

The "peerade" was headed by Orson carrying a miniature, moth-eaten Christmas-tree, decorated mostly with winks, the sole relics of by-gone festivities. The others carried such "presents" as could not be harnessed to the tree, and all were singing at the tops of their lusty voices, "There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town To-night."

They got a laugh from Wah-na-gi on their first appearance, which put the stamp of success on the show right at the start. They circled the room until the song was done, then the tree was placed on the table in the centre, and the solitary half-hearted candle at its apex was lighted ceremoniously. Wah-na-gi, as the guest of honor, was left on one side of the room and the boys all gathered on the other. McShay advanced to the tree and began a speech in a mixture of his best Fourth-of-July camp-meeting manner.

FELLER CITIZENS AND LADY:

Somebody, who is probably a liar, has just informed us that to-morrer is Christmas. To-morrer bein' Christmas, it follers as a sequence before the fact that to-night is Christmas Eve. That this is likely to be a Hell of a Christmas ain't no argyment fer not celebratin' it before we git to it and find out how bad it is. Let us therefore humbly and devoutly git agoin' and ketch the spirit of the occasion even if we have to rope it and throw it on its head. All you as has blue tickets and been in reg'lar attendance can git in on it, and *perhaps* look fer a prisint, and those as gits left kin fill up on good wishes of which we have a superfleuous supply. First, we will have the usual Christmas-tree.