Christmas Quatrains

By GEORGE CREEL

AGAIN the star dawns in the eastern sky;
Again we hear the shepherd's startled cry
As waking from his midnight sleep he sees
The camels of the wise men sweeping by.

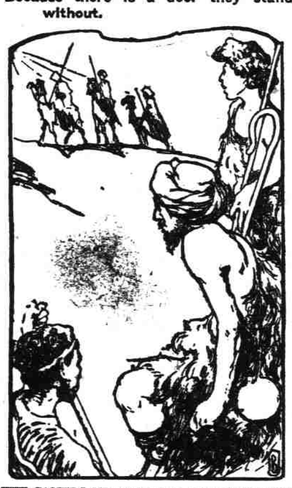
The years have worked their measure of decay.
Where are the inn and stable? Who can say
"This is the spot" or "There the very place
Where Lord Christ came into the light of day?"

No more chants Caiphas his vengeful song,
And scattered to the winds are all the throng
That clamored for Barabbas, only held
In memory by reason of their wrong.

The weak souled Pilate long has passed away;
Great Caesar, too, is now at one with clay,
Their mighty Rome forgotten save as theme
To keep the grumbling schoolboy from his play.

But still the scent of frankincense and myrhh
Steals down the centuries, and as it were
But yesterday, so sweet and new it seems,
Did Virgin Mary bear the Harbinger.

Let fools with much pretense of wisdom scout
The truth and wag their heads in owlish doubt
Of Great Jehovah's all embracing scheme
Because there is a door they stand without.



THE CAMELS OF THE WISE MEN SWEEPING BY.

Content are we, the children of his hand,
To wait, nor insolently demand,
Assured that in God's own good time he will
Unlock the door and let us understand.

Of all thy gracious gifts, O God Most High,
The dearest of them all is this clear eye
Of faith with which we shrine the miracle
Of faroff Bethlehem and time defy.

O Virgin, wert thine eyes less unafraid
Or didst thou shrink, sore startled and dismayed,
When first thou felt that life within and learned
On thee God's precious burden had been laid?

What must have been thy happy, sweet amaze
To see the aureate halo blaze
And from the wide flung gates of paradise
To hear the mighty harmonies of praise!

Loud sang the golden throated cherubim
And all the wheeling hosts of seraphim,
Whose snowy pinions changed to canopy
Of virgin white the heaven's sapphire rim.

HUMILITY DIVINE! A MANGER BIRTH.

Hosanna! Glory to the Son of Man!
O happy moments ere his work began
Of lifting from the world its weight of sin
And making straight salvation's tender plan!

No hint of Pontius Pilate's last decree,
The lonely horror of Gethsemane;
No prescience of thorny diadem
Or shadow from the hill of Calvary.

Humility divine! A manger birth—
The humble stable bathed in holy light—
The Babe upon a truss of straw—the mild
Eyed kine awaked to wonder at the sight!

Alas, still lingers issue of that kine,
The thick of wit, who can detect no sign
Of God in Christ's dear birth nor understand
The marvel of the holy bread and wine.

And sons of doubting Thomas still abide
With us on earth and still the truth deride
Because they cannot grasp his nail torn hands
And see the blood gush from his pierced side.

O shame of shames! The wise men saw on high
God's guiding star gleam in the eastern sky
And straightway journeyed forth across the world,
With ne'er a question of where or why.

Thy place within the heavens ever hold,
O blessed star, and like those men of old,
May we have faith and hope to follow on
And at our journey's end the Christ behold!

—Kansas City Independent.

This Unromantic Age.

"It sho'ly do look," said Miss Miami Brown sadly, "like dar war no mo' romance dese days."

"What's de trouble?" asked Erastus Pinkly.

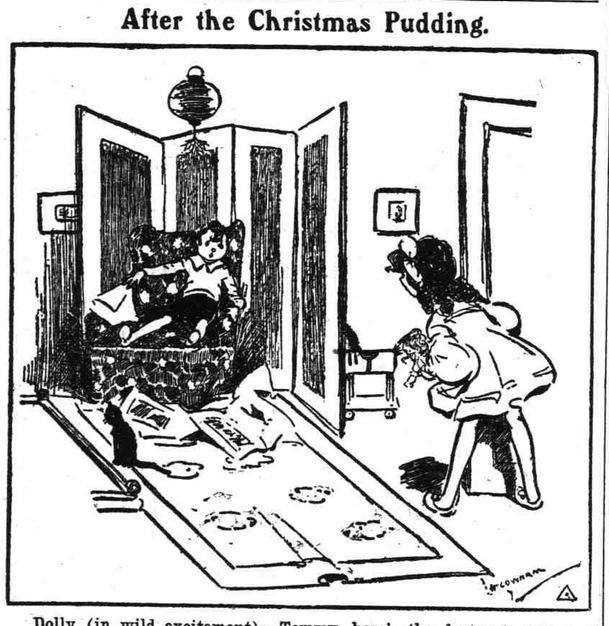
"I takes notice dat when you asks a gemman to a Christmas dinner he doesn' 'splay no interest in whethuh dey's gwine to be mistletoe in de pahlor, but keeps hintin' aroun' to fin' out how 'bout de turkey an' fixin's on de dinner table."

A Word of Holiday Caution.

Little Gracie—I don't think my new doll is quite as nice as your new doll.

Little Ethel—Well, I don't think you ought to say much about it, 'cause it might hurt Santa Claus' feelings.—Brooklyn Life.

After the Christmas Pudding.



Dolly (in wild excitement)—Tommy, here's the doctor to see you
Tommy (sadly)—Oh, tell him I'm too ill to see him!