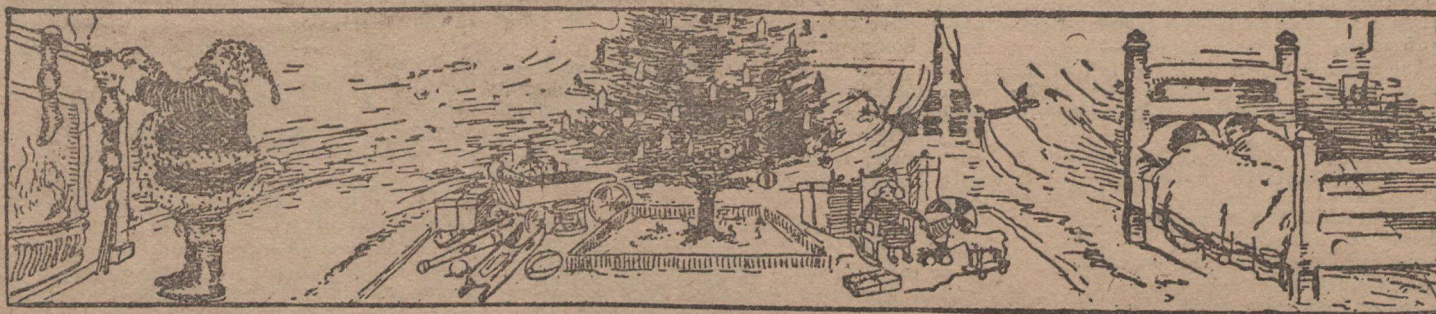


LITTLE FOLKS



—'Globe and Commercial Advertiser,' N.Y.

The Night Before Christmas.

They were going to stay awake and see who filled those long stockings they had borrowed from big brother Tom, and then somehow they saw a tree grow up in the middle of the nursery floor and the snowy little field beneath it instead of the nursery rug, and such numbers of things in it and around. Every thing they had ever told each other they wanted was there

and candles and apples and—— Oh! Was it! Could it be Santy himself over them! They could just see him through the branches of the wonderful tree and he was filling those long stockings with such knobby things.

Then wee Mary turned over and Ted sat up and would you believe it? It was grey dawn and mother was saying 'Put on your slippers dears!' And there was

no tree, but Mary and Ted are sure it was there 'Cause, Daddy we saw it and besides here are the knobby parcels we saw him put in our stockings—and—look at mine, mother! and mine, Oh!'

Then there was such fun in the big bed where mother tucked them in to open the parcels, and the things in them were far better than the wish ones for these were real!

Mildred's Gift.

(By Mary C. Callan, in the 'Youths Companion'.)

The 'Busy Bees' came swarming out through the parsonage gate. 'How lovely that we have enough ready to fill it in time!' cried one little bee. She was not thinking of a hive, but of a barrel. For



VIOLET.

these 'Busy Bees' were, after all, only little girls who met together every week to learn to do useful things. For a long time they had been making warm garments, under the guidance of the minister's wife. The fruit of their labors, with whatever gleanings they could spare from their own wardrobes, was to be packed in a barrel the next time they met, and sent as a Christmas remembrance

to a charitable society in the city.

Mildred ran into the house and up to the play-room.

'And there is not a single doll going in that barrel,' she murmured. Then her face grew grave with a great resolve. 'One of you must go, my dears,' she said, as she looked at her largest and loveliest, Violet. 'It seems as if I couldn't let you go,' she murmured.

A minute later she was sitting in her little chair with Violet on her lap, singing a lullaby.

'Now my precious Violet,' she said, 'I have decided to trust you to be my messenger, to carry Christ-

mas happiness to some little girl who has no one to love.'

And that is how Violet went to the city in the Christmas barrel.

Even into the wards of the children's hospital the Christmas feeling had crept. Little faces, saddened by suffering, brightened as the spicy green trimmings were hung about the walls, in preparation for the day. But in a quiet corner the house physician looked down gravely at a still little figure on one of the cots.

'There is no reason why she should not have a satisfactory recovery,' he said. 'This operation has proved very successful. She

