

## Our Boys and Girls.

### WHAT TO TELL THE CHILDREN.

BY MRS. S. C. COLLIER.

Talk not alone of Kris Kringle;  
Of Santa Claus, grizzly and grim;  
Tell them the story of Jesus,  
The Christ-child, so charming to them.

Truth is more thrilling than fable,  
Love more refining than fear;  
The birth of a Child in a stable—  
A story they all love to hear.

Tell of a chorus of angels,  
Encircled in rainbows of light,  
Proclaiming the birth, in a manger,  
Of Jesus that wonderful night.

Beautiful, angelic faces  
Peering through shimmer and sheen;  
The heavens aglow with their radiance,  
The atmosphere thrilled with their theme.

Their voices sang glad hallelujahs,  
Hosannas to Jesus, the King,  
"Peace and good will to all nations"—  
What wonderful tidings to bring!

Tell them the lowly Child Jesus  
Was really a Prince and a King,  
Coming to save us from evil,  
The sweetest of blessings to bring.

The birthday of Jesus remember  
With presents and music and cheer;  
Mem'ries of Bethlehem render  
This day, the best day of the year.

—Christian Advocate.

### HOW CHRISTMAS CAME TO RAGS.

BY CORA A. LEWIS.

"Rags, bones and old iron," as the other boys called him, or "Rags" "for short," tempted by the warmer air, and the fragrant odors of fruits and flowers in Centre Market, forgetting, for the moment, his shame of rags, crept in from the curb. Was there ever anything so delightful as a saunter through this beautiful Washington market? Rags thought not, and with longing eyes gazed at the rows of game, and plump poultry, "chine" and cooked pigs' feet, the crisped cabbages, rich, yellow sweet potatoes, the pickles piled up in lovely glassware on the various stands; then the chrysanthemums, the roses, the violets, why, it almost turned his head to look at them! not to mention the Christmas wreaths of running pine and holly, brightened here and there by shining red berries and paper or "everlasting" flowers.

"Two days to Christmas Eve night," thought Rags, "an' not a crumb this mornin'; I'm down on my luck, shore! an' they ain't no use thinkin' 'bout Christmas comin' to pore niggers. Sah?" this last, with cap in hand, in reply to a gentleman who called "Rags!" and continued—"Do you want a quarter job? You look like you needed a few."

"Deed that I do, sah," he quickly responded, casting a rueful glance at his ragged coat.

"Well, here's a turkey I want you to carry to my house, No. —, Fourteenth Street, North West, and mind, don't let him run away with you. Here's five cents—better buy a sandwich with it, you look hungry; and here," scribbling a few words on a card, "is a C.O. D. card. Do you know what that means?"

"Yes sah, they'll pay me the rest when I git there."

"Just so; now travel."

"Say, Dave, are you a fool to start that ragamuffin off with your goods? I'll bet a dollar your folks never see that bird," said a friend standing near.

"Oh yes, they will," was the positive answer; "Rags is a responsible boy—he's served me before. I like his face—it's so intelligent, and his manly bearing. I only hope my family will not feel themselves insulted by his appearance, for I wanted to help the poor little pickaninny."

It happened that the cook, at the other end of the route, was good-natured, and kindly invited Rags to the range to get "a bit warm," and while she was vainly trying to read the words on the card which he handed her, the twelve-year-old daughter of the house stepped into the kitchen.

"Maggie, mamma says come to her immediately; she wants to see you." "Yes, miss; an' will you be so kind as to watch the things in the oven," with a meaning glance in Rags' direction, "while I ask the madam the answer to this the boy brought?"

"Certainly," and to Edith's delight she was left alone, face to face, with a ragged little darkey. Her mother belonged to a charitable association, and ever since she could remember Edith had longed to do something herself for somebody, without any "red tape" yaws, or "investigations" by someone else, in the way. But her mother had always laughed at her zeal, telling her she would have more opportunity than she cared for when she grew older. Now fate had thrown a subject (or was it an object?) in her way, and with a beaming smile she spoke to Rags, and by way of prelude, seeing his gaze resting on the burden he had just delivered, she asked him if he liked turkey.

"Dunno, miss, never tasted any."

"Never tasted turkey! Who ever heaf'd of such a thing? She was almost tired of turkey, though to be sure the Christmas turkey is always nicer with its oyster and chestnut dressing than the ordinary ones—and she should just see that the poor chap had a chance to taste turkey once in his life, anyhow."

No X-rays revealing these thoughts to Rags he sat soberly awaiting for his change, thinking it was nice to be warm, but he might be losing money by absence from market.

"What's that on your coat?" suddenly asked Edith, who had been slyly looking him over.

"Why, miss, that's—er—miss—my—toe."

The girl laughed. "I suppose you mean mistletoe, but do tell me how you came to wear it—it's awful dear, brother says, and your coat is so shabby it looks strange."

"I was comin' out the market and the gamman gave me a nickel for a sandwich, but I run across some fine drest white fellers that was a talkin' to ol' Aunt Sally. Ol' Aunt Sally, you know, she had holly and pine an' yerbs to sell, an' a bunch o' this yere. One feller says 'I want a piece o' that to send to my best girl, I kow how she'll smile, an' jes' where she'll hang it, an' I'll kiss her under it, you bet; it'll be the first time though, for she's as shy as a paw-tridge;" an' then I told her I wanted a nickel's worth. You see maw is my best girl, an' she's been po'ly a long time (that's why I'm Rags, on'y my right name is Henry Hamilton Paine), an' I s'ayed to myself it might cheer her right smart to kiss her under the—mistletoe!"

"Bub, you know you could kiss your own mother anywhere or any time."

"Yes, miss, I know, but Aunt Sally s'ayed it was bound to bring me good luck, and the Lord knows I need it, for with maw an' my little sister on my hands"—

"A little sister!" how the interest deepened.

"If I could git stiddy work," he went on, "I'd git along."

"Dear me, yes," said Edith, her mind flying upstairs to a certain box wherein lay ten dollars all her own for Christmas, to use as she pleased, "and I shall please to be fairy, just like in the stories," she thought, "and Rags shall have a turkey, (I know I can coax Maggie to roast it for me) and a new suit, and something for his mother and sister, too, and oh, I wonder if after while he couldn't go to be a door-boy for Mrs. Blank, on Connecticut Avenue. She was looking for one I heard her say, and how cute Rags would look in the beautiful livery suit they put on them—he's so black. O, here's Maggie," as she returned. "Henry, could you come up here on Christmas day, about 12 o'clock? I might find some work for you."

"Certainly, miss," with joyful eyes.

"Very well; here's your money."

"Thank you, miss. My hand was eachin' this mornin', an' I spit on it an' put it in my pocket; was hopin' it meant money."

"Did you wash your hands, then?" hastily asked Edith.

"No, miss; charm ud be brok then."

"Oh. Wait a minute," and she disappeared, soon returning, however, with a coat and a cake of soap.

"Here's an overcoat brother outgrew—and some—soap; when you come next time come as clean as you can, 'cept the rags."

He understood. "All right, miss, and thank ye, too."

"And here is a sandwich; don't forget Christmas, and when you come I'll tell you all about whose birthday it is. Good-bye then."

Rags walked back to the market on air (it seemed to him); indeed he narrowly missed running under an electric car, but a miss proved "as good as a mile," in his case.

Edith found a willing aid in her father, and together they filled up a huge Christmas basket that made Rags and his sister dance and shout with delight when he reached home.

And best of all, though Henry has not yet arisen to the dignity of a liveried door-boy, he is an *Evening Star* boy, and is able to attend school part of the time, and Edith's hopes are high for a brilliant future for him.—*The Presbyterian*.

### The good offices of pastors in behalf of their denominational paper are asked just now.

Our influence for the uplifting of man grows in strength as we grow in grace, and its extent is lost in infinity.—*Katherine S. Woods*.

*There is Only One Eclectic Oil.*—When an article, be it medicine or anything else, becomes popular, imitations invariably spring up to derive advantages from the original, which they themselves could never win on their own merits. Imitations of Dr. Thomas' Eclectic Oil have been numerous but never successful. Those who know the genuine are not put off with a substitute but demand the real thing.

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Was Unable to Turn in Bed Without Help.

Plasters and Liniments No Good.

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CURED HIM.

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The fundamental idea of Christian stewardship is the acknowledgement of God's ownership, not of what one has merely, but of one's very self. As the apostle expresses it, "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." Since this is so, we have no right to hoard our Lord's money, or to use it on selfish gratifications. The money we make is God's money, entrusted to us for his glory in the furtherance of his kingdom on earth.

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Also every form of rheumatism, neuralgia and sciatica are best cured by Nerviline (the quickest relief for muscular pain yet discovered). It's because Nerviline strikes in and penetrates right to the core of the pain that it gives such unbounded satisfaction. "I caught cold in my shoulders while driving and suffered great pain," writes G. E. Dempsey, of Berlin. "I used Nerviline freely and was soon quite well. I have found Nerviline an excellent remedy for rheumatism and neuralgia as well as for cold on the chest. I recommend Nerviline highly and wouldn't be without it." Price 25c.

All men are blinded by reason of sin. Some are still further blinded by a sinful reason.—*Rev. N. N. Harter*.

Miss Bessie Nason, a well-known lady of Clover Hill, N. B., writes: "I gladly recommend Laxa-Liver Pills to anyone suffering from constipation. They cured me entirely before I had finished the third box."

Hath any wronged thee? Be bravely revenged. Slight the wrong and the work is begun; forgive it, it's finished. He is below himself that is not above an injury.—*Francis Quarles*.

*Joints Swollen.*—My little boy, eight years old, had a bad attack of rheumatism. His joints were swollen, and he couldn't sleep with the pain. One box of Milburn's Rheumatic Pills completely cured him. F. Bissonette, Port Hope, Ont.