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Now the Christmas time is near, And the cherubs are bright, but dear Little voices we hear...

"Santa Claus," And the cherubs are not dumb, With their wish: "I want a drum, Tell us, won't you, when he'll come?"

"I want a dolly," princess cries; "One that opens and shuts its eyes," Another cherub, still, but wise,

"Mamma, mamma, Mamma, Mamma, Lots of tricks, Santa Claus."

Chorus still of cherub joys: "Ma, tell him to bring us boys' Knives, and skates, and lots of toys," Baby sings:

"We want 'ings— Santa Claus."

So they chatter as they play; Curly heads both gray and gay, Bring them pleasure while you may: Youth will die— Hope will die— Santa Claus.

MISS ENID'S PRESENT.

BY AUGUSTA HANCOCK.



MISS ENID sat by the fire in the oak parlor, and gazed into the bright flames as if she saw there some very lovely picture of the past. "Pretty Miss Enid!" the some times called her in the parish, and the adjective was well applied, so sweet was her smile, and so tender and gentle were the soft tones of her voice.

"We love you so much, you know," gray-eyed Angela had said, "that we want to do all we can, and it isn't very much, but we do our best." And Bobby had broken in with an account of the Christmas card that he meant to send Miss Enid—a very gorgeous production from the village shop, in the purchase of which and similar treasures the children's morning had been happily spent.

And once in her cosy oak parlor, in her own chair by the bright fireside, she lay back with half closed eyes and gave herself up, for a brief time at any rate, to the memory of the past. It was not a very eventful past, after all, that the children's talk of Christmas had brought back to her. She was young then, that was all, and life was rose-tinted with health and happiness and—should she confess it, even to herself?—love! Yes, she believed that love had come to her, as it comes once, and only once in a lifetime, to every one. And yet no voice had ever whispered to her that a true heart was hers for always—no lips had ever pressed her own in the glad rapture of a lover's kiss—no sweet, strong arms had enfolding her and held her captive—ah, me, no! And yet, and yet! There were half spoken words imprinted in her memory; there were tender glances, and wonderful smiles, such as love, and love only, could awaken; there was a

had only been time for "Good-by" as the gate, for he would not come in, he said—only "Good-by" and a trembling hand shake—and he was gone. And Miss Enid's love story had never really begun—it had only been a dream, perhaps, who was to know? So the long years had passed, taking one by one of her loved ones away, as the autumn takes the flowers that are wearied with the long, long summertime, until she was left alone—alone in the pretty old house where the swallows built under the eaves in the spring, and where the garden was ablaze with roses and syringas and clematis all through the summer. And the children of the village were her friends, and the vicarage babies came and grew up like flowers around her, and she was as warm and sweet as the sun, and she had something to love, and no one ever knew how sometimes she longed and yearned until her heart felt almost breaking—for what? Ah, dear hearts, I cannot tell you.

opened again, and some one, tired of waiting outside, came in! There was a shout from the children, and a cry, a glad, startled, tender cry, from Miss Enid and then everything else was forgotten, and the astonished bairns saw their friend's slender form clasp closely in the arms of the "present," who was usually called by them "Uncle Edward."



WHAT KRIS KRINGLE SENT.

We hung up our stockings on Christmas Eve On the knobs at the foot of the bed. "We shall find them crammed with beautiful things"

face—a beautiful, brave face that dwelt safely shined forever in the depths of Miss Enid's heart—the face of one who had surely, surely loved her once, in the long ago! And she fancied sometimes that he meant to tell her so, that the words had trembled on his lips, the words that would have changed her life and his so greatly! She had read part of his story in his eyes—clear, grave eyes that were truth and honesty itself—and yet he had never uttered what his heart surely knew well, and she had never listened to the sweetest words that the human ear can hear.

But when the morning began to break I suddenly woke up quite, And looked to see if dear Santa Claus Had thought of us in the night. When, oh! how frightened I was! I heard A noise by the foot of the bed. I whispered, "It must be Santa Claus," "Yes, it must be," Evelyn said.

You must picture for yourselves a lonely woman—one who could love deeply, truly, passionately, one to whom little children turned as to a mother's protecting care, to slumber peacefully on her tender bosom or to smile up into the sweet face above them. Picture that to yourselves, and then tell me for what it was that my dear Miss Enid longed so much sometimes. She was very good and sweet and patient, but she was very human, after all—but a woman at heart—and every woman yearns at some time or other of her life for love.

We waited to see what his face would be, And my heart went pat-pat-pat (And Evelyn said hers did it the same), 'Till we heard the mist of an cat. There were two little kitties. A lovely present For Christmas, I think, don't you? And father says, "Well, it was Santa Claus," And Evelyn says so too.

suggested Ronald, and Marjorie said, "And the money-box would do for a wedding present, you know, Bobby. Mother says 'tis to be soon." And then she added, what every one said that happy day when they heard of the wanderer's return, "Dear Miss Enid."

CHRISTMAS EVERGREENS.

How They Were First Used in Olden Times. Among the votaries of the early Druids there was a superstition that the houses should be decorated with evergreens in December, in order that the goblin spirits might enter them and thus be kept free from the blast of the cold north wind and the frost, until a milder season renew the foliage of their usual haunts.

HOLLY IN DECORATIONS.

Its Red Berries a Beautiful Feature in Christmas Adornment. A picturesque shrub especially useful at this time of the year is the holly, with its tough and shining spiny leaves and its pretty little full, round berries. It is the only plant appropriate to this happy period that relieves the dull green and monotonous white of the non-flowering plants and vines supposed to belong to Christmas and the days that follow Epiphany.

Who does not know the poem beginning: The mistletoe hung in the castle hall, The holly branch shone on the old oak wall. Years ago over every man's door in England hung an sprig of mistletoe at this season. There still hovers a mystic charm about the mistletoe, and many a girl now, with a thrill of expectancy, places a branch of it under the chandelier or over the door.

Among the ancient Britons the mistletoe that grows on the oak tree was the one held in favor. Because of its heathen origin it is not often used in church decorations, a fact which is referred to by Washington Irving in his "Bracebridge Hall," where he has the learned parson rebuke the unlearned clerk for this very thing.

In Germany and Scandinavia the holly or holly tree is called Christ's thorn, because it puts forth its berries at Christmas time, and therefore is especially fitted for church decorations.

The Jews used to decorate at their Feast of Tabernacles with evergreens and flowers. The laurel was used at the earliest times of the Romans as a decoration for all joyous occasions, and is significant of peace and victory.

In some places it is customary to throw branches of laurel on the Christmas fire and watch for omens while the leaves curl and crackle in the heat and flame.

The Assyrian Christians, who live almost isolated from the Western world and the eastern regions of Asia Minor, have a lovely custom on the early morning of Christmas. They all repair from their dwellings to the open air and wait for the morning star to rise, hailing its advent with deep devotion.

Christians in Peru. A Christmas celebration in Peru has peculiar features. In the cities, and more especially in Lima, there are bewildering scenes of activity on Christmas Eve. The streets and square are crowded with a gayly dressed people. Doves of asses are to be seen in every direction, laden with fruits, bouquets from the mountains, liquors and other merchandise.

Suddenly the scene changes. The curtain falls on the play, the music and dancing cease, and the people go from their homes. The midnight bell at the cathedral has summoned all to mass. The houses and streets are nearly deserted, while the churches, with their decorations and blazing tapers, are thronged.

At Dublin, Ireland, water burst into a colliery at Cong, county Mayo, flooding the shaft a depth of 150 feet and drowned six men. It is announced that the Spanish cabinet has decided to resign owing to the recent popular demonstration against the ministers of finance, justice and public works, who supported the municipal authorities.

Great Britain is making issue with the United States for the wounding of Purser James H. Banc, of the British... The latest co-operative establishment reported is the big agricultural implement factory it is to be put up at Springfield, Ill., by the Patron of Humanity of twenty-five States.

sharp earthquake shocks were felt at Athens, Greece, and also at Chalcis, Livadia, Thebes and Corinath. Sharp earthquakes were felt at Athens, Greece, and also at Chalcis, Livadia, Thebes and Corinath.

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McSwatters—"What are you going to hang up for Christmas?" McWitters—"My watch, probably."—Syracuse Post. Jobson—"Bill Bicketts took his new girl out sleighing on Christmas Eve." Hixon—"What! that one-eyed fellow? How in the world did he manage it?" Jobson—"She drove."—Puck.

Hobbes—"My wife's got me a box of cigars for a Christmas present. But I'll get even with her." Pomas—"What will you do?" Hobbes—"I'm going to select her next hat myself."—Chicago Record.

Cobble—"Well, I suppose I'll have to eat my Christmas turkey in a boarding house this year." Stone—"That's tough."—Life.

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LATEST NEWS

IN BRIEF.

GLEANINGS FROM MANY POINTS. Important Happenings, Both Home and Foreign, Briefly Told. Newsy Southern Notes.

Wednesday was the great day of the Charleston, S. C., festival. The parade was witnessed by fully 80,000 people. Two freight trains on the Air Line collided at Thickertown, S. C., on Thursday night, and engineer Curlee was killed.

A premature explosion of powder and dynamite at La Follette, Campbell county, Tenn., Thursday afternoon, killed four men, and four others may die by the explosion.

While attempting to step from a moving street car on Fourteenth street in front of Peachtree Inn, Atlanta, Mr. H. L. Hart, of Palatka, Fla., was thrown backward, his head striking the pavement, producing injuries from which he died a few hours later.

The town of Titusville, Tex., was early wiped out by fire Friday morning. Mr. O'Brien was burned to death while trying to get \$18 left in his room. The loss is \$100,000. Hamberg & Garner, merchants, are suspected of incendiarism and are in jail and in danger of lynching.

A. K. Ward, the forger who was captured and brought back to Memphis, Tenn., after a sojourn in Honduras, has been indicted fifty-five times for forging as many notes. The amount of forged notes is over \$80,000. Ward has employed good lawyers and will make a fight on the line of a general denial.

Northern News Notes. Hon. Allen G. Thurman, the Old Roman, died at his home in Columbus, Ohio, on Thursday.

The physicians of Wyoming county, Pa., are greatly puzzled over the case of Miss Pearl Borton, who has been sleeping uninterruptedly since November 27th.

A San Francisco dispatch says Miss Millie Viola, actress and stonut, says she has come from Australia to go over the Niagara Falls in a barrel. To make the feat more difficult, she says she will have the barrel dropped from a balloon.

Three corpses of women stolen from the cemeteries were discovered in the dissecting rooms of the Kansas Medical College at Topeka, and the governor had to call out a military company to protect the college from mob attack.

The Exposition. Thursday was Tennessee Day at the Atlanta Exposition.

Chatanooga Day was celebrated in fine style at the exposition Wednesday. One of the first fruits of the Atlanta Exposition, from a commercial standpoint, appears in the effort now being made to organize a direct connection between the Atlanta chamber of commerce and the commercial bodies of Costa Rica, Guatemala and Mexico. The idea is to establish a commercial museum in Atlanta with a permanent exhibition of the products of those countries, and also to establish in Costa Rica a similar exhibit of the United States.

Foreign. At Dublin, Ireland, water burst into a colliery at Cong, county Mayo, flooding the shaft a depth of 150 feet and drowned six men. It is announced that the Spanish cabinet has decided to resign owing to the recent popular demonstration against the ministers of finance, justice and public works, who supported the municipal authorities.

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