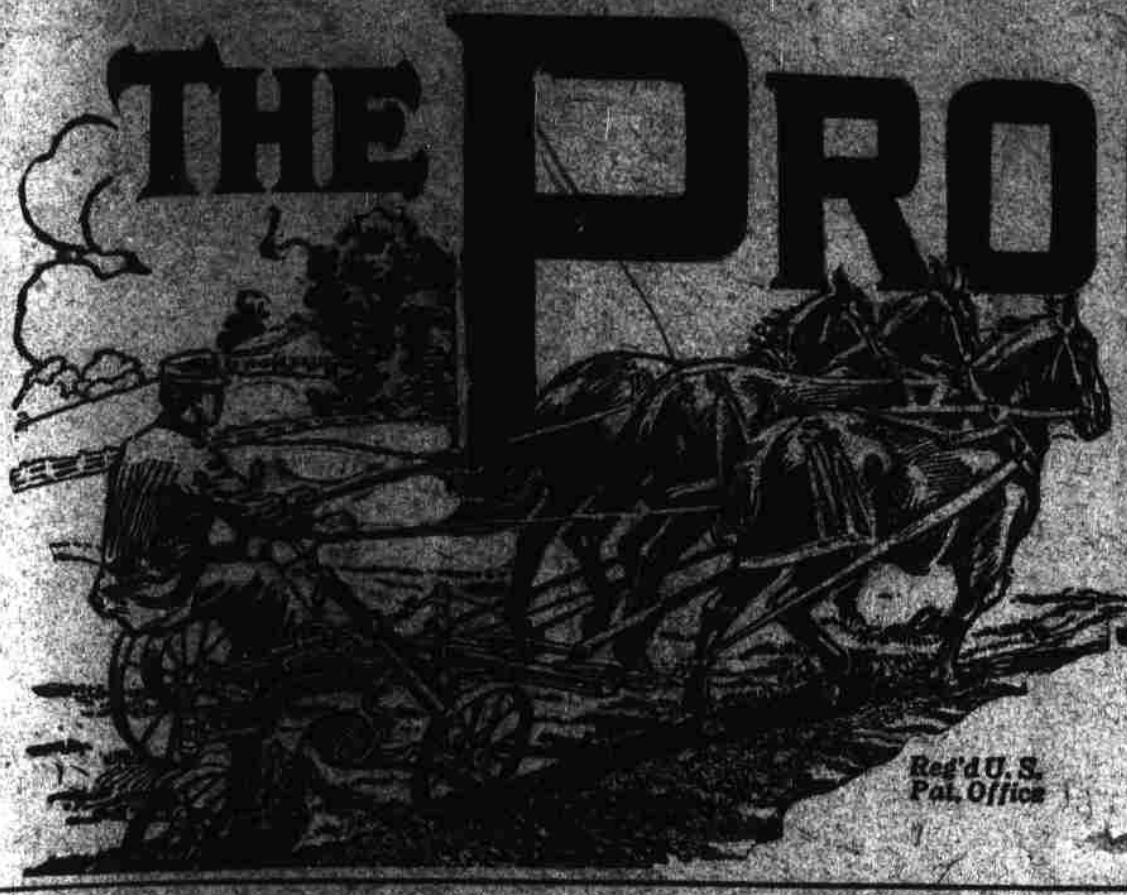


# THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER



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## CHRISTMAS IN

**H**EAP on more wood!—the wind is chill;  
But let it whistle as it will,  
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.  
Each age has deemed the new-born year  
The fittest time for festal cheer.

And well our Christian sires of old  
Loved when the year its course had rolled  
And brought blythe Christmas back again  
With all its hospitable train.  
Domestic and religious rite  
Gave honor to the holy night:  
On Christmas eve the bells were rung;  
On Christmas eve the mass was sung;  
That only night in all the year,  
Saw the stoled priests the chalice rear.  
The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;  
The hall was dressed with holly green;  
Forth to the wood did merry-men go,  
To gather in the mistletoe.  
Then opened wide the baron's hall  
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all;  
Power laid his rod of rule aside;  
And Ceremony doffed her pride,  
The heir, with roses in his shoes,  
That night might village partner choose;  
The lord, underogating, share  
The vulgar game of "post and pair."  
All hailed with uncontrolled delight,  
And general voice, the happy night  
That to the cottage, as to the crown,

## THE OLDEN TIME

Brought tidings of salvation down,  
The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,  
Went roaring up the chimney wide;  
The huge hall-table's oaken face,  
Scrubbed till it shone, the day to grace,  
Bore then upon its massive board  
No mark to part the squire and lord.  
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,  
By old blue-coated serving-man;  
Then the grim boar's-head frowned on high  
Crested with bays and rosemary.  
Well can the green-garbed ranger tell  
How, when, and where the monster fell;  
What dogs before his death he tore,  
And all the baiting of the boar.  
The wassail round, in good brown bowls,  
Garnished with ribbons, blithely trows,  
There the huge sirloin reeked; hard by  
Plain porridge stood, and Christmas play  
Nae failed old Scotland to produce,  
At such high tide, her savoury goose.  
Then came the merry maskees in,  
And carols roared with blithesome din;  
If unmelodious was the song,  
It was a hearty note, and strong.  
Who lists may in their mumming see  
Traces of ancient mystery;  
White shirts supplied the masquerade,  
And smutted cheeks the visors made.  
But, O! what maskers richly dight  
Can boast of bosoms half so light!

England was merry England when  
Old Christmas brought his sports again,  
'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale;  
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;  
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer  
The poor man's heart through half the year.  
—From Marmion.

