

FAMOUS CHRISTMAS POEM AND HOW IT WAS WRITTEN.

Dr. Clement Clarke Moore, who wrote the most popular Christmas poem, lived in New York in a big, old-fashioned house, long since leveled to the ground. Dr. Moore had children of his own, and, says the Springfield, Mass. Republican, it was his custom every Christmas season to arrange some entertainment for his little ones and their friends. In 1822 he wrote the poem which formed the chief part of the household entertainment on the "Night Before Christmas." He never dreamed that it would become famous, or that the world would remember this classic childhood verse and forget his laborious work in compiling a huge Hebrew-Greek lexicon.

NOT WRITTEN FOR PUBLICATION.

The publication of it never entered his head. In the following year, however, a young woman from Troy, the daughter of Rev. Dr. Butler, of that city, was visiting at the Moore home, and, in talking over plans for Christmas, the good doctor showed her the verses he had written the previous year. She was so charmed with them that she requested the privilege of copying them, and took them home to use in a children's festival.

Then, feeling that others might also like to use the poem, she gave a copy of it to the editor of the Troy Sentinel, and the complete poem was published in that newspaper on December 23, 1823, the first time that it appeared in print. When Dr. Moore heard of it he was inclined to be somewhat annoyed. Its instant popularity amazed him, and when it began to be copied into foreign languages he was still more surprised. Dr. Moore never received one cent for the poem, but he had what was to him the greater satisfaction of knowing, in later years, that he had given happiness and pleasure to thousands of persons, and perhaps deepened their appreciation of the Christmas season.

POET'S HOME.

Dr. Moore's home until its demolition about 1850, to make way for modern improvements was one of the historic landmarks of the city. The original farm consisted of many acres bordering the river in the vicinity of Twenty-third street. It was originally bought long before the Revolution in 1750 by Major Thomas Clarke, a retired British army officer. He named his farm Chelsea, as the retreat of an old soldier, and the name Chelsea was afterward given to the little village which grew up there just north of the older Greenwich village.

His house was a modest frame structure, which was burned shortly before he died, and his widow built the more celebrated stone house later known as the Moore homestead. Their daughter, Charity Clarke, married Bishop Benjamin Moore, and in the big house which originally was a two-story stone structure, Clement Clarke Moore, the author of the Christmas poem, was born on July 5, 1781.

DR. MOORE'S CAREER.

Dr. Clement Clarke Moore was graduated from Columbia in 1798. He studied for the ministry, but never took orders. In 1818 he gave to the General Theological Seminary the entire block now occupied by its buildings between Ninth and Tenth avenues, Twentieth and Twenty-first streets, and in one of the rooms hangs a fine portrait of the worthy doctor, and every year at Christmas time the students decorate it with greens and holly. For thirty years Dr. Moore held the chair of professor of Hebrew and Oriental languages in the seminary. In St. Peter's Church, near by, in Twentieth street, between Eighth and Ninth avenues, to which Dr. Moore gave liberally, is a tablet in memory of his many good deeds.

Dr. Moore died in Newport in 1863. The New York Historical Society has a copy of the celebrated Christmas poem written by Dr. Moore at the request of one of the officers in 1862, and with it a letter by his nephew, T. W. C. Moore, relating some of the circumstances under which the poem was written. In the letter Mr. Moore says that his uncle told him that a portly Dutchman living on the Chelsea estate first suggested to him the idea of making St. Nicholas the hero of this Christmas ballad. The poem follows:

A VISIT FROM ST. NICHOLAS.
 'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
 Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
 The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
 In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.
 The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
 While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;
 And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,
 Had just settled down 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 threw open the sash.
 The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow,
 Gave the lustre of midday to objects below,
 When what to my wondering eyes should appear,
 But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer,
 With a little old driver so lively and quick,
 I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
 More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
 And he whistled and shouted and called them by name;
 On Comet! on Comet! on Comet and Comet!
 To the top of the porch, to the top of the wall!
 Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!
 As dry leaves 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 toys, and St. Nicholas too,
 And then in a twinkling I heard on the roof
 The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
 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 foot,
 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 peddler just opening his pack.
 His eyes-how they twinkled! His dimples how merry!
 His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
 His droll little mouth was drawn up 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 of it encircled his head like a wreath;
 He had a broad face and a little round belly
 That shook when he laughed like a bowl full of jelly.
 He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
 And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself!
 A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
 Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.
 He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
 And filled all the stockings; 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 a thistle.
 But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
 "Happy Christmas to all and to all a good-night!"

BLIND GIRL PICKS COLORS BY SMELL; "HEARS" BY TOUCH.
 Jamesville, Wis.—Overcoming the handicap of blindness and deafness in a manner which has astonished medical authorities here, Miss Willetta Huggins, sixteen years old, student at the Wisconsin School for the Blind, has learned to "listen" to the conversation of others through her sense of touch. She is a wonder child of the country and is said to be far in advance of Helen Keller in some things she can accomplish.

Recently two examiners came to the school to have a talk with Miss Huggins and see her demonstrate her strange powers by the sense of smell and talking with people with her finger tips.
 "How many people are in this room?" asked a visitor.
 "Three, when I counted," came the correct answer.
 The girl can also tell colors by the sense of smell. Recently when she was invited to visit Governor John J. Blaine, Willetta conducted a long conversation with the Governor by means of placing her fingers on the Governor's head so she could get the vibration of his voice.
 "What is the color of my suit?" asked Governor Blaine.
 "It's gray and black—a mixture," answered the girl, to the astonishment of those in the room.
 To test her powers further, Miss Huggins was locked in an absolutely dark bank vault and given six envelopes containing different colors of yarn. She correctly wrote the names on the outside of each envelope.
 Every month shows some new development of the strange powers of Miss Huggins. At first she could read a person's conversation by placing her hand on the talker's throat. Now her powers have so developed that she places her hands on the speaker's head. Recently she conversed with a man by means of a ten-foot pole. She had the man place the pole on his head while she took the other end in her hand. She then read his conversation and answered him.
 By the same strange sense of touch she can also conduct a telephone conversation by placing her fingers on the diaphragm of the telephone receiver.
 Miss Huggins is of normal build for a girl of sixteen years, robust and has

A STANDARD FOR EGG PRODUCTION.

The all-important question of how many eggs a flock of pullets can be expected to lay during each month of the year is answered by county agent J. N. Robinson, who offers some new figures that will be of interest to all Centre county farmers and poultrymen. Taking as a standard the results of an egg laying contest in which over 5,000 birds were trapped and in which all breeds were represented, it is found that the following production per pullet can be expected.

For the month of December seven eggs; January, nine; February, twelve; March, eighteen; April, nineteen; May, twenty; June, eighteen; July, seventeen; August, fifteen; September, thirteen; October, seven and November, five.

These results are some which any poultryman should attempt to duplicate. When it is realized that the average egg production in this State per hen is about seventy-five, there is considerable room for improvement. A study of the above table will show that one reason for this relatively high egg production is the fact that during the months of July, August and September, the rate of production was kept up. Good housing and more than anything else, good feeding, are directly responsible for this condition.

A TOUGH WINTER, SAYS GLOOMY GUS.

Hamburg ladies, skirts all aglow,
 Don't mind the weather so the wind don't blow.—Old Georgia Song.

It's going to be rough on skirts, ankles, noses, and in fact, the tout ensemble, if the dour predictions of Gus Luckenbill materialize. Gus is the self-appointed weather prophet of the Philadelphia and Reading Railway and not even the most confirmed optimist could ever say to him "Hail Brother."

The December program is as follows: December 5, unsettled; 6, cloudy; 7, generally fair; 8 and 9, cold rain and sleet; 10 and 11, fair; terrific blizzard over country from 12 to 14; fair and cold from 15 to 20 inclusive. The white Christmas will have its way paved by a snowstorm between the 15th and 23rd. Christmas day will be cloudy, then a terrific cold spell until New Year's day, when rain will fall. Seven severe snowfalls are predicted in January.

Just when the robins will nest Gus doesn't say. If it all turns out as badly as Gus predicts there won't be any robins.

Praises Our Architecture.

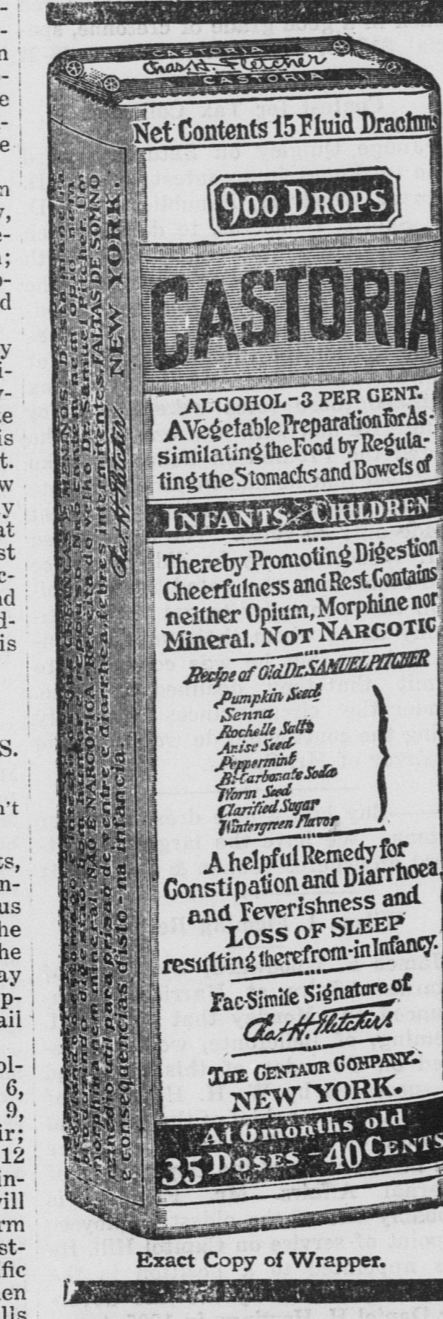
Liverpool, Dec. 12.—Professor C. H. Reilly, of the School of Architecture, Liverpool University, has just paid a tribute to American architecture which he said was purer and more stable than that of England. "America does not seem to be swept as our country has been by fashions set by individual contemporary architects," he said. "American architecture has been in the last 30 years less self-sufficient and less insular than British."

The American architect deliberately sought his inspiration in the work of the Italian, French and Spanish Renaissance, Professor Reilly said. One had no fear that Fifth avenue would at any moment be spoiled by a glazed terra-cotta building, with grotesque German detail, yet who could say the same of Oxford street or the Strand, or any leading London thoroughfare?

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