

THE BOARDMAN MIRROR

E. S. Nelson

Christmas Time

By THOMAS A. CLARK
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OF ALL the illusions of childhood, I gave up with most reluctance those that clustered around Christmas. The old saint who climbed down the chimney into the fireplace in our sitting room and filled our stockings on Christmas Eve was as real to me as Moses or George Washington or my grandfather or any other person of whom I had heard but whom I had never personally met. He is to me real today when I am in reminiscent moods, perhaps because I have always wanted him to be real. Long after I recognized all the subterfuges which were being practiced on me as a child at Christmas time, I never admitted them even to myself, for I was quite willing to submit to the deceptions; I was made happy by all the ceremonies and surprises.

I have never in all my life been away from home at Christmas time; I hope I never shall be. Christmas joys are for me the most delightful; Christmas memories, the most precious. Everything about our holiday preparations at home was of the simplest



character, but the season was full of possibilities and surprises. The dinner lacked the conventional roast turkey. Instead there was a roast goose or a huge joint of roast beef following the English custom with which my mother was familiar) with suet dumplings and gravy. There was always, too, a loaf of spiced bread and plum pudding with a delightful sauce of drawn butter, and there was mince pie followed with nuts and raisins and other goodies.

Just as "home" always suggests to me sugar cookies, hot from the oven, with mother warning me not to eat so many as to make myself sick, so Christmas invariably brings to my mind the thought of raisins. They were in the spiced bread which mother made, the plum pudding was congested with them, I found them always on Christmas morning in my stocking with other good things to eat, and there was regularly on Christmas day a dish of them on the table to be eaten after dinner. It was not altogether what we had to eat that gave Christmas such a high place in my regard, though that helped materially, no doubt. It was the mystery, the anticipation, the preparation and the surprise of it all; the gathering together of all the family, the games, the roaring fire in the fireplace, and the general hilarity and good will prevailing that made Christmas for me the best loved of all the holidays of the entire year.

"We are rather outgrowing Christmas," a friend said to me a few days ago. "I don't believe it is ever going to be for any one again just as it used to be."

I suppose not; though there are some events connected with the celebration of Christmas, there is the real Christmas which I am sure I shall never outgrow. If I should hang up my stocking by the fireplace now, I feel just as sure as I ever did that old Saint Nick would get in some way before morning and fill it as he used to do when I was a child. My faith in Christmas has never waned, and my need for it. I practice economy badly at any time, but with the greatest difficulty at Christmas time, and especially since the prices of my own particular varieties of frankincense and myrrh have been so affected by the economic conditions. It is what is in our hearts that makes Christmas real. The song of



the angels is in the air if the Christmas spirit is in our hearts, Christmas is as great a reality as it ever was. If

Merry Christmas to All



A Load of Christmas

By Frank Herbert Sweet
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HOLCOMB did things in a peculiar way—a peculiarly nice way, though. It affected his Christmas gifts, his business, even his friendships. But then he was a bachelor of fifty. Then, too, everybody loved him, which is a very peculiar thing about a successful business man with competition, you'll admit.

This year Holcomb was very busy, and his Christmas gifts—general gifts, you know—hadn't even occurred to him until two days before the day.

He was passing through a new street between a restaurant and his office, when he saw a small shop with windows crammed with toys—nothing but toys. At this season, nearly the middle of the afternoon, a toy shop ought to be crowded with customers. This shop was closed. On the steps stood a small, anxious looking man, and a big one dangling a large key. It looked like a store key.

Seemed peculiar. So Holcomb went to the steps.

"Like to look at the toys," he began. "Can't now," boomed the big man. "This chap can't pay a bill, so I've taken it. Auction day after tomorrow. I'm sheriff."

"Meaning," said Holcomb, "that if the bill is paid, the store belongs to this man again? How much?"

"Of course—and \$200."

"What's it all worth?" to the little man.

"About \$50 if sold at auction," dejectedly. "I picked a bum street. No business."

"What did you pay or agree to pay?"

"\$500."

"What will you sell for?"

"Can't sell until—" nodding toward the sheriff.

Holcomb counted out \$200, and passed it to the sheriff.

"Good-by," he said. "Now what do you ask?" to the small man.

"I'd rather like \$300, but will be glad to accept half that."

Holcomb counted out the \$300.

"Give me the key," to the sheriff.

"Thank you. Now where can I find two men to move the toys?"

"I'll be one," beamed the man out of business. "I know about toys. And I can get another man from the next building."

"Do so, and I'll bring round my car from the next corner."

Inside of an hour the shop was emptied and the linotype filed. Then Holcomb took the most country of all the country roads, stopping at every house that showed signs of children.

"Hello," he would call to any small boy or girl he happened to see; "got some stuff for your house. Please take it for me. I'm in a hurry. Give you a quarter."

He had provided a pocket heavy loose quarters.

There were about three hours of it. When the daylight was gone he was empty. He was glad of his richness, for he had to go back the same road.

Oregon Seal Record Excellent.

A record in the December Christmas Seal Sale was made by Oregon last year, which places her well toward the top of the list of states in the per capita sale of seals. Her 1923 record was 5.6 seals sold for every person in the state, an increase of seven-tenths of a seal over the 1922 mark.

Portland, and Multnomah county, Oregon, last year won a cross-country contest against Portland, in Cumberland county, Maine. The race was to see who would sell the highest number of seals per capita. A large silver loving cup was awarded Multnomah county, which reached the record of 9.2 against her opponent's 6.2. Even so, Multnomah did not reach the top among the Oregon counties, for she was slightly surpassed by Deschutes.

The 1924 Christmas Seal Sale begins December 1, and continues until Christmas. The sale constitutes the sole support of the Oregon Tuberculosis Association, with all its health and anti-tuberculosis work, and provides funds for the County Public Health Associations. Ninety-five per cent of the proceeds are retained within the state, only five per cent being sent as commission to the National, or parent organization.

For seventeen years, Christmas Seals have been following their useful career in the United States. The first

MERRY CHRISTMAS

(By Rev. A. J. Neufeld)

We take the time honored privilege of saying to all our good friends, that we hope they will have a Happy Christmas Season. The stock word is "Merry". It is a good wholesome cherry old word and we use it, refusing to try to improve on it. Merry Christmas. Let the season be merry! Let every heart be merry! Let every home be merry! Every church, every factory, every shop, every office, every business, every peace conference, every financial campaign, every editorial room, every man, woman and child, every Angel in heaven! yes, why not? So in the name of Bethlehem "act and the blessed joy of giving let us all unanimously, heartily, hilariously be merry. For Christ the Babe born in the manger of Bethlehem is all things to all men and each has a part in him.

To the artist, He is the one altogether lovely; to the architect He is the chief cornerstone; to the astronomer He is the sun of righteousness; to the baker He is the living bread; to the banker He is the hidden treasure; to the biologist He is the life; to the builder He is the sure foundation; to

the doctor He is the great physician; to the educator He is the great teacher; to the engineer He is the new and living way; to the farmer He is the sower and the Lord of the harvest; to the florist He is the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley; to the geologist He is the rock of ages; to the horticulturist He is the true vine; to the judge He is the righteous judge the judge of all men; to the juror He is the faithful and true witness; to the jeweler He is the pearl of great price; to the lawyer He is the counselor, the law giver and the advocate; to the newspaper man He is the good tidings of great joy; to the oculist He is the light of the eyes; to the philanthropist He is the unspeakable gift; to the philosopher He is the wisdom of God; to the preacher He is the word of God; to the sculptor He is the living stone; to the servant He is the good master; to the statesman He is the desire of all nations; to the student He is the incarnate truth; to the theologian He is the author and finisher of our faith; to the teller He is the giver of rest; to the sinner He is the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world; to the Christian He is the Son of the Living God, the Redeemer and Lord.

Santa's the Goodest Man



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