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Courier Junior Department,
Ottumwa, Iowa.

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EDITOR
MATILDA DEVEREAUX

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Dear Juniors: A happy, happy New Year to every one who chances to read this page. A happy New Year means a happy day, every day. The Courier Junior force is exceedingly happy and this happiness is due to the success of the 1917 Christmas Stocking club.

Some idea of the extent of the good done by the Stocking club members of whom there were many hundreds, may be gleaned from the fact that 1,027 pairs of stockings made glad that many boys and girls.

All of the Stocking club members were not little ones. Many of those who have reached maturity, some of whom remember the days of a childhood that was not blessed with some of the things that the child heart craves at Christmas time, gave generously to help some other "kiddies" have a happy Christmas by joining the Stocking club.

The work of sorting out these stockings and sending them to the children to whom they were given was a work of love. The happiness that shone in the faces of the little ones as the Junior Santa Claus called at their homes, made the task a pleasant one.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS.

You know everyone should make some good "resolves" on New Year's day. We think the following resolutions might be followed with excellent results:

No. 1—That we will belong to the 1918 Christmas Stocking club.

No. 2—That we will be boosters for the 1918 Christmas Stocking club.

No. 3—That we will obey our parents and teachers.

No. 4—That we will work hard in every Junior contest.

No. 5—That we will study hard and never be tardy at school or absent.

THREE PRIZE WINNERS.

The Christmas Story contest proved to be an excellent one and all the stories are published today. The judges have decided that the following juniors are entitled to prizes: Maxine Wiegand, Minnie May Duffield and Edward Robert Canny of Eldon.

A SPECIAL CONTEST.

We want the Juniors to write compositions on the Red Cross. Stories of some of the local chapters or a history of the Red Cross will be accepted. The reward will be a membership in the Red Cross, which, of course, entitles the winner to a Red Cross pin.

CONTEST SUBJECTS.

We all want the Juniors to send in school compositions and other stories, besides the ones on the subjects we suggest. Sometimes children can write better compositions when choosing their own subjects. We especially want letters and ancestor stories. To encourage originality and variety in the juniors' work the following list is given:

School compositions.
Ancestor stories.
Interesting letters.
Book reviews.
Unusual stories.
Current events.
Soldier stories related by veterans and retold by juniors.

Select prizes from among the following: Book, box of letter paper, doll, box of school supplies, box of candy or a knife.

ANOTHER CONTEST.

We also want the Juniors who think the other subjects are too hard to write on one of the following subjects.

The Story of a Nickel.
My Best Friend.
A Pet Dog.
Corn and Apples.
Sweet Potatoes and Cotton.
A letter.

Select prizes from among the following: Box of candy, football, roller skates, doll, knife or book.

ALL ABOUT PRIZES.

We do wish the Juniors would acknowledge their prizes.

If any Junior has ever failed to receive a prize after his or her name appeared in this paper, it is because the wrong address has been given us. When we say wrong address we especially refer to incomplete addresses. All city Juniors should put their street number and all Juniors living in the country should put their box number or failing to have a box send in their parents' names.

Helen Corrigan—A School Composition—A Bad Habit Cured.

Dear Junior: I am sending you one of my school compositions, the name is, "A Bad Habit Cured."

A monkey who had acquired the bad habit of smoking cigarettes one day found what he thought a great treat. "A cigarette, and already lighted. How lucky I am. I never saw a red cigarette before. My land, what is the use of me standing and talking about it? I'll take a puff. My, how good, guess I'll have another. What was it that popped? Who is shooting at me? Oh, my nose! my nose! it's burning off. Oh, now, I know, someone is playing a joke on me.

"Well, you watch me, I will never smoke another cigarette as long as I live."

This story teaches us that everything is not what we think it is, and never grab up anything until we know what we are grabbing.

Well, I will close for this time, hoping to see my letter in print.

Your Junior friend,
Helen E. Corrigan, age 12.
121 West Myrtle street,
Ottumwa, Iowa.

Christmas Gifts Astray

Frances Harmer.

Edna Bright and Susie Westover looked at each other. They always looked at each other as they met, and never very kindly. Susie, entering or leaving the office of Blair & Farrell, where she was a stenographer, finding her first position hard, would look almost resentfully at Edna, calling for her father, Dr. Bright, whose office faced the Blair & Farrell office.

"I don't like the look of that girl," Edna said sometimes to her father as she skilfully steered the little electric car, "she has such a frown."

"I haven't noticed it," her father would reply.

"I don't like that girl," Susie would confide to her mother and sister, when, tired, perhaps from hanging to a strap, she entered the shabby little apartment where her mother and an invalid sister made home for her. "She's always so beautifully dressed, and so superior looking!"

"Well, she isn't superior," Carrie would say lovingly.

They had—but they did not know it—a mutual friend. Edna's godmother, Mrs. Oswald Gray, was the widow of Susie's father's one-time employer. Mrs. Gray kept up a kindly habit of sending the youngest Westover child a little gift every Christmas. It was always a very useful gift.

Oddly enough, out of some fifty purchases made by Mrs. Gray at one big department store, these two went astray!

Christmas was cold, bright, snowy. Edna Bright, singing a Christmas carol as she came down the stairs, was met with affectionate interest by her father and mother, her elder sister Grace, and her twin brothers, George and Henry. Her place was crowded with gifts.

"This must be from godmother," said Edna, when her mother's little evening gown (white silk), with pink rosebuds embroidered on it), Henry's box of candy, George's large bouquet of violets, her father's little gold bracelet watch, and many other charming things had been examined and praised. "I wonder what it can be."

She opened a long, flat box, and drew out—a stout, serviceable house dress of purple calico!

It was a nice calico, strong, "well covered," quite unlikely to fade or wear out in a hurry.

"Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh!"

They were five indignant, horrified "Oh's."

"There's some mistake!" cried Grace. "She always send such beautiful, appropriate things!"

"See if it is meant for you, sister?" suggested George.

Edna, half disappointed, half amused, drew out a card.

"For my dear god-daughter, hoping she will wear it for her godmother's sake," she read. "Yes, it's for me! Does she mean it for a domestic science course?"

"No! One has dainty bungalow aprons and caps for that," asserted Grace. "It's a mistake."

"I don't see how we can set it right," said Mrs. Bright, busy at the coffee urn. "One can hardly ask her if she meant to send a calico gown."

"It's a mistake," insisted Grace. "This is for some poor person, and probably that poor person has Edna's present!"

Then, with a private motive, she changed the conversation.

"Every one going to church?" she asked.

"Every one," said Dr. Bright promptly, as they scattered, laden with gifts.

Meanwhile, long blocks away, a humbler home was enjoying Christmas in a less profuse fashion.

"This is from you, mother," cried Susie, unwrapping the second volume of Caesar from its papers. "I am so glad! Now I can study in the evenings again."

Next she unrolled some lengths of crochet edging.

"Thank you so much, Clara." She smiled at the sister, whose couch had been brought close to the table. "It's from the best sister in the world."

"To the best," Clara smiled back.

There were five other gifts. A little box which had come from registered mail was the last.

"From Sharpless & Kent!" remarked Susie. "Who could have sent me anything from them?"

She opened the packet. A purple morocco case revealed, on a white velvet ground, an exquisite little crescent of gold, set with small but fine pearls.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!"

Three exclamations of delight filled the tiny room.

"I never dreamed of anything so lovely!" cried Susie. "Do you think it can be for me?"

She saw a tiny card, bent from its folding round the morrocco case.

"With best wishes from Mrs. Gray."

"She's always sent such useful, plain things," remarked Mrs. Westover, pouring out the coffee. "I am glad she chose something ornamental for a change. It is really most kind of her to remember us at all."

"It makes me happy that her present is pretty. It isn't the cost," Susie said happily, "but I feel as if she knew me—which she doesn't—when she can choose for me a lovely thing like this. I must let the girls see it tomorrow."

The day wore pleasantly on, but soon after the return of Susie and Mrs. Westover from church a telegram came!

They stared at it a minute before Mrs. Westover rather tremblingly opened the fateful yellow envelope.

"Mistake in gifts return pin to ten Rosedale avenue. Gray."

Edna, hidden to rest after dinner, went to her room. The calico gown lay on her bed. She took it up curiously.

"Hideous thing!" she thought, and then an idea came to her.

"I'm sorry for any girl who wears those things all the time."

She sat down and began to think rather more earnestly than usual. She fingered the stiff calico. Mrs. Gray's beneficence was well known, and Edna felt sure that some one had been selected to wear the purple calico. If so, what was her own gift?

A tap at her door roused her.

"Miss Edna," said the second maid. "There's a girl at the door with a little box that she says she was told to bring here; and she said to show some one this."

So Mrs. Gray's telegram was read by Edna, too.

"Oh," said Edna, "ask her to come up here."

When Susie saw Edna her face stiffened and hardened a little. Odd that this girl was the one to whom she had to yield her pearl pin!

But no one could resist Edna's greeting.

"Oh, do sit down," she cried, as she grasped the situation. "I am so sorry you had to take this long trip!

"I don't understand,' she went on, while Susie gave a swift glance round the pretty, dainty room. "How did Mrs. Gray know?"

"I don't understand, either," replied Susie. "We had only the telegram."

Then suddenly Edna understood. Grace had probably talked to Mrs. Gray.

Susie said nothing about her own gift, and Edna with a quick movement flung her coat over the purple calico.

"Then I must have your gift," she said, with a smile. "Please wait a minute."

She ran out of the room, breathlessly asked the maid to make tea, and then, with her mind made up, returned to her guest.

"I hope you won't mind that I wore these," she said, as she put a string of Venetian beads into Susie's hands, "and I hope you like them."

She could not—no, she could not—offer the purple calico in exchange for the pearl pin. This girl was about her own age, as fond of pretty things as she herself. The purple calico had taught Edna something.

"Oh, were these for me?" cried Susie, her face lightening, until the serious expression gave way to a soft radiance.

"Oh, I like these almost as well—quite as well," she added hastily, "and I had been afraid"—She stopped in time, but Edna understood.

(Continued next week)

ALL ready for the party and anxious to go in a best frock is this little maid. The model is of old rose crepe de chine trimmed with hand-crocheted edging in white silk.

EDWARD ROBERT CANNY—THE MISSION OF THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING CLUB.

The mission of the Christmas Stocking club is to help little ones whose parents are too poor to give them a Merry Christmas, or little orphans who have no one to make them happy on Christ's birthday.

Many little children are made happy on Christmas when they are given a nice warm pair of well filled stockings for possibly their own mother has sadly told them that Santa can't come to their house as they are too poor, so you see one mission is to bring joy and happiness into the homes of the poor, and too a nice new pair of stockings is more comfortable than a pair of old ones so you see the club also brings comfort.

And when poor little children are sad because of no presents the club sends presents and the sadness is driven away and they are joyful because you know all of us little children look forward to Christmas and Santa Claus and how disappointed we would be if no Santa came to our house and mamma says the Christmas Stocking club is the way Santa visits many poor little children's homes in Ottumwa to keep them from being disappointed.

Edward Robert Canny, age 8.
Eldon, Iowa.

EDNA HOFFMAN—WHY THE CHRISTIAN WORLD CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS.

Dear Juniors:

I thought I would write a story about why the Christian world celebrates Christmas.

A long time ago God told Mary he was going to give her a son. He told her to give him the name of Jesus.

Jesus is our savior. Jesus is called the son of God.

We celebrate Christmas because it is Christ's birthday. My teacher's name is Miss McGaw. I am in the fifth grade.

Edna Hoffman,
Libertyville, Iowa, Bo No. 56.

MAXINE WIEGAND—CHRISTMAS IN OTHER LANDS.

I thought I would write about Christmas in other lands. The day before Christmas in Norway is a busy one. Out of doors the men are preparing the Yule wood which must be perfectly dry, cut into even, smooth sticks and placed under the bench that extends the whole length of the living room. After this has been done the men go up on the mountain side and cut down a load of fir trees. The branches, except a tuft at the top are stripped off. These trees are then set up all around the low house. A pretty sight they make if the snow falls upon them in the night. In the house the women are flying about scouring and decorating the floor, furniture and walls. They suspend from the ceiling a crown of straw from which dangles shreds of brightly colored cloth of green, red and blue. The floor is covered with wisps of rye straw in memory of the stable in which Christ was born. Great oblong loaves of Yule bread are browning in the stove. The children have gleaned the grain from the harvest fields long ago and now they fasten the sheaves to posts and laugh to see the birds eat. Now it is growing dark and the children must go with the women to the cow house. They give the cattle their best forage and say as they put a new collar on her neck. "Merry Christmas, little one."

Soon the fires are lighted and the merriment begins. The children keep running to the door as if they are expecting some one and clap their hands in delight when they hear a bell ring just outside. They run to open the door and welcome an old man and woman. The woman carries a basket of sealed packages. She hands out each package to the one whose name it bears and when the basket is empty she would disappear only to return with another basket.

In Sweden on Christmas eve the fathers and mothers tell their children legends of the Christmas tree. One of the oldest ones is this:

Before the Swedes ever heard of Christ they thought the world to be a tree with its top in heaven. During their lives people went up or down the tree according to their deeds. Yggdrasil the world tree was always green with far spreading branches so the Norway fir was taken as its symbol. When the Christian religion came to the county the people said that Yggdrasil should be the sign of the birth of Christ.

There is another legend which accounts for the candles. In the older days two true lovers were killed in spite of all the efforts to save them. From the spot where the blood fell sprang up a fire tree known as the service tree. The boys and girls believe that on every Christmas eve tiny lights burn on this service tree and that no matter how the wind rages.

Maxine Wiegand, age 11,
918 N. Court St., Ottumwa, Ia.

AILEEN ECTON — THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.

Dear Juniors:

I thought I would write you a letter for the Christmas contest.

I am going to write you about "The First Christmas."

One evening as Mrs. Witch sat at the table reading the paper she happened to glance and see "Baby very ill, not expected to live; people very poor."

"My," she exclaimed, "that's Jenny's baby, my own daughter, whom I have been looking for for so long. Look I have all these riches and she not even hardly a crumb of bread. I must send for her at once."

She got up and rang the bell for the maid. She did not come. She rang again, but no one came, so she went out into the hall where she found the nurse crying as though her heart would break.

"Why," said the old woman. "Why, enough," she said. "My poor little one year old daughter at home almost starved and she has never know what a Christmas is yet," and she sobbed again.

"Don't worry, she will see it in the morning. But first you must help me to get back my daughter and her three children, who are almost starving."

"Very willingly," the nurse replied.

"Hurry and get your things on while I get my muff" said the old lady.

In a little while the nurse came back looking very happy.

"Come on, we will hurry so we can get back before dark."

They got into the auto and were off in no time. At last they came to a place where the streets were dark and dirty. They drove up the street to Slave avenue, and stopped at an old boarding house. They went in where an old lady was sitting around the fireplace trying to keep warm. "Good woman," said the old lady, "could you tell me where Mrs. Eliote lives.

"Yes," the housekeeper replied. She boards in the coal shed in our back yard. "Thank you," said the old lady.

They all went out in the back yard and there was the poor lady with her baby and children lying on the ground almost dead. They picked them up and carried them all into the car.

When they got home they took the best care of them and on Christmas day they were all happy for this was the first Christmas any of the children had had. Christmas eve the old lady left a trained nurse in care of the sick and went down town and bought all the presents she could think of and gave them to the nurse and besides she gave her a month's wages of $100 becau she was so rich and the nurse was so poor. So that So that Christmas two families were made happy by one old loving woman.

Aileen Ecton, age 12.
402 N. Milner St., Ottumwa, Ia.,
Seventh grade.

MARGARET OLIVER — THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.

Dear Juniors:

As I have never written to you before I thought I would write a story about "The First Christmas.

It was the night before Christmas that the Christ child was born. The shepherds were lying upon the ground. They saw a wonderful light. It was shining directly over the stable where the Christ child lay. The shepherds were afraid. A host of angels came down from the sky and told them not to be afraid for they brought good news. They said that the Christ child was born and that the bright star shone directly over the stable where he lay. They sang "Glory to God in the Highest and on earth, peace good will to man."

Margaret Oliver, age 11,
Selma, Ia., R. No. 1.

MISS Dorothy Klewer of the St. Nicholas ice rink in New York, speaking for her famous skating Airedale "Lizzie," proclaims the dog the champion of the world on ice. "Lizzie" isn't a fancy skater, but can speed well.

LOIS MOORE — THE STORY OF THE LITTLE KING'S BIRTH.

Dear Juniors:

The Christian world celebrates Christmas in memory of Christ's birth, because he was born as a savior of the world and gift to men.

About two thousand years ago Joseph and Mary were going up to Jerusalem. They stopped in Bethlehem to stay all night. There was no room at the inn so they had to stay in a stable. While they were there Christ was born and they named him Jesus because he was born to save the world.

The shepherds were in their fields and when they saw the light they were afraid. The angels came to them and said "Fear not, for I bring you tidings of great joy. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a savior which is Christ the Lord." The angels told the shepherds that they would find him in a manger. And a multitude of angels sang "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will toward men."

The wise men followed the star of Bethlehem which shone over the stable where he lay, and they found Mary, Joseph and the babe lying in the manger roughly lined with hay.

Christmas is celebrated by the Christian world and some non Christians because the Christians taught them that western nations keep it. Because Christ was a gift to men we give gifts and sing praise in memory of his birth.

Lois Moore, age 10,
Ottumwa, Iowa.

FELICIA ZENOR — THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

Christmas is the anniversary of the birth of Christ. It is observed on the 25th day of December. The celebration dates from the fourth and fifth centuries. Among the Romans certain Christian practices were adapted from an older pagan feast in honor of of the birth of the sun or Sol.

Among people of Germania ancestry, including the English, the celebration of the Christmas season, with holly, wassail, mistletoe and the Yule log, are relics of an old pagan festival commemorating the shortest day of the year. The custom of making presents at Christmas time is associated in the popular mind with the gifts presented to Christ by the wise men of the east, but in reality at least so far as the English people are concerned, it is derived also from heathen usage. The custom of decorating Christmas trees has been traced from Rome to Germany, from Germany to England and from England to the United States. The prejudice against Christmas observance, as too strongly tinctured with the heathen tradition, was so strong in Scotland that until recently children in Presbyterian families had no Christmas. Even yet it is not a popular holiday in Scotland. In New England at an early day it was considered inappropriate to celebrate Christ's birthday with feasting, gift giving and jollity. Many children of today think there is a real Santa Claus that brings their presents to them.

Felicia Zenor, age 13,
420 N. Milner St., Ottumwa, Ia.

CHARLES FIELD — THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.

Dear Juniors:

Christ was born in Bethlehem. Joseph and May were coming to pay their tax. There was an inn but it was so crowded that they had to sleep in a barn in which the cattle were eating.

That night little Jesus was born. The shepherds on the hill were watching their sheep when all at once angels appeared and sang the beloved words, "Peace on earth, good will to men." So they started to Bethlehem and at last they saw the well known Jesus.

The wise men from the east saw the star and followed it and at last they too were at Jesus feet and laid rich presents there. Christ stayed on earth thirty-three and one-half years.

Christmas gifts should be given to the poor on Christmas. We ought to sing Christmas carols and make everybody happy.

Charles Field, age 10,
Ainsworth, Iowa.

MINNIE MAY DUFFIELD—HOW THE OTHER WISE MAN FOUND THE KING.

Dear Juniors:

When Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the time when Herod was king there came from the east of Jerusalem three wise men. They said "Where is he that is born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east and are come to worship him."

When Herod heard this he was very puzzled and so were all the people of Jerusalem.

King Herod called together all the scribes and chief priests of the people and asked them where the Christ child was to be born, and they said: "In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet."

Then Herod talked secretly with the wise men and asked them at what time the star had appeared. He told them to go to Bethlehem and seek the Christ child and when they had found and worshipped the child to come and tell him where Jesus was that he might worship him also.

Then the wise men departed from Herod and the same star they had seen in the east went before them till it came and stood over the place where the young child was. Then the wise men went into the stable and found the Christ child lying in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes and they fell down and worshipped him and gave him gifts of frankincense, gold and myrrh.

They had been warned by God in a dream not to go back to Herod, so they departed to their own country in another way.

The Bible gives a rather meager account of the Magi as to where they came from and where they went after the visit to the Christ child. But Lew Wallace gives us such a vivid and beautiful description of their meeting and their journey on their wonderful camels to Bethlehem that it seems almost inspired.

Henry Van Dyke tells the legendary story of "The Other Wise Man." A wealthy and learned Persian who sold his magnificent home and his many possessions for three costly gems which he meant to present to the Christ child and started to follow the star. Near Babylon he found a dying Hebrew by the wayside and spent several hours ministering to him, so he missed the three wise men at the place where they all were to meet and thus had to part with one of his gems to fit himself with a caravan with which to cross the desert. When he reached Bethlehem Joseph and Mary had taken the child and started to Egypt, so that he missed him.

He parted with one of his jewels to bribe one of Herod's soldiers to spare the life of a baby boy.

From this time on he wandered in search of the Jews until the day of the crucifixion he parted with the last of his gems to save a beautiful girl from a life of slavery.

During the darkness and earthquake which followed the crucifixion he was struck with a falling tile from a building and as he was dying, the girl he had saved, bending over him, semed to hear a voice like still small music from a distance and the other wise man answered it thus:: "Not so, my Lord! For when, saw I thee an hundred, and fed thee? Or, thirsty and gave thee drink. When, saw I thee a stranger, and took thee in? Or naked, and clothed thee? When, saw I thee sick or in prison, and came unto thee? Three and thirty years have I looked for thee, but I have never seen thy face nor ministered to thee, my king." Again, the maid heard the sweet voice very faint and far away "Verily, I say unto thee, inasmuch as thou hast done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, thou hast done it to me."

The journey was ended. The other wise man had found the king.

Minnie May Duffield, age 11,
Prairie avenue, Ottumwa, Ia.

ISABELLE WATTS — "WHY WE CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS."

Dear Juniors:

We celebrate Christmas because it is Christ's birthday. He was born in Bethlehem. His mother and father's names were Mary and Joseph. Mary took her first born baby and wrapped it in swaddling clothes and laid him in the manger because there was no room in the inn. In the same country there were some shepherds watching their flock. An angel came down upon them and told them about the first born baby. The shepherds went to Bethlehem to see the baby. They found the baby lying in the manger. After the eighth day some angels brought the message from God to name the baby Jesus. Soon he became a great man.

Isabelle Watts, age 11,
108 N. Davis St., Ottumwa, Iowa.

EMMA ROLINSON—VERY MUCH OF A PATRIOT.

Dear Juniors:

I will write you a few lines about the war. I think the Germans are mean for fighting against our flag.

In 1861 my mamma's great grandfather and my great grandfather and grandfather all were in war. My grandfather's name is Daniel King. He lived in Ottumwa until five years ago and he went to the south and died. My Uncle Roy is gone to war now. He is over in France. My papa belongs to the Red Cross. I hope to see our boys not to fight no more and come home for I think it is too bad.

I love the red, white and blue and will stand by it.

Emma Rolinson, age 8,
1220 Center Ave., tOtumwa, Ia.

FERN WARREN—THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.

Dear Juniors:

As I have never written before I thought I would write about "The First Christmas."

One winter night more than nineteen hundred years ago some poor shepherds were watching their flocks near a little village called Bethlehem which is in a far away country called Palestine.

Suddenly there came a wonderful light in the sky. They looked up and saw an angel flying toward the earth saying "Fear not, for I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

And they found in the manger in Bethlehem a little babe. And when they saw him they fell down on their knees and worshipped him.

Fern Warren, age 8,
Drakesville, Iowa, R. 4.

LUCILLE LYON — THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.

Dear Juniors:

I thank the Courier Junior very much for my book "Hans Brinker or the Silver Skates." This time I'm going to write about "The First Christmas."

Not far from Jerusalem there lies a little town called Bethlehem. On the hills nearby flocks of sheep and goats are pastured. To this day there may be seen fenced in portions of ground where sheep are kept over night.

One night, long ago shepherds were watching the flocks near Bethlehem when suddenly a bright, shining light appeared in the sky. The whole heaven was one blaze of light where a moment before the stars only had twinkled. The shepherds were frightened. Some leaped to their feet, some sank to their knees.

But they looked up and saw a shining angel descending from heaven and he spoke to them and said: "Be not afraid; I am bringing you good news; to you is born today, in the city of David, a savior, which is Christ the Lord."

That very night Jesus was born in Bethlehem and those shepherds were the first to hear about it. The angel told them to go to Bethlehem, and find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

Then the whole sky was filled with angels who sang "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

When they had praised God the angels returned to heaven and left the shepherds alone.

The shepherds then arose and hasten to Bethlehem to see the Savior.

They found him lying in a manger wrapped in loose clothes.

Joseph and Mary had gone to their native town, which was Bethlehem, to pay their taxes.

When they arrived all the inns were full and they staid in a stall. That night Jesus was born.

Ever after we have celebrated the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, by thinking of others by gifts.

I will close by hoping to see my letter in print.

Lucille Lyon,
1018 N. Jefferson St., Ottumwa, Ia.

BIRNEY SHOEMAKER—COMPOSITION—IOWA.

Dear Juniors:

I am going to write on Iowa. It produces more grain and cattle than any other state. It produces many horses but not as many as Kentucky. The kinds of hay are timothy, blue grass, clover and alfalfa. Also much wild hay is raised.

The kinds of corn raised are red, yellow, white, kafir corn, white tip, ninety day corn and pop corn.

Holstein, Jersey and Durham cows are raised in large bunches. There are many different kinds of cows raised.

Des Moines is the capital in the south central part. It is also a large city for trade on account of the Des Moines river and is an important railroad center. It manufactures machinery, medicines and packs meat.

Sioux City is another large city in the western part of Iowa on the Missouri river.

It is an important trade and meat packing center. Sioux City is in Woodbury county and it is named after the Sioux Indians.

The kinds of trees raised are ash, elm, maple, birch, walnut, poplar, box elder, cottonwood, butternut, hickory, fir, red cedar and many varieties of oak The birds and animals known as coyotes, raccoons, wildcats, woodchucks, minks, otters, muskrats, gophers, gray squirrels, rabbits and jack rabbits, quails, partridges, ducks, geese, and prairie chickens are the large birds. The fish that are caught are pickerel, bass, perch, trout and catfish.

The third city in size is Davenport on the Mississippi river in the eastern part of the state of Iowa. It is in Scott county. It is also a great grain market and manufactures glucose, starch, machinery and flour.

Dubuque manufactures cars, and clothing. It also has large lumber mills.

Iowa was discovered by the French in 1673. In 1803 the United States bought from France a vast territory known as the Louisiana purchase.

Birney Shoemaker, age 12,
321 N. Weller St., Ottumwa.

HELEN M'CARTY — A BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS STORY.

Dear Juniors:

The people of Judea all have sheep. There were three brothers. The two old ones were strong. The youngest one was weak. The elder brother always tried to let the younger sleep as much as they could.

It was one cold winter night on the 25th of December. The little brother had to watch the sheep. He saw the strange light in the sky. He said "I will go and tell my brothers." He awoke them and said "See that strange light in the sky?" "Yes," said the brothers.

They followed it as the wise men had. The little brother wanted to go and said "I will take my little lamb along so that if the wolves get the flock, they will not get mine." He picked up the lamb in his arms and carried it to the empty and lonely barn where the new born king lay in the manger. The people were giving gold to the baby. The little boy said, "I have nothing to give but love." Then he looked in his arms and said, "Yes, I have my little lamb to give." It was quite hard to give up his little pet lamb. The only thing he had of his own. Then he said "I will give it." He laid the little lamb at the feet of the Christ child. The little Christ child seemed to say "You and your love are better than all the gold."

Helen McCarty, age 10,
Ottumwa, Ia., R. No. 1.

VERA LOUISE M'KEE—THE THREE WISE MEN.

Many, many years ago three wise men were watching their sheep at night. All at once a star shone very bright and soon an angel appeared. "Why dost thou not follow that star? Now is the time to follow before it gets too dim to follow. Off they set to see what they would find. And what did they find—a dear little baby lying in a manger.

How surprised they were for even the beasts kneeled to greet the baby. The baby, was born on Christmas day long, long ago and on that night it was a wonderful night. And even today we keep December 25th as Christmas day. And by giving presents to the Christ child is why we give presents now at Christmas time.

Vera Louise McKee, age 12,
Franklin School.