

The Day of the Child

By Wilbur D. Nesbit.

The tree shines with the candle glow,
The trinkets glitter jewel-wise,
And we would that our souls might know
The joy told in the children's eyes.
Such sheer delight as this of theirs—
A wondrous happiness it is!
And every word the message bears:
This is the children's day—and His!

Let us come, as the Wise Men came
Those nineteen centuries ago,
Led by the Star's eternal flame
That bade them rise and hasten on.
They brought rare frankincense and
myrrh,
They brought rich gems and graven
gold,
They knelt, adoring, near to Her,
And all their marvelings they told.

Aye, as those Men of long ago,
To-day we, too, may see the Star,
May see its mystic heavenly glow
Flash out o'er Childland fair and
far;
And from our hands now fall the gifts
And we know why the Wise Men
smiled
With gratefulness; and each heart lifts
Its chant of worship of the Child.

Copyright by W. D. Nesbit.

THE CHRISTMAS OF TODAY



WHILE the ancient traditions of Christmas time have been handed down from generation to generation for hundreds of years the holiday has been so modernized and improved of late that naught save its ancient lore and customs remain. In this day the old form of celebrating

the day is seldom seen. As the yule log vanished with the advent of the stove so the simple ways which amused the youngsters of yesterday have disappeared and in their stead comes to-day an endless line of mechanical devices. The dolls of to-day open and close their eyes and even speak; the toy steam train runs by real steam power; the miniature electric car is driven by real electricity; the toy animals and insects move about like real life. Now Christmas trees are purchased at the grocery store and are illuminated at night with tiny electric lights instead of candles. Instead of popcorn balls and cornucopias of candy the tree is decorated with gilt and tinsel ropes and stars. More automobile horns are heard now on Christmas day than sleigh bells. Steam heat and electric radiators take the place of open fires and plenty of money makes the day even more enjoyable than ever before.

Much Due to Electricity.
Electricity, which has invaded every nook and cranny of life to-day, has assisted more than any one thing in modernizing the Christmas celebration. The electric cars hurry Christmas callers from house to house. On Christmas eve the buildings and

streets are ablaze with countless electric lights. Electric telephones and telegraph are wishing every one many happy returns of the day. The wireless carries "Merry Christmas" from ship to ship and the electric cable flashes the good will of governments around the earth.

The new electric ovens sizzle with the roasting turkey and the electric stove is rushed to prepare the many appetizing viands for which the day of feast calls. Electric door-bells are jingling; electrical musical instruments furnish the music for the Christmas carols; the electric motors, which have worked so faithfully in preparing the many valuable presents of a thousand different varieties, are enjoying a day's rest after the hustling days of the holiday trade.

Useful Christmas Presents.

Year by year it grows more the custom to make Christmas presents just as useful as possible. While expense is not considered so material as it used to be it is important that the gifts should be useful as well as ornamental. This is as it should be. Here again electricity finds a useful field. The development of the electric heating and cooking devices has added a host of valuable and useful things which are always acceptable Christmas gifts. The electric chafing dish, electric shaving mug and electric coffee percolator will be numbered among the most conspicuous of useful Christmas presents. The electrical list also contains electric flatirons, electric cookers, luminous radiators, massage machines, hair dryers, curling iron heaters, water heaters, tea kettles, baby milk warmer and a number of other useful things, not to mention the electric toys.

This year will see less money wasted for useless trinkets than ever before.



Christmas Decorations.

Let the house be bright and cheerful at Christmas, with plenty of holly and mistletoe distributed throughout. If there is a chandelier in the dining-room have it hung with evergreens and holly, and from that carry long ropes of greens to each corner of the room, thus forming a canopy for the table. Fasten wreaths at all the windows. Red and green is most appropriate for the Christmas table. In the center place a bowl filled with red carnations surrounded with holly, and four single candles in silver or glass sticks with scarlet shades to further carry out the bright and cheering color scheme. At each place have a miniature Christmas tree to which place cards are tied with narrow, red ribbon. If preferred the centerpiece may also be a tree of a larger size. Boxes representing Santa Claus and filled with bonbons make appropriate souvenirs, for the possession of a "sweet tooth" is by no means confined to the extremely juvenile.

Gifts from Wall Paper.

Get a sample book of wall paper which can be had for the asking when the season is over. For a waste paper basket cut a pattern six inches at the top, tapering to four inches at the bottom, and 12 inches high, which is a good size for a lady's desk. Cut four sections from cardboard and a square 4x4 inches for the bottom. Cover the outside of each piece with a pretty design of the wall paper, cutting the pieces a little larger than cardboard, pasting the edges on to the wrong side, use a contrasting color for the inside, plain paper is prettier and cut just the size of the section. Punch holes near the top and bottom of each piece and two on each side of the bottom piece, near corner; tie the pieces together with baby ribbon, it requiring about three yards. One can make different sizes, small ones for hair receivers or with a little pad in bottom for jewelry, also glove and handkerchief boxes. Cover empty thread boxes and fill with home-made candy.

CHRISTMAS and CIVILIZATION



ALL Christendom again celebrates the nativity of the founder of the Christian faith, and the inauguration of the new year. The heart yields to the prevailing spirit and sentiment, despite intellectual dissent. Not to observe, in some form, the Christmas festival is felt to do violence to the best instincts of humanity. This holiday eclipses all other birthdays, as the sun makes the electric light to cast a shadow. At this season a large majority find delight in giving. It gives occasion for springs of human kindness and good will to flow. It challenges the charge that man is innately and persistently selfish. More than is believed practice the truth that is more blessed to give than to receive.

Christmas is the festival of children and women. Christ's conception of childhood and youth and his treatment of women made it possible for them to commemorate his birthday with joy and gladness. At the outset of his career he foretold the regency of the cradle and the glory of the woman. Christmas celebrates the birth of a child to whom the world owes the progress of 1,900 years, and whose work will endure so long as earth shall continue and influence other worlds.

NINETEEN centuries ago a peasant woman of Judea in a stable gave birth to a child destined to do the greatest possible work—to free all women from bondage and all children from slavery—the evils which disgraced past ages. Jesus' influence upon humanity as a child, a man, a teacher and as a Saviour, as one who put the eternal right of man above all established customs and precedents, is the greatest inheritance of the human race. The king of the Jews has become the king of the world. A Hebrew mind with no racial bias is now ruling the nations. The spirit of the Christ most deeply moves modern life and thought. His name has passed over our institutions and his mind has penetrated into our social and domestic existence. The inspiration of true liberty and education, the benediction of the beautiful, the elevation of letters, literature and morals are ascribed to him.

HIS influence upon the centuries is as clearly marked as the currents of the Gulf Stream bringing verdure and beauty to inhospitable shores, light to those in darkness, and making the wilderness to blossom as the rose. Innumerable poems, dramas and songs have been developed through his teaching. Art taxes itself fittingly to portray his life, architecture struggles to build temples suitable for his worship. Universities, colleges, schools, and all systems of education attempt to realize his estimate of the dignity and worth of childhood. "Government itself," said Gladstone, "is but the translation of the teachings of Jesus Christ into human laws and institutions." His thoughts and ideas toil like a giant for man's progress. The single historic vine in Santa Barbara carried to California by a priest has changed all the industries of that land, so Christ's ideas carry energies for civilizing worlds. "As the sun upon the horizon rolls forward, pouring forth warmth out of its invisible urns, so we perceive an atmosphere of hope and joy has been poured over the continent out of the heart of Christ and those who loved him." The world celebrates at Christmas the advent of this wonderful being. It looks reverently upon the face of him, the feeble infant in the manger, and upon other children to whom he gave so much.

CHILDREN and Christmas are the factors of civilization. Edmund Burke defined civilization as "the spirit of a gentleman, and the spirit of religion in a life lived in the presence of man and God." The beauty, purity, humility, faith, helplessness and the promise of chil-

dren educate the parents in affection and gentleness, and through them the community. The spring whence civilization flows is the Babe of Mary, and the babe in every home. The Christmas spirit incarnated in deeds of kindness, of self-forgetfulness, love, mutual helpfulness, is the secret of Christian civilization.

It will inoculate all the world with that purpose to do justice and deal kindly with our fellows. Christianity has been defined as "a beautiful civilization slowly journeying across the earth." It is the only civilization worthy to be named. It presents ideals, with the power to realize them.

THERE were individuals who reflected ideal virtues in other periods, but were unable to multiply themselves, dying like Beatrice, who took her beauty, as they carried their moral excellences away with them. The first Christmas dawned on a world of selfishness and sin, and dark with folly and cruelty. There was beauty for the few, slavery, poverty and starvation for the many, death for the unwelcome child and degradation for woman. There were 375,000 paupers in a population of 1,000,000 in Rome. It was a period of intellectual chaos, moral and social desolation, and individual hopelessness. Into this gloom came the star of Bethlehem, beaming light, hope and sympathy. The contrast between the manger birth and the Christmas morn that will dawn this week with its carols, songs, gifts, joy and gladness, is the most striking contrast earth's history holds.

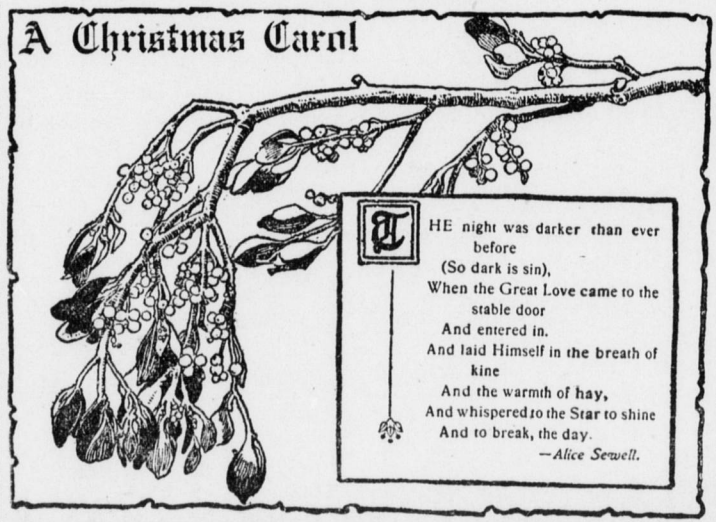
With that first Christmas childhood became sweet and sacred, woman was crowned queen of the heart and home, the slave made free, the ignorant, poor and wretched found education, shelter and sympathy, and the joy of general intellectuality became contagious. As the sun rises earlier and lingers longer than yesterday so the spirit of Christmas will usher in the golden age of happiness and good will. In the great picture of Coreggio the light on the face of the babe lends a glow to shepherd and wise men. The Christmas spirit lends a glow to all the instruments and forces of society.

WHILE humanity falls below the ideal, the effort to practice it is not wholly nugatory. The "drift of the world is upward." The people are climbing. Interest in children is increasing. Woman is coming to her own. Labor is entering the reward of work. War is becoming unpopular. Racial prejudice will hide in shame. The Christ spirit is victorious. God's good will becomes triumphant in home, street and legislative hall. The triumphs of the past dictate new struggles for the future. When Pericles gave his oration over the Athenian dead, pointing to the graves, the great orator said: "Their silence is eloquent! These heroes ask us to go and live for the city for which they died." Thus past achievements pledge us to fresh fidelity. Christmas asks us to lend the impulse of a new love to home, school, street and city; to be a friend of the friendless, a benefactor to some dumb beast or deserted child, to be voice for the dumb, eyes for the blind, springs of water for the thirsty, trees of shade for the weary, food for the hungry, refuge for the smitten.

Be an angel of mercy, bringing "peace on earth and good will toward men," and thus hasten a Christmas which will not simply come to-morrow, but will stay all the year.

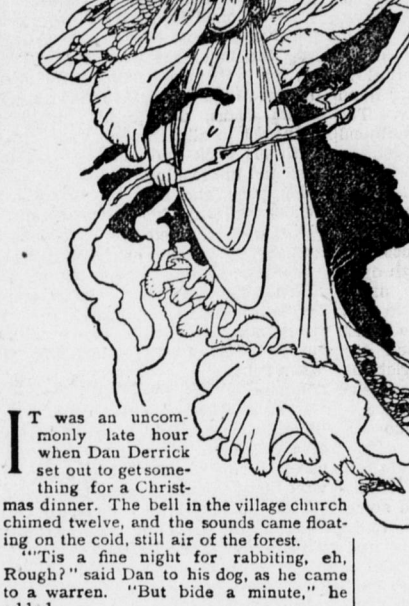
Christmas Salad.
For a Christmas salad select the largest and brightest red apples, and cut a deep slice from each at the stem end. Scoop out the pulp; drop both the covers and apples into cold water and leave them until needed. Cut crisp celery into small pieces with one-third the quantity of English walnuts or pecans broken; mix with very stiff mayonnaise. Wipe and polish each apple and fill with the salad, fitting each cover carefully, and set on a bed of crisp lettuce leaves just before serving.

A Christmas Carn!
THE night was darker than ever before
(So dark is sin),
When the Great Love came to the stable door
And entered in,
And laid Himself in the breath of kine
And the warmth of hay,
And whispered to the Star to shine
And to break, the day.
—Alice Sewell.



The FAIRY CHRISTMAS TREE

A Xmas Fairy Story for Children
by EDWARD WRIGHT



The wife and husband looked up in astonishment. The berries on the mountain ash were glowing with a deep, soft, red light. The tree seemed to be hung with lamps carved out of large round rubies. The inexpressibly beautiful radiance grew richer and fuller and brighter, flooding all the room, and transfiguring, with its strange rose-tint, the wondering faces of man, woman and children.

"Listen!" said Peggy, who had the quick, fresh sense of a woodland child. Music sounded faintly in the distance, and then came nearer and nearer. Peggy ran to the door and unlatched it, and into the room there swept a troop of pretty little forest elves. They were all clad in Lincoln-green, except their Queen, and she wore a bodice and a kirtle of pure, snowy silk, with a girle of gold and a golden hem.

"Thank you so much," she said to Dan, "for bringing the fairy tree in out of the cold and the snow. It will be much nicer for us to dance by a warm fire this weather than out in the chill forest."

"I'm sorry we've nothing of a supper for you, ma'am," said Doll Derrick. "But if you'd care to taste our rabbit pie?"
"No! no!" said the Queen of the Elves, touching the table with her wand. "You must permit me to provide a feast for you this Christmas."

The table at once became covered with a splendid dinner. There were roast turkey, and Christmas pudding and grapes, and nuts and sweets, and boxes of crackers, and every good thing, in fact, that the heart of man could wish for.

"Now, that would make a pretty Christmas-tree for the little ones," he said. He pulled it up by its roots from the loose earth, and put it under a neighboring oak.

Taking a net out of his pocket, he fixed it round some of the rabbit-holes in the warren, and said to the dog:
"Now round 'em up, lad; round 'em up!"
Rough knew his work well. He traced a black shadow across the moonlit waste of snow, to the nearest field of winter cabbages, and there he silently routed out the rabbits, and sent them helter-skelter back to their holes.

"Drat the net!" said Dan, springing out from behind the oak.
Somehow he had not fixed it firmly, and the rabbits knocked it over and escaped. Only one got entangled in the loose meshes.

"One wild rabbit isn't much of a Christmas feast for man and wife and five little ones," said Dan ruefully, as he threw it beside the mountain ash.

"Ah, hal! I've caught you red-handed this time, Dan!"
The poacher turned, and found a keeper watching him.
"I'm only after a rabbit," he exclaimed.

"Yes," said the keeper; "I've been tracking you in the hopes that you were after the deer again. But it doesn't matter. Soon as Christmas is over I'll have you up for it."

He walked away, leaving Dan Derrick in a state of hopeless misery. This capped it all. Dan was a wood-cutter. But the winter before his right arm had been crushed by a falling tree, and he had lost the use of it. With the help of Rough, however, he had managed, since this accident, just to keep his wife and children from starving.

Now all that was over. The magistrate would impose a fine on him, and, having no money to pay it, he would be sent to prison. What would become of his wife and the five little ones?

"Well," he said, with an attempt at cheerfulness, "I won't spoil their Christmas by telling them of what's waiting for me a couple of days after."

He returned home by the way he came, and picked up the rabbit and the mountain ash, and went to bed without saying anything to his wife.

It was to the merry-making by candlelight that they all looked forward. The morning they spent in gathering holly, and the afternoon in decking the cottage with it; and Dan himself forgot his troubles in a secret work of decoration. Shutting himself in the shed, he planted the mountain ash in a deep box filled with leaf mould, and clipped off a few unsightly leaves and tied bits of gayly colored paper on the branches. When the rabbit pie was at last placed on the table in the full light of the solitary candle, he told his two eldest boys to bring in something which they would find in the shed.

"I'm only after a rabbit," he exclaimed.

"Yes," said the keeper; "I've been tracking you in the hopes that you were after the deer again. But it doesn't matter. Soon as Christmas is over I'll have you up for it."

He walked away, leaving Dan Derrick in a state of hopeless misery. This capped it all. Dan was a wood-cutter. But the winter before his right arm had been crushed by a falling tree, and he had lost the use of it. With the help of Rough, however, he had managed, since this accident, just to keep his wife and children from starving.

Now all that was over. The magistrate would impose a fine on him, and, having no money to pay it, he would be sent to prison. What would become of his wife and the five little ones?

"Well," he said, with an attempt at cheerfulness, "I won't spoil their Christmas by telling them of what's waiting for me a couple of days after."

He returned home by the way he came, and picked up the rabbit and the mountain ash, and went to bed without saying anything to his wife.

It was to the merry-making by candlelight that they all looked forward. The morning they spent in gathering holly, and the afternoon in decking the cottage with it; and Dan himself forgot his troubles in a secret work of decoration. Shutting himself in the shed, he planted the mountain ash in a deep box filled with leaf mould, and clipped off a few unsightly leaves and tied bits of gayly colored paper on the branches. When the rabbit pie was at last placed on the table in the full light of the solitary candle, he told his two eldest boys to bring in something which they would find in the shed.

"I'm only after a rabbit," he exclaimed.

"Yes," said the keeper; "I've been tracking you in the hopes that you were after the deer again. But it doesn't matter. Soon as Christmas is over I'll have you up for it."

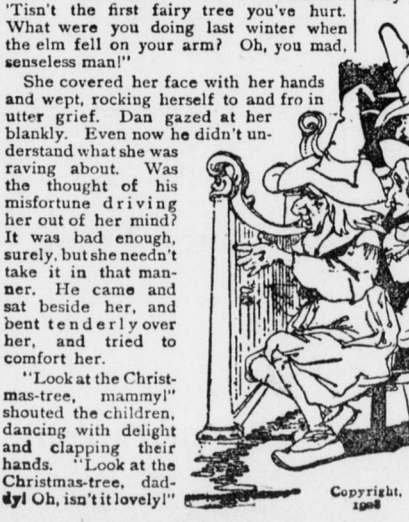
He walked away, leaving Dan Derrick in a state of hopeless misery. This capped it all. Dan was a wood-cutter. But the winter before his right arm had been crushed by a falling tree, and he had lost the use of it. With the help of Rough, however, he had managed, since this accident, just to keep his wife and children from starving.

Now all that was over. The magistrate would impose a fine on him, and, having no money to pay it, he would be sent to prison. What would become of his wife and the five little ones?

"Well," he said, with an attempt at cheerfulness, "I won't spoil their Christmas by telling them of what's waiting for me a couple of days after."

He returned home by the way he came, and picked up the rabbit and the mountain ash, and went to bed without saying anything to his wife.

It was to the merry-making by candlelight that they all looked forward. The morning they spent in gathering holly, and the afternoon in decking the cottage with it; and Dan himself forgot his troubles in a secret work of decoration. Shutting himself in the shed, he planted the mountain ash in a deep box filled with leaf mould, and clipped off a few unsightly leaves and tied bits of gayly colored paper on the branches. When the rabbit pie was at last placed on the table in the full light of the solitary candle, he told his two eldest boys to bring in something which they would find in the shed.



Before departing back into the fairy tree, she stroked Dan's arm; and he was able to open the door with it as he said good-night to the Queen of the Elves and her troop. Dan now grows the best apples in New England, and he has a very good crop of them in the worst season.
"I say, Mr. Derrick," said a stranger one day, "why don't you root up that useless mountain ash in the center there?"
"Oh, that's what some folks call a fairy tree!" said Dan, "they say it brings a man luck."