

happen,' said the cross little candle in a whisper.

'Yes; but wait!' replied the other. 'Just shine your brightest all the time.'

'I won't,' snapped the cross one.

When evening came, ranged all round the tree were happy boys and girls. Soon every bough on the great tree blossomed with little lights. Some of the flames were faint, but many were bright. When the little white candles were lighted, the cross one just sputtered a minute and then went out. The other shone so brightly that a gentleman standing near said:

'Oh! What a brilliant little candle—but it is almost out of sight among the green branches. We ought to put it where it can be seen better.'

'Put it on the very tip-top,' said a little lady.

And that is where they did put it—on the very tip-top of the tree where it nodded and gleamed in answer to the smiling faces all around it.

### Keeping Jesus's Birthday.

(Margaret C. Brown, in 'North-Western Christian Advocate'.)

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.

### Edna's Stocking.

(By Elizabeth Ferguson Seat, in the  
'Tribune Sunday Magazine'.)

Edna rummaged in the box where the limited supply of family stockings were kept, but found it hard to decide which she should take.

'I s'pose I can take any of 'em.

Mother said the family wouldn't need to hang up any because Santa Claus could never find his way up five flights back.'

The child held up a sock belonging to her brother Earl and inspected it critically; then she searched with suspicious fingers one of her mother's and two belonging to her sister Elvina, only to lay them all aside with a sigh. Then she took her own, a new pair, but so little and short! After a minute's thought, she brightened. 'I'll take 'em both; one wouldn't be worth his trouble.'

It was almost dark, but the different members of the family had not yet come in from their day's work. Slipping a gray shawl over her head, and tucking the stockings in the pocket of her apron, she went as quickly as possible down the stairs and out to the street, upon which the gray mists of a wintry Christmas Eve were falling. Taking a short cut through an alley she soon came out upon Avondale

ave. The imposing structures of brick and stone, the large, snow-covered grounds, the clumps of evergreens, were all splendid and made her heart beat faster, for she had determined that in one of those palaces, somewhere, her Christmas stocking should be hung.

'This one's sure to be on his route,' she whispered, and with firm step walked up to a front door through whose ground-glass surface the light filtered cheerfully. Standing on tiptoe, she placed her finger upon the button and kept it there until the door was jerked open by a man who seemed frightened.

'Why do you ring like that?' he demanded in astonishment at the tiny figure under the trailing shawl. 'What do you want?'

'To see the lady of the house,' she replied firmly.

A boy standing back in the hall laughed. 'Here, mother,' he called mischievously, 'you're wanted. Be quick about it!'

A sweet woman in a red gown



### Blessed Christmas.

(By Carolyn S. Bailey, in 'Congregationalist and Christian World'.)

How many shining tapers to light a Christmas tree,  
How many toys and dollies for little folks to see,  
How many prancing reindeer to dash across the snow,  
How many little stockings all hanging in a row,  
How many merry carols, how many presents, say—  
To make for little children a blessed Christmas day?

Ah, listen, once on Christmas there came a baby boy,  
The stars his Christmas tapers, and mother's love his joy,  
With only hay to wrap him and cattle by his bed,  
And yet he heard the angels come singing overhead.  
A very little loving and grateful hearts away  
Will make for little children a blessed Christmas day.

