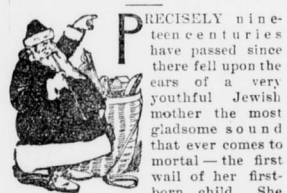


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FREELAND, PA., DECEMBER 23, 1897.

BLESSINGS OF CHRISTMAS.

Why It is the Day of All Days in the Christian Calendar.



PRECISELY nineteen centuries have passed since there fell upon the ears of a very youthful Jewish mother the most glad sound that ever comes to mortal—the first wail of her first-born child. She was scarcely more than a child herself, being but about 16 years of age; but tradition attaches to her most excellent judgment, and a maternal instinct incalculably strong.

This was the first Christmas and Mary was the first person in all the world to receive a Christmas gift, and hers was infinitely greater in value than all combined, that have been since received by all the people who have lived or died.

O, the Christmas tide—Christ's birthday, day of all days in the calendar. How hearts glow on this day and warm each to the other. How strife and bitterness end, and all cares, from within and from without, take on quick wings and fly far away.

O, the Christmas tide—Christ's birthday, day of all days in the calendar. How hearts glow on this day and warm each to the other. How strife and bitterness end, and all cares, from within and from without, take on quick wings and fly far away.

IT MADE HIM HOT.



Santa Claus—There, confound those hard-coal burners! I've singed my whiskers and ruined another suit of clothes.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

To Be Filled. Said Santa Claus on Christmas eve, In jolly, good, fat glee: "To judge by all these stockings here They've turned the hose on me!" —Up-to-Date.

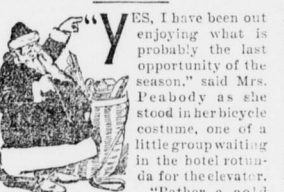
CASTORIA. The fac-simile signature of Chas. H. Fletcher is on every wrapper.



OH, THIS DEAR OLD MERRY CHRISTMAS! WAS THERE EVER SUCH A TIME!

MRS. PEABODY'S SOLITAIRES.

By Antoinette Van Housen Wakeman.



YES, I have been out enjoying what is probably the last opportunity of the season," said Mrs. Peabody as she stood in her bicycle costume, one of a little group waiting in the hotel rotunda for the elevator.

"That's a woman in ten thousand," said the gentleman who had spoken to Mrs. Peabody.

"Yes," said his companion, "The worldly Mrs. Peabody, as her family and friends call her, is an exceptional woman. Her son Harry is 40. But years don't count when a woman is as charming as Mrs. Peabody. Give me a worldly woman of the right sort every time. It will be time enough for angels when we reach the Elysian fields."

"You're right. Didn't she look a picture, though, in that natty bicycle suit?"

In the meantime Mrs. Peabody had donned a modish house gown and seated herself in the circling window of her sitting-room. It was one of the handsomest apartments in the hotel and its windows commanded a superb view of water, shore and distant city.



MRS. PEABODY FOUND NORA.

from shore to sky line, and she paused and enjoyed it as only a person gifted with fine appreciation could. Mrs. Peabody knew that she possessed this gift and she never attempted to belittle or exceed it. Her appreciation of the efforts of others was cordial and intelligent and wholly unmixt with a weak desire to imitate them.

regarded her not as the ordinary Mrs. Peabody, but quite one of themselves. Still, Mrs. Peabody was a society woman to the end of her finger tips. She would no more have missed a social function from choice than she would have broken the decalogue, and she certainly would not have done that, for she was not only a member of one of the most fashionable Presbyterian churches in the city, but her husband was one of its elders, and in her way she lived the religion she professed.

The Peabodys were not rich, but they were able to have many of the luxuries of life. On the wall above Mrs. Peabody's work table was one of Cazin's vivid yet delicately ideal interpretations of nature. Further on was a small Corot, a brilliant bit of Vibert's realism, a Landseer, a Gibson girl and a gay, impossible poster, for Mrs. Peabody's appreciation was of the all-around kind. Still, there were some things which Mrs. Peabody wanted very much which she did not have, and one of them was a pair of diamond solitaires. Her ears had been pierced when she was a child. She never would have thought of wearing anything less handsome than fine gems, and the small, vacant punctures were an ever-present thorn in the rose of her satisfaction as she viewed herself costumed and ornamented for the many functions she was never weary of attending.

"It is just Annie, Mrs. Peabody. It's about Nora I'm after comin'," she said as she came in. "It's very bad she is, mum. The doctor says she must have an operation that costs a dale of money, have her leg took off or die. Nora says she will go to Heaven on the two legs of her, but won't be livin' 'til a stump. Nora's savin's are all gone, and Biddie Sullivan's too, and all they have now is Biddie's earnin's. Nora's mother, poor old ma, can do no more than take care of her. I thought, mum, if you would see Nora you could be chance injure to have her leg cut off."

Nora had at one time been Mrs. Peabody's favorite maid, and she did not hesitate about going to her at once, although she knew the snow, so beautiful as a part of her window picture, was making a most disagreeable slush on the streets.

When Mrs. Peabody and Annie reached the tenement where Nora lived, and were mounting the stairs, they heard a strong melodious voice singing the strokes and clicks of a flatiron as it was used and placed and replaced on a metal stand: "Be not courtin' of woe by lookin' 'em up. Just work and be merry and drink of your cup. Not carin' about what to-morrow may bring: It's to-day, my laddie, that's havin' its fling: What good at all are you if you're always a-carin'?"

"I wish," said the minister's son said, "that people wouldn't give me slip pery for Christmas."—N. Y. World.

be taken' the two legs of ye. It was only last Sunday that Father Maloney said, quotin' the Holy Scriptures: 'If yer leg be had cut it off and cast it from ye, for it's better to be halted and maimed than havin' two legs all right to go to hell.' But it was all to no purpose. Nora was obdurate.

"I think not this year, my dear. I never knew more trying times. I have even withdrawn my subscription from the Relief and Aid."

"How very beautiful! Ah, how good you are, Erastus!" she exclaimed, her face glowing with pleasure.

"I have wanted them so long. You would know how they suit me," she continued, as she adjusted the beautiful gems and viewed her reflected self with the utmost satisfaction.

"Erastus," she said, "don't think me rude, but will you tell me how much you are to pay for my solitaires?"

"Certainly, Josephine, just an even \$1,000—"



ARE YOU SURE YOU ARE SATISFIED TO DO THIS?

operation performed which would restore Nora, "and you take the price of the other and renew your subscription to the Relief and Aid."

"But, my dear, you say you have wanted a pair of solitaires for a long time," said Mr. Peabody.

"But you are sure you are satisfied to do this?"

"Entirely sure."

"That was his idea." "Look here, Mr. Hojack," said Mrs. Hojack. "I'd like to know why you asked me what I wanted for a Christmas present, if you intended to get something entirely different?"

THE GREATEST OF ALL.

Aged or Young, the Shepherd Hath Care of His Sheep.



LONG years had whitened the flowing locks, And wrinkled the ruddy skin, Of the old man waiting on Christmas eve To welcome his kith and kin. Thro' the wide-flung door streamed a sudden flame And the walls gleamed sunset red. As they came, and he cried: "Oh! the homestead hill Is steep and rugged as life, but skill, And courage, and patience, and care, and will, Must win to the fountain head. Yet the soul that triumphs is strong," cried he, "As strong as the Saviour of Galilee."

"Tis a long, hard climb up the hill of life," cried the mother beside him there, "But its valleys are sheltered, and gay and green, Its gardens and pastures fair. Though the road that leads to these grateful spots Be winding, and rough, and steep: Where the oak has topped the blue-bells come, When the thrush is silent the pheasants drum, And the brook will sing when the birds are dumb— The Shepherd inspires His sheep. He conquers the elements all, With the vision of Jesus of Galilee."



AROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

"The sky may be cloudy, the mountain steep, Cry the son with the sable hair, 'What matter? The snail with its shell must keep. Man only abroad may fare. He needs no castle, nor cave in the cliff. He conquers the elements all, He wrenches the mountain asunder, the wave Of the widest ocean he makes his slave. He scoffs at fears and he mocks the grave When he answers that one brave call— That one brave call: 'Come, follow thou me, And he conquers with Jesus of Galilee.'"

"O, the lowland sweet, where the bobolink reels Through his tangle of tipsy tunes, Where the bees dive deep in the clover blooms And the ring-dove coos and croons; I love to live it with all my heart," cried the daughter, a blue-eyed maid, "My limbs grow never a weary, I run To the hill's brown crest where I dance in the sun. Till the earth and the sea and the sky are one— (And she tossed her yellow braid). He taught us that beauty is best," cried she, "And I worship with Jesus of Galilee."

"See, grandpa, my dolly is ready for bed. 'You must take us, and rock her to sleep.' And the old man said, as he lifted the child: 'The shepherd hath care of His sheep. Be ye aged or young, be ye weak or strong. The end of it all is this— You may loiter or climb—if the way you go Be warm with roses or bleak with snow. However you boast, the all you may know Is—a doll and a good-night kiss. 'Ho, suffer the children to come unto Me. In My Kingdom they're greatest of all.'"

CHARLES EUGENE BANKS.

Her First Christmas Pudding. Once a bride, unused to cooking, made an Xmas pudding rare, And in weight, at no pudding ever did with it compare. Then the bride unused to cooking bowed her weary head and cried, But her cheerful husband whispered: "Never mind, my precious bride, It is just the thing I needed: we will yet outwit the fates!"

"Tommy, have you dreamed about Santa Claus yet?" "Yes, papa; and he was bow-legged just like you."—Chicago News.

Their Thoughtless Gifts. "I wish," said the minister's son said, "that people wouldn't give me slip pery for Christmas."—N. Y. World.

Mr. Kink's Preference. "Well, Uncle Ebenezer, you will have turkey or chicken for your Christmas dinner?" asked Mr. Gildersleeve of the aged negro. "I prefer chicken, sah," replied Mr. Kink, who then added, reflectively: "Den none ob my neighbors don't keep turkeys, you know."—N. Y. World.

A Husband's Plea. I ask not gold nor gems, my dear, Nor rubies from Persian chest; I do not beg a diamond clear To sparkle on my breast. But from your heart, O, give to me, Tho' short your store of pelf, Some wee, small gift—whatever it be— That I can use myself. —Chicago Record.

Holiday Troubles. "What do you intend to get your husband for a Christmas gift?" "I can't make up my mind whether to give him lace curtains, a dinner set, new portieres or a drawing-room clock."—Chicago Record.

The Tempter. George—I do not see the mistletoe in its usual place; what is the matter? "Bess—Papa could not afford it this year. But I am wearing in my hair the ribbon it used to be tied up with."—Up-to-Date.

Advertisement for 900 Drops Castoria. Includes text: 'Vegetable Preparation for Assimilating the Food and Regulating the Stomachs and Bowels of INFANTS & CHILDREN. Promotes Digestion, Cheerfulness and Rest. Contains neither Opium, Morphine nor Mineral. NOT NARCOTIC.' Also includes a signature of Chas. H. Fletcher and 'NEW YORK'.

Advertisement for Castoria. Includes text: 'SEE THAT THE FAC-SIMILE SIGNATURE OF Chas. H. Fletcher IS ON THE WRAPPER OF EVERY BOTTLE OF CASTORIA. Castoria is put up in one-size bottles only. It is not sold in bulk. Don't allow anyone to sell you anything else on the plea or promise that it is "just as good" and "will answer every purpose." See that you get C.A.S.T.O.R-I-A. The fac-simile signature of Chas. H. Fletcher is on every wrapper.'

RAILROAD TIMETABLES. LEHIGH VALLEY RAILROAD. November 14, 1897. ARRIVAL OF PASSENGER TRAINS. LEAVE FREELAND. 6:05, 8:45, 9:15 a.m., 1:00, 3:34, 3:45, 5:25, 7:07 p.m. for Drifton, Jedd, Foundry, Hazle Brook and Lumber Yard. 6:05, 8:45, 9:15 a.m., 1:00, 3:34, 3:45, 5:25 p.m. Black Diamond, for Weatherly, Mauch Chunk, Allentown, Easton, Philadelphia and New York. 7:07 p.m. for Weatherly, Mauch Chunk, Allentown, Easton and intermediate stations. 9:15 a.m., 2:34, 5:25 and 7:07 p.m. for Hazleton, Delano, Mahanoy City, Shamondah, Ashland, Mt. Carmel, Shamokin and Pottsville. 7:25, 10:51, 11:51 a.m., 5:22 p.m. for Sandy Run, White Haven and Wilkes-Barre. DEPART FREELAND. 8:38, 10:51 a.m. for Sandy Run, White Haven and Wilkes-Barre. 10:43 a.m. and 1:38 p.m. for Jedd, Foundry, Hazle Brook, Stockton and Hazleton. 10:43 a.m. for Hazleton, Delano, Mahanoy City, Shamondah, Mt. Carmel, Shamokin and Pottsville. 1:38 p.m. for Weatherly, Mauch Chunk, Allentown, Easton, Philadelphia and New York. ARRIVE AT FREELAND. 5:50, 7:25, 9:15, 10:51, 11:51 a.m., 12:58, 2:30, 3:51, 5:22 and 6:00 p.m. from Drifton, Jedd, Hazle Brook, Foundry, Jedd and Drifton. 7:25, 9:15, 10:51, 11:51 a.m., 12:58, 2:30, 3:51, 5:22 p.m. from Hazleton, Delano, Mahanoy City, Shamondah and Pottsville. 9:15 a.m., 2:34, 7:00 p.m. from Wilkes-Barre, White Haven and Sandy Run. 7:25, 9:15, 10:51, 11:51 a.m., 2:34, 5:22 p.m. from Delano, Mahanoy City, Shamondah, Ashland, Mt. Carmel, Shamokin and Pottsville. SPECIAL TRAINS. 8:38, 10:51 a.m. and 12:51 p.m. from Hazleton, Stockton, Lumber Yard, Hazle Brook, Foundry, Jedd and Drifton. 10:51 a.m., 12:51 p.m. from Philadelphia, New York, Easton, Allentown, and Mauch Chunk. 10:51 a.m. from Pottsville, Shamokin, Mt. Carmel, Ashland, Shamondah, Mahanoy City and Delano. 10:30 a.m. from Wilkes-Barre, White Haven and Sandy Run. For further information inquire of Ticket Agents. CHAS. S. LEE, Gen'l. Pass. Agent, Philadelphia, Pa. ROLLIN H. WILBUR, General Superintendent, A. W. NONNECAMER, Asst. G. P. A., Philadelphia, Pa.

Advertisement for 'The Eldredge' and 'The Belvidere' bicycles. Includes text: 'WE MAKE Wheels, Quality Guaranteed, Too! Ladies', Gentlemen's & Tandem. The Lightest Running Wheels on Earth. THE ELDRIDGE AND... THE BELVIDERE. We always Made Good Sewing Machines! Why Shouldn't we Make Good Wheels! National Sewing Machine Co., 330 Broadway, New York. Factory: Belvidere, Ills.'

Advertisement for Vienna Bakery. Includes text: 'VIENNA: BAKERY. J. B. LAUBACH, Prop. Centre Street, Freeland. CHOICE BREAD OF ALL KINDS, CAKES, AND PASTRY, DAILY. FANCY AND NOVELTY CAKES BAKED TO ORDER. Confectionery & Ice Cream supplied to balls, parties or picnics, with all necessary adjuncts, at shortest notice and fairest prices. Delivery and supply regions to all parts of town and surroundings every day. 60 YEARS' EXPERIENCE. PATENTS TRADE MARKS, DESIGNS, COPYRIGHTS &c. Anyone sending a sketch and description may quickly ascertain, free, whether an invention is probably patentable. Communications strictly confidential. Oldest agency for securing patents in America. We have a Washington office. Patents taken through Munn & Co. receive special notice in the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, beautifully illustrated, largest circulation of any scientific journal, weekly, terms \$3.00 a year; \$2.00 in advance. Free copies and ILLUSTRATED BOOK ON PATENTS sent free. Address MUNN & CO., 361 Broadway, New York. Are You a Roman Catholic? Then you should enjoy reading the literary productions of the best talent in the Catholic priesthood and laity and you know what they CAN do, as they appear weekly in The Catholic Standard and Times OF PHILADELPHIA. The ablest and most vigorous defender of Catholicism. All the news—strong editorials—children's department, which is educational and instructive. Prizes offered monthly to the little ones. Only \$2.00 per year. The Grandest Premium ever issued by any paper given to subscribers for 1897. Send for sample copies and premium circular. The Catholic Standard and Times Pub'g Co. 503-505 Chestnut St. Phila.

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