

A Christmas Correspondence

FROM her to him:
 "Dear Jim,
 I'm so perplexed,
 So altogether tired
 out and vexed,
 I've tramped
 through miles
 and miles
 of store,
 I've handled gloves and ties and trash galore.
 The girls are all disposed of—any stuff
 That looks expensive's always good
 enough—
 But you men, who grow humorous at a tie
 And mock us for the poor cigars we buy,
 (This wisdom I can't cribbed from out the
 pater's—
 For my enlightenment, see comic papers)
 You know a smoking cap would make you
 mad;
 Please, is there anything you haven't had?
 Just mention any trifle you prefer—
 What is it that you want for Christmas, sir,
 And I will bless you with my latest reach,
 Most cordially, your friend,
 Elizabeth."

"Dear Girl," he wrote.
 "I'm sorry that you're harassed,
 Although you've made me frightfully em-
 barrassed.
 Each Christmas of my life I've been so
 haunted
 By all the awful things I haven't wanted,
 I hardly can believe the tale is true
 That I'm at last to have a thing, I do.
 In fact, your letter really seems to say,
 You are to dictate, I am to obey.
 So poor, rash child, no longer I demur;
 These are the little trifles I prefer:
 Imprimis then: Two certain eyes of blue
 That tell unbid the hidden thoughts of you;
 Second: Your strong, young hands, alert
 to lend
 Their tender strength to help and hold a
 friend;
 And third: That laugh of yours that rings
 as gay
 As happy bells upon a holiday;
 And fourth: Your sweetness, tender-
 ness and truth,
 The glory and the gladness of your
 youth.
 Dear little Madam Santa Claus, a line
 To tell me if this present may be mine.
 Oh, child, be generous this Christmas
 day.
 And your petitioner will ever pray
 The right to sign himself, with sweet
 intent,
 Always your grateful, glad
 Recipient."
 —Theodosia Pickering Garrison, in N. Y.
 Life.

A STRANGER AND YE TOOK ME IN.

THE Auberts were taking a step up in life. From being birds of passage in a tenement house, free to flit by the midnight train to Canada whenever fancy dictated, they were evolving into landowners and had bought a house. It was a very little house on the hillside, which overlooked the village where Jean Aubert and Delia and Henri worked in the mills, but two acres of land went with it, and already the little Auberts were growing rosy and fat-legged. Hitherto the gates of Paradise had been effectually closed to them, and with woods and fields no more than half a mile away, and the whole street on the other side lined with green lawns to tempt their very eyes, they had never till now kicked up their heels on grass.

Peeping out of the two street windows of the yardless double tenement house which had been their home, or playing softly round the doorstep on hot summer evenings, they had looked like a family of mice, noiseless, bright-eyed and shy. Mamma Aubert was the mother mouse, a thin, dark-eyed, decent French-Canadian woman, seldom seen outdoors, but often of an afternoon by the window with a bald-headed baby in her arms and a rather hectic flush upon her cheeks. In school the little Auberts wore perennial high-necked, long-sleeved, pink calico aprons, and still maintaining their mouse-like manners did excellent work. The boys were black-eyed rogues, but like true Frenchmen took kindly to instruction in cap-doffing and excuse-me. They all had a gift for penmanship and drawing, and Robert Aubert was the artist of the school.

The year before the horse was bought the two eldest children had graduated into the woolen mill, and Delia's deft fingers earned enough money to pay her board, clothe herself tastefully and have a little margin left, which she laid by for furniture for the room which they were going to call parlor.

There was one shadow on the family happiness, and that was the mortgage; and just before Christmas this shadow began to assume alarming proportions. It had looked easy in the spring, when they first moved into the new home, to meet the payment which was due in December. Jean Aubert was carpenter and machinist in one of the factories, and a steady and capable man, but the process of evolution is never without a struggle, and, do the best he could, the interest was all he could pay. Even for that, what with the cold coming suddenly on and his nestful of young ones being uncommonly hungry and hard on their clothes after their summer out doors, the family resources were strained to the utmost. Delia and Henri contributed their savings, the parlor that was to be was shut up, and they all came down to a pretty strict diet of pudding and milk. It was a poor outlook for Christmas, for ahead of them loomed up more interest and other payments, besides the monthly outgo for their living.

"I don't know but I've undertaken too much," Jean Aubert said, soberly. "It costs more over here than it did on the street. If we don't save more this winter than we have since we came, we shall have to move back," and in the melancholy silence that followed Mamma Aubert gave up her chickens and cow, Delia saw her dream of muslin curtains and an organ vanish in air, and the children suffered that depression of spirits which is always induced by a verdict adverse to Christmas.

Fortune has a way of experimenting with full cups to see how much more they can hold after they are apparently brimming. The Auberts thought they had all the mouths they could feed and all the cares they could compass consistent with the ambition, which they were not yet prepared to relinquish, of owning their house, when the very next day after the family council a knock came at their humble door and Madame Aubert opened it on an old man, who asked if Jean Aubert lived there.

"I come to see him from Canada," said he.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon, but Madame Aubert made the visitor comfortable by the fire. He was old and poorly dressed, and had with him a shabby carpetbag.

"You know me?" he asked, as he took off his coat and prepared to make himself at home. "No? Ah, Jean remember. His father my old neighbor—friend—up in Chateau-grand."

Madame Aubert went about her work, the little Auberts resumed their play, the older children came stamping in from school. The questions they all entertained in respectful silence about the stranger who sat dozing by their fire—Who was he? Had he come to stay? What should they do with him?—waited till Jean should come.

That evening they all sat up and listened to the fine old story of the Boy Who Went to Seek His Fortune—or was it the Prodigal Son? It was told in French, with many gestures and much dramatic effect—and Pierre Demarest, its hero and narrator, was assisted by the smiles and tears and enthusiastic applause of all the Auberts, from Jean Aubert down.

In the seignory in Canada where the Auberts lived the Demarests had been their neighbors. Old Demarest had been a father to Jean's father, and Pierre Demarest had been his dearest friend. But Pierre had chosen to wander, and while young Aubert settled and married and became a

farmer on the land adjoining old Demarest's, Pierre went west and disappeared. No word came from him, and except in Aubert's stories to his children of the friendship he and Pierre had had together in the days when Aubert was a stranger and Father Demarest had taken him in, the very memory of Pierre Demarest seemed to have died. Gone 30 years! His audience gathered that he had first drifted beyond the pale of civilization in company with a party of railroad engineers; that he had been a guide and hunter in the Rocky mountains; that he had had some experience in mining, and that he had been to Alaska. He talked of Indians and bears with a familiarity that made the Aubert boys' hearts burn within them. But he dwelt with most particularity upon his home-coming.

"I think I see my home before I see," he said. "I come to Chateau-grand. I take my bag and walk down the road—two miles—to my old home. No one know me. My father dead, my mother dead, my brother Selim say no room for me. He not care. He say he think me dead. Why not me write so many years? My brother Leonard live in Chateau-grand. I go to him. I walk back all the way to his house. He have big, good house. He woman scowl at me—so!—and say: 'You ole man, you poor, you come to live on us, you go 'way.' They give me no supper. I take my bag, and think of my friend Aubert. I go again into the country. I come to my friend Aubert's house. He dead, too, but his son just like him. Glad to see me 'fore he knew me. Give me supper. When he find out who I am, he seize my hand, he laugh, he cry, he say: 'My father's friend!' I cry, too. I stay two weeks with him and his brother on next farm. They very kind to me. I say: 'Where your brother Jean? He little boy when I leave home.' They say: 'He in the states, in Harvichtown, New Hampshire. He work in mills. Do well. Have wife and children.' I say: 'I go to see him. Spent Christmas with

him, if he glad to see me.' Not see my brothers any more. They 'fraid I cost them money. I not trouble them."

Jean Aubert grasped the old man's hand.

"We are truly glad to see you," said he. "We are not so well off as we were, because we struggle hard to buy this house. The little children want the air. My woman like a cow and chickens. My girl here, Delia, want a little room—a parlor—for her beaux. We work hard all together for the pay. But we see our friends. If you'll take what we can give you, you are kindly welcome. Many times I've heard my father tell how kind your father was to him. And the children here will like to hear some more about your life."

In the days that followed the family made good Jean's welcome, and both by word and act caused their old visitor to feel at home. Their native French politeness, united with real kindness of heart, concealed the inconvenience which his presence caused them, and in truth, except for the fact that the family divisor had already seemed as big as it could well be, and that it is always a problem how to put 12 persons to sleep in five beds, Pierre was very little trouble. He sat for the most part by the fire, quiet and content. In the evening when they were all at home, he told stories and talked with Jean about old times. The children ceased to be shy before him. Robert furtively drew his picture—on a shingle, as many a brother artist has been driven by stress of circumstances to do. He was a man of medium size and much weather-beaten—a study in brown, with a keen old face, little gold rings in his ears, bright eyes, and small, strong hands. He was old, but not feeble, he was silent, but not stupid, and after his own fashion seemed cheerful and at ease. Robert finished him, and after a moment's contemplation added a beard, a fur cap, and trimmed his old coat with fur; rounded his waist line up a bit and put on a belt, and then, the fancy growing, represented him as surrounded with various articles suited to the holiday ambitions of the young Auberts—for instance, a paint box and heaps of drawing paper labeled "Robert," a watch and chain such as Delia hankered after, and a bicycle for Henri.

In spite of the quietus Papa Aubert had put upon Christmas, the children could not help planning for some sort of a celebration. They could at least have a tree to look at; spruces were

HEIGHT TO BE TEST.

Railroad Officials Favor Abandonment of Age Limit in Children.

It is possible that before long children traveling on railroads may be charged for as much per inch, instead of selling them tickets upon the time-honored age rule. Officers of the big transportation companies whose lines terminate in Chicago say that one of the most difficult questions they and their conductors have to face is the age limit in selling tickets and collecting fares for children. At least one general passenger agent is of the opinion that children should be charged for according to their height. He says it would be much easier to regulate the difference in rates by this method than by accepting the words of parents and others regarding ages.

"There is absolutely no way in which railroads may discriminate between children over and under age," this official said. "We are entirely dependent upon the word of parents, guardians and others in charge of the minors. The present rule is that children under five years shall be carried free. Between five and ten years half fare is charged. Now, a child under the five-year limit may be unusually large for its age, and the conductor may suspect an over age. Again a child more than five may be unusually small, or the age may be passed, beating the railroad out of a half fare. If we should abolish this rule and go by height I don't see that any greater hardship would be worked and the requirement would be more fair to the transportation companies."

The question is of such importance that it will be considered by the general passenger agents of the roads east of Chicago and west of Buffalo and Pittsburgh.

RAILROAD TO HUDSON BAY.

The Plan of Years Now Being Actually Executed—To Be Ready in Three Years.

The talk and plans of decades have finally taken form and a railway connecting the great lakes with Hudson bay is now actually under construction. Consul Brush, at Niagara Falls, has sent to the state department a valuable report on the subject, from which it appears that the line plunges hundreds of miles through an unbroken wilderness, with no cities, towns or even villages to afford traffic.

In fact, only Indian guides and hunters have ever attempted to penetrate the great wilderness to the north. Nevertheless, the railroad, which is known as the Algoma Central, is being built in the most thorough manner possible, with the best equipment available, able to stand almost any strain upon it, and capable of good service for years to come. Eighty-five-pound steel rails are used and the locomotives are of enormous size, weighing 135 tons when equipped for traffic.

The engines are so massive that railway companies were afraid of the strain on bridges and they were delivered from Chicago to Sault Ste. Marie by the lake route on steam ferries.

The new railway starts at Sault Ste. Marie. Ground was broken less than 90 days ago, but already 25 miles of road are completed and in use, and the railway is pushing forward at the rate of half a mile a day. It is expected that it will require three years to complete the road.

MARKET REPORT.

Cincinnati, Dec. 21.

CATTLE—Common	\$2 50	@ 3 50
Extra butchers	4 75	@ 4 85
CALVES—Extra	4 75	@ 6 50
HOGS—Choice packers	4 92	@ 4 95
Mixed packers	4 80	@ 4 90
SHEEP—Extra	3 25	@ 3 50
LAMBS—Extra	5 10	@ 5 25
FLOUR—Spring patent	3 90	@ 4 30
WHEAT—No. 2 red	...	@ 78
CORN—No. 2 mixed	...	@ 38 1/2
OATS—No. 2 mixed	...	@ 24
RYE—No. 2	...	@ 54
HAY—Best timothy	...	@ 14 75
PORK—Family	...	@ 12 50
LARD—Steam	...	@ 6 80
BUTTER—Ch. dairy	...	@ 14
Choice creamery	...	@ 26 1/2
APPLES—Ch. to fancy	2 75	@ 3 50
POTATOES—Per brl.	1 65	@ 1 75
TOBACCO—New	10 00	@ 11 25
Old	12 00	@ 14 75

Chicago.

FLOUR—Win. patent	3 65	@ 3 80
WHEAT—No. 2 red	71 1/2	@ 74 1/2
No. 3 spring	66	@ 70 1/2
CORN—No. 2	...	@ 38 1/2
OATS—No. 2 mixed	...	@ 23 1/2
RYE	...	@ 25
PORK—Mess	11 15 1/2	@ 11 25
LARD—Steam	6 92 1/2	@ 6 95

New York.

FLOUR—Win. patent	3 60	@ 3 90
WHEAT—No. 2 red	...	@ 78 1/2
CORN—No. 2 mixed	...	@ 46 1/2
OATS—No. 2 mixed	...	@ 27 1/2
RYE	...	@ 35
PORK—Family	14 50	@ 15 00
LARD—Steam	...	@ 7 35

Baltimore.

WHEAT—No. 2 red	72 1/2	@ 72 1/2
Southern	68	@ 73
CORN—No. 2 mixed	42 1/2	@ 42 1/2
OATS—No. 2 mixed	28 1/2	@ 29
CATTLE—Butchers	4 75	@ 5 00
HOGS—Western	5 30	@ 5 40

Louisville.

FLOUR—Win. patent	4 25	@ 4 70
WHEAT—No. 2 red	...	@ 75
CORN—Mixed	...	@ 41
OATS—Mixed	...	@ 25
PORK—Mess	...	@ 12 00
LARD—Steam	...	@ 7 00

Indianapolis.

WHEAT—No. 2 red	...	@ 73 1/2
CORN—No. 2 mixed	...	@ 37
OATS—No. 2 mixed	...	@ 24 1/2

PROFESSIONAL CARDS.

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 Office in Agricultural Bank Building
 (7 to 10 a. m.)
 Office Hours (2 to 4 p. m.)
 (7 to 8 p. m.)

Frankfort & Cincinnati Ry.

ELKHORN ROUTE.

LOCAL TIME CARD IN EFFECT DECEMBER 25th, 1898.

EAST BOUND.			
	No. 1	No. 3	No. 5
	Pass.	Pass.	Mixed.
Lve Frankfort	7:00am	8:40pm	1:00pm
Lve Elkhorn	7:11am	8:50pm	1:20pm
Lve Switzer	7:18am	8:56pm	1:25pm
Lve Stamping Grnd	7:24am	9:02pm	1:30pm
Lve Duval	7:34am	9:12pm	...
Lve Johnson	7:39am	9:17pm	...
Lve Georgetown	7:45am	9:23pm	2:30pm
Lve C. S. Ry Depot	7:50am	9:28pm	3:00pm
Lve Newtown	8:15am	9:53pm	...
Lve Centerville	8:25am	10:03pm	...
Lve Elizabeth	8:30am	10:08pm	...
Arr Frankfort	8:40am	10:18pm	...

WEST BOUND.			
	No. 2	No. 4	No. 6
	Pass.	Pass.	Mixed.
Lve Paris	9:04am	5:40pm	...
Lve Elizabeth	9:04am	5:40pm	...
Lve Centerville	9:45am	5:55pm	...
Lve Newtown	9:53am	6:03pm	...
Lve C. S. Ry Depot	10:28am	6:37pm	7:50am
Lve Georgetown	10:28am	6:37pm	7:50am
Lve Johnson	10:37am	6:46pm	...
Lve Duval	10:43am	6:52pm	...
Lve Stamping Grnd	10:52am	6:59pm	8:25am
Lve Switzer	11:00am	7:07pm	8:40am
Lve Elkhorn	11:07am	7:14pm	8:55am
Arr Frankfort	11:25am	7:32pm	9:15am

Daily except Sunday.
 a connects with E. & S. g. connects with Q.
 & C. connects with Ky. Central.

KENTUCKY CENTRAL POINTS

Frankfort	Ar. 12:00 P.M.
Georgetown	Ar. 10:28 A.M.
Paris	Ar. 9:00 A.M.
Windsor	Ar. 8:45 A.M.
Richmond	Ar. 7:50 A.M.
Frankfort	Ar. 6:40 A.M.

GEO. B. HARPER, Gen'l Supt.
JOS. R. NEWTON, G. P. A.

RAILROAD TIME CARD.

L. & N. R. R.

ARRIVAL OF TRAINS:

- From Cincinnati—10:58 a. m.; 5:35 p. m.; 10:10 p. m.
- From Lexington—5:11 a. m.; 7:45 a. m.; 3:28 p. m.; 6:37 p. m.
- From Richmond—5:05 a. m.; 7:49 a. m.; 3:28 p. m.
- From Maysville—7:42 a. m.; 8:25 p. m.

DEPARTURE OF TRAINS:

- To Cincinnati—5:15 a. m.; 7:51 a. m.; 3:40 p. m.
- To Lexington—7:47 a. m.; 11:35 a. m.; 5:45 p. m.; 10:14 p. m.
- To Richmond—11:08 a. m.; 5:43 p. m.; 10:16 p. m.
- To Maysville—7:50 a. m.; 6:35 p. m.

F. B. CARR, Agent.

My agency insures against fire, wind and storm—best old reliable prompt paying companies—non-union. W. O. HINTON, Agent.

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Dyspepsia Cure

Digests what you eat

Artificially digests the food and aids Nature in strengthening and reconstructing the exhausted digestive organs. It is the latest discovered digestant and tonic. No other preparation can approach it in efficiency. It instantly relieves and permanently cures Dyspepsia, Indigestion, Heartburn, Flatulence, Sour Stomach, Nausea, Sick Headache, Gastralgia, Cramps, and all other results of imperfect digestion.

Prepared by E. C. DeWitt & Co., Chicago.

W. T. Brooks.



"AND NOW I GO AWAY."

to be had for the cutting on the hill that overshadowed the village. The little boys would get one. Robert should make a paper angel for the top. They would color egg shells for ornaments, and Mamma Aubert promised them a cake and snow-ice-cream.

"And we will say," they declared, and it was a piece of philosophy worthy of older heads, "we will say, when the time comes to take off the presents, that this house is our present."

What was that? Did old Demarest chuckle, or merely cough in his sleep? They thought he was dozing, as, with six heads in a bunch, they whispered their plans in the corner on the other side of the fire. If they only could have seen what was written inside that rusty old envelope of a man! Has anybody imagined how it must feel to be Santa Claus? If it is true that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and that, whatever the joys of possession, generosity feels better than gratitude, St. Nick must be the happiest being in the universe. And Pierre Demarest was planning to be the Auberts' St. Nicholas.

The day before Christmas he buttoned on his coat and trudged over to the village.

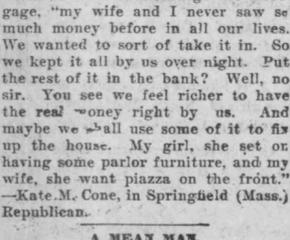
"I buy some little things for you young ones," he said to Mamma Aubert. That night he took Robert and Delia into his confidence. Robert was to go next day and get what he had bought and Delia was to smuggle the parcels into the house and put them on the tree.

"You not tell," he said, impressively; and then with a twinkle: "I like to see what the children say."

Delia will never forget that Christmas, not merely for what happened in the evening, but for the responsibilities which beset her during the day. If they had not all gone off to church in the morning except Robert and herself and the baby, she never could have managed it. Robert came home fairly staggering under the weight of the things the old man had bought.

"There are candies, Delia," he panted, "and a lot of those shiny things

A MEAN MAN.



Gilson—I understand that Gilchrist's wife has left him.

Willets—Is that so? What was the trouble?

Gilson—She asked him what he was going to give her for a Christmas present.

Willets—Yes?

Gilson—He said he had decided to let her get her teeth fixed.—N. Y. Press.

Day of Thanksgiving.

The deepest note of Christmas is thanksgiving. The angels sang its first Te Deum for a men to learn. And our Christmas prayer shall be: "Give us day by day this day's doxology; teach our common lives to sing 'Glory to God.'"—T. H. Darlow.