

MY STORY THIS WEEK.

FOR several weeks Peter had been "saving up." It wasn't easy to save much when one sold only a few papers, and when there were three mouths to be filled every day, and only Peter and mother to earn anything. And mother's work did not bring much money when she had to make cotton gowns for a dollar and a quarter a dozen.

Peter felt the care of his family; but he had determined that Christmas Day he had a right to a real treat for himself and for his chum, Tom Bird, pink and white ice-cream; it was to be a twenty-cent plate, and cake with frosting all over. Fifty cents must be raised for this fine spread and every day Peter jingled the coins in his pocket and then counted them.

The day before he had the needed sum all in pennies, and Christmas Eve he went whistling up the stairs full of joy. But his whistle soon changed when he entered the room that was kitchen, dining-room, sewing-room and living-room all in one.

His brave mother was sitting with her head bowed on the table sobbing. "Why mother, what's the matter?" The poor mother lifted her head and made an effort to check her tears. "It is the Christmas Eve," she said, "and no tree and no present for the little one there," pointing to the inside room where Gretel was sleeping. "It is the first time we have had no Christmas. The father always used to bring the tree home on Christmas eve with candles and toys, and a fine cake too, and the little one will never know a Christmas now."

"Now cheer up mother, and never mind," said Peter, as a sudden idea came into his mind. "Just supposing somebody should bring us a tree now." "No, no," said the sad woman, "there's no one." "I must be off a minute," Peter declared, "to see Tom Bird, but I'll be back in an hour. Now, mother, go to bed, for you are tired."

Peter ran down the stairs again, and went to Tom Bird first. "It's all up for tomorrow, Tom," he said. "I can't treat. You see I'm the only man now, and I must buy some Christmas things for my little sister." Then he was off quickly to make his purchases before stores and markets closed. He soon reappeared on the narrow stairs, carrying a big bundle and a tiny green tree. He put them down outside the door to make sure that the room was empty.

When he found his mother had gone to bed, he softly brought in his package. The baby tree was planted in a tin cup on the table, two red candles were fastened upon it, and on the top a beautiful gilt angel. A small rubber doll with a knit gown was laid on one of the branches, and a strip of apple cake wrapped in brown paper, on another.

"Won't she be surprised?" he said, and he too crept into bed and slept, to dream of trees reaching to the sky glittering with a hundred stars.

The mother was up early the next morning. Peter was awake too, to enjoy the surprise. "Oh my! Oh my!" he heard her saying. "Gretel, Gretel, come quick and see the beautiful Christmas tree." When Gretel jumped about the tree with screams of delight, Peter jumped for joy too, for he was glad and happy, as those who make others happy always are.

MY QUESTIONS THIS WEEK.

1. What is the meaning of Christmas day?
2. Where was Jesus born?
3. To whom was his birth announced?
4. Which is better, to give or receive?

I AM LEARNING
TO-DAY

ABOUT



JESUS the KING

MY PRAYER THIS WEEK.

Oh God! We praise Thee for Thy greatest gift to us, Thy dear Son, our loving Saviour.