## SANTA CLAUS' VISIT.

On snow-clad hills, at still midnight, The moonshine lies in beauty bright; The world is hushed in slumber now,

The world is hushed in slumber now, For balmy sleep from every brow Hath smoothed away the lines of care, And stamped repose—night's blessing—there.

Day's busy, bustling crowd is still, Reprived awhile from cares that fill All hearts wherein the pulse of life Exceeds the throbs of infant strife; The mingled voices of the crowd No longer heard—each head is bow'd In mansion rich and poor abode. Forgetful of the heavy load Poor human nature has to bear, In homespun clad or silkin wear—A sweeter sleep to toil is given Than to the idle, blessed of heaven, With every luxury wealth can bring; With every luxury wealth can bring; While laborers toil and blithely sing, The rich oft yawn in discontent, The rich oft yawn in discontent,
And mourn at eve the day misspent.
But midnight brings to all surcease
From daylight's cares—to all sweet peace
Thus resting in the close embrace
Of sleep—night keeper of our race—
The world awaits the coming dawn
That ushers in glad Christmas morn.
The spirit of the season by
Steals swiftly, while each youthful eye
Close scaled remains by nature's laws,
As o'er each house goes Santa Claus. Close sealed remains by nature's laws, As o'er each house goes Santa Claus. A pack of gifts his back bestrides, As down the chimney quickly glides The fur-clad elf, with pipe and whip, His twinkling eye and smiling lip A promise give or something nice, As through the room like creeping mice His footseps glide; he views the feet Of stockings which, at mourn, will greet The eyes of children in the bed Where hang the stockings overhead. With nods, and winks, and funny shrugs, His well-filled pack around he lugs. His well-filled pack around he lugs, Until a chair he finds to mount, So that their number he may count. So that their number he may count.

"One, two, three, four—'twas fice last year,
(He stops to wipe away a tear)
I'll look again—the smallest feet
Are missing; they have gone to meet
The Babe of Bethl'em, at whose birth
The shepherds sang 'GoodWill on Earth.'"
He glanced around; on bed of straw
The little errand boy he saw:

"Ah, there lies one I did not see,
'Tis likely he, too, dreams of me;

## "Ah, there lies one I did not see, "Tis likely he, too, dreams of me; To him warm clothes I'll give instead This toy I bought the child that's dead." Then stooping down and putting back The silver trumpet, from his pack The other gifts he quickly drew, And stuffed the stockings number two, And three, and four; the smallest one He filled the last, When all was done He chuckled low, and made a pause, Then vanished—dear old Sants Claus. Margie's Christmas Eve.

BY MISS SARAH BRION.

It was the day before Christmas. A cold still day with a leaden sky hanging like a gray curtain over the earth. A day cheerless enough to make poor little Margie Hepburn's heart sink, and her blue eyes filled with tears, as she sat pressing her cheek against a car window, and trying vainly to catch a glimpse of the sun. Just her eyes and heart dancing again, for there never was a merrier little fairy than Margie, but the gray clouds hung lower and lower, and she couldn't help being miserable.

Poor child! She was all alone in the world, with nothing but her light heart and her trust in Providence to keep her supported her at a city boarding school. | laughs to ring out as clearly from Margie's She was going now to live with her aunt as lips as from Emmic's. the under-paid governess of a tribe of insolent, ill-bred children. She had been trav-

"Now, I mean to stop thinking about knew I should find something cheerful .-What a pretty group of girls! And how declare. Now, I shall have pleasant occu- It will be perfectly jolly!" pation in watching them."

The party entered; three young girls, all ing. The merriest set they were, and evibound upon some very pleasant expedition. thundering on its way again.

Little Margie, seated just opposite th party, watched them quietly; and learned had deserted wondered greatly over her many things about them. She learned prolonged absence, and were very curious that the two brown-eyed girls with such dazzling complexions were "Alice and Emmie had scared up," as Tom expressed Emma," and one of the young men their it. brother Leslie. The tall, queenly girl, with a skin like a magnolia bloom, and dark lashes drooping low over her black eyes, was "Adelaide." Adelaide Brent. apparently, for a gentleman whom she called brother, and who was by far the gravest of the party, was addressed as Mr. Brent by the two hazel-eyed girls. Then cling bag contained, had produced a bottle That is 1 am going to take a load of folks there were George and Tom Hardy, two of cologne, and assured Margie it was to Col. Ben Elliott's, a mile this side of fun-loving youths with almost imperceptible moustaches, and John Winston, a distinguished-looking young man, with very dark gray eyes, and quiet, graceful man- with much interest the color coming brightners. He always spoke in a low, subdued tone, but what he said was sometimes ablution. Then she brought over the lovely accompanied by a smile of intense amuse- Afghan Margie had admired, and proudly ment, and a glitter of the deep gray eyes. exhibited it as her own work. In the midst Besides, she could not go to Col. Elliott's, Then a shout of laughter was sure to follow from the rest of the party, and Margie concerning all manner of fancy work, the she could stay in till her aunt sent for her.

would wish she had heard what he said. opposite paid very little attention to her .-A glance or two from their laughing eyes ing fast, and the down train had brought fell on her quiet figure, and glinted off news that quite a heavy snow-storm had again coldly and carclessly. She was only set in nearer the mountains. The news a pale, sleepy-looking girl, with a brown seemed to create some uneasiness among step came over the snowy platform, and veil tied under her chin, and her head pilfortable pillow, but she had no warm, soft, and Afghans lay upon the seat in front of ing under a mautle of white. The train never thought of wishing they would offer 'side would spread it out that she might the sound of the car wheels seemed to grow for neglect of duty, and was so gentlemanly se e the stitch, for knitting was one of Mar- dull and muffled. gie 's passions, one which she could not affor, I to include-worsteds were too costly,

especi, illy "high colors." On ra ttled the train over long bridges. high emb, ankments, and dull-looking plains. Mile after mile was passed. It was nine gers of "You'll be all night on the road, sage and up the narrow stairs he pointed to change with her was at once accepted. co'clock, and the train, after a prolonged There's a drift in Harris' Cut as high as out. shrick from the engine, darted into a your smoke-stack, and you'll stick there A confusion of gay laughing voices guided the long halts, Mr. Winston came to the

## THE CECIL WHIG.

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Emmie apparently went to the door to

followed. Then Margie heard again,

"Yes, we will be ready in fifteen minutes,

Mr. Winston? Oh, certainly there be room

enough! I am so glad you mentioned it .-

to accept favors from people she had never

seen till to-day, was so galling to proud

Margie, that she felt like running desper-

to pray for pardon and for help in her lone-

In the next room they seemed uncor

through the thin partition, for Emmie was

know if we could give Miss Hepburn a

"Oh!" sighed Addy plaintively. I sup-

a note to her aunt from her? It's Mrs.

Delancey's business to get her to ---- ville.'

"Grecious, Addy!" exclaimed Emmie,

here, with no way of getting to ---ville

for a week perhaps! What are you talking

about? Mamma would give us a good

scolding if we did it, wouldn't she Alice?"

Alice agreed that she would, though she

widently hesitated to disagree with the

hard to keep from confronting Addy like a

that "she need not be at all uneasy, the

'nice party' should never be spoiled by

In the midst of her struggles against

pride and temper, bright, warm-hearted

Emmie came in to hurry her, and to entreat.

in her caressing way, that Miss Henburn

home with them to "Clifton," from which

she could easily reach her aunt's.

would take a seat in their stage and go

Margie yielded, secretely hoping that the

on that night to ---ville, and in a few

placed with Emmie and a large basket con-

taining lunch, which Mrs. Simmons had

smuggled, on the back seat of the stage .-

There was any quantity of room, for Leslie

climbing to the roof, where they chanted

college songs and frighteened timid Alice

by pretending to fall off every five minutes,

and Mr. Winston, after the first half mile

Mr. Cross (than whom there never was a

It was after sundown when the stage left

night promise to be a dark one, for as Mr.

wa'n't for them dratted clouds, and beside

with a head to drive," and he repeated

his favorite expression, "he would get

through if things held together." So

they rolled on, the stage swinging easily

noislessly into the soft snow, and the noble

echo for miles around. A very pleasant

state of affairs if it could only have lasted.

pines was soon passed, and then came a

all points of the compass, and actually, as

were broken by the weight of snow and

lay stretched across the road, and which

required the united strength of all the men

So it happened that when during one of

in the company to remove them.

from side to side, the wheels crushing

iollier fellow by the way.)

and Tom, and George Hardy preferred

imperious, magnificent Addy.

seat in the stage. Of course we can."

or five, if you say so. What did you say,

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smoking coffee, and buttered rolls, which | heavier, too, and she began to fall into lit- | face and blue eyes went "straight to her | "Why are you not asleep, too, Miss Hepshe imagined were to be found in the the uneasy dozes, with her cheek pillowed heart," she said. refreshment room of the depot. She watch- on her satchel. She was so tired that even | She took her into the "company room," ed the stream of passengers hastening from the prospect of being snowed up all night the pride of her heart, which adjoined the cold out there? the cars, and half made up her mind to in a deep cut could not keep her awake. - sitting-room, and, giving her water to bathe follow them. But it was such a jostling, She fell asleep even while thinking with her face, went back to the parlor again .hurrying crowd, and she was such a little dismay that the town where her aunt lived | Somehow, the sound of happy voices in the thing, that they might run over her. Then was twelve miles from the railroad station. next room made Margie more lonely and "I feel as though it were so selfish in us to she had a nervous horror of pickpockets, and the mountain roads would probably wretched than she had ever been in her sit here warm and safe while you are out in who abounded, she had been assured, in be rendered impassable for the carriage such crowds. Besides, "breakfast" would which was to meet her. Emmie had said water all at once, and, though she tried cost a dollar, and there was very little more that a stage, which ran from the station to than that in her purse. So she laid her --ville regularly during the summer, head upon her little satchel again, and had been chartered for the use of her party, prudently resolved to be satisfied with the although it had long ceased to make its slender lunch of bread and smoked beef daily trips. the good-natured housekeeper at the "In- Margie wondered if they would go off stitute" had given her. "Addy, shall we go to breakfast?" she fate. She dozed off, dreamed her aunt's flow faster than ever for very pity of her- don't be discouraged," he said.

leard Emmie ask.

"Neither do I; but I never can help it," on her in a grave, curious expression. said Tom Hardy, with a ridiculous grimace, senting to drink a cup of coffee if it could be brought to her.

delightful aroma.

the waiter, was carrying on a whispering wound it hurriedly into a great knot at the conversation with Alice and Emmie, and back of her head! Margie, to her astonishment, suddenly perher hand, and naused by Margie's side.

fee?" she said, in a tone which somehow managed to be an entreaty, an apology, and a caress all at once. "I am sure it will do you good; you look tired. Please slumber, and this time she was roused from

but I saw you were alone, and it's so disa- and she slept again, with the scarlet and greeable for a lady to go in a crowd like purple afghan wrapped around her, and

you! You are very kind, indeed."

Then the waiter brought Emmie another "Won't you sit down here?" said Mar-

one little ray of sunlight would have set Emmie slipped into the seat, stealing a glance across the car to see what the move- bewildered and startled to speak or to do ment would be thought of there.

rather uneasy, and Mr. Winston's dark iness, she tied on her bonnet, picked up eyes flashed an amused approval.

Margie discovered that Emmie's party eling all night, and cold, fatigue, and the mountains that she herself was jour her. The cars whistled, and moved off up unhappiness had made her cheeks pale, and neying to. That Emmie knew her aunt, her eyes languid, but the brave young Mrs. Delancey, and did not like her either. heart kept hoping, hoping on, and trusting | That fact Margie guessed from the girl's the future to bring her peace and happiness. | tell-tale face, not from anything she said. | that rose like white domes into the sky, myself, and look for something else bright, were going home from boarding-school to dark pine tree in the dim forests all around if I can't see the sun," she thought, as the her sister's wedding. "She is to marry the little station, great drifts of snow

dark-eyed, blooming, and pretty, and five she contrasted the dreary prospect before and on her cloak, and in her eyes, and gentlemen, young, too, and all good look- herself-the cold welcome to a strange in the air she breathed. And there dently, from their remarks, they were with Emmie's glowing description of the home love, and luxury, and gayety await-With a good deal of bustle and laughter ing her. But in a moment she put away they were at last seated, and, as they smiled the feeling, and answered cheerfully the be possible for a carriage to come from and nodded farewells to their friends on questions Emmie asked about herself .- ville in'a week." the platform, the train went jarring and Her little history was soon told, and Emmie ran on again with her overflow of happy confidences. Meanwhile the party Emmie

> about "the little party with the blue eyes The two girls were fast becoming friends. from your face. Just put some on your your going that far with them. I thought handkerchief, and try it," and had watched | you were one of that crowd."

train stopped at a station, and Leslie and Poor little Margie! The merry party George came in from another car to announce in an excited way that it was snow-Emmie's party, and she went back to her

lowed on a little satchel. A very uncom- seat to discuss the subject, leaving Margie to watch the snowflakes that went hurryvoluminous shawl to rest her tired head ing past the window, and to notice how upon. A pile of wrappings, shawls, cloaks, the brown earth was gradually disappear-Adelaide and Mr. Winston, and Margie seemed suddenly to have plunged into a

shouted cheerful predictions to the passen- your" of hers, and went into the little pas- hard and and cold, and Margie's kind offer

merrily and safely, and leave her to her glimpse of her piteous face made her tears only a little more than half way. But carriage had overturned in a snow drift, self. "Poor little me! poor little me!" she "Why, no, I believe not," said Addy, and she was buried in the snow, and started felt like saying, just as she used to say Margie. languidly. "I am sure we breakfasted awake to find her satchel fallen on the floor, when she was a tiny child, and wanted her very comfortably before we started. I am a little snow drift stealing in through the sweet mother to pity and kiss her. That I think. This is a dreary Christmas eve here bottle of shrub has gone and smashed, tled fawn. "It is father," she whispered be given up till after the wedding, when not hungry yet. And then, my dear, I crack in the window, and melting on her thought brought the tears quickly again, for you, Miss Hepbourn.' never cat in such places if I can help it." | neck-and Mr. Winston's dark eyes Axed | and Margie was just about to put her head

It was so provoking and ridiculous a sitas he moved towards the door. The other | uation, and Margie blushed crimson as she | when a sound in the next room attracted | it would have been in the shelter of her gentlemen followed, Addy graciously con- caught the gentleman's eye, and then with her attention, and made her stop crying to aunt's house. Fire and lamps cannot make you well, little one, for the trouble we give down by the light wind that shook the Margie was seized upon to fill her place. sudden dignity she sat up, untied her brown listen. veil, (her bonnet had all this time been sus-In a few moments a waiter entered bear- pended on a hook above her head) and ing a tray with half a dozen cups of smok- brushed the snow from her hair and neck. ing us." ing hot coffee, which certainly had a most | What a wealth of lovely red-gold, waving hair rolled down on her shoulder as she While Addie stirred and tasted her cof- unfastened the ugly veil! And what pretty fee. Mr. Winston, who had returned with white hands they were that caught it, and

Then she attempted to close the window ceived from their glances that they were more tightly, but with all the strength of talking about her. She had scarcely time both hands she could not move it. She But you know the stage isn't going to to be surprised, however, before Emmie, looked up in great surprise as another hand nodding a smiling ascent apparently to a was quietly placed upon the window, and proposition of Mr. Winston's, came across the "provoking thing" slid easily into its till Mrs. Delancey sends for her." the narrow aisle with a cup of coffee in place. Mr. Winston had come to her aid, and she gave him a shyly grateful look "Won't you let me offer you some cof- from her dark-fringed eyes and a murmured "thank you," which ought to have rewarded him well for his trouble.

Again Margie dropped into an uneasy troubled dreams by the touch of gentle Margie's pale cheeks had glowed at first hands on her head. Emmie's smiling eyes with a little flame of wounded pride; but met hers for a moment-something soft Emmie thought it was only shyness, and and warm interposed between her cheek she went on to say, in her winning tones: and the hard wood of the car seat-a gen-"I wouldn't have ventured to offer it, eral sensation of comfort stole over her, her head nestling on a soft cushion So they didn't mean to be charitable, but | made of its folds. She slept long and only corteous. Margie could stand that .- | sweetly, while the train jarred on, the snow With a smile as bright as Emmie's, she drifts deepened, the wind howled through took the cup, and said, heartily: "Thank | the deep cuts, and the winter night came

stealing on. Margie could scarcely help thinking it cup, and she drank her coffee standing by part of her dreams, when a voice roused Margie's seat, and chatting pleasantly with her with the words, "We are near station. I think you'd better put on your bonnet." It was her friend Emmie who gie, motioning to the seat beside her, and spoke, and Margie attempted to smile back into the girl's bright face, but she was too anything but rub her eyes. Then, with Addy looked slightly surprised, Alice fingers that seemed fairly numb with sleepher bag, and followed Emmie and her So Emmie kept her seat, not only while friends from the cars. She shivered with the cars halted, but long afterwards. "The the plunge into the snowy air, which roughly from despair. Four years ago she had free-masonry of youth" drew the two and effectually wakened her. Some one been left an orphan, and since then the young girls together, and soon little confi. put out a hand to help her to the platform; cold, unwilling charity of her aunt had dences began to be exchanged, and merry some one else called out, "Come on, John;

we are waiting," and she saw that Mr. Winston was again her helper. He walked on up the platform, and she looked around were going to the same little town among eagerly for the carriage which was to meet the snowy track, and Margie was left standing a lonely dark little figure on the white platform. Snow on the distant mountains Emmie told her that Alice and herself feathery plumes of snow crowning every train halted in a city depot. "There! I Mr. Brent, Addy's brother, and all of us heaped in the narrow road that plunged are to be bridesmalds and groomsmen. The into the forest and was lost to view; snow wedding is to be the day after Christmas on the wood piled along the railroad, snow happy they look, chatting and laughing day, and there will be half a dozen grand on the glaring red stage that stood near the with their friends. They are coming in, I parties in the neighborhood afterwards. - house, and on the backs of the six bay horses that were harnessed to it, and that So Margie thought, too, and with a feel- stamped and smoked as the flakes gathered ing of envy she could not quite control, on them; snow under Margie's little feet.

home, and her life of loneliness and toil- was no carriage waiting for her. The stage-driver, who was standing by his horses, shook his head as she questioned him, and said "he didn't believe it would

> She looked around the wide waste of snow, and saw no house but the little frame building which served the purposes o depot, store, and post office at once. A week in this dreary place! That was simply impossible! She must get on by some means. "Was there no cart to be hired? No horse she could ride to ----ville?"

The driver looked curiously at the troufor neither of them was troubled with reti- bled childish face of the questioner, cence, and before ten o'clock Emmie had and shook his head again. "No, ma'am found half a dozen little kindnesses to do there ain't nothin' to be got about here for Margie. She had entreated her as as a and twouldn't be possible to go in, or or personal favor to eat some of the nice bis- it, if there was; not such weather as this. cuit and cold chicken her own pretty trav. Iam going through if things hold together. better than water to wash the car dust ---ville. I don't see nothin' to hinder

No. Margie wasn't one of "that crowd." ly into Margie's cheeks during this novel | She was a stranger to all of them. She had no right to a seat in a vehicle chartered by them, and she could not ask it as a favor of the animated conversation that followed of course. Was there no place here that "Yes, the driver "s'posed" she could stay at Mrs. Simmons'. She was the storekeeper's wife, and lived in the rooms over

the store. While Margie was making up her mind to ask shelter of Mrs. Simmons, a quick Mr. Winston's voice sounded beside her.

"Excuse me. I did not mean to leave

you standing in the snow, but I went to insure your trunks being taken off. There is a very comfortable room above the store. Will you join the ladies of my party there.' He spoke in such a quiet, matter-of-fact snow cloud, which grew more dense as they voice, exactly as if he had been appointed Cross to "get through," and answering her one. She only admired the gay colors advanced, until earth and sky were hid by the railroad company to look after of one of the Afghans, and wished Ade. from view by the thick, driving flakes, and unprotected ladies, and was apologizing and unobtrusive in his manner, that even As station after station was passed, the Margie's excessive pride and shyness could reports of the storm ahead of them grew not take fright at being thus dependent and Addy only spoke to complain. The more terrible. Men who stood on the plat- upon the care of a stranger. She gave middle scat which she had chosen as the forms, looking like moving snow drifts, him another of those pretty grateful "thank most comfortable, she now pronounced

gloomy depot and stopped; its arrival certain," and other things to the same effect. her to the neat sitting-room where Mrs. door and opened it just wide enough to being the signal for the deafening ringing of a bell, and a hourse shout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing, and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly decreasing," and glad to entertain Col. Elliott's daughtout of "twenty heavily on, its speed constantly on, its speed constantly of "twenty heavily on, its speed and the stoppages at the stations growing ters and their friends. She made Margie | "Every one is asleep but me," she said Breakfast! Margio thought with longing longer. Margio's heart grew heavier than welcome, too, for she was a kind, hospital in a low tone. Children so the comfortable steak and oysters, the ever, but fortunately her eyelids grew ble soul, and something in the girl's fair. Very wise," he answered, with a laugh.

burn? You are not afraid?"

"Not very. At least we manage to keep warm with hard work," he replied. "I wish we could help you, said Margie.

life. Great tears passed into the baisin of this terrible storm." "We are quite contended with knowing with all her might, she could not stop cry- that you are warm and safe. Don't be ing. Three times she went back to wash | troubled about us." for he somehow guess-

off the traces of weeping, and at last, when | cd from her tone that she was troubled. she thought her cheeks were dry, and she "Are we nearly at our journey's end?" began to arrange her hair before the mus- she asked. "Well-no. To tell the truth, we are lin-draped looking-glass, the very first

> "Are the horses very tired? asked "Rather. But they can pull us through

"I don't mind it," said Margie, quietly.

down on the little toitet-table and give way In fact it was not drearier for orphan to a burst of passionate, despairing sobs, Margie out in the cold stormy night than light and warmth in the heart, and the Emmio's voice exclaimed, "Girls, please kindness of strangers was better than the be quiet! Leslie and Mr. Winston are call- coldness of her who should have been kind. "We are stopping a long time," Mr.

Winston said, "to rest the horses. We hear what they said, and a murmured con- have a long hill before us now. I advise versation between her and the gentlemen you to go to sleep, too."

Then he closed the door, and with a snort of snow on the steep mountain road. With many stoppages and much shouting (which waked the slumbering inside passengers,) and a great deal of prying at the wheels ville. However, that doesn't make any with rails taken from a fence, which was difference; we will make her stay with us fast disappearing under the snow, the top of the hill was reached, and the descent

So they were talking about her, and began. driver, a crash, and the stage lay on its way. life together. Then she was shocked at and in a moment the frantic animals were young men to follow. cious that every word could be heard you don't."

When the horses were released, and inside passengers. To do them justice, the slavish precision. girls had "behaved like bricks," as Tom expreised it.

pose we must, but our nice party will be spoiled. Won't it do, Emmie, if we take No one screamed except Alice, who was shrick after shrick at first, till Margie school-girl like. "Leave the poor child iorses, and make matters worse."

Leslie dragged open the door with a breathless inquiry, "Are all the rest of you killed? I don't hear anybody screaming but alice." And the peal of laughter that greeted this speech assured him that the opened-mouthed wonder and admirano one was seriously injured. But, though tion of little July and the other children. How Margie's cheeks burned during this no one was hurt, it was apparent that very She had made friends with them long ago, conversation. Her "drops of tears." were When the girls had happened to the stage. When the girls had been lifed from the vehicle, and stood laughing and shivering father went away and the snow began to little insulted queen, and assuring her in two feet of snow, Mr. Cross walked round the stage, and solemnly came back

to give his verdict.

"She's off the handle now, anyhow .-Things ain't held together. Ladies, I'm rafters in the store-room. She was so glad sorry for it, but we won't get through to- when Mr. Cross came, but she wished night." In the dismayed silence that fol- father knew all about it, for he would be lowed, he went on to say: "You see I frightened at their being all alone in the hadn't counted on having whole trees thing house. Father had gone to bring home at the leader' heads, as that one was that little brother Johnny from grandfather's, lies across the road there It skeered the cause to-morrow was Christmas, and they critters, and they slewed round right towards the edge of the mountain. I hadn't father would come early to-morrow mornstage driver could be induced to carry her no fancy for taking a load of passengers ing." down a precipice a hundred feet high, so I noments she found herself comfortably slewed them the other way, and we went into that gulley quick as winking. There of them liked to give utterance to. When anin't no harm done-oh, no! Nothing Mr. Cross came in, Margie whispered her but a wheel ground up against a rock like it had been through a coffee mill-a bless ing it wasn't one of your pretty headsthe axle tree broken,—and the devil to pay everywhere!" And Cross waved his arms wildly, as if words failed him wherewith to express the utter ruin and smash that

of the road, took the scat beside the driver, had taken place. Here was a situation! Nine o'clock of a winter's night, a wild mountain road, a flerce storm raging, and ten people, up to the station, but it was not dark, nor did the their knees in snow, blown about by the driving wind, and stiffening already with

Cross said, "it would be a full moon if it the cold. "Is there a balcksmith's shop at the foot the snow made it light enough for any man of the mountain?" asked Mr. Winston.

There used to be." "Yes," said Leslie, "but there's no use

trying to mend anything to-night." 'Of course not," exclaimed Mr. Cross, "But Jim Bailey has a snug house down there that will shelter us all, and my advice horses springing forward as if they enjoyed is that you all travel down there as quick the performance, while from the singers on as you can. It ain't more than fifty yards. the roof a jolly chorus made the forest We couldn't have broke down in a better place. What's that about the trunks. Miss Alice? Bless the women! you can't skeer But the level stretch of road through the nor freeze the love of their clothes out of 'em. They are covered up tight in the series of hills, up and down, up and down, boot-not a snowtlake can get to 'em .each hill steeper and longer than the last. Now, I'll go ahead with these critters, and The stage alternately plunged and rolled, break the way, and you all follow after

and its progress grew slower and halts me.', more frequent. And all the time the snow It was a wild journey. The girls could came down in one vast blinding cloud, not keep their feet in the wind, which which was whirled hither and thither by came tearing down the mountain, bringing the wind, so that it seemed to come from miniature avalanches with it, and Margie, who as usual found herself the special care Tom said, to be "snowing up," at times. of Mr. Winston, could only cling to his The gentlemen were now obliged to get arm, and suffer herself to be almost carried out at every hill, and to trudge knee deep through the drifts. When they reached in the track of the vehicle. But still the blacksmith's log cabin, all was dark 'things held together," even when they and still, and Mr. Cross' shouts and knocks began to encounter fallen trees, which were for a long time unanswered.

"Drat the man! Is he dead or drunk, I wonder?" growled Mr. Cross, pausing to listen for an answer. "I heard something then," cried Margie,

The ladies meanwhile sat quietly in the who had pressed close to the door. "Somestage, never doubting the ability of Mr. thing like a little child crying. Listen!" "It was the wind, I reckon. Well, I'll the merry shouts of their escorts with try again, and he shouted aloud: "Jim, laughter as gay. But three hours had been Jim Bailey, it's me, Dan Cross, and a load you make me love you with your levely passed in this way, even Emmie, the mer- of passengers out here freezing to death!- voice." Open your door man." riest of them all, became weary and silent,

This time, after a pause, a little faint was bending forward listening to some you Mr. Cross?" "Yes, it's me, little July. Let me in

who clung to her skirts.

Air. Cross, at the sight of whom all the children smiled, and the door opened wide intensity, while Marchistantly.

In the children smiled, and the door opened wide intensity, while Marchistantly.

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In the children smiled, and the door opened wide intensity, while Marchistantly.

last night, and he hasn't come back, and sound. "No. But I cannot sleep. Is it very there's nobody here but me and the children. So I was afraid to open the door at the ladies with instinctive grace and cour-

> "Now, July," said Mr. Cross, who seemed perfectly at home, "you see this basket? Well, there's plenty of supper in herecold chicken and so on-for these people.

be done?" "Make more bread," said Leslie, reck-

July laughed as she opened the door of a shed room, and with some pride showed a with all the strength of his lungs, sent taken in a little here and there, and found well-stocked store-room. But she said she forth a shout that echoed far and wide over to fit her admirably, and Emmie clapped never made any bread out of flour. "Fathor always made the bread."

"Now, ladies, which of you will make the bread for supper?" asked Leslie gayly, is father," she cried. "He is down there her curls. and plunge the six bays breasted the waves and the girls looked at one another in in the deep snow. Oh please, Mr. Cross, silence. "I never made any bread in my life,"

said Alice, slowly. "And I never saw any made," exclaimed looked unwards with a comical face of

despair. In this emergency Margie came forward planning a way out of all her difficulties "That's over," said Emmie, in a relieved for her. How kind it was, and yet how their kindson partial to the said tone, and she sank back amongst the biscuit. I think I can do it again," she their kindness pained her. To be obliged shawls and cushions for another nap. The said, and she proceeded to fasten up her other girls were following her example, sleeves, put on an apron July brought her, when a violent lurch, a shout from the and to wash her hands in a business-like

ately out into the snow, and going on, and side in a gulley, while the horses struggled Mr. Cross watched her handle the tray arms around her, and Margie's soft voice kissed "Margaret's" cheek with much on, and on, till she should sink down in | mad to escape from the tangled harness .- | and quart cup, and sift the flour, and then some soft white drift and let the flakes but Mr. Cross, though standing on his saying with a quiet nod, "You'll do," he cover her up, and end her troubles and head in a snow drift, still held the roins, left the house, beckoning several of the

her own wickedness, and with the sweet seized and held by three or four pair of The party remaining in the house were trustfulness of a child, she bent her head strong arms, each busied in obeying the soon very busy getting supper, under the driver's directions, "Cut the traces! Cut directions of Margie, who flitted about like everything that holds them! Darn them! a fairy, doing everything she attempted they'll have us over the bank in a second if with wonderful grace and dexterity, and group of men, bearing slowly, oh, so slow- gie's exquisite voice, studied her graceful, issuing her orders like a ceneral on the field of battle. It was amusing to see how saying, "Mr. Winston and Leslie want to stood trembling and starting in the road even Addy the magnificent went to her the next care was to release the terrified humbly for orders, and obeyed them with

When Mr. Cross and his party returned, having first made a trip to the stage to bring down all the shawls and cushions, thrown into Margie's lap, and uttered and then sheltered the horses in a shed adjoining the smythy, they found George silenced her by a quick "For mercy's sake, and Emmie carefully putting biscuit to don't scream. You will only frighten the bake in a couple of ovens, while Alice watched the boiling coffee-pot. Addy and Leslie were setting a table, and Margie with flushed cheeks and bright eyes, was everywhere at once, showing everybody the right way to do everything, and exciting fall. They had been so frightened, and had had nothing to eat but some corn bread July had baked on the hearth, for she couldn't reach the meat that hung on the wanted Johnny at home. She s'posed

Somehow the child's story filled her hearers with vague apprehensions, which none fears to him, but was met by the assuararce that "Jim Bailey was a prudent man, and wasn't likely to do nothing rash. He'd turn up all right."

So they went on with their preparations for supper, and a merrier meal than supper was, when it came, never was seen .-They appointed Margie mistress of ceremonies, as she had proved herself more capable than any one else of filling the position of housekeeper, and very gracefully she did the honors.

And just as they were rising from the table, some one discovered that it was twelve o'clock, and Margie, starting up, declared they must "sing in Christmas morning," and sing in the open air, too, as Christmas carols should be sung. So she opened the door wide, and, lo! the flakes had ceased to fall, the clouds were flying away before the lulling wind, and on the bending forest trees, and the steep mountain sides, and in the wide valleys, the heaped and drifted snow lay "sparkling to the moon" that shone calmly down upon the quiet earth, while here and there n the sky a large white star glimmered forth, too brilliant to be outdone by the radiant moon.

Then, on the crystal air, went ringing like a chime of bells, a chorus of clear young voices in the sweet old Christmas

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The sugel of the Lord came down, And glory shone around."

It was Margie who led the hymn in a won derful voice, so fresh, so sweet, and so full, that the others could scarcely sing for listening, and when the last liquid note had floated up beyond the stars, the listeners stood looking up as if there must be angels hovering over them.

A long deep silence followed, which Addy was the first to break. Going up to Margie, her clear cheek flushing, and her great dark eyes slining with tears, she touched the young girl's brow with her beautiful lips, and said, gently, "Child,

quick." to the door. "July, listen," she whisper-ed. "Don't you hear some one calling?" appeared with a frightened face, holding The child listened intently, fixing her voice: "How funny things are! I know back with one hand two smaller children, eyes meanwhile on Margie's face. The you so well now, Margie, that I hardly be-"Hallo, July! where's father?" asked the face, and fluttered the dark dress she | till Mr. Winston said, this morning, 'Miss Mr. Cross, at the sight of whom all the wore, but still she listened with that look | Emmie, will you carry a cup of coffee for

"Father's gone to grandpa's. He went | too listened breathlessly for the expected

A picture for an artist's eye was the group in that doorway. Glorious imperial first," said July, clinging to Mr. Cross' Addy, with the soft light in her eyes, her hand, and looking shyly at the strangers purple dress sweeping round her and touchwho entered. But in a few moments she ling the snow at her feet; fair little Margie, forgot her shyness, and was busy throwing with her golden-bronze hair falling and pine knots on the bed of coals that glowed glittering over her shoulders, and scarlet in the great fireplace, and setting chairs for shawl half trailing on the floor, half clinging round her slender figure. Behind these tesy. Up sprang a glorious blaze, light- two a flood of warm light from the Christmas fire, glowing and sparkling, and half ning every corner of the large kitchen with its crimson glow, and warming thoroughy revealing other young and graceful figures edition of Emmie. A little taller, a little the chilled travellers who crowded around in the background; in front of them the of snow, and the little pale, wistful child. John Winston, standing outside in the shadow of a great tree, was smiling to see how fair it was, and was already in fancy put an end to the controversy, by sending transferring it to canvas, when little July off an express to inform Mrs. Delancy that but we'd like some coffee amazin'. Helloh! transferring it to canvas, when little July What's this? Here's a nice mess. This threw up her head with the look of a star- her nice was at Clifton, but she would not and soaked all the bread! Now what's to hoarsely. "He is calling me." With her Mrs. Delancy, who was expected to be tiny hand held up for silence, she listened present, might carry her home with her. again, and once, only once, from the ralessly. "I suppose July can give us some vine, a hundred feet below them, came a and not only that, but one of the brideflour or meal to make it of. We will pay low, wavering, wordless cry, almost borne maids having been prevented from coming

> feathery snow from the pines. Dan Cross started up at the sound, and the mountains, and then paused for the her hands with delight as she saw how answer. None came, and little July wrung lovely the little "snow maiden" looked her hands and sobbed in wild terror. "It with her white robes and a silver arrow in get him out. He will die in the cold."

the house, seized half a dozen flaming name of the bridemaid with the remarkably beautiful hair and complexion—the young Emmic, while Addy folded her hands, and out again. As many ready hands seized lady next your daughter Alice?" and Mrs. the torches, and following the lead of Mr. Elliot, who had learned-no one knows Cross, the men hurried down by a circuitous how, but she knew everything-Mrs. Delanroute into the deep ravine where there the cey's intentions with regard to her orphan shadows lay black as ink.

The torches flared red against the moonvine was reached the shadows fled before Mrs. Delancy." their light. To little July, kneeling on the edge of the precipice, with Margie's and she resolved in a moment, and as she whispering hope and courage in her car, it show of affection, she was thinking deeply. seemed a long time before the torches She continued the same train of thought ceased flashing restlessly to and fro, and afterwards, when she watched Margie gathered at last around one central point. attracting the admiration of the whole the search had been successful, and then, for the slieghing was fine, the moon brilby the winding path, toiling patiently liant, and Col. Elliot's house a proverbily, a dark and heavy burden with them. sweet manners, and came to a conclusion. Up from the black shadows into the fair Here was a beauty of the first order-agirl moonlight, through the wide, open cabin whose face alone was an ample fortune. door, and into the light of his own hearth fire they carried the cold senseless form of hid away in a dingy school-room, but must the blacksmith, and his little daughter be "brought out" with all the increased gathered his head in her arms, and rocked lustre that a beautiful setting could give to tle July had looked on death, and she brilliant match, and Mrs. Delancey's heart

home, but she was wrong. child. Here's his heart beatin' under my attentions upon her beautiful niece. hand like a sledge-hammer a'ready. Not

sat in his arm-chair by the king, with July sitting at his feet, and the low tones of voice that was dearea than all two curly-headed cherubs sleeping on a the world besides. bear-skin beside him, while he ate his supper and told his adventures. The snow the next summer was fully as pleasant and had detained him at his father's until he eventful. became so uneasy about the children at the to him, he came into the main road near his house, but seeing no light from the drift of snow into which he sank. Here, Winston. It is a good match, too, and I stunned, chilled, and bewildered by the don't know any other man I'd say that storm and darkness, he had groped about much for." vainly trying to find his way out of the "Well, I must say I kind of s'picioned ravine, and conscious that his shouts could that," said Jim, smiling, "when they came and at last he sank down to die, utterly July gave Miss Margie them wild rosies unable to move another step. But when that grow down in the ravine where I fell he had lain a little while with his eyes that night. Pretty pink things they are, closed and his heart beating slower and 'bout the color of her cheeks, as July say." slower, suddenly he heard music in the air "Well, I must say you are a long time

above him. "Yes, you may believe me or s'picioning it," said Mr. Cross, dryly .not, just as you please," said Jim, sturdily, "It's been in my mind ever since that same like the music in church, only sweeter than | thing was for the best, and I s'pose the use shining like silver in the sky. Then I that mightn't ever have seen each other gathered up strengh to call my little July without it. But I don't keer about havhere. I called her three times, and when I ing a hand in matchmakin' of that sort had done it I was sorry, for I was afraid she every winter," and Mr. Cross touched up would try to come down to me, and be lost the leaders and disappeared in a cloud of in the snow. Then I tried to raise myself dust. up again, and in a minute the world seemed to spin round and round, and I just didn't know any more till I heard Dan Cross say, 'He's all right now, boys,' and TO HOLDERS OF 5-20 BONDS so I am all right."

"And it was Miss Margie and all of then you heard singing," said laughing, crying July, looking up at Margie with a face of half adoration. "But I reckon the angels don't sing any sweeter than she does. added July, softly.

"Anyhow, it was the singing that saved ny life," said Jim, with a tremble in his rough voice; "I was falling asleep in the snow when I heard it, and when a man falls asleep there, it is apt to be a long sleep—a long sleep, little July." And Jim stroked the child's hair, and gazed musing ly into the fire, while July bent forward long timilly touched Marcie's hand with a lower controlled to the fire, while July bent forward long timilly touched Marcie's hand with a lower controlled to the source of the same and there, who have invested largely in this security, highly recommending these Bohds, will be sown on application. rough voice; "I was falling asleep in the and timidly touched Margie's hand with a touch that was a blessing. "There sin't only angels in heaven. I

reckon there's some of 'em on the earth,

too," said Dan Cross, nodding sagely, and pointing his speech with so direct a look at Margie, that she and every one else laughed outright. But there was no one to contradict Mr. Cross, for somehow the girl's sweet ways and sunny temper, and patience and gentleness had won every heart there. Orphan Margie, who was so lonely this norning, had many warm friends now. As Margio smiled faintly in return. She shelay down at last to sleep, on the bed of cushions and shawls, and piles, of clean voice called, timidly from within: "Is that fancied sound that came home on the fitful hay, which had been spread for the girls in sold at the Lowest Cash Prices. wind. Was it fancy? She turned, and one room of the cabin, she thanked Heaven catching little July's arm, drew her softly for the friends she had found, and for a to the door. "July, listen," she whisper- happy Christmas eve. And the last sound she heard was Emmie saying, in a sleepy wind blew her black hair over her pale lit- lieve I never saw or spoke to you in my life

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And Margie's dreams were none the less fair and pleasant for hearing this. There was a merry breakfast in the morning, and a safe and pleasant journey to Clifton, in the stage which the indefatable Mr. Cross had mounted on runners, and a joyful welcome from Col. Elliot, his handsome stately wife, pretty Sue, the bride elect, and a host of rosy-cheeked little brothers and sisters. Sue was an older graver, but just as pretty and warm-heartcold glittering moonlight, the wide expanse cd. They would not let Margie speak of going to—ville Emmie and Alice hung round her and entreated, and Sne urged her to stay, and finally Mrs. Elliot

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So Margie was one of the wedding quests, Her plea that she had no white dress was laughed at-a vapory "tulle" of Sue's was

When the wedding ceremony was over, Mrs. Delancy raised her eyeglass, and said. Without a word, Mr. Cross dashed into graciously, "Mrs. Elliot, may I ask the nicce, answered by leading the young lady forward and smilingly introducing her as lit snow, and when the bottom of the ra- "Your niece, Miss Margaret Hepburn,

Mrs. Delancey was a little taken aback. But at last a shout from below told them room-which was in fact the whole county, through the deep snow-drifts, came the ally delightful place. She listened to Mar-

She was not to be kept in the background, backwards and forwards in grief too deep a diamond of the first water. She must for words or tears. Many a time pale lit- add to the family grandeur by making a thought it had come again to their humble beat high when she saw that already the first "catch" in the room, John Winston, "Not this time, July.', said Mr. Cross, wealthy, distinguished, accomplished, and cheerfully. "He ain't off the handle yet, handsome, was bestowing the most devoted

So the Fates-not always cruel-willed so close to the fire, boys, though I believe that Margie's Christmas holidays should he ain't so much frozen as dead beat and be a dream of plendor and gayety-of lovestunned, with a long tramp and a fall some- ly new dresses, of parties without number, And so it proved. At the end of an hour little head would have been turned if all these things had not charmed her less than fire, very feeble and dizzy, but happy as a the light in one pair of dark eyes, and the

That was a gay winter in-

"Have you heard the news. Jim?" askcabin that he set out, in spite of entreaties ed Mr. Cross, drawing up his team before and warnings, to come to them. Taking a the smithy, one sunny morning in June. short cut through wood roads well known "What is it?" asked the blacksmith, wiping his brow.

"Well, one wedding makes many, they windows (poor July had put up the wood- say. Here's young Mr. Elliot going to en shutters when night came on) he had marry that pretty Miss Addy Brent. Fine wandered out of the path, missing his foot girl, after all, but just a little hysted. And ng, fallen over the edge of the precipice, Miss Margie Hepburn, the blessedest little and only been saved from death by the vast critter that ever stepped, is going to marry

not be heard above the roar of the storm, ridin' by here together last week, and my "but I heard the angels singing. It was night. I have always heard that everyany they make there, and the clouds were of the thunderiest snowstorm I ever saw, rolling away from before it, and the moon was to bring them two people together.

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