

out. If there had been one, how it would have surprised him to see that he and his house and the pine tree were riding in a sleigh with Papa and May and Archie.

He would have been still more surprised if he had seen the tree standing in the parlor, covered with toys and trinkets and little candles.

"It must be spring at last," he thought, for it was very warm in the parlor.

So he poked a hole in the wall of his house, and out he came. But what do you think? He was not a caterpillar at all!

"Oh, see the lovely butterfly!" cried May.

He flew to the tip-top bough; and the children said there was nothing else on the tree so pretty as the butterfly.

"He must have come down the chimney with Santa Claus!" said May. And she never guessed that he came out of the caterpillar's house—*Youth's Companion*.

Five-minute talks on "Christmas and New Year when I was at school," by several parents and other visitors.

Recitation.—For a little girl:

If Santa Claus should stumble,
As he climbs the chimney tall
With all this ice upon it,
I'm 'fraid he'd get a fall
And smash himself to pieces—
To say nothing of the toys!
Dear me, what sorrow that would bring
To all the girls and boys!
So I am going to write a note
And pin it to the gate,—
I'll write it large, so he can see,
No matter if it's late,—
And say, "Dear Santa Claus, don't try
To climb the roof to-night,
But walk right in, the door's unlocked,
The nursery's on the right!"

Recitation.—By a girl:

SANTA CLAUS ON THE TRAIN. . .

On a Christmas eve an emigrant train
Sped on through the blackness of night,
And cleft the pitchy dark in twain
With the gleam of its fierce headlight.

In a crowded car, a noisome place,
Sat a mother and her child,
The woman's face bore want's wan trace,
But the little one only smiled,

And tugged and pulled at her mother's dress,
And her voice had a merry ring
As she lisped, "Now, mamma, come and guess
What Santa Claus will bring."

But sadly the mother shook her head,
"He never can catch us here," she said,
As she thought of a happier past;
"The train is going too fast."

Oh, mamma, yes, he'll come, I say,
So swift are his little deer,
They run all over the world to-day,—
I'll hang my stocking up here."

She pinned the stocking to the seat,
And closed her tired eyes,
And soon she saw each longed-for sweet
In dreamland's paradise.

On a seat behind the little maid
A rough man sat apart,
But a soft light o'er his features played,
And stole into his heart.

As the cars drew up at a busy town
The rough man left the train,
But scarce had from the steps jumped down
Ere he was back again.

And a great big bundle of Christmas joys
Bulged out from his pocket wide;
He filled the stocking with sweets, and toys
He laid by the dreamer's side.

At dawn the little one woke with a shout,
'Twas sweet to hear her glee;
"I knowed that Santa would find me out;
He caught the train, you see."

Though some from smiling may scarce refrain,
The child was surely right,—
The good Saint Nicholas caught the train,
And came aboard that night.

For the saint is fond of the masquerade
And may fool the old and wise,
And so he came to the little maid
In an emigrant's disguise.

And he dresses in many ways, because
He wishes no one to know him,
For he never says, "I am Santa Claus,"
But his good deeds always show him.

Henry C. Walsh.

HOW CHRISTMAS BEGAN.

1. The beginning of Christmas day is away back in the fourth century. It was Pope Julius who first thought of having a holiday on Christ's birthday. He asked St. Cyril to find out the real date of Christ's birth. And the result was that December 25 was fixed upon.

2. The season which we now celebrate was in the early time a heathen festival. It was many long years before it became a Christian holiday. It was Pope Gregory the Great who said, "The heathen festivals must gradually be changed into Christian ones, and the Christian festivals must imitate those of the time before Christ."

3. And this is just what has taken place. In Italy the old Saturnalia and Crumalia of the Romans have been turned into a celebration of Christ's birth. And in Germany, the old "Jul" (Yule) festival was the beginning of our Christmas.

4. The word Christmas means "Christ's mass," which was the way in which the holiday was first celebrated. The