

Hidden Gifts of the... Christmastide.

By ALOYSIUS COLL.

THINK you, my little baby boy, That the gifts are all for you— The picture books and the painted blocks

And the soldier men in blue? But what of the joy in mother's heart When she saw you dance for glee, When you woke to see the candles burn On the boughs of the Christmas tree?

YOU clapped your hands and you laughed aloud When you found the little plow With the oxen team that jogged on wheels

In the shade of the greenwood bough, But what of the silent tenderness That stirred in mother's breast When you drove the oxen to the barn In the twilight hour to rest?

YOUR eyes in wonder opened wide When you saw that the little train Would rattle down the carpet track And then run back again But that follows your baby feet To scatter the flowers of mother love Where the way is bright and sweet



YOU CLAPPED YOUR HANDS AND YOU LAUGHED ALOUD

YOU set the sails on your tiny ship, And you sent it out to sea On a silver lake with shores of moss When the wind was fair and free, But what of my silver lake of dreams Where never a ship may start, But bears you at the prow to sound The fathoms of my heart?

AH, beat your taps to the soldier boys, Unyoke the oxen team, And draw the fires in your painted train, Come to my arms and dream, For there are the gifts of a tender day And a night of childish joy; Mine is the everlasting gift Of a mother's heart—my boy!

Her Best Friend's Gift.

Wickers— isn't it unfortunate that dark Miss Manley has just the faintest suspicion of a mustache? Her Best Friend— It is, indeed, I sympathized with her last Christmas. Wickers— Sympathized? Her Best Friend— Yes. Without the poor dear knowing it I sent her a mustache cup.

A Disappointing Feature.

"Was there any disappointing feature about your appearance as Skuta Claus?" "Well, rather! The nose of my false face melted off!"

Angered When He Fired at Their Companions—Condition Critical.

Freemont, Ill., Dec. 14.—Paul Niles, a hunter, was attacked by an enormous flock of crows near here and barely escaped with his life. Niles fired into the flock, wounding several, and the others attacked him. The man started to run, but was knocked down and necked about the face and eyes and beat almost to insensibility by the birds' wings. With great difficulty he crawled to a nearby barn, with the birds fighting him all the way, and it was not until he got inside that they desisted. Niles is in a critical condition.

Won \$500 on Drop of Water.

New York, Dec. 17.—John W. Gates won \$500 on a race between two drops of water down a Pullman car window the other day. He was riding with a fellow plunger. Rain was falling outside. Two drops trickled down the pane. Pointing at one Mr. Gates said: "Bet you \$500 my drop reaches the bottom first." "It's a go," the other agreed. It was a close race; first one drop then the other was ahead, but the Gates selection came out victor, and Mr. Gates pocketed the spoils.

Killed at Mock Lynching.

Memphis, Tenn., Dec. 16.—Carrying out a mock lynching Willis Gordon, a 16-year-old negro, was hoisted to a shafting at a local manufacturing concern by several companions. Before he could be released his clothing caught in a belt and his head and arms were severed from his shoulders. Several of the participants in the affair, all of whom were negroes, were arrested on charges of involuntary manslaughter.



The Christmas Chef

By DAVIS TRACY.

[Copyright, 1907, by C. N. Lurie.]

"DID you get one, John?" Mrs. Botsford spoke eagerly, almost hysterically. "Yes, I sent her round to the kitchen entrance."

"Can she cook?" "She is neat and very nice looking." Mr. Botsford temporized defensively. "She says she can do every kind of housework from up garnet to down cellar."

"But can she cook—fancy dishes, I mean?" "She says that she had quite a reputation at home for plain, wholesome cooking, and she is willing to learn. I told her what you wanted."

Mrs. Botsford dropped upon a stool, her eyes filling. "Oh, John," she ejaculated, "it's 11 o'clock now, and Cousin Edward's fiancée is coming at 3 o'clock to stay until Saturday, and she and Edward and some of her people will be here for Christmas dinner tomorrow, and you know I have never seen the girl or any of them. We must have things nice. The girl's worth a clear million in her own right. Oh, John, why need our cook get sick at such a time and—"

Mrs. Botsford was becoming incoherent, but John nodded comprehendingly. "But what else could I do? There's a corner on servants, especially cooks, at this season. The only suggestion of one besides Sarah was a ten dollar a day chef who commences on a regular job Monday. Of course you don't want a chef for two days."

Mrs. Botsford sprang to her feet, her face suddenly radiant. "The very thing!" she cried. "He can do the art work and your cook the

fact of her coming in a cab and being well dressed was significant of \$10 a day.

Mrs. Botsford did not wait for the second girl to answer the bell, but hurried to the side entrance. The occasion was too momentous for ceremony. As she threw open the door the girl was bending over a fine clump of late chrysanthemums that were smiling daintily into the very teeth of winter. Mrs. Botsford's heart warmed toward her instantly. A girl who could bend over flowers with that look was not an ordinary workman, but an artist. As the girl smiled, nodded and came forward Mrs. Botsford almost caught her in her arms.

"Oh, my dear," she cried, without giving the chef an opportunity to speak, "you don't know how glad I am to see you! I will take you right into the kitchen, and Sarah will show you where everything is. I shall not make a suggestion, for I see you are perfectly capable. Only do make it just as comprehensive as you can. Miss Lenox is accustomed to everything, and—and I want to make her like me so much and to please Edward."

She had been hurrying the chef through the hall to the kitchen. At the door, to her surprise, the chef pressed a light kiss upon her forehead. "If you are as nice to Miss Lenox as you are to me," she smiled, "I think she will like you. Now you may leave me in charge. I will do the best I can."

Mrs. Botsford returned to the drawing room, rubbing her forehead thoughtfully. "What's the matter, Julia," her husband asked—"another headache?" "No," doubtfully; "that's where the chef kissed me. I never had a girl kiss me as soon before. But I don't care if only she diffuses her artist soul through the cooking. She has an artist soul, John. I saw it in her eyes."

At 3 o'clock she was again at the window, but there was no carriage in sight. Two minutes later the tele-

phone rang. She went to the telephone herself. "What's that you say? Can't come? Why, that's too bad. But you will be here tomorrow, of course? What? Will send note? Yes. Well, come as early as you can."

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Mr. Botsford nodded vaguely and opened the note, which read: "Dear Mr. and Mrs. Botsford—Sorry I cannot come according to agreement. Imperative summons elsewhere. Will see you tomorrow. Faithfully, etc., M. LENOX."

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Mrs. Botsford opened the note with trembling fingers. As she read she frowned, looked mortified, laughed and finally passed the note to her husband, with shining eyes. "She's all right," was her only comment. The note read: "Dear Mrs. Botsford—You really must forgive me. I had an errand downtown and so called at your house an hour earlier than I intended, thinking that I would stop there awhile, and then perhaps you and I would do the errand together. A sight of your lovely chrysanthemums drew me straight through the gate to the side entrance. Then you opened the door, and some way we drifted into the kitchen before I quite realized what I was doing. Then your straits and a remembrance of former triumphs conspired to do the rest. I really do love cooking and have taken a lot of courses in special things. I think I have excelled myself at this time and believe you will be satisfied with the result. Sarah and the second girl can manage the rest very nicely. I shall do my errand now and be home tonight. It will be more convenient. You may expect us quite early tomorrow morning. Lovingly, M. LENOX."

Outdid Uncle Sam.

How an Old Lady Found a Person the National Postoffice Couldn't.

"The fates call and mortals obey." The speaker was a small, precise and elegant old lady whose diminutive stature was quite forgotten by her hearers in the realization of her force and dignity. She had gone to the dead letter sale under protest and was narrating an experience which grew out of the purchase she had made. "I went to that sale not because I wanted to or was interested or expected to buy anything, but because I've an impertinent grandniece who hinted I was too old to be in such a crowd."

"After while the auctioneer offered a package as big as a sack of flour, and I bought it for 85 cents. Then when I brought it home I found it contained nothing but a lot of worn, threadbare clothing mended almost to

the fact of her coming in a cab and being well dressed was significant of \$10 a day.

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"But why did she go?" gasped Mrs. Botsford. "I thought—"

"She said everything was all ready, Sarah repeated stolidly, 'an' that I could attend to it now. There,' as a clear cut tinkle sounded outside; 'that's her car startin' now. She said she wanted to catch the 9 o'clock.'"

Mrs. Botsford opened the note with trembling fingers. As she read she frowned, looked mortified, laughed and finally passed the note to her husband, with shining eyes. "She's all right," was her only comment. The note read: "Dear Mrs. Botsford—You really must forgive me. I had an errand downtown and so called at your house an hour earlier than I intended, thinking that I would stop there awhile, and then perhaps you and I would do the errand together. A sight of your lovely chrysanthemums drew me straight through the gate to the side entrance. Then you opened the door, and some way we drifted into the kitchen before I quite realized what I was doing. Then your straits and a remembrance of former triumphs conspired to do the rest. I really do love cooking and have taken a lot of courses in special things. I think I have excelled myself at this time and believe you will be satisfied with the result. Sarah and the second girl can manage the rest very nicely. I shall do my errand now and be home tonight. It will be more convenient. You may expect us quite early tomorrow morning. Lovingly, M. LENOX."

"The whole art of a happy and successful life lies in moving with Nature instead of against her. Directly we begin to antagonize Nature by neglect or disobedience of her laws written in our bodies, instant friction is set up, and friction means waste of energy and loss of power. Dr