



A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND  
A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

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"Whatever else be lost among the years  
Let us keep Christmas still a shining  
thing."

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May Christmas be happy and carefree  
and from its joy may be gathered  
strength to make the New Year a  
Happy One.

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To Old Friends and New Friends and  
Friends yet to Come, we wish a Very  
Merry Christmas and a Glad New Year.

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**Saturnalia Scotorum**

**A SCOTSMAN LOOKS AT HOGMANAY**

It's a guid auld Scottish custom, this Hogmanay, has been for long and is likely to persist for many a year to come. As the Old Year shuffles off the stage with the New Year crowding upon its heels, Scotland enters upon its "Daft Days." Though the modern worship of the great god Efficiency has shorn the Daft Days of much of their glory, it still remains a joyous period and the most carefree in Scotland's calendar. It is New Year not Christmas that the Scot considers his holiday and woe betide the employer who would attempt to keep office or factory at work on that holy day. Even now, in wartime, Scots workers get their New Year's Day.

Reasons for Scotland's celebration of Hogmanay instead of Christmas are not hard to find. Roman Catholic Scotland kept the Christmas festival in the traditional manner, but John Knox changed all that when he initiated the great Reformation that culminated in the Presbyterian cult, with all its predestination, eternal punishment, and other gloomy Calvinistic tenets. His doctrine, hopeless and fatalistic, made the devout fear God, but certainly left no room for love or even respect for Him.

A great man was this John Knox, a terrific driving force but an intolerant bigot. He was self-conscious, self-willed, and intensely dogmatic, characteristics shared by so many of his fellow-countrymen then and now. In 1569 he hectoring an act upon the little kingdom ordaining heavy penalties, with death on a third conviction, to those who should celebrate mass or even be present at its celebration. And so Christ Mass went by the board as a national festival in Scotland. In England under the Puritans the observance of Christmas was strictly forbidden by Act of Parliament. Charles II revived the festival throughout the joint kingdom, but the Scots, set now in narrow Presbyterianism, would have nothing of "heathenish popish practisis".

Hogmanay was observed by the Druids—those irascible old long-whiskered gentlemen, always depicted with arms high flung and in a fearfully bad temper, calling down the fires of retribution on someone's head. They were never very much of a force in England as a whole, but were strongly entrenched throughout Scotland. Among their ceremonies at the beginning of the year was one of going into the woods to gather mistletoe. Doubtless there were pretty girls around those days, but, no, one couldn't imagine the Druids using mistletoe for that purpose. One old writer states: "They were wont the first of each year to go into the wodes where, having sacrificed, they gathered mistletoe, esteeming it excellent to make beasts fruitful and most sovereign against all poyson". Another says the Druids "cut mistletoe with a golden bill and brought it into the towns and houses of the great next morning, where it was distributed among the people, who wore it as an amulet to preserve them from all harm, particularly from danger of battle."

Derivation of the word "Hogmanay" is obscure. Attempt has been made to derive it from "hagia mene" (holy month or holy moon); others class it as a corruption of the Latin "hoc in anno". One idea is that it comes through Old French "au gui l'an neuf" (to the mistletoe this New Year) which links the word with the Druids' summoning of the people to follow them to the forest in search of mistletoe. In Norway they have "hoggermott" or "hoegted". This word, however, comes from "hogg" (to kill) and narrows the meaning to the slaughter of beasts on the eve of the great feast of Yule. Gaelic Scotland proffers several derivations which at least are ingenious if not very convincing. A part of the Hogmanay ceremonies in the Highlands was that a member of the party would be decked with a mantle made of cowhide and his companions would race after him shouting and belabouring him with sticks. The main shout would be "thog mi n' eigh" (I raised the cry). Maybe, but why all the fuss about raising a cry. Another Gaelic suggestion is "thog mi au t-eug" (I bring death) possibly because so many bottles are killed around that time. Yet another is "thog manaigh" (I bring luck) which is a trifle better than the preceding. And then, there is the Englishman, who, when asked what he thought of the word, replied diffidently that it probably was the epitome of the Scot's national trait "Hogmanay: hug money." Derivation of the word is purely conjectural: one man's guess is as good as another's.

Great religious celebrations and festivals hold the imagination of a people long after a change in the national faith has taken place. The Christian Church has therefore found it judicious at times to graft its teachings upon the pagan beliefs and appropriate festivals of the superseded cult to its own ends. Our present-day word, Yule, now synonymous with Christmas, is taken from "Geol" the name of the great mid-winter festival of the Angles, Saxons, and other Gothic peoples. Similarly, when Christianity was introduced to the Celts, the mistletoe-gathering ceremony of the Druids was adapted to Christian teachings and mistletoe remains to this day in close association with the observance of Christmas.

For many a year it has been the custom all over Scotland for bands of children to go the rounds from door to door begging for something as a token of Hogmanay. Burns says of them:

"The cottar weanies, glad and gay,  
Wi' packs oot owre their shouthers,  
Sing at the doors for Hogmanay."

The song they sing has come down the years with but little change, though one does not hear it very often nowadays:

"Hogmanay, Trollolay,  
Gie's o' your bread  
An' nane o' your grey".

Here another quaint word pops up, one which may mean anything or nothing. "Hogmanay, Trollolay" say some wise philologists, has a Christmastide derivation: "homme est ne; trois rois la" (a man is born: three kings there). That is to say: Christ is born; three wise men from the east are there. In Scotland, however, Christmas is practically ignored and Hogmanay, Trollolay is a part of the New Year festival. Again it may be nothing more than the inherent rhyming instinct of children coming into action. Hogmanay, Trollolay, one slips smoothly enough from the first word to the second, just as one hears from the lips of children at play, the world over. If so, then down go the the philologists and their strained derivation. "And they shall be confounded by a lisping child" as St. Augustine says. It may have its roots in the "tra la la" so common in English poetry and song, especially around Elizabethan times. From the lips of a child "Hogmanay tra la la" would swiftly merge into "Hogmanay Trollolay". However, here we are again in the wide field of conjecture. Once again your guess is as good as mine.

Hogmanay celebrations seem to have been originally of a religious character and were enacted in the churches. This was later prohibited, however, when observance of the holy day degenerated into wild and profane clowning. In the sixteenth century the clergy of France complained bitterly of the fantastically dressed men and women who disturbed church service and pestered worshippers at prayer. In the next century the wild buffoonery had become lawlessness and the government took heavy handed action to stamp it out. These motley-clad merrymakers

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**The Porcupine Advance  
Wishes One and All  
A Very Merry Christmas**



**The Chief and Members  
of the  
South Porcupine Fire Dept.**

at this festive season of the year take  
this opportunity to thank the public  
very sincerely for co-operation and  
good-will throughout the passing year  
and to wish one and all

**A Merry Christmas and a Happy  
and Prosperous New Year**



We hope for you a very Merry  
Christmas, and that you find  
all that you seek in the Glad  
New Year.

**JOHN W. FOGG, LTD.**

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May Friendship and Goodwill  
dwell with all this Christmas-  
tide and throughout the year  
to come.

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There are no fancy words that express  
the honest thought more clearly than  
just:—"A Very Merry Christmas and  
a Happy and Prosperous New Year."

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