

The Week Before Christmas

By W. E. Hill

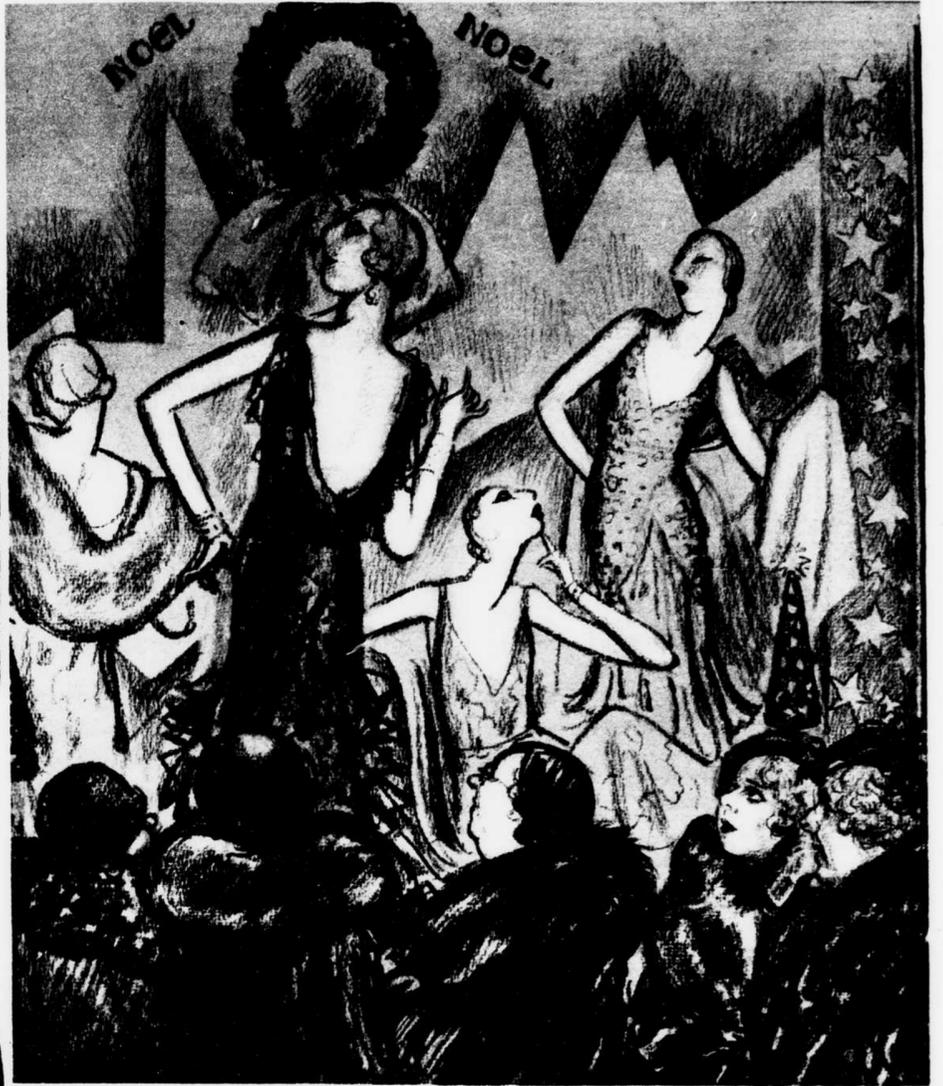
(Copyright, 1931, by the Chicago Tribune.)



"I really think Babe would rather have a dumping truck than the doll house we planned, Roy!" (Many a train back to the suburbs will be missed during the week before Christmas while mom and dad show Babe around the toy department.)



The debutante parties are at their best during the week before Christmas, and happy is the proud mother who can entice a crowd of college youths on vacation to her daughter's coming out. (These three boys have about decided to leave the party flat on account of the inferior quality of beverage served.)



Christmas would never be Christmas without the Christmas displays in the shop windows, and department store managers are to be congratulated on keeping up this old Yuletide custom.



"You've simply got to spend Christmas in the country with us, Marion. Just an old-fashioned Christmas. Throughout these great United States the week preceding Christmas will be rife with young married couples trying to corral a bevy of friends into the country for over Christmas. Now is the time for these same friends to think seriously about bad roads, guest room beds, one-pipe furnaces and heavy December snows."



"Oh, yes, indeed, a canary gets on beautifully in a home where there are cats. You won't have any trouble at all. They will grow to love each other!" Ladies who clerk in pet shops will promise anything to a prospective customer during the week before Christmas.



The department store Santa Clauses are not nearly so winsome as in years gone by, and this is in a great measure due to the depression, because most of them have their minds pretty steadily on dividends and market values.



At the perfume counters just before Christmas you'll see many a young man sniffing seriously at sealed-up bottles of "L'Oignon de Paris" or "Whiff de Poisson," making believe they can really smell the contents. Salesladies realize how difficult this is and never sell a male buyer anything under \$12 a bottle, so he will be on the safe side.



Nowadays a college girl, home for her Christmas vacation, is careful not to be too intellectual. Back in the stone age a girl from Smith or Vassar could start conversation with her supper partner by saying, "Do you think that Chaucer or Hardy was the precursor of the modern novel?" or she could say, "Do you think basket ball or foot ball is the prettiest game?" and she would be sure to make a hit. Today, whatever the lead, a girl just says, "Hot Cha-Cha!" and will be considered a pretty keen baby.



"Don't worry, papa, maybe you'll find a job today!" (A suggestion for those harassed souls who say at Christmas time, "I don't know what to give her; she has everything." Why not send the money to those who have nothing?)



"I always feel, Grace, that a janitor or an elevator boy prefers something a little more personal as a gift at Christmas time!"



"Sanctuary." Now, that sounds just like the sort of book to give Cousin Ed and Cousin Louisa. They're so religious." The Christmas book department is always a safe haven for the last-minute shopper.

