

Christmas Eve in the Kitchen

By ELEANOR E. KING.

IN THE kitchen of an apartment building in the city was seated a large, husky man with a little girl of about seven, on one knee, and a boy of perhaps six, on the other knee.

"But grandpa, I don't see why Santa Claus doesn't come," said little Doris. "We have waited so long out here in this old kitchen."

At this, Master Fred laboriously climbed down from his grandpa's knee and ran over to the kitchen door, and then to the window.

"Isn't it disgusting, grandpa? I can't even see him coming."

"Well, you know," said grandpa, as Fred climbed back upon his knee, "Santa Claus was a little boy once himself, and he knows how impatient little boys are. He has a hard time, though. Every year he has more boys and girls to bring toys to than he had the year before."

"But grandpa," said Doris, "I never knew Santa Claus was ever a little boy."

"Oh, yes," asserted grandpa firmly. "Once upon a time a group of fairies were playing around in an open place under some trees and they found a little baby asleep. They took the baby to their queen. The fairies loved the little baby, so they begged the queen to let them keep him and take care of him. The queen consented and the little boy 'Claus' thrived under the care of the fairies."

"Sh-h!" Grandpa, I think he's coming, interrupted Fred as he again climbed down and ran to the window. "Nothing doing," he said with much disgust and gave a signal with his arm like the flagman does when telling a train to go.

Grandpa obeyed the signal and continued: "He lived under the care of the fairies until he grew to be quite a man. Then the queen ordered her fairy workmen to build 'Claus' a hut, as he was a mortal and could not live the way the fairies did, any longer. 'Claus' had lots of time when he got into his new home and he occupied it by carving things. The fairies had taught him how to carve and he began making all sorts of toys.

"There was a village some distance from his hut and every time he heard of a little boy or girl down in the village who was sick, he took them one of his little toys. The children grew to like him ever so much. After a while he became acquainted with so many children that he found it hard to get around and see them all so often. He decided that he would work all year making toys, and then go around and find out which of the children had been good, and leave them presents.

"When the fairies heard of this plan they were delighted and gave Santa Claus four reindeer and a sled to help him out.

"After many years of this hard work Santa Claus began to show that he was growing old. The fairies realized that Santa Claus was a mortal and would die, so they—

"Santa Claus has come," some one shouted from the front room.

"Hurry and finish, grandpa. What did they do?" queried Doris nervously.

"They gave Santa Claus everlasting life so that he could make little children happy always," finished grandpa.

"Oh, I am so glad," said both of the kiddies.

"Now, to see what Santa brought," said grandpa, and all three made a rush for the parlor.



Under the Holly Bough

THE WHO have scorned each other, Or injured friend or brother, In this fast-fading year: Ye who by word or deed, Have made a kind heart bleed—Come gather here.

Let sinners against and sinning Forget their strife's beginning. And join in friendship now; He links no longer broken, He sweet forgiveness spoken, Under the holly bough.

Ye who have loved each other, Sister and friend and brother, In this fast-fading year; Mother and sire and child, Young man and maid, let mild, Come, gather here.

And let your hearts grow fonder, As memory shall powder. Each pain unbroken vow; Old loves and younger wooing Are sweet in the renewing, Under the holly bough.

Ye who have nourished sadness, Estranged from hope and gladness, In this fast-fading year; Ye with o'er-hardened mind, Made ailing from your kind—Come, gather here.

Let not the useless sorrow Puncture your night and morrow. If ever you hoped, hope now; Take heart, uncloud your faces, And join in our embraces, Under the holly bough.

—Charles Mackay.

Birds and Animals Share Christmas

CHRISTMAS is not merely a festival celebrated by and for man alone. Among the folk lore of other countries are several quaint stories in which animals and birds give evidence of their adoration. A well-known Bosnian legend offers a version of world adoration—they claim that on the holy day "the sun in the east bowed down, the stars stood still; the mountains and forests shook and touched the earth with their summits, and the green pine tree bent; the grass was bowed with the opening of blossoms; incense sweet as myrrh pervaded upland and forest; birds sang on the mountain tops and all gave thanks to the great God."

In Bosnia on Christmas day a sheaf of rye is put into birds' nests and bird houses for the birds' Christmas. A stranger, stranded in a Michigan town was once startled to see a sheaf of rye in a bird box. He knew immediately that one of his kind lived there and was keeping Christmas in the old way.

An old Indian legend tells us that on Christmas night all the deer in the forest kneel in adoration before the Great Spirit. Woe to him, however, who tries to spy upon them. He is punished with perpetual stiffening of the knees.

Many people of the old world claim that on Christmas night animals are gifted with speech, but none must trespass or cavalcade.

The Greater Need.

Little Horace—My mamma says maybe you'll give my papa a safety razor for Christmas.

Department Store Santa Claus—Yes, little man, I think I will.

Little Horace—Huh! You better keep it and use it yourself?—Tuck.

Have You Seen Old Santa?

After many years of this hard work Santa Claus began to show that he was growing old. The fairies realized that Santa Claus was a mortal and would die, so they—

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DECEMBER ACROSTIC

IF THE following words are arranged in order, one under the other, their initials will spell the name of something relating to Christmas. As a further help, we will say that each word has three letters:

- A small insect.
- Word used in speaking of ocean tide.
- More than one.
- Word used in asking questions.
- Adjective meaning not rigid.
- A small part of the body.
- Head covering.
- Verb to be mistaken.
- Month of the year.—Successful Farming.

DAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS.

Patience—Aren't you sorry now you didn't do your Christmas shopping early?

Patience—Why, I'm going to, I'm going out early this evening to do it.

Removing Pencil Marks.

Indelible pencil marks may be removed by soaking for a few minutes in alcohol and then washing in the regular way. The alcohol is just as effective after the material thus stained has been washed and ironed.

Definition You Should Know.

From the "Listener's Guide to Music"—A fugue is a piece in which the voices one by one come in and the people one by one go out.—Boston Transcript.

The Christmas Feel

THEY'S a kind-o' feel in the air to me,
When Christmas time sets in;
That's about as much o' a mystery
As ever I've run ag'in!
Fer instance, now while I gain in weight
An' general health, I swear
They's a goneness somer's I can't just state
A kind o' feel in the air.

They's a feel in the Christmas air goes right
To a spot where a man lives at!
It gives a feller an appetite—
They ain't no doubt about that!
And yet they's somepin—I don't know what—
That follers me here and there,
And ha'nts and worries, and spares me not,
A kind o' feel in the air.

They's a feel, as I say, in the air that's jest
As touchingly sad as sweet!
In the same ra-sho as I feel the best
And am spryest on my feet.
They's allus a kind o' sort o' a ache
That I can't locate nowhere;
But it comes with Christmas and no mistake!
A kind o' feel in the air.

Is it the racket the children raise?
Why no! God bless 'em, no!
Is it the eyes and the cheeks ablaze—
Like my own wuz, long ago?
Is it the bleat o' the whistle, and beat
Of the little toy drum and blare.
O' the horn? No! It is jest the sweet
The sad sweet feel in the air.

—JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.



Artificial Eyes.

Today there are probably more artificial eyes in the world than there have ever been before, yet so excellent is the workmanship used in their manufacture that they can very seldom be detected. The artificial eye, however, will not serve the wearer forever. There are certain orbital fluids which destroy the enamel, thus involving considerable expense for renewal. In view of this, celluloid is often used instead of glass, and lasts longer. The minutest details are carefully reproduced even in the veins on the eyeball and the broken color of a hazel iris.

With the snowshoe, with its broad, alitced, rawhide bottom, serviceable in walking over soft snow, the wearer does not expect to develop much speed, says the American Forestry Magazine. The sport consists in walking on snow so soft that, without such appendages, he would sink into it. Northern hunters in former times made their own shoes with hatchet and knife, and if leather thongs were not at hand, the lattle soles could be woven of basswood bark, which can be stripped in winter as well as in summer.

A sandpaper substitute that has special merit for removing rust from tools without scratching is made from crushed coke. The coke is crushed to the required degree of fineness and sifted through a piece of cloth onto a piece of coarse paper, which has been coated with glue. After the glue has dried, the paper is ready for use.

A physician claims to have restored two patients to sanity by pulling their teeth. When they see the bill they may go crazy again.—Pittsburgh Sun.

*Read the last page.

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