

GIRLS AND BOYS

Next month: Lesson I, on "The Land of the Golden Man." Watch for it.

THE CHRISTMAS TREES ARE GROWING.

O the Christmas trees are growing
In the lands beyond the sea,
And I seem to see them waving
All their branches toward me;
Fir trees of the snowy Northland,
Palm trees 'neath warm sunny skies,
Pines and spruces, oaks and cedars,
Every sort and every size,—

"Not like ours?" No, my Laddie,
But somehow, sometime I know
When the Good News has resounded
O'er the wide world, to and fro,
That where'er the children listen
To the story sweet and true,
There will come the Christmas spirit
As it comes to-day, to you.
And no matter where they're living,
Hut or palace born, you'll see
They will find, yes, surely find it,—
Some sort of a Christmas tree!
Hasten, O thou blessed future,
When the least shall keep this day,—
Birthday of the Baby Jesus,
And shall own His loving sway!

—L. A., in Junior Missionary Friend.

THE CHRISTMAS CHEER CHILD.

By Edith Mary Irvine.

"Mother," cried little Margaret, running through the great wide hall of an old Spanish-built house in the rural districts of Porto Rico; "mother, what will we do about Christmas? Santa Claus doesn't come to Porto Rico!"

"Who said so, darling? I believe he will if we'll be good and write him an invitation. Maybe he would like to have a rest from so much snow and frosty air. Suppose you invite him, anyway."

"But, mother, what would he do with the reindeers and sled if there isn't any snow, and how could he come down the chimney? These Porto Rican houses haven't any chimneys, nor any fire-places, either; and, mother, what will we do for a Christmas tree? Don't you

think we ought to go back home just for Christmas; poor father will be awful lonesome without us. Besides, what will I do without any place to hang up my stocking?"

"We couldn't, Margaret dear; and you know we are going to learn how to spend Christmas a new way this year. There are so many people who don't know anything about Christmas joy, living all about us, and in other years we've just kept Christmas for ourselves, so this year we'll take some joy to them; won't that be nice? Mother is stronger now, so we can go and see the little boys and girls like you, who live in those gloomy, comfortless tenements of San Juan. We shall visit other places where there are people deprived of comforts and blessings of which we have never been deprived, and then we shall come back home and go to the Christmas entertainment in the church; and even though they won't have a Christmas tree, I am sure the good missionary will have taught them to keep Christmas with a right good will."

Mrs. Logan had been ordered to a tropical climate for her health, and having heard much of Porto Rico chose this as the best place to spend the winter. At first it had been difficult for her to get accustomed to the exceedingly quiet, monotonous life of the mountain village and the lack of associations. Then the American teacher had appeared, and after forming acquaintance, Mrs. Logan had insisted on her coming to share the old roomy house with her and little Margaret. They had been a blessing to each other. Ruth Harwood, a thoughtful girl of high ideals, had come to her every day with some new story about her school children. She took such heart-interest in her work that there had been little time for loneliness. The