

### SANTA CLAUS IN PORTO RICO.

CHRISTMAS in Spain is a religious festival rather than a social one. It was so originally in Porto Rico, but the population has been influenced partly by the many American merchants who reside in the cities and who exert an influence more potent than the number of churches to persuade.

The churches welcome the day with services which begin at midnight and last until the midnight of the next day. What with one church beginning ten minutes too soon and another ten minutes too late and a third at the right moment, what with bells which ring every fifteen minutes and bell ringers who under some ancient custom will sound the great bells every half hour, the city is filled with music which never ceases to end.

If you are near a campanile the effect is not altogether pleasant on account of the volume of sound striking the ear with too much force, but in a public square several hundred yards from the nearest belfry, where trees



A DAUGHTER PLAYS ON THE GUITAR, and buildings break the sound waves, or in suburbs on the hillside the effect is unspeakably delightful.

Pleasantest of all is it when you are sitting in the inner court or quadrangle of a Porto Rican home. Around you on four sides the house rises above you, and in the grounds or in great tubs and porcelain pots rich flowers, graceful vines and restful trees afford shade, color and perfume. The sound of the bells descends from the air above very much like a benediction. You sit in an easy chair, and servants bring you tea or steaming coffee, sweetmeats and biscuits, confections and cigarettes, while a daughter or son plays ancient songs or dances upon a mandolin or guitar.

The churches are crowded; so are the clubs and most of the places of recreation. Every vehicle is in use, and here and there can be seen young men and women trying to imitate English models. Some of the people of the mountain districts carry out many of their early superstitions in regard to Christmas. They hang over the doors of their houses boughs of trees which are supposed to possess charms and often conduct marriage ceremonies under great canopies made of these charmed trees.

A great many wild flowers are in bloom at Christmastide, and these are worn by children of the mountain districts in wreaths and garlands about their heads, necks and waists. The Christmas giving is sadly missing in our new possessions. The churches hold no Christmas tree, and there are few charitable societies to give feasts. However, one hospital for old people and orphans in Ponce gives a Christmas fete, and the inmates have a good meal and receive warm clothing, medicines and other useful gifts.

The American occupation has brought extra Christmas cheer to the people of the island. The American residents celebrate the day in good American fashion, and, best of all, they put money into circulation and give zest to industry and business.

#### When Shepherds Watched by Night.

Some historians contend that the shepherds could not have watched by night on the Bethlehem plains in December, it being a period of great inclemency. In answer to this a well known student says: "Bethlehem is not a cold region. The mercury usually stands all the month of December at 46 degrees. Corn is sown during this time, and grass and herbs spring up after the rains, so that the Arabs drive their flocks down from the mountains into the plains. The most delicate never make fires till about the end of November, and some pass the whole winter without them. From these facts I think it is established without doubt that our Saviour was born on the 25th day of December, the day which the church throughout the world has united to celebrate in honor of the coming in the flesh."—Washington Star.

#### Most Popular Christmas Poem.

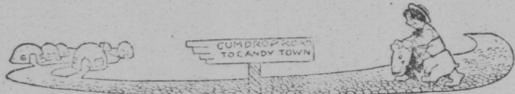
Most popular Christmas poem written for children was that famous to the world, beginning: "Twas the night before Christmas, when through the house—"  
 This poem was written by a very famous man, Dr. Clement Clarke Moore, a professor of Greek and Hebrew in the Theological seminary in this city. He was born in 1779 and died in 1847. New York Globe.

## THE RIDE TO CANDY TOWN

BY ROBERT DONNELL

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When Charley rode to Candy Town  
 Aside a Teddy bear,  
 He looked in wonder up and down  
 With many a hungry stare,  
 For all the streets were named for sweets,  
 And, oh, so many there!



They entered town by Gumdrop road,  
 Where all the candy shops  
 Were stuffed as full as any toad  
 With most delicious drops.  
 As Charley glanced he almost danced,  
 While Teddy licked his chops.

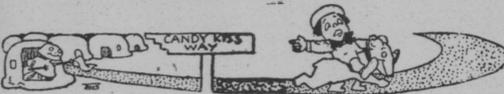
They turned a corner, when,  
 In view,  
 Came Chocolate Bonbon avenue,  
 Which filled them with surprise,  
 For every shop was a chocolate drop  
 Of most amazing size.



But on they went with even jog,  
 Since shops are not to eat,  
 And soon they passed, with eyes agog,  
 Through Peanut Brittle street,  
 And every brick was a peanut stick  
 And doubtless very sweet!



But Teddy trotted right ahead  
 Through Candy Kisses way,  
 Though Charley pulled his ears and said:  
 "Hold on a minute—stay!



Lemme get down an' eat this town.  
 I'll finish up today!"

That Teddy bear plugged straight along  
 Until he chanced to see,  
 Surrounded by a merry throng,  
 A great big Christmas tree.  
 "Now I can climb and have a time,"  
 Says Ted. "Hooray for me!"



As Teddy started climbing up  
 His passenger slid down  
 And struck the bedroom floor kerplup,  
 And in his nightie gown!  
 Now, wasn't that a sorry bat  
 To get in Candy Town?



But, after all, the town was there.  
 When Charley oped his eyes,  
 High up the tree was Teddy bear,

Of real riding size,  
 And candy sweets from all the streets—  
 A Christmas paradise!



### SANTA AND THE LITTLE MOUSE.

By FRANK H. SWEET

One Christmas eve when Santa Claus  
 Came to a child's house  
 To fill the children's stockings there  
 He found a little mouse.

"A merry Christmas, little friend,"  
 Said Santa, good and kind.  
 "The same to you, sir," said the mouse.  
 "I thought you wouldn't mind

"If I should stay awake tonight  
 And watch you for awhile."  
 "You're very welcome, little mouse,"  
 Said Santa, with a smile.



And then he filled the stockings up  
 Before the mouse could wink—  
 From toe to top, from top to toe,  
 There wasn't left a chink.

"Now, they won't hold another thing,"  
 Said Santa Claus, with pride.  
 A twinkle came in mouse's eyes,  
 But humbly he replied:

"It's not polite to contradict.  
 Your pardon I implore.  
 But in the fullest stocking there  
 I could put one thing more."

"Oh, ho," laughed Santa, "silly mouse!  
 Don't I know how to pack?  
 By filling stockings all these years  
 I should have learned the knack."

And then he took the stocking down  
 From where it hung so high  
 And said: "Now put in one thing more.  
 I give you leave to try."

The mouse chuckled to himself,  
 And then he softly stole  
 Right to the stocking's crowded toe  
 And gnawed a little hole.



"Now, if you please, good Santa Claus,  
 I've put in one thing more,  
 For you will own that little hole  
 Was not in there before."

How Santa Claus did laugh and laugh!  
 And then he gayly spoke,  
 "Well, you shall have a Christmas cheese  
 For that nice little joke."

THE DEAR OLD TREE.  
 By FRANK H. SWEET.  
 There's a dear old tree, an evergreen tree,  
 And it blossoms once a year.  
 'Tis loaded with fruit from top to root,  
 And it brings to all good cheer.



For its blossoms bright are small candles white,  
 And its fruit is dolls and toys,  
 And they all are free for both you and me  
 If we're good little girls and boys.

The Christmas Manger.  
 In France may be almost universally seen representations of the manger in which Christ was born, with figures of Mary, Joseph and the child Jesus, and cattle feeding near by.

## CHRISTMAS SUPPLIES

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DO NOT WAIT  
 Until Xmas week to order your Goods.  
**BUY NOW!** Xmas Prices are NOW ON, and You Gain Nothing by Waiting.

GROCERIES AND PROVISIONS, CONFECTIONERY, CROCKERY AND GLASSWARE, TOYS.

## GEO. STABLES

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18, Fulton Fish Market New York

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S. Kerr, Principal, Odd Fellows' Hall

### SEASON'S GREETINGS.

This is the time of year that your hearts and voices should be in tune. To complete the harmony, your Pianos and Organs should also be in tune if not, send your orders early to

### W.C. DAY,

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### FOR SALE.

For Sale, Cheap, a general purpose horse, 16 hands high, and weighing about 1,100 pounds; or would exchange for a good two or three year old colt. Apply to—  
**The MIRAMICHI QUARRY CO.,**  
 Renous Bridge.

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**INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY**  
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FIRST CLASS ONE WAY FARE Between all stations on the line. Going Dec. 21 to Jan. 1, inclusive. Returning until Jan. 3rd, 1910.  
 To stations beyond Montreal.—  
 Going Dec. 21, 25. Returning until Dec. 27, 1909.  
 Going Dec. 31 and Jan. 1. Returning until Jan. 3, 1910.  
 FIRST CLASS ONE WAY FARE TO MONTREAL, ADDED TO FIRST CLASS ONE WAY FARE AND ONE-THIRD BEYOND.  
 Going Dec. 21, 22, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31, Jan. 1.  
 Returning until Jan. 5, 1910.  
 Territory—Detroit, Mich., Port Huron, Mich., Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., Port Arthur, Ont., and points in Canada east thereof.

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