

SORROWS OF SANTA

CHANCED into Santa Claus' home one day. And these are the words I heard him say:

"Ah, me, the times, the manners, the men! It used to be all so different when

"I was a young man in the long ago And sped with my reindeer over the snow.

"Then every home in every land Gave unto me always a welcome hand,

"And chimneys then in the days gone by Were not oversmall and not overhigh.

"And the stockings they used were the old fashioned kind, All hung in a row and so easy to find.

"Then the gifts were so simple and all in good taste, From the gingerbread man to the doll made of paste.

"But now it's so different. Heigho, hear me sigh! I mourn for the days in the Land of Goney.

"For now I'm kept busy from early till late, In my earnest endeavors to be up to date.

"I've trimmed my old beard in the new Yankee style, And instead of a laugh I've a simpering smile.



"I'VE CEASED TO WEAR ALL MY OLD FASHIONED CLOTHES."

"Yes, I've ceased to wear all my old-fashioned clothes, And I've got on long shoes with the sharp pointed toes.

"And my reindeer and robes and my beautiful sleigh With my gingerbread presents are all laid away.

"For I ride nowadays on a bicycle swift And I'm puzzled to know what to bring for a gift.

"To the girls fin de siecle, and as for the boys, They've no use at all for my old-fashioned toys.

"And the houses have changed. In those things called a flat I'm kept busy guessing just where I am at.

"Excuse me now, please, if I speak very low; I've come to my last and my cruelest blow.

"'Tis the worst, though what I have told you is bad; My wife has acquired the new woman fad!"

And those were the words I heard him say When I chanced in Santa Claus' home one day. —Detroit News-Tribune.

AN ODD BELGIAN CUSTOM.

A Picturesque Procession on Christmas Eve.

In some old Belgian towns a beautiful spectacle may be seen on Christmas eve. Amid the sound of drum, cornet, cymbal and a whole orchestra of instruments, with the chanting of carols, a long, gayly decked procession marches through the principal streets—children of all ages, each division dressed in its special color (white, blue, pink or yellow), and all bearing some badge or emblem or grasping some bright ribbon attached to shrine or crucifix. The effect of grouping and color is very artistic. Here and there in the throng older, stronger hands bear aloft precious relics, upon which the spectators reverently gaze. Many novel features come into view as the procession passes along, but the prettiest sight is the train of beautiful children in fastidious dress marching over the flower strewn pavement, each small person earnestly absorbed in the special part it performs. —Pittsburg Dispatch.

CANDLESTICKS AS GIFTS.

Antique Treasures Which May Be Found In Junkshops.

Candlesticks are decorative, utilitarian and thoroughly good form. What, then, could be more acceptable for Christmas gifts?

A pair of highly polished brass candlesticks give an air of distinction to even the humblest surroundings. Their polish reflects the thrift of the housekeeper, and their presence denotes her good taste.

The genuine antique candlesticks with their quaint, simple outlines, are preferable to the more modern affairs that are apt to be a trifle too ornate for really good effect. The candlesticks may often be bought in junkshops for their gross weight, and many beautiful specimens have been picked up in this way by the clever and industrious collector. —New York Journal.

A TROPICAL CHRISTMAS

How the Day of Days Is Celebrated In Jamaica

CHRISTMAS with the mercury at 95 degrees in the shade and soaring away out of sight when exposed in the open!

The burning, almost boiling, rays of the sun beat vertically down from a deep blue dome of sky that is unlocked by a single film of cloud, and reflect back with added intensity of suffering heat from the parched, baked and cracked earth and from the surface of a sea that shimmers like molten lead. Christmas in a land of perpetual summer, and a hot wave at that, where a linen suit feels like a buffalo robe and the mere thought of a blazing Yule log almost induces an attack of fever! The calendar may insist that it is the 25th of December, but to a stranger from the north, says a newspaper correspondent from Kingston, Jamaica, to whom the word "Christmas" has a jingle of sleighbells and the sharp, keen ring of skate blades on the ice, there is no real Christmas in the strange countries of the tropics.

In Kingston, the capital of Jamaica, the preparations for Christmas begin several weeks before the event. The shopkeepers lay in extra supplies and provide special attractions, pretty much after the manner of the New York stores. Among other things they import large quantities of sweetmeats and candies from London, New York and Paris, including chocolate creams and other confectionery which New Yorkers are accustomed to getting "fresh every hour." In Jamaica you are resolutely sure of getting these delicacies fresh every Christmas. Chocolate grows in great abundance all over the island, but it must go to London or Paris or New York to be manufactured into candy, or even into the preparations for breakfast beverages. That is one of the expensive peculiarities of the country. The Christmas market is the great feature of the day, and almost the principal event of the year in a certain sense. Everybody goes to market on Christmas day, and between the hours of 6 and 9 in the morning all the fashion and beauty of the island's capital are on dress parade through Victoria market. The stalls in the market are gayly decorated with flags, bunting, palm branches, colored paper, tinsel and an



A NATIVE DUDE IN HOLIDAY DRESS.

abundance of flowers. A brass band occupies a prominent position in the market building and discourses music of great volume and variety and more or less melody. After the crowds fairly take possession of the market the performance of the band appears to be mostly pantomimic, for nothing made by the hand of man can for a moment compete in noise producing capacity with the average Jamaican negro.

The West Indian negro's great weakness is a love of gay apparel, next is a predilection for ceremoniousness, and the most prominent affliction is garrulity. In the crowd that surges past one through the market and the surrounding streets may be seen every variety of apparel known to civilized and uncivilized man. The country people wear little or nothing, the coolies as little as nothing, but the town negro wears everything he or she can put on, without any regard whatever to the climatic conditions. They take their notions from the English fashion papers, and heavy woolen clothing is all the style. The writer has even seen sealskins worn in Kingston on a day when the thermometer registered 90 degrees in the shade. Here is a stylish saddle colored gentleman wearing loud check trousers, patent leather shoes, a striped flannel shirt of three colors, a

crimson and black sash around his waist, a blue English cricketing cap on his head. In his hand he carries an immense cane, while screwed into his left eye is a circular piece of perfectly plain glass, through which he glares stonily on the throng. Not long ago the single eyeglass became very popular among Kingston society dandies, but they could not get along with the glasses that magnified, so some enterprising merchant imported a lot of circular pieces of plain window glass and all the dudes wore them, happily and idiotically.

The Cause of His Grief.

The danger of explaining all one's troubles is illustrated by an incident from Chums. A kind hearted old gentleman had found a small boy crying and stopped to see what was the matter.

"Why are you crying, my little lad?" he asked.

"Boohoo!" said the boy. "Billy Wells hit me, an' father hit me because I let Billy hit me, an' Billy Wells hit me again because I told father, an' now father 'll hit me again because Billy Wells hit me the second time."

A Sailor's Fish Test.

Sailors have a very simple and what is said to be a very effective way of determining the edible or nonedible qualities of any new varieties of fish they may happen to run across. In the water in which the fish is boiled is placed a bright silver coin. If the coin retains its natural color during the boiling process, the fish is good to eat, but if it turns dark the food is rejected.

No Cause For Him to Complain.

"See here!" remarked the guest to the new waiter. "There doesn't seem to be any soup on this menu card."

"Oh, no, sir," replied the waiter nervously. "I didn't spill it at this table; it was the one on the other side of the room."—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

A Long Wait.

Physician (looking into his anteroom, where a number of patients are waiting)—Who has been waiting the longest?

Tailor (who has called to present his bill)—I have, doctor. I delivered the clothes to you three years ago.

When We Really Can't Blame Them.

Sometimes in our more tolerant and forgiving moods we don't blame people for what they do. At the same time we cannot help but feel that they ought to have had more sense.—Indianapolis News.

Red and Inflamed Eyelids.

Red and inflamed lids, lids white, look as though the person had been keeping very late hours, says a recent periodical, and lids which have little crusts formed during the night at the root of the eyelashes, are usually an indication of a low degree of astigmatism. In some cases no relief is had for this condition till proper glasses are procured. A large proportion of the cases, however, will be cured by the following ointment: Yellow oxide of mercury, three grains; yellow vaseline, one-half ounce; mix thoroughly and apply a very little to the edge of the eyelids each night.—Jewelers' Circular-Weekly.

The Limit.

"Don't you think," said the soulful young thing, "that a ruined old church with the ivy clinging to its crumbling walls comes nearer than anything else to realizing one's ideal of patient resignation?"

"That's what it does," replied the young man with the camera. "I don't know anything that will stand for being photographed half as often."—Exchange.

No Cause For Woe.

Stokes—Speaking of mourning, if your rich uncle were to die, should you put on black?

Bickers—Certainly not. If he left me something handsome, why should I be such a hypocrite as to don the garb of woe? On the other hand, if he left me out of his will, how could I consistently put on mourning for such a curmudgeon?—Boston Transcript.

Extra Limited.

Patron—When was this chicken killed?

Waiter—We don't furnish dates with chickens, sir. Only bread and butter.—Pittsburg Press.

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