

The Weekly Register.

GOODRICH & HITCHCOCK, Publishers.

REGARDLESS OF DENUNCIATION FROM ANY QUARTER.

50.00 per Annum in Advance.

VOLUME XII.

TOWANDA, BRADFORD COUNTY, PA., THURSDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 23, 1880.

NUMBER 30

THE FARMER'S CHRISTMAS EVE.

Well, another year has rolled around, and Christmas Eve is here. Take down the Bible, say your prayers and read about the shepherds, how the angels came to them, and told them the great Christ was born in lowly Bethlehem. Somehow, I cannot help it, I feel my boy in there among the angels looking down upon his peasant child. Sometimes, I cannot help it, I try my thoughts to feel his face against my cheek, his arms around my neck. There, wife, but don't startle me! Our enjoy a brighter Christmas Eve among the angels in light; we shall not hear his voice below, we shall not see him, by and by, with eyes so long and thin. I see you've found the place, my child; so I'll be glad to see you read about the shepherds that night when you were born. Although I did not read Mary, I feel the "peace on earth, and good will to men." I join my feeble voice to theirs, and sing "good will to men."

Oh! get the stockings all hung along the kitchen. You think, no doubt, that Santa Claus will give you some of that. Well, should I wonder if he did? He's rather old, and loves to please the children, though his path lies through the snow. Now I've been thinking all the while, that I've never had a good gift, and I'm sure I've never had a good one. So, John, get up to-morrow at the earliest moment, and bring me a good gift, and I'll be glad to receive it. Then get a good book, and a good pair of shoes, and a good pair of stockings. For what's the good of wishing that the poor were warmed and fed, and that the rich were made to warm them, and without the love of God? If all Christians would do their duty, there'd be no crying among the poor each Christmas morn'g.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

The festival of Christmas, regarded as the greatest celebration in the ecclesiastical year, and so important and joyous a solemnity is deemed, that a special exception is made in the laws of the United States, which provide for the observance of the anniversary falling on Friday, that day of the week, under all other circumstances a fast, is transformed into a festival. That the birth of Jesus Christ, the deliverance of the human race, and the mysterious link connecting the transient and incomprehensible attributes of Deity with human sympathies and affections, should be considered as the most glorious event in the annals of the world, and most worthy of being reverently and joyously commemorated, is a proposition which must commend itself to the heart and reason of every one of his followers, who aspire to walk in the footsteps of their Lord and Master, and share with his parent the adoration bestowed on the latter, as the divinity of which the sun was the visible manifestation; whilst with the ancient Persians, the appellation for the god of Light was Mithras, and apparently the same as the Irish Mithra, and with the Phoenicians or Carthaginians it was Baal or Bel, an epithet familiar to all students of the Bible. Concerning us as regards the objects of our worship, there was a remarkable uniformity in the period of the year at which these different nations celebrated a grand festival in his honor. The time chosen appears to have been uniformly the period of the winter solstice, from which the new year was frequently reckoned. This uniformity in the celebration of the festival in question, is to be ascribed to the fact that some committee of Christians, in the early ages, who had all individually experienced the gradual shortening of the day reaches its utmost limit on the 21st day of December, and the sun, recommencing its upward course, announces that midwinter has passed, and spring and summer are approaching. On similar grounds, and with similar demonstrations, the ancient pagan nations observed a festival in mid-summer, or the summer-solstice, when the sun was at the height of his summer solstice, his ascent on the 21st of June, or longest day. By the Romans, the anniversary was celebrated under the title of Saturnalia, or the festival of Saturn, and the custom of the pagans, as a universal license and merry-making. The slaves were permitted to enjoy for a time a thorough freedom in speech and behavior, and it is even said that their masters waited on them as servants. Every one feasted, and rejoiced, work and business were for a season entirely suspended, the houses were decked with laurels and evergreens, presents were made by parents and friends, and all sorts of games and amusements were indulged in by the citizen. In the bleak north, the same rejoicings had place, but in a ruder and more barbarous form. Fires were extensively kindled, both in and out of doors, blocks of wood blessed in honor of Odin and Thor, the sacred mistletoe was gathered by the Druids, and sacrifices, both of men and cattle, were made to the savage divinities. Fires are said to have been kindled at the birth of the year by the ancient Persians, between whom and the Druids of Western Europe a relationship is supposed to have existed. In the early ages of Christianity, the revelry and license which characterized the Saturnalia, called for special amendment. But at last, convinced partly of the inefficiency of such denunciations, and partly influenced

WHAT THE BELLS TOLD THE CHILD.

Once in holy Gethseme
There was born a child the one.
In a manger he laid the one,
Toughly cradled—little maid.
But the Magi from afar
Saw the glowing Eastern Star.
Hark! before him and adored,
Cried his Jews, Christ our Lord!
This is who the clappers tell
Swinging in each brass bell,
Blinging round the world wide;
'Christ was born at Christmas-tide.'

OUR CHRISTMAS STORY.

A Chapter From an Old Journal.

Make the charred logs burn brighter,
I'll show you by their blaze,
The signs and wonders of
Of yesternight's things and days.
Bring here the ancient volume,
The clearest is old worn,
The dots and dashes, and the
And faded letters are torn.
The dust has gathered on it,
There are so few who care
To read what Time has written

THE CHRISTMAS LEGEND.

A STORY FROM THE BLACK FOREST ABOUT CHRISTMAS-EVE.

It was Christmas Eve. The night was very dark and the snow falling fast, as Hermann, charcoal burner, drew his cloak tighter around him, and the wind whistled fiercely through the trees of the Black Forest. He had been to carry a load to a castle near, and was now hastening to his little hut. Although he worked very hard, he was poor, gaining barely enough to support his wife and four little children. He was thinking of them, when he heard a faint, guiding light, and he followed it, and found a small, shabby house, and he entered it, and he found a man and a woman sitting at a table. The man was old, and the woman was young, and both were looking at him with interest. Hermann told them his story, and they listened to him with sympathy. The old man said that he had been a charcoal burner himself, and he had known many who were like Hermann. He said that he had seen Hermann's father, and he had seen Hermann's mother, and he had seen Hermann's children. He said that he had seen Hermann's father and mother, and he had seen Hermann's children. He said that he had seen Hermann's father and mother, and he had seen Hermann's children. He said that he had seen Hermann's father and mother, and he had seen Hermann's children.

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