

MY CHRISTMAS WISH



A Good, Glad Christmastide, my friend, To you and yours is the wish I send. May all your tomorrows have skies of blue, And all your friends be loving and true.

Bell Ringing, One of the Oldest Christmas Customs

WHAT would Christmas be without the melody of the bells ringing god will toward men? Bell ringing is one of the oldest of Christmas customs. At one time, in England, the ringers gave their services free, nor would they accept any special payment. The peal was rung as a matter of course, and was the natural expression of English joyousness. The merry music of the bells in Great Britain and wherever churches have peals of bells, is today as much a feature of Christmas as the decoration of church and home with evergreens, or the provision of the good cheer which always marks this festive season.

A Good Modeling Material.

It is often very difficult to keep a child confined to the house amused. But with a modeling material with which they can make animals, beads, etc., they can be kept amused for hours. Take four tablespoonfuls cornstarch, eight tablespoonfuls salt and eight tablespoonfuls boiling water. Mix the dry ingredients and pour on the boiling water, stirring until the mixture is soft. Put on the fire and stir until it forms a soft ball, then remove from the stove and stir for ten minutes. A little color may be added. Wrap in oiled paper when not in use to keep from hardening.

THE GIFT I CHOOSE.

GIVE me the hearthstone with the glow that warms the soul within: I choose the gift of kindly smiles, that wealth can never win; The laugh that ripples to the lips from hearts where peace sub-sime Reigns in the fullness of content to bless the Christmas time.

Uncompromisingly Morose.

"Christmas comes but once a year," said the ready-made philosopher. "Yes," replied Mr. Groucher; "a tornado doesn't come even as often as that. But consider how long it takes to get over it!"

The Christmas Card

I AM a Christmas Card. I was born shortly before Christmas of 1913. I was put away in a box after Christmas and the next year I came forth again, and the price put upon me had risen from two cents to five. The next year I cost ten cents. Still I did not sell. "We'll have to charge a quarter for that card," my owner said, "and get up the prices of some of these others, or they won't be bought."

Christmas Fish. A fish which resembles a cod is considered by the people of Sweden as an indispensable adjunct of their Christmas feast. This fish is buried for days in wood ashes or else soaked in soda water, then boiled and served with a milk gravy.

Who Said Santa Claus?



Christmas

SOUND over all waters, reach out from all lands. The chorus of voices, the clasp of hands; Sing hymns that were sung by the stars of the morn, Sing songs of the angels when Jesus was born! With glad jubilation Bring hope to the nations! The dark night is ending and dawn has begun; Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun, All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one! Sing the bridal of nations, with chorals of love, Sing out the war culture and sing in the dove, Till the hearts of the people keep time in accord And the voice of the world is the voice of the Lord! Clasp hands of the nations In strong gratulations; The dark night is ending and dawn has begun; Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun, All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one! Blow, bugles of battle, the marches of peace; East, west, north and south; let the long quarrel cease. Sing of glory to God, peace to men of good will! Hark, joining in chorus, The heavens bend o'er us! The dark night is ending and dawn has begun; Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun, And speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one! -John Greenleaf Whittier.

And the Postman Passed the House

IT WAS Christmas morning. Old Hiram Palmer sat by the window waiting for the postman. Christmas eve had been rather bleak. He had seen, from the window, groups of people passing from time to time, hurrying, smiling, such gay, happy people.

Hiram was old, too old. He had outlived his friends, his immediate family, his day had long since gone by. He had given generously to hospitals and charitable institutions and a number of personal presents. He always, for example, sent some of the large baskets of fruit the town's leading shop arranged so attractively, to those he knew would never buy themselves such delicacies.

The last Christmas he had only received two presents. One from his nephew out West and another from a grandchild. He was waiting for these now. The postman came along the street. Eagerly old Hiram waited. And then he got up and went to the door. But the postman had passed by. "Are you sure you have nothing for me?" he called out. "Look more carefully. I was expecting some packages."

"I guess I won't bother about Uncle Hiram this year. It's a nuisance to shop, and anyway what does he care about a necktie? He can buy all he wants!" And his grandchild had said: "I've got to cut down my Christmas list. It's so long." And she had run her pencil through her grandfather's name. For she had said: "Christmas is for young people. He's too old to care about presents and a handkerchief or two which I might send him!"

CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

THE best thing to give to your enemy is forgiveness; to an opponent, tolerance; to a friend, your heart; to your child, a good example; to a father, deference; to a mother, conduct that will make her proud; to yourself, respect; to all men, charity. -F. M. Balfour.

Ironing Board Cover.

Cut and hem a piece of unbleached muslin, about four inches wider and longer than your ironing board, so that it laps over about two inches under the board. Then crochet an edge of six chain and fasten, and so on until you have edged the entire piece. Lay the cloth on the board, turn over and lace it with a stout cord or tape, the same as you would lace a shoe—using, however, only about every fourth loop. The cover can be easily removed and washed.

Christmas Eve in the Kitchen

IN THE kitchen of an apartment building in the city was seated a large, husky man with a little girl of about seven, on one knee, and a boy of perhaps six, on the other knee. "But grandpa, I don't see why Santa Claus doesn't come," said little Doris. "We have waited so long out here in this old kitchen."

At this, Master Fred laboriously climbed down from his grandpa's knee and ran over to the kitchen door, and then to the window. "Isn't it disgusting, grandpa? I can't even see him coming." "Well, you know," said grandpa, as Fred climbed back upon his knee, "Santa Claus was a little boy once himself, and he knows how impatient little boys are. He has a hard time, though. Every year he has more boys and girls to bring toys to than he had the year before."

"Oh, yes," asserted grandpa firmly. "Once upon a time a group of fairies were playing around in an open place under some trees and they found a little baby asleep. They took the baby to their queen. The fairies loved the little baby, so they begged the queen to let them keep him and take care of him. The queen consented and the little boy 'Claus' thrived under the care of the fairies."

Grandpa obeyed the signal and continued: "He lived under the care of the fairies until he grew to be quite a man. Then the queen ordered her fairy workmen to build 'Claus' a hut, as he was a mortal and could not live the way the fairies did, any longer. 'Claus' had lots of time when he got into his new home and he occupied it by carving things. The fairies had taught him how to whittle and he began making all sorts of toys."

"There was a village some distance from his hut and every time he heard of a little boy or girl down in the village who was sick, he took them one of his little toys. The children grew to like him ever so much. After a while he became acquainted with so many children that he found it hard to get around and see them all so often. He decided that he would work all year making toys, and then go around and find out which of the children had been good, and leave them presents."

"When the fairies heard of this plan they were delighted and gave Santa Claus four reindeer and a sled to help him out. "After many years of this hard work Santa Claus began to show that he was growing old. The fairies realized that Santa Claus was a mortal and would die, so they—" "Santa Claus has come," some one shouted from the front room. "Hurry and finish, grandpa. What did they do?" queried Doris nervously.

"They gave Santa Claus everlasting life so that he could make little children happy always," finished grandpa. "Oh, I am so glad," said both of the kiddies.

"Now, to see what Santa brought," said grandpa, and all three made a rush for the parlor.

DAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS. Patience—Aren't you sorry now you didn't do your Christmas shopping early? Patience—Why, I'm going to. I'm going out early this evening to do it. Removing Pencil Marks. Indelible pencil marks may be removed by soaking for a few minutes in alcohol and then washing in the regular way. The alcohol is just as effective after the material has been stained has been washed and ironed.

A CHRISTMAS CONFESSION



I didn't hear old Santa come—he never made a sound, just left for me a Christmas tree, with presents all around! And tho I like each thing he brought, my books and all the rest, I'll tell you confidentially: I love my dolly best!

First Christmas Tree

WHEN Ansgarius preached the White Christ to the vikings of the North, so runs the legend of the Christmas tree, the Lord sent one that should be high as hope, wide as love, and that bore the sign of the cross on every bough, they chose the balsam fir, which best of all the trees in the forest met the requirements. Perhaps that is a good reason why there clings about the Christmas tree in my old home that which has preserved it from being swept along in the flood of senseless luxury that has swamped so many things in our money-mad day. At least so it was then. Every time I see a tree studded with electric lights, garlands of tinsel gold festooning every branch, and hung with the hundred costly knickknacks the storekeepers invent year by year "to make trade," until the tree itself disappears entirely under its burden, I have a feeling that a fraud has been practiced on the kindly spirit of Yule.

Wax candles are the only real thing for a Christmas tree, candles of wax that mingle their perfume with that of the burning fir, not the by-product of some coal-oil or other abomination. What if the boughs do catch fire? They can be watched, and too many candles are tawdry, anyhow. Also, red apples, oranges and old-fashioned cornucopias made of colored paper, and made at home, look a hundred times better and fitter in the green; and so do drums and toy trumpets and waid-horns, and a rocking horse that need not have cost forty dollars.

Washing Windows.

If windows are washed when the sun is shining on them they dry before there is time to polish them, and look streaky. Always dust windows before washing them. Add a little ammonia to the water to make the glass shine and polish well.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

WHETHER we shout it or sing it, we must be sure to mean it; for if we really mean it when we say, "Merry Christmas, everybody," we will do all in our power to make Christmas a day of unselfish joy for all those within reach of our influence. Christ came into the world to bring light which brings joy. He came to bring deliverance to men; to solve their difficult problems; to inspire a higher hope in the spirit of men. That is the cause of the deepest joy to mankind. Yes, Christmas is a joyful day as well as a sacred day.

It is a day for doing good deeds, as well as thinking good thoughts. It is not a day for receiving gifts only. There are so many opportunities for doing good, that we may receive joy a hundredfold, with the expenditure of just a little time and thought. There are many who have little; many who do not know the meaning of this day as you know it; many whose spirits are crushed by disaster. Remember them—Boys' World.

THE FEAST OF LIGHTS

THE lights on the tree are said to be of Jewish origin. In the month of Kislev, of the Jewish year, corresponding nearly to our December, and the twenty-fifth day, Jews celebrated the feast of dedication of their temple. It had been dedicated on that day by Antiochus. It was dedicated by Judas Maccabeus, and, according to Jewish legend, sufficient oil was found in the temple to last for the seven-branched candlestick for eight days, and it would have taken eight days to prepare new oil. Accordingly the Jews were wont on the twenty-fifth day of Kislev in every house to light a candle, on the next day two, and on the eighth and last day of the feast, eight candles twinkled in every house.

It is not very easy to fix the exact date of the Nativity, but it fell most probably on the last day of Kislev, when every Jewish house in Bethlehem and Jerusalem was twinkling with lights. It is worthy of note that the German name for Christmas is Weihnachts (the night of dedication), as though it were associated with this feast. The Greeks also call Christmas the feast of lights, the name given to the dedication festival, Chanukah, by the Jews.

WHY THE CHRISTMAS KISSES?

Obsculation, Allowed by Custom, Celebrates One of Most Charming Events in Tradition.

WHY should men kiss girls who stand under mistletoe?

Because they like it and because custom allows it. Every kiss under the mistletoe, however, is a kiss which celebrates one of the most charming events in Christmas tradition.

The romance goes back to the days of the gods of Scandinavia, when Baldr the Beautiful was shot by Locke, the Spirit of Evil, with an arrow of mistletoe. But his mother, Venus of the North, restored him to life by saluting with kisses all who passed beneath a branch held aloft in her hand. Thus it became an emblem of love and happy celebration. Ancient races held the plant in great veneration, particularly the Druids, who went in procession into the forests to collect it.

After New Year's day it was distributed among the people as a sacred and holy plant. If any part of the mistletoe touched the ground it was regarded as an omen of impending evil.



A FULL STOCKING.

Hock—Santa Claus apparently has gifts to please everybody. Rock—Yes. It seems that there is nothing he doesn't keep in stock. He brought one woman of my acquaintance a divorce with alimony and the custody of the pool.