

CHRISTMAS.

Here comes old Father Christmas, With sound of fife and drums; With mistletoe about his brows; With merry bells about his ears; His arms are full of all good cheer; His face with laughter glows; He shines like any household fire Amid the cruel snows. He is the old folk's Christmas, 'Tis warm their hearts like wine; He turns their winter into spring And makes their faces shine. Hurrah for Father Christmas! Ring all the merry bells! And bring the grandest all around To hear the tale he tells. Here comes the Christmas angel, So gentle and so calm; As softly as the falling flakes, He comes with flute and psalm, All in a cloud of glory. As once upon the plain, To shepherd boys in Jewry He brings good news again; He is the young folk's Christmas: He makes their eyes grow bright With words of hope and tender thought, And visions of delight. Hail to the Christmas angel! All peace on earth he brings; He gathers all the youths and maids Beneath his shining wings. Here comes the little Christ-child, All innocence and joy, An infant bearing gifts in either hand, For every girl and boy. He tells the tender story About the Holy Maid, And Jesus in the manger, Before the ox and ass, Like any little water bird, He sings his sweetest song, Till all the cherubs in the sky To hear his carol throng. He is the children's Christmas; They come without a call To gather round the gracious Child Who brings joy to all. But who shall bring their Christmas Who wrestle still with life? No grandees, youths, nor little folks, But they who wage the strife; The fathers and the mothers Who fight for homes and bread, Who watch and ward the living, And bury all the dead. Ah! by their side at Christmas-tide The Lord of Christmas stands; He smooths the furrows from the brow With strong and tender hands. "I take my Christmas gift," he saith, "From thee, tired soul, and thee; Who giveth to My little ones Giveth unto Me." —Philadelphia Ledger.

A CHRISTMAS STEAK.

THE morning before Christmas Day ten years ago, when I was living in the Prickly Pear Canon, twenty-five miles northwest of Helena, Montana, my wife said to me: "Charley, wouldn't it be nice if we had a venison steak, too?" The "too" meant in addition to a turkey, a pair of chickens, a boiled ham, a plum pudding, and I don't know how many kinds of cakes and pies that she had planned for our Christmas dinner. "Well, Nelly, as there's only yourself and the baby and me to be at dinner, I don't suppose we'd starve without a venison steak," I said, laughing. "But there'll be some fun getting a black-tailed deer." So I took my Winchester late in the forenoon and started for the mountain, after kissing my young wife and the baby—our first. If Nelly had asked for an elephant steak, I dare say I'd have tried to get one. She had come out to the far West with me after I had visited home in Michigan only two years before, and my pride was that she should want for nothing. We had done well from the start, and so we do yet, thanks be to God and steady work in season. The night before I started up the canon with my rifle and hunting-knife there had been a fall of about six inches of snow. This would make it easy to track game. So I went along in good spirits, struck the foot of the mountain two miles from home, and decided to go up an immense gulch straight in front of me. I soon reached the head of the gulch and the top of the mountain. Then I turned around on the backbone of the mountain, and went back nearly in the same direction I had come, only about a thousand feet higher. It was here I sighted my game, a fat doe, on the west side of the backbone, just on the edge of a gulch. This was about three o'clock in the afternoon, and the sun was already low. The doe had not seen me, and I did not mean she should till I could get close enough to make sure of that steak. So I worked over on the east side of the backbone, and went along till I got right on top of a slope directly above a great wall of mountain that I had admired on the way up. I was then watching for the doe more than for my steps, and that carelessness nearly finished me. Suddenly my feet slipped, and I went sliding down the steep mountain side. I was not more than fairly on my back when I understood what had happened. I had trod on the old drifts of snow which had been melted on the surface by the Chinook winds a few days previously, and had then frozen again into a hard slope of ice. This was covered by the fresh snow of the night, and so I had not noticed the danger. The fresh snow went with me, I could not hold on by it at all; and I was making a quick trip down. The slope was about two hundred and fifty feet long. Where it stopped the

straight wall began. It was about four hundred feet high. I slewed round somehow, and went heels first, then head first, flat on my back. You may suppose I had not time to think much on the way down; but I saw a great deal. I saw Nelly and the baby all alone in the house waiting for me. I saw what I should look like after falling four hundred feet on boulders. I saw Nelly's people a thousand miles away and more, and she with the baby in her arms and without ten dollars in the bureau drawer hoping many a day and night for the bundle at the cliff's foot to walk in alive. It was had to see all that and feel myself sliding to destruction. As I slewed round a second time, and found myself going down on my back, feet first, I lifted my head and saw a stunted pine close ahead. My Winchester was still in my right hand; somehow I had clutched it by the muzzle. In a flash I threw out my hand, hoping to fling the gun around the little pine and stop myself; but the hammer of the gun struck the pine, and the charge was fired into me. The bullet plowed through the muscles of my forearm, made a flesh wound in my right side, and cut away my cartridge belt. I had slid about one hundred and fifty feet when this happened. The shock of the noise and the bullet stunned me, I suppose, for the next thing I knew was that I lay in a clump of small bushes. The sun had gone down, but there was still a clear afterglow when I came to my full wits, in surprise to find myself alive. For an instant I wondered if I had dropped over the cliff.



THE OLD DAYS.

Santa Claus—"It does me good to find one of these big old-fashioned chimneys that a fellow can drop into without squeezing through narrow flues and grates till one's ribs are almost cracked. Oh, for the good old days when every chimney was a temptation to me."

I tried to rise, and in doing so looked through the bushes. There was nothing just in front of them. They grew on the cliff's top for about twelve feet wide along its very edge. I had nothing but these frail bushes between me and the boulders far below. Seeing this, I trembled and crouched down. Then I noticed the blood from my wounded arm. It was dripping to the snow at the roots of the bushes, and my movements had already sprinkled many red spots around. I lay a long time in the snow, keeping my right side to the bushes, for I feared that I should go through if I lay uphill and pressed against them with only the breadth of my feet. Then I lifted up my wounded arm, hoping to stop the flow of red. Perhaps the loss of blood had helped to break down my nerves. At any rate, I shuddered and shook, and thought I was about to faint. It seemed a great time before I could control myself sufficiently to seek for some means of escape. But I did not look down over the cliff. It seemed that one more sight of that abyss would lure me to jump over in despair. I looked up the slope. The track I had made was as if a very wide broom had swept snow off hard, white ice. But I reflected that this was only a thin sheet of ice covering deep snow. I could not break through the slippery crust with hand or foot; but I might cut holes in it with my pocket-knife, and climb by these. So I put my hand in my pocket to search for the knife. It was not there. It was not in any of my pockets. I suppose it had slipped out during my head-first sliding. For a moment hope went out of me. Then it sprang up fresh. My hunting-knife! How could I have forgotten it? I put my hand to the sheath. The sheath was empty! Now it seemed certain that I must die; so certain that the raving spirit of protest was stilled in my heart. I resigned myself to God. There was nothing to do except go mad or accept my fate, and to accept is to be calm. I think I then had the very feeling with which so many of the dying turn their faces silently to the wall when told that death is near. Evening had now come on. To the bushes I turned my face, letting my wonderful arm which pained me little, come to the snow. With that movement of resignation my thoughts flew again distinctly to my wife and child; it was as if my soul sought com-

munion with them for the end. Then the question as to how I should be found set me again to trouble. I was lying on a place seldom seen by any hunter on the mountain. If I should remain there my bones would bleach perhaps for years unfound. Only the foxes and the carrion birds would visit them. They might in a season be overgrown by the bushes, and hidden forever from mortal eye. I pictured the agony of my wife waiting in uncertainty. The shocking thought that some wicked person might persuade her that I had deserted her came into my brain. Would it not be merciful to her to rush through or to one side of the bushes and fall over the precipice? Below there on the boulders my body might soon be seen by some hunter, and certainly my clothing and bones would be found in the spring or sooner. But what of God? In His sight should I be guilty of suicide if I participated by but a little what seemed my doom? I half-rose in this new agony and put my right hand among the bushes, meaning to lean and peer over the cliff. Now the moon was clear. My hand struck something hard. With a loud cry of joy I found it was clutching my hunting-knife! This had slipped out of its sheath during my sliding, and lodged among the bushes. "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!" My heart was mightily cheered with the sense that He had not forsaken me. As I turned to the steep slide, and began backing out of holes for climbing I had little thought of how small was still my chance of escape. But I was very careful, working

down and found myself unable to rise. Then Nelly came. That brave little wife of mine had actually left the baby sleeping and set out all alone across the snow in the moonlight to track me. She had come two miles. She had begun to climb the mountain, when I saw her suddenly but a few yards away. The bottle of tea she carried wrapped in a cloth was still warm when she knelt beside me, and it roused me quickly to some strength. Certainly she saved my life, for I could not have risen again, and should have been frozen to death by her bravery. How we got home to the baby is a story I need not dwell on. What Nelly did with all that Christmas dinner I do not know, for I was sick and senseless for more than two weeks. But in the end I was as well as before, except that I had paid a good Winchester and a belt of cartridges for a venison steak that the fat black-tailed doe continued to carry where it grew.—Youth's Companion.

The origin of the term "Christmas box" as applied to donations of Christmas spending money is uncertain, though antiquarians generally seem to think that it was derived from the custom of placing money for masses to be said or sung on Christmas Day—therefore "Christ-masses"—in a box, which from this use was called a Christmas box, a term gradually corrupted to Christmas box, and finally applied to all money given as a Christmas gratuity.

Christmas Celery. On Christmas Day, though the turkey's tender, the oysters stuff. Christmas dinner at home, no matter how meagre, is preferable to Christmas lunch in the bar-room.

A nice easy exercise for Christmas Day is that of counting the change you have left. It can be done generally with one hand. If the "heft" of the pocketbook was, in every instance, commensurate with the promptings of the heart, what a glorious Christmas it would be for the poor.

Now is the accepted time for the re-launching of that old-yule-tide "chestnut." "What is the difference between this umbrella and the 25th of last December?" "One is a Christmas present and the other is a Christmas past."

An Exhausting Task. Alpha—"I see that your friend Bondy has sailed for Europe. What is the object of his visit?" Omega—"He goes to recuperate his health, which is broken down by overwork."

Alpha—"Overwork? Why, I never knew him to do a day's work in his life." Omega—"You don't know all. One day last week he went out to select a Christmas present for his wife, and he came home suffering from nervous prostration."

On Christmas Eve. "Darling!" exclaimed Algernon Thinshanks, as they sat in the soft firelight glow on Christmas Eve, "I sometimes wish I had lived in the distant past, in the days of baronial halls, and feudal castles, and armored knights. There is a romance about the delightful past which the prosaic present cannot awaken. Which do you like best, dearest, the past or the present?"

"At this time of the year, Algernon, the present, by all means!" responded Mabel, promptly.

The new Australian gold fields apparently are worked under the same difficulties as those of Arizona—an almost constant water famine.

Christmas Predictions. The old "Shepherd's Calendar" has this much to say about Christmas weather: "If the sun shine clear and bright on Christmas Day it promises a peaceable year from clamors and strife, and foretells much plenty to ensue; but if the wind blow stormy toward sunset, it betokeneth sickness in the spring and autumn quarters."

Two French proverbs may fitly close this bundle of weather sayings: Christmas on the balcony Easter near the fire-brands. At Christmas, the gnats; At Easter, the locusts.

The popular mind could not fail to fix upon this day some predictions concerning births: Commencing with Sunday, we are told: What child that day born may be, A great lord he shall live to be.

With Christmas on Monday: They that be born that day I mean, They shall be strong each one and keen. Of Tuesday it is said: They shall be strong and covetous. Wednesday is a lucky day: Whatever child that day born is, He shall be doughty and gay, I wis, And wise and crafty also of deed, And find many in clothes and bread.

Not less fortunate is the child who is born on Christmas when it falls upon Thursday: If a child that day born shall be, It shall happen right well for thee; Of deeds he shall be good and sabbie; Wise of speech and reasonable.

The influence of Venus or Freya is seen to extend to the infant who first sees the light on Friday's Christmas: The child that is born that day Shall live long and lecherous be away.

Saturday, again, is malignant: And children born that day by faith, In half a year shall meet with death.

At present it is said in Lincolnshire, England, that the child born on Christmas will be able to see spirits, an assertion elsewhere made on Sunday.

Deaths on this day are sometimes thought to be ominous. In Somersetshire, England, it is said that a death during Christmastide is a token of many deaths throughout that year in the parish.

The Mistletoe. "But mistletoe—English mistletoe? Surely that will never lose its hold!" some reader may exclaim.

Not in name, perhaps, but in substance. For you must know, real English mistletoe is as rare in this country as a white blackbird; and that so called by florists, and supposed to possess all the properties with which the black-art of the Middle Ages endowed the mystic parasite because grown on British soil, comes principally from Normandy, where it flourishes in such mad profusion as to be a veritable nuisance, while it has so embraced and strangled the road-side poplar trees that the French Government has ordered it to be entirely destroyed. If this edict is carried into effect, we shall see very little of the true mistletoe (Viscum album), but will have to content ourselves with its American cousin, the Phoradendron flavescens, which abounds in some of the Southern States, is really far prettier, and bears more berries, but lacks the romantic associations clustered about the "All-heal" of the old Druids.

We may venture to predict, however, that so long as there are merry hearts and fond-lopers on the earth, some sort of mistletoe, ancient or modern, will be hung up on each recurring December; for, as a sweet poetess of England sings:

"Under the mistletoe peace an I good will Mingle the spirits that long have been twain; Leaves of the olive-branch twine with it still, While breathings of hope fill the long carol strain."

Yet, why should this holy and festive mirth In the reign of old Christmas-tide only be found? Hang up love's mistletoe over the earth, And let us kiss under it all the year round."

The Festivity Not Yet Complete. Tommy—"Come out an' play." Eddy—"I can't." Tommy—"Why not?" Eddy—"I got some Christmas things wot I ain't broke yet."

It is figured that every man, woman and child in the United States eats an average of four and a half bushels of wheat in a year in the form of bread or breakfast cereals.

To Santa Claus. We wish you a Merry Christmas, Old Santa Claus so true; If you'll hang up a stocking We'll fill it full for you.

We'll put in fond affection, And kisses by the score, Together with devotion, What could you ask for more?

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EQUAL SUFFRAGE.

WOMEN TOOK PART IN THE ELECTION IN COLORADO.

They Not Only Voted Themselves, But Insisted Upon the Men Voting—Scenes at the Polls.

WOMEN voted for all candidates at the recent election in Colorado. A Denver letter to the New York Sun describes the scenes and incidents on Election Day as follows: The total vote in Colorado was in round numbers 156,000 this year. Two years ago it was 93,000, although 1892 was a Presidential year and there was a strong desire to make a stand for the silver cause. Furthermore, times were good in 1892, and the mining districts were more populous than at this election. The phenomenal increase in votes over two years ago does not indicate an increase in population in Colorado. Facts disclose that the women voted to fully ninety per cent. of their registration, and their enthusiasm was reflected in



WAITING THEIR TURN AT THE POLLS.

the awakened interest taken by the male voters. All over the State on the eve of Election Day the women went to bed early with one prominent thought in their minds. They would go to the polls on the morrow; they would go early for fear that some unforeseen circumstance might rob them of the opportunity to vote. This sentiment was shared by the men, who took rather a humorous interest in the experiment. Had it not been for the interest taken by the women of the household many men would not have bothered about voting at all, to say nothing of getting out early to vote.

In Denver by half-past 6 o'clock in the morning every voting precinct, from Capitol Hill to the Platte River bottoms, presented an interesting spectacle. Men and women of all sorts and conditions had assembled to await the opening of the polls at 7 o'clock. The air was crisp at that hour, but the workman was used to the chill of early morning, their wives and daughters, wrapped in shawls and cloaks of rather antiquated style, were unmindful of the cool air, while the late risers of the fashionable districts for once realized the beauty of an early morning in Colorado. D. E. Moffatt, President of the First National Bank and one of the wealthiest men in Colorado, was

thoroughly familiar with the Australian ballot, which in Colorado is rather a complicated affair. Intelligence people learned how to vote a scratched ballot properly, and many did so, though the majority of ballots in every precinct were straight party votes. The remarkable feature of early voting was observed all over the State. In Cripple Creek, especially, the early morning lines were very long. In mining camps and in quiet country precincts the women turned out early and generally with escorts. There, as in Denver, the desire of the women to vote induced the men to go to the polls quite generally. That more women voted in Colorado than men would be an absurd statement. Nor can it be said that the percentage of female voters exceeded that of the males, but the undisputed fact remains that this time the women thoroughly aroused the men and caused them to cast a heavier vote everywhere than heretofore.

As the Election Day waned the women and business men stirred themselves to draw in the few stragglers. Women in couples and in open buggies rode from house to house insisting that the laggards must come out. In one precinct in the residence district of Capitol Hill only two registered voters failed to vote. The sick were

carried to the polls; the busy man was hunted out and persuaded to take time to vote. In several instances women made repeated visits until they had forced the indifferent to the polls. One old lady had declared upon hearing the news that women had received the franchise that she hoped she might die before one of her daughters disgraced her by going to the polls. As the campaign progressed she became interested so that, as a consequence, she was among the early voters at the polls on Election Day, and cast her ballot before her daughters did. The sentiment in favor of women suffrage grew by reason of the general interest in the election. It was a growth from above to below. The best people of the State took up the matter first, and then the ignorant, the indifferent and those who had opposed woman suffrage were compelled to acknowledge that the act of voting did not degrade woman in the slightest degree.

Photographing Meteors. An interesting device for photographing meteors has recently been placed in the Yale University Observatory. It consists of an inclined shaft carrying a number of cameras so inclined as to include in their combined field a large area of sky. The shaft is turned by clockwork so as to follow the motion of the stars and make their images appear as points instead of lines, as would be the case if the cameras were fixed. With this arrangement the paths of the meteors are shown in their true relation to the heavenly bodies and their direction at once determined. The instrument is exceedingly useful in discovering the "radiant points" of meteors—the spots in the sky from which they start.—Detroit Free Press.

Illinois railroads employed in 1893 66,680 hands, whose wages amounted to \$40,072,676.

chatting informally with his neighbor, not of the issues of the day nor with an idea of influencing votes, but of the breakfast yet unstarted, or of the unique experience which each was enjoying. A mounted police officer appearing would be chaffed and told to go elsewhere to find discord and trouble. The lines for the first two or three hours contained from 100 to 200 voters, but by 11 o'clock the rush was ended, and then during the remaining hours the polls were practically deserted. An occasional voter would drop in, cast his ballot, and depart as quietly as he had come. Women in pairs and in small parties would enter the booths, prepare their ballots, deposit them in the boxes, and go without a word. There was a general expression of satisfaction on their faces. The women were more expeditious