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NOTICE.

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WATCHING FOR SANTA CLAUS.

Did you ever see Santa Claus? You have seen pictures of him with his great long, frosty beard, with his overcoat as warm and comfortable as you please, with his laughing eye, his arms full of toys and goodies, and his fiery reindeers, and you have wondered how in the world he ever managed to slide down such a small stovepipe as yours to bring you the good things which fill your stockings every Christmas morning.

Somebody surely must have seen him, for mamma and papa, and grand-mamma particularly, talk so much and so wisely about him. What stories they tell of his peculiar tricks in their younger days, and with what interest are the recitations of these stories listened to! But who ever did see Santa Claus, after all? When you wait up for him he never comes, even if you should watch all night. But then who took his photograph so as to make such nice pictures of him. Somebody must have seen him surely, but when, and how, and where?

Those boys and girls in the picture are evidently determined to learn something about him from personal observation. What an expression of eagerness and interest is in their countenances! If the cat should mew, wouldn't they be frightened? Indeed they would, and perhaps do as they should have done long ago if they want their stockings filled go right off to bed.

Last year Santa Claus had hard times filling the stockings that he found hanging on the tens of thousands of mantel pieces all over the country, but this year it is likely that he will be better off. Isn't it too bad that good old Santa Claus is ever poor? Such generous people should always be rich. But the time will come when all our boys and girls will know everything about old Santa, when they will be telling little ones of how he likes little boys and girls who are good with as grave a face as grandma does now. The Messenger has a wish for them then, and that is that Santa Claus will always be well off, and that the children and grand-children of this country in twenty, forty or a hundred years from now, will have reason to be better pleased with Santa Claus than those who are children in the year 1877.

HOW TWO LITTLE BOYS NEARLY SAW SANTA.

One Christmas eve, not very long ago either, two little boys kissed papa and mamma good-night, and climbed up-stairs to bed, fully determined to dream about Old Santa skimming along over frozen rivers and ponds with his reindeers, until he came to the city where they lived, and then going from house to house peeping through the windows and listening at the chimneys to make sure that all the little folks were fast asleep, then climbing up the side of the house by the spout, going on hands and knees along the roof to the chimney.

How could he get down? So they whispered away to one another until they got tired, and after getting out of bed again to see that the stockings were in the best place, and to stretch them a little bigger if possible, they rolled over and tried to go to sleep. But it was no use, Santa Claus kept driving and creeping and dancing before their eyes, until one of them fancied he saw the jolly old fellow at the foot of the bed, and started up to find it a dream. So time went on, and they listened for some little stir in the chimney, but it was only the wind. But suddenly a little faint light shone in at the nursery door.

"It wasn't the wind after all," said one, and they began to shiver, thinking they would be found out. Yes, sure enough, somebody was at the door and creeping toward the foot of the bed where the stockings were hanging. The little fellows began to tremble, first they thought, "We'll just take a peep at him." "But if he sees us he'll run away." So in a trice they bobbed their heads under the bed-clothes, and held their breath for fear of starting Santa. Then they forgot all about Christmas for a moment, until Old Father Christmas appeared in his sleigh again driving away with bundles of toys laughing and singing in time to the merry jingle of his sleigh bells. They had gone to sleep. But the first part of it was not a dream, they did see the light, and if they had looked instead of going to sleep they might have seen him, but they saw what he left, and early in the morning little bare feet went patter down-stairs dragging heavy stockings full of Christmas cheer, to show papa and mamma what Santa Claus brought.



WATCHING FOR SANTA CLAUS.

WHY DO WE REJOICE AT CHRISTMAS

How many boys and girls on Christmas think of the cause of their rejoicing? How many think that they are celebrating the greatest birthday in the world. It is not their father's, their mother's, their sister's, their brother's, their own, the Governor General's, the Prince of Wales or the Queen's. No, none of these, but a greater still—Christ's birthday.

— Extravagance is the key to most of our financial troubles. Every second man thought himself a millionaire, or in a fair way to be one; and as he was so sure of the result, he did not take the precaution to wait till the matter became a fixed fact. He drew upon his fortune in advance, and it is not strange that he should wake up to find himself bankrupt. If you propose to live like a millionaire, be sure first that you have the money in the bank. Imaginary fortunes make a poor showing on 'change or in the real world. Pay as you go, and go no further than you can pay, is a safe rule and will save a world of trouble ahead.—Zion's Herald.

"A GOOD FELLOW AT BOTTOM."—The phrase, "He is a good fellow at the bottom," may remind one of the story of a gentleman who was riding in a remote Devonshire lane, and seeing a swan-looking place before him, called out to a rustic who was near, "I say master, is there a good firm bottom here?" "Oh, yes, sir, that there be." He rode on, and soon plunged up to the horse's girths. "Hilloa, you rascal! didn't you tell me there was a good firm bottom?" "See there be, sir, when you comes to it; but you hasn't half ways to the bottom yet!" — Archbishop Whately's Sermons.