

Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!
Shout the evergreen and pine!
And replying, sing their comrades
Now bedecked in splendour fine.
With the toys all ranged about them,
Gay with lights, they honoured are
As a depot for dear Santa
And his heavy-laden car.

Oh, this dear old Merry Christmas!
Was there ever such a time!
Gladdest poets oft despairing
Fail to give thee fitting rhyme.
Better speak these merry children,
Romp, rushing through the hall,
"Merry, Merry, Merry Christmas,
Unto you, and unto all!"

KEEPING CHRISTMAS.

When the writer was a child only Church-folk were said to "keep" Christmas. You could tell by walking through the streets where Church-folk lived—by the branches of spruce or hemlock in the window. The exchange of gifts, the distribution of bounty to the poor, the Christmas dinner, were confined to Church-folk. And on Christmas Day worshippers crowded the parish church, with a goodly sprinkling of dissenters among them, those who "didn't keep" Christmas, as they used to say, but who came to see the decorations, or hear the Christmas sermon. But now, it is said, everybody "keeps" Christmas. And if the exchange of gifts, the distribution of bounty, the big dinners, and the general hilarity, is "keeping" Christmas, we must admit that everybody does "keep" it. But is everybody's way the true way? Is there, indeed, any meaning in it? If, amidst the grand rejoicing, we do not catch the key-note of the feast, "Glory to God in the Highest," if in the exchange of gifts we forget God's Supreme Gift to us, of His Only-Begotten Son; if in feeding the poor there is no real remembrance of Him who for our sake was born in a stable, we can hardly be said to "keep" Christmas in any true way, whether we be Church-folk or dissenters. It is a mock Christmas; an empty Christmas; because it is a Christmas without Christ. The way to "keep" Christmas is quite another way. The place to "keep" Christmas is not at the fireside, or the festive board alone, or chiefly; but at the altar. There the faithful "keep"

Christmas, indeed, with Him who humbles Himself anew, and makes of His temple another Bethlehem—the house of the Living Bread.

Let us, with the shepherds, when they heard the glad tidings, hasten to this our Bethlehem, there to "keep" Christmas with our new-born King.

A CLUSTER OF HOLY DAYS.

Holy days cluster about Christmas like precious stones about the diamond in a glorious piece of jewelled work.

In the last days of Advent we keep the martyrdom of St. Thomas.

On the day following Christmas we honour the first martyr, St. Stephen.

The next day we commemorate him who, next to the Ever-Blessed Mother, was most loved by our Lord, St. John the Evangelist.

On the third day after Christmas we sing the praises of the Holy Innocents, whose blood tells of the impotent fury of King Herod against the King of Kings.

The fourth day is the anniversary of the martyrdom of a great English Archbishop, St. Thomas a Becket, who died in defence of the Catholic Church.

The octave day (Jan. 1) is the day on which the Holy Child received His Name, Jesus—that Holy Name which we love and honour, and at which we bow and worship.

The twelfth day (Jan. 6) is the Feast of the Epiphany, on which the Three Wise Men worshipped the Holy Child and gave Him gifts—gold and incense and myrrh.

Let us keep holy all these days with which the Church surrounds the day of the birth of the Holy Child Jesus.

THOSE WHO ENDURE

The pains of rheumatism should be reminded that a cure for this disease may be found in Hood's Sarsaparilla. The experience of those who have taken Hood's Sarsaparilla for rheumatism, and have been completely and permanently cured, prove the power of this medicine to rout and conquer this disease. Hood's Sarsaparilla is the One True Blood Purifier and it neutralizes the acid which causes the aches and pains of rheumatism. This is why it absolutely cures when liniments and other

outward applications fail to give permanent relief. Be sure to get Hood's.

HINTS TO HOUSEKEEPERS.

Rice and Meat Croquettes.—One cupful of boiled rice, one cupful of finely-chopped cooked meat—any kind; one teaspoonful of salt, a little pepper, two tablespoonfuls of butter, half a cupful of milk, one egg. Put the milk on to boil, and add the meat, rice and seasoning. When this boils, add the egg, well beaten; stir one minute. After cooling, shape, dip in egg and crumbs, and fry as before directed.

Horseradish Sauce.—Two tablespoonfuls of grated horseradish, 2 tablespoonfuls of cider vinegar, one cup of cream, yolk of one egg, one tablespoonful of butter. Salt to taste. Cover the horseradish with water, let boil half an hour, drain off the water, add the vinegar, butter, half a teaspoonful of sugar and the salt, mix together; beat the egg and cream, and add just before sending to the table. Serve with oysters or cold fish.

Chicken Soup.—Take one well-dressed chicken and cut it in small pieces. Put it in a stew-pan nearly full of water. Add one large tomato, one large onion, one-half pod of red pepper, cut fine, one-half cup of rice. Salt to suit the taste. If the chicken is not fat, add a small piece of butter.

For Dainty Luncheons.—Delicious deviled ham salad may be made by mixing two tablespoonfuls of deviled ham with four tablespoonfuls of creamed horseradish. Sprinkle one-half a teaspoonful of salt over three cups of boiled potato cut into cubes, and add one teaspoonful of lemon juice. Stir in gently one-half of the radish, and pour the balance over the whole. Garnish the top with sliced hard-boiled eggs, gherkins and sprigs of fresh parsley.

Pampas grass may be cleaned very easily by making a lather with tepid water and soap, then shake the grass about in it, smoothing it through the fingers till the dirt is removed. Rinse in cold water, to which a little blue has been added, and shake well before the fire till it is quite dry.

Never cover hot meats or soups when putting them away till they are perfectly cold. If there is no escape for the hot air, they are certain to spoil.

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