

Mother Saves Money on Her Christmas Presents

By E. K. Wooley.



HEN PA JENKINS came home last night he casually remarked that there seemed to be a lot of extra plants occupying all the window-spaces. They all seemed to be in pots of about the same size, and consisted mostly of all, slender green leaves.

"Why all the grass?" facetiously observed Pa.

"I just brought them up from the cellar today," explained Ma. "They must bloom by Christmas, you know."

"Going to decorate our fair dwelling?" queried Pa.

"No—they're Christmas presents," said Ma.

"O-O-O-H!" breathed Pa. "I was wondering why I hadn't been called upon to dig up for Christmas. Some new wrinkle, isn't it? Well, as long as it's cheap, I'm for it."

"I wasn't going to say anything about it until I felt pretty sure it would succeed," beamed Ma.

"You see, I read in a paper somewhere last fall that if you'd take cubs of Chinese lilies and hyacinths and daffodils and plant them in the cellar and tend to them right, then bring them into the light a little while before they are ready to bloom, they would make nice Christmas presents. So I bought a lot of bulbs and little flower pots and followed directions, and you can see for yourself that they're all going to bloom in time to make lovely Christmas presents."

"You know how mother loves purple—well, she gets that deep purple double hyacinth. I'm going to tie a lighter shade of purple crepe paper, with a big ribbon bow, around the pot. And you know your sister Daisy is just crazy about daffodils—she gets that one marked 'Daisy.' And so on. All I have to do is to get some ribbon and crepe paper and make the plants look artistic and Christmassy, and we'll be giving people something they'll really love to have."

"Ma," solemnly quoth Pa, "you're a wonder!"

"Didn't you ever know that before?" laughed Ma.

"The only thing that bothers me," commented Pa, "is how you're going to get the things delivered."

"Oh, you'll have to take around as many as you can," declared Ma.

"Who—me?" queried Pa. "Say—I ain't any express wagon."

"But just think of all the pleasure you'll have being a sort of flower Santa Claus," urged Ma. "I could pay some of the boys to do it, but I know you'd be careful and not break anything, and wouldn't get them mixed up, and you're such an old dear, anyway—"

Pa wriggled and rattled his newspaper and cleared his throat to show that the flattery didn't sink in.

"Well," he growled; "I didn't say I wouldn't, did I?"



More Genuine Christmas For New York This Year

By Herbert Corey.

NEW YORK'S apt to have a little Christmas for about a cent this year. But it's fair guessing that the Christmas spirit will be of a better quality than in any recent year—not even excluding 1907.

"That," says Wall street—and before New York was spugged its Christmas was tooted to the Wall street tune—"that was the grandest little Christmas ever. We went home with twists of money in our ears."

The rest of the country was busted. It was in the middle of panic times. But brokers get just as much for selling stocks as they do for buying them. Every broker who had not been fighting the market had his safe stacked with soft money. In such times giving is as wide and thoughtless as the Mississippi. It was the stingy and picaresque little house that gave as small a bonus as 10 per cent. Dozens gave their clerks an amount equal to their annual salaries.

"This year," said a banker, "five or six houses may give boom-time presents to their employees. But most clerks will be tickled to get word that they may hold their jobs another year. There's more happiness in that sort of a gift in this sort of a year than in being given a hatful of money when folks are flush."

The only real favorite of Christmas fortune on Wall street this year will be James N. Wallace, president of the Central Trust company. If gossip is correct. Every year he gets \$50,000 from his adoring directors. He will get that sum this year.

"They're afraid he might go somewhere else if they got to holding out on his stocking," said an observer. "He is the finest handshaker west of the Crystal Palace, London. He has handshaken his company into more good things in Wall street than any other four men in the district."

ALL brokers who can will hold on for 1914, of course. They're optimists by nature. Also, they think they have reason to believe that next year will be a better year for them than last year—in which, according to one unofficial statistician, the Stock Exchange earnings of the financial district did not average \$500 per broker. They have been able to hold on to their offices because in the last few years many of them have built up an investment rather than a purely speculative business. But while they're holding on, they're not buying many diamond lavalieres for their second cooks.

"It's safe to say that \$2,000,000 less will be spent for jewels in the Fifth avenue shops this year than during Christmas time of a fairly prosperous year," said the manager of one of the great stores. That may be a most conservative estimate. One year a western millionaire came into this man's store.

"I want the finest pearl necklace you have in the store for the old woman," said he.

This quotation is verbatim. He got the necklace. It cost approximately \$60,000. The next day he came raging into the store. He had discovered that his wife's dearest rival had purchased a diamond necklace for something more than \$100,000 in the same store.

"Why didn't you tell me?" he yelled at the store manager. "Do you think I'm going to stand for my wife getting showed up that way? Gimme another pearl necklace."

With jewels being purchased at that rate, the manager's estimate of this year's decrease in trade seems not excessive. It isn't only the westerner who buys that way. One year a New York man paid \$100,000 for jewels which he presented to women. He is a bachelor.

LAST year Tony worked for \$6 a week in an uptown store. Five dollars covered his necessary expenses. For 10 weeks he had held out \$1 a week in order to buy a warm coat for his mother. The week before Christmas the office snitch came to him.

"We're getting up a purse for the manager, Tony," said he. "I've put you down for \$5."

Tony told the snitch with considerable elaboration and attention to detail where he could go, and when. He was fired that night. Tony's mother didn't get the warm coat, but it is a pleasure to state that the office manager got a bunged eye. Tony is today perhaps the only puglist Spug in the world. Most of his income is derived from fighting semi-finals. Between times he organizes Spug circles in offices where the employees lack nerve.

"They can fire one guy because he don't give up," says Tony, "but they can't fire the whole force. An' I'd like to see some ivory-handed floorwalker try to chase me when I'm organizing."

The tremendous growth of the Spugs in the past two seasons is largely because in this organization—the underpaid and timid employe finds protection against Christmas

blackmail. It is safe to say that the foremen in nine out of ten sweatshops in the crowded downtown districts have extorted Christmas "gifts" from the miserable, fearful little foreigners under their thumbs. Spugging has spread as rapidly as have the principles of unionism among these people—as fast as the Spug theory is presented to them. That is why the Spugs hope their party at the Grand Central Palace will be attended by 15,000 on Christmas day—which will be about a record for Christmas parties. Hot coffee and chocolate and palatable sandwiches and plenty of trots and tangos, and a 40-foot Christmas tree—which was presented by the state of Maine—will be features of this event.

BIG TIM SULLIVAN is dead. But the executors of his estate will give a Christmas dinner in his name, as they know he would wish them to do. In the old days Big Tim annually fed between 5000 and 6000 down-and-outs—and fed them to breathlessness with turkey and pie and mugs of steaming coffee.

"No one will be admitted without a ticket," the placards in front of the clubhouse always read. But just before the long line that had been stamping its myriad feet in the tingling cold began to move through the opening door Sullivan was sure to slide up to the doorkeeper.

"No matter about the tickets," he always whispered, "if the lads look hungry."

It's perfectly true that there's a fight on for the political control of the Bowery and that the old Sullivan clan seems to be underneath the pile. Therefore there will be two Christmas dinners with turkey and every hungry man in town can eat himself into an illness at each. And it's likely that there is something of a selfish motive underneath both. But there is also sentiment on the part of the Sullivans. If you don't believe it watch their Irish eyes fill with tears when they speak of Big Tim and the Joy he took in these turkey feasts.

Christmas giving in New York will be cut down to a paring this year. Wall street's comparative impecuniosity accounts directly and indirectly for much of this decrease. The Spug idea—for the prevention of useless and the promotion of useful giving—accounts for more. People have learned to give more thought to their gift bringing. Thousands are daring to defy Christmas extortioners for, perhaps, the first time since they opened a pay envelope. Perhaps it is only fancy—but it seems as though the grouches are fewer and less malevolent and that wider smiles are seen on more faces.

The subway can never take the Christmas place of the old fashioned one horse sleigh. And a tier of cubicles in a high building will never seem as homelike as the big white house under the evergreens. But just because there is less of blare and ostentation and smoke of money this seems a more Christmassy Christmas than New York has seen in half a dozen years.

The Newest Graft

THIS is the very latest graft. It combines psychology and credulity and the humane sentiments. It has proven irresistible.

"Oh," said the spokeswoman of the pair of pretty girls, fixing limpid eyes upon the victim, "we are so frightened!"

The victim sits back in his office chair and mildly swells up a big, and tells the pretty lady that she has come to just the right shop. He won't let anyone frighten her.

"Mame and I were taking lunch with Dr. Marcus Broome in Chicago yesterday," says the pretty spokeswoman, "and he said that he had to go to New York. He dared us to ride as far as Englewood with him. So we did—just for a lark. And then the train didn't stop at Englewood—and here we are."

Business of tragic throwing of troubles on the auditor's shoulders.

"But what becomes of Dr. Marcus Broome?"

"He said that he had to go on to Washington. He will come back tomorrow morning and take us back to Chicago. But we haven't any baggage and we can't go to a hotel, and we haven't enough money to go back to Chicago."

Silent appeal in two pairs of pretty eyes.

"But how did you happen to come to me?" asks the victim, vainly trying to elude the falling sword.

"Oh," says the spokeswoman, "we almost felt that we knew you" (this is what the wiretappers call the "convincer"); "we have heard Mary Tupper Wilkins speak of you so often."

The victim knows Mary Tupper Wilkins. Acquaintance with her is a guarantee of quality. So he stakes the two marooned wanderers to the money they need for hotel fare, and for railroad fare, and possibly for a little bit of shopping they positively must do before they go back to Chicago. And then, long afterward, he asks Mary Tupper Wilkins about her two renolds. And Mary says she never heard of them before.

This graft has not failed in a single known instance.

PREPARING FOR SANTA



"MINE TOO, SISTER"
PHOTOGRAPH COPYRIGHT BY C. V. MC MONAGLE
CHILDREN OF MR. AND MRS. J. M. SCUDDER
1554 EAST 19TH STREET