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HAPPY DAYS

VOL. XIV.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 23, 1899.

No. 26.

THE GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFT.

BY ELIZABETH P. ALLAN.

The Christmas tree was up in the Carlyles' parlour; the tapers were fastened upon its branches, and the pretty gilt and silver ornaments, the frosted balls, the coloured glass stars and drops were spangling it all over with sunshine.

Twilight came creeping on, but, oh! so slowly, thought the children; for the tree was not to be lighted until evening. Papa would get home from the city about dark, with the presents to hang on the tree.

"It seems a thousand years till dark," exclaimed Dick.

"Let's get mamma to tell us a story," suggested Nanine, "that will make time fly."

"A story?" said mamma, leaning back in the big arm-chair, pretty tired, as mammas generally are on Christmas Eve; "I don't know anything to tell you a story about."

"Tell us about a farver, givin' his chillens Twistmas pwesents," suggested Robin, whose little head was full of that delightful unknown present his "farver" was bringing him through the twilight.

This seemed to make mamma think of something.

"There was a Father once long ago,"

she said, "who had a Christmas gift for his children—a very precious one; it was a jewel worth more than all the world, for whoever once laid his hand on that jewel would never die, but would live forever.

to do, Dick, when they heard of their Christmas present?"

"Jump about six feet, this way," cried Dick, making a flying leap in the air, across the hearth-rug, startling old Tabby almost out of her senses.

"What do you think the children of that good Father would do, Robin-hood?"

"I fink they would say, 'Fank you, farver,'" said the little boy at mamma's knee.

The mother looked at them with a gentle smile. She saw they had not found anything but a sort of fairy story in her words.

"And what does Nanine think these children of the Father would do when they received this glorious gift?"

"I know what they did, mamu," said Nanine, for she was older and wiser than the boys, and knew the story of the first Christmas night at Bethlehem by heart, "some of the children received the present with joy, but some would have nothing to do with it."

"Think of that, children," said mamma, "suppose when papa comes in with your presents you turn your back, and leave them hanging on the tree, and never touch them, and never thank him,

what would poor papa do?"

"He'd det some uvve rittle chillens, 'an not have us any more," suggested Robin.

"That is the way people treat God,"



TELLING ABOUT THE GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFT.

"The Father sent this Gift to his children one Christmas Eve, and sent noble ambassadors along to tell them about it. Now what would you expect the children

said mamma, "when they refuse Jesus Christ for their Saviour. He is God's great Christmas Gift to us all, and we must not forget to say, 'Fank you, Farvor,' as Robin says, every day as well as Christmas Day."

Mamma's story was done; but what was that clicking sound? The front yard gate! And the next minute three pair of feet pattered down the stairway, and three young voices shouted, "Father has come!"

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Happy Days.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 23, 1899.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING.

A merry, merry Christmas to every boy and girl of the big HAPPY DAYS family! May the day be to each one a day of right blessed cheer, and may it be followed by many and many another even more bright and blessed!

Christmas is the first of all the children's days, because it is kept in memory of the birth of one perfect child who came from heaven to found a kingdom of child-hearts. The true child-heart is loving, faithful, and obedient, and it is the gift of the Child-King, the gentle Jesus, who reigns Lord of all in heaven and in earth.

Any one who can receive the gift may enter this kingdom, and what time can be better for one that is yet outside than is this lovely Christmas time, when the very air seems full of giving and receiving?

Come, dear children, come now and give yourselves heartily to the blessed Lord who gave himself so completely to you on the first Christmas Day, and who has been giving, giving every day since! If you have already entered his kingdom, give yourself to him now for fuller love and service, and let this Christmas be the time we shall learn how truly blessed it is to give.

A REAL CHRISTMAS SURPRISE.

BY ELIZABETH P. ALLAN.

"What is Buster whispering about, down behind the sofa?" asked mamma.

"Oh! it's a great secret, mamma," laughed Jamie; "Buster wants us all"—

"No, Jin," cried the little boy they called Buster, "you said you wouldn't tell."

"Sure enough, I did; but mamma don't count."

"You said you wouldn't tell anybody," persisted Buster.

"Take care, Jamie," said the mother; "a promise is a solemn thing, and especially a promise to a little one. If anybody 'offends,' by making such a one think less of truth, which is the pillar of God's throne, 'it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck'—you know the rest."

"Whew? Do you hear what mother says, Sue? We have got ourselves 'into it' by promising to agree to Buster's plan for Christmas."

"Buster and Santa Claus must settle that," said Sue carelessly. She evidently looked upon Buster's plan as a joke.

But the little boy was very much in earnest. He had gotten his brothers and Sue to agree, and now there was only one more thing to do, and for that, it was necessary that he should have the sitting-room to himself. Buster watched his chance.

One morning, a week before Christmas, the boys and Sue being off at school, papa at his office, and mamma up in the nursery bathing the baby, Buster found himself in possession of the room. He carefully shut the door, and going to the register, softly called "Santa Claus; old Santa Claus!"

There was no answer.
"I'm afraid registers are not so good as chimneys," said Buster to himself, feeling discouraged; but he called again, "Santa Claus; old Santa Claus!"

This time there was a rumbling sound somewhere, or Buster thought so, and with sparkling eyes, he called through the grating: "Santa Claus, all the children in this house think you give too many presents down some chimneys, and skip over the others; that isn't fair, Santa Claus, and if you haven't enough things in your pack, next Christmas Eve, just give all of us one thing; and give some to Johnny Banks' folks. They live round on Prettyman Street, and you can easily get down their chimney, 'cause they don't hardly have any fire. Will you, Santa Claus?"

But no answer came. Perhaps Santa Claus, if he was really listening at the chimney top, was too surprised to answer, for I must confess he was used to hearing boys call up the chimney for everything they could think of, but I doubt if ever before the old Christmas giver had heard a fellow say he had more than his share.

Christmas morning came on apace. At one breakfast table the children were silent from utter surprise; for instead of

heaped-up parcels, and overflowing plates, like other Christmas mornings, there was just one present for each! Just one; and not a very big one at that!

Buster was in such a state of excitement that he could hardly eat a bite of his buckwheat cake, and nothing would do but that the boys and Sue must go with him round to Prettyman Street to see how Johnny Banks' folks had fared.

For now the secret was out: Buster had gotten the family to agree in his asking Santa Claus to divide things up more, and here was certainly one-half of his answer in their small pile.

I wish you could have paid that visit to Prettyman Street with Buster. You would have seen Christmas cheer where it had never been before, and little eyes dancing with joy that were all too used to weeping. I doubt not you would have said with Jim and Charley and Sue, when they went back to their one Christmas present apiece, "Old Santa Claus must do this every year."

A MOTHER'S EXCUSE.

It comes again, the blessed day
Made glorious by the Saviour's birth,
When faintly in a manger dawned
The light of God which fills the earth.

Along a weary, wintry waste,
My heart a loving pilgrim wends
Her pious way, this holy time,
To greet you, oh, beloved friends!

Fondly I long to take my place
Beside your hearth, its joys to share—
To sun me in the summer smiles
Of the dear faces gathered there.

But baby eyes upraised to mine,
And baby fingers on my breast,
Steep all my soul in sweet content—
Charm even such longings into rest.

Yet, dear ones, let my name be breathed
Kindly around your Christmas tree,
And the still presence of a soul
Make welcome in the place of me.

No unadorned and humble guest
Comes that fond soul this blessed even,
She bears a jewel on her breast
The fairest of the gifts of heaven.

A rose that breathes of paradise
Just budded from the life divine,
A little, tender, smiling babe,
As yet more God's and heaven's than mine!

Born in the Saviour's hallowed month,
A blessed Christ-child may she be,
A little maiden of the Lord;
Room for her by the Christmas tree!

It is all very pleasant, sitting there, and imagining all sorts of nice things, but it is very selfish, to say the least; run and do something for somebody, and see how much happier you will feel.

WHAT DECEMBER SAYS.

Open your hearts ere I am gone,
And hear my old, old story;
For I am the month that first looked down
On the beautiful Babe of glory.
You must never call me lone and drear
Because no birds are singing;
Open your hearts, and you shall hear
The song of the angels ringing.

Open your hearts, and hear the feet
Of the star-led wise men olden;
Bring out your treasures of incense sweet,
Lay down your offerings golden;
You say you look, but you see no light
Of the wonderful Babe I'm telling;
You say they have carried him off by night
From Bethlehem's lowly dwelling.

Open your hearts and seek the door
Where the alway poor are staying;
For this is the story, for evermore,
The Master's voice is saying:
Inasmuch as ye do it unto them,
The poor, the weak, and the stranger,
Ye do it to Jesus of Bethlehem—
Dear babe of star-lit manger!

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTERLY REVIEW.
December 31.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget
not all his benefits.—Psalm 103. 2.

Titles and Golden Texts should be
thoroughly studied.

1. Joy in G.'s H. - I was glad when—
2. H.'s P. A. the J. - If God be for—
3. E. P. for H. P. - Commit thy way—
4. E.'s J. to J. - The hand of our God—
5. P. of D. - They that sow in—
6. N.'s P. - Prosper, I pray thee—
7. R. the W. of J. - Watch and—
8. P. R. of the S. - The ears of all—
9. W. of I. - Wine is a—
10. K. the S. - Remember the—
11. L. in G. - God loveth a—
12. F. of R. and W. D. Whatsoever a—
13. C.'s C. F. - Unto you is born—

FIRST QUARTER, 1900.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

LESSON I. [Jan. 7.]

THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

Luke 2. 1-16. Memory verses, 8-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he
shall save his people from their sins.—
Matt. 1. 21.

A LESSON STORY.

The word that the angel spoke to the
shepherds of Bethlehem so long ago is
spoken to us again to-day: "Unto you is
born . . . a Saviour." Shall we not study

the story of his life with loving thought
and care?

* Luke tells us why Joseph and Mary
went to Bethlehem. This was called the
"city of David," and Joseph and Mary
were of the family of King David. The
Jews were under the rule of the Romans at
this time, and so when the emperor of
Rome made a law that all Jews should be
enrolled, those who had gone to live in
other parts had to go to their own tribe
and city to be enrolled.

When Joseph and Mary came to Bethle-
hem, they found a great many people
there—so many that they could not find a
place in the inn, and had to go into the
stable where the oxen and asses were
kept. It was there in the lowly shed that
Jesus was born, a little child, so that the
youngest and weakest and poorest of all
might find the way to heaven!

Was there no one there to welcome the
newborn King? Yes, an angel came from
heaven to tell some good shepherds who
were waiting and hoping for the coming
of the King, that he had really come!
They made haste to go to the stable, and
there, gathered about the infant Saviour
were the carpenter Joseph, the sweet
mother Mary, the glad shepherds, and the
wondering cattle!

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGEST.

How did the great God come to this
world? As a little child.

Where was he born? In Bethlehem of
Judea.

Who were his father and mother?
Joseph and Mary.

To what family did they belong? To
the family of King David.

What was Bethlehem often called? The
city of David.

Who said that all Jews must be enrolled?
The Roman emperor.

Who went to Bethlehem to be enrolled?
Joseph and Mary.

Why could they not sleep in the inn?
It was too full.

Where was Jesus born that night? In
a stable.

Who heard first of his birth? Some
shepherds.

Who told them the good news? The
angels.

Can you sing the angels' song? The
heart of peace may sing it.

THE CHRISTMAS SNOWBALL.

Paul and George made it. First they
made a little snowball in their hands, then
they rolled it in the snow that lay on the
ground. The snow was not very deep, so
they took their little shovels, and made a
path of quite deep snow to roll the ball in.
When it was done they stuck some holly
in it and called it the birds' Christmas
pudding. How nice it would have been if
they had put some seeds in it for 'plums.'
The birds like the bright red holly berries,
but they are not good to eat.

Never let a day pass without doing
something for Jesus.

THE TWO LITTLE STOCKINGS.

BY SARAH KEABLES HUNT.

Two little stockings hung side by side,
Close to the fireplace, broad and wide,
"Two!" said Saint Nick, as down he
came,

Loaded with toys and many a game.
"Ho! ho!" said he, with a laugh of fun,
"I'll have no cheating, my pretty one;
I know who dwells in this house, my dear;
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 specs 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 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,
"God bless you, darling," he said with a
sigh,

Then softly he blew through the chimney
high,

A note like a bird's when it soars on high,
When down came two of the funniest
mortals

That ever were seen inside earth's portals.
"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 gathered
them in

And 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 St. Nicholas flew through the icy air,
Bringing "peace and good-will" with him
everywhere.

CHRISTMAS-TIME.

I feel so happy I cannot keep still
Just one more day, and 'twill be Christ-
mas Day;
And all the house is full of secrets now,
And everybody whispers what they say.

When I go in the door, unless I knock,
Or rattle with my hand upon the latch,
Mamma hides something underneath her
chair,
And aunty jumps up, something else to
snatch.

John's got a ball for Bess, and yesterday
He let me bounce it on the playroom
floor,
And how we laughed when Bess came
running up
To ask about the racket at the door!

I've made a heart-shaped pin-ball for papa,
And aunty's book-mark
now at last is done;
She has not seen it, and
she cannot guess
What I have for her—
oh, it is such fun!

To-night, when nurse
went down to get
our tea,
I watched the man
lighting the lamps
below,
And saw them twinkling
up the long, long
street,
Like a procession of
stars down in the
snow.

When jingle, jingle,
straight up to our door
Came through the dusk
a horse and wagon,
too,
A man jumped out with
bundles in his arms,
And to the stairtop all
we children flew;

Then Jennie took them in; but ere we
saw,
Mamma ran up the stairs and drove us
back:

But Bob said he was sure he saw a sled,
When, naughty boy, he peeped out
through the crack!

To-morrow night I shall not go to sleep,
But watch the chimney, Santa Claus
to see;

I think he is papa, but now he lives
In the spare room, and aunty keeps
the key.

FEEDING THE BIRDS.

One of the prettiest of Christmas cus-
toms is the Norwegian one of giving on
Christmas Day a dinner to the birds. On
Christmas morning every gable, gateway,
or barn-door is decorated with a sheaf of
corn fixed on the top of a tall pole, where-

from it is intended that the birds shall
make their Christmas dinner. Even the
poorest will contrive to have a handful
set for this purpose, and what the birds
do not eat on Christmas Day remains for
them to finish at their leisure through the
winter.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

What a proud old turkey this is! He
goes strutting about as though he owned
the whole world and as if he was not
afraid of any one. Poor old fellow! if he
could only know that "pride goes before a
fall." He seems to be saying to this happy
family who are watching him with amuse-
ment, "Well, you are not going to have
me for dinner to-morrow." If he could
only know that the old farmer intends
killing him later on I fancy he would be
more humble.



CHRISTMAS EVE.

CHRISTMAS BELLS.

Mildred Thorpe was going on an errand.
An odd errand it seemed too.

"Why, mother dear, it seems so silly to
carry a bunch of holly to an old woman.
What can she want with it?"

"Never mind, Mildred, take the basket,
and don't lose out the holly, whatever you
do," answered her mother, with a gentle
sigh, as she closed the door against the
reluctant little girl.

Suddenly the chimes from the church
steeples rang out:

Glory to God in the highest,
Glory to God, glory to God,
Glory to God in the highest,
Peace on earth, good will to men.

Mildred's face lightened. "I love the
chimes," she said, and she began to sing,
"Ring, Happy Bells, Across the Snow." She
hardly noticed how fast the time
went until she found herself opposite the

little house where her mother had sent
her.

"Ah, my holly, my beautiful Christmas
holly!" the old woman exclaimed, as soon
as Mildred was inside the tiny room.
"Your mother never forgets. Christmas
would not seem Christmas to me without
the holly. You'd like to know why I
love it so? I wasn't always poor. I
lived in the South, and on our lawn grew
great trees of holly. At Christmas the
whole house used to be trimmed with the
bright green leaves and the red berries.
My home has gone, my children are dead—
your mother used to play with them, and
she knew how they loved the holly. I
see my happy days again when I look at
the bunch of holly."

She lifted out the bunch lovingly. Un-
derneath was an envelope, which Mildred
left upon the table, then slipped softly out.

There was money in the envelope which
would help to make the
dear old woman com-
fortable for a long time.

The bells were still
ringing.

"I'm glad that Jesus
has a more beautiful home
in heaven prepared for
the dear old woman who
has lost her earthly home,
thought Mildred.

CHRISTMAS COMES.

Dark are the days when
the year grows old.
Dark and dreary the win-
ter cold;
And far away on the
frozen marsh,
The wild bird's cry sounds
shrill and harsh;
And the dry reeds bow to
the north wind's
blast,
And the blackskies frown,
and the snow falls
fast.

But the Lord was born in the winter
time,
And the joy-bells rang with a tender
chime;

For his love has kindled a warmer glow
Than the golden days of summer know.
And we love the Christ-child's birthday
dear,
Best of all the days of the year.

Into the darkness he brought the light,
Sun who rose at dead of night,
When the angels came to the cradle stall
To worship the child who is Lord of all.
Sorrow and sin and poverty sore,
He turns to glory for evermore.

Live to be useful; live to give light;
for those who are enabled through grace
to shine as lights here, shall, in the world
to come, shine as suns and stars for ever
and ever.