

Part Plants Play at Christmas Time

Uses of Plants More Noticeable at Christmas.

(By E. W. Hart)

"So hallowed and so gracious is the time" that the last month of the year must always be associated with the season of goodwill, and this precious thing called home, the all-powerful lodestone which draws the wanderer's heart from the farther end of the earth.

It is the spirit of Christmas, Saint Nicolas or Santa Claus that fills the homes of all with good things, both spiritual and material.

Frank Church once exclaimed—"Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies. Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. No Santa Claus! Thank God! he lives and he lives for ever."

Children will certainly agree with Mr. Church when, at this most gracious season, the spirit of Saint Nicolas (their patron) loads them with gifts.

Now, Christmas presents owe their existence to plants. Among these will be the indispensable box of candy composed mostly of sweets made with sugar and flavoured with materials of vegetable origin, such as chocolate.

Sugar may be extracted from the sugar cane (one of the grasses), from fruit, from the maple tree or from beet roots.

Chocolate is a preparation of the seeds of the cocoa tree which only grows in hot countries such as tropical America and the West Indies. It is interesting to know that its first botanical name "Theobroma" means "Foods for the Gods."

Another vegetable flavouring for candy is the coconut, which grows on a great palm tree. It is no relation to the chocolate cocoa, but belongs to the same family as the date, which also finds a place in the Christmas candy box.

The Useful Coconut
The coconut palm is one of the wonders of the world because every part of it is said to be useful to man, either to clothe, feed or shelter him. The

nut furnishes milk, the young green leaves are eaten like cabbage. A wine is made from liquid produced by the flowers. The sap supplies sugar. Vessels and utensils are made out of the nutshells. The wood is used for making dwellings. The leaves dried and plaited form the roof or they may be made into umbrellas. Cloth and mats are woven out of the fibres of the leaves, and the leaves sewn together make sails for ships. The fibre also makes string and cordage. The oil pressed from the fresh kernel is used for the seasoning of food and illumination.

The date palm, which grows to a height of 80 feet and is surmounted by feathery foliage, is the symbol of elegance and grace, hence it became a favourite Hebrew woman's name, "Tamar." The date is common in Palestine. As Bethlehem is only about five miles south of Jerusalem, it probably flourished there on the first Christmas Day. Many places are named from its abundance, e.g. Jericho, "The City of the Palms"; Harazon-Tamar, by the Dead Sea; Baal-Tamar, near Gibrath, etc.

A Bountiful Providence
Providence, through the medium of plants, supplies not only the Christmas gifts, but loads the dining-table with delectable fruits and vegetables. The after-dinner cup of coffee is made from the seeds of the coffee tree that belongs to the same family as the familiar bedstraws or Galliums, one of which is appropriately associated with Christmas. It is the Galium verum—the true Galium—because of the legend that this plant was in the hay on which the Mather of Christ rested. It is therefore called Our Lady's Bedstraw or Ladies' Bedstraw. In parts of Eastern and Western Canada this plant is becoming quite common where its showy sprays of tiny yellow cruciform flowers bloom all the summer.

Gratitude and thanksgiving for the beneficence of festal seasons are the time-honoured and gracious usage of an appreciative world.

Five hundred years before the first Christmas, Aeschylus, a Greek poet, whose religious feeling was probably stimulated by the solemn services which represented the deepest and purest elements of religion, said "For these things it is meet to give the gods thanks-offerings long-enduring." Had Aeschylus been born five cen-

A TALL CANDLE FOR CHRISTMAS



The use of a monster candle adds an odd Christmas touch to the decorations for the season. Elizabeth MacRae Boykin, author of Pleasant Homes, a weekly feature of The Advance, makes this suggestion in the above picture.

turies later he might have been profoundly stirred by the scraphic hymn "Gloria in excelsis Deo."

Cranberries for the Christmas Dinner

About the Other Member of the Turkey Partnership.

There are things that naturally go together, like liver and bacon, pork and beans, Bergen and Charlie McCarthy. So it is with turkey and cranberry sauce. There are people

who think of cranberries as soon as Christmas is mentioned. Anyway, here are some cranberry recipes that should be timely:

Spiced Cranberries
Four cups cranberries; two cups sugar; one-half cup vinegar; three-quarters teaspoon whole cloves; one-piece stick cinnamon.

Combine sugar, vinegar and spices and bring to a boil. Add the cranberries and cook slowly, without stirring, until the skins pop open. Seal in sterilized jars.

Molded Cranberry Sauce
Four cups cranberries; two cups granulated sugar; two cups water. Boil the cranberries in the water un-

til all the skins pop open. Strain through a fine sieve; add the sugar and stir until dissolved. Boil rapidly for eight to 10 minutes, or until a drop jells on a cold plate. Turn at once into a wet mold and chill.

Ten-Minute Cranberry Sauce
Four cups cranberries; two cups granulated sugar; two cups water.

Boil sugar and water together for five minutes; add the cranberries and boil without stirring until the skins pop open. Remove from the fire when the popping stops and allow the sauce to remain in the pan until cooled. For a thinner sauce, bring the water and sugar to a boil and add the berries; cook until all the skins are broken.

Cranberry Orange Relish
Four cups cranberries; one to one and one-half oranges; two cups granulated sugar.

Put the cranberries through a meat chopper; remove the seeds from the oranges and put through the chopper too (both pulp and skin). Mix with the sugar and allow to stand for one day or over night, before serving. To store for future use, place in glasses and seal with paraffin.

Cranberry Cocktail
One quart cranberries; one quart boiling water; two tablespoons lemon juice; one-quarter cup orange juice; three tablespoons grapefruit juice; three-quarters teaspoon salt; three-quarters cup fruit sugar.

Wash cranberries, add to boiling water and simmer until the berries pop. Strain and add the lemon, orange and grapefruit juice, salt and sugar. Pour into a saucepan and bring to boiling point. Serve chilled.

Cranberry Mincemeat
Two pounds apples; two pounds sugar; one-half cup chopped candied peel; two cups raisins; two cups tart cranberry sauce; one-half one vinegar or lemon juice; two cups chopped cooked beef; one-quarter teaspoon cinnamon; two cups water or stock.

Combine ingredients and stir over low heat until sugar has dissolved. Cover and simmer gently until thick. Cool and store until needed.

Appeal of the Christmas Tree Through the Years

(From The Canada Lumberman)

Christmas and the New Year have a certain intimate interest to those engaged in the forest products industries because of the fact that in hundreds of thousands of homes a forest product—the Christmas tree—will add to the enjoyment of the season. To the younger generation the tree has a fascination especially when illuminated and laden with presents, to be distributed amid anticipations of the contents of the many coloured and be-mottled wrappings. Will the anticipations of the children be fulfilled; will the desire for a doll or other present be met? The excitement, the expectation, the delight—in a word, the happiness is the compensation given to the parents who have expended care and money in loving efforts to afford pleasure to the children. To them it is a miniature fairy land, ministering to their sense of the beautiful. While children may not appreciate the significance of the messages of peace and goodwill associated with Yuletide, they do grasp the significance of the Christmas tree as an expression of kindness and love from the donors of the gifts. It is a gladsome hour—the most delightful of all festal institutions. The Christmas tree, aglow with brightness is, to use a term used by G. K. Chesterton, "The white light of wonder."

Unadorned, it is one of nature's contributions to the gaiety of the season, not to be measured in terms of its monetary value, but in terms of the Christmas Spirit.

Although materialistic in form, the Christmas tree is associated with religious legends of the past—a kind of sacrament linking mankind with ancient mysteries. The tree of German origin, dating back to 1605, since when it has spread to all parts of the world. The first mention of it in England was in 1729, but it did not become general until about 1840. One authority regards it as coming from the union of two elements: the old Roman custom of decking houses with laurels and green trees of the Kalends in January, and the popular belief that every Christmas Eve, apple and other trees bore fruit. Another writer says: Sometimes Christ himself was regarded as the tree of Paradise. The thought of Him as both the light of the world and the tree of life may at least have given a Christian meaning to the light-bearing tree and have helped to establish its popularity among pious folk.

CHRISTMAS

(By Laila Mitchell Thornton)
I did not hear the angels singing
In Bethlehem that night so long ago
And yet I know

As well the message they were bringing
I did not see the Star whose glory
Lighted a stable where a baby lay,
And I today

Can know as well the natal story.
What matter years, when Truth is speaking
For I shall find Him on the Christmas Day

As sure as they
Who left their sheep, the Saviour seeking,
And I may worship, treasure giving
As did the Wise Men, coming from afar;

Where'er men are
There is the Child, the Christ, the Ever-Living.

The sergeant was taking the recruits' parade. "Fasten that button, you!" he bellowed to one soldier. "None of that strip-tease stuff here!"

SALLY'S SALLIES
By King Features Syndicate, Inc.

A monologue is a discussion between a wife and a husband.

Trans-Canada Pilots Meet High Standards

Uniform Resembles That of the Navy.

Montreal, Dec. 10.—"Where does that plane come from?" a woman asked the other day at the Winnipeg airport. "Vancouver," she was told. "Oh," said she, "what accounts for all the Navy men?"

She was referring to the Trans-Canada Air Lines pilots, who look very much like the Navy in their smart blue uniforms and peaked caps. Trans-Canada is as strict as the Navy in details of dress. The flying officers must always be trim when on service, never a button undone, never in shirt sleeves, not even a pencil showing. They must wear white shirts and black ties, black socks and shoes.

The blue service dress is worn from September 14 to May 14. In summer the men go into grey.

Following the practice of the Imperial Airways, the Pan American Airways and other representative British and American companies, the T.C.A. has changed the designation "Pilot" and "Second Pilot" to "Captain" and "First Officer." The Captain is recognized by two rings of gold braid on his cuff and the First Officer by one ring. The standard Royal Naval half-inch braid is used. Both officers wear the T.C.A. insignia—maple leaf and bird shape—as cap badges and on buttons.

Latest statistics show that the T.C.A. has 34 pilots among its more than 300

employees. Nineteen are Captains and 15, First Officers.

Dress is, of course, a minor matter, but, according to Trans-Canada executives, it is an example of the high standards of discipline and efficiency demanded by the men. Before they are engaged, they have to pass stiff physical examinations, based on Flank's Physical Efficiency Index, as followed by the Civil Aviation Division of the Department of Transport and the Royal Canadian Air Force. While they are in service, they must present themselves regularly for examination by company doctors as well as fulfil the requirements of the Department of Transport. Their character must also be of the highest.

Before he takes control of a plane or sits in the First Officer's seat, a T.C.A. pilot goes through the most rigorous training course, lasting many months. Not a detail is left unstudied, not a possible experience but is met in advance. He is checked over periodically while in the air and he returns regularly to the Link Trainer, in which he "flies" while still on the ground.

The T.C.A. pilot is prepared for great responsibility. Every flight he makes is carefully planned, with the co-operation of dispatcher and meteorologist, and it is the pilot who has the last word as to whether the plane shall go up or not.

Radio Fiend (over garden wall)—Last night we had lovely reception, very loud and clear. It was a broadcast of animal life and we got all the animals perfectly. Bored Neighbor (shuffling indoors)—Yes, including my goat.

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