I WOULD like to have
the Christmas time
I remember now
so well;
So many things for-
gotten that would
be a joy to tell;
Not a gath'ring in
a meeting house
with a faded
Christmas tree—
Such things are com-
mon now-a-adays,
but didn't used to be—
Where the parson and his family, all for
Sunday meeting drest,
Of the presents hung upon it always have
the most and best!
Where the little ragged urchin, with his
face clad in regret,
Can look with wide-eyed wonder at the
things he'll never get!
There were no velvet cushions on our
nineteenth century chairs;
No fine and padded tapestry where we
knelt to say our prayers:
No costly paintings on the walls that some-
how always stay,
In a sort of mocking elegance when the
guests have gone away.
No gaslight throwing diamonds in your
eyes at every turn,
Nor frappe from the punch bowl, tea from
costly silver urn;
No prancing steeds and butler, with furs
and furbelows,
To shield the rose-clad maidens from the
prying winter snows!
But the old log house in Herman, that was
such a cozy home,
With its shingle-covered arches that to
us was heaven's dome;
Its basswood floor of puncheon, the pegs
beside the door,
Just enough to hang the wardrobe of the
family and no more.
The rifle and the powder flask, with its
curious catch and spring;
The belt with sheath knife in it, bullet
molds and everything,
Hung upon the dry, cracked rafter out of
reach of careless hands,
But ready, opportunely, when a sudden call
demands.
Along in first December, when the woods
and fields were white,
And the owls were holding concerts of the
hooting kind at night,
There were hints of coming Christmas, and
a half unconscious awe
Settled on our youthful features in a way
you never saw!
Six of us in that household, I well may call
it seven,
But that one, a little three-year-old, had
strayed away to Heaven:
Six make even numbers, if we count it two
by two,
But I'll put the other in it for complete-
ness; wouldn't you?
We were told to hang our stockings and
then to quickly leave—
This was early in the evening of that fa-
mous Christmas eve—
And we scrambled up the ladder to the
chamber overhead,
To whisper speculations on the things
that had been said.
Outside the storm was dancing in fantas-
tic flights amain,
Sowing crystal stars in showers against
the window pane;
Yet sheltered in that household we little
cared for this,
When no harm would dare to venture be-
tween us and mother's kiss!
Very early in the morning, while the stars
were shining bright—
For the clouds had fled the scandal of dis-
robing in the night!—
We sought our hanging stockings on the
backs of every chair—
The ones we wore the day before, for we
had no more to spare!
Compared with what we have to-day it
would be counted small,
But the gifts were rich in kindness; for
each one gave his all;
The apples were like spheres of gold, and
all the little things
Were more to us than diadems from
crowns of ancient kings!
The hands that filled our stockings on that
night so long ago,
The hearts that beat for those they loved,
are whiter now than snow
That scatters on this Christmas eve its
crystal fleece of white,
Reminder of that household where in
dreams we live at night.
—Edward William Dutcher, in Banner of Gold.

IT WAS the Pentlands' first dinner under their own roof-tree. The plum pudding had made the circuit of the dining-room. Every face at the festive board reflected good cheer.

As city editor and society chronicler of the Lone Star, the Pentlands had met, loved, married and continued to work side by side until their joint earnings enabled them to build this pretty Queen Anne Cottage; and to the house-warming had been bidden their Christmas eve friends tried and true. Elizabeth Pentland's ambition was achieved; she possessed a home. As she surveyed the table snowy in white linen, glistening in silver and cut glass, and caught through the holly and mistletoe the approving coo of the infant heir to Pentland "affections and good-will," and the congratulatory smiles of their guests, her happy face lifted in gratitude.

"Thank God!" said Mrs. Pentland, "this is one social event I am not called upon to chronicle."

"Amen," said the city editor.

"How like a story," said Mrs. Weatherell; "one of those good, old-fashioned, wholesome love stories I am so hungry to read. By the way, can anybody tell us what has become of the old-fashioned love story?"

"Like the day of miracles, my dear, it has passed." Elizabeth Pentland's cynicism was acquired before she met the city editor.

"The telling, you mean; but love—not a bit of it. It's as young and as full of vitality as this King of Love Feasts—Christmas itself."

Mrs. Weatherell was one of those rare women at peace with self and the world, despite the fact that the latter persisted in believing her wretchedly unhappy. As pretty a woman as one meets in a long day's walk was Mrs. Wetherell; nature and art fitted her to shine in brilliant society. But Mrs. Wetherell's beauty was of the spirit as well as the flesh. Never was she known to complain. The husband whom the world dubbed a miserable failure was still to her the Prince Charming who won her heart when she was toasted the loveliest girl in her "set."

At five and forty Mrs. Wetherell judged all marital relations from her own vantage ground—the love that is eternal. It was this refreshing, Arcadian strain in her nature that attracted and held the affection of Elizabeth Pentland, whose knowledge of "men and things" had come from hard knocks with the world.

"I am sick unto nausea," sighed Mrs. Wetherell, "of the problems involved in the modern love story. How refreshing it would seem to meet once more in print love on the old familiar grounds!"

"Fancy," laughed Miss Dashaway, sketch artist of Good Form, "the tag end of this century wading through Jane Austen!"

"Notwithstanding the speed and spirit of the times," said Return Betram, a sculptor who had outlived his contemporaries, consequently his fame, "material for Jane Austen stories is not wanting in our own day."

"No, not while you are with us, Betram," chuckled the city editor, replenishing the patriarchal chiseler's glass.

The ox-like eyes of the sturdy little sculptor, dilating with the youth that in art is never old, blinked knowingly.

SAT PLAYING WITH THE TRIVIAL THING.

"Betram has a story he is bursting to tell," cried the city editor. "Mrs. Wetherell has given him the cue. I wager a choice public is about to be supplied with a revised, annotated, up-to-date edition of Jane Austen."

"Imagine a Jane Austen of the Latin quarter!" smiled Mrs. Pentland, with an encouraging nod.

"For once the clever Mrs. Pentland is in error," said the sculptor, settling in his chair with the ease of a raconteur sure of one telling arrow in his quiver. "Nothing could be more remote from the Latin quarter than this story which the drift of the conversation makes so timely. To be candid, my chief purpose in accepting Mrs. Pentland's hospitality was to recount Hillhouse's romance."

"He was my best friend," continued Betram, encircling the table with a second significant twinkle; "I may say a lifelong friend. About a year ago Hillhouse was called to Barrington to work on the equestrian statue of which you may have heard. He took a studio in a back bay house that had outlived not only prosperity but gentility. The studio confronted a formidable row of dwellings in a very similar state. These houses were occupied for the most part by lodgers and mealers of various ages and colors and conditions of servitude. In intervals of inspiration, and they were not infrequent with Hillhouse, he fell, between whiffs of his pipe, to speculating on the daily occupation and the heart stories of his heterogeneous neighbors. One of his studio windows looked almost impertinently into a hall-room of the most imposing house in the row. To Hillhouse's surprise, his mirror one day reflected its occupant, who riveted his attention with a fascination almost as irresistible as that which wrought the ruin of Paul Pry." Betram paused. The interest in his auditor's eyes urged him on.

"She was a frail little woman," he said, at length, "with a certain faded splendor, the splendor of a brilliant autumnal flower that defies drought and frost, and with a color and perfume of its own, holds sway long after its garden companions lie withered and dead. She rarely went out save in the flush of the morning or late in the twilight. Her room, like herself, bespoke a faded splendor, discernible even from Hillhouse's studio. A window-garden of old-fashioned bloom and a plentifully-stocked bookcase that crowded the small apartment almost to suffocation, absorbed her days.

"Certain hours she was wont to sit in the window, an open book in her lap, her heavily-fringed gray eyes lost in invisible worlds. I know not whether it was the style of her dress—the white mull fichu, closed on the low bosom to fall in graceful folds to the hem of her voluminous dark skirt, or the outline of the coiffure, so like the mode prevalent when Hillhouse was the Beau Brummel of his world—that attracted his attention; but the sculptor soon found himself modeling her delicate profile. Hillhouse, it goes without saying, was a bachelor, in whom the wine of youth was scarcely less beady at 50 than in the flush of youth."

"Just such a chap as our own Betram," interposed Pentland.

"Hillhouse's faith, devotion I may say, to the ideal in life, as an art," continued Betram, "has survived the gross materialism of the times with which advancing age found him curiously in and out of tune. Away back in the golden youth lay his romance—a romance that unconsciously shaped and colored his life, lending a perennial freshness to the man, which he strove to impart to his work. As the delicate features of his unknown neighbor grew under his deft touch the chords of memory awoke, and Hillhouse had begun to revel again in that golden past, when suddenly his model moved.

"A carriage with the livery of an exclusive world had drawn up at her door. A lady muffled in sable alighted, and soon Hillhouse beheld his little neighbor in the arms of a stranger. It was the first visitor that had come, in Hillhouse's time, to that modest door. The next day it snowed steadily; but about three in the afternoon his neighbor surprised him by appearing at the street door, bonneted. With rapid strides she disappeared down the avenue—to appear before he had smoked three pipes at her favorite seat in the window. The light fell strongly on the profile, which now seemed rejuvenated by some inner glow. Hillhouse snatched the clay and made haste to finish the interrupted sitting. He had not worked long, however, until he was sharing his model's quiet mirth.

"A street fakir had evidently inveigled her into buying a mechanical toy, such as abound in the streets of our large cities during the holiday season. Far into twilight this stately autumnal flower sat playing with the trivial thing; and the footprints of time magically vanished from her sweet face, as she repeatedly pulled the string, and the grotesque wooden monkey, with its multi-colored jacket, slid up and down the yellow pole. Through the veil of snowflakes Hillhouse continued to watch his neighbor, and as her smiles at the monkey's antics broadened his guffaws filled the lonely studio with companionable echoes. Suddenly there was a rift in the lute. The incorrigible monkey was perched at the top of the pole and refused to budge. In vain the sorceress cast her spell. The toy fell from her hands a wreck; disaster, dire distress, beclouded her face. Not a shadow escaped Hillhouse. In a jiffy he had seized his hat and was knocking at her door.

"'I have observed from my window—I am your neighbor,' he exclaimed, locating his eerie den across the way—'that you have met with an accident. I am not without some mechanical skill, and I thought I might be of service.'

"She opened the door wide for him to enter. In the dignity of her presence the shabby gentility of her surroundings vanished.

"'You are kind, sir,' she said. 'To-morrow is Christmas.'

"'Ah! so it is,' said Hillhouse. 'I had forgotten.'

"'I promised to take Christmas dinner yesterday after long years of separation. There is a little boy in the family, and I thought the toy would amuse him.'

"'And so it will,' laughed Hillhouse, 'as it has you and me.'

"She colored like an old-fashioned garden pink, and her limpid gray eyes dropped as he picked up the mutilated monkey. In less time than it takes to tell, this grotesque representative of the 'missing link' was restored to its pristine agility.

"'How can I thank you?'

"'By telling me some day,' said Hillhouse, 'that your young friend's enjoyment of the toy has been greater than ours.'

"Some days elapsed before Hillhouse had the courage to knock a second time at his neighbor's door. In the interval he had learned a little of her history. It was not without a purpose that he scanned the bookcase until his eyes lighted on a strangely familiar volume.

"'I see Miss Foxglove is an admirer of Lucile,' remarked Hillhouse.

"'It belongs to the past.'

"'Then it has not been opened for some time?'

"Miss Foxglove's gray eyes turned within.

"'A quarter of a century,' she said.

"He took the volume from the shelf, and with strange misgiving turned the leaves until arrested by a much underscored canto, from which fell a faded—foxglove.

"'With a smile whose divinely deep sweetness disclosed
Some depths in her nature he never had known.'

"The eyes of Lavinia Foxglove met his.

"'The volume has never been opened,' she said—sudden pallor in her queenly presence—'since an old, old friend borrowed it, returned it—and then—then—'

"'What happened?'

"'He went away.'

"'And then?'

"'The world changed.'

"She took the volume Hillhouse handed her to read in the lines the foxglove had stained the confession she had waited in vain to hear from the lips of the borrower so long ago."

"You don't mean to tell us," cried Miss Dashaway, "that there lives in this age a man stupid enough to expect a woman to look in a book for a proposal?"

"But that happened a quarter of a century ago," laughed Mrs. Pentland.

"True," said Betram, "and the poor lout supposed that the girl had eagerly devoured every word underscored, while she naturally laid the volume away and never looked at it again until Hillhouse opened it and bade her read the lines which embodied his proposal. Not having heard from her, he went away in a moment of pique and never returned. From time to time he heard of her conquests, but it seems they were but flirtations which he strove in vain to forget. Youth passed away, as did her family ties, until she was left alone in the world, with a mere pittance that cut her off from the gay circle in which she was once so brilliant an ornament."

"Well, she must be a moss-grown foxglove," laughed Miss Dashaway. "I thought the species extinct. Fancy a modern woman pining over a delinquent lover, burying herself in a hall-room with an Angora cat and a window garden!"

"How does it come, Betram," said Pentland, "that your quasi-Austen heroine escaped clubdom?"

"No reflection on club women," reproved the hostess. "To forget history there is nothing like helping to make it."

"Bravo," cried the telegraph editor.

"I can understand Miss Foxglove," said Mrs. Wetherell, giving the story teller a sympathetic smile. "She was born too early to grasp the spirit of the new movement and adjust herself to its exactions. Being an offspring of the old order of things, she clung instinctively to a belief that her heart's desire would some day be fulfilled. As she waited, opportunity slipped by."

"If I recollect rightly," said Frothingham, "everything had plenty of time to slip by in a Jane Austen story."

"But isn't it time for the cleric?" smiled Mrs. Wetherell. "Jane Austen without the clergy is Hamlet without the prince."

Betram's glowing eyes took in the guests who had followed his story with the bantering old friendship admits. "To-morrow at high noon," said he, "Rev. Dr. Broughton will await you at the 'Red Brick church,' and after the ceremony Lavinia and I will be at home at the studio—its latch string, you know, is always out—where we hope to dispense 'Christmas cheer throughout the year.'"

"The deuce!" cried the city editor. "You said the chap's name was Hillhouse."

"And so it is," smiled the sculptor—"Return Hillhouse Betram." — Lida Ross McCabe, in Detroit Free Press.

WHAT HE MISSED.

Diggs—Old Adam was a lucky man in one respect, anyway.

Biggs—In what respect?

Diggs—Eve never gave him a box of bargain-store cigars for a Christmas present.—Chicago Daily News.

Patriotism.

"Aw, you know, you may celebrate Christmas as best you know how," said the supercilious Englishman, "but you cawn't come up to the old English plum pudding you know."

"Sir," said the patriotic American, with asperity, "our homemade, or still more the bakery-made, mince pies can produce as fine a line of nightmares as any English plum pudding ever boiled."
—Indianapolis Journal.

A Flank Movement.

"Mrs. Jinks is as sharp as tacks."

"What has she done lately?"

"She has bought everything she needs, so that her relations can't give her useful Christmas presents."—Chicago Record.

Soon Learn Better.

When young we always think it queer
That Christmas comes but once a year:
But when we pay for Santa Claus,
We see the force of Nature's laws.
—J. J. O'Connell, in Puck.

ONE OF CUBA'S MANY PROBLEMS.

General Greene Must Organize a Police Force at Havana & He Asks Superintendent McCullagh to Aid Him.

—Copyright, 1898

"As soon as we are in possession of Cuba and have pacified the island it will be necessary to give aid and direction to its people to form a government for themselves," said President McKinley in his latest message to congress.

That one sentence hints at many momentous problems. The "aid and direction" it will be necessary to give the Cubans will, eventually, cover everything from the formation of a proper legislative and executive government for the island and its provinces in the sanitation of the cities and villages. There must be a complete regeneration. The reforms cannot be half-way.

The upbuilding of Santiago has begun under a very capable man. Havana comes next. This great city must be supplied with laws and compelled to respect those laws. To this end, Gen. Francis Vinton Greene, who is in military charge of Havana, has asked John McCullagh, superintendent of elections for the Metropolitan district of New York, and former chief of police of New York city, to come to Havana and advise him as to the organization of an efficient police force. McCullagh has been a New York policeman for 28 years. His life work has been enforcing the law and guarding the property of the citizen. He has been a success.

SUPERINTENDENT JOHN M'CULLAGH.

Superintendent McCullagh does not go to do the active work of organizing a police force in Havana. He goes to give Gen. Greene, on whom the burden of organization will rest, the benefit of his experience. It is quite as necessary to police Havana as it is to maintain a military occupancy of the island until such time as the Cubans can govern themselves. And with this necessity comes an opportunity for organizing a police force along proper lines and with proper ideals. There are no politicians—the bane of every police force in this country—to be consulted. There are no questions of party or personal expediency to be met. Simply, the proposition is one of gaining the best possible results with the material at hand.

Many difficulties will present themselves. Laws must be made before they can be enforced. Precedents will not apply. The conditions are unique. It will be hard to suppress gambling, for instance, in a community where every man and nearly every woman is a gambler, where lottery tickets have been sold openly on the street corners with the sanction and encouragement of and for the benefit of the government. It will be hard to suppress bull-fighting and cock fighting where the native considers the right to fight bulls and the right to fight cocks coexistent with the right to breathe. Vice that has been winked at for years will struggle desperately to retain its prestige. There will be dissatisfaction, and maybe mutterings of rebellion. But if the method is wise, the desired end will be attained.

A police force to govern Havana properly must be formed on military, or at least, semimilitary lines. There must be a man in supreme control. He must be a commander in chief, the arbiter, the director in all things. The organization must work through him and he must work through the organization. An esprit du corps must be established and fostered that shall make the organization a vital force through its very belief in itself and its loyalty to its leader. Men must know that merit shall be the sole test for preferment. They must be held secure in their positions. They must be educated to deal with conditions foreign to those presented to any police force in this country and to do their duty without fear or favor.

The policing of Havana is a complex problem, but it is reasonable to suppose that if the men who are chosen to maintain law and order are given a full understanding of what is expected of them, held to strict accountability for every regulation, and protected when they are right, the organization will develop into an overwhelming force for good, stable and equitable municipal government.

Superintendent McCullagh said to the writer before he left for Havana: "It would not be proper for me to detail any plans I may have or the organization of a police force in Havana until I have seen and consulted with Gen. Greene. We are old friends, and shall not be long in coming to an understanding. It must be remembered, though, that I am not at all familiar with the various conditions that prevail there, and I want to make a study of the problem on the ground. I have a very clear idea of what should be done, but it remains to be seen whether my ideas will conform, in their entirety, to the local exigencies. I have long cherished a plan of police organization along military lines that I think would be of vast service in certain cities.

"If we can get proper material at Havana, the opportunity for organizing and maintaining a good police service are exceptional. It must not be forgotten, however, that whatever is to be done must be done gradually, in order that the people may accustom themselves to the new order of things. I do not doubt that, under Gen. Greene's supervision, the city will be adequately protected by a well-organized police force before long."

SAMUEL G. BLYTHE.

Johnson as an Inventor.

It may not be generally known, but it is a fact that John S. Johnson is probably the inventor of the detachable tire. As long ago as 1890 he made a detachable tire and fastened the outer covering to the rim by means of little hooks placed about an inch or two apart. This was when he was working in a repair shop in Grand Rapids, Mich., and before he came out as a world-beater in the record-chasing game. He did not think to have the tire of his make patented, else he might have had a fortune, for the detachable tire has brought riches many times over to those who brought it out.

An Odd Tombstone.

Henry Jacobs, an eccentric citizen of Lincoln, Kan., has erected in memory of his son James, who died in 1891, a white marble tombstone, cut in the shape of a satchel. Young James was of an unsettled disposition and traveled a great deal. The old gentleman's idea was to commemorate the fact in the tombstone.