

THE PUMPKINS' FATE

A CHRISTMAS STORY

FARMER BROWN, Mrs. Brown, and five little Browns were at dinner. It was a few days before Christmas and the question which was disturbing their minds was what to have for dinner on Christmas Day.

A great deal of the talking was being done by the five little Browns, as they were called. They chattered and laughed, and quarreled, too, I fear. Sometimes their father and mother got a word in edgeways.

"Of course, we must have a turkey," said Mrs. Brown.

"And one with lots of wish bones," cried Brownie No. 2, "so we can all wish."

"Ain't we going to have any pie?" chimed in the youngest.

"Well," said Mr. Brown, "I think pumpkin will do. It is the healthiest. This with a smack of his lips.

"Yes, it's the best, too," chimed in the little Brown, who had asked for it, in spite of a stern glance from Father Brown, and a sharp "Hush" from his mother.

"There's a big pumpkin in the barn, that will make a dozen pies," said Mrs. Brown, "beside, three smaller ones."

"Yes," replied Mr. Brown, "I know. As soon as dinner is over we'll go out

ful of jelly," as the poem says of Santa Claus when he laughed.

Did you ever see a pumpkin tremble? No? Nor I, but this one was different from the kinds that grow now, for he trembled and shook like a leaf.

The medium sized pumpkin said to the big one:

"I told you so. You were so proud at being the biggest. Now you see what will happen. You'll be made into pies, like your brother was on Thanksgiving Day."

All the smaller pumpkins laughed at this and the big fellow grew white through his yellow skin.

"Well, I'll make more pies than any of you will," he replied, "and better ones, too; that is, if I don't escape."

"Escape!" exclaimed all the others in a breath. "Why," continued one fellow with a lump on the side of his head, "why, you're so fat that you can't even walk, let alone run."

This settled matters for a few moments, till a sound was heard on the floor below. This set the big fellow all a-tremble again, for he was sure it was the farmer come to make him into pies. But it was a false alarm. It was John, the hired man, talking to his brother, Jim, the gardener. "Yes,"

"Yes, if they make a lantern out of me, I'll just grin and bear it, and the more I grin the more folks will be scared and the more folks are scared the more I will grin."

"If you grin too much," put in the one with the lump, "your mouth will meet at the back of your neck and the top of your head will come off."

"Silence!" shouted the big fellow, jumping up and down. "Silence, all of you. I hear some one coming."

Voices were indeed heard and the farmer entered the barn, talking to himself.

"Why don't you run," piped the little pumpkin, becoming brave, as he heard the farmer preparing to mount the stairs.

"Yes, hurry and escape," said the lumpy one, "why don't you run or roll, as you say you can do so gracefully."

This was too much for the big one, who was in a towering rage, and was jumping up and down like a rubber ball. He was close to the head of the stairs, and as he heard the farmer coming up he gave a big leap, and missing his balance, down he rolled.

Bump—bump—bumpety—thump! Right on to the farmer's head he went, and then fell with a smash on the floor, where he was dashed into a thousand pieces.

The farmer was stunned by the blow for a moment and couldn't think what it was that had hit him. But he turned and saw the wreck of the big pumpkin that was to have served for the Christmas dinner, lying about the floor.

"Dear me! dear me!" he exclaimed, "there goes that biggest pumpkin all

Scaring Santa Claus.

You afraid of Santa Claus? Goodness me, I'm not! I'm lots too big to let him make me scared; 'Sides, a year ago I saw him, right on Christmas Eve. So now he wouldn't scold me if he dared!

Yes, sirree! He's big and fat, like his pictures are:

An' I was sittin' by the chimney, too. When he lit right on the hearth, shook the snow flakes off, An' turned to me, an' says: 'Why, howdy do?'

Nen I run back to the door—so's to lock him in—

"I'm pretty well," I says, an' nen we sat.

An' talked a lot about his work, an' he told me, he did,

'Twas hard to get around when you're so fat.



Bime-by I says, 'I hope you won't forget me Christmas Day.'

Although I'm not the best of children, 'cause

If you should do so, I'm afraid I'd have to tell the boys

That b'lieve in you 'There ain't no Santa Claus!'

My! Didn't he turn pale! He caught holt o' my hand;

Says 'Don't do that, please, for—I like you,

I'll give you heaps o' things you want, 'f you'll b'lieve in me,

An' let the other children do so, too!'

So we made a 'greement, an' I will have some things

At Christmas time, you bet! What's that you say?

Don't b'lieve I ever scared old Santa Claus? Well, now,

Just ask him, if you see him Christmas Day!

The Result of Environment.



"I tell you Santa Claus is tall and thin."

"And I tell you he is short and fat."



The respective papas who explained the situation.—Judge.

What a "Yuletide" Means.

"Yuletide" is, of course, again to the fore. It is a good enough word, euphonious and convenient. But there is no use in investing in syllables with too much glamor of medieval poetry and romance. The cold, concrete fact is that it means the time of yelling, or "yowling," not to say caterwauling. By all means let us have a merry yuletide, but let us not "make Rome howl" too much, nor let our yule festivities become—as the name might imply—a katzenjammer.—New York Tribune.



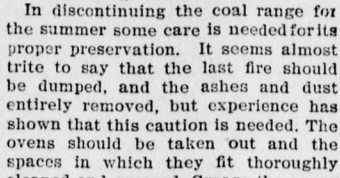
Cysters on the half shell
Consommé
Roast turkey, chestnut stuffing, cranberry sauce,
Pashed potatoes, Creamed celery, Peas,
Chicken pie, Baked sweet potatoes, Turnip, Squash,
Cottage with French dressing, Crackers and cheese,
Plum pudding, Raisins
Nuts Bonbons
Coffee

Decorations Last Till Twelfth Day.

All Christmas decorations, according to the English idea, should be left in position till Twelfth day, and a sprig of holly should remain somewhere in each room till Ash Wednesday.

THE GREAT DESTROYER

SOME STARTLING FACTS ABOUT THE VICE OF INTEMPERANCE.



Drink and Commerce—Why the American Workingman is Said to be Superior to the English and German—Alcohol Dulls the Brain and Prevents Precision.

The article given below has appeared in papers in Belgium, France and England, and was sent from this country for publication in Europe by M. Rudolph Meyhofer, who came from Brussels as an international delegate to the Young Men's Christian Association jubilee in Boston. He stayed long enough to study industrial and educational conditions in the leading States, including the question of American trade supremacy.

England and other European countries are anxiously asking for the causes of the commercial supremacy of the United States. A recent number of the English edition of the "Review of Reviews" says:

Cassier's Magazine (an English periodical) contains an interesting series of short articles by some of the most prominent engineers and business men in the United States upon the question of American competition.

Most of the writers agree in saying that the American workman is the chief agent in enabling American manufacturers to take first place in the world. Walter MacFarland, of Pittsburgh, gives one important reason for this. He says:

"It appears that the American workmen are much better timekeepers and far less given to dissipation than those of Great Britain. One of the best firms of British shipbuilders recently stated that there is a loss of time amounting to nearly twenty per cent, due largely to drunkenness. If anything approaching these figures is true, there can be no surprise that (English) firms open to competition from well managed American works should have a hard time."

In inquiring as to the cause of this greater sobriety of the American, the fact appears that twenty years ago business interests in the United States paid no attention to the effect of the beverage use of alcohol or of tobacco on working ability. About that time the now almost universal study of physiology, which includes with other laws of the body those which relate to the nature and effects of alcoholic drinks and other narcotics, began to be a legal requirement for all pupils in the public schools of this country.

During the last ten or fifteen years the children have been carrying from the schools to the homes of the 75,000,000 people of the United States the story of the evil nature and bad effects of alcoholic drinks and other narcotics.

As a result of the diffusion of this knowledge the railroad of the United States now almost universally refuses employment to men who drink, whether on or off duty.

Carroll D. Wright's Labor Bureau investigations show that more than seventy-five per cent of the employers of skilled labor in the United States require total abstinence of their employes, and fifty per cent of the employers of unskilled labor demand the same. These requirements, the cordial acquiescence in them by the employed, and the commercial supremacy which this knowledge has secured to the United States, have been promoted by the truth taught by the school that alcoholic drinks injure working ability.

The different reception given by workmen to the employers' demand for abstinence where scientific temperance is not taught in the public school is well illustrated in the following incident:

The manager of the Borsig factory in Germany recently posted an order forbidding the workmen to bring into the factory beer or other spirituous liquors or to drink the same during working hours. The workmen, numbering over 1000, held a meeting, and objected to this order. The next day they conspicuously carried in their beer.

During the excitement caused by the order a pamphlet appeared, by an old factory official, who affirmed that the use of alcoholic drinks was detrimental to the laborers' own interest. He referred to the cleverness and sobriety of the American workmen, which makes them able to do very exact and precise work, which he says is not possible in German industry, because of the drinking habits of the laboring classes.

The American workman does not resent the employer's demand for abstinence, because he has learned, often from his child in public school, that alcohol not only dulls the brain, but weakens that nerve control of muscle that is necessary to the precision essential for fine work.

The nomination for knighthood of Sir Hiram Maxim, the American inventor, was one of the last official acts of Queen Victoria. In an article in the World's Work Sir Hiram furnishes indirect testimony to the same point. While describing the results of the English trade unions, he says:

"The English workman spends a great part of his earnings in beer, tobacco and betting; he has no ambition." Of course not, for beer in dulling the brain dulls ambition. "The American workman," he says, "wishes to get on; he accomplishes a great deal more work in a day than any other workman in the world."

England is beginning to see the difference in results between occasional talks by temperance advocates to school children and the systematic graded public school study of this topic required by law in the United States.

Drink Up His Fortune.

M. Courtinaud's uncle died in April and left him \$1400. Deighted with so much money he considered various plans of spending it. He was afraid to place it in the bank, and he had no confidence in commercial ventures. Not a day of racing, he finally decided to drink it up. And at the end of five months succeeded. His average was 85 a day. At last he bought a bottle of alcohol for forty cents, drank it and then shot himself. He left a request to be buried in a cellar at the side of the barrels.—Western Advocate.

Alcoholics Not Always Drunkards.

It is not necessary to carry the use of alcohol to the extent as to show the phenomena characteristic of intoxication to produce the effects of alcoholism. Alcoholics are not necessarily drunkards. The holics are inebriable, excessive drinkers, but their number is after all quite insignificant when compared with the immense multitude of those whose systems get poisoned by the daily consumption of moderate quantities of liquors of which alcohol forms the basis.

A Noble Work.

The Christian home for intemperate men in New York recently celebrated its twenty-fourth anniversary. During the past twenty-four years it has cared for 7000 intemperate men, of whom it is declared that fully one-half are now living sober and honorable lives. A new and larger home is to be erected at Mount Vernon.

The Crusade in Brief.

Sunday Closing is strictly enforced by order of the Mayor at Hampton, Va.

According to insurance statistics tectotalers may expect seventeen years more life than drinkers.

The average stature of the Swedes, the tallest people in the world, has steadily increased since 1841. The cause is believed to be partly due to the decrease in drunkenness.

Iowa school teachers, assembled in State convention, have petitioned the Legislature to prohibit the sale of liquor within five miles of any institution of learning supported wholly or partially by the State.

TEN Christmas Presents, all new and fine:
Polly dropped the dolly—then there were 9.

NINE Christmas Presents, some small, some great:
Baby tore the picture-book—then there were 8.

EIGHT Christmas Presents; Rob and Dick and Bevan
Together broke the rocking-horse—then there were 7.

SEVEN Christmas Presents; Tommy,
cutting sticks,
Lost his shiny jack-knife—then there were 6.

SIX Christmas Presents; Jimmy
went to drive,
The wind blew his cap away—then there were 5.

FIVE Christmas Presents; through
an open door
The pussay-kitten ran away—then there were 4.

FOUR Christmas Presents, beautiful to see:
The engine burst its boiler—then there were 3.

THREE Christmas Presents;
little sister Sue,
Overwound the music-box—
then there were 2.

TWO Christmas Presents;
Dicky went to run,
Fell and smashed his
watch-glass—then there was 1.

ONE Christmas Present: with laughter and fun
We ate up all the candy—then there was 0.

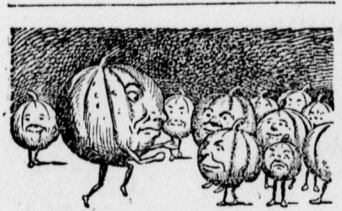
There were ten Christmas Presents,
when the day dawned bright;
Not one of them was left on Christmas night.

HARRIOT BREWER STERLING.
—Youth's Companion.

to the barn, and see which one we will need. That big one is too large, I think, but we will see."

As soon as the meal was over the whole family, Mr. Brown and Mrs. Brown, and the five small Brownies, all trooped out to the barn, to pick out the pumpkin that was to be converted into pies for the Christmas dinner. Up the stairs they went to the hay loft, where lay the four big, yellow pumpkins, all ripe and mellow.

After a long discussion as to the needs of the family in the pie line, Mr. and Mrs. Brown decided to use the biggest one, so Mr. Brown picked it up and set it at the head of the stairs.



JUMPING AND SHAKING HIS FIST,

where it would be ready to be brought to the kitchen when wanted.

Then all the Browns, Mr. Brown and Mrs. Brown and the five little Brownies, solemnly filed downstairs—Mr. Brown to see to the chickens, Mrs. Brown to her sewing and the five small Brownies to play.

As soon as the family had gone the big pumpkin which had been chosen began to tremble all over, "like a bowl-

he was saying, "we must have some fun on Christmas Eve. Let's make a jack o' lantern." The pumpkins were all attention.

"The very thing," exclaimed Jim, "and there's half a dozen pumpkins or so up stairs in the loft. I saw them the other day when I was looking for a rake."

"That's so," replied John; "one is a big one, I remember. He'll make a fine lantern."

"Well, I'll go get a knife," said Jim, "and you hunt up a pole to put it on. We'll scare the whole village; that's what we'll do," and they ran out into the yard.

Upstairs all was still as a mouse, while the men were talking, but as soon as they left a great commotion sprang up.

"A jack-o-lantern," exclaimed the medium-sized pumpkin to the big one, "not even a decent pie. Ha, ha, ha."

The others all joined in the laugh, while the poor doomed one could hardly contain himself. In fact, he almost split with rage, jumping up and down and shaking his fist at the others till the little one hid himself for protection.

"And what will become of all of you?" shouted the big one, "if they make a jack-o-lantern of me?"

The laughing stopped.

"Why, two of you will be taken to make pies, and you'll be boiled and mashed and baked and then eaten, while I will enjoy myself scaring people, just as I am scaring you now." In spite of what he said, he didn't look as though he would enjoy it much, but he continued:

to smithereens. This barn is getting so old and rickety, I ought to have known better than to have put that pumpkin at the top of the stairs, where it could be jarred down."

"Well, then, there's nothing to do but to take two of the smaller ones," and suiting the action to the word he walked up stairs and carried off the two bigger pumpkins, leaving the little fellow all alone, trembling with fear, yet thanking his stars at his escape.

His joy, however, was short-lived. An instant later the hired man came upstairs.

When he saw only the one small pumpkin he scratched his head a moment and then said:

"Well! well! So the old man has left only the little one after all. He must like pies! There were four here this morning." So picking up the little pumpkin, who was fainting from fright, he carried him off.

The next day all that remained of the four pumpkins were a dozen pies, a jack-o-lantern and a lot of smashed pumpkin on the ash heap.—Mortimer Forsythe, in the Brooklyn Eagle.



Decorations Last Till Twelfth Day.

All Christmas decorations, according to the English idea, should be left in position till Twelfth day, and a sprig of holly should remain somewhere in each room till Ash Wednesday.