



## CHRISTMAS



**C**HRISTMAS is here. The stores are being congested. Bargain counters are being besieged. Spirits and stockings are going up. Minds are ubiquitously working over the problem of what to give.

Christmas is in the air. It is in the clouds, in the cars, along the trails, and in every childish eye. Post and express offices are working overtime sending out messages of good cheer. Fat turkeys are strutting aimlessly, unconscious of martyrdom. Cornucopias are looking up, and the candy sellers are growing ambitious.

Christmas is with us. Churches are being trimmed. Spruce trees are spreading their branches for coming burdens. Small, chubby hands are being clasped in joyous expectation. Round, full little hearts are beating high. Secrets are being kept—and broken. Santa Claus is hiring extra hands.

There is agitation supreme in all the toy windows. Little steam cars are beginning to puff with pride. Hobby horses are feeling their oats. Tables are beginning to groan, and as for Cupid, he is just as warm as ever in a fur-lined overcoat.

Jack Frost is also at work at the same old painter's trade. Fingers are being surreptitiously measured. Mysterious packages are being smuggled in through back doors. Significant smiles are being exchanged. Bills are coming in, but who cares? For Christmas is here again.

And incidentally, we wish each of our friends a Merry Christmas, and hope that each and every one of them may have a Christmas tree; not a Christmas tree especially reserved for himself, but one that you may be only too glad to share with others.

One of the peculiarities of the Christmas tree is that it has no pride of birth; rich or poor, it is always the same, and it is even thought by some that the humbler its aspect—the more thin and shabby its appearance—the more joy it carries to those to whom it goes. This is, doubtless, because the Christmas tree is not so much dependent upon mere externals, but carries beneath its rugged exterior a heart of pure gold; and possibly its love is more likely to reach out for the poor, rather than to the very rich.

To whomsoever it goes, the Christmas tree carries its own special radiance. May it shine upon you all, good friends, and make your Christmas what it ought to be.