

How We Observed Christmas.

This last year I determined to simplify the usual Christmas exercises as much as possible and to give each child a share in the work.

About two weeks before the close of school we began making booklets using the time devoted, as a rule, to writing and drawing. Those of the older pupils (mine is an ungraded school) were made with covers of drawing paper, upon which they painted appropriate designs, and the inside containing two or more stanzas of a Christmas carol neatly copied. The younger children made dainty little booklets in the form of bells and stockings cut from colored paper with Christmas greetings printed in gold upon the outside. These together with match-scratchers and calendars (designs taken from the *Popular Educator*) constituted the children's gifts to their parents and friends, great care being exercised that no one who was likely to be present should be forgotten.

Next instead of having a man procure and set the tree for us, two of the older boys volunteered to do it, and although the tree, when it at length appeared before us, had much to be desired, the very fact that "we got it ourselves" more than made up for all defects in the eyes of the children.

Some of the girls made the candy bags while others strung popcorn and made paper chains so that when the tree was trimmed it presented quite a respectable appearance.

Beside the simple gifts that I gave my own pupils I made a list of the baby brothers and sisters and put a Christmas post-card and a bag of candy on the tree for them.

Invitations were written on paper cut in the form of a five pointed star, the points being turned in toward the centre and fastened with a holly seal.

The exercises themselves were very simple. We learned a few new songs and recitations for the occasion, but for the most part made use of the regular work. One of the boys read an original story entitled "The Adventures of Santa Claus;" the little ones sang a motion song learned earlier in the term; and the school repeated a poem they had learned, in concert.

Simplicity was the keynote of the whole, but both children and parents pronounced it a success.—E. E. C., in *Popular Educator*.

The Carleton County, N. B., Teachers' Institute will meet at Woodstock, Thursday and Friday, Dec. 22 and 23.

A Merry Christmas.

Of all the days in the year there is not one that brings so much pleasure to the children as Christmas Day. It is looked forward to with delight, and its memories are full of happiness. Even the baby shares in its joy, and no one in the family is too old to feel its spell. Our rooms are gay with holly and evergreens, and our tables loaded with good things. Father, mother, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, grandparents and friends send presents, while Santa Claus fills the stockings from top to toe.

For weeks before everybody is busy making presents. Little girls steal into out-of-the-way corners, hiding their presents when the one it is intended for comes near. Mother works away quietly and no one suspects that anything unusual is going on as she darns the stockings, mends the trousers or stitches away at the little dresses.

Boys who never thought of saving a cent all the year, grow economical all at once in its last weeks, or form plans of earning money to buy some of the Christmas Boxes with which the shop windows are filled.

On Christmas morning every one will be surprised and delighted. Each present, though it may be only a trifle, shows that the giver has taken pains to find out what would most please the loved one for whom it was chosen.

Long after the children have grown up and are, perhaps, living lonely lives far away, their hearts will grow warm as they think of the Christmas time when home was filled with the merry laughter and the sound of the happy voices of the children who were yet enfolded by the protecting love of father and mother. For Christmas is the children's festival and it is right that they should celebrate the day with joy and gladness.

Nearly two thousand years ago a Child was born who has made the world a happier place. He came to save the world from sin and from the sorrow that is born of sin. In all His teachings he said no word which could check innocent mirth. In His great work He was never too busy to notice the little ones and the praises He loved best were sung by childish voices. We cannot honor His birthday better than by trying to do just what He told us when he said "Love one another." This is the surest way to be happy, as well as to make others so.

To all child readers, then, A Merry, Merry Christmas.