

WINTER.

I stood in the gathering shadows
Of a dull, drear, wintry day;
And I thought of the vanished summer,
And the flowers which had lined the way.

I thought of the warm, bright sunshine
The ripple of the stream,
The songs the wood-birds carolled,
The glow of sunset sheen.

And I sighed when I gazed at the contrast,
And longed with a throb of pain
That the long, drear winter were over,
And summer were back again.

Till white and still came the snowflakes
Down through the thickening air,
Cold and soft and silent,
Alighting everywhere.

They covered the old worn arbour
With a robe of spotless white,
And flung on the pine-tree branches
A drapery soft and light.

They fell on the lordly castle
Of the rich and high and great,
And down on the peasant's cottage,
And over his rustic gate.

They fell on the lonely churchyard
Where the weary pilgrims sleep,
And out on the dreary moorland,
And down on the village street.

Till the whole broad land was whitened
With a garment pure and fair—
Man seemed, with his sins and passions,
The only black thing there.

Then I thought of him who has promised
To clothe us in spotless dress,
And present us to His Father
In His own pure righteousness

And I saw that even winter
Has a beauty passing fair,
Which summer with all its riches
Can ne'er with it compare.

Then over the soft, pure mantle
From the shining heights above,
The sunshine in floods came streaming
Sweet pledge of the Father's love.

Thus the seasons, each in their courses,
As they come at His word of command,
Show forth in their varied glories
The power of His loving hand.

And whenever we look at the snow-wreaths
With their glitter of silvery white,
May our hearts be lifted upwards
To the regions of endless light?—*Youth.*

TOPSY

SUDEAN, a little girl who was very full of fun, with bright, dark eyes that laughed, lived away over in India. They had a terrible famine there. The mother died and then the father, and no one was left to take care of the little girl? She had stopped laughing and could only cry, "I am so hungry, so hungry!"

The missionaries found her and took her home to their pleasant orphanage, where she had plenty of food and pleasant playmates and kind friends to love her. But she played so many pranks that they named her Topsy: and sometimes Topsy made a good deal of trouble for her playmates and her loving friends, for she wanted to have her fun whether it was fun to them or not.

But one day she heard the missionary say that Jesus had died for her sins. She listened very closely, and soon she gave her heart to Jesus. After that she felt she must tell others the same sweet story. So she used to go with the Bible woman into the homes of the women of India and help teach the verses.

One day she saw a strange woman sitting by the roadside on a tiger skin. Her hair was all matted together, as if she had not combed it for years. Her face and arms were rubbed with sacred ashes, and she had a necklace of nuts that were also thought to be sacred. She was dressed in yellow, for that was the way those holy women dressed, and this woman was thought to be so holy that she was worshipped as a goddess, and people used to take the dust off her feet and put it to their foreheads, thinking it very sacred.

What do you think Topsy did? She sat down beside this woman and asked her if she had ever heard of Jesus, and she told her all she could and then invited her to go and hear the missionary talk.

Of course nobody thought this woman, who was called a goddess by the people of India and honored by thousands of natives, would accept the invitation of this child. But she did, and you see God helped the little child as much as the grown woman. The missionary talked with the woman and found she was very learned. She could speak in four languages, but she listened to the story of Jesus like a little child, and gave her heart to Him.

Then she felt just as Topsy did—she must go and tell the story to others, and she said, "I must go back to every city where I have told the wrong story and tell the right one." Thousands had come to see her when she was baptized and gave up all her worldly honors and now she started forth just like a humble water carrier of India to tell to all of Jesus.

Did not our little Topsy help? Is it not worth while to earn, save, and send our pennies to give the Gospel to the little friends over there and to pray for them.—*Dayspring.*