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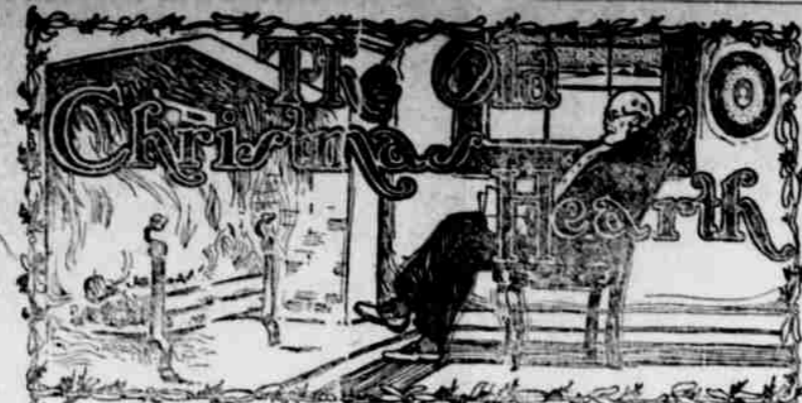
Illustration on left is full size of ladies' style; on right, gentlemen's style.

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I LEAN back in my arm-chair as the snow-flakes soft and white
Clothe the hillsides and the valleys in habitments of white.
While the cutting winds of winter send their music far and wide,
Disputing with the mellow bells the joys of Christmas-tide;
I seem to catch the echoes of the songs they sing on high,
Beyond the mystic beauty of December's vaulted sky,
And again is told the story of the Christ-child's humble birth,
As I sit and, eager, listen by the dear old Christmas hearth.

THERE'S music in the steeples, there are chimes deep in the bells,
And the wild winds mingle gladly with the holy Christmas bells,
And I look beyond the window on the beauty of the snow,
Recalling some sweet Christmases in life's fair "long ago";
What scenes come floating back along the winding ways of Time,
Like the fragrance of the flowers of an ever-cherished clime;
Till my chamber fills with faces and I hear the sounds of mirth
That brighten with infectious glee the happy Christmas hearth.

I SEE six little stockings hanging in a pretty row.
We hung them round this cherished hearth one twilight long ago,
And we nestled closer 'neath the old roof-tree of home,
And hardly slept for watching for old Santa Claus to come;
I remember, ah! who does not? how the sunny Christmas morn
Revealed the wealth of treasure from the doll to drum and horn—
How the house was filled with laughter till it seemed to shake the earth,
While brighter glowed the fire upon the old Christmas hearth.

TODAY there seems to come to me across the fleecy snow
The beauty and the glory of that Christmas long ago,
When shepherds watched their gentle flocks upon the hills afar,
In the heaven-tinted splendor of the East's transcendent star;
I see a mother bend above a matchless cherub face,
And a radiance not earthly drives the shadows from the place;
Till Judaea wakes to glory and new beauty crowns the earth,
And the choristers of Heaven sing about my Christmas hearth.

OLD Time seems in his dotage and upon his tresses white
Lies the snowflake of a Christmas that has filled me with delight;
Far and wide the bells are ringing, and their music, glad and free,
Tells the story of His coming on the land and on the sea;
And mingled with their anthems is that chorus all divine
That filled a mother's heart with joy one night in Palestine;
And I bow my head a moment as the children check their mirth,
And silence comes to sanctify the dear old Christmas hearth.

I BLESS the glorious dawning of this queenly winter day,
It brings to all a gladness from a region far away,
And while the bells are ringing over all this happy earth
I bless the loves that cluster round the dear old Christmas hearth.
T. C. HARBAUGH.

A Christmas Comedy of Errors
By ELISA ARMSTRONG BENGOUGH.

THERE, now, we are all ready for Christmas," said Mrs. Slickerby, as she climbed stiffly down from the chair on which she had been standing to deck the chandelier with holly. "How surprised Josiah will be when he comes in, cold and tired, to find the place looking so like holiday times. I declare, I have a good



"It's Your New Set of Furs!"

mind to make a fire in the stove just to please him; he kept asking for it so long—though, come to think of it, he hasn't mentioned it lately, though I always told him it only made a dirt for me to clean up and the furnace heated the whole place anyhow. He said his mother used to have a nice fire in the stove when they came in evenings. Of course, she did; his mother never saw a furnace in her life, and wouldn't have known it from a telephone if she had." She paused, with her hands on her hips, to admire the result of her labors. "Yes, I guess I will light a fire in that stove, anyhow, it will serve as a text for more remarks about the cold and a few more hints as to how I do need a new set of furs this Christmas. Josiah is a good man, but he is as close when it comes to a question of money as a potato is to its skin."

She was bustling about as she talked, making her preparations to light a fire in the brilliantly polished stove. "There, I declare," she cried, as she opened the door, "if Josiah hasn't got this stove all filled up with papers and trash, after all my talking; it does seem as if you can't teach a man to be careful about a house any more than you can teach a hen to play checkers! Never mind, I'll just lay my kindlings on top of the trash and not scold—Christmas is not the time for scolding, anyhow—though when you've got to live with a man it's best to take every opportunity to teach him what's right."

As the fire began to crackle cheerfully, she left it and went over to the old-fashioned cupboard in the corner, reached carefully to the top shelf and took down a bundle.

"I'll just take a last peep at Josiah's present," she said. "I tell you, there was a lot of work in the knitting of that afghan, and if he doesn't give me those furs he'll feel a good deal ashamed every time

he puts it over his knees in the hazy this winter—and the furs are not in the house, I know that, for I've been over every square inch of it in hopes I'd find he'd hidden 'em somewhere." She had unfolded a wonderful combination of colors in wool which would have made Joseph's coat a sadder garment by comparison, and looked at it with great admiration. Then she carefully replaced it. "I don't know as it's just necessary to keep it away up there—he wouldn't see it if it was right under his nose. Dear me, I certainly smell something burning. I wonder if it can be my cake in the oven, I had almost forgotten it, with all these other things on my mind."

"There comes Josiah now!" she cried ten minutes later, as she heard the door of the sitting room open. "Well stay out here and see what he does. Well, surely he must be pleased with the decorations and the fire in the stove. It sounds as if he was doing a jig all over the room—and him a professing Christian, too!"

Five minutes later she opened the sitting room door and stood transfixed on the threshold. "Why, Josiah Slickerby, what on earth is the matter?" she shrieked. "You are as black as a sweep and your beard is all singed, and what is that awful smell in here, and w-what is that you have in your hand?"

"It's your new set of furs, that's what it is," retorted Josiah, grimly. "A good set of furs that cost a lot of money, too, and looking like a cat that had been sitting on a can of firecrackers when they went off!"

"But how on earth could—"

"I had hid 'em in the stove, that's how! you said you'd never make another fire in it now we've got a furnace, and I hid 'em in it, so's I could surprise you for Christmas!"

"Well, goodness knows, you have surprised me!"

"Yes, and when I came into this room it was all full of smoke, and flames were bursting out of the stove door, it was so full, and if I hadn't kept my presence of mind and hunted out that old thing to smother the flames with, the whole place might have been burned!" And he held up the afghan, which was scarcely in better condition than the furs!

IT CAN BE DONE WITHOUT.



Capt. Makelove—But surely you don't object to go under the mistletoe, Miss Golt?
Miss Golt—Oh, yes, I do. Why bother about the mistletoe?
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Clara—Mabel is so thoughtful about her Christmas presents.
Belle—In what way, dear?
Clara—Always leaves the price tag on so as to save me a trip down town to find out.—Brooklyn Life.

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