

tention to the meal.

the man answered.

sullen features.

his head.

only reply.

mentor.

voice

open.

breakfast.

"I'm not fit-that is, 'er, I don't

"All right, I guess you want to eat,"

The man shook his head, but some-

"Well, I'll show you the pictures and

Donald slid along the table as near

to the man as the dishes would al-

low, "this one is about 'Blue Boy.' I'll

read 'bout him," and, in a chanting,

high-pitched voice, he repeated the

"Did you ever sleep under hay-

The man frowned slightly at the

childish query, bit his lip and nodded

rogator. "Did your mamma let you?"

The man's lower lip was pressed

cruelly by his teeth at this question.

but a surly shake of his head was his

"Oh, was you naughty and runned

scrubby beard and grime on the hag-

gard face, a dull red flush spread to

the roots of his shaggy, neglected hair.

for you?" continued the little tor-

"Didn't your mamma come to look

"She didn't know where I was," the

tramp answered, in a strange, muffled

"Then you hided from her!" ex-

The man was looking out of the

"I was naughty once and runned

away," Donald prattled on, "and when

my mamma found me she was just

awful glad, but she cried, too-wasn't

that funny? And she said mothers

was always glad when they got their

boys back, even when they was big

and runned awful far off, 'strayed into

the paths'-I forget just what that

part was, but she said I must always

"A DOOR OPENED."

'member any more, but I guess if you'd

The man cast one flerce look over

"Isn't you goin' to eat any more?"

chirped the little fellow, with awak-

ened hospitality, noticing that his

guest, sitting with his head on his

hand, seemed to have lost his appe-

tite. The child's voice roused him

from his thoughts, and, seeing that

Mary had paused in her work and was

humbly, "Can I have some coffee?"

watching him curiously, he asked

Meanwhile Donald was turning the

pages of his book. "Here's a funny

picture," he announced, pointing with

window now, forgetful of his good

claimed the child, with blue eyges wide

away?" the boy asked, slowly.

"Was it nice?" went on his inter-

mow?" he asked, suddenly, at the con-

rhyme of "Little Boy Blue."

clusion of his recitation.

know Mother Goose, don't you?"

know how to talk to such a little kid,"

demanded.

One star burned low within the darkened And from a stable door an answering And from a stable door an answering light
Crept faintly forth, where through full hours of night
A woman watched. The sounds of day had ceased,
And save the gentle tread of restless beast
There dwelt a hush profound. The mother's sight—
So holden by her Babe took no affright When shadows of the beams, that caught the least
Of light, seemed shapened to a lengthening cross;
She only saw a crown made by a fleece
Of golden hair. Naught presaged pain or loss loss— To her, the pivot of the swinging sphere Lay sheltered in her arms so warm and

near; A mother's heart proclaimed Him "Prince of Peace!" -Edna A. Foster.

was such an unkempt, sad looking creature when he presented himself at the back door that Christmas Had Mary been an observing girl, morning asking for she would have seen, under the something to eat that Mary was more than half inclined to disobey the rule of the

Tracy household, which stood good at all seasons of the year as well as at Yuletide, and refuse his request. Before she could do so, however, Mrs. Tracy herself came into the kitchen, and, with scant show of hospitality. Mary allowed the tramp to enter.

She had always secretly grumbled because Mrs. Tracy would allow no one to be turned away hungry, and today there was no excuse, for the famly had just finished breakfast and there was plenty of food left to give the man a substantial meal.

"Goin' to come and rob the house to-night, like's -not," was Mary's inward comment as she put the coffee pot on the stove, and she watched the man narrowly to see if he were making a mental plan of the house, but her suspected burglar did not once look up from the floor as he sat nervously twirling his hat. "He's young and able to work."

Mary soliloguized, as she bustled to and fro putting eatables on one end of the kitchen table. "Might be tolerable good lookin', too, if he was shaved and dressed up-and-washed." "There!" she snapped, setting a cup of coffee down on the table with as much force as she could without spilling its contents. "Your vitual's set."

The man, scarcely raising his eyes, dropped his hat and hitched his chair near the table.

Just as he eagerly clutched the cup of fragrant coffee, a door opened, a pair of merry blue eyes peered into the kitchen and a shrill little voice piped out, "Hello, man, merry Christmas!"

The "man" started, shifted uneasily go back to your mamma she'd forget in his chair, but made no reply. Unthe naughty and be glad. Do you daunted by his chilling reception, the think she'd cry?" door was burst open, and a goldenhaired little boy burst into the room. his shabby person. "Cry!" he exclaimed, bitterly. "Oh——" he stew With the unquestioning confidence of childhood, he walked up to the his breath hard between his teeth as stranger and said gravely, "I said merry Christmas." the sight of the baby face choked back the oath that nearly escaped him.

"Run into the other room, Donald," Mary put in hastily.

The man shot a half-defiant glance at her, but did not look at the child. "I don't want to," the little fellow replied. "He's company, and mamma said I could 'tain him. I bringed the

new Mother Doose book dat I dot from Santa Claus to show he," and, pushing a chair close to the table, from it be mounted the end of the table opposite the man, and sat there like a sweet, rosy cherub observing some

dark spirit. \* famished, paused just long enough to dreadful naughty boy. I'll read 'bout wares.

know." he commented, gravely.

him," and, in a very solemn and impressive tone, he repeated the tale of

Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son." "It's dreadful bad to steal, you mamms says so, and, of course, she knows-mammas know most everything, don't they? Once-what do you think?-I stole! I didn't steal a pig like Tom, but I stole some little cakes, and my mamma talked to me a long time, and she told me so many things so I'd grow to be a good man. Did your mamma want you to be a good man,

The man choked on a hasty cup of coffee, but made no reply. Donald did not seem to expect one, but chatted on. "I was 'fraid my mamma did not love me any more when I stole those cakes, 'cause she looked so sorry, but," with a happy little laugh, "seemed like she loved me more'n ever after. But I don't want to see her look sorry like that again. Did you ever make your mamma look sorry-out of her eyes, you know?"

A smothered groan from stranger and, with a child's intuition of "something wrong," Donald sought to cheer and console, and said, reassuringly, "Well, you just go an' tell her you're sorry an' see if she don't be glad and love you. I most know she will."

The man had ceased eating and sat motionless with his head bowed on his breast until Mary approached and curtly asked if he were "done eatin'." "Yes," he answered absently, and,

looking wistfully at the child, he reached for his hat. "Is you goin' to see your mamma?"

questioned Donald, eagerly, "Yes, my little man," came the answer, in a clear, ringing voice that look wonderingly at his strange little made Mary jump and drop a basin,

"That's just where I am going. But companion, and then gave his full atfirst, tell me your name." "Don't you want to talk?" Donald "I'm little Donald Robert Tracy, and

my papa's big Donald Robert!" "Good-by, little preacher. You're the best one I've ever heard," and just brushing the golden head with his lips, the tramp passed out of the the child observed, graciously. "I guess I'll read to you," opening the door and went down the street, not with the slouching, hang-dog air with book he was holding in his arms, "You which he had approached the house, but with head erect and shoulders squared, he swung along with long, thing like a smile flitted across his easy strides.

"Of all the ungrateful wretches!" exclaimed Mary, angrily, to Mrs. read you 'bout 'em. This one," and Tracy, who had slipped in through the half-open door. "He never even said 'thank you.' " Her mistress did not seem to hear, but, with shining eyes, gathered her little son up in her arms, and, as she pressed him closely to her, she whispered brokenly, "And a little child shall lead them."

> A year passed, and little Donald's taining" the tramp was forgotten

. . . .



KNOW MOTHER GOOSE DON'T YOU?"

by all save Mrs. Tracy. She often wondered what fruit the good seed sown by the innocent child last Christmas morning had borne. That he had been God's chosen instrument for working out some great end, her gentle heart never doubted.

It was, therefore, a great pleasure and satisfaction to her to receive a long letter from the "man." It was written from his home in a far eastern city, and told, in a simple, straightforward manner, the story of his downcome back to her-an'-an'-I don't fall and how, moved by Donald's childish prattle, he had worked his way back home, resolved to begin life anew; how kind friends had helped him and encouraged him, and how he was doing well at his old trade of bookbinding.

"I was going from bad to worse," the letter ran, "and nothing is easier for a young fellow to do, and the road down to being a 'common tramp' is a short one when one gets started. When I came to your house that Christmas morning I was bitter, hard and desperate. No one living could have touched my heart as did that little blue-eyed boy. His little sermon, with its text taken from 'Mother Goose,' snatched this poor brand from the burning. Tell the little chap that I found my mamma, and she was glad as he said."

Accompanying the letter was a package of Christmas gifts, addressed to Donald. Among other things it contained a book-a copy of "Mother Goose" exactly like the one from which he had "read" to the man to 'tain him," exquisitely bound in white vellum. On the cover in gold letters was Donald's name, and below it, "From his grateful Blue Boy, Christmas-189-



In England children hang their stockings at the foot of their beds. In America the whole family suspend their stockings from the mantelpiece of the sitting room, to save Santa Claus the trouble of ascending the stairs and The tramp, who seemed almost his fat little finger, "but it's 'bout a entering each room to distribute his





And Robert's self was on my lap, his lips were at my ear—
"A dreadful, dreadful story—" a sudden, awful pause-"Somebody said the other day there aint no Santa Claus.

"Would you believe it, auntie? They said 'twas all a trick
About the tiny reindeer and the visits of Saint Nick,
That all the chimneys were too small, the stoves were all too hot,
And lots of just such stuff as that, I can't remember what.

"They said that years and years ago, with fire-places wide.

And all the doors upon the latch in all the countryside.

Both old and young for myths and dreams had quite a pretty passion, But now belief in Santa Claus had all gone out of fashion.

"And when I cried that I could prove 'twas all a wicked lie.
They only shrugged their shoulders and said I'd better try;
I never will believe it, I know it can't For if I've never seen him, say, auntie, haven't you?"

in my dreams,
Though when I wake I only see the cold,
white, still moonbeams;
Dozing I often think I hear the sound
of horn and hoof,
And waking find the elm-tree boughs a
tapping on the roof. uestioner, quite often

But I have other reasons than those plain to eye and ear For trusting in the story that we hold so true and dear; I never shall outgrow it, nor lose my The world will never get beyond a need of Santa Claus.

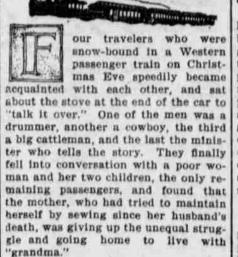
-Youths' Companion.

## THE DAY OF DAYS.

A thousand years have come and gone,
And near a thousand more,
Since happier light from heaven shone
Than ever shone before;
And in the hearts of old and young
A joy most joyful stirred,
That sent such news from tongue to

As ears had never heard.

And we are glad, and we will sing.
As in the days of yore:
Come all, and hearts made ready bring.
To welcome back once more
The day when first on wintry earth
A summer change began,
And dawning on a lonely birth,
Uprose the Light of man.
—T. T. Lynch.



The little threadbare children had been promised a Joyous Christmas there, and when they found that the plockade would prevent their getting farther, for the present, they cried pitterly until sleep quieted them. Just pefore they dropped off the drummer remarked:

"Say, parson, we've got to give these thildren some Christmas."

"That's what!" said the cowboy. "I'm agreed," added the cattleman. The children were told to hang up their stockings.

"We ain't got none," quavered the dttle girl, "'ceptin' those we've got

on, and ma says it's too cold to take 'em off." "I've got two pairs of new woolen

socks," said the cattleman, eagerly. "I ain't never wore 'em, and you're welcome to 'em." The children clapped their hands,

but their faces fell when the elder remarked:

"But Santa Claus will know they're not our stockings. He'll put in all the things for you."

"Lord love you!" roared the burly cattleman. "He won't bring me nothin'. One of us'll sit up, anyhow, and tell him it's for you,"

Then the children knelt down on the floor of the car beside their improvised beds. Instinctively the hands of the men went to their heads, and at the first words of "Now I lay me," hats were off. The cowboy stood twirling his hat,

and looking at the little kneeling figures. The cattleman's vision seemed dimmed, while in the eyes of the traveling man shone a distant look-a look across snow-filled prairies to a warmly lighted home. The children were soon asleep. Then arose the question of presents.

"It don't seem to me I've got any-



"NOW I LAY ME-"

thing to give 'em," said the cowboy, mournfully, "unless the little kid might like my spurs. I'd give my gun to the little girl, though on general principles I don't like to give up a

"Never mind, boys," said the drummer, "you come along with me to the baggage car."

So off they trooped. He opened his trunks and spread before them such an array of trash and trinkets as took away their breath.

"There," said he, "just pick out the best things and I'll donate the lot!" "No, you don't!" said the cowboy. 'I'm going to buy what I want and pay for it, too, or else there ain't goin' to be no Christmas round here."

"That's my judgment, too," said the cattleman, and the minister agreed. So they sat down to their task of selection. They spent hours over it in breathless interest, and when their gifts were ready there arose the question of a Christmas tree. It had stopped snowing, and tramping out into the moonlit night, they cut down a great piece of sage-brush. The mother adorned it with tinsel paper and the gifts were prettily disposed. Christmas dawned for two of the happiest children under the sun, and a happy mother, too, for inside the big plush album selected for her the cattleman had slipped a hundred-dollar bill.

After Christmas,

As a general thing affectionate fathers and mothers rejoice in the happiness of their children, but the rule has its exceptions.

"Is Mr. Smart at all given to drink?" inquired a merchant, anxiously, of his confidential clerk.

"No, indeed!" was the decided answer. "He never touches a drop. But what put such a suspicion into your mind?"

"Why, I noticed that he has been two hours late for the last three mornings, and he looks for all the world as if he had been on a regular spree."

"Oh, that's all right," said the clerk. "He gave his boy a drum for Christmas."

## CANDY FOR THE

gift of a fancy bedecked box of candies is at all times a most welcome gift, and as bonbon candles are very expensive to purchase in large quantities and are so easily made, a few recipes for Christmas goodles may be useful to our readers. Years ago people believed that candy was harmful, but that notion was set aside; and it is declared really beneficial-of course, when eaten at the proper time, in proper quantities and made of pure materials. Home-made candies are always pure, the best materials are used and the cost is much less than is paid for the same grade in the stores. It is a nice plan to make your own Christmas candies, and you can send boxes away to your friends who will prize things made for them much more than anything bought.

To send candles away they should be made to look as dainty and pretty as possible. Fancy baskets can be cheaply bought that will be pretty after the candy is used, and lined with waxed paper over a fringed inner lining or some delicate colored tissue paper. In packing place waxed paper between the layers, and when the basket is filled wrap the edges of the lining paper over the top so that the candles are covered, then gather the fringed tissue paper into a rosette,

and tie with baby ribbon. In making peanut candy, to every half pint of shelled and blanched peanuts use one cupful each of molasses or sugar. Boil together until the mixture is brittle when dropped into cold water; then stir in the half pint of peanuts before taking from the fire. Pour into buttered pans and mark off into squares or lengths before it cools. Hickory nuts, English walnuts or almonds may be used in place of peanuts.

To blanch nuts is to remove the fine skin which covers the nut under the shell. This will easily rub off in peanuts, but other nuts require different treatment. After removing the shell cover the nuts with boiling water, and let them stand until the dark skin will easily rub off, then put them into cold water. Dry between towels.

doubt if any class of men in the world appreciate their holidays so fully as the jackies, writes a retired naval officer. The life on board a warship is at best very confined and necessarily strict and severe. There is the suggestion of a prison in the steel walls and narrow quarters and the regularity of the hours and meals. The life of the jackies is made up almost entirely of work with very little play. We learn to enjoy our Christmases the more when at last they come round. On Christmas, for once in the year at least, all rules, of which there are so many on board a battleship, are thrown to the winds and the jackies are given the entire freedom of the ship. The order which is usually given them is that they can spend the day exactly as they like, and take any liberties they choose short of blowing up the ship.

It sometimes happens when the ship is in some attractive port that the satiors prefer to spend the day on land, and they are of course always granted leave of absence. It is seldom, however, that the ship is so deserted that the cabins are not for the time converted into a veritable pandemonium. There is no formal celebration of the day ordered by the government. The sailors are simply given their liberty and they do the rest. If a chaplain chances to be on board the day is opened with some simple religious services and there the jurisdiction of the captain may be said to

Thoughtful Santa-

end.

Kind old Santa Claus! He brings something even to the bad little boys who go fishing on Sunday .- Puck.