

The Christmas Carol



AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON

Pleasant Revival of An Old-Time Custom

THE FIRST NOWELL

The first Nowell the Angels did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields
As they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Chorus.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel!

Then let us all with one accord,
Sing praises to our Heavenly Lord,
That hath made Heaven and earth of naught,
And with His Blood mankind hath bought.

Chorus.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel!

By JOHN DICKINSON SHERMAN

IS THE Christmas Carol coming back to its own as a time-honored feature of the Christmas Tide? It looks so. And it is to be hoped that it is so. For the singing of Christmas Carols will help to popularize the religious observance of the day—

which is losing ground year by year in this material age. Probably there is no room in our Twentieth Century civilization for carol-singing after the old way. But carol-singing on a large scale is admirable—as many American cities abundantly proved in 1924. It was made a community service. Many singers were enlisted and trained. Carols were sung in hospitals, orphanages and other institutions. The message of home was carried to the traveler in hotels and railroad stations. Mass-singing in municipal auditoriums was received with popular acclaim. This community service was strangely reminiscent of the old-time "Waits"—street musicians who were an established institution of English cities, wearing "Waits badges," with the town arms.

The singing of carols is much older than Christmas, just as the midwinter festival of good cheer long antedates the celebration of Christmas as the anniversary of the birth of Christ. The pagan Britons celebrated this midwinter festival; so did the Romans and many European peoples. It was not until the Fourth Century that this festival became identified with the church festival of Christmas—"Christ-mass."

Have you discovered that it's very easy indeed to dance to some of the Christmas Carols? Well, it is. And that's because "Carol" was originally a term for a dance—or for songs intermingled with dancing. It was a long time before the word came to be applied strictly to a religious Christmas song.

Primitive man makes merry, you know, in song and dance and boisterous play. It is not hard to see in the Christmas of modern times plain evidence of the pagan origin of midwinter festivities. The "Yule Log" undoubtedly spread from the ancient Lithuanians and Letts, whose "Christmas Eve" was "Log Evening." The

Silent Night

MICHAEL HEYNE

O Little Town of Bethlehem,
How silently, how silently,
The wondrous Child is born,
Of the Virgin Mary.

God rest you merry Gentlemen

1. In Bethlehem, in Jewry,
The Son of God was born,
And all within a manger,
Which the shepherds saw,
Did nothing take to them,
O singers, do.

"Lords of Misrule" of England was a leftover from the Roman Saturnalia. The Christmas Carol goes back a long way into early English life. The first printed collection came in 1521 from the press of Wynkin de Worde.

This early master-printer was probably born in Lorraine and went to London to be assistant to Caxton, whom he succeeded in 1491. It is interesting to know that a fragment of this edition is still extant and contains the famous "Boar's Head Carol," which is still sung on Christmas Day in Queen's College, Oxford—whether the serving of the boar's head on a silver platter in the big dining hall still obtains, one is not prepared to say.

In the old days the serving of the boar's head, with much pomp and ceremony and minstrelsy and song was the feature of the Christmas feast in the homes of the wealthy and great. The authentic wording of this carol is as follows:

The boar's head in hand bear I,
Bedeck'd with bays and rosemary;
And I pray you, my masters, be merry,
Quot exite in convivio,
Caput apri deferro,
Reddens laudes Domino.

Our steward hath provided this
In honor of the King of Bibles,
Which on this day to be served is
In Regiments Atrio,
Caput apri deferro, etc.

At the time Wynkin de Worde published the first collection of Christmas Carols in 1521 carol-singing was a universal practice in England. In 1525, when Henry VIII lay ill, there was an edict specifically prohibiting "carols, bells or merry-making." In 1526 a license was issued to Thomas Trysdale to print, "Certayne goodly Carowles to be songe to the Glory of God."

The Puritans endeavored to put a stop to carol-singing and practically succeeded. Parliament, it will be remembered, ordered the abolition of Christmas Day and to show that it had been abolished sat in session December 25, 1652—"commonly called Christmas Day."

But Christmas day came back with the Restoration—and so did the Christmas Carol. In 1661 appeared a volume with the title, "The New Carols for the Merry Time of Christmas, to Sunday Pleasant Tunes."

In France also the Christmas Carol is very old. The French word for the Christmas Carol is Noel. The Breton word is "Koroll," which means a dance. Noel originally meant "birthday." In

time it came to mean the "Birthday of Jesus." Still later it was a song about His birthday. Nowadays a Frenchman wishing anyone "Merry Christmas," says, "Joyeux Noel!"

Now the title, "The First Nowell," of the English Christmas Carol, from which quotation has been made in the foregoing, throws a sidelight on history. This carol is probably more than 500 years old, although it did not appear in print until 1833. The Norman conquest of England was responsible for the "Noel" in its title. And this in turn was changed to "Nowell" to make it look English and to insure its pronunciation in two syllables.

"Silent Night" is probably one of the most popular of all the Christmas Carols. It seems to have been first published in Leipzig as a "Tyrolean Song." Before that it had been in the repertoire of a family of strolling Tyrolean players. Its origin was then unknown and it was said to be old.

In time it was credited to Michael Haydn. A few years ago Ludwig Erk made a thorough investigation and reported that "Silent Night" was written and composed in 1818 at Oberndorf, Germany; that Joseph Mohr, assistant priest, wrote the words; that Franz Gruber, a schoolmaster, wrote the music. According to Erk, the carol was produced Christmas Eve in the church, the poet, a tenor, singing the melody, and the composer singing bass. A chorus of young women sang the refrain. The church organ was out of repair and the accompaniment was played on a guitar.

"God Rest You Merry Gentlemen" is believed to date back to the Seventeenth Century. It certainly is as familiar to the English-speaking world as any. One version has the first line, "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen"—one does not know whether or not the use of the comma is authorized.

It will be noted that the Christmas Carols in general have a common characteristic—which is especially prominent among the older ones: They are set to pleasing and not difficult music; they are simple in form and picturesque; they are often childlike in their naivete. In short, they are real bits of folklore.

Yet men famous in the world of letters have not disdained to try their hands at the Christmas Carol. For example, "O Little Town of Bethlehem," deservedly popular, was written by the Boston divine, Phillips Brooks. It was intended for Sunday schools only. Several composers have written music for it. These include Joseph Barnaby, the Englishman, and Louis H. Redner, the American.

So Tessie Tongue licked her forty-eighth stamp, and Hannah Hand wrote her forty-eighth card and Effie Eyes looked at her forty-eighth address, and Bessie Brain—well, she kept on thinking!—Martha Banning Thomas, (©, 1925, Western Newspaper Union.)

One of the features of the new Union railway station in Chicago is the chapel, where the bodies of the dead in transit may reverently be cared for, and where travelers may come to pray while waiting between trains.

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL Sunday School Lesson

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D.D., Dean of the Evening School, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

Lesson for December 13

PAUL IN MELITA AND ROME

LESSON TEXT—Acts 28:1-31.
GOLDEN TEXT—I am now ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth.—Rom. 1:16.
PRIMARY TOPIC—Paul the Helper.
JUNIOR TOPIC—Paul in the World's Capital.
INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—A Prisoner Preaching.
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—The Power of the Gospel.

I. The Shipwreck on Melita (vv. 1-10).
Through the storm they lost their bearings, and when they were safe on land they learned that the island was called Melita. Their experiences here may be noted as follows:

1. The Hospitable Reception of the Natives (v. 2).
They built a fire and made the shipwrecked people as comfortable as possible in the cold and rain.

2. Paul Bitten by a Venomous Serpent (v. 3).
The world's greatest preacher and missionary, yet he was not above picking up sticks for a fire. All along the journey Paul busied himself in doing all that he could to help some one. Any service rendered in the right spirit is holy work.

3. Paul Heals Publius' Father (vv. 7-10).
These people now received some return for their kindness. When this man of note was healed, others came and were healed also.

II. Paul's Arrival At Rome (vv. 11-16).
When Paul reached Rome Christ's charge to the disciples was fulfilled. After three months' stay at Melita Paul departed for Rome in the ship of Alexandria, whose sign was Castor and Pollux. At Syracuse they were delayed three days, perhaps for favorable winds. At Puteoli he found brethren at whose request he tarried seven days, after which he again set his face towards Rome. At Appia forum and at Three Taverns brethren from Rome met him. From Puteoli the news went before of Paul's coming, and so interested were the brethren that they came for more than forty miles to meet him. This greatly encouraged him and he gave God thanks.

He greatly craved the fellowship of other Christians and was much helped thereby. This was the first city in all his missionary life that thus welcomed him. It was typical of the welcome that was given to the gospel by the Gentile world. He was treated with great leniency at Rome for he was allowed to hire a house and live apart, except that his guard was constantly with him. Being chained to a soldier was rather irksome, yet it gave him a chance to preach to the soldiers, which he could not have had in any other way.

III. Paul's Ministry In Rome (vv. 17-31).
1. His Conference With the Leading Jews (vv. 17-22).
He did not as usual, wait for the Sabbath day to speak to the Jews. He allowed only one day for rest, his object being to have a fair understanding with them. When they came he endeavored to conciliate them. He told them that though he came as a prisoner, he was not a criminal. Though his own countrymen had sought his life he did not come with accusations against them. The result of this interview was that the Jews cautiously took neutral ground, but expressed a desire to hear what Paul could say in defense of a sect which was everywhere spoken against.

2. Paul Expounding the Kingdom of God and Persuading Concerning Jesus (vv. 23-31).
He pointed out a real kingdom—the Messianic kingdom with the historic Jesus as the king. The kingdom to Paul meant a definite reign of a definite person, not simply an improved state of society. This he showed from the Scriptures.

Small Things; Great Things
You're waiting to do some great thing; you're waiting to pull down some great evil. Perform the small things that are unseen, and they will bring other and greater things for you to perform.—John Bright.

Leading Us Along
In denying ourselves, Jesus is not asking us to limit ourselves. He is, rather, leading us along the road in which we shall find self.—G. Glenn Atkins.



Thousands of women testify to the truth of this from their own experience.

"But constipation is serious, Grace"

"Not so long ago I was like you—headaches a good deal of the time, sleeping badly, and the least bit of housework tired me out. My complexion too, was bad."

"Finally, I went to see Dr. Farman. He showed me that it was constipation that was back of my troubles. He said that it was a very serious thing because poisons from clogged waste matter were picked up by the blood and carried to every body organ. And if I didn't correct it in time I might become a victim of one of those terrible organic diseases."

"He made me drop laxatives altogether, changed my diet, and put me on Nujol. I don't think I've ever felt better."

"I sleep well, my headaches have disappeared, and you can see for yourself what an

improvement there is in my skin. Nujol has done wonders for me."

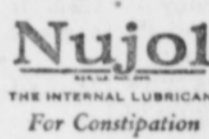
Nujol Works Like Nature

Constipation is dangerous for anybody. Nujol is safe for everybody. It is neither a food nor a medicine. It does not gripe. It is gentle and natural in its action and is prescribed by leading medical authorities.

Nujol simply makes up for a deficiency—temporary or chronic—in the supply of natural lubricant in the intestines. It softens the waste matter and thus permits thorough and regular elimination without overtaxing the intestinal muscles.

Nujol can be taken for any length of time without ill effects. To insure internal cleanliness, it should be taken regularly, in accordance with the directions on each bottle. As Nujol is not a laxative, it does not form a habit and can be discontinued at any time.

Ask your druggist for Nujol today and begin the perfect health that is possible only when intestinal elimination is normal and regular.



THE INTERNAL LUBRICANT For Constipation

Americans Expend Much for Jewelry and Gems

According to George Frederick Kunz, considered the world's greatest authority on gems, and research curator of precious stones in the American Museum of Natural History, the American public during one year spends close to half a billion dollars on jewelry. The history of precious stones, he says, shows us that the trading of precious stones dates from the earliest markets for gems was that of Babylon, at approximately 4000 B. C. The emerald, lapis lazuli, garnet, agate, Amazon stone, hematite and jasper were the principal stones sold there. Then there were the cities of Egypt, Alexandria at one time was a great center. Then Athens, Constantinople, Augsburg and finally London, Paris and now New York.—Thrifty Magazine.

Very Pointed

The French foreign minister, M. Briand, tells an excellent story of how a friend with a somewhat vitriolic wit scored over a political opponent. The opponent was criticizing in the chamber of deputies, a bill brought in by Briand's friend.

"When," he declared, "I first read the text of the ridiculous and impossible measure I thought I was becoming mad."

"Becoming!" interjected the wit. "Becoming, indeed! How fond the honorable member is of adding unnecessary words."

DEMAND "BAYER" ASPIRIN

Aspirin Marked With "Bayer Cross" Has Been Proved Safe by Millions.

Warning! Unless you see the name "Bayer" on package or on tablets you are not getting the genuine Bayer Aspirin proved safe by millions and prescribed by physicians for 25 years. Say "Bayer" when you buy Aspirin. Imitations may prove dangerous.—Adv.

The Obscure Point

The bluff old Colonel was telling a jungle story in the club coffee room. "Yes," he exclaimed dramatically, "it was in the dead of night. Outside was a roving elephant bent on destruction. I crept out and shot it dead in my pajamas."

"But, colonel, how did the thing get into your pajamas?" drawled one of his listeners.—London Weekly Telegraph.

Why have RHEUMATISM?

OH, what a wonderful feeling to be free from that miserable rheumatism. To know again the joy of limber joints and active muscles—freedom from that agonizing pain! How often have you longed for some relief as you suffered torture from swollen, inflamed muscles and joints—how often have you said you would give anything in the World for a few hours comfort!

helps Nature build the red-blood-cells that fight off the impurities that cause rheumatism. Conquer rheumatism! S. S. S. has shown the way. For generations S. S. S. has brought blessed relief and comfort to thousands of rheumatia sufferers. When the rich, red blood that S. S. S. helps Nature build goes coursing through your system, it purifies the blood in your body. Rheumatism vanishes—skin blemishes disappear—you begin to get hungry again and enjoy your food—strength and power fill your body—you are vigorous—red-blooded and ready for action. Know this joy of living again! Take S. S. S. and banish rheumatism! Get S. S. S. from any druggist. The larger bottle is more economical.



Their Christmas Task

"If I have to lick another stamp," declared Tessie Tongue, "I absolutely won't have enough energy to talk, and that's my chief business."
"If I have to scratch off another address," scolded Hannah Hand, "I shan't be able to life a finger for a month."
"If I have to give another glance at an address book, I shall go blind," muttered Effie Eyes.