

THOLUCK'S CHRISTMAS-TREE.

The Christmas-tree is sometimes called Christ's tree, by the Germans. Their children usually speak of it as the Sugar-tree. For, in their eyes, its attractiveness is due to the candies and sweetmeats which it brings.

The tree has taken root in our land. But its growth will be promoted, if we surround it with the simple tastes and quiet "amusableness" which have made it grow so luxuriantly in its native soil.

An English clergyman, while a student at the University of Halle, was invited to celebrate Christmas eve at the house of that eminent Christian scholar, the late Prof. Tholuck. His description exhibits the simplicity and childlikeness of mind with which the Germans enjoy their Christmas-tree. He says:

"Down each side of the room into which we entered—there were sixty students invited—was a long table. In the middle of each table was placed a large Christmas-tree, profusely lighted up with little wax tapers and decorated with colored and gilt papers.

"On each side of the two tables were ranged plates filled with small cakes and sweetmeats; before each plate lay a kind of plum-loaf, and at the side a book or books.

"This room opened into the Professor's study, in which there was also a table. On it were a Christmas-tree, a miniature representation of the shepherds tending their flocks, of the appearance of the angels, and of the manger, with its heavenly child, with Mary and Joseph standing near. There also were plates with cakes, books, and small articles of dress.

"As soon as the visitors had greeted their host and hostess, four students struck up a choral.

"When they ceased, Prof. Tholuck reminded his guests of the great gift which the festival commemorated, and begged them to accept the little gifts he had laid by their plates.

"Each one was then requested to look for his plate and book, which was indicated by a slip bearing his name. On every slip Tholuck had also written an aphorism, such as:

"Thou, O God, hast made us for thyself, and our heart is restless, until it rests in thee; 'We can only know God by living a divine life; 'First receive the kingdom of God as a little child, then press into it as a man.'"

"Tea was then handed around, and



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the company separated into small groups, for conversation. After they had thus spent the hours, Tholuck read a few verses in the New Testament, commenting on them, and closed the evening with a brief prayer.

"The guests then gathered their cakes, loaves, sweetmeats, and books, and bidding their host and hostess good-night, departed, filled with a quiet delight."

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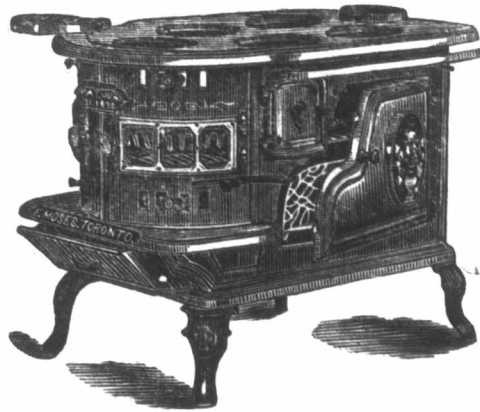
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