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FOR THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE

Richmond, on the James.

A soldier boy from Franklin,
Lay gasping on the field,
When the battle shock was over,
And the foe was forced to yield.
He fell, that faithful hero,
'Fore deadly foeman's aims,
On the gory plains of battle,
Near to Richmond, on the James.

A soldier stood beside him,
His comrade in the fray,
They had long been friends together,
Down to childhood's happy day;
And side by side they struggled,
Through scenes of blood and flames,
But they part that day forever,
Near to Richmond, on the James.

Oh! comrade, I would tell you
Of friends in days of yore,
Of the far, far distant loved ones
I shall meet in life no more.
My lips can only whisper,
Their dear and blessed names,
But bear my blessing, say I perished,
Near to Richmond, on the James.

Bear my good sword to my brother,
And the badge upon my breast
To my young and gentle sister,
By guardian angels blest.
Take a lock from off my forehead,
Say my love 'till death she claims,
And that "brother Ned" oft thought of her,
Near to Richmond, on the James.

Oh! would that mother's loving arms
Were folded round me now,
That I could feel once more her hand
Upon my cold, cold brow;
Now I think for me she's praying
With holy, saint-like names,
While I am dying, dying,
Near to Richmond, on the James.

And when I am dead, dear comrade,
Close lay these fairest braids
On my breast—Oh! she was fairest
Of all the village maids,
Soon, soon we would be wedded,
But death the bridegroom claims,
And my cold corpse shall wither,
Near to Richmond, on the James.

And you will miss me comrade,
You will miss me for awhile,
When friends do gather round you,
Each decked with happy smile,
But soon my name shall perish,
'Mid life's glories and its shames—
Farewell! Farewell!—he passed away,
Near to Richmond, on the James.

BENNEY, LUCAS CO., O., Nov. 29, 1879.

A LADY CONTRIBUTOR.

Looking for Santa Claus.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

One wintry day little Mina arose in the morning and found that her mother was not up.

This was strange, for the sun was high and his beams fell aslant through the high garret window upon the bare floor. The stove was cold and the coffee-pot stood empty on the shelf. Mina laughed at the thought that she had waked before her mother. She slipped on her blue woolen dress, her large checked apron, her knitted stockings, and her thick shoes; and having washed her face, and braided her hair in two tight little pig-tails, crept around to her mother's bed, intending to kiss her awake. But her mother's eyes were wide open, her cheeks were red, and her hair was tossed about on the pillows.

"Oh, my child," she cried, as she saw her little girl, "what shall we do now? I am ill. I have a fever of some sort. My head is as heavy as if it was made of lead. I am not even able to rise, much less to go about my work. We shall starve together, you and I, poor, unhappy widow and orphan that we are."

"Oh, no, mother," said Mina. "We need not starve. I can make the coffee, and go and buy the bread and sausages."

"Child! child!" cried the mother, "very soon there will be no money to buy anything. I have felt myself breaking down for a week. I have no hope now. I must send for the doctor, and when he finds I am not able to pay him he will send me to the hospital. You, poor little soul, you will soon be motherless as well as fatherless."

The poor woman hid her face in the pillow. Mina wept. Tears ran down her round cheeks; but she soon went to the stove, and kindled a fire, and made the coffee, as she had seen her mother do it.

"The coffee will do you good, mother," she said. But the poor sick mother was too feverish to taste it.

Then, indeed, Mina felt that everything was wrong. "Christmas time! Christmas time!" repeated the poor woman, talking more to herself than to her child; and Christmas used to be so happy."

At this Mina crept closer to her mother's bed. Yes, in two days Christmas would come. She had looked forward to it so. She had hoped that she would find in her stocking a wax doll with blue eyes, and a candy basket full of sugar plums, at least; but she should not care for them if her poor mother were so sick.

"Child! go to the old doctor," said the mother. "Go tell him to come quickly! I must be made well if he can do it! Go! Go!"

Mina put on her hood and ran away. The good old German doctor came back with her, and felt his poor country-woman's pulse, and wrote a prescription, and patted little Mina on the head, and bade her take care of her

mother. But though the child took nearly all the money to pay for the powders he had ordered, and though she watched by her mother's bed all day, the mother grew worse. She lay tossing and fro, talking of the past.

"It was Christmas time when I ran away with your father," she said with the quick speech of fever. "My father did not like him, nor my mother either; so we ran away and were married. We came to this country in a great ship. We were very happy until he died. Mina do you remember how good he was to us last Christmas? Ah, only for you, only for leaving you, my little girl, it would seem best for me that I am going to him."

"Christmas! Oh, in Germany, at home in Germany, we always had a Christmas tree, and we sat together in the parlor, and the window lifted and St. Nicholas came in. He gave us toys and gifts of all sorts. We were glad and yet frightened. Our wooden shoes we set in a row on the hearth at night. In each we found some gift. Such a supper! dancing! music!

"I wonder whether my old father is dead; whether my old mother lives; whether they forgive me?"

She wept, but little Mina sat thinking. She thought of Santa Claus—old St. Nicholas, the good Christmas friend of all good children—he who would come down the chimney, or in at the window, with any gift he pleased. Surely if he was so good to her mother when she was a little girl, he would remember her now that she was sick. But how was he to know? He could if he pleased, give her mother plenty of money. Of that she felt certain. But how was one to find him?

"Mother," she said, "where does Santa Claus live?"

The poor mother was fast growing delirious.

"What did you ask?" she said, dreamily. "Where he lives? Oh, I do not know."

"But he could do anything, give anything he chose?" asked Mina.

"Yes," said the feverish woman, "yes—yes; tell him to bring me ice—nice, cold, glittering ice—to cool my head—ice, ice."

"Oh, I will get you some ice, mother," said Mina. I will go to the grocer's and get some."

She took a bowl from the closet and a penny from the old purse, and ran out of the room, shutting the door softly behind her.

There was a grocery in the lower part of the house, and she went into it and up to the counter. A rosy-faced Dutch boy gave her the ice, and he looked so good natured that she asked him a question.

"Do you know where Santa Claus lives?" she said.

The boy scratched his head.

"Yes—he lives in Germany," he said.

Mina's heart leaped high.

"Biddy—little Biddy Flynn," she called to a child passing the door, "will you take this bowl of ice up to my mother, and give her some, and stay by her until I come back. I'll only be gone a few moments."

Good-natured little Biddy took the bowl and ran up stairs, and Mina ran down the streets that she knew led to the river as fast as her feet could carry her. She had two cents in her pocket, and thought that would pay her fare.

A sailor was standing near a fruitstand. Mina looked up into his round, brown face with confidence.

"Mr. sailor," she said, "will you tell me which of those ships go to Germany?"

"Why, that one yonder, my little lass," said the sailor pointing to one over which the German flag floated. But Mina thought he meant the little ferry-boat that ran to Weehawken.

"Thank you," she said, and flew away. A bell was ringing; she hurried past the ferry-house, dropping her two cents into the hand of the ferry-master, and the boat was off the next moment.

It did not take long to cross the river, and Mina went on shore and looked about. A great good-natured looking man sat smoking his pipe at the door of a shoemaker's shop.

Mina went up to him and said softly:

"Please, sir, will you tell me where Mr. Santa Claus lives?"

Mr. Santa Claus?" said the man, in broken English.

"Vell, I do not know—does he keep shop or work at a trade? You tell me vot he is, den maybe I remember him."

"Don't you know? I thought every one knew Mr. Santa Claus," said Mina. "He—he makes toys for little children."

"So!" said the German. "So. Yas, I know. Go up dis street and along to the next corner, den you see a little gate. Behind dat you find de man dot makes toys for de children."

Mina said that she was much obliged. She felt that people were amiable in Germany, and her hopes rose high. She followed her old German's direction and soon came to a high fence. There was a gate in it. She lifted the latch and opened it, and before her was a low, brown house. Softly she crept up to the window. Yes, yes, she had found Santa Claus at last. There, before the fire, sat a little fat old man with white hair and rosy cheeks, hard at work with a turning lathe. An old woman, as rosy as he was, was gluing pieces of wood together with a brush—toy chairs, tables, bedsteads, wagons, milk-maids, jointed dolls; and at a table sat four little girls painting away at the finished toys with the brightest colors. Oh! this was delightful, and Santa Claus and his wife looked so kind!

Mina knocked on the door. Some one cried, "Herein," and she entered.

She stood at the threshold and dropped the little courtesy her mother had taught her, and said:

"Please, Mr. Santa Claus, I want to speak to you particularly. It is about Christmas."

"So?" cried the old gentleman—and truly he was a German—rising. "But what did you call me, little one?"

"Mr. Santa Claus," said Mina. "I've been looking for you all day, and poor mother is so sick. That is why I want to see you. You used to come in at the window on Christmas Eve when she lived in Germany, and you always put something in her shoe, and now she cannot earn money because she is sick. I want you to come the chimney and put enough in her stocking to last until she is well, for father is dead, and we have nobody who cares for us. And you—oh! you are so good, always going over the roofs on Christmas Eve, and giving presents to everybody."

"The child thinks you are Santa Claus," whispered the old German woman in her husband's ear. "Oh, how like she is to our little Mina, do you not see?"

"Do you speak German, child?" said the old man.

"Yes," said Mina, "it is my mother's language. Yes, I speak it very well."

"And what is your name?" asked the old gentleman.

"Mina Hoffman, Mr. Santa Claus, if you please," replied Mina.

The old woman caught her husband's arm.

"Be quiet, be quiet," whispered the old man. "It is a common name."

"And how did you come to think of coming here, my little maiden?"

"Because you were so good," said Mina. "To-day mother cried and told me how pleasant it used to be in Germany; and oh, Mr. Santa Claus, you must know where her father and mother are. She said she ran away from them; I and know she thought it was very naughty—only what could she do if they wouldn't let father come in?"

"Hans, Hans, it is our daughter!" cried the old woman. "What was the name of your mother's father?"

"It was Ansen, Mrs. Santa Claus," said Mina.

The old lady began to cry. She caught the child in her arms and kissed her fondly.

"Oh, good Mrs. Santa Claus, you will ask Mr. Santa Claus to help mother, won't you?" pleaded Mina.

But now the old couple took her by the hands and led her away to an inner room, where the old lady rumaged in the drawer of a little bureau and brought out an old-fashioned daguerreotype.

"See, child," she said. "Don't this look like any one you know?"

"It looks like mother," cried Mina, only—only not so old."

"It is enough," said the old gentleman. "Child, God has sent you. I am not Santa Claus. I am only an old toy-maker, working here in Weehawken—in a strange country to which I came from my fatherland. But my dear, I am your grandfather, and this is your grandmother. We came to America to look for our daughter when we heard she was a widow, but we could not find her. Now we are going to go and take care of her. We will go with you. And again I say, God sent you."

So in a few moments Mina and her grandparents were on their way across the ferry.

It was late in the afternoon when they climbed the stairs of the tenement house. Then the old people waited outside in the entry, and Mina went into the poor, half-furnished room and found little Biddy Flynn still waiting patiently.

"What happened ye, Mina?" she asked. "The mother has been fretting for you."

"Oh! my child! I am nearly frightened to death!" sobbed the poor woman.

"Mother!" cried Mina. "Oh, mother! I went to Germany to find Santa Claus—for we never needed him so much. But it was not Germany, and I did not find him; but—oh, mother—I found grandfather and grandmother!"

"Mother! Father!" cried the poor woman; and the next instant they rushed in and had her in their arms.

So Mina had a merry Christmas after all; and you may be sure that her mother got well, and that Santa Claus did not forget her.

A Good Name.

How true it is that a good name is capital itself. Such a capital, like every solid accumulation, is not built in a day, but is the result of years of continuance in well-doing. Any man can hope, by a spirit of good-nature or honorable dealings, to acquire an enviable reputation, which is implied in the possession of a good name. Little things done and observed in a series of years, the trifles of which life is made up, if done conscientiously, are what contribute to the result, and win for man the confidence of his fellows; and when one has thus acquired this good name, men seek him in business, rely on his word, and prefer his goods. Such a capital is within the reach of the poorest. It commands confidence, and helps one in securing all that is desirable in life, and as it is not to be acquired without delay, it does not depend upon birth or influence for its attainment. It is wonderful so many prefer to travel by crooked ways, which, though they may seem short cuts to success, do not lead in that direction at all.