

Uncle Samta Claus

By Christopher G. Hazard

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"TELL us a story, Uncle Peter," said the children, as they climbed over their kindly relative one Christmas eve. "A story!" repeated Uncle Peter, affecting surprise, but willing to draw upon his inexhaustible stock; "well, have you ever heard of Uncle Samta Claus?" "Oh, you mean Uncle Santa Claus!" exclaimed Jack. "No, I don't," said Uncle Peter; "I mean the old man with the plug hat, the blue swallowtail coat, the striped breeches; the old man with eyes like stars and a smile that never comes off excepting when somebody is treading on somebody else; the old man with the striped flag, whose headquarters is up in Alaska; the biggest Santa Claus there is." "All right, then," answered the children, "tell us about him."

"Well," said Uncle Peter, "he has his hands full just now and is doing all he can to fill the hands of others. The air is so noisy with wireless cries and clamors, there are so many hands reaching out over the seas, that he is almost distracted. Ever since he got back from the great war he has been repairing its damage and renewing the prosperity that it spoiled. And long before that he was in the Christmas business. He surprised China by refusing to accept the great sum of the Boxer indemnity. He let the Cubans have Cuba when he had made them free, and many thought that he had a right to take that fair island for himself. He is working hard at his task of making America truly American, a sober, industrious, enlightened, prosperous, happy, Christ-mas-y nation."

"I'm glad I'm one of his American children," said Agnes, when Uncle Peter had concluded; with which sentiment all the rest agreed.

A little cloud of doubt had arisen on the Christmas sky, however, as Uncle Peter had spoken of Uncle Samta's lavishness in far countries. Edith voiced it when she "wanted to know if it would be of any use for them to expect anything that Christ-



"I'm Glad I'm One," Said Agnes.

mas, whether or not they were to hang up their stockings. "You'll put your foot in it if you do," said George. "No, she won't," said Uncle Peter; "I have had a special delivery letter from Uncle Samta, saying that he has had his eye on this house for the last twelvemonth, and that this will be one of his stopping places because from it so much of service for others has been going out. He says that you are his gardeners, and that you have planted so many seeds of kindness that a lot of beautiful things will be sure to come up. That is always the way, he says; in fact, it is the way in which he got rich himself."

This was a very pleasant assurance for the children. It made them think of a happy mistake that one of them had made when they were having war gardens all over the town: A certain Mr. Rose had been appointed by the mayor as inspector of gardens for the whole place, and one day Betty pointed him out to a friend with whom she was walking. "There goes Mr. Rose," she said; "he's an expecter of gardens!"

When the children had been reminded of Mr. Rose they also remembered what Betty had done at their last Christmas party; stalking heavily and pompously down the room, she had said: "I'm Mr. Atlas, who holds up the world." So one of them stood on tiptoe, threw back her head and threw out her arms and said: "I'm Uncle Samta Claus, who holds up the world." "Well done!" cried Uncle Peter; "that's just it!"

There wasn't any disappointment in the house the next morning. "Did you get all that you wanted?" asked Uncle Peter. "Yes," said Mary. "Were you at all disappointed?" "No," said Mary. When Mary said "Goodness," her mother said, "You shouldn't say 'goodness,' Mary." "Gracious!" said Mary. But Mary was too excited to have a care for her expressions. In describing the situation afterwards she said: "I was in a perfect stupor of excitement."

Uncle Peter had a present, too. After all the rest had been made happy Agnes brought out a parcel, and when Uncle Peter opened it there were two big books that told over again the story of all that America had stood for and accomplished. This made him very glad indeed, and he asked them to write his name on the fly leaf and to say that it was from his Young Americans. Then the Christmas party ended with a verse of our national anthem, heartily sung and followed by all the other verses, with a hurrah for Uncle Sam instead of an amen.

LEAGUE A FAILURE

English Paper Says Wilson's Hobby is Spendthrift.

"The League of Nations has not justified its existence."

"It is helpless in preventing war."

"It is wasteful."

"It has taken front rank as a money spender."

Thus "John Bull," the British weekly of large circulation, sums up the league's record in an article entitled "Squandermania at Geneva," the costly futility of the League of Nations.

"John Bull" declares:

"With the ideal of the League of Nations everybody must agree. This is an entirely different thing from agreeing with its methods and procedure."

"What is the League of Nations doing? In the recent Near East crisis we were on the verge of another great war. The league was helpless. But when it comes to spending money the league is right in the front ranks."

"True, it is dealing with certain questions—the opium menace and the age of consent for the women of Slam. This is a far cry from the prevention of war and the reduction

of armaments. But the league is spending 1,000 pounds a day in salaries alone. Its officials and clerks draw handsome salaries with no practical results, and altogether the league has cost over a million pounds. "Girl typists working at Geneva get more than British members of parliament at Westminster; married members of the staff are sent over from this country with their wives and children at the expense of the taxpayers."

"Sir Eric Drummond, chief of the British staff, gets 4,000 pounds a year and 6,000 pounds for expenses. Many officials get 2,000 pounds a year and expenses. "The day may come when the League of Nations will justify its existence."

—A touch of realism is added to fire drills in Chicago public schools by the explosion of "movie" bombs causing smoke to flood the corridors and exits. There is no fire but the pupils are not

aware of this fact. The conduct of the pupils during the drills is excellent. —A Frenchman, Dr. Gabriel Bidou, has discovered methods to replace paralyzed and useless muscles with mechanical equivalents. In most cases the "artificial muscle" is a spring, so adjusted that when the weight of the body is released, from the limb affected, it is brought forward as it would have done had the muscle contracted naturally.

—A man in Gratz, Austria, who had

longed himself from a tree, was cut down by a farmer. During the operation one of his legs was broken, caused by his landing in a ditch. He sued the farmer for hospital expenses. The lower court granted his demand. The superior court, however, considered that the farmer had done a good turn to the man who wanted to die, and his duty as a Christian citizen. The higher court held that he could not be held responsible for the consequences of his act and denied the would-be suicide his claim.



While Engaged in Christmas Shopping



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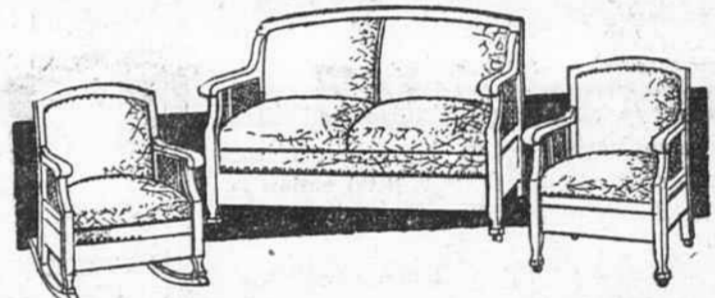
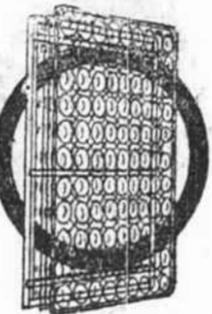
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The Christmas Shop



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AND WE TRUST THAT THE NEW YEAR Will Bring to Each One More Prosperity Than Any Past Year Has Brought.

WHILE TALKING OF CHRISTMAS

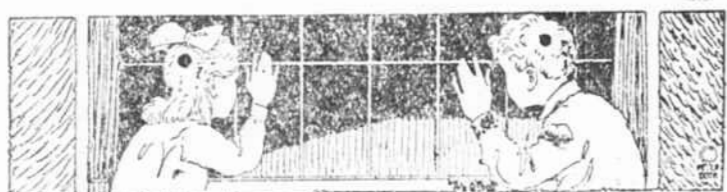
WHICH NATURALLY reminds one of the end of the year, we wish to express our appreciation for the liberal patronage afforded us during 1922 and to say that we cordially invite a continuation of this generous patronage during 1923.

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