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fun over the preparations, and at last the eventful night arrived.

It was a perfect night. Little Johnnie Frost, after helping the Forest to put on its pretty new dress, had obligingly taken himself off. The Indian Summer Queen had hung the thinnest of blue gauze veils over the hills and valleys; the Moonlight with her magic wand had turned everything to silver, and the Dew Fairies had flung their jewels far and wide. This was the more delightful because it had been decided to hold the last meeting just outside the Cave where a lovely hemlock in the centre of a grassy spot made an ideal Christmas Tree. This tree was truly a wonder. A firefly glowed on the tip of every littlest branch, and all sorts of queer little parcels were tied on.

Everyone in the Merry Forest, whether members of the Club or not, had been invited, and there was a very large audience. The programme commenced in good time with a full chorus of bird voices. Then the Professor made a very elegant speech in which he praised the Club members for the splendid work and the noble spirit shown by all. He hoped that this spirit would be kept up all through the winter and carried to far-away lands, and that very early in the summer these happy meetings in the Cave of Fireflies might be resumed.

This speech was loudly applauded, and then Mr. Mockingbird sang a very lovely solo.

Next—you never could guess what came next—a recitation entitled "The Night Before Christmas," by Little Boy Blue. He explained to them first of all who Santa Claus was and described his reindeer. Everyone was so interested. And how they did laugh! This was followed by more singing. Then Puck danced a two-step to a lively piece of music played by the crickets on their violins. After this came some very funny stories, and a song by Doll Dimple and Boy Blue.

Then, while the birds and squirrels leaned from their perches to listen, and all the animals gathered closer in a ring around her, Doll Dimple, in her sweet and simple way, told the story of the Christmas Tree. She told of a dear little Baby who came from the skies with a wonderful Gift, and of a lovely Song heard in the sky, and a bright Light, and a beautiful Star.

They all thought it the loveliest story they had ever heard, and they wanted her to tell it all over again, so she did. Then the children sang again, and there was some more bird music, and the programme came to an end.

After this came the refreshments, and this part of the entertainment was a decided success. Mrs. Bear and Puck had certainly worked hard, and Puck's cleverness had secured some unusual dishes, but he could not be coaxed to tell how he managed it. There was a savoury beef stew, and potatoes, and nuts and apples and berries and honey, and a big fruit cake covered with white icing. This especially delighted the birds. There was milk, lots of it—Puck had milked Farmer Smith's cows himself. Everything was declared to be delicious, and all the Merry Forest folks enjoyed the treat.

Last of all, the Christmas Tree was stripped of its strange fruit. The presents consisted mostly of little bags of nuts, apples and maple candy. There were also a few little dolls and toys and trinkets that Puck had picked up. These caused a great deal of fun.


Just as the moon was setting they formed two big circles and danced around the Tree, still beautiful with its firefly lights, and everybody sang in his own way the song he knew best. Thus happily came to a close the Jolly Animals' Club.

THE END.

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Famine conditions still prevail in Persia, and the people are dying of starvation in large numbers. One of the C.M.S. missionaries, a lady doctor, writes that bodies are lying about the streets of Isfahan, and

fathers are poisoning their children rather than see them die of hunger. The wards of the C.M.S. hospital at Isfahan are nearly all given over to these famine-stricken people, but few of them have the strength to rally.

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