

LITTLE BUSY BEES AT THEIR OWN PAGE

MERRY CHRISTMAS to all the Busy Bees! Now that you have all looked into your stockings and know just what Santa has brought you, and have time to sit down and take a long breath and think about it all, "Merry Christmas to all the Busy Bees!"

Because the year is so arranged, Christmas is no sooner here than it is time to think of New Year's and to plan for the new year. In your stories this week, therefore, tell us, Busy Bees, how one should plan for the new year.

Two Christmas stories win the prizes this week. The stories are different in every respect. One tells of the first Christmas, and tells it in simple, direct style. The other tells of a modern Christmas incident. Thyra Buchanan of Silver Creek and Fay Calhoun of Elm Creek are the prize winners.

Any of the Busy Bees may send cards to anyone whose name is on the Postcard Exchange, which now includes:

- Jean De Long, Alnsworth, Neb.
- Irene McCoy, Harrison, Neb.
- Lillian Merwin, Beaver City, Neb.
- Mabel Witt, Bennington, Neb.
- Ana Gottsch, Bennington, Neb.
- Minnie Gotsch, Bennington, Neb.
- Agnes Dampke, Bennington, Neb.
- Marie Gansinger, Bennington, Neb.
- Joe May, Central City, Neb. (Box 12)
- Vera Cheney, Orlingburg, Neb.
- Louis Hann, David City, Neb.
- Essie Fritsch, Fremont, Neb.
- Aida Bennett, Elgin, Neb.
- Eunice Bode, Fair City, Neb.
- Minie Reed, Fremont, Neb.
- Luella Lundberg, Fremont, Neb.
- Marian Capps, Gibson, Neb.
- Marguerite Mason, Gottenburg, Neb.
- Anna Voss, 467 West Charles street, Grand Island, Neb.
- Lydia Roth, 605 West Koenig street, Grand Island, Neb.
- Ella Voss, 467 West Charles street, Grand Island, Neb.
- Irene Costello, 115 West Eighth street, Grand Island, Neb.
- Jessie Crawford, 406 West Charles street, Grand Island, Neb.
- Pauline Schulte, Deadwood, S. D.
- Martha, 209 North Ninth street, Grand Island, Neb.
- High Hill, Lehigh, Neb.
- Hester F. Lehigh, Lehigh, Neb.
- Alice Temple, Lexington, Neb.
- Ruth Simpson, Lexington, Neb.
- Anna Neilson, Lexington, Neb.
- Edythe Kretz, Lexington, Neb.
- Margaret Temple, Lexington, Neb.
- Alice Grossmeyer, 145 C street, Lincoln.
- Marian Hamilton, 229 L street, Lincoln.
- Essie Hamilton, 229 L street, Lincoln.
- Irene Disher, 200 L street, Lincoln.
- Hughie Disher, 200 L street, Lincoln.
- Charlotte Bogg, 227 South Fifteenth street, Lincoln.
- Mildred Jensen, 704 East Second street, Fremont, Neb.
- Helen Johnson, 238 North Seventeenth street, Lincoln.
- Rheta Myers, 224 North Sixteenth street, Lincoln.
- Louise Stiles, Lyons, Neb.
- Estelle McDonald, Omaha, Neb.
- Milton Steier, Nebraska City, Neb.
- Harry Crawford, Nebraska City, Neb.
- Harvey Crawford, Nebraska City, Neb.
- Lucile Hazen, Norfolk, Neb.
- Letha Larkin, South Sixth street, Norfolk, Neb.
- Emma Marquardt, Fifth street and Madison avenue, Norfolk, Neb.
- Gwendolyn M. Jones, Norfolk, Neb.
- William Davis, 231 West Third street, North Platte, Neb.
- Louis Haabe, 200 North Nineteenth avenue, Omaha.
- Frances Johnson, 233 North Twenty-fifth avenue, Omaha.
- Marguerite Johnson, 233 North Twenty-fifth avenue, Omaha.
- Emilie Brown, 222 Boulevard, Omaha.
- Helen Goodrich, 610 Nicholas street, Omaha.
- Mary Brown, 222 Central Boulevard, Omaha.
- Hazel, 422 Dodge street, Omaha.
- Lillian Wirt, 415 Cass street, Omaha.
- Lewis Wolf, 215 Franklin street, Omaha.
- Edna Ingham, 215 Franklin street, Omaha.
- Bassett Ruf, 184 Blinney street, Omaha.
- Meyer Collin, 546 Georgia avenue, Omaha.
- Edwin P. Douglas, 546 Georgia avenue, Omaha.
- Ada Morris, 344 Franklin street, Omaha.
- Myrtle Jensen, 280 Isard street, Omaha.
- Orin Fisher, 280 Isard street, Omaha.
- Mildred Erickson, 279 Howard St., Omaha.



RULES FOR YOUNG WRITERS

1. Write plainly on one side of the paper only and number the pages.
 2. Use pen and ink, not pencil.
 3. Short and pointed sentences will be given preference. Do not use over 250 words.
 4. Original stories or letters only will be used.
 5. Write your name, age and address at the top of the first page.
- Prizes and second prizes will be given for the best two contributions to this page each week. Address all communications to CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT, Omaha Bee, Omaha, Neb.

(First Prize.)

A Christmas Story.

By Thyra Buchanan, Aged 11 Years, Silver Creek, Neb., Red Side.

Once upon a time, very, very long ago, something happened.

It was longer ago than you can even think. It happened on the same day as Christmas.

Some wise men were on a hill. They were watching their sheep. It was night. It was very dark and still.

Suddenly they heard a voice. It came from the sky.

Suddenly they saw a bright light. It was all around them.

The voice said: "Be not afraid, be glad. The Christ child is born this day, so to the city. You will find Him there in a manger."

Then the wise men heard the beautiful singing. In a moment the singing was gone. The voice was gone. The bright light was gone.

So the wise men went to the city. They found the Christ child lying on some hay in the manger.

They loved Him. He was so good and so beautiful.

Ever since then we have kept this child's birthday.

We call it Christmas.

(Second Prize.)

An Alms Present.

By Fay Calhoun, Aged 19 Years, Elm Creek, Neb., Blue Side.

Mrs. Black had a very dear friend who just loved embroidery, so she thought she would make her a waist. Her name was Miss Blake.

As Tommy Brown was hurrying over to Patty Clark's he discovered a small package. Now this happened to be Mrs. Black's embroidered waist all tied up in holly ribbon. Patty was a great friend of Tommy and he was just going home to get her Christmas present. It was the sweet little kitten you ever saw. So he hid the box behind a tree and ran home.

Soon he was back again. He thought and thought, he knew that Mrs. Black had lost her package, but he thought he

must take his package to Patty, so on he ran and left it on the porch.

And soon Mrs. Black had her present on its way again.

When Miss Blake opened it she was very much surprised to see a sweet little kitten, and Patty was surprised to see a nice waist.

But they never knew the difference. Miss Blake just loves her kitten to this day.

I think they both had a merry Christmas, don't you? I wish all of my readers a merry Christmas and happy New Year.

How a Doll Made Christmas Happy for a Little Sick Girl.

By Arthur Mason, Aged 13 Years, 1205 N. Avenue, Fremont, Neb., Red Side.

I am an old, worn-out doll, but I can remember my first Christmas. I was away in a room with the other toys in a store in an eastern town. One day the owner said, "I guess I'll send this doll to my little niece out west."

So it was, I arrived Christmas eve in a box with other toys, and lots of good things and oh the night there were six children, as I counted them over and over.

The wee baby got a rattle and I was given to the little 8-year-old girl, who had been sick a very long time.

Such a jolly bunch of children! They had decorated the window with tree ornaments, because they could not get any trees. It was a traveler had passed by he would have known the children were happy. My mistress was very happy, but not long after Christmas the little girl died.

Courage, in Spite of Difficulties.

By Margaret Ludwig, Aged 14 Years, 2407 South Twenty-second street, Omaha, Neb.

Aye, he became great and with never a boast. Just shifted his way with enemies aloof. Damsel Luick was against him many times in his place. And difficulty was met many times face to face.

At school he was liked but was called "Teacher's Pet." A nickname that he would not like.

When grown into manhood he wed a fair. 'Twas then poverty lurked at his door-unpaid.

As I say he did win—what he won was not. Nor was it as easy at nothing at all. Perhaps you know him, perhaps you do not.

He hath title—Sir Courage. You need him a lot.

A Happy Christmas.

By Ada Donaldson, Aged 13 Years, Hillsboro, Ia., Blue Side.

It was a week before Christmas and it was cold and snowing. Mae and Ray Jones were in the library reading, when they heard a knock at the door. Mae went to the door and opened it, there stood a little girl about her size. She had a thin shawl about her head and shoulders

and said it. She declared that an ounce of prevention was worth a pound of cure.

"Our boy Jack is a great fellow," smiled Mr. Greyson. "Well, let's have a peep at the tree, mamma. All have had a hand at the fixing except myself. And I've some small trinkets to hang on a limb."

"If there's a limb left," laughed Mrs. Greyson. "And she drew the curtain aside so that her husband might look at the tree. While he was examining it he slipped from his pocket several small boxes, which he tied to one of the less-burdened limbs.

"Well, it's a beauty, mamma," he said, speaking of the tree.

Then the children joined their parents in the parlor and pretty soon the young guests arrived. Then all was merry-making and fun.

And after the curtain was drawn from in front of the tree the light shone full upon frightened little Bonnie. He sat in the full view of all present. A queer looking, red-cheeked individual, whom the children all called "Santa," was there, making loads of fun as he lifted the gifts from the tree. But Bonnie could not enter into the spirit of the occasion, for he felt that every minute would be his last. So he sat cowering and shivering on the limb, so much afraid of what might happen to him should he fly away from it.

And pretty soon a pair of bright eyes rested on him. They were Santa's eyes, and he thought Bonnie a stuffed or toy bird. "Ah, ha," said Santa Claus, grinning from ear to ear, "we have here a dear little bird."

But just as he was about to lay hands on

him to pass his sleeve across some butter and salt. He declared that an ounce of prevention was worth a pound of cure.

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Her lips and hands were blue with cold. She wanted the doctor. Mae called her father and while she was waiting for him, she asked the little girl her name and about her family. The little girl said her name was Essie Smith, that her father was dead, and that she had a brother, 8 years old, who was a cripple and her sister 18 months old. Then Mae's father came and she went back to her reading.

When the doctor came home Mae asked how Essie's mother was. He said she was very sick and that she would have to be taken to a hospital and said that they had very few clothes and little food, the cellar was damp and they had very little fire.

Mae told Rae about them and they said they would take the money that father gave them for Christmas and buy them food and clothing.

After Mrs. Smith was taken to the hospital Mae wanted the children brought to their house. So they were brought there the next day. While Mrs. Smith was at the hospital Mr. and Mrs. Jones bought a beautiful home near the outskirts of the city. And they fixed it up for Mrs. Smith. Christmas morning they were to move her to the new home.

Mae and Ray and their mother bought clothes for Mrs. Smith and her family. When they moved Mrs. Smith to her new home Mae and Ray were very happy. And when the day was over they said it was the happiest Christmas they had had for a long time.

But Mr. Grinder took no notice of the boy except to answer no.

When Mr. Grinder was sitting in his parlour the servant entered and said there was a gentleman to see him. At first Mr. Grinder told the servant to put him out. But the servant said the man had important business with him, so he said to show him up.

The gentleman who wished to see him was Father Harrow who wished everyone to be happy on Christmas. He wanted Mr. Grinder to give some money to him so that he could help the poor, but Mr. Grinder refused.

After Father Harrow departed, Mr. Grinder asked his servant to get his coat and hat and he started to go down town. Everybody he passed looked poor, but nobody asked him for money. He went on until he noticed Father Harrow and a little boy. He followed them until they went up a staircase and into a couple of rooms. He went up behind them and entered the room.

There was a pale woman on the bed. She told her son that she was going up to live with God, and she said she was going to ask Father Harrow to take care of him. Then Mr. Grinder said he would take care of him.

"This woman was his daughter-in-law, and he did not know it."

Lola in Ireland.
Eunice Wright, Age 12 Years, 532 North Logan street, Fremont, Neb., Blue Side.

Lola lay in front of the fireplace, idly turning the pages of a Mother Goose book, which she had read about fifty times. She knew the contents by heart. What each letter of the alphabet stood for, from A to Z.

Soon she grew tired of it, and laying it aside propped her head up on her arm and used it for a pillow. She was gazing absently into the fire when the log seemed to take on the look of a tiny palace all red and yellow.

Lola laughed and thought it must be a fairy, but when "Hello," sounded in her ear she sat up straight and looked around her. She could see nothing. Thinking she must be dreaming, she curled herself up for a nice nap which she wasn't destined to secure for that little voice kept persistently calling, "Hello! Hello! Can't you see me? Oh, dear! You'll make me lose my patience!"

But Lola thought she must be dreaming and paid no attention until, "Come on, I'm going to take you some place if you'll ever come!" sounded right in her ear. She opened her eyes then, and saw, sitting on her shoulder—a dear, tiny little figure clad in orange gossamer, and holding in her right hand, a golden wand that had a bright yellow star gleaming on the end.

"How pretty!" Lola exclaimed.

"Yes," said the fairy looking at the palace of fire, "I think it is very pretty."

Lola laughed. "You do not even know what I'm talking about," she said.

"Why," answered the fairy, "you're talking about the palace of course."

"No," replied Lola, "I was talking about you."

"Well, we'll let that pass," said the fairy. "My name is Princess Firelight. What is yours?"

"My name is Lola Jensen."

"That's a very pretty name. Quite as pretty as yourself. But we must be hurrying. Would you like to have me take you to Ireland?"

"I'd be delighted!" said Lola.

"I thought so," answered Firelight.

"It is very far," asked Lola, "not feeling in a mood to walk very far?"

"No, it's just inside the fireplace, where the pretty palace is," replied Princess Firelight.

"But, I can't get in there, and besides I would burn up, mamma said so," Lola said.

"No you won't," said the princess, and immediately everything seemed to grow very large, but Firelight told Lola that she had made her grow very small, and she walked into the fire—but it did not burn—and up the steps of the lovely palace. As they went under the beautiful arched doorway, they heard some very pretty music coming from the inside.

"Oh, where is that music?" exclaimed Lola. "Let's go to it. It seems so very pretty."

"We are," answered Firelight. "Do you like to dance?"

"I don't know how to dance. Mamma never would let me learn."

"You don't have to learn in Ireland," answered the princess. "You just seem to know how before you begin. And it isn't like the way you dance either."

Lola thought it very queer, but nevertheless, she followed where Firelight led, and they went into the dancing room where the fairies seemed to be gliding over the floor—dancing.

Firelight and Lola danced too and Lola found that what the fairy had said was true.

They danced quite a long time, then the lights began to grow dim, and one by one they went out. The fairies began to dance more and more slowly, soon they were left in the dark.

Princess Firelight led Lola out of the darkness and on to the floor where she had first been.

Princess Firelight then touched Lola with her wand and she became large again and was lying in the same position as at first. Lola looked at the fireplace, but the palace had gone and in its place was the same old log. Suddenly the door opened and Mrs. Jensen came in and said:

"My Lola, what a long nap you've had."

"Sure he does," declared Jack. "And his story is interesting, too."

Christmas Tree Chat

I AM a little Christmas Tree.

And one day soon you will see me in gala finery, boughs all hung With gifts so nice, and candy strung From limb to limb, with ribbons gay! Yes, some day soon I'll look that way.

One time I grew quite wild, you see; But came a man who looked at me; Said he: "You are the exact size. A tree like you we'll surely prize. My children want an evergreen, And you're the nicest one I've seen."

So I was lifted from the dirt, And, strange to say, it did not hurt; Then carried to the city, where So many folks at me did stare. And in a parlor fine I'll stay Till one week after Christmas Day.



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"This woman was his daughter-in-law, and he did not know it."

I came in a little while ago and you were sound asleep.

It was not until then that Lola realised she had been dreaming.

Charley's Birthday Gift.

Greta Strickland, Age 13 Years, Council Bluffs, Ia.

Charley Bircham was as happy a boy as could be found in all America, when on his eighth birthday his father brought him for a birthday present, a magnificent mastiff. A large brass collar around the dog's neck was engraved with the dog's name, "Hero."

Charley had had all sorts of presents, boxes of tools, skates and books, and once he had a very large rocking-horse. But this was a real live present, the grandest present he had ever received.

Charley and Hero soon became fast friends, taking the saddle from the old rocking-horse, Charley would mount the patient mastiff, and Hero seemed to be almost as proud of his rider as Charley was of his horse.

Mary's Kindness.

By Emilie Brown, Aged 13 Years, 222 South G. Boulevard, Omaha, Red Side.

There was a little girl whose name was Mary. Her parents were very rich and she could have anything she wanted. Across from her home lived her little friend, who was very poor, named Millie. Her mother had to work for a living.

Millie knew she would get no presents, but Mary knew she could get what she wanted. This year Mary wanted an extra large amount of presents and she received them all.

On Christmas day little Millie sat by the window looking very sad, when she heard a gentle tap at the front door. When she opened the door who should be there but little Mary.

"Millie, 'Millie, you never get any presents for Christmas so I thought I would get you something."

When Millie untied the package she saw it was a beautiful doll. Millie thanked Mary very much and said it was the nicest present she ever had. When Mary got home her mother asked her where she had been. Mary said that the doll she got for Christmas had been given to Millie. Mary's mother said it was very nice of her to be so kind to her little friend.

Jennie's Christmas.

By Helen Igen, Aged 9 Years, 126 North Forty-second Street, Omaha, Red Side.

Once there lived a little girl named Jennie. Her father and mother were very poor. In a few days it would be Christmas and Jennie was sure that she would get no presents.

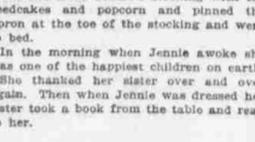
But on Christmas eve Jennie hung up her stocking by the fireplace and her good sister Grace made some seedcakes and moulded them like animals, birds and people. Then when they were done she went to her sewing basket and took from it a piece of white cloth and sewed till she had made a little white apron for Jennie. She had an ear of popcorn which a neighbor had given her which she popped. Then she filled Jennie's stocking with the seedcakes and popcorn and pinned the apron at the toe of the stocking and went to bed.

In the morning when Jennie awoke she was one of the happiest children on earth. She thanked her sister over and over again. Then when Jennie was dressed her sister took a book from the table and read to her.

A Question

W HAT becomes of Little Fishes When the creek is frozen o'er? Do they leave their home in water And take refuge on the shore? Do they shiver when Old Winter Sifts the snowflakes o'er their heads? Or do snowdrops, just like feathers, Make for them nice cozy beds?

Anyway, 'tis cause for question Just what Little Fishes do When the ice crusts on the water; And I surely wish I knew!



Bonnie's Christmas

IT WAS a stern Christmas eve, the snow flying and the thermometer registering far below zero. From the pavement of the town's streets one might look through windows into lighted, warm and happy homes, occasionally getting a peep of an evergreen Christmas tree in the parlor, surrounded by laughing people whose hands were busy decorating the tree's branches preparatory for the festivity which was to be enjoyed a few hours later. It was only 6 o'clock and all the town was in its gala Christmas eve attire.

But there beat one heavy little heart in the great out of doors, where the chill blasts of wind swept so cruelly round street corners and down long, narrow alleys. And the heart that beat in Bonnie, a little sparrow without a home. Poor Bonnie sat perched and shivering on the bare branch of a slender tree that stood bending in the wind just outside the gate of a very cozy home. In the home dwelt the Greysyons, a family consisting of father, mother, two sons and one daughter. The children's names were Harry, Jack and May. Harry was 14 years old, Jack was 11 and May 10. May was always called the baby of the family and her two "big" brothers were forever doing nice things for her. "She's the only sister we've got," they would "niggle" nicely toward her. And so they did.

But that's another story. Let us to the dilemma of poor little Bonnie, as she sat shivering near to her death on the bare limb of the slender tree that waned and tossed in the wind near to the front gate of the Greysyons home. "I'll surely freeze to death," said Bonnie to herself as the shadows of night gathered rapidly about him. "And I am so hungry; oh, so hungry! If I might find a crumb—just a crumb—I would be grateful for it. How can I ever pass through this night?"

Then the warm, yellow light coming from the parlor windows of the Greysyons home attracted Bonnie's attention and he stopped his melancholy soliloquy to hop to a limb nearer to the house that he might get a closer peep into the bright, warm place. There, seeing that the lattice of the parlor window afforded a better view, he hopped there, though his feet were so numbed from cold that he could scarcely bestir them, and his wings were quite stiff and his whole body shivering.

Once on the window ledge Bonnie could look into the room very easily, for only a lace curtain hung between, and the glass pane, of course. And when he pressed his body against the pane he could feel some warmth, for on the other side a bright fire was glowing in the grate and the comfortable atmosphere of the room spread all about even to the windows. As Bonnie looked he saw three children come into the room, and the eldest, who was Harry, turned up the gas, which had been burning but dimly. Then the children began hanging pretty things on a tall evergreen tree that stood in one corner of the room. As they worked the little girl took from her

pocket a sweet cake and began to munch from it. But she was so absorbed in her work of hanging a box which contained a pretty gift for one of her brothers that she put the cake on a table near by and forgot it. As Bonnie's eyes rested on the bit of sweet cake his tiny stomach gnawed fresh at sight of food. "Ah, I wish the clear thing which covers this opening were not so hard and that I might enter that beautiful place and take a few bites from that good cake," he whispered to himself. But his attention was still held by the children, who put ever so many pretty boxes and parcels on the tree. Then, their work accomplished, the oldest boy drew a curtain, which had been hung temporarily, across in front of the tree and they ran out of the room. While Bonnie was wondering why they had gone from such a pleasant place, the door opened and in walked Mrs. Greyson, her arms laden with presents, which she proceeded to hang to the limbs of the tree.

After Mrs. Greyson had finished arranging her gifts on the tree she turned out the gas, leaving the room lighted dimly by the glow from the grate. And then, sniffling the air, she said aloud, so that Bonnie overheard her: "The room is too warm and needs fresh air. There will be about twelve persons in here tonight and the parlor must not be stuffy. I'll open one of the windows." So saying, she went to the window that was directly beside the one on whose ledge perched freezing Bonnie, and opened the lower sash some ten inches, leaving the curtain drawn aside so that the fresh air might come in freely. Then the good lady left the room, calling out in the hall: "Come children, dinner is waiting. I hope there was hot bit, for our company will arrive precisely at 8 o'clock, and Santa Claus must not be kept out in the cold, you know."

Then Bonnie heard a scurrying of children's feet along the hall, mingled with closed and the sounds of feet and voices glad voices. Then a door opened and the Greysyons family were gathered round the table in the dining room in the rear of the parlor.

Bonnie peeped cautiously at the open window, hopped near to it and peeped again. "Ah, ah," he said. "I can go in that way. How kind the lady was to open it for me." And he went peeping and flying directly to the small table on which may have left the bit of sweet cake. It didn't take Bonnie long to enjoy a good dinner, for he ate of the cake till his breast began to protrude most noticeably. Then, feeling much better, he flapped his warming wings and looked at the topmost branch of the evergreen tree which lifted itself above the curtain.

"The very place for me," said Bonnie, and he flew to the spot. Ah, it was snug up there! The room was warm and dusky and Bonnie felt very drowsy. Soon he was fast asleep, all crunched into a tiny feathered ball on the limb, half hidden behind