

that the entire social observance of the glorious festive season consists in an ample supply of hot water and lemons. Dickens, of course, did much to restore the ancient observance in England; but long centuries before the Dickensian stories found their way to the hearts of Britishers, Christmas had had a place in the calendar of "Merrie England."

Many Christmas social observances are traceable to heathen origin; but in early days they were legitimized by custom and usage. The old Roman "Strennae" (condemned by such writers as Tertullian and Maximus of Turin) doubtless had their origin in the days of the Caesars to whom sycophantic officialdom paid obsequious tribute at the beginning of the New Year which in those days began with the month of March. These were the first Christmas presents. The "Calend Fires" were also a heritage from paganism, but when they began to grow into an abuse, they were condemned by Pope Zachary at the instance of St. Boniface. The "Yulelog" is a survival of the Scandinavian *Jul*. It seems to have been introduced into England in the time of Henry VIII. where it became immensely popular. The log was drawn by servants into the hall, where each member of the family, sitting down on it in turn, sang a Yule-song and drank a cup of spiced ale. The log was then cast into the fire with prayers for the safety and happiness of the household until next Yule-tide. A part of the log was preserved to light the Yule-log of the following season. It was believed that a piece of the log in the house was a security against fire. The Yule-log became connected with other usages in time: tenants had the privilege of supplying the Yule-log to the seignorial manor and, in consequence of the gift, possessed the right to feed at the lord's expense as long as the round of wood given by them should burn. The Christmas Tree is of doubtful origin; but we find it first mentioned in the annals of the city of Strasbourg two centuries ago. It was introduced into England, in 1840, by the Prince Consort; but it has become one of the most popular institutions among the English-speaking peoples. It now occupies an important place in Christmas decoration; and every home has its Christmas Tree.

It were a long story to record the various social observances which characterize Christmastide; but some of them, of very ancient date, deserve mention. Among these we find a variety of games and amusements, some of which are still in vogue. Chief of these were: "The Lord of Misrule"; "Mummers"; and the "Pantomime."

"The Lord of Misrule." The office of this functionary, who