys twisted in the shroud of a crucified Christ. The myrrh. Oh, the height, the depth, the length, the breadth of the Saviour's sorrow! Well might the wise men shake out the myrrh.

But I notice also from another sack they shook out the frankincense. Clear up to the rafters of the barn the air is filled with perfume, and the hostlers and the camel drivers in the farthest part of the building inhale it, and it floats out upon the air until passersby wonder who in that rough place could have by accident dropped a box of alabaster. Frankincense. That is what they burned in the censer in the ancient temple. Frankincense. That means worship. Frankincense. That is to fill all the homes, and all the churches, and all the capitals, and all the nations from cellar of stalactited cave clear up to the silvery rafters of the starlit dome. Frankincense. That is what we shake out from our hearts to-day, so that the nostrils of Christ once crinsoned with the hemorrhage of the cross shall be touched with the perfume of a world's adoration. Frankincense. Frankincense in song and sermon and offertory and handshaking and decoration.

Praise Him, mountains and hills, valleys and seas, and skies and earth and heaven—cyclone with your trumpets, northern lights with your flaming ensign, morning with your castles of cloud, and evening with your billowing clouds of sunset. Do you know how they used to hold the censer in the olden time, and what it was made of? Here is a metal pan and the handle by which it was held. In the inside of this metal pan were put living coals, on the top of them a perforated cover. In a square box the frankincense was brought to the temple. This frankincense was taken out and sprinkled over the living coals, and then the perforated cover was put on, and when they were all ready for worship, then the cover was lifted from the censer and from all the other censers, and the perfumed smoke arose until it hung amid all the folds and dropped amid all the altars, and then rose in great columns of praise outside or above the temple, rising clear up toward the throne of God. So we have two censers to-day of Christmas frankincense. Here is the one censer of earthly frankincense.

O that we put our thanks for the mercies of the past year, the mercies of all our past lives, individual mercies, family mercies, social mercies, national mercies, and of earth burning with grateful sacrifice and incense of praise toward the throne of Christ. Bring on more incense, and higher and higher let the columns of praise ascend. Let them breathe all these pillars and hover amid all these arches, and then soar to the throne. But here is the other censer of heavenly thanksgiving and worship. Let them bring all their frankincense—the cherubim bring theirs, and the seraphim theirs, and the one hundred and forty-four thousand theirs, and all the eternities theirs, and let them smoke with perfume on this heavenly censer until the cloud canopies the throne of God. Then I take these two censers—the censer of earthly frankincense and the censer of heavenly frankincense—and I swing them before the throne, and then I clash them together in one great hallelujah unto Him whom the wise men of the East brought the gold and the myrrh and the frankincense. Blessed be His glorious name forever!

Sad But True.

Evening in Chicago.

The lake beating a murmurous tattoo on the lonely shore.

A great house in the silent street, with the wind howling outside.

The young Count of New York whispering sweet somethings to the lovely Lady Northside inside.

"Dear lady," he says in tremulous tones, "I have known you only a short time, but love is not a slave of time or circumstances, and, lady mine, I,—I—" he hesitated only an instant, "I would ask your hand."

She blushed and let her beautiful brown eyes fall.

He picked them up quickly and handed them to her, as she said:

"What you ask is very great, dear Reginald, and"—

But Reginald was gone.

And Lady Northside was conversing to herself.

On the outside the count halted.

"By Zucks!" he exclaimed in cold, mechanical tones, "she thought I was asking for her foot."

And the next moment he had disappeared in the gathering gloom.

Schiller and the Lightning.

A curious incident is handed down from the boyish life of Schiller, says the Boston *Herald*. One day, in a tremendous thunder storm, the family gathered together in ill-disguised terror. But Fritz was missing, and the father, alarmed for his safely, sought him in vain in all the rooms of the house.

He went outdoors to search for the truant, and to his surprise, found him perched on a branch of a solitary tree, eagerly watching the heavens and the flashes which lighted up the gloom. He was wholly indifferent to the rain, which had wet him to the skin, and to the danger he incurred. To the sharp reproof of the father the boy replied with a glowing face:

"The lightning is so beautiful! I wish to see where it comes from."

The fact that certain red stars have disappeared from the heavens has recently been noted by Mr. Birmingham, of Tuam, Ireland, who also mentions that other stars of the same color have undergone extraordinary changes in brilliancy. The cause of this variability in colored stars is unknown. It is supposed, however, that red stars are ordinarily in an ember-like condition, and are occasionally heated to whiteness in some manner not yet understood.

THE BLACKFEET.

THE ABLEST OF ALL THE WESTERN INDIAN TRIBES.

Their Intellectual Vigor and Eloquence—Form of Government and Religion—The Terrible Sun Dance.

In person the Blackfeet possess unusual beauty and symmetry of the Indian type. They are tall and well made, with intelligent faces, aquiline noses, clear and lustrous eyes, with less prominent cheek-bones and thinner lips then are usual among other tribes. Their costume is the ordinary dress of the Northern plains Indians, and the faces of the men and women are often painted with vermilion. The primitive costume of the women is a long gown of buffalo-skin, dressed beautifully soft, and edged with yellow ochre. It is confined at the waist by a broad belt of the same material, thickly studded with brightly polished round brass plates the size of a silver half-dollar. In later days, since they have come more into contact with the whites, and especially since their allotment upon reservations, the Blackfeet have taken largely to the wearing of calico and woollen garments. The Blackfeet possess much intellectual vigor, perceptive power, imagination and eloquence. They are dignified in bearing, with an expression of pride and reserve. Strong, active, energetic, and fond of war and chase, they possess much oratorical power, are keen and close reasoners and eloquence is highly esteemed and cultivated among them. Their scope of thought is wide, and their speech is adorned with a boundless