

CHAT CHAT AND CHUCKLES.

THE BLOOM OF A CHRISTMAS TREE.

At night we planted the Christmas tree
In the pretty home, all secretly;
All secretly, though merry of heart,
With many a whisper, many a start,
(For children school-born to make believe
May not sleep soundly on Christmas Eve.)

And then the tree began to bloom,
Filling with beauty the cosy lounge room,
The branches carved in a perfect pose,
Laden with wonders that men call "toys,"
Blossoming and ripening (and still no noise),
Until the merry folk stole away
To rest and dream till dawn of day.

In the morning the world was a girl and a boy,
The universe only their shouts of joy,
Till every branch and bough had bent
To yield the treasure the Christ-child sent.
And then and then the children flew
Into our arms, as children do,
And whispered, over and over again,
That oldest, newest, sweetest refrain,
"I love you! I love you! Yes, I love you!"
And hugged and scrambled, as children do,
And we said in our hearts, all secretly;
"This is the bloom of the Christmas tree!"

DEFIANCE—Extract from a new novel: 'Stand where you are, Reginald de Coursey! Advance one step nearer, and I will tell you what I saw at the World's fair!'

'Foiled again!' hissed the villain as he faded from view.

The open car has gone to rest
Upon the car-horn floor,
And now the chilly people growl:
"Why don't you shut that door?"

Auctioneer.—'This book, gentlemen, is especially valuable, as it contains marginal notes in the handwriting of Alexander Von Humboldt. A hundred marks offered. Going!—going!—gone! It is yours, sir.' (The autograph marginal note by the renowned scholar was as follows: 'This book is not worth the paper it is printed on.')

An Argyleshire older was asked how the kirk got along. He said: 'Aweel, we had four hundred members. Tuen we had a division and then there were only two hundred left; then a disruption, and only ten of us left. Then we had a heresy trial; and now there is only me and ma brither Duncan left, and I ha' great doots of Duncan's orthodoxy.'

She searched his pockets through and through,
Yet felt no jealous thrill,
Though she found some lines from an old old flame—
A great unpaid gas bill.

SOMETHING TO SHOW ON A RAINY DAY—'Can you let me have some money this morning, John?' asked Mrs. Sprigs at the breakfast table.

'Why, I gave you \$10 the other day, and told you to fix things so that you would have something to show on a rainy day. What did you do with it?'

'I bought three pairs of silk stockings so as—'
But he was gone.

Did you see the lagoon at the World's Fair? Well, here is the latest story regarding it. It was near the south side of the Electricity Building, where an extended view of the lagoon is cut off by the island and by curves. An Irishman stepped up to a guard and said: 'Where is that lagoon I'm hearing about?' 'Right here,' was the answer, with a wave of the hand toward the water. The Irishman looked at the water, the island, and some weeds in the corner. Then he said: 'Is that it? B-gorra, I'll stave it some night with a sponge.'

IN HARD LUCK.—'I was so hard up Christmas,' remarked a tramp, 'that I couldn't get enough to eat let alone anything to drink. As a last resort I rang the minister's bell and asked him if he would give a little food to a repentant sinner who hadn't eaten anything for a week.'

'If you're truly repentant,' he said, 'I'll save you, my poor man.'
'I am, sir,' I replied, feeling sure he'd invite me into the kitchen.
'In that case,' he returned, 'just kneel down there on the stoop and I'll give you some food for reflection.'

SWEETS TO THE SWEET.

She loved him very tenderly,
He loved her not a bit.
Yet fate decreed that on this night
They side by side should sit.

"Say something sweet, dear," said the maid;
And through her colored glasses
She eyed him fondly as he breathed
The single word—"Molasses!"

A little ragged girl was crying bitterly on a street in New York. A sympathizing lit le friend came up, and the following conversation ensued:

'Why, Maggie, what are you crying for?'
'My brudder Jimmie is dead.'
'What did he die of, Maggie?'
'He went to the poor children's excursion an' ate too much cake and sandwiches.'
'Oh, Maggie,' said the little comforter, 'think what a beautiful death—cake and sandwiches!'

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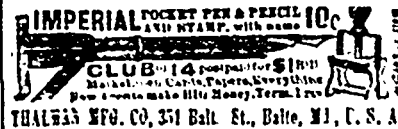
We are talking about a "shortening" which will not cause indigestion. Those who "know a thing or two" about Cooking (Marion Harland among a host of others) are using

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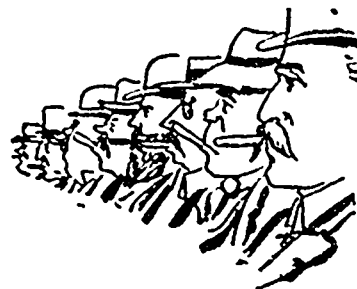


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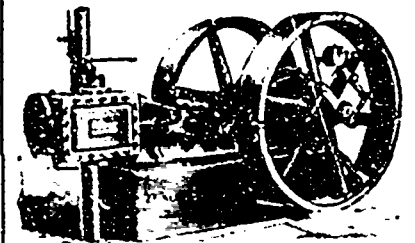


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