

A Christmas Greeting.

Speed my thought, oh, speed, my thought,
Over the miles of snow!
Never before, to hear to her door
Love, with his looks aglow,
Hast thou so far to go!
Take for a chime bells of my rhyme
Over the miles of snow!

Stand, my Thought, oh, stand, my Thought!
Fled are the miles of snow.
Call, O Love! to her window above,
In the voice her heart must know.
'Tis the time of mistletoe;
Sing in the night to her window afloat,
In the night of stars and snow!

HELEN GRAY COLE.

CHRISTMAS ON THE PRAIRIES.

A gentleman who formerly resided in the East but who is now living on the prairie in our North-West writes as follows:

Vastly different is the Christmas that we enjoy far out on the prairies of the North-West, from yours in the towns and cities, where gay bells ring, and stores are filled to overflowing with beautiful things to bestow upon the friends you remember on this glad occasion. The spirit of generosity seems to be contagious then. We all desire to give.—Though it is different out here, yet it is the same glad day. Many, many years ago, in the little town of Bethlehem, was the Christ born on this day. And that same Divine King reigns to-day above, to cast his various and measureless blessings to the children of men over our frost-lettered prairies, as well as you who inhabit the crowded cities. It is often a mirthful party on these vast prairies, that welcomes its annual visit; and although they have no minister near to preach his Christmas sermon to them, at the little schoolhouse in the ravine, and go home with them for dinner, and keep up his reputation for toothsome edibles and roast fowl in particular, yet are they thankful in their hearts, that this day, of all others the gladdest, is given them to enjoy, and in their innocent merriment their joy finds vivacious expression.

The manner of keeping Christmas and the kind of gifts bestowed would, perhaps, aggregate the main or more noticeable differences. Of course, on more thickly settled prairies, the manner of celebrating this world-kept holiday is not, or may not be, as we sketch it. Our Christmas is located on an isolated prairie, far from towns and railroads, and where the entire surroundings would seem to be alien to the conventional methods of keeping that day, and not very propitious to any, scarcely.

On Christmas Eve, as the loving hearted mother surveys the little empty stockings invitingly pinned to a chair-back, or hung above the old fire-place with its cheerful blazing logs, how her memory must revert to other scenes than this time calls up, in far-away Ontario, which she left to help start a home on the wild prairies. So many long miles from town, and it may be the want of money, makes the purchase of toys impossible. Yet she knows the little ones, with faith as strong in the good St. Nicholas as their little Eastern cousins can possibly repose in him, are sweetly dreaming of gifts on the holy morrow. With what eagerness will they rush to those stockings in the rosy flush of early morning! They must not be disappointed. They must have something, that mother heart says.

And sure enough, they do find something. With what childish love the little hearts respond to the one who has not forgotten them, as, on Christmas dawn, they carefully unroll the stockings. An investigation displays wonderful flat-chested boys and girls made of cookie-dough, and remarkably fat ones made of doughnut dough, with dogs and horses, ducks any chickens, all with prominent eyes of black pepper grains; and there are strange creations of pop-corn with syrup to make it adhere, which those dear hands have fashioned with such matchless patience and inimitable skill. And away down in the toe, are pushed some of those big, thick-shelled hickory-nuts, to be found in the woods along the prairie streams. Very happy are these prairie children over their simple gifts and many games they enjoy with them.

As the day goes on, the big brothers, or some male friend, may chance to drop in with other gifts,—live gifts captured in the hunt—queer, little barking prairie-dogs, a long-eared jack rabbit, or a beautiful spotted fawn,—though seldom the latter, which has been scared from its native haunts further south.

Then the wonderful Christmas dinner comes. No rich plum pudding is there, but something better: wild turkey roasted to a turn, and a great nappy of rabbit-pie floating in rich gravy. It is a feast that a king might well envy. In the evening, the young folks scattered around in different cabins, gather in. They tell stories around the big fire-place, sing songs, play games, and make merry as only truly honest, cheerful young people can. And so the good Christmas comes and goes, out here, on the North-West prairies, with "Peace on earth, good will toward men."

Little 3-year-old Robin had just got a shoe-button in his nose, and his mother took him in great haste to the doctor's. The removal of the button caused the little fellow some pain. "Well, my little man," said the physician, "are you all right now?" "Yes, I am all right now," was the indignant response; "but I are don't to have oo' rested."

Christmas, Blessed Christmas.

The open house and hall which the Christmas ballads celebrate are symbolical. It is the day on which nobody shall go starving or cold, because it is the nativity of the Teacher who tells us to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked. It is the day of fraternity, and perhaps before it is over, before the wassail-bowl is wholly dry, and while a few forfeits yet remain to be redeemed, it may occur to some of us to ask, if the open house and hall are symbolical, why should not Christmas itself be symbolical, and since it is a day of fraternity, why should not every day be a day of fraternity?

The effervescence of good feeling which sparkles and rustles through Dickens's *Christmas Carol*; the spirit which melts old Scrooge not only into human sympathy, but into a hilarity which makes him whisper something to the old gentleman, his terrified debtor, that causes the old gentleman to say, "Lord bless me!" as if his breath were taken away, and then to add, "I don't know what to say to such munificence"; the spirit which stirs Scrooge to give Bob Cratchit a dig in the waistcoat and to announce that his salary is about to be raised—"I'll raise your salary, and endeavor to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop, Bob"—this is the spirit of Christmas in its largest sense, the spirit not of a day only, but of a life, for it is good-will to man.

It is not probable that the millennium will be brought about by employers raising the salaries of their clerks, but it is certain that there will be no millennium without that spirit. Scrooge's Christmas did not end with sunset; it lasted all the year round. That Christmas, indeed, is an impostor which ceases to be Christmas because the twenty-fifth day of December is gone. Its reality can be tested only by watching closely the twenty-fifth of May and the twenty-fifth of September, and if they are full of the same kindness, the same good cheer, for everybody and everything, with which the twenty-fifth of December overflows, then that day is not a donkey masquerading as a lion, but a genuine Christmas.

Once there was a Maid Marian who played at forfeits and snap-dragon, and watched the morris-dancers and hobby-horse, and heard the waits singing under the cold moon, and at last, caught beneath the mistletoe, she paid the sweetest forfeit of all. And in the bottom of her heart, despite her rosy cheeks, she felt that she paid it willingly, and secretly sighed to think that Christmas comes but once a year. But long afterward, when for many a year she had been married to the youth who caught her beneath the sacred bush, as she made the plum-pudding every Christmas, and helped to hang the little stockings by the fireside, and hunted the slipper, and gayly bluffed the blindman, she remembered that it was not the snap-dragon nor the waits, nor even that happy forfeit, which made the old Christmas, but something that did not set with the sun nor die with the carol of the waits. She was caught now under the mistletoe, not by that youth only, but by little fellows with pudgy arms, who covered her all over with kisses; and when she was tired of romping, and the little fellows with pudgy arms were fast asleep, holding their dolls and horses and elephants and dogs, she said to that youth of other years, "It was not the games and the pudding, and the mistletoe that made the old Christmas—it was love; and love makes Christmas all the year."—[Harper's Magazine.]

When Women's Rights Were Not Considered.

What the early Christians did was to strike the male out of the definition of man and human being out of the definition of woman. Man was a human being made for the highest and noblest purposes; woman was a female made to serve only man. She was on the earth to inflame the heart of man with every evil passion. She was a fireship continually striving to get alongside the male man-of-war to blow him up into pieces. This is the way in which Tertullian addresses women: "Do you not know that each one of you is an Eve? The sentence of God on this sex of yours lives in this age; the guilt must of necessity live too. You are the devil's gateway; you are the unsealer of that forbidden tree; you are the first deserter of the divine law; you are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed so easily God's image, man. On account of your desert, that is, death, even the Son of God had to die." And the gentle Clement of Alexandria hits her hard when he says: "Nothing disgraceful is proper for man, who is endowed with reason; much less for woman, to whom it brings shame even to reflect of what nature she is." Gregory Thaumaturgus asserts: "Moreover, among all women I sought for chastity proper to them, and I found it in none. And verily, a person may find one man chaste among a thousand, but a woman never." The Testament or the Twelve Patriarchs makes a similar statement, and adds: "By means of their adornment they deceive first the minds of men, and they instill poison by the glance of their eye, and then they take them captive by their doings," and therefore "men should guard their senses against every woman." "The angel of God showed me," it says in another passage, "that forever do women bear rule over King and beggar alike; and from the King they take away his glory, and from the valiant man his strength, and from the beggar even that little which is the stay of his poverty."

How, then, were men to treat this frivolous, dress-loving, lust-inspiring creature? Surely the best plan was to shut her up. Her clear duty was to stay at home and not let herself be seen anywhere. And this duty the Christian writers impress upon her again and again. She is not to go to banquets, where her looks are sure to create evil thoughts in the minds of men who are drinking largely of wine. She is not to go to marriage feasts, where the talk and the songs may border on licentiousness. Of course she is not to wander about the streets in search of sights, nor to frequent theatre, nor the public baths, nor the spectacles. Does she want exercise? Clement of Alexandria prescribes for her: "She is to exercise herself in spinning and weaving, and superintending the cooking if necessary." He adds: "Women are with their own hand to fetch from the store what we require; and it is no disgrace for them to apply themselves to the mill."—Principal Donaldson, in the *Contemporary Review*.

How to Cure a Cold

When one becomes chilled, or takes cold, the mouths of myriads of little sweat glands are suddenly closed, and the impurities which should pass off through the skin are forced back to the interior of the body, vitiating the blood and putting extra work on the lungs and other internal organs.

Just beneath the surface of the skin, all over the body, there is a network of minute blood-vessels, finer than the finest lace. When one is chilled, the blood is forced from these capillary vessels into one or more of the internal organs, producing inflammation or congestion, and thus often causing diseases dangerous to life.

The time to treat a cold is at the earliest possible moment after you have taken it. And your primo object should be to restore the perspiration and the capillary circulation.

As soon, then, as you feel that you have taken cold, have a good fire in your bedroom. Put your feet into water as hot as can be borne, and containing a tablespoonful of mustard. Have it in a vessel so deep that the water will come up well toward the knees. Throw a blanket over the whole to prevent rapid evaporation and cooling. In from five to ten minutes take the feet out, wipe them dry, and get into a bed on which there are two extra blankets.

Just before or after getting into bed, drink a large glass of lemonade as hot as possible, or a glass of hot water containing a teaspoonful of cream of tartar, with a little sugar if desired.

Should there be pain in the chest, side, or back, indicating pleurisy or pneumonia, dip a small towel in cold water, and wring it as dry as possible. Fold the towel so that it will cover a little more surface than is affected by the pain. Cover this with a piece of flannel, and both with oiled silk, or better, with oiled linen; now wind a strip of flannel a foot wide several times around the chest.

The heat of the body will warm the towel almost immediately, the oiled linen and flannel will retain the heat and moisture, and, steaming the part, will generally cause the pain to disappear.

Should there be pain or soreness in the throat you should treat it in a similar manner with wet compress and flannel bandage.

Eat sparingly of plain, simple food. Baked apples and other fruit, bread and butter, bread and milk, milk and toast, baked potatoes, or raw oysters may be eaten.

By following the above directions intelligently and faithfully you will ordinarily check the progress of the cold, and prevent serious, possibly fatal illness.

Curing a Hiccough.

Mr. Smithkin had heard that a sure cure for a hiccough was a severe fright. One evening, smoking at his fireside after supper, he was taken with a hiccough, which continued in spite of all his efforts to check it.

Presently he got up suddenly from his chair, and called out in alarm to Mrs. Smithkin:

"I've lost my watch! I've lost my watch!"

Mrs. Smithkin hastened into the room.

"John Smithkin!" said she, "What do you mean? Why, you haint done any such thing. Here's your watch all right, in your vest pocket."

"Don't you think I know that?" said Mr. Smithkin. "I was jest giving myself a severe fright, you know, to stop the hiccoughs!"

Expressive.

The Boston *Budget* reports an anecdote of a little girl who was very fond of walking with her father. One day he went further than usual, and she began to grow tired.

She did her utmost to conceal the fact, lest it should make her father indisposed to take her with him on future occasions. At last her lagging steps betrayed her to her father's watchful eye.

Even then, however, she parried his questions, and could not be brought to admit her weariness, till he drew her into a trap.

"Well, Lillie, if you don't feel tired, tell me just how you do feel."

"Oh, I'm not much tired, papa," answered the diplomatic little girl; "but I feel as if I should like to take off my legs off and carry 'em awhile."