




**CHILDREN'S PAGE**



**An English Christmas**

When Eva and Wilfred looked out of the nursery window one morning, they clapped their hands with joy, for all the ground was white with snow.

They had never seen snow before in all their lives, for they had been born in Africa. Lately they had come to live with their grandfather, in England, and when the weather began to grow cold they had asked every day if Jack Frost and Tommy Snow would come soon.

"Tommy Snow has come at last," said their aunt. "After breakfast we will wrap ourselves up and go out and make his acquaintance. And then we will decorate the rooms with holly, for you know tomorrow is Christmas Day.

"Oh, that will be fun!" cried Wilfred.

"Do you remember last Christmas?" said Eva.

"Papa and mamma made a Christmas tree, to make it like an English Christmas. And we had turkey and plum-pudding, too."

Yes; and how surprised all the black people were; they had never seen a Christmas tree before, and they wondered what sort of a tree it could be that had flames growing on it instead of flowers."

"And everyone got a present off it," said Eva; "the little black children and all. I wonder what they would think if they could see this jolly white snow," cried Wilfred. "Please, Auntie; do let us go out at once."

So auntie took the two children out to see what the snow was like. Their grandfather's was a great house, with high walls all around it. Outside the walls there was a large park, full of beautiful trees, and a river ran through it, and wild deer lived beneath the trees.

The trees were all covered with fresh white snow, which sparkled in the sunshine, and the ground was spread with the soft white carpet. The children ran about and enjoyed their walk very much.

"Oh, look, Auntie; there is a deer," cried Wilfred. The pretty creature turned its head at the sound of Wilfred's voice.

"Hush," said auntie in a whisper, "they are very timid; let us stand still, and see what it will do." So they stood still and watched the deer. It ran down

to the river's brink, but the water was frozen hard. The deer put out a foot and stamped upon the ice, made a hole, and drank some water, and then started to run away.

Then auntie called gently, and held out a piece of bread she had brought for that purpose. The deer knew her voice, and came timidly up and took the bread from her hand. Then it scampered off in a great hurry, because it was half afraid of Eva and Wilfred, as they were strangers.

"The deer will soon learn to know you, too, if you bring them something to eat, and don't run after them and frighten them," said auntie.

As they were returning from their walk, they saw some of the game-keepers. One was carrying some dead hares strung on a pole, and one was leading a horse with a large dead stag on its back.

"Your uncle and his friends have been out shooting," said auntie. "We shall be having some venison for dinner soon. We shall not starve even though we are snowed up."

"When I grow big, will Uncle let me have a gun and go out and shoot, too?" asked Wilfred.

"I should not like to shoot the poor animals," said Eva. "I would rather run about and play with them."

When they reached the house, Wilfred got some crumbs to feed the poor little birds, who were so hungry they came flying to the window when they saw the food.

Then Wilfred went outside again, and got some of the men to tie a sheaf of corn to the top of a long pole stuck in the ground, and that made a fine feast for the poor hungry birds.

"I am afraid we shall not be able to walk to church today," said auntie, on Christmas morning. "the snow is so very deep. We must have the sledge out."

"Oh, that will be fun," cried the children; "we have never been in a sledge."

So the sledge was brought around to the door, and they were all well wrapped up in furs, and set off, the little bells on the horses making pleasant music as they glided along. The snow had drifted into heaps beneath the great bare trees in the park, and the roofs of the houses

in the village were covered with it. Everything was still and white. If Wilfred and Eva had never seen snow before, they were to see plenty of it now.

On the way home from church they left their auntie's Christmas presents at the houses of all the poor people in the village; and very glad the poor old women were of the warm blankets and petticoats, and the little children of the toys and plum-puddings.

Just outside the park gates they passed by some large sheds, where the poor sheep were huddling together to keep each other warm.

The sky was growing very dark, and large white flakes of snow were beginning to fall. The sheep seemed to know that more snow was coming, for they were making a great baa-baa-ing.

A little farther on they met the shepherd carrying a sheep in his arms.

Auntie stopped the sledge, and asked the shepherd if the sheep was ill.

"It's nearly frozen to death, Miss," said the shepherd; "the silly creature ran away from the others, and I found it an hour ago all by itself on the roadside; it had lost its way, the silly thing, and if I had not happened to come by it would have been dead by now.

"And do you think you will save it?"

"Yes, I hope so. I am going to take it to the house, and my wife will make a cup of hot strong tea, and pour it over its throat. I think that will bring it around."

The children laughed at the idea of giving sheep tea to drink, but their auntie told them that they often gave animals hot tea for medicine when they were ill.

The snow was coming down very thick and fast before they reached home, and they were glad enough to warm themselves by the great Christmas fire, and to enjoy the turkey and plum-pudding for dinner.

**The Evils of Gossip**

This talent runs mostly in the feminine sex. It is caused by jealousy or nothing to do to occupy their restless minds. It has caused many a woman's hair to be sore at the roots, also the loss of thousands of hairpins. Take my advice WOMEN, and cut out this useless luxury.

—CLARENCE HADLEY