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THURSDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 20, 1923

IT'S THE SAME OLD SANTA CLAUS.

Had the writer reached his present age back in the reign of the good Queen Victoria, he would doubtless have been required by both old and young as—well, as having reached maturity, we will say. In these paying times of peace and prosperity, we think as a mere lad—at least we family boys do. We profess that, by reason of a slight sentimentality that has developed this winter, simultaneously with a touch (just a touch, mind you) of rheumatism, which causes us to be a trifle chary of reminiscence.

We started out, to say that we could remember when dried blackers, carefully saved from hog-killin' time, hung on the wall, "above at the sailor," treasured for that ecstatic moment on Christmas morning, when the little darkies landed on them with both feet, producing a very satisfactory, if not-inflammable sort of Christmas fire-works. Had we not been informed by writers in the daily papers, of late, that the "waiters that used to be," and the "good old times" were but figments of the imagination, seen rose-tinted in retrospect through the eyes of a vanished youth, we would say that Christmas meant more back in the unsty-mighties; that we had jollier times than the children of today. But we didn't, we suppose—we only think we did.

However, there is one concomitant of the Christmas spirit that is lacking today, (and it is not Christmas spirits, either, for we write of childhood and that is the old open fire-place. To us it seems incongruous for Santa Claus to come in at the door or window, or Lord knows, up through the furnace register. There never was but one fitting place for the coming and pattern saint of childhood to make his entrance. Then, the chimney Saint Nicholas came with a bound." As an effective entrance to the stage of his mission of joy he did, and lessed fire-place with its blue-burning sparking logs, its brass andirons and red brick hearth will never have a peer. Why, just "the stockings which hung by the chimney with care gave proof that Saint Nicholas soon would be there." No self-respecting old Saint would find it in his heart to pass such a fire-place by, despite the "ashes and soot." No mere tree in its tinsel trappings and its gaslamping gems of brilliant lights typifies the spirit of that gentle Myth of Childhood as does an old open fire-place, its glowing embers painting ruddy shadows, which darken in antithetical obeisance to the approach of Saint Nick. Also, we almost disgrace our preface and take our stand among the ancient cases!

But, for still comes, then Saint Nicholas, that shabby and plump and right jolly old elf. Though he arrive by tap, he usually manages to make his appearance at seasonable time and entomatate those "visions of sugar-plums" which dance through the heads of all proper children on the night before Christmas. When he does not come it is the greatest tragedy of childhood—a tragedy that no grown-up should permit, if it be in his power to prevent it.

See that the children enjoy Christmas. Christmas belongs to them. It is their day, and if Santa has been invested the greatest, the poorest, the kindness mythical personage in the world. And we, who began this by reminiscence and sentimental glamour, we who sang "old time Christmas," must confess that Saint Nicholas never grew old, but was in our case, too clever for us to bring a little, little, tear to our eyes, very far to their beard is like.

We know that it is hard to believe, if you are children, and if you are a grown-up, it sometimes doubtful such will be Santa Claus, though they believe in a little Christmas, yet, if you are children, they may live and agree to the "Christmas Day of Today-to-Be."

MR. FIELDS STARTS WELL.

Mr. Fields, during his first week as Governor, fulfilled his promise of a "good business director in every important position." Further, he has shown the "courage of his convictions" in the matter of appointments, in spite of the protests of his friends, and in the face of the "good business" he promised. "Further, he has shown himself a man of his word." Further, he has shown himself a man of his word, in the matter of the appointments belonging the executive office. He has shown himself as one that he will not accept the "dictation" of any "bosses." Further, he has shown himself a man of his word, in the matter of the circuit judges of the commonwealth, a matter of the power on which he made his promises. Further, he has shown himself a man of his word, in the matter of the question of the appointment of a commissioner of agriculture, a matter of which he made no promises. Further, he has shown himself a man of his word, in the matter of the suffering from an attack of "cold feet." Further, he has shown himself a man of his word, in the matter of the "Cooperative Association