THE KEY OF CHRISTMAS LAND

Who has the key of the Christmas Land?
Where the bonfire shines,
And the holly twines,
Carollies sing—a merry band—
And stars are bright o'er that fair strand—
Who has the key of Christmas Land?

Light are the hearts in Christmas Land; In each group you meet There are faces sweet. Bosoms young and gulleless are there, And brows not yet wrinkled with care— Who has the key of Christmas Land?

Dear baby hearts in Christmas Land,
We want to be near,
And join in your cheer
When the tree with its strange fruit bends,
And you wait for what Santa sends—
Who has the key of Christmas Land?

Love has the key of Christmas Land, Oh! come, Charub Love,
With wings like the dove,
prend over hearts thy light of peace,
Bow for a harvest full of increase—
Open the gates of Christmas Land.

Open the gates of Christmas Land;
There is much to do
And the days are few.
Bid all men set Charity free;
By thy grace, let us see there be
None of God's poor in Christmas Land.
—William Lule.

A MAD CHRISTMAS

BY E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM.

If there is one thing more than another when a bachelor commences to doubt whether his state of single blessedness is the most desirable form of existence it is at Christmas time. The joys of the season are essentially domestic joys; and svery one is either looking forward to convivial meetings with a circle of relations and friends or a happy reunion with his own family. At such a time a middle-aged bachelor with no relations teels rather out of it.

Now, although I must plead guilty to

middle-aged bachelor with no relations feels rather out of it.

Now, although I must plead guilty to ten years of bachelorhood, I never was one of the misanthropical type. I was single (observe the past tense) not from principle, but merely from force of circumstances, and I was never addicted to abuting myself up with my books and a cat, and growling cynical remarks at the pleasure seeking world. On the contrary, I am of a somewhat jovial disposition, and was always fond of society. Christmas time I liked to spend at a jolly country house, and could turn my mind to charades, dancing, romping with the villagers or children, conjuring and many other accomplishments. In fact, I may say with fine modesty that I once heard myself described by a country hostess as an "extremely useful sort of man."

The ides of anguling Christmas in any

bestess as a "extremely useful sort of man."

The idea of spending Christmas in any selitary rooms, with only my landlady and har domestic to talk to was a contingency which I had never contemplated for a moment; but last year I was very nearly brought face to face with it. I generally had at least two or three invitations to select from, and chore the one where I should be likely to meet the most interesting set of people; but on this occasion my usual invitations did not arrive. The Harwoods, with whom I had spent the Christmas before, had lost a child, and were in mourning; the Houldens were wintering at Nice (Mrs. Houlden was delicate) and at Houghton Grange both the girls were married, and the Christmas house parties were things of the past. These were my stock invitation; and as I recollected others among my circle of acquaintances to whom something or other had happened since last year it slowly dawned upon me that if I desired to avoid a Christmas in London I had better make arrangements to remove myself either to a northern hydropathic establishment which I had occasionally honored with my presence, or to a Brighton hotel, where I was sure of falling in with some pleasant company. Just as I had arrived at this melancholy decision, however, a letter arrived which afforded me the greatest

VA.

f tin,

best

ed to

pat-

a.

-,

e,

nds

ns!

S



"WITH MY BACK TOWARD THE ENGINE."

estisfaction. It was an invitation to spend a week or two with my old friend, Fred Halleton, at his place in Leicestershire; and with the vivid recollection before me of a pleasant Christmas spent at Gaulby Hall some three years ago, I lost no time in penning a cordial assent to the welcome invitation. A few days later beheld me, followed by a porter carrying my various impediments, on the platform of St. Pancras, prepared to make my journey down to Leicester by the half-past three Manchester and Liverpool express. The Pullman was crowded with a pack of nonsy school-boys, so I eschewed it and selected an empty first-class carriage. I took possession of my favorite corner seat, with my back to the engine, and wrapping my leg round my knees and unfolding a newspaper glided away from the city of smoke in a remarkably good humor, partly inspired, no doubt, by a capital innch, and partly by pleasurable anticapations of my forthnoming visit.

Fred met me at Leicester station, and I saw with regret that he was looking pale ant ill and much thinner than when I had seen him last. He seemed pleased

to see me, however, and greeted me things to witness when they do come warmly.



glance.
I admitted I had thought her strangely silent, and apparently having some anxiety weighing upon her mind.
He laughed, a short unpleasant laugh, and leaned over to me confidentially.
'I rely upon your discretion, you know, Neillson. I wouldn't have it known for the world; but my wife is mad."

"Mad !" I stared at him incredulously.

on."

"I should imagine so," I assented, devoutly hoping a fit was not then pending. Soon I managed to make my adieu, and with a sigh of relief found myself once more in the hall. I made my way to Eurdett's room, but he had gone to bed, and seeing it was nearly 11 o'clock, I decided to go to bed, and, precoded by a servant (I could never have found the way myself). I mounted again the wide stairs and threaded the numerous passages which led to my room. It was at the end of a wide corridor, on either side of which were six doors.

"Does any one sleep up here?" I asked the man as he bade me good night. He pointed to a door exactly opposite

He pointed to a door exactly opposite mine.

"That is the master's room, sir," he replied; and the one at the bottom end is Mrs. Hallaton's. No one else aleeps in this part of the house. The servants' rooms are all in the north wing."

I am generally able to sleep at whatever hour I retire; but it was early, and the fire looked tempting; so, instead of immediately undressing, I changed my coat for a smoking jacket, and, lighting a pipe, made myself comfortable in an easy chair. Soon I heard Mrs. Hallaton's light footsteps ascend the stairs, and the door of her room open and close, and a little while afterward Fred halted outside my door to bid me a cheery goodnight, and then entered the room opposite.

"I'M GOING TO CHUCK HER DOWN."

During our drive to Gaulby I hazarded a few remarks, with a view to ascertaining what sort of a: party there was collected at the Hall, but I got nothing definite out of him. He was quite unlike his old self, and I came to the conclusion that he must be ill. As we drove up the avenue I leaned out the window to gaze at the fine fold mansion, and it struck me at once as looking cold and uninviting, while the grounds were certainly very much neglected. Something seemed wrong all round, and I began to feel almost sorry I had come. We overtook Mrs. Hallston at the hall door, just returned from a walk. She was as gracious and so pleasant as she had ever been to me, but I fancied that I could detect in her manner and appearance something of the ill being which seemed to exist around her.

We all three entered together, and the moment we passed through the door I felt onto a heavy doze, and when I felt convinced that my expectations of a jolly Christmas party were doomed to dispond the total and the desire and appearancy by the structure of the connect was something was wrong, but at any rate I conseld myself with the reflection that I had lost little by coming, as it had been a choice between here and the hotel. But, all the same, I did not feel particular shout my wife, I don't suppose, have you!" he saked, with a searching glance.

"You haven't noticed anything particular shout my wife, I don't suppose, have you!" he saked, with a searching glance.

I admitted I had thought her strangely silent, and apparently nothing to make a confidant of you, if I may, old man."

I bowed my head and listened.

"You haven't noticed anything particular shout my wife, I don't suppose, have you!" he saked, with a searching glance.

I admitted I had thought her strangely silent, and apparently having some anxiety weighing upon her mind.

He lauked a short malessent laugh.



and leaned over to me confidentially.

"I'rely upon your discretion, you know, Neillson. I wouldn't have it known for the world; but my wife is mad."

""Mad!" I stared at him incredulously.

"See, mad," he repeated impatiently.

"It was the sun in India last year that did the mischief. She would expose herself to it. The doctor whom I have consulted advised me to send her tos private asylum, but I haven't the heart to do it. She's perfectly harmless, you know; but, of course, it's an awful trial to me."

I stammered out an expression of sympathy. To tell the truth, I scarcely knew what to say. I was bewildered at this painful explanation of the gloom which reigned over the house. Presently Fred tooled his eyes and left me to digest this strange and unwelcome piece of news. I am naturally somewhat selfish, and before very long my sympathy was diverted in some measure from my host to myself. It occurred to me that it was by no means a pleasant prospect to be a guest in a house the mistress of which was mad. It was not altogether kind of Fred to invite me, I thought, under the circumstances, without some explanation of his wife's state. I began to feel quite ar injured man. I was quite tired of my own company, and Fred was fast asleep. So I opened the door softly and made my way down to the hall. As I

tion of his wife's state. I began to feel quite ar injured man. I was quite trad of my own company, and Fred was fast asleep. So I opened the door softly and made my way down to the hall. As I passed an open door Mrs. Heliaton appeared and beckoned me in. I had no alternative but to obey her invitation.

"Mr. Nellson," she said, in an agitated tone, "as you are going to stop here for a day or two, there is something connected with this household which you ought to know. Has my husband told you anything?"

I bowed and told her gravely that I knew all, and that she had my profoundest sympathy.

She sighed.

"Perhaps you are surprised that I should sak whether Ered had told you," she said, turning a little away from me. "It seems strange, doesn't it, that one should be mad and be conscious of it! I only comes on in fits, and they are terrible.

She shuddered, and so, to tell the truth, did I.

"Shech a phase of madness is probably not incurable," I ventured to suggest timidly.

"I ledged a little toward the door. I had no experience in talking with lunaties," she answered, vehemently.

I edged a little toward the door. I had no experience in talking with lunaties, and fet anything but comfortable in my present position. Mrs. Hallaton was beginning to look very excited and dangerous.

"Of course if you are frightened, Mr. Nellson," she said a little contemptatous ly, "you can leave us whenever you please. These fits do not come on often, but they are anything but pleasant of the paraget? The property of the paraget? The position of the paraget? The position of the made and swarred with my weight, and they are anything but pleasant they are anything but comfortable in my present position. Mrs. Hallaton was beginning to look very excited and angerous.

"Of course if you are frightened, Mr. Nellson," she said a little contemptatous ly, "you can leave us whenever you please. These fits do not come on often, but they are anything but contemptations and content of the paraget? The profession of the profession of the prof

and then my struggling feet seemed to part with the earth, as with a wild yell of:

"Leicester! Leicester!" I opened my eyes and ast up with a start. The paper had slipped from my flugers, and the train was slowly steaming into Leicester station, and there, standing upon the platform, smiling and robust, looking the very picture of health, was Fred Hallaton.

That Christmas party at Gaulby Hall

the very picture of health, was Fred Hallston.

That Christmas party at Gaulby Hall was the most enjoyable I was ever at, and the people (the house was crammed full of visitors) the most entertaining and agreeable I ever met. There was one young person especially—a Miss Alice Pratison she was then—with whom I got on remarkably well. I never enjoyed a visit so much in my life as I did that one, nor a ride so much as one afternoon when Miss Pratison and I, after a capital run, rode home together with her little hand in mine and our horses very close together. Next Christmas, if Alice doesn't object, I mean to have a jolly little house party of my own.

Christmas Carols.

Musical specialists divide earols into two classes, the sacred and the secular, although there is a third, the words of which are a curious admixture of both, as for example:

as for example:

If the sun shines through the apple tree on Cristmas Day there will be an abundant crop the following year.

Now the time is come wherein Our Savior Christ is born;
The larder's full of beef and pork The garner's filled with corn.

The music is often excellent, many of the carols being composed during the best days of the ecclesiastical masters, and in not a few of these compositions appear fugue, counterpoint, and even canon of excellent composition and har-

mony.

They were originally sung in all the churches at Christmas time, instead of the hymns for the day, and in the rural districts of England this custom is still observed. But more frequently at present they are heard from the lips of strolling bands of singers, while a solitary warbler sometimes serves to recall the carroller in Dickens's Christmas story, who begins outside the door with:

"God bless you, merry genitemen, may nothing you dismay," when old Scrooge cuts the song short with a ruler.

Many cellections of carols have been made, and some of them are really remarkable compositions, being fugues in three to six parts, and the words of not a few convey ancient begonds, occasionally remarkably poeticsl, both in idea and language, such as "The Carol of the Holy Well:"

All under the leaves, the leaves of life.

the Holy Well:"
All under the leaves, the leaves of life,
I met with virgins seven;
And one of them was Mary mild,
Our Lord's mother of Heaven.

Oh, what are you seeking, you seven fair maids, All under the leaves of life? Come tell, come tell what seek you All under the leaves of life.

We're seeking for no leaves, Thomas, But for a friend of thine; We're seeking for sweet Jesus Christ To be our guide and thine.

Christmas Hints.

Buy no more than you can afford. Give no gift where you do not delight to.

Shop no more than you have the trength for.

Entertain only within you means.

Entertain only within you means.

Keep your Christmas nerve and muscle and heart and hope and cheer first for your own.home, your own fireside, your dearest, your closest, your sweetest—and then for the homeless, the fireless, the unloved, the "undeared," and be true, true, true to the last Christmas card that goes to your postoffice, or the last "Merry Christmas" that crosses your lips!

Couldn't Fool Santa Claus.



Santa Claus—"One of the boys has been trying to ring in his father's stock-ing on me, but he's going to get badly left."

Christmas Proverbs and Saws. A warm Christmas, a cold Easter. A green Christmas makes a fat grave-yard.

yard.

If ice will bear a man before Christmas it will not bear him afterward.

If Christmas finds a brudge he'll break it; if he finds none he'll make one.

The shepherd would rather see his wife enter the stables on Christmas Daythan the sun.

Yale is come, and Yule is gone,
And we have feasted well;
So Jack must to his fiail again,
And Jennie to her wheel.

Getting Ready for Christmas.

Husband (who is laying the carpet)—
"Oh, ghee—— Blank it."
Wife—"Go on, dear, say what you think; I've covered my ears. You know I can't bear to hear such talk, especially when Christmas is so near."—
Texas biffings.

WORDS OF WISDOM.

Lies run. Truth walks. Wrong doing begins with wrong think.

ing:
Real good never shrinks from any kind of a test.

Evil is most dangerous when it looks nost like good.

most like good.
Wisdom is knowledge harnessed up and put to plowing.
The man who has one talent and is improving it will soon have ten.
We can help one another to live, but no man can help another to die.

Of all counterfeits there is none more contemptible than counterfeit humility.

No man can harm his brother until he has first killed all love for him in him-

When you find a chronic fault-finder you generally find a person who loafs too much.

much.

There are people who wouldn't lie with the lip for anything, and yet they live a lie every day in the week.

Looking too closely at a dollar doesn't make it any bigger, but it very ofter makes the soul a good deal smaller.

If some people could have their way, when they pray for rain they would pick out the ground for it to fall upon.

There is never any difficulty in finding people to play the first fiddle, but oh, how hard it is to get the rest of the orchestra.

It comes so much easier to forgive those who have caused us suffering, when we learn that we too have made others to suffer.

There is a difference between sitting before the fire and thinking about doing good, and going out into the cold and doing it.

The laborers who were sent into the vineyard at the eleventh hour had probably been at work somewhere else up to that time.

Writing poetry about how to reach the masses is an altogether different matter from going at it with beth had and trying to save the people as they come.—Indianapolis (Ind.) Ram's Horn.

Remarkable Water System

Remarkable Water System.

No city in the world is supplied more abundantly with water than Fez, one of the capitals of Morocco and the usual place of residence of the Sultan. This capital, with a population of about 100, 000 people, gets its water supply in a remarkable manner. The town lies in a river valley. The Wady el Fez rises among the hills a few miles southwest of the city. By the time the stream reaches the outskirts of the town it is wide and deep. Its natural course lies through the heart of the city, but the inhabitants have diverted all the water from the large channel into a number of canals. Then from these canals the water is conducted by hundreds of little channels to every garden and house of the town. The river bed itself through the valley is perfectly dry.

When Doctor Lenz was there a few years ago he said he believed there was no other city in the world with so fine a water supply as Fez. Unfortunately, the natives do not know how to value and properly utilize their great blessing. Though a stream of pure water runs through every house and garden, the town is extremely dirty. Ludwig Pietsch, who accompanied the Dutch Embassy to Fez in 1878, said:

"There is no city in the world, with the exception of Rome and perhaps Vienna, which has so splendid a water system. The brooks gurgle through every garden in the town. The city has other blessings, too, for its climate is glorious, the soil of the country round is very fruitful, and the landscape is of surpassing beauty, but the people do not know how to utilize their plessings. Their streets are extremely dirty, their houses are badly ventilated, and they have made insalubrious a town that could be one of the healthiest in the world."

After the water has flowed through the city in these many hundreds of little channels, what is left of it is gathered into the river again east of the town, and then it flows north to join the Sebu River, the largest in Morocco. It is the only instance in the world where a whole rivers is thu wrillized to provid

River, the largest in Morocco. It is the only instance in the world where a whole river is thus utilized to provide a large city with water.—New York Sun.

Texas' "Belled" Buzzard.

Texas' "Belled" Brizzard.

Among the distinguished visitors at Belton, Texas, the other day was the famous "thelled" buzzard, which, thirteen years ago, was captured at McGregor, Texas, and turned loose again with a small bell attached to his neck. Your correspondent saw the bird for the first time on its first visit to Belton. Since his first capture he has crossed the continent several times, having been seen in many places from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The bell is of a small size, somewhat smaller than the bells used on calves here when they are turned loose for grazing on the prairies. As the buzzard flaps his wings the bell jingles and he can be plainly heard when he is soaring at a considerable distance in the aux.—St. Louis Republic.

CURIOUS FACTS.

Brazil is a country of extraordinary fem

Two pounds of beef are consumed to one of mutton in England.

The waters of the Grand Falls of Labrador have excavated a chasm thirty miles

People in Japan are called by the family name next and the honorfic—thus, "Smith Peter Mr."

A man in Concord, Mich., makes a living by raising English sparrows and selling their heads for the bounty.

An industrious hive of Andrew County.

An industrious hive of Andrew County,
Missouri, bees lately made a record of
twelve pounds of honey in twelve hours.

John Stowe of Birmingham, Conn.,
recently ejected a live frog, which he
declares he swallowed two years pre-

The longest railroad bridge span in the United States is the cantilever span in the Poughkee pisie (N. Y.) bridge over the Hudson—548 feet.

Melons were first called canteloupes from being cultivated at Canteloupi, a village near Rome, where they had been introduced from Armenia by mission-

aries.

aries.

The earliest inhabitants of Greece were probably, the Pelasgi, an Aryan nation who came from the high table-land of Asia, passed around the Caspian Sea into Europe, and settled in Greece and Italy.

Western Washington loggers tell of an immense log, recently floated down the Snoqualmic River, which five oxen had difficulty in hauling. It was a fire log thirty-two feet in length and eighty-nins inches in diametor at the largest end.

Twelve thousand silk worms was

Twelve thousand silk worms when newly hatched scarcely weigh one-quarter of an ounce, yet in the course of their life, which lasts only about thirty-five days, they will consume between three hundred and four hundred pounds of leaves.

A Gardiner (Me.) pastor collected 1400 copper cents during his itinerancy, and paid them over to a merchant in that city the other day. But the merchant got nearly even with the good man by handing him back 1000 of them in the shape of a weedling fee.

A Newberry (Mich.) man named Bolton nearly cut a tree down and was advised to finish the job, but put it off. A few days after his wife was digging potatoes in the field and stopped under the tree to tie her shoe when the old bitch, without a warning, fell, killing her instantly. stantly.

stantly.

There are naturalists in this day and age who believe that horse hairs will turn to living snakes; that toads will live for thousands of years in the cavity of a rock without food or water; that the barnacle goose was developed from the shell fish of that name, and that the bird called Sora is a species of the winged froe.

frog.

The City of London is put down by geographers as the centre of the landed hemisphere. In other words, a radius of about 6000 miles on the curved surface of the earth, with London as a centre, would describe a circumference enclosing more land than any 6000-mile circle that could be drawn from any other city in the world. frog.

the world. Down to the time of Homer, who flourished 907 B. C., as little was known of the surface of the earth as is now known of the interior. Greece was then regarded as the centre of the earth, which was surrounded at the distance of 500 miles by the ocean river. Liter the land was extended farther and a limited form given to the old Courtier. form given to the old Continent.

souther blessings, too, for its climate is glorious, the soil of the country round is very fruitful, and the landscape is of surpassing beauty, but the people do not know how to utilize their blessings. Their streets are extremely dirty, their bluses are badly ventilated, and they have made insalubrious a town that could do one of the healthiest in the world."

After the water has flowed through the city in these many hundreds of little bannels, what is left of it is grathared into the river again east of the town, and then it flows north to join the Seburily instance in the world where a whole river is thus utilized to provide a large city with water. —New York Sun.

Land of the Olive and the Pig.

Bame parts of Australia seem to be salmirably suited for the growth of the olive. Mr. Principal Thompson of the colive. M Some parts of Australia seem to be admirably suited for the growth of the olive. Mr. Principal Thompson of Dookie says in a recent report that 700 olive trees planted in that district are robust and healthy, and that they produce splendid oil. He strongly recommends the planting of olive recommends the planting of olive around vineyards and homesteads for shale and shelter and to give a picturesque a pearance to the rural home. Apart from making of oil he believes it would pay handsomely to grow olive berries to feed pigs alone. Last winter the pigs at Dookie (about eighty head) were allowed to eat up the fallen berries in the olive grove; they had no other food for upward of two months, and throve amazingly, their skins having a peculiar shining appearance, characteristic of animals being well feed. —Chicago News.

A Remarkable River.

A Remarkable River.

That all the rivers run into the seas as an old saying, but on the African coast, near the Gulf of Aden, is found an exception to the rule in a river that runs out of the sea into the Lake of Assal. The surface of Lake Assal itself is nearly 700 feet below the mean tide and it is fed by this paradoxical river, which is about twenty-two miles in length. It is highly probable that the whole basin, which the lagoon partly fills, was once an arm of the sea, which became separated therefrom by the duning of loose sand. The inflowing river has a limited volume, being fullest, of course, at high tide, and has filled the basis to such an extent that evaporation and supply exactly balance each other. —New Orleans Picayune.