

## JUST A MAN.

BY MARION MUIR.

She derided man's devices,  
Scorched with scornful words his vices,  
Swept him wholly out of date;  
And encouraged all her sisters  
To become inspired resistors  
Of the evil time and state.

But she fell too sick to travel,  
Preach or teach or hold the gavel—  
Lay quite twisted up with pain;  
And her sisters never brought her  
Not one cup of pure fresh water,  
While she tossed and called in vain.

Then it was that man the savage,  
Man, the creature born to rage,  
Tender trust and hearts sincere,  
Came the cared and watched and fed  
her,  
All her letters wrote and read her—  
For she had her husband near.

## CHRISTMAS.

BY LADY COOK, née TENNESSEE C. CLAFLIN.

The happy season of Christmas is once more close upon us, destined to bring joyfulness and mirth to millions of hearts, but bitter sadness and a sense of utter loneliness to the forlorn. Heaven pity those who at this festive period have no smiling faces of dear ones at their board, or, worse still, possess neither home nor means nor friends. When most families are annually gathered together in loving communion, it is meet that the common sympathies of humanity should be most strongly stirred on behalf of the wretched and the outcast.

It is unquestionable that our Christmas festival is of Pagan origin; that it is the survival of sun-worship—one form of that great and universal phallic creed which would seem to be as old and as ubiquitous as mankind. Who can say for how many thousands or scores of thousands of years the souls of men were moved to hope and joy by the return of the sun to vivify and bless the earth? The end of the winter solstice was a period of expectancy and promise, celebrated by joyful feasting, curious customs, and appropriate worship and the first day of every week was dedicated by our Anglo-Saxon ancestors to the solar deity. Christianity appropriated the Pagan festivals to its own cult with as few innovations as possible, so as not to shock too rudely the conservative susceptibilities of its converts. And thus the time of year of the universal Saturnalia was fixed upon as the precise period of the birth of Christ, the spiritual Sun, "the Sun of righteousness." Who was to bring gladness and healing beneath His wings. The Scriptural phrase is a plain allusion to the Solar-serpent worship which prevailed in Syria, as in this country and throughout the world. An ancient hieroglyph of its divinity was a circle, egg, or sun, with hovering wings.

The Yule-clog or log was emblematic of the same sacred fire. The sun's name in Welsh was Haul; in Breton, Heol. The Anglo-Saxon name for Christmas was geol or iule; Danish and Swedish, jul; Icelandic iol or jol; and English, Yule. Thus Yule plainly meant the festival of the Sun. A year was often called sun by the ancients, and Yule was the time when the old sun died and the new one was born. Thus the birth of Christ coincides with the birth of the sun.

Warmest, in his "Vindication of the Solemnity of the Nativity of Christ," 1648, says:—"If it doth appear that the time of this Festival doth comply with the time of the Heathens' Saturnalia, this leaves no charge of impiety upon it; for, since things are best cured by their contraries, it was both wisdom and piety in the ancient Christians (whose work it was to convert the Heathen from such, as well as other superstitions and miscarriages) to vindicate such times from the service of the Devil, by appointing them to the more solemn and especial service of God. The Blazes are foolish and vain, and most countenanced by the Church.

"Christmasse Kariles, if they be such as are fit for the time, and of holy and sober composure, and used with Christian sobriety and piety, they are not unlawful, and may be profitable, if they be sung with grace in the heart.

"New Year's Gifts, if performed without superstition, may be harmless provocations to Christian love, and mutual testimonies thereof to good purpose, and never the worse because the Heathens have them at the like times."

All very sensible, but at the same time a clever example of a special pleading, not unknown in our time, in which Heathen priority is ignored. The "Blazes" or Yule-logs, however, were difficult for Warmest to account for or to claim a Christian emblem. We can scarcely suppose him ignorant of their meaning or of that of the others. But he doubtlessly thought it would not be wise to enlighten the vulgar. Herick tells us that the Yule log of the new Christmas used to be lit "with last year's brand." In some places this was kept under the bed during the interval as a preventive against thunder and fire. It was said to cure cattle diseases, and its ashes freed the corn from blight.

The Christmas Candles used to be of enormous size, and made to illuminate the whole house. They were always lit on Christmas Eve, and thus Christmas, says Blount, was called "The feast of Lights," in the Latin Church.

Christmas is the season of carols. Durandus derives this word from *cantare*, to

sing, and *roia*, a joyful interjection. Talbot, however, derives it from Breton, *coroll*, to dance; and Richardson from the French *Carolle*, a particular kind of dance. From its similarity of structure and meaning in many tongues, we may be sure that it meant dancing accompanied with music and song, like that around the altars of the Sun God, Bel, or that practised by the Bacchantes of the Sun God, Bacchus, or by the Corybantes, the Galli of Cybele or Bela, the Lunar deity and consort of the Solar.

Warton says of the Christmas Carols printed in 1523, by Wynkyn de Worde, that "these were festa chansons for enlivening the merriment of the Christmas celebrity." Indeed there is scarcely a custom of any importance relating to Christmas which was not an ancient one when Christ was born. The evergreens, mistletoe, illuminations, cakes, carols feasting, dancing, and diversion of various sorts, point to the same Pagan sources, as do so many other of our social and religious customs. Even the Bishop's Crosier is the old Litnus or chief ensign of the Roman Angurs. Moheim informs us that Gregory Thaumaturgus "allowed the Christians to dance, sport and feast, at the tombs of the martyrs upon their respective festivals, and to do everything that the Pagans were accustomed to do in their temples during the feasts."

It was not until the fourth century that Christ's Mass was instituted, and the Eastern Christians celebrated it, then as now, on the sixth of January, and called it the Epiphany, while the Westerns pitched on the 25th of December.

We hope some day to give an account of the carols, for these form interesting pictures of the habits and thoughts of our ancestors. There was that strange one sung by the sewer while bearing the boar's head, as he was followed by the stately procession of nobles, knights, and ladies, into the banquet hall in the good old days when open house were kept for all comers by the great for weeks together. It begins:—

"Caput apri defero,  
Reddens laudes Domino.  
The boar's head in hand bring I  
With garlands gay and rosemary;  
I pray you all sing merrily,  
Quis estis in convivio."

Then there is that beginning.

"God rest you, merry gentlemen,  
Let nothing you dismay,  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour,  
Was born upon this day.  
To save us all from Satan's power  
When we were gone astray."

An old one, chanted in our youth by ballad singers commences:

"I saw three ships come sailing in  
On Christmas day, on Christmas-day."

It appears "Our Saviour Christ and His Lady," were aboard, and in violation of the possibilities of modern geography:

"O they sailed into Bethlehem  
On Christmas-day, on Christmas-day."

But which among them all—and many of the more very quaint—excels for beauty is that which Bishop Taylor called "the earliest Christmas Carol":

"Gloria in Excelsis!"

A sixteenth century one, quoting the refrain, begins thus:

"When Christ was born of Mary free  
In Bethlehem, that fair city,  
Angels sang there with mirth and glee,  
In Excelsis Gloria!"

Herdsman beheld these angels bright,  
To them appearing with great light,  
Who said 'God's Son is born this night,  
In Excelsis Gloria!"

Formerly the festivities partook too much of the nature of the classic Saturnalia. It was a period of license and debauch. Old Father Christmas had to vindicate his character, which was done by deputy in a tract of 1651, called "Twelve Yeares Observations on the Times." Half a century afterwards, another tract, named "Batt upon Batt," confesses:

"Our Batt can dance, play at high jinks with Dice,  
At any primitive orthodox vice  
Shoeing the wild mare, tumbling the young Wenches,  
Drinking all night, and sleeping on the benches."

The merry-making that continued from our Christmas day to Twelfth day ("old Christmas day") is noted in a ballad of 1630:

"When Christmas-tide comes in like a bride,  
With holly and ivy clad,  
Twelve days in the year, much mirth and good cheer  
In every household is had."

We must not omit to notice the splendid charities of our countrymen on behalf of the unfortunate, and especially at Christmas. The subscriptions which annually pour in for the poor is a case in point, and one which reflects the highest credit on all concerned.

For after all, what does it matter whether the legends of Christmas are true or false, whether its customs are Pagan or Christian, so that the season bring "Peace on earth and good-will towards man?" Joseph of Arimathea may never have visited Glastonbury, nor his dry walking-stick have become that "Holy Thorn" which miraculously blossomed annually on the fifth of January, yet there are saints as good as he who walk the earth still, and flowers and fruit of human kindness fairer than any that ever flourished on Weary-all hill. May the coming Christmas be like the "three ships" of

the old Carol—freighted with love and mercy, so that all may sing, as of old:

"Without the door let sorrow lie,  
And if for cold it hap to die,  
We'll bury it in a Christmas pie,  
And evermore be merry!"

## SIX LIVES LOST!

AWFUL RESULT OF FIRE IN OTTAWA.

OTTAWA, Dec. 17.—An awful catastrophe took place this morning up Friel street, near Clarence. Fire caused the death of Patrick T. Leahy and his five young children.

The fire bells rang at 3.15 o'clock, and in spite of a prompt response from the reels and hose wagon it was evident that the house was doomed. It was not, however, until the arrival of Chief Prevost that it was learned the family, or the best part of them, were in the doomed building. The chief at once ordered the doors burst open, and himself made a rush into the house.

A terrible sight met his gaze. The stairway was burned down, and lying at the foot was the body of an apparently ten-year-old girl, burned to a crisp. It took but a short time to get the fire under control, but it was evident from the smoke and fire that no hopes remained of finding anything but charred remains. Such proved to be the case, the body of the father and the other five children being found in the bedrooms, from which the escape was cut off.

From what could be learned it appeared that the husband has been for some time showing signs of mental derangement, or so it appeared to the neighbors, and was in the habit of wandering around the house at night with a lamp.

This morning, it is supposed, he dropped the lamp and the whole house was almost immediately in flames. Mrs. Leahy tried to quench the flames, but was unable to succeed, and after exhausting her efforts in that direction had barely time to escape from the house with one child.

The bodies were removed to Gauthier's morgue. Those of the children were so terribly burned as to be unrecognizable. An inquest will be held.

## "WISHED MYSELF DEAD."

How Many a Poor Dyspeptic Has The Same Wall?—But South American Nerve Gives A New Lease of Life.

Mrs. Mary A. Simnot, of Penetanguishene, writes: "I was a great sufferer for over four years from nervous indigestion and dyspepsia; often wished myself dead; was attended by best physicians; tried many remedies, but found very little relief. I was attracted to South American Nerve by reading of the wonderful cures wrought by it. I had about lost all faith in medicine, but I concluded to try it. One bottle wonderfully relieved me. I gained strength right away, my appetite returned and in a very short while I was completely cured. I cheerfully recommend it." Sold by W. W. Short.

## TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS.

Typographical errors sometimes cause really serious trouble and annoyance. On other occasions they are simply amusing. Some years ago an advertisement of a political meeting was inserted in a Philadelphia paper. The advertisement was intended to announce that a well-known leader would address "the masses" that evening. Owing to the misplacement of a "space," however, the public of Philadelphia was informed that the address would be delivered to "them asses at National Hall." A religious paper called the Gospel Banner, which is published at Augusta, Maine once attracted attention through the prank of a printer, who transposed two words of its motto, so that it read: "In the name of our God we will up set our banner." The omission of a comma was the cause of a suit for libel brought against a Western newspaper by the inventor of a patent medicine. A testimonial to the worth of his compound was inserted in the paper and read as follows: "I now find myself completely cured, after being brought to the very gates of death by having taken only five bottles of your medicine." The comma, which should have come after the word "death," was unnoticed by the compositor.—Youth's Companion.

Nervous people find relief by enriching their blood with Hood's Sarsaparilla, which is the one true blood purifier and nerve tonic.

## PREACHER STABBED BY A DEACON

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Dec. 18.—The Rev. Virgil Moulton, pastor of the Weeping Willows Baptist church, before the collection was taken last night denounced the Board of Deacons, alleging that the contributions Sunday after Sunday had been diverted to the private needs of the deacons who passed the boxes. Last night when the money was counted by the pastor the amount was less than on any previous Sunday, though the congregation was large, and he so declared. Jefferson Boyd, one of the deacons, jumped from his pew and before he could be prevented stabbed the preacher in the side twice. Boyd escaped through a side door, but was arrested later. The preacher's condition is critical.

## Merit!

Made and Merit Maintains the confidence of the people in Hood's Sarsaparilla. If a medicine cures you when sick; if it makes wonderful cures everywhere, then beyond all question that medicine possesses merit.

## Made

That is just the truth about Hood's Sarsaparilla. We know it possesses merit because it cures, not once or twice or a hundred times, but in thousands and thousands of cases. We know it cures, absolutely, permanently, when all others fail to do any good whatever. We repeat

## Hood's Sarsaparilla

Is the best—in fact the One True Blood Purifier. Hood's Pills cure nausea, indigestion, biliousness. 25 cents.

## A TERRIBLE MURDER.

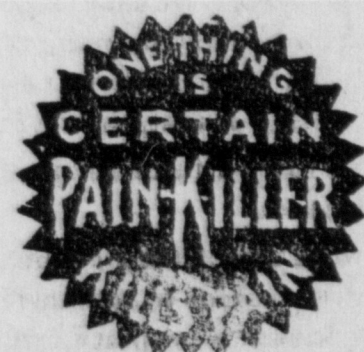
INDIAN KILLS HIS WIFE, FEARING THAT SHE HAD BECOME A WENDIGO.

WINNIPEG, Man., Dec. 18.—Indian Agent Short who has arrived in the city from Berens River, brings particulars of a horrible murder, which occurred three weeks ago, about eighty miles east of Berens River. It appears that an Indian woman named Sarah Ross, was suffering from typhoid fever and became delirious. Her husband thought she had become a Wendigo, and according to old superstitions beliefs and customs of the Indians, decided that she must be killed in order to prevent her from eating other members of her band, and he acted accordingly, committing the deed in a most atrocious manner.

Grabbing his wife around the body with one arm, he grasped her hair with the other hand and twisted her head until the neck was broken. The news of the crime was brought to Berens River by members of the band with which the murderer lived, and Mr. Short came into the city to report the matter to the Attorney-General. It was decided to take the Indian into custody on a charge of murder and Constable Garrioch, of Potage la Prairie, will leave at once armed with the necessary authority to make the arrest. The scene of the tragedy is 200 miles north of the city.

## Active Man Wanted

To read this advertisement and then give Putnam's Painless Corn Extractor a trial. It never fails to cure. Acts in twenty-four hours and causes neither pain nor discomfort. Putnam's Corn Extractor extracts corns. It is the best.



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THE GREAT Family Medicine of the Age.

Taken Internally, It Cures Diarrhoea, Cramp, and Pain in the Stomach, Sore Throat, Sudden Colds, Coughs, etc., etc.

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No article ever attained such unbounded popularity. We can bear testimony to the efficacy of the Pain-Killer. We have seen its magic effects in soothing the severest pain, and know it to be a good article.—Lancet, London, 1896. Nothing has yet surpassed the Pain-Killer, which is the most valuable family medicine now in use.—Tennessee Organ. [This real merit, as a means of removing pain, no medicine has ever acquired a reputation equal to 'Perry Davis' Pain-Killer.—Yorpe's News. Beware of imitations. Buy only the genuine 'PERRY DAVIS'—Sold everywhere, large bottles, 25c.]

## FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

Many have tried for years to discover a remedy suitable to their own case for the Constipation, Biliousness, Indigestion, Headache, Kidney and Liver Complaints arising from Poor Digestion, Weak Stomach, and a Sordid Liver.

To these we say: Try the new medicine—

## Laxa-Liver PILLS

Read what people say. Here it is. Miss S. LAWSON, Moncton, N. B., says: "They cured me of constipation and sick headache." Mr. H. JAMES, St. Nicholas Hotel, Hamilton, Ont., says: "They are a pleasant, sure and quick cure for constipation, dyspepsia and sick headache." Miss M. E. HICKS, South Bay, Ont.: "Laxa-Liver Pills are excellent for sick-headache, causing no pain or griping." Mrs. JOHN TOMLINSON, Hamilton, Ont.: "They are a perfect cure for even the severest headache."



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