

## Christmas Tide

"AUNT FATHIE"

Just as surely as April showers bring May flowers, just so surely do the early December days, breathe the subtle inevitable Christmas spirit. The shops and the very atmosphere teem with suggestions and we can't escape it. The systematic, thoughtful one in ready months ago and has all parcels labelled and is patiently waiting mailing day. How we enjoy them, as for some of us every month is so crammed full of responsibilities and doings we cannot get ahead. Do let us keep our balance. It is a study worth while to stand aside in one of the great stores and watch the throngs of people with tense set faces, memoranda in hand, making merchandise and business of shopping, and it half robs Christmas of its charm. Yet this is the season of gift giving and what would we do without it. This gayest of all our months is brightened with holly. There is such a witching mystery everywhere. It just fits in and completes the year. Don't you think like everything else it has gone to seed?

We overdo it and it is time for re-

action. There is not half the joy in buying the valuable gift that the little girl of long ago felt, in making the tiny needle book for mother, or grandmother. Our chimneys were larger, the fire places gave old "Santa" lots of room to work in.

Yet with all the chance he had, he did not have to squeeze down sleds, miniature baby carriages, life size dolls, pianos, etc. Oh, no. If our stockings being in a row in the fire place were bulging out with oranges, candy hearts, candy dogs, abbeys, etc., a pretty ribbon and sometimes a turkey head added by a mischievous uncle or cousin, so much the merrier and we were perfectly happy.

I very much fear Santa Claus and his dashing reindeer will soon be an ancient classic for how can we get down through our furnaces and radiators that our wee boy is puzzling about. There are rumors in the air that he is coming in an "auto". Let us cry back to simplicity in this, as in other things. We were so happy in the old days, and I believe with one writer that, "the true Christmas spirit is just to be kind." Many men dread Christmas as the nightmare.

They have not developed along Christmas lines with the times. For them it means a heavy drain on the pocket book. It would be better for them to be more elastic in many cases, for it means unselfishness, the development of thoughtfulness and we all need it. We should give by all means, it is symbolic of God's great gift to us. Let us keep the true Christmas spirit in our giving and give of ourselves. We may have a loving family circle. Many are sad and lonely, have no home life. We can ask at least one of such to join our festival and our reward comes sweetly. "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of these, you have done it unto Me."

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When creaming sugar and butter for cake, a pinch of salt will give the cake a splendid flavor. Also add a tablespoonful of cream to the butter and sugar and the work will take only one-half the time besides making the cake much more smooth.

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In cutting bread for sandwiches, if a hot instead of a cold knife is used, the slices will be thinner and more easily cut.

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