

The Christ-Child.

This world has whirled on its way
For nineteen hundred years,
Since Bethlehem's babe, who came in
Love,
Went over us His love.

Still swings above the golden star
That on that night stood still,
Above the humble village inn,
By the Judaean hill.

And wise men seek the path today,
The crowned Magi find—
The mother heart of womanhood,
Makes that Earth's holy ground.

The singing angels hover now,
Above the manger, there,
Where God's light shone upon His
brow,
The Palace of His love's fair.

The wondrous story, never old,
Thrills on the wakened heart,
Who led us to His Heavenly Fold,
Who walked from men apart.

Awake, today, in spirit still,
The song that never dies!
Find out that glittering star again,
The scales dropped from our eyes!

For God's dear love is potent now
As when His reign began;
The chanting of the seraph host
Shames restless heart of man.

Here, in our midst, the Heavenly
Dove
Seeks an eternal rest;
Descending from His throne above
To hide within each breast.

Wade! Better Natures, sleeping long!
Cast off the thralls of sin!
Lead to the cheering angels' song,
And let the White Dove in!

Here by the graves of vanished heroes,
Great all in love today!
Fit up your brows with laurels white,
And meet Him on our way!

—Richard Henry Sturge

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

Where did the Christmas tree originate? This is a question that doubtless would puzzle most people to answer. It came to us from England, and it is pretty well settled that it was taken there from Germany, for the custom of setting up a tree hung with gifts at Yuletide was by no means universal in Britain until after the marriage of Queen Victoria to a German prince.

But prior to this there was a sort of Christmas tree in England. The "wassail bob," a bunch of holly or other evergreens on a pole, decked with ribbons and hung with oranges and apples, and sometimes bearing a pair of dolls, was carried about in Yorkshire at Christmas nearly a century ago. And until 1830 the "besant" was escorted by a procession with music at Shaftesbury—it being a tree-shaped framework covered with ribbons, flowers and peacock feathers on which were hung jewels, coins and other articles of value, loaned by the local gentry. Hutchins' history of Dorset states in 1803 that the decorations of this "besant," or "byzant," or "bezou," as it was variously called, were sometimes worth as much as £1,500.

These kindred customs prevailing in the England of a century ago are generally regarded by archaeologists as survivals of tree worship, which seems to have existed everywhere.

Germany probably received the tree from Scandinavia, where the ancient legend tells of "Yggdrasil," the ash, which binds together heaven, earth and hell; its branches spreading over the whole world and reaching above the sky; its root running in three directions, one to the Asa Gods in heaven, one to the Frost giants, and the third to the under-world.

In the far East, Japanese sacred books, written a dozen centuries ago, relate how the gods pulled up by the roots on the mountain Kager the Saka tree, on the branches of which they hung jewels, a mirror and blue

and white peace offerings to the shining goddess of the heavens. The Hindoo Parijata and Kalpavriksha visited all the objects of the desires of god and mortals, and so, too, did the Iranian Harvisptokhm, "the tree of all the seeds."

At cremation ceremonies in Buddhist Siam a framework representing a tree, to which are tied lines and nutshells containing money and lottery tickets, occupies a prominent place and after the rites these "fruits," which are called "har-apruk," are scrambled for by the crowd.

In Upper India the scavenger caste carry in processions, in honor of their god Zahir, a bamboo framework decked with bright colored clothes and peacock feathers, and hung with fans and bunches of cocoa nuts.

Lucian describes trees covered with ornaments and sacred attributes which were brought each year to the burnt offerings to the goddess Atergatis at Hierapolis of Syria; and he told also of great trees, loaded with goats, sheep, garments and gold and silver objects which were burned before the Syro-Phoenician gods.

Conventional, or "made-up" trees are pictured on Babylonian cylinders, and one of the bilingual hymns translated by Prof. Sayce describes how the "Place of the Tree" (of which these pictured trees were undoubtedly symbols) is the central spot of the earth, while its fruits—obviously the stars—are of brilliant crystal and reach into the liquid vast.

The pine of Cybele and Attis is still to be seen on the ancient bas reliefs, hung with bells, a reed flute, a wheel and other objects, and there are sacred birds among the branches and a ram and a bull standing beneath, ready for sacrifice.

Pictures and other votive objects were attached to the laurel of Apollo.

Summing up all the evidence, it certainly seems that the Christmas tree hung with gifts has descended to us from the times when decorated trees laden with offerings were worshipped as representatives of the abstract "Universe tree," whose trunk was the cosmic axis, whose roots were in the under-world, and whose branches, lifted aloft into the skies, bore up the heavenly hosts.

This is simply to call your attention to
the place where you can find what you may
want for a

Christmas Present

—As Usual it is at the—

"Old Reliable Drug House"

—OR—

B. O. WOOD

The custom of decorating the churches with greenery at Christmas had its origin in a pagan ceremony. The great feast of Saturn was held in December, when the worshippers hung the temple with such green things as they could find; and the Christians adopted the same method to celebrate the birth of the Savior, giving it an emblematic turn by referring to the "righteous branch," and justifying it from Isaiah 55: 13—"The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree and the box together to beautify the place of my sanctuary."

The holly, or holy tree, is called Christ's thorn in Germany and Scandinavia, from its use in church decorations and its putting forth its berries at Christmas time.

Letters to Santa Claus.

Dear Santa Claus—I want a doll and a work box with thimble and little scissors in it. I want some nuts and candy. I have got a live sister that can't write, she wants a doll too and a table and dishes and some candies and nuts.

ANNIE KETHLEY.

BURNHAM, Mo.

Dear Old Santa Claus:—Bessie wants a buggy and a table, a dress, pair of shoes, some stockings, candy and nuts, a picture book, and a doll. Your friend,

BESSIE WAKEFIELD.

Dear Santa Claus—I want a little air gun, nuts and candy.

EMMET KETHLEY.

Dear DEMOCRAT and Santa Claus.—Through your kindness I want to send Santa a letter and I think he will be sure to get it this time. I want a sled, a watch, a knife, a harp and a lot of nuts and candy and I will try and be good all next year. Now I hope you will find me and can spare just this much out of your pack.

Your little friend,

DALE WILSON.

Dear Santa Claus:—I want a doll buggy, cook stove, a doll and wash stand and a box full of candy. I will be at the Christian church in Monroe city to receive all these nice things.

LORA KIDD.

MONROE CITY, Mo., DEC. 19th, 1898.

Dear Santa Claus—I thought I would write you a few lines to tell you what I want. I want a box of dishes and a doll trunk and a little watch and all the candy and nuts and apples that I can eat.

Yours truly,

BESSIE BOMAN.

Dear Old Santa Claus:—I saw in the DEMOCRAT last week that you are watching the good girls and boys, so I thought that I would try to be very good, and hope you will come and bring me something real nice. I am eight years old and live one mile north of Indian Creek want a doll and a doll buggy and a set of dishes of your own choice and many other pretty things.

From your little friend,

LARA KELLER.

Dear Old Santa Claus:—Will you please send my little friend, Jennie Nolen, a little wagon and a doll and some candy and nuts. She is one year old and lives about a half quarter from me.

Dear Santa Claus:—I thought I would write and tell you what I want for Xmas. I want a nice doll with blue eyes and curly hair and just four years old, also some candy and peanuts. Hoping I will see you Xmas, I will close.

From your little friend,

VERGIE MAY THOMAS.

To Santa Claus:—Do not forget my little sister and my little baby brother. My little sister wants some candy and a doll and some nuts and a little blue book and some oranges and bananas. My little brother wants some candy and a rattler and a cur dog.

From your little friend,

JESSIE MADDOX.

Dear Santa Claus:—I see that through the kindness of the Monroe City DEMOCRAT, we children can write to you, and tell you what we want you to bring us. I want a doll, a baby bed and a picture book. I don't think this is very much to ask, is it? I can not write very well as I am only five years old, so I write this on papa's type-writer. So good bye.

VEVA MEDELL TERRELL.

Monroe City, Mo.

MONROE CITY, Mo., DEC. 1898.

Dear Santa Claus and DEMOCRAT:—I am eight years old and I live three miles out in the country and I want a new pair of shoes and some candy. Now dear Santa don't forget to come.

Elsie McLeod.

Dear Old Santa Claus:—I will try and write you a little letter and I will not ask you for too much for you have so many to buy for. Bring me a pair of skates and a pair of gloves and some candy and nuts and some fire-crackers and a story book. I am eight years old.

Harry Maddox.

Monroe City, Mo.

MONROE CITY, Mo.

Dear Santa Claus—I thought I would write and tell you what I want. I want a horn, a black-board, box of crayon and an eraser, and a train of cars, candy and peanuts. Please old Santa don't forget your friend.

ROY MEYER.

MONROE CITY, Mo., DEC. 18, 1898

Dear Santa Claus and Democrat—I live three miles out in the country and I will be six years old Tuesday, and dear Santa I want a new pair of shoes and some candy.

ENNICE McLEOD.

MONROE CITY, Mo., DEC. 19, 1898

Dear Old Saint Nic:—Mamma says if I am a very good boy you will come and see me. Of course I must tell you where I live and what I want you to bring me. I was five years old the 22d of November. Our house is two miles south and one quarter east of Monroe City. I would like a little wagon, some candy, fruits and nuts. Hoping you will not pass and forget me, I remain your little friend,

JOHNIE HARDWICK.

MONROE CITY, Mo.

Dear Santa Claus—I thought I would write to tell you what I want. I want a doll and trunk, a set of dishes and a cradle, some candies and nuts. Santa, do not forget our little brother.

Your friend,

AMITIE MEYER.

DEC. 16TH, 1898.

Dear Old Santa Claus—What I want for Xmas: A wagon and a cap and a wheel-barrow and a pair of gloves. I am 7 years old.

WALTER ROHR.

Monroe City, Mo.

Catharine street.

Dear Santa—I have tried to be a good girl. I rock my little brother to sleep and am lots of help. I am four years old and brother is two. I want you to bring me a doll cradle and a set of dishes and for Jaza bring him a wagon and a rattle box and some candy and bananas. Good-bye.

BERNICE LITTLE.

MONROE CITY, DEC. 16, 1898

Dear Old Santa Claus—What I want for Xmas is a silk handkerchief and a toilet box. I am ten years old. From

IDA ROHR.

DEAR SANTA CLAUS.

Care of DEMOCRAT.

Please, bring me a pair of skates and a sure "nuff gun" (an air rifle.) Santa Claus don't you think I am big enough for a gun? Please fill both my stockings with nuts and candy.

Your little friend,

CLAUDE WESTFALL.

DEC. 17, 1898.

Dear Old Santa—I am a little boy ten years old and I go to school. Our teachers name is Mr. Rogers and I like him very much. Mamma has told me so much about you that I know you must be good and kind. I want you to bring me a muffler and a pencil, and tablet, and a box of caps, and please don't forget some candy and nuts. I hope you may live a long life is the wish of your friend.

CHARLIE LITTLE.

BURNHAM, Mo.

Dear Old Santa Claus—Ernest Wakefield wants a hobby horse, a pair of shoes that has two soles on them, one pair of soles went sand a boy.

Your friend,

ERNEST WAKEFIELD.

MONROE CITY, Mo., DEC. 14, 1898.

Dear Old Santa—I am a little girl with dark hair and blue eyes. Will you please remember me this Christmas and bring me something nice. I would like to go to the church Xmas eve and see your smiling face. I would like for you to bring me a story book and scrap book and some candy and nuts and oranges, and don't forget my brother. From one of your little girls.

ELLA BOARMAN.

Dear Santa Claus—I want a hat for Christmas and a bracelet, that is all I want so good-bye.

To Santa—From

VIENNA YOELL.

MONROE CITY, DEC. 19, 1898.

Dear Santa Claus—I saw in the DEMOCRAT where little Jefferson Crigler had asked for a nice little box of monkeys, so I will ask you to bring me a steel, a harjo and a pony. If you bring me these I will be happy.

Yours

Ovville Wilson.

P. S.—You will find me up at Pa's and Mamma's to spend Christmas eve, and I always hang my stocking on the right side of the mantle, so don't make a mistake and fill them full.

O. W.

Dear Old Santa—I want a ten cent cut of Battle Ax and a five cent cut of Battle Ax and then I can chew my Battle Ax and blow my horn for McKinley. Fill my ragged sock full of Democrats lard candy, and don't forget the Battle Ax.

Yours truly,

James Boman.

Dear old Santa—My papa said if I expected you to bring me any thing I must write to you, and he said the DEMOCRAT would print it and you could read it. You know you send me a card and said you would bring me a Chautauqua blackboard and desk. Please don't forget it, and I would like a pair of rubber boots and a gun, and a nice fire engine. And, of course, some candy, oranges and nuts, and please bring me your picture and anything else you want to bring. And, I would like a shoofly for little brother and you had better bring him something to cut his teeth, on so he will have some fingers left. I hope I have not asked for too much, and I will try and be a good boy.

Paul Edwin Linn.

P. S.—If I get my chautauqua desk I will try and learn to write by next Christmas.