

THE CHEERFUL WAX CANDLE.

By ALICE LE BARON.
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ONCE upon a time two little candles lay side by side in a big box. Both were pure white. Said one: "I wonder what will become of us. Do you think we could be meant for a Christmas tree?" For you must know that to be put on a Christmas tree is the best possible thing that can happen to a candle.

"Of course not," said the other, who was cross. "If we are meant for a Christmas tree it will be for some shabby little children—see if it isn't."

"If we are," said the first, "I'll shine



"PUT IT ON THE VERY TIPTOP."

my very brightest, for the eyes of even poor children with only few pleasures in prospect are enough to rival little candles on Christmas eve."

"If we are," grumbled the second, "I am not sure that I will allow myself to be lighted at all."

Christmas eve drew nearer and nearer. Sure enough, the two little candles, with many others of blue and pink and yellow and red, were bought for a Christmas tree.

On the day before Christmas, while it still was daylight, some young girls came to arrange the presents and make the tree ready for the evening.

"Oh, what a lot of pretty little candles!" said one of them. "They are such lovely colors—all except those two white ones. We will put those out of sight, because the red and pink ones are prettier."

"Didn't I tell you what would happen?" said the cross little candle in a whisper.

"Yes, but wait," replied the other.

"Just shine your brightest all the time."

"I won't," snapped the cross one. When evening came, ranged all round the tree were happy boys and girls. Soon every bough on the great tree blossomed with little lights. Some of the flames were faint, but many were bright. When the little white candles were lighted the cross one just sputtered a minute and then went out. The other shone so brightly that a gentleman standing near said:

"Oh, what a brilliant candle! But it is almost out of sight among the green branches. We ought to put it where it can be seen better."

"Put it on the very tiptop," said a little lady.

And that is where they did put it—on the very tiptop of the tree, where it nodded and gleamed in answer to the smiling faces around it.

The Barber's Joke.

Christmas morning and the barber very busy.

"I'd rather shave ten Germans than one American."

The rubicund brewer in the chair smiled broadly through the lather.

"Goot," he chuckled. "Dot vos right! But vy?"

The barber took a firmer hold upon his victim's nose as he replied:

"Ten Germans pay me a dollar and a half—one American only 15 cents."

And you could have heard the thermometer drop.

Popcorn!

"If Santa Claus has corns the same as grandpa," said a wee girl the other day. "I think he'd be 'fraid to come down the chimney over a hot fire for fear his corns would pop."

Santa Claus' Revenge.

Related comes advice tonight That, "without proper cause," Two foolish boys went on a strike Against old Santa Claus.

They sent him written word that he Must take two trips a year. The first an early one to see What children wanted here. They said his work of late was bad. They criticized his taste. They said it made them very sad—Those presents gone to waste! They asked him why he thought a boy Would want a Teddy bear. They said it seemed he could employ Much better judgment there. They wrote him frankly what they thought.

A protest in each line. They told him that they thought he ought To sell out and resign. They covered reams of paper then To tell him what to do—The how, the which, the what, the when. They carefully went through—And then they told him what to bring For each boy in their town. And for themselves—"Oh, everything!" Was just what they put down. They thought the saint was far too old To understand their scheme. And each one bought a bag, to hold Their presents, it would seem. But when they woke on Xmas morn With "What did Santa bring?" Why, just as sure as you are born, He hadn't left a thing!

STACY E. BAKER.

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 of us: "I suppose those beggarly nieces of mine will send me some fool trash they themselves can make and expect me to give them gifts worth forty times as much. They're a nuisance. Every way I turn there's somebody expecting me to put up a Christmas present. I wish those 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, unwilling almsgiving or tipping. Servants, deserving or otherwise; poor relatives, charity societies, people too lazy and shiftless to earn comfort for themselves, all "expect" something. The effort to fill 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. Mortal mind can sink to no meaner level than to "expect" a Christmas present.

Yet with all earth's giving there is one thing nobody ever thinks to bestow unless it is some man or woman, usually a woman, who has been tried in all ways by sorrow, hardship and affliction, who has looked on this world's treasures and seen them melt away and has learned there is nothing in them. To such a true, sweet, tested soul has come the full knowledge that the only Christmas present worth while is the one the Christ Child came to earth to bring. Still the Christ Child's gift is on the earth, 1900 years after the holy Nativity. It is to be had by every human being. It is the most precious offspring human being can either give or receive, yet in our so-called Christian world today naught is so scarce as this one thing.

What was it the Christ Child came to bring? "Peace on earth, good will to men!" Down the centuries the tidings of this priceless offering have sounded, and they sound still, but now faint and afar off to the worldling sense. For weeks the atmosphere has been confused and lashed with the vibrations of Christmas buying and selling, Christmas scramble and ex-

pectancy; it is overborne and heavy with the awful weariness of the Christmas makers. Who has time to send forth the glorious gift which is the very foundation stone of Christmas itself—peace and good will?

How would it do alike for those overtaxed 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 deserts or disappointments, but giving forth joyfully the best that is in us—of widening and softening our souls, we would weed from our consciousness all our pitiful little grudges against others and in fold even those we dislike most in the loving thought of Christmastide?

THE DEAR OLD TREE.

By FRANK H. SWEET.

There's a dear old tree, an evergreen tree,
And it blossoms once a year.
'Tis loaded with fruit from top to root,
And it brings to all good cheer.

For its blossoms bright are small candles white,
And its fruit is dolls and toys,
And they all are free for both you and me
If we're good little girls and boys.



Christmas Family Advice.

To Papa—Remember the myth of Santa Claus, to keep it holy.

To Maamma—Don't worry about the molasses candy getting on the parlor rug. Christmas comes but once a year, and the stores will sell you a parlor rug any day.

To Miss Belle—It is not necessary to

stand under a bunch of mistletoe if you look at him the right way.

To Little Willy—Don't be envious of Jimmy Jones because Santa brought him a cannon. Next year you may get a disappearing gun. (It will disappear mysteriously shortly after you begin to make a noise with it, and maybe mamma can explain.)

To Baby—Be good, dear child, and let who will be clever.

Old Folk at Home Remembered.

A good many hundred thousand dollars have been shipped home to Europe for Christmas, through the banks, by foreigners employed in America. This year, probably because of the high rates of wages, the banks have been busier with this class of exchange than usual. The bulk of the drafts go to England and Ireland. Servants send most of this money, and none is apparently so poor or ragged that he or she has not at least the equivalent of a pound sterling to send home to the old folks.

Peacocks For Turkeys.

Peacocks formerly took the place of turkeys on the Christmas table.

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