

customs. We have our Christmas trees, and my little Canadians hang up their stockings. They listen eagerly to stories about Santa Claus and his reindeer. In my Northland, the Indians say that on the Holy night the deer all kneel and look up at the Great Spirit; but if anybody spies on them, his knees will be stiff all that year."

(Knock heard).

"Hark! I hear our friends."

Enter FRANCE, RUSSIA, ITALY and JAPAN.

All exchange greetings. Merry Christmas, Compliments of the Season, etc.

CANADA.—Let us sing a song to put us in the Christmas spirit.

(Solo, hymn or carol can be introduced here).

CANADA.—Though the shadow of war is over the land we must not forget that Christmas is the birthday of the Prince of Peace. The little children whom He loved must have a happy day.

(*Speaks to France*).

Mademoiselle France, will you tell us of Christmas in your land.

(Music of the Marseillaise as France steps to centre of stage).

FRANCE.

On Christmas Eve in La Belle France we leave out our wooden shoes to see what "P'tit Noel" will put in them. If you've been naughty you may get only a few pebbles. In the morning good children (most French children are good) find their shoes full of candies, and perhaps they find some silver money too. At midnight we are taken to church. There we hear lovely music. In one corner of the church we see tiny images of the Mother with the Baby Jesus in her arms. The shepherds with their sheep stand near her, and the Wise Men with their gifts.

ITALY *steps forward*.

ITALY.—"You have a Santa Claus. We have a little old woman called Befana. She goes round from door to door leaving presents for good children, but bits of coal for naughty ones. On January 6, the day of the coming of the Wise Men, we give our gifts. There is a great Fair held with booths built in the streets. They sell toys and have all kinds of fun."

JAPAN *steps forward*.

JAPAN.—"The children in my country have learned about the birthday of the Christ child from the good missionaries, who come to us from western lands. I can tell you about a Christmas tree party. The ladies at the mission house had it for the treasure flowers. Do you know what the treasure flowers are? That is what we call the babies. The missionary lady told us the story of the first Christmas. The tree was beautiful. It was trimmed with pretty flowers and balls that we made. And what do you think we had for icicles? *Glass Chop Sticks*. The bigger children would not take a second present; they said (*bow*) 'Honorable thanks, I have.' It was a very happy time."

RUSSIA.—"St. Nicholas is the saint of our country; and as he is the children's saint we keep his birthday on December 19. A great carnival is held on the frozen river by Petrograd. In the home when we sit down to our Christmas Eve supper, the table cloth is laid over a layer of straw. Each one pulls out a straw. The longer your straw, the more luck for you next year. We have a tree with lots of candles, and the children from the schools sing carols.

Listen! I hear one now.

(*Chorus of children singing a carol, very softly at first*).

Enter SERBIA and BELGIUM with chorus.

SERBIA and BELGIUM *take centre of stage, chorus group themselves in the background.*

BELGIUM.—"In my little country (please God it may soon be our own again), the children take the biggest wooden shoes they can find, fill them with hay, oats or carrots, and leave them on Christmas Eve for Santa Claus' white horse. The room is locked up, and in the morning all the fodder is gone and in its place are toys and all sorts of nice things.

SERBIA.—(*Three or four children act this*). "When the Christmas fire has been started, mother takes some straw (*takes bundle of straw*). The children follow her (*children stand in a row behind SERBIA*). Then she does this. It brings good luck.

(SERBIA *scatters straw, walking and saying "cluck, cluck"* The children follow her as chickens, saying "peep, peep." SERBIA *returns to front of stage*). "A box of wheat with a lighted candle in the middle of it is put up high in the east corner of the hall." (SERBIA *stands looking towards east, if possible, arms folded on breast. Children stand around with bowed heads*.

Father says, "May God bless the family with health, the fields with corn, the bee-hives with honey, the sheep with wool and the cows with good rich milk." (SERBIA *then turns towards children and says*): "May God grant us all health." (*To which the children say*): "May God grant it. Amen."

All on the stage—"May God grant it. Amen." (SERBIA *steps back and CANADA forward*).

CANADA.—"I thank you, friends, for what you have told us. Our friendship will be closer now that we know each other better. At Christmas we shall think of the children in every land and wish them all (*all together*) "A Very Happy Christmas."

For a closing Canada, Britannia, or any of the children may repeat or sing the following Carol:

The earth has grown old with its burden of care,
But at Christmas it always is young,
The heart of the jewel burns lustrous and fair,
And its soul full of music breaks forth on the air,
When the song of the angels is sung.

It is coming, old earth, it is coming tonight;
On the snow flakes which cover the sod,
The feet of the Christ child fall gentle and white,
And the voice of the Christ child tells out with delight
That mankind are the children of God.

On the sad and the lonely, the wretched and poor,
The voice of the Christ child shall fall;
And to every blind wanderer open the door
Of a hope that we dared not to dream of before,
With a sunshine of welcome for all.

The feet of the humblest may walk in the field
Where the feet of the Holiest trod;
This, this is the marvel to mortals revealed,
When the silvery trumpets of Christmas have pealed,
That mankind are the children of God.

Phillips Brooks.