

The Project Gutenberg eBook of The Thin Santa Claus: The Chicken Yard That Was a Christmas Stocking, by Ellis Parker Butler

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: The Thin Santa Claus: The Chicken Yard That Was a Christmas Stocking

Author: Ellis Parker Butler

Illustrator: May Wilson Preston

Release date: March 6, 2006 [EBook #17937]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Jason Isbell, Emma Morgan Isbell, Sankar Viswanathan, and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <http://www.pgdp.net>

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE THIN SANTA CLAUS: THE CHICKEN YARD THAT WAS A CHRISTMAS STOCKING ***



THE THIN SANTA CLAUS

The Chicken Yard That Was
a Christmas Stocking

By
ELLIS PARKER BUTLER



Illustrated by May Wilson Preston

NEW YORK
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY
MCMIX



"Mrs. Gratz watched the thin man search the chicken yard for toober-chlosis bugs"

THE THIN SANTA CLAUS

The Chicken Yard That Was a Christmas Stocking

By

ELLIS PARKER BUTLER



Illustrated by May Wilson Preston

NEW YORK
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY
MCMIX

Copyright, 1909, by
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY
Published, November, 1909.

Copyright, 1908, by The Curtis Publishing Company

TO

HARRY S. MOORE

ILLUSTRATIONS

<i>"Mrs. Gratz watched the thin man search the chicken yard for toober-chlosis bugs"</i>	Frontispiece
	<i>Facing page</i>
<i>"He looked like a man who had lost nine hundred dollars, but he did not look like Santa Claus"</i>	12

THE THIN SANTA CLAUS

[3]

Mrs. Gratz opened her eyes and looked out at the drizzle that made the Christmas morning gray. Her bed stood against the window, and it was easy for her to look out; all she had to do was to roll over and pull the shade aside. Having looked at the weather she rolled again on to the broad flat of her back and made herself comfortable for awhile, for there was no reason why she should get up until she felt like it.

"Such a Christmas!" she said good-naturedly to herself. "I guess such weathers is bad for Santy Claus. Mebby it is because of such weathers he don't come by my house. I don't blame him. So muddy!"

[4]

She let her eyes close indolently. Not yet was she hungry enough to imagine the tempting odour of fried bacon and eggs, and she idly slipped into sleep again. She was in no hurry. She was never in a hurry. What is the use of being in a hurry when you own a good little house and have money in the bank and are a widow? What is the use of being in a hurry, anyway? Mrs. Gratz was always placid and fat, and she always had been. What is the use of having money in the bank and

a good little house if you are not placid and fat? Mrs. Gratz lay on her back and slept, placidly and fatly, with her mouth open, as if she expected Santa Claus to pass by and drop a present into it. Her dreams were pleasant.

It was no disappointment to Mrs. Gratz that Santa Claus had not come to her house. She had not expected him. She did not even believe in him. [5]

"Yes," she had told Mrs. Flannery, next door, as she handed a little parcel of toys over the fence for the little Flannerys, "once I believes in such a Santy Claus myself, yet. I make me purty good times then. But now I'm too old. I don't believe in such things. But I make purty good times, still. I have a good little house, and money in the bank—"

Suddenly Mrs. Gratz closed her mouth and opened her eyes. She smelled imaginary bacon frying. She felt real hunger. She slid out of bed and began to dress herself, and she had just buttoned her red flannel petticoat around her wide waist when she heard a silence, and paused. For a full minute she stood, trying to realize what the silence meant. The English sparrows were chirping as usual and making enough noise, but through their bickerings the silence still annoyed Mrs. Gratz, and then, quite suddenly again, she knew. Her chickens were not making their usual morning racket. [6]

"I bet you I know what it is, sure," she said, and continued to dress as placidly as before. When she went down she found that she had won the bet.

A week before two chickens had been stolen from her coop, and she had had a strong padlock put on the chicken house. Now the padlock was pried open, and the chicken house was empty, and nine hens and a rooster were gone. Mrs. Gratz stooped and entered the low gate and surveyed the vacant chicken yard placidly. If they were gone, they were gone. [7]

"Such a Santy Claus!" she said good-naturedly. "I don't like such a Santy Claus—taking away and not bringing! Purty soon he don't have such a good name any more if he keeps up doing like this. People likes the bringing Santy Claus. I guess they don't think much of the taking-away business. He gets a bad name quick enough if he does this much."

She turned to bend her head to look into the vacant chicken house and stood still. She put out her foot and touched something her eyes had lighted upon, and the thing moved. It was a purse of worn, black leather, soaked by the drizzle, but still holding the bend that comes to men's purses when worn long in a back trouser pocket. One end of the purse was muddy and pressed deep into the soft soil where a heel had tramped on it. Mrs. Gratz bent and picked it up. [8]

There was nine hundred dollars in bills in the purse. Mrs. Gratz stood still while she counted the bills, and as she counted her hands began to tremble, and her knees shook, and she sank on the door-sill of the chicken house and laughed until the tears rolled down her face. Occasionally she stopped to wipe her eyes, and the flood of laughter gradually died away into ripples of intermittent giggles that were like sobs after sorrow. Mrs. Gratz had no great sense of humour, but she could see the fun of finding nine hundred dollars. It was enough to make her laugh, so she laughed.

"Goodness, such a Santy Claus!" she exclaimed with a final sigh of pleasure. "Such a Christmas present from Santy Claus! No wonder he is so fat yet when he eats ten chickens in one night already. But I don't kick. I like me that Santy Claus all right. I believes in him purty good after this, I bet!" [9]

She went at once to tell Mrs. Flannery, and Mrs. Flannery was far more excited about it than Mrs. Gratz had been. She said it was the Hand of Retribution paying back the chicken thief, and the Hand of Justice repaying Mrs. Gratz for sending toys to the little Flannerys, and Pure Luck giving Mrs. Gratz what she always got, and a number of other things.

"'Tis the luck of ye, Mrs. Gratz, ma'am," she said, "and often I do be sayin' it is the Dutch for luck, meanin' no disrespect to ye, and the fatter the luckier, as I often told me old man, rest his soul, and him so thin! And Christmas mornin' at that, ma'am, which is nothin' at all but th' judgment of hivin on th' dirty chicken thief, pickin' such a day for his thievin', when there's plenty other days in th' year for him. Keep th' money, ma'am, for 't is yours by good rights, and I knew there would some good come till ye th' minute ye handed me th' prisints for the kids. The good folks sure all gits ther reward in this world, only some don't, an' I'm only sorry mine is a pig instid of chickens, but not wishin' ye hadn't th' money yersilf, at all, but who would come to steal a pig, and them such loud squealers? And who do you suspicion it was, Mrs. Gratz, ma'am?" [10]

"I think mebby I got me a present from Santy Claus, yes?" said Mrs. Gratz.

"And hear th' woman!" said Mrs. Flannery. "Do ye hear that now? Well, true for ye, ma'am, and stick to it, for there's no tellin' who'll be claimin' th' money, and if ever Santy Claus brought a thing to a mortal soul 't was him brought ye that. And 't was only yesterday ye was sayin' ye had no belief in him!" [11]

"Yesterday I don't have no beliefs in him," said Mrs. Gratz. "To-day I have plenty of beliefs in him. I like him plenty. I don't care if he comes every year."

"Sure not," said Mrs. Flannery, "and you with th' nine hundred dollars in yer pocket. I'd be glad of the chanst. I'd believe in him, mesilf, for four hundred and fifty."

That afternoon Mrs. Flannery, whose excitement had not abated in the least, went over to Mrs. Gratz's to spend the afternoon talking to her about the money. She felt that it was good to be that near it, at any rate, and when one can make a whole afternoon's conversation out of what Mrs. Casey said to Mrs. O'Reilly about Mrs. McNally, it is a shame to miss a chance to talk about nine hundred dollars. Mrs. Flannery was rocking violently and talking rapidly, and Mrs. Gratz was slowly moving her rocker and answering in monosyllables, when some one knocked at the door. Mrs. Gratz answered the knock. [12]



"He looked like a man who had lost nine hundred dollars, but he did not look like Santa Claus"

Her visitor was a tall, thin man, and he had a slouch hat, which he held in his hands as he talked. He seemed nervous, and his face wore a worried look—extremely worried. He looked like a man who had lost nine hundred dollars, but he did not look like Santa Claus. He was thinner and not so jolly-looking. At first Mrs. Gratz had no idea that Santa Claus was standing before her, for he did not have a sleigh-bell about him, and he had left his red cotton coat with the white batting trimming at home. He stood in the door playing with his hat, unable to speak. He seemed to have some delicacy about beginning. [13]

"Well, what it is?" said Mrs. Gratz.

Her visitor pulled himself together with an effort.

"Well, ma'am, I'll tell you," he said frankly. "I'm a chicken buyer. I buy chickens. That's my business—dealin' in poultry—so I came out to-day to buy some chickens—"

"On Christmas Day?" asked Mrs. Gratz.

"Well," said the man, moving uneasily from one foot to the other, "I did come on Christmas Day, didn't I? I don't deny that, ma'am. I did come on Christmas Day. I'd like to go out and have a look at your chickens—"

"It ain't so usual for buyers to come buying chickens on Christmas Day, is it?" interposed Mrs. Gratz, good-naturedly. [14]

"Well, no, it ain't, and that's a fact," said the man uneasily. "But I always do. The people I buy chickens for is just as apt to want to eat chicken one day as another day—and more so. Turkey on Christmas Day, and chicken the next, for a change—that's what they always tell me. So I have to buy chickens every day. I hate to, but I have to, and if I could just go out and look around your chicken yard—"

It was right there that Mrs. Gratz had a suspicion that Santa Claus stood before her.

"But I don't sell such a chicken yard, yet," she said. The man wiped his forehead. [15]

"Sure not," he said nervously. "I was goin' to say look around your chicken yard and see the chickens. I can't buy chickens without I see them, can I? Some folks might, but I can't with the kind of customers I've got. I've got mighty particular customers, and I pay extra prices so as to get the best for them, and when I go out and look around the chicken yard—"

"How much you pay for such nice, big, fat chickens, mebbby?" asked Mrs. Gratz.

"Well, I'll tell you," said the man. "Seven cents a pound is regular, ain't it? Well, I pay twelve. I'll give you twelve cents, and pay you right now, and take all the chickens you've got. That's my rule. But, if you want to let me go out and see the chickens first, and pick out the kind my regular customers like, I pay twenty cents a pound. But I won't pay twenty cents without I can see the chickens first." [16]

"Sure," said Mrs. Gratz. "I wouldn't do it, too. Mebbby I go out and bring in a couple such chickens for you to look at? Yes?"

"No, don't!" said the man impulsively. "Don't do it! It wouldn't be no good. I've got to see the chickens on the hoof, as I might say."

"On the hoofs?" said Mrs. Gratz. "Such poultry don't have no hoofs."

"Runnin' around," explained the visitor. "Runnin' around in the coop. I can tell if a chicken has got any disease that my trade wouldn't like, if I see it runnin' around in the coop. There's a lot in the way a chicken runs. In the way it h'ists up its leg, for instance. That's what the trade calls 'on the hoof.' So I'll just go out and have a look around the coop—" [17]

"For twenty cents a pound anybody could let buyers see their chickens on the hoof, I guess," said Mrs. Gratz.

"Now, that's the way to talk!" exclaimed the man.

"Only but I ain't got any such chickens," said Mrs. Gratz. "So it ain't of use to look how they walk. So good-bye."

"Now, say—" said the man, but Mrs. Gratz closed the door in his face.

"I guess such a Santy Claus came back yet," said Mrs. Gratz when she went into the room where Mrs. Flannery was sitting. "But it ain't any use. He don't leave many more such presents."

"Th' impidince of him!" exclaimed Mrs. Flannery.

"For nine hundred dollars I could be impudent, too," said Mrs. Gratz calmly. "But I don't like such nowadays Santy Clauses, coming back all the time. Once, when I believes in Santy Clauses, they don't come back so much." [18]

The thin Santa Claus had not gone far. He had crossed the street and stood gazing at Mrs. Gratz's door, and now he crossed again and knocked. Mrs. Gratz arose and went to the door.

"I believe he comes back once yet," she said to Mrs. Flannery, and opened the door. He had, indeed, come back.

"Now see here," he said briskly, "ain't your name Mrs. Gratz? Well, I knowed it was, and I knowed you was a widow lady, and that's why I said I was a chicken buyer. I didn't want to frighten you. But I ain't no chicken buyer."

"No?" asked Mrs. Gratz. [19]

"No, I ain't. I just said that so I could get a look at your chicken yard. I've got to see it. What I am is chicken-house inspector for the Ninth Ward, and the Mayor sent me up here to inspect your chicken house, and I've got to do it before I go away, or lose my job. I'll go right out now, and it'll be all over in a minute—"

"I guess it ain't some use," said Mrs. Gratz. "I guess I don't keep any more chickens. They go too easy. Yesterday I have plenty, and to-day I haven't any."

"That's it!" said the thin Santa Claus. "That's just it! That's the way toober-chlosis bugs act—quick like that. They're a bad epidemic—toober-chlosis bugs is. You see how they act—yesterday you have chickens, and last night the toober-chlosis bugs gets at them, and this morning they've eat them all up." [20]

"Goodness!" exclaimed Mrs. Gratz without emotion. "With the fedders and the bones, too?"

"Sure," said the thin Santa Claus. "Why, them toober-chlosis bugs is perfectly ravenous. Once they git started they eat feathers and bones and feet and all—a chicken hasn't no chance at all. That's why the Mayor sent me up here. He heard all your chickens was gone, and gone quick, and he says to me, 'Toober-chlosis bugs!' That's what he says, and he says, 'You ain't doing your duty. You ain't inspected Mrs. Gratz's chicken coop. You go and do it, or you're fired, see?' He says that, and he says, 'You inspect Mrs. Gratz's coop, and you kill off them bugs before they git into her house and eat her all up—bones and all.'"

"And fedders?" asked Mrs. Gratz calmly. [21]

"No, he didn't say feathers. This ain't nothing to fool about. It's serious. So I'll go right out and have a look—"

"I guess such bugs ain't been in *my* coop last night," said Mrs. Gratz carelessly. "I aint afraid of such bugs in winter time."

"Well, that's where you make your mistake," said the thin Santa Claus. "Winter is just the bad

time for them bugs. The more a toober-chlosis bug freezes up the more dangerous it is. In summer they ain't so bad—they're soft like and squash up when a chicken gits them, but in winter they freeze up hard and git brittle. Then a chicken comes along and grabs one, and it busts into a thousand pieces, and each piece turns into a new toober-chlosis bug and busts into a thousand pieces, and so on, and the chicken gits all filled full of toober-chlosis bugs before it knows it. When a chicken snaps up one toober-chlosis bug it has a million in it inside of half an hour and that chicken don't last long, and when the bugs make for the house—What's that on your dress there now?" [22]

Mrs. Gratz looked at her arm indifferently.

"Nothing," she said.

"I thought mebby it was a toober-chlosis bug had got on you already," said the thin Santa Claus. "If it was you would be all eat up inside of half an hour. Them bugs is awful rapacious."

"Yes?" inquired Mrs. Gratz with interest. "Such strong bugs, too, is it not?"

"You bet they are strong—" began the stranger.

"I should think so," interrupted Mrs. Gratz, "to smash up padlocks on such chicken houses. You make me afraid of such bugs. I don't dare let you go out there to get your bones and feet all eat up by them. I guess not!" [23]

"Well, you see—you see—" said the thin Santa Claus, puzzled, and then he cheered up. "You see, I ain't afraid of them. I've been fumigated against them. Fumigated and antiskep—antiskeptized. I've been vaccinated against them by the Board of Health. I'll show you the mark on my arm, if you want to see it."

"No, don't," said Mrs. Gratz. "I let you go and look in that chicken coop if you want to, but it ain't no use. There ain't nothing there."

The thin Santa Claus paused and looked at Mrs. Gratz with suspicion.

"Why? Did you find it?" he asked. [24]

"Find what?" asked Mrs. Gratz innocently, and the thin Santa Claus sighed and walked around to the back of the house. Mrs. Gratz went with him.

As Mrs. Gratz watched the thin man search the chicken yard for toober-chlosis bugs all doubt that he was her Santa Claus left her mind. He made a most minute investigation, but he did it more as a man might search for a lost purse than as a health officer would search for germs. He even got down on his hands and knees and poked under the chicken house with a stick, and, when he had combed the chicken yard thoroughly and had looked all through the chicken house, he even searched the denuded vegetable garden in the back yard, and looked over the fence into Mrs. Flannery's yard. Evidently he was not pleased with his investigation, for he did not even say good-bye to Mrs. Gratz, but went away looking mad and cross. [25]

When Mrs. Gratz went into her house she took her seat in her rocking-chair and began rocking herself calmly and slowly.

"'T was him done it, sure," said Mrs. Flannery.

"I don't like such come-agains, much," said Mrs. Gratz placidly. "I try me to believe in such a Santy Claus, but I like not such come-agains. In Germany did not Santy Claus come back so much. I don't like a Santy Claus should be so anxious. Still I believes in him, but, if he has too many such come-agains, I don't believe in him much."

"I would be settin' th' police on him, Santy Claus or no Santy Claus," said Mrs. Flannery vindictively; "th' mean chicken thief!" [26]

"Oh," said Mrs. Gratz easily, "I guess I don't care much should a nine-hundred-dollar Santy Claus steal some chickens. I ain't mad."

But she was a little provoked when another knock came at the door a few minutes later, and when, on opening it, she saw the thin Santa Claus before her again.

"So!" she said, "Santy Claus is back yet once!"

"What's that?" asked the man suspiciously.

"I say, what it is you want?" said Mrs. Gratz.

"Oh!" said the man. "Well, I ain't a-goin' to fool with you no longer, Mrs. Gratz. I'm a-goin' to tell you right out what I am and who I am. I'm a detective of the police, and I'm looking up a mighty bad character." [27]

"I guess I know right where you find one," said Mrs. Gratz politely.

"Now, don't be funny," said the thin Santa Claus peevishly. "Mebby you noticed I didn't say nothing when you spoke about that padlock being busted? Mebby you noticed how careful I looked over your chicken coop, and how I looked over the fence into the next yard? Well, I won't fool you. I ain't no chicken-yard inspector, and I ain't no chicken buyer—they was just my

detective disguises. I'm out detecting a chicken thief—just a plain, ordinary chicken thief—and what I come for is clues."

"Yes?" said Mrs. Gratz. "And what is it, such cloos? I haven't any clooses."

The thin Santa Claus seemed provoked.

"Now, look here!" he said. "You may think this is funny, but it isn't. I have got to catch that chicken thief or I'll lose my job, and I can't catch him unless I have some clues to catch him with. Now, didn't you have some chickens stolen last night?" [28]

"Chickens?" asked Mrs. Gratz. "No, I didn't have chickens stolen. Such toober-chlosis bugs eat them. With fedders, too. And bones. Right off the hoofs, ain't it a pity?"

It may have been a blush of shame, but it was more like a flush of anger, that overspread the face of the thin Santa Claus. He stared hard at the placid German face of Mrs. Gratz, and decided she was too stupid to mean it—that she was not teasing him.

"You don't catch on," he said. "You see, there ain't any such things as toober-chlosis bugs. I just made that up as a sort of detective disguise. Them chickens wasn't eat by no bugs at all—they was stole. See? A chicken thief come right into the coop and stole them. Do you think any kind of a bug could pry off a padlock?" [29]

Mrs. Gratz seemed to let this sink into her mind and to revolve there, and get to feeling at home, before she answered.

"No," she said at length, "I guess not. But Santy Claus could do it. Such a big, fat man. Sure he could do it."

"Why, you—" began the thin man crossly, and then changed his tone. "There ain't no such thing as Santy Claus," he said as one might speak to a child—but even a chicken thief would not tell a child such a thing, I hope.

"No?" queried Mrs. Gratz sadly. "No Santy Claus? And I was scared of it, myself, with such toober-chlosis bugs around. He should not to have gone into such a chicken coop with so many bugs busting up all over. He had a right to have fumigated himself, once. And now he ain't. He's all eat up, on the hoof, bones, and feet and all. And such a kind man, too." [30]

The thin Santa Claus frowned. He had half an idea that Mrs. Gratz was fooling with him, and when he spoke it was crisply.

"Now, see here," he said, "last night somebody broke into your chicken coop and stole all your chickens. I know that. And he's been stealing chickens all around this town, and all around this part of the country, too, and I know that. And this stealing has got to stop. I've got to catch that thief. And to catch him I've got to have a clue. A clue is something he has left around, or dropped, where he was stealing. Now, did that chicken thief drop any clues in your chicken yard? That's what I want to know—did he drop any clues?" [31]

"Mebby, if he dropped some cloos, those toober-chlosis bugs eat them up," suggested Mrs. Gratz. "They eats bones and fedders; mebby they eats cloos, too."

"Now, ain't that smart?" sneered the thin Santa Claus. "Don't you think you're funny? But I'll tell you the clue I'm looking for. Did that thief drop a pocketbook, or anything like that?"

"Oh, a pocketbook!" said Mrs. Gratz. "How much should be in such a pocketbook, mebby?"

"Nine hundred dollars," said the thin Santa Claus promptly.

"Goodness!" exclaimed Mrs. Gratz. "So much money all in one cloos! Come out to the chicken yard once; I'll help hunt for cloos, too." [32]

The thin Santa Claus stood a minute looking doubtfully at Mrs. Gratz. Her face was large and placid and unemotional.

"Well," he said with a sigh, "it ain't much use, but I'll try it again."

When he had gone, after another close search of the chicken yard and coop, Mrs. Gratz returned to her friend, Mrs. Flannery.

"Purty soon I don't belief any more in Santy Claus at all," she said. "Purty soon I have more beliefs in chicken thieves than in Santy Claus. Yet a while I beliefs in him, but, one more of those come-agains, and I don't."

"He'll not be comin' back any more," said Mrs. Flannery positively. "I'm wonderin' he came at all, and the jail so handy. All ye have t' do is t' call a cop." [33]

"Sure!" said Mrs. Gratz. "But it is not nice I should put Santy Claus in jail. Such a liberal Santy Claus, too."

"Have it yer own way, ma'am," said Mrs. Flannery. "I'll own 'tis some different whin chickens is stole. 'Tis hard to expind th' affections on a bunch of chickens, but, if any one was t' steal my pig, t' jail he would go, Santy Claus or no Santy Claus. Not but what ye have a kind heart anyway, ma'am, not wantin' t' put th' poor fellow in jail whin he has already lost nine hundred dollars,

which, goodness knows, ye might have t' hand back, was th' law t' take a hand in it."

"So!" said Mrs. Gratz. "Such is the law, yet? All right, I don't belief in chicken thieves, no matter how much he comes again. I stick me to Santy Claus. Always will I belief in Santy Claus. Chicken thieves gives, and wants to take away again, but Santy Claus is always giving and never taking." [34]

"Ye 're fergettin' th' chickens that was took," suggested Mrs. Flannery.

"Took?" said Mrs. Gratz.

"Tooken," Mrs. Flannery corrected.

"Tooked?" said Mrs. Gratz. "I beliefs me not in Santy Claus that way. I beliefs he is a good old man. For givings I beliefs in Santy Claus, but for takings I beliefs in toober-chlosis bugs."

"An' th' busted padlock, then?" asked Mrs. Flannery.

"Ach!" exclaimed Mrs. Gratz. "Them reindeers is so frisky, yet. They have a right to kick up and bust it, mebbby."

Mrs. Flannery sighed.

"T is a grand thing t' have faith, ma'am," she said. [35]

"Y-e-s," said Mrs. Gratz indolently, "that's nice. And it is nice to have nine hundred dollars more in the bank, ain't it?"

THE END

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

That Pup

The Great American Pie Company

Pigs is Pigs

Mike Flannery on Duty and Off

Kilo

Little Comic Masterpieces

PIGS IS PIGS

By ELLIS PARKER BUTLER

The comic classic that made the Nation laugh. Nearly 200,000 copies have been sold.

THE GREAT AMERICAN PIE COMPANY

By ELLIS PARKER BUTLER

"If read aloud in his presence it would convulse a wooden Indian." *Des Moines Mail and Times*.

A GOOD SAMARITAN

By MARY RAYMOND SHIPMAN ANDREWS

This has been called the best story that ever appeared in *McClure's Magazine*. A really humorous tale of an inebriated youth.

BREEZY

By J. GEORGE FREDERICK

A breezily humorous, great little business story. Breezy is distinctly an American product, and his success is an inspiration.

THE PETS

By HENRY WALLACE PHILLIPS

Red Saunders's curious menagerie, and the tale of a "scrap" that will make you weep for joy.

MIKE FLANNERY

By ELLIS PARKER BUTLER

Mike Flannery, the express agent of "Pigs is Pigs" fame, in some more genuinely laughable situations.

THAT PUP

By ELLIS PARKER BUTLER

The funniest dog story in years, "One prolonged howl of laughter." *Springfield Union*.

THE BIG STRIKE AT SIWASH

By GEORGE FITCH

One of the most rousing funny football stories that have ever appeared in print, by our new humorist.

WARRIOR, THE UNTAMED

By WILL IRWIN

What happened after Warrior, the "man-eating" lion of Paradise Park, broke his bonds and made straight for the open country.

LITTLE MAUD

By CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS

This delightful story by Mr. Loomis is known to millions of English-speaking people all over the world.

EACH, ILLUSTRATED, 50 CENTS

Doubleday, Page & Company

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE THIN SANTA CLAUS: THE CHICKEN YARD THAT WAS A CHRISTMAS STOCKING ***

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE

THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase "Project Gutenberg"), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. "Project Gutenberg" is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic

works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or

distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, "Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation."
- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.
- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain "Defects," such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the "Right of Replacement or Refund" described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS', WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state

law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™'s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.