

## CHRISTMAS-TIME.

**Character and Customs**—The Christmas-Child—Evergreens—Gifts—Feasting and Merriment.

The festival of Christmas is regarded as the greatest celebration throughout the year, and though at the present day it is somewhat shorn of its ancient glories, and devoid of the boisterous jollity which characterized it in the time of "good Queen Bess," when the logs flamed and roared and mirth reigned supreme, it is still the holiday in which all classes most participate. Separated, as many families are, during the year, they all make it a point to meet together around the hearth, to wish each other a "Merry Christmas," which was the old English greeting shouted from window to street, and from street back to window, in the "long, long ago." The Christ-child, with his gifts and masked attendant, belong to the German antiquity. Frugal housewives, shaking the crumbs from the table-cloth around the roots of their fruit trees, in order that they become more fruitful, clearly points to the mysterious influence attributed by the ancient Germans to the time of the Twelve Nights.

In Bohemia the fruit trees for the same reason are violently shaken during the time of midnight mass. In other localities a corn cake and hot cider is offered to the largest apple tree, as the king of the orchard, while those who take part in the ceremony join in singing:

"Bear good apples and peers enough!"

"Hurrur! hurrur! hurrur!"

Yule-log and yule-candle became of the same order. The mistletoe was regarded by the Druids as sacred, and its berries, as symbolic of purity, were associated with the rites of marriage. The game in which the mistletoe formed a particular feature was among the most amusing of the festivities, and is still in vogue in some parts of England.

The Christmas tree is doubtless of German origin. They conceived of the world as a great tree whose roots were hidden deep under the earth, but whose top flourished in Walhalla, the old German paradise. This tree was first fitted up during the Twelve Nights, in honor of Beetha, goddess of spring; it was subsequently transferred to the birthday of Christ, who, as the God-man, is the "resurrection and the life." The evergreen tree and emblem of spring-time became the symbol of an eternal spring. The burning lights were to adumbrate Him who is the "Light of the World," and the gifts to remind us, in giving His only Son for the world's redemption, He gave us the most priceless of all gifts. Such was its origin. Now the Christmas tree is not only to be found throughout Germany, but has taken root from the Alps to the Ural, from the Kiel to the Appenines, alike on the banks of the Neva and the Po, the Mississippi and the Thames; in truth, wherever German civilization has penetrated.

In England Christmas is scarcely the shadow of its former merry self, when all classes of society indulged in the most unrestrained joviality and merriment. The wassail bowl, warm ale with apples floating therein, that once played so conspicuous a part at the Christmas banquet, are now obsolete. Even the singing of carols, which was once so popular even at court, is now confined principally to the lower classes; while the yule-block, or Christmas log, is being gradually supplanted by the Christmas tree, whose introduction into England is comparatively of recent date. Generous rations of beef are distributed to the parish poor by the rich of England. Christmas bells ring out their silvery chimes on the crisp morning air, joyfully and cheerfully. Nor is there wanting a spicy flavor to the feasts and frolics, to say nothing of the roast beef and plum pudding, while the boar's head, decorated with rosemary or holly, is served up in great state at the royal Christmas table.

On Christmas day in Suabia, maidens inquisitive as to their prospective lovers draw a stick of wood out of a heap to see whether he will be long or short, crooked or straight. If they wish to ascertain which of them will first become a wife they form a circle and place therein a blind-folded gander, and the one to whom he goes first will soon be a bride. Among many others a favorite method of forecasting the future is to sit upon the floor and throw one's shoes with the foot over the shoulder, and then to predict from the position it takes what is about to transpire.

One of the principal features of the holiday in Italy is the Christmas dinner, which begins early and lasts late. The rich feast right royally, and the poor, who can afford meat but once a year, must keep it for the Christmas dinner. In anticipation of this, it is usual for every one who has done you a service during the year to call upon you in advance of the day for their *buona festa*. It is a generalization of what is true of our newspaper carriers of the United States, hence the origin of the carriers' address on New Year's day.

The day is observed in Spain very much as it is in Italy, the Christmas dinner playing a very conspicuous part. In Russia, although St. Nicholas is a special favorite, and they have the Christmas tree and the services in the churches, all special ceremonies are reserved for the Easter holidays and Epiphany.

In Lapland and Norway a cake is set out in the snow as an offering, which was probably intended, originally, to propitiate some pagan divinity, as it dates back to the time of Thor.

Though New Year's is generally observed in France rather than Christmas, for the distribution of presents, it is the Jesus bambin who comes with a convoy of angels loaded with books and toys to fill expectant little shoes which tiny hands placed so near the chimney.

In Sweden Yule-time is the gayest season of the year. It begins on Christmas and continues till Epiphany, and is given up to dancing, feasting and merrymaking. No heavy work is done during that time. In the rural districts the tables are spread and kept standing, every visitor is expected to take something, otherwise he is believed to take

away with him the yule-joy. The family leaves a light burning all night, and should it accidentally go out, it is believed some one in the house will surely die during the coming year.

The American Christmas is a modification of the English. In large towns it is universally kept, but in some villages but few shops are closed, and only one or two of the half-dozen churches are open for service. Still everybody remembers it is Christmas. Presents are made in families. Christmas carols are sung at early morn; the children go from house to house wishing each other a "Merry Christmas." Then there are the games and Christmas parties, to say nothing of the family dinners, and probably few who call themselves Christians allow the day to pass without giving a thought to the sacred event it commemorates.—*Detroit Free Press*.

## Colic.

Coin is presumed to be from the Latin *cunus*, a die or stamp, and itself really is a piece of metal converted into money by a legal stamp. There is a tradition that Phedon, king of Argos, first issued stamped silver about 746 B. C. The earliest coins struck, both in Asia Minor and in Greece, were stamped upon one side only. The first coin in England was made by the Romans early in the first century. The shape varied—square, round, oblong—until the mid-dies, when round coin was adopted by all the European nations. Gold coins were first issued in France by Clovis A. D. 489. About the same time they were issued in Spain by Amalric, the Gothic king. In both countries they were called trientes. The first American coinage was by the Virginia company in 1612. The first money actually coined here was in Massachusetts in 1632. Thirty-three years later Connecticut and Vermont made copper coin, and three years after them New Jersey also made copper coin.

Coins are among the most certain evidences of history. In the latter part of the Greek series they illustrate the chronology of reigns. In the Roman series they fix the dates and successions of events. Gibbon observes that if all our historians were lost, medals, inscriptions and other monuments would be sufficient to record the travels of Hadrian. The reign of Probus might be written from his coins.

Another word belonging to this class comes from the Roman coin issued by Servius Tullius, and bore the image of a sheep (*pecus*), and was thence called *pecunia*, the term subsequently applied to money in general. Some coins have derived their names from their weight—as, for instance, the British *pound*, the French *livre*, the Italian *lira*; some from the metal itself, as the *cuernus*, the *rupe*, from the Sanscrit "rupa," silver. Other coins have got their names from the design, as the American eagle, the angel, testoon (from *testas*, a head.) Others from the head of the state, as the sovereign, the crown; and others from the monarch's proper name, as the ducie (from Darius) the Phillip, Louis d'or, or the Napoleon. Then again, some coins have got their names from places. The florin, which has different values in Holland, Bavaria-England and Austria, is so called because it was first coined in Florence.

The French *franc* took its name from the first syllable of the inscription *francorum rex*, king of the French. The sou, which circulates in France as the cent, does in the United States, is from the Latin "*sordidus*," which was the name of a golden coin issued by some of the Roman emperors.

The guinea derived its name from the coast of Guinea, in Africa, from which was brought the gold from which it was coined, first in the year 1664. They were called in and succeeded by the sovereign in 1817. The English pound was originally a pound of silver, which was divided into 240 pennies, by the Saxons. The shilling has been assigned a great many derivations. The most plausible refers it back to the German "schill" or shield, so that shielding, finally reduced to shilling, would indicate a coin on which the prince's shield is stamped.

The penny is a coin of a vast antiquity. Its familiar shape, as may be generally known, is a comparatively modern alteration of the silver form in which it was known in ancient times.

The American cent began to make its appearance from the mint in 1792, and was prepared by Robert Morris, the great financier of the Revolution. The dollar or thaler is said to have been first struck in the dale or valley of Joachim, in Bohemia, in the sixteenth century.

The first coinage in this country commenced in 1794. This silver coin circulates in Spain, Germany, Holland and Mexico.—*Troy Times*.

## Test for Water.

A simple test is to cork up a small bottle nearly full of it, in which a piece of lump sugar has been put. If by thus excluding the air and letting it stand in the light for two or three days there is not a milky cloud seen, but the water remains clear, it may be considered free from the phosphates with which sewage water is impregnated. To ascertain if water contains iron, take a glass of water and add to it a few drops of the infusion of nutgalls, or suspend a nutgall in it by means of a thread for twenty-four hours. If iron is present, the water will become of a dark-brown or black color. Prussiate of potash is a still more delicate test for detecting iron. If a crystal, or a drop of it, when dissolved, be added to a glass of water containing iron, it will immediately become of a blue color.

To ascertain if water contains magnesia, take a quantity of the water, and boil down to a twentieth part of its bulk; then drop a few grains of carbonate of ammonia into a small glass of water. No magnesia will yet be precipitated; but on adding a small quantity of phosphate of soda, if any magnesia be present it will then make its appearance and fall to the bottom of the glass. In this experiment it is necessary that the carbonate of ammonia be in a neutral state.

No man knows what a ministering angel his wife is until he comes home one day, suffering with a dreadful cold, and she happens to have a bottle of Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup in the house.

## CALENDAR FOR 1882.

1882	1882
Jan. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Jan. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14	7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15
9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16	9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
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22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29	22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29
23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

**A Signal Evidence of Health**  
Is a regularly recurring action of the bowels. With the due performances of this function are united good digestion, pure and active circulation of the blood, and an adequate secretion of healthy bile, which seeks the conduits designed for it by nature. The performance of these co-operative functions, insuring permanent health and vigor, may, if interrupted, speedily be rendered inactive and regular with that sense of morbid sensations of organic activity and general health. Hostetter's Stomach Bitters. While it relaxes the bowels effectively, it does so without pain, and without giving rise to the violent, weakening reaction always to be anticipated from a drastic purgative. The drenching effect, associated in the minds of many ill-advised persons with thoroughness as its essential, is minnows to the stomach and intestines organs that are, on the contrary, invigorated by the Bitters, which is, moreover, a superb preventive and remedy for fever and ague, and a proven specific for rheumatism, debility and kidney inactivity.

A LADY in Missouri, since the fashion of collecting buttons went out of practice, has made a collection of 17,000 spuds.

## To Consumers.

"Golden Medical Discovery" is a concentrated, potent alterative, or blood-cleansing remedy, that wins golden opinions from all who use it for any humor, from the common pimple, blotch, or eruption, to the formidable scrofulous swelling, or ulcer. Internal fever, soreness and ulceration, yield to its benign influences. Consumption, which is but a scrofulous affection of the lungs, may, in its early stages, be cured by a free use of this God-given remedy. See article on consumption and its treatment in Part III. of the World's Dispensary Dime Series of pamphlets, costs two stamps, postpaid. Address World's Dispensary Medical Association, Buffalo, N. Y.

THREE carloads of live buffaloes were shipped from Winnipeg, British America, for exhibition at the Minneapolis fair.

## MORNING STARS. Evening Stars.

Venus until February 20, Venus after February 20, Mars until December 6, Mars after December 6, Mars until January 10, Mars after January 10, Mars until January 15, Mars after January 15, Jupiter until March 20, Jupiter until March 20, after September 1, Jupiter until May 6, after September 1, Saturn until May 6, after August 16.

## Planets Brightest.

Mars, March 21, July 20 and November 8, rising when just before the sun. Also February 6, April 10, June 14, August 18, October 22, December 6. Jupiter, March 10, April 15, May 20, June 25, July 30, August 14, September 19, October 24, November 29, December 14.

## The Four Seasons.

Winter begins December 21, 1881, and lasts 89 days. 8 hours and 40 minutes.

Spring begins March 20, 1882, and lasts 92 days. 21 hours and 62 minutes.

Summer begins June 21, 1882, and lasts 93 days. 2 hours and 2 minutes.

Autumn begins September 22, 1882, and lasts 89 days. 16 hours and 50 minutes.

## Church Days and Cycles of Time.

Sep. 20th—*Sunday*—*Assumption of the Virgin Mary*.

Oct. 1st—*Monday*—*First Sunday in October*.

Oct. 15th—*Friday*—*Second Sunday in October*.

Oct. 22nd—*Friday*—*Third Sunday in October*.

Oct. 29th—*Friday*—*Fourth Sunday in October*.

Nov. 5th—*Wednesday*—*Fifth Sunday in October*.

Nov. 12th—*Wednesday*—*Sixth Sunday in October*.

Nov. 19th—*Wednesday*—*Seventh Sunday in October*.

Nov. 26th—*Wednesday*—*Eighth Sunday in October*.

Dec. 3rd—*Wednesday*—*Ninth Sunday in October*.

Dec. 10th—*Wednesday*—*Tenth Sunday in October*.

Dec. 17th—*Wednesday*—*Eleventh Sunday in October*.

Dec. 24th—*Wednesday*—*Twelfth Sunday in October*.

Dec. 31st—*Wednesday*—*Thirteenth Sunday in October*.

Jan. 7th—*Wednesday*—*Fourteenth Sunday in October*.

Jan. 14th—*Wednesday*—*Fifteenth Sunday in October*.

Jan. 21st—*Wednesday*—*Sixteenth Sunday in October*.

Jan. 28th—*Wednesday*—*Seventeenth Sunday in October*.

Feb. 4th—*Wednesday*—*Eighteenth Sunday in October*.

Feb. 11th—*Wednesday*—*Nineteenth Sunday in October</*