



All the air with love is laden,
Where the Yule logs glow and flame,
Hopeful youth and trustful maiden
Softly chant the Master's name.
Now, if there be any sad ones,
Bid their tearful eyes be dried,
Now, if there be thoughtless glad ones,
Be that gladness purified;
For the bells of peace are ringing,
Chiming anthems of the free,
Earth and Heaven join in singing
Of the glories yet to be.

Seek the boughs, so green and fragrant,
Let the waxen tapers dance,
Here is hope for prince, for vagrant,
Christ of every circumstance!
Pile the leaping fagots higher,
Let the wide-mouthed chimneys roar
Clash the cymbals, twang the lyre,
Angels wait at every door.
Soft the Day of Peace is breaking;
Gladdest day of all the year;
And sweet Plenty, want o'ertaking,
Spreads a feast of love and cheer.



On the evening before Christmas, in the year of grace 1894, Mr. Rufus Bell created a mild sensation at his home by arriving with a parcel of huge dimensions. He made sure that none of the children were about the house before he entered and, when he had crossed the threshold he immediately concealed the mysterious bundle in a closet and locked the door upon it.

Mrs. Bell at once demanded an explanation, and her niece, Miss Rose Mayne, seconded the demand strongly; thereupon Mr. Bell struck the attitude popular with candidates when they say "My fellow-countrymen," and said:

"Ladies, I am but human, singular as the statement may seem; but I am nevertheless a being of ideas and resources—"

"We are always acquiring information," interrupted Mrs. Bell.

"Rose," continued Mr. Bell, serenely, turning to the younger lady, "as a school-teacher you must have studied juvenile human nature, and you must have been shocked by the fact that children cease to believe in the good old stories of Santa Claus and his reindeer almost as soon as they are able to walk; in fact, I have heard you comment upon this sad truth. What is Christmas to a child, if the child doesn't believe in Santa Claus? Where are all the romance and poetry of the occasion? My own children are skeptical when I tell them the charming legend of Kris Kringle; I have undertaken to convince them that there is a Santa Claus; I have decided to let them see Santa Claus in person."

This announcement naturally pleased the ladies; and their excitement was quite intense when Mr. Bell produced a bundle from the closet and opened it, producing a lot of ancient furs and a bearskin hat that had probably been used by a druggist of the town band; to please the ladies he donned his costume at once, and they voted him a perfect Santa Claus, as he certainly was.

"Now," he said, when he had resumed his ordinary raiment, "I don't think it quite fair to reserve this entertainment for our own children exclusively, so I have invited a few good little boys and girls of the neighborhood; and Mr. and Mrs. Brewster will be here, and young Mr. Moon; I have let them into the secret. You will tell the children to hang their hosiery in the north room, and inform them that you have reason to believe that they may see Santa Claus if they sit up and keep perfectly still; at the proper time I'll ascend the roof and slide down the chimney; it is just large enough for the purpose. And I guess that's all."

During the balance of the evening, until nine o'clock, there was a great deal of active preparation in progress in the Bell mansion; the north room was tidied, and a semi-circle of chairs placed for the expected guests, who began to arrive at the stipulated time. Mr. Bell was in a fine frenzy of excitement; he declared to his wife, in a whisper, that he felt like a boy again, and she replied that she was ten years younger than she was before he unfolded his delicious scheme. By half-past nine all the guests, large and small, were in their places; Mr. Moon, a young man who had been studying law for ten years, and who hoped soon to be admitted to the bar, sat next to Miss Rose, upon whose hand he had serious designs, and his efforts to appear at one were amusing and instructive; Mr. Brewster, who was small and timid looking, nestled beside his wife, who was massive and had a bass voice; silence brooded over the throng until Mr. Bell, who was given to speeches, went into another attitude, and said:

"Children, I have heard that you don't believe there is a Santa Claus? You have formed the unworthy idea that your parents and friends fill your stockings on Christmas eve, and that good old fur-clothed Santa is a myth. Now, I have here a letter from Santa. (Great excitement among the children.)

"And he says that he will arrive here at ten o'clock, coming down the chimney which you see before you. I must leave you for awhile, as I must keep watch outside; but you must all be quiet and keep your seats, or Santa Claus may become angry, and refuse to enter."

Ten o'clock was announced by the tall clock in the adjoining room, and the mellow chimes of that ancient time-piece had scarcely died away before the children heard other sounds. Up overhead there was a violent scratching and tearing, as though a poorly shod reindeer was trying to climb the roof, and they distinctly heard the silvery tinkling of bells, and some of them believed that they could make out the grinding of the sleigh runners on the shingles. It was a moment of awful excitement; Johnnie Bell, who had never quailed in danger's stormy hour, did not try to conceal the cold perspiration that stood on his forehead; Amelia Grimm, whose



ourage was generally unswerving and uncompromising, tried to stifle a shriek, and only half succeeded.

After the roof had been successfully ascended, they heard a great noise by the chimney, as though Santa had just alighted, and then they heard him descend the interior of the chimney; lower and lower he came, until finally his legs were in the room, and they kicked in a very human and prosaic way. After they had kicked for awhile, and no more of the visitor's body appeared, it began to dawn upon everybody that Santa was in difficulties. The children and the older visitors sat staring at the legs for a few minutes, and then Mr. Moon, who was a man for an emergency, gallantly rushed to the rescue. He seized Santa's ankles and pulled with all the force of a pair of gymnasium-educated arms, but he didn't seem to make any headway, for Santa yelled in a voice that sounded like a doleful cry from the tomb that he was being wedged in tighter than ever, and he implored the company to do something for his relief.

The elders held a council of war. Mr. Brewster mildly suggested that it would be a good plan to send in a fire alarm, but his wife crushed him with a look, and said that the only way she saw was to take the bricks out of the chimney; and she added: "This comes of a man trying to act the fool when he ought to be thinking of the world to come."

Meanwhile Santa groaned and shrieked in a fearful manner in the chimney, and protested that if he wasn't soon released he would be a

corpse. Mrs. Bell was fainting comfortably in her armchair, and most of the children had vanished. It was then that Miss Rose approached Mr. Moon, wringing her hands and weeping beautifully.

"Mr. Moon," she cried, "you see the sufferings of my uncle, and you stand here idle. Can you not rescue him?"

"Miss Rose," said the intrepid young man, "I can get him out of that in five minutes; it rests with you whether I



shall do it or not. The last time I proposed to you, you refused me, as usual. If you'll promise to marry me, I'll rescue your uncle; if you won't, I leave this town forever—and your uncle in the chimney. His kicks are growing feeble and labored; I don't think he can last more than three minutes."

The young lady leveled a glance of scorn at him that should have withered him, but he stood firm. He felt that his whole future was at stake, and reflected that all's fair in love and war. There was a stern, cold silence for a minute or two. Meanwhile the vibrations of Santa's legs became desultory and spasmodic, and his muffled groans betokened extreme exhaustion.

"Wretch!" cried the young lady, at last, "rescue my uncle! You shall have the reward you ask!"

The wretch bowed with noble grace and a moment later was on the roof, with a rope in his hand; he let the rope down the chimney, and called to Santa Claus to grasp it and hang on. Santa did so, and tolled upward while Mr. Moon pulled; after 15 minutes of distressing work, Santa emerged from the chimney, a poor, battered effigy of himself.

Mr. Moon assisted him to the ground and into the house, where the children and the other guests crowded about him and laughed; for children always will laugh when they ought to weep.

When Mr. Bell was recovered sufficiently, he leaned against the back of a chair—he was too weak for an attitude—and said:

"Children, if you tell about this around town, I'll have you all arrested and sent to the penitentiary for life. And you, Johnnie, for that titter I'll make you saw a cord of green wood. I want you all to go home and tell your parents that Santa Claus is the biggest hoax of the 19th century, and I'll guarantee every word you say."

By careful nursing Mr. Bell was restored to his normal health in a few days, and his first act was to have the old chimney taken down.

One day in March Mr. Moon led his bride to the altar; he held his head high and his eye sparkled. After the ceremony there was a dinner at Mr. Bell's residence, and Mr. Bell himself was radiant with good humor and hospitality. He called the young couple aside, and indulged in an attitude and a speech:

"My beloved ones," he began, "the morning of life opens radiant to you; sunlight glimmers upon the waters, there are blue skies overhead, and—the robin redbreasts are twittering on the boughs. But dark days of tempest and storm may come; rolling waves may threaten your bark, and then remember that if you need a helping hand, you may call upon Rufus Bell."

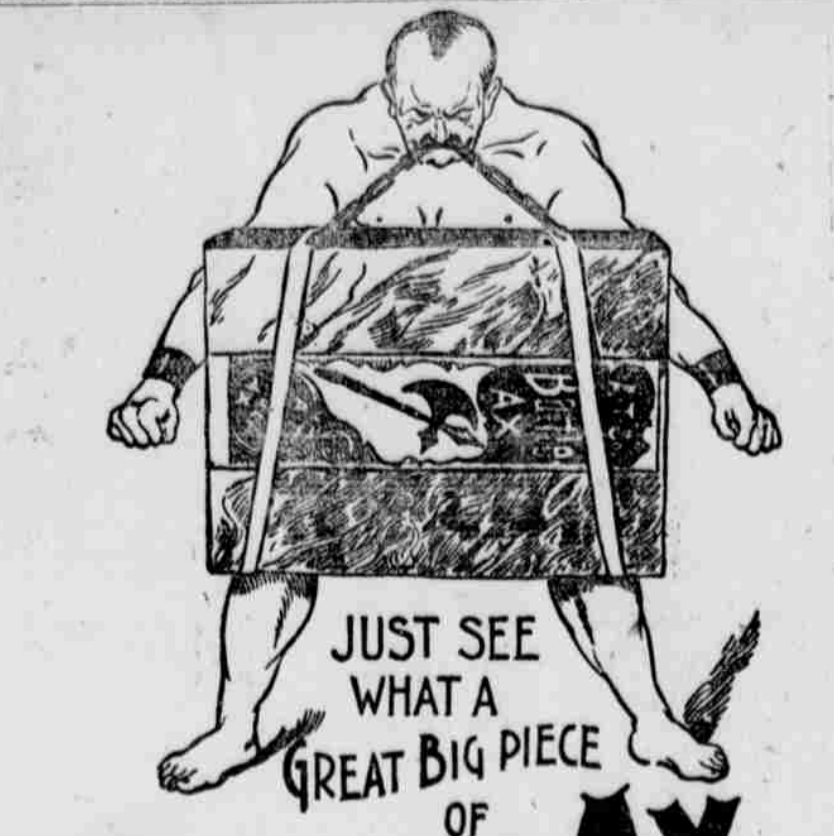
Mr. Moon looked dreamily out of the window.

"May I ask a favor of you now?" he asked.

"A hundred of them, my dear boy."

"Well, I see it's snowing, and there's enough on the ground to make sleighing. Will you lend us your reindeer and sled for awhile?"

Santa Claus' Stockings.
Said Santa Claus on Christmas eve,
"In jolly, good, fat glee:
"To judge by all these stockings here,
They've turned the hose on me."



JUST SEE
WHAT A
GREAT BIG PIECE
OF
**BATTLEAX
PLUG**
YOU
CAN GET FOR
10 CENTS
LARGEST PIECE OF GOOD TOBACCO
EVER SOLD FOR THE MONEY

"He that works easily works successfully." 'Tis very easy to clean house with **SAPOLIO**

B. F. SHARPLESS, Pres. N. U. FUNK, Sec. C. H. CAMPBELL, TREAS.
**BLOOMSBURG
LAND IMPROVEMENT COMPANY.**
CAPITAL STOCK, \$30,000.

Plotted property is in the coming business centre of the town. It includes also part of the factory district, and has no equal in desirability for residence purposes.

CHOICE LOTS are offered at values that will be doubled in a short time.

No such opportunity can be had elsewhere to make money. Lots secured on SMALL MONTHLY PAYMENTS. Maps of the town and of plotted property furnished on application.

Call upon or write to the Secretary, or J. S. Woods, Sales Agent, or any member of the Board of Directors.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS.
B. F. SHARPLESS; J. L. DILLON.
C. W. NEAL; A. G. BRIGGS, DR. I. W. WILLITS,
DR. H. W. McREYNOLDS, N. U. FUNK.
11-19-

Low Prices and Good Work.

For the finest and best stoves, tinware, roofing, spouting and general job work, go to W. W. Watts, on Iron street. Buildings heated by steam, hot air or hot water in a satisfactory manner. Sanitary Plumbing a specialty.

I have the exclusive control of the Thatcher steam, hot water and hot air heaters for this territory, which is acknowledged to be the best heater on the market. All work guaranteed.

W. W. WATTS,
BloomSBurg, Pa.
10-27-19

ALWAYS SHARP SHOD WITH THE NEVERSLIP
THE NEVERSLIP

ONE TRIAL WILL CONVINCE YOU.
Your horse being always sharp shod, is ready for work. His feet are always in good condition, and he is not constantly at the blacksmith's being sharpened, which ruins his feet, causing great expense and loss of time to you. Remember, once shod with "NeverSlip" you can easily put in new Calks when needed without removing the shoes. **BE SURE your horse-shoes have "NeverSlip" on hand. Ask your SHOE WITNESS for full information. MAILED FREE.**

THESE CALKS ABSOLUTELY PREVENT SLIPPING. REMOVABLE-STEEL. SHARPENED AND SELF-SHARPENING.

A. J. ROAT, KINGSTON,
Everything in Hardware.

Crown Acme,
The best burning oil that can be made from petroleum.

It gives a brilliant light. It will not smoke the chimneys. It will not char the wick. It has a high fire test. It will not explode. It is pre-eminently a family safety oil.

We Challenge Comparison with any other illuminating oil made.

We stake our Reputation, as Refiners upon the statement that it is

The Best Oil
IN THE WORLD.

ASK YOUR DEALER FOR
CROWN - ACME

THE ATLANTIC REFINING CO.,
BLOOMSBURG STATION,
BLOOMSBURG, PA.

THE MARKETS.
BLOOMSBURG MARKETS.

COMBINED WEEKLY. RETAIL PRICES.

Butter per lb.	\$.22
Eggs per dozen	.24
Lard per lb.	.10
Ham per pound	.12 1/2
Pork, whole, per pound	.06
Beef, quarter, per pound	.07
Wheat per bushel	.65
Oats " "	.28
Rye " "	.50
Wheat flour per bbl.	3.50
Hay per ton	12 to \$14
Potatoes per bushel	.30
Turnips " "	.25
Onions " "	.50
Sweet potatoes per peck	.25 to .30
Tallow per lb.	.42
Shoulder " "	.11
Side meat " "	.07
Vinegar, per qt.	.07
Dried apples per lb.	.05
Dried cherries, pitted	.10
Raspberries	.12
Cow Hides per lb.	3 1/2
Steer " "	.05
Calf Skin " "	.80
Sheep pelts	.75
Shelled corn per bus.	.60
Corn meal, cwt.	2.00
Bran, " "	1.10
Chop " "	1.10
Middlings " "	1.10
Chickens per lb new	.08
" " " old	.10
Turkeys " "	.10
Geese " "	.10
Ducks " "	.08

COAL.

No. 6, delivered	2.40
" 4 and 5 "	3.50
" 6 at yard	2.25
" 4 and 5 at yard	3.25

E. A. RAWLINGS.
—DEALER IN—

All Kinds of Meat,

Beef, Veal, Lamb, Mutton,
Pork, Hams, Bacon, Tongues,
Bologna, &c. Free Delivery
to all parts of the town.

**CENTRE STREET,
BLOOMSBURG, PA.**

Telephone connection.

PATENTS
Patents and Trade Marks obtained, and all Patent business conducted for MODERATE FEES.
OUR OFFICE IS OPPOSITE THE U. S. PATENT OFFICE. We have no sub-agencies, all business direct, hence can transact patent business in less time and at less cost than those remote from Washington.
Send model, drawing or photo, with description. We advise if patentable or not, free of charge. Our fee not due till patent is secured. A book, "How to Obtain Patents," with references to actual clients in your State, County, or town sent free. Address
C. A. SNOW & CO., Washington, D. C. (Opposite U. S. Patent Office.)

Bring the Babies.
INSTANTANEOUS PROCESS USED.

Strictly first-class guaranteed photographs, crayons and copies at reasonable prices. We use exclusively the Collotype Aristotype process, thus securing greater beauty of finish and permanency of results. CAPWELL,
MARKET SQUARE GALLERY,
Over Harrison's Store.

YOUR
JOB PRINTING
DONE AT THE
COLUMBIAN OFFICE