

HOME INTERESTS

Conducted by HELENE.

A CHRISTMAS THOUGHT.

I will honor Christmas in my heart. I will live in the past, the present and the future.

The time of peace and good will and kindly greetings is with us again, finding us a little farther on the way.

A CLEVER SILVER GIFT.

A clever little Christmas gift for the woman who prides herself on having her silver just so, yet who finds it necessary to have it polished every time she brings it out from her treasure chest.

GIVING CHILDREN MECHANICAL TOYS.

In these days of twentieth century restlessness and complexity we are going far from the spirit of simplicity and love in which this first Christmas was born.

Modern mechanical toys. Too often the child's playthings are no longer the tools of his active mind and busy fingers, but, instead, he has become the tool of the toys.

At first these mechanical toys are interesting. We look with amazement at the way every external detail has been copied, as if stands with its clever mechanism ready, and all we have to do is to wind it up and let it go.

But let us consider the matter for a moment from the standpoint of the child. He is not supposed to cast it aside after the first interest has subsided. He is expected to play with it, and yet how can he play with a toy which does everything itself after it is wound up?

And this is one of the great secrets of childhood's amusements. It is the child who plays, and his imagination which he uses. The real spirit of play must come from the child himself, and his toys should be simply the means to bring about this end.

The mechanical toy has a certain value in keeping the child in touch with the world through his playthings, but its educational value is very small.

That toy which leaves something to the imagination is the one which will last longest and in which the child will take the deepest interest. That is why the game of blocks has outlived every other game and why it will exist long after the mechanical toys are forgotten.

The nervous unrest of our time is showing in our children, and their toy department is one little place where we may put down the brakes. Instead of buying playthings as modern, as elaborate, as finished and as mechanical as possible, let us rather study to find simpler toys—those which will cause the child to use his imagination as well as the toy, for this is real play.

HOW TO MAKE A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

The Christmas tree has by no means passed the days of its usefulness, and let us hope that it never may do so, but a variety is sometimes desirable at Christmas time as well as at other times, and to get in the spider's web may be substituted for the tree, says the Ripley (Ind.) Journal.

To secure the present the child must follow the windings of the ribbon wherever it may lead until the gift is arrived at and claimed. Such

a plan is productive of much innocent amusement and the surprise at the end of the ribbon is all the more appreciated for the search it has taken to find it.

For Christmas house parties, either for children or for grownups, the scheme will add much to the pleasure of the occasion and will serve as a means of getting all present better acquainted.

When the sons and daughters and grandchildren return to the old home for the holiday season a spider's web will add to the merriment of the season.

HOW TO PUT UP THE CHRISTMAS CANDIES.

Where a large number of children are to be provided with candies and nuts, use, instead of the ordinary tarlatan bags or pasteboard boxes, some pretty crepe paper napkins, placing the candies and nuts in the center of the napkin and then tying them up with either bright-colored yarn or baby ribbon, thus bringing the four corners of the napkin together in the shape of a flower.

SOME NICE THINGS TO SERVE.

Birds' Nests with Oysters.—Boil one package of spaghetti in salted water until tender. Drain and arrange in eight small mounds on the bread board; before it is thoroughly cold scoop out the center of each, and, when cold, fry in hot fat. The irregular form of spaghetti results in very realistic nests. Prepare the oysters, by scalding them in their own liquor, then drain immediately. Place a tablespoonful of olive oil in a small saucepan, add a finely minced onion and carrot, and turn until the oil is absorbed. Pour in half a pint of cream and cook for five minutes, then stir in a tablespoonful of chopped parsley, and a saltspoonful of thyme, season with salt, pepper and paprika, and add the oysters. Set over boiling water for ten minutes and pour carefully into the nests, garnish with blanched celery tops.

Sweetbread and Pistachio Salad.—Cut a pair of sweetbreads into cubes, mix with three one head of finely shredded lettuce and a cupful of mayonnaise dressing to which has been added half a cupful of blanched and pounded pistachio nuts. Arrange in a mound and decorate with stars of mayonnaise and sections of sour orange.

Frozen Fruit Cup.—Take equal portions of preserved peaches, cherries and pineapple, cut them into small pieces and add two oranges, peeled and shredded; cover with confectioner's sugar and chill on ice for four hours before serving. Half fill sherbet cups with the chilled fruit and cover with two tablespoonfuls of strawberry sherbet. Cap each portion with a star of whipped cream, placing a candied strawberry in the center.

Crystalized Fruit.—Boil two cups of granulated sugar with a cup of water and one-fourth of a teaspoonful of cream of tartar. Test it by dropping a little in cold water, and when it becomes brittle and snaps, remove from the fire. Dip into it sections of orange from which all skin has been removed, white grapes,

bits of pineapple, cherries and fruit of any kind. Spread on waxed paper and harden.

Maple Parfait.—Put a pint of milk in a double boiler, and, when very hot, add the whites of two eggs, beaten with two tablespoonfuls of confectioner's sugar; stir until the custard thickens but does not boil. Remove from the fire, and, when cold, pour in a cupful of maple syrup and half a pint of cream lightly whipped. Freeze to the consistency of custard, then add a cupful of chopped boiled chestnuts and freeze hard; pack in an ornamental ring mould and serve with the centre filled with whipped cream.

FUNNY SAYINGS.

FEELING IN HIS ART.

The singing teacher was visiting the school, and as this was an important event in the district, the pupils had been instructed to memorize a verse or two to recite for the entertainment of the visitor.

During the delivery of the lines, one small boy was especially noticeable for the action with which he accompanied his words, so much so that the teacher, surprised at his efforts, commended him highly on the ease with which he spoke and the apparent practice which he must have put on the piece.

"It was fine," she exclaimed, in closing, "and shows a large amount of rehearsal! But, Johnny, where did you get the gestures?"

"Tain't the gestures," replied the young genius with a twist. "Tain't the gestures, it's the hives."

A NATURAL PHENOMENON.

One day Mr. Jellaby had his twin babies down-town, tucked in their double-ended carriage, facing each other, with only their little round faces showing out of the blankets. A boy caught sight of the babies, and he cried in astonishment, "O, mamma, look quick! There is a baby with a head on both ends."

THE TIME FOR IT.

The juvenile rowdy of the house was promised a spanking when he went to bed. His father, who had the contract in hand, went up-stairs at the proper time to administer it. He heard the boy praying earnestly for all sorts of things. Finally the little fellow made a special request that the whipping should be light, winding up with the assurance: "And now, God, if you're ever going to help me, now's your chance."

A GYMNASTIC MARVEL.

There are optical illusions of all varieties. Some are due to mirage, and some are not. A little boy who was drilling a squad of classmates at recess found difficulty in getting them to march properly.

"Lift your right leg!" he called. "Lift your right leg!" "Things went very well until Patsy Hennessy forgot and lifted his left leg, which happened to be clad in trousers exactly like those of the boy next to him, who was obedient in holding up his right leg. The drillmaster stopped against. "You can't do that, Pat Hennessy!" he called. "You're holding up both legs!"

"A

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FIVE GOLDEN RULES.

First—Eat only 3 meals a day, 5 hours apart.

It requires 4 to 4 1/2 hours to digest a meal. This leaves 1/2 to 1 hour for the stomach to rest.

Second—Eat nothing between meals.

If anything is taken into the stomach while digestion is going on, digestion stops and may not start again for an hour.

Third—Eat slowly and chew food thoroughly.

This insures food being well mixed with saliva and partially digested before it reaches the stomach.

Fourth—Drink little fluid with meals.

The stomach gives out about 1/2 pint of gastric juice to digest each meal. If you take another pint of tea, wine or water, then the digestive juices are too diluted to properly digest the food.

Fifth—Take one "Fruit-a-tives" tablet about twenty minutes before meals. "Fruit-a-tives" tone up and sweeten the stomach—insure an abundant flow of digestive juices—and cure Dyspepsia. Follow these directions for 1 month and see how much better you are in every way.

COVENANT OF KINDNESS

Make One to-day and Resolve to Keep It

By Ian MacLaren.

Pardon me if I suggest to you that you enter into a covenant of kindness with your soul. Let us resolve that if we get put out this week by something said to us or something done we will not take it out of our wife, which many respectable "Christians" do. Nor take it out of our children. That we will not be mean enough to take it out of the servants in our house, who can't reply to us, nor out of the clerks in the office, who are afraid to say anything lest they lose their situation.

Let us resolve this week that no friend shall pass us without a signal of good will, even though it be across a street. If any one succeeds this week, then let us trample under foot our envy and our jealousy and let us go and tell that man or that woman that this is one of the greatest things we ever heard of, that they cannot imagine how we have been lifted up by their joy.

Might we not carry the covenant a little further and resolve to go into deeds? Suppose we determine that this week every day we shall do something to make this poor world happier? Suppose you write a letter when you go home to some one you love but to whom you have not written lately? Do it before you go to bed. Let it be a letter full of kindly gossip, telling what you are about, what you have been reading, what you have planned, and saying all sorts of kindly things to the person, whether it be your mother in the country or your friend you have not seen for a long time.

I declare to you that if the people who read this should resolve to-day, before Almighty God, that they will be kind this week, and not unkind, and put themselves about to keep their covenant, they would lift misery from many lives, and they and their friends would come to the close of the week in joy and peace and love of God. What you propose to do, do swiftly; for as the shadows now are falling, and the day is coming to its close, soon the shadows will be adrift your life and mine, and your day will be done. We shall come home in the evening, rendering our account to the Master.

CHINESE CONVERTS AND THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

A notable characteristic of Chinese converts is their devotion to the Blessed Virgin. The Sisters of Charity at Ningpo, to whom we lately had the pleasure of sending an offering for their mission, tells us that "no good Chinese Christian would think of retiring to rest without chanting the Rosary, no matter how tired or weary he might be. In the evening we see hard worked fishermen kneeling in their little boats, with their wives and children, fervently singing away, quite regardless of their pagan surroundings."

The Poet's Corner.

A BELL. (From "Lyrics and Legends of Christmas-Tide," by Clinton Scollard.)

Had I the power To cast a bell that should from some grand tower, At the first Christmas hour, Out-ringing And fling A jubilant message wide, The forged metals should be thus allied— No iron Pride, But soft Humility and rich-veined Hope Cleft from a sunny slope, And there should be White charity, And Slivery Love, that knows no Doubt for Fear, To make the peal more clear; And then, to firmly fix the fine alloy, There should be Joy.

THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

Sweet Infant Prince, Who, by Thy birth, Shed light and joy divine, Come now, in might, unto the earth, And calm this life of mine! Bid carking fears and doubts depart; Bid gloom and sadness cease; Come, gentle Babe, and fill my heart, Sweet Jesus, give me peace!

The hopes that burned within my breast Have lost their olden fire, And, in their stead, a fierce unrest Doth 'gainst my soul conspire! Lord, from my cheerless lot I crave The favor of release; From tyrant-rule my spirit save,— Sweet Jesus, give me peace!

CHRISTMAS BELLS.

I heard the bells on Christmas Day Their old familiar carols play, And wild and sweet The words repeat The words repeat Of peace on earth, good will to men! And thought how, as the day had come, The bellies of all Christendom Had rolled along The unbroken song Of peace on earth, good will to men! Till ringing, singing on its way, The world revolved from night to day A voice, a chime, A chant sublime, Of peace on earth, good will to men!

But in despair I bowed my head—"There is no peace, on earth," I said; "For hate is strong, And mocks the song Of peace on earth, good will to men;" Then pealed the bells more loud and deep, "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep! The wrong shall fall, The right prevail, With peace on earth, good will to men!" —Henry W. Longfellow.

THE BLESSED MAID.

The Blessed Maid, she sits and holds Her little Babe upon her knee, Her little Babe she sits and holds And looketh on Him tenderly; She does not know the angels lean From heaven's walls the twain to see.

The angels lean from heaven's walls, They are a shining company, Archangels and the Cherubim, And seraphs ranked in their degree, And they are clad in harness bright, Wrought in God's holy armorie.

The angels lean from heaven's walls, And loudly they sing adoringly; The Blessed Maid, she does not hear The angels' wondrous minstrelsie; The kine, they kneel down in their stalls To hear that heavenly harmonie.

The Blessed Maid, her eyes drop tears; The kneeling kine she does not see She sees, afar, Gethsemane, The cruel stripes, the crown of thorns The awful cross on Calvary. —Philip W. Francis, in the Independent.

Mild in their Action.—Parnelle's Vegetable Pills are very mild in their action. They do not cause griping in the stomach or cause disturbances there as so many pills do. Therefore the most delicate can take them without fear of unpleasant results. They can, too, be administered to children without imposing the penalties which follow the use of pills not so carefully prepared.

OUR



Dear Girls and Boys:

There is no use of you this week. You cited waiting for Santa would not take time page, I am sure. I hope to be very heavy, with things stowed away for and boy readers, not so kindly write me let all the little folks who in reading this page, sincerely the kind wish the letter in this issue my little friends to assist wishes for a very Christmas.

Your loving

Dear Aunt Becky:

I was sorry to see you in the corner. I hope will write you for Christmas and tell you what me. I sometimes get letters from my sisters are away to a pretty little black dog Nip. I have lots of fun sometimes will just play with me. With merry Xmas and a happy I remain.

Your loving nep

Granby, Dec. 18, 1905

Dear Aunt Becky:

Just a few lines to you will accept me for your to school and like it very study English and French geography, history and My best friends are Kate Maggie Casey. I have teachers. The oldest, most and lives at St. Michael, a school teacher, teaches home. I was received on the 8th December, Immaculate Conception, was very pretty. As the letter I will close wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a happy

Sherrington, Que. Dec.

Dear Aunt Becky:

There is no doubt that wondering what has become from Sherrington. So busy with school studies not many spare minutes had a musical and trag the 8th December, feast immaculate Conception, in hall, given by the young parish for the profit of it was a success. My part in the French play Concert. I am anxious skates, as are many other girls. I hope Jack Frost us in time this year.