

New Christmas Stories for the Children

NEGLIGES AND COATS ARE QUICKLY MADE NOW

By Lucy Carter.

New York, Dec. 11.—It is remarkable how easily a fashionable up-to-date negligee, dressing sacque, theatre coat, blouse, or even dress can be made by any woman quick witted enough to recognize that underlying all the soft drapings of the loose fussy clothes now modish, are the lines of the kimono, or peasant blouse, and the straight lengths of material variously draped familiar in Greek prints.

Possibilities in Short Lengths.

Never have such possibilities existed for turning short lengths of materials into fascinating fashionable attires, and any scarf or piece of bordered material 2 1/4 yards in length by 26 inches wide will make up into a dainty sacque suitable for formal or informal wear according to its material and trimming. Fold the scarf in half, the fold coming at the center back, cut out a small semicircle at the top to fit the back of the neck. Measure 15 inches from either upper end of the scarf and fold this back in a diagonal line to within 3 inches of the bottom, like a reverse. Cut this off and join the bias edge to the straight upper edge of the scarf at the neck circle. This seam is the only one in the garment and makes the shoulder seem in one continuous line. Slope the front to the line of the bust, or turn back the material in a reverse to this point. Trim the neck in swansdown, marabout or with a lace ruching, and place a butterfly bow, or silk rose at the right where this trimming terminates. Edge the sleeve with matching trimming and you have a modish little coat for an hour's labor, which any one would be glad to own and wear. Try it with a piece of tissue paper, doll's size to get the idea, then its no trick at all to make it in any size desired. The length of the garment depends on the width of the strip of material. A piece of figured crepe or poplin in 44 or 45 inch width would make a charm-



The above designs are by The McCall Company, New York, Designers and Makers of McCall Patterns.

ing wrap that could be lined and interlined for warmth if desired, or a pattern on kimono lines can be readily obtained that needs no more time or trouble in the making.

A Long Folded Negligee.

An equally successful quickly produced long negligee is made by using a strip of 36 inch goods twice the length from neck to foot, good measure to allow for hem. Fold this in half and 2 1/2 inches below the fold, in the center of the front side—cut out a triangle 5 inches at the top and 7 inches at each side. This is the opening for the head, for this garment slips on like a night gown. Beginning at the foot join the sides to within 15 inches of the top and sew a good sized hook on one side and an eye on the other just where the seam finishes. Slip the garment over the head, and catch the sides together with the hook and eye on the underside and you have an exceedingly pretty, gracefully shaped negligee. The sleeve openings may be bound or faced with contrasting color, the neck finished with a frill of lace, or band of swansdown. The bottom is hemmed and if desired can be finished in a pointed train, though allowance for this must be made in measuring. Three and one-half yards of 36 inch material is the usual amount required for a height of 60 inches from neck to floor.

Kimono Blouses.

Kimono blouses—and nearly all fashionable waists are modelled on this plan—are not at all difficult to turn out. The cutting out is quickly accomplished with a good pattern and the making, once this detail is accomplished is an easy matter. Such waists made of pretty brocades are worn for all but the most formal occasions, and are not among the inexpensive styles if one buys them ready made. All waists as has been repeatedly said in these letters, are very loose fitting, quite slouchy if it were not that the underpinning indicates dainty trimness of attire.

LUCY CARTER

AN AMATEUR SANTA CLAUS



By HAMILTON POPE GALT

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WE had all agreed that Mr. O'Shaughnessy was the very one to be Santa Claus at our Christmas tree.

"No!" he said, "No!" We had never seen Mr. O'Shaughnessy so vehement before. "That is one thing I will never do—no, not if the czar of Russia were to command it!"

"Why?" asked some one from a safe distance. "Because I played the part once, and I will never do it again. I may as well tell you about it, and then you'll know that it is of no use to bother me about it any more."

"One Christmas I was broke, I was hungry, and my feet were on the ground. I had asked a thousand people for something to do, anything to

was in it, and he was mad when he found there was nothing."

"I want that," said the boy again, pointing to me.

"He has taken a fancy to you," continued the pa.

"I can't see that I have any advantage over the giraffe," I said.

"Just then the boss of the store came along. He was just busting himself for the millionaire."

"My boy wants your Santa Claus," said the gentleman to the boss.

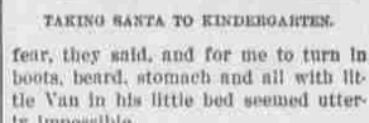
"And the kid jumped up and grabbed me by the hand and began pulling at me and fighting the maid off with the other hand."

"Well," said the boss, "take him along, Mr. Van Veggie. It will be no loss whatever to us, I assure you."

my hand and fought them off whenever they got too near.

"When bedtime came they tried to tell little Van that Santa wanted to go home now and work on the toys for Christmas, but he held on tighter than ever and insisted that I would have to sleep with him."

"This made it pretty bad. If I was to pull off my boots and my beard and my stomach and one thing and another the boy would be paralyzed with



TAKING SANTA TO KINDERGARTEN.

fever, they said, and for me to turn in boots, beard, stomach and all with little Van in his little bed seemed utterly impossible.

"We compromised by my sitting by his bed and holding his hand until he went to sleep. Would you believe it? That boy was the lightest sleeper you ever saw! Every time I tried to take my hand away his eyes would open and he would take a tighter grip."

"I sat up all night holding that kid's hand. I had a man in attendance, who brought me everything I wanted, and I had collected a ten from Papa Van, but I didn't get much sleep."

"The boy had me with him all the next day. I had to be with him when he got his bath and his breakfast, and I attended kindergarten with him."

"I was 'it' at kindergarten, too, but along about 4 o'clock he lay down on a couch and went sound asleep. 'I stole from the room softly and unobserved. I had had enough of the job and was resolved to escape. 'Just as I was getting out of the front door a good sized boy came along and started to blab something about 'Hello, Santa Claus!' and tried to grab hold of me. 'I paralyzed him by pulling out my stomach and hitting him over the head with it. 'I gained the street and flew for home, dodging this way and that to baffle pursuit and shedding beard, boots, cotton and fur all along the way. 'I hid for three days and then emerged and got a nice little job loading coal on a ship. I have always gone in for a sane Christmas ever since that little experience.' We did not press Mr. O'Shaughnessy.



IS THAT YOU SANTA?

"KNECHT RUPERT" WAS GERMAN SANTA CLAUS

The Santa Claus idea has grown out of a variety of legends and customs. The festival of St. Nicholas, who was the especial friend of the children, was celebrated in Germany about the 6th of December. It was easy enough to make this coincide with the later and more general festival. The tangible Santa Claus was called "Knecht Ruprecht," and usually he was some member of the family dressed up to represent a beneficent gift giver. It was the custom to have a yew bough placed in the parlor of the German home, and on this all the packages containing gifts were placed. On Christmas morning the whole family assembled to claim the gifts, each having to guess the donor. "Knecht Ruprecht" distributed the gifts to the younger children, but he lectured them also on obedience and good behavior, and if any one had been bad, instead of a gift he or she was given a switch that they might be punished. So the little Germans try hard to be very good before Christmas.

Bad Day For Birds.

The day after Christmas, St. Stephen's day (shooting day in England), is celebrated in a queer way by some of the Marx boys, and Ditchfield says they feel privileged to stone wrens at this time because of a story to the effect that in days gone by a most dangerous siren was finally compelled to assume the form of a wren once a year (on the 26th) and ultimately to be killed by mortal hands. Another tradition furnishes an excuse on the ground that it was a wren that awakened the guard of St. Stephen just as the latter was about to escape from prison.

Enemies of the Christmas Tree.

Not every balsam nor every spruce is a Christmas tree. The expert cutter learns to tell at a glance if the branches grow in perfect rings, which give shape and symmetry to the tree. He must be sure, too, that the squirrels have not eaten the buds from the tips of the topmost branches, and that the cattle and deer have not sharpened their horns in passing.

CHRISTMAS LULLABIES.

Songs Popular at Yuletide Season Traced Back For Centuries.

Christmas lullabies to the Divine Child may be traced back to medieval times. In one of the Coventry plays occurs what is plainly a cradle song to the Infant Jesus, which has been preserved in music as well as in text. Five hundred years ago the mere picture did not suffice the faithful. The scene had to be enacted. The little play was called "The Cradling of the Child." Standing on a platform above the manger, boys representing angels proclaimed the birth of the Saviour. Priests took the part of shepherds and gathered around the manger. Here stood Joseph, Mary and the servant of Joseph.

After the choir had sung hymns, among them "Christus Natus Hodie," Mary sang the first verse of the German song. "Joseph, dear Joseph mine, help me to rock my babe, that God may reward me in heaven—the Babe of the Virgin Mary." Joseph answered with the second verse of the song. "Gladly, my dear nurse, will I help thee rock thy babe, that God may reward me in heaven." etc. The servant sang: "Rejoice, Christian multitude. The King of heaven, who was born of the Virgin Mary, has taken on mortality."

A Sure Sign.

Dr. Probe—I guess that Peterby doesn't intend to pay his bill this year. Mrs. Probe—What makes you think so? "I just got a Christmas present from him this morning."

SIGNIFICANCE OF HOLLY.

Why holly at Christmas? The pagan Romans dedicated the holly to Saturn, whose festival was in December, around Christmas. The early Christians, to escape persecution, decked their homes with holly and other Saturnian emblems. The Romans sent their friends holly sprigs during the Saturnalia with wishes for their health and prosperity.

CHRISTMAS IN HOLLAND.

In Holland Santa Claus pays his annual visit to all good children twenty days before he comes to this country. Dec. 5 is the feast day of St. Nicholas, alias Santa Claus. He has nothing whatever to do with Christmas, and his visit there is an Anglo-Saxon anachronism. As their patron saint, children were taught to look to Nicholas for care and protection. In England the custom was abolished with the worship of saints at the reformation and was re-established in the American guise of Father Christmas in the middle of the last century. But in Holland Santa Claus continues to make his visits on the right day, Dec. 5. The Dutch children do not hang up their stockings, but place their shoes, filled with hay or straw for the donkey on which St. Nicholas rides, in front of the fireplace.

The Christ Child.

An Irish legend tells that on Christmas eve the Christ Child wanders out in the darkness and cold and the peasants still put lighted candles in their windows to guide the sacred little feet, that they may not stumble on the way to their homes. In Hungary the people go yet further in their tenderness for the Child. They spread feasts and leave their doors open that he may enter at his will. Throughout Christendom there is a belief that no evil can touch the child who is born on Christmas eve.

A Custom Well Forgotten.

Children used to be reminded in an uncomfortable manner that Dec. 28 was Innocent's day, for it was considered wholesome on that morning to give them a good cutting or other form of punishment, presumably to remind them of the sins which were not committed by the innocents whom Herod ordered slain on that day. Fortunately every vestige of this fashion is now blotted out.

Helping Things Along.

Mrs. Crabshaw—What's that you're blowing on your buzze, dear? Bobbie—The call to arms, ma. Sister's young man has her under the mistletoe.