

CHRISTMAS POETRY

CHRISTMAS TIDE ACROSS THE SEA.

Mina Irving in *Leslie's*.
Far away over the troubled ocean
Old Santa Claus? on his yearly
round,
Cold hearths deserted, and roofless
ruins
And empty echoing rooms has
found,
The truss of hay for his reluctant
supper,
No longer waits by the farmhouse
door,
And the bird-pole, too, with its sheaf
of plenty
For hungry songsters, is seen no
more.
For rosy faces of happy children
At cottage windows he looks in
vain,
No stockings hang in the chimney
corner,
No holly glows at the broken pane,
The hapless little ones weep and
wander
Forlorn to alien lands afar.
For blood and tears and the smoke
of battle
Have dimmed the light of the
Christmas Star.
The ancient shops where he used to
purchase
His stock of wonderful Christmas
tops
Are dark and vacant, where once
they glittered
With tons of treasures for girls
and boys,
So let us spare from the wealth of
presents,
That load our beautiful Christmas
tree,
A few to put in the eager fingers
Of homeless orphans across the
sea.

I SAW THREE SHIPS.

I saw three ships come sailing in,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas
Day.
I saw three ships come sailing in,
On Christmas Day in the morning.
Pray, whether sailed those ships all
three,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas
Day?
Pray, whether sailed those ships all
three,
On Christmas Day in the morning?
O, they sailed into Bethlehem,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas
Day;
O, they sailed into Bethlehem,
On Christmas Day in the morning,
And all the bells on earth shall ring,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas
Day;
And all the bells on earth shall ring,
On Christmas Day in the morning.

AND ALL THE ANGELS IN HEAVEN SHALL SING.

And all the angels in heaven shall
sing,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas
Day;
And all the angels in heaven shall
sing,
On Christmas Day in the morning.
And all the souls on earth shall
sing,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas
Day,
And all the souls on earth shall
sing,
On Christmas Day in the morning.
Then let us all rejoice again,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas
Day;
Then let us all rejoice again,
On Christmas Day in the morning.

NOW, THRICE WELCOME, CHRISTMAS!

From Poor Robin's Almanac, 1695.
Now, thrice welcome, Christmas,
Which brings us good cheer,
Mince pies and plum porridge,
Good ale and strong beer;
With pig, goose and capon,
The best that can be;
So well doth the weather
And our stomachs agree.
Observe how the chimneys
Do smoke all about,
The cooks are providing
For dinner, no doubt;
But those on whose tables
No victuals appear,
O, may they keep Lent
All the rest of the year!
With holly and ivy
So green and so gay,
We deck up our houses
As trees in the day,
With holly and rosemary,
And laurel complete,
And everyone now
Is a king in conceit.

THE BLESSED CHRISTMAS TIME.

Christian Work
I walked in the world to-day, dear
Lord
Midst wealth and wealth and fame,
Clasped hands with power and beauty
Lord,
With loveliness and name.
I walked in the world to-day dear
Lord,
Midst perfume rich and rare,
Earth's choicest exotics poured cost-
ly breath
Upon the heavy air.
I walked in the world to-day, my
Lord,
Through crowded hall and mart,
Where fruit or loom and press and
brush
Each vile for glory's part.
I have come apart from the world,
Dear Lord,
Where the mighty rule and shine,
To find sweet joy at thy blessed side,
To feast on things divine.
Oh, the world is poor! I am rich to-
night
As I walk in the path of the star's
clear light,
And I need no share in the great
world's fame
I am crowned in the faith of the star
child's name.

THE STORK; AN ANCIENT CHRISTMAS BALLAD.

The following poem, written in the
middle or latter years of the six-
teenth century and published for the
first time in the current Atlantic,
was copied from a prayer-book of
King Edward VI, published in 1549,
which was found by a reader of the
Atlantic in an old house on the edge
of the Yorkshire woods.
The stork shee rose on Christmas eve
And, sayed unto her broode,
I nowe muste fare to Bethlehem,
To vience the Sonne of God.
Shee gaue to eche his dole of mete,
Shee stowed them fayrly in,
And farre shee flew and faste shee
flew,
And came to Bethlehem.
Now where is he of David's lyane?
Shee asked at houses and halles,
He is not here, theye spake hardlye,
But in the Maungier stalle.
She found him in the Maungier stalle
With that most Holye Mayde:
The gentyle stork shee wept to see
The Lord so rudelye layde.
Then from her paunteye breast shee
plucked
The fethers whyte and warme:
Shee strawed them in the Maungier
bed
To kepe the Lorde from harme.
New blessed bee the gentill stork:
Forevermore, quote the Hee,
For that shee say my sadde estate
And showed suche Pythe.
Full welkum shal shee ever bee
In hamlet and in halie,
And hight henceforth the Blessyd
Byrd
And friend of babies alle.

THEIR CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

Boston Courier.
Little Penelope Scroates,
A Boston maid of four,
Wide opened her eyes on Christmas
morn
And looked the landscape o'er.
"What is't inflates my bas de bleu?"
She asked, with dignity,
"Tis lissen in the original,
Oh, joy beyond degree!"
II
Miss May Cadwallader Rittenhouse
Of Philadelphia town
Awoke as much as they ever do there
And watched the snow come down.
"Well, I'm glad that Christmas has
come again."
You might have heard her say,
"For my family's one year older now
Than it was last Christmas day."
III
It was Christmas in giddy Gotham,
And Miss Irene de Jones
Awoke at noon and yawned and
yawned
And stretched her languid bones.
"Well, I'm sorry that it's Christmas
Papa at home will stay,
For change is closed, and he won't
make
A single cent all day."
IV
Oh, windily dawned the Christmas
In the city by the lake;
And Miss Arabel Wabash Breezy
Was instantly awake.
"Ah, what's that in my stocking?"
Well, in two jiffs I'll know!"
And she drew forth a grand piano
From away down in the toe.

A REAL LETTER TO SANTA.

Dear Santa Claus: I thought I'd write
These few lines to you to-night,
Just to tell you everything
We would like to have you bring:
For if they don't come from you
Goodness knows what we shall do!
Tommy wants a coaster sled
And a sweater (blue and red.)
Football, too, and skates and some
Chocolate candy and a drum,
Johnny wants a phonograph,
"Singing songs that make you
laugh."
Choo-choo cars that really go
And such things that go with it.
She would like some dishes, too,
And a doll's house, painted blue,
Mamma wants a dinner set,
And she'd also like to get
Earrings and some bric-a-brac
And lovely sealskin saccos.
There! now that's enough to bring—
I don't want a blessed thing
For myself, for I'm so small
I don't really count at all.
O! I'm very small, I'm told,
Though I'm thirty-five years old.
Just supply this list I send
And I'll be your grateful friend,
I must have the things, you see,
For my wife and children three,
Who demand them all of me.

A REAL SANTA CLAUS.

By Frank Dempster Sherman.
Santa Claus, I hang for you
By the mantel stockings two—
One for me and one to go
To another boy I know.
There's a chimney in the town
You have never traveled down.
Should you chance to enter there
You would find a room all bare;
Not a stocking could you spy,
Matter not how you might try,
And the shoes you'd find are such
As no-boy would care for much.
In a broken bed you'd see
Some one just about like me
Dreaming of the pretty toys
Which you bring to other boys,
And to him a Christmas seems
Merry only in his dreams.
All he dreams, then, Santa Claus,
Stuff the stockings with, because
When it's filled up to the brim
I'll be Santa Claus to him!

GOD BLESS YOU, MERRY GENTLE MEN.

The Favorite English Carol.
God rest you, merry gentlemen;
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ, our Saviour,
Was born upon this day;
To save us all from Satan's power,
When we were gone astray,
O tidings of comfort and joy,
For Christ, our Saviour, was born
on Christmas Day.
From God, our Heavenly Father,
A blessed Angel came,
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same;
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by name.
The shepherds, at those tidings,
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flock a-feeding,
In tempest, storm, and wind,
And went to Bethlehem straightway,
The Son of God to find.
But when to Bethlehem they came,
Where was this Infant lay,
They found Him in a manger,
Where oxen feed on hay,
His Mother, Mary, kneeling,
Unto the Lord did pray.
Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace,
This holy tide of Christmas,
All others doth deface.

THE SUMMONS.

John Kendrick Bangs in *Collier's*.
Now come the Christmas chimes to
summon me
From sluggish ease and cynic
thoughts of doubt
To deeds of kindly Opportunity
That on all sides of us now lie
about;
To spread the Gospel of Good Will
to all,
To sing the songs of Peace upon
the mart,
And fill with spirit of high festival
To overflowing every human heart.
To carry hope to hopeless ones, and
ease
The sufferings of grievous helplessness;
To carry joy to those whose miseries
Have plunged them in a maelstrom
of distress;
To lavish light on Darkness, drying
tears;
To enter into homes of them that
grieve,
And with the touch of sympathy the
fears
Of brothers in affliction dread re-
lieve.
That is the song those Christmas
chimes ring forth;
That is the summons sent to those
who fear,
Borne on the crispy air from out the
north
Upon this morn so thrilling in its
cheer,
Let him who hath of his possessions
spend
Not stores of gold, but Love in full
est play—
He wins the greatest treasure in the
end
Who LIVES as well as GIVES his
Christmas Day!

THE SEVEN SETS OF PRESENTS.

Detroit Free Press.
All the world's a Christmas tree,
And all the men and women merely
children
They have their presents and re-
membrances,
And one man in his time gets many
gifts,
His lot being seven series. At first
the infant,
With his feeding spoons and rattles;
Then the trumpet and tin soldiers,
skates and sleigh
And firemen's helmet, and then the
lover,
Sighing like a furnace with a gaudy
necktie
Knit by the lady's fingers. Then a
hubby,
Showered by his friends with socks
and gloves
And pipes that will not draw, ink
wells of brass
And fountain pens that leak, or else
some painted
China that his wife can use as well.
And then
The middle-aged of fair round belly
—a little cap
To hide his shining pate. The sixth
set sinks
Into the carpet slipper game or bad
cigars—
A silver cutter, since his teeth are
bad,
Last gift of all that ends this strange
Eventful history is falling sight,
Then they bring a magnifying glass
For grandpa.

A SONG IN THE AIR.

By J. G. Holland.
There's a song in the air,
There's a star in the sky,
There's a mother's deep prayer
And a baby's low cry;
And the star rains its fire while the
beautiful sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles
a King.
In the light of that star
Lie the ages imperaled,
And that song from afar
Has swept over the world.
Every hearth is aflame, and the beau-
tiful sing,
In the homes of the nations, that
Jesus is King.

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER.

By Elizabeth Stuart Phelps.
Lord, for the lonely heart
I pray apart,
Now for the son of sorrow
Whom this to-morrow
Rejoiceth not, O Lord,
Hear my weak word.
For lives too bitter to be borne,
For the tempted and the torn,
For the prisoner in the cell,
For the shame lip doth not tell,
For the haggard suicide,
Peace, peace, this Christmastide!
Into the desert, trod,
By the long sick, O God;
Into the patient gloom
Of that small room
Where lies the child of pain
Of all neglected most be fain
To enter, healing and remain.
Now at the fall of day
I bow and pray,
For those who cannot sleep
A watch I keep,
Oh, let the starting brain
Be fed and fed again,
At thy behest
The tortured nerves find rest.
I see the vacant chair,
Father of souls, prepare
My poor thought's feeble power
To plead this hour.
For the empty, aching home,
Where the silent footsteps come,
Where the unseen face looks on,
Where the handclasp is not felt,
Where the dearest eyes are gone,
Where the portrait on the wall
Stirs and struggles as to speak,
Where the light breath from the hall
Calls the color to the cheek,
Where the voice breaks in the hymn,
When the sunset burneth dim,
Where the late large tear will start,
Frozen by the broken heart;
Where the lesson is to learn
How to live, to grieve, to yearn,
How to bear and how to bow,
Oh, the Christmas that is dead,
Lord of living and of dead,
Comfort thou!

THE TALE OF CHRISTMAS.

By Ethel Butler Bowman.
There lies a little town afar
Where eastern starlight gleams
And in the lowly stable bed
A baby lies and dreams.
And close and close his mother holds
Her little one, and prays
As Mother-hearts have prayed since
the dawn
And will, through coming days.
There lies a quiet plain afar
Where shepherds watch their sheep
And angels burst celestial gates
And wake them from their sleep,
And where the mother holds her
child
In sheltering embrace.
The sages fall in worship mute
Before a baby's face.
There stands a lonely cross afar,
A crown of thorns is there—
And cruel nails and bitter drink
And hate that fills the air,
But, Ah! Beyond the shadowy cross
An empty tomb, and lo!
Where furtive guard kept watch,
—to-day
The Easter lilies grow.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

By Stephen Chalmers.
The hour of time where the frost's
gray rime
In fantastic glamour lies;
A sheet of light on the gleaming
white
That mirrors the spangled skies:
A great cold star in the heavens afar
And a moon trail on the hills;
The earth instilled with an awe ful-
filled
And the night with music thrilled.
The carolers sing as the church bells
ring,
While up in the organ loft
The sage owl croon as the calm,
sweet tune,
Comes swelling, but ever soft,
The message flies through the chang-
ing skies
By changing time and tongue,
But ever the same as the tale that
came
The shepherd men among.
Where the mistletoe and the laurel
bough
And the holly and bay are twined
Where the hearth fire gleams as in
ancient dreams,
One age is but in mind,
As in modern dreams the hearth fire
gleams,
The carolers sing as the tower ton-
gues swing
So, under the easement still,
Man's peace and God's good will.

A CHRISTMAS LETTER.

By James Courtney Challis.
Dearest Phyllis, pray remember when
you're making up the list
Of your presents for December (un-
less I am to be missed)
That I've slippers, picture brackets,
smoking sets of various types,
Half a dozen smoking jackets, thir-
ty-seven meerschaum pipes,
Twenty patent "kid glove menders,"
collar boxes by the score,
Of embroidered silk suspenders,
forty-seven pairs or more;
That each year since I was twenty
I've received a paperweight,
Have pen wipers, ink stands plenty
paper cutters—twenty-eight;
That I've Browning and Longfellow
by the hundred—every kind—
Shakespeare—black and blue and
yellow; Milton till I'm nearly
blind.
So there's just one present only that
I'm wanting in this year
Of my bachelorship so lonely—that's
yourself, my Phyllis, dear.
CHRISTMAS IN THE MORNING
An Old Egghead Carol.
We saw the light shine out afar,
On Christmas in the morning,
And straight we knew Christ's star it
was,
Bright beaming in the morning.
Then did we fall on bended knee,
On Christmas in the morning,
As praised the Lord, who'd let us
see
His glory at its dawn.
Oh, never thought we off his name,
On Christmas in the morning,
Who bore for us both grief and shame
Affection's sharpest scolding.
And may we die (when death shall
come)
On Christmas in the morning,
And see in Heaven, our glorious
home,
The star of Christmas morning.

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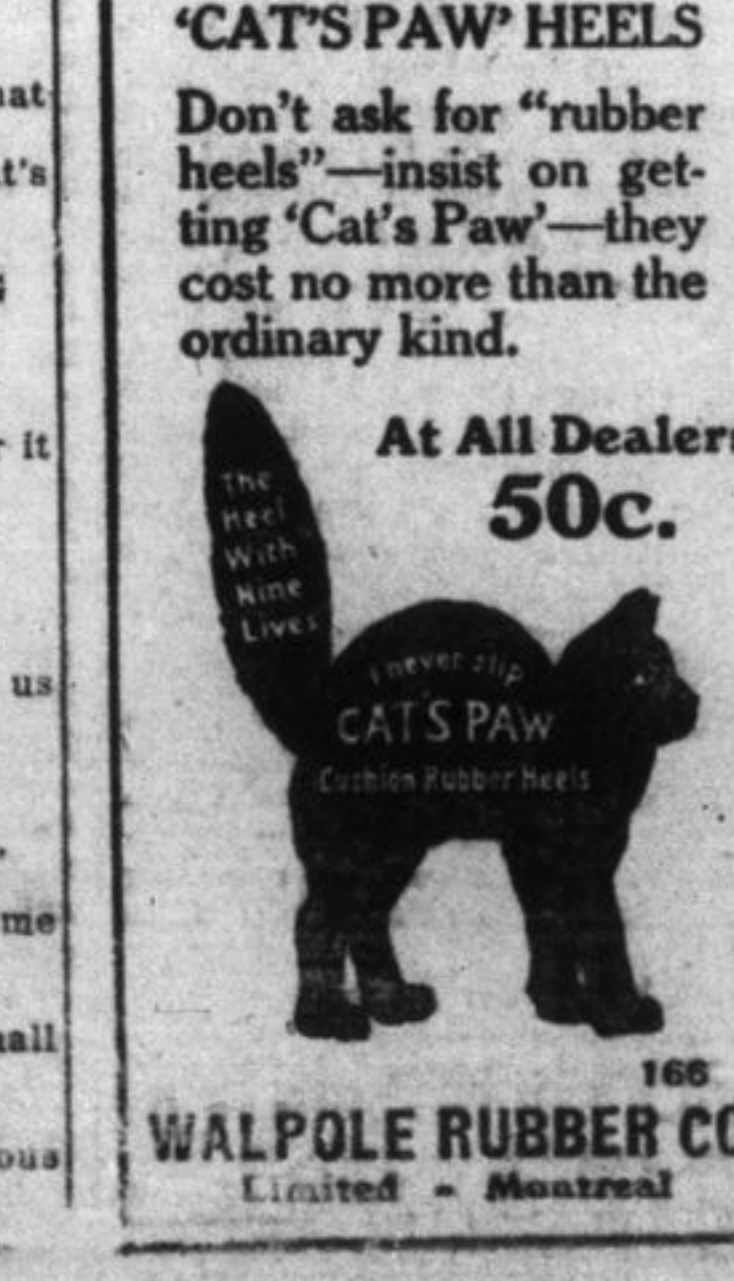


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