



ON THE NATURE OF CHRISTMAS

For those who care to heed, the nature of Christmas can be found in every corner of the universe — especially in the fresh wind of early winter, which carries on its airy back the first white flakes of downy snow, mingled indiscriminately with the noise of carols, laughter and carousing. Crispéd are the golden reed beds; frozen are the shimmering lakes; crispéd and golden is the brittle turkey skin; while at the local supermart, frozen solid is the pudding.

Christmas is the time for life to begin anew. Mother Nature covers all her land with whitened innocence, just as we cover our countenances with the egg-nogs, creamy white. The landscape dissolves in swirling, turning, tumbling clouds of cool snow; the best of friends dissolve in clouds of Irish Mist.

Ah! But it is in the generation of modern youth, where one can best find Christmas' truest flavour — a generation made of stern stuff, tomorrow's leaders, rugged, invincible, heads hewed from finest English oak, eyes fastened on the future and the coming New Year's Eve.

The coldest heart of the most hardened cynic beats a little faster at the sight of dear little children, round like sudden puffs of steam, caroling merrily in the streets. Their pure sweet voices rend the evening air, and rise to the very limits of the northern sky — and all for only money!

From virgin white steeples, sharply pointed, rolls forth the sound of swinging bronze, while far below, in rushing jewel-hung streets, more human sounds invade the air: the wildly clanging bells counting up the till, and to slake the nation's fierce thirst, icy cubes on coolest crystal tinkle. While out, away, across the lovely lakes, where slinking otters lie, to piney forests, deep in hoary frost, the sounds of purest nature reign unperturbed. Trees crackle in their frosty coats, fluffy little rabbits scutter here and there, and a tawny deer nudging the forest floor, crinkles icy mices' bowers.

Jack Frost, that abstractionest supreme, paints the land with whirling whitened majesty, which reddening in the first clear spark of eastern dawn, colours the whole land, forest, town, and sewage plant in the golden luxury of Kreighboff's immortal canvas.

The spirit of Christmas — who can fathom it? Useless is our intellect, and syllogisms have no effect; it is in the breasts of little children and in the local five and dime.

