



If Grandpapa Were Santa Claus!



If Grandpapa were Santa Claus, how happy we would be! When toyshop toil was finished he would take us on each knee. He'd tell us all his secrets and he'd name the pretty toys He'd made and kept in hiding for the other girls and boys.

We have a real, live Grandpapa! He visits us each year, And he is quite a bosom friend of Santa Claus, I hear. Although he owns no reindeer, and of playthings no great store— If Grandpapa were Santa Claus, we could not love him more!

GENE MORGAN.

EMOTIONAL VALUE OF DAY

Christmas Spirit Almost Universally Felt, But What It Is Remains a Mystery to Many.

The emotional value of Christmas may be said to be universally felt. Something happens at Christmas that, only for a day or two, does the whole world good. What that something is remains for many a mystery. A number of persons who feel the renewing impulse are like Faust when the notes of the Easter song arrest his suicidal intent; they take and enjoy the moment's deliverance and continue to regard the source of the boon as nothing more than mythology made potent through human associations. Others are moved through superstitious fears; they approach the great season with consciences crowded with uncomfortable memories; Marley's ghost is after them, but, unlike Scrooge, their new heart is only for Christmas week. Another group simply fall in with an ancient custom and are surprised, and indeed pleased, when the dry bones of their unbelieving minds come together, take on flesh, and begin to live. A vast multitude meet the great day with buoyant expectation, take with thanks its new happiness, return to their work in this exalted mood, and ask no questions about cause and effect. A few philosophize on the phenomenon, and they are willing to stake their lives on the substantial truth of their insight.—George A. Gordon, in Atlantic Monthly.

Don't and Do in Holiday Fire Caution

- Do not decorate your Christmas tree with paper, cotton or flimsy materials.
- Do not use cotton to represent snow.
- Do not permit children to light candles.
- Do not leave matches within reach of the children.
- Do not place Christmas tree near window curtains or gas fixtures.
- Use metallic tinsel and non-inflammable decorations only.
- Use asbestos fiber to represent snow.
- Set the tree upon a substantial stand.
- A house of merriment is better than a house of mourning.
- Have an extinguisher or a few buckets full of water near the tree, ready for use in an emergency.

When and Why.

"Do you go to Sunday school now, Georgie?" inquired Georgie's uncle.
 "Yes; Christmas is comin'!"
 "Don't you go except just before Christmas?"
 "Yes; I go just before the summer picnic, too."

MISTLETOE HISTORY

Gathering of Plant Sacred Rite in Druidical Religious Festivals.

Also Considered a Potent Remedy for Ills, a Belief Which Still Exists in Some of the Remote Places of Europe.

WE decorate our homes with sprays of mistletoe at Christmas time, but few of us know the history of it as a Yuletide symbol. Pretty girls are kissed under it and a great deal of fun and nonsense is carried on apropos of it, but no one stops to think of how ancient a decoration it is or how sacred it was once thought to be.

Almost everybody has a vague knowledge that the Druids of old had something to do with the gathering of mistletoe, but just what that something was is not clear to the average mind. The fact is that the ancient Celts in their druidical religion had two great festivals, one in June and the other in December, the latter being equivalent to our Christmas. In both of these great festivals the gathering of the mistletoe was a sacred rite.

Pliny in his "Natural History" describes the ceremony. Speaking of the Druids' worship of the oak, he says: "They believe that whatever grows on these trees is sent from heaven and is a sign that the tree has been chosen by the god himself. The mistletoe is very rarely to be met with, but when it is found they gather it with solemn ceremony. This they do especially on the sixth day of the moon, because by the sixth day the moon has plenty of vigor and has not run half its course."

"After the preparations have been made for a sacrifice and a feast under the tree they halt it as the universal healer and bring to the spot two white bulls whose horns have never been bound before. A priest clad in a white robe climbs the tree and with a golden sickle cuts the mistletoe, which is caught in a white cloth. Then they sacrifice the victims, praying that God may make his own gift to prosper with those upon whom he has bestowed it."

"They believe that a potion prepared from mistletoe will increase their flocks and that the plant is a remedy against all poison."

It was believed to be a remedy for many ills, and this belief is still to be found in many remote places in Europe. In Holstein, for example, the mistletoe is regarded as a healing remedy for wounds, and in Lacaune, France, it is always administered by the native people as an antidote for poison.

In the northeast of Scotland people used to cut withes of mistletoe at the March full moon; these they bent in circles and kept for a year to cure hectic fevers and other troubles. In some parts of Germany the mistletoe is especially esteemed as a remedy for the ailments of children, who sometimes wear it hung around the neck as an amulet.

In Sweden on Midsummer eve mistletoe is diligently sought after, the people believing it to be possessed of many mystic qualities, and that if a sprig of it is attached to the ceiling of the dwelling house, the horse's stall or the cow's crib, the trolls will then be powerless to injure either man or beast. Branches of the plant are commonly seen in farm houses hanging from the ceiling to protect the dwellings from all harm, but especially from fire, and persons afflicted with the falling sickness think they can ward off all attacks of the malady by carrying about with them a knife which has a handle of mistletoe.

Like their Swedish neighbors, many German peasants consider the mistletoe a powerful charm against evil spirits. A similar belief seems to have lingered among the Romans, whose religion at a very early date was somewhat similar to that of the Druids. When Aeneas descended into Hades he gathered to protect himself from the infernal powers a branch of mistletoe, which Vergil calls the golden bough.

"IS 'E COMIN' TERNIGHT?"

WILBUR D. NESBIT

HIT'S de las' thing I heah when I tun out de light:
 "Is 'e comin' ternight, mammy? Comin' ternight?"
 En de good Lawd knows, dough I sez "Not yit,"
 Dey's a-astin' me still whut dey gwine ter git.
 En I projick en plan, en I skimp en squeeze,
 En I hurries apas' all de winders I sees,
 'Case de chilluns espec' dat he'll bring 'em a lot—
 En dey think he's de same dat de White Folks got.

"Is 'e comin' ternight, mammy? Comin' ternight?"
 Lawd, I wish in mah soul dat 'e would en he might!
 I wish in mah soul dat 'e'd come down de fluz,
 Lak I uster believe dat 'e sholy would do.
 When de chilluns ondress en dey jump in—to haid,
 En I tuck up de quilt 'roun' each po' I'll haid,
 Den I set down en wish, en I wish lak I haid,
 Dat 'e find out de place 'fo' hit come Christmas Day.



Why, de chilluns believes! Dey is sho' dat hit so.
 En dey countin' on him lak a man dat dey know,
 En dey talk er de things dat he sutten ter bring,
 'Twell dey set up in baid en dess holler en sing.
 En I tell 'em w'y sho' good ole Santy 'll come
 WM a doll en a sled en a railroad en drum.
 En dey drif off ter sleep wid a smile on dey face—
 En dey ain' not a cent I kin spath in de place!

HIT'S de las' thing I heah when I tun out de light:
 "Is 'e comin' ternight, mammy? Comin' ternight?"
 En I laughs wid dem all w'en dey plan whut dey do
 W' de things dat he'll bring—en I say hit's all true!
 En de white chillun up whah I's wukin', dey 'low
 Dat ole Santy he'll come, en won't miss 'em nohow.
 "Is 'e comin' ternight?" Lawd, I wish hit 'ud be
 he's com hyuh en fix up dis 'poblem for me!

Except ye become as a little child ye shall in no wise enter into the joy of Christmas time.

The Christmas Robin. In many parts of England the robin is associated with Christmas-tide. There is a belief that on Christmas eve these birds will sing near a house where a person is dying, to cheer him.

Greatness of Man. The greatness of man does not show itself in its ability to build cathedrals, to sculpture, to paint, to write, to invent, to discover, to control men, to found nations, etc., but in its ability to commune with God and do his bidding.—Western Methodist.

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