

THE A. T. FORERUNNER.

"NOT GREATER WEALTH, BUT SIMPLER PLEASURES."

No. 15

DECEMBER, 1911.

THE SEASON'S GREETINGS.

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The Editor,

"Burnbrae," The Avenue.

CHRISTMAS.

Once again Christmas season approaches, bringing with it the expectation to most of us,—would it were to all—of festivity and mirth.

This is the season when we all become young again, and lay ourselves out to enjoy life. It is even possible to find stern fathers and careworn mothers joining in the children's games, fully enjoying the mirth and frolic, jest and joke, which befits the occasion, though perhaps they do not care to count the Christmasses that have passed since Santa Claus last filled their stockings, out of his wonderful bag; making them so happy and delighted with his gifts. Good old mysterious Santa Claus, just the same to-day as when the oldest inhabitant was a child, the same jolly round face, the same white whiskers, the same air of benevolence. One can see at a glance that his purpose is to give pleasure and create happiness; and though for some of us the mystery of his coming and going was long since dispelled, we still have happy recollections of his past favours to us in the happy days when he filled our stockings from his wonderful stock of good things, sometimes, jolly old joker as he was, playing a prank on us as well, by carefully wrapping in oh! so many papers, something which we thought must be of value by the care bestowed on it, but which eventually turned out to be a small bit of coal, perhaps a button, or something else equally valueless and equally mirth provoking. Happy days! gone beyond recall for some of us, leaving cherished memories nevertheless, which as they grow more distant as the years pass, grow more precious and sacred, recalling to our minds old associations, the old home, and the old friends.

Wonderful time Christmas! let it not pass without our learning the lesson of it. We celebrate by it

the birth of Jesus; what more in keeping with such celebration, than that we should be possessed of a desire to give pleasure to those about us; to cultivate a kindly humane spirit, and to make life as jolly and mirthful, happy and buoyant as possible to everybody. Dickens tells us of Old Scrooge who thought Christmas a nuisance, and that Old Scrooge was greedy and grasping and sour and unhappy. No wonder! if we would be jolly and happy and young in heart, even though the hair may be turning grey, we must imbibe the Spirit of Christmas, and carry it along with us through all the year. We are more humane at Christmas and being more humane are more human and being more human are nearer the Divine. When the Spirit of Christmas permeates society, then the earth will be merry and its inhabitants nobler and purer than now. Let us all unbend then, get pleasure by giving pleasure, determine to make the season as pleasant to everybody as possible. Don't let us stand on our dignity too much, or think the world was made for our special benefit.

The Christmas Spirit is abroad, your "Forerunner" sees it approaching and gladly proclaims the fact. Let us all strive to lay hold of that Christmas Spirit and make it our guest; and that all may have a right Merry Time is the wish of

Yours truly,

A. T. FORERUNNER.

The Recital by Mr. J. T. Hardy, to be given on Friday December 29th, will be of a character appropriate to the season as will be seen by the list of items given below:

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| "MY BEST TIP" (A Porter's Story) | Cassells' Magazine. |
| "COPPERFIELD AND THE WAITER" ... | Dickens. |
| "MR. PICKWICK ON THE ICE" ... | Dickens. |
| "BOOTS AT THE HOLLY TREE INN" ... | Dickens. |
| "MR. MacMUNN'S LAST COURTSHIP" ... | Scotch. |

The recitals will be interspersed with solos, and a most entertaining evening is in store.

One can only hope that the kindness of the busy professional elocutionist in thus visiting us, will be recognised and ensure a crowded audience.



STORYETTE FOR THE CHILDREN.

Dolly's First Letter.

Tomorrow was Christmas Day. Dolly's little mind had evidently been full of some trouble for a week at least and her mamma had been watching her very closely to try to find out the cause. Questions had been put to her and answered, but Dolly was not quite satisfied. She had been very lonesome for some weeks, as Jacky Jones, her special playmate, who lived near, had been very poorly and was now so ill with a child's complaint as to have to keep his bed.

"Are you quite sure, mamma, that Santa Claus is still alive?" she suddenly asked, her eyes lifting up to her mother's face with an enquiring gaze, "are you quite sure that he will not forget to come to the Estate tonight to fill our stockings?"

"You can take it from me, Dolly," her mamma replied, with an amused smile, "that although Santa Claus is a very, very old man, as long as there are little girls and little boys in the world who are good children and obey their parents, he will keep alive and will always remember to reward his little pets on Christmas Eve."

"But how will Santa Claus bring all the presents that even we shall want? Why, mamma, there are more than seventy scholars in our Sunday School alone and how can a poor old man carry such a load of Dollies, Teddy Bears, Oranges and Sweets as it will take to fill all our stockings?"

"Well, my dear, Santa Claus no doubt has a very strong back and perhaps he will carry them in a large bag slung across his broad shoulders. I have seen a picture of him with a bag on his back which was so big and so full of presents that it reached quite as high as the roofs of the houses he was passing. So do not be afraid that he will forget you, darling."

"As high as the roofs of the houses," repeated Dolly sadly. This was just what she had been afraid of, and she felt as if she would like to have a good cry. Her mamma had told her that Santa Claus came only to children who were fast asleep, so that if she kept awake she would not see him. She sank into deep thought and after a time appeared to have made up her mind what to do, for when her mother, later on in the evening, left her alone in the room to go and attend to her housework, Dolly obtained some note-paper and a pencil and was soon busy writing, her little tongue going first into one cheek and then into the other.

Bedtime came and Dolly, after hanging up her stocking with seeming great care, was tucked up in her cosy bed and in a short time was fast asleep.

Then the night crept on and Santa Claus duly arrived with presents for his numerous little pets. But when he came to Dolly's bedside with the usual oranges and sweets and a large Teddy Bear, he found it impossible to get them into her stocking. The cause of this, however, was not far to seek, for pinned inside the top was a letter addressed to "Mr. Santy Claws" which read as follows:

Deer Santy Claws,

My playmate, Jacky Jones, who lives down the Avnoo is very poorly and I am very very sorry for him. So please Mister Santy Claws I am riting to ask yu if yu find yu can't get yure big bag under the lamp arch and have to go round Fern Rise first will you please keep a very nice present til yu get to him, and if yu will doo so yu needn't give me one. Please scuse my riting.

Yure lovin, DOLLY.

When Santa Claus read this thoughtful little missive he laughed out so loudly that he almost awakened Dolly, who however only turned over in her sleep with a smile. But tears came into the eyes of Santa's companion who with a whispered "My Darling" bent down and lightly kissed little Dolly. When morning came both Jacky and Dolly found splendid presents in their stockings, for kindly deeds, however small, never go unrewarded, children.

REPORTS.

MONTHLY MEETING.

The Monthly Meeting was held on Thursday, December 14th. In the absence of the President. Mr. A. H. Hibbett was voted to the chair, and presided over about forty of the tenant members. Mr. J. T. Taylor gave the committee's report, stating that the workmen were levelling a part of the ground set apart for recreation purposes, for a cricket pitch for next season. They requested tenants to clear up as far as possible the allotment rents and other small accounts which may be owing. The Secretary followed with a request for all pass-books to be brought in for audit, and went on to explain the financial position of the Society, and the need for raising £600 to purchase next plot. Twelve hundred pounds is required for the purpose, but Co-partnership Tenants have promised half, providing that the other half can be raised locally, in either Shares or Loan stock. Mr. Scott gave report of Estate Council and Mr. Murby of Recreative Club, both institutions being in a satisfactory state. In general business some complaints were made regarding dogs not being kept under proper control. The meeting also decided to send a message of sympathy to Mr. Jackson, formerly secretary of Estate Council, who is ill.

Humberstone and District Supply Association.

The past month has been a period of steady satisfactory progress new members are still being made, and we are doing our best to supply all the requirements of our customers. We are grateful to find by the

upward tendency of the weekly receipts, that our attempts are appreciated by the residents. Our first quarter is nearing its close and your committee anticipate being able to report a very satisfactory result. Members will please bear in mind the important first quarterly meeting in January. Look out for the date.

Parish Meeting and Parish Council Meeting.

Ting! Ting! Ting! Ting! It was the unusual sound of the village school bell calling the parishioners to the Parish Meeting at 8 p.m. on the 30th of November. This meeting, which had been previously called by notice on the board in the usual way, is necessary according to the Act for that purpose made and provided (as the lawyers say,) before any expenditure can be made for lighting the village for the winter. But so interested are the residents in local affairs that the combined efforts of notice board and bell only succeeded in "skeering up" two, both of whom reside on the Estate. These in addition to the Parish Council constituted the Parish Meeting. The only item of business was to sanction £24 being spent for lighting purposes. This was proposed from the "platform" and seconded by one of the "audience" the assent and consent of the local Referendum being obtained unanimously. A 2d. rate is estimated, with the balance in hand to raise sufficient revenue; the chairman remarking facetiously that we had enjoyed (?) a 4d. rate for this purpose and then a 3d. one, and now no doubt we should appreciate one at twopence.

After the Parish Meeting a meeting of the Parish Council was held, when Precepts on the Overseers were signed for current expenses. It was also decided to repair hedge and fence of allotments on Keyham Lane hill; to put swing gate at entrance to church field to correspond with the one at the back of the church, and to write to the County authorities re dangerous corner at bottom of Thurmaston Lane.

ESTATE COUNCIL NEWS.

On December 2nd, a Whist Drive was arranged which proved most enjoyable. On the following Saturday December 9th, Mr. C. Goodenough kindly provided the programme, which was much appreciated. Mention must be made of the very juvenile performer who sang her song in most creditable style.

December 16th was a night long looked for, and a pleasing surprise it turned out to be, for this was Children's Night. They sang in capital style, the precision and enunciation was very good and they well deserved the encore they received for their last piece "Children's Voices." Mention must also be made of their drill, both with the Dumb-Bells and Clubs. All honour to those who have given their time and services in their training.

The Estate Council are very busy with the 'Xmas Programme and it is hoped there will be happy times for all.

THE PEOPLE'S SERVICE.

The effort to inaugurate on the Estate meetings for worship, on the simple basis of aspiring humanity, has been amply justified so far by the results, both as regards the quality of meetings held, and the number of residents present.

This report is written at the conclusion of the sixth meeting, the last of the temporary series originally decided on. No one who has been present at any meeting, participated in the hearty singing, or heard the thoughtfully chosen readings, prayers, or addresses, will be surprised to learn that at the general meeting, held to consider the question, it was unanimously decided to establish the services on a permanent basis. The committee responsible are determined that the meetings shall be as before, varied.

We recognise that as a community our tastes and aims differ, at least in form; we so believe that our platform must be an open one to men of different views. All we ask from our speakers, is a tolerant attitude to their hearers, and that they themselves sincerely mean the things they utter.

Again, we want bright meetings. The heartiness of our singing has been a feature already, and we are now fixing up a choir which should mean yet further advance in this direction.

As a seasonable change the Service on December 24th. will be a "Carol Service," and be mostly musical in character. *Optimist.*

CHURCH OF CHRIST.

On Wednesday December 13th, Mr. F. S. Herne of the Leicester Permanent Library, gave a lecture in the Meeting House on "The Origin of the New Testament." It was a most interesting address, Mr. Herne undoubtedly having a good grip of his subject. He stated that for twenty years after the death of Christ, the Gospel was proclaimed orally, or by mouth alone, there being no literature. Then the Apostle Paul wrote his first Epistle, which was to the Church at Thessalonica about A.D. 52 or 53, to be followed by his Epistles to the Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans, which after century's research and attacks, have been admitted by all as authentic. The Gospels were written after the Epistles, probably about A.D. 70, Paul having died A.D. 68, and 300 years later a canon of 27 books was decided upon as authentic and Apostolic in Corinth A.D. 397. The lecturer pointed out that the fact of the Epistles having been brought together in such a wonderful manner, testifies to their authority and the Divine intention and should strengthen the faith of all believers in the Word of God.

Items of Interest.

A dog was observed on the 4th inst. on the Estate with four legs, one at each corner.

Look out for "The Cornstalks" this Christmas; performers who have appeared before all the "Crowned Heads of Europe"—ever thought of hearing cornstalk?

Is it fair that the Whist Drive booby prizes should be monopolised by one individual as they have been?

Dear Editor,—Will the Estate Druggist be carrying on business on Boxing Day?

Anxious Enquirer (mother of six).

Church of Christ Lord's Day School.—The annual scholar's tea and distribution of prizes will take place on Saturday, December 30th in the Meeting House. Tea on tables at 4-30 p.m. to be followed at 6 by the meeting at which the scholars will help to entertain by songs and recitations. Parents and friends are cordially invited.

"A keeper, who was attracted by trumpetings and loud roarings from the elephant cage in a menagerie at Woodbridge, found one of the elephants in agony. He was unable to relieve it, and later heard a thud on the floor. It was found that the elephant had cast a tooth, weighing, it is stated, about 7 lbs."

The above is an extract from our local newspaper. It takes some swallowing—we mean the story, not the tooth.

Just as we go to press we have received an interesting letter from Mr. T. A. Smith, once an Anchor tenant, now residing in New Zealand, desiring us to convey his best Season's Greetings to all his old associates. We hope to insert his letter in our next issue.

Gardening Notes.

The dark and gloomy days of December usually bring thoughts of Christmas festivities in preference to gardening. We clean up our tools, put them in order and bid them goodbye; unless by chance there is a bit of nice weather during our holiday, and we feel we should like to counterbalance some of our superfluous energy by a little double-digging. If this should happen let us prepare our plot for Broad-Beans as these will be the first seeds to be planted in the open. But I think most of us will be satisfied to sit by the fire and get out our plans for the coming spring.

Read an occasional book of which there is quite a good collection in our free Library, such old favourites as Dr. Hogg, J. Wright, Walter Wright, Cassell's Illustrated Gardening, Beeton's "All about Gardening" and many others.

If any reader wishes to make up a pretty and effective little decoration for Christmas, the following may be made pleasing and worthy of the little trouble it entails. Take an ordinary dish, fill it with one of the garden mosses, add a little water to keep it fresh, get a few flowers such as Violas, Pansies, Violets or Lily of the Valley and insert their stems into the moss forming a design to suit taste. It is surprising what may be done with about a dozen blooms worked on these lines. Wishing every reader a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. T.R.

The year lies in the evening light;
The poet, musing in autumnal woods,
Hears melancholy sighs
Among the wither'd leaves.

Not so! but, like a spirit glorified,
The angel of the year departs; lays down
His robes once green in spring,
Or bright with summer's blue.

And, having done his mission on the earth—
Filling ten thousand vales with golden corn,
Orchards with rosy fruit,
And scattering flowers around—

He lingers, for a moment, in the west,
With the declining sun, sheds over all
A pleasant, farewell smile—
And so returns to God.

Selected.

Saturday Evening Entertainments IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOM.

January 6th,—Concert arranged by Mr. Aston.

„ 13th,— „ „ Miss L. Meekins.
„ 20th,—Whist Drive.
„ 27th,—Dance.

Letters to the Editor.

CORRESPONDENCE INVITED.

Letters to the Editor need not be signed. Writer's name and address, on a separate slip, must accompany letters, but will not be published unless required. Will correspondents and others please write on one side of the paper only.

To the Editor,

Dear Sir,—I was pleased to see the letter of "Anxious" in the A. T. F. in respect to the future welfare of our boys and girls on the Estate, but he has only touched the fringe of the subject. What is needed first is to endeavour to find out the adaptabilities of the child. That, to the writer, is where so many parents have made the mistake of placing the boy or girl to some trade or occupation without full consideration as to whether the child's talents run in that direction. I think if we did our best to understand the youngsters from their side, we should be building up a community of healthier and more contented men and women, thus giving them the chance to bring into reality some of the dreams of their parents and friends. Might I here be permitted to make another suggestion to the Estate Council? Now is the golden opportunity, if they can find someone able and willing to form a class of elder boys and girls, to teach them the higher ideals of life as advanced by R. Owen, J. Ruskin, W. Morris, Kingsley Arnold.

Yours, SPRINGTIME.

To the Committee of A. T. F.

Dear Sirs.—I must congratulate you upon last month's paper being so bright and cheerful. But now to my way of thinking, it is time you altered the name, for a paper like last months, cannot be styled a "Forerunner." I think it has come to stay. Might I be allowed to suggest two names that would be suitable for future editions.

(1) "The Beacon" because it seems to throw a light over the whole of the Estate.

(2) "The Link" because it seems just what is necessary to hold us all together. W.N.

HUMBERSTONE and DISTRICT SUPPLY ASSOCIATION.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

The Store will be closed on Monday and Tuesday next.

LAST DAY OF QUARTER.

Our First Quarter will end on December 31st.