

**Santa Claus Travels  
by Railroad Now**  
**The Reindeer Rest and a  
Wreck is Averted**

**Y**ES, SANTA CLAUS is real—a real spirit—the Christmas spirit. That is why you do not see him. Spirits are invisible. You do not see them, nor him, but you see their work and you feel them in your heart. Any reader of these lines who has not felt the Christmas spirit—Santa Claus—this season surely is to be pitied.

Santa will give his prancing reindeer a rest Christmas eve and go aboard every Southern Pacific limited train between Portland and Ogden and El Paso, Silver tipped fir Christmas trees from the Sierra Nevada mountains, elaborately trimmed, will be placed on the trains Christmas day and hundreds of pounds of candy, in decorated boxes, will be distributed to the children by the dining car stewards in the role of Santa.

A special Christmas dinner, with "all the fix'n's" will be served in the dining cars.

**Halo on Another Head**  
*By Christopher G. Hazard*

**Artist Finds New Place for Circle Because of a Service to Mankind**  
**A**VID SPENCER looked again at his watch with some anxiety. The hospitality of the old southern home had been lavish, the exhibition of his paintings had been successful beyond his hopes, there had been congratulations, and flowers, and commissions. Quite overwhelmed with courtesies and attentions, charmed by the quaintness and beauty and customs and scenes new to him, the artist longed to linger, and was loth to leave the old city. But the northern train that he must take was almost due, the station was distant, and his hosts had seemingly forgotten all about it, until they suddenly appeared with apologies and delivered him to the black coachman and the family coach. Fortunately, the train, burdened with its load of Christmas cheer, was late, also, so that when it moved on Spencer was among its passengers.

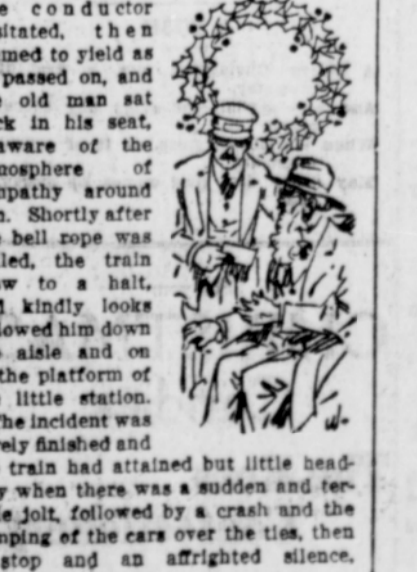
The rather monotonous landscape threw him back upon reflection, and he found himself reviewing the sights and experiences of his visit with pleasant amusement. Again he witnessed the bargaining of the old market. "Is you got enny algs?" "I ain't sed dat I ain't." "I ain't axed yer is yo' ain't, I axed yer ain't yo' is." He recalled the curious operations of the revival meeting that had so illustrated the picturesqueness of negro character and hummed to himself the song that had there been so intensely sung:

Dere's a halo on His haid,  
A halo, oh my Lawd.  
But dere's one for me He sed,  
A crown ob glory wen I'm daid.  
A halo, oh my Lawd.  
Dat's de kind ob hat ter git,  
A halo, oh my Lawd.  
In rain or shine hit's bou'n' ter fit,  
I sholy am a-wantin' hit,  
A halo, oh my Lawd.

And I kin feel hit sproutin' now,  
A halo, oh my Lawd.  
A crown ob shinin' on my brow,  
Each time to Him I mek a bow,  
A halo, oh my Lawd.

As the train sped on the artist's reminiscences were interrupted by the voices of the conductor and one of the passengers. "But this train does not stop at Redfield," the conductor was saying, as he looked at the old man's ticket. "It must sure stop this time," answered the passenger; "I just got to see Jim once more before he goes. I only got the message this morning. I want to wish him a merry Christmas and a happy New Year where he's goin'."

The conductor hesitated, then seemed to yield as he passed on, and the old man sat back in his seat, unaware of the atmosphere of sympathy around him. Shortly after the bell rope was pulled, the train drew to a halt, and kindly looks followed him down the aisle and on to the platform of the little station. The incident was barely finished and the train had attained but little headway when there was a sudden and terrible jolt, followed by a crash and the bumping of the cars over the ties, then a stop and an affrighted silence.



broken by the voice of the Pullman porter, crying out, "We've run through an open switch and we've wrecked, but ne' min', de train am standin' on de groun'." Engine, baggage cars and dining car were off and broken, but the Pullmans remained on the track. "If we hadn't stopped at Redfield," said the conductor, "we'd 'a' been going forty miles an hour and all heaped up at the bottom of the embankment."

In the artist's studio today there is a picture of the Christmas Christ, with the halo that believing love has placed upon His head. And just below it another halo rests upon the head of an old man, pictured there because of his unconscious but real service of mankind.  
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**THE KINDLY STAR**

**T**HE little boy was afraid of the dark, but, as he looked out through the low window, upon the panes of which Mr. Frost was making his pictures, he saw a bright star that was winking at him with a most friendly and assuring light. It shone through his tears and seemed to say that it would watch over his sleep. So he shut his eyes, and, stilling his sob, the better to hear the carol singers across the street, was safely away to slumber and a dream. The dream lady looked like his mother, all dressed in a robe that glistened and sparkled like snow, and she was bringing him the hope of his heart, the sled that was to take him so delightfully down the hill. And when he woke so early on Christmas morning he found that his dream had come true!—Christopher G. Hazard.  
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**THE REASON OF REINDEER**

"I know why Santa Claus has reindeer," announced little Mary. "Why?" asked her mother. "Cause they have Christmas trees growing on their heads!"—M. B. Thomas.  
(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

**IT'S A GOOD TRYOUT**

The man who has tried to hide some gifts from the wife or kids knows how futile is the attempt to secrete the jewelry from burglars.

**A GENEROUS PRAYER**

There is no finer Christmas sentiment than the words of Tiny Tim: "God bless us, every one!"

**That Gobbler for Christmas**  
*By CLARA DELAFIELD*

**They Just Could Not Kill the Bird They Had Watched Grow Up From Babyhood**  
**W**AL, marm, I might let you have the gobbler for Christmas," said Silas Hicks. "He'll be a fine bird by then. But I dunno. He's the only one I've reared out of that brood, and I'm kinder attached to him."

However, he promised Mrs. James finally to let her have the gobbler. Silas Hicks was not a sentimental man. He was a farmer, and in business for the money it brought him. He had a brother John, who had gone to the city and made money hand over fist. John was a crusty old bachelor and largely devoid of the sense of family obligations.

There had been a time, five years before, when things went badly with Silas. There was a heavy mortgage to meet, the crops had been a failure, and he had been in danger of dispossession. Besides, his wife was on her sick-bed, from which she was never to arise.

Silas had gone in his despair to the brother whom he had not seen for years. John had turned him down flat. "Father left you the farm because you played up to him, and kicked me out into the world," he said. "Now I've made my pile, you have the nerve to come to me for help. I don't see it, Silas."

"My wife's sick," pleaded Silas, "and you've got more money than you know what to do with."  
"Oh, I can find a use for it," John rejoined caustically. "Maybe if you'd

shown a little sympathy for me when I was hoofing it on the sidewalks I'd have a little more for you, Silas." Silas went home. Somehow he managed to survive the crisis. But his wife died, and he grew lonelier and lonelier. If he had had a few thousand dollars he would have sold out and gone south to live, somewhere away from this bleak New England coast. But he could just manage to make both ends meet. Daily he cursed his brother in his heart.  
He started raising turkeys, and that was a failure. Only the gobbler lived.

He used to watch the bird with interest. The gobbler would come clucking after him for crumbs. And it was odd how it looked like John.

He began to call it John. It had a queer way of putting its head upon one side and calling, as John used to do when he was a boy. Gradually, to old Silas' fancy, the gobbler became an emble of John. He hated it.

He hated it, and he was attached, too. He made a sort of pet of the gobbler. He wanted it to love him, so far as a turkey gobbler is capable of love. Then, when Christmas came, he was going to cut its throat very slowly, bending its head back to see the terror in its eyes. He would thus have his revenge upon his brother.

"Yes, marm, John's thriving nicely and putting on flesh," he told Mrs. James. "Here he comes. John! John!" Up came the big gobbler, put its head on one side and surveyed Silas to see if he had any bread crumbs.

"Isn't he the cutest thing!" said Mrs. James. "I don't wonder you can't bear to let me have it, Mr. Hicks."  
"Oh, that'll be all right, marm," responded Silas cheerily.

An elemental hatred for the gobbler had come to fill his heart. Christmas was at hand. He pictured how, on the morrow, he would grab the bird, he would insult it with all the turkey abuse that he had picked up from it; then it should die slowly, as he would like John to die.

On Christmas morning he found a letter from an unknown correspondent in the city. Opening it, he read that his brother John was dead.

**One-Half Dozen Happy Kiddies**  
*By ELEANOR KING*

**Young Woman Gathers in Homeless Tots for Christmas Festivities**  
**T**HE dining room of this exquisite home was beautiful, spacious and furnished in the best of taste. Its massive Jacobean high-backed chairs, long table, draperies all harmonized. But that quality which puts one at ease was lacking. It looked austere and unfriendly. The servants had decorated the table and room profusely, trying to give a little of the Christmas atmosphere. The forbidding look still asserted itself, though. From the length of the table and amount of edibles piled upon it, one might have judged there was to be quite a party, but only four places were set.

The dinner gong sounded. A middle-aged, well-dressed man and woman appeared. "And you say Thelma went out in the car?" "She didn't say where she was going, Robert," replied his wife. "She probably thought Hubert was taking too long in getting over here, so she took it upon herself to go after him."

"Undoubtedly," assented Mrs. Fremont. Thelma came soon bursting in upon her folks, coat and hat still on. To be sure, she had Hubert with her. "Dad, mother," she exclaimed, "come and see what I have out here!" She led her folks into the front hall. To their astonishment, they found the

butler and a maid occupied in removing coats and hats from six children. "Well, where did you get these?" said Mr. Fremont in his blustering way.

"It's like this, Dad," began Thelma with a rather apologetic air: "When I came downstairs this afternoon and saw that dining room table heaped up with good things—well, I just went for Hubert; together we found the name of the nursery or home or whatever you call it, near here and we went over there. I had the matron give me half a dozen children, and here they are." She pointed to the group in front of her, who were busy taking in their surroundings. "Children, this is my father and this my mother. Now, Dad, here is Tony, Rose, Frederick, Charles, Anna and Marie," as she gathered the children to her. "Now, children, we are going in and have dinner. Let's see, Hubert, you take Frederick and Charles, Dad take Tony; Mother, you take Anna, and I will have Rose and Marie."

The children, ranging from six to eight, were rather shy until they set eyes on all the goodies on the table; then they were all excitement. Thelma winked at Hubert, and then looked at her dad. He was busy keeping meat enough cut up for Tony, supplying his numerous other demands, and keeping up with his many questions. The children were fairly stuffed when they climbed down from the table.

"We are going to play some games now," said Thelma. "Hubert, you get on that side of the circle; come on, Dad and Mother." But no amount of coaxing could bring Dad and Mother. Dad thought he had done his share.

"What do you think?" said Thelma to the children a little while later;

"Hubert tells me he was just in the library, and Santa left a Christmas tree and some gifts for you in there." They all made a dash for the door.

"Where do you suppose she got these things?" queried Mr. Fremont of his wife.

"I can't imagine," she replied; "this must have been the planning of more than today."

It came time for Thelma to give the dread announcement that they were to leave for the home. Before doing so she surveyed the scene before her: There was Dad, on his hands and knees, crawling about the floor with Tony, playing train. Tony had succeeded in winning over Mr. Fremont. There sat her mother reading a story to three of the youngsters, and Hubert—she could hardly believe her eyes—sat cuddling a little sleeping form in his arms. She went over and sat down on the arm of his chair.

"You dear old thing," she said, putting her arm around him; then, "Hubert, look at Dad. Won't you say this day was a success?"  
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HALSEY  
**Cream and Produce Station**  
Cash paid for  
**Cream, Poultry, Eggs, Veal & Hides. M. H. SHOOK**

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**An Optical Christmas**

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**Kryptoks for Christmas**  
Kryptoks—the gift that gives lasting satisfaction

**Meade & Albro,**  
Optometrists, Manufacturing Opticians  
Albany, Oregon

ALMOST glad we're not going to our Grandmother's for Christmas this year," Mrs. Will confided to Mr. Will a week before that great day. "Do you realize we've never had a Christmas here in our own home, just ourselves and our family?"

"Yes, I've been thinking of that," Mr. Will replied. "Let's keep it just ourselves, and give the kiddies one truly home Christmas to remember." As usual, Mr. and Mrs. Will were in complete agreement in their ideas and emotions. Mrs. Will sighed contentment. Mr. Will sighed contentment, too; for after all, such harmony as theirs is not so common in this workaday world of wives and husbands.

But as Christmas day grew nearer and nearer Mrs. Will suddenly realized she was nursing a sick conscience. There was something she had not the heart to confide to Mr. Will. Now, Mr. Will had a sick conscience, too. There was something he had not the heart to confide to Mrs. Will.

But fortunately everything was straightened out before Christmas, that day of peace, dawned.

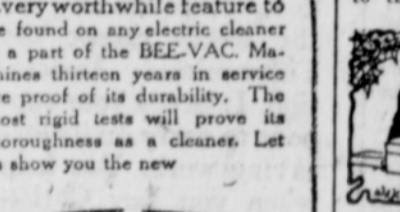
Billy, their oldest, didn't know what the word conscience meant. Of course he had heard mother and father whispering about how nice a strictly family Christmas would be.

He had heard them, but perhaps he hadn't understood their sentiment. Anyway, at luncheon, two days before Christmas, he suddenly blurted, "Say, Mom, I've asked Jim Larkin to our Christmas dinner and the tree. You know his folks are in Europe, and he's just staying on at the school. Thought he'd like it here better. More home-like."

"Oh, bother, Billy," Lucy cried—thirteen-year-old Lady Lucy. "I've asked Fatty Brown. She hasn't any folks anywhere, even in Europe. Just

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**Christmas Day in Own Home**  
*By ETHEL COOK ELIOT*

**Mother, Father and Children Have Special Guests at Family Feast**  
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