

CHRISTMAS BELLS.



HURRAH FOR THE HOLIDAYS.

Santa Claus and the Mouse.

One Christmas Eve, when Santa Claus
Came to a certain house,
To fill the children's stockings there,
He found a little mouse.

"A merry Christmas, little friend,"
Said Santa, good and kind,
"The same to you, sir," said the mouse,
"I thought you wouldn't mind."

"If I should stay awake to-night
And watch you for awhile,"
"You're very welcome, little mouse,"
Said Santa, with a smile.

And then he filled the stockings up
Before the mouse could wink—
From toe to top, from top to toe,
There wasn't left a chink.

"Now they won't hold another thing,"
Said Santa Claus, with pride,
A twinkle came in mouse's eyes,
But humbly he replied:

"It's not polite to contradict,
Your pardon I implore,
But in the fullest stocking there
I could put one thing more."

"Oh, ho!" laughed Santa. "Silly mouse!
Don't I know how to pack?
By filling stockings all these years
I should have learned that knack."

And then he took the stocking down
From where it hung so high,
And said: "Now put in one thing more;
I give you leave to try."

The mouse chuckled to himself
And then he softly stole
Right to the stocking's crowded toe
And gnawed a little hole.

"Now, if you please, good Santa Claus,
I've put in one thing more,
For you will own that little hole
Was not in there before."

How Santa Claus did laugh and laugh
And then he gravely spoke:
"Well! you shall have a Christmas cheese
For that nice little joke!"

"What did you get in your stocking?"
asked one Chicago girl of another.
"Nothing." "Why, how was that?"
"Oh, I suppose it's on account of those
horrid newspaper men making so much
fun of my darling little nose. Santa
Claus must have been scared away."



ARRANGING THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

The Christmas Stocking.

"Dear Santa Claus," wrote
little Will in letters truly
shocking, "I've been a good
boy, so please fill a heapen
up this stocking. I want
a drum to make pa sick,
and drive my mamma crazy.
I want a doggie I can
kick so he will not get
lazy. I want a powder
gun to shoot right at my
sister Annie, and a big
trumpet I can toot just
awful loud at granny. I
want a drefle big false
face to scare in fits our
baby. I want a pony I can
race around the parlor,
maybe. I want a little
hatchet, too, so I can do
some chopping upon our
grand piano new when
mamma goes a shopping.
I want a nice hard rub-
ber ball to smash all
into finders the
great big mirror
in the hall an'
lots and lots o'
winders. An'
candy that will
make me sick
so ma all
night will hold
me an' make pa
get the doctor
quick an' never
try to scold me; an'
Santa Claus, if pa says
I am naughty it's a
story. Jus' say if he
whips me I'll die and
go to kingdom
glory."

A frost-fanned air and a steel-blue sky;
A tolling bell in the church tower high;
'Tis the hour of parting for you and I,
Old year, dear 'ave, good-by,
Good-by, old year, good-by!

A peal of bells and a rosy dawn;
White clouds low drifting when night has
gone down;
A guest has come, though a guest has gone,
Hail! sweet, my love alone,
New Year, all hail dear love, my own!

MALACHI BIGSBY'S REFORM.

Malachi Bigsby was very bad indeed,
and the more he thought about the
matter, the more surely was he con-
vinced of the fact. It was easy enough
to prove it. He was a little colored
boy who went to school in Florida.
There was a rule in that school that
every time one of them was naughty a
mark should be put on his card; when
five marks were there, a round black
zero was added, and when three of
these zeros, which meant fifteen sins,
were on the card, the ooy or girl was
sent home, and not allowed to return
to school for a whole week.

Thinking about it this morning, it
seemed to Malachi that the cause of
his getting so many marks was that
he did not begin to "look out" soon
enough. So he resolved that he would
turn over a new leaf with the new
year.

Just as he made this resolution
Malachi looked up at the big live-oak
which grew by the road-side, and re-
membered that he had heard the song
of an oriole from that tree before.

"Speets yer got yer nest thar," he
shouted, and without delay Malachi
clambered up the trunk. He looked
carefully among the branches, and at
last he found the nest. He looked at
it with great satisfaction, but did not
take it away, because he felt that it
was safer there than in the crown of
his hat, which was his only pocket.

He came down from the tree, and
very soon caught up with the dozen or
two Slabtown boys, who were slowly
walking toward school.

Malachi winked in a wise way to
Ananias Loomis, who soon dropped
out of the ranks, and the two fell a
little distance behind the rest.

"What cher got?" said Ananias.
"Oh, nuthin'—nuthin' exactly," an-
swered Malachi, mysteriously. "I
reckon thar's a right smart oriole's
nest up some o' these trees, an' I
thought ser'd like ter know."

"Whar? whar?" cried Ananias,
eagerly; "I'll swap yer my bottle of
water with a hole in the cork, that has
ter be filled twicet every day."

"Huh!" said Malachi, scornfully.
"Mammy 'd give me ez many bottles
ez I'd carry fur nuthin'. I was er
thinkin' about yer knife that teacher
give back ter yer last week. But I
recollect the aige ain't oversharp.
Miss Bright she don't like us ter steal
birds' nests; says its mean. I reckon
so mysef. And Adams is gettin' a
c'lection of nests. 'Speeks I'll speak
ter him at recess; but I'll think about
the knife and bottle tergether," and he
would say no more.

But a strange thing happened in the
Lincoln school that day. Instead of
going out-of-doors at recess, they all
marched into the big assembly-room,
where, on the platform, stood an en-
ormous chimney and fire-place.

Miss Bright was there, and a lot of
other white folks, all smiling in a very
queer manner. The children sang two
or three songs about "The whale did
swallow Jonah whole" and "Gabriel
blowing his trump, trump, trumpet;"
then Miss Bright took out a little book
and began to read.

"'Twas the night before Christmas."

She stopped after a line or two, and
said: "You must watch, children, for
I think Santa Claus will come pretty
soon."

They all knew about Santa Claus,
and had hung up their stockings Christ-
mas-eve. Nearly every one had found
"nigger-toes" and "Jackson balls" in
those same stockings Christmas morn-
ing.

But she was a long time reading the
story, and they listened so hard in
order not to lose a word, and looked
so intently at the chimney for fear
Santa Claus should whisk by before
they saw him, that their three hun-
dred little hearts nearly stopped beat-
ing. Then,

"Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with
a bound,"
read Miss Bright; and down he came,
fur-coated, white-haired, red-nosed,
pipe in his mouth and pack on his
back.

For one awful second the children
were too frightened to stir; then, like
a great wave, the whole mass surged
back toward the door, crying and
trembling, the big ones falling over the
little ones in a genuine panic.

Ahead of them all Malachi Bigsby
sprung out of the door, and above all
their voices rose his terrified scream:
"It's me he's come fer! I knowed I
was wicked!"

The familiar bell soon calmed the
children so that they would look at
Santa Claus from a respectful distance,
and when he pulled off his beard, and
they recognized a well-known face,
they were glad to take the candy from
his pack and the presents from his
hands—clothes, books and dolls—
which the kind children in the north
had sent.

All but poor Malachi. No amount
of persuading could coax him inside
the door. Miss Bright brought his
presents to him—a bag of candy, some
trousers, almost whole and with
two pockets, and best of all, a red
Tam O'Shanter, which she had added
especially to soothe him. He would
only say, "I knows I's dreadful wicked,
teacher, an' I ain't ter goin' near him."

When they walked home after school
Ananias said, "Yer needn't say nuthin'
ter Ad about that nest; I'll give yer
the knife an' bottle."

"No, yer don't," responded Malachi,
with dignity. "I ain't ter goin' ter tell



REMEMBERING THE POOR.

yer whar that nest are. I 'speets I
shan't never steal nests no more."
"Fraid cat!" sneered Ananias,
tauntingly. "I warn't scared at all,
quick ez I see the p'int, and that he
warn't no real Santa Claus, but just
Pete Blackman rigged up."

"Huh!" made answer Malachi, "yer
warn't fur behind me racing fer the
door. I warn't too scared ter see
that. And I ain't ter goin' ter tell yer
whar that nest are, and I'm goin' ter
bring lookin' soon's I get five marks
on my card after this."

Ananias, who never "looked out"
until he had thirteen marks, was too
astonished to do more than stare at
Malachi, who had turned his corner
and was walking slowly down the
road.

A Time of Rejoicing.

"The happy Christmas comes once more,
The heavenly guest is at the door;
The blessed words the shepherds thrill,
The joyous tidings—Peace, good will!
The belfries of all Christendom
Now roll along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good will to men."
With gentle deeds and kindly thoughts,
And loving words withal,
Welcome the merry Christmas in,
And hear a brother's call."

THE WORK BASKET.

DAINTY LITTLE SWEEPING CAPS
are made out of silk handkerchiefs
gathered to fit the head, the four
points being brought back to the top
of the head and held by a bow of rib-
bon.

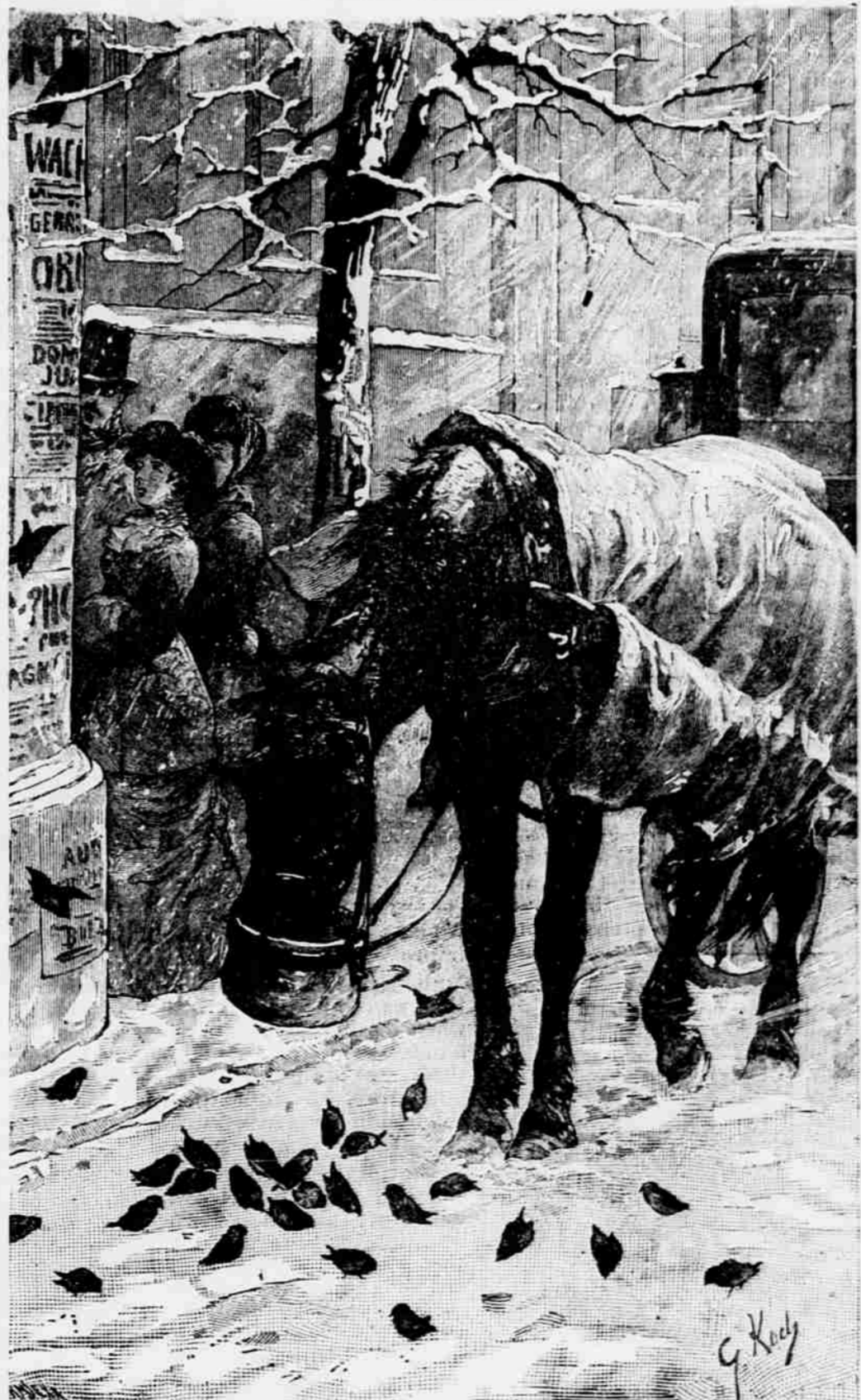
SHADES FOR GAS GLOBES.

Some of the prettiest shades for gas
globes are made out of pale pink gauze
put plainly on the globe, first being
doubled two or three times. The edge
about both sides is gathered and then
drawn down tightly and tied. Trans-
parent birds and flowers may be glued
on the gauze, but the plain pink looks
best.

FEATHER ORNAMENTS.

For fancy work we find peacock
feathers among the favored decora-
tions. They are used on panels, lam-
brequins, table scarfs, etc., and are
applied with very artistic results.

PRETTY SMALL SCREENS FOR TABLES
have panels of cream silk, with a
wreath of flowers done in colored silks
on one side and a moonlight scene
painted on the other side.



A WINTER SCENE.