

**Christmas Eve Alliance****Made Two Hearts Happier**

THE wind howled dimly, and Oscar Huggins, looking out at the whirling snow, put up the shutters. Put them up right, too, as the little grocery would be closed tomorrow. Dimly, he wondered how to spend Christmas.

He checked over his stock, nibbled a bit of cheese, and opened the back door to throw out a rotting apple.

In the snow stood a boy. The lad dove for the apple, polishing and handling it as something precious.

"Here!" said Oscar roughly. "What are you doing?"

The boy looked startled. "I thought you threw it away," he answered, "and see, it's pretty good."

"Humph," said Oscar. "All right, keep it. But, mind, you've no business loitering here. You should be home in this weather, and on Christmas eve, of all times." The lad shifted uneasily but did not leave. "Well?" Oscar demanded.

"I was looking for work, sir." Oscar looked at him sharply. "Out on your own, son?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where are your folks?" His tale of bereavement, struggle and loneliness was brief but impressive.

"How'd you like to spend Christmas with me?" the grocer offered. Funny, this life. A bit ago he had almost wished he wasn't closing tomorrow—now it seemed jolly.

"Gee!" exclaimed his new friend. "Swell!"

They packed a market basket to overflowing. But Oscar turned back. "Wait a minute." He selected his best candies and found a bit of red string.

"If I keep him to help in the store he'll probably eat it anyway," he consoled, "might as well show him a Merry Christmas."—Helen Galsford.

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**Santa as He Appears in the Different Countries**

SO SANTA CLAUS wears a red suit and a long white beard, and when he isn't busy in the toy store, drives a sleigh pulled by Donner and Blitzen?

Not if you live in Hawaii. There, on a moonlit December night, you might see Santa come riding in from the ocean on a surf-board. As likely as not there would be a lei, or wreath of flowers, about his neck, though he wears the same red suit and waterproof boots he dons for boys and girls of the United States, since Hawaii is really American territory.

In the Philippines, though it, too, is American, the white cap turns conical like a Spanish clown's. He carries a red-and-white lantern which helps him find the home of every good boy and girl, and drives buffalo, which they call carabao. The gifts are packed in baskets slung across the backs of these creatures.

What would you think of Santa in a rickshaw? But, after all, if you were a Chinese child isn't that what you would expect? And Santa never disappoints. In Japan he sits with his feet tucked under him to take his tea on a wintry afternoon, and in the African tropics—well, you just wouldn't recognize the red suit! He has even taken to using the airplane in his own country. I am sure that when he leaves the reindeer in his barn, he pats the nose of each one and urges the ice elves to feed them plenty of reindeer moss till he comes home again.—Frances Grinstead.

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**SANTA CLAUS**

THERE is a Santa Claus. His real name is Spirit of Charity. He is the symbol of benevolence, compassion and altruism. He is the ideal of that small legion of really human humans who pave unselfishly numerous paths to happiness with kindness, sympathy and charity.

**He Was a Dutch Boy**

Christmas was celebrated long before Santa Claus was ever thought of. His prototype was the Dutch boy bishop, St. Nicholas, who on December 5 used to go round punishing little children who did not say their prayers and rewarding those who did. Gradually he was changed from a boy into a jovial old man, while the sledge and reindeer are modern additions. Actually, Santa Claus was unknown in England a hundred years ago. The Dutch founders of New York introduced him to America, and England borrowed him from the States.—London Tit-Bits Magazine.

**Believe in Yuletide for Dead**

Kitzbuhel, Austria, is one of the few places in the world which believe that the dead should share in the Yuletide celebration. On Christmas eve, this picturesque little village in the Tyrol has, for many years, decorated each grave in its cemetery with a tree lighted by candles and other small lights.—Collier's Weekly.

**Select Sturdy Toys**

Well-built toys which will provide happy play throughout the year are better than those which make a brave showing on the Christmas tree but which are soon broken or discarded.

**Mr. Gandy Good Shopper, but Forgot Own Present**

IT WAS simply out of the question for Mrs. Gandy to go to Sayville that morning. The day before Christmas and a thousand things to do; but Mr. Gandy was going. Of course he could do many errands, yet hardly the one she wished most to have done—a gift for himself. Sayville was the nearest shopping place to the tiny village where the Gandys lived, a good fifteen miles over the mountain, by a rickety bus which ran once a day.

Mrs. Gandy was struck with an idea. She hurried to a neighbor's house and begged her to come home with her. "Just ask Mr. Gandy if he will buy for you a pair of gloves, for your husband. Give a large size. He'll never guess."

The neighbor obligingly consented. Mrs. Gandy felt well pleased with her bit of a scheme to get her husband to buy his own gift (unknowingly) for himself, but she was a trifle dismayed when, at five o'clock, Mr. Gandy came home, tired, hungry and tumbled an armful of packages on the kitchen table.

"You got the sage for the dressing? The celery? The red toy truck for Tommie? The blue mittens for Sarah? The nuts and raisins, and the white wool for grandma?"

Mr. Gandy nodded and inquired how soon supper would be ready.

"And," asked his wife casually, "the gloves for Andrew, his wife wanted?"

Mr. Gandy smiled. "I clean forgot about them until the bus was ready to start! So I just hopped into a place and grabbed the first pair I saw. 'Good enough for old Andrew,' I thought, but they aren't much." He grinned a little shamefacedly, like a boy.

Mrs. Gandy plumped down in a chair. "Bill Gandy, that serves you just right. Those gloves are a Christmas present from me to you. You are served with your own sauce!" And she laughed so hard that Bill Gandy had to join her at his own expense.—Martha B. Thomas.

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**Mothers' Night, Ancient English Christmas Name**

THE oldest English name for Christmas is Moddra Night, or Mothers' Night. In the early days, when our Saxon forefathers had just settled down in the country that was to be England, the day of December 25th was given up to games and feasting, but the night was dedicated to the special honor of mothers. They occupied the seats of honor, and everyone brought them gifts. Sons and daughters who had gone out into the world strove to be at home on that one night in the year.

A little later the name Yule was given to Christmas, and the rejoicings of the day were prolonged into night, when men sang and told stories sitting round the cheerful blaze of the Yule log.

The old customs of Mothers' Night gradually died out, though they still survive in a few parts of the country. Its place has been taken to some extent by Mothering Sunday in the North of England. On that day everyone who can do so still makes a pilgrimage homewards, and the mother receives the homage of her family.—London Tit-Bits Magazine.

**THE DAYS BEFORE**

"What nice manners the polite little Thompson boys have!"

"Yes. They are always like that just before Christmas."

**Proper Size for Toy Blocks**

Four inches long by two inches square is a good size for children's building blocks, according to educational experts. These can be made at home by cutting them from a 2 by 2 planed joist, sandpapering the edges and corners to a slight roundness, and painting them in bright colors. Old, worn blocks can be given a new lease on life by enameling them in gay hues.

**Shakespeare and Christmas**

Christmas is mentioned twice by Shakespeare and then incidentally. Yuletide was, however, an important time in his life, because it was then that his plays were produced by command at the courts of Queen Elizabeth and James I, with Shakespeare in the casts.

**Toys Should Please the Child**

Select Christmas toys to please the child, not to amuse the adults in the family.

**Your Christmas Pleasure**

Your Christmas pleasure is due when your Christmas duty is done.

**NEW BANK REGULATIONS**

Raleigh, Dec. 1.—Regulations in keeping with a legislative act and designed to "promote safer banking and to better protect the interest of depositors, creditors, stockholders, and the public in their relation with banks" have been issued by Gurney P. Hood, state banking commissioner. The regulations govern the keep-

ing of more extensive records by the banks to improve operating methods.

**DIES HAPPY**

Twin Falls, Idaho, Dec. 1.—Joseph William Walker, 71, was dead today, the victim of a perfect rummy hand for which he had hoped through a lifetime of card playing.

He succumbed to heart failure as he viewed his hand.

A survey says that youth is losing its influence—why the fact is the old folks are getting younger every year.

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