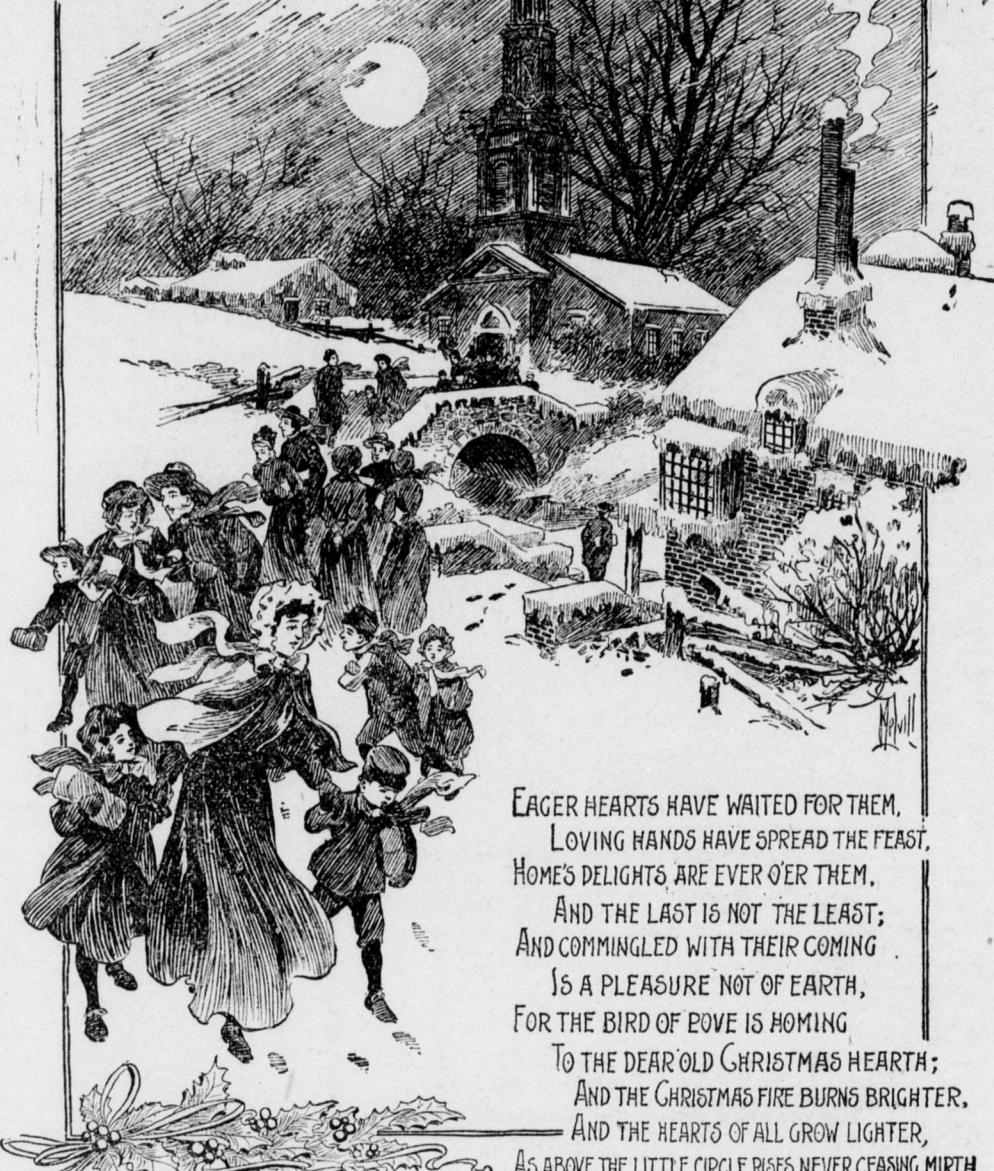


CHRISTMAS JOYS BY T.C. HARBAUGH.

HARK! THE UNSEEN CHOIRS ARE SINGING,
 FAR BEYOND THE AZURE DOME,
 AND THE CHRISTMAS BELLS ARE RINGING
 FOR THEY BRING THE CHILDREN HOME;
 AH! THEY COME FROM DALE AND DINGLE,
 AYE, THEY COME FROM LANDS AFAR,
 AND WITH JOYOUS HEARTS COMMINGLE
 NEATH THE GLORIOUS CHRISTMAS STAR:
 HOW THEY HEARKEN TO THE STORY
 SACRED SWEET, THOUGH OLD AND HOARY,
 HOW THE SAINTED BABE WAS CRADLED IN THE ORIENT AFAR!



EAGER HEARTS HAVE WAITED FOR THEM,
 LOVING HANDS HAVE SPREAD THE FEAST,
 HOME'S DELIGHTS ARE EVER O'ER THEM,
 AND THE LAST IS NOT THE LEAST;
 AND COMMINGLED WITH THEIR COMING
 IS A PLEASURE NOT OF EARTH,
 FOR THE BIRD OF LOVE IS HOMING
 TO THE DEAR OLD CHRISTMAS HEARTH;
 AND THE CHRISTMAS FIRE BURNS BRIGHTER,
 AND THE HEARTS OF ALL GROW LIGHTER,
 AS ABOVE THE LITTLE CIRCLE RISES NEVER CEASING MIRTH.

THE STORY OF SANTA CLAUS

St. Nicholas the First Patron Saint of the Children.

SANTA CLAUS is the one myth that will not down. The tradition of a beneficent spirit—call him by what name you will, Santa Claus, Kriss Kringle, St. Nicholas, Father Christmas or Noel—who comes around on December 25 of each year, and gladdens the heart of children, rich or poor, by mysteriously leaving to them the very things they most want, survives in spite of all attacks.

Santa Claus, the real Santa Claus, is both old and young. His pictures show to us a jolly fellow, with a beard suggesting the venerable, twinkling eyes bespeaking bounding youth. And



The Russian St. Nicholas.

young in feeling and action, if not in years, he must be to get over all the world in one night, without missing one house in which lives a deserving child.

He is different in every country, ranging in years from the beautiful Christ child that the good children of France adore, to the jolly old fellow to whom the American youngster vows allegiance.

But it is not in this sense that the writer means to depict Santa Claus as both young and old. It is from a historical standpoint that the comparison is made. Santa Claus, as we know him in this country, is less than a century old, but the real Santa Claus,

the original of them all, goes way back to the remote third century.

His present name, Santa Claus, or Kriss Kringle, is derived from St. Nicholas, the very incarnation of all that was good and generous.

St. Nicholas, destined to be worshipped in various forms by the children of scores of centuries, was born in Patara, a town of Lycia, in Asia Minor. From his earliest days he showed a religious inclination that destined him to take a high place in the church.

As a young man he entered the monastery of Sion, and in time he became abbot and later bishop of Myra. His sanctity and learning made him shine even in the most illustrious company, and he was one of the most notable figures at that wonderful gathering of 318 bishops, who met at Nicea in 318 to condemn the heresy of Arius.

While St. Nicholas became famous in the councils of the church, it was still more as the special friend of the children that his fame spread.

One of his earliest miracles, it is related, had to do with restoring to life two or three children. There are two accounts of the story. One says that an Asian sent his two sons to Athens to study. En route they fell in with a villainous innkeeper, who, to get their valuables, slew the two boys, and cut their bodies into bits, which he put in his brine barrel to sell for pork. Then St. Nicholas, having seen the crime in a vision, came to the spot, and restored the children to life.

The other version says there were three children, and that their would-be murderer was a butcher. In either case, St. Nicholas performed the miracle of restoring them to life.

This was the first act by which St. Nicholas proved his love for children. The second bore still more strongly on the Santa Claus idea, for it was a favor that he did at Christmas time.

A certain nobleman of Patara was so poor that he was unable to give a portion for his three daughters, and it seemed impossible that any of the trio could get a husband. St. Nicholas, learning of their plight, came at Christmas time and threw a purse filled with gold into an open window. The act was done as stealthily as that of the modern Santa Claus; the nobleman could not tell who his benefactor was, but he gave thanks and married off the eldest daughter.

Next Christmas came another purse, and the second daughter took a husband.

When the Christmas of the third year approached, the nobleman's curiosity got the better of him, and he set himself on guard to see who it was that left the money. When the saint appeared, the nobleman came forward and asked why so good an act should be performed in stealth. Then the patron saint of the children enun-

ated the great truth that the best acts are those that are done for the joy of doing, not the hope of praise.

Thus centuries ago was proclaimed what is the best sentiment of Christmas giving. The idea of St. Nicholas was so beautiful that it took its place among the great beliefs of the children, and in different forms it is found nearly every century.

Both his name and his form differ, but everywhere his labor is the same. In France, Germany, Russia and the Netherlands he is the embodiment of an essentially religious idea, but in England and the United States his office is more a secular one.

France always represents Noel as the Infant Jesus, and in Germany, too,



The German Kris.

the name Krist Kindel, corrupted here into Kriss Kringle, means literally the Christ Child.

In central Europe, where the Christ Child is believed to come with gifts for the little ones, he is dressed like a maiden, carrying a silver bell, lighted tapers and wearing a crown.

St. Nicholas carries the same name in Holland that he does here, Santa Claus. In Switzerland they call him Sama Klaus, and in Heilgoland, Sonner Klaus.

He is Niklo or Niglo in Austria, and boasts the luxury of an attendant, who assists him in carrying all his bundles. This assistant to Santa Claus is known as Krampus, and with the children is only a shade less popular than his chief.

"Holy Man" is the respectful term by which the patron Saint is known in the Tyrol, and here, too, he has help, being accompanied by the Christ Child and St. Lucy. The Christ Child Himself comes in Alsace.

Even Japan has a Santa Claus, similar in most respects to the Santa Claus of the occident. He is known as the "Sage of Long Life."

SANTA CLAUS PARTY

NOVEL AND PRETTY ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON.

Originated by Youthful Grandparents for a Family Reunion—Lovely Home Beautified With Attractive Decorations—The Christmas Luncheon.

This very charming and delightful party was given by young grandparents, who had a lovely home with large rooms, and they invited the grown-up folk, too.

The host and hostess were assisted in receiving their guests by Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus and Miss Santa Claus. After the greetings, they were ushered into a large room, a portion of which had been converted into a typical winter forest, in the corner of which was a lovely Christmas tree all aglow with lights.

Before the gifts were distributed by Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus, Miss Santa Claus told the old, old story of the Christ-child, emphasizing the fact that Christmas is a time for gifts because Jesus was a gift of love to the world, how he "went about doing good," "pleased not himself"—teaching and living a life of goodness and love. That is why Christmas, his birthday, is the gladdest of birthdays in all the years, she told them.

Miss Santa Claus directed and lead all the games, and whenever there came a pause, she told such delightful stories. There were selections from Dickens, and "Uncle Remus," and many other lovely stories.

The entertainment closed with a lovely luncheon, which was served in the large dining-room. At the windows were holly wreaths, tied with large bows of red ribbon, while the mantel was banked with greens and thickly studded with red candles, different lengths. In the bay window were festoons of running cedar, with a fluffy red bell suspended by a bit of the cedar from the highest point of the arch, with smaller bells on either side.

The long table had for a centerpiece an oval mirror, surrounded by a miniature forest, which had been converted into a typical winter scene by a glass-blower. Gliding across the frozen pond was a sleigh drawn by four deer, in which Santa Claus was seated, with a pack of toys on his back, and toys all about him. At the farther end of the pond was a tiny house nestling among the evergreen trees. The children were seated at this table with the host and hostess.

There were four round tables at either corner of the long table, at which the older people sat. The centerpiece of each was a round plateau of mistletoe, in the middle of which gleamed a flaming star of red. A five-pointed star was cut from cardboard, then tacked to a thin board. The star was outlined with red candles, with a cluster of five candles elevated in the very center of the star.—The Pilgrim.

AFTER CHRISTMAS.



Soldier—Haven't seen much of you lately. Been staying at home pretty close?

Jack-in-Box—Oh, no; I've been in and out a good deal.

Kept Him Busy.

Patience—And you say her "steady" was at her house seeing the old year out with her?

Patrice—Yes; and he told her when the clock struck 12 he'd give her a kiss for each stroke he heard of the clock.

"Wasn't he stingy?"
 "Oh, no; you see there were 14 clocks in the surrounding rooms, and no two kept the same time."—Yonkers Statesman.

After Bigger Game.

"I dreamed last night," remarked Connelly, as the trolley car was taking him to town, "that the man who killed the goose that laid the golden eggs was back to the earth."
 "Still killing geese, I suppose," said Mullen.

"No, he wasn't," replied Connelly, "he was gunning for Santa Claus' deer."—Brooklyn Life.

Grounds for Suspicion.

"Well," asked the lawyer, "what reason have you to suspect that your wife has ceased to care for you?"

"She's trying," the man with the troubled countenance replied, "to make me consent to play Santa Claus in a suit that she has decorated with bunches of cotton."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Not a Cheerful Sight.

Mother—Yes, Dorothy; the lord loveth a cheerful giver.
 Dorothy (aged six)—Goodness! I hope he don't see you getting those Christmas presents ready for the mail, then, mamma.—Judge.

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT.

By Henry F. Cope.

Heaven's anthems come always to those who are faithful to earth's toil.

God looks through the gift that is given for men to look at.

There is no such thing as a helping hand with a withholding heart.

No man ever had a happy Christmas by thinking of what he was getting.

It's the cheer and not the charity we give that makes the world brighter.

Nothing could be more sacrilegious than a selfish gift rendered in His name.

Tell of your happiness and you will find your troubles indefinitely postponed.

You are most likely to hear the angels singing if you go where some one is weeping.

No man ever got any good out of giving who did it with an eye single to his own glory.

Many a man's appreciation of Christmas has been spoiled by his apprehension of New Year's bills.—Ram's Horn.

WISE GIRL.



Ethel—If you're not going to accept Mr. Koyme, why don't you tell him to stop calling on you.
 Clarice—I am, right after Christmas.

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

It is Best Made by Remembering the Christ Spirit of Kindliness.

A happy Christmas to grown people and a merry Christmas to the children! And let it be a happy Christmas; for that one day put away worries and disagreeable feelings, and enter into the real spirit of Christmas, which is to give happiness into some human life. It is not in the giving of presents alone that is the true Christmas; it is in bestowing kind words, kind looks and smiles where there is not always sunshine. Why do people so often think Christmas a burden, and wish the holiday season past? Why should the sad and sorrowful look forward to it as a dread anniversary? This is the worst form of selfishness. Christmas should be a day of self-forgetfulness and of thinking of some one else's life, and how it can be made brighter. There is a great deal of sadness and worry in all stations of life, and a few cheery words, accompanied by a smile, give great encouragement and cost but little effort.

And the children! Does anyone ever notice the wistful faces peering into the fascinating shop windows at this season, and remember that probably this is their owners' only glimpse of Christmas? That in their whole miserable existence never a penny has been handled by them of their very own? Let the childless one and the sorrowful one, as well as those who daily take their walks abroad, think of this, and each one in his own way do his best to gladden some life, and by doing so feel by Christmas night that there is something after all worth doing and living for in this old world, and the new year will be prepared for by ending the old one well.

Ignorance.

"I reckon," said Miss Miami Brown, "dat what de young gemman needs nowadays is mo' scientific education."

"What makes you think so?"

"I was done stan'in' under de mistletoe foh half an hour, but foh all dem young gemmen knowed 'bout botany it might as well have been a cabbage leaf."—Washington Star.

A Day of Reckoning.

'Twas the day after Christmas, And all through the house The children were having A merry carouse; While pa in his study Was tearing his hair As he gazed at the bills That were piled everywhere. —Town Topics.

Of Interest to Stockholders.

Jaspar—I hear that Santa Claus has given up his yearly rounds.
 Jumpuppe—You don't tell me!
 Jaspar—Yes. He has accepted a regular position on the "Salaries Committees" of various big corporations.—Town Topics.

A Holiday Reflection.

"A Christmas tree is a good deal like a wife."
 "How's that?"
 "It's the trimmings that cost."—Chicago Record-Herald.

FIRST XMAS TREE

INTRODUCED IN AMERICA BY GERMAN AT WOOSTER, O.

Created Much Comment at the Time—First Church Christmas Tree in This Country Also Credited to Ohio Town.

The first Christmas tree in the United States, it is claimed, was introduced in the college town of Wooster, O. August Ingard was the promoter and he brought the idea from his former home in Germany. For more than half a century Mr. Ingard has been familiarly known among a large circle of people as the "father of the Christmas tree." He died not long ago at the age of 80, after having lived in Wooster for more than 60 years.

Few young people of the present day realize that the Christmas tree is of comparatively recent origin in this country. In the early days of America there was a strong aversion to the observance of Christmas after the manner in which it was celebrated in many parts of Europe, or, in fact, any observance at all. It is even claimed that the New England Thanksgiving was established as a substitute for the growing tendency to observe Christmas. All Yuletide festivals were therefore slow in making their appearance in the United States, but the Christmas tree came last of all. In Europe the Christmas tree was first established in Rome, and from there introduced into Germany, where it soon became particularly popular.

After Mr. Ingard had crossed the deep to the new world and settled in Wooster and the first Christmas holiday season had rolled round he became homesick when he thought of the festivities which at that very time were in progress in the fatherland. With a view to calling up as best he could the Christmas scenes of his old home he secured a spruce bough and with some bright paper and candles he made what is believed to be the first American Christmas tree. The people of Wooster, which was then but a mere village, came in large numbers to see the tree, and this new



AUGUST INGARD.

He introduced the Christmas Tree in America.

feature of the holiday season created wide interest and enthusiasm. At that period the importance of the Christmas season was growing more rapidly than it had ever done before, and the introduction of the Christmas tree therefore at this time could scarcely be styled premature. The following year many of the villagers brought into their homes the boughs of spruce trees, too, and the popularity of the Christmas tree increased thereafter rapidly and soon spread to other towns.

The introduction of the Christmas tree into a church, however, remained for the year 1851, or nearly a decade after its appearance in the homes of Wooster. Rev. Henry C. Schwan of Cleveland, for more than 20 years president of the German Evangelical Lutheran synod of Missouri and Ohio, introduced this first church Christmas tree into Cleveland. Rev. Mr. Schwan was born in the province of Hanover, Germany. He came to Cleveland about 55 years ago. Cleveland at that time was the center of a great deal of religious intolerance and anything in the nature of an innovation was looked upon with horror.

Rev. Mr. Schwan, like Mr. Ingard, being a German, recalled the Christmas tree of Germany and accordingly during the first year of his pastorate in Cleveland he arranged for a Christmas celebration in his church. A Christmas tree decorated with gilt, tinsel, candles, apples and candies comprised a part of the celebration. The feeling over this tree in the community ran high among other denominations. It was styled idolatrous and sacrilegious and it was prophesied that it would bring down the wrath of God. Others laughed at the tree as absurd. Members of the church in which the Christmas tree had been inaugurated were even boycotted for a time in their business and in other ways were made to suffer, their accusers claiming that they had groveled before a hemlock tree with lighted candles and cheap pictures. One or two members, it is said, were even threatened with discharge by their employers if they ever again participated in arranging for another Christmas tree. The next year, however, the church enjoyed another Christmas tree, and every year thereafter, and as time went on the feeling against the now universal custom gave way and the German conception of Christmas came to be better understood.

Easy to Find Excuse.

Corruption will never want a pretense.—Cato the Younger.