

side. At the south end there is another building, which goes by the name of Willow Street School, and is principally attended by the coloured children. Nothing has been said in this article about the other parts of Truro, but at another time, perhaps, they may be described.

A TRURO VISITOR.

AN OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS.

BY GRANDFATHER.

It was Christmas evening and all the world was covered with snow, while the moon, in all her splendor, "filled the earth with a silver sheen." In a large old-fashioned farmhouse a merry group of young people was gathered to celebrate the day on which the Saviour of men made his appearance in the world.

Apart from this group sat an old man who seemed to be lost in thought. The merry crowd, seeing him alone, began to gather around him and demanded a story. His little grandson, the pet and pride of the old man, climbed upon his knee, and, putting his arms about his grandfather's neck, said, "Grandpa dear, please tell us about a Christmas that you spent in your old home in the old country." This suggestion was, warmly seconded by all, and the old man began:—

When I was a young man I lived in old England. We did not spend our Christmas the way the people do out here. My father, being a country squire, had many men working under him, and these he invited to the house on Christmas. The party was not composed of these only, but some of the neighbouring squires with their families were invited.

For days before the house was in a perpetual uproar. Men were sent out into my father's woods to gather mistletoe with which to trim the house. As many of you have never seen the mistletoe, I will try and give you a description of it. The mistletoe is found growing around other trees and has long green leaves, with clusters of shining red berries at the stem of the leaves. Then the men, taking bugles and trumpets, would go into the woods, and after gathering as much mistletoe as they could carry, they would return home, very often bearing the yule-log. The green was put on the old-fashioned mantle, around the windows, and on the large hanging lamp. After these decorations the goose had to be caught and the boar killed; the boar's head being one of the special features of the Christmas feast.

At last the great day came and my father, mother, and elder sister awaited the arrival of the guests. At the moment when the bells, which it is customary to have rung at Christmas, began to ring, the sound of merry voices was heard. Arriving at the door, we found a happy group, headed by men carrying bugles and drums. This music may not seem as nice to you as that of the piano, but it suited us. The people were conducted to the large hall at the back of the house, where they talked for a while.

At the end of this hall a curtain had been hung, and a stage fitted up for the company who were going to give an example of the ancient mystery play. To make the scene more realistic some of the party were dressed in the masques and dresses of the times portrayed. I will remember some young ladies who were dressed in rich brocades, with ruffles and ermine around the neck. They also wore high peaked hats with veils hanging to the ground, and carried fans in the shape of hearts.

By-and-by the dinner was served. First came the boar's head on a large platter decorated with holly, then the goose and ham, and last, but not least, the big plum pudding. Then the wassail, in large, brown bowls decorated with ribbons was passed around.

The afternoon was spent quietly and after tea they went to the hall and danced. The distinction between classes was

not kept. Once when the dancing was at its height, my little sister who was only three, tried to join in the dance. At this show of childish eagerness, every person stopped dancing to watch her trials:—But I see that this little boy is sleepy so I will not say any more now, and when the New Year comes with its joy and gladness I will tell you more."

A CHRISTMAS LETTER FROM THE SOUTH.

Dear Editor,—This Christmas day is almost closed, and it has been very pleasant to me. But much was so different from our northern Christmas that I can hardly realize the time of the year. What would you think to look out Christmas morning on fields decked in flowers, and orchards in full bloom? But our fairest Canadian landscape was never so lovely as this land. We sat under orange trees in full blossom part of the day, and wherever I looked something beautiful met my gaze. For a long time I watched the birds that flitted among the trees. Of these there was a great variety, and in their brightness of coloring, as well as their gift of song, they are certainly one of the delights of this sunny land. This afternoon we drove beyond the villa till we had a good view of a snow-capped mountain peak, that at first sight seemed quite near. How strange it looked to me to see the snow gleaming from the mountain in summer time. It carried my thoughts to home, and I wondered how you spent the day. Maybe you enjoyed yourself skating or sleigh-driving. The seeming short distance to the highlands proved a long drive, and when we came to our journey's end we were quite ready to do justice to the lunch we had brought with us. We lingered till the fading light began to cast purple shadows over the mountain, and then we started for home. I will probably spend some time near the mountains, as the friends whom I am visiting live there during the hot season.

Arrived at home, we found a pleasant surprise awaiting us. The house was brilliantly lighted and adorned for a festive occasion. Entering the drawing room, I found it almost a bower of vines, and twined among these were geraniums, Jamaica roses, and flowers of every shape and color. Nothing could have adorned the room as did these flowers and vines gathered wild from the woods and fields near the villa, and I thought our hosts very kind to take this means of pleasing her northern visitors. Maybe you would like to know something of these we met at the gathering this evening. The greater part were young people living in the villa, some like ourselves had come to Jamaica for sight-seeing, and among this number was a gentleman lately returned from travels in Europe and Asia.

There was one beautiful Spanish lady, who sang songs of Spain, and played for us during part of the evening. The young people were very merry, and they made bouquets from some of the flowers, playing games by means of these. There was a prize given to the one who was most successful at the games, but I will tell you more about this some other time, for, as it is late, I must hurry on.

A number of us strolled to the verandah for a few moments' enjoyment of the moonlight, and while waiting there a flock of tired-looking birds alighted near us. A gentleman in our group said he thought they were avocets, probably the last of the birds that would come from the north this season. As I saw them the memory of our swallows' flight and return came with new wonder to me. Surely there are many lessons to learn from these things. When we returned to the drawing-room, conversation was mostly about Christmas itself and Christmas pleasures and stories, each had a share of attention. After a little, the gentleman lately returned from foreign travels, entertained us with the story of his travels in Palestine, the home of Him for whom Christmas is kept.—It is needless to say this perfected our evening's enjoyment,