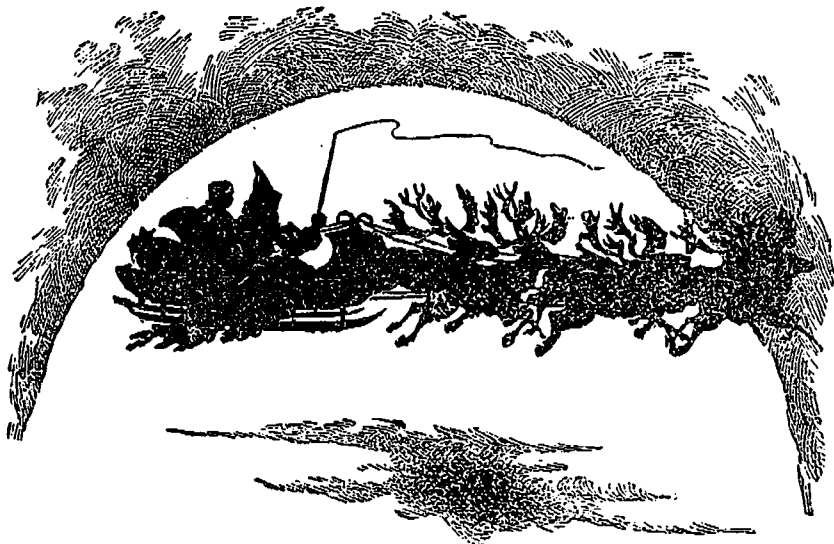


hearted, swarthy, little Italians who, with delight, hail the nativity of the *Santissimo Bambino* or Holy Christ-Child.

"Now, ho for the Northland and Russia, Sweden, Norway and Denmark," shouted Santa Claus, as he wiped the perspiration from his brow, and "Donder and Blitzen," the gay little deer, flew off as though they, too, loved the land where the snow flies.

The white tipped pinnacles and spires of St. Petersburg glittered brightly in the starlight as they passed down the frozen streets, and through the double windows could be seen

Just as Karl was opening his lips to beg that he might accompany the genial little gift-bearer to his own abode, and have a peep at flat, quaint Holland, he felt a blast of cold sea air and heard the roar of the ocean, while at the same instant the sledge came in contact with a huge iceberg. There was a tremendous shock, and the boy started up with a scream, to find himself by his own fireside, his brothers and sisters laughing and chattering around him, and his father shaking him by the shoulder, while he cried, "Come, come, Karl, wake up! You have been asleep here long enough."



SANTA CLAUS AND HIS REINDEER TEAM.

the gleam of the *samovar*, or great brass tea urn, from which the mother dispensed *chai* or tea mixed with ginger, while little Alexander Alexandrovitch and Valeska Fedorovna, with their young friends, joined in pretty graceful dances, such as the *tressaker* or the *roosula*. Karl was surprised, however, at the cheapness of the toys which Santa Claus saw fit to leave at these regal looking mansions. "But I get no credit even for these," he said, "as the children believe they come from *Baboucka*, a cross-grained old crone, with whom I dislike to be confounded."

Four o'clock struck as they sped through the pine forests and over the frozen lakes of Norway, and there was the jangling of sweet bells on all sides as sledges came from every direction, filled with good people on their way to the Christmas dawn service in the churches which now were all aglow with hundreds of candles. While the congregations were at their devotions, Karl and Santa Claus stole up to the neat cottages, where white curtains hung at the windows and all the tables were covered with snowy cloths, to toss in the doors useful and acceptable *Julkapps* or Christmas boxes for old and young, while in front of many a humble home they found a cake set out in the snow as a modest Christmas offering, of which they gladly partook, the long night ride having given them the keenest of appetites.

Sweden was much the same, but the sun was rising as the magic sledge crossed the *Norriska Fullen* mountains, church was over and the little Adolfs, Gottfrieds, and Ingborgs were eagerly watching the fastening of a sheaf of wheat upon a tall pole, that even the dear little birds of the air might share in the glad yule-tide cheer.

"Nice, generous folks these!" remarked the good saint approvingly, and slipping into the poorer cottages he shook a magic lance over the Christmas dinners which made the salt fish, served with horse-radish, the pork, milk, and yule-groats, taste as delicious to the simple peasants as the dainties of the rich, while in the children's shoes were hidden many desired treasures.

"It is growing too light for us to pause in Denmark," said Santa, as they sped away from Scandinavia, "and it matters little, as the young Danes soon leave off playing with toys, and yesterday I sent my servant Ruprecht there with a whole bale of fairy books and pretty legends, which the parents have probably distributed ere this."

But as they passed over Copenhagen, Karl looked down and saw many merry parties of boys and girls who were spending their holidays in the public gardens, sliding on the *Montagne Russ*, or Russian railway, on which run trucks furnished with comfortable arm-chairs. Two rode together, and seemed to find the rapid rush down one hill and up another the greatest of sports, while out in the rural portions of the country, every cow, dog and cat seemed to be lowing, barking and mewling for joy, for in Denmark animals are always given an extra allowance of food on Christmas day.

"Christmas Eve is over, and now for America, and then home," exclaimed Santa Claus

"Asleep indeed!" cried the lad, indignantly. "Why, I have been traveling all over the world!" and he proceeded to relate the incidents of his interesting journey.

"A wonderful dream, truly!" said Mr. Quentin, "but nothing but a dream, induced by the book of travels you have been reading."

This, however, Karl disclaimed with scorn, and as later he found that the Christmas customs of the lands he visited are indeed just as he witnessed them, he will always believe that on that memorable night he actually took a trip in Santa Claus sleigh.

Sunrise in the Thompson Canyon.

NEXT morning (Oct. 24, 1890) I rose at 6 a.m. We were just entering the Thompson Canyon. The mountains on either side were clothed at their base in all their autumn grandeur, and at one point the sight baffles description. There was the deep gorge five or six hundred feet below—there was the verdure covered base of the mountains and the clouds above, and towering above the clouds in all their majestic grandeur were the snow covered mountain peaks—jutting out in startling prominence. And grander still, as we were passing, the morning sun just lit them up and made them still brighter and glistening, especially in contrast to the morning twilight in the gorge below. The sheen of the morning sun slowly spreading down and down, past the glistening snow, past the dark green pines, till it reached and gilt with a golden tint the rich autumn colors of the foliage of the woods below. It was a sight that will not soon be forgotten. May it be the will of the Father that the Light of the Cross will so spread.

"O live for those who love you,
For those who know you true,
For the heaven that bends above you,
And awaits your coming too;
For the good that lacks assistance,
For the wrong that needs resistance,
For the future in the distance,
And the good that you may do."

—W. Taylor.

Golden Opportunities.

Many times I sit and wonder
Why we live our lives asunder
From the purest bliss that fills the human breast.
Why we close the golden portal
To the joys that are immortal,
Shutting tightly up within us, all that's best.



"HUSH! THE CHRIST-KINDCHEN PASSES BY."

Old Santa Claus.

OLD Santa Claus is a merry wight,
And his reindeers merrily go
Over the cottage roofs by the moon's pale light,
Through December's frost and snow;
He comes from a land of cold and night,
But he comes good gifts to bring;
And hearts grow warm as amid the storm
His sleigh-bells merrily ring.

The children's stockings hang up in a line,
Where the ruddy embers glow;
Where the bright stars shine with a light divine
On our human joys and woe.
And many a curly head nestles with hope
On its pillow of soft repose,
And this merry wight through the winter night,
On his journey of love still goes.

Many words remain unspeaken,
That would be the happy token
Of the good will which we bear to one another,
And the little acts of kindness
We overlook in our blindness,
Would go so far to help a weaker brother.

Precious moments fast are fleeting;
Let us give a cheery greeting,
And extend to all we can, a helping hand.
Let all hate and envy perish,
Only kindest feelings cherish,
And our hearts, beneath their sunshine, will expand.

Let us gather every treasure,
Filling up the brimming measure
With the jewels scattered all along our way.
They will fill our lives with sweetness,
And, in their grand completeness,
Turn night into the glad and glorious day.

F. F. Toronto.