

# SANTA CLAUS HAS ARRIVED

Dear Santa Claus, I want a bicycle and a chook and a slay with a nice new pony in it what I can ride and a reel gun to kill bears and don't let mamma see the gun cos she is very afraid of guns but she likes bears skins and ples put a big box of candy in the slay and a train with a reel injin and never mind about the bicycle if you do that, and ples not to bring a doll i am a boy but my little sister that came here last year is not a boy if you want to bring a doll for her al right. Good by and i hope you will get there safe and don't forget the candy and the injin and some bullets for the gun and the slay with a pony in it that is reel and then i shall love you as much as mamma and please put in the Witness if your hair is red this year. I loving Willie Jones.

The above is a sample of thousands of letters addressed to Santa Claus, which are being received at the big department stores—letters which go to show that old Father Christmas is as popular as ever. There was a time when the children had patiently to wait until Christmas Eve in the hope of seeing Santa Claus when he came down the chimney, but telegraph houses and the new system of heating have changed all that. So many houses are heated with steam nowadays, with a chimney that only

## A LITTLE GIRL'S LETTER TO SANTA CLAUS.

Dear Mr. Santa Claus—I hope you are quite well. I want to write you a long letter, but I don't speak I can for the baby is crying so very loud poppa says he is enough to drive anybody crazy and he is so I thought I would write and ask you if you could change him for one which don't cry. Please Mr. Santa Claus I should like a kitchen stove with fry pans to it and sawspans and a little table and chairs to play keeping house with and could you give me a long frock like mamma and dear Santa Claus I am sending you four kisses. X X X X

FLORENCE MACDONALD.

If you can't bring all I have said please bring a doll to open and shut her eyes.

leads down into the furnace in the cellar, that Santa, who is getting more portly as the year advances, has found it necessary to put up at the various department stores in the city, and distribute his favors from those stores by thoroughly up-to-date methods.

Naturally, this has made shopping more popular than ever, and it has not detracted in the least from the mystery surrounding Santa Claus, for if he no longer performs the wonderful feat of coming down the chimney, he appears in a dozen stores at the same time, and looks different in every one of them.

He arrived in most of the local stores this week, and it has been one of the main events of the grown-ups to take them to see him. "Maine," said a woman to Santa Claus, "I was wondering where you were after Christmas." A good, kind Santa he is, with lots of presents for the little ones, which he distributes in person, and heaps and heaps of toys which father and mother may buy at the cheapest market rates.

Also, in nearly every instance, he has a post-office near his house in the store, into which the children may drop their letters to let him know what they want, with a sign over the post-box telling the children to be sure and give their names and addresses, Santa Claus being very anxious that none shall be disappointed.

The snow came in good time this year, and young Jack Frost followed hard after. These are the forerunners that Santa Claus loves. An early winter makes Christmas business hum.

Claus was smiling at such a fine afternoon this week, when a "news" reporter came across him, and told him that he wanted to interview him.

Old chap leaned back his head and out a big Falstaffian below, his red face growing redder and redder as he laughed himself almost out of breath.

"Interview me," he said. "Why, my young fellow, you must be crazy. I have never been interviewed in my life."

"No, let us go somewhere and have a cup of hot beef-tea and laughing. You don't suppose I drink beef-tea, do you? Ha, ha ha! Here, you must come with me, and I'll show you some new in the way of drink."

He winked elaborately, and led the way to his temporary house, in one of the department stores.

He and the interviewer sat down together in his cosy little parlor, and Santa Claus poured out two glasses of something that looked like tea and smelt of roses, and steamed like a kettle.

"That is polarexus," he said. "Made from the lichen that grows on the North Pole."

He took a long drink, leaned back lazily in his bearskin chair, and set out with the interviewer. "Once I used to make all my Christmas presents in about a fortnight, but now I work all the year round. You could just see me in my factory at the North Pole."

Yes, North Pole. Why not? Think of it, the South Pole? No, sir, the North Pole. That's my address all the year round, and I suppose I shan't be in peace even there much longer. Of my bears came to me a little while ago to say that Peary was on the way to see my factory, but I just ordered the north wind to drive him off. When I was on my way down to Captain Bernier, and he asked me would give him permission to see

the North Pole. I said "Certainly." He said, "Where is it?" I said, "That's the question." He said, "Sir Wilfrid wants to know." "Oh, does he," I said. "Yes," he said. "Sir Wilfrid Laurier says it belongs to him." Ha, ha And he says I'd better find it quickly, or Canada will know the reason why." Ha, ha, ha.

Santa went off into another of those floor-shaking laughs of his, and then stopped very suddenly, saying, "Why, bless me, I was forgetting all about the little children! Curious thing, y'know, but the way children love me is something too great for words. Can't explain it at all. Now, there was a sweet little angel in blue and white, in—"

Here he coughed, looked across the table, and winked.

"Never mind where," he said. "She was all blue and white, and had just the sweetest baby face peeping out of one of those woolly caps. So much prettier than our children at the North Pole."

"What, are there children at the North Pole?" exclaimed the astonished interviewer.

"I should jolly well think there were," said old Santa. "But don't interrupt me, or else I shall forget which child I am talking about, there are so many. About this little girl in the store yesterday. She pulled me by the coat, and 'Please are you Mr. Santa Claus?' she asked. 'The same, my dear,' said I. She looked up at me, pouted. Then she turped round to another little girl who was with her, and said, triumphantly, 'There, I told you Mr. Santa Claus had nice brown eyes.' 'Pon my word, I was quite flattered. Yes, I was. I filled her pockets with chocolate creams, and packed away three dolls for the two of them to have on Christmas Day.'"

"Some of your boys here are very fresh—very fresh indeed. Several of them have been making fun of my beard. They must have been badly brought up, but I have got even with them by striking their names off my free list. The little girls are sweeter than ever, y'know. And the sidewalks here are just as bad in another way. If only they would keep them clear, like they do outside—!" Again he winked, and then went on: "Outside some stores, it would be all right. With all your up-to-date news and all that, you never allow any lumps to stay on the sidewalk up at the North Pole. They always levelled down by our tame seals lying on them and melting the lumps off."

"And I notice, too, that here in Montreal you have a very bad habit of pushing one another in the stores. We never allow that at the North Pole. People who push each other and who do not apologize immediately, are fined two bear-skins, or in default thirty days' hunting for worm-bait. That soon stops the rudeness, I can tell you."

"There, now you must go, because I have to see to the dear children. But I should be glad if you would just put a few lines in the paper to say if there are any children who haven't written to me yet, they'd better do it straight away if they have anything to tell me, because I am not going to read any letters after a certain date. I shall be too busy delivering goods."

"Young man," he called out, as the interviewer was leaving. "There's just one question I want to ask you. Do you ever stop to think what a lot of love there is in the world? Just you take a walk round the stores and see everybody buying something for somebody else, and then go home and think it out—Montreal Witness."

Softly thae Night is Sleeping.

Softly the night is sleeping  
On Bethlehem's peaceful hill;  
Silent 't he shepherds watching,  
'T he gentle flocks are still;  
By hark! the wondrous music  
Falls from the opening sky:  
Vallies and hills resound  
Glory to God on high!

Oh—  
Glory to God, glory to God,  
Glory to God! it rings again,  
Peace on earth, good-will to men.

Day in the East is breaking;  
Day o'er the crimsoned earth;  
Now the glad world is waiting  
Glad in the Savior's birth;  
See where the clear star bendeth  
Over the manger blest;  
See where the infant Jesus  
Smiles upon Mary's breast!

Come with the glad shepherds,  
Quick hasting from the fold;  
Come with the wise men bearing  
Incense and myrrh and gold,  
Come to Him, poor and lowly;  
Around the cradle throng;

Come with your hearts of sunshine,  
And sing the angels' song,  
Weave ye the wondrous unfolding  
The fir tree and the pine;  
Green from the snows of winter,  
To deck the holy shrine;  
Bring ye the happy children;  
For this is Christmas morn';  
Jehovah, the divine Infant,  
Jesus, the Lord, is born.

She—I saw the prettiest glass to-day,  
Guess where I saw her? He (gallantly)  
—In the mirror.



## Oh, Kids! Listen! Old Santa Is Up To Fine New Tricks

The Dear Old Fellow Has Invented a Lot of Splendid Toys  
for This Christmas, 'Cause Peary and Cook Both  
Saw 'Em and Say So.

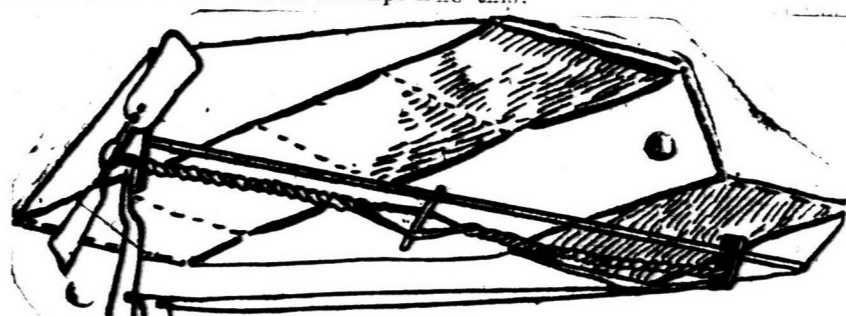
Now every little boy and girl who is expecting to find some pretty things or dandy toys in their stockings on next Christmas morning—and 'twill only be a short time until that glorious day will be here—can open wide their eyes and listen!

Dr. Cook and Commander Peary, who, as you know, have just returned from the north pole, of course saw old St. Nicholas' way up there and got well acquainted with him.

They both say that he was looking well, but he was dreadfully busy and couldn't talk very long. He gave them both a little peep into his big toy workshop. And what do you think they saw? Well, they saw just tons and bushels of lovely dolls and wagons and fire engines and patrol wagons and little houses and fuzzy cats and old toy cows with bells on and sets of dishes and tops and all sorts of other jimmeracking things.

Dr. Cook says that Santa told him he was going to give away every blessed toy to good boys and girls. Peary says that when he called on Santa the old fellow said he was thinking of using an airship to get his toys onto the roofs of houses this year, because his reindeer had such a big load that he was afraid they couldn't pull it.

The explorers won't tell of all the things they saw in the shop, but Dr. Cook says he did see a lot of little airships like this:



They are made of silk and wire, and they really fly through the air. The propeller wheel is made to go around like lightning by a piece of twisted rubber or a spring.

Peary says he saw a little steamboat that really floats, and is also driven by a propeller which is made to go around by a spring. Just like this:



Dr. Cook says that because Teddy Roosevelt is hunting big game in Africa, Santa thought it would be nice to give some of the children lions and tigers and other wild animals. And because Dr. Cook and Peary both got to the pole, Santa has fixed up quite a lot of polar bears. Here's the pictures of a bear and lion:



Peary said he saw a lot of dainty, dimply, darling dolls, but he remembered only one well enough to make a picture of it. It was a funny little Dutch boy with a checkered cap. Peary also saw a fine elephant, very big, and made of leather, with black beads for eyes. He says it didn't have any tusks.



But these are only a few of the things old Santa has for his good children. Say, children, what do you suppose he's going to bring to you?

## THE CHILD'S STORY

Outline of a Human Life as Viewed in the Glory  
of the Christmaside.

By Charles Dickens.

Once upon a time, a good many years ago, there was a traveler, and he set out upon a journey. It was a magic journey, and was to seem very long when he began it, and very short when he got half way through.

He traveled along a rather dark path for some little time, without meeting anything, until at last he came to a beautiful child. So he said to the child, "What do you do here?" And the child said, "I am always at play. Come and play with me!"

So he played with that child, the whole day long, and they were very merry. The sky was so blue, the sun was so bright, the water was so sparkling, the leaves were so green, the flowers were so lovely, and they heard such singing-birds and saw so many butterflies, that everything was beautiful. This was in fine weather. When it rained, they loved to watch the falling drops, and to smell the fresh scents. When it blew, it was delightful to listen to the wind, and fancy what it said, as it came rushing from its home—where was that, they wondered!—whistling and howling, driving the clouds before it, bending the trees, rumbling in the chimneys, shaking the house, and when it snowed, that was the best of all; for they liked nothing so well as to look up at the white flakes falling fast and thick, like down, from the breasts of millions of white birds, and to see how smooth and deep the drift was; and to listen to the hush upon the paths and roads.

They had plenty of the finest toys in the world, and the most astonishing picture-books; all about scimitars and slippers and turbans, and draws and giants and genii and fairies, and blue-beards and bean-stalks and riches and caravans and forests and Valentines and Orsons; and all new and all true.

But, one day, of a sudden, the traveler lost the child. He called to him over and over again, but got no answer. So, he went upon his road, and went on for a little while without meeting anything, until at last he came to a handsome boy. So he said to the boy, "What do you do here?" And the boy said, "I am always learning. Come and learn with me."

So he learned with the boy about Jupiter and Juno, and the Greeks and the Romans, and I don't know what, and learned more than I could tell—or he either, for he soon forgot a great deal of it. But they were not always learning; they had the merriest games that ever were played. They rowed upon the river in summer, and skated on the ice in winter; they were active afoot, and active on horseback; at cricket, and all games at ball; at prisoners' base, hare and hounds; follow my leader, and more sports than I can think of; nobody could beat them. They had holidays too, and Twelfth cakes, and parties where they danced till midnight, and real theatres where they saw palaces of real gold and silver rise out of the real earth, and saw all the wonders of the world at once. As to friends, they had such dear friends and so many of them, that I want the time to reckon them up. They were all young, like the handsome boy, and were never to be strange to one another all their lives through.

Still, one day, in the midst of all these pleasures, the traveler lost the boy as he had lost the child, and, after calling to him in vain, went on upon his journey. So he went on for a little while without seeing anything, until at last he came to a young man. So he said to the young man, "What do you here?" And the young man said, "I am always in love. Come and love with me."

So, he went away with that young man, and presently they came to one of the prettiest girls that ever was seen—just like Fanny in the corner there—and she had eyes like Fanny, and hair like Fanny, and dimples like Fanny, and she laughed and colored just as Fanny does while I am talking about her. So, the young man fell in love directly—just as Somebody I won't mention, the first time he came here, did with Fanny. Well! He was teased sometimes—just as Somebody and Fanny used to quarrel; and they made it up, and sat in the dark, and wrote letters every day, and were happy asunder, and were always looking out for one another, and pretending not to, and were engaged at Christmas-time, and sat close to one another by the fire, and were going to be married very soon—all exactly like Somebody I won't mention, and Fanny!

But the traveller lost them one day, as he had lost the rest of his friends, and after calling to them to come back, which they never did, went on upon his journey. So he went on for a little while without seeing anything, until at last he came to a middle-aged gentleman. So, he said to the gentleman, "What are you doing here?" And his answer was, "I am always busy. Come and be busy with me!"

So, he began to be very busy with that gentleman, and they went on through the wood together. The whole journey was through a wood, only it had been open and green at first, like a wood in spring; and now began to be thick and dark, like a wood in summer; some of the little trees that had come out earliest, were even turning brown. The gentleman was not alone, but had a lady of about the same age with him, who was his wife; and they had children, who were with them too. So, they all went on together through the branches and the fallen leaves, and carrying burdens and working hard.

Sometimes, they came to a very green avenue that opened into deeper woods. Then they would hear a very little distant voice crying, "Father, father, I am another child! Stop for me." And presently they would see a very little figure growing larger as it came along, running to join them. When it came up, they all crowded around it, and kissed and welcomed it; and then they all went on together.

Sometimes, they came to several avenues at once, and then they all stood still, and one of the children said, "Father, I am going to sea," and another said, "Father, I am going to India," and another, "Father, I am going to seek my fortune where I can," and another, "Father, I am going to Heaven!" So, with many tears at parting, they went, solitary, down those avenues, each child upon its way; and the child who went to Heaven, rose into the golden air and vanished.

Whenever these partings happened, the traveller glanced up at the sky above the trees, where the day was beginning to decline, and the sunset to come on. He saw, too, that his hair was turning gray. But, they never could rest long, for they had their journey to perform, and it was necessary for them to be always busy.

At last there had been so many partings, that there were no children left, and only the traveller, the gentleman, and the lady, went upon their way in company. And now the woods were yellow; and now brown; and the leaves, even of the forest trees, began to fall.

So, they came to an avenue that was darker than the rest and were pressing forward on their journey without looking down it when the lady stopped.

"My husband," said the lady, "I am calling."

They listened, and they heard a voice a long way down the avenue, say, "Mother, mother!"

It was the voice of the first child who had said, "I am going to heaven!" and the father said, "I pray not yet. The sunset is very near. I pray not yet."

But, the voice cried, "Mother, mother!" without minding him, though his hair was now quite white, and tears were on his face.

Then, the mother, who was already drawn into the shade of the dark avenue and moving away with her arms still round his neck, kissed him, and said, "My dearest, I am summoned, and I go!" And she was gone. And the traveller and he were left alone together.

And they went on and on together, until they came to very near the end of the wood; now, that they could see the sunset, shining red before them through the trees.

Yet, once more, while he broke his way among the branches, the traveller lost his friend. He called and called, but there was no reply, and when he passed out of the wood, and saw the peaceful sun going down upon a wide purple plain on a fallen tree. So, he said to the old man, "What do you here?" And the old man said with a calm smile, "I am always remembering. Come and remember with me!"

So the traveller sat down by the side of that old man, face to face with the serene sunset; and all his friends came softly back and stood around him. The beautiful child, the handsome boy, the young man in love, the father, mother and children; every one of them was there, and he had lost nothing. So, he loved them all, and was always pleased to watch them all and they all honored and loved him. And I think the traveller must be yourself, dear grandfather, because this is what you do to us, and what we do to you.

## AT THE BIRTH-PLACE OF CHRIST.

At last I am come to the market place, at one end of which stands the Church of the Nativity, marking the holy, lowly birthplace. There is only one entrance from the street, and it is so low that in entering one is forced to bow the head, and assume a posture of reverence.

Down the dark and winding stairs, slippery with the drippings of countless candles, I make my way to that lowly place into which first came the Light of the World. The Grotto of the Nativity is a cavern beneath the church, low, narrow, and low ceiled, with pendant lamps of precious metal and rare workmanship lighting the gloom. The floor is marble, and wonderful old tapestries, pictures and silk hangings cover the walls. A marble cradle in one corner commemorates the manger; and in a recess on one side, a dozen or more hanging lamps are ranged around in a half circle. Before the altar there, all men bend low and kiss the ground for Christ's sake; for it is here a silver star is set to mark the birthplace of Him whom his mother called "Jesus." The centre of the star is glass, and through it one may see the original rocky floor of the stable.

I close my eyes for a moment, while mind and heart rebel against the present, until it vanishes; and the atmosphere of the past, in all its deep and wondrous mystery, returns to envelop my soul. "I am here—in Bethlehem!"—I whisper to myself—and beyond closed lids I see the Virgin mother, with her gentle face as the old masters loved to picture her, and a "light that never was on land or sea" in her beautiful mother-eyes; while the glory from one low-hanging star touches a baby's hair—Letter in Army and Navy Life.

## 'Twas Night When the Lord Was Born.

It was not in the glow of noontide high,  
Or the tender grace of morn,  
But shadows were over the earth and sky—  
'Twas night when the Lord was born.

This is ever the way God moulds his deeds,  
In silence and out of sight;  
They hide in the dark like precious seeds,  
Then suddenly arise in light.

So whenever a night with shadowy wing  
Folds darkly over our way,  
We must listen to hear God's angels sing  
And watch for the dawning day.

Let us say, when we sit in darkness long,  
With aching heart, forlorn,  
'Twas night when the angels sang their song.

'Twas night when the Lord was born."

For all the glad that had rolled in light  
Since the first glad day had birth,  
Were not half so bright as the one dark night,  
When the Savior came to earth.

And at last we shall own in the heavenly  
clime,  
With a finished life in view,  
That our darkest nights in the path of time  
Were the brightest days we knew.

REV. ALFRED J. HUGHES.