

A Season of Cheer

Happy faces smiling
Where the ruddy hearth-fire gleams
And joyous hearts are beating
In the glow of Christmas dreams

Sorrows rule is banished
Forevermore it seems
And all the world is brighter
For the glow of Christmas dreams

1920

Daddy's Evening Fairy Tale

MARY GRAHAM HUNTER

PLANS FOR CHRISTMAS

"Have you written to Santa Claus?" asked Nick of Nancy.
"I wrote this very day," said Nancy.
"And so did I and Nick."
"Well," said daddy, "I'm glad to hear it, for it is high time you both did. Everyone is writing their Christmas letters now. We're almost too busy for stories. It's just nice to have Christmas talks as we do every year, and then it is always nice to hear of what Santa Claus is doing up in his work shop."
"He likes to have the boys and girls know of how he is working for them and how his work for them is just like play. And yet he likes to let them know that sometimes he does have to work so fast that he then especially likes the electric letters they write."
"He is never too busy to read their letters. In fact Santa Claus is never too busy to do anything he has to do or to read anything he has to read."
"Sometimes he just has to work a little faster, that's all."
"Well, when Christmas time comes around," daddy went on, "I just don't think about anything but Christmas and jingling bells and the snow and the presents that are to come and the stockings and the Christmas tree and Santa's visit."
"I forget about the usual evenings of the year when I tell stories of animals—true stories they are—and fairy tales, too; tales of the Fairyland people."
"But now I like to think about the real and true Christmas things, the great joys that we have each year, at this time of year, such real joys and real pleasures."
"And real stockings and real trees and real presents," he added with a laugh.
"And I must tell you, as we're talking of letters to Santa, of some of his plans for Christmas."
"He is going to start out in plenty of time to give the presents to each child. He won't give them himself and he will go away before he is seen, but he will leave them in the stockings."

RING OUT, YE MERRY BELLS!

"Ring out, ye merry bells! Welcome winter's day!
Welcome, and high-crowned Christmas
Dance as a child at play, keeping his
holiday.
Welcome, back from the snow peak
and glade."
"Up with the holly bough, green from the
winter's love,
Lark up your lark and carols for a
day,
Out to the forest gay gather the mistle-
toe,
Old and young, rich and poor, up and
away!"
"Up with the holly boughs, and the
lark now,
In with the yule log, and brighten the
hearth,
Quick! here he is ready, come with his
merry train,
Laughter and music and friendship and
mirth."
"Up with the holly boughs, high in each
master house,
Garishly the antlers that hang in the
hall,
Yes, and the "huck" of corn with a gar-
ment of gold,
Rich as the bloom on the cottage's
wall."
"Watch his duties now, Christian, you
will attend,
Think, then, ye rich, whilst your tables
are spread,
That of the wretched ones, Poverty's
stricken ones,
Weeding whilst children are asking for
bread."
"Ring out, ye merry bells, ring till your
music ends!
Out o'er the mountain, and far on the
main,
Ring till those careless ones catch up
your merry train,
"Come, Christmas, saints and
sinners."
—Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly.

"And Santa, Be Sure and Don't Forget—"



First Xmas Carol Found in the Roman Mass

CAROLS were originally accompanied with a dance, and this carol dancing is part of the rhythmic movement of the Oberammergau play, as well as of the dances of the Shakers of Lebanon in New York state.
The first Christmas carol history is the "Gloria in Excelsis" found in the Roman mass, and in the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer. It is ascribed to Telesphorus, bishop of Rome, about the year A. D. 136, and is common in both the eastern and western churches.
An old English carol begins with the notable words:
Behold a simple, tender babe
In freezing winter night,
In homely manger trembling lies,
Alas, a piteous sight.
The "higher critics" have wondered how the shepherds could watch their flocks by night, even in winter in Judea, but this presented no difficulty to Robert Southwell, the author of this quaint carol, who as a Jesuit was imprisoned in the Tower of London, and, after enduring the tortures of the rack, was executed in 1594.
A popular carol among the Germans is one written by Martin Luther for his little son Hans. It begins:
From the highest heaven I come to tell
The gladdest news which e'er befell.
A very sad story is told in connection with this carol. In order to give it realistic effect in a certain Lutheran church it used to be sung by a boy let down from the roof of the church dressed as an angel. But one day the rope broke, and the boy was killed. This put an end to a very beautiful but dangerous Christmas custom.
At a time when the liturgical and biblical plays were popular the Christmas carol was an important feature. In Italy in the time of St. Francis of Assisi, in order to instruct the people, the villagers came to the church carrying lighted torches, and there they saw the scene of the manger filled with hay, and the ox and ass standing in their places near the Virgin and Child. Then it was that St. Francis and his friars stood by the manger all night long, giving God thanks that by this means the hearts of the people had been touched.
"Rare old Ben Jonson," in the days of the "Good Queen Bess," wrote a carol which begins "I sing the Birth was born tonight." And about that time appeared a very popular carol which is sung in "Merrie England" even to the present day, the first line of which is "God rest you, merrie gentlemen." Some old Christmas carols have come down to us in half Latin and half English. Among them is a carol which appears in the collection for Grace church, New York city:
When Christ was born of pure Marie
In Bethlehem, that fair citie,
Angels sang with mirth and glee
In Excelsis Gloria.
In this "Grace collection" there is a carol commencing "Over the world on Christmas morn," by Dr. Mackay Smith.
The unorthodox carol of the sixteenth century has given place to the popular Christmas hymn of later days. Wherever the English language is spoken Charles Wesley's hymn, "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing," finds a place in the sanctuary. It is also translated into the languages of India, China and Japan. Its author was the brother of the founder of Methodism. He was a true poet and a perfect hymn writer. His masterpiece is the beautiful hymn "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," which was sung by the Princess Alice at the deathbed of the prince consort of England, the lamented husband of Queen Victoria.
"Come all ye faithful!" is the

CHRISTMAS BELLS

The great yule loaves are blazing high,
The halls with holly green are dressed,
And blitheome maids and merry lads
Are every-where in all their best,
And have ye seen the fairest maid
That e'er hath dwelt 'twixt sea and sea?
And for my love and for my faith,
Think ye she'll bring a gift to me?
O, ring, ye joy-bells, gayly ring!
O, merry minstrels, harp and sing!
Fill every heart with Christmas cheer,
For Christmas comes but once a year.
The yule fire blazes warm and high,
On oakened rafters, blackened walls,
It shines upon the fairest maid,
As down she dances thro' the hall,
I sing my weary harp aside,
(And will she stoop to such as I?)
I haste to meet her underneath
The mystic branches hanging high,
O, ring, ye joy-bells, gayly ring!
O, merry minstrels, harp and sing!
O, fill my heart with Christmas cheer,
For Christmas comes but once a year.
Who hath so rare or fair a gift
As this my love hath brought to me?
For I was but a minstrel lad,
A dainty, high-born maid was she,
Yet with her lips her heart she gave,
Her heart, all pure as Christmas snow,
And for her love and for her faith,
Fourth unto Jesus and war I'll go,
O, ring, ye joy-bells, gayly ring!
O, heart of mine, rejoice and sing,
For Christmas love and Christmas cheer
Shall bless our lives the whole round year.
—Annie Louise Brackenridge.



"Get the Trees."

which he'll fill and sometimes on trees or on little tables or wherever he sees the children have a place waiting for their presents.
"Sometimes he brings the trees with him, but usually he lets the children or their families get the trees and then he adds presents."
"He is planning to start out in plenty of time and the reindeer are going to be all ready."
"Get up," and they are off as soon as Santa Claus is in his sleigh.
"And the sleigh has many bells, and where there is no snow the reindeer have fixed the sleigh so they can pull it over the roofs and the towers and the villages and anywhere at all."
"The jingling bells will sound all over on Christmas eve. Most of us will be sound asleep and we will not hear them, but somehow when we wake up on Christmas morning we will feel quite sure that we have heard some lovely sounds in the night. We will remember some sounds which made our sleep very pleasant and very lovely as though we had heard beautiful music—and we will have heard the bells jingling on the sleigh of Santa Claus."
"Then the reindeer wear harnesses with Christmas bells on them, and they shake with excitement and the bells jingle all the time."
"Yes, the true news is that Santa Claus is going to start off at the same time as usual this year and that he is going to all the homes he visited last year and some more beside, and that no one is going to be forgotten, no one at all."
"Those are Santa Claus' plans, and when he is all through he plans, as he always does, to go back to his home and there to take out his magic telescope and look right through it into the windows of the homes where there are children, and he will see their smiles."
"And all of your smiles, you know, are the thanks that Santa Claus receives."

REMEMBER THE LITTLE BIRDS.

When we are all rejoicing and happy in our homes, do we ever think of the little birds or give them a Christmas, too? What would springtime be without them? And yet when do we pay back their kindness? When wintry winds blow, and food is hard to find then is the time we should remember them. Take little pieces of suet and trim some trees for them. If you have no trees in the vicinity of your home, then bundle up in a nice warm coat and go where you can find some.

LET THE CHILDREN HELP

Christmas day is a day for the children especially. They will have more pleasure in this holiday if they are allowed to prepare for it. In town where the children have kindergartens the little ones are filled with the holiday spirit by the work they are given to do and the plays they share. The teacher has them making chains of colored paper, strings of red cranberries, curtains of red and yellow grains of corn. They cut out snow scenes, showing Santa Claus and his reindeer. They play Christmas games and sing Christmas songs. They don't enjoy this sacred holiday for they have helped to prepare for it. The shops supply kindergarten materials for home work. Even the ten-cent stores have sewing cards with wools, beads, games and colored crayons with which the children can do their share.

Xmas Posy Party

"A Garden of Flowers"—an ideal scheme this for a fancy Christmas dress party. When the invitations are sent out each guest should be requested to come to "the Garden of Flowers" dressed to represent a flower. Whatever flower is chosen should be intimated to the hostess when accepting the invitation. For the supper table decoration for this party, in the center stand a large doll dressed as a rose—the queen of flowers. In her hands should be fastened as many garlands of baby ribbons, or strings of small blossoms as there are guests. Attach little gifts at the other ends of the garlands appropriate to the costumes of the guests that are to receive them, such as brooches and scarfpins with flowers in enamel, baskets of sweets trimmed with flowers, or pretty cut glass bottles of perfume, decorated with blossoms. The ribbons or garlands should be arranged that each small guest finds a corresponding gift; thus, Violet's present is adorned with the flowers she represents, etc. The menus should be in the form of flowers or petals and the lamp or candle shades of rose colored silk.

Christmas Song

In every babe that gains the light
Through rack of human pain,
In each new-breathing soul tonight
The Christ-child lives again,
In every drop of anguish, pressed
From pallid woman's brow,
In every virgin mother-breast
His Mother whispers now.
And wise men through the darkness hie,
Lo! In the East—a Star!
O little Christ who is to die
Was your soul's journey far?
Strange motor wounds of death and birth,
Lighting an endless sea;
A little child has come to earth
And He must die for me!
—By Mary McNeil Penolosa, in the Craftsman.

Origin of Yuletide

Yule was the name of the ancient Scandinavian festival held at the time of the winter solstice. The word is of uncertain origin, says The Housekeeper, but it probably is taken directly from the Icelandic word "yol," meaning a feast. It is curious to note how many nations of old marked the "turn of the year"—that is, the December solstice—by festivals. The Egyptians, the Hindus, the Persians, the Greeks and the Romans all had feasts at this season, but especially the Northern nations—the Teutons, the Scandinavians, the early natives of Britain—rejoiced at the event of the sun's turn on its course. The festival was kept with much eating and drinking and noisy jollity. One of the ceremonies was the placing of an enormous log of wood—often so large that it required the strength of several men to bring it in—upon the hearth fire in the huge fireplace. The burning of the Yule log was thought to insure good fortune to the family, especially when charred pieces of the log burned the year before and kept over for that purpose were used to light it.

SILENT CHRISTMAS.

The first "still Christmas" in England occurred in 1525, Henry VIII was king. In December the king fell sick, and the nation was filled with anxiety. It was decided that the Christmas should be a silent one. There were no bells, carols, or merry making. Silent Christmases were proclaimed in the protectorate of Cromwell. The festival was altogether abolished, and the display of the emblems of the nativity was held to be seditious. The change was most notable in London. There was silence in the Strand; the church bells were still.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

Happy, happy Christmas that can win us back to the delusions of our childish days; that can recall to the old man the pleasures of his youth; and transport the sailor and the traveler thousands of miles away, back to his own fireside and his quiet home.—Charles Dickens.

CHRISTMAS IN OTHER LANDS.

The Mexican Christmas is a strangely mixed week of sports, revels and religious observances. The "Passion Play" never fails to attract great crowds, nor do the bull fights. In the Philippines grand masses are held in the churches in the morning. Great chains of flowers are carried to the churches by the children, who parade through the streets singing Christmas songs, bands preceding them. In the afternoon there is dancing and merry-making. In Spain the religious note is predominant at Christmas and there are curious performances of mystery plays.

SIDESTEPPIING.

"Father," said the small boy, "do you believe in Santa Claus?"
"My son, the holiday shopping season has complications enough without starting a cross-examination."

BUT ONCE A YEAR.

"Merry, merry Christmas, Let the joy-bells ring; Glad hearts are rejoicing As the angels sing. Let our hearts be brightened, Give to all of cheer. For the gladsome Yuletide Comes but once a year!"

CHRISTMAS IN HOLLAND.

A quaint ceremonial is observed in Holland on Christmas eve. At midnight the men of the towns and villages, dressed in varied costumes, meet in the public squares. One is selected and into his charge is given a large illuminated star mounted upon a pole, and with this star is a guide—the Wise Men were guided to Bethlehem—a procession winds through the streets, the men chanting the "Gloria in Excelsis." After the parade a great supper is served.

Reasonable Request.

Boy Scout (on night guard)—Halt! Who comes here?
"Officer of the day."
"Advance, officer of the day, and explain what you are doing out at night."—American Boy.

Not Very Good Baby.

"This isn't a very good picture of your little baby brother, is it?" said the visitor.
"No, ma'am," replied little five-year-old Alice. "But, then, he ain't a very good baby."

BULL FIGHTS XMAS FEATURE.

When the people of Peru celebrate Christmas, ice-stalls, provided with chairs and benches, are crowded with perishing pleasure-seekers who find ice decidedly necessary on sultry Christmas. There are other peculiar features connected with a Christmas in Peru. No doors are closed. There is music and dancing in almost every house and everyone is welcome. Strangers can enter anywhere and will be given a hearty welcome, especially if they are

foreigners.

At midnight the people go to church and the houses and streets are nearly deserted.
Christmas Decorations.
In America our chief mid-winter decorations are little fir and cedar saplings from six to ten feet high, children's trees essentially, to be made resplendent with colored candles and shining trinkets, with soldier gifts in sober packages between; branches, wreaths, stars, or even tiny sprigs of holly; sprays of mistletoe, and some-

He Just Can't Wait to See Santa Claus



times a whole mistletoe plant. But the tiniest sprig of mistletoe is as effective as the larger bunch, if properly placed, in contributing to the mirth of a Christmas evening, provided a proper number of maids and men be present.
Johnny Knew.
Teacher—Johnny, what man has done more for this country than any other man?
Johnny—Santa Claus.—Houston Post.