

with cold, and the first thing that it did was to search for a warm place. It found Piccola's little wooden shoe which felt warm, so it gladly crept into it.

Piccola then hastened to bring her father and her mother to see what she had found. You may be sure that they rejoiced over it too. As Piccola petted, and warmed, and fed the bird, she said again and again, "This is the best kind of a toy, for it is a live one."

The Christmas Tree.

The little boy and the little girl owned a tiny evergreen. It stood in a grass plot between the sundial, the arbor and the pigeon cote.

The sun warmed it, the rain washed it, the soil fed it, and so it grew straight and beautiful and green.

The year that its tip was as high as the children could reach, the little girl said to her brother, "I have a fine idea. We will give our friends a Christmas tree. We will hang presents for them."

"Yes," said the little boy, "but we must plan about it in the house, or the pigeons will hear us. They would tell all the others before we are ready."

"That is true," said the little girl; "we must surprise them."

On Christmas morning, when the sun sparkled on the snow, the little girl and the little boy began to decorate the tree.

They hung bright-colored boxes of grain and lumps of white suet from every branch. With ears of corn, bunches of wheat heads and rings of bread they made the little tree so gay that it thrilled through all its branches. They tucked away a cabbage, some turnips, more corn and a goodly store of nuts under the lower branches. On the very top they placed a gilded star that shone in the sun.

It was a splendid little Christmas tree!

"Pigeons, pigeons! white and blue!
Here's an errand now for you!"

chanted the children.

"Tell every squirrel and rabbit and bird,
Everything feathered and everything furred,
To come as quick as they can to see
The finest sort of Christmas tree!"

Away whirled the pigeons, and soon there was a fluttering of wings, a pitpat of all sorts of little quick feet; there was a squeaking and piping and peeping when all the little wild things began to gather under the evergreen tree.

The little boy and girl shouted with laughter as they saw the barnyard tribe scramble across the snow, under the leadership of the old gander. How they all clucked and gabbled about the good Christmas corn on the crusty snow! How the little wild rabbits liked the cabbage and turnips, and how the squirrels stuffed their cheeks with nuts! The birds pecked the suet and ate the grain, and fluttered and sang and twittered round the little boy and the little girl. The children danced and clapped their hands; the little evergreen tree glowed and sparkled, and seemed to understand their fun.

The children's mother smiled from the kitchen door, and called out, "What are you little people doing now? Are you having another Christmas?"

"Having a Christmas tree for our friends," they said.

—*The Youth's Companion.*

Paganini, the great musician, once did a great kindness. As he was passing through a street in London one bitter cold Christmas day, he saw a poor blind man standing in the roadway playing on a violin. He was trying to earn a little money to buy some food. But he did not play well, and people hurried by without stopping to listen to his music. No one came to the windows to throw him a penny, and so the poor blind man stood hungry in the cold. Paganini stopped and tapped him on the shoulder, saying, "Well, won't the people give you any money?" "No," was the answer, "they won't open their windows. It is too cold." "Lend me your violin," said the great musician, "and let us see if they will open them for me." Paganini played wonderfully. Everybody stopped to listen; the windows flew open, and plenty of money was thrown to the player. Paganini picked up the silver, gave it to the blind man, and told him to go home out of the cold.

This is like what Christ did for man. He opened men's hearts, that would otherwise have been closed to the poor.

Christmas.

C hrist, Christ is born today!
H oly be thy holiday,
R ise betimes and haste away,
I n the church to kneel and pray,
S urely from thine heart to say
T hou, oh Lord, will I obey.
M any poor around there be
A lms give thou and sympathy.
S o God's blessing light on thee.

—*Lady Lindsay.*

This beautiful acrostic may be used as a Christmas exercise. Make the letters of the word Christmas in either red or black or of evergreen, upon squares of white cardboard about 14 x 14 in. The nine children stand in a row holding their letters behind them. As each child says the line beginning with his letter, he holds it out in sight of the audience. When the lines have all been spoken and the word Christmas is completed, the children repeat the verse in concert, being careful to hold the letters in a straight line. The recitation may be ended with any Christmas text.

—*Alice L. Fairweather.*

Santa Claus' Little Boy and His Dolls.

(Enter small boy wearing overcoat, cap and mittens.)

I am Santa Claus' little boy. When my father started out he forgot one load of dolls, so mother said I could take two of the young reindeer and follow him. I came along all right until the moon went under a cloud, then we were stuck in the snow. Those dolls are so cold, I'd like to bring them in and warm them. May I?

Children: O, yes, yes, bring them in.