

The EMPTY STOCKING



There's an empty stocking hanging from many a little bed,
Where a God-blown dream hangs over each sleeping curly head;
And the vision gathers nightly of a day that's soon to come,
Where little feet should patter to the music of the drum.

There's an empty stocking hanging by many a wind-blown door,
That must wait in vain for Christmas, in the gray haunts of the poor;
And eyes that now shine brightly through a rain of tears,
See nothing there on Christmas but the sorrow of the years.

But out where splendor centers in the mansions of the great,
No call will go unanswered, no rest will vainly wait;
The Christmas horn will summon—the Christmas drum will roll
The tide of joy in magic through the gateway of each soul.

But where one gift would brighten the dark of weary days,
No reindeer's hoof will thunder o'er Poverty's drear ways;
And so, for God's white season—for some wee dreamer's cause—
Don't you think that you might whisper just a word to Santa Claus?

Christmas Classic in Author's Hand

"A Visit From St. Nicholas," Written by Clement C. Moore 100 Years Ago and Known to Every Child

I was the night before Christmas, when all through the house

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;
And mamma in her 'kitchen, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
To open the shutter and throw up the shades;
The moon, on the breast of the new-fallen snow,
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below;
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
Saw a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:
"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! on, Comet! on, Dunder and Blitzen!"
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!

A LITTLE book bound in red morocco holds the kernel of the children's celebration the world over of Christmas. To look at it no one would dream its hidden words are even now vibrating in the hearts of countless children, yet the charm its bright covers embrace is perennial. It is the manuscript of the famous children's classic, "A Visit From St. Nicholas," written by Clement C. Moore almost a hundred years ago, and dedicated to his own children in particular, and, as it has since proved, to childhood the world over.

This season it has as its companion in the library of the New York County Historical society in Central Park West a photographic copy of the original text enlarged sufficiently to enable it to be easily read, for though the original chirography is quite remarkable for a man of Dr. Moore's years—eighty-two when he indited the poem—it is fine and old-fashioned, and therefore somewhat difficult to read.

The innovation has proved a rare treat to the library patrons, and it is interesting to note with what reverence it is handled by men and women whose childhood days are long past, yet whose holiday memories are still bright. Two pages and a half are consumed in committing the poem to paper, and the repetition of the old familiar lines brings to mind pleasant thoughts of the season, for no one has ever visualized our American Christmas from the children's viewpoint as has Clement C. Moore in his rare little poem.

The lines were written as a Christmas gift for the author's two young daughters nearly a century ago, but it has since become a progressive gift to countless other girls and boys. Accompanying the original manuscript when it was presented to the society by T. W. Moore, a relative, some fifty years ago, is a letter in which the writer tells how the verses came to be written and how it happened that they were eventually published.

Mr. Moore lived at the time in a handsome house overlooking the Hudson, at Ninth avenue and Twenty-third street. Then Chelsea, like Greenwich village, further south, was quite remote from the city. Each was largely populated by the Dutch settlers from Nieuw Amsterdam. Living near his country seat was a portly, rub-

The Christmas Gift

by Merrill Walrath Burton

The day before Christmas, Why don't you make it one of rest, Joel, and begin the new one fresh and ready and bright for the work before you?

The Rev. Joel Brierly regarded his estimable better half with smiling thoughtfulness. "It happens to be a day when both of us must live up to imperative duty, dear," he replied.

"There are the Mason children. I have placed the two older ones with some very good people. The little girl of four and the boy of six, however, are still in need of a home. I have been thinking; suppose you see if you cannot find some one to adopt the girl and I will do the same for the boy."

"Who are we ever going to get to take them?" inquired Mrs. Brierly, growing fussy and excited.

"I shall trust your busy and sensible mind to enlist the interest of some of your charitably inclined lady friends," answered Mr. Brierly gallantly. "I will undertake trying to influence some benevolent husband or father."

So, with holiday cheer warming his honest heart, the best liked minister Paxton ever had started forth on his mission. Before doing so, however, he sat down on the porch for a quarter of an hour compiling a list of possible "prospects." Thomas Dalrymple, the village magnate, was among them, and he listened with apparent interest to the minister's story of how four children had been left homeless and penniless through the death of their mother, a poor widow.

"Tell you," said Mr. Dalrymple, "my wife is an invalid and any variation in our regular life would greatly disturb her. I shall be only too glad to join in a fund to provide for the care of one of the children at some school or institution."

"We have none here adaptable to," demurred Mr. Brierly, "and I promised Mrs. Mason that I would exert supervision and care over her little ones until they were able to take care of themselves."

talk about there being no more Christmas or New Years for you!
"Rouse up, John Dallas! what you want is something to interest you, to break the dull monotony in your quiet life, and, happily, I am the very man who can suggest to you how you are going to do it."

John Dallas regarded his visitor hopefully, almost pleadingly. "If you will follow my advice," continued Mr. Brierly, "you will bring into your home tonight a gift for your dear wife that will wake up in her all the old-time interest in the world and you."

"I hope it—long for it," declared Dallas eagerly.

"Very well," resumed Mr. Brierly. "I am looking for some one to adopt little Benny Mason, whose mother died last week. Come, old friend, brighten up heart and home with a loving, grateful little guest, who will surely bring a blessing to your threshold. Go home then every night to find your wife happy, because she has had some one to cling to her and love her all the day long, and the happy little fellow will twine himself close about your longing hearts."

John Dallas arose from his chair and fervently grasped the hand of his friend and adviser. There was a newborn light in his rugged face.

"Bring along the lad as soon as you like," he said. "It won't be my fault that he doesn't have a pleasant home, and I hope Mary will say the same," and just after noon Mr. Brierly appeared with the little outcast.

"Mr. Brierly says you are to be my new father," prattled the bright faced little fellow, running up to Mr. Dallas, "and won't you please take me to my new mamma?"

Not within five years had the old-time cheering, winning smile deepened on the face of John Dallas as now. He took his little charge around the stores and fitted him out newly. Somehow he was thrilled, as, clasping his hand lovingly, Benny ran by his side as late in the afternoon he started for home. As he went up its steps he told Benny to go to the end of the porch and stay there till he came back. His wife met him in the hallway.

"Mary," he said, and his voice showed deep emotion, "I've got something to tell you. You know tomorrow is Christmas. Well, I'm going to turn over a new leaf."

"How strangely you talk!" spoke Mrs. Dallas. "Aren't you a pretty good man as it is?"



Daddy's Even Fairy

A CHRISTMAS CH...
"This is the time of year, Daddy, when I do not feel like writing fairy stories of my kind. I have a prescription except stories of Christmas time."

"And they're the stories we like to hear," said Nick.

"Yes," said Nancy, "we don't want fairy tales or anything else, no matter how nice it is in the way of a story, just when we're so excited over real things like Christmas."

"I'm glad we feel the same way about it and that is why I've been telling Christmas stories for the past week and more and will go on doing so for another week or so if you still want to hear them."

"We do," said Nick.

"I'm going to tell you today, or rather, this evening, of the excitement in the city. There were so many people out, in fact it seemed as though everyone had come out, and some of the dogs whose masters and mistresses hadn't wanted to leave them alone all the time these days had brought them out, too.

"The dogs stuck close to their masters and mistresses and looked about them as though to say: 'Dear, dear, such crowds! Why a poor dog doesn't know which way to turn.'"

"One dog was riding in a motor and looking out of the window at one side and then at another in his excitement. There was so much to see. A pussy cat wandered in and out between the feet of some people trying to find her home, and she evidently found it before I left her, for I saw her bounding along with a happy, gleeful look on her face as though to say: 'Well, it's enough of a crowd for any cat to lose its way in, but a cat is pretty smart—just see me!'"

"In the big shop windows dolls were gayly riding elephants and they didn't look in the least afraid, and they were riding lions and didn't seem to have any fear!"

"GOING HOME FOR CHRISTMAS"

"Going home for Christmas!" Oh, the magic and the mirth
Thrilling through four throbbing words—
four words so wonder-worth!
Flow the happy pulses leap, and how the eyes shine bright!
How the springing feet keep step to songs
from morn till night!
Flow the hopes and hopes bore and
bore to us no more—
Nothing is worth noticing, with such a joy before!
"Makes us keen to do our bit to help the sad old earth."
"Going home for Christmas!" Oh, the magic and the mirth!

"Going home for Christmas!" My, how pleasant strangers are!
Not a care but has a smile for every joy and jar!
"Not at all! My fault!" they say, all smiling back at you;
Wonder, now, if they're all going home for Christmas too!
Sort of like to ask 'em, but there's never time to stop.
With everybody shopping just as hard as they can shop,
A host of jokes are jabs and pokes from bundles in a car!
"Going home for Christmas!" My, how pleasant stranger are!

"Going home for Christmas!" What a dream for day and night!
"Was I ever dream more dear and beautiful and bright?"
"Nearer comes the time, and now we dream it more and more."
"Yes, we never did our daily work so well before!"
"Can't get tired, somehow, now; and crossness doesn't fit
With the dream that's singing, singing—not a bit!"
All the tasks are easy ones, and all the burdens light.
"Going home for Christmas!" What a dream for day and night!

"Going home for Christmas!" It's so good it must be true!
Isn't it about time that the jolly postman's due?
Every day or so they write to say we "mustn't fail!"
Just as if we wouldn't walk, in lack of rail or sail!
"You're coming home for Christmas; the days are all so slow!"
Every day acts just that way at this end—don't we know?
Cross it off the calendar the minute it is done!
"Going home for Christmas!" It's so good it must be true!
—MINNIE LEONA UPTON.

Different Now, But Christmas Just the Same

By DeLyle F. Cass

On days they used to bring a head smoking into the feast
the holly-grown Yule-log to
fireplace with special cere-
monies
afterwards the custom
of sweet-voiced boys to
use to house on Christmas
standing grouped in the
singing carols of joy to the
ance of bells.
grandfather's time folks
bolsterous sleighing par-
all muffled up snugly
horses, with the iron
swiftly over the hard-

A Christmas Carol

"What means this glory round our feet,"
The Magi mused, "more bright than morn?"
And voices chanted clear and sweet,
"Today the Prince of Peace is born!"
"What means that star," the Shepherds said,
"That brightens through the rocky glen?"
And angels answering overhead,
Sang, "Peace on earth, good-will to men!"
Tis eighteen hundred years and more
Since those sweet oracles were dumb;
We wait for Him, like them of yore;
Alas, He seems so slow to come!

But it was said, in words of gold,
No time or sorrow e'er shall dim,
That little children might be bold
In perfect trust to come to Him.
All round about our feet shall shine
A light like that the wise men saw,
If we our loving wills incline
To that sweet life which is the Law.
So shall we learn to understand
The simple faith of shepherds then,
And, clasping kindly hand in hand,
Sing, "Peace on earth, good-will to men!"
But they who do their souls no wrong,
But keep at eye the faith of morn,
Shall daily hear the angel-song,
"Today the Prince of Peace is born!"
—James Russell Lowell.

no fireplaces in which to burn the logs, even if we had them; where the policeman on the beat probably would arrest the Christmas choirsters if they came around and woke up the neighborhood by singing early in the morning.
Mollie and I just wake up the kids and let them tumble downstairs to see the tree we trimmed the night before, and then let them litter up the parlor, while she sits quietly on the arm of my chair and I smoke, watching them most of the day afterwards.
But, let me tell you, friends, it's Christmas, just the same!

OLD ENGLISH CHRISTMAS SONG

All hail to the days that merit more praise
Than all the rest of the year,
And welcome the nights that double delights
As well for poor as for peer.
Good fortune attend each merry man's friend
That doth but the best that he may,
Forgetting old wrongs in carols and songs
To drive the cold winter away.
This time of the year is spent in good cheer,
And neighbors together do meet,
To sit by the fire with friendly desire,
Each other in love for to greet.
Old grudges forgot, as put in the pot,
And sorrows aside they all lay;
The old and the young do carol this song,
To drive the cold winter away.

When old Christmas-tide comes in like a bride,
With ivy and green-holly clad,
Twelve days in the year teach mirth and good cheer
In every household is had.
The countryman's guise is then to devise
Some gambols of Christmas play,
Where every young man does the best that he can
To drive the cold winter away.

A Christmas Kiss



"Poorly, Poorly, Sir," Replied Dallas Dejectedly.

seemingly weary from his useless tramp, and as he passed the office of John Dallas, who dabbled in real estate, he saw its tenant staring gloomily out of the window. Now the thought never occurred to Mr. Brierly that here might be a possible benefactor. John Dallas was gray and grizzled. He had changed a good deal of late years, and all his old-time cheerfulness seemed to have vanished after his children had grown up and married and went away. The clergyman had heard that Dallas and his wife lived a lonely and, it was said, rather unhappy life. Dallas looked it as he greeted his chance visitor.

"Just dropped in to rest for a minute or so," announced the latter. "How are you getting along, Mr. Dallas?"

"Poorly, poorly, sir," replied Dallas dejectedly. He had left home that morning wretchedly dissatisfied. Insensibly since the youngest and last of the family brood had chosen a wife and had settled in another section of the country, like himself, Mrs. Dallas had changed greatly, and the holiday season as it came around seemed almost unbearable.

CHRISTMAS CAROL

What shall we say at Christmas?
Only the kindest words,
Sounding like fairy whispers
Or like the songs of birds.
Let every voice resounding
Be sweet with tones abounding,
Love the whole earth surrounding
Love without thought of malice.
What shall we do at Christmas?
Surely all friendly things,
Secretly, lovingly, softly,
As touch of the angels' wings.
Hearts like crystal chalice
Shall pour into cot and palace
Love without thought of malice.
What shall we sing at Christmas?
Songs rising high and clear,
Telling the Christ-child's story
Loudly, that all may hear.
How, in a far-off nation,
Pure above all temptation,
Was born the world's salvation!

Sand Was Lacking

"Couldn't you put up a bluff?"
"No, I haven't the sand."
Learning How.
We never spend our time to better advantage than when we use it in learning how to do the things we need to do. The one who works ignorantly, works at the greatest possible disadvantage. Learn how to do something, and learn how to do it better than other people, and you will find out that the world has been saving a place for you.—Girls' Companion.
"It's better to watch bubbles than put your finger in to learn if the balls."