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On Christmas eve the children, all gathered around the fire, Discuss the probabilities until they must retire.
Tis then the Tateful wishbone, kept over from Thanksgiving day, Is brought to light and broken in the traditional way.

With their fair, expectant faces and eyes with light aglow They await the anxious moment when all of them shall know Who is to be the favorite of fortune and whose choice Is sure to bring fulfillment fit to make the heart rejoice.

SOMETHING NEW FOR CHRISTMAS.

By ELIZA ARCHARD CONNER.

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WE lash our brains to chase up something new to give our friends at Christmas. In like manner they lash their brains to think of something to give us. We say to ourselves, "Rich old Aunt Rachel ought to put up something handsome this year, the old curmudgeon!" Rich old Aunt Rachel in her turn says to us: "I suppose those beggarly pieces of mine will send me some food trash they themselves can make and expect me to give them gifts worth forty times as much. They're a nuisance. Every year I turn there's somebody expecting me to put up a Christmas present. I wish these hungry hangers on were at the north pole."

The whole scheme of Christmas giving has been perverted till it now means only one of three things—either barter, swindling, stinging, or thieving. Servants, desiring or otherwise; poor relatives, charity societies, people too lazy and shiftless to earn comfort for themselves, all "expect" something. The effort to fill all these expectations causes a drain that makes most people look forward with dread from one Christmas to the next. Seven out of ten Christmas presents are nowadays forced from the grudging donor just because the receivers "expect" something. Mr. Truesdell has been dealing very heavily lately, I believe.

"Very heavily indeed," Goodale agreed promptly.
"Many people will be very hard hit," Very hard indeed."
Van Ingen concluded that he had solved the problem. He thanked his informant, rose languidly and proceeded to his club, inwardly grateful that he had escaped a terrible possibility.

even an apology shouted in a voice that seemed peculiarly disagreeable: "Here, Goodale! Get a move on and sell all you can—10,000 bushels today. Keep a cool head, man!" Having given his commands, Truesdell turned to his visitor. "You'll have to excuse me," he said. "I expected a quiet day, but the bulls are on the warpath, and I'm having the fight of my life. Goodale will be back presently, and he'll tell you all about it. Come in tomorrow and I'll blow you to that luncheon—if I have money enough left to pay for it."

How would it do alike for those over-axed with giving and those too poor to give anything at all simply and quietly to bestow the Christ Child's gift on all mankind? After presenting the few material gifts one really offers for the pleasure of it, how would it do to make everybody around us happy as we can all day long, being cheerful, merry, loving and helpful to every member of our household, thinking not at all of our own desires or disappointments, but giving forth joyfully the best that is in us—life, widening and softening our souls, we would need from our consciousness all our pitiful little grudges against others and in fact even those we dislike most in the long thought of Christmasting?

While he was eating his luncheon a man whom he knew emerged from behind his paper and came over to his table.

"Beastly panic in the wheat market," he observed rather dolefully. "Hope you're not scorched, Van."

"No money to play with, dear old chaps. I've just left a man up to his eyes in it—Tom Truesdell. Know him?"

"Well, rather?" the other replied. "I have just dropped a cool \$10,000 in the pit. If your man Truesdell has been equally out of luck he must be looking forward to a rather gloomy Christmas. It means millions to him."

An hour later Van Ingen went into the writing room and penned a note to Mr. Truesdell to the effect that some expected and important business would compel him to forego the pleasure of a further discussion of the contemplated alliance.

On Christmas eve Goodale and Van Ingen met face to face on the street. The latter would have passed without a sign of recognition, but Goodale stopped his hand and greeted him cordially.

"I am afraid you people must have come out of your dear old lady," Van Ingen stammered.

"Not at all," declared the other radiantly, with a final wring of his one true rival's hand which made him wince. "We were bears. The lower the price went the more we made. About a million is the figure."

Van Ingen smiled feebly and murmured his congratulations.

Christmas.
Sing holly now and mistletoe
And all resentment from your heart,
Since the accessories which show
And in this joyous day have part,
And good to him you fair would wrong
Lift up your heart in joy and song
And sing the Christ back to your side
ELBERT SHERMAN.



"Nor would I if I could dissolve the melancholy That makes her so adorable—my lady of the holly!"

THE CHRISTMAS BEARS.

By GERALD PRIME.

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ISABEL was having it out with her father. It was only a few days before Christmas, and she should have been at peace with herself and all mankind in general, but she wasn't. She had been telling herself all this particular day that as soon as her father came home she would put her case before him in a light so convincing that he would be brought to admit that he had been a little too arbitrary. Her scheme had not worked. She was beginning to realize painfully that her effort to gain her point had resulted in confirming her father in his opinion that it was a man's privilege to rule in his own house, especially when the woman of it was his only daughter, a girl of twenty, who could not be expected to know her own mind.

"You know perfectly well," said Isabel, with a final heroic attempt to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat, "that Jack and I have been—have been good friends for a long time. The only reason he hasn't spoken about it to you—is because he has been waiting until he was in more of a position to do so."

"Then it's mighty lucky for him that he concluded to postpone it," declared Tom Truesdell testily. "Romance is all very well for those who can afford it, but Jack Goodale doesn't belong to that class. I pay him a fair salary, and I admit he earns it. But I don't see how he expects me to accept him as a son-in-law. How could he ever provide for a wife as extravagant as you? Absurd!"

"He has a little money, and he may make a lucky deal some day," she persisted in spite of the forlornness of her hope.

"You mean that the young man intends to gamble in wheat?" he asked ironically.

"Why shouldn't he? You do, don't you?"

Tom Truesdell snorted impatiently. "No," he retorted, "I do not gamble. A gambler risks his property. I never risk anything. I know how the market is going because I make the market. There is a difference, Isabel."

Driven to desperation, Isabel played her last trick. "The man you want for a son-in-law," she said, "is no better off financially. He has nothing but his debts to distinguish him."

He smiled sardonically. "If I want him for a son-in-law," he returned decidedly, "I am well enough off to afford him. I grant you Gerald Van Ingen has very little means, but he has something that the Truesdell family needs a good deal more. He has position."

"He's an empty makeshift," declared Isabel wrathfully.

"He isn't very brainy, I suppose," her father admitted. "He'll be all the easier to manipulate on that account. But I haven't made up my mind yet. Mr. Van Ingen is coming to lunch with me tomorrow, and I shall make a study of him. He certainly ought to do great things for his society."

Van Ingen was punctual at Truesdell's office on the following day. As he entered the busy place he found the bustle very disquieting to his nerves. Tape machines clicked, clerks were shouting perplexing fractions into telephones, and there was an uproar quite unfamiliar to the young man's ears. All at once Truesdell rushed into view, almost overturning his distinguished visitor, and without

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BOBBY'S CHRISTMAS PLAIN.

By WILLIS HAWKINS.

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I'M awful tired o' bein' rich. I think it was a pity We come into the money which Enticed us to the city. I wish that we was poor again An' back in Pawpaw Center A-livin' as we used to when We was so much contented.

Pa didn't have that worried look An' ma was never nervous Before we had a chef to cook An' a butler man to serve us. I'd rather be the way we was, All feelin' fine an' happy, With simple cookin' such as ma's That never made us scrappy.

An' then the lugs the girls put on! I think it's awful silly That Mary Jane is "Marie Zhon" An' Nellie is "Nattie." But, gracious, they git mad at me When I say "Nell" or "Mary," Though that was what they used to be When they was 'tendin' dairy.



"I THINK IT'S AWFUL SILLY."

Then that I knew a lot o' boys That I could play an' fight with An' swap my marbles an' my toys Or go an' stay all night with. But now that I'm a rich man's son There'd be a great sensation If I should play with any one Beneath my lofty station.

An' now that Christmas time is near An' Santa Claus is comin' I don't see how he'll git in here Unless it's through the plumbline.

Where 'lectric currents sizzle, An' I guess where you don't have fires Your Christmas is a fizzle.

Santa Claus on the Street.
In the larger American cities of late years Santa Claus has come to be pretty well known to everybody who frequents the business streets during the two or three weeks preceding Christmas. The Volunteers of America, organized by Ballington Booth, formerly of the Salvation Army, supply Santa Claus in considerable numbers.

The traditional chimney idea is put to practical use. A member of the Volunteers rigs himself up in true Kris Kringle costume, with long coat, flowing white beard and fur cap. He stands beside a miniature chimney set on the sidewalk, on top of which is a large placard requesting passersby to drop in a coin to help send Santa Claus down the chimney with a big Christmas dinner for the poor or to carry shoes, clothing or other supplies to the city unfortunates.

A Sponge Garden.
A beautiful effect may be obtained by means of a damp sponge and a few weeds. Take a large piece of coarse sponge and cut it into any shape desired. Then soak it in water, squeeze half dry and sprinkle in the openings red clover seed, millet, barley, grass, rice, oats—any or all of these. Hang the sponge in a window where the sun shines at least part of the day. Country Life in America.

What an Earthquake Is.

"An earthquake," writes Frank A. Perret, formerly honorary assistant at the Royal Neapolitan observatory, in Century, "is an undulating vibration of the ground resulting from some sudden movement of the underlying strata. This may be produced by a volcanic explosion, the breaking of a stratum of rock under strain or the sudden intrusion of lava between the strata or into a fracture, the types respectively known as volcanic, tectonic and intervolcanic. My own impression in experiencing these shocks was that of a rubbing together of masses under pressure, which throws the adjoining material into vibration. If you put a little water into a thin, wide mouthed crystal goblet, wet the finger tip and rub it around the rim, a sound will be produced and the water will be set in vibration like the ground waves of an earthquake."

When Harvard Was Young.
Harvard, the first college, founded in 1636, continued for more than fifty years to be the only college. It was established by vote of the general court of Massachusetts Bay, which agreed to give £400 toward its endowment. Two years later this endowment was more than doubled by the bequest of John Harvard, who left half of his property and his entire library of 300 volumes to the college. The conditions of admission were few. To matriculate it was necessary to know "so much Latin as was sufficient to understand Fully or any classical author and to meter and speak true Latin in prose and verse." The student was required "to be able to decline the paradigms of Greek nouns and verbs." Each class was also required to study the Latin of the Westminster catechism—Scrap Book.

Why Do Seals Swallow Stones?
No nature student seems yet to have discovered for what reason seals swallow stones, though the fact is a well established one. Certainly the stones are not taken in for ballast, for the empty seals keep down as easily as the others. They are not swallowed for the purpose of grinding up food, for they are found in the stomachs of nursing pups. They are not taken in with the food because they are found in the stomachs of both young seals and in those that live in the open sea and feed on squid. Yet it is evident that these things are not swallowed haphazard, but are selected with considerable care from the articles strewn along the shore, and that a preference is exhibited for rounded objects. This is shown by the fact that, as a rule, only articles of one kind are found in any one seal's stomach.

An Insulting Pronoun.
The ritual of society, as women make it, even exacting the world over, even in almshouses. The London Outlook reports a serious trouble among a set of workhouse officials. The infirmaries, three in number, had demanded a separate sitting room and the delight of Sunday dinner therein, and the matron had sought to humble them by sending the cook to enjoy her Sunday dinner in their company. The brawny cook described what occurred as follows:
"Well, Nurse Blank, she come down and got inside the door. 'Four covers?' she says. 'Four?' 'What's the fourth?' 'Me,' says I. 'You! she says, and with that she tosses her head and walks away."

London Pavements in the Old Time.
Occasionally a side pavement added to the comfort of the foot passengers and spared them the necessity of floundering through the deep mire of the roadway. These pavements, however, were only partial, and passengers made use of the highway, soft with mud and filth thrown from the houses and obstructed with heaps of manure, which dogs and swine made their lair. The latter animal was so useful a scavenger and could be kept at so little expense as to account for the pigsties which stood in the main streets of all our towns. "Denton's England in the Fifteenth Century."

Children Cry FOR FLETCHER'S CASTORIA