

Sammie's Uncle Dick

By RUBY DOUGLAS



ALEXIA stood over the kitchen range popping corn, and the reflection of the crimson coals in her cheeks was like a full-blown blush rose.

It was the day before Christmas, and, save for the long strands of popcorn, Alexia was preparing her great Christmas tree was dressed. It stood in the dining-room, its branches projecting about the windows heavily laden with mysterious ribbed parcels and rainbow-hued ornaments.

"A real Christmas, after all," cried Alexia, and the smile which accompanied the words would have led one to believe that she was in her sixth winter instead of in her three-times-that-many with a few years added—just a few years, though! The family Bible said Alexia was two-and-twenty.

A great gust of wind drew her attention suddenly without. She stood by the window wondering if it was to be a real blizzard like they had in the west.

The heap of snow was growing larger and larger, and she watched the feathery flakes pile up on each other affectionately. All at once a white something, larger and more substantial than a snowflake, was drifted onto the heap. It was a tiny white envelope.

When she had finished the popper of corn, Alexia opened the window and picked up the damp little paper. One short word was written in a much-blurred and childish hand: "God." Alexia would not have been so surprised if it had been Santa Claus. Children often write to him.

Out of the envelope she pulled a piece of note paper—probably surreptitiously borrowed—on which was written in the undeveloped hand of a little one:

"Dear God, please make me a Christmas tree like the one in the window across the court. I can see it. I will put this on the roof so you'll get it sooner. Yours truly, Sammie."

So Sammie was the name of the little boy she had seen so often in the opposite window. He seemed lonely; she judged that his mother was dead and that the child's father was a busy, thoughtless man. An old housekeeper was the only person she ever saw about the apartment.

It was because Alexia had been a little lonely herself as Christmas drew near—her first Yuletide in the city—that she had gathered this little circle of poor children and planned a party for them. Her reasons were not purely philanthropic.

There was no need of two persons being lonely, Alexia philosophized, and she straightway went over to interview the old housekeeper in regard to Sammie. She did not mention the note, for, should the child find out, his faith would be shattered.

On Christmas morning, before Alexia was fully dressed, a small young male visitor was announced. No name was given, and she wondered if some of the poor little children, in his joyful anticipation of the day, had been unable to restrain himself until the appointed hour of the party.

But it was Sammie. He stood breathlessly in the hall without either coat or hat, his little cheeks bright with the nipping breath of Jack Frost.

"Uncle Dick's come," he said, by way of introduction to his mission. "My Uncle Dick came last night, and—and I can't leave him all alone. Please can't he come, too?"

"Of course, Sammie, bring Uncle Dick along," she said, taking his little round face in her hands.

Alexia's children had all arrived but Sammie, and the dining-room was filled with ejaculations of delight at each new view of the splendid tree.

She was beginning to wonder whether or not Uncle Dick had prevented Sammie's coming when an impatient tinkle of the bell seemed to say "Sammie."

Alexia answered the ring herself. "Here's Uncle Dick," said her small friend before she could open the door for him. "Where's the tree?" he cried, his childish excitement and importance it bringing a visitor running away with his patience.

Without a sign of an introduction, Sammie scanned down the hall toward the dining-room, leaving Uncle Dick standing in the doorway.

"Uncle Dick!" said Alexia when he could get her breath.

"Yes, Alexia," said Uncle Dick—but it was not old. "Sammie said I was invited. Am I?" He put out his hand. It must be Fate, dear. Shall we defy it?"

"Or was it Sammie?" asked Alexia, trying her hand in his.

But before he could continue the argument the young man in question peeped.

"Aren't you coming, Uncle Dick?" asked, astonished that anyone could main so long away from such enticement as the dining-room held.

"Yes, Sammie, but, I say, come here," Sammie came, reluctantly.

And, because he was very young and very much interested in a Christmas tree, he did not notice how tenderly Uncle Dick kissed him, and how many times Alexia took him in her arms that day hugged him.

TRUCE OF CHRISTMAS DAY

Song of Israel Causes Suspension of Hostilities Which Neither Army Could Resist.

"On the night preceding the 25th of December, 1870," began a captain, according to the Methodist Recorder. "I was in command of a company of volunteers engaged in the defense of Paris. The siege had already lasted three months, and in the trenches my brave comrades were enduring martyrdom of suffering and privation. The cold was biting bitterly; the stars were shivering in a cloudless sky; the moon shone brightly on the snow-clad plain between us and the enemy; the German trenches were so close to us that we could hear the passwords of their sentinels as, hour by hour, they were relieved and passed into their camp.

"As I was walking about to keep my feet from freezing, one of my men came up to me, and, saluting, said: 'Captain, I have a strange request to make; I want you to permit me for a little while to leave the trenches.'

"Leave the trenches?' I replied.

"But why? Because it is so cold? It will be warm enough when we begin to fight."

"It is not that. I ask you, as a favor, to allow me for a little while to leave my post. I cannot tell you why; but, if you grant me leave, I promise you you won't regret it."

"Impossible! You want to go to Paris. If I give you leave, I cannot well deny it to the rest."

"No, not to Paris," said he, smiling, "but in that direction," pointing toward the German lines. "I shan't be long."

"He had aroused my curiosity. I granted him permission, but warned him that he would most probably get killed."

"No fear," he said, and, leaving over the ramparts, he walked into the middle of the plain.

"We followed him with our eyes, listening for the sharp crack of the enemy's rifles, and expecting at every step to see him fall. Not a sound, save the crunching of the frozen snow beneath his feet! As soon as he had come within hearing of the German sentries he paused, saluted, and began to sing a well-known Christmas hymn, with the refrain:

"Noel! Noel! Christ is King of Israel!"

"It was so unexpected and so simply done, the strain took from the night, the scene, the circumstances, such a beauty and sublimity that the least religious of us hung upon his lips, and the hardest hearted in our trench were moved. The Germans neither spoke nor stirred. It seemed as if a spell had bound them all in silence and in immobility. The simple strain had doubtless made them think of home and of the happy groups around the glittering Christmas trees beyond the Rhine. They were evidently listening, for no other sound was audible—not a step, not a movement of arms. As soon as X— had done his hymn he gave another military salute, turned on his heel as on a pivot, and deliberately walked back to our line.

"Well, captain," said he, "are you sorry that you gave me leave?"

"Before I could reply, a soldier had begun to move across the snow from the opposite camp. He, like X—, saluted, and, between the companies of armed men, he sang a German version of the 'Noel, Noel,' that the French recruit had sung. I had given orders, though they were superfluous, not to fire on him. He sang the hymn through, verse by verse, and when he came to the refrain, the soldiers in both camps joined in the chorus:

"Noel! Noel! Christ hath ransomed Israel!"

"The same emotion filled all hearts. All diversities and enmities had been forgotten in the presence of the Prince of Peace. The soldier then departed to the German lines and disappeared. A few hours later we began to fire again."

HER RULE OF XMAS GIFTS.

Painstaking Aunt Has a System of Her Own by Which She Distributes Gifts to Her Relatives.

The right rule for a gift, according to Emerson, is that it should be something which will "convey to some person that which properly belongs to his character, and is easily associated with him in thought."

There are few people indeed who do not at least try to consider the particular taste and character of the friends to whom they give, says the Youth's Companion. But once in a while a matter-of-fact person quite fails to perceive that this is necessary. A good thing is a good thing, in the eyes of such a giver, and it may be assumed that the recipient will therefore like it, and be grateful, unless, indeed, he happens to have it already, which is the one possibility to be dreaded.

There is a placid, painstaking, prosaic, but much beloved aged aunt to a large flock of youthful nephews and nieces whose system, based upon this comfortably simple view, refuses to consider even the drawback of duplication. Every Christmas she makes everything she gives, and her presents are of two kinds: one for girls and one for boys.

One year it may be penwipers for the brothers and needlebooks for the sisters, the next, mufflers for the one and mittens for the other. These articles she patiently and leisurely procures for weeks beforehand. They are always tasteful in tint and exquisitely made, and are usually welcome.

An unfortunate schoolgirl whose birthday in November had brought her already two pairs of bed-shoes, in what she had discovered to be Aunt Elmira's bed-shoe year, tried to avoid a third pair by a word in season conveyed discreetly through a cousin.

"Dear, dear!" murmured Aunt Elmira, softly, halting her knitting-needles for an instant. "Both pairs blue, did you say, child? I must be sure that my pair is pink, and—yes, that is a very good idea—I'll knit them a size or two larger, so she can wear out the other first, and be quite sure they will fit when she is ready for them. Pink with a white finish should be pretty."

Very gently the cousin hinted at some other present, but Aunt Elmira's head was shaken at once, a slight but decisive shake.

"No, dear," she affirmed, tranquilly, "two kinds of gifts are all I can make in one year without feeling myself worried and flurried. Ruth will find her bed-shoes just as serviceable and just as pretty a year or two later, if she can't wear them now; it doesn't matter. My mind was made up long ago, my dear, that too many Christmas-masses were spoiled by worrying."

Perhaps Ruth was not wholly grateful for the pink shoes, and the system may be questioned; but Aunt Elmira's friends certainly find the spectacle of one person always unharmed, unworried and unruffled, even in the wild weeks before Christmas, a soothing and refreshing sight.

CHRISTMAS TREE FEATURE.

Dancing Dolls Above Parlor Decoration Produces Pretty Effect for Holiday.

Dancing Christmas fairies always enhance the children's delight in the Christmas tree, and once made can be used year after year, says Woman's Home Companion. Buy up a dozen or more of five and ten-cent dolls, and add to the variety have among the number some Japanese and colored dolls. Dress these to represent fairies in bright hues of spangled gauze, tarlatan or tissue paper, and liberally sprinkle their hair and garments with diamond-dust powder. Each doll should be provided with a dainty pair of fairy wings made from spangled tissue paper and fastened to the body by means of concealed wires. These wires should be coiled to obtain motion in the wings, and nothing better can be used than the fine spiral coils that come out of worn-out, wire-stitched brooms. The least motion will set this spiral to quivering, causing the wings to move as if in flight. In like manner use the spiral wire to attach the dolls in hovering positions over and around the tree. The effect is magical; every foot-step causes far enough to start the dolls dancing and circling above and around the tree, as if invisible fairies of the air had come down to join him in the Christmas glee.

HOLIDAY MAGIC.

On Christmas Eve put nine mistletoe berries to steep in equal parts of honey and vinegar, quaff the decoction on an empty stomach, retire before midnight and your dream will be your destiny. On New Year's Eve a girl should pull 12 hairs from her head, make them into a ring, put it into the prayer-book at the marriage service and sleep with the book under her pillow. Her future husband will figure in her dreams, but if she has no dream she will live and die unmarried.

Wonderfully Made.

Ted—Why don't you use that Christmas present your girl made you?

Ned—I'm afraid to. I don't know whether she intended it as a tobacco pouch or a necktie.—Town Topics.

No Credit for Dad.

It is hard to be saving up every cent for a kid's Christmas when you know old Santa is to get all the credit for it.—Atlanta Journal.

Baby's Stocking.

The happiest home is where a baby's stocking is hung up for the first Christmas.

Madonna's Colors.

In nearly all old paintings of the Holy Family the Madonna wears red and blue, red being the hue of love, and blue symbolical of Heaven.

Easy to Be Happy.

Mrs. Nixdoor—Aren't you always worried half to death when it comes to buying a Christmas present for your husband?

Mrs. Sun's line—My, no! I buy my husband something I want for myself, and he buys me something he wants for himself, and then we trade.

Origin of Gift Giving.

The practice of making presents on Christmas day undoubtedly owes its origin to a general idea to carry into practice the Biblical mandate: "Peace on earth; good will to men." At first the great lords made presents to their retainers, and the season was marked by universal charity. By degrees the practice of Christmas giving spread until now everybody gives friends presents.—Detroit Free Press.



HAS NEW GOVERNOR.

CAPT. FRANTZ TO SUCCEED FERGUSON OF OKLAHOMA.

President Selects Ex-"Rough Rider" for Post—How a Political Career Was Begun by a Boxing Contest with Roosevelt.

Washington.—Capt. Frank Frantz will be the next governor of Oklahoma. He will succeed Gov. Ferguson when the latter's term expires, January 13. Mr. Roosevelt had shown his confidence in the "ex-Rough Rider" captain by appointing him postmaster at Enid, and later Osage Indian agent. He eagerly acted upon the suggestion that Frantz be named as the successor of Gov. Ferguson.

If Capt. Frantz should live to receive his commission as governor of Oklahoma, he will be 33 years old, by far the youngest of the six governors who have served the people of Oklahoma. Capt. Frantz was born in Woodford county, Illinois, May 7, 1872. He is the son of a farmer of Virginia ancestry. He is a man of athletic build, direct and vigorous in his manner and conversation. He has the address of the successful, educated business man, and his amiability invites friendship. A slight impediment in his speech annoys him at times. He is a mixer, but has never engaged sufficiently in politics to show his ability as an organizer.

He was educated in Eureka college, Eureka, Ill., removed to Wellington, Kan., in 1890, and mined for several years in California, Arizona and New Mexico. In 1893 he went to Oklahoma. The Spanish-American war aroused his patriotism, and he enlisted in Arizona as a private.

Gov. McCord, of that territory, appointed him first lieutenant, and when Capt. "Bucky" O'Neil fell in battle, Frantz led his captainless Troop A through the engagement and was given the commission left vacant by O'Neil. He was mentioned in general orders for his bravery, and was recommended by Gen. Joseph Wheeler for a brevet commission at the close of the war. But congress refused to grant brevets

to volunteer officers. On the back of his discharge from the army, in Col. Roosevelt's handwriting, are these words: "I promoted him for gallantry and efficiency in the fight of July 1."

After the close of the war, Capt. Frantz returned to his home in Enid and engaged in the mercantile business. He married Miss Matilda Evans, of Enid, in 1900. They have three children, two boys and one girl.

Soon after President Roosevelt entered the white house Capt. Frantz called upon him. During their conversation Frantz remarked that he had boxed some at Harvard. Then nothing would do but he must put on the gloves with the president.

"Bully!" exclaimed Mr. Roosevelt as he got up rubbing his jaw after the first punch had put him off his feet. "But you can't do it again."

They sparred for a few seconds, then—biff! And the president of the United States lay on his back on the gymnasium floor. A right hook to the jaw had done the work.

Mr. Roosevelt was not out, but he was not so eager to get up and "mix" it again.

The boxing bout was ended and Frantz's political career begun. He was first made postmaster at Enid. Then he declined the Osage Indian agency because the salary of \$1,800 was not enough. He met Secretary Hitchcock in St. Louis by request.

"I didn't endorse you for the position," admitted Secretary Hitchcock, "but the president wants you. He says there has been considerable graft at the Osage agency, and he wants you to clean it up."

"All right," answered Capt. Frantz, "if the president asked me to go to South Africa, and there wasn't a cent in it, I'd take the trip. I'll take the place."

Frantz was installed as agent for the Osage Indians, and there has been no hint of graft since. Now this same Harvard rough-rider-boxer has been named governor of Oklahoma.

There are four Frantz brothers. Orville, who is also a white house caller, is a wrestler. He has never thrown the president, and has no office. He was known as "Home-run" Frantz at Harvard, and he will pitch for the St. Louis Cardinals next year. John and Walter are amateur athletes of note.

The father of Capt. Frantz once was prominent in Illinois politics. He was leader of the independents in the Illinois legislature of 1876. The independents elected David Davis to the United States senate, after taking him from the United States supreme bench, thereby changing the complexion of the commission selected to decide the contest between Hayes and Tilden.



CAPT. FRANK FRANTZ, (Who will succeed Ferguson as Governor of Oklahoma.)

The Fashions of the Winter

One is impressed by the combination of thin stuffs and velvet, almost every good dressmaker will have a model showing this feature of the season's styles. Net and velvet are united, and with good effect, the net heavy and substantial, the velvet used as band at the bottom and rather sparingly otherwise. One excellent model of brown net thus trimmed was brought to our attention, and also a good black, made up over white. The brown had a brown foundation.

A peacock-blue broadcloth embroidered elaborately in the feathers of this proud bird, was completed by a hat of



velvet in the peacock blue, one of the small tip-tilted affairs we expect and see on every other woman we meet. Although the style is common, many of the individual hats are not at all common, still spell style. A peacock green cloth of softest, most beautiful appearance, had one feature particularly noticeable; the sleeves slashed to the shoulder to disclose cream net undersleeves, and the vest made with a V at the neck to give another hint of the net waist.

Brown, which we seemed to think quite out of fashion, promises presently to be in the height of fashion. A warm shade in velvet is most effective when employed with rich dark fuchsias, and recently we were attracted by a handsome seal coat made with rolling fronts and a straight, loose front of brown velvet, embroidered delicately in gold. Brown crepe de chine is exquisite. This well appreciated material now comes in all shades. Crepe de chine loses none of its vogue; we should say it is more in favor than ever. The lovely dahlia shades are particularly lovely in crepe; and also the lighter shades of red at present so much approved, the old rose and pinks. Yesterday a girl out for a walk flashed by in a chic costume of rose broadcloth,

the skirt a high princess, the coat short, with waistcoat of lace showing. One meets, day and evening, both light shades and dark; there is not now such criticism of overdressing as once there was. In the current phrase, everything goes.

A new shade is apricot, a pinkish yellow that, in spite of prejudice, is very fetching, and very becoming when becoming at all. It is especially good in soft cloths and in millinery. Glaring colors and combinations, we rejoice to say, are relegated to the background—are quite banished. Long may they stay away! The peacocks are brilliant, but they are beautifully, not crudely, brilliant. The tinsel used is not the cheap, showy sort, but of rich beauty, and lovely embroidered beltings are seen at the exclusive shops.

It may not be out of place to speak of the coiffure of the season and the style of comb in favor. The hair is done high on the head, with a very loose, puffy arrangement at back and sides. The preference is given to a single back comb, a wide, elaborate one. For the puff at the back many make use of the "rat," alas, many who present a most untidy appearance, the pad showing through and adding to the disheveledness. This style is good when not exaggerated; very bad when untidy. Lovely combs may be had with an edge of gold filagree, the first cost considerable, but they never tarnish, can be handed down as an heirloom.

Taken by and large women this year present a neat, smart appearance, the tailored suits to have the credit. To be sure, there are loose effects, but the lines are long and straight. The neat woman does not necessarily mean prim; today it means smart.

A few weeks ago we chronicled the use of ribbons as trimming, and would again call attention to the fact that they are distinctly in style. A show window may have on display a half dozen costumes trimmed with ribbon, and to-day we paused before one filled with net evening gowns adorned with rows and rows of ribbon frills, the frills narrow and in colors. One white net had lavender frills; a prettier costume was of pink and white and one equal to this in prettiness was of blue and white. A very white tulle went well with the last, its sole trimming a soft fluff of pale blue high on one side.

To obtain the fashionable low flare for the skirt there is now in use a featherbone framework with silk flounce at the foot. It does not interfere with the natural lines of the figure and does hold the skirt out gracefully. Some dress-makers make use of hair cloth bounces, but the featherbone frame has good points. It is made up daintily as possible, the bones covered with shirred ribbon. It is not so expensive nor so heavy as a much befrilled petticoat, and gives the right hang to the skirt above.

A smart raincoat is in box coat style, and has pockets above and below the waist. The favored colors are tans, Oxfords and olive greens, and the coats now come in heavier materials than formerly, meeting the demand for a winter wrap. The separate long coat is growing in favor, a coat that may be worn with different gowns. Women have got tired of the suit with its tendency for the skirt to fade and presently not match the jacket; welcome the separate warp.

Fancies in Feminine Dress

Icy winds may blow, snow lie deep on the ground, yet Milady appears on the street as well as in the house with sleeves cut off at the elbow. The three-quarter sleeve is a long one these days; banished the one-time wrist length, save for shirt-waist and such strictly utilitarian garments. Of course this means expensive long gloves. What is saved in sleeves is more than lost in "hand-shuhe."

The fashionable long glove for evening wear is the white suede, and it is often seen with the dressier afternoon costumes. It makes one long for the excellent and cheap London glove; here in America we have to pay so much for this trifle of the toilette. To those interested in economy we would add that the long black suede glove is in excellent style, and that long glove may mean the 8, 12 or 24 button. A black glove makes the hand look small, and the suede outlines the arm prettily.

We note the number of attractive hats that are trimmed with illusion. This morning we saw a very good one with a lace crown, the crown a low cone, the brim edged with white velvet; a ruff of white illusion almost concealed the brim and mounted well up on the crown; a cluster of three camellias nestled in the illusion on one side, well toward the front, and under the turned-up back was a quantity of ribbon the same soft shade as the camellias, a pinky white.

A beautiful largish hat—none of the hats this year are very big—of violet panne, was a dream. The panne fitted smoothly, this giving a satin sheen much better than folds or puffs would have been. The shape was not unlike a longish sailor of years ago, the only trimming a ruche of white illusion. And concerning the color of hat one should wear, taste is divided between the hat that matches the costume exactly and the one that contrasts. An elegant gray gown and wrap were worn with a hat of peacock blue velvet; the effect very good. Peacock blue and peacock green are in highest favor in both millinery and gowns; the cheap feathers have not driven them out.

A maine neck ruff usually proves very becoming, and not a few are seen at opera and theater. They come in the delicate shades, perhaps are most popular in white. For afternoon occasions furs take their place. Afternoon toilettes are marked by rich colors, evening gowns seem best this year when in the delicate shades. Nothing is in higher favor than pale blue, pink and old rose.



Soft materials lead, the clinging kind. White lawn and nainsook waists have an unprecedented vogue; where silk was considered the only choice of waist, now we have the dainty and seemingly simple lawn and nainsook. These materials are also forward for chemisette and undersleeve with gown of velvet or broadcloth, the white goods daintily hand-tucked. It is a very pretty fashion.

ELLEN OSMOND.

Stolen Thunder.

Some orators have a fine command of other men's language.