

The Coming of the Snow.

The clouds were copper-dyed all day,
And struggled in each other's way,
Until the darkness drifted down
Upon the sun-forsaken town.

Said people passing in the lane,
"It will be snow," or "Twill be rain;"
And school-boys, laughing in a row,
Looked through the panes, and wished
for snow.

Then came the wind, and shook his
wings,
And whirled the dead leaves into rings;
He made the shutters move and crack,
And hurtled round the chimney-stack.

Soon he went whistling o'er the hill,
And all the trees again stood still;
Then, through the dark the snow came
down,
And muffled all the sleeping town.

The keen stars looked out through the
night,
And touched the boughs with flakes of
light;
And moving clouds revealed the moon,
To make on earth a fairy noon.

At morn the boys laughed with delight,
To see the fields and hedgcs white;
The folks said as they hurried past,
"Good-morning! Winter's come at last!"

**A CHRISTMAS THAT ENDED IN
ASTONISHMENT.**

BY ELIZABETH HEYWOOD.

The Benson children were sitting talk-
ing about Christmas presents, and Austin,
the oldest, a boy of fourteen, said:

"I should like to send a box to our
cousins in the country."

"They never keep Christmas in the
country," said Robert, a boy of ten.

"It's time they began then," said
Marian, a girl of twelve.

"We'll make them keep it," said Rosa,
who was eight years old.

"How'll you scare up the cash to buy
the things?" asked Bob.

"Pa'll give it to us, for he thinks all
the world ought to keep Christmas," said
Rosa.

"But what shall we send?" asked
Charley, a boy of six, "sleighs and—"

"Sleighs! Send snow to 'Greenland's
icy mountains,' hey? They call them
sleds in the country, and every boy there
has got one," said Rob.

"Oh!" said Rosa, "Ma will know just
what to send—"

"To the girls, of course; but Austin
and I will get the things to make the
boys' eyes start out of their heads," said
Robert.

So the man who thought all the world
ought to keep Christmas was appealed
to for the cash, and gladly supplied it,
and you may know those children had
fun in buying the things to fill the box.

Scene changes to that farm-house in
Blinn's Hollow.

Four hearty children here are bound
to have a good Christmas as well as
those city folks who never send a fellow
anything.

The two boys are going out to skate
and slide down hill, and the girls are
going to have a little party in the after-
noon, and the boys are told to be at home
in good time for dinner, so as to be ready
for it after.

So to this party the girls came in their
school dress, and the boys only brushed
the snow off their every-day suits and
washed their hands and faces and combed
their hair. These children wore clothes to
fall down in if it so happened that a
fame like "Open the gates as high as
the sky" rolled a whole column in a de-
feated heap at once.

And they were having a splendid time,
such screaming and laughing and jump-
ing about, when in the midst of the
richest of the fun up drove the stage,
and all stopped to bet it was some old
goodey coming to spoil all the fun, when
in came the driver with the big box sent
by those cousins in the city, "hollering"
out the directions, "'Silas Hoskins,' by
express from New York."

"Anything to pay?" asked Mr. Hos-
kins.

"Nothing, paid right through," said
the driver, running out.

Then there was profound stillness
around that box for a minute, and then
the idea struck Dan, the oldest Hoskins
boy, that it would be well to open it—
there and then—and he and Silas Junior
sped out to find the hatchet.

Mr. Hoskins quickly pried off the top
of the box, and it was found to be filled
with paper packages, six in all—for the
father and mother were not forgotten.

"Which shall we open first?" asked
Susan, the youngest of the Hoskins, who
had the largest bundle.

"Open them all at once!" said a smart
boy of the company.

But it was decided to begin at the
youngest, and so go up to the oldest.
What a room full of O's went up, as that
paper disclosed a big doll with real hair
and a long trained white dress.

"Ain't it splendid! an' here's its box
of every-day clothes and a water-proof
and two hats."

Susy was so astonished she could not
say a word. Then Nelly opened her
bundle, and found a box of china dishes—
a full set, with knives and forks; and the
girls all said: "We will play keep-house
with these by-and-bye. We will set out
the stand, and have a tea-party; but we
won't have the boys to it, for they are so
careless they would kick the table over,
and say somebody else did it."

"Oh, don't worry yourselves; we boys
will take care of ourselves," said they.

Mr. Hoskins had had hard work to pull
out the next bundle. It was so large,
and it was directed to "Silas Junior"

"Now Si, open yours! Goodness!
A drum and six and two tin horns!
Won't we play soldiers by-and-bye. Oh,
you've got candles, too; look-a here!"

"Oh, what a splendid pair of skates!"
said the boys, as Dan opened his pack-
age, and found, besides, a handsome
book.

"Now, ma, open yours," said Nelly.
"Why, it says on it, 'Things for a
Christmas-tree,' and as she opened it a
great "aw!" went up.

Then two of the boys "piled out" to
cut down a little evergreen, and came
back shouting with it on their shoulders:

"Where shall we stand it?"

"In the middle of the floor," said some.

"Who'll hold it there for about an
hour?" said one.

"Couldn't you find one that would stand
alone?" said another.

Then Mr. Hoskins, who was delighted-
ly turning over his present, a bound
volume of the last Agriculturist, said,
"Get me the auger;" and when it was
brought to him he turned over the box
and bored a hole in the bottom, and then
whittled it out large enough to receive
the trunk of the little tree. Then Mrs.
Hoskins hung up the pretty things and
fastened the little candles to the limbs,
when some one said, "If it were only
night now!" "Oh, we can make it
night," said Si, going out and clapping
on the wooden shutters. So the candles
were lighted and the all-colours of glass
balls shone, and the other things looked
"too pretty for anything," all said.

"Now," said Mrs. Hoskins, "my pre-
sent was meant to be distributed, and I
shall give the company the nicest things,
because you who have received presents
do not need any more." So she handed
to one of the boys a square box, and
when he had opened it he started back
in affright, for out popped a monkey
dressed in red with a red cap on, and a
funny, little hairy nose peeping from
under.

Screams of laughter went up, and
some said, "Why don't it jump out?"

"Oh," said Si, "don't you see it's on a
spring, and can't come out. It's meant
for a scare!"

Then Mrs. Hoskins gave a little girl
another box, and she was afraid to open
it, and so one of the boys gallantly dared
the feat, and found four tiny books, and
was laughed at for a hero of the first
water.

Another little girl got a cradle with a
doll in it, and one of the boys found a
jack-knife in the little paper he opened,
and another a tin horn, and so on.

Then there was a cornucopia of candies
for each of the company, and it was a
merry time.

The boys at once got up a "general
training" with the fife and drum and tin
horns, and the girls settled themselves to
play keep-house with Nelly's kitchen.
Then they hung all the things that were
taken off back on the tree, and played
Christmas over again.

I think if those children in the city
had seen how happy this Christmas box
had made these children in the country,
they would have been satisfied that the
trouble they had taken in sending it was
not labour lost. Mrs. Hoskins did not
forget to write and tell them all about
its arrival, and the company they had
with them to share the presents. She
said they would remember it a long time,
and she hoped that country people would
awake to the matter of keeping Christ-
mas as a grand holiday. She would
like to think of the whole country ring-
ing with gladness on this happy day.

Passenger (on the vestibule limited)—
"Porter, does this train stop at Dinkey-
ville?"

Porter.—"No, sah; she doan' even
hesitate dar, sah."

"Mary Ann," remarked Mrs. Wickwire,
"I think if you will take a sweeping
glance around this parlour, you will see
that you have given it a very glancing
sweep."

**THE DRESS THAT
MARGARET MADE.**

She never would have
thought of it if the grown-
up people had not so fool-
ishly flattered her about
the way she made her
doll dresses. Her poor
little head was turned, and
she thought she could do
almost anything in the
way of dressmaking.

"I expect to see you
making a dress for your
mother next," one old lady
said.

Then Margaret felt that
she could never be satisfied
till this friend's expecta-
tions were fulfilled. "I
believe that I could if I
only had the chance," she
thought. "Big people's
dresses are just like dolls',
only bigger." And then it
suddenly occurred to her
that just that very minute
her mother was out looking
for a dressmaker. Upstairs
in the spare-room a new
dress was waiting to be
made. "Why, I have the
chance to try now!" said
Margaret. "Everybody is
out, and what a lovely sur-
prise it would be to have
that dress made for mother
when she comes in!"

Thereupon this dressmaker,
aged nine, flew into the
house. In five minutes
she had the cloth out and
was cutting adventurously
into its soft folds. "I'll
make the waist first," she
thought, "for most people
hate to make waists, and I don't." And
with that the waist was cut after Miss
Margaret's only pattern. With it she
had made very successful dresses for the
clumsy dolls which were the fashion in
those days. Truth compels me to say
that when applied to her mother's dress
it looked very different. For the first
time a twitter of uncertainty disturbed
little Margaret, and she lacked the spirit
to begin on the skirt. She did finish the
waist, but it was with a doubtful mind
that she surveyed even it, as it lay on the
bed. The sleeves were sticking out of
those two little holes in the pattern as
stiffly and straightly as though two
wooden arms were inside them. Doubt
was resolved into sad certainty when her
mother, being called to admire it, burst
into tears instead.

"Why, mamma!" faltered the poor
little dressmaker, "I thought it would
be such a lovely surprise."

But that proved too much for the
mother. Drying her eyes, she at once
gave Margaret a surprise. Though not
"lovely," it was successful.

For a long while afterwards this small
person was content to confine her skill
to her dolls, and paid no attention what-
ever to the flatteries of the grown-up
people.

A CHRISTMAS LEGEND.

"It is so cold, Gretchen, and the wind
grows keener."

"I know, Christel; come closer and put
thy head on my lap."

"Even poor Wagen is cold," murmured
the child, "yet you say it is the eve of
the Christ-child's birth. Was it like this
at home, sister?"

"Oh, no," the other answered at once,
"quite different, for there it was warm
with fires, and our father brought in
good things for us to eat; then we had the
beautiful Christmas tree with its lights,
and the golden peace apples which it is
said that the angels throw down from
heaven; then our mother used to tell
stories to us while our father sang."

"What stories?" asked the little one:
"could not you tell them to me?"

"About the blessed Christ-child. Lay
thy head on my knee, and, Wagen, come
nearer. Thou, too, shalt hear about him."

The bleak wind whistled down the
street, past brightly lighted homes and
crowds of hurrying people, glad with all
the Christmas joy, but the light and
brightness seemed far from the hungry
little foreigners as they shivered in their
corner, and Gretchen began her story.

"Many hundreds of years ago, Christel,
some poor shepherds in the field were
keeping watch over their flocks by night,
and as they sat together, a fair, bright
angel appeared to them, and they were
afraid; but the angel bade them 'fear
not,' and told them how Christ the Lord
was born in Bethlehem. Then up there
in the sky, see, Christel, among the stars,
they saw a multitude of angels, who sang
—ah, even more sweetly than our mother
sang to us—you know it, the angels'



TOBOGANING.

song. 'Glory to God in the highest, and
on earth peace, good-will toward men.'"

"But he went back to heaven and left
us as our mother did, and we are so cold
and hungry."

"Yes, he did," Gretchen answered
musingly, "but our mother used to tell
a legend of the fatherland, of the way he
comes again each year, and this is the
story: When the eve of his birth comes
round the same angels bring him as a
little babe to earth again; and here in
the cold and snow, the blessed Christ-
child wanders about. Think how chill
it is for him, little one; but he goes all
over the earth, and our mother used to
say that no one could be so hungry, so
cold, or so lonely as he. Over the bare
country hills, like those where the shep-
herds watched, and through the city
streets, he walks, till one child or all
those he came to save will take him in
and give him shelter in its heart. But
so many forget about him, just as they
forget about us," the little German con-
tinued sadly. "They are so glad in
their homes, or their hearts are so full of
other things that there is no room for
him; that was the way when he first
came to earth; then there was no room
for him in the inn. Still he goes to each
little child to see if its heart is open for
him, and think how sad he must be if
they are not—sadder even than we. Only
a little child can take him in on this
night, and our mother said that their eyes
must be clear from all earth stains, and
their souls as pure as when they first
came from heaven; then, if they are
watching earnestly, he may come."

"I hope that he will not have to go
back to-night," said the little one. "See,
Gretchen, look at that star: if we keep
our eyes upturned to it, will that not
keep them clear? Then thou and I,
with poor Wagen, will watch for him."

A long silence fell upon the little group,
while the busy world passed by. From a
church below the hill came the clear
notes of the angels' song: "Fear not,
fear not, for behold, I bring you glad
tidings of great joy," yet still their small
pinched faces were turned heavenward,
and the childish, homeless hearts waited
for his coming. The little one's head
dropped and her heavy eyes closed, but
after a time she tried to open them, as
she murmured with a smile, weary and
faint no longer. "There he is, Gretchen!
look! the light! It is the Christ-child!"

But the sister had fallen asleep, with her
head on her hands; so the little one sank
back with a last glad smile of earth, and
she went away, past the city, and over
the hills, home with the Christ-child.

He—"I never smoke a cigarette with-
out thinking what a fool I am."

She—"I didn't know before that there
was any virtue in cigarettes."

Teacher—"What does the realm of
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"Please, sir, not to lose our heads in
moments of excitement, sir."

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