

**An Up to date Santa Claus.**

BY H. J. PAINE.

When Santa Claus came to town last year.  
His deer,  
"His said,  
Struck a live wire and fell down dead.

Poor Santa felt sad to lose them so,  
I know;  
But he  
Was not of the kind to give up, you see.

So he rigged up his sleigh like a trolley  
car,  
And far  
That night,  
Via telegraph wires, he took his flight.

To each little child in bed  
He sped,  
Nor missed  
A single one of all the list.

But this year he's going to take in hand  
A brand-  
New way,  
And deliver his goods in a horseless  
sleigh.

—Harper's Round Table.

**THE PULLMAN STOCKING.**

BY SIDNEY DAYRE.

They came into the Pullman sleeper just as Christmas Eve was closing in, a woman and one small boy. The woman was dressed in widow's clothes freshly made, but of rather cheap material, such as the lady in the opposite section decided, after one glance of her practised eye, as would very soon hang limp, turn brown, and look "sleazy." The boy's suit was a trifle outgrown and not in the latest style.

But no lack in the matter of clothes could extinguish the beam in the bright eyes which gazed about in childish delight on the fineness of the surroundings, and which met with frank friendliness the gaze of fellow-travellers as he stood up to pass his hand over a panel above his head.

A man in the seat close behind leaned over and spoke to him. It took but a few words, joined with a glance at the kindly face, to loosen the flood-gates of childish talk.

"Yes, we've come, oh! over 'n' over so far. We was on a train that something happened to it, on another road, and so we didn't get here to get on this road this morning; we thought we would. So we have to keep on to-night, and that's how it is we come into this nice car. We was just in a seat all last night; but mamma said we'd have to have a place to sleep to-night. Handsome here, ain't it?" patting the velvet cushion. "And they make up cunning little beds, just like you has at home, mamma says; only it costs a lot."

The clear treble rang out for the full benefit of the half-dozen nearest neighbours, and just here mamma whispered a few words which checked the flow of information. The round face grew sober with grave speculation, and presently a hand touched the shoulder of the man in the seat behind.

"Say, mister, doesn't Santa Claus travel on this train?"

"Oh, I really don't know," was the reply. "Well, I suppose not."

"That's what mamma said she s'posed," with a little sigh. "But 'course he couldn't," with a half-laugh. "Santa Claus has too much to do Christmas Eve to be takin' trips."

"And he doesn't travel by rail," some one suggested.

"Course he doesn't," with enthusiasm. "He goes kitin' along with his reindeer, scootin' over the roofs and down the chimneys—my! But," with another sigh, "I don't know how'll he find me!"

"Where did you expect him?"

"Oh, to grandpa's; we're going there. And I 'spected to hang up my stockin' there, and I wonder what Santa'll think when he goes down the chimney and doesn't find my stockin'. Do you s'pose," with a little anxiety, "he'd go back to our old house where we lived 'fore papa died, 'spectin' to find us there?"

"No, I think not. Santa Claus keeps track of his children, you know."

"I guess so," brightening up; "and he knows me. He's brought me things, oh! dozens of Christmases."

"Then I guess he'll be likely to find you somewhere."

A delighted expression grew on the small face as a keen investigation of the face of the person offering such comforting opinion seemed to result satisfactorily.

"If you're sure he wouldn't forget, though he's got such millions and millions of places to go to. He'll think it strange I ain't there at grandpa's with my stockin'." Well, with another sigh,

I hope he'll get to understand some way, and I hope he'll know I was good, and didn't bother mamma when she said we couldn't get there, for all I wanted to, awful bad." There was a choke in the high-pitched voice.

The porter now came to make up the berths, and mamma led the boy to another seat. For a while the clear eyes watched with a pleased admiration all the arrangement of the cunning little beds. Then mamma drew him into her arms, and, as the quiet of the approaching sleep fell on him, talked softly of the Christmas Eve eighteen hundred years ago, when quiet shepherds watched their flocks, with the clear heavens above, and the star leading to the cradle of the Child, for whose sake we love to make Christmas a time of rejoicing for children. Inside the curtains of the berth the pillows for mother and child were laid at opposite ends, in order to give more room, so that the expression of pleasure in the "pretty curtains," "nice little pillows," "warm blankets," with the mixture of delighted giggles, was still easily audible.

The next man behind, coming to his

silver dollar in the toe of the stocking, drew out a box of candy, which followed the dollar.

"Look there!" Four school-girls, on their way home for the holidays, caught sight of what was going on.

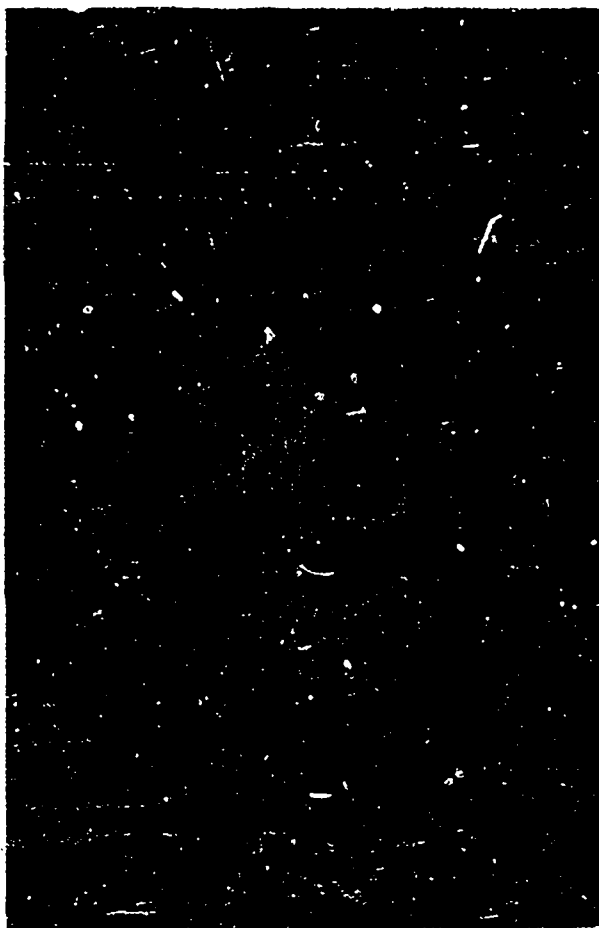
"Well, it isn't often you see a Christmas stocking on its travels. We must scrape up something for it."

A doll was hastily made up of two or three silk handkerchiefs, and crowded in, accompanied by nuts and candies from lunch baskets. A boy farther down made some lemons into pigs, which nearly filled the stocking.

But the gifts did not stop for the spirit of the season was fully awakened. Small coins were passed along from one hand to another, and shaken well down into the toe by the man next behind. A woman, with a bag of Christmas gifts for a family of expectant small friends, made a selection from them, and brought her offering.

"Why, the stocking's full," said the man next behind. "But here—this'll do!"

He pulled out a lavender handkerchief, and when she laid gifts inside, tied



**The Baby Christ.**

BY JULIA WARD HOWE.

The Baby Christ, so fair and dear,  
Shines out upon the closing year;  
The skies are dark, the days are short,  
In which he holds his childish court,  
While angel heralds call again,—  
"Good will on earth, from heaven to men."

For loving gifts this is the time,  
In frigid zone or torrid clime,  
Each ranking spite we cast away  
Before the kindly Christmas play,  
And only genial faces show;  
The little Christ will have it so.

We kiss the precious Baby's hand,  
And hail him, loved of every land,  
While still our earnest thoughts pursue  
The way the Babe to manhood grew,  
The valliant service that repaid  
The gifts beside his cradle laid.

Oh, not for dimpled cheek and smile,  
For gesture sweet and tender wile,  
Do we his radiant presence prize,  
And shout his promise to the skies!  
We follow him with willing mind,  
Anointed champion of mankind.

berth a short time later, stopped with a stare of surprise, and then met with a smile the smile of a lady across the aisle as she nodded towards the curtains which closed outside the boy who had missed a visit from Santa Claus. Upon the button of the drapery hung a small stocking.

Others paused in passing, and others came on hearing of it, so that before long every one in that sleeper had seen the little Christmas stocking. In the subdued light there may have been tears mingled with the smiles with which 't was regarded by those who by force of circumstances were not gathering by some stocking-decked fireside, from those whose life had lost the music made by little feet; perhaps sadder by those who had wandered far from home joys and home purity.

"A poor place for that sort of thing, I'm afraid," said the next behind to the lady across.

"Perhaps not so bad as one might think," was her answer. She had opened a lunch basket, and, just as the man, after fumbling in his pocket, dropped a

it by the four corners and pinned it to the stocking.

The word had passed along, and travellers in the next car came through to take a peep at the travelling stocking. Small trinkets were edged in beside the doll. Scarfs were tied around the stocking, and handkerchiefs filled out with nobody knew what fastened on. In short, if Santa Claus was not travelling on that train some of his near relatives must have been. The child and his mother were hurried out of the car early in the morning.

"Hush—sh-sh-sh-sh-h-h-h—" The mother was fairly out of breath with her efforts to keep that boy from arousing the whole car. But the car was ready to arouse, and shouts of laughter mingled with the squeals and giggles and exclamations of delight and amazement.

"Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!" Heartfelt greetings followed the two as at length they hurried out.

"He shouldn't have done it—I didn't know," said the mother, looking about in a shy gratitude.

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