

## A DISTANT CAROL.

Mark.  
Leaning from the casement dark,  
How the keen-kindled light  
Of the pulseless winter night  
Glints upon the bosom white  
Of the froz'n earth.  
Drear, ev'n for that wond'rous birth,  
Lofty, lowly,  
Human, holy,  
Whereat now all earth rejoices.  
Hark! a distant choir of voices  
In a Christmas carol blending.  
To the sparkling sky ascending.  
Hear the far chimes' measured ringing.  
Faintly blended with the singing;  
Sinking, soaring  
Soft, adoring;  
Midnight now hath found a toga,  
As though the choired stars that sung  
High circling over them  
That watched in Bethlehem,  
Were echoing, echoing still,  
Peace and good will,  
Good-will.

—[Katherine Van Harlingen, in Harper's Weekly.]

## A CHRISTMAS CARD.

It is at once painful and perplexing to be answered with a heavy sigh when one expects an exclamation of pleasure and admiration; so it was not wonderful that Mrs. Austin, under the exact conditions, looked into her husband's face. She was holding up for his inspection a large wax doll, one of the treasures for Madge, the blue-eyed darling of four years, who was counting the days until Santa Claus should come. Every stitch of Miss Dollie's elaborate costume was the work of Mrs. Austin's busy fingers in hours when Madge was dreaming of full stockings and Christmas trees, and the last stitch set, the result was displayed for "papa's" approval.

Now papa was quite as devoted a parent to Madge and two-year-old Harold as mamma, and took deep interest in all nursery matters. It may be that the memory of two other tiny heads and baby faces that had brightened the nursery for a few brief months and then been hidden by coffin-lids deepened the love for the children who came later to comfort the aching hearts. But it is very certain that the little Austins were as much loved and petted as children could be, and did not dream more hopefully of Christmas treasures than their parents did lovingly of supplying them.

It was with some alarm, too, that Mrs. Austin put aside her last triumph of needle-work and threw her arm around her husband's neck.

"What is it, Charlie?" she asked.

He drew her into a loving embrace before he said, sadly:

"I met my father again to-day. Margaret, it will kill me to have things go on so. He was downright shabby, feeble and broken; looking so old and so sick that I could not keep the tears out of my eyes. But he would not speak to me. I said all I could say in the street, and tried to follow him; but he stopped short and said: 'I do not know you! You will cease to annoy me!' And I could not make a scene in the street."

There was a choking sound in Charles Austin's voice as he ceased speaking, but, being a man, he kept back the sob that would have followed. Mrs. Austin's tears were falling fast.

"At Christmas time, too," she said. "It is useless to send presents, Charlie; he has sent them back every year."

The story this conversation referred to was an old one, a true love marriage made in the face of disinheritance and paternal displeasure. Mrs. Austin had been a poor girl, employed in the factory of Simon Austin, then a man of great wealth and good social position; a man purse-proud, arrogant and full of his own importance. When his only child, his idolized, indulged son and heir, told him of his love for pretty Margaret Hay, a factory-girl living in the factory, boarding-house, wearing calico dresses, and earning a mere living, the old man was a maniac in his fury.

He would not see that the girl was pleasing in manner, refined in taste, well educated and sweet-tempered, in love to brighten any home and make any good man thoroughly happy. He gave a fierce command that the master should end them and there. Charles Austin, utterly unaccustomed to be crossed in any fancy, refused obedience, never before exacted, and the conversation ended in a stormy quarrel and the young man's expulsion from home.

But with a good fortune that does not often follow disobedient sons, Charles was at once taken into the employ and favor of his mother's brother, an eccentric old bachelor, who gave the young couple a home in his own luxurious house. It was a new life to the old gentleman, and he took the keenest interest in all the household affairs as Margaret managed them, loved and mourned the older children, and dying, when Madge was but a year old, left his entire large estate to his "beloved nephew, Charles Austin."

And while the sunshine of prosperity had no clouds for this wayward son, the father's fortunes had gone all away. Some commercial panic was the first blow to Simon Austin, and an effort to repair the loss by speculation only added to the disaster. He missed the cool, clear head of the son who had of late years been his active partner, the judgment he had first trained and then trusted to guide his large business. He was angry, and his angry impulses led him into dire blunders, until he grew so involved, that there was no escape, and he failed for more than his entire fortune.

At once Charles hastened to him, offering his entire wealth to save him, only to be met by a proud, fierce refusal to be under any obligation to a disobedient child or his beggar-wife.

Over and over again, as poverty became more and more bitter to the man broken and aged, did his son implore him to allow him to help him, offer him a home, love, care, obedience, even, only to be thrown back with angry scorn.

A proud man always, Simon Austin cherished his wrath as the last remnant of the old arrogance, and would not bend one inch. He found letters telling him anonymous sums of money were in the bank in his name, and wrote back refusing to claim them. He mistreated every offer of service, as dictated by his son, and returned to Charles every scrap of

aid sent to him, often perplexing his son by sending what had not come from him, though he always refused to believe this. And being old and broken in health, he sank lower and lower, unable to fill lucrative positions, and taking the work that gave him barely food and the poorest clothing.

Very sadly the son and his wife talked of the impossibility of helping one who would not let any appeal touch him, until suddenly Margaret cried:

"Charlies! I have an idea! Let me try to win your father over. I will send him a Christmas card."

"My dear, he would not open the envelope."

"But it will not go in an envelope. Don't ask any questions. Let me try, and see if your father does not dine with us to-morrow."

"Dine with us! Margaret, you must be crazy!"

"Not a bit of it. Just let me have my own way, dear."

"Do you ever fail to get that?" was the laughing query, for something in his wife's face gave a fresh hope to Charles Austin's heart.

It was a very mean room in a very poor house where the sun of a bright Christmas morning wakened Simon Austin. Everything in the shabby place told of the lack of woman's care and love. Dust hung upon everything, disorder reigned. There were no dainty trifles of needlework; the curtains were dingy and crooked; the carpet torn and dirty.

Very wearily and slowly the old man dressed himself, lit a fire in the grate and rang for the poor breakfast his landlady provided. Dinner and tea he was supposed to buy outside, but very often this muddy coffee, stale bread and tough chop or steaks were the sole repast of the twenty-four hours.

It was Christmas Day, and no business took the old man abroad; so, after the untempting tray was removed, he took a newspaper and drew shivering to the fire. But before he had read one column there came a knock upon the door, and then it opened wide and closed again, bearing a child—a little girl in a quaint Mother Hubbard cloak and hat, with large blue eyes and clustering golden curls, and holding a large fat basket full of fresh, beautiful flowers. While the old man gazed at her in silent amazement she said, in a sweet, childish voice:

"If you please, dear grandpapa, I am your Christmas card!"

"You—you are what?" he said, utterly bewildered.

"If you please, dear grandpapa, I am your Christmas card!"

"Who sent you here? What is your name?"

"Mamma brought me here! I am Madge Austin, dear grandpapa—" and then, half frightened at the strange face and the poor room, the child's eyes filled with tears, and her lips trembled. "I want to go home!" she whispered.

"Don't cry!" Mr. Austin said, finding his senses and taking her into his arms, very tenderly. "Don't cry, dear, I will take you home."

"Oh, if you please, because my big doll is there and all the toys Santa Claus brought, and brother Harry. What did Santa Claus bring you?"

"Nothing!"

"Oh! with a very deep drawn sigh, "was it because you are up so many stairs? But he always comes to our house, and mamma said, perhaps, to-day, we would bring us our grandpapa! We haven't got any now, you know, and mamma said if he did come, we would love him just the same as papa, and he would love us. And, please, grandpapa, so we will." And here the child put her little arms around the head bent low before her, and lifted the face quivering and tear-stained.

"You must take the train," said he.

"You can't make me," replied the gambler.

There were no more words. In two minutes the giant was carrying the limp body of the ruffian to a wagon, in which he drove him to jail. There he washed the blood off the gambler's face and tidied his collar and scarf. From there the couple walked to the cars, where they parted amicably.

"I had to be a little rough," said Kirkup to the loungers at the station, "because he was armed like a pin-cushion, and I didn't want to have to kill him."

the extremities dry and warm, and you will have done much to conserve the health and comfort of the whole body.

## JACK KIRKUP.

### Graphic Description of a Typical Border Sheriff.

There was only one policeman to enforce the law in a territory the size of Rhode Island. He was quite as remarkable in his way as any other development of that embryonic civilization. His name was Jack Kirkup, and all who knew him spoke of him as being physically the most superb example of manhood in the Dominion. Six feet and three inches in height, with the chest neck and limbs of a giant, his three hundred pounds of weight were so exactly his complement as to give him the symmetry of an Apollo. He was good-looking, with the beauty of a round-faced, good-natured boy, and his thick hair fell in a cluster of ringlets over his forehead and upon his neck. No knight of Arthur's circle can have been more picturesque a figure in the forest than this "Jack." He was as neat as a dandy. He wore high boots and corduroy knickerbockers, a flannel shirt and a sack-coat, and rode his big bay horse with the ease and grace of a Skobeleff. He smoked like a fire of green brush, but had never tasted liquor in his life. In a dozen years he had slept more frequently in the open air, upon pebbles beds or in trenchers of snow, than upon ordinary bedding, and he exhibited, in his graceful movements, his sparkling eyes and ruddy cheeks, his massive frame and his imperturbable good nature, a degree of health and vigor that would seem insolent to the average New Yorker. Now that the railroad was building, he kept ever on the trail, along what was called "the right of way"—going from camp to camp to "jump" whiskey peddlers and gamblers and to quell disorder—except on pay-day, once a month, when he staid at Sprout's Landing.

The echoes of his fearless behavior and lively adventures rang in every gathering. The general tenor of the stories was to the effect that he usually gave one warning to evil-doers, and if they did not heed that he cleaned them out." He was a revolver, but never had used it. Even when the notorious gambler on our border had crossed over into "Jack's" bailiwick he was in pink satin, cut very low and framed with a silk tulle bertha tied with pearls in front and on the shoulders. The embroidery was likewise in pearls. In my initial illustration you will find pictured a very pretty evening gown in pink silk trimmed in a very original manner with white satin ribbons. I may say, in a general way, that pink, yellow and Nile-green are the most modish colors for ball dresses, and that the round cut-out is to be much affected, although you must not neglect to garnish it with a tulle or gauze ruche a little more than an inch in width.

For young persons, nothing could be more appropriate and more dressy than

## Antique Stories.

There are said to be about fifty buffaloes in the above, there is a redaction of the same.

The London Zoological Society has recently acquired a white frog.

The medusa is a fish so fragile "that when washed on the beach it melts and disappears," says a noted scientist.

A Lawrence, Mass., man has a petrified trout a foot in diameter and five inches high, which was found on the shores of Lake Champlain.

A large snake was discovered milking a cow at Hagerstown, Md. The cow's owner had been at a loss for a long time to account for the diminution in his milk supply.

A Clinton, Me., man owns a bird dog that has distinguished himself the past summer by bringing home twenty-five chickens from the yards of his owner's neighbors.

A stork had a ring on his leg for identification. After two years' absence he returned to Germany last spring with a second ring, bearing the inscription, "India sends greetings to Germany."

The butterflies of Australia bathe. One will alight close to the water, into which it backs until the whole of the body is submerged, the forelegs alone retaining their hold on dry land. In moment it will fly away, apparently refreshed.

A Belfast, Me., man who went troutting relates that he caught a trout ten inches long, and was looking at it admiringly when there came a great rush of wings and something took the fish from his hands. The despoiled fisherman looked up in time to see a big crow flying away with the prize.

"Dadpa's tun! Santa Claus brought dandpa!"

There was no pride could stand against this loving, sincere welcome, so pride collapsed.

"Do you really want me, Charlie?" the old man faltered. "It is not mere charity!"

"Hush!" whispered Margaret. "Do not grieve him by such a word. He will never be happy until you come home, dear father."

And so Christmas once again gathered up the tangled threads of estrangement and knit them into strong bonds of home-love.

## Take Care of Your Feet.

Some folks treat their feet as they might their shoes; take no care of them, and even abuse them, as though when they had become shapeless and almost useless they could be thrown aside and a new pair obtained. Mistake. One pair is all any man will have in this world.

The circumstances under which they serve us are, at best, very trying and not altogether calculated to keep them shapeless and comfortable. Abuse them and they will make every nerve in one's body twinge in sympathy with their torment. Wear high-heeled boots, thus pitching the weight upon the toes, and the spine will curve, the gait will become constrained and mincing and the erect form, the woful stride, the manly carriage of a free and well-balanced figure will have been lost forever.

Begin early to care for the feet.

Wear wholesome, soft and well-made hose, and shoes which conform to the shape of your own feet, whether they resemble other people's shoes or not. Have plenty of changes of foot clothing, keep

## DRESSES FOR THE DANCE.

### THEY ARE EXTREMELY RICH AND ELEGANT.

Now that the Holidays Are Past, the Fashionable World Has Taken to the Ball-Room, and There'll Be No Let-Up Until the Lenten Season.

#### Why Do We Dance?

COME I genious writer has been attempting to explain why we dance, that is, we grown people. He is willing to admit that in nature everything young dances—the lambkin gambols on the green, the colt leaps and prances in the field, the calf romps in the pasture, and the children, too, without waiting for the coming of the dancing-master, execute nature's rhythmic movements in their play and frolicking. "But," claims this writer, "could there be anything more ridiculous than the spectacle of grown folks capering about a so-called ball-room in gauzy attire, and keeping time to music with faces serious enough for a funeral? Possibly not; but it's the fashion to do so, and, therefore, we do it. Then, again, it's an excuse to wear evening dress, and young or old, without exception, are always glad to have an opportunity to don one of those gauzy, if my gowns, as delicate in color as in texture, with its garniture of flowers or lace or embroidery.

The moment the holidays have passed, the fashionable world sets to work dancing, says our New York lady correspondents, and there is no rest until Lenten days come to check the gayety. Ball dresses are extremely rich and elegant this season. For instance, it is a common thing to see a girl in sat'ns with an embroidered silk muslin tabler and corset in broad silk, with a ruching of the same trimming, straight flaring collar and turned-up sleeves. Another lovely ball dress is in pink satin, cut very low and framed with a silk tulle bertha tied with pearls in front and on the shoulders. The embroidery was likewise in pearls.

In my initial illustration you will find pictured a very pretty evening gown in pink silk trimmed in a very original manner with white satin ribbons. I may say, in a general way, that pink, yellow and Nile-green are the most modish colors for ball dresses, and that the round cut-out is to be much affected, although you must not neglect to garnish it with a tulle or gauze ruche a little more than an inch in width.

For young persons, nothing could be more appropriate and more dressy than

that the American voice has not the depth and softness of the English voice.

In my fourth illustration I have still another ball dress to present for your consideration, being made up in striped gauze. The gauze skirt is made over a white faille skirt which is finished with a ruching of the gauze cut on the cross. These two skirts are made with trains and cut very bias in the middle of the back, but, in addition, the side breadths of the faille are also cut bias. The gauze skirt is only as was stated. There must be good reason in the top of the skirt to cover it with bias, and the bias is covered by a boned gauze basques cut straight, which surround the entire corsage and are laced round the waist and the hips, commencing at the waist and then brought up and crossed about the bust. The basques being carried around again to the back and finishing between the shoulder blades and falling to the edge of the skirt.

The woman who has her ball dress in readiness is about in the same position

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