

MERRY CHRISTMAS



REGINA COELI.

SAY, did his sisters wonder how Joseph see in a mild, silent little maid like thee? And was it awful in that narrow house, With God for babe and spouse? Nay, like thy simple, female sort, each one apt to find him in husband and in son, Nothing to thee came strange in this, Thy wonder was but wondrous bliss; Wondrous, for though True Virgin lives not but does know (Howbeit none ever yet confessed) That God lies really in her breast, Of thine he made his special nest And so, All mothers worship little feet And kiss the very ground they've trod, But, ah, thy little baby sweet, Who was indeed thy God!

—Coventry Patmore.



WHEN Lucien de Hem had seen his last 100-franc note raked in by the banker and had risen from the roulette table where he had just lost the remains of his small fortune he experienced a sort of vertigo and almost fell.

With reeling brain and failing limbs he tottered over to the leather bench that encircled the room and threw himself on it. For some minutes he gazed vaguely at this private gambling hell in which he had wasted the best years of his youth, recognizing one by one the plundered heads of the players in the bold glare of the three great green shades. He heard the soft friction of the gold on the felt and realized his loss, his ruin; but he remembered that at home, in a bureau drawer, there were two army pistols which had been bravely used by his father, General De Hem, in the attack of Zaatcha. Then utterly worn out, he slept profoundly.

He awoke with parched throat and glancing at the clock saw that he had barely slept a half hour.

An imperative need to breathe the night air came over him. The hands marked a quarter to midnight, and, on rising and stretching his arms, Lucien recollected that it was Christmas eve, and by an ironical freak of memory he saw himself a little child again putting his shoes in front of the chimney at bedtime.

Just then old Dronski, the Pole, a fixture of the place, in threadbare, braided livery, came up to Lucien and mouthed a few words in his dirty beard.

"Lend me five francs, Monsieur. Here are two days since I have been out of the club and it has not turned up once. Laugh at me if you will, but you may cut off my last if it does not come out in a few minutes, when the clock strikes midnight."

Lucien de Hem shrugged his shoulders; he had not even the wherewithal to pocket to pay the tax known by the name of 'la porte' which the

street, a central one, walled in by high houses, was all white. Multitudes of cold stars shone in the blue-black purged sky.

The ruined man walked rapidly, revolving desperate thoughts in his mind, and was more than ever drawn to the pistol box in his dressing case drawer.

Suddenly he stopped. He was confronted by a heart-breaking scene.

On a stone bench, placed according to the old-time custom beside the monumental door of a palace, a little girl of 6 or 7, barely covered by a ragged black frock, was sitting in the snow. She had gone to sleep there, in spite of the cold, in a painful attitude of utter weariness, with her poor little head and shoulder propped in an angle of the icy stone.

One of her old shoes had fallen from the foot which hung over and lay in the snow.

Lucien de Hem felt mechanically for his vest pocket, and was suddenly reminded that a moment before he had not even found a forgotten franc, nor a pourboire for the valet.

However, stirred by an instinctive pity, he approached the little girl, and would perhaps have carried her in his arms to give her a night shelter, had he not seen something shining in the old shoe as it lay in the snow.

He bent over. It was a gold louis.

Some charitable person, a woman, doubtless, in passing by this Christmas eve had seen the shoe in front of the sleeping child, and had remembered the touching legend. This generous alma had been given so that the little one might believe in the gifts of the holy child, and in spite of her distress retain some hope in the goodness of Providence.

A louis! It meant many days of plenty for the beggar, and Lucien was about to waken and tell her so, when he heard a voice in his ear, a drawing, thick voice, mumbling:

"Here are two days since I have been out of the club. You can cut off my fist if it does not come out when the clock strikes midnight."

Then the young man of 23, coming of honest stock with a magnificent military record, never falling in honor, this young man suddenly conceived a dreadful thought, fell prey to a wild, hysterical, monstrous desire. Assuring himself with one glance that the street was deserted he swiftly stooped, advanced a trembling hand, and stole the louis from the old shoe. With a wild rush he reached the club again, cleared the stairs in one impetuous rush, swung open the door of the reeking hall, and threw the gold piece on the green, just as the clock chimed the first stroke of midnight.

"All on 17!"

Seventeen won.

With a turn of his hand he shoved the 26 louis on red.

Red won.

He left 72 louis on the same color. Again it appeared. Three times he put up the doubled stakes with the same luck. There was now a great heap of gold and bank notes in front of him, and he began frantically to sow them broadcast over the table. Every combination favored him. The little ivory ball jumping about the divisions of the roulette seemed to be magnetized by the gambler's gaze, and obeyed it. In 10 plays he had recovered the few thousand francs, his last resource, that he had lost early in the evening. By punting 200 or 300 louis at once he would soon have far more than the heritage he had fooled away.

In his haste to play he had kept on his heavy coat, and the great pockets were already crammed with rolls of bank notes and gold pieces. He now had to stuff them into his inside pockets, his vest and trouser pockets, his cigar case, his handkerchief, and everything that could hold them. He still played. He still won; like a lunatic, like a drunken man! He threw the gold anywhere on the table with disdainful certainty.

In his heart a red-hot iron was burning; he thought only of the child sitting in the snow; of the little beggar

will leave here and carry her home sleeping in my arms. I will bring her up, love her as my own child, and care for her always, always."

The clock struck 1, the quarter, the half, the three-quarters, and Lucien still sat at the table. A minute before the banker rose abruptly and said in a sharp voice:

"Enough for the day, gentlemen; the bank is closed."

Lucien leaped to his feet. Roughly he pushed the players aside as they lingered about, eyeing him with envious admiration; hurriedly he cleared the stairs and ran to the stone bench.

"Thank God!" he cried; "she is still there!" He seized her hand.

"Ah! how cold she is, poor little one!"

As he lifted her in his arms the child's head fell back limp, and she did not waken. How children sleep, he thought, pressing her to his breast for warmth; and, vaguely anxious, he was about to kiss her lids to draw her from this heavy slumber, when he saw with terror that the child's eyes were half open, showing glassy pupils, extinguished and motionless. With terrible suspicion Lucien brushed her little lips with his own, and no breath came from them. While Lucien had been winning a fortune with the louis stolen from her, this little beggar had died of cold. His throat contracted in awful agony, he tried to cry out . . . and in the effort—he awoke from a nightmare on the bench at the club, where he had fallen asleep before midnight, and had been left undisturbed by the kindness of the old valet, who had gone off last of all at 5 o'clock. His heart had been touched by the poor bankrupt.

A noisy December dawn was peering through the panes. Lucien went out, pawned his watch, bathed, breakfasted, then went to the recruiting office, where he enlisted in the First African Chasseurs.

Lucien de Hem is now a lieutenant; he lives on his small pay and never touches a card.

It appears that he saves something, too, for not long ago, in Algiers, he was seen by a brother officer who was walking behind him in a winding street of the Kasbah giving alms to a little Spanish beggar asleep under a doorway. The officer had the indiscretion to look at the money which Lucien had given to poverty.

He had put a gold louis in the child's hand.



HE APPROACHED THE LITTLE GIRL.

In Excelsis Gloria.
(A hymn dating from the 13th century.)

Christ is born of maiden fair;
Hark! the heralds in the air!
Thus adoring hear them there,
"In excelsis gloria!"

Shepherds saw those angels bright,
Carolling in glorious light;
God, His Son, is born tonight,
In excelsis gloria!

Christ is come to save mankind,
As in holy page we find,
Therefore sing with reverent mind,
In excelsis gloria!

A Prince in Elizabeth,
Prince Victor Emmanuel of Naples,
is said to be an expert electrician. It is reported that on all his expeditions he

WILL BE NO DEFICIT.

DEMOCRATIC SCREAMS ABOUT THE FAILURE UNFOUNDED.

The formal "estimate" of the Secretary of War shows an apparent deficit for 1898 of \$31,000,000, but the facts point to a probable surplus in that year of \$30,000,000.

Washington, D. C., December, 1897. "And hereafter the secretary of war shall annually submit estimates in detail for river and harbor improvements required for the ensuing fiscal year, to the secretary of the treasury, to be included in and carried into the sum total of the book of estimates." From the sundry civil appropriation act for the fiscal year 1897.

The above quotation from the last sundry civil appropriation bill as it became a law and stands upon the statute books, explains the apparent prospect of a deficit in the fiscal year which is to begin July 1st of next year.

A good deal of professed distress has been manifested in certain quarters over the figures of the report of the secretary of the treasury which indicate a deficit in the next fiscal year. The people indulging in these evidences of distress will perhaps be gratified to know that the apparent deficit is only apparent, and that the figures when considered in light of the paragraph quoted above, warrant the assertion that the fiscal year beginning July 1st, 1898, will show a surplus of \$30,000,000, instead of a deficit of \$31,000,000.

The explanation of the apparent deficit is found in a single line on page 12 of the secretary's report. It is as follows:

"Public works, war department, \$63,400,409.81."

The above is the formal "estimate" for river and harbor improvements in the fiscal year in question now required by the paragraph quoted at the beginning of this dispatch, to be inserted in the annual estimates sent to Congress by the secretary of the treasury. Prior to the adoption of this new requirement the secretary of war made his estimates of the amount required for the river and harbor improvement upon the judgment of the chief of engineers. Now he is required to insert in the annual estimates every dollar that any and every subordinate officer in charge of the various improvements the country ever may choose to name as the amount that can be "profitably expended" during the coming fiscal year.

Everybody familiar with the reports of the officers in charge of river and harbor works knows that it is the habit to recommend the appropriation of large sums, usually two or three times as much as is expected to be obtained, for the works of which they are in charge. This custom magnifies to a certain degree the apparent importance of the work of which the officer in question is in charge, makes him extremely popular with the people of the city or locality in which the work is being carried on, and where he usually resides during the progress of the work itself, and is looked upon as a harmless way of pleasing the surrounding public and making the official in question both popular and his duties apparently important. The result is that it has been the habit of the war department for many years to reduce to about one-third of their dimensions the estimates made by these subordinate officers.

An example of this may be found in the total estimates for river and harbor works as sent to congress in December, 1891, to cover the expenditures of the fiscal year 1892, in which the secretary recommends an appropriation of \$13,208,393 for river and harbor works. On the very same page, however, began a lengthy table which gave the detailed estimates presented for the various rivers and harbors, the total of these figures being \$52,489,956. That table was preceded by the following note:

"River and harbor, showing the amount that can be profitably expended in the next fiscal year—The following statement is not furnished as a part of the annual estimates for the public service required by the act of March 3, 1875, to be presented by the secretary of war to the secretary of the treasury, but is inserted as a convenient and customary summary of items taken from the annual report of the chief of engineers for the fiscal year 1891, showing under the provision of the act of congress approved March 2, 1867, the amount that can be profitably expended in the next fiscal year on each of the works mentioned."

In the above case it will be seen that the figures covering the "amount that

can be profitably expended in the next fiscal year" were \$52,489,956, while the amount that was actually estimated was \$13,208,393. The result was that the total estimates in that year as they went to congress obtained for river and harbor improvement only the condensed item of \$13,208,393, instead of the elaborate estimate of "profitable expenditures" amounting to \$52,489,956. This has been the annual custom for many years to put into the estimates simply the amount which in the judgment of the war department should be expended. This year, however, the new law enacted by last congress compels the secretary to put into the annual estimates the entire sum named in these statements of the "amount that can be profitably expended in the next fiscal year." The result is that the sum "estimated" for the river and harbor works alone in the next fiscal year is \$65,400,409.81, while nobody expects that the appropriations will be more than one-third of this sum.

Since the figures of the secretary of the treasury, including the \$65,400,409.81 for river and harbor works, only estimate a deficit of \$21,647,885, and since it is absolutely certain that the actual expenditures for rivers and harbors will fall nearly or quite \$40,000,000 below the enforced estimate, it is quite apparent that the actual appropriations for the fiscal year will be \$20,000,000 less than the estimated receipts, instead of \$20,000,000 more, as would appear, in the absence of the explanation offered by this new requirement of the law.

GEORGE WILLIAMS.



Sowing.



Reaping.

Reciprocity Prospects.

The Dingley law is only about four months old. It has not had time to justify itself as a revenue producer, owing to the heavy anticipatory imports during the time that congress was giving it final shape, but its provisions have been clear from the day it was signed by the president, and foreign countries are fully advised as to its bearing and significance. Is there a single sign of a tariff war against the United States on the horizon? Is there not, on the contrary, a sign of commercial good will in every direction? Foreign governments are putting the same high value on our markets that we ourselves in the Dingley law have put upon them. Instead of making war on us, they are making overtures to trade with us on terms of mutual benefit. The reciprocity clause of the new law promises to be one of the most useful features. Great Britain invokes it in the interests of her possessions in the West Indies. Sir Wilfrid Laurier is now in Washington willing to discuss terms for increased trade between Canada and the United States. France desires to negotiate a reciprocity treaty and Peru does also. It is not too much to say, indeed, that the United States has only to show a willingness on the subject to extend her trade by means of reciprocity on advantageous terms in nearly any direction.—Washington "Star."

A good deal of distress has been in the minds of Democrats since the estimates of the treasury department sent to congress at the beginning of the session indicate an apparent deficit of \$31,647,885 during the fiscal year which ends June 30, 1898. It is pointed out, with reference to this estimate, that a recently enacted law requires the war department to put into its estimate for the expenditures of the coming year all estimates made by subordinate officers of needed expenditures upon the river and harbor works where they are employed. The result of this is that the estimates for river and harbor improvements alone amount to \$65,400,409.81, which, of course, is from forty to fifty million dollars more than will be appropriated for that purpose. Notwithstanding the fact that these figures were excessive, the treasury department was compelled under the law to include them in its so-called estimates, knowing full well they were absolutely excessive, and that the appropriation for this work would fall probably \$50,000,000 below the figures named. These circumstances account for the fact that the official figures estimate an apparent deficit of \$31,000,000, when, in fact, it is expected that there will be a surplus of at least that amount in the year in question.

President McKinley is still hopeful of definite and valuable results from the efforts in behalf of international bimetalism which were inaugurated by the Republican party immediately following his election. In his message he discusses briefly the work of the commission sent abroad for that purpose, expresses gratification that our great sister republic of France was willing to join with this country in an attempt to bring about an agreement upon this subject, and closes his discussion of this question by saying that he has still reason to hope that the labors of this commission "may result in an international agreement which will bring about recognition of both gold and silver money upon such terms and with such safeguards as will secure the use of both metals upon a basis which will work no injustice to any class of our citizens."

President McKinley speaks in hopeful terms, in his message, of the prospects regarding reciprocity treaties with European and American countries. He expresses the belief that "by a careful exercise of the powers conferred by the recent tariff act some grievances of our own and other countries, in our mutual trade relations, may be either removed or largely eliminated and the volume of our commercial exchanges enlarged with advantage to both contracting parties."

"The recent victory of the fusionists in Nebraska," said Editor Edward Rosewater of the Omaha Bee, "was in no sense a victory for Bryanism. It was a protest of the voters against the disgraceful boodlerism that had characterized state and municipal officials who happened to be Republicans. The state treasurer, the state auditor and the city treasurer of Omaha had all been guilty of purloining the public funds, and the Republican party had to suffer for their sins."

"The voters thought that the best way to rebuke such conduct was to defeat the party to which these men belonged, and there was no thought of any other issue. Mr. Bryan, of course, claims the fusion success as a personal triumph, but those who know the real conditions in Nebraska laugh at his pretensions. The Republican party has undergone its ordeal, and henceforth it will push to the fore. The people of Nebraska are with it on all the leading questions, and it is certain to come back into power."

Since protection is ordained to stand as our national policy for an indefinite period, will our free trade contemporaries contend that the tailors and other makers of and dealers in garments, are less entitled to share the benefits of that policy than their fellow-citizens engaged in other kinds of business? Is there any more reason why A should bring in a year's stock of clothing for himself and family free of duty than for permitting B to bring in an importation of wines, olive oil, cheese, or pickles?

The free trade newspapers are sneering at the small amount of revenue collected under this clause of the tariff. The Springfield Republican, for instance, says: "Some \$74,500 in customs duties was collected during October on the personal baggage of returning American travelers who landed at New York. At this rate the yearly revenue from that source would be less than \$900,000, against Mr. Dingley's estimate of \$10,000,000."

Well, a yearly revenue of \$900,000 is by no means a contemptible item. But that, considerable as it is, is a mere trifle when revenues are being expended in no gauge of the effect of that and there is every reason to believe that but for the personal baggage tax the millions' worth of goods would have been brought home in trucks, and duty, that have come and gone to come as from the pocket of the traveler, and the benefits of that

THE PERSONAL EFFECTS CLAUSE.

