

HOME CIRCLE COLUMN

Pleasant Evening Reveries dedicated to tired Mothers as they Join the Home Circle at Evening Tide.

It's a wise husband who prepares to pay for the Christmas gifts received from his dear wife.

The new Christmas game will be very fashionable. The players hunt through their pocketbooks to see how much money they have left. The one who has the most has to buy a present for New Year's.

Christmas, the celebration of the birthday of the Divine Child, is peculiarly the children's festival. And while it cannot, too, but be a time of special rejoicing among grown-ups, we realize after all that it has no other charm to compare with the pleasure we take in some kiddie's delight over the doll or drum or picture book that our special Santa Claus has brought him.

It does the world good to open its doors and take in the season's greetings. Business goes on all the happier because there is a warm, charitable feeling in a man's soul toward his employer or employees or acquaintances. We are all so busy we are apt to forget to be considerate, forgiving and kind. It is well to let the brain rest and allow the heart to rule sometimes, or men may lose the faculty of loving and being charitable.

Christmas most truly belongs to the children. It celebrates the event of the child to whom the wise brought gifts and the shepherds came and worshipped. Would that every child in this land of abundance might receive that little portion to fill the hearts with joy and chase the sobs and tears away. It takes so little to open the fountains of joy it would seem so small a portion might fall to the lot of all the children of American homes; but alas, some will be burdened with gifts till they weary in counting them and others—what a disappointing Christmas it will be! Cannot we be thoughtful of one another and share our blessings with those less favored and make our Christmas more truly happy for ourselves and merry for many others?

Oh, how pleasant, bright and cheery home should be made at that sweet season—Christmas—when each and everyone can bestow some little gift of affection upon dear ones and remembering those who are less fortunate. We should remember the great gift of our Heavenly Father to the world. He it is that can and will send blessings which will make home bright and

Smiths Falls Man Killed in Action.

Mrs. George Whiting received a telegram stating that her nephew Private Rexford Hurlbert, is officially reported killed in action on Nov. 29th. Private Hurlbert is well known in Smiths Falls, and enlisted there going overseas with the second contingent. A singular thing in connection with his death is that on the very day he was killed he wrote a letter to a friend in town which he began by saying that he supposed it would seem like a voice from the dead. Within a few hours he was killed and when his letter was received here it was in very truth a voice from the dead. He enclosed in it a very handsome pearl rosary.—Rideau Record.

The American Viewpoint.

Our Dumb Animals: Suppose the United States were fool (f) enough to use half the money it is talking of spending on gunboats and general "preparedness" and send food, clothing, relief of all sorts to the sufferers from this war. Christmas presents to the widows and orphans of the soldiers, both of Teutons and Allies shiploads of them, keeping it up till the war ends—who imagines that any of the contending nations would ever want to attack us? You can disarm a nation as you can a man, quicker by kindness than by a message that you're ready for him. The trouble is we are afraid to try this human, rational, perfectly practicable plan.

Hitting the Nail on the Head.

At a meeting held on board of Ford's peace ship while the vessel was on her way across the Atlantic, one of the delegates, speaking of American "preparedness," said: "It is not true, perhaps, that every one who favors preparedness in the United States is a grafter, but nothing can be truer than that every grafter in the United States is in favor of preparedness. These men do not want a military preparedness. What they want is a great military profit. The United States is in danger. It is in danger of enemies from within, and they are not naturalized enemies, either. They are native citizens, and they are the men who are building battleships at tremendous profits, men who are trying now to add to the burden of taxation of the United States of America, and to mortgage posterity for years to come." Ford had the report of this wireless back to American news agencies.

Hundreds of Canadians from France and encampments in Great Britain are now on leave in London.

Mount Edith, near Banff, may be re-named "Mount Edith Cavell," after the martyred British nurse.

Children Cry FOR FLETCHER'S CASTORIA

happy. The inmates of a sweet, Christian home should never indulge in gossip, but speak kindly of every one, some loving word of encouragement to the despondent. When in our power lend a helping hand.

Santa Claus' reindeer with their spreading antlers, may have walked two and two out of the ark, when it rested on Aarat's crest after the flood subsided, but who cares? The gift of eternal youth is theirs and they are too busy to bother with family records or chronological tables. Each year the rhythmic patter of their tiny hoofs will be heard on your roof on Christmas eve if your heart keeps young and true and your ears are still attuned to the faintest whisper of God's own messengers. Santa Claus finds his happy way into the homes of the rich and the poor alike, into the palace and into the cottage, wherever children have been sent to brighten and to bless.

Christmas should mean infinitely more to us than can be expressed by gift or language. It is not to be a season of tears, but of joy. It should fill every home with gladness and the noise of happy children and parents. Let the children come home, let the parents throw open their homes to them; let the yule log, a log of wood be laid in the fireplace and lighted and with songs, match the merry crackling log and shadows of the flames dancing jocularly upon the wall. Say, come friends, come strangers. If it be but a cup of cold water that's given, and a kindly smile it will do something to show that

"God's in His Heaven, All's well with the world."

To us no season of the year awakens so much of tenderness and fellow feeling towards all humanity as Christmas. It is not only a time of well wishing, but kindly doing, with a vein of sympathy that would turn no one away empty, without no tender greeting, no act of kindness, no word of love that might contribute to another's happiness. No sacrifice seems too great that we might not bless one another—no yielding up of self to trying that we might smooth some life, no trial of patience too great that we might not bear and forbear with a spirit vexed with many things. An appreciative Christmas will rule the baseness, rudeness, roughness out of any life. Christmas is the time of love. Hatred, envy and malice can have no Christmas. Greed and selfishness are entirely foreign to the day.

SUMMARY OF NEWS.

The war so far has cost France \$6,204,500,000.

Lord Alverstone, former Chief Justice of Great Britain, is dead.

Several women were injured in butter riots at Cologne, Germany.

Lord Alverstone, formerly Lord Chief Justice of England, is dead.

Capt. Guy Drummond, of Montreal, killed in action, left over \$1,000,000.

Premier Asquith announced the reduction of certain British officials' salaries.

A British aviator was burned to death during manoeuvres over England.

Turkish attacks against British positions along the Tigris River have failed.

The heaviest snowstorm in years tied up traffic in the Eastern States last week.

Forty-three more disabled Ontario soldiers are on the Atlantic homeward bound.

King Constantine of Greece has been advised by his physicians to take a complete rest.

The 10th Battalion was heavily shelled by German artillery during its last period in billets.

Sir John French is said to have made no mistakes while in command of the main British forces.

The 3rd Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force destroyed a German supply transport.

Half of the Presbyteries of Canada give a majority of over 20,000 in favor of union with the Methodists and Congregationalists.

King Peter of Serbia, who was driven from his country by the Teutonic invasion, will take up his residence in a palace near Naples.

The steamer Majestic of the Northern Navigation Company was burned to the water's edge at Port Huron, and the Saronic badly damaged.

Private Watts B. Smith, of Tilsonburg, one of the guard at the Marconi wireless station, Port Burwell, committed suicide by hanging.

The French Commercial Commission is shortly to visit Canada to inquire into the chances for a continued supply of war munitions from this country.

Death sentences on Mrs. Hawkes, Wetaskiwin, Alta., and Mrs. Coward, Kootenay, B.C., guilty of murder, have been commuted to ten years' imprisonment and life imprisonment, respectively.

Major Le Grand Reed returned a cheque for \$5,000 which the Recruiting League had given him. A condition was attached to acceptance of the cheque was that the Depot hand over to the League the grant from the city.

Children Cry FOR FLETCHER'S CASTORIA

MERRY

CHRIST'S coming inaugurated among men a new era of good will, and as a consequence thrones are tottering, chains are loosening, prison doors are opening and practical Christian beneficence is flooding the world with sunshine and fills it with songs of gladness.—Rev. Dr. P. S. Henson.

HERE is that "glad tidings," that gospel of "great joy" of which the angel spake to the wondering shepherds—this announcement of God's love for man and man's sonship to God. And these "glad tidings" are for "all people," so the angel said. There is not a single soul to whom the tidings of Christmas come that is not assured of the love of the almighty and infinite Father.

REFORM ye, then—so sounds the voice of the Eternal Spirit, the power back of evolution—reform ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand! So we may gird ourselves to every task of reform with new hope and fresh enthusiasm and ring our Christmas bells again.—Rev. Dr. R. Heber Newton.

It may be that in every gift which at this blessed Christmas tide we gladden our children's hearts we are the Magi again offering treasure to the Holy Child. We may make it so. But richer gifts than these will be required. Our endurance shall be our gift to him who gave himself. Is there toil for us, that we may honor him? Is there self denial? Are there holy consecration and humble service, that shall make the world at last a spotless sacrifice to him who purchased it?

SO we keep Christmas because of its good tidings of great joy. The season of its occurrence is our ripened time. The north wind and the snow in that wind have made us what we are. It drove us to the hearth, to the sacred fires of the inner circle, to the building of the keystone in the arch of our civilization, the home of the Christian man.—Rev. Dr. S. P. Cadman.

TODAY all institutions are beginning to imitate the wise men from the east, who brought to the Divine Child their gold and aromatic spices, their frankincense and treasure. Christ's estimate of the value of childhood has conquered the world. His thought of childhood is the very heart and genius of Christian civilization.—Rev. Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis.

MORNING, noon and night, for breakfast, dinner and supper, the first thing on awaking and the last thing on going to sleep, every hour of every day of every week of every month of the year we want the spirit of Christmas, for it is the spirit of ministrations, of giving, of service, of doing for others.—Rev. Dr. Francis E. Clark.

AND did you ever think what a peculiarly blessed sound in the ears of those watching shepherds of the valley of Bethlehem was the announcement of the angels, "Christ has come?" Ever since the gate of paradise was shut against our first parents his advent had been looked forward to as the hope of a lost world.

STILL there is call for strenuous endeavor and constant fight against evil without and within, as though God would remind us that this is not our rest, that the true holiday (holly day, as it used to be written) is above at his right hand.—Rev. Dr. P. S. Henson.

"Wassail! Drink!"

The wassail bowl, which is still used in some old European families at Christmas, succeeded the skull of the Norseman's foe as a drinking vessel. In these old wassail bowls, some specimens of which are of brown ware and others of massive silver, were placed the ale, the ginger, the sugar, the nutmeg and the roasted crab apples. Where the old custom still prevails the ale is served spiced and sweetened in the wassail bowl, but the apples are omitted.

Still Bring in the Bear's Head.

The ancient Christmas ceremony of bringing in the bear's head is regularly performed on Christmas afternoon in the hall of Queen college, Oxford, England. The head is borne in on a silver dish, shoulder high, at the head of a procession formed by the college choir augmented for the occasion singing "The Bear's Head Song."

ON CHRISTMAS EVE



EVERY one is familiar with the viands that go to make up the Christmas dinner of the English speaking races—the turkey, goose, plum pudding and mince pie festivals—but how many of us know what they eat at Christmastide in foreign countries?

The Frenchman's Christmas bill of fare, for instance, is extensive and varied and in many respects quite different from our own. The great Gallic national dishes are truffled turkey and black puddings, of which every Frenchman who can afford such luxuries makes a very hearty meal at Yuletide.

In Russia the Christmas meal consists largely of two dishes—one of wheat porridge served with honey and the other a curious compound of stewed pears, apples, oranges, grapes and cherries, sweetened with honey and served cold.

Italians, too, are fond of rather sweet and indigestible dishes, especially at Christmas. One of their favorite combinations is that of eels, periwinkles and vermicelli, while the inevitable macaroni and spaghetti form, of course, the principal articles of food at all times.

The German Christmas dinner offers as its principal attraction the goose, without which your true German would feel that he had not had a real holiday feast. Germans, like Austrians and Italians, have a very sweet taste, as evidenced by their numerous varieties of cake.

Notwithstanding the tendency in all countries to offer huge dinners at Christmas, it would seem that every



BRINGING IN THE PEACOCK IN OLDEN TIMES.

nation's holiday bill of fare is becoming simpler with the course of time. An interesting comparison may be made of the Christmas dinners formerly served in England and in this country with those of today, albeit the latter are by no means scanty.

The forebears of modern Englishmen must have possessed magnificent appetites. Their hospitality was conducted on a scale that would make the housekeeper of today shudder. The meal with which they commenced their Christmas day, a mere appetizer to them, was ample enough to rob the modern gourmet of all zest for food for several days. The sideboard of the old English mansion groined under its leviathan round of beef, its corpulent pork pie, the Yorkshire ham, the brawn and chine, while on the table itself deviled turkeys' legs, homemade sausages, cutlets and kidneys sent up a mingled and grateful incense from an environment of piles of hot buttered toast, new laid eggs, honey and fruit.

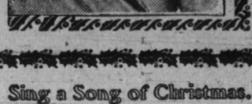
But this repast, substantial as it was, was trifling as compared with the dinner—the real dinner—that followed not many hours after. The feast was heralded by the bear's head, preceded by servants who blew resounding flourishes on their trumpets. The bear's head itself was carried, sometimes on a dish of gold or silver, into the banquet hall at the head of a stately procession of guests.

Then came the peacock, which was served even more sumptuously than the bear's head, with its garnishing of rosemary and bay and its tusk ornamented with large apples. This is how they used to prepare the peacock for the feast: When it had been roasted and dressed with a stuffing of sweet herbs and spices and basted with the yolks of eggs it was sewed into its feathers; its beak was gilded, and it was borne to the dining hall by dames of high degree, accompanied by the strains of minstrelsy.

Other features of the old time Christmas dinner included geese, turkeys, capons, pheasants, sirloins of beef and bunches of venison. That these were washed down with gallons of ale and wine goes without saying. Indeed, another story might be written of the liquid element of the old English din-



WILL SANTA REALLY COME?



Sing a Song of Christmas.

Sing a song of Christmas, Gladdest day of all; O'er the hills and valleys See the splendor fall; Sing of gleaming holly; Sing of mistletoe— Sing a song of Christmas Everywhere you go.

Sing a song of Christmas, Holy, happy day; Sing of Bethlehem's manger, Where the Christ Child lay; Sing of love unbounded, "Peace, good will to men," Sing a song of Christmas O'er and o'er again.

Sing a song of Christmas; 'E'en on this glad day There are griefs and heartaches All along the way; Hearts that wait the uplift Of your note of cheer— Sing a song of Christmas, Strong and sweet and clear.

—Edith Virginia Bradt in Ladies' Home Journal.



THE forest in a whisper spoke, Vine to flower and pine to oak, From holy hills Jerusalem To where, upon its leafy hem, The humble village clung— Calm Bethlehem, dark, yet like a gem, Enwrapped with light, as jewels are, By trembling radiance of the star.

The trees a coming wonder told While yet the birds, their songs unsung, Dreamed of the coming of their young. But, though of splendor bright The forest breathed, its boughs were hung With sable shade; no taper's beam Cast through that dusk its happy gleam.

The angels sang; the shepherds came; In the lone manger shone a flame That burned with supernatural light. The pine trees whispered through the night.

And, though the Saviour's birth Changed not their shadowy gloom to white, They in a patient darkness still Bowed, sighing, and obeyed his will.

Vanished is that old forest now And withered wholly, root and bough. Yet in all Christian realms of earth Springs a new forest, full of birth That lights with radiant cheer The evergreen's enduring worth, And to that whispering prophet brings A glory of the King of kings.

For all our merry Christmas trees Glow fair with flame and revivies That cluster round them year by year, And fir and pine, or far or near, Live upright, gladly die, Knowing that they to God are dear, And bring to man, illumine, A torch that leads to heaven's gate.

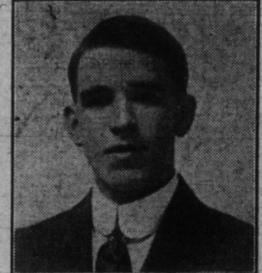
Even so the measure slow of time, Like a rhythm clung with rime, Raises the patient soul on high, Brings joy to life, even from a sigh, And in conclusion sweet, Dark grief with gladness can ally, So shines the forest when we meet With light and song, Christ's birth to greet.

—George Parsons Lathrop.

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TO MY MANY PATRONS AND OTHERS. I WISH YOU ALL a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May your continued patronage be mutually pleasant and satisfactory. C. F. BURGESS.