

A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

"I don't know how, Nanny," said Phoebe Uphorpe, "but I think Mr. Waterburn is going to give us Saturday afternoon for a holiday."

Nanny Uphorpe raised her delicately penciled eyebrows.

"Christmas Eve?" said she.

Phoebe nodded.

"And if he does, Nanny—what do you think? I'm going to take you to Paisley Farm to spend Christmas."

"But, Phoebe, we can't afford it."

"Yes, we can! We will! We must!" Phoebe stamped her little patched boot on the floor by way of demonstrating how entirely she was in earnest. "I've been pinching and saving for three months to lay aside the railway fare, and get you a cloak that was decent to wear—and you shall go now, unless a cyclone interferes, or Paisley Farm is swallowed up by an earthquake."

"Oh, Phoebe," faltered the elder sister, "do you really think we might?"

"I really think we shall!"—Phoebe's will had always been the strongest since they were little girls. "Get your things ready. We can manage with the telescope-bag and the little black shawl-strap. And I'll bring home a ribbon to-night to retrim your bonnet. There are some lovely shawls in Mercier's window at reduced rates."

"But—but have you written to Aunt Paisley? Has she invited us?"

"No," Aunt Paisley hadn't invited us, and I've not written to her. I thought it would be such fun to take her by surprise. And I know she'll be glad to see us."

Phoebe went smiling out into the raw air. A grey curtain of cloud drooped low over the December world, a lean cat darted across the hall of the shabby boarding-house in pursuit of some still leaner mouse, a starved sparrow twittered on the door-ledge, in the ash-can. Just inside the area railings, a smart Italian woman poked and prodded for stray rags or bones.

"Is all the world fighting for a livelihood, I wonder?" Phoebe asked herself.

Mr. Warbeck Waterburn was a "Caterer and Furnisher," and Phoebe Uphorpe was his head young person. She helped make up menus, furnished ideas for dinner cards, saw that the smilax was draped gracefully over chandeliers and balustrades, and directed the florist's men where to set the palms and dracaenas.

"Miss Uphorpe has a deal of taste," said Mr. Waterburn; "and, what's better, she comes cheap."

"Saturday hatternoon?" said Mr. Waterburn. "We don't never 'old to the 'alf holiday custom to this establishment. Christmas Heve? Well, Christmas Heve ain't business, you know, hexcept that Mrs. Dale Dressingham wants to give 'er little girls a Santa-Claus surprise, and h'i was planning for you to set the supper-table—small and hearty, you know."

Phoebe contracted her black brows.

"But I want a Santa-Claus surprise myself," persisted she, "and I must have a holiday until Tuesday. It's Christmas. Let Miss Dalley go to the Dale Dressingham's this once. It's only a children's party."

"If I must deduct it from your salary, then," solemnly spoke the caterer. "If my young persons go back on business, why, it stands to reason business will go back on them. Hum—! Yes!"

"I can't help it," fluttered Phoebe. "I must go home this Christmas!"

"Here come the boks for Major Latimer's breakfast," said Mr. Waterburn. "Be so good, Miss Phoebe, to be condescendingly as much as possible in the rosebuds. Rosebuds is shockingly dear this time o' year. Hif the Major marries Miss Pursey, he has the dejeuner his given for, well an' good; hit not, 'e hoves us a big bill h' ready, hand hit'll be clear loss."

As Phoebe twisted the Cornelia Cook rosebuds deftly up with white carnations and teathey sprigs of maiden-hair, for Major Latimer's dejeuner, her mind was full of the coming holiday which was to cost her so dear in a financial point of view.

"Nan is looking so pale and ill," she said to herself. "She needs a breath of country air and a peep at the Housatonic hills. I do wish Aunt Paisley would ask her to stay all winter. She could work at the jet-gimp business just as well there as here, and I could bring the material back and forth. And perhaps if John Paisley realized how sweet and—"

"Ave a care, Miss Hupthrope—ave a care!" said the caterer, pausing from his occupation of adding up the items of Mrs. Banderville's last week's reception. "You've ruined that rose. And such a beautiful 'all-hopped one, too!"

"There was a flaw in the stem," said Phoebe, reddening.

"Cawn't you put a wire through it?" Phoebe shook her head.

"Major Latimer is very particular about his boutonnières," said she. "He'd detect a wired flower at once."

"Hum—hum—haw!" reflectively spoke the caterer. "Hif's a great pity. Such a fine, plump, 'all-hopped one, too!"

"John used to like Nan in the old days," mused Phoebe; "and she so needs some one to love and cherish her, poor darling! The city never did agree with her, and it's only—"

"Miss Hupthrope," solemnly enunciated the caterer, "h'i've spoke twice to you, hand hever han haws'er 'ave h'i 'ad."

"Oh, I beg your pardon! What was it?" cried Phoebe, with a sudden start.

"Hif I desire you to be so good has to stop at Bend & Barlow's—the florist's you know—hand tell them there's a horder for decorations for the Gilliland ball next Thursday week, hand the fan-palms must be better specimens than those they sent us last time. Be very particular, please, not to forget," pompously uttered Mr. Waterburn.

Young Mr. Barlow laughed when Phoebe delivered her message.

"Waterburn wants the cream of everything, doesn't he? And for half price into bargain," said he. "Do you have charge of the decorations, Miss Uphorpe?"

"I suppose so," admitted Phoebe.

"Then I'll see to the palms myself," said Barlow. "I won't have you blamed."

"What lovely lilies of the valley!" said Phoebe, involuntarily averting her eye.

"Won't you have a bunch?"

Barlow took a wax-white cluster from

the counter and twisted a stem of ferns around them.

"I—for myself?"

"Yes. Why not?" Phoebe laughed and colored.

"Because I'm only Mr. Waterburn's young person," said she.

"Nonsense! You are—"

But just then a carriage customer came in, holding a lorgnette to her eyes, and sweeping down half a dozen pots of cyclamen, with the sinuous evolutions of her dress-train, and Phoebe hurried away.

"Well, I never!" said Mrs. Paisley. The clear, cold dusk hung like a curtain over the old Connecticut farm-house. The giant sycamores in the door-yard creaked in the west wind, and a white mantle of snow enveloped all the dreary pasture lands. In the doorway stood the old lady, shading her eyes with one wrinkled hand, while the other held a red shawl under her chin.

"It's Phoebe, ain't it," said she, "and Nan? Well—I never! Did he write you to come?"

"He? Who? Uncle Adoniram?"

"No—John!"

"Nobody wrote to us to come," said Nanny, with quivering lip. "Oh, I hope—we're not intruding!"

But Aunt Paisley opened wide her hospitable arms at these words.

"Intrudin'?" echoed she. "You, my sister's only children! Why, what a word that is to use! Come in—come right in and sit down by the fire."

"Down by the fire," cordially repeated Uncle Adoniram, giving his neices a regular Polar-bear hug.

"And take off your things an' get warm."

"An' get warm," added Uncle Adoniram, making haste to fling a three-cornered spruce log on the fire, although there was blaze enough there already to roast an ox.

Phoebe danced about the room like a sprite, while Aunt Paisley was unfolding Nanny's many wraps.

"Why, how dressed up you are!" she cried. "Spruce and hemlock on the walls, and new ceiling paper, and a store carpet—a real red-and-green store carpet on the floor! Aunt Paisley, what's going to happen?"

But the old women had followed her husband out into the sink-room, whispering into his ear:

"Niram, what on earth be I goin' to do?"

"Don't do nothin'!" said the farmer.

"But what be I to say?"

"Don't say nothin'."

Mrs. Paisley turned away with an impatient shrug of the shoulders.

"A man ain't fit for nothin' to give advice," said she under her breath, and just then Phoebe's sweet voice sounded close to her.

"And frostud cake and cold roast duck in the pantry," cried she. "Aunt Paisley, you're goin' to have company."

"Yes, we be," said the old woman.

"That's Bible truth."

"And where is John?"

"Gone to bring the company home."

There was a certain embarrassment in the old woman's manner that aroused Phoebe's suspicions.

"Aunt Paisley," she cried, "he—he never is going to be married?"

"Yes, he is," gasped Mrs. Paisley; "and I haven't the face to deny it."

"And never told us?"

"John's a man as never talked much," faltered Mrs. Paisley.

"Has he gone after his bride?"

"Yes, he has; but—"

"Then," gasped Nanny, springing up, "we must go away. We never dreamed—we didn't think—"

But old Mrs. Paisley seized her arm.

"No!" she cried, "don't go! Stay! He'll be back soon! He's sure not to be long. And this is the first Christmas you've been home for three weary years. Don't go away now."

"Is she nice, Aunt Paisley?" faltered Phoebe. "Do you like her?"

But Aunt Paisley, saying something about the Christmas pudding boiling over-long, had hurried out into the kitchen. Nanny burst into tears.

"Phoebe," she sobbed, "Phoebe, I'm sorry we came."

"I ain't," said Uncle Adoniram's reassuring voice. "Don't fret, little Nan. I'm real glad you came. Hush-sh! There's the sleigh-bells now! He's back again! I—thought—so!"

"With his new wife?" The bitterness in Phoebe's tone was indescribable. Nanny shrank back, hiding her face behind her sister's shoulder, as the door flew open, letting in the crisp, cold air and John Paisley at the same time.

"Where is she?" he cried, looking quickly around. "They told me at the station she was here."

"Phoebe!" Aunt Paisley called, "come out here and help me with the oarberry jelly! Niram! Niram! I want some more oven-wood right off!"

Uncle Adoniram disappeared with a chuckle. Phoebe came out to her aunt.

"Why did you call me?" she stammered.

"Don't you see?" whispered Aunt Paisley, her old face instinct with happiness. "Can't you guess?"

"Aunt Paisley!" Phoebe started back. "It's never Nanny that you meant?"

"He's liked her ever since they was children," said the old woman. "He's missed her awful since you took her to Bridgeport. He was going to the city to-night to bring you both back for Christmas, and he was going to ask her to stay here as his wife. Oh, Phoebe, Phoebe, I never could have had a blessed Christmas present than that! To be sure, John ain't my son, only Adoniram's first wife's lad, but I love him just as well; and of all the wives he could have picked and chose, Nanny Uphorpe suits me best."

While Uncle Adoniram kept up his chuckle.

"It don't matter much," said he. "John was goin' arter a wife, but now it seems the wife has come to him. Leap y-ar; eh, gals! Well, I be pleased!"

"Oh, by the way," said John suddenly remembering himself as they sat eating Aunt Paisley's creamed chicken and drinking incomparable coffee, half an hour later, "I'd like to have forgot. I fetched a like-ly young fellow up from the daypo. Left him at Silvester's Tavern. Said he'd come up this way to see about a big Masonic hall in the city. Guess he wants to buy up all creation in the evergreen line. Eh? What ye blushing about, Phoebe?"

"Oh!" cried Nanny, her sweet eyes all alight, "it was never—Mr. Barlow?"

John slapped his knee.

"That was the name," said he. "He

said he knowed you girls. He's coming here to-morrow to eat his Christmas dinner. I invited him."

Phoebe cheek was pinker than the inside of the big sea-shell on the mantel. Intolerably her hand sought the cluster of lilies of the valley which still hung at her belt.

Across the snowy fields, in the soft clamor of the Christmas bells, young Barlow walked the next day, his face fairly radiant and Phoebe stood by the gate to greet him.

"Am I welcome?" he asked; and Phoebe murmured:

"I—I didn't think you cared for me like that!"

Side by side the two young pairs strolled to church, and Aunt Paisley, basting the Christmas turkey, said out aloud:

"I 'most wish we could hev a double weddin'! But of course Phoebe has to give that Englishman fair notice. Well, well, they do make two handsome couples! Hark to the bells again! Don't they say it clear and plain as human voices—a merry Christmas! a merry Christmas!"

And Aunt Paisley laughed and cried in the same breath.

CHRISTMAS TREES AND HOLLY.

The Prince Consort is Said to Have Introduced The Former Into England.

In connection with the holly, which figures so conspicuously in all our Christmas decorations, we find a quaint old conceit chronicled, that every holly bough and lump of berries with which you adorn your house is an act of natural piety as well as beauty, and will, in summer, enable you to relish that green world of which you show yourself not unworthy. In Germany and Scandinavia the holly, or holy tree, is called "Christ's thorn," from its use in church decorations, and because it bears its berries at Christmas tide. The loving sentiment imprisoned in the holly bough and translatable into every language can hardly be more happily expressed than in Charles Mackay's verses, "Under the Holly Bough;"

Let sinners against and sinning
Forget their strife's beginning,
And join in friendship now;
Be links no longer broken,
Be sweet forgiveness spoken,
Under the holly bough.

To Germany the civilized world is indebted for one of the most enjoyable of all Christmas delights, the Christmas tree. This custom was little known in England before the marriage of Queen Victoria, and was, we believe, introduced by the late Prince Consort. We call it a gift from Germany, and yet, behind the quaint figure of Kris Kringle, coming from the snowy woods, with the tree rising high above his genial shoulders, laden with gifts and glittering with lanterns, as he suddenly invades the lowly German cottage on kindly errand bent, we see the very ancient toy pine-tree hung with "osclia," which boys and girls in ancient Rome looked for on the sixth and seventh days of Saturnalia. But we who are not antiquaries are content to accept these pretty customs, come whence they may, and to improve on them if we can. A wide gulf is fixed between the Puritanic days, when Christmas was frowned upon as a remnant of evil superstition, and to-day, when nothing is too rare or good for the making of our homes bright and our sanctuaries beautiful in honor of the Author of the Christian feast. Wherever civilized man is found, there, in one form or another, we find the token of adoration and gratitude.

A Missing Bicyclist.

The authorities at Washington have been used to assist in the search for Frank G. Lenz, a Pittsburg bicyclist, who left New York in June, 1892, for a journey around the world on his wheel and was last heard from in May last, when he was in Asiatic Turkey, near the Persian border. It is feared that Lenz has been murdered by brigands. Such a tour as he projected is naturally associated with great perils. The bicyclist Stevens made a wonderful journey through Asia several years ago, and was lucky enough to return safe and round. The United States government will doubtless institute inquiries concerning Lenz, although it would seem that there is little chance of the present survival of the daring young American.

Taken at His Word.

Irascible old gentleman looking at two of his garden vases discovers one with damage surreptitiously repaired.

Old gent to gardener—George, this is cracked!

George—Yes, sir; had an accident.

Old gent—But it's been puttied up!

George—Yes, sir.

Old gent—Now, I call this unpardonable to conceal it to putty it up! If you had come and told me you had broken it I should have forgiven you—

George (eagerly)—Please, sir, the other's broke.

Generalship.

"The Clantys does b: slow returning what they borrow," said Mrs. Dolan.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Rafferty. "O'i niver forgit the trouble Oi had gettin' back the flautoons Oi lint 'em wanst out o' the kindness av me heart."

"An' how did yez git 'em?"

"O'i sint my b'y Teddy to holler out that the Clantys wouldn't be in this country only St. Patrick chased the snakes out of Ireland. Then the oirons came over the fence lasht enough. All Teddy had to do wor to dodge 'em."

A Maine Town's Grievance.

Norridgewock's pride has been deeply, and sorely touched. In the slightly lettering on the gorgeous cars of the new street railway the name of the town is spelled with one "r." To think the man who did that lettering did not know Norridgewock better than that!

An Early Application.

"My task in life," said the pastor, complacently, "consists in saving young men."

"Ah!" replied the maiden, with a soulful longing, "save a good one for me, won't you?"

Preparing for Christmas.

"Are you doing any work for Christmas yet?" Wile—Yes, indeed; I've gone through my husband's pockets 14 times in the last two weeks.

Right in Style.—Mr. Highfill—"Where is that 'Book of Etiquette and Complete Letter Writer'?" Mrs. H.—"What do you want it for?" Mr. H.—"I want to write to the grocer to tell him I can't pay him."

CHRISTMAS GIVING.

A few Sensible Words by a Woman on the Subject.

Liberalty and charity, remarks a practical western woman, are especially beautiful in the Christmas time, when every earnest heart is full of gratitude toward the Great Giver. But we are a practical people, and in danger of losing sight of the spirit, while we keep to the letter. We remember that we must give, but there is hardly time to understand why, and there is such a disposition to "keep up appearances," do things "in style," that present-giving has got to be little more than an expensive fashion.

Young Canada demands handsomer presents every year, and manufacturers vie with each other in the manufacture of "holiday goods." Merchants line their stores and shops with everything attractive and beautiful, and because they are to be had, because others buy them and because our friends expect them, we spend money for trifles, forgetting to save enough for needful expenses, and the Christmas time becomes a dreaded festival and present-making an actual burden.

All the blessedness of giving is lost in the terrible strain of finding something to give, and the gift carries with it pain oftener than pleasure; disappointment, if it be simple and inexpensive; chagrin and mortification, if it be handsomer than one set in exchange; envy, if it be something better than the recipient has been able to secure for dear ones.

Foolish men and women try to excel each other; and the merchant laughs and grows fat, while every Christmas adds new lines and wrinkles to the faces of his customers. Is this "Peace on Earth?"

Even while the beautiful anthem rolls through the solemn church, even while the minister talks to his people about the spirit of Christmas, hearts are burning with shame and envy and jealousy, or swelling with pride, all about the Christmas giving!

All this kind of thing is wrong; one needs only to think of it to see it clearly. The money spent for useless, senseless, even unwelcome presents, would do wonders if it could be properly used. The one thought seems to be to buy a costly present and one that others are buying. Of course the etiquette which forbids the giving of needful things, has much to do with this where young people are concerned, but here again is the spirit lost sight of for the letter.

With some people the duty of giving is a great weight. These buy anything and everything and scatter presents with no thought or reason, no sense of the "eternal fitness of things," and rest peacefully afterwards while they enumerate the presents and count the dollars spent from them, blissfully unconscious of the fact that every single present is lying somewhere because it must, not because it is wanted, and for the reason that it is in the wrong place.

It is thought, not money, that makes a present valuable. It is expected to find its way to the heart, there awakening gratitude and appreciation, it must come from a heart that is alive with real, thoughtful, painstaking love.

Let the present be simple and suitable. Study your friends and learn their needs and tastes, then put your knowledge and love and money together, and you will be able to make an acceptable present.

Let me speak a word to those who have a great desire to give something to dear relatives or valued friends, and have nothing to give. The desire may be ever so laudable and worthy. You may be sure if it springs from a good motive it will make itself felt in some way, trust to this, and do not cheapen your regard in the eyes of your friend by allowing it to be represented by something that you ought not to give.

Flowers are always in fashion and everybody with a heart capable of one throb of Christmas gladness loves the pretty things. Choose these, and be careful that they express some sentiment, some loving thought. Don't send a grief-stricken friend a great bunch of scarlet geraniums, but rather let it be a cream-rose-bud set in a wreath of purple violets, or a cluster of white jasmine backed by a spray of dark heliotrope. You wouldn't send orange blossoms to your men friends, but a spray of mignonette on a scented leaf, and to your sweetheart a spray of forget-me-nots lying on a fresh piece of arbor vitae ready for the "button-hole." Common sense, real feeling and thoughtfulness are what you want—and money, a very little of which will go a long way with a sensible mind to go guide it and a loving heart to stop it now and then in just the right places.

AN ODE TO DIAMOND DYES.

AIR: BONNIE DOON.

O! Diamond Dyes, ye colors fair,
Prepared with scientific care,
Ye joy of every woman's heart,
From our lov'd homes, oh, ne'er depart.
Ye are our choice, our joy, our pride,
Forever in our homes abide,
That ye may show your marvellous pow'rs,
When time brings on our dyeing hours.

In vain have speculators tried
To mar thy worth, thy fame deride;
But women's hearts so warm and true,
Forever loyal are to you.
Shine on! shine on! ye stars of light,
Ye Diamond Dyes so fast and bright,
Ye gems of true economy,
May millions yet be bless'd by thee.

For full information regarding the Gladstone and, in fact, any sleigh write to

John Edgecombe & Sons,

Manufacturers of Carriages, Sleighs, etc.

Fredericton, N. B.

HAMILTON'S

DELICIOUS

Caramels

DELIGHT ALL

CANDY

(AND OTHER) LOVERS.

As a Flesh Restorer, Puttner's Emulsion has no equal, giving substance and tone to the wasted muscles.

All druggists keep it. Price 50 cents per bottle.

Johnson's Anodyne Liniment

Internal & External
IT IS
Unlike any Other.

EVERY MOTHER
Should Have It
In the House.

It is marvelous how many different complaints it will cure. Its strong point lies in the fact that it acts quickly. It is a fact, that any pain anywhere, every lameness everywhere, is penetrated, relieved or cured by this wonderful, soothing Anodyne. It is the sovereign remedy for bites, burns, bruises. For 14 aches, earache, headache, neckache, stomachache, toothache, in fact every ache. For scalds, stings, rashes, sprains, stiff joints, swellings and sore muscles. For colic, chills, coughs and catarrh. For hacking, whooping and whooping cough. For asthma, bronchitis, diphtheria, is grippe, sore throat and lungs. For croup, cramps, cholera morbus and summer complaints. For dyspeptic pains, neuralgia and neuralgia. For cuts, cracks, corns, contusions, chaps and chilblains, all irritations and inflammations. For lame back, shoulder. For pains in chest, hip, eye, stomach, use this great vital and muscle restorer. Every ailment above is caused by inflammation, to cure which Johnson's Anodyne Liniment was devised.

Originated by an Old Family Physician
FOR PURELY HOUSEHOLD USE,
Generation after Generation have Used and Blessed It.

All who order direct from us, and request it, shall receive a certificate that the money shall be refunded if not abundantly satisfied. Retail price, 25 cents. Six \$2.00, express prepaid. If you can't get it near home, ask first. Sold by druggists. Pamphlet free. I. S. JOHNSON & CO., 22 Custom House Street, Boston, Mass.

ALWAYS ASK FOR

"D.C.L."

SCOTCH & IRISH WHISKIES AND LONDON GIN

PROPRIETORS:-
THE DISTILLERS' CO. LTD
EDINBURGH, LONDON & DUBLIN.

CILLESPIES & Co., - MONTREAL,
AGENTS FOR CANADA.

THE GLADSTONE SLEIGH.