THE SHEPHERD LASS. A SOOTHISH CHRISTMAN STORY

Oh, sick treat to watch the lass A-nomin' through the heather! Around her a' the lambles thrang To ca'ch her giance an' hear her Which cahoes a' her hills amang As Lley come out the gither. t was a braw, bright Christmas day Till near time for night-fa',

The timid lambies, bleatin', rin Roun' Janet a' thegither; Weel kens the lass the gaet to gae, Travil't sae aften ilka day, Wi' cheery voice she leads the way Safe hame ayont the heather.

But heaven protect us a' at once She misses ane wee pet; She snatches up her plaid to gae; Her mither, greiten', bids her sta; Nor tempt again till break o' day. The gloom an' snaw an', weet. But 'Mither dear,' the lassic cries,

'Ye ken it was yoursel'
That teacht me na sae lang syne,
Hoo the guid shepberd, meek an' ki
Lefta' the joys of Heaven buhin'
An' cam' on earth to dwell. Just to seek out his wanderin' sheep Through hunger, weet an' caul 'sanna I, tho' dark the way, my puir lambic gane astray, in tho' it taks till break o' day, in' bring him to the fauld?

The mither, doited, didna speak Sae Janet kneel't to pray For guidance to the Shevherd kin', An' then w' willing heart and mind Kin through the blast an' snaw to find Her lambie gane astray.

Fill just afore the break of day They heard a feeble bleat :

They heard a feeble bleat; An' rinnin' whaur the sound came fra They saw—aye, bairns greit, weel ye A sight that till their deein' day Nane o' them will torget :--The lamble wrapt in Janet's plaid, A' safe frae blast and cauld; But the wes shepherd lass had gane Far frae a' worldy grief and pain, Leadit by Him wha ance was slain Safe to His heavenly fauld.

"OUT OF REACH," , trickiest of waiting-girls, ras her lady's powdered curls, With mistlete

Sir Plume comes passing to a rout, He smiles, perhaps knows all about The mistletoe. Her guileless lady's not aware, That what the girl is twining there Is resulted

-FREDERICK LOCKER. CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS. How to Make the Home Charming at Small

Among the Christmas preparation one of the most important is decorating the home. It may seem a little trou-ble, but what of that? surely we can do nothing without a certain amount of trouble, and my dear young friends will be doubly repaid when everything i If you have brothers, make them useful by sending them to fetch the green and hanging the beautiful devices which have been so admirably carried out under your deft fingers. There are many ways of using the You can make a heavy festoon of it and fasten at each corner of the room, crossing them in the centre where they are canght up to the ceiling. Another exceedingly pretty way is to take a light cord the length of each picture a light cord the length of each picture cord and tie small pieces of green to it, make a light festoon, then hang them over the nails of each picture and let A deep flush suffused the officer's fine the other's hand.

A deep flush suffused the officer's in the other's hand.

A deep flush suffused the officer's in the other's hand.

"BW It almost even remind her of those what it is; but there is a change in him. [—I fancy it is since we knew Lord times!" broke in Mr. Welbrook, graspower than the other's hand. them lav over the cord, then make an-

other long one and festoon tastefully over the lace curtains. This is particularly effective if you have a bow winand cover by sewing little pieces of the evergreen all over them and pin them the curtains, forming the words "merry Christmas to all," or any sentiment you may desire. Wreaths of green with red and white berries hung in the windows or on the wall are very pretty. If you have no berries you can easily make some by tying small peas into turkey-red and white cotton and bury the rough edges among the Dip some of the leaves and um and water, allowing a pound the f rmer to a quart of the latter. These are very pretty for decorating the chandelier, the effect being doubly beautiful from having the light so near same solution and placed here and there among the green secures variety and looks very quaint. All of these preparations afford a great deal of musement to the young people, and

GLORIOUS TIMES OF GREAT TOO MUCH."

trouble.

Turning from the view of Christin as regards the nations of the earth to the congenial aspect of its domestic side, let us welcome him with Leigh Hunt, who sings:

certainly the pleasure manifested by all who see them is worth all the

No poet was ever more ardent in his praise of good old customs than Leigh Hunt, that most conservative of radi cals. He could even celebrate and speak kindly of their excess, and, in a train of most pleasant banter,

writes of Christmas as the Glorious times of great Too Much! Too much fire, and too much noise, Too much eating, too much drinking, Too much evrything but thinking; Too much evrything but thinking; Solely bent to lugh and staff, And trample upon b

This is truly seasonable poetical lic ense-a running over as it were o animal spirits, which was characteristic of the man, even under the most severe depression. For no one advocate ore strongly than he did the restrict tion of enjoyment to what he here terms "base enough," and the distribution of the surplus of the great Too Much among those who unfortunately are innocent of all familiarity with Enough.

WHAT WE MAY EXPECT. A green Christmas. And consequently, as the goes, a fat church-vard.

The Christmas turkey to have a vis ion of carving knives. Sleighing. A visit from the red-nosed man who savs it's cold. A sleighing party.

A dance and hot turkey. The tail end of a Manitoba blizzar before long. To have our wives present us with handsome Xmas presents, and then to

meet the bills ourselves. More complimentary notices regard ing THE CHRONICLE. And, it possible, more subscribers for the same journal.

Snow poems. Frequent slips on icy sidewalks Every reader to send a copy or two of the CHRISTMAS CHRONICLE to a friend Manitoba, or semewhere else.

CHAPTER I.

The spacious lake was private property, situate in the handsome grounds surrounding Sunnyside Hall, the country seat of Everard Welbrook, Esq., banker and speculator. Left a widower with two children, his whole affection had been centred in the latter. For them he strove to accumulate money; for them he speculated; for them, being a quiet, somewhat retired man himself, Sunnyside Hall was always crowded with guests—especially at Christmastide. Bob and his sister Jean, so far as re-

Bob and his sister Jean, so far as re-semblance went, might have been twins. Both were handsome, both fair. To return to the skating party. Bob, on receiving the retort from the pretty brunette, wheeling round, at once bore down upon her. The girl, glancing over her shoulder with a laugh, increas-ed her pace; but Bob was more than her watch and some came alongide. her match and soon came alongside.
"Don't run away, Miss Norman," he said. "I have been looking for you I don't know how long."

"Have you? Why?"

"We want to try the quadrille. Those of us, you know, who tried it yesterday. Remember this is our last day. I'm aw-

fully sorry."

"So am I. It's been," with a merry side glance, "delightful. But have you your other couples?"

"Oh, yes; only Jean and the lieutenant are wanting. Having found you," said Bob, "I must go and find them."

"Be sure of one thing," laughed Cis Norman, "wherever you find them it will be together."

"By Jove!" a sudden light breaking in more him, "ear don't mean that?"

"El know—I know!" exclaimed Mr. Welbrook, somewhat irritably, passing his hand through his hair; "but dead men's shoes sometimes are long in coming. There—there—I don't mean that!

Only, I repeat, it is impossible!"

"Have you any fault, any blame to and in me, sir?" pleaded the young fellow. "If you would let me know your objection—in what I am distasteful—"

"Distasteful! My dear young friend,

in upon him, "you don't mean that?"
"Something very much like it, I suspect," nodded the girl merrily as she skated off in an opposite direction.
"Dear me," she added sotto voce, "how

Cis Norman's surmise was perfectly orrect. Jean Welbrook and Lieutenant Maurice, a tall, handsome young officer, manly of build, honest of face, and with a pair of dark eyes full of tenderness and , were together, but not on the lake. They were standing amidst the trees, which, though leafless, save for the holly-bushes with their bright scarlet

berries, were thick enough to screen hem from observation.

Jean leaned against the trunk of a liver beech, her face bent down; the roung officer bent over her, one of her ands in his, and his face fixed pleadingly on the sweet, fair countenance that was degree to him than another else on as dearer to him than aught else on

was dearer to him than aught else on larth.

"Darling," he whispered, "pray say 'yes!" Think, to-morrow I leave Sunnyside. In a week I go to India."

Jean trembled, her small hand pressad her companion's.

"Let me, then, tell your father of our love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once. Don't let me take away to love at once at o

me?"
"Not at all—he likes you."
"Is it, then, that I am not rich enough?"
"I cannot say, John. I do not know.

oubled.
"The young fellow who gave you that splendid fan at Christmas?" he cried.
'You don't, you can't mean that your father would favor his suit? Why, Jean, he is half an idiot, that is, he isn't half

orthy of you—no man living really is nite worthy; but he is full of conceit nd selfishness—he never could make you happy."
"He never shall have the chance,
John," she replied with a spirited glance

in her violet eyes.
"My darling!" and his lips touched

hers.
"Yes, John,I love you,and I can never do otherwise; therefore I cannot, wi'not, marry any other man—only dear, I cannot wed even you without papa's sprays of evergreen in a solution of consent."

"And that I hope to get, darling,"

"And that I hope to get, daring," exclaimed the lieutenant, earnestly, "Yes, hope, Jean. How dearly does Mr. Welbrook love you. Do you think he would sacrifice your happiness for a title? Wealth you already have. If you do, my darling, I cannot; so have I your consent to ask him?"

The girl hesitated, then answered:

"Yes, John, and may it be as we wish and we fears are groundless. When

res, John, and may tobe as we wish and my fears are groundless. When will you see papa?"

"I shall go immediately, Jean." The latter consulted her watch. "It wants an hour yet to luncheon she said.

she said. "If you go now you will find hapa in his study. Directly I can get way I will wait you in the western con-"Yes, love. Pray for me—pray for us "Can you doubt it, John? Is not our happiness the same?"
He would have embraced her, but she

He would have embraced her, but she moved back, exclaiming:

"Hark. Is not that Bob calling? Yes," hurriedly. "You, dear, go on to the house; I will return to the lake."

Before he could assent she had disappeared among the bushes. Reaching one of the before-mentioned creeks, she quickly fixed her skates, and then went in the direction of Bob's wine. in the direction of Bob's voice.

"Have you seen Maurice, Jean?" inquired her brother as they met.

"The last time I saw him," she

the house."

Bob had been keenly regarding her. Now he said:
"I say, Jean, we haven't any secrets from each other, have we? So don't mind confessing it. Is there anything between you and Maurice?" "What do you mean, Bob?" she ask-

ed, averting her eyes.
"Do you care for him, dear?"
She looked up at him, and replied, earnestly :
 " I love him, dear, with all my heart." "Poor Jean."
"Why do you pity me, Bob?"
Because the pater, I fear, will never

consent."

It was her own belief, but she cried:
"Don't say that, Bob. If he do not
my heart will break. Why should he

"Because he hopes you will be Lady Melton; he told me so yesterday, And you see, Jean "—hesitating—" it would be a more suitable match. You are an be a more suitable match. You are an heiress; the pater's got no end of money; while Lieutenant Maurice—
"Oh, Bob—Bob—don't be mercenary.
Don's you side against me, or we shall never be friends again."
Before he could reply they were joined by some of the skaters.
Meanwhile, not without considerable negroupers. Leek Maurice had aveced.

Meanwhile, not without considerable nervousness, Jack Maurice had proceedad to Mr. Welbrook's study. His host received him with his usual pleasantness, pushing away with evident relief some papers he had been perusing. He was a man of about fifty-six; Bob somewhat resembled him in feature. His hair was very gray, and lately he had contracted the habit of passing his hand with an action of weariness through

what had brought him, while the young fellow's hopes dropped below zero as he noticed the suddenly drawn brows, and gravity of expression. gravity of expression.

"You are a soldier, Mr. Maurice, and should face difficulties as bravely as I am sure you would face your country's

expectations are great."
"I know-I know!" exclaimed Mr.

"Distasteful! My dear young friend I have neither fault nor blame to find.

I like you—like you very much; only—the truth is——"

me my first consideration."

""And yet, sir, you would separate her from the man she loves—who so fondly loves her that he would lay down his life for her?" ejaculated the lieutenant, with much agitation. "You would break hex heart—"

"Tut—tut!" interrupted Mr. Wel-breek with inverseed writeshilter. "It's

"Let me, then, tell your father of our love at once. Don't let me take away as my melancholy companion in camp the fearful doubt."

"It is but to make the doubt cerainty, I fear, John," answered Jean sadly. "I feel my father will never consent."

"Why, dearest? Does he dislike me sal know you to be, I need not ask you to refrain from twing Jean down by obtained to refrain from the first from the fi to refrain from tying Jean down by ob

she will never wed another; but if by her own desire she should wish to do so, am only aware at one time that would have been no obstacle with papa; yet her own desire she should wish to do so, low" she hesitated—"now I cannot tell I would not even remind her of those

"That's to be seen-that's to be seen.

sorry this should have happened, for there is no one I so esteem as yourself." Jack Maurice was bewildered. He knew Mr. Welbrook not to be that kind of a man who says one thing meaning another; and he was grasping his hand with almost a fatherly grip. features betraved real em on. He could say no more. To plead further he knew would be useless, so he withdrew, and hastened, heavy at heart, to the

west conservatory.
"His sole thought his children's hapris sole thought his children's hap-piness," he reflected, bitterly. "It's all because of that confounded, lisping sprig of aristocracy Lord Melton! As if marall her mine despite everything !" He found her waiting. As he appeared she came quickly among the palms and ferns to meet him, her violet eyes fixed on his countenance.

"Oh, John," she murmured, tremuously, putting out her little hands, "you need not speak: I read all in your face

on his breast. "Only be true to

That afternoon, when the other guests were elsewhere occupied, the dogcart was brought round that was to convey Jack Maurice to the station. He felt after his rejection it was not comme if faut for him to remain. Besides, that evening Lord Melton was expected. So the poor lieutenant had made his adieux, had said farewell to Jean—who had to run to her own room to hide her tears and now came out to mount into his | hand in his; "and you were one day to

"Well," he murmured, looking round upon the splendid grounds, "perhaps I did hope too much—was too ambitious. Jean is an heiress—an heiress to an al-

the far-stretching country—a drear, wintry scene, with a wintry evening settling quickly upon it—" called this a merry Christmas."

When he was speeding by rail to town he could not help picturing the bright, holly-decked drawing-room at Sunnyside, where, with a frown, he saw Lord

Melton persecuting his Jean with his unwelcome attention. A week later, when the transport was steaming down channel, Mr. Welbrook steaming down channel, Mr. Welbrook called Jean into his study, and informed her that Lord Melton had proposed for r hand.
"Jean," he said, "accept him. I have

was a man of about fifty-six; Bob some what resembled him in feature. His hair was very gray, and lately he had contracted the habit of passing his hand with an action of weariness through it.

He leaned back in his chair with his usual genial expression as Jack Maurice stated his desire to speak to him.

"Are you come to say you've got an extension of leave, Mr. Maurice?" he asked. "If so, I am glad off it. All our friends flit to-morrow, and it will be dull for Jean and Bob until we too start for town."

"I wish it were so, sit," said the young lieutenant; "but the transport sails in a week, and I must be on board. No; what I have to say sir, concerns nee and my future far more seriously—so seriously that I hesitate to commence."

Mr. Welbrook threw a sharp glance at him, and Jack Maurice felt he guessed

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Mr. Welbrook threw a sharp glance at him, and Jack Maurice felt he guessed

Mr. Welbrook threw a sharp glance at him, and will succeed, if we do not despair at the outset."

"I do, papa, "she answered, quietly.

"I could not even like Lord Melto. I could not woted him even if I did not love—I do not even like Lord Melto live it is impossible. I could not love John Maurice. But I do love him, so twould be sin to wed another.

Oh, papa, if you force me to not see an other.

Mr. Welbrook looked into the pale, distressed face lifted prayerfully to his.

"Jean, reflect," he exclaimed.

"Doyou mean this?"

"My Jean, you are a heroine!"

"My Jean, glaed, and she my she answered, quietly.

"I do, papa, "she answered, respectfully.

"I do not ove John M

It was true. Mr. Welbrook, the supposed wealthy man, was ruined. In that endeavour to make the "crown a poun", he had rashly speculated, as men will do when "the crown" means

would be toil.

When Jean heard the news she could

Lands. "It was my only chance; but — cannot break her heart. Jean, Jean, my poor. Jean."

"But, sir." put in Bob, "not dishonor. Why dears, when one morning Bob entered the bouldoit where Jean sat at work thinking of Jack.

"Why Bob, you come back?" she sked. "What is the matter?" the acked. "What is the matter?" the acked. "How strange you look. Oh, Bob, speak."

"Two Bad news, dear," he answered, putting his arm shout ther. "Be strong, "she exclaimed. "It was strong," she exclaimed. "It was the oppored of the post of the post

known the worth of my children. Now sit down, and let us talk over it."

Was this the gray, haggard-faced man of so brief a time ago? All the old energy had returned. There was hope, not despair on the banker's countenance. At that moment, strange as it may seem, he was happy.

men will do when "the crown" means thousands.

Mr. Welbrook had had one excuse; it was not for his own aggrandisement that he strove; all he did was for his children. He had tried to give them the golden apples of Hesperides, and, lo! he presented in lieu only Dead Sea fruit. He would have had for them not only the comforts but the luxuries of this world, and now, probably, their lot would be toil.

At that moment, strange as it may seem, he was happy.

A busy but by no means a terribly anxious time followed. People knew of the Welbrook failure, and so also that Mr. Welbrook was acting the part of an honourable man. Sunnyside was to be sold. The servants at Portland Place were dismissed. An agent had it to let furnished, and the Welbrook family had removed to apartments at Fulham. removed to apartments at Fulham.

If their enemies exulted, this horesty of purpose drew about them friends:

pened?"
"Yes," she answered, in a low tone. thankful for the twilight about them.
"What does he say, dear?"
"Nothing," a tremble in the sweet

emark, though he said:
"Oh, with a soldier many things may
"ot." Isn't it droll to think that there may be fine skating going on in Lendon

would be foil.

When Jean heard the news she could not realize it. "Ruined! Beggars!"

The words rang throbbing through her brain.

"Let me sit down, Bob, please," she murmured, her hands pressed to her temples. "Give me a little time, dear, and—and tell me all about it."

He led her to a seat; then gently told her everything. How, a great loss following one speculation, their father, in the hope of retrieving it, had entered upon others, which also had failed. There was a good deal of business about it it she could not understand, but Jean comprehended this plainly enough—they were ruined.

"It's been a fearful time for the poor pater," proceeded Bob, a quiver in his voice, "and to think of his bearing it so bravely alone—letting us have all our pleasures and be so jolly happy. He had but one chance—your accepting Melton—and you see that fell through."

"Oh! Bob, you don't mean papa would have let me wed Lord Melton, and we nearly beggars?" exclaimed Jean.

"Surely not. Had you accepted him, and we nearly beggars?" exclaimed Jean.

"Surely not. Had you accepted him, the patter would have told him the state of affairs: and by making over to him subject to keep her father from think."

So Jean talked on, ever finding some subject to keep her father from think.

"It doesn't seem like it, does it ?

"Nothing," cried Bob. "What do ou mean?"

Then she told him. Bob's heart sank little as he historical but he said. What he said with the said. The said with the steps of the veraments of the said with the steps of the veraments with the said with the said with the steps of the veraments with the said with the Then she told him. Bob's heart sank is little as he listened, but he said, little as he listened, but he said, his countenance was bronzed, his expression animated, free of care, and

a. Ittle as he histened, but he said, heartily:

"Oh the newspaper has miscarried, Jean, newspapers will."

"Then Bob, why has he not written as usual?"

Bob was struck by the truth of that emark, though he said:

"Oh, with a soldier many things may any things may he fine skaing going on Lorde."

"Oh, with a soldier many things may have fine skaing going on Lorde."

"Oh, with a soldier many things may prevent. But I'm glad you've written dear. You see, it'll be all right. Jack Maurice is not like other men."

So Bob began to look out forthemails too; but it none the more brought the letter which never came.

"I would not have believed it of Jack Maurice," exclaimed Bob, indignantly.

"We can tell the character of no man until he is tried," regioned Mr. Wellrook.

"What time is it pet?"

"How can be like Christman at any the is tried," regioned Mr. Wellrook.

"What time is it pet?"

"For many."

"What time is it pet?"

"For many."

out here."
The three sat at the social meal, talking of much, especially of their new

Matters had prospered with Mr. Welprook in his new home. His small capi-al, judiciously expended, had already calized nearly cent per cent. The care but one trouble—his beloved child Jean and was unable to remove it. Still, the ecorate the walls, to give the rooms an ppearance of the old country. They an not lived long enough in the new to

tarving in the bush, had brought him one, fed him, and handed him over to is education until the boy grew to love pretty, gentle mistress with an ection that was devotion.

Ie brought heaps of greenery, and ned delightedly as Jean, the morn-

nailed them to the walls.

"Now, Jube," she said, "I want some different flowers. Those beautiful scar-let, trailing ones, you know. Go and get my horse and your pony saddled. Off ran Jube. The horses were soon owed by the Australian. It was a eautiful morning: a south wind had they reached a dense part of the bush, where the flowers needed grew luxur-

"Missic Jean," cried Jube, "me see booties yonders!" and the boy darted arther into the bushes.

Scarcely had he gone than Jean felt a ough, hard hand on her shoulder. Surrised, alarmed, she turned to find the vil lace of the man who had sworn vencance on her brother Bob.

"We've got you now, my fine madam, loes ho? Calls me thief, cattle lifter, loes ho? Well, I'm going to be a woman-lifter too! Let's see how he likes that! Mert, lend a hand; she truggles like a cat! Quick—quick— ring the horses! We must reach Black

outh, and cried: eave me!"

laughed his sister. "Here is papa—here comes papa.!"
She ran down the steps of the veran-

"Four, papa."
"Do you mind making your tea-hour earlier? I should like a cup above all things."
"Mind, papa! No, Deb shall bring it

for it."

He knew the canker in her young heart and was unable to remove it. Still, the

Jean had an aide-de-camp in a bright,

iantly; they alighted, and began to gather the splendid, gorgeous blos-

She uttered a cry of terror; but in second it was stilled by a hand over

ully before evening."
Poor Jean did indeed struggleell that, for a moment, she freed her 'Oh! Jube, Jube, help me! Don't For a second Jube's black face, in orror, glanced out of the bushes, then isappeared. The bushranger swiftly agged her again, then, by the help of gagged her again, then, by the help of his companion, mounted his horse, holding Jean close before him, and both at full speed rode off through the bush.

Not a quarter of an hour later Jube came dashing down the road to the station. As he come in sight of it he gave a great whoop of joy. A group of mounted men were at the gate.

"The pa-leese!" he cried. "The pa-leese!"

In a few minutes he had joined them, and was breathlessly pouring his story into the ear of the captain—a hand-some, soldierly man.

"Good Heavens! what do you mean?" jaculated the latter. "Mr. Welbrook's aughter abducted by these scoundrels! Where is Mr. Welbrook? He has a son

On on they went, and at every stride

On on they went, and at every strids saw they were decreasing the distance between pursuer and pursued. What breeze there was blew in their faces, thus the police were drawing very near before the bushrangers caught the sound of the horses hoofs. They were seen to look back, then increase their speed.

"On I on!" cried the captain. "Remember, my lads, it's a woman's honor we're saving. By heavens! the brutes are flagging! Hurrah!"

It was so; the horse that carried the double weight was perceptibly dropping behind. Then it was perceived that Jean, having also become aware of pursuit, was struggling with her captor.

"Good heavens! should he hurt her!" thought the captain in horror. One instant he reflected; then, raising his weapon fired above the bushranger's head. To have fired at him or his horse might have brought the three down with a crash fatal perhaps to the delicate girl.

The captain's plan succeeded; the

down with a crash fatal perhaps to the delicate girl.

The captain's plan succeeded; the bushranger, as the bullet whizzed over him, halted a second; his horse reared. Directly after, Jean, her head and shoulders yet muffled, was seen to be half flung, half slid on to the ground, when the horse, relieved of the weight, sprang forward at redoubled speed.

The captain, followed by his men, dashed forward. The former, on reaching Jean, halting, with a cry of indignadashed forward. The former, on reaching Jean, halting, with a cry of indignation, sprang to the ground, and kneeling by her side, began to tear off the mufflings as he called to his men:
"Forward, forward, lads. Capture the villains dead or alive. What's the matter?" he added, as the men sudden, with various evalemations, brought

matter?" he added, as the men suddenly, with various exclamations, brought
their horses to a halt.
Jube had already seen and called out:
"Fire, bush on fire."
"Yes," exclaimed one of the police,
"they've fired the bush, captain; and
see, it's rushing toward us with the
wind. By Jove, we shall have a race
for it."

"Great heaven," ejaculated the captain as he sprang up, clasping Jean in A race indeed. Owing to the intense

heat the trees and grass were as inflammable as gun-cotton, and even in the few seconds the flames were licking up whole patches of the dry grass, leaping up the tree trunks, and running along

"Let him lead us in heaven's name,"
answered the captain. "All of you forward, I will follow."

The slight divergence brought them

for awhile nearer the fire. It scorched their hands and faces, but it goaded the horses to speed.
"Shall I save her—shall I," murmured the captain, distractedly, as he leaned over Jean. "Pray heaven, yes." As the words passed his lips, Jean's eyes opened and, wondering, bewildered, fixed themselves on the countenance pent over hers. Then-oh, the cry that

burst from her lips—the joyous light on her face, as her arms went suddenly to his neck, and she exclaimed:

"John—John—at last."

"My darling—my Jean—my own love," for John Maurice it was. "My Jean—my betrothed—found after all these months."

The words recalled her; she drew back regarding him in perplexity.

"Found? Found?" She ropeated.

"Yes, dearest; after long search," he answered, fondly. "Darling, I have much to tell, much to hear; but this is no fitting time. Jean, see."

December 25th, 1656, will show:—

"Colonel Matthews—'The House is thun, much, I believe, occasioned by the observation of this day. Have a short lift to peread. Here, it is appearation of this foolish day's soleumity; this renders us in the eyes of the people to be profane. We are, no doubt, returning to Popery. But we may place than they do the chor's Day. One may places than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the tord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's Day. One may place than they do the Lord's

no fitting time. Jean, see." She looked up, and perceived the flames. She uttered a cry.
"The bush is on fire! Ah! yes, I remember now-the bushrangers. Oh!

see the flames, how they spring after "Fear nothing, love. I am here, and

She looked into his face with a fond, half-reproachful glance.

"Ah! John," she answered, "as if I had ever taken it from you!"

"Medicalize!" It form you!"

in the presentation of gifts. had over taken it from you!"

"My darling!" His lips touched hers, and at that moment all else but the joy of reunion was forgotten.

Jube proved as good as his word.

take the men and feast them. Well, captain, come into the house. We'll have luncheon, then you can tell us."

Jack Maurice's story was briefly this:

"Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale, "Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale, "Twas Christmas told the merriest tale; A Christmas proached the mightiest ale, "Twas Christmas told the merriest tale; A Christmas gambol oft would cheer The poor man's heart through half the year." —where is he?"

He turned to poor old Deb, whom he had been interrogating about the station before Jube's arrival, and who was now wringing her hands in the bitterest distress, calling out:

Min. Whether the servant had never reached posted it, or from some other cause, it had certainly miscarried, and anxiously he was waiting a reply to his last letter to Jean, when he met with an accident while tiger-shooting in the jungle. He had been structured in the posted in the servant had not posted it, or from some other cause, it had certainly miscarried, and anxiously he was waiting a reply to his last letter to Jean, when he met with an accident while tiger-shooting in the jungle. He bad been interrogating about the station before Jube's arrival, and who was now wringing her hands in the bitterest distress, calling out:

"Miss Jean I—oh! my pretty mistress, save her! If you be like them London police, go and take the villains up. Master's somewhere about," she now answered. "I don't know where, And Mr. Bob's gone about the cattle to Dingo Gully. Oh! master, master!" she added wildly, "the bushrangers have stolen Miss Jean! Help—help!"

"Men," exclaimed the captain rapidly, "you hear! A young lady has been carried off; there is not a moment to lose. We are on their track. Who knows Black Gully?"

"Me," exclaimed Jube. "Take me with you, misser pa-leesse; me show you."

"Good, Linderin, take the boy behind."

Despite the heat, who will doubt that

What's this burry, what's this furry.
All throughout the house to-day?
Everywhere a merry sourry,
Everywhere a sound of play.
Something; too, as the matter, matter,
Out-of-duors as well as in,
For the bell gost clatter, clatter,
Every minute—such a din.

Everybody winking, blinking In a queer, mysterious way What on earth can be to pa What on earth can be to pay?
Bobby peeping o'er the stairway,
Bursts into a little shout:
Kitty, too, is in a fair way,
Where she hides, to giggle out,

As the bell goes cling-a-ling-ing Every minute more and more As the bell goes canges-use. Every minute more and zoore, And swift feet go springing, springing. Through the hall way to the door, Where a glimpse of box and packet, And a little rustle, rustle, Makes such sight and sound and racks. Such a folly bustle, bustle—Thilling skyly out of sight. All at once show shining faces, All at once show shining faces, All at once scream with delight.

Go and ask them what's the matter. What the fun outside and in-What the fun outside and in—
What the meaning of the chatter,
What the bustle and the din,
Henr them, hear them laugh and shout them,
All together hear them say,
"Why, what have you been about, then
Not to know it's Christmas Day?"

Christmas in the Seventeenth Century. Though Christmas is now observed as a day when joy and songs of triumph are its distructive features, and the occasion is one which speaks most eloquently of peace and good will to man, it was not always so, and its observance resulted in tumples and rick which in the branches.

In less time than it takes to write, the captain was in his saddle, Jean supported on his arm, and with the police retracing his steps through the bush.

In less time than it takes to write, the captain was in his saddle, Jean supported on his arm, and with the police retracting his steps through the bush. The three sat at the social meal, talking of much, especially of their new home.

"It's a capital place," remarked Bob; "but for the heat, the 'muskeeters," and those prowling semi-bushrangers."

"I fancy, my boy, it would be better for you to hand such over to the law than treat them as you did the fellow the other day."

"It may be, sir. But I was so riled I couldn't help it. He came to ask for work, and I found him sneaking off with my horse. I horsewhipped the scoundrel off the station."

"For which piece of justice taken into your own hands the fellow vowed vengeance."

"Let him," laughed Bob; "what could he do?"

"Let him, let takes to write, the the coulcing him the troublous times of the Stuarts, remelered legislation in re noticing her stillness, the idea crossed him that to stay her struggles the scoundrel had struck her.

Riding up to his side at this moment, one of the men said:

"This lad says, captain, that he can take us another way, across Stoney Flat; once there, he declares we need no longer fear the fire."

"Let him lead us in heaven's name," time of the Commonwealth. In John Evelyn's Diary the following entry oc-curs under the date 25th December.

1652 :--"Christmas Day, no sermon anywhere, no shurch being permitted to be open, so observed it at home."

From Barton's Diary it appears that the efforts of the Puritans to have Christmas Day struck off the calender did not succeed very well, as the following debate in Cromwell's Parliament, December 25th, 1656, will show:—

"All plums the prophet's sons deny, And spice broths are too hot, Treason's in a December pye. And death within the pot. Christmas, Tarewell! thy days, I fear,

At the restoration of Charles II. "Fear nothing, love. I am here, and will save you."

"But you—you—how are you here?"

"I will tell you, dearest, as we go. Only first, Jean, answer me. Did you fancy I had ceased to love you?"

"How could I do other, John, when you were so silent?"

"But if, dearest, I can explain that silence? Will you give me back your love?"

"Will you give me back your love?"

"But if, dearest, I can explain that silence? Will you give me back your love?"

"Gration restoration of Chattes 1.9

which had fallen into disuse were revived, and the "wassail bowl" again circled, the convivial, hospitable board and the loud and merry jest again rang through the halls and homes of old England. The gentry kept open honses as in the olden time. The custom of giving Christmas and New Year's pre-

The English Christmas. makes good cheer the glory of the day. Forty years ago, when Leech was beginning his career, Kenny Meadows was the "character artist" of the Hustrated London News, and its chief holiday pictures were drawn by him. They were all scenes of eating and they were grames of the Hustrated London News, and its chief holiday pictures were drawn by him. The English Christmas tradition makes good cheer the glory of the day. bidding his men halt, rode on alone. At the gate of the station, Bob was seen just arrived, hearing the news from old Deb; while Mr. Welbrook was riding from an opposite direction, after a fruit-less search.

Speedily they all met in the search of the se just arrived, hearing the news from old Deb; while Mr. Welbrook was riding from an opposite direction, after a fruitless search.

Speedily they all met, when Jean, laughing, blushing, sprang to the ground, and ran to her father.

"Saved—saved!" he cried, catching her to his heart. "My darling saved!"

"Yes, papa," she answered. "Saved by Lieutenant Maurice."

"What!" cried Bob and Mr. Welbrook together.

"Yes, sir, no other," said the captain. reader of to-day looks with amused curiosity at these holiday sketches of yesterday, he too, like the stranger by the fire in Bracebridge Hall, through all the four and the feasting, hears the music of the old Christmas song:

This is the spirit of Dickens's Christ-This is the spirit of Dickens's Christmas, and of Thackeray's, and, in a great degree, of Irving's, touched in all of them by the modern humanitarian sentiment. It is the traditional English Christmas, when no man should go hungry. For there is no joy upon an empty stoumach—except, indeed, the thin cestasy of the starving saints in old pictures, and they were already dehumanized. This is a Christian truth which asceticism has forgotten. To which asceticism has forgotten. To identify squalor, emaciation, and denial of all human delights with especial all human delights with especial ecity was to degrade the rich and nerous religious spirit which taught at all the world is for man's benefit and pleasure. It was George Herbert of whom Richard Baxter said that he ang as one whose business in this world was most with God, and whose beautiful

"Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright, The bridal of the earth and sky," are as fresh as when they were written; tho also said.

flow: thing we see but means our good, as our delight or as our treasure: Christianity does not decline any wholesome use or beauty of the world, and it would be a sorry preacher in the church embowered and scented with Christmas greens who did not hold that Christmas good cheer contemplates body

s well as soul. HANG UP THE BABY'S STOCKING. Haug up the baby's stocking;
Be sure you don't forget—
The dear little dimpled darling

Be sure you don't forget.

Be sure you don't forget.

The dear little dimpled daring?

She never saw Christmas yet;

But I've told her all about it.

And she opened her hig blue eyes,

And I'm sure she understood it,

She looked so funny and wise,

Something in our stocking at Christ-

Two Christmases.

WAS IT A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

It's been the jolliest Christmas in my life," exclaimed Bob Welbrook.

"Not a very great space that," smiled a pretty dark eyed girl, in skating costume, as she glided past him on the ice dotted over with-skaters.

The spacious lake was private property, situate in the handsome grounds surrounding Sunnyside Hall, the country seat of Everard Welbrook, Esq., banker

"As my life!" interpolated Jack Maurice.

"And," proceeded Mr. Welbrook, slightly waving he hand as if the assertion was unnecessary—"wish for my consent to become her suitor? I am very sorry for this, Mr. Maurice, indeed I am! I am grieved, for—it is better to speak at once—it is impossible?"

"Impossible! For Heaven's sake, Mr. Welbrook, do not say that! Think of—of the suffering you must cause to both! Jean—"

of—of the suffering you must cause to both! Jean—'
"Loves you?"
"She says so, and I believe her!"
answered the young lieutenant earnest-ly. "She declares her happiness, like mine, depends upon our union. In pity, sir, do not decide hastily!" he went on. sir, do not decide hastily! he went on.
'I am aware, as far as money goes, at
present I cannot boast of much; but
Jean and I could—nay, would wait.
When two people love each other, and
are sure of one another, they can easily
do that. And though it's an unpleasant
and not a kind thing, I know, to look
forward for dead men's shoes, still my
expectations are creat."

"You have, sir, other views for your "You have, sir, there views for your very, very blind brothers are!"

"By Jove!" repeated Bob again, slowly, looking very grave. "If that's so what will the pater say? Why Jack Maurice has little more than his meny first consideration."

"You have, sir, there views for your laughter?"

"Exactly! That is it! Other views that must be carried out! The happiness of my children has ever been with meny first consideration."

> brook, with increased irritability. "It's not so bad as that! Every girl loves "Mr. Welbrook, surely that is not your true reading of women? certainly not of your daughter? I may seem con-ceited in what I have said; but pray remember I am here to plead her cause as well as my own. I can never—will never wed anyone but Jean, and sho—" Mr. Welbrook, during the speech, had

taining from her any promise."
"No, Mr. Welbrook," replied the young licutenant, who had risen, "I shall not attempt it. Jean has told me

Now my young friend, do you mind leaving me? As I told you, I have not been well; excitement hurts me," and he pressed his hand to his side. "I am

"It is as I feared!"

"It is, darling," he answered, huskily.

"Mr. Welbrook has refused; he—he
has other views for your future."

"I know—I divined it," she said with

me."
"As if, darling," he answered, clasping her to him, "I could ever be other-

there was a pause; they were bounded the window without seemed; his could not be! Jean must marry money."

Then he stepped back evidently to brevent remark from Jack, who, bewildered, got into his place, and rode way down the avenue.

nost millionaire. But, as he is a millionaire, why can he want her to narry money? That beats me. And I," he added with a sigh, as he gazed at instant she was by his side, her arms about his neck.
"Papa, dear, darling papa." she exclaimed, "don't mind it—don't give way

ertain bonds, he hoped to raise enough ing, as if she had no care of her own. a little sob. "But though, John, I cannot wed you without papa's permission, I'll never marry anyone butyou—never!
I swear it, John—I swear it!" as she
I swear it, John—I swear it!" as she have saved papa?"

"No, Jean; he had a wild hope you might; but even from what I know now, it would have failed. Though I expect you would have done it had you "Yes, for papa, Bob; though for my-elf, I would rather work for my living, nowever hard, than wed Lord Melton." "And for what do you imagine the pater cared for wealth, save for our happiness? No, Jean, that would have

een worse than this. As to work, that's just what I expect it will be. Of course, I don't return to Cambridge."
"Poor Bob!" tenderly she put her and now came out to mount into his seat.

He had not done so when the study window opened and Mr. Welbrook came out towards him.

"Good-bye, Maurice, good-bye," he reiterated, shaking his hand. "Believe me, I am very sorry for you! Heaven knows I wish you every happiness; but this could not be! Jean must marry money."

hand in his; "and you were one day to stand for the county."

"We will not think of that now, dear," he reiterated, shaking his hand. "Believe turned; and then imagine the disappointment and worry."

There was a pause; they were both looking out of: the window without seeing aught but the dull February aftermoon. How far from dull it seemed.

> hearts!
>
> Jean broke silence first.
>
> "Where is papa, Bob?" she asked.
>
> "In the library."
>
> "Let us go to him."
>
> They found Mr. Welbrook busy writing. He raised his face, gray and haggard, as they entered, and perceiving Jean, abruptly covered it with his hands, and dropped back in his chair. In an

for our sakes!"
"My child—my Jean!" he ejaculated, "My child—my Jean!" he ejaculated, amazed. "Have you heard the truth? We are ruined!"

"Yes, papa, Bob has told me. It is very, very terrible, but there are worse things that might have come to us."

"Worse! Poor child, she does not realize it! What could be worse, my Jean "
"Death, papa," she answered, quietly.
"If you or Bob had been taken from

After all she had not so much, for her heart was filled with a great joy, a great hope, which was represented in two words—Lieutenant Maurice.

Lord Melton, who had refused to accord Legaco five in the second legaco for cept Jean's first rejection, and had im-plored to be allowed to hope and be re-ceived as a friend, had, when the crash plored to be allowed to hope and be received as a friend, had, when the crash came, cut Bob on their chancing to meet, and gone unexpectedly on a yachting cruise.

"Do you mean Australia, sir?" asked Bob, eagerly.

"Yes; what do you say to the plan, my boy?"

"That it is excellent, sir. I should ing cruise. like nothing so well. I own the idea of being tied to a desk, as I must be in

out, calculated when John Maurice would receive it, and when she could get his reply. It was possible in seven weeks, perhaps six, but she would give two months, not to worry two months, not to worry disappointment should he happen to miss a mail.

During these two months it was that Bob and Mr. Welbrook found their diversity apartments as summer to the sea. lingy apartments so sunny. Jean had eccived three letters from Jack Man-rice, full of tenderness and love, rejoic-ing much in her refusal of Lord Melton; out, of course, he had heard nothing of but, of course, he had heard nothing of the bank stopping.

Mr. Welbrook and Bob were too oc-cupied to notice that a change was coming over Jean; that her eyes had at times a wistful, anxious expression in them, and her laughter and light-heart-edness were at times forced. Thus, she

them, and her laughter and light-heart-edness were at times forced. True, she tried to be always the same before them, but she could not always succeed, for the two months had passed—it was nearly ten weeks—but not a letter, not a line had come from Jack Maurice. Had one of his usual epistles arrived, Jean would have believed the newspaper had miscarried. But these had ceased also. What could it mean? For the first time the girl's heart knew real sorrow. She began to despair—to ask herself was Jack like Lord Melton, and had cared for her only because he believed her an heiress?
Another week; no letter.
Surely he would have written if but to hint his change of desire. There

must do thay; but I don't lancy I Suce "Do you mean Australia, sir ?" asked

ing cruise.

The question which had arisen in Jean's mind was, would Jack Maurice do the same? Would he woo the heiress, but forget her in her poverty?"
Her bright, happy smile answered her before her words.

"As if I did not know him better! My dear, true, loving John! Was it not only on last Christmas day that he said he hated riches? He wished I was poor, and then he would be sure to win me."

Nevertheless it was rather a delicate matter to write to John and tell him of their great trouble. It seemed to Jean, who was sensitive, as if she said, "I am free now, because I am poor, and can wed you, though I was refused you when I was an heiress."

She knew John, was so sure of him, yet she hesitated; she pondered over it for long, then decided she would send a newspaper first with all the account of the failure, and her father's intention to give up everything. It would break the mone; then she could write in answer.

So, without a flutter of doubt, she procured a paper and gave it to the maid of the house to post; then having ascertained on what day the mail went out, calculated when John Maurice would receive it, and when she could get his reply. It was possible in seven weeks, perhaps six, but she would give were a dealing the content of the co

"Me," exclaimed Jube. "Take me with you, misser pa-leesse; me show you." Good. Lindgrin, take the boy behind you. Now off!"

The captain of the mounted police. "Good. Lindgrin, take the boy behind you. Now off!"

The command was followed by the clatter of hoofs, as the men dashed off a pursuit. Elack Gully was nearly twenty miles the intense heat. The consciousness of heat was everywhere, and worse, the want of water. The rivers were dry, the land cracked, and the cattle of yonde large station, with a look of an English homestead about it, had to be driven here, then there, through the bush for fresher herbage and water. About three hours after noon, a young fellow in light linen garments and broad planter's hat, came at a gallop down the road to the station. Leaping his to one of the men, then made his way to the the house.

At the sound of the clattering hoofs a young girl had stepped out of one of the shaled sitting-rooms into the verandah, and now she greeted the new-comer.

"Me," exclaimed Jube. "Take me with you, misser pa-leesse; me show you." Good. Lindgrin, take the boy behind you. Now off!"

The command was followed by the clatter of hoofs, as the men dashed off in pursuit.

Elack Gully was nearly twenty miles distant—a dense spot of wild overgrowth in the midst of a wilderness near the glow present the mountain range. One amongst the glown range of the difficult; the police knew that, and did not spare whip nor spur. If the glown range of the place, capture would be difficult; the police knew that, and did not spare whip nor spur. If the glown range of the police were of the station. Leaping his to be fore Black Gully was reached.

The rest is known.

The rest is known.

The rest is known.

The the had to live, so entered for Justice and to the station. Leaping his worse, the glown range of the place, capture would not spare whip nor spur. If the least of the police were of the best; secondly, the bushrangers depredation. Although the readah. "I am awfully glad, Jack, to find it all the captain is."