

(@, 1924, Western Newspaper Union.)



The Song of Christmas

JAMES WHITCOMB KILEY

******* CHANT me a rhyme of Christmas-And though it is filed with laugh-ter, let it be pure and strong.

Sing of the hearts brimmed over with

and by the middle of the Fourth centhe story of the day-Of the echo of childish voices that will tury this date was generally recognot die away. nized. In the pagan nations this had been the time when a festival of joy

Of the blare of the tasseled bugie, and of the timeless clatter and beat Of the drum that throbs to muster squadrons of scampering feet.

They celebrated the 21st of December by all manner of licentious revels and heathen debauchery, and eve:

and yet ere the song be done, verse for the ears that hear not, and a verse for the sightless one.

though it be time for singing a Let a low, sweet volce of pathos run through the melody.

At first only the royal households hold had its ruler of the season's revels. But gradually, as time passed, these wild celebrations gave place to festivals none the less joyous, but more befitting the season.

Yule log was observed, of decorating the house with holly and mistletoe,



the lighted candle in the window, and the midnight singing of carols. Still later Christmas became a day marked by bountiful dinners given to the poor by rich landowners, rather than merely a time of feasting and merrymaking.

And slowly the real Christmas spirit is coming more and more into the hearts of humanity, as we grow each year to better understand the song the angels sang that starilt night on the Judean hills. And "on earth peace, good will to men," means more with each recurring year as we open our hearts to the Child of Bethlehen

Stall M of cold water outside his wagon and had not even bothered to get off all the makeup.

The water was cold. It was hard to heat water after the performance was over, and only a little of the paint came off-only a little cold-looking pink water was at the bottom of

the basin. But the dogs didn't mind. They slept on the end or by the side of his cot in his wagon. They jumped in after him each evening, and they each kissed him good night. They didn't mind paint. They were used to It.

Oh, yes, he would take a long, long holiday. He would rest on the little he had managed to save. It would be enough for him and his pets.

But as the days passed along he seemed to feel rested and the pets seemed to have new vigor and strength. It was splendid to feel rested again. A family had invited him to Christmas dinner-and he had accepted and he had asked, too, if he could come with his donkey and bring his dogs along. They, he said, would help put on a little show for the It was all agreed.

But when Christmas afternoon came and the Christmas dinner was over, and the old clown was beginning his

children.

show for the children, he knew then that he could never take more than a few months' holiday from being a clown.

The laughter and the delight and the shricks and the cries of joy from the children were things the old clown could not get along without. This Christmas had shown him that I



"Mother, does Santa Claus love my aursemaid, too?" "I guess so, Thomas. W as Why? saw Sants her on his lan

cious plan; O, grant us Thine all-conquering good will, Thy loving faith in man!

Her

Christmas

By Emily Burks Adams

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adored granddaughters, settled them-

selves, for, to them, no one could tell

"All right, girls, that won't be hard.

The very best Christmas I ever had

was my wedding day. I was married on Christmas day and the most pre-

tious gift I ever received was your

stories equal to grandma.

you get a turkey?"

RANDMOTHER,

tell us a real Christ-

mas story-one you

really experienced.

Tell us the very

best Christmas you

Julia and Jua-

nite, grandmother's

ever had-"

Wedding

Master of Death, Thy greatest gift is To know Thy sacrifice, to share Thy

Lest in the mirth of Christmas we for-The glory of the Cross.



than six in one bed-three at the head and three at the foot-beds were made on the floor all over the house, and we slept as soundly as you on your fine box springs of today, and nothing disturbed us only an occasional snore, and that wasn't half as bothersome as the sputtering of these flying machines.

"Well, the next day dawned fair, and I think everybody said "Happy is the bride the sun shines on." Peg assured me the cakes were fine and turkeys tender. The great, long table was "set" and we were married under a bough of mistletoe -and your grandfather kissed me for the first time. I'm sure no girl of today can say that Everybody shook my hand and wished me much joy and we all went to dinner. Your grandfather and I ate at the first table; most of the women walted, for in those times the men always ate first. I suppose it was proper then; anyway, they did.

"The next day we drove over to your grandpa's home for the infare, and had another big dinner, and I had a cheaper calico. I called it my second-day dress. We visited my folks and his folks about a week and then took our belongings in an ox-cart to



our home, four miles away-a o room log house built by grandpa. Your mother was born there.

"That was, a great Christmas, and we were happler in one room those in mansions today.

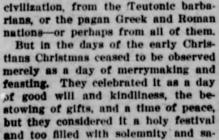
"Ob, that was a great day! Yes, if was truly Christ's day and Christ's way. The same Savior reigned the as now, and he has the same m sage—'I go to prepare a place for you that where I am there ye may be also."

"Good night, girls, grandma must re-tire. Tomorrow is Christmas day, but sixty-seven years ago I received a gift better than any I'll get tomorrow. I'll be with father before another Christ-mas rolls around and there'll be an-other great Christmas and the same Christ will reign. Good night, dearn."



It is not strange that they should the whole custom aside, and celebrated the Child of Bethlehem.

It was not until four hundred years



100

fore the coming of the Christ Child.

Christmas came from early Egyptian

Celebrating

Christmas

ANNA DEMING GRAU

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E SHALL have to

go farther back

than the Christian

era to find the

source of Christ-

mas celebration.

for we borrowed it

from the nations

existing long be-

cred joy to be made a time of hilarity and bolsterous jollity. That the very date is uncertain makes little real difference. In those early days of the Christians they thought it fellowing the heathenish customs to there birthdays. We cannot wonder at this when we re member that every god and goddess

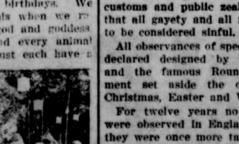
every noted myn, and every animal





have come to a time when they put of misrule came into existence-this none at all, not even the birthday of into whose hands the keys of the

later, not until Christianity had tri- and nights were full of "all manner of pumphed and become a recognized fac-bor in the world that they even began time was had," we are told.



birth.

The Western empire had accepted

December 25 as the date, and the

Eastern churches celebrated January

6, while other dates from September

29 to May 20 were observed, and each

of these with some good reason for

its selection. It was Pope Julius who

finally settled the controversy by ac-

cepting the ruling of the Western church and established December 25,

took place, because it was then that

the sun was supposed to begin to re-

cede from the equator.

ages that the meaning and the significance of the season began to dawn upon the minds and hearts of men. In old England Christmas became a time of feasting, drinking and hilari-

ous merrymaking-not a very advanced conception, but a step beyond the pagan idea. Later the spirit of Puritanism began to influence English customs and public zeal ran so high that all gayety and all festivity came

All observances of special days were declared designed by the "deville," and the famous Roundhead parliament set aside the celebration of Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide,

For twelve years no special days were observed in England, and when they were once more taken back into favor the result was what might have been expected, for the Christmas seaon became a time of feasting, drink-

ing, dancing and wild revel, lasting for twelve days and nights. The lord was the chosen master of festivities, house were given and whose word was law while the revel lasted. The days

But, O, let your voice fall fainter, till, blent with a minor tone, temper your song with the beauty of the pity Christ has shown.

and sing one verse for the voiceless;

after the coming of Christianity it was centuries before these pagan customs had these lords of misrule, but the cusand practices were eliminated. And tom spread until almost every houseit was not until after the Middle

The ceremony of bringing in the

