And one away on life's strong sea, Where manhood's ship

rides high and free.

Peers out across the surging tide,
And hears the same sweet song, my dear,
That comes to you adown the year—
Looks out to you, his star and guide.

He sees you in the brilliant glow Of Christmas, 'neath the mistletoe, And breathes the perfume of your hair; He loves you as he loved you when He told you so, and kissed you then— He sees you sitting, pensive there.

Then do not sigh again, my dear,
He loves you truly; never fear
That aught may wile his heart from you,
He'll come with one more Christmas day
And kiss your anxious tears away
As sunshine does the dew.

From out the half-light—almost gloom— that grays the presence of your room, He'll bring the light of long ago, and with your head upon his breast, in love's delight, and peace, and rest, He'll kiss you 'neath the mistletoe.—Woman's Home Companion.

THE XMAS STAGE.



HE weather was bit terly cold. Not such cold as the East laments when the thermometer sinks zero, when the cable cars are chilly, and the furnace-heated houses not quite so

wont. But such cold as the Northwest encounters on the prairie, when the thermometer has frozen at forty degrees below zero, and men cease to reckon the in-creased iciness of the atmosphere. The Bismarck stage, during the winter

season that long-ago year, made but one weekly journey to Zenith City, and was due at its destination on Christmas Eve. Connor, the driver, possessed an endur-ance admired through all the frontier, and a reverence for certain ancient customs unsuspected by his closest intimates. Among the dugouts of the yearling town, and the infant Fort Fletcher, its neighbor, he knew that his arrival was anticipated with the sick longing that exiles feel for tokens from the distant homes where they fain would be. And he intended to arrive promptly for the sake of a package tucked into his safest pocket. A package on which an old lady down in Vermont had written shakily:

"To be opened on Christmas morning." But to the ranchman, his host of the previous night, who prophesied a blizzard,

he uttered this intention, minus sentiment: "There will be no blizzard unless the wind changes," he said decisively. "We've got no passengers to kick about freezing their noses. Me and Morris have contracted to deliver our goods to-night, and if we don't do it you may look for us in a



THE STAGE WAS TRAPPED

frift somewhere between here and the own when the job takes your fancy.

Morris, the express messenger, who was new to the frontier, grinned an enthusiastic assent. The ranchman declared gruffly that Connor trusted too much in his luck, and pressed upon them the loan of an extra buffalo robe each.

They set forth. The road was not bad, judged by prairie midwinter standards. The sky was a flawless sapphire, and the ley air, which whitened the flesh like hot iron where it touched, was forbidden access to any feature of these professional voyagers, except their well-trained eyes. They had a journey of six hours before them, without change of horses, but Connor opined that, with his cattle feeling as prime as they did, he might cut the record down to five.

Upon which Morris exclaimed that it would be a pity to shorten such a glorious

Connor, however, vouchsafed no reply to this ignorant hardihood, except a glance which it was fortunate that his fur collar intercepted, as it conveyed a rebuke yet more scathing to youthful high spirits than Talleyrand's famous "point de zele."

They had been three hours on the way when, about noon, the messenger suggested that he would walk half a mile to warm himself a bit.

Waste time, and the wind is changing," Connor answered briefly, and Morris was aware of a sudden thump at his heart. But he sought mutely to disregard it by thumping his chill hands. An hour later Morris produced a flask, which his companion briskly snatched

from his grasp.
"Not if I know it," he said grimly.

"I am near frozen!" "You would be past thawing when we get to the town if I let you swallow this stuff now, lad!" Connor added with a gigantic slap on the messenger's bowed shoulders; "I don't propose to drive into Zenith City sitting beside a corpse-it would kind of spoil my Christmas dinner, Connor asserted, and Morris was silent. A silence which the other ended by

shaking him roughly. "Wake up!" he exclaimed. "You are forgetting my last remark."

There was only an indistinct murmur.

Connor drew in his horses.
"Git down, you young fool!" he roared.
"You are bound to have that tramp any-

WHY DO BELLS FOR CHRISTMAS RING?



half asleep he ordered him again to de

"Run a hundred yards or so, as if you was sprinting," he commanded. Stumblingly Morris obeyed at first, but as the stagnant blood stirred in his veins with the enforced motion his pace in creased. A quarter of a mile further on

he overtook the stage at racing speed.
"That is better," Connor said cheerly, s Morris prepared to climb back to his place. "No, you don't come up here, I'm tired keeping one eye on you when I want both for the scenery! Just take these robes of yours, and crawl inside among them mail bags. You will need more than an hour to freeze stiff under cover, and I job would be done by now." they, poor souls, expect to get to-morrow, reckon on getting to town within that "That's sol" came in chorus from either this feller one kind of present, and that reckon on getting to town within that

A stage driver is as absolute a sovereign as a ship's captain, and travel was resumed upon these prescribed conditions. Some time elapsed. A mass of clouds

had risen in the west, through which the sun gleamed a fiery ball that mocked the cold, while a fitful wind promised fulfillment of the ranchman's prophesied blizkard.

The ponderous vehicle scraped and creaked to the top of a slight ascent, which dipped into a "coolie" whose fur ther side rose higher and steeper. Down the first declivity the horses rushed, and driver. midway Connor set his teeth with a mighty oath.

There, in the narrow bottom of the 'coolie" on either side of a space worn between snowdrifts and called the road. stood two tall figures holding leveled pis-

The stage was trapped, and Connor pulled up his horses promptly.

"You chose your day luckier than seem ed probable from the weather," he said, gazing keenly at what little was visible of his much-muffled assailants, as they drew nearer. "I'm rather prejudiced against a long-winded preacher, and I'll skip the killing a fellow creature on Christmas text.

"Three or four miles away there are two d-

the highwaymen.
"You planned the killing to be on your side, eh?"

hanker to put a hole through you-or the forgetting! And for the sake of that gift,

side the road. and the other exclaimed:

"Starving men don't count costs, and and nothing else! There is money in many we intend to have your lond!" "There are two ways of looking at this book. There is a diamond ring and

thoritatively. "And speak lower when and if I live half an hour they will get you answer, for my express messenger is them presents. Boys, you are at your asleep inside, and he might take things wits' ends, I know, but you were honest less peaceable than I, if he wakes." Again there was a sound of laughter, to the devil-I guess you ain't goin' to in-

and this time it came from both figures though their pistols yet covered the stage | eh?"

"You're a queer lot?" the taller fellow said.

"I've heard the same before." Connor agreed. be so surprised if I ask you to listen to a square meal in a week. These fur coats Christmas sermon? "Quit fooling."

"It's too d—d cold for joking."
"You will hear my sermon, or I'll chance a shot from each of you while I get my 'gun' into play," Connor declared with Zenith City can spread. I'll swear you curious convincingness.

THE DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.



Something that sounded like a derisive camps full of hard-worked, ill-fed, halflaugh issued from the fur collar of one of frozen men. In one camp they are mostly roughs, like you and me, or worse. In the other they are soldiers who live clean because they must, and a pack of officers who grin and bear it, I guess, for the same Connor continued slowly:

"Well, I'm a dead shot at longer range between the disorder in Zenith City and drop on me, you couldn't hit me when I the order at Fort Fletcher, but they are alike in cold and hunger. Yes, sir, and thing more! They both remember in one thing more! They both remember tonished voice.

"Oh, yes, you are—little boys shouldn't tell fibs," Connor asserted. "But you don't want to shoot me no more than I feller another, from some woman who "But we mean business," one added, loves him far off beyond these prairies. Those presents I have here in this stageof them, I've seen the messenger's receipt matter. Hear mine," Connor began au- couple of diamond pins for the lieutenants. men until no work and gambling sent you terfere with them other chaps' Christmas,

The leveled pistols sank simultaneous

"Connor!" Jim Gwynne said, and his voice sounded youthful and piteous. "This "Being queer, boys, you will not is our last chance. We haven't eaten a we stand up in are pledged for day after to-morrow. Let us have only-"
"Not a penny! But see here"-Connor

leaned forward eagerly-"you follow me to town, and I'll treat to the best supper shall not starve on Christmas Day-and "Silence gives consent, eh? Well, I ain't I'll drive you back to Bismarck next trip, where, if our company don't offer you well-paid work, you can shoot me for a

-d liar!" He held out a huge fur-gloved hand on either side. "Shake on that!" he cried

cheerfully. Half an hour later the rabble gathered in unusual numbers at Zenith City, to witness the unloading of the stage which had brought the Christmas mails. Morris, the messenger, sleepily emerged from within its huge bulk, when Connor called him.

"I had a sort of nightmare awhile ago, he exclaimed, with a laugh, as Connor beat himself about the chest to restore circulation. "I thought the stage stopped. and that you were talking of shooting But I knew it was a dream, so I went to sleep again." ..

"Best you could have done," Connor greed. "Here, Jim Gwynne," he added ngreed. to a tall fellow who lounged near, "lend a hand, will you? There comes the general's orderly from Fletcher for them Christmas gifts."-Waverley Magazine.

XMAS CARDS OLD AND NEW.

Origin of the Remembrance and Som

of Their Fads and Fancies. Thirty years ago in Berlin a lady of noble birth painted the first Christmas It grew out of a strong desire to send a simple remembrance to a cousin of hers, who was in the diplomatic service of William I., then King of Prussia and afterward Emperor of Germany. The lady had loved and been loved by this consin but a strange misunderstanding had part ed them. During a convalescence she painted a spray of forget-me-nots on fancy card and inscribed a few words in gold letters, the translation of which was May the Christ child rest on your heart and bring you peace and happiness." This she dispatched on Christmas eve to the court by a trusted friend, who managed matters so adroitly that the lovers were again reconciled and ever after happy. The following year they told their story to some intimate friends at court. The nobility then adopted this method for to spell it "Xmas."

sending best wishes and polite greetings during the holiday season.

Shortly afterward printed cards appear-ed, and it became a trade. The folding card, with happy surprises in sentiment hidden under flowers, was a conception of the French in 1871. The trade still grows in significance, especially since the evolu-tion of the card to the calendar.

The most beautiful cards still com from Germany. They are in a bewilder-ing multitude of chaste designs, including all sorts of natural flowers, with sentiments engraved in silver or gold under the leaves. England produces the most artistic ecclesiastical cards of any country, yet she does not confine herself to this style exclusively. There are many genteel poor people in London who main-tain themselves in comfort by writing verses for Christmas and New Year's cards, and their work is done early in the year. The custom of sending Christmas cards in America was first noticeable in 1870. They were then made on a very small scale by a firm in Boston. The trade grew in importance until now, when t is at its culminating point and the Christmas calendar bids fair to supersede the card.

A NOVEL IDEA

One Bright Girl's Highly Original

Christmas Method. In large families of daughters Christmas is almost a calamity; there are so many presents to be bought, and so many different varieties of secrecy to be main-tained. Recently Anne, the second daughter in a bevy of eight, issued an original edict: "I've made up my mind," said Anne, "that all this Christmas secrecy is unwholesome and foolish; the strain on the brain and the perves-in a large family like ours, is exhausting and dangerous. Puf not going to have any more Christmas secrets; all this skurrying bundles into the house and out of sight is going to stop— so far as I'm concerned. What I make, I'm going to make in full view of all the family; and what I buy I shall put on the table in my room—anybody that chooses may open my bundles and look at the contents.

All the other girls were astoundedsuch an idea! It would ruin Christman

—Anne is simply crazy.
Anne has stood her ground, however, and her Christmas work is still going on; she embroiders beautiful dollies, pin-cush ions and stand-covers, in full view of the other girls even asking their advice as to shades in silk and designs. On her table are many interesting presents-books, pic tures, brie-a-brac, boxes of candy and other desirable articles. With the display of her presents, however, Anne's frank ness has ended; and the great family-all the seven other girls-have decided that this is by far the most exciting and entertaining Christmas time they have ever experienced. Two thrilling problems-two profound mysteries—still exist to agitate pleasantly the household pulse; Is Anne going to let us each choose our own presents, or is Anne herself going to choose a gift for each one? Anne, the sphinx embroiders on silently, and the answer is yet unknown.

CHRISTMAS IN CUBA

Uncle Sam Has Presented the Island a Great Gift of Liberty.



UBANS' stockings undoubtedly have some holes in them this Christmas, but out of these has run a vast deal of equivocal misrule-"bene fits" which another Yuletime will make a mere memory. The home church has kept the universal anniversary pretty green in the hearts

of Spanish devotees even through the years of disorder and disruption, but the patriot of the soil has been left out in the cold-forced to eat his Christmas dinner in fear and trembling of a domiciliary visitation from Spanish "agents." or having none at all, lurking, menaced and fugitives behind trochs, in swamp, or under the thatch of some isolated mountain hut.

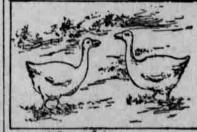
This year all is changed. For the isl and entire there is Uncle Sam's great gift of Liberty. Reviving to its influences, general sunburst of prosperity is presaged in dawning gleams of promise and glory, and the hunted and homeless have taken heart. The rapacious Spanish soldier is dining at his home board, living on his career of "glory"-his sympathizing friends still resident in Havana are prudently "reconciled" to events that have an unmistakable trend in the direction of

toleration and fairness.

Individually, the Cuban is sure of a personal gift. Uncle Sam has filled, is filling, his larder with generous contribu tions until the next season of plantation proceeds places him on a self-sustaining level. There are ruined homes to recoup, parted families and friends, there are many lost never to return, but these are the fortunes of war, and the victory has been won.

The fairest morn that ever dawned for Cuba marks this Christmas day, when the blood, the tears, the hopes of the suffering struggling patriots of half a century, un der the watch and ward of Columbia's star of destiny, from the blessed altar of fruition proclaim for generations yet to be a glowing cycle of merry, happy Christ-

The Difference. First Goose-What's the difference be tween a Christmas turkey and a Christ-

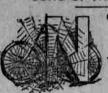


Second Goose-1 200no First Goose-Why, one is dressed to kill and the other is killed to dress.

A Contingency. Mr. Cumso-I have not yet decided whether or not I shall buy my wife a pres-

ent this Christmas. Mr. Cawker-Why this indecision? Mr. Cumso-I am waiting to see whether I shall have any money left after she

has bought my present. It is time now to begin to remember no SONG OF THE WHEEL



OW I'm consigned to garret grim, Where cobwebs from the rafters

from the ratters sway,
way,
Where risks of corn depend from pegs,
Where mice run to and fro all day.

My strands vibrate when winds caress—
Ah! then I spin my masy song;
But no one lists my music soft
Through days so short and nights so long.

These ancient garbs of other days
Are peopled with the ghosts of old;
These peaked hats and bonnets quaint,
Old-fashloned faces seem to hold;
Then trooping out from corners dim,
They come to tread the minuet—
No fleck of dust arises where
Their tripping feet perchance to stray.

Like harp collan I spin
My strains to lend the dancers zest,
Who bow sedate, elate and prim,
Who come with trend of ghostly guest.
The buckled swath bestows his hand
To slippered Miss Priscilla fair;
I only see the froile gay
They know not of below the stair.

The wind subsides, no longer turn
My strands; the dancers swiftly go
Back to their places in the gloom,
To hang from pegs in motley row,
And this—my song on Christmas day,
Whose merry frolic ends when I
No longer spin my ghostly lay
To callyen those—who lived to die.
—H. S. Keller.

THE BOAR'S HEAD.

Was the First Dish Brought to Our Forefathers' Table on Christmas. Aside from its religious observance and signification Christmas has always been a time of feasting and jollification. This emperament has descended to us from the days of the old Germanic and Scandinavian nations, when the time was set aside for rejoicing and pleasure prior to the Christian era, but even as late as the seventeenth century in England and throughout continental Europe the delights of the table were paramount. With our forefathers a soused boar's head was borne to the principal table in the hall



with great state and solemnity as the first dish on Christmas day. In the book of "Christmasse Carolles," printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1521, are the words sung at this auspicious moment:

The bore's head in hande bring I With garlandes gay and rosemary. I pray you all synge merrely— Qui estis in convivio.

bore's head I understand Is the chefe service in this lande, Loke wherever it be fande. Servite cum cantico.

Chancer alludes to this custom in the following passage of the "Franklein's

James sitteth by the fire with double berd.
And he drinketh of his bugle horne the wine.
Before him standeth the braune of the
tusked swine.

Under the Mistletoe.



Christmas Gifts of Money.

"If, after thinking for a long time, you cannot decide what she (my poor girl friend) would like best," writes Ruth Ashmore, in advising girls as to their Christmas giving in the Ladies' Home Journal, and you know her well enough to leave to her the choice of the gift, then send her the money that she may spend it for herself. But make this money look more like a chosen gift, and less like that which is so hardly earned by her; trouble yourself to go to the bank and put it in gold, or at least in a new bank note, and inclose it in a tiny little purse."

A Memorable New Year. New Year's day, 1859, is of historic importance. At the reception held at the Louvre on that day the few words addressed by Napoleon III. to the Austrian embassador resulted in the famous war of the summer of that year which changed the map of Europe,

Even Up. Crawford-The new woman should make Christmas easier for the married

man to bear. Grimshaw-I don't see it. A bike and set of bloomers cost about as much as a sealskin sacque.-Judge.

The Dun. This bugaboo of New Year's day Seems quite bereft of reason. Unsatisfied if you but pay The compliments of the season.