St. Nicholas

St. Nicholas, as all the world knows, is the patron of children, with whom he is the most popular saint in the calendar. Bishop of Myra, in Lycia, in the time of Constantine the Great, if we are to credit the Roman breviary, supplied three destitute maidens with dowries by secretly leaving a marriage portion for each at their window. Hence the popular fiction that he is purveyor of presents to children on Christmas Eve. He usually makes his appearance as an old man with a venerable beard, and dressed as a bishop, either riding a white horse or an ass, and carrying a large basket on his arm, and a bundle of rods in his hand. In some parts of Bohemia he appears dressed up in a sheet instead of a surplice, with a crushed pillow on his head instead of a mitre. On his calling out: "Wilt thou pray?" all the children fall upon their knees, whereupon he lets fall some fruit upon the floor and disappears. In this manner he goes from house to house, sometimes ringing a bell to announce his arrival, visits the nurseries, inquires into the conduct of the children, praises or admonishes them, as the case may be, distributing sweetmeats or rods accordingly.

St. Nicholas is the Santa Claus of Holland, and the Smiklaus of Switzerland, and the Sonnoe Klas of Heligoland. In the Vorarlberg he is known as Zemmiklas, who threatens to put naughty children into his hay-sack; in Nether Austria as Niklo, or Niglo, who is followed by a masked servant called Krampus, while in the Tyrol he goes by the name of the "Holy Man," and shares the patronage of his office with St. Luco, who distributes gifts among the girls, as he among the boys. Sometimes he is accompanied by the Christ-child.

In many parts of Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands, St. Nicholas still distributes his presents on St. Nicholas eve—the 5th of December—instead of on Christmas Eve. In the Netherlands and adjoining provinces he is especially popular, and is perhaps the only saint who has maintained his full credit, even among the Protestants. For days previous to his expected advent busy housewives have been secretly conspiring with the bakers in gilding nuts, cakes and gingerbread, and torturing pastry, prepared with flour, sugar, honey, spices and sweetmeats into the most fantastical forms, from which the good saint may from time to time replenish his supplies. As to the children, St. Nicholas, or Sunder Klass is the burden of their prayers, the staple of their dreams and the inspiration of their songs. As they importune him to let fall from the chimney top some pretty gift into their little aprons, they go on chanting with childish fervor,

"Sunder Klaas du gode Bloot!
Breng mi Noot un Zukerbrod,
Nicht to veel un nich to mium
Smiet in mine Schorten in."

In Belgium, on the eve of the good bishop's serial voyage in his pastoral visitation of his bishoprics of chimney-tops, the children polish their shoes, and after filling them with hay, oats or carrots for the saint's white horse, they put them on a table or set them in the fire-place. The room is then carefully closed and the door locked. Next morning it is opened in the presence of the assembled household, when, *miribile dictu!* the furniture is found to be turned topsy-turvy, while the little shoes, instead of the horse's forage, are filled with sweetmeats and toys for the good children, and with rods for the bad ones. In some places, wooden or China shoes, stockings, baskets, cups and saucers, and even bundles of hay are placed in the chimney or by the side of the bed, or in a corner of the room, as the favorite receptacle of St. Nicholas' presents.

Sad Incident of the Eastern War.

The London *Telegraph* says: An incident has befallen the wicked and cruel war now raging; which may help to bring home to those chiefly responsible for its sufferings a sharper sense of their guilt. Prince Sergius, of Leuchtenberg, says a telegram from Gorney Studeni, has been killed in one of the recent reconnoissances made by the army of the czarewitch. The prince was attached, like his brother Eugene, to the lancers of the Russian Guard, and riding out along the Lom, a Turkish bullet struck him in the forehead, instantly killing him. The prince thus slain in the flower of his life—for he was only twenty-eight years of age—was, we believe, the fourth son of the Grand Duchess Marie, eldest daughter of the late Emperor Nicholas, of Russia, being, therefore, a nephew to the present czar, and it is obvious that such a casualty must appeal to the minds of the Russian ruler and his household with a great deal more force than the deaths of innumerable soldiers and ordinary officers. We do not say this uncharitably; for it is not to be doubted that long ago the very soul of Alexander has been sickened by the carnage, amid which he is obliged to live, and by the daily multiplying proofs of the crime and blunder, into which he allowed himself to be drawn by the solicitations of the Russian war party, and the beguiling clamor of a faction among ourselves. We know not how far there may have been a touch of tenderness in the relations between Prince Sergius and the Czar Alexander, but the two were at all events near kinsmen by blood, and it may, perhaps, be that the natural feelings produced by this young man's death, may so impress the mind of his majesty with the unspeakable misery caused by his enterprise in many a humble home, and so far sway his already melancholy disposition, that he may by-and-by open his eyes a little to the true character of this vast crime, which is disguised under the name of a pious and philanthropic undertaking.

A Curious Little Animal.

The "truncated pichiciago" is one of the smallest of four-footed animals. It is not more than two inches in length. The shield which covers the entire upper portion of its body is composed of a single piece, and consists of regular, uniform, and smooth scales neatly arranged like mosaic. This coat of mail is truncated vertically at its rear portion. The animal has a curious, cut-off appearance, owing to the apparent absence of a tail, but in reality due to the position of that member, which is short and closely pressed against the body. All the lower portions, the neck, stomach, sides and legs are covered with long and fine hairs.

The pichiciago is found chiefly in the Cordilleras mountains, in Chili, where it feeds on earth worms, snails, and insects. It uses its long, large and sharp nails to make burrows, which are often very deep. In these it remains concealed during the greater part of the day, and rarely ventures to wander to any great distance even by night. It cannot jump or run swiftly; hence when attacked by an enemy it has no means of escape but by its subterranean gallery; hence, when hard pressed, it seeks safety in digging a new hole, and very often succeeds in thus escaping; but when this resource fails, the animal rolls its head and legs under its stomach, forming a ball like a hedgehog, and thus incased in armor defies the teeth or claws of its adversary. It is sometimes called the chlamyphore. As is the case with the mole and other subterranean animals, the eyes are of minute dimensions, and are hidden under the soft and profuse fur of the face.

The editor of an Iowa paper offers to send his "photograph to any (female) teacher who will send him the news from her township," and another Iowa editor advises the teachers to take up the offer, as the pictures will do to scare bad school-boys with.

The pension bureau has 90,000 claims unadjudicated.

Beatty's Celebrated Pianos and Organs.

We have been informed by good authority that the sales of the celebrated pianos and organs of Mr. Daniel F. Beatty, of Washington, N. J., for the last thirty days was by far the largest ever before made since he commenced business; he will no doubt double his already immense business during the holiday season, as Christmas and New Year's gifts. We don't wonder at his immense business, as he is offering great inducements during the holiday season. For instance, we see by his circular he is offering to sell a brand new $270 cabinet parlor organ for only $65; magnificent extra fine rosewood pianos, retail price $650, for only $175. He also sends them on half-month test trial, refunding money and pays freight charges both ways if in any way unsatisfactory. This certainly is a very fair offer Mr. Beatty is now making. We certainly advise our readers who may wish a first-class piano or organ for a holiday gift, to address him at Washington, N. J., at once, for his twenty-four page illustrated newspaper and his new confidential circular to the trade, giving full information all about the piano and organ war. Both sent free to any address.

An Alpine Avalanche.

In the summer of 1864, a party of tourists, while visiting the Alps, climbed, with great difficulty, to an elevated and snow-covered plateau, in order to obtain a better view of Swiss scenery, and contrast the beauty and richness of midsummer below with the bleakness and sterility of midwinter around and above them. In play they rolled the moist snow into large balls; they crowded it over the edge of the plateau. In falling it struck softer snow, which immediately gave way, and soon an avalanche was tearing down the mountain side, burying and destroying every thing in its course. As the handful of snow became the irresistible avalanche, so the hacking cough with sore throat and catarrh, if neglected, speedily develops into that dread destroyer, consumption. In the early stages, Dr. Sage's Catarrh Remedy will effect a cure, though if the blood be affected or impoverished it must be purified and enriched by Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery, and the liver and bowels kept active by his Pleasant Purgative Pellets. Many who despaired of life and had been given up to die by physicians and friends, owe their restoration to the above remedies.

ELY, Linn Co., Iowa, May 8th, 1877.

Dr. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y.:

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Mrs. General Sherman, wife of the general of the United States army, says: "I have frequently purchased Durang's Rheumatic Remedy for friends suffering with rheumatism, and in every instance it worked like magic." Send for circular to Helphenstine & Bentley, druggists, Washington, D. C.

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Patentees and inventors should read advertisement of Edson Bros. in another column.

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From Mrs. Mary Francis, well-known as "Margaret Blount."

Brightbank, Woodstock, Vt., Oct. 6, 1876.

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A lady cousin, who resides with me, took the Syrup during her recovery from a serious illness of some weeks. She has been an invalid for years. Five bottles of the Syrup have so built up her system that she now eats quite heartily, sleeps well, and can walk three miles (in fine weather) without fatigue. I consider the medicine so invaluable to persons of sedentary pursuits, or to those who suffer from languor or low spirits, that I relate this personal experience of its effects to you, leaving you to make what use you please of my letter.

Yours very respectfully,
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The Markets.

NEW YORK.

Beef Cattle—Native	09¾@	11¾
Texas and Cherokee	08¾@	09
Milch Cows	40 00 @	70 00
Hogs—Live	06¾@	06¾
Dressed	07¾@	07¾
Sheep	04¾@	05¾
Lambs	05¾@	06
Cotton—Middling	11¾@	11¾
Flour—Western—Good to Choice	5 40 @	6 25
State—Good to Choice	6 00 @	7 00
Buckwheat, per cwt	2 40 @	2 80
Wheat—Red Western	1 44¾@	1 44
No. 2 Milwaukee	1 33¾@	1 36¾
Rye—State	76 @	78
Barley—State	77 @	78
Barley Malt	68 @	70
Buckwheat	80 @	85
Oats—Mixed Western	40 @	41
Corn—Mixed Western	65¾@	65¾
Hay, per cwt	65 @	90
Straw, per cwt	60 @	65
Hops	11 @	18
Pork—Mess	14 10 @	14 20
Lard—City Steam	(08¾@	08¾)
Fish—Mackerel, No. 1, new	19 00 @	20 00
" No. 2, new	14 00 @	15 00
Dry Cod, per cwt	5 60 @	6 00
Herring, Scaled, per box	10 @	22
Petroleum—Crude	09½@09¾	Refined 13¾
Wool—California Fleece	30 @	33
Texas "	30 @	45
Australian "	44 @	49
State XX	41 @	44
	27 @	33
Butter—State	20 @	21
Western—Choice	20 @	25
Western—Good to Prime	12 @	16
Western—Firkins	13 @	13
Cheese—State Factory	10 @	11
State Skimmed	09 @	10¾
Western	23¾@	24¾
Eggs—State and Pennsylvania		

BUFFALO.

Flour	6 25 @	7 40
Wheat—No. 1 Milwaukee	1 33 @	1 37
Corn—Mixed	60 @	65
Oats	38 @	42
Rye	70 @	78
Barley	82 @	83
Barley Malt	80 @	82

PHILADELPHIA.

Beef Cattle—Extra	06 @	06¾
Sheep	05 @	05¾
Hogs—Dressed	08 @	08¾
Flour—Pennsylvania Extra	7 12 @	7 25
Wheat—Red Western	1 52 @	1 53
Rye	65 @	67
Corn—Yellow	60 @	61
Mixed	60 @	61
Oats—Mixed	35 @	38
Petroleum—Crude	09¾@09¾	Refined 14
Wool—Colorado	23 @	28
Texas	2 @	32
California	27 @	33

BOSTON.

Beef Cattle	08 @	08¾
Sheep	06¾@	07¾
Hogs	05 @	19¾
Flour—Wisconsin and Minnesota	06 @	09
Corn—Mixed	7 50 @	9 00
Oats— "	48 @	52¾
Wool—Ohio and Pennsylvania XX	58 @	65
California Fall	45 @	63

WATERTOWN, MASS.

Beef Cattle—Poor to Choice	5 50 @	6 50
Sheep	7 00 @	7 75
Lambs	7 00 @	9 00

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