

SANTA BANNED BY PURITAN FATHERS

No Christmas Festivities or Gifts for Children in Massachusetts in Early Days

DAY JUST LIKE ANY OTHER

Condition Somewhat Better for Youngsters in New Amsterdam—Holiday Observance Toyless in the Colonies in Seventeenth Century

In the early days of this country's history Christmas festivities were not generally observed and poor old "Santa Claus," and all he represents, had a hard time of it.

In Massachusetts the observation of Christmas was utterly denounced as an evil, ungodly and pernicious custom, and any child daring to think of as much as a plum pudding on that day would make herself liable to reproof by the authorities. All along the stern and rock-bound coast, Geraldine Ames writes in the Churchman, the only Christmas trees in the days of the Puritan domination were those that nature had planted there and had adorned with fleecy snow. The fires burned brightly on the open hearths, but as far as the children knew Christmas was just like any other day in the calendar. Even after the Puritan reaction against the forms and customs of the old church had spent itself to some extent the children of the seventeenth century still expected no gifts in honor of the birth of Christ.

In New Amsterdam the outlook was a little better for the children. The Hollanders had brought with them their St. Nicholas, and his birthday was celebrated joyously by young and old just before Christmas, but Christmas was also observed. Of course, they had not many real toys as we know them today, but in the shoes that the little Hollanders set by the fireplace in the shining kitchen, which was also the living room, were homemade gifts. Many of these were of a useful character, such as hand-knit caps and mittens, but now and then a skillful Hollander would carve a model of a boat such as that which had brought them to New Amsterdam, or a miniature chest of drawers, and one can fancy the recipients showing these with pride to the wondering little Indian boys and girls when they came to be on terms of sufficient amity with them for such conferences.

In Virginia, where the church of England was strong and its adherents steadfastly observed the holidays as in the home country, there was always more of the Christmas spirit and abundant cheer and merrymaking than elsewhere at this season. Here the Yule log held its place and here were the games and the feasting that made it indeed the merry season of the year. Later when New Amsterdam became New York and the English came in to power the character of the Christmas holiday was changed somewhat, although the Dutch influence continued dominant for many years.

Throughout the colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries toys were an almost unknown factor, but wherever Christmas observations were not frowned upon by religion, feasting and good cheer were abundant, and bond and free, rich and poor, old and young, shared in the games, abundant food and genial atmosphere. In the eighteenth century toys began to make their appearance in the colonies. Some of them were brought from over seas and had the enchanting quality of novelty. Little girls who had helped to mother their younger brothers and sisters were delighted with dolls that were all their own, to fondle and cuddle. A toy was a thing to be cherished in those days. Some of the gifts were of real intrinsic value, for the shipping and trading were growing to be important factors in the colonies, and men brought treasures of all kinds from the far East to the seaports, whence they were distributed to other parts of the colonies. The war for independence interrupted this and the children shared in the self-sacrifices and deprivations that were undergone by all the families living in the colonies at that time. When soldiers were starving at Valley Forge there was little thought in their homes of Christmas merrymakings and little out of which to provide it.

After the war there were still lean years, but by the opening of the nineteenth century peace and plenty smiled upon the land and Santa Claus found it safe to resume his visits and make his distributions.

Remember Old Friends.

"What? A holiday greetings card with old Bill's name scribbled across it? . . . Good old Bill! Why, it's 11 years almost since we saw each other, and here he's not forgotten me even yet! . . . Huh, Mary, you needn't be so all-fired proud of that scarf Aunt Susie sent you. This may be only a colored postcard, but by George, it's from Bill! . . . Well, well—this sure is Christmas!"

The First Christmas Card.

The Christmas card cannot claim to have been established so long as other of our Christmas customs. The first Christmas card came into the world in 1846, when Sir Henry Cole, an Englishman, sent Yuletide greetings to his friends.

CHRISTMAS BELLS

Hark! Hark! I hear a distant bell,
And now a chime—they softly ring;
What joyful tidings do they tell
As back and forth they swing.

'Tis mid of night—who rings those bells?
Perhaps some doves there nestling,
And while each little bosom swells,
And warm, they touch with gentle wing
The tuneful metal, and it feels
So incubated it would swing
To life, and wake the world with peals
Of gladness as for new-crowned King.

Those midnight bells, how sweet they chime,
The welkin vibrates with their sound;
To hearts attune they are sublime,
Nor spread they dread alarm around.

Lo! now I see, from East afar
A light shines through the steeple's
frame
'Tis brighter than the brightest star,
It glides the bells with golden flare;
There, too, I see some cherubs cling
Fast hold the ropes. How fair they be!
They swing the bells and sweetly sing
"This is the Christ's nativity."

Wake every heart, join in their song
Of praise to Christ, our new-born King;
To him our sweetest strains belong,
And his, our richest offering.

When wakes the god of day, and shines
Athwart the heavens, what of glee
Will wake as well? With box and pines
And flowers gay, you house will be
Adorned, and while the anthem swells
With organ's voice, all Christendom
Will vibrate as are those bells
That Christ's nativity has come.
—J. William Pope.

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ANCIENT CHRISTMAS TOYS

Dolls That Delighted Children of Rome and Greece in Early Days—Recently Excavated.

Rag dolls are as old as the hills and so are dolls with movable arms and legs, toy dogs, rocking horses and a host of other things that bring delight to the children on Christmas morning.

Recent excavations in the ruins of ancient Rome, Greece and Egypt have placed the British museum in possession of an interesting assortment of these relics of early Christian days, some of which may possibly have been given to the children of the followers of Christ at a time when the observation of Christmas day was an innovation.

In the nursery of a newly excavated house at Behnesa, Egypt, a fairly well preserved rag doll was found with arms and legs still intact and painted face. The doll is by no means a beauty and does not compare with the Christmas dolls of today, but nevertheless it must have brought joy to a little girl's heart nearly 2,000 years ago.

The jointed dolls of long ago were made to sit down, stand up and move their arms, but they didn't close their eyes or squeak "mamma." Among the toy dogs, horses and donkeys are some made of stone and baked clay and others carved out of wood.

A CONVENIENCE.



"So you think the Santa Claus myth is a good thing?"

"Yes, it's a great convenience to have some imaginary person to take the responsibility when the children are disappointed Christmas morning."

A Christmas "Suppose."

We would not change the children's Christmas. But suppose all the grown-up people were to say to one another: "This year, instead of my giving you a present and your giving me a present, let us club together and give our present to some poor child who will not have any Christmas. There are hundreds of them somewhere. Or, if we do not know of such a child, let us give our present to a hospital for children, a home for crippled children, for incurables, for the aged, the blind, the feeble-minded." This to be, of course, in addition to what we usually give to charities at this season. Why could we not try this as an experiment, and see what the result would be?—Christian Register.

Touched His Heart, Not Purse.

A very ragged individual invaded the office of a millionaire one Christmas eve and started describing his woes and sorrows in so graphic a manner that the millionaire was more affected than he had ever been before in his life.

At last, with tears in his eyes, he rang the bell for his servant, and when the latter arrived, said to him in a broken voice: "John, put this poor fellow out at once. He's breaking my heart."

Their Annual Resolve.

Probably the girls are saying the same thing this year that they have said every year in the past: "Well, I'm going to start making presents right away for next Christmas."

"A Soul Above Potatoes"

By PAUL HAMILTON

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"You'll stay in Clifton, won't you, Harney?"

Mrs. Ross looked all motherly anxiety as she addressed her son. With them on the garden seat was Harney's sweetheart, Alma Reeves, whose bright, pretty face reflected the solitude of the older woman.

The son and lover affected quite a lordly air. A week previous his uncle, Mark Lenton, dying, had bequeathed him a neat sum in money and a grocery store he owned in the village.

"Tell you," pronounced the young man, almost grandly, "I've got a soul above potatoes."

"But, Harney, dear," intervened Alma, "you know how pleased you were at first with the idea of being your own master and running a business for yourself."

"That's all right," acknowledged this ambitious favorite of fortune, "but I've met my old chum since then. You know Ned Dallas came down to see me when he learned of my big luck. Well, he's a clerk in a broker's office and he says that with his experience of the money market, if I will supply the capital, he will make a regular Napoleon of finance of me."

Before leaving Harney made an arrangement with Warren Doane, an old clerk in a local store, to place him in charge of the one he had inherited on a basis of equal division of profits. The day after Harney's departure Mr. Doane called at the Ross home.

"I am going to surprise Harney," he told Mrs. Ross, who was an old friend. "He has agreed to let me have full swing with advertising and specialty wrinkles and I am going to build up a grand trade. Alma, I shall need some one to take charge of the cashier's desk. Can I count on you?" and Alma acquiesced in the arrangement and the enterprise started out under most promising auspices.

The young adventurer across the shoals of finance wrote almost daily the first month of his absence. He was all anticipation, ambition, enthusiasm. Then he became less effusive in his epistles and during the second month of his absence only two brief letters reached home.

"We must not expect too much attention from the poor boy, immersed as he is in business cares," Mrs. Ross told Alma, who, in her faith and innocence, pictured "the poor boy" handling the monetary destinies of nations. The merest "All well—love to all," about comprised the substance of subsequent letters from Harney. Meanwhile, Alma and Mr. Doane begrudged no thought or care that would tend to place the despised grocery business upon a firm and growing basis and keep it there. The idea that she was doing something that benefited the business interests of her lover kept Alma animated and glad. How she worked, and planned, and hoped! She had, however, received an inkling from something she overheard between two local business men that Harney "was cutting a wide swath in the city," making daring speculative investments and going beyond his depth.

It was one Saturday night and Mr. Doane had closed the store an hour earlier than usual on account of a rain storm, and Alma had decided to remain for an hour or so and balance the books and was engrossed at her task when the knob of the store door rattled, and then there was a quick, sharp tapping on its glass panel. Alma could make out the visitor against the glare of the street lamp. It was Harney Ross and she uttered a cry of joy as, unlocking the door, she led him into shelter and clung to his arm, uttering fervent words of welcome. Then as he came within the radius of the desk lamp her heart smote her.

"I've tramped it from the trolley, Alma," he said, "I ran out of money and I'm about famished. You've got a neat and inviting layout here," and he went over to a counter which held a tempting array of cheeses, dried beef, hotted ham and some pickle relishes, on the way drawing a liberal handful from the cracker box, and set about eating with an enjoyment that both gratified and saddened Alma, for this returning lover of hers dreadfully suggested the penitent prodigal.

"This is sure a land of plenty," said Harney, with a sigh of satisfaction as he completed a lunch sufficient for two men. "Alma, I've come back with nothing but a hard, costly lesson learned. Those city sharks took my money away from me so easy, I wonder how they did it. I'm through as a financial Napoleon. I'm glad to creep home, humble and glad to come back to the store, and mother—and you."

"And, oh, Harney," jubilated Alma, "such a business the store has done! You poor boy, indeed! How welcome you are!"

"I had a soul above potatoes, you know?" observed Harney with mournful retrospect. "Well, if the flat upstairs is still vacant—"

"Yes, it is, Harney," nodded Alma. "Then it's a quiet wedding as soon as you can get ready. And, after what I've gone through, it will be paradise to settle down in the cozy, modest little home."

"Even if it is right over the potatoes!" laughed Alma, bestowing a kiss that to Harney Ross was more precious than all the money he had lost.

Orchard Information

VARIETIES OF SMALL FRUITS

Ravages of Green Worms Given as Reason for Neglect of Currants and Gooseberries.

Frequent inquiries along this line indicate a continued interest in growing currants and gooseberries.

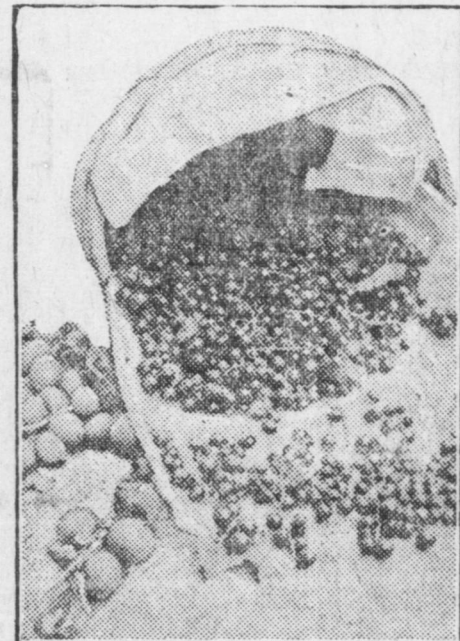
The chief reason they are not more plentifully grown seems to be the ravages of the green worm. This greedy enemy is easily controlled, but it requires prompt attention, and as the attack is made in a very busy season it is apt to be neglected until fighting is useless. All varieties of the currant are most readily propagated from cuttings of the new wood.

The strong and thrifty ones should be selected, and, using a very sharp knife, cut them into six-inch pieces.

The ground where these are planted should be plowed deeply and well pulverized, which encourages a good root growth. We must never (in horticultural operations) overlook the fact that a loose and porous soil is necessary to a healthy root development.

The cuts should, of course, be set big end down, and it matters little if they are set perpendicular or at an angle of 30 degrees. But this is important, only an inch, or one bud, must be left above the surface after the soil has been firmed and settled.

The best time to do this work is the last half of September. Then the lower end of the cut will callous and roots will start before freezing weather. It is then necessary to mulch with an inch of straw or hay or stable litter. This will prevent the heaving out by frost which is liable to ruin half of the crop unless protected. But it is also possible to grow good bushes by taking off the cuttings in April and



Currants Keep on Growing for Years if the Old Wood Is Cut Away.

planting as described above. But this is not as sure as the fall planting, because the callousing and rooting in the fall is just so much time gained, and if a dry period should chance to come before roots have started only a small percentage of the cuts will grow.

If you plant on rich soil and give good culture you will at the end of the first season have sturdy bushes one foot or more in height and sometimes two or three shoots.

Gooseberry bushes are also frequently grown from cuts as described for currants. But this is not the best method. By far the best method to increase the gooseberry is the hilling system. This is an early summer job, say mid June to mid July, according to latitude. Take a single bunch of bushes or a row of them, as the case may be, and bank them up with loose earth.

Make the bank broad enough so that each shoot may retain its natural position and make it high enough so that only three or four inches of the tops will stick out above the bank. Put in earth enough so that after it settles the situation will not be materially changed. If this is well done and the season is reasonably wet every branch will send out roots and you will have as many bushes as you have shoots in the bunch.

These may be taken away in the fall or early spring and planted where they are to remain.

To make assurance doubly sure make the bank very broad so that it cannot dry out. That is all you need. Plenty of moisture and good, thrifty bushes and you can grow gooseberry plants by the thousand.

DAMAGE BY CURRANT WORMS

Often Causes Considerable Defoliation Before Attack Is Noticed—Spraying Is Best.

The currant worm, by its habit of first attacking the lower leaves and those on the inside of the bush, often causes considerable defoliation before the attack is noticed. Three pounds of arsenate of lead to 50 gallons of water as a spray readily controls this pest, and if one makes the practice, at the time of making the first colling moth spray on apples, to apply the same mixture to the currant and gooseberry bushes, getting the spray all through the bushes, the worms may be ignored. In case the injury is unnoticed until the fruit is well grown use hellebore, dusted on or in a spray at the rate of one ounce to two gallons of water.

KNOWS NO NORTH OR SOUTH

Southern Doughboy Who Fought in France Is Strong for the Appellation "Yank."

The monicker, Yank, is going to stick. Just read what this fellow, who was born south of Mason and Dixon's line, writes:

"I come from a line of 'rebels' who boast that they did not surrender. Until I was quite a husky chap I believed that 'd— Yankee' was one word and 'Republican' its synonym, and knew the 'rebel yell' as a varsity boy knows his college yell. Before the war I wore a slouch hat, rode horseback and shot squirrels. I still say cawn bread, think Dixie should be our national air, that Robert E. Lee was the world's greatest general, and Jefferson Davis, sub, the world's greatest statesman.

"But, speaking for myself and a not overly small bunch of fellow 'rebels,' I am exactly satisfied with the honest, hard-fisted, firm-jawed and seemingly inevitable nickname of Yank, and say, with one of the papers back home:

"Let Yank be the official battle name of our boys, and the 'rebel yell' their official battle cry."

In truth, the South and the North are welded.—Stars and Stripes.

Cutting the Nation's Tire Bill.

Forty makes of motor tires were submitted to the bureau of standards by the office of the quartermaster general," writes Thomas H. Uzzell in Everybody's. "They were given laboratory 'durability runs,' after which they were autopsied by the rubber specialists. Their carcasses were cut up and the pieces boiled, stretched. The results were discouraging. Even the best of them seemed to suffer from improper 'toughening.'

"So into their little rubber-mill went the experts, with notes furnished them by the tire manufacturers, and proceeded to make up some tire rubber which had the proper degree of toughness. They succeeded. They passed out the word: 'The trouble is that you makers are not sifting your zinc oxide before mixing it with the rubber compound.'

"The makers began to sift. Better tires resulted. Some \$30,000,000 were saved to the government. And today you are enjoying a cut in your tire bill by getting better tires—a result of that experiment with zinc oxide."

Successful Woman Trapper.

Trapping predatory animals is scarcely the kind of occupation in which a woman might be expected to distinguish herself, even with the great extension of the range of feminine activities to which we have been accustomed lately. Mrs. Ada Tingley of Idaho, is reported, however, by the North-western division of the United States biological survey, to be so successful in this employment that her male rivals are finding it hard to keep up with her records. Her victims are mainly coyotes, bob-cats, wolves, lynxes and mountain lions. At 8:30 every morning Mrs. Tingley mounts her cayuse and rides off to her traps, of which she runs six lines, of 50 each. She uses a fish bait prepared by a secret formula. On occasion she can use a .32 caliber rifle with almost perfect accuracy.

Make Big Gun by Shrinking Liner.

In making a 12-inch gun at an eastern arsenal the liner tube, 36 feet long, was finished and rifled before being shrunk into place. Customarily the liner is fire-bored and rifled after the shrinkage operation, and this is declared to be the first time a gun of such large size was ever assembled after the tube was finished.—Popular Mechanics Magazine.

Johannesburg Now Metropolis.

Johannesburg, with a population of 263,274, is the largest and most cosmopolitan city in South Africa. The tastes of the people are varied, ranging from the simplest requirements on the part of the natives to the most cultivated wants. Music of some form is one of the means of satisfying these wants.

LOOK TO SARDINIA FOR CORK

World Turning to That Island for Production of Material So Much in Demand.

Cork has probably passed olive oil as the leading export of Sardinia, and Commercial Attache A. P. Dennis states that recent production has been so stimulated that a large factory at Tempio is quadrupling its capacity. The bark is stripped from the tree once in nine years. At the Tempio factory the dried bark is first thoroughly steamed and flattened out by hydraulic pressure; it then remains in piles about 90 days, when it is taken out covered with blue mold, and is carefully scraped on both sides and cut into widths varying according to the lengths of the cork stoppers desired. The strips are cut by hand into cubes, a process requiring highly skilled labor, with much care in picking out defective pieces. The corks have been rounded and tapered by high-speed cutting machines, but a new abrasive process is claimed to reduce the waste of this finishing from 20 to 80 per cent. Before the war the fine dust sold in Germany for unknown use for about \$90 a ton. At Terranova the cork is differently utilized, the best being baled in sheets for shipment, while the inferior is coarsely ground and used with a magnesium surface for walls and floor coverings. The war demand was for cork trench mattresses, which were both light and afforded protection from cold and moisture.

Making His Way

By VICTOR REDCLIFFE

(Copyright, 1915, by the Western Newspaper Union.)

"You will give her up?"

"Never! Less now than ever. Uncle Reuben, do not cross me in the desire and duty of my life. Within a month Lois Newton has lost her father, who has left her penniless and homeless. She is the only woman I ever loved. I have made her my wife. Surely—"

"Go!" Old Reuben Morely rose to his feet, pulsating with fury. His trembling finger pointed to the door, his eyes glared. "Go!" he shouted, and his fists clenched. "Out of my heart, out of my home—forever!"

Walton Blair bowed his head in silence. He hurried his steps to escape the anathemas hurled after him by his selfish, irrational relative. The dismissal meant penury.

It was sweet and soothing the solace he received from the bride of an hour. The very fact of his great sacrifice of home, position, heirship, endeared him double fold to the modest, unassuming girl who was ready and willing to go hungry, roofless, accept the heaviest burdens of toil so that she had him by her side.

Reuben Morely, though now recovered with his independent nephew. As to Lois, no claims of preference held her to her native village. Her aunt cared for them in her humble way during the week that they devoted to mapping out their future. Walton had no trade or profession but he had done some clerical work for his uncle and was capable of filling the position of the average office clerk. There was an old friend of his dead father named John Allen, who operated a large manufacturing plant at a town called Lupton. Walton left Lois with her aunt, to be received at Lupton with full consideration and the kindly tender of a position in the bookkeeping department of the great works.

Just as Walton was looking around for modest living quarters, at a critical moment he saved the two little children of the wealthy manufacturer from sure death in an automobile accident, but sustained the serious injury of a broken arm, and the attending surgeon told him that he would not be able to use his right hand for a year to come.

"I have sent for your wife on my own initiative," Mr. Allen told Walton, as he lay under hospital care. "I have also planned to show my lasting gratitude toward you in a way that cannot offend your sense of the fitness of things. You have probably noticed that little oasis of house and garden at the edge of the mill site. It was where I and my family passed the happiest year of our lives. I am going to fix up the place and rent it to you at a nominal price."

"But I shall be unable to pay for it," remonstrated Walton.

"So? Hardly. You may not be in a condition to do any office work but, if you will accept it, you shall become our night watchman. Ten to five you make hourly rounds of the signal boxes and see that all is safe. And if I do not mistake, that charming little wife of yours will not be too proud to sit in the timekeeper's office at seven, twelve, one and five and keep tab on the incomings and outgoings of the workmen."

"Oh, this is ideal!" exuberated Lois, when two weeks later they were installed in the home John Allen had so generously provided. It was in the enchanting garden surrounding the house that they passed many hours of the day, restoring its former brightness as far as they could. Mr. Allen died and they lost a good friend but his son-in-law, who succeeded to the business, accepted the old provision made for the Blairs as a sort of obligation of honor, and for five years the happy and contented married pair remained on duty in their respective positions.

A little golden haired cherub came to them and the pretty home became a haven of delight when Dorothy was old enough to get around. It was just after her fourth birthday when there was a collision on the trolley line that ran directly past the house. Several were injured, among them an old man who with the others was carried into the Blair home, which afforded the nearest shelter. It was found that he was still stunned. When he recovered consciousness he was lying on a couch and little Dorothy, whose father and mother were away at the time, was fanning him and looking startled, but silent.

"Who are you? Whose house is this?" The old man almost frightened Dorothy by starting up suddenly and fixing his eyes upon a framed photograph on the wall. "Who are you?" he asked more gently, scanning the child's face closely.

"I am Dorothy Blair," replied the little one, "and mamma and papa are away, and that picture you stare at so is Uncle Reuben, who is going to come and see me some day, papa says."

"He has come already, dear child!" pronounced Reuben Morely in broken tones, and he was holding the little one on his lap when Walton Blair entered the room.

Reuben Morely, though now recovered, still lingered, and when he went on his way it was all arranged that they were to come to his home and stay there permanently, and cheer the life of the lonely old man with sunshine of tenderness and love.