

BOBBIE'S CHRISTMAS PRAYER.

"Dod b'ess all the family dear;
Dod b'ess mamma, papa, too;
Dod b'ess 'tittle sister Fan—
An' bring me a sled, nice an' new.

"Dod b'ess all the chil'ren poor,
An' make all the stek folks well;
An' dear Dod, p'esse don't forget
To send a pony, big an' swell.

"Dod be gracious to your lambs,
An' keep sin out of my life;



Dod b'ess all my 'tittle frien—
An' p'esse don't forget a life.

"An' Dod b'ess ole Santa Claus,
He is such a splendid man!
An' tell him to not forget
To bring a gun, too, if he can.

"An' a box of marbles, too,
An' a lot of picture books—
An' a toolchest full of tools,
Wif tacks, nails, screws, an' hooks.

"An' dear Dod, some other fings
To fill in corners wif, you know,
Ginger cakes an' nuts an' figs
An' a lot of candy, too.

"An' I wouldn't mind some skates,
(I'll give my ole ones to some frien)
An' I reckon dis is all—
So dood-night, dear Dod, amen."
—Detroit Free Press.

THE MYSTIC MISTLETOE.

Once a Feature of Pagan Rites, It Now Belongs to Lovers.

From time immemorial the white berried mistletoe has played a leading part in Yuletide festivities, though it has not always conveyed the osculatory privileges which give it its value in the eyes of the romantic youth of to-day. Like so many other features of the Christmas celebration, mistletoe has been borrowed from the pagans of antiquity and Christianized by the lapse of centuries. The Persians before the birth of Christ used the mistletoe in their sacred rites, and in parts of India pagan priests still incorporate it in their ritual. It figures largely in Scandinavian mythology. Baldr, the son of Odin, though a demigod, was slain by a spear of mistletoe, a proof of its magic powers.

It is from the Druids of old England, however, that mistletoe has come to us. The Druidical priests, sprung, it is said, from the magi of the east, the wise men who worshiped at the cradle of the infant Savior, held the mistletoe as their most sacred possession, and the cutting of the pretty parasite from the oak, the tree which the Druids claimed God loved more than any other, was attended with the greatest solemnity. On the Druids' festival day a grand procession, leading two white oxen, moved to the mystic grove. There the oxen were fastened to the oak by their horns, and a white robed priest climbed into the leafless branches and cut the bunches of mistletoe with a golden knife. The oxen were then sacrificed and religious services performed, after which the procession returned to the temple in the forest and the mistletoe was deposited in the Druidical arcanum.

Besides taking its place in the religious observances of the Druids, the mistletoe, which the priests gave a name meaning "all healing," was made into many curious decoctions by processes in which times and seasons and incantations were supposed to add to its mysterious powers. These medicines were regarded as cures for human ills generally. With the advance of civilization and the death of superstition mistletoe has lost its religious character, but not its popularity, and the forests of England and of our own Southern States are as eagerly frequented by mistletoe gatherers as ever were the dark woods of the ancient Druids.

ORDERED OFF.



The New Year—You'll have to move on, old man.



Warning to Housewives.

A cook of thirty years' experience points out that such combinations as meat cooked in conjunction with flour (sausages and pork pies) are liable to turn sour in twenty-four hours, and this sourness, which can be detected both by taste and smell, indicates the presence of poison. This applies to soups, stews, gravies, etc., which have been thickened with flour, as well as to sausages and meat pies. If, before the sourness supervenes, such things are eaten hot or cold, or made hot up to boiling point, they are safe, but simply warming up hastens the generation of the poison.

Tomato Catchup.

One-half bushel of unpeeled tomatoes, cut up small. Add to them a teaspoonful of celery seed and cook until soft enough to rub through a colander, then through a sieve to strain out the seed. Add three tablespoonfuls of spices tied up in a small cheese-cloth bag, a quart of vinegar, salt to taste, a bag of granulated sugar, and one teaspoonful of red pepper. Cook for ten minutes, or until thick.

Sweet Potato Cakes.

Boil sweet potatoes and, while still warm, mash and rub through a fine colander. Stir in a cup of milk, a tablespoonful of butter, salt and sugar to taste. Last of all whip in the well-beaten yolks of two eggs. Form with floured hands into flat cakes and dip each one into the frothed whites, then into fine cracker dust. Lay on a platter and set in the ice chest for two hours before frying in deep, boiling fat.

Dry Cheese.

Dry cheese shows a careless housekeeper. It is a source of waste, as the dry, hard pieces are usually thrown out. To keep cheese moist it should be wrapped in buttered or oiled paper and kept in an airtight pan or one with a lid that fits closely. Cheese that is cut and soon to be eaten will be moist and fresh enough if merely wrapped in a damp cloth.

To Wash China.

Tea and coffee stains can be removed from embossed parts of china cups and jugs by the use of a little salt made damp and rubbed with a small brush on the stained parts. China should be washed in the ordinary way with a strong soapy lather, which will make it beautifully bright, and is very much more effectual than the use of hot water alone.

Sour-Milk Biscuits.

To a quart of sifted flour add three scant teaspoonfuls of baking powder and a pinch of salt. Add butter and lard in equal parts in a piece the size of an egg. Mix well with a fork, using enough sour milk or buttermilk to make a very soft dough. Do not roll, but cut out rapidly with as little handling as possible and bake in a quick oven.

Brown Bread Pudding.

Soak three tablespoonfuls of brown bread crumbs in enough cold milk to cover. Make a custard with a pint of boiling milk, yolks of two eggs, sugar to taste, and lemon flavoring. Pour over the bread crumbs. Lastly add the white of the eggs beaten to a stiff froth; stir all together. Bake in a buttered dish for half an hour in a moderate oven.

Pineapple Salad.

Shred a ripe pineapple and serve on lettuce leaves with mayonnaise, or add for one pineapple peeled and shredded one large orange and two mandarins divided into sections, two red bananas, sliced, two dozen Malaga grapes, seeded, and a dozen English walnut meats, divided. Heap all on tender lettuce leaves and serve very cold with mayonnaise.

To Fix Labels on Tins.

The labels on tins frequently become loose and fall off, the reason usually being that the gum which fastens them is not strong enough. The following recipe for a good glue will be found effective: Take one ounce of pulverized borax and two ounces of gum shellac, put them into a pint of boiling water and boil until dissolved.

Fried Almonds.

Twenty rounding tablespoonfuls of flour, four tablespoonfuls of butter, four rounding tablespoonfuls of sugar, one-half teaspoonful of salt, one tablespoonful of vanilla, one-quarter of a pound of grated almonds. Stir together, roll, cut into almond shape and fry in hot oil. Drop into sugar mixed with cinnamon.

Frosted Apples.

Peel as many apples as required, and stew whole until tender. Whip the white of two eggs to stiff froth and dip each apple in, having well sugared each one. Bake until the white becomes pale brown color.

BUYING LARGER FARMS.

Rural Population Decreasing As Wealth Increases.

It seems a paradox, but is nevertheless well established as true, that in certain of the best farming regions of the United States great and abounding agricultural prosperity has resulted in decreased rural population. A no less striking than surprising illustration of this is given in a recent State census report of Iowa, which is reported to show a falling off of 2 per cent in the population of that great and glorious State since the general census of 1900. Of course, such a result was not acceptable to Iowa's pride, and it was not readily accepted. Close inquiry, however, is reported not only to confirm the general correctness of the new count, but to show a sufficient reason for its disappointing result.

The explanation offered is that it is all due to the land hunger of the prosperous Iowa farmer. Having money ahead and well knowing that good farm land in the Mississippi valley is one of the safest and most profitable of investments, he has been buying in the adjoining farms of his less forward neighbors to such an extent, the reports say, that vacant farmhouses dot every township in the State. Many of these vacant farmhouses may again be occupied by the sons and sons-in-law of the purchaser; and some of them will be abandoned, and the newly acquired lands consolidated into larger farms. And if Iowa follows the course of development that has been going on for many years in the magnificent farming regions of Central Illinois, the consolidated farms will be leased in tracts of 80 or 320 acres, or more, to thrifty and prosperous tenant farmers.

The process as it has gone in Illinois for a number of years is that the wealthier land owner buys out the 40 and 80-acre farms of his neighbors, tile drains and otherwise improves them, often renting the same land or larger tracts to the vendors, who generally made more money as tenants than they had done as owners. The tenant farmers of Central Illinois put their capital into the best of farm implements and machinery and live stock. Their prosperity is seen in their comfortable and well furnished houses, the well kept vehicles and horses which their families drive to church and to country gatherings. In Central Illinois just now the tendency is to larger farms, the tenant generally desiring to increase his area and the landlord regulating the quantity of land he will lease by the proved capacity and success of each tenant. For its best farm lands Iowa appears to be approaching the same system.—Springfield Republican.

Beware of Ointments for Catarrh that Contain Mercury

Mercury will surely destroy the sense of smell and completely derange the whole system when entering it through the mucous surfaces. Such articles should never be used except on prescriptions from reputable physicians, as the damage they will do is tenfold to the good you can possibly derive from them. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, O., contains no mercury, and is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. In buying Hall's Catarrh Cure be sure you get the genuine. It is taken internally, and made in Toledo, Ohio, by F. J. Cheney & Co. Testimonials free. Sold by druggists, price 75c. per bottle. Hall's Family Pills are the best.

His Game.

"I understand our friend, Maifinchanz, is working on a scheme to remove weeds."

"I didn't know he had any interest in gardening."

"He hasn't; he's merely laying his plans to capture old Gotrox's young widow."—Philadelphia Press.

Mothers will find Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup the best remedy to use for their children during the teething period.

Trick of the Trade.

"Madam," began the peddler as he opened his red satchel, "can I sell you something this morning?"

"No," snapped the elderly matron, raising her broom ominously, "and you better move on."

"Just as you say, madam. I was going to offer you the greatest wrinkle remover on earth, but I see you don't need it."

"Ah, I—"
"And also this wonderful remedy for restoring gray hair to its natural color, but you have no use for that, either."

"Why, how kind of you to think so!"

"And this little volume entitled 'How to Remain Beautiful Forever.' But it would be superfluous to offer it to you. Good-by, madam."

"Come back here! Come back here this instant. I do not need them, as you say, but I will buy them and give them to some friend. I always encourage truthfulness."

China and Japan are pre-eminently the seaweed-eating nations of the world. Among no other people are seaweeds so extensively eaten and relished as food substances.

Chinese Ruler.

The Empress Dowager of China was sold into slavery at the age of eleven, to save her family from starvation. Afterwards she was presented to the late emperor, and, upon his wife's death, became Empress. Her feet were never bound, and she was taught to read after persistent pleading. The sterling qualities of this wonderful woman, like those of Pillsbury's Vitos, have overcome every obstacle. And she holds herself at the head of China, as does Vitos at the head of breakfast foods.

Correcting a Misapprehension.

Wasn't that same young man here to see you last night?"

"Yes, papa."

"Well, what does he mean by coming every night in the week?"

"He doesn't come every night in the week. I never met him until last Thursday, and he was only here Thursday and Friday and Saturday evenings."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

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Knowledge.

Johnny—Smokin' cigarettes is dead sure ter hurt yer.

Jimmy—Go on! Where did ye git dat idee?

Johnny—From pop.

Jimmy—Aw! He wuz jist stringin' yer.

Johnny—No, he wuzn't stringin' me; he wuz strappin' me. Dat's how I know it hurts.—Philadelphia Press.

Pho's Cure is a remedy for coughs, colds and consumption. Try it. Price 25 cents, at druggists.

Seclusion Necessary.

Mrs. Psmith—But how did you manage to keep that secret a whole week, dear?

Mrs. KJones—It wasn't hard. I simply stayed away from the Browning Club and when callers came I sent word that I wasn't at home.—Cleveland Leader.

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Trusts vs. Kings.

"What," queried the fair maid, "is the difference between a trust and a ring?"

"I'm afraid I cannot explain the difference in so many words," replied the young man in the case, "but if you'll put your trust in me I'll blow myself for the ring to-morrow."
And she put her trust in him.



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'Ware of the Dog.

Bob—Miss Subbubs has asked me to call to-night.

Dick—Yes?

Bob—Yes. What shall I wear?

Dick (who has been there)—'Ware of the dog!—Philadelphia Ledger.

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