

### Guests.

What news? What cheer? The trees have come to town!  
The forest grew too sombre. They've come down  
To look for faces that they learned to know  
In summer-time, a little space ago.

They saw a fine smoke a-curl from chimneys high  
Born of white fires that leap and blaze, and lie  
Warmly at last within the red log's breast.

The pine trees saw the smoke and dreamed the rest!  
They knew there would be merriment within  
And growling lonely for the joyous din  
Of well remembered voices, packed for town.

Laughing as burly woodmen hewed them down.  
Last night I passed along a crowded street  
And hummed a song that to my soul is sweet.

When some one somewhere whis-pers in my ear  
"Good friend, pray, not so fast! Be-hold me here!"

A row of trees, just newly come to town!  
And as I looked their fragrant phalanx down  
The very pine I loved so well—in June—

Beneath whose shade I hummed my little tune  
Was there before me, like a Christmas guest,  
A thrill with gladness for a finished quest.

And other trees were calling other names.  
My own stands now, just where the firelight flames  
Upon broad boughs that I have hung with gems.

Lovelier than My Lady's diadems!  
I sit and watch the fitful gleams that stir  
I dream of gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Three!—Magi!—It's a story that I know  
Of shepherds on a hillside, long ago—  
A still young Mother and a sleeping Child.

A Star—A Song—a little world be-guiled  
By strains of "Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men!"  
Would we might hear the Angel's song again!

A Voice the laden branches seem to stir  
"They brought Him gifts—gold, frankincense and myrrh."

What song—what carols break upon my ear?  
"The First Noel!"—O little Children, dear,  
Come in and gather largess from my Tree.

For it has come to town to visit me!  
—Barbara Young.

Unto Us A Son Is Given

Given, not lent,  
And not withdrawn—once sent,  
This Infant of mankind, this One,  
Is still the little welcome Son.

New every year,  
Newborn and newly dear,  
He comes with tidings and a song,  
The ages long, the ages long;

Even as the cold  
Keen winter grows not old,  
As childhood is so fresh, foreseen,  
And spring in the familiar green.

Sudden, as sweet  
Come the expected feet,  
All joy is young, and new all art,  
And He, too, whom we have by heart.

—Alice Meynell.

The King

"My little Son," she said,  
"My little Son,  
My beautiful, my wondrous,  
Lovely One.

Kiss Thy head, Thy hands,  
Thy little feet—  
Thou art so small, so helpless,  
And so sweet.

"They come with gifts  
And look on Thee with awe,  
And tell in whispers  
Of a star they saw.

"I see but Thee, I know  
No more than this,  
That Thou art soft  
As rose leaves.

To my kins—  
—Abigail Cresson.

Other People

This is the season above all others for taking thought away from ourselves toward other people. What a miserable festival it would be if all our mind turned inward, our gaze were introspective and our desire began and ended in a ring about ourselves!

Rank selfishness is this, to invade the blessed time with care purely for our own concerns, with anxious meditation of our own revolving problems, however insistent and intrusive they may be. We need never look far to discern the less fortunate; however unhappy we think we are, there is a plight at our doorstep more serious than our own. We need to look resolutely and cheerfully away from our perplexity, for the health of our minds, for the good of our souls, for the happiness of others which we are bound to consider.

It does not matter so much that we shall bring our own dream true for ourselves as that we shall bring happiness in the long run to another, even though it be with sacrifice. "Greater love hath no man than this," a true, abiding affection is tested most of all by its willingness to renounce. And let no gloomy face be carried to the altar of the oblation, but a high, proud smiling countenance.

For it takes from the beauty of any service to the race—or to any member of it—if we play the part in a dreary, melancholy key, as of one who consents rather than elects to live and to rise to the whole of a duty.

When we came into this world we did not come into a solitary paradise. We found the scene thronged and the rules fixed and the game to be played as others had soberly agreed to play it. There has to be an ordered structure of society, for the defence of interdependent mankind against the independence of the lawless and the predatory. We cannot let the world be run by those who are themselves un-governable. "Save he serve, no man may rule." And each in his place, be it high or low, is bound to think of all the rest.

What Will You Buy in Toyland?

Christmas, expressed in the terms of the child's mind, is synonymous with toys. At this holiday season made merry by children and for children, there is a tendency toward being too generous with toys. If not too generous, then too self-centred on the shopping trip to Toyland that we come home with toys bought to suit our own tastes and desires rather than the little four, five or six-year-old for which they are meant.

The great joy of receiving toys at Christmas time for children is getting what they want. Every toy should be made to exercise a dual purpose; that of making the child happy and of assisting him in an educative and creative way. Toys are the treasured possessions of childhood, and the impressions they make in childhood days are lasting.

It may be you note in advance what the child wants, but it is also necessary to know why. Perhaps little James wants a sled like the one his playmate has. This may be because it is a bright and shiny one, or because it can go faster and farther than any other sled of his playfellows. The boy who teases for expensive mechanical toys may have his real wish better gratified in the ownership of materials with which to experiment and construct his own metal toys. If Jane is of a studious nature, she will get more hours of real happiness out of a story book suitable to her age, rather than a set of doll dishes, which for us appears to be the correct gift for any little girl.

One can do a child a grave injustice by getting him everything he wants. This is a world of limitation, thwarted wishes and the necessity for sharing with others. If a host of toys and playthings is received at Christmas time, a child's appreciation for new toys later in the year, is dampened. One mother of our acquaintance allows her sons to have only a few of the toys they receive at Christmas time. The remainder is put away and given to them at appropriate times throughout the year.

Then, this Christmas morning let your children or your little friend receive the toys for which they have been longing, but let those toys be so selected as to incite happiness and delight in the gift, and stimulate the child mind in an educative way.

If you wished to walk through all the streets and lanes and alleys in London you would have to walk ten miles every day for nine years.

A small boy who asked a gardener how he got the water into water-melons received a reply that was worthy of his question: "I plant the seed in the spring," said the gardener.



# A MERRY CHRISTMAS



## A little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!

A little town of Bethlehem,  
How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by;  
The everlasting Light,  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee to-night.

O holy Child of Bethlehem!  
Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in,  
Be born in us to-day;  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell;  
Oh, come to us, abide with us,  
O Lord Emmanuel!

### My Christmas Tree.

Each year as sure as Christmas comes around,  
The family send me out to get a Tree.  
And heretofore my habit's always been  
To take the very first that I could see.  
But lately I've been giving it some thought  
And now it seems a senseless thing to do—  
To rob the Future of a stately tree  
To furnish pleasure for an hour or two.  
See, where those sapling pines out in the glade,  
Straight as a lance are reaching towards the sun.  
Now, these will all be fine big trees some day.  
If I don't end what Nature has begun.  
But here's a little spruce beneath the shade  
Of this great, husky, moss-clad forest king,  
A slender chance has he to reach his prime,  
Yet for a Christmas Tree he's just the thing!  
So I'll take this, and hie me home again,  
And leave you sturdy saplings all intact  
To grow and rear strong columns to the sky,  
Till what I see in fancy turns to fact.

W. H. C.

### The Heart of a Child.

If Christmas brings no thrills, something is wrong, not with Christmas, but with yourself. Christmas is nineteen hundred years old, but age has not withered its charm. Much has crashed since the cry of a Child was heard in Bethlehem—kings, kingdoms, empires, religions, civilizations—but Christmas, the Child festival, still stands firm and four-square, entrenched in a million hearts.  
Christmas! The very word hold a thrill. Eyes shine, and hearts beat quicker. The call, the grip, of Christmas, still hold power.  
But you—what of you? If Christmas brings no thrill you have lost something. Perhaps faith and hope and charity have gone, pushed out to make place for a bitter cynicism.  
The world may have buffeted you, and it may seem that you stand alone, chilled and cold and forgotten. But Christmas is yours still. It must hold happy—perhaps holy—memories. For were you not once a child? What better salve can there be for the bitterness of to-day than the fragrant memories of happy and holy yesterdays? "He who shall keep Christmas," said an old-time philosopher, "shall keep himself."  
If Christmas brings no thrill, something is wrong. "Maybe we are not at peace," "Maybe 'good will' is not in our hearts." Perhaps we are nursing old hatreds, bitter memories that should have been banished and forgotten years ago.  
In that case we are in antagonism with Christmas; its meaning, its message, and its lesson. Let a Little Child lead us back to friendliness, to forgiveness, to peace, and to happiness.  
For Christmas to mean nothing to us is a tragedy. We stand condemned. Some say they have "got beyond troubling about Christmas." If you

### What Do You Do With Your Christmas Tree.

What do you do with your Christmas tree?  
Do you put it out on the balcony,  
That people who pass may happier be  
To look at its pretty greenery?

What do you do with your Christmas tree?  
Four little girls at afternoon tea  
Stripped its branches, for cushions, with glee,  
And found how sweet its scent could be!

What do you do with your Christmas tree?  
Do you deck it with food for the chic-a-dee-dee,  
That all his mates at a banquet free  
May hold a snowy revelry?  
—Edith Perry Bodwell.

### Eye of Murdered Man Holds Slayer's Image.

The theory that a murder victim's eye may sometimes hold the image of his slayer received scientific confirmation from Prof. Doehne of Cologne University, Berlin. The professor photographed the retina of two of the victims of Fritz Angerstein, wealthy Hagen merchant, who killed eight persons. The retina of one yielded a picture of Angerstein's face. The other showed the same face, contorted with rage, and the blade of the axe with which the murders were committed.

### Other People.

The bags are packed and ready, Nicholas!  
Your gloves I laid together in the hall,  
The thickest pair; it's cold to-night.  
Pull down  
Your cap over your forehead! What a boy!  
You are to capor so! Stand still, you child  
Of children, till I see your collar.  
There!  
I knew you'd put that old coat on; it's torn.  
From last year's journey, and you hid it where  
I could not find it, purposely! Of course  
The red is beautiful, and they expect  
To see you in it, but I tried to make  
The new one just as bright. There's no time now  
To change.

And, Nicholas, be very sure  
To handle Vixen carefully; she's full  
Of little tricks—you've stabled her too long!  
And might lead on the others. Please don't let  
Them take you near the trees; your sleigh's so small.  
And not well-balanced; branches catch their hoofs  
Sometimes, and you forget.

The bells were tuned  
Just yesterday—one's missing from the reins.  
Near Comet's head. You said he rubbed it off  
Against a chimney. How I like to think  
Of all those chiming tongues that sprinkle sound;  
Like jets of frosted spray upon the night!  
I know the children love them. Don't forget  
The last wee letter that came in to-day!  
It asked you for a sheep, and so you made  
An extra woolly one that squeaked a "Be-a-a!"  
I tucked it in your pack right near the top.

They're waiting for you, Nicholas!  
I feel  
Their eager, little hearts; they beat so fast; it's like  
A pulse that throbs around the world.  
Good-bye!  
I'll have a good hot breakfast when you're back.  
Your gloves? Good gracious, Nick, I told you where  
They were. I thought of course you had them on!  
They're in the hall!

The moon is up—look out;  
That Vixen doesn't shy at it. Good-bye!

—Martha Banning Thomas in Youth's Companion.

## FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS



A Jack Frost party is sure to prove popular with the youngsters and is not difficult to arrange. The snow man who greets the young guests is made of cotton batting, but he looks like a real snow man. Two sticks wrapped in many thicknesses of cotton form the legs, which are nailed to a block of wood to make a foundation. The other parts of the body are made of rolls of cotton batting sewed or wired in place. He wears a fur cap and has long white whiskers made of crepe paper, if horse hair is not available. On the floor beside him lies his pack. In one hand he carries a string of sleigh-bells; in the other, a Christmas stocking. The mother or an older sister might act as hostess, acting the part of Mrs. Jack Frost and superintending the games in such a manner that the young guests will be kept busy.

Each child arrives he is given a white paper cap, and when all have assembled, they are given the opportunity of decorating Jack Frost. The children are blindfolded one at a time and after being turned around three or four times are told to walk up to Jack Frost and place their caps on his head. The child who first succeeds gets a small prize.

Each child is then allowed to throw a soft rubber ball, attempting to hit Jack Frost's string of bells. The first one who succeeds receives the Christmas stocking and presides over its contents. Other successful contestants draw a prize from the pack, and at the close of the contest each child draws one of the snow man's gifts.

The children will all enjoy the game of Jack Frost in which the children form a circle, with one child who represents Jack Frost standing in the center. "Jack" runs around inside the circle, touches a child on the right hand and goes back to his place again. The child thus touched says, "Jack Frost came this way." The child at her left asks: "What did he do?" Child No. 1 replies: "He nipped my hand (shaking the hand)." Child No. 2 asks: "What about Jack Frost, and the same question and answer follow. This is repeated, each child doing as No. 1 did, and thus it goes around the circle back to No. 1 again. Jack Frost then steps out and nips this child's left hand, and now both hands are shak-

ing. Each time Jack nips some part of the body, until the children are hopping up and down and shaking all over, which of course is great fun for them. Mrs. Jack Frost then says: "Jack Frost is coming this way," and whispers around to each of the children: "To some she whispers, 'hush,' to others 'hush,' and to others 'hush.'" At a given signal from her, the players call out their words together and the result is a big sneeze, which makes all laugh.

Some one is then selected to represent Jack Frost. Other players are given the names of Christmas gifts, such as a doll, a box of candy, or a book. A number of chairs are arranged in the middle of the room with one chair less than the number of players, not counting Jack Frost. Jack then takes his place in the center of the room and calls for them one at a time. The first one called comes forward and takes hold of Jack's coat, then each one in turn, as he is called takes hold of the player who precedes him until there is a long line behind the leader. Jack then begins to run around the chairs, the others after him, until he suddenly calls: "Christmas Gift," when the players must drop down. As there are not enough players one player will be left. Moved until he must pay a forfeit.

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### A Saint's Wife.

The bags are packed and ready,  
Nicholas!  
Your gloves I laid together in the hall,  
The thickest pair; it's cold to-night.  
Pull down  
Your cap over your forehead! What a boy!  
You are to capor so! Stand still, you child  
Of children, till I see your collar.  
There!  
I knew you'd put that old coat on; it's torn.  
From last year's journey, and you hid it where  
I could not find it, purposely! Of course  
The red is beautiful, and they expect  
To see you in it, but I tried to make  
The new one just as bright. There's no time now  
To change.

And, Nicholas, be very sure  
To handle Vixen carefully; she's full  
Of little tricks—you've stabled her too long!  
And might lead on the others. Please don't let  
Them take you near the trees; your sleigh's so small.  
And not well-balanced; branches catch their hoofs  
Sometimes, and you forget.

The bells were tuned  
Just yesterday—one's missing from the reins.  
Near Comet's head. You said he rubbed it off  
Against a chimney. How I like to think  
Of all those chiming tongues that sprinkle sound;  
Like jets of frosted spray upon the night!  
I know the children love them. Don't forget  
The last wee letter that came in to-day!  
It asked you for a sheep, and so you made  
An extra woolly one that squeaked a "Be-a-a!"  
I tucked it in your pack right near the top.

They're waiting for you, Nicholas!  
I feel  
Their eager, little hearts; they beat so fast; it's like  
A pulse that throbs around the world.  
Good-bye!  
I'll have a good hot breakfast when you're back.  
Your gloves? Good gracious, Nick, I told you where  
They were. I thought of course you had them on!  
They're in the hall!

The moon is up—look out;  
That Vixen doesn't shy at it. Good-bye!

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