It Pays To Patronize Our Advertisers

Good King Wenceslas

A Christmas Carol of Long Ago

Good King Wenceslas looked out
On the feast of Stephen,
And the snow lay round about,
Deep and crisp and even.

Brightly shone the moon that night,
Though the frost was cruel;
When a poor man came in sight
Gathering winter fuel.

First Singer:
"Hither, page, come stand by me.
If thou know'st it, telling,
Yonder peasant, who is he?
Where and what his dwelling?"

Second Singer:
"Sire, he lives a good league hence,
Down beneath the mountain,
Close against the forest fence
By St. Agnes' fountain."

First Singer:
"Bring me flesh and bring me wine,
Bring me pine logs hither;
Thou and I, we'll see him dine
When we bear them thither."

Second Singer:
"Sire, the night is darker now,
And the storm grows wilder,
Fails my heart, I know not how
I can go on longer."

First Singer:
"Mark my steps, be brave, my page;
Tread thou in them boldly;
Then thou'lt find the winter's rage
Freeze thy blood less coldly."

Page and monarch on they went,
On they went together.
Through the rude wind's wild lament,
Through the bitter weather.

In his master's steps he trod,
Where the snow lay dinted;
That was in the very sod
Which his foot had printed.

Therefore, Christian men, be sure,
Wealth or rank possessing,
Ye who now do bless the poor
Shall yourselves find blessing.

One Historic Christmastide.

The crusades had a wonderful influence upon the literary taste as well as the national manners and festivities of Christmastide.

It was at the Christmas festival of 1214 that the barons demanded from King John the document which as the foundation of English liberties is known by the name of Magna Charta. John's tyranny had become intolerable, and the hopes of the people hung on the fortunes of the French campaign, in which he was then engaged. After his defeat and return to England the barons met secretly and swore to demand the restoration of their liberties by charter under the king's seal. Having agreed to assemble for this purpose at Christmas, they separated. On the feast of the Epiphany the barons asked of the king his confirmation of the laws of Edward the Confessor and Henry I. John met the barons with an absolute refusal, but, finding them firm, pleaded for time to consider. This was granted, and in 1215, knowing it to be inevitable, he called the barons to Runymede and there signed the great charter.

Christmas Song

Now is the time when holly sprays
Light all the barren, breeding ways,
And every bell, it sounds noel,
A paean in the Master's praise.

Now is the time when mistletoe
Like beryl in the morning beam,
And every bell, it sounds noel,
And makes the Master's praise its theme.

Now is the time when mistletoe
Is glossy in the noonday glow,
And every bell, it sounds noel,
To praise upon his name bestow.

Now is the time of ingle mirth,
The blessed day of Christ—his birth,
And every bell, it sounds noel,
To ring his praise throughout the earth.

—Clinton Scollard in Ainslee's.

Hang Up a Jar Instead of A Stocking

NO LITTLE Mexican boy or girl ever thinks of hanging up a stocking. They have something far more interesting. Three or four days before Christmas stands spring up about the alameda, or open park, without which no Mexican village is complete. All about these shops are hung the pinatas, which take the place of Christmas stockings. These are apparently great dolls 2 or 3 feet tall, dressed in tissue paper, with papier mache faces and dangling legs and arms. In reality their flowing paper garments conceal earthen jars for the holding of candies.

Sometimes the pinatas are in the form of angels or fairies, but usually they represent some person prominent in Mexico. President and Mrs. Diaz used to smile from every stand. The Mexican child may live in a hut built of flat stones piled together in a public lot, but he has his pinata at Christmas time.

In the better homes the pinatas are strung on a rope across a room. They are already heavy with their load of dulces, or candies, and they dangle somewhat dangerously over the heads of the beholders. Finally, the tallest man is blindfolded, given a stout cane and turned round and round. Leaping up, he strikes at the suspended figures. Amid shrieks of laughter and directions he keeps striking until he hits one of the jars. "Crack!" go its sides, and, being made only of baked clay, they crumble away and the sweets come pouring out. Nobody is too dignified to scramble for them. The older people are on their knees with the children. Everybody gets at least a mouthful. Then another is blindfolded, turned about and told to strike for another sugary deluge.—L. Crozer in McCall's Magazine.

What Others Like to Eat at Christmastide

SPAIN loves her turkeys. Nor does she find it necessary to run them to death on the farms in order to make their meat tender, for the fowls are driven into town from long distances, and their feet are tarred to withstand the hardness of the roads. For three days before Noche Buena the streets of the cities and villages are thick with squawking poultry and bleating lambs and kids that are destined for the slaughter.

Cuba fattens up her turkeys on walnuts to make their flesh more toothsome. Mexico grinds the cooked turkey to a paste, which is mixed with chili, raisins, currants, wine and a few other ingredients into what is called mole de guajalote. France, too, although she shows her partiality for turkeys by cramming them with truffles, coquettes with her Christmas menu. Now she throws her scarf to blood red sausage, fat and juicy; now to stewed hare with unfermented wine; again to pheasants, to hazen hens, to heath cocks.

In Brittany the home cured ham gives savor to the rye bread and to the chocolate porridge especially dedicated to Noel. In Cuba baked hams, preciously boiled in champagne and well sugared, vie for favor with a Spanish piece de resistance called "Mors and Christians," in reminiscence of a page in Spanish history, and made of black beans and rice.

In southern Italy eels, curled round with tail in mouth, defy time on the Christmas board by the emblem of eternity. In the smaller Italian cities on the day before Christmas the air is shrill and cries of kids being brought to market in panniers swung from donkey backs. Chickens, pigeons, tripe, boiling hot, are other dainties appropriate to the season, as well as turkeys, geese and calf's head.

German and Scandinavian countries are noted for the bounty of their Christmas cheer. In rural neighborhoods the tables are spread from Christmas to Epiphany. England, too, offers wide and varied hospitality. In Warwickshire, for instance, they serve roast crab apples with chine of pork and cider wine. Yorkshire has its frumenty, its Yule cakes and plum pudding. Scotland boasts one dish all her own—haddock, stuffed with oatmeal and onions.—Chicago Tribune.

Not Until "Next Christmas."

It was said the other day by an old southerner in Washington that no home loving Virginian ever would move "until after the next Christmas." The next Christmas comes and goes, but there is still another to come, and the moving is put off and happily will be put off until the holiday spirit has gone from the South, a spirit that will go when the South goes.—New York Evening Post.

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