



ing branches she could see dolls, dozens of them. She rubbed her eyes and pinched herself, but still could not believe she was really alive. She had never had a doll; she never expected to have one, but she was very thankful to have the privilege of looking at them, anyway. It would be something she could always remember.

Just at this point in her reflections a soft hand was laid upon her own cold one, and a soft voice said to her: 'Are you all alone, dear?' 'Yes,' she replied in Chinese. The woman knew that meant 'Yes' by the nod of the head that went with it, and with one protecting arm around her said: 'Then, come with me, and we will sit near the front, where you can see the tree.' The child did not understand all the words, but she felt the love in them and the Christmas cheer in the air, and, clinging closely to the kind woman, she was led up the carpeted aisle, and got a seat close—close to the wonderful 'tree of heaven.'

But, more wonderful still, when she was seated, she found herself in the presence of other Chinese girls, as well as American ones. What could it mean? The woman smiled at her questioning eyes, and listened eagerly, while the Chinese girls interrogated the little one. She soon told them her pitiful story, which they in turn interpreted to the American woman, and she answered softly:

'My dear, the Christmas star must have brought you to us, for these other girls are all rescued slaves, and I am their American mother. You also shall go and live with us, where the old highbinder can never find you.'

The child's heart was too full for utterance, but the radiant face and tear-filled eyes were better than words to one who knew and loved the poor Chinese slaves, and the kind woman understood.

The girls were so good to her and so glad to explain the meaning of it all. While they whispered their words of explanation the music grew louder and grander, until it seemed as if the heart of the slave child would burst for very ecstasy.

Looking high up she saw for the first time the great shining star which had guided her to the place. It must be the same, and now it was resting radiant, scintillating, on the topmost bough of the tree of heaven, and just beneath it, swaying gently, was the figure of the Christ Child, pink and dimpled, and it held out its arms and seemed to beckon to the rescued one. While she looked some one took a doll from the glittering tree and gave it to Louey Ching. She could not believe it; she only dreamed she had it. She? Louey Ching, the poor slave child, with a doll. Such a reality surely could not be for her. But the girl assured her there was no mistake, and the Christ Child seemed to smile at her, and she smiled back, and said: 'Samon jai! Samon jai! mea wah?' (The child! the child! what is it?) and the girls replied: 'It is the Christ Child, and above it is the Star of Bethlehem—the Christmas star that guided you to us.'

The Children's Festival.

The religion which the wonderful Galilean Teacher brought into the world has given a glory and a significance to childhood it had never known before, and which is not known to-day except where the religion he taught prevails. It is only in the lands that are known as Christian that the sacredness of childhood is recognized and protected by every law and every safeguard that society and government can throw around it. Only in the lands where the name of the Nazarene is held in reverence are the orphans, the waifs, the foundlings, the homeless, neglected and suffering children, taken in, sheltered, taught and provided for with tender, thoughtful and generous care. Under the banner of no other faith are there found such homes

as the homes of Christendom; no homes where little feet are so tenderly guided, where the innocence and purity of childhood are so carefully fostered and jealousy guarded; no homes where so much is sacrificed and nothing thought too dear that can bring joy, peace and large opportunity and privilege to the children.

Strange, indeed, would it be if Christmas were not the day most loved by children, the anniversary of the birth of Him who is the best friend that childhood can ever know; who loved the children, blessed them, gave His life for them, and to whose spirit and teachings they owe the rarest, choicest blessings that are theirs to-day.—Leslie's 'Weekly.'

Keeping Jesus's Birthday.

(Margaret C. Brown.)

How shall little hearts keep Christmas
When the earth is wrapped in snow?
Little hearts must all be loving,
For in loving, love will grow.

How shall little hands keep Christmas
When the winds of winter blow?
Little hands make gifts for giving,
In this way our love to show.

How shall little lips keep Christmas
When the winter stars shine clear?
Little lips may sing glad praises
To the gentle Christ-child dear.

So may hearts and hands and voices
All together Christmas keep;
Once a child and now our Shepherd,
Jesus, guard Thy lambs and sheep.

'Break it now, that precious ointment of love whose fragrance will sweeten the whole house. Someone has said that 'repression of the expression of feelings is the American vice,' and it is too often true; but Christmas is the very time for turning over a new leaf in the volume of habit, and resolving that love in the heart shall be exalted into love in the life.'—Selected.

Christmas at Sea.

How black the billows loom and leap
From far to far!
Courage, ye boatmen! On the deep
Shall float a star.

Death rides upon the demon blast!
Reefs lure and hide!
Behold the glimmering Feet forecast
Upon the tide.

For dawn! For dawn! Shall ever dawn
Have hope to start?
Behold, two little Hands have drawn
The clouds apart.

What warmth has pierced the winter, sweet
As breath of kine?
O boatmen, lift your hearts to greet
The landward sign!

And in the east what carol wakes
Triumphantly?
Sing, boatmen, sing! For Christmas breaks
Upon the sea!

—Agnes Lee.

Forget the noise of the city and the worries of the office for at least one day, and listen to the 'Song the angels sang.'

