Fairles Keep Christmas.

A fairy woke one winter night And looked about with glances t "I think I will arise," she said, "And leave my comrades in their bed, And I will go abroad and see How mortals fare." So, full of glee At such wild daring, forth she went On bold investigation bent.

The air was chill; the moon shone bright As ever on a summer night.

The ground was covered deep with snow, And trees stood leafless, row on row. The fairy shivered in the wind And said, "The friends I left behind In their deep slumber happier are Than I who rashly roam so far."

Yet on she went and sought the town And in amaze went up and down— Such lights, such music and good cheer As grace no other time of year, Such happy faces everywhere, Such glad release from fret and care, And homes so garlanded with green, As ne'er before the elf had se

"I thought the world was dull and drear In winter time," said she. "Oh, dear! I wish my comrades only knew How bright it is, how fresh and new, In its white dress; how every street Is all alive with bounding feet; How people laugh and sing and play-It surely is some festal day!"

Through street and house and church and

store
She flitted, wondering more and more
At all she saw and all she heard,
Hoping for some enlightening word,
When on a banner carried by She saw these words uplifted high:
"Rejoice, O earth, be glad and gay!
It is the blessed Christmas day!"

Away she sped o'er town and hill And field and wood and frozen rill, Unto a cavern warm and deep, And woke her comrades from their sleep. "Arise!" she cried. "Oh, come away! The world is keeping Christmas day!"
And ever since when birth bells chime The fairies help keep Christmas time. -Lillian Grey in Boston Transcript.

THE LIGHT IN THE COTTAGE.

"There was a light last night in thethe haunted cottage."

My wife's little mother spoke it with shiver and whisper at the breakfast Christmas morning. Toinette and I looked at each other as if to ask, "Is her old trouble coming back?" She, catching our glances, shook her head.

"No, my dears, there's nothing the matter with me," answering as if she had read our thoughts. "There was a light there," she reiterated. "I heard some one cough. There were strokes of a hammer and, a little later, a carriage was driven away. I saw it go."

She was so decided in voice and manner, so different for the moment from her usual gentle self, that I felt sure nothing ailed her head. We were very watchful of the dear old lady because she sometimes-not very often-had mild but temporary delusions. She had never entirely recovered from the shock caused by the tragic loss of her husband.

"It was Christmas night a year ago, John, that you saw a light there," remarked Toinette meditatively.

"I have not forgotten it," said I, "nor how, when I went to look into the matter, I plumped into a man coming down the front steps. What followed was something like this: 'Beg pardon,' I said. 'Being an officer and seeing a light in this empty house I thought tramps might have broken in.

"'I'm no tramp,' replied the man, speaking in a heavy bass voice, as if he had a cold.

" 'It was so odd a thing'-

'Odd or not,' he broke in, 'it's my ho e, to do with as I like. What's the time, officer? But never mind! Here's my carriage. Good night!' And he was driven away without so much as a glimpse of his face.

'Now. I'm not a bit superstitious" mother declared it with a vigor and positiveness that permitted no controversy, even had we, her children, thought or said anything to the contrary-"but it made my flesh creepy to think of any one being alone in that empty, horrible old shell."

"And then you went to bed and cried over it half the night," asserted Toinette reproachfully. "Your eyes show it, moth-

"Kill out my memory, daughter, and the tears will stop." Her lips quivered as she spoke. "You know I can't help it." "Yes, I know," and Toinette began to talk of other matters.

I might as well state right here, so that the story may be the better kept together, that misfortunes had in my case transformed me from a bookkeeper into a policeman, and I had found no way of turning myself back again. The station to which I was assigned was within five minutes' walk of the flat we called home. The cottage about which we had been talking was a small, one story structure, with steps coming directly down to the sidewalk in front and with a scrimpy, weed covered backyard, as if it were a refuse patch from some rich man's garden. Less than half a dozen years before it had been about in the center of a three acre tract devoted to "truck gardening," but the city had grown out far beyond it and was smothering it with great buildings of brick and stone. The exterior was kept in good condition by paint, but its interior condition was unknown, the owner plain-ly preferring that the property should remain tenantless. This cottage was directly in the rear of our building, facing a par allel street. An alley separated the two yards. From our rear windows we could look down on the premises, so that it was not difficult to notice any unusual happening. Among old women and children the place had the reputation of being haunted, a distinction that seems naturally to become attached to wornout and unoccupied places, and this one had not been lived in for many years. For my wife and her mother—the latter especially—the cottage was the reminder of the saddest period in their lives. One Christmas night, just 11 years before, the husband and father, David Vance, crazed by the ruin brought upon him by the perfidy of a friend and reduced to a condition of starvation, went out of that cottage into the blinding fury of a snowstorm and was not seen or heard of again. His family had afterward drifted around, being sometimes in one city, sometimes in another, until they had unwittingly come back to within a stone's throw of the birthplace of their bitterest recollections.

After the family had left the cottage the story ran that a subsequent tenant had murdered his wife there and that it was haunted not by the ghost of the slain, but by that of the slayer, who had been duly

and properly executed, and that for this reason no tenant would take the house at any rent. Still another legend, picked up by me in conversation with "old settlers" and considered from a professional point of view, was to the effect that the present owner was a man beyond middle age who had been disappointed in love, the object of his affection being the daughter of the woman who had been murdered and the man who had murdered her, and that he came to the house every little while, like one to the tomb of his departed, to mourn over his loss, the girl having considerately married the man she loved. It will be ob served that the little house seemed the nucleus of several tragedies, real or unreal, and therefore became an uncanny spot to the superstitiously inclined. A community of houses, like a community of persons, seems necessarily to cover disreputable constituents, and the cottage, from its mean ness of appearance and its unpleasant antecedents, looked more disreputable than any of its neighbors, and seemed, therefore,

always an object of suspicion. The light of the Christmas day had blended with the darkness of the Christmas night. I had traveled my beat as in duty bound. Our dinner had been eaten and all evidence that it had existed removed with housewifely skill and care. Frank, Toinette's big brother, had gone out for a mile walk, "to shake down his food," as he said. Toinette was reading to me, half dozing in a chair, and the clock had just struck the half hour after 8 when mother, with an unnatural excitement in look and action, came into the room.

"It's there!" she cried, breathing hard, her hand over her heart. "I've been watching for it. Somehow I felt sure that whoever was there last night would come

again tonight, just as last year." "What is the matter, mother?" said my wife, running up to her. "You frighten

"There, there, daughter. I didn't mean to scare you, but it excites me so to see a quiet thing like vellow light looking out between the blind slats of that empty house that I suppose I show my feelings. Toinette's forehead had two up and down wrinkles between her eyebrows as she looked at me with a hard stare. Then she spoke:

"John Austen-dear John-vou're big and ain't afraid of ghosts, and are a policeman besides. Now do go down to that shanty and find out what's inside. It will relieve mother's mind so."

I wasn't on duty, but an officer of the law ought always to be on duty is the way I look at it. So I got my work clothes on, put my star where I could show it easily and went away with the laughing threat of arresting the ghost.

Somebody or something was in the old house, sure enough. Threads of vellow light around the windows proved it. I pushed softly at the door of the little lean to in the rear. It noiselessly swung open. letting me into as mean and squalid a kitchen as I ever saw or heard of. It wasn't much bigger than a large closet. The stove was cold and rusty. Its front door was broken and hung by one hinge. The griddles had pieces knocked out of them. Only one pot or kettle was visible. Two panes of glass were gone from the one window, and rags were stuffed into the holes, the tight wooden shutters hiding them from outside view. A tallow candle, stuck in its own grease to the bottom of a ruined saucer, gave a swirling, smoky flame, by which I saw a few bits of dilapidated crockery on a shelf. The table was an inverted dry goods box, from which pieces had been broken for fuel. Great heavens! Into what a nesting place of poverty had I stolen my way? What did this opening scene promise?

My entrance had noiselessly forced open, just a hair's breath, the door to the adjoining room. Blowing out the candle, I enlarged the opening until my eye could take in the contents of the apartment. The first look showed a gray haired man scated at a table, his arms upon it and his head upon his arms. I was directly behind him, and my glances took in the length of the little room. Such a room and such a table! The plastering had dropped off the ceiling and sides, leaving ulcerous looking spots. What remained was of a dirty, gray color and a network of cracks. The lath showed

like the ribs of a skeleton. The table was covered with a cloth, clean, but porous with holes and fringed with tatters. In the center was a little kerosene lamp of glass, whose wick was so small as to afford little more than a firefly sort of glow, but it was enough to show a plate holding six potatoes with their jackets on and a half loaf of bread. Three plates turned down, three tumblers of water and knives and forks at each place, added to those articles which the man had pushed aside, were all the table held. Three vacant chairs, one at each plate, were notices of expected guests. There was no stove, and the air came cold and musty into my face through the crevice of the door. Warmly dressed though I was, I shivered with a dread that I was looking at the phantom of the dead murderer or at the real and crazed lover or at a tramp making a mockery of his Christmas dinner. The bowed down figure suddenly shook 9s with an ague. A groan came from it. A minute more the man was sitting stiffly erect, staring at the ta-

ble and muttering and sighing.

Very real, but very crazy, he seemed. None the less so when, rising to his feet, he became a figure of magnificent manhood-gray topped, but tall, muscular and dignified—a soldier in looks, even to the trimming of the heavy white mustache. His clothing was black, and not a glint of ornament was visible. What had this grand looking old man to do with this place of chilling misery? He was its foe by dress and bearing. Its unspeakable

poverty made it his enemy. He walked the room with long strides and heavy footfalls, the floor creaking and groaning under his weight. There was no cessation of his talking to himself until, placing his hands on the back of his chair, he halted and looked across the table at the vacant chairs. Then his mutterings changed to a loud tirade of self denuncia-

"This is the fifth time I have set this table and sat at it alone," he said. "Where are you, my loved ones? If you are dead, I pray God that your spirits may come and see my grief and shame and learn of my penitence If you are dead, then I mur dered you. I am a criminal, whether you are alive or dead. I am so guilty that I would not dare to tell the world of my cowardly act. For years I've here done penance on Christmas nights. This miserable hut is mine-my chapel of confes sion, my place of self punishment. What good is all my wealth if you are not with me to share it? Guilty coward that I was to flee from you! Money has not been lacking to find and restore you to me. Perhaps you starved to death and lie in the potter's field. If you are living, it must be that you remember me only with curses. I deserve them—indeed I do."

Then sinking on his knees he said:

"Good Lord, hear my prayer!" Give me back my loved ones! I have come to this

spot from the ends of the earth year after year that my past may never be forgotten by me. I ought to be dead, but I dare not die. I shall taste tonight of such food as we ate that night. All that we had. I would give up all my riches if I might eat it with my loved ones, but it is not to be

His chin came down upon his breast. He was a statue of despair. Clearly to me he was also crazy. He would have been considered so by any man in my place. Plainly enough he had worked himself into a frenzy and at that moment was suffering from a reaction. While he was in that mood and I was wondering what to do with him or for him there was a flash of light, a touch on my arm and a whispered:

'John, what is the matter?" It was Toinette, with my bullseye lantern. "You were so long gone that mother began to fret and worry and I said that we'd go after you. She's outside. Don't go! I'll get her." And she was out and back

again before I could do anything.
"A crazy man," I whispered, and gave them a chance to peep. All three were watching the man's back, when, with a heavy sigh, he raised his head, moved toward the front door and thence out upon the little porch. There were choking and gasping noises at my side and somebody clutched at my arm and hung on it heavily. It was for a moment only, for the pressure was instantly lightened and mother's voice said:

"John! John! That man is David! I'm sure of it. Let me get to him!" And the frail little woman actually struggled to put me aside, and doubtless would have screamed had I not clapped my hand over her mouth. "Hush! Be calm!" I said. "It is well

to be certain before we act."
"John, there's the table set just as it was set the night he? appeared and in the same room. And this is the anniversary night. Please let me in, John."

"Yes, mother, if you and Toinette will do just as I wish," for I had a plan in my mind to test the matter. This being agreed upon and the heavy tramp of the man still sounding upon the porch, I almost carried the two women from where we stood to the vacant chairs, into which they dropped in a half faint. As I turned away I lowered the wick of the small lamp so that discovery would not be immediate. The waiting was a long one-intolerable to the two weak creatures in their agonies of doubt and hope. Once mother gave a weak, hysterical cry, but smothered it immediately. Toinette was all of a tremble from cold and nervousness. At last the man came groping into the room, confused by its darkness. "Repentance is useless," I heard him say. "I shall come no more. God is not merciful to an old man like me. I have not the purpose or the will to

keep on hoping. Eh! What's this?" His hand was so shaky as he leaned forward over the table to turn up the wick of the lamp that he fumbled blindly for the screw and finally had to pull the light to ward him. With a full blaze on, he placed it heavily upon the table close to the two waiting women, and still leaning forward stared in their faces as if fascinated. They also were spellbound, and mother as white Toinette was, as she afterward confessed, frightened. The man, she said, 'seemed to be stabbing her with looks from his eyes." Would he never be done with that greedy stare?

Twice he raised a hand from the table and put it to his forehead as if dazed. A noise in his throat showed that he was trying to cry aloud as if he were in the agony of an insupportable dream. test was a cruel one, but it did not last long, perhaps a minute, though it seemed

a score of them. "Mother! Toinette!" The man fairly shrieked the names Their arms went out to embrace him.

"Alive and in this place tonight of all nights!" he cried. "God be praised!"

He was standing erect as he spoke, his clasped hands raised high toward heaven, his face upturned. "My penance is end-ed," he said to himself, and began to sway and clutch at the air and to fall as a great

Into my arms descended David Vance, like one tired out with hard labor. In the lap of the little mother I laid the great gray head that had, like hers, lived on hope so many years. The daughter's hands came, like bracelets of love, upon her father's wrists. Thus he rested until con sciousness came back and his opened eyes saw the loves of his old life, glorified through many tribulations.

At last, after 11 long years of such spiritual torture as befalls few people, the broken threads of his family life were once more in the hands of David Vance. He said so, with an indescribable pathos of look and voice, at the reunion supper that same night at the Westmoreland after the bewildered Frank had been added to the

party. "Not until tonight did I lose hope," remarked the old gentleman. "I can't give any reason for not surrendering to what seemed a certainty. Wherever I was, in the mines or in great cities, there was always within me a spiritlike confidence that some if not all of us would meet again. Tonight for the first time I despaired, and yet"-halting for a second and looking around the table with the eloquence of undying affection in every line of his noble face-"and yet, see! we're here, all of us, alive and full of cheerfulness, as if there'd been no storm.'

"Thanks for this to John's curiosity. murmured Mrs Vance from under his

"Thanks to little mother's restlessness. that was always expecting something,

said 1 "Thanks to the good Lord, above all else," said Mr. Vance slowly and solemnly, as if it were a prayer.—Chicago Post.

Christmas Trees In England.

Christmas trees were unknown in England until the reign of Queen Victoria After the present Prince of Wales had be 4 years old Prince Albert ornamented a Christmas tree for the amusement of the infant prince. The idea pleased the people, and as Christmas trees were every year made a feature of the court celebration the fashion soon spread among the English.—Exchange.

Chime on Sweet Bells! Oh, sweet across the glistening fields
The Christmas carols play,
And joyously each loving heart
Doth greet this holiday.

Now "Peace on earth, good will to men!" Is pealing through the air While hearts with kindness overflow And rest replaces care.

"Behold the Christ child, newly born!" Resounds the glad refrain, And every soul that hears the song, Christlike, is born again.

Chime on, sweet bells, till round the wo The message shall be borne And men of every clime shall know ÷Keyes Becker. CHRISTMAS FEASTS

Old Time Dinners of Amazing Proportion. What They Used to Eat In the Days of King Arthur-Boar's Head Served With Cere-

mony-An Ancient Dinner to the Poor.

It is almost impossible to say when the custom began of celebrating Christmas with a sumptuous feast. It is certain, however, that the observance has never lapsed since English history began. Whistlecraft, a writer who delved deeply among the traditions and records of the reign of King Arthur of the Round Table, describes the Christmas dinner of that day in verse:

They served up salmon, venison and wild By hundreds and by dozens and by scores, Hogsheads of honey, kilderkins of mustard, Muttons and fatted beeves and bacon swine, Herons and bitterns, peacock, swans and bus

tard, Teal, mallard, pigeons, widgeons and, in fine, Plum puddings, pancakes, apple pies and custard.

tard.
And therewithal they drank good Gascon wine.
With mead and ale and cider of our own,
For porter, punch and negus were not known.

This bill of fare is doubtless more poetic than accurate, yet it is not far out of the way. One notable omission is that of the wassail bowl, for wassail, though it was a drink of the ancient Druids of the third century and probably earlier, was for many hundred years a favorite British drink and came to be a distinctive feature of Christmas feasts. It was first made of ale, or what was then considered ale, sweetened with something that did duty for the more modern sugar. Just what that was is today unknown, but it was sweet. Then there was toast, and there were roasted crabs, put hissing hot into the bowl-a queer drink, but such as it was it was liked

As time went by the recipe was varied till, perhaps 1,000 years or so later, the wassail bowl was filled with wine, well warmed and spiced, with toasted bread and roasted apples. If wine were not obtainable, ale was used, but the apples were deemed indispensable and really seem to have been an improvement on crabs. Doubtless it was the white pulp of the apples that gave wassail its nickname of "lamb's wool," and it was therefore an anachronism that crept into the account of King Arthur's feast when the boy with the mantle cast a spell over the table, for it is told that on that occasion only one knight found his sword sharp enough to carve the boar's head or his hand steady enough to lift the lamb's wool without spilling it.

It will be noticed that King Arthur had neither turkeys nor geese, though both of them are now distinctive features of the Christmas feast. The turkey was not taken to England from the east till the sixteenth century, and, though the goose was known before, his gastronomic value seems not to have been discovered.

But if Arthur's feast seems gargantuan it was a frugal repast compared with those that came later. Gervase Markham describes a "moderate dinner" of about A. D. 1600 that would answer for Christ

amazing way: "The first course should consist of 16 full dishes-that is, dishes of meat that are of substance and not empty or for show-as thus, for example: First, a shield of braun with mustard; secondly, a boyl'd capon; thirdly, a boyl'd piece of beef; fourthly, a chine of beef rosted; fifthly, a neat's tongue rosted; sixthly, a pig rosted; seventhly, chewets baked; eighthly, a goose rosted; ninthly, a swan rosted; tenthly, a turkey rosted; the eleventh, a haunch of venison rosted; the twelfth, a pasty of venison; the thirteenth, a kid with a pudding in the belly; the fourteenth, an olive-pye; the fifteenth, a couple of capons; the sixteenth, a custard or dowsets. Now, to these full dishes may be added sallets fricases, quelque choses and devised paste, as many dishes more, which make the full service no less than two and thirty dishes, which is as much as can conveniently stand on one table and in one mess. And after this manner you may proportion both your second and third courses, holding fulness on one half of the dishes and show in the other, which will be both frugal in the splendour, contentment to the

Surely a "moderate dinner" like that would make a lord mayor's banquet seem stingy, yet there is ample evidence that such feasts were not uncommon 'in that elder day." Not every one, however, set such a table, even when he could afford it, for Pepys records a dinner given to the poor by Sir George Downing one Christmas at which nothing was served but beef, porridge, pudding and pork. It may have been better than the recipients usually had for everyday fare, but they voted it a mean entertainment for Christmas.

guest and much pleasure and delight to

the beholder."

The boar's head, as is well known, was for hundreds of years the piece de resistance of every well regulated British Christmas feast, and it has been held by some writers that it became the favorite because of a general desire to protest against the Jewish prohibition of pork. A more probable reason is that the boar was the fiercest of all the wild beasts of the country, and killing him was the highest achievement of the huntsman. Then, again, his head is very good to eat.

Whatever the reason, the great dish was served with great pomp. It was served in style. A forgotten poet wrote: If you would end up the brawneis head, Sweet rosemary and bays around it spread. His foaming tusks let some large pippin grace, Or midst those thundering spears an orange

place. Sauce, like himself, offensive to his foes. The roguish mustard dangerous to the nose. Back and the well spiced hippocras, the wine Wassail, the bowl with ancient ribands fine, "Porridge with plums and turkeys with the.

The mere dressing of the dish did not suffice, however. The ceremony of bringing it into the banquet hall of a



was not brought without a procession. First came a runner in a horseman's coat with a boar spear in his hand. Then a huntsman in green with a naked and bloody sword. Then two pages in sarcenet, each with a mess of mustard, and last the bearer himself, chosen for his size and strength, proudly holding the huge silver platter on which the

boar's head lay. Such was the plainest procession that entered, always with music, for a Christmas carol was always sung. What the magnificence of the wealthiest houses was may be imagined from the fact that King Henry II, having caused his son to be crowned during his own lifetime. himself served as bearer of the boar's head at his son's table and was preceded by the royal trumpeters as he entered.

The splendor of these ancient feasts would doubtless seem barbaric now, but the profusion of the viands seems wonderful. In comparison our modern spreads seem small, and one wonders if in the elder day all men were like the one who died only lately and who made a reputation by a single remark, "The turkey is an excellent bird with it assumes. one serious fault-he is too big for one person to eat and not big enough for ing for "Happy Christmas!"-Selected. two." DAVID A. CURTIS.

Christmas In Denmark.

The tree is always lighted on Christmas eve in Denmark, and the family all meet together then. The older people get their presents on a plate at their places at the table, and the children's gifts are on the tree. Roast goose is always the chief feature of our Christmas eve dinner and a dish of rice is eaten on Christmas eve before dinner is served. Apple fritters are eaten instead of

plum pudding. Christmas day itself is observed strictly as a religious festival, but the day before and the day after Christmas are holidays. The theaters are open, and the young people give dances. Our little Danish children do not know about Santa Claus. They have instead what they call a Nissen, meaning a Christmas brownie in the shape of a little old man with a large gray beard who is supposed to live under the ground. Another Danish superstition is that at midnight Christmas eve the cows in the stable rise and low in salutation, and on Christmas eve young maidens tell their fortunes by breaking the white of an egg into a glass of water and watching the shapes

"Glagelig Jul!" is the Danish greet-

Fauble's

WE ARE

SHOWING

THE CORRECT

STYLES,

JUST WHAT

YOU

ARE HUNTING,

AT

THE RIGHT

PRICE.

PROFIT BY

YOU WILL

A VISIT.

TRY IT.

DALACIA, OIL MEAL (Our old LINGLE)

NOW VERY CHEAP (Makes such a makes such a makes

Bellefonte, Pa.