Answers to Letters

"BABS"—I am indeed happy to hear from you but the neat letter you write me kindly sign your full name, as I keep all the letters sent to me. We have not much snow in St. John at present and only had a few days' sleighing when the weather became mild and with a rain storm it left the streets pretty bare. I have read some of the books you mention and like them very much. I suppose you are working hard on your examinations, and the marks made are indeed very good. You want some of the C. C. members to correspond with you, well send me your full name and I will request them to do so. Thank you for your kind wishes and also the very pretty Christmas card.

RETA—You must certainly enjoy getting ready for the concert which I am sure will prove to be most enjoyable. I am sorry that you and your dear mother are suffering from a severe cold and you must be careful during the sudden change of weather. I hope you will both be well soon.

Yes, Christmas will soon be here and I hope you and all the other young people will enjoy it.

NO NAME—I have received a very interesting letter from one of my nieces in Chipman, but she was so absorbed in a poem entitled "Old Tim Crow" that she forgot to sign her name. I'm glad she is well and really sorry that her pet kitten was so foolish to walk on the edge of a rain barrel, fall in and lose its life. Perhaps the members of the C. C. would like to read the poem which is as follows:

"OLD TIM CROW"

A funny crow sat on a limb,
And something funny tickled him.
He clapped his bill, he winked his eye,
And this is just the reason why

He looked at you, he looked at me
And said how strange some folks can be.
They cannot caw, they do not fly,
They are not crows, I wonder why?
Tim Crow's cigar is just a joke
Tim Crow would never, never smoke.

MILDRED—I'm glad you are prompt in writing a letter to me after joining the Corner. You must enjoy going to school and I know you will do well when you hold the Christmas concert. I would love to be present at it. You certainly must have plenty of fun with your Angora kitten "Bubbles" is the name of a kitten that a little St. John girl lost a few weeks ago and later found it in a cake shop. Tell your brother George to send in his name and join the corner.

EMMA M.—I must congratulate you on your penmanship, as it is excellent, and I am very glad to hear from you. Your long letter is very interesting. I am sorry you have been sick with a cold and missed going to school. I have had a bad cold for a week and know how to sympathize with you. Keep taking your music lessons; it is hard for a time, but soon you will be able to play well, and it is so nice to be able to entertain your friends.

St. John is just like your town—we had some snow but it has all gone.

We are all looking for Christmas and I might inform you that I received a message from Santa Claus to look after poor children in St. John on Christmas and I have arranged to give four or five hundred a nice new pair of stockings, pair of mittens and plenty of fruit, candy and nuts, so you see that Santa knows that Uncle Dick will always be kind to the kiddies. I'm sorry your cousin is so ill and trust she will soon get better.

You must have plenty of fun with your kitten. So you want me to give it a name. I would call it "Patricia," after Princess Patricia, as the first regiment who went to the war for Canada called themselves after her viz., "Princess Pats." Tell your little chum, Loretta, to send in her name and join the corner.

Hanging Up The Stocking

Time-Honored Christmas Custom Dates Back to the Days of St. Nicholas of Padua.

From Italy comes the legend from which we are supposed to get the time-honored custom of hanging up the Christmas stocking.

Good old St. Nicholas of Padua used to throw long knitted purses tied at both ends, into the open windows of the very poor people. These purses were made of yarn not unlike a footless stocking. Finally it became the custom of the people to hang them outside of their window on the night before Christmas, so that St. Nicholas could put a gift into them as he passed by. By and by, when coin became scarce, toys were put in for the children, and useful presents for grown people. In the North country where it was rather chilly at Christmas time the purses were hung on the mantelpiece, and it was believed that the good old saint would come down the chimney and fill them. When these purses were out of use, stockings were substituted and have been used ever since.

"Aren't you glad to see me? You were just wishing I was here!"

Moses Mouse didn't act glad—not the least bit! He struggled his hardest to get away. But Miss Kitty Tabby—she evidently trouble holding him, with only one paw, too.

"Now that I'm here," she said to him, "don't you want to balance that scrap of cheese on your nose once more and offer it to me?"

Since Miss Kitty caught him Moses Mouse hadn't and anything that she could understand. He had made only a few squeaks of fright. Now, however, he managed to gasp: "Yes! Just let me go a moment! I can't pick up the cheese while you're crushing me against this pantry door."

CHRISTMAS GAMES FOR KIDDIES; WHOLE FAMILY CAN ENJOY THEM

Filling the Christmas Stockings—Pinata Parties Way Down in Mexico—The "Gum Drop Chew;" "Green Ladies;" "Indoor Nutting Party."

Of course, there'll be the Christmas tree in all its splendor, and the Christmas supper and all the usual, but oh! so necessary Christmas games at the children's Christmas party. But the novelty of some new Christmas games will be appreciated and enjoyed by all the children, and with Mother or Big Sister to take a hand and direct the fun the party will be an assured success.

An amusement that makes a lot of merriment is "Filling the Christmas Stockings." For this you will need a supply of small stockings—baby stockings are best, but if you cannot get these, they may be made of red calico or cambric. They should all be of one size and each stocking should have a large patch of white cloth sewed to it, bearing a number in plain figures. There must be one stocking for each guest. Hang them in a row at one end of the room. At the other end of the room place a row of plates on the floor and tack labels, bearing the numbers corresponding with those on the stockings, in front of the plates. Now, fill the plates with peanuts and candies. The nuts must be carefully measured and the candies counted, so that all the plates will contain the same amount. Each child then takes a spoon in hand and draws a number from a hat. He then stands in front of the plate which bears that number, and at a given signal, when all the players are standing in place, the game begins.

The object is to see who can fill his stocking first. Only one nut or candy may be carried on the spoon at a time, and any one who touches the nuts or bonbons with his hands forfeits them to the one who first notices his mistake. If in his haste to fill his stocking he spills the contents of his spoon, he must pick it up and replace it on his plate before he can go on with his strenuous labor. This causes lots of fun, and of course there is a prize for the one who gets his plate emptied first. Then all the children sit down and enjoy the contents of their Christmas stockings while some good Christmas story is read aloud or some one entertains with music.

"Way down in Mexico the children have Christmas Pinata Parties and these can be good fun for our Canadian boys and girls. The "pinata" is a big jar, which is hung from the ceiling by means of bright cord. The jar is covered with pretty paper and bright tinsel and is filled with toys and fruits, nuts and candies. The children are blindfolded and take turns in trying to find the jar and hit it with a cane till it breaks. Each child has three chances; but, as it is far more likely to beat the air than the jar, a lot of fun is caused before it breaks and the presents come tumbling out for the children to scramble for.

Now, I don't think I would advise the use of a glass jar for this game, as there would be danger of hurting some one's eyes, and it would be better not to use fruit or toys because the children might be injured in the scramble; but, by substituting a paper sack for the glass jar and hard candies a lot of fun may be had. Each child should be given a little paper sack in which to put his treasures as he gathers them.

A great mirth provoking contest for young children—and the older folks, too, for that matter—is a "gum drop chew." Have ready as many gumdrops as there are contestants. String them separately on stout threads one and one-half yards long. At a given signal each contestant takes one end of the thread in his mouth and "collects" the thread in his mouth until the gumdrop is reached. He must not use his hands at all! Of course, a prize is given him who reaches his gumdrop first. The prize may be a long necklace of pink and white gumdrops.

When the children tire of their regular duties amuse them with Christmas duties or "green ladies" as they are called, if you live where the pine trees grow. Break off as many of the pine twigs as you wish "ladies" and give the children cut out ladies' heads from the fashion books. Paste these on the top of the twigs. Then trim off the bottom of the twigs evenly. They will then stand erect. Stand them on a bare table or smooth paper and fan or blow gently and the green ladies will move back and forth and dance in the most graceful manner. A bit of red ribbon tied about the "waist" of each will delight the children at this season of the year.

An indoor nutting party may be arranged by decorating a small tree with bags of nuts of all kinds. This tree may be as Christmassy as you wish. There should be a candle on top and a few sprigs of holly among the branches.

The bags that hold the nuts are of all sizes and shapes. The little guests at a signal are told to strip the tree, and the one who secures the greatest number of nuts is promised a reward. The joke is that the larger bags do not contain the greatest number of nuts, for some of the bags hold lone cocoanuts or butternuts. Some of the very small bags hold quite a number of peanuts. The nuts are all counted before the prize is awarded.

To make any children's party a success, the interest and co-operation of some adult is very necessary. The children may be shy at first, but if Mother or some older sister gets them "started" there is sure to be great fun and enjoyment—and you can count on a hilarious old time of it. Children just can't enjoy themselves and be quiet!

Christmas Poetry.

THE RETURN AT YULETIDE.

Christmas comes and the old world turns
Fondly back to its fairy days—
Days that saw Him whose splendor burns
Bright through eras of mark and maze;
Back to the Star whose speaking rays
Wise men spied as it beckoned them
Over Judea's winding ways
Back to the Babe of Bethlehem!

Christmas comes, and the old heart goes
Gayly back to the dear days past—
Days whose breath of the budding rose
Scents the years that have followed fast;
Back to the Star whose spell was cast
Over young eyes and dazzled them,
Filling rapt youth with a wonder vast—
Back to the Babe of Bethlehem!

Christmas comes, and the old faith lives,
Summoned back from the days gone by—
Days hallowed with the joy that gives
Morals balm for their ach and sigh;
Back to the Star in the smiling sky,
Pilgrims haste as it urges them
On to the haven ever nigh—
Back to the Babe of Bethlehem!

Christmas comes, when the world doth go
Bounding back to the best of days—
Days when He in a manger low
Began charmed into prayer and praise;
Back to the Star whose speaking rays
All men spy as it beckons them
Over Judea's winding ways—
Back to the Babe of Bethlehem!

A child's vocabulary is divided into three distinct classes. There is the home vocabulary, the language for the street and police court, phraseology. Children may be brave in the streets and use "tough" words, but at home they choose their words. In police court where it would be no crime for them to say what they are asked to say, it takes horses, nothing of them, to draw out statements.

"Kid" witnesses on entering the witness box are always asked if they understand what it means to take an oath. The questioner, sometimes the magistrate or the lawyer interested in the case first gets the child "at home" by asking what games he or she usually plays.

"What happens to you if you tell a lie?" is then asked. The child hesitates and tries to answer, grows red in the face, and nine times out ten stammers out:

"We don't go to heaven."

Once in a while the exceptional youngster gets away with a bright remark. After hearing the questions the youngster does a little thinking as though a brilliant remark is coming, looks around at the lawyers, clerks and the magistrate anxiously waiting for the reply and says:

"Sometimes one goes to jail."

WHEN HEARTS ARE TRUMPS

Tragedy If Child Should Have Christmas Come and Go Without an Ecstasy.

If you have no child of your own, you must borrow, or beg one for Christmas eve; for it is the time when the world lights its happiness with a child's joy, writes Dr. James I. Vance, in the Minnie Stats Journal.

Only a child may have the right of way on Christmas eve. If you do not stand in with the children, you must stand aside.

It is the hour when the world makes a cradle its throne; when not only wise men from the East, but grown-ups from all points of the compass slip down over the hills of memory toward childhood's dawn, saying under their breath: "We have seen his star in the East and are come to worship him."

What a wonderful thing is this yearning of the old world for the happiness of children that climaxes at Christmas! The better side of human nature comes to the front. We throw off our cynicism. Meanness is shamed into generosity, and for a little while on Christmas eve the lightwads of earth have a look in on paradise.

Was there ever a sweeter eagerness, a holier joy, a more heavenly anticipation, than that which all through the house is felt on Christmas eve? Every one is thinking of making somebody happy. The delicious secretiveness of it intensifies the thrill. Care is forgotten. Expectation is ringing the bells. Peace is over all the world. And the hero is a child.

Thank God for children! "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." It is a sin to disappoint a child. Then it must please God when we make the children happy.

If there is no child in your home, maybe there is one on your doorstep, waiting for you to be its saint on Christmas eve. There are certainly some there in the street. They are looking at the toys in the window with wistful faces, and wondering what the lover of children will bring them. It is your time to pay, and hearts are trumps!

What a tragedy if a single child in your town should have Christmas come and go without an ecstasy!

Something of a Globe Trotter.

(London Free Press.)

No one will ever be able to say of the Prince of Wales: "Home-keeping youth." As a young lad he made several continental trips, including France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland. Since then he has been in Canada, Australia, United States, New Zealand and India. Later this year he will go to Japan and again Canada. A real globe-trotter, our Prince!

Music Hath——!

"I Wonder if He Will Miss Me?" sang the young lady with the cracked voice.

And from the balcony came the answer: "If he does he ought never again to be trusted with a gun."

The Spirit of Christmas

Christmas, symbolic of the birth of Christ, brings our minds and thoughts to the life and mission of the Saviour of all men. In the present age, we are prone to forget what Christ died for. The school of the world is teaching a new doctrine and, in many instances, we find the churches transgressing in this respect.

Quite recently a minister made this statement from his pulpit: "There is another fellow trying to get the prize you are after. Unless you knock him down he will knock you down and the prize will be his."

That is a dangerous doctrine. It is not the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and at this time, when our thoughts must turn to spiritual things, it would be well for all of us, who are following this doctrine, to pause and think what it means. There are too many of us believing in this knockdown business, in this crowding or elbowing or pushing other people back. That is wrong. We should not aim at getting ahead of the other fellow in this way. That is not the real way to gain success.

There is no more pernicious doctrine than this elbowing, crowding and robbing others of their chance to help ourselves along, using them as rungs in a ladder upon which to climb. We can go ahead doing this, but we will ultimately find that the Golden Rule contains the highest success philosophy. We are so made that we cannot help ourselves along at other peoples' expense without real injury to ourselves, no matter what the immediate advantage may seem to be, and we cannot help others without helping ourselves.

All nature and all truth are banded together to kill selfishness. There is no natural place for it in the universe. It is an abnormal quality and only affords one a seeming advantage. If we cannot climb the ladder without knocking somebody off we should stay where we are. The fact is that all healthy advancement, all advancement that endures, helps everybody about us. Our progressive example, our up-to-date methods, our lofty ambition, our energetic endeavor—all these things are to inspire everybody about us.

Christ taught us all these things; Christ's life, as an example, will continue to teach us all these things and this Spirit of Christmas, if looked at from the spiritual and not from the material standpoint, will not only teach us what Christ really is, but teach us to help one another.

If we carry a helpful spirit, always encouraging those about us and giving them a lift, as we progress ourselves, in other words, if we hold an altruistic spirit,—we shall succeed better ourselves because we shall be happier and more harmonious; for there is nothing which will shrivel and paralyze one's faculties like self-taksam. Push on and up with a wide charity, a broad magnanimity, with an open, generous heart always looking out for those about us, giving everybody a lift when we can by the way, encouraging those about us. This is the only way to advance to anything worth while. The moment we begin to crowd and elbow our way and trample on others the quality of ourselves or our success in life is immediately lowered, and the influence upon ourselves will certainly be paralyzing and pernicious.

The life of Christ was a complete example of unselfishness. Christ hewed the pathway to success for all of us if we will only walk along that path. The Spirit of Christmas to all of us should be the Spirit of Christ, and, commencing with the New Year, we should carry with us the spirit of self-sacrifice, the spirit of helpfulness, the spirit of enlightenment—the staying a little while or the tarrying on the roadside to help along a brother or a sister who has found the path long and tedious, whose moral spirit has been weakened by the warfare of the world and who requires the comfort, the help, and cheer from we who are more successful on our road to success.

After all what is there in success if we have found it at the expense of our weaker brother? The true success is the success gained by a personal effort truly, but the real success is the success of a man who has helped others to have success. We who commence this new year with this real Spirit of Christmas, and lay out definitely our plans for that year, should have the one aim and object—a new and better understanding of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which will help us along the road to better and more peaceful termination, so that when we look back on the future we will not look back on it with regret, but with a feeling that we have tried to live up to the great doctrine of Christ, the Christian—God a God of Love.

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