

New Year Wishes

By CHRISTOPHER G. HAZARD

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ASSURANCE
Whatever the year may bring
Of things not understood,
We shall be that everything
Will come to us as good.
We may go on with joyous tread
And not a single thing to dread.

SOMETHING NEW
I wish the best, and the best,
Between the best and the year,
Thank God for something young and new!
And may this new year of time's page,
Be fair addition to our age,
Be filled with sunny wit and sage!

THIRTY-TWO
May the New Year be threaded through
With strands of love and gold for you;
Things high and precious, far and fine,
To serve, inspire, delight and cheer!

New Year's Eve

And here we stand to say "Good-by!"
Fare words—and we scarce know why,
They bring a moisture to the eye,
And to the heart some quakes and aches;
We speak them very tenderly,
With half a sob and half a sigh—
"Old Year, good-by! Old Year, good-by!"
—W. K. Barleigh.

HERE we stand again on the
borderland of Welcome and
Good-by. There is so little
between them and so much either
side of them.

When the great bell of time
strikes the midnight hour, and
1933 passes into the land of long
ago, there is one simple resolu-
tion that we can all make with
pretty good surety that we can
keep it till the next midnight
chimes—that we will be a better
man or woman in the next year
than in the last.

That won't be a hard resolution
to fulfill in some degree, and if
everyone is even a little better,
there will be a heap more good-
ness, kindness, success and love
in the world when 1933 rings out
than there is now.

The untold year brings with it
another chance for all—a chance
to make good where we have
failed—a chance to benefit by
what we have counted as failures
in the year that is passing out.

The old year has been a difficult
one for many. Some have lost
heart. The new year, which gives
promise of so much that is better,
will bring new courage and hope
to them.

If we can let the unhappy part
of the past year go with it, and
only remember the good, it will
help toward all that is best in the
new.

One of the best things that we
can hope for the untold year is
that it will be a busy one for
everybody. Work is the best
promoter of goodness and happiness,
and the best cure for trouble and
sorrow that there is.

When the solemn, happy bells
"ring out across the snow," let
them ring out with them the bad
things and ring in all that is good
and true and beautiful that is
within the power of each one
of us.

ANIMALS AND NEW YEAR'S DAY

Oxen, Cows, Sheep, Goats and Pigs
Blessed in Churches of Italy,
Spain and France.

IN ITALY, Spain and France more is
made of New Year's day than
Christmas and on St. Sylvester's eve as
the last day of the year is called the
most joyousness prevails. Even the
animals are blessed in the churches.
A correspondent who attended one of
these quaint ceremonies, writes:

The priest lifted high the host and
said some words of benediction at
which the people fell on their knees
with a response. An acolyte with a
holy-water sprinkler passed through
the columns of animals deftly throw-
ing the sacred water upon them. The
oxen and cows were thus blessed first,
then the sheep and goats and lastly
the pigs. A moon nearly full glittered
high above the mountain stones and
combined with the light from the can-
dles revealed the long, polished horns
and heaving sides and sleek coats of
the oxen and cows and the white
woolly skins of the sheep. The acolyte
quitting among them, incensed them
and their bellowing, bleating and
squealing arose to a tumult. But, high
above all, the voice of the priest was
heard, as he chanted these words:

"My children, God in his goodness
send me, his unworthy servant, here
to bless your flocks, according to an
ancient custom of our mountains, so
that these animals by whose aid you
may join in our religious cere-
monies which usher in the New Year,
and you then sing a loud hosanna of
praise to the ever-merciful Lord so
gentle to sinners."

NEW YEAR CALLS PASSE

The American custom of New Year
day calls, so prevalent in the social life
of this country in the Nineteenth cen-
tury, is little practiced today.

CARD GAMES AT CHRISTMAS

This Pastime Afforded Means of
Entertainment in England During
Yuletide Season.

A UNIVERSAL Christmas cus-
tom of England in olden
times was playing at cards.
Persons who never touched
a card at any other season
of the year felt bound to play a few
games at Christmas.

A prohibitory statute of Henry VII's
reign forbade card playing save during
the Christmas holidays. Of course this
prohibition extended only to persons of
humble rank.

Sir Roger De Coverley took care to
provide both creature comfort and
amusement for his neighbors at Christ-
mas by sending "a string of hog's pud-
dings and a pack of cards" to every
poor family in the parish.

Even the pulpit comes in for its
share of anecdotes regarding playing
cards. Fuller gives an example of a
clergyman preaching from Romans
12:3, "As God hath dealt to every man
the measure of faith." The reverend
gentleman in question adopted as
an illustration of his discourse the
metaphor of "dealing" as applied to
cards, reminding his congregation that
they should follow suit, ever play
above board, improve the gifts dealt
out to them, take care of their
trumps, play promptly when it came
their turn, etc.

Short notes were frequently written
on the backs of playing cards. In an
old collection of poetry is found the
following lines:

"To a Lady Who Sent Her Compliments
to a Clergyman on the Tea of
Hearts.

"Your compliments, dear lady, pray
forbear,

"Old English services are more sin-
cere;

"You send ten hearts—the tithe is only
mine,

"Give me but one and burn the other
nine."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

ORIGIN OF CHRISTMAS TREE

History of the Yuletide Emblem Ex-
tends Far into the Mists of
Antiquity.

THE history of Christmas tree
usage extends far into the
mists of antiquity. Some
say its origin is connected
with the legendary Tree of
Time, Yggdrasil, the great tree of Norse
mythology, within whose roots and
branches heaven and earth are bound.
Some say the custom may be traced to
the Egyptians who, at the time of the
winter solstice, decorated their portals
with branches of the date palm.

To a Scandinavian legend may per-
haps be traced our custom of illum-
inating the tree when darkness comes.
Among the Greeks, Christmas is known
as the feast of lights.

To people of different localities to-
day the term Christmas tree may mean
fir, spruce, pine, cedar or even mag-
nolia, for each particular region makes
use of the most suitable species that is
to be found near its markets. In the
vicinity of the mid-west, a short-needle
pine found in Michigan and Wiscon-
sin may be used. On the Pacific coast
the white fir finds favor, while through-
out Ohio, the Norway spruce is largely
used. In Maryland and Virginia, the
scrub pine and farther south cedar
and holly. Best of all is the sym-
metrical balsam fir, each tiny leaf of
which sends out a breath of aromatic
fragrance.

AN OLD CHRISTMAS CUSTOM

Village Boys in North England Re-
produce Play That is as Old
as the Race.

IN THE North of England
some of the oldest of our
Christmas customs are still
faithfully observed. One of
the quaintest is that of the
village boys who call themselves "The
Mummers." At Christmas time they
perform a little play that is as old
as the English race.

There are three chief characters—
St. George, resplendent in silver-
piped armor, and brandishing a
wooden sword; Beelzebub, who is, of
course, the famous dragon; and the
Doctor, who wears a butterfly top-hat.

At the beginning of the play it is
announced that the countryside is
being laid waste by Beelzebub. Various
minor characters make an appeal for
deliverance from the monster's sway.
Then St. George bursts upon the scene.
A fierce battle takes place, in which
he slays Beelzebub, but is himself
badly wounded. At this point the Doc-
tor rushes in with a bottle, which he
places to the saint's lips.

"Tak soon o' mah niff-naff dahn
thy tiff-taff," he prescribes. So George
drinks and is cured.

Some of the words used in the play
are so old that neither the boys nor
the majority of the audience can un-
derstand them.

OLD STORY.

What did your
Mother say when
I didn't come
home until late
last night?
She said "Just
wait till after
Christmas, I'll ex-
plain!"

Nut Bread.

One egg, 1 cupful sugar, 3 cupfuls
flour, 3 teaspoonfuls baking powder,
1 large cupful nuts, a little salt.
Use enough water to mix; let stand
30 minutes; bake slowly one hour.

To Remove Chewing Gum.

Wet the material well around
the gum with kerosene and rub
lightly. This will promptly remove the
gum. Then wash as usual.

CHRISTMAS FEAST FOR BIRDS

Feathery Tribe in Bosnia Not Forget-
ten—Food Placed Near Nests and
Shelters.

CHRISTMAS is not merely a
festival celebrated by and
for man alone. Among the
folklore of other countries
are several quaint stories
in which animals and birds give evi-
dence of their adoration. A well-
known Bosnian legend offers a version
of world-adoration. They claim that
on the holy day "the sun in the east
bowed down, the stars stood still; the
mountains and forests shook and
touched the earth with their summits,
and the green pine tree bent; the
grass was bed-floored with the open-
ing of blossoms; incense sweet as
myrrh pervaded upland and forest;
birds sang on the mountain tops and
all give thanks to the great God."

In Bosnia on Christmas Day a sheaf
of rye is put near birds' nests and
bird houses for the birds' Christmas.

An old Indian legend says that on
Christmas night all the deer in the
forest kneel in adoration before the
Great Spirit. Woe to him, however,
who tries to spy upon them. He is
punished with perpetual stiffening of
the knees.

Many people of the Old World
claim that on Christmas night animals
are gifted with speech, but none must
trespass or eavesdrop.

Many and many have been the tales
which account for the robin's red
breast. In great many parts of Europe
he is called the savior's bird, and a
story is told that when the Christ was
crucified the robin, unable to stand
His suffering, ventured to pluck the
thorns from His head. In doing so, the
blood stained the robin's breast, which
sign he wears today.

USE OF CHRISTMAS STOCKING

Custom Comes From Sunny Italy
Where Poor First Used Long
Knitted Purse.

THE custom of hanging up
stockings on Christmas Eve
comes to us from a land far
across the ocean—from
sunny Italy.

In the city of Padua, long ago, good
old St. Nicholas used to go about the
streets after dark and throw through
the windows of the homes of the poor
people long knitted purses, tied at
both ends, and containing much need-
ed coins. These purses were made of
yarn, and when untied looked not un-
like a footless stocking.

Finally, as time went on, the poor
people, hoping thus to remind the
more fortunate of their needs, used to
hang these empty purses out of the
windows on the night before Christ-
mas, so that a gift might be placed
in them.

In the north country, where the
weather is cold at Christmas time, the
purses were hung by the chimney
place in the hope that St. Nicholas
would drop his offering down the
chimney.

When the purses went out of fashion
stockings as the thing most like them
were used in their stead, and that is
why we today still observe the prac-
tice and the custom.

"COME AN' GONE!"

IN THE days before prohibi-
tion, an old, southern ducky
was wont to celebrate Christ-
mas with a quiet and solitary
bottle of liquor. Upon one oc-
casion he was going home with
his prize under his arm, when he
stumbled on the curbstone.
The bottle slipped, fell and
broke, spilling the contents all
over the pavement.
The old ducky regarded the
catastrophe with gentle mourn-
fulness.
"There, now," he murmured,
"Christmas come an' gone!"

CHRISTMAS DAY IN ICELAND

Natives Still Cling to Old Customs and
Songs; Day Is One of Great
Happiness.

SUCH a strong-winged thing
is Christmas Cheer that it
has betaken itself even to
that isolated island of the
far north, where the short-
est day is four hours long, and where
at Christmas time the sun does not
rise above the horizon for a week.

Christmas is a great day with the
people of Iceland and they still cling
to all their old customs and songs and
the day to them is one of great hap-
piness.

One of their favorite old songs is
filled with simplicity that is touching
and yet gives a glimpse of a philoso-
phy of life that is pretty fine:
When I go good and think aright
At peace with man, resigned to God,
Thou lookst on me with eyes of light,
Tasting new joys in joy's abode.

A HARD JOB.

For little children
in a flat,
Drawbacks are
growing
greater;
For how can Santa
crawl with his
pack
Crawl through a
radiator?

To Remove Chewing Gum.

Wet the material well around
the gum with kerosene and rub
lightly. This will promptly remove the
gum. Then wash as usual.

CHRISTMAS TREE AND STOCKING

Two Christmas practices, both old
and very pretty, that have come down
to us are the Christmas tree and the
hanging up of children's stockings on
Christmas eve. Each provides a way
of making gifts, and the way provided
by the stockings is especially pleasing
to children. Perhaps it is going out,
but in homes where it is still followed
there are delighted children on Christ-
mas morning when the mysteriously-
filled stockings are examined in some-
thing like awe blended with great
pleasure. The Christmas tree sur-
vives, and no Christmas school festi-
val is complete without one, brilliant
with lights and loaded with presents,
presided over by a merry yet vener-
able Santa Claus.

Christmas Neckties.

Some individual with leisure and
curious mind has figured out that 99
out of every 100 men receive a necktie
as a Christmas gift. The estimate is
conservative, but how many of the
neckties so bestowed are worn by their
recipients? The giving of neckties is a
perilous proceeding always, for a neck-
tie is essentially a matter of indi-
vidual taste. Many a man gets neck-
wear at Christmas that he could read-
ily enough admire as part of a curtain
or a drape, but that he would wear
only under the compulsion of a gun
levelled at his head.

Small Feet of Mexican Women.

Mexican women have smaller and
more regularly shaped feet than
American or European women, says a
St. Louis man who has spent many
years as a shoe dealer in the City of
Mexico. The women of the Mexican
aristocracy, he says, almost invariably
wear size 1 shoes.

Wonderful Power of Love.

What a sense of protection is given
by the consciousness of being loved,
and what an additional sense over
and above this, by being near the one
by whom one is, and who has to be
loved the best.—From John Stuart
Mill's Diary.

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