



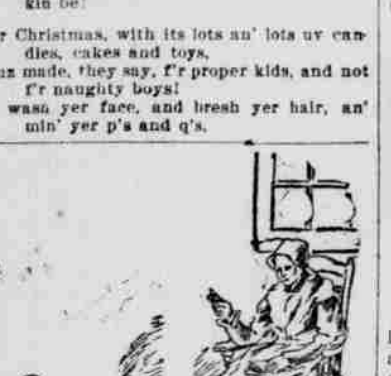
Father calls me William, sister calls me Will.  
Mother calls me Willie—but the fellows call me Bill!  
Mighty glad I ain't a girl—rather be a boy  
Without them sashes, curls and things that's worn by Faulstrey!  
Love to chaunc green apples an' go swimmin' in the lake—  
Hate to take the castor-oil they give for belly-ache!  
Must all the time the hull year round their ain't no flies on me,  
But jes' 'fore Christmas I'm as good as I kin be!



Got a yaller dog named Spart—sick 'im on the ont!  
Fast thing she knows she doesn't know where she is at!  
Got a ripparded, an' when us boys goes out to school,  
'Lone comes the grocery cart an' we all look a ride!  
Rot, sometimes, when the grocery man is worried and cross,  
He reaches at me with his whip and larraps up his nose,  
An' then I huff and holler: "Oh, you never lectured me!"  
But jes' 'fore 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 mislanner like her siders' brother Dan.  
As was up by the cannibals that lives in Caylon's isle,  
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 'n' Daniel Boone, or else I guess she'd know



That Buffalo Bill an' cowboys is good enough for me—  
Excep' jes' 'fore Christmas, when I'm good as I kin be!  
Then of Sport he hangs around, so solum like and still—  
His eyes they seem as sayin': "What's er matter, little Bill!"  
The cat she sneaks down off her perch, a wonderin' what's become  
Ov them two snotsies or hern that use ter make things hum!  
But I am so gentle and stick so earnestlike to biz,  
That mother sez to father: "How improved our Willie is!"  
But father, havin' been a boy hisself, suspicious me,  
When, jes' 'fore Christmas, I'm as good as I kin be!

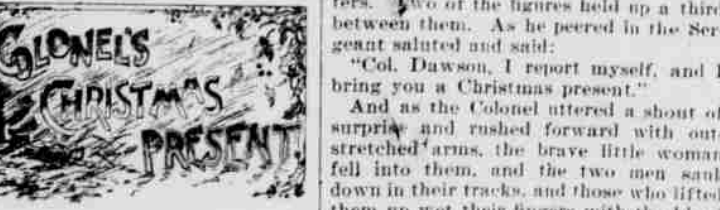


For Christmas, with its lots an' lots of candies, cakes and toys,  
Was made, they say, for proper kids, and not for naughty boys!  
So wash yer face, and brush yer hair, an' m'n' yer p's and q's.



**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 325. Tradition has woven many a pretty tale about him, and even many 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, rubicund 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 "Christ Krindlen," or "Christ Child." It is the day when, as Dickens says, we should remember the time when its great founder was a child himself. It is especially the day for the friendless sick, the children in hospitals, the lame, the stork, 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.



**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 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."

**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 were decided upon, says the New York Mail and Express. If the children can get 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 riddles, riddles, 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 box of brushes, and split and bundled several cords of wood.

"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 "Amateurs," "Authors," "History of Our Times," and shadow pantomime. 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 **Handed-4** Trains edition. "Say, mister," said a boy who had just overhauled a market woman after purchasing a box for four or five blocks, "do you



Come, old year, 'tis time to go.  
Age perhaps, has made you slow.  
But your time of ruin has flown,  
And I come to claim my own.  
You are popular no more.  
At your triumphs here are gone,  
With what strength is left to you,  
And you better watch you.

Learning from experience,  
I have promised much like you.  
When another year has flown,  
People will condemn me, too.  
But what matters that to me?  
Years, like men, must come and go.  
We are fast with promises,  
With faintnesses we are slow.

A **Race Track** Field Cure. The following story is told by one who for years was an inveterate horse owner. "It was Christmas eve. My 4-year-old stud by my knee in his 'night' coat before being tucked in his stable, and in my morning he was in the trough on Santa Claus to bring him the treasure upon which he had fixed his heart. When he had finished I asked the master of the house what should old Santa Claus bring him? He bowed his little head on my



**VOICES OF THE BELLS**  
By Ten A. Carver  
Listen to the Christmas bells,  
While all the world is peeping,  
They are peeping, peeping, peeping,  
And this is what the bells are saying:  
We are the voices of yokes and yogas,  
We are the tongues of beehive and beehive,  
We are the lips of the brilliant sleepers,  
We are the dreamers of a star in the public east,  
We are the prayers of the wandering Magi,  
On Syrian deserts all level and lone,  
We are the choros of Judean Shepherds,  
We are the notes that from Heaven were blown,  
From the golden throat of an Angel's horn,  
When the Christ was born.  
We are the teardrops of grief and sorrow,  
We are the echoes of yesterday's pain,  
We are the jubilant voice of tomorrow,  
We are the light that breaks the gloom,  
When the Christ was born.



winter know who hit you in the neck with that hard snowball?"  
"You bet I do," replied the man, slack-jawed speech.  
"Will ye name a quarter of I ketch him and bring him here?"  
"Yep."  
"Gimme 50 cents?"  
"Yes," said the driver, lifting his whip from the socket; "I don't give you no more'n that."  
"Well, git the money ready."  
"You haven't got the boy that threw the snowball yet."  
"Yes, I have. That boy is me. Dad's sick, and me mother can't get work. The twins is too little ter earn anything, an' if I don't kinde there won't be any Christmas tree at our house. I'll take a tickin' any day for 50 cents."

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 put the best firest upon his soul.  
"Oh, what's the use of hanging up my stock-ings, if I can't say,  
"The old man is coming to see me on Christmas day."  
He'll scratch us off his program when he thinks up his team,  
For Santa needs a fresh pair, and they beat our fat by steam."  
—Washington Star.

A **Christmas Church** U-n. If the platform of a church or Sunday school were not deep enough to admit of an artistic Christmas arch can easily be made by an amateur carpenter, writes Pleasant Wilson, in the Ladies' Home Journal. The upper part should have wire stretched across, to which may be fastened a solid mass of green. The framework should be of white, be wound with wire-green, the whole placed about two feet from the wall, so that behind it may be hung the Christmas bells of red and yellow lacquer with different lengths by ropes of evergreen. These bells may be made of heavy tin, different angles by using fine picture wire. Let each bell be worked, 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 envelope addressed and sealed, containing a pretty Christmas card, is a unique feature. Then there is the huge snowball made of cotton, and sprinkled 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 in the Forests of Maine.

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

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

On Sunday, the fifth of December, 1901, 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 detention was overruled, and the one unloading freight was allowed to go to its destination. How the cars are loaded can easily be described, but fragments of twenty-five thousand freshly cut evergreen trees must be left to the reader's imagination.

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

At regular intervals about each car four or about eight and two at each end were about 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, to the front and rear, and 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, that filled the car. From six hundred to eight hundred half-trunked trees were packed in a car, so that the ten car-load contained twenty-five thousand trees in all.

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

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



Tommy—Did yer have a good one Christmas, Johnnie?  
Johnnie—Don't yer see dat I did?  
—Life.