

VARIOUS

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"CLEAR THE COAST!"

CLEAR the coast! clear the coast!" cried Albert and Frank, as they came down hill swiftly on Frank's new sled.

"Look out for that woman!" cried little Harry, who was standing at the top of the hill.

A poor German woman was crossing the road. She had a large basket full of bundles, which she carried on her head. In her right hand she had an umbrella and a tin pail, and on her arm another basket. Truly, seeing that the roads were slippery, she had more than her share of burdens.

She tried to get out of the way; but Frank's new sled was such a swift runner, that it came near striking her, and caused her to nearly lose her balance, putting her at the same time into a great fright.

"You bad boys, you almost threw me down!" she exclaimed, when she recovered from the start they had given her, and looked around to see if she had dropped any of her bundles.

But down the hill they rushed on their sled, Frank losing his

hat in their descent, but little caring for that in his delight. The two boys, after reaching the foot of the hill, turned, and began to drag their sled up again.

"That woman," said Frank, "called us bad boys. Let us tell her that we are not bad boys. We did not mean to run her down."

"Here comes Harry, running. What has he got to say?" asked Albert.

"I tell you what, boys," said Harry, "you'll be taken up if you run people down in that way."

"Why didn't she clear the coast when I told her to?" said Albert.

"Why didn't you steer your sled out of the way?" returned Harry.

"I didn't hit her, did I?" said Albert.

"No; but you were trying to see how near you could come without hitting her," replied Harry. "It's too bad to treat a poor old woman so!"

"So it was," said Frank. "What shall we do about it?"

"That's for Albert to say," exclaimed Harry.

"Well," replied Albert, "the right thing will be to offer to drag her bundles for her on the sled."

"That's it!" said the other two boys.

By this time they had reached the place where the poor woman was moving slowly along under her heavy burdens. She seemed very tired, and sighed often as she picked her way timidly over the frozen snow.

"We are sorry we frightened you," said Albert. "We did not mean to do any harm. Put your baskets on this sled, and we will drag them for you as far as you want to go."

"Well, you are little gentlemen, after all," said the woman, "and I'm sorry I was so vexed with you."

"You had cause," said Frank: "we were to blame."

Then she put her two baskets and the tin pail on the sled; and the three boys escorted her to her home, where she thanked them heartily for the way in which they had made amends for Albert's bad steering.

Uncle Charles.

WHO IS IT?

Surely a step on the carpet I hear,
Some quiet mouse that is creeping so near.
Two little feet mount the rung of my chair:
True as I live, there is somebody there!
Ten lily fingers are over my eyes,
Trying to take me by sudden surprise;
Then a voice, calling in merriest glee,
"Who is it? Tell me, and you may go free."

"Who is it? Leave me a moment to guess.
Some one who loves me?" The voice answers, "Yes."
"Some one who's fairer to me than the flowers,
Brighter to me than the sunshiny hours?
Darling, whose white little hands make me blind
Unto all things that are dark and unkind;
Sunshine and blossoms, and diamond and pearl,—
Papa's own dear little, sweet little girl!"

George Cooper.

A LETTER TO SANTA CLAUS

The little boy who got his aunt to write this letter for him wishes to have it appear in "The Nursery," so that Santa Claus may be sure to read it. When it is *printed*, the little boy says he can read it himself. Here is the letter:—

Dear Mr. Santa Claus,—Please, sir, could you not bring me a team of goats next Christmas? I do want them so much! Other little boys no bigger than I am have a pair of goats to play with.

When I ask my mother to get me a pair, she says she will see, but thinks I shall have to wait a little while. Now, dear Mr. Santa Claus, I do not feel as if I *could* wait.

Besides, ma's "little while" seems like a great while to me, and when I get older I shall have to go to school; but now I could play almost all the time with my little goats, if I had them. Oh, dear! I wish I had them now! I can hardly wait till Christmas.

I will be very kind to them, and give them plenty to eat, and a good warm bed at night. Brother Charley says he will get me a wagon, if you, good Mr. Santa Claus, will give me the goats.

Folks say, that, although you are an old man, you love little children; especially little boys with black eyes, and who obey their mother. Well, my eyes are very black; and I love my mother dearly, and try to obey her.

My name is Francis Lincoln Noble: I live at 214, South 8th Street, Williamsburgh, L.I. The house is quite high; but, dear Mr. Santa Claus, I think your nimble deer can climb to the top of it.

You can put the little goats right down through the chimney in ma's room. I will take away the fireboard, so they can come out at the fireplace. Oh, how happy I shall be when I wake in the morning, and see them! I shall say, "Merry Christmas!" to everybody; and everybody will say, "Merry Christmas!" to me.

But dear, good Mr. Santa Claus, if you cannot get to the top of the house to put them down the chimney, please to bring them up the front-steps, and tie them to the door-knob; and then blow your whistle, and I will run right down to the door; and, dear Mr. Santa Claus, could you not stop long enough for me to say, "Thank you!" for my mother says all good boys say, "Thank you!" when they receive a present?

Francis Lincoln Noble.

THE BOY AND THE NUTS

A boy once found some nuts in a jar. Like all boys, he was fond of nuts, and was glad to hear that he might put his hand *once* in the jar, and have all the nuts he could then take out. He thrust his hand down the neck of the jar, and took hold of all the nuts he could. When his hand was quite full, he did his best to draw it out of the jar.

But the neck of the jar was small, and his hand was so full of nuts, that he could not draw it out. He felt so sad, that tears fell from his eyes. His friend who stood near told him to let go half the nuts. He did so, and then drew out his hand with ease.

We shall find it so in life: men lose all, if they try to get too much.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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