

The Canadian Courier

W R Haight
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THE NATIONAL WEEKLY

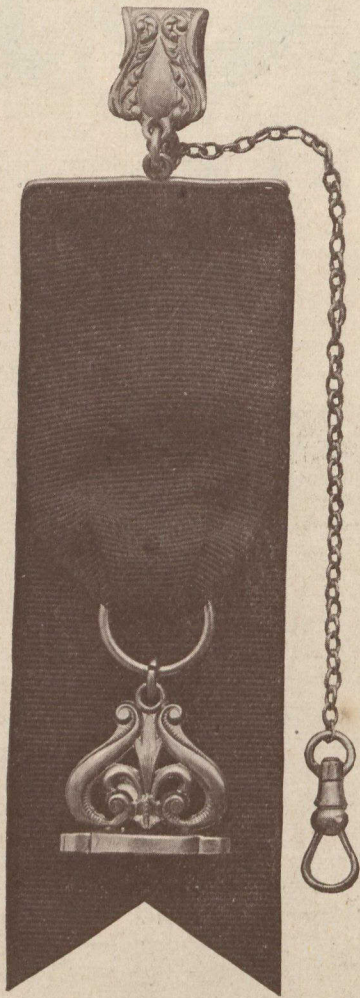


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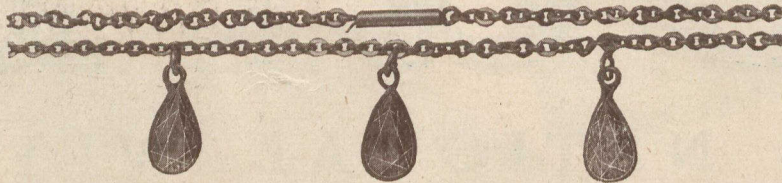
Christmas Number

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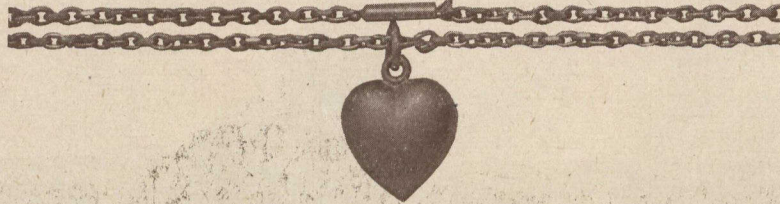
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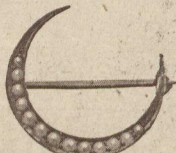
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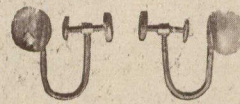
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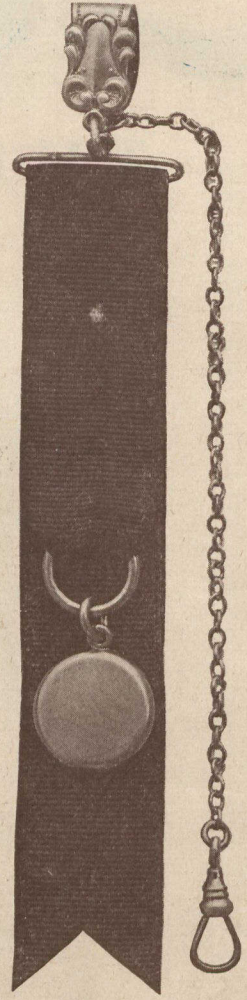
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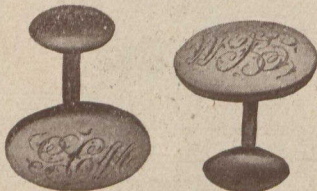
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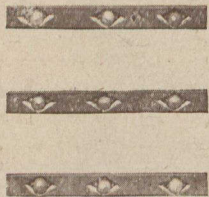
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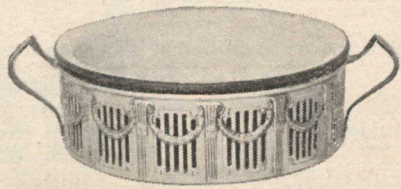
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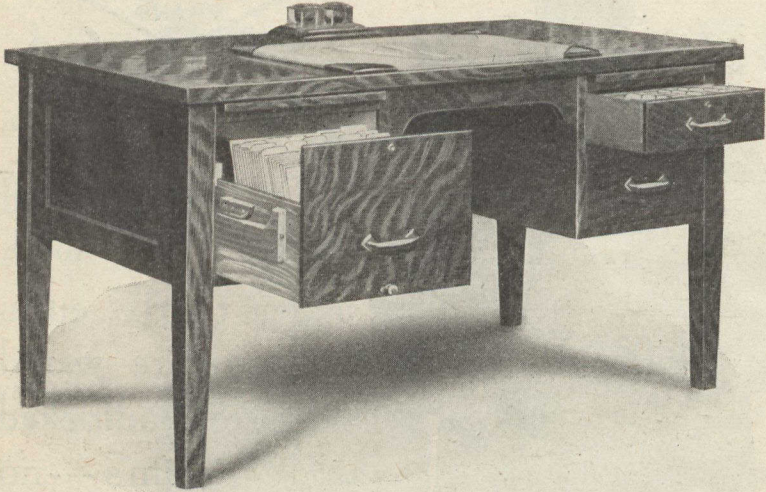
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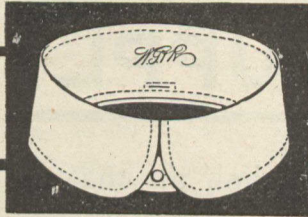
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The Canadian Courier

A National Weekly

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Editor's Talk

WE believe this to be the best ten-cent Christmas number ever issued in Canada. This may sound egotistical, but our friends will forgive us the remark. It contains two kinds of stories—that told in pictures and that in words. With the exception of two of the short stories for children and the tale by Alice and Claude Askew, every feature has been produced in Canada.

We tender our thanks to the writers and artists who have assisted in the work. Miss Kerr's cover design is worthy of special mention, while the drawings by Mr. Thomson, Mr. Greene and Mr. Jefferys are in their best style. Mr. McArthur, once editor of *New York Life*, contributes to our pages for the first time, and we hope to have him again. The same is earnestly said of Mr. Middleton, the clever paragrapher of the *Toronto News*.

AS this number surpasses all those which have preceded it, for this is our third Christmas number, so we hope the issues of 1910 will excel those of 1909. A new serial story by Isabel Ecclestone MacKay will begin in January. Mr. Harry Whitney's account of his famous musk ox hunt in Ellesmere Land will appear in six of the first ten issues. The photographs accompanying these articles are the most wonderful photographs ever taken in northern Canada and Greenland—Messrs. Peary and Cook to the contrary notwithstanding. Indeed, we thoroughly believe that the Whitney articles will be alone worth a year's subscription—in advance.

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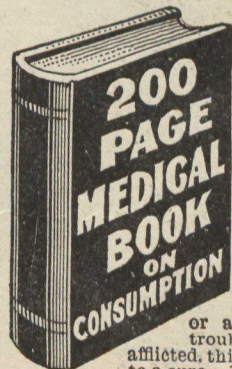
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In answering advertisements mention Canadian Courier

EATON'S

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It is usually difficult to make the money, which we have planned to spend, accomplish all that we desire. At Christmas the heart is larger than the pocket-book. This season of giving makes a thousand and one pressing demands upon the average man and woman's ready money. It often takes hard thinking to spread the Christmas money around the large circle of those we care for. If you desire to make a little money go a long way, there is no gift, at the same cost, that is of more practical use than a sterling silver toilet article. Those illustrated below might be called luxurious necessities, and will certainly make ideal Christmas presents. Their appearance and usefulness is, however not one whit more attractive than the moderate price quoted in every instance, and the quality is fully up to the **EATON** standard.

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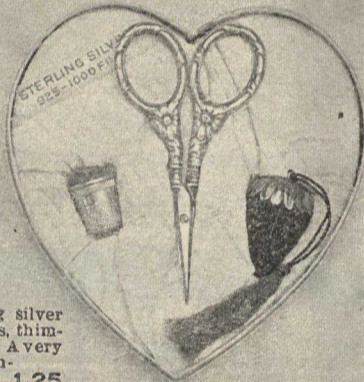
S2-1X. Sterling silver photo frame with plush back, stands 3 1/4 inches high, suitable for dresser, mantel or desk.....1.25



S2-2X. Small plain sterling photo frame with plush back, stands 2 1/2 inches high..... 50c



S2-3X. Very pretty table or desk bell, sterling silver handle and plated bell, it stands about 5 inches high..... 50c



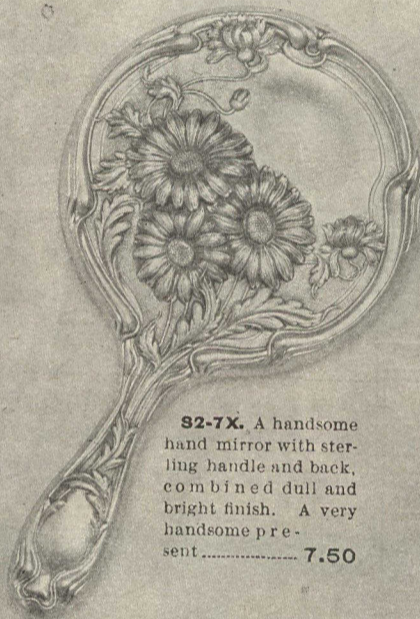
S2-4X. Sterling silver sewing set, scissors, thimble and emery ball. A very acceptable remembrance.....1.25



S2-5X. Fine clothes whisk with sterling silver handle. Very pretty floral design..... 1.35

S2-6X. Fine comb with sterling silver back..... 1.00
Combs are not exchangeable.

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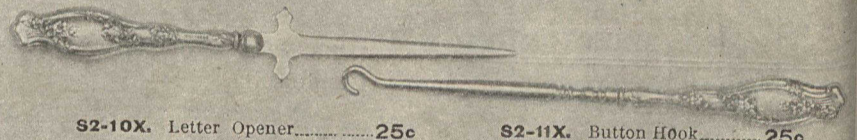


S2-8X. A hair brush of finest bristles, fancy floral design, sterling silver back, combined grey and bright finish..... 3.50



S2-9X. This hat brush is made of the very finest material, has sterling silver back of beautiful design. A present for either men or women..... 2.50

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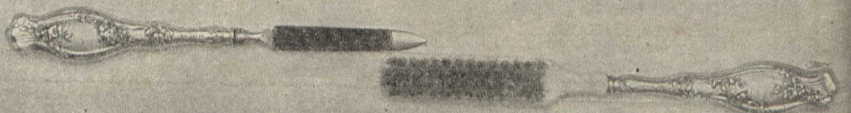
S2-10X. Letter Opener..... 25c

S2-11X. Button Hook..... 25c



S2-12X. Tooth Brush..... 25c

S2-13X. Cuticle Knife..... 25c



S2-14X. Nail File..... 25c

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Canadian Courier

THE NATIONAL WEEKLY

VOL. 7

Toronto, December 11th, 1909

No. 2



*"Be merry all, be merry all;
With holly dress the festive hall,
Prepare the song, the feast, the ball,
To welcome merry Christmas."*

REFLECTIONS

By THE EDITOR

the impossibility of maintaining the present high price of real estate, and are generally dubious. Their doubt makes them miss opportunities which wiser men grasp.

ACCORDING to Dickens, who did so much to popularise the great December festival, the Christmas spirit is "the spirit of active usefulness, perseverance, cheerful discharge of duty, kindness and forbearance." This is a long definition but it would be hard to frame an amendment. It will do us all good to read it again and again. Perhaps "active usefulness" is the phrase which has most affected the Anglo-Saxon race for which Dickens wrote. At Christmastime, the majority of us are more actively useful than at any other. We lay aside, to a greater or less extent, our selfish cupidity and our exclusiveness; we plan and do what we can to make others happy. The result is that for a few short days the lines of the human faces in our midst relax into gentle smiles, and the children amongst us break forth into happy laughter. The storehouse of joy is refilled and the temple of gladness is refurnished.



THE Anglo-Saxon world's 1909 Christmas should be decidedly merry. The ministrations of St. Nicholas should be generous. We have more reason to be thankful and joyful than at any similar period since the good saint made his first appearance sixteen centuries ago. There was never a time when youth could look out upon life with greater assurance of a long and pleasant existence. There was never a time when the bulwarks of civilisation had been builded so high about the individual. Even the weakest woman may work out her destiny without let or hindrance. Tyranny and oppression by the strong have been practically eliminated, and the rights of the individual do not depend so largely upon the accident of birth and heritage.



CANADA'S 1909 Christmas should be as merry as the merriest. Nature has been most bountiful and the Sun of Prosperity shines as it has never shone before on this portion of His Majesty's domain. Neither flood nor earthquake, neither storm nor plague, neither disaster from without nor disaster from within have laid a blot upon the year's page of progress. From the fisherman's humble cottage on Atlantic's shore to the equally humble hut of the British Columbia miner, from the well-furnished home on Ontario's most southerly fruit-farm to the most rudely constructed cabin of the newest settler in the Saskatchewan Valley, there is a joyful story to tell. Freedom and plenty are everywhere, and freedom with plenty has been man's greatest ambition, mankind's greatest hope. We have had our portion of joy and sadness, our seasons of thanksgiving and regret. These come to all people and to all individuals. But no nation, as a whole, has had a greater measure of happiness in any one twelve-month since the Angels chanted the heavenly message "Peace on earth and Good-will toward men."

If there are any poor among us, any who are suffering, any who are dis-spirited, let those of us who are more fortunate share with them of our wealth and our joy and gladness. They need sympathy more than charity, but if they need charity let it be given with a smiling countenance so that there be no bitter sting.



CANADIANS hardly realise how prosperous their country is, though they are said to be an optimistic people. This lack of knowledge shows itself in two ways. Comparatively few people know that Canada is making faster progress than any other country in the world; that the records of 1909 have surpassed the records of 1907, the banner year in Canada as in other countries. Because of this incomplete realisation, some people are holding back, are talking of

In the second place, this lack of knowledge is evidenced by the extravagance of those who are luckiest. This is the other side of the picture. A man makes a little money in an unusual way, and he at once mortgages his house to buy an automobile. Another finds that with his increased salary, his bank account is growing rapidly; he and his wife decide to sell the little cottage and build a big, new house, on the Hill. Another man, more selfish, keeps to the old house but spends his money more lavishly at the club. Still another bestows fine clothes and furs upon his wife and daughters until they become ridiculous in the eyes of their more conservative friends. If these people knew that this prosperity was exceptional, they would be more careful, their spirit of saving would be stronger, and they would invest for the future rather than spend in the present.

There is a happy mean between penuriousness and extravagance, but comparatively few Canadians strike it. That the spending of money is a sure road to happiness is one of the fallacies which we have borrowed from our cousins across the Border.



ONE curse which the newly-rich lay upon us all is their harrowing habit of tipping every servant who waits on them, and of tipping to an extent which is out of proportion to the service rendered. It is not a curse which is confined to Canada. It is laid on every country in Europe, and it makes hotel life in Paris, London and New York a weary struggle. The Lyons Company have a restaurant in Piccadilly where "no tips" is the rule and a card bearing that sign stands on every table. A new hotel on the Strand has adopted the same rule. The fight has begun, but the selfish individual will continue to perpetuate a practice which pleases his selfishness.

In Toronto, Montreal, Winnipeg and the larger Canadian cities, the hotel and restaurant tips have become a burden. The generous mining broker and the lucky speculator are not content to pay the usual and conservative ten per cent.; they make their gratuities twenty per cent. or more. Such conduct is unneighbourly to say the least. Besides, it is neither good for the tipper nor the tipped. It induces a situation among servants which makes good service almost impossible. It creates a condition which is trying to both the servant and the served. It kills courtesy and breeds incivility.



THE Winnipeg *Telegram* of Thursday morning, December 2nd, has this heading: "Disloyalty of Laurier Clearly Demonstrated by Hon. Robert Rogers." To the large numbers of our readers who do not know, we may tell them that Hon. Robert Rogers is Minister of Public Works in the Government of Manitoba. This Mr. Rogers revives the old story that Sir Wilfrid in 1885 would like to have gone out and fought with Riel against the regulars and volunteers who were suppressing the Rebellion. He charges that Sir Wilfrid was averse to sending troops to South Africa; that at the Imperial Conference two years ago he opposed any colonial assistance to the British navy, either in money or ships; and that Sir Wilfrid now refuses to send a money contribution at this juncture in Imperial affairs.

It must be noted first, that Sir Wilfrid is accused of disloyalty to the Empire, not to Canada. The Hon. Mr. Rogers tacitly admits that Sir Wilfrid is loyal to his native land, to the people whom he governs. His disloyalty is merely to the British people and the British Crown. Is there a sane citizen, not a politician, who will believe it?

If Sir Wilfrid is disloyal, then there are many Canadians who are disloyal. There are thousands upon thousands of good citizens, both

English-speaking and French-speaking, who believe that Sir Wilfrid has pursued a sane policy in military and naval matters, and has only gone wrong when he yielded to the clamour for a Canadian navy. There are thousands upon thousands who would refuse to spend a dollar on military or naval expenditure of any kind, who regret exceedingly that Sir Wilfrid has consented to even a small expenditure for naval purposes.

But if Sir Wilfrid is disloyal so is Sir Charles Tupper. In his letter to Mr. Borden, he states with pride that a few years ago he (Sir Charles) opposed a direct contribution. He also states his present position as follows: "The demand which will soon be made by some that Canada should contribute to the Imperial navy in proportion to population, I regard as preposterous and dangerous." Surely this letter is sufficient to prove that Sir Charles Tupper does not regard Sir Wilfrid's position as one of disloyalty. Surely it is sufficient proof, if proof were needed, that the Hon. Robert Rogers does not voice the sentiments of the Conservatives of Canada when he uses such unusual language concerning the Liberal Leader.



WHEN you buy books for your friends, buy Canadian books if you can. There are at least twenty volumes published this year which are worthy of special consideration, but the choice should not be confined to those of the year. The writer has about one thousand Canadian volumes on his shelves, and with at least five hundred of these he has made friends. Any one would be a loss were it to disappear. Many of them are dressed in modest covers, but their intrinsic worth is better than lavish gold and colour printing. They teach one to know his country.

Turn again to our issue of November 27th and read the summaries there. Mr. Bradley's volume on "The Making of Canada," Miss Cameron's "The New North," Miss Laut's "Canada: The Empire of the North" have all been written for British and United States readers. Miss Cameron's book, published by Appleton's is exceptionally fine in appearance. Most of the novels of the year have also been published abroad. Sir Gilbert Parker's "Northern Lights," Mr. Roberts' "The Backwoodsman" and Ralph Connor's "The Foreigner" have been published on two continents. Mr. Duncan's "The Suitable Child," Mr. O'Higgins' "Old Clinkers," and Miss Montgomery's "Anne of Avonlea" have been published in New York. All this to show that Canadian writers are appreciated abroad as well as at home.



THOSE interested in closer commercial relations between Canada and Germany will be pleased to read the following resolution passed by the Winnipeg Board of Trade on October 28th:

Whereas in consequence of the late tariff legislation of the United States, there is a probability of increased restrictions being placed upon our trade with that country; and

Whereas the increase in population, products and known resources of the Dominion of Canada is so large and so rapidly increasing that it is specially desirable that our trade relations should be extended as far as possible, and kept upon the most friendly basis; and

Whereas the German Government, forgetting our right to deal as we saw fit with our Mother Country, did impose an extra charge on goods from Canada, and as a consequence a surtax was placed on German goods entering this country, and it is advisable that the unfriendly relations brought about by their actions should cease:

Therefore be it resolved that this Board would urge on the Dominion Government the advisability of meeting in the most friendly spirit any advances made by the Government of Germany looking toward again placing the trade relations of the two countries on a mutually satisfactory and friendly basis.

THROUGH A MONOCLE

THE TRANSATLANTIC ELECTION.

THE coming General Election in Great Britain promises to be the most interesting event, by way of political struggle, which that country has seen for many years. The National Liberal Federation has issued a manifesto in which the central controversy of Peers and People is represented as the crucial feature in the political situation. Precedents and precepts are being ransacked by the authorities on that complex fabric, the British Constitution, and dates of former contests are quoted with a warning emphasis.

Mr. Asquith, whose political keenness is entirely unassociated with personal magnetism, has aroused something approaching fervent loyalty among the Liberals by the terms of his final motion regarding the Lords' action in refusing to pass into law the financial provisions of the Lower Chamber. It is generally recognised, however, that the Power behind the Premier is Mr. Lloyd-George, whose Celtic temperament supplies the warmth and impetuosity lacking in his leader. This brilliant Welshman will unquestionably be the foremost figure on the Government side during the campaign. He is already regarded

as the champion of the workingman, while, in personality and oratorical type, he approaches the popular idol. "It is Lloyd-George's fight" is the general belief. The progress of this remarkable parliamentarian is a refutation of the common charge that in British politics, it is impossible to go far without social or financial influence. Mr. Lloyd-George is variously dubbed a "firebrand" and a "beacon of hope." Whatever he may be, it is safe to predict that during the

* * *

THERE is one figure which stands aloof—pathetically, in the opinion of some, cynically in the eyes of others. Lord Rosebery, who so quickly disentangled himself from the folds of Gladstone's mantle, is a perplexing, and yet charming force in the political and literary life of Great Britain. His knowledge of public affairs is united to an academic distaste for popular leadership; yet his speeches are greeted by each side as utterances of "pith and moment." His heart is not in the fray, yet he lingers near, as if unwilling to lose sight of the chief combatants. His position in the present juncture would be embarrassing to one less gifted in diplomatic *finesse*. His letter to the London press on December first pleased neither Lords nor Commons, as it was dubious regarding the Budget and yet condemnatory of the action of the Upper House. In Lord Rosebery's case, there appears to be an embarrassment of riches and talent. He might have been the leader of his party, had he not been born to distinction. He sees so many sides to every question that he is carried away by none of them. He consequently prefers the aloofness of the man, who sees most of the game, to the ardour of the party supporter who plunges into the thick of it. The Government regards him with a mixture of pride and exasperation, the Socialists consider him an aristocratic wolf in the sheep's clothing of Liberalism, while Mr. Balfour's followers rise up and call him broad-minded.

* * *

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL, who, next to Mr. Lloyd-George, is supposed to be responsible for the innovations of the Budget, is a remarkable young person in either political or literary circles. In his earlier career, Mr. Churchill appeared to aspire to be an understudy to Ulysses. With that end in view, he had many and varied adventures in Egypt and the Transvaal, turning these to account in books and lecture tours. In connection with the latter, he came to this Dominion, on which occasion he left a peculiarly painful impression. Mr. Churchill has put away the faults of his youth since then, has written an admirable biography of his father, Lord Randolph Churchill, and has devoted himself to a political career with a perseverance, all undaunted, even by the dog-whip of an indignant Suffragette. He is brilliant, nervous and volatile—a man to be reckoned with in political strife.

* * *

THE Leader of the Opposition is hardly in a position to make any popular appeal, and must fall back on the *dictum* that the more radical aspect of the Budget is an attack on property. Mr. Balfour has frequently appeared, in the eyes of the people, as a man who has had political Leadership thrust upon him—a philosopher, with a fancy for golf, rather than the head of a great party. However, he has shown more than once, a fighting spirit which has led the closest observers of British affairs to conclude that he is not so pensively indolent as he looks.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain, who is sure to be a prominent figure on the Unionist platform, is hardly imbued with the tenacity of originality of his famous father, whose enforced retirement makes many wonder what would be the outlook if Mr. Joseph Chamberlain were in the fighting front of Opposition. But "Brummagen Joe" is a broken man, worn out by the political conflict in which he once took so keen a delight. His son has been described "as accurate as an icicle"—in which case, he is not the opponent to score against the present Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Curiously enough, while a great fight is anticipated, the Irish members appear to be out of it. In fact, this element, so often a turbulent force in the deliberations of the House, has been remarkably subdued during the last session and seems to be in no immediate danger of eruption.

THE MONOCLE MAN.

Marcus Brutus Lansdowne's Speech in the Forum after the Death of the Budget.

(The London Bystander.)

"Commons, countrymen, and lovers! Hear me for my cause; and be silent, that you may hear; believe me for mine honour; and have respect to mine honour, that you may believe; censure me in your wisdom, and awake your senses, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Lloyd George's, to him I say that Lansdowne's love for Lloyd George is no less than his. If, then, that friend demand why Lansdowne rose against Lloyd George, this is my answer: not that I loved Lloyd George less, but that I loved England more. Had you rather Lloyd George had triumphed, and die all slaves; than that the Budget were dead, to live all free men? As Lloyd George loves me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honour him; but as he was a Socialist, I slew him. There are tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honour for his valour; and death for his Socialism."—(Julius Caesar, Act III, Scene 2, slightly revised.)



At the Fur-post in the Hinterland, it's Winter time six months in the year



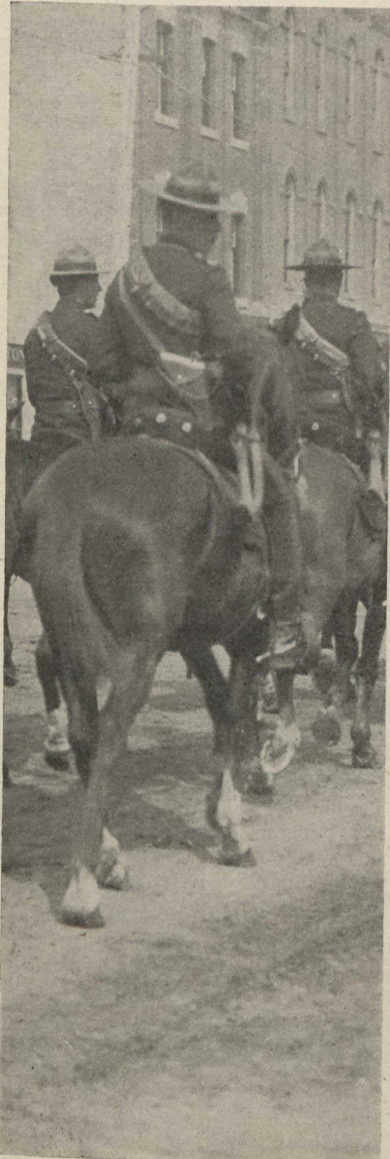
The Gow Ganda Trio Singing a Christmas Carol.



Last of the camp chuck in the lumber woods—day before Christmas. "Hey Charley! Turkey to-morra."



Late in the Fall the tie-slingers got far past the Christmas Tree Belt.



No filled stockings for these chaps either.

Outposters Who Can't Get Home

BYOND the confines of the ordinary way there are in Canada a large number of people who don't get home for Christmas. They are the outposters doing the world's work in remote, often in solitary places; the vanguard of our civilisation which in this country is becoming a somewhat complicated thing.

The oldest of our outposters is the hunter who under a variety of tribe-names from Micmacs in the Maritime Provinces to the Lochieux perched up on the crest of the Arctic Circle, make their cities of such places as old Fort Abitibi at the head of this page. But they're no farther out on the edge of things in Canada this Christmas than the chaps at Gow Ganda, who pitched their tent long before the snow went off the rocks where the silver was. And the mounted police are still on the fringes; following civilisation that crawls over the old trails where the police posts used to be the only sign of human habitation. In the lumber camps you find them, the beginners of things; and few of them get out of the woods far enough for a Christmas dinner at the old homestead. The railway builders and the brakemen; the outpost surveyor running base lines from all meridians in the out-of-call places; these and many another of the cheerful army of trail-blazers in this hugely interesting country will be glad just for a chance to snowshoe or shoepack in to the nearest fur-post or lumber camp, and the good chuck spread by the Factor.



These way-makers would appreciate roast turkey with cranberry sauce on the edge.



The Fiddle and the Grindstone in British Columbia.

THE PROMOTER

The wise-acre Wizard who 'Sees Sermons in Stones, Books in Running Brooks,' and a 'Lead-pipe Cinch' in everything.

By PETER McARTHUR

HAVE you ever entertained a promoter—either unawares or awares—a real, up-to-date, hustling wizard of wealth, running under a forced draught, with reverberating furnaces, smoke consumers, triple expansion chest and other modern improvements? We have. Yesterday a telegram came from our most enterprising relative who some years ago found the country too slow for his throbbing, air-cooled brain. It read: "Arrive on the two-fifty-two. Meet me, sure."

It was then one-thirty so the driver was caught and hitched in such a hurry that no one had time to pick the burrs out of his tail. The hustling promoter swung out on the step of the approaching train and hit the ground just as the engineer was beginning to apply the air-brakes. With a skip and a jump he and his suit-case were in the buggy and we had shaken hands and started for home before the next passenger had disembarked.

"What a lot of rigs there are to meet this train!" he began. "By jimminy! I believe there would be a fortune in organising a taxi-cab company to handle the passenger traffic at the country stations. I noticed on my way here that there was a crowd of rigs at every station. Think of the saving of time it would mean to everybody if taxi-cabs took the place of all these slow-moving horse vehicles!"

It was gently suggested to him that at this season of the year time is about the last thing that people in the small country towns are trying to save. They are spending a large part of it in trying to figure out how to kill the rest of it.

"Oh, yes, I know," he protested, "you are all like the farmer I once heard of. He was feeding his hogs with corn in the ear. A sensible stranger who came along began to advise him. He said: 'Don't you know that if you had that corn ground to meal and fed it to the hogs as a mash you would fatten them in half the time?'"

"Perhaps you're right," said the farmer, "but will you tell me what is time to a hog anyway?"

"That's the trouble with you farmers. You work during the spring and summer and do practically nothing during the fall and winter. If you had a proper idea of the value of time you would organise industries that would keep you busy all the year round. If it was not that I am feeling fagged out and have run down to get a good rest I'd think out some scheme for you."

"Then you will be figuring on spending a few weeks with us this time?"

"A few weeks! I go back to the city on the five-seventeen train to-morrow morning. I'll be as fit as a fiddler by then. But I mustn't forget that taxi-cab idea," and he pulled out a pencil and notebook to make a memorandum of it. At this point we reached the school and as the son and heir, on account of his extreme youth, is allowed to go home at recess we picked him up. His once white blouse was noticed to be bulging corpulently around his waist and rich brown stains were appearing on the cloth.

"What you got there?" he was asked.

"Walnuts," and he fished one out.

"Oh, I say," exclaimed the Promoter, "just look at the rich brown colour of those walnut stains. Here's the idea of a lifetime! You remember, don't you, that the pioneers used to dye cloth with walnut hulls? What a scheme it would be to organise the Pioneer Dyeing Company and revive the old dyes! Walnut brown! Beech-bark grey! Crushed-strawberry pink! Think of the appeal it would make to the patriotic sentiment of the people. Pioneer dyes will keep fresh the memory of the makers of the country! We might even get the Education Department to pass a regulation making it compulsory on all children of school age to be dressed in Pioneer colours. It isn't a bit more silly than attempts at reformed spelling, and besides it would mean business. That beats my taxi-cab scheme all hollow. Materials would cost practically nothing. Say! this is a sure winner! You and I will be having big varnished touring-cars before the snow flies. I must make a note of it."

As he put away his note-book and pencil he reached for the walnut that the boy was holding in his hand.

"Looks something like a peach," he said musingly. A moment later he was "stung by the splendour of a sudden thought."

"By thunder! You remember how the peach

originated, don't you? The Moorish conquerors of Spain carried with them the rough-hulled bitter almond from which they made poison for their arrows. So as to have a constant supply they planted them out in the new country. In that salubrious climate the bitter almond developed into the peach. What's the matter with developing the walnut so that the outside of it will be a fruit and the inside a nut? Luther Burbank is doing just as wonderful things every day. These new trees would bear at least four times as much as an ordinary peach tree. With peaches at a dollar a basket and walnuts at a dollar a bushel this new nut-fruit would bring at least five dollars a bushel. Eureka!" he yelled, waving his arms. "There's the name for it on the first shot out of the box—Nut-Fruit. Doesn't that make your mouth water? Just think how it will stand out in the ads. About how many trees of this kind could be planted out on a hundred-acre farm? Let me figure it out."

With the stub of a pencil he began to figure on the linen duster stretched over his knee. He kept at this till we had reached the farm gate. Then he stopped in disgust.

"Say, I'm certainly in need of a rest!" he exclaimed. "I was doing my figuring without taking into account the value of walnut timber, which is now quoted at over a hundred dollars a thousand. You must lend me a pad of paper to figure with when we get up to the house."

He shook hands with his welcoming relatives as if he were doing a rush job on piece-work. He then began to wander aimlessly about the farm, reverting from time to time to the brilliant schemes he had evolved since his arrival.

"There ought to be a good field for taxi-cabs among the farmers. Think of the steps and time it would save in doing chores, rushing about from the barn and granary to the henhouse, pig-pen, cow-stable and what not. Then think of how useful it would be in bringing the hired man home from the fields for his meals and saving all his energy for his work."

When his eye caught the marvellous October foliage the Pioneer Dye scheme began to seethe in his brain again.

"There must be some method of extracting the colours from autumn leaves and running our Pioneer Dye Company as a subsidiary concern, utilising the by-products of farming just as the aniline dyes are manufactured as by-product of the oil business. When we get dyes of that kind on the market the millinery shops of to-day will look as sober and dull as an undertaker's establishment when compared with the emporiums of the future."

After a couple of hours he felt so much refreshed that he was laying out the old farm in building lots for a summer town with a cottage beside every tree and the pasture field rented to campers. During supper time he outlined a scheme for home-made pickles and preserves in all the markets of the world that would make the fifty-seven varieties look like a kindergarten enterprise.

After supper, the heavy meal and abundant fresh air began to have their effect and he grew sleepy. But the fact made him wide-awake in a moment. At last he had discovered the ideal place for a sanitarium for the insomnia patients of the metropolis. Everyone else went to sleep while he talked about it and no one knows at what hour he stopped and turned in. Next morning he was up at daylight and as he bolted his breakfast he thought out a scheme for the "Rooster Alarm Company" for waking sleepy people.

"Just think of it! Instead of depending on the brittle strength of wheels and springs we would hitch our scheme to one of the great mysteries of nature—the early morning crowing of the rooster."

As he mounted the train, thoroughly rested, the last words that floated back were: "Greatest scheme ever."

A BROKEN IDOL

Wherein Nature and Art Conspired to make the Best of a Bad Situation.

By J. EDGAR MIDDLETON

IN one part of Canada where winter attends to its duties with the earnestness of enthusiasm, skating is a social pastime. The Mercury Skating Club of Killiecrankie owns a rink of noble proportions which is as exclusive as a fashionable church, and almost as cold. No alien foot may cross the threshold. No common skate may come in. The very ice, polished as a promoter, would wrinkle itself in scorn if its gleaming surface were cut by any but silver-plated hockey skates with gilt trimmings.

The young people of Killiecrankie whose parents had money, or credit, paid a stiff fee every year for the privilege of skating here. Tea was served every afternoon, and those who "poured" found their names in the social column of the Killiecrankie *Daily Gazette*. A band of two cornets, a trombone and a tuba provided thin waltzes and stringy two-steps for the benefit of those who danced on skates and tempted Providence with hair-starting reversions on the "outer edge."

Alice Vanstone had been a member ever since she "came out." Dignity clothed her as a garment. Other girls might appear in toque and sweater. Other girls might join the Mercury Ladies' Hockey Club and learn the virtues of the body-check. But Alice, who by the way, was "Miss Vanstone" to all mere acquaintances, wore mink and Persian lamb and floated about as a very Diana on runners.

Colonel Vanstone, the father of this earthly goddess, commanded the garrison. His professional profanity could make a cavalry sergeant-major flush with envy. But at home before this self-sufficient, calm-eyed young woman he felt nervous, incapable of expression. She talked of art. He floundered. She mentioned music. He had difficulty in distinguishing the Reveille from the Retreat. The Colonel had spent twice his pay in educating Alice. When she left the convent she was Miss Vanstone, beautiful as an Etruscan vase and apparently just as hard.

One day she told her father that his nose was much too red. He went to the Club immediately and applied himself assiduously to Scotch and soda, merely to assert his soldierly independence of feminine dictation. Miss Vanstone was interested in

noses. Since the Art Professor had explained the beauty of the Apollo Belvidere she had observed profiles constantly until she had become a connoisseur. By a judicious course of pinching and tweaking carried on night and morning for several months she had corrected an unhappy tendency which her own nose had evinced, a tendency to swell at the bridge; scarcely Roman, more nearly described as Romanesque. Success had been won. Now her nose was pure Greek, such a nose as Helen of Troy probably possessed, a nose that brought her recognition as the Beauty of Killiecrankie and drove at least one subaltern of the garrison into a distracted state.

And not subalterns only. Jimmie Lawson, ledger-keeper at the bank, thought of Miss Vanstone far too much. He had danced with her one memorable night. The next day he could not attend to business and at the end of the month he was 27 cents out in his balance sheet.

Neither the Lieutenant nor Lawson had any reason for believing that Miss Vanstone could be captured. She had expressed no preference. She floated through the ball-rooms shining, like the sun, upon the just and the unjust. When the frost came and the Mercuries began to skate she was as alluring as ever and, if anything, a shade less kind. It was vain for the Lieutenant to pass macaroons and tea. She allowed no opportunity for a declaration. Jimmie and she often did grapevines and other ornamental tracery on the middle of the rink, but a man cannot pause in a double backward swing to say, "Will you marry me?" Perhaps it was for this reason that Miss Vanstone preferred the airy graces of the skater's art to the more solid, easy stroke.

The officers of the garrison took a lively interest in Lang's affair with the Colonel's daughter. Through devious channels the news of her hobby had come. The Lieutenant had the finest nose in the mess. It was straight as a lead pencil. It began unobtrusively and finished modestly. The lines were unbroken by protuberances of any kind. The curve at the end modified a tendency towards sharpness, and the chiselling of the nostrils was accurate and artistic. It is doubtful if in the whole galaxy

of eligible young men who belonged to the Mercury Club such another nose could be discovered. Indeed, if the Apollo Belvidere himself had been permitted a visitor's card, on recommendation of a member in good standing, he would have been overcome with confusion to find a nose a trifle better than his own.

Major Bolder had said in the hearing of several of his brother officers that he would wager a case of champagne on Lang. His nose was irresistible. "What more could she ask?" said the Major. "If she knows what she wants Lang is as good as married now."

The pretensions of Jimmie Lawson were laughed

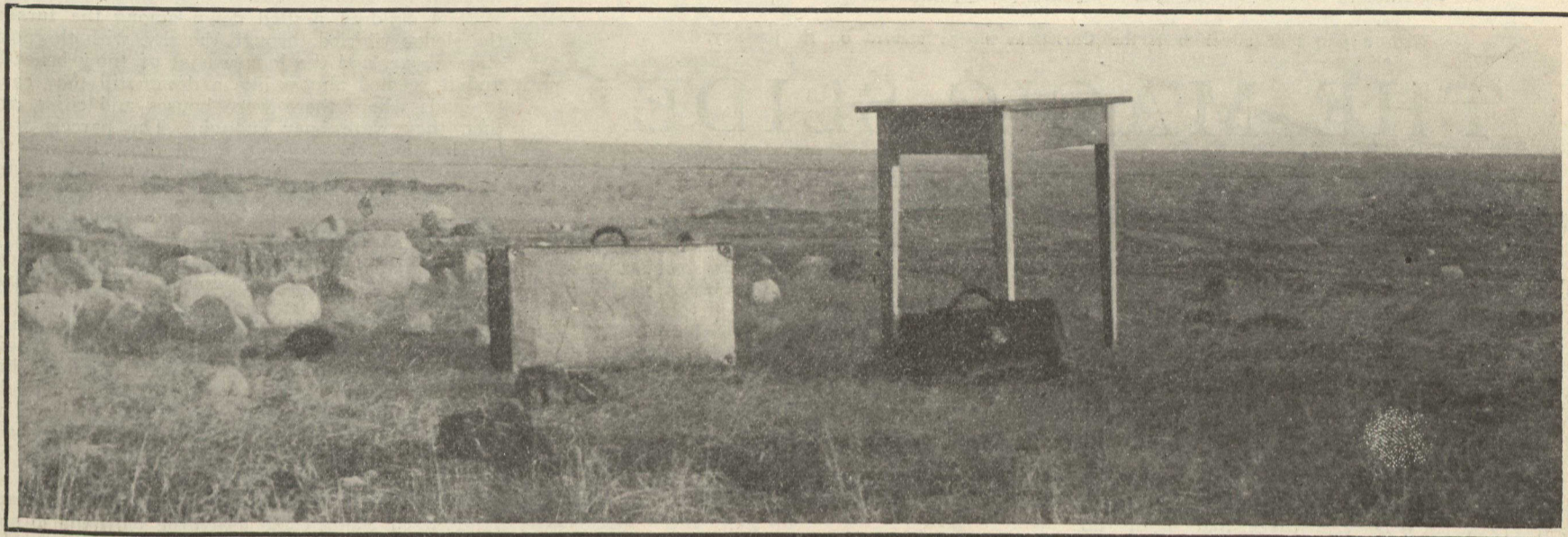
to scorn. The mess knew that he laboured in vain. First of all, he was a civilian. It was inconceivable that a soldier's daughter should mate with a mere quill driver. Again, Jimmie was not handsome. His frame was well set up, but his face was pudgy. A football scar over one eye did not add to his attractiveness. And his nose—to be frank, it was a common pug. No idealism could cling about a feature so commonplace. Clear blue eyes and a definite squareness of jaw could not atone for it. Alas! it was the kind of nose that may indicate generosity of nature, resource, good humour, but it was no more patrician in character than a rented

suit of evening clothes. Miss Vanstone certainly could never marry Lawson.

But Lang was not so sure as his friends of the Mess that his conquest was already assured. He did not depend wholly upon his nose, but he cultivated the Colonel's good will. It is fair to say that Colonel Vanstone considered Lieutenant Lang an excellent young man well worthy of his daughter's hand, but he was not disposed to force her inclinations—even if he had dared. He contented himself with occasional reference to the Lieutenant's

CONCLUDED ON PAGE 30

BUILDING A TOWN IN THIRTY-FIVE DAYS



On October 5th, the owner of the Town-site of Kingsley, arrived with his portmanteau, a small table and his documents. The same train brought the buyers and a number of portable houses.

Prestissimo! A New Town

THE world's record for town-building is held by the new corporation of Kingsley, Saskatchewan. The old saying, "Rome was not built in a day," has no sarcasm in it when applied to this newest of towns. Kingsley was built and came to the status of four hundred people all housed and fairly comfortable, with five lumber yards, a huge three-storey hotel and other modern conveniences—in just thirty-five days after the first citizen set his foot on the site. On October 5th, 1909, there was nothing to mark the site of Kingsley but a table, a suit case and a valise. On that civilised table, jiggly in the feet and "sot down" among the gopher holes over two inches of frost and dried-up flowers and buffalo grass, was written the document that gave birth to the new town; the first transfer of title to land.

The rest of the progress was a transformation as swift as though done by a magician's wand. Over the new line of the Canadian Northern that runs from Saskatoon and Prince Albert towards Calgary—about fifty miles from Saskatoon into the Goose Lake country, went the string of flat cars and box cars carrying tents and household goods; also a



Buying the first Town Lots on October 5th.

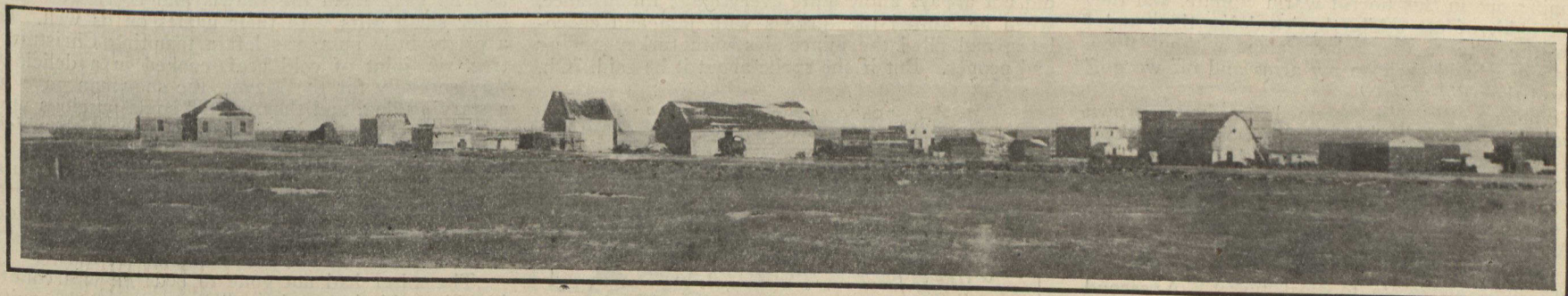
few ready-made houses built to order in a lumber yard at Saskatoon and dumped off on the prairie like packing-cases; straightway stoved and tabled and chaired and bedded as complete as many an

Ontario farmhouse of a generation ago. Street lines were measured and staked; settlers came ske-daddling in; stores went up; ground was broken for a hotel; east and west and north and south the bold lines ran out into the vague trail-broken prairie and the sons of progress set themselves down to make a metropolis of wheat as natively as a beaver builds a dam. The gophers ran for their holes and the badgers crawled far down; the coyotes retreated to the tips of the hills and they barked strangely down at the restless bipeds that had stalked in bag and baggage, box and dice to take possession of the land and to set up town gods as calmly as though there had never been an Indian or a kyuse or a tepee anywhere within a hundred miles.

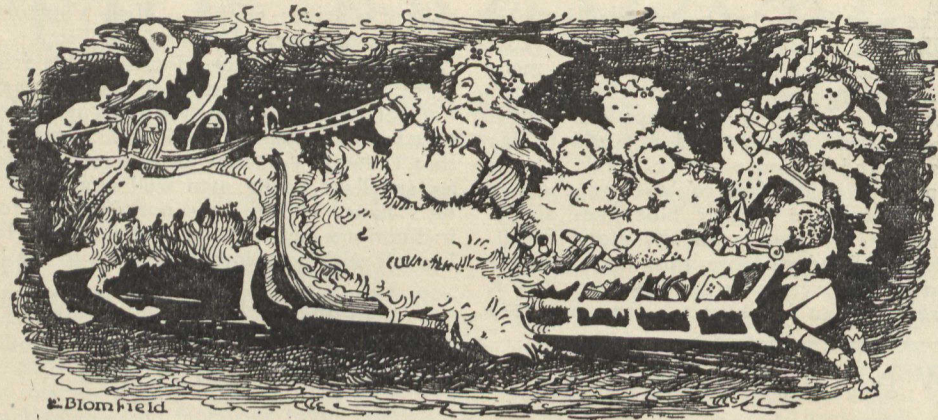
Such is the story of progress in the West, where they draw a few lines on a paper, scratch off a document or two, and before the ink is dry begin to build a town that draws waggons over the trails as a magnet draws iron filings. A couple of years ago a six-months town was counted a swift one. Kingsley has all records beaten by four times over; and so far as can be seen is likely to hold the record for all time to come, unless some new burg next spring beats it by the scratch of a pen or the chuck of a board.



Kingsley as it appeared when the COURIER Photographer saw it on October 10th, five days after it was founded.



Kingsley, on November 10th, with 400 people and 125 buildings.—This new Town is on the Goose Lake Branch of the C.N.R., running south-westerly from Saskatoon toward Calgary.



With a jangle of silver bells the Christmas sledge started on its journey.

THE MAGIC SLIDE

A Christmas Fairy Tale

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY ELSIE BLOMFIELD

IT certainly was rather startling. The twins looked at each other blankly, and then at the snowman. He wore a battered hat, and held a rake in his arm, like an ordinary snowman. But it seemed to both Wilfrid and Hilda that he looked at them with an expression in his little stony eyes that was not quite ordinary. The most curious part of it all, however, was that a moment ago there had been no snowman there.



They helped to fill the sledge

white and tall in the grey winter twilight, stood the strange snowman.

"We did not make it," said Wilfrid, his eyes wide with surprise. "How did it come here?"

And then the snowman spoke. "No, you did not make me," he said, in a queer, crackly voice; "I was made some four years ago by a person who really knew how a snowman ought to be built. When it thawed I melted and went off to the North Pole to Santa Claus, as all the best snowmen do. Are you ready to start?"

"Start where?" asked Hilda.

"To see Santa Claus, of course; for what else did you make the magic slide?" answered the snowman, impatiently.

"We don't know what you mean," said Wilfrid.

"Why, this path of ice that lies in a direct line pointing to the Polar Star, of course," answered the snowman, looking at the slide. "You don't seem to know anything—I suppose you have worked the magic spell by chance.

"Eve of Christmas; frozen pathway leading to the Polar Star.

Hundredth journey; three together; wish and slide, and there you are!"

"You have done the ninety-nine times; we are three together; wish to see Santa Claus, and there we'll be. But first, will you be useful?"

"We'll do anything!" cried Hilda, excitedly.

"Anything we can," added Wilfrid earnestly.

"Then take care of my eyes," said the snowman, taking them out and giving one to each child (they were just little black round stones); "they keep dropping out in this horrid warm climate, and they aren't a bit of use while they're doing that, and I know the way to the Polar Palace without them. Now put a hand each on my arms and off we go." And they did go.

Somehow the slide seemed to have grown longer; so long that the end of it was lost in shadows. On and on they went, down the slippery path of ice, while the winter landscape flitted dizzily past on either side, and the stars came out in the darkening sky.

At last they saw glimmering before them a beautiful palace of ice, with a large star shedding a silvery light above its topmost turret. A second later, and they were at the gate.

"Now give me my eyes!" said the snowman.

Hilda gave him the little stone she had been holding tightly in her hand.

"Why, it's warm!" cried the snowman in disgusted tones.

Then Wilfrid gave back the other which he had kept for safety in his pocket.

"And that's sticky!" said the snowman, crossly; "it's all over toffee! One eye warm and one eye sticky! It's horrid! But it's no good apologising now; the harm's done," and he fitted them in, grumbling all the time. Then he clapped his hands, and immediately he was crowned with frosted holly, armed with an icicle spear, and robed in a cloak of stars joined by their points, while Hilda and Wilfrid found themselves clothed in white bearskins trimmed with frost jewels.

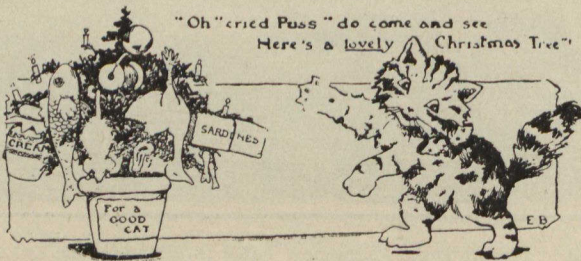
The snowman clapped his hands again, and they stood in the great hall of the palace. In the middle of it was an enormous sledge and thousands of little fairy folk, some in white, some in green with red caps, and some in glittering frosty garments were hurrying to and fro, loading the sledge with parcels of every imaginable shape and size, or feeding the waiting reindeer on snowballs, which made the creatures grow larger and stronger every minute.

And in the midst of all the bustle and confusion stood Santa Claus himself, in his long scarlet cloak.

"We must help," said the snowman; "the sledge must start at eleven, and Father Christmas, who is Santa Claus' twin brother, can't do anything this year because he has influenza."

Santa Claus turned and smiled a welcome out of his kind blue eyes, and the children ran and heaped plum puddings and Christmas trees and dolls and drums and Noah's arks on to the sledge with the fairy folk.

The snowman worked, too, but Hilda thought that four-year-old snowmen, though clever at magic, did not always know quite everything; for instance, when he stuffed the turkeys with jam and chocolates, and filled the mince-pies with turkey-stuffing and pepper. But if she spoke about it he said, "Oh,



"Oh," cried Puss "do come and see Here's a lovely Christmas Tree"

you don't know anything; you nearly spoilt my eyes; they are warm and sticky now. And we have to be quick, anyhow."

The large and cross-looking clock at the end of the hall struck eleven, and the alarm added "Gr-r-r-r-r-r-r!" in an ear-piercing tone.

"Oh, do be quiet!" cried Santa Claus.

"My alarm is set to eleven, and at eleven I gr-r-r-r-r-r, Santa Claus or no Santa Claus," said the clock, obstinately.

The last packages were thrown upon the sledge, and Santa Claus caught up the reins and leaped to his place; the snowman sprang on behind him with a child on either side, and then with a jangle of silver bells, and a shout from all the fairy-folk, off started the Christmas sledge on its journey through the frosty night.

The children nestled down among the furs as the sledge whirled through the sky, with the polar stars above, and the lone wastes of snow beneath; and it seemed almost like a dream till they came to lands where there were houses and cities, and then they were busy enough. The parcels were labelled, and the children found those having the names Santa Claus wanted, and he took them, and vanished down chimney after chimney with lightning speed, to bestow his gifts and blessings on the sleeping households.

Sometimes he would glance at a church clock as they passed, and say, anxiously, "We shall never do it in time!"

Sometimes he had to go down chimneys so narrow and crooked that though he went by magic, it made him tired and hot. Other chimneys had queer little iron caps on them, and not even by magic could he descend these; he had to leave his gifts at the door, ring the bell, and spring back into the sledge which rose like a shooting star before anyone could catch a glimpse of it.

When they came to the town where Wilfrid and Hilda lived, Santa Claus asked the snowman to help him by leaving the gifts at every other house. He did not know so much magic as Santa Claus, so he had to enter through the windows, while the children in the waiting sledge watched him by the light of his starry cloak.

He paid no attention to the labels; indeed, he tore them off, and just gave everyone what he pleased, his great idea being to do it as fast as possible. If the children said a word, he said in a snappy sort of tone, "Remember my eyes."

When they arrived at the Mayor's house, the snowman said he could not find the stocking.

Hilda said grown-up people did not hang out

stockings, and the presents had better be left on the table. The snowman would not listen; he found two socks among the Mayor's clothes, and explaining that he had heard Mayors liked banquets and feasts, and he thought it would be nice to put in something to eat, he turned a jelly out of its mould into one sock, and the other he half filled with mincemeat. "But those socks will be what he wears," objected Hilda. "Then it will be all the more a complete surprise when he puts his toes in in the morning," said the snowman.

The things that had been labelled with the Mayor's name, a carved armchair, a warm silk dressing-gown, silver ornaments, and rare fruits, the snowman divided among some very poor folk, and he gave them the shawls and comforters and other small gifts with their names on as well. To a pretty little puss was left a tempting Christmas-tree. A joint of cold beef, cooked in a delicious way specially for the Mayor, the snowman gave to a starving dog, and they wasted some precious moments watching the joyful astonishment with which the hungry animal devoured it.

For the rich miser who lived in the lonely house on the hill, the snowman had not a single gift left, for he had put the bag of gold directed to him on the pillow of a poor old woman who did not expect to have anything nice for Christmas at all.

The miser had not gone to bed; he was counting his gold downstairs. "He must not be quite disappointed," said the snowman. "I'll put my holly

"Dear, oh dear!" said Santa Claus
 "I've used up all my store—
 A person with *so many* socks
 I never found before!"

SANTA
 CLAUS
 IN
 DIFFICULTIES



wreath in his bed for a surprise, and my icicle spear in one of his stockings; it's magic ice, and won't melt till it is touched by the human hand; and then he will know he is not forgotten."

By the time the clocks were striking the midnight hour, Wilfrid and Hilda could scarcely keep their eyes open. Santa Claus appeared and disappeared, and the sledge rushed on, and the snowflakes began to whirl about them, soft and thick and white. The last thing they remembered was the call at the centipede's house, and then they remembered no more till they awoke in their own

self is a powerful magic; and in the second place, we both noticed how very cross the Mayor looked in church this morning, just as he would if he had really tried to put on those socks, you know! And the miser glared at us as we came out, as discontentedly as possible, and some of the poorest people there looked as if they loved Christmas, and as if it had brought them just everything they wished for, and more."

"Well," said Wilfrid, "if ever it freezes again on Christmas Eve, we will make another magic slide, and try again."

little beds, to the sound of the bells that were ringing in Christmas morning.

It was Christmas afternoon, and Hilda and Wilfrid were roasting chestnuts by the fire.

"I wonder if it was a dream?" said Wilfrid.

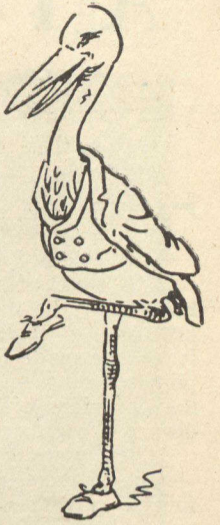
"I'm quite sure it wasn't," said Hilda, positively. "In the first place, mother never missed us, though we were away all the evening until midnight, and that in it-

the very name of Santa Claus. As for Christmas, I wish it had never been invented, it fairly gives me the hump!" And he strode off angrily.

Just as Teddy Bear reached home feeling very sad indeed, all the little Teddy Bears came running to the door. "Hoorah! Hoorah!" they cried, "here's the real Santa Claus at last. We knew he'd come!"

Teddy Bear's face beamed. "Yes, I'm Santa Claus, my dears," he said, "and all these toys are for you — dolls and balls, waggons and drums, something for everybody from the baby up."

That was the happiest Christmas the little Teddy Bears had ever spent. And all because they believed in good old Santa Claus!



The Fairy's Visit

By M. H. C.

IT was the night before Christmas, and for a long time after Ethel had been tucked in her bed she lay gazing out of the window at the frosty sky above and watching the twinkling stars. She was thinking what a long time it would be before morning came and wishing she could go to sleep. "My!" she said to herself presently, "that's a big star, bigger than all the rest and it has a brighter twinkle. And it's *winking* at me—yes, I winked both my eyes and it winked back. Oh, you funny, funny star," and she buried her head in the bedclothes and giggled. She would take just—one—more—peek. There it was still, much bigger now, and not a star at all as she had thought, but a tiny golden ship, with sails all set, and it floated down the sky straight to her bedroom window. There it anchored and down the gangplank to the sill stepped the most wonderful little creature Ethel had ever seen. She was about two feet tall and was cloaked in a beautiful snow-white coat of ermine skin. On her head was a round cap of the same, and standing up at the side was a beautiful spray of what Ethel thought looked like diamonds threaded on slender wires, and they shimmered and glistened every time she moved her pretty head. Buttons of the same kind adorned her coat. From underneath her cap, yellow curls poked themselves and smuggled about her neck. Her eyes were starry blue and her cheeks like a rose.

She tapped the window with her icicle wand. "I would come in," she said, and Ethel could hear her voice quite plainly through the glass, "but your room is warm and I do not want the frozen dew-drops on my cap and coat to melt. Dew-drops are very rare in our land and besides they were a Christmas present to me from Santa Claus, and I value them very much. And that reminds me of what I came for. About ten minutes ago I received a wireless message from His Royal Highness asking me to sail over here in my airship and leave a little magic that would make you go to sleep. He'll be along himself presently and he wants your eyes to be closed when he comes. Now, I have only a short time left, what shall I tell you about?"

"About yourself, and all you know of Santa," answered Ethel quickly, "but I wish you could come in and be comfort'ble."

"Thank you, I am accustomed to standing, and this new aeroplane costume is not very handy to sit down in, but I think it's tremendously becoming, don't you?" and she opened her coat and showed her little figure clothed in a velvet doublet and breeches of emerald green.

"You see," she went on, "reindeers are awfully out of date now, and Santa and the whole North Pole community use airships. I suppose you heard," she said suddenly, "about our all having to move? Think of it! After all the years we have lived in the hidden Polar region, to have our land discovered by some fussy old explorers, who didn't know what to do with it when they did find it. But they didn't discover *us*. We saw them coming and vacated in time. We are settled very comfortably now in new quarters where they are not likely to stumble across us in some time. I tell you, Santa was angry about the whole affair. He said if it was not for all the dear little children in the world he would go out of business altogether, but he could not bear to disappoint them, so he is busy again this year just the same as usual, and if I do not hurry he'll catch me gossiping here, and cut me off without any presents in the morning. So good-night, little Ethel, and Merry Christmas!" The night was over and Christmas Day had come.



TEDDY BEAR'S CHRISTMAS

By HAROLD SIMPSON

IT was getting near Christmas time, and Teddy Bear had been thinking how sad it was that no one any longer believed in Santa Claus. "Surely there must be *someone* who believes in him still," he said to his wife; "and if there is I mean to find him."

When Christmas Eve came Mrs. Teddy Bear was surprised to find a sleigh, drawn by a real reindeer and loaded with presents, at the door. She was still more surprised when Teddy Bear, dressed as Santa Claus, came downstairs and got into the sleigh.

"Where are you going, my dear?" she asked.

"I'm going to try and find somebody who believes in Santa Claus," he answered, "and if I do he shall have all these lovely presents." And he drove off.

Soon he met a Hyena. "Hyena," he asked, "do you believe in Santa Claus?" But the Hyena only laughed rudely, and as he went on laughing and laughing Teddy Bear finally left him in disgust.

A Stork was the next person he met. "Stork," he said, "do you believe in Santa Claus?" The Stork stood on one leg and said nothing. After a few minutes he stood on the other leg and spoke. "Let's tork of something else," he said. Teddy Bear drove off furiously. He couldn't bear puns!

A little while later he met a Giraffe. "Giraffe," said he, "do you believe in Santa Claus?" The Giraffe looked down at him scornfully. "I suppose you think, just because I've got a long neck, that I can swallow anything," he said. "There's no such person as Santa Claus!" and he turned away haughtily.

Teddy Bear drove on sorrowfully till he met a Kangaroo. "You give me the jumps!" said the

Kangaroo, when Teddy Bear asked him about Santa Claus. And drawing a skipping-rope from his pouch, he began to skip as if his life depended on it. Not another word could Teddy Bear get out of him, so he had to leave him at last.

Next he met a Chimpanzee. The Chimpanzee was even ruder to him than the others. "Don't try any of your monkey tricks on me," he said, in answer to Teddy Bear's question. "I know you quite well, you're Teddy Bear. You'd better go home!"

"It's no use," sighed Teddy Bear to himself, "no one believes in Santa Claus. Chimpanzee's right, I'd better go home!"

He had just turned the sleigh towards home when he met a Camel, whom he asked the same question as before. "Santa Claus!" snorted the Camel, "I hate



A Christmas Wish

I WISH that dolls and woolly lambs
 Just grew upon the trees,
 And I might go and pick them,
 And give to whom I please.

I wish that waggons, skates and trains
 Would come down with the snow,
 And I might go and gather them
 For every boy I know.

Now one may wish, and wish again,
 And still it comes not true;
 But here's a wish that is mine to give—
 Glad Christmas-tide to you. M. H. C.

AT THE OLD LADIES' HOME

Where on Christmas Morning those whom the World thinks Sad are Cheerful and Happy

By JEAN GRAHAM

THE halls of the Hatherley Home wore an unwonted air of festivity on the morning of the Twenty-fifth of December. The portrait of the Founder was wreathed with holly, and the members of the Board had sent a profusion of roses, so that a holiday brightness and fragrance made the old ladies beam with the compliments of the season, as they met each other in the corridors or foregathered in small groups to discuss the gifts of various friends and benefactors.

There were eighty old ladies at Hatherley Home—none of them under sixty and many of them over four-score years of age, and never did you see such an excited crowd of old ladies nor hear greater chatter, unless at a girls' school the day before the Commencement Exercises.

Away up on the third storey, where the view is at its best, the old ladies were at their cheeriest and the "Dear me's" and "Did-you-ever's" were flying free, as they beheld new caps, or fondled new ribbons and bright cards which told that Some One had remembered them.

As a grey-eyed girl with rosy cheeks left the elevator—for Hatherley Home is very modern, indeed, and has a "lift" for the old ladies—there was a stir of interest, since not even on Christmas morning do the old ladies see anything quite so pretty as Dorothy Maxwell.

"Where is Mrs. Meredith?" asked the girl of an old lady in black who wore grey mufflers on her wrists.

"Helen Meredith!" said the old lady. "Just come with me, my Dear. It's the centre room, with a grand view of the hill. It looks something beautiful this morning with the sun shining on the snow."

Ever so many old ladies seemed to have gathered in Mrs. Meredith's room, and when Dorothy appeared, with a large paper box and some small paper bundles, there was a sudden hush, and each white head was thrust forward to see the newcomer more plainly. Such a sweet old face the girl looked at—smooth and pale as old ivory, with eyes of violet-blue gazing peacefully out beneath the silvery hair! So their eyes met, the bright, laughing eyes of Eighteen and the soft, wise eyes of Eighty, and the two became friends, in spite of the gulf of three-score years.

"I don't think I have met you before, my Dear," said a gentle, quavery voice.

"I'm Dorothy Maxwell—Mrs. McBride's niece. Auntie is so sorry that she could not come this morning. So I brought the flowers instead."

"Your auntie never forgets," said Mrs. Mer-

dith, with a soft pink flush in her old ivory cheeks. "She's one of the kindest ladies on the Board," said the old lady who had brought Dorothy to the room.

There was a small chorus from the aged group and Dorothy began to realise that Aunt Margaret was even more of a "dear" than her small army of nephews and nieces had always considered her.

"It—it doesn't seem a bit lonesome here," she remarked, looking at the bright texts and photographs, to say nothing of the crimson rug which covered Mrs. Meredith's knees and on which the old, blue-veined hands rested proudly.

"Lonesome, my Dear," said Mrs. Meredith with a laugh which was a silvery echo of Dorothy's own, "Why, it's the busiest room on the hall. Mrs. Hamilton brings her lace here in the afternoon and Mrs. Gordon does her knitting at this window, and, when the rheumatism isn't too bad, I sew a little myself. Then there's always someone dropping in to tell us about the world outside and give us a bit of a flower. Then, there's the view, Dearie—and it's a very poor day when there's no sunshine on the trees. Really, I don't know what the poor folks do, who can't see the hill and the sunlight."

"Would you like to open the box yourself?" asked Dorothy suddenly, with a strange mist over her eyes, as she looked at the gentle old face.

"Let Mrs. Browning do it. She's so clever with the string." A brisk little old lady trotted forward with an air of importance and proceeded to untie the holly-red cord, open the box and remove the layers of silky green paper until violets, roses and carnations were revealed to the admiring regard of dozens of dim old eyes.

"A sinful waste!" Dorothy would have said, twenty-four hours earlier, if she had seen such a box going to the Old Ladies' Home. But when she saw the rapture with which the fragrance was greeted, the trembling hands which gratefully clasped the moist stems as Mrs. Meredith insisted on giving the Christmas blossoms away, she rejoiced in the extravagant ways of Aunt Margaret.

"Why, you're giving them all away," she protested laughingly.

"Not all, my Dear," said Mrs. Meredith, holding fast one pink rose and a cluster of violets, "I'm keeping these for old times' sake. The violets make me think of the woods in spring near the old home."

"And the rose?" asked Dorothy.

The eyes of Eighty and the eyes of Eighteen met once more and Dorothy suddenly understood that memory may mean more than a girl's dream.

Her guitar dropped to the floor with a thump and the old lady with the grey wool wristlets seized it eagerly.

"Play a tune for us, now, there's a good girl," she pleaded.

Dorothy was going to Christmas dinner at Uncle Ned's, and Cousin Harry, just home from 'Varsity and the proud possessor of a mandolin, had insisted that she should bring the guitar that the afternoon might be spent in blissful duets. She looked at the wistful faces and had her gloves off in a moment. Seating herself near the window, from which the old ladies could see the frost-diamonded hill, she began to play softly, while the hall filled with bent old ladies, in black silks, shiny at the seams, shawls crocheted with elaborate edging and caps which nodded gaily as the notes of the guitar quivered from the strings. Dances that might have tinkled in Old Madrid, *tarentelles* which set the rheumatic feet a-tremble, and a dreamy old serenade which turned the morning sunlight of December into a summer twilight of long ago! All these, Dorothy played for the old ladies of the Hatherley Home, who felt as if they were all eighteen again, with the whole wide world before them. Then she sang such quaint, old songs—"Love's Old Sweet Song," "My Old Kentucky Home," and low, tender lullabies which brought the "Grandma Ladies" nearer to the girlish player and her old guitar.

There was a long silence, as Dorothy slipped the guitar into its linen case and then rubbed her fingers briskly. The eyes of some of the old ladies were very bright, while others were openly wiping the tears away with crisp new handkerchiefs which had arrived that very morning.

"It's the best Christmas music I've heard in many a day," said brisk little Mrs. Browning, who was sadly unorthodox in her views. "I like it better than the hymns about being 'over the river—the river,' and Miss Havergal's poetry. It's all right this side of the river, yet a while."

Dorothy's eyes twinkled as they met the apologetic glance of Mrs. Meredith.

"I'm ever so glad I came," she said, shaking hands with a score of soft, crinkled hands which touched hers eagerly. "And perhaps you'll let me come again."

With one accord the old ladies wished her a Merry Christmas as she went on her glad, young way, realising that the light at eventide may be the softest Christmas glow of them all.

And all through the Christmas hours the old ladies heard the echo of a girl's guitar.

A Canadian Christmas Sixty Years Ago

The slow-going, rough-hewn Days of our Forefathers in the Woods of Middle Canada

By AUGUSTUS BRIDLE

PARTICULAR attention is called to the drawing on the opposite page, which shows in a manner worthy of Charles Dickens the kind of Christmas Canadian folk used to have fifty years ago and more. The artist who drew this picture was himself a Canadian, born some years after the time depicted in his drawing.

It was in the days of the "peg-top trousers" and the crinoline skirts; pompous yet gay; the time of simple, unadorned festivity. The house was built of logs; hewn two sides and chinked up in the crevices. The floor was of "puncheons," which were slabs—very hard to wear out in a dance. The ceiling displayed the joists, which came very handy for the hanging up of corn-ears, sage and parsley, festive red peppers and the toothsome, home-cured ham—all which kindly note in the picture.

On the far wall hung the family shot-gun, a single-barrel muzzle-loader, decorated with the un-failing powder-horn below—and many a rainy day's polishing and scraping that horn of plenty got before it was ready to sling over the huntsman's coat when he sauntered out into the woods right back of the house to pop over a deer, a few partridges or a wild turkey; or by night grabbed it in a hurry to scramble out to the hen-coop after a marauding midnight fox.

In those days, staircases were rare, so they used ladders to get upstairs. There might have been a

coal-oil lamp; or again the pleasing glow on the faces of the merry Christmas party may have been from a few tallow candles, made in the good old-fashioned family moulds.

Little if any of the furniture was of the "boughten" variety. The folks in 1850 made their own rush-bottom chairs, such as may be seen in the picture, with the bottom very probably woven of bark, stripped from the green tree in the bush—such as was used for tying up corn stalks. The tables were "deal"—home-planed; butter-bowls and rolling-pins carved from maple knots and billets of oak and hickory. Perhaps the clock on the dinky little shelf was got at a store, as well as the stove, which in those days was something of an innovation on the fireplace.

But the people—they were the stately, decorous, primed-up folk who got their manners from ancestors across the sea. The truly rural jargon was not yet developed. There were courtly compliments, paid in the old-style way. The pompous, full-fronted gentleman with his hand knobbed on the table seems to be indulging in a semi-cynical compliment to the young ladies at whom he leers rather benignantly—and in a moment or two may fussily take from his coat-tail pocket a huge handkerchief, sonorously blow his nose and thereafter take a pinch of English snuff. He is probably the schoolmaster, learned in the rudiments with a smattering of

classics; the kind that did casual farming in a leisurely style after school-hours, or boarded round with the ratepayers. That kind has long since vanished from the earth, and gone is much of the consequential dignity of the countryside.

Observe also the primpy young swell in the dance; with what bland pomposity he escorts his partner through the mazes woven by the music and the caller-off. He is the gay young Lothario of the back township; a dandy from head to heels, to the ladies a killer, to the other young men an object of envy as to clothes and his manner of speech; with very likely a passable voice in a song and a turn for rhetorical recitation.

And the fiddlers! Did you ever behold more elevated musicians? These gentlemen drawing the long bow were the itinerant joy of three townships; the dispensers of music and of mirth; reeling off the classic minuet as glibly as the more rustic strains of "Old Dan Tucker" and "The Sailor's Hornpipe." The dance to these gentlemen was a stately thing. But if ever the high halls of the Canadian backwoods home echoed to undying revelry, it was on that Christmas night in 1850 when the aristocracy gathered from village and farm and celebrated Christmas with a mixture of courtly grace and rustic hilarity such as can no longer be found in Canada. We shall never have quite such days again.

A CANADIAN CHRISTMAS PARTY IN 1850



From a Drawing made in the best style of Mr. David Thomson, a Canadian Artist, now living in London, England; originally printed for private circulation in the old Art League Calendar of 1897; now the property of Mr. Robert Holmes, the well-known painter of Canadian Wild Flowers.



"Even on Christmas Eve the house-wife on the Gore Line was fastidious over the soap—'Snippy Old Snoop!' he mumbled as he watched her."

THE ASH-BOY'S CHRISTMAS EVE

Being somewhat the Ruminations of a Lad whose business was to pry into the Barrels and Boxes of other bush-dwelling folk.

WRITTEN BY THE ASH-BOY

It was a dirty job. His clothes were scuffed and gnawed by the ashes; his boots as red as bricks and hard as nails; hard to get on in the morning; hard to get off even with a boot-jack at night. Ashes had made them hard. Many weeks he had been gathering ashes on the side roads and the by roads and the roads through the moaning mysterious bush where he saw more things in heaven and earth than he ever dug out of an ash-barrel.

Very largely the wealth of the world however was summed up to him in a bushel of ashes. He knew their value; had himself helped to leach them and lye the kettles, boiling the black salts and melting the potash that sold for seven cents a pound. And at Christmas week he was full of speculative ideas of what he could do with the price of a hundred bushel of ashes if he only had it—to spend on Christmas things. You see he was an English lad who had perhaps an exaggerated notion of what a Christmas is. He had been used to the English Christmas, where they never have turkey but only roast beef. He had never seen a turkey till he came to Canada, where he had since learned from the farmers that turkeys used to go wild in the woods. So he kept a shrewd eye on the gobblers in the farm lanes as he turned in at the gate and across the slab bridge; knowing well that his own boss had a gobbler or two and that there was no family so poor in that part of Canada as to be without a turkey.

But the old English Christmas had a far-away meaning for this ash-boy because he had a dim and delightful remembrance of shadowy cathedrals and chiming bells; of crowded streets and crammed street tramcars; of holiday folk and of poverty folk and of them that gaze wistfully in at London windows looking for the good warm things inside. And the miles of snow that mantled the woods and the

choppings and buried the ruts in the road gave him a curious hankering after the good old warm English Christmas, where they sing carols to the dawn, and where big organs played and choirs sang and the millions went abroad pulling bonbons and such. He had a dim notion that there might be cities in Canada, but he had never seen one. He had heard of Montreal—having come through it by night on his way up the St. Lawrence when he crossed the water. He had heard of Toronto—though as yet no Winnipeg. Some day he would probably get enough money together to take a trip to one of these cities; and he had a very large desire to do so at Christmas time; though of course he wouldn't be able to get away, for he had the ashes to haul.

"Got 'ny ashes, mum?" Over and over again he asked it; when sometimes he knew they had when they said they hadn't; and there were miles of the road when he felt a good deal like the match girl looking in at the Christmas window. For his load on Christmas Eve was piling up slow, and if he got not a full load heaped up over the box he got his deserts from the boss for being a "poor coot" and a "lummicks" and what not. So all that grey drooning day of white land and cloudy sky he hustled the old team and chirped hard after the ashes; packing them in hard and heaping up the two-bushel basket high for a bushel—for the boss' sake; for at Christmas time surely the folk wouldn't begrudge him good measure running over.

But all that day he got less than half a load of ashes; and towards the dip of the day he began to get somehow careless whether he got any more or not; just dreaming about Christmas and the tree and the gifts and the jangling bells and the happy hula-baloo that was sure to come all about some boy that was born in a manger hundreds of years ago.

Heaven knew that some of these farm wives didn't seem to know much about the story of the



HE "ashcat" boy had been speculating about Christmas. He had a very good chance to do this, for the houses in those days on some of the roads were a long way apart, so that he turned in very seldom with his accumulating load of the backwood house ashes, leavings of a thousand fires. He was a very ruminative sort of lad. "Got 'ny ashes to-day, mum?" Thus he addressed the house-wives; humbly, hopefully, sincerely. It

was important to be humble—except when the family dog came snooping at his boot-leg, in which case he batted the brute with the scoop shovel.

Christmas week he was glad of the sleighing; "slippin," he called it. He hated luggering a two-bushel basket of ashes clear up to the high side of a waggon box, because the box was double-boarded to hold about a hundred bushels, and that made a long trip in a day to get a load. And of course there were ashes and ashes. Some were dry and light; some damp and hefty. Some were half leached by the wet and some were fresh and strong as the day they were shoveled out of the high-oven stoves. But they were all the same price; five cents a bushel—nominal price; paid in soap, the ashcat's currency; soap of two sorts in a lidded box at his left hand on the conspicuous ornament to the hickory spring seat that went bibbety-bob with the slewing of the sleigh bobs like a bird on a wind-blown bough.

thing. About all they seemed to know was, that they didn't have any ashes. Noon and miles from home; three more turns in the road, through a neck of woods into the next township, and as yet not more than a bit of a jag not high enough to show over the top of the box. It surely was one of the off days. They would come once in a while; good deal like the little match girl. Somehow everybody seemed grumpy. The dogs were snarly. The further he went without getting any ashes the less he felt like turning into a lane. There were all kinds of lanes; long and straight; short and crooked; coming out into woodyards where sometimes the men of the house were cross-cutting wood with queer-looking saw-horses rigged up of stakes. Here and there a pump at the end of the lane; a log trough; usually a flock of dumpy hens and a rooster or two; occasionally a snooping old sow; always a wood-pile; once a gang in the barn threshing clover seed with a devil of a dust.

Thrifty farmers some of these; most of them had chopped homes out of the bush. Ashes were the only thing they had to sell that cost nothing to get. They were connoisseurs on ashes; knowing even better than the boy the hardwood ashes from the soft, and eternally convinced that if there was a real, up-to-date swindler in the township it was the man who packed a two-bushel corn-basket full of prime hickory and oak ashes all for a bar of brown soap that cost him no more than two cents at the most; which was not a comfortable feeling to have on Christmas Eve when everybody is supposed to have a tinge of benevolence. The ash-boy understood. He was the making of a sharper; never would succeed in becoming a citizen; might be English and all that, but all his fine notions about Christmas would never keep him from being a derelict.

Every mile he drove that grey afternoon made him all the more certain that he was a complete failure. Every dog that barked at a gate gave him to understand that he would get no more ashes that day.

"I'gosh! I'm a jay, I guess," he mumbled as he bluebeeched up the team and struck a swinging clip back a sideroad. "Littlest load I ever had."

And he began to ruminate on the uncertainties of life; for it was a long way from an ash-basket to being even a pathmaster or a pound-keeper, let alone becoming Premier of Canada. Nevertheless, ashes were all right, so long as he got enough of them; hundred bushels to make a hundredweight of "black salts" at the ashery; three hundred to make a hundredweight of potash.

Getting to be a very queer road; miles back from where he had started in at sunrise; a sombre, untrampled sort of place this stump-road concession—now back of the gore line, heading he scarcely knew whither, except that somewhere in the back-woods at the end of the ditch there was a saw-mill, and he might be able to get a few bushels of ashes there.

Soon creeping towards the close of the day; the boy began to hear the strange sounds of winter silence in the bush. The one clear note was the mellow jingle of the bells on the team. What a luxury it was to be driving a team! In England he had scarcely even seen a horse; and had never

handled the reins, which in Canada his boss called "ribbons." In England he had never seen a sleigh, which in Canada was called "bobs." Here he was driving a pair of horses, as native to the job as though he had been a London cabby; no trouble to do it; just hang on to the lines and let the team



"A fat white moon peered through the clearing into the narrow bush-road."

"flicker," as he said to himself; following the twisted, vagrant track among the trees and the stumps, every now and then the hind bob slewing carelessly towards the edge of the snow-quilted ditch.

And to the jangle of the bells the shadows came; the tree-trunks blurred and night began to come, the mystical, strange shadow of the Christmas Eve. Not another team on the road. Plunkety-plunk! went the hoofs as he got farther and farther back into the defiles of the whispering woods. Not a light; never a barn or a house; not the sign of a gate or a lane; only the good-night scramble of a black squirrel or two and the mysterious creak of a "talking-tree" which he knew to be an old hollow stub.

On and on he went, the loneliest yet the happiest lad that ever was; not particularly caring about the ashes; interested more in the drifting clang of the bells that sounded through the aisles of the sombre bush like the little souls of great Christmas bells somewhere. He had a great liking for bells; knowing many a bush-man's team by the sound of his bells, far better than he knew most men by their morals or their habits and customs.

Heaven knew what road he was on now. He was in dream-land; a shimmer of snow and a drift of cloud; the parting of the curtains as the trees jumbled up into masses of shadow—and then a fat white moon peered through the clearing into the narrow bush-road. It struck a warm, mellow light on the snow and the tips of the harness, and made the track glisten like the trail of a moonlight on a sea somewhere. A ghostly, delightful, drowsy world; a mild and gentle air; he must have fallen asleep, dreaming that the bells were the jangle of cathedral chimes, that the trees were the great walls of London burdened with smoke and fog, and that about him was a great crowd of people, more folk than he had seen for many a year, but all going somewhere this Christmas Eve.

Suddenly the sleigh jolted a bit; the horses' hoofs thudded on a culvert. He woke—to find that he was turning in to the yard of a sawmill; a city of logs piled up four decks high with caves between, and at the end of one long, crooked alley the hissing, simmering old sawmill with a smokestack almost as high as a church steeple.

"Got 'ny ashes?" he mumbled to a spectral, blinky sort of a man that came up out of the engine-room hole. "Any good hardwood ashes?"

"Ya-as, got a pile of 'm yonder. Help y'rself, sonny. Guess yeh need 'm to make a load."

The boy drove on. He was much awake now. No longer dreaming about city streets; lost in wonder, love and praise as he scooped the white ashes of the mill into the big double box without even the formality of a basket for measure.

He heaped up a grand, good load while the mill-man carved his tobacco and the moon swung high over the clearing nibbled out by the mill. He called it forty bushels—when it was nearer sixty—and he handed the man an armful of thick brown soap, wishing it had been the pink perfumed kind that smelled like Christmas.

"That's all right, son. It'll take off the dirt. Wish yeh a merry Christmas—when she comes."

"I'gosh! Same to you!" said the boy as he chugged in the shovel, mounted the basket bottom side up and climbed to his swaggering hickory seat.

Away he went through the log piles; jingling consequentially out to the long bush road; hungry as a bear and happy as a king; with a full-packed load behind and ten miles of good "slippin'" ahead.

And as he let the horses "flicker," he mentally wished every man, woman and child that had a fire and an ash-heap in that land of the backwoods—a very merry Christmas.

It was better to be an ash-boy in Canada than a street-gamin in London; better to live in the bush and help clear the land than go slipshodding round the streets of a big hungry city that ate up thousands of young ones every year as good as he was.

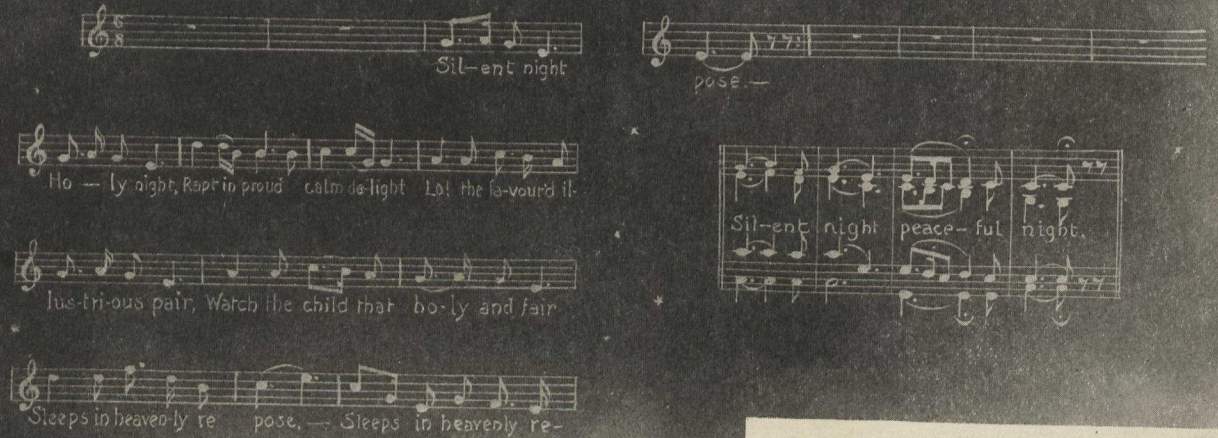
CHRISTMAS WEEK IN EDMONTON MARKET, TEN YEARS AGO



In those days the Galicians, thriftily dressed in sheepskin coats, drove sixty miles with prairie-made jumpers and home-made harness to the fur-town metropolis on the Saskatchewan.

The Eve of Christmas

SILENT NIGHT



THE SHOESTRING BOY

BY JOHN R. O'CONNOR.

I AM long accustomed to the child-merchants of the city thoroughfares: their manners and customs, likewise their wiles and hypocrisies. The tear-stained, sleeping youngster in the doorway is a bluff; so is the crying kid who has lost his only nickel down the grating; and there are many others. They are all a part of pavement life, and would be noticeable only if eliminated. The inexperienced stranger alone would give them heed. But I confess that on the Christmas Eve when I first encountered the hero—I had almost said zero—of this tale (he was so small), I was compelled to halt and observe.

The snow was crunching under my feet, and the frost nipping my ears, as I walked briskly along the almost deserted street towards my hotel. With head bent against the whistling wind I hurried on, anxious for the indoor warmth. The light blazing from out the plate-glass front of a department store splashed across the sidewalk. My eyes, bent downward, led me to note in the path of the glare a child of about six years, running along beside me and whispering hoarsely as he held towards me something in his hand. The plea in the dark, round eyes was irresistible.

"Buy a p'r o' shoe-laces, Mister, on'y fi' cents?" he panted, and his teeth chattered as he spoke.

A little, tattered overcoat was buttoned tight up under his chin, a rough cloth cap pulled over the tops of his ears, while his peaked, white face filled the space between cap and collar. His feet, encased in broken boots, were connected with the upper portion of his anatomy by threads of limbs clad in shreds of stockings. One tiny hand at a time occupied a pocket of the coat, while the other, devoid of covering, was on duty with the shoe-strings.

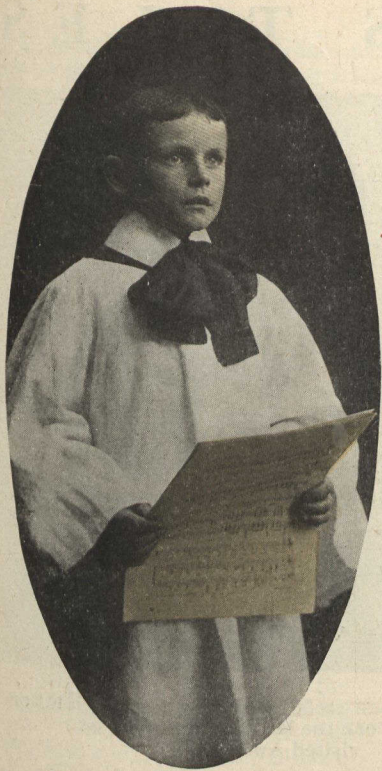
I felt his hands. they were cold. His cheeks were like ice. I lifted the mid- get in my arms, intending to carry him into the hotel to warm him. But he kicked to be set down, and cried: "I ain't cold, Mister; I'm always shiverin' in de winter. Gi' me a nickel, an' I'll go home." This had a familiar ring, so I put him on his feet, stuffed some change in his coat pocket, and he ran away across the light patch into the dark, beyond. "Well," I soliloquised, as

I resumed my way, "poor little beggar! I wonder what's in store for him. I suppose he'll either grow to be a news-vendor with a voice like a raven, or else he'll wake up some bright morning in a far country, a silver-throated cherub."

But though I dismissed him from my mind, his image found lodgment in my memory. And I would often thereafter go out of my way to pass through that street on my journey homeward just to see if he was "on the job." And he was always there. The rain would soak him through, but there he would be, drawn against the corner of the gaily-dressed show-window. The frost would chill him, but it could not drive him away. He was a part of the scenery; and a part of the season, whatever it was. I concluded that the secret of his escape from some deadly disease must be that the microbes looked upon him as

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26





A Grand Old Christmas Hymn

"ADESTE FIDELES" is perhaps the finest Christmas morning hymn in the world. Its origin is comparatively obscure. The tune is Portuguese; the words are a translation from the Latin by Canon Oakely. There have been and still are sects who mangle this lovely slow melody by setting it to swift words. It should be sung slowly; with great reverence and the finest of feeling.

ADESTE FIDELES. 66. 11 5. 6 10.

1. *f* Oh, come, all ye faith-ful, Joy-ful-ly tri-um-phant, To Beth-le-hem hast-en
 2. *f* Tho' true God of true God, Light of Light e-ter-nal, Our low-ly... na-
 3. *f* Raise, raise, choirs of an-gels, Songs of loud-est tri-umph, Thro' hea-ven's high ar-ches
 4. *f* A-men! Lord, we bless Thee, Born for our sal-va-tion; O Je-sus! for ev-er

now with glad-... ac-cord! Lo! in a man-ger Lies the King of an-gels;
 -ture He hath not ab-horred; / Son of the Fa-ther, Not made, but be-got-ten;
 be your prais-es poured; Now to our God be Glo-ry in the high-est;
 be Thy name... a-dored; Word of the Fa-ther, Late in flesh ap-pear-ing;

O come, let us a-dore Him, O come, let us a-dore Him,

O come, let us a-dore Him Christ... the Lord!

AT CHURCH ON CHRISTMAS MORNING

THERE was a fleck of impossible snow that seemed to crawl right up towards the tip of the great steeple, and it blinked and spangled there in the crisp white light of the Christmas morning as though it had been a celestial diamond. Here and there in the grim shutters of the eyrie windows aloft there were jots of snow; and down from that on the cornice that hooded the great clock whose chimes last

night rang out the hour of twelve; down and down and deeper still in the cold, devout shadows of the tower and mantling away till it got to the sunken gloom of the great windows that looked over the place where the roof of the cathedral seemed to begin—still the crisp sheen of the snow that on the street was trampled by thousands of hurrying feet that went to the church on Christmas morning.

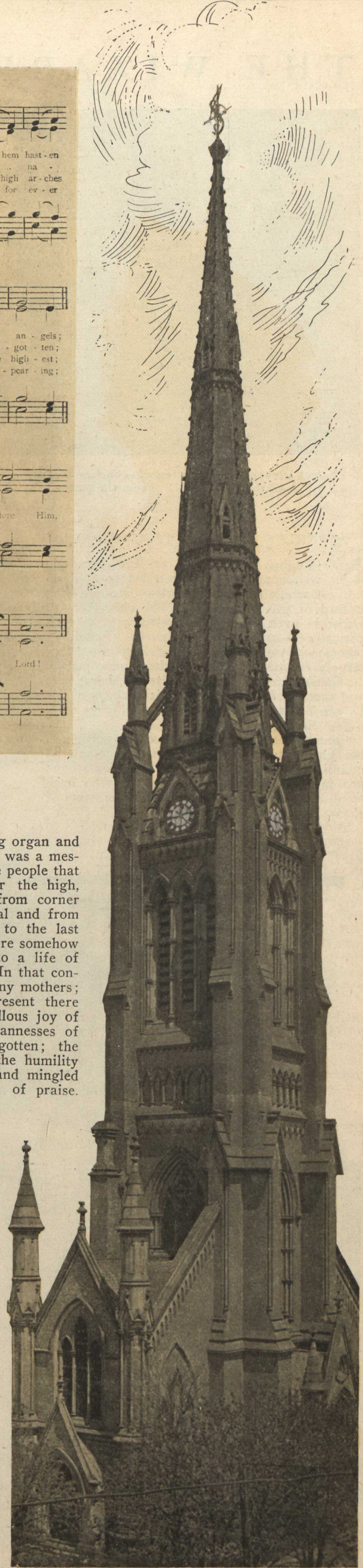
Over the hum and jostle of the merry crowd there came now and then from the opening great doors of the tower the muffled lift of the organ; the diapasons that shook the windows—in a delightfully creepy sort of way; and as the boy and his mother got inside where the lustre of stained glass drifted over the well-dressed crowd, the voices of boys and of men in the chancel rose in a hymn; many hymns—but chief among them one, and it was "Come all ye Faithful"—the finest of all; sweeter than "Hark the Herald Angels"; grander than "Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning"; more beautiful and triumphant than "This is the Day and this the Happy Morn"; and the boy listened to his mother singing the hymn when he felt too happy and full of joy even to sing a line himself.

Because in that hymn of the great

cathedral with its swelling organ and its full-voiced choir there was a message of motherhood. The people that stood by hundreds under the high, shadowy nave, singing from corner to corner of the cathedral and from the rear of the chancel to the last row by the door—they were somehow lifted by that hymn into a life of nobility and gentleness. In that congregation were many, many mothers; and to every mother present there must have been a marvellous joy of life. For once the meannesses of common ways were forgotten; the pride of high folk and the humility of the low—all merged and mingled into one common hymn of praise.

Homes by thousands had sent out their folk this Christmas morn; and it was a wonderful thing just to belong to a home in a city, where the streets were crowded with people, the churches with worshippers, and where nobody was lonesome, and everybody might hear such a choir, such an organ and such a hymn.

When they got to the last verse—"Raise, choirs of angels," the great organ was turned full on; the voices rose with it; the boys and the men, the women and the children, all in one great swelling sea of adoration song—that died away, rolling up into the roof among the beams and the arches; and the great silence of prayer fell upon the hush of the crowd.



THE WIZARD OF CHRISTMAS TALES



Charles Dickens in 1839, a few years before writing "A Christmas Carol." From the painting by Maclise.



A caricature of Dickens. Mr. George Cruikshank, London, artist and friend of Dickens, did many sketches of the novelist.



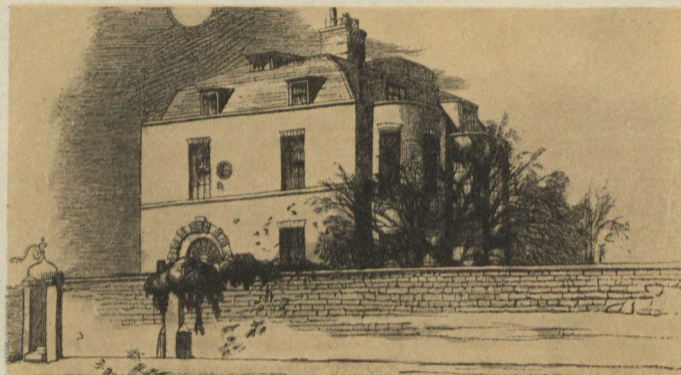
Charles Dickens in 1868. From a photograph taken in New York the last time the novelist visited America.

CHARLES DICKENS TO CANADA.

NO English writer and no Christmas-tale writer anywhere has a better hold on Canadians than Charles Dickens, the wizard of Christmas tales. The characters of Dickens—even though they sometimes approach caricatures—are real people to Canadians, whereas those of Sir Walter Scott are very largely creatures of imagination and romance.

Canada has many a Nicholas Nickleby; here and there a David Copperfield; perhaps a few Oliver Twists and Tiny Tims; quite possibly a few Scrooges.

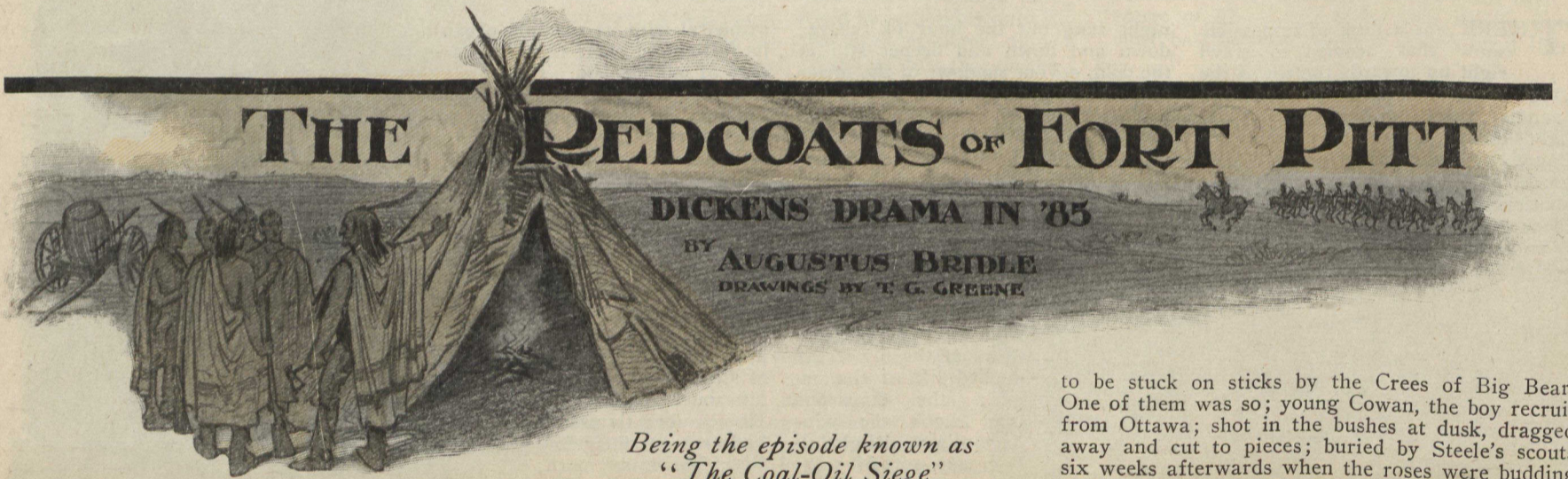
The Christmas stories of Charles Dickens are known to almost every man, woman and child in Canada. His pictures of London streets are familiar to hundreds of people who once lived on stump roads in the bush. The name of



House in which "A Christmas Carol" was written.

Dickens is known to old-timers on the Canadian prairie; clear out to the fur posts on the Saskatchewan, where in 1885 a son of Charles Dickens was an officer in the North-West Mounted Police. The story which follows below is a picture of one very dramatic episode in the career of that son.

And there is an artist in Canada who well remembers Charles Dickens. Mr. William Cruikshank, R.C.A., is a nephew of the well-known George Cruikshank, whose caricature of Dickens appears on this page; and he frequently met the novelist at his London home; describes him as something of a caricature in dress—velvet coat, braided trousers, and very much of a dandy. Mr. E. S. Williamson, of Toronto, who has the first gold watch ever owned by Charles Dickens, has the finest collection of Dickens reliques in the world.



THE REDCOATS OF FORT PITT

DICKENS DRAMA IN '85

BY AUGUSTUS BRIDLE

DRAWINGS BY T. G. GREENE

Being the episode known as
"The Coal-Oil Siege"



CHARLES DICKENS very likely heard of Canada when he was in New York and down south, lecturing and getting material for "Martin Chuzzlewit"—that was in 1861 and 1868. But the greatest Christmas-tale writer in the English or any language died fifteen years too soon to get the material for a dramatic story more thrilling and uncommon than any of his own London tragedies. Had he lived to be seventy-three years of age he might have written the story of Francis Jeffrey Dickens on the Saskatchewan—which was in 1885.

As most Canadians know, that was the year of the Rebellion; when the half-breeds rose against the white settler and the Indians thirst-danced and painted and looted and sometimes murdered—largely because they hated the redcoat police. Francis Jeffrey Dickens was an Inspector in charge of the divisional force at Fort Pitt, which was headquarters for a small empire of the lone land dotted with outposts and fur posts and Indian camps. Fort Pitt was the loneliest and most cut-off place in the whole valley of the war. It was a village of

wood inside a stockade; a city of fur; gathering place for trappers and traders; fighting place for Blackfeet and Crees—for it was boundary between. Butler in his "Great Lone Land" vividly describes old Fort Pitt; that was in 1871 when he went over the trails to establish the law two years before the first redcoats set up posts in the land.

Drifting down the Saskatchewan by scow nine years ago, the writer picked up odds and ends of talk about Fort Pitt from here and there a survivor of the siege which was in April, 1885. Indian Agent Mann, of Onion Lake, his wife and family of three were captives in the carts of Big Bear after the surrender of the fort, in command of which was Inspector Dickens. They well remembered Dickens and his thirty redcoats; Big Bear with his two devilish sons, Little Poplar and Wandering Spirit, and his thousand men, women and children. At Mooswa, thirty miles above Pitt, stood the shack of Patsy Carroll, the line-mender and operator. Patsy recalled Dickens with much interest. He himself was one of the redcoats under him. He recalled the coal-oil siege and the scow-drift down the ice-flooded river; for he helped fight the fire and pole the scow six days down from Pitt to Battleford—which also was burned by the Crees of Poundmaker; and God knew into what hands they might fall; but they had to get out of Pitt or leave thirty hearts

to be stuck on sticks by the Crees of Big Bear. One of them was so; young Cowan, the boy recruit from Ottawa; shot in the bushes at dusk, dragged away and cut to pieces; buried by Steele's scouts six weeks afterwards when the roses were budding on the hills above. Drifting down on the scow past the sole surviving shack, our party saw the grave



Birch-Bark Souvenir from Fort Pitt, 1885

of young Cowan; a corral of poles and a wooden slab.

But that again anticipates the story of Dickens at Fort Pitt; the story that the elder Dickens might have written had he lived; that began to be the centre of a vast, ugly stage of drama just after the

massacre of priests and traders at Frog Lake, twenty miles northwest—the priests shot in the church and the church burned over their bodies. Dickens had been a year or so in charge of Pitt. He went there before the signs of war became obvious. He came to Canada because he was something of a rover and because in those days it was the fashion for adventurous young Englishmen to join the force in the out-post land.

The *Book-Lover* has published an historic note regarding this Dickens episode in Canada, entitled "The First Gold Watch of Charles Dickens": "Francis Jeffrey Dickens, third son of the novelist, came to Canada shortly after his father's death in 1870. He remained some time in Toronto, then went to the Northwest, and in 1874 secured an appointment as Inspector in the Mounted Police. During the Northwest Rebellion of 1885, it was reported in England that Inspector Dickens had been killed by Indians in an attack on Fort Pitt, of which he had charge. This, however, was not correct. He held his position in the Mounted Police until invalided from the service on March 1st, 1886, and died at Moline, Illinois, on June 11th of the same year. The first gold watch owned by Charles Dickens was in the possession of Francis Jeffrey Dickens and was brought by him to Canada. Before going west he became acquainted with Mr. F. M. Midford, of Toronto, and this acquaintance afterwards developed into a warm friendship. On his return to Toronto some years later, it came about one day that, being in want of money, Dickens said he must sell the watch. Mr. Midford promptly declared his readiness to furnish the cash needed and his unwillingness to see such a relic pass into the hand of a stranger. 'It was my father's first gold watch,' said Dickens, 'and I'd much rather see it yours, Midford, than a stranger's.' After the death of Mr. Midford in 1891, the Dickens watch passed to his sister, Mrs. Hadwen, from whom it was purchased by her brother, Mr. William Midford, of the Methodist Book Room. The watch remained in Mr. William Midford's possession until 1902, when Mr. E. S. Williamson became its owner."

Born in London, Inspector Dickens must have sat and regaled his men with reminiscences of the great town pictured in his father's books. From London to Fort Pitt was precisely like London to Siberia. Pitt was so far away on the map of Canada that Dickens the elder had probably never even heard of it. It was about midway between Duck Lake, where the war began, and Edmonton, which was the northernmost end of it. All the redcoats that went up from the east got to Fort Pitt the last place of all. Steele's scouts reached it in the latter part of May. Middleton's men got there in July as may be noted from the illustration of birch bark



"Flogging out the fires in full view of the camp above and the fire-fiends below."

drawn and written by Sergeant Kitchener weeks after the last gun was fired at Batoche, Riel captured and Big Bear routed at Loon Lake in the far north with his remnant of the captivity.

Dickens and his men understood that they were very far off; that by the swift turn of the wheel—in the dark as it were—they were suddenly in a jackpot with a thousand savages camped on the long, bush-cropped bank above; the restless Crees who had thirst-danced and burned and looted and massacred at Frog Lake, and then swung their shuffling caravans across the hills to the wooden stockade with its thirty police and as many traders, women and children.

Pitt was the only hope thereabouts; a forlorn hope; a stockade of wood bullet-marked and knife-hacked by Indians; there where the York boats fetched up the goods from York Factory and drifted down the furs to Hudson's Bay. Here were twenty houses or so; stables and blacksmith shop;

his room hung amid boughs and twittering birds; and in that peaceful literary home this inspector of police had lived before ever he heard of Fort Pitt. He must have been a baby in the house where Dickens wrote the Christmas Carol. Well — he felt much like a baby at Fort Pitt. So did they all. There was no other way to feel: hemmed in and cut off and with nothing to do but wait and wonder what the Crees would do next—and when they would do it. Not by day; for the police guns were too much feared by the Indians and there were eyes in the wooden stockade.

The river began to drift away white and restless under the stockade; getting out and away—but the garrison of Fort Pitt stayed in; at night the sentries at the bastions; most of the inhabitants unable or unwilling to sleep; hearing noises in the silence;

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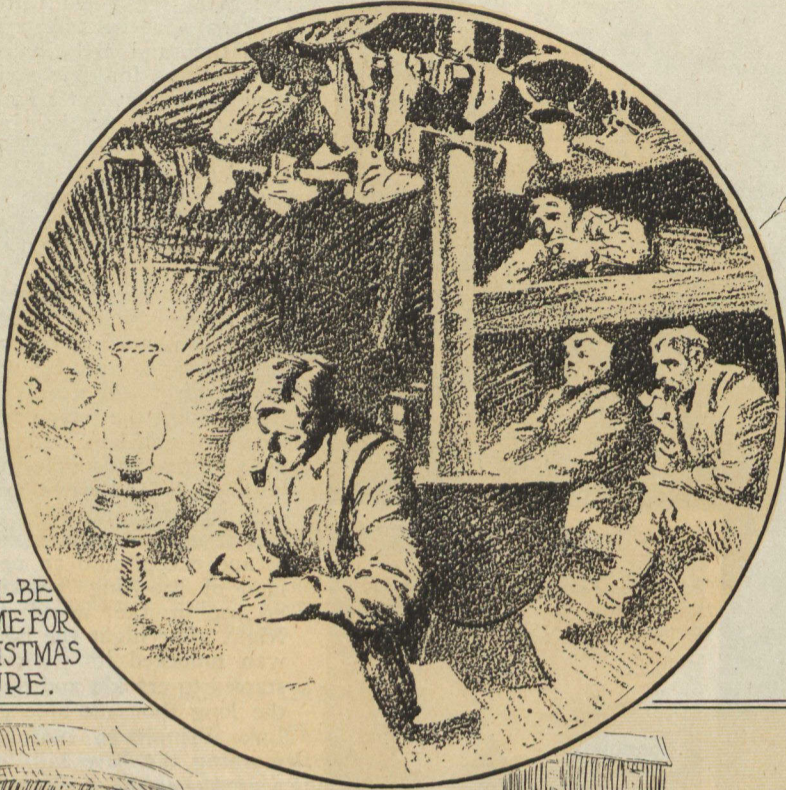
"In the grey of an April dawn they let the scow sheer away into the ice, and began the six-day drift from Fort Pitt to Battleford."

stores and powder magazine; one flapping red flag—H. B. C. And the thirty redcoats huddled under that flag with Inspector Dickens were wanted very badly by a thousand redskins camped above; there for days and weeks with their carts and cattle and ponies and loot; their smoking tepees—their bales of hay and barrel of coal-oil.

Here was a picture for the elder Dickens with his mastery of the language of suspense; the lingering uncertainty of profound isolation. As placid an old fort as ever smoked into a solitude; men, women and children and police cut off by weeks of journey from the nearest redcoat column; in the stone magazine plenty of powder; a store full of guns; horses a couple of score; buckboards and carts and wag-gons; all the means of fighting and of escaping—but nowhere to escape except into an open lone land of prowling redskins, and no use in the world to fight. Night after night the Saskatchewan unlocked its ice-gates and started to crackle and thud down the long thousand-mile gorge to Lake Winnipeg; morning after morning the bare hills of April peered over the stockade into the huddle of peaked-up, wooden roofs with their spires of hopeful, shuddering smokes — and still the smokes of those tepees above on the long bank; the patient Crees who had thirst-danced and painted and murdered and now wanted nothing so well as thirty redcoats under the son of the man who wrote Christmas stories for white folks.

But fifteen years before the elder Dickens had written lines describing the placid beauty of his home upon Gad's Hill where

THREE THOUSAND MILES FOR CHRISTMAS DINNER



I'LL BE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS SURE.



ON THE SNOWSHOE TRAIL



FOUR DAYS OUT FROM CAMP.



ALONG THE NORTH SHORE

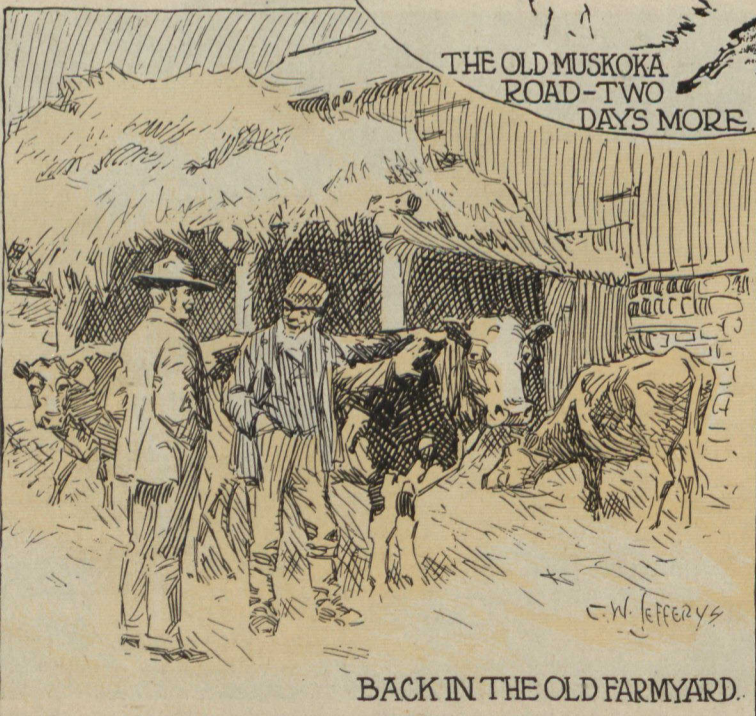
THREE thousand miles for a Christmas dinner—from a lumber camp on the coast ranges of the Douglas firs to the snoozy old farmhouse down in Ontario; it was years since Tom Higgins had been over that trail. He went over it westward in 1900, just when the big treks began over the wheat-lands and the cow-hills; when there was one transcontinental with a few



THE OLD MUSKOKA ROAD—TWO DAYS MORE.

branch lines. He came out—when the construction camp had begun to crawl near up into the solitudes that lie southward from Cariboo; when the wizards of finance are flinging their ropes of traffic clear from the midland lakes to the open plains of the wheat, up by the fur-post rivers a griddle of steel, on into the foot-hills, out by the passes of the Rockies to the cradle of the chinooks and down by the valleys of the coastward rivers to the tumbling sea.

As he snowshoed out from camp, valise on his back, to find the railway, he began to realise that Canada is a huge contract for any one man to get up and yell about as a patriot all in a single breath; but, he got the feeling that Christmas week.



BACK IN THE OLD FARMYARD.



HELLO DAD, MERRY CHRIS —!

Rare Quality Diamonds

Canadian bought Diamonds are the best values obtainable anywhere in the whole world. The public are very exacting in demanding that the quality shall be right. This compels our examination of every stone entering our stock. Our selections are famous for their high grade attributes. Not merely does this apply in relation to our own Canadian clientele but exists in the minds of our many United States patrons who buy from us because of these quality safeguards plus our price-saving possibilities. :: ::

WRITE FOR ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE

B. & H. B. Kent

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It is imperative that good presents be given for Christmas those which will Please and Be Kept

Books please young and old. Books are ever valued. The largest Book Room in Canada can satisfy every taste for good books.

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WILLIAM BRIGGS
THE BOOK ROOM
29-37 Richmond St. West, Toronto

in answering advertisements mention Canadian Courier

DEMI-TASSE

ONE USE FOR IT.

SHE was a sweet little girl with innocent blue eyes, and she came home from Sunday-School with a card on which was pictured a highly-coloured Biblical scene, a reward for saying many "verses."

"Isn't it a lovely card?" she said to her mother.

"Yes, dear, very pretty."

"What do you think we'd better do with it?"

"I don't know, dear. What do you say?"

The small girl was thoughtful for a few moments and finally said brightly:

"I know the very best thing to do. You may offer it as a bridge prize!"

* * *

NEWSLETS.

IT is understood that Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Mr. R. L. Borden are troubled with insomnia, in consequence of the rumour that the Liberals of British Columbia and the Conservatives of Nova Scotia have joined their forces to form a Third Party.

It is entirely untrue that Captain Bernier has been asked to spend the Christmas holidays with Commander Peary. Next summer, there is going to be a North Pole Old Boys' excursion to the place where the Stars and Stripes is unfurled, where the Eskimo ate the gum drops and found an open sea. How they will talk over old times, to be sure! Hon. L. P. Brodeur will be the guest of honour.

* * *

HAPPY RICHARD!

Away out in spacious B. C. The Tories are smiling in glee.

They elected McBride, Victoria's Pride,

And Whitney's as pleased as can be.

* * *

WORTH WAITING FOR.

DURING a political campaign, that speaker fares best who can most readily answer a question with an anecdote. The story will have only the most slender connection with the inquiry, but it serves its purpose if it diverts the attention of the audience from the awkward situation.

Hon. W. S. Fielding is a careful and conscientious Cabinet Minister, who shuns the making of promises and the pledging a golden future. The tariff is his darling child, and so long as he can persuade the public that the tariff is all right, other matters may take care of themselves. During the last Dominion election, Mr. Fielding found himself the chief speaker at a meeting in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

Now, everyone knows that the crying and constant need of that picturesque province is a tunnel, the Tunnel in fact, and the people will listen gladly to any public man for any number of minutes if he will only talk tunnel. Mr. Fielding had not gone far in his picture of the country's prosperity, in his compliments to the large and intelligent audience, when he was brought to a halt by the interrogation: "What about the tunnel?" which was repeated on all sides.

In no wise daunted, Mr. Fielding proceeded to tell the following tale:

Once upon a time there entered a parlour car a happy bridegroom and blushing bride, who vainly tried to look as if they had been married for many months. He tried to read the newspaper, she pretended to take an interest in the scenery, but the other passengers saw that the wedding ring was very new and the bride's going-

away gown was what the papers call a "creation."

To the delight of this unsophisticated pair, the train suddenly shot into a long and unlighted tunnel, from which it emerged with a smiling car of passengers and a more-deeply-blushing bride.

"George," said the latter, after a few moments, "do you know that the tunnel cost a million dollars?"

"I don't care," replied George stoutly. "It was worth five millions."

Mr. Fielding continued blandly: "Now I cannot say when the tunnel will come to Prince Edward Island. But I have no doubt that when it comes you will, like George, conclude that it was worth waiting for."

* * *

NON-COMMITTAL.

POLITE and yet truthful was Lord Beaconsfield's formula for acknowledging an author's presentation of a book to him:

"Lord Beaconsfield presents his compliments to Mr. K— and will lose no time in perusing his interesting book."

* * *

WHY RUN RISKS?

A CANADIAN author wrote an anthem for a recent celebration in Toronto.

Toward the end of the exercises, when the people were going out a few at a time, the author rushed to the conductor and said:

"Is it over?"

"Practically."

"But, great Scott! man, they haven't sung my anthem!"

"Well," said the conductor, "so long as the people are going out peacefully and quietly, why sing it at all?"

* * *

THE CALL OF THE WILD.

Twenty thousand pairs of arms that beat the frantic air,

Twenty thousand pairs of eyes that gleam or gloat or glare.

Twenty thousand voices wild that scream and yell and swear—

Football—that's all!

—Judge.

* * *

THE USUAL THING.

IT was a cruel response which was given the other day to an old professor of music, who is a bachelor and lives in lodgings. He was looking at one of the inscriptions which now mark the houses formerly inhabited by great artists and other notables.

"Ah!" said he, "what will they put outside my apartments when I am gone?"

"Why, 'lodgings to let,' of course!" replied the cynic.—*English Journal.*

* * *

CONCLUSIVE.

TWO young men who had been chums at college went abroad together. One conscientiously wanted to visit every spot mentioned in the guide books; the other was equally conscientious about having a hilarious time. This naturally led to disagreements. In the course of one of these the lover of pleasure said tauntingly:

"Perhaps you are doing these places so thoroughly because you are going to write a book about your trip."

"I should," replied the other promptly, "if Robert Louis Stevenson hadn't pre-empted the title I want to use."

"What's that?"

"Travels with a Donkey." —

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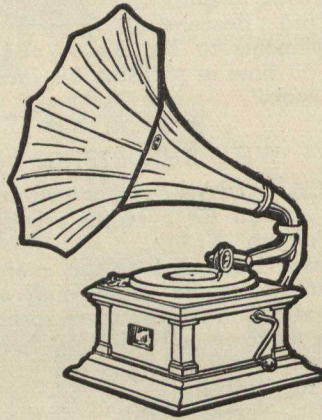
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THE SILVER CRADLE

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"IT'S useless to expect me to forgive Richard—it's absurd. I could have forgiven the lad most things—getting into debt and all that—but marrying my companion, a two-penny halfpenny little creature who couldn't say boo to a goose and yet was artful enough to catch my grandson. Oh, Richard ought to have known that he was offending me beyond redemption when he married Betty Driscoll. But there, I've cut him off with a penny in my will and stopped his allowance, so I should imagine he was regretting his foolish runaway marriage.

Lady Laura Brayton laughed, harsh, jarring laughter. Then she settled herself comfortably into the big armchair which it was usually her pleasure to occupy. For this capricious old lady was fond of the good things of this life, and she counted a well-stuffed chair as quite necessary to salvation.

She was a pretty old lady, and she looked like a piece of Dresden china, but her blue eyes were a trifle hard in their expression, and her lips were tightly pressed together, and this took off the softening effect of her clouds of white fine hair and delicate, rose-leaf complexion.

Mrs. Sedley looked up sharply at Lady Laura. The wife of the local vicar, it behooved Anna Sedley to pay court to the great lady of the neighbourhood—the local patroness. But it was difficult for the little brown-haired woman with the clear, flashing hazel eyes and small, sharp features to pay court to anyone; besides, on the point under discussion, Mrs. Sedley differed with Lady Laura—differed utterly—nor did she hesitate to say so.

"I do think you're unkind and unfair to Dick—I do, indeed, Lady Laura." Mrs. Sedley leaned forward in her chair, clasping her thin brown hands together—cool, capable little hands. "You take an impressionable boy like your grandson and have him down here for six weeks at Christmas—a poor, hard-working young barrister, bored to death with dusty law books and legal documents. Then you get a mild attack of influenza and keep to your bedroom for over a month, leaving Richard to be entertained by poor little Betty Driscoll—a delicately pretty girl with her lovely red gold hair and dark blue eyes—a lady, too—a lady every inch of her."

"A penniless little pauper," Lady Laura interrupted tartly, sticking out two small, daintily shod feet and resting them on a velvet hassock that stood in front of her chair; for it was a habit that had grown on her—the constant display of her neat little ankles and tiny, high-heeled French shoes.

"A lady all the same," Anna Sedley retorted. "Poor Betty couldn't help her father losing all his money owing to a stupid investment going wrong, and I'm sure everybody loved the dear old Colonel and was frightfully sorry when he died."

"Well, wasn't I very sorry when the Colonel died?" Lady Laura protested hurriedly. "Anyway, I was the only person who offered to give Betty a home when she was left without a single farthing—I didn't want a companion, they are only a bother and a nuisance—but I took Betty in out of pure charity. And how did she repay me? Why, by flirting desperately with my grandson—making babyish love in her shy, demure way, lowering her eyes; blushing, and all the rest of it, angling for the boy who she fondly believed was going to be my heir. But there she made a mis-

take—a big mistake. Richard could have married Norah Trevor, my nice goddaughter, a girl with over a thousand a year of her own; he would have married her if that other little wretch hadn't come along."

"Norah Trevor is a hopelessly plain girl," Mrs. Sedley remarked coldly.

"My dear, she's an heiress," Lady Laura's feet went out a little farther and she tilted her pointed chin. "Why should heiresses be pretty?"

"To prevent men falling in love with the girls who don't happen to be endowed with worldly goods," Anna Sedley retorted. Then she rose from her chair and held out her hand to her hostess.

"Well, good-bye, Lady Laura. I really must be going or my good man will be wanting to know what has become of me. Besides, I ought to run into the church on my way back and see if the decorations look all right. Oh, dear me, these Christmas decorations!"

"I wonder you were able to get here at all this afternoon," Lady Laura replied languidly. "When I wrote and asked you to come to tea I had half forgotten that it was Christmas Eve."

"The very busiest day of the parochial year—but I shouldn't have come to tea if I hadn't had something to tell you—a piece of news that I have reserved till the last."

"A piece of news?" Lady Laura's blue eyes sparkled, for she dearly loved a little scrap of scandal and was addicted to gossip. "Tell it me at once, dear. Why, we could have discussed it over our tea-cups. How teasing not to have told me before!"

"I heard from Richard yesterday—quite a long letter."

"Stop, if your news concerns my grandson," Lady Laura flushed a bright indignant pink. "I have also received a letter from him, but I put it into the fire unread. I let Richard know months ago that I desired to hold no further communication with him, and I have kept my word."

She set her lips grimly together and looked just what she was—an obstinate old lady who had suffered a grievous disappointment, and had turned against her own flesh and blood.

"You put the boy's letter into the fire?" Mrs. Sedley exclaimed with frank disgust, "and after all the fuss you used to make over Dick in the past, your own grandson, too. Well, I wouldn't have believed it, and on Christmas Eve."

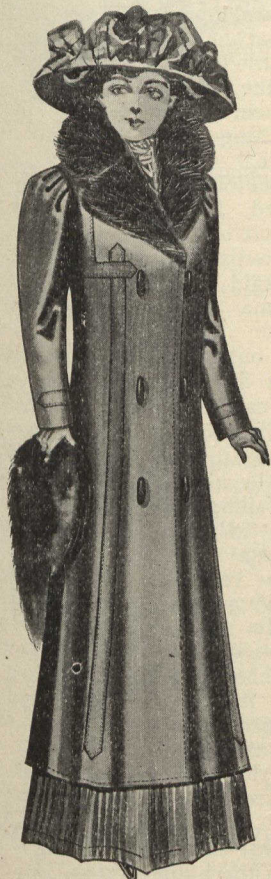
"What difference can Christmas Eve make?" Lady Laura's tone was icy, but her heart was beating over-quickly under her black silk bodice; she always dressed in rich silks and satins, and wore a quantity of soft lace—fine, yellow, cobwebby lace.

"What difference can Christmas Eve make?" The Vicar's wife caught her breath sharply. "Why, just all the difference in the world, I should think. It's the season of Peace and Goodwill—when people make up quarrels, forgive and forget, and bury all stupid, unkind thoughts they have been indulging in. The world bursts into bloom at Christmas, I always think—grows sweet and fragrant and is scented by the Christmas Rose. Crusty folk are moved to do sudden, unexpected kindness—even misers open their purses. A spirit of love prevails—of charity—the angels usher in Christmas morning, remember, and the little Christchild smiles at us all."

She checked herself abruptly, half ashamed of her strong burst of feel-

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ing but Anna Sedley did believe in Christmas and the Christmas spirit.

The old lady leaning back in the big armchair shrugged her shoulders. "I hate Christmas," she announced. "It's all very well when you have children about you—your own children—but my boys and girls are dead. All that I have left to remind me that I have ever borne a child is the old wooden cradle in which they were all rocked—a cradle banished to the lumber room years ago."

"I should fetch it out," Mrs. Sedley interrupted hurriedly. "It would make a cosy nest, Lady Laura, for your great-grandson—your poor daughter's grandson. For Richard is a father—his son was born just four weeks ago."

"What!" cried the old lady; her hands shook a little and her mouth went awry. "Dick—Dick—with a baby of his own," she muttered, then a tear trickled slowly down her cheek. "Oh, if the lad hadn't set me at defiance, how happy and more than happy such news would have made me. I could have worshipped Richard's boy if he'd married as I wished—but—" She paused, two vivid spots of colour stood out on each of her cheeks. "I won't forgive him or that wife of his—no—not for all the babies in Christendom—people who thwart me have to suffer. Besides, I never forgive."

She kept clasping and unclasping her hands as she spoke, her agitation painfully evident.

Anna Sedley frowned. "You won't forgive—yet you hope as we all do—to be forgiven, and you don't want to see your great-grandson—as fine a baby as was ever born, so Dick writes—the baby who came into the world in a small back street lodging house, for the young couple have been having a hard time of it as far as money goes since you stopped Richard's allowance. Well, I'm surprised, I really am, for after all Betty is a lady, and a sweetly pretty girl."

"She knew I wanted Richard to marry Norah Trevor—that my mind was set on the match."

"But she was also aware that Richard didn't care two pins for Norah. Besides, young people in love with each other generally go their own way, Lady Laura—as Dick and Betty did."

The old lady folded her trembling hands together.

"Let the matter drop, Mrs. Sedley. I have put Richard out of my life, out of my thoughts, and I don't want to hear about him."

"He's frightfully hard up—he and delicate, pretty little Betty. Why, he writes in his funny, amusing way, that he has just constructed a cradle for his son and heir out of an old orange box bought from the local grocer. Briefs have been few and far between, I'm afraid, but I daresay the baby sleeps soundly enough in the packing-case—poor little heir to poverty."

Lady Laura winced.

"This is what comes of improvident marriages," she began, then she looked sharply at Anna Sedley. "I don't mind letting Richard have the old cradle upstairs for his son. It's absurd putting a baby into an orange box, and—and I'm not an utterly heartless old woman, and this is Christmas-time, so I'll give you two banknotes for twenty pounds each, and you can post the money to Dick, and also send the cradle to him, but you mustn't let him think that I am sending the money—that would never do, never."

Mrs. Sedley smiled, a faintly subtle smile.

"Thanks, dear Lady Laura, but I don't think I'd care about being your almoner. If you want to send Dick some money send it yourself; and as

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to the cradle, he'd recognise the old cradle."

Lady Laura laughed, harsh, rather jarring laughter.

"Would he, do you think? I think not. He wouldn't remember the old wooden cradle—he was only a child, a babe, when he slept in it. What associations or recollections could it possibly have for Dick, whilst for me—"

Her voice had an odd quiver in it—a queer, throaty quiver—and Mrs. Sedley felt strangely moved. Then hardly knowing what she was doing, she bent over Lady Laura and kissed the old lady on her forehead.

"Good-bye," she said gently. "I mustn't stay any longer, I really mustn't. Think about the old days a little—other Christmases—and remember your grandson is fighting a hard battle with poverty in London, and that he and Betty have got a dear little baby to look after, and I think the Christchild wants you to help them to look after that wee, small thing—such children as they both are."

"Rebellious children," Lady Laura muttered, but her eyes had grown quite soft and misty, and her old lips had taken to trembling.

She said no more, however, neither did Anna Sedley for the matter of that, for the Vicar's wife slipped quietly out of the big drawing-room, such a fine formal room with its carved cabinets full of priceless china, stiff Chippendale chairs, heavy brocade curtains, and Lady Laura was left all by herself in the twilight, the snow falling fast outside, and the church bells beginning to ring for Evensong.

It was very quiet in that large fire-lit drawing-room, and all at once the old lady felt strangely lonely, and she shivered, then drew her lace scarf tightly about her shoulders, her pretty vanity forgotten, picturesque folds abandoned for the sake of warmth and comfort.

She rose slowly from her chair. Her cheeks were not so very pink after all, and she looked her age.

"I must find that cradle; it ought to be in the lumber-room. I—I don't like to think of Richard's baby—my poor Mary's grandson—sleeping in an orange box, an old packing case. The poor child oughtn't to have to suffer for the faults of his parents—it's wrong."

She left the drawing-room as she spoke, and made her way up the wide staircase of the old Kentish manor house, where it had pleased Lady Laura to dwell for over forty years—ever since the early days of her widowhood, in fact—and it seemed to the old lady as if a whole host of unseen shadows trooped after her, the ghosts of her dead.

She was tired and out of breath long before she reached the lumber-room—a weary old lady—and her fingers trembled as she turned the rusty key and unbolted certain hinges and the whole air seemed to ring with the sound of Christmas bells—or, so Lady Laura fancied.

She found what she was in search of—the wooden cradle, the quaint, old-fashioned wooden cradle in which all her children had slept. Later on she would send a maid up to the lumber-room to dust the old cradle and carry it downstairs, but she must rest for a moment or two, she was very weary.

Lady Laura sat down—a tired old lady—and, somehow, her eyes closed, and she fell fast asleep, for the very young and the very old find it easy to fall asleep—kind sleep that prepares the young to live and the old to die.

When she woke up the moon was shining, the bright, clear Christmas moon, and the lumber-room was flooded with light. It seemed to Lady



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Laura as if the wooden cradle had turned into a silver cradle, a shining silver cradle, and, surely—unless her old eyes were playing strange tricks with her—a babe smiled up in her face, a soft, rosy babe.

She clasped her old hands together. This was Christmas Eve, she remembered, a night when it comes easy to see visions. But how brightly the silver cradle gleamed, how sweetly the babe smiled.

She sank on her knees. A proud old woman, but her pride was fast melting within her, and she felt ashamed of the angry feelings she had indulged in during the past year.

She had been too hard on Richard and his little wife. After all, they had only obeyed the natural instincts of love and youth, and was a harsh, tyrannical old lady to dictate to a young man and tell him whom he was to marry? Why, Richard had done well to set his grandmother at defiance and risk the loss of a fortune; he had been true to himself and his manhood.

The moon suddenly went in, hid by a passing cloud, and after the cloud had drifted on—well, the cradle was just mere black oak again, and the rosy, smiling babe had vanished, returned to the land of beautiful dreams.

Lady Laura rubbed her eyes. She felt tired and dazed, but happy, oh, much happier than she had been for months.

She rested her hands on the cradle and gazed down into its emptiness, and a low sob shook her from head to foot. She thought of her children—the children who had all gone Home before her, and then of the little great-grandson, and as she thought of Richard's child, colour bloomed pink in her cheeks again, her lips parted in a dreamy smile.

"Someone shall go up to London to-night," she murmured. "I will send an embassy to Richard—one of my old servants—and I will give this message to be delivered to my grandson and his wife." She paused a second, then added in firm tones: "Yes, Richard shall be told that a cradle waits here—an empty cradle—and his child must sleep in it on Christmas Day—his dear little child."

Betty and Richard took Lady Laura at her word. They came home hand in hand on Christmas Day, to be taken back into an old lady's heart, and to fill a silent house with life and laughter. But they might have found the door barred had there been no empty silver cradle to fill, no warm, rosy babe to smile with clear blue eyes into Lady Laura's face.

Redcoats of Fort Pitt

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21.

beginning to be certain what must happen before many days when the patience of even cunning redskins had worn out.

Then came the coal-oil siege; grotesque enough for a Dickens. The Crees of Big Bear had looted a barrel of coal-oil from the store at Frog Lake; the new fire-water; bales of hay they had fetched. By night they crawled down the long bank out of the poplars and the glimmering camp; down the long bank to the stockade. Silent as cats under the wooden walls they bundled the hay and soaked it with oil. They slung the blazing wads of prairie hay over the stockade on to the dry wind-blown roofs. And the nights were full of leery devilment. Dickens' thirty men and the white traders—the Fort Pitt fire-fighters—soaking blankets in water and mounting the roofs; flogging out the fires in full view of the camp above and the fire-

fiends below—who, however, shot none of them.

IT was a little touch of ultimate hell. The Crees had been mewed up a long while; muttering against the police. A hundred years they and their fathers had traded skins at old Fort Pitt. But the Great Company was a shadow now, the redcoats were the substance—and Big Bear's crowd didn't care what became of the ancient trading post. Things were going to the devil anyway, ever since the other flare-up in 1871 when their cousins the half-breeds began to kick the new government by law in the shins. Burning a fort and a church and a store was a very small matter now. Likely the busy white man would put up lots more of them when the railway should come. There seemed to be no end of these palefaces from the south and the east; cunning, long-headed people that invented this coal-oil fire-water—but all the coal-oil and hay they had wouldn't burn the fort by night; it was no use to go down the bank by day, with all those loopholes spitting bullets.

So they called a council of war, and the painted-faces decided on a ruse; the red man's craft being yet strong in the land. It was a simple trick. Most Indian tricks are. They carried it out beautifully.

One nippy April morning the garrison bestirred in the fort and the men blinked out over the long bush-clad bank with its grey poplars and its squadrons of coughing crows—to see not a smoke of Big Bear. Not a canvas, not a cart; not a kyuse nor a dog; nor hide nor hair of a thousand Crees visible on the campground. The entire camp had shifted in a single night.

Dickens and his men knew in their bones that it was a trick; but they hoped and waited and whiled away the dreary days, wondering why the redskins had vamoosed. There was no reason; no possibility of Steele's men from Edmonton, along with General Strange and the 65th from Montreal drifting down on the scows—for weeks yet; no hope of the columns from eastward getting up the valley from the railway, past Batoche and Fish Creek and Battleford. The Indians really had Fort Pitt just where they wanted it.

Nevertheless it was decidedly queer to wait for days and see never a smoke of those Crees. The redcoats cooped up—not being used to that—became restless; most of all the young recruit Cowan from Ottawa, a youth of high mettle who implored Dickens to let him and Trooper Loasby and another go scouting after the vanished redskins.

Dickens demurred. He knew there was as much danger in the job as there was curiosity in the garrison. But Cowan and his pals kept up the din day by day—till Dickens gave his consent. And on a crisp April morning when the ice was slamming and barking like packs of seals in the crooked gorge, the rear gate of old Fort Pitt was swung open for the first time in weeks; and the three restive redcoats, guns at the saddles, rode out; up the long bank, cautiously and quickly, glad to be out of the coop, hitting the trail that their horses hadn't hoofed for a moon.

They got to the deserted camp ground; saw the fire spots where the tepees had been; the trampled buttes and the grass nibbled by hundreds of ponies; the grey poplars shivering in a slight wind that crept up from the gorge and caromed away over the long, brown hills; and in a very little while they went walloping northwestward back the main trail that the carts had come, back to Frog Lake, the settlement.

It was about noon when they got

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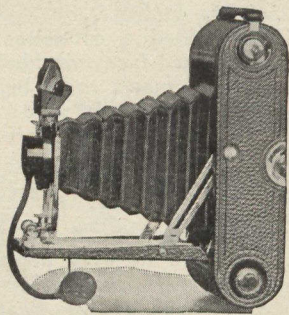
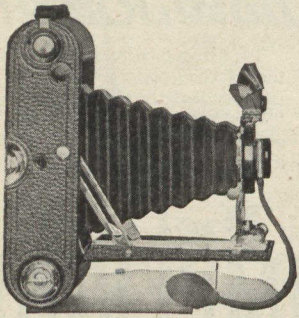
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HAMILTON -- -- -- ONTARIO

within sight of the abandoned settlement; the burned church and the store—and sure enough, crisp as fine-weather clouds over by the rim of the lake they saw the cones of tepees; the rust-brown lodges of Big Bear!

But why had the redskins gone back to Frog Lake? Here again was no reason. Impossible to get near enough for a close reconnoitre. In the shadow of a poplar bluff they waited and listened over the hard, untawed hills of the prairie land as yet untouched by the breath of spring; the huge, unconscionable silence with never a smoke from those tepees. And they said it was a trick. But what—and why?

They turned and rode back; the troopers three; something at least to tell Dickens and the garrison at Fort Pitt.

IT was crawling towards dusk when the three redcoats got close to the woods directly above the fort. It may be that one of them knew that something unusual would happen. But before any of them had time to think it out—they slammed by a shortcut in the creep of dusk, through the neck of woods that lay in a slight ravine not far from the old camp.

They were going a clip; and suddenly the poplars barked and spit and seemed to rise like living things. They were riding fair through the camp of Big Bear, cached up there in the bush—for the tepees at Frog Lake were only a blind, and the redskins scented that the redcoats, the *shomogonish*, would go snooping over that way; so they had, and they had seen them go in the morning; waited for them all day—three out of thirty.

Snap! went the guns. One horse went down. The head trooper got past, down the bank. Loasby fell from his horse, wounded; lay flat on the bank within sight of the glimmering fort.

Young Cowan's horse was shot under him, and he was fair in the lap of a hundred savages; just a boy of eighteen, and not time to swing his gun, before he was seized as a rabbit is clawed by a lynx—and by the ungentle hands of a pack of squaws he was lugged away into the glimmering shadow of the camp where the little twig fires were smudging, not much bigger than the eyes of a thousand redskins that glared through the brushwood.

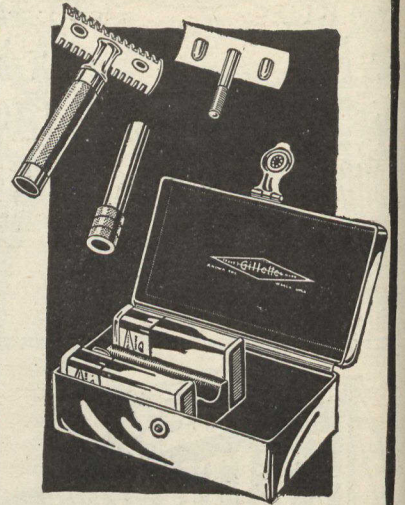
They did to the young recruit quite all they had intended to do to the thirty redcoats. While he was still alive he was cut to pieces. His tunic they tore it off; and his heart—

But why describe it; when weeks later the scouts of Col. Steele found the dried heart of young Cowan spitted on a stick beside what the coyotes had left of his body?

As for Loasby, he shammed clean death when the Indians came nosing about him, there in the dangerous open raked by the guns from the fort. When they went away he crawled down to the fort.

So Dickens and his garrison understood that night—that what had just happened to Cowan would soon come to all of them. There was but one way; the factor and the traders urged it on the unwilling police. The way was—for the police to get out, down the river, leaving the fort in the hands of the traders and their families; for it was as much of a certainty that Big Bear's crew would hurt not the hair of a trader's head, as it was certain that they would scalp and disembowel every hated redcoat they might find in the fort.

There never have been cowards among the mounted police. These men at Fort Pitt were as good as any. They had the traditions of the force to maintain. But they were in a jackpot. The certainty was that by staying and fighting like a trapped



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bear they would kill a few Crees before the last redcoat was hacked to pieces; and by that time Heaven only knew what the blood-excited savages might do—very probably massacre the men, women and children.

It was all a sort of guesswork; and it was debated hard and long; police against the traders and the Factor who presumed on their knowledge of the Crees enough to hope they were somewhat safe, at least from bloodshed, so long as the police were out of there.

It was at night when the thirty redcoats rode out of the fort and boarded an old ferry scow that lay in the ice. They loaded her with grubstake and blankets and wood; and in the dark they poled her across the drifting ice to the southern shore, for the river there is wide, and from that side starting the drift in the morning, they would be out of reach of the Crees.

At creep of day they pulled out away from the familiar old fort, from the men, women and children; knowing they were right, but hating the way. In the grey of an April dawn they let the scow steer away into the ice, and began the six days journey from Fort Pitt to Battleford below, where Poundmaker and Yellow Sky and Mud Blanket were holding fort, burning and pillaging and waiting.

What happened to those left at Fort Pitt they never knew till weeks later, when they learned of the ten-weeks captivity in the carts of Big Bear; which was broken only by the arrival in early summer of Col. Steele and his scouts, who forced Big Bear to surrender, away up in the sloughs of the Beaver River.

In the rather bald outlines of this episode there are surely many aspects of drama. The sequence from the massacre at Frog Lake to the six-days drift of the police scow down the ice and the ten-weeks jolt of the Fort Pitt captives northward in the carts of Big Bear forms a series of incidents that lend themselves well to dramatic treatment. No such colourful series of episodes ever happened in the West before, and surely none since. The race of the railroads has just about obliterated the last vestige of old-time romance, when the unwritten law of the Great Company with its two centuries of grip on the tribes of the interior and the north-land seas was giving way to the written, summed-up, obvious law of the redcoat, making way for the settler and the civilisation which the Great Company had but crudely outlined.

That the story of the foundation of law in that land is largely devoid of the blood-red and the hair-raising is a tribute to the Royal Northwest Mounted Police. There may be belligerent critics who, loving a melodrama, will insist that the police at Fort Pitt should have stayed at their post till they were hacked to pieces and their blood drunk by the savages. But this was not the identical character of the finest police force in the world. The mounted police of the Canadian plains have never been lacking bravery. Indeed, they have done things that no other force has ever attempted by way of enforcing law. But they have done it with a minimum of bloodshed. The abandonment of Fort Pitt was as much the plain duty of the police under the circumstances as the defense of Battleford and the struggle at Fish Creek. Story-writers would have been the better off for a lurid massacre at the old fort with the police fighting to the last gasp. History is better off with things as they occurred



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Jack, too, is cold—and cross.

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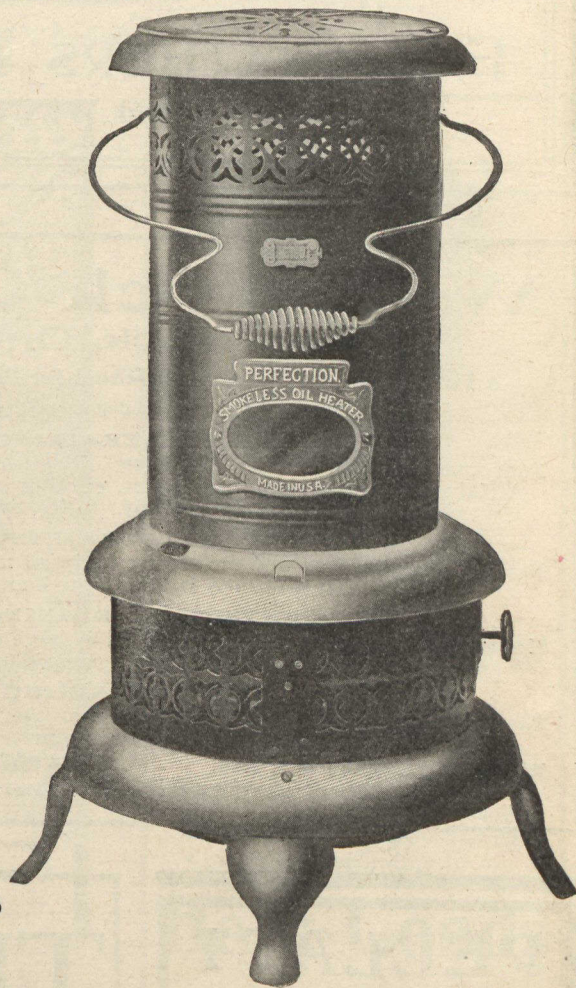
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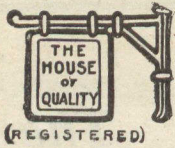
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A Broken Idol

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 11.

good qualities and he was gratified to observe, as he thought, an access of warmth in his daughter's treatment of the heart-sick officer.

It was evening in the rink. Jimmie and Miss Vanstone had just completed a series of involved semi-circles, intended probably to represent a flowering convolvulus in a state of delirium. The young woman was breathless and suggested a moment's rest.

Then it happened. Jimmie Lawson poured out his soul in seven words and waited for the answer. She looked at his earnest face, smiled and shook her head. "It is impossible, Mr. Lawson," she said. "I do not like your nose. You must forgive me, but I couldn't, really."

"What's the matter with my nose?" said Jimmie, a shade resentful.

"I prefer the Greek type," she said. She glanced involuntarily at Lieutenant Lang who was passing.

"Ha!" said Jimmie, noticing the glance and its object. Then he laughed, begged pardon and went skating with Georgina Le Grand, the centre forward of the hockey team.

"Why did he laugh?" pondered Miss Vanstone. But Lang found her and these puzzling thoughts were soon obliterated.

But the laugh meant much. Jimmie remembered one vicious day when Lang was a Garrison half-back, careering down the field with the ball under his left arm, and his right fist working like the piston-rod of an engine. He remembered the long, low tackle, the crashing fall, when Lang's face was jammed into the frozen earth and Jimmie lay unconscious across the warrior's neck. He remembered—

But this was not the time for mere recollections. It was the time for action. Lang would be accepted if something was not done, and that speedily. Jimmie, gliding along in a waltz with Georgina, was talking four feet to the yard. Carefully, as if by accident, he bumped his partner into Lang and Miss Vanstone and the four of them fell in a heap. Jimmie swung his arm. Accidentally—his fist met the Greek nose of the subaltern.

Miss Vanstone looked and shrieked. The Lieutenant's nose was all askew. A lump had developed on the left side and there was a fearful hollow in the middle.

When Lang broke his nose on the football field a beauty doctor had mended it with paraffine. And Jimmie knew.

They do say that the Major lost his case of champagne.

Stories of Quebec

AN excellent Christmas publication is James Edward Le Rossignol's "Little Stories of Quebec," from the house of Jennings and Bryan. The author teaches political economy in the University of Denver; writing is but a pastime with him. Judging from his exhibition of work in this volume, Canadian readers will insist upon more tales from the story-telling professor. Mr. Le Rossignol of Colorado is quite a piece away from the haunts of the habitant, but he knows Quebec like a book. His sketches are in prose, somewhat like those of the late Dr. Drummond in verse. He has caught the *bonhomie*, the spirit of simplicity, the reverence for things sacred which characterises the life of the Lower Canadian French.

Professor Le Rossignol announces for next year two books—a story of Quebec and a treatise on his favourite subject of economics.

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The Shoestring Boy

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 18

one of themselves, he was so small, and treated him as a brother accordingly.

The burly policeman on the beat knew him; so did the Greek peanut-vendor, and the girl from sunny Italy with the street-piano.

Came the balmy days of spring, and in their midst, race-week. Mornings and evenings the street in front of the big store and the bigger hotel near-by was gay with groups of handsomely-gowned and bejewelled women, and flashily-attired and prosperous-looking race men.

The shivers had disappeared from my little friend, but he was still clad in the same old winter rags, and he greeted me with his wonted grin whenever I pressed a coin into his black little paw.

As I passed him on the first day of the races I said to him: "How's trade?"

"Gee, dem race-fellers is fine," piped he. "One big guy t'rew me up in de air t'-day, an' said I'd be his Mascot fer de races, an' 'e gi' me a dollar."

A couple of sporty "fellers" with diamond headlights passed by and threw the youngster some change, with a laugh and a joke.

The kid said, looking up at me, "Gee, Mister, me troat is sore t'-day. Me fer home. S'long."

The next day I looked in vain in his accustomed place for the little lad. He was not there. After searching diligently without result, I opined that he had withstood the chills of winter only to be saved for Death's spring harvest. So I promised myself to take another route home in future.

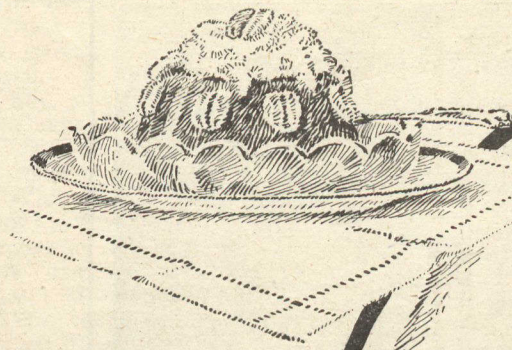
However, on the last race-day I was obliged to pass that way once more, and again I saw nothing of my little friend. As I quickened my pace to get by the spot where he was wont to be, I heard a familiar voice huskily call: "Mister,—say, Mister!" Turning, I saw a sight that held me suspended between laughter and tears. There was the kid right enough. But what a transformation! Gone was the scrimpy coat, gone the shabby cap, the worn-out shoes, the threadbare hose. In their place were velvet and patent leather and silk. He was a vision of crimson plush from head to foot—Little Lord Fauntleroy re-incarnated, save for the flaxen curls.

"I t'ought you wuz gone away or sumpin'," he cried. "I wuz lookin' fer y' t' show y' me cloes."

"You look like a Christmas tree," I said. "Where did you get all the finery?"

"Dese is me Mascot cloes. Y' know de guy wot I'm his Mascot. Well, he gi' me dem. Say, he's a prince. He's a bookmaker, an' he says ever sence he gi' me de dollar an' made me his Mascot, all de horses wot he bet on wins. So de oder day he tooked me in de big store an' buyed me dese togs, an' made me wear dem. Gee, dey felt funny at first. But people wot used to growl at me like I wuz a dog, says now, 'No, me little man, I don't want any laces t'-day. Now run away home.' An' me own customers buys jus' a same, an' brings people to look at me. De man wot I'm his Mascot tooked me fer a ride in his car, an' he's goin' to gi' me Mudder a lot o' money to keep fer me wen de races is over. Gee, I hope I grows up quick so's I kin be a bookmaker at de races. Dere's some class to dem guys—gee, dere he is now. S'long, Mister."

And the little red figure pattered across the walk to the curb, where a big, fat, jolly-looking man with a sparkler the size of a walnut in his scarf, was sitting in an automobile.



Delicacy

A delicate dessert means much to the full enjoyment of a meal. After the hot, heavy meats and vegetables how delightfully refreshing to see a light, delicate, delicious dessert come to the table.

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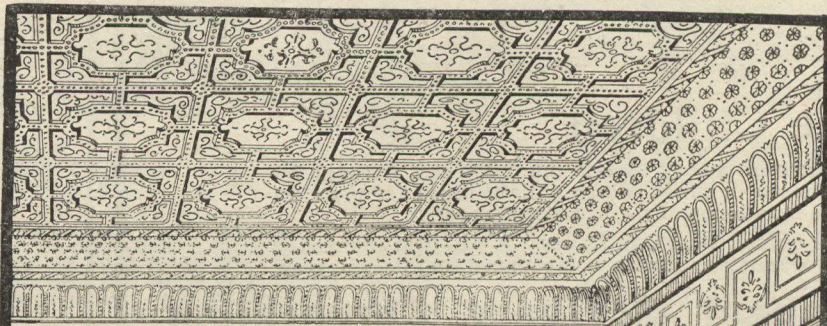
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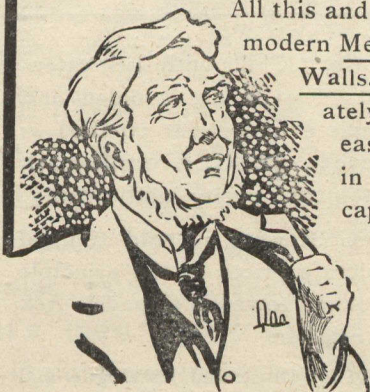
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Christmas for Two

By DONALD B. SINCLAIR

CHRISTMAS begins with the college boys right after the last punt has bunged and panted over the frozen ground. The bunch reflect: Only three weeks till the Twenty-Fifth; it hardly seems a day since the Thanksgiving game. Then, there was not a bite in the air and the autumn sun plashed gaily through the trees. Now Tim, the freshman finds it positively necessary to draw on those gloves with the silk lining which he has been fingering delicately for the benefit of the fair co-eds all fall on days when it was warm enough to swim. His meerscham and the silver '13 on the bowl receive not a moment's thought as he creaks across the white campus. Vanity is going to pieces. He is almost sensible. He reads the notice boards in the main hall with feverish perturbation. His ears prick up alert, and his eyes have a keen, calculating stare as he stands on the edge of a group of the year, which Henry, the Senior of the glasses and deep voice, solemnly admonishes about an immediate visitation called "term exams."

"You chappies, get your third in Math. and Francais and Latin and behold, rose-time is May. Don't and—"

Mr. Henry's warning jerk so flabbergasts Tim that he does not think of the puerile designation of "Chappie" as applied to his manhood, which ordinarily his pride would resent, but slinks off for contemplation.

Bill, a sophomore with a green cap and a pile of books, accosts him for a match. On the strength of favour granted, Tim makes bold to ask for confirmation of one Henry's remarks. Bill just grunts in dignity:

"You bet, kid! Get your nose down or—well, I have a star."

"What's that?" innocently from expectant Tim.

"It's —"

Bill is sore. He has a Greek supplementary to write off at the end of December. He must do some tall plugging. He cannot go home for Christmas. That is where the rub comes in. Bill held down right outside wing on the Seconds this fall. It was his tackle of Hardisty which saved the championship. He got a big write-up in the morning editions. He wanted to tell the folks at home all about it. Think of it! If he had not got bawled up on that syntax—it was a roasting hot day—why, in twenty-one days he might be beating it home on the flyer. He would pay for two seats. Of course, he could only sit on one; the other, across the aisle, would be a heap of his suitcases that he might keep an eye on the precious contents — Christmas truck enough to start an opposition general store in the home town. The train would roll into the little yellow station and he would jump out to find "Sis" wearing the new white furs, about which she had written him; then, they two would pile into the bright red cutter and tinkle off to the big house on the hill with its blazing old-fashioned grate and hungry incense of spluttering roasts pervading all the rooms.

Comes Christmas Day sparkling and white. Everybody cheerful but Bill. The first person to whom Bill grunts a "Merry Christmas" is Tim, the freshman, strolling in from the campus, blowing out great breaths of smoke and frosty air. The sophomore condescends to parley.

"Thought you were going home for Christmas?"

"Couldn't get away; too far," says Tim.

"How were the term exams?"

"Got 'em all. Your Greek comes off on the twenty-seventh."

"Perfect rot that stuff—no use to

anybody but a professor."
 "It helps you to read your frat. pin doesn't it?"
 Whereat, a "ninety-pounder" of a freshman goes staggering from a slap on the back and an invitation to dinner.
 At six o'clock Christmas night, a sophomore and a freshman sit down to dinner at a down-town hotel, when the former, whose very food almost chokes him, sees a most remarkable appetite in process of gratification. From eight o'clock till eleven the older chap leans back in his seat at the theatre, and with amazement watches the shining eyes and flushed face of the freshman drinking in the

music and the lights.
 The curtain drops and they are on the streets, to the dark residence bound.
 "Say, wasn't it great!" cries Tim with enthusiasm.
 "Oh, piffle!" says Bill, who is really irritated.
 "What did you say—not a good show? Why, out in Reilly, Saskatchewan, where I come from, we have one medicine show a year! Wasn't that singer—"
 "Your folks live in Saskatchewan, you say?" says Bill, slowly. "Let me see—two thousand miles—and this Christmas. Great Scott!"
 And he smiles.

Moral.—It is better to miss a meal occasionally than never know what fun it is to be hungry.—*Life*.

* * *

IN THE POST OFFICE.

SOFT azure were the maiden's eyes,
 Her port was mild and meek,
 The beauties of the brier rose
 Were mirrored on her cheek.
 Her brow was broad and beautiful,
 Her hair was lustrous gold,
 Her features were Diana-like,
 Of purest Grecian mould.

She stepped from out a motor-car
 With elegance and grace,
 Sweet intellectuality
 Illumed her lovely face,
 Her suit was an ideal fit,
 The cloth a mellow brown;
 She was the smartest little maid
 In all this widespread town.

She had some business of
 The Registration sort,
 A birthday gift, a trifle, for
 A Journalistic Sport
 Who lives and toils in Montreal
 And wears a crimson vest
 While he is building castles for
 The girl he loves the best.

The Guy behind the wicket said,
 In accents gruff but clear,
 As he observed the pretty maid,
 "Just sign your name down here."
 She turned away, and heaved a sigh,
 Her face was strangely white,
 Oh, what a dreadful circumstance!
 The maiden could not write!

Irresolute the maiden stood
 She was embarrassed so,
 The hastening throng was all about;
 She watched it come and go.

At last she bravely sought the man
 To whom she spoke before,
 And told her woe. The fellow wept
 Long ere the tale was o'er.

The maid was not illiterate,
 She knew Charles Dana Gibson,
 De Maupassant and Maeterlinck,
 George Bernard Shaw and Ibsen.
 Why could she not inscribe her name
 Without this fearful fuss?
 —Because a public Postal Pen
 Is never worth a cuss.

—*Toronto News*.

* * *

THE MUCH-MALIGNED CABBAGE.

Wigg—"What kind of cigars does Closefist smoke?"
 Wagg—"Well, when you light one of them you instinctively look around for the corned beef."—*Philadelphia Record*.

* * *

SARAH'S FAVOURITE DISH.

YEARS ago, Madame Sarah Bernhardt was a devotee of croquet, and it was currently reported that she played with human skulls instead of balls. "It is quite extraordinary," she once said, "the things which have been written about me. I am told that my favourite dishes are burnt cats, lizards' tails, peacocks' brains, and sautes au beurre de singe." Apropos of this, Madame Sarah not long since sent a quaintly-worded two-page telegram to a hostess who was expecting her to dinner. "As a consolation," the message concluded, "I am treating myself to large quantities of my favourite dish—fried onions!"—*M. A. P.*

QUIPS AND CRANKS

PLETHORA.

'T WAS the night before Christmas, and all through the palatial Westacrotton residence not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. This was not surprising, as most of the mice were suffering with the gout, and the others were too fat and lazy to do anything more than go out for a drive now and then in the carpet sweeper. The stockings were not hung by the chimney with care for the reason that young Westacrotton, having reached the ripe age of five plus, felt that it was time to discontinue that time-honoured juvenile custom. Neither did he hope that St. Nicholas soon would be there. In the first place he didn't believe in the reindeer and chimney episode and re-

garded the entire book of Santa Claus with suspicion if not absolute distrust. Moreover, it seemed such a waste of time to hope for anything when he already had all that he could possibly hope for, and more, too. The only thing that saved him from hopeless agnosticism was his faith in his parents. This enabled him to retire early, and as no visions of sugar plums danced in his head, owing to the entire absence of any anticipatory excitement, he was able to sleep soundly and arose rather later than usual. After dressing leisurely he sauntered down stairs and surveyed the customary pile of toys and other pleasurable merchandise, which had been dumped in there for his enjoyment—and tried not to look bored.

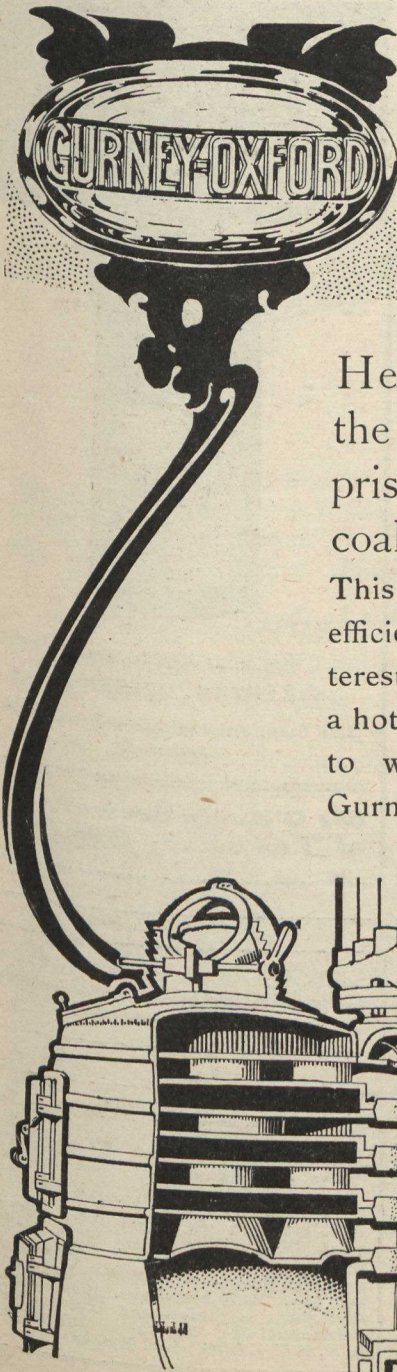
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The Merriest Christmas to You

BY FRANK LAWSON.

I WANT to wish you the merriest time

That ever anyone had,
And no one could happier be than you

If wishes could make you glad.
If you were a girl or a boy to-day
And Santa Claus came with his pack,

And you wanted all the toys in the world,

There is nothing that you should lack:

If you were a maiden of eighteen years

Or a youth of twenty-two,
And a Prince or a Princess should be your dream,

I'd make that dream come true.
The prettiest scenes of every land

Should pass in view before you,
And the love you should feel, you have never felt

Since you lay on the lap that bore you.

I want you to realise this day
Commemorates the birth
Of the Prince of Peace who was sent to bring

God's message of joy to earth;
And I want you to read that message now

And learn what its words convey,
In the light of the men of these later times,

With the knowledge of to-day;
For not since the Star of Bethlehem
Became the wise men's guide
Was ever known in all the world
A happier Christmas-tide!

Rejoice in the realm of childhood's faith

Ere the spirit of doubting knew you;

Peace and Goodwill—Goodwill and Peace,

And the Merriest Christmas to you.

An Attractive Number

THE *Canadian Magazine* for December offers right royal Christmas fare in an issue which is a credit to Canadian journalism. From the frontispiece, "A Sledge at Quebec" (from the painting by J. W. Marrison), to the final pages, this number, both in artistic and literary excellence, is assurance of the good work being accomplished by our writers and artists. Mr. T. O. Marten, with whose covers the readers of the *CANADIAN COURIER* are familiar, has designed an extremely effective cover of Twelfth Night suggestion which cannot fail to put the reader in seasonable humour. There is a profusely-illustrated article, "The Art of J. W. Marrison," there are stories by Theodore Roberts, Thomas Stanley Moyer, Virna Sheard, Ward Fisher, L. M. Montgomery, E. M. Yeoman, Edwin Dowsley, each of which is well worth an hour by the Christmas fireside. Then there is a delightfully human and sympathetic sketch, "A Shacktown Christmas," by Augustus Bridle, poems by Marjorie L. C. Pickthall, George Herbert Clarke, Estelle M. Kerr, Isabel Ecclestone MacKay and Duncan Campbell Scott, which form a contribution in verse in which any magazine on the continent might take pride. A somewhat novel feature, "A Series of Western Photographs," by Newton MacTavish, the editor, is a decidedly attractive contribution. Altogether, there is a spirit of bright hopefulness and good cheer which makes the Christmas *Canadian Magazine* a valuable adjunct to the season's festivities.

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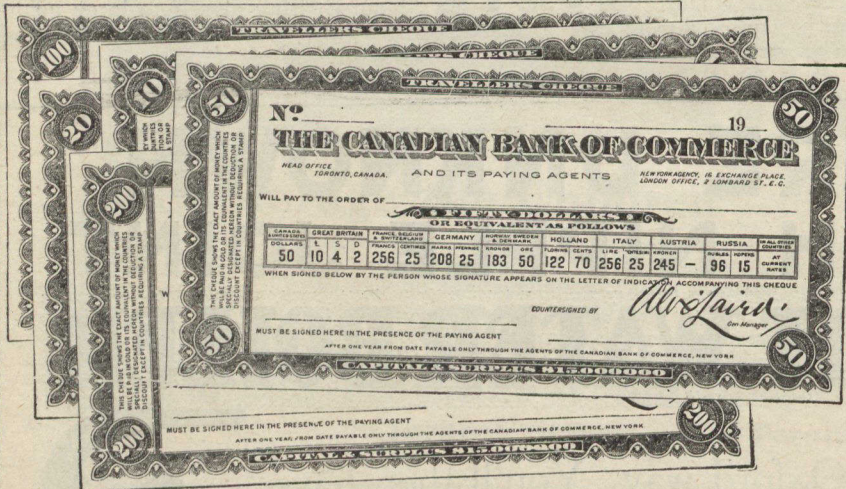
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