

Star of the East.

BY MRS. L. V. HAULMAN.

Star of the East! thy radiance gleams
Adown the solemn years to-day;
As when his word first gave thy beams
To guide upon their joyful way
The *Magi* from a distant land
Across the deserts burning sand.

Star of the East! thy fires yet glow
As glowed they on that solemn night
When shepherds worshipped, bending low,
And far the city lay, a-light
With thy soft beams, whose touch did fret
Each sacred spire and minaret.

Star of the East! thy crimson ray
Hath pierced the gloom of troubled years
Undimmed; along thy shining way
The flower of love and faith appears.
Touched with thy glow the old year dies,
Bathed in thy light the new shall rise.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 25, 1886.

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FOR MISSIONS
FOR THE YEAR 1887.

WE bid our readers herewith a merry Christmas. Let the day, in every home and in every heart, be one of gladness. Let gladness reign in the domestic joys that mark the day, in the giving forth of gifts and good wishes, the good wishes as acceptable as the gifts. Let gladness reign in the ministering to those whose lives are narrow and hard, especially to those children to whom it is one of the very few bright days of the year. Let gladness reign in the thought pre-eminently of him whom the day commemorates, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, born a human child in Bethlehem of Judea. For all our joys must trace their roots back to the manger cradle, all our best hopes and highest anticipations must brighten themselves in the light that shone there.

CHRISTMAS ALL THE YEAR.

A POST has sung about the happy Christmas time:

"The poor will many a care forget;
The debtor think not of his debt;
But as they each enjoy their cheer,
Wish it were Christmas all the year."

Christmas is of all seasons the time of good cheer; the time of hearty, loving thought for one another; the time of giving and forgiving, and in this sweet and real sense it may, and should, last all the year.

Shall it not be so with our young readers? Resolutions, however good they may be, will not be of much use, may be, but the Christ of the Christmas stands ready to be with us all the year round, and he can make us thoughtful; he can so really give himself to us that we shall love to give cheer and help to each other; he can make it easy to forgive, because he forgives much. Let us have the dear Christ in our hearts all the year, and then we shall have the Christmas spirit all the year, since

"The star that shines in Bethlehem
Shines still, and shall not cease;
And we listen still to the tidings
Of glory and of peace."

NEW CHRISTMAS BOOKS.

THE Christmas books become hand-somer every year. We thought that the enterprising Worthington Publishing Company had last year reached the perfection of handsome books for the little folk. But this year they have surpassed themselves. The following books are really works of art, and instead of the jingling "Mother Goose" rhymes, we have simple and dainty poems, which, with the pictures, will refine and cultivate the taste of the young readers fortunate enough to become the possessors of these books.

The first one we notice is "From Meadow-Sweet to Mistletoe," by Mary A. Lathbury—an elegant large quarto, with numerous beautiful fine pictures. Price \$2.50. Both pictures and poems are by the accomplished young lady, whom thousands of Chautauquans will remember as the writer of several ringing Chautauquan songs. Each double page contains on the right hand the picture of some natural object, flowers, or birds, or butterflies, and on the left a charming little picture allegory, which is described in such verses as all young people will love. The pictures are produced by photogravure process on a tinted ground—very graceful and elegant. We are especially charmed with that of the babes in a shell sailing o'er the wide, wide sea, and that entitled "Angels."

Another beautiful book is "Christmas Elves; or, The Day Fairies," by Agnes Carr Sage. It is a somewhat smaller quarto of 128 pages. Price \$1.75. It tells how the fairies, Monday, Tuesday, and the rest, came to the little lame Lisa Kinkle, and told her wonderful stories that beguiled the weariness

of the sick girl's imprisonment. It is intended for younger children than either the last or next mentioned book, and the pretty illuminated cover and droll pictures will fascinate the little folk.

"Under Blue Skies," by Mrs. S. J. Brigham, is another dainty book of poetry with numerous coloured pictures. The blending of flower life and child life in both pictures and poems is very gracefully done. Price \$2.00.

For older readers we have from the same House a stout octavo of 350 pages, entitled "How? or, Spare Hours Made Profitable for Boys and Girls." By Kennedy Holbrook. Price \$2.00. It is intended not merely for Christmas time, but for spare hours all the year round. It tells ingenious boys and girls how to make all manner of toys and puzzles and

games; how to perform simple experiments, and the like. The following may serve as specimens of the many things young folks are taught how to do:—to make Christmas presents—a large variety; to make leather work, and papier mache and repoussé work; to make and stock an aquarium; to make a camera obscura, a panorama, a windmill, a yacht, a boomerang, an Æolian harp, etc.; to make and operate simple electrical apparatus, and a hundred things besides. Numerous pictures explain just how it is done. The book will develop the inventive genius and constructive skill of any boy or girl, and will make them familiar with the laws of nature and principles of mechanics.

These books are all published by the Worthington Co., New York, and will be sent post paid for the above marked prices by William Briggs: Methodist Publishing House, Toronto.

A CHRISTMAS-GREETING.

WHILE the bells ring out notes sweeter and grander than on other days, while songs are merrier and thrill with a richer music, while hearts beat quicker and pulses throb with a warmer glow, while all the world feels the impulse of a new and bounding gladness, we join our voice in the general jubilation, and wish to all our readers the merriest, gladdest Christmas they have ever known. May the thought of the blessed Christ-child in the manger, whose birth into the world enkindled the angelic rapture, awaken every heart to gratitude and loftiest praise.



A REAL CHRISTMAS.

ALL the children, as they passed Mr. Christian's shop, stopped and looked at the array of good things arranged in fancy boxes, and especially at the row of Christmas-trees standing outside on the pavement.

"That's mine," said little Jenny Paradine, pointing to one at the end of the row.

"Ah, that's yours, is it?" said the grocer, Mr. Christian himself, who happened to be leaning against the door-way.

"It's neither too big nor too little," said Jenny; "and it's all roundy, and so green! Yes, that's the one I'll take."

"I suppose I am to keep it for you, eh?" said Mr. Christian. "You are not going to take it back with you!"

"No, sir," said Jenny, politely. "I'll take it the day before Christmas, sir. Phil will come for it, if I ask him. And by that time all the things will have grown out on it, I suppose."

"Grown out on it?" said Mr. Christian questioningly. "What do you mean by that, eh?"

"Why the dolls and the candies and toys and cakes," said Jenny, not at all abashed by the fact that the other children had gone on, and that she was left to talk to Mr. Christian alone. "There's one in a toy-store down the street—it's just covered!"

"Bless the child!" said Mr. Christian, looking at her in amazement. "So you think the things grow on the trees, do you? Well, well!"

"They grow on in a night," said

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