

# A Page for the Children

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## ABERNETHY'S

### THE SNOWBALL PARTY.

The children in the big Orphanage were not looking forward to Christmas very much. They had no friends to send them even a Christmas card, and the people who looked after the Orphanage spent so much money in buying food and warm clothes for the boys and girls that there was none left over for treats or Christmas presents. Carols would be sung in church on Christmas morning but the rest of the day would be much like any other, and there would be nothing to remind them that was the best



"HIDE AND GO SEEK."

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day in the whole year. But they did not know what was being planned at the home of their doctor, a kind-hearted man they all liked, and looked forward to his visits with joy, except when he gave them very nasty medicine.

"If we don't have a party this year, mother," said Kitty, the doctor's eldest girl, "could we give the Orphanage children a treat? They never seem to have a very jolly time at Christmas."

"I think we might manage it," replied mother. "We will hear what father says. I'll ask him as soon as ever he comes home."

Father thought the idea splendid, and promised to dress up as Santa Claus in the scarlet coat made from an old dressing gown. So the four little girls spent their holidays planning a surprise party for the children who enjoyed so few treats, and they found it great fun; there were so many things to think of and do.

Thus it came about that on Christmas Day the Orphanage children were startled by a loud rapping at the door, which opened to let in Santa Claus. They knew it must be Santa Claus because he was so like his pictures, and they clapped their hands joyfully as he entered. Behind him came four little girls, who they knew must belong to Santa Claus, for they wore scarlet hoods like his own, and pretty scarlet capes trimmed with fur and holly.

"A merry Christmas!" cried Santa Claus, smiling and opening his big sack. The children hoped it held toys, but it seemed filled with snowballs.

But the white balls did not melt or break even when Santa Claus took out an armful and threw them to his little ones, who caught them very carefully. For some time a merry snowball fight went on between Santa Claus and his helpers; then one of the balls flew across to the children who watched.

"Open it and see what is inside!" said Santa Claus, and the little boy who had caught the ball saw it was covered with soft white paper. He quickly tore a hole in the cover, and, to his surprise, out tumbled a packet of lovely chocolate creams!

And now Santa Claus and his four helpers snowballed the other children, and somehow managed it so that each child got two snowballs-filled with sweets. Then Santa Claus began to unpack big parcels from his pockets and the bottom of his sack. Each one had on it a name. Santa Claus knew just whom it was for, and the children thought he was very clever to know their names so well. Everyone got just the toy they wanted, too, so you may think how happy they were. They were very, very sorry when Santa Claus and the four little girls said good-night to them and went away carrying the big empty sack.

"It was the nicest party we ever had," declared the doctor's children that night, which was just what the other children felt.

### CHRISTMAS NIGHT GAMES.

#### FLY AWAY.

Another bewildering game. One player, who is seated on a stool or low chair, must place the first finger of her right hand on her toe. The other players all crowd around her, each one placing a finger close to hers. When all are settled the leader raises her finger suddenly, saying: "Fly away!"

If she mentions something (such as a bird, a witch, a bat, butterfly, a feather, or a kite) that has the power of flying, the others must raise their fingers. But if she mentions something that cannot fly, such as a book, a pumpkin, or a train, no notice must be taken.

If a player makes a mistake he must pay a forfeit or retire from the game. It frequently happens that when one player makes a mistake, several others do so at the same time.

#### RYHMING LIGHTS.

This is an excellent game because, besides being so simple that it can be understood by even the smallest children, it exercises the thinking faculties of all.

One of the players thinks of a word, which must be guessed by the others, and in order to help them discover the word she tells them the name of a word that

rhymes with it. For instance, we will suppose that "Book" is the word thought of, the leader or player who thinks of the word tells the others that it rhymes with "look."

Each player is then allowed to ask a question, the questions and answers being something like the following:

"Is it running water?" "No, it is not a brook."

"Is it something belonging to a shepherd?" "No, it is not a crook."

"Is it the name of something upon which we hang our clothes?" "No, it is not a hook."

"Is it a cosy corner?" "No, it is not a nook."

"Is it used in School?" "Yes, it is a book."

#### RIDDLES AND ANSWERS.

Plant tight shoes and what will you raise? Corns.

Three-sevenths of a chicken, two-thirds of a cat, and half of a goat. What is it? Chi-ca-go.

What is the difference between here and there? The letter "T."

Why are an egg and a colt alike? They must both be broken before they can be used.

When is a bonnet not a bonnet? When it becomes a pretty girl.

What is the first thing a boy does when he falls into the water? Gets wet.

Why are days longer in summer than in winter? Because heat expands and cold contracts them.

Why is the nose in the middle of the face? Because it is the centre (scenter).

What is that which makes everyone sick, but those that swallow it? Flattery.

What is that which is often brought to the table, cut, but never eaten? A pack of cards.

What is a put-up job? The paper on the wall.

Why is the letter G like the sun? Because it is the centre of light.

#### A CHRISTMAS PUZZLE.

Here is a little Christmas puzzle which may amuse some of the younger members of the family while they are trifling with the dessert after their mince pie and pudding have all disappeared.

Take four raisins, four nuts or almonds, four lumps of sugar and four pieces of candy and arrange them in the form of a square this way:

C A R S  
C A R S  
C A R S  
C A R S

The letters stand for the initials of the various substances, candy, almonds, raisins and sugar. Now re-arrange these in such a manner that no two pieces of the same substance shall be in line vertically, horizontally or diagonally, and see how many of the sixteen pieces you can still use. It is possible to use all but three if you hit the right combination so that there shall be only three empty spaces.

#### WHY ARE CHRISTMAS TREES USED?

This custom, as far as Christianity is concerned, is German in its origin, and is identified with the labors of St. Maternus, one of the earliest, if not the very first, of the preachers of the gospel among the Teutons.

Just how the people became latter day sponsors for the Christmas tree is doubtful, though it is possible that it is traceable to the Saturnalia, and may have been imported into Germany by some of the conquering legions. The Germans have a legend of St. Maternus sleeping beneath a fir tree, and of a miracle that occurred upon that occasion.

There is another theory that the notion of this tree came from Egypt. The palm



"LONDON BRIDGE IS FALLING DOWN."

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tree is supposed to have put forth a shoot every month, and a spray of this tree was used in Egypt at their winter solstice celebration as being symbolical of the ended year. The Germans attribute the actual institution of the fir tree as part of the Christmas celebration to Martin Luther, but there is no reliable information on this subject. The Dutch, especially in New Amsterdam, were responsible for the vogue which the tree gained in America. It is now one of our oldest holiday customs.

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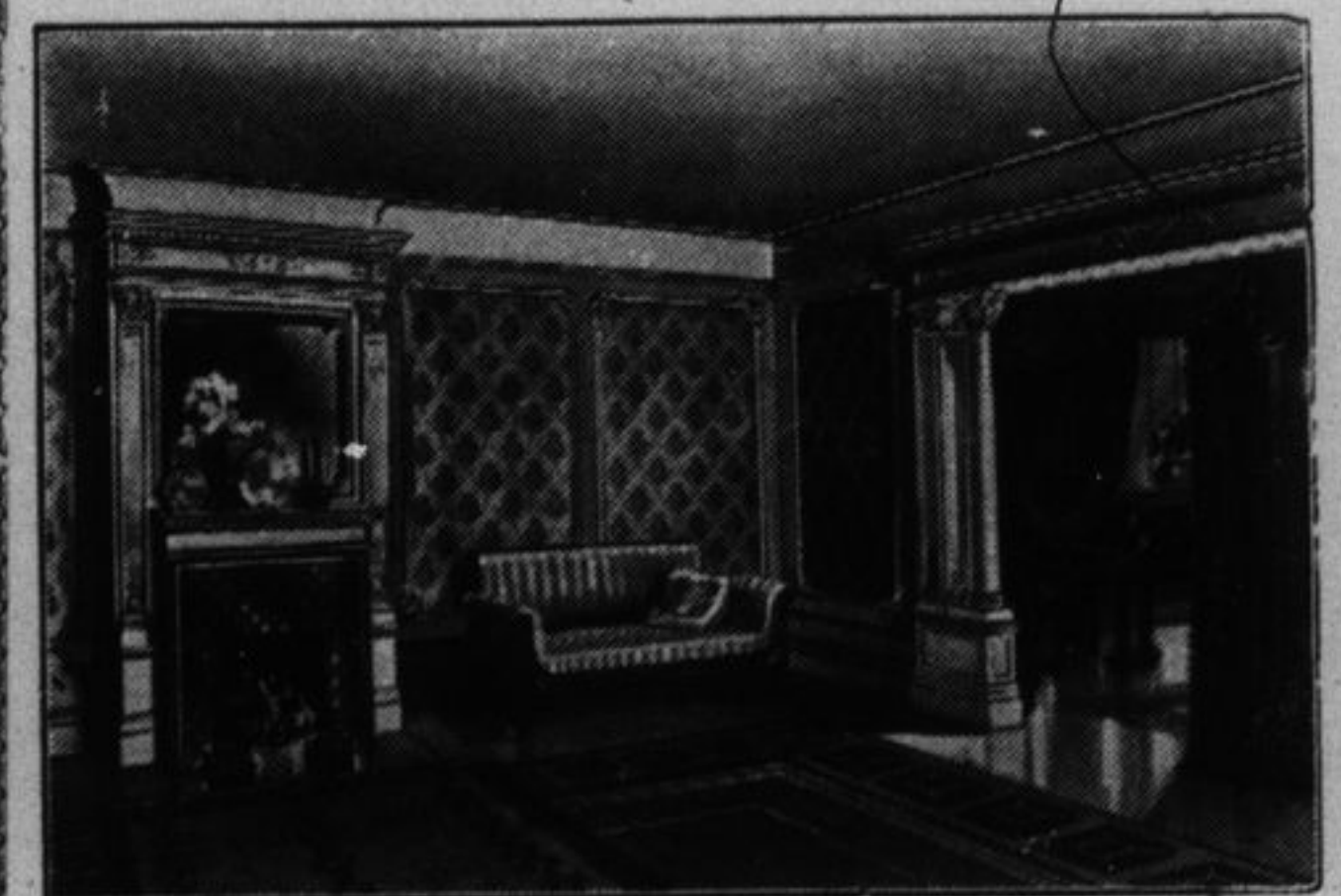
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