WILD, FANTASTIC FABLES

of later times. And yet I think these fanciful stories, which were told so often at the fireside, in the tent, at the resting-place of the reapers, and by the camp fires of the caravan, are worth reading, because they are so fresh and childlike, and sometimes so pretty, and because they have had such an influence upon art.

But the greatest fund of marvellous stories about the Flight is found in the "Arabic Gospel of the Infancy," which was current among the Christians of the East, and was undoubtedly used by Mohammed in the composition of the Koran. It is an Oriental variation upon a sacred theme an Asiatic embroidery full of all kinds of strange beasts, a sanctified Arabian Nights, Entertainment. It tells of a dumb bride. restored to speech by taking the infant Jesus in her arms; and a crazy woman who would not wear any clothes brought to her right mind by the compassionate look of the Lady Mary; and a girl with the leprosy cleaned by washing in the water in which the child had been bathed; and sundry other household miracles even more

INGENUOUS AND ASTONISHING.

It describes the dwelling-place of the Holy Family at Matarea, a town a little to the northeast of Cairo, where any sceptical person may still see the aged sycamore which sheltered them, and the "fountain of Mary," in which she washed her child's coat. But the most wonderful tale of all is the story of the enchanted mule, which runs on this wise:

As the Holy Family were entering into a certain city they saw three women coming out of a cemetery, and weeping. And when the Lidy Mary saw them, she said to the girl who accompanied her (the same who had been cleansed of her leprosy): "Ask them what calamity has befallen them. But they made no reply to the girl's questions, asking her in their turn : "Whenca are you ? and whither are you going ? For the day is spent, and night is coming on 'apac'," "We are travellers," said the girl. "and are seeking a house of entertainment." They said: "Go with us, and spend the night with us." Accordingly the travellers accepted the courteous invitation, and were brought into a new house, richly furnished. Now it was winter, and the girl going into the apartment of the women, found them again weeping and lamenting. Beside them stood a mule, covered with housings of cloth of gold, and sesame was put before him, and the women were kissing him and feeding him. And the girl said . "What is all this ado, my ladies, about this mule?" They replied with tears : "This mule, which thou seest, was our brother, born of the same mother with ourselves. When our father died he left us great wealth, and this only brother. We did our best to get him married, and were preparing his nuptials after the fashion of our country. But some women, moved by jealousy, bewitched him, unknown to us; and one night

A LITTLE BEFORE DAYBREAK.

when the door of our house was shut, we saw that this our brother had been turned into a mule, as thou now beholdest him. And we are sorrowful, as thou seemt, having no father to comfort us ; and there is no wise man or magician in the world that we have omitted to send for, but nothing has done us any good." And when the girl heard this she said : "Be of good courage, ladies, and weep no more; for the cure of your calamity is near; yes, it is presently in your own house. For I also was a leper. But when I saw that woman, and along with her that young child, whose name is Jesus, I sprinkled my body with the water wherein his mother had washed him, and I was cured. I know that he can deliver you from your affliction also. But arise, go to Mary my mistress, bring her into your own apartment, tell her your secret, and supplicate her to have pity upon you." When the women had listened to the girl's words they hastened to the Lady Mary and brought her into their chamber, and sat down before her, weeping and saying : "Our mistress, Lady Mary, have pity upon thy servants, for no one older than ourselves, no head of our family, is left-

NEITHER FATHER NOR BROTHER-

to live with us; but this mule which thou seest was our brother, whom women have bewitched into this condition. We beseach thee, therefore, to have pity upon us." Then grieving at their misfortune, the Lady Mary took up the Lerd Jesus and put him on the mule's back, and she wept with the women, and said to Jesus Christ, "Alas, my son, heal this mule by thy mighty power, and make him a reasonable man as he was before.' And when these words were spoken, the shape of the mule was changed, and he became a young man of engaging appearance. Whereupon there was great joy in the household, and the grateful sisters immediately concluded to marry their brother to the girl who had teen the means of brigging him so great a benefit.

All this, especially the happy marriage, is quite in the style of Scheherezade. It is no more like the sober records of the evangelists | ed." than a display of fireworks is like the silent sters; and the very contrast goes far to prove, or at least to iliustrate the historical character of our four gospels .- [Henry van Dike, in . Harper's Magrz ne for D. cember.

CHRISTMAS STORYETTES.

HIS PRESENT.

Charley wanted to give Clara a Christmas present, but could not make up his mind as to what it should be; so the next time he called he frankly told her of the

difficulty under which he was laboring. "Want to make me a present, Charley?" Clara exclaimed in well-disguised astonishment. "Why, Charley, you forget yourse!f!" He took the delicate hint and offered himself then and there.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING.

Never mind, ladies. The Christmas shopping does not come out of your pockets. It is your annual opportunity to get more than even with the men, that's all.

before Christmas that no one may be parholiday season might last all the year round.

CHRISLMAS PRESENTS.

"The Christmas season's at the door whirl:

The dude now seeks the dollar store To buy a present for his girl."

Which reminds us to suggest that if you received any presents last Christmas that you do not fancy, this is a good time of the year to dispose of them.

WE DON'T BUY THEM.

"Buy your Christmas presents now!" the legend that meets us in the window of an up-town store.

Thank you for the advice-but we won't do any such a thing, oh, no! We always kindly permit our friends to buy them for us.

CHISTMAS SLIPPERS

This is the time of the year when useless girls derive exquisits pleasure in getting up slippers, the cost of which is out of all proportion to their value, and then think it s good joke to tell their showmaker to " send the bill to pa-but be sure and not send it until after Christmas."

"It is a perfectly safe wager that there is not a "pa" in the land will see where the joke comes in.

CHRISTMAS DLFINITIONS.

The English girl's favorite toe: mistle-

The key to the joys of Christmas: tur-

Christmus present: December 25, (Last Christmas is a Christmas past.

CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS.

for them " is never understood to apply to the Christmas stockings. And talking about stockings-" Stockings be hanged !" says the St. Louis girl, " It is

The old saying that "hanging is too good

HER CHRISTMAS GOOSE.

grand piano in a sock."

only the Chicago belle who expects to find a

Mrs. A.: Are you going to have a goose this Christmas? Mrs. B.: I have cooked my Christmas goose already.

Mrs. A.: Why-you don't tell me so? Mrs. B.: Yes, I badgered my dear husband out of a sealskin sacque worth four hundred dollars !

HER CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

A gentleman sauntered into a large dry goods store, a few days before Christmar and remarked : "I want something for a Christmas present for my wife." The clerk suggested various things, but the customes seemed not quite satisfied. At last he asked: "Have you cotton cloth?" "Certainly, sir." "I want eight new shirts. Eight times four are thirpy-two. I'll take thirty-two yards." The gravitude of the wife at receiving a

a Christmas present the cloth for eight new shirts for her husband can be imagined.

EDITORS' PRESENTS.

The dry goods clerk always gets the bulge on the poor journalist in making Christmas. presents. The editor can never put his hands on anything except an old mouldy paste pot, a rasty pair of scissors, and a box of steel pens, suspender buttons, and burned matches. And yet we hear people talking about the even distribution of justice. That is just-ice a fellow looks at the matter. We are open for an engagement as dry goods

Oar girl must have an even show somehow, when it comes to the matter of Christmas presents.

TOO MUCH TURKEY.

Little Frank, having eaten more turkey on Christmas than was good for him, complained bitterly.

On being asked where the pain was, he answered, with great seriousness, pressing his tiny hand upon his chest, "I think, papa, it must be in my wish bone, 'cause it's right

WILFUL WASTE.

"Did you stop at Shears the tailor's?" "Yes and I gave him fits." "What did you do that for? You'll never get 'em back.

A Source of Annoyance.

A gentlemen, coming home at evening, spoke harshly to his little three-year-old, who was playing very noisily. The little lady dropped her playthings and

retreated hastily to a corner. "What's the matter?" asked pape. "Well," said the child, "I've been a good pirl all this day, and now you come home

Very Seldom.

and make trouble the first thing."

"What is the use of flepping your claws around in that fashion ?" said the oyster to the crab. There's no use in getting excit-

"Il bet you'd be excited if you were in my sace," said the orab. " I don't lose my temper."

"At all events it is very seldom that you get into a stew."

A ORUEL DEATH.

A Dakota Sheriff Tells How It Feels to Hanged.

county, South Dakota, is a native of this to restore a nearly lost equilibrium and give city, says the New York "Star," but has us a new testament of that immertally been in the west over thirty years. He is which was dimly foreshadowed in the old here on a visit to his relatives on Staten testament of the patriarchs and prophets island.

night, "that the question whether a man so that man could stand up and ask of his should be hanged or executed electrically Father that which the desires without the has been settled. I am glad to find that electricity has carried the day, for I assure or the priests of Isis in Egypt, or of other you that death by hanging is intensely pain- intermediaries, pagan or non-pagan. A

you were hanged?" "Quite so, and it was no joke. When the Hereafter. Our dual lives, natural and the war closed I went west to seek my for- spiritual, enable us to live in both the Here And really, they are so good-natured just | tune, and had a pretty hard time before I | and Hereafter. Who preaches the gospel found anything even resembling it. One of love? Are they those who leave Jesus doned for expressing the wish that the hard winter two others and myself went into of Nazareth and his supernal dectrines to Wyoming on a prospecting expedition, and make the pulpit ring with sectional politics. had to maintain ourselves chiefly by hunt- Are they those who keep alive the embers ing. Antelepe were very scarce just then, of the dead past as journalists and other and we suffered considerably from hunger, authors and peliticians, and thus make mis-One morning we separated, the better to chief which delights excarnated spirits And through the air the snowflakes scour the country, agreeing to meet on a These people preach the gospel of hate, and distant hill at noon. My companions were the gospel of hate is the gospel of the hells. hardly out of sight when I shot a steer, and There are other preachers of the gospel of was in the act of cutting it up when three | hate, the Czars and the Alexanders, and the fierce-looking cowboys swooped down upon | epauletted professionals who make war their me. I am, as you see, swarthy, and they pastime and their aggrandizement. The only took me for a Mexican. As they also were real gospel of love which has been preached dirty looking, I made the same mistake, in its fullness is that which rose and rises and saluted them in the little Spanish I had | from the hearts of mothers for their offspring. picked up. It happened that a tall cot Were it not for motherhood and those little anything else at the present time. Occasion ton tree was conveniently close, and, with- refiners, babies, the world would be in the ally a merry crowd gathers to sing some jor. out saying a word, one of the men threw shadow of night. George Barlow, the " new the lariat around my neck, tossed the poet" of England, beautifully writes: other end of the rope over a stout limb; his two companions pulled upon it, and I was in the twinkling of an eye going through all the agonies of hanging, The pain was frightful. There was a tremendous rushing! Christianity commenced with a weman and through my ears, the sky and everything will end with a woman. Mothers like else turned blood red, pins and needles Mary illustrate best on the birthday of the seemed to be sticking into every part of my Reformer and Savior the love and tenderbody, and at the same time the back of my ness and beauty of true Christianity. Here

> throat and the other was rubbing my chest with the same liquid. It appeared that my comrades had returned in time to cut me down before life had fled, but just then I wished they had let me be. The process of resuscitation was if possible, still more agonizing than the hanging, but, as the man condemned by law does not suffer in that regard, there is no use in dwelling upon it." "But why did they hang you?"

the rate of forty strokes a second. How long

it lasted I couldn't tell. To me it seemed

hours. When I regained consciousness one of

my friends was pouring whiskey down my

"They were driving a herd of cattle to Idaho and it was one of their steers that I had shot. When my friends arrived and explained, the cowboys cut me down and when I was ready to receive them they were profuse in their apologies.

"That is how I know that hanging is one of the most cruel deaths to which you can

A Sad Case.

"I reckon," said farmer Begoah, Josiah might ez well be kep home from college. The base-ball is over, an' he can's learn much anyhow. Besides, I'm afraid it's kind o' mixin' his mind up." "What makes you think so, Ezra?" asked

Mrs. Begosh. "Waal, I was to see him the other day, and every once in a while he would say sumthin' that seemed to hev no bearin' on anything in pertickler. Ez we wuz walkin' together along the street, he interrupted me

an' says 'and the band played.'" me the razzle dazzle, are you ?' he says, with louder and, not knowing what it meant, an air of seriousness that made me sad. I they harried ferward to the top of the rise. that, on'y for askin' me where I got that buffaloes. hat over an' over ag'in, although he knew as well as I did where I bought it, havin' couple of hunters, four or five miles off, had been with me at the time. I don't know fired into and stampeded a large herd. This whether to bring him home, or have him | herd, in its rush, gathered others, all thunsent to a hospital or somethin'."

Practical Demonstration

woman, entering the printing office, "that denned beasts was charging straight down or you employ only girls and that you are in them not a quarter of a mile distant. Down need of a forewoman?" make up a form ?"

"Just look at me and see," she answered, turning herself around. She was engaged.

Two of a Kind Got Acquainted.

"This," said the man who was travelling on the cars, as he opened his valise and took out a bottle, "is a mixture called Dr. Jenkinson's Indispensable. I never travel without it. It is the best and most agreeable tenic now on the market, by all odds."

"I am not so sure about that," replied the man who was occupying the seat with him. I have here"—and he opened his own valies and took out a bottle-"a tonic called De Rybold's Extract, which I have used for several years and consider the best preparation ever made. No man ought ever to-"I have no doubt it is a fairly good medicine in its way," broke in the other, "but if you had ever tasted Dr. Jenkinson's Indispensable you would throw that stuff of yours

'I know all about Dr. Jenkinson's nostrum, and I know exactly what its made

"You do, eh?" "Yes, sir, and I know Dr. Rybold's extract is made from precisely the same formula only from pure materials instead of the vile and adulterated ingredients old Jenkinson

"It's made from the same formula, is it?" "Exactly the same." "You lying old ignoramus, how do you know what it's made of?

"How do I know, you insulting old sooundrel? I'm Dr. Rybold, sir?" "I am glad I have found you out, you infernal villain. I am Dr. Jenkinson?

Framined for Admission to the Bar. Examiner-"Can you give me an iustance of a person inciting another to perjury !" Condidate-"Yes; when the court asks a board?"

Ohristmas !

Another Christmas! One morel year has passed to the eternities. What have you been doing during this time? The great James E. Morgan, sheriff of Sherman Nazarene came into the world at Bethlehem and singers. It was His mission to sweep "I find," said the sheriff to me the other away the clouds that obscured the heavens intervention of professional oracles in Greece poetess below speaks of the gospel of love "Why, sheriff," I said, "is it possible that | as a catholicon fer evil and a creator of happiness in the Here. So it is, also, in Each child upon the planet born

Brings back that planet's early morn In the sweet sunrise in his face.

head felt as if it were being sandbagged at is the poem; CHRISTMAS.

Eighteen hundred years! yes, almost nine-

teen hundred. Since over the manger-oradle the wise men leaned and wondered. Eighteen hundred years; and yet the world

to day Is blind to the meaning of truths that Jesus was sent to say. Bighteen hundred years ! and yet men stand and preach

Creeds and sanons and dogmas, beyond the tired mind's reach. While all the sad souls want and all the sad sculs need.

Is Love, Love, for that was the Saviour's creed. Highteen hundred years! and yet the churches centend : But Love was in the beginning, and Love

will be in the end. For Love is the only law that knows no alteration. And Love is the only door that leads us into

selvation. Righteen hundred years ! and men are doubting still !

But Love is the way to peace, and all may find it who will. We have only to keep on leving, and lo the path appears

Though the world has been slow to see it, for eighteen hundred years ! ERLA WHEELER WILCOX.

The Perils of Buffale-hunting.

On the occasion in question, my brother "I thought I might as well humor him, and cousin were on their way homeward. an' I says gently : 'Well, sposen' it did, They were just mounting one of the long, Josiah?' Says he: 'That's all right, pep; low swells into which the prairie was broken you're a good one, but you ain't on.' 'Ain's when they heard a lew, muttering, rumbling on what?' see I. 'You ain't tryin' to give noise, like far-off thunder. It grew steadily teld him I hadn't no razzle dazzle to give, so As they reached it, they stepped short in as to kind o' quiet him, an' he laughed in a terror and amesoment, for before them the satisfied way. He was purty quiet after whole prairie was black with madly ruching

Afterward they learned that another dering along tegether in uncentrellable and increasing panic. The surprised hunters were far away from

any broken ground or other place of refuge "I understand," said a handsome young while the vast herd of huge, plunging, madthey came !- thousands upon thousands, "Yes," replied the printer. "Can you their front extending a mile in breadth, while the earth sheek beneath their thunderous gallop, and as they came closer, their shaggy frontlets leemed dimly through the columns of dust threwn up from theidry soil. The two hunters knew that sheir only hope. for life was to split the herd, which, though it had so broad a front, was not very deep. If they failed they would inevitably be trampled to death.

Waiting until the beasts were in close range, they opened a rapid fire from their heavy breeck-loading rifles, yelling at the top of their voices. For a moment the result seemed doubtful. The line thundered steadily down on them; then it swayed violently, as two or three of the brutes immediately in their front fell beneath the bullets, while the neighbors made violent efforts to press off sideways. Then a narrow wedge-shaped rift appeared in the line, and widened as it came up closer, and the buffalees, shrinking from their fees in front, strove desperately to edge away from the dangerous neighborhood; the shouts and shots were redoubled; the hunters were almost shaked by the cloud of dust through which they could see the stream of dark huge bodies passing within rifi:-length on either side; and in a memer t the peril was over, and the two men were left alone on the plain, unharmed, though with their nerves terribly shaken. The herd earcered on teward the horizon, save five individuals who had been killed or disabled by the shots-[Prom Buffalo-Hunting," in St. Nicholas for Dicember.

Took it Literally.

"I baig ze pardon, said a Frenchman to the captain of a steamboat, "but mayre is one zing I vould laik to tell you. " What is it?"

"Zere is ze dangear of ze explosion present-"Of an explosion? Is there mutiny on

female witness how old she is. "Texas Sitssteward just now ce lair sat he would blow arrive till five, and then I had to

The Christmas Carol.

Carols form one of the principal feature of the festival which is celebrated at Chris. mas all over the civilized world. They an not by any means of recent origin, for they were used by devout Christians long and when every country was ruled by barbarian and the life of the people very primitive to early as the second century they were the

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The early Christmas carols were deeply religious. They showed pions feeling and sentiments, but in a few years developed b. to wild bacchapalian songs which the cierg which followed caused the carols to be mon religious again, but all during the Dark Aga they were decided y frivolous in character, In England, under Angle-Saxon kings, they were very merry songs, but occasionly gree to be more than indecent. The early Parity abolished the use of Christmas cirols alto. gether, and never allowed anything but the psalms to be sung. Since that time they have been about the same in style as at present some religious and others light and gay,

The first regular collection of Christma carols known to have been made, wascnepub. lished in the year 1521. There have been many issued since then, and at present deal. ers in sheet music find them picfitable. The custom of singing carols on Christma eve is an old one, and though not much indulged in throughout this country, is a time horored practice in England, where the prinorpal families of each locality are serenaded by the waits. Christmas carols seem more confined to Sanday school festivals than ous glees on Christmas eve, but the practice is quite rare.

Mearly all the carcle are of English origin. very few being other than the work of Eng. lish bards. Some extremely pretty ones are the results of American hymn writers, but they are decidedly inferior.

The Pumpkin Pie.

Take a sharp knife—the best of its kind-And pare off the pumpkin's golden rind;

Then cut into cube shaped blocks of buff. And slowly simmer till soft enough.

Run through a sieve—the best to be buight-Till you have of the sifted pumpkin a quart

Oh, the "cropple-crown" hen will mourn to For her rifled nest in the scented hav.

For ere your pumkin pies you can bake Out of her nest you must nine eggs take,

Beat yolks and whites in a separate dish Till both are foamy and light as you wish,

White sugar, one cup and a half you take, And two quarts of milk your pies to make: Then of cinnamon, nutmeg, and mace, each

You take a teaspoonful ere you are done. Next spices, sugar, eggs, pumpkin, and

You must beat together till "smooth a (That is the curious, homely phrase,

days.) New a dezen of raisins, more or less, To each pie will add flavor, you must con-

My grandmother used in those old-time

The whole must be baked in a shell-like

And, just as it hardens, with sugar you dust. If you follow this rule, when done you'll

"Here's a genuine, old-time pumpkin pie! LIZZIE M. HADLEY.

A New Explosive.

The Australians, it would seem, have tagen hold of a new and valuable explosive called egrasite. It is the invention of two engineers named Liersch and Kubin, Itis impervious to damp, shock, or fire. In power is to dynamite as 100 to 70, and it can be carried from place to place with the utmost safety. It emits a thick, black smoke, and the detonation is louder than that of gunpowder, but shorter, sharper, and clear. It can be used for rifle cartidges or as priming for cannon. A bombehell loaded with it exploded with such terrific force that experiments against palisades representing 100 250, and 500 men at ranges of 300, 750, and 1,200 meters recorded marks in very division of the palisades standing for a soldier .- [N.Y. Times.

Pursuing His studies.

"I don't see your son about anywhere," said a travelling man to a merchant whom he had called on.

" Is he out of the city?" " Y es." " Pursuing his studies?"

"I think he is pursuing his studies, but from what I can hear I don's think he has much chance of catching up to them.

Very Lucky.

" Phwat is it?" "Tell me wan ting?" " If oi oan."

" Dinnis."

"Is it lucky to foind a horse shoe!" "Be the powers, yis—if it's in a hit of a difficulty yez happen to be wid no shilaleh handy !"

With an Improved Service.

"It seems to me, Emily," said the count try pessmaster, mildly but firmly, "that if would be pleasanter for all concerned if you would fix it so these three young men wouldn't come at the same time. They just sit and glare at each other all the eres:

"Yes, papa," the young lady answered, obediently. .. My Winter male arrangement will go into effect next week."

Cause and Effect.

Mrs. Chancery Line- What a lovely new sealskin, my dear ! "Mrs. Ilfracombo-" And I'm sare never saw you with that diamond broccs

before," Mrs. Chancery Lane - "My hashing didn's come home till four this morning

Perfu that Pu mre, cer Fifty is