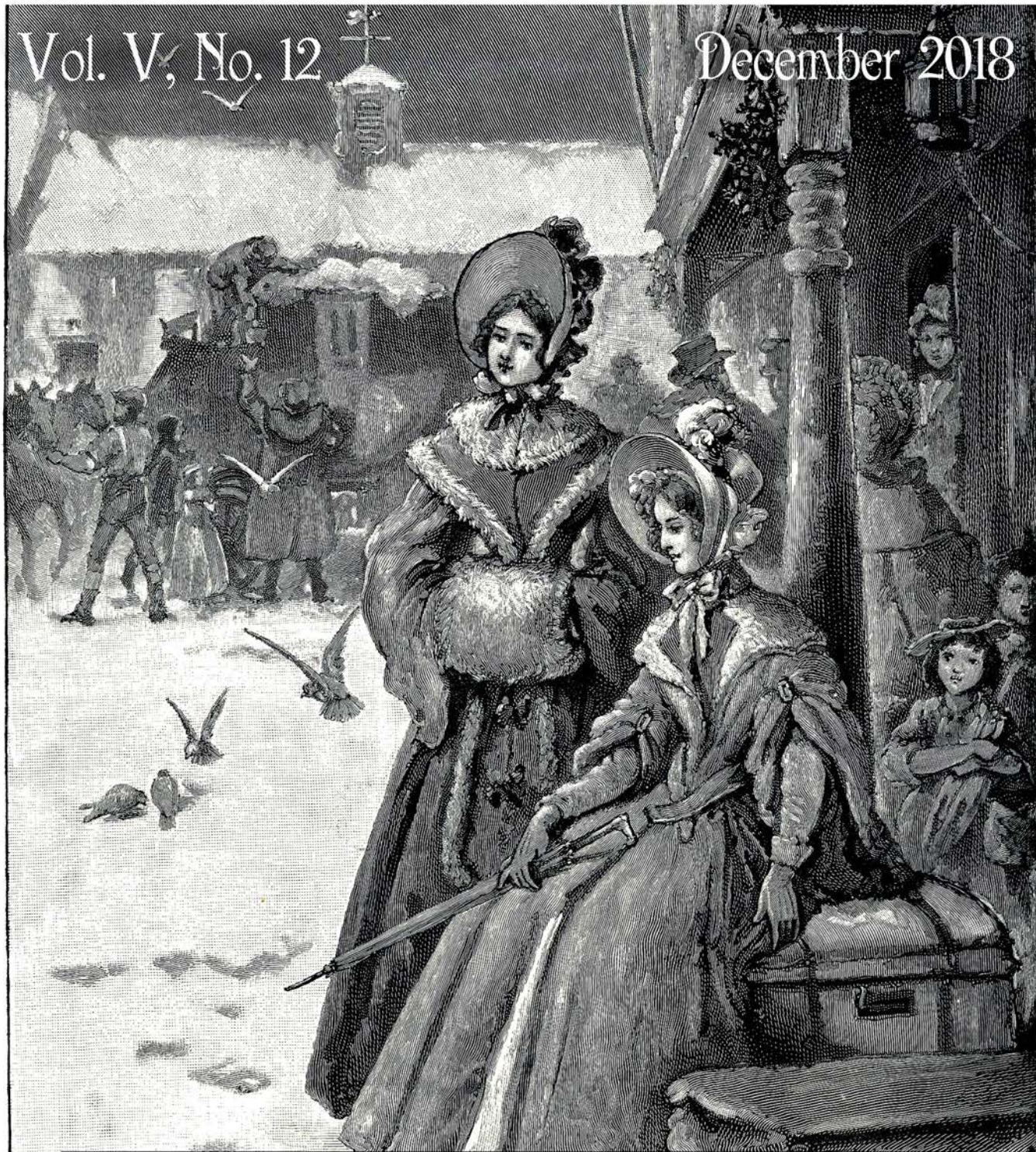


# Victorian Times

Vol. V, No. 12

December 2018



*Christmas in the New York Tenements • The Children's Christmas in Art  
Christmas in Cartoons • Costumes for Children's Christmas Calico Balls  
Recipes for Holiday Entertaining • The Mistletoe • December Folklore  
How to Entertain at Christmas • Fiction: "A Glut in Turkeys"*

# Victorian Times

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\* *The Girl's Own Paper* \*\* *Cassell's Family Magazine*

# The Children's Christmas

Somehow, as this issue came together, it seems to have turned into an issue focusing not just on Victorian Christmas, but on the Victorian *children's* Christmas. Our feature on "Christmas in the Tenements" looks at how children from around the world, living in New York's worst slums, celebrated the holiday. Standing in sharp contrast to their experience are the articles on children's Christmas costume balls in England. And then we have the lovely art feature, "The Children's Christmas as Depicted by Famous Black-and-White Artists."

Now, to us, the idea of Christmas being a celebration that focuses primarily on children doesn't seem the least odd. But while Christmas has always been, at least to some extent, an opportunity to bless the children, it has not been a "children's" holiday throughout most of history. For centuries, Christmas was a holiday for adults—a day of celebration and feasting rather than work and hunger. Children certainly enjoyed the festivities, but those festivities were not, for the most part, aimed specifically at them.

The Victorian era marked the beginnings of a new concept of "childhood" as being a distinct period of life. Children were celebrated simply for being *children*, rather than simply as rather smaller members of the family (or the workforce). There are undoubtedly many reasons for this, but at least one relates directly to the Victorian effect upon Christmas itself: commercialization.

This was the first period in history in which it was possible to buy inexpensive, mass-produced children's toys—and so, of course, shops and manufacturers encouraged parents to do just that. It was the first period in history in which advances in printing and reduced paper costs made it possible to publish books *just for children*—which led to a rise in children's novels and literature that focused more on entertainment than on profound moral lessons.

Small wonder, then, that the Christmas holiday season seems to have become increasingly focused on treats, gifts, and entertainments for the Victorian child. Articles abound on how to host a children's party (one, which we have planned for a future issue, notes that at such parties, children often preferred coffee to tea...). The costume ball makes more sense if we recall that in Victorian England, children didn't dress up for Halloween.

But as Christmas became increasingly a holiday focusing on giving presents to children, it also began to develop the dichotomy between "lots of presents" and "the true spirit of Christmas" that we see to this day. Victorians with the ability to spend lots of money on children's gifts were not unaware of the fact that thousands of children would *not* be able to experience such luxuries during the holiday. Victorian childhood might have been a wonderful time for children of families with money, but the streets were still filled with young and often homeless beggars, the factories were filled with child laborers, and the poorhouses and orphanages were filled, period. Giving lavish gifts to one's own children often meant feeling some twinges of conscience toward those who had so much less.

This divided "spirit" of the season can be summed up by its two most famous literary achievements: Clement Moore's *A Vision of St. Nicholas*, and Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. Moore's poem, delightful as it is, simply depicts a jolly, generous Santa whose sole business is to stuff the family stockings full of gifts before moving on to the next house. Dickens, conversely, seeks to show us that the "meaning" of Christmas is to make *mankind* one's business. Interestingly, today, we still get endless TV-movie variations on *A Christmas Carol* (my all-time favorite being *Scrooged*) but not many that endorse the theme of Moore's *Vision*.

So we can perhaps thank the Victorians for a "new" holiday tradition: The state of tension we feel as we are torn between buying one more "perfect" gift for a loved one, and wondering if we ought, instead, to spend the holiday in a soup kitchen. Even as Victorians bought more and more holiday gifts for their children, Victorian Christmas stories (like the one we offer here, titled "A Glut of Turkeys") tend to focus on the importance of charity, and illustrations remind well-to-do children to take a moment to pass a toy or doll to some ragged, less fortunate child on this day of days.

Personally, I believe we actually can have things "both ways." Deuteronomy 15:11 reminds us that "For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land." Those who can open their hands wide, as Scrooge learned to do, are usually those who can *afford* to buy someone a turkey—as Scrooge did. And as Scrooge discovered, Christmas may be a day when we enjoy turkey and presents, but open-handedness can go on all year long!

—Moira Allen, Editor  
editors@victorianvoices.net



## MERRY CHRISTMAS IN THE TENEMENTS.

BY JACOB A. RIIS.

WITH PICTURES BY JAY HAMBIDGE.

IT was just a sprig of holly, with scarlet berries showing against the green, stuck in, by one of the office boys probably, behind the sign that pointed the way up to the editorial rooms. There was no reason why it should have made me start when I came suddenly upon it at the turn of the stairs; but it did. Perhaps it was because that dingy hall, given over to dust and drafts all the days of the year, was the last place in which I expected to meet with any sign of Christmas; perhaps it was because I myself had nearly forgotten the holiday. Whatever the cause, it gave me quite a turn.

I stood, and stared at it. It looked dry, almost withered. Probably it had come a long way. Not much holly grows about Printing-House Square, except in the colored supplements, and that is scarcely of a kind to stir tender memories. Withered and dry, this did. I thought, with a twinge of conscience, of secret little conclaves of my children, of private views of things hidden from mama at the bottom of drawers, of wild flights when papa appeared unbidden in the door, which I had allowed for once to pass unheeded. Absorbed in the business of the office, I had hardly thought of Christmas coming on, until now it was here. And this sprig of holly on the wall that had come to

remind me,—come nobody knew how far,—did it grow yet in the beech-wood clearings, as it did when I gathered it as a boy, tracking through the snow? «Christ-thorn» we called it in our Danish tongue. The red berries, to our simple faith, were the drops of blood that fell from the Saviour's brow as it drooped under its cruel crown upon the cross.

Back to the long ago wandered my thoughts: to the moss-grown beech in which I cut my name, and that of a little girl with yellow curls, of blessed memory, with the first jack-knife I ever owned; to the story-book with the little fir-tree that pined because it was small, and because the hare jumped over it, and would not be content though the wind and the sun kissed it, and the dews wept over it, and told it to rejoice in its young life; and that was so proud when, in the second year, the hare had to go round it, because then it knew it was getting big,—Hans Christian Andersen's story, that we loved above all the rest; for we knew the tree right well, and the hare; even the tracks it left in the snow we had seen. Ah, those were the Yule-tide seasons, when the old Domkirke shone with a thousand wax candles on Christmas eve; when all business was laid aside to let the world make merry one whole



Christmas Mottos.

week; when big red apples were roasted on the stove, and bigger doughnuts were baked within it for the long feast! Never such had been known since. Christmas to-day is but a name, a memory.

A door slammed below, and let in the noises of the street. The holly rustled in the draft. Some one going out said, «A Merry Christmas to you all!» in a big, hearty voice. I awoke from my reverie to find myself back in New York with a glad glow at the heart. It was not true. I had only forgotten. It was myself that had changed, not Christmas. That was here, with the old cheer, the old message of good-will, the old royal road to the heart of mankind. How often had I seen its blessed charity, that never corrupts, make light in the hovels of darkness and despair! how often watched its spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion in those who had, besides themselves, nothing to give! and as often the sight had made whole my faith in human nature. No! Christmas was not of the past, its spirit not dead. The lad who fixed the sprig of holly on the stairs knew it; my reporter's notebook bore witness to it. Witness of my contrition for the wrong I did the gentle spirit of the holiday, here let the book tell the story of one Christmas in the tenements of the poor.

It is evening in Grand street. The shops east and west are pouring forth their swarms of workers. Street and sidewalk are filled with an eager throng of young men and women,

chatting gaily, and elbowing the jam of holiday shoppers that linger about the big stores. The street-cars labor along, loaded down to the steps with passengers carrying bundles of every size and odd shape. Along the curb a string of peddlers hawk penny toys in push-carts with noisy clamor, fearless for once of being moved on by the police. Christmas brings a two-weeks' respite from persecution even to the friendless street-fakir. From the window of one brilliantly lighted store a bevy of mature dolls in dishabille stretch forth their arms appealingly to a troop of factory-hands passing by. The young men chaff the girls, who shriek with laughter and run. The policeman on the corner stops beating his hands together to keep warm, and makes a mock attempt to catch them, whereat their shrieks rise shriller than ever. «Them stockin's o' yourn 'll be the death o' Santa Claus!» he shouts after them, as they dodge. And they, looking back, snap saucily, «Mind yer business, freshy!» But their laughter belies their words. «They gin it to ye straight that time,» grins the grocer's clerk, come out to snatch a look at the crowds; and the two swap holiday greetings.

At the corner, where two opposing tides of travel form an eddy, the line of push-carts debouches down the darker side-street. In its gloom their torches burn with a fitful glare that wakes black shadows among the trusses of the railroad structure overhead. A woman, with worn shawl drawn tightly

about head and shoulders, bargains with a peddler for a monkey on a stick and two cents' worth of flitter-gold. Five ill-clad youngsters flatten their noses against the frozen pane of the toy-shop, in ecstasy at something there, which proves to be a milk-wagon, with driver, horses, and cans that can be unloaded. It is something their minds can grasp. One comes forth with a penny goldfish of pasteboard clutched tightly in his hand, and casting cautious glances right and left, speeds across the way to the door of a tenement, where a little girl stands waiting.



«A Large-sized Santa Claus for Ten Cents.»

«It's yer Chris'mas, Kate,» he says, and thrusts it into her eager fist. The black doorway swallows them up.

Across the narrow yard, in the basement of the rear house, the lights of a Christmas tree show against the grimy window-pane. The hare would never have gone around it, it is so very small. The two children are busily engaged fixing the goldfish upon one of its branches. Three little candles that burn there shed light upon a scene of utmost desolation. The room is black with smoke and dirt. In the middle of the floor oozes an oil-stove that serves at once to take the raw edge off the cold and to cook the meals by. Half the window-panes are broken, and the holes stuffed with rags. The sleeve of an old coat hangs out of one, and beats drearily upon the sash when the wind sweeps over the fence and rattles the rotten shutters. The family wash, clammy and gray, hangs on a clothes-line stretched across the room. Under it, at a table set with cracked and empty plates, a discouraged woman sits eying the children's show gloomily. It is evident that she has been drinking. The peaked faces of the little ones wear a famished look. There are three—the third an infant, put to bed in what was once a baby-carriage. The two from the street are pulling it around to get the tree in range. The baby sees it, and crows with delight. The boy shakes a branch, and the goldfish leaps and sparkles in the candle-light.

«See, sister!» he pipes; «see Santa Claus!» And they clap their hands in glee. The woman at the table wakes out of her stupor, gazes around her, and bursts into a fit of maudlin weeping.

The door falls to. Five flights up, another opens upon a bare attic room which a patient little woman is setting to rights. There are only three chairs, a box, and a bedstead in the room, but they take a deal of careful arranging. The bed hides the broken plaster in the wall through which the wind came in; each chair-leg stands over a rat-hole, at once to hide it and to keep the rats out. One is left; the box is for that. The plaster of the ceiling is held up with pasteboard patches. I know the story of that attic. It is one of cruel desertion. The

woman's husband is even now living in plenty with the creature for whom he forsook her, not a dozen blocks away, while she «keeps the home together for the childer.» She sought justice, but the lawyer demanded a retainer; so she gave it up, and went back to her little ones. For this room that barely keeps the winter wind out she pays four dollars a month, and is behind with the rent. There is scarce bread in the house; but the spirit of Christmas has found her attic. Against a broken wall is tacked a hemlock branch, the leavings of the corner grocer's fitting-block; pink string from the packing-counter hangs on it in festoons. A tallow dip on the box furnishes the illumination. The children sit up in bed, and watch it with shining eyes.

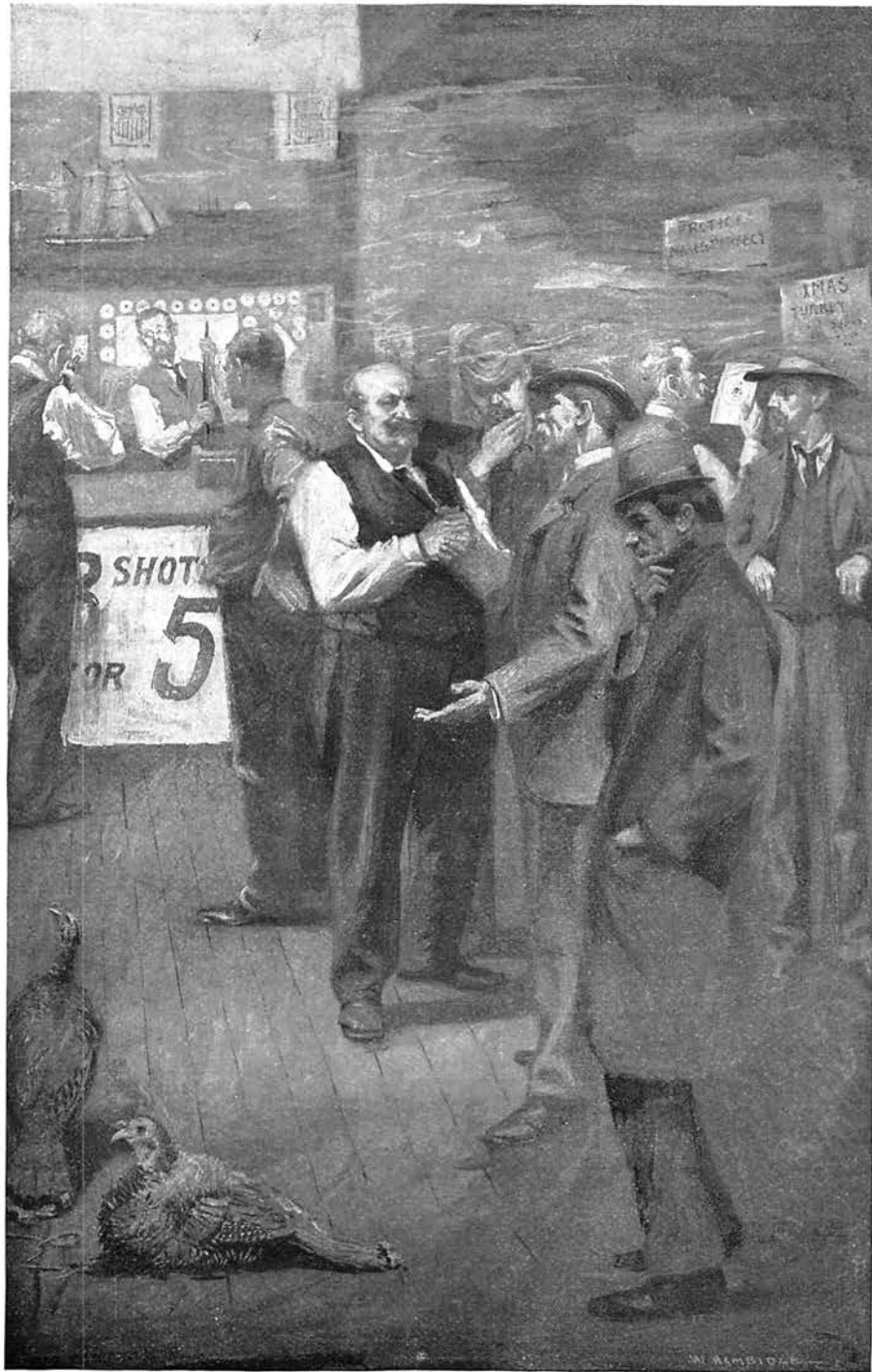
«We're having Christmas!» they say.

The lights of the Bowery glow like a myriad twinkling stars upon the ceaseless flood of humanity that surges ever through the great highway of the homeless. They shine upon long rows of lodging-houses, in which hundreds of young men, cast helpless upon the reef of the strange city, are learning their first lessons of utter loneliness; for what desolation is there like that of the careless crowd when all the world rejoices? They shine upon the tempter, setting his snares there, and upon the missionary and the Salvation Army lass, disputing his catch with him; upon the police detective going his rounds with coldly observant eye intent upon the outcome of the contest; upon the



Holly.

wreck that is past hope, and upon the youth pausing on the verge of the pit in which the other has long ceased to struggle. Sights and sounds of Christmas there are in plenty in the Bowery. Juniper and tamarack and fir stand in groves along the busy thoroughfare, and garlands of green embower mission and dive impartially. Once a year the old street recalls its youth with an effort. It is true that it is largely a commercial effort—that the evergreen, with an instinct that is not of its native hills, haunts saloon-corners by preference; but the smell of the pine-woods is in the air, and—Christmas is not too critical—one is grateful for the effort. It varies with the opportunity. At «Beefsteak John's»



A CHRISTMAS «TURKEY-SHOOT» ON THE BOWERY.

it is content with artistically embalming crullers and mince-pies in green cabbage under the window lamp. Over yonder, where the mile-post of the old lane still stands,—in its unhonored old age become the vehicle of publishing the latest «sure cure» to the world,—a florist, whose undenominational zeal for the holiday and trade outstrips alike distinction of creed and property, has transformed the sidewalk and the ugly railroad structure into a veritable bower, spanning it with a canopy of green, under which

dwell with him, in neighborly good-will, the Young Men's Christian Association and the Gentile tailor next door.

In the next block a «turkey-shoot» is in progress. Crowds are trying their luck at breaking the glass balls that dance upon tiny jets of water in front of a marine view with the moon rising, yellow and big, out of a silver sea. A man-of-war, with lights burning aloft, labors under a rocky coast. Groggy sailormen, on shore leave, make unsteady attempts upon the dancing



The Man with Mechanical Insects.

balls. One mistakes the moon for the target, but is discovered in season. «Don't shoot that,» says the man who loads the guns; «there's a lamp behind it.» Three scared birds in the window-recess try vainly to snatch a moment's sleep between shots and the trains that go roaring overhead on the elevated road. Roused by the sharp crack of the rifles, they blink at the lights in the street, and peck moodily at a crust in their bed of shavings.

The dime-museum gong clatters out its noisy warning that «the lecture» is about to begin. From the concert-hall, where men sit drinking beer in clouds of smoke, comes the thin voice of a short-skirted singer warbling, «Do they think of me at home?» The young fellow who sits near the door, abstractedly making figures in the wet track of the «schooners,» buries something there with a sudden restless turn, and calls for another beer. Out in the street a band strikes up. A host with banners advances, chanting an unfamiliar hymn. In the ranks marches a cripple on crutches. Newsboys follow, gaping. Under the illuminated clock of the Cooper Institute the procession halts, and the leader, turning his face to the sky, offers a prayer. The passing crowds stop to listen. A few bare their heads. The devoted group, the flapping banners, and the changing torch-light on upturned faces, make a strange, weird picture. Then the drum-beat, and the band files into its barracks across the street. A few of the listeners follow, among them the lad from the concert-hall, who slinks shamefacedly in when he thinks no one is looking.

Down at the foot of the Bowery is the «panhandlers' beat,» where the saloons elbow each other at every step, crowding out all other business than that of keeping lodgers to support them. Within call of it, across the square, stands a church which, in the memory of men yet living, was built to shelter the fashionable Baptist audiences of a day when Madison Square was out in the fields,

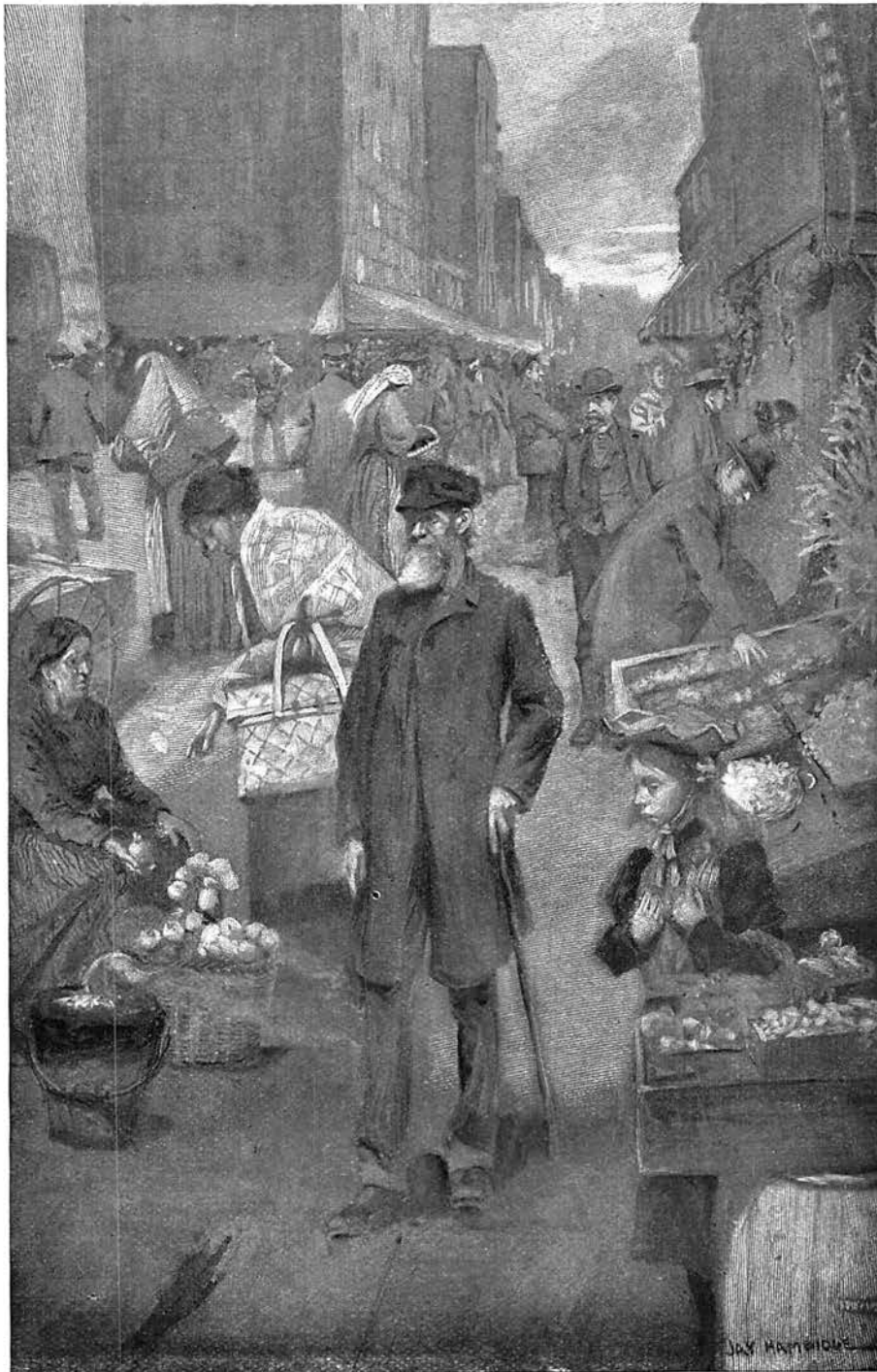
and Harlem had a foreign sound. The fashionable audiences are gone long since. Today the church, fallen into premature decay, but still handsome in its strong and noble lines, stands as a missionary outpost in the land of the enemy, its builders would have said, doing a greater work than they planned. To-night is the Christmas festival of its English-speaking Sunday-school, and the pews are filled. The banners of United Italy, of modern Hellas, of France and Germany and England, hang side by side with the Chinese dragon and the starry flag—signs of the cosmopolitan character of the congregation. Greek and Roman Catholics, Jews and joss-worshippers, go there; few Protestants, and no Baptists. It is easy to pick out the children in their seats by nationality, and as easy to read the story of poverty and suffering that stands written in more than one mother's haggard face, now beaming with pleasure at the little ones' glee. A gaily decorated Christmas tree has taken the place of the pulpit. At its foot is stacked a mountain of bundles, Santa Claus's gifts to the school. A self-conscious young man with soap-locks has just been allowed to retire, amid tumultuous applause, after blowing «Nearer, my God, to thee» on his horn until his cheeks swelled almost to bursting. A trumpet ever takes the Fourth Ward by storm. A class of little girls is climbing upon the platform. Each wears a capital letter on her breast, and has a piece to speak that begins with the letter; together they spell its lesson. There is momentary consternation: one is missing. As the discovery is made, a child pushes past the doorkeeper, hot and breathless. «I am in (Boundless Love,» she says, and makes for the platform, where her arrival restores confidence and the language.

In the audience the befrocked visitor from up-town sits cheek by jowl with the pigtailed Chinaman and the dark-browed Italian. Up in the gallery, farthest from the preacher's desk and the tree, sits a



The Toy-monkey Seller.





CHRISTMAS EVE IN MULBERRY BEND.

Jewish mother with her three boys, almost in rags. A dingy and threadbare shawl partly hides her poor calico wrap and patched apron. The woman shrinks in the pew, fearful of being seen; her boys stand upon the benches, and applaud with the rest. She endeavors vainly to restrain them. «Tick, tick!» goes the old clock over the door through which wealth and fashion went out long years ago, and poverty came in.

Loudly ticked the old clock in time with the doxology, the other day, when they

cleared the tenants out of Gotham Court down here in Cherry street, and shut the iron doors of Single and Double Alley against them.

Never did the world move faster or surer toward a better day than when the wretched slum was seized by the health officers as a nuisance unfit longer to disgrace a Christian city. The snow lies deep in the deserted passageways, and the vacant floors are given over to evil smells, and to the rats that forage in squads, burrowing in the



IN THE ATTIC.

neglected sewers. The «wall of wrath» still towers above the buildings in the adjoining Alderman's Court, but its wrath at last is wasted.

It was built by a vengeful Quaker, whom the alderman had knocked down in a quarrel over the boundary line, and transmitted its legacy of hate to generations yet unborn; for where it stood it shut out sunlight and air from the tenements of Alderman's Court. And at last it is to go, Gotham Court and all; and to the going the wall of wrath has contributed its share, thus in the end atoning for some of the harm it wrought. Tick! old clock; the world moves. Never yet did Christmas seem less dark on Cherry Hill than since the lights were put out in Gotham Court forever.

In «the Bend» the philanthropist undertaker who «buries for what he can catch on

the plate» hails the Yule-tide season with a pyramid of green made of two coffins set on end. It has been a good day, he says cheerfully, putting up the shutters; and his mind is easy. But the «good days» of the Bend are over, too. The Bend itself is all but gone. Where the old pigsty stood, children dance and sing to the strumming of a cracked piano-organ propelled on wheels by an Italian and his wife. The park that has come to take the place of the slum will curtail the undertaker's profits, as it has lessened the work of the police. Murder was the fashion of the day that is past. Scarce a knife has been drawn since the sunlight shone into that evil spot, and grass and green shrubs took the place of the old rookeries. The Christmas gospel of peace and goodwill moves in where the slum moves out. It never had a chance before.

The children follow the organ, stepping in the slush to the music,—bareheaded and with torn shoes, but happy,—across the Five Points and through «the Bay,»—known to the directory as Baxter street,—to «the Divide,» still Chatham street to its denizens though the aldermen have rechristened it Park Row. There

other delegations of Greek and Italian children meet and escort the music on its homeward trip. In one of the crooked streets near the river its journey comes to an end. A battered door opens to let it in. A tallow dip burns sleepily on the creaking stairs. The water runs with a loud clatter in the sink: it is to keep it from freezing. There is not a whole window-pane in the hall. Time was when this was a fine house harboring wealth and refinement. It has neither now. In the old parlor down-stairs a knot of hard-faced men and women sit on benches about a deal table, playing cards. They have a jug between them, from which they drink by turns. On the stump of a mantel-shelf a lamp burns before a rude print of the Mother of God. No one pays any heed to the hand-organ man and his wife as they climb to their attic. There is a colony of them up there—three families in four rooms.

«Come in, Antonio,» says the tenant of the double flat,—the one with two rooms,—«come and keep Christmas.» Antonio enters, cap in hand. In the corner by the dormer-window a «crib» has been fitted up in commemoration of the Nativity. A soap-box and two hemlock branches are the elements. Six tallow candles and a night-light illuminate a singular collection of rarities, set out with much ceremonial show. A doll tightly wrapped in swaddling-clothes represents «the Child.» Over it stands a ferocious-looking beast, easily recognized as a survival of the last political campaign,—the Tammany tiger,—threatening to swallow it at a gulp if one as much as takes one's eyes off it. A miniature Santa Claus, a pasteboard monkey, and several other articles of bric-à-brac of the kind the tenement affords, complete



SHOPPERS IN A JEWISH METAL SHOP, CHRISTMAS EVE.

the outfit. The background is a picture of St. Donato, their village saint, with the Madonna, «whom they worship most.» But the incongruity harbors no suggestion of disrespect. The children view the strange show with genuine reverence, bowing and crossing themselves before it. There are five, the oldest a girl of seventeen, who works for a sweater, making three dollars a week. It is all the money that comes in, for the father has been sick and unable to work eight months, and the mother has her hands full:

the youngest is a baby in arms. Three of the children go to a charity school, where they are fed, a great help, now the holidays have come to make work slack for sister. The rent is six dollars—two weeks' pay out of the four. The mention of a possible chance of light work for the man brings the daughter with her sewing from the adjoining room, eager to hear. That would be Christmas indeed! «Pietro!» She runs to the neighbors to communicate the joyful tidings. Pietro comes, with his new-born baby, which he is tending

while his wife lies ill, to look at the maestro, so powerful and good. He also has been out of work for months, with a family of mouths to fill, and nothing coming in. His children are all small yet, but they speak English.

«What,» I say, holding a silver dime up before the oldest, a smart little chap of seven— «what would you do if I gave you this?»

«Get change,» he replies promptly. When he is told that it is his own, to buy toys, his eyes open wide with wondering incredulity. By degrees he understands. The father does not. He looks questioningly from one to the other. When told, his respect increases visibly for «the rich gentleman.»

They were villagers of the same community in southern Italy, these people and others in the tenements thereabouts, and they moved their patron saint with them. They cluster about his worship here, but the worship is more than an empty form. He typifies to them the old neighborliness of home, the spirit of mutual help, of charity, and of the common cause against the common enemy. The community life survives through their saint in the far city to an unsuspected extent. The sick are cared for; the dreaded hospital is fenced out. There are no Italian evictions. The saint has paid the rent of this attic through two hard months; and here at his shrine the Calabrian village gathers, in the persons of these three, to do him honor on Christmas eve.

Where the old Africa has been made over into a modern Italy, since King Humbert's cohorts struck the up-town trail, three hundred of the little foreigners are having an uproarious time over their Christmas tree in the Children's Aid Society's school. And well they may, for the like has not been seen in Sullivan street in this generation. Christmas trees are rather rarer over here than on the East Side, where the German leavens the lump with his loyalty to home traditions. This is loaded with silver and gold and toys without end, until there is little left of the original green. Santa Claus's sleigh must have been upset in a snow-drift over here,

and righted by throwing the cargo overboard, for there is at least a wagon-load of things that can find no room on the tree. The appearance of «teacher» with a double armful of curly-headed dolls in red, yellow, and green Mother-Hubbards, doubtful how to dispose of them, provokes a shout of approval, which

is presently quieted by the principal's bell. School is «in» for the preliminary exercises. Afterward there are to be the tree and ice-cream for the good children. In their anxiety to prove their title clear, they sit so straight, with arms folded, that the whole row bends over backward. The lesson is brief, the answers to the point.

«What do we receive at Christmas?» the teacher wants to know. The whole school responds with a shout, «Dolls and toys!» To the question, «Why do we receive them at Christmas?» the answer is not so prompt. But one youngster from Thompson street holds up his hand. He knows. «Because we always get 'em,» he says; and

the class is convinced: it is a fact. A baby wails because it cannot get the whole tree at once. The «little mother»—herself a child of less than a dozen winters—who has it in charge cooes over it, and soothes its grief with the aid of a surreptitious sponge-cake evolved from the depths of teacher's pocket. Babies are encouraged in these schools, though not originally included in their plan, as often the one condition upon which the older children can be reached. Some one has to mind the baby, with all hands out at work.

The school sings «Santa Lucia» and «Children of the Heavenly King,» and baby is lulled to sleep.

«Who is this King?» asks the teacher suddenly, at the end of a verse. Momentary stupefaction. The little minds are on ice-cream just then; the lad nearest the door has telegraphed that it is being carried up in pails. A little fellow on the back seat saves the day. Up goes his brown fist.

«Well, Vito, who is he?»

«McKinley!» shouts the lad, who remembers the election just past; and the school adjourns for ice-cream.



A Prayer of Thanksgiving that he  
«lives in a Free Country.»

It is a sight to see them eat it. In a score of such schools, from the Hook to Harlem, the sight is enjoyed in Christmas week by the men and women who, out of their own pockets, reimburse Santa Claus for his outlay, and count it a joy—as well they may: for their beneficence sometimes makes the one bright spot in lives that have suffered of all wrongs the most cruel—that of being despoiled of their childhood. Sometimes they are little Bohemians; sometimes the children of refugee Jews; and again, Italians, or the descendants of the Irish stock of Hell's Kitchen and Poverty Row; always the poorest, the shabbiest, the hungriest—the children Santa Claus loves best to find, if any one will show him the way. Having so much on hand, he has no time, you see, to look them up himself. That must be done for him; and it is done. To the teacher in this Sullivan-street school came one little girl, this last Christmas, with anxious inquiry if it was true that he came around with toys.

«I hanged my stocking last time,» she said, «and he did n't come at all.» In the front house, indeed, he left a drum and a doll, but no message from him reached the rear house in the alley. «Maybe he could n't find it,» she said soberly. Did the teacher think he would come if she wrote to him? She had learned to write.

Together they composed a note to Santa Claus, speaking for



THE SCHOOL FOR ITALIAN CHILDREN—AN ICE-CREAM FEAST.

a doll and a bell—the bell to play «go to school» with when she was kept home minding the baby. Lest he should by any chance miss the alley in spite of directions, little Rosa was invited to hang her stocking, and her sister's, with the janitor's children's in the school. And lo! on Christmas morning there was a gorgeous doll, and a bell that was a whole curriculum in itself, as good as a year's schooling any day! Faith in Santa Claus is established in that Thompson-street alley for this generation at least; and Santa Claus, got by hook or by crook into an Eighth-Ward alley, is as good as the whole Supreme Court bench, with the Court of Appeals thrown in, for backing the Board of Health against the slum.

But the ice-cream! They eat it off the seats, half of them kneeling or squatting on the floor; they blow on it, and put it in their pockets to carry home to baby. Two little shavers discovered to be feeding each other, each watching the smack develop on the other's lips as the acme of his own bliss, are «cousins»; that is why. Of cake there is a double supply. It is a dozen years since «Fighting Mary», the wildest child in the Seventh-Avenue school, taught them a lesson there which they have never forgotten. She was perfectly untamable, fighting everybody in school, the despair of her teacher, till on Thanksgiving, reluctantly included in the general amnesty and mince-pie, she was caught cramming the pie into her pocket, after eying it with a look of pure ecstasy, but refusing to touch it. «For mother» was her explanation, delivered with a defiant look before which the class quailed. It is recorded, but not in the minutes, that the board of managers wept over Fighting Mary, who, all unconscious of having caused such an astonishing «break», was at that moment engaged in maintaining her prestige and reputation by fighting the gang in the next block. The minutes contain merely a formal resolution to the effect that occasions of mince-pie shall carry double rations thenceforth. And the rule has been kept—not only in Seventh-Avenue, but in every industrial school—since. Fighting Mary won the biggest fight of her troubled life that day, without striking a blow.

It was in the Seventh-Avenue school last Christmas that I offered the truant class a

four-bladed penknife as a prize for whittling out the truest Maltese cross. It was a class of black sheep, and it was the blackest sheep of the flock that won the prize. «That awful Savarese», said Miss Haight, in despair. I thought of Fighting Mary, and bade her take heart. I regret to say that within a week the hapless Savarese was black-listed for banking up the school door with snow, so that not even the janitor could get out and at him.

Within hail of the Sullivan-street school camps a scattered little band, the Christmas customs of which I had been trying for years



MRS. BENOIT.

to surprise. They are Indians, a handful of Mohawks and Iroquois, whom some ill wind has blown down from their Canadian reservation, and left in these West-Side tenements to eke out such a living as they can weaving mats and baskets, and threading glass pearls on slippers and pincushions, until, one after another, they have died off and gone to happier hunting-grounds than Thompson street. There were as many families as one could count on the fingers of both hands when I first came upon them, at the death of old Tamenund, the basket-maker. Last Christmas there were seven. I had about made up my mind that the only real Americans in New York did not keep the holiday

at all, when, one Christmas eve, they showed me how. Just as dark was setting in, old Mrs. Benoit came from her Hudson-street attic—where she was known among the neighbors, as old and poor as she, as Mrs. Ben Wah, and believed to be the relict of a warrior of the name of Benjamin Wah—to the office of the Charity Organization Society, with a bundle for a friend who had helped her over a rough spot—the rent, I suppose. The bundle was done up elaborately in blue cheese-cloth, and contained a lot of little garments which she had made out of the remnants of blankets and cloth of her own from a younger and better day. «For those,» she said, in her French patois, «who are poorer than myself»; and hobbled away. I found out, a few days later, when I took her picture weaving mats in her attic room, that she had scarcely food in the house that Christmas day, and not the car-fare to take her to church! Walking was bad, and her old limbs were stiff. She sat by the window through the winter evening, and watched the sun go down behind the western hills, comforted by her pipe. Mrs. Ben Wah, to give her her local name, is not really an Indian; but her husband was one, and she lived all her life with the tribe till she came here. She is a philosopher in her own quaint way. «It is no disgrace to be poor,» said she to me, regarding her empty tobacco-pouch; «but it is sometimes a great inconvenience.» Not even the recollection of the vote of censure that was passed upon me once by the ladies of the Charitable Ten for surreptitiously supplying an aged couple, the special object of their charity, with army plug, could have deterred me from taking the hint.

Very likely, my old friend Miss Sherman, in her Broome-street cellar,—it is always the attic or the cellar,—would object to Mrs. Ben Wah's claim to being the only real American in my note-book. She is from down East, and says «stun» for stone. In her youth she was lady's-maid to a general's wife, the recollection of which military career equally condones the cellar and prevents her holding any sort of communication with her common neighbors, who add to the offense of being foreigners the unpardonable one of being mostly men. Eight cats bear her steady company, and keep alive her starved affections. I found them on last Christmas eve behind barricaded doors; for the cold that had locked the water-pipes had brought the neighbors down to the cellar, where Miss Sherman's cunning had kept them from

freezing. Their tin pans and buckets were even then banging against her door. «They're a miserable lot,» said the old maid, fondling her cats defiantly; «but let 'em. It's Christmas. Ah!» she added, as one of the eight stood up in her lap and rubbed its cheek against hers, «they're innocent. It is n't poor little animals that does the harm. It's men and women that does it to each other.» I don't know whether it was just philosophy, like Mrs. Ben Wah's, or a glimpse of her story. If she had one, she kept it for her cats.

In a hundred places all over the city, when Christmas comes, as many open-air fairs spring suddenly into life. A kind of Gentile Feast of the Tabernacles possesses the tenement districts especially. Green-embowered booths stand in rows at the curb, and the voice of the tin trumpet is heard in the land. The common source of all the show is down by the North River, in the district known as «the Farm.» Down there Santa Claus establishes headquarters early in December and until past New Year. The broad quay looks then more like a clearing in a pine-forest than a busy section of the metropolis. The steamers discharge their loads of fir-trees at the piers until they stand stacked mountain high, with foot-hills of holly and ground-ivy trailing off toward the land side. An army-train of wagons is engaged in carting them away from early morning till late at night; but the green forest grows, in spite of it all, until in places it shuts the shipping out of sight altogether. The air is redolent with the smell of balsam and pine. After nightfall, when the lights are burning in the busy market, and the homeward-bound crowds with baskets and heavy burdens of Christmas greens jostle each other with good-natured banter,—nobody is ever cross down here in the holiday season,—it is good to take a stroll through the Farm, if one has a spot in his heart faithful yet to the hills and the woods in spite of the latter-day city. But it is when the moonlight is upon the water and upon the dark phantom forest, when the heavy breathing of some passing steamer is the only sound that breaks the stillness of the night, and the watchman smokes his lonely pipe on the bulwark, that the Farm has a mood and an atmosphere all its own, full of poetry, which some day a painter's brush will catch and hold.

Into the ugliest tenement street Christmas brings something of picturesqueness as of cheer. Its message was ever to the poor and the heavy-laden, and by them it is understood

with an instinctive yearning to do it honor. In the stiff dignity of the brownstone streets up-town there may be scarce a hint of it. In the homes of the poor it blossoms on stoop and fire-escape, looks out of the front window, and makes the unsightly barber-pole to sprout overnight like an Aaron's rod. Poor indeed is the home that has not its sign of peace over the hearth, be it but a single sprig of green. A little color creeps with it even into rabbinical Hester street, and shows in the shop-windows and in the children's faces.

The very feather-dusters in the peddler's stock take on brighter hues for the occasion, and the big knives in the cutler's shop gleam with a lively anticipation of the impending goose «with fixin's»—a concession, perhaps, to the commercial rather than the religious holiday. Business comes then, if ever. A crowd of ragamuffins camp out at a window where Santa Claus and his wife stand in state, embodiment of the domestic ideal that has not yet gone out of fashion in these tenements, gazing hungrily at the announce-



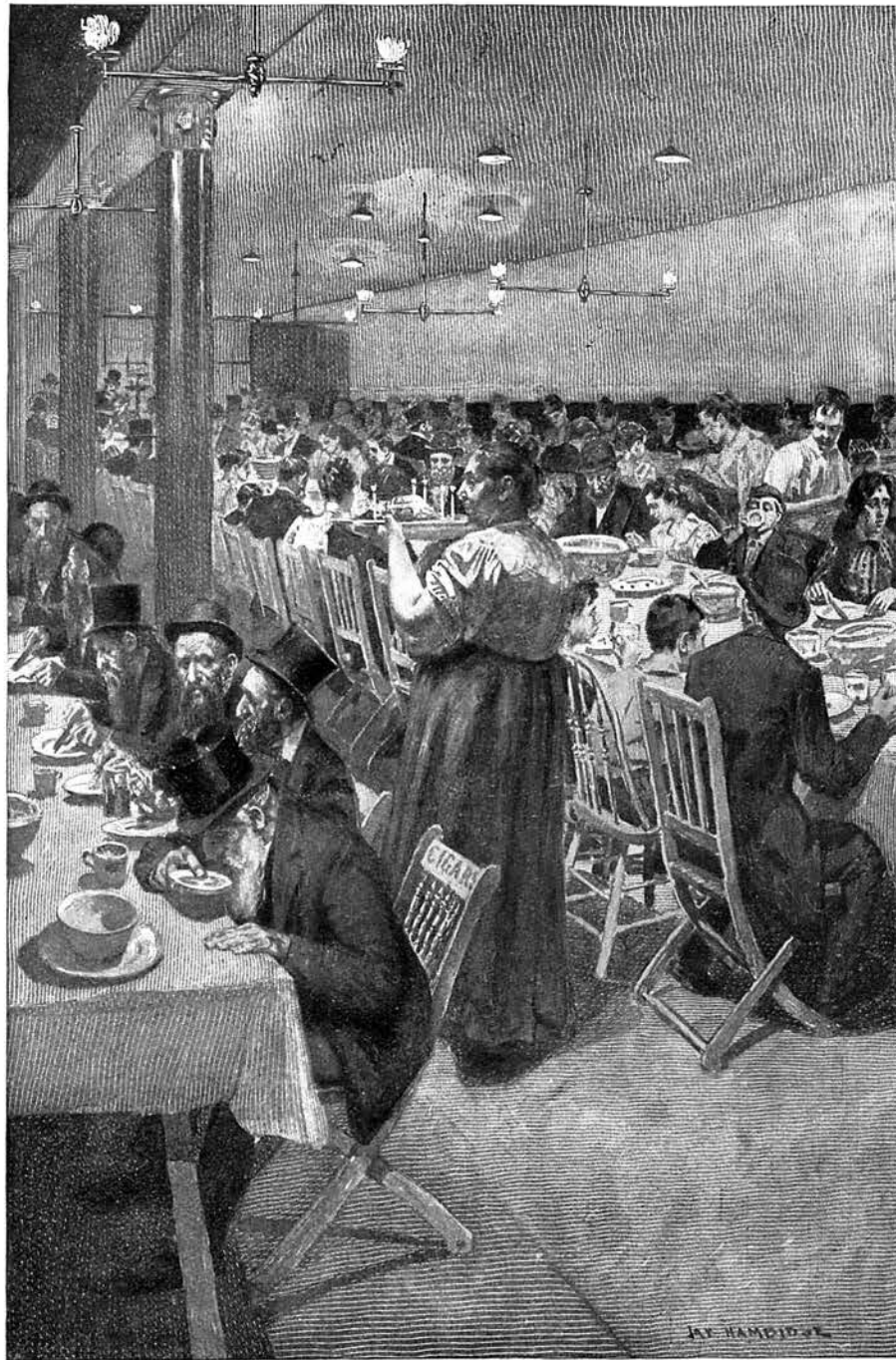
WAITING FOR A PEEP AT A «REAL SANTA CLAUS.»

ment that «A silver present will be given to every purchaser by a real Santa Claus.—M. Levitsky.» Across the way, in a hole in the wall, two cobblers are pegging away under an oozy lamp that makes a yellow splurge on the inky blackness about them, revealing to the passer-by their bearded faces, but nothing of the environment save a single sprig of holly suspended from the lamp. From what forgotten brake it came with a message of cheer, a thought of wife and children across the sea waiting their summons, God knows. The shop is their house and home. It was once the hall of the tenement; but to save space, enough has been walled in to make room for their bench and bed. The tenants go through the next house. No matter if they are cramped; by and by they will have room. By and by



comes the spring, and with it the steamer. Does not the green branch speak of spring and of hope? The policeman on the beat hears their hammers beat a joyous tattoo past midnight, far into Christmas morning. Who shall say its message has not reached even them in their slum?

Where the noisy trains speed over the iron highway past the second-story windows of Allen street, a cellar-door yawns darkly in the shadow of one of the pillars that half block the narrow sidewalk. A dull gleam behind the cobweb-shrouded window-pane supplements the sign over the door, in Yiddish and English: «Old Brasses.» Four crooked and moldy steps lead to utter darkness, with no friendly voice to guide the hapless customer. Fumbling along the dank wall, he is left to find the door of the shop as best he can. Not a likely place to encounter the fastidious from the Avenue! Yet ladies in furs and silk find this door and the grim old smith within it. Now and then an artist stumbles upon them, and exults exceedingly in his find. Two holiday shoppers are even now haggling with the coppersmith over the price of a pair of curiously wrought brass candlesticks. The old man has turned from the forge, at which he was working, unmindful of his callers roving among the dusty shelves. Standing there, erect and sturdy, in his shiny leather apron, hammer in hand, with the firelight upon his venerable head,



A CHRISTMAS WEDDING AT LIBERTY HALL.

strong arms bared to the elbow, and the square paper cap pushed back from a thoughtful, knotty brow, he stirs strange fancies. One half expects to see him fashioning a gorget or a sword on his anvil. But his is a more peaceful craft. Nothing more warlike is in sight than a row of brass shields, destined for ornament, not for battle. Dark shadows chase each other by the flickering light among copper kettles of ruddy glow, old-fashioned samovars, and massive andirons of tarnished brass. The bargaining goes on. Overhead the nineteenth century speeds by with rattle and

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roar; in here linger the shadows of the centuries long dead. The boy at the anvil listens open-mouthed, clutching the bellows-rope.

In Liberty Hall a Jewish wedding is in progress. Liberty! Strange how the word echoes through these sweaters' tenements, where starvation is at home half the time. It is an all-consuming passion with these people, whose spirit a thousand years of bondage have not availed to daunt. It breaks out in strikes, when to strike is to hunger and die. Not until I stood by a striking cloak-maker whose last cent was gone, with not a crust in the house to feed seven hungry mouths, yet who had voted vehemently in the meeting that day to keep up the strike to the bitter end,—bitter indeed, nor far distant,—and heard him at sunset recite the prayer of his fathers: «Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the world, that thou hast redeemed us as thou didst redeem our fathers, hast delivered us from bondage to liberty, and from servile dependence to redemption!»—not until then did I know what of sacrifice the word might mean, and how utterly we of another day had forgotten. But for once shop and tenement are left behind. Whatever other days may have in store, this is their day of play. The ceremony is over, and they sit at the long tables by squads and tribes. Those who belong together sit together. There is no attempt at pairing off for conversation or mutual entertainment at speechmaking or toasting. The business in hand is to eat, and it is attended to. The bridegroom, at the head of the table, with his shiny silk hat on, sets the example; and the guests emulate it with zeal, the men smoking big, strong cigars between mouthfuls. «Gosh! ain't it fine?» is the grateful comment of one curly-headed youngster, bravely attacking his third plate of chicken-stew. «Fine as silk,» nods his neighbor in knickerbockers. Christmas, for once, means something to them that they can understand. The crowd of hurrying waiters make room for one bearing aloft a small turkey adorned with much tinsel and many paper flowers. It is for the bride, the one thing not to be touched until the next day—one day off from the drudgery of housekeeping; she, too, can keep Christmas.

A group of bearded, dark-browed men sit apart, the rabbi among them. They are the orthodox, who cannot break bread with the rest, for fear, though the food be kosher, the plates have been defiled. They brought their own to the feast, and sit at their own table, stern and justified. Did they but know what

depravity is harbored in the impish mind of the girl yonder, who plans to hang her stocking overnight by the window! There is no fireplace in the tenement. Queer things happen over here, in the strife between the old and the new. The girls of the College Settlement, last summer, felt compelled to explain that the holiday in the country which they offered some of these children was to be spent in an Episcopal clergyman's house, where they had prayers every morning. «Oh,» was the indulgent answer, «they know it is n't true, so it won't hurt them.»

The bell of a neighboring church-tower strikes the vesper hour. A man in working-clothes uncovers his head reverently, and passes on. Through the vista of green bowers formed of the grocer's stock of Christmas trees a passing glimpse of flaring torches in the distant square is caught. They touch with flame the gilt cross towering high above the «White Garden,» as the German residents call Tompkins Square. On the sidewalk the holy-eve fair is in its busiest hour. In the pine-board booths stand rows of staring toy dogs alternately with plaster saints. Red apples and candy are hawked from carts. Peddlers offer colored candles with shrill outcry. A huckster feeding his horse by the curb scatters, unseen, a share for the sparrows. The cross flashes white against the dark sky.

In one of the side-streets near the East River has stood for thirty years a little mission church, called Hope Chapel by its founders, in the brave spirit in which they built it. It has had plenty of use for the spirit since. Of the kind of problems that beset its pastor I caught a glimpse the other day, when, as I entered his room, a rough-looking man went out.

«One of my cares,» said Mr. Devins, looking after him with contracted brow. «He has spent two Christmas days of twenty-three out of jail. He is a burglar, or was. His daughter has brought him round. She is a seamstress. For three months, now, she has been keeping him and the home, working nights. If I could only get him a job! He won't stay honest long without it; but who wants a burglar for a watchman? And how can I recommend him?»

A few doors from the chapel an alley runs into the block. We halted at the mouth of it.

«Come in,» said Mr. Devins, «and wish Blind Jennie a merry Christmas.» We went in, in single file; there was not room for two. As we climbed the creaking stairs of the



rear tenement, a chorus of children's shrill voices burst into song somewhere above.

«This is her class,» said the pastor of Hope Chapel, as he stopped on the landing. «They are all kinds.

laps, or squatting on the floor; in the midst of them, a little old woman with heavily veiled face, and wan, wrinkled hands folded in her lap. The singing ceased as we stepped across the threshold.

«Be welcome,» piped a harsh voice with a singular note of cheerfulness in it. «Whose step is that with you, pastor? I don't know it. He is welcome in Jennie's house, whoever he be. Girls, make him to home.» The girls moved up to make room.

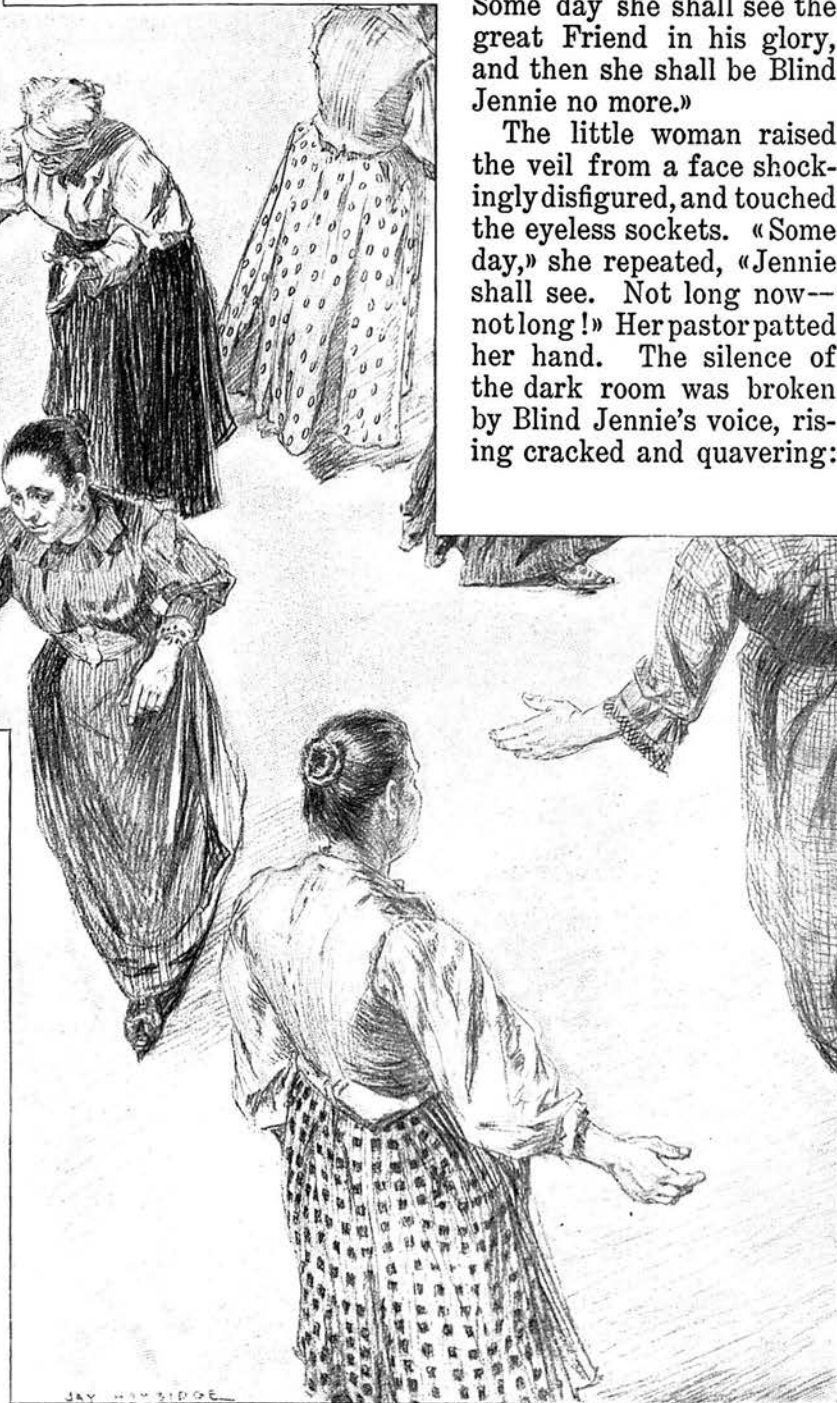
«Jennie has not seen since she was a child,» said the clergyman, gently; «but she knows a friend without it. Some day she shall see the great Friend in his glory, and then she shall be Blind Jennie no more.»

The little woman raised the veil from a face shockingly disfigured, and touched the eyeless sockets. «Some day,» she repeated, «Jennie shall see. Not long now—not long!» Her pastor patted her hand. The silence of the dark room was broken by Blind Jennie's voice, rising cracked and quavering:

THE SCRUBWOMEN'S FESTIVAL.

We never could hope to reach them; Jennie can. They fetch her the papers given out in the Sunday-school, and read to her what is printed under the pictures; and she tells them the story of it. There is nothing Jennie does n't know about the Bible.»

The door opened upon a low-ceiled room, where the evening shades lay deep. The red glow from the kitchen stove discovered a jam of children, young girls mostly, perched on the table, the chairs, in each other's

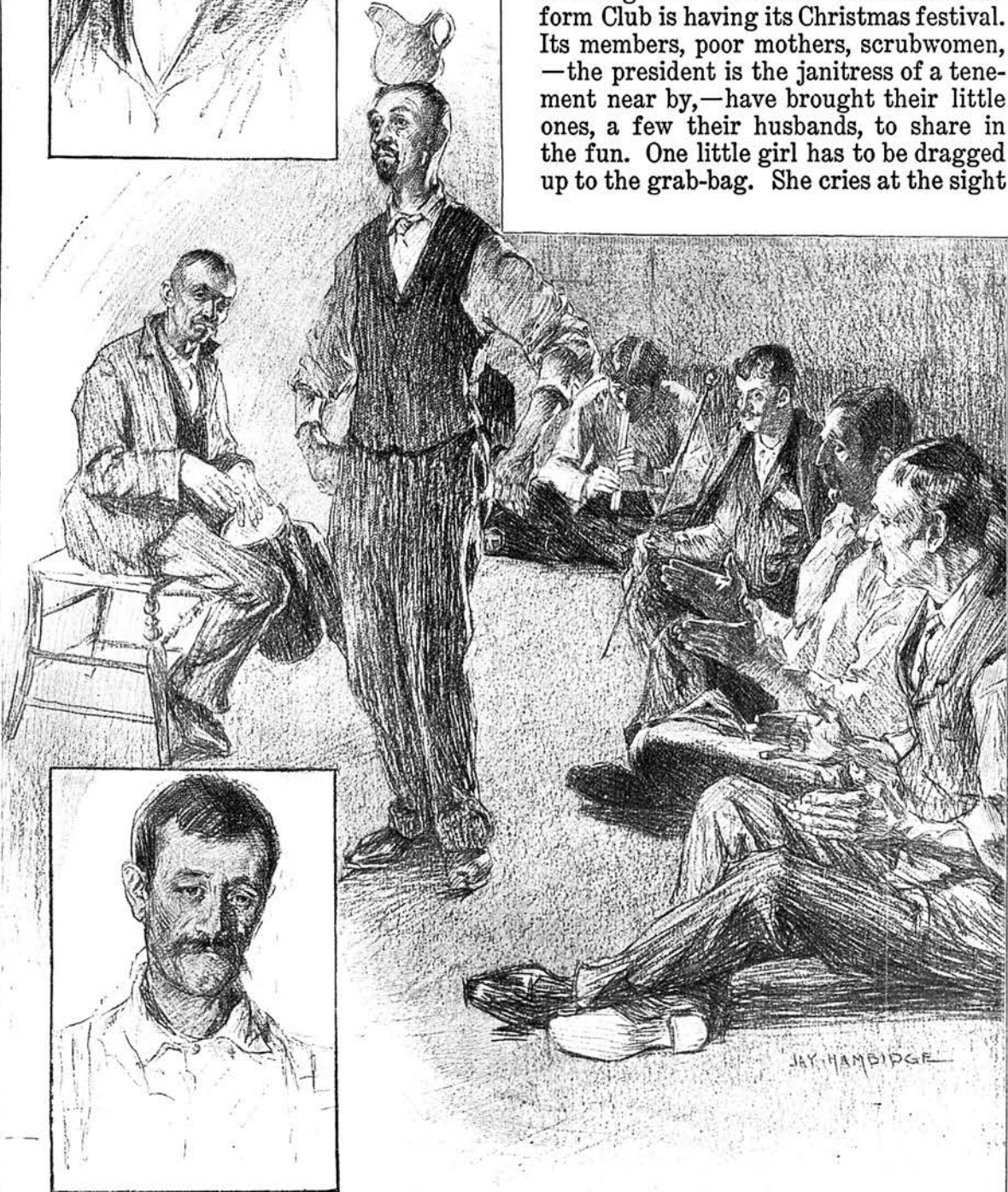




«Alas! and did my Saviour bleed?» The shrill chorus burst in:

It was there by faith I received my sight,  
And now I am happy all the day.

The light that falls from the windows of the Neighborhood Guild, in Delancey street, makes a white path across the asphalt pavement. Within there is mirth and laughter. The Tenth Ward Social Reform Club is having its Christmas festival. Its members, poor mothers, scrubwomen, —the president is the janitress of a tenement near by,—have brought their little ones, a few their husbands, to share in the fun. One little girl has to be dragged up to the grab-bag. She cries at the sight



DANCE OF THE NEW YORK SYRIANS.

of Santa Claus. The baby has drawn a woolly horse. He kisses the toy with a look of ecstatic bliss, and toddles away. At the far end of the hall a game of blindman's-buff is starting up. The aged grand-mother, who has watched it with growing excitement, bids one of the settlement workers hold her grandchild, that she may join in; and she does join in, with all the pent-up hunger of fifty joyless years. The worker, looking on, smiles; one has been reached. Thus is the battle against the slum waged and won with the child's play.

Tramp! tramp! comes to-morrow upon the stage. Two hundred and fifty pairs of little feet, keeping step, are marching to dinner in the Newsboys' Lodging-house. Five hundred pairs more are restlessly awaiting their turn upstairs. In prison, hospital, and almshouse to-night the city is host, and gives of her plenty. Here an unknown friend has spread a generous repast for the waifs who all the rest of the days shift for themselves as best they can. Turkey, coffee, and pie, with «vegetables» to fill in. As the file of eagle-eyed youngsters passes down the long tables, there are swift movements of grimy hands, and shirt-waists bulge, ragged coats sag at the pockets. Hardly is the file seated when the plaint rises: «I ain't got no pie! It got swiped on me.» Seven despoiled ones hold up their hands.

The superintendent laughs—it is Christmas eve. He taps one tentatively on the bulging shirt. «What have you here, my lad?»

«Me pie,» responds he, with an innocent look; «I wuz scart it would get stole.»

A little fellow who has been eying one of the visitors attentively takes his knife out of his mouth, and points it at him with conviction.

«I know you,» he pipes. «You 're a p'lice commissioner. I seen yer picter in the papers. You 're Teddy Roosevelt!»

The clatter of knives and forks ceases suddenly. Seven pies creep stealthily over the edge of the table, and are replaced on as many plates. The visitors laugh. It was a case of mistaken identity.

Farthest down-town, where the island narrows toward the Battery, and warehouses crowd the few remaining tenements, the somber-hued colony of Syrians is astir with preparation for the holiday. How comes it that in the only settlement of the real Christmas people in New York the corner saloon appropriates to itself all the outward signs of it? Even the floral cross that is nailed over the door of the orthodox church is long

withered and dead: it has been there since Easter, and it is yet twelve days to Christmas by the belated reckoning of the Greek Church. But if the houses show no sign of the holiday, within there is nothing lacking. The whole colony is gone a-visiting. There are enough of the unorthodox to set the fashion, and the rest follow the custom of the country. The men go from house to house, laugh, shake hands, and kiss each other on both cheeks, with the salutation, «Every year and you are safe,» as the Syrian guide renders it into English; and a non-professional interpreter amends it: «May you grow happier year by year.» Arrack made from grapes and flavored with aniseed, and candy baked in little white balls like marbles, are served with the indispensable cigarette; for long callers, the pipe.

In a top-floor room of one of the darkest of the dilapidated tenements, the dusty window-panes of which the last glow in the winter sky is tinging faintly with red, a dance is in progress. The guests, most of them fresh from the hillsides of Mount Lebanon, squat about the room. A reed-pipe and a tambourine furnish the music. One has the center of the floor. With a beer-jug filled to the brim on his head, he skips and sways, bending, twisting, kneeling, gesturing, and keeping time, while the men clap their hands. He lies down and turns over, but not a drop is spilled. Another succeeds him, stepping proudly, gracefully, furling and unfurling a handkerchief like a banner. As he sits down, and the beer goes around, one in the corner, who looks like a shepherd fresh from his pasture, strikes up a song—a far-off, lonesome, plaintive lay. «(Far as the hills,» says the guide; «a song of the old days and the old people, now seldom heard.» All together croon the refrain. The host delivers himself of an epic about his love across the seas, with the most agonizing expression, and in a shockingly bad voice. He is the worst singer I ever heard; but his companions greet his effort with approving shouts of «Yi! yi!» They look so fierce, and yet are so childishly happy, that at the thought of their exile and of the dark tenement the question arises, «Why all this joy?» The guide answers it with a look of surprise. «They sing,» he says, «because they are glad they are free. Did you not know?»

The bells in old Trinity chime the midnight hour. From dark hallways men and women pour forth and hasten to the Maronite church. In the loft of the dingy old warehouse wax candles burn before an altar of

brass. The priest, in a white robe with a huge gold cross worked on the back, chants the ritual. The people respond. The women kneel in the aisles, shrouding their heads in their shawls; the surpliced acolyte swings his censer; the heavy perfume of burning incense fills the hall.

The band at the anarchists' ball is tuning up for the last dance. Young and old float to the happy strains, forgetting injustice, oppression, hatred. Children slide upon the

waxed floor, weaving fearlessly in and out between the couples—between fierce, bearded men and short-haired women with crimson-bordered kerchiefs. A Punch-and-Judy show in the corner evokes shouts of laughter.

Outside the snow is falling. It sifts silently into each nook and corner, softens all the hard and ugly lines, and throws the spotless mantle of charity over the blemishes, the shortcomings. Christmas morning will dawn pure and white.



### OUR YULE-TIDE EVERGREENS.



**T**HOUSANDS of busy hands are, year by year, engaged in gathering and arranging the evergreen boughs and blossoms of the winter season; and much good taste is exhibited in their graceful distribution in our homes and places of worship. But a large proportion of those young people who gather and form these treasures of the woods and gardens into beautiful decorations, know nothing of their properties and uses, and the historical interest attached to them. Now, it is both pleasant and profitable to learn something more of the things we so commonly handle than their mere names, form, or colour; and thus, what little additional information I possess in reference to these Christmas greeneries shall be placed at their service.

I have adopted the old name "Yule-tide" because the custom of decorating with evergreen boughs was of ancient date in Britain; and, by a curious coincidence, the season which was made one of rejoicing and festivity on account of the sun's revolution at the "winter's solstice" by our heathen ancestors, was that period when in after years the advent of our blessed Lord was commemorated, and made the time for family reunions, giving of love-tokens, alms, and hospitality.

The name "Christmas," which succeeded "Yule-tide," was derived from the Saxon word *Messe*, a "feast," and so may be rendered "Christ-feast." *Yule* likewise means "a feast," of which term there are several very similar ones, derived from the same primitive root in the Danish and Swedish as well as Saxon and Anglo-Saxon languages. I will not enter further into the question of the meaning and origin of the quaint old name "yule," because in a former article I made some observations thereupon, but pass on to the main subject under consideration.

The shrubs and evergreen trees chiefly in use for the decorations of the above-named festival are the bay, box, cypress, holly, ivy, laurel, laurastina, mistletoe, and yew; and to supplement these, there are winter flowers, such as Christmas roses, monthly roses, crocuses, snowdrops, daisies, bachelor's buttons, dried lavender, together with ferns, furze, parsley leaves, pine cones, &c. I will confine my observations, however, to the few evergreens which are above-named, and within the reach of all.

The Bay-tree (*Laurus nobilis*) is a native of Europe, Asia, and Africa. It is a highly aromatic shrub, and is much esteemed, as most of you know, for culinary purposes, and the decorative trimming of dishes; but, already familiar with the tree and its uses, some of you may like to know something of its classical history. The curious traditions connected with it date back to very early times, long prior to the Christian era, when it was designated the "tree of Apollo." The story was that the heathen deity, Jupiter, was credited with having transformed Daphne into a bay-tree to save her from the pursuit of the former. On this account we learn that peculiar virtues were attributed to it; and, amongst others, it was believed to be a preservative against injury from lightning.

Probably on this account it was that some of the Roman emperors, including Tiberius, selected the bay to form the wreath which they wore round the head, just as they would have worn an amulet. It was also employed

to make those with which poets were crowned, and the successful competitors in some of the ancient games—then as a symbol of victory. The bay was also credited with gifting those who tasted its leaves with prophetic inspirations, and thus the Pythian Priestess used to chew them, because, after a season of abstinence, they produced some degree of excitement. Besides being regarded as a symbol of victory, the withering of the tree was considered of evil omen, and a presage of death. An allusion to this superstition is to be found in one of the plays of Shakespeare, viz.—

"'Tis thought the king is dead. We'll not stay;

The bay-trees in our country are withered."

—Richard II.

The Box-tree (*Buxus*) follows next on my list. There was some traditional virtue or significance attached to it, evidenced in the discovery of the twigs found in some old British barrows in Essex. There are dwarf species as well as forest trees; and in the neighbourhood of Dorking there is some high ground called "Box-hill," which was at one time covered with this valuable tree, most of which was cut down at the beginning of the present century (1815), and sold for £10,000. The grain of the wood is exquisitely fine and close, and is found superior to all others for engraving and wood-carving, the manufacture of musical and mathematical instruments, and chessmen, &c., its delicate, pale yellow colour rendering any use of a dye not only superfluous, but destructive of its beauty. There are splendid forests of this tree both in north-western Russia and Persia; but in this country they now grow singly as a rule; but the dwarf kind (*Buxus sempervirens*), which is a Dutch variety, is much employed as a border for flower-beds, and in carpet-gardening. In country villages you may often observe the quaint shapes into which box-trees are cut, an idea borrowed by our ancestors from the Romans. The latter clipped them into the shapes of gigantic birds and beasts. No blossoms appear on this tree until the month of April; but its small and pointed leaves, somewhat resembling those of the myrtle, contrast well with the broad and brighter leaves of



the laurel. It was a great favourite amongst our forefathers for the decoration of their houses on festal occasions, and it is one of those named by the prophet Isaiah to flourish in the land of Israel, when the waste places shall resume their ancient fruitfulness, and become "the garden of the Lord"; and, again, we are told, "He shall plant in the desert the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box-tree together" (Isaiah lxi. 19), and also in chap. lx. 13, "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee; the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together; to beautify the place of my sanctuary."

The Cypress stands third in alphabetical order, and may be utilised amongst our Christmas decorations. It is true that this peculiar and beautiful tree is much connected with cemetery plantations, owing to its dark and sombre hue; but it is likewise associated with births and weddings from ancient times in the East. When a daughter was born amongst the inhabitants of the Greek archipelago, a grove of cypress trees was planted by the father as her future portion, her fortune augmenting as her years were multiplied. And thus we may trace the origin of the name by which these groves were designated—viz., "daughters' dowers." The tree is one characterised by extreme longevity. Its duration of life is computed at from five to six hundred years, some proportion reaching from eight to nine hundred. But Strabo names one example in Persia which had attained the wonderful age of 2,500 years. They rise to a height of about 120 feet, and measure from twenty-five to forty feet in circumference. One cypress, seen by De Candolle in Mexico, measured as much as 120 feet round at the base, and was considered by him to be older than Adamson's and Humboldt's famous baobab, or baobab tree, of Africa, which tree is the patriarch of living organisations. By calculating its circles the specimen which they especially name was estimated at an age of 5,700 years. The cypress of Montezuma is forty-one feet in circumference, and, grand as it is, it is quite diminutive in comparison with that in Mexico, before-named. It is said that, when the roots of this tree are for six months under water, it is observed to grow to a gigantic size.

The Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) is a special favourite amongst our Christmas greeneries, for it is not only employed on walls, windows, and pillars, but is awarded a place of distinction on the dinner-table, to beautify with its scarlet berries the historical and characteristic "plum pudding," the "standing dish" of the season. There is considerable variety exhibited in the colour of the leaves, some trees producing them of an ivory-white, and some a beautiful and delicate shade of pink, while on others we find them variegated. The most remarkable specimens of this description which I have myself observed were some in the County Carlow. Perhaps the deep shade of the splendid avenue of ancient yew-trees with which these hollies were surrounded may have had some influence in the colouring, at least, of the ivory-white variety.

Perhaps it may be regarded as having a special claim to recognition, not alone for its bright appearance but as one of the limited number of trees indigenous to Great Britain. The name has been erroneously supposed to be a corruption of the word "holy," but it has, however, been dignified in Germany and throughout Scandinavia by the distinctive name of "Christ's Thorn," possibly because of its putting forth its berries at the nominal season of our Saviour's birth, the time-honoured custom of its use in the decoration of churches in commemoration of that event, and as a natural result of many of the ancient traditions connected with it. For instance, according to legendary history, it was the bush in which

God appeared to Moses in a flame of fire; and when the latter turned aside to see why the bush was not burnt, "God called unto him out of the midst of the bush," and told him that the place whereon he stood was "holy ground." There is also another legendary history attached to the holly tree, and that is that the cross on which our Saviour was crucified was made of its wood, on which account it was known as the *Lignum Sanctæ crucis*. But not alone since the Christian era has it been held in such esteem; for in Eastern nations, as well as in the West, and dating back to early heathen times, it was valued, not merely for its beauty, but for some fancied medicinal virtues, and as possessing some characteristics connected with the supernatural. It was dedicated to Saturn by the ancient Romans, whose feast, held in his honour, was observed at the same period of the year as the Christian festival, and commemorated, among other ways, by the sending of sprigs between friends and relatives, accompanied by good wishes, just as we send pictorial cards and kindly greetings. The flowers of the holly were regarded, according to Pliny, as an antidote to poison, and a decoction produced from the leaves was supposed to convey the gift of wisdom by the Persians, for which reason they sprinkled their children with it. Our own Druids, pitying the sylvan sprites when, during the season of frost and snow, there was no shelter provided for them by the leafless branches of the oak, used to garnish the walls of private dwellings with branches of holly, in which they could find a place of refuge suited to their taste.

I now pass on to the Ivy (*Hedera helix*), which is seen in perfection at this season, the blossoms being amongst the very few that gladden the eye in winter. There are various kinds of ivy, some being of a reddish purple, resembling the colour of the Virginia creeper; others of an ivory-white, and others variegated, having irregular markings and streaks of green and white; and perhaps no other plant can show so great a variety in the formation of the leaves and in their respective dimensions. What is known as "Irish ivy" was imported from the Canary Islands as a covering for an old wall or a border for a flower-bed; and even as an evergreen substitute for flowers in the same, as well as to serve as a climber over a wire trellis on a house, or an archway over a garden walk, it is of much beauty and value. It is also suitable as hanging greenery from a garden vase or a basket suspended in a room.

But it clings with only too "cruel kindness" to a tree, and absorbs much of the nourishment which should go to it from the soil, depriving it of air, light, and sunshine, and strangling it in its deadly grasp. Never allow it to grow as a parasite on any tree, and wherever found so doing, saw the stem through at the base, that it may wither, and release its hold, and then pull up the root, for it will kill whatever it entwines. Ivy will live to a stupendous age, ranging from five to six hundred years. As a decoration for the pillars of a church it could not be surpassed in suitability and elegance; and as regards any symbolic significance it is one of the emblems of eternal life. In reference to its classical history and ancient associations, it was dedicated by the Egyptians to Osiris, and by the Greeks and Romans to Bacchus, or the god of wine, who was represented as crowned with ivy, as it was supposed by the ancients to neutralise the intoxicating influence of any excess in wine-drinking.

But this graceful evergreen had a second symbolic significance in the old-world times, derived from the tenacity with which it clings to whatever it once entwines. On this account it was presented by the heathen priests to persons newly married, to represent the "Gordian knot," by which they were bound one to the other. Hence the motto, "We flourish

or fall together." Ivy was presented in the form of wreaths and garlands to the victors at the Isthmian games, afterwards superseded by pine-branch garlands. It bears round clusters of dark purple berries, which succeed the blossoms, in the depth of the winter season.

The Laurel, one of the most beautiful of our winter evergreens, was famous in classic times, and in the Christian art of the middle ages. It was introduced into Europe from the East in 1679. The name is derived from the Celtic *blaur*, pronounced "lor," and signifying "green." The plant is of the genus *Laurus nobilis*, or bay tree, of which there are many species, and all valuable, including the camphor, cinnamon, bay (before-named), and sassafras. A considerable difference in character is shown in the tree called the American laurel, a shrub of the genus *Kalmia*. Other kinds are known as the cherry laurel, or *Prunus laurocerasus*; and also the great laurel, or *Rhododendron maximum*. No plant has a finer glaze on its beautiful pointed broad leaves. Early in the year they turn to a fine yellow hue, and fall off; but they are completely replaced by the middle of April. The blossoms are small and white, growing in clusters. As to its classical associations, it was famous amongst plants. In the Pythian games the victors were rewarded by wreaths of laurels, while those in the Olympic were formed of green parsley. It was supposed to possess extraordinary virtues, endowing those who slept under its branches with poetical inspirations, and likewise to be a safeguard against the power of lightning, as it could never be struck by it. I have myself seen the group of laurels around the tomb of Virgil at Baia, near Naples, who died there on his way to Greece, and these laurels are the successors of those parent trees which were planted there by Petrarch.

The *Laurestinus*, or *Viburnum tinus*, was known to the ancients as the *Tinus*, the leaves of which, as you know, are smaller, darker, and less glazed than those of the laurel. It is not a native of this country, but was introduced here at about the time of Bacon, having been introduced into Europe from the East in 1596. It is now common everywhere; but in the south of Europe it even forms extensive hedges. Its berries are of a dark purple colour, and the tiny blossoms grow in large clusters, presenting a flat, even surface of a pinkish-white tint. I am not aware that the *Laurestinus* has any classical associations, and only name it as an admirable addition to the greeneries which the winter season affords.

Next in order on our list of evergreens is the Mistletoe.

This curious plant, which owes its existence and borrows its nutriment from another, and not direct from the soil, is a parasite of the oak, crab-apple, pear, locust, and lime-trees, that on the oak being the rarest kind. In Anglo-Saxon it was called *Mistelthâ*. A popular song, well known by many of our readers, bears the name of "The Mistletoe Bough," and the unfortunate young bride, who constitutes the heroine of a very tragic history, has been multiplied, like William Tell, and claimed by more than one distinguished family, but, I have reason to believe, was one of the Copes of Bramshill, although the catastrophe took place during a residence of her family in Italy. With reference to the mistletoe, I must remind you that the Druids selected it to do honour to their great festival in the winter solstice. They called it "All-Heal," and, according to some accounts, they used to cut it from the trees with their brazen celts, or upright hatchets, fastened to the ends of their staves; but, according to others, it was cut by the chief of the Druids with a golden sickle, kept for that purpose only. These branches were carried by them in procession, and laid upon their altars. (See Stukeley's

account—"Medallic History of Carausius.") It is said that the medicinal properties of this curious and beautiful plant were universally believed in, and that wonderful cures were effected by its use in cases of epilepsy and various other disorders of a like character. In the year 1729 a treatise was published on its virtues as a medicine by Sir John Colbach; and, more especially in reference to its use in epilepsy, another appeared in 1806 by a Dr. Fraser. The genuine plant is the *Viscum album* of botany; but there is one very nearly allied to it—the *Loranthus Europæus*—which may often be found on the oak, as on the

other trees named. This species is to be found near Vienna, in the garden of Schoenbrunn, but does not appear in a more westerly direction. It has been thought that this, and not the *Viscum album*, was the sacred mistletoe of the Druids. A description of bird-lime is made from its fruit.

The use and veneration of the mistletoe was peculiar to the Celts and Goths, who alike introduced it into their religious rites as the sun approached the winter solstice. It forms the solitary exception amongst our evergreens in reference to the decoration of churches, and is, by common consent, altogether con-

signed to our private homes. The poet Gay, in his "Trivia," names it amongst the other greeneries set up in our churches; but he did so through some oversight, for the plant so peculiarly connected with ancient heathen worship in this country, having been, by a mistake of a country sexton, brought into a Christian place of worship, it was expelled on account of its heathen associations, which rendered its use inappropriate.

The last evergreen respecting which my space will permit me to speak, is the Yew, or *Taxus baccata*. Emblematic as it is of death, it is also recognised as one of immortality. In olden

times the wood was especially valuable as the best for the manufacture of bows and cross-bows, and those of you who are well-informed in English history may remember that with the bows of yew the battles of Cressy and Poitiers were won; the best in use for modern archery, and a variety of articles, such as arm-chairs, are likewise manufactured from it. The trunks of these venerable-looking trees resemble a number of rods bound together, looking like "fluted" pillars. I have seen an *avenue* of such at Fenagh, co. Carlow, which presented the appearance of a dim cathedral aisle. The yew is famous for its great longevity. One found in a bog had 545 rings, each marking an annual growth, although the diameter measured only 18 inches—100 rings to an inch. Those at Fountain's Abbey are about 1,200 years old; one at Crowhurst of 1,500; at Fortingal, another upwards of 2,000; and at Brabourne, in Kent, and at Hedson, Buckinghamshire, there are patriarchs of from 2,500 to 3,000 years of age, being the oldest specimens of still living vegetation existing. Yew trees seem to have been favourites with our forefathers. We see them not only in churchyards, but in the little gardens in front of country cottages and farm-houses, very usually clipped into grotesque forms like box-trees. They were also much employed for garden hedges, of which a very remarkable specimen is to be seen at Battle Abbey, in Sussex. They are also much employed in the same way in Holland.

I will not now speak of the gorse, ferns, and other evergreens that also help to deck our homes at this great season of family reunions; my notes, composed of facts and fables, are concluded; but I must raise your thoughts to higher considerations: the unfading blooms and eternal reunions, where He is Lord of the feast, whose birth, as the "Son of Man," we feebly commemorate here.

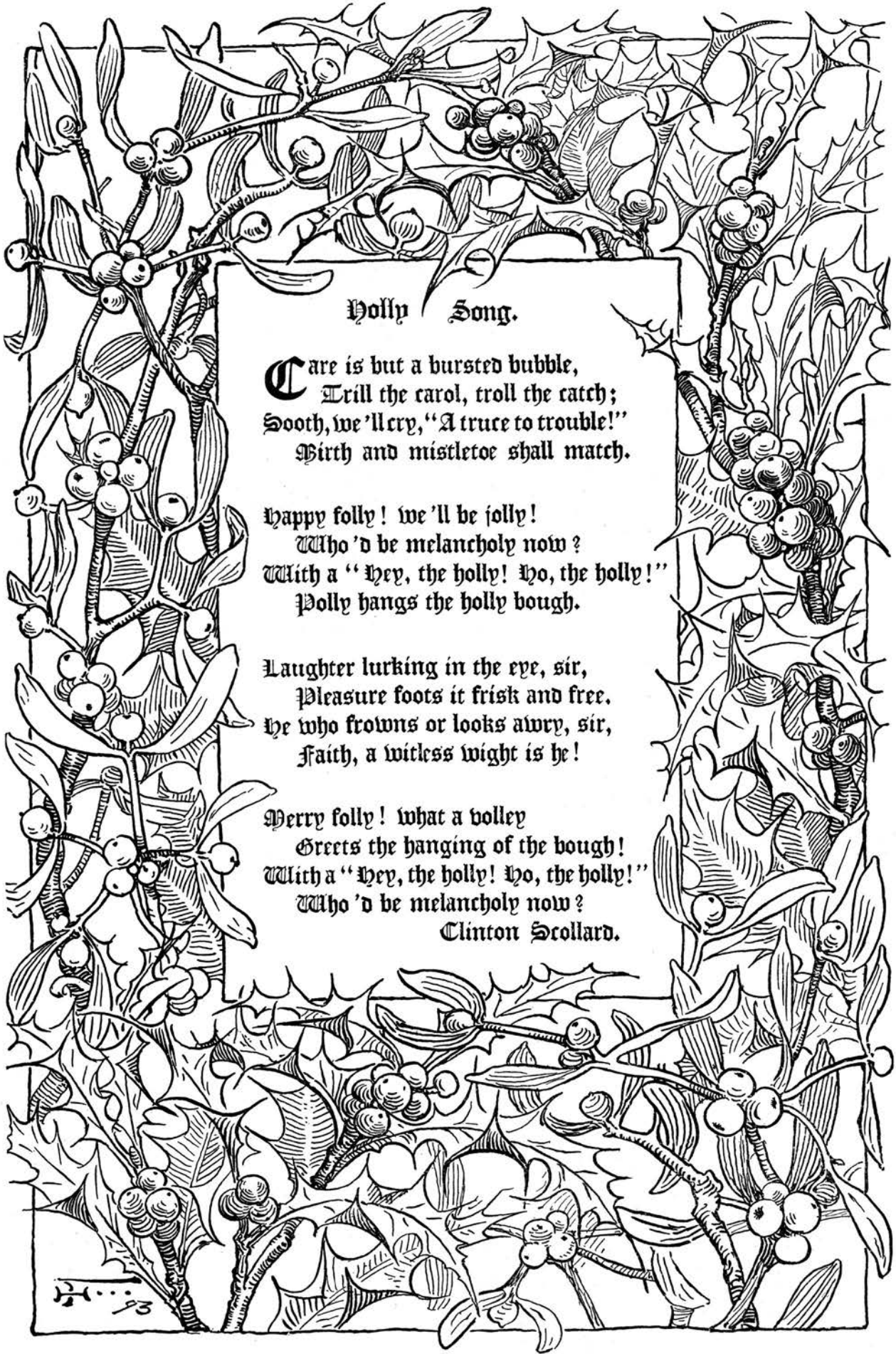
The evergreen plants, which ancient custom has connected with that wondrous event, may typify in your mind the never-fading "Tree of Life," in the paradise of God. The incomprehensible "ages of ages" are spoken of, in connection with it, as if divided by months and years; but only to convey to your minds the idea that through the long course of that blissful existence will be granted successively new delights. Nor is this all. For the sick and suffering what is the feast? to the blind, the loveliest garden? But with the ever-varying joys will be granted the power of enjoyment, for "Then shall the blind see out of obscurity; the lame man shall leap as a hart; and the tongue of the dumb shall sing," for "the leaves" of that tree are "for the healing of the nations."

S. F. A. CAULFIELD.



THE STORY OF THE EVERGREENS.





Holly Song.

Care is but a bursted bubble,  
Troll the carol, troll the catch;  
Sooth, we'll cry, "A truce to trouble!"  
Birch and mistletoe shall match.

Happy folly! we'll be jolly!  
Who'd be melancholy now?  
With a "Hey, the holly! Ho, the holly!"  
Dolly hangs the holly bough.

Laughter lurking in the eye, sir,  
Pleasure foots it frisk and free.  
He who frowns or looks awry, sir,  
Faith, a witless wight is he!

Merry folly! what a volley  
Greet's the hanging of the bough!  
With a "Hey, the holly! Ho, the holly!"  
Who'd be melancholy now?  
Clinton Scollard.

# The Humour of Christmas.

BY JAMES WALTER SMITH.



MAMMA: "To-morrow's Christmas Day, Effie, dear, and you will go to church for the first time." (Encouragingly): "There will be beautiful music—"  
Effie: "Oh, mummy, dear, may I dance?"  
DRAWN BY PHIL MAY. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE PROPRIETORS OF "PUNCH."

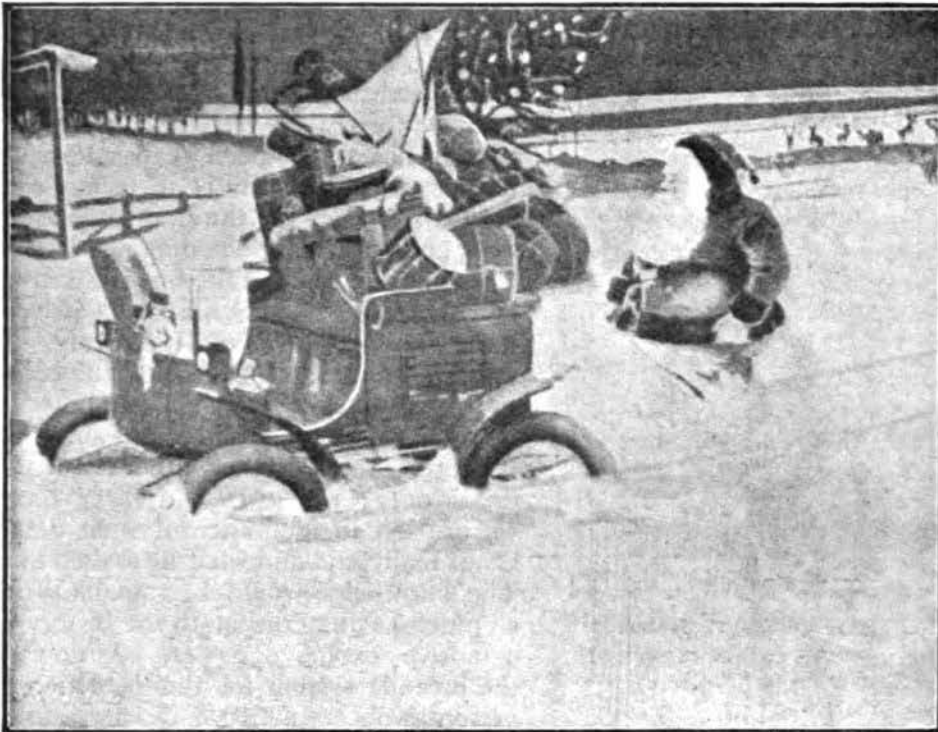


WHEN Effie's mother told her that to-morrow would be Christmas Day, and that Effie was going to church for the first time, where she would hear beautiful music, the little girl cried out, "Oh, mummy, dear, may I dance?" The point of view of Effie is the point of view of untold thousands. We older ones, burdened with the knowledge acquired by years of Christmases, know that Christmas is a religious festival significant with beauty, and some of us are prone to lament, as the Puritans so strenuously lamented, that the fundamental note of the Christmas season seems to be lost. Yet it is not for us to say that the child's point of view is not correct. It makes for happiness, and to be happy in the happiness of others should be the aim of all at Christmas-tide.

The arrival of Santa Claus is so eagerly watched for that we have often wondered why he has never been seen. Possibly because the dustman is in league with Santa, and gets in the way of curious boys and girls. Little Montague, who on Christmas morning told his father that he was awake when Santa Claus arrived, came very near to actual discovery. It was so dark that little Montague could not see Santa, "but when he bumped himself on the wash-stand he said—" "There," replied the father; "that'll do, Monty; run away and play"—and we are left in ignorance of what Santa Claus really said and what he looked like. The knowledge would be valuable—not so much as an addition to the history of explosive expletive as an addition to the juvenile system for the detection of patron saints.



LITTLE MONTAGUE: "I was awake when Santa Claus came, dad."  
Father: "Were you? And what was he like, eh?"  
Little Montague: "Oh, I couldn't see him; it was dark, you know. But when he bumped himself on the wash-stand he said—"  
Father (hastily): "There, that'll do, Monty. Run away and play."  
DRAWN BY C. E. BROCK. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE PROPRIETORS OF "PUNCH."



STUCK FAST.—DRAWN BY ARTHUR F. MERRICK FOR "LIFE."

attempt at personification. On one such occasion Santa appeared in the room where daddy was making up with a shaving-brush and a hand-mirror. "Great Scot!" cried Santa, "is that me?" and we may imagine that he rapidly departed from the scene with some horror at the recollection of a real monstrosity.

Some justification, however, should be expressed on the paternal behalf, for if no one

That Santa Claus should be so intolerably long in arriving at his destination is not to be wondered at when we remember the difficulties in the way of his progress put there by progress itself. Our merry saint has to keep up with the times, and the most accurate knowledge that we possess of his doings tells us that the reindeer which he used to drive so recklessly over the housetops are now possessions of the past, and that Santa to-day rides *en automobile* through the drifting snows. He runs the risks taken by others who fare forth in winter. He may get locked up in the drifts or he may have a total breakdown, so common to beginners in the new and ever-increasing method of locomotion, but the perils in his path are as nothing.

A traveller such as he is always prepared for shocks. Often when for some reason or other his arrival has been given up as hopeless, and daddy has undertaken, in response to a pressing and unanimous request, to figure as Santa Claus, the unexpected appearance of the saint upon the scene throws things into confusion. Santa himself might well be astonished at such a moment to look upon the results of daddy's



PAPA MAKES UP.—Shade of Father Christmas: "Great Scot! Is that supposed to be me?"

DRAWN BY TOM BROWNE FOR "THE KING."



SANTA CLAUS VISITS THE FREAK MUSEUM.—DRAWN BY C. J. TAYLOR FOR "PUCK."

haired doll that moves its eyes. If by any chance the old fellow were to find himself in a museum devoted to freaks, as one of our artists pictures him, he would be equal to the emergency. Santa Claus possesses the discriminative power to please the diverse tastes of such abnormal people.

Once upon a time Santa had experience with a selfish boy who, thinking to get the better of his brothers and sisters, climbed to the roof and there hung, at the top of the chimney, his empty stocking attached to a broom. Expectantly he went

has ever seen Santa Claus how can anyone tell the way he should be dressed? Although the saint brings with him gifts enough to fill every reasonable want, and would hardly feel at a loss were a hundred thousand stockings hanging before him when he entered the chimney of a well-regulated house, he is compelled to exercise some discretion in the act of distribution. His insight into the consciences of the young tells him unerringly where to place his gifts. Never will a box of paints be found in the stocking of the little fellow who has longed for a box of bricks, and tin soldiers never occupy the place intended for a flaxen-

to sleep, and in the night the Frost King came, covering the cities and the villages with white and leaving behind a world of trackless snow. When Santa, in his sledge and furs, drew towards the home of the selfish one, he found the stocking filled with ice and snow and the house barred by wintry rigour against



COLD STUFFING.—Little Gussie Greedy hangs his stocking outside the chimney so that he can be sure to get it filled, but is not entirely satisfied with the result.

DRAWN BY F. BEARD FOR "JUDGE."

his approach. Departing as quickly as he came, he rode for miles and miles towards the city of the Rising Sun, and when the morning came a wet and empty stocking was found at the top of the chimney by the little boy who had placed it there. No message had been left, but there remained a lesson in the heart of the little one, for good or ill.

Would we could always be as successful in interpreting the morals taught by artists! From them we get so many pictures of the humorous side of Christmas and its festivities that we tend to

forget the sorrow. Where there exists a Christmas tree and a purse to buy its candles and pendent ornaments, there will pleasure reign, but there yet remain some lives into which a real Christmas rarely comes, try as we may in philanthropic mood to give it them. The little waif in the slums who got nothing for the holidays but two punishments, and "didn't hang up no stockin' for them neither," is a typical figure in a class that is always with us. To relieve distress thus humorously emphasized is, happily, a common work at such a season.

The best-laid plans of philanthropy, however, stop short in many cases where they would do most good. Says little Milly, in one of our pictures, "Don't yer think if she hung up her stockings Santa Claus might give her a pair of legs to put in 'em?" the remark being directed against a waif, with spindle legs, carrying a heavy basket along a

snow-covered pavement. How wise it would be if we, in our Christmas philanthropy, were to fill the stockings of the poor with fatter limbs instead of presents! The Christmas feeling that we have no right to our own turkey if we have not filled the larder of the poor is a feeling beautiful in itself. More effective would it be were we to do it daily, and not soothe ourselves with the balm that Christmas comes but once a year.

That the festival does come but once a year is looked upon by some as a blessing.

Consider, for instance, the poor father who, in a benevolent mood, undertakes to act the part of Santa Claus at the Christmas-tree festivities. Father thinks, in his innocent way, that it would be no end of a lark to dress up and please the little children, but we have known many cases where father has pleased the children to the point of terror by his



"Did you get anything for the holidays, Billy?"  
 "Yes; dad give me two lickin's, and I didn't hang up no stockin' for them neither."  
 DRAWN BY M. WOOLF FOR "LIFE."



PERSONAL.—Milly: "Don't yer think if she hung up her stockings Santa Claus might give her a pair of legs to put in 'em?"  
 DRAWN BY M. WOOLF FOR "LIFE."



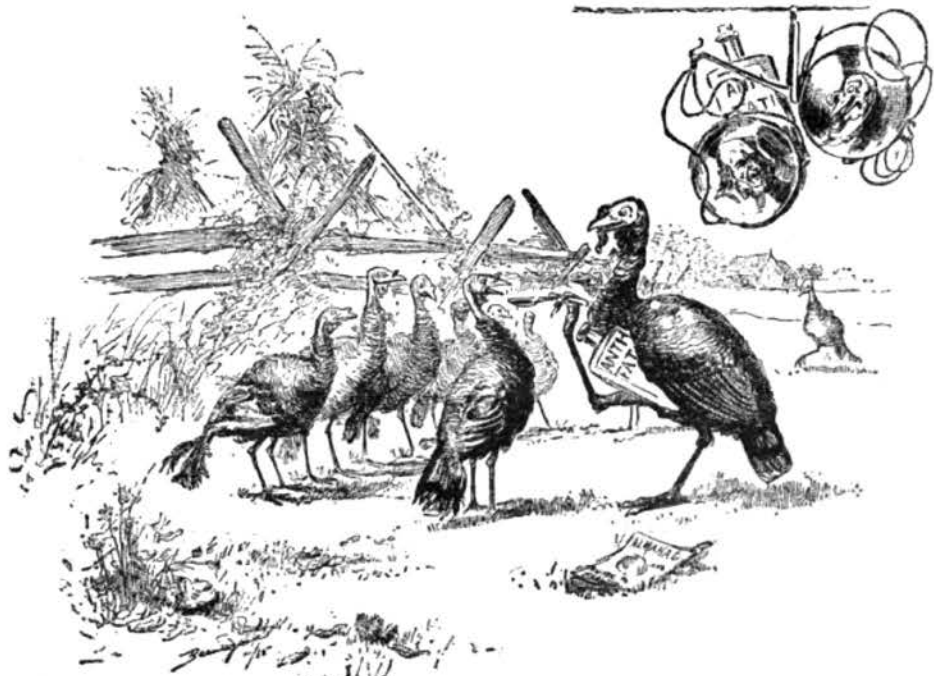
There has been an interesting event in Bagly's household, of which Johnny has been kept in ignorance. Johnny: "Put this on the tree, too, Pop. I found it in mummy's room. She's asleep."  
DRAWN BY J. A. SMITH FOR "PUCK."

As for the good, fat turkey which forms the staple of our Christmas feast, there is little to be said that has not already been told. There yet remains a chance for someone to sing his praises as Lamb sang the praises of the pig, and as the writers of the olden time lauded the virtues of the boar's head. One old writer, dealing with pre-Christmas preparations,

extraordinary rig. Again, it is no small job to do Santa's work thoroughly, and to come out of a chimney just like the real thing is a feat of grace quite impossible to the well-fed British parent of mature years. At such times as these accidents are bound to happen, for the curiosity of the family to know just what father is doing is a known quantity, certain to be expressed in the little equation of holiday life. One of our humorists tells us how the Christmas tree was in preparation in the home of one Bagly just after a certain interesting event had taken place. Johnny, who had been kept in ignorance, suddenly appeared in the room with a parcel in his arms. "Put this on the tree, too, Pop," cried Johnny; "I found it in mummy's room. She's asleep." We have nothing more to add, except that this harassing scene is immortalized on the present page.

has barbarously written: "Now capons and hens, beside turkeys, geese, and ducks, with beef and mutton, must all die, for in twelve days a multitude of people will not be fed with a little. Now plums and spice, sugar and honey, square it among pies and broth. Now or never must music be in tune, for the youth must dance and sing to get them a-heat, while the aged sit by the fire."

What the turkey thought of these prepara-



THE MARCH OF SCIENCE.—Result of over-education in animals.  
DRAWN FOR "LIFE."

tions, or thinks of them to-day, would be fit subject for an ornithologist to consider. Does the sumptuous bird have a foreboding of his fate? Can it be that he knows the real reason of his being — that the kindly care bestowed upon him by the farmer in the month of November tricks him not? As the old poets say, we trow not. Foolish he may be, but the turkey is too old a bird — as he



Mr. Charles O Connor: "Golly, wot's der matter wid yer, Jakey?"  
Mr. Jacob McFinnigan: "Turkey."  
DRAWN BY "CHIP" FOR "LIFE."

if we look back upon our childhood days, there is not one of us who will fail to understand the condition of Mr. Jacob McFinnigan, the small and swelling youth shown here. Sermons might be written on this subject.

The end of all is the pudding. It comes upon the table smoking hot and leaves behind it memories of a happy day. It goes by parcel post to English families throughout the

world, and does more good than Christmas cards. It is a staple commodity upon which the household can fall back at any time, and can be used to induce manual labour in tramps, with indifferent result.

We are indebted to Messrs. James Henderson for permission to reproduce the drawings from *Puck*, *Judge*, and *Life* which we have selected from *Pictorial Comedy*.



MISPLACED GENEROSITY.

Mrs. Gamp (to tramp): "If you saw up that wood for me I will give you this Christmas pudding."

sometimes proves himself to be — not to understand the object of his existence, and he bears it almost bravely when doomsday comes. The day has yet to arrive — although the humorist has anticipated it — when turkeys will gather in a farmyard to discuss the virtues of anti-fat.

On one of the turkey's virtues all can to-day unite to praise. It is a filling bird. And,



Tramp (a few minutes later): "Beg parding, mum, but if it makes no difference to you I would rather saw up the pudding and eat the wood."  
DRAWN BY TOM BROWNE FOR "THE KING."



## CHRISTMAS IN THE NORTH.

**N**ORWAY is the home of some very pretty and interesting Christmas customs. They will, for the most part, be also found in Sweden and Denmark, as they are of Scandinavian origin. The old Norse Christmas was known as Jul (pronounced Yule), derived from one of the epithets (Jolner) of the Scandinavian deity Odin; and so they obtained Jul from Jolner as the Romans got Saturnalia from Saturn. Yule fell late in the year, and when our hallowed festival

came to be celebrated in northern lands, the one merged into the other. On the introduction of Christianity into Norway, the Christmas festivities were regarded as heathenish. The yule feasts were not only prohibited, but those who gave them were punished with death or mutilation by order of King Olaf the Saint. How changed are the times! Long before the advent of Yule nowadays, great preparations are made for the due observance of the fête. The yule-cake (bakkelse) is made; the venison is hung, the pigs and fatted calves are killed, the small game is collected, and a good supply of fish laid in. Large quantities of wood are brought from the forests, and the logs are piled up by the fireside, all in readiness. As the day approaches, the invitations are sent out, and the final touches are given to the arrangements at the house, bright fresh leaves being spread over the floors of the principal rooms. On the morn of the appointed day, the invited are spirited away in light and elegant sledges to the happy abode, whilst the church bells ring out the sweet music of peace and good-will to mankind. Most of the Norwegians attend the early service at the parish church, and it is on this occasion that they carry offerings to their minister. Having thus recognized the festival as members of the Christian Church, they return to their homes to honor it after the manner of their forefathers. Their tables are heavily laden, and there is much eating and drinking, the repast opening with the standard dish of fish. Afterwards the Christmas songs of the country are sung, stories are told, and the fairy lore of the country, proverbially rich, is largely drawn upon for the amusement of the little folks—not always exclusively. They tell how the Trolls make their appearance on Yule night, and invite the young men to feast with them in their sylphid homes amongst the hills. Norway, too, has the Christmas-tree; the poorest peasant in the country, as well as the richest proprietor, does not fail to light up the toy-bearing fir-tree for the gratification of his children. Card-playing is another of their Yuletide amusements. The favorite dances are a kind of valse and an exciting gallopade. They dance to the fiddle, and the fiddler is invariably a cobbler.

We have yet to notice the prettiest of the Norse Yule customs—that of giving the fowls of the air

a feast on Christmas Day. For the sparrows and other small birds sheaves of wheat, oats, or barley are stuck upon long poles and put out on gables of houses, barn-doors, out-buildings, gateways, and other places where the feathered tribe love to congregate. They are said to know when Christmas is drawing nigh, for you may now observe hundreds of birds flocking round the snow-covered houses, while at other times they are scarcely visible.

The Christmas of Sweden is very similar to the Christmas of Norway. The custom of dining the smaller birds is also popular amongst the Swedes; so attached, indeed, are the people to it that the man who forgets the fowls of the air at this season is sure to lose his character for benevolence. It is, besides, the practice to give the cattle a double feed on Christmas Eve. "Eat well, my good beasts, and thrive," say the farm-laborers, "for this is Jul-afton." The church bell announces the birth of the day almost as soon as the eve has passed away; and at a very early hour people may be seen by hundreds in the streets of the towns, lighted on their way by lanterns. They are going to church. It is an extraordinary sight, and what makes it more so is the vast number of children seen in the throng. They are being taken to the Jul-Otta—the Christmas day-break (song)—there being a tradition amongst the Swedes that if the children attend this early service they will very easily learn to read. This is followed by the "race home." It forms part of the rustic creed, that the bread-winner who arrives first at his house from the Jul-Otta will be the first to get in his next harvest, or, if a bachelor, the first to obtain a wife. The rest of Christmas Day is spent by the Swedes in a quiet and pious manner. St. Stephen's (Dec. 26) is given up to family visiting; it is a more open holiday, differing from Christmas Eve, inasmuch as people go out and about; and differing from Christmas Day, inasmuch as there is a considerable amount of sledging, eating and drinking, and making merry. Between this time and New Year's Day, the young people divert themselves by "getting married"—à la Suède, of course; and those already "sacrificed," or those who don't care about going to the altar, solace themselves in a round of other pleasures.

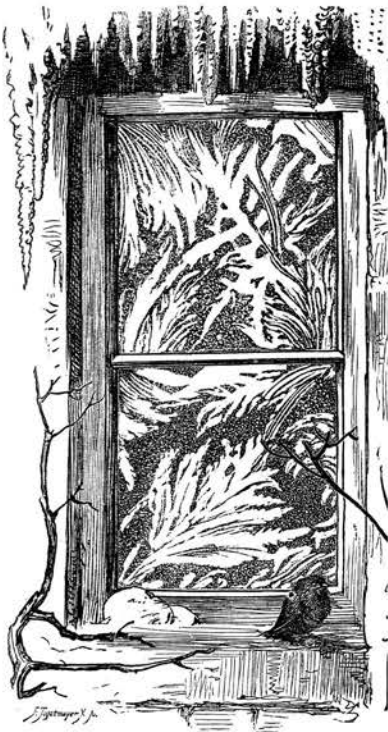
Ask any Dane which he regards as the great national holiday of

his country, and he will unhesitatingly inform you that it is Christmas Day. Being a sober-minded individual, the Dane, like most of his Northern kindred, spends his Yule by the fireside, and binds a little more closely together his domestic relationship. The eating of grod and the singing of hymns around the Christmas-tree belong to the Eve; church-going, alms giving, card-playing, story-telling form the lighter amusements of Christmas Day; dinner, the heavier. The *pièce de résistance* is the plum-pudding, to which the fair children and blue-eyed maidens of Denmark do ample justice. At the conclusion of the dinner, emphasis is given to an interesting ceremony. The children say to the head of the table, "Thank you for my dinner," and the company, on rising, ladies and gentlemen alike, shake hands all round, saying, at the same time, "Good may it do you!" Then follow the drawing-room entertainments, the finale being a Danish Christmas song in which everybody present takes part.

The characteristics of the Russian social Christmas, which we have only space to notice briefly, are these. In the country districts a good stock of salted meats, sausages, and kirsch is laid in during the six weeks which precede Christmas (O. S.), and at an early date it is arranged amongst friends and relatives at whose house the festival shall be celebrated. In due time the hostess goes round and invites the company in an old-fashioned but complimentary set speech, followed the next day by the nurse, who invites the young ladies. Subsequently the host himself asks the guests, generally by deputy, "to witness the sports of the fair maidens, to break with them a bit of bread, taste a grain of salt, and partake of the roasted goose." At the time named the guests arrive in sledges, the young ladies and gentlemen first. All is bustle now in the house and neighborhood. One of the first proceedings is the introduction of the young people, for this is the "mating season," over which the hostess presides. So soon as the elder visitors have been received, a lady is chosen to conduct the ceremonies. We need scarcely add that this lady is sure to be the fairest of the matrons. Then are served the refreshments, which comprise many things besides sausages, salted meats, and kirsch; indeed, delicacies of the rarest kinds, and liqueurs of the choicest "brands"



are offered to the company. The health of the host, hostess, and their family is now ceremoniously drunk, and the entertainments of the evening commence. Mimmers are called in, the national dances are performed, and the company is further amused by the happy allusions of the improvisatore. These amusements are almost invariably supplemented by the famous dish-game. In a deep dish placed on a table in the middle of the room, and filled with water, the ladies deposit their available articles of jewelry. The mistress of the ceremonies takes charge of the dish and its contents. The dish is covered with a napkin, the company sit round the table; bread, salt, and charcoal are brought in, and then everybody present joins in the old song of "The Salt and the Bread." Meanwhile the trinkets are stirred in the dish, and short songs are sung, prognosticative of good and evil fortune. As each of these is ended, a trinket is taken from the dish, and the owner is supposed to be elated or made miserable by the import of the words. And woe to the owner of the trinket which is taken last from the dish. There are many other indoor amusements. The most popular of those which take place out of doors is masquerading. Both gentlemen and ladies visit their friends in disguises; and much merriment is caused by the attempts made to identify the wearers of the masks. T. N.



**Cocoanut Cake.**—To the well-beaten yolks of six eggs add two cups powdered white sugar, three-fourths cup butter, one of sweet milk, three and a half of flour, one level teaspoon soda, and two of cream tartar, whites of four eggs well beaten; bake in jelly-cake pans. For icing, grate one cocoanut, beat whites of two eggs, and add one teacup powdered sugar; mix thoroughly with the grated cocoanut, and spread evenly on the layers of cake when they are cold.

**Lemon Cake.**—One and a half cups of sugar, one of butter, two and a half of flour, five eggs beaten separately, four teaspoons sweet milk, one teaspoon cream tartar, half teaspoon soda.

**For Jelly.**—Take coffeecup sugar, two tablespoons butter, two eggs, and juice of two lemons; beat all together, and boil until the consistency of jelly. For orange cake, use oranges instead of lemons.

**New York Cake.**—Two cups of sugar, one of butter, one of milk, nearly four cups of flour, white of eight eggs, three teaspoons of baking powder, flavor with lemon. Bake a little more than three-fifths of this mixture in three jelly tins, add to the remaining batter one tablespoon ground allspice, one and a half tablespoons ground cinnamon, teaspoon cloves, a fourth of a pound each of sliced cinnamon and chopped raisins. Bake in two jelly tins, and put together with frosting, alternating dark and light.

**Orange Cake.**—Two cups of sugar, half cup of butter, three and a half of sifted flour, half cup of sweet milk, three eggs beaten separately, teaspoon baking powder mixed in flour; bake in jelly tins. For jelly, take the juice and grated rind of two oranges, two tablespoons cold water, two cups sugar; set in a pot of boiling water, and when scalding hot, stir in yolks of two well-beaten eggs, and just before taking from the fire, stir in the white of one egg, slightly beaten, and when cold put between the layers of cake. Frost the top with the other egg.

**Neapolitan Cake.**—*Black Part.*—One cup brown sugar, two eggs, half cup butter, half cup molasses, half cup strong coffee, two and a half cups flour, one of raisins, one of currants, a teaspoon each of soda, cinnamon, and cloves, and half teaspoon mace.

*White Part.*—Two cups sugar, half cup butter, one of milk, two and a quarter of flour, one of corn starch, whites of four eggs, small teaspoon cream tartar. Make frosting of whites of two eggs to put between the layers.

**Ribbon Cake.**—Two and a half cups sugar, one of butter, one of sweet milk, teaspoon cream tartar, half teaspoon soda, four cups flour, four eggs. Reserve a third of this mixture, and bake the rest in two loaves of the same size. Add to third, reserved, one cup raisins, fourth pound citron, a cup of currants, two tablespoons molasses, teaspoon each of all kinds of spice; bake in a tin same size as other loaves. Put the three loaves together with a little icing or currant jelly, placing the fruit loaf in the middle. Frost the top and sides.

**Yellowstone Cake.**—One and a half cups granulated sugar, half cup butter stirred to a cream, whites of six eggs, or three whole eggs, two teaspoons cream tartar stirred in two heaping cups sifted flour, one teaspoon soda in half cup sweet milk; bake in three layers. For filling take a teacup sugar and a little water, boiled together until it is brittle when dropped in cold water; remove from stove and stir quickly into the well-beaten white of one egg; add to this a cup of stoned raisins chopped fine, or a cup of chopped hickory-nut meats, and place between layers, and over the top.

**Delicious Chocolate Cake.**—The whites of eight eggs, two cups sugar, one of butter, three full cups flour, one of sweet milk, three teaspoons baking powder; beat the butter to a cream, stir in the sugar, and beat until light; add the milk, then the flour, and beaten whites. When well beaten, divide into two equal parts, and into half, grate a cake of sweet chocolate. Bake in layers, spread with custard, and alternate the white and dark cakes. For custard for the cake, add a tablespoon of butter to one pint of milk, and let it come to a boil; stir in two eggs, beaten with one cup sugar, and add two teaspoons corn starch dissolved in a little milk.

**Lemon Pie.**—Two lemons, two cups of sugar, one cup of milk, two tablespoonfuls of flour, and six eggs. Use the yolks only. After the pies are baked, beat the whites

and eight tablespoonfuls of sugar. Spread it over the pies, put them in the oven till they become a light brown.

**Buns.**—One pound of flour, six ounces of butter, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, a quarter of a pound of sugar, one egg, not quite a quarter of a pint of milk, a few drops of essence of lemon; bake immediately. This will make twenty-four.

**Christmas Pudding.**—Mix together in a large bowl three beaten eggs, half a cup of butter, two cups of zante currants, one cup of chopped citron, the juice of two oranges, and one cup of bread crumbs rubbed fine through a sieve, and one cup of sweet cream; flour a cloth well, put in the pudding, and boil hard two hours. Eat with a rich sauce. C. R. P. Y.

**Christmas Pudding, No. 2.**—Mix together one pound of currants, half a pound of sugar, ditto butter and flour mixed, the yolks of eight eggs, one teaspoon of cinnamon, the grating of two lemons, and juice of one, mix with it a little milk with a teaspoonful of yeast powder stirred into it. Boil in an oven two hours, rich liquid sauce. Put in only enough milk so as to just have the pudding stick together. C. R. P. Y.

**A Cream Pudding.**—One pint of sweet cream, into which stir smoothly one teacupful of fine flour; stir, this until quite thick over the fire, then take off, and when it is cool, stir into it four beaten eggs, add two teacups of fine white sugar, and one cup of citron chopped fine. Bake till set. This is a very fine pudding, if the last operation of *baking* is done right. Many persons bake custards too long, until they become *watery*, which spoils them. Eat this pudding cold. Can be eaten with sauce if desired, but is very good without. C. R. P. Y.

**Rice Croquettes.**—Boil half a pound of well-washed rice in one quart of cold water, with a level tablespoonful of salt, half a pint of milk, half the yellow rind of a lemon, or two inches of stick cinnamon, and two ounces of sugar for half an hour, after it begins to boil, stirring it occasionally to prevent burning. Take it from the fire, stir in one at a time the yolks of three eggs, and return to the fire for ten minutes to set the egg. Then spread the rice on an oiled platter, laying it about an inch thick, and let it get cool enough to handle. When it is cool enough, turn it out of the platter upon some cracker dust spread on the table, cut it in strips one inch wide and three inches long, roll them into the shape of corks, dip them first in beaten egg, then in cracker dust, and fry them golden brown. Lay them on a napkin for a moment to free them from grease, put them on a dish, dust a little powdered sugar over them, and serve them.

**Apple Dumplings.**—Pare and core as many apples as you want dumplings, keeping them whole. Make a suet crust, roll it out, and cut it in as many squares as you have apples. Fold the corners of the pieces of paste over them, pinch them together, tie each one in a floured cloth, and boil for one hour. Then take them from the pudding cloths, and serve them with butter and sugar.

**Lemon Dumplings.**—Sift eight ounces of dried bread crumbs, mix them with the same quantity of very finely-chopped suet, pare off the thin yellow rind of a lemon, chop it very fine, and add it with the juice to the bread and suet. Mix in half a pound of sugar, one egg, and enough milk to make a stiff paste, about half a pint. Divide the paste into six equal balls, tie them in a floured cloth, and boil them an hour. Serve with butter and sugar, or syrup.

**Apples in Jelly.**—Pare and core small-sized apples without cutting open; then put them with some lemons, in water to cover, let boil slowly until tender, and take out carefully without breaking. Make a syrup of half a pound white sugar to a pound of apples, cut lemons in slices, and put them and the apples into syrup; boil very slowly until the apples are clear, take them out in a deep glass dish; put to the syrup an ounce of isinglass dissolved, let it boil up, lay a slice of lemon on each apple, and strain the syrup over them.

**Codfish Balls.**—Soak codfish cut in pieces about an hour in lukewarm water, remove skin and bones, pick to small pieces, return to stove in cold water. As soon as it begins to boil, change the water and bring to a boil again. Have ready potatoes boiled tender, well mashed and seasoned with butter. Mix thoroughly with the potatoes half the quantity of the codfish while both are still hot, form into flat thick cakes, or round balls, fry in hot lard or drippings, or dip in hot fat, like doughnuts. The addition of a beaten egg before making into balls renders them lighter. Cold potatoes may be used by reheating, adding a little cream and butter, and mixing white hot.

## WHAT TO WEAR.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS. BY OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.

### CHILDREN'S FANCY DRESS FOR CHRISTMAS PARTIES.



"JILL."

may be acceptable, and shall begin with those which are particularly easy to make at home. Boys' costumes, as a rule, not being so easy as girls', I will discuss the boys' first.

*Geneviève de Brabant* gave prominence to a cook's dress, and nothing is easier—and I was going to say quainter. It must be all white, even to shoes and cotton stockings; the breeches are made of white linen, and fastened with three buttons at the knee, and over this is either a frilled blouse, full, and ending at the waist,



FRENCH DRESS, 1787.

FANCY costumes are particularly well adapted to little folks, a fact which of late years has come to be recognised, and at many juvenile parties character costumes are *de rigueur*. In case any of my readers should receive invitations to such parties for the young members of their family, and be puzzled how to dress them, I propose to give some details that I trust

or a white double-breasted tail-coat; the white apron must, *de rigueur*, be tucked into the waist, and the flat cook's cap be worn on the head. If you want any further decoration, you may wear the *cordons bleus*, display a bill of fare, or a saucepan; and should you prefer to be a pastrycook, you carry a wooden tray of cakes; or a baker, you carry a long Vienna loaf.

A clown—more especially the

French one, Pierrot—is very easily concocted. He wears long, loose, white trousers and blouse, with a row of coloured rosettes down the front, and has his face painted, and occasionally has a half-mask, black. An æsthetic clown is a good notion, with sunflowers and blue china plates worked over the white dress, a peacock's feather in the conical cap, a sunflower and a feather-fan carried in the hand.

A wizard, or astrologer, is easily managed: a black conical cap, with cabalistic insignia pasted on in gold paper, and a long black robe with the same, a wand in the hand, large spectacles, a ruff at the throat, made of treble box-plaited muslin, and pointed shoes.

Mirliton is a pretty dress for a boy, and of much the same cut as the clown's, only that the blouse is more close-fitting, but pointed cap, blouse, and trousers should be covered with inch-wide stripes of blue cotton, stitched on diagonally, so that they appear to be wound round and round.

A Christy minstrel, in striped linen coat and trousers, preposterously large collar, a black face, and a battered hat, is capital for a big boy, as some little fun can be brought to bear on the character.

Small boys dressed as Napoleon the Great, Dr. Pangloss, a jockey, Dick Turpin, and other well-known characters are irresistibly charming. As I have mentioned these, and you might select them, I must tell you how to dress them. Napoleon I. has a black cocked hat, with tricolour rosette, a large lapelled coat, white leather breeches, silk stockings, and shoes. Dr. Pangloss, a large-skirted, large-sleeved black velvet coat, with steel buttons, a very long waistcoat, black velvet breeches, ruffles, shoes with buckles, white wig, and spectacles. A jockey appears in a parti-coloured jacket and breeches of satin, cap to match, top-boots, a whip in hand. Dick Turpin, in a scarlet coat and waistcoat trimmed with gold braid and buttons, lace ruffles and cravat, leather breeches, high boots, and three-cornered hat and fancy wig, with pistols at the belt. I consider that the most



LADY OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY.



FISHWIFE.

favourite fancy costume for boys just now is the man-of-war's man, because everybody has a sailor suit; and the æsthetic costume, which is rendered by black pointed shoes, silk stockings, light velvet breeches, short jacket, and a large soft coat. An æsthetic green is really the colour that should be chosen, but a black velvet is as often as not adopted, and that can be worn afterwards in every-day life.

Any characters from the nursery rhymes and stories seem well adapted to children, and at one of the prettiest juvenile parties I have seen, no other costumes were admitted. Jack Horner in blue breeches and waistcoat, a red coat with gold buttons, a tricolour hat, and a plum hanging to his watch-chain, dragged by



FORESTER.

the hand the very smallest brother, who personated Jack the valiant Giant Killer. The little fellow in his blue trunk-hose, close-fitting red habit, helmet, shield, and sword, seemed to have come direct from the kingdom of Liliputia. Boy Blue as Gainsborough painted him; Blue Beard with a thick beard of blue wool; Beauty and the Beast devoted themselves to "My pretty Maid," in a quilted petticoat, bunched-up chintz tunic, muslin kerchief, straw hat, and milk-pails; and to "Mary, Mary, quite Contrary," who had "cockle shells, silver bells, and pretty girls,

all of a row" on her pink and blue gown; a châtelaine formed of watering-pot, hoe, rake, and spade at her side. Red Riding Hood, in red cloak and blue frock, was there, as well as Chaperon Rouge, the French and more dainty rendering of the same, viz., a red satin petticoat, black velvet bodice, white muslin apron, and red silk hood, a basket in the hand; and also Cinderella, both as a princess and a serving-maid, but in both cases displaying her crystal shoe — by-the-by, best made by covering a discarded white satin shoe

with talc cloth. There were several other characters.

Kate Greenaway's heroines suit little people wonderfully well, and you can hardly do wrong in copying her illustrations faithfully. I have in my mind's eye a little damsel of eight years old, with auburn hair and sparkling eyes, who as Jennie won all hearts. She was not, as I have seen the character rendered, in black silk dress, muslin apron, kerchief and cap—captivating enough when a bright young face peeps from beneath—but in a short green skirt and pelisse, with poke bonnet and fur muff, a lace pelerine over her shoulders, and high-heeled shoes. Quaker's and quiet dresses, which elderly people might wear, are always piquant on a child, just as the garb of a baby or of a schoolboy is extremely amusing worn by a grown man. Vandyck's famous picture of Charles I.'s children may always serve as a guide to a family group. The close lace cap, the long skirt, the bibbed apron suit little girls to perfection, and there is hardly a picture which Vandyck, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough, or De Largillière painted of children which would not show to advantage if reproduced at a juvenile fancy ball.



A PAGE.



MOORISH SERVANT.

If you wish to make a boy thoroughly happy, let him appear as Robinson Crusoe in knickerbockers and paletot and cap of fur, with robins sewn about it, a parrot perched on the shoulder, a belt round the waist, carrying a fowling-piece, pistols, hatchet, and



BARRISTER.

umbrella; and a little friend should be allowed to accompany him as Man Friday with blacked face and hands and feet, wearing a striped shirt and trousers. Lalla Rookh and other Eastern dresses suit dark girls well. If I describe Lalla Rookh I shall be describing the ordinary run of Oriental dresses. She has full red silk trousers to the ankle, a short petticoat to match, a green satin overdress with open sleeves trimmed with gold, a pink satin bodice over a gold-spangled chemisette. A few illustrations will make this paper of more practical use; they are as follows:—

No. 1. *Jill*.—In a flowered cotton frock and petticoat; soft silk kerchief, knotted at the throat. The large brim of the bonnet should be lined with a colour becoming to the wearer.

No. 2. *French Dress about 1787*.—Pale blue and yellow striped silk coat; yellow satin breeches; long blue waistcoat, fastening to the waist, then opening to disclose a blue under-vest trimmed with gold braid. Chain and seals hanging at the side. Large lace jabot in front, and lace ruffles at the wrists. White wig; tricornered black hat; gold-headed cane.

No. 3. *Lady of the Twelfth Century*.—Dark woollen dress, with three-inch border of contrasting colour; the long sleeves match the border, likewise the pointed

fichu in front. Velvet collar. The pointed head-dress is white and gold; the veil is white; a velvet band borders the edge, and lace frills fall on the hair. Gold ornaments, pointed shoes.

No. 4. *Fishwife*.—Woollen dress, either dark blue or dark terra-cotta red; soft silk pink kerchief for the head. Stockings striped to match dress.

No. 5. *Forester*.—Dark woollen tights, hood, and hose. Boots, belt, jacket, and gauntlets of soft leather. Felt hat; staff in hand.

No. 6. *Page*.—Tights and vest joined by ribbons, and showing a soft shirt at the neck, waist, and wrists. Hanging sleeves lined with a contrasting colour falling over close ones. Long hair and round hat.

No. 7. *Moorish Servant*.—Striped silk trousers; embroidered satin jacket; Oriental scarf round hips; soft muslin turban. The hands and face should be stained.

No. 8. *Barrister*.—Black gown, either in black lustre or rich corded silk; scarf in either black or crimson silk; wig; brief in hand.

No. 9. *Dutch Woman*.—Short-waisted dress, with square velvet-trimmed bodice; gauntlet sleeves with a puff of cambric at the elbow; elaborately gathered chemisette; lawn apron with handsome lace border.

In fancy costumes everything depends on brightness of colour, freshness, and suitability. Nervous children should not be put into dresses which are associated with a marked bearing or the quiet self-possession of a woman of the world; they can hardly help looking well whatever they wear, so let them have all the enjoyment they can.



DUTCH WOMAN.

## HOW TO ENTERTAIN AT CHRISTMAS.



CHRISTMAS gatherings, if not entirely confined to the family, are as a rule mainly composed of relatives, possibly of all ages. I know one happy home where four generations have assembled for the last three Christmas Days.

Unfortunately, family parties do not inevitably mean concord, though they ought to do so. There are always some lonely people whom it is a charity to include in the invitations; and while conferring a kindness, a hostess may possibly by their presence be tending to preserve the general harmony.

The one ingredient to be universally infused is gladness. Everybody can, at all events, *endeavour* to bring goodwill and a smiling countenance to the festive board, banishing for a time the recollection of every-day worries. There is all the rest of the year

to think of them. This is peculiarly the children's time, and we would have them as happy as we were in the old Christmas Days of long ago.

The party may assemble only on Christmas Day, or the house may be full from Christmas Eve until over Twelfth Night; in both cases much depends upon the hostess.

I think it was Lord Beaconsfield who said that happiness was atmosphere. To bring about a general feeling of enjoyment, much depends on the surroundings. The house must be cheerful, the ruling power animated. It is worth while to bestow some little trouble on the decoration of the rooms. Have plenty of shining holly, and laurel too, and don't omit the mistletoe, for we have long ago forgotten all about the paganism, magic, and superstition which surrounded it, and have relegated it to scenes of social merri-

ment. Many a shipload I have seen despatched from St. Malo, the French people hardly understanding its subsequent purpose, and a very good trade is done with it in the West of England.

I like to see a motto of welcome wrought in holly hanging in the hall, and in the yearly volume of CASSELL'S FAMILY MAGAZINE for 1877 there is an article, "How to Decorate the House at Christmas-time," with many useful suggestions. Flowers brighten up a room wonderfully, and should you have enough and to spare, I would advocate the American plan of making bells and balls of flowers to hang beneath chandeliers and over doors. They look best entirely of one kind of bloom. The balls are easily made by tying the ends with string, the bells require a foundation of the bell shape. Last year we made this of crinoline wire covered with coarse muslin about twelve inches long, and hid it entirely with mistletoe; the waxen berries looked extremely pretty among the greenery as it hung over the doorway.

See that there is an abundance of Christmas literature about. Servants and children as well as the grown-up guests delight in looking at pictures. A pretty, well-written story of Christmas happiness is wont to diffuse a sense of enjoyment among its readers. The glowing freshly-written pictures of the Christmas shops and the holiday people in the Christmas numbers of our magazines inspire us with a renewed power of happiness as each season comes round.

Be sure that your hearth burns brightly. Though the yule log of Scandinavian origin is no longer drawn in by household retainers, bestridden by old Father Christmas, to be kept alight if possible to Candlemas, you will have no bad substitute in a fair-sized piece of ship's timber crackling in the grate.

It does not come within my province to enter upon the question of Christmas cheer. The board should be as liberally spread as means will allow. Children delight in a substantial tea, over which their elders can preside before their own Christmas dinner is served. An abundance of crackers and bon-bons add to the general fun—which, by-the-by, I have known enhanced by drawing lots for partners at the dinner-table.

Everybody likes presents, and presents are inseparably connected with the season. Queen Elizabeth so delighted in them that even her "kitchen wenches" presented her with lozenges; and fans, bracelets, and treasures of all kinds poured into the royal lap when December came.

There are two points to be considered: first, what to give, and then how best to make the giving a source of pleasure. The poor should not be forgotten. A good plan is the Christmas basket, carried pedlar fashion into the hall, and its contents distributed by all the members of the family to the poorer neighbours invited to be present, and to the servants. Such charity is doubly welcome accompanied by kindly words and wishes, and it greatly delights the young people to see their handiwork appreciated.

Christmas-trees, which the Prince Consort intro-

duced among us nearly forty years ago, have established their fame, and there is not much that is new to be told about them. They have this drawback, that in removing the presents there is a danger of fire; and it is not a bad arrangement to hang the tree itself with beads and glittering balls brilliantly lighted, and set the presents round the table well wrapped up, a small lighted doll's-candle by each; the children are thus able to examine their gifts by the light of their very own candle. A snow-ball about a yard in circumference, made in two halves, with calico covered with wadding, on a wire foundation, filled with presents, may be rolled into the room and allowed to burst open, when a general scramble ensues. A gipsy-tent rigged up in a back drawing-room, with a presiding gipsy up to her work, who distributes the gifts with an appropriate word or two to each recipient, or a post office or parcels delivery office, with some bustling officials, may be made to produce a great deal of fun. We had a very successful distribution once from a hen's nest, concocted out of a clothes-basket, the gifts wrapped up to represent eggs, and the whole surmounted by a stuffed hen; but it went off so well because we had a clever henwife, who, dressed in flowered skirts and a high pointed cap like Mother Hubbard, delighted everybody. Another year we had a Cheap Jack, who made many of us forget the pleasure our presents gave us by the roars of laughter he produced, standing in the centre of the drawing-room ottoman, and, with many a merry *bon-mot*, scattering the parcels here and there. The Mummers, the Lord of Misrule, St. Nicholas, or Knecht Rupert may be made to put in an appearance and give away the presents. Knecht Rupert, in Germany, makes the distribution according to the deserts of the children, dressed in a white robe, a mask, flaxen wig, and high buskins. The Lord of Misrule wears the high top-boots of Charles II.'s time, ruff at throat, and a flowing robe. He disappeared in 1640, but before that he presided over Christmas festivities in the houses of the king and nobles, and the Mayor of London, from Allhallow Eve to Candlemas Day. He has been resuscitated of late for the special purpose of present-giving on more than one occasion.

A Christmas ship has the advantage of being very pretty, and of exercising some ingenuity. A boy clever at carpentering could even make a good-sized one. The presents are concealed in the hold; two feet long is a good size, and the rigging crystallised with alum to look like snow is a great improvement.

These distributions may take place at night or during the day, but at this season there is plenty to amuse during the day-time—long walks, when the weather is favourable, or maybe skating, and a good game of battledore and shuttlecock—or the improvement upon it, Badminton—in-doors, if it rains; in which case, too, let me recommend bean-bags. For this make four bags six inches square, of strong holland, and half fill them with dry peas. The two players stand before each other, a bag in each hand, and

throw simultaneously with both hands. The bag hurled from the right hand must pass to the left hand of the *vis-à-vis*, while the bag in the left hand is passed to the right, and the left hand receives the opponent's bag from his right hand. The double movement is difficult, and requires knack, but is good exercise.

If the skating-ground be near the house, some hot drinks are most acceptable, especially to those standing on the banks. I give the recipe for one which is always approved, viz., egg wine :—Beat up two eggs, and add a little cold water; boil one pint of elder wine with spice, then beat all well together, pouring from one vessel to the other, replace it on the fire till it boils, and drink when quite hot.

When the Vicar of Wakefield's altered fortunes obliged him to repair with his family to a distant neighbourhood, we read how his new parishioners "kept up the Christmas Carol, sent true love knots on Valentine's Morning, ate pancakes on Shrovetide, showed their wit on the first of April, and religiously cracked nuts on Michaelmas Eve;" and these observances of old customs would seem to savour of a taste for simple pleasures. If carol-singing be one of them, it is certainly being revived amongst us, and this delightful form of musical amusement by young people is a Christmas pleasure worth cultivating. "God rest you, merry Gentlemen," and "Nowell, Nowell," date back to Henry VI.'s time; "Come let us all sweet Carols sing" is of German origin; and "We three Kings of Orient are," American; but there are many admirable collections.

If you bring your entertainments from without, there is a choice of conjuring, a Punch and Judy show, bell-ringing, fantocinni, and the magic lantern. In the

latter each year there are marked improvements, and you may follow the fortunes of Tam o' Shanter, Don Quixote, the Forty Thieves, and Johnny Gilpin, or visit the scenes of the Afghan or the Zulu War, or discover the wonders of the microscope, or enjoy the pranks of a Christmas pantomime as displayed from the lens on the white sheet.

Besides bagatelle, loto, spelicans, dominoes, and the rest, there are some newer games, such as Chinese Gong, viz., a wooden stand with a pasteboard gong having a hole in the centre, into which the players throw one of six balls, which fall into numbered receptacles; Patchesi, or Homeward-bound, a round game between draughts and fox and geese; gobang, fishponds. "How Stanley attained Congo," "Doggett's coat and badge boat-race," are amusing too, and each week something new is brought out.

Recitations are just now very fashionable, and it is quite worth while to prepare some beforehand. Do not let them be too pathetic. Shakesperian readings always please, I mean those in which each part is read by a different person, but read carefully, and studied beforehand. A diversity of such amusement each evening would make a fortnight or three weeks pass all too quickly, and render the remembrance of Christmas time memorably pleasant. Recitations from good and entertaining authors never come amiss.

I cannot do better than conclude with one of the best of Christmas good wishes, which we owe to one of them: "Many merry Christmases, many happy New Years, unbroken friendships, great accumulation of cheerful recollections, affection on earth, and heaven at last."

ARDERN HOLT.

## The Christmas Sleigh-Ride.

They started from the old farm-gate,  
The happiest boys alive,  
With Rob, the roan, and Rust, his mate,  
And Uncle Jack to drive;  
The snow was packed, that Christmas-time,  
The moon was round and clear,  
And when the bells began to chime,  
They all began to cheer.  
Chime, chime, chime, chime,—such a merry load  
Sleighting in the moonlight along the river road!

They passed the lonely cider-mill,  
That's falling all apart;  
The hermit heard them on the hill,—  
It warmed his frozen heart;  
They cheered at every farm-house gray,  
With window panes aglow,—  
Within, the farmer's wife would say,  
"Well, well, I want to know!"  
Chime, chime, chime, chime,—such a noisy load  
Speeding by the homesteads along the river road!

The river shone, an icy sheet,  
As o'er the bridge they flew;  
Then down the quiet village street  
Their Christmas horns they blew;  
The sober people smiled and said,  
"We'll have to give them leave  
(Boys will be boys!) to make a noise,  
Because it's Christmas Eve!"  
Chime, chime, chime, chime,—such a lively load  
Scattering songs and laughter along the river road!

But now it's growing hard to keep  
Awake, and now it seems  
The very bells have gone to sleep,  
And jingle in their dreams.  
The lane at last,—the farm-gate creaks,  
And Grandma cries, "It's Jack  
Why, what a peck of apple-cheeks  
These boys have brought us back!"  
Chime, chime, chime, chime,—such a hungry load  
Rosy from the Christmas ride along the river road!



English Illustrated Magazine, 1895



## CHILDREN'S CALICO BALLS.



**C**HRISTMAS is essentially the children's season, and as it approaches anxious mothers revolve in their mind how best to cater for the amusement of the little folks who make the sunshine of their life. Few entertainments give them more in-

tense pleasure than a calico fancy ball, and it is difficult to imagine a prettier sight than the young, fresh faces, beaming with interest and enjoyment—the several picturesque costumes adding much piquancy to their young charms. In this I am sure all will bear me out who were present at the juvenile ball given at the Mansion House some two years ago. There, a good plan was adopted of having a march round from time to time, so that the dresses could be seen to perfection. I am inclined to think the boys had rather the best of it on that occasion. We all lost our hearts to a dear little fellow barely four years old who, as Portia, appeared in a black silk legal gown and wig, a brief carried in the hand; a Post-boy, top-boots and all, true to the life; a Yankee in a large-patterned checked suit, with high collar; and a Cook, in white cap and apron. One of the very best of all the dresses, however, was an Incroyable, of which our illustration will give a good impression. Note the short-waisted, long-tailed drab cloth coat,

with its large lapels, the blue satin striped waistcoat and breeches, the lace frills at the wrists and front of the shirt, the cocked hat with tricoloured rosette, the top-boots, the double eye-glasses, and the massive gold chains hanging from either fob—a veritable dandy of the Directoire period.

It is customary at these juvenile balls to provide some amusements besides dancing, such as conjuring or Punch and Judy, tumbling, Christy Minstrels, Marionettes, Fantrecini, or any similar entertainments which may be the fashion of the hour, just as the hand-bell ringers and the Arab jugglers have been in time past. But I consider, besides all this, it is almost an essential part of the programme that there should be a special quadrille of the evening, those dancing in it assuming a particular dress. The choice is a large one. There might be a Dolly Varden and Joe Willet Quadrille, including Sam Weller, Mrs. Nickleby, Mrs. Gamp, Squeers, the Marchioness, and many others “familiar in our mouths as household words,” which are best copied from the illustrations that accompanied the first edition of the great author's works. A Shakespeare or a Waverley Quadrille is to my mind better suited to grown-up people, but a Cracker Quadrille is quite charming for children, the dancers being enveloped in different coloured dominoes, and tied up with ribbons like monster bonbons. At the present time, however, the most popular of all are the Singing Quadrilles, the best-known of which are the “Nursery Rhymes” and the “Blue Boy.” As the figures proceed, the dancers accompany their movements by singing in concert, and there are one or two airs for each figure—old-fashioned ones, originally associated with “Jack and Jill,” “Goosey Goosey Gander,” “Hey Diddle-diddle,” “Jack Horner,” “Where are you going to, my Pretty



Maid?" "Baa, Baa," "Bopeep," "Sing a Song of Sixpence," "Ride a Cock Horse," "Mary, Mary, quite Contrary," &c.

Illustrated nursery lore has made these several heroes and heroines so familiar to children, that I



think most of them could themselves explain how they should be dressed. Bopeep is brought before you in the first of our illustrations. It should be made up in a pretty light blue sateen, trimmed with pink cotton-twill, the long pointed bodice laced in front over a low jaconet muslin chemisette. The sleeves are tied up with pink; a pink rose nestles at the side. The blue Shepherdess hat is worn over powdered hair. Blue silk stockings and high-heeled shoes with pink rosettes complete the costume. A basket of flowers and a crook tied with ribbon and flowers are carried in the hand, and often a small toy lamb under the arm, which probably pleases the little woman, though the chances are, before the evening is over, all these paraphernalia will become a burden, and they will find a resting-place in some obscure corner, only to be unearthed before departing,

At the memorable ball at Marlborough House, there was a Fairy-tale Quadrille, in which Beauty and the Beast, Princess Fair Star, Cinderella, the Goose Girl, and many other similar characters flourished, but they are not all suitable for a veritable calico ball; as the Goose Girl, for example, wore a shimmering robe of silver tissue and feathers; and the Duke of Connaught, as the Beast, a cloak of tiger-skin; for though the greatest licence is allowed with regard to material, a line must be drawn somewhere.

When calico balls first started, as I believe they did in India, only veritable cotton goods were admissible, such as calico, print, sateen, muslin, tarlatan, net, cretonne, and cotton velvet; tinsel replacing gold trimmings; while specially made cotton ribbons, cotton gloves and mittens, cotton velvet and sateen boots and shoes were worn. Now, however, fur trimmings, ribbon, and plenty of cotton-backed satins are to be seen at calico balls.

The pretty cretonnes and cotton fabrics to be had at every draper's make it an easy matter to concoct little girls' dresses in the correct material, but with the boys

there is more difficulty, and only where ample licence is admitted would the top-boots of a Postboy in our sketch be admissible. As it is, it is one of the most favourite characters. Any two colours may be selected—pink and blue are a happy mixture; the several divisions of the cap should be of the alternate shades, the jacket pink, the sleeves blue, the breeches white, and the tops of the boots pink.

"Folly," on the contrary, could just as well be carried out in sateens as in cotton-back satins, and should be a motley mixture of shades—the cap part blue, part red; the ruff white lace; the upper part of bodice half red, half blue; the plastron green, the sleeves blue with yellow epaulettes, the belt red; the basques, one Vandyck red, one blue; one leg encased in blue, one in red—shoes, cotton tights, and all.

A Clown is a very easily made dress for a boy, carried out in white calico with blue stripes pasted on it, so that when completed the stripes have the effect of being wound round the white. It is after the Pierrot order—a loose paletot, cap, and tights—but somewhat prettier, for Pierrot has white linen shoes, very large trousers, a loose paletot guiltless of belt, a huge flapping frill-edged collar, and red calico rosettes down the front; and he ought by good rights to have his face painted, which would be a tiresome process for a very little boy, though one of nine or ten might enter into the fun of it. Peppé Nappa, Pierrot's Italian relative, is generally dressed after the same fashion, only all in blue, and with a large ruff.

Mothers who do not care to go to much expense can dress their boys as veritable sailors—suits which can be subsequently used for every-day wear, and are to be had ready to put on at some of our seaports, in white drill or Galatea for under half-a-sovereign, and in serge for a few shillings more. To very little boys especially the dress is most becoming.

Father Christmas, without any doubt, ought to put



in an appearance, and has a further claim than his costume, which is easily concocted—only a white wig crowned with holly, a long flowing white robe with a monk's hood at the back, a girdle round the waist, a staff in hand, and a slight dredging of flour on the

shoulders, as though just out of a snow-storm ; and, above all, a wallet, which, if filled with bonbons or trifling presents for everybody, will secure him a heartier welcome—this is all that is needed.

Little Boy Blue is generally dressed as Gainsborough's Blue Boy, and is specially appropriate in the Blue Boy Quadrille, if that is preferred to the ordinary Singing Quadrille. How familiar the artist has made the costume to us all !—the blue jacket with slashed sleeves and lace collar, the blue breeches, stockings, and blue shoes, the cloak depending from the shoulder, and held gracefully through the arm—a part of the costume, by-the-by, which for the wearer's sake, at a calico ball, might very easily be dispensed with.

To aid in selecting dresses when the occasion occurs, I may mention the following characters that might be adopted by boys—a Zouave, an Eastern Water-carrier, a Watteau Shepherd, Feramorz, a Knight of Malta, an Italian Fisherman, a Cricketer, a Grey



Friar—and they are none of them difficult to carry out. But *place aux dames*. National costumes have always many copyists at calico balls, and we have selected the Italian as, perhaps, the most picturesque for our illustration. It should be made up in dark scarlet and dark blue cotton, the upper and under skirts both bound with the contrast. The apron for calico balls presents a difficulty, and the best way of surmounting it is to procure a fancy chintz and stitch it in bands on to the dark blue ; it is held on by the string passed round the waist, the upper portion turned over. The chemisette and head-dress are made of thick jaconet, and the portion resting on the head should be lined with cardboard, gold pins being used to keep it on. Gold or coral ornaments are best.

The Swiss with its silver chains and embroidery on a velvet bodice, the Normandy with the high cap, the Welsh with the high hat, the Alsatian with the large bow on the skull-like cap—all these find favour, as also does another distinctive class, the French Soubrette (illustrated above), which may be prettily rendered in a pink and white striped skirt, pink bodice, pink-trimmed muslin cap, bibbed apron, and pink-striped stockings.

Many effective dresses may be made in these striped cottons—Dolly Varden, Fille de Madame Angot, for



example. Last year, in America, what were known as Mother Goose Parties were started, and there all the children appeared in characters taken from nursery lore, made up literally with nothing but coloured cotton, and they are described as being most successful.

For the benefit of the little ones, it has been found an excellent plan to introduce other country dances into the programme besides "Sir Roger"—such as "Le Carillon de Dunkerque," Scotch Reels, "Tempête," "Off She Goes," "Haste to the Wedding," and similar old-fashioned jigs.

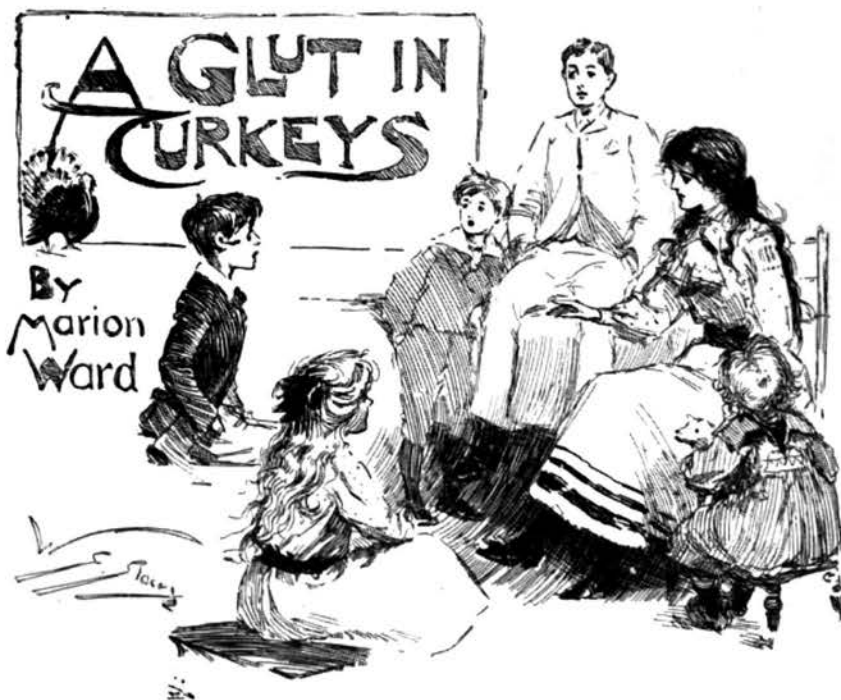
I have only now a few more dresses for girls to mention. Pamela I have seen charmingly represented in a black cotton over a cerise cotton petticoat, with demure cambric cap, fichu, and apron ; and Grace Darling in a short blue skirt, loose tunic, sailor bodice, and fisherman's cap, carrying a lantern and a life-buoy. I do not, as a rule, consider that historical characters can be well carried out in calico, or that they are suited



to little children, always excepting Charles I. children as Vandyck painted them, in their long dresses and sleeves, and baby-caps, the most quaint and charming

of ideal infant splendour and rank. Lady Jane Grey, however, in silver-grey cotton, and cotton-backed black velvet, may be made to look as demure as a Puritan Maiden, both of which I commend to the notice of those who contemplate taking part in a juvenile

calico ball, together with Mother Hubbard, in her pointed hat; or a Witch, not so very unlike, having cats and serpents cut out in black cotton, and stitched or pasted on to the scarlet cap. There are so many suitable characters, the only difficulty is which to select.



**I**t seems to be the fashion nowadays for quite young girls to write stories all about themselves and their thoughts and escapades, and get them published, even when they are most ordinary and uninteresting—excepting to themselves, of course; so I don't see why I should not tell about our Turkey Christmas, or, as Ronald calls it, our Glut in Turkeys, which really was very funny, and tragic as well. It happened last Christmas. I was quite a child—only fifteen. Father had not patented his wonderful discovery then, and made a whole fortune just by—but I forgot; that is another story, as Mr. Kipling would say. We really were horribly poor. Father was abroad on business, and had been unexpectedly delayed, so that he could not possibly get home till after Christmas, and quite suddenly mother had almost come to the end of her ready money.

Mother never kept things from us, so we children knew just how bad things were. There were five of us: myself (Nora) the eldest, then Jack, then Dulcie, then Nicholas, and lastly Noel, who was just a baby of three. And besides us there was Ronald from next door, who was sixteen and very

big, and always called himself the head of the family.

So just before Christmas I called a council. First I called down the telephone for Ronald (we made that telephone between the nursery and Ronald's own private sitting-room ourselves, and it had a tremendous bell, an old dinner-bell, so that he could hear plainly if he happened to be in any different part of the house). And when he came I summoned the rest of the family, and solemnly proposed that, owing to the financial resources of the family being pretty well bankrupt, we should one and all cheerfully consent to forego our usual Christmas presents this year.

Ronald seconded the motion, but some of the others looked doubtful. Dulcie consented instantly, and amended further that we should each put our own private little hoards into a general box and give it to mother to add to the housekeeping-money. Dulcie always was a sweet little saint.

But Jack jibbed at that.

"Hang it all!" he said. "I'll go without my present, though I did want that 'Animals in Motion' desperately. But I jolly well can't give up my money as well. Why, I've been saving for months to buy a pair of skates!"

I put the motion to private vote and decided against it. I had just ten shillings of my own: exactly half enough for that dear little bamboo bookcase I had been saving up for for such a long time. No; I certainly did not want to add my small savings to the family fund.

So I repealed that suggestion and, repeating my former proposition, it was carried unanimously. The fear of the greater had minimized the less. (I got that sentence out of a book.) So we wrote out a declaration, setting forth our determination, and each signed it (Noel could just make his letters, so he put O L, which was the nearest he could get to his name), and I carried the paper to mother.

Mother just looked at it, and then she put her arms round me and hugged me. "You originated it, of course?" she said.

Then I felt mean. So I told her how much nobler Dulcie had been.

"I wonder what a mother feels like who cannot be proud of her children?" was all she said.

Mother never says much; it's not her way, but I saw the tears in her eyes as she kissed me. So that was settled.

And she said nothing would induce her to take our private stores, if we begged her on bended knees; so that was settled too.

"But," said mother, "a turkey we must and shall have."

"Do you think we can afford it?" I asked, gravely.

Mother just laughed at me, with a determined gleam in her pretty eyes. "We're *going* to have one," she said, very firmly.

When mother looks and speaks like that there is no more to be said. And it was really a great relief to me. Christmas with no presents would be bad enough, but Christmas without *turkey!* Talk about "Hamlet" without the Prince! Besides, the children would have been so desperately disappointed. So mother bought the turkey. We all went with her to help her choose a fine fat one, and Noel cried because we would not let her get a horrid, dark-looking one with yellowish marks on it. He cried all the way home for his "pitty feckled birdie," till Ronald took away his sword and helmet, and told him he was dismissed from the army for babyishness. And then he stopped, and smiled dreadfully with his poor little mouth all turned down at the corners, and the sobs still hiccupping between his words, and called us all to witness he was "laughing." So Ronald gave him back his sword and

apologized gravely for his mistake. Noel worships Ronald; he can always make him do anything, even in his worst moods.

So we chose the turkey—a great, fat, white one, and carried it home in triumph. The shopman actually wanted to send it. As if we would have thought of letting him do such a thing! We took it in turns to carry the basket, and Ronald insisted on sharing my turn—to make longer for the little ones, he said; but I knew quite well it was really because he thought it too heavy for me. Ronald is like that.

And then, two days before Christmas, the tragedy happened.

We were sitting in the play-room in the evening, and I was writing a note to Ronald to send by the despatch (we made that ourselves, too; an awfully useful arrangement, composed of two strong pieces of elastic passed through the telephone tube, one end of each nailed respectively to the walls of the play-room and Ronald's room, and at the other end a loop, and attached to the loop a ball of twine. Do you see? That loop was kept fastened to a nail in the farther room, the elastic pulled very tense and taut; then, when either side wanted to communicate with the other, all you had to do was to unloop your end, tie the note—or sweets, or anything you liked small enough—to it, and let it shoot through the tube to the farther room. Then you pulled the loop back by the twine, ready for the next message) telling him to be ready early next morning—Christmas Eve—to come and do some private shopping with me, when suddenly Ellen, our maid-of-all-work, came rushing in like a maniac.

"Oh, mum!—oh, *mum!*" she shrieked. "The turkey!" And flopping into a chair she flung her apron over her head and burst into stormy sobs. And between her sobs the awful truth came out. The turkey was stolen!

I felt stunned. It was too terrible to believe. And then was such a pandemonium that we could hardly hear ourselves speak. Ellen was sobbing and explaining incoherently; Dulcie was patting her shoulder, and begging her not to cry; Jack and I were asking questions; and Noel and Nickey, disturbed in the middle of an exciting game of soldiers, had gleefully hailed Ellen as the foe, and were assaulting her vigorously, and with triumphant shouts, with their wooden swords.

But at last it was all out. Ellen had had the turkey up in the kitchen to prepare for roasting, and had gone out of the room



"ELLEN, OUR MAID-OF-ALL-WORK, CAME RUSHING IN LIKE A MANIAC."

for a few moments, leaving the window open and the turkey on the table just inside.

She was just in time to see the turkey's tail disappear as she came back, and, although she flew frantically out of the side door and into the street, not a sign of the thief was there to be seen. And that was all.

Mother was very gentle to her; she said it was not her fault, and, of course, she would be more careful in future. But when Ellen had sniffed herself remorsefully out of the room she looked at us very gravely.

I saw what she meant.

"Well, there's the pie," I said, with a big breath.

The others all stood quite still, looking at us with curious expressions.

Jack pressed his lips tight together and looked up at the ceiling.

"There's the pie," he echoed, firmly.

Mother's eyes grew very soft and sweet.

Nickey opened his mouth. "*No turkey?*" he roared.

"There's the pie—a lovely great pie, and the pudding; think of that lovely brown pudding, with its holly, and blue flames," said Dulcie, hurriedly.

Nickey's mouth was still open. He is a fat little boy, and rather greedy.

"But—no—TURKEY!" he wailed. He flung himself at mother. "You'll get another, mums, won't you? 'Twon't be a Christmas at all without a turkey!"

Mother stroked his head. "I'm afraid we can't afford it, dear," she said, sadly.

"Not a *little* one?" begged Nickey.

"Pig!" said Jack and I together, disgustedly.

"Pigs yourselves," retorted Nickey, fiercely.

"We're content with pie," taunted Jack.

"Hush, children; quarrelling won't mend matters. Nickey's content with pie, too, I know, isn't he?"

Nickey struggled hard. "Y-yes," he said, at last, in a very forlorn little voice.

"That's mother's brave boy," said mother, cheerfully, and Nickey brightened up.

But although we all pretended so hard not to care, we did, dreadfully. No presents and no turkey! It was terrible. It could not be—in fact, it *should* not be. I quite jumped with the sudden thought that had come into my mind. That precious ten shillings! To eat half my longed-for bookcase in a day! It seemed too awful: my eyes quite smarted at the thought. But then I thought of the glorious surprise it would be and the difference it would make.

In the middle of my reflections I looked up and found Jack's eyes fixed sombrely on my face, and he looked away so guiltily when he met my eyes that I felt sure he must have been reading my thoughts. Before I went to bed I had made up my mind.

I did not send that note to Ronald, after all. My private shopping was to be *strictly* private.

I had expected to find it very difficult to get out alone ; but, to my relief, next morning mother was busy in the kitchen, with Noel hindering her ; Jack had gone off somewhere by himself ; Dulcie looked very uncomfortable, and said if I didn't mind she wanted to stay and practise ; and Nickey was busy counting his farthings, and told me to go away and not bother. So I went.

I shut my eyes tight when I passed the shop with that dear little bamboo bookcase ; but once the money was gone, and I held the firm, heavy turkey in my arms I felt absolutely hilarious.

It would be *such* a surprise. Ellen was to be sworn over to secrecy, and to cook it while we were all at church on the next day. And the thought of the family's faces when it came smoking on, in its brown savouriness, made me stand and laugh aloud in the middle of the street.

After all, what was a future bookcase in comparison to such a present surprise ?

I went home at such a rate that I collided violently into Jack, who was just coming round the corner. He was hiding something under his overcoat, and went scarlet and seemed very confused.

I held my turkey down at my side as best I could, and tried to think of a way to get into the pantry without his seeing me.

As we stood waiting to be let in, to my surprise Dulcie appeared at the gate. She went as red as a rose when she saw us, and half paused, as if she would run away. "You did not practise long !" I could not help calling out.

She blushed still deeper. "No ; I—I thought of something I wanted out."

She dawdled about outside the gate till the door was opened, and then she followed us slowly in.

I waited for Jack to go upstairs, so that I could slip down into the pantry, but he stood aside politely, waiting for me to go up, so I had to, holding my bulky parcel carefully in front of me.

Half-way up I paused and looked over.

Jack was still standing there, apparently waiting for Dulcie, and Dulcie was standing in the hall, staring absorbedly at the pictures. A horrible, horrible suspicion formed dimly at the back of my mind. I stood quite still, breathless and waiting.

As I stood there Ronald's knock sounded at the door.

Dulcie opened it slowly.

There stood Ronald, and, all undisguised, there dangled from his hand a colossal fat turkey !

"I say," he cried, "mater's compliments, and could Mrs. Kingsley charitably make use of this beggar? We've had *three* sent us to-day."

I sat down limply on the stairs. There was a dreadful pause. Then Dulcie, looking past his head, said, in a silly little voice, "Postman !" and pointed outside.

"Kingsley?" said the postman, briefly, and plumped a large hamper down inside the hall.

I groaned aloud.

Through the crevices of that detestable hamper

unmistakable feathers protruded.

Ronald looked up and quite jumped when he met my tragic face looking at him through the balustrade. Then he looked back at the others bewilderedly.

Mother came out of the kitchen just as Nickey came flying up the front steps.

His cheeks were scarlet and his eyes snapped excitedly. He waved a brown parcel aloft. "Who's a pig now? It's only a half, but I only had a hundred and ten farthings, and he said that would only buy just half a little one, but you may eat it all.



"I FELT ABSOLUTELY HILARIOUS."



“‘KINGSLEY?’ SAID THE POSTMAN.”

*I don't want it!*” and tearing off the wrappings he proudly disclosed half a small and emaciated ready-cooked turkey.

Mother stared. “Dearie!”

“All my own farthings—every one,” and he laughed boisterously and stamped about to pretend there wasn't any lump in his throat. Jack and Dulcie looked up at me. We all knew now. I felt quite dazed and giddy. I came slowly downstairs, and Jack and Dulcie came to meet me.

Simultaneously we unwrapped our parcels. Then I sat down in the hall and laughed hysterically till the tears rolled down my face.

For a second mother stared dumfounded, then with a little cry she fled down to the pantry, and returned holding aloft a dish on which reposed a noble turkey.

“I went out before breakfast!” she cried, and, sitting down on the floor beside me, she mingled her tears with mine.

I don't think I have ever laughed so much in all my life as I did that Christmas Eve.

Of course, Ronald had to be told all from the beginning, and there we all sat in that hall round our six and a half turkeys and laughed till we were weak.

“My bookcase!” I gurgled.

“My skates!” roared Jack.

“My muff!” chortled Dulcie.

“My farthings!” spluttered Nickey.

And “My precious reserve-fund!” wept mother.

I don't believe anyone, since the world began, laughed so much over a tragedy before.

And I suppose that's about all. We lived on turkey till we hated the very mention of it, and even then we were obliged to give two

away to deserving poor people. I need not say that the two we so disposed of were Ronald's and the one that came in the hamper from old Uncle Malcolm. They were by far the two biggest and fattest, but we would each have eaten every morsel ourselves rather than give away a drumstick even of our precious bookcase, skates, muff, farthings, or reserve-fund.

But to this day you have only to mention the word “turkey” to set the whole family helplessly laughing. The memory of our six-and-a-half-fold surprise is too much for any of us.



# The Children's Christmas,

AS DEPICTED BY FAMOUS BLACK AND WHITE ARTISTS.

BY A. B. COOPER.



CHRISTMAS is the Festival of Childhood, the Carnival of Innocence, and it is right and fitting that it should be. Its first occasion was one of joy—the greatest joy that can come to homes and hearts—the birth of a little child. And the annually recurring celebration of that greatest event in the world's history—the birth of the Christ-child—is most appropriately given over to the little ones. It is the one day in the year when even the selfish become generous; the hard, tender and sympathetic; the careless and callous, loving and gentle; and when the little ones, who are typical of all that is innocent and beautiful in life, are set in the forefront and their happiness and pleasure considered as the chief object of the festival.

Who can estimate the difference which the

advent of the Babe of Bethlehem made in the world's attitude towards children? Just as Christ's treatment of Woman entirely revolutionised her status in all Christian countries, so the fact that the Lord of Glory was Himself a helpless babe has for ever sanctified childhood, and the passage of the ages has more and more impressed the heart of the Christian world with the great fact that the welfare of the little child is the highest care, not only of the family, but of the State.

And thus Christmas to the thoughtful mind means more than merriment and jollity. And this is the note struck by Beatrice Offor in our frontispiece. It brings the evangel of innocence, love and purity, and inasmuch as it weans men's thoughts from stocks and shares, from buying and selling, from "cares of to-day and burdens for to-morrow," sets them to thinking with equal earnestness of Christmas trees, Christmas



CRACKERS.  
*Drawn by S. Begg.*



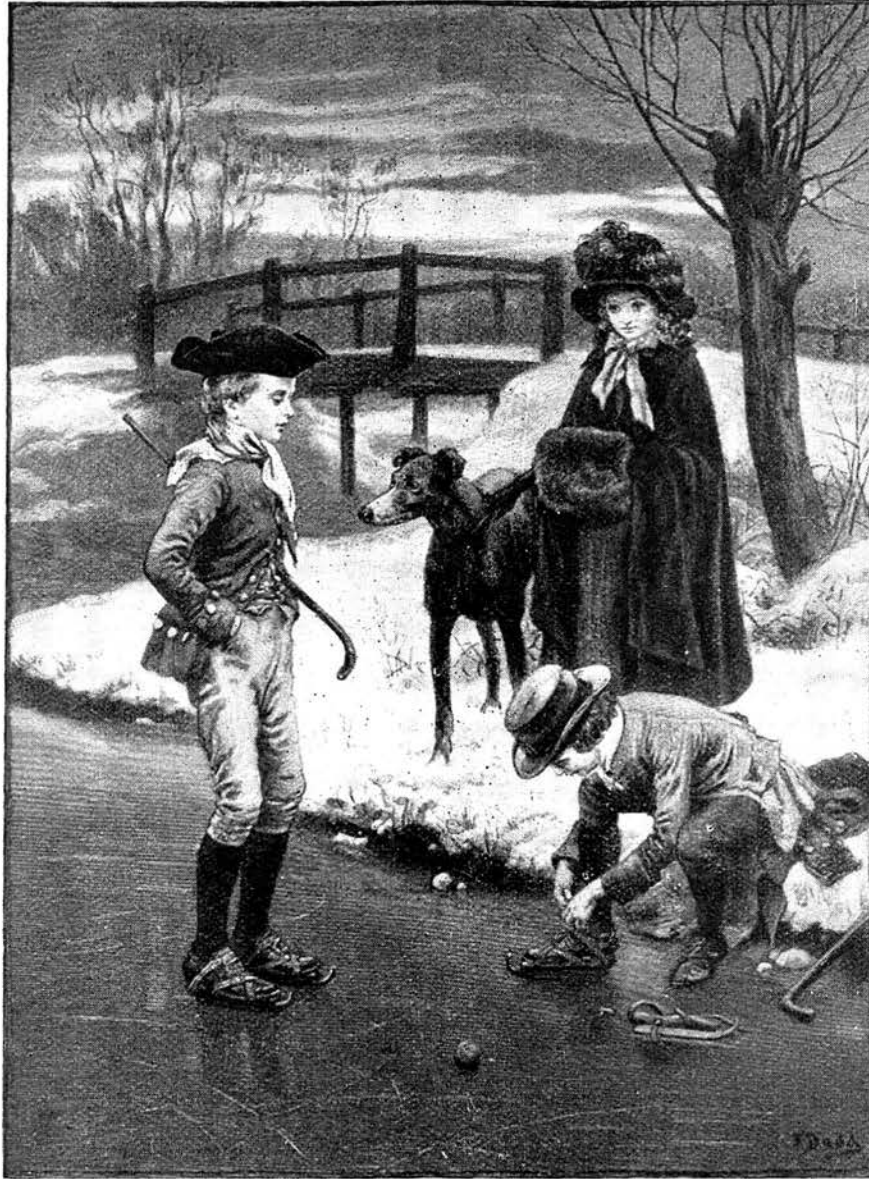


THE TOURNAMENT.  
*From the painting by S. Biggs.*

stockings, Christmas parties and merry times for the little ones, so far are they the nobler, the gentler, the better for Christmastide and its happy customs.

Nothing is more characteristic of Christmas than its Christmas Numbers. The large-hearted Charles Dickens set the ball rolling and, like a snow ball, it has grown bigger and bigger as it rolled, until to-day the book-

It is our pleasure to present to the readers of the *Sunday Strand* some of these delightful creations. Though they are not religious pictures in the exact sense of that much-abused word, yet they are, to every child-loving heart, so full of the spirit of kindness, love and tender humour, that they will probably warm hearts which a more serious set of pictures would leave untouched.



IN DARK DECEMBER.

Drawn by Frank Dadd, R.I.

stalls groan with their weight of Christmas literature. The pictures are half the battle, and why? Because the children like them. Father carries home the illustrated magazines and papers because the artists have revelled in the glorious and congenial task of drawing pretty children, occupied in every conceivable Christmas pastime and custom.

Mr. Sidney Begg has made a happy hit in *The Tournament*, and, furthermore, his picture is typical of Christmas. The children are emphatically "on the top." All mere men must bow the knee to the conquering child and be content, despite immaculate linen and dress clothes, to play charger while childhood rides in state. Doubtless the two



A CHRISTMAS DANCE: THE CLASSES.  
*Drawn by Frank Craig.*



A CHRISTMAS DANCE: THE MASSES.  
*Drawn by Frank Craig.*

men on their knees are enjoying themselves better than anyone else in the room, unless it be the two cherubs engaged in mimic warfare or the babe screaming with delight on his mother's lap. Even the dog is there and seems to be enjoying his Christmas as much as anyone.

There is another specimen of Mr. Begg's delightful art in *Crackers*. It is a similar party but at another stage in the proceedings. Everybody is waiting for the crack of the cracker, and again the centre of all interest is a little child. It is her courage which is belauded; it is her sensations which are

comedy, something which, while we laugh, touches the fountain of tears and turns our thoughts, unawares, to those great problems which to-day are crying out for solution in our densely populated cities and towns. The "classes" and the "masses"—these in the brilliantly lighted room, surrounded by every luxury and refinement which wealth and culture can command—those in the wet street, dancing to the tune of the barrel organ; both happy in their own way, but, oh, the difference—the sad, pitiful difference between the lot of the one and the other.

They are all Christ's little ones. He is the



AN AMBUSCADE.  
From a drawing by F. Barnard.

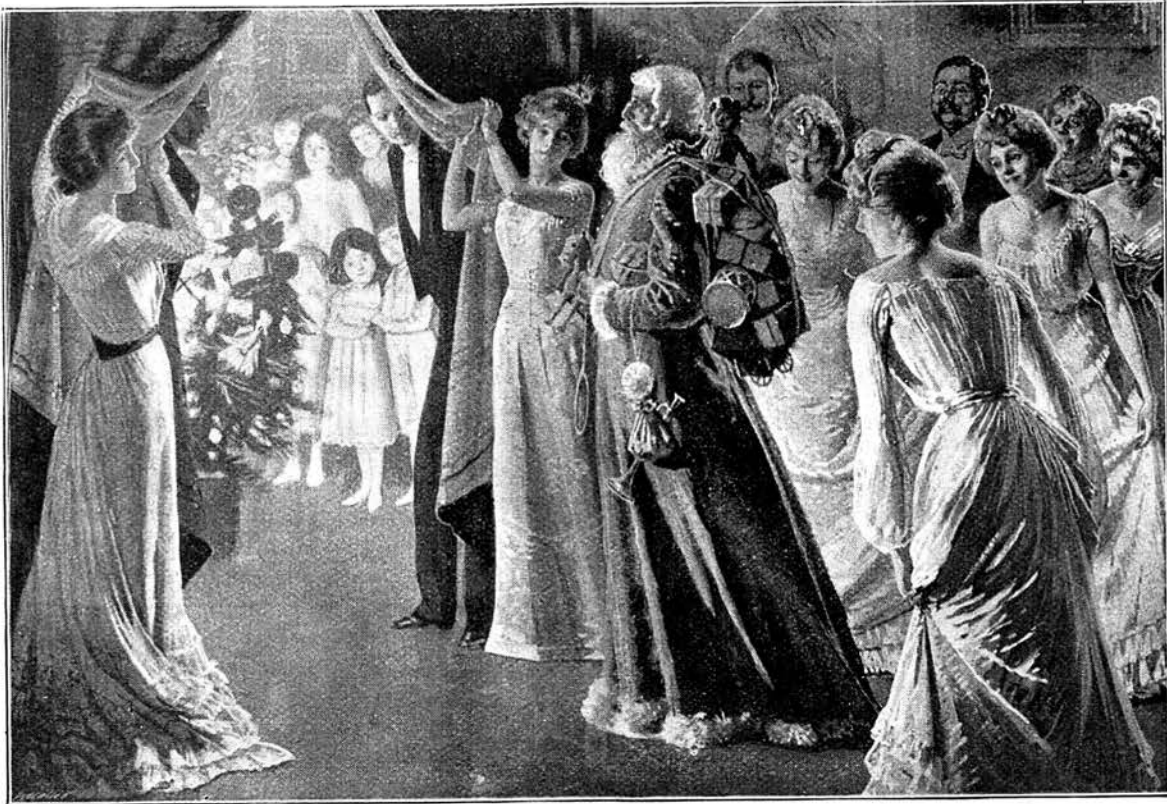
uppermost in everybody's mind. And note the little idyll behind the chair. The sweet maiden, wearing the pretty cap she has extracted from her cracker, is bashfully reading to a boy friend the motto which was also one of its hidden treasures. Thus the world goes round and is kept sweet and innocent, and the boy and girl grow up to plight their troth and to make a home of their own and carry on the old traditions in the old sweet way.

Frank Craig touches, perchance, even a deeper note. It is not a note of tragedy—such would be unsuitable to the season—but there is just a spice of tragedy in the

Saviour of the "classes" and the "masses," and with Him, who looks not at the outward appearance but at the heart, the nobility and aristocracy of character dwells both in the East and in the West, and if there is a time when this great truth comes home to all hearts, it is surely Christmas, when we commemorate the great proclamation of peace and goodwill to men.

Frost and snow are in our Northern latitudes inseparably connected with the festival of Christmas. A race of English-speaking people will arise, however,—nay, has already arisen,—who will know nothing of this. The Australian Christmas comes at mid-





THE COMING OF SANTA CLAUS.  
*Drawn by Lucien Davis, R.I.*

summer and Christmas there, from our point of view, is all topsy-turvy. But here, in the old country, what a joy a good old-fashioned Christmas-cardy Christmas is, when the eaves are hanging with icicles, when the pond is frozen hard enough for a waggon to drive over it, and when every ironmonger's shop-window is beplastered with the magic word "Skates"!

Frank Dadd has given us a pretty picture of an old-fashioned Christmas in the double sense of the word. The boy putting on his skates, the other standing shivering and eager to be off, and the quaint maiden on the snowy bank have been grandparents these twenty years or, more likely indeed, have joined the great majority. But the sentiment is still true. It is a typical English scene, and may the day be far distant when it ceases to be.

And what shall be said of snowballing? Even the victim can hardly be seriously "cross" when a party of merry boys and girls, such as Fred Barnard could draw so well, let fly showers of snowy missiles, not only from behind the trees but under cover of the very barrow-load of holly and mistletoe which the poor fellow has set down in order to attend to his self-defence. It is certainly a warfare in which the advantage is all on one side but, unlike all other warfare, it is

kindly meant and there is no malice in it. The picture is typical of Fred Barnard's art, and the man who so sympathetically illustrated Dickens has a congenial subject. But it is not every one, after all, who takes snowballing kindly, and Mr. Reginald Potter gives us a case to the contrary. It is again one of those old-fashioned English scenes that, with "black and white" men, are so much in vogue. The quaint schoolboys with high peaked caps, the 'prentice with his pies upon his head, the sedan chair of the period, the be-flounced and crinolined dame, the chair-carriers, wigged and wigless,—what can be more complete? But the old lady is angry; there can be no mistake about that. She doesn't take kindly to snowballs at all, and, true to their nature, the more unkindly she takes it, alas, the more the little urchins like it. But let us hope she had kindlier thoughts afterwards.

In "Justice on the Heels of Crime" we have a scene which is just as modern as the other is archaic. Mr. Forester has hit off the situation delightfully and has added to the humour of the picture by the humour of the title. We have all been there. We have all committed the unpardonable sin of making a "slide" in the public road, seen the policeman loom large round the corner and made a frantic endeavour to get a last



A QUIET CHRISTMAS.  
*Drawn by Cecil Aldin.*

slide before we ran. This time, the corner is very near and the policeman very nimble, but,—alas for the hopes of men,—the prey which was well-nigh in his clutches, eludes his grasp and down he comes on the very slide it was his duty to prohibit. A fearful joy is depicted on the faces of the children, while the bigger and rougher boys on the top of the bank, who have probably often been “chivvied” by this self-same policeman, have the utmost difficulty in controlling their risibles. The children themselves have probably been counting their “Christmas Bumps” and here is Mr. Peeler himself actually

Cowper. But this time the children have been to Santa Claus’ headquarters, to his storehouse and magazine, and they are coming back laden with spoil, or, perchance, going to another room to add to their possessions. What perfect joy is depicted on the face of the little child who marches well in front with her new doll clutched to her fur-bound coat! But even her excitement is surpassed by the brother who follows in her train, gun over shoulder and drum slung about his neck. Wait till he gets home, indeed? Not he! He must “drum” now, this very minute, and no power on earth shall

indulging in one. What a triumph!

Then there is the Santa Claus legend—that old, old idea which custom cannot stale, because, to every new child who comes into the world, it is as new as the world itself. Mr. Lucien Davis has given us a delightful picture. It is again the old theme, the “grown-ups” plotting and planning on the one side and the children behind the curtain wildly expectant on the other. This is Santa Claus indeed, the identical individual, the chimney climbing, deer-driving saint himself; and what a load he has got! Sufficient to go round and something to spare. The fair ladies who lift the curtain, and the rest hugging themselves for very joy in the joy of the little ones, have been through it all themselves and know just how it feels. Can you not hear, a moment later, the cry of rapture which goes up from the shadowy party within? Mr. Davis’s talented pencil has seldom done anything better.

Children and toys again by Mr. Max



JUSTICE ON THE HEELS OF CRIME.  
*From the drawing by Forestier.*

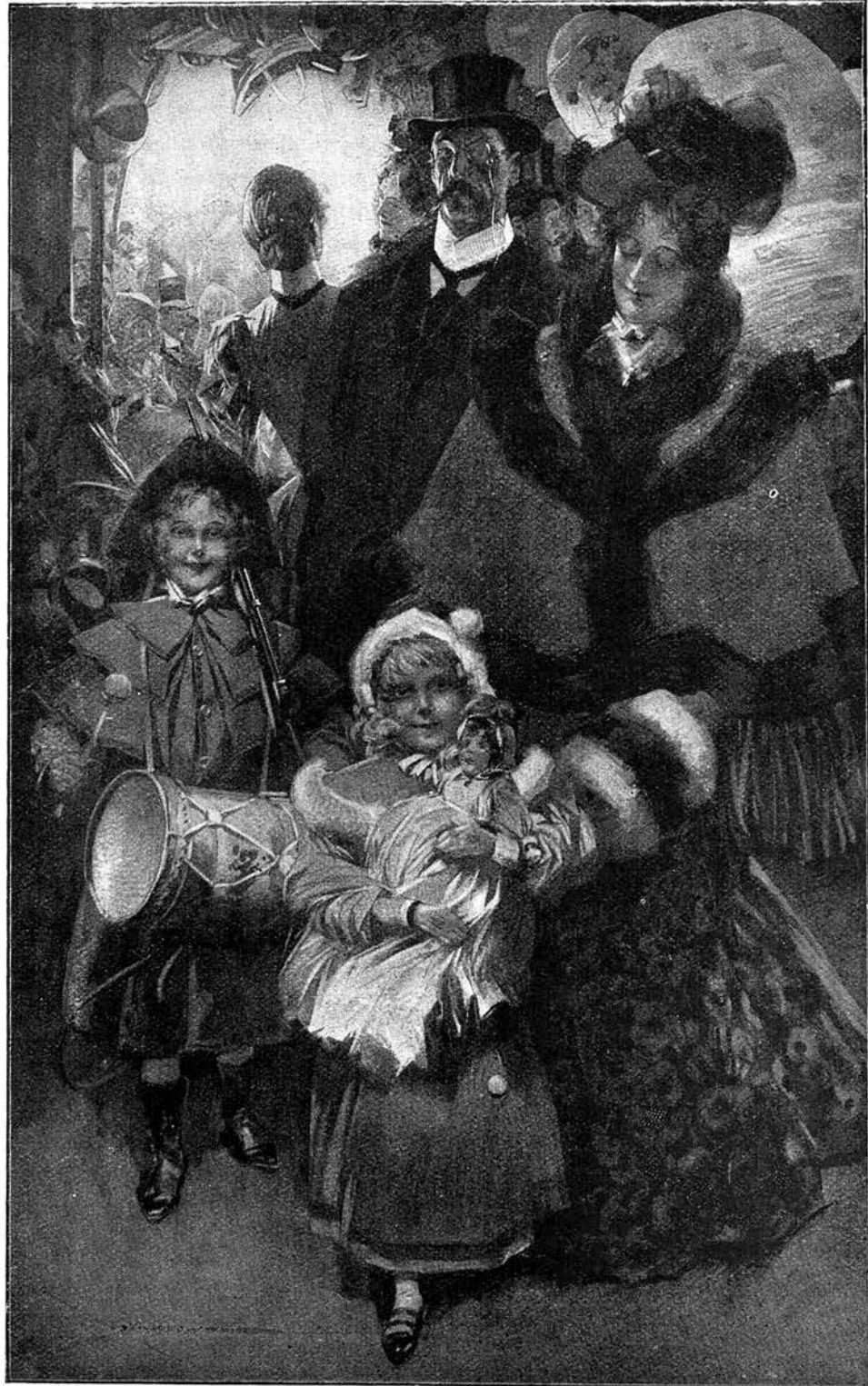


stop him. Ah! the martial spirit is strong in boys, but if, under Christian influence and training, it becomes sanctified into true patriotism and a passion for righteousness, into the courage which faces death rather than disgrace, it is not to be lightly esteemed.

And now as we draw to a close, two of the most popular and truly English of all black and white artists remain to be mentioned. The first is Cecil Aldin, the true successor of Randolph Caldecott, a man of delightfully quaint humour and wonderful execution. Probably no man living reproduces the old English atmosphere so well as this fine artist, and the drawing we present to our readers is a typical example. The artist's kindness of nature is proved by his choice of subject, for he seldom omits a child and a dog. They are both here in the very forefront and the combination of old age by the fireside, slippered and pantalooned, the tiny mite on the old man's knee, listening entranced while he bridges the years that lie between with a tale of some Christmas long ago, and the lovers at the window, looking out upon a world transfigured by hope—make a picture worthy of any painter's brush.

Outside it is cold and bleak, but inside, despite the fact that there is no exceptional Christmas cheer, there is the happiness of a home life where the old and young live in unity.

And, lastly, comes the ever-popular Louis Wain. He is the man who makes cats human.



A CHRISTMAS EVE IN TOYLAND.  
*Drawn by Max Cowper.*

It has been said that his cats are not like cats, but when someone asked: "If Louis Wain's cats are not like cats, what are they like?" the question suddenly became difficult to answer. However that may be, his wonderful skill in making his cats play the rôle of human beings is unique in art and he does it supremely well. This is one of his most typical pictures, and, like all his work, tells its own story admirably.

Some wag has sent out invitations for a Christmas party, and there is joy in infant cat-land. Fond mothers bring their little ones by coach, carriage, and on foot, through the deep snow, to join in the merry-making. But what is this they see on arriving? The broken windows of the house, its generally deserted appearance, and more than all the great staring sign over the garden wall, unmistakably announce the fact that the house is empty, and that a hoax has been played upon the unsuspecting parents. There

are vows of vengeance, deep if not loud. Who has done this deed? If it should ever leak out, then woe betide him! Two of the little ones sit upon the family trunk and weep bitter tears. Another, by the aid of a friendly back, climbs over the fence to make further and more particular investigation, but the majority are expressing their feelings, and it is well for us, perhaps, that the picture is only a picture, for the things that a cat can say on occasion are neither pleasant nor polite.

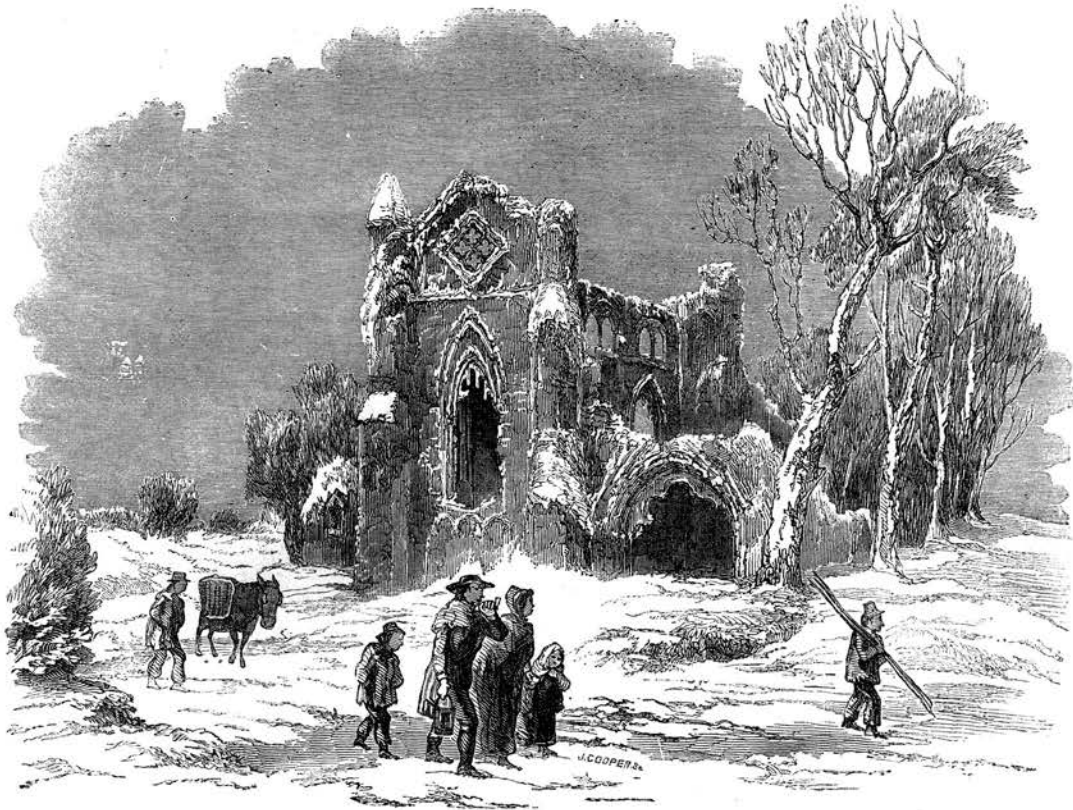
Yes, the man who can draw has a great power in his hands, and it is well, as in the pictures we have chatted about, when the pencil is used to give innocent pleasure. There are higher forms of art than this, but there are few which give greater enjoyment to a greater number, and we are glad to be able to present the pictures to our readers and to wish them all as merry a time as the merriest and happiest to be found in our Christmas Picture Gallery.



THE CHRISTMAS INVITATION: A HOAX.  
*Drawn by Louis Wain.*



THE COMING OF SANTA CLAUS.  
*By Louis Wain.*



Illustrated London Almanack, 1851

## CATERING FOR CHRISTMAS PARTIES.

**P**ERHAPS the greatest difficulty at the present season with regard to Christmas cheer is, how to avoid sameness. Christmas Day has of course its old fixed traditions—the holly, the beef, the pudding, the little extra festivity, and above all, the irresistible feeling of “good-will towards men,” that beams in most faces apparently from the simple cause of its being Christmas Day. Nor is there fear that these old traditions will ever fail. At the present time, even under the blazing midsummer sun at the Antipodes, will be found the chopped suet, the candied peel, the raisins, &c., for the pudding, in spite of the heat, simply because it is Christmas Day, and men feel that it is a sort of profanation to rob it of even one of its many old associations.

With Christmas parties, however, it is somewhat different, and Father Christmas will surely forgive me if I suggest a few additions rather than alterations to the well-known Christmas cheer. First with regard to evening parties. I think the chief cause of these pleasant gatherings being not more frequent is the expense. Is it necessary in the present day, when we all dine late, to sit down to a profusely laden table to supper, where too often more money has been spent on ornaments than on the food itself? It is an old grievance, the terrible expense of evening parties, and I cannot do better than quote one of the greatest, if not the greatest authority on the subject, M. Louis Eustache Ude, *ci-devant* cook to Louis XVI. M. Ude had mourned over the great waste generally attendant on big suppers, with the depredations of the

hosts of waiters who were generally too dainty to sup off the remains. As he justly observes—“This class of persons assimilate no little to cats, enjoying what they can pilfer, but very difficult to please in what is given to them.” M. Ude says: “I ventured therefore to suggest to the nobleman whom I had the honour of serving, that a supper might be given which should suit the taste of everybody; which should satisfy at once the inviter and the invited—the guest by the novelty of the arrangement, and the host by the smallness of the expense incurred.”

I think this admirable advice is none the worse for being more than half a century old, and I will give you a few of his suggestions adapted to modern times.

Ude’s principal innovation was to have supper so that persons could help themselves without any trouble, and without formally sitting down to a large table. With regard to the supper itself, he recommends “things to be eaten rather than looked at,” or, as an example, baskets of fruit are preferable to a triumphal car of barley-sugar.

In speaking of children’s Christmas parties, I explained how nice sandwiches could be made out of tinned salmon, in which mayonnaise sauce is used instead of butter. In parties of grown-up people who have dined late, it is quite possible to make sandwiches the *fidce de résistance*, so to speak, of the supper, and yet, as Ude says, the supper shall satisfy both the inviter and the invited.

Remember, however, that sandwiches in one respect resemble oysters. A good sandwich, like a good

oyster, is a most delicious *bonne-bouche*; a bad sandwich, on the other hand, like a bad oyster, is an unspeakable horror. I will give a list of sandwiches which may be cut for supper, and would recommend a label being placed on each dish in order to inform persons of the contents—Fowl, Veal, Ham, Tongue, Game, Salad, Anchovy, Fillet-sole, &c.

First the fowl sandwiches, and as of course we shall have to use several fowls, let us try and utilise the fragments that remain. Suppose we say we are going to make a nice little supper for twenty people. Order in three good-sized fowls, have them roasted the day before and let them get cold, and cut off with a sharp thin knife all the meat you can into small thin slices, carving up the fowl as you find it advisable for the purpose of getting off the meat. After all this is done place the cut meat into, say, an empty vegetable dish, press the meat slightly together to help to keep it moist, cover it over, and put it by in a cool place till you begin to cut the sandwiches, which should not be done till a few hours before they are wanted.

You will find that, however carefully you may have cut the meat, still a good many scraps of fowl remain over, and a good deal more can be obtained from scraping the back and the bones. Get the bones as bare as you can, and then smash them all up and put them in a saucepan, and boil them with one onion stuck with a dozen cloves, a couple of bay-leaves, a handful of fresh parsley, and half a head of celery. Fill the saucepan up with a couple of quarts of water, and let it all boil away till there is about a pint of liquor altogether left in. Then strain this off carefully and put it by, skimming off any grease on the top if there is any.

Next take a pint of milk and three-pennyworth of cream, taking London prices for the latter rarity, and put it in an enamelled saucepan and boil it; you can have the strained-off pint of chicken broth ready, and as soon as the milk and cream begin to rise up in a white foam in the saucepan from boiling, pour the broth or stock on it, let it boil up again, and season it with a little salt and pepper, strain it once more, and pour one half into a basin, which, for the present, place by the side of the meat cut up ready for the sandwiches, and pour the other half into another basin for the inside of some chicken patties which I am making out of the scraps. Take those scraps and mince them with about half their quantity of cooked bacon or ham—the trimmings of a piece of ordinary cold boiled bacon do very well—and a tin of preserved mushrooms, price 1s. Mix all this together, put it in the basin with the milk and broth mixed, stir it up, put it back into the saucepan, and stir it over the fire for a little while—over a hot-plate or a gas stove is far preferable to an open fire. Now chop up a little parsley *very fine* and mix in a tea-spoonful of the parsley, stir it up for a few minutes while hot, and it is finished.

Next have ready some empty patty-cases, which of course can be made at home, but which will often be found to be best ordered from a pastrycook's, and small round vol-au-vent cases are preferable to the old-

fashioned shape generally sold at pastrycooks' shops. (*Vide* diagram. Shape 1 is far better than shape 2, as it holds more meat.)

Fill, say, a dozen of these patty-cases with the mixture, put them in the oven for ten minutes, and take them out and see if the insides are properly filled; if there are any holes in the inside, press the meat down with a small spoon and put a little more meat in. Then put the patties by in a cool place ready for supper, ornamenting them with a little fresh bright green double parsley. I am quite sure, if you will follow this receipt out exactly, not forgetting to boil the milk and cream separately first before you add the chicken broth, that you will find these patties very delicious; only be careful to have patty-cases that will really hold some meat.

Next the sandwiches. Take a tinned loaf and a large sharp knife, and cut some thin slices of bread, piling them up one slice upon another as they fall, as they will fit each other in that way and in no other.

Next get out the sliced chicken and the sauce made from the milk and cream and chicken bones; probably this will be a hard jelly; if so, dissolve it by putting the basin in the oven for a little while. Use this to butter the bread. Take the two top slices of the bread and open them like a book, spread a very thin layer of the white sauce on each piece, cover one with thin slices of fowl, add a very little pepper and salt and place the other slice on it, press the two slices of bread together gently, and cut them across each way from corner to corner with a *sharp* knife, so that each slice makes four sandwiches. Be careful that no pieces of fowl stick out from the crusty edge. These sandwiches may be now piled up—as, of course, explaining how to make one sandwich is sufficient for the lot—on a plate and ornamented with a little parsley. A white napkin folded neatly, or a fringed doyley, can be placed at the bottom of the dish.

We have now used up three fowls without one scrap of waste, and have even extracted the goodness from the bones. Compare this, from an economical point of view, with the ordinary cold roast fowl, remembering what people generally leave upon their plates at supper parties, where it is not quite the thing to scrape bones bare.

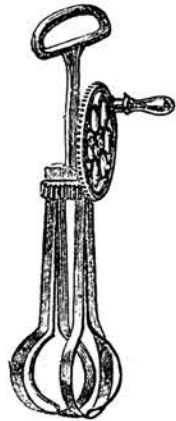
Before we go on to the next dish, I would remind you first that these patties are equally good, if not superior, hot for dinner. When you have them hot, always make the inside hot by itself before it is put in the cases, as otherwise in warming up the patties the pastry would get burnt and brittle before the meat got hot through. If the meat or inside is put in hot, ten minutes in the oven will be sufficient to warm the pastry.

Another thing to be borne in mind in reference to the sandwiches is to have the loaves of bread carefully rasped before cutting them up, by which means the crust is reduced to a minimum.

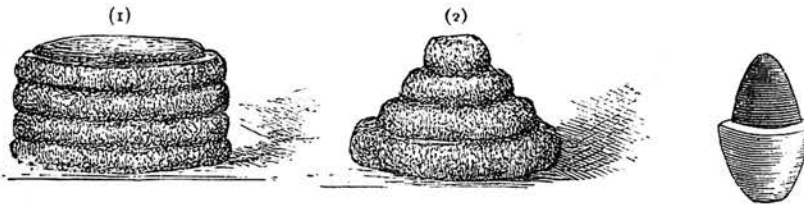
I will next take the sandwiches of filleted sole, anchovy, and salad, which latter is made from mustard and cress. All these require the same sauce for buttering the bread, which should be

made as follows :—Take two yolks of eggs, carefully separated from the whites, and place them in a good-sized basin and drop salad oil on them, and keep beating them with a fork—a wooden fork is best—till the mixture becomes as thick as butter.

A far quicker way of making mayonnaise sauce is by using a whisk with a handle (*vide* diagram). These can be purchased now for one shilling, and will be found very useful for a variety of purposes, such as whisking eggs for omelettes, souffles, for making frothed white of eggs, whipped cream, &c. With one of these simple but useful machines—which can be obtained by order through any respectable iron-



monger—mayonnaise sauce can be made in a few minutes of the requisite consistency, viz., like butter. Two yolks of eggs will take a good-sized cupful of oil. Add to this a table-spoonful of tarragon vinegar and a tea-spoonful of very *finely* chopped parsley, also a little pepper and salt. Some persons add as well a little chili vinegar.



Cut up the bread as before and use this sauce to butter each piece with sparingly. Take first some well-washed and drained mustard and cress, which can be obtained in any weather, or grown for the purpose in a warm room in the house. Sprinkle one side with the mustard and cress, the latter largely predominating, place the other piece of bread spread over with the sauce on it, and trim the pieces sticking out round the edges with a sharp knife, after pressing the two pieces of bread with the salad between them well together. A pair of good-sized scissors does very well. Then cut the sandwiches across as before, making each slice into four pieces.

In making anchovy sandwiches, you butter the bread as before with this sauce, and lay across it thin strips of filleted anchovy. Take an ordinary bottle of anchovies, such as is sold at most grocers', and take the fish out of the liquor and wash them thoroughly in several waters till all the scales are rubbed off as well as the salt. Cut the fish down with a sharp knife and take out the bone. Next cut the meat of the fish into as thin strips as possible. Remember anchovy is a very strong flavour, and you must endeavour to make the sandwich as mild as possible; consequently these thin strips must be laid across the bread somewhat sparingly. Allow, say, half an inch between each strip. Cut up the sandwich into four as in the previous cases.

The filleted sole is prepared as follows :—Fillet some soles, and boil the fillets laid lengthways in some water to which have been added a few drops of vinegar. Drain the fillets on a cloth and let them get cold;

cut them into thin slices, and for this purpose you must get a very sharp knife indeed. Lay these fillets on one side of the bread spread with the mayonnaise sauce, and sprinkle a little pepper and salt over the fish, cover over with the other piece of bread, both pieces being buttered with the sauce, press down and cut as before. Avoid using a steel knife for spreading the sauce; a silver knife is best, or the handle of a silver spoon will do.

I do not think it is necessary to say anything about the preparation of ham sandwiches, beyond that if they have to take their chance with the other plates of sandwiches you will find them not so popular as is generally supposed. But I will now explain how to make game sandwiches, and these are made from home-made potted game in the following manner.

Take a single grouse or a single pheasant, and as the potted game will keep, this is best done some few days before. Roast it, cut off all the meat from the bones and put the bones into about a quart of stock to simmer. Add at first an onion, a spoonful of sherry, the same quantity of mushroom ketchup, a

couple of bay-leaves, a pinch of thyme, and if handy a slice of raw ham. Let this all simmer for some time, and then strain it off and boil the liquor away till it is reduced to just a sufficient quantity to moisten the meat, or less than half a pint.

In the meanwhile take the meat and pound it in a mortar, first of all chopping it as fine as possible, moisten it with the reduced stock, and add to it just sufficient cayenne pepper as will make it agreeably hot; and as it is not wanted to keep long, much need not be added. When thoroughly mixed, add gradually from four to six ounces of butter, according to the size of the grouse or pheasant, and put it into small pots for use, pouring some butter melted in a small saucepan over the top. This will keep a long time, and what is not used for making sandwiches will do for breakfast afterwards. In making the game sandwiches, simply place a thin layer of this potted game between two pieces of bread very slightly buttered, and cut them up as before.

Veal sandwiches can be made from an ordinary piece of roast veal, with veal stuffing, that has been left from some previous dinner. Take a little of the stuffing and pound it in a mortar, add some butter and mix till you get the whole of sufficient consistency to spread with a knife, then use this to butter the bread, and with a very sharp knife cut the veal into the thinnest slices possible, and use them for making the sandwiches.

There is one more dish I can strongly recommend for supper parties, for the very good reason that they will be sure to be eaten, and that is, Devilled Eggs.

Take, say, a dozen eggs—they must of course be fresh, but not necessarily new-laid—and hard-boil them, *i.e.*, put them into cold water in a saucepan and place them on the fire. Let the water come to a boil, and let them boil for ten minutes, then take them off and put them into cold water till nearly or quite cold. Take off the shells and cut each egg in half so that it makes two cups; by pinching each cup carefully with the fingers the inside of the cup—*i.e.*, the half-yolk—will come out. Next place these twenty-four half-yolks in a mortar and pound them till they become smooth, or in other words, till all lumps cease to exist. Then add a good half-pound of butter, a salt-spoonful of anchovy sauce, and work the whole together till it becomes quite smooth; this requires time and patience; lumps of yolk and lumps of butter are equally objectionable.

Next take the twenty-four hollow white cups and cut off the tip ends so that they will stand upright on a dish; fill the cups with the pounded yolks, &c., and

pile it up so that it comes to a point (*vide* diagram). This makes a very pretty dish; twelve eggs will of course make twenty-four cups. If you wish to ornament the dish further, you can take the little white pieces cut off the end, and chop them finely with a knife; and get a little chopped parsley, and sprinkle the white and green pieces on the yellow pyramids, and place some ordinary parsley in the dish round the base of the eggs. These devilled eggs look best either in a silver or a plain white dish.

Interspersed with the dishes I have named, I would recommend small baskets of fruit, such as grapes. A mould or two of jelly, and a nice piece of cold roast beef in the centre of the side-board, red and juicy, and ornamented with curly horseradish and parsley; some light pastry can of course be added if wished, as well as an almost infinite variety of sweets, and lobster salads, but I feel sure that if the supper I have mentioned be carried out it will satisfy the invited, and consequently the inviter.



## CHATS ABOUT THE CALENDAR.

DECEMBER, according to the calendar of Romulus, was the tenth month, as the name implies (*decem* being the Latin word for ten); but by the Julian calendar it was made the twelfth, and is the last month in our year. Among the Romans this month was devoted to various festivals. The peasants kept the feast of Vacuna, after having got in the fruits, and sown their corn. During this time all orders of the community were devoted to mirth and festivity. Friends sent presents to one another; the schools kept a vacation, and pleasure was the order of the day.

Our Anglo-Saxon ancestors called December the *Winter-monath*, but after their conversion to Christianity they called it *Heligh-monat*, or holy month, in commemoration of the feast of the Nativity, which is always celebrated in this month. There are few remarkable days to be noticed. Perhaps it may interest some to know that in this month the poet Gray and the painter Rubens were born; and Richelieu, John Wycliffe, Flaxman, Mozart, Dr. Johnson, Washington (names you should surely know something about) died. The 21st day is the shortest day, and from this time we may begin to look forward with some hope to the passing away of the dreary days of winter. But by far the most remarkable festival occurs on the 25th, commonly called Christmas Day. Happy Christmas! The time of family reunions, of joyous greetings, and of welcome presents. Out of doors there may be rain and wind, snow and ice; but indoors the scene is very different, with the merry games, the kisses under the mistletoe, Sir Roger de Coverley, not to mention the roast beef and turkey, the plum-pudding and the mince-pies, without which, in the opinion of many young people, Christmas would not be Christmas at all! The mistletoe is so associated with the festivities and decorations of Christmas that a word or two about it may not be uninteresting. It grows luxuriantly upon apple-trees, and upon the oak, and the fruit is made by the Italians into a kind of birdlime. The mystic uses of the

mistletoe are traced to the pagan ages; it has even been identified with the golden branch referred to by Virgil in the lower regions. The Druids called it *all heal* or *guidhell*. They had an extraordinary veneration for the number three, and chose the mistletoe because its berries grow in clusters of three united to one stalk. They celebrated a grand festival on the annual cutting of the shrubs, on which occasion many ceremonies were observed; the officiating Druid being clad in white, and cutting the branches with a golden sickle. But when did mistletoe become recognised as a Christmas evergreen? We have Christmas carols in praise of holly and ivy of even earlier date than the fifteenth century; but allusion to mistletoe can scarcely be found for two centuries later, or before the time of Herrick.

"Down with the rosemary, and so,  
Down with the baies and mistletoe,  
Down with the holly, ivie all,  
Wherewith ye dressed the Christmas hall."

And Shakespeare describes—

"The trees, though summer, yet forlorn and lean,  
O'ercome with moss and baleful mistletoe."

The seeds of the mistletoe ripen late, between February and April, and birds do not willingly feed upon them as long as they can procure the berries of hawthorn, hollies, ivies, and other winter food. No sooner, however, does a late frost set in, and the ground become covered with snow, perhaps for the first time, then the little food-seeking warblers fly to the mistletoe, and find the sustenance in its berries which is denied them elsewhere. If the ripe berries are rubbed upon the branches of trees they may thus be readily cultivated.

The 28th day of this month is celebrated as the slaughter of the Innocents by Herod, and there is a strange superstition which affirms that it is unlucky to begin any work upon this day.

A good many people still keep up the custom of seeing the old year out and the new year in, and I daresay many of our young readers have done so. At first it is con-

sidered fine fun, and the old year is gladly pushed aside, in order to make room for the more welcome incoming one. But as you grow older, you will not be in such a hurry to get rid of the old years, but cling more lovingly to them, as you begin to feel the truth that they can never be recalled. Hence you will treat their exit into the land where all things are forgotten, more tenderly, and perhaps even sorrowfully.

December is allegorically represented by the Ancients as an old man, with a severe countenance, clothed in a coarse (but, let us hope, warm) garment; his hands, which are encased in gloves, hold a hatchet, emblematic of the season, which is the time for felling timber. Instead of his head being surrounded by a garland, it appears to be wrapped in three or four nightcaps, with a Turkish turban over them; his mouth and beard are thickly iced over; at his back is a bundle of ivy, holly, and mistletoe, while by his side is the sign of the goat, Capricornus, symbolical of the sun entering that constellation on the 21st.





## THE MISTLETOE

CHRISTMAS is here, and the houses are decked with evergreens; round the picture frames the red-berried holly is wreathed; over the chimney-piece are the soft branches of the fresh green fir; and hanging from the lamp in the hall is a fine bunch of the mystic mistletoe. How well we know the thick forked stem with its branching twigs, bearing the small rounded green leaves, and the opaque yellowish berries. We know it was beloved of the Druids, and most of us perhaps have a vague idea that it grows upon oak trees, which it sometimes does, only I think most of us might visit all the oak trees within a radius of ten miles, and not find a single clump of mistletoe on the whole lot; because it is very scarce in most parts of England, and does not grow upon the oak if it can find any other of its favourite trees handy. It is an unscrupulous plant, this mistletoe which we make free of in the house every Christmas-tide, and even wear in our buttonholes; it is one of those vegetables which does not obtain its living honestly, by taking root in the soil and using up the carbon contained in the air in the form of carbonic acid gas, but it lives as a parasite, that is to say, it sponges upon another plant, robbing it of the sap which is its source of life and strength.

Like the interloping cuckoo, who lays her eggs in the nest of the hedge-sparrow, so that they may flourish at the expense of their unconscious hosts, the mistletoe settles upon the apple tree or hawthorn, without so much as by your leave or with your leave, and calmly commences to deprive its unfortunate entertainer of the very juices which it has stored up in his woody tissues for its own profit.

You will always find the mistletoe growing in a great bush from the forked branch of a tree, and it is in the centre of this fork that the roots of the parasite take hold. Here the bark is thinner and more delicate, and the long fibres of the parasite can more easily penetrate through the woody coating down to the soft tissue and juicy sap below. Now perhaps you will wonder how the seed of the mistletoe ever got to this convenient fork, and found a resting-place just at the point where two apple stems unite. You may think that perhaps the seed was blown thither by the wind, or carried by those great gardeners, the insect family.

No, this time it is a bird who is responsible for planting the mistletoe just where it will thrive the best.

This bird is called the missel-thrush, because he is so fond of the berries of the mistletoe, and commonly feeds upon them. These berries contain the seed of the plant, for you know that all plants which bear berries are propagated by this means. The berry consists of some eatable stuff surrounding the seed, which is usually hard—in the case of the plum, you know, it has a stony coat which is strong enough to protect it from the digestive juices of any animal that chances to eat the fruit. The missel-thrush, attracted by the sticky pulp of the mistletoe berries, eats away, but does not swallow the hard, nut-like seeds which lie safely embedded in the viscid mass; they, being sticky, are gummed to the feet and bill of the bird, and when he has finished his repast he flies away with them safely attached to him. By-and-bye he grows hungry again, and visits other trees in search of food, perhaps a healthy apple tree on which he hopes to find a good crop of mistletoe berries; but alas! he is disappointed, and having perched on a branch only to find none of the fruit which he so dearly loves, he begins—not as the old man in the rhyme, to “scratch his head and think” what he shall do next, but—to rub off the uncomfortable adhesions against a forked branch, which is the very spot which best suits the young mistletoe for sprouting.

So the bird and the plant are really a small co-operative society, each having a share in the profits; while, I am afraid, the apple tree represents the unfortunate shareholder, who supplies the capital and receives no dividends; because the mistletoe, whom we must regard as the sleeping partner in this concern, is as fraudulent and dishonest a one as could be found in the whole length and breadth of the vegetable kingdom.

The missel-thrush is pursued by a singular nemesis for his unconscious share in this swindling of the defenceless apple tree, because from the berries of the mistletoe man makes the very bird-lime which so often lures him to destruction.

SUTHERLAND WALKER.





### King Christmas.

**H**E is come ! he is come ! a monarch he,  
 By his broad, bright reign over land and sea ;  
 A king with more than a kingly sway,  
 For he wields a sceptre that *hearts* obey.  
 He comes to us with a song and a shout,  
 And a tinkle of laughter round about,  
 And a rhyme of bells  
 That sways and swells  
 Cheerily under the faint, brief blue  
 That, crowding at nightfall, the stars look through.  
 He comes in joy to our household ring,  
 Meet him, and greet him, and crown him king.

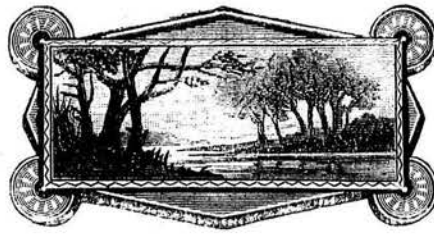
To lowly cottage and lordly hall  
 He comes, with a blessing for each and all ;  
 He holds his court by the blazing hearth,  
 For he loves the joyance of household mirth.  
 The boys all hail him with shout and glee,  
 For a rare boy-loving old king is he.

They deck their homes,  
 And watch as he comes  
 Down the dark of the winter night ;  
 They weave him a garland of holly bright,  
 When he comes with gifts to their joyous ring,  
 And meet him, and greet him, and crown him king.

He mends the links in Love's broken chain,  
 And drifting hearts are drawn near again.  
 He brings us back, amid smiles and tears,  
 Our dear ones, over the gulf of years ;  
 He sings to us echoes, sweet and low,  
 Of the song that was sung so long ago  
 To the shepherds of old,  
 As they watched the fold,  
 Of "peace on earth," and to men "goodwill,"  
 And softly the same sweet story still  
 King Christmas tells in our social ring ;  
 Then meet him, and greet him, and crown him king.

A. GRAHAM.





## A Christmas Carol.

Words and Music

by COTSFORD DICK.

I. Now, all good Chris - tian folk, re - joice! And lis - ten to our sto - ry: How

watch - ful shep - herds saw one night The hea - vens filled with glo - ry.

II.

Amazed, they heard the Angels call,  
" Good tidings are we bringing,  
For Christ is born in Bethlehem,  
His praise let all be singing."

III.

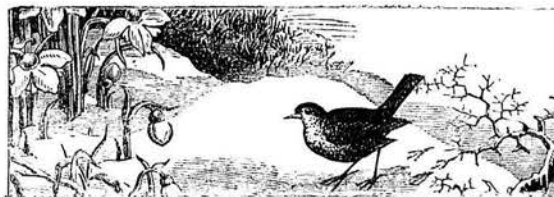
With joy they hastened there to find,  
Within a manger lying,  
A little Child, who to the world  
Should tell of Love undying;

IV.

Of Love, all fear to cast away,  
Though life be dark and dreary;  
Of Love to welcome Home at last  
The wandering and weary.

V.

To God, who sent this Love to us,  
Be honour, praise, and glory;  
And peace, good-will be unto you  
Who listen to our story.



The labours of THE XII-MONTHS  
set out in NEW PICTURES & OLD PROVERBS

WISE SHEPHERDS say that the age of man  
LXXII years and that we liken but to one  
hole year for evermore we take six yeares to  
every month as JANUARY or FEBRUARY and  
so forth, for as the yeare changeth by the



twelve months, into twelve sundry manners so  
doth a man change himself twelve times in  
his life by twelve ages, and every age lasteth  
six yeare if so be that he live to LXXII. For three  
times six maketh eighteen & six times six  
maketh xxxvi And then is man at the  
best and also at the highest and twelve times  
six maketh LXXII & that is the age of a man.



Here comes I, king Cuts and Scars - Right from the Turkish wars. The 4th number



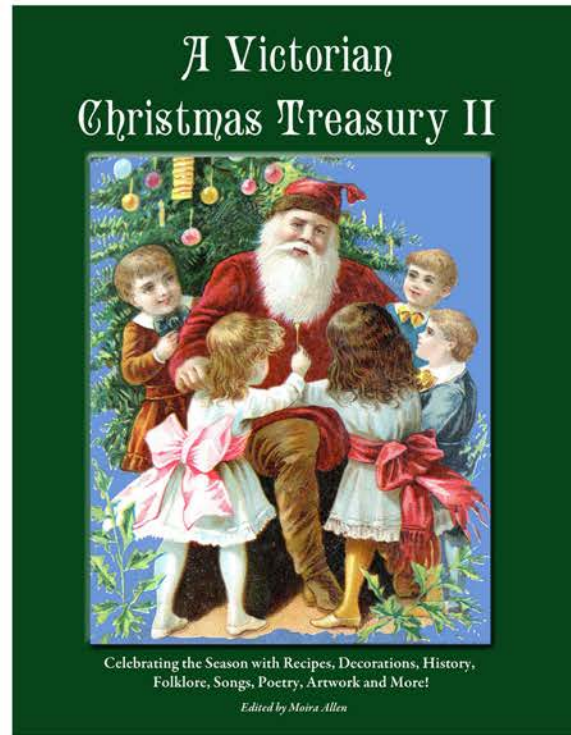
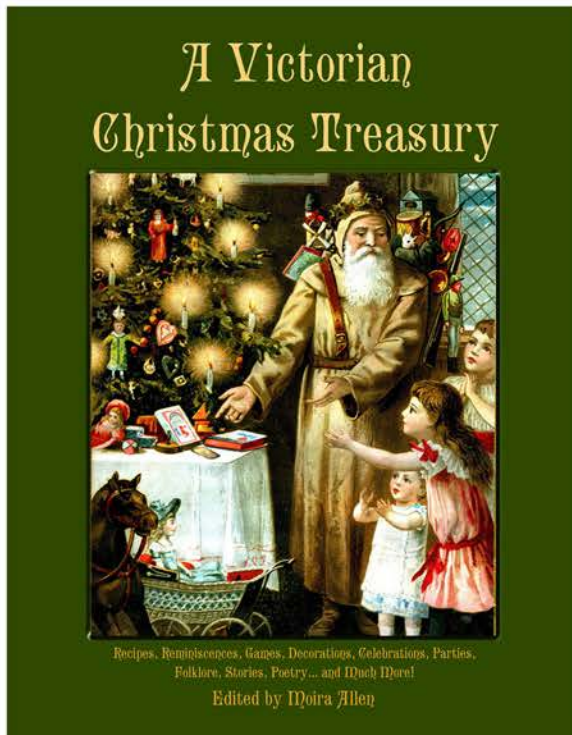
DECEMBER

Then cometh DECEMBER full of cold  
with frost and snow with great winds and  
stormy weather, that a man may not la-  
bour nor nought doe: the sun is then at  
the lowest that it may descend, then the bees  
the earth is hid in snow, then it is good to hold  
them ne the fire, and to spend the goods that they  
gathered in summer. For then beginneth man's



haire to wax white and gray and his body crook-  
ed and feeble, & then he loseth the perfect understand-  
ing, and that six yeares maketh him full LXXII  
yeare, and if he live any more, it is by his good guid-  
ing & dieling in his youth. Howbeit that a man  
may live till he be an hundred yeares of age,  
but there are but few that come thereto.  
— In DECEMBER keep yourself warm & sleep. —

# We Wish You a Victorian Christmas...



A festive tree... sparkling baubles... the holly and the ivy... glowing candles and firelight... cards and greetings from those we love... So many of the things we love best about Christmas, from Jolly Old St. Nick to Ebenezer Scrooge, come to us from Victorian days!

Now you can bring an authentic Victorian touch to your holiday celebrations with *A Victorian Christmas Treasury* and *A Victorian Christmas Treasury II*. Discover mouth-watering recipes, unique ways to decorate your home, “new” Christmas carols, and delightful parlor games. Host the perfect Victorian holiday tea! Enjoy tales of holiday celebrations from the blizzards of the American prairie to the blistering sun of the Australian colonies. Plus, discover Christmas as depicted by the wonderful artists of the Victorian world - visions guaranteed to put you in the holiday spirit!

These beautiful collections take you inside the Victorian home and around the world. If you love Christmas, you'll love our *Victorian Christmas Treasuries* - so make them a part of your holiday traditions today! (They make great gifts, too.)

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books/Christmas.shtml](http://VictorianVoices.net/books/Christmas.shtml)

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