

LIES FOR CHRISTMAS

Father calls me William, sister calls me Will,
Mother calls me Willie—but the fellows call
me Bill!
Mighty glad I ain't a girl—rather be a boy
Without them sashes, curls and things that's
worn by faultery!
Love to chawkin' green apples an' go swim-
min' in the lake—
Hate to take the castorile they give f'r
belly-ache!
Most all the time the hull year round they
ain't no floss on me,
But jes' f'ore Christmas I'm as good as I
kin be!

Got a yaller dog named Sport—sick 'im on
the cat;
Fust thing she knows she doesn't know
where she is at!



Got a clipper-ated, an' when us boys goes
out to alide
'Long comes the grocery cart an' we all hook
a ride!
But, sometimes, when the grocery man is
worried and cross,
He ranches at me with his whip and larrups
up his boss;
An' then I lift and holler: "Oh, you never
teched me!"
But jes' f'ore Christmas I'm as good as I
kin be!

Gran'ma says she hopes that when I get to
be a man
I'll be a quissioner like her olde's brother
Dna.
As wuz et up by the cannibals that lives in
Ceylon's lale,
Where every prospect pleases an' only man
is vile!
But gran'ma she had never been to see a
Wild West show,
Or read the life of Daniel Boone, or else I
guss she'd know



That Buffalo Bill an' cowboys is good enough
f'r me—
Except jes' f'ore Christmas, when I'm good
as I kin be!

Then of sport he hangs around, so solum
like and still—
His eyes they seem a sayin': "What's er mat-
ter, little Bill!"
The cat she sneaks down off her perch,
a-wonderin' what's become
Ov them two enemies uv heru that use ter
make things hum!
But I am so peelite and stiek so earnestlike
to biz,
That mother sez to father: "How improved
our Willie is!"
But father, havin' been a boy himself, sus-
picious me,
When jes' f'ore Christmas, I'm as good as I
kin be!

For Christmas, with its lots an' lots uv
candies, cakes and toys,
Wuz made, they say, f'r proper kids, and not
f'r naughty boys!
So wash yer face, and brush yer hair, an'
mish yer p's and q's.



An' don't bust out yer pantaloons, an' don't
wear 't your shoes;
Say yessum to the ladies, an' yessir to the
men.
An' when they's company don't pass yer plate
f'r pie again,
But, thinkin' uv the things you'd like to see
upon that tree,
Jes' f'ore Christmas be as good as you kin be!
—Eugene Field, in Ladies' Home Journal.

A Christmas Entertainment.
A novel idea for a children's Christ-
mas entertainment is a butterflies' ball,
writes Elizabeth Robinson Scovil, in the
Ladies' Home Journal. This need not
mean late hours or expensive dresses.
The boys wear light-fitting suits of black
or dark-brown, the girl any pretty, fanciful
dress. The framework of the wings is
definitely fashioned of wire and covered
with paper or the cotton crepon that
comes in such vivid colors; these are
spangled with gold or painted to re-
present the tinting of the butterflies' wings,
and to this the wings are attached. The
effect is very brilliant and graceful. An-
other pretty fancy is an archery fete.
The children carry small bows dressed
with flowers, and sheafs of arrows in
flower-bedecked quivers.

"You haven't got \$5 about you, Jones?"
"No, I haven't. Wife borrowed the last
to buy my Christmas present."—Atlanta
Constitution.

THE CHILDREN'S BEST FRIEND



SANTA CLAUS is the children's friend. Who he was we have little means of knowing. Authentic history is almost silent on the subject, merely stating that he was the Bishop of Myra, in Lycia, and died about the year 326. Tradition has woven many a pretty tale about him, and one runs that he appeared in the night time and secretly made valuable presents to the children of the household. What manner of person St. Nicholas was, seems subject to variation, according to the time, place or manner of regarding him. Medieval painters represent him as slender, and clad in full episcopal robes with mitre and crozier. Modern painters and story-tellers in England, Germany and America, give us a jovial, rosy-cheeked type of a man, with none of the features of the cleric. Kris Kringle is regarded as an alternative name for Santa Claus, but he is a totally different being. Kris Kringle is simply a corruption of the German word "Christ Kindlein," or Christ Child.

Christmas is children's day; it is the day when, as Dickens says, we should remember the time when his great founder was a child himself. It is especially the day for the friendless young, the children in hospitals, the lame, the sick, the weary, the blind. No child should be left alone on Christmas day, for loneliness with children means brooding. A child growing up with no child friend is not a child at all, but a premature man or woman.

The best Christmas present to a boy is a box of tools, the best to a girl any number of dolls. When they get older and can write letters a postoffice is a delightful boon. These are to be bought, but they are far more amusing if made at home. Any good-sized cardboard box will do for this purpose. The lid should be fastened to it so that when it stands up it will open like a door. A slit must be cut out about an inch wide and from five to six inches long, so as to allow the postage of small parcels, yet not large enough even to admit the smallest hand. Children should learn to respect the inviolate character of the post from the earliest age.

Capital scrapbooks can be made by children. Old railway guides may be the foundation and every illustrated paper a magazine of art. A paste box, next to a paint box, is a most serviceable toy. Hobby horses are profitable steeds and can be made to go through any amount of paces. But mechanical toys are more amusing to his elders than to the child, who wishes to do his own mechanism. A boy can be amused by turning him out of the house, giving him a ball or a kite, or letting him dig in the ground for the unhappy mole. Little girls, who must be kept in on a rainy day, or invalid children, are very hard to amuse, and recourse must be had to story telling, to the dear, delightful thousand and one books now written for children, of which "Alice in Wonderland" is the flower of perfection.



BEGINNING at Benton City, on the Union Pacific Road, the telegraph line stretches to the north, leaps across to the Laramie mountains, and at a point opposite the great mass of earth and rock and tree, called Red Butte, it comes to a sudden stop. From this point to the fort, a distance of twenty-five miles, is the roughest portion of the way, and the skulking bands of Indians make it the most dangerous.

At the terminus of the line is a rude shanty and a soldier operator. Close by the shanty are tents of the soldiers, who are setting the poles and pushing the line along until the fort shall have electric communication with the outside world.

It is December now—only two days to Christmas. There have been cold rains, snow storms, severe weather, and the soldiers are wondering why they have not been ordered back to the fort for the winter, when a mounted messenger arrives over the trail bearing the expected order. The Colonel's wife has gone East. The operator is to wire her to remain where she is until spring. When her answer is received the shanty is to be closed up, camp broken, and the party headed for the fort. The afternoon wears away, the night comes down, and some of the soldiers are asleep, when Benton City sends in its call, and follows it by a telegram reading: "The Colonel's wife started West four days ago, and ought to be there or at the fort now."

Next morning there was an arrival from the South. The Colonel's wife, riding a horse with a blanket for a saddle, dismounted at the front of the shanty, and opened the door with a cheery "Howdy do, boys!" to the operator and the Sergeant. As both men stood at "attention," she removed the hood and cloak which enveloped her, shook off the snow, and said to the Sergeant:

"I came through with hardly an hour's rest, and I'm hungry as a wolf. Tell some of the men to cook something. I'll give the Colonel a surprise."

Everybody hustled and hustled, and an hour later camp was broken, and twelve people headed for the north, the strongest man breaking the way, and the Colonel's wife bringing up the rear, with a kind word and a smile for every soldier. The trail led up a narrow valley, and the wild gale had drifted the snow until the line had to move forward at a snail's pace. At nightfall they had made just half the distance to the fort. In a thicket all ate supper together. Said the Sergeant, as he looked in vain for the stars: "I saw Injun signs back by the creek."

"I see that you have revolvers as well as muskets," remarked the Colonel's wife. "Please give me one and extra ammunition. I'll try and not be a burden to you, at least."

As the gale came sweeping down the valley and roaring around the mountain base, there were wild war whoops and the crack of rifles. In the darkness a score of Indians had crept close upon the camp. Both sentries were shot dead.

"It's only Injuns, boys; only Injuns!" shouted the Sergeant, and he fired his first shot. "Now, then, push out."

They had not moved ten rods before a rifle cracked and one of the men pitched forward, shot through the heart. A minute later two more bullets whistled over the men's heads. Then the little band was hidden from sight of the Indian sentinels by the blinding whirl of snow.

"They're after us, ma'am," said the Sergeant.

"They won't take me prisoner," whispered the Colonel's wife, as she held out the revolver.

"That's right, ma'am. We are headed for the fort right enough, and maybe the red fiends will haul off after a bit and let us go in peace. A merry Christmas to you, though I've seen merrier ones in my time."

For a mile or more the little party breasted the storm. Then came a sudden shot, and the rear guard went down. There were seven men and a woman at 8 o'clock. At 9 o'clock there were but five men, at 10 but four, at midnight only two. Two men and a woman—the Sergeant, the soldier-operator, and the Colonel's wife. The others had been picked off one by one, and the Indians still followed. Now and then the trio halted, knelt down, and peering into the snow-whirl, opened a fusillade which checked pursuit if it did not wound or kill.

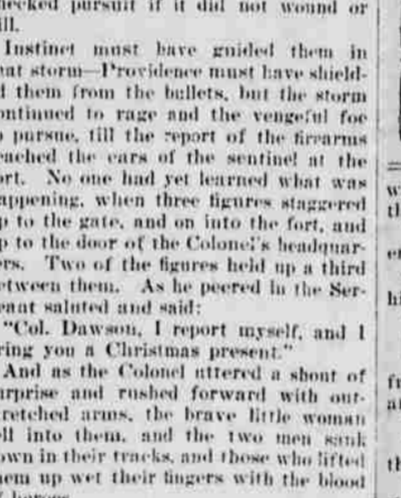
Instinct must have guided them in that storm—Providence must have shielded them from the bullets, but the storm continued to rage and the vengeful foe to pursue, till the report of the firearms reached the ears of the sentinel at the fort. No one had yet learned what was happening, when three figures staggered up to the gate, and on into the fort, and up to the door of the Colonel's headquarters. Two of the figures held up a third between them. As he peered in the Sergeant saluted and said:

"Col. Dawson, I report myself, and I bring you a Christmas present."

And as the Colonel uttered a shout of surprise and rushed forward with outstretched arms, the brave little woman fell into them, and the two men sank down in their tracks, and those who lifted them up wet their fingers with the blood of heroes.

A handsome merry-faced woman, who is five years older—a Sergeant of infantry who limps a bit—a lone grave in which sleeps the soldier-operator—nothing more.

"You haven't got \$5 about you, Jones?"
"No, I haven't. Wife borrowed the last to buy my Christmas present."—Atlanta Constitution.



BOTH MEN STOOD AT ATTENTION.
The Colonel's wife may tell you the story—the Sergeant couldn't be coaxed to, but he can't conceal the limp, and is proud of the extra stripes he has worn on his sleeves ever since that Christmas day.

I will remember the poor if I have to make a memorandum to that effect every morning.

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INDOOR CHRISTMAS GAMES.

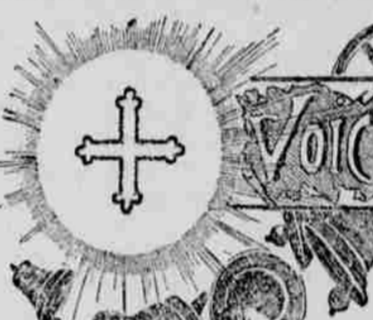
How the Young Folks May Find Pleasure if the Day Be Stormy.

Parlor games like chess, draughts, dominoes, etc., are too heavy for Christmas. The boys and girls want more rollicking, hip-hip-hurrah games. A committee appointed to provide desirable amusement for a well-known charity in New York selected the following program. Ten hours were spent in selecting appropriate indoor games and pastimes, and even then no more than were actually needed got out of doors their amusement is easy, for baseball, leap frog, hide and seek, and other games suffice, but indoors something akin to these games is wanted.

In this class is a game known as "The Country Circus." It consists in making riders, tumblers, clowns, strong men, etc., of all the children and with this improvised company giving a performance. Another good game for the house is called "Jack-of-All-Trades," in which those engaged must perform some work in the particular trade to which they are assigned by the foreman. In this game on Thanksgiving the boys and girls of an institution in Jersey cut and sewed a lot of carpet rags, made a lot of brushes, and split and bundled several cords of wool.

"The Boy Hunters," in which the children learn the name, habits, and peculiarities of the entire animal kingdom, is another good game, and "Robinson Crusoe" one of the same kind and value. All these games are active ones, require constant movement, and are meant only for the daylight. For the evening, games less boisterous must be chosen. In this class are "Anagrams," "Authors," "History of Our Times," and shadow pantomimes. The last named, however, are the most popular and enjoyable and have so increased in favor that books written especially to show how to prepare and perform them can be had at any well-stocked book store.

A Financial Transaction.
"Say, mister," said a boy who had just overtaken a market wagon after pursuing it for four or five blocks, "do you



THE PASSING YEAR
Come, old year, 'tis time to go.
Age, perhaps, has made you slow.
But your time of rule has flown
And I come to claim my own.
You are popular no more,
All your triumphs here are gone,
With what strength is left to you,
Had you better hasten on.
Learning from experience,
I have promised much, like you.
When another year has flown
People will condemn me, too.
But what matters that to us?
Years, like men, must come and go.
We are fast with promises,
With fulfillments we are slow.

VOICES OF THE BELLS

Listen to the Christmas bells,
While all the world is praying;
They are pealing, swelling, telling,
And this is what the bells are saying:
We are the voices of Vedas and sagas,
We are the tongues of prophet and priest;
We are the lips of the sibyl and seer,
Who dreamed of a star in the purple east,
And by the gales of the mystical morn
When the Christ was born.
We are the prayers of the wandering Magi,
On Syrian deserts all level and lone;
We are the chorus of Judean shepherds,
Who dreamed of a star in the purple east,
And by the gales of the mystical morn
When the Christ was born.
We are the teardrops of grief and of sorrow,
We are the echoes of yesterday's pain;
We are the jubilant voice of tomorrow,
Let Peace on Earth; let Thy good will reign
So our lips break silence on Christmas morn
When the Christ is born.

Johnny's Woe.
Curly-headed Johnny had a tear drop in his eye.
Curly-headed Johnny couldn't speak without a sigh.
And the Christmas preparations that were round him everywhere
Had not the least effect upon his melancholy air.
"Oh, what's the use of hanging up my stockings," he would say;
"There's nothing to look forward to for me on Christmas Day."
He'll scratch us off our program when he hitches up his team,
For Santa needs a fireplace, and they beat bells out by steam."
—Washington Star

A Christmas Church Idea.
If the platform of a church or Sunday school room be deep enough to admit of it an artistic Christmas arch can easily be made by an amateur carpenter, writes Florence Wilson, in the Ladies' Home Journal. The upper part should have wires stretched across, to which may be fastened small hemlock boughs, thus forming a solid mass of green. The framework should, of course, be wound with evergreen, the whole placed about two feet from the wall, so that behind it may be hung the Christmas bells of red and yellow immortelles at different lengths by ropes of evergreen. These bells may be made to hang at different angles by using thin picture wire. Let each bell be worded, so that they may seem to ring out their own song of "Glory to God in the highest."

For a Sunday school festival, a post-office where each child upon inquiring might find an envelop addressed and sealed, containing a pretty Christmas card, is a unique feature. Then there is the huge snowball made of cotton, besprinkled with diamond dust and filled with gifts for the infant class, which may be rolled through the window with an appropriate letter from Santa Claus.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE STATE.

Great Demand Is Annually Made on the Forests of Maine.

Not all who desire a Christmas-tree for the holiday merry-makings can sally forth, armed with a hatchet, and hew from their own acres. Therefore at each Christmas season great demand is made on the forests of Maine for evergreen spruces.

No tree but an evergreen will do, and no evergreen but the spruce presents the delicate, feathery, flat, clean-lined branches of dark perennial shade, which throw out by contrast the brightness of the suspended presents and favors.

On Sunday, the fifth of December, 1891, ten car-loads of Christmas trees for New York were detained in the Portland yard because they were loaded so that it was impossible to work the brakes. This objection was overruled, and the sweet-smelling freight was allowed to proceed to its destination. How the cars were loaded can easily be described, but the fragrance of twenty-five thousand freshly cut evergreen trees must be left to the reader's imagination.

The ten cars, all "flats," or platform cars, were each thirty-four feet long, loaded eight feet high, and all came from the small station of Wisnesset, which lies at the head of one of the numerous bays on the coast of Maine.

At regular intervals about each car, four on each side and two at each end, were stout spruce stakes, originally Christmas trees which might have done duty at the Castle De Blunderbore. These rose to the top of the load, which was limited to a height that would clear all overhead bridges on the road.

In this space the trees were packed lengthwise, butts to the front and rear tops to the center, so compactly that the loaded car was one solid block of green. Each car held about twenty-five hundred trees, large and small, tied in bundles of four. From six hundred and fifty to seven hundred bundles were packed in a car, so that the ten car-load contained twenty-five thousand trees at least.

The marketing of Christmas trees is a Maine specialty. Every year speculators purchase the right to cut trees from the land owners, paying half a cent, one cent, and two cents apiece for trees from eight to twelve years old on the stump. Then the natives are hired to cut and bring them to the shipping point, where they cost the speculator from ten to twelve cents each, loaded on the car.

He pays also for their shipment to New York—sixty-seven dollars per car, or about two and one-half cents per tree.

The trees retail in New York for from one to five dollars each, according to their size. The same quality of tree can be purchased on the street, in the city of Portland, at from twenty-five to fifty cents each, while in other parts of the State boys who wish for Christmas trees sally forth and cut them for themselves.

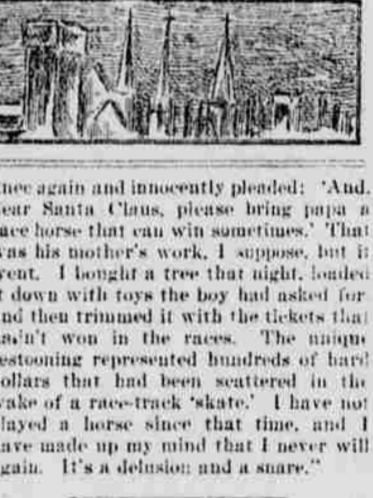
—Youths' Companion.

Yule Time Customs.
It is customary to give a quarter present and expect a \$5 one in return.
With the usual pervasiveness of name, Christmas comes in the middle of a hard winter.
The modern highwayman doesn't say "money or your life!" he wishes you "a merry Christmas."
The small boy who tries to make too much noise is apt to blame Santa Claus for not giving him an extra head for his drum.
Some people wish you a merry Christmas instead of giving you a present, because it's easier to pay the compliment of the season than it is to settle with Santa Claus.
Your wife expects you to look pleased when she gives you a \$40 smoking jacket and tells you she has had it charged.—Truth.

Her Heart's Desire.
There comes a time once in every year, when children may without impropriety give their loving friends a hint in season.
Uncle William was talking with Lucy, his best little niece, about Christmas. He wished to know her mind upon a certain highly interesting object, but preferred to get at it indirectly.
"Now, Lucy," said he, in a casual manner, "if I were going to buy a doll for a little girl, what kind of a one do you think she would like?"
"O, Uncle William?" answered Lucy, with undisguised interest, "there is nothing like twins!"

The Boarding-House Turkey.
"Is the fuse laid?" inquired the landlady of the head waiter.
"It is, madame."
"Then fire it."
"I have, madame."
"But the turkey is still whole."
"Yes, madame, the powder had no effect on it."
"Then send for some dynamite, and tell the boarders the turkey is so tender it takes time to carve it."

Nothing Slow About Johnnie.
Tommy—Did yer have a good time Christmas, Johnnie?
Johnnie—Don't yer see dat I did?
—Life.



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