

'Open your eyes now, dear. You need not fear!' said Miss Cameron, and opening wide her slanting eyes the child saw that she was in a bright, cheerful place, full of pretty things and all around her—could she be dreaming?—were Chinese girls, with bright happy faces. She was soon surrounded by them, and all talking to her in the tongue she understood, and were telling her the most wonderful things. She could hardly drink in so much joy all at once, for her little brain was still dazed with the sorrows she had known but she knew that she was safe—that was enough. There were many things here which she had never known. She was put into a delightful hot bath; her hair was washed and arranged neatly, and she was slipped into a clean warm bed, where she soon forgot her sorrows in the deep sleep of childhood. When she awoke, feeling like a new being, she was given some lovely Chinese garments, and when they allowed her to look in a mirror she did not even know herself. It is strange what a little love and care will do.

When she was dressed she heard a bell ringing. She did not know what it meant, till Miss Cameron said to her: 'Come to your first Christmas dinner, little one.'

Holding tightly the slim fingers of the gentle lady she entered the dining-room, full of chattering girls. In the centre of the room was a long table. On this table there surely was everything in the world to eat. Such an air of peace and good will was there that the tired stranger soon forgot all fear, and felt herself one of them. But her starved heart was to know more happiness before the day was ended.

Soon after dinner the darkness fell, and then the whole company of eager, laughing girls was admitted into the mysteries of the room with the closed door. Entering they saw a beautiful green tree, and on its topmost bough shone radiantly a great star, while gifts hung from its branches.

'Is it really growing? and did the Christ-child really put those pretty things on it?' asked the child.

There were many gifts, but never did any gift bring such rapture as the doll that was given to Ah Choy. It was a sight never to be forgotten to see the poor thin arms clasping it, and the pale face lighting up with budding mother-love. As she pressed it close to her heart she looked up at the star, from which the pure rays of light glowed tenderly, and said: 'It is so beautiful; what is it?' And Miss Cameron replied, with tears of gratitude in her eyes: 'It is the star of Bethlehem, Ah Choy, and it will guide you into perfect peace'—The Standard.

Her Own Place.

(By Sydney Dayre.)

'She's not coming!'

Mother dropped a letter with a face of dismay.

'Who's not coming?'

'Eunice.'

'Not coming for Christmas?'

'O-o-o-o-o!' A wail of distress from a younger one.

'But why, mother? Do tell us what she says. Why! I can't believe it.'

'It won't be Christmas at all,' went on the wail.

'She says—' mother took up the letter, 'that Miss Marian Ford, her great friend, has invited her to spend the holidays with her in the city.'

A howl of discontent from the small ones.

'I didn't suppose any place would be better than home to her,' said Elizabeth.

'It isn't only the nice place and the city,' continued mother, 'there are going to be some concerts that she wants very much to attend. So she says she's very sorry she can't be in two

places at once, and love, love, love for all of us, and we musn't miss her much. Of course the concerts will be a real benefit in her musical study.'

'But I wouldn't have believed it of Eunice,' repeated Elizabeth. And mother to herself echoed the words as she went about with an ache at her heart.

Eunice could scarcely, in anticipation, have believed it of herself. The home Christmases were so dear, so precious, the idea of spending one anywhere else seemed almost a sacrilege. But this invitation was a temptation. Even mother, through all her heart-ache, could understand the allurements in the visit of a great city.

'I haven't any spirit for a tree,' said Elizabeth, as the day drew near.

'O, we musn't say that,' said mother, betraying her sympathy in the feeling. 'The children could never bear it to go without it. We have always had one since Eunice was a year old.'

'It was always fun when she was here to help. But now it seems a good deal of trouble.'

'Never mind, dear. We must have things just as usual.'

It had been with many misgivings that Eunice had decided on the Christmas away from home. At the first reception of the invitation she had refused to consider it at all. But as days went by the persuasions of her friend began to have their weight, and she had yielded.

'There are plenty at home to make a merry time. They will be glad I am having such a good time—with so much that is of real benefit in it.'

And still Eunice, with all her reasoning, could never fully persuade herself that the vacancy at home could be filled.

'O, Miss Eunice!'

Passing through one of the halls of the dormitory on the day before Christmas Eunice turned at the sound of a call behind her.

'What is it, Hannah?' It was one of the maids, who approached her with a shining face.

'Miss Eunice! See what I got.' She held up a new \$5 bill.

'That's good, Hannah. A Christmas present, I suppose?'

'Yes'm. From the teachers. A dollar from each, only they put it all in one. Now, Miss Eunice, you couldn't guess what I'm goin' to do with this?'

'Well, I am a pretty good guesser. I should say you are going to spend it in presents for the home folk.'

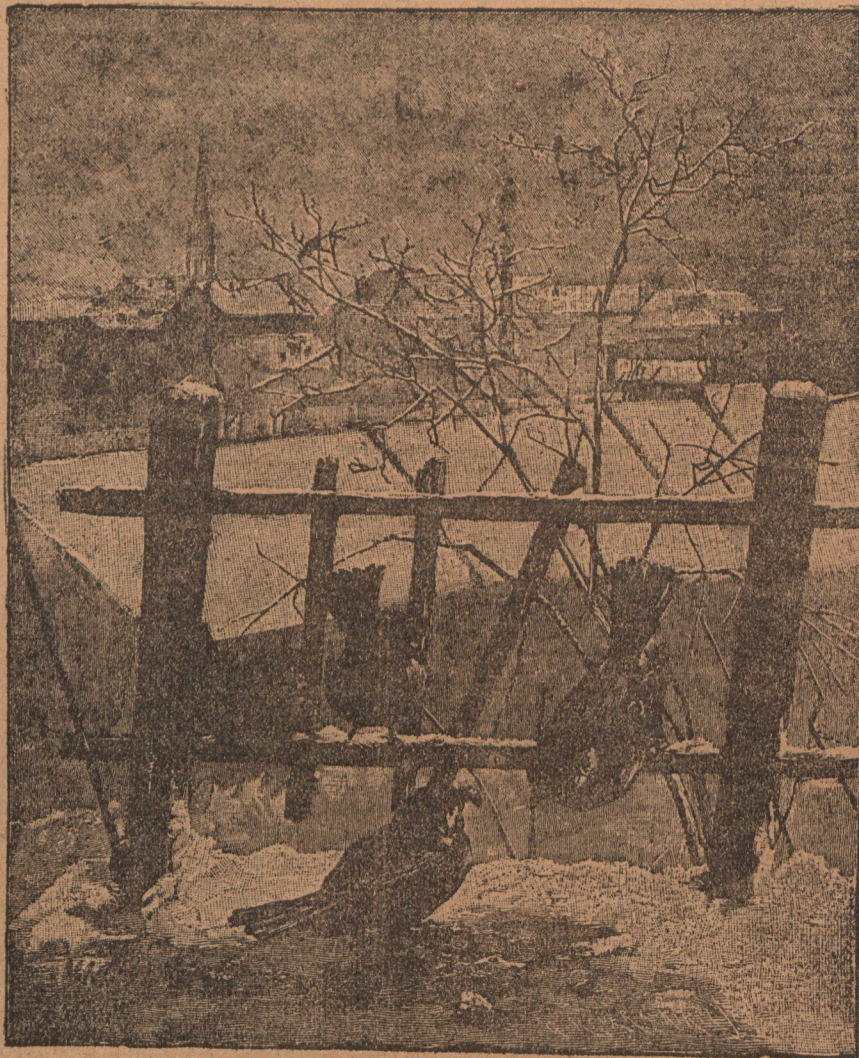
'Wrong. You'll have to guess again.'

'Something nice for yourself.'

'Wrong again, Miss Eunice!' The plain, honest face was fairly radiant. 'I'm goin' to spend this money—every cent of it—in goin' home for Christmas—'

'Now, Hannah!'

'It's so. It'll take it all, but what o' that? They don't want no presents, they just want me. They'll



—American Messenger.

Don't Forget to give the Birds their Christmas Dinner.