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## Christmas in... — Royal Families

Queen Victoria's Forty-Five Thousand Dollar Tree. Interesting Ceremonies in Potsdam Palace.

Special for the Canadian Home Journal.



CHRISTMAS tree laden with gifts representing an outlay of \$45,000 is not an every Christmas occurrence even with kings, queens and multi-millionaires. But, upon one occasion, Queen Victoria's Christmas tree was thus royally bedecked. This was the first year of her marriage. Previously to that time, Christmas had been kept by her Majesty in almost Puritanical fashion. When she came to the throne, the festivities at court were barely mentioned among the news of the day. But the Prince Consort, with his German idea of Christmas, changed all that, and the festal season was kept regardless of expense.

Three days after Christmas Holy Innocents' Day—the Queen remembers all the children living at Windsor. All the little ones of the neighborhood assemble at St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, where a service is held especially for them, and after which each child is given a cake and a toy or useful present. The inauguration of this Innocents' Day service at Windsor dates only from 1886. Little boys and girls, babies with mothers or nurses, and infants in stately carriage, one may meet on this day going up the Castle hill for the service. Afterwards the older children are entertained at tea at the Deanery.

The Queen's health is drunk every day in the year by her officers throughout the world, but on Christmas Day the ceremony has a character all its own: the colonel of the regiment takes his place at the centre of the table, the rest of the company sit around as they please, except at each end of the table sit the president and vice. Behind the president, who is responsible for order, are the colors of the regiment; behind the vice-president is always the picture of the Queen. The president rises and gives the toast: "Mr. Vice, the Queen, God bless her." The "vice" rises, as

well as everyone at the table, and answers. "Gentlemen, the Queen, God bless her." Outside the band plays the National Anthem, and each man drains his glass.

Christmas at Sandringham is kept in much the same fashion as at Osborne. The Princess of Wales has consignments of goods sent down by the tradesmen, in order that previous purchases may be supplemented, and the place has all the appearance of a veritable bazaar for many days before. The Prince of Wales usually drives about in his brougham to the shops and buys what pleases him best on the spot. The Princess of Wales, too, goes about in her carriage making purchases here and there, and in Bond and Regent streets one is certain to come across several princesses doing their own Christmas shopping. The Duchess of York usually walks when visiting the shops, leisurely inspecting the tempting windows.

The Princess of Wales sends costly and well-chosen gifts to the Amalienborg Palace at Copenhagen, to the royal palace at Athens, to the Dowager Empress of Russia, and to the Duke of Cumberland's family. On Christmas morning an avalanche of telegrams arrive at Sandringham from relations, friends, former dependents, public bodies, public men and even total strangers.

The German Emperor and Empress personally attend to much of their Christmas buying in the Berlin shops. There is no more generous giver at this season, than the Emperor, and the Empress remembers her humblest friend, besides giving largely to charitable institutions. Their gifts, too, are useful rather than ornamental and the list of persons remembered equals that of Queen Victoria or about one thousand all told. The Empress gives immediate relatives some trifle she has knitted or embroidered. With every gift a Christmas card is enclosed, and gifts to relatives contain besides a small cake baked in the royal kitchen.

Each member of the royal family has a tree—all being set forth in the shell salon of the palace at Potsdam. When everything is in readiness, the little Princess Victoria Louise leads the procession to the salon, where one of her brothers conducts her to her own particular tree. The Emperor conducts the ladies and gentlemen of the court to the trees arranged for each and the Empress to their Majesties' trees.

Chocolate slippers are features of the German Christmas decorations—St. Nicholas is supposed to have fed his reindeer from them;

a sugar image of the Christ-child is another gift—every German child, including prince and princess, expects to find among his presents the Christ-child. The Christ-child is wrapped in swaddling clothes, tied with ribbons. Three days in Germany are devoted to merrymaking—Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and December 26.

The young Queen of Holland, although a betrothed maiden, has not outgrown children habits, and with each return of Christmas hangs up her stockings by the tiled chimney-place. The little King of Spain quite as carefully hides his slippers on Christmas eve, to find them filled with sugar plums in the morning. The slippers are always hidden, be it noted—in a convenient place—that is convenient for the good fairy to drop gifts in.

## Lord Rosebery's Daughter.

ALTHOUGH it was only recently that Lady Sybil came of age she has acted as mistress to her father's beautiful homes for the last three or four years, and has on more than one occasion been the hostess of royalty. She is passionately attached to her father, which perhaps accounts for the fact that up to the present no lover has been successful in wooing her from her father's side. Lady Sybil is a very clever and accomplished young lady, being one of the few girls to whom the Queen has accorded the privilege of a private presentation. The rumors current lately that Lady Sybil was shortly to marry are denied.

How, THEN, shall we preserve at once both a steadfast and tranquil mind, and also carefulness of things? Take example of dice-players. the numbers are indifferent, the dice are indifferent. How can I tell what may be thrown up? But carefully and skilfully to make use of what is thrown, there is where my proper business begins. - Epictetus.

