

### Merry Christmas.

Children, they cry for it,  
Lovers, they sigh for it,  
Gobblers, they die for it,  
And good cooks always make up extra large  
batches of well-seasoned mince pies for it.

Stockings are hung for it,  
Pans are sung for it,  
Chimes off are rung for it,  
And crusty old bachelors open their wallets  
and think they are young for it.

Babies they squall for it,  
Merchants all call for it,  
Auctioneers bawl for it,  
And sweet, loving mamas just empty their  
purses and squander their all for it.

### The New Year's Log-Rolling.

When it became known in Verdant valley that a Yankee had settled on the vacant quarter over by the lagoon, Uncle Billy Barker expressed the sentiment of the community in his terse disclaimer that, so far as he was concerned, he "didn't have use for no Yankees. You put a Yankee into any range, and thar'll be bad blood right away. They hain't content to leave things be as they found 'em, but want to cram their free-school notions down everybody's gullet."

During the six years that Verdant valley had been settled there had never been a dissenting vote cast at the polls. It was the boast of the district that this was the banner township of California. But now the laurels were about to be wrested from them. However, there the intruder was, with his wife and daughter, and there he evidently intended to stay. A comfortable house and a substantial barn bore witness to that. This particular offender had a sturdy way of minding his own business which, with his uniform affability of greeting, soon began to tell in his favor, so that, notwithstanding his denunciation, Uncle Billy was the first to visit the stranger and proffer his good services. For whatever of prejudice and narrowness might mark their minds, the class to which he belonged had none of those qualities in their hearts.

Now this diplomatic call of the elder Barker had an important result. Winthrop (the stranger) wanted to employ some one to help him clear away the timber, and a bargain was soon reached, by which the pioneer's son, Jim Barker, a fine stalwart fellow with a bit of schooling and a handsome face—just the stock, withal, by which the world is replenished—was engaged for this work. Jim was not the least averse to this arrangement, for—well, he had reasons of his own.

Those who saw the land adjacent to the lagoon before civilization had spoiled it will remember that it was heavily wooded. Great oak trees lifted their brawny arms and sought with a hundred leafy fingers to clutch the delicious, impalpable air. Fir trees scattered here and there in stately pride. The madrone, aristocrat of the forest, showed its saffron bark and its olive leaves. The undergrowth was thick. The poison-ivy was gorgeous with a fatal beauty. The manzanita tossed its ripened berries to the gregarious quail. There was no small work ahead in subduing the forces of nature. The field must be cleared and ready for ploughing by the first rains. Luckily the rains held off. There were a few inconsequential showers in November, and then for weeks the heavens were almost skyless, one could see so far into them.

By Christmas the undergrowth was cleared away, and about half the trees felled. Jim, who seemed to have some plan of his own, suggested that these be left where they had fallen; to be trimmed and chopped afterward; so that as fast as one tree went down, another was attacked. But the progress was slow. Christmas day Jim went home, and called his father into council. After hearing his report, the old man replied:

"We got to give him a log-rollin'. The Lord has held the rains off about all he's goin' to. He hain't goin' to spoil the crops for the sake of no Yankee. He's done enough already, and we got to do the rest. We'll have it on New Year's. And, by-the-way, Jim"—after a pause—"you take care that logs is the only things that gets 'emselves cut up over to the Yankee's."

Jim's only answer was a blush. But, to be sure, that was enough. New Year's morn, about half-past five, there was a prodigious dog-fight at the pre-emptor's front door. Now the New Englander had but one dog; and it stands to reason that one dog ain't going to get up a fight all by himself; that is, unless he is uncommonly pugnacious, which this one was not. A glance through the window revealed not only three dogs, but two wagons, the horses already half unhitched from the traces. The occupants had alighted upon the ground. Up the road several teams of oxen were advancing. The house was evidently being put into a

state of siege. And in a moment the voice of the senior Barker called out: "You'uns had better git up. You're goin' to have some company."

By the time the family were dressed and a hasty breakfast snatched, the army of attack had taken possession of everything. Every moment brought new arrivals. There was a kaleidoscope of men, women, children, horses, dogs and oxen. The great festivals of Western life are camp-meetings, barbecues and log-rollings. Those who believe that the American blood is running out, should strike an average on the children present at one of these occasions. Polly Winkle assumed command of the women and children, by no other right, that I know of, than that she most nearly realized Napoleon's definition of the greatest of her sex. It was soon evident that the house was too small to accommodate so many, and the Winkle contingent were led to the commodious loft in the barn. Here from each wagon was brought such an array of dainties and sweetmeats as would have doubled up a less hardy race for the rest of the year. A table was improvised, the stove was removed to the loft, and by noon a smokin' dinner was on the board.

Meantime more than fifty men were at work in the field. The November rain had carpeted the ground with wild flowers, but those were unheeded. The lupine bloomed in vain. The gaudy eschscholtzia flaunted its colors unheeded. The timid nemophila crept closer to the sod, and hid its maidenly beauties from profanation. But all were alike unsought. There was men's work to be done. Great trees lay stripped and deformed, like torsos of mighty giants. One-half the force were chopping at the trees yet standing. Every few moments some monarch would tremble, try to steady himself for a second and then fall with a resounding crash to the earth. A score of woes were upon him at once. His hundred arms were lopped from his body. His life-blood sank into the thirsty earth. The place that knew him in his pride knew him no more. As fast as the logs were ready, chains were passed around them, the oxen were harnessed to them and they were drawn to designated spots, and arranged in orderly piles. When Alice Winthrop came down to the field with a dozen girls about her own age, and looked out of her great brown eyes upon the strange scene, what splendid feats of strength were done! With what magnificent grace these men moved now who were so awkward in the house! and how Jim Barker hated young Winkle for shouldering an immense log with such apparent ease!

Once in a while a couple of youngsters got into a wrestling match. Then a rest was declared for five minutes to watch the throw. During the nooning there were several of these, and Jim Barker had a set-to with young Winkle, which was more than half in earnest. It had leaked out somehow that the former was very much interested in the new family, or in part of it at least, and Winkle had jokingly offered to "cut him out." Now Jim was in that miserable state of uncertainty when the mere suggestion of such a possibility made him wofully unhappy. And it may be doubted whether Winkle ever got such a toss in his life as Jim gave him that day—all in sport, though, of course.

When night fell, the circuit preacher, Methodist South, declared that the field was ready for the Lord's vineyard. Nothing but a few stumps remained to impede the course of the ploughman. The underbrush was burning from a dozen fires. In a single day, in a hearty western fashion, work had been done which one person must have labored at for months. In the house the gossips had had a session of rare comfort. When all came together at supper it was a season of great merriment. But after a while the young people began to get restless. There was a good deal of whispering, and some half-suppressed secret seemed on the wing. When the preacher rose to go there was a general expression of regret. The whole assemblage escorted him and his family to their wagon. But he had not driven three hundred yards before there was an unmistakable sound of dance music in the air. The good man wavered a moment, and then drove straight home and never heard it.

The wind had changed to the south early in the day, and the rain now began to fall. But in the loft Sandy Ballou was mounted on a nail keg, and was fiddling as if his life depended on his zeal. What pigeon-wings were cut! What pressure of hands was exchanged when Sandy authorized "almande left"! What maddening whirrs when he called, "swing partners"! The rain came down in torrents. It seemed as if the reservoirs of the heavens had given way. About twelve o'clock a wagon-load who had started for home

came back and reported portions of the road caved in by the creek. The darkness was almost palpable. It was unsafe to venture out. There was nothing to be done but to make a night of it. Sandy Ballou started in afresh to fiddle till daylight. A new relay of candles was lighted. Some of the older folks went to the house, and took turns at getting a little sleep. But the younger heels knew no rest. Antique country dances that had not been seen for generations were resuscitated. Sandy was king, and his brain seemed a store-house of forgotten figures.

During the afternoon Jim Barker had picked a bunch of delicate nemophilas, and handed them to Alice Winthrop, saying, "My fate goes with these flowers."

The senior Barker had observed this action, and was not slow in drawing his conclusions when, later in the evening, the fair Puritan appeared with the dainty offering on her bosom, and Jim had an awkward expression of uncontainable happiness. A little after four o'clock horses were harnessed, and as Jim helped his father into the wagon, the latter said, inter-rogatively, "Well?"

But Jim kept his eyes resolutely toward the east, and answered, "The dawn is just breaking."

Whereupon Uncle Billy whipped up his horses, and responded, quizzically, "Yes, Jim, I s'pose it is."—*Harper's Magazine.*

### SCIENTIFIC SCRAPS.

A Norwegian geologist has measured the glaciers of Iceland, and found them to be the largest ice-rivers in the world, those of Norway, the Alps and the Pyrenees seeming quite small by comparison.

Instead of establishing his theory to the contrary, the results of Baron Nordenskjold's expedition to Greenland confirm the general belief that the interior of that country is entirely covered with a thick sheet of perpetual ice.

A correspondent of Nature believes that such vast quantities of gas as must have been freed by the Java catastrophe have necessarily affected the earth's atmosphere, and thinks that the fine weather of September prevalent over a large part of the earth, may have been a result of the great eruption.

Dr. C. C. Abbot, of Trenton, N. J., has destroyed another old belief in weather lore. For twenty years he has kept a record of the building of their winter houses by muskrats, the storing of nuts by squirrels, and other habits of the animals which are commonly regarded as indicating the character of the coming winter. His conclusion is that the habits referred to have no connection with the rigor or mildness of the approaching season.

Mr. Meyer, of Paris, claims he has invented a paper indestructible by fire. Specimens have been exhibited which had previously been placed for four hours in a pottery furnace. Mr. Meyer has also invented incombustible colors and ink. The invention is likely to be of great value, and the incombustible paper will be in demand for wills, deeds, account books, &c.

Fifty thousand francs is the prize which France offers for the discovery which shall enable electricity to be applied economically in one of the following directions: As a source of heat, of light, of chemical action, of mechanical power, as a means of the transmission of intelligence, or of the treatment of disease; the prize being open to all nationalities, and to be awarded in December, 1887.

### How to Grease a Wagon Wheel.

The *Coach Maker's Magazine* indorses the statement that few people are aware that they do wagons and carriages more injury by greasing too plentifully than in any other way. A well made wheel will endure constant wear from ten to twenty-five years if care is taken to use the right kind and proper amount of grease; but if this matter is not attended to, it will be used up in five or six years. Lard should never be used on a wagon, for it will penetrate the hub and work its way out around the tenons of the spokes, thus spoiling the wheel. Tallow is the best lubricator for wooden axletrees, and castor oil for iron hubs, but many of the patent axle greases are also excellent, and have the merit of being cheaper and more convenient to handle. Just grease enough should be applied to the spindle of a wagon to give it a slight coating. This is better than more, for the surplus put on will work out at the ends and be forced by the shoulder bands and nut washer into the hub around the outside of the boxes. To oil an iron axletree, first wipe the spindle clean, wet with spirits of turpentine, and then apply a few drops of castor oil near the shoulder and end. One teaspoonful is sufficient for the whole.

### THE COLOR OF ANIMALS.

Why Polar Bears are White and Parrots Green—Some Curious Information.

Any one attending a zoological garden or noticing any large collection of animals is at once struck by the variety of colors, both of the plumage and hide or skin, says the Cincinnati *Enquirer*. Some animals are highly colored, others have hues somber and dark. What is the reason of this? Why are some animals colored? What is the use of any coloring? These questions can only be answered by a consideration of the habits of the animals, the means provided for their procuring food, and the weapons they have for defense. The coloring of animals is to a large extent protective. It enables animals to hide from their enemies, who would otherwise extinguish their species, and in other instances, where they have means of defense that warn other animals to keep away, they are highly colored, so that other animals are warned to give them a wide berth. For instance rats, mice, bats and moles, which seek for food at night, are dark, of dusky hues, while in the light of day they conceal themselves in their holes. Yet the skunk, which is a nocturnal animal, has much white about it, and a large white tail which it carries erect; but the horrible odor it carries makes it universally dreaded, and its conspicuous white tail is a signal-flag to all carnivorous animals not to attack it, which they seldom do.

All the bears in the world are either brown or black, except the polar bear, which is white. So are most of the animals of the polar region white, that is, of the same color as the snow and ice they inhabit, which similarity of color is a means of protection from their enemies, inasmuch as they are not so readily seen. Perhaps the musk ox, or musk sheep, which is of a dark brown color, would seem an exception, but the habits of the animal explain this. They are gregarious, live in flocks, and this is their means of protection, hence, if one strays away from the flock it is necessary that they be of a dark color, so that it can see its comrades at a distance. The raven is another instance; it is black, yet it inhabits the regions of snow and ice; but it feeds on carrion, and has no enemies that think its body fit for food. Armed insects are highly colored, such as wasps and bees. Their very high coloring shows to other animals what they are, and their poison protects them. Some insects have so hard a covering that they are practically uneatable. These are frequently highly colored. Others can fly rapidly, and this is a protection, so they are given a gaudy coloring, like the swift-flying rose-chaffer. Butterflies are gaily colored, but they are unfit for eating; even when given to young turkeys they spit them out. Insects are often found on trees and leaves which are the exact color of the food that they seek. This is a protection. The voice of the tree toad is heard before the rain, yet so exactly is it the color of the limb on which it lies that it is hard to find it. Green caterpillars feed on the green leaves, and their very food serves to hide them from their enemies. Certain insects called loopers can stick themselves out rigidly like sticks, which they so much resemble as to be taken for them. Green and brown caterpillars are greedily eaten by birds, and even by frogs, lizards and spiders, hence they generally feed at night, and during the day remain motionless upon the leaves or twigs of the same color as themselves. Bright colored caterpillars, however, are discarded by birds and always refused by frogs, lizards and spiders, as if they tasted bad to them. Parrots that live in the dense foliage of green trees are invariably green, and the birds of high-colored plumage are tropical where the colors of the flowers and shrubs are brilliant. Birds that abound in the region of deciduous trees are never green, but brown or olive is the prevailing color. This tint is least perceptible among the leafless trees and bushes which prevail for the greater portion of the year, when protection is so much needed. There is a butterfly called the orange-tipped; when on the wing it is most conspicuous, but when in the evening it rests on the wood parsley it can scarcely be seen, so beautifully do its colors blend with those of the flower-head of the plant. So that, on the whole, the gorgeous colors of the somber shades with which various animals are adorned, while beautiful, have a use to the animal that is not mere display, but protection as well.

### The Foolish Goose.

A goose having been placed in a pen and fed until she could scarcely breathe, happened to catch sight of a lean old hen on the fence, and called out:

"You can now see which of us stands

highest in the estimation of our master. Here I am provided with a warm pen and fed until my crop is bursting, while you have to roost anywhere, and have not an ounce of fat under your feathers."

"That's all right, my friend," replied the hen, "but while your goose will be cooked for Christmas, I shall live to see many months yet."

### Benefits of Advertising.

The subject of advertising has been more carefully and thoroughly studied during the past few years than in all the preceding years, and conclusions have been reached which are demonstrative. Some of them are these:

1. The judicious advertising of a good, legitimate business always pays, sometimes enormously.

2. The best advertising medium is the live newspaper, bringing as it does larger returns in proportion to the money invested than any other.

3. The best advertising medium for a local business is the most widely circulated local newspapers.

4. An old, established business needs advertising as well as a new one, because of competition, changes of population and the habitual forgetfulness of mankind.

5. To derive the greatest possible benefit from business advertising it should be systematically kept up and the advertisements frequently changed.

There is one reason for advertising which business men rarely consider—its general effect on the prosperity of their place. The newspaper goes out into the world from day to day or week to week, as the representative of its city, and men judge of the city more by the newspaper than anything else. If this is newsy and able and many local firms are represented in its advertising columns, they assume at once, and generally correctly, that it comes from a live place—a good place to trade in and live in—and thus they are drawn thither. The effect is not slight, and the suggestion is one which deserves the consideration of every tradesman.

The above statements have come to be almost axioms with the successful class of business men, and they are acting upon them more and more every year. The largest business houses of the great cities have long employed men at large salaries to look after their advertising. A gentleman who was connected with the dry goods house of A. T. Stewart stated a few years ago that the great merchant paid his advertising man a salary of \$10,000 a year. It is well known that he was an extensive, persistent and careful advertiser, and was in the habit of often announcing special lines of goods and reduced prices. His advertising was one of the secrets of his wonderful success.

### The Boy and the Walnut Tree.

A grandson of the Governor of Virginia, a child of some four or five summers, was on a visit to his maternal grandfather, who is a wealthy landholder in Ohio. One day after making his first visit to Sunday school, with the religious instruction of which he seemed duly impressed, he accompanied his grandfather to gather the fruit of a large walnut tree. On the way the little fellow said:

"Grandpa, whom do all these woods and fields belong to?"

"Why," said the matter of fact gentleman, "to me."

"No, sir," emphatically responded the child, "they belong to God."

The grandfather said nothing till they reached the richly laden tree, when he asked:

"Well, my boy, whom does this tree belong to?"

This was a poser, and for a moment the boy hesitated; but casting a long look upon the nuts he replied:

"Well, grandfather, the tree belongs to God, but the walnuts are ours."

### Failed but not Foundered.

"Yes, George, dear, I accept your proffered love and will be your wife;" and a pair of strong arms clasped her tightly, lovingly.

"You have heard, of course," she said, from under the lapel of his coat, "that father has failed?"

"No, I hadn't heard that," said George, weakening his grip a little.

"Yes, she continued, nestling more closely to him; he failed last week and—"

"That puts a different phase upon matters entirely," said George, struggling to break loose. But the girl held him fast and continued:

"And settled with his creditors at two cents on a dollar; and—"

"Nay, dearest," interrupted George, passionately, "do not speak of such sordid matters. Let us think only of love and the happiness which the bright future has in store—"

But gentle reader, let us leave them in their young love and perfect trust.

### CLIPPINGS FOR THE CURIOUS.

According to an English statistician, who has been at pains to collect data on the subject, early risers live the longest.

The system of paying workmen's wages in goods instead of money was prohibited by the English Parliament in 1831.

The "art" of chiropodist first attracted attention in 1845, when a German practiced on the corns of the Queen of England.

Beards were not worn in England until after the Conquest, and at the Restoration the practice of wearing them fell into desuetude.

The largest oyster shell in the world is in the Church of St. Sulpice, in Paris. It weighs over 500 pounds and is used as a baptismal font.

There are two cats at the Crystal Palace Exhibition of London priced at \$50,000 each. Five hundred dollars is a common price fixed on the exhibits.

Friday is beggars' day in Havana, and then the halt and the blind in every phase of filth and misery take possession of the streets. Strange to say, the beggars in Cuba are mostly Chinamen; while in the Western States of America the almond-eyed Celestial is a pattern of industry and frugality.

Among the Goths, Iberians and Moors, the licking of the thumb was regarded as a solemn pledge or promise. Another custom of even greater grace and elegance was common in Scotland, where among the lower classes bargains were concluded by "licking and joining of thumbs."

Total abstinence, even for boys, was a thing unknown in England early in the century. When Charles Matthews, the younger, wrote to his mother describing the visit of the boys at Merchant Taylors to the Mansion House he said: "We went to breakfast. There were very good things. I eat (sic), viz., a bit of fowl, a pear, an apple, half a jelly, a role, five glasses of negus, half a tumbler of ale, three cups of coffee and a glass of water."

The South Carolina Railway is the first railway built in the South, if not in the United States; its mileage has never been added to or reduced since its completion; it has never passed out of the hands or management of its stockholders, and has always been successful and profitable. It runs from Charleston, S. C., to Augusta, Ga., and from Charleston to Columbia.

### Opium Smuggling.

Opium is surreptitiously supplied by San Francisco Chinamen to their countrymen in the Sandwich Islands, where it is forbidden. The drug brings \$80 to \$90 a pound, and the smuggling of a few hundred pounds makes a Chinaman rich. In numberless ways they try to introduce it. A large safe was consigned to a prosperous merchant. An officer demanded that it be opened. The Chinaman declared that he had forgotten the combination. That night the safe, weighing four tons, was taken out of the bonded warehouse, carted away several miles, emptied, and left in a sugar cane field, where the officers found it the next day, with evidence that it had been crammed with opium. A man had a contract for washing the linen of the Pacific Mail steamers. Hundreds of bundles, each containing a can of opium, were pitched from the steamer's deck to the wharf and carted to his laundry. He happened to be sick on one occasion, and his assistant, who was ignorant of the contraband trade, handled the linen in such a way that a can of opium fell out. A great number of sewing-machines were sent to Honolulu, and by accident it was discovered that the legs were hollow and packed with opium. Opium has been delivered in the islands in fruit cans, the can being divided into three compartments, the two outside ones filled with fruit and the larger one with opium. Large quantities have also been shipped to the island in stove wood, each piece of the wood being bored. Masses of coal have done service in the same way.

### Blundering.

Talking of dinner parties, a gentleman not long since was dining with a friend, and was asked to take down a certain lady. Now there were two ladies present, one a widow, whose husband had not died in the odor of sanctity; the other a married woman, whose husband had gone to Ceylon. The unfortunate thought he had the married lady on his arm, but it was the widow, and turning to her with his most fascinating smile, he said: "Nice day this has been."

"Do you think so? It has been so awfully hot!"

"Do you call this hot?" said he, archly. "Why, it is nothing compared to the place your husband has gone to."