[Continued from the Eighth Page.] creature, whose thoughtless soul finds expresion in a never-ending titter, is commanded to cast herself flat upon the floor, and in this irritable posture to whistle "Yankee Doodle" under a chair, without laughing, the Christmas dinner gets a shaking that materially assists in its digestion.

But every country under the sun, and each particular neighborhood, has its own especial pastimes for this merriest day of all the year, and to attempt their mere enumeration would be a wearisome and thankless task.

### CHRISTMAS SUPERSTITIONS.

The Crowing of the Cocks-Spinning on Christmas-Day-The Cattle at their Devotions-Taking Down the Evergreens-The Burning of the Yule-Log-The Stranger on the Grate, and Other Omens.

It is not unnatural that the Christmas season should have many peculiar superstitions attaching to it, nor that some of them should still linger in the minds of the people. One of the most ancient and curious of these was that con-

The Crowing of the Cocks.

Silent during the hours of darkness through out the rest of the year, it was believed in olden times that "this bird of dawning" crowed from the setting of the sun on Christmas eve to its rising on Christmas morn. Shakespeare has seized upon this popular tradition, and turned It to good advantage in one of the ghost scenes in Hamlet. "Marcellus" reminds his companions that the ghost "faded on the crowing of the cock," and then continues in the following beautiful strain:-

"Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes' Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
This bird of dawning singeth all night long;
And then, they say, no spirit stirs abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planet strikes;
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
Se hallow'd and so gracious is the time." In old times there was a prejudice among the people of Scotland against

Spinning on Christmas-Day, they believing that it was nothing less than sacrilege to be so engaged. The Calvinistic preachers, overflowing with anti-Christmas pre-judices, took especial pains to rid their flocks of idea. Their efforts in that direction are thus described in Jhone Hamilton's "Facile

"The ministers of Scotland-in contempt of the wher hate daves observed be England—cause their wyfis and scruants spin in open sicht of the people upon Yeul day; and the raffectionnate auditeurs constraines their tenants to yok their pleuchs on Yeal day, in contempt of Christ's Natiuitie, whilk our Lord has not left ynpunisit; for thair oxin ran wod [mad], and brak their nakis, and learnit [lawed] sum pleugh men, as is notoriously knawin in sindri partes of Scotland."

The Devotion of Cattle.

In the counties of Cornwall and Devon, in England, it was long believed, and it is proba-ble that the notion still lingers there and in other out-of-the-way places, that at twelve o'clock the cattle in their stalls would fall upon their knees and make "a cruel moan, like Christian creatures." It is also said that these dumb brutes, knowing naught of the change of style in reckoning the year, continued their devo-tions on the eve of the old Christmas. The tra-dition probably originated in the fact that in many of the old pictures of the Nativity the ox and ass are represented as being upon their knees, in acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the new-born babe.

Down with the Evergreens.

We have already stated that, according to the canons of the ecclesiastics, all the Christmas decorations of churches and houses must be re-moved before the second of February. If any of the evergreens were suffered to remain after that period, it was considered an omen of ill, as expressed in the following lines by Herrick:

"For look, how many leaves there be Neglected there maids trust to me, So many goblins you shall see." There were likewise many superstitious no-

The Burning of the Yule-Log.

It was the custom to deposit in some secure place the charred remains of the Yule-log, from which to light its successor on the ensuing And it was believed that the preservation of this remnant would unfailingly secure the house against are throughout the coming

So, too, if a person who was troubled with a squint should chance to enter the half while the log was burning, the omen was considered un-propitious. A like idea attended the arrival of of a person with bare feet, more especially when that person happened to be a flat-footed woman.

The Stranger in the Grate

was another omen which was variously inter-preted, according to the circumstances. As is well known, the action of the fire on the smoke arising from the coals causes it to assume fun-tastic forms, from which it is possible for a Hvely imagination to picture anything that happens to come in mind. The rank of the fanciful stranger was therefore determined by the height of the bar to which the flake of smoke for the moment adhered. The stranger's perfections were determined by the outline of the flake, each jag or rent in which betokened a corresponding defect. The stranger would bring joy or sorrow, according as the fire burned bright or low; and should the flames suddenly start up in a sparkle, it was augured that a hero from the wars was close at hand, If any auxious maiden desires to know just when her hero will arrive, she must clap her hands before the grate, and calculate the days of waiting by the time consumed by the flake of smoke in falling from its place. Among

Other Omnious Occurrences. If a person unluckily snuffed out a candle, his or her pairing with one of the opposite sex during the coming year was a thing not to be thought of; unless, indeed, a spark should remain, from which the candle could be re-kindled by blowing on it. So it was believed that bread baked on Christmas-eve would never mould; and when Christmas fell on a Sunday, good luck awaited every one, while the reverse ras the case when the festival happened on a

## CHRISTMAS PRESENTS.

The Christmas Gift-The Legend of Santa Claus-Christmas Charities.

The crowning glory of the Christmas season is The Christmas Gift.

It is in the expectation of this that the young hearts of every Christian household beat high and wild with hope for many weeks. And not alone by them are the amenities of the holiday season thus looked forward to with eager longing. Sad, indeed, is the lot of him or her for whom, on Christmas morn, there is not at hand some token, however slight, of the remembrance of relatives and friends. Such an one is virtually an outcast, a being who has no place at the Christmas board or sround the Christmas hearth. For the most attractive way in which this passion for gift-making can be indulged, we are

The Legend of Santa Claus. This shadowy personage is variously known in this country and the German Fatherland, from which last the tradition is derived, as

Twas the night before Coristmas, when all thro' the house

Not a creature was silrring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimneys with care.
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there:
The children were nestled all saug in their beds,
While visions or sugar-plums danced through their
heads;



WAITING FOR SANTA CLAUS.

And mamma in her kerchief, and I in my cap,
Has just settled our brains for a long winter's nap.
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters, and thre w up the sas';
The moon on the branst of the new fallen snow,
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below.
When what to my wondering eye should appear,
But a ministure sleigh and eight tiny remder,
With a little old driver, as lively and quick,
I knew, in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eag'es his coursers they came.
And he whistied and should and called them by name;
Now Dasher! now Dancer! now Prancer! now
Vixen!
On. Cemet! on, Cup'd! on, Donder and Blixen! WAITING FOR SANTA CLAUS.

Now Dasher! now Dancer! now Prancer! now Vixen!
On Cemet! on, Cup'd! on, Donder and Bixen!
To the top of the porch! To the top of the wall!
Now dash away, dash away, dash away, all!
As leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle mount to the sky,
so up to the housetop the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of tors and St. Nicholas, too.
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing or each little heof.
As I drew in my head and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.
He was dressed all in fur from his head to his toot.
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back.
And he looked like a peddier just opening his pack.
His eves—how they twinshed his dimples—how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, als nose like a cherry;
His droll little month was drawn an like a bow,
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow.
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth.
And the smoke it entirelyd his head like a wreath;
He had a broad face, and a little round belly.
That shook when he laughed, 'ike a how if all of jelly.



"A RIGHT JOLLY OLD ELF." And I laughed, when I saw him, in spite of m yself. A wink of his eye and a twist of his head, soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread. He spake not a word, but went straight to his work, And filled all the wookings; then turned with a jerk, And laying his finger aside of his nose. And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose. He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle, and away they all flew, like the down of the thistle; But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight. 'Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!''

Closely associated with Christmas gifts a

Closely associated with Christmas gifts are Christmas Charities.

But while the former passes only from relative to relative, or from friend to friend, the latter embrace all humanity, and have special reference to the poor. In almost all Christian lands it has been the custom for the rich to furnish the poor in their neighborhood with a substantial Christmas dinner, in addition to the be towing of various other favors on that great So, too, in the public corrective instiholiday. tutions, it is usual for the corrupted and impo-verished elements of the population to be treated to a feast that does not shame the day. These occasions afford faint glimmers of that bright and joyous life which throughout the rest of the year is unknown to the subjects of poverty and crime.

## CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD.

Special Christmas Customs in Particular Countries - In England - Devon hire - Cheshire -Manchester-Christmas in Scotland-In Ireland - In France - In Germany-In the United

States.

We have thus far given a systematic account of the origin, history, and character of the great Christmas Festival; and in course of so doing we have necessarily treated of most of the peculiarities which characterize it in the Old World and the New alike. There remains, however, a number of special customs of particular countries and localities which we shall now take up in order, commencing with our Mother Country.

Special Christmas Customs in England.

In the county of Devon, as we have already seen under the head of "Christmas Sports," the burning of the Yule-log was attended with ceren.onies unlike those prevalent in other sections of the country. We have also noted the peculiar superstition there prevalent concerning the devotion of the cattle on Christmas-eve. Devonshire, in truth, appears to have a Christ-mas peculiarly its own. Still another local custom is yet in vogue in some localities of the county. On Christmas-eve the farmer, with his family and friends, are in the habit of partaking of hot cakes dipped in cider, the beverage itself being used to wash down the crumbs. This done, the party proceed to the orchard and make an offering of a portion of these savory dishes to the apple-trees. In the fork of the tree the cake is deposited with due cere-mony, while the tree itself is drenched with the juice of its fruit. Meanwhile the men are firing off guns and pistols, and the women and girls are

shouting this doggerel verse;-"Bear blue, apples and pears enow Barns full, bags full, sacks tull. Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!"

In the county of Norfolk they formerly had a similar custom of sprinkling the orchards and meadows with spiced ale. In the neighborhood of the New Forest, in Hampshire, a similar

Cremony is still practised.

Cheshire likewise has its peculiar customs.

In Chester and the neighboring villages crowds singers parade the streets on Christmas eve, ceiving substantial entertainment at every receiving substantial entertainment at every house which they honor with a call. So, by an ancient custom of the country, servants engage themselves to their employers from New Year's eve to Christmas Day only. During the intervening seven days the masters are obliged to shift for themselves, as all their late employes, in holiday attire, are then to be found in the larger towns, making merry with the

Santa Claus, Kris Kinkle—a corruption of Christ—Kindlein or Infant Christ—and Saint Nicholas; and from the various attributes assigned him the latter is evidently his great prototype. We could give no better version of the story than is found in the following immortal poem, by Clement C. Moore:—

savings of a year. It is then that the keepers of shops and public houses drive a thriving trade by day, while at night the towns are made hideous by the revelries of the thoughtless crowds. Terpsichors and Bacchus then reign supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme, as they did during the celebration of the supreme.

Most of the churches abandon which is still a marked characteristic of the festival as celebrated in our Mother Country. And yet, we believe that, outside of New England, where the old Calvinistic leaven is not yet extinct. tion of master and servant was, for the time, in

like manner effectually dissolved.

At Manchester they have a fashion of celebrating Christmas in a way that is highly charorating Christmas in a way that is highly characteristic of the England of three and four centuries ago. Under the superintendence of the Directors of the Mechanics' Institution, an annual "Christmas Party" is held each year in the monstrous Free-Trade Hall, which can accommodate full five thousand people. The President of the Institution takes the characterists. the opening of the ceremonies, but he is soon superseded by the jolly "Lord of Misrule," under whose direction masking, mumming, and singing have full sway. Sometimes there is also a procession of the months, at other times of the seasons, and at all times of the old-fashioned Wassail-Bowl. Nor is the bringing in of the Boar's Head ever omitted. At one of these festivals, recently, the great national drama of saint George and the Dragon was represented in handsome style. The Patron-Saint of England, after performing produces of valor, the merest mention of which would stagger the belief of our readers, at last encountered the ferocious "Dragon," whom he slew after a hot and forious contest. The debris of the battle was then cleared away, when the defiguted spectators belook themselves to tripping "the

There are many other localities in England in which interesting local ceremonies are still practised, but we must hasten on to

Christmas in Scotland. As we have already stated, it is only in the Highlands, and in a few sections of the southern portion of the country, that the lestivities of the winter solstice are conducted at Christmas.

In these sections, at early dawn on Christmas-Day, the housemaid proceeds to make, from mea which was steeped two weeks before in somans-bone, the Prechdachdan sour, or sour scones. These fluished, the housemaid turns her attention to the baking of hard cakes and soft cakes, and other edibles, among which we find such eutlandish and incomprehensible names as brandered bannocks and pannich perm. The sowans, a sort of oatmeal porridge, are then boiled down to the consistency of molasses; and by this time the lagan le-vrich, or "yeast bread," is ready. These various dishes are then served and the whole family while still in hest; and up to the whole family while still in bed; and not till old and young have emptied their bickers do they condescend to rise.

The time between rising and dinner is passed by the old people in consulting the signs of the coming year, and by the young in boisterous sports, among which the prominent ones are swinging, prize shooting, and ball throwing. The dinner itself is substantial and tempting. One of the favorite dishes is termed sonsy or saveury haggis, which is a jumble of sheep's maw, lung, heart, and liver, mixed with suet, omons, pepper, and salt; or of the latter and oatmeal alone. To the dinner succeeds the bowl, and when it has had a free and easy circulation, thereby raising the spirits of the com pany to the proper pitch, they hasten to the ball-room or the card-table, and pass the remainder of the day in great good-humor with themselves and with all the world.

One of the characteristic features of a Christmas in Ireland

is the practice of a barbarous sport, termed "Hunting the Wren." To this diminitive bird the Irish people profess a great antipathy, which had its origin, according to tradition, in several different ways. By some authorities it is said that at the battle of Glinsuly, in county Donegal, the Catholics would have surprised the Protestant army sleeping, had the latter not been awakened by some wrens who were dancing and picking away on their drums. A similar incident is also, by some writers, attributed to the invasion of Ireland by the Danes. By others it is said that the superstitious awe in which the Druids held the wren, whom they con-sidered the King of all the Feathered Tribe, caused the first Christian missonaries to persethe moffensive bird, and by their command it is hunted to the death with great glee to

the present day.

Be this as it may, wren hunting is one of the most boisterous and attractive of the Irish holiday sports. There is, indeed, a dispute as to whether the proper day for the hunt is Christ-mas or St. Stepnen's, although we believe it is at present practised only on the former. On this day the wren-or "the Devil's Servant," as t is called by its mortal loes-is hunted with untiring zeal, and battered to death wherever

To the hunting of the wren succeeds the cere mony of the "Wren-Bush," In this the staughtered bird is suspended by the leg to a "bush" of holly and ivy, and in this manner is carried through the village streets, from door to door. at the head of a merry procession of men, women, and children. The ceremony is termi-pated by a regular Irish frolic, in which fun, dancing, and love-making vie for the mastery. In former times the procession was attended with much greater pomp than at present, the royal bird being decked with gay ribbons, and borne atolt by persons selected for the occasion; while their followers were arrayed in grotesque costumes, and had in their company the declee of horby horses, tiery dragons, and rampant serpents, who frisked their tails about in a manner that contributed greatly to the editica-tion of the crowd of spectators.

Christmas in France is not what it is in England or America. In the first place, a Frenchman abhors a plum-pudding. His Christmas, to English eyes, at least, is therefore a very insignificant affair. It is nevertheless an occasion of great merriment, and it has become a custom on that day to appease family quarrels, to settle upon marriages, and to persuade dissatisfied couples again to risk the sorrows of wedded life, for the sake of its manifest joys. The most attractive element in the leasting of the day is a rare and palatable election of Southern fruits, which at this season of the year are brought into Paris in enormous quantities. Grand ballets are to be seen at the theatres, and balls and soupers are the entertainments which are provided for such as frequent the gaming-houses. At midnight, too, on Christ-mas eve, the priests are accustomed to celebrate mass in an impressive manner, the churches and altars being profusely and elegantly deco-rated. The singing on these occasions is par-ticularly good, and is listened to by great crowds of eager and happy people.

The English custom of burning the Yule-log is copied after in some sections of the country.

where a large log is placed upon the hearth at six o'clock on Christmas Eve. This was at one time regarded as a sure protection from pestilence during the whole of the ensuing year for all who sat around its blazing coals. The legend Santa Claus likewise lingers in France, that popular individual there passing under the name of Bonhomme Noel. Shoes, instead of stockings, are used as receptacles for the toys and candies intended for the little folks. Christmas in Germany.

The great teature of the Christmas festival in Germany is the Christmas tree. This beautiful custom is almost universal in this country, although in England it was quite unknown until within the last quarter of a century. In Germany it is a very ancient custom, and had its origin in all probability in some of the mediseval pageants which were so popular on the con-tinent. The tree is usually of fir, although both birch and yew are used. The Christmas tree is there always illuminated, the smaller gifts dangling from the boughs, while the more bulky ones are deposited around it on the table. In the Catholic sections of Germany, the Christchild, from whom the gifts are alleged to come, is frequently personated by a person robed in white, and bearing a crown and wings of gilt. But this feature, being considered irreverent on account of the deceit which it involves, is said to be falling into disuse.

Christmas in the United States. It is scarcely necessary for us to dwell at any length upon the special observance of Christ-mas in our own country. Every one is familiar with it, and the only points that require any explanation have already been touched upon. Our people are, perhaps, not quite so bolsterous were their English ancestors, not entirely

he year. Most of the churches, especially those of the Episcopal denomination, are handsomely decorated, and services appropriate to the occasion are held on Christmas morning. The remainder of the day, as well as the preceding evening, and, as a general thing, the entire week between Christmas and New Year is given up to social enjoyment, especially on the part of the children. The principal charm which the occasion has for them, however, is fluid of the Christmas gift. The chimney is the favorite channel through which the presents reach them and Kris-Kinkle is the pairon saint to whom they are taught to ascribe the un-bounded generosity of which they are the happy recipients. In many families the Christmas tree is preferred to the stocking, and in many others both are called into requisition.

A valuable lesson in the art of human kind-ness, and one well suited to the day, can be gleaned from the scene presented by a Christmas tree in a family of the poorer class. Around a little scrub of a pine, in the branches of which repose half a dozen gingerbread and a few sticks of peppermint candy, behold the dazzled urchins gathered, each one arrayed in his best bib and tucker, his simple heart thrilled with a joy that has been unknown for many dreary and weary months! How much happiness even a few dimes can purchase.

And now, having fulfilled the promise given at the outset, by collecting almost all that is known, and certainly all that is of any value of interest, concerning the origin, history, and celebration of the anniversary of Christ's Nativity, we again, and in all sincerity, invoke for you, kind reader, "A MERRIE CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPIE NEW YEAR"!

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## LEGAL NOTICES.

IN THE ORPHANS' COURT FOR THE CITY AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA.

Estate of HOPE, Minors.

The Auditor appointed by the Court to audit, settle, and adjust the account of ROBERT D. MORRIS, Guardian of GEORGE B. HOPE and MARY B. HOPE, children or MATTHEW B. and AGNES C. HOPE, children or MATTHEW B. and AGNES C. HOPE, deceased, and to report distribution of the balance in the hands of the accountant, will meet the parties interested for the purpose of his appointment, on Menterested for the purpose of his appointment, at his office, No. 402 WALNUT Street, in the city of Philadelphia.

12 14 in with

Letters of Administration upon the said estate having been granted to the undersigned all persons indebted thereto will make payment, and those having claims, will present them to.

JACOR KLEMM, Administrator, No. 3714 BRIDGE Street; ROBERT P. DECHERY, No. 209 S. FIFTH Street.

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