

a week ago—could not wash nor work at all."

"Where is Ludovig!"

"He is gone to work up at de Sphread Eagle Mine—and dia is Grist-mas, too. It vas too bad—too bad."

"Then the money I gave you for presents for—" Mrs. Morton began to ask; but the poor woman interrupted her.

"Aah, my good frient, I had mit to puy some medicine. Und dese goot tings to eat vat you did send—vell, I dinks de shildren would been starved except for dese goot tings you sent. But dey're all gone already, und I don't know vat I shall do."

"Where are the babes now?"

"Oh, dey're oud to blay. Dey shtay too long, but dey must haf some fun. Bime-by dey haf mebbe to suffer too, shust like me."

At that instant the door was burst open, and a shock-headed boy who did not belong to the Morton party rushed in, shouting, "Oh, Miss Larsen, your kids has gone down the road on a runaway car, and they is both kill—"

At hearing the last words of the rude messenger, Mrs. Larsen had tried to spring up, but Mrs. Morton pressed her back upon the pillow, exclaiming: "The children are safe. They did go down the track, but they were saved."

To see the deep joy with which that poor mother welcomed back the lost little ones, and to feel what might have been the scene had they been brought to that distracted home dead instead of alive, was too much for the tender-hearted lad, and he began to poke the fire with tremendous vigour. The next thought was, supposing that he had failed, and that his had been the mother weeping over a lifeless child, and—But he couldn't stand this picture at all, and rushed out, exclaiming, "Awful smokey!" for fear somebody should misunderstand the water in his eyes and the chokiness in his throat.

More than one holiday has come and gone since then.

As for Harold—when, on Christmas, he goes to church and hears of him whose perfect manliness all men pattern after who try to make the best of themselves, nothing goes home to his feeling and his understanding like the record that of his own will Christ gave his life for the help of those who were weak and in trouble. "Greater love hath no man than this"—nor greater courage.

Christmas-Eve.

HEAVILY hung is our Christmas-tree,
Its boughs they glitter for you and for me,
The hemlock-branches piled with snow
In evergreen wood, bent not so low,
God giveth all. The ravens call,
He hears them. So let us begin
He hears always when children pray;
For he himself a child has been.

Dear Lord, we would not selfish be
All hearts are not as glad as we,
Remember then the poor to-night
And flood their darkness with thy light;
The hungry food, the wanderer lead,
The sorrowing soothe, the captive free;
And pity, we pray, on the children's day
All those who have no Christmas-tree.

Little Margary.

BY KATHERINE LEST STEVENSON.

THE Christmas bells were ringing,
Were ringing glad and clear;
And every home and every heart
Seemed filled with Christmas cheer;

When sad, pale little Margary
Stole forth the joy to see;
And, as she heard the bells' glad chime,
"Oh, ring," she cried, "for me!"

No Christmas joy was in her heart,
She had no warm bright home;
She shivered as the bells' glad peal
Rang from the tall church dome.

For sick, and desolate, and sad,
Was Margary that night,
When Christmas bells were ringing glad,
And Christmas fires burned bright.

She stole along the brilliant street,
She paused by many a door;
The light, and warmth, and gladsome cheer
But made her sorrow more.

She saw homes filled with brightness,
And children mad with glee;
"There is no mother's love," she said,
"No Christmas joy for me."

She sank at last, faint, weary,
Within the broad church door;
The bells were chiming overhead,
The storm raged wild before.

There, as the music sounded,
She felt no longer sad;
"I think the church must be my home,"
She said, "I feel so glad."

"Why, it's all warm around me,
All warm, and glad, and bright;
Are the bells calling for me?
Yes, yes, I see a light!

"I am going to my Christmas"—
Then all was still again,
While, overhead, the Christmas chimes
Still rang the mad refrain.

The sexton found her later,
And he grieved the sight to see—
But the Christmas joy shone on the face
Of little Margary.

HOW FATHERS CAN MAKE CHRISTMAS MERRY.

BY KNOXIAN.

A MERRY Christmas is a good thing. It makes people feel genial and generous and kindly. The most frozen natures thaw out a little during the Christmas season. A man that does not thaw out slightly at Christmas is a little iceberg. He should be sent on an expedition in search of the North Pole, and sent so far that he would have to stay there. The place for such a little human iceberg is North, among the large icebergs. The heads of every household should try to make Christmas a most enjoyable family day.

A merry Christmas, like a well-kept Sabbath, must be arranged for. The first thing in the way of successful arrangement is to get yourself in a good humour.

There are various ways in which a man may put himself into a presentable condition for Christmas. One good way is to meditate on the blessings you have enjoyed during the past year. You need not go out into the fields like Isaac to engage in the meditation. If the weather had been as cold in the East as in Canada Isaac would have done his meditation within

doors. Just think on Christmas eve of the blessings you and your family have enjoyed for the last twelve months—health, home, friends, food, raiment, reason, restraining grace, the privileges of the sanctuary and the hope of a better home in the land beyond. If you find that meditating does not stir up your gratitude, relieve you from worry, and take the acid out of your system, then take a little wholesome exercise among the poor. Go to that poor bed-ridden sufferer around the corner, who has lain there for years, and bring him or her some Christmas cheer.

Having made the necessary inward preparations for Christmas then turn your attention to the family. You see that woman working just as hard on Christmas morning as on any other. You took a good long snooze, but she had to take care of the children and arrange for the Christmas dinner. That is the woman whose ungloved hand you held at the marriage altar long years ago. She has changed a good deal since then. The bloom has left her cheek, but she lost it taking care of your house and children. She does not step so lightly now as she did then, but remember she has taken many a weary step in caring for your home. She has changed, no doubt, but not any more than you have changed—perhaps not quite so much. There was no smell of tobacco on your breath, or two days' growth on your unshaven chin when you began to visit that woman. You never spoke short or cross to her in those days—never. Now, if you can't afford to give her a nice Christmas present you can at least show her that you appreciate her efforts to make your home comfortable, and that you love her quite as much as when her step was more elastic and her cheek had more colour.

Have you any children in the house? Give each one a little present if you can afford the outlay. Years hence, when they are far from the old home spending Christmas among strangers, the little present may make them think of other days and perhaps keep them from evil. If you are so much engaged in business or have to attend so many meetings that you don't know the smaller children, try and get acquainted with them. Their mother will be happy to give you a suitable introduction. The little ones may be surprised at your conduct, but the surprise will do them good.

It might add a little to the enjoyment of your Christmas dinner if you invited a young friend or two in to help the family to demolish the Christmas turkey. Are there no well-behaved, deserving young men within your circle, who are far away from their homes? Do you not know of any worthy young ladies in situations, fighting their own way in the world that you might invite to share your hospitality? Your own boys and girls may not always be at home—they may not always have a home to be in, and you may yet see

the day when you will be very glad to hear that your son or your daughter has been invited to dine on Christmas with some respectable man in a distant town or city.

If you go out take the children with you. Give their mother a drive. It will make her think of old times and do her good. Spend the evening in the family. Don't steal away into another room and read your political paper, and selfishly suck a cigar or briar-root or old clay. Be one of the family for one evening.

And having spent Christmas day merrily in your home, gather the family around the family altar and commend them all to the great Father above. Remember the absent ones in the family prayer and ask God for grace to make your home better and brighter for the new year than it ever was before.—*Presbyterian.*

Edith's Christmas Morning.

THIS really now is Christmas day;
I am so glad so glad!
I wonder if in all the world
There's anybody sad.

But oh, dear me! I 'most forgot
That girl across the way;
Her father drinks, they're awful poor,
And once I heard her say
That Christmas day was like all days.
I'm 'fraid—I'd like to know—
But what's the use? It's too late now
If I had money, though,
I'd go and—but I've not a cent.

Now let me think: they say
If anybody has the will
They're sure to find the way,—
What can I give to that poor girl?
I just have this sweet doll
That Santa Claus has brought for me,
Besides this pop-corn ball,
And box of candy, nuts and cakes.

And still "where there's a will"—
But I'm real poor myself, I'm sure,
Yet she is poorer still,
And like enough has had no gift
This blessed Christmas morn.
I wonder if she's thought at all
That Christmas, Christ was born.

He did not think about himself,
But just of others thought.
I 'pose I could divide with her
These things that Santa brought—
I will! I'll give her half of them,
But then—here's this sweet doll,
I can't divide it, possibly;
I'll just give—give—it all.

GOD'S CHRISTMAS GIFT.

AMID our Christmas gifts we should not forget the best and greatest of all—God's gift of his own dear Son. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." O what a gift, on the first Christmas-day eighteen hundred and eighty-five years ago, was the gift of the Divine Child, the Babe of Bethlehem, the Son of God, to be the Saviour of the world! Dear children, let him be your Saviour. Love him. Trust him. Give him, as the best Christmas gift you can bring, your young and loving hearts.