

SIR ANTHONY'S CHRISTMAS GIFT

(Elton Harris, in the "British Weekly.")

He had walked moodily into his library, and without troubling to turn up the lights, had flung himself into an easy chair, thrust his hands into his pockets, placed his much splashed top-boots on the curb, and with head sunk on his breast, sat gazing into the fire.

Two years ago there had not been a grey hair in his head, nor would he have been sitting desolate and alone, wondering how he was to get through this time of rejoicing, especially if the frost had come to stay, as had looked too likely when he had ridden home through the gloaming just now. Of course, it would stay, he told himself with deep self-pity; was not a mad gallop after himself the sole thing left that could stir his pulses, make him forget—

"Oh, I understand," and Sir Anthony regarded him unsteadily, the photo hanging limply in his hand. "Well, I am much obliged to you—all, with a hasty glance at the youthful lady in the centre, who seemed much inclined to make a dash for it, and recover the gift.

"You see you are our father; it is a Christmas present," the boy explained nervously. "Joe's children gave him one—he liked it," and the younger lad, lovingly endeavored to deserve his nursery name of "Beauty," nodded his head in grave confirmation.

"Oh, dear God Almighty, at this blessed Christmas time, when our Lord was born, have mercy on Master Anthony, and let his little children lead him back to peace."

"Baby gives," she lied. "It is new, and she thinks you will like it," explained Beauty, with placid, protecting pride, his chubby hands in his belt. "You had better kiss her; she seems to like you."

What the Jew Celebrates at Christmas.

Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch, of Chicago, in the Ladies' Home Journal (New York, December), thus sets forth what the Jew celebrates at Christmastide:—"It is not a secret among scholars that the celebration of the twenty-fifth of the midwinter month in the Jewish notation of the years' circuits as a day of light in commemoration of the rededication of the Temple (see Saint John x. 22) is one of the component factors of which Christmas observance in the Church is a combination.

With something like a smothered groan, Anthony caught her up—Monica's child, who knew her father through the window—and by the aid of one of those faultlessly cut top-boots Beauty was likewise lifted beside her, while Tony found himself swung on to the arm of the chair, whence he could shyly slip an arm round his father's neck, satisfied by the look on the stern, dark face that he would not be repulsed.

"God forgive me!" the man muttered, as in a flash he realized that something was left to him—these tender and innocent souls were all his own to guard, their ardent baby love be his for the winning.

"You like the present?" questioned Tony presently, as the girl's sleepy head lay against his chest, and he dropped the damp mite of a thumb dropped from the rosy mouth. "Joe, nurse's nephew, has five children, and his wife went to heaven when God, the Father, took mother. The children were made to look like her. The children were made to look like her. The children were made to look like her."

"It was almost the first time that he had spoken of her, but looking from the upturned faces of her little sons on the silver-framed photo of lovely Monica on the mantelpiece, it seemed strangely easy and was almost a relief. For she seemed very near to him yet in that quiet room, with her tiny daughter's soft breathing close to his ear, surely he was keeping his promise to her at last and finding that it brought its own reward.

"I dine at home on Christmas Day, and the children with me, even—Miss Monica," he said when nurse arrived for her charges, and he looked up at her with an expression absent from his face for many a long day. "A happy Christmas to you, good old friend; in truth, none better deserves one."

From that Christmas Eve Sir Anthony was the centre of these children's lives; people said, indeed, that he lived for them. And this remark was possibly truer than much that people say; for certain it was that every Christmas would sweep through the bare trees and the park, and frost behind the ice-bound, tall dark man would come quietly into the library at eventide, and after listening a moment to the distant joy-bells, would unlock a drawer in an old desk, and stand motionless before it.

"Barber Saves the Clippings." The barber as his patron arose, shook from the apron to the floor the short locks that he had clipped from the man's head and a boy appeared, swept up the hair and placed it carefully in a large bag.

"Has it got any use?" asked the patron, with an interested and pleased smile. "Of course it has," said the barber. "I would save it otherwise."

"What is it used for?" asked the man. "What will become of that short hair which I have been carrying about under my hat?"

"Well," said the barber, "some of it will go into mortar, some of it will stuff furniture, but most of it will be made into those fine strainers which are used to clarify the best syrups. There are no strainers equal to those woven of short human hair and for all the hair that the barbers can supply the strainer makers keep up a steady demand."—From the Philadelphia Bulletin.

ARCHIE MCGREGOR'S CHRISTMAS VISIT.

(Continued from Page 10.)

opens we will take a trip to the city to see them." His aspect in proposing a visit evidently did not have the desired effect, for she answered rather decidedly, "No, John, I shall not visit them. I'd be too old-fashioned for Archie's stylish city wife."

Failing to give her any comfort, he rose slowly, and said, "I think I'll go to the police office for the paper, before the storm comes on." He returned in a short time, for the little postoffice was only a few rods down the road.

Opening the door he called cheerily, "Here's a letter from Archie." "Here's a letter from Archie," he called, and he handed it to her. "It is worth a mint to you, father!" "That it is, mannikin," but in his new humility Anthony Amherst felt that possibly he deserved his picture less than his coachman, Joseph.

"Would you like it better with a shell frame, dear little shoes?" demanded Beauty, laying a venturesome finger on the cleft in the firm chin. "No, no, just as it is," he answered. "Or—we will get one for it like that one up there, with—mother's picture in it."

"I know that Kate, you have made these three months of our married life so happy that I have grown selfish. To day one of the orphans asked permission to go home for Christmas. When I saw the joy on his face as I granted his request, a strange, inexplicable yearning came over me, bringing with it a mental picture of the old home, and father and mother. I feel that they want me to-night, and I wish them to know my wife," he said, with fond pride.

"I would like to know your parents, Archie, I have no mother now, so you must give me half of yours," she said, sorrowfully. "He drew her closer to him, saying eagerly, 'There's a train in half an hour, Kate. Could we go then?'"

"What about our grand dinner to-morrow evening at Judge Dummer's?" "I'll send a note to the judge, explaining our absence. Will you go late? Say you will humor me, dear." He looked at her pleadingly.

With her loving intuition, she understood his longing even better than he did himself, and answered unhesitatingly, "Of course I will, Archie. I'll get ready at once."

A few hours later as they were speeding away towards the old home among the northern hills Archie leaned towards his wife, saying tenderly, "I am taking my parents a precious gift this Christmas."

"I hope your mother will like me," was her wistful yet reserved answer. "And what about my father?" was the puzzled question. "Oh, I do not fear winning his love, but mothers are different. It is hard for them to share their sons' loyalty and love with other women. I feel for you, mother, Archie," she whispered, softly, as she nestled closer to him.

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