

# Redney's Christmas Smoke

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It was three days before Christmas. Redney Burke separated his diminutive frame from the seething crowd of humanity that pressed along the street and paused before a plate glass window which above all others attracted him. This was not a department store or a candy store or a bakeshop. Inside there were neither toys nor sleds nor good things to eat, but it held those things upon which Redney Burke had feasted his small eyes for many days. And now he looked, with his whole soul in his glance—he looked and looked and looked. He sniffed the air and imagined to himself that already he was enjoying the good things within.

For it was a cigar store, a store of the better class, full of pipes and tobacco and cigarettes and chewing tobacco and everything that ends in smoke.

In the front of the window immediately under the olfactory nerves of Mr.



WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE FOR CHRISTMAS?

Redney Burke was a pipe—not an expensive one, but one of just the make and pattern that suited Mr. Burke. He had religiously watched this pipe from day to day, afraid that some other customer would buy it. But there it still remained.

"Gee!" exclaimed Mr. Redney Burke to himself as he scratched his short red hair. "Gee, I wisht I had it!"

And the unfortunate part of it all was that he didn't have a cent. He searched every pocket and cranny of his superannated clothes, from his feet, which rested on the ground, to his hat, which occupied an exalted position some three feet odd above the ground, for that which he knew he did not possess. The expected happened, for he found nothing.

"Gee!" he exclaimed again. "If I had anudder suit, I'd hock this. I gotter have that pipe; that's what!"

Strolling along the street, at peace with all the world, came a philanthropist. Redney's critical eye, casting about for ways and means, noted him as he came.

"I ought he was a stiff," he remarked confidentially to some friends a day or two later, "but I was away off, I wis."

The philanthropist, whose good nature, to give the devil his due, was caused by a remarkably good dinner which he had just enjoyed—the philanthropist bore down upon Mr. Redney Burke. The latter saw him coming.

"Now, what's his game, anyways?" thought Mr. Burke as he turned back once more to gaze upon the pipe.

"Hello, small sir!" remarked the friend of mankind genially. "Merry Christmas!"

"Aw," thought the small sir to himself, "what ye givin' us? Why can't ye leave me alone?"

But he didn't say it. He simply looked up at the big man with a half coy, half frightened glance, more particularly to determine whether he might not be the police department in disguise.

"Merry Christmas!" he returned, a bit wistfully as he thought he saw a possible opening of a pleasant nature.

"Well, my boy," continued the man, "what are you going to have for Christmas, anyways?"

"Christmas," returned Redney, with a slight variation from the truth. "We don't never have nothin' for Christmas, we don't."

The man smiled a smile of pity. "Dear me," he remarked, half to himself, "how true it is that one half of the world knows not how the other half lives." Then he raised his voice. "What would you say, small sir, if I should buy you some of those toys?"

He stopped as he gazed into the window. "Why, why," he went on, "I thought this was a toy store that you were looking into?"

"Naw," returned Redney. "It's a tobacco store."

"But—but," continued the man, "you don't smoke tobacco. You certainly at your age cannot—"

"Naw," returned Burke, "I don't. I

—I wasn't thinkin' about meself so much. I was thinkin' about the old father. He broke his pipe last month, an' he ain't had none since, an' he's too poor to git anudder one. I was lookin' at these. Gee! If I could git enough of the stuff together, I wouldn't do a thing but buy that there one for him—me poor ole father."

This was said with an air of the greatest frankness, although Mr. Redney Burke had always considered his father, as did many others, in the light of a genteel myth. Still he thought to himself that if he had a father and if he himself were worth a few million or so he might—he didn't commit himself upon the subject, however, even in his thoughts—he might blow his father to a pipe some time. This considerate sentiment, he reasoned, justified his reply to the philanthropist.

"Well, well," remarked the latter, glancing down at the disinterested specimen before him, "but what would you like to have now for Christmas?"

"Redney shook his head. "I ain't particular about meself. If I could git that there pipe—an'," he added as he scented possibilities heretofore unsuspected, "an' a good bit of smokin' tobacco, an' one of them there rubber things to put it in—say, if I could do that for the old man—say! An' wouldn't he feel stuck on hisself! But, gee, wot'd he use? I can't do it, so I might as well be goin'."

He made this last remark because he knew intuitively that brevity, which is the soul of wit, is also the essential in charitable enterprises. Good impulses don't last forever, so he moved off, shaking his head as he went.

The big man looked up and down the street to see if he was observed, then he stretched forth his hand and caught Redney by the arm.

"Here, my boy," he exclaimed gently as he shoved a five dollar bill into Mr. Redney Burke's reluctant grasp—"here, go and get the pipe for your father and then go and get something for— for yourself, and— and have at least one happy Christmas that you can look back upon." His eyes glistened a bit as he said it, and, to his credit be it said, he did not regret the impulse or the donation for a full two hours thereafter.

"Tanks," said Mr. Burke, with a bit of a scrape and a stiff sort of bow—"tanks from me an' me old man."

The next day there was a queer formation in an unfrequented corner of the play yard of the Fourteenth ward school. This formation resembled more than anything else an Eskimo hut, but composed, instead of inanimate material, of a very animated and interested crowd of boys gathered around a common center. From the aperture in the top of this human Eskimo dwelling, and therefore heightening the illusion, ascended a column of smoke, and as it ascended to the skies there came a voice from within.

"Gee, fellers," said the voice. "Gee, but ain't this great?" It was the voice of Mr. Redney Burke, the votary of Mr. Lady Nicotine, the center of an admiring crowd. He smoked a pipe—the pipe of his heart—and he filled it from a red rubber case.

"Just fits in me pants pocket," he observed. And as he said it he pulled out a few dollar bills and exhibited them.

"An' I got four more plunks left! What d'ye tink?" he said.

Later, in the class room, the teacher lifted her head high in the air and sniffed.

"Some boy," she remarked severely, "has been smoking. I want to know who it is."

She looked—not around the room—but directly at Mr. Redney Burke. He fairly reeked with tobacco, and he knew it. Under the circumstances, therefore, he side stepped with alacrity into the aisle and looked squarely into the teacher's eyes.

"Me old wo-me mother," he explained glibly—"me mother had a smokin' jag on yestiddy, an' I had to stay home an' fill her pipes, an' me clo'es is full of it. It ain't me; it's her. D'ye see?" Then he whipped out a small, new leather pocketbook with a brand new penny in it and handed it over. "An' a merry Christmas to you, Miss Burt-whistle!" he remarked.

A Treasure Tree.

One of the most famous Christmas trees in history was erected at Windsor castle in the early forties. It was not so very remarkable for its height, which was forty feet, but for the fact that in the aggregate its crop of presents amounted in value to \$45,000, or the value of the product of 9,000 acres of forest land.

Winter Winkles.

Oh, the happy boy is drooping

Down the hill with his new sled,

While the humble tramp is shopping

Kindling wood out in the shed,

And the ruffled,

Muffled, stuffed

Calceollet pecks the frozen corn,

And the golden,

Molden, olden

Brandy's looked for ev'ry morn!

The fragile maid is skating

On the pond behind the mill;

The sparrow's masticating

Frozen crumbs upon the sill,

And the howling,

Sprawling, crawling

Infant's wrapped in fannels hot,

While the seeping,

Ever healing

Goose grease stands beside the cot.

The suburbanite is skipping

To his snow becovered lair,

And old Boreas is slipping

Merry snowflakes through the air,

And the creeping,

Leaping, sleeping

Trolley car hops through the mush,

While the rosy,

Always dozy

Butcher's boy slopes through the slush.

These wintry scenes I fancy

As I'm smuggled in my bed,

Concealed so that you can't see

Even the baldness of my head,

And the dashing,

Clashing, smashing

Maltones rhyme upon my pane,

While I coolly,

Honest, truly,

Dream that summer's here again.

—New York Journal.

## XMAS A DAY OF TERROR.

Hard Lines of the Players Who Entertain Theater Crowds.

In the vaudeville houses where continuous performances are given Christmas day strikes terror to the most time hardened dramatic soul.

The doors open anywhere between 9:30 and 10:30 a. m. and close at about midnight. The headliners play their customary two turns, but those lower in the dramatic scale play "on demand," generally about four times. If an act is particularly weak, it is used to "chase" out the audience—in plain English, to tire it into leaving the house and making room for the line waiting in the lobby.

The low salaried vaudeville actor, therefore, eschews any Christmas dinner and hires himself to the nearest quick lunch counter, there to feast on turkey sandwiches, execrable coffee and pie as heavy as his spirits. By the time he has done his last turn on the stage he is more ready for bed than for the festive board.

To the unsuccessful actor Christmas is likely to bring that blessing of the Rialto, a "turkey date."

Scattered within easy access of New York are numerous small cities, or, more properly speaking, towns, where good shows never come. Of these the catchpenny manager keeps a list, and on quick notice he scours Broadway for cheap, unengaged talent, from which he organizes his company, rehearses it hastily in some playhouse conveniently idle at the time, rushes some cheap printing upon the poor, unsuspecting town and lands there bright and early Christmas morning. The population, show hungry, welcomes the holiday diversion and packs the town hall, matinee and night.

The actors are thus assured of a good Christmas dinner and supper and a percentage of the box office receipts. Usually these are divided according to the importance of the roles played by the actors. This will tide them over until New Year's day, which brings another "turkey date."

Many an actor now featured on Broadway has played his share of "turkey dates." One in particular tells how, with five associates, he put on "The Clemenceau Case," not abashed that the cast called for no less than twelve capable actors, and was quite radiant over the returns of "one Christmas dinner with trimmings" and \$125 to be divided among the actors.—Washington Post.

## CHRISTMAS "BARRING OUT."

A Strange Custom of Schoolboys and Teachers.

"Barring out" was one of the Christmas customs greatly in vogue in England three centuries ago. It is a custom that obtains not only in England, but to some extent in our own country, to this day, although it is not particularly a Christmas custom in our country. "Barring out" was the keeping of the teacher or master out of the schoolhouse until he yielded to such terms as the boys of his school chose to dictate. If the boys were able to keep the teacher out of the schoolhouse for three days and nights he was bound by all the laws of the custom to come to terms with the boys and to grant them all that they demanded in the way of half holidays and abbreviated lesson hours and extended recesses. If, on the other hand, the teacher outwitted the boys and regained possession of the schoolroom, the chagrined pupils were bound to submit to such terms as he chose to dictate. As these terms usually included the severe trouncing of all the boys having anything to do with the barring out of the teacher, the boys were on the alert to keep him from defeating them. More than one Christmas time of rejoicing has been turned into a time of weeping and wailing on the part of boys whom some barred out teacher has defeated.—Leslie's Weekly.

## A Laundry List For Christmas.

For a laundry list obtain a delicate book slate with two or three leaves and bound in cloth. From embroidery linen cut a piece sufficiently large to face the front and back and with a margin a quarter of an inch wide all around. On one-half of the piece mark the words "Laundry List" within a frame at the middle, and to decorate the remainder of the piece draw a conventional flower design. When the work is finished, apply the linen to the slate and cover with glue by turning the edges over and making them fast to the inside on a narrow edge of the cloth binding that is usually left between the edge of the slate part and the binding. At the top hinge corner attach a ring with bow and ribbons, by means of which it can be hung in a convenient place, and at the knot tie a piece of string half a yard long, to the end of which a pencil may be attached.

## Christmas Wonder Oranges.

The wonder orange may be used to conceal small Christmas gifts, and it also makes a pretty decoration for the tree. Take a good sized ball of coarse orange colored worsted and begin winding it about the present. If the gift is not symmetrical enough to admit this, first wrap it in crushed tissue paper.

After the worsted is completely wound so as to make a ball the size of a big orange fasten green tissue paper leaves in a cluster about where the stem should be and a loop of baby orange ribbon with which to hang it up. The wonder orange can also be used to stuff into the toe of some expectant Christmas stocking.

## Merry Christmas!

Be merry all, be merry all  
With holly dress the festive hall;  
Prepare the song, the feast, the ball,  
To welcome merry Christmas.

—W. R. Spencer.

## Xmas Near the North Pole

I THINK Christmas, 1883, was my most memorable one," said General Greeley, the arctic explorer. "With my command I was proceeding southward in the hope of obtaining help, and about the 20th of October we encamped ourselves in a little hut at Cape Sabine. Our supply of food was running very low, and we were on very short rations, every one being allowed just food enough in each twenty-four hours to sustain life. Under these depressing circumstances and amid the awful silence of the polar night the cheerfulness that we continued to maintain was remarkable. It would have been a splendid opportunity for Dickens' character, Mark Tapley, who was always seeking some specially depressing situation in life to show how jolly he could be under adverse circumstances. As the Christmas season approached we all looked forward to it with eager anticipation, not only as a festive day the associations and memories of which would to some extent vary the wearisome monotony of our lives, but because we knew that the winter solstice would fall about Dec. 22 and that then the sun would return and the long, dreary night be at an end.

"Christmas day came at last. Christmas in the arctic regions! At 6 o'clock



TELLING CHRISTMAS STORIES.

we had our breakfast—thin soup made of peas, carrots, blubber and potatoes. Our Christmas dinner was served at 1 o'clock. Hearken to our menu, ye who will sit down the coming Christmas to roast turkey stuffed with oysters; first course, a stew of seal meat, onions, blubber, potatoes and bread crumbs; second course, served one hour after first, a stew of raisins, blubber and milk; dessert, a cup of hot chocolate. The best and most Christmasy feature of this meal was that we were allowed a sufficient quantity of it to satisfy the pangs of hunger. Our enjoyment of the dessert, one cup of chocolate, we tried to prolong as much as possible. Over it we told each other Christmas stories. We exchanged reminiscences of bygone Christmases at home with the loved ones so far away. We discussed the probability of our ever reaching our own firesides again, and we entered into an agreement that if we got back to civilization before another Christmas we would pass the day together in memory of that awful Christmas we were then spending in the realm of the relentless lee King. Alas, many of those brave fellows never lived to see another Christmas!—Buffalo Express.

## Christmas Dinner Recipes.

Chestnut stuffing is the most delicious that can go with a Christmas turkey. Shell a quart of Italian or French chestnuts. Put in hot water and boil until the skins are softened; drain off the water and remove the skins. Press them, a few at a time, through a colander and season with butter, salt and pepper. Add chopped parsley, onion and bread crumbs and season with stock.

Giblet Sauce.—Boil the giblets until tender; chop them, but not too fine, and add a tablespoonful of flour to the pan in which the turkey was roasted. Brown the flour, stirring constantly, adding slowly a cupful of water in which the giblets were boiled; season with salt and pepper and add the chopped giblets.

## A Country Named For Christmas.

South Africa was discovered by the Portuguese, who were searching for an ocean road to India. Bartholomew Diaz was the commander of the two little ships that formed the expedition in 1486. Eleven years later Da Gama took another Portuguese fleet south. He discovered Natal on Christmas day and thus named it in consequence.

## Tale of a Christmas Survivor.

"But where is that beautiful tail you had day before yesterday?"

"The farmer said, 'Heads I win, tails you lose.' Well, I took to my heels and lost my tail, but he did not win my head."

## CHRISTMAS REMNANTS.

Ways of Serving the Portions of Turkey Left From the Feast.

After your Christmas dinner you will probably find that you have a goodly portion of turkey left. This has happened a great many times before, and as a result many ways have been devised for preparing these left over scraps of turkey meat. This does not mean the large white slices of the breast, for this portion of the meat can be simply arranged on a platter and eaten as it is.

A salad of the white meat of turkey is as good as if not better than chicken salad. Take one cup of turkey meat, rather coarsely chopped; one cup of celery, also rather coarsely chopped; the whites of three hard boiled eggs, also chopped. Put the yolks of the hard boiled eggs into a bowl and mash and then pour over them three tablespoonfuls of melted butter or pure olive oil. Into this put one teaspoonful of salt and one of mustard, with a dash of red pepper; then thin with half a cup of vinegar.

Another way to use the white meat of turkey is to chop it fine, then put a spoonful of cranberry sauce that has been run through a colander in the bottom of a mold or small bowl, on this a layer of chopped turkey, then a layer of cranberry, and so on till the mold is full. Press hard and put in a cold place till ready to use; then turn out on a platter.

Turkey Croquettes.—Take one cup of turkey meat, chopped fine; one cup of bread crumbs, one spoonful of butter and two of cream; season with salt and pepper; mold into little fancy shaped cakes and fry.

Turkey patties are made exactly as are chicken patties. To one cup of turkey take one cup of turkey gravy or one cup of water made rich by a generous lump of butter; season and thicken with a little flour; pour into pastry shells and bake in a quick oven.

## A LESSON FOR CHRISTMAS.

How a Generous Giver of Presents May Retaliate For Neglect.

"Here's something cheap. Let's buy it," said the tall, angular woman.

"What for?" asked the jolly little one.

"Oh, for a Christmas present," answered the other.

"Who for?" queried No. 2.

"Oh, I don't know. It will come in handy for some one."

"Here" (to the clerk), "wrap me up two of these and hurry my change, please. How much? Seventeen cents? Oh, all right."

"My goodness!" ejaculated her jolly companion. "You don't mean to say you buy all your Christmas presents that way?"

"Pretty nearly—at least that's what I intend doing this year. I've taken lots of pains to buy things before, but from now on I'm going to go about things differently."

"Why, what has changed you?"

"Well, it's this way: I'm an old maid, you know, but I like pretty things awfully well. I am accounted well off, and so I am, but almost every year I have sought out the nicest, prettiest things I could find and sent them off to those I count my friends. And what did I get in return? Nothing, positively nothing. Now, the value of a thing doesn't count one bit with me, but I do like people to be thoughtful, and when I get two or three marked down calendars and a general collection of stuff picked up to send at the last moment which is not of the least use to anybody I rebel. So this year I am going to try to teach them a lesson."

## Joy of Christmas Time.

While the Christmas season brings a thrill of joy to all the aged who have lived correct lives, yet it is sometimes saddened by reminiscences of sins of omission and commission. The knowledge that during this blessed time evil spirits are shorn of power to do evil does not always soothe the pangs of conscience. But to the young, to whom life in prospect is all hope and sunshine, the season is one of unalloyed bliss. In addition to health and good digestion, they have two patron saints, "Little Jack Horner, who sat in the corner," and Santa Claus, who, though a Dutchman, is endeared to the infancy of all nations by the boundless profusion he showers on all nationalities. There are trees sufficiently stacked up around the market house to carry all the old gentleman's benefactions this year, and they are selling readily, a testimonial to the improved prospects of the expectant recipients of his bounty.

Numerous, indeed, are the hearts to which Christmas brings a brief season of happiness and enjoyment. How many families whose members have been scattered far and wide in the restless struggle for life are then reunited and meet again in that happy state of companionship and mutual good will! How many old recollections and how many dormant sympathies does Christmas time awaken!

There are thousands of Pickwicks today as well as a century ago who enjoy that sacred time as well as he.—Pittsburg Press.

## Smoking the Christmas Fool.

In some parts of England the custom is said still to continue, two days after old Christmas day, of "smoking the fool"—that is, a pile of straw being collected and set alight, the "fool" is hung over it by a rope around his waist and swung backward and forward till he is nearly dead. Then he goes around with his cap and collects "what the spectators think proper to give," as the chroniclers express it. In these enterprising days, when almost any game is worked that can induce any one to give anything, it seems strange that no one has imported this custom, for it must be a successful one.

## A Song of Christmas

TWINE the bittersweet and holly  
Arched above the hearthstone's glow.

Joy, and not melancholy,  
Came, indrifting with the snow.

In each face the frost's a-tingle,  
And afar on flying wing  
Comes the sleigh bells' rhythmic jingle  
Through December journeying.

Set the board and ask the blessing  
For the bounty amply spread,  
In the simplest words expressing  
What a loving Father said—

"Peace on earth"—for this is nearest  
When the snows with us abide,  
And the winter air is clearest  
In the hush of Christmastide.

SEND THE FAIRTEST DOWN THE MIDDLE.

Bring the old musician's fiddle,  
Relic of the bygone days;  
Send the fairest down the middle  
While the lilting music sways.

Light of foot and quick of laughter  
Swing the dancers, toe and heel,  
As they pass or follow after  
In the quaint Virginia reel.

Make a welcome for the stranger,  
Should his footstep cross the door,  
By the memory of the manger  
And the Christ that was of yore;

Gather children's faces round you,  
As he gathered them long syne,  
If it be the years have crowned you  
With their radiant divine.

Deck the tree and light the candles,  
Let the stockings all be hung,  
For a saint with furry sandals  
O'er the housetops high has swung.

And his reindeer steeds are prancing  
Through the star bespangled rime,  
And the moonbeams pale are glancing  
In the merry Christmas time.

—Woman's Home Companion.

A Christmas Card Worth Millions.

The most expensive Christmas card ever made was prepared by an English firm in Calcutta some years ago for the native ruler of Baroda, in the East Indies, and intended as a gift for a European lady of rank with whom the great man was in love. This card was a foot in length by ten inches in width and of flawless ivory, to obtain which over forty elephants were killed. Four of the most skillful carvers to be found were at work for six months on this magnificent present. When it was finished the eyesight of three of them was injured and the fourth man became blind. The engraving and carving they did were the representing of 10,000 of the stages of existence of Buddha. The card was ornamented around the edges, like a frame, with forty-four diamonds of the purest water, and each the size of a hazelnut. The cost was estimated at half a million pounds sterling. The lady never got her present, for the potentate was arrested for trying to poison the English resident, and the card disappeared.

## Scalloped Oysters.

The Christmas dinner should include oysters. They may serve for an entree and are delicious scalloped or baked in a pie with the giblets. This is the way to prepare scalloped oysters: Place in a shallow baking dish a layer of oysters; over this spread a layer of bread crumbs or crumbled crackers; sprinkle it with salt, pepper and bits of butter; alternate the layers until the dish is full, having crumbs on top, well dotted with bits of butter. Pour over the whole enough oyster juice to moisten it. Bake in a hot oven fifteen or twenty minutes or until browned. Serve in the same dish in which it is baked. Individual scallop cups or shells may also be used, enough for one person being placed in each cup. Properly prepared, it is an excellent dish.—New York World.

## Christmas Oyster Soup.

One quart of oyster liquor, two dozen oysters, one quart of milk, two tablespoonfuls of butter, two tablespoonfuls of flour, juice of half a lemon, salt and pepper to taste, tiny pinch of mace. Heat milk and strained oyster liquor in separate vessels. Rub butter and flour together, cook in a saucepan until they bubble and pour on hot milk, stirring till the mixture is thin and smooth. Add the liquor, drop in the oysters and cook five minutes. Season and serve at once. Add lemon juice the very last thing.

## Peace on Earth.

I heard the bells on Christmas day  
Their old, familiar carols play  
And wild and sweet  
The words repeat,  
Of peace on earth, good will to men!

—Longfellow.