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BOYS and GIRLS

TWO LITTLE STOCKINGS.

By Sarah Kebbles Hunt.

Two little stockings hung side by side,
Close to the fireside broad and wide,
"Two?" said Saint Nick, as down he came,
Loaded with toys and many a game
"Ho-ho!" with a laugh of fun,
"I'll have no cheating, my pretty one,
I know who dwells in this house,
There's only one little girl lives here."
So he crept up close to the chimney place,
And measured a sock with a sober face.
Just then a wee little note fell out
And fluttered low, like a bird about,
"Aha! what's this?" said he in surprise,
As he pushed his specks up close to his eyes,
And read the address in a child's rough plan.
"Dear Saint Nicholas," so it began,
"The other stocking you see on the wall
I have hung up for a child named Clara Hall.
She's a poor little girl, but very good,
So I thought perhaps you kindly would
Fill up her stocking, too, to-night,
And help to make her Christmas bright.
If you've not enough for both stockings there,
Please put all in Clara's, I shall not care."
Saint Nicholas brushed a tear from his eye,
And "God bless you, darling," he said with a sigh,
Then softly he blew, through the chimney high,
A note like a bird's as it soars on high.
When down came two of the funniest mortals

Santa Claus Assistant.

It was not long after midnight.
The wee small hours of Christmas Day
were just beginning to arrive,
and down in the library, where the tree
was sheltering a profuse array
of toys, stood, an unexpected guest.
He was ill clad, unshaven, and his
hair looked as though it had never
carried a comb. In his right hand he
carried a dark-lantern, and slung
over his left arm was a sack,
a common jute bag, and he had entered
a window that looked out upon the street.
The family had all retired,
and for the most part were asleep.
That is why the unexpected guest
chose this time to arrive.
Stealthily he crossed the room,
and, drawing the portiere silently
across the broad doorway that opened
into the hall, he slid back the
front of his lantern, and lighting a
match in the flame, he turned on
the gas and lit it, so that he might
better see the exact character of his
surroundings.
"Hump!" he said, as he observed
don't know but what, after all, it's
a good thing that parents give their
children expensive things these days.
It's a great help to our profession.
You can't raise much on candy, balls
and two-penny dolls, but these sil-
ver-dollar bills in 'em come in handy.
Gold sleeve-buttons too," he added,
as his eyes took in a few fur-
ther details of the scene before him,
"an' a gold watch as well. This is
lucky."
And then, as he bent over the
group of toys and presents of a more
expensive nature intended for Bob-
bie, his eyes glittering with joy at
the prospective value of his haul,
the heart of the unexpected guest
stopped beating for an instant. There
was a rustling behind him.
With a quick movement he slid the
cover of the dark lantern to, by mere
force of habit; but it was unavail-
ing; the room was still lighted

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That ever were seen on this side earth's portain.
"Hurry up," said Saint Nick, "and nicely prepare
All a little girl wants where money is rare."
Then, oh, what a scene there was in that room!
Away went the elves, but down from the gloom
Of the sooty old chimney came tumbling low
A child's whole wardrobe, from head to toe.
How Santa Claus laughed, as he fastened each one to the sock with a pin!
Right to the toe he hung a blue dress.
"She'll think it came from the sky, I guess."
Said Saint Nicholas, smoothing the folds of blue,
And tying the hood to the stocking, too.
When all the warm clothes were fastened on,
And both little socks were filled and done,
Then Santa Claus tucked a toy here and there
And hurried away to the frosty air,
Saying: "God pity the poor, and bless the dear child
Who pities them too, on this night so wild."
The wind caught the words, and bore them on high
Till they died away in the midnight sky.
While Saint Nicholas flew through the icy air,
Bringing "peace and good will" with him everywhere.

though dimly.
"Hullo!" said a soft voice from the portiere and at the same moment the curtains parted and there stood Bobbie, clad in his nightgown. "Is that you, Santa Claus?" he added, peering curiously at the unexpected guest.
The man gave a short laugh.
"That's the first time I've been taken for any one that's half decent," he said to himself, and then he answered, in a whisper loud enough for Bobbie to hear:
"Well not exactly, sonny. I'm only his assistant."
"His what?" said Bobbie.
"Sh! Not so loud, my boy—you'll wake the family; and if you did that I'd vanish like the mist," said the man. "I said I was only Santa Claus's assistant. You see, my lad, there are so many more children now-a-days than there used to be that the boss has to get outside help Christmas Eve, or he'd never be able to finish up his work in time. So he sends for me an' a few others like me—heaven help us! and we do his distributing for him. I'd just lain these things out here when you surprised me."
"Oh, isn't it beautiful!" he cried. "All these things for me! A watch too, just the very thing I wanted!"
The man drew back as the boy spoke, and with a queer light in his eyes sat down in one of the chairs suddenly.
"Are you tired?" asked Bobbie, leaving the tree and crossing to Santa Claus's assistant.
"Yes," said the man. "Very."
"I'm sorry," said Bobbie, affectionately, as he took the other's hand

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St. Joseph's Home Fund

The actual date of Father Holland's birthday has passed and we had hoped that a goodly sum would have been realized to present to him on Sept. 19th; but so many have been out of the city during the summer that our appeal failed to reach them and consequently nothing like the necessary amount came in. However, every day is a birthday—somebody's—so if each one contributed, his number of years either in dollars or cents, quite a comfortable sum in a little while would be realized. We thank those who have not already done so will send in their mite to help a worthy cause—To pay off the debt on the St. Joseph's Home for Working Boys. A cent will be as welcome as a dollar and will be acknowledged in issue following receipt.

FILL OUT THIS COUPON.

FOR
ST. JOSEPH'S HOME FUND.

Name

Address

Amount

The Playmates of the Infant.

It is all about a brother and a sister who lived together in a castle. They were only children, and knew no harm, but not very much good either. Their father was a great Lord, and they saw little of him but their mother was always with them, and kept them as gulleless as angels, and almost as happy.
One day when the sun was very bright and hot, they played noisily in the garden, till they were quite tired, and then rested on a grass plot, over which a sycamore stretched out its shady arms. In the middle of the plot a flower-bed was cut, and in the middle of the flower bed stood a pedestal which supported a white marble statue of the Madonna, holding at her breast the Infant Saviour.
The children had from the first been so used to this statue, that they had never thought of putting any questions regarding it. But today, as they looked out from the shade of the sycamore, and saw the sun shining on the face of the infant, it came into Walter's curly head to inquire: "Who is the child that is always smiling down at us so sweetly from his mother's arms? And how kind she is: just like ma-

MY BABY DEAR.

warning that God would soon ask her for her boy, and though she prayed with many tears that he might be spared, she said with all the sincerity of her truly Christian heart, "Thy will be done."
And God's holy will was done. It was His holy will that Walter should receive his reward early. Before the last sleep stole upon him, he saw in his dream a beautiful child like the beloved Infant that looks towards the sycamore tree in the garden; and the child stood beside his little bed, smiling, and bringing him fruit, oh, so delicious to the taste and exquisitely cool and refreshing. And still smiling into the face of the dying boy, He kissed his lips, and smoothed his damp hair, and wreathed his forehead with flowers that smelled very sweetly, and looked very fair. But it was not the fruit or the flowers, but the deep love which shone out of the child's eyes that brought joy and strength to the little fainting heart of the dying Walter.
Then poor little Walter woke up from his beautiful dream, and his pale, thin face looked bright and happy. The bright smile never faded from the face till he closed his weary eyes again, only to open them at the loving welcome from the eyes of Jesus in heaven.
But Alice—it was many years before she followed him to heaven who had been the playmate of her childhood. Many a prayer she had to say, many a good deed to do, many a kind word to speak, many a holy thought to cherish in her virgin heart, many an act of love to offer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In her

eighteenth summer, she became the affianced bride of Christ, but many a year of patience and prayer, of grace and merit did she live on earth before her Divine Spouse called her to Himself in His kingdom. His living image had reigned alone in her heart, even since the days of her early childhood when she and Walter sat on the grass under the sycamore tree, and looked up at the Infant's marble image, and cried: "Come down, and play with us."—Messenger of the Sacred Heart.

By Samuel Abbott.
Sleep, little one, in thy tiny bed:
A white star is hovering overhead:
A bird flies west through the dark-
ening day:
Sleep, little one, while I kneel and
pray—
Mother of Jesus, may thy tear
Never be mine for my baby dear.
A spirit waits at the door of
dream,
With lips asmile and with eyes
gleam,
To lead thee into the woods that lie
Beyond the gates of the evening sky.
Mother of Jesus, roads are wide;
Bring him back if he leave my
side.
Go. Fly with him where the bird
has flown
And see the field with the stars
o'erstraw;
And I will bide in my Land of Bliss
To bring thee home with a morning
kiss.
Mother of Jesus, thou dost know
Why it is that I love him so.