## Lancaster Intelligencer.

SATURDAY EVENING, DEC. 24, 1881.

CHRISTMAS! To-night the world hears again the story of the events which ushered in this Christian era of its life. Down nearly nineteen centuries this story has come and tions of men tired relating it, listening to and fills the land to-night as when to frightened shepherds angel choirs sang "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men."

Such music, as 'tis said. Before was never made, But when of old the sons of merning sung, While the Creator great,

His constellations set, And the well balanced world on hinges hung. And cast the dark foundations deep, And bid the weltering worlds their oozy chan

The same stars look calmly down upon a troubled world and point the Way, as shone above the procession of the wise were cradled all the hopes and all the de- what have we seen here? velopment of this new age; and the pro-Bethlehem. The light of the world is the

light which flooded Judea's bills. It would be useless to deny and it is of the events upon which this celebration the world's thinkers or of the figures in its it. great events. We cannot stop in this gainsay it. They are numerous, to be logic of events.

Christmas is essentially the holiday for the commemoration of charity, that cardinal virtue of the Christian faith. This is the holy impulse which it calls out everygracious memories stir this feeling and all its gift-giving and the gay trees, blazing set up for a general government a practi with lights and toys, are emblematic of anity.

man born in Christendom carries Christ-North pole, and Dr.Prime on the Equator, were alike mindful of the holy season.

features of its celebration from those two nations which, sprung from common stock, have most deeply impressed themselves inheritance from England. The Christmas tree and "all that" are transplanted from German soil. But it grows most luxuridinner, the Turkey-to day we spell it with a big T-is an American bird.

The Intelligencer feels the spirit of

## CHRISTMAS POLITICS.

We propose, for this one occasion, to ask our readers to mingle their religion with their politics. This Christmas time is the best of all times in which to review and revive the principles we ought to maintain in both the church and the state. And these principles, like the Southern gentleman's newspaper, ought to "consist." A good Christian cannot be a bad citizen. A genuine follower of Him who came to rescue the lowest fallen and to preach the largest liberty to all the whether it be that of some great office or that only of a single ballot, to the perpetration of any kind of injustice.

of Nazareth all men were free and all equal-king and subject, lord and slave. establishing an imperium in imperio, and ten, by the devil and the Federalist in would supersede the civil with their ecclesiastical authority. In vain a powers. long line of pious and illustrious apologists pointed to the scripture, good will to men, crystallized into a politwhich enjoined obedience, prompt and ical system, it is the plain duty of every implicit, to the civil ruler and made even one to sustain it with voice and vote. the payment of the most onerous and ob- To the young reader we say, study the tree. Neither spoke much while the ornanoxious taxes a religious duty. The mo- teachings of the patriots who founded nopolists of that day, the owners of this blessed Republic, and left it to your charters and special privileges, those who pious care, to be handed down unimpaired held the power to make other men labor to the generations which are to come after they scarce could mention now but with over to the parsonage and into the pastor's that they might riot, refused to be con- us. Commit to memory the inaugural tears. And when all was done, and to- study, saying as he enteredvinced. They saw that the spirit of the ballot in the fear of God and in remem-Galilean's sweet gospel was full of peril brace of your forefathers. Cast it so that to Him who had once been a child Himself, getting the greens for the church? It is to their pretensions. That which filled it will count for right and for justice; and that as the blessed Christ-Child He would only two weeks yet, and then—" the heart of the broken slave with a new- so that it shall not help to place any other come and abide in the hearts of the chil- The worthy pastor's face had been averted born hope and robbed fire and cross of man or any other class of men under the dren asleep in the chamber overhead, they so that Michael had not seen the look of born hope and robbed fire and cross of heel of the oppressor. Read the Intelligence to the artificial managements of society, will be good Democrats. C. F. B. dren asiecp in the channel overhead, they mingled their tears as with broken utterance unspeakable anguish there was upon it, and mercy might be with him who was his head and speaking until the pastor replied, wearily raising and mercy might be with him who was which enabled a few men to live by the sweat and tears of the many. That was the real danger which the Roman lord, as

well as the Roman politician and tax-

eater, apprehended from the strange teaching of the new sect.

The gospel of Christ was indeed the first proclemation of pure democracy on the earth. It was good will to men-to all men of every grade and condition. Translated into politics that means that all men should be equal before the law as they are equal before God; equal it has not grown old. Nor have the genera- not merely in their rights to life limb, but in their right to it and repeating it. The same joyful song labor as they see fit, and to enjoy the fruits of their own endeavors. The Sermon on the Mount, and the Declaration of American Independence contain the same self evident truths. But they have had a hard and a long struggle to get themselves placed on the human statute book, and to be kept there after they were enacted. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." We make a little advance, and then, if we relax our efforts in the least, we straightway lose more than we had gained. Ambition, greed, the love of dominior, and the lust of money unearned, never sleep. It is men, who journeying from the East to not within the scope of an article like Jerusalem, rejoiced with exceeding great this to sketch this struggle, or even to aljoy when their celestial guide stood over lude to any of its incidents beyond the where the child Jesus lay. In that manger limits of our own fortunate country. But

Thomas Jefferson was the great apostle cession of all these later centuries, so big of human liberty on this continent. He with history, has been led by the Star of proposed to start all men in the race of life upon a footing of perfect equality; and to give no man any legal advantage over another. In Virginia he broke down the csneedless to repeat the proofs of the verity tablished church ; repealed the law of primogeniture and of entails; reduced is founded. The civilized world testifies the government to a pure democracy : its acceptance by the general festivities of and would, if he could, have abolished Christmas. In every land where the tidings negro slavery, concerning the conseand the blessings of the gospel have quences of which to his awn race he reached the anniversary of the Redeemer's trembled, when he thought of the justice birth is kept by an outburst of joyousness of God. He was also the projector of a and by the exercise of those virtues which system of popular education, which was make happy homes, and hence strong far in advance of the times in which he nations. The people who believe in Chris- lived, but we beg the young reader to retianity are in the vanguard of civilization. member the fact when he hears some We are yet far from the millennium, but the brawling demagogue claiming the credit of world is getting better; and to the birth, the common school system for a party the life and death of Christ it owes what which was born yesterday, and was born makes for its civilization to day. The three only to take up the cause of the few Christian era is its golden age. Those against the many where Thomas Jefferwho dispute this are a small minority of son's ancient enemies were forced to drop

But Mr. Jefferson's great work of "good Christmastide to poll those who would will to men," did not stop then. Virginia was free-free of the hoary abuses sure, but no man who apprehends the of monarchy and aristocracy-and, his Dephilosophy of history will thus ignore the claration of Independence having been sustained by arms, the colonics were independent states. But now arose an enemy more dangerous than the British crown beyond seas had ever been. It was new and pressing, subtle and insidious. where, and this the feeling of those who It came in the guise of patriotism and keep Christmas as it merits keeping. Its lured the people by promises of national power and glory. The party of which its tender observances have their root in Alexander Hamilton was then the head love. Its feasting and home gatherings, would have extinguished the states, and cal monarchy " on the British models." the principle which is the life of Christi- Failing in that, they have ever since been endeavoring to construe away the Hence it is that wherever he goes the constitution which our wise forefathers gave us, and to establish what they mas with him in his heart, and, as is else- call "a strong government," with no where foreibly recalled, Dr. Kane at the limitations but the pleasure or accessities of the administration. They wanted debts, monopolies standing armies, Our own Christmas, like our nationality class distinctions, splender and profusion. is composite. We borrow the principal They assaulted the constitution with their impudent doctrine of "implied powers;" they undermined it by corruption, and would have overthrown it by fraud and upon our social institutions. The feast- force had they been able. But Mr. Jeffering of the Christmas season, and much son founded a great party to protect and that is bright and joyful, come to us by defend the constitution, and he led it with singular prudence and devotion until the Federalists were turned out of power, neck and heels, in 1800. His memorable antly here. The American Christmas is and glorious administration, and the adoriginal in its entirety if not in its parts, ministrations of his Democratic successors. and after all the feature of the Christmas constituted the golden age of the republic. The party which Mr. Jefferson founded and inspired, and which he trusted would stand through all the ages like a wall of the season. To all its patrons, its adver- fire around the free institutions of Amertisers and its readers, with all that the ica, remains to-day what it was then. Its term implies, it wishes a MERRY CHRIST- principles are unaltered. It says the federal government must be administered according to the plain letter of the written charter. Such a government, as the administrations of Jefferson and Such a lively lad as he was, to be sure! his disciples demonstrated, is pure, simple and inexpensive. It protects all while it harms none. Its blessings encompass us about the church, the graveyard, the parlike sunshine, its burdens are unfelt. It creates no monopoly. The power of taxa- ging the graves, ringing the bell and lighttion is used only to support the government, and to provide for the "few objects" of federal care, prescribed in the written constitution. It cannot be em. ployed to transfer the proceeds of one man's labor to another; or to exact tribearth cannot lend his political power, ute from one class of citizens in order to eurich another. These are the beneticent doctrines of Democracy. The

political philosophy of Jefferson is but the In the spiritual commonwealth of Jesus morality of the New Testament applied to the state-the golden rule in public affairs -under its blessed sway the people eat It was the great objection of the philoso. the bread they have earned; it cannot be phers and statesmen of the first century snatched from the weary hands of labor that the new religion confounded all to fill the overflowing storehouses of orders of society, that it stripped the rich | wealth and monopoly. Riches and povand the great of their artificial distinc- erty stand upon the same plane. No man tions, and restored the servile and base to has a special license to sell dearer or to the dignity of nature in spite of all the de- charge more for the same service than crees of the state. It was, therefore, in another. The Man rules and the Man their eyes essentially revolutionary and is protected in all his natural rights levelling. Out of this truth grew a cloud and dignity, and not the accident of birth of monstrous lies which encompassed the or property. When Democracy professes church for several centuries, among the to be aught but this, which it was at the rest the same argument the Know- beginning, and must be forever, it is eat, I fear, God help him, poor boy. Nothings urged against our Catholic spurious-an impudent fraud and hypo brethren, viz.: That the Christians were critical shan, devised, in nine cases out of

some dark conjunction of their wicked Democracy being peace on earth and

-So now is come our joyfullest feast; Let every man be jolly; Each room with ivy leaves is drest. And every post with holly.

THE PINE-KNOT.

For the CHRISTNAS INTELLIGENCER. The rare pine-knot from the mour tain brough Though charred to the outward sight. Yet what resinous gold did its heart unfold When split by the axe's might! What charmed delights through the

nights. What kindling up of mirth, Before the fire, did that knot inspire

Of youngsters met, a merry set, All tree from grief and care,

How our plays were advanced and our jo From that pine-knot's ruddy glare:

As the kerculef we sought, now cold, now How we pressed each other around. Soon to flee from the thwacks, bestowed

our backs. From the hero who had it found : When mine eyes were bound I could hear th

sound Of each merry laugh or jest, But I could not see fingers, two nor three, That before me were held for a test. rom mine arms outspread away they fled, Or when cornered each carefully whisht;

But, though dodging, at last did I catch

'Twas the very one I had wisht! Oh, the merry pine-knot! I had almost thou It shared in our mirth and glee; For it shed its glow, now high, now low, Just to suit our companie. When some active game did our hearts infla

It reddened on every cheek, But it filled the room with a partial gloom

Around as we sat, all hands closed flat, Each two while one slipt hers between, With what prime delight did I hold mine tight-

The button received within ! With such rollicky fun. as the night sped Did that pine-knot us supply; While the aged cook, with her solemn look, In the corner sat musing by. Then what stories she told, all weird and

From her treasured Irish store !-While the oozing pitch, from the pine kn rich,

Was receding its flame before ;-They were traught, on the green, with tairie

With deeds of unearthly kind, Till we feared almost we might see some g If we dared to look behind.

In my life's advance I have read romance From authors the very best, But with all their art they could not impart To my soul that olden zest; in the parlor bright I've had high delight,

With the gas-light mellowed o'er, But that pleasure caught from the rich pi Such can I catch no more!

## A CHRISTMAS STORY.

TWO CHRISTMAS EVES OF

A Tale of Home and of the Army.

BY REV. H. M. KIEFFER.

For the INTELLIGENCER.

"Hand me up some more greens Mich-

Michael was the old sexton of the village church, and he and the pastor, Mr. Burnett, ers at their heels. were busy decorating the chancel of the church for the coming festivities, one stormy day before Christmas, now nearly twenty years ago. With coat off and perched high up on the ladder, while old Michael bustled about amongst the coils of greens on the floor, there the worthy pastor sat, intent on his work, and yet busy thinking betimes of one who was far away. As he cast a glance out of the window, he wondered whether it was so cold and stormy down there, or whether they had built their winter quarters, or were lying men dashed up the defile and away. out yet in their shelters, or were, may be on the move, or perhaps even now, as he sat there, engaged in battle. "Which, God forbid," said he to himself. "Tis surely no time now for men to fight when the very angels of God are chanting their sweet songs of "Peace on Earth, Good Will toward Men."

Absorbed thus in sad reflection on the singular spectacle, as the angels must look upon it, of half a continent staining its hands red with fraternal blood at this glad season of peace, he had not observed old Michael, who, with outstretched arms, was holding the greens up towards him, and had been obliged to call to him twice before succeeding in arousing him from his

"Here are the greens, Mr. Burnett." "O, Michael, excuse me. I forgot all

about the greens." "What were you thinking about, Mr. Burnett? About George? He was here last year helping us at this work, I remember; and I just wonder where he is to-day? Why, do you know, sir, it don't seem to me at all like Christmas without that boy. Ever since he was a baby he's followed me sonage and everywhere; watched me dig. ing the church, until I do believe I loved him as much as if he'd been my own child instead of yours. Do you think it's as

it is here?" But the pastor made no answer, for Michael's words had only served the purpose of plunging him into deeper thought about his boy; a tall, fair-haired, blue eyed theless, strange to say, laid as a sacrifice on the altar of his country, even as Abraham of old had stretched forth his hand to slay Isaac at the call of the Lord.

At last the greens were all hung, and the pastor walked over to his parsonage. "Papa! papa!" shouted the children, as he was heard at the door stamping the snow from his shoes, "Papa, to-morrow is ly?" Christmas !"

"Kithmath," lisped little Madge, as she climbed up on his knee and nestled back in his arm, while Rob and Gertie mounted on either side of his chair.

"Yes, children, to-morrow is Christmas. And you are all glad and happy, and that stead! is right. But papa is a little heavy-hearted when he thinks of Geordie so far away from home, without any good warm house and out in the cold, with little enough to "But Geordie is a soldier," said Rob, "au' he doesn't mind it; 'cause when

soldiers gets cold an' hungry, they says, 'I don't care !" "Papa, will we have a Christmas tree this year?" asked Gertie. "Well, children, you'll have to get to

bed early, so Santa Claus may have a chance to bring it in and put it up." It was sad work for the pastor and his wife, that putting up of the Christmas ments were being tied on, and the gifts for the children set forth in order beneath the tree, for both were busy thinking of their blue-eyed first-born, whose name

afar from home.

And where was George Burnett, or woe was written in every feature: Geordie, as he was known in the family, this Christmas eve, now nearly twenty tions in the chancel this year." years ago? The scene of our story must

pany of cavalry, or what was left of the forty year, and I never yet-" company after the Gettysburg campaign, being on scout duty, had for several days been reconnoitering away to the right wing of the army of the Potomac, now safely lodged fin its winter cantonments, and halted for the night in a little ravine surrounded by a dense undergrowth of scrub-pine and cedar. It was snowing fast. The pines bending beneath their white covering, afforded a tolerable shelter for the men and horses, while in the open space blazed a great camp fire, whose

flickering light added its charm to the wild and weird scene. "Say, boys, don't you think you are making a little too big a fire, there? Snow is a good reflector, you know, and we may have some of Mosby's men down on us before morning."

"Well, Cap, that's so. But we've got to keep warm some way, haven't we?" "Besides, it's Christmas Eve, you know," said Burnett, "and it makes a fellow feel like having a little fire to think of the jolly times they are having at home to-night.

"Pile on another log, Geordie," said Joe Winters, "and let 'em see us if they want to ; Mosby or no Mosby, we've got to have a fire to toast our shins by and remind us that Christmas comes but once in the year-.

"'O, Christmas comes but once in the year, Tra, la, la; tra, la, la. Good sirs, I wish you all good cheer, Tra la la, la la!"

With no heart for restraining his men from their hilarity, the captain allowed them the poor and solitary comfort of their camp fire, taking good care, however, that his pickets on the surrounding hills should be well posted and wide awake. Before settling down by the fire for the night, he personally inspected every post and resolved within himself to sleep with more than one eye open. As he returned from one of these tours of inspection, on emerging from the bushes what a picture his tired troopers looked through the driving snow and the dancing red light of the camp fire. Seated on piles of pine brush, with their horses saddled and tethered beneath the pines, they were having a jolly time.

Burnett, the favorite of the company, was singing a song, the rest joining in on the chorus, so sweet and melodious that the very horses pricked up their ears at the sound. Then followed stories and anecdotes, grave and gay, with songs and glees, till the fire flickered low, and all hands wrapping themselves up in their great coats and blankets, lay down before the fire, Indian fashion, and were soon sound asleep.

"Hello! What's that, boys?" Bang-bang bang!
"Boots and saddles, boys-the devile

are on us for sure!" Kicking the snow over the smouldering fire, the captain ordered his men, in short sharp tones, like the suppressed blast of a bugle, to stand by their horses' heads, make ready their earbines, loosen their sabres and mount. Screened from observation by a clump of pines along the edge of the ravine through which the enemy would likely dash down on them, they awaited the charge as their pickets came galloping in with a body of Mosby's troop

"Now, my lads," shouted the captain, "look to your carbines and sabres,

them have it !" Not anticipating so sudden a check to their headlong course, and with no suspicion of the neat little ambuscade awaiting them, Mosby's men were thrown somewhat into confusion by the sudden shock, as with ringing carbines and swift sabre strokes the Union boys dashed out Lord to let our Goordie live and come on them with a cheer. It was short, sharp work, man to man and horse to horse, the whole affray occupying scarcely more time than it takes to relate it, when in a cloud of snow at their horses' heels Mosby's

Several men were killed on either side and some wounded, too, whom we need not stop to mourn over, for such are the chances of war-but where was Burnett?

"Burnett! Burnett!" sang out his messmate, Winters, as he stood leaning against his horse. "Any of you fellows against his horse. know where Geordie is?" There was no answer. He was not among the wounded, he could not be found among the killed. "By Jove! said Winters, "they've

taken Geordie prisoner!" Without a word more, and uttterly heedless of an ugly wound in the shoulder, Winters mounted his horse and dashed at full gallop in the direction Mosby's men

"Winters! stop!" shouted the captain He might as well have shouted to a whirlwind. For Joe Winters -- a tall, raw boned man of great physical strength and flery temper, had from the first taken a strange liking for the slender and rather delicate lad of light hair and blue eyes, and any day would have gone through fire and flood or worse for the love he bore him. And the suspicion that Geordie was a prisoner. and the certainty that he would never return alive, aroused in Winters the heroic determination to overtake Mosby's men and surrender himself instead of Geordie

How he rode hard and fast mile after mile that wintry Christmas morning-how he overtook the Confederate cavalry with their prisoner riding in the midst-what scenes there were amongst the boys in gray, as dismounting they listened to the gallant proposal of Winters to ransom their prisoner with his own body-how Geordie expostulated, entreated, begged stripling of a lad, whom he loved with all the wounded Winters to desist, and how the unutterable affection of a father for in spite of all his remonstrances he was his first-born son, and whom he had never- conveyed back again the next morning to his own men, I will not stop more partieu larly to relate. Suffice it to say that at daybreak, as they were preparing to break camp, Geordic rode into the midst of them and threw himself on the ground in a

passion of tears. "Why, Burnett," said the captain, "what's the matter? Are you hurt bad-

"O, no, Cap, but-Winters-" "Aye, my boy, Winters-can you tell me what has become of him ?" "Yes, sir. They took me prisoner in the fight last night-and Winters has gone and given himself up a prisoner in my

Another year had passed away and second Christmas Eve was drawing near George Burnett's father and mother, and old Michael too, as well as they, anxiously and impatiently awaited the holi-

days; for when the holidays came Geordie would be home on furlough. . Old Michael, having made unusual preparation for the decoration of the church, was he high glee. There should be a most bountiful offering of the laurel, box and pine that year in the Lord's house. " for Geerdie, my boy, is coming home," said

he to himself. Four weeks, three weeks, two weeksaye, it was only two weeks yet till Christmas, when one morning old Michael, scarcely able any longer to defer his prepa rations for the chancel decoration, walked

"Mr. Burnett, don't you think we'd better be making some arrange

and a countenance on which unutterable "Michael, there won't be any decora-

"No decorations this year! And Geor-

shift now from the quiet Northern village die coming home, too! Why, sir, I've assigned one night to duty on a dangerous to the pine forests of Virginia. A com- been sexton of this church for well nigh

"Michael," interrupted the pastor, "that may all well be. But, read that; God knows I cannot tell you ; read-that." Taking the letter which the pastor held out toward him with a trembling hand, Michael put on his glasses, went over to

the window and read; aye read-A letter from the captain commanding Geordie's company, which set forth in brief yet terrible words how after several days of almost continual marching and fighting, and while holding a very important post at the extreme left of the army in front of Petersburg, his son you.' round asleep on his post, had been at once ordered under arrest, and was to be forthwith tried by court-martial, the judgment of which it was feared would be severe. "No effort," said the captain, " will be spared to save the brave and gallant boy. Nevertheless use all the influence you can command with the authorities at home,

and make no delay." Paralyzed as by a mighty grief, old Michael stood looking at the letter as if he did not at all comprehend what it was all about, when a second letter was thrust into his hand, a letter from Geordie himself, saying in brief yet awful words-"Papa and mamma, what the captain has written is only too true. God help me ! Pray for me without ceasing!"

The unutterable grief there was in that quiet country parsonage during those days of awful suspense, the reader is left to imagine for himself. A gloom as of midnight settled down on the unfortunate household. Mr. Burnett, having taken every measure to bring such influence to bear on the authorities as to save his beloved boy from the extreme and terrible punishment due to his crime, in spite of the reassuring words of friends, settled down to the firm conviction that Geordie's days were numbered. For hours at a time, there he would sit in his chair with his head bowed on his study table, paralyzed, benumbed, deadened unable to arouse himself from his sorrow, too full of an inexpressible grief to pray or even to weep Had their beloved one fallen in the gallant charge, or died of disease, hard as that had been, it could have been perhaps, endured with fortitude, or, at least, with resignation; but this, this

was more than heart could bear. Gloomy indeed was that Christmas time in the household. The poor children, unable to enter into their parents' grief, or even fully to appreciate the cause of it. were yet hushed and awed into a silence, which strangely contrasted with their customary merriment at that happy season of

And so the merry, merry Christmas Eve of 1864 came on. The sleigh-bells sounded cheerily in the crisp, sharp air, as people drove swiftly by, and all the village was aglow with joy and glee. At the parson-age, the children had been put to bed early, with no prospect, alas, of a Christmas tree greeting them in the morning-"because," said Gertie as she tucked herself under the covers, "You see, old Santa

people are so sorry.' "Yes, he likes people to be glad when he comes," answered Rob.
"Won't Santa Claus come to-night,

Claus don't like to go to houses where

papa?" Little Madge had climbed out of her crib and gone down in her long night dress to the study door, where her father gether,

"No, my poor child, there will be no Santa Claus for us to-night, I fear." "Because we are all so sorry, papa; Santa Claus doesn't like to come to houses where people are so sorry. Don't cry, papa and mamma, I will pray the gool home.

It was one o'clock Christmas morning Yet there they sat, pastor and wife, talking of the happy times gone by-of Geordie's babyhood and his fine promise of a noble manhood—his brave and gallant behavior on many a hard fought field-and again and again mingling their tears, and weeping bitterly as they thought of his danger and the cruel doom that might be

"How terrible to endure this untold an guish, Martha, on this glad night of our blessed Lord's birth! I fear me the bells, which should ring out joy to the world on the morrow, will do naught but toll and

toll for me.' "Come, John," said she, " we should be more trustful, it may not be so ill. Let us hope for the best.

"Hope? Aye, wife, I have hoped and prayed, till God Himself seems utterly to have forsaken me, and left me crushed under this mighty grief-the Lord forgive me my want of faith! Hark! Did not you hear a noise out there, Martha?"

There was a clanking sound on the porch, followed by a distinct knock thrice repeated. Taking the lamp in her hand. the good wife went out, opened the door -there was a shriek-a moan, and a heavy fall to the floor. On rushing out forthwith, judge of the emotions of the worthy pastor on seeing his wife fallen in a swoon on the floor, and bending tenderly over her a man in a cavalryman's uni-

form! "Geordie! Geordie! My God, it Geordie; my son, my son! "Yes, father. But it is too much for poor mother, I fear-let me carry her in.' Now, the sleep of children is proverbi-

ally light on Christmas night, and so it was no wonder the little ones in the chamber above were awakened by the noise be-

'Rob," said Gertie. "Well," answered Rob, "Are you awake?"

Yes. "Did you hear that noise? I wonder whether it wasn't Santa Claus trying to get in ?'

"Oh, no, Gertic. You know papa said Santa Claus would not come to our house "I'll get up and see," said little Madge. Climbing out of her crib and going to

the stairway, there she stood, like a little fairy in her long night dress, calling: "Papa! Papa! Did Santa Claus come

"Yes!" answered a strange voice. "Who are you?" said she. "I don't know vou. Are vou Santa Ciaus?" "Aye, Madgie, my sweet little angel

sister; I am your Santa Claus to-night!" Then rang out through the house the glad chorus of the children's voices sweeter than the chimes of any merry Christmas bells-"Geordie! Geordie! It's Geordie, come home to us all!"

No more sleep was there in the parsonago that night. With the children on his knee or hanging over his chair, and his mother lying beside him on the lounge, faint yet from her too sudden joy, George Burnett sat talking with his father as the dawn of the Holy Day came streaming up over the Eastern hills.

"But, Geordie," my boy, "said Mr. Burnett, "you have not told us yet how you came to sleep on your post."

"Well, father, the way of it was this: One year ago last night, in a little fight we had with Mosby's men, you remember I was taken prisoner; you know, too, how, himself up to Mosby's men in my stead. Oh, a truer, braver, nobler fellow than he never buckled on a sabre! But after he came back to us he was never the same man physically as before. He was broken down by prison life and his old wound had

and important part of the line on the extreme left of the army. As usual Joe was put on the post of danger, where I found him when the second relief went out, sick, suffering and utterly exhausted and broken down, and compelling him to go to the rear I took his place. I thought I could keep awake, but, father, I could not. Utterly exhausted, the "grand rounds found me sound asleep-and the rest you know. When the facts came out, in the course of court-martial, the General said "Young man, you have made a narrow

escape. It was only your taking the place of a sick and wounded comrade that saved "General," said I, "Joe Winters once gave his life for mine. Should I not willngly give my life for his? And so my furlough; which had been withheld during the court-martial, was handed me-and

"Rob," said the pastor, "run and call old Michael over. And, Geordie, you just step over into the other room when Michaal omes in, till I call you.' As Michael entered the pastor said:

Michael, you will ring the bell, and ring it right joyfully, too. There shall be no olling of bells for me this day. "Ring the bell!" exclaimed Michael.
'And what for, sir? Did you not say we were to have no service? Or is it possible

you have heard some good news of Whereupon, to Michael's utter and most oyful surprise, in walked the young and

nandsome cavalryman. "Aye, Michael," said the pastor: 'Ring the bells! Ring the bells! And ring them full, joyfully, too-for this, my son. 'was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found !

## CHRISTMAS!

IN OTHER LANDS. THE HOLIDAY OF CHRISTENDOM.

How They Used to Keep It, and How We

Keep it Now. "Christmas comes but once a year"perhaps it is as well. We are a dyspeptic cople, and if it came more often our sufferings would be fearful; and yet how our British ancestors enjoyed it, and how they ate! For days the fires blazed in the great hearths, and the yawning chimney roared with the blaze of oak logs, and the cook lost her temper, and the scullions trembled before her, and the game-keepers were on foot night and day, and poachers prowled in the crisp forest; and above, in the great hall, the maidens and youths hung the holly, and with mischievous and arch looks and red lips, which pouted many a temptation, the mistletoe bough was draped in the most convenient place for unconsciously standing beneath it. How they managed to move about at all after dinner is a mystery to their degenerate descendants, for then

They served up salmon, venison and boars v hundreds and by dozens and by scores ; Hogsheads of honey, kilderkins of mustard Muttons and fatted beeves and bacon swine lerons and bitterns, peacocks, swans and

Teal, mallard, pigeons, widgeons, and in fine Plum-puddings, pancakes, apple pies and cus-And therewithal they drank good Gascon

wine, With mead and ale and cider." We will add to this the "Laborers' " Now thrice welcome Christmas,

Which brings us good cheer, Mince pies and plum porridge, Good ale and strong beer, Good ale and strong beer. With pig, goose and capon, The best that may be.

With holly and ivy, So green and so gay, We deck up our houses As fresh as the day, With bays and rosemary, And laurel complete, And everyone now They drank in proportion to their cat-

John Still, bishop of Bath and Wells. From his office, he, if any one, should have been a cold-water advocate. But we

language "Gammer Gurton's Needle,"the convivial bishop singing: I cannot cat but little meat, My stomach is not good : ut sure I think that I can drink With any that wears a hood; Tho' I go bare, take ve no care, I nothing am a-cold ; I stuff my skin so full within

Of jolly good ale and old. Back and side, go bare, go bare: Both footand hand, go cold: But belly, God send thee good ale enough Whether it be new or old. English Feetlylties. The good bishop sung thus in 1566, but we fear that afterwards the license of the times often abandoned the "jolly good ale an' old" for stronger liquors. writer who very much resembles Charles Lamb in his style and quaintness of expression, says of the men of a later date: Put an Englishman, behind a full pot and he will drink until he cannot stand. At first he is silent, but as the liquor gets towards the bottom he inclines to conversation. As he replenishes, his coldness thaws and he is conversational. The oftener he calls to "fill again" the more talkative he becomes, and when thoroughly liquefied his loquacity is deluging. The business of dinner on Christmas and other feast days, brings on the greater business of drinking; and the potations are strong and fiery-full-bodied port, hot sherry and spirits. This occupation consumes five or six hours, and perhaps more to toss off the glass, and to huzza after the 'hip! hip! hip!' of the toast given. A calculation of the number who celebrate festivals after this fashion might be usefully illustrated by the reports of physicians, wives and nurses, and the bills of apothecaries. By continuing the 'wassail ' of our ancestors we attempt to use the body as they did, but we are other beings, cultivated in other ways, with faculties and powers of mind which would have astonished their generations quite as much as their robuster constitutions, if they were to reappear among us, would astonish ours. Their employment was in hunting the forest for food, or following in armor, with risk to life and limb. They had no ledgers, no commerce, no Christmas bills, no letter writing, no printing, no engraving, no bending over the desk,

tions nor of the cares that we have.' A Christmas Pie

It takes us back to the old days of Rome to find Sir Henry Gray having prepared for his Christmas feast a pie nine feet in circumference at bottom, and so heavy that it took two men to lift it, and so cumbrous that it was neatly fitted in a box on wheels to roll it around the table to each guest. It may interest our houseagainst my will and without my consent, keepers to know its contents, in case they tables. Take two bushels of flour, 20 And one day makes them rich for all the pounds of butter, 4 geese, 2 turkeys, 2 rabbits, 4 wild ducks, 2 woodcock, 6 snipe, 4 partridges, 2 neats tongues, 2 curlews, 7 But the universal making of presents blackbirds and 6 pigeons; build a small only came later with the Christmas tree. house especially for it—for we moderns Earlier it was confined to presents of days and nights without any sleep, save what we could get in the saddle, we were with a boar's head with a lemon in its Christmas is, with us, the children's day,

nouth, garnished with herbs, and served by stalwart yeomen in green coats and low shoes with broad buckles, scarlet doublets and gray yarn hozen, and be carved by the official carver, arrayed as described in

the "Squyer of Lowe Degree." There he arrayed him in scarlet red, And set a chaplet on his hedde A belte about his sides too. With brode barres to and iro: A horne about his necke he caste And forthe he went at the last To do his office in the balle

Among the Lordes both great and small."

The Mummers A jester with cap and beils, or, if preferred, a "lord of misrule," to turnish riot and amusement, and a company of musicians with lutes, viols and eithernsso will the festivity be ancient and aesthetic. But it would have to be held out ef the way of quiet people with modern nerves, and after all it would be incomplete without the Christmas plays, masques and spectacles which followed. Imagine a resurrected ancestor, accustomed to the mummeries of old times, introduced to a modern pantomine-"Humpty Dumpty," for instance. It is interesting to note the change in Christmas plays. First, in 1348, we have the "mummers," probably without dialogue-men disguised in masks of heads of animals and grotesque hoods, relies of the "morrice dancers. We find dresses ordered for the mum mers before King Edward III; eighty tunies of buckram, forty-two visors, fourteen faces of women, fourteen heads of angels, and mantles embroidered with dragons' heads, tunies with the heads and eyes of peacocks, with stars and vari ous devices. A step further, in the time of Henry VIII., we find masques and pageants; and later still "Punch and Judy, the father and mother of the pantomime the next the pantomime, which keeps the stage to-day as peculiar to Christman

Christmas Superstitions. As to the superstitions connected with the day, have any come down to us? Do some still say?

" Ever when that season come Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebated.
The bird of dawning singeth all night long.
And then no spirit stirs abroad,
The nights are wholesome; then no planets

strike ; No fairy talks, nor witch liath power to charic So hallowed and so gracious is the time In old prints of the Nativity an ox and an ass are represented as in the stalls, meekly regarding the Virgin and the Child in the manger. The tradition was that on "Old Christmas Day" all oxen in stall went

down on their knees at midnight, and as late as 1760 many country people in Eng Isud professed to have watched and seen the oxen get down on their knees "with a moan like Christian creatures," exactly as the clock was on the stroke of twelve. A Modern English Christmas. Let us come down to the beginning of our own century and see how Christ

mas, though the same in spirit, is changed in manner of ance. We go back to a magazine of the time, where we happen to find just what we want. Says the writer in his graphic sketch-the scene is in England, it is searely necessary to say : "On the north side of the church are a great many holiy trees. It is from these that our dining and bedrooms are furnished with boughs. Families here take it by turns to entertain their friends. They meet early. The beef and pudding are noble, and so are the mince pies. The nuts, half playthings and half eatable; the oranges are cold and acid, as they ought to be; bowis, generous old English, huge, de manding lad'es, threatening overflow as they come in, solid with roasted apples when set down. Towards bedtime you hear of elder wine, and not seldom of punch. At the manor house it is pretty much the same as elsewhere-girls, al though ladies, are kissing under the mistletee. If any family among us happens to have hit upon an excellent brewing they send it round about, the squire's house included, and he does the ing, good, wholesome liquor mostly, which same by the rest. Riddles, hot cockles, accounts, with an out-of-door life, for such | forfeits, music, dances, sudden and not to excess not killing them, as it would kill be suppressed, prevail among great and off a modern toper. We do not say, how- small, and from two o'clock to midnight ever, that eating and drinking was all of the village looks like a deserted place out Christmas in the olden time in England, of doors, but is full of life and merriment But it is the phase of it most dwelt upon | within. We had a discussion as to what by old writers. Even a bishop thought it was the great point and crowning glory of no derogation to chant of "Jolly good ale Christmas. Many were for mines pies, and old," and doubtless could drink his some for the beef and plum pudding, more fill with the best of them. We mean for the wassail bowl. A maiden lady timidly said the mistletoe, but we agreed at last that although these were predigious and some of them exclusively belonging to find in the oldest comedy in the English | the season, the fire was the great indispensable; upon which we all turned our faces towards it and began warming our hands. A great blazing fire is the visible heart and soul of Christmas; a huge, heaped up, over heaped up, all attracting fire, with a semicircle of faces, is not to be denied us."

But alas it is denied us; and what have

we in its place? The turkey for our crown ing blessing at this season. Let us hono: our national bird! It would be unjat iotic not to do so. When he came in as appropriate especially to the season we know not, but he is a worthy usurper over boar's head and beef-a monarch who reigns by gastronomic right. After all, however, he is not the crowning blessing of the scason. ile is common to Thanksgiving and other days. It is not even that most modern of customs breaking in upon the character of the day and more" honored in the breach than the observance." "Christ mas visits from house to house. No! we get our great joy of the day, our modern crowning blessing, from abroad. We are not children any longer, nor do we know how to play as children, as our affectors did. For us there are no more "cakes and ale." We are too big, too wise, too digni fied, too self-conscious, too careworn. We have no children among us over ten years of age. But to all under that age we offer the "Christmas Tree." It is easy to find after dining. Wine and walnuts with a vengeance. There is no rising from it but for the children and of Christmas gifts comes from. It from Germany and Denmark. So late as the time when Coleridge wrote "The Friend" it was little known -if known at all-in England or America, for Coleridge writes in his third essay of Part II: "There is a Christmas custom here at Ratzeburg which pleased and interested me. The children make little presents to their parents and to each other, and the parents to their children. On the evening before Christmas day one of the parlors is lighted up by the cuil dren, into which the parents must not go. A great yew bough is fastened to the table at a little distance from the wall : a multitude of tapers are fastened on the bough, and colored papers hang and flatter from the twigs. Under this bough the children lay out in great order the presents they mean for their parents, still conecaling in their pockets what they no wasting of the brain, no financiering; concealing in their pockets what they not a hundredth part of the social relationship mean for each other. Then the parents are introduced, and each presents his little gift, and then bring out the rest, one by one, from their pockets and present them with kisses and embraces. On the next day the parents lay out the presents for the children." The custom of giving Christmas boxes to children had long ex-

isted in England, as we find in Gray's " Trivia.' Some boys are rich by birth beyond all wants, Beloved by uncles and kind, good old aunts. When the time comes round a Christmas box

> year." The Christmas Tree.

But the universal making of presents reopened; but his high and gallant soul, have degenerated in the matter of ovens— game, Christmas boxes as above, etc. It that knew no change. Well, about a month and bake; serve cold. As the rage is now is probable that in America the Christmas ago we were sent off on a raid, and after for mediævalism, old furniture, antiques, tree was and is more popular than in Enghaving been ahorse continuously for two stained glass and our grandmothers' land, our large German population setting