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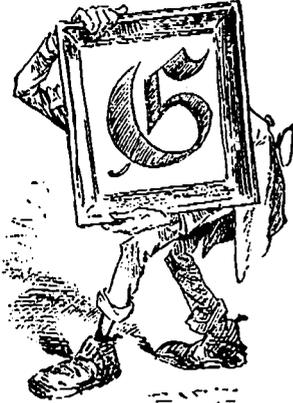


**THE CHRISTMAS TREAT.**—The genial season of Christmas is once more with us, and, as usual, it has brought that mysterious expansion of heart which leads us all to entertain "good-will toward men." The miracle of thus transforming our natures even for a brief period every year must be a standing puzzle to the agnostic; and it ought to be an equal mystery to the Christian that the spirit of Christmas does not last with all of us throughout the year. Charity, brotherhood, and the giving of gifts are the order of the moment, and it is especially the happy province of the great and good to bestow largess upon the poor and lowly just now. That is why MR. GRIP has gathered the boys of his mission school together for a jollification

—on paper. Poor little chaps, how happy they seem to be, released for the moment from the hardships and privations of political life. How intently they listen to the kind-hearted MR. GRIP, as he tells them about Santa Claus and draws funny pictures to illustrate his profound remarks. Then see the heads of the business department loading the Christmas tree with good things, and the energetic President casting aside for the nonce his aldermanic duties to make himself useful in distributing hot soup to our protégés. Is it not altogether a beautiful and touching sight? It is, indeed—but Christmas is a beautiful and touching festival.

**MR. MOWAT AS SANTA CLAUS.**—If Mr. Mowat will be so good-natured as to rig himself up in a Santa Claus costume (as old Mr. Jollyboy does every year at the Sunday school Christmas festival),

and present the people of Toronto—or Ontario, for that matter—with a nice little Act exempting houses from taxation to the extent of \$600, he will find that the present will be very much appreciated. If the Attorney-General can't bring himself to the point of donning the costume, every allowance will be made for his bashfulness, or whatever it is, and the Christmas box referred to will be accepted quite as gratefully if presented in his every-day clothes.



**HE** Whistling Prima Donna, Mrs. Alice J. Shaw, has been granted a divorce. Poor Shaw will have to do his own whistling hereafter.

**COUNT** one more knock-out for the champion legal pugilist, Nol Mowat. This time the battle ended by Ottawa Jack being sent clean over the ropes. To descend from the language of high society, their Lordships of the Privy Council have decided that

the Dominion authorities were entirely too previous in presuming to sell timber limits off Crown lands in Ontario for the benefit of the Federal Treasury. Although the title to all Crown lands is vested in the Dominion Government, as representing the Crown, all revenues derivable therefrom, whether by sales of timber, minerals or anything else, belong to the Provinces in which such lands may be situated. This is the law as read and expounded by the court of last appeal. Of course it is too bad that John A. should thus be deprived of a first-class bribery fund, but it can't be helped. We will now have to trouble the right hon. gentleman to hand back all the boodle he has received from this convenient source.

**ANYBODY** who takes Ernest Albert Macdonald for a chump is a poor judge of human nature. Senator Frank Smith is in some danger of making a mistake just here. There are some shrewd speculators who have been known to lay out great railway projects with a view simply to a profitable "sell out," and it is perhaps natural for Mr. Smith to conclude that this proposed new street car line is a case in point. Hence his "bluff." But he will find that Albert is mightily in Ernest in this matter. What he wants is a new railway for the East End, and he acts very much like a man who intended to get it.



**THE** new Street Railway Co. offers to pay two per cent. of its gross annual receipts from passenger traffic to the city, and hopes no doubt to have a good round profit for itself after that. Will somebody please tell us why the city shouldn't manage the street railway business exclusively, and take 100 per cent. of the net earnings for the public treasury? Why couldn't Mr. Frankland, or some other equally competent man, manage this department for the city as ably, efficiently, economically and honestly as he does for Senator Smith? When the new civic constitution is being discussed, the feasibility of taking over for the city's benefit all monopoly franchises now farmed out