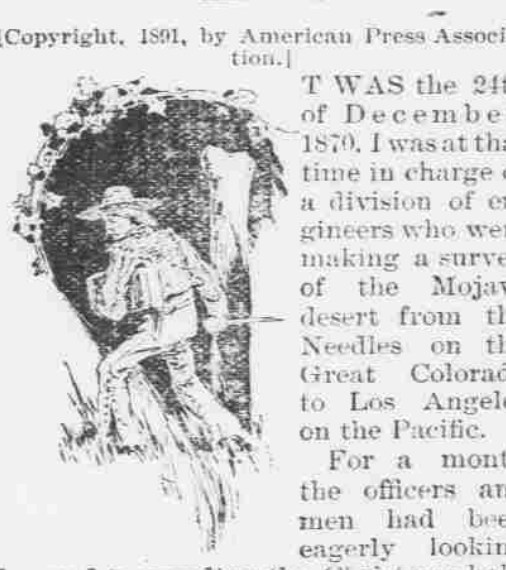


DEAD IN THE DESERT.

A CHRISTMAS STORY BY ALFRED R. CALHOUN.



IT WAS the 24th of December, 1870, I was at that time in charge of a division of engineers who were making a survey of the Mojave desert from the Needles to the Great Colorado.

STROYED, THERE WAS NOTHING TO INDICATE THE TOWN, STATE OR LAND.

one read as follows, and, curiously enough, it was dated Christmas eve, a year before: "MY DARLING BOY—I think of you at all times, but on Christmas eve you fill my heart so that I can think of nothing else, and if it were not for Dora, who had come to cheer me, I fear I could not stand it."

"Do not think me impatient," she urged, "but I feel more and more that wealth does not mean happiness, and that the noblest manhood is not developed in the fierce struggle for gold."

"Nero, grown fat and lazy, lies at my feet as I write, I call your name, 'Louis! my Louis!' and the dog starts up and hears no loved voice or footstep, and he comes back dejected and lies down with a moan."

"We were out of the desert. The odor of orange blossoms and perennial helio trope filled the air, and the ripple of water came to our ears whenever we reined in our horses."

"The man was of medium height, and the carbine, pistol and knife, still belted about his shrunken waist, indicated ability to resist. He was young. The long, dark hair and the silky mustache, through which the white teeth gleamed, told this. We opened the saddlebags and found \$200 in gold, the titles to a lot of California mining lands made out to one 'Louis Bolton', and a bundle of letters tied with a blue ribbon."

men wherever one turned. From the wide parlors came the rhythmic fall of feet and the smell of music. Here was Eden, but on asking the landlord the reason for these festivities, he replied: "It is a wedding. Mr. Louis Bolton, whose bride and mother reached here yesterday from the east, was married to-night."

"Yes, here he is. Let me introduce him." The landlord introduced me to a tall, handsome young man, and I at once took him to my room and showed him the arms and saddlebags.

Now, Lordings, listen to our ditty. Strangers coming from afar, Let your minstrel move your pity, Give us welcome, soothe our care."

CHIRSTMAS THOUGHTS. From heaven to earth at night's high noon There flashed a ray of sacred fire, And Nature's voice was all in tune With songs of sweet desire."

OLD TIME RHYMES. Some Quaint Christmas Verses of Other Days. It was Thomas Tusser who, nearly three and a half centuries ago, advised all people to at— Christmas play and make good cheer, For Christmas comes but once a year, in his quaint book, entitled "Five Hundred Pointes of Good Husbandrie," but it was previous to this that there had been issued a mock play called "Alexander and the King of Egypt."

Run like the horses do. "Oh, no, Frankie, it wouldn't look well for me to run like that." "Then you might as well take me home again. This pace is just killing me." —Life.

Herrick, in his "Hesperides," treats: Of Christmas sports, the Wassell Boule That tost up, after Fox-I-th-hole; Of Blind-man buffe, and of the care That young men have to choose the Maere; Of Ash-heapes, in the which ye use Husbands and wives by streakes to chuse; Of crackling laurell, which fore-sounds A piteous harvest to your grounds.

A writer in The Gentleman's Magazine for May, 1784, tells us that "the drinking the Wassail bowl or cup was, in all probability, owing to keeping Christmas in the same manner they had before the Feast of Yule. There was nothing the northern nations so much delighted in as courting one, especially at this season, when fighting was over. It was likewise their custom at all their feasts for the master of the house to fill a large bowl or pitcher, to drink out of it first himself, and then give to him that sat next, and so it went around."

CLIMBED UP ON TOP OF IT. There did not seem to be any place inside the chimney where I could hold on by my feet, but the ceiling in our room was not very high and I had often jumped most as far, so I jes let her go, and I suppose I went down. Anyway, I did not know about anything for a long time. Then I woke up all in the dark with my head feeling queer, and when I tried to turn over in bed I found I wasn't in bed at all, and then my arms and legs began to hurt terrible, mostly one arm that was doubled up. I tried to get up, but I couldn't because my bones hurt so and I was terrible cold and there was nothing to stand on. I was jes stuck. Then I began to cry, and pretty soon I heard mamma's voice sayin to papa: "Those must be sparrers that are making that noise in the chimney. Jes touch a match to the wood in the boys' fireplace."

Better Still. First St. Louis Girl—I want to hang up my stockings on Christmas, but I am afraid it isn't big enough. Second St. Louis Girl—Why don't you hang up your ear muffs?

A Short Wait. "Why are you sitting on my piazza? What do you want?" "That's all right. I thought I'd make myself comfortable until the sun comes out."

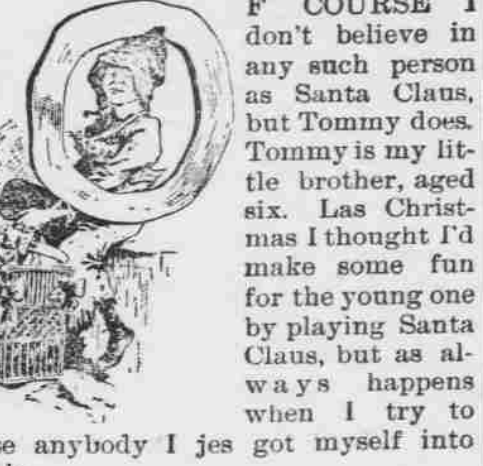
THE SON COMES OUT. Too Slow. "Say, auntie, do get a move on you. Run like the horses do."

THE ANTIQUITY OF THE CHRISTMAS BOX. Three centuries ago the Christmas box now not often heard of, was in the hey, at its glory, as these lines show: Gladly the boy with Christmas box in hand, Throughout the town his devious route pursued.

Shiloh's Consumption Cure. This is beyond question the most successful Cough Medicine we have ever used, a few doses invariably cure the worst cases of Cough, Croup and Bronchitis, while its wonderful success in the cure of Consumption is without a parallel in the history of medicine.

Several stores and dwellings in Oxford for sale or rent JOHN A. WILLIAMS.

BILLY'S SANTA CLAUS EXPERIENCE.



I don't believe in any such person as Santa Claus, but Tommy does. Tommy is my little brother, aged six. Last Christmas I thought I'd make some fun for the young one by playing Santa Claus, but as always happens when I try to amuse anybody I jes got myself into trouble.

I went to bed pretty early on Christmas eve so as to give my parents a chance to get the presents out of the closet in mamma's room, where they had been locked up since they were bought. I kept my close except my shoes, and put my nightgown over them so as I'd look white if any of them came near me.

I hurt my fingers some opening the scuttle, but kept right on. It was snowing hard and I stood and let myself get pretty well covered with flakes. Then I crawled over to the chimney that went down into our room. I climbed up on top of it. I had brought my bicycle lantern with me and I lighted it so as Tommy could see when I came down the chimney into the room.

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TO A SPRAY OF MISTLETOE.

[A CHRISTMAS SOLLICQUY.] One year ago above the door You hung, and she was there. I kissed her then, because of you, And then upon the stair



We sat and talked because of you My arm stole round her waist. And then, because of you once more, I kissed her. This in haste:



Stuffer—What do you think? Jones has actually invited me to dine with him on Christmas day at his boarding house. Dashaway—Hal hal! Did you ask him if he had a grudge against you? Stuffer—Yes. He said no, that he had a grudge against the landlady.

CHRISTMAS APHORISMS. Pope Telephorus, who died before the middle of the Second century, deserved canonizing, if for nothing else, for instituting Christmas as a festival. It has been celebrated ever since in all Christian lands, and has given more happiness to children than any day in the calendar. Making children happy is the essence of Christianity.

The most satisfactory way to observe Christmas is to do at least one good act to some of our fellows. The consciousness of doing such an act will inspire us to do others, and so sanctify the day as to make it ever welcome.

Christmas is always associated with the good Jesus who, whether regarded as God or man, was the purest, kindest, noblest being that has walked the earth. He has inspired love in saint and sinner, in devotee and skeptic alike. Men may wrangle about creeds; but about Jesus and his beautiful life there can hardly be any difference of opinion, for he pitied all who suffered and strove to heal every aching heart.

Christmas has gradually evolved out of its theology and has come to stand for a festival of love. Therefore all men love it, for throughout the universe love is born of love and is worshipped for its own sake.

Baking powders are mixtures of chemicals which, when moistened, liberate carbonic acid gas. They are added to the flour used in baking, so that the gas, as it escapes, will puff up the dough, rendering it spongy and light. Yeast serves the same purpose by causing a fermentation in the flour, which also develops carbonic acid gas.—Boston Budget.

"You never loved me, John!" sobbed Mrs. Billus hysterically. "Maria," exclaimed Mr. Billus earnestly, "you are mistaken. If you will look back over the family expense account you will find that it cost us \$27.50 for repairing rocking chairs during the first three years of our married life." —Chicago Tribune.

Hold Your Cotton. If you can hold your cotton we feel safe in guaranteeing a better price. Yes, cotton will rise. Mark our prediction, and you are being sent out from New York and published in the newspapers all over the country that the cotton crop will be unusually large. It is without foundation and is a miserably false. It is the work of stock speculation aid them in their speculative schemes. In fact, the information which shows that the world's cotton crop according to the estimates of the best experts, will be more than the published estimates of a million bales. Further, we have in our possession a confidential circular which was intended to circulate on the inside among speculators which puts the cotton crop of world at 1,300,000 bales short of the figures they are publishing to their own estimates. The cotton crop of the year will 'a' show the estimates of the world at least 600,000 bales. It is true we lost last year by holding back cotton, but the crop was unusually large which with a contracted money supply enabled the speculator to steadily push down the price. In fact we can sell as a few money sharks can control the volume of currency. But within this year it is hardly possible that they will be able to keep down the price if the farmers will hold and stop selling.

The following resolution was offered before the Supreme Council of the Alliance at Indianapolis by Union Butler, of North Carolina, and unanimously adopted: Resolved, That being in possession of facts that are thoroughly reliable, which warrant us in a belief that a false estimate has been purposely made of the present crop of cotton, we feel safe in guaranteeing better prices if cotton can be held for sixty days. We know that many will be forced to sell in order to do themselves and their creditors justice, but let every man hold who can. —The Caucasian.

Ethel—I think I ought to tell you, Edith, that I met your fiancé in a dark hallway last night and he kissed me. Edith—Indeed! The hallway must have been very dark.—Munsey's Weekly.

"Don't want nothing. Go 'way. Don't like peddlers." "But maybe your husband does. How about a razor?" "He never shaves. Go 'way." "But perhaps he might want to commit suicide." —Philadelphia Times.

"I'm told," said George to Mabel, "that tyrotolozyl has been found in remarkable abundance in ice cream this season." "Does it hurt one much?" she asked apprehensively. "Oh, I guess it poisons you," he replied.

"Is it alive?" "Ye—yes; I think so." "Oh, George, if I would like to see one." —Merchandise Reviewer.

Man is an ungainly creature at the best. His head is an irregular spheroid, his eyes are not of equal efficiency, his whiskers won't grow uniformly. One shoulder is higher than the other, and this is on opposite sides—his hips (if he has any) are unequal in shape. The calves of his legs are not twins in anything but age; and without his tailor, hatter and bootmaker he is a sorry looking animal.—Ogden Argus.

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F. H. Hickey, 1208 Main street, Lynchburg, Va., writes: "I was broke out all over with sores, and my hair was falling out. After using a few bottles of Botanic Blood Balm my hair quit falling out and all the sores got well."