

Uncle Santa Claus

By Christopher G. Hazard

"TELL us a story, Uncle Peter," said the children, as they climbed over their kindly relative one Christmas eve. "A story!" repeated Uncle Peter, affecting surprise, but willing to draw upon his inexhaustible stock; "well, have you ever heard of Uncle Santa Claus?" "Oh, you mean Uncle Santa Claus!" exclaimed Jack. "No, I don't," said Uncle Peter; "I mean the old man with the plug hat, the blue swallowtail coat, the striped breeches; the old man with eyes like stars and a smile that never comes off excepting when somebody is treading on somebody else; the old man with the striped flag, whose headquarters is up in Alaska; the biggest Santa Claus there is." "All right, then," answered the children, "tell us about him."

"Well," said Uncle Peter, "he has his hands full just now and is doing all he can to fill the hands of others. The air is so noisy with wireless cries and clamors, there are so many hands reaching out over the seas, that he is almost distracted. Ever since he got back from the great war he has been repairing its damage and renewing the prosperity that it spoiled. And long before that he was in the Christmas business. He surprised China by refusing to accept the great sum of the Boxer indemnity. He let the Cubans have Cuba when he had made them free, and many thought that he had a right to take that fair island for himself. He is working hard at his task of making America truly American, a sober, industrious, enlightened, prosperous, happy, Christ-mas nation."

"I'm glad I'm one of his American children," said Agnes, when Uncle Peter had concluded; with which sentiment all the rest agreed.

A little cloud of doubt had arisen on the Christmas sky, however, as



"I'm Glad I'm One," Said Agnes.

Uncle Peter had spoken of Uncle Santa's lavishness in far countries. Edith voiced it when she wanted to know if it would be of any use for them to expect anything that Christmas, whether or not they were to hang up their stockings. "You'll put your foot in it if you do," said George. "No, she won't," said Uncle Peter; "I have had a special delivery letter from Uncle Santa, saying that he has had his eye on this house for the last twelvemonth, and that this will be one of his stopping places because from it so much of service for others has been going out. He says that you are his gardeners, and that you have planted so many seeds of kindness that a lot of beautiful things will be sure to come up. That is always the way, he says; in fact, it is the way in which he got rich himself."

This was a very pleasant assurance for the children. It made them think of a happy mistake that one of them had made when they were having war gardens all over the town: A certain Mr. Rose had been appointed by the mayor as inspector of gardens for the whole place, and one day Betty pointed him out to a friend with whom she was walking. "There goes Mr. Rose," she said; "he's an expecter of gardens!"

When the children had been reminded of Mr. Rose they also remembered what Betty had done at their last Christmas party; stalking heavily and pompously down the room, she had said: "I'm Mr. Atlas, who holds up the world." So one of them stood on tiptoe, threw back her head and threw out her arms and said: "I'm Uncle Santa Claus, who holds up the world." "Well done!" cried Uncle Peter; "that's just it!"

There wasn't any disappointment in the house the next morning. "Did you get all that you wanted?" asked Uncle Peter. "Yes," said Mary. "Were you at all disappointed?" "No," said Mary. When Mary said "Goodness," her mother said, "You shouldn't say 'goodness,' Mary." "Gracious!" said Mary. But Mary was too excited to have a care for her expressions. In describing the situation afterwards she said: "I was in a perfect stupor of excitement."

Uncle Peter had a present, too. After all the rest had been made happy Agnes brought out a parcel, and when Uncle Peter opened it there were too big books that told over again the story of all that America had stood for and accomplished. This made him very glad indeed, and he asked them to write his name on the fly leaf and to say that it was from his Young Americans. Then the Christmas party ended with a verse of our national anthem, heartily sung and followed by all the other verses, with a hurrah for Uncle Sam instead of an amen.

NOT A HOLIDAY LIKE OTHERS

Significance of Christmas is Not Lost; Its Spirit Enters into Life of World.

IT IS not likely that all of the multitude of people who eagerly and anxiously prepare to celebrate Christmas day are conscious of its sacred character. They know of course that it stands for the anniversary of the birth of the Founder of the Christian religion, but that thought is not uppermost in their minds. To such, for the moment, it is merely a holiday in which they wish to give gifts to persons they care for and whom they wish to please. It is a period in which they forget themselves in order to give joy to others.

In this one thing, though they may not be aware of it, they demonstrate the teaching of the One whose day they observe, for unselfish thought for others is one of the great lessons taught by the Teacher of teachers who was born in Bethlehem of Judea centuries ago. There are Christmas givers today who make no sacrifice when they purchase rich gifts for family or friends; they know no self-denial, though it does not follow that they do not give all their hearts. But with the great mass of givers there is a setting aside of personal wishes and even urgent needs in order that those they love may be glad on that day of the year when all the Christian world rejoices. The self-sacrifice is as nothing compared to the end to be attained.

On the other hand, a multitude of men and women are spiritually aware of the character of the day. They look back across the centuries to the Child in the manger and see in the dawn of a new hope to mankind, a revelation of a new life, a bond between mortal existence and the hereafter that has given comfort to myriads and a light to the world that grows brighter with the passing of the ages. The gifts that they bestow and those they receive typify to them the greatest of all gifts to the world—the One who came to point the way to eternal life.

No, Christmas for all its seeming frivolity and thoughtlessness is not a mere holiday like others. Even the light-minded and heedless ones realize a difference, and if pushed to explain would do so reverently. Under all the hurry and confusion and gaiety of the preparations and the celebration the significance of Christmas is not lost. The meaning of the Great Event whose anniversary we observe cannot be escaped. Its spirit has entered into the life of the civilized world.—Indianapolis Star.

SPIRIT OR SOUL OF THE OAK

Mysterious Mistletoe, Growing From Sturdy Tree, Looked Upon by Druids as Holy Thing.

THE mistletoe season draws near. Many boughs or pendants of this mysterious and beautiful plant will be torn from oaks and other trees and suspended from chandeliers and doors.

Many myths are associated with the mistletoe. The Druids of Britain looked upon it as a holy thing. To them the oak tree had a strong religious significance and seeing the curious plant growing out of the oak they conceived that it was the spirit or the soul of that tree. In this way it is believed that the Druids came to regard the mistletoe as the symbol of life and they therefore treated it with manifest reverence and gave it a prominent place in their religious rites. It is also believed that the Druids held the mistletoe as sacred to Fraya, the goddess of love, and that this is how it came to be associated with love-making and kissing.

The old herbalists, the forerunners of the physician, regarded the mistletoe as a thing having remarkable therapeutic properties. It was held to be good for epilepsy and for various convulsive "distempers." Many of our British and our Irish ancestors believed that the mistletoe was a charm against disease.

The mistletoe is a plant parasite, and yet not altogether a parasite. Though it would rather live off of the tree, it is the means of self-support. It fastens itself upon its host, penetrates its tissue and draws nourishment from it, often deforming it and sapping its vitality. Yet the mistletoe is a green, leafy plant; that is, it possesses the green pigment, chlorophyll, which gives the green color to normal vegetation. The presence of green leaves indicates that the mistletoe has the power, which independent green plants everywhere possess, of constructing organic foodstuffs, such as starch, out of inorganic compounds, carbon dioxide and water, utilizing sunlight as the source of energy in the process. It is, therefore, only partly a parasite so far as dependence upon its host for food is concerned, but it is none the less harmful on that account.

Dumplings for Stews.

One pint flour, 1/2 teaspoonful salt, 2 heaping teaspoonfuls of baking powder, sifted together four times. Mix with one cupful of rich milk; drop by spoonfuls into the boiling stew; cover tight and do not open for 15 minutes, when they should be done. These may also be dropped on a buttered plate and cooked in a steamer over fast-boiling water, and served with stewed cranberries or any stewed fruit.

The Bear's Head.

The old Christmas dishes were, of course, largely determined by the food material available for the Christmas board. The existence of thousands of wild boars in the woods made boar hunting one of the national sports, and the bear's head with its concomitant brains, one of the most popular among Christmas dishes. The old custom of serving up this ancient dish at Queen's college, Oxford, is associated with a legend to the effect that in olden days one of the students, when attacked by one of these wild denizens of the woods, saved himself from its jaws by thrusting his Greek lexicon down its throat, with the ejaculation, "Græcum est" (It is Greek). Of course the beast was choked, the "choking" possibilities of such a dry-as-dust volume being generally understood.

HER LESSER HALF.

Come into the next room, reader. I see we was right. That wasn't his fiancée, at all, although it was a sort of ex-fiancée, 'cause he's her lesser half. Merry Christmas.

Raisin Toffes.

One and one-half cupfuls brews sugar, 1/4 cupful vinegar, 2 tablespoonfuls butter, 1/2 cupful broken walnut meats, 1/2 cupful chopped raisins. Cook sugar and vinegar together until it forms a hard ball when tested in cold water. Add butter and pour on nuts and raisins arranged in a greased pan. As it hardens mark into squares.

THE CHIGGER

Here's to the chigger, The bug that's no bigger Than the point of a good-sized pin. But the point that he raises Itches like blazes And that's where the rub comes in.

THE PATCHWORK QUILT

IT WAS such a sunny December day that Marian could sit on the porch and do her Christmas sewing. This quilt was to surprise her grandmother, for old folks don't expect presents at any time of the year, least of all do they look for such a fine thing as Marian was preparing. It was gay with shreds and patches from many an old dress and the stitches were as neatly and closely put in as any dress-maker could have wished. Besides, upon every patch there was worked the name of someone whom the old lady loved. This required a good many patches and made quite a large quilt, but the child had worked long and patiently.

She was happily repaid for all her busy care when she saw a happy tear roll down Grandma's cheek as the lovely gift was unfolded, and heard her say: "Now I shall not feel so lonely at night, and what pleasant dreams I shall have with all my friends around me."—O. G. Hazard.

WISDOM?

Blessed are they into whose dust God never moulded the wander lust. For the sweat from the brow of the men who road, will turn to gold for the stay at home. And he who goes where the long trail calls will spend his life in overalls. But there are times, I will admit, when all my chores I long to quit and cast aside my heavy load and join the hobo on the road.

Teacher—What is the highest form of animal life? Little Pete (quickly)—The giraffe.

SEE THROUGH THIS?

She—"What would you call a man who hid behind a woman's skirts?" He—"A magician." FILLERS?—

Calcium arsenate will be scarce this next season, believe agricultural workers. All the more reason for good planting, early preparation, good culture and picking squares in growing cotton next year.

Get your seed early and plant the varieties best adapted to the section, advises College and department of agriculture workers. Good seed is one of the cheapest means of increasing acre yields.

"Let the farmer forever be honored in his calling; for they who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God."—Thomas Jefferson.

NOTICE

Complying with the law I herewith submit the following statement of amounts approved and paid each of the County Commissioners for services for year ending November 30, 1922.

J. C. TAYLOR, 20 days services attending meetings at \$2.00	40.00
240 miles one way at 10c	24.00
Extra services	10.00
E. W. WHITLEY: 19 days services attending meetings	38.00
228 miles one way at 10c	22.80
228 miles one way at 10c	22.80
Extra services	2.00
E. H. EURE: 20 days services attending meetings	40.00
Extra services	108.00
J. M. ELEY: 20 days services attending meetings	40.00
320 miles one way at 10c	32.00
Extra services	16.40
J. O. ASKEW, JR.: 16 days services attending meetings	32.00
192 miles on way at 10c	19.20
Extra services	65.00
F. G. TAYLOR: 18 days services attending meetings	36.00
162 miles at 10c, one way	16.20
Extra services	92.00
J. A. NORTHCOTT, Clerk County Commissioners.	\$ 144.20

Winton, N. C., December 4, 1922.

STORE OPEN EVENINGS 'TIL CHRISTMAS

BUY A MAN'S GIFT IN A MAN'S STORE

THAT'S ASSURANCE THAT YOUR GIFTS WILL BE APPROPRIATE, AND ONE THAT HE WILL APPRECIATE

WE'VE HUNDREDS OF ATTRACTIVE AND PRACTICAL ARTICLES THAT MEN LIKE AND WILL BE PLEASED TO HELP YOU MAKE YOUR SELECTIONS

ARMY & NAVY SALES STORE

Next to Bellamy's AHOSKIE, N. C.