

Like a living thing the straight
rails sing
A high, exulting strain
The coaches reel over the shin-
ing steel
As we thunder across the plain,
Through night, through day,
We leap away
With rattle and crash, and
roar,
And our pulses leap as we home-
ward sweep,
And Christmas comes once
more.

The smoke hung back on the
shining track
Like a banner floats and furls,
With a leap and bound, like an
unleashed hound,
The engine forward hurls.
Beside us fly the field and sky
And the woods with echoed
roar,
And our hearts beat fast as the
miles sweep past,
For Christmas comes once
more.

DOROTHY DEANE.

MABEL GIFFORD'S CHRISTMAS

BY ANNE H WOODRUFF

MABEL GIFFORD was out of sorts. There was an unhappy expression closely approaching a scowl upon her fresh, young face as she gazed moodily from the kitchen window upon a scene bright with the glitter of sunlight upon fresh-fallen snow. An open letter lay upon her lap. Her mother glanced at her anxiously from time to time on her short journeys to and fro from kitchen to pantry, and at last said gently:

"I am sorry about your disappointment, dear, but I suppose it could not be helped."

"It is all Helen's selfishness," burst out Mabel, hotly. "She promised last summer to spend Christmas with me, and now because she has had an invitation that suits her better she accepts it, no matter how I feel."

Mabel thought of the rows of mince and pumpkin pies on the pantry shelves, the plump turkey waiting to be stuffed, the numerous other dainties prepared for the Christmas holidays, and of the zest and energy with which she had swept and dusted, putting the house in perfect order from cellar to attic, even to decorating the pictures, and every available spot with evergreens, hoping to make the old farmhouse attractive to her fastidious guest. Everything was done, even to the stoning of the raisins for the plum pudding. She was aroused from her reverie by her mother's voice, saying:

"Well, I declare, if there isn't Maria Church plowing through the snow, with a market basket on her arm. I know it must be heavy the way she carries it. Rob," to her son, who had just come in, "if the team is still there and the load off, go after Miss Church and drive her home. It's enough to kill her to get her skirts so drabbed."

"All right, Muz," said the good-natured Rob. "Come along, sis, and don't sit mooning there any longer."

They soon overtook the solitary spinster, who ejaculated with gratifying emphasis:

"For the land sakes! Is that you, Rob Gifford? I guess I'm in luck this time," and depositing her trembling form upon the board with a sigh of supreme satisfaction.

After driving a couple of miles they stopped before a small frame house of forlorn and dismal aspect, doubtless owing in part to its aloofness from neighbors.

"Wait here until I come back," said Rob. "I'm going to drive over to see Tom Wilson. I won't be gone long."

speck of dust could be seen anywhere. Rugs and mats of all sizes, shapes and colors were spread here and there, seemingly for adornment rather than use.

"They're hern," whispered Mabel's companion, noticing the girl's eyes fixed upon them. By "her" Mabel understood Miss Church to mean the sister who had lived with her and had died a year before.

"Martha had a wonderful gift that way," she continued. "It's surprisin' what she could do right out of her head. They're all her make. I never had no taste for it."

Mabel murmured something inaudi-



BRINGING HOME THE CHRISTMAS TREE

(Drawn by Sarah S. Stilwell for Harper's Bazar.)

ble as she contemplated the works of art before her. Scroll work of extraordinary design, bouquets of wonderful flowers of enormous size and painful colors, and animals and birds of astonishing proportions.

"It must be very, very lonely for you," said Mabel with ready sympathy.

"Yes, 'tis," replied Miss Church. "I don't know how to stand it sometimes. When I found Christmas was comin' it pretty nigh made me sick to think of it. When folks git old and uninterstin' people don't haunker after havin' 'em round much, and I'd no as I blame 'em any. But when you git used to yer own you miss 'em when they're gone."

"Yes, indeed," said Mabel, fervently, swallowing the lump in her throat with difficulty. "I'm so sorry you have to live here all alone, Miss Church."

"There's them as has ast me to live with them," she said, "but I somehow can't leave my home, where I've lived all my life, and I'd no as I could git along with 'em if I did. There's yer brother come back."

"Did you notice that rooster, Mim?" he asked with a snort when they had started homeward. "Wasn't he a caution?" but Mabel was in a brown study and did not respond satisfactorily. Her abstraction continued until after supper, making Rob uneasy at such unusual conduct, and giving her mother real concern. Then came the unburdening, followed by consultation, with the result that Rob was dispatched in the morning with the cutter with a note to Miss Church, which read thus:

"Dear Friend: I, too, am lonely this Christmas Day, and disappointed, for the friend I expected has not come,

and I hope that you will do me the kindness to come in her stead. Please do not disappoint me. Your sincere friend,
MABEL GIFFORD."

Miss Church was sitting at the window, with her steel-rimmed spectacles astride her nose and her Bibie in her lap, when Rob drove up. Curiosity quickly brought her to the door. Utter amazement was depicted upon her countenance when she had read the note.

"Mercy me!" she said, "I don't see what the child wants of me. But if it's a-go'in' to be any disappointment my not goin', why I'm a-go'in' to go," and she put on her wraps without another word.

Mabel devoted herself to her guest, who enjoyed the day immensely. She was interested in everything—Mabel's fancy work, Mrs. Gifford's recipe for ginger cake, Rob's account of how he caught the mink that had been robbing his henroost, and Mr. Gifford's political views. It was intelligent interest, too, with a touch of quaint humor that made her company very agreeable.

"I had no idea that Maria Church was so well informed," said Mr. Gifford to her husband, discussing her afterward.

"She's just like her father, old John Church—shrewd, honest and plain-spoken," said Mr. Gifford.

The dinner was pronounced a great success by Miss Church, whose opinion was of value from the fact that she was a judge of good cookery, and was never known to pay undeserved compliments. The crowning part of the day's pleasure was the Christmas tree entertainment in the church in the evening. She beamed on the minister when he made the customary remarks,

you, Rob? Whatever is the matter with the boy. I guess he's got the high-strikes. Good-night."—Chicago Record-Herald.



St. Nick by Automobile.

Good old Saint Nick comes to one of the up-town stores this holiday season in a sadly unpoetic vehicle. There will be no clatter of light hoofs or jingle of sleighbells to mark his passage over rooftops in that vicinity on the night before Christmas. No wicked children, who lie awake to catch him, will hear that jolly old voice urging on Dasher and Prancer, Donner and Blitzen, and all the rest of the famous old four-times-four-in-hand team. In other words, reindeer as a motive power are out of date, and the metropolitan Santa Claus comes this year in an automobile. Nor is this all of the new revelation. The store's decorators have



pictured Kriss as coming, strange to say, from a southerly direction and not out of the frozen north, as he used to appear to the watchful parental eyes of generations gone by. His new-fangled vehicle seems to follow a route that lies over the hills of Staten Island and just touches a corner of South Brooklyn before it leads up toward Liberty's little island and the skyscrapers of Manhattan. To the youthful "higher critics" of the Christmas saint, these disclosures ought to furnish new material for reflection.—New York Sun.

In Santa's Doll Factory.



He prepares to make glad the hearts of good little girls.

BRINGING THE CHRISTMAS TREE

BY KATHARINE FYLE

All morning long the heavy sky
Has seemed to threaten snow,
And over bleak and wintry fields
The crows are flapping low.

The children's voices carry far
On such a winter's day,
And you can hear the hatchet sound
Almost two fields away.

To-morrow night the sturdy fir
Shall decked and lighted be,
And it shall shine with toys and gifts
A lovely Christmas tree.

All Alike.

Husband—"Do you think we can afford to give away so many Christmas presents, dear?"

Wife—"That's no argument. The people who give us presents can't afford it, either."—Puck.



"POLLY SCREAMED WITH DELIGHT OVER THE BIG DOLL."

better. I don't seem to feel nigh so lonesome as I did. I will let you take off the pattern of them wats when you come. I'd just as lief you would as not. A girl as smart as you be had ought to copy 'em in no time. Is that

New Enterprises That Are Enriching Our Favored Section.

A Sheet-Steel Mill.

Additional impetus will be given the increasing industrial importance of Cumberland, Md., and its vicinity by the equipment of the steel-sheet mill which has been definitely announced during the week. The new plant will be established by the Maryland Sheet & Steel Co., just incorporated under New Jersey laws with capital of \$100,000, and the mill's annual capacity will be 9,000 tons of sheet steel. The Crucible Steel Co.'s plant in South Cumberland has been purchased at \$65,000, and will be remodeled and improved with modern machinery to comprise the new plant. Howard H. Dickey is president and manager; Harry E. Weber, secretary, and A. F. Baumgarten of Pittsburg, Pa., is vice-president and purchasing agent.

Mining Transfer.

According to a dispatch from New York, the Norfolk & Western Railroad Co. has made arrangements to control the interests of the Pocahontas Coal & Coke Co., and will purchase the property of the company for \$29,000,000, paying this amount in 4 per cent. bonds of the Norfolk & Western system. The Pocahontas Coal Co. represents a combination of mining properties in West Virginia, recently referred to in the Manufacturers' Record. It is understood that the Norfolk & Western will conduct its operations through a subsidiary organization. The property is estimated to contain about 300,000 acres of coal land.

To Enlarge Plant.

A dispatch from Parkersburg, W. Va., states that the Parkersburg Iron & Steel Co. has contracted for the erection of an important addition to its large steel mill, now nearing completion. The addition is to be a large mill to involve the expenditure of about \$100,000. Messrs. Wm. B. Scafe & Sons of Pittsburg, Pa., have contract to manufacture and erect structural frame building for the plant.

Textile Notes.

Mr. George B. Hiss of Charlotte, N. C., has been elected chairman of the board of governors of the Southern Cotton Spinners' Association in place of Mr. D. A. Tompkins, who has occupied that position since the organization of the association. Mr. Hiss has been identified with it as secretary, and has rendered valuable service as such to the association and the textile industries generally of the South.

A similarity of titles caused an error in our recent mention of the consolidation of two knitting mills at Chattanooga, Tenn. It was the Ocoee Hosiery Mills of Chattanooga, Tenn., and the Richmond Hosiery Mills of Rossville, Ga., two miles from Chattanooga (and not the Richmond Spinning Co. of Chattanooga), that consolidated. The plants will be continued under the Richmond title.

The court has ratified the sale of the cotton-mill property of the Great Falls Manufacturing Co. at Rockingham, N. C., to D. L. Gore, recently reported as having bid \$37,245 for the property. Mr. Gore is of Wilmington, N. C., and it is said that he intends to expend about \$40,000 for improving the plant, and is to then put it in operation. The spindles number 4500 and the looms 134.

Atlanta (Ga.) Knitting Mills has decided to double the capacity of its plant by duplicating the present equipment of machinery. This action was taken at a meeting of stockholders during the past week. The mill now has fifteen knitting machines, thirty sewing machines, etc., in operation, and finds its capacity inadequate to demands for the product.

It is announced that a contract has been definitely closed securing for location at Huntsville, Ala., the cotton mill recently mentioned as proposed. This will be the tenth mill in the city, and land for a site has been purchased. Particulars will be announced soon.

Lavonia (Ga.) Cotton Mills will double, it is reported, its plant of 2500 spindles, which just began operations some weeks ago. The present building would accommodate the increase.

Messrs. J. Irwin Bitner and H. J. Crosson of Hagerstown, Md., who leased the Valley Hosiery Mills at Mechanicsburg, Pa., will remove their machinery to Hagerstown, there to enlarge the plant. A building will be erected and machinery added to increase capacity daily to 500 dozen pairs of hosiery. Lace goods and fine hosiery will be manufactured.

William J. Magee of New Iberia, La., has addressed the Chamber of Commerce at El Paso, Texas, relative to establishing a knitting mill at El Paso. A \$15,000 plant to work both cotton and woolen yarns is contemplated.

Dwight Manufacturing Co. of Alabama City has commenced the erection of a one-story brick clothroom 100x186 feet and a cloth-storage room 50x86 feet.

Endeavors will be made for the erection of a cotton factory at La Porte, Texas, and G. E. Kepple will lead the movement.

Messrs. D. C. Giddings, Jr., R. A. Schurenberg and F. W. Wood of Ebenham, Texas, will organize a company for the erection of a cotton mill.

Clayton (N. C.) Cotton Mill has decided upon an increase of capital from \$100,000 to \$120,000. This company is operating 5000 spindles on yarn production.



DECORATING THE HOUSE.

and Mabel followed Miss Church into the house.

It was very scantily furnished. The floors were bare, but white as soap and water could make them. The table was spotless in its purity. Not a