

THE CHRISTMAS SHOPPER

BY ROBERT DONNELL

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THIS is for men only. If women read it they may laugh at the men, thereby causing family disturbances. It is about Christmas shopping, in which women are interested, but it is about men's shopping, not women's. So much has been written concerning the matter of women buying Christmas presents for men that it seems high time to show the other side of the shield. Among all the domestic tragedies incident to this life none is so poignantly pitiful as the annual tragedy that takes place when Mr. Man goes forth surreptitiously to purchase Yuletide gifts for his ladylove, be she wife, widow or maid.

"What would she like, I wonder?" sighs Mr. Man. The sigh is long drawn out, like the linked sweetness of the first kiss. By the time he enters the big, bewildering department store which he has passed by a thousand times without entering and which is to him an unknown wonderland he quits sighing and begins seeing. The first things he sees are the scores of pretty salesgirls, including some not so pretty. But of course not one of them is half so pretty as the girl, wife or widow for whom he is going to buy that—well, now, what? He begins to sigh some more.

Ah, a box of gloves—the very thing! And yet what size does she wear? Suppose he got her three sizes too large for her dainty hands! Awful!

Then he goes to the other extreme—or extremity—and resolves to get her a pair of those beautiful satin slippers which he discovers on a counter. But, again, what size? If he should make the sad error of getting a single size too large she would stare sarcastically at him and inquire:

"Do you think I'm from Chicago?"
Gloves and slippers are marked "taboo" in his calculations. Well and good. Her hands and feet are disposed of. Now, how about her head? Why, a set of those back and side combs—the very thing! All women like pretty combs, of course. But maybe his particular woman is sensitive and she might imagine that he imagines that she doesn't keep her hair tidy.

"Oh, I s'pose she knows when she needs hair combs!" sighs Mr. Man, turning to the next counter. Her head is out of the question. So far as Christmas presents go, she is decapitated. Well, that still leaves a considerable portion of the lady adaptable to adornments.

"Where are the Cremonas?" asks the man.
"We don't sell violins in this store," replies Miss Saleslady.
"Go to a music house."

"Violins! I'm looking for a lady's house dress, a sort of wrapper!"

"Oh, you mean a kimono!" giggles the girl, passing on the giggle to the next girl, who is likewise generous.
"Didn't I say kimono, miss?" the man says a little testily.

"Third floor; take elevator," says the giggly girl.
Mr. Man finally finds the kimono department. The stock is bewildering. He never imagined there were so many kinds of kimonos in the world. He had associated the kimono with the Japanese and supposed they were all Japs. He couldn't fall to get one to fit. They were all so loose and flowing that most anything in the shape of a Japanese kimono would fit any woman as well as it was intended to fit. So at last the search is ended. Eureka! Found!

"The latest and daintiest thing is the French flannel kimono," says the chief saleswoman, whereupon she shows Mr. Man a late and dainty creation in pink flannel which looks no more like a Japanese kimono than a caterpillar looks like a butterfly.

"But—how—can I know this will fit?" asks Mr. Man.

"About how large is your—lady?" asks the saleswoman.

"Oh, bout four size—hundred 'n' twenty pounds."

Miss Saleslady swells. She is quite plump to begin with.

"I guess you're mistaken about her being my size," she says somewhat scornfully, secure in her possession of the fact that she weighed 145 on the penny slot machine only this morning. Mr. Man is embarrassed and helpless.

"I'll—be back in a few minutes," he says, having definitely determined to get a French flannel kimono. Mr. Man goes down to the first floor.

A Christmas Morning Courtship



"What would you like, pretty maid?" he said.
"Why, I'd like to coast on your Christmas sled."

where the giggly girls abound. For ten minutes he wanders around through the aisles, casting longing glances at the salesgirls. Now and then he pauses and eyes one girl in particular. Finally the floorwalker, who has been eying Mr. Man, steps up and asks:

"Anything in particular, sir?"
"Yes; I'm looking for a girl about the size of my—I mean, the lady I'm trying to buy a Christmas present for. That young lady with the billowy blond hair is just about the size."

"Well, what of it?" asks the floorwalker.
"I want to borrow that girl for about five minutes."
"The deuce you do!"

"Yes, to go upstairs to the French kimono section and try on a kimono for me—I mean for my—the other lady. See?"
The floorwalker sees; also he smiles. But Christmas is coming, so let him feel cheerful.

"Here, Miss Lou," says the floorwalker to the billowy blond. Miss Lou accepts the assignment gracefully, accompanies the gentleman up to the third floor, chatting amiably en route, and tries on French kimono after French kimono. At last one fits snugly.

Mr. Man pays the price. The dainty garment is bundled up and sent to his address, and his troubles are over. But are they? There's a sequel. It happens that Mr. Man is buying this kimono for the dearest girl in the world, who is to become his own and only wife on New Year's day. She has confided to him that she believes in useful Christmas gifts, something nice to wear, for instance, and he has paid \$48.85 for a nice French flannel kimono. Very well. It is three days till Christmas eve. That very night when he reaches home Mr. Man finds this note, left by messenger:

Mr. Man—All is over between us. I will send your ring and the dog collar and the bracelet tomorrow. I was in Goldenstein & Abraham's this afternoon and saw you making eyes at half the girls in the store; then I saw you openly flirting with a blondine creature. I dropped my veil down so you couldn't recognize me. I heard you say "third floor" when you went to the elevator with her. I went up in the next car and watched you buy a beautiful French kimono for that horrid wretch! Is it necessary for me to say more?
ALLYCE.

So you see there are tragedies in men's Christmas shopping. But did this really happen? Ask the man.

SLEEPY HEADS.

By GOODLOE THOMAS.

H! yo'! Ho, yo'! Chris'mus in de mawnin'!
Bettah h'ist away, yo' kids, I's wa'nin'!
O! folks' way am to set aroun' de grate
Hatchin' rikelections till de housah gits late.
Linkum Jeff'son, git to bed
Fo' yo' loss dat sleepy head.

H! yo'! Ho, yo'! Chillun, des supposin',
While yo' serrin' dere noddin' an' dozin',
Dat of Sants Claus comes a-prowl-in' aroun',
Ketchin' yo' r'wake when yo' should be soun'?
Annabella, git onstripped,
Fo' I has to sen' yo', whipped!

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM



BY MAURICE SMILEY

BACK toward Judea turn the battling hearts
Of men in these the creed and canon days;

From soaring spires and armaments to where
The Nazarene once walked the fretted sea;
From gilded domes whose crass magnificence
Hides not the hovels in their shades to where
The Master lay that Galilean night
Beneath the stars; from velvet pews and gold
And silver glittering to where He said:
"To visit them that suffer and are sick
Is true religion, undefiled. Whoso
Shall rightly worship God must worship Him
In spirit and in truth."

The world doth tire
Of hollow show and sounding litanies
That echo from the bannered plains of War,
Of vestments crusted with the gems that mock
The starving bodies and the hearts of men.
It longs to hear the simple gospel: "Love
Ye one another. Whosoever gives
A cup of water to the least of these
Shall give it unto Me." World weary souls
Are turning from the blasphemy of Pride,
And back across the crimson centuries
They go, back over fields of hate and strife,
Back over pathways red with blood
And lighted with the fires of stakes and gleam
Of swords—until at last they see the Star
Of Bethlehem and stand beside a holy Child.
And there, beneath the sky where angels sang
For joy, the story of two thousand years
Is blotted out. Upon the new command
No bloody seal is set. "Good will to men
And peace on earth," the gentle message runs.

THE VETERAN'S CHRISTMAS TALE

I NEVER think of Christmas but I think of the one I spent when on detached service down in Virginia in '62. I was a captain then, and, being on special service, I happened to be temporarily attached to the command of General Cox at Gauley Bridge, Va. I was warmly welcomed as I arrived on Christmas eve and brought some letters to both officers and men, the first many of them had received for nine months. The command was the First Kentucky, and a line of fellows they were. Captain Ralph Hunt invited me to share his tent, and as we sat smoking together after taps he threw me a letter, saying, "Read that."

Dear Ralph—I have sent you a turkey and some fixings and also some new underwear, and I hope the box will reach you in time for Christmas.

"That's enough," he said, for there was a lot more in the letter, and it was signed Susie. "The box is under my bunk, and as you are to leave tomorrow night you are sure of a good dinner anyhow." So we turned in, and Christmas day dawned clear and cold, and when it came time for dinner the captain's orderly had done himself proud by cooking that turkey in fine style.

"The pickets are driven in," said Captain Hunt as he stood in the tent opening with a turkey leg in one hand, and the next moment he was ordered to take his company, make a reconnaissance and report the strength of the enemy.

The country about Gauley bridge was thickly covered with scrubby



"THE PICKETS ARE DRIVEN IN."
pine and cedar. Pushing through this until he obtained a position commanding the road by which the Confederates must advance, the captain halted his men. He sent a few men in advance as scouts, and then he and I and a corporal went forward about twenty yards. The scouts, bewildered by the underbrush, got into our rear, and as soon as we heard men advancing in our front Hunt at once said it was his scouts returning. "That tur-

key isn't cold yet, and we'll finish it when we get back."

In place of our scouts the advancing party was the advance guard of Confederates. Hunt recognized the officer in command as Captain Loughborough, and the three of us jumped to cover. But Loughborough, who was in advance of his men, had caught sight of Hunt, and, with a volley of oaths, he cried:

"Come out, you—Yankee, and be shot!" As he cried this he covered Hunt's hiding place with a long Ma-



THE CONFEDERATE DROPPED

issippi rifle and fired. Hunt had grabbed the corporal's ordinary smooth bore musket and so quickly had he acted that both shots rang out at the same instant. I was looking out at the whole thing through the branches of a thick cedar, and the two men were not more than fifty yards apart. The Confederates dropped in his tracks and never moved, and at once a volley was poured into the captain's bush, but not a bullet hit him. Hunt's men, supposing that the three of us must have been killed, beat a retreat and made good their escape, and we were surrounded and captured. At first the Confederates were for wreaking vengeance on Hunt for the death of a favorite officer, but the gallantry he displayed and his perfect coolness while in their power finally won their regard. When asked to give his parole he refused, saying: "You fellows spoiled my Christmas dinner that I and my friends here had just sat down to, and I propose to get back and finish it if I can. You get no parole from me." I and the corporal gave our parole, but Captain Hunt was mad clear through. He was ironed and, after marching with our guard through several towns of Virginia, we brought up at Richmond and were thrown into Libby. We never heard who ate our Christmas turkey.—J. A. R. in Brooklyn Eagle.

The Christmas Story.
Oh, the bells, o'er hills and dells, ringing warm from heart to heart!
Every stroke the story tells, every chime proclaims its part.
Pleading low with those in doubt,
Sternly chiding those about
To lose heart.

Oh, the bells, like living wells, throbbing with the life they bear,
Bottly each the story tells, eager for the world to share.
Thrilling hearts that have grown cold,
Pleading with the young and old
Everywhere.
—New York Herald.

THE FELINES' CHRISTMAS OUTING



Going to a Christmas Dinner



Discussing the Christmas Pudding



A Visit From the Doctor Next Morning