

Our Young Folk.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

THE children dreamed the whole night through
Of stockings hung the hearth beside;
And, bound to make each dream come true,
Went Santa Claus at Christmas-tide.

Black stockings, red, brown, white and gray—
Long, little, warm, or patched and thin—
The kindly Saint found on his way.
And, smiling, popped his presents in.

But as he felt his hoard grow light,
A tear-drop glistened in his eye;
'More children on this earth to-night,
Than stars are twinkling in the sky.'

Upon the white and frozen snow
He knelt, his empty bag beside—
'Some little socks must empty go,
Alas!'—said he—"this Christmas-tide.

"Though I their stockings may not heap
With gifts and toys and Christmas cheer,
These little ones from sorrow keep;
For each, dear Lord, to Thee is dear!

"Thou wert a little Child like them"—
Prayed he—"For whom I would provide
Long years ago in Bethlehem,
That first and blessed Christmas-tide!

"As soothed Thee then Thy mother's kiss,
And all her comfort, sweet and kind,
So give then love, lest they may miss
The gifts I know not where to find!

"That sweetest gift, dear Lord, bestow
On all the children far and wide;
And give them hearts as pure as snow"
Prayed Santa Claus—"at Christmas-tide!"

—*Marguerite Merington, in the Ladies' Home Journal.*

A CHRISTMAS DREAM.

MARION was fast asleep. Christmas shopping had tired her out. She had planned and worked for days, and her closet was full of pretty gifts, designed to give a pleasant surprise to many friends. She thought her work was done. But as she slept she dreamed.

One stood by her side, He called her by name, He took her by the hand. She could not fail to know Him. It was her Saviour.

"You have made gifts for many," he said, "have you provided aught for Me?"

Marion's heart sank before this question. It was true! She had forgotten the Lord. Yet she took courage, and asked the old, old question,—

"How, Lord, could I give anything to Thee?"

"Arise," He answered, "walk with Me and behold gifts for which I long, gifts within the power of every child to give."

In her dream Marion stood in a dark, foul court-

yard. A girl no older than herself, with her head shaved and the marks of many bruises on her half-naked body, crouched in a corner. Miserable, abused, tormented, she was on the point of taking her own life. She had no friend in earth or heaven; why should she live? She had committed the unpardonable sin; she was the widow of a man she had never seen. Her wretched soul yet shrank from the dark abyss awaiting it, should it quit the shuddering body! Ah! what should she gain if she should venture all and die?

As Marion looked, she trembled. A sigh of ineffable sorrow and tenderness from Him, upon whom she did not dare to look, rent her heart.

Again, in her dream, Marion saw passing, one by one, the daughters of many countries. Savage, untaught, unclean, some filled her with pity, some with terror. Each one in passing turned and looked her in the face.

"Who hath made us to differ?"

"Why, why have you all things and we nothing?"

"Let us eat of the crumbs that fall from your table of peace."

These, and cries like these, rang in her ears and assailed her heart.

She turned and looked at her Guide. He had forgotten her. His eyes, full of pity and longing, were fixed upon the passing throng.

Even as she gazed, He was gone, vanished from her sight. She could ask nothing, but she knew in her soul that if she would offer gifts to the Lord, she must bring him souls.

When she awoke, she wept over her empty purse. Never again did her Christmas money flow only in the accustomed channel. She gave to her friends, but she gave first to her Lord. She made first for him her little cake, no matter how small her handful of meal.

CHEWING GUM.

WHO would think that over a million of dollars a year are spent here in America for chewing gum? It is a good deal of money to put out in the indulgence of a habit which some regard as positively injurious, and which is at any rate a luxurious practice, and one which most boys and girls outgrow as soon as they perceive that it is not accordant with the best of manners. The custom, however, has prevailed here ever since the Indians took the spruce gum from the trees and taught the white man to roll it in his mouth. And the desire to chew something seems to prevail in other quarters of the globe; for the Chinese chew a pungent bean, and the Turks and other eastern races use beeswax. The manufacture of chewing gum has become quite an industry. In Brooklyn one large six-storied building is devoted to this purpose; and the processes of production are closely guarded lest the secrets respecting the mixtures should be disclosed.—*Missionary Visitor.*

THE GOSPEL IN SONG.

INTO the southern portion of the Province of Minas Geraes, Brazil, the Gospel penetrated more than twenty years ago, and found lodgment in the heart of an aged patriarch known as "Anthony the Just." As