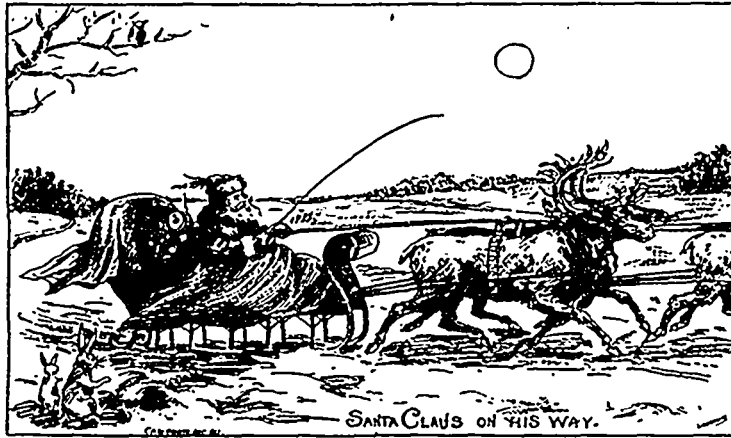


Young People's Department.



SANTA CLAUS ON HIS WAY.

SANTA CLAUS.

I HAD a dream of Santa Claus. I saw him on his way for Christmas, 1890—and so he comes! Santa Claus is very old, for, just think, this is 1890, and soon it will be 1891—all that time since the first Christmas Day, when the Angels sang, “On earth peace, good-will toward men.” And yet good old Santa Claus comes on and on. Every year he gets his reindeer ready, and packs his toys together, and then how merry he is when he gives them out to his good boys and girls.

But then, I had this dream also, why boys and girls may themselves be Santa Claus! But how? Why think, Santa Claus cannot give many toys to all, because there are so many, and then he is a queer old fellow, because he doesn't go to poor children as much as he goes to rich. Now this is naughty of Santa Claus, but he is obstinate about it, and we can't get at him to make him do better, for he steals in at night, and then goes away again and nobody sees him till Christmas comes again.

“Naughty Santa Claus,” you say. Yes, that is what I say. But, little boys and girls may themselves be Santa Claus. But “how?” you ask. How? Why, ask father and mother to let you give some of your toys and pretty things to some poor people on Christmas Eve. Then take the toys and pretty things yourself, and see how happy the poor little children will be. That is the way you may be Santa Claus, and that is the way you may make others happy, and then what a Merry Christmas you will have! You will feel so glad that some one else is playing with toys that you yourself gave away. It is a good time to make presents, for what a present God gave to us when he sent our Saviour here, a little babe, to grow and be a man, and then save us from our sins.

HAROLD ELWOOD.

HAROLD ELWOOD was certainly not a model good boy. His school teacher said so, his parents said so, and all his friends agreed with them in their decision. And Harold himself thought they were pretty correct in their judgment, for after many attempts he had well nigh given up the hope of ever becoming anything but a scapegrace, always in trouble. Not that he was a maliciously bad or vicious boy, this is quite a false description of his character. But he was so full of life, so thoughtless and quicksilverish, that he was constantly letting his tongue run away with him, or getting into some mischief which brought him into disgrace with his superiors. And because he possessed the strong desire within to do right (which all boys have, if only we older people would believe it and try to develop it), this condition of things gave him many a headache, and then, half an hour later the spirit of forgetfulness would whisper in his ear, and all his good resolutions would fly away, and poor Harold would be sent up to the principal's room, or have a fine marked against his name by the choir-master, and his mother's face would look sad, and his father's stern, while his own heart would sink down to his boots, and he wondered why it was so terribly hard for him to be good, while Wilhe Cebun and David Dott always managed to keep a straight face, and in the good books of masters and parents. And so at last, he thought he would go and talk to a certain friend on the subject, one who often checked him in his mad pranks, though he seldom scolded, and who he knew liked him even when he was in disgrace.

And the friend, whom we will call Mr. Oncei-wasaboy myself, received him very kindly, and, when Harold had told him his trouble, talked to him something like this: