

The silver frost is on the pane, The snow is on the lawn, And Bethlehem's star begins to wane Against the rosy dawn, As from the steeple swinging wide They greet the golden day, The joyous bells of Christmatide, And this is what they say: "Oh, great and small, In hut and hall, A merry Christmas to you all?

"Fair maiden with the checks aglow, Yours be a lover true, But widow in the weeds of woe, How shall we comfort you, Save that to wish above the dead The snows may lightly rest. And nightly in your dreams his head May lie upon your breast? But great and small, In but and hall. A merry Christmas to you all!

"To yonder preacher, bent and old, The blessing of the Lord-And soldier in the blue and gold, To you a bloodless sword; Forgiveness to the souls astray, The lambs with spotted fleece; To all the cities time to pray; To all the nations peace; And great and small, In hut and hall, A merry Christmas to you all!" -Minna Irving.

THE NORTH WIND'S CHRISTMAS TOUR. BY JENNIE WHITE.

T was the last month of the year, and the last half of the last month, the very busiest and most perplexing, as well as the most interesting and delightful time of the year, because it brings

with it that day of all days-Christ-

The Christmas bustle and stir were in full tide all over the globe, and away up in his far northern home the old North Wind was making ready for his December tour around the world.

Bless me!" he blustered, glancing at his calendar-the sun-"the year is almost ended and Christmas will be here in a few days. I must hurry or I'll not get off in time to help Santa Claus with his work, and he is unusually busy this year, I understand. and needs my help."

Now it would have surprised some people, who consider the North Wind a cold, gruff, boisterous old fellow, to hear him talk of taking part in the Christmas festivities, and in the role of helper to good old Santa Claus, too; but he spoke in a very matter-offact tone, and went on with his preparations for his journey just as

Those young ones of hers have good happiness because of it. hearty appetites, and the widow's so high-spirited a body can't do much to help her out. But this cold snap 'll be a good excuse, and she can't object to a Christmas present." And he went into the house to consult with his wife about the kind of "truck" most likely to be acceptable to the Jones family.

"Whew! how cold it's getting," ex-

neglected of the city.

clutches.

ble Fever Spectre had been holding

high carnival for weeks, seizing upon

men, women and children and laying

them upon beds of suffering and pain,

"Aha!" said the old North Wind, as

And giving his cloak an indignant

whirl, he rashed over the land so

Fever Spectre, who had hesitated and

SONG OF THE REINDEER. Over the snow to the earth we go, And a merry band are we. As we're driven along by Santa Claus strong, Who cracks his whip in gleet And our prancing feet to the music sweet Of the Christmas bells keep pace. As we seek the earth on a mission of mirth In our reckless, headlong chase Each heart, red hot, is a glowing apot That burns like a coal inside: And it's Ho! for the toys to the girls and boys That we bring on our fearful ride: It's Hey! for the shout that we'll soon call out From the waiting throng on the shore Of the sphere we cheer this time every year-And here's to the earth once more! -Tom Masson. 米 ж ж

Widow Jones Christmas morning, ing on with redoubled interest and

"Pretty good trip," he murm nred made it possible for him to be less

noisy, and his former roar was now a murmur, "Santa Claus will find smooth ranning over this snow, and some of his business has been taken up by other hands, thanks to my cold breath, so he will not have quite so much to attend to on Christmas Eve.

"I think we can find them, for on this side of the children's letter is the name of the street and the number of to himself, for his slackened pace the house. Some one has evidently begun a letter and got no further than that. But this is all we need and when Aunt Alice comes I will get her to sit with you while I go out and hunt up your little proteges."

"Oh, goody, goody!" exclaimed the little girl, clapping her hands joyously. "And if you find them I shall have a claimed the merchant, as a blast of Hello! what's this?" and darting down happy, happy Christmas, for I could though a Christmas tour and helping Santa Claus were quite a matter of store from an opening door. "Snow- over which he was passing, he brought much for me and I not doing anything for anybody. The North Wind had lingered to see if his further services would be needed in behalf of the children's letter, but on hearing this he laughed softly and resumed his journey. "No

FORTUNE HID IN A COIN.

Check for a Million Dollars Hidden in a Five-Franc Silver Piece.

If you happen to have in your possession the particular French coin known as five-franc piece, you may, unwittingly, be a millionaire. Such, at least, is the belief shared by hundreds upon hundreds of credulous Frenchmen and Frenchwomen, many of whom spend most of their spare time destroying quantities of fivefranc pieces in the hope of realizing a fortune.

Dr. Marco Leonardo Nardez, the weil-known numismatist, and one of the recognized authorities on coin lore, speaking of this curious condition of affairs, said: "It is quite true that half of France still believes in the existence of great wealth hidden in fivefranc pieces, although many numismatists hold that the fortune in question was long ago discovered and appropriated by one of the Rothschild family.

"The story of the strange five-franc fortune legend may be briefly told. A five-franc piece, to begin with, is a silver coin, and is worth about \$1. Napoleon I. was very anxious to make the coin a popular one, and with this end in view he caused it to be circulated everywhere throughout France that he had inserted in one of the silver pieces before it left the mint a bank note or order for 1,000,000 of these same five francs-i. e., for \$1,-000,000. Whether he really did this or not I cannot say for certain, but the weight of evidence would seem to show that it was done. In the manuscript memoirs of the Duc de Feltie, Napoleon's minister of war, it is expressly stated that the Emperor enclosed a note on the Bank of France. duly signed by the governors of that institution, in a split five-franc piece; that the halves were then welded together, partially reminted and thrown in a heap of similar coins, which the emperor mixed with his own hands. These coins Napoleon took with him in a bag when he went to Boulogne, and distributed lavishly enroute, even dropping some of them out of his carriage windows. In this way it was impossible to keep track of the lucky coin.

"The news of this odd lottery spread far and wide, and the five-franc piece leaped into immediate favor. From that day to this mutilation of the coin has been common in France. Switzerland, Belgium and elsewhere. Every year the Bank of France is requested to make good scores of pieces split in a vain search for the five-million-franc bank note.

"There are many stories dealing with reputed finds of the fortune. Indeed, when a man becomes suddenly rich in France, it is common to hear people whisper: 'Tiens! * * * He must have found Napoleon's famous coin!" Some assert that the Emperor kept the coin himself, but this hardly agrees with Napoleon's character. Still it is a current theory that some of the money which enabled Napoleon III to reach the imperial throne was found in the lucky silver piece, which his mother, Queen Hortense, had wheedled out of her brother-in-law.

had his hair parted accurately in the middle, and was possessed of assurance largely in excess of his stock of common sense.

"Beg pardon," said he, riding alongside, and lifting his cap with a smile that was intended to be perfectly irresistible, "but haven't we met before?" She answered him by throwing him a look that would have withered anything less fresh, and moved over to the further side of the avenue. Nothing abashed he followed suit, and with another bow and smile that was as Chesterfieldian as a mounted bicycle will permit, said:

"I hope I am not intruding, but_

"You are intruding, sir. I do not know you and do not wish to talk to

"Well, if you don't know me, let us get acquainted. You know-

"Slackening her speed, she had sud-denly dismounted, and, leaning over her wheel, began to carefully examine one of the pedals. He was off his machine in an instant.

"Allow me to assist you," said he, quickly seizing the opportunity presented.

She said nothing, but releasing her wheel to him took his to hold, while he went down on his knees to the offending pedal. He was no sooner on his marrows, with his face to the ground, than she deftly extracted a hairpin from her Fedora and quickly inserted the point into the rear tire of his wheel. By the time he had discovered there was absolutely nothing wrong with the pedal, and that it was working as smoothly as mechanical skill and bicycle oil could make it, the hairpin was resting inoffensively in its proper place.

As she whirled merrily out the avenue a would-be masher stood by his bicycle with a tire as flat as the proverbial pancake. What his emotions were as she faded from view among the trees will never be known, but it was with crestfallen countenance that he slowly wheeled his machine over to the bicycle tent for repairs. - Detroit Tribune.

Cowbells.

One of the comparatively few things that the hand of improvement has not touched is the cowbell, which is made now just as it was fifty, a hundred and more years ago, and has now just the same peculiar clanking sound as ever. Cowbells are made some of copper. and some of a composition metal; but most of them are made of iron and finished with a coating of bronze. The cowbell is not cast; it is cut from a sheet of metal which is folded into shape and riveted. The metal loop at the top, through which the strap is passed, is riveted into the bell. Cowbells are made of ten sizes, whose sounds range through an octave. Sometimes musical entertainers who play upon bells of one sort and another ome to the manufacturer, and by selection among bells of the various sizes find eight bells that are accurate in scale. There are only four factories in the United States in which cowbells are made, and in each case the cowbell is only an item of production among many other things. Cowbells are sold all over the country just the same as ever, but much the greater number are sold in the South, the Southwest and the West, where farms are larger, less likely to be under fence, and cattle are more likely to stray. There are sold in those parts of the country a hundred dozen cowbells to every ten dozen sold in the East. American cowbells are exported to the various countries of South America and to Australia. - New York Sun.

course and the regular order of things with him.

"."Il have to take some pretty cuts aroan 1 corners and make good time." he puffed, hurrying a few more snowclouds into the folds of his long cloak. which floated away like a long train behind him, and packing another suply of air into his capacious lungs, nd stowing away a blizzard or two in is pockets. "But I think I am equal o it," he continued. "I'm pretty risk yet, for an old fellow like meeel as young as a boy." And puckerng up his lips, he whistled an air so vely it made the mercury in the thermometers of Greenland drop twenty degrees, and all the men hurried to get into their fur overcoats. and all the mammas gave their little folks an extra dose of whale oil to keep them from taking cold and having the croup.

and in many cases death, bringing to "Well, I'm off," said the old fellow the homes of the land gloom and sorat last, his preparations completed, row and filling all hearts with fear and and with a whirl of his coat-tails that dread. sent the snow-flakes flying in every direction, away he went, like the he saw the state of things, "this is whirlwind he is. Up hill and down, where I'm needed. I'll soon put an through the valley, over lake and river end to this. A pretty Christmas and pond, past field and village and they'd have here if this went on!" town, he sped, filling the air with fying snow-flakes and covering the earth with ice from his frosty breath. flercely and determinedly that the

"It will make Christmas so much merrier for the children and young folks," he roared to himself, for he was going at such a rate and making such a racket, puffing and blowing now dropped everything and hed in myself." hear himself think. "And I noticed that the older folks like a bit of snow and ice too at Christmas, to say no-



"A BOY, LIGHT OF WEIGHT AND SWIFT OF FOOT, CAME TO HIS HELP."

thing of how much easier it makes things for Santa Claus and his reindeer," And on he rushed, chuckling with warm southern air with which to gifts, and we will lov you. to himself as he went.

"Hello! Guess we're going to have first visit to it, and facing about, a spell of weather," said the farmer, started merrily northward, well looking out over his brown meadows. pleased with himself and his efforts. "Mighty glad to see this snow, too. Nor was he any less gratified as he re- scrap books I made; and I have enough The wheat needed it, and crops are traced his steps over his former course pennies to buy something for the always better when snow sets in at and saw the results of his work.

Christmas. Regular norther we're Everywhere he heard exclamations and the sweet voice was trembling having," he added. "Guess maybe of delight at the Christmas snow and with excitement and regret, I'd better take a load of wood and ice, and say that the preparations for "Well, dear," said the mother, some potatoes and truck over to the great Christmas festival were go- smiling again at the child's eagerness.

me coming down."

ity toward any particular spot on his

ing, too; that's good. This will help up a slip of paper on which something trade immensely. We always have a was printed in a child's unskillful fine trade when we have a cold, snowy hand. Christmas. This change in the

"Thought maybe I'd find some litweather is worth a thousand dollars the matters to attend to on my way to me. I can afford to give the wife home, and here's one of them now. and children a pretty good Christmas Looks like one of those letters Santa need to give myself any uneasiness this time, thanks to old Boreas" Claus is always getting from the cail-Then came the thought of those to dren. Yes, that's what it is," he conwhom Christmas brought no good tinued, blowing the folded sheet open cheer except as charity should bestow and examining it hastily. "A letter it, and going to his desk, he filled out to Santa Claus from some of those a check for fifty dollars and sent it to poor little fellows in that big, forlorn the committee who were arranging a house. I suppose I missed it when I Christmas feast for the poor and went this way before, and now it's too

late to get it to Santa Claus in time Meanwhile the North Wind, still for him to attend to it, for I'll not get speeding on his journey, had reached the warm south land, where the terri-



"DEAR ME!' SAID NAN, BUBBING HER EYES. 'I STAYED TOO LONG.' "

faltered in his work of destruction at the first icy breath of the North Wind. home to-night before he starts out on now dropped everything and fled in his trip. I'll just have to look after it

nant old fellow's terrible blasts, leav-All this time he was twirling the ht ing poor victims pale and weak, but tle soot-stained note around thoughtfulhappy and thankful enough over his ly and tossing it from one hand to the departure and their escape from his other. But now he caught it up, puffed out his cheeks, and with one "Thank God for this north wind," strong whiff of his breath sent it flysaid the doctor, returning from his ing, across streets and houses, straight round of visits to his patients. "This to the window of a pleasant, comfortfrost and snow will effectually end the able-looking house a few blocks away, fever's ravages, and we shall have a where it fluttered, fell, and rested on the broad window-sill.

"There!" panted the North Wind, "Oh, mamma! what's that?" exwhen he had driven the Fever Spectre claimed a young girl sitting in an easy to the far-away and uninhabited part chair close to the window, as the little of the land, where he could do no mis- letter danced before her. "Open the chief, "that finishes my journey, and window and get it for me, please?" now I must get back home in time for she added eagerly.

"Yes, dear," said her mother, smil my own Christmas dinner. I've made pretty good time." he added, shaking ing at her eagerness, and ready, as all his cloak to make sure he had dis- dear mothers are, to do anything in tributed all the snowflakes, and turn- her power to amuse this dear one. ing his pockets inside out to see that who was just recovering from a long no lazy blizzards were shirking work illness, and quickly opening the winby hiding there. "And I need not be dow, she drew in the little missive and in such a hurry going back. I'll have | laid it in the outstretched hand of the time to look around and attend to any little girl. who eagerly unfolded it and little matters that may have escaped | read:

"Deer Santy claws plese cum to our hours and bring us som crismus So saying, he filled his lungs anew make amends for any unwonted sever-

"ROBBY and MINNIE BROWN."

"Oh, mamma," said the child. "If we only knew where they live, we could send them some Christmas gifts. pleased with himself and his efforts. There's the doll I dressed, and the little boy, if we only could find them,"

about that," he chuckled. "The Brown youngsters will have a Merry Christmas without any more kelp from me," and he moved briskly on. "Time's flying," he muttered, "and I must be getting home; but there's just one more matter I must look after. if it takes the rest of the day." And gathering up his cloak with a determined air, he swooped down upon a highly respectable looking and unsuspecting gentleman walking brisklyalong the street, and lifting his hat from his head, carried it off down the street and around the corner at a great rate. The gentleman followed as quickly as possible, but he was not so brisk as the North Wind, and would have given up the chase in despair, but a

boy, light of weight and swift of foot, came to his help and soon brought back the missing property. The gentleman thanked his young helper, and noticing how scanty was

his clothing for such a cold, snowy day, was prompted to ask his name. When the boy gave the information asked, the gentleman tarned pale.

hesitated, then asked where he lived. The boy told him, and the man turned paler still; then taking the boy by the arm, he said in a choked tone: "You must be my nephew-my sis-

ter's child. We disagreed when we were young, and I haven't seen her since. I thought she was living in a distant city. Take me to her." And as the rich, prosperous man

went off with the poorly-dressed boy to find his sister, the North Wind April breeze.

"A good day's work, and now for home," the North Wind said, settling down to a steady, even pace. "I confess I'm a trifle blown, and somewhat warmed up, and shall be glad to have a chance to cool off and get my breath."

As he drew near to his own comfortable quarters, he met Santa Claus just starting out on his Christmas Eve tour.

"Many thanks for your help," shouted that jolly fellow, "and a Merry Christmas to you."

But the North Wind's work was not complete until he had presented himself to his Master and made his report. When he had finished the Christmat Angels gathered about him and sang a beautiful Christmas carol to his praise. But the Christ Child, whose birthday is the Christmas Day, and who is the Master of the North Wind and Sante Claus and all the Christmas Angels, smiled approvingly upon him and said, "Well done."

And the North Wind was content and happy .-- Ladies' World.

A man's cyncism is bounded on the north by his vanity and on the south by his digestion.

"The most likely explanation as to why the five-franc piece fails to turn up is that Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, a French member of the great Jewish banking house, secured it. This account states that Baron de Rothschild, having investigated the tradition and found sufficient proof of its truth, deliberately set to work to locate the \$1,000,000 note. He quietly bought in and collected every fivefranc piece he could get, and his agents were notified to preserve and forward to Paris every five-franc piece which reached them in Europe, Asia, Africa or America. In his office the Baron kept three trusty men hard at work bisecting the coins. Some say that he had invented a plan for welding them together again, so as to defy detection; others maintain that he melted down the silver and sold it to the government. The work was colossal; but in the end the baron's system is said to have conquered. He found the note for 5,000,000 francs, having spent nearly a million to obtain it. The order was duly presented at the Bank of France, and, says the tradition, cashed by that institution.

"Plausible as the narration may seem, the great mass of Frenchmen refuse to credit it, and go on, year after year, splitting open their five-franc pieces to look for Napoleon's note. It is certainly a tantalizing thought that somewhere in the world a check for \$1,000,000 is knocking about, hidden in an ordinary silver coin worth barely \$1. By possessing and opening that laughed with delight and capered coin the man worth just five frances about like some giddy, frisky little may in a moment become a millionaire."- Washington Star.

EASILY DONE.

How a Bicycle Girl Got Rid of an Annoying and Peristent Wheelman.

She was youngand pretty and alone. Her bicycle costume was neat, trim and becoming, and mounted upon a wheel she floated along over the smooth paths and roads, the cynosure of many admiring masculine eyes and perhaps the envy of many feminine. She was enjoying the pleasures of an afternoon apin on Belle Isle. The exercise had tinted her cheeks with a pink glow of the kind that never saw the inside of a drug store, and that always will baffle the art of the chemist, and her eyes were glistening with the exhilaration of health.

She was riding up Central avenue, and had reached a point about midway between the Casino and the Zoo, when she met with an annoyance that ladies

"Drinking" Oysters.

One of the biggest ovster dealers at Fulton market, New York, said that three weeks ago in one week 1,000,000. oysters passed through his scow.

"The season this year," he said, "has been very good, and the oysters we are getting are superior to any we have had for years. Most of the oysters handled in this market are what we call 'sounds.' These are grown in Princes bay from seed taken from the East river and Staten Island sound. They take about three years to mature, and are the best for general all around use. Many of these are used in the Western trade.

"We wholesalers distinguish the varieties of oysters by the shape and color of the shells. When ovsters are brought to market here first we put them through an operation known as 'drinking.' They are taken down to Port Richmond, Staten Island, and shovelled off the sloops into floats at high water. They remain in these floats for six hours, and during that time absorb or 'drink' enough water to give them the correct taste. The water in the floats is much fresher than that from which they are taken in the first place. The water of New York bay is just salty enough to flavor oysters just right. After the oysters have gone through the floats it would be difficult for the most expert connoisseur to distinguish variety by the taste, and he could only tell the name of the oyster by seeing the shell."

A New Eyelid by Surgery.

A surgical operation of great delicacy was recently performed at the Dublin Ophthalmic hospital-the grafting of an eyelid of a recently killed pig on that of a man. The pig was stuck in the usual way, and as its blood poured out at the throat the doctor with a swift stroke of the lancet cut off an eyelid. The edge of the patient's eyelid, where the attachment was made, had been cut already, riding alone are frequently subjected and quick as thought the doctor to, but which this young woman dis-posed of in amostrefreshing and novel living and attached its eyelid to the manner. The annoyance manifested man's eyelid. The piece was made itself in the form of a dudish young fast instantly by stitches. The report man of the masher species. He role says that the operation has been most a bicycle, wore golf hose, a pink shirt, successful so far.

