

Christmas With The Pickwickians

NO chronicler of Christmas doings has done it so imitatively as Dickens, and nowhere has Dickens described them better than in the "Pickwick Papers."

As brisk as bees, if not altogether as light as fairies, did the four Pickwickians assemble on the morning of the 23d day of December in the year of grace in which these their faithfully recorded adventures were undertaken and accomplished.

After traveling through a wide and open country where "the wheels skim over the hard and frosty ground," slowing up as they draw near a country town, where the horses are changed, then again "dashing along the open road, with the fresh air blowing in their faces and gladdening their very hearts within them," they arrive at Dingley Dell, where they are introduced to that famous personage, the fat boy.

the airs of a man who could "skate" and having shown his ignorance thereof, was smartly reproved by Mr. Pickwick. Meanwhile, "Mr. Weller and the fat boy having by their joint efforts cut out a slide," all hands participated. Says the chronicler of the day's sport: It was the most intensely interesting thing to observe the manner in which Mr. Pickwick performed his share in the ceremony—to watch the torture of anxiety with which he viewed the person behind gaining upon him at the imminent hazard of tripping him up, to see him gradually expend the painful force which he had put on at first and turn slowly around on the slide, with his face toward the point from which he had started, to contemplate the playful smile which mantled on his face when he had accomplished the distance and the eagerness with which he turned around when he had done so and ran after his predecessor, his black gaiters tripping pleasantly through the snow and his eyes beaming cheerfulness and gladness through his spectacles, and when he was knocked down, which happened upon the average every third round, it was the most investigating sight that can possibly be imagined to behold him gather up his hat, gloves and handkerchief with a glowing countenance and resume his station in the rank with an ardor and enthusiasm which nothing could abate.

Mr. Pickwick unfortunately breaks through the ice and gets a good wetting, but, being taken on a smart run to the house, put to bed and given unlimited quantities of hot punch, finds himself none the worse next morning, when the party departs from Dingley Dell.

Thus does Dickens tell us of one of the merriest Christmases that a reader could desire. There is no touch of sadness in the chronicle, and all that one could wish for is that the story were longer. Long live the tale, and long may we enjoy Christmas with the Pickwickians!

LONG WALK FOR SANTA.

Tree Burned, Father Goss Eight Miles For New Toys.

Gifts intended for his eight children being destroyed when his lighting of the Christmas tree, just before midnight, caused a fire which damaged his home in Cleveland, Alfred Hammermeister trudged eight miles through snow before he could rouse a store-



MR. PICKWICK WENT SLOWLY AND GRAVELY DOWN THE SLIDE WITH HIS FEET ABOUT A YARD APART.

began to stow the things rapidly away in the cart, while the fat boy stood quietly by and seemed to think it a very interesting sort of thing to see Mr. Weller working by himself.

The conversation of these two characters is too long to reprint here, but not too much so to peruse with the greatest interest. We must pass over the story of the wedding, which was the day before Christmas event at Dingley Dell, at which Mr. Pickwick distinguished himself by a felicitous speech, and got to the story of the dance. Dickens' description of the old sitting room is a gem:

The best sitting room at Manor Farm was a good, long, dark paneled room, with a high chimney piece and a capacious chimney, up which you could have driven one of the new patent cabs, wheels and all. At the upper end of the room, seated in a shady bowyer of holly and evergreens, were the two best fiddlers and the only harp in Muggleton. In all sorts of recesses and on all kinds of brackets stood massive old silver candlesticks with four branches each. The carpet was up, the candles burned bright, the fire blazed and crackled on the hearth, and merry voices and light hearted laughter rang through the room. If any of the old English yeomen had turned into fairies when they died, it was just the place in which they would have held their revels.

After the dance was over, Mr. Pickwick having acquitted himself with great credit, the reader is told about the doings in the famous old kitchen. Here hung the mistletoe and did its mission well in adding to the jollity of the occasion. The artist whose pictures appear on his pages has done excellent justice to Dickens' text:

From the center of the ceiling of this kitchen old Wardle had just suspended with his own hands a huge branch of mistletoe and this same branch of mistletoe instantaneously gave rise to a scene of general and most delightful struggling and confusion, in the midst of which Mr. Pickwick, with a gallantry which would have done honor to a descendant of Lady Tollinglow herself, took the old lady by the hand, led her beneath the mystic branch and kissed her in all courtesy and decorum. . . . Wardle stood with his back to the fire, surveying the whole scene with the utmost satisfaction, and the fat boy took the opportunity of appropriating to his own use and summarily devouring a particularly fine mince pie that had been carefully put by for somebody else. . . .

It was a pleasant thing to see Mr. Pickwick in the center of the group, now pulled this way and then that and first kissed on the chin and then on the nose and then on the spectacles, and to hear the peals of laughter which were raised on every side.

Finally we come to Christmas day, which was cold and cheerful and good "skating" weather. The party all went to a "pretty large sheet of ice," where Mr. Winkle, having assumed

keeper and gather another supply of presents so that the children's faith in Santa Claus might not be lost.

The children were asleep when Mr. and Mrs. Hammermeister completed decorating the tree. The father decided to light the candles as a test. They burned; so did the cotton snowballs. The blaze awakened the children. "Santy here?" they piped. "Is it mornin'?" The parents gathered them in their arms and rushed to the street. Firemen brought out a lot of fire ruined presents from the house.

"Santy been and gone and our things is burned up!" the children cried.

Hammermeister began his weary search for an open store. He employed the infrequent street cars for long stretches, but trudging mile after mile in fruitless search. Finally he routed a storekeeper from his bed and, burdening himself with a new supply, trudged home to turn sorrow into joy.

Hunting Christmas Ghosts.

Ghost hunting bids fair to become the ruling passion of Washington society. The fortunate owners of a pecked house, roped with ivy and densely surrounded by trees, are issuing cards for a Christmas specter hunt. The Christmas ghost hunt is imported from England, where the houses are ancient enough to harbor specters who were there before William the Conqueror. The comparative newness of this country leads some to predict that the fad over here will fall. There are exceptions, however, for even in Washington there is one of the treasure guarding ghosts—an out and out buccaner of the Spanish main variety, with cocked hat, gold lace, ruffles, high yellow boots, red jacket and an odor of antiquity. Those acquainted with him say that he clicks his chains of stolen doubloons.—Washington Star.

A Christmas Sentiment.

However sincere we may be in our efforts to spread Christmas cheer, our charity is none the less a testimony to our sense of the fact that peace and good will have not come upon the earth. Poverty and wretchedness are not to be offset by yearly gifts of baskets of food and outgrown clothes.

We ought to make the spasmodic kindness of Christmas one of the constant forces of our industrial world. Equality and fraternity are born not of charity, but of justice.

Instead of commercializing Christmas we ought to Christmize commercialism.—New York Mail.



E. D. CRUMPACKER.

THE Sixtieth congress assembles for its second and short session under conditions which are rather unusual. A national election has just been held, and the party in possession of the government has been sustained in power. There will be no change in the political complexion of the majority in either branch of congress or of the executive branch of the government. Nevertheless there will be a change in the head of the government, and, while President Elect Taft has promised to carry forward the "Roosevelt policies," he will naturally have his own way of doing things and his own preferences in the matter of legislation to be furthered. There is interest among the nation's legislators as to the course things will take after the 4th of March next. Of most immediate concern, however, to the members of the Sixtieth congress are the legislative matters left over from the last session and those which will claim foremost attention in consequence of the recommendations of President Roosevelt in his annual message or in special messages to congress to be expected later in the session. Mr. Roosevelt is anxious that before he surrenders the reins of government to his successor laws should be on the statute books embodying, in addition to the acts that already have been passed in execution of the administration's policies, such further enactments as may serve to complete the record. Some of these subjects, such as those bearing on labor interests and that respecting amendment of the Sherman law to permit railroad pools under government supervision, are expected to occasion debate.

When congress assembled after the national election of 1904 Mr. Roosevelt had been chosen as the occupant of the White House for the ensuing four years, and no special changes in affairs at Washington were anticipated. Eight years ago Mr. McKinley had just been chosen to succeed himself. Twelve years ago Mr. Cleveland, a Democrat, turned the executive power over to a Republican successor, as he, four years previously, had received the same authority from a Republican predecessor, Benjamin Harrison. Again, going back another four years, one finds Mr. Harrison taking the reins from a political opponent, Mr. Cleveland. There was also a change of parties when Mr. Cleveland succeeded President Chester A. Arthur. One has to go back to the inauguration of Garfield, twenty-eight years ago, to find a Republican, President Rutherford B. Hayes, retiring from the presidency and handing the reins over to a successor of the same political faith.

The fact that tariff revision is to be a leading issue in the next congress, even though no enactments on the subject are to be attempted this session, makes it inevitable that there should be considerable discussion of the matter now. Then, too, the hearings before the house ways and means committee, of which Congressman Seno E. Payne is chairman, have served to keep the question in mind. Mr. Payne is one of the veterans of the halls of legislation at Washington, and his mind is a big storehouse of information on matters pertaining to the tariff schedules. He has participated in the framing of a number of noted measures on the subject and has talked tariff since the days when some of the younger congressmen were in the infant class. Another prominent figure at the hearings has been Representative Champ Clark of Missouri, who is regarded as the logical successor of John Sharp Williams of Mississippi as minority leader in the house. Mr. Williams surrendering this position to go on a European trip prior to entering the senate, Congressman Clark has been a good deal in evidence at the tariff hearings, never losing a chance to make a point for his party in matters pertinent to the inquiry.

Ordinarily Frank H. Hitchcock, who was chairman of the Republican national committee in the recent campaign and who is slated to be in the next cabinet, would not figure at all in the doings of this congress. But in view of the plans being laid by one element or another as to the organization of the next house Mr. Hitchcock comes into the game even at its present stage. He was very successful in managing Judge Taft's canvass for the presidential nomination and later on his campaign for the presidency. It is natural that the president elect should rely on him for help and advice in carrying out any plans as to beginning his administration under conditions favorable to the execution of his pledges. Representative Theodore E. Burton

of Ohio has for some years been one of the leading members of the house of representatives, and he is especially in the eye at present because of the talk of him as a candidate for the speakership. Should any differences arise between the next administration and the present speaker, Uncle Joe Cannon of Illinois, in regard to the program to be observed on tariff revision Mr. Burton would, it is said, be the man to receive the Taft support for the speakership in the Sixty-first congress. Since the committee on ways and means has been giving hearings on the subject of the tariff schedules the question of the policy to be pursued under President Taft and the subject of how the Republican majority in the house will be organized has naturally been uppermost in the talk of the statesmen at Washington.

Another house leader who is now specially prominent is Representative Edgar Dean Crumpacker of Indiana, who began his service at Washington in the Fifty-fifth congress. He is a close friend of Speaker Cannon and has been active in denying rumors of any impending conflict between him and the president elect.

Meantime the president elect himself is watching the progress of events from a congenial southern clime and getting in training for the heavy responsibilities he is to assume. Golf he still finds most conducive to this result. It was last summer that he said one day:

"I would like to get on the scales and weigh, but I am not going to per-



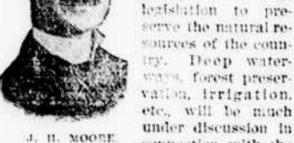
SENO E. PAYNE.

mit myself, for I might be disappointed in the belief that my daily exercise on the golf links has reduced my weight. I am convinced that I could have done nothing in the way of exercise that would have done me more good than has the daily game of golf, which I have so religiously played. But I am afraid that instead of reducing my flesh I have simply hardened my muscles. I never felt more fit in my life for any task."

Mr. Taft announced at the time that he should not dispose of his riding horse nor should he buy another. He has become very much attached to the animal he has ridden for so long.

"He is a good horse," he remarked, "and the other day when he stumbled and I lit on my shoulder over his head he made no attempt to move. And, besides," added Mr. Taft frankly, "I haven't the money to spend on another horse."

J. Hampton Moore, who represents the Third Pennsylvania district in congress and who has been conspicuous recently in connection with the meeting at Baltimore of the Atlantic Deep-sea Waterways association, is one of the newer congressmen who have become talked about in consequence of the prominence of legislation to preserve the natural resources of the country. Deep waterways, forest preservation, irrigation, etc., will be much under discussion in connection with the legislation of the present session. Representative Moore is president of the Atlantic Deep-sea Waterways association. He is a Republican, was born at Woodbury, N. J., in 1864, educated in the common schools, was office boy, law student, court reporter, municipal clerk, editor and publisher, member of legislature and served in the house first as a member of the Fifty-first congress



J. N. MOORE.

TROUBLE FOR BOWSER

Mother-in-law Arrives and Makes Him Toe the Mark.

CALLS OLD MAN TO ACCOUNT.

Promises to Behave Himself After Being Bluffed to a Standstill and Now Thinks His Wife's Mother the Best Ever.

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I am Samuel Bowser's mother-in-law. The other night I had a dream about him. I dreamed that he was swelling around the house and finding fault and raising Cain generally, and the first thing in the morning, being a believer in dreams, I packed my satchel and started for the depot. I arrived at Mr. Bowser's house about an hour before he was due for dinner and found my daughter in bed sick with headache. She was also worrying over what her husband would say when he came home and found the routine of the house interrupted.

"Mary, you just cease to worry about him," says I as tears stood in her



HE WAS LEANING AGAINST AN IRON FENCE.

eyes. "Your mother is here to look out for you, and if Samuel comes home and goes to cavorting around he'll hear something drop. If he comes home with a 'spell' on there'll be a shindy that'll make his hair curl." The hired girl had been posted before Mr. Bowser reached home, and he didn't get a hint of my presence. When he entered the house and failed to find his poor victim in the hall to greet him he banged the front door and stamped around until he was told that Mrs. Bowser was lying down with a headache.

"She is, eh?" he shouted. "Lying down with a headache, is she? Who brought on the headache?"

The girl informed him that she didn't know.

"But I do!" he blustered. "She's been eating pickles and oranges and bananas and a lot of other truck. Don't tell me she hasn't, for I know better. Headache, and the house all upset! Nice old ranch this for a man to come home to! It's no wonder that ten thousand husbands in the United States are driven to drink every year. We'll see about that headache."

With that he came tramping upstairs, and I hid in the clothes closet. He made more noise than a horse coming up, and he had no sooner entered the room than he almost yelled out:

"Well, this is the last of you! I've warned you a thousand times over, but it has done no good. It's no use in going for the doctor. Any one can see that your days are numbered."

"It's only a headache," said Mrs. Bowser as she tried to smile.

"Only! Only a headache! And what is that headache going to lead to? Woman, if you have brought about your own death don't blame me. You can't hog down a dozen bananas, skins and all, and expect to live more than a few hours."

"I haven't eaten a banana in two months."

"Then it's raw cabbage or some such thing. Well, don't look to me for any sympathy. I shall bury you, of course, but don't expect anything more."

Some of His Actions.

Then he tipped over a chair, walked over to the bureau and opened the drawers and slammed them shut and had begun to whistle as loud as he could when my daughter asked:

"Mr. Bowser, won't you send for mother?"

"Send for your mother?" he fairly howled as he whiffled around on her. "Send for that old bat! Never! Never in this world!"

"But if I am going to die I should like her with me."

"She can't come. If she was here I know just what she would do. She'd—"

"So do I know!" I said as I suddenly walked out on him.

Mr. Bowser staggered over to a chair and sank into it, and his face turned as white as flour. He had been caught red handed. I stood giving him the stony stare for a long three minutes, and then he worked up nerve enough to ask:

"Who invited you down here at this time?"

"I didn't have to wait for an invitation. Dinner is on the table, and we will go down. We can talk as we eat."

"There's no talking to be done," he sulkily observed as he drew away.

"There's a heap of it, Samuel, and I want you to come along."

He shut his jaw and stuck out for a while, but eventually followed me downstairs. Then he tried to grab his hat and overcoat and make a sneak for it, but I had an eye on him and prevented it. I finally got him down to the dining room and the table, but he refused to eat. That made no difference in the programme, however. I began to talk to him like a mother-in-law. I am an elderly woman of pronounced opinions. I proceeded to reel off some of those opinions for his benefit. He hadn't got more than a quarter of a dose before he rose up to go, saying something about suicide, but I squatted him down and kept him there until I had said all I wanted to.

Mr. Bowser wasn't exactly quiescent under my fire. He uttered exclamations about cats and bats and mothers-in-law, and fourteen different times he said that he would leave the house if I didn't, but we were both there when I got through talking—that is, when I got through talking for just then, I went upstairs to see my daughter and had scarcely got there when I heard him rattling and banging at the furnace in the cellar. I descended part way and stopped him by threats of the crowbar. Then he took a notion to fix a door in the kitchen, and I had to make some blood curdling threats before he would cease hammering and sawing. Then he came up into the sitting room and got out an old harp and began strumming on it and singing. I didn't have to waste words on him on this occasion. As soon as he saw me coming he cuddled down, and I left him playing solitaire with a pack of cards. I went up again.

Then Mr. Bowser sneaked on me. Half an hour later I came down to make some fresh tea and found him gone. I am that sort of woman that when I strike a son-in-law's trail I never leave it until he is my mutton. I put on my things and went looking for Mr. Bowser. I heard of him on several corners, but it was nearly an hour before I overhauled him. He was leaning against an iron fence with his hands in his pockets and his hat pulled down, but I knew him at once. He started off as if I grabbed for his ear, but a kind hearted little boy, whom I shall certainly remember in my will, ran ahead of me and seized him by the coat-tails and hung on until I could come up.

"Come home, Samuel," I said as I got a good hold.

How He Was Bluffed.

He said he'd die right then and there first, but he didn't. A policeman came along and advised him to trot, and thus I got him home. Then I sat down and took a chair in front of him and labored with him—that is, I began a monologue that lasted for three hours, and every time he pretended to doze off I gave him the toe of my shoe and roused him up. I waded into the Bowsters for a hundred years back. I compared him to an owl, a polecat, a toad, a gobbler and a hundred other things. I hurled threats at him that brought shivers to my own spine. Whenever he tried to protest I menaced him. Whenever he tried to get up to go I threatened his life.

Three hours did the trick. The bluffer was bluffed. I wore him right down. His wife could have done it years ago if she had only had the grit and the pertinacity. If she had gone for him the first time he ever yelled "Woman!" at her he would have been as humble as a rabbit the rest of his days. After the first hour I saw that I was gaining on it, and I never let up for a minute until the bells struck 1 o'clock. Then Mr. Bowser suddenly collapsed in a heap, and after I had rubbed a wet rag over his face and revived him he rose up and put his arms around me and murmured:

"Oh, you dear old thing, but I'm so thankful that you came and that we have had this delightful talk together!"

At the present writing he is following me about the house and wishing he could die for me, and I think I have him bluffed for as much as two weeks ahead. Mothers-in-law, try my recipe, and take no other.

SARAH THOMPSON, Mother-in-law of Mr. Bowser Per M. Quad.

Trouble Ahead.

Hewitt—You look worried. Jewett—I am worried. I left my bankbook on a street car. Hewitt—Cheer up; it may be found. Jewett—That's what worrying me. It may be found and left at my house and my wife will know what my bank balance is.—New York Herald.

Shakespeare Illustrated.



"The Winter's Tale" — Browning's Magazine.

Well Supplied.

Doctor—I want you to get some strong bark at night. Patient—Won't have to get it. All my neighbors keep dogs.—Puck.