



A Christmas Message

O Bethlehem, a slumber amidst thy startit hills,
 Those fair Judaeen pastures, whose ancient lore fulfils
 The prayer of Priest and Prophet, the hope of Heaven and Earth
 Post hear, in dreams ecstatic, the anthem of Love's birth
 Post see in wondrous vision, the aureole-crowned King,
 The star-led Magi, speeding their precious gifts to bring?
 Post see the Mother bending with yearning heart and eyes
 O'er that incarnate saviour—the Lord of earth and skies?

O heart, dost thou hear the story: or art thou too, asleep,
 So weary with the vigil that human hearts must keep?
 Dost know that thou dost shelter, like Bethlehem of old,
 The Son of God incarnate, and gifts of grace untold?
 And as the star illumined The Way, that holy night,
 Thy life may guide all wanderers, with Love's eternal light
 O Bethlehem, awaken! O Heart, arise and sing!
 This is the Advent Glorious, the Birthday of thy King!

Elizabeth Ruggles

A CHRISTMAS LEGEND

(Translated From the French by H. Twitchell.)



ONCE upon a time long ago, when the wonderful things told of in legends happened, the smiling country of Avignon in France was not beautiful as it is now. No white cottages and green vineyards adorned the hillside. Only a shepherd's hut was to be seen. Here lived Eudes, his wife and two children.

One cold, stormy Christmas night, as Eudes was plodding homeward after sheltering his flock, he was a prey to the most melancholy reflections. He thought of his hard lot, his poverty, and felt that the future held nothing in store for him. As he neared his home the north wind redoubled its fury, and he heard the chimes of the nearest church ringing out through the frosty air.

"Christmas chimes!" he thought. "Christmas is for happy and rich people, not for poor shepherds like me." His dark humor did not escape the notice of his wife when he entered his lowly hut. She sent the children to amuse him, and soon saw him smile as he listened to their prattle. As the evening wore on the storm increased, but seated before the fire blazing in the chimney, Eudes forgot his discontent, happy at being sheltered from the raging tempest. When the family were about to sit down to their evening meal they heard a loud knock, and a voice outside cried: "Open the door, my good man, for the love of the living God, whose birth we celebrate this night!"

"Who are you?" asked Eudes. "I am an old man who has traveled many a weary mile in this terrible cold. I am at the end of my strength and can go no further. Open the door, if thou hast any kindness in thy heart!"

Now, Eudes had a great deal of kindness in his heart, so he opened the door at once. On the threshold stood a stately old man, beautiful to behold, with luxuriant white beard and clear, blue eyes. There was nothing sordid in his dress. He carried a heavy cane, upon which he leaned with dignity and grace.

"Welcome, old man," said the shepherd, cordially. "I thank thee, my son. My blessings be upon thy house." The visitor spoke slowly, and his voice was like soothing music.

"May I ask you to share our frugal meal?" asked Eudes. "I thank thee again. Thy repast will be indeed welcome, and on listening to thy words of welcome my heart is already cheered."

Going up to the cradle where the children were sleeping, he paused, and contemplated them. "The cherubs! How peacefully they sleep, and how sweet their dreams must be! On this Christmas night visions of the Child Jesus doubtless smile upon them."

Eudes and his wife felt themselves moved in a mysterious way as they listened to the sweet voice: "Long ago the Redeemer was born in a far-away land, where the air is light and pure, and where lilies grow on the mountainside. The skies were not overcast on that night, and the stars sang together."

Soon after they sat down to the humble meal. The guest praised the order and cleanliness which he saw everywhere. On hearing this Eudes began to lament because of his poverty and his laborious life. He spoke of his discouragement and failure, and referred to the future with utter hopelessness.

But the old man consoled him. He spoke of the charm of a life so full of liberty. "The shepherd, dreaming on the

mountainside, is not an unfortunate being," he said. "Think of those who are pent up in palaces. It is in these splendid abodes that people die of weariness and disease. Those whom thy imagination pictures as powerful and happy are often infinitely unhappy and unfortunate."

As he spoke his head was surrounded by an aureole, and a light emanated from his entire person. He continued: "Happy the humble man who, like thee, Eudes, walks peacefully along the pathway of life. I have wandered far over this world, and have seen many strange things. I have lived in splendid palaces of marble and in the cottages of the poor, and I have found the greatest happiness under humble roofs."

As he ceased speaking the room was suddenly flooded with light. The poor shepherds recognized their divine guest and prostrated themselves in prayer.

"Have no fear," said the guest. "I am He who brings peace to all. Live in happiness and contentment, and thy children shall bring thee joy. I will take envy out of thy heart; also, the desire for what thou canst not have. And I will adorn thy land with flowers and fruits, so that thou shalt praise My name every day."

Eudes and his wife were speechless with awe, and when they recovered themselves their divine guest had vanished.

They never forgot His words, however, and contentment and peace reigned ever after under their lowly roof. They never forgot that the lot of the humble had been called blessed by the Lord on that stormy Christmas night.

The legend runs that the land of Avignon blossomed like the rose every year after that eventful night.—Epworth Herald.

CHRIST AND THE CHILDREN.



BY OTILLIE ROEDERSTEIN.
 From "The Christ Face in Art."

CHRISTMAS CHIMES FROM MANY CLIMES.

Christmas is always a season of good wishes and loving kindness.

In America almost all children hang up their stockings on Christmas eve, to be filled by kind old Santa Claus. In Germany they make more of Christmas than we do in America. Everywhere the Christmas-tree is used.

If a family is too poor to have a whole tree, a single branch only will stand in a conspicuous place, hung with the few simple gifts.

A week before Christmas St. Nicholas visits the children, to find out who have been good enough to receive the gifts the Christ-child will bring them on Christmas eve.

It is a very usual thing to see on a German Christmas-tree, way up in the very topmost branch, an image or doll representing the Christ-child, while below are sometimes placed other images representing angels with outspread wings.

After the tree is lighted the family gather round it, and sing a Christmas hymn.

In France may be almost universally seen representations of the manger in which Christ was born, with figures of Mary, Joseph and the child Jesus, and cattle feeding nearby. Often these representations are decorated with flowers, and lighted candles burn softly before them.

In Norway the people have a delightful custom of putting on the roof of the barn, or on a pole in the yard, a large sheaf of wheat for the birds, who fully appreciate their Christmas feast.

In England almost every one who can do so has a family party on Christmas eve. Young and old join in the games, many of which belong especially to Christmas time.

From the ceiling of one of the rooms a large bunch of mistletoe is hung. If any little maid is caught standing under it the one who catches her has a right to take a kiss from her rosy lips.

In Holland the little Dutch girl puts her wooden shoe in the chimney-place ready for gifts, just as the little American girl hangs up her stocking.

And so in some way all over the Christian world on the eve of the twenty-fifth day of December the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ is celebrated. Everywhere the Christmas chimes are ringing out the message the angels brought to Bethlehem—"Peace on earth, good-will to men."—Youth's Companion.

A CHRISTMAS LITANY.

By ALICE CRARY.

Oh Christ the true and living Vine,
 As Christmas garlands we entwine,
 Adorn for us each heart's true shrine:
 We pray Thee, Holy Jesu.

Oh Christ, of all this world the Light,
 As Christmas tapers we ignite,
 Shine on our lives and make them bright:
 We pray Thee, Holy Jesu.

Oh Christ, the heavens were arif't
 When Thou didst come, the Father's Gift,
 Through Christmas tokens souls up-lift:
 We pray Thee, Holy Jesu.

Oh Christ, through every path the Way,
 Thy Cross shines through the Star today,
 Lead on until the perfect day:
 We pray Thee, Holy Jesu.

People of fresh air habits and discernment almost instantly and unconsciously are able to tell the presence of deleterious and injurious agents

COMMERCIAL
Weekly Review of Trade and Market Reports.

R. G. Dun & Co.'s Weekly Review of Trade says:

"The near advent of the holidays and the close of the year naturally curtails operations in most primary markets, though retail trade is correspondingly augmented and every indication points to a very large distribution of merchandise."

"The difficulty experienced by the steel mills in making prompt deliveries is the cause for some abatement in the demand for finished products, while the lull in pig-iron buying is becoming more pronounced, production rapidly overtaking consumptive requirements. Cotton goods are steadier, and larger purchases of gray goods have been made on contract. The Fall River wage schedules have been continued on a basis of 8 per cent. above normal and the wage agreement will be continued for another six months. Jobbers are buying in a very limited way and are taking their semiannual inventories."

Bradstreet's says:

"Colder weather and the nearer approach of the holidays have stimulated trade quite generally throughout the North and West, and even helped Southern trade, especially in the western part of the cotton States. As the week advanced there seemed to be evidence that the railroad strike was losing its effectiveness as a trade deterrent, though the statistics of flour output at large North-western cities show those centers to have been sharply affected."

Business failures in the United States for the week ending with December 9 were 259, against 230 last week, 298 in the like week of 1908, 284 in 1907, 229 in 1906 and 226 in 1905.

Wholesale Markets.

New York.—Wheat—Spot firm; No. 2 red, 126c. nominal domestic elevator; No. 2 red, 1.25 1/2 nominal f. o. b. afloat; No. 1 Northern Duluth, 1.20 1/2 nominal f. o. b. afloat; No. 2 hard winter, 1.21 1/2 nominal f. o. b. afloat.

Corn—Spot firm; No. 2, 72c. elevator domestic, 72 1/2 delivered and 66 1/2 f. o. b. afloat all nominal. Option market was without transactions, closing unchanged to 1/2 c. net higher. December closed 69 1/2 c. May closed 70 1/2 c.

Oats—Spot firm; mixed, 26 @ 32 lbs., nominal; natural white, 26 @ 32 lbs., 45 1/2 @ 47 1/2; clipped white, 34 @ 42 lbs., 46 1/2 @ 51. Option market was without transactions, closing unchanged. May closed 47 1/2 c.

Butter—Firm; receipts, 3,480 packages. Creamery specials, 34 1/2 c.; do., extras, 33 1/2 c.

Eggs—Irrregular; receipts, 6,175 cases. State, Pennsylvania and nearby gathered, white, 32 @ 40; do., hennery, brown and mixed fancy, 38 @ 40; do., gathered brown, 30 @ 37; Western extra first, 32 @ 34; first, 29 @ 31; seconds, 26 @ 28.

Philadelphia.—Wheat—Firm; contract grade, December, 116 @ 118c.

Corn—Firm; December 1/2 c. higher. December, 63 1/2 @ 64c.; January, 63 @ 63 1/2 c.

Oats—Firm, 1/2 @ 1c. higher; No. 2 white, natural, 49 @ 49 1/2 c.

Butter—Steady; extra Western creamery, 35c.; do., nearby prints, 36c.

Eggs—Steady; Pennsylvania and other nearby firsts, free cases, 32c. at mark; do., current receipts, in return cases, 30, at mark; Western firsts, free cases, 32, at mark; do., current receipts, free cases, 26 @ 30, at mark.

Cheese—Firm, 1/2 c. higher; New York full cream, choice, 17 1/2 c.; do., fair to good, 16 1/2 @ 17.

Live Poultry—Dull; fowls and chickens lower. Fowls, 12 1/2 @ 14c.; old roosters, 10 1/2; chickens, 12 1/2 @ 14; ducks, 14 @ 15; turkeys, 18 @ 19; geese, 12 @ 13.

Baltimore.—Wheat—No. 2 red, 114 1/2 for No. 3 red, 1.11 1/2 for steamer No. 2 red, 1.07 1/2 for steamer No. 3 red, No. 4 red and stock rejected, and 1.03 1/2 for "can't use" rejected. Small bag lots, by sample, sold at 105 @ 112c. per bush., as to quality and condition.

Corn—Western opened firmer; spot, 63 1/2 @ 64 1/2 c.; year 63 1/2 @ 64 1/2; February, 63 1/2 @ 64 1/2; March, 64 1/2 @ 64 1/2. Steady demand for corn in all positions, but trading moderate. Sales 5,000 January, 64c.; 25,000 March, 64 1/2; 10,000 January, 64 1/2; five cars new spot, 64 1/2; car new spot, 64 1/2; 5,000 year, 64; 10,000 January, 64 1/2; 5,000 year, 64 1/2.

Oats—White, No. 2, as to weight, 47 1/2 @ 48c.; do., No. 3, as to weight, 45 @ 47 1/2; do., No. 4, as to weight, 45 @ 45 1/2. Mixed, No. 2, 45 1/2 @ 46c.; do., No. 3, 44 @ 44 1/2.

Hay—We quote, per ton: No. 1 timothy, large bales, \$17.50 @ 18; do., small blocks, \$17.50 @ 18; No. 2 timothy, as to location, \$16.50 @ 17; No. 3 timothy, \$14.50 @ 15.50; choice clover mixed, \$17 @ 17.50; No. 1 clover mixed, \$16.50 @ 17.

Butter—Creamery fancy, 34 @ 24 1/2; creamery choice, 32 @ 33; creamery good, 30 @ 31; creamery imitation, 22 @ 25; creamery prints, 34 @ 36.

Eggs—Maryland, Pennsylvania and nearby firsts, 30c.; Western firsts, 30; West Virginia firsts, 30; Southern firsts, 29; guinea eggs, 15 @ 16.

Live Stock.

Pittsburg.—Cattle—Supply light; steady. Choice, \$6.80 @ 7.10; prime, \$6.50 @ 6.75.

Sheep—Supply light; strong. Prime wethers, \$5.10 @ 5.25; culls and common, \$2 @ 2.60; lambs, \$5.50 @ 8.25; veal calves, \$9 @ 10.

Hogs—Receipts heavy; active. Prime heavies, \$8.60 @ 8.65; mediums, \$8.50 @ 8.52 1/2; heavy Yorkers, \$8.45 @ 8.50; light Yorkers, \$8.35 @ 8.45; pigs, \$8.20 @ 8.30; roughs, \$7 @ 7.50.

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Close Calculation.
 It is within the memory of many middle-aged people that the custom of school teachers "boarding around" was the usual thing in country districts. Although a custom which teachers seldom liked, it is doubtful if many of them had as hard a time as a young schoolmaster who described his experience in the 'New England Galaxy' for 1817. The article was written by Leonard Athorp, then an undergraduate of Bowdoin College. The young schoolmaster was to receive \$15 a month and his board.

From the first day I perceived that I was at board on speculation, and at the mercy of a close calculation, he writes. One day the whole dinner consisted of a single dumpling, which they called a pudding, and five sausages, which in cooking shrank to the size of pipestems. There were five of us at table.

A few days afterward, on my return from school, my eyes were delighted by the sight of an animal I had never before seen. It was a raccoon, which the young man, Jonathan, had killed and brought home in triumph. When skinned he seemed to be one entire mass of fat, and of a most delicate whiteness. I was overjoyed, and went to bed early to dream of delicious steaks which the morrow would bring.

Long before daylight I heard the family stirring, and the alacrity of quick footsteps and the repeated opening and shutting of doors all gave assurance of the coming holiday. I was soon ready for breakfast, and when seated at table I observed that the place of Jonathan was vacant. "Where is Jonathan?" I asked. "Gone to market," said they. "Gone to market, pray? I did not know there was any market in these parts."

"Oh, yes," they said, "he is gone to — about thirty miles to the southward of us." "And what has called him up so early to go to market?" "He is gone," said they, "to sell his raccoon."

KIPPY.
 I thought it might interest you to hear about my pet chicken Kippy. Father brought her home to us for an Easter present. When we turned down the cover of the box there was the fluffiest, downiest little chicken I ever saw. The man had given father some food for her, and we gave her some of it. When she had gotten used to our house we let her out and put her in a large box, with netting over the front. Every morning, when she would hear my voice, she would pick and pick at the netting until we let her out. Then she would hop on my finger, run up on my arm, on to my shoulder and cuddle up in my curls.

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