

we not take thought of these? If in so doing we miss some customary luxury, if we take away from the richness of some yearly gift, shall not the want, the defect, be eloquent of haspiness to some one, perhaps only a little stranger child, whose day but for that would have been dark indeed.

But let us give wisely, not so scatter our largeness that the nimblest beggar may get the largest share. It is very pleasant to give, too pleasant to give, when benisons follow bounty. So many are charitable who do not make the Church their almoner. Should this be? Can we not give simply in the name of the Lord Jesus? When we lay our gift upon the altar shall it not be something to think that it will carry thence to some poor soul a message from the Saviour of the world?

All the world has changed since the mystical hour of His birth. At His coming, humanity leaped at a bound to a higher plane of life and hope. For as years advance and days grow sadder through loss, does not His image fill the vacant place death has left, with divine promises of immortality? Does there not rest a tenderer light on the face of every little child since He was cradled in Bethlehem? Are there not sweeter cares, more sacred loves, that wait on motherhood, since He, the Lord of Glory, in gracious humility was born of a pure virgin?

We fall far below the meaning of the time, if we fail to make this day one of spiritual strength and rejoicing. It is one of the evils of these years that too much stress is put upon the mere worldly keeping of Christmas. It is easy to beautify an altar with flowers, and so gratify individual vanity, or elevate the parish standard of taste in church decoration; it is hard to give these with simplicity, and think of them no more than as offering to Christ. It is easy for weary feet to throng the aisles of our churches, it is hard for weary minds to divest themselves at this time of the cares of household preparation, and not hurry their devotions and slight the tremendous truth that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. But let us keep steadily before us the fact that all rejoicing on this day is worse than idle, unless pervaded with earnest thanksgiving to God for His unspeakable gift in Christ Jesus our Lord.

As Christmas falls on Thursday this year, the following quotation from an ancient manuscript in the British Museum may be apropos:

"If Xmas-day on Thursday be,
A windy winter ye shall see;
Windy weather in each week,
And hard tempests, strong and thick;
The summer shall be good and dry,
Corn and beasts shall multiply;
That year is good for lands to till,
Kings and princes shall die by skill;
If a child born that day shall be,
It shall happen right well for he;
Of deeds he shall be good and stable,
Wise of speech and reasonable;
Whoso that day goes theiving about,
He shall be punished without doubt;
And if sickness that day betide,
It shall quickly from thee glide."

COMING TO CHRIST.

In the Bible we are told
How the wise men came of old,
By the star before them led
To the Saviour's manger bed.

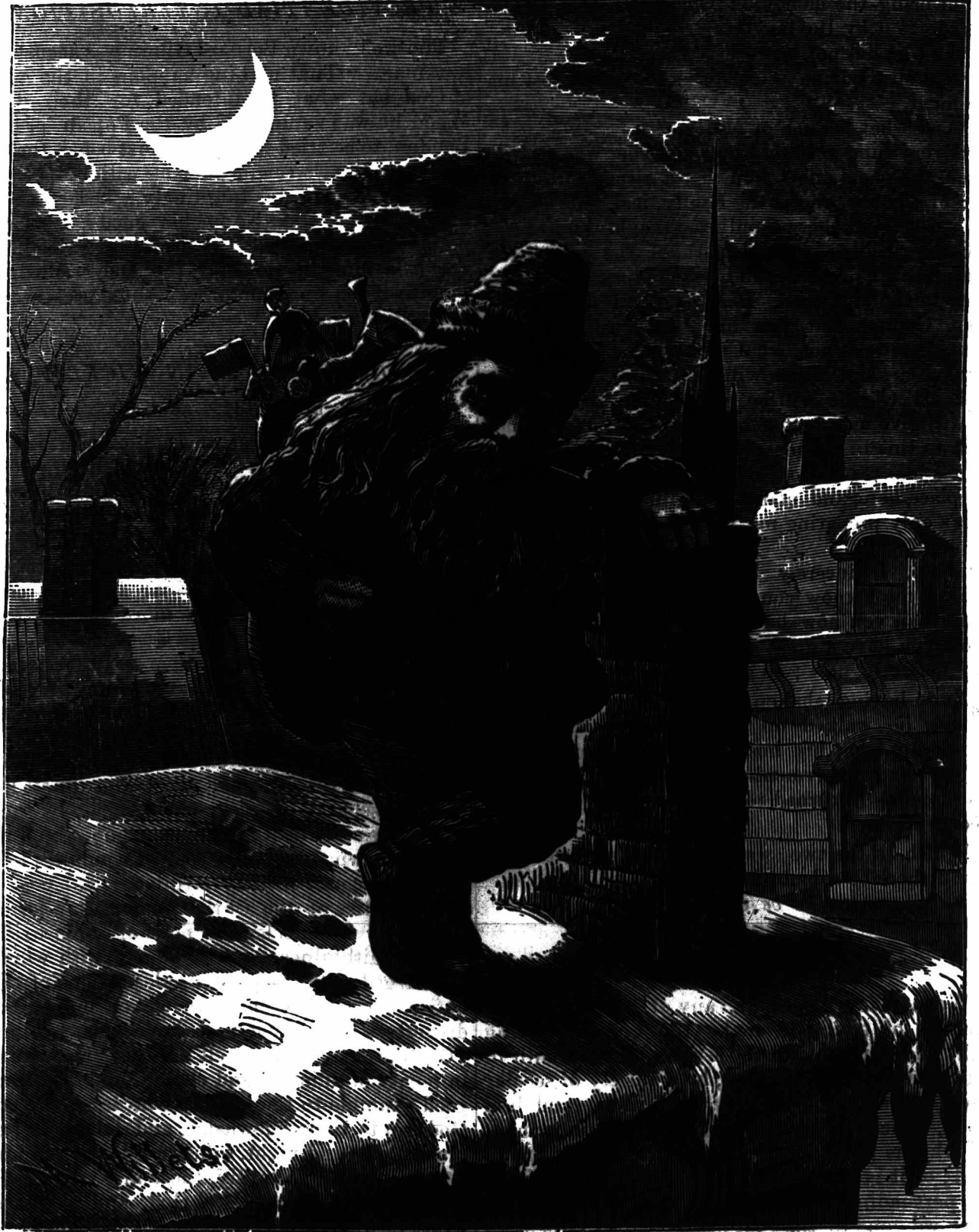
No bright meteor twinkles now
Guiding where to seek and bow,
But each tiny star doth cry,
"Lo, the Saviour dwells on high."

We are taught in God's good Word
How to seek and find the Lord;
Come and let us worship too,
As the Bible bids us do.

Lord, to Thee, our God and King,
We our hearts alone can bring,
Yet Thou wilt this gift prefer
Far beyond their gold and myrrh.

Dr. John Hall says: "Give according to your means, or God will make your means according to your giving."

Never court the favor of the rich by flattering their vanities or their riches.



Children's Department.

SANTA CLAUS.

Nannie, you know, Christmas-eve *really* comes, and we have written our letters to Santa Claus, and put them under the library door, and he *really* comes and gets them! Besides, the very, *very* best is all day Christmas. The going to the early service, the evergreens and the beautiful singing at church—then the Christmas-tree and the party! Oh, I do wonder, if any other little girls *ever* have as good a time as we do!" And then Nannie began singing:

"The Prince of Peace, you know, to-day
Was born, and poor, in a manger lay."

"Mamma, just think of His"—and Nannie spoke very softly—"lying in a manger—a dear, little, soft baby. Just think, Mamma, if you were so poor that baby-boy had to lie out in a stable! Wouldn't it be dreadful? Oh, I'm so glad no one is quite so poor now."

"I'm afraid there are a great many people, and here in this city, too, who haven't as comfortable a place to sleep in as a stable, even. Don't you feel sorry for them?"

"Oh, mamma, I told Nannie that I didn't believe any other little girl ever had as good a time on Christmas as we do; but are there really little children who won't have *any* Christmas presents, perhaps not even any dinner?"

"Yes, dear, a great many."

Lillie's little heart was very tender, and the tears were running down her cheeks while she said.

"If I asked Santa Claus to keep *all* my presents, and not bring me one single one, but to give them to some poor little girl who wouldn't have any, do you suppose he would?"

"I know a nicer way," said Nan. "Couldn't

we find a poor little girl somehow, and bring her in the house, give her some dinner, and let her see the Christmas-tree and the party? If I was a poor little girl and had never seen a tree and a party, I know I should be just perfectly wild to see them. Don't you think it would be nice, Bob?" For Bob Thomas, the little girl's brother had just walked—no, jumped—into the room.

"No! who wants a beggar girl at our party? Perhaps she'd bring her cold victuals basket, and carry off all our candy and presents in it. Give her some 'grub' on the steps if you want to."

"Why, Bob Thomas, how would you like to have your Christmas dinner just 'grub' on the steps, if you never had eaten anything nice in your whole life? If we can find a little girl—and I guess perhaps mamma is going to let us look for one, aren't you, mamma?—won't you ask Santa Claus not to give you quite so much as he always does, but to give some to that little girl? I'm going to, and you will won't you, Lillie?"

"Well, I think that's cool. Say, mamma, do you know what the girls are talking about? We don't want any beggars at our Christmas party. I want all the presents I can get."

"Yes, Bob, I'm sorry so say I think you do. But whose children are the beggars?"

"God's I suppose."

"You know they are, and not only that, but I believe He loves them even more tenderly than he does the children who have so much in this world, because they need his love so much more. You can do as you please, but I am very glad Nan and Lillie would like to do something for the poor. You may write Santa Claus about a poor child's presents, and I hope by Christmas day there may be a little child here to have some dinner and a sight of the tree."

Bob didn't say anything till he got into the hall where Nannie heard him mutter something about needing new skates anyhow.

When Norman had promised to write to Santa