

High Point, N. C.  
WALTER CRISSMAN  
Business Manager

# THE YOUNG AMERICAN

Published Monthly  
NADY CATES, Jr.  
Editor

VOL. 1—5c Copy

DECEMBER, 1920

25c Year—No. 4

## Just the Christmas Spirit

Nady Cates, Jr.

It was the quaintest room in the whole town; rather odd too that two young men occupied it—two young men of eighteen and twenty-one years. Not quaint because of pictures and drapery, nor furniture and wall decorations; but quaint for one reason, it was bare of all embellishments save one faded placard, which hung over the mantle piece, bearing this inscription in large, outstanding letters, "WE ARE WOMEN-HATERS."

Herbut Angeles and Edwin Halwin, eighteen and twenty-one years old respectively, and inmates of the room, had been staunch friends all their lives, and had loved each other like two brothers. Upon the almost simultaneous deaths of their parents they had both taken up their abode in this apartment house, which was one of the best in the growing town of Harrisburg. Unfortunately, in their early exploits of love, they had become disgusted with the whole feminine species, and this had resulted in this declaration of utter contempt that now hung above the mantle. Practically all their lives both of the youths had been what is termed today "respectable gentlemen." Although they cursed excellently and frequently, they had never entered into the realms of real debauchery and crime, and hence they were highly respected in society. However, they held not even a wee, little place in church, nor did they care to converse along the lines of religion. They were nothing more than society's "respectable gentlemen," or "tolerable good chaps," as their office comrades called them. This is not saying much of a fellow in this age, when it is true that as men sink too low to be spoken of as those who have really done something noteworthy in life, they are called generally as "respectable gentlemen."

In calculating the worth of Herbut

Angeles and Edwin Halwin, we would invariably decide that Edwin Halwin was the better of the two, inasmuch as his past record was less spotted and stained than that of his contemporary. Of course, as we said before, neither of the lads had ever gone so far as to commit murder or robbery, but Herbut, being the younger of the two young men, had led a reckless life among the snares of "little sins," while his companion had been more watchful and judicious in his pursuit of evil, meditating always on the possible results of his misdeeds.

It was on the way before Christmas Eve that the boys were sitting in their room in an unusually melancholy mood, Edwin gazing blankly out the side window and Herbut sitting by the window that looked out upon the street. Both seemed to be deeply enveloped in thought. Edwin sat motionless, with his elbows resting on his knees and his chin in the palm of his hand; while Herbut twisted nervously in his chair, looking first at the placard over the mantle and then through the window at the farm horses trudging along in the snow, drawing the sturdy farmers in their wagons, with bundles of Christmas toys at their feet; at the good fathers, wearing the unconscious smiles that Christmas brings and carrying packages under their arms that bore the merry pictures of Santa Claus; and at the beautiful damsels, who walked with springy steps as they carried numberless Christmas presents in their hands.

The two youths sat for a quarter of an hour longer, when Herbut turned suddenly to Edwin and said, "Ed, don't you think it might help things a little if we would make a few Christmas decorations in our room for the first time in our lives?"

Edwin's hands dropped from his chin as he stared at Herbut like a

frightened deer. "W-wh-what you men? Why we haven't turned our hands to Christmas decoration since we've been living together. You must be crazy!"

"I thought it might liven things up a little," explained Herbut.

Edwin scratched his head a moment in perplexity. "What's the matter with you anyway?" he demanded, as he turned his chair to face Herbut. "Durn it, you ain't been half way like yourself for more than a month. What's gettin' into you, I'd like to know."

"Aw, it ain't nothing, Ed. I was just looking out the window here, and saw Miss Grayson putting holly in her windows, and I thought it mighty help the looks of our room to hand up something to remind ourselves that Christmas is here."

Edwin was mystified. Was that sincere and lustful heart of his friend changing its beat from things sinister to those of beauty? Why, his chum had even noticed a woman!

"Look a-herc, Herbut," admonished Edwin. "Do you see that sign up there on the mantle-piece? Well, you'd better mind how you notice the girls. You've got to remember that we're still women-haters."

Herbut dropped his head as a cloud appeared on his brow, and he winced from inward pain. "Edwin," he said, "I've got a confession to make. I—ah—"

Edwin jumped from his seat. "What! Herbut, have you fell in love with a woman. Dang it, answer me! Have you?"

Herbut winced again, but made no answer.

However, Edwin stormed on, his face red with fury and his fists pounding spasmodically on the bedpost. "You durned old fool, Herbut, I thought you had more sense than that. By Hercules, I'd rather see you in Hades than marry a devilish wo-