

## The Crescent Picture Palace

### A Big Christmas Bill!

**THE UNSEEN WITNESS**—A very powerful drama.  
**HIS AWFUL DAUGHTER**—A cure for the blues.  
**MR. DAVID PARKS**, Baritone, sings the "Rosary."  
 Sessions—Afternoon, 2; 5c. Evening, 7; 10c.

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The only High-Class Vaudeville Theatre in our Colony.

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Grand Opening on December 25th of Rossley's 2nd Annual

Pantomime,

**SNOW WHITE and the SEVEN DWARFS.**

Under the Distinguished Patronage of His Excellency Governor Davidson, Mrs. Davidson and Children.

**THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SPECTACULAR PRODUCTION EVER**  
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## XMAS WITH CAPT. SCOTT.

(By Commander Evans, R.N.)

This Christmas Day started for us at 5 a.m., when Captain Scott called the two sledge teams. We were encamped in latitude 55° 35' S., long. 159° 8' E., on the King Edward VII. Plateau, at an altitude of 8,000 ft. above the Great Ice Barrier.

### That Terrible Stillness.

The two teams consisted of Capt. Scott, Dr. Edward Wilson, Captain Lawrence Oates, and Petty Officer Edgar Evans in one tent; in the other Lieutenants Evans and Bowers and Petty Officers Lashley and Crean.

A fine, clear day, but with a cold southerly wind which soon turned our breath into cakes of ice on our beards. We struck camp at 7.50 a.m. packed our sledges with the two tent floorcloths spread above the loads to dry, and stepped off at 8 o'clock, marching due south.

Owing to a low drift in our faces, our progress was retarded slightly, but as the forenoon advanced the sun was quite warm, the breeze fell light, and both parties took off their wind-proof blouses, and attached them to the sledges, the drift subsiding altogether, and the ice-crystals on the surface gleaming with a beautiful orange-tinted lustre.

The thermometer stood at only three degrees below zero, and the early-forenoon march was pleasant enough. Bowers and I agreed that the prevailing wind here was south by east, and we discussed the aspect of this lonely, white plateau in the winter. Its silence is terrible enough in the summer, but in the winter, when all is dark, and, owing to the altitude, the temperature must fall to eighty or ninety degrees below zero—what a country!

### Into the Depths.

We had a halt for a "breather" at 9; but it was cold waiting, and we were glad to start off again.

Soon after this we got among rather bad crevasses, mostly snow-bridged, and very difficult to see, but we travelled over these, and we could distinguish at the run.

This was Lashley's forty-fourth birthday, and he celebrated it by suddenly disappearing into a crev-

asse. His shout stopped us, and we turned round to find him in a horrible chasm about 80 feet deep and 8 feet wide. A good deal of the bridge had subsided into the chasm, and our 10ft. sledge just bridged it. Although my party shouted to Captain Scott's team, they evidently did not hear us, and they went on until one of them looked round and saw us in some trouble; but, before they could return we had got Lashley to the surface.

### Many Happy Returns.

Our poor tentmate was suspended under the sledge by his harness, and spinning round in the most dizzy fashion. We got our Alpine rope, with a bowline in it, down to Lashley, and he managed to get his foot into the loop and hold on to the rope with his hands. Then Bowers and I hove up on the Alpine rope, and Crean took in the slack of his harness, and turned up round the bow of the sledge alternately, until he reached hard ice once more. This took some time to do, as Lashley was very heavy, and we could not get a fair purchase for hauling. We really expected the sledge to turn over, and take the lot of us down into this deep-blue hole.

As Lashley reached the surface, badly shaken and with his mouth cut, Bowers wished him a happy Christmas, and Crean many happy returns. Lashley's reply was unfit for publication.

We marched on, and explained the delay to Captain Scott; then we continued until he gave the camping signal by holding up his ski stick at one o'clock, and then we pitched camp for lunch.

Bowers, who was our cook, gave us extra tea and butter for lunch, also raisins and a stick of chocolate. He would not tell us what he had put in the two bags marked "Xmas Fare"; we were to find that out at the end of the day's march. Lashley told us at lunch that he had been a tectotaller and non-smoker all his life. He certainly looked fit, even after his misfortune of the morning, and must be a man of remarkably good-wearing stuff.

After an hour and a half's spell for lunch, we struck camp and proceeded. Our extra tea had warmed us up splendidly, and we started off at a fine, swinging pace.

### Oates Loved Meat.

In the afternoon we marched till 7.15 or a little later, making good 17½ statute miles for the day, which was not bad, considering we were pulling over 180 lb. weight per man. We were a bit tired and keenly looking forward to the Christmas dinner, which was the one full meal that we had on that never-to-be-forgotten journey. We gave half the pony-meat, which we had kept, to Captain Scott's tent, and Oates, who loved meat, was more delighted than any other of the party. He said he would rather have the meat than any other foodstuff on earth! We quickly pitched the tents and filled the cookers, and then the two cooks provided the meal which we had all discussed for days. We had many times eaten it in imagination on the march.

When we had a good spread on the tent, the non-cooks shifted footgear, and hung their gun-knives (fur boots) and socks out to dry on ski-sticks, and then my party sat round and watched "Birdie" Bowers preparing "The Great Hoosh."

After Dinner.

First came extra thick pemmican, with pony-meat in it, and biscuits pounded up into tiny pieces. (The pemmican is finest beef-extract with 60 per cent. of pure fat.) The "Hoosh" was flavored with onion powder, and a number of raisins were added; these had been kept surreptitiously by Bowers for over a month. Then we had a chocolate-and-biscuit "ragout"—a filling dish.

How our mouths watered at the smell while little Bowers cooked! Would he burn it, this experimental dish? Was he using enough water? Yes, it was just right, and Bowers thoughtfully had added lumps of crystallised ginger to this remarkable delicacy.

But that was not all. Bowers had kept two little plum-puddings in a spare pair of socks, and these brought the last touch of home to our happy little party. Then we had a mug of hot cocoa, a piece of chocolate, and some caramels. By the time the "caramel stage" was reached most of us had had quite enough.

Indeed, so completely were we satisfied that, despite the lowness of the temperature, we lay on our sleeping-bags, unable to raise the energy to get into them, and no inclination for a bonding effort!

### Looking Forward.

Then at last we stirred, took a final look outside the tent, and even in our contented condition, we were struck by the stillness and loneliness of that plateau.

A stratus cloud topped the grand peaks of the Dominion Range, and the sun, creeping towards the south, gave just enough light to let us appreciate the beauty of the scene.

About 9.30 we shouted our "Good-nights!" to our leader and his companions in the other tent; and, after Bowers shouted from his sleeping-bag "Good-night, all!" he turned over and said: "I wonder where we shall be all next Christmas?" We little thought that only three of the eight would be alive, and that the names of the five of the party would be written so sadly, yet so grandly, on the scroll of fame.

## CHRISTMAS JOTTINGS.

### UNDER THE MISTLETOE.

The harmless and good old Christmas custom of kissing under the mistletoe is a perennial source of discussion and dispute, but have you any idea how it originated? This is the story.

Balder, the Scandinavian god of poetry and eloquence—so says the legend—sought immunity from the violence of his enemies by extracting from everything, in earth, fire, and water, a promise to do him no hurt. Foolishly, he forgot to obtain this assurance from mistletoe; and Loake, his great enemy, on learning this, induced a herring to shoot Balder with an arrow made from a bough of mistletoe.

Now, the other gods and goddesses, on hearing of the death of Balder—who was a great favourite with them—prayed that out of the love they bore him he might be restored to life. Thus, when this came to pass, mistletoe, instead of being an emblem of death, became the emblem of love, and, as such, was given to the goddess of love to keep and guard, whilst everyone who passed under the bough she held in her hand was expected to salute her with a tender kiss.

### CHRISTMAS CARDS.

Seventy years ago there were no Christmas cards. At the close of 1844 one lonely greeting was entrusted to the Post Office, and from that one have sprung all the various and beautiful specimens that form such an important feature, both socially and commercially, of this season of the year.

This fine Christmas card is believed to have been sent by W. E. Dobson, R. A. He had a friend from whom he had received many kindnesses and attentions during the past year of which he wished to show his appreciation in some way.

After some thought he painted a small picture, symbolising the spirit of Christmas, and sent it by post to his friend. It was a sketch of a family gathering drinking a toast to "Absent Friends," and surrounded by all the comforts and luxuries of Christmas time.

This sketch was about twice the size of the post-card of to-day, and was

painted on a piece of Bristol board.

### Mince-Pies Prohibited.

Puritans of the seventeenth century guarded against looking upon the rosy side of life.

Because Christmas is really a survival of the Celts' Yule, and is not the actual anniversary of the birth of Christ, they refused to countenance Christmas festivities. Not only did they refuse to recognise the day, but they made laws to that effect.

The Parliament of 1644 passed an Act ordering all law-abiding citizens to observe the 25th day of December as a solemn fast, to be spent in silent atonement for previous Christmas days that had passed in riotous living and merry-making.

Naturally the community did not share in these hard and fast rules, and many a turkey was surreptitiously killed, and many a plum-pudding quietly boiled. But we betide the unfortunate offender against the Act were he luckless enough to be discovered.

Soldiers were sent to search the houses of those suspected of harbouring such delicacies as mince-pies, etc., and many were the pitched battles between disagreeing sections of the public.

### BOTH FOR AND AGAINST.

The Christmas-box is an old institution with a message and a mission. Yet in some respects it has become a serious menace. Originally, an offering of affection or appreciation, in sundry articles it has degenerated into a bribe, or worse.

Where once, even in those same circles, it was prompted by pure goodwill, or as a reward for real services rendered, the "gift" is now covertly

bestowed with ulterior designs; demanded as a "right," or withheld in the certain knowledge that another, less scrupulous and no more generous, will benefit by its subtle bestowal.

The reference, of course, is to the commercial Christmas-box, the "gift" responsible for so much envy, jealousy, and demoralisation in the business world, and not a little in the relations between master and servant outside of trade affairs.

Admittedly, recent legislation aims at removing some of the canker, but everybody is aware of its general inefficiency especially in regard to the Christmas-box.

But how different the picture framed within the family circle! Here, happily, is still preserved the true spirit of the custom. In the home, the Christmas-box remains a pure love-gift; a thing of joy alike to giver and receiver.

### QUEER CHRISTMAS-TREES.

A Christmas tree of solid gold, two feet high, and plentifully supplied with branches, is not an ordinary sight or fashion. Such is the description of a "tree" given by an Irish gold-miner to the late Pope a few years ago. The man had made a fortune in the Klondyke, and spent a large slice of it on the gift mentioned.

Very different was a "tree" improvised by some British sailors wrecked on the West Coast of Ireland a few years ago. Landed on an island, and unable to make the mainland owing to storms and lack of adequate boats, to help pass the time and also please the kidneys of their temporary hosts, two men resolved to make a Christmas tree.

On that desolate spot—a mere rock in the sea—neither bush nor shrub was to be found; but after much

searching they unearthed a delicate umbrella-frame. Even this was an alien to the island, but the soldiers did not trouble to discuss its presence or manner of coming. They simply rigged a few extra "spars" to its "mainmast," and with scraps of green paper and rags converted the brolly into a passable imitation of a fir-tree. Odd pieces of wood were then fashioned into ships, Noah's ark, animals, dolls, etc., and the tree duly decorated with the toys.

Rather more quaint was a tree annually set up by a lady in Philadelphia. One Christmas this lady's house caught fire during the night, the inmates being warned of their danger by the howling of a dog. As a sort of reward, for several years afterwards the animal's mistress made a tree in its honour, the "decorations" including beefsteaks and toy rats for the dog's consumption and amusement.

### AN UNHAPPY MISTAKE.

During the Christmas morning service at a country church the organist was much harassed because the organ blower kept working the lever noisily after he had finished playing. This spoiled the effect of his Christmas music, and he was specially annoyed as a famous preacher had come down from London to preach for the occasion.

After a particularly loud "leaver-interlude" he hastily scribbled a note to the offender and sent it round by a choir boy, who, misunderstanding his instructions, put it into the hands of the preacher just as he was about to enter the pulpit.

The note was as follows:—"Perhaps you will kindly stop when I tell you to. The people have come here to hear my music, not your noise."

## Merry X

O Christmas, merry O! Is it really come again With its joy and with There's a minor in it And a shadow in it And a spray of cypress With the holly-wreath And the hush is never By laughter light and As we listen in the To the bells across

O Christmas, merry O! 'Tis not so very long Since other voices ble With the curl and If we could but hear As they are singing If we could but see Of the crown on each There would be no sign No hidden tear to fly As we listen in the To the bells across

## The New Xmas Re

It was just beginning morn morning as little with a start. It was with a bluish light and he was obliged to to for an instant to see was.

One o'clock! Suddenly he heard gions below a shie jumped softly out of

Now, Bobbie, in s was a brave little bo not to disturb his s calmly sleeping in the stealthily made his The light in the hall but he could see the plainly in the distan The sound of bells o roof indicated that so ing.

Who could it be? his mouth. Fortunately, he h wait. There was a s brick, and then— A short, dumpy pe the fireplace, on her sized bag of toys. by the fatal curiosity had suddenly devel forward.

"Who are you?" he The fat lady howe "Don't you see? I Claus."

"But where's Mr. "Oh, he has per He found that he was job. Being only a m ited in his capabilities Bobbie was silent. Then his face brighte

"Oh," he exclaime You are a Suffragette And, oh,"—he clappe gle—"you are my m Mrs. Santa Claus the first time with s "Do I look like y said at last.

And Bobbie, shak plied—"I really couldn't haven't seen her to She's a Suffragette you are not my m stay and be one?"

Mrs. Santa Claus from her eye as she one bag of toys on pared to depart.

"I wish I might," must obey the voice of all the other little I must visit to day are Suffragettes!"

### CHRISTMAS

She needed pots and broom. And window-blinds room; Her sheets were do bare fire. And her tablecloths see. She wanted clothes a And a good, plain sack. Some kitchen spoons bread.

A pair of scissors and She hoped some would stop And happen to think a mop. Or a bathroom rug. tray. Or a few plain plates She hoped and hoped a lot.

But these, of course she got: A cut-glass vase and A china thing for rec Some oyster forks, a A chafin-dish and A letter-clip and a And a sterling this that.

A gilt-edged book on And fancy bags till secretum: Some curling tongs puff. And a bunch of other But though she inw wrote

To all of her friends note. And said to each of "How did you guess most?"

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TO HER MAJESTY THE KING

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TO HER MAJESTY THE PRINCE OF WALES