

An Unruly Christmas Mystery

Identity of the Wise Men Who Came to Adore the Christ Child



THE ADORATION BY RUBENS THE MOST CELEBRATED PICTURE ON THIS THEME



ONE OF THE QUAINTEST AND EARLIEST PAINTINGS OF THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI. ALTER-PIECE IN KOLN CATHEDRAL. BY MEISTER STEPHAN

"THERE CAME WISE MEN FROM THE EAST TO JERUSALEM, SAYING, WHERE IS HE THAT IS BORN KING OF THE JEWS? FROM THE PAINTING BY JOHN LAFARGE IN THE CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION, NEW YORK.

ONE Christmas mystery remains unsolved. May never be solved. Who were the Wise Men of the East? Of what nationality were these Magi, who traveled from afar to do homage to the new-born Saviour? What was their rank? Whence came the wealth that enabled them to bring their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh? Why was the star vouchsafed them as a guide to show the way to Bethlehem? No one knows, though centuries of research have been made by eminent scholars. The simple story as told in the Bible is one of the most familiar in Christian lore. Any child could recite it in detail. Painters and sculptors have made it the theme of the most inspired products of their brushes and chisels, but to this day the identity of these Wise Men remains a mystery. There are, of course, theories. Men who know the period have striven to revive its life so as to lift the veil

from the famous trio, but all have labored under the great disadvantage that in setting down the story of the birth of Christ the Apostle Matthew has been disappointingly meager in dealing out information about the three Wise Men. He simply says they arrived in Jerusalem three foreigners. He does not tell us of what race, nor of what station in life. But there are clues in the Biblical record, for all that. It is fair to assume from the fact that the visitors were received at court by King Herod, and that they carried gifts of value, that they were in their own country men of royalty or close to it. Probably Persians. The use of the word Magi indicates that they were Zoroastrians, members of Persia's most sacred order, and if they came from the east, were most probably natives of Chaldea, that ancient region lying beyond the Jordan and the desert.

Herod evidently deemed it cautious to treat them with deference, for disquieted though he was by their news of the star or comet that was to lead them to the birthplace of the Redeemer, he dissembled, and told them that when they had found the new-born he would return to worship with them. The theory that they were Persians gains further support from their actions when they came into the presence of the Christ. Their deep bow, their humble prostration was the Persian deference to a King, and the gifts they brought were Persian in character. This is the general idea to be deduced from the Bible story. It is little more than clever theory, for it supplies no names, it tells no rank. A research of the great paintings in which the subject is treated produces bewildering results. There are half a hundred different ideas presented. In the earlier efforts the number of Wise Men varied from two to six, though modern research insists that three is accurate.

There is little royalty expressed in the early conceptions. It was about the fifth century when painters generally began to accept the idea that the three men were rulers in their country, and wore their crowns when they came in the presence of the greatest of all Kings. Names for the Pilgrims. Not until nine centuries later, however, did the church find names for the first pilgrims to the shrine of the Prince of Peace. The monks of the 14th century disclosed much of importance about the early days of the Christian era. They delved deeply, and brought to light much of the knowledge we have now. It is for that reason that their story of the Three Wise Men of the East deserves particular consideration. Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar they call the Three Wise Men. All were great Kings. Caspar was the oldest. At the time of the birth of Christ he was 90 years old, and for more than two-thirds of that time he had ruled in Arabia. Balthasar was black, a native of Saba and 60 years old. The youngest of the three



THE WISE MEN AND THE STAR FROM THE PAINTING BY R. HANER IN THE BERLIN MUSEUM

was Melchior, whose country was Tarsish. He was 20 years old. Three miracles taught them that some great event was destined to occur, so they went to the Mount Victorialis to pray and watch for the star. When it appeared they dropped all the cares of state, and followed it 12 days and nights without eating or sleeping, till it led them to Jerusalem. Then the story follows that of the Bible, telling how they went to Herod, then to Bethlehem, worshipped and presented their offerings, received from Mary the linen in which He had been swathed, and, fearing the good faith of Herod, they embarked in secrecy and returned to their own countries by another route than that by which they had come. The story does not stop here. It tells circumstantially the after life of the Three Wise Men. The good Apostle Saint Thomas journeyed to their country, baptized them, and all three went out to preach the doctrine of the Christ. The Fourteenth Century Story. They were slain by barbarous Gentiles, and later the Empress Helena, wife of Constantine, recovered their sacred bones, and brought them to Constantinople. Thence they were carried to Milan, and finally found ultimate resting place in Cologne, where they now are. This is the 14th century story of the Three Wise Men. It is detailed, picturesque, plausible, but there is no proof for it, and the many other versions of the story would be equally entitled to belief. Sculptors and painters give varying accounts. Over the portal of St. Andrea, in Pistoia, the sculptor has engraved their names on a bas-relief. Rubens in his marvelous "Adoration," in the Museum at Antwerp, makes them royal Princes apparently of some heathen nation, for their garb is barbaric. They bear a resemblance to the 14th century story. Bousmieu shows them as virtual saints, all men of years, and from their garb he deduces, as a fact, that he has given them halos as well as Joseph, Mary and the Christ. Gozzoli paints in Emperor Michael Paleologus and Lorenzo Medici, who could have possessed the bones in such a period as that of the beginning of the Christian era. This fact shows how little data the painters and sculptors have had to work on. The supposed Colvin and immediately upon to draw upon the imagination, and the result is a network of contradiction and fable that will perhaps remain a hopeless tangle as long as the world lasts.

On the Making of an Ordinary Cook

Using Leftovers. Continued by Miss Lillian E. Tingle, Director of Portland School of Domestic Science.

(Continued from last week.)
4. PIES and Pastries.—For these the meat may be cut either in cubes or slices and reheated with a little good gravy or finely minced and bound together with sauce something like a croquette mixture. In any case extra seasoning will be necessary. A few slices of fresh vegetables, celery, carrot or onion, sautéed in the butter or other fat used in making the gravy, will be found helpful in reviving the flavor. The paste can be varied all the way from fine puff paste (used for creamed chicken, oysters, etc.) to plain biscuit crust. A good way of using the latter is to roll it rather thin and line a bowl or mould of suitable size. Fill up with the meat and nicely seasoned gravy, cover with crust, fit on a cap or cover of greased paper, and steam until the paste is cooked and the meat warmed through; then turn out on a platter and send to table with additional gravy. Extra gravy is a great help in making "left-overs" palatable, and is easily obtained with the aid of a well-managed stock pot.

is best, however, with curry or other richly-seasoned dishes. Little baked "turn-overs" are nice made from short crust, biscuit crust or potato crust (mashed potatoes with flour added, "roughed" to roll out), as the cook's recipe says). 5. Hash and Savory Mince.—Every cook is supposed to know how to make hash, so little comment is necessary. The faults most often met with are carelessness in preparation of the meat, the use of raw instead of cooked potatoes, lack of thorough browning, and unattractive service. In spite of the countless jokes on the subject, hash is a dish by no means to be despised, when properly served, although owing to the fact that the meat is subjected to direct dry heat, it is a less desirable method of "warming-over" than some others on our list. The term savory mince includes a large number of differently flavored dishes all made from meat passed through the mincing machine or finely chopped in a bowl and reheated, but not boiled, in slightly thickened gravy. Suggestions for seasoning have already been given, and some directions for using mince besides the simple and convenient way of serving it on toast. Remember that the toast should be crisp, but not hard, neither too thick nor too thin, of a good brown, but not burned. The crusts should be trimmed off and saved for "browned crumbs."

or other suitable vegetable in a small quantity of fat. Second—Add one or two level table-spoonfuls of flour (according to the thickness desired) for every tablespoonful of fat and brown the too—a very pale fawn color is enough. Third—Add one cup brown stock, if you have it. Second stock will do, but usually has not so good a color as "first stock." Fourth—Bring to the boil and season carefully, then add a few drops of caramel or "kitchen bouquet," until the desired tint is obtained. Use the caramel cautiously or a bitter taste will result. Fifth—Save any brown "dish gravy" to help your brown sauce. Sixth—Use a little meat extract if your gravy is still pale and weak. Caramel is made by heating a few spoonfuls of sugar in a small pan until it turns a deep brown, but not black. Add (cautiously, or it will fly in your face) just enough water to dissolve the browned mass. Bottle it and keep it for coloring soup and gravy and for flavoring custards, ice creams and puddings. Don't forget to use a little spice, bay leaf, etc., when the meat seems lacking in flavor, but don't depend too much on these. A salmie is made from game; the gravy is rich and highly seasoned and usually contains wine, but the principles involved are the same as for ordinary ragouts or "English hash." A ring of cooked vegetables, of rice, or of beans or of mashed potatoes makes a suitable and convenient garnish. Toast points are also used.

Most Remarkable of Murder Cases

Facts Stranger Than Fiction on Which Wilkie Collins Founded One of His Novels.

THE FINAL disposal of Vermont's latest murder case recalls an earlier confession, telling of the quarrel in a pasture, of striking Colvin down with a club, of the death of Colvin and of the hiding of the body and the final disposal of the bones in a river. Self-Confessed Murderers. The trial followed in October of 1819, was presided over by Judge Dudley Chase, an uncle of Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase, and was held in the Congregational Church at Bennington to accommodate the audience called out by the sensation. Aside from the confessions, a son of Colvin testified to seeing Stephen fell his father with a club, and a fellow-prisoner in the jail told of Jesse's confiding to him the details of the murder and the disposal of the body—a story which Stephen corroborated. A verdict of murder in the first degree was brought in and the boys were sentenced to be executed at Windsor January 28, 1820. The Vermont Legislature commuted Jesse's sentence to imprisonment for life, but by a vote of 37 to 43 refused to abate Stephen's sentence. Stephen then suggested—both boys having finally pronounced their various confessions spurious and protested their innocence—that an advertisement for Colvin be put in the papers. His counsel accordingly inserted such a notice in the Rutland Herald, with the request that other papers throughout the United States copy it. But papers were not numerous then and communication was slow, while the hanging day was near at hand. The Rutland Herald ridiculed the notion that anything would come of it, and insisted that Colvin was dead. No Direct Evidence. No positive evidence against them appeared, however, until Jesse, urged by his jailers, confessed that just before Colvin disappeared Stephen had quarreled with him and struck him with a club or stone, fracturing his skull; he believed that Colvin had been killed, but could not say what was done with the body. Then came the indictment, and then Stephen, urged by many influential persons that it

would be best for him to make a clean breast of the matter, wrote out a long confession, telling of the quarrel in a pasture, of striking Colvin down with a club, of the death of Colvin and of the hiding of the body and the final disposal of the bones in a river. Self-Confessed Murderers. The trial followed in October of 1819, was presided over by Judge Dudley Chase, an uncle of Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase, and was held in the Congregational Church at Bennington to accommodate the audience called out by the sensation. Aside from the confessions, a son of Colvin testified to seeing Stephen fell his father with a club, and a fellow-prisoner in the jail told of Jesse's confiding to him the details of the murder and the disposal of the body—a story which Stephen corroborated. A verdict of murder in the first degree was brought in and the boys were sentenced to be executed at Windsor January 28, 1820. The Vermont Legislature commuted Jesse's sentence to imprisonment for life, but by a vote of 37 to 43 refused to abate Stephen's sentence. Stephen then suggested—both boys having finally pronounced their various confessions spurious and protested their innocence—that an advertisement for Colvin be put in the papers. His counsel accordingly inserted such a notice in the Rutland Herald, with the request that other papers throughout the United States copy it. But papers were not numerous then and communication was slow, while the hanging day was near at hand. The Rutland Herald ridiculed the notion that anything would come of it, and insisted that Colvin was dead. No Direct Evidence. No positive evidence against them appeared, however, until Jesse, urged by his jailers, confessed that just before Colvin disappeared Stephen had quarreled with him and struck him with a club or stone, fracturing his skull; he believed that Colvin had been killed, but could not say what was done with the body. Then came the indictment, and then Stephen, urged by many influential persons that it

Mr. Whelpley, of Manchester, Vt. Chadwick brothers interested, said his brother-in-law in New Jersey employed a man answering Colvin's description, and asked Whelpley more about him and the crime. Retracing his steps, Chadwick looked up the man, questioned him, found that he had come from Manchester, and that he answered all descriptions. The result was to send Whelpley to New Jersey, where he saw the supposed Colvin and immediately recognized him beyond any doubt. Colvin, who had become badly disarranged mentally, refused to return to Vermont, and was finally deceduced into going. Court was in session at Bennington when, on December 22, the party arrived unheralded from New Jersey. Colvin was recognized by persons on the street, and when the news penetrated the courtroom the court broke up in confusion, and everybody, Judges and all, rushed out to see the resurrected man. There was no doubt as to his identity, and when the party reached Manchester cannon were brought out and Stephen was let loose from his cell to fire the first shot. When Colvin saw Stephen Boorn he asked what the fetters on his limbs were for. Being told, Colvin said: "You never hurt me; Jesse struck me with a brier once, but it did not hurt me much." Colvin was later taken before the court, and when he had been heard as to his identity, the court heard petitions for a new trial on the ground of newly discovered evidence, and upon these being granted, the cases were not pressed and the brothers set free. This case became the foundation of Wilkie Collins' novel, "The Dead Alive." The lesson it seems to teach is that confessions wrung from accused persons in the midst of popular excitement need to be viewed with great care. It is further to be noted that the Vermont Legislature in those days did not reserve its refusal to commute capital sentences entirely to women murderers.

Were There Really So Many? Punch, London. A publisher advertises: "The Thousand and One," Surely there is some exaggeration here?

Roman pie is made as described above, except that cooked macaroni or spaghetti is collared into the bowl by way of lining and tomato sauce is used to season and accompany it. "Shepherd's pie" is made by lining a greased baking dish (three-foot china is best), with left-over mashed potatoes. Mince meat is used for the filling. Cover this with more mashed potatoes, mark with a fork to make an easily browned surface, and brush over with melted dripping or butter. Bake it until nicely browned (quick oven) and serve in the baking-dish. Little individual baking-dishes can be used if you have them. They come in varying prices and grades of china, and are most useful in making attractive breakfast, luncheon and dessert dishes of many kinds. Baked rice may be used in similar fashion as cover and lining for baked or steamed pies. It

7. Meat Cakes.—There are many names and different ways of serving meat loaves and cakes. Of course those made from fresh meat are best, but nice things can be made from cooked meat, too, by adding a little ham, bacon or salt pork, bread crumbs, stock and beaten egg. Remember that the more egg you add the moister your mixture should be on account of the stiffening power of the egg. Perhaps you think this detail too small to be mentioned, but I know of many instances where a student has added an extra egg to some recipe (cake, custard, dressing or

And She Did. Cleveland Leader. In a boat on a stream they floated along. He and she, on a sweet June day— (Oh, I know this is not an appropriate song. For a month when the skies are gray? But what matters it, anyway?) She sat at the tiller, and he at the oars. And he looked in her wonderful eyes. And wished he might float to some faraway shore. With her into Paradise. (And he heaved a couple of sighs.) And so he asked her to be his wife. (Only he put it thus, you see): "All will you not promise to float through life. Like this, together with me?" ("What a chestnutty speech!" thought she.) But she answered: "Oh, yes!—through life like this. 'We will paddle and drift and float!' (Which shows that she was a wise little miss—) He was doing the work, you'll note. But she was steering the boat!"

How Canst Thou Sleep? (From the German of Heine.) Charles Godfrey Leland. How canst thou sleep so calmly? While I alive remain? O'er girls may yet be wakened, And then I'll break my chain. Know'st thou the wild old ballad, How a dead, forgotten slave Came to his ghost lady? And how he lay in the grave? Believe me, gentle maiden, Thou all-too-lovely war! I live, and still am stronger Than all the dead men are.