

AROUND THE HOLLY TREE

by CLARISSA MACKIE

IT was the day before Christmas, and it had been snowing all the morning.

The Marsden children sat around the living room fire and sang Christmas carols and talked about the millions of people who were sending gifts to loved ones, just as the wise men brought gifts to the Christ Child under the Christmas stars.

Suddenly they noticed that Clarice was very thoughtful.

"What is the matter, Sis?" asked Gordon, the oldest boy.

"I am thinking of our dear woods people and how the snow has covered their food so that they may starve to death while we are having a happy Christmas," said Clarice.

Gordon whistled in dismay. "Oh, I never thought of them!" he said.

"I don't want my gray squirrels to starve to death!" said Paul.

"And Mr. Rabbit and his family," added Mabel.

"Or the snowbirds. I saw a whole flock yesterday!" cried Gordon eagerly.

"Or my own dicky bird!" hissed Baby Nan, pointing a fat finger at the canary's cage in the window.

They all laughed and kissed little Nan.

"And what about you, Cousin Marlon?" they asked of the little girl who was visiting them.

"I'm thinking about Mr. Rabbit, too," said Marlon. "I was thinking it would be nice if Santa Claus remembered him."

Gordon got up and danced a hornpipe. "Let's have a Christmas tree for the woods people!" he shouted.

What a racket there was as they all rushed into the hall after caps and cloaks and overshoes!

Clarice and Gordon disappeared in the kitchen and were gone a long time. When they came back they carried a little basket.

Baby Nan was taken to her mother's room, and the merry youngsters ran shouting across the snowy garden to the path which led to the woods.

How quiet the woods were when they were in the shadow of the pines and hemlocks!

Suddenly some twigs crackled, and a beautiful deer bounded lightly away and disappeared among the trees.

"He was hungry," said Gordon. "See how he has eaten the twigs from the hemlocks."

All over the snow were the footprints of little animals—rabbits, squirrels, even the trail of a fox which Gordon and Paul pointed out.

And threading in and out like a pattern of lacework were the dainty footprints of birds.

"Poor little wood people!" sighed Clarice. "I'm afraid the snow has covered all the seeds and pine cones."

"Where shall we have the Christmas tree?" asked Mabel, jumping up and down with delight.

"Here!" cried Marlon, pointing to a small holly tree. "See, it is already trimmed with red berries!"

"Just the thing," said Gordon, opening his basket. "Now, youngsters, step up and help yourselves to goodies to put on the Christmas tree."

"Here are nuts for the squirrels, bits of sweet for the blue jays and the snow birds, some lettuce and carrots for Mr. Rabbit and his family, some canary seed to scatter on this cloth and apples for everybody."

What a wonderful Christmas tree that was! Everybody helped to trim it, and when the lettuce and carrots had been tied on to the lowest branches so that the rabbit family could reach them the young Marsdens all drew away and hid behind a clump of hemlocks.

Bright eyes must have been watching the holly tree, for very soon the guests began to arrive at the Christmas party. Such a twittering of birds and cracking of nuts and crunching of carrots and crisp lettuce! Don't you think their little hearts sent up thanks to the loving Father, who had reminded the Marsden children not to forget his little woods people?

And as the children raced across the snow toward home they sang Christmas carols until they were overheard by a great sleigh load of people coming from the railroad station.

"Merry Christmas!" they called. "Merry Christmas!" And the sleigh stopped and took them all in, for they were all going to spend Christmas at the Marsdens. There were Marlon's father and mother, and there were aunts and uncles and grandparents. "Merry Christmas!" they all said to each other, for they were happy.

And I'm sure if you could have understood all the twittering and chattering around the holly tree in the woods you might have learned that the woods people were saying "Merry Christmas!" too.

WHAT A WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS TREE THAT WAS!

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HANDLING TWO MILLIONS BUSHELS A DAY

THE CANADIAN head of navigation on the system of the Great Lakes was established long before any pioneer dreamed of wheat harvests on the vast prairies that only a few years ago were the hunting grounds of the buffalo runners. It was to Fort William at the mouth of the Kaministiquia River that the trappers and coureurs de bois of the great fur-trading companies brought down their year's catch of peltry, and it was there that they met, in annual concave and celebration, the representatives of the corporations which they served. In the memory of persons not yet much past middle age the old fort was standing on the river banks, while it is only a few years since the last of the stone buildings was demolished to make room for the spreading railway yards that now occupy its site.

When the influx of settlement began to show the latent possibilities of the west as a grain growing country, and the railroad builder followed the trail of the trappers, the judgment of the great men who planned the first line into that region, the Canadian Pacific railway, selected as their lake terminal the place that past experience had shown to be along the line of least resistance. And thus the City of Fort William had its beginning upon the site of the fort of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Thirty years ago the western plains were still on their trial as an important source of grain supply, and it was in 1888 that the first indication was given of their fertility, the first warning of what facilities would be needed for handling the crops of years to come. A crop that averaged over 28 bushels to the acre swamped all the handling machinery of those days: The Railway Company's single, million-bushel elevator was hastily supplemented by a huge flat warehouse, but all that could be done hardly availed to lessen the blockade. The necessity for additional storage facilities at the terminals was recognized and, within two years, it had risen from a single million to over five and a half million bushels, a total that seems insignificant in the light of the further growth that has since taken place, but which was fairly adequate for the crops that followed 1888. And it is to be noted that, since that date, largely owing to the progressive policy adopted by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, the terminal storage has more than kept pace with the crop development, so that the transportation interests will not again be caught napping. The pioneer company set an example of preparedness that has been imitated by all who have followed them.

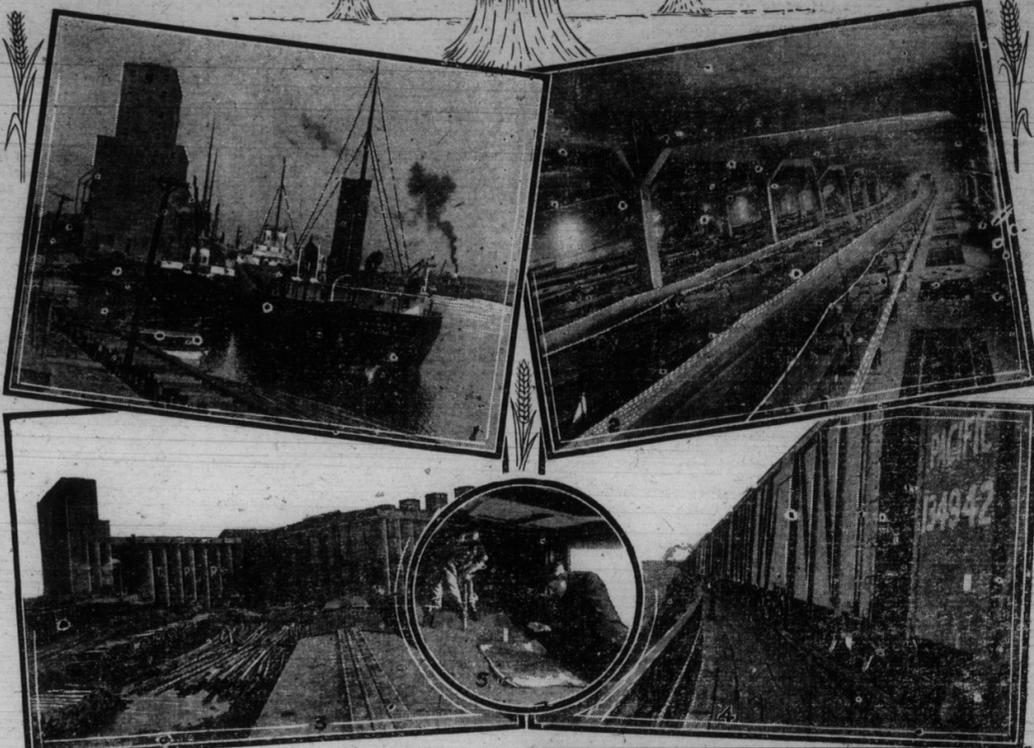
No better indication could be gained of the rapid development of the areas under crop in the three prairie provinces, and of the still more rapid increase in the ability to handle these crops, than the bare figures for the years since 1900, when with two and a half million acres sown to wheat, and another million to oats and barley, the lake ports had only a storage capacity of five and a half million bushels. For the next five-year periods, the increase in area under cultivation was as follows: 1905—under wheat, 3,941,000 acres, and all grains, 6,009,000 acres; 1910—under wheat, 5,301,000 acres, all grains, 14,626,000 acres; 1915—under wheat, 11,659,000 acres, all grains, 17,948,000 acres being an increase, in the fifteen years, of about five-fold in the crop acreage. Meantime, however, the increase in the storage capacity of the elevators at the head of the lakes had increased as follows: 1905—25,700,000 bushels; 1910—43,785,000 bushels. Thus, while the acreage increased five-fold, the storage capacity was multiplied by eight. Add

to this the capacity of all the interior elevators, 124,839,000 bushels, and it will be seen that the danger point of the grain traffic, as far as a blockade is concerned, has shifted from the head of the lakes elsewhere, probably to the terminals on the Atlantic seaboard, where the grain is transhipped to ocean going vessels.

Speed and efficiency are the prerequisites of this service. From the beginning of September, when the first of the new crop reaches the head of the lakes, until the early part of December, when lake navigation closes, an enormous stream of grain is kept flowing from all the ramifications of the branch lines of the west, which converge at Winnipeg, whence it pours down the narrow spout of the funnel to its outlet at Fort William and Port Arthur. The Canadian Pacific, the oldest established and by far the largest carrier of grain, is concerned. The sampling and grading of all grains is under the control of the government, through the board of grain commissioners, who exert powers to those of the railway commission towards transportation. To them is entrusted the work of maintaining the high standard of Canadian grain, and so well is their task accom-

plished that the government grade, given at Fort William, will establish the price of that particular shipment on the Liverpool market. In solving the many problems that have arisen during the growth, to its present proportions, of the grain trade of the Canadian west, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company has played no insignificant part. Owning and operating the first terminal elevators at the

lake ports, it was the pioneer in steel construction, and to-day operates the largest single elevator in the world, Elevator "D," with a capacity of 7,350,000 bushels under one roof, and has also set the example to the grain trade in equipping its houses with the most modern devices for cleaning, drying and treating damaged grain, in hospital elevators that have proved such a boon to the farmer of the prairie



1) Loading grain freighter. (2) Elevator grain carrier. (3) C. P. R. elevators at Fort William—capacity 3,750,000 bushels. (4) On the way to the elevators. (5) Inspecting grain in cars. (6) Government inspectors at work.

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Holiday Greetings



ALTHOUGH we live in Gungywamp, Which isn't on the map, An', though our town bez settled down To take its winter nap, Our thoughts go out to friends afar, Friends north, south, east an' west, We hepe an' pray this Christmas day Will be their happiest.

We live here quiet on the farm, Irene an' ma an' me; We have two pens uv noisy hens An' cats, no less'n three! We raise our garden sass an' sich, Make cider ev'ry fall; Wish we could git a cask uv it Out to you, one an' all.

We ain't no hands fur style an' sich, But we jest wantar say We'll use you white by day or night Ef you should come our way, Accept this greetin', which is full Uv good of Gungy cheer, An' peace, good will an' joy until We see you all next year!

—Joe Cans.

An Austrian Christmas Delicacy. The Austrian affects at Christmas time a delicacy known as fruchtbrod, made of raisins, currants, figs and chopped dates. This constitutes a sort of cake, baked hot.

AILING WOMEN OF MIDDLE AGE

Mrs. Doucette Tells of her Distressing Symptoms During Change of Life and How She Found Relief.



Belleville, Nova Scotia, Can.—"Three years ago I was suffering badly with what the doctors called Change of Life. I was so bad that I had to stay in bed. Some friends told me to take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and it helped me from the first. It is the only medicine I took that did help me and I recommend it. You don't know how thankful and grateful I am. I give you permission to publish what your good medicine has done for me."—Mrs. SIMON DOUCETTE, Belleville, Yarmouth Co., Nova Scotia, Canada.

Such warning symptoms as sense of suffocation, hot flashes, headaches, back-aches, dread of impending evil, timidity, sounds in the ears, palpitation of the heart, sparks before the eyes, irregularities, constipation, variable appetite, weakness and inquietude, and dizziness, are promptly heeded by intelligent women who are approaching the period in life when woman's great change may be expected.

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound invigorates and strengthens the female organism and builds up the weakened nervous system. It has carried many women safely through this crisis.

If you want special advice write to Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co. (confidential) Lynn, Mass. Your letter will be opened, read and answered by a physician, and held in strict confidence.

A GOOD TEACHER



Not only in costly gifts or rich rare food lies Christmas joy or blessing. It lies—no one can tell another where it lies. The finding must be for one's self alone. I can only say to all little children, to all growing children, to all who are looking back as well as to those who are looking forward, to them I can say with Tiny Tim, "God bless you each this happy Christmas time," and if you would be very sure to get its meaning best make a real Christmas for somebody who might not have it but for you.—Kate Langley Boshier.

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A VERY Merry Christmas To One and All Is the wish of STANZEL, THE SHOE MAN.

A full line of the Leading Styles in FOOTWEAR always in stock. Some pretty things in Slippers and Fancy Shoes for Holiday Gifts.

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