

## DOMINION EXPRESS CO.

Main Office—10 James Street South  
Telephone 611 or 1934

### General Forwarders To All Parts of the World

Solicit your holiday shipments for all parts of Canada and for foreign countries.

Small and valuable parcels are carried in strong trucks and through safes.

Address tags and labels may be obtained at main office.

Special attention given to Christmas Day deliveries.

See that drivers to whom you deliver parcels wear this company's uniform and badge.

Ship early to avoid the rush.

If your gifts consist of money, our

Express Money Orders Are Payable Throughout

Canada, Newfoundland and the United States.

Express foreign Cheques in all foreign countries.

Express travellers' cheques for tourists and travellers payable all over the world.

CHARLES A. DOBSON, Agent.

### MARY'S CHRISTMAS TOILET

"Well, is it any bigger?" inquired Mr. Bixby, as he leaned back from the table at the conclusion of a scrappy, girl's-day-out sort of dinner.

Mrs. Bixby did not immediately respond, and eight-year-old Jimmy, human question mark, recognized a conversational opening.

"Is what any bigger, papa?" he asked. "It's half past 7, James," said his father. "High time for you to tackle that example you missed at school this morning. Go to once."

And James, though he might have liked to argue the question, went; for only yesterday Mary, the new girl, had reminded him that Santa Claus sometimes forgot to come to boys that were disobedient. To be sure there was a family rumor that his bachelor Uncle Simon, who was just about right in everything, did not believe in the whiskered saint, but with the practical test of the matter so near at hand the wise little Jimmy was taking no chances.

Mrs. Bixby, however, had no need to ask what her husband had meant by his question. He had given up his table lectures on the theory and practice of domestic management long ago, and the confusion caused in his mind by the swift, yet never-ending procession of serving maids through the Bixby establishment had reduced him finally to an unceremonious silence. Nevertheless, his wife knew that his inquiry referred to the pompadour of that new girl, Mary.

It was a thorn in both their sides. "I don't know," said Mrs. Bixby, when the echoes of James' departure had died away, "whether it is any bigger or not. She hasn't come right yet. This isn't her regular afternoon out, you know, but she seems to have an enormous number of friends to get presents for, and I let her go downtown to do some Christmas shopping. Her hair was all right when she left, but so it was the last time she went out, yet when she came back you remember she had to stoop to get under the curtain poles in the dining-room."

"Well, perhaps it takes a visit to an expert hairdresser, and if it never happens except on her days off it will not be so bad."

"No, especially as she hardly ever comes in until bedtime, except for these holiday trips. But you can't tell. If she were to learn to build it up herself and should appear in it next week when Henry and his wife are here for dinner I would die of mortification. And suppose she should wear it Christmas day?"

"She didn't have 'em much when she first came, either, did she?"

"No, not above the average normal size. But, do you know, the last big one she had looked a little crooked to me, and I fancied then that she had been practicing on making them herself."

"Mrs. Bixby was now at the hysterical half-way point between irritation and amusement."

"Can't you tell her?" suggested Mr. Bixby, "gently, yet firmly, 'that there's a limit to—'"

"Yes, but it would probably be equivalent to giving her notice. Shall I do that?"

Thus, as the result of his first venture in domestic suggestion in the last nine years, Mrs. Bixby found the problem suddenly put up to him. "I'd certainly hate to see her go," he finally said. "She seems really fond of James and the baby, and they of her; and she's the first girl in the lot's see—the last."

"The last eleven."

"That hasn't really disliked them, isn't she?"

"Yes, the first since Martha Rice. And Mary really loves them. Yesterday morning when I came down a little early I overheard her and James sounding each other as to what they wanted for Christmas, and at the end of a long cross-examination he finally made Mary admit that Santa Claus was not the only one who gave presents."

"Yes, and she makes delicious soup; almost as good as that girl we had just before the baby was—"

But here Mr. Bixby was relieved of further responsibility concerning the problem by a ring at the doorbell and the descent, pell mell, from the upper regions, of Jimmie, who for the last week had been on the watch for all mysterious bundles that came into the house.

Mrs. Bixby opened the door and re-

vealed Mary under the largest pompadour she had yet appeared in.

"Let me see your bundles, Mary," cried Jimmy, making a dash at her. "Let me see what you've got."

But Mary, embarrassed, perhaps, by the frowning glance of Mrs. Bixby, dodged past him and hurried to the kitchen, dropping, as she went, the one small bundle she had been carrying.

Jimmie pounced upon this before his mother could stop him, but it turned out to be only a yard or so of some sort of cloth. His mother took it with her as she moved toward the kitchen, closing the doors not too gently behind her. Mr. Bixby, who had come out into the hall, knew by the firmness of his wife's step that the problem of the pompadour had been taken out of his hands.

"Papa," began the disappointed Jimmie, by way of stating off further struggle with that vexatious example, "Is Uncle Simon an agnostic?"

"Why, no, child. Where did you ever get hold of that big word?"

"Oh, I heard the minister talking about agnostics and unbelievers when he was here the other day to get stuff for that Christmas box for the heathen. I'm awful glad Uncle Simon ain't one 'cause then he must believe in Santa Claus."

Meanwhile, out in the kitchen Mrs. Bixby was saying, after severe contemplation of Mary's coiffure: "Mary, I'm sure, if you could see yourself you would see that that huge pompadour is unbecoming."

Mary had removed her hat and now broke into smiles. "I don't need to see myself, ma'am," she said. "I'm that ashamed! Do you think Mr. Bixby noticed it? Coming home in the car there was a young fellow I know was laughing at me. I can't stand it another minute!"

She began to fumble with her hair as she talked and finally drew from within the towering structure a little loomlike and a train of tin cans. She put them on the table and then produced from the same region a rubber doll and a baby's rattle.

"For the children," she explained, as she reached up again. "Jimmie was watching the dog so lately I didn't know how else to get 'em in."

Whereupon Mrs. Bixby sat down in the nearest chair and had her hysterics after all, and Christmas morning, when the presents were distributed, the papier-mache cigar case, which was Mary's present to Mr. Bixby, was found to have tangled around it a long hair that was not his wife's.

John D. Ruff.

### Dame Santa Claus.

No, I have not made a mistake. It is Dame Santa Claus that I am going to write about.

Don't you think that she really deserves just a little bit of the praise and admiration that children over all the world, at this time of the year, are giving to Mr. Santa Claus? For there is surely a Dame Santa, else who is it that cares for him when he comes home on Christmas morning, tired and cold? It is not a servant, for he hasn't any; it is surely a woman, Mrs. Santa Claus.

And, again, who is it that makes his fur coat and fur hat and his boots and stockings? And who is it, tell me, that cooks his meals and sweeps his house,

way up there at the north pole, if it's not Mrs. Santa?

And when Santa's hammer slips, while he is working on some little boy's sled, who is it that ties the finger for him if it is not Mrs. Santa Claus?

And when Santa Claus gets a letter from some little fellow who wants a nice, warm pair of stockings, or who wants a woollen cap, who is it that knits them? Santa Claus can't, for although he is a "master of all trades," he never learned the gentle art of knitting stockings. Mrs. Santa Claus knows how, of course. She sits down, and knits dozens of pairs of stockings and mittens after her dinner's over. You know she has lots of time between meals; they only come about once a week up there, for the days are a whole month long. Just think of it! And there Santa only eats three meals a day.

Although we would all like to visit Santa Claus and see his wonderful palace of ice, south of the north pole, and his beautiful workshops, and meet his gentle wife, I am a bit afraid we would not like to stay many days if the meals only came once a week. But with Santa Claus it is different; he is used to it by this time, for he has lived way up there ever since there were little boys in the world; and then he always eats enough at one meal to do him until the next.

There is something about Mrs. Santa Claus that you will like when you know her better. Her jovial smile and old-fashioned ways seem to make one like her better.

I've just tried to show you that although Santa Claus is a nice fellow and we like to have him come to see us once a year, it isn't quite fair that you should forget "Dear Mrs. Santa Claus," for without her you couldn't have any Santa, and without Santa Claus, I just shiver to think of it, there would be no Christmas!

So when we write to Kris Kringle and after you've asked him for everything you want, you'll make his old heart feel glad and you'll stand a greater chance of getting your gifts if you'll only say: "And now, dear Santa, please remember me to Mrs. Santa Claus, and please bring her with you when you come, on the night before Christmas, for I would like to meet you both. I've always been asleep when you came before, but I won't be this time; and please don't forget my chiu-chiu cats, for your dear little friend."

"Christmas Child."

A New Malady.

It was Christmas Day, and the candy lion had been waiting—oh, so patiently—for Mary to finish her dinner. Much against her baby wishes had she been obliged to swallow the last of her bread. When her mother insisted on her finishing her "milk the small face looked up in desperation as she lisped, "Mozzer, if I eat any more food I will be humpback in my stomach, like grandpa!"—Lippincott's.

Only Two Realities.

Billy—So yer didn't get nuthin' but a jackknife and a sled for Christmas?

Tommy—Yes, dat's all I got worth speakin' of. Dere wuz a suit of clothes, and an ooceroo, and a hat or two, and some underclothes, and a book of poems, and some stockin's and gloves, and some collars and cuffs, and a few other things like dat, not worth speakin' of.—Men and Women.



THE ARTLESS ANSWER.

## The Legend of the Mistletoe..

By  
Virginia  
Belmont

Bolder the beautiful, God of the summer sun, Fairest of all the Gods! Light from his forehead beamed, Runes were upon his tongue, As on the warrior's sword.

All things in earth and air Bound were by magic spell Never to do him harm. Even the planets and stones All save the Mistletoe, The sacred Mistletoe."

There are some customs which seem to survive almost indefinitely the lapse of centuries. The Mistletoe, which reappears every Christmas, was a sacred plant as far back as the days of the Persians, an object of worship in Persia and India. It evokes memories of the ancient Gauls, of the sacred groves, and the Druids, whose priests were said to have sprung from the Magi, and all that belongs to a vanished religion. In the days of the Druids, the festival of the cutting of the Mistletoe took place in the month of March, on the sixth day of the moon. The tenth of March at that period was New Year's Day, and as the festival required the full light of the moon, it was held as near New Year's Day as the moon would allow. The Druids claimed that the Gods loved the oak above all other trees. It was the tree of Thor, the thunderer in Scandinavian mythology, of Jupiter among the Greeks, of Perun, who is the Jove of the Slavonic nations. On the day appointed for the festival of cutting the sacred plant, a procession was formed. Two white bulls being led, were fastened by their horns to the trunk of an oak. A Druid climbed the leafless branches of the tree, and with a golden sickle cut the sprays of Mistletoe. Beneath the stately oak was a circle of Druid priestesses in white robes, their hair confined by golden crescents; they held their snowy veils outspread to receive the sacred sprays as they fell from the oak, for they were never permitted to touch the ground. Religious rites were then performed and the two white bulls were sacrificed. The sprays of Mistletoe were carefully preserved and used in many ways. They were placed over doors to bring good fortune, to keep off evil spirits. They were also used in various decorations to cure many maladies, for great healing power was ascribed to the plant.

Bacon says that the Mistletoe which grew upon oaks was counted very medicinal, and the Druids considered it a remedy for every kind of poison. In some parts of Germany the children still run about the streets at Christmas, knocking at doors and windows with hammers, and shouting "Gut heil, Gut heil!" These words are plainly equivalent to the Druidical name of the Mistletoe, used by Pliny when he speaks of it as "All heal."

It played an important part in the life of the Gauls; a remnant of this still seems to exist in France, for the peasant boys still use the expression "An gui ian n'au" as a New Year's greeting. The ceremony of decorating churches with evergreens is of great antiquity and was observed in many countries hundreds of years ago, just as we still find a similar custom observed in the East at New Year, showing us that the origin of the observance is the same in each case. It was esteemed a sacred plant among the Normans and the Celtic bards, the harpers of Scotland and Wales held it in great reverence. Perhaps the Mistletoe was taken as a symbol of the New Year on account of its clusters of green leaves growing upon bare trees, and giving them the appearance of having renewed their foliage. In Brittany, it is called "Herbe de la Croix," because it was believed that from its wood the cross was made; though it was degraded from a stately forest tree in consequence of this fact.

But before we hear of the Mistletoe of the Druids, we meet with the beautiful legend of the death of Balder, from the association with which it doubtless derived its sanctity. The Apollo, or Day god of the Norsemen, bore the name of Balder the Good. He was beloved alike of gods and men. In him the Norsemen honored all that was beautiful, eloquent, wise and good. He was the spirit of activity, joy and light, without the brightness of his presence, Asgard, the abode of the gods, of Odin, of Thor, of Freyja, would have been dull and barren. Great trouble, therefore, fell on the gods in Valhalla, when Balder, one day informed them that he had been visited by terrific dreams, threatening him with deadly peril. It seems that he did not possess the immortality which the Greeks attributed to their mythic divinities. Therefore, the gods of Valhalla determined to use all their magic arts to preserve to themselves and to men their favorite deity. The mythology of ancient Scandinavia included a principle or power of evil called Loki, whose chief aim was to do mischief and mar the happiness of the gods. Of all the deities, Loki hated most the God of Light. Balder's mother, Freyja, was so heartbroken at the thought of all created things that they would not hurt him. The goddess mother met with a ready response from earth, air, fire, water, stones, diseases, beasts, birds, insects and poisons, and from trees and flowers. One thing alone escaped her spells. There grew on the eastern side of the Valhalla an ancient oak, attached to which, rooted in its gnarled branches, she perceived a tiny plant, a soft green, insignificant thing with pearly white berries. It seemed so powerless to do harm, that she passed it by. Alas! from all ages comes the warning, that nothing is insignificant. After the spell had been laid on all creation, not to hurt Balder, the gods were wont to test this immunity from harm, by getting him to stand on the plains of Asgard as a target at which they hurled darts and stones, and some struck at him with swords and by the axes. The spell worked well; Balder was ever unhurt, and it came to be an honor, paid him, when his invulnerability was thus tested. One day the gods were assembled, when Loki, hovering near unseen, gazed upon the singular spectacle. He beheld the bright-haired Balder standing in a circle formed by the deities of Valhalla. Odin stood gazing at the sport, while Thor threw his mighty hammer at Balder, which rebounded without injury to the youthful god. In his

turn each god hurled missiles at Balder, who stood smiling at them, erect and unharmed. What could it mean? Loki determined to find out. So changing his shape to that of a fair and queenly woman, he hastened to the dwelling of Freyja. The goddess received her visitor graciously and inquired whence she came. "From the plain where the gods are making a target of Balder, without hurting him," replied the false guest.

"Aye," said Freyja, "neither metal nor wood can hurt Balder, for I have exacted an oath from all things, that they will not harm him."

"What!" exclaimed the guest, "have all things sworn to spare him?"

"All things," replied Freyja, "except one little shrub that grows upon an oak on the eastern side of Valhalla, and is called the Mistletoe. I thought it too young and too feeble to crave an oath from it."

A secret joy thrilled through the false maiden as she heard these words, and hastening from Freyja's dwelling as soon as she could, she flew to the spot where grew the fatal parasite. Then, resuming his proper shape, Loki cut off the Mistletoe and hastened back to the plains of Asgard. He found the gods still at their singular amusement. The blind god Hodur, the god of brute strength, was standing alone to one side. In the Norse mythology he signified Night, as Balder signified Day.

"Why dost thou not throw something at Balder?" asked Loki.

"Because," answered Hodur, "I cannot see, and I have nothing to throw."

"Come, then," said Loki, "do as the gods do, and throw." "Do as the gods do," said Hodur, "and I will throw." "Come, then," said Loki, "do as the gods do, and throw." "Do as the gods do," said Hodur, "and I will throw."

After the final purification by suffering and fire and the regeneration to which the Norsemen looked as the means of the ultimate adjustment of good and evil, and from which they did not exempt even their gods, the influence of good was to prevail. Balder would reappear, radiant, beautiful, joyous as before; and Loki, the spirit of evil, be no more heard of.

### A CHRISTMAS VAMPIRE.

A fool there was, and he made a gift, (Even as you or I.) He bought it with taste and care and thrift

(For a lady his friends thought rather swift) And when he gave it, the lady sniffed, (Even as you or I.)

Oh, the judgment and taste and time we waste On the gifts at Christmas; Which we give to the lady who isn't pleased (And now we know she could never be pleased And never be satisfied.)

A fool there was, and he gave his cheque (Even as you or I.) For a necklace of pearls without a fleck, (And it didn't the least suit the lady's neck) And she never thanked him a single speck! (Even as you or I.)

Oh, the chink we lose and the think we lose. On the things we buy with pride, To give to the lady who never is pleased, (And now we know she can never be pleased And never be satisfied.)

The fool was fleeced to his last red cent, (Even as you or I.) She threw him aside, when his gold was spent, (And nobody cared where the lady went.) And the fool gave way to loud lament, (Even as you or I.)

And it wasn't the loss, and it wasn't the dress The reason that same fool cried; It was coming to know that she never was pleased (Seeing at last she could never be pleased And never be satisfied.)

—Carolyn Wells, in December Smart Set.



HEARD AT THE SHOW.

"My father is rich now, and it has turned his head."

"How does it affect him?"

"Now he doesn't spill soup on his shirt bosom when he eats."

### YULETIDE IN SHETLAND.

Curious Customs in the Island Where The Ponies Come From.

The festival of Yule, as is well known, dates back to prehistoric times, when men worshipped nature rather than nature's God.

The inhabitants of the Shetland Isles are descended from Norsemen, who were zealous in religious belief, and "Yule" to them meant a season of great importance. The "Gammel Norsk Hjul" signi-

## RALSTON'S SHOE POLISHES



"BLACK BEAUTY" gives not only a better and more lasting polish, but it contains ingredients that give prolonged life to the finest leather

It's 25c and Worth It.

## Blachford & Son Funeral Directors

57 King Street West

Calls Answered Every Hour of the Day or Night

PRIVATE MORTUARY PHONE 636

## Harris Siderski

Dealer in Rags, Metals, Rubbers and Paper Stock

21 Walnut Street North, Hamilton

Office Tel. 848

Residence Tel. 2236

11 and 13 Ferguson Ave. N.

Telephone 936

## C. A. COLVILLE, MACHINIST

Manufacturer of All Kinds of

Special Machinery, Brick Machinery, Brick-Makers' Supplies

fies, literally, "wheel," and the festival so called was held in honor of the sun at the winter solstice—wheeling round toward the equator. The return of the sun formed an important period of the year as being the beginning of renewed life in nature, which only could be revived by the light and warmth of the ascending orb.

The course of the sun was observed in all things as far as possible. Everything was turned from left to right—the corn stacks so built in course, the mill so turned in grinding and the wheel in spinning—in fact, everything is, rigidly observed as being—i. e., a time of rest from all manner of labor—Madame.

Many superstitions included in nature worship had full scope at the "Hjul" time—or more modern "Yule"—when a vast multitude of "trolls," or fairy folk, who at that season were not only active, but maliciously disposed, had to be propitiated.

To give the fairy folk no opportunity of playing tricks, the fishing creel and the spinning wheel taken out of gear and its integral parts laid aside, and everything suspended from ceiling or walls lifted down, as if left in their usual places the ubiquitous elves were supposed to set all going against the sun's motion, which of course would be a serious trouble. The time of Yule, and still is, rigidly observed as being—i. e., a time of rest from all manner of labor—Madame.

Some medicine is so that we can't even forget to take it.