

### What Christmas Day Brought the Convict

It was late in the afternoon of the day before Christmas. To the woman who waited for news and yet dreaded its coming it was the closing of the longest, wretchedest, dreariest day that she had ever known. She had been advised not to hope, yet she clung to hope, feeling that if she gave up entirely she must die. If the worst came she must live for the sake of the children, who were too young to know of the shadow that clouded their lives.

Often and often the woman went to the window and looked out at the dreary street. Once when a boy came down the walk with the blue uniform of a telegraph messenger she clutched at her throat and uttered a little moan of despair.

"Who's matter, mamma?" asked the little girl that clung to her skirts. The woman could not reply until after the messenger had passed her gate. Then she caught the child in her arms and covered its face with kisses. Hope once more revived in her heart.

When she went to the window again the woman looked out and saw her husband coming. In the wave of joy that surged over her she did not notice that he looked old and hopeless and broken and bent and that there



HE TOOK OPEN THE TELEGRAM.

was no elasticity in his step. She threw open the door and ran down the gravelled walk to the gate.

"John, oh, John," she cried, flinging her arms about his neck, "you are free! Heaven be praised for his mercies. You are free."

The man pressed her to his heart, unable to speak.

"I knew that they would not find you guilty—they could not," she cried. "My poor Grace," he murmured, stroking her hair, "you must be brave. I have been found guilty. Five years in the penitentiary."

"Then how is it that you are here?"

"The judge who sentenced me has given me a reprieve on my own recognizance so that I can spend Christmas with you and the babies. I am in honor bound to surrender myself to the sheriff on the first of the year. It was a technical violation of the law only. They know I am honest, but the sentiment of the public is set so strongly against bankers that I could not get justice. Even my political friends dare not support me. It is an unexpected favor that I am allowed to be with you for a few days."

John Anstruther spoke bitterly, and his wife listened with tearful eyes. She controlled herself with an effort.

"John, the children!" she whispered. "They must not know. Let them have one more happy Christmas. They have been praying for you to come home. Let us smile and be happy with them for a few days. Let us forget the dread future."

Once during the evening she spoke of a pardon which might be asked of the governor.

"It is a vain hope, dear," her husband said. "We will not waste ourselves on it." And he relapsed into thoughtful silence.

But for all the shadow that hung over the home there was a Christmas tree, and the Anstruther babies were happy. Their convict father played the role of Santa Claus. Their mother laughed and sang, though now and then her voice broke and her eyes were wet with tears. A few neighbors called full of sympathy and yet timid about showing it. All the little town felt that it was best to let the stricken family enjoy their Christmas cheer without intrusion even on the part of those who loved and respected them.

When the children, surfeited with sweets and their arms still filled with precious toys, were asleep once more the mother was busy in her kitchen with her preparations for the grand Christmas dinner of the morrow—perhaps the last bountiful meal her children would have through all the dark days to come.

John Anstruther went to his room to look over his papers. In the drawer he suddenly found something that made his heart leap.

It was a revolver. He took the shining, cruel thing in his hands, and a sort of madness came over him. Here was his opportunity. Here was escape from the stripes, the dark cell, the life of a convict. Here was a way to freedom. He pressed the cold muzzle to his forehead. His finger was on the trigger. He could hear Grace singing sadly, with a pathetic attempt to be gay in the kitchen.

"Coward!"

### Festal Day In Dixie A Carnival of Cheer

SOMEHOW there is a charm about a Christmas down in Dixie peculiarly fascinating. It savors more of the old English holiday when the wassail bowl was filled to the brim, when the Yule log glowed and the boar's head was borne into the banquet. It was in the good old days before the war that the folks of the south observed this joyous season with a prodigality more lavish and hospitality more extensive than were dreamed of even in the annals of Bracebridge Hall.

Then came the true carnival of merriment. The old manor was ablaze with life and beauty. From the surrounding country all the belles and the beaux had gathered. Morning brought a meet at daybreak for the fox hunt, and nighttime called for "Old Uncle Ephraim," the plantation fiddler, whose reels were famous throughout the whole country. Feast followed feast, and the spirit of celebration extended from the master down to the field hands, each of whom received a jug filled with good whisky when he called for his Christmas ratons.

But these are the days that have gone, and with their going departed many characteristics which made the Christmas time down south so distinctive. While the fate of war and changed conditions have curtailed the prodigality of former days, most of the ancient customs remain, and in many instances Christmas in the villages and the country is but a mild repetition of antebellum observances.

A few of the large country homes still have some of the old servants who were with the family in slavery days. If these old family darlings have been away during the year they always reappear with the approach of the Christmas holidays and assume duties about the household. The old "mammy," although her services have been engaged elsewhere during the rest of the year, reports to make the fruit cake for Christmas dinner.

She alone knows the culinary traditions of the family kitchen. The ingredients of this wonderful cake have been handed down from generation to generation, and the spice and the brandy and the citron and all such things are compounded according to the proportions laid down years and years ago.

These fruit cakes bear the family name, and some time, through the courtesy of the season and the exchange of compliments of the day, a slice of Grantland cake is on the same plate with a slice of Dubignon cake. Not infrequently these cakes are cooked a year in advance, by which time they are fully seasoned and settled, although the cracks in the icing and its yellow tint mar the beauty somewhat. Its cooking can be entrusted to no hands except those of the antebellum family cook or her descendants.

Not alone this old cook, but all branches of the service in vogue during the days of slavery are usually represented about Christmas time. The son of your father's and your grandfather's coachman comes, and on rare days the old man himself hobbles to the house and spins out marvelous tales of the past.

These old darlings are all presented with gifts, and for each of their children a present of some sort has been prepared. This feature generally comes in the southern home before the rest of the family has been attended to. In the meantime the children have been keeping eager watch at the door of the room where Santa Claus has made his visit. No one is allowed to enter this sacred precinct until the paterfamilias gives the signal, but before this signal is given every member of the household must be dressed and ready for breakfast and the morning prayers must have been said.

When everything is ready the children are allowed to rush in and examine the contents of their stockings. Some of the largest children still have implicit faith in the wonderful personality of old Santa Claus. Forged notes from the old fellow, admonishing them to make their behavior according to the precept of their mother, are eagerly read and compared. The interchange of presents among the older members of the family usually takes place at the breakfast table, but in most instances they are allowed to mingle with the bounties of old Santa Claus and are plucked from the same holly tree from which his presents hang.

The hunt for the holly and the mistletoe, while not as exciting as the chase for the boar's head, is just as much a feature as that old English custom and equally enjoyable. Several days before Christmas are a busy time, filled with straw and brimming full of pretty girls and boys, too, is driven into the woods, where the search for the holly is carried on. It requires a most agile youngster to scale to the height where the mistletoe grows, and he is always sure of a generous reward of kisses from the girls below.

Christmas day is always quiet. Sometimes the boys and girls have been taught carols, which they sing at home or in the village chapel hard by. Night brings mirth and youthful jollity again when the darlings come once more and sing old songs or participate in outdoor games.

About it all there has been a quaint, old time flavor. Everybody is happy, and yet there is a tinge of sadness about it all, for the southern Christmas now is but a faint echo of days gone by.

### Christmas Treasures

By EUGENE FIELD.

I COUNT my treasures o'er with care—  
A little toy that baby knew,  
A little sock of faded hue,  
A little lock of golden hair.  
Long years ago this Christmas time  
My little one—my all to me—  
Sat robed in white upon my knee  
And heard the merry Christmas chime.

"Tell me, my little golden head,  
If Santa Claus should come tonight,  
What shall he bring my baby bright,  
What treasure for my boy?" I said,  
And then he named the little toy  
While in his hand and truthful eyes  
There came a look of glad surprise  
That spoke his trustful, childish joy.

And as he lapped his evening prayer  
He asked the boon with baby grace,  
And, toddling to the chimney place,  
He hung his little stocking there.  
That night as lengthening shadows crept  
I saw the white-winged angels come  
With music to our humble home  
And kiss my darling as he slept.

He must have heard that baby prayer,  
For in the morn' with glowing face,  
He toddled to the chimney place  
And found the little treasure there.  
They came again one Christmas tide,  
That angel host so fair and white,  
And, singing all the Christmas night,  
They hured my darling from my side.

A little sock, a little toy,  
A little lock of golden hair,  
The Christmas music on the air,  
A watching for my baby boy,  
But it again that angel train  
And golden head come back for me  
To bear me to eternity  
My watching will not be in vain.

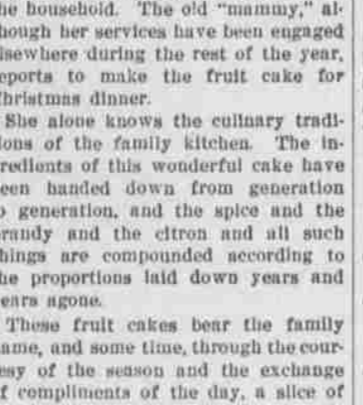
For This Christmas,  
Ye old time stave that poeath out  
To Christmas revels all  
At tavern tap and wassail bout  
And in ye banquet hall—  
Whiles ye old burden rings again,  
Add yet ye verse, as due,  
"God rest you merry, gentlemen,"  
And gentleness to too!"  
—James Whitcomb Riley.

### PLAN JUVENILE COURT.

(UNITED PRESS LEARNED WIRE.)  
Paris, Dec. 20.—The French government today is looking for quarters to serve as a Juvenile Court, patterned after the American model originated by Judge Lindsey. The Chamber of Deputies passed an act in July, 1912, providing for such a court but neglected to provide either funds to operate it or a room for it to be held in. Paris courts are already overcrowded so a separate building must be arranged for.

### The Boy Bishop

PERHAPS the most remarkable of all celebrations in honor of St. Nicholas was the old one of the boy bishop. The boy bishop assumed his office on St. Nicholas day, Dec. 6, and held it till Holy Innocents' day, Dec. 28. The custom originated on the continent of Europe and was adopted in England, where it reached what was probably its fullest development. A boy was chosen to represent a bishop and was clothed with all the robes and



THE BOY BISHOP RULED WITH HIGHEST POMP AND AUTHORITY.

invested with all the insignia pertaining to the station. Other boys represented priests, deacons and other suitable persons for the bishop's train. The boy bishop conducted a service in the church, and in some cases he and his companions went about from house to house singing and collecting money, which they did not ask as a gift, but demanded as a right.

"The boy bishop attained his fullness of dignity at Salisbury cathedral, though he was known all over England. There he was chosen from among the choir boys, the rest forming his retinue, and he ruled with the highest pomp and most absolute authority. He is said to have conducted all the services of the church except the mass. In some other places the boy bishop is said to have celebrated the mass itself. If any prebend fell vacant in his term of office he filled it, and if he died before his term expired he was buried with all the honors due to a genuine bishop. There is record of a boy bishop at Salisbury filling a vacant prebend by the appointment of his schoolmaster, and there is in the cathedral there the tomb of one who died while holding his office. On the top of it is an effigy of the child in full episcopal robes.

Such masquerading plays as this were not then deemed offensive or derogatory to the dignity of the church. In fact, much coarser and more uncouth exhibitions were freely permitted on some occasions, even to the extent of burlesques of the services of the church within its own walls. Of course the evil and discreditable side was bound to be seen in time, and the functions of the boy bishop were at last forbidden by Henry VIII. They were restored, however, for a time by Mary.

—St. Nicholas.

### St. Nicholas Eve.

A stranger visiting the German colonies of our great cities would think that his almanac needed resetting, for on the evening of Dec. 5 thousands of little stockings are hung up with the same careful clothespinning and heart of hope as on the authentic Christmas eve. St. Nicholas eve it is that the "fatherland" exiles are celebrating. Just as early as any children ever get up those that are paying honor to the gift saint tumble out of bed and find their stockings well weighed with fruit and candies and apfelkuchen.

The naughty child that has been a trial to its parents in previous weeks is rather likely to find his stockings laden with coal. It is a hint that a second gift season is at hand and that it would be well to fall into line with the good children. And the good children are encouraged to a renewed and severer virtue for the days between their present reward and the fuller holiday that is coming—Country Life in America.

Christmas Song.  
O'er Bethlehem town  
A star looked down  
When shepherds watched by night,  
And wise men gazed  
With hearts amazed  
To see the wondrous sight.

"Beloved star,  
We follow far,"  
They said. An angel voice  
Upon the air  
Rang full and clear.  
It sung: "Rejoice! Rejoice!"

"A Child is born!"  
"His Christmas morn!"  
Then sing, dear children, sing,  
For history's page  
In every age  
Shall hail that Child a King.  
—Lydia Avery Conroy.

A Greeting.  
God send a blessed Christmas  
To every patient life,  
A little resting from the toil,  
A success of the strife,  
May Faith breathe words of gentle cheer,  
Hope point to roses blowing near  
And tender love and friends sincere  
Make this a blessed Christmas!

Oh, somehow, half blindly, we as city,  
county and state, stumble along; we'll  
all be rich and happy yet.

a long vacation—hibernata.  
A teaspoonful of gossip will taint a  
kettleful of pure truth.

### Good Old Santa Goes To Many Odd Places

GOOD old Santa Claus looks in upon pretty nearly everybody at Christmas time, and the festival of which he is patron is celebrated in some very odd ways and out of the way places in our country.

At Ellis Island, in the harbor of New York, on Christmas day several hundred children, with their parents, usually await debarkation on the shores of America. There is a multitude of German "kinder," of Italian "bambinos" and of youngsters of every nationality, as much interested, all of them, in Christmas doings as any Yankee young folks could possibly be. It is indeed an occasion of great excitement for them, inasmuch as the missionary societies have provided for these humble aliens a wealth of good cheer, and, with the help of donations made for the purpose, the day is rendered joyful for all, both young and old, toys being plentifully distributed among the little ones.

The loneliest places in the world are some of the lighthouses which our government maintains along the coast for the protection of mariners. Yet Santa Claus finds his way to them, and in his honor a feast, even though it be a humble one, is held. It may be that the barren rock which the lighthouse marks affords room enough for the keeping of a dozen chickens, the fattest of which are suitably sacrificed.

But even this is not practicable in such a spot as Boon Island, off the coast of Maine, a dangerous bit of terra firma which is continually swept by the waves. Only a few years ago, so the story goes, a little girl four years of age, daughter of the keeper of Boon light, was so distressed because her father had been prevented by continual storm from going to the mainland for the customary Christmas goose that she stole out of the lighthouse at night and knelt in a sheltered spot to pray.

"Dear God," she said, "please send us a goose for our Christmas dinner!" Hardly had she spoken the words when a great wild goose flew (as sometimes happens in such places) against the big lantern above and fell dead at her feet, to be promptly carried in and presented to the family as a bird literally sent from heaven.

Uncle Sam maintains about fifty lightships along the seacoasts and on the lakes to mark dangerous shoals. Lonely indeed are the skippers and crews of these vessels, which, like the fabled phantom ship, pursue voyages

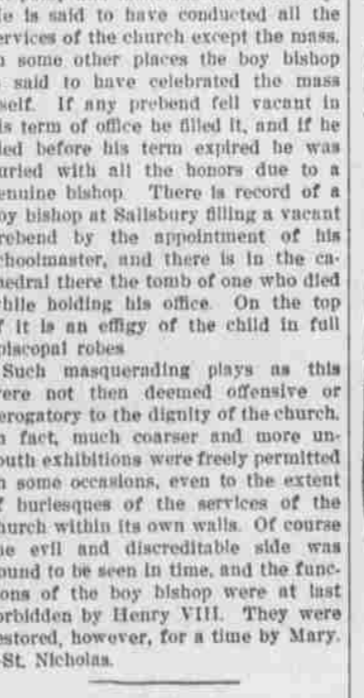


CHRISTMAS AT ELLIS ISLAND.

that have no end, continually buffeted by storms. Yet Christmas is not forgotten. A brace of wild ducks, perchance, may be secured for the feast, and the cook will surely provide a liberal dish of the much appreciated "plum duff"—a preparation of pastry shaped like half a watermelon, which, in order that all the raisins it contains may not fall into one slice, requires, under the rules, to be cut "fore and aft."

In that far flung archipelago known as the Aleutian chain, which, reckoned geographically as a part of Alaska, stretches across the northern Pacific, Russian customs are still retained to a great extent, though the islands belong to the United States.

But, speaking of Alaska, it is a fact curious enough that Santa Claus in real life is seen there at Christmas, as nowhere else in the world, with his reindeer. The superintendents of the reindeer stations, established by the government for the benefit of the natives, harness the tamest of their animals and, hitching them to a sleigh filled with bags containing provisions, tobacco and other desirable things, drive through the Eskimo villages and leave at each humble hut one of the sacks as a reminder that the Christ Child, about whom these poor people have learned from the missionaries, is born.—Los Angeles Times.



CHRISTMAS AT ELLIS ISLAND.

"A Merry Christmas."  
"A merry Christmas" is the wish I send  
from my heart,  
A life all full of love, in which no sorrow  
finds a part.  
Or, if some pain fall to thy lot, love  
guarded though it be,  
May he who came at this glad time then  
make it bleed to thee,  
Sound over all waters, reach out from all  
lands,  
The chorus of voices, the clasping of  
hands;  
Sing hymns that were sung by the stars  
at the morn';  
Sing songs of the angels when Jesus was  
born!  
—Whittier.

It is a sad thing when a bridegroom's  
—or a bride's—smile changes into a  
scowl.

Young men, there may be better  
places than the navy for you, but there  
are many places worse.

### Young Men's Christian Association PHYSICAL DEPARTMENT

Business men's gymnasium and recreation classes, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 5:30 to 6:30 p. m.; Senior classes, Monday and Thursday evenings, 8:00 to 9:30; Student classes, Monday and Thursday, 4:15 to 5:15 p. m.; Junior classes, Wednesday, 4:15 to 5:00, Saturday, 10:15 to 11:00 a. m.; Boys, Tuesday and Friday, 4:00 to 4:30 p. m.; Ladies class, Wednesday, 7:00 p. m.; Ladies swimming period, 7:00 to 9:00 p. m. Competitive games Friday and Saturday evenings. Boxing and wrestling and free work by appointment. The Physical Department equipment includes the following: Gymnasium, 80x40, three hand ball courts, swimming pool, ten shower baths, steam room, boxing and wrestling room, private locker and dressing room for business men, large general locker room for senior and junior members.

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### RELIGIOUS WORK

Sunday afternoon meetings, men and boys bible classes, lectures, etc.

### SOCIAL WORK

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