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The Christmas Carol

THE Christmas carol as a feature of the holiday observances is an English rather than an American custom, and the "carols" who sing them under the windows of English houses or on street corners are quite unknown with us. Yet the Yuletide carol plays some part in the Christmas exercises of almost all our churches, one in particular, "O Tidings of Comfort and Joy," being used in all Episcopal churches. It is included in the hymnal, but not any one may have forgotten it we give it here.

God rest you, merry gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay;
For Jesus Christ our Saviour,
Was born upon this day.
To save us all from Satan's power,
When we were gone astray,
Oh tidings of comfort and joy,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour,
Was born on Christmas day.

Curiously enough, carol singing at Christmas time came part from heathendom. The Anglo-Saxon, Gaelic, or Yule, was an ancient pagan festival which in the wisdom of the early missionaries was retained with a new significance. The season's Christening then had its influence upon the carol, which developed into two classes, one of joyous expressions of the Saviour's birth and the other singing of wassail. Though carols are said to have been sung in the primitive church, the earliest one extant is of the thirteenth century. Its manuscript is now in the

Britannic Museum. It is written in Anglo-Norman, and the first stanza, freely translated, is as follows:

Now, lordings, listen to our ditty,
Strangers come from afar,
Let poor minstrels move your pity,
In this mansion, as they tell us,
A Christmas wassail keeps today,
And as the king of all folk,
Reigns with uncontrolled sway.

A modernized form of this carol was used at Oxford up to a recent time. Another carol which was sung at the beginning of the sixteenth century and which shows a true religious feeling is this:

When Christ was born of Mary, Joe,
In Bethlehem, in that fair city,
And angels sang the praises,
In Excelsis Gloria.

Herodmen beheld the angels bright,
To them appeared with great light,
And said "Godeys sone is born this night"
In Excelsis Gloria.

They sang ye comys to save (man) kynde,
As yn Scriptures we fynde,
Therefore this song have we in mynde,
In Excelsis Gloria.

Then, Lord, for thy great grace
Grant us the blys to thy nation,
Where we may syng to thy solas
In Excelsis Gloria.

Among the many carols of later date are many of exquisite beauty—St. Bernard's "White Shepherd," "Watch Their Flocks by Night," Isaac Watts' "Joy to the World, the Lord is Come," Charles Wesley's "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing," and Phillips Brooks' "O Little Town of Bethlehem." Of another age are these Christmas verses of Robert Herrick, the quaint old English poet:

Tell us, then clear and heavenly tongue,
Where is the Babe that lately sprung?
Lead us the lily banks among?

Or say if this new Birth of ours
Sprung laid within some ark of flowers,
Sprung with dew light, Thou canst
Lead us to it?

Declare us, bright star, if we shall seek
Him in the morning's blushing cheek
Or in the bed of spices through
To find him out?

Milton's "Hymn on the Nativity" must, of course, be ranked among the best of Christmas songs, while the "Gloria in Excelsis" of the King James Bible will always be sung wherever the English language makes its way.

When Christmas Comes on Sunday

By LOUIS E. THAYER
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To us little fellows Sunday is a day different
From all the other days that's in the week,
Cause you've kind of got to creep around on
tip-toe;
And you've sort of got to whisper when you
speak;
If you don't, your papa ma is sure to scold you
and call you bad and scraggled boys,
For Sunday days were made for thought and
work,
But they wasn't made for romping and for
noise.

And I don't think that Christmas day's to come
on Sunday!
Why, somehow, somehow, I don't see but
cause when it's the good whines can't laugh
and holler?
Say, it's pretty hard on little chaps like me,
And if a feller jer' forgives the quiet,
And bubbles out
a little, who's to
blame?
It's pretty hard
when Christmas
comes on
Sunday.

For I know the
day will never
come the same.
I know jes' how
twell it's when,
in the morning,
I find my
sneezing
and blowing
of toys.
I seem to hear my
father say,
"Well, John-
ny,
You may look at
them, but don't
make any
noise."
And me, perhaps,
will bring me
out a trumpet
and say, "Well,
Johnny, it is
Sunday now,
you know."
Say, it's pretty hard
waiting for tomorrow,
What good's a trumpet that you dassen't blow?

I wish they'd print the calendars all over
And make our Christmas come some other
day,
Jes' so little chaps can have some freedom
And romp and shout and whistle their way,
There's lots of things that ain't jes' as they
should be,
And 'cause they ain't it seems to me a shame,
It's pretty hard when Christmas comes on
Sunday,
For I know the day will never seem the same.

TELL you what, the day will jes' blow over,
And we won't hardly know that it's been
here.
Christmas eve will be about the only Christmas
That we will have a chance to know this year.
Another carol which makes the whole thing harder
is that we have a Sunday every week.
While we have to go and have our only Christmas
When we almost have to whisper as we
speak.

"DON'T MAKE ANY NOISE!"
NOW, it's a little feller, don't remember
And laughs out loud and hollers jes' a bit,
And if he sees you sneezing as they ought to,
Say, "Who's that sneezing and blowing and hollering?"
Say, he says, "I'm just a little fellow, and I'm
sneezing and blowing and hollering because it's
Christmas day and I'm happy."
It's pretty hard when Christmas comes on
Sunday,
For I know the day will never seem the same.

Christmas Twice a Year.
Madagascar is probably the only place in the world where Christmas is celebrated twice a year, and where there are also two New Year's days. Since the influx of missionaries the Christmas issue of an edict that the Christmas year should be followed. But in commemorating the year the date of the first day was set some time in October or November. Since the natives have converted to the Christian religion they observe Christmas on the 25th of their own December, but also have made a holiday out of the day in their year which corresponds to our Christmas.

Beware of Counterfeits
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IT was the dawn of Christmas day, 1812, and over the blue Atlantic, under the warm skies of the Tropic of Cancer, was slipping heavily laden with scarce stores a way, the privateer schooner Governor Tompkins, four-teen guns, of New York. Officers and crew were happy. Fortune had favored them. Since leaving port early in July, some three weeks ago, the declaration of war against England, they had taken a number of British vessels and had suffered but slight injury. The crew, save those on watch, were asleep, dreaming of sweetest shores and plum-dug at sea, when from the lookout at the masthead the cry of "Shall, boy!" roused man and vessel to action. Up from the cabin bolted the officers; up from the forecastle, roused the sailors, and at the same moment up from the horizon peeped the masts of three ships. This might have been a day of "peace on earth," but it was not a day of peace on the ocean, not for the Governor Tompkins! She shook out all her canvas, and with the English flag flying as a bit of deception she started in pursuit.

The wind was very light. The chase was a tedious one. It lasted from dawn until 3 in the afternoon. Slowly nearer and nearer drew the Governor Tompkins, but so slowly that the plum-dug appetites were spoiled by exasperation and impatience. The largest of the ships appeared to be a good sized transport vessel, and vision of the specie perhaps aboard her filled the minds of the folk upon the privateer. The two other craft were merchantmen. The three vessels would make a fine Christmas gift, and added to prizes gone before, would enable the Governor Tompkins to speed home rejoicing.

Still, as the privateer little by little cut down the distance, her people began to be not so confident. The transport looked so much bigger than they had pictured her at first. Captain Nathaniel Shaler held his long brass telescope trained upon her, and there was that in her which puzzled him. She was what might be called a merchantman, and on her deck was from her sides up almost to her topmasts, and her rigging extended fully to his officers. "Mr. Farnum, go forward and see what you can make of her." So Mr. Farnum, first lieutenant, went toward the bows to take a peep down avarit a furious squall.

The squall struck the schooner first, and ere her light sail could be taken in—aye, in Captain Shaler's own words, "Almost before I could turn round" she had been rushed onward, faster than her liking, for he had been under the guns not of a transport, but of a frigate, waiting for her!

Captain Shaler was a Yankee skipper, and he did the best he could. The

REPLIED WITH THE VERY WORST INTENTIONS
squall gave him and his all that they could attend to for a few minutes. To attempt to tack in such a blow was hazardous. If it did not wreck the schooner it would at least expose her to the guns of a frigate. He therefore, he trimmed his sails, discarded the English flag and hoisted three American ensigns, and, standing right on parallel with the frigate, gallantly opened with his broadside. The Britisher, having, as he thought, his privateer in a box, replied with the very worst intentions in the world. His first round was a scorcher. A twenty-four pound ball struck John Johnson, a negro seaman, in the back and cut away all the lower part of his body. But as he lay dying on the deck he exclaimed several times to his "mates": "Fire away, my boys! No haul or down!"

Another twenty-four pounder similarly mangled John Davis, also a negro. He fell overboard, and, being himself now useless and in the way, begged to be thrown overboard. Other shot from the same broadside wounded First Lieutenant John Farnum and Seaman James Dougherty, John Parker and John Sunabell slightly, Thomas Lovell severely and Thomas Davis so badly that he soon afterward died. This same broadside exploded an ammunition box containing two powder cartridges for a nine pounder gun. The cartouches and these promptly dashed up so violently that they forced sparks through a crack in the wooden cap which fitted over the magazine to close it. Luckily for the Governor Tompkins the magazine had been drenched and the fire screen in the shape of a wet blanket had been hung before the magazine hatch so as to serve in just such an emergency as this. The sparks died in vain and expired. Half an hour had passed since the squall had arisen so inopportunistly for the Governor Tompkins, but so opportunely for the frigate. The two vessels were running side by side, the privateer's position being her lighter guns and the man-of-war's heavier armament. The Governor Tompkins was swift, and Captain Shaler had hoped that in the course of a few broadsides she would draw ahead and out of the reach of sailing. But this time the Governor Tompkins had almost met her match at sailing. The frigate was nearly as fast as she.

Instead of spurting ahead the good schooner only gradually—ah, how gradually—progressed from a little astern the frigate's beam to opposite her bows, and during all this process the solid shot from the frigate's guns were being pelted at her round after round. The British tars were not reliable "chaps." They did not live up to the reputation of their first broadside. Not a ball after that touched the schooner's hull. She dashed on practically unscathed. Farther and farther she forged beyond the frigate's bows. Fewer guns could be brought to bear upon her. A long half hour and the British shot began to fall short. The Governor Tompkins' men breathed easier. Then the agile wind dropped, leaving them well nigh becalmed, while the frigate kept going on.

Her shot again reached their vicinity. The privateersmen hastily put out their sweeps, and in desperation all hands pressed and tugged at the great, unwieldy oars. A detail was ordered to throw overboard whatever stuff could be spared from the deck, and, passing up shot from the hold, they hoisted that, too, over the rail. Plunk, plunk it went into the sea until 2,000 pounds had thus been disposed of. The schooner began to gain on her pursuer, another half hour and the enemy's muzzles once more fell short. Twenty-five minutes the privateer proceeded to bury her dead and to clean decks. She was a sorry sight, but let us believe, a wiser schooner. Thereafter the heavy weather eye, in addition to her fighting eye, pealed and was wary of "transport" innocently painted, but with boarding nettings stretched.

America's First Christmas Day

By A. W. FERRIS
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Christmas eve four centuries and centuries ago the first Christmas was celebrated in the city of Rome. It was the day of the great feast of the Transfiguration, and the day of the Transfiguration of Christ. The feast of the Transfiguration was celebrated in Rome for centuries before the first Christmas was celebrated in the city of Rome. The feast of the Transfiguration was celebrated in Rome for centuries before the first Christmas was celebrated in the city of Rome.



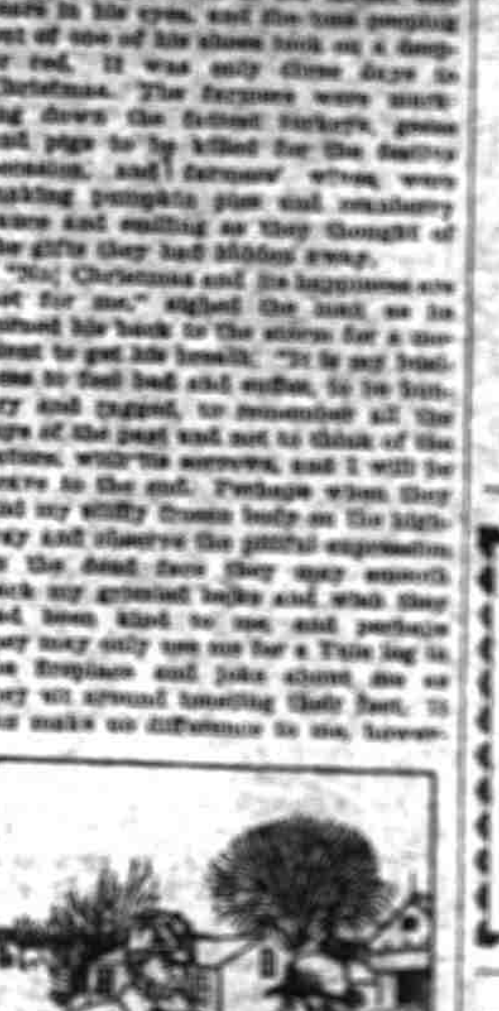
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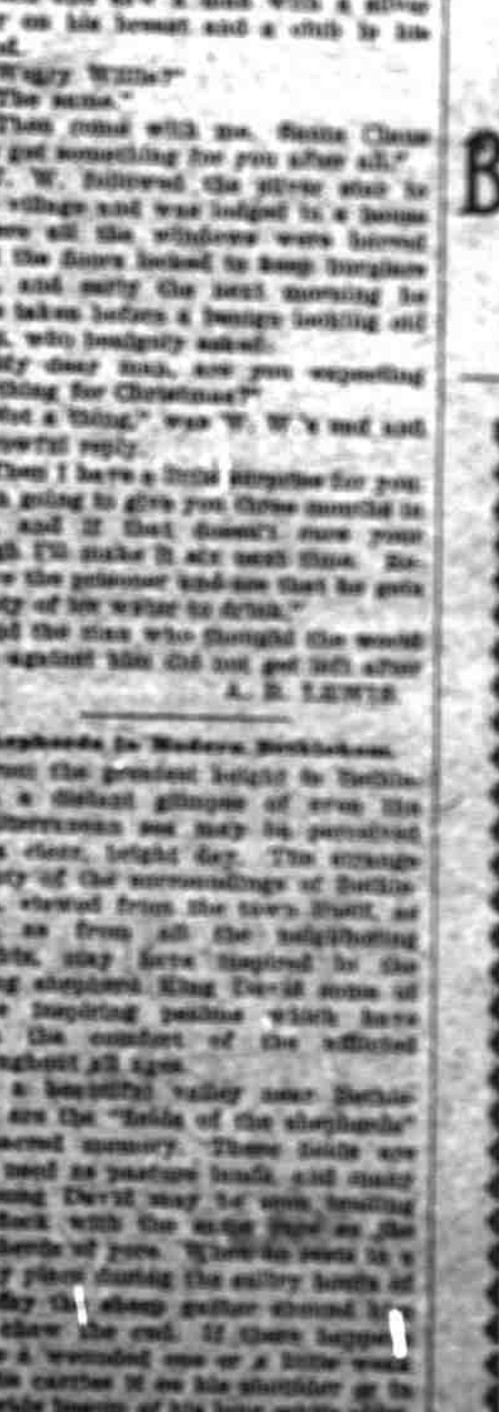
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His Christmas Luck

"WELL, there is my Christmas luck!"
The man who spoke these words was standing over a counter at a little grocery store in the city of Rome. He was a young man, and he was looking at a little package which he had just bought. He was looking at it with a smile, and he was saying to himself, "That is my Christmas luck!"



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