



### The Santa Claus Line

There's a mystical route to the far North Pole  
Where Santa Claus holds full sway;  
And a smile or a kiss is the only toll  
On letters that go that way.  
The old folks are barred from this postal line,  
And only the children know  
The secret, mystical, wonderful sign  
That hurries their letters so.

### The Wonderful Route of the Dancing Flame

Is the name the swift line bears.  
Twas Santa who gave it the beautiful name,  
And children hold all the shares.  
Their letters are written with many a quirk  
And dropped in the red flames bright.  
Then, quicker than thought, they do the work  
And hurry them out of sight.

### And Santa, who sits by the far North Pole,

Surrounded by oodles of toys,  
Laughs loud in his glee when the letters roll  
By millions from girls and boys.  
Each stamp is a kiss from the sweetest of lips,  
And Santa is wondrous wise;  
For each from the letter he quickly clips  
And holds as a precious prize.

### The Wonderful Route of the Dancing Flame

Is laden with childish dreams;  
And visions of joy and hours of play  
Are born in the firelight's gleams.  
A wonderful route—and the letters fly  
On wings that are tipped with light;  
And each dimpling cheek and each shining eye  
Insures them the quickest flight.

### One Christmas Eve

One Christmas eve more years ago than some of us like to recall, a dozen traveling men and two or three newspaper men found themselves snow-bound in a little Kansas town on the Central Branch. It had been snowing for several days, and the traveling men were mad as hornets because every hour saw their chances growing slimmer for getting to their homes in St. Joseph or Kansas City in time for Christmas.

About 4 o'clock on the day before Christmas the "stub train" jolted through the drifts and stopped at the depot, and there the engine died a peaceful death. It would be both impossible and impolite to print even a tithe of what those traveling men and newspaper men said as they waded through the drifts from the little depot to the only hotel the town boasted. But they felt better after throwing out before the generous fire in the hotel office, and after a supper that would tickle the palate of an epicure the crowd was really goodnatured and reasonably happy.

Billy Johnson, who represented a St. Joseph flouring mill, and who was better known as "Discuit" Johnson, lit a cigar, tilted back in his chair, and then remarked:

"I move that the first man who says a word about home tonight be fined the cigars for the crowd."

The suggestion met instant favor, and for an hour nothing but politics and business entered into the conversation. Suddenly Billy Brooks yawned and said:

"If there's any Christmas doings in

town tonight I move we all go down in a body."

That suggestion, too, met with favor, and Ed Allen was deputized to make inquiries. In a few minutes he returned and reported:

"Only one church in town, and it is going to have a Christmas tree."

Then the travellers bundled up, inquired as to the direction, and waded through the drifts until they came to the church. It was early, so the strangers found seats together in the rear of the building, and waited for the exercises to begin.

There were some good singers in the party, and they sang lustily when the familiar old hymns were announced. "Antioch," "Coronation," "Ring the Joy Bells" and other songs were sung with a will, and then the presents on the dwarfed little Christmas tree were handed out to the expectant children. At the conclusion of the gift distribution the pastor arose and made a little talk. He spoke about the poor of the little village and the surrounding country, and made an appeal for a liberal contribution. It was in the early days of Kansas, and there were no rich people there then. Most of those present were poor homesteaders, but they were willing to do all they could for their poorer neighbors. So when the collection plates started everybody chipped in something. But when the collectors struck that bunch of snowbound traveling men and newspaper workers there was something doing.

Tom Utt was the first man, and he dropped in two silver dollars. They rattled against the plate like a skylight hit with a hammer. The next man was game and dropped in two more. And the next and the next. Johnnie Longnacker couldn't find two silver dollars, so he dropped in a handful of small change that sounded like a charge of shot against a boiler. By the time the collector had passed around that bunch of jolly good fellows he had to use both hands to hold the plate and everybody was craning their necks to see what was going on.

When the plates were returned to the front the good pastor took one look, and then raising his hands for the congregation to stand, he uttered a prayer for the strangers within the gates that more than one man has cherished in his memory for nearly a quarter of a century.

When the boys reached the little hotel after the Christmas celebration they were feeling fine, and they sat around the stove until the first gray dawn of the Christmas morning, but they did not enforce the proposed fine on stories about home, for every man had one or more to tell.

### The Philanthropic Employer

A delegation representing the employes of the Great Philanthropist called at the office.

"What can I do for you?" he queried.  
"Our wives and children suffer from hunger because our wage is so low," said the spokesman.

"Well, I can not raise wages. I have just given \$50,000 to the persecuted of Russia."

"And we are freezing because we can not buy sufficient fuel."

"That is none of my affair. I can get plenty of men to take your places at the same wage, and I am compelled to practice economy in order to make my annual contributions to charity."

"Our children are growing up in ignorance because we are forced to

put them into the mills as soon as they are able to work."

"I can not help that. I am giving millions annually to universities to further the cause of education."

"We are compelled to live in comfortable shacks."

"But I can not help that. I am busy building libraries and hospitals."

"You make huge profits from our toil, and we ask only a little fairer division."

"I give you all I can. My expenses are much higher than yours."

Having nothing further to offer the delegation withdrew, and the Great Philanthropist ordered a 10 per cent reduction in wages in order to recoup himself for his latest contribution to the prosperity campaign fund.

### He's Coming Soon

I've known some mean men in my time—

For instance, one who tried  
To skin a flea because he heard  
Some one would buy the hide.

Another gave his son a dime  
To skip each evening meal,  
And when the boy had gone to bed  
The dime would slyly steal.

And once I knew a man who dined

Each day down town in state,  
And then at eve go home and kick  
On what his family ate.

Another stopped the clock at night  
To save wear on the wheels;  
And one would walk upon tiptoes  
To save wear on his heels.

The world is full of men so mean  
That they would rather see  
A lot of children shedding tears  
Than see them laugh with glee.  
Such men but cumber up the earth  
And fill life full of woe;  
But think they are engaged in good  
When they are acting so.

But of mean men defend me from  
The sordid, selfish one  
Who would deprive the little folk  
Of all their Christmas fun.  
The very meanest of them all—  
The meanest ever was—  
Are those who are so mean they say  
There is no Santa Claus.

Of course there is a Santa Claus!  
We've seen him lots of times.  
The jolly fellow comes each year  
And down the chimney climbs.  
We've seen his reindeers prance and run;  
We've heard his sleighbells chime.  
No Santa Claus! Just wait and see—  
He'll be here Christmas time!

### Seasonable

"Gracious, Scribbler, you've got it hot in here."

"Have to have it hot. Hand me that coal bucket while I feed this fire a little."

"But it's hot enough to roast an ox in here now."

"I know it; but it isn't half hot enough for my business."

"What on earth are you doing?"

"Writing a Fourth of July poem for a magazine. I had to sit on a cake of ice last summer to write my Christmas poem."

### Forehanded

"I've got to have some new stockings, papa," remarked Little Willie.

"All right, my son; I'll bring you some this evening."

"And, say, papa; I wear two or three sizes bigger'n I did last Christmas."

### Suspicious

The lynx-eyed sleuth shadowed his man for several hours, and the head sleuth finally asked:

"Why do you follow that man? There is no charge against him."

"O, I know it," replied the lynx-

eyed. "But his line of talk sounds suspicious."

"How's that?"

"I heard him talking about 'national honor' and 'civic virtue' a few hours ago."

### Brain Leaks

Hypocrites deceive themselves most.  
He who gives joy gives more than money.

Some men reach for fame with soiled hands.

Policy honesty is the rankest form of dishonesty.

Some people imagine that sin is only dishonesty exposed.

The man who misses an opportunity to enjoy a healthy laugh misses much.

The church member who must always be conciliated never amounts to much.

Every now and then we see a man so tired of resting that he is unable to work.

Men are prone to spend a lot of time designing mansard roofs of hope for unfinished foundations of deeds.

It is the man who is always talking about his rights who is generally trying to infringe upon the rights of others.

### NEEDED THE MONEY

When a now famous specialist began the practice of medicine as a young man he numbered among his first patients a certain Mr. Darlie, of Woonsocket, R. I. For a time the young physician treated his patient successfully for a very painful tumor on the neck.

One day the doctor called to inquire after his patient's progress. Although assured that the latter was enjoying good health he had never known before, he at once assumed an air of the greatest concern and advised a speedy operation.

"But," said the astonished convalescent in broadest Scotch, "Dinna ye tell me yourself an operation wasna necessary! I'm feelin' better than I ha'e twa year gone, an' wha, d'ye want to cut me noo fur?"

The physician hesitated a moment, then resumed, embarrassedly: "Well, you see, my good man, I need the money."

"Oh," said the patient, much relieved, "if it's the siller ye're after, a' right. I was afeared ye war ower-anxious for the experience."—Boston Herald.

## Maupin Thinks

That his book would make an excellent Christmas gift for husband, wife, son, daughter, sister, brother, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, sweetheart or friend. It is a book of 250 pages, cloth bound, gold ruled cover, fine paper, and contains the best of Mr. Maupin's poems, sketches, stories and Fables in Rhyme.

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