



TONY PASTOR AS SANTA.

Veteran Actor Was the Friend of the Stage Children.

There are at present engaged in different capacities on the stage and in the theaters about 400 children to whom the holidays usually are days of toil, and many of these little folks are breadwinners for younger brothers and sisters. It was for them that the late Tony Pastor and his wife, Mrs. E. L. Fernandez, and "Aunt Louisa" Eldridge, now dead, inaugurated the Christmas festival which has become a perennial affair.

The little ones, all less than twelve years old, provide the stage entertainment on these occasions, and there never is any interference by the authorities. Christmas, 1907, was Tony Pastor's last appearance as the children's Santa Claus, and this year they will miss his genial face and kindly at-

tentions. Last year he was master of ceremonies and introduced his tiny "top liners." At the end of the act he presented to each of the girls a beautifully dressed doll and to the boys boxes of candy or appropriate toys. Admission was by invitation only, and when the programme began the house was crowded to the doors, the balcony being given up largely to poor children of the east side. Some of the actors were mere babies, who went through the business like veterans, and the gravity of most of them when singing their comic songs was immensely amusing.

One of the players was presented as Baby Esmond, a perfect cherub, who piped a love ditty and danced with one foot held in the air. Mr. Pastor said she was of "this year's crop," and when she had ended the performance he asked her to tell the audience her age. Without shrinking from the question, as her fellow actresses do, she lisped, "I'll be four next January."

Another of the same mature years was "Miss Miriam Jackson," if you please. She came out with a Teddy bear in her arms, sang a song and did such clever capering that every woman in the audience wanted to hug her.

Lillian Tobin, herself no bigger than a doll baby, sang "Poor John" and invited the audience to join her in the chorus, which it did with a will. At the end of the programme Mr. Pastor announced that a banquet was awaiting the children in the basement of Tammany hall.

After the little ones had been satisfied in that respect they were sent up to the main hall of the building, and there the really big feature of the evening took place. On the stage stood three Christmas trees, bending over from the weight of pretty things, while the stage itself was heaped with toys.

After that there was a second distribution for stage children only in the committee room of Tammany hall. Most of the children had written requests for certain articles, and as they appeared one by one and gave a name corresponding with that on Mrs. Fernandez's list the present asked for was delivered. Some of these were of costly quality, having been purchased with money donated to the cause. Mrs. Fernandez said the children of the stage nowadays ask for useful things rather than for playthings. Since these events were inaugurated it is estimated that more than \$50,000 has been spent for gifts.—New York Herald

LONG WALK FOR SANTA.

Tree Burned, Father Goes Eight Miles For New Toys.

Gifts intended for his eight children being destroyed when his lighting of the Christmas tree, just before midnight, caused a fire which damaged his home in Cleveland, Alfred Hammermeister trudged eight miles through snow before he could rouse a storekeeper and gather another supply of presents so that the children's faith in Santa Claus might not be lost.

The children were asleep when Mr. and Mrs. Hammermeister completed decorating the tree. The father decided to light the candles as a test. They burned; so did the cotton snowballs. The blaze awakened the children. "Santy here?" they piped. "Is it morning?" The parents gathered them in their arms and rushed to the street. Firemen brought out a lot of fire ruined presents from the house.

"Santy been and gone and our things is burned up!" the children cried. Hammermeister began his weary search for an open store. He employed the infrequent street cars for long stretches, but trudged mile after mile in fruitless search. Finally he routed a storekeeper from his bed and, burdening himself with a new supply, trudged home to turn sorrow into joy.

Pat Cronan and The Cigarettes

THE heroic conduct of Lieutenant William P. Cronan, U. S. N., in saving a turret's crew from death on the battleship Connecticut last year was to have been expected from a man of his character. Pat Cronan, as he is known in and out of the navy, belongs to that class of officers who reflect credit on the country and the service. It was my



IT WAS THEIR LAST BOX.

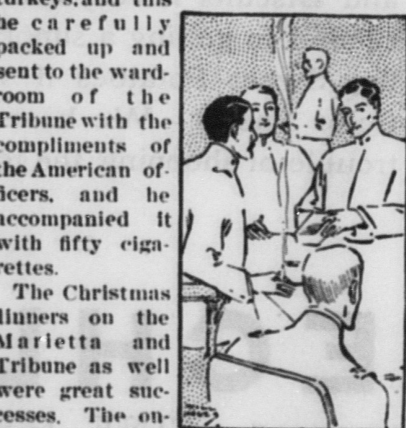
fortune to be with him on the gunboat Marietta during the blockade of Venezuela in 1902 by Great Britain, Germany and Italy. There was no duty too onerous for him to undertake, no service he was unwilling to face. His men stood solidly behind him, ready to go wherever he would lead. As the Marietta had been in the Caribbean sea waters for a long time, it looked as though the Christmas dinner would consist only of canned stuff and fresh vegetables and the peculiar cigarettes of the tropics. Fortunately the steamer Philadelphia arrived at La Guayra, one of the ports blockaded, and, as it could not unload, Captain Diehl, the commander of the Marietta, succeeded in inducing the commercial vessel to part with two turkeys and some cranberries which, among other things, had been brought from New York carefully stowed away in the icebox. The Philadelphia had no Egyptian cigarettes, and the question arose where they could be got. Cronan pondered deeply over the weighty problem and then asked permission for a boat. Without indicating what he proposed to do he gave the orders to proceed to the British cruiser Tribune, which was one of the ships enforcing the blockade.

Cronan was received by the ward-room mess of the Tribune with open arms. As a special mark of appreciation of his visit a box of a hundred Egyptian cigarettes was brought forth by the executive officer. Cronan was invited to take one. His eyes lingered longingly on the box as he extracted a lonely weed. He remained about a quarter of an hour, and then, reaching over to the box, closed it and, to the astonishment of the Britishers, put it under his arm. They were too



MADONNA IN PRAYER — SASSAFERRANTO

well bred to remonstrate, but their eyes spoke volumes. It was their last box! Cronan went over the side and was pulled away to his own ship, leaving behind disgust and desolation. As soon as he reached the Marietta he asked Captain Diehl for one of the turkeys, and this he carefully packed up and sent to the ward-room of the Tribune with the compliments of the American officers, and he accompanied it with fifty cigarettes.



WHY IS CRONAN LIKE THIS BOX?

The Christmas dinners on the Marietta and Tribune as well were great successes. The only bar to complete enjoyment on the part of every one on the American gunboat not in Cronan's confidence was the absence of cigarettes. When the coffee

was served Cronan announced that Santa Claus had commissioned him to convey a splendid gift to the mess. He then produced the half filled box.

"Why is Cronan like this box?" enthusiastically asked one officer who belonged to the conundrum class of humanity.

"He's not full," one wit replied. "He's a delight to the eye," said another.

"He's white, straight, and whatever yellow there is in him is the best yellow there is," hazarded a third.

"Perhaps," admitted the questioner. "But my answer is this: You find Cronan always where the smoke is thickest."—Chicago Tribune.

Poor Angel.
"I wonder," said the sweet young thing, "why a man is always so frightened when he proposes?"

"That," said the chronic bachelor, "is his guardian angel trying to hold him back."

Marked Him.
"Are you aware who I am?"
"Sure! Didn't I just call you an old idiot?"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

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