

INDEPENDENCE MONITOR

"THE PAPER THAT EVERYBODY READS"

Oregon Postcard

VOL. 4

INDEPENDENCE, POLK COUNTY, OREGON, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1915

NO. 18

Telling Santa What They Want



Christmas Dinner at Bracebridge Hall

THE dinner was served up in the great hall, where the squire always held his Christmas banquet. A blazing, crackling fire of logs had been heaped on to warm the spacious apartment, and the flame went sparkling and wreathing up the wide mouthed chimney.

The great picture of the crusader and his white horse had been profusely decorated with greens for the occasion, and holly and ivy had likewise been wreathed around the helmet and weapons on the opposite wall.

A sideboard was set out just under this chivalric trophy, on which was a display of plate that might have vied (at least in variety) with Belshazzar's parade of the vessels of the temple—"flagons, cans, cups, beakers, goblets, basins and ewers"—the gorgeous utensils of good companionship that had gradually accumulated through many generations of jovial housekeepers. Before these stood the two Yule candles, beaming like two stars of the first magnitude. Other lights were distributed in branches, and the whole array glittered like a firmament of silver.

We were ushered into this banqueting scene with the sound of minstrelsy, the old harper being seated on a stool beside the fireplace and twanging his instrument with a vast deal more power than melody. Never did Christmas board display a more goodly and gracious assemblage of countenances. Those who were not handsome were at

least happy, and happiness is a rare improver of your best favored visage.

The parson said grace, which was not a short, familiar one, such as is commonly addressed to the Deity in these unceremonious days, but a long, courtly, well worded one of the ancient school. There was now a pause, as if something was expected, when suddenly the butler entered the hall with some degree of bustle. He was attended by a servant on each side with a large wax light and bore a silver dish, on which was an enormous pig's head, decorated with rosemary, with a lemon in its mouth, which was placed with great formality at the head of the table.—Washington Irving.

"No Santa Claus!"

If it be true, as some do say,
That there's no Santa Claus,
What is this spirit on the way
That never seems to pause
When Christmas chimes are sounding clear.

Upon the frosty night
In spreading splendid gifts of cheer
In every mortal's night?

What is this sense of glow divine
That comes to you and me
When watching all that happy clime
Of children round the tree?
Whence comes this mantling atmosphere,
So full of sweet release
That falls upon us once a year
And covers us with peace?

No Santa Claus? Oh, men of doubt,
Whence comes this merry clime?
Would you so fair a spirit flout
For the sake of a name?
Dear child—Santa is everywhere
Where hearts are true and kind,
And where there's love of man to there
His presence rare we find.
—John Kendrick Bance in Harper's

Tom Speedwell's Christmas

By Rev. CHARLES FREDERIC GOSS, D. D.

THE last of the little stockings had been packed to its utmost capacity and hung upon the mantel.

Mary surveyed them with a smile of satisfaction and then went into the nursery to take her good night look at little Bob and Elsie.

When she returned there was in her great brown eyes the mysterious light of mother love.

She found her husband sitting near the fireplace and gazing absentmindedly at the flames.

"Tom," she said, "what do you think Elsie said when Bob asked her this afternoon what she wanted you to give her for Christmas?"

"I don't know. What?"

"She heaved the sweetest little sigh and replied, 'I wish papa would just give me his own self all day long.'"

"What did she mean by that?" he asked with a start.

"You dear old fellow," she answered, pushing his hair back from his forehead with her gentle hand, "you have



YOU NEVER SAW ANY ONE SO HAPPY

not been yourself of late. Your bustle has worried you, and we hardly feel as if we see anything of you. Your body is here, but your mind is down at the store."

"You think Elsie has noticed it?"

"I do so."

"Don't let this worry you. I intended to tell you, for I know how hard it is."

"Bless your heart! Don't for heaven's sake let me fall into any habit which will darken those little children's lives nor yours," he said, kissing her.

An all day frolic began in the Speedwell home the minute those two little white nightgowned figures stole into the room at sunrise.

Tom helped them empty their stockings and open their packages, and when they screamed with delight in their childish trebles he roared in his thunderous bass. He peeled their oranges, cracked their nuts, spun their tops, strapped on their skates, dressed their dollies and shot peas at their tin soldiers for four hours until dinner.

He seemed a little tired and drawn when he carved the turkey, but Mary gave him a look that set new force

Safe in Santa's Arms



into him, and after dinner he commenced again.

You never saw any one so happy as those little Speedwell young ones. They forgot all about their toys and just rolled and tumbled over their dear old daddy like little puddles over a great Newfoundland dog.

And when the day turned to twilight and the twilight faded into dark two three children crept up into Tom's lap and laid their heads upon his heart.

Bob fell asleep with his eyes fixed upon his father's face, in a sort of mute adoration, and Elsie, putting his bearded cheek, said in tones so much like Mary's that they startled him.

"Papa, do you know when gift I like best of all?"

"Your dolly," he said, trying to appear unconscious.

"You," she answered gravely, and trying heroically, but vainly, to keep awake so as to feast upon his love a little longer, she, too, fell asleep and dropped off upon the sea of Nod.

"And there by the fireplace sat Mary, her big brown eyes full of tears.

"Well done, dear heart," she said.

"You have won a great victory today. You have given yourself to others and so have reproduced the Christ life again. And now carry them off to their beds, and after I put them to bed you shall sit down with me and have a good, long worry if you want to."

"I don't believe I do, sweetheart. I say come out of myself for the first time in weeks, and I guess I'll stay."

—Theosophical Tribune.

No Perfect Christmas Sermon.

Some one has said that there cannot be found in literature a single Christmas sermon which meets the occasion. Of course there cannot.

The occasion is the new birth of the world. Unless the preacher is competent to say how far the world has grown since its new birth, unless he can comprehend and declare the infinite greatness of that kingdom of God which the Saviour of men promises to the world and unless the same preacher can describe the world as it was, "the people who sat in darkness," he cannot preach the sermon which shall meet "the occasion."—Edward Everett Hale.

In the Christmas Shop

SHE was six if she was a day. She had a little fat back in a little black coat, and her wisps of red hair matched her red tannish-shaunt. In her firm hand she held a struggling boy about a year younger, and they were getting into the elevator at a big department store and making for the toys.

The Woman Who Saw had a like destination, and when the floor was reached they got out together. Children are not allowed unaccompanied by guard-lans in most large shops, but such was her air of responsibility, of decorum, that it would have been a bold floor-walker who dared to question her.

Nor evidently was it her first visit. The boy, still held in leash, ran in front and made straight for the space devoted to Santa Claus, his reindeer and his sleigh piled with toys.

There was a background of fir and cedar and a huge Christmas tree, but the pair sat down before the fascinating old fellow in his red robe, his long



THEY SAT DOWN BEFORE THE FASCINATING OLD FELLOW

white beard, holding his big white, and from his face the small boy did not turn.

Across the room was a crèche, also a wonderful and beautiful thing—the infant Jesus in the manger, the mother in her blue robes, St. Joseph with his staff, the three kings respectful.

The children had been perfectly still for fifteen minutes looking at Santa Claus when the little girl whispered to the boy. He squirmed, struggled, but she was too much for him. She dislodged him from his seat, dragged him to the crèche and with motherly Irish pluck pressed him on his knees.

Reverently she described the holy group, then would utter devotion from a more human motive. "See the cow, Denny. You mind the cow we used to see last summer at the farm when we went on the fresh air? See the goat, Denny. You mind the goat in our alley? It's his pitcher." But Denny whimpered and pulled and pulled to be back again to his idol.

The little girl looked up and met the eyes of the Woman Who Saw. Her sixth was that given by every woman since the beginning, for every man for whose soul she holds herself responsible.

"I'm afraid," she said, "Denny likes Santa Claus better than he likes God."

—New York Evening Sun

Give thanks for Christmas.

At the Foot of the Magical Tree



A Christmas Church

GIVE me a snug little church, dressed for the holidays in greens, wreaths of holly, long hanging garlands of ground pine and laurel, perhaps rather awkwardly, but none the less lovingly, arranged by interested church members, not by a hired florist, and filling the building with the breath of outdoors.

I want some trees on the pulpit and high overhead a blazing star of fire, shining out into the semi-twilight of the building. I want to rise in the starlighted darkness of a properly frosty Christmas morning and in everyday clothes, wearing mittens, if I choose, and my second best hat, walk briskly through quiet streets to the church and join the waiting congregation.

There won't be a crowd. There will be no display. Only a few scores of those to whom Christmas means a wonderful reality will be there. And there will be congregational singing, lots of it, and we'll run the gamut of the hymns of the Nativity. We'll read the appropriate Scripture responsively and listen to the Christmas story told once again by the kindly voice of the unpretentious clergyman.—New York Evening Post.

Turkey Not an Ancient Christmas Dish.

The turkey as a Christmas dish was introduced into England in the sixteenth century and is therefore of less antiquity than the huge sirloin of beef or the mince pie. Mince pies were first shaped like a manger, as were the Yule cakes given out by the bakers to their customers. The plum porridge later developed into the plum pudding, which dates from 1675. At the old Christmas feasts peacocks and cranes formed some of the dishes. Before being roasted the peacock was carefully skinned, and after leaving the oven the bird was re-dressed with its old plumage.

On the Trail

I PEEKED around a bit last night. I thought I'd like to get a sight Of old man Santa Claus. I came a-sneakin' down the stair And hid behind the parlor chairs, As still as two small baby bears With butter on their paws.

I sat, and sat, and sat, and sat, All scrunched up like a Hottentot, And skurriedly breathed at all. 'Twas awful dark and kind of weird, And as the hours disappeared I felt myself a-gettin' skeered At noises in the hall.

And nen old Sandy hove in view, He wore a shaggy coat and two Big goggles on his eyes, He wore a pair of motor mitts As fuzzy as a pussy kit's And wool cap like my mother knits For daddyykin's surprise.

He whisped once or twice, and nen He cackled like a settin' hen Or like a rooster does. "He'll never know me now!" said he While fixin' up the Christmas tree, But old man Sandy can't fool me— I know just who he was! —Carlyle Smith in Denver Republican.

Shoes Instead of Christmas Stockings

ALL over New York the children talk of the coming of Santa Claus for weeks before Dec. 25, but there was a time when he was more frequently referred to as St. Nicholas, the Dutch St. Niclaes, or San Claus. Mrs. Van Rensselaer says in her "History of New York."

"The stockings that our children hang on Christmas eve were once the shoes that the children of Amsterdam and New Amsterdam set in the chimney corners on the eve of Dec. 6, and the reindeer whose hoofs our children hear represent the horse, descended from Woden's horse Sleipner, upon whose back St. Nicholas still makes his round in Holland. When Catholicism prevailed St. Nicholas was everywhere the children's saint. In Holland, where his personality was modified by memory of Woden, god of the elements and the harvest, he had a peculiar hold on popular affection, which persisted into Protestant times. The children of Holland still believe that he brings the gifts that they always get on the eve of his titular day, Dec. 6."

Healing Virtue in Christmas Coins.

In certain parts of Worcestershire and Staffordshire the idea prevails that a silver coin from the Christmas morning offering is a sovereign remedy for any ill that human flesh is heir to. Accordingly any householder who happens to have an ailing child or other person in his house hires him to the clergyman of the parish on Christmas morning and asks as a favor a sacrament shilling, as the coin is called. The coin given in exchange has to be obtained by collecting a dozen pennies from as many different accidents and then changing the coppers for a silver shilling. For this coin the applicant receives the coveted sacrament shilling, which on being taken home is hung round the ailing one's neck and is popularly supposed to effect a rapid and complete cure of the complaint, no matter what it may be.

Provide For Christmas.

Provide for Christmas eve that it do come To feast thy neighbor good cheer to have some!

Good bread and drink, a fire in the hall, Drawn, pudding, sauce and good mustard without fail.

Beef, mutton, pork and shred pie of the best.

Pie, veal, game, saupon and turkey well dressed.

Apples and nuts to throw about the hall, That boys and girls may scramble for them all.

Ring lolly corals, make the fiddlers play— Let scrupulous families keep away.

For oftentimes is seen an arrant knave Than some who do counterfeit most to be STAVE.

—Poor Robin's Almanac, 1864

WHEN IN DOUBT, MAKE IT FURNITURE FOR CHRISTMAS

ALWAYS ATTRACTIVE, SENSIBLE AND LASTING.

FREE CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR YOU

We would like very much to be able to give everyone one of these nice presents but of course that is impossible, so we have decided to offer one extra good article and give everyone an opportunity to get it ABSOLUTELY FREE. The present selected is a handsome overstuffed Rocker. From Saturday morning until Friday, Dec. 24, at 4 p. m. every man and woman asking the privilege personally at the store can have their name put in the box. No strings attached. It costs you nothing. At 4 p. m. Friday some lucky person will get our present. Be sure to come to the Store and get your name in the box. We want everyone to have an opportunity.

Open Evenings beginning Tuesday, Dec. 21-

Moore & Walker, Home Furnishers