

### "Dolly, Isn't Christmas Jolly?"

A certain young lady,  
Who lives in Arcady,  
Thinks her simple Polly  
A duck of a Dolly;  
And in an arm-chair,  
With a minute to spare,  
Fast chatters away to her;  
Though what she can say to her  
By way of invention  
Is past comprehension;  
Now kissing, now scolding her  
Now warmly enfolding her.

A sly little bird  
One day overheard  
Missy's gossiping tattler,  
And thus ran the prattle:

My sweet darling Dolly!  
Now is it not jolly  
That Christmas is near,  
With its berries and holly,  
And best of good cheer?  
I am, astly delighted,  
Mamma has invited  
Young ladies a few  
To meet me and you  
Well may you stare, Miss,  
At thought of such bliss,  
Each brings a fine Dolly,  
But none like my Polly!  
Yes, you shall be drest  
As fine as the best;  
Nay, finer; for know—  
Let me whisper it so—  
I am sure you can hear,  
Though dumb you appear,  
You're like my dog Trudy;  
Who knows all I say;  
For that he shows clear  
By pricking his ear  
And wagging his tail  
On the floor like a stall  
But he is too shy;  
I suppose, to reply:  
Yet what symmetry lies  
In his liquid brown eyes!  
His frame all a-shiver  
And a low whining quiver  
Betraying his rapture  
As I hold him in capture.

I wish you would speak,  
If only a squeak.  
Just as Pussy-cat goes  
When you step on her too  
Now, dearest of dears,  
Keep open your ears,  
And let your eyes glisten  
To show me you listen.  
I've a toilette, the rarest,  
To suit you, my fairest;  
A pink satin dress,  
From Paris express;  
Then dainty silk socks,  
With finely worked clocks;  
And shoes—O such beauties!  
To put on your tooties;  
Rare pearls to bedeck  
Your lily-white neck;  
A scarf o'er your shoulders,  
To charm all beholders;  
And a pair of kid gloves,  
Such dear little loves,  
Tight-fitting as skin.  
The fair hands within,  
O won't you look fine  
And all else outshine!  
With envy they'll stare,  
Their eyes open wide,  
As you sit on a chair  
Erect by my side,  
Dressed out as a Queen  
On State days is seen.  
O, darlingest Dolly!  
Now isn't Christmas jolly?

### Old Christmas Games.

One of the interesting features of a Christmas in the olden times was the varied assortment of games which were so heartily joined in by both old and young assembled round the blazing hearth. Most of these merry pastimes have long ago passed away; only a few, such as snapdragon, hide-and-seek, etc., being known by the present generation out of the long list of Christmas games formerly kept up. Thus, an old game played especially at Christmas was "hot cockles," a species of blind-man's-buff, in which the person kneeling down, and being struck behind, was to guess who inflicted the blow. It is described by Gay in the following lines:

As at hot cockles once I laid me down,  
And felt the weighty hand of many a clown  
Buxoms gave a gentle tap, and I  
Quick rose, and read soft mischief in her eye.

In an old tract, "Round About Our Coal Fire; or, Christmas Entertainments," published in the early part of the last century, mention is made of a game called "Questions and Commands." The writer says that the commander may oblige his subjects to answer any lawful question, and make the same obey him instantly under the penalty of paying any such forfeit as may be laid on the aggressors. "Handy-dandy" was much in request at this season. One of the party concealed something in his hand, making his neighbors guess in which one it was. If the latter guessed rightly, he won the article, if wrongly, he lost an equivalent. It is alluded to in "Piers Ploughman," and it is, perhaps, noticed in Shakespeare where King Lear (Act iv., sc. 6) says to Gloucester: "Look with thine ears; see

how you' justice rails upon you simple thief. Mark, in thine ear: change places; and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief?" Browne, too, in one of his "Pastorals," tells how boys

With the pibbles play at handy-dandy.  
A childish diversion also usually introduced at Christmas in bygone days was the "Game of Goose." It was, says Strutt, played by two persons, although it readily admitted of many more, and was well calculated to make the young people sharp at reckoning the produce of two given numbers. The table for playing "Goose" was about the size of a sheet almanac, and divided into sixty-two small compartments, arranged in a spiral form, with a large open space in the centre marked with the number 63; the other compartments were denoted by numbers from one to sixty-two,

parties joined in the game, when Dun was, of course, extricated. No small merriment arose from each person's sly efforts to let the log fall on his neighbor's toes. It is frequently alluded to by old writers, and by Shakespeare in "Romeo and Juliet" (Act i., sc. 4), where Mercutio says to Romeo:

Tut, dun's the mouse, the constable's own word:  
If thou art dun we'll draw thee from the mire.

Some doubt exists as to the precise nature of a game designated "Shooting the Wild Maro," and mentioned by Herrick, where he speaks of—

Christmas sports, the wassail-bowl,  
Of blind-man-buff, and of the care  
That young men have to shoe the maro.

"It appears," says Brand, "that the wild maro was simply a youth so called, who was

Now Post and Pair, old Christmas's heir,  
Doth make a gluggingally  
And vol you who, 'tis one of my two  
Sons, card-makers in Par-alley.

It is, too, among the diversions described by Sir Walter Scott, in his graphic picture of Christmas Eve in "Marmion," and is mentioned by many of our old writers. Three cards are dealt to all, the excitement of the game consisting in each person's vying or betting, on the goodness of his own hand. It would seem that a pair of royal aces was the best hand—hence one of its names, "Pair-royal"—and then other cards, according to their order, such as kings, queens, etc. Thus it much resembled our modern game of "Commerce." Another game of cards was "Ruff," known also as "Double Ruff" or "Cross Ruff," one of its most popular names being "Trump." It is mentioned in "Poor Robin's Almanac" for 1693:

Christmas to hungry stomachs gives relief,  
With mutton, pork-pies, pasties, and roast  
beef;  
And men at cards spend many idle hours,  
At loadum, whisk, cross-ruff, put, and all  
four.

This game was much the same as whist; and was played by two against two, and occasionally by three against three. Noddy, too, we are told, was also much in demand, being noticed by Middleton, where Christmas, speaking of the games at that time as his children, says: "I leave them wholly to my eldest son Noddy, whom, during his minority, I commit to the custody of a pair of knaves and one-and-thirty." In "Poor Robin's Almanac" for 1755 it is thus noticed:

Some folks at dice and cards do sit,  
To lose their money and their wit,  
And when the game of cards is past,  
Then fall to at Noddy at the last.

There is some doubt as to what game was meant; some think cribbage, and others "Beat the knave out of doors."

Such were some of the old games practiced at Christmastide; and the importance that was attached to these diversions may be gathered from the fact that every large household had its Lord of Merry Disports, whose duty it was to arrange the merry-makings every season; a custom which was extended to our Universities and the Inns of Court. At the present day when Christmas is shorn of so many of its former glories, some of these old fireside games might with advantage be revived, thereby creating harmless mirth and fun.—Illustrated London News.

### A Dog who Died from Remorse.

A remarkable instance of the effect that can be produced upon a dog by a human voice was related to me yesterday. Some of your correspondents would consider it confirmatory of their notion that dogs have mind enough to understand words; but I myself rather believe that the sound of the voice acts upon the feeling of dumb animals just as instrumental music acts upon us. The story is as follows:—A clergyman had for a long time a dog, and no other domestic animal. He and his servant made a great pet of the dog. At last, however, the clergyman took to keeping a few fowl, and the servant fed them. The dog showed himself very jealous and out of humor at this, and when Sunday came round and he was left alone, he took the opportunity to kill and bury two hens. A claw half uncovered betrayed what he had done. His master did not beat him, but took hold of him and talked to him most bitterly, most severely. "You've been guilty of the sin of murder, sin—and on the Sabbath day, too; and you, a clergyman's dog, taking a mean advantage of my absence!" &c. He talked on and on for a long time, in the same serious and reproachful strain. Early the next morning the master had to leave home for a day or so, and he did so without speaking a word of kindness to the dog, because he said he wished him to feel himself in disgrace. On his return the first thing he was told was:—"The dog is dead. He never ate nor drank after you had spoken to him; he fasted and pined away, and he died an hour ago."—London Spectator.

Sincerity is an opening of the heart. We find it in very few people; and that which we generally see is nothing but a subtle dissimulation to attract the confidence of others.

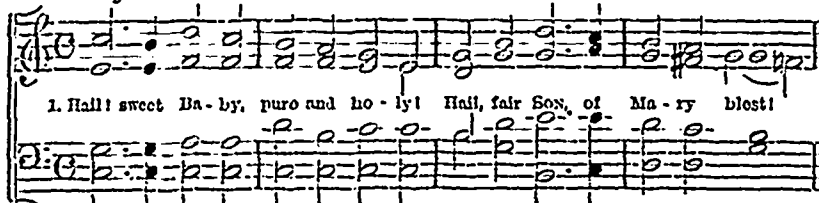
Try to be happy in this very present moment: and put off being so to a time to come: as though that time should be of another make from this, which is already come and is ours.

## CHRISTMAS CAROL.

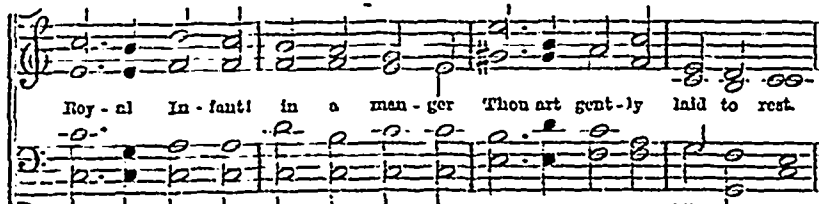
### HAIL SWEET BABY, PURE AND HOLY.

Briskly.

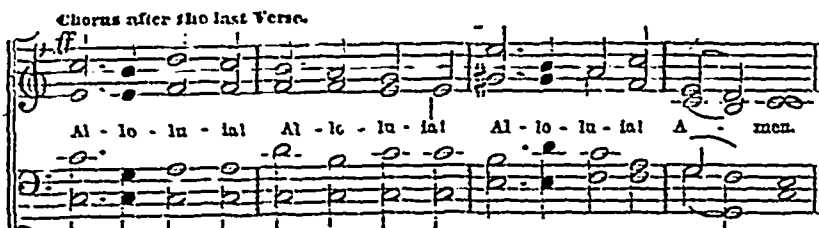
F. A. MANN.



1. Hail! sweet Ba-by, pure and ho-ly! Hail, fair Son, of Ma-ry blest!



Roy-al In-fant! in a man-ger Thou art gent-ly laid to rest.



Al-lo-lu-in-al! Al-le-lu-in-al! Al-lo-lu-in-al! A-men.

2 Filled with awe and tender rapture,  
Tears of joy Thy mother weeps,  
Through the night Thy foster-father  
By Thee faithful vigil keeps.

3 Hovering o'er the hallowed stable  
Choirs of Angels carols sing,  
Glory, glory in the highest,  
Hail to Thee, O Christ our King.

4 Shepherds, leave your flocks and  
hasten  
To adore on banden knees;

Wrapped in swaddling clothes your  
Saviour,  
Israel's Shepherd, ye shall see.

5 Children, year by year with gladness  
Keep Christ's birthday feast anew;  
Sing His praise with loving voices  
Who was born a Babe for you.

6 Hail, sweet Baby, Child of Mary,  
Hail King David's royal Son,  
Singing carols round Thy cradle,  
We adore Thee, Holy One.

Chorus after last verse:—Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen.

inclusive. The game was played with two dice, each player throwing in turn, and marking with a counter whatever number the dice cast up. Thus, if there were a four and five he marked nine, and so on, until the game was completed. The number 63 had to be reached exactly, and should the player exceed it he had to reckon back, and throw again in his turn.

Another game seems to have been "Fox in the Hole," and is thrice mentioned by Herrick, but not once explained:

Of Christmas sports, wassail-bowl,  
That's brewed up after fox in the hole.

A diversion which often caused much laughter was "Dun in the Mire." A log of wood was brought into the middle of the room; this was "Dun," or the cart-horse, and a cry was raised that he had stuck in the mire. Two of the company then advanced, either with or without ropes, to draw him out. When unable to do so, they called for further help, until finally all the

allowed a certain start, and who was pursued by his companions, with the object of being shoed, if he did not succeed in outstripping them." Then there were "converses," wherein one gave a word, to which another found a rhyme; a pastime once very popular.

Among other references to old Christmas games may be quoted the "Paston Letters," in which a letter dated Dec. 23, 1484, relates how Lady Morley, on account of the death of her lord, directing what pastimes were to be used in her house at Christmas, ordered that "there were none disguisings, nor harping, nor luting, nor singing, nor none lord disports; but playing at the tables and chess, and cards; such disports she gave her folks leave to play, and none other."

Of old Christmas card-games may be mentioned that known as "Post-and-Pair," to which Ben Jonson refers in his "Marriage of a Christmas."