

WILLIE KNOWS IT

Willie (at close of Christmas Day): 'Grandpa, didn't you say that Santa Claus only brought presents to good boys?'

Grandpa: 'Yes, dear.'

Willie: 'Well, if Santa Claus thinks all of the fellers he brought presents for are good boys, some boys' parents has cheated him awful.'

AN INVALID'S CHRISTMAS

My best Christmas came at a time when I was prepared for my worst one. For months I had lain in a lethargy of pain. Finally they sent me away with my nurse to prepare for a serious operation early in the new year.

My Christmases heretofore had been like most other women's—a hurried, strained month or two of preparing presents which I could rightly not afford the money to buy or the time to make. When my nurse asked me how I should celebrate Christmas, I told her that I would celebrate it not at all.

But when Christmas Eve came I found that it was not going to be so easy a matter to ignore the date. There was a timid knock, and the nurse opened the door, to find a newsboy, awkward and shy, standing there with a tissue-paper roll in his hand.

'Saw yer lyu' by the winder all the time,' he began in crimson embarrassment—and bolted, leaving me the richer by a spicy carnation and a little throb of gratitude in my throat.

Then came the baker's little daughter, fat little legs and flaxen pigtales, and broad good-will on her features. Such a coffee-cake as she bore, with such wonderful decorations! 'Mine mamma, she sends you a Merry Christmas, and she hopes you are already yet better,' said Gretchen shyly.

So the day went on. Little gifts came from all sorts of people who barely knew me—who knew me only as the pale lady who lay in the long invalid chair by the window. A woman whom I had scarcely met, but whose home had suffered the same loss that crushed me, sent me a bunch of flowers and an understanding message. All the world seemed to have time and tenderness to spare for a lonely sick woman. And—re-buke to my cynicism—my relatives and friends sent me the most desirable little things imaginable.

That was the best Christmas. I learned then that no one is so poor or so busy that he may not find 'some poor soul to be good to,' and that the sight of sorrow stirs a universal chord of sympathy. It was my best Christmas, for it gave back to me what I was losing—a full belief in my own kind.

CHRISTMAS GAMES

THE FOUR ELEMENTS.

Try playing the game of the four elements next time things become dull at a party. The players are seated in a circle; the one who has been selected to begin the game takes a knotted handkerchief and throws it suddenly into another's lap, calling out at the same time either 'earth,' 'air,' 'fire,' or 'water.' If 'earth' is called out the player into whose lap the handkerchief has fallen must name some quadruped before the other can count ten; if 'water,' he must name a fish; if 'air,' a bird; if 'fire,' he must remain silent. Should the player name a wrong animal or speak when he ought to remain silent, he must pay a forfeit and take a turn at throwing the handkerchief; but should he perform his task properly, he must throw the handkerchief back to the first player. Those who have never joined in this game can have no idea of the absurd errors into which the different players fall when summoned unawares to name a particular kind of animal.

A GOOD GAME.

When your friends come to spend the Christmas afternoon with you, ask them to seat themselves in a circle, and then play the game of the Alphabetical Tour. The idea is to travel around the world, naming your destination and errands in order of the alphabet. For instance, you ask the first player:

Miss A., where are you going?

Answer—To Auckland.

Leader—What will you do there?

Answer—Apply for Amusing Anecdotes.

'I am going to Blenheim,' says the next.

Leader—What will you do there?

Answer—Bake Bacon and Beans.

Each one is asked in turn by the leader, 'Where are you going?' and 'What will you do there?'

C—goes to Constantinople to Call for Citron.

D—Dunedin to Dress, Dine, and Dance.

E—to Europe to Eagerly Enjoy Everything.

F—to Flanders to Fish for Flounders.

G—to Greenpoint to Garden and Groan.

H—to the Hutt to Hunt Hares.

I—to Ireland to Imitate Irishmen.

J—to Jersey to Join a Jubilee.

K—to Kensington to Keep Kittens Kindly.

L—to Lincoln to Love Loyally.

M—to Maryland to Marry a Musician.

N—to Nelson to Not Nervously.

O—to Oamaru to Own Outrageous Onions.

P—to Petone to Patronise Pastry.

Q—to Queenstown to Quarrel Queerly.

R—to Rangitikei to Rove and Roam.

S—to Siam to Sell Seven Shawls.

T—to Toronto—to Tell Tedious Tales.

U—to Uruguay to Upset a Usurper.

V—to Vienna to Vex a Vixen.

W—to Waterloo to Weep and Wail.

Y—to Yarmouth to Yawn.

Z—to Zante to Zig-zag Zealously.

When the alphabet has been around, you begin over again. 'Anyone who fails to give a correct answer pays a forfeit or drops out of the game.'

FAMOUS PENS.

Name a pen belonging to Uncle Sam?—Pensylvania.

A pen belonging to the novelist Thackeray?—PENNENNIS.

An English copper pen?—PENNY.

A pen which writes involuntary punishment?—PENALTY.

A pen which subscribes to voluntary punishment?—PENANCE.

A sacred household pen of ancient Rome?—PENATES.

A pen that writes without ink?—PENCIL.

A pen hanging up?—PENDANT.

A pen that can go through thick walls?—PENETRATION.

A pen found among the birds?—PENGUIN.

A pen that writes almost entirely in water?—PENINSULA.

A pen that can cancel the supreme sentence?—PENITENCE.

A Lenten season pen?—PENITENTIAL.

A pen that admits to any stronghold?—OPEN.

A pen found on a flag?—PENNANT.

An aromatic pen found among weeds?—PENNYROYAL.

A pen of weights and measures?—PENNYWEIGHT.

A pen economical in small matters?—PENNYWISE.

An old soldier's pen?—PENSION.

A pen belonging to a quietly thoughtful person?—PENSIVE.

A pen always shut up?—PENT.

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