



# THE CHRISTMAS FAIRYLAND

(By Charles Battell Loomis.)

Old Mark Duncan was always a kindly man and no one ever appealed to him for help in vain.

At twenty-five years he was a promising farmer in Connecticut; five years later he was a more promising farmer out West, and ten years later he was a railroad man, and so rich that no one, not even he, knew the extent of his riches.

Wealthy and kindly was he, but not imaginative. Very practical and hard-headed and soft-hearted, which is a good deal better than being hard-hearted and soft-headed.

But his wife, who had been a school teacher in Connecticut before he married her, while as kindly as he, was much given to day dreams; and when a son came to them he partook of the kindness of both parents and the imagination of his mother.

Most successful westerners come to New York sooner or later. The Duncans were no exception, it so happening that they arrived in December of the year 1906. While their palace was building they stayed at a hyphenated hotel on Fifth avenue.

Oliver Wolcott Duncan was just 21, but as his father was not in society and did not care to be, the young man did not have a party in his honor.

Instead of that, he decided to convert Madison Square into a fairyland on Christmas eve for the benefit of such of the poor of New York as cared to come to the festivities.

The Mayor of New York at that time was a man of a very gay and sympathetic nature, and when Oliver told him what he intended to do was delighted and assured him that he would aid him by every means in his power.

Old Mark may have thought the idea foolish, but he did not say so, and as the money was to be expended for people who had had little joy in their lives, Mr. Duncan told the young man to go ahead and spend all he wanted short of paving the square with gold blocks.

As for Mrs. Duncan, she was delighted with the idea and gave Oliver all the help in her power, suggesting many of the best features and acting with the enthusiasm of a young girl.

Many of the poor of New York enjoyed the wonderful spectacle, but you may get a better idea of it if I follow the fortunes of Jimmy McKenna, who lived on Cherry street and who first heard of what was to be done when a gilded wagon, drawn by six milk white horses passed by his home.

Seated in the chariot was a very noble-looking personage, who looked as if his ancestors had been princes for seven generations. His name was Tommy Scanlon.

He distributes pretty cars with a picture on one side of Santa Claus trying to climb into the top of Madison Square tower, and on the other an invitation to every child under 12 to come to Fairyland opposite the Flatiron building at any time from 7 to 12 Christmas eve.

Jimmy wanted his mother to go up with him, but Fairyland was a word not in her dictionary, and while she was glad to have him go and take little Nelly, she stayed behind.

It was a bracing winter evening, and the city was still decorated with ice crystals that a storm had left behind when it passed over the land.

There was a goodish crowd steering for Fairyland, and Jimmy found it hard to obtain even standing room for his little sister on the electric car that carried them up.

The air was filled with shouts of approval as each carload was emptied at the square. The inexhaustible purse of the Duncans had indeed made it a fairyland—although the ice storm had contributed much of the glitter and splendor.

There must have been a million tiny incandescent lights on the ends of the branches of the many trees in Madison Square, and I verily believe that the sun would have been blinded by the glare if he had not gone to be long since.

Gaping mouthed children wandered here and there, trying to see all there was to be seen and to do all there was to do.

The first thing that caught the children's eyes was the apparatus for coasting that Oliver had caused to be built. It was an inclined plane running around all four sides of the square and covered with well packed snow.

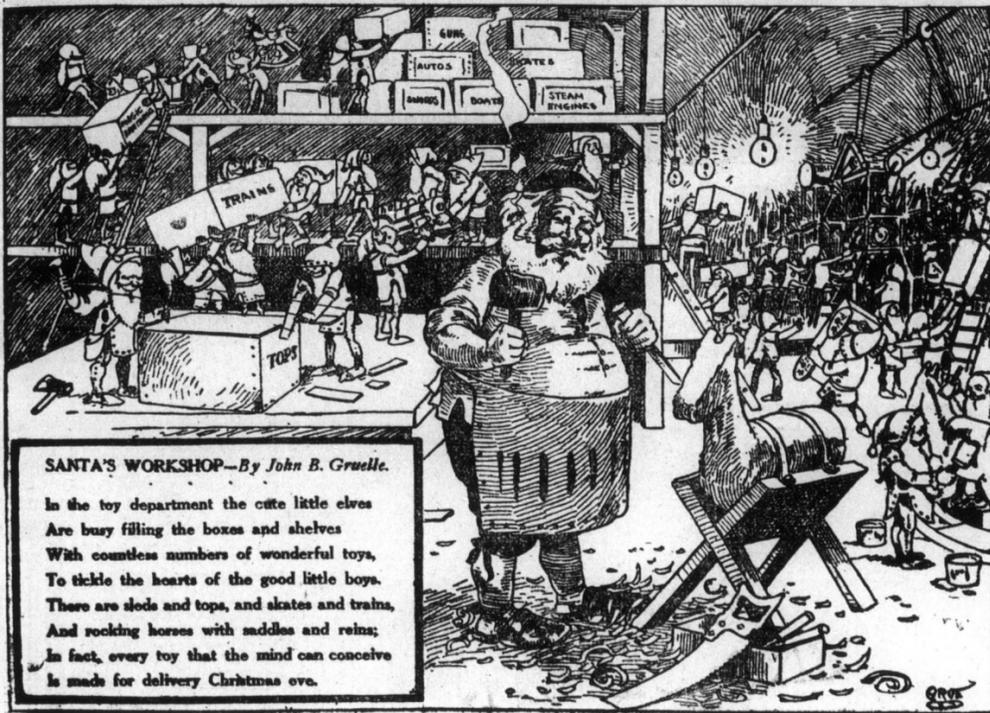
Jimmy and his sister went to the door of admission, and, seeing a man in a very gorgeous uniform standing there, the boy said:

"Does it cost anything to coast?"

"No, indeed," said the man; "we pay you to go up in the elevator and you can take the sled home with you."

He pointed as he spoke to a pile of sleds and Jimmy picked out two. Then the man handed each a quarter and they stepped with many others into a huge elevator that bore them swiftly to the top of the hill.

Arrived at the top, they cast themselves on their sleds and rushed down



SANTA'S WORKSHOP—By John B. Gruelle.

In the toy department the cute little elves  
Are busy filling the boxes and shelves  
With countless numbers of wonderful toys,  
To tickle the hearts of the good little boys.  
There are sleds and tops, and skates and trains,  
And rocking horses with saddles and reins;  
In fact, every toy that the mind can conceive  
Is made for delivery Christmas eve.

## COMPLIMENTS TO OUR MANY READERS

The Times wishes all its readers and friends a very Merry Christmas. May health and happiness and prosperity be theirs. May they be able to look back without regret and to look forward with hope. We go through this world only once, and let it be our resolve to endeavor to leave it better than we found it.



SANTA'S WORKSHOP—By John B. Gruelle.

This wonderful workshop is just for girls,  
Where the dolls are made with the loveliest curls,  
The bluest eyes and the rosiest cheeks;  
They make a million in just two weeks.  
Wouldn't you just like to take a peep  
At these beautiful dolls when the workers sleep?  
But little girls cannot go, it seems,  
To Kris Kringle's workshop, except in dreams.

THE FINISHING TOUCHES.

the speedy, turning four sharp corners, but meeting with no accident. Almost before they knew it they had passed out into the street and entered the park again, this time seeing straight ahead of them a wonderful fountain that spouted seven different kinds of sea water.

No one could drink at this fountain unless he was provided with a silver cup, so the big Santa Claus said who stood by its side, but he smiled as he said it, and handed to each child who came forward a very pretty silver cup with "Merry Christmas, 1906," engraved on it.

Jimmy and Nelly were so thirsty from their swift ride that they did not stop to examine their cups, but drank eagerly an copiously of the various flavors.

When they had quenched their thirst (for the time being) they became aware of an enormous barrel, at least 20 feet high and 10 feet in circumference, which stood to the right of the fountain. From its top hung many ropes, and walking around and around it was another Santa Claus, inviting any boy who wished to climb up the rope and take what he saw.

Nelly wanted to climb up, but Jimmy told her he'd grab for two when he got there. He had one good pocket in his jacket, with no hole in it worth mentioning.

He took hold of the rope and went up hand over hand, and the sight that met his eyes almost made him lose his hold. The finest candies that Oliver could get in New York were in that barrel, and by means of an ingenious piece of mechanism the contents kept rising to the top so as to be within reach of the eager paws that were clutching on all sides.

From time to time the supply was replenished, and I would not dare say how many thousand pounds of candy were put in and then grabbed out of that barrel by soiled little hands.

Jimmy wished he might hold on by his chin and so use both hands, but he was not gymnast enough for that, so he had to content himself by making big clutches with his right hand and filling his pockets before his strength gave out.

Not far from the barrel there was a flapjack, on top of which was a caak; and those boys who could climb were invited to do so by Oliver himself, who, with his mother, was enjoying the gay scene that the park presented.

In order to prevent confusion a companion flapjack had been placed very near the other, so that as soon as a boy had helped himself to the contents of the cask he could slide down and make way for others.

Jimmy had no idea what was in the cask, but he shined up, telling little Nelly not to cry, for he'd be back soon. "Jimmy'll be all killed," said she, her lips quivering; but Mrs. Duncan, who was standing by, patted her on the head and said:

"No, Jimmy will come down by the other pole, and will bring something for you, I'm sure."

When Jimmy put his hand into the cask, he did so with perfect confidence, although there might have been crabs or spiders in it. But it was not crabs, but eagles that were in the cask; gold eagles, and Jimmy, supposing by the feel of them that they were quarters, gladly clutched a whole handful.

When he rejoined Nelly, he was a little disappointed. "Dey're counterfeit," said he, for he had never before seen any gold money.

But when Mrs. Duncan explained to him that each coin was worth forty quarters, he immediately wanted to climb up again. Oliver hated to refuse him, but there were crowds of children waiting their turn, so he said:

"Have you been to get your squirrels?"

"No! Where?" said Jimmy, hastily putting his money in the lining of his hat.

"Over by the Saint Gaudens statue of Farragut," said Oliver; and Jimmy, taking his little sister's hand, threaded his way to where there was a huge gilded cage containing numberless gray squirrels.

"Give us a squoll," said Jimmy, eagerly, to the gaily attired attendant, who, bowing low, said:

"It shall be as you wish."

Then he opened a door in the cage and drew out a silver gray squirrel.

"One for Nelly, too," said Jimmy, never forgetful.

"It looks like a rat, only its tail is swelled," said Nelly, putting her squirrel's head in her mouth.

The little animals were as tame as kittens; and indeed they had nothing to fear from the McKennas, who loved animals, and who had once made a pet of a rat.

While they were petting the squirrels, they heard music away up above them, and on asking a superb young prince in a cocked hat where it was, they were told that it came from the fairy orchestra.

"I can't see," said Nelly, with a tinge of wail in her voice. She was fearful of losing some phase of this wonderful fairyland.

"Oh, I see it, I see it!" shouted Jimmy. "Look, Nelly, up in der tree. Little fellers. Gosh can't dey play!"

The "littie fellers" were dressed up to represent fairies, and not one of them was more than 15 years old; but they (Continued on Page 42.)