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**The Inn at Bethlehem.**  
 (The Landlord Speaks—A.D. 28)  
 What could be done? The inn was full of folk; his honour, Marcus Lucius, and his scribes, who made the census; honourable men from farthest Galilee, came hitherward. To be enrolled; high ladies and their lords; the rich, the rabbis, such a noble throng. As Bethlehem had never seen before. And may not see again. And there they close hurried with their servants, till the inn was like a hive at swarming time, and was fairly crazed among them.  
 Could I know That they were so important? Just the two. No servants, just a workman sort of man. Leading a donkey, and his wife thereon. Drooping and pale—I saw them not myself. My servants must have driven them away. But had I seen them, how was I to know? Were inns to welcome stragglers, up and down In all our towns from Beerseba to Dan. There was a sign, they say, a heavenly light Resplendent; but I had no time for stars. And there were songs of angels in the air Out of the hills; but how was I to hear Amid the thousand clamors of an inn? Of course, if I had known them, who they were, and who was He that should be born that night— For now I learn that they will make him King. A second David, who will ransom us From these Philistine Romans—who but He That leads an army with a loaf of bread. And if a soldier falls, he touches him And he leaps up, uninjured!—had I known, I would have turned the whole inn upside down. His honour, Marcus Lucius, and the rest, And sent them all to stables, had I known.  
 So you have seen him, stranger, and perhaps Again will see him. Prithes say for me I did not know; and if he comes again, As he will surely come, with reins, and And banners, and an army, tell my lord That all my inn is his to make amends.  
 Alas, alas! to miss a chance like that This inn that might be chief among them all, The birthplace of Messiah—had I known!  
 By Amos R. Wells.

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from each side of the back. It is necessary to partly turn in order to reach the tenderloin and kidney fat. A saddle of venison is carved in the same way.  
 In placing a haunch of venison or mutton, have the loin or backbone nearest the carver.  
 A rib roast or a sirloin roast should be placed with the backbone at the right end of the platter. Carve by placing fork in middle and cutting down to the ribs close to the backbone. Next remove any gristle near the back bone. Then from the side nearest the carver cut thin, even slices parallel with the ribs, run the knife under them to separate them from the bone. A sirloin roast is sliced in much the same manner, a cut being required at the flank end and near the backbone to separate the slices.

**Christmas Frolics**  
 AS DESCRIBED BY SOME OF THE GREAT WRITERS OF THE PAST.  
 The man who would know the delights of the "old-fashioned" Christmas, "when every heart was gay, and all the world was young," can find no better companion than Charles Dickens, whose pen has such a magic to conjure them up for us.  
 In his genial company we can feel the warm glow of the flames as they leap gleefully up the chimney of a cozy, close-curtained inn-parlor, with the incense of the steaming punch-bowl coming gratefully to the nostrils, and the merry clashing of the church bells in our ears.  
 Our pulses beat to the lift of the music and the trip of dainty feet; we watch with envy the kissing under the mistletoe, and involuntarily rise to Mr. Wardle's bidding: "Fill up! It will be two hours before you see the bottom of the bowl through the rich, deep colour of the wassail."  
 As Dickens Saw It.  
 How good it must have been to be young in those days—to feast with Bob Cratchit on his famous goose—to join in "Sir Roger," as led by Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig, "after the cold roast and boiled"; and to hear Scrooge's "A merry Christmas, Bob! A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you for many a year. Bob, make up the fire, and bring another coal-scuttle before you dot another 'I, Bob Cratchit!"  
 How we chuckle as we watch Mr. Pickwick, in all the glory of speckled silk stockings, lead out the old lady in rich brocade, saluting her with all courtesy and decorum under the mistletoe; and see that young lady with black eyes, and the other young ladies make a sudden dart forward, and before he knew distinctly what was the matter, surround him, and, with one accord, present their pretty lips to be kissed in turn.  
 But all our novelists do not picture Christmas in such gay colours as the genial "Boz." Those two Christmases at Queen's Crawley even Becky Sharp's sprightly pen cannot redeem from drabness—with dreary Sir Pitt uttering his pompous platitudes, and hating each other all a year round." Nor is there exhilaration in the picture of the amiable Prince de Montcontour drinking to Colonel Newcome and his misfortunes, while Mme. de Fiorac and Ethel Newcome "stick their glasses with pale lips." Pathetic or dignified Thackeray's Christmases are, but seldom stimulating.  
 "Long and Very Dull."  
 But at least they are as lively as those Anthony Trollope pictures. Plum-pudding such as Lily Dale had to eat with the rest, and binadam's buff as played at the "Great House," scarcely make an exhilarating Yuletide, with dinner at three o'clock, and an endless evening sitting in when it should be tea-time.  
 No; the Christmases spent by these bewhiskered, peg-topped men and crinolined women in drawing-rooms of magnet rep are as little attractive as the making of endless wreaths for church decoration must have been to Trollope's young ladies. No wonder he confesses. "It was long and very dull, that Christmas at Allington."  
 "In Jane Austen we get an occasional glimpse of "the gaities, which Christmas generally brings," but the glimpses are tantalizingly few. The red-armed Misses Bennett, Elizabeth refusing the forward young vicar, when shut up with him in her own close carriage; "walks to Merryton, sometimes dirty and sometimes cold"; and even appalling suppers of chicken and scalloped oysters leave us unmoved.

**A Russian Legend.**  
 Babushka stood in her doorway When the Three Wise Men passed by. "We go to worship the King," they said, "We have seen His Star in the sky. Wilt thou come with us, Babushka, Or over the Star be set?" "I will come and seek the New-born King, But ah! My lords! Not yet! I must set my house in order, And I must spin and sew." The Star had set ere she made an end, And the winds began to blow. And evermore Babushka Goes seeking through the wild The Three Wise Men, the shining Star, Her King, the New-born Child.  
 When the eve of Christmas, When there are none to see, She comes with gifts in either hand, To deck the Christmas Tree. She comes where sleeping children Lie dreaming of the morn, To see if once again on earth The Christ-child hath been born.  
 —Marion L. Adams.

Nor are we tempted to join Silas Marner as he spends his Christmas Day "in loneliness, eating his meat in sadness of heart," and looking dolefully out on the black frost "that seems to press cruelly on every blade of grass."  
 Lacking in True Gaiety.  
 Rather let us turn to "The Mill on the Floss," and watch Tom and Maggie enjoy that plum-pudding, which "was of the same handsome roundness as usual, and came in with the symbolic blue flames round it." Here we catch some of the true Christmas spirit; as also when we smile at Aunt Kimble's "annual failure, to follow suit," or tread a measure in fancy at the ball at the Red House, "provided for the occasion as if for a siege," and stocked with feather-beds enough to sleep a small army.  
 But George Eliot's Christmases, however picturesque, are rather decorous and dull. They lack the joie de vivre that dances for sheer joy of being alive in Dickens' pages; and this note of irresponsible gaiety even Thackeray rarely strikes.

**World's Largest Waterfall.**  
 The world's highest waterfall is the great Iquazu Fall, in the Argentine Republic. Until recently the very existence of this gigantic cataract was questioned, depending as it did on the testimony of wandering Indians, and of one solitary white man, a Jesuit missionary. Now, however, since the railway to Paraguay has been completed, they can be reached without any very great difficulty. The Iquazu Falls are 210ft. high and nearly a mile wide, as against Niagara's 160ft. in height and approximately the same width, while the column of water is about the same in both cases. The Victoria Falls on the Zambesi River in South Africa, too, are 330ft. high, more than double that of Niagara. Except in March and April, however, the volume of water hurling itself over the Victoria Falls into the gorge below is smaller than at Niagara.

**Children's Exchange.**  
 A custom prevails in Denmark that can hardly fail to bring nearer together the residents of town and country, and make a fellow-felling between families whose lives, but for that custom, might never come in contact with each other. Residents in the towns send their children, to the country for the summer holidays, and take in exchange for them country children, to whom the sights of the city are a novelty. The school children of city and country leave their homes by thousands, and change places with each other. It is estimated that Copenhagen alone sends ten thousand school children to the rural districts, and entertains the same number in return.

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**Carving the Christmas Meats.**  
 Seven preliminaries to successful carving are these: First, that the meat is of prime quality; second, correct cookery; third, a hot platter, and one of sufficient size to hold the entire joint or bird, when it shall have been carved; fourth, meat to have all strings or skewers that might annoy carver removed before serving; fifth, platter containing large fowl to be placed correctly with head at left of the carver must be of sufficient height to enable him to carve comfortably without rising; and, lastly, but by no means of lesser import, see that the carving-blade is of razor-like sharpness.  
 In carving roast turkey or chicken, remove first the leg, then the wing from one side, then the leg and wing from the other side, separating the joints. Then carve the breast on each side. If the number of people to be served warrants, continue by removing wishbone; separate the collar bones and shoulder blades; separate the breastbone from the back, then the back from the body, and then the side bones. Should the bird be exceptionally large, second joints and legs are to be cut into at least two pieces.  
 The breast of a roast goose and a roast duck should be cut parallel to the breastbone.  
 In carving a large partridge, remove first leg and wing from one side and then from the other; leg and wing constituting one portion. Afterward remove breast from back and cut it through the middle. When partridges are of average size, serve one-half a bird to each person. Small birds like grouse or partridge are placed across the platter with heads on, the farther side from the carver.  
 For it is to be remembered that there are prescribed ways of placing the various meats that very perceptibly facilitate the act of carving.  
 A saddle of mutton should be placed with the tail end to the left of the carver. This must be carved with the grain of the meat, in long, thin slices

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