

Philadelphia Bulletin

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OUR WHOLE COUNTRY.

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MERRY CHRISTMAS.

The Christmas Evening Bulletin

ORIGINAL CHRISTMAS STORIES

CHRISTMAS POEMS

Historical Account of Christmas

FUN FOR CHRISTMAS

CHOICE CHRISTMAS SKETCHES

Christmas Reading for Everybody

MATTER FOR GRAVE AND GAY

CHRISTMAS.

BY GEORGE WITHER—1588—1607.

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

Though some chide at our mirth repine,
I found your forefathers so merry,
Drown sorrow in a cup of wine,
And let us all be merry.

Now all our neighbors' chimneys smoke,
And Christmas blocks are burning;
Their ovens they with baked meat choke,
And all their spits are turning.

Without the door a merry throng,
And for cold it lay to die,
We'll bury 'em in a Christmas pie,
And evermore be merry.

Now every lad is wondrous trim,
And no man minds his labor;
Our lasses have provided them
A barge and a tabor.

Young men and maids and girls and boys,
Give life to one another's joys;
And you shall shall by their noise
Perceive that they are merry.

Rank misers now do sparring shun;
Their hall of maces soundeth;
And dogs hence with whole shoulders run,
So all things be as merry.

The country folks themselves advance,
With crowdy nothings out of France;
And Jack shall pipe and Gill shall dance,
And all the town be merry.

Ned Squash hath fetch his hands from pawn,
And all his best apparel;
Bristle hat and boots of lawn
With dropping of the barrel.

And those that hardly all the year
Had bread to eat, or rags to wear,
Will have both cloth and dainty fare,
And all the day be merry.

Now poor men to the justices
With capons make their errands;
And if they have not money,
They plague them with their warrants.

But now they feed them with good cheer,
And what they want they take in beer,
And when they have not money,
And then they shall be merry.

Good farmer in the country nurse
The poor, that else were undone;
Some landlords spend their money worse,
On just and pride at London.

There the roysters they do pay,
There the riotous they are playing,
Which may be ours another day,
And therefore let us be merry.

The client now his suit forbears,
The prisoner's heart is eased;
The debtor drinks away his cares,
And for the time is pleased.

Through others' purses be more fat,
Why should we care to fall of that?
Hang sorrow! cure will kill a cat,
And therefore let us be merry.

Hark! now the wags abroad do call,
Each other forth to rambling;
Anon you'll see them in the hall,
For nuts and apples scrambling.

Hark! how the rooster is bragging sound,
Anon they'll think the house good round,
For they the collar's depth have found,
And there they will be merry.

The wenches with their wassail bowls
About the streets are singing;
The boys are come to catch the owls,
The wild and the mad are playing.

Our kitchen boy hath broke his box,
And to the dealing of the ox,
Our honest neighbors come by flocks,
And here they will be merry.

Now kings and queens poor sheep cotes have,
And mate with everybody;
The honest now may play the knave,
And wise and witless be merry.

Some youths will now a mumping go,
Some others play at Rowland-bo,
And twenty other games boys mo,
Because they will be merry.

Then wherefore, in these merry days,
Should we, I pray, be duller?
No, let us sing some roundelay,
To make our mirth the fuller;

And, while we thus inspired sing,
Let all the streets with echoes ring;
Woods and hills and everything,
Bear witness we are merry.

ARCHIMEDES FISHER AND THE FAIRIES.

A Nonsensical Christmas Narrative.

BY JOHN QUILL.

It seems necessary to have a fairy story at Christmas time, and I have undertaken to write this one with a firm determination to make it the very poorest fairy story that ever was written.

Archimedes Fisher lived in those good old times when every boy of his age was taken in charge by a beneficent immortal spirit, which hovered around and pranced from the side scenes and came up through the trap exactly when it was desirable to have a supernatural being on the spot to enable a boy to do apparently impossible things.

But Archimedes Fisher was a practical youth, with no perceptible talent for the fairy business, and as no member of the elite fraternity appeared to think it worth while to bother with Archimedes Fisher, he had rather a mortifying time getting along by himself. Even when he was a baby he seemed to hold

all the low cards. No fairy godmother with gossamer wings and plink silk tights, and a form no longer than a parlor match, ever came browsing around Archimedes Fisher's cradle, waving a star to the end of it, to drive away the evil spirits which would be likely to annoy young Mr. Fisher. So far from this being the case, it was ascertained by careful observation, that the only things which ever hovered about his cradle were swarms of vivacious flies, which severally and collectively punctured the bald pate on the head of Archimedes Fisher, and did ample justice to the colation with which they supplied themselves in this inhuman manner.

Now it is observable when Archimedes Fisher was larger than any benevolent spirit, with a glittering tiara upon her real alabaster brow, came around, and took him out and showed him a huge pumpkin lying on the ground, and touched it with her magic rod, so that it was immediately transformed into a magnificent golden coach, with six horses, and an obese driver, with four footmen behind, and lined all through with crimson velvet, so that he could and did drive up to the palace in magnificent style, and excite the envy and admiration of the noblemen and other titled aristocrats.

As the contrast of this disgraceful child, when he had found a pumpkin, merely scouted, and sculptured a nose and a mouth and two eyes in it, and illuminated it with a candle, and sprung it up like a sister Matilda, on a dark night, so that she was scared into fits, and Archimedes' father locked him up in the smoke-house for a week, alone, with his own rations and an empty stomach.

Mr. Fisher never had any satisfactory success with these matters, apparently. For instance, when he fell from a tree and was carried to the hospital, he ever appeared in an entirely unaccountable manner, and touched him with her wand, and in an instant he found himself arrayed in gorgeous apparel of silk and satin, and with a feather several feet in length in his cap. Not by any means. His mother simply came at him with the rolling-pin, and with three or four vigorous whacks, hid off of him before she put him to bed, and made him lie there all day while she washed his neck and put a fresh patch on them, and replaced the suspender-buckles.

Archimedes Fisher's forte certainly did not seem to be ability to indulge in supernatural talents over the candles.

This was proved very conclusively, I think, at the time he was precipitated into the creek and sank as rapidly as the reputation of a man who accepts a situation on *The National Intelligencer*. Now you would naturally think that a beautiful and fascinating young mermaid, with long golden tresses waving about her ivory shoulders, and a magnificent form, with a glittering tiara on her head, and a full of melody and sweet, unearthly music, would have seized him in her snow-white arms, kissed him with her ruby lips, and carried him down to her abode beneath the sea, where the houses were built of gold, and the windows of diamonds, and offered him untold millions of specie, and piles of precious stones, if anybody would do under the circumstances.

I say you might reasonably have supposed that this would have happened, and that Archimedes Fisher, with his commendable sagacity, would have consolidated with that bewitching mermaid, on the spot. But, strange to say, no such thing occurred. You would hardly think that Mr. Fisher would only strangely glide into the water, but a degraded Irishman, with warm red hair, and not a solitary particle of sentiment in his nature, actually dragged that creek with a boat hook, and carried Archimedes Fisher by the trousers, and brought him back to life, and hope, and influenza, and happiness, and inflammatory rheumatism, and his mother's arms.

And they had to roll him on a bench for an hour to get the water out of him, and then saturate him so completely with whisky that his parents were compelled to put a stamp on him to keep him from being seized by the Revenue Inspectors.

It was remarkable how little luck Archimedes Fisher had in this fairy business. You know, under went meandering around, and heard that a beautiful princess was imprisoned by a cruel and objectionable giant, and mustered up his courage, and with his magic sword, and rode away on his supernatural steed, and went up, and killed the dragon that lay in his path, and thundered at the door of the giant's castle, when out rushed a bloodthirsty scallawag, with a glittering tiara on his head, and was attacked by the impetuous and courageous Archimedes Fisher, who snote off his preposterous head with one blow, and then dashed into the castle, and saved the princess, and married her, and lived happily ever after.

And then he didn't lift her tenderly in his arms, and place her on a palfrey which happened to be standing in the courtyard, and he carried her, and conveyed her to the king's castle, who said: "Bless you, Archimedes Fisher; Archimedes Fisher, bless you," and was so much overcome that he wept tears of joy and hugged Archimedes Fisher to his majestic bosom, and straightway married him to his daughter and made him Prime Minister of the Kingdom, with the right to distribute post-offices among his relations, and to sell good stock whenever he wanted to.

I should think not. That kind of thing, I wish you distinctly to understand, was not in Mr. Fisher's style.

He merely went to the giant's premises and climbed over the fence, and began to go for the giant's apples in a vigorous manner, and the giant, who saw him, and recognized him as a kleptomaniac, and went and told on him to the giant, who married her out of gratitude, a short time after he had gone down and sold his dog to Archimedes Fisher, and the king, who committed him to jail for ninety days for petty larceny.

And while he was there, instead of an exquisite fairy all decorated in expensive clothes, and no bigger than your finger, bursting in upon him, and waving her wand three times and causing the prison walls to fade away, as she bade him come forth into the bright and beautiful sun, where the birds sang sweetly, carolling forth their delicious notes, and filling all nature with melody—instead of this, the old wall-eyed matron, dressed in black bombazine, and with a snuffy nose, lipped in and out off all his hair with a pair of shears, and set him to scrubbing the floor, with injunctions to be saving of the soap.

Just so when he got out, and met another lovely princess riding along the road in her coach, she never once fell in love with her, and he never once spoke to her, and he never hand walked down the long green lanes, amid the violets and primroses, and with all the heavy with the rich fragrance of the time and climate, and the limpid brook rippling past in measured cadence.

On the contrary, the princess was not attracted by his appearance, and naturally so, for he was blacked and had blisters on his nose, and his shirt gave evidence of his want of proximity to godliness, and she merely caressed him over the head, and told him to "get on," and he eventually married a girl out of the poor-house, and as no fairy was ever around to give him the power to find a fresh piece of money in his pocket every time he went out, he got so perfectly poor, and very-stricken that he had to take his wife back to the poor-house a short time after the wedding, and he lived there until he choked to death one day upon a pig of corned beef, which he was trying to swallow.

In fact, taking everything into consideration, we may lay it down as a general proposition, that Archimedes Fisher's ventures in fairy undertakings were disgraceful failures, just such disgraceful failures as this story is.

ANE XMASSE BALLADE.

BY ANE OLD ROYE.

Y' fegges, faire maydes ande merrie menne,
I telle ane wondrous tale—
Butte fyrste, methynks, thatte I wolde drynke
Ye Smythte, hys hystere ale.

Grammerce, putte ye Yule-logge onne;
Ye nyghte ys colde wythoute—
Butte fyrste mye lyppe wolde soethlye syppe
Ye Browne, hys jollye stoude.

Thys tale I telle, ys parolous strange
Ande newe to carle orre kyngge—
Butte fyrste lyste ye uppe mye pverlye clyppe
Fulle wythe ye gyne, hys sylge.

Drye wythoute yte ye to telle ane tale,
Wythouten tune orre tryppe—
Butt t're ys wylde wylde ane-mysse,
To trye ye egge, hys sylpe.

Ye Smythte hys beere theye broughten hym,
Ye Browne ye jollye stout—
Ye more he alced ye lesse he knewed
Of whatte he wasse aboute.

Ye egge hys sylpe theye broughte alsoe
Ande eke ye gyne hys sylge,
Butt t're wylde wylde ane-mysse
Wasse tyghte ane ane-a-tyngge.

(Written for the Christmas Number of the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin.)

THE FATE OF JOE MCGINNIS.

A Warning to Mothers.

BY JOHN QUILL.

This horrible tale was related to me by Archibald Haggerty, the young gentleman who blacks my boots:

"Mr. Quill, you see Joe McGinnis and me and a lot of us fellers was a playin' marvls down to Pine street wharf one day, and Joe McGinnis had no luck. He blowed on his ally and said conjurin' over it, and spit on it, and said 'for everthings,' but 'twas no use, for us fellers was his commoners, and his ball's eye, and his glass agate, and his white alleys, until Joe jist busted out a cryin' and went and sot down on a board and rubbed his fists into his eyes like he was tryin' to gouge 'em. And us fellers we didn't pay no 'tention to Joe McGinnis, and we went on a playin' and a playin', and never saw that Joe had gone and sot down on a place where some fellar had been a shippin' this yer nitro-glycerine. And that there stuff, you know, Mr. Quill, it had been and leaked out all over that there board on which Joe McGinnis was a settin', and the first thing Joe McGinnis knewed his pants was soaked with nitro-glycerine, like he had a fire in the river. Ye, it was. And Joe McGinnis when he felt it a gittin' damp he braced home, and thought he'd dry them pants of his'n by the stove. But, you know, old Mrs. McGinnis when she seed Joe she was mad as fury, and she jist rose right up and snorted:

"I say, you Joe, you outrageous willin', where've you bin with them pants?"

"And then old Mrs. McGinnis she jist made a rush for Joe, Mr. Quill, and she grabbed a bolt of Joe, and lay him across her lap this here way, you know. Then she lifted up that there number sixteen fist of hern, intendin' to spank Joe McGinnis like sin. But when she struck that nitro-glycerine, Mr. Quill, wass't there a regular basin' out of things, you know, salem! I guess so! There was a kind of a grumble and a roar, and a rarin', rarin', thunder and lightnin' explosion, and then about thirty billion earthquakes all run into one, and old Joe McGinnis was blowed through the window and the door, and the fire-place, in little bits of chunks 'bout the size of a marble, and he never knowed what ailed him, while Mrs. McGinnis went a pitchin' through the ceiling and the garret about ten thousand miles, along with chairs and stove-pipe, and pans and tom-cats, and soup-tureens and other things, and she never come down again, she didn't. And that was what ailed Joe McGinnis and Mrs. McGinnis, and you're born. And now, Mr. Quill, couldn't you give a feller a quarter for Christmas?"

It was a sad fate, that of young Joseph McGinnis; and what a solemn warning it conveys to mothers! How careful should every parent be to examine her child's trousers with chemical tests for nitro-glycerine before inflicting punishment! Let mothers lay this lesson to heart, and resolve hereafter to exercise loving vigilance lest they, too, should perish as this wretched Mrs. McGinnis did, without a chance to get off any last words.

THE CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL.

An Interesting Historical Sketch.

The institution of the Christmas festival is attributed by the spurious Decretals to Telesphorus, a slave among his relations, and to sell good stock whenever he wanted to.

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Christianity, and have partly survived to the present day. But the Church also sought to control the festival in England, and a large extent successful—the deep-rooted heathen feeling by adding, for the purification of the heathen customs and feasts which retained, in its dramatic representations of the birth of Christ and the first events of his life. Hence sprang the so-called "Manger-songs," and a multitude of Christmas songs, as well as Christmas dramas, which, at certain times and places, degenerated into farces or foils' festivals. Hence, also originated, at a later period, the Christ-trees, or Christmas-trees, adorned with lights and gifts, the custom of reciprocal presents, and of special Christmas cakes and dishes, such as Christmas rolls, cakes, currant-loaves, dumplings, &c. Thus, Christmas became a unitary social festival for young and old, high and low, and no other Christmas festival could have become.

In the Roman Catholic Church, three masses are performed on Christmas—on the midnight, one at daybreak, and one in the morning. The day is also celebrated by the Episcopal Church; special psalms are sung; a special service of reciprocal presents, and of service, and in England the Athanasian Creed is said and sung. The Lutheran Church likewise observes Christmas; but most other denominations professing the Christian religion, as a "human invention," and as "a vestige of papistical worship," although everybody keeps it as a social holiday, on which there is a scrupulous abstention from all business. But within the last half-century, the festival has once again become a religious observance, which has fallen off. In England these at one time were with more or less brilliancy till Candle-mass, and were great and joyous; but now, a meeting in the evening, composed, when possible, of the various branches and members of a family, is all that distinguishes the day above others.

"GOOD THINGS." Good tidings! Good tidings! Ring out, O Christmas bells! The old familiar music still, O'er hill and lowland swells; Go ye to the merry leaves and bay The holly's crown, and hark ye, And welcome, Christian hearts, to-day, The Babe of Bethlehem.

Good tidings! Good tidings! It is the selfsame strain That once the holy angels sang To shepherds on the plain; A song which cheered the weary rest, And comforts those that mourn; The ancient anthem, ever blest— "To us a Child is born."

Good tidings! Good tidings! The world is old and sad; We need the blessed Christmas-tide To make us merry and glad; To darkened eyes who saw through tears Their earth-lights pale and die, This holy radiance appears— "The day-spring from on high."

Good tidings! Good tidings! O meek and lowly King! Teach every faithful heart this day The meaning of the manger scene; Teach us to do Thy deeds of love, Thy precious sweat to sow; As angels work for Thee above, So let us work below.

Good tidings! Good tidings! The music shall not cease; Hark ye to the organ wayward feet Into the way of peace; Chime, tuneful bells, and loudly ring To hail the Christmas morn; And all ye angels, and sing— "To us a Child is born."

CHRISTMAS BOXES.

History of an Old English Custom.

Christmas-box is the name given in England to a small money-gift to persons in an inferior condition on the day after Christmas, which is the custom of the West, and, in fact, the custom are essentially English, though the making of presents at this season and at the New Year is of great antiquity. Within the last few years, more particularly in England, the practice of giving Christmas-boxes to servants and apprentices, domestic servants and tradesmen, had become a serious business, more particularly in London, where every old custom seems to linger and most difficult to get rid of. Household servants felt under an obligation to give money to their masters on the day after Christmas, also to various inferior path officers, including scavengers and lamp-lighters, while shopkeepers, on the other hand, were equally anxious to present to the male and female servants of their customers. Thus, as referred to in *Christmas*, a poem:

Glady the boy, with Christmas Box in hand, Throughout the town his devious route pur-sues; And of his master's customers implores The ready mite: "Open his cash he begs; The which, perchance, of coppers, few consists, Whose dulcet jingle fills his little soul With joy!"

At length the Christmas Box system became so general, that the great merchants and bankers struck up notices in their windows that no Christmas Boxes would be given, and at the same time the public authorities issued regulations to the same effect. At Christmas, 1836, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs issued a circular to the different embassies, requesting a discontinuance of the custom of giving presents to the messengers of the Foreign Department and other government servants. Since this period the practice has greatly decreased, doubtless to the improvement of the self-respect of the parties interested. In this country it has never been in such a shape as that mentioned above, Christmas presents being given nearly exclusively in families and among friends.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS.

The word carol (Italian carola, and French carole, a round dance—probably from the Latin carolla; Welsh coroll, to reel, to dance; the name is thence applied to the music or song accompanying such a dance; carillon is probably allied), signified a song of joy. The practice of singing carols, or, at all events, music, in celebration of the nativity of Christ as early as the second century, is considered as proved by the circumstance that a large sarcophagus, belonging to that period, has sculptured upon it a representation of a Christian family joining in choral praise for the purpose of celebrating the birth of their Lord. The Christmas Carols seem to have sadly degenerated, and became, in fact, so indecent, that the clergy found it necessary to forbid their use. Under the Anglo-Saxon period, merriment and piety were quite combined in English life, a peculiarity that affected the Christmas carols of that period not a little; but the third century the jocosity has unhappily lapsed into what would now be considered profanity. The oldest printed collection of English Christmas Carols bears date of 1521. The majority of these, though written by men of learning—priests and teachers—exhibit a lamentable ignorance of the character of the subject to the ferocious rage with which he regarded the mid-eyed Dulcitt when he descended from the platform and beamed through his spectacles upon Sarah, as he offered her his arm and swept her past poor old Bob, without even a glance at his rival. To make matters worse, everybody in the class understood the situation, and all eyes were turned upon Bob, to see how he would bear it.

Everybody thought it was rough. The young ladies thought so, because Mr. Dulcitt had not chosen them, instead of that "stuck-up thing,"

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CHRISTMAS CAROLS.

The word carol (Italian carola, and French carole, a round dance—probably from the Latin carolla; Welsh coroll, to reel, to dance; the name is thence applied to the music or song accompanying such a dance; carillon is probably allied), signified a song of joy. The practice of singing carols, or, at all events, music, in celebration of the nativity of Christ as early as the second century, is considered as proved by the circumstance that a large sarcophagus, belonging to that period, has sculptured upon it a representation of a Christian family joining in choral praise for the purpose of celebrating the birth of their Lord. The Christmas Carols seem to have sadly degenerated, and became, in fact, so indecent, that the clergy found it necessary to forbid their use. Under the Anglo-Saxon period, merriment and piety were quite combined in English life, a peculiarity that affected the Christmas carols of that period not a little; but the third century the jocosity has unhappily lapsed into what would now be considered profanity. The oldest printed collection of English Christmas Carols bears date of 1521. The majority of these, though written by men of learning—priests and teachers—exhibit a lamentable ignorance of the character of the subject to the ferocious rage with which he regarded the mid-eyed Dulcitt when he descended from the platform and beamed through his spectacles upon Sarah, as he offered her his arm and swept her past poor old Bob, without even a glance at his rival. To make matters worse, everybody in the class understood the situation, and all eyes were turned upon Bob, to see how he would bear it.

Everybody thought it was rough. The young ladies thought so, because Mr. Dulcitt had not chosen them, instead of that "stuck-up thing,"

Old Dobbins had his sitting-room in the second story, and just as Bob got beneath the window, the lamp was lighted and Sally appeared, taking off her bonnet. There was a tree by the window, and as Bob glanced at it his mind was made up. He decided to climb into the branches, so that he might look upon his own eyes upon the porphyry of the woman to whom he had given his love. After a series of difficult gymnastics, in which he tore his coat and knocked the skin off of his hands, he reached a place from which he could peer into the room. Yes, there was Sally, sitting in front of the fire, and Dulcitt by her side, with his arm on the back of her chair, with his glasses turned full upon her, and his faded eyes gazing at her, just as Bob's used to gaze. Bob Caruthers felt his heart sink within him at this spectacle, but he determined to sit on that limb all night if it was necessary, in order to see all that happened, and to ascertain precisely how matters stood. Hardly had he formed the resolution, when Sally came to the window and pulled down the blind.

"It's no use," said Bob, in despair; and he began to descend the tree, when the kitchen-door opened and somebody came out. It was so dark that Bob could only distinguish a figure; but he knew from the voice that it was old Dobbins. Old Dobbins went to the wood-pile and collected a few chips, whistling meanwhile to a large dog that accompanied him. Bob had heard Dobbins express his determination to procure a dog to prevent thefts from that identical wood-pile. Doubtless this was the very animal.

"But the best thing for me to do will be to keep quiet until old Dobbins goes in," said Bob.

To his horror, however, he saw dimly the figure of the dog smelling around, until it ran up to the tree, when it began to bark vociferously. Bob thought then he would certainly be discovered. But no; strange to say, Dobbins entered the house and closed the door, leaving his dog outside beneath the tree. After a few more barks the misguided animal lay down, and seemed determined to make a night of it.

Mr. Caruthers, from his cool and lofty perch, regarded the indistinct black figure beneath him with anguish. "Good gracious!" he said, "suppose the rascally brute should stay there all night!" Then he thought he would wait until the dog got to sleep, and creep