

NEWS AND VIEWS FOR WOMEN READERS

THE WISHING-WELL

By Juanita Hamel



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Suppose there were a wishing well where all our dreams came true! Deep in the woods where the dryads play, Cinderellas might come to whisper their wishes to the well.

CHRISTMAS IN AN INDIAN WIGWAM

In view of their distinctive taste for ceremonial, and the strong vein of sentiment running through their nature, it seems strange that our North American Indians have not developed from their own sources anything corresponding very nearly to our Christmas idea.

On most of the Indian reserves to-day a contribution is made by the residents of adjacent towns for this Christmas dinner. Merchants and other business men donate groceries and candy; the government allows additional rations for Christmas week, and all brought together, a sumptuous feast is provided.

Contact with white people in the early days, however, brought about some changes in their holiday dates. Celebrations which had been held at the beginning of the year were held at our New Year's time.

A touching scene in all the Indian school dinners is the presence of a number of old men and women who, never having been at school, and not having learned to sit at a table and eat with knife and fork, squat against the wall of the room and are there served by kind-hearted teachers and employes, eating their food in the more primitive way to which they have been accustomed.

It was the custom of the Hudson Bay company, in the early days of trading in Western Canada, to take the end of the year and the beginning of the new year as the time for balancing accounts, and usually accompanied the Indians' settlement with a present of some sort.

When the white people brought to the notice of the Indians the Christmas tree with its annual crop of beauties and benefits, the pretty fairy caught hold of their minds

very promptly, and in nearly every Canadian tribe it was named the "giving tree."

There is a pretty legend connected with the Christmas tree in the Indian wigwam which may or may not have a historical foundation.

It is said that many, many years ago, during the days of the medicine clans, a cedar tree was always brought in by the leading medicine man in the early spring. Because of its long life the cedar tree was called "Grandmother." The tree was placed directly in front of the medicine lodge, but before it was put into place the people were invited to make offerings to the "Grandmother."

After the season of medicine ceremonies was over in the late autumn, the tree was hung with little children's moccasins. A prayer was offered by one of the medicine men that the owners of the footwear might be blessed with long life and good health. The tree was then

thrown into the river, and as it floated away they sang till it was out of sight.

As a rule there is little Christmas giving new among the Indians of western Canada. Parents who are not too poor will sometimes make a donation of part of their rations to the school in which their children are being educated.

The kinds of gifts made to the Indian children at the schools are much like those made to white children. The traders on the reservation, the contractors who supply the commissary, and others who depend upon the patronage of the Indians and the government for their business, contribute more or less liberally. The school teachers themselves also draw upon their slender purses.

The children are encouraged to make little souvenirs for each other for contributions—things made with their own hands—the girls do needlework, the boys construct mechanisms in the workshop and give these. To the boys and girls of the Indian wigwam Christmas has a real meaning, and the season is looked forward to with great interest.—W. Mc. Tait.

TEN COMMANDMENTS

- 1. Thou shalt love the giver of the gift because he has sent the gift. 2. Thou shalt remember first the very young and the very old. 3. Thou shalt buy within thy means, remembering the spirit of the gift and not the value. 4. Thou shalt not become a party to the mere exchange of gifts. Let the heart go with each and every greeting or present thou sendest out. 5. Thou shalt make such gifts as thy skill may warrant, inasmuch as the work of thy hands gives added value of the offering. 6. Thou shalt tie up no bitter remembrance with a gift, but only peace. 7. Thou shalt have thy gifts ready several days before the time of delivery that the immediate days before Christmas may be filled with peace and happiness, and not with turmoil and frenzy. 8. Thou shalt seek the abodes of the poor and friendless with such wholesome gifts as may cheer and nourish their hungry bodies and hearts. 9. Thou shalt not gush over thy gifts. Thou shalt show thy gratitude in more sincere ways. 10. Thou shalt, at earliest opportunity, give written or verbal thanks for such kindness as thy friends may have bestowed upon thee at Christmas.

It is the soul which sees and hears, not those parts of the body which are, in a sense, the windows of the soul.

A conspiracy is never more difficult of detection than when it is concealed under a pretense of duty, or of some alleged necessity.

Recognition of Russia might get along better except for some of the people who are for it.—Chicago News.

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Do you know a man who smokes a pipe? A million dollars worth of matches for Christmas would suit him.

Advertisement for Moir's Chocolates, featuring an illustration of a woman and text 'and at Christmas we always have Moir's Chocolates'.

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