"SOLDIERS FIRST" SHOULD BE THE MOTTO THIS CHRISTMAS

Numerous Ways of Useless Giving Pointed Out, Including Impossible Perfumery and Costly Wrappings, and Need for Economy to Help Fighting Men Is Emphasized

By JANE DIXON.

THE apple cheeked old fellow who drives the celebrated team of roof climbing reindeer may not like the following conversation. In fact, if he sees it he is pretty certain to stamp and storm and fling his long white whiskers wide to the whistling December winds. He may even go so far as to overlook the participants in it when he comes to the distribution of plunder. But the conversation actually occurred, and as a suggestion it is worthy of record. Here it is:

"Want to make yourself a popular writer?"

The inquirer was a personable young chap of big heart and limited purse. He is the sort of Lothario who would stake you to a half dozen mauve chrysanthemums with his last five spot and then lunch on thin air and a tall glass of water for the rest of the week.

"I surely do. Otherwise why write at all?"

"I know how you can turn the trick."

"How much does the secret cost?"

"Not a cent. It's a free will offering. It's worth a million dollars, but I'll give it to you for nothing if you promise to put it over."

"All right. Shoot."

"Start a movement through your paper to make Christmas gifts unpatriotic."

"Simple little task. About as simple as winging Big Bill with an airgun."

Many Would Praise Idea.

"Don't you believe it. The easiest task you ever tried, that is what it would be. You'd have more ardent applauders than a Century chorus queen. Mary Pickford would be no kind of a heroine at all alongside of you. Praise would reverberate from city to city, not forgetting small towns, villages and hamlets. All over the world fellow sufferers who face Christmas with a brave smile and a busted bank roll would rise to call you blessed."

"How do you figure I am going to get away with any such revolutionary idea?"

"How are you going to get away with it? You are going to get away great. Just say you think it is wilful waste at a time like this to spend money on pin cushions and gold lace collar boxes and junk like that when we need all our money to help can the Kaiser."

"No go. Sorry. Your scheme is a failure."

"Why?"

"Because one of the surest ways to persuade Willum crowns are not becoming to his style of beauty is to buy Liberty bonds. Nice fat Liberty bonds all done up in a neat little package, tied with a holly ribbon and sealed with a Santa Claus stamp, would make the most acceptable kind of a Christmas gift."

The personable young man with the big heart and the limited purse admitted defeat. He said there seemed nothing left for him to do but to find a place where he could dine heartily on a dime's worth of crackers and milk.

"I have a better scheme than yours," offered the wise boy who is a regular Houdini when it comes to worming his way out of a tight place. "Get up a quarrel with your girl. Tell her everything is off forever. You can always patch it up some time in January."

The wise boy pretended the suggestion was a joke. Maybe it was. Maybe it wasn't. But to be forewarned is to be forearmed. Girls, tread easy. Allow not your pride to run away with your prospective present. Pay no attention to the eccentricities of man at this season of the year. Laugh at his provocations. Notice not his seeming neglect. When he goes up in the air smile and keep your feet on the ground. There is method in his madness. A deep seated plot has been laid to deprive you of your Yuletide rights. He is one of those Smart Aleck fellows who does not believe in Santa Claus.

This Fellow Must Decide at Once.

"You know, I am up against it right," confided another one of the Christmas baiting crew. "I have two girls. That is, I think I have them, though a fellow never can tell for certain where he stands with a woman. He may think he is assaying 100 per cent., when the truth is he is hitting about deuce high. Anyway, I like these two girls fifty-fifty. Looking over my total assets I see I can only play Santa to one of them. Which one? That's the question. I've got to make a decision quick. Getting nearer the danger zone every day."

"Flip a coin," some one suggested. "Heads it's the blonde. Tails it's the brunette."

"Might as well," admitted the wise boy. "No matter which one wins you will have a sneaking feeling you wish it had been the other."

Come to think of it, there must be a lot of men in the same jar of pickles. How S. Claus must chuckle when Christmas comes along and the random Romeo, who has spent an entire year convincing six or seven dolls that each is his one best bet, has to dig and make good. Let us see—seven times a five pound box of candy is thirty-five pounds of candy. When we consider that a plain lump of sugar has to be arrested from a head waiter these days by main force, the high cost of courtship ought to cause many a man to settle down before the Yule bells begin ringing their merry old roundelay.

There was once a man who had a great and worthy idea. His idea was a safe and sane Fourth of July. For as much as he gave us the safe and sane Fourth, we must be eternally grateful to the man. But why did he weaken? Why did he not continue the good work until he had established for humanity a safe and sane Christmas? Verily would his name have been headlined on the pages of time along with those of Cæsar, Napoleon, Christopher Columbo, George Wahington. As a deliverer he would have ranked along with Abraham Lincoln. He would be remembered longer than the man who invented horseless carriages and holeless socks.

Picture if you can an absolutely safe and sane Christmas. What would it mean to the individual, to the world at large? Of what would it consist?

Perhaps it would be better to inaugurate a process of elimination, to tell some of the things of which it would NOT consist. Take, for example, the Whatsis. The Whatsis is a form of Christmas gift that has been in existence since Santa wore a pinning blanket. The secret of its identity has never been solved. Untold numbers of mystified recipients have tried to discover from Yuletide to Yuletide what it is all about, but the Whatsis goes waggishly on its way defying the most valiant efforts at solution.

The Whatsis assumed various shapes, sizes, forms, according to the imaginative power of its maker. In its most frequent phase it is made up of a mess of pink or baby blue ribbon, a shower of French knots, some dodads of lace and other staggering impedimenta from the fancy work department. It looks awfully sweet and pretty. But now that you have it, what are you going to do with it? Should it be worn beneath the blouse or on top of the dressing table? Are those ribbon strings meant to be tied underneath your chin or around a pile of freshly laundered handkerchiefs? You dare not display your ignorance by asking the giver to let you in on her intentions. So you thank her in your very best gush and send the Whatsis away to join the other Whatsises in the bottom of an old trunk. Unless of course you can dig up some other victim to wish the Whatsis on, say as a New Year's token or a birthday remembrance.

The masculine gender of the Whatsis is quite as far from sanity as the feminine. It consists mostly of something made out of quilted satin. After kicking around in the dresser for a while and getting itself thoroughly disliked because of its tendency to impede progress it is pressed into service as a shoe shiner.

There really ought to be a law against the Whatsis. It gets too many goats. It is wilful and wanton waste. If you must indulge in an orgy of pink and baby blue ribbons, tie a few yards of it around the neck of a turkey and lead the noble bird to the house of the one to whom you wish to play Santa Claus. You will be as welcome as a check from home.

Not so very far back a favorite form of Christmas atrocity practised on innocent young women by indulgent admirers was a silver manicure set. The set was displayed in a near leather case about the size of an old fashioned telescope. Throw back the lid, and there stood revealed a collection of tools such as rivalled the implements of a noted surgeon about to perform a major operation.

The manufacturer of these "sets" never sent a working script with his production. He left it to you to guess the offices of the twenty-odd pieces. In order to give them proper display room on your dressing table you would have to dispense with your comb, brush, hand mirror and many other articles of daily usage. You did, but not for long. The handles of this Christmas manicure silver had a happy way of separating themselves from whatever was fastened to the other end. This was an excellent excuse to send the pesky things to the scrap box, where they may be found, blackened and riotous with rust, to this very day.

Impossible perfume was and is a favorite pitfall of the male shopper in Giftland. Really, the young lady gougers who sell odoriferous rubbish to credulous beaus ought to be ashamed to take the money.

"This is one of our newest odors," they twitter, waving a glass cork back and forth before the olfactory nerves of an abashed buyer. "It is the concentrated essence of the forget-me-not bloom with just a dash of orange blossom. So delicate. So refined. Only $25 a dram. And look at the bottle. Cut glass, Colonial style, with filagree of silver. I'd simply be tickled to death if some one would send me a bottle of it for my Christmas. I wouldn't care if I never got another thing."

Has Sized Up Her Victim.

The girl behind the counter has sized up her victim. She is hep to the kind of catfish look in his eyes. Some one of her sisters has him locoed. The perfume is probably an inferior grade of new mown hay, but she knows the psychological effect of the mention of forget-me-nots and orange blossoms on a man who is only two hops and a jump ahead of the wedding march. She is right. The man tears himself away from several months' savings and departs with the precious package clutched tightly in his overcoat pocket.

The fatal eve arrives. Honeylove is handed her year's supply of poison gas. She removes the stopper. It takes her about two seconds to discover that when she trips forth with a few drops of the costly camouflage scattered over her person she will have only a few rivals, the most notable of which will be the chemical factories across the river in New Jersey. Her entrance into a room will be the signal for the hostess to fling open the windows, and when she sits beneath an electric fan in a resaurant patrons will petition head waiters to move them out of suffocating distance.

Will she tell Clarence of this? Will she tip him off that as a Santa Claus he is one of the very best little wet blankets in the world? Never in a million years! Instead she will clasp it close and coo:

"Perfume. Oo-o, I love perfume. I'm simply crazy about it. What kind did you say it is, dear? Forget-me-not and orange blossom? How perfectly sweet! It's too beautiful. Every time I use it, dear, I'll think of you. I'll never move a step without a touch of it. But I'll be stingy with it too. It's much too precious to waste. How did you ever think of anything so lovely?"

Poor Clarence! He treads air all the way home. He ought to get a look at Honeylove now:

"Perfume. Terrible stuff. Didn't know they made it that bad. And I never use anything but violet. He knows it. He's heard me say I can't stand anything but violet a thousand times. He did it for spite, that's what he did. And to think I did everything but tell him I wanted a wrist watch. Well, I'm through. I've wasted six whole months on that man. Stupid, so he is, just naturally s-t-u-p-i-d."

Has Many Hair Brushes.

A man who has a way with women owns six sets of military brushes that have never seen active service. He owns a seventh set which he uses. The six "sleepers" have come to him by the Christmas tree route. They are monogrammed, engraved, crested and inscribed. They are backed with ivory, enamel, ebony, silver. There is even a pair of platinum and gold.

"Pool all six sets and you wouldn't get a brush a man could use," says the owner. "When I want to brush my hair I use an old pair of wooden back boys I've had ever since I was in college. They are getting a trifle worn around the edges, and the varnish departed from their backs years ago, but I wouldn't trade them for all the other twelve. A woman can no more buy a hair brush for a man than she can buy him neckties. And I guess we are unanimous on the necktie question."

A true story. A girl who had everything wanted to play Santa Claus to a boy who had nothing, as yet, except youth, health and ambition. So she sneaked out and bought him a set of platinum and diamond shirt studs, with cuff links to match. They certainly did look swagger, nestling there in their bed of soft gray velvet. Gilbert de Peyster would have been proud to own them. But the boy was not Gilbert de Peyster. He was plain Tom Somebody or other. He had not attained that exalted state of social well being where he could jump into his own private evening clothes. He had hopes, but no matter how brave a man may be, he cannot go out in the evening clad only in hope. Perhaps you can appreciate Tom's feelings on Christmas morning when he tore off the tissue paper and confronted the equivalent of his salary for six months.

But he was a game guy was Tom. He went out and hired the needed clothes. He wore the plunder. He wore it several times thereafter, when he had the price of an evening's interest in a community dress suit. When he did not have such price he sent regrets. The upkeep of his Christmas present was proving pretty expensive.

He took to thinking about it a lot. After a while he realized it would be a long time before he could live up to those studs and cuff links. He was a safe and sane boy. Though he liked the girl very much, he saw the impossibility of it. Quietly but firmly he dropped out of the race. The girl was heartbroken. She could not understand why. It has never dawned upon her that Santa Claus may have a sense of proportion as well as a sense of humor.

Mention of tissue paper brings to notice a custom which has gained a staggering momentum during the last several holiday seasons. This is the custom of Christmas wrapping.

Formerly it was deemed sufficient to "do up" a present in plain wrapping paper, tie it with a piece of cord and send it on its merry way. Then some wily manufacturer of cord hit upon the idea of coloring his wares red. He sold out quicker than a lemonade vender at a Fourth of July picnic. From the moment the wily manufacturer started his ball of red cord rolling no one has been able to stop it. To-day it has pushed the presents themselves away over into the wings while it stands in the centre of the stage and grabs the entire Christmas performance.

To show any class at all, the up to date Christmas gift must be housed in a special Christmas box. A Christmas card bearing the sender's name and the season's greeting must be tucked inside. It must be wrapped first in Christmas tissue, next in Christmas paper, tied with Christmas ribbon inside and Christmas cord outside, sealed with Christmas seals, stamped with Christmas stamps and tagged with Christmas tags.

Wrappings Prove Costly.

A complete set of Christmas wrappings for a ten cent handkerchief costs in the neighborhood of fifty cents. It may reach the extremity where givers find it necessary, by reason of limited funds, to send merely the wrappings and trust to the generosity of the recipient to accept good will in place of a gift.

Merely by way of suggestion: Dispense with elaborate wrappings and drop the nickels and dimes thus saved into the tin box for one of our war charities. It will buy a bag of candy for a soldier's baby temporarily, perhaps permanently, deprived of his papa Santa. It may mean a slice of Christmas turkey for some Sammie over there nursing his trench feet and taking pot shots at Huns between bites.

What kind of a Christmas are we going to have?

The jolliest sort of a Christmas, to be sure. There will be the same holly wreaths tied with scarlet ribbons, the same sprigs of mistletoe beneath the chandelier, the same pungent greens, the same candle starred and bauble gay trees, the same carols, the same joy bells. There will be the same turkey stuffed with chestnuts oozing gravy, the same mince pie, the same plum pudding. There will be the same stomach aches, the same gout, the same heavy heads and clogged systems. Also the same old harvest for the same family physicians. The harvest moon of the M. D. is the star of Bethlehem.

Beyond shadow of doubt we will have some changes in our Christmas programme. There will be a new note of seriousness running through all our good time. Santa Claus, once perched so conspicuously atop the highest peak of the Christmas tree, will be replaced by "The Star Spangled Banner." In many proud homes which possess the right the beauteous banner will be accompanied by the service flag bearing its grave message of one or two or three star letters as the family has given of its own.

Already toy shops announce the stampede for miniature militarism. Regiments of little tin soldiers will be marshalled beneath the boughs of evergreen. Infantile cannon will thunder as never before. Baby guns will bark at imaginary enemies. Toy drums will rat-a-tat-tat to the tread of small feet. Play bugles will sound the call to arms.

Indian suits, once the pride and joy of child hearts, are tossed aside without receiving so much as a tumble. Johnny, Jr., wants a soldier suit like daddy wears or he wants Santa to make him a sailor like Uncle Bob. Even tiny Alice, she of the spun gold curls and cornflower eyes, would rather have a toy sword with a belt that fastens around her waist than she would a doll that can close its eyes and say "Mamma!" when you squeeze it.

"Soldiers first!" This is the holiday edict.

In sending a contribution to THE SUN Tobacco Fund Mrs. F. W. Saunderson of Cedarhurst, L. I., wrote:

"A friend and I have agreed to send Christmas gifts to our soldiers this year instead of to each other."

I do not know Mrs. Saunderson of Cedarhurst, L. I., but I wish I did. She is made of the sort of stuff which if occasion demanded would be found in the front ranks with a gun on her shoulder, marching forward to do her bit.

There is no copyright on Mrs. Saunderson's decision. Any woman who is thinking of knitting a pair of heliotrope house slippers for a man friend so he may sit by the fire and enjoy his comfort is at perfect liberty to tell him she has decided to knit a khaki colored helmet for a soldier instead. The man who exchanges boxes of cigars with his men friends is free to adopt the Cedarhurst idea and arrange with them to send the smokes to "our boys," whether they have gone over or are getting in shape to go.

So put on your war bonnet, Santa. Slip into your service suit. Button up your trench coat. Pack your old kit bag with safe and sane gifts. Stick a billion rounds of good cheer into your ammunition belt. Harness the reindeer to a gun carriage and get ready for the big drive in favor of a happy holiday season, 1917-18.

"Lead the noble bird to the home of one to whom you wish to play Santa Claus."

JAKE WINTERBOTTOM'S MAN HUNT HAS PAINFUL END

Comes Up With the One Eyed Man With Disastrous Results, Mr. Owen Pepper Reports

By DAVID A. CURTIS.

THINGS that happened outside of Arkansas City, speaking in general, were held to be of no importance whatever by the citizens of Arkansas City at the time when old man Greenlaw ran a little saloon on the levee there. The prevailing sentiment of the community seemed to be to the effect that it was enough for any man to do to pay attention to local occurrences without bothering his head with thoughts of what might or might not occur elsewhere.

It was true that only two things remained as food for thought after the elimination of extraneous matters. One of these two was the flood that usually threatened the existence of Arkansas City and other riverside settlements twice a year. The other was the poker game that was played more frequently than that in the little back room of old man Greenlaw's saloon.

Outside of these two nothing had ever happened in the place and so far as human intelligence could be relied on to predict nothing else could be expected to happen. And the people of Arkansas City troubled themselves not a whit as to what happened elsewhere, as has been already stated.

There was, however, one notable exception to this general statement. The old man himself, and a certain group of four husky citizens who cooperated with him in the conduct of the aforesaid poker game, were as indifferent to the affairs of the rest of the world as were any of the other citizens of Arkansas City with the single exception noted. These five were grievously tormented by their realization of the continued existence of the one eyed man.

It irked them extremely that he should number the cart as he did year after year, setting at naught all the principles of correct living, defiant of all consequences, even derisive of the frequent efforts of those whom he outraged to avenge their wrongs, and serenely confident in his truly marvellous ability to extricate himself from the seemingly hopeless situations in which he was forever putting himself.

Of itself the objection which old man Greenlaw and his friends entertained to the fact that the one eyed man remained extant was not an indication that they were broadening out in the sense that they were beginning to concern themselves with anything outside of Arkansas City. Had the one eyed man remained away from there from the first, or even if he had refrained from going back there after one or two visits, as might have been expected of anybody who had ordinary human intelligence, the entire population of Arkansas City, including old man Greenlaw and his four copartners, would have refused to fash themselves with thoughts of him. But no.

A certain captain of one of the packets that plied the Mississippi River with such regularity as the condition of the river made possible had been in his earlier days a master mariner in all of the Seven Seas, and in his long experience had acquired a vocabulary. He, after some observation of the manifold doings of the one eyed man, had been heard to call him the "Stormy Petrel of the Mississippi Valley," and there was some aptitude in the name, though it was not fully descriptive, for the one eyed man was almost certainly to be found in the centre of any serious disturbance that occurred at any time anywhere between St. Louis and New Orleans.

Whereas the petrel delights, as did the one eyed man, in upheavals of the elements and is usually among those present when upheavals occur, and whereas the one eyed man was also to be found wherever there was one, the comparison of the two was in one respect apt, but there was another in which the likeness failed to appear, for it was a safe bet on all such occasions that the one eyed man was himself the upheaver.

However peaceful the scene when he arrived, he would usually tear things wide open soon after his arrival. The steamboat captain, it will be observed, had connoted only one of the one eyed man's characteristics, but as a fact he had many and various traits.

But even though it be reiteration it should be said right here that old man Greenlaw and Jake Winterbottom and Jim Blaisdell and Joe Bassett and Sam Pearsall would have been calmly indifferent as to any and all of the one eyed man's doings if he had stayed away from Arkansas City, but that he would not do. He knew he was not wanted there, but to his perverse nature that appeared to be an excellent reason for going there, and from time to time he went.

He was probably the only person who knew anything about Arkansas City who would go there if he could avoid it, but to him the peril of the adventure presented an irresistible temptation. Almost any temptation was irresistible to him. That was one of his characteristics, but as was said, he had others.

For one thing he was a truly remarkable poker player, accounted by many the most skilful manipulator of pasteboards in his time, though there were many others who held that Jim Blaisdell was his equal if not his superior in that respect. Then, too, he was a handy man with a knife and always carried one. Further than that—but the list is too long. Those who are curious should read the stories of his adventures and judge for themselves what manner of man he was.

Several of these adventures he had undertaken in Arkansas City. Hence the antipathy to which allusion has already been made. The five persons hereinbefore mentioned loathed him.

It is true that of the five there was one who had a sneaking admiration for him, but this admiration was not such as to beget a friendly feeling. By no means.

Jim Blaisdell could not but respect one who rivalled him in skill so successfully as did the one eyed man, and though he desired the latter's extinction no less earnestly than did the other four, he longed even more to prove his own superiority in the game before the one eyed man should finally cash in. The others had no such thought.

They respected One Eye's prowess too greatly to wish to sit in with him. All they wanted to do was to kill him. This they had attempted to do several times, but with no success whatever.

This preyed on their minds. Not the fact that they had tried, but that they had failed. Especially did Mr. Winterbottom grieve, though he said little about it, being usually a man of few words.

Day after day he meditated between puffs till at length he formed a desperate resolve. Mr. Winterbottom invariably wore a double barrelled derringer in each of his two lower vest pockets. He could shoot as well with his left hand as with his right. Saying nothing to his friends of his purpose he disappeared. Next day there was a gap in the circle in old man Greenlaw's saloon.

Possibly a week elapsed during which no tidings of him came to the little saloon. Conjecture was exhausted, but no reasonable explanation of his absence had been found, so when Mr. Owen Pepper came in—Mr. Pepper was a travelling salesman from east Tennessee, who always combined pleasure with business by visiting the saloon when he reached Arkansas City.

When Mr. Pepper came in the old man questioned him.

"Is yo' all done heer'd anythin' o' Winterbottom recent?" he said. "He ain't been seen fo' a week."

"Oh, I don't know," said Mr. Pepper. "They is a kyind of a rumor circ'latin' up an' down the river 'bout a elderly gent what's trav'lin' 'round, some wild eyed an' grim, 'nquirin' where he's liable fo' to meet up with the one eyed man. Mebbe that's him."

"Mebbe," said the old man doubtfully. "I never reckoned Jake was liable to do nothin' like that, but he would bring him home forthwith, wherefore Mr. Pearsall had not gone.

As old man Greenlaw had never, in the course of several years, left his saloon for any purpose whatever, night or day, there was no one but Mr. Winterbottom to undertake the errand, if indeed that was really what he had gone away for. They thought it was probable, but they had no positive knowledge on the subject until Mr. Pepper came in again the next time he reached Arkansas City.

So eager was the old man by that time for news of the wanderer that he did not even wait for Mr. Pepper to say "Let's liquor," as etiquette required him to do on entering, but he—the old man—abruptly exclaimed: "Is that thar wild eyed indivi'l what yo' all was tellin' on done met up with One Eye yit? An' was it reely Winterbottom?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Mr. Pepper, also ignoring etiquette for the time with no compunction, so far as could be seen. "Yo' uns 'peared to reckon they was some question 'bout it reely bein' him, 'long o' p'sumin' what anybody'd just nachully be wild eyed onder the circumstants. Mebbe that's so. Mebbe the one I heer'd about first off was him an' mebbe not. I ain't p'pared to say."

That was the way with Mr. Pepper. If he saw that his hearers were greatly interested in what he had to tell he would prolong the telling by any evasion he could think of, no matter how cowardly.

"That ain't the p'int," said the old man sternly. "I done as't yo' is Winterbottom done did what he set out to, or ain't he? Can't yo' answer a plain question?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Mr. Pepper with a twinkle in his eye, but perceiving almost instantly that he would incur great peril if he indulged in further trifling, he went on hastily: "He never told me nothin' 'bout what 'twas he was aimin' to do, but him an' the one eyed man done met up some'res in Memphis, into a s'loon. 'Cordin' to what I done heer'd they must 'a' been diddin's."

"One on 'em's daid then," declared Mr. Bassett. "Jake ain't one to give up no other way."

"Oh, I don't know," said Mr. Pepper. "The doctors claims what his inj'ries is painful but not necar'ly dang'rous. 'Pears he had both hands into his two pockets, diggin' fo' his derringers when the one eyed man done seen him, but afo' he c'd git 'em out One Eye give him a swipe with a knife squar acrost his belly, on'y it didn't go fur enough in fo' to cut him open 'ntirely. 'Peared it on'y just cut his two hands to the bone, so he didn't had no use of 'em, so One Eye he just laughed at him an' as't the s'loon keeper to send fo' a doctor, an' he walked out."

"That ain't like One Eye," said the old man sceptically. "How come he didn't kill him when he got a chanst?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Mr. Pepper. "I as't him that my ownself when I seen him in Helena, day befo' yesterday, an' he says what he reckons he's liable fo' to stop over in Arkansas City ag'in sooner or later, an' he'd kyind o' hate to miss meetin' any o' the gang. Said they wouldn't be nigh so much fun into it if they wa'n't all hyar."

All Birds Looked Alike to Him

HE sauntered into the market early on Thanksgiving eve, scanned the rows of poultry hanging around the place, pointed up to them and said to the attendant:

"Give me one of those birds; about ten pounds."

The attendant took one down, weighed it, with the ready reply, "Just ten exactly, sir," wrapped it up and handed it to the purchaser, who took his check to the cashier's window and left the place well satisfied with the selection for the following day's dinner.

When he arrived home (he lived in Jersey) he was met at the gate by his wife who asked.

"Well, dear, did you select a nice, tender one?"

"I hope so, dear. They told me at the market the birds were the finest they had handled in many years, owing to the mildness of the season," he said, as he handed the bundle to her. She placed it in the pantry until after the evening meal.

He had settled down comfortably for his usual evening's reading, when he was startled by the voice of his wife and saw her enter the room with the bird clenched tightly by the feet in one hand and pointing with the other to it.

"And you say you picked out this turkey yourself?" she asked.

"Why, yes. Anything wrong with it?"

"Anything wrong with it! You know that in our forty years of married life we have never let Thanksgiving go by without a real turkey, and here you bring home a big, fat goose!"

"What!" he said, as he sprang up. "A goose! That's one on me. I saw row after row of them hanging around and took for granted they were all turkeys."

"Well," she sighed, "we'll have to make the best of it. We're well supplied with geese for the day. That's two we have."

"Two! Where's the other?" he asked.

"You," she replied.

"She is hep to the foolish look in his eye."