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Farmer Stebbins as Santa Claus.

By WILL CARLTON.

(Copyright, 1935, by American Press Association.)

We went to Peggstown visiting, my good old wife an' me,
An' thought that we would bathe ourselves in Christ'mas joy an' glee;
For Sarah Ann, a buxom dame, an' daughter, too, of mine,
Resides there with her older half an' children eight or nine;
An' so we gathered gifts enough to make 'em all content
An' took the train an' landed there the very day we went.



The children warmly greet'd us an' crowded round
my chair,
With four a' perchin' on my knees an' young was still
to spare;
An' asked about my spectacles, an' how I grewed
my wig,
An' if my papa bought my teeth before I got so big,
An' how my whiskers come to bleach an' other ques-
tions priss;
To make a mortal realize that younger days have
down;

An' if I ever looked it up how fur I was around,
An' when I run if it would chase the whole ad-
jacent ground,
An' if the four-correct-weight box didn't think I was a lot,
An' if I wouldn't have to put two pennies in the slot,
With other questions well designed to give a hint to see
That I was not a first class slyph so far as they could see.

An' when I told 'em fairy tales they wouldn't be-
lieve a word,
An' said the Sin'bad sailor things could never have
occurred;
An' all the pleasant little lies that need to cheer my
youth
They set upon without delay as destitute of truth.
An' when of Christmas mysteries in solemn tones I
spoke,
They laughed an' said that Santa Claus was all 'a
bloomin' fake."



"So Christmas eve I slyly told my daughter
Sarah Ann:
"I'll show the tots a little sight to laugh at if they can.
You rake the fireplace clear o' fire, not tellin' them the cause,
An' I'll come down the chimney way dressed up as Santa Claus.
It isn't very fur to climb—the weather's pretty mild.
An' I would do three times as much to interest a child."



I went an' clad in hairy garb, with whiskers long
an' white,
An' other things to paralyze the inexperienced sight,
An' had some sleighbells bright an' new a-hangin'
on my arms,
An' pockets full o' Christmas things to add unto my
charms,
An' with the strongest ladder rope that I could find
in town
I entered in the chimney top an' clambered slowly
down.

My goodness makes! Who ever heard of such un-
timely lack!
The chimney narrowed all to once, an' suddenly I stuck
An' hung there like a roastin' hen a-waitin' to be browed,
For spite of all my effortin' I couldn't get up or down.
An' then the child're heard the noise an' run distreamin' fast
An' looked an' yelled: "It's Gran'pa Steb! We know him by his feet!"

An' then their mother had to tell what I had tried
to do,
Whereat their little fancies sprung the subject to
pursue.
They asked me if I'd traveled far, if chimneys in-
jured coats,
An' where my span of reindeers was, an' if they'd
like some oats,
An' told me, with a childish greed for Christmas
gathered pelts,
If I would throw the presents down, I needn't come
myself;



An' there I hung for quite awhile, with fury
in my heart,
Until they brought a mason in, who took the bricks apart;
An' though they made the children stop, an' sent 'em off to bed,
I knowed what they was thinkin' of an' what they prob'ly said,
An' when the mornin' did appear an' breakfast time occurred,
They set around the table there forbid to say a word;



A-sufferin' so to laugh at me, afraid that I'd be
gruff,
An' longin' for their presents, too—I knowed it well
enough,
An' then a tear come in my eye, an' like a fond old
dunce
I went an' dug the presents out an' give 'em all to
once,
An' then I says, "If Santa Claus is what you call 'a
fake,"
These pretty things he brought fur you is real an' no
mistake."

An' then they up an' danced around an' kissed me,
one by one,
An' hugged me harder than the blessed old chimney just had done,
An' with a thousand looks of love inquired me with thanks
An' made me like 'em more an' more in spite of all their pranks.
An' me, the prettiest of the whole, who always took my part,
She smiles an' says: "It's Gran'pa Steb. We know him by his heart!"

The Religion of Paying Debts.
One of the papers has the follow-
ing remarks on this subject. They
drive the nail in the head and clinch
it.
"Men may sophisticate as they
please. They can never make it right,
and all the bankrupt laws in the uni-
verse can not make it right for them
not to pay their debts. There is a
sin in this neglect as clear and as
deserving Church discipline as in
stealing or false swearing. He who
violates his promise pay, or withholds
the payment of a debt when it is in
his power to meet his engagement,
ought to be made to feel that in the
sight of all honest men he is a wind-
ler. Religion may be a very comfort-
able cloak under which to hide; but
if religion does not make a man
'deal justly' it is not worth having."

Is There Anything at Likly's
Worth going to see? The dollar
table alone is a sight to behold.
Is There Anything the Matter
With Likly's fifty-cent window?
Fleece Isacoles 14c.
What you pay 20c to 25c for else-
where. All colors; all sizes. J. W.
Maser, 196 East Main street.
That Dollar Table at Likly's
Will help you out amazingly in se-
lecting nice Christmas presents.

Our One-Dollar Table
fairly groans beneath its load
of attractive novelties. Many a
visitor to our store says it pays
to take a trip to Likly's, if only
for the sake of the exceptional
bargains offered at the one-
dollar table.
(Henry Likly's,
34 State street.)

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without remembering the time I spent
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