



## GRANNY'S CHRISTMAS.

Do you wonder, my grave-eyed darling,  
As you clamber upon my knee,  
What Granny's dreams are made of,  
What Christmas brings to me?  
Do you wonder why she is happy,  
Why, with her wrinkled brow,  
Granny can smile, my darling,  
As gladly as you do now?

Granny is old, my darling,  
And she looks at the empty chairs,  
But she hears your little footsteps  
Upon the old oak stairs;  
And she thinks of the dear ones, darling,  
Who were here in the days ago,  
And the feet, like yours, that scattered  
And the eyes, like yours, that shone.  
And the Christmas bells are pealing  
Over the winter snow,  
Bringing the same sweet message  
They brought long ago,  
Of Him who was born to show us  
That our love is not in vain;  
And that all who trust Him, darling,  
May meet in heaven again.

F. E. WEATHERLY.

## CHRISTMAS IN NAPLES.

The most interesting and curious sight of the holiday season in Naples is the Præsepium. A Præsepium is a life-size representation of the Nativity, or Christ in the manger at Bethlehem. The one in the church called Santa Maria in Porto is the finest in the city, and occupies nearly half one side of the church. In this representation there are several houses, or rather arches, with doors at which people are standing. The manger is always placed near the centre of the scene. The Virgin is generally robed in blue satin, with crimson scarf and white head-dress. Joseph is never very conspicuous, though he stands behind the Virgin attired in a handsome working-dress of the period.

The Holy Christ-child—the *Santo Bambino*—lies in a rich cradle, with linen covering. The Magi, borne by their black slaves, are very prominent in their grand clothes, jewelled turbans and satin tunics covered with jewellery, representing handsome royalties in the prime of life and strength. One of them is always black in complexion, and the others a rich brown, much darker than the average Italian. They all kneel reverently to do homage and make their costly offerings.

More attendants, and sometimes horses and mules, are behind in the distance, with raiment and various accessories of wealth and position; also any number of bright, picturesque peasants carrying presents of vegetables, fruit, sheep of all ages, and even dogs.

All these figures are life-size, and of brown-painted wood, extremely well-carved, full of expression, feeling and action. There are foot-paths, trees and flowers in all directions, making the scene wonderfully realistic. A goodly number of flying angels, suspended by invisible wires, are hovering above the holy group.

Last year in the Præsepium of Santa Maria in Porto there were thirty-six figures, two of which represented the artist and his wife, the latter as a shepherdess surrounded by large woolly sheep.

She was quite handsome, and wore a modern Roman *vesta* costume.

The Magi was carefully studied from pictures, and were dressed in the Oriental costume of the unchanging East.

These Præsepia are most characteristic in the churches frequented chiefly by the poor, who save their little hoards of chest-nuts, apples, tomatoes, etc., to put into the hands of their beloved *Santo Bambino* as offerings. The poor people revel in it all, and mothers are seen holding up their little ragged and dirty children to show them these wonders.

## NETTIE'S MISTAKE.

'That child really must be vaccinated this week, or she cannot go to school,' mamma said; and Nettie on the veranda outside of the open window listened eagerly.

'Yes, I will call and tell the doctor to come up at once,' answered papa, as he went out.

'Vaccinated! That's something awful, for Nellie White told me her arm nearly ached itself off. And "that child" means me. Well, what if I'm not at home when the doctor comes?' mused Nettie, guiltily. She watched the road to the village, and soon saw a buggy coming.

It was the doctor's, she was sure; and soon the veranda was empty and a hurried child was running across the fields towards the woods which skirted the pond.

What a hunt there was for Nettie when the buggy stopped before the gate! But she was not to be found.

It was more than two hours before she

## A GOOD HOLIDAY GAME.

There are some old games that should not be permitted to go out of fashion, and it is always worth while to tell about them, for the oldest of games is new with new readers. The old game called 'Throwing Light' is especially useful, because it can be played in a large company, as well as a small one. They were playing it at the Browns' the other day. Said Susie Brown:—

'I belong to the vegetable kingdom in all three of my senses,—at least, in all three of my nouns, though I am also a verb. I am black and green and brown, and yet sometimes I have no color at all. I am quite light, and yet I have to do with heaviness. I am very soothing. Many people weep over me.'

'You can't be a veil, can you?' interrupted John; but Susie shook her head at him, and went on.

'I give out light and heat, and yet I am



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appeared, and as soon as she was within doors another buggy stopped before the house.

'The doctor! I'm very glad, for I was afraid he wouldn't come, and you cannot go to school until you are vaccinated,' said mamma.

Nettie was silent.

She did not speak until the doctor had gone. Then she said slowly, with a deep flush upon her face: 'I thought the doctor was here a long while ago, mamma.'

'Oh, no; Uncle Will came for you to ride out with him, but we could not find you,' answered mamma, and there was a roguish gleam in her eyes. Did she know?

'O-h-h-h!' cried the dismayed Nettie; 'Uncle Will's rides are just splendid. Oh, mamma, I ran away and got lost in the woods, and almost fell into the pond. I missed that nice time, when vaccinating don't hurt a bit. Oh, dear me!'

'Remember it, deary,' said mamma significantly. 'Never run away from a duty, no matter how hard it seems, for it sometimes brings an unexpected reward.'

'I guess you are right, mamma,' smiled Nettie, with tears in her eyes.—Our Little Ones.

never burned. People carry me; people throw me away. To some people I am very offensive. People like me very much. Every one wants to get rid of me. Many people cannot do without me.

'You are not pain, are you?' asked Lucy. 'P-a-n-e and p-a-i-n, you know?'

'No, I am not pain,' said Susie, 'though I am very painful, and yet I am very delightful, so some people think.'

'Have you anything to do with funerals?' asked Ed, with a quizzical smile. He had been thinking deeply.

'Ye-e-s,' admitted Susie.

'Then I know you,' said Ed, triumphantly, 'you're a weed.'

The principle of the game will be easily understood. Words must be taken of several significations but of the same pronunciation, such, for example, as 'key, quay, or 'pear, pair, and pare.' If the word is not guessed after the leader has proceeded for a few minutes, the method of 'twenty questions' may be applied. Golden Rule.

MAKE BUT FEW explanations. The character that cannot defend itself is not worth vindicating.—F. W. Robertson.

## FAITHFUL IN LITTLE THINGS.

A young bugler in the French army lay on his narrow bed in the camp hospital mortally wounded. The commander, passing from bed to bed, to speak a kind word to each occupant, paused by the little bugler, and laid a cool hand on his fevered brow.

'Oh, general,' said the little fellow, 'if only I were a man, I might have helped to win the battle yesterday.'

'Win the battle!' he replied, 'why, without your aid we should never have won the day; though your duty seemed so simple and so insignificant I could not have done without you.'

## CARELESS SANTA CLAUS.

From north to south speeds Santa Claus his Christmas-crowded sleigh;  
He does a wonderful amount of labor in a day;  
And so, although a pity, yet perhaps it is not queer

That in his haste he chanced to make some sad mistakes last year.

It happened in a town that lies not distant from our sight—  
The name I will not mention here, but if I would I might—

He passed expectant, loving friends by tens and maybe scores,  
And left the presents meant for them at other people's doors.

The gloves he brought for Ella Green he gave to Emma Gray,  
Who had a dozen pairs from Paris just received that day;

The doll that sickly Lulu Lane had hoped for half a year  
He gave, with seven finer ones, to small Estella Greer.

The drawing tools requested by ambitious Tommy West  
He sent to idle Phillip Jay, who let them rust in rest;

The muff intended Hester's needle-roughed hands to hold  
He gave the banker's daughter—and the sewing-girl caught cold.

None needed more than Mrs. Brown a china dinner-set;  
And Santa brought it for her, but it went to Mrs. Brett;

And Mrs. Brett, who boarded, crowded it upon a shelf,  
Where no one else could see, and where she seldom looked herself.

Penallan Vane, the bachelor, society's delight,  
Had three fine silk umbrellas, with handles gleaming bright;

And only one was meant for him, one for the widow Moore,  
And one for Jones, the coughing clerk at Irwin's trimming store.

Now you may think the riddle was not very hard to read,  
That those who had too much would soon discover who had need;

But though indeed remarkable 'tis true which here I say:  
Not one of them has dreamed of the mistake until to-day.

It is too late to mend it; dolls broken, gloves out-worn,  
A pretty muff moth-eaten, umbrellas lost and torn;

But don't you think that all of us had better watch this year,  
Lest Santa Claus should err again, and make the blunder here?

