

Christmas.

The inn was full at Bethelhem;
A busy crowd were there;
And some were rich and some were wise,
And some were young and fair;
But who or what they were, to-day,
There is not one to care;
But in the cattle's manger
There lay a baby stranger
Soft nestled, like a snow-white dove, among
the scented hay;
And, lo! through Him was given
Our song to earth and heaven.
The song two worlds together sing upon a
Christmas day;
'Glory to God! Good will to men!
O listen! Wake it once again!
Peace on earth! Good will to men!'

They sing it, those who sang it first;
The angels strong and high;
They sing, in shining white, the saints
who died long years gone by,
And all the fluttering cherub throng,
The children of the sky;
They sing, the patient, waiting souls
Who still faith's conflicts know,
They sing, life's happy innocents,
Their faces all aglow,
One melody fills heaven above
And floats o'er earth below,
The song of that sweet stranger,
Who, in the cattle's manger,
Lay, nineteen hundred years ago, among the
scented hay!
All sin and wrong forgiven,
Earth seems close kin to heaven,
And sweet two worlds together sing upon a
Christmas Day!
—Marian Douglas, in 'Harper's Bazaar.'

Inasmuch.

'Isn't it a terrible day!' exclaimed a friend, as she paused outside the door of the Deaconess Home to shake the clinging snow from her umbrella and clothing.
'Oh, I like a snowstorm,' replied the deaconess as she hurried down the steps. 'Besides, I am always sure to find the people at home, and I know the "shut-ins" need me most on dark days.'

The air was 'hoary with the swarm and the whirl-dance of the blinding storm'; while drifts everywhere, and a strange stillness, broken only by the intermittent, muffled sound of sleigh-bells. Past white mounds of snow, through which a pathway had been tunnelled, the deaconess made her way to a narrow street only a few steps away from one of the busiest thoroughfares of the city. The rising wind began to shriek and moan as she turned a corner, and from the windows of dreary little houses along the way, hungry-looking faces peered out at her in wistful questioning. Rows and rows of these unhomelike dwellings, where poverty and unthrift yawned from broken window-panes and tumble-down doorways, were left behind, when, suddenly, she stopped in front of one much larger than the others, opened the door and quickly ascended a long, dark stairway.
'Come in,' answered a tremulous voice to her repeated knocking. In the gathering gloom, an old lady was painfully groping her way to the door. 'Good afternoon, Mrs. B——; I thought you might be feeling lonely this stormy day!'
'Oh, and so it's you, dear. Do you know, my eyes are getting that bad I can hardly see my hand before my face, but I ought surely to know your voice. I'm right glad to see you, for I'm getting in a bad way again, and can hardly make my bit of porridge in the mornings.'

From under her cape the deaconess drew a small tin pail. 'I've brought you a stewed chicken, and you can warm it over for your supper.'

'Ay, miss; it will do for two or three meals. You are always bringing me something good, and I'm sure it is very kind of you to think of an old body like me. I've not had any meat since the last you brought me.'

'Let me straighten things about for you,' and suiting the action to the word, she brought oil, filled the old herosene lamp, with some telling strokes put the room in order, replenished the fire in the poor little stove, and made all necessary preparations for the evening meal. She deposited in the wooden box which served as a cupboard a fresh supply of tea, sugar,

and oatmeal, then drew up her chair beside her aged friend and opened the well-worn Bible. There was something very touching in the eager, reverent attitude of her listener, who loved the Word of God, but had been deprived of the privilege of reading it for many long months. Slowly and distinctly a chapter full of comfort and hope was read, and in the prayer that followed, a tender touch from the unseen fell upon them both with a holy calm and peace.

'I was 'most tempted to-day to think that God was forgetting me,' said the old lady very humbly, when her visitor rose to go. No chiding needed here, only patient, loving words of sympathy and cheer. The deaconess thought of the sad life history of this lonely woman. The dear home faces long buried out of sight, without companionship, and often face to face with want, what wonder that it seemed hard at times to live on cheerfully with so much of love and life all gone!

'Look up and keep a brave heart,' she called back cheerily from the foot of the stairs, a few minutes later. 'Ay, I'll try, dear, and I thank him for——' but her friend was gone into the storm again, for other hungry hearts were waiting.—'Christian Guardian.'

HOUSEHOLD.

Table Garnishings.

Now just a word or two about Christmas table decorations; for no matter how simply we live during three hundred and sixty-four days in the year, on this three hundred and sixty-fifth, this feast day of all Christian countries, we desire to mark the feast with some bit of garnishings.

One might enlarge upon the subject of table decorations in general, and show how much of refinement is not merely indicated but inculcated in the family by the presence of the dainty table trifles, but just now we wish to indicate the simple garnishings appropriate for the Christmas dinner.

My country housekeeper of a humble home, who had neither conservatory nor gay satin ribbons, placed at each plate a little spray of cedar, plucked fresh and fragrant from the bush 'down the road,' a few yards of baby ribbon, scarlet, blue, white and pink, costing but a few cents, had been purchased a few days before and was tied into knots at the base of each little spray.

Father's was red, mother's blue, Arthur's pink and white baby's white only, these were fastened each on the dress bodice and coat after the dinner and worn for the remainder of the day. A vase of pressed ferns and preserved haw berries stood on the table centre, with a bit of the ribbon knotted about it.

The plum pudding came in with a cedar spray in its steaming centre.

And that was all, yet with freshest of table linen, and a dining-room heavy with sweet-smelling boughs, 'it was real Christmassy,' as Arthur said.

From this simple and costless garnishing, we may go upward to the primrose and chrysanthemum centre-pieces; the roses at each plate; the costly little German Christmas tree that the florist exports; even the rare orchids. We may spend as many dollars as we will, yet for this our mid-winter feast, I am not sure but that my country friend with her very humble means had also the truest art instinct.

Only do not consider the rich food all that is needed; have rather a simple fare with suitable garnishings.—Jean Joy, in the 'Canadian Home Journal.'

Holiday Recipes.

Chestnut Stuffing.—Chestnut stuffing for a turkey is prepared as follows: Drop 25 (or thereabout) large chestnuts in boiling water, and leave them for a few minutes; then take them up and rub off the thin dark skin. After this cover them with boiling water and simmer one hour; then take them up and mash them fine. Mince a pound of veal and half a pound of salt pork very fine. To this add the chestnuts, half a teaspoonful pepper and two tablespoonfuls of salt and a cupful of soup stock or water; then stuff the turkey with this.—Boston 'Herald.'

A Novel Plum Pudding.—An English doctor recommends that to make Christmas puddings more digestible and nutritious, suet should be entirely left out. He advises the following recipe, in which nuts finely ground up in a nut mill take its place.—Ingredients: One pound grated bread crumbs, one pound stoned raisins, one pound currants, one pound sultanas, half a pound sweet almonds blanched, and a few bitter almonds, half a pound pine kernels, half a pound of brown sugar, quarter of a pound of butter, quarter of a pound of shelled Brazil nuts, grated rind of three lemons and six eggs, half a pound candied peel. Finely cut up peel, and pass all the nuts, except the pine kernels, through the nut mill; the latter are to be simply chopped. Rub the butter into the bread crumbs, add the fruit, sugar, grated lemons, and lemon peel, then the eggs well beaten, and mix together. Put into a basin and boil in the usual way for six hours.—Exchange.

Sugared Popcorn.—Make a plain sugar syrup, and boil until it will candy in cold water. A cup full of sugar is enough for three quarts of popped corn. Mix the corn quickly with the syrup seeing that every kernel gets its share. Sprinkle a part with colored sugar before it cools.

Popcorn Balls.—For this purpose the corn must be carefully popped and sorted, and all the bad kernels removed. It may be chopped

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