TOST, * STRAYED OR STOLEN

By MARY WINTHROP

[Copyright, 1902, by T. C. McClure.] "HE man who said that a big lage in itself didn't know a pity very sweet. thing about it, or else he had never been in a village. Lord! I would say it was a collection of hostile camps, communication."

By way of emphasis for his words Frank Lane threw across the room the tending to read. It landed with a wash, bringing with it to the floor a small vase which stood on the corner of the mantel. Broken bits of porcelain rolled in all directions.

The young man started to his feet. The vase was one of his childish relies. Every bit was precious. But he sank back with a groan. He had forgotten his sprained ankle.

The pain in it made him remember. It was almost intolerable for a few moments. But that was not what brought the tears to his eyes-tears of weakness and leneliness. He was remembering that it was the day before his bachelor apartments with a sprained ankle. A solitary dinner at the club



"I WISH YOU WOULD LET ME EEEP IT."

was never wildly festive for Christmas, but even that was to be denied him this year.

Lane hastily brushed aside the tears as the wife of the janitor came in. Womanlike, she was compassionate. Her face beamed as she cried: "A package for ye, Mester Lane. Th' postman jest left it, an' I hurried it up, thinkin' it might cheer ye a bit. It's sure some prishit a lady fren's been a sendin' ye."

The invalid laughed shortly. From a lady friend! He had been raised in an orphan asylum and as far as his knowledge went had not a living relation. His position in the business world was entirely due to his own pluck and energy. He had not had time to-make lady friends.

When the woman had gone, he still looked curiously at the package in his lap. It was in bad order. The string was loosened and the enveloping paper torn. The address was blurred, but he could still make out faintly the inscription "F. E. Lane" and the name of the apartment house. It was really

His fingers trembled with eagerness as he slipped off the outside wrapper and disclosed dainty tissue paper and ribbons. It must surely be from a girl, be thought.

Inside was a creation of violet silk. He eyed it dubiously, but then his face cleared. He had seen similar curios in shop windows. It must be a handker-

But the name of the sender? He took hold of the case gingerly and shook it. He carefully turned it inside out. No card appeared. It must have slipped out on the way. He sniffed appreciatively. The case was strongly scented with violets. It almost seemed as if the fair donor herself was glorifying his room with her presence.

Yet the question of who had sent it still remained unsolved. He knew whom he wished had sent it-the girl in the flat above. She was the girl who, when she came in from the office of an evening, sat down at the plane and rattled off a jolly twostep-that was when things had gone well-or crept in quietly and sang soothing lullablesthat was when the day's work had left her wornout and blue. Lane sympathized, for he had felt just that way

"B-r-r-r" rang the electric bell. Lane frowned as he reached his hand back for the button. Why need commonplace realities in the shape of the janftor break in upon his day dream? Then he straightened up suddenly. Then he straightened up suddenly. The snow less deep on land and lea; The figure standing in the doorway The skies are shining overhead: was not to be confused with the jan-Ator. It was a girl with rebellious brown curls wandering down to ob- How "Rab and Allen cam' to pres struct g pair of serious dark eyes. It They sing; we sing, Heigh-ho, the helly!

was the girl of the flat above. The girl stood uncertainly a moment Priends, let us pay the wonted fein the gathering dusk, then stepped forward with sudden decision. "I beg your parden for intruding on you." she said apologetically. "I don't be-

neve you can even see, who I am in The Christmas this semidarkness. Won't you let me light up? I am the girl from the flat above." As she spoke she turned to the switch. In a moment the room flashed into a blaze of light.

Lane still stared at her as ff at a vision, but the years of business training came to his aid. "Won't you sit down, Miss Fane?" be said courteously. "I can't rise-a little triffe of a sprained ankle."

apartment house was a vil. I am so sorry." The man found her with, but one whose talents and per- American.

with a janitor as the only means of strayed or stolen. It must have come, for my coushi writes that it was mailed some days ago."

gayly illustrated magazine be had been over the dainty trifle lying in his lap. of aristocratic pretensions, and the anowy, sloppy weather. Yes, the pillow hid it from view.

at him expectantly.

answer those searching brown eyes was resolved to appoint a committee you, old man." him. "I wish you would let me keep the community to prepare a substance of this." he mused aloud. It," he said plendingly. "I will buy you who had left their homes in Falcon. "Now begins a period of hard work. Supper was always provide. Christmas and that he was shut up in anything else in its place that you like." hurst to do buttle for their country's for me. Miss Lane's color deepened. "Why?"

she asked wonderingly, agining who might have sent it to me. and I can't bear to give it up. I would not care so much if I was up and around. You don't know how blue a fellow gets shut up here all alone. Lit-

tle things come to count a lot." He looked-so helpless lying there on the couch that the girl's heart went out their town had no heroes whom they time quite a movable feast and kept to him, and she had a fashion of following her heart more readily than her went at once to make further inquiries permitted and that one of the early tly. "I know just how you feel. You shall keep the handkerchief ease. Cousin Laura will never know, and I have several others. And you must count it as a real Christmas present from me. Only don't give me anything in its place except to wish me a merry Christmas when I come down to see you in the morning. I will bring some of the goodles from my home box. They will make you forget all about the ankle.

She hurried away. Lane did not know that it was because she wished to hide tears brought to her eyes by the dumb gratitude on his face. And he look of lay back and wished that the morrow

Before another Christmas the two flats were empty. Mr. and Mrs. Lane were keeping house in a large flat on the ground floor. His wife always declares that he stole her heart and the bundkerchief case at one and the same time on that memorable Christmas eve.

There was a rattling at the hall door. XMAS WITH THE GERMANS.

Scenes In the Shops and in the Refirement of Home.

As the handsome shops reveal the Christmas of the rich Germ we see the Christmas joys of the other. the peasant class. The toy stores-the dolls in all the national costumes of the world, and windows all bristling with combating soldiers. Candy shops! Candy is distinctively American. In Germany and France It is bombons; in England sweets. The Germans do not eat candy as a babit, as we do, but on Christmas time, according to their idiom, "it goes loose." But it is the "pfefferkuchen" that is the great distinguishing delicacy of Christmastide. Not a house, family or person in Germany is without it. - It is a sort of hard spice cake, made in all sorts of shapes. The writer spent last Christmas in the home of Baron von Shierbrant. The day before Christmas the drawing rooms were closed. No one dare enter except the baron and baroness, who came in and out of those rooms very quietly and mysteriously. On Christmas eve the first event of interest is the Christmas eve dinner, which is characterized by the serving of "karpfen in bier" and the bringing forth from mous Christmas cakes, marzipan, pfef, it was felt that the honor of the town mouth, Kitty, conferences and pfefferkuchen. Dinner had been saved by a small majority. Chicago Tribune. ends with the joining of hands and all And by one of those sudden turns saying, "Gesegnete mahizeit."-Wash. which public opinion often takes the

A Juvenile Impression. "I'll be glad when I'm a grownup man," said the thoughtful youngster.

"Because then I can get my Christgood beforehand."-Washington Star.

"Chris'mus kin be made so much pleasanter of the stern parunt will on'y knickknacks of every description and let his min' wander back tew the time other good things too numerous to menwhen he made a dash fur the ole chim. tion. neypiece himself," says Ole Nutmeg.

Ballads of Vule. Though some are dead and some are fled the depot. To lands of summer over sea, The holly berry keeps his red, The merry children keep their glee. They heard with artiess secrecy This gift for Maude and that for Molly. ita Claus he turns the key

On Christmas eve. Heigh-ho, the holly! Amid the snow the birds are fled The robin's thme that was so free Far north at home the "barley bro They brew; they give the hour to folly.

- ENVOL

The yearly tithe of mirth, be jolly! It is a duty so to be Though half we sigh, Heigh-ho, the

Private Jackson

N Company K of a volunteer regiment that was camped in Manila a year ago there was a soldier sonality never would attract any par-"I don't want to trouble you," she ticular attention. Previous to his enwent on, "but I am looking for one of listment he had been a hostler in a my Christmas presents which is lost, livery stable, and in the village where A Christmas Task For Homelock he lived his social status was consid-

ered a minus quantity. leading people of the numlelpality "Bless me! Mulroon's come home Indian corn has been gathered. "It is a handkerchief case made of prided themselves on being up to date, solar!" he suddenly remarked as the ice the members of the exclusive set been heard. flag in the faroff Philippines."

dies chanced to ask the names of the you know."-New York Journal. boys who had enlisted from Falcenhurst. No one present was able to an-



THIRTY-RIGHT LETTERS AND A CHRISTMAS

conhurst could boast there was some less it has real teerin." absent Jackson was made much of. People who hardly desired to notice him when he lived in their midst called upon the committee with parcels and kindly messages that they wished to send to their "old friend, Mr. Jackson." Possibly no box that was sent to the mas presents without having to be Philippines ever contained a greater variety of presents. Everything, from champagne to ginger snaps, was most carefully packed into the Christmas

box. There were reading matter galore, When the box was finally filled and natled up it took four men to load it

Into the wagon which was to had it to the wagon which was to had it to the depot.

Having packed the box and started.

Twas Christmas broached the mightlest Having packed the box and started,

felt it obligatory upon themselves to write Jackson that he might know to whom to give the proper credit. In camp one night the boys of Company K were discussing the approach of Christmas and speculating upon what they might get from home. Poor Jackson took no part in the conversation. He had no relatives living, and to his knowledge there was not any one in America who would bother about sending him even a Christmas

card. When asked if he hoped to get

a package he shook his head and said

that he would be the last man in Ma-

that the folks in the United States New Year's

Un Christmas eve the first sergeant innounced that thirty-eight letters and a Christmas box that weighed "about a ton" were walting to be receipted for by Private Jackson. Company K had a very merry Christmas, but through It all the maintained his usual stolld cheerfulness. The amount of stuff that Jackson received, together with the libnamed Isaac Jackson. He was caused to be circulated through the "Yes, I know," the girl interrupted just a common, everyday sort of man, regiment a story to the effect that he Year's day took its place among the

MYSTERY OF MYSTERIES.

Sherles, the Detective.

It was the day after Christmas. Homelock Sherles and I sat in the Instinctively Lane spread his hands The town of Falconhurst was a place Butcher street rooms cursing the bees have been known in New England

"Hard work?" I asked wonderingly. The select committee entered into the "Why, I haven't heard of any recent "Because," he said vehemently, "it's work with enthusiasm. On the first unurders, robberies or disappearances." the only Christmas present I shall have day there was collected a vast assurt. "None of these this time, old man, to be shipped to Manila one of the la- his girl gave him is intended for, don't brown.

Evolution of Christman.

swer the question, and, fearful that It is said that Christmas was at one could honor, the bank president's wife when the wenther and circumstances of her husband. Although this worthy popes fixed on Dec. 25. Gradually the man was supposed to know all about custom of singing canticles and carols everybody who was anybody in Fai- was introduced by the church in reconhurst, he could not immediately call membranes of those songs of the heavto mind the name of a single volunteer, only host that amazed the shepherds and rather shamefacedly he so stated on the Gallican hills and sent them off to his wife. But just then his office in het haste to find the wendrous lane. boy, who had overheard the question. The bolly and mistletoe decorations, of and answer, spoke up and said that course, descended from the Druids, and "like Jackson, who used to work in a pretty fancy reigned which suggestfivery stable," had joined the ed that the sylvan spirits would be inarmy and gone to Manila. The bank duced to follow the evergreen branches er made an investigation and found into house and church and remain that with the exception of Ike Jack- there, sheltered from the utmost rigorson no one had enlisted from Falcon, of winter frosts and shows. Then the When it became known that Jackson the fire never allowed to go out before was the only volunteer of whom Fal. Candlemas, a device for securing warmth during the coldest weeks, while people saf around the hearth and sinused themselves with hot cookies and snapelragon, conjuring and forfeits and quarted spiced ale and nunch. much as their descendants crack jokes "over the walnuts and the wine" of these days between Christmas and the

Observances In England.

ties and pantomimes.

still and the children clamor for par-

The lighting of Christmas candles and the burning of the "Christmas block" were the sure heralds of the season in old England, and the custorus sfill survive in certain parts of the country. In some counties a piece of the Yule log is kept from one year to the next, in order to light the next year's log. In ancient times this fragment was supposed to be a protection against five and thunder. Its askes were given to animals for certain sickness and were scattered over the land to keep the corn from blight.

In Deventhire what is known as the "Ashron famil" is burned on Christmas eye, and a company watches the falling apart of the hours with which the fagot is bound as they burst with the heat. In some parts of England, after the church service, the people express their Joy by crying out in chorus: "Yule! Yule!"

Sensonable Advice.

"I shan't want one," said Kitty, "untheir secret hiding places of the fa- disappointment in certain quarters, but "Never look a Christman dall in the a white handkerchief crossed upon year also. Christianity, however, made it was felt that the honor of the town mouth, Kitty," cosmoeled her quele, - their breasts,

CHRISTMAS POEMS.

By James Whiteomb filley, word of gedspeed and good cheer oall on earth or far or near, r friend or for, or thine or mine. Henry when the star bloomed forth and The world's face, with God's smile on it.

By Ben Jonson, I sing the birth was born tonight. The antibor both of life and light. The angel so did sound it.

And like the ravished shepherds said,

Who saw the light and were afraid. Yet searched and true they found it.

By Sir Walter Scott.

the package on its way across the con- Twas Christmas told the merriest tale. tinent, those concerned in their work A Christmas sumbol off would cheer felt it obligatory upon themselves to A poor mun's heart through half the year.

> By Harriet Beecher Stowe. [Written at the age of elghty-two.] Hall, blessed Christmas mo When Christ, a child, was born In honvenly grace arrayed.
> Amen't Halleldah!

By Rudyard Kipling. High moon behind the tamarisks-the sun who by its means thus once a year As at home the Christmas day is break. stood in the attitude of high priest to

those who tell us how they love us. And forget us till another year be genet "twelve wise men" were chosen, and

on the Old Plantation

IIRISTMAS was never celebrated to any great extent in the south back in the good old days "befoh de wah." New sympathetically. The janitor told me. a good enough fellow to get along was a millionaire in disguise.—Manila masters, and the prolonged, rollicking captain was elevated upon it and car. With Polly, who's brimming with feelig "co'n shuckin" supplied the slaves of Kentucky and Missouri especially with heaps of corn, while the darkies sang all the jollity they desired. It was an institution peculiar to the south, peculfar not in being confined to those sections, but peculiar in the manner in

When a "co'n shuckin' " was decidpurple silk. As our names look some Consequently when the whole country bark of a dog came in from the hall. ed upon notices were sent out to the gan. Stacks of fuel had been placed thing allke, I thought it might have was interested in the sending of Christ- "How on earth can you tell?" I mar- slaves of all adjoining plantations stat- at intervals of a few yards near the come to you by mistake." She looked mas boxes to soldiers on foreign serv. Veled, for no sound of man's voice had ing that on a certain night Judge S. corn, and after they had been lighted, Now, Lane had been mentally plan- of Falconhurst resolved to do their "Because his dog doesn't know him," ing of so many thousand bushels and wise men," the fun began. As the corn ning how he might keep that handker- share. At an informal meeting held miswered my friend, with a gleam in that all colored people, male and fe- was busked it was thrown into piles chief case. He was a thief in every- one evening at the residence of Brew. his eye. "For a veterinary surgeon male, were invited to attend. Great and would be hauled away in the thing but the deed. But he could not ster De Kallb, the bank president, it you let a great many 'horses' get on preparations were made by "ole mass morning. Twelve workers were sewith a lie. "Yes, I have it. I thought consisting of six fashionable ladies and Another period of silence, and then for, while they expected a good night's and, as back in New England, the red it was mine." And he held it out weak a half dozen of the wealthlest men in Sheries reached up his long white work in the shape of wagon loads of ear was eagerly sought for, but with ty. Then sudden inspiration came to the community to prepare a suitable band and took down the bottle of gin. yellow corn, pleasure was to be the a different purpose. When a man got

which it was conducted, for husking

since the mind of man remembers and

large scale and generally consisted of darky would not "marry for ten two or three roasted pigs, turkeys and years." If by shrewd dodging he misschickens, with side dishes of vege- ed it his happiness would be crowned tables, in equal proportion. Bushels within the year. If a dusky belie seof sweet potatoes were baked, boiled cured a red ear she had the option of I have been lying here in the dusk imment of things that it was thought the All mysteries. Every young man in and fried, and hundreds of rich, golden choosing a sweetheart from any of the soldiers would like. As the stuff was fown will soon be here to have me pumpsin ples were turned out of the darkles around the corn pile.-Cincinbeing packed in the big box that was find out what the Christmas present ovens, done to a mouth watering nati Enquirer.

A band of musicians was engaged, for no "co'n shuckin" would be complete without it. On those nights ne- They Originated In Japan, Where groes worked not happily save to the twanzing of the banjo and walling of

A corn shucking always lasted three nights continuously on one plantation, and then the negroes moved on to the next, where three more were devoted New Year's calling in the United to the corn of the owner, and so on States. More charming art, more deuntil all the maize of the neighborhood lightful custom, are not numbered had been husked.

About twilight the darkles began to passed away to suffer in their time, let arrive from all over the country, the us hope, a happy revival. "hoys" clad in their suits of jeans. For more than a hundred years the with that pride of the darky's heart, designing and coloring of New Year his "long tailed clawhammer blue." cards occupied the attention of the Every negro who minde pretensions to foremost draftsmen and wood engrav- How like the rose petals on which the bee being "anybody" possessed one in more ers of Japan. They were made at the or less condition of wear.



THE NEGROES WORKED HAPPILY TO THE MUSIC OF BANJO AND PIDDLE.

woolsey frocks, with their heads tied in nature is given new birth the anup in flaming red bandanna handker- clents probably for this reason considchiefs, the redder the better, and with ered it a suitable time to begin their

They came in groups, and each party teenth century Jan. I was settled on by of huskers from a neighboring planta- common consent in all continental tion was announced long before it ar- countries. rived by the well known tunes prevalent in those days floating down the boys and women hastened to the gathering. A favorite tune was this:

Yes, we's gwine to do shuckin'. Yes, we's gwine to de shuckin'. We's gwine to de shuckin' of de co'n, An' we'll be dar in de mo'nin'. We'll be dar in de mo'nin', shuah as

As soon as the darkles were all assembled the oldest slave present went "sbuckin" without corn as to be un | ment. prepared to produce the bit of silver | But, in fact, to propose to oneself to

on the first evening. there performed a ceremony the exact. He who is not worse today than he to us. Whetting his jackknife upon not better is worse.-Charles Lamb. the silver, he solemnly pronounced an Invocation for a bountiful crop of corn the following year. And it is doubtful if the "ole massa" would have been any more willing to allow the busking to proceed without this kindly prayer than would his white haired servitor.

the family he served. will drink our healths at dinner. After the preliminary prayer the

their first duty was to select two of the brawniest negroes in the company, who, when called out, with much pride at their distinction, indulged in a good humored contest of strength, which was known as "rasslin' fo' de capt'in." The victor became the master of ceremonles, and upon him devolved the duty of seeing that no one shirked in

work or entertainment. The matter of the captaincy being decided, the "twelve wise men" chose four big fellows, who formed a "pack ried half a dozen times around the this melody or something akin to it:

When our days am done Don't we darkles hab a time? When our days am done Don't we darkies cut a shine?

Back to our cabin we will go, Buck in the early mo'n. But we'll be here in de ch'nin' To do de shuckin' ob de co'n,

Then the corn shucking proper beor Squire B, would give a corn shuck- under the supervision of the "tweive a" and "ole missus" for this event, lected for each heap of unhusked corn. it he shied it at a big algger's head, Supper was always provided on a and if he hit the mark the unfortunate

NEW YEAR'S CARDS.

They Are Now Obsolete. In Japan originated the art of making and the custom of exchanging New Year cards. Today both are as obsolete in the Flowery Kingdom as is among the good things that have

The female portion of the gathering peror's court. In size they were from "Be it mistletoe, dear, a minute or so, And the angel said unto them: "Fear Yule kig was lit on Christmus eve and was coquettishly dressed in linsey six to eight inches, and each was inscribed with a poetic sentiment dictated by the noble giving the order. They were printed from five or six blocks. So it's, oh, to be handling the holly with each color requiring, as in modern color printing, a separate block. The blocks were the property of the noble. With Polly, the genius of all that is folly, who retained or destroyed them at A lure on her lip and with love in her will. No reprints for another were ever permitted. A nobleman's New Year card was like his coat of arms or

NEW YEAR'S IN OMAR'S DAY the Christians seeming to have copied en the shepherds said one to another,

his sword. The surimonos, as Japan's

designed specially to please some indy-

love.-New York Press.

Nine Centuries Ago. Now the new year reviving old desires, The thoughtful soul to solitude retires; Ah, my beloved, fill the cup that clears Today of past regret and future fears. So sang old Omar, the Perslan poet, nine centuries ago, and we of today can but echo his thoughts at this New Year's season of resolution and festivity, though kingdoms have risen and fallen, old nations have decayed and new ones sprung up and we live in a and justice abound, for the human emotions remain much the same whatever the time or clime in which we live, whatever the religious influences which govern us. Of course in the time of Omar in most countries the new year was celebrated in March, that being the beginning of the vernal equinox. and as it is the season when everything

Those New Year Resolutions. road and over the fields as the happy - Every 1st of January that we arrive at is an imaginary milestone in the turnpike track of human life, at once a resting place for thought and meditation and a starting point for fresh exertion in the performance of our

a distinct break, and finally in the six-

journey. The man who does not at least propose to himself to be better this year than he was last must be either very good or very bad indeed.

to "ole massa" and begged a piece of | And only to propose to be better is silver money. This was always ex- something. If nothing else it is an acpected, and a plantation owner would knowledgment of our need to be so,

do well is in some sort to do well posi-Taking this piece of silver, the an- tively, for there is no such thing as a clent darky returned to the field and stationary point in human endeavors. meaning of which has not come down was yesterday is better, and he who is

Her New Year's Gift. Lucila Gladys Rosamond Ophelia Phyllis May Sweetly resolved to make folks glad Upon the New Year's day. A busket filled with daintles rare With her own hands she bore And left it without word or sign Before a poor friend's door, "It did not even bear my name,

For that, in full, you see, She murmured medestly,

HANGING

A quip on her lip and a jest in her eye.

This holly, I know, sir, you wish mistle-

high.
I looked at her, haughing, to see were she



"THIS HOLLT, I KNOW, SIR, YOU WISH MISTLETON, SIR!

settles

Her cheeks were! Her lips were the shone round about them, and they were

With Polly the mischievous. Polly the the city of David a Saviour, which is -Clinton Scollard in Smart Set.

ORIGIN OF XMAS GREENS. New Year's cards were called, were They Were Used at Christmastide

Five Centuries Ago. ne is older than the Christ It from their pagan ancestors. In a "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem It Was Celebrated in the Springtime very old book we find this reference to and see this thing which is come to the use of evergreens at Christmas pass, which the Lord bath made known time: "Against the feast of Christmas unto us." every man's house, as also their parish | And they came with haste and found churches, were decked with holme, Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying ivie, buyes and whatsoever the season in the manger. of the year afforded to be green. The | And when they had seen it they conduits and standards of the streets made known abroad the saying which were likewise garnished, among the was told them concerning this child. which I rend that in the year 1414, by And they that heard it wondered at tempest of thunder and lightning, to those things which were told them by ward the morning of Candlemas day, the shepherds. ard of tree, being set up in the midst pondered them in her heart. port of Christmas to the people, was that they had heard and seen as it was torn up and cast down by the malle- told unto them. nant spirit, as was thought, and the stones of the pavement all about were east in the streets and into divers. The Druids always sought the mishouses, so that the people were sore tietoe by the full moon and, when they

Candles in small candle holders are of thus saluting the fair dams of therealways scattered well over the tree. It after. The mistletoe was said to have is a wise precaution to keep a pan of been the original magical shrub or forwater in which is a wet sponge in case bidden tree in the garden of Eden.of accidents. When a spark falls upon | Cincinnati Enquirer. as soon have thought of having a which is the first step toward amend- the spot will check the spread of the a bough, the sponge quickly applied to fire,-Washington Star.

> Christmas In the West, Deadshot Dick - Any fun In Par Creek on Christmas, Bill? Grizzly Bill-Waal, we had a purty big Christmas tree.

> Dendshot Dick-Anything of much account hangin' on it? Grizzly Blit-Three hoss thieves and two Chineymen.

Suitable Gifts For Women, Silver or silver and glass tollet orti- The "color line" is not a live question. cles are always acceptable to women Some of them are brush, comb, powder box, cold cream jar, buttonbook, curling iron, glove stretcher, atomizer, perfume jar, vaseline holder and bairpin Christmas eve, but use their father's

A LONG CHRISTMASTIDE. Holidays That Extend Into the New

While in this country, as in England, Germany and other parts of Europe, the joyens spirit of the Christmas festival is by no means limited to bec. 25, but finds expression in many ways in the life and amusement of the peo-WITH Polly I chanced to be hanging ple both before and after that day itthe holly, the regulah, with Polly paid here to the observance of the in other lands go to make up Christmastide. The period opens with St. The wind it was grieving, and shadows Thomas' day, which falls on Dec. 23, were weaving and closes with St. Distants day, on Their dark web without o'er the face of Jan. 7. The first named festival is and closes with St. Distaff's day, on Within it was merry with green leaf and known in some parts of England as "Doling day," on account of the dis-And Parly, close by, with a gleam in her tribution of the bounty of charitable Individuals, and in most English cities at the present time the day is given up toe, cir."

Cried I' lly as o'er as a wreath we hang table societies and the distribution of benefits among the poor and needy. It is also the day chosen for the election And, oh, what a glint there shone out of church officers, a custom adopted here in some denominations, and it appears also from the old rhyme that certain public officials were elected at the same time:

Year.

My masters all, this is St. Thomas' day, And Christmas now can't be far off, you'll And when you to the ward motes do re-

I hope such good men will be chosen there As constables for the chaning year

As will not gradge the watchman good strong beer.

As for St. Distaff's day, which closed the merry round of Christmastide, that anniversary is now rarely observed anywhere, but in the good old times in England it was not the least among the hoppy festivals of the year. It takes its name from the fact that on this day it was the custom for women to resume for a few hours their labors at the distaff or the spinning wheel. It was sometimes called "Rock day" in honor of the rock, which is another name for distaff.-Leslie's Weekly.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.

From the Gospel According to St. Luke, Chapter II, Verses 7-20, And she brought forth her firsthorn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manner, bemuse there was no room for them in

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, io, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord

"A minute?" breathed Polly, with mirth not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. "For unto you is born this day in

> Christ the Lord. "And this shall be a sign unto you, ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the

angel a multitude of the beavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." The use of evergreens at Christmas | And it came to pass as the angels

country where sentiments of freedom at the Leadenhall, in Cornhill, a stand- But Mary kept all these things and of the pavement, fast in the ground. And the shepherds returned, glorifynailed full of holme and ivie, for dis- ing and praising God for all the things

Druids and Mistletoe.

aghast at the great tempest."-Leslie's found it, rejoiced and worshiped. After cutting off its twigs with a golden sickle they sacrificed two milk white bulls beneath the tree. The sacred The old fashioned stockings and shrub was then immersed in water, hearts and crosses and animals cut out and the resulting concection became of tarlatan outlined with worsted and their remedy for all diseases. The early then filled with flat candles and tied Christians would not permit the use of on the tree are always popular orna- the mistletoe in their churches because ments. Sugar figures bought in the of its heathenish origin; consequently confectionery store will serve to break it was hung only within the private the monotony. The baker at Christmas abode and asually in the kitchen. Any time usually has his windows filled maid caught standing beneath a branch with horses, dogs, cuts and men and had to forfeit a kiss to the gallant women made of delectable cake dough | eagerly awaiting his opportunity. With and artistically ornamented with color- each kiss a berry was plucked, and ed sugar curlycues. These are tooth- when all of the berries disappeared the some and attractive to the small boy bare branch was useless to the young man who wished to claim the privilege

Christmas at Ninety In the Shade. . Christmas in the West Indies is very well observed. To meander about among palm trees or orange groves and fichts of sugar cane on Christmas day, with the thermometer at 90 degrees in the shade, certainly has the zest of novelty to a northerner. If you are in the British West Indies on Christmas day your attention will be most attracted in all the Christmas gatherings of which you form a part, whether in the streets, the home or the church, by the close association of whites and blacks.

Boots as Steckings. German children do not, as a general practice, hang up their stockings

big boots instead.

J. D. HAMILTON, President.

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