



SANTA CLAUS READY TO START.

NOT FOR CHRISTMAS SPORTS OUTDOORS.

By UNCLE BOB.

Did you ever wear snowshoes? Maybe not, but they're great fun if you know how to use them. Of course if you live in southern California or Florida or other really southern places you needn't ever hope to enjoy snowshoes unless you



NOT THE LEAST BIT AFRAID.

go a long way north, but it is interesting to read about them and know something about them anyhow. There are states in this big country where snowshoeing is popular—away up in Michigan and Wisconsin, for instance, where the snow lies deep on the ground for months at a time. Over in Norway, far across the Atlantic ocean, is the place where snowshoes come in the most handy, for that is a land of deep snows and long winters.

The idea of the snowshoe is to keep you from breaking through the top crust of the deep snow and let you skim gracefully over the white surface. Snowshoes are much used in the big forests, where the snow falls several feet deep and then gets a frozen crust



"SKATES FOR ME," SAYS SUSIE.

over the surface that will hold up anybody on snowshoes, but would let a person wearing ordinary shoes or boots break through and founder about up to his arms perhaps. With a pair of snowshoes secured to your feet you can travel fast over the snow crust—if you know how. It takes a little practice to learn how to

travel on snowshoes. The little boy in the picture certainly looks as if his father had taught him how, for he doesn't appear to be the least bit afraid. His smile shows that he is enjoying the sport.

Snowshoes are not real shoes, of course. You must wear your real shoes and stockings to keep your feet warm, then fasten the snowshoes to your soles. They are really very much like little sleds, only that you have a sled on each foot instead of the "belly buster" that you use in coasting downhill. You can climb hills on snowshoes, and you can't do that on a sled, as you know. That's where lots of the fun comes in.

In northern Michigan and some other parts of the north the little boys and girls sometimes get a pair of snowshoes from Santa Claus, and they prove to be a very enjoyable Christmas present.

"Skates will do for me," says Susie. Oh, very well. Then we'll have Santa Claus leave a pair of skates for you beneath the mantel. They're too big and awkward to put into your stockings, and you want all the room there is in your stockings for candy and other smaller gifts, anyhow.

Every boy and girl who loves the outdoors—and what child doesn't?—wants to go skating. You'll agree to that, won't you? Of course, if you live far south, where the creeks and ponds don't freeze over, you can't expect ice skating, but then there are



HER THRONE IS A TREE TOP.

roller skates. Still, roller skates don't really suggest Christmas. A pair of them is a welcome gift from Santa Claus to a boy or a girl, but it is the ice skates that make us think of Christmas time.

Nowadays skates are nicer and cheaper than those we used to have, say, thirty years ago. Did any of you boys and girls ever see a pair of the clumsy looking wooden skates with steel runners which your fathers used to wear before the all metal skates came into fashion? Those wooden skates were strapped to heel and toe—no heel plates or toe clamps in those days. But they were mighty good skates all the same, and your father enjoyed them just as much as you'll enjoy the highly polished nicked beauties which Santa Claus may leave for you this Christmas.

Here's a picture of the Christmas queen, the queen of outdoor sports in winter time. You will see that she is dressed very warmly, which is as she should be, for she is standing in a tree-top—her throne, you know—and it must be pretty chilly up there when the wind blows. But you will notice also that the Christmas queen has wings, so she can fly down and join her subjects, the other boys and girls, in skating, snowshoeing or coasting downhill. The queen in this case is not a fairy, as you may imagine, but a dear little girl "made up" to play the part at a Christmas tournament that took place in an English town last year.

WHAT IS A CHRISTMAS TREE?
BY ROBERTUS LOVE

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WHAT kind of a tree is a Christmas tree? I'm sure all you children and I will agree That it isn't an orange or plum or pear, Though all of these fruits it is likely to bear.

THE Christmas tree is a popcorn tree— A fact that a Sleepy-Eye Kid can see— For look at the popcorn balls and strings That hang from its branches, 'mong other nice things.



BUT listen to grandpa's wise old talk. He tells us that popcorn is grown on a stalk. We'll have to believe him, and so, you see,

That it really isn't a popcorn tree.

THE Christmas tree is a candle tree, For candles all over it all of us see. They're red, white and blue, and we'll light 'em tonight, For candles are meant to make candle trees bright.

NOW listen to grandma (please leave us alone!)— She tells us that candles are molded, not grown; So we've got to give up, with a sigh, you see, The notion that this is a candle tree.



THE Christmas tree is a spangle tree, For spangles are dangling all over it, see? Spangles of silver and spangles of gilt, It's surely a spangle tree Santa has built!



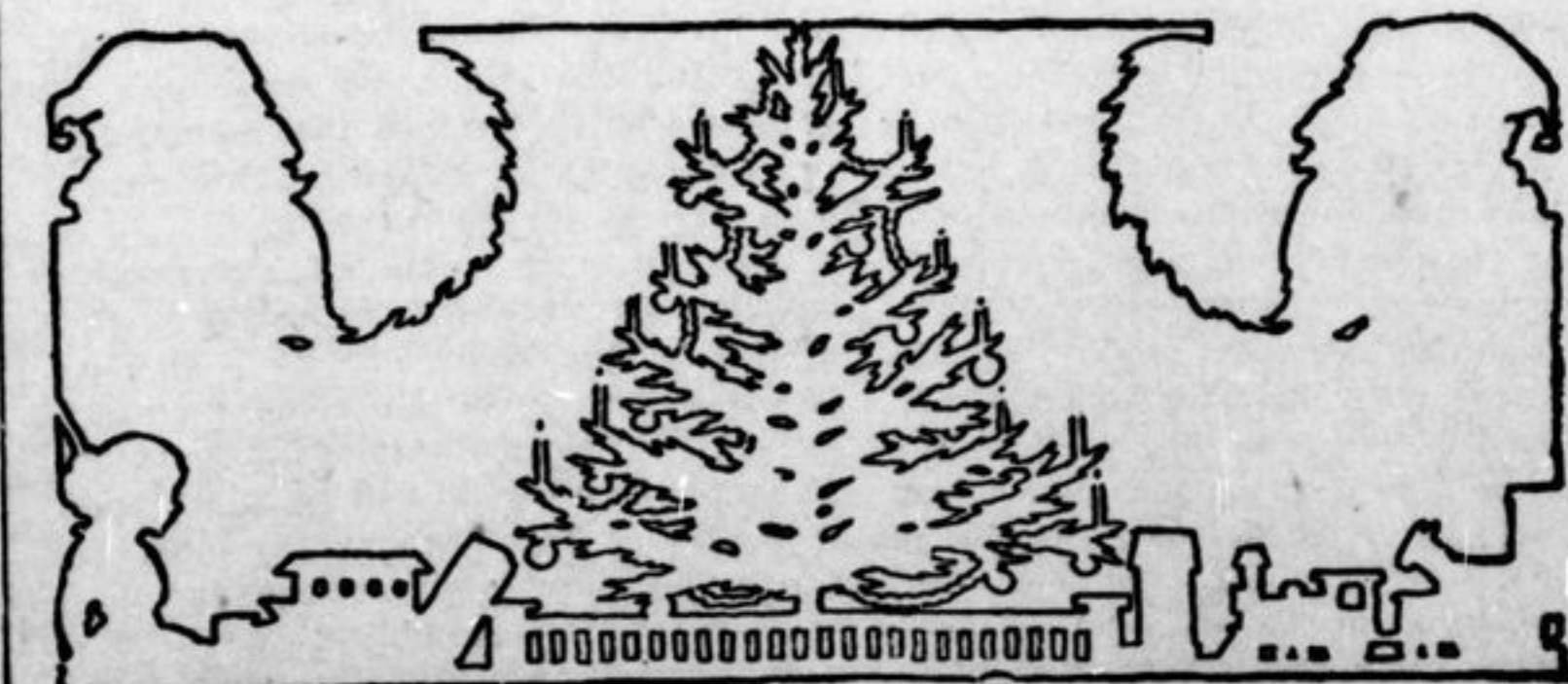
BUT listen to daddy—he says, says he, There's no such thing as a spangle tree, For spangles, says daddy, are made in a shop, So this nice idea we'll have to let drop.

THE Christmas tree is a candy tree— I'm sure now we have it! Let's holler with glee! There's candy in boxes and candy in bags, Let's mark it with "THIS IS A CANDY TREE" tags!



BUT here comes your mamma, who says, if you please, "Who ever saw candy that GREW upon trees?" So sadly we've got to surrender such whims, It may be this candy was TIED to the limbs!

THE Christmas tree is a CHRISTMAS tree! Is that not sufficient for you and for me? It's full of good goodies that Santa Claus grows, And WE shouldn't ask how they got there, I s'pose.



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THE TREE OF TREES.

By PETER M'ARTHUR.

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A TREE there is that all year round Puts out its blossoms everywhere In every happy home it's found, And once a year its fruit is fair. It blooms unseen, but none the less Its blossoms yield a peerless treat. As high as heaven its branches press And deep as love it sends its root.

Our thoughts of those to memory dear Will fill it with a radiant bloom Whose fragrance charms the weary year And floods with light our days of gloom. A whispered wish, a childish sigh, Will make a hopeful blossom spring. And when the waiting months go by The tree the longest for fruit will bring.



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The fruit it bears what art can show! All kinds of sweets and wondrous toys! How can a tree so truly know What gifts to bring for girls and boys! For old and young its branches bend Beneath their burden of delight With gifts and trinkets without end To cheer the heart and glad the sight. And when old Santa Claus comes round, All white with snow, but full of fun, He packs the presents that abound And leaves a gift with every one. He is the prince of woodmen bold, For he it is, and none but he, Who gives the world to have and hold The strongly fruited Christmas tree.

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