



# The Christmas Home Song

by Wilbur D. Nesbit

The heart is singing home again—the heart is singing home. Wherever up and down the world the restless feet may roam. When comes the time of holly-leaves, of fellowship and mirth, That marks the glory of the day the Christ-child came to earth— Then all about and all around, on mountain, plain, and foam, The heart is singing home again—the heart is singing home.

The wander-love! It leads us on beneath the dreaming star, It beckons us with tempting hands from many lands afar, It lures us where the lotos dream is filled with rare delight, It guides us where the silent snows gleam through the endless night, But now, to all who wander far beneath the sky's broad dome, The heart is singing home again—the heart is singing home.

It brings a picture of the past—a picture fair and free— A picture of the good old home—wherever it may be, And o'er the waves it sings to us, across the hill and plain, Until the soul within us seems to echo the refrain. Wherever up and down the world the restless feet may roam, The heart is singing home again—the heart is singing home.

To every man in every place there comes the haunting song, It rises like a glory chant, in cadence full and strong. To him who sleeps upon his arms before the tireless foe, And he who bends above his desk, the coaxing strains must know. For sweeter than the clover-tang that drips from honey comb, The heart is singing home again—the heart is singing home.

## INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 24

MALACHI REBUKES JUDAH.

LESSON TEXT—Malachi 2:1-4. MEMORY VERSES—3:16, 17. GOLDEN TEXT—1. "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts."—Mal. 2:7. 2. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."—Luke 2:11.

There is no certainty as to the definite time when Malachi uttered his prophecies, because no data is given in the book, and the sins which he sought to reform were present throughout the whole period of Ezra and Nehemiah, from 458 through the rest of the century. Most place him soon after Nehemiah's second coming to Jerusalem, between 432 and 430.

He is plain spoken, and direct, without high eloquence, or supreme poetic power, but abounding in effective similes, metaphors and imagery which hit the mark, and do the work. What a London paper says of a distinguished man's straightforward speeches applies well to the sermons of Malachi: "A sound and healthy gospel doubly welcome because the world is waking to the consciousness of intellectual and moral hunger which only these truths can satisfy."

If we read the later chapters of Nehemiah and compare the sins and evils which Nehemiah labored to reform, with the sins and evils which Malachi denounces, it will be seen that both are laboring for the same ends, and realize the same necessity of reform. God was dishonored, and religion made a mere form and farce, by offering mean things for sacrifices, as polluted bread, and lame and sick animals, by refusing to do the simplest service in the temple without pay, by refusing to pay tithes for the support of the temple worship, by intermarrying with the heathen. In all these things they broke the divine law; they showed that their minds were all wrong.

One of the peculiar glories of the Bible is that from the very beginning its golden age is in the future, not, as in other ancient nations, in the past. And as the golden age must have a maker, God's revelation soon brings into view the one, the Messiah who alone can make the age of gold which is the Kingdom of Heaven. Isaiah tells us that "unto you a child is born, unto you a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

In the last book of the Old Testament, about 400 years before Christ was born, the last prophet brings the hope and ideal and goal in the person of the Messiah, Christ, the Jesus who was born on the true Christmas day. Behold I, God, will send my messenger, one coming in God's name, and bearing a divine message, whose work shall be to prepare the way before me, the coming of God himself. This messenger, interpreted by our Lord himself on two occasions, was one who should come in the spirit and power of Elijah, doing the same work, rebuking sin, denouncing all wrongs, calling men to repentance, awakening the conscience.

It is possible that these words had a partial fulfillment in Nehemiah, a foreshadowing on a smaller scale, of John the Baptist who completely fulfilled the prophecy. Nehemiah's reforms were a part of the preparation for the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven, and fixed the eyes of the people on the great ideal toward which they were slowly moving.

There is a natural connection between religion, moral, generous giving, devotion to God, on the one hand, and a general condition of prosperity, on the other. They tend to cultivate those higher moral and spiritual qualities which are the source of material civilization, and which are the great enemy to the vices that are the source of poverty. But especially do they transfigure all earthly things, and enhance their value, and bring into life the love and joy of heaven. There is no greater prosperity than the privilege of having some part in the elevation of man, in the coming of God's kingdom, and in the blessing of final triumph, and in the blessing, well done, good and faithful!

Suppose we make two mans of the world on the plan furnished by the United States census to show the degree in which ignorance, certain diseases, and many other things prevail, by means of higher and darker shades. On one map we will note the countries where the purest Christianity prevails, by white. A darker shade will mark the more imperfect forms, and then let the shades grow darker and darker through Mohammedanism, and the various forms of heathenism till we come to the blackness of the lowest fetishism.

## Religion as Satisfaction

By Rev. Hugh T. Kerr, Pastor of Fullerton Avenue Presbyterian Church, Chicago

TEXT—One thing thou shalt do.—Mark 10:21. This is a character study in black and white. The picture is drawn by a determined hand and there is no hint of hesitation. Stroke follows stroke until the complete portrait is before us. The story is as complete as it is concise. It begins in comedy and ends in tragedy. The young man, impulsive, optimistic and temperamentally enthusiastic, burries breathlessly into the presence of Jesus with the long hushed question of his heart upon his lips, and then when our hopes for him are highest we behold him making what Dante calls "The Great Refusal" and returns to his old life as ill at ease and with his heart as hungry as ever.

Let us not misunderstand this young man. He was no comedian trifling with sacred things and then casting them thoughtlessly away from him. He was intense, enthusiastic, a nobleman at heart, and when Jesus looked upon him he fell in love with him. He had climbed the ladder of lawful ambition, and while still a young man was in the council of the elders. Honor did not spoil the humility of his heart, and in the presence of the Master he bowed in graceful reverence. Richly endowed with worldly wealth, he was still more richly endowed with a nature rich in the virtues that make for righteousness.

Jesus was intensely interested in this young man. We read that "He loved him." I think he was interested in him on account of his youth, Christ and young manhood, as has been said, are as magnet and steel. This young man had all his life to live. The years with all their possible achievements were still before him. Christ was interested in this young man because he was rich. Riches and wealth meant power, and power is another name for responsibility. Jesus spoke hard words about rich men and about rich men who loved money, who trusted in money, who because of their money forgot about God. Jesus, however, did not despise a man because he was rich. He loved the rich young ruler. It was a rich man who begged his lifeless body as it hung unmet upon the cross. Two rich men took his dead body and wrapped it tenderly in the choicest of linen and laid it away in a costly sepulcher.

Jesus knows and recognizes no class. Riches and poverty to him are but the tools with which character fashions circumstances. "The man of the good for a's" that it is written of him that "he made his grave with the rich in his death." There is pathos and tragedy in that sentence. "Must the Master wait till death" to dwell in the battlements of the rich? May he not make his abode with the rich in his life? Let the rich man open the door and Christ will enter in to share his lonely isolation, and will satisfy the hunger of his heart.

Jesus was interested in this young man because he was moral. His life was pure and his hands clean. For him a good name was better than great riches. He followed the quest of the best. He was one of the Knights of the Round Table, who had pledged his honor to "live sweet life of purest chastity." To gain the love and admiration of Jesus it is not necessary to wander off into forbidden paths of sin, and to run the gauntlet of a dissipated life. For all young men who are fighting sin and the devil and carrying a clean conscience in the midst of contaminating circumstances Jesus has a warm welcome.

Jesus was interested in this young man, who, with his youth, his position, his influence, his purity of life, was still dissatisfied and came with the cry of a wonderer "What lack I yet?" This is a wonderful thing that he should have so much and yet not have enough.

Jesus answered the young man's question by a command. "Come, follow me." In a great book recently published there is this striking sentence. "If the gods went their way and were satisfied, and the beasts went their way and were satisfied, the unrest of man can only mean that he is not rightly related to his present life." Now, is not that just the truth? How can a man be rightly related to this present life in which he is set if he leaves out God and refuses to become related to the eternal realities that lie all around him, in the world of truth and beauty and goodness? Are youth, and worldly honor, and riches the only things that life needs to be related to? Out of all these human relationships the cry is heard. "What lack I yet?" And Jesus responds promptly. "You lack the love and the light of the presence of the God of truth."

The human heart is homeless until it finds the Heavenly Father. "Find God, and you find rest and peace and satisfaction. Religion is satisfaction. Religion completes life and perfects love, and only in the presence of God is the soul satisfied. No sacrifice is too great to gain this great treasure. "Sell all that you have and give to the poor if necessary." Let nothing hold you back from following after Christ in the life of self-surrender and loving service.

ed by the Eye That Never Sleeps. "I will guide thee with mine eye." Ps. 138:8. When we are in the dark, God can and will see for us. When we are a friend who can see, a blind man may walk as safely as any one. We have often seen an led about through crowded streets by his wife, and he always had a happy contented smile on his face, for he knew that every step taken was being directed by one who loved him, and who could plainly see the way. It would be that way with us if we would only trust more in the Eyes of the Lord for guidance and not grope along alone in doubt and misgiving.

## Temperance

SMALL DOSES ARE INJURIOUS

Maintained That Temperance or Self-Control is Promoted by Total Abstinence From Alcohol. The immediate effects of small doses of alcohol on the nervous system have only been demonstrated comparatively recently, says an English temperance publication. Prof. Victor Horsley has lectured on the action of alcohol on the brain and nervous system, and has quoted the experiments of Kraepelin, who found the reaction time (i. e., the time between observing a signal and indicating that it had been observed) distinctly diminished by alcohol although not consciously so to the person affected. These have been confirmed by Dr. Kellogg and others. Dr. Schmidt and Dr. Furer have published elaborate tables of numerous experiments on the action of alcohol upon mental operations, such as learning by heart, associations, requiring chiefly automatic movements, were at first rendered easier, yet these were soon done with increasing difficulty, while the higher associations were, from the first, enfeebled.

The increase of automatic actions is no proof of stimulation. All such actions are performed more readily when the attention is not fixed upon them. It is as would be the case were a narcotic to affect a horse and his rider, but to affect the rider first. As the grasp of the reins relaxed the horse might start off more quickly and more erratically, depending upon surrounding circumstances, because free from the check and control of his master. As the influence extended gradually to him his movements would become increasingly sluggish. The excitement of the drinker is the result of surrounding stimuli, not checked by the judgment and will, which are at once enfeebled. Hence, it is maintained that temperance, i. e., self-control, is promoted by total abstinence from drugs such as alcohol, which weakens it.

Other functions of the nervous system have been proved to be impaired by alcohol, even in small doses, such as one or two teaspoonfuls, for instance, the sensibility of touch, the acuteness of vision and hearing, and the muscular sense. In all these cases the subject is perfectly unaware of any injurious alteration, and it can only be demonstrated by sensitive and accurate tests. It may be truly said that the devil in solution is a devil of dissolution, disease and death. The immediate effects of small doses can be shown to be injurious by precise observations, but the effect is cumulative and becomes obvious after several years of continuance.

It is this fact of unquestionable harm done by alcohol without warning to the drinker, both immediately and after years of moderate drinking, through chronic degeneration of tissues which render the advice to take it moderately so dangerous, apart altogether from the real risk of acquired craving for excess.

## MAN IS HELD RESPONSIBLE

Saloonist Could Be Put Out of Business if Compelled to Pay for Damages He Does.

Under the striking headline "The Ox That Was Wont to Gorn," the Advance (Congregationalist, Chicago) presents an editorial on the relation of present aspects of the saloon business to certain Mosaic rulings. The following is taken from the article:

Under the Mosaic law the owner of an ox "that was wont to gorn" was responsible for the damage he did, if that owner had knowledge that the animal was vicious and failed to restrain him. The ox was to be killed in any case and his flesh was not to be eaten, which was a testimony of the law to the sacredness of human life. If the ox killed another, the owner's life was forfeited, but he had an opportunity to redeem his life by the payment of a ransom.

Under this specific Mosaic statute we have the broad principle that a man is responsible for the mischief he either does or allows to be done when he might prevent it, and this principle is pretty generally embodied in the statutes of all civilized countries. But we make an exception of the mischiefs done by the saloon evil, which are on the whole greater than those resulting from any other form of vice. But there are indications that public virtue is strengthening in regard to this evil, and that the time may come when the saloonist will be compelled to quit his so-called business by being compelled by the law to make compensation for the damages daily resulting from the ordinary conduct of it.

A case recently came before the supreme court of the state of Indiana, in which a wife sued the man who sold her husband the drink by which he became intoxicated, and in the intoxication committed a crime for which he was sentenced to prison for life. The court, reversing the decision of the lower court, held that under the existing law, dealers in intoxicating drinks are responsible in money for the damages done to families by the loss of the support of those who become criminals in the use of drink. In the case referred to it was held that the wife could collect damages, if she could prove who sold her husband the liquor. This principle was embodied in a statute in Ohio years ago, called the Graham law, but, as we remember the case, the law was repealed before it had had a fair trial.

The difficulties of legal control of the drink evil are very great; but vast gain will be made, if we shall be able to throw the burden of supporting the women and children made helpless by the drunkenness of husbands and fathers, upon the shoulders of those who make profit out of the misfortunes and sufferings of the innocent and defenceless.

## A FEDERAL HEALTH BOARD.

It is gratifying to note that the bill for the creation of a federal health board will not be allowed to pass without a protest. Reports of organized resistance come from all parts of the country, and it may be that the opposition will soon be sufficiently solidified to defeat a project that promises infinite mischief for the community, and suffering and injustice for the individual.

The proposal is based upon those specious claims that are notoriously hard to controvert. If a federal health board were to confine its activities to the promulgation of salutary advice upon hygienic matters, to the abatement of quackery, and to the purity of drugs, it might be possible to say much in its favor, although it would still be difficult to say that such an organization is needed. But we know that it will attempt to do far more than this, seeing that its adherents have loudly proclaimed their intentions. Indeed, there is no secrecy about them. It is confidently expected that the board will consist of advocates of one school of medicine only and that the methods of that school will be not only recommended, but enforced upon the nation. Indeed a board that was in any way representative of the medical profession as a whole would be stultified by its own disagreements. Outside the domain of simple hygiene, for which we need no federal board at all, there is no single point of medical practice upon which allopaths, homeopaths, eclectics and osteopaths could be in union. Any board that could be devised by the wit of man must be composed of representatives of one school only, and this means that all other schools are branded as of an inferior caste, even though nothing worse happened to them. And something worse would happen to them if we are to establish a school of medicine. If we are to assert that the government of the United States favors one variety of practice more than others, why not establish also a sect of religion and bestow special authorities upon Baptists, Methodists and Episcopalians? An established school of religious conjecture seems somewhat less objectionable than an established sect of pseudo-scientific conjecture.

Those who suppose that a federal board of health would have no concern with individual rights are likely to find themselves undeceived. It is for the purpose of interfering with individual rights that the proposal has been made. We need no special knowledge of conditions to be aware that what may be called unorthodox methods of healing have made and inroads into the orthodox. Homeopathy claims a vast number of adherents who are just as well educated and just as intelligent as those who adhere to the older school. Osteopathy, eclecticism, and half a dozen other methods of practice are certainly not losing ground. Beyond them is the vast and increasing army of those who may be classed under the general and vague name of mental healers. Those who are addicted to any of these forms of unorthodoxy need have no doubt as to the purposes of the federal health board. Those purposes are to make it difficult for them to follow their particular fads and fancies, to lead them, and if necessary to drive them, from medical unorthodoxy to medical orthodoxy.

Now the Argonaut holds no brief for any of the excesses and the superstitions connected with the care of the body in which this age is so rife. But it does feel concerned for the preservation of human liberty and for the rights of the individual to doctor himself in any way he pleases so long as he does not indubitably threaten the health of the community. He may take large doses or small ones, or no doses at all; he may be massaged, anointed with oil, or prayed over, just as the whim of the moment may dictate, and probably it makes no particle of difference which he does. But he has the right to choose, just as he chooses the color of his necktie or the character of his underclothing. It is not a matter in which any wise government will seek to interfere. This is precisely the liberty that the health board intends to take from him. Orthodox medicine, conscious of its losses, is trying to buttress itself by federal statute, to exalt allopathy to the status of a privileged caste, and to create an established school of medicine just as some other countries have allowed themselves to create an established school of religion. It is for the common sense of the community to rebuke that effort and to repel an unwarranted invasion upon elementary human rights.—San Francisco Argonaut.

## A Drain of the Company.

On his way home from the theater, where he had seen a performance of "Othello," Bobby was unusually quiet. "Didn't you enjoy the play," his grandfather asked at last. "Oh, yes, very much," replied Bobby. "But, grandpa, there's one thing I don't quite understand. Does the black man kill a lady every night?"—Youth's Companion.

Natural Deduction. "Papa, are lawyers always bad-tempered?" "No, daughter; why do you ask that?" "Because I read so much in the papers about their cross-examinations."

Kindred Spirits. "Lady," said Plodding Pete, "I ain't had a square meal in two days." "Well," said the resolute woman, as she turned the dog loose, "neither has Towser, so I know you'll excuse him."

Its Status. "Our congress is the finest legislative body going." "No, the British house of commons is, and I can prove it." "How so?" "Why, you must admit the house of commons is a business connection."

A Business Connection. Messenger Boy—Who's the swell guy we was talkin' to, Jimmy? Newboy—Aw, him and me's walked together for years. He's the editor of one o' my papers.—Life.

## Johnny's Christmas Journal

By Wilbur D. Nesbit

6 a. m.—Got up as was pickin' things in my nite close an was pickin' things of the Crismas tree wen pa an ma cum down an sed for guthess saik boy yule catch yure deeth of cotted; go bak to bed untill it is time to get up.

6:15 a. m.—Put my close on an went down stairs agin an et ten stikes of candy an two oranges befor pa cum down an sed he wud whip me if I didnt go bak to bed an let him get sum slepe after hein up so late the nite befor, but ma sed Jon doant destroy the Crismas joy for our boy; let him alone.

6:30 a. m.—I hav got a ralerode track an trane an a hookin ladder an a set of dum bells, an injun clubs an a air gun an a pistol that shutes arrers at a target an a histry book an a pare of mittens an sevral sacks an boxes of candy an hav et sum moar.

7:30 a. m.—Pa an ma kep astin me

look out an fergot the bath tub an the watter run over an the coelin of the parlor fell axidently an grandpa an pa an unkel Joe an ma was axidently hurt so the dokter is bak agin an the plummor is comin if they can fined him.

7 p. m.—Gramma and grampa and unkel Joe has gone home an pa is settin down stairs with his arm in a sling where the plasterin brook it an he sez when it gets well he will tend to my case o it is a sad world for 'Hitel boys that is full of happiness one moment an filled with greet the nex an our ook has quit because I axidently shot an arrer from my pistol into her ear an scarret her so she dropped a pan of dishes that wuz mas beed chiny an brook them all up an she has quit an the dre engines cum

why I didnt eat no brekfast an pa sed he hot lie ben etin candy already in spite of his orders that I shudent, but ma sed no doubt the excitement of Crismas was enuf to take away my appetite.

8 a. m.—Grandpa an gramma-an unkel Joe is here. They brot me sum moar candy an an injun sute with a tommyhawk an a torpedier hote, that winds up and sales in the watter.

8 a. m.—Pa showed me how to run the trane on the track an broke the engin, but he sez it can be fixed. Unkel Joe giv me a dollar an I went out an bot sum burd shot to shute in my air gun an sum candy.

10 a. m.—It beent cold if you dont sit rite beside the parlor winder where I broke it axdently shuttin with my air gun. Pa threttened to lick me, but grampa sed boys will be boys an he was wota than me when he was my alge.

12 noon.—It wuz too bad about gramma, but I cudent help it. I wuz playin injun on the trale and Missus Perkins from nex dore wuz here and she wuz talkin with gramma an I run up behine them an tommyhawked gramma an Missus Perkins an then started to scarp Missus Perkins, but jest her here cum off an she looked

## Rhyme of the Man Shopper

By Wilbur D. Nesbit

It is a pallid, weary man: He stoopeth one of three. By thy white cheek and blazing eye, Now, wherefore stoopedst me?"

"Oh, sir!" the worried man exclaimed, "I fain would have thee tell Where I may find within this store The things they have to sell."

For it was in a Christmas store That all of this took place. 'Twas there the frenzied man was seen With hopeless, troubled face.

The stranger man would tain be gone From him of haggard eye; Besides, the aisle was crowded with The folks who would go by.

"I pray thee," said the stranger man, "Go chase thyself from me." "Ah, sir," the other man implored— "A woeful wight was he."

"A tortoise comb, a pair of skates, A whole cartload of toys, Some things beside for all my friends, And for their girls and boys."

"And here I am; and I am here; The things—oh, where are they? For male and female clerks conspire To hide from me the way."

"But this I know, and this alone: Three aisles across, then back, Four counters down, one counter up, Then double on your track."

"The elevator takes you next, To land you otherwhere, And when you weary of its crowd, You amble down the stairs."

"But still—but still, my honest friend, You do not reach the goal. 'Tis always 'on the other side,' It is, upon my soul!"

"So here am I, and I am here, And you are standing by, I care not where the things may be, But where the dunces am I?"

They led him to an ambulance, Although he did resist, And now in padded cell he cons His Christmas shopping list.

He shrieks upon the midnight clear, And on the noontid air: "Three aisles across, two counters back, Then up and down the stair!"

Oh, foolish men, take heed of this, Before you go to shop, And when you reach the outer door, Tear up your list and stop.

## Johnny's Christmas Journal

By Wilbur D. Nesbit

6 a. m.—Got up as was pickin' things in my nite close an was pickin' things of the Crismas tree wen pa an ma cum down an sed for guthess saik boy yule catch yure deeth of cotted; go bak to bed untill it is time to get up.

6:15 a. m.—Put my close on an went down stairs agin an et ten stikes of candy an two oranges befor pa cum down an sed he wud whip me if I didnt go bak to bed an let him get sum slepe after hein up so late the nite befor, but ma sed Jon doant destroy the Crismas joy for our boy; let him alone.

6:30 a. m.—I hav got a ralerode track an trane an a hookin ladder an a set of dum bells, an injun clubs an a air gun an a pistol that shutes arrers at a target an a histry book an a pare of mittens an sevral sacks an boxes of candy an hav et sum moar.

7:30 a. m.—Pa an ma kep astin me

look out an fergot the bath tub an the watter run over an the coelin of the parlor fell axidently an grandpa an pa an unkel Joe an ma was axidently hurt so the dokter is bak agin an the plummor is comin if they can fined him.

7 p. m.—Gramma and grampa and unkel Joe has gone home an pa is settin down stairs with his arm in a sling where the plasterin brook it an he sez when it gets well he will tend to my case o it is a sad world for 'Hitel boys that is full of happiness one moment an filled with greet the nex an our ook has quit because I axidently shot an arrer from my pistol into her ear an scarret her so she dropped a pan of dishes that wuz mas beed chiny an brook them all up an she has quit an the dre engines cum

why I didnt eat no brekfast an pa sed he hot lie ben etin candy already in spite of his orders that I shudent, but ma sed no doubt the excitement of Crismas was enuf to take away my appetite.

8 a. m.—Grandpa an gramma-an unkel Joe is here. They brot me sum moar candy an an injun sute with a tommyhawk an a torpedier hote, that winds up and sales in the watter.

8 a. m.—Pa showed me how to run the trane on the track an broke the engin, but he sez it can be fixed. Unkel Joe giv me a dollar an I went out an bot sum burd shot to shute in my air gun an sum candy.

10 a. m.—It beent cold if you dont sit rite beside the parlor winder where I broke it axdently shuttin with my air gun. Pa threttened to lick me, but grampa sed boys will be boys an he was wota than me when he was my alge.

12 noon.—It wuz too bad about gramma, but I cudent help it. I wuz playin injun on the trale and Missus Perkins from nex dore wuz here and she wuz talkin with gramma an I run up behine them an tommyhawked gramma an Missus Perkins an then started to scarp Missus Perkins, but jest her here cum off an she looked

## Rhyme of the Man Shopper

By Wilbur D. Nesbit

It is a pallid, weary man: He stoopeth one of three. By thy white cheek and blazing eye, Now, wherefore stoopedst me?"

"Oh, sir!" the worried man exclaimed, "I fain would have thee tell Where I may find within this store The things they have to sell."

For it was in a Christmas store That all of this took place. 'Twas there the frenzied man was seen With hopeless, troubled face.

The stranger man would tain be gone From him of haggard eye; Besides, the aisle was crowded with The folks who would go by.

"I pray thee," said the stranger man, "Go chase thyself from me." "Ah, sir," the other man implored— "A woeful wight was he."

"A tortoise comb, a pair of skates, A whole cartload of toys, Some things beside for all my friends, And for their girls and boys."

"And here I am; and I am here; The things—oh, where are they? For male and female clerks conspire To hide from me the way."

"But this I know, and this alone: Three aisles across, then back, Four counters down, one counter up, Then double on your track."

"The elevator takes you next, To land you otherwhere, And when you weary of its crowd, You amble down the stairs."

"But still—but still, my honest friend, You do not reach the goal. 'Tis always 'on the other side,' It is, upon my soul!"

"So here am I, and I am here, And you are standing by, I care not where the things may be, But where the dunces am I?"

They led him to an ambulance, Although he did resist, And now in padded cell he cons His Christmas shopping list.

He shrieks upon the midnight clear, And on the noontid air: "Three aisles across, two counters back, Then up and down the stair!"

Oh, foolish men, take heed of this, Before you go to shop, And when you reach the outer door, Tear up your list and stop.