

PRECAUTIONARY HINTS.

ABOUT this time papa remarks irreverently (eyes cast down), "I haven't seen a tie I like in any shop in this whole town."

About this time the minister drops in to call on mother dear and hints that he is well supplied with slippers, gifts of yesteryear.

About this time big Brother Jack declares: "Clara no more I smoke!"

A pipe whiff now and then perhaps! No, mother, this is not a joke!"

About this time poor mother dear perplexed and inclined to sigh, "How strange that each should show distaste."

For just the gifts I meant to buy!"

—Ella A. Fanning.

CHRISTMAS IN MANILA.

CHRISTMAS for the majority of the 25,000 inhabitants of Manila—that is, the Filipinos—begins on Christmas eve. There are no stockings hung, however, for stockings are not popular, even with the most aristocratic senoritas, who usually go bare ankle. Midnight mass is the occasion which brings thousands to the churches. These fine edifices are thrown open and blaze with myriads of candles and electric lights.

Manila at midnight on Christmas eve is probably gayer than at any other time of the year. The streets are thronged with carriages and people in their best attire. Many Americans turn out on Christmas eve also to see the displays and the people and make church to church inspection tours in parties. Fine trained choirs and stringed orchestras render excellent music.

The weather during the holiday season is just cool enough to dispel the chronic laziness which pervades Manila during most of the year and put a little spice into the blood. At noon the thermometer will probably not go over 81 or 85 degrees. At night, however, a blanket on the bed is not too much.

The Seven Sets of Presents.

All the world's a Christmas tree, and all the men and women merely children. They have their presents and remembrances, and one man in his time gets many gifts. His lot being seven series. At first the infant, with his feeding spoons and rattles; then the trumpet and tin soldiers, skates and sleigh; and fireman's helmet, and then the lover, sighing like a furnace with a gaudy necktie; knit by his lady's fingers. Then a hubby, showered by his friends with socks and gloves; and pipes that will not draw, ink wells of brass; and fountain pens that leak, or else some china that his wife can use as well. And then the middle aged of fair round belly—a little cap; to hide his shining pate. The sixth set sinks into the carpet slipper game or bad checkers—A silver cutter, since his teeth are bad. Last gift of all that ends this strange eventful history is falling slight. Then they bring a magnifying glass for grandpa.

—Detroit Free Press.

Santy and the Stork.

"But, daddy, is there really, truly Santy?"

"Well, I just guess yes—a regular corker he fits too."

"Is he nice?"

"Is he? Well, I should say so! Isn't he, Mary?"

"Humph! Very nice, as Santas go, but not very modest."

"Is he handsome, daddy?"

"Oh, as handsome as a picture—sparkling eyes, fine forehead, beautiful complexion—very handsome, isn't he, Mary?"

"Henry, it's perfectly dreadful the way you deceive that child. You ought to be ashamed of yourself. You're setting him a terrible example."

"But, daddy, where does he live—away off somewhere?"

"Oh, yes; very, very far."

"Away off where the stork lives?"

"The stork! Who's been telling you about the stork?"

"Mamma."—Chicago Tribune.

Mistletoe.

It is high time that something was done about our mistletoe literature that crops up so regularly during the holiday season.

It systematizes about as follows:

The joke about the girl who wears a sprig of mistletoe on her head.

The joke about the mistletoe that didn't come in time, and the girl asks (always coyly) whether they cannot get along without it.

The church trimming mistletoe joke.

The sprig of mistletoe that the long lost lover on his dramatic return on Christmas eve always draws out of his pocket at the end of the story.

The fact is that the mistletoe has now degenerated into a chestnut. It no longer serves any useful literary purpose. It should be worn only by mothers-in-law.—Harper's Weekly.

The Best Known Christmas Poem.

"Twas the Night Before Christmas"—those delightful verses that will charm both the old and young as long as there are stockings to be hung—was written ninety years ago, just before the holiday season, by Clement Clark Moore, then professor of oriental languages in the New York Theological seminary. It has become an American classic, and no Christmas day is complete without a reading of this charming little lyric that has lived and gladdened the Christmaside for nearly 100 years.

My First Christmas Eve Dance

WRITTEN BY A JACK TAR

WHEN me and my shipmate, Bill Boithead, was takin' a little cruise ashore last year we each got a pretty, sweet scented note with R. S. V. P. at the bottom, requestin' "the pleasure of your company" at a dance on Christmas eve. Bill, who is well up in these things, told me them letters meant "Reply Sharp; Very Pressin'." So we wrote our replies sharp, acceptin' "the very pressin' invitation."

Well, Christmas eve came round, and Bill and me rigged ourselves out in our best shore goin' togs and set sail for the dance. On reportin' ourselves we was mustered in a big cabin like a battleship's gun room, all tidvated up with holly and mistletoe, and with the deck polished instead of holy stoned, and so slippery that I nearly pitched on to my bowsprit as I went through the hatchway.

"Vast heavin', Bill," I sez, comin' to an anchor, "this is worse than crossin' the bay in a gale-o' wind," but Bill he kept forgin' ahead, as cool as a middy in command of a dispatch boat, so I slipped in his wake, sweatin' like a marine recruit goin' into haction for the first time. We was nearly the last aboard, for the cabin was pretty full, the men lookin' like restaurang waiters and the ladies all as smart as a cruiser squadron in rainbow rig.

Presently a fussy little chap, who I took to be the commodore, but who Bill said was the M. Sea man, though he didn't look as if he knowed much about the sea, came up and gave us both a pretty card with sailin' orders on, which Bill called a program. Then he passed the word to clear for haction, and a band on the quarterdeck aft struck up and the dancin' begun.

As I was leavin' against the bulwarks the M. Sea man came up and



"I NEARLY PITCHED ON TO MY BOWSPRIT," said somethin' what I couldn't catch, so I said, "Aye, aye, sir!" and before I knowed it he had hintrojuiced me to the smartest AI clipper built little craft I ever turned my searchlights on, and somehow the next minute her sweet little figurehead was close to mine, and I made fast around her amidships and stemmed into haction.

"This is a polker, not an 'ornpipe,'" she said presently in a voice as sweet as the bo's'n's whistle pipin' at grog time, so I axed her parding and navigated accordin'. Well, we boxed the compass about twice, when some one ran foul o' my starboard bow and threw me on my beam ends. My consort was so consarned and bore a hand so prettily to haul me up that I quite forgot to say what I was goin' to the lubber. Next time I was goin' to dance with her again, but she told me she was engaged. "Hindeed!" sez I as 'aughty as a admiral. Then a red-headed swab took her in tow, and the band strikin' up the "Keel Row" there was the two of 'em a-caperin' away just like old Mac, our second engineer, when he has had what he calls "a wee drap" on-pay nights.

Soon after I see her sittin' fannin' herself, while the redheaded chap was a-carryin' on shamefully with a girl in pink, so I tacked towards her and told her what I thought of the swab she was engaged to and boffered to bash in his headlights. I thought she would never stop laughin' as she told me she didn't even know him and was only engaged to him for the dance. And then I felt better.

Well, to cut the yarn short, at eight bells I conveyed her down to the ward room to mess, and after that we hove to in a conservative full of palms and flowers and smellin' like a tropical bisland, and then—well, after a very hot engagement, in which I had to bring both broadsides into haction, my pretty prize hauled down her flag, and a few months later we signalled for a sky pilot, and I towed her safe into port.—London Tit-Bits.

BRIEF NEWS OF OREGON

The fifth annual exhibition of the Oregon Poultry and Pet Stock association is in session at Portland.

The annual meeting of the Oregon Woolgrowers association will be held in Portland, December 10.

District No. 42, Tillamook, now has a new schoolhouse, built from money raised by a special bonding election.

The Polk County School Officers' association has been formed and the first meeting is to be held Saturday, December 20.

Miss E. M. Thompson, an exhibitor at the carysanthemum show at Creswell, named a pale pink "mum" the "Miss Jessie Wilson" flower.

At the city election, December 16, Ashland will vote on the wet and dry proposition, as an annual custom. It is now dry.

By a vote of 240 to 69, Klamath Falls has voted to bond the city for the purpose of raising money for building a new city hall.

The Oregon Agricultural cadet band has made plans for a tour of Willamette valley and eastern Oregon during the holiday season.

The twenty-eighth annual meeting of the Oregon Horticultural society will be held in the Portland public library December 10-12.

B. F. Nichols of Laidlaw boasts of having been sheriff in Oregon 67 years ago. He first served when Oregon was a provisional government, and was first elected in June, 1846.

Senator Lane has introduced a joint resolution for the preliminary examination and survey of the Willamette and Columbia rivers from Portland to the sea.

Following a week's search in the snows of the Blue mountains Sheriff Kelsey of Wheeler county, has captured Mack Vaughn, and returned him to Fossil on a charge of bootlegging.

Albert H. Stone was drowned when the speed power boat Oregon Wolf IV turned turtle in the Willamette river near Portland, while going at a rate of more than 40 miles an hour. John E. Wolf and Orth Mathlot escaped.

With the assurance that not less than 500 delegates from all sections of the state would be in attendance, elaborate preparations were made for the commercial meeting held in Roseburg Thursday.

A year's incarceration in the jail at Albany is the record of Albert Peacock, convicted of violating local option laws. Unless he gets released as result of an appeal, he will have to remain in jail a considerable time longer.

Twenty-five farmers of Central Oregon have been given packets of dry land alfalfa seed sufficient to plant one acre, the officials of the Oregon Trunk railway seeking to demonstrate the possibilities of this particular kind of seed.

A new monolithic silo has just been completed at the Salem Indian school. This is one of the very few monolithic structures of this class in the Pacific northwest, and is said to be one of the finest in the United States. The structure is about 40 feet high and has a capacity of nearly 150 tons of silage.

Judgment for \$950 and costs was rendered in favor of Milton Garnett of Benton county, against Frank Edwards, a Portland broker on a deal for the sale of a team of horses made 20 years ago. Service was had when the defendant returned to the state after the long absence.

M. V. O'Shea, professor of science and the art of education at the University of Wisconsin, has been secured as the principal spaker for the meeting of the western division of the State Teachers' association, which will be held in Salem December 22 to 24, inclusive.

In pursuance of the terms of a contract entered into between the government and the Maxwell Land company, of Hermiston, Secretary Lane has ordered a public sale of several hundred acres of land embraced within the Umatilla irrigation project. The sale will be held at Hermiston, on December 27.

Not until 95 per cent of the area of land held by the settlers in the first unit of the Tumalo irrigation project, Crook county, is signed up under contracts with the state for water, will the work be commenced on the distribution system for the unit, according to an order of the Desert Land Board.

Senator Chamberlain speaking at a luncheon to Latin-American diplomats said he believed the United States should make some adequate reparation to Colombia for its loss of territory when ex-President Roosevelt took the Panama canal zone away from it. Senator Chamberlain also spoke in favor of barring Orientals from the United States.

A movement is on foot led by the Multnomah Anglers' club of Portland to perfect an association, that will embrace all the rod and gun clubs of the state. The expressed object of the organization is to unite the sporting interests of Oregon in one central body to effectively secure needed legislation, to offset the cannery interests and commercial fishing interests and to secure equal distribution of eggs.

The First Christmas

IT often has been stated that the birth of Christ must have occurred four years before the date fixed on for the current chronology and that it is probable the event befell at some other time in the year than a few days after the winter solstice. The reason for the confident assertion is the ascertaining of the fact that Herod died about four years B. C.

The basis of this supposition is the report that at the time of the birth of Christ "there were shepherds abiding in the field, watching their flocks by night," a circumstance not natural in the latitude of Bethlehem near the shortest day. That is the height of the rainy season in Judea, and the date does not appear to have been observed generally before the fifth century.

Many students of Biblical history have argued that the story about the star of Bethlehem points to a date for the Nativity not later than May 8, B. C. 6. On that date the planets Venus and Jupiter were so closely in conjunction as seen from the earth that the apparent distance between them was equal only to the breadth of the full moon. These planets were



THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

then visible in the east a couple of hours before sunrise and must have produced a strikingly beautiful appearance and have been spoken of as one object. That was about fifty days less than two years before the death of Herod, a fact which harmonizes well with other conditions of the narrative, for it is probable that the mandate for the slaughter of all the children two years old and under was issued some months before his decease, and the limit of two years would leave an ample margin for any uncertainty as to the time of the appearance of the star, as related by the magi; also there were no paschal full moons on a Friday between the years B. C. 6 and A. D. 33 and no other following that till A. D. 60.

From this it would seem to follow that Christ was thirty-eight years old at the time of the crucifixion, and this would vindicate the sagacity of the Jewish doctors who affirmed that he was not yet fifty (forty) years old. It is remarked, too, that in the spring of the same year there was a triple conjunction of planets—Saturn, Jupiter and Mars—and that the first two named were in conjunction as seen from the earth no less than three times in the year preceding—that is, B. C. 7.

Another theory about the star of Bethlehem which has been advanced is that the star seen by the magi is Spica, the leading brilliant in the constellation of Virgo, the Virgin. For many years before and after the Christian era the star was changing its place until it was then literally a "star in the east," and its movement in that direction may have been the very fact noticed by the wise men of some centuries preceding who expected that the prophecy about the Virgin would be fulfilled when its principal star reached the position noted. If this were so the visit of the magi from Bactria, in the far east, is easily explained, and the chief difficulty attending the explanation lies in the fact that such an important search as they undertook is noticed by only one out of the four evangelists.

The uncertainty of the centuries in regard to the date of the Nativity in year and month may never be cleared up. Its existence has been unfairly cited as reason for disbelieving the whole narration. The people of 2,000 years ago attached little importance to dates, except current ones, and it may be remembered that the destruction of Jerusalem occurred between the time of the Nativity and the writing of the gospels, at least in the shape in which it has come down to us.

Sick Fish.

Experiments by aquarium experts have indicated that salt water baths will cure some ills of fresh water fish, while fresh water makes sick deep sea denizens well.

Alcohol Free Restaurants.

Zurich has a number of "alcohol free" restaurants, at which tea, coffee and milk are sold at 2 cents per cup or glass. They are visited daily by an average of 11,000 persons. The low prices are made possible by the fact that the restaurants are financed by a woman's temperance association which expects no profits.

Great Combination Offer

The Stayton Mail management has made arrangements with the **Portland Evening Telegram** whereby we can give subscribers the advantage of a gigantic combination offer for a limited period. You can get a Metropolitan evening paper with all the latest news from all over the world and all the news of Stayton and vicinity at a remarkably low price.

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A CHRISTMAS LETTER.

DEAREST PHYLLIS, pray remember when you're making up the list of your presents for December (unless I am to be missed)

That I've slippers, picture brackets, smoking sets of various types, Half a dozen smoking jackets, thirty-seven meerschaum pipes, Twenty patent "kid glove menders," collar boxes by the score, Of embroidered silk suspenders, forty-seven pairs or more;

That each year since I was twenty I've received a paperweight, Have pen wipers, inkstands plenty, paper cutters—twenty-eight;

That I've Browning and Longfellow by the hundred—every kind— Shakespear—black and blue and yellow; Milton till I'm nearly blind.

So there's just one present only that I'm wanting in this year Of my bachelorship so lonely—that's yours, my Phyllis, dear.

—James Courtney Chatter.

Paper and String.

When you undo a parcel fold the paper and tie the string around it. There will always be a string to fit a bundle without looking for one.

The Lord of Misrule.

The "Lord of Misrule," who sometimes rejoiced in the whimsical title of the "Abbot of Unreason," was a very important functionary of the Christmas ceremonies in the olden time. His office was that of master of the revels, and in castle and hall, from Christmas eve down to Twelfth day, he was absolute master of all. On taking up the duties of his office he generally made some quaint speech, explaining to the company that he absolved them of all their reason and that they were to be just wise enough to make fools of themselves. Under his rule all were to be equal. No one was to sit apart in pride of self sufficiency to laugh at others. Moreover, being possessed of the magic power to turn his auditory into children, it was his intention while his sovereignty lasted that they should conduct themselves as such.

Arkansas Timber.

Arkansas is annually cutting 540,000,000 feet of short leaf pine timber, 350,000,000 feet of loblolly pine, 40,000,000 feet of cypress, 25,000,000 feet of oak, 2,000,000 feet of red gum and 31,250,000 feet of hickory.