

At Christmas-Tide.

At Christmas-tide the fields are bare,
A shiver of frost is in the air;
The wind blows keen across the world,
Gone is the autumn's glimmer of gold.
But, lo! a red rose opens wide
In the glowing light of the ingle-side—
A rose whose fragrance, sweet and far,
Is shed at the beaming of Bethlehem's star;
And once again the angels sing
That love is heaven, and Christ is king.

At Christmas-tide the children go
With dancing footsteps over the snow;
At Christmas-tide the world is bright
With the sudden splendor that thrilled the
angels.

And made the dawn a shining way,
When first their wakened to Christmas-day.
Ah! hide your faces, churls and rude,
For none have a heart to share your mood.
At Christmas-tide the open hand
Scatters its bounty o'er sea and land,
And none are left to grieve alone,
For love is heaven, and claims its own.

At Christmas-tide are chiming bells;
Oh! silvery clear their cadence swells
They smite the cold of arctic plains;
They ripple through falling of tropic rains;
In palaces men pause to hear
The wonderful message of peace and cheer;
In lowly huts the peasants pray
With blessing to God for the happy day;
On every breeze the joy is borne
Around the globe on the Christmas morn;
And loud once more the angels sing
That love is heaven, and Christ is king.

At Christmas-tide, in all and cope,
The priest uplifts the anthem of hope;
But each true heart that casts its care
On the sweet Christ-child hath unaware
A more than priestly christ poured
Upon it, down from the mighty Lord;
And grateful spirits haste to lay
Gits at His feet on the Christmas day;
While high above the seraphs sing
That love is heaven, and Christ is king.
—Harper's Bazar.

CHRISTMAS AT MUD FLAT.

She had been in camp four days. Where she came from, why she came, or who she was, no one could tell. But she was in camp, and had come to stay, there was no doubt. She was quiet, modest and simply clad—three qualities which commended her to the residents of Mud Flat as a change from the ordinary run of females who from time to time invaded the precincts of that classic settlement.

Nor were these the only points which had been noted by the boys. As Andy McCorkie had gallantly handed her from the lower step of his mud-hesperated coach to the portico of the hotel everybody saw that she clung almost convulsively to the little child whose arms were twined about her neck. They observed, also, that her features were pale and bloodless to an extent that was almost pitiful. By that delicate intuition which sometimes exists under the roughest exteriors, the sturdy miners of Mud Flat understood that the strange lady was suffering from mental as well as physical illness. Their sympathy was aroused in her behalf from that instant, and every man in the place immediately constituted himself her champion and friend.

A day later, when she had rented a cabin near the outskirts of town, without disclosing to any one her intentions for the future or the story of the past, their interest was increased, and they began to show their friendship in substantial ways. A great heap of firewood was mysteriously deposited within easy reach the first night. Bags of flour, quantities of coffee and sugar, a whole ham, and a quarter of fresh venison like wise made their appearance from some unexplained source the third morning.

Little was seen of the recipient of these treasures, however. She had only been on the street once, and then only to purchase a few necessary articles. Upon that occasion she met the reverential gaze of a score of loungers, and turned her head away, pretending not to see, when the jovial Bill Carter smuggled a huge package of candy into the child's capacious pocket. But aside from that she had remained hidden from view, and the miners knew as little about her on the fourth day as they had on the first.

The twenty-third of December was unusually cold, even for that locality. In the main apartment of the Magnolia saloon, a party of the boys were

whoever she might be," observed rather angular personage to his companion as Long Tom Rollins—"whoever she might be, she's alone, barrin' the kid, and unpretended besides. Sue's sickly, too, and ought to be a doctor. This ain't no sort of a place for a—Inverlind," he concluded, hesitatingly, removing his heavy boot from the table. Then, after a pause, he continued: "I wonder what s'is the critter anyhow?"

"A man's at the bottom of it, gentlemen," observed Judge Gashwilder, "and the other side of the table is a conviction at each of his

"Take my word for it, as they ailers is in some poor woman's and her eye of its frequent at all times. In men of Mud Flat to what he would bring back for the strange lady and her child.

favorite orator had thrust his right hand into his breast as a preparatory gesture leading to a more extended tribute to the sex. Long Tom Rollins leaned forward and exclaimed:

"See here, old man. How do you know all this?"

For a moment everybody was aghast. Whether they were astonished at the suddenness of the interruption, or at the half savage tone of the speaker, or whether it occurred to them that the judge might possibly have so far overstepped the bounds of prudence as to have attempted "pumping" the interesting stranger, may never be known. But it is certain they were astonished into silence. Even Judge Gashwilder was observed to lose his usual presence of mind. For an instant his naturally serene countenance wore an expression which in another would have been mistaken for guilt. If the confidence which the others had always placed in him was a trifle shaken at that instant, it was quickly restored when, after a moment's hesitation, the old gentleman explained his peculiar position.

"You see, gentlemen," he said, gradually resuming the attitude from which he had been surprised by the abrupt speech above quoted, "I was prowlin' round her cabin last night, when all of a sudden I heered voices inside. The door was open a leetle bit, and by standin' where I was I couldn't miss a syllerbul. I will here explain," he continued, thrusting his red bandana handkerchief into his breast, as was his wont when speaking publicly, "that I was there for the purpose of findin' out, if possible, whether the gal was in need of anything that I could help her to."

"Which accounts," observed a bystander, "for that chicken which was hung up alongside the door when I came by this mornin'?"

"I heerd her talkin' with the kid," continued Judge Gashwilder, not noticing the interruption, "and I couldn't help lissenin'. As near as I could make out, the talk was like this:

"'When shall we see papa?'

"'Heaven knows, my baby. We have aught him long, and when God is ready He will restore him to us.'

"'Is Crisimas comin' soon, mamma?'

"'Yes, baby, darling. But there won't be no present for my little one this time. We are away from home, and poor. But when we find papa we will go where there are lots of pretty things, and then baby shall have plenty.'

Here the judge leaned forward and whispered in a nervous voice, telling his companions that he had heard the mother repeat to her child the sad story of how her father had gone West four years ago to seek his fortune; how for two years his letters, containing money for her support, had come like rays of sunshine through the clouds; how they had suddenly stopped, and no answers were received to her agonized appeals; how for two more years she had supposed him dead; how, at last, the postmaster in the little village where she lived had, upon his dying bed, confessed to having stolen the letters from her husband, so as to get the money they contained, and suppressed her missives to him, for fear of discovery; and how she had started out with her little one to find the lost husband, who had been last heard of in Mud Flat.

All this the judge told to the few friends he could trust, speaking in a whisper, lest the precious secret should be passed to others in the room.

"And now," he added, resuming his rhetorical attitude and voice, "I axes you as gentlemen and representatives of Mud Flat chivalry, shall this gal and her kid, being too poor to have a Christmas of their own—shall they go without it or not? Remember, gentleman that kid is the first one as ever came into this place, and p'raps she's our luck. Let us nurrer her, my friends, and let us show her mother that we ain't so lost to virtuous principle as we not to appreciate it, when we hev a good woman and an innocent kid among us. Let us give em a Christmas. I will now proceed to head the subscription."

So saying, the gallant old man emptied the contents of his breeches pocket upon the table. Others followed suit, and when the last man had placed his contribution there, the pile contained a goodly sum.

"Now, gentlemen, some one of us has got to take that money, ride to Denver, and spend it for 'em. Who shall it be?"

"Let me be your agent," responded a deep bass voice.

Turning they saw a tall stranger, standing near by, who had just entered in time to hear the judges call for contributions. One or two in the room recognized him as a miner who had come in from the diggings that afternoon, having found it too cold to work longer in the mountains.

They were inclined to resent the interference of an outsider, and probably would not have heeded his request had he not spoken a second time. Drawing near the table, he said:

"Gentlemen, I was once a married man myself, but my wife, God bless her, is dead. For the love I bear her memory, for the affection I have toward the remembrance of my little one buried with her, I ask you to let me aid in this matter."

The sardines in his voice and face was so sincere, and the utility of sending a man who had "been there, and knowed what women folks would like," presented itself so favorably to the miners that with but little hesitation they allowed him to do as he wished.

In an hour he was gone, and the settlement was lost in speculation as to what he would bring back for the strange lady and her child.

The morning of December 25 dawned crisp and cold. The fresh, biting air of the mountains raced among the trees right merrily, whisking the snow into little wreaths, and frolicking among the branches with real holiday gaiety. It was nearly noon when the stranger rode into camp loaded with bundles. At the Magnolia he met an eager crowd of miners, who, headed by Judge Gashwilder, were soon on the road to the strange lady's cabin. Arrived there, they felt a sudden hesitation about entering. It was like intruding upon some sacred ground, and they were almost tempted to deposit their bundles upon the threshold and fly.

"You take the stuff," said the judge to the stranger, "and go in rust. You've been familiar with wimmen, and know how to handle 'em. We'll wait outside."

But the stranger felt the same hesitation. Perhaps his long absence from feminine society made him bashful. Perhaps a thought of the memory he revered caused him to hold back.

Finally the judge consented to take the lead, and doffing his hat, knocked softly. The door was opened by the child, who bade him enter. Beside the grate sat the mother, who rose to meet them. All passed in but the stranger, who stood outside.

"Marm," said the judge, who somehow had lost his usual ease of speech and gesture, "we—that is, the citizens of Mud Flat—has come to wish you a merry Christmas, and to offer you these few tokens of our respect an' esteem."

Having thus delivered himself, the old gentleman deposited the bundles on the table, and stood beaming serenely on all his companions. The strange lady, completely overcome by this unexpected kindness, could not find words to reply for a moment. Then, in a broken voice, she said:

"This is a glad moment of my sorrowful life. You are good, kind men and I know God will repay your generosity to the widow and fatherless, I—"

She stopped suddenly, and stood with blanched cheeks and distended eyes, staring toward the door. The miners turned and beheld the stranger, who, with a great stride forward, and a cry expressing the wildest joy, caught the woman in his arms.

They stood thus, heart pressed to heart, and lips to lips, for an instant. Then the stranger turned his eyes devoutly toward the ceiling.

"Thank God," he murmured, gently, "the wife I had supposed dead is restored to me."

The miners stole softly away, and left the stranger standing thus, with his arms tenderly twined about the woman of his love, and the little child clinging fondly to his knees.

The air was balmy outside; the sun shone with ineffable sweetness upon the scene; a bluejay screamed his delight from a neighboring tree, and the wind played a joy tuncful among the rocks.

Christmas had come to Mud Flat.

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TIMELY TOPICS.

The Rev. Charles F. Penney, of Maine, the leading prohibition State of the Union, has compiled statistics showing that in forty years there have been 6,356 patients received at the State insane asylum, one-third of whom were suffering from the effects of habitual intoxication. In fourteen years, he says, the police of Augusta, the city of his residence, have made 4,096 arrests, seven-eighths for drunkenness. During the same time \$94,000 has been expended for the poor and destitute.

According to the latest returns the total number of cotton spindles on the globe is 71,250,000, of which 39,500,000 are in use in England and 10,050,000 in the United States, the balance, 21,700,000 being at work in all other countries, France having the largest number, which amounts to 5,000,000. The country having the least number is Greece, which has 36,000 only. The greatest cotton spinning center of the United States is Fall River, Mass., which has 1,364,191 spindles and 32,621 looms, and consumes 162,475 bales of cotton annually. It manufactures 400,000,000 yards of cloth every year.

Alexander Graham Bell, of telephone fame, is a tall and well-proportioned man, with black hair and beard, shining black eyes, a genial smile, and very gentle and courtly manners. His wife—an exceedingly pretty woman—was a Miss Hubbard, and although she is what is called a deaf-mute, she both talks and understands her interlocutor as well as those who have always heard and spoken. Her mother, acutely distressed by the indifference between her child's future and that of more fortunate children, bent her whole energies to the task of discovering methods of communication by the use and observation of muscles of the lips and throat, and was largely instrumental in developing and perfecting the system by which the educated deaf now talk themselves and understand what others say.

In Mr. Gladstone's household, at Hawarden, was an old woman servant who had a son inclined to go wrong. The mother remonstrated and advised her boy, but all to no purpose; he seemed determined on a headlong course to ruin. At last the mother, in her desperation, caught the idea that if she could persuade the premier to take him in hand, perhaps the prodigal might be reclaimed. "Screwing her courage to the striking point"—for what will a mother not do for her child?—she approached her master, and, in trembling tones, preferred her request. Mr. Gladstone responded at once, and though the affairs of the greatest kingdom in the world pressed heavily upon him, with genuine simplicity of character he had the audacity to his study, when he spoke tender words of advice and remonstrance, and eventually knelt down and prayed a higher power to help in the work of redemption. This kindly action was effectual, and the lad became a reformed character.

Especially Hiptala, a Bombay merchant prince, who arrived in New York a short time ago, brought with him his four native wives. These are in charge of another woman and eunuch. In addition were three servants of the male sex, varying in height, size and age. The prince says each servant has certain things to do. "No servant does two things, and when I get tired and weary I make them amuse me. They are all good musicians. During our trip across they had plenty of opportunity for practice, as in that time some of our most solemn feasts took place. To the last of these we invited all of the passengers, and they appeared highly amused. Then I have also my own snake charmer and my women who dance for me after dinner. When the Prince of Wales visited Bombay some years ago I entertained him, and on that occasion my wives showed him the nautch dance." The prince says he is here just to see the United States.

The recent earthquake at Agram, Austria, was almost as terrible as similar convulsions in South America. The damage to private buildings in that city alone amounts, according to the best estimate, to upward of 4,000,000 of florins. Among the minor inconveniences consequent upon the disaster, the total suspension of lighting by gas was severely felt. But the inhabitants were not simply deprived of light by night, but even of fire by day. The chimneys of most dwelling-houses fell down, and though the cold was very severe the citizens did not venture to light their fires as usual. The loss and damage in works of art and antiquities in the city is very great. A most extraordinary natural phenomenon was observed at a spot about nine kilometers from Agram. There a number of fountains of hot water burst out from the earth. These geysers, which resembled the well known hot springs in Iceland, were, however, hot temporary. It was also noticed that all the rivers and streams within a certain radius of Agram suddenly rose more than a yard above their previous and usual level.

The marvelous accomplishments of electric telegraphy at the present day are seen in the following schedule of times and places, as given in a French paper of recent date: A telegraphic dispatch sent from Paris will reach Alexandria, Egypt, in five hours, Berlin in one hour thirty minutes, Basle in one hour and fifteen minutes, Bucharest in five hours, Constantinople in five hours, Copenhagen in four hours, Cuba in ten hours, Edinburgh in two hours

and thirty minutes, Dublin in three hours, Frankfurt-on-the-Main in one hour twenty minutes, Geneva in one hour fifteen minutes, Hong Kong in twelve hours, Hamburg in one hour thirty minutes, Jerusalem in six hours, Liverpool in two hours, London in one hour fifteen minutes, Madrid in two hours thirty minutes, Manchester in two hours and thirty minutes, New York in four hours, New Orleans in eight hours, Rio Janeiro in eight hours, Rome in one hour thirty minutes, San Francisco in eleven hours, St. Petersburg in three hours, Saigon in eleven hours, Southampton in three hours, Sydney, Australia, in fifteen hours, Valparaiso in twelve hours, Vienna in one hour forty-five minutes, Washington in six hours, Yokohama in fourteen hours, and Zanzibar in seven hours.

Bedlam.

The term "Bedlam," so often applied to lunatic asylums, is merely a corruption of Bethlehem, a hospital of that name having been set apart in London three centuries ago for the treatment of such patients. It need hardly be mentioned that insanity is a disease due to high mental cultivation. In Scotland the proportion is one to 563, while in England, where there is less culture, it is one to 783. In our own country it is one to 750. It is never found, however, among the barbarians. There are but few lunatics in India, and in countries deprived of political liberty, such as Italy and Austria, the proportion is very small. Among the more noted instances may be mentioned George III., whose mind was disordered during the last thirty years of his life. Dr. Brown, former superintendent of the Bloomingdale asylum, became a victim of the disease which he was treating, and the constant study of insanity led to his own mental wreck. Horace Greeley's case is too well known to require detail. It is evident that his mind was crushed by the distress occasioned by the political error into which he fell. Gerritt Smith, the famous philanthropist, was at one time deranged, and was during this attack an inmate of the Utica asylum. James Otis, the revolutionary patriot, became deranged in his latter days, and while in this condition was killed by a stroke of lightning. American statesmen have been remarkably exempt from this calamity.—New York Letter.

A Celestial Revelation.

Mr. Goober—as the story goes—lived in the Mormon country. He had but one wife, and never thought of taking any more till one day an elder told him it was his religious duty to seal unto himself a few others. Mr. Goober went home and sadly informed his wife of what the elder had said, and Mrs. Goober said she had no objection, provided the elder would come round and argue the case with her piously. Goober told the elder, and the elder drooped around. He smiled sweetly as Mrs. Goober advanced to meet him. The next thing he knew he was skipping around the room with his coat slit up the back and his hat knocked into pi, while Mrs. Goober wielded the broomstick. He finally jumped out of a window, and escaped with his life, a sadder and a wiser man. The next time he met Goober he told him he had had a celestial revelation by which Goober was relieved from the necessity of taking any more wives.—Mrs. Goober would count for almost 1,000 in the New Jerusalem.

A Swiss Jail.

People have often complained of a laxity of discipline and supervision in jail in this country, but they appear to be veritable bastilles compared with that in the Canton Schwytz, Switzerland. The only prison is a farmhouse, and the jail authorities are a jailer, police sergeant and a nun. The two former spend most of their time at some neighboring baths. The prisoners go in and out as they please, apparently only remaining because they like it. The nun is in the habit of accompanying repentant infanticides to a neighboring shrine. One criminal, a brutal murderer, sentenced about a year ago to imprisonment for life, seems to have been kept locked up until he was so won on the nun's feelings by protestations of piety that she allowed him to work outside like the rest. Early one morning lately he was sent for water and, strange to say, cannot now be found.

Facts for the Curious.

Cotton was first planted in the United States in 1729.

Bread made with yeast was first used in England in 1650.

When tea was first introduced into England it sold for \$15 a pound.

The word checkmate is derived from the Arabic Es cheikh imat—the king is dying.

The cobra di capello is fond of the water, frequently swimming some distance from land. It has even been known to board vessels at anchor. Cobras are much used by Indian jugglers, who do not, as has been asserted, remove the serpent's fangs before exhibiting them.

King Louis, of Bavaria, has summoned Richard Wagner to Munich, to consult with him about the theater which is to be a part of the new royal residence upon an island in the lake of Herrenchiem. This palace is to cost \$10,000,000. Attached to the theater will be spacious and comfortable lodgings for all the artists who will be annually engaged to perform before the king. Only such guests will be invited as in King Louis' opinion are competent to appreciate Wagnerian music.

FOR THE FAIR SEX.

Finger Rings.

The practice of wearing rings has been very prevalent in different countries and at different periods. Rings have been used to decorate the legs, fingers, toes and nose, which last fashion was very prevalent among Israelitish women. The form of the ring symbolizes eternity and constancy. In the Saxon period, and even after the Norman conquest, 800 years ago, a ring around the neck was the recognized badge of personal serfdom. The Egyptians wore finger rings, the signet being an emblem of authority. The dark-eyed Jewess, in the days of the prophets, delighted to adorn her slender fingers with glittering rings set with rubies, emeralds and chrysolites. The Greeks used finger rings in connection with marriage rites. There are some specimens on which are brief inscriptions. A Greek ring has engraved on it "Faith immortal." There are Roman nuptial rings in the cabinets of the curious, on which are engraved, in rude Latin letters, "Love me," "I love you," "Happy life," etc. Among the ruins of Pompeii was found a gold ring, picked up in Diomed's house, on which was cut the device of a man and woman joining hands. This is supposed to have been a wedding ring. The custom of inscribing short sentences, called "Posies," on wedding rings is noticed by Chaucer, Shakespeare and other dramatists. The Grime ring as a marriage ring was at one time in great favor. It was a double or triple ring, formed of two or three links turned upon a pivot. At the betrothal the parties concerned broke the ring asunder, each retaining a link to serve as a reminder of the engagement until they ratified it at the altar, when the parts were reunited, and served for the marriage ring. This ring is mentioned in the "Beggars Bush," by Beaumont and Fletcher. It is undeniable that finger rings look remarkably well upon a lady's delicate and well-formed pretty little hand or hands. They become them, and what a neat way they have for exhibiting the rings—there, that is sufficient.—Troy Times.

Fashions in Gloves.

There has been but one innovation made in the standard fashions for gloves, and that is the introduction of lace insertions in ladies' gloves. Two or three rows of half-inch wide lace are placed between a similar width of the kid at the wrist. For street and evening wear, especially when short or elbow sleeves are worn, the lace top is the favorite. It is an ordinary glove of any number of buttons, with a lace pattern perforated in the kid for an inch or two at the edge, making a much more artistic finish than the ordinary plain band. The glove with an insertion of lace extending the length of the wrist is also one of the most popular gloves worn. The favorite shades for evening are flesh, cream, ecrú and mastic tints. The number of buttons varies with the taste of the wearer, six to eight being worn on most occasions. For the street black is very popular. In colors either a match for the costume or a contrasting color is used, old gold, mastic and wood browns being the favorites. Undressed kids are extensively worn for mourning. Street gloves have from four to six buttons generally. As the weather grows colder dogskin gloves of a fine quality are preferred by many to those of kid, as they are heavier and warmer. They are made with two, three and four buttons, and cost \$1.75. Kid lined with lamb's wool, with fur tops, is made in gloves and mittens for winter wear. They are made in all dark colors, and cost \$1.50 a pair. Lined gloves, with wide gauntlets of seal and beaver for driving, are also used for the street, and are \$2.50. The castor gloves may be had in grays, chamois and light brown. For children lined dogskin and kid and cashmere gloves are made in the same colors as those for older persons.—New York Herald.

Fashion Notes.

Some of the short petticoats worn with little sacks for morning dress are quilted.

Link sleeve-buttons do not sell as well as the single buttons, in spite of the favor of fashion.

The gowns with plain straight trains and fronts opening over trimmed aprons are in high favor.

Puffs of colored satin are inserted into the outer seam of black dress sleeves when they are worn in the evening.

Collars for the outer garments worn by small children are pointed on the right shoulder and fastened on the left by a steel clasp.

Alsatian bows for the hair are simply shirred to form their loops instead of being held together by a band of ribbon.

Veils of red gauze are much worn in Paris, although they injure the eyesight and make the face look as if painted.

It is a mistake for a young lady who wishes to appear slender to wear a very large cord about her waist, and a fat woman should content herself with a vest.

Webbing or stockinet, of silk, and in all the new colors, is sold by the yard for corsets and sleeves.

Cardinal, old gold and bellotrope satin line many of the most elaborately jet embroidered dolmans.

Dresses continue to be narrow. Wide sleeves, gathered at the top, are much worn; and new combinations are combined with old ones.

Some of the most elegant ball dresses for the winter are of black tulle, embroidered with gold, amber and iridescent beads, and have a most dazzling effect.