

CHRISTMAS CHILDREN.

Some Famous Men Who Were Born on Christ's Birthday.

Even were it not for its celebration as the birthday of the Saviour, Dec. 25 would rank as quite a notable date in the year for the number of eminent persons whose natal day it is. Curiously enough, however, we seldom think of the day as the beginning of the career of any one on earth other than He to whom custom has assigned it.

We know that historical events of all sorts—battles, sieges, and so forth—have occurred on Christmas, for articles almost without end dealing with this interesting side of the history of the day have been written, but of its biographical side little has been said, the more odd this because the fact that many notables have been born on the day cannot fail to prove of interest.

The biographical index of Christmas is comparatively long and includes such names as Sir Isaac Newton, William Collins, the lyric poet; P. S. Gilmore, the musician and bandmaster; Richard Porson, the greatest classical scholar England ever produced; Johann Jacob Reiske, the celebrated German orientalist; Clara Barton, Admiral S. C. Rohan and a number of others. Unhappy little shavers they must have been in their childhood with their birthday and their Christmas rejoicings all merged in one.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

CHRISTMAS IN WEST INDIES

How the Darkies of the Antilles Celebrate the Holiday.

Christmas in the West Indies is a very jovial, rollicking affair—at least in the estimation of the darkies. The great feature of the season is the series of masquerades or mystery plays enacted by strolling negro performers.

These are of two sorts. Representations of such Biblical stories as that of David and Goliath—when you may see the dramatic personae clad in such historically accurate garments as "bed-tick" trousers and cretonne coats of flaming pattern—and those of a purely local character. Of these last is the mongoose play, which is peculiar to St. Kitts, and the object of which is to wage mimic war against the destructive pest which is the curse of the island. These strolling players are the chief feature of Christmas celebrations.

They are quite an imposing lot of men, with a good ear for music, and as you watch their antics you might easily imagine that, instead of being in a civilized British colony, you were back in the heart of Africa, assisting at some savage death dance or other heathen rite.

Christmas in Tibet.

Tibet, the home of the strangest and least known people on the face of the earth, is also the home of the strangest of Christmas customs. The feast of Queen Winter in Tibet corresponds with our own Christmas festival. The figure of this queen, or goddess, is painted blue and mounted on a camel, surrounded by a string of human skulls. The dance celebrated at this feast is called tsam, and the masked figures which take part in it would be comic if they were not so horrible. One represents a horned bull, another a deer, but this deer, peculiarly enough, has a horse's head, an ancient symbol among the Tibetans of the messenger of death. There are evil spirits in hordes, demons and other bad spirits to shock the ignorant people into blind obedience to the lamas. One god curses another, and every town has its local protecting divinity. There are serpent gods representing the spirit of evil, but they are fought by such protecting divinities as Garuda, who is always represented in lamajams with a stout body, human arms, wings and the head of a bird.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Christmas Cards.

The Christmas card as we know it has an origin easily traceable, and it is doubtless at least sixty years since the first was designed. The artist who claimed to be its originator and who was, at any rate, the first to see its possibilities was W. C. T. Dobson, R. A., who, when quite a young man, in 1844, was prompted at Christmas to make a little sketch symbolic of the season's joys and festivities and to send it to a friend. It seemed to give great pleasure, and the next year Mr. Dobson determined to follow up the idea on a larger scale, and by having his card photographed was enabled to send copies to twenty-five or thirty friends. The delight with which they were received was so great that Mr. Dobson was quick to perceive that he had found out a new pleasure for Christmas.—New York Mail and Express.

"Man Wants but Little"

"Made known your wants for Christmas yet?"
"Sure. Asked the forty-seven friends who sent me suspenders last year to send trousers to match them this."—Cincinnati Times-Star.

The Dawn of Christmas.

Christmas day begins in the middle of the Pacific ocean, and there is where Santa Claws starts and ends his great and only journey of the year.

A Prayer For the Poor.

Col' w'in a-tryin'
'Tee break down de do—
Lard' sen' de Christmas
Of peace ter de po!
Lean wolf a-howlin'
Out dar in de snow—
Lard' sen' de Christmas
Of peace ter de po!
Sweet I'll chillin'
'Tid nowhar ter go—
Lard' sen' de Christmas
Of love ter de po!
—Atlanta Constitution.

WIVES ON CHRISTMAS TREES

Strange Christmas Customs That Prevail in Parts of Russia.

Of all Christmas tree customs, one of the strangest prevails in parts of Russia. A gift tree is set up in the village, on the branches of which roost young unmarried women, cloaked and hooded and veiled so that their identity is concealed. The swains are admitted one by one, just as they are in our familiar American game of "spat in, spat out." Each as he enters lifts a veil—of course at random—and the face thus disclosed belongs to his future wife. The act of lifting the veil betroths the couple, the penalty for breaking the engagement being a heavy fine to be paid into the village treasury.

Another Russian custom is a procession of children dressed in fantastic animal costumes. One boy holds aloft



A RUSSIAN CHRISTMAS TREE.

a star shaped paper lantern to represent the "star of the east;" another carries on his back a miniature theater, on the stage of which puppet performances like "Punch and Judy" shows are given at every farmhouse where the motley pageant halts.

The modern Christmas tree comes to us from Germany, the Yule log from Scandinavia, Santa Claus from Holland and the Christmas stocking from France, but the Christmas turkey—ah, that is America's contribution to the world's stock of Christmas cheer! But there is one part of the world where the people are afraid to eat turkey. In Armenia it would be too much like treason to their cruel ruler, the Turk. If they do venture to eat the fowl they call it "Egyptian hen." Down in Egypt they name it "Indian hen." Thus both Armenians and Egyptians save themselves from Moslem vengeance.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

Christmas Table Decorations.

The dinner table itself should proclaim the season by its decoration. A snowy cloth patterned with holly leaves or mistletoe, a centerpiece of glossy holly leaves and brilliant berries, silver candelabra and silver bonbon dishes are appropriate and dignified. Flat wreaths of holly tied with bows of "berry" red ribbon are very effective on the table, one in the center and one encircling each candelabrum. A silver or cut glass bowl of holly and meteor roses or holly and mistletoe may be set in the wreath to complete the centerpiece. The outline of the Christmas star may be used instead of the wreaths. In this case the bows of ribbon are omitted. And for the guest cards either bells, stars, plum puddings, holly or ivy leaves, cut out and painted and ornamented with Christmas verse or greetings, are appropriate, and a little silk stocking of bonbons may be laid by each card as a souvenir.

Christ's Birthday.

There is something akin to sadness in the fact that in tracing the origin of many of our church festivals we find it in pagan celebrations antedating the Christian era. There is nothing certain even about the birthday of Christ. Some authorities assert that December was in the dry season, when shepherds were on duty day and night. In the controversy over the date, extending from December to May, Pope Julius (337-352) had an investigation made by St. Cyril and was satisfied that the 25th of December was correct. It was so established in the Roman church, and before the end of the fourth century the dictum was universally accepted.—Boston Herald.

Mrs. Lender's Liberality.

Struggling Pastor—Nearly all the congregation has subscribed liberally for the Christmas tree fund, and I feel sure that I can also have your hearty co-operation. How much will you—
Mrs. Lender—Let me see. Oh, I am the only member who has a carriage and coachman, I think.
"Yes. The rest are poor."
"Well, I will drive around and collect the subscriptions."

Christmas Day.

Oh, blessed day which gives the eternal lie
To self and sense and all the brute within—
Oh, come to us amid this war of life;
To hall and hovel come; to all who toll
In senate, shop or study and to those
Who, sund'ry by the wastes of half a world,
Ill warn'd and sorely tempted, ever face
Nature's brute powers and men unman-
ned to brutes—
Come to them, best and blessing, Christ-
mas day.
Tell them once more the tale of Bethle-
hem—
The weeping shepherds and the Babe
Glorious—
And keep them from the road, fair Christ-
mas day.
—Charles Kingsley.

THE MYSTIC MISTLETOE.

Once a Feature of Pagan Rites, It Now Belongs to Love.

From time immemorial the white berried mistletoe has played a leading part in Yuletide festivities, though it has not always conveyed the osculatory privileges which give it its value in the eyes of the romantic youth of today. Like so many other features of the Christmas celebration, mistletoe has been borrowed from the pagans of antiquity and Christianized by the lapse of centuries. The Persians before the birth of Christ used the mistletoe in their sacred rites, and in parts of India pagan priests still incorporate it in their ritual. It figures largely in Scandinavian mythology. Baldur, the son of Odin, though a demigod, was slain by a spear of mistletoe, a proof of its magic powers.

It is from the Druids of old England, however, that mistletoe has come to us. The Druidical priests, sprung, it is said, from the magi of the east, the wise men who worshiped at the cradle of the infant Saviour, held the mistletoe as their most sacred possession, and the cutting of the pretty parasite from the oak, the tree which the Druids claimed God loved more than any other, was attended with the greatest solemnity. On the Druids' festival day a grand procession, leading two white oxen, moved to the mystic grove. There the oxen were fastened to the oak by their horns, and a white robed priest climbed into the leafless branches and cut the bunches of mistletoe with a golden knife. The oxen were then sacrificed and religious services performed, after which the procession returned to the temple in the forest and the mistletoe was deposited in the Druidical arcanum.

Besides taking its place in the religious observances of the Druids, the mistletoe, which the priests gave a name meaning "all healing," was made into many curious decoctions by processes in which times and seasons and incantations were supposed to add to its mysterious powers. These medicines were regarded as cures for human ills generally, whether of mind or body.

With the advance of civilization and the death of superstition mistletoe has lost its religious character, but not its popularity, and the forests of England and of our own southern states are as eagerly frequented by mistletoe gatherers as ever were the dark woods of the ancient Druids.

CHRISTMAS IN SWEDEN.

One Day When There Are Neither Rich Nor Poor.

If you were in Sweden on Christmas eve you would hear the church bells begin to ring at 5 o'clock, for everybody stops work then and the festivities begin in great earnest everywhere in the kingdom. Class distinctions are forgotten and servants are allowed to sit at table with the family. After supper comes the universal Christmas tree, for Sweden is one of the early homes of this beautiful custom.

On Christmas morning at 6 o'clock, while it is still dark, you would go to church, for everybody goes, unless you stayed at home to mind the lights in the house, for every home in the kingdom is illuminated. There is almost sure to be a deep snow, and you would go to church in a sleigh. Behind every sleigh you would see two boys standing on the runners and holding pine torches—a beautiful spectacle as a long procession of sleighs glides over the snow on a forest road. These torches are stuck up in a circle around the church. A whole week is given to good cheer and hospitality.

A Friendship Calendar.

A friendship calendar as a Christmas gift was a source of much pleasure to an elderly lady living alone, says Good Housekeeping. At her request each one of fifty-two of her friends, representing the fifty-two weeks of the year, furnished material for every day of the seven in his week. Each one followed out his own idea for the week's calendar, contributing favorite quotations, short poems, anecdotes and reminiscences, some even adding cherished recipes. In many instances the contributions were original. Others were illustrated with small pictures cut from current magazines. The result was a perpetual calendar, each day representing the loving thought of a friend.

A Christmas Game.

"Christmas candles" is a good old time game. A lighted candle is placed upon a table. The player is blindfolded and stationed with his back to the candle, about a foot from it. He's then told to take three steps forward, turn around three times, then to walk four steps toward the candle and blow it out. His attempt to do so will probably be as amusing to the audience as disconcerting to himself.—Country Life in America.

The American Woman.

It is a fact that American women have degenerated in point of health and physique until they have literally become a race of invalids. Thompson's Barosma will remove that sallow complexion, that tired feeling, that bearing down sensation. Thompson's Barosma invigorates all the organs, strengthens and builds up the entire system. All druggists. \$1 per bottle, 6 for \$5.

Prayers offered in fear are still more sincere than prayers offered in a spirit of boasting.

Revolution Imminent.

A sure sign of approaching revolt and serious trouble in your system is nervousness, sleeplessness, or stomach upsets. Electric Bitters will quickly dismember the troublesome causes. It never fails to tone the stomach, regulate the Kidneys and Bowels, stimulate the Liver, and clarify the blood. Run down systems benefit particularly and all the usual aches vanish under its searching and thorough effectiveness. Electric Bitters is only 50c, and that is returned if it don't give perfect satisfaction. Guaranteed by L. Taggart, Druggist.

Nervousness.

The most degenerative cause for nervousness is when the kidneys are affected. When the kidneys are congested for disease it affects the great nerves connecting them with the stomach and the heart. The stomach is constantly getting out of order and bloating and palpitation of the heart sets in leading many to believe that they are suffering from nervousness, stomach trouble and heart disease. Thompson's Barosma at once corrects the kidney, soothes the nerves and restores the stomach and heart to their normal conditions. Thompson's Barosma is pleasant to take. For sale by R. C. Dodson.

Try to make two virtues look like 10, and they will get so thin you won't know them.

A Pleasant Pill.

No pill is as pleasant and positive as DeWitt's Little Early Risers. DeWitt's Little Early Risers are so mild and effective that children, delicate ladies and weak people enjoy their cleansing effect, while strong people say they are the best liver pills sold. Sold by R. C. Dodson.

No More Suffering.

If you are troubled with indigestion get a bottle of Kodol Dyspepsia Cure and see how quickly it will cure you. Geo. A. Thompson, of Spencer, Ia., says: "Have had Dyspepsia for twenty years. My case was almost hopeless. Kodol Dyspepsia Cure was recommended and I used a few bottles of it and it is the only thing that has relieved me. Would not be without it. Have doctored with local physicians and also at Chicago, and even went to Norway with hopes of getting some relief, but Kodol Dyspepsia Cure is the only remedy that has done me any good, and I heartily recommend it. Every person suffering with Indigestion or Dyspepsia should use it." Sold by R. C. Dodson.

When poverty comes in at the window love crawls under the bed.

A Costly Mistake.

Blunders are sometimes very expensive. Occasionally life itself is the price of a mistake, but you'll never be wrong if you take Dr. King's New Life Pills for Dyspepsia, Dizziness, Headache, Liver or Bowel troubles. They are gentle yet thorough. 25c, at L. Taggart's Drug Store.

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FOR LADIES COATS, ALL STYLES, FURS, SUITS, SHIRT WAISTS AND SKIRTS, CHILDREN'S DRESSES AND COATS



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The Laughlin Fountain Pen is a quality hard rubber, is fitted with highest grade, or extra security, of the most secure and reliable, and has the only perfect feeding device known. It is guaranteed for one year and mounted, at an extra charge, for presentation purposes, \$1.00 extra. Surely you will not be able to resist the temptation of three times the price that will give you such continuous pleasure and service.

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Harry S. Lloyd, Emporium, Pa.