

THE HICKORY DEMOCRAT

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Call 127 and Give Your Order Now.

No orders for ornamented Christmas Cakes taken after December 21st.

Telephoning Santa Claus



Hello, Santa! I'm Louise. Don't send me a dollie, please. Naughty mobile painted red. That's what I would like instead.

Seeing Santa Claus

By LAURA FROST ARMITAGE.

(Copyright, 1908, by American Press Association.)

EARL (to Ruth)—Oh, I just wish we could see him.
Fred—See whom?
Ruth—Why, Santa Claus. Earl and I have just been talking about him, and we were wishing we could get a peep at him once.
Gladys—Oh, I wouldn't like to!
Dorothy—Harry and I tried it last year. We came down and hid in the front hall, but papa found us and sent us to bed.
Fred (after thinking awhile)—I've thought of something. Santa Claus wouldn't come in if he should spy us, but if he thought we were not real children he might. Couldn't we fool



"SANTA WOULDN'T COME IN IF HE SHOULD SPY US."

him by making believe we were Mother Goose children right out of the book?

Dorothy—How could we do that?
Fred—We could dress like them and then stand perfectly still as if we were

made of wax or something, just the way you do in a tableau, you know. He might think it was some kind of a show of wax figures.

Earl—Oh, my! I couldn't keep as still as that.

Harry—You could if you really wanted to see Santa Claus.

Earl—Oh, I will! I will! See me! (Poses.)

Gladys—Will we have to stand so very long?

Fred—Oh, not very, very long! We must all be ready before 12 o'clock.

We must dress like Mother Goose children, and I'll fix you in your places; I'll be Boy Blue. We can find some dress-up clothes in the attic.

Harry—I think I'll be Jack Horner. I can have a pie.

Dorothy—I want to be Bopeep. A cane with a hook handle will do for a crook.

Gladys—May I be Miss Muffet?

Earl—What can Ruth and I be?

Fred—You might be Jack and Jill and carry a pail of water. An empty pail will do. Now let's be off and see what we can find. Then we'll go to bed, and I'll be awake, and after papa and mamma go upstairs I'll call you, and we'll come down very softly.

(Exeunt.)

II.

(Children come tiptoeing in in costume, stockings in hand.)

Fred—Now, we'll hang our stockings first. (All hang them.) Then we'll get into place. Bopeep, you stand here. Hold your crook so. Miss Muffet, you must sit on this footstool, and you must be eating. Put your spoon to your lips, so. Jack Horner, get into that corner and hold up your thumb with the plum on it. Jack and Jill, stand over here and take the pail between you. I will stand here and hold my horn to my mouth, so. Now, we mustn't move our eyes. It's getting late. Now, all ready! (All pose.)

Ruth (after awhile)—Oh, dear! This pail is so heavy even if it is empty.

All—Sh!

Gladys (after awhile)—How my arm aches!

All—Sh!

(Earl yawns aloud.)

All—Sh!

Harry—My thumb is tired of standing up.

Dorothy—I'm—so—sleepy (yawning).

All—Sh!

(Jack Horner's hand drops, then his head. Bopeep drops crook and leans against wall. Jill lets go of pail and slides to floor. Jack lets down the

said. Miss Muffet's head drops forward. Boy Blue's eyes close and horn falls. This rouses him for a moment, but his eyes soon close again, and he leans against the wall.)

Enter Santa Claus. (All fast asleep.)
Santa Claus—Ah! Well, well, well! Some of the children of my old friend, Mother Goose. But what are they doing here? (Walks about and looks at them closely.) Ah! I know these children. They're not Mother Goose's family. Ah! I see what they are up to. They're waiting to see me, and they don't want me to know them. But they can't fool this old fellow. Just as if he didn't know every child in the world. I've found children waiting for me many a time, but they always fall asleep and miss me. I'll fill the stockings, and won't they be surprised when they wake up and find they've missed me after all. (Fills stockings, then puts toy or candy into Miss Muffet's bowl and into Jack and Jill's pail.) Now I must be off. But I believe I'll try that horn of Boy Blue's once. (Blows and runs off, dropping horn near door. Children rouse up a little at sound, then fall back into former position.)

III.

Morning.—Fred (rousing)—Oh, I say! Wake up! What are you all asleep for?

Harry—Who's been asleep?

Dorothy (rubbing eyes)—Not I.

Gladys—I—was—almost asleep.

Earl (yawning)—Did—come?

Ruth (almost crying)—I was so sleepy. Did you all see him?

Others—Oh, no, no!

Fred—Well, I'm afraid we were all asleep. But I heard him. He blew on a big horn.

Harry and Dorothy—I heard him.

Gladys—And there's your horn, Fred, over by the door. He blew on that.

Ruth—See what's in our pail! (Holding it up.)

Gladys—And in my bowl!

Harry—And see the stockings!

All—Oh, oh, oh! (All run to get the stockings.)

Dorothy—Oh, why couldn't we have kept awake?

Fred—Well, we've missed him this time sure. But next year we'll try it again, and we'll all keep awake.

All—Yes, indeed, we will.

The Gift.

By FRANK H. SWEET.

(Copyright, 1908, by American Press Association.)

THE Christmas chimas are sounding on the air.

And as I sit and listen to their sweet,

Unearthly music, gone is every care,

Forgot is all the turmoil of the street.

The troubles that the path of man beset.

The vast anxieties of human life,

All fade away, and every fond regret

Is left in all their glad and joyous strife.

WHAT though I seem alone on this fair day,

From happy comradeship stand isolate,

With none to greet me as I walk my way.

To merely live I count a happy fate—

To merely listen to those joyous sounds

That thrum through the crisp of winter call

So free.

Although the merry-makers on their rounds

Pause not to think of or remember me.

IS'T not enough that on this Christmas morn,

This glad birth morn of him whose day it is,

My heart, but yesterday so sad, forlorn,

Doth open to the message that was his?

IS'T not enough to know that from above

The tidings of a sacrifice divine

Come as a gift of an eternal love

That I have but to take to make it mine?



The Christmas Prayer

An exchange remarks that the principal business of the Ananias Club is the enlargement of its quarters.

Subscribe for the Democrat; only \$1.00 a year.

"Hark! Here Santa Comes!"



LOOKING FOR SANTA CLAUS.

Why Saint Nicholas?

By ROBERT DONNELL.

(Copyright, 1908, by American Press Association.)

WHY is Santa Claus sometimes called St. Nicholas? For the most excellent reason that Nicholas is the real name of the saint.

Until comparatively recent years there was no Santa Claus at Christmas time.

When the old saint comes down the chimney Dec. 24, Christmas eve, and deposits gifts for the children in the suspended stockings he is just nineteen days behind time, for his true and proper time is Dec. 5, that being the eve of St. Nicholas day.

Just how Nicholas got to be the Christmas eve saint is not altogether clear, but those iconoclasts who dig into ancient matters are probing this secret. They have discovered, or claim to have discovered, that the Christmas eve Santa Claus really originated in America, being transported to England from New York.

In the saints' calendar Dec. 6 is St. Nicholas day. Nicholas was bishop of Myra, in Lycia. He is believed to have lived under the Emperors Diocletian and Constantine and is the patron saint of poor maidens, sailors, travelers, merchants and children.

Rich maidens, of course, are also quite willing to acknowledge him when he comes along with diamond dog collars, necklaces and tiaras.

Before the great religious reformation the custom of giving presents on St. Nicholas eve was general throughout Christian Europe.

When the worship of the saints was abolished the practice died out in England, where for about three centuries St. Nicholas failed to visit households on the evening of Dec. 5 to leave presents for good children.

By the way, it should be pointed out that Nicholas was noted even in infancy as a particularly good and pious child. Therefore his visits are not made to bad children—only to those whose parents can vouch for their good behavior during the previous year.

In Austria, Holland and Poland St. Nicholas eve is still observed. Good children get presents, secretly left in their shoes placed upon the hearth stone for the purpose or in their stockings hung from the mantel.

When New York was settled by Hollanders the devout Dutchmen brought over to America their religious customs, not forgetting that of St. Nicholas eve.

In old New Amsterdam the saint made his visits the night of Dec. 5, St. Nicholas day being celebrated by the settlers as a holiday.

In-time the Dutch were supplanted by the English. New Amsterdam became New York, and the old St. Nicholas eve gift giving custom was reintroduced into England from New York.

But in England the custom of giftmaking on Christmas eve had grown up. There was, however, no Santa Claus ceremony. Gifts were made outright and without secrecy.

When St. Nicholas sailed back to England there was consternation among fond papas and mammams in the tight little isle.

"What! Shall we have two days of

gift giving and less than three weeks apart?" they cried.

Thrifty English parents, it is supposed, determined that one day of giving was enough, and so they simply transferred St. Nicholas to Christmas eve.

IRISH POINT OF VIEW.

It is a merry Christmas

When there is lots of snow,

For then through my good shovel

Some golden coin I know.

And 'tis a merry Christmas

When not a flake is seen,

For Christmas to the Irish

Is merry when it's green.

R. K. MUNKITTRICK.

An Editor's Love Letter.

Dear darling delinquent:—Our precious subscriber in arrears!

You are so shy! Do you think we have sold out and gone? No, little sugar-plum, we couldn't get away if we wanted to.

We are still at the old stand dishing out the news on sweet promises and bright expectation. They make an excellent diet, with a little pudding flavored with a word of encouragement to serve as dessert.

We are waiting and watching for thee, darling, our turtle dove. We long to hear thy gentle footsteps on the stairway below and hear the ring of the happy dollars in our office.

Dear one, we feel unusually sad and lonely without you, dear. Now, little pie crust, will you, will you come? Do we hear you answer in a voice so sweet and beguiling, "I am coming," or is it only the winds that around our office roar? We pause for further developments.

Women don't have to swear to show how mad they are. There are other ways.

Some girls are so anxious to make names for themselves they misspell the front and then change the rear one.

There probably is a wrong side to everything—except, maybe, the right woman.

Often the man who, has the price of a good coat in his pocket doesn't care how shabby the pocket may be nor the coat it belongs to.

There is no credit for being good when you have to.