

The Acton Free Press

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1889.

The Young Folks.

CHRISTMAS MORNING.

Glor's kiss broke the morning.
With a smile and a Santa Claus,
As with nature's dewiness,
Peace, good-will, was born on earth.
Heaven's door rolled wide asunder,
Through the gate of pearl and gem,
Angels throng'd to see this wonder,
Earth held heaven's diadem.

Cro—Ring, O bells, thy loudest, sweetest,
And ring, O bells, shout with glee;
Love the greatest, loudest, sweetest,
Christmas gave to you and me.
Ring, O bells, Ring, O bells,
Ring, your loudest, ring your sweetest,
Ring, bells, Ring, O bells,
Ring your loudest Christmas bells!

Oliver, pipe, pipe and blow,
Weave in bobolinks' feathered bairn,
While one voice raise a cheer,
Him our love and thanks to bear.
But how poor the gifts we offer,
How we ought to give them!
Ye who work so kindly brother,
Make them now a Bethlehem.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

One o'er the hills of Sodah,
Burst forth a glorious light;
Heralding the Messiah,
Shining a splendid brightness;
And the bright spirit stealing,
Sweetly on us all of us,
From heaven's towers pealing,
Jesus the Lord is born!

Cro—Glory, glory, gloria; let us sing!
Glory to our heavenly King!
Sound aloud His praises,
Sing a joyful lay.
This is the Savior's natal day!

Strange was his thron, O children!
Only a manger cold!
But many a gift were brought him,
Myrrh, frankincense and gold.
Myrrh was the bitter token
Of His great sacrifice;
Frankincense, homage paid him;
And gold, the kindly price.

Still through the air around us
Ecclesiastic strains;
Still on the hills the darkness,
That light in crimson robes,
What are the gifts we bring him?
No type of song now!
Hearts' prayers shall be our incense,
And love shall crown His brow.

WHERE SANTA CLAUS LIVES.

It was a delightful day in my vacation—just the right kind of a day for an excursion," somebody remarked at the breakfast table. "We girls were very grateful to this somebody, as it at once gave us the idea how we should spend the day.

"A nine o'clock started out; there were four of us, so like the animals going into the Ark, we went two by two. We had not decided where to go, so much so the better, as we gave as an air of adventure.

As we walked towards the river, discussing the different islands, and points of interest down stream, a friend passed us whom we had "good morning," and asked where he was going.

"Oh! nowhere," he answered, and hurried on.

"That's just our case," said our chaperon, laughing. "Let's follow him, for we certainly are not bound for anywhere."

As we reached the dock, a small steamer, which we had never seen before, came putting up with its bell, ringing and flag flying. In the crowd we lost sight of our companion; but he did not mind this as we had made up our minds to go on board this steamer.

"The captain was on deck, and waving a gold-headed cane, called out: 'All aboard; going right to—' but his speech was mopped in the bow by the hand on deck, which struck up 'Over the hills and far away.'

Such a delightful prospect we could not resist, and had just time to get onboard, when our little steamer moved rapidly off down the river. We had spent nearly an afternoon on this river, so were familiar with the scenes; and we settled ourselves on deck and read the *Leader*, while the boat made rapid progress.

I had been reading a long time, perhaps two hours, when looking up, I was surprised to find we had passed all points familiar to me and that we seemed to be going with the speed of the wind. After consulting with each other we resolved to seek the captain, and question him as to our whereabouts, and our landing place.

He was very polite, and smiled and bowed; surprised to know we had never taken this trip before. We were only three thousand miles from our starting point, and pointing to a mere speck in the distance, said we would land there in about five minutes.

"This is island 'Nowhere,'" said he. "We will remain there till five p.m., when we will return to our dock."

Every one was hurrying about gathering up their parcels. Fortunately we had no encumbrances to look after, so spent our time studying the island which we were rapidly approaching. Could be mistaken; I rubbed my eyes and looked again. No, I was not mistaken; that island was certainly moving about, very slowly and steadily, yet it moved. I called the girls' attention to this fact, and they saw at once that it really was in motion, and how very peculiar the whole aspect of the island was.

The foliage of the trees was bare, while the ground was white with snow. Contrary to my expectations we had no trouble in landing on Island Nowhere. There was a beautiful broad street leading from the landing to the center of the island, which we took. We walked but a little way when we met twenty men dressed in bright red—a striking contrast to the scenery about. They walked slowly and majestically—each one now and then raising upon a tin cup suspended from his neck. A letter of the alphabet painted on each box.

A first, B second, and so on. We ran across these men constantly during our tour of the island, and learned they were the post-office of Nowhere. They received the mail from the steamer, which was sorted and put in the various boxes for their delivery. We found on reaching the centre of the island that the houses were circular in form and made of glass, and were very brilliant in the sunlight.

"People who live in glass houses must not throw stones," quoted our chaperon.

"That's true," said I, "but I don't believe there are any stones here."

At this assertion we stopped and looked about us. And I was right; not a stone to be seen. We met many peddlars, who all looked smilingly, and occasionally we were greeted with a broad of laughter from some passer-by who almost started us, and we began to fear the people here were not quite sane.

"I cannot imagine why they are so rude," said our chaperon; "but here comes an old gentleman of whom I will ask for some information. Can you tell me, sir, why all the people we meet are lunatic?"

"Certainly, madam. It is the air we breathe. It is mostly composed of laughing gas. And so we are nearly all happy. There are a few who, testing can make happy."

Thanking him for his information, and feeling relieved to find we were not on an island of lunatics, we asked what we should find to eat us for the next few hours.

"Well," said he, looking us over, "the house of Santa Claus is the usual attraction for the few young people who visit us; you will find his house and factories in the large park at the end of the street. But before you leave be sure to call into the store round the corner."

We thanked him again, and hurried took our way towards Santa Claus' park, dodging the hand-carts that glided so rapidly but noiselessly down the street. These were, by the way, the modes of conveyance in Nowhere.

We soon found ourselves at the entrance of a large park of evergreens. "How nice these trees are green," said I, "and so many little men were constantly adding to by basketfuls."

"These trees are green, and not blue. How nice it seems!" exclaimed our chaperon.

Passing through another gate, we came into a lovely spot where robins were prancing. Such beautiful creatures!

"Come, Dunder and Vinten," said I, trying to recall a bit of whom which starts off:

"Twas the night before Christmas."

Imagine our surprise when two of the deer started towards us. They advanced but a little way, however, as the ring of a bell at the other end of the park sent them all running in that direction. We followed them, and to our great surprise saw them mount the roof of a long, low building, pranced up to the chimney, waited there moment, and then hurry down. This they did many times, till all stood with a long and beard appeared at a window and threw them sugar plums.

"I am sure that was Santa Claus," said our chaperon. "What a beautiful face he had. I wish we could come back."

He had so much to do as could not see visitors, but sent word we were welcome to visit his workshop, and see how hard he was trying to have a good supply of toys for the little folks at Christmas time.

Entering an immense building, we saw hundreds of little dwarfs at work. They paid no attention to us as we passed along inspecting their work, which was wonderful to see. Toys of every sort, dolls, hoops, skates, sleds, and so many others, too numerous to mention. We could hardly tear ourselves away; but we knew we had but little time to spare, and if we missed the bus we might have to remain on this wonderful island for many months to come.

We were really sorry to go away without seeing Santa Claus, and thanking him for his many kindnesses to us in the past; but the little dwarf that let us out the gate grumbled said:

"Santa Claus will remember you at Christmas time, and I will be sure to give him your messages."

One more treat for us to visit, then we must hurry to the boat—the store.

I say the store, as there was but one on the island. The clerks were very polite, and showed as through every department; but, somehow, the articles had a worn look, and I opened a book which I knew at once was one I owned years ago. So I called a clerk to help me solve the mystery. He explained to me that all articles in this store were those that had been lost in the grid, and were brought to Nowhere to be disposed of. That explained some of the oddities of dress I had noticed on the natives.

I have not told you much about them. They appeared quite like ordinary mortals, excepting they all had but three fingers on each hand. In that we attributed them to having been obliged to open up their fingers extensive on the piano. We each purchased a little cake and started for the boat; as it was time for its departure.

When we reached home it was quite dark, and we tried to tell our friends where we had been; but found it a difficult matter to make them understand.

The captain was on deck, and waving a gold-headed cane, called out: "All aboard; going right to—"

But the boat had already left with its neighbor's cook. He was so delighted with the bread, biscuits and cake she made with Imperial Crown Taster Baking Powder that his fall de-persists in love with her.

He has promised however to return to his wife when we will use the same which will now be all the only reliable.

W. KENNEDY, Stittsville, Ont.

Lived With His Neighbor's Cook.

Philip Swan has eloped with his neighbor's cook. He was so delighted with the bread, biscuits and cake she made with Imperial Crown Taster Baking Powder that his fall de-persists in love with her.

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