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The midnight is passed,
And the Christmas is here;
O solemn bells, ring
Through the night hushed
and clear;
As angelic hosts brought the
tidings of old,
Let now the glad news by thy
deep tongues be told
O joy to the world,
Forget sorrow and fear!
The midnight is passed,
And the Christmas here.

JACK'S CHRISTMAS FAIRIES.

By Edith Sessions Tupper.

UP to his ears in mischief all the time was Jack, yet he was the dearest, roundest, rosiest little lad imaginable. He was a picture of happy boyhood that afternoon, three days before Christmas, when, in his smart coat, trimmed in the most delightful military fashion with bands of Persian lamb and black frogs, and his jaunty cap set on his fair hair, and his fat hands protected by fur-trimmed gloves, he went into the park with his sled for a romp. He ran and shouted and pranced until his eyes glowed like stars and his cheeks shone like apples, and everybody who saw him said: "What a handsome boy!"

Jack, of course, was looking forward to Christmas, just as every boy and girl who reads this is looking forward to that day of all days. He expected to have all sorts of fine things in his stocking, and with very good reason, for Santa Claus had never neglected him. Jack's father was rich. Grandmamma, who was richer, was coming to spend the holidays, and Santa Claus had been telephoned on the subject of skates, drums, games, swords, guns and sweetmeats, and there was every prospect that when he called at Jack's home his sleigh would be very full indeed.

Jack was like all boys who have no brothers or sisters, a trifle selfish. But he was a manly, kind-hearted little chap for all that, and so, when he was through with his play and was dragging his sled homeward and came upon a scene on a street-corner which roused his sympathy he paused to find out what it meant.

A crowd of rough boys were tormenting a poorly-clad little girl, whose wan, hazzard face spoke too plainly of misery and poverty. She was frightened and almost crying as Jack came up.

"Here, now!" said Jack, with sturdy determination, "you stop that or I'll call a p'liceman."

Fortunately at that moment a blue-coated officer came in sight, and the hoodlums fled with one wild departing yell.

"Thank you," said the little girl, timidly, "those boys allus are pickin' on me."

"What is your name?" said Jack.

"Susie Greene."

"Well, Susie," said Jack, with an air of business, "you look cold and sick."

"I an't very strong"——

"And hungry," continued Jack.

Susie burst into tears.

That was enough for Jack.

"Get right on my sled," said he, determinedly, "and I'll take you down to my house and you'll have something to eat."

Susie obeyed, and the officer saw with grim pleasure the young heir to

SANTA CLAUS WAS TELEPHONED.

Mr. Newten's millions dragging off the little waif to his home, a block away.

"He do be a foine chap, he do be," remarked Policeman Mulvaney.

Jack took Susie into the kitchen and gave orders she should be fed forthwith. Then he hurried up to his mother's room. She was there with his grandmother, and in a few words he told them about the little girl he had rescued.

"She's poor and hungry, and she's got no decent clothes. Mamma, can't you fixed her up?"

His mother looked at him a moment, then asked, quietly: "Jack, would you rather have this little girl made comfortable or have a big Christmas yourself?"

Jack hesitated. He thought of all those presents he was expecting; then he thought of Susie thin dress and bursting shoes.

"You can take the money you were going to spend on my Christmas and fix her up," he bravely said. Then his grandmamma, a stately old lady, in black satin and white lace cap, called him to her and kissed him, with tears in her eyes.

Jack sat bolt upright in bed and rubbed his eyes very hard. No, he was not asleep. There was the open fire, there his clothes on the chair, there the door into his mother's room.

It was Christmas Eve. Jack had not hung up his stocking, for he did not expect any presents. Susie had been warmly clothed and her wretched home had been brightened by the visit of Jack and his mother. The boy was satisfied. He had made his choice and expected to abide by it.

But, marvellous to relate, as he looked towards the fire, he saw a crowd of tiny people hurrying and fussing about on the fur rug before the fire. Three or four had a miniature ladder which they were putting up against the side of the fireplace. Several others had hold of one of Jack's long stockings. When the ladder was in place, a little man, with elfish eyes and spider-like legs, climbed the ladder, dragging Jack's stocking after him, and hung it on a

HE STOPPED TO COMFORT HER.

hook and then, coming down, put his hands on his hips and surveyed his work with great satisfaction.

"That's what I call a good job," he said. "Now hurry up, you folk, and get your presents in there before St. Nicholas gets along."

Then fairy after fairy climbed the ladder and put in his presents. There was a fat brownie, who brought a basket of nuts from the woods.

"I have worked all day," he said, "looking under hedges and dead leaves to gather these nuts for the boy who was kind to Susie."

A quaint little fairy in a curious foreign gown and cap approached. "I have come clear from the borders of the Black Forest in Germany," she said, "to bring this music-box for the boy who was not ashamed to look after a poor little girl."

There was quite a stir as a remarkable fairy approached. He was copper-tinted and had a feather stuck in his black hair, and he bore on his shoulder a beautiful bow and arrow.

"From the lands of the setting sun I have come," said he. "I am a Puckwudje, an Indian fairy, but I wanted to bring an offering to the young pale-face who has a good heart."

A merry little man in green climbed the ladder, hauling up a beautiful toy sword which he had brought from England for Jack. Then there followed one of the "good people" of Ireland with a drum which he had brought from the Emerald Isle. "Shure, it's hurryin' I must be after doin'," he cried, "to be back before daybreak."

In the midst of all this excitement there came a pawing of tiny hoofs overhead and a jingling of bells, and a voice down the chimney cried, "Whoa!" very loudly.

At this every fairy vanished abruptly. But the stocking was left hanging there, and presently, with a scramble and rush, down the chimney came the good Saint himself. Jack knew him directly from his pictures. He examined the stocking attentively.

"So they've been here, she's of me!" he observed. "That's a great idea! I never was left before. Well, no matter! There are a few things they've forgotten. Here are the skates, the games, the box of chocolate, the books," and as he talked he piled the packages up on a table near the fireplace.

Jack's eyes were so heavy he couldn't hold them open. He shut them for an instant, and when he opened them again it was Christmas morning.

He sprang from his bed and rushed to the fireplace. Yes, there hung his stocking full and running over, and

JACK RUBBED HIS EYES.

the table near by was loaded with gifts.

And, if you were to argue forever, you could never make Jack believe that there is no Santa Claus or such things as fairies.

"I know better," he says, with a decided shake of his curly head. "I know better, for I've seen them."

Christmas Fun.

Those mothers who wish their children's Christmas fun to be fun pure and simple, eschewing fashionable dances and other unsuitable diversions, will find the following suggestions useful:

A tissue-paper candy bag, hung from the chandelier, to be struck with a light rod or switch by each child, blindfolded, in turn, till the lucky one breaks the bag and the candies may be scrambled for, is sure to cause jollity and laughter. This is an old game, but a never-failing one. Forty years ago it was described and pictured in juvenile books, yet, once good, always good, is a true proverb.

Another mirth-provoking device is a sawdust pie. Cover an ordinary washtub with bright paper, having a frill around the edge. Put in a layer of sawdust, then some trifling gifts, another layer of sawdust, and so on. Smooth the top into a shallow cone shape, to resemble a pie, lay over it a brown paper cover, with darker spots here and there, to imitate the scorching of the crust, and fasten some little ornament at the apex, which will lift the cover off as by a handle. Have a sheet spread underneath, provide the children with wooden spoons, and let them dig for "plums."

Of course the amusements indicated are for the youngest members of the flock. Older children may enjoy getting up a Brownie party, a Japanese party, etc., in appropriate costumes. Or they will greatly enter into the spirit of making a number of poorer children happy, by packing a large basket or hamper with attractive little parcels, which they have prepared themselves, then passing them to the shabby little guests. The finest spirits are those who do not lose sight of the fact that Christmas is a time for making others happy, not a season for getting all one can and keeping all one gets.

After Christmas.

Mrs. Buffer—"That's a nice shoe-bag of yours. I had a present of one like it——"

Mrs. Muffer—"Shoe-bag? That's a photograph case. Mrs. Greely, who gave it to me, told me so."

Mrs. Buffer—"Horrors! And I thanked Mrs. Greely for a shoe-bag! I've a mantel drapery like yours, too."

Mrs. Muffer—"Is that a mantel drapery?"

Mrs. Buffer—"Certainly; Mrs. Spriggs, who gave me mine, told me so."

Mrs. Muffer—"And I thanked Mrs. Spriggs for some petticoat trimming!"

Both (in tears)—"Well, home-made presents ought always to be labeled, anyhow!"

Below Zero and the Belt.

Ten Broks (after the refusal)—"How cold it is to-night. My hands are chilled."

Gwendolen—"Well, I have made you a Christmas present of the mitten. That ought to keep them warm."—The Yellow Book.

If I Were Santa Claus.

If I were only Santa Claus,
And Santa Claus was me,
To show to him just what a good
O. I Santa Claus I'd be.
I'd always bring the kind of toys
And story books for him;
I'd fill his stocking every year,
And fill it to the brim.
This year I'd bring a book, or so
On how we conquered Spain,
Or how a boy pursued his foe
Across the Rio in like plain.
And boxing gloves—and, say, I guess
A pistol would be great
To shoot like with. And then—oh, yes,
A wheel for ninety-eight.
I'd bring a leather suit and hat—
The kind that cowboys wear,
Or beetle knives and things like that
He'd have a lot to spare.
I'd fill his stocking then with all
The candy it would hold,
And where the packages were small
I'd fill in round with gold.
And when they saw how good I was,
How happy folks would be
If I were only Santa Claus—
And Santa Claus was me.

Her Christmas Offerings.

"She was the prettiest and brightest girl we had at our house party that winter," related the smiling old lady who loves to dwell upon the holiday festivities when she was a girl. "She was a great favorite with the men because of her dashing ways and the air of good commadeship that she always carried about with her. Yet we could never see that any one of her admirers was favored above another, and often wondered if she would fill the appointed destiny of woman.

"In the party was Harper Allison. We always called him Harpy. He was big, athletic, good-natured and good to look at, but we never thought of him as a brilliant man. It was as plain as could be that he was in love with her, and men of his type are so persistent. They lay siege, and, no matter what may come, they continue the siege.

"I know that he proposed to her a score of times, but he was always put off with the laughing assurance that she was not to be won by any of the stereotyped methods, and that if he ever did find a lodging place in her heart he would see a sign.

"Christmas Eve we all hung up our stockings outside our doors, just as a lark, you know. In the morning we all had presents to show but Harpy. He pretended to be disconsolate and consolation. He had put on a great long pair of woolen stockings, knit in black yarn and tipped in red by a fussy old aunt in Maine, who always feared that Harpy never dressed warmly enough. He had not only been slighted by Santa Claus, but the stockings themselves were gone.

"After dinner there was a sleigh ride of the old-fashioned kind. As she raised her dress to clamber into the big sled, we all saw that over her dainty shoes she wore heavy woolen stockings, and the toes were red. 'Now I know what I got,' shouted Harpy, and before us all he tossed her into the air, caught her as she came down and kissed her indefinitely."

Yule-Tide Sparks.

About $125,000,000 is spent on Christmas gifts yearly in this country.

The custom of making gifts is widest spread among the Germans.

Snapdragon, a one-time favorite game at Christmas, is again coming into favor.

Skating over the frozen marshes was a favorite holiday pastime among the Knickerbockers.

The custom of giving the turkey the first place on the bill of fare at Christmas is gradually giving way to the old English plan of providing a huge round of beef.

A pretty conceit for trimming Christmas trees is a paper star with a candle in the center. They are made after the manner of the "pin wheel" and commemorate the appearance of the Star of Bethlehem.

To feed Greater New York on Christmas Day it is estimated that it will take among other things, 1700 head of cattle, 7000 tons of poultry, 1700 barrels of cranberries and three carloads of celery.

The best bag to use for the Christmas pudding is made of thin unbleached muslin. Be sure that it is well scalded before the pudding goes in. Keep a supply of clean, strong, white tape for pudding strings.

When the Heart Grows Warm.

Santa Claus might reconnoiter in an air ship.

It is time now to begin to remember not to spell it "Xmas."

To get the right height and measure of Christmas in the stocking feet is by no means a bad plan.

The young people are not alarmed at that anti-Santa Claus movement. They are preparing to turn the hose on it.

If the weather clerk will send a little snow for Christmas he will not be required to put it in the hanging stockings. It will be appreciated if it is left outside.

Helping Santa.

There is nothing slow about Johnnie.—From Christmas Life.

BRITAIN'S BEST GENERAL

SIR H. HERBERT KITCHENER HAS HAD AN ADVENTUROUS CAREER.

Striking Incidents in the Life of This Remarkable Irishman—Having Crushed the Dervishes His Grateful Country is Showering Honors Upon Him.

Like Wellington, Wolseley and Roberts, Major-General Horatio Herbert Kitchener is an Irishman, having been born in the "Kingdom of Kerry" some forty-seven years ago. He is tall, standing all six feet in his stocking feet, and, dark complexioned—which latter is not natural after twenty years of service in Africa. Entering his commission in the Royal Engineers ten years ago, he found at a volunteer in the two great European wars of recent times—against the Prussians with General Chanzy's army of the Loire, and against the Chinese in the Bakhan, under Gordon. Most of his service has been in the East, where he first went in charge of a party of surveyors to Palestine.

Here he began to acquire his remarkable knowledge of Oriental languages, of which many stories are told. For example, at one of his many encounters with Arab chiefs, two Arab chiefs were arrested as spies, and condemned to the penal tent. Shortly afterward a third Arab prisoner was hastily ushered into the tent. An animated jabbering ensued between the three, and in a few minutes, much to the astonishment of the sentry, the latest arrival drew aside the doorway and stepped out, remarking: "All right sentry; I'm going to the General."

It was Kitchener. Again, only a few minutes passed when an orderly hurried up, and a spade was handed to each of the two Arabs, who were marched outside the lines, dug their graves, and were shot. They were two dangerous spies and Kitchener had found them.

Probably because he has thus been a wanderer on the face of the earth—a modern Cain, perhaps, who has very literally "roamed many lands and known their minds"—perhaps also because he has been a terrible busy man from his early youth, Sir Herbert has never married. He has for years had charge of the Egyptian army, and is still a bachelor. But perhaps some day will come in the war in which all the other celebrities of the British army have won their laurels, when he will be called home to England to receive the honors that are lavished only upon the favorites. There have been wars in which there has not held a tenth of best qualities possible in the circumstances, frequently gave rise to angry comments and such a lack, if they were not by the grace of God, that would not have sufficed to keep at spin death—yet that in such moments grew so curiously that the light in them seems fixed as if suddenly frozen."

It was Sir Herbert Kitchener who went ahead of Sir Herbert Stewart's column with two native guides to the first dash for the wells of Gakdul. Near there a notorious robber leader, who had accompanied the Mahdists in their merciless raids, was surprised and chased by Ninth Lancers scouts. He and his two followers would probably have escaped Kitchener, who was well mounted, had not overtaken them. Alone, and in advance of the lancers, he closed with these ferocious freebooters, and called upon them to surrender. The cowardly rascals that had so often succeeded in this moment. Deceived by it into the belief that they were surrounded by unseen foes, and the Irishman had at his command, they surrendered and were lost, for the lancers came up and made prisoners of the lot. It was a cool and characteristic act, which added Kitchener's reputation with British soldiers.

At the crisis of the Dongola expedition, when it became necessary to seize a strategic point, so that supplies might accumulate there before the Nile got too low for river transport, Kitchener's personal influence previously exerted in those regions secured many miles of the railway on which the supplies were to be carried. Followers upon camels and other animals in his service, but fresh disaster seemed overwhelming, but he stood up against it with almost stoic fortitude.

In twenty-four hours the distribution of forces along the line of communication was so arranged that battalions could be set free for intensive work on the railway. He went to the spot, several points where great disasters had occurred, looked at travel bridges and bridge abutments with the eye of an engineer, told the men that these things must be repaired in so many days, and very emphatically the order of it at most "Sahib." Great story, indeed, to tell to the men of science. Though the task thus set seemed in some cases hopeless, it was done, and the men, taught a great lesson by the hard taskmaster, were ready for the battle of Omdurman and victory of the Nile.

Wanted an American Name.

Perhaps it was a little strange in an American country, where great importance and consequence are so great delight in nicknaming. We put it down in England where it has been played for hundreds of years. Some authorities think it was introduced into Britain by Caesar, but the earliest mention of it is by William Fitzstephen, in his description of London in the 12th century. It was much played on holidays, and especially on Shrove Tuesday. At one time it was customary for the men of the different villages in the midland counties of England to play against each other—every able-bodied man being usually pressed into service. Desperate struggles often took place during these matches, which sometimes grew into riots and produced long and bitter feuds. So dangerous did the game become that King James I denounced all rough and violent exercise "as football, meeter for a maiming than making able the users thereof." As early played at the great English schools, as Rugby, Eton and Harrow, it was finally changed from being a mere struggle between two sides to get the ball from one end of the field to the other to one for more intricate. The game at school now features were developed until several forms of the game were developed. About 1845 football clubs began to be formed in the large cities, and a season afterward players began to favor the adoption of a set of rules to govern all English football play, excluding all the brutal features of the game. At first it was found impossible to come to any agreement, but in 1866 rules were adopted in accordance with the views of those who did not favor brute force in carrying out this sport. In 1875 Harvard and Yale played their first game of football according to these rules, and soon afterward it became popular in the colleges. In this country the game is usually played from about the 1st of October till the end of November.—Saturday Night.

The Last of the Delawares.

The proposed exodus of the Delaware Indians from the United States to Mexico is the latest and most sorrowful commentary in the history of our dealings with the Indian tribes. These Indians always have been peace Indians. They never only kept peace with the white man, but they have been his allies and protectors against the savage tribes of the West.

They surrendered the first of their lands to William Penn, and they have been engaged in the same sort of real estate transactions ever since. Their present and last stand is in the Indian Territory, where their neighbors, the Cherokees, are seeking to compel them to pay for their tribal lands, which they bought and paid for, into a common pool, and the case is now pending in the United States Court of Claims.

They have finally lost faith in the white man and propose to take up their abode in Mexico, where the Indian enjoys all the rights and privileges accorded to other inhabitants and where a land title in the name of an Indian is as valid and lasting as if it were in the name of a ruling chief.

Indeed Chief Isaac Parker says a Mexican agent has promised that they shall have an Indian agent, Indian schools, and the land titles he says, not have to be in the name of the chief, but in the name of the tribe. He says that the Delaware government.—Chicago Times-Herald.

Keys Intended for Blocks.

Of the many weird rings the key ring will appear strange to many readers. One was a commonplace ring with a small key hanging from the back of it. This was usually the key to some treasure box which it was inconvenient to have anyone open except the owner. It wasn't easy to mislay a key of this kind. One of the Borgias had a ring of this kind with a poisoned needle concealed in the key. An unsuspecting enemy could easily be disposed of by wounding him to unlock a cabinet with this ring. If he assented, a slight pressure as he turned the key would discharge the poison into his system. Split rings that could be adjusted to various fingers, double rings, plain on the outside but bearing an inscription or charm on an inner surface entirely concealed from prying eyes, and rings of fantastic shapes depending upon the fancy, were worn and those which delighted our very remote ancestors.

A Perfect Pun.

The following is a remark of Sydney Smith, made on hearing a little girl complain of being punished for "good-ness" for "patriarchs." Said the great wit, "She is determined on making an example of the patriarchs." A prominent writer declares this to be the most perfect pun he has ever heard.

GOOD ROADS NOTES.

What Has Been Accomplished.

During the comparatively brief period that there has been concerted action to secure an improvement in the condition of the roads throughout the United States a great deal has been accomplished. The League of American Wheelmen has been among the most active workers in this worthy cause. As a body it has agitated the matter persistently, while the individual members have forwarded the propaganda throughout the cities and villages in all sections of the United States. The agricultural element has been surprisingly slow in waking up to a realization of the value of good roads, but the farmers everywhere are now beginning to take a more active interest in the subject than ever before. In many instances [illegible] of poor roads with the wear and tear on horses, wagons and harness compared with the cost of good roads, the question is biased personally. Some years ago a careful comparison was made between the relative cost to the farmers of the Southern States and the farmers of France in the matter of getting their products to market. In the latter country a man and two horses can accomplish more than two men and four horses are able to do over some of the notoriously bad roads with which we are afflicted. Many of the roads which run for hundreds of miles through the Alps, over lofty passes and at great distances from large towns, are of a sort such as the average American farmer never saw. And at the same time leading out of the capital of the United States there are roads of a sort that have not been seen in Western Europe for centuries. It is in fact time that the whole country was waking up to the importance of the question, and gatherings such as that held in Omaha are doing a good work, and a work that should be helped along in every way.

Gravel Roads.

Road improvement is one of the most important questions for consideration of the farmers, and should be thoroughly discussed in the Institute and Farmers' Clubs during the winter.

Good roads are absolutely necessary for the comfort and convenience of the farmer, and now is the time to put the roads in good shape to meet the winter storms; all holes and depressions should be filled or leveled. Where water stands after a rain is the best way to ascertain where repair is demanded.

Where good gravel can be obtained it makes the best and cheapest road, and can be put on the roadbed during the winter.

It should be borne in mind that a good gravel road once well constructed doesn't require the constant care and expense of the common clay road. A team can haul four tons over a good road easier than the same team can haul 1200 pounds over the mire beds that our common roads become after a wet spell.

[illegible] a farmer who owns a nice carriage and [illegible] and harness [illegible] and splashed and [illegible] with mud when he drives to town. A good gravel road will be found to be a well paid [illegible].

[illegible] macadam or belgian stone, but the western stone won't resist the action of frost and don't pack and become smooth like the gravel.

Where Good Roads Pay.

It is acknowledged, says the Nashua Telegraph, that if the Granite State is to hold the prestige of the past and still remain the great Mecca for visitors and tourists, that the State must see to it that the roads are put in the best condition possible. The people of other States are building systems of special roads which form a very attractive feature, and one that will do much to attract strangers. New Hampshire has got to do the same, and a grand State road up the Merrimack valley to the mountains is an immediate demand in the condition of affairs at the present time.

Turnpiking Pay Poorly.

The turnpike still receives built around Lumberton, N. C., mainly by convict labor, have done much for the progress of the place. Fifty miles of hard roads are down and they are to be extended to the county borderline. It is said that it used to be a [illegible] for a farmer to come to town with four bales of cotton on a wagon drawn by four horses, but now he thinks nothing of bringing six bales on a wagon drawn by two.

Paragraphs About the Crusade.

The motor carriage will be another shouter for good roads.

And what the highway most requires is better drainage and broader tires.

The many cycle paths on Long Island afford such good all-the-year riding that wheels can be advantageously used there at almost all seasons.

The plan of appointing an engineer as overseer of the roads of South Orange, N. J., is being considered. It might to be done. The practice there of actually throwing earth and sod upon the sidewalks to "protect" it is a disgrace to so progressive a town.

The hard roads of Long Island are so attractive to wheelmen that increasing numbers are constantly using them. Ten years ago 10,000 cyclists traveled on the Long Island railroad; last year 100,000, and this year over 250,000, going to and from different riding points on the island.

The Boston Dispensary, the oldest medical charitable foundation in New England, treated 26,291 new patients during the year 1897.