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CHRONICLES of GINGER FARM

By
Gwendoline P. Clarke

Just recently a young girl said to me — "Mrs. Clarke, do you think it silly of me — I want to have a tree, and the house decorated and — oh, just everything for Christmas. But yet there are only the two of us . . . maybe it would seem foolish."

Of all the seasons of the year Christmas is the most loved, and probably the most significant, because without that first Christmas there certainly would have been no Easter, nor Ascension. Most loved because it is a season so readily understood and appreciated by us, the common people, because it typifies the love, the difficulties and the close union of humble family life. And so, home-loving people throughout the ages, have tried to create an ideal of goodwill and fellowship in their own family circles. How well they succeeded is reflected in the attitude which each succeeding generation has toward Christmas at home.

Mothers of little children, think no time wasted that you spend on making a happy Christmas in your home. Children will remember the gaily trimmed tree long after presents around it are forgotten. Make your Christmas tree traditional. What do I mean by "traditional"? I mean to build up Christmas memories for your family that are essentially personal. Don't make drastic changes. Take care of the Christmas tree decorations and bring them out, year after year. If you once have a star to top your tree, always have a star. Let your children grow up with it — to them it will symbolize THEIR Christmas tree. Worldly goods have little relation to Christmas tradition — it can be present in the

humblest home — or absent in the wealthiest.

Many families this year will be incomplete — there may be sons in France, Holland, Italy, England — and you may say, "Oh, we don't feel like holding Christmas with our boys away!" Has it ever occurred to you that to write and tell your boys just that is to destroy their faith? Christmas at home — Christmas as they knew it — is something they hang on to. It is one of the things they are fighting to save. And maybe in some distant land, perhaps in a bomb-damaged home, they may get a fleeting glimpse of a tree, topped by a star. That glimpse may intensify their longing for the folks back home, yet they will like to remember that over there will be the same Christmas dinner — Mom will manage somehow, sugar or no sugar and there will be folks coming . . . and the same excitement over gaily wrapped parcels. Gee, it sure would be great to be there . . . maybe next year . . .

Unfortunately there are also homes where only memories of fighting sons remain. It is not for me to say how Christmas shall be observed in such homes — I can only hope that to them will come some measure of healing and comfort during the season of peace and goodwill.

But to the thousands of other homes let me send along this message with my kindest regards and good wishes . . . Keep Christmas — whatever you do keep Christmas. Put your heart into it and the way will be clear, for where there is Christmas in the heart there will surely be Christmas in the home.

Good-bye and "God Bless us everyone!"

The Bookshelf...

FIVE ACRES And Independence

By M. G. Kains

This book tells how to select, finance, stock and develop a small farm. It points out mistakes to avoid as well as methods that assure success; it emphasizes the importance of good water, sanitation, drainage and irrigation; tells how to enhance crop yield while improving soil conditions; explains how to treat neglected orchards already on the place, how to start and care for new ones. It discusses berry patches, vineyards, fruit and vegetable crops, dairy cows, hogs, poultry and bees.

The book is based on the personal wide experience of the author and covers virtually every problem that the small farm owner is likely to encounter.

Five Acres and Independence . . . By M. G. Kains . . . Ambassador Books Limited . . . Price \$2.50.

In The Ice Age

Do you know that Arctic reindeer, mammals which have become symbols of Christmas, once roamed through southern Canada? This was during the Ice Age when the glaciers covered Ontario. They existed with the mastodon, woolly mammoth, and musk-ox, along the bleak, barren borders of the great ice sheet.

Christmas Joke

By VALINE HOBBS

I hung my stockings up last night beneath the mantel shelf.
And then I hung some other ones for more than just myself.
I hung a pudgy woolly one upon a nail alone.
That's for my little fox dog who hoped to get a bone.
I hung a silky shiny one so it would never fall.
That's for my little Persian cat who wanted just a ball.
Then last I hung two wee ones for my cunning goldfish fleet—
(I played a trick on Santa Claus: the honeys have no feet!)
This morning every one was full, from top to tippy-toe,
And Kitty-cat and Dog and I have what we wanted so.
But, oh, my little fox and twine, whatever shall we do
With these two pairs of rubber boots that Santa left for you?

JAP SPITE DID THIS



Medical air men cluster about an eight-month-old Filipino child who suffered face wounds from the bayonet of a Jap, retreating before American forces in the Philippines. The battle-torn Yanks vie with each other to feed the child from an oversized bottle.

The Jade God

By
MARY IMLAY TAYLOR

CHAPTER I

"So you've come back, Mark Grant?" The old lawyer swung around in his swivel-chair and looked the young man up and down with an eye as cold as a lizard's.

Mark laughed. Liberty was sending golden bubbles through his veins; it was easy to laugh.

"I behaved well, Mr. Fosdick," Mark said, his tone defying criticism, challenging; "they let me out a few months ahead of time."

"Humph!" Fosdick grunted. "I've no use for new-fangled notions in prisons," he remarked dryly; "hot air, that's all; a man should serve his time."

"You've never been in prison, Mr. Fosdick," he said. "When you've tried it you'll be quite favorable to new-fangled notions. I've had fifteen years' experience. I know!"

Fosdick's gray face twisted into a grim smile. "I don't think I'll try it — not in your way. Let me see: how old were you when you went up?"

"Seventeen."
"Seventeen? Gosh!" The lawyer stared at him for a moment, incredulously. "I'd forgotten. A boy — and convicted of killing that old man, your uncle — to get his money, too!" he added reproachfully. Mark's face sobered. His eyes darkened. "Convicted? You call that travesty a fair trial?"

The old man recoiled slightly, but he steadied himself to face the young fury in Mark's glance. "It was a fair trial; I always said so; you appealed, too," he maintained his point dryly; then he put Mark's anger aside with a gesture. "I've no time to take that up. I dare say you've suffered for it."

"What do you want, Mark?" The young man put his hand in his pocket and drew out an old letter with Fosdick's name in the corner. He laid it on the desk.

"That says that Aunt Hurley left her money for me when I came out, and you have charge of it. I'm out, Mr. Fosdick."

Fosdick glanced at the envelope without taking it up. "I see! Your Aunt Hurley's money brought you here mighty quick!" he remarked grudgingly. He had never forgiven the boy for Grant Barton's death. Of course he'd done it for the uncle's money. The motive was as plain as the nose on your face! "I drew that will. Her friends advised against it, but she would have her way. She always believed in you."

"God bless her!" Mark broke out, suddenly devout. "The will was proven, of course; you say as much in this letter."

The lawyer assented grudgingly.

Scholarship

Value \$750.00 and cash awards for original musical compositions. Canadians of either sex under 22 years on March 1, 1945, the closing date for entries. Junior Division open to competitors under 16 who do not qualify for major prizes. For entry forms and full information apply CANADIAN PERFORMING RIGHT SOCIETY LIMITED, Royal Bank Building, Toronto.

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He found one at the other end of the street, with a teapot on the swinging sign. It was down a few steps below the sidewalk, and, as he descended, he was surprised to find the two young clubmen at his heels. He took a seat near the door and ordered tea and muffins. But he felt resentment when he found the two young men had seized upon the table next to his and, without much pretense of eating, themselves, were unquestionably watching him drink his tea and eat his muffin.

They were both young, one big, about his own build, the other small and fat with red cheeks, and they were both fashionably and expensively dressed; they had the air of idle wealth. They were evidently disputing something between themselves, and Mark got the impression that he was their chief interest. It nettled him; he hurried his food down, drank his tea and paid his bill. It left him twenty cents. As he counted his change and thrust it back into his pocket he laughed bitterly to himself. How would Fosdick like to face his night in the city, with twenty cents? He was just rising from the table when his two young neighbors suddenly rose, came over, and pulling out the two empty chairs opposite, sat down, uninvited, at his table.

The stout young man leaned forward confidentially, his red cheeks growing redder.

"Pardon me," he said courteously, smiling across at Mark; "It's a wager — my speaking to you, I mean. If you've ever made a wager, you know how a fellow feels. I hope you don't mind our butting in this way. You see, it's all part of a bally bet I've made with my chum here."

"I see" — Mark still studied the pair. "I don't mind. In fact, I rather like it. What's the bet?"

"Oh, it's a thousand dollars, I —"

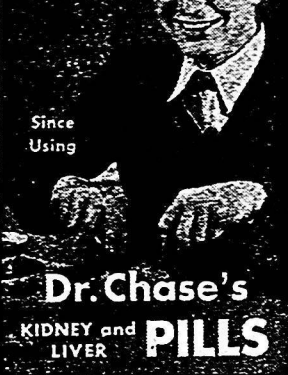
"Shut up!" Archie broke in suddenly, "you're only babbling, Ted. Let's get to business." He turned a little haughtily and faced Mark. "It's this way. My pal here has been getting into trouble with a lady, an elderly and exclusive lady, one of the smartest of the smart set; she won't have a man in her house who drinks too much, or gambles, or—" he shrugged — "you know the usual things! Teddy was a prime favorite, but she caught him gambling, and then he got stewed, two of the cardinal sins. She's forbidden him the house, and he's sore. There's going to be an exclusive afternoon today, a big affair. Ted has no card. He's raw about it, and he's laid a wager with me that she'll all bunk about her rules, that she doesn't really know what her guests do, that any fellow — the first man we met in the street — given a clean shirt could pass muster. I've taken the bet. I don't believe she'll receive anyone without credentials, she'll find a way to freeze the newcomer out, even if a fellow took him in, unless she knows he's all right. Ted's bet me a thousand dollars that he can pick up the first man he meets outside the club, give him the clothes and get him in — if I'll take him past the door and simply say: 'This is Mr. — oh, any old name! Now, do you see?'"

Mark nodded. "I see!" he said, and laughed. There was vigor in his laughter, a jubilant ring of freedom.

"I met you first outside the club," he said, "that's the whole of it. It's a wager —" he made a boyish grimace — "I don't want to lose my thousand dollars, Archie, here, is a bit stiff-necked about it. You — I wonder—" he leaned back, thrusting his hands into his pockets and jingling his money rather obviously — "I wonder if you'll help me out? It's only for one afternoon, you know, at a tea, there'll be dancing no end of fun, but the test will be the dinner afterwards. She only asks the elect to that — the ones of Colonial dames, I call 'em. I bet she'll ask you."

"What do I get?" asked Mark. (To Be Continued)

Do I Enjoy My Meals



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**SUNDAY SCHOOL
LESSON**
**THE GROUND OF
UNIVERSAL JOY**
Luke 2:8-12; Hebrews 1:1-4;
1 John 1:1-4.
GOLDEN TEXT—Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people. Luke 2:10.

Message of Joy
In the Christmas story is revealed the fact that God's ways are not man's ways. For centuries the promise of a Messiah and a deliverer for Israel was repeated. Not to the Roman governor, or the Chief Priest in the temple did God's messengers come, but to humble God-tearing shepherds who had been eagerly awaiting the coming of their Saviour.

They were in the country, in the silence of the night, watching over their flocks. The angel of the Lord came upon them without warning. The glory of the Lord shone about them. Their reaction to this amazing sight was that of natural sinful man when he comes in contact with the glory of a righteous God. Under similar circumstances Isaiah was spellbound in the temple, Paul fell to the ground on the Damascus Road, and John would have worshipped the heavenly messenger.

The angel quieted the shepherds with the assuring words that they were bearers of Good News of Great Joy, not only for them but for all people. The glad tidings the angels brought was that a Saviour had been born in the city of David.

In early bible days God spoke to the people in many ways. Sometimes it was in words at other times it was through visions, dreams, etc. However, in these last days He has spoken through his son the Lord Jesus Christ. Being the only son, he is heir of all things. By Christ, God made the world, verifying the fact that Jesus was present during creation.

The greatness and power of Christ is revealed in the brightness of His glory, a perfect image of God the Father. All power is in his hands, and all things are upheld by his word. Jesus came into the world with but one purpose in view: to lay down his life in payment of the sins of all who would believe on his name. Having completed this task he returned to glory where he is seated on the right hand of God.

During the Christmas season, may we not fail to worship the Great Giver, for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

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