# Democratic Watchman.

# BY P. GRAY MEEK.

#### A NEW XMAS.

A NEW XMAS. The pastor was in his study, his brow was fur-rowed with thought, And wisdom to guide him rightly for many a day he'd sought, And there was not a single volume on the shelves above or below That could throw any light on the problem that puzzled and vexed him so. For the harvest season was over, and Christ-mas was close at hand, And the glow of the rising splendor already illumed the land; And'there on the desk before him, in orderly neatness lay The sermon he meant to del'ver to his people on Christmas day. So 'twas not this that disturbed him, nor was he a moment vexed By any doubt or delusion in regard to his chosen text; Eve he neached but a simple general in lap.

by any double of utracher in register in an chosen text; For he preached but a simple gospel, in lan-guage as terse and plain As the smooth, round pebbles that David took when the mighty giant was slain. The pastor thought of his little flock, the chil-

dren great and small, And great was the loving kindness with which he regarded all; And yet a wave of trouble ran over his heart

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said it, and Maggie, looking at the window, against which the dark pressed close outside, echoed the sigh. She was but 12 years old, yet a good deal of hard experience can be crowded into twelve years sometimes. "Your pa went to town to look for work again, Maggie."

And yet a wave of trouble ran over his heart because They thought much less of Jesus Christ than they did of Santa Claus. For one and another whispered—their words had an eager ring,— "What shall I get on Christmas ? What will Santa Claus bring ?" "Mat shall I get on Christmas ? What will Santa Claus bring ?" "Mat as everywhere and ever the thirst for gain increased. The charm of a kingly presence was missed from the royal feast. The pastor sat in his study, when his good wife opened the door, And together they held communion and talked the trouble o'er; And she, being quick of fancy, in a moment or two had planned A better way for keeping the day that was now so close at hand. full. She had made up her mind that away." whatever she brought, it must be something that would fill the stockings very full, indeed. At odd moments, when she could hide herself from the children, she busied herself mending the worn old stockings so that they would sat down in front of the fire, while her

sat down in front of the fire, while her next Sabbath morn, And to brain and heart, like a swift-winged dart, was the startling message borne. For he spoke in words of fire the truth they must all believe: "The Master has said: 'It is far more blessed to give than to receive;" And if at the Christmas season you'd be richly and truly blest, "The pace and good-will to men may fill the length and breach and bead, "That peace and good-will to men may fill the length and breach of the tand."

send for it Chris'mas eve."

oh, crisp and clear Christmas dawned that year: the church was with holly drest, wear with bolls rang out a merry chime that and down the aisles were choed from east to west;
And the bells rang out a merry chime that and down the aisles were choed from east to west;
And around the datar and down the aisles were baskets and barrels stowed.
While up on the pulpit and into the pews the didn't been yere long, and Santy Claus i box, and she was almost perfectly hap.
While up on the pulpit and into the pews the didn't been yere long, and Santy Claus i box, and she was almost perfectly hap.
While up on the pulpit and into the pews the didn't know we was yere, but Joe gathered from near and far.
Oh, happy were pastor and people as they ight of Bethlehem's star;
And hapy the poor and needy to whom were the gott im think it was true!''
Their hearts revived and illumined by the gott 'em alone! You ain't pewer the good things given ''' the good things given '''' the good things given ''''' the good things given '''' the good

house, towards town.

hold what was put into them. And how she worked! The next of them paid any attention. by her, or jostled against her, but none

week was cold and stormy, but that She went slowly along and peeped didn't matter. She couldn't afford to in at the window where she had select lose any time. A wind-storm one night ed the little toys that were to have fillblew down a great many nuts, and as ed those empty stockings at home. she was there first the next morning Some of them were still there. A man denly, turning her big eyes upon the worn face in the corner, "I never thought about it before, but folks is cough was worse, and she was forced "My little chap'd think the world an evil fortune overtook her, for Joe's and was saying in a big, hearty voice : Santa Claus had ever come, lauged all cough was worse, and she was forced "My little chap'd think the world the while her happy tears were raining to spend part of her money for medi- was comin' to an end if he didn't get down on the boy's eager face.

Maggie wandered on, the loneliest, the most desolate little creature in all the land. Presently she heard the length and breadth of the land."
There were apples and pears in plenty, and the mother in the dreary tone habitual with her. "I'd and become o' what other are settin" in the there were were were there of the set night with only fifty cents in her little sound of children's voices. It came

consecrated with tears. oh, crisp and clear Christmas dawned that Joe's a lookin' for Santy Claus! box, and she was almost perfectly hap-

All that day she went on tiptoe, and the stockings, and climbing upon a taken your money; I 'lowed to git on a her eyes shone like stars. A hundred chair, hung them on the nails himself. drunk with it, but I couldn't do it, times she caught Joe and Susie up in Having done this, and stood back to somehow, and walkin, roun', tryin' to her arms, hugging them tight and admire the effect, he wanted to be put fight it off, I lit on a job, deliverin' to bed. "For if we go to bed early," he said, "maybe Santy Claus 'll come along here first, before he gives all his things an' a dollar besides !"

Maggie could not stand it. She was no dream about that! When Joe, seized the old shawl, flung it over her head and shoulders and fled out of the Christmas tree, with all its branches

come? You thought he wouldn't, but

# The Only Way to Account for It.

The Christmas doll had come through the mails from a city several hundred miles away, and when it was taken out

annual reunion of families to tell us of the "mourned, the loved, the lost." A children's festival is sure to be

-CHRISTMAS.-Christ, the Lord, is born to-day! Hang the house with holly gay, Ring the tuneful bell! In the churches, vast and dim. Solely for the love of Him, The Te Deum swell! Meet the poor with open hands; Ask that Christ's Divine commands Sweetly in thee dwell! -Grace W. Halght, In Good Housekeeping.

Seasonable Thoughts.

Christmas tide is peculiarly a season of joy and festivity. Its "good cheer" has passed into a proverb. Christmas is the birthday of Christendom. It

may, in a sense, be said to be the birth-

day of all Christians. Those who celebrate no other birthday, celebrate this. There are none so poor as not to

find ways and means to secure a visit from Santa Claus on Christmas eve,

and none so rich as not to long for his visits. The festival is universal-not

confined to any sect of Christians, nor

to any nation nor group of nations. All

persons born in the peace of Christian-

religious institution. But while its

pious features are not forgotten, its

peculiarly human features are becom-

ing constantly more prominent. In it.

we remember not only our own kith

and kin, but our neighbors, our fellow-

citizens, our fellow-country-men, and

beyond all these all our fellow-beings-

only a minute fraction of whom we can

ever personally know. To assist at

such a festival makes us all better-it

widens our sympathies. The whole human race is one. Every person is

in one way or the other dependent upon some one else for everything that makes life tolerable. Commerce, even

in spite of wars and aggressions, is every year bringing all branches of the

human family into closer relations. Bad as the savage and semi-civilized nations and races are now treated by the highly civilized nations that come into contact with them, their treatment is much better than it was in the past. The world, in spite of cynicism, 18 get-ting better. The improvement is sure

The burning of the Yule log lights up happy homes. The sparks chase away the demons of discontent that seem to haunt many homes at all seasons of the year but Christmas. Many persons, perhaps most mature persons, while watching the sparks ascending, think of friends absent-some tempora-rily, some forever. The Egyptians

were in the habit of having a reminder of death at all their feasts. We re-

quire no material coffin at our great

if slow.

well celebrated. Children are not restrained by the prudential-motiveswhich often prevent mature persons "Six days off! Six days of twenty-four hours each, hours linked tle folks will have their way. Their fathers and mothers, even if they had to stint themselves in other directions, would be compelled to keep up Christmas in its pristine glory. We are at peace with all the world-indeed, it may be said of the present time as of the morn of the Nativity. "No war or battle's sound Was heard the world around." As a nation we were never more prosperous than now, This will be in fact, as well in name, a "Merry Christmas."- Er.

ity have an inheritance in it. Its celebration is becoming year by year more universal. It is difficult to find a person who does not now keep it as the greatest holiday. Fitting it is that He who came to But oh, the next morning! There proclaim peace on earth to men of good will should be honored in a festival of good humor. Christmas is of

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laden with stars, and then turned and Nobody noticed her-nobody. Peo- saw those bursting stockings-that ple with baskets and bundles hurried was a sight worth seeing! For didn't he scream and clap his hands until he waked Susie, who added her shouts to his? And didn't he presently leap into Maggie's arms, crying : "I knew it Mag! I just knew he'd

> I just knew he would !" And Maggie, the child for whom no

And happy the poor and needy to whom were the good things given That carried a blessing with them and lifted their souls to Heaven, For out of this rich abundance the hungry were sweetly fed. The naked were clothed, and the sick and sor-rowful cheered and comforted: And so great was the joy of giving, that pastor and people felt As if, with the wise men of the east, at the Saviour's feet they knelt.

Oh, never a brighter Christmas had dawned on the dull town, Never had richer blessings been scattered so

freely down; And taught by the Holy Spirit their selfish

And taught by this holy opine then solution greed to subdue, All hearts rejoiced—and on Christmas day was the Christ child born anew. —Josephine Pollard, in Demorest's Monthly.

#### How It Happened.

A Story of a Home That Santa Claus Never Visited.

BY JULIA TRUITT BISHOP.

It was just on the outskirts of town. The wind, which went whirling down the streets, making men button their overcoats more closely as they hurried home, caught a slender, childish figure and drove it along at a great rate, flapping the ragged old shawl as though it would tear it into shreds. The face hidden away under the big sun-bonnet was a brave and patient little face, but the clothing was thin, and the nose and hands were red with cold.

It was a bitter evening to the little girl trudging home in the dusk ; bitter without, if not within. She was so light, and the wind was so strong, that it really seemed that she was being treated very much as the brown leaves were-driven here and there just as the wind pleased; but fortunately it blew her in the direction she wanted to go, and finally through a tumble-down gate, up a disorderly walk and into the front door of a little house that leaned off one way while its chimney leaned off another, as though they were minded to part company.

A chorus went up from around the open fireplace: "There's Maggie! Is you cold, Maggie?"

And then the woman sitting in the chimney corner said :

"Well it's about time you was gittin' home. You stayed so long I thought you must be a-waitin' for the corn to grow, 'tore you brung the meal." filled for Christmas, and who else was there to fill them? Maggie set her

Whereupon the woman arose and began mixing the meal for corn bread. Maggie silently drew near the fire, trying to unfasten the shawl with her numb fingers. The two younger children, a pale, sickly looking boy of 7 and a girl of 3, came and stood one on each side of her, and laid their heads against her affectionately.

"Tell us what you saw, Mag," coax. ed the boy; but Maggie replied evasively :

"Oh, lots of things! More'n I could tell in a week! Sit down now, Joe that's a good boy, an' let Susie lay her head in your lap. Maybe she'll go to sleep. Mother, has father come back." Not yet," replied the mother, asshe

patted the corn pones into their proper shape and laid them in the skillet over hid them in an old cigar box, away up the glowing coals. She sighed as she on a high shelf.

"Let 'em alone! You ain't never | er get the work done the next morning had nothin' yourself, an' you've done and it seemed to her that her mother well enough !'' replied the woman ir- made excuses to keep her sweeping

to a chair by the fire.

place in my life for bein' out o' work. Been a huntin' for it all evenin' And with this declaration he manag-

went comfortably to sleep.

And this was the secret of the poverand wrethedness that had been Maggie's portion since she could remember.

Maggie lay for long hours that night listening to the wail of the wind around the little shanty, and thinking with anguish of the two little stockings that would be hung up by the mantel gie," said her mother, in that old, Christmas Eve, and how they would dreary tone. "Your pa took it. He still hang there, limp and empty, Christmas morning, and two faithful an' when things got so bad with 'im little hearts would be broken on ac- this mornin', he jest took it. I tried count of it.

The tears streamed down her cheeks a-talkin' to 'im.' in the dark at the thought. Her heart went out most of all to little Joe-poor she only half comprehended what had little Joe, to whom life had brought befallen her. Her face was deathly nothing but poverty and sickness. But pale and she was trembling. at last, out of her great trouble, a plan

occurred to her, and she went to sleep quiet, radiant with expectation. little, "father didn't take my money, did he?-the money I've worked so hard A mile away, down in the "bottom" was a pecan grove, where the public more, an' nothin' to put in poor Joe's were allowed free access. Afraid as stockin', after all ?" stockin', after all ?'

-thirty-five cents.

she was of boys and negroes and tramps "He took it, Maggie; an' I reckon and even of bears, for her timid imagihe's drunk enough on it by this time,' nation filled the grove with savage replied her mother, bitterly.

animals; unaccustomed as she was to Maggie put the box away and sat climbing, she yet went every day and managed to clamber awkwardly into trees and crawl out upon limbs and beat down the nuts ripened by the recent frost. After awhile the mother called to

She had a hard time. A slip and a Joe, who was fumbling in a box : fall one day lamed her a little, and "What are you after, Joe ?" The child came proudly forward came near proving far more serious.

Besides, the nuts on all the lower limbs with a hammer and two nails. had been pretty well shaken down, and "Here, Mag," he said, "come an' she dared not climb very high. But drive these up for me. They're to

she worked all the harder. There hang our stockin's on. The one at were two little stockings that must be this end o' the mantel-piece is mine an' the other one's Susie's! Drive 'em in stout, Mag, for the stockin's might be teeth and beat away at the limbs as heavy."

though her life depended on it. At "Joe," began Maggie tremblingly, the scale and weighed. Seven pounds come and see strangers like us-"

"Oh ! yes he would," cried Joe, his weeks to go on yet. Oh, the stockings should be filled! and perhaps she might get something to eat besides, something nice for little Joe. maybe, be in a fix,"

Maggie drove the nails in silence. Within the last two or three hours her and candy for the baby. She wrapped face had grown pale and drawn, as it the precious coins in a bit of cloth and might have looked after a severe illness.

Later in the evening Joe demanded "Maggie, my girl, I'm sorry I have and my wife were present."

and knelt there, holding her fast. brave Maggie gave her!

and scrubbing and bringing wood and "I don't think she's hurt," she said She had heard a step on the walk and knew it. Maggie opened the door silently. The man that came in walk-of her joy she caught Joe and Susie ed unsteadily, and hastened to drop in- both up, and danced about the room the child's father captured her and the Christmas every month? Why stolidwith them a few times, and then, hav- mother threw her arms about her neck ly await the anniversary of the birth of "Well, I didn't git no work agin," ing made some excuse to get them out he said thickly. "Never saw such a of the house, she climed upon a chair wet with grateful tears. "We mended and kissed her pale face, her own eyes will?" and took down the box that contained

nd took down the box that contained er treasure-She noticed as soon as she touched She noticed as soon as she touched shaking hands with her for the her treasureed to get his head upon a table and it that it felt strangely light, but it did twentieth time, "And you were standnot occur to her, even then, that any- ing on the sidewalk looking in? Thank thing was wrong. But when she step-ped down to the floor and opened the You'll never stand on the sidewalk holiday. Let us make the sweetness, box and it utterly empty, a look of again and watch my children play. The joy, the light that comes with Christ-horror and alarm flashed into her face. You'll be right here in the house with mas come oftener than once a year, "Mother!" she cried piteously, "mother! my money's gone! Did you I wish I could do something for you

move it mother?" right now-to-night! I can't wait till "'Tain't no use a-cryin' for it, Mag- to morrow !"

Then suddenly Maggie turned and stood before him, her hands clasped seen ye puttin' some up thar last week, and her face full of passionate appeal. "Oh !" she gasped, "could you fill yard." this mornin', he jest took it. I tried two little stockin's?"

"Two? Twenty-fifty of 'em !--why, to git 'im not to, but 'twan't no use where did she go, wife?"

Maggie had stood listening as though But Maggie was already halt way home. She was not conscious of running-she flew. Such a look was in mas it will not bear a man afterward. her face as she ran in and jerked down "Mother," she said, hoarsely, after a the two little stockings that her mother did not question her. Back again and into the basement where they still for ?---an' now it's too late to make any awaited her ! She held up the poor, tree on Christmas day there will be an worn, mended stockings, one in each hand

> "Here they are," she panted. "Joe hung 'em up, his an' Susie's an' I never had nothin' to put in 'em !"

The Judge was profoundly touched. down. The hardest heart that ever beat might have melted at the sight of the poor, forlorn little face. She didn't cry—she was too utterly crushed. The outge was projectingly fourtharly f

to little Joe. We don't need it any more.'

"Well done, little man !" cried his father; and the tree was despoiled of its lights and carried carefully out by Sam

Maggie went with the others like one the end of a week she took her stock of nuts up to one of the grocery stores, don't b'lieve they's anything in it. If home, with all its candles and ornaand tremblingly saw them poured into they is any Santy Claus, he wouldn't ments in position, ready to be lighted in the morning. In a dream she saw

the stockings hung, each on its own She clutched the money and went dark eyes flashing. "If he's as good nail, both of them nearly bursting with flying home as though her feet had as they say, an' I know he is, we're their load, and with the dearest little little This was a famous beginning the very folks he'll be sure to come an' toys pinned all over them and even wings. This was a famous beginning the very torks ne it be sure to come an tory platter the best indeed! There were several more see. An' if he comes, Maggie, an' hanging to the toes. In a dream she wasn't to find any stockin's, then he'd saw bundles and baskets laid at her deal." mother's feet.

When they had all gone away, too, it must have been in a dream that she heard her father coming home, steady and sober, for he came and put his arms around her, and said :

together with golden chains, days bound by silken ties, days of rosy dawn and It was into her mother's arms that golden sunset in the household. Six days off Christmas!

Christmas, when all the world is

We would not hinder the joys of this week nor of the next. But we may ask that all the pleasure be not split in one day or in a fortnight. Let us have souls for more Christmases. Heart. mas come oftener than once a year,

### Weather Proverbs for Christmas.

A warm Christmas, a cold Easter. A light Christmas, a heavy sheaf. A green Christmas, a white Easter. A green Christmas makes a fat grave

A wind on Christmas day, trees will bring much fruit.

If Christmas finds a bridge he'll break t; if he finds none, he'll build one. If ice will bear a man before Christ-The shepherd would rather see his wife enter the stable on Christmas than on any other day.

If the sun shines through the apple abundant crop the following year.

#### Old Time Epicures.

# Listen to the enumeration of good things, described by Whistlecraft, to have

these stockings up, dear, and send Sam in. I have some things that I want him to carry." "Papa," whispered one of the chil-dren, "let Sam take our Christmas tree to little Joe. We don't need it any bustard, Teal, mallard, pigeons, widgeons, and, in

Tea, mattara, pigeons, widgeons, and, m fine,
Plumb puddings, apple pies and custard,
And therewithal they drank good Gascon wine,
With mead and ale and elder of our own;
For porter, punch and negus were not known.

# When the Lovers Met.

From the New York Advertiser.

Tom-"Yes, we swore to remain true to each other. Then I went away for a

long time." Jack-"And she was always in your thoughts ?" Tom-''I thought a good deal of her

-I mean I thought of her a good

Jack-"And when you met you embraced her fondly, of course ?" Tom-"I would probably have done so were it not for our surroundings." Jack--"The encounter was public?"

Tom-"Yes, and both her husband

WASHINGTON, Dec. 22-The conversion of trade dollar bullion into stand. ard silver dollars, was completed today. The coinage of standard silver dollars is therefore at an end, unless a change shall be made in the policy of the Treasury Department through congressional enactment or otherwise. The coinage of 2,000,000 ounces of silver or \$2,585,000 a month under the act of July 14th. 1890, ceased on the first of July last, and the coinage of standard dollars since that date has been confined to the trade dollar bullion in the treasury.

This latter coinage was authorized by an act of March 3, 1891, which required the Secretary of the Treasury to coin trade dollar bullion into silver dollars, as soon as practicable. The total amount of this bullion on hand July 1st was 4,365,631 ounces, costing \$4,020,361, and the entire amount has been coined into silver dollars.

Leach, Director of the Mint, said this afternoon that while he was not authorized to speak of the future silver policy of the department he thought there is scarcely any doubt that the coinage of standard silver dollars will be continued at the San Francisco and Carson City mints in amounts sufficient to meet the necessities of the service. He estimated this at \$100,000 a month for each mint.

In the Grip's Clutches.

WILKESBARRE, Dec, 20.-An epi. lemic of grip is prevailing to an alarmng degree in this city. For the past ew days the disease has been increasng and to-day about one third of the citizens are sufferers from the malady. The doctors have more work than they can attend to, and business, except in the drug stores, is seriously affected by the epidemic.

Many of the conductors and motor nen on the electric roads are sick and have substitutes in their places. The newspapers find it difficult to get out an edition, as printers, pressmen, foremen and the staff are alike compelled to succumb to the epidemic. The cold snap has increased instead of diminishing the extent of the sickness and should it increase, Christmas here will be a gloomy one. A few of the smaller stores have been closed and the sign "sickness" hung on the doors. At present there seems to be no abatement in the ravages of the malady.

Bullion All Used Up.