



A Family Journal devoted to all that Appeals to the Home.

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DECEMBER, 1904.

Christmas.

The Christmas chimes are pealing, softly pealing; the joyous sounds are ringing ever louder and clearer, ever nearer and nearer, like a sweet-toned benediction falling on the ear. Glad ringers are pulling the ropes, and in one grand swell of melody Christmas, with its old yet ever new and marvelous mysteries, bursts triumphantly upon the world once more. The cattle have turned their heads to the east and knelt down to worship the king cradled in the manger; the houses are decked with holly; the yule-log burns brightly; the gray shadows sweep away; the sun is up and the bright-eyed children, who have lain awake all night listening for the patter of old Saint Nick's tiny steeds on the roof, only to fall asleep at the eventful moment, wake hurriedly to find the stockings running over with toys and sweetmeats.

Beautiful and right it is that gifts and good wishes should fill the air like snowflakes at Christmastide. And beautiful is the year in its coming and in its going—most beautiful and blessed because it is always the Year of Our Lord.

Gift Giving and Receiving.

One of the most promising aspects of each recurring Christmas is the manner in which the custom of gift-giving has grown. This feature is observed by Christian and Jew alike—in many instances by those in pagan pales. The wealthy give largely of their abundance, those less fortunately situated, in accordance with their means. A touching phase of the season is the effort which even the poverty-stricken put forth to remember substantially those on their own level and others still more luckless than themselves. There is good reason why this should be the case. God, the maker of the sentient universe, gave to our world the marvellous, unspeakable gift of His Son, a God Himself. No more sublime, no more heroic

spectacle will all history furnish than this instance. The ancient Greeks and Romans made effigies of their gods and worshipped the carven likenesses. To Baal, who could not or would not see nor hear or intermedate, they made flowery prayers. To divinities who demanded the sacrifices of purity, of blood and of lives, they did homage—counting themselves privileged. Christianity's boon to the world, on the other hand, bears the evidence of practicality, of substance, infinitely superior to these pagan rites. A God descended to the earth, with all its vile-smelling tumult and its cheerless wastes of sin and indifference, for the avowed purpose of becoming the Intercessor for humanity with the Intelligent Force which fixed the sun and the stars and the earth itself in their orbits.

Contemplating the grandeur of this gift; recognizing the divine love and condescension involved, is it not natural that we should wish to show our love and benignity to our friends, by a similar course on our own small, finite scale? This is the core of Christmas giving. The wish to convey the impression of affection; of thought, the desire to demonstrate the tenderness of relations which bind us to other people, even to the extent of sacrificing a few of our own whims and indulgences. The gift given with the veneer of ostentation, "with a lively sense of favors expected," is the one which will fall flat in its effect on the sender and receiver. The man who gives extravagantly, that he may impress the recipient with a sense of his

own superiority and importance, is to be pitied rather than detested—he misses nine-tenths of the gratification, the warm glow of kindness which is experienced by the simple-hearted man whose sole motive is that of unselfishness.

Happily, too, the great mass of people are beginning to regard Christmas more as a religious celebration than the excuse for license in food and drink consumption. While the occasion is obviously one which calls for liberal good cheer, for hospitality with a free hand, it should by no means be construed as a pretext for brutal gourmandizing, for reckless dissipation more fitted to the saturnalias of the children of antediluvian barbarism. Co-operating with a commendable public sentiment, the authorities have each year drawn a tighter cordon around those who would thus interpret the feast of the Nativity. Together with a wholesome spontaneity and a loving altruism, we are coming to observe in the history of humanity.

Christmas.

Of course you are going to have a merry Christmas time. You expect to receive presents and will many gifts to those you love. Knowing you want the happiest time possible, let me tell you what to do.

Give something to somebody who really needs what you can give. Somebody who does not expect anything from you. If you have to sacrifice a little to do this, it will be better, for you will feel happier. Try it.

Secrets of Success.

What is the secret of success, asked the sphinx.

Push, said the button.

Never be led, said the pencil.

Take pains, said the window.

Be up to date, said the calendar.

Always keep cool, said the ice.

Do business on tick, said the clock.

Never lose your head, said the barrel.

Do a driving business, said the hammer.

Aspire to greater things, said the nutmeg.

Never do anything off-hand, said the glove.

Be sharp in all your dealings, said the knife.

Spend much time in reflection, said the mirror.

Trust to your stars for success, said the night.

Strive to make a good impression, said the seal.

Turn all things to your advantage, said the lathe.

Make much of small things, said the microscope.

Get a good pull with the ring, said the door-bell.

Find a good thing and stick to it, said the glue.

Never take sides, but be round when you're wanted, said the bell.

Make the most of your good points, said the compass.



"WHAT WILL 'SANTIE' BRING ME?"