

"Come in," he said. The door opened slowly, and a strange figure appeared before our astonished eyes. It was a small boy, hardly reaching to the handle of the door, and his little cap was covered with snow.

"Ah, ha!" said Keys, in his most impressive manner, "you have just come in from outside." At the evidence of such uncanny powers of deduction the little creature started to run away.

"Don't be frightened, my little man. I knew it from the coagulated moisture collected on your cap, but little boys must learn to be polite. Lift your lid." He did so, scattering the Christmas largesse all over our priceless Bokhara rug.

"Now come over here and tell us your troubles," said Keys kindly.

In the genial warmth of the roaring fire, his damp clothes steaming like a hot toddy—a strange concoction of the ancient Romans—his little lips lisped a tale of a strangeness such as had surely never been told before, unless I may be allowed to except some stories of mine which have been published by the well-known firm of Brown & Younger.

"Please sir, I writted a letter to Mr. Sandy Claws Esq., to bring me a hairy-plain for Christmas all painted red all over, and the Post-Offis they sent the letter back and says as how they can't find 'im. I knowed you could find anybody, so I come to you."

"Quite right, my little man," and Keys' keen eyes gleamed with professional pride. "You go straight home to bed and to sleep, and I will see that Mr. Santa Claus calls