

CHRISTMAS BELLS AND FAIRIES.

A PLAY FOR LITTLE CHILDREN.

Compiled by JEAN T. LEAVITT.

Scene.— A Wood.

Time.— Christmas Eve.

Dramatis Personae.— Six Christmas Bells. Six "Little Men."

Stage Directions.— Small evergreen trees in tubs or boxes may be disposed at back and sides of stage, or the wood may be represented by green boughs with cotton wool snow here and there.

Costumes.— The little girls are dressed in red paper costumes to look like the Christmas bells so commonly used in decorations. The little men's green jackets and red caps should also be made of paper, and a white feather is stuck in each cap.

Bells run tiptoeing on to stage, looking about them as if in a pleasant excitement of fright. They recite in chorus, with appropriate gestures:—

Up the airy mountain
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-playing
For fear of little men.
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together,
Green jacket, red caps
And white owl's feather.

(A rustling and soft footfalls are heard).

FIRST BELL.— Oh! Hark! Did you hear that?

Bells huddle together, looking over shoulders and listening.

SECOND BELL.— Do you suppose the little men can be about on Christmas Eve?

Little men rush in from opposite side. Bells fall back one step and draw in breath with a long soft "Oh-h-h!" They stand and look at each other.

LITTLE MEN.— What queer creatures! Who are you?

BELLS.— We are Christmas decorations from the house on the hill up there (pointing).

FIRST LITTLE MAN.— What are you doing in the glen?

FIRST BELL.— Well, the family are all asleep and won't miss us, so we came out to see what the glen is like on Christman Eve. But where have you come from?

LITTLE MEN.—

Down along the rocky shore
We make our home,
And live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide-foam.

BELLS. (Looking closely at little men).— We really not be afraid of you, after all.

LITTLE MEN.— Oh no! We never do any harm.

FIRST LITTLE MAN.— Do tell us what it is like in the house up there.

FIRST BELL.— Come closer, little men and we'll tell you. (All draw closer together and sit down).

BELLS (Recite in chorus).—

Tis the night before Christmas, and all through the house
Not a creature is stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings are hung by the chimney with care
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon will be there.
The children are nestled all snug in their beds

While visions of sugar plums dance through their heads
(Sleigh bells are heard and children jump up quickly).

FIRST BELL.— "Listen! Listen!"

(All hold hands to ears to listen. Sleigh bells sound louder and St. Nicholas is heard in the distance, crying):—

ST. NICHOLAS.— "Now, Dasher! Now Dancer! Now Prancer! and Vixen!

On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Dunder! and Blitzen!

To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!

Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"

(Sleigh bells die away).

FIRST LITTLE MAN.— "Do let us catch up to him." (Making as if to follow the sound, and the other little men run after him).

FIRST BELL.— Stop! Stop! No one ever watches St. Nicholas. Only naughty children pry into his comings and goings."

ANOTHER BELL.— Come, sit down again and we will tell you all about his visit.

(Children sit down again).

BELLS.—

"Down the chimney St. Nicholas comes with a bound.
He is dressed all in fur from his head to his foot,
And his clothes are all tarnished with ashes and soot;
A bundle of toys he has flung on his back
And he looks like a peddler just opening his pack.

His droll little mouth is drawn up like a bow
And the beard of his chin is as white as the snow.

He speaks not a word, but goes straight to his work
And fills all the stockings; then turns with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he goes.
(Sleigh bells are heard in the distance and St. Nicholas calling out.

Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good-night.
(Little men jump up and point to sky.

FIRST LITTLE MAN.—

"See the sky, it calls the sun,
Darkness soon will have to run;
And with darkness, fairy feet,
Disappear like wind clouds fleet."

(Bells rise quickly and look at sky).

FIRST BELL.— Yes, indeed, Christmas Day will soon be here; but we still have time to dance and sing.

LITTLE MEN.— "Yes, let us dance and let us sing, while we make a fairy ring."

(Children form a ring, run half way round circle and come back again, unclasp hands, right foot advanced in circle, raise left and right toe and revolve, join hands, run round opposite way and back again, singing:—

Let us dance and let us sing
While we make a fairy ring.

Right foot first,

Left foot then,

Round about and back again,

Tra la la, tra la la,

La, la, la, la, tra, la, la.