

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS.

THE ORIGIN OF CHRISTMAS AS A HOLIDAY—THE MANNER OF ITS OBSERVANCE IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

The 25th of December is the day on which the sun is near the most southern point in its apparent annual journey, and for so long as we have historical record, it has been celebrated by ceremonies and religious.

The Hindus on this day decorate their houses with garlands of flowers and papers of gold and tinsel, and the custom of making presents to relatives and friends is universally observed.

The Egyptians recognized it by their festival in honor of the birth of their god Horus.

In China it is a general holiday, the shops are shut and the courts closed. No journey would under any circumstances be commenced on this day.

The Persians kept it as the birthday of Mithras the mediator, spirit of the sun, with ceremonies of uncommon splendor.

The old Romans held high festival in honor of Bacchus, rejoicing with him that the sun was about to return and revive the vineyards. They designated the day the birthday of the inevitable sun.

There is no record that the birthday of Jesus the Christ was observed till the second century. At the suggestion of Pope Telesphorus some of the Eastern churches recognized the 6th of January as the day of the birth of the Christ, and it is added to other celebrations in the last week of December.

In the fourth century Pope Julius made an order which directed the chief of the time for the purpose of examining all evidence bearing upon the date of the birth of Jesus, that they should, if possible, fix the day, in order that its observance might be uniform.

After due deliberation they decided that it was on December the 25th. This decision was, at the time, believed by many of the Fathers in the Church to be erroneous, and they went so far as to assert that the examiners had been biased in their decision by the desire to please the public, to whom this day had already come to be a kind of popular festival.

But we find another derivation for the name. The old Saxons had a word *Messa*, by which they designated all days freed from labor, whether holidays or fast days. The holidays kept in remembrance the birth of Christ, were *Christe Messa*.

The spread of the Christian religion carried with it the observance of Christmas as a religious festival with religious observance connected. Other observances varying with the customs and habits of different nations.

With the Germans, Christmas is a festival of the world-famous myth of "Saint Nicholas," *alias* "Santa Claus," *alias* "Kris Kringle," the patron of Xmas, a fat, bearded old man in a red suit, with a bag of goodies, and a whip, who is supposed to visit the children on Christmas Eve.

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Advertisement for Corn's Store in Chest Springs, featuring a \$10,000 offer and various goods like dry goods, groceries, and clothing.

Advertisement for Best Bargains in Town for the ready cash down, featuring a new stock of winter goods and Freidhoff's cheap store.

Advertisement for Dry Goods, Dress Goods, Notions, Hats, Caps, and various household items, including a patent corn sheller.

Advertisement for Gent's Furnishing Goods, including hats, caps, umbrellas, trunks, and valises, from Young America Clothing House.

Advertisement for Headache & Dyspepsia cure, featuring Dr. Mettaur's Headache Pills.

Advertisement for New Premium Corn Sheller, highlighting its two important advantages and ease of use.

THE FEROCIOUS FROG.—The London Telegraph relates the following story of the curious propensity of the frog, alleged to have been discovered during the drainage of some large carp ponds upon Count Schlotzger's estate of Warrumburn.

WHAT CAUSES GRAY HAIR.—Gray hair sometimes comes prematurely by inheritance, usually, for the largest use of water containing lime.

GRANT COUNTY OF ARIZONA.—Dr. Thomas has furnished the County Gentlemen an account of the giant cactus of Arizona (Cylindropuntia), one of the greatest wonders of the vegetable kingdom.

Advertisement for Improved Excelsior Kidney Pad, a cure for back ache and kidney ailments.

Advertisement for Parker's Hair Balsam, a treatment for hair loss and scalp conditions.

Advertisement for Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, a digestive aid and general health tonic.

Advertisement for Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, a medicine for various ailments.

Advertisement for Safe Mineral Cure, a natural mineral water for health and vitality.

Advertisement for Facts with Knowledge, a collection of practical information and advice.

Advertisement for Van Dyke's Sulphur Soap, a cleaning and skin care product.

Advertisement for T. W. Dick, Attorney-at-Law, offering legal services in various areas.

Advertisement for Ayer's Hair Vigor, a hair restorative and scalp treatment.

Advertisement for Safe Mineral Cure, detailing its benefits and availability.

Advertisement for Ely's Cream Balm, a soothing ointment for various skin irritations.

Advertisement for Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, emphasizing its effectiveness for digestive issues.

Advertisement for Guide to Success in Business, offering advice and resources for entrepreneurs.

Advertisement for Hamburg Tea, a high-quality beverage for social occasions.

THE LEGEND OF SANTA CLAUS. This popular name of the saint who presides over Christmas and the day after it, is derived from the name of St. Nicholas, the legend of whose appearance is an Italian story.