

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

RALPH SMITH & CO.

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. IX.]

TORONTO, DECEMBER 21, 1889.

[No. 26.

Hanging the Holly.

BY MRS. J. B. HILL.

LET us keep the day with gladness,
Weaving the holly gay
Into a wreath to crown the Babe
Who in the manger lay,
When shepherds watched their flocks by night
And the stars shone with wondrous light.

O happy, blessed Christmas-tide!
That day so long ago
When Immanuel veiled his glory
To save the world from woe;
And conquered death, the grave, and sin,
That we might rise and reign with him.

And now he wears the kingly robes,
And waves the victor's palm,
For the Babe of Bethlehem is our Lord—
Praise him in joyful psalm
For the love which brought our Lord to earth,
And that Christmas day which saw his birth.

A TRUE CHRISTMAS STORY.

BY DOROTHY HOLROYD.

"CHRISTMAS!" said Arthur moodily; "I wish there was no such thing as Christmas!" and when a ten-year-old boy has such moods and such wishes, something is wrong, without a doubt.

He was a delicate little fellow, with big brown eyes and soft silky hair—some mother's darling, one would have said, if it had not been ten o'clock of a December night, when such darlings are generally tucked away in warm, white beds, dreaming of Santa Claus and his wonderful reindeer.

Instead of that, Arthur

was waiting at the junction for an avenue car, while a shrill wind whistled round his slim legs and mocked at the scant protection of a turned-up coat-collar and woollen scarf, for overcoat he had none. No visions of "Comet and Cupid and

Dunder and Blitzen" danced through his head; even the frosty tinkle of the car-bells had a jaded sound to him, as though the horses—poor things!—were almost as tired as he.

The car was nearly empty. It was too early for

at this time of the night?" was the abrupt question which followed.

"Home from work," said Arthur laconically.

"And what sort of work can such a child as you do to keep him till this hour?"



HANGING THE HOLLY.

theatre-goers to be crowding back, and too cold to tempt people out except for some definite purpose.

Arthur dropped a demoralized-looking bit of yellow pasteboard into the ticket-box, dug his poor little cold toes down into the straw, and settled himself with as much comfort as the circumstances would permit. It was good just to be able to sit still and rest; he was too tired even to take an interest in his fellow-passengers. There were not many of them—only a coloured woman with a big basket of clean clothes that she was carrying home, and an old gentleman with keen blue eyes and bushy eyebrows who sat in the corner just opposite.

Arthur regarded them both with complete indifference. He had seen just as many men, women and children that day as he wanted to see; people, to him, meant only one more or less to make trouble.

But the old gentleman in the corner was far from being so indifferent. This tired child in knee-breeches and with no overcoat was enough to give one a heart-ache that would last all through Christmas-time, and what sort of a Christmas could one have with a heart-ache for company?

Arthur lifted his heavy eyelids with a touch of surprise as the old gentleman rose and crossed over to the vacant space by his side.

"Where are you going