

At the CHRISTMAS WINDOW

ONCE upon a time there was a scrivener who wrote a Christmas story without mentioning shop windows, and the people rose and slew him, saying, "It has never been done."

Does the reader recognize this strolling ragged newsie? Down through the centuries he comes, the eternal poor child of Christmas, who is, by the law of the prophets, invariably happier than the rich man in his limousine. (This limousine, by the way, was once a coach and four, the rich man a red nosed baron and the child a golden haired page. His mud colored mongrel alone remains the same. He has not altered in 500 years.)

It was a week before Christmas, and we had not yet found our rich man. At last, however, just as dusk was falling, we found our man.

He was old; he was alone in the world. His hair fell in a white fringe about his ears. His face was bitter, but sad. Surprisingly as we grasped his wrist we felt his pulse. His heart was ready to melt.

"Quick!" said we, leaping into the plum colored interior of his limousine. "There's no time to lose. The boy is waiting three blocks farther along. Tell your man to hurry, please."

The old gentleman did not seem to observe our presence. We were piqued for a moment, but soon reflected that, being a young author, we were, of course, quite invisible. He spoke sharply through the tube to his chauffeur: "Get on, Simmons; get on. I can't stay here all night. And, Simmons, stop at the toy shop three blocks farther along."

The car drew up to the curb. The old gentleman, clutching a copy of Dickens in one hand and his gold headed cane in the other, descended to the sidewalk. Instinctively, as though guided by some impulse of the ages, he turned toward the Christmas shop window where with a thousand tiny artificial candles.

Standing just in front of the bright window, the mud colored mongrel at his heels, was the little newsie, his hands in his pockets, his cap on the back of his head, his wistful eyes



Looking Into the Christmas Window.

fixed upon that feast of plenty. For one dreadful instant we thought we saw a look of boredom, of ennui, flash across that pale pinched face, but we could not be sure.

"Humph!" said the old gentleman. "This your window?"

"Yes, sir," replied the boy with a cherubim smile, "mine and Bonesy's." "I know!" muttered the rich man. "It is Christmas. Come! I will give you anything you ask for one peep into your window! I say this in all humbleness, knowing that you are richer than I, knowing that I have nothing that you would want, but still I beg of you to name your heart's desire."

We turned to the little newsie, the eternal Christmas child. Fondly, almost tearfully, we waited for him to speak. At last he did so, glancing for inspiration at the mongrel, "I want to know, wretched boy, that he had shattered the tradition of centuries."

"I'll trade you a look in the window," said the boy bluntly, "for a five minute sit in yer automobile."

A moment later pedestrians passing that particular corner saw an old gentleman peering rather dazedly into a Christmas shop window, while in the plum tinted, nickel plated, electric lighted, luxuriously appointed limousine at the curb sat a little newsie with a mud colored mongrel huddled to his bosom and an overwhelming happiness in his eyes.

As for the Christmas author—but he was very young and quite invisible.—Dana Burnett in New York Evening Sun.

New Year's Morning

By HELEN HUNT JACKSON

ONLY a night from old to new! Only a night and so much wrought!

The Old Year's heart all weary grew,
But said, "The New Year rest has brought."

The Old Year's heart its hopes laid down

As in a grave, but, trusting, said,

"The blossoms of the New Year's crown

Bloom from the ashes of the dead."

The Old Year's heart was full of greed;

With selfishness it longed and ached

And cried, "I have not half I need;

My thirst is bitter and unslaked,

But to the New Year's generous hand

All gifts in plenty shall return;

True loving it shall understand;

By all my failures it shall learn

I have been reckless; it shall be

Quiet and calm and pure of life.

I was a slave; it shall go free

And find sweet peace where I leave strife."

Only a night from old to new!

Night and the healing balm of sleep!

Each morn is New Year's morn come true,

More of a festival to keep.

All nights are sacred nights to make

Confession and resolve and prayer.

All days are sacred days to wake

New gladness in the sunny air.

Only a night from old to new!

Only a sleep from night to morn!

The new is but the old come true;

Each sunrise sees a new year born.

NEW YEAR BELL IS SILENT.

Famous Relic of American Independence Formerly Rang in the Year.

Every New Year's eve citizens of Philadelphia gather round the shrine of Liberty, Independence hall, to hear the New Year rung in. Formerly this service was performed by the bell now known as the Liberty bell.

Before that memorable day in 1776 when the nation's fathers gave forth to the world their Declaration of Independence, whose signing was heralded by the ringing of the bell, New Year's rejoicing was started by the first peal of what is now known as the Liberty bell.

After the events of July 4, 1776, made the bell one of the most priceless relics of the nation, custodians of Independence hall restricted its use, fearing some mishap, and after 1830 the bell was no longer used for the New Year's salute. In 1832, on the celebration of George Washington's birth day, it was rung and not again for three years, when on July 8, 1835, while the funeral procession of Chief Justice Marshall was passing, the bell was tolled.

Suddenly the note grew discordant. An investigation was made. It was found that a crack had been started. The bell had completed its task. No more would it greet the New Year or pay tribute to the nation's great. But from the tower of Liberty's cradle another bell always welcomes the coming of a New Year.—St. Paul Pioneer Press.

Not Alone on New Year.

Of course it is customary to make New Year's day the day of new resolutions, but there is no particular reason why we should confine this work to this one day in the year. In fact, the very best resolution we can make on New Year's day is to resolve that during the coming year we will use every endeavor to make each day a day of self improvement; that not a single day shall pass upon which we have not attempted to speak a good word or do a kind deed for somebody; that not a day shall pass upon which we will not try to weed out some of the tares and brambles of character that now offend others or some of the bad habits that offend even ourselves.

Pay Up Day In China.

At the Chinese New Year the houses and other buildings are decked with flowers, and the streets are thronged with people, who come out to buy provisions, new clothes and gifts. One good New Year custom in China is that of settling up all debts before the old year has died out. A Chinaman who allows the New Year to dawn before he has settled with his creditors feels himself disgraced.

The New Year Dawns.

The new year dawns, the sun shines strong and clear.

And all the world rejoices and is gay.

The city loving birds from spray to spray

Flit busily and twitter in my ear

Their little frozen note of wintry cheer.

From ruddy children with the snow at play

Ring peals of laughter gladder than in May,

While friend greets friend with "Happy be thy year!"

—Louise Chandler Moulton.

FUN on NEW YEAR'S EVE

ALTHOUGH many of the old customs have been dropped and almost forgotten, New Year's parties are not out of date. A nice one is a pantomime of an enchanted girl.

A damp sheet must be fastened up across the room or between the folding doors of the parlor. First fasten the corners of the sheet, next the center of each of the four sides in order that the cloth may be perfectly smooth; then place a lighted candle on the floor about four or five feet from the center of the curtain. When the lights in the room occupied by the company are turned out shadows of the actors behind the curtain may be seen on the screen, some one, standing outside the curtain and facing the audience, should relate the story of the play—of how a young girl while walking out on the last day of October meets Halloween, who presents her with three gifts to try her fortune, and how, when she is about to do so, a witch enchants her, etc. After the story is finished and a lively overture has been performed on some musical instrument the pantomime is played as follows:

Halloween Appears.

The young girl personating the enchanted one comes gayly forward from the side. When almost across the curtain she meets Halloween, who approaches from the opposite side, arrayed in a short dress, with wings made of newspaper folded fan fashion and fastened on the shoulders. In her hand she carries a cane with a silhouette of a cat or two or three stars and a crescent cut of stiff brown paper and pasted on the end.

Halloween shows the maiden three gifts—an apple, a hand mirror and an unlighted candle. Instead of the mirror a crystal ball may be used.



Seeking the Future in the Crystal Ball.

Before presenting them she illustrates by gestures the use to be made of each. Holding the mirror or globe in front of her face, she bites the apple, then looks quickly around, as if expecting to see some one, and, again holding up the mirror or globe in one hand and the candle in the other, she takes a few steps backward. When a boy or young man enters by jumping over the light, which gives the appearance of his having fallen from the sky, Halloween looks around, and the boy or man quickly disappears.

All this time the girl stands transfixed with her hands raised and all the fingers spread out in astonishment. She receives the presents, which are given with many nods and gestures.

The Old Witch Enters.

As the maiden then takes up the apple and mirror or globe her hand is stayed by a witch with flowing hair, who has approached unperceived, carrying under one arm a broom and wearing on her head an ordinary hat with a piece of newspaper rolled up and pinned on to form a peaked crown.

The poor girl looks anxiously around and discovers she has been enchanted, for there are three girls instead of one. This effect is produced by two more lighted candles being placed on the floor on either side of the first candle. The candles are removed, and the Old Year, an old man, instantly appears.

Discovering him quickly, the girl runs forward to tell her sorrows and finds that it is only when alone that she is enchanted, for when she attempts to point out her other selves they have disappeared. Making many guesses, she looks here and there for them, but in vain. Then as the Old Year leaves she bids him a sorrowful adieu.

The Little New Year.

Immediately little New Year enters, crowned with a paper star and wearing wings of paper. The young girl rushes to meet the New Year with a hearty greeting. She then tells him of her enchantment and kneels down, and the little New Year raises both hands above her head, then, kissing him hand to the maiden, departs.—Nellie F. Morris in Pittsburgh Dispatch.

A Christmas Carol

By HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

I HEAR along our street

Pass the minstrel throngs.

Hark! They play so sweet

On their hautboys Christmas songs.

Let us by the fire,

Ever higher,

Sing them till the night expire.

In December ring

Every day the chimes;

Loud the glee men sing

In the streets their merry rimes.

Let us by the fire,

Ever higher,

Sing them till the night expire.

Shepherds at the grange,

Where the babe was born,

Sang with many a change

Christmas carols until morn.

Let us by the fire,

Ever higher,

Sing them till the night expire.

These good people sang

Songs devout and sweet.

While the rafters rang

There they stood with freezing feet.

Let us by the fire,

Ever higher,

Sing them till the night expire.

Who by the fireside stands

Stamps his feet and sings,

But he who blows his hands

Not so gay a carol brings.

Let us by the fire,

Ever higher,

Sing them till the night expire.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY.

It's All Real to Bobby Boy, Who'd Like to Ride With Santa Claus.

Bobby Boy was sitting in his wee brown chair so close to the great bunch of Christmas holly that he could stretch out his fingers and touch the shiny red berries whenever he wanted to make believe that he was far away in the great forest in Santa Claus land. He had only to close his eyes and "shiver his shoulders," as if he were cold, when the warm, quiet room would vanish and he would be walking with Merry Bell in the story.

"By and by," said the sweet voice of Sister Marjorie, who was reading from the book, so she couldn't shut her eyes and make believe she was in the forest too. Bobby Boy remembered that he must tell Sister Marjorie just what it looked like when they reached home.

"By and by they came to a part of the forest where there were tall trees, green and fragrant, just like the trees one sees in the markets before Christmas.

"Merry Bell clapped her hands. "Hurray!" she cried. "We're almost there! See; here are the Christmas tree woods. Pretty soon we'll find the reindeer feeding on the evergreen vines."

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State game wardens say that during the open season for deer, seventeen buck deer were killed in Carbon county, and three does—one by a passenger train at Hickory Run, and two illegally shot by hunters.

Superintendent of Schools Frank W. Wright, of Uniontown, resigned to be signed to become assistant deputy state commissioner of education of the state of Massachusetts. He will assume his new duties next January 15.

Rev. E. H. Kellogg, for seven years pastor of the Second Presbyterian church, Carlisle, and former head of the Carlisle Presbyterian, has left for Hartford, Conn., where he will be on the faculty of the Hartford Theological seminary.

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"They walked softly through the snow paths.

"Sh!" said Merry Bell; "don't frighten them. When they see us the Christmas reindeer will know us and come running to us to let us kiss them. That's how we know which are the good reindeer that will carry dear old Santa safely over the world on Christmas eve. Just think—if a reindeer was bad and tipped poor Santa out!"

Bobby Boy opened his eyes wide. "Ho! I wouldn't care if they did tip him out. I'd wun wight out in the snow an' help him put all the toys back, an' nen maybe he'd give me a wide."

Sister Marjorie laughed and went on with the story which dealt with the enchanted country behind the picture books.

Christmas Long Drawn Out.

It has become the custom to imagine that every ceremony connected with the Christmas holidays in old England was observed on the holiday itself. Nothing could be further from the real facts. It should be remembered that in England of old, and to some extent even in industrial England of today, Christmas does not refer only to the holiday itself, but to the twelve days and nights immediately following the feast of the Nativity. It would easily be discovered by anybody who took the trouble to give a few moments' thought to the subject that it would be nigh physically impossible to follow all the ceremonials and customs connected with the Christmas season on one day.

The Season of Joy.

The festival of Christmas is gratefully unique because of the predominant note it contains—the note of joy, of a rupture, an abandon of delight, which carries all before it—and, while it surcharges the hearts of those who are naturally gay, it also invades the gloomiest and the most sorrowful and creates for them a rift in the constant clouds of the heart.—Rev. S. P. Cadman.

Fitness in Gifts.

The ideal consideration in making a Christmas gift is fitness. What would be an ideal present for one person would be a mockery for another. It isn't the cost—it isn't even the beauty of a gift that must be first considered—it is the need and the tastes of the recipient.

A box containing Christmas gifts donated by citizens was shipped from Norristown to its soldiers on the Mexican border, and each wearer of the khaki was sent a check for \$5, while families of the soldiers will also be remembered in a money way.

Fire in sawdust, originating from a blaze kindled by skaters, worked its way around a storage icehouse belonging to J. M. Detweiler, of Perkaskie, but failed to ignite the frame work, since it stood on a wall and the skaters will lose their winter playground.

Two cars, containing 600 cases of beer and a small amount of whisky shipped into Washington county for distribution by agents, were seized at Hills Station, near Washington, by County Detective Byron Knestrick and shipped back to the consignors.

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