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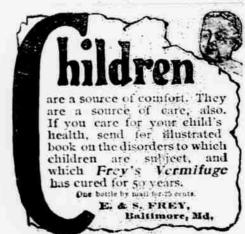
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HENDERSON, N. C., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1897.

A TALE OF TWO CHRISTMASES.

"Well, this has been what I call a a great sigh of content as he threw him-

"Now, I imagine," he went on, talking to himself in a light hearted way,



"OH, MY SON! HOW COULD YOU DO IT?" would tempt even me to give up knocking about the world and settle down, as they all want me to. By George, I have a notion to do it. Mother says that granddad wants somebody to look after the estate, and if he could only trust me he would be glad to have me do it.

"Confound it all, that's what sticks in my crop. Nobody ever trusted me so far as I know, and I never would explain anything, no matter how suspicious the circumstances might be. So 1 always got blamed for everything Hanged if I don't think that even mother used to think I took all the cream that any of the cats stole.

"Foolish, of course, to run away and go to sea, but what could a fellow do when he is always getting into scrapes and is too proud to deny anything even when he isn't guilty? Well, I've seen half a dozen years of life and had a good fling out of it, but I don't remember that I ever did anything to be ashamed of. Hello! Who's there? Come in, the door isn't locked. Why, mother, is it you? Crying? What on earth is the mat-

Springing to his feet, he took the poor little lady in his arms and placed her carefully in the big chair. Then pulling a stool forward he sat on it at her feet, and laying his head in her lap said: "There, mother. Do you remember, this is the way I used to sit when I was a little fellow? Now tell me all about it.

What has happened?" But she only sobbed the harder for a time, and at length when she could command her voice she cried out passionately, "Oh, my son, my son, how could you do it?"

The curly head was lifted instantly, and the handsome, boyish face grew sullen and hard. Recklessness and pride were Habberton family traits, and Ben, though a younger son, was a true Hab-

So he said nothing, knowing that he would hear more presently, and he did, for soon his mother talked on weakly and, if she had only known it, foolishly: "You know your grandfather al-...... ways suspected you of being wild, and after you went to sea he always said you'd come to some bad end, and I had hard work to get him to ask you here for Christmas, but after you came he liked you ever so much. He would not have asked you to sit with him this afternoon if he hadn't, and even when he dropped asleep and you left the room he wasn't angry. He said of course you wanted to be with the young folks. But how could you take that money? You ought to have asked me if you needed any. I know you said you had come back as poor as you went away, but I did not think you needed it right away. I can return it to your grandfather, of

Office: Dr. Boyd's old rooms, over course, but he is so angry that he says he will have you arrested in the morning, and I do believe, Ben, that he would have made you his heir. How could you do it, Ben?" Ben had grown very white, and his

> mother paused, but he said quietly: "So you and granddad have discovered that I am a thief, have you? How did you find it out?". "Why, he had \$500 in bills in his writing desk. It seems he saw it there

fists were clinched tightly when his

just before you went to his room, and there was no one else there up to the time he missed it." "So he says I stole it, does he?" "Don't use such words, Ben. Of course you didn't mean it for stealing, but I am afraid he will have you arrested-and think of the disgrace! Why didn't you ask me for money, Ben?".

It was something like an imprecation



"HE IS GONE. his breath as he rose to his feet and walked up and down the room for a few moments. But no word more of any the year. kind could his mother get from him un-

OIL ON THE WATERS. her room, and, kissing her tenderly, bade her good night.

Going back to his own room, he resumed his reverie. "Well," he thought, "I had a merry Christmas, for it's after 12 o'clock. And now for the old life. Christmas," said Ben Habberton, with Cowardly, folks would call it, I suppose, to run away with a charge like self into an easy chair in the great guest | that over my head, but I don't think it chamber that was his for the time and is. If I stay, the old man will surely stretched his feet out toward the cheery make a row in the morning and there will be a great scandal. If I go, he will be too proud to make the scandal for nothing. He will call \$500 a cheap price to get rid of good for nothing me, and that will be the end of it. Poor mother thinks I'm guilty, too, but they won't tell anybody else for shame's sake, and if they can't trust me let them

think what they will. "Five hundred dollars," he muttered, with a nasty sort of laugh, under his breath. "That's rather a small sum to turn thief for, but I wish I had a hundredth part of it just to get grub till I strike another job. I could get it from mother easily enough, but I'd rather go hungry than take it from her, thinking what she does.

"But it's best for me to go. I would not care so much about if it it weren't for Alice. Perhaps that's best too. I don't know whether she would care. Probably I never will know now, so here goes.'

And opening his window carefully and noiselessly he swung himself out on a huge vine that clung to the side of the house, and, lowering himself hand over hand, he was soon on the ground. It was only five miles to town, and he was there long before daybreak.

Now Alice was a certain wide eyed, clear witted, young second cousin of this headstrong youth. They had never met till three days before, but great things are done in three days when Cupid lurks around old fashioned country houses where the mistletoe is used among the decorations, and Ben was very much mistaken in thinking she wouldn't care. She would and she did.

Being quick witted, Alice was also impulsive, and sometimes it was well that she was so. On the morning after Christmas she passed old Mr. Habberton's door very early on her way down stairs and was greatly surprised to hear angry words inside. As the door was open she entered. "I tell you he stole the money, and I

shall send for the police," stormed the old man, and Ben's mother, who had been pleading for mercy, gave up the struggle. "I would have sent last night if it hadn't been Christmas." "Why, who has been stealing, Uncle

Ralph?" asked Alice. Even in his anger the old man paused. It seemed a cruel thing to accuse one of



"HT'LL BE A MERRY CHRISTMAS, AFTER ALL!" HE EXCLAIMED. his own kin, but the case was too clear. "That young rascal, Ben!" he exclaim-

ed and told the story of the money. Then Alice had occasion, if never be fore, to be thankful for her quickness. "I don't think Ben looks like a thief," she said, "but, uncle, you say you saw the money in your desk just before he

"I certainly did," said Mr. Habber-

"But are you sure you left it there?" asked the girl. The old man looked at her in surprise Then one emotion chased another across his rugged features until presently he sank back in his chair with an expression of great disgust at himself "I'm surely getting old," he exclaimed. "I put it in the safe and forgot that I had done so. Con't let anybody tell

Ben that I suspected him." "But I told him last night," said his "Then go quickly and tell him to come here till I apologize. You have all of you been too ready to accuse that boy

all his life This seemed rather hard to Alice, who had certainly never accus d Ben of anything, but that wise young woman held her tengue while Mrs. Habberton hurried out of the room. In a few moments she returned, exclaiming, "He is gone!"

Lighthouse 34 was situated about half den rocks anywhere within a mile or

The lighthouse keeper had a helper, so that usually there were two men on of them was obtainable at times, and it happened a year after Ben Habberton had left his grandfather's house that the with his family at Christmas time, and

lighthouse tower, gazing out at the furious storm that raged and meditating



THE FRENCH CANADIANS.

Where the Day Is More of a Holy Day Than a Holiday and Where Gifts to the Little Folk Are Not Credited to Santa

Jean Eaptiste Leblanc of lower Canada has this advantage over his cousins in the rest of the Dominion, that his Christmas celebrations are not confined to one day, but are divided between that great holiday and New Year's. Then again he has the further advantage of an early start, for while the English folk are still sleeping snugly in their warm beds he is out attending mass at church or cathedral. Indeed it may be said with truth that Christmas among the French Canadians is more of a holy day than a holiday, as it constitutes one of the four great church festi-

vals of the year. midnight on Christmas eve, when, summoned by the chimes of the bells, all good Catholics who can manage it crowd to the sacred edifices, which are appropriately adorned for the occasion, and there take part in an elaborate service lasting nearly two hours. The splendor of this service, of course, varies according to the equipment and facilities of the establishment, being comparatively simple in the remote country churches, while in the large edifices it becomes a superb religious function.

The midnight mass in Notre Dame church or St. James' cathedral, Montreal, celebrated as it is before congregations of many thousand people, is perhaps the most imposing and awe inspiring religious ritual to be witnessed upon this continent. The musical features of these services always receive eareful attention, with the result that the whole proceeding is made so interesting as to attract large numbers of Protestants who are willing to forego the comforts of sleep in order that they



NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL, MONTREAL, may be spectators of the proceedings. To what extent this is the case may be a mile from the mainland on the point judged from the fact that for the mid- ship was immediately in smooth water. of a reef that lay irregularly parallel to night mass in the Jesuits' church of Overboard went her anchors as quickly the shore, leaving plenty of clear water | Montreal, where the music is always | as the captain could give the order, and between. The coast was rocky, and the of an exceptionally high order. Those she was safe. light was maintained as a warning, for not having the right to a seat in the For the rest of the night Ben watcha vessel that should approach too near church may obtain one by payment of a ed, throwing a little more oil from time was liable to be dashed to pieces on hid- fee, and these seats may be reserved in to time, and in the morning, the storm ening everflow as they come in, solid

theater or the opera. Nor is this the only important religious function of the day. In many guard at 34, but leave of absence for one places there is also an evening service, where again the proceedings are very elaborate and ornate and the music very beautiful Since the advent of electricikeeper had gone to spend a few days ty and its wonderful adaptation to purposes of ornament there has been added Ben, who was the helper, was alone on | to this vesper service in Notre Dame church a novel and striking feature in Long after midnight Christmas morn- the sudden illumination of the great ing that impetuous youth sat up in the altar. Just when darkness has enshrouded the vast edifice by means of innumerable electric bulbs cunningly concealed by no means pleasantly on the events of in the intricate and florid carvings the he looked for, and then he answered: whole altar front is instantaneously il-"I shall go melancholy mad if I stay | luminated, producing an effect which til she had exhausted herself with weep- here long," he thought. "It is no life cannot be adequately described in words. ing and pleading Then he led her to for a young man, and I wish mother In the rural districts the midnight

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION AMONG I am by this time, and if she doesn't taste, whether it be to gather at the write and let me off from what I said I tavern and play cards and checkers, or to this term its widest and most commust leave here and look for something

on shore. This is neither land nor sea. "I wonder what granddad thinks and how he came to make such a mistake. Confound him! He ought to know that a Habberton couldn't be a thief. It was just like him, though, to jump at the conclusion that I had done something wrong. Every one in the family is hasty -except me Hello! What's that?"

He had seen a faint gleam out at sea, and watching as only a sailor can watch be soon saw another.

"It is certainly a rocket," he exclaimed, talking to himself as his habit was when he was excited. "Some vessel is in distress God help her and all aboard if they can't keep her offshore, and if she is disabled in any way that'll be hard work against this gale If she's one of these coasting steamers and her machinery's broken down it's all day The celebration of the day begins at | with her, for there's no anchorage outside the reef, and there's not a chance in 5,000 of her driving in behind with-

out striking. It was a coaster, and she was certainly beyond the control of those on board, for as he looked rocket after rocket There was no life saving station within graisse de roti (fresh pork grease), co-15 miles, and Ben's eye was the only chon an lait (sucking pig), paleron one that saw.

Nearer and nearer she came, driven aux snelles (pie made of haws). by the awful power of the worst storm Ben had ever seen. Fascinated by the sight, he sat as if frozen, watching for the tragedy that seemed inevitable. He thought of the little boat below, but it was a hopeless thought Twenty men been a time of feasting and jollification. could not have lanuched her from the This temperament has descended to us rocks in the breakers that were dashing from the days of the old Germanic and up, and no one man could have rowed Scandinavian nations, when the time her a rod if she had been affeat. All he was set aside for rejoicing and pleasure could do was to sit and watch He prior to the Christian era, but even as could see the ship now from time to late as the seventeenth century in Engtime as she rose and fell on the waves, | land and throughout continental Europe but every time she sank from sight he the delights of the table were parathought must surely be the last. He mount. With our forefathers a soused knew the cruel rocks that lay below the boar's head was borne to the principal

among those rocks to the lee of the reef day. In the book of "Christmasse Caron which the lighthouse stood, but it olles," printed by Wynkyn de Worde was not written that she should be in 1521, are the words sung at this auswrecked that Christmas day Lying picious moment: helpless in the trough of the sea, she drifted past rock after rock till Ben saw with amazement that she was floating in behind the reef, and still he watched with straining eyes.

Suddenly he sprang to his feet with a shout like a crazy man, and, rushing down the stairway four steps at a time, the room below and ran out into the Tale:" storm. A thought had come to him of James sitteth by the fire with double berd, one chance in a million, and he was after that chance

A single blow smashed in the head of hogshead, and in another instant he was scooping out the oil it held with the pannikin and scattering it like madas far as he could in every direction. The wind carried it all toward the vessel, and the great wonder of the sea was wrought almost in a minute, for as the oil fell the waves abated, so that the

having abated, he rowed out small boat to the ship's side. As he stepped on her deck the captain greeted him with such thanks and

praise as could only be given by one who had just been saved from destruction. Then as the passengers crowded amazement, his grandfather, his mother and Alice.

your mother came. You must come home again, this time to stay." Ben looked at his mother and then at

laugh. And it was. DAVID A CURTIS

esque, for there, as the hour approaches, one sees the great stone church that LESSONS TAUGHT BY THE BIRTH OF dominates the parish lit like a vast lantern, and stretching from it on either hand the homes of the habitants, each one doing its little best in loyal imitation. Hardly have the big bells in the

service, if not so sumptuous in its ap-

pointments, is indubitably more pictur-

tower begun to ring out their clear call

upon the crisp, cold air than the little

the carioles appear upon the road and speed swiftly toward the church. The houses are ,awake and ablaze all night, for when the long service at last comes to an end the congregation does not go quietly home, but breaks up into little groups, usually consisting of family circles, that with chattering and laughter hasten indoor to enjoy the bountiful supper which is the reward of their piety and at which by immemorial custom doughnuts and potted head form the pieces de resistance. These family gatherings are perhaps the cheeriest of all the year. The strangeness of the done their duty as good Catholics, the inspiration, no doubt, gathered from

to is to be given up to pleasuring to the full extent of their ability, all these influences not only combine to put everybody into the best of humor, but to produce an exultation of spirits that drives all care and worry into temporary obliv-For those who are very piously disposed this midnight mass by no means completes the religious programme of the day, for if they so choose they may

de vie, or to engage in horse racing. shooting matches and similar sports. As I have already stated, Jean Baptiste divides his Christmas. By this I mean that two important features of the festival as celebrated by English reserved by the French for the 1st day of January-namely, the giving of presents and indulgence in especially good

With regard to the giving of presents, in which the French take just as teresting to note that these etrennes, as they are called, are by the little folk credited not to Santa Claus, but to le petit Jesu and are perhaps all the more enjoyed on that account.

As to the culinary characteristics of terested in a list of dishes, some or all of which may be found upon every French Canadian dinner table on this duct! occasion. They are: Pain dore (toast with egg), pate aux patates (potato pie), poulet sauce blanche (chicken with (roast of fresh pork-shoulder) and tarte

J. MACDONALD OXLEY.

The Boar's Head. Aside from its religious observance and signification Christmas has always table in the hall with great state and No earthly pilot cold have guided her solemnity as the first dish on Christmas

The bore's head in hande bring I With garlandes gay and rosemary. I pray you all synge merrely-

The bore's head I understande Is the chefe servyce in this lands. Loke wherever it be fande. Servite cum cantico Chaucer alludes to this custom in the

he seized an ax and a big pannikin in following passage of the "Franklein's And he drinketh of his bugle horne the wine. Before him standeth the braune of the tusked

The Same Old Christmas. A description two centuries ago of the festivities of Christmas shows little

variation from present customs: "Families take it by turns to entertain their friends. They meet early, the beef and pudding are noble, the mince pies peculiar, the nuts half playthings half eatables, the oranges as cold and acid as they ought to be, furnishing us with a superfluity which we can afford to laugh at, the cakes indestructible, the wassail bowls generous, old English, hage, demanding ladles, threatwith roasted apples when set down. they be ladies, are kissed under the mis- all ages

Christmas Greens.

In olden times holly was used only to up to have their say Ben saw, to his deck the inside of houses at Christmas, while ivy was used not only as a vintner's sign, but also among the ever-"We came after you, my boy," said greens at funerals. For formerly "the the old man, "as soon as your letter to rooms were embowered with holly, ivy, cypress, bays, laurel and mistletoe."

There are thousands of quaint old verses that could be quoted in praise of Alice. In both their faces he saw what the rosemary, laurel and mistletoe. A love of nature, her fruits and flowers, "It'll be a merry Christmas after all, her roses and vines with their mystic granddad," he exclaimed with a happy significance seems to have been a predominant trait among those who gathered at the Yuletide.

### A CHRISTMAS SERMON

CHRIST.

The Duty of Charity and the Nobility of Self Sacrifice-How Art Has Paid Its Tribute to the Nativity.

It was the distinctive glory of Christ's

bells on the horses' necks send back evangel not that it introduced a new tinkling responses as one after another code of morals or of social ethics, but rather that it emphasized the force and broadened the scope of those existing and gave them higher sanctions and infinitely greater importance from being exemplified in the perfect life of Christ himself. There were people who had been just, true and God fearing before Moses brought down the tables of the law from Mount Sinai, and men acted the role of the good Samaritan, animated by the purest benevolence, thousands of years before Christ taught by precept and example the duty of charihour, the sense of satisfaction at having ty and the nobility of self sacrifice. Even the sermon on the mount only presented in concrete form rules of conthe service they have just attended and duct which regulated the lives of many the fact that the day already broken inin all ages, not with the force of law, of which there might be none, but as a through the skin, and I was permaresult of self originated conviction and nently rid of it. feeling.

Love in Christ's code of ethics was both the soul and body, the animating S.S.S. never fails to cure Scrofula, Eczema, Riccumatism Contagious Blood principle, as well as the performing Poison, or any disorder of the blood. agent. It was no longer be true, kind Do not rely noon a simple tonic to cure and pure because it is a duty so to a deep-seated blood disease, but take a be, but be all that because you love real blood remedy. to be so. No mere formal acquiescence free upon appliagain attend high mass at 10 p'clock, to be so. No mere formal acquiescence free upon appli-vespers at 2 o'clock and benediction at or compliance will meet the require-7 o'clock, thus practically spending the ments of this new presentation of the Specific Co. AN IMPOSING RITUAL hadn't asked me not to go to sea again. Not many, however, are so devout as a li was a fool to make her even that half all this, and the majority of the men the result of authority or the claims of moral law. It demands absolute obedi- Atlanta, Ga.

Has the Christian church (assigning to regale one another with well worn prehensive meaning) ever come within stories garnished with tobacco and eau measurable distance of realizing the exalted Christ ideal? Yes, possibly, in the apostolic age and for a short time subsequent, but it would be absurd to claim that the Christian churches of today, great as is their influence for good, are animated by the spirit of the early people on the 25th day of December are Christians or inspired by that divine enthusiasm which made each one of them a center of light and largely transformed society throughout the known world within a century after the birth

of Christ. We are now like Moses on Mount much delight as the English, it is in- Nebo-we see the promised land, but it is still in the dim distance, and we are apparently getting no nearer to its haven of rest-but how soon would the prospect change were the gospel of love and humanity, preached and lived by Christ, to become a distinctive feature of the day, my readers may perhaps be in- our civilization instead of the materialistic and selfish motives which largely sway modern life and determine con-

The Saviour was born under the humblest possible circumstances, as if to Fee Sold by your DECGGIST. show how low in the estimation of God white sauce), tourtieres (meat pie), are all the pomp and magnificence of that wealth and power which men prize so highly. His Virgin mother was poor, his foster father was a mechanic, and he himself dignified labor by earning his bread by the sweat of his brow.

> Christ was emphatically the Saviour of the poor, and those who bear his name best show the sincerity of their professions by imitating him in his loving kindness and benevolence. Charity is a duty incumbent upon Christians at all times, but even the most humane will feel prompted to be kinder and more sympathetic while celebrating the in Brain work or close occurs a ms. advent of one who displayed during his whole lifetime upon earth a divine compassion and pity for the poor and the

Not the least of the lessons taught us by the birth of Christ is not to despise he humblest or be hopeless of the most depraved of that species so honored by Deity that he came and took its form EXGESSES. and assumed its nature with all its imperfections. However low in the scale of being persons may be, there is a spark of the divine in them still, a trace of that promethean fire breathed into man by the source of all life and all consciousness which constituted him a living soul.

The story of the advent and of its climax-that amazing act of self sacri- Good Work. fice-has been the solace of the weary and heavy laden in all the intervening centuries. The song of the angel choristers chanted over the lowly place of his birth, conveying heaven's message of deliverance for man, has sounded throughout the centuries, like an undertone of hope, above the discords of life and the mutterings of despair.

Philip James Bailey in "Festus" writes: We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not

breaths: in feelings, not in figures on a dial. We should count time by heart throbs. He most Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the

The stupendous mystery of the advent and the perfect life that followed it made it possible for mankind to attain the high state of perfection so beautifully illustrated by the poet. Precepts were Toward bedtime you hear of elder wine not wanting before, but henceforth and not seldom of punch. Girls, though there was a perfect life as a model for

Doubtless all events, however impossible it may be to perceive their trend, contribute to

Toward wh ch the whole creation moves. The parts have sung of that day, philosophers have written of it from the earliest times and optimists think they see its hear upproach, but it must be confessed that the signs of its coming or ising Education and culxny it, are at best only

Is a deep-scated blood disease which all the mineral mixtures in the world cannot cure. S.S.S. (guaranteed purely regetable) is a real blood remedy for blood diseases and has no equal.

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her constitution. She then took nearly every so-called blood medicine and drank them by the wholesale, but they did not reach her trouble. Some one advised her to try soon found that she had a real blood remedy at last. She says: "After taking one dozen bottles of S.S.S. I am perfectly well, my skin is clear and healthy and I would not be in my former condition for two thousand dollars. Instead of drying up the poison

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in my system, like the potash and

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