

THE ALAMANCE GLEANER.

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NO. 46

Advice to the Aged.
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Charlotte, Salisbury, Durham, Hickory and a number of other towns are taking action to secure the commission form of municipal government.

When you have a bilious attack give Chamberlain's Tablets a trial. They are excellent. For sale by all dealers.

Gov. Marshall of Indiana, Vice-President-elect, has accepted an invitation to deliver the address at the University commencement next June.

Relieved in 20 minutes by Woodford's Sanitary Lotion. Never fails. Sold by Graham Drug Co.

A number of representatives of afternoon newspapers in Durham Saturday night and organized for the purpose of securing better press reports for afternoon papers.

Christmas Eve.

Dream, little child! The shadows fall.
Over the land the mystic veil
That hides the morrow from our eyes
Is swaying in the starlight pale.
Dream, little child! 'Tis Christmas eve.
Dream while the magic hours glide by.
Each wind that blows the snowflakes wild
Is laden with sweet mystery.



Dream, little child! The glowing coals
Are painting pictures on the wall.
Out from the quivering shadows there
You almost hear the thrilling call
Of "Merry Christmas, little maid!
I hope I've brought your heart's desire."
And Santa's shadow just above
Grows lifelike by the leaping fire.

Dream, little child! The Christmas air
Is glowing with your visions bright,
And all the joys tomorrow holds
Are shining on the page of night.
Dream, little child! And may the years
To you your richest treasures leave,
And may all happy dreams prove real
That come to you this Christmas eve!

Christmas Morning



The Joy of Christmas.
Religion is not an austere thing. It is all joy the moment we bear the Christmas angels chorusing until we swing into glory to the music of the redeemed throng about the throne. The service of Christ is gladness and peace. He means that his every disciple should live in a perpetual Christmas.

In the Nick of Time.
Woman (excitedly)—Have you filed my application for a divorce yet?
Lawyer—No, ma'am, but I am at work on the papers now.
Woman—Thank fortune, I am not too late! Destroy all papers and evidence at once, please.
Lawyer—A reconciliation has been brought about between you and your husband, I infer!
Woman—Gracious, no! He was run over and killed by a goods train this morning, and I want to retain you in my suit against the company for damages.—Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.

Colored Goldfish.
The artificial coloring of goldfish to meet prevailing tastes by keeping them in water containing certain chemicals is extensively carried on in Sicily.

Swedish Girls.
Every Swedish girl not born to wealth is taught a trade.

Flexible Ivory.
Ivory may be rendered flexible by immersion in a solution of pure phosphoric acid—specific gravity 1.13—until it partially gains in transparency. Then it is washed in cold, soft water and dried. It will harden if exposed to air, but may again be made pliable by immersing in hot water.

Oldest Pipe Organ.
A church on the island of Gotland, in the Baltic sea, has the oldest pipe organ in the world, an instrument dating from 1240.

CHRISTMAS AMONG THE MIKADO'S PEOPLE.

WORDS adequate to a description of the festive season in Japan are difficult to command. Even the camera and brush would fail to do justice to a scene of such gay activity and color. As Christmas approaches, city, town and village take on a new appearance, and the diversions of the people a new turn and tone. In Japan Christmas is not a mere holiday. It represents a holiday season in the fullest sense of the term.

For weeks before the dawn of Christmas day preparations elaborate in kind and degree are under way. Men in tight fitting costumes, their professions or the contractors' names printed on their backs, spend day after day decorating the streets and houses. Strands for the lanterns and the festive greetings must be erected and a thou-



and little matters have to be seen to, before all is in complete readiness for the bustle of gladness.

Every house of the many that shelter the fifty millions of the Japanese empire, however humble the abode may be, has some sign of the New Year idea. Before every gate and doorway is placed the chief symbol of the season, what the Japanese call the kadomatsu, or pine tree of the honorable date. At each side of the entrance to the house or garden three short pieces of bamboo tree, cut at an acute angle, stand tied together as a pedestal from which rises the ever glorious pine tree, in shape something like a Christmas tree, for the young pine is the emblem of a loyalty and life that are ever fresh and green.

In addition, over the door of each house is set up a lobster attached to an orange. These are usually the gifts of a friend to express the good wish that the recipient will live till the lobsters are bent up like a lobster. Whether the orange represents orange blossoms and plenty of weddings in the family is not clearly known. Above the ornaments of the doorway is stretched a piece of artistically woven straw rope, the shinto sign of reverence for the ancestral gods. As one goes along the streets they seem gradually to be transformed into long and winding avenues of trees, suggestions of the ancestral hunting grounds, and at night the whole is lit up by innumerable lanterns that shed a varicolored light on the decorations and the crowds that throng the thoroughfares. The blaze of lanterns color lends the scene a magic touch that charms the Japanese mind and has no little attraction for the foreigner.

To tell of the endless array of gifts that at this season pass between friend and friend, neighbor and neighbor, would be impossible. Among the more common may be mentioned a basket containing a dozen eggs or oranges, a box of sponge cake, or a cake of soap, the latter gift being in no way intended as a reflection on the beneficiary.—New York Post.

Let Her Pass.
See the merry Christmas shopper,
But for goodness' sake don't stop her!
Let her hike along her pathway;
Let her pass you with a smile,
Though you know her, don't detain her,
For the fact could not be plainer
That if you two get to chatting,
You will merely block the aisle.

Do not ask her how she's feeling,
If her sister's baby's peeing,
From that awful secret fever
Or if it will affect her mind,
Don't trouble about her mother
Or her nephew or her brother,
Can the idle gossip, lady,
There's a crowd's work to be done!

Do not ask her what she's knitting
Or crocheting for a riddle,
Little Christmas gift this season,
If you get her started she
Will relate her whole life story,
All its tragedy and glory,
And there's full two hundred people
Trying hard to walk on by.

See the merry Christmas shopper,
But for goodness' sake don't stop her!
There's no reality now you can think of
That is so just now worth while
Let her go about her buying,
Though to speak to her you're dying,
Cut it out this Christmas season
Let's have freedom in the aisle!

Christmas Don'ts.
Don't try to pay debts or return obligations in your Christmas giving.
Don't give trashy things. Many an attic could tell strange stories about Christmas presents.

Don't make presents which your friends will not know what to do with and which would merely encumber the home.

CHRISTMAS DAY IN BETHLEHEM.

At this season of the year probably no city of the ancient world presents a more picturesque or attractive aspect than Bethlehem, whose population is many times multiplied by the presence of a vast army of pilgrims from every part of the globe. Mecca, in the height of the great annual Moslem influx, or Haridwar, in upper India, at the season of the sacred festival, may have much greater but they cannot be said to have more devout or more cosmopolitan crowds than those that flock to the city of David in the Christmas week. Shaped wonderfully like a crescent, yet the only thoroughly Christian town in all Syria, Bethlehem puts on its gayest garb as Christmas approaches. At all times a pretty and attractive place, it is then a thousand-fold more so. The thrifty townspeople, their handsome wives and dark-eyed daughters, prepare for the festivities weeks in advance and are ready to welcome the first arrivals.

No words can adequately describe the grandeur of the Christmas services at the Church of the Nativity, which is the center of interest for the pilgrims. These services are kept up the entire week. On the way to church the visitors are beset by peddlers, who insist on pushing under their very noses little ornaments of olive-wood and mother-of-pearl. The Church of the Nativity is one of the oldest structures in existence, and, although it has been repeatedly repaired, it still retains much of its original form and character. In the side aisles at different altars priests chant the service in tones that swell and die amid the tall columns that support the roof.

At the shrines groups of pilgrims kneel in reverent adoration, while still other groups are guided around the church by monks, who point out the rich relics and sacred places, the most venerated of all being the shrine of the manger, beneath the church, which, it is claimed, incloses the actual birthplace of the Saviour. During the Christmas festivities this manger shrine is resorted to by great multitudes, who crowd each other in their pious eagerness to kiss the marble slab on the floor with a silver star in the center.

So fervid and enthusiastic are these worshippers that the marble slab has been repeatedly kissed away in places, rendering a new slab necessary. The same experience has occurred with the stone covering of the crypt in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

MARKET PLACE IN BETHLEHEM ON CHRISTMAS MORNING.

seam, which has had to be renewed several times in consequence of its outer surface being literally kissed away by pious devotees. The tradition is that Christ was once laid in this manger. A few feet distant is the chapel of the Magi, where the wise men of old, Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar, came worshipping with rare gifts.

A subdued, rich light is diffused throughout the grotto by the softly glowing lamps over the star, and the swinging censurers and an agreeable odor to an otherwise close and musty atmosphere. All worldly thoughts are banished as the kneeling pilgrims listen spellbound to the melodious chant of the sacred office or the full, sturdy, noble singing of the grand looking, bearded priests. The low roof, the "singing rock," the censurers, the music, the lights, all seem to dissolve, and in their stead there appear to the moist eyes of the adoring pilgrims the manger cradle with the babe, the Virgin mother and Joseph, the mean surroundings, the oxen and their litter of straw and the gentle, wondering sheep.

The Christmas festivities, however, are not confined to the Church of the Nativity. The week is a general festival in the town and a season of financial harvest for its citizens. Like all orientals, they are thrifty to avariciousness, and the sight of the splendid gifts that are brought year after year to the church and especially the Grotto chapel, by strangers from afar widely excites their cupidity. Among these thousands that are living temporarily in tents, or, it may be, quartered in the more comfortable convent, there are many rich who can be easily persuaded into generosity when under the supernatural influences that seem to pervade everything at Bethlehem.—Philadelphia Record.

Missouri and Iron.
Missouri was the first state west of Ohio to mine and smelt iron, a small charcoal furnace having been erected in 1815.

Lefty Golf Course.
Gyants, in Tibet, boasts the highest golf course in the world. The next highest is the course at Guimerg, in the Himalayas, which is 8,500 feet above the sea level. But Gyants, standing a height of 12,100 feet, easily bears off the palm for golf at a high altitude.

THE MISTLETOE MAID



THE Spirit of the Mistletoe
Her spell about the land throws wide,
And eyes are bright and cheeks aglow
Where throbs the pulse of Christmastide.

O gracious branch with berries pearled,
What gloried green surpasses this,
Whose magic aways the whole wide world,
The rhythmic sweetness of a kiss?
Yet as the winter, weeping, dies,
The charm still masters Cupid, so
Whene'er he looks to Psyche's eyes
He sees the mirrored mistletoe.

"JEST 'FORE CHRISTMAS"

BY EUGENE FIELD.

FATHER calls me William, sister calls me Will,
Mother calls me Willie, but the fellers call me Bill.
Mighty glad I ain't a girl—rather be a boy
Without them sashes, curls an' things that's worn by Fauntleroy!
Love to chawnk green apples an' go swimmin' in the lake—
Hate to take the castor ole they give for belly ache!
'Most all the time, the whole year round, they ain't no flies on me,
But jest 'fore Christmas I'm as good as I kin be!

Got a yeller dog named Sport, sick him on the cat;
First thing she knows she doesn't know where she's at!
Got a clipper sled, an' when us kids go out to slide
'Long come the grocery cart, an' we all hook a ride!
But sometimes when the groceryman is worried an' cross
He reaches at us with his whip an' larpups up his hoss,
An' then I laf an' holler, "Oh, ye never teched me!"
But jest 'fore Christmas I'm as good as I kin be.

Grammar says she hopes that when I git to be a man
I'll be a missionary like her eldest brother Dan,
As was et up by cannibals that lives on Ceylon's isle,
Where every prospect pleases an' only man is vile.
But grammar she has never been to see a wild west show
Nor read the life of Daniel Boone or else I guess she'd know
That Buff'lo Bill an' cowboys is good enough for me!
But jest 'fore Christmas I'm as good as I kin be!

An' then old Sport he hangs around as solemn-like an' still;
His eyes they seem a-sayin', "What's the matter, little Bill!"
The old cat sneaks down off her perch an' wonders what's become
Of them two enemies of hern that use to make things hum!
But I'm so polite an' 'ten' so earnestly to biz
That mother says to father, "How improved our Willie is!"
But father, havin' been a boy himself, suspicious me
When jest 'fore Christmas I'm as good as I kin be!

For Christmas, with its lots and lots of candy, cakes and toys,
Was made, they say, for proper kids and not for naughty boys;
So wash yer face an' brush yer hair an' mind your p's an' q's,
An' don't bust out yer pantalons, an' don't wear out yer shoes;
Say "yessum" to the ladies an' "yessur" to the men,
An' when there's a company don't pass yer plate for pie again,
But, thinkin' of the things yer'd like to see upon that tree,
Jest 'fore Christmas be as good as yer kin be!

Cured.
A cat which had the habit of taking its food under the sofa annoyed its mistress so much that at last her husband said he would cure it of the trick. "Go off to bed, lass; leave it to me," said he. "All right, George; but, mind you, do not hurt the poor thing!" George was so long downstairs that his wife was asleep when he turned in. The next morning, however, she asked how he had got on with the cat. "Oh, I sawed its legs off!" said George. "What, the cat's?" "No, no; the dog's!"—London Express.

Flower Bedecked Windows.
Here is an idea which could be adapted to the beautifying of towns with great advantage. The municipality of Paris offers prizes for the most attractive window decorations by using blooming plants, there being several classes in which competitors may strive—that is, single windows, whole house fronts and the fronts of mercantile establishments.

A Historian's Joke.
Macaulay is not usually regarded as a humorous writer, but in his "History of England" he perpetrates the following in relating the death of Charles II.: "Several of the prescriptions have been preserved. One of them is signed by fourteen doctors. He recovered his senses, but he was evidently in a situation of extreme danger."

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