

Little Folks.

In the Orphan-House.

(A Legend of Christmas Eve.)

They sat at supper on Christmas Eve,

The boys of the orphan school,
And the least of them all rose to say

The quaint old grace in the old-time way

Which has always been the rule:
'Lord Jesus Christ, be Thou our guest,

And share the bread which thou hast blessed.'

The oaken rafters holly bedight
And brave in their Christmas guise,

Cast shadows down on the fair young face,

The hands clasped close with childish grace,

The reverent wistful eyes;
And for a moment as he ceased
Silence fell on the Christmas feast.

The smallest scholar he sat him down,

And the spoons began to clink
In the pewter porringers one by one,

But one little fellow had scarce begun

When he stopped and said, 'I think'—

'And then he paused with a reddened cheek,

But the kindly Master bade him 'speak!'

'Why does the Lord Christ never come?'

Asked the child in a shy soft way;
'Time after time we have prayed
that He

Would make one of our company
Just as we did to-day,

But He never has come for all our prayer,

Do you think he would if I set Him a chair?'

'Perhaps! who knoweth?' the Master said,

And he made the sign of the cross,

While the zealous little one gladly sped

And drew a chair to the table's head

'Neath a great ivy boss,
Then turned to the door as in sure quest

Of the entrance of the Holy Guest.

Even as he waited the latch was raised,

The door swung wide, and lo!

A pale little beggar boy stood there
With shoeless feet and flying hair

All powdered white with snow.

'I have no food, I have no bed,
For Christ's sake take me in,' he said.

The startled scholars were silent all,

The Master dumbly gazed;
The shivering beggar he stood still—

The snow flakes melting at their will—

Bewildered and amazed

At the strange hush; and nothing stirred,

And no one uttered a welcoming word.

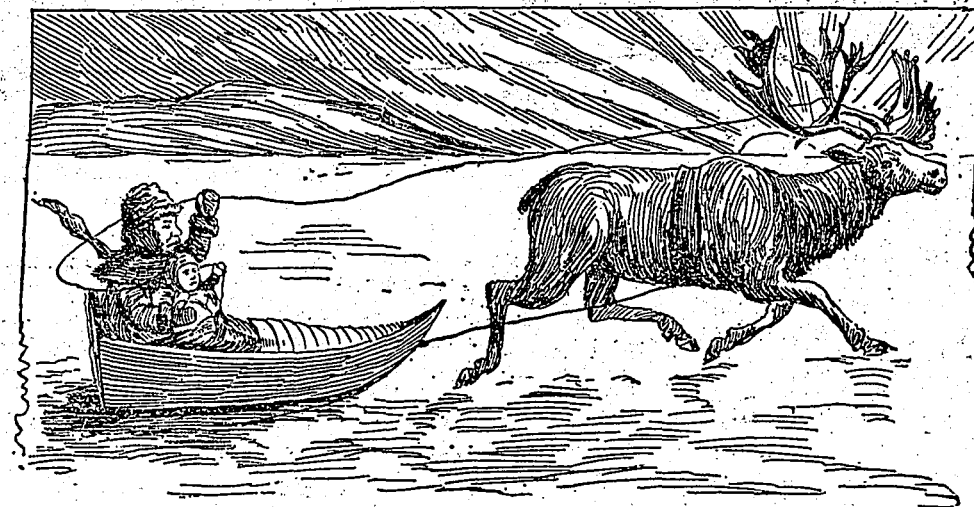
Till, glad and joyful the same dear child

Upraised his voice and said,
'The Lord has heard us, now I know,

He could not come Himself, and so

He sent this boy instead
His chair to fill, His place to take;

For us to welcome for His sake.'



Then quick and zealous every one
Sprang from the table up,

The chair for Jesus ready set
Received the beggar cold and wet,

Each pressed his plate and cup.
'Take mine! take mine!' they urged

and prayed,
The beggar thanked them, half dismayed.

And as he feasted and quite forgot
His woe in the new content,

The ivy and holly garlanded
Round the old rafters overhead

Breathed forth a rich, strange scent,

And it seemed as if, in the green-hung hall

Stood a Presence unseen which
blessed them all.

O lovely Legend of olden time,
Be thou as true to-day!

The Lord Christ stands by every door,

Veiled in the person of His poor,
And all our hearts can pray,

'Lord Jesus Christ, be thou our guest

And share the bread which Thou hast blessed.'

—Susan Coolidge in 'Wide Awake.'

A Queer Horse and Buggy.

The horse is a reindeer, and the buggy is very much like a canoe, and of course it has no wheels.

You know your father's harness has traces and reins. But this harness has only one trace and one rein. The trace is fastened to the collar and to the sled. The rein is thrown over the right or left side of the horse when the driver wants him to turn to the right or left.

Would you like to take a drive like this with your father? Because if you lived in Lapland, and

your father were a Lapp and you were a little Lapp, you would have to ride this way.

If your reindeer should die, your father would take the hair from the skin and make cloth of it. Then he would take the skin and make good leather; from the horns knife handles, spoons, and other things would be made.

You see, the people in Lapland would find it hard to live without the reindeer. Just think how God always gives people and animals what they need to live in this world, wherever he has placed them.—'Buds of Promise.'

People seldom improve when they have no model but themselves to copy after.