

## Our Young Folk.

### STRETCH IT A LITTLE.

**T**RUDGING along the slippery street  
Two childish figures, with aching feet,  
And hands benumbed by the biting cold,  
Were rudely jostled by young and old,  
Hurrying homeward at close of day,  
Over the city's broad highway.

Nobody noticed or seemed to care  
For the little ragged shivering pair;  
Nobody saw how close they crept  
Into the warmth of each gas-jet  
Which flung abroad a mellow light  
From the gay shop-windows in the night.

"Come under my coat," said little Nell,  
As tears ran down Joe's cheeks and fell  
On her own thin fingers, stiff with cold,  
"Taint very big, but I guess 'twill hold  
Both you and me, if I only try  
To stretch it a little. So now don't cry."

The garment was small and tattered and thin,  
But Joe was lovingly folded in  
Close to the heart of Nell, who knew  
That stretching the coat for the needs of two  
Would double the warmth, and halve the pain  
Of the cutting wind and the icy rain.

"Stretch it a little," O girls and boys,  
In homes o'erflowing with comforts and joys;  
See how far you can make them reach—  
Your helpful deeds and your loving speech,  
Your gifts of service, and gifts of gold;  
Let them stretch to households manifold.

—Harpers' Young People.

### PAGAN DEVOTION.

**A** CURIOUS religious ceremony took place a while ago in Rangoon. In an earthquake, the bird's wing of gold and precious stones which crowns the great pagoda was thrown down and injured. The people were called upon for subscriptions for a new one, and in three weeks eighty thousand rupees had been collected. Notice was given that on a certain day the melting of the gold and silver would take place, and that it would be the last opportunity of contributing. In one of the large rooms of the pagoda, two large crucibles were placed, one for gold, the other for silver. Hundreds of men, women, girls, boys, and little children passed by, dropping their ornaments of gold or silver into the crucibles, or handing their precious stones to the clerk, to be set in the bird's wing. Women gaily dressed passed by, and taking gold bangles from each arm threw them into the pot; or, taking off their rings, and handing the stones to the clerk, added the gold to the boiling mass. Those who had no gold put rupee coins into the silver crucibles. Even the beggars added their mites. All seemed glad to give their treasures for such a purpose. All their good deeds are so many rungs of the ladder

which reaches to heaven. The Shans went in a body of twenty men, and presented a valuable diamond, which is to be placed as the chief ornament of the wing.

### A JAPANESE SNOW-STORM.

**T**HERE are many parts of Japan in which a snow-storm is no rarity, but in the region of Kobe and Osaka snow seldom falls to the depth of more than an inch or two. This morning, however, an early outlook from the window gave me the impression of a general whiteness over all the landscape. As daylight grew stronger I saw that the snowy covering was fully seven inches thick. This seems very little to one accustomed to the heavy snow-falls of Minnesota or even the lighter ones of Ohio, but here it occasioned quite an excitement.

I had a meeting for women in the afternoon, and the walk of two miles from our house to the place of meeting was a very interesting one. Busy hands and artistic skill had transferred the white material into a variety of shapes which would have done credit to a sculptor's studio or a hall of art in any country.

There were snow-white or white snow rabbits peering out of shop doorways; little lapdogs in attitudes of play and at rest; cats, from the large reclining one two or three feet in length, on a back street, to the more frisky little kittens in the shops; foxes on all-fours, with ears and tails erect, one holding a small flag in its mouth; old men and old women of snow, with black woolly eyebrows and charcoal eyes, stood gazing upon the passers-by; an elephant, with its five foot long proboscis, reclining next door to an "yebisu," one of the gods of good luck. This last was six or seven feet in height, and the fish which he had just caught, and which still hung to the hook, was about two feet long.

In one shop was a small boat with masts, the hull being made of snow. On a street corner a white bear sat on its haunches. Its mate I saw nearly two miles away as I returned home after the meeting. On another corner and in various other places were imitations of the stone lanterns seen in every Japanese garden and on temple-grounds. One of these was the only unfinished piece of work I saw; a man was still carving its sides with a broad-bladed knife. An immense frog sat in one street, just ready to spring through the door in front of him in case any one should open it. The frog was about four feet long, and not far away was a turtle about the same size. A rat, larger by several sizes than any that gnaw their way into our store-rooms, was climbing a snowy cliff. Rugged mountain scenery was represented in many of the streets; and in various places were two pinnacles near together, with a rope of straw stretched from one to the other, and strips of white paper suspended from the rope, such as may be seen anywhere in Japan wherever there is a sacred place among the mountains.

In many stores were represented in snow the two round cakes of "mochi," made of rice-flour, one on top of the other, and surmounted by an orange with green leaves, such as the idol-worshippers always offer to the gods on New Year's. In one store was a fire-