

Carrying the "Star of Bethlehem"

THE Star of Bethlehem as seen in Holland is a pretty, but a cheap sight, for it costs nothing. 'Tis the harbinger of Christmas, a huge illuminated star, which is carried through the silent, dark Dutch streets, shining upon the crowding people and typical of the star which once guided the wise men of the East.

The young men of a Dutch town who go to the expense of this star, which is carried through the streets as a signal that Christmas has come once again, are swayed by the full intention of turning the Star of Bethlehem to account.

They gather money from the crowds for the poor, and, having done this for the good of those whom fortune has not befriended, they betake them to the head burgo-master of the town, who is bound to set down the youths who form the star company to a very comfortable meal. 'Tis a great institution, the Star of Bethlehem, in many Dutch towns and cities. And may it never die out, for it does harm to no man and good to many.

The Yule Log.

The ceremony of the Yule log, which is generally agreed by authorities to be traceable to the pagan rites which were performed at that season of the year before the coming of Christianity, was nevertheless the most joyous of the ceremonies observed on Christmas eve in medieval times.—New York Herald.

Celebrated Christmas With Biblical Play

MANY curious feasts arose in connection with the celebration of Christmas in early days. Thus the ass on which Balaam rode in the "Reims Mystery" won for the feast the title "Festum Asinorum," the feast of the asses. As it was celebrated in France, according to William Hone, it consisted almost entirely of dramatic show. On one occasion the clergy walked on Christmas day in procession, habited to represent the prophets and other characters.

Moses appeared in an alb and cope, with a long beard and a rod. David had a green vestment. Balaam, with an immense pair of spurs, rode on a wooden ass, which inclosed a speaker. There were also six Jews and six gentiles. Among other characters the poet Vergil was introduced, singing monkish rimes. They moved in procession through the body of the church chanting verses and conversing on the life of Christ till they came into the choir.

This service, as performed in the cathedral at Rouen, commenced with a procession in which the clergy represented the prophets of the Old Testament, who foretold the birth of Christ. Then followed Balaam mounted on the ass, Zacharias, Elizabeth, John the Baptist, the Sibyl, Myrthree, Simeon, Vergil, Nebuchadnezzar and the three prophets in the furnace.—Washington Post.

Tale of a Gift That Wasn't Given

GIFT giving has marked the theatrical profession in all times, and it was interesting to hear on one occasion an old actor tell with tears in his eyes of the most beautiful Christmas present that he had ever received—a wig that Edwin Forrest had worn in "Othello" and that he gave to the actor, then young, in token of his esteem, says a player.

It was a most tearful scene, this old man recalling this touching incident of the good old times, and we were all leaving the table, burdened with the picture and the memories that it evoked, when Stuart Rogson leaned over and whispered:

"You know Forrest never gave anyone anything, and he didn't wear a wig in 'Othello.'"

A Grudging Gift

Dad says that Christmas time is meant for girls and boys. He can't regret the money spent to purchase toys. This is a pleasure, he asserts; it makes him glad, but there is one expense that hurts, Says dad.

Dad gives the servants goodly tips for Christmas day. Into his pocketbook he dips in kindly way. One item aggravates him, though; it makes him mad. To buy a gift for sister's beau, Says dad. —Exchange

Representative Royal C. Johnson, of South Dakota gave up his seat in Congress Monday to enlist as a private in the regular army. He left for Camp Meade, Annapolis Junction, that morning. To several of his friends he said that he would be "the tamest private in camp." Mr. Johnson is 32 years old and has a wife and two children. From 1911 to 1914 he was Attorney General of South Dakota. He was elected as a Republican to the Sixty-fourth Congress.

Thrift is one of the corner stones on which manhood must be constructed.

Santa Claus Wishes One And All A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year.



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