



## FOR THE CHILDREN



### THE GIFT O' SANDY MCTAVISH By GEORGIA WINKLER.

THE night was dark, bleak, and wet, just such a night when banshees and other spirits are at large. Sandy McTavish sat alone in his old log shanty, in a little western town, and counted his gold and silver.

The shanty was a veritable curiosity shop, every corner was heaped full of old clothes, empty bottles, pieces of iron, and all kinds of odds and ends that he had picked up on the streets.

But Sandy was happy, for was he not counting his beloved siller. First he would hold it up to the dim light of the tallow candle, then let it run through his fingers. "My, my," he would mutter, "but its braw. See it shine, the bonny, bonny siller, an' a' from o' penny. Didna' me mither say, 'Save the pennies, Sandy lad, for o' penny's the seed o' a pun. The seed o' a pun, save a wee, Sandy, dinna waste the siller, lad.'"

"Wha' was it the meenister said, 'Better ta gi' than ta racive.' Gi' my braw siller, na, na, Sandy mon."

"Whist, was that a knock at yon door!"

Sandy swept the money into a box and put it under the table.

Then he called out, "Wha's there?"

A little voice answered, "Sandy McTavish, let me in, Sandy McTavish, let me in."

Sandy arose and opened the door, and a little boy stepped into the room, his clothes were wet, and the water ran down upon the floor.

"Wha' do ye want wi' a poor lone mon like me," said Sandy, "that canna even afford a bit o' fire on a cold weet nicht?"

"Sandy," answered the boy, "the Master sent me to see what you would give to the poor this cold, wet weather."

"Me gi' the poor," screamed Sandy, "me, me, yer crazy, laddie. Tell yer Maister, wha' iver he is, that Sandy McTavish is a poor, lone mon, me gi' hoots lad, I ha' na-thin'."

The boy looked around the room, "Surely, Sandy," he said, "you'll give something—just one penny."

"A penny," moaned Sandy. "The seed o' a pun, where would I git a penny?"

"Then—a quart of flour to feed the poor," begged the boy.

"Floor," said Sandy. "Floor, me that dinna has enough ta eat mesel!"

"Then only a stick of wood to warm the poor," pleaded the lad.

Sandy stamped in rage.

"Me gi' gude wood, that canna afford a fire."

The boy stooped, and picked up an old rusty key.

"Wilt give this, Sandy," he said, and the look on his face seemed to strike a chill to Sandy's heart.

"Tak' it, and be gane," he wailed, and threw open the door. The boy stepped out into the dark, wet night, with the key clasped in his hand.

Sandy shut and bolted the door, muttering to himself, "'Twas a gude key, worth a penny anywhere." Then he lit a fire for he felt strangely cold and chilled.

Several days after Sandy felt ill, but would not get a doctor, for doctors cost money. The neighbours brought him food and fire, for they thought he was very poor, but it was no use, Sandy's days

for gathering rags and old iron were nearly at an end.

One night after a long restless day, just as the clock struck twelve, he sank into a deep heavy sleep, and awoke to find himself on the bank of a beautiful river. All was still and peaceful save for the soft, sweet strains of delicious music that came from the inside of a large golden gate, which seemed to Sandy to enclose the whole river bank.

The soothing restful strains of music drew Sandy inward, and so he tried to open the gate, to see what was beyond, but behold! it was locked and fastened and he could not move it. Still the longing grew intense, and he looked around for some other means to enter.

Suddenly a soft, sweet voice, not unlike the music, said, "Sandy McTavish wouldst thou enter?"

Sandy looked up, but could see no one. Again the voice said, "I am the Master, wouldst thou enter?"

"I would," said Sandy, "but I canna unlock yon gate."

"State your deeds on earth, Sandy McTavish if thou wouldst unlock the golden gate."

Sandy thought a moment, then said, "I took Jack Stuart's overcoat from him last winter, because he owest me twa shillings."

"I sold the Widdy Murphy bad eggs for her sick son."

"I hoarded my siller when the poor was starvin'. I am no fit ta enter."

"Did'st thou do no good, Sandy?" said the voice.

"Na," answered Sandy.

"Did'st thou give naught to the poor? Think again, Sandy."

"Naught but a broken key," said Sandy. And even as he uttered the words a little boy stood beside him, and in his outstretched hand lay the broken key. But no longer was it rusty and broken, it was bright and shining.

"Behond how the Master returns what is given to the poor, Sandy," he said, "take it and enter."

And immediately the gate swung open on its golden hinges.

and hand in hand, they entered the presence of the Master.

### "WHILE GETTING WELL."

By ISABEL ECCLESTONE MACKAY.

A little bird sits on my window-sill

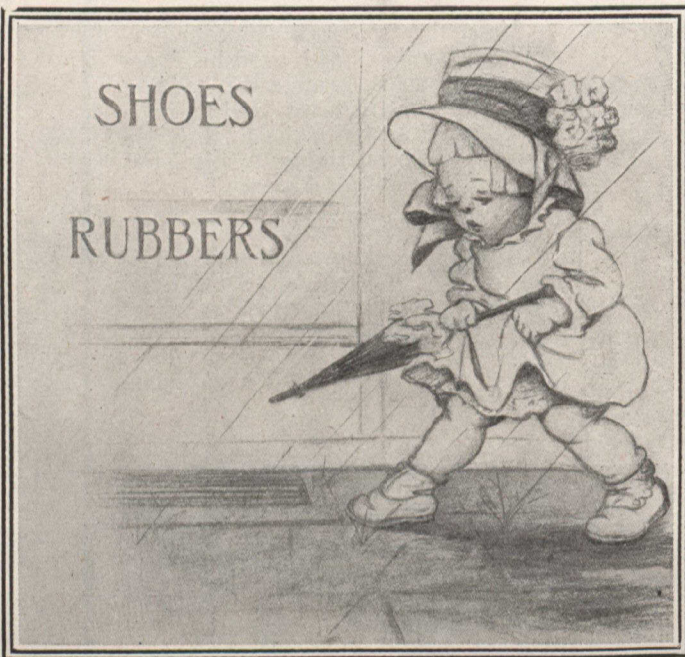
And winks his eye at me and says: "Hello! Sick, are you? Why, whatever's wrong? I'm never sick, you know!"

And, just at breakfast-time, in comes the Sun To make queer wiggly patterns on the wall And laugh and say: "Oh, lazy-bones, get up! You are not sick at all!"

And when I shut my eyes I hear the brook Calling and calling as it hurries by—I can't lie still! I'm hot and mis'erable—I'm afraid I've got to cry!

The leaves just whisper, whisper all the time! The little clouds all hurry by so quick!—And nothing seems to care a speck about A little child that's sick!

—Oh! Here's the Wind! How cool his fingers are! He steals across the bed and feels my hands And my hot head, and doesn't say a word—I think he understands! St. Nicholas.



"Won't someone call a 'Taxi'?"—St. Nicholas.



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