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A Close Shave for a Bill.

ATLANTA, GA .- The Georgia General Assembly adjurned at midnight after a 50 days' session. Many local measures were rushed through in the closing hours. The only bill of general importance was the appropriation bill and the conference committee's report passed the House by only one majority. Had it been lost the Governor would have called an extra session. The General Assembly holds another 50 days' session next fall.

Postoffice Conspirators Tried and Convicted.

COLUMBIA, S. C .- Barrett, the chief of the gang of postoffice conspirators who have been on trial here the past week in the United States Court, was sentenced in the conspiracy case to 18 months imprisonment in the government prison at Columbus, Ohio, and to pay a fine of \$3,500. He has not yet been sentenced in the forgery case in which he was convicted. The maximum sentence for this offense is 15 years and a fine of \$5,000. The other conspirators convicted along with him have been given similar sentences. One of them, J. T. Tillman, who was tried and convicted, is a fugitive in Texas. Two other members of the gang are fugitives also, but they have not yet been tried.

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HOLLY BERRIES,

Holly berries, holly berries, Red and bright and beaming through the dusky evergreens Like sprays of coral gleaming Ye have power to fill the heart With memories of giee;
Ob, what happy thoughts can cling
Bound the holly tree!

When I see the holly berries I fancy that I hear Ringing in my ear. Christmas, with its blazing fire And happy hearths, I see; Ob, what merry thoughts can cling Round the holly tree!

Bring the glowing holly berries, Snow is lying deep;
All the gay and blooming flowers Till the springtime sleep, Let them grace our happy homes With their crimson light, Mingling with the somber fir,

Keeply blows the lev wind. Shorter grows the day, Winter scatters cold and gloom In his dreary play , Yet we love the ele For the joy they bring, And the holy memories That round the holly cling.

Holly berries, holly berries, Red and bright and beaming Like sprays of coral gleaming; Ye have power to fill the heart With memories of glee; Ab, what happy thoughts can cling

"LEFTY."

A CHRISTMAS STORY



gray pony he rode seemed to share in his dejection; man and beast looked as though life had used them ill, and turned to them only its harshest side.

Clark Sargent was manager of the Rita Blanca, which was owned by an English company. It was a clean, well run, closely managed concern, and a very unpromising place for shirks, sweaters or loafers of any sort. Clark himself was sitting on the porch as this forlorn-looking pair me up.
"No," he said in reply to a reques

hands now." Then, as he noted the look of abject despair that settled upon the thin face, "get down and rest and have some dinner. You look

"No, I sin't sick," was the answer hastily and anxiously given. "I hain't been sick. I'm jest tired an' hungry. I been ridin' all day."

Clark had just come in from where

all the headquarters hands, including the cook (for your genuine ranch cook is always a rider, too, and quite as liable as not to be the best bronche buster and handler of cattle in the force) were gathering two-year-olds for shipment, and there was no one at the ranch hovee but himself.

As he set out some cold grub and put the coffee pot on the stove he glanced at the man from time to time. Something in the meager form—that looked like a boy's only because it was not strong and well-nourished enough for a man's—touched his sym-

Something in the meager form—that looked like a boy's only because it was not strong and well-nourished enough for a man's—touched his sympathies.

"Why, you are not able to do a cowboy's work," he said, speaking almost sharply, because he was annoyed with himself for feeling inclined to employ the poor fellow against his business instincts and for pity's sack alone.

"Why alone was always because he was annoyed with himself for feeling inclined to employ the poor fellow against his business instincts and for pity's sack alone.

"Why alone was always better," bearing him and they drove as far as the outkirts of the town, when Clark turned obstinate and made him go back.

Finally, long after midnight, when he went again into the bar, Clark said he would go with him if Lefty would take one drink. Hoping to paches the property of the town, when consumption to the part of the common that home, Lefty, whose springtime had been nipped and chilled by adversity's northers, came into late blossom. His made him go back.

Finally, long after midnight, when he went again into the bar, Clark said he would go with him if Lefty would take one drink. Hoping to paches the property of the town, when consumption to the common the common that he comfort of that home, Lefty, whose springtime had been nipped and chilled by adversity's northers, came into late blossom. His as the cutskirts of the town, when Clark turned obstinate and made him go back.

Finally, long after midnight, when he went again into the bar, Clark said he would go with him if Lefty would take one drink. Hoping to paches.

"O, yes, I am, sir. I'm a heap tive. His cough was always "better," abler than what I look. I'm used to and he was mildly impatient of any abler than what I look. I'm used to and he was mildly impatient of any it. I been out in more northers, an' inquiry as to his health, assuming the worked to stop more stampedes than I've got fingers an' toes. I can stand I've got fingers an' toes. I can stand anything, if I c'u'd jest git a stiddy no stiddy job for six months; that's what's used me up so."

The end of it was that Clark put fully the medicines Clark gave him, Thompson-or Lefty, the sobriquet as he would have taken, done or enhis lefthandedness had earned for him in the free and easy style of the plains. where a man's conspicuous feature or trait dubs him on the force; and he was started out on regular range work the next morning.

There was no complaint from the boss of any lack of ability, capacity or energy on Lefty's part; and no re He seemed only too well satisfied, and nost anxious to please.

But one morning, when Clark was riding across the Minneosa pasture, he saw one of his cowboys dismounted saw one of his cowboys dismounted do again; it's been my worst enemy, and sitting on the ground beside his I've been in with rustlers an' all kinds pony, which was graz ng. As the figure remained motionless, he rode nearer to see what was the matter, and recognized in the crouched form, with its head on his knees. Lefty.

He called to him by name raised his face, wiping his mouth fur

"I git a little dizzy, sometimes," he said appealingly, "when I ride right hard; I ain't hurt, Mr. Sargent; I

"Good God, boy," said Clark, look-ing at the blood spatters on the brown plains grass, and on the shirt front which the other was trying vainly to cover with that trembling left hand, "you've had a hemorrhage! Go right up to the house as soon as you can."
Lefty staggered to his feet, and stood clinging to his saddle horn, in a pitiful effort to pull himself together,

and look all right.
"Mr. Sargent," he said, besee ingly, "this ain't nothin'; it don't interfere with my work none; an' you don't know how bad I hate to be knockin' about from one place to an-

"Why, Lefty," said Clark, horrifled, "you don't think I wanted to discharge you! Here, let me help you up on the horse, and I'll lead him

Clark had a medicine chest, a fair practical knowledge of the effect of practical knowledge of the effect of city so far as was possible, and lessened drugs, and considerable tact in their by his own watchfulness and care the

use. Lefty, of course, was burning out—but slowly in this high, dry air, so unfavorable to the development of his disease; and Clark doctored him faithfully with tonics and palliatives.

faithfully with tonics and palliatives.

He was not sent out on the range again; work was found for him about the house, and he soon came to be cook and general domestic manager. He developed into a skilful house keeper and his cooking saved much of the customary wear and tear of the boys moral natures. Indeed, Fletch Phillips declared that it was a more potent means of grace than the exhortations of the cowboy evangelist over at Lone Jack. ver at Lone Jack.

But it was to Sargent's especial comfort and welfare that his loving services were watchfully devoted.

The pegs and gun racks in the gleaming inffalo horns, picked up on the plain by Lefty, with the weather worn bark of years of exposure on worn bark of years of exposure on them, and patiently scraped down and polished till they look like little half crescents of jet. He searched out, polished and put up, too, the great spreading cattle horns over the office doors and windows. Clark likes to hunt, and the heads and skins of deer, antelope, coyotes and big "Joater" wolves that he has shot, stuffed and mounted, or stretched and tanned by Lefty's skilful hands, adorn the walls and floor.

Clark's pony, his saddle, spurs and

Clark's pony, his saddle, spurs and all his equipments and accounterments were kept in the shining and speck-less condition of a crack cavalryman's; and his clothing was searched for rents and missing buttons with the

terrible risks Clark ran when drinking. It came to be the regular thing that whenever the backboard was brought out for one of the manager's trips, Lefty got old Hank Pearsall to take charge of the house and the cook-ing while he drove for Clark. It was only so that he felt at case, for then he knew that whatever maudlin reaching for the lines or slashing at the haif-broke broncho team there was, he was there to take care of Clark, who had more than once of late rolled out of the buckboard, and Lefty had had hard work, what with the wild team and Clark's helplessness, to get him

One lowering December afternoon they stopped at Antelope for the mail, on their way home from a distant ranch. Things had been going bet-ter; it was weeks since Clark's last spree, and he had been doing almost entirely without liquor. But it was Christmas Eve; every bar room full of cowboys and ranchmen, drink-ing and hilarious.

Clark would have the team put up and fed, and they themselves had sup-

per at the Antelope House.

When Lefty went to him in the bar, after supper, Clark would have come, but there was a crowd around him that wouldn't hear of it. Finally, annoyed at Lefty's persistence, they turned their attention to him, and it was only by the exercise of considerable dexterity and address that he got out without having to drink with

Full of anxiety, he went back again and again, sometimes finding Clark determined to make a night of it, sometimes half sobered up and will-Lifted out of vagabondage into a ing to go, but when on the strength of this he got the horses out and baunting dread of losing it; simply

CHRISTMAS

pleased, like a child, at being a valued always failed by a little to get Clark

attitude of a great stout fellow

ought to be out on the range earning his way, but who accepted these light-

er duties because they were of a sort

dured anything asked or imposed up on him from that quarter.

But there was one medicine Clark

could not get him to take: and it was

tonic upon which he placed the mos

reliance in such a case-plenty of

give me none o' that. Whisky an' me's bad friends."

I know you've drank plenty of whisky

didn't get no good by my meanness,

me as long as I stuck to it, an' that's what it'll do for any man that loves it

As Lefty said this he looked care-fully away from his employer. Clark's drinking habit was the one gnawing

It had been growing steadily worse since Lefty came to the Rita Blanca. It used to be that Clark only drank to

excess when he went to Antelope,

where there were bar rooms and con vivial companions; but now the buck-

oard could not be got ready for s

Lefty's own bitter experience, to certain passages in which—the most without a jug of whisky in it.

shameful and criminal-he always re-

ferred with open simplicity, gave him

an appreciation and horror of the de-

clivity upon which the other was start-ing; and he only lacked the courage

o speak. When Clark was beginning on one

of his sprees Lefty's beseeching eyes would follow him, only to drop hum-

bly when they met his look; and the

silent protest and entreaty was as well

Lefty stood between him and publi-

could have been

rstood between them as words

drive of a day or two across the coun

anxiety and distress that he had.

neither.

like I do.

"Why, Lefty, that's mighty queer.

"Yes, sir; an' it's what I'll never

"No, Mr. Sargent," he said, "don't

unpopular with the others.

Notwithstanding this, he took faith-

plea and promise, another and another, till by the time they left they

When they came to the first gate into the Rita Blanca pastures, about

three miles from the ranch house.

Lefty gave the lines to Clark and got down to open it, the whip unheeded,

But the long drive in the sharp air

had sobered him up enough that he wondered to see the tall posts on each

side of the gate moving. The next moment he knew that there was a man

behind each post, it being the only

found for miles upon that bare, open, half moonlit plain. The revelation was like a bucket of ice water dashed

over bim, and he gussed instantly— with a throb of that auxiety for Clark

which was always with him—that these were some of the Mexicans with

His mortal fear for Clark's life

swept the belogging fumes out of his

It was Clark's life they wanted; he

knew that; it was not himself they were after. He could go forward and open the gate safely, since they likely

thought him too drunk to notice

But if they knew that the one in the

whip. The outfit whirled away like a cloud, while Lefty turned to face Clark's fate.

When Clark Sargent, thoroughly

very drunk indeed.

me to save Clark.

trouble.

the Rita Blanca was having

ere about equally intoxicated.

obered, got the wild ponies pulled lown, turned around and drove back to the gate, there was nothing in sight on the great, gray, glimmering level but a dark, motionless heap by one of

the gate posts.

He flung his lines over the post, went and knelt beside the still body.

"Lefty," he whispered, with his heart in his throat.

There was no answer. He found the man's shoulders, lifted them, and the man's sounders, was Lefty.

Clark raised him out—it was Lefty.

Clark raised him gently, and felt for the wounds that were scaking his clothes with blood. Lefty mounded

"O, Mr. Sargent, I'm going to die; and who'll take care of you then, when when you're drinking. "Who is it knows like me that's been through it, the hell you're a walkin' right down into! And who'll be willin' to go with you, faithful, through the worst of it all, like I'd a been glad an' proud to?
Nobody! Nobody! O, I can't go—
I ain't ready! Mr. Sargent — O, my God!—promise me—promise—

"I do, Lefty! I do—I do promise!

The Lord be my witness—"
The dying man, with some reminiscence of a cradle-side prayer, raised his life-scarred hands and laid them together, "For Christ's sake, amen," he whispered, and breathed no more. As the buckboard went slowly homeward with its freight, the dim light of

Christmas morning wrought pallidly upon the plain. It sought out and touched upon the face of that patient care taker, never eloquent as now in

its voicelessness.

When Clark came to his own door it was broad day. But Lefty's Christmas was spent otherwhere.—Washington Star.

Christmas in the Past.

The father of the boy or girl of to-day can well remember, if he has reached the age of forty or upward, a time when Christmas had practically no existence for him. In certain parts of the country, indeed, Christmas has never been forgotten. In New York City, in Pennsylvania, and in the

South generally, Christmas, as well as Easter, has always been observed. In New England, however, in many of the rural parts of New York, and in portions of the country which were settled from New England and from rural New York, Christmas was, forty Indeed, the burden of many a carol years ago, but a name. Some trace of it seemed to have surmight be condensed into "plum pud-

vived in the occasional practice of hanging up the stocking ou Christmas Eve. Boys and girls often hung their stockings by the fireplace, and in the morning, if they were fortunate, there was in each stocking a store of nuts, a hittle candy, and perhaps a jack-knife or a thimble. But next day—Christ-mas Day—the boys and girls went to school as usual, and fathers and mothers went about their usual tasks. There was no holiday and no big

Christmas dinner.
The one feast of the year had been The one feast of the year had been eaten at Thanksgiving. The mines pies accumulated for that festival were still making their appearance upon the family table; and the pies, and the memory of all the other good things and sports of Thanksgiving, had to serve the children of that period, as far as holidays were con-cerned, until Fast Day came round

In most of the States, indeed, the children had not even Fast Day to look forward to. There was no real holiday until the Fourth of July. For them there were practically but two holidays in the year.

The recollections of Christmas which a person of fifty should under-

which a person of fifty should under-take to relate to his children would be very much like the celebrated chapter about the snakes in Ireland, which simply stated that there were no snakes in Ireland. He might, how-ever, have a vivid recollection of a rather lonesome ten minutes spent in hanging a woolen stocking by a fire-place, during which time his parents sat solemnly by, looking as if they did not altogether approve what he was doing. The joy with which he might anticipate a possible gift was tempered not a little by the remembrance of ope Christmas morning when he arose eagerly, searched his stocking, and found nothing whatever

Very soon, however, the real Christ. mas began to grow up, as it were. The most powerful agency in making its observance general was the Sundayschool. Always on the lookout for something with which to arouse the interest of children, the Sunday school of thirty years ago early made choice of Christmas. "Trees" were introduced as a feature of an annual observance, and many little gifts were listributed.

It was customary to have the pas mges in the Gospels relating to the wirth of Christ read aloud by one of he pupils of the Sun lay-school who sould read well, and this office creatly coveted. The chance of being elected to read these passages alone st Christmas was a sufficient incentive o many pupils to pay particular atsention to their realing lessons at school for months together. The interest of the children in these

xercises was very great from the start, and it soon drew the older people into an almost equal interest in the revival of the old festival. In a surprisingly short time Christmas hal become the nost important day in the year. -Youth's Companion.

Greens for Church Decoration.

buckboard was Clark, they would jump upon it and knife him as he People used to be rather more par ticular than they are now as to what greens they used for church decora-tion. The favorite plants were holly, bay, rosemary, and laurel. Ivy was Lefty reeled toward the gate, caught it and clung to it, shaking in every limb. The silent watchers behind the posts might well have thought him objectionable because it was formerly Even while his poor spent frame sacred to Bacchus, Cypress was som times used, but its funeral asdrooped shuddering against the gate, his single and undeviating mind ran made it out of place at so festive season as Christmas. Mistletoe wa desperately through every possible excluded because it was sacred to the Druidic religion, and perhaps because it was considered too frivolous in its They were of much the same height -enough so to be mistaken in suggestions. The decorations should properly remain in the church till the end of January, but must be cleared away before February 2, Candleman the semi-darkness. Why not make it He tore the gate open with a lurch and flung it wide—"Lefty!" he screamed, "Lefty! Drive for your life, Lefty!" And as the excitable The same is true of private dwellings, for superstition regards it as a fatal omen if this period is over-stepped.—New York Sun. team of cow ponies, trained to run at the shout, swept through at a gallop, he slashed the rear horse with his

Do not seek for silence on Chrismas Day. Remember that even in poetry, Christmas inspires such rhymes as boys, toys and noise.

AROUND THE TELE LOG.

SOMETHING MISSING Huggins - "Did your fiances's Christmas present please you?"

Kissam—"It was very fine. She
made it herself, but there seems to be

mething missing."
Huggins—"What?"
Kissam—"A diagram explaiting its

"Paps won't buy me a bow-wow," cried the little daughter of a very rich "Don't cry, dear," said her mother, soothingly; "when you are grown he will buy you a puppy with a title."

A GENEROUS CHILD.

Mamma—"Tommy, what are you going to buy mamma for her Christan gift?"

Tommy-'Why, momsy dear, Prethought and thought about that, and decided that the best thing I could get for you would be a pair of new skates for your little boy."

Wife (sweetly) — "And what shall is et my dearie for a Christmas present

get my dearie for a Christians present this year?"

Husband (grimly) — "Oh. soms small, cheap trifle."

Wife— "Oh! "You are awfully molst, aren't you?"
Husband "No. Awfully poor."

TOO GOOD TO LAST.

It isn't strange at Christmas time we find the moments fly. Then everybody is lovely and the mixtates hangs high.

Old Christmas Carols.

The earliest collection of Christma carols was published in 1521. Many are little more than drinking songs used at social or religious festivities of which singing and dancing then formed a prominent feature. In one old legend a jolly knight is made to

"Not a man here shall taste my March bee Till a Christmas carol he doth sing; Then all clapt their hands, and shouted and sung. Till the hall and the parlor did ring."

ding, goose, capon, minced pies and roast beef;" and everybody was etpected to indorse the sentiment expressed a couple of hundred years ago in "Poor Robin's Almanack;" "Poor Robin's Almanack; "Now, thrice welcome, Christmas Which brings us good cheer, Minced ples and plum pudding, Good ale and strong beer;

With pig, goose and caped
The best that may be,
So well doth the weather
And our stomachs agree No less characteristic is the quaint

Nowel—el el el. Now is wel that evere was wee; Now make we myrth, For Crystea byrth, And sing ye yole till Candlemes.

while the innate sweetness of

6-d rest you, merry gentlemen; Let nothing you dismay; For Jesus Christ, our Saviour, Was born upon this day. and of Herrick's "Star Song," and

Christmas-Day Thoughts, Santa Claus is a curious old gentleman. He will not enter a chimney

unless it soots him. That it is better to give than to receive is proved by the fact that the custom of giving at Christmas has out-lived the custom of receiving at New

Utility should not always be the uiding factor in the selection of a rift. A ton of coal is always useful, but hardly appropriate to send to your best girl.

There are some people who would be dissatisfied on Christmas morning if Santa Claus had dropped the earth into their stockings the night before. Fortunately their number must a ways be limited, because very few peo-ple wear stockings sufficiently large to accommodate so extensive a pres

indications that the Nativity was cele brated by the early Christians. Though the date of Christ's birth is only tralieved to have been appointed in the fourth century, by Julius I., Bishop of Rome, as the anniversary of that Wise Men to the Saviour's time intervening between the two dates. In the sixth century all Chrism united upon the observance of the 25th of December.



I used to be a bandsome bird.
With feathers black and yellow.
And waitle red. Upon my word
I was a gallant fellow.

I walked the barayard with a strit, And when I fell to drawning. The littingirls would run and ery— "Look out! the gobbler's coming."

And when I spread my man isome tall, With pride and joy unfailing. No ship that floats upon the sea, Had finer rig for sailing.

Ains! my gobbling days are done:
My fate is sad and murky—
I am that poor, picked, maked thing,
Known as—"a Christmas turke?
—Pear! Bivers.

Early Celebration of the Nativity. Away in the first century there are ditional, the 25th of December

> event. Previously the Eastern Church had observed the 6th of January in special commemoration of the appearance of the Star which guided the in Bethlehem. For a while the Esst-ern Church adhered to this date, in spite of Julius's edict, though the Western Church observed the 25th of December. This had a natural tendency to extend the festival over the