

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Sleep! snow-white world, under the stars, Sleep! Sleep! While choral angels from on high, Floating across the midnight sky, Lean down with waving lily-wands, To bless the earth with gracious hands. And hark! the golden chord! "Praise be to Christ our Lord, The Son of Man in lowly manger born, Before whose face the strength of Sin is shorn." Then, till the holy morn, Sleep! Sleep! Wake! bright world, under the bright sun, Wake! Wake! Hark! how the Christmas angels sing: "All hail! to Christ our Lord and King! All hail! good will and peace to men! All hail! to God on high! Amen!" Join ye the joyful song: The reign of ancient wrong Is o'er this hour: for Christ the Child is born! Oh, happy world! thy bonds of sin are torn, This holy Christmas morn, Wake! Wake! —Charles L. Hildreth, in Demorest's.

LOU'S CLARINET.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

HERE WAS A Christmas eve service in the Second Westcock Church. The church at Second Westcock was quaint and old-fashioned, like the village over which it presided. Its shingles were gray with the beating of many winters; its little square tower was surmounted by four spindling posts, like the legs of a table turned heavenward; its staring windows were adorned with curtains of yellow cotton; its uneven and desolate churchyard, strewn with graves and snowdrifts, occupied a bleak hillside looking out across the bay to the lonely height of Shepody Mountain. Down the long slope below the church straggled the village, half-lost in the snow, and whistled over by the winds of the Bay of Fundy. Second Westcock was an outlying corner of the rector's expansive parish, and a Christmas eve service there was an event almost unparalleled. To give Second Westcock this service, the rector had forsaken his prosperous congregations at Westcock, Sackville and Dorchester, driving some eight or ten miles through the snows and solitude of the deep Dorchester woods. And because the choir at Second Westcock was not remarkable even for willingness, much less for strength or skill, he had brought with him his fifteen-year-old niece, Lou Allison, to swell the Christmas praises with the notes of her clarinet.

The little church was lighted with oil lamps ranged along the white wall between the windows. The poor, bare chancel—a red-cloth covered kitchen table in a semi-circle of paintless railing—was flanked by two towering pulpits of white pine. On either side the narrow, carpetless aisle were rows of unpainted benches. On the left were gathered solemnly the men of the congregation, each looking straight ahead. On the right were the women, whispering and scanning each others' bonnets, till the appearance of the rector from the little vestry-room by the door should bring silence and reverent attention. In front of the women's row stood the melodeon, and the two benches behind it were occupied by the choir, the male members of which sat blushing self-consciously, proud of their office, but deeply abashed at the necessity of sitting among the women. There was no attempt at Christmas decoration, for Second Westcock had never been awakened to the delicious excitements of the church greening. At last the rector appeared in his voluminous white surplice. He moved slowly up the aisle, and mounted the winding steps of the right-hand pulpit, and as he did so his five-year-old son, forsaking his place by Lou's side, marched forward and seated himself resolutely on the pulpit steps. He did not feel quite at home in Second Westcock Church.

The sweet old carol, "While shepherds watched their flocks by night," rose rather doubtfully from the little choir, who looked and listened askance at the glittering clarinet, into which Lou was now blowing softly. Lou was afraid to make herself distinctly heard at first, lest she should startle the singers; but in the second verse the pure vibrant notes came out with confidence, and then for two lines the song was little more than a duet between Lou and the rector's vigorous baritone. In the third verse, however, it all came right. The choir felt and responded to the strong support and thrilling stimulus of the instrument, and at length ceased to dread their own voices. The naked little church was glorified with the sweep of triumphal song pulsating through it. Never before had such music been heard there. Men, women and children sang from their very souls, and when the hymn was ended the whole congregation stood for some seconds as in a dream, with quivering throats, till the rector's calm voice, repeating the opening words of the liturgy, brought back their self-control in some measure. Thereafter every hymn and chant and carol was like an inspiration, and Lou's eyes sparkled with exaltation. When the service was over the people gathered round the stove by the door, praising Lou's clarinet and petting little Ted, who had by this time come down from the pulpit steps. One old lady gave the child two or three brown sugar-biscuits which she had brought in her pocket, and a pair of red mittens which she had knitted for him as a Christmas present. Turning to Lou, the old lady said, "I never heard nothing like that trum-

pet of yours, Miss. I felt like it just drawn down the angels from heaven to sing with us to-night. Their voices was all swimming in a smoke, like, right up in the hollow of the ceiling." "Taint a trumpet!" interrupted Teddy, shyly. "It's a clarinet. I got a trumpet home!" "To be sure!" replied the old lady, indulgently. "But miss, as I was a saying, that music of yours would just soften the hardest heart as ever was." The rector had just come from the vestry room, well wrapped up in his furs, and was shaking hands and wishing every one a Merry Christmas, while the sexton brought the horse to the door. He overheard the old lady's last remark, as she was bundling Teddy up in a huge woollen muffler. "It certainly did," said he, "make the singing go magnificently to-night, didn't it, Mrs. Tait? But I wonder, now, what sort of an effect it would produce on a hard-hearted bear, if such a creature should come out at us while we are going through Dorchester woods?" This mild pleasantry was very delicately adapted to the rector's audience, and the group about the stove smiled with a reverent air befitting the place they were in; but the old lady exclaimed in haste: "My, land akes, parson, a bear'd be just scared to death!" "I wonder if it would frighten a bear?" thought Lou to herself, as they were getting snugly bundled into the warm, deep "pung," as the low-box sleigh with movable seats is called. Soon the crest of the hill was passed, and the four-poster on the top of Second Westcock Church sank out of sight. For a mile or more the road led through half-cleared pasture lands, where the black stumps stuck up so strangely through the drifts that Teddy discovered bears on every hand.

probably keep well out of our sight. However, it's just as well to get beyond its neighborhood as quickly as possible. Steady, Jerry, old boy! Steady—don't use yourself up too fast!" The rector kept the horse well in hand; but in a short time it was plain that the panther was not avoiding the party. The cries came nearer and nearer, and Lou's breath came quicker and quicker, and the rector's teeth began to set themselves grimly, while his brows gathered in anxious thought. If it should come to a struggle, what was there in the sleigh, he was wondering, that could serve as a weapon? Nothing, absolutely nothing but his heavy pocket-knife. "A poor weapon," thought he, ruefully, "with which to fight a panther." But he felt in his pocket with one hand, and opened the knife, and slipped it under the edge of the cushion beside him. At this instant he caught sight of the panther, bounding along through the low underbrush, keeping parallel with the road, and not forty yards away. "There it is!" came in a terrified whisper from Lou's lips; and just then Teddy lifted his head from under the robes. Frightened at the speed and at the set look on his father's face he began to cry. The panther heard him and turned at once toward the sleigh. Old Jerry stretched himself out in a burst of speed, while the rector grasped his poor knife fiercely; and the panther came with a long leap right into the road not ten paces behind the flying sleigh. Teddy stared in amazement, and then cowered down in fresh terror as there came an ear-splitting screech, wild and high and long, from Lou's clarinet. Lou had turned, and over

retor; and as the panther made a dash to intercept the sleigh, it found itself in too close proximity to the strange-voiced phenomenon in the pung, and sprang backward with an angry snarl. As Lou's breath failed from her dry lips, the sleigh dashed out into the open. A dog bayed angrily from the nearest farm-house, and the panther stopped short on the edge of the wood. The rector drove into the farm-yard, and Old Jerry stopped, shivering as if he would fall between the shafts. After the story had been told, and Jerry had been stabled and rubbed down, the rector resumed his journey with a fresh horse, having no fear that the panther would venture across the cleared lands. Three of the settlers started out forthwith, and following the tracks in the new snow, succeeded in shooting the wild beast after a chase of two or three hours. The adventure supplied the countryside all that winter with a theme for conversation, and about Lou's clarinet there gathered a halo of romance that drew rousing congregations to the parish church, where its music was to be heard every alternate Sunday evening.—Youth's Companion.

Antiquity of Christmas Toys. The doll is thousands of years old; it has been found inside the graves of little Roman children, and will be found again by the archeologists of a future date among the remains of our own culture. The children of Pompeii and Herculaneum trundled hoops just as you and I did, and who knows whether the rocking horse on which we rode in our young days is not a lineal descendant of that proud charger into whose flanks the children of Francis I's time dug their spurs. The drum is also indestructible, and setting time at naught across the centuries, it beats the Christmas-tide and New Year summons that bids the tin soldier prepare himself for war, and shall continue to beat as long as there exist boyish arms to wield drumsticks, and grown-up people's ears to be deafened by the sound thereof. The tin soldier views the future with calm; he will not lay down his arms until the day of general disarmament, and there is, as yet, no prospect of a universal peace. The toy sword also stands its ground; it is the nursery symbol of the ineradicable vice of our race—the lust for battle. Harlequins, fool's-cap-crowned and bell ringing, are also likely to endure; they are sure to be found among the members of the toy world as long as there are fools to be found among the inhabitants of our own Gold-laced knights, their swords at their sides, curly-locked and satin-shod princesses, stalwart musketeers, mustached and top-booted, are all types which still hold their own. The Chinese doll is young as yet, but she has a brilliant future before her.

SANTA CLAUS ON HIS ROUND.



Look at him there on the chimney top Just ready to descend— There's never lived in this whole wide world Such a dear good-hearted friend! But see, he has stopped to listen If the children are asleep For he'd never go down if they stayed awake Or tried to take one peep!

But once he sees that all is right He'll go down with his toys, And fill up all the stockings Of his little girls and boys. Then with a bound he'll be off again— Up through the chimney and over the roofs, And the frozen ground will again resound With the patter of reindeer's hoofs.

He was not at all alarmed, however, for he was sure his father was a match for a thousand bears. By and by the road entered the curious inverted dark of Dorchester woods, where all the light seemed to come from the white snow under the trees rather than from the dark sky above them. At this stage of the journey Teddy retired under the buffalo-ropes, and went to sleep in the bottom of the pung. The horse jogged slowly along the somewhat heavy road. The bells jingled drowsily amid the soft, pinking whisper of the runners. Lou and the rector talked in quiet voices, attuned to the solemn hush of the great forest.

"What's that?" Lou shivered up closer to the rector as she spoke, and glanced nervously into the dark woods whence a sound had come. The rector did not answer at once, but instinctively seized the whip, and tightened the reins as a signal to Old Jerry to move on faster. The horse needed no signal, but awoke into an eager trot which would have become a gallop had the rector permitted. Again came the sound, this time a little nearer, and still apparently just abreast of the pung, but deep in the woods. It was a bitter, long, wailing cry, blended with a harshly grating undertone, like the rasping of a saw. "What is it?" again asked Lou, her teeth chattering. The rector let Old Jerry out into a gallop, as he answered, "I'm afraid it's a panther—what they call around here an 'Indian Devil.' But I don't think there is any real danger. It is a ferocious beast, but will probably give us a wide berth."

"Why won't it attack us?" asked Lou. "Oh, it prefers solitary victims," replied the rector. "It is ordinarily a cautious beast, and does not understand the combination of man and horse and vehicle. Only on rare occasions has it been known to attack people driving, and this one will

the back of the seat was blowing this peal of desperate defiance in the brute's very face. The astonished animal shrank back in his tracks and sprang again into the underbrush. Lou turned to the rector with a flushed face of triumph; and the rector exclaimed in a husky voice, "Thank God!" But Teddy, between his sobs, complained, "What did you do that for, Lou?" Lou jumped to the conclusion that her victory was complete and final; but the rector kept Jerry at his top speed and scrutinized the underwood apprehensively. The panther appeared again in four or five minutes, returning to the road, and leaping along some forty or fifty feet behind the sleigh. His pace was a very curious disjointed, india rubber spring, which rapidly closed up on the fugitives. Then round swung Lou's long instrument again, and at its piercing cry the animal again shrank back. This time, however, he kept to the road, and the moment Lou paused for breath he resumed the chase. "Save your breath, child," exclaimed the rector, as Lou again put the slender tube to her lips. "Save your breath, and let him have it ferociously when he begins to get too near."

The animal came within twenty or thirty feet again, and then Lou greeted him with an ear-splitting blast, and he fell back. Again and again the tactics were repeated. Lou tried a thrilling cadenza; it was too much for the brute's nerves. He could not comprehend a girl with such a penetrating voice, and he could not savor up his courage to a closer investigation of the marvel. At last the animal seemed to resolve on a change of procedure. Plunging into the woods he made an effort to get ahead of the sleigh. Old Jerry was showing signs of exhaustion, but the rector roused him to an extra spurt—and there, just ahead, was the opening of Fillmore's settlement. "Blow, Lou, blow!" shouted the

rector; and as the panther made a dash to intercept the sleigh, it found itself in too close proximity to the strange-voiced phenomenon in the pung, and sprang backward with an angry snarl. As Lou's breath failed from her dry lips, the sleigh dashed out into the open. A dog bayed angrily from the nearest farm-house, and the panther stopped short on the edge of the wood. The rector drove into the farm-yard, and Old Jerry stopped, shivering as if he would fall between the shafts. After the story had been told, and Jerry had been stabled and rubbed down, the rector resumed his journey with a fresh horse, having no fear that the panther would venture across the cleared lands. Three of the settlers started out forthwith, and following the tracks in the new snow, succeeded in shooting the wild beast after a chase of two or three hours. The adventure supplied the countryside all that winter with a theme for conversation, and about Lou's clarinet there gathered a halo of romance that drew rousing congregations to the parish church, where its music was to be heard every alternate Sunday evening.—Youth's Companion.

Antiquity of Christmas Toys. The doll is thousands of years old; it has been found inside the graves of little Roman children, and will be found again by the archeologists of a future date among the remains of our own culture. The children of Pompeii and Herculaneum trundled hoops just as you and I did, and who knows whether the rocking horse on which we rode in our young days is not a lineal descendant of that proud charger into whose flanks the children of Francis I's time dug their spurs. The drum is also indestructible, and setting time at naught across the centuries, it beats the Christmas-tide and New Year summons that bids the tin soldier prepare himself for war, and shall continue to beat as long as there exist boyish arms to wield drumsticks, and grown-up people's ears to be deafened by the sound thereof. The tin soldier views the future with calm; he will not lay down his arms until the day of general disarmament, and there is, as yet, no prospect of a universal peace. The toy sword also stands its ground; it is the nursery symbol of the ineradicable vice of our race—the lust for battle. Harlequins, fool's-cap-crowned and bell ringing, are also likely to endure; they are sure to be found among the members of the toy world as long as there are fools to be found among the inhabitants of our own Gold-laced knights, their swords at their sides, curly-locked and satin-shod princesses, stalwart musketeers, mustached and top-booted, are all types which still hold their own. The Chinese doll is young as yet, but she has a brilliant future before her.

The Yule Log Custom. The yule log or yule block is probably another form of that which has been preserved in the Christmas tree. A huge log of wood placed in the fire place is kept burning all the evening in many places in England, and even in the United States the custom is not unknown. It is called *Cuchos de Noel* in France. The yule candle is lighted the evening of December 24, midwinter-night, and kept burning all night if possible. If it goes out during the night it is looked upon as a sign that some one will die in the house soon. On the other hand, the stumps of these candles are considered a powerful remedy for diseased or injured hands or feet.

Song of Kris Kringle's Tree. Kris Kringle's bells are jingling, The frosty air is tingling, All silvery sounds are mingling, This merry, merry day, With many a feecy feather The snow-flakes dance together. Here comes Kris Kringle's weather, In good Kris Kringle's way. Kris Kringle's measure's tripping, Kris Kringle's sweetness sipping, The while his gifts we're clipping, From brave Kris Kringle's tree, We set the candles burning, Like stars and planets turning, And every dream and yearning There satisfied we see—

Alone and solitary, Aloof from elf and fairy, It grew in forests airy Through many a season dim— To reach its day of glory, When winter woods were hoary, To hear Kris Kringle's story, And dear Kris Kringle's hymn. O tree that warbles never! O tree that charms us ever! O tree that lives forever! The blessed Christmas tree, Where love and kindness blending Round up the year's fair ending, There heaven's own beauty lending, Behold Kris Kringle's tree, Margaret E. Sangster, in Young People.

The little red house at Lenox, Mass., in which Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote "Tanglewood Tales," "The House of Seven Gables," and other stories, is to be restored.



A Plea For the Modern Home. It must not be forgotten that homes are no longer so utterly retired as formerly. They are connected by telephones and look out on railroads and the daily press invades them. Woman, to live a true home life, is no longer secluded. Factories have taken away most of our home vacations. We are robbed even of our knitting needles. The world has come into our gardens and to our doorsteps. It is impossible to be as far from all the world as formerly, but I am not sure that we cannot all the time find our ambition in home life. To be loved by our children is grander than to be admired by the crowd.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat. Florida produces over fifty varieties of the orange.

A PALATIAL HOME. FINEST PRIVATE RESIDENCE IN THE WORLD.

It is in Course of Erection by Cornelius Vanderbilt in New York, and Will Cost \$3,000,000.

CORNELIUS VANDERBILT'S new mansion, on the north-west corner of Fifth avenue and Fifty-seventh street, is so far completed, says a New York letter in the New Orleans Picayune, that it is in the hands of the decorators and finishers. This particular Vanderbilt house will be, it is asserted, the handsomest and costliest private residence in the world. Its frontage on Fifth avenue extends from Fifty-seventh to Fifty-eighth street, giving it an outlook on Central Park. In order to acquire this frontage Mr. Vanderbilt had to pay \$350,000 for a single lot on the corner of Fifty-eighth street and the Avenue and tear down a house that would have sold for \$200,000. His new mansion completed will represent an outlay of at least \$5,000,000, but intelligent workmen, instead of crying out against him for his vast wealth, commend him for affording so many steady employments during the hard times. It is not forgotten that he has been constant in his endeavors to ameliorate the condition of the working classes ever since he came into his fortune of over \$100,000,000.

The architecture of the new house is Spanish. It is built of gray stone, with red trimmings, and has turrets, battlements, towers and window verandas in great variety. The conservatory, which is Mrs. Vanderbilt's special pride, is lighted by a court and by long windows on Fifty-seventh street. Part of it has a glass roof, and is not built up overhead, the court being large enough to give the exotics all the sunshine they require. Many rare plants will be brought to the conservatory from the Breakers, the Newport home of the family, and many others from over the ocean. The ballroom is larger than any two other private ballrooms in New York, and is decorated in green and gold, and the ceiling will be beautified by celebrated artists, both American and foreign. The decorations of this one room will cost about \$200,000. The side walls, left comparatively bare, will be covered with flowers on the occasion of grand entertainments. A well-known florist estimates the cost of the floral decorations for a ball, a screen of flowers about the room and a flight of swallows, at \$3000. Mrs. Vanderbilt will not, it is understood, draw upon her conservatory for such entertainments. The chandeliers in the ballroom are crystal, and in the form of flowers, in the hearts of which electric lights will glow.

There are in the mansion about 100 rooms. Miss Vanderbilt, the daughter of the house, has a suite of her own, including a boudoir, sleeping room, maid's room, breakfast room and little parlor. For family use there is a private dining-room only large enough to accommodate twenty persons. In the great banquet hall there will be seats for one hundred guests. It is stated that more money has been spent on the plumbing of the house than on any other one feature. Since the death of her son from typhoid fever, eighteen months ago, Mrs. Vanderbilt has been very nervous about sewers and sewer gas, and every possible precaution has been taken to prevent any invasion of the latter. The bathtubs are of decorated porcelain, and the floors of all the bathtubs are exquisitely tiled. The faucets are very ornamental and a practically perfect system of drainage has been introduced. The bathing facilities include a marble swimming bath. Mrs. C. P. Huntington has one of these in her house, and takes a dip daily in it. It is freshly filled with water every time she uses it at a cost of \$17. The Vanderbilt swimming bath is larger and will doubtless be more expensive.

Mr. Vanderbilt is naturally unostentatious and domestic in his tastes. He has never figured very prominently as a society man. This season, however, his daughter is to make her social debut, and that is undoubtedly the paramount reason why he has been anxious to have his new house completed. Miss Vanderbilt's parents will give her a grand coming-out ball, which is quite likely to eclipse in proportion and magnificence any similar affair of the kind in the history of New York. Mr. Vanderbilt will have for his nearest neighbors Ex-Secretary William C. Whitney, on the southwest corner of Fifth avenue and Fifty-seventh street, and Mrs. Paron Stevens and C. P. Huntington on the upper and lower corners across the avenue. Only one block away are the Plaza Hotel, the Savoy and the New Netherland.

Annual Hunt for Parish Stones. A party of serious and resolute men might have been seen yesterday from nine in the morning until four in the afternoon, in the neighborhood of Finchley, now following the high road, now leaving the beaten track for the open fields and anon clambering over hedges and ditches, brick walls and wooden fences. The leader was not blindfolded nor did he nervously clutch the hand of the man nearest him—facts which dispelled at once the idea that they were thought readers in search of missing treasure or criminal. They were engaged on an errand of immense local importance and not until they had hunted out every one of the stones by which the limits of the parish are marked would they return to their homes and families. In all some ten miles were traversed, with the satisfactory result that any difficulty that may have arisen hitherto with regard to the latitude and longitude of any particular property had been removed. At Hampstead the "beaters," as they are called, celebrated the occasion by dining together. It is fourteen years since this ceremony was last carried out at Finchley.—London Telegraph.

Facts About Licorice.

From its many applications in pharmaceutical processes and the fact that it is a product of a far away country which is known to us as the land which has furnished us the earliest traditions regarding the human race, Licorice possesses an interest for the pharmacist which is not shared by many drugs of equal prominence.

Licorice has been known and used for many centuries in Oriental lands, especially in Syria, where it is principally sold in a weak decoction as a refreshing drink, the extract being made by a special process to avoid extracting any of the bitter taste, and is sold by street vendors, nicely cooled, and is really a delicious and healthy drink when properly prepared. In the vicinity of Damascus the root has been gathered from special localities where, probably owing to the kind of soil, it is sweeter than from other parts, then dried and crushed under heavy stones drawn around on it by mules, in the same manner that olives are crushed for the extraction of the oil. In this form it is exported in sacks, very largely to Egypt, Arabia and many parts of Africa, where it is used almost entirely for making licorice water, which is considered very healthy for drinking in hot climates.

When the root is freshly dug in its green state it resembles in texture a small parsnip and cuts easily in much the same way, is of a pale, slightly green color internally, externally the color varying according to the soil in which it grows. It has a rather unpleasant, sweetish taste, somewhat resembling that of a raw sweet potato, and when dry loses about one-half its weight. The bark, in decocting, has to be cut off, as there is nothing that can be peeled off as in most roots. The proper time for digging the root is during the winter months after the plant has dried up, as it then has more strength than when the plant is in vigorous growth. In Syria and Asia Minor the fields where most of the plant is found, are at a distance from the villages, and a contractor or purchaser often finds it necessary to erect huts for the gatherers to sleep in, and also to provide provisions to sell them while they are at work. They also establish certain centers or places where scales are placed with an agent to weigh and credit the root as it is brought in. A certain price is paid to the owner of the land of Government, as the case may be, for the privilege of digging according to the quantity of root found.—Pharmaceutical Era.

Christmas Eve Ceremonies at Bethlehem.

On Christmas Eve most imposing services are held in the chapels of the Basilica, and the French Consul at Jerusalem takes a very prominent and unique part in them, owing to the fact that France exercises a protectorate over these holy places, as she has done at intervals since the time of Charlemagne. In consequence the French Consul is received by the clergy with royal honors; the old ceremony established by an ordinance of Louis Quinze being strictly adhered to. These honors are not only the greatest that can be rendered to any human being, but they are paid only to the Consul of France.

On the day before Christmas he proceeds with great pomp and ceremony, surrounded by Turkish soldiers, to Bethlehem, being met half-way by all the sheiks and other dignitaries from that place. At the queer little hole in the wall which serves as an entrance to the Basilica, the prior and all the community of the Franciscans receive the consul and conduct him to their convent, where he holds a court, receiving all the dignitaries, civil and religious, of Palestine, who can by any possibility be present.

We had made very good friends with one of the brothers, who took such care of us that we missed nothing worth seeing. The evening service begins at ten o'clock with a high pontifical mass in the Franciscan church; at its close a long and brilliantly lighted procession is formed, which proceeds to the "Grotto of the Nativity," all bearing long, lighted candles. The singing of the Christmas carols in this spot is something new to be forgotten. The service lasts till about two o'clock in the morning, when a Te Deum closes it. All Bethlehem watches the night through, many camping by the light of their long candles in the great nave of the Basilica; everywhere are cries of excitement and joy, and the air is filled with the smoke of incense.—Demorest.