

THE NIGHT RIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

POSS THE PRESENT GAMES

'Twas the night before Christmas, when **RIGHT** through the house.
Not a creature **LEFT** was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung **RIGHT** by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;

The children were nestled **RIGHT** snug in their beds,
While visions of sugarplums danced **RIGHT** in their heads;
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled **RIGHT** down for a long winter's nap,

When out on the **LEFT** lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang **RIGHT** from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I **LEFT** like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
LEFT the lustre of mid-day to objects **RIGHT** below,
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,

With a little old driver **RIGHT** lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name;

"Now, Dasher! Now, Dancer! Now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! On, Cupid! On, Donder and Blitzen!
To the **RIGHT** top of the porch! to the **LEFT** top of the wall!
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet **RIGHT** with an obstacle, mount **RIGHT** up to the sky,
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard **RIGHT** on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little **RIGHT** and **LEFT**
As I drew in my hand, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from his head **RIGHT** to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;
A bundle of toys he had flung **RIGHT** on his back,
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.

His eyes — how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn **RIGHT** up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow;

The stump of a pipe he held **RIGHT** tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath;
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
That shook, when he laughed like a bowlful of jelly.

He was chubby and plump, a **RIGHT** jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;
A wink of his **LEFT** eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;

He spoke not a word, but went straight **RIGHT** to his work,
And filled all the stockings; then turned **LEFT** with a jerk,
And laying his **LEFT** finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;

He sprang **RIGHT** to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove **RIGHT** out of sight,
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night."

