

THE RIGHT OF A MAN

Out on the roads they have gathered, a hundred thousand men, To ask for a hold on life as sure as the wolf in his den;

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Marley was dead to begin with. There is no doubt about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk and undertaker.

Scrooge knew he was dead? Of course he did. Scrooge and he were partners. Scrooge was his sole executor, sole administrator, sole assign, sole mourner. And even Scrooge was not so dreadfully cut up, but being a good business man he solemnized the day of the funeral with an undoubted bargain.

On Christmas Eve he sat in his counting house. It was cold, bleak, biting weather, foggy withal. People in the court outside stamped to keep warm. The city clocks had struck 3, but it was dark already.

Scrooge's clerk was copying letters before a fire so small it looked like one coal. He could not replenish it. Scrooge kept the coal bucket. The clerk put on his comforter and tried to keep warm with a candle. Not being a man of strong imagination, he failed.

"Bah!" said Scrooge. "Humbug!" "Christmas a humbug! Oh, Uncle!" "Merry Christmas, huh! What right have you to be merry? You're poor enough."

"Come, Uncle, don't be dismal. Come to our house for dinner tomorrow." "If I had my way," Scrooge said by way of reply, "every idiot who goes about saying 'Merry Christmas' would be boiled in his own pudding with a stake of holly through his heart."

At shutting up time, Scrooge dismounted from his stool. "You'll want all day off tomorrow, I suppose," he addressed Cratchit, his clerk. "If quite convenient," said the clerk.

"It's not convenient and it's not fair to pay you a day's wages for no work." The clerk observed that it was only once a year. "No excuse for picking a man's pocket. But if you must have off here all the earlier next day."

the floor below and came up the stairs to his own door. "It's humbug still," he said. The dying firelight leapt up.

"It's Marley's ghost," it seemed to say. Indeed, it was the same face, Marley in his pigtail waistcoat, tights and boots. "What do you want with me?" Scrooge asked.

"Much," the spirit replied. Scrooge noted the chains which fettered Marley were made of cash boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, "You are fettered. Why?" "I wear the chain I forged in life. At this time of year I suffer most. Hear me," said the ghost; "my time is nearly gone. You will be haunted by three spirits. Without their visits you can not shun the path I tread, doomed all my days to travel the mortal world. Expect the first visit tomorrow."

The apparition walked backwards from him. At every step it took the window raised itself a little. When he reached it it was wide open. It departed through it. Scrooge followed to the window and looked out. The air was filled with spirits. Every one wore chains like Marley's. Scrooge closed the window and examined the door by which Marley's ghost had entered. It was double locked as he had left it. He tried to say "Humbug!" but failed. He tumbled into bed and fell asleep.

When Scrooge awoke it was so dark he could not distinguish anything. Out of the darkness came a strange apparition. "Are you the spirit whose coming was predicted?" he asked. "I am the Ghost of Christmas past, your past," the voice was soft and low. The spirit seized Scrooge by the arm.

"Rise and walk with me," it commanded. In vain Scrooge would have replied he was mortal and liable to cold and that he was light-headed. The spirit could not be resisted. Scrooge was borne through the wall and stood on an open country road with fields on either side. "Good heaven," Scrooge cried. "I was bred in this place. I was a boy here!" They walked along the road. Scrooge recognized every gate and post and every tree. A little market town appeared with bridge and church and winding river. Some shaggy ponies trotted with boys on their backs.

"A solitary child sits here, neglected by his friends," the spirit said. Scrooge knew it. He was that child. The scene changed. The ghost showed him a young man in earnest conversation with a lovely girl. It was Scrooge and the sweetheart he had once loved. But he loved gold so much more that the girl married another.

"Spirit," begged Scrooge. "Torture me no more!" But the relentless ghost took him to another scene. The same young woman was now the mother of an adoring family. She and her husband were talking about him, Scrooge. It was the time of Marley's death. They noted that Scrooge would now be entirely alone.

Scrooge was now conscious of being exhausted, overcome by an irresistible drowsiness. Then he was back in his own bedroom. He had barely time to reel to bed before he fell into a heavy sleep. Scrooge awoke from a deep slumber. His room had undergone a complete change. Holly and mistletoe gleamed everywhere. Heaped on the floor were turkeys, geese, suckling pigs, long wreaths of sausages, chestnuts, rosy apples, bowls of punch. "I am the Ghost of Christmas Present," said a voice. Scrooge saw a figure clad in a green robe bordered with white fur. "Touch my robe," the spirit commanded. As Scrooge did so, the room vanished instantly. They stood in the city streets on Christmas morning. People were jovial and full of glee. They called to each other and threw facetious snowballs. Grocers' windows showed tempting wares. Bells rang out from the steeples. People flocked to the churches.

The spirit conducted Scrooge to the home of his clerk, Bob Cratchit. Mrs. Cratchit was busy preparing the Christmas dinner. Little Cratchits plunged forks into steaming dishes. "Here's Martha, mother," called one of them. "How late you are dear," the mother kissed the girl a dozen times. "Father's coming," Master Peter cried. "Hide, Martha!" In walked Scrooge's clerk, neat in his threadbare clothes. Tiny Tim, the smallest child was perched on his shoulder. Alas for Tiny Tim! He bore a crutch and wore an iron frame. "Where's our Martha?" cried Bob looking around. "Not coming," Mrs. Cratchit said. "Not coming!" Bob's face fell. "Not coming on Christmas Day!" Martha didn't like to see him disappointed so she ran from her hiding place. Finally, dinner was ready. What a goose! Never was there such a feast! Everybody praised it. They ate it down to the last atom. Eked out with apple sauce and mashed potatoes it was sufficient for the entire family. Everyone had enough and the youngest Cratchits were steeped to the eyebrows in sage and onion. Then came the pudding looking like a speckled cannon ball. It blazed in ignited brandy. A sprig of Christmas holly was stuck in the top. When dinner was done, apples and oranges were put on the table and a shovel of chestnuts on the fire. The family drew around the fire to sip the punch Bob Cratchit had made. "A Merry Christmas to us all!"

Bob proposed: "God bless us! The family responded. "God bless us everyone," said little Tiny Tim. "Spirit," asked Scrooge, "will Tiny Tim live?"

"I see a vacant seat," said the spirit, "a crutch without an owner." "No, No," said Scrooge. "Say he will be spared." The spirit showed Scrooge Christmas celebrations in homes, poor and sad. Finally, they came to the home of Scrooge's nephew. "Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!" the nephew laughed. "He said Christmas was a humbug." "More shame to him, Fred," said Scrooge's niece by marriage. "He's a comical fellow," the nephew said, "not always as pleasant as he might be but I have nothing to say against him. I am sorry for him."

After dinner they played charades. Someone asked what animal was wild, savage, lived in London and walked about on two legs. It was not a bear or cow or pig. "It's your Uncle Scrooge," cried the niece. The spirit took the man many other places and then took him back to his rooms. When the third of the spirits came, Scrooge received him on bended knee. "I am the Ghost of the Christmas Yet to Come," it said. The spirit took Scrooge to the 'Change where a group of merchants hurried up and down, money clinking in their pockets. "When did he die?" asked one. "Last night," said another. "I thought he would never die." "What has he done with his money?" asked another. "I don't know. He hasn't left it," someone replied.

"It is likely to be a cheap funeral. I don't know a soul to go to. Suppose we make up a party to go." "I'll go if anybody else will," said one, "but I must be fed." Scrooge knew the men. They were talking about him, discussing his funeral arrangements. The spirit took Scrooge to a pawn shop into which a man with a heavy bundle slunk. There were two women already there. "The charwoman first," the shopkeeper said. The laundress second and the undertaker's man third, the shopkeeper said. The women, like the man, had bundles, plunder from Scrooge's rooms on his death. "If he wanted to keep it after he was dead, why wasn't he different in life, wicked old screw," one of the women said. "Then he would have had someone to look after him, instead of gasping out his last breath alone."

They opened their bundles. "Here's his bed curtains, rings and all," said the woman. "Here's his blankets. He won't take cold without them now." They heaped their spoils on the floor. The pawnbroker chalked it on the wall. Scrooge listened in horror. In the scanty light he viewed with detestation and disgust the obscene demons as if they had been marketing the corpse itself. "If there is any person who feels emotion at this man's death, Spirit, show me that person," he pleaded. The spirit took him to a home where a woman sat alone, waiting. A man came in. She looked up. "Tell me, quickly. Is it good or bad? Did he relent?" "He's past relenting. He's dead," the man replied. The woman was thankful and said so. Their debt would be transferred. But in the meantime they could raise the money owed.

"Let me see tenderness connected with death," Scrooge begged the Spirit. For reply, the Spirit showed him the frail little body of Tiny Tim stretched upon the bed of death. The Spirit then led him to a lonely grave yard. On a neglected grave Scrooge could make out the name, Ebenezer Scrooge. "Spirit," Scrooge beseeched, pity me. I am a changed man. Assure me that I may change these shadows and I will lead an altered life. I will honor Christmas with all my heart. The phantom's head collapsed. It became Scrooge's headpost. Yes, and the bedpost was his own. The bed was his own and the room his own. "They are not torn down," he said, folding the bed curtains in his arms. "I am light as a feather," he laughed in joy. "I am happy as an angel, as merry as a schoolboy, as giddy as a drunken man. Merry Christmas, everybody! Hallo there! Merry Christmas everybody! Hallo there! Whoop! Hallo!" He frisked about the sitting room. He flung to the window he opened it. It was clear, cold and bright. No fog. No mist. Golden sunlight! Heavenly sky! Sweet, fresh air! Merry bells! "What's today?" he called to a boy below. "Why it's Christmas," the lad replied.

"You know the poulterer's next street but one," he a-keed the boy. The boy replied he did. "There's a turkey hanging there as big as you. Go buy it. Bring back the poulterer. I'll give you a shilling. If you come back in less than five minutes I'll give you a half crown." "I'll send it to Bob Cratchit," he said to himself. "It's bigger than Tiny Tim." He chuckled and chuckled. Shaving was not an easy task. He had hand trembled so. But if he had had a piece of sticking plaster on his hand he would have put a piece of sticking plaster on his hand and rushed downstairs. "Merry Christmas!" he called here, there, everywhere. He saw a man who had solicited him for a Christmas donation for the poor. He pressed a large sum on him. He went to church. He walked around the streets, patting children on the head, looking into windows. Everything yielded him pleasure. Finally,

he found himself at the front doorstep of his nephew. Fred was so glad to see him he nearly shook his arm off. Scrooge made himself at home in five minutes. He played the games he had seen in his dreams. He was at his office early next morning. If he could catch Bob late! And he did! The clock struck 9. A quarter past. He was full 18 minutes late.

"What do you mean by coming at this time of day?" Scrooge growled. "I am sorry, sir. It is only once a year. It shall not be repeated." Bob replied. "Now I tell you what. I am not going to stand this any longer," he gave Bob a tremendous dig in the waistcoat. "Therefore I am going to raise your salary." Bob trembled. He thought of calling for help and of getting Scrooge into a straight jacket. "Make up the fires, Bob Cratchit. Buy another coal scuttle before you dot another I, Bob Cratchit."

Scrooge was better than his word. To Tiny Tim who did not die, he was a second father. Some people laughed to see the alteration in him. But Scrooge let them laugh for he was wise enough to know that nothing ever happened for good at which people did not have their fill of laughter. He knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive ever knew. "God bless us! Every one." —By Charles Dickens—Pittsburgh Press.

STATE PAYS PART FOR HAULING SCHOOL PUPILS

The amount of State reimbursement for the pupil transportation of school pupils has been determined for each of the 1110 school districts which furnished transportation for the school year ending July 1931. If the Department of Public Instruction approves the transportation and the contracts provided school districts of the third and fourth class receive reimbursement on the basis of 50, 60 or 75 per cent. of the amount paid for approved transportation, which is required by law, depending on the true valuation per teacher in the respective districts.

The maximum annual amount allowed a district having a true valuation of more than \$100,000 per teacher is \$3000. The maximum annual amount allotted a district having a true valuation of \$100,000 or less is \$4000. School districts may and under certain conditions are required to furnish free transportation for school pupils as provided by the school law. Two thousand five hundred contracts for transportation of school pupils for the school year 1931-32 have been approved. Transportation is furnished in sixty-six counties of the State. The motor bus is largely used in the transportation of 60,000 school pupils. With the improved highways and snow removal from the main thoroughfares there are few consolidated schools in the State to which motor bus transportation may not be furnished during the entire school year. All buses used for the transportation of school pupils must comply with the provisions of the motor code and are required to meet the standards for pupil transportation which are prescribed by the Department of Public Instruction.

P. O. ISSUES MAIL EARLY WARNING

The annual warning to "Do Your Christmas mailing early" has been issued by John L. Knisely, postmaster at Bellefonte, in describing plans that are being made to handle the holiday rush. Extra help will be secured to assist the regular employees in handling the heavier mails. Mr. Knisely stated, but he warned that even the augmented force is able to do only so much work and that in order to insure the delivery of Christmas parcels before the holidays, mailers should have the packages in the mail early and should observe the rules of addressing them that are so important in facilitating the handling of the tons of parcels that are care for by the local post office. Mail volume during the holiday increases 200 per cent, he stated, and it is a physical impossibility to handle this increase in three or four days. Therefore, he urged persons sending cards and packages to have them in the mails at least a week or ten days before Christmas. This, he said, will not only insure delivery, but may assist the postal employees in spending Christmas with their families. Packages containing breakable articles should be marked "Fragile," and all parcels must carry both the name of the sender and the consignee. "Perishable" must be marked on packages containing such articles. All parcels should be wrapped well with heavy paper and twine.

REALLY HOW WILD WERE THESE TURKEYS?

Somerset county's woods and fields yielded between 700 and 800 wild turkeys to nimrods during the season. These figures were announced by Harvey Bitner, Somerset county game protector who is preparing his annual report on the wild turkey kill for the State Game Commission. Mr. Bitner said that he has made a careful investigation of the turkey situation in the county and has found that many nice birds escaped the fire hunters. While the supply was greatly reduced, the Game Protector believes that a sufficient number remain for breeding purposes.

STATE COAL, GAS AND OIL TO END IN 100 YEARS

Pennsylvania's greatest natural resources—coal, gas and petroleum—are limited in productive usefulness to another 100 years. The great supplies considered inexhaustible will be close to depletion early in the twenty-first century, Dr. George H. Ashley, state geologist, has told the United Press. "Then we must depend on water, wind, wave and sun for our sources of fuel," Dr. Ashley said. His estimate placed the duration of anthracite coal at between 130 and 150 years; petroleum, 100 years; natural gas, 100 years; and bituminous coal, 70 years.

He emphasized that changes in economic conditions may affect these estimates. The available supply is a fixed factor, but the rate of consumption is undeterminable, he said. "For example, a survey of duration of anthracite made several years ago would indicate that the supply would last 100 years. Today it would appear the exhaustion point will not be reached for about 150 years," he said. Dr. Ashley explained that the decided drop in anthracite production lengthened the period of its availability. The most serious depletion will be that of coal, he pointed out. "When oil is exhausted we shall still make the product from oil shales and coal. When natural gas is exhausted we shall still make gas from coal," he said. "But when coal is exhausted the fuel resources are at an end and we must turn to water, wind, wave and sun, none of which ever will replace coal in cheapness and ease of use."

Geological surveys by Dr. Ashley and his assistants show 16,354,876,000 tons of anthracite; 44,022,840,000 tons of bituminous coal; and 1,300,000,000 barrels of oil remaining in the resource reserves laid down 200,000,000 geological years ago by folding and condensation of rock strata and decayed vegetable matter in Pennsylvania. Not all of this supply is available nor commercially practical, Ashley pointed out. Geologists and engineers estimate that about 50 per cent of the anthracite supply, or 8,979,000,000 long tons are "recoverable." The percentage is declining periodically. The annual production of anthracite at present is about 70,000,000 short tons. This production may rise to 99,000,000 as it did in 1917 or fall below the 69,000,000 mark of 1930. Bituminous reserves commercially available aggregate about 10 billion of the 40 billion tons in the present supply. The mining rate has averaged about 150,000,000 tons annually.

"Pennsylvania then will find herself with large reserves of thin coal (the other 30 billion tons) so expensive to mine that she no longer can compete with adjoining States having much larger reserves of thick, and therefore cheaply mined, coal," Dr. Ashley said. Dr. Ashley differed sharply with the American Petroleum Institute estimate of the present supply of oil. The state geologist set the supply at 600,000,000 barrels obtainable by drilling and 700,000,000 additional barrels to be obtained by mining, that is, by crushing rock containing the oil, such as now is done in sections of Europe. The natural gas supply was estimated at 50 trillion cubic feet and production has exceeded 100 billion cubic feet annually. "A most optimistic estimate would give 100 years as the life of the field, allowing an average decline of 1,000,000 cubic feet a year," Dr. Ashley said.

The future of the resources depends on such developments as rejuvenation of petroleum wells and on adoption of policies of conservation and of restricted production now being developed within the industries.

THIS MAGAZINE IS A GREAT PAL OF THE BOYS

Those boyhood years between the ages of ten and twenty are the impressionable years—the formative years when the fundamental character of a boy is molded into the pattern it will maintain throughout the remainder of his life. That is why so much importance is placed on the factors that govern the lives of adolescent boys—their companions, their environment, their reading, the food they eat, etc. At this age is determined whether the boy will develop into a cheerful or surly man, generous or selfish, intelligent or dull, ambitious or indolent.

School teachers, librarians, Scout leaders and others engaged in boy activities have found that the American Boy—Youth's Companion magazine is one of the most favorable influences a boy between ten and twenty can have. Its stories and articles are a force for good—wholesome, alive, inspiring. The million or so boys who read this magazine every month consider it their closest friends. In it they find the keenest entertainment, adventure, mystery, athletics, aviation, humor, everything that delights a live-wire American boy. Its sports articles by famous coaches and athletes help boys win places on school teams. Its professional articles and biographical sketches aid them in selecting their life's work. Its keenly analytical editorials guide them in their daily problems.

That boy or young man in whom you are interested would have a world of pleasure reading The American Boy—Youth's Companion. Make a subscription to this magazine your gift to him. Subscription prices are only \$2.00 for one year or \$3.00 for three years. Mail your order direct to The American Boy—Youth's Companion, 550 W. Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, Michigan.

FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN. DAILY THOUGHT

If you've lost your zest for Christmas, Lost your love for all its cheer; If you scoff at gifts and giving, As the Christmas time draws near. If you frown at all the clutter, When old Santa trims his tree, Tell me, please, what is the matter? Something's wrong it seems to me. If the stocking by the hearthstone Wakes no memory in your breast, If the coming of old Santa After all have gone to rest, Does not rouse your heart to action, Make it beat and throb and kick, Answer for my satisfaction, Are you sure you are not sick?

If you can't feel joy at Christmas, Joy of life and joy of song; If you can't rejoice in giving; Whether it be right or wrong; If the Yule log's invitation To your heart no cheer can give, Let me ask, how in creation Is it worth your while to live?

Why not be a game sport this Christmas? Make your relatives and friends play and play and play! There are games for everybody. Some are designed especially for the 18-months-old child. Some were made for the invalid or the traveler. And for children, adolescents and adults, there are upwards of 500 to choose from. The new game good for anyone over 10 or 12 years, is Camelot. It savors both of chess and checkers being not so difficult as chess, and yet much more fascinating than checkers. Two play it on a board marked in two kinds of colored squares. Revived this year is going strong is backgammon. You can get it in ordinary board and counters or in de luxe fashion, with either an inlaid table top or a portable backgammon cover for an ordinary card table. Badminton is revived also. In games of skill there are Go Bang, Pegity, Wei, Chi, a German game called Halma, and the old standbys of checkers and chess.

Games of chance are popular. There are electric racing games and games such as Derby Day which decide. There are at least 15 versions of the old-time parcheesi, the latest being the Big Trail which, instead of sending a man home to start over again, captures Indians or loses pioneers, wagons and horses. Roulette is popular, and there are a dozen novelty games based on roulette. For adults, as well as children, Anagrams are popular. You can get inexpensive or de luxe sets of the game. Card games that are being sold in quantity include the ever popular Quinix, the old game Pit, Flinct Old Maid, Rock and many other similar games.

Board games are excellent for children and enjoyed by adults too. The crokinole board on which several games can be played is a universal favorite. Polyanna still live and is popular. East is East an Uncle Wiggly are favorites. Soldiers are back with us again 12 years after the great war. There are many shooting games, too, Wild Hickey-Pickety, Five Wise Bird and other versions of them given variety. Good old tiddle-de-winks appear in so many new dresses that it is hard to list them all. Some have the men over baryard fowls, horses and pigs. Others try to jump the into pockets in a board, each pocket having a different count. Combination boxes, houses, oases of games are de luxe gift. Some include a dozen games in one. For invalids or travelers there are puzzle pictures, in about 100 different varieties. Costume puzzles are among the deluxe types, with a finished puzzle a gorgeous lady another day. There are geography puzzles, word puzzles, and many others.

For the children there are various versions of the old bean bag, rit toss, jack straws, jacks. For the babies just turned 18 months there are Play Sticks, colored with vegetable matter so a child may play them in his mouth without injury. There are bead boxes, big ball mosaics, wagons, and other color match games. As the child gets a little older the kindergarten paraphernalia available. Still older, there are all games, weaving ones and cray competitions. Whatever the age, whatever the outlook of your friends and relatives, if you are in doubt what to get them for Christmas you might try a chance and let games come your rescue.

"Everybody knows that a succulent pig roasted with an apple in mouth is the only dish for a Christmas dinner," Chief Joseph Cocuzzi the Pittsburgh Athletic Association states without being too dogmatic. He simply states a fact. "In the first place the pig must not be over 14 or 15 pounds; it he is too mature," he begins. "For the apple dressing take 25 pounds of bread, soak it in five or six minutes and squeeze dry. Now a pound or two of chopped ham, six onions, three or four apples peeled and sliced, and a dozen eggs are mixed together. "Use sage or thyme, never bo Parsley is added to the bread crumbs and the whole mixed together." Oyster in place of the apple make a good dressing. Stuff suckling and roast. For the gravy use very little flour but plenty of celery, onions and carrots. Of course the recipe as printed above should be followed with measurements only if the world's family is coming to your house Christmas dinner. It needs 40 pounds. Make your recipe in proportion.