

Why?

Because the invisible pane of glass lay between; a power that was stronger than the foe prevented his triumph.

As I looked at that safe fly and angry spider, a thought came to my mind.

It reminded me of the safety of Christ's sheep.

The old enemy comes on and, apparently, his triumph is sure.

The Christian sees him coming, and, apparently, he must fall.

But, *invisible, yet real*, there stands between the protection of Christ.

"Fear not, little flock." "My sheep shall never perish." And this is the lesson for boys and girls. If we are in Christ's hand, and on Christ's side, we shall be safe. He will stand between us and every foe.

### THE MAN WHO LOOKED LIKE SANTA CLAUS.

By GRACE DUFFIELD GOODWIN, in "Sunday School Times."

The head of the firm of Pendleton Brothers, real estate agents, looked impatiently from his office window out into the whirling snow-storm. He was not in the best of tempers, and every boy in the great Broadway building scampered a little faster when he came to the glass door that shut Pendleton Brothers away from the rest of their fellow-men.

This was no unusual occurrence, for "Pendleton Old Man," as the office boys called him, was never amiable; he was only sometimes a little less disagreeable than people expected him to be. When he was particularly angry, he usually flung open the door, attacked anyone within reach, and continued his tirade until even the cat slunk away discouraged.

"Guess the old man's a little nervous," the janitor was wont to remark calmly, on these occasions, in a voice of compassion. Thereupon the head of the firm glared fiercely, retreated, and banged the door.

It had gone on so long that it had ceased to be surprising, or exciting, or dreadful. This morning the explosion had been worse than usual, and the janitor discussed the matter with Mr. Pendleton's coach-

man, who reported a lame horse and a grazed carriage as the causes of the present little difficulty.

"He's got to go to Delancey street," remarked the coachman, "and he's got to go in the car, and I'm thankful for it. Seems like he's uglier 'long toward Christmas than any time of year; it makes him mad to see other people enjoying themselves."

Mr. Pendleton's face as he boarded a cable car was proof positive of the truth of the coachman's statement. He wore a huge frown, and snapped up the conductor so sharply that the man retorted, and everybody had to wait until the dispute was settled. The frown, the voice, the manner, accorded ill with the snow-white hair, the heavy white beard and moustache, and the erect, gentlemanly figure.

When he reached Delancey street, on which one of his rich clients was buying property, he had cooled off somewhat, perhaps owing to the snow that lay thickly on hat and overcoat. He had not remembered his umbrella.

Delancey street was full of ash-cans, push-carts, half-clad children, and women with babies wrapped in shawls. Delancey street was above, or below considerations of weather. Mr. Pendleton was interested in spite of himself. Old New Yorker as he was, Delancey street was new to him. This side of life he had read of, but he belonged to the half that lived differently. He had not realized that there were so many children in the whole city.

Turning about, he found himself followed by a crowd of small boys, several of whom, their hands in the holes where the pockets used to be, were strutting along in comical imitation of his own military bearing. One look at his face caused two or three to burst into a shout:

"Santy Claus, Santy Claus! It's Santy Claus hisself!"

This was followed by more eager voices:

"Hi, Santy! I seen you uptown in a big show window!"

"Say, old gent, w're's your Chris'mus presents?"

"Are you comin' to my house?"

"I live with Billie Magee,—there where the ash-can is what's got a red poster on!"

Amazement, incredulity, incomprehension, anger, amusement, and something approaching good humour, chased each other over Santa Claus' features. He laughed outright—he, "Pendleton Old Man," who had all but forgotten how his own laugh sounded.

"I'm looking for 201," he said, smiling; "can anybody tell me where it is?"

"That's my house!" screamed the ragged little chap who lived "with Billie Magee." "And it's lots of us fellows' house, too. There's forty of us kids in Magee's."

"You've struck it right now, Santy," said one hatless youngster approvingly. "You come along o' me. Don't you faze yourself none with Johnnie Gwinn. I licked him yistiddy, and he hain't forgot it—have you, Carrots?"

Johnnie Gwinn calmly disregarded the taunt, save that he thrust a derisive tongue in his cheek, and constituted himself Santa Claus' guardian angel on the other side, from which sheltered vantage ground he administered stinging kicks to his tormentor.

Their progress was slow, and the red-postered ash-can spilled all its discouraged contents over the sidewalk in the skirmish. Old cabbage leaves, banana skins and celery-tops made dangerous going for one who chose to be fastidious; but, picking his way, with new laughter that warmed his heart, Mr. Pendleton, transformed into a snow-image, climbed the precipitous stairs, falling over pails and brooms used on Delancey street solely for purposes of ornament. He was half pushed, half pulled into a dingy front room, where an astonished woman backed off with an air of defiance, catching up a stray chair, not unused to this mission, for the laudable aim of self-defence.

Mr. Pendleton was embarrassed.

"Be seated, madam," he stammered, with instinctive courtesy towards a woman, removing his snow-covered hat and revealing his snow-crowned head.

This was greeted with a yell of joy from the clamouring crowd, who called loudly for Billy Magee. A small, sickly man came creeping out of a dark bedroom, blinking at