

did not. Much of the mining operations was suspended during the long winter season. Many claims were "laid over," which meant that the law which provided for this, being taken advantage of they were not forfeited from not being worked, as they would otherwise have been. Hence the autumnal exodus of many of those who had means who migrated to the lower country, or to California, until the following spring when the work on the claims had to be resumed. This condition of things made it necessary that those who remained should find the greater interest in each other's society, and should make the most of the Xmas tide; the holiday season being hailed as breaking in upon the monotony, dull to the point of painfulness, which remoteness from other populations occasioned. The great majority of the population found in the saloons their principal places of concourse and enjoyment. Gambling was much indulged in by professionals and non-professionals. It constituted one of the peculiar strong temptations of the place, the spirit of it encouraged, some thought, by the very occupation they were pursuing. It was a maxim current in Cariboo that mining itself was a gambling pursuit, so largely did the element of chance enter into it. It was what Josh Billings called "fooling with the chances," and like a lottery there were many blanks to every prize.

One illustration of the prevalence of the gambling spirit which the Christmas time afforded I must not omit to mention. Christmas week brought ranchers from the agricultural portions of the interior contiguous to the great trunk road with seasonable supplies in the shape of turkeys, chickens, roasters, eggs, etc., while to the butchers came the finest of beef, mutton and pork. The fowl which thus came to the market in sufficient quantities were not offered for sale; indeed, could not be bought. It was held at one dollar per pound. But

that meant simply in every case the price of a chance in a raffle. So many chances for a turkey according to the number of pounds it weighed, and so of chicken and roaster—all were raffled. This was kept up in the saloons for two or three nights before Xmas eve, in some instances the same article being raffled more than once. A poor lookout for the preacher, you say. Well, no the preacher did not fare so badly. The turkey which he could not buy was sure to come to the door on Xmas eve ticketed with some one's compliments. On one of our Xmases a kind friend who ran both a ranch and a grist mill and who brought his commodities to Cariboo in his sleigh at a distance of one hundred and twenty miles, sent a first fruit of his cargo to the parsonage in the shape of a couple of sacks of flour, a roaster, a pair of chickens, and two dozen eggs. When it is remembered that flour was seven dollars a sack (it had been nine dollars), that eggs were five dollars per dozen, and the other articles one dollar per pound, it will be admitted that this was a pretty handsome donation. This was additional to a couple of turkeys, a leg of mutton, and a prime roast of beef from other sources. The climate supplied us with superb cold storage facilities free of charge in the low temperature of the region which kept articles frozen for months without a break in the shape of a thaw.

Of course we had our Xmas service in the little church with an unusually good attendance and a generous Xmas offering in the plate collection. Afterwards there was a gathering of congenial souls in the parsonage, and had the parsonage been larger there would have been more.

I fear that the limit of space allowed for this gossiping reminiscence has been more than reached. I must therefore lay down the pen, leaving much that is more or less directly relevant, for the present, unsaid.

JOSEPH HALL.

A Christmas Carol.

Bethlehem's plains are still as green,
Bethlehem's harvest fields as white,
As when angel bands were seen
Making luminous the night.

But for long has ceased the lay
Sung by that seraphic choir,
And for long has passed away
That apocalypse of fire.

Yet that ancient Christmas song
Still is sung by faithful hearts,
And the light that's vanished long
Brightness to the soul imparts.

Still to Faith's divining eye
Lustrous forms the expanse fill,
And to Love's quick ear the sky
Thrills with heavenly music still.

While the ages come and go
Hymns of praise unceasing rise,
And with songs by saints below
Angels join their symphonies.

Glory still to God is given.
Peace on earth is still made known,
And the Heir of earth and heaven
Claims the kingdoms for His own.

Christmas joyfully returns
On the wings of this new morn.
Gladly our spirit yearns,
Worshipping the Christ once born!
—Dawson Burns in Illustrated London News.

If you enjoy our Christmas No
express it by sending in your sub-
scription immediately.

There is only one real failure in life
possible; and that is, not to be true to
the best one knows.—Canon Farrar.



Two Centenarians.

The accompanying cut presents the photograph of two old time Indians of the An-k-o-m-e-a-n-u-m nation, commonly called the Cowichan. They are reputed to be one hundred years old, which is highly probable.

That being the case their lives span the century.

The picture was taken at Soanenoo.

They are a type of people which are fast passing away.