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ESTABLISHED 1827.

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TOMMY TO SANTA CLAUS.

Each Christmas you come at midnight
Across the billows of snow
To fill to the brim my stocking
With candies that richly glow.

You know how I prize the presents
You hang on my Christmas tree,
For you once were a little fellow,
And of playthings fond like me.

You wake up long before daylight,
And greeted the Christmas morn
By pounding your red drum madly
And blowing upon your horn.

You sat on the bed delighted,
To play with each pretty toy:
But who was it filled your stocking
When you were a little boy?

—*R. K. Munkittrick, in Harper's Young People.*

CHRISTMAS.

Christ, the Lord, is born to day!
Hang the house with holly gay,
Ring the tuneful bell!
In the churches, vast and dim,
Solemn for the love of Him,
The Te Deum swell!
Meet the poor with open hands;
Ask that Christ's Divine commands
Sweetly in thee dwell!

—*Grace W. Haight, in Good Housekeeping.*

HOW IT HAPPENED.

A Story of a Home That Santa Claus Never Visited.

BY JULIA TRUITT BISHOP.

It was just on the outskirts of town. The wind, which went whirling down the streets, making men button their overcoats more closely as they hurried home, caught a slender, childish figure and drove it along at a great rate, flapping the ragged old shawl as though it would tear it into shreds. The face hidden away under the big sun-bonnet was a brave and patient little face, but the clothing was thin, and the nose and hands were red with cold.

It was a bitter evening to the little girl trudging home in the dusk; bitter without, if not within. She was so light, and the wind was so strong, that it really seemed that she was being treated very much as the brown leaves were—driven here and there just as the wind pleased; but fortunately it blew her in the direction she wanted to go, and finally through a tumble-down gate, up a disorderly walk and into the front door a little house that leaned off one way while its chimney leaned off another, as though they were minded to part company.

A chorus went up from around the open fireplace: "There Maggie! Is you cold, Maggie?"

And then the woman sitting in the chimney corner said:

"Well it's about time you was gittin' home. You stayed so long I thought you must be a-waitin' for the corn to grow, 'fore you brung the meal."

Whereupon the woman arose and began mixing the meal for corn bread. Maggie silently drew near the fire, trying to unfasten the shawl with her numb fingers. The two younger children, a pale, sickly looking boy of 7 and a girl of 3, came and stood one on each side of her, and laid their heads against her affectionately.

"Tell us what you saw, Mag," coaxed the boy; but Maggie replied evasively:

"Oh, lots of things! More'n I could tell in a week! Sit down now, Joe that's a good boy, an' let Susie lay her head in your lap. Maybe she'll go to sleep. Mother, has father come back."

"Not yet," replied the mother, as she patted the corn pones into their proper shape and laid them in the skillet over the glowing coals. She sighed as she said it, and Maggie, looking at the window, against which the dark pressed close outside, echoed the sigh. She was but 12 years old, yet a good deal of hard experience can be crowded into twelve years sometimes.

"Your pa went to town to look for work again, Maggie."

Maggie turned away in silence. After awhile the cooking was done, and the four sat around the table and ate the corn bread with a little cold meat that had been left from dinner. It was poor fare enough, but three of them made a meal. Something was in Maggie's throat, and she could not eat.

After the supper was over and the little ones were sound asleep, Maggie sat down in front of the fire, while her mother took her old place in the corner.

"Mother," broke out Maggie, suddenly, turning her big eyes upon the worn face in the corner, "I never thought about it before, but folks is gettin' ready for Chris'mas. The winders is full o'things. I seen 'em this evenin'. I seen a man buy a doll bigger'n Susie, an' heered him tell the storekeeper to put it away an' he'd send for it Chris'mas eve."

"Chris'mas won't do us much good," said the mother in the dreary tone that had become habitual with her, "I'd druther it wouldn't come. 'Pears like it allers reminds me more o' what other folks is got, an' I ain't.

Maggie's eyes went from the complaining face to the glowing coals that lay in a heap beneath the hickory forestick.

"I wish I could get somethin' nice for Joe an' Susie," she said dejectedly. "'Pears like I'd like for 'em to knew they was such a day as Chris'mas. Them Barnes boys tol' Joe som'n 'bout Santy Claus the other day, an' in come mighty near settin' 'im crazy. He's a-lookin' for 'im, mother! Think o' that! Joe's a-lookin' for Santy Claus! He's a goin' to hang up his stock'! I tried to beg 'im out of it, but it wasn't no use. I tel' 'im we was so pore an' hadn't been yere long, and Santy Claus didn't know we was yere, but Joe wouldn't b'lieve a word. 'He goes ever'where, with Susie; I wisht I could give 'em both some'n, jest to make 'em think it was true!"

"Let 'em alone! You ain't never had nothin' yourself, an' you've done well enough!" replied the woman irritably.

She had heard a step on the walk and knew it. Maggie opened the door silently. The man that came in walked unsteadily, and hastened to drop into a chair by the fire.

"Well, I didn't git no work agin," he said thickly. "Never saw such a place in my life for bein' out o' work. Been a-huntin' for it all evenin'."

And with this declaration he managed to get his head upon a table and went comfortably to sleep.

And this was the secret of the poverty and wretchedness that had been Maggie's portion since she could remember.

Maggie lay for long hours that night listening to the wail of the wind around the little shanty, and thinking with anguish of the two little stockings that would be hung up by the mantel Christmas Eve, and how they would still hang there, limp and empty, Christmas morning, and two faithful little hearts would be broken on account of it.

The tears streamed down her cheeks in the dark at the thought. Her heart went out most of all to little Joe—poor little Joe, to whom life had brought nothing but poverty and sickness. But at last, out of her great trouble, a plan occured to her, and she went to sleep quiet radiant with expectation.

A mile away, down in the "bottom" was a pecan grove, where the public where allowed free access. Afraid as she was of boys and negroes and tramps and even of bears, for her timid imagination filled the grove with savage animals: unaccustomed as she was to climbing, she yet went every day and managed to clamber awkwardly into trees and crawl out upon limbs and beat down the nuts ripened by the recent frost.

She had a hard time. A slip and a fall one day lamed her a little, and came near proving far more serious. Besides, the nuts on all the lower limbs had been pretty well shaken down, and she dared not climb very high. But she worked all the harder. There were two little stockings that must be filled for Christmas, and who else was there to fill them? Maggie set her teeth and beat away at the limbs as though her life depended on it. At the end of a week she took her stock of nuts up to one of the grocery stores, and trembling saw them poured into the scale and weighed. Seven pounds—thirty-five cents.

She clutched the money and went flying home as though her feet had wings. This was a famous beginning indeed! There were several more weeks to go on yet. Oh, the stockings should be filled! and perhaps she might get something nice for little Joe, maybe, and candy for the baby. She wrapped the precious coins in a bit of cloth and hid them in an old cigar box, away up on a high shelf.

All that day she went on tiptoe, and her eyes shone like stars. A hundred times she caught Joe and Susie up in her arms, hugging them tight and laughing for joy, though there were tears in her eyes. It was so delightful to picture Joe's face, when he should wake and see the little stocking stuffed full. She had made up her mind that whatever she brought, it must be something that would fill the stockings very full, indeed. At odd moments, when she could hide herself from the children, she busied herself mending the worn old stockings so that they would hold what was put into them.

And how she worked! The next week was cold and stormy, but that didn't matter. She couldn't afford to lose any time. A wind-storm one night blew down a great many nuts, and as she was there first the next morning she reaped quite a harvest. But then an evil fortune overtook her, for Joe's cough was worse, and she was forced to spend part of her money for medicine, and before the week was out she found it necessary to replenish their store of meat.

These reverses left her on Saturday night with only fifty cents in her little hoard as the result of two week's faithful work.

But Maggie was not discouraged. One more week remained. A wild anxiety took possession of her to get all the money possible and to bring such a Christmas into that little cabin as had never been dreamed of. If she could only get a dollar—a whole dollar!

She stole up to town once or twice and peeped in at the alluring windows where holiday goods were displayed and tried to pick out the things that she intended to buy. Five more days yet before Christmas. Three days, two days. The last nuts were taken in and sold, the money was put into the cigar box, and she was almost perfectly happy. She had eighty-five cents.

Her father came in late, and was sober and sure y. He complained bitterly of having come to a country that intended to starve him and his family, and so complaining he went to his rest, and there was silence in the little cabin.

Maggie thought that she would never get the work done the next morning and it seemed to her that her mother made excuses to keep her sweeping and scrubbing and bringing wood and water until it was nearly noon. But it was all done at last. In the fulness of her joy she got Joe and Susie both up and danced about the room with them a few times, and then, having made some excuse to get them out of the house, she climed upon a chair and took down the box that contained her treasure.

She noticed as soon as she touched it that it felt strangely light, but it did not occur to her, even then, that anything was wrong. But when she stepped down to the floor and opened the box and it utterly empty, a look of horror and alarm flashed into her face.

"Mother!" she cried piteously, "mother! my money's gone! Did you move it mother?"

"'Tain't no use a-cryin' for it Maggie," said her mother, in that old, dreary tone. "Your pa took in. He seen ye puttin' some up thar last week, an' when things got so bad with 'im this mornin', he jest took it. I tried to git 'im not to, but 'twain't no use a-talkin' to 'im."

Maggie had stood listening as though she only half comprehended what had befallen her. Her face was deathly pale and she was trembling.

"Mother," she said, hoarsely, after a little, "father didn't take my money, did he?—the money I've worked so hard for?—an' now it's to late too make any more, an' nothin' to put in poor Joe's stockin', after all?"

"He took it, Maggie; an' I reckon he's drunk enough on it by this time," replied her mother, bitterly.

Maggie put the box away and sat down The hardest heart that ever beat might have melted at the sight of the poor forlorn little face. She didn't cry—she was too utterly crushed.

After awhile the mother called to Joe, who was fumbling in a box:

"What are you after, Joe?"

The child came proudly forward with a hammer and two nails.

"Here, Mag," he said, "come an' drive these up for me. They're to hang our stockin's on. The one at this end o' the mantel-piece is mine an' the other one's Susie's. Drive 'em in stout, Mag, for the stockin's might be heavy."

"Joe," began Maggie tremblingly, "let's not hang up any stockin's. I don't believe there's anything in it. If they is any Santa Claus, he wouldn't come and see strangers like us—"

"Oh! yes he would," cried Joe, his dark eyes flashing. "If he's as good as they say, an' I know he is, we're the very folks he'll be sure to come an' see. An' if he comes, Maggie, an' wasn't to find any stockin's, then he'd be in a fix."

Maggie drove the nails in silence. Within the last two or three hours her face had grown pale and drawn, as it might have looked after a severe illness.

Later in the evening Joe demanded the stockings, and climbing upon a chair, hung them on the nails himself. Having done this, and stood back to admire the effect, he wanted to be put to bed.

"For if we go to bed early," he said, "maybe Santy Claus 'll come along here first, before he gives all his things away."

Maggie could not stand it. She seized the old shawl, flung it over her head and shoulders and fled out of the house, towards town.

Nobody noticed her—nobody. People with baskets and bundles hurried by her, or jostled against her, but none of them paid any attention.

She went slowly along and peeped in at the window where she had selected the little toys that were to have filled those empty stockings at home. Some of them were still there. A man was buying one of them as she paused, and was saying in a big, hearty voice:

"My little chap'd think the world was comin' to an end if he didn't get his stockin' full every Christmas."

Maggie wandered on, the loneliest, the most desolate creature in all the land. Presently she heard the sound of children's voices. It came from the basement of a fine residence. The basement was on a level with the sidewalk, and Maggie, pausing before the glass door, looked wistfully in. A Christmas tree, glittering with tiny wax candles and bright with tinsel ornaments, stood on a table in the center of the room. Four or five prettily dressed children were marching about it singing a Christmas song, and the table and chairs were strewn with the handsome and costly presents that they had received from the gift-laden tree.

It was just a moment—such things leave so little room for thought! One of the dancing children jarred the table a little and a tiny candle lost its hold on the branch and fell. It lodged among the filmy folds of a little girl's white apron and before she could move the blaze ran up and enfolded her in a dreadful embrace.

She stood still, screaming, and the other children ran here and there with wild shrieks. But, suddenly, some one came bursting in from the street, threw an old shawl about the struggling child and knelt there, holding her fast.

It was into her mother's arms that brave Maggie gave her!

"I don't think she's hurt," she said simply, and was about to go out on the sidewalk again, wholly unconscious of anything heroic in her action, when the child's father captured her and the mother threw her arms about her neck and kissed her pale face, her own eyes wet with grateful tears.

"Yes! yes! God bless you, my dear!" cried dignified Judge Barr, shaking hands with her for the hundredth time. "And you were standing on the sidewalk looking in? Thank God for that! Poor little, lonely girl. You'll never stand on the sidewalk again and watch my children play. You'll be right here in the house with them! Just to think how near it came! I wish I could do something for you right now—to-night. I can't wait until to-morrow!"

Then suddenly Maggie turned and stood before him, her hands clasped and her face full of passionate appeal.

"Oh!" she gasped, "could you fill two little stockin's?"

"Two? Twenty—fifty of 'em!—why, where did she go, wife?"

But Maggie was already half way home. She was not conscious of running—she flew. Such a look was in her face as she ran in and jerked down the two little stockings that her mother did not question her. Back again and into the basement where they still awaited her! She held up the poor, worn, mended stockings, one in each hand.

"Here they are," she panted. "Joe hung 'em up, his an' Susie's, an I never had nothin' to put in 'em!"

The judge was profoundly touched.

"Do you hear that, wife? Do you hear that?" he said. "I'm going home with this little girl to-night. You want to go along? I thought so. Fill these stockings up, dear, and send Sam in. I have some things that I want him to carry."

"Papa," whispered one of the children, "let Sam take our Christmas tree to little Joe. We don't need it any more."

"Well done, little man!" cried his father; and the tree was despoiled of its lights and carried carefully out by Sam.

Maggie went with the others like one in a dream. In a dream she saw the Christmas tree placed on the table at home, with all its candles and ornaments in position, ready to be lighted in the morning. In a dream she saw the stockings hung, each on its own nail, both of them nearly bursting with their load, and with the dearest little toys pinned all over them and even hanging to the toes. In a dream she saw bundles and baskets laid at her mother's feet.

When they had all gone away, too, it must have been in a dream that she heard her father coming home, steady and sober, for he came and put his arms around her, and said:

"Maggie, my girl, I'm sorry I have taken your money. I 'lowed to get on a drunk with it, but I couldn't do it, somehow, and walkin' roun', tryin' to fight it off, I hit on a job, deliverin' Christmas goods; an' I've been at work all day. What's more, I believe the job's a steady one. Here's yer money an' a dollar besides."

But oh, the next morning! There was no dream about that! When Joe opened his eyes and saw that beautiful Christmas tree, with all its branches laden with stars, and then turned and saw those bursting stockings—that was a sight worth seeing! For didn't he scream and clap his hands until he waked Susie, who added her shouts to his? And didn't he presently leap into Maggie's arms, crying:

"I knew it, Mag! I just knew he'd come! You thought he wouldn't, but I just knew he would!"

And Maggie, the child for whom no Santa Claus had ever come, laughed all the while the happy tears were raining down on the boy's eager face.

How She Bought A Horse.

She was an independent sort of a girl, recently in possession of quite a fortune, and she concluded that a horse was a necessity in her new establishment, so she sent for a dealer and talked with him. What she didn't know about horses would fill a livery stable, but she tried to make the dealer believe she was a judge and told him to bring her something to look at. The dealer came and she went out to pass judgment. She walked all around the animal critically, as professionals do.

"Is he well trained?" she inquired with the air of a jockey.

"Certainly, miss," replied the dealer. "She is well gaited and fine in harness."

"Um-um," said the girl. "Is she all right in the boots?"

"Yes, miss," gasped the dealer, "but you see I've only got shoes on her forefeet."

He said that because, really, he didn't know what else to say.

The girl laughed merrily.

"I noticed that, but you couldn't very well have them on her five feet, could you?" she gurgled.

"I mean, miss," stammered the dealer, "that she is shod only on the fore feet."

"I understand," she said seriously; "but that can be cured without any difficulty, can't it?"

"Very easily, indeed, miss," assented the dealer, with a great sense of relief.

"She seems to be all right in the fore shoulders, but her hind shoulders don't seem to be quite right," suggested the girl.

"There's nothing the matter with her there," asserted the dealer. "She is perfectly sound."

"There's no danger of her withers being spavined, is there?" she inquired, carefully. "I've seen horses like that, and they always make me nervous."

"No danger in the world, miss," the dealer assured her.

"How old is she?" inquired the girl.

By this time the dealer knew his man and was confident.

"Being a lady, miss," he smiled "I'd rather not tell her age."

"How considerate of you!" she said, earnestly. "I'll take her." And the dealer sent in a bill for $150, representing a net profit to him of $100.—*Detroit Free Press.*

How to Fascinate.

Doubtless thousands of young people and not a small number of old ones, wish every day of their lives that they could learn the secret of fascinating others by means of their graceful, exquisite manners. The secret is an open one. It is easy to learn that it lies all neglected by the wayside, while those who would give their dearest treasures to find it pass unknowingly.

It is only this: Fill your heart with good will to everybody, and then practice at all times the best manners you know, particularly at home. If you begin at home this charming manner will, so to speak, get settled on you and never leave you. Be just as polite to your sister as you would to your best girl. Strive to gain the good will of father, mother and brothers and sisters and children exactly as you strive to gain good will abroad.

There is no place for practicing manners like the home circle; no place permit one to say, where it is more appreciated. It will be a cultivation of heart, mind and body, this endeavor to feel nothing but affection for the people at home and treat them as though they were worthy of as much consideration at your hands as if they were the President of the United States and his family. So they are worthy. Then from the home will float out around you those sweet, magnetic influences which will draw the hearts of mankind toward you.

Light Rooms.

"I will get quite enough darkness when I move into my last home," said a bright, cheery housekeeper, as she threw open the shutter and left the southern sun into her sleeping room. "I think of all follies that a housekeeper can be guilty of, one of the worst is the darkening in of rooms and the habit of closing window-blinds. I think the superb health of my family is to a great extent chargeable to the habit that we have of almost living in the sunshine. Every bright day all of the shutters are thrown open, and the entire house gets the benefit of the sunlight. It drives away dampness and mould and microbes and blue-devils, and puts us all in good humor and good health. I cannot imagine good sanitary conditions and darkness. Even my cellar is as light as I can possibly make it, and whatever fruit and delicacies need to be shut away from the light I put into close cupboards or covered boxes. I have sheets of canvass that can be thrown over them before they are put away, and always take pains so to arrange my stores that nothing will be injured by an abundance of light.

"People who live in badly lighted apartments have little color and less health; and I for one do not intend to spend my days in an atmosphere of gloom. That is my greatest objection to living in a flat. It is almost always the case that some of the rooms are so dim and cheerless that they would give the best-dispositioned person the blues. I prefer a snug cottage, with any inconvenience which may attach to it, to stuffy, closed-in rooms where all of the light and air I get are, to some extent at least, second-handed.

Two Vauable Friends.

A physician cannot be always had. Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Sprains, Bruises and Burns occur often and sometimes when least expected. Keep handy the friend of many households and the destoyer of all pain, the famous Red Flag Oil, 25 cents.

Many a precious life could be saved that is being racked to death with that terrible cough. Secure a good night's rest by investing 25 cents for a bottle of Pan-Tina the great remedy for Coughs, Colds and Consumption.

Trial bottles of Pan-Tina free at G. W. Benford Drug Store.

Queer Finds.

London Answers is still collecting stories of queer finds. Here are several good ones:

For some time I was engaged in business in one of the principal watering-places in the south of England, and all through the summer I regularly took my morning bath.

One day a friend of mine, who was bathing with me, and who was a good swimmer, pointed out a dark object floating some way from the shore. He swam for it, and it proved to be a bottle, so tightly corked that no water had made its way inside.

Upon opening it we found it contained American dollars notes to the amount of $50.

DUCKS AND GOLD STUDS.

About 12 months ago a friend of mine, a farmer, had a most remarkable find.

He had a duck killed, and when the bird was being dressed, a gold stud was found embedde in the giz zard.

How it had come there was a mystery.

EMBEDDED IN CORAL.

Upon his return from Australia, my brother brought with him a large piece of coral, which he had himself broken off a coral reef.

It was put on a bracket as an ornament but one day it fell on the floor and broke in half.

Firmly embedded in the center was a whole stick of modern black lead pencil.

STUFFED RABBIT.

Some 10 years ago a gentleman living in London had a stuffed rabbit sent him by a friend in the North of England.

A short time afterward the skin of the rabbit was damaged by a fire and the gentleman was much astonished, when having removed a portion of the skin, half a sovereign dropped out.

A farther search resulted in a sum of over $50 in gold and silver being found secreted in the stuffing. No clue was ever obtained as to how the money got into its strange hiding place.

HIT ON A SMUGGLED STORE.

Some time ago a gentleman and myself speculated in the purchase of an hotel at Folkestone. We determined to have the dining-room re-papered, and on the old paper being scraped off found wood underneath, and one of the boards being taken down, we discovered that the whole room was lined with boxes of cigars.

The store had probably been smuggled, and lain there for a number of years. We sold $1000 worth and kept the remainder, which were splendid.

Maxims for the New Year.

I do not point out this fact to you that you shall this year be mournful. Make it the best year of all your life—the happiest, the brightest and the best. Imbue your heart with the freshness of the morning, your soul with the sparkle of the dawn. Resolve by good deeds and thoughts to make this the most triumphant year of your life. As a series of short maxims to carry with you through this year, let me give you these:

Make every day begin and end with God.

Be content with what you have.

Have a hearty, joyful family alter in your family circle.

Fill your home with as much good reading and bright music as your means will allow.

Think ill of none, but well of all.

If fortune favors you, think of others.

Don't sham; be real.

Keep busy and you will keep healthy.

Respect all sacred things.

Love God.—*Talmage, in Ladies' Home Journal.*

Sheridan's Ducks.

Sheridan, who was no sportsman, once went out on a shooting excursion. Everything flew before him and his gun and he got nothing. On his way home with an empty bag, he saw a man who looked like a farmer, staring over a gate at a flock of ducks in a pool.

"What will you take," said Sheridan, "for a shot at those ducks?"

The man looked at him in astonishment.

"Will half a crown do?"

The man nodded, and Sheridan gave him the half crown, taking his shot at the ducks. About a half a dozen fell dead. As he was preparing to bag them he said to the man: "I think, on the whole, I have a good bargain of you."

"Why," said the man, "they're not mine!"—*Chatterbox*

They All Keep Time.

An ingenious and apparently satisfactory method of making a number of clocks in the same building keep uniform time has recently been adopted in three large public edifices in Berlin. By this system the primary clock every hour starts an electric current, which opens a waterclock, allowing the water to flow through jets. In this manner the air in the tube of a ringing apparatus, of the secondary clocks is absorbed, each tube being closed by leather membrane. Upon rarefaction of the air, the membrane lifts a bar, and the clock is worked to the exact extent it has run down. There is a similar rarefaction in connection with the striking apparatus.

The laws of health are taught in the schools; but not in a way to be of much practical benefit and are never illustrated by living examples, which in many cases might easily be done. If some scholar who had just contracted a cold was brought before the school so that all could hear the dry, loud cough and know its significance; see the thin white coating on the tongue and later, as the cold developed, see the profuse watery expectoration and thin watery discharge from the nose, not one of them would ever forget what the first symptoms of a cold were. The scholar should then be given Chamberlain's Cough Remedy freely, that all might see that even a severe cold could be cured in one or two days, or at least greatly mitigated, when properly treated as soon as the first symptoms appear. This remedy is famous for its cures of coughs, colds and croup. It is made especially for these diseases and is the most prompt and most reliable medicine known for he purpose. 25 and 50 cent bottles for sale,

The chief secret of comfort lies in not suffering trifles to vex us and in cultivating our undergrowth of small pleasures.

Christmas Aphorisms.

Christmas has gradually evolved out of its theology and has come to stand for a festival of love. Therefore all men love it throughout the universe, love is born of love and is worshiped for its own sake.

No conscientious person can enjoy his Christmas dinner if he knows anybody else within reach to be hungry. The consciousness that we have given food to the needy provides us with the finest appetite.

Of late years Christmas has become far more a domestic and merrymaking holiday then a religious one. But it is religious in the best sense, since it is a day of peace and rest, and opens the hearts to human needs and human sympathies.

The most satisfactory way to observe Christmas is to do at least one good act to some of our fellows.

Christmas was formed, in the era of theology, for Christ and mass. In these practical and luxurious days it might signify that we should try to imitate Christ