

HANG UP THE BABY'S STOCKING.

Hang up the baby's stocking,
Be sure you don't forget,
The dear little dimpled darling,
He never saw Christmas yet;
But I've told him all about it,
And he opened his big blue eyes,
And I'm sure he understands it,
He looks so funny and wise.

Dear! what a tiny stocking,
It does't take much to hold
So a pink toe as baby's
A way from frost and cold.
But then, for baby's Christmas
It will never do at all;
Why, Santa wouldn't be looking
For anything half so small.

Know what we'll do for the baby—
I thought of the very best plan;
I'll borrow a stocking of grandma,
The largest that ever I can;
And we'll hang it by mine, dear mother,
Right here in the corner, so,
And write a letter to Santa,
And fasten it in the toe.

Write: "This is the baby's stocking
That hangs in the corner here,
You never have seen him Santa,
For he only came this year;
But he's just the blindest baby—
And now, before you go,
Just cram his stocking with goodies,
From the top clear down to the toe.

Children's Christmas Club.

By ELLA S. BARBOUR.

From St. Nicholas.

To every girl and every boy in North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia:

My Dear, Dear Friends. Do you know what a "club" is?

I hear your answering echo back from all the cliffs and hills of our land, and the sea breeze brings it to me faintly from the countries far away.

"You get a lot of people to belong, and you have a president and rules, and pay so much to join, and vote, and—"

Yes, that is it; you all know what a "club" is.

Now I want to write you about a club—a true club—a very proper and thoroughly organized club, eleven months old; and you may believe every word, for it all happened right here, in Portland, Maine, less than a year ago.

On Sunday, December 10, 1882, a lady sitting in a warm, cozy room, while the wind whistled about the house, rattling the windows, and piling the snow flakes in deep drifts across the steps and against the fences, was thinking of the houses up on The Hill and down at Gorham's Corner, and in Salem Lane, which had no steam radiators, no glowing grates, no double windows to keep out these searching winter winds.

She thought, too, of the little children in those houses and, as it was December, of the joyous day coming so soon—the day for giving gifts to all the world over—and wondered if in those houses little bare feet would spring out of bed, and dance across the chimneys in the dim dawn of Christmas morning; if numb, bluefingers would eagerly snatch down shabby, faded stockings; and find that St. Nicholas had really been there; if, later on, fathers and mothers, with brothers and sisters, and babies in their high-chairs, "for just this one day," would come gaily around dinner tables, where plump Christmas Turkeys lay at one end, and plum puddings were ready for the other and huge stacks of oranges, nuts and apples rose in the middle; and if, in the evening there would be great mysteries in the parlors, a fragrance of spruce, an exciting rustling of paper parcels, mothers slipping slyly in and out of doors with hands hidden behind them, a general scurrying about—and then all eyes dazzled by a hundred twinkling candles caught in the branches of a graceful tree laden with toys.

She wondered if in those houses would go up that wild shout of glee, those ringing hurrahs and joyous clapping of hands she had so often heard. And as she wondered, she shook her head sadly, saying:

"They have never known these pleasures, they never will, unless—oh! unless somebody remembers them. Why can't something be done? I would work, but one person can do so little alone. I want a hundred helpers—where shall I find them?"

She thought intently for a few moments, and then cried: "I know! The children will do it, the Portland children—those who have happy homes and Christmas-trees, and play rooms full of toys. They will load a Christmas-tree as one was never loaded before; they will spread a Christmas dinner which cannot be eaten in one day; they will do it—the warm-hearted, generous Portland children."

The bells from all the churches were ringing for Sunday-school. That was the time—that was the place to find the children. A number of notes were written, asking two or more girls and boys from every Sunday-school in the city to meet at that house at five o'clock, on the following Thursday afternoon.

Did they come?

Come? They did not know what the call was for, save for a whisper about Christmas work; but they came; came in pairs, in trios in quartets and quintets—a whole squad from the Butler school; big boys with big hearts, wee tots only four years old from the kindergarten—one hundred children ready for anything.

Oh, I wish you could have been there at the forming of that club!

A lady came forward to speak to them and their voices were hushed in expectation. I can't tell you just what she said, but her words were beautiful. She spoke of their Christmas festivities every year, of their presents and their friends; then of the unfortunate children who had fewer, some none of these joys.

When she asked: "Does any one here want to do anything for these others?" the thought that they could do anything was new to almost all—to many even the wish was new; but like one great heart-throb came their answer:

"Yes! If I! I! I! I want to do something!"
"Children, what can you do?"
A pause, and then one little voice cried:
"Give 'em a cent!"
That was the first offer, but it was followed by many another, "Give 'em candy!" "Give 'em a turkey!" "Give 'em a coat!"—each beginning with that grand word, "Give."

The result of the meeting was this: To form a club which should last "forever," and call it "The Children's Christmas Club;" to have it for its motto: "Freely we have received, freely give," to place the membership fee at ten cents, so that no child should be prevented from joining because he was not "rich;" to make no distinction in regard to sect or nationality; to permit to join the club any girl or boy under eighteen years of age who accepted its principles which were: To be ready at all times with kind words to assist children less fortunate than ourselves; to make every year in Christmas week a festival of some kind for them; to instead of carelessly destroying them; to save and, whenever practicable, put in good repair all outgrown clothing; to beg nothing from any source, but to keep as the keystone of the club the word "Give;" to pay every year a tax of ten cents, and to make their first festival in the City Hall on Thursday, December 28, 1882.

Then came the choosing of officers, with the idea that the chief officers, should be grown persons. His honor the mayor of Portland was elected president of the Children's Christmas Club. Others, ladies and gentlemen, were chosen for vice president, treasurer, secretary, executive committee, etc., etc.

The children then dispersed to meet again on Saturday, at Reception hall. Saturday morning brought to the hall a meeting of grown persons, who offered their stronger hands, wiser heads and deeper purses in the work the children had undertaken; but agreed that all that children could do should be left to them.

And a great support these "elders" form, who stood ready in the background to give of their strength, who quietly incited their willing contributions to the executive committee, "with best wishes for the Children's Christmas Club."

Instead of one hundred children, three hundred came to Reception hall, eager to join the club. After addresses by the president and others, children's committees were appointed, and their work explained to them.

As the children passed out in single file, each was registered, and received from the secretary a card of membership, as follows:

Card of Membership.
1882. CHRISTMAS. 1882.
"Freely ye have received, freely give."
C. C. C.
This is to certify that Alice Elizabeth Bars is enrolled a member of the CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CLUB, Portland.
J. Smith, Secretary.

Card of Invitation.
CHRISTMAS 1882.
C. C. C.
George Washington Jones
You are cordially invited to attend our Christmas Festival,
At City Hall, Thursday, Dec. 28th, at 2 p. m.
CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CLUB,
No. 579.

Let us skip the busy days of preparation, when the secretary of the Children's Christmas Club recorded twelve hundred names; when the Park-street school sent in the names of one hundred members who brought to their teacher books, toys and clothing, to be sent to the City Hall; when comfortably clad children came through the city bringing in their sleighs, on their sleds, in their arms bundles of clothing and toys, baskets of provisions, books, sleds, skates—much that was dear to them, given in the spirit of true charity.

One child could bring "only a plate of biscuits;" another a dozen apples for the dinner; one had no toys at home, but brought a five-cent piece she had treasured "to buy something;" for someone "little feller that hasn't nothin'" one took all her money and brought to her Sunday school teacher a painted candy bird-cage, and said, "I want it to go on the tree for some child poorer'n me."

And how were the children invited—those children who were to be the guests of the club?

Six hundred invitations were printed. An invitation committee was formed to distribute these invitations with the greatest care to persons who would be responsible for every ticket; that is, they gave no invitation to any child without knowing the parents or something of the recipient's history, and writing the child's name on the front of the card, with the giver's name on the back.

For three days before the festival, these little "guests" could come to the clothing room, and from the donations made by the "members" receive boots, shoes, dresses, hoods, trousers and jackets—whatever they needed to present a neat and orderly appearance at the festival.

Let us look into the city hall at half-past one, on the afternoon of Holy Innocent's day, December 28th, the most fitting day for this children's feast.

The gallery is reserved for those members of the club who have no work to do during that afternoon. But besides these, no other spectators are admitted to the hall: no grown persons, except the committees who are to assist during the festival in various ways. The stage supports a lofty tree, decorated that morning by the members, while, on tables behind, are heaped presents for six hundred children. Around the edges of the hall, settees have been placed for the guests, while the entire center is converted into a dancing hall.

Thirty long tables are loaded with all

that makes Christmas dinners the best in the year. Ten plates are laid at each side of every table; a lady is standing at the foot of every table; a member of the club stands at either side as "waiter," to see that no guest lacks anything.

In the anteroom, the reception committee, consisting of fifteen boys and fifteen girls, under the direction of a gentleman who has consented to take charge of the guests, await the arrivals.

Looking down the broad staircase, we see the lower hall filled with children, whose eager, upturned faces are reward enough for all the labor.

Soon the six hundred have had hats and caps and cloaks safely checked, and marshaled in thirty lines of twenty, each line headed by one of the reception committee. The doors are thrown open, the band plays a march, and the long procession files in—twenty girls, then twenty boys; up and down, in and out, through the six long aisles, between the tables, and twice around the hall before the first one has entered.

Such a line of faces, beaming with joy or timid, with bewildered awe; rough hair smooth to-day; grimy hands clean and scrubbed; no harsh words, no jostling, no disorder, as rank after rank enters, and the quick eyes take in the beauty of the Christmas garlands, the towering tree, and, best of all, the good will and love radiating from every face.

Among the presents sent in was a large doll, handsomely dressed, to which was pinned this note:

"If there is any little lame girl at the festival, this doll is for her."

As the line wound along, a tender murmur ran through the hall, for there, leaning on crutches, came a lame girl, and every boy and girl whispered on the instant, "That doll is for her."

The children stood around the tables, the leaders taking their places at the head.

The musicians lay aside their instruments, and a deep quiet rested upon the ranks of children, as the president of the club rises and extends the Christmas greeting of the Children's Christmas Club to its guests.

After that a clergyman took them back to that day, eighteen hundred and eighty-two years before, when the great and cruel King Herod sent out his decree that every child under two years old should be put to death, and his executioners went forth, and slaughtered every one; but the little Christ-child was saved. Saved for what? To live to teach people that little children are precious to their Heavenly Father, and that in every little child is something that will live forever—the price of which is far above rubies.

The band then played gaily, and the guests who had waited so patiently and respectfully were invited to partake of the feast.

Every plate had been previously filled with a generous supply of turkey or chicken, and every table had an unobtrusive source of ham, tongue, pickles, cake and pie, and for nearly an hour the little hosts and hostesses served their guests before conducting them to the settees awaiting them.

You can judge best whether the dinner was appreciated, by my telling you of one little girl who, when asked if she preferred chicken or turkey, replied, "I ain't never tasted chicken;" and of the boy who put aside, in a little pile beside his plate, the nicest part of everything given him. When asked if she did not want to eat that, looked up shyly, saying, "Please may I carry that home to mother? She's sick."

While the children are marching around to their seats, those thirty tables disappear as if by magic, caught up by ready hands, leaving the floor clear for games and amusements.

Where were the most eager faces—among the "members" in the gallery of the "guests" about the hall? Which were the happier?

I think there was no difference, for when our hearts are full to the brim with joy, they can hold no more and if screams and peals of laughter, and quick clapping of hands, mean joyousness, they were both as happy as they could be.

There was so much to enjoy! A little girl recited beautifully "Twas the night before Christmas," a queer hobby-horse as large as life curved and pranced about the hall, taking fright at everything, and convulsing the house with laughter as he waltzed in time with the music, some gentlemen sang funny songs and told the most amusing stories; and suddenly who should appear but Santa Claus himself! He was "clothed all in fur from his head to his feet," and carried on his back a pack containing six hundred bags of candy.

As the sunlight faded, a tiny ray suddenly flashed from the highest branch of the Christmas tree, and a little voice cried, "Oh, Bessey, see the star!" Then another and another twinkling light crept out, till the graceful Christmas tree stood transfigured, all agleam with light.

A pretty device had been to tie among the branches "sun-bows," as a wee one called a prism, and the tiny candles were reflected in a hundred swaying mirrors.

A quiet awe had rested upon the children as they watched the stars creep out; but as a flood of light burst upon them from the ceiling a grand hurrah went up. Then a strain of music came, soft at first, but soon swelling into a chorus.

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow."

Where are the presents all this time? Safely waiting on long tables behind the tree, where now each rank of twenty is led by the hosts, who have so cordially done their duty through the afternoon.

Up the flight at the left of the stage, goes the long procession, on to the stage and near that glittering tree whose broad arms stretch out as if to welcome them. Then a present is laid in every hand, and on goes the line down the steps at the right, and out into the dressing rooms, and then home.

The lame child whom we saw when she came in, received the doll sent for her; and among the fathers and mothers there, not one can keep back the tears.

"They slung me a pair o' skates!" cried one boy who literally could not restrain his joy. It seemed to be always the right thing for the right child. Was it because they have so few that any gift is precious?

But even this is not all; for after they

are wrapped in their out-door garments (which are all too thin), apples and oranges are slipped into their pockets, and packages of food for sick mothers are put into their hands.

Thus closes the happy day. Looking up the deserted staircase, a little later, a gentleman saw, all unconscious of time or place, a child sitting there, with a doll—her first doll, probably—tightly clasped in her arms, gently swaying to and fro, crooning a soft lullaby.

Will you print all this, St. Nicholas? Will you ask your readers if there shall not be other Christmas clubs this year? If all the children in every city, every town, and every village, shall not have one good dinner, one happy day, every year?

If you will do this, dear St. Nicholas, I am sure I may give you the thanks of all the members of the Portland Christmas club, who have learned by experience that there is no way so sure of making their own hearts glad as to make glad those of their less fortunate brothers and sisters.

Go thou and do likewise.

Personalities.

An amusing incident that occurred to the Rev. Frederick Baylis Allen, assistant rector of Trinity church, Boston, is called to mind by the number of weddings that have taken place there of late.

A young couple called at his residence to be united in wedlock and after the ceremony had been pronounced the groom, taking a coin from his vest pocket, handed it to Mr. Allen and departed. When they had gone Mr. Allen looked at his fee and found it was a five cent piece.

Sojourner Truth's most remarkable speeches are being recalled now that she is dead. In 1851, at Akron, O., when she was eighty years old, in the course of a woman's rights convention, she shouted: "Den dey talks 'bout dis ting in de head—what dis dey call it?" ("intellect," whispered some one near)

"Dat's it, honey. What's dat got to do with women's rights or nigger's rights? If my cup won't hold but a pint, and you'n holds a quart, wouldn't you be mean not to let me have my little half measure full?" Den dat little man in black, dar—he says women can't have as much rights as men, because Christ wa'n't a woman! Whar did your Christ come from? Whar did your Christ come from? From God and a woman! Man had nothin' to do wid him."

Perhaps a more extraordinary suicide was never heard of than that which is reported from Venice. Three young ladies went out, took their passage to the Lido, were observed to be very melancholy during the journey, and ended by drowning themselves. They appear to have taken their own lives, two out of mere melancholy and from tedious vitae, the third out of sympathy and for the sake of company. They had lost their mother, one of them had weak sight, another was subject to fits, and they had all been reading "I Promessi Sposi," the Italian book which most English schoolgirls have read. The least afflicted of the sisters was a girl of great beauty.

One of the latest incidents of the Paris duel is thus mentioned: For a trifling matter G. found himself drawn into a duel, and he chose for a witness one of those ferocious creatures who make a reputation at the expense of the skin of a friend. During the negotiations G. waited at a rendezvous the decision of the witnesses. At last his friend arrived, radiant with joy. He looked as if he had captured a town. "Good news. Your affair is arranged. You will fight in one hour—with the pistol—at three paces. I had a good deal of trouble to get consent to the three paces. They would not believe that you are near-sighted." Fortunately, however, the quarrel was amicably settled.

Lord Sackville, brother of the British Minister at Washington, owns a magnificent old house (whose roof covers five acres) and park called Knole, near Sevenoaks, a small town in Kent. Railroads have of late years brought it within half an hour of London, and multiplied ten-fold the crowds who went to see the house. The thing has become such a nuisance that Lord S. will no longer allow it to be seen, and all the Sevenoaks hotel keepers and publicans, who have mainly lived on it, and deemed its exhibition a prescriptive right of theirs, are furious. A letter has appeared in which the writer says that if Knole catches fire he doubts if men would be gotten in Sevenoaks to man the engines.

Governor Terrazas, of Chihuahua, having commissioned the frontiersmen of the foothills of the Sierra Madres to come for breech-loading rifles and one thousand cartridges each for the purpose of crushing, if not exterminating, the Apaches and all other hostile Indians of the mountains, orders that word be sent to all the frontiersmen of the Territories of Arizona and New Mexico to join the mountaineers of that State, declaring that they can share in the \$250 premium offered on each scalp, and the plunder and animals, arms, and captured ammunition.

When Senator Beck visited his old home in Scotland, in 1875, while strolling through the fields he met an old schoolmate. "You don't remember me, Donald?" he said to him. "No," said Donald, "I don't know your face. But I caught a six-pound salmon to-day in the frith, and whenever I have done that before something has happened. I don't know you by sight, but you're either John McPherson, who left us thirty years ago, or you're Jim Beck. Now which is it?" "Sure enough," cried the senator, "it's Jim Beck."

"Weel, Jimmie, they tell me that the Americans are going to elevate you to the House of Peers. Is it so? Come along home then and we'll eat the fish An American lord is good enough for a Scotch salmon."

Two car-loads of blooded stock are on their way to Joe Jefferson's Louisiana plantation.

THAT WOMAN'S CONGRESS.

A Characteristic Account by a Delegate to the Late Chicago Meeting. Correspondence of the Cincinnati Commercial Gazette.

Dear Sue:—You know I promised to tell you all about the Woman's Congress, in which you are so interested, and which we went to Chicago on purpose to attend—that is I did, but Sally wanted to match some feathers and have her hair banged. She is a dear girl but does not seem to have the remotest idea about the higher life, her duty to womanhood, and all that sort of thing, you know.

It rained the first day. It was just horrible. Chicago weather certainly proves that habit is stronger than principle, for the mercury slid up and down from all points of the compass, and all this after we had been promised fair weather.

We went to drive after breakfast with Jack, and he would take us out to the park, although we told him we were under a mortal obligation to go to the meeting. He said he guessed there would be enough earnest women to carry the thing through without us. I don't like to hear Jack adopt that tone. If there is one thing women ought to do it is to encourage each other in the cause, by their presence at least.

When we got back the meeting had adjourned, but it did not make much difference, for it was a business meeting—minutes, and reports, and thins. I don't believe you would care much for them.

In the afternoon we heard a paper you would have liked so much. I forgot the title; but it was all about children and drunkenness and poverty and crime. It was read by an eastern lady. They just love such things. She wore a black dress, and looked so sweet and noble up there on the stage. When she said the state ought to interfere, and women ought to make it their business to see to it, I felt thrilled to the heart, and was willing to do anything to help the good work. Then there was a discussion of the paper that I did not hear, because I was trying to remember what I had done with Sally's sample of velvet.

That night there was a grand banquet at the Palmer House. I did want to hear Miss Barton speak on "The work of the Red Cross," but it was impossible. We had made up our minds to go to the banquet, and knew that we should be all tired out and fit for nothing if we tried for both.

It was a lovely party, and I have sent you the Society Journal, in which there is a full account.

I was glad we had taken evening dresses with us. It was such a satisfaction to show the world that a woman can take a serious, earnest, view of life and still pay some attention to her appearance.

The next day it rained so hard that it really seemed foolish to go out. We had accepted an invitation to lunch, so we spent the morning getting ready. We really ought to have declined, but it seemed a little rude to do that, especially as she said we should go down together to the afternoon meeting. Lameben was delayed by calls, and there was a baby—a dear little thing—but she would not go to sleep, and we could not leave her crying. I felt really guilty when we reached the hall and found the session nearly over. It was not very enjoyable, one can not be interested in the discussion of a paper one has not heard. It is trying, too, to feel that you are not living up to the level of your friends' expectations. Some of the ladies seemed to think we might have been early if we had cared to, and made themselves really disagreeable, even after I had explained how it was. I think really the great problem is now women shall proportion their time justly between their conventional and their higher social duties. Next year I'll present a paper on that subject if you will help me.

I do think Jack is lovely. We met him in a barber shop where Sally went to have her hair banged. He said she looked like the wreck of an ill spent life, but if she would wear her hat very far down over her nose he would take us some place for supper and see that we were in time for evening services. I think men have a better idea of time than women, don't you? I was real glad he went, for one of the ladies talked so seriously and earnestly about sowing wild oats. There were many gentlemen present and all looked impressed when she referred to Darwin, or Huxley or Spencer, for you know it takes a strong mind to read those books.

On Friday morning was the election of officers. More than half the ladies forgot their membership tickets, and a good deal of time was taken up making out new ones. It was after eleven before the ballots were distributed. A list of vice presidents and other officers is made out by a nominating committee, but each member can scratch any name and substitute another. There were two or three I would like to have changed, but did not have a pencil. As Sally was in a hurry to go for her feathers I just voted the ticket as it was and left.

There were some papers to be read that afternoon, and a charming tea at the rooms of the Fortnightly, that I was awfully sorry to miss, but we decided hastily to come home with the Kinseys—you know father does not like to have us travel alone.

I feel more and more how important it is for a woman to cultivate her mind, and have come home with a fixed and unwavering purpose to elevate my sex, and to cling to the path of duty, no matter how hard it may be to climb.

Hair is worn high in Chicago.

In the list of the largest taxpayers in the District of Columbia appears the name of Henry W. Howgate, who pays taxes upon \$77,000 worth of property in Washington. The war department can't find him, but the tax collector can.

At Corsicans, Tex., a score of business houses were burned. Aggregate loss, \$99,000; insurance, \$49,000.

W. W. Corcoran has given \$200 to St. John's College, Annapolis, which he desired to be expended in planting memorial trees as a tribute to Bishop Piacquey, one of his old friends.