

The World's First Christmas

Christmas comes but once a year, it is true, but it is a matter for thanksgiving that it comes that once to everybody, high or low, rich or poor, millionaire or tramp, king or beggar. Even to those who have no turkey, nor mince pie, nor even where to lay their head—even to the poor little waifs and strays of childhood who have no kind friends to fill their suspended stockings with toys and non-bons, or who have no stockings to suspend, the day itself comes just the same, and upon the saddest heart and the poorest, most blighted life, it sheds something of that sweet feeling of peace on earth, good will to all mankind, which it ushered into the world nearly 1900 years ago, when a lovely baby boy was born away over in Bethlehem, and his beautiful young maiden mother cradled him in a manger.

Centuries ago two plain people stopped at a village barn after a walk of eighty miles, too long a trudge for one in poor health. No lords of state awaiting in ante-chamber, as when other kings are born; no messengers mounted at the doorway ready to herald the advent from city to city; no medical skill in attendance; no satined cradle to receive the infantile guest, but a monarch born in the hostelry called the House of Chim Ham. The night with diamonded finger pointing down to the place; the door of heaven set wide open to look out; from orchestral batons of light dripping the oratorios of the Messiah; on lowest doorstep of heaven the minstrels of God discoursing of glory and good will!

Soon after the white-bearded astrologists kneel, and from leathern pouch chink the shekels, and from open sacks exhale the frankincense and rustle out the bundles of myrrh. The loosened star, the escaped doxology of celestials, the chill December night aflush with May morn, our world a lost star, and another star rushing down the sky that night to beckon the wanderer home again, shall yet make all the nations keep Christmas.

I have always rejoiced that Christ was born on a December night. Had it been the month of May—that is the season of blossoms; had he been born in the month of June—that is the season of roses; had he been born in the month of July—that is the season of great harvests; had he been born in the month of September—that is the season of ripe orchards; had he been born in the month of October—that is the season of upholstered forests. But he was born in the month of December, when there are no flowers blooming out of doors, and when all the harvests that have not been gathered up have perished, and when there are no fruits ripening on the hill, and when the leaves are drifted over the bare earth.

It was in closing December, that he was born, to show that this is a Christ for people in sharp blast, for people under clouded sky, for people with frosted hopes, for people with thermometer below zero, for people snowed under. That is the reason that he is so often found among the destitute; you can find him on any night coming off the moors; you can see him any night coming through the dark lanes of the city; you can see him putting his head under the fainting head in the paper's cabin. He remembers how the wind whistled around the caravanary in Bethlehem that December night, and he is in sympathy with all those who, in their poverty, hear the shutters clatter on a cold night.

Christ's cradle was as wonderful as his cross. On that first Christmas he had only two friends. They were his parents. No satined cradle, no delicate attentions, but straw, and the cattle, and the coarse joke and banter of the camel drivers. No wonder the mediaeval painters represent the oxen as kneeling before the infant Jesus, for there were no men there at that time to worship. From the depths of that poverty, he rose, until to-day he is honored throughout all Christendom, and sits triumphant on the imperial throne in heaven.

What name is mightiest to-day in Christendom? Jesus. Who has more friends on earth than any other being? Jesus. Before whom do the most thousands kneel in chapel and church and cathedral the world over? Jesus. From what depths of poverty to what heights of renown! And so let all those who are poorly started remember that they can not be more poorly born than was our Christ.

Do you know that the vast majority of the world's deliverers had barn-like birthplaces? Luther, the emancipator of religion, born among the mines; Shakespeare, born among the literate, born in a humble home at Stratford-on-Avon; Columbus, the discoverer of a world; born in poverty at Genoa; Hogarth, the discoverer of how to make art accumulative and administrative of virtue, born in an humble home at Westmoreland; Kisto and Briaux, whose keys unlocked apartments in the Holy Scriptures which had never been entered, born in want, nine out of ten of the world's deliverers born in want.

I stir your holy ambitions this Christmas with these thoughts of the world's first Christmas, to tell you that although the whole world may be opposed to you, and inside and outside of your occupation or profession there may be those who would hinder your ascent, on your side and enlisted in your behalf are the sympathetic

heart and almighty arm of one, who, on the night of the world's first Christmas, about 1900 years ago, was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. Oh, what splendid encouragement for the poorly started. Our world has plenty of sympathizers! Our world is only a silver rung of a great ladder, at the top of which is your Father's house. No more stellar friendless planets spun out into space to freeze, but a world in the bosom of divine paternity. A star harnessed to a manger.

QUEEN VICTORIA'S CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

Simplicity does not always dwell in the cottage, nor its opposite in the palace. Household Words some time ago gave an interesting picture of Queen Victoria's observance of Christmas. Since the death of the Prince Consort the holiday has always been spent at Osborne, in the Isle of Wight. There the queen makes arrangements for her Christmas gifts and greetings; and a long list she has, for no member of her large family is forgotten, and all her friends and ministers receive greetings from her.

She invariably writes to the ex-Empress Eugenie and ex-Queen Isabella of Spain. The late Lord Beaconsfield often received a present from her, and Lord Salisbury is honored in the same way. Christmas presents go to all her ladies and gentlemen-in-waiting, and the more humble servants are not forgotten. Every royal servant receives a gift from the queen at Christmas. She sends cards to her former maids of honor, her favorite clergymen, doctors, singers and musicians.

The queen's taste in cards is not governed by fashion. She does not care for the private cards bearing a printed greeting, now so fashionable, but prefers to select a suitable card for each recipient. For her immediate relations she chooses a simple card, on which, for a specially favored one, she paints a rose, lily, or some unpretentious design, with a Christmas greeting in her own flowing handwriting.

Her actual gifts are on as simple a scale as the cards. She does not favor expensive presents, but prefers to give and receive tokens slight in themselves, but expressive of the good wishes and affection of the donor.

Her majesty is very fond of knitting, straw-plaiting and crocheting with large ivory hook and soft Shetland wool, and the quilts, mufflers, mittens and hats made by the royal hands are greatly prized by the members of her family. Flower epergnes, dainty bonbon dishes, photograph frames and beautifully bound books figure largely in the queen's list of presents.

Tradesmen who, by royal warrant, are "purveyors to her majesty" forward to the queen large consignments of articles suitable for Christmas presents, and from these she can select all she requires. It often happens, however, that a pretty advertisement in one of the weekly journals will bring a command for a selection of the goods to be sent to the queen, followed by a substantial order, even when the firm is not a warrant holder.

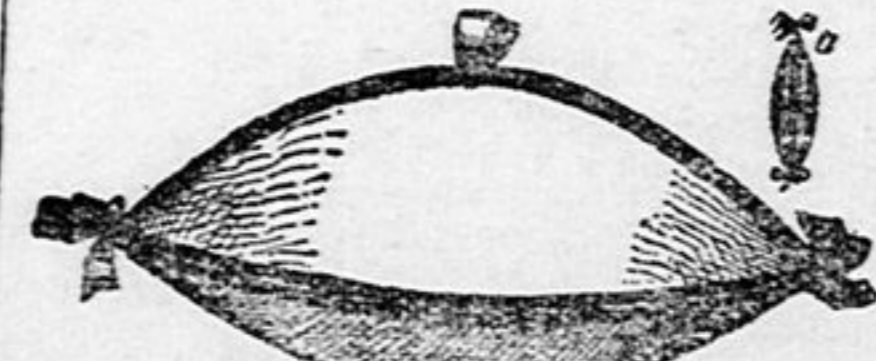
To her younger nephews and grandsons the queen gives handsome tips, and to the girls dress lengths of fine stuff, with the direction that the dress is to be made up as the recipient pleases, and the bill forwarded to her majesty.

To a favorite grandchild the queen will sometimes send a fine uncut jewel, with the message that it is to be set as the receiver chooses, as "grandmother does not know the latest fashion in jewelry, but will be pleased to pay the bill for the setting."

Whoever else is forgotten, the queen always remembers her old servants at Christmas. Those who were in her service before the death of the Prince Consort are specially favored. They are allowed to choose for themselves some article of silver plate and on Christmas day they receive their present, accompanied by a large black-bordered card bearing the touching inscription, "With good wishes from Her Majesty and Prince Consort."

A FOOTBALL WORK BOX.

This work box is a novelty this Christmas which will find favor with many because it is so easily made. First cut out from stiff cardboard three oval pieces, as shown in the illustration, eight inches long by 3-1/2 inches wide in the widest portion. Cover these neatly with linen, face them



with red satin or silk and bind the edges with a half-inch wide satin ribbon. Then put the pieces together and sew two sides blind stitch, with heavy red twist. At the corners tie small bows of ribbon and in the middle of the top opening sew two loops, which will serve as a handle. The two sides being sewed very tightly, makes enough spring to keep the box closed. Denim in colors is also used to cover these boxes, red with red ribbon for Harvard girls, and mothers, and blue for Yale, while black ribbons on yellow silk was the handsome combination made up for one of Princeton's

ARMY OF GREAT BRITAIN

ITS PERSONNEL, ITS ORGANIZATION AND ITS MANAGEMENT.

Parliament Exercises Control of the Army—Officers of the Headquarters Staff—The Volunteer Army—Duties of the Militia—The Pay of Officers and Men—Expenditures for the Army.

Under the provisions of the bill of rights of 1689, England can not maintain a standing army in the time of peace without the consent of Parliament, and since then the number of troops and the cost of the different branches of the service have been sanctioned by an annual vote of the House of Commons. In another way Parliament exercises control of the army, passing at the commencement of every session an act entitled the army annual bill, investing the crown with large powers to make regulations for the good government of the army and to frame the articles of war, which constitute the military code.

An order of council, dated November 21, 1895, reorganized the military administration and defined the duties of the principal officers. Under the system in vogue before them, all the departments of military service were controlled by the commander-in-chief of the army as the supreme head, with the Adjutant General as his chief of staff; while the civil departments were directly under the financial secretary. Now the Secretary of State for War, under the new system is in control of all branches of army service, and the heads of departments are responsible to him. An army board, consisting of the commander-in-chief as president, and the Adjutant General, Quartermaster General, inspectors general of fortifications and ordnance and the accountant general, as the representative of the financial secretary, as members, reports on promotions and appointments of officers of superior rank and on all proposals for estimates. These duties are the chief functions of the board.

THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

of the army exercises general command, is the principal adviser of the Secretary of State and is charged with the plans of mobilization and for defensive and offensive operations. Associated with the commander-in-chief in his department are the military secretary, director of military instruction and the officer in charge of the mobilization service. The Adjutant General has to do with the discipline, education, training, clothing and recruiting of the forces; the Quartermaster General provides the supplies and equipment for the army, and the inspectors general of fortifications and ordnance are charged with the control and maintenance, respectively, of these departments. These are the principal departments of the British army.

One feature of interest provided for in the present system of defense is the cabinet of officers to which, in the time of war, is referred the naval and military departments. These officers compose the headquarters staff of the British army. Field Marshal Rt. Hon. Viscount Wolsey, commander-in-chief; Maj. Gen. Sir Coleridge Grove, military secretary; Maj. Gen. Sir Charles Ardagh, director of military intelligence; Gen. Sir Evelyn Wood, adjutant general; Lieut. Gen. Sir R. Harrison, inspector general of fortifications; Lieut. Gen. Sir George Stewart White, quartermaster general of ordnance, office vacant; Maj. Gen. Edward Arthur Gore, inspector general of remounts; Maj. Gen. Thomas Kelly-Kenny, inspector general of auxiliary forces and recruiting; Maj. Gen. Henry Fane Grant, inspector general of cavalry; Surgeon General James Jameson, director general of medical department; Col. James Douglas Forde-Jones, director of army schools; Rev. J. Cox Edghill, chaplain general.

PERSONNEL OF THE ARMY.

According to figures given in Whitaker's Almanac, for 1899, the personnel of the British army is as follows:—Regular army, at home and in colonies. 171,394
Army reserve, first and second class. 73,462
Militia, including permanent staff and militia reserve. 83,050
Militia, channel islands. 3,996
Militia, Malta and Bermuda. 3,996
Yeomanry cavalry, including staff. 2,472
Volunteers, including staff. 11,981
Total. 263,963

The latest estimates in Whitaker's Almanac, for 1899, show that the regular army of the United Kingdom, exclusive of officers, 1087 warrant officers, 17,100 sergeants, 291 drummers, trumpeters, etc., and 150,267 rank and file, a total of 189,513 men of all ranks. There are, in addition to the regular army four classes of reserve or auxiliary forces—militia, yeomanry cavalry, volunteer corps and the army reserve force. In case of invasion the constitute the principal defense. They are organized as infantry and garrison artillery, and number about 261,000 men. The volunteers receive their instruction under the government, and are commanders of military districts. On joining, recruits are required to attend thirty drills, and afterward a mini-

mum of nine drills annually are sufficient. Officers of volunteers are appointed by the Lieutenants of counties, subject to the approval of the Queen. The volunteers are mobilized in case of invasion or war, and are held for permanent service.

THE MILITIA

consists of about 155,000 men, who are intended for local defense, but may be ordered anywhere within the limits of the United Kingdom, and are available for garrison duty in England's Mediterranean fortresses. This force is organized as infantry and artillery. Enlistment is voluntary and the term is for six years. Officers of the militia are commissioned by the Queen, and the Generals commanding the military districts administer all the details of recruitment and instruction. For from three to four weeks annually the militia is called out for instruction, and this time may be extended to eight weeks, if necessary. Regular officers may also be assigned to the militia as instructors, and the soldiers in reserve may be attached to it whenever called out for maneuvers. The militia reserve numbers about one-fourth as many men as are in the militia. Their term of enlistment is also for six years.

Another force, called yeoman cavalry, consists of about 13,000 men, who are equipped as light cavalry. Every man furnishes his own horse, and, when called on for service, each man is paid 7d a day. The yeoman cavalry drills eight days a year and is subject for duty in cases of riot or insurrection.

The vital principle of the present army system is the training of men by short service in the regulars and then passing them into the reserve. After serving three years in the ranks of the regular army soldiers are permitted to go into the reserve, where they receive 6 pence a day in consideration of being liable to military duty. Thus the regular army has a body of trained soldiers from which to recruit its ranks.

IN THE TIME OF WAR.

When called back into active service they go into the branch of the army in which they were originally enrolled. They acquire the right to a position if called back to the colors.

Except in the case of Ireland, the direction of the army is exercised through the general officers commanding districts. Great Britain and Ireland are partitioned into fourteen military districts. For the infantry there are 102 sub- or regimental districts, each under the command of a line Colonel. There are also twelve subdistricts for the artillery and two for the cavalry respectively.

Enlistment in the English army is voluntary, carrying with it in the time of war the payment of large bounties. Twelve years is the term of service, with re-enlistment to twenty-one years, which entitles the soldier to a life pension.

To command England's large army there are 9 Field Marshals, 20 Generals, 40 Lieutenant Generals, 125 Major Generals and 23 Brigadier Generals.

THE RATE OF PAY, PER YEAR IN POUNDS STERLING OF THE DIFFERENT OFFICERS AND MEN, APPROXIMATELY, IS AS FOLLOWS:

Commander-in-chief, field marshal, £4500; General, £2400; Lieutenant General, £2100; Major General, £1500; Colonel, £1000; Lieutenant Colonel, £820; Major, £620; Captain, £420; Lieutenant, £318; Ensign, £100; Sergeant, £36; private, £18.

In 1897 to 1898 the expenditures for the army of Great Britain amounted to a little more than one-sixth of the whole expenditures of the country, and was at the rate of 9 shillings per head of estimated population. During the following year the army expenditures showed an increase, being a total of £22,359,599.

For the year 1898 to 1899 the army expenditures, in detail, were as follows:

Fof effective services.	
1. Pay of army.	£7,426,400
2. Medical establishment, pay, etc.	297,100
3. Militia, etc.	568,600
4. Yeomanry, pay, etc.	75,010
5. Volunteers, pay, etc.	614,700
6. Transportation and remounts.	733,100
7. Provisions, forage, etc.	3,392,200
8. Clothing establishments, etc.	1,295,600
9. Warlike and other stores.	2,373,900
10. Works, buildings and repairs.	1,175,645
11. Military education, pay, etc.	182,300
12. Miscellaneous effective services.	61,800
13. War Office, salaries and charges.	245,250
Total.	£18,441,405
Non-effective services.	
14. Retired pay, half pay, etc., for officers.	£1,938,280
15. Pensions for warrant officers, etc.	1,802,535
16. Superannuation, etc., allowances.	177,453
Total.	£22,359,599
For that year the estimates for ordnance factories aggregated	£2,922,000.

MONTHS OF MADNESS.

Contrary to the general opinion, more people go mad during the summer months than in the usually gloomy and dull months of November, December and January, when times are bad and the general conditions appear more conducive to insanity. Not only in this country, but in many other mad during May, June and July than during any other portion of the year, and that suicide which is due to some form of insanity—is also more prevalent during the summer.

DIRECTLY NONCOMMITTAL.

The cook asked if we had hardwood floors. What did you tell her, Jack? I didn't answer her at all. How could I guess whether she wanted them, or didn't want them?

THE DURHAM CHRONICLE

EVERY THURSDAY MORNING
AT THE CHRONICLE PRINTING HOUSE, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.



Sensible
Suggestions.

Perhaps the following Suggestions may help you to come to a decision as to what would be nice
FOR HIM

A Box of Choice Cigars from 50c up.
A Fancy Cigar Case from 50c up.
A Nice Cased Pipe from 50c up.
Leather Travelling Cases \$1.25 up.
Leather Collar & Cuff Cases \$1.50 up.
Leather Purses from 25c up.
Leather Wallets & Letter 50c up.
A good Razor 50c up.
Fancy Shaving Mugs 15c up.
China Moustache Cups 25c up.
China Porridge Sets 75c up.
Fancy Ink Stands 25c up.
Fountain Pens—hard rubber Cases from 2