

MARION PROGRESS

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For he's a jolly good fellow
Which nobody can deny

Children and Christmas in Many Lands

THE little folks of all the world do not keep Christmas as the children of this country do. In fact each land has its own peculiar ways, and our people, being drawn originally from almost every clime, have introduced into our celebration of the day a bit of the Christmas features brought from mother countries. We have the Dutch Santa Claus, the German Christmas tree, the English plum pudding and carols and our own peculiarly lavish gift making.

The boys and girls of far distant countries are spending the day in such different ways that it may prove of interest to young and old to hear something of the distinctive Christmas customs.

THE English Christmas is not unlike ours, save that we do not have their pretty custom of "bringing in the yule." In almost every family in England the boys and girls gather about the burning log on Christmas eve to sing carols and tell Christmas legends. Often the children who live in the country assist at the dragging in of the huge log.

An English child would not feel it was Christmas if there was not a bit of mistletoe hanging in the hall, under which the unwary are kissed soundly. Little and big eat the rich and blazing plum pudding, and all join in the singing of Christmas carols and church-going.

CHRISTMAS in Holland is the gala day of the year for the children. They have a pretty custom of ushering it in. Just at midnight on Christmas eve, the men and boys dressed in fancy costume, march through the streets in long procession, holding aloft a brilliantly lighted star, as they chant the "Gloria in Excelsis." The little girls clad in white stand at the windows and bow to the star as it passes.

THE children of Belgium on Christmas Eve are dressed in gay colors and form a procession, which marches through the streets, led by an orchestra and singing carols. Each child holds aloft either a Christchild in a manger or a crucifix.

AMERICAN mothers find one day of Christmas merrymaking distracting enough for their children, how would they like to live in Russia, where work is often suspended for a fortnight, while all the people keep holiday.

Even the poorest peasant has a tree and it is harvest time for beggars, for no one will refuse him anything. In some of the country districts the boys dress as animals, and led by other boys as keepers, march through the streets headed by a band of boys making dreadful music with harsh sounding instruments. These processions go from door to door, pound until they are admitted, and all given food and drink, and two small pieces of money.

All over Scandinavia a week is given to merrymaking. Every one goes to six o'clock church on the dark Christmas morning, and in the evening every home in the land is illuminated. They have wonderful trees, around which grown people and children dance and sing. The Scandinavian child is very good to the poor on Christmas and "akes gifts and food to poor families."

A purse free to all subscribers who pay a year in advance to THE PROGRESS

A Song for Christmas

HANT me a rhyme of Christmas—
Sing me a jovial song—
And though it is filled with laughter,
Let it be pure and strong

Sing of the hearts brimmed over
With the story of the day—
Of the echo of childish voices
That will not die away—

Of the blare of the tasseled bugle,
And the timeless clatter and beat
Of the drum that throbs to muster
Squadrons of scampering feet.

But, O, let your voice fall fainter,
Till, blent with a minor tone,
You temper your song with the beauty
Of the pity Christ hath shown.

And sing one verse for the voiceless;
And yet, ere the song be done,
A verse for the ears that hear not,
And a verse for the sightless one.

For though it be time for singing
A merry Christmas glee,
Let a low, sweet voice of pathos
Run through the melody.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

GRADED SCHOOL NOTES

The teachers and students of the high school had the pleasure of hearing a most helpful address Monday by Dr. Henry Louis Smith, president of Davidson College. He asked and answered to the entire satisfaction of every one present the following questions: Why are boys and girls required to attend school so long? Why are such studies as Latin and Algebra required for study in school? Why is any study required which is not used in after life? He compared life's work to chopping wood, the boy's brain to a dull axe, the hard studies to a grindstone, and the teacher to the operator of the grindstone. The illustration was very effective, and the address has already borne fruit and will continue to do so.

The weather was very inclement but quite an audience greeted the Bunnell Concert Company last Thursday night, and we feel safe in saying that no one was disappointed. The music was excellent, and the recitations were very good, especially those in the negro dialect.

The Third and Fourth Grades had a contest in arithmetic this week in which the Fourth Grade came out victorious. Another contest will be held this week.

The Fifth and Sixth Grades were matched against each other in spelling Tuesday. Those representing the Fifth Grade, having been selected by competition, were Mattie Gladden, George Streetman, Lois Burgin, Edna Rader, Josephine Bird, Leon Justice, Jack Howard, Robert Morpew, Archie Clapp, Marjorie White. Those representing the Sixth Grade, having been chosen in the same way, were Kate Huffman, Pearl Hoover, Frances Wood, Ruth Finley, John Poteet, Guy Kirby, Morris Laughridge, Charles Laughridge, Ruth Burgin, and Arthur Poteet. In the first trial, the victory was won for the

Fifth Grade by Josephine Bird and Edna Rader; in the second contest the same grade won again with the following still standing at the close of the contest: Mattie Gladden, Edna Rader, Josephine Bird, Leon Justice, Archie Clapp and Robert Morpew. The Sixth Grade, not being satisfied with their effort, has challenged the Fifth for another match.

The Eighth and Ninth Grades will have an old-fashioned spelling match Friday, and the Sixth and Eighth are to contest in Latin. These contests serve as incentive to study at a time when an incentive is needed.

Garden City School Notes.

On the evening of December 22nd at 7:30 o'clock, the closing exercises of the school will be given, which is hoped to please those who attend. In addition to the school exercises there will be furnished string music by the Mr. Davis' of Old Fort. All are invited to attend.

We too attended the spelling match at Greenlee. Keen or dull, all seems to have stood in the same line. "Three to one" did you say? Let us count a little. "Prophecy" or "Prophecy"? See Webster's Dictionary, or apply to Garden City school for further information. "Two to one" is the very best we can figure it in favor of Greenlee, saying nothing of our intermediate room spelling against the high school department, and the new method introduced at this time.

The closing exercises of Nealsville school will take place Thursday and Friday nights, the 21st and 22nd. A splendid program, consisting of recitations, chorus, drills, etc., has been prepared and a pleasing entertainment is promised.

Why not send THE PROGRESS to some one for a Christmas present.

Subsoiling Demonstration.

The subsoiling demonstration given at Garden City last week was very interesting to all the farmers present, and there were quite a large number from different sections of the county there during the day. Approximately 250 shots of dynamite were put off, 178 being to subsoil an acre and the other in stump and tree-blowing.

In the subsoiling of the acre, the holes were put down a rod apart each way about three feet deep, the object being to go through the hardpan and provide drainage for the acre in case of wet weather, and the holes broken to provide water reservoirs to furnish moisture to the plant in the dry season. On the sides of the acre which was sub-soiled is other land which will be cultivated just as the other sub-soiled acre is cultivated, and the same amount of fertilizer used. This will be done that the subsoiling can be tested as to plant growth and yield the very first year. This demonstration was given by the Jefferson Powder Company, which is represented by the Price Hardware Company, and is estimated by conservative men that the cost of subsoiling will be about \$15.00

The stump and tree-blowing demonstration was most interesting and proved conclusively that the trees could be removed and the land subsoiled at the same time. This was just as interesting to the farmers present as the subsoiling of the acre.

The ground upon which this demonstration was made is the property of the Garden City School, and experiments will be made from time to time with the hope that the yield on land of this kind can be so increased as to justify modern methods in farming. The experiment will be watched by many with a great deal of interest.

Colonel William M. Wilson Pays Marion a Visit.

Col. Wm. M. Wilson, of Obion, Tenn., visited relatives in Marion last week. It was his first visit to McDowell county. He is a great grand son of Thomas Wilson, who came from Fermanagh county, Ireland, and settled near Pleasant Gardens in 1769. Thomas Wilson was a brother-in-law of Col. John Carson, who came from Ireland at the same time and settled in this county. Colonel Wilson is a grand son of Ruth Davidson, of Revolutionary fame, and whom tradition says, when a small girl, carried an important dispatch to Gen. Francis Marion at Ninety Six, S. C.

Colonel Wilson is 84 years of age, but he is as hale and hearty as most men at sixty. He had attended the Rivers and Harbors Congress at Washington, where he made an address that was highly complimented by the press of that city. He has attended every session of this Congress and is the oldest member of it. He lives in the Reel Foot Lake section of Tennessee and owns more than ten thousand acres of the bottom of the lake. There has been an endless chain of litigation over the lake property, and no end of trouble, and his account of it was intensely interesting.

Colonel Wilson was driven out by Pleasant Gardens and up Buck creek and shown where his ancestors formerly lived. He justly thinks that this is the most beautiful country he has ever seen.

He was given a reception by Mrs. J. L. C. Bird on Friday, which was largely attended by his relatives, and all who met him were delighted with his charming personality. He left Saturday for Florence, S. C., to visit other relatives. His friends will be delighted to have him visit them again.

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