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JIMMY'S LETTER TO SANTA CLAUS.

Dear Santa Claus, if you could bring
A patent doll to dance and sing,
A five pound box of caramels,
A set of reins with silver bells;

An elephant that roars and walks,
A Brownie doll that laughs and talks,
A humming top that I can spin,
A desk to keep my treasures in;

A boat or two that I can sail,
A dog to bark and wag his tail,
A pair of little bantam ducks,
A chest of tools, a box of tricks;

A small toy farm with lots of trees,
A gun to load with beans and peas,
An organ and a music box,
A double set of building blocks—

If you will bring me these, I say,
Before the coming Christmas-day,
I sort of think perhaps, that I'd
Be pretty nearly satisfied.

—Harper's Young People.

THE CHRISTMAS WISH.

Santa Claus limped back to his chair with a groan.

"Isn't it any better, my dear?" asked Mrs. Santa, anxiously.

"Not a bit," said Santa. "Rather worse, I think."

"What shall you do?" said Mrs. Santa.

Santa looked gloomy. "Of all the times in the year to sprain my ankle! And Christmas only two days away. But we must just make the best of it. Of course the brownies can look after the gifts. But I shall miss a great deal of pleasure, my dear. Oh! just no end of it. It's such fun to see the children skurrying off to bed early, and listening for the patter of hoofs, and the sleigh bells. And then I always find someone who has been especially good, and I add an extra Christmas blessing. I nearly always find some sad place where they are not expecting me and leave stockings full of things. The brownies can fill out the usual list, but I don't know whether they will use judgment about the extras. But I can't go. I couldn't get down a chimney, or even in a window with this ankle." Santa rested his head on his hand, and looked really sad for the first time in several hundred years.

Mrs. Santa whisked a gay doll dress on which she had been working under her apron. The sight of it might increase Santa's grief, and she could finish it after he had gone to bed.

"I've thought of something," said Santa suddenly. He was smiling again and his eyes were twinkling.

"I'll make a wish—a Christmas wish, and send it out with instructions to stop—well to stop whenever it belongs. A Christmas wish will know. It will have judgment. Of course it will stop at the right place, and do just the right thing."

"How clever you are to think of it," said Mrs. Santa, and she took out the pink spangled doll dress and began sewing as fast as she could.

Santa closed his eyes and thought hard. When the Christmas wish was made it fluttered about the room on

rainbow colored wings. You couldn't be sure that you had seen it because it looked like a flash of light, and after it was gone you would say, "I think it was only a sunbeam." But wherever it touched, it left warmth and light behind. So if you were a wise person who knew all about fairy things you would know it was a Christmas wish by that.

After the Christmas wish had flown all about the room and rested on Santa's head for a moment, it started out to find the places that should have an extra Christmas blessing. Many, many houses it passed where the children were cuddled in their beds dreaming of Santa Claus, but though it smiled on them all and made their dreams brighter it did not stop. But on Christmas Eve the Wish paused over a lonely farmhouse to hear a boy say, "Do you think he will come, mother? I have tried hard to be good."

The mother's voice sang as she said, "I am sure he will come. You have been good indeed. In all this hard time I have never seen a frown on your face. You have been my sunshine. And you have helped. You help sister on my busy days, and when sister on my busy days, and when grandmother had the rheumatism you waited on her so cheerfully. I don't believe that there's a better boy than mine in the whole world."

"Ah!" said the Christmas Wish, "I will wait here awhile." Then it flew all about the room so that the boy, and little sister and mother and father and grandmother all began to laugh for pure joy. Then it sought out the Christmas gifts. They were not very many or fine but it rested on them, and they became wonderful things. The little sister's doll is as good as new to this day. Indeed it will never break for it is a fairy doll now. And the boy's jackknife was filled with such magic that it would carve the loveliest things. And last of all the Wish rested on the boy's heart, and filled it full of loving thoughts that became deeds when he awoke, so that the boy was a blessed Christmas child all the year.

Then the Christmas Wish went on its way with many a backward glance for the home it had blessed.

Again it waited over a home where a little girl was standing at a window.

"Mother," she said, "I was talking with little Ellen in school today, and she isn't going to have any Christmas at all."

"I am so sorry," said mother.

"Mother," said the little girl, "do you think if I wrote a note, and pinned it to my stocking, and asked Santa to give her half of my things he would do it?"

"I'm sure he would," said mother, and she smiled happily as she helped the little girl spell the loving words.

The Christmas wish lingered here and put her magic on the half of the toys that were left for the little girl, and the half that were sent on to Ellen. When the Christmas Day was done the little girl said, "It's the happiest Christmas I ever had. The playthings are so lovely, and the whole house seemed just shiny and sweet." And she never guessed it was because

the Christmas Wish had been there.

The Wish stopped next in a little room where a young girl sat weeping. "I can't make it come right," she said, "and I did want her to have a Christmas present." She turned over the rag doll she had been trying to make, and looked towards the bed where a crippled child lay sleeping.

Just then the poor light flared up brave and strong and the fire grew warmer. It was the Christmas Wish at work, and the girl wiped her eyes and took up the rag doll again. But now everything was right. The rag face was beautiful. The tired fingers fashioned the clothes with ease. The Christmas joy filled the bare room so that the girl began to sing and the brownies heard her, and left a great basket full of things at the door. They couldn't come in because she was awake. In the morning the little sick child caught her doll to her breast with a cry of joy. And while the sister was away at work that morning the sick child watched with wonder a flash of light that played about on the walls and ceiling.

It was the Christmas Wish. It had made itself into a Christmas present for the two poor sisters.

"I have a fairy of my own," said the sick child. "It came for a Christmas gift. It has rainbow wings and it makes the room all sweet and cosy."

"I think it's just a sunbeam," said the sister.

But the Christmas Wish laughed like a tinkle of Christmas bells.—Lelia Margaret Walters.

ALFRED'S PRAYER.

"Mamma," said Alfred one night as was going to bed, "I prayed that God would keep us children from quarreling; but he has not answered that as yet, for sister Daisy and I quarreled dreadfully today."

"Ah, my son, you will have to help the Lord answer that."

"Help the Lord, mamma? Can't He do everything?"

"He won't make you good against your will. If you choose to be a naughty boy, God will be grieved. But when Satan tempts you to quarrel, if you turn right to God for strength to resist him, and fight like a good little soldier, then God will give you the victory. But He won't do the work for you."—Olive Plants.

REMOVING TEMPTATION.

My neighbor's small son, not yet four years old, appeared at my door one morning, and after looking in a moment, announced:

"Your screen's unlocked."

"I was busy so I said, 'All right.'"

"Why don't you lock it?" he said.

"In a minute I will," I answered, and he was silent a little while, then:

"I wish you would come and do it now."

"But why Lawrence?" I asked.

"Well," he sighed, "I might tum in and my mamma said not to."

Miss R. was telling her Sunday school class of boys about the Shut-in Society whose members are persons confined with illness to their beds or rooms.

"Whom can we think of," said she, "that would have had great sympathy for those that are so shut in?"

"I know," said a little boy, "some one in the Bible, ain't it, teacher?"

"Yes, Johnny; and who was it?"

"Jonah!" was the ready answer.—Selected.

A GEOGRAPHY LESSON.

"Jimmy," said the teacher, "what is a cape?"

"A cape is land extending into the water."

"Correct, William, define a gulf."

"A gulf is water extending into the land."

"Good, Christopher," to a small, eager-looking boy, "what is a mountain?"

Christopher shot up from his seat so suddenly as to startle the teacher, and promptly responded: "A mountain is land extending into the air."—Selected.

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A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

Not what we give but what we share—so wrote our beloved poet, James Russell Lowell, in "The Vision of Sir Launfal." A capital motto for Christmas, these words. Not what we give but what we share makes Christmas happiness. To give may involve no unselfishness, but to share—that means to put aside our own longings to keep, and to forget self in the desire of adding to another's happiness.

Such is the true spirit of Christmas. Just a little longer we must wait until that Hallowed Birthday comes to crown the season of "peace on earth, good will toward men."

Christmas, how happily we breathe out that word which recalls the time when that tender little Child, whose coming meant so much for the beautiful sweetness of the world, lay against his mother's breast. As that little Child brought happiness, peace, and blessed charity to us, so we, like little children, bring happiness to others on Christmas day.

Like little children. Ah, just to give ourselves over to the happiness of the day with the sweet abandon of childhood; that would mean a Christmas indeed. What little things make the children happy. A single bright top, a pretty book, and a few sweets—and behold the world is transformed into a beautiful garden of happiness.

What greater happiness could we "grown-ups" ask than to witness the pure, unalloyed joy of a child's face as it beholds the gorgeous Christmas tree? Look into the child faces on Christmas morning and draw your inspiration for the day. Surely to give such joy as this is what Christmas is meant to be.

"Not what we give but what we share." Christmas means that. Not alone what we share of things, but what we share of joy, contentment, peace, and charity. Like the warm summer sunshine, sitting in among the blossoms and coaxing them into bloom, so does the kindness of Christmas-tide warm the heart and expand it with joyousness. No matter how weary the other days have been, no matter how cheerless, how disappointing, how bitter—on Christmas we must forget them, for the sake of Him who suffered and gave his life for us and for our happiness.

To some who read these words, the year has brought its pains. To some it has been but one of many years of heartaches and biting disappointments. We extend to them the warm handclasp of friendship and bid them look up and forget, just for this one day, if for no longer. Who knows, this one day of surrender to happiness may mean the changing of their lives, the direction of their footsteps into more flowery paths. No unkind look, no loud harsh word, must pass our lips to spoil the beauty of this day. That would be sacrilege. It must be lived to the fullest and the best, as if there were to be no tomorrow, as is it were the last.

Just to share with somebody else that which we have, even if it be little, will make our Christmas happy. Perhaps some of us will have no material things to give. Well, that does not bar us from giving, from enjoying Christmas, and from helping others to enjoy it. We still have the smiles, the sweet words, the tender handclaps. What material gift could ever equal these? They are the height, breadth, and depth of Christmas giving. Without them other gifts would be meaningless baubles. Smiles and kind words cost nothing. Even the poorest can afford to give them.

Let us each try to have a child-Christmas this year. Even though we have tasted of life and learned its varying phases; even though we have sad regrets for the past, and vague doubts for the future, let us put them aside and go back through the years with the little ones. They will teach us how to be joyful. To appreciate truly the gifts which come to us, as they do, even though Santa Claus has lost his mystical power over us, such a Christmas would be a Christmas.

Remember the folks at home, girls, the old folks who have toiled through the years and each season have tried to give us a happy Christmas. To them Christmas brings a flood of mingled memories. Show them that you understand. Then remember the neighbors, far and near, with a joyful greeting, and let them see your happy faces, much as the children show their toys. Finally, after you have spent the day in happy exclusion of self, go to your mirrors and see if you do not find in your faces that which shows that you have had "A Merry Christmas."—Doris Lee.

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GOD'S PROMISES.

God's promises are all lamps to light up dark places and I know of no brighter one than this: "As thy days so shall thy strength be."

But maybe you are already in the long, dark passageway. Or possibly the valley through which your steps are leading is a very dark and shadowed one. Then gladly I bid you look up and catch some of the light which God sheds down from this blessed assurance.

"When the sun withdraws its light, Lo! the stars of God are there; Present host, unseen till night— Matchless, countless, silent, fair."

If we never had nights, we could never see the stars. And so if you and I never had any trouble, we could never enjoy such a promise as this of which we have written. We do not love nights, but we do love the stars. We do not love sorrow and trouble, but we do bless God for sustaining grace. We do not love weakness, but we rejoice in such promises of God as will uphold us when weakness comes.—G. B. F. Hallock.

"Now, Elsie," said the school teacher, "can you tell me what a panther is?"

"Yeth ma'am," lisped the little miss. "He ith a man that makths pantha."

ROVER'S THANKSGIVING. "Hurrah for Thanksgiving!" cried Rover, in his deep bass voice, as he saw Dollie coming with a milk pan full of good things.

There were turkey bones and bits of dressing and fragments of chicken.

"Now, this is what I call a feast," said he. "I peeped in at the dining-room window a while ago, but not one of the company had such a plateful as this. I think they cooked the din-

ner mostly on my account. They just tasted a little to see if it was properly done.

"If they cooked it for themselves, why didn't they go and bury these delicious bones till they wanted them?"

"Ah! they appreciate my position. They know what is due to a dog of my dignity.—Youth's Companion.

THE LARGEST GIVER.

I want to tell you of an inquiry of my little five-year-old Helen. She attends Sunday school, regularly. Returning home one Sunday, she said:

"Mamma, every Sunday the man reads how much money each class gives and then he tells how much Total gives, and Total gives more than anyone. He must be a rich man. Who is Total, mamma?"—The Delinquent.

The head mistress of a certain village school was one day examining a few of her select pupils in grammar.

"Stand up, Freddie, and make me a sentence containing the word 'sel-

dom,'" she said, pointing to a small urchin. Freddie paused as if in thought; then, with a flush of triumph on his face, replied: "Last week, father had five horses, but yesterday he seldom!"—Christian Register.

Even so little a thing as your "good morning" may be the means of uplifting the one to whom you speak. Send a smile with it. Speak with animation. Act as if you thought the morning was indeed "good", and the world fair, and life full of beautiful possibilities. The languidly drawn "good morning" or that which snaps out with curt indifference, might as well not be spoken. Let a shaft of sunshine go from your heart to another as you say good morning.—Selected.

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