

XMAS IN MANY LANDS.

HOW THE FESTIVAL IS OBSERVED IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

In Canada, England, Ireland, the United States, Russia and France—The Scotch Keep New Year's Day—The "Blindfold Betrothal."

In Canada Christmas has always preserved the characteristics of the festival as it is regarded in the mother country and especially in England. It is the day when absent sons and daughters are reunited around the hearth in the old homestead; it is the day of especial praise in the churches of the land; it is the occasion when charity is in all hearts, and it is also in the spirit of the European reformation a day of delight for the children. The celebration of Christmas is universal throughout the Dominion. The streets of the city and town for several days beforehand take on the holiday appearance. At this time business activity is at its highest. Of late years there has been a tremendous increase in the volume of trade in Christmas toys and other presents.

Christmas day is the greatest holiday of the year in England. Some of the old-time jollification when

'Twas Christmas brought the mightiest ale,
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale.

in late years may have been to some extent modified, but from the members of the House of Commons, who adjourn long enough to satisfactorily enjoy themselves, to the youngsters who look forward to the Christmas tree as they look forward to nothing else in the world, the country commemorates the day with a thoroughness which defies comparison. The English Christmas sentiment is in every respect one of gladness, generosity and good-will. Families are united on that day, good healths are toasted and great dinners are eaten. The English Christmas is reflected in the elaborate special editions of all great illustrated papers printed to illustrate the day. These papers command immense circulations and are sent to absent friends throughout the world.

North of the Tweed the most popular holiday is not Christmas, but emphatically New Year's day. The religious history of Scotland is self-explanatory of the decline of Christmas festivities in the country. However, as it is said there are more Scotchmen in London than the whole population of Edinburgh numbers, they in some measure make up for the neglect of the world's greatest day in their native land. The early Scotch reformers were entirely successful in their declared intention of putting an end to the "heathenish" observances of Christmas day in common with several other days which their zeal frowned upon. Scotland is the most conspicuous example of the results of this movement, which was not confined to the Scotch reformers alone. But, then, Scotchmen never do things by halves.

In the Irish village on St. Stephen's day—the day after Christmas—the grown-up lads kill a wren, and, dressing themselves in fantastic costumes, go in procession from house to house carrying the dead bird in a holly bush at the top of a tall pole. They sing an eminently practical song of which the following is the burden:

Thy wren, the wren, the king of all birds,
Thy Stephen's day was caught in the furze,
'Twas her body's little her family's great,
So get up, laddy and give us a treat.

They usually get it. The hunting of wrens on St. Stephen's day is a Pagan custom. It is supposed that the death of the wren is symbolic of the death of the year, which was celebrated in olden times on the shortest day in the year.

In the United States Christmas comes next in popular appreciation to Thanksgiving. But this much is to be said for the republic, that Christmas is growing in the recognition of its people year after year. It is at present chiefly an occasion for exchanging costly presents. The more expensive the better in this as in all other ideas of the idolaters of the mighty dollar. The children profit by the spirit, however, and in few countries is Santa Claus more opulent in his favors. The traditions of the Puritans are no longer as strong as they once were. The worse than wearisome—the shamelessly abused—functions of New Year's day are slowly dying the death, and the simpler, the heartier and the merrier joys of Christmastide are replacing them. New York is ahead of its sister cities so far in this steadily changing sentiment.

The "blindfold betrothal" is an institute of the Russian Christmas. It is a fete held in the chief landowner's house of the district. All the neighbors are invited. When the guests are assembled, at a sign from the master, all the young girls enter a large room with forms ranged along the walls. There the hostess covers their heads and shoulders with a long cloth so as to make it as difficult as possible to identify them individually. Then the young men enter singly and doubtless in every case each is assisted by some sort of feminine Freemasonry to select the choice of his heart, since mistakes are seldom made. The moment a girl's veil is raised she becomes engaged to the young man who has lifted it under penalty of a fine or indemnity.

In the French Breton village when the hour of Christmas midnight strikes, the bell of the church calls the faithful to their devotions. They carry lanterns to light them on their way. After the midnight mass is said, and as the men and women leave the church, they give alms to the poor of the locality who are gathered at the door. The humble French Christmas is thus observed by prayer and alms-giving. Both customs are as touching as they are simple, and, although not confined to France, the ceremony here referred to is in no other land more piously and dutifully observed.

Commotion in Financial Circles.

Once in a great while one of the thirty odd bank clerks who are daily delegated to render into the Providence Clearing House the accounts of their respective banks makes an error in his "figures." Usually the session is over in twenty minutes, but Tuesday it required an extra hour for the finding of a ten-cent mistake in \$1,152,100. As there is a money fine, which gathers double compound commin-

uted interest, so to speak, as the minutes are piled up by the clock, each young gentleman of the thirty odd is on pins and needles until the fellow who is to blame is discovered. At noon the Clearing House telephone, which is that of the Roger Williams bank, began to ring, and from that time until the session was concluded bank after bank called up to know if its emissary had gone to Canada and had left everything but a balance against the bank. Officials and clerks, who go to dinner in rotation, stood with watches in hand and saw their cars go by, and felt an increasing and aching void at the "belt." About 12:45 o'clock the \$1,152,100 had been squared up to a cent, and the ten-cent fellow who had shaken the banking community to the pit of its stomach was laden with a crop of fines as thick as flies at the bung hole of a molasses barrel.

TWO RIVAL BAD MEN.

An Ante-Prandial Event That Resulted in the Demise of One of Them

The man who told the story between the puffs of his cigar was from Texas:

The tale of Clay Allison's life is one of the most sombre romances one hears of about Western camp fires. Clay Allison was a desperado. He lived in the Red River country, on the western marshes of the Llano Estacado. His trigger finger was busiest in the latter seventies. He had a record of fully twenty-one dead men, whose graves were scattered from Dodge City to Santa Fe.

"One of his most artistic murders was the killing of Bill Chumk, a long-haired, swashing, bellowing bravo and a professional bad man. He, too, had a record—a record that was full of cowardly deeds and of blood. He and Allison had no cause of quarrel. They were rival killers—that was all—and which one was quicker on the draw was a pleasant matter for debate and wager on the part of their friends. So it came about very naturally that the two men swore to kill each other on sight. They met one night in a little settlement in northern New Mexico. They sat down at the supper table of a frontier restaurant opposite each other, and drew their six shooters and laid them across their knees. Chumk ordered raw oysters. When the trencher had been set before him he dropped his hand to his lap as if to get a napkin, and fired at Allison under the table. The bullet failed of its mark. Quick as lightning Allison's gun replied. A little red spot just between Chumk's eyes told where the bullet entered, and the dead man, swaying from side to side, bent gradually over and settled down upon the table and was still, with his face buried in that dish.

"Allison went to Kansas City once on a cattle drive and while there he met and loved a beautiful, but fallen woman. He married her and took her to his Texas ranch to live. She made him a true and loyal wife. A child was born to them—a child whose face was as beautiful as its mother's, but whose poor little body was horribly deformed. Allison loved the babe with the love of his passionate nature, but to his superstitious mind, the misbegotten infant was a curse from God visited upon him for the wanton crimes of his dark career. And from the hour of that unhappy birth Allison became a new man.

"No more men fell before his unerring pistols. He forewore liquor and all the riot and licentiousness in which he had formerly indulged. He turned his great nervous energies to business. In a few years he was rich. Tens of thousands of cattle on the western ranges bore his brand. One morning, half a dozen years or so ago, he left his ranch in a road wagon and started for town. As he drove briskly along, the wagon wheel jolted into a deep rut with a suddenness that threw Allison from his seat headlong to the ground. His neck was broken by the fall. The horses jogged on into the distance unmindful of the dead man lying there alone upon the prairie, unmindful of the period which fate had put at the end of that wild and stormy life."

TWO LIVES SAVED.

A Diphtheria Remedy That May Prove Effective in Other Cases.

Now that diphtheria is so prevalent, and so many cases prove fatal, it is a duty to make public the knowledge of any medicine or methods that will help decrease the ravages of the dread disease.

It is stated that it equal parts of Norway tar and turpentine be mixed and then burned in the room of the patient, creating a smoky atmosphere for the sick person to breathe relief will be given at once, and cure will follow repeated applications of the remedy.

A gentleman of this city who is deeply interested in mission work learned that two children were very low with diphtheria, and had, in fact, been given up as hopeless cases by the physician treating them. The gentleman did not deem it safe to visit the afflicted families, but he wrote to them and implored them to try the remedy given above; it would certainly do no harm, he said, and might result in good.

In each family heed was given to the counsel of the friend whom they esteemed highly, and in whom they had great confidence, owing to past kindnesses, and in each case there was noticed an improvement at once, succeeded by great gains in a few days, and finally recovery. Undoubtedly two lives were saved, for it was afterward learned that the physician had partly made out two death certificates, having exerted his skill to the utmost and expecting death to ensue the day the first trial was made of the tar and turpentine smoke.

Walking in a Circle.

One hears so much of travellers losing their way in the Australian "bush," that the following, from a colonial writer, is not without interest:—"The tendency on these occasions," he says, "is to walk in circles. It is very annoying, but by no means unusual, to find one's self, after two hours' hard walking, at the exact spot one started from. Indeed, I have completed the circle in half an hour, when lost in the woods without a compass. I have remarked, too, that I almost invariably trend to the right, not to the left; and on comparing notes with other 'bush-whackers,' I find that I am not singular in this respect. Can it be that the left is generally the better leg of the two, and takes, imperceptibly, the longer stride?"

Burmese children of both sexes begin to smoke almost as soon as they can speak.

HOW TO CHOOSE A SPONGE.

Don't Buy One of the Bright Yellow Kind and Look out for Discolorations.

Although the difference between a good and a bad sponge is very marked, but few people seem able to appreciate it. The first requisite of a good sponge is that it should be dark in color. The beautiful yellow sponges commonly seen in drug-gists' windows are a delusion and a snare. The natural color is a light to a medium brown, and the yellow sponges have been bleached by a vitriol bath, which destroys their elasticity and makes them wear out much sooner.

The feel of a sponge should be velvety. It should compress into a very small bulk by squeezing, and it must be of a uniform color. The best and most expensive are Levant sponges. They come from the eastern Mediterranean. The Dalmatian sponge is next in quality and price. There are very many others, however, known to the trade as horse sponges, Zimocca sponges, yellow, velvet, sheep's wool and glove sponges. The prettiest and at the same time the cheapest is the grass sponge, which is made up of myriads of small filaments and looks like a ball of yellow wool. The majority of sponges used in this country come from Florida. Cuba also supplies a good many. The sponge after being detached from the bottom either by a dredge net or an instrument something like a sickle, which is made for the purpose, is allowed to lie in the sun until the flesh decomposes.

The sponges are then trodden under foot in running water until the flesh is all washed away, leaving the skeleton, which is the sponge as we know it. If the decomposition is allowed to go too far, yellow spots will appear upon the sponge and damage it. They are then packed up and sent to the dealer, and, after a further washing, put on the market. The export trade of New York in sponges is very large, and they are exported to every country in Europe.

PAT'S GRANDMOTHERS.

They Came in Very Handy When he Wanted a Holiday.

A happy-go-lucky, ready-witted Irishman is in the employ of Murell Dobbins, the builder. He is a genius, but withal an industrious, trustworthy fellow, and Mr. Dobbins thinks the world of him. Pat went to his employer a few weeks ago, and asked for a day off.

"Me grandmother's dead, sor, and O'd like to go to th' funeral," said Pat.

He was granted the leave of absence. Ten days afterwards Pat asked for another day off.

"What's the matter now?" asked Mr. Dobbins.

"Mather it is, sor," replied Pat. "Sure an' me gran'mother's dead, th' saints rest her soul."

"Why that's what you said before."

"Shure, I did that, sor, but that wor me mither's mither, and this be me father's mither."

He got that day, but when the very next week Pat returned to his employer asking for another day, Mr. Dobbins was perplexed.

"More grandmothers dead?" he asked.

"Yes, sor, there be. It's me mither's mither, sor, and she do be gone to be buried th' morrow, sor."

"Aha, Pat!" exclaimed Mr. Dobbins. "I have you there. Your mother's mother died before, you know."

"So she did, sor, so she did. But me mither were married twice, sor."

Mr. Dobbins was so completely stumped that he gave Pat the day off.

Pocket Dictionaries for Two.

Two men were seated at a small table near the front door waiting for their sandwiches and coffee, when they were approached by a shabby stranger who touched his hat and said:

"Gentlemen, may I ask a favor of one of you?"

They were silent. It was not new to them.

"What I wished to ask was, gentlemen, how to spell the word 'balloon'."

They looked at one another in surprise and one asked: "The word 'balloon,' you say?"

"Yes, gentlemen, I got into a discussion with a friend, who says there is but one 'l.' I maintain there are two."

"Your friend's right," said one of the men at the table.

"No, he isn't," retorted the other.

"You're right—two 'l's," said the first.

"Let me see, now," said the first. "B-a-l-double-o-n-b-a-l-o-n. I think you're wrong, Bill, and that this man's friend wins the bet."

"It's no bet," said the shabby stranger. "We simply got into an argument. You can see for yourself there is chance for an argument. If I had a pocket dictionary I could tell in a minute. Gentlemen, would one of you lend me a dime with which to purchase one?"

They looked at him coldly for a moment and then each pulled out a dime and gave it to him.

"You've a good thing," said the first one.

"Yes, something new," added the other. But the shabby stranger did not smile. He simply thanked them and said he would buy one for his friend also.

They Made a Deal.

"Excuse me," said the seedy man, sidling up to the well-dressed citizen, "if I don't mistake, you are going into the saloon to buy a drink or a cigar or something?"

"I am going to buy myself a drink," answered the citizen, with an accent on the pronoun.

"Oh I didn't want to brace you for no ball. What I want you to do is to take this here nickel and ask me to have a beer with you."

"I'll tell you: If I go in and drink with a fine, well fixed man, like yourself, I kin afterward stand there and stow away all the urch I want to. If I go in lookin' as I do, with my little old one nickel I'd git throwed out before I had a chance to take more than four or five forkfuls of the beans and a sandwich or two."

The deal was made.

Rare and Curious Gems.

The rarest and the costliest of gems, though not always esteemed the most beautiful, are pigeon's blood rubies, fine opals and diamonds that are pure but shed a distinct glow of blue or pink. A very perfect pearl of enormous size and lustrous

skin, tinted a rarely beautiful golden-green, was valued, uncut, at over three hundred pounds. A faultless green pearl is very rare. A curious stone is the Alexandrite. It is a dark green stone that is polished, cut and set, very like a fine topaz or amethyst, in large showy rings, surrounded by diamonds. By the light of day the Alexandrite has no special beauty save its fine lustre, but directly a shaft of artificial light strikes the dull stone, deep gleams of red flash out of the green, and under the gas or in the firelight, one ignorant of this vagary would instantly pronounce it a ruby.

GAELIC NAMES.

Translation of Some of the Terms Used in the Highlands of Scotland.

Everybody knows that the word mac (pronounced in Gaelic machk) means son, so that for example, MacDonald literally means the son of Donald. But it is not generally known that when a woman is spoken of, the Highlanders substitute for mac the feminine nich, which means daughter; that the vocative of mac is vichk (we spell phonetically), which always replaces mac when a person is addressed; and that the nominative plural is mickk (sons), or clann (children). Sir Walter Scott's ignorance of Gaelic frequently led him into error upon these points in his poetry and in his novels.

The meaning of the Gaelic word clan (as just stated) is children, and the obedience which clansmen owed to their chief was considered by them rather as the affectionate obedience due by children to a father than as that due by subjects to a ruler. They believed themselves to be all blood relations descended from a common ancestor, of whom their chief was the living representative. The clansman who hesitated to save his chief's life at the expense of his own was regarded as a coward fled from his father's side in the hour of peril. On the other hand the chief was expected at all times to acknowledge the meanness of his clan as his relation, and to shake hands with him wherever they might happen to meet. Subordinate to the chief and generally related to him, were the chieftains and tacksmen.

Righteous Indigation.

Mrs. Youngman—I'm so boiling over with righteous indignation I don't know what to do. I'd—I'd like to bite somebody.

Friend—"Whom?"

"Whom? Why, those coarse brutal, inhuman owners of the St. Quiet flats. They refused to rent to me."

"Everybody knows that they object to children, my dear."

"Yes, of course; but they objected to mine."

He Was All Right.

"We are not allowed to sell whiskey except for medicinal purposes or for use in the arts," said the druggist.

"I need half a pint for use in the arts," replied the customer.

"Are you an artist?" asked the druggist, as the bottle was handed over.

"Yes in a way. I have taken a contract to paint the town red."

Rigby."

When falls the rain and winds are blowing
I do not heed, I do not care,
With a Rigby coat on I am going,
I'm dressed for weather, wet or fair,
The rain may fall as from a fountain
And turn the fields into a pool,
The east wind whistle o'er the mountain,
I wear Rigby, I'm no fool.

A Natural Fear.

Small Tommy's nearly crazy,
And I fear he'll go quite daft.
For fear that Santa Claus may fall
Down th' elevator shaft,
And smash the toys,
He has for boys,
Like Tommy, that
Live in a flat.

Hicks (in the graveyard, reading a tombstone)—"Sacred to the memory of Thomas Slenderminded." Wicks—"Yes; isn't it ridiculous? Slenderminded was the most forgetful fellow that ever lived."

The earliest snow ever known in Great Britain was on October 7th, 1820.

"77"

DR. HUMPHREY'S NEW SPECIFIC

FOR

COLDS

Dr. Cyrus Edison, Commissioner of Health for the State and City of New York, has sounded the keynote of warning. He says: "We have a good deal of northeast wind during November and December, and the cold damp weather it generally brings is very favorable to the contraction of colds, and the subsequent development of pneumonia."

He further says "that Grip is the disease with which pneumonia most readily combines."

Among other things Dr. Edison recommends is warm woolen clothing next the skin, wholesome food, moderate exercise and plenty of rest.

Protect yourself with "77." Dr. HUMPHREY'S SPECIFIC FOR COLDS, GRIP, INFLUENZA, CATARRH, PAINS, and SORENESS in the HEAD and CHEST, COUGH, SORE THROAT, GENERAL PROSTRATION and FEVER.

Taken early it cuts it short promptly.

When taken in its prevalence, it preoccupies the system and prevents its invasion.

Taken while suffering, a relief is speedily realized, which is continued to an entire cure.

With a view of these pleasant pellets in your pocket, you need not fear the cold, damp weather or sudden change in the temperature (such as we are now having). A few doses of "77" will check the first symptoms of Fever and Cold, and its continued use will complete the cure.

It is such a comfort and relief to know that when you leave your wife suffering with a cold when your husband goes to business not feeling well and above all, when your child, trades off to school each carries a real PROTECTOR in "77."

A Cold taken in the Fall is most dangerous, if not prevented or cured a miserable Winter follows. Neglected Colds lead to Grip, Catarrh, Bronchitis and sometimes pneumonia and Consumption.

77 will "break up" a Stubborn Cold that "hangs on."

Be sure to get

"H-U-M-P-H-R-E-Y-S"

A small bottle of pleasant pellets—fits your pocket. Sold by druggists or sent on receipt of price, 25c. or 5 for \$1. HUMPHREY'S MEDICINE CO., cor. William and John sts., New York.

SUNLIGHT SOAP

LESS LABOUR GREATER COMFORT

DOES YOUR WIFE DO HER OWN WASHING?

If she does, see that the wash is made Easy and Clean by getting her SUNLIGHT SOAP, which does away with the terrors of wash-day.

Experience will convince her that it PAYS to use this soap.

SMITH & TILTON, Agents, St. John, N. B.



YES,

I Tell you Children will grow up to have a clear and healthy skin if they use

BABY'S OWN SOAP,

and don't you forget it and get some cheap substitute.

THE ALBERT TOILET SOAP CO., MONTREAL.

WE respectfully beg to notify dealers in Window Shades, Laces, Fringes, Poles, Pole Trimmings, etc., that we have taken full possession of the Macfarlane Shade Co's. works, and any orders for goods from samples previously shown by that concern will receive our prompt attention and shipment if addressed directly to us.

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It is a neatly got-up book of 140 pages, profusely illustrated, and contains items of interest from every department of our large and varied stock.

Prices and descriptions are given in almost every instance, and everything is done to make this an invaluable guide to Christmas shopping.

N. B.—We have every facility for executing mail orders, and endeavor to give customers at a distance as thorough satisfaction as if they bought at the counter.

HENRY MORGAN & CO., - Montreal.

STEAMERS.

INTERNATIONAL S. S. CO. TWO TRIPS A WEEK FOR BOSTON.

UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE the steamers of this company will leave St. John for Eastport, Lubec, Portland and Boston, every Monday and Thursday morning at 7:00 (standard).

Returning will leave Boston same days at 8 a. m., and Portland at 5 p. m. for Eastport and St. John.

Connections made at Eastport with steamers for Calais and St. Stephen.

Freight received daily up to 5 p. m. C. E. LAECHLER, Agent.

1894. SEASON 1894. ST. JOHN, GRAND LAKE and SALMON RIVER.

And all intermediate stopping places. The reliable steamer "MAY QUEEN," C. W. BRANNEN, Master, having recently been thoroughly overhauled, her hull entirely rebuilt, strictly under Dominion inspection, will, until further notice, run between the above-named places, leaving St. John, Monday, Wednesday and Friday at noon.

Steamer "City of St. John" will leave Yarmouth, every Friday at 7 a. m., for Halifax, calling at Barrington (when clear), Shelburne, Lockport, Lunenburg. Returning will leave Halifax every Monday at 6 p. m. for Yarmouth and intermediate ports, connecting with S. S. Yarmouth for Boston on Wednesday.

Steamer Alpha leaves St. John every Tuesday and Friday at 7 p. m. for Yarmouth.

L. E. BAKER, Managing Director.

FOUR TRIPS A WEEK

from Yarmouth to Boston. Steamers Yarmouth and Boston in commission.

One of the above steamers will leave Yarmouth every Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evening, after arrival of express from Halifax. Returning will leave Lewis' Wharf, Boston, every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at noon.

Steamer "City of St. John" will leave Yarmouth, every Friday at 7 a. m., for Halifax, calling at Barrington (when clear), Shelburne, Lockport, Lunenburg. Returning will leave Halifax every Monday at 6 p. m. for Yarmouth and intermediate ports, connecting with S. S. Yarmouth for Boston on Wednesday.

Steamer Alpha leaves St. John every Tuesday and Friday at 7 p. m. for Yarmouth.

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