

A MARVELLOUS TALE.

'Twas the week before Christmas. In Lapland
Town

(Where lived Santa Claus of world renown)
A crowd had gathered from far and near
To attend the sale of Mr. Claus' deer,
For, strange to say, he had advertised well
That on that day his deer he would sell.
The people all wondered how their neighbor
would carry

His Christmas load without deer or lorry,
But that he knew a thing or two
After reading this tale you'll say is true.

'Twas the day before Christmas. Santa Claus
Suddenly left his old Lapland Town!
Whither or when or how no one knew,
Nor did he give them the slightest clue.

'Twas Christmas Night, and the Moon looked
On sleeping city and village and town;
But the Man in the Moon saw the strangest
thing

That ever was viewed by a planet, I ween.
As midnight drew near he keenly peered
To see if Santa and his antlered herd
Were going to visit the world once more
From chimney to chimney and door to door.
Long he listened for the merry jingling
Of his golden bells with the air a-mingling:
Hold! By the light of the Evening Star
What's this I see in the distance afar?

A white-bearded, fur-covered affair!
High-ho! 'tis St. Nicholas at last, I declare!
But where are his ponies with high-perched
head?

And his cosy seat in his little sled?
Faster and faster he flies o'er the earth,
Shaking with laughter and jolly with mirth.
But what is he riding? 'Tis a thing of steel;
By Jupiter, Stars, he's on a Rudge Wheel!
With a curved handle-bar and a clear-sounding
bell,

And a load of presents that nearly fell
As he pedalled away o'er the Rockies' crest:
'Twas a perilous ride, it must be confessed.
But how he flew over hill and plain!
How he worked his way with might and main!
How he skipped across highways and across
corner lots,

Till in the distance his feet were but dots!
And his pile of goodies had run so low
That he wheeled to Fairyland and began to stow
Away in his saddle-bag a fresh store of toys
For American girls and Canadian boys.
And all night long on his tangent wheel
St. Nicholas raced with the envious Deil
Who tried to stop him on his errand of joy,
Jealous because he had been given no toy.

By the break of day, when the Morning Star
Arrived on the scene from her home afar,
St. Nicholas had finished the last of his task,
Disappointed from his wheel, took out a flask,
And drank hearty and long to his Friend of
Steel—

His Lightning Express—his new Rudge Wheel;
He drank to the health of Robinson & Co.,
And advised his friends at once to go
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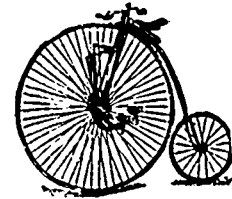
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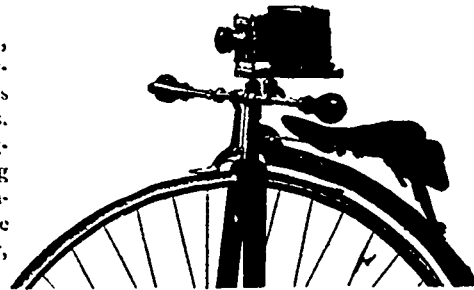
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