

Suggestions
FROM

Our Holiday List

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can't give up the donkey—nor any of those fine little animals that we have this year. I had thought of a nice little hammer and a box of nails and some blocks of wood for him to hammer the nails into! Hey, now! what do you think of that?"

"What do I think?" said the cricket. "I think, Saint Nicholas, that you have forgotten how the little boy beat his brother with his drumsticks; how he snipped his sister's fingers with the scissors; how he threw his harmonicon at the nurse; how he—"

"Dear, dear, dear!" groaned Santa, "so he did, so he did!"

"And if you keep giving him things when he uses them so wrongly," continued the cricket, "how will he ever learn better? To be sure, his mamma and papa and all his kind friends are trying to teach him, but it is necessary that everybody should help to train such a boy as—"

"I know," interrupted Santa. "I know. You're a wise little counsellor, and not as hard-hearted as you seem. — And if you think it will cure the little fellow, I suppose we must give him the sawdust this year."

"Yes," said the cricket, solemnly, "sawdust it must be."

Christmas morning came. The little boy whose name Santa Claus did not wish to mention saw the other children pull out one treasure after another from their long, well-stuffed stockings, while in his own, which he had hung up with so much hope, the night before, there was nothing but sawdust!

If I should use all the sad words in the English language, I could never tell you how sad that little boy was as he poured the sawdust out of his stocking, and found that Santa Claus had really sent him nothing else.

Poor little chap!

It was almost a year later, just before Christmas, when Santa Claus again sat by his fire—thinking.

But this time he was in no trouble; no, indeed, not he! He was rounder, and rosier, and jollier, than ever before; and how he was smiling and chuckling to himself! His eyes twinkled so, and were so very bright that you could almost have lit a candle at them. He and the cricket had been planning all sorts of ecstatic surprises for the stocking of the boy to whom they had given sawdust the year before; for, if you can believe it, the little boy had been trying all the year to be careful and gentle, and he was really quite changed.

"Sawdust is a grand thing," chirped the cricket, leaping about in delight.

"Yes, but I am glad we do not need to use it this year," replied Santa. "Let me see the list again. Don't you suppose we could cram in one or two more things? Have you put down the—"

This is the end of the story, or, at least, all that could be told before Christmas; for if I should write more, and a certain little boy should read it, he would know just what would be in his stocking, and that would never do in the world.—St. Nicholas.

CHRISTMAS SONG.

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
'Round you, lowly mother and child;
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds tremble at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluiah!
Christ, the Saviour is born.

THE BEST GIVING.

At the Christmas season everybody, no matter whether he has been helpful or not during the year, tries to do something for those he loves, and often for those he does not love, but who need to have something done for them. Let us give our Christmas gifts on the principle of "lifting a little." Let us choose the sort of present that will lighten a burden where we can do so, as well as one that will simply give pleasure to the eye or taste of those who receive it. Too many times we choose what we think is pretty, without regard to whether it suits the needs of the one on whom we would bestow a remembrance. It is not so gratifying to one's self to give money, and yet money is often the most sensible gift we can bestow, for the people who have real needs do not like to mention them, and if they have the money, it can be made to give real pleasure, and at the same time to lift a burden from the mind. I have known families to receive gifts of the same articles of clothing which, at great cost of labour, they had just succeeded in procuring for themselves. I have known families to receive beautiful gift books that must be handled carefully and kept away from the dust, who would have been so grateful for school books, maps, charts, and such things as they constantly have to buy. To people who have little space give nothing of which they must take care—that is, after a momentary pleasure, adding a burden instead of lifting one.

—Let all work of Church decoration be performed with reverence and decorum, as becometh the House of God.

—Good is self-knowledge, but Christ-knowledge is the best.