



my sweet creature,' her husband begged. 'You know a stew has been fatal to many a Fruitee.'

Mrs. Fruitee was fast shrinking into a small hard lump from terror when in the distance she espied her son closely pursued by a ravenous wolf-mouse. Poor Nutty would have perished miserably had it not been for Prunie. That brave dog fought off the furious beast until his master reached the house, and then dashed in, leaving behind him one current from the tip of his tail!

The next morning the cook, who had made them, carried them all into the dining-room.

'It is Christmas Eve,' she explained, 'and you are Priscilla's Christmas gift.' But they had no idea what she meant.



Children and Mother.

Oh! the lamplight was yellow, the firelight red,
And they shone both together on each little head
Bent over the letter I struggled to write,
With the gay little heads getting all of the light.
'Dear Santa Claus, darling,' they told me to say,
'Here's the list you've to bring us a week from to-day:—

A baseball and bat;
A gold watch, a cat;
A tea-set, tin soldiers, and game;
A nice dollie's bed,
A new jointed head;
An air-gun, some pictures with frames;
A peppermint cane.
A long choo-choo train;
A top, a policeman's patrol;
A big toy express,
A silk party dress,
A magnet, with fish and bowl;



'An automobile,
A pig that can squeal;
An engine, with gong, hook and ladder;
A glittery ring,
A bird that can sing,
Oh! nothing could make a child gladder.

'A saucer and cup,
A piano, a pup;
Hand organ, with monkey and cap;
A pony and cart,
A gingerbread heart,
And a baby to hold on my lap.'

But do you suppose that, when Christmas Day broke,
The children got half of the things they bespoke;
Nor did the Saint fail them, he got all they said,
With the queerest old jumble he piled up his sled;
But on reaching their chimney, he found that the flue
Was too small for his pack, and it wouldn't go through.



So he left what he could, and then scattered the rest
Over city and country, just where he thought best;
And the air fairly crinkled with smiles of delight
That made our dear youngsters own Santa Claus quite,
For thousands of children were happy as kings
With hundreds of turtles and trumpets and things.
—'Harper's Bazar.'

