A CHRISTMAS CAROL

He for the yuletide merry, The yuletide merry and gay: When every face Good will doth grace, And beautiful Peace, away From every soul, In her hood and stole, Drives care, for the livelong day,

Here's to the mistletoe heary. And the holly with berries red, On rafter and beam That glisten and gleam, as they did in the days that are dead; Love grows not old, Nor do hearts grow cold with the yule branch above them spread.

Hero's to the Christmas greeting. Sweet as the music of heaven To the friendless and lone, To whom kindness' unknown, whom 'tis but seldom given; Let us not forget Sorrow's eyes, tear wet, Lest our hearts with like grief be riven

Ho for the yule log, burning In the wide old chimney place; Pile it higher, higher. The Christmas fire, Fill the house with warmth and cheer; Then gather them in

From the haunts of sin. To the Christ child, they still are dear Though the sunshine of their childhood They have turned to blackest night,

Stariess and cold is the dismal world, And again, some would find the light. The dear Christ's care Let me lovingly share To guide the wanderers aright. Let the "Gioria in Excelsis,"

With its music, flood our souls On this blessed day— May it swell alway, Till its tide o'er the broad earth rolls, For Christ child's known From zone to zone, And his love her millions controls.

A CHRISTMAS DINNER.

"You have inserted Joshua Prouty in the ification, Miss Rogerst son of Gideon ronty, born 1802; married"-"Yes, Mr. Prouty."

"Thank you. And you have entered the mony of Leonard Prouty, of Chicago, eerning the design of the cont-of-arms?

"Thank you, Miss Rogers, If you are at ge I have my introduction ready for opying: The Prouty family in America founded by Christopher Prouty, who, ing from England in 1634, with his wife riscilla, settled at Dorchester' "It is quite legible, Mr. Prouty."

The secretary spread the manuscript bere her, unscrewed the cover of an ornatal inkstand, pushed a wisp of her fluffy lende hair out of her blue eyes, and went rely to work.

Mr. Prouty went back into his study, hich adjoined the room which his secretary pied. As he sank into his deep, soft added easy chair, he bent forward, half unsciously, and turned the brass framed irror on his table in such a position as to deet that corner of the next room in which his secretary. He found it pleasant, hen, looking up from the letters he was ethodically reading and labeling, his glance ll upon the mirror, to note therein the dim. est spiritual, vision of a fair head, bent waward, the glint of a silver bairpin half stina soft coil, and the outline of a soft late cheek and a round chia pressed into a retty emblance of two by a rim of white plar; and Mr. Prouty respectfully and inmy enjoyed that pleasure. From a like misless motive he was wont, in his mental rences to her, to call his secretary by her stame, which was Polly. He thought

ally a very pretty name. He had begun to be faintly suspicious that exequirement of a secretary was the one

He had undertaken it merely as a recreamat 45-but, with his muscular form, inexioned face, I * looked La years younger; was retired from an inherited mercantile ss with an ample bank account and thing to do. He intended the acceptance no pecuniary remuneration; he expected to at a copy, gilt leaved and in gilt lettered indings, to every existing Prouty.

It had gradually dawned upon him that the was an ouerous one. The Prouty family a siamingly large and widely scattered. b Prouty, during the past seven months, a traveled over a large portion of the traveled over a large portion of the tied States; pored over deeds and wills and tage records in court houses innumerasaciphered inscriptions in scores of cemeto, and written 1,672 letters and received Sin return, upon all of which Mr. Prouty i paid the postage. And as yet the history a, to to speak, in a stage of red and pulpy

The comparative feebleness and vanity of seefort, also, had now and then forced it-Supon his consciousness. It had occurred him that whether Jabez Prouty had been min 1730 or 1721, and when Melancthon outy had married Nancy Higginson; and her the tail of the lion which stood on rear legs in the center of the coat of arms did properly curl and wave to the left, as surged by Renwick Prouty, of New Orsated upon by Leonard Prouty, of Cases, and the Leonard Prouty, of Cases, and the Cases

outy, looking through his window into street beneath-Twenty-eighth streetght a vibration of the coming composite, fax of shoppers from the houses opposite, that a vibration of the coming festival in profusion of messenger boys and expressand the rattling rush of dry goods my wagons. At the present moment Mr. sty, giancing in either direction, discovtwo highly dissimilar figures approachfrom the west, a tall young man in a lar garb of long black overcoat and elt hat; from the east, a short young mashort, pale tinted overcoat and a but. When the bell rang, therefore, in quick succession, Mr. Prouty evinced Prosty, the son of his deceased brothad Emjamin Todd, commonly known Jab Todd, his departed sister's son. For Syears Mr. Prouty had contributed, unaringly, the vastly greater share of

light step of one of the maids of his ordered bachelor household sounded; his nephews were shown in. tirk Prouty sat down on a sofa with

as dignity; Bub Todd threw himself with haste and violence. Neither Preted Mr. Prouty; it was a formality a they commonly omitted. easily cold weather," said Bub, deposit-

hat on a table—his last call had been the purpose of extracting the \$10 necon the chandeller with his silver head-"Where did you get that!" He turbulently across the room to stare stching on the wall, "Oh, come now, dien't think you were getting a good when you got that? It's execrable

"I took a fancy to it," said Mr. Prouty, apologetically.

"Beastly, beastly!" Bub tapped his light uppered shee sharply, took an impatient turn about the room, and bolted off towards the

secretary's deak. Bub was generally understood to be an artist. He had a high priced studio uptown, patronized the best models, and enriched the art material store at which be dealt. But-the fact was inexplicable to Mr. Prouty, who met his weighty bills-with the exception of nine which Mr. Prouty had bought and presented to friends, he had never as yet sold a picture. Had Mr. Prouty been aware that the nine paintings stood faced to the wall in nine respective back garrets, save only on days when he was expected to dinner, his bewilderment might have been less. As it was, he listened to his nephew's copious explanations-heard gallery committees called cade and private collectors roosters-in puzzled sympathy.

Selkirk Pronty loosened the red silk handkerchief which incased his somewhat lengthy neck, cleared his throat, and picked up a volume from the table.

"G. Lambert Robinson," he read, with sternness. "Is it possible that you admire that imbedile's bosh!" "I think it-harmless!" Mr. Prouty fal-

tered "He is a fellow of tenth-rate ability," said Selkirk, severely. "His productions are trash—doggerel." He dropped the book in a weariness of disgust, stroked his chin with a languid hand, and strolled in the direction of the secretary

Selkirk was literary; the fact, by reason of the peculiarities of his apparel and the length of his hair, was easily discernible. He had bachelor apartments on Washington square, including an expensively fitted study and a large library; and Selkirk employed his time in writing poetry. What became of it was dubious. He had published a volume at his own expense—or at Mr. Prouty's; but the first edition, with the exception of press copies, still lay untouched on the publishers' shelves. Mr. Pronty, while surprised at the result, was a firm believer, through the iterations of his nephew, in the depraved idiocy of reviewers and the crassitude of the

Mr. Prouty looked through the door to where his secretary sat, well hemmed in by his nephews. He was aware that their visits had tripled in frequency and length during the past seven months, and that the carpet on either side of his secretary's desk had begun to look positively dingy and worn; he was aware, in short, that his nephews were jointly and severally in love with Polly

Mr. Prouty had told bimself that this state of affairs was highly grauff, ing. He had become attached to his pretty secretary; he was fully conscious of it. What, then, could he so much desire for her as an eventual comforta ble settlement? He was aware that, were his howering hand withdrawn, a settlement with Bub Todd or Selkirk Prouty would not be comfortable; but be had no intention of withdrawing it. Apparently, as the situation promised, he should be able by proxy to provide for Pelly all the rest of her life; and the thought was a pleasing one. But whether he should provide for Mrs. Bub Todd or Mrs. Selkirk Prouty was a mystery which, though Mr. Prouty had made some few delicate and hesitant attempts to light on it, was as yet un-

His bronza clock struck twelver Bub and Selkirk detached themselves slowly from the

"How shall you spend Christmas?" Mr. Prouty inquired, accompanying his nephews to the door, with his usual cheerful cordiality, and quietly inserting an indorsed check into the hand of each, an attention which Selkirk received with a bow in which there was an element of condescension, and Bob with a nonchalant waive of the hand,

"I shall join friends at Old Point Comfort," Selkirk rejoined, adjusting his red silk handkerchief.

"Geoff Smith's going to have some of us fellows up the river somewhere," said Bab, putting his hat on a corner of his head. "Where will you be?" he added, incidently, with his head in the hall,

"I shall dine at home," Mr. Prouty replied. "I have invited your Aunt and Uncle Tibing house dinner would not be a cheerful one, you know.

Nor cried Bub, shortly. "Indeed!" said Selkirk, with ironical emphasis, closing the door with a snap. Mr Prouty, abashed and bewildered, turned back. Polly was standing in the doorway with his manuscript in her hand, her slender face and soft, light hair form and peachy charmingly outlined against the half drawn portiere. Mr. Prouty forgot his perplexity in the sight.

"I am so sorry I have not been able to finish it," she was saying. "I will take it home with me if I may." Polly's hours ended at twelve; in the afternoon she copied in a downtown office.

No, no; I will not allow it, Miss Rogers, her employer responded, quite warmly. is through no fault of your own; you were interrupted," he added, with pleasant jocu-

Polly smiled in return. They are agreeable fellows-my nephews,

Mr. Prouty pursued: "rather attractive." They seem pleasant," Polly responded.

"They are unlike, to be sure," said Mr. routy, musingly. "Selkirk has dignity and Prouty, musingly. "Selkirk has dignity and repose of manner; Benjamin, with equal stability of character, I am sure, is more im pulsive-more effervescent. Which style do you consider the most engaging, Miss

"I have not thought of it," said Polly, meeting his eyes serenely, and with some gen-

They are estimable young men, both, Mis Rogers," said Mr. Prouty, desperately. believe them to be of deep intrinsic worth with possibilities of warm affection and protecting strength, should-should there be oc

"I do not doubt it, Mr. Prouty," said Polly,

"They would make good husbands-they would make a good husband, Miss Rogers said Mr. Prouty, speaking hoursely in the difficult embarrassment of his effort.

"I am sure you are right," said Poliy. She raised her blue eyes in faint alarm, and spoke

soothingly. Her jaunty checked jacket and her high feathered hat hung on a hook near. She put the latter on, and smiled up timidly at Mr. Prouty from under a scrap of veil which ped at the tip of her straight little new Mr. Prouty helped her into her jacket, and restored her failen handkerchief, and stood looking at her with the admiring thrills and the gentle comfort which the sight of her always gave him, while she pulled on her yellow gloves and buttoned them with an tracted hair pin, and tocked her liands into her monkey skin must and tripped away. He even crossed to his window, inthrailed by her softening influence, and watched her flitting out of sight, followed by the admiringly re troverted ever of five successive men whom she met. It occurred to Mr. Prouty that the practice of turning on the street to gaze backward was an offensive one. He put his papers in

order absently, and went down to lunch. Perhaps it was the unending procession of feet imbued with a holiday spirit-that gave

Mr. Prouty a highly agreeable idea. He went upstairs and put on his hat and overcoat, with a brisk step and a beaming face. He knew nothing about buying Christmas presents naving had small experience, but it had struck him that it would be a very ple thing to buy a present for Polly. It would be-what he surely owed her-a token of his esteem and of his appreciation of her services.

It was 5 o'clock when he got back. He had walked down Broadway looking into windows, in helpless indecision, at velvet bonnets, and satin candy boxes, and photographs of actresses and royal personages, and long gloves, and Japanese bric-a-brac and sheet music. He had been drawn into the crowd surging westward along Fourteenth street, and been borne up Sixth avenue like a straw in the rapids, yelled at by the proprietors of booths on either hand, and gazing confusedly over the sea of surrounding heads at five cent Christmas cards, five cent cornuccias, five cent jumping jacks, five cent green tin alligators, five cent pincushious on clamshells and five cent plush monkeys on strings. He had been carried round the corner and inte Twenty-third street, and been squeezed, mussed and fatigued through a shadowy succession of stores in which hundreds of pretty girls had shown him millions of articles; and in which cashboys had rushed and floorwalk ers had perspired, and sealskinned shoppers had chattered deafeningly; and in which he had grown more and more hopelessly lost. He had even drifted, dazedly, into a toyshop and looked at rubber dolls and wooden sold iers and tin horses and flannel dogs on wheels, And he had come home wearied, rumpled and

He sat down with his chin in his hands. thoughtfully. He reflected that his impulse had been a foolish one and that the abortive ness of his effort was not to be regretted. Undoubtedly he should be able-possibly soon -to include the fatherly warmth of his desire in the presentation of a hand-ome wedding gift. Mr. Prouty informed himself that he was exceedingly happy in the contemplation of this prospect; he smiled broadly rubbed his hands. He was obliged to keep his mind faithfully upon the smile and the attrition of his hands in order to continue them, but he performed them with mechan ical regularity for some time.

At 12 o'clock on Christmas day Mr. Prouty. his fine form clothed in holiday attire and his handsome face flushed with leager anticipation, awaited his three expected guests in

Below, the parlors were thrown open, a long vista of comfortable elegance, with flowers in fancy baskets and leaping grate fires; and the darkened dining room shone the bright array of silver and the sprinkling of tinted fairy lights and the scintillations of the laden sideboard; and the odor of the little pig patiently roasting in the range mingled with the aroma of the plum pudding steaming above it, and gently floated in

The bell rang, and Mr. Prouty, pacing his study floor with an irregularity of pleasurable emotion, burried downward.

Selkirk Prouty was removing his outer gar ents before the hall mirror. He wore a turndown collar of some width, covered in the rear by his falling locks, and joined in front by a blue silk scarf; and he carried a package. He greeted Mr. Prouty, standing

"I altered my arrangements," he explained, with benignity, "and resolved to join you at your Christmas dinner. Ah; rather cozy, be admitted, rubbing his hands before the grate, with an unbending of complacent be-nevolence. "Miss Rogers has not arrived? I have a slight token to present to her." unwrapped a volume of his poems and placed it at a consolenous point on the mantel.

Mr. Prouty opened his lips forcibly, with a gasp, and strove to speak. He assured himelf, strenusasly, that nothing more gratify ing could possibly have occurred. It would be an excellent opportunity for the furtherance of his hopes regarding Polly; possibly the occasion would bring about a happy culmination. He reproached himself for having emitted Selkirk from his primal arrange

"I wish to see Miss Rogers privately, by the way," Selkirk continued. "I have a matbals to dinner and Miss Rogers. Her board | ter to discuss with her which has been for some time upon my mind, and it occurred to me to embrace this opportunity.

"Certainly—certainly," Mr. Prouty mur-mured. He looked at his nephew he-pefully. His well poised dignity, his self-centered manliness, had never appeared to greater advantage, surely. If there were a choice between his nephews as regarded their fitness for Polly, Mr. Prouty believed that Selkirk was that

"If some little management proves neces sary for my seeing Miss Rogers privately," Selkirk added, spreading his blue scarf, "

may depend on your assistance!"
"Assuredly, assuredly," Mr. Prouty responded, with hurried warmth. "Ah, thanks!" Selkirk sank into a chair in

a languor of self recollection. The bell pealed; Mr. Prouty hastened into

the hall with a beating heart-and stopped in amazement. It was Bub Todd and a messenger boy

arrying a large and very carefully enveloped burden.

"Didn't look for me, eh!" said Bub, remov-e, his pale gloves, "Well, changed my ing his pale gloves. "Well, changed my plans and concluded I'd drop in. Just put on another plate, Molly," he remarked to the retreating girl.
"Two, Mary," Mr. Prouty faltered.

Bub glanced into the parlor; frowned at the disclosure of his cousin, and lowered his

"She ain't here yet! Brought her a little present; little thing I've been doing." He removed its wrappings and placed it in an advantageous light against the hat rack. "How's that!" He rubbed his dangling glass with his scented handkerchief and seized Mr. Prouty's lapel. "See here, I want to see her when she comes; want to have a confab about

a little matter. Keep the gang off and give me a chance, will you-eh?" Mr. Prouty hesitated, bewilderedly, Bub's impulsiveness, his offhanded spontaneity struck him with fresh force, and favorably. Perhaps Polly's clinging aweetness - Mr. Prouty was certain that Polly's nature was one of clinging sweetness—would crave more warmth, more demonstrative ardor than Selkirk would be likely to lavish upon her; perhaps-yes, surely-Bub would make her

Enf" Bub repeated, sharply. "Why, yes; to be sure, my boy," said Mr. Prouty, with dazed cordiality, and Bub saun-

tered into the parlor, yawning. The bell jingled again, this time with a gentle timidity. Mr. Prouty felt a thrill, half of poignant pleasure and half of painful

apprehension, tingle through him. He sent forward at an unsteady pure. Yes—it was Polly. She met Mr. Prouty with a pleasant smile, and a pretty flush, and laid her gloved hand in his, with her blue ever swiftly raised to him; and covered his agitated allence by chatting brightly of the day and the weather, as she laid aside her jacket, and rolled up her gloves and put them in her muff, and pinned her veil to her hat, and pressed her dextrous hands to the shining blonde aureole above her charming face, and went with her host into feet which passed the dining room window— the warm, fire lighted, flower scented parlor. She started back in shy alarm at the

sight of the two masculine figures within. Solkirk rose hastily from the chair in which e was baif dozing. Bub bounded from the sofa upon which he was unconventionally re-They hurried forward simultaneous clining. ly, and Polly bowed to them each, with a sweetly impartial smile. Bub looked at Sel-kirk frowningly, Selkirk returned the look

with haughty coidness. 'It is a delightfully beautiful day, Miss Rogers," he remarked, drawing a chair near

to her. 'It is very pleasant," said Polly.

"The glad Christmas-tide—who does not welcome it?" Seikirk demanded. He looked uggestively and severely at Mr. Prouty, and Mr. Prouty, with a sudden startled rememrance, turned hastily to Bub.

"1-I have some engravings I think you have not seen, Benjamin," be said. "They are in the back parlor." Bub had slapped down a chair at Polly's

mount side "Jolly day, Miss Rogers?" he observed, "They are from recent French paintings Benjamin," said Mr. Prouty, anxiously.

You will be interested in examining them. 'Pm awfaily glad you're on hand, Miss Rogers," said Bub, turning upon Mr. Prouty with an amazed and threatening glare. "It is a day of bright associations and

lessed hopes," Selkirk proceeded. "I have not shown you my new edition of Cariyle, Selkirk," Mr. Prouty faltered, truck by a wave of confused recollection. If you will come upstairs for a moment to

the library"---"It is a senson of peace and love," said Selkirk with a stern gaze of wrathful consterns

tion at Mr. Prouty. 'You're looking tip-top, Miss Rogers," Bub

They include some Bonheurs and Meisso iers, Bonjamin," said Mr. Prouty, dazedly If you will come into the back parlor"-Bub rose to his limited beight with a vioent jerk. Mr. Prouty wiped the perspira

tion from his ferchead. There is a portrait and biography, Selkirk," he gasped, with Bub's flerce eyes upon him. "Shuli we go up to the library?" What do you mean by not going, sir!" Bub demanded, eyeing his tall cousin fero-

"To whom are you speaking, sir!" Selkirk rejoined, rising with stern dignity,
"Miss Regers, may I request you to accom pany me to the further end of the room? I

lesire to speak to you privately; without in-"Will you go into the hall with me, Miss

Bub demanded, glowing with Rogersf" Polly, standing with fluttering breath and chaped hands, was timidly, shrinkingly si-

Bub glared at Selkirk. "You're a cad, sir!" he remarked, with savage force.

"You're a puppy," Selkirk responded, with Mr. Prouty mopped the anguished beads from his brow and gazed at Polly. Polly's ves were lifted to his. Her lips were parted tremulously; her color came and went swift-

y; her soft eyes looked into his own with timorous fright and sweet appeal and yearnng trustfulness-and-Mr. Prouty stared at her in breathless wonler, in wide eved bewilderment, in dazed in redulity and delirious joy. A great light burst over him. He felt his face paling and his limbs trembling and his strength forsak-

ing him; but he opened his arms wide. And his little secretary, bursting into a soft shower of tears, tripped into them and threw her own saugly about his neck, and buried her tenderly tearful, smiling face upon his There was a pause of some duration. The rattle of a confectioner's wagon outside and the thud of an ice eream pail on the pavenent resounded with a startling distinctness. The roast-pig-and-plum-pudding odor wan-

dered up and mingled with the fragrance of the flowers. The brass dog on the mantel soked down in impassive calm. Bub Todd mitted a long, low pitched whistle, strolled and placed his painting with its face towards the baseboard and sauntered back. Selkirk ton and Jacob at this juncture made their Prouty cleared his throat, mechanically reappearance and urged him to be quiet. arranged a displaced lock, went to the mantel and deposited in volume of poems behind a large vase and sat down reflectively. The bell rang a loud and cheerful peal, and the maid came up to admit the two remaining guests and to announce the readiness of the Christmas dinner.

Mr. Prouty's secretary became Mrs. Prouty six weeks later, and sailed with her late employer on a European wedding tour. The numerous Proutys resident in America have not as yet received a gilt edged copy of their family history for the reason that it has never been completed.-Emma A. Opper in Frank Leslie's Hiustrated Newspaper.

Christmas Proverbs and Predictions. A green Christmas makes a full graveyard. A white Christmas, a lean graveyard.

Other sayings connect Christmas with Eastert A green Christmus indicates a white Easter.

A warm Christmas, a cold Easter. Easter in snow. Christmas in mud. Christmas in snow, Easter in mud.

Its influence on the crops during the en ing year is set forth in other proverbs: If windy on Christmas day, trees will bring forth much fruit.

If it snows on Christmas night, we expect a good hop crop next year. Christmas wet gives empty granary and

borrel: "If on Christmas night," says a German proverb, "the wine ferments heavily in the barrels, a good wine year is to follow,"

Somewhat uncertain is the prediction that If at Christmas ice hangs on the willow clover may be cut at Easter

The proverb that follows is somewhat ob If Christmas finds a bridge, he'll break itif he finds none, he'll make one.

Nor is this one very clearly expressed: Wet causes more damage than frost before than after Christmas. An English proverb tells us: If ice will

bear a man before Christmas it will not bear A German saying declares that: The shepherd would rather see his wife enter stable on Christmas day than the sun.-Ex-

There's Some Pathos in This Joke Gentleman (to poor little boy)-Well, John ny, did Santa Claus put anything in your stocking?

-No, he didn't; but he would if it hadn't a been for one thing. Gentleman—What's that! Boy showing a bare foot through a big hole in his shoes—That's that,—Washington

A Lucky Birth.

"Whatever are you doing, hanging up both your stockings?" asked a mother of her little girl. "One is enough; besides, you shouldn't be so greedy, my dear. "I sin't greedy."

was the philosophical reply. "You must remember, ma, that I'm a twin."-Judge. CHRISTMAS THEN AND NOW.

We used to hang up our stockings When I was a child, dear me; Nor ever thought for a moment Of having an Xmas tree. You see, we were old fashlored children, Not wise little women and men; Nicholas came down the chimney-We had wide-open fireplaces then.

We went to bed in the twilight To waken ere yet it was dawn, And empty with trembling fingers The stockings on Xmas mern. But now the tree with its tapers Is lit on the eve instead, And hugging their Xmas presents The little ones go to bed.

But then, pray where is the stockly Could hold all the wonderful things-The triumphs of human invention The modern St. Nicholas brings: Now steam takes the place of his reindecr Those fleet, fairy coursers of vore;

nd since we have closed up the chimners He needs must come in at the door -Mrs. M. P. Handy

FILSEY.

A CHRISTMAS SKUTCH FROM LIFE IN ROO-

SIERDOM. "I reckon this is goin' ter be er buster, aid old Uncle Billy Botsworth as he caminto the family sitting room of the old farm house with a great load of wood on his shoulders. With a crash he deposited his burden on the spacious hearth, where a huge fire was already blazing, and began to pile on the long, dry sticks of besch and hickory until in a few moments a perfect sheet of flame was roaring up the wide throated chimney.

Grandma Botsworth, who sat in her customed corner by the "jamb," busy with her knitting, made no reply, while Uncle Billy proceeded to remove his coat, hat and boots, and, having filled and lighted his pipe, sat down to enjoy himself. Outside a furio snow storm was raging, and already the earth was heavily carpeted with white. Pres ently his two sons, Jacob and Milton, came in from doing up the chores, and, like their father, were soon divested of caps, coats and boots, and seated before the rousing fire talk-

ing over the events of the day. A little later Mrs. Botsworth joined them, and then the family circle was complete. No. oot complete, either; a daughter was missing. Three years ago this Christmas eve she had rone out from the parental roof to marry the nan she loved, but whom her father had for bidden some time before to enter his doors. But Mary had gone; and she and her husband, a poor mechanic, went out west to build up for themselves a home and fortune. After they were married, a day or two before they were to start for Dakota, Mary and her hus band drove to the old home, where she got out of the buggy and started to go into the house to say good-by. She did not ask nor expect forgiveness from her father for what he had done; but she knew her mother and her brothers still loved her, and would gladly have her come to see them. So she just had her hand on the gate latch, and, with tear filled eyes, was taking in the dear and familiar surroundings, when her father, coming round the corner of the house, saw her.

"Don't yer come in here," he yelled, hoarse "Don't step your foot inside o' that gate, Mary Ellen Botsworth, 'You're no darter o' mine. Take yer hatchet-faced paint-slinger

For a moment she stood as if stunned at his words; then, without a word, turned and went to the buggy. Her husband helped her in, and then, standing up and shaking his whip at Uncle Billy, said: "Bill Botsworth, if you wasn't my wife's father, I'd thrash you till you couldn't walk for a week. You object to me for a son-in-law only because I am poor; but I'll see the day I can buy an' sell u's if you was black, darn you.

Here Mary laid her hand on his arm and wid, "Stop, Will; it won't help things any to

quarrel; lot's go." It was well that Will heeded her advice, up and down the room for a space, with his | for old Uncle Billy had started for the buggy ands in his pockets; sauntered into the hall, with murder in his eye; and there is no tell ing what might have happened had not

So Mary went from home an outcast; and, as the buggy disappeared around the bend in the road, Milton turned to his father, and, with tears in his eyes, said, reproachfully:

"Pap, you oughtenter have done it."

And Mrs. Botsworth, who had come to the door just in time to take in the affair, echoed her son's words:

"No, pap, you was too hasty," she added. Mary Ellen was allus a mighty good girl; an', though I'd ruther she'd not a married Will Kenney, yet I hope the Lord will pros-per them both."

"You are right, mother," said Jacob, the elder of her sons, "you are right, mother, 'Filsey' (the nickname the boys had bestowed upon Mary when she was a toddler) was the best giri in Indiany; kind an' lovin', an' a sister worth the havin'."

As for Uncle Billy, seeing his whole family up in arms against him, he vouchsafed no reply, but turning, strode rapidly in the direc tion of the barn.

From that time on he had never spoken his daughter's name. And although he knew that mother and the boys got occasional letters from her, yet he never by sign or inquiry showed that he ever thought of her, or had the slightest interest in knowing whether

she was dead or alive.

But on the Christmas eve that I have introduced him to your notice, he sat by the fire thinking; and his thoughts were of her. He had long ago admitted to himself that he was too hasty when he drove his only daughter away from his home; but he still re-mained silent. At each family reunion, al-ways held on Christmas day, he had missed her. And as the coming one was to be held at his house, and his brothers and sisters with their families would be there, he, with some bitterness of feeling, was brooding over the fact that, through no fault of his, he reasoned, the pleasures of the day would be marred. Everybody missed Mary; the children of his nephews and nieces would ask for her and talk about her, despite the admonitions they had received to the contrary. As he was busy with his thoughts, gazing

spoke up and said: "Tomorrer"il be another white Christmas. This makes two on 'em right hand runnin' Three years ago was a mighty mild winter, and we had a green Christmas that year."

Here the old lady paused and heaved a

the while moodily into the fire, and now and

then punching up the fore sticks in a spiteful

sort of way, Grandma Botsworth suddenly

No one said anything and she contingod: "I recolleck now there was more buryin's that year in the Bald Hill buryin' groun than there has been since all put together."
"Yes," assented Mrs. Botsworth, reflective

ly, "a green Christmas allers makes a fat graveyard, they say, an' I never knowed it to fail. "I reckon it'il be good sleighin' tomorrer,"

observed Uncle Billy, "an' all the folks'll come over in the bobs. Eh! what's that!" The exclamation with which he concluded his remark was caused by the furious barkof old "Maje," the watchdog, the sound of voices in the front vard, and what exemed to

The two boys started for the front door, while the remainder of the family sat in-

be theory of a child in fear.

tently listening and wondering who could be their visitors. They had not long to wait; for a minute latter the sitting room door was flung open and Jacob strode in bearing in his arms a bright and insty two-year-old boy. Almost snatching the wraps from about it, and holding the little fellow up, he shouted: Pap, look at your grandson; Filsey's come,

an' this is her boy."
"The devil it is," roared Uncle Billy. springing to his feet, with a face as black as a 'hundercloud. "Take him away; I don't want ter see him."

"Hold on a minute," shouted a clear, strong years in the doorway. It was the son-in-law who had spaken, and who steeped into the room, his figure erect and eyes blazing with "Hold on a minute, I say," be anger. tinued; "I want a word Bill Botsworth, I can buy and sell you. Lam a rich man, but don't have to own me for a son-in-law on that account. As for me, I can get along without you. But Mary here wanted to come back and see her mother and all of you once more, and I said she should; and, more than that, I said you should treat ber and baby right, or I'd make you; and, by thunder, I'll de itt Understand me, I ask no favors for myself, but for this poor girl here, that you've treated so mean, and who still loves you, but who wants to come home only for a little while, I will speak for, and fight for, too, if necessary." was talking, mother and daughter were weeping in each other's embrace, and Grand-ma Botsworth, rising with difficulty from her seat, laid her hand on her son's shoulder. "William," she said, "now's as good a time to give in as ye'll ever have. If Mary an' Will can afford to fergive you, I don't see how you can help fergivin' them. Come now, son, do right."

For an instant he stood struggling with his passion, then love conquered. Extending his hand to his son-in-law, he said: "Billy, I knock under; I've made a mistake an' am for it. Daughter, come here."

With a glad cry Mary put her arms about his neck and kissed him again and again, "There, there, child!" the old fellow murmured, in a voice busky with emotion,

all forgot now, an"-But he did not fluish the sentence. And, while Mary was kissing grandma and all were silently crying for joy, he began to hustle round and get on his boots to go out and "see about the horses." But, as Will and Mary had come to the station, only two miles dis tant, by rail, and had there hired a man and team to bring them over, his services in this

direction were not needed. He did, however, build up such a fire in the old fireplace as it had not seen for many a day, and, as they all sat around it and talked until long after the stroke of twelve, it was indeed to them a happy Christmas.—Ed. R. Pritchard in The Arkansaw Traveler.

FOOD FOR REFLECTION.

Yes, Mister Turkey-cock, I own You make a gallant sh As in full fig you strut about

Give you too great a shock

But would it, in your puffed out state,

To know e'en awine look down on you,



Yet so it is; for by their eyes, And guttural parts of speech, I know they scold you for your pride, And humbler thoughts would teach

"You silly bird (they seem to say). Pray don't make such a clatter You're kept so well that you may look Well on a Christmas platter."
—London Graphic.



Swipesy - What did Santer Claus

bring yer, Misery? Misery-Oh, I got a brand new warm overcoat, and a pair o' dandy pants, and a lot o' candy and s'm'other little things

I can't jest remember. Whaju git? Swipesy-Oh, I got a sealskin cap, an' some warm cloze as goes on under these, an' fourteen dinner tickets, and lots o' candy an' things. Now, Misery, straight -wha'd' yer git? Misery (voice just a little shaky)-Say,

Swipesy, I hunged up my stockin' all right, and, do yer know, I never got a bloomin thing! Swipesy (also shaky as to voice)-Nor

me, neither. - Smith, Gray & Co.'s Illustrated Monthly.

The Yule Log.

In the poblest English houses of today they observe the old peasant superstition of light ing the yule log, "the ponderous ashen fagot from the yard," and great ill luck is foretold if its flame dies out in twelve days. Frumenty (boiled porridge with milk, sugar, wine, spices and raisins) is served, also mines ples and plum puddings. The Christmas ple of Yorkshire is a "bra'goose pie"—which Herrick, in one of his delightful verses, thus

Come, guard this night the Christmas play That the thief, though ne er so slie— With his flesh hooks, don't come nigh To catch R

From him whom all alone sits there, Having his eyes still in his care, And a deal of nightly fears, To watch is,

This was one of the famous songs of the waits, or singing boys, who go about London still, singing their Chrismas carola-

AND AND at It BIRTY Annuas je licen