



THE BACHELOR'S CHRISTMAS.

CHRISTMAS-PARTY, and, no doubt, a loaded Christmas tree. And girls and boys and toys—and noise!

What do they want with me? And yet their friendly note declares—three underlined—I must not fall. Well, well, I won't! She's always sweet and kind.

Now, let me see. I had not thought Upon my wardrobe's state; I must look up my evening vest—By Jove! it's rather late To rummage for a satin tie And fish out gloves to match. Great Scott! my best shirt's at the wash, And this one needs a patch.

I'll thread a needle—if I can—(I am the man who brings Of single blessedness!) and see If I can't mend these rags. This thread's too coarse; or else, perhaps, My needle is too slim. The light's poor or it may be My sight is getting dim.

Why were men's fingers only made To drag and thump and jerk? I'm thinking how my little hand Would get around this work! And how she'd smile and bite her head, And look so wise and calm, And—there! I've stabbed my finger through! Oh, what an ace I am!

The clock ticks on. I must make haste, Since she desires—alas For those lost opportunities Our thoughtless youth let pass! But, as she's single still, who knows, Some joys we may retrieve. Perhaps she'll mend up life for me Before next Christmas eve.

—Madeline S. Bridges, in Judge.



ARTHUR'S CHRISTMAS LETTER.

ARTHUR seated himself upon the floor, in a corner of the room farthest from his mother; he wrinkled his eyebrows, puckered his mouth and cramping his little fingers around a stubby lead pencil began to write; and this is what he wrote:

"DEAR SANTA CLAUS: Please don't get too fat. I'm a little thin. An old like a sled on a pair of skates. An please give MOTHER the very nicest thing you got. We live on French street, First Chibly down 2 FLIGHTS."

He stretched out his little mump fingers, with a sigh of relief, for printing was hard work for Arthur's chubby fist. Then he glanced furtively over his shoulder, to make sure his mother was not looking—but no; stitch, stitch, stitch her needle went through the heavy coat, and she did not once look up. So he folded the precious letter in a painstaking manner, and sealed it in the envelope addressed:

"MR. SANTA CLAUS," and stuffing it into his little pocket—regardless of opposition on the part of letter or pocket—went softly out of the room; but his quiet movements ended on the landing just outside, and he tore down the stairs and through the streets to the post office.

Perhaps the thought that there were but two days before Christmas, and the consequent fear that the gentle reminder might not reach Santa Claus in time, gave the deer-like fleetness to his sturdy little feet.

There was no one in the office, so he walked boldly up and dropped the letter through the slot, and watched it sliding down the inclined plane into the receiving box. Then, with a fear of being detected, he ran out of the office, and, with his hands in his pockets, scampered home.

Arthur's letter lay among the others for a half hour or so, and then a clerk began assorting them for the mails. "Here's a good one!" he laughed heartily as he held up the crumpled envelope.

"Mr. Santa Claus!" and he laughed again, in company with two or three clerks who had gathered around him. Just then the door opened and the postmaster came in.

The clerk held up the letter: "Mr. Santa Claus—address not given! Are you acquainted with the gentleman's residence?"

Mr. Morris took the envelope and laughed, also, as he glanced at it, and was about to throw it down, when a sudden vision of four little maids, with an unquestioning faith in Santa Claus, arose before him.

hands in their pockets, and thrashed one foot against the other, while they called in cold voices to the passer-by: "Paper, sir, paper!"

The heavens were studded with gleaming stars which blinked merrily down on the hurrying throng; and through uncurtained windows were glimpses of gay Christmas trees with happy children dancing around them, and smiling fathers and mothers looking on.

Holly wreaths hung in profusion and festoons of evergreen and mistletoe adorned the walls; and over these happy scenes played the flickering light of the "yule" log's glow.

The church bells rang merrily, and the organ's deep note peeled forth upon the night winds; lights streamed from the windows and through the doors as they swung to and fro, while softly on the listening ear stole the sound of voices singing of "Peace on earth, good will toward men."

But the peace and warmth and glow had not reached "French street, first chimney, two flights down."

There was a little fire—just enough to give it the name—but it seemed an empty title.

The curtain was not drawn—what need of that? since the frost had worked so thick a screen that not even a loving star could peep in with a happy Christmas greeting. Mrs. Hill, with an old shawl over her shoulders, sat close to the table, with a dim kerosene lamp beside her.

She was blue with the cold, and her fingers were so stiff that the needle went laboriously through the heavy seam. Her tired eyes filled with tears now and again, but she dashed them away—every minute was precious; for if the coat was not finished to-night, and taken back—there was a sorry outlook for to-morrow. And the thought of the empty larder and coalhod nerved her to frantic efforts at faster working; and when the clock outside told the hour of eight, it sent a colder thrill through her frame.

Arthur, in spite of the cold, had pulled off one of his stockings, and was looking ruefully at a large hole in the toe.

"Look!" he said, holding it up before his mother, with a comical expression on his little mottled face.

"O, Arthur, how you do wear your stockings out! I mended them all up last Saturday night."

"But it came right through again!" and Arthur glanced from the yawning stocking to his mother's tired face, then back again to the stocking.

"Do you s'pose the presents will come through?"

"No, I am afraid they won't," she said, half bitterly.

"But I don't want 'em to!" and he looked up with a perplexed expression at his mother, who was afraid his presents wouldn't come through.

He examined the hole again, taking its dimensions by thrusting three fingers through it and stretching them apart.

Yes, there was no doubt a good sized toy could squeeze through that hole.

"Can you mend it, mother?"

"O, Arthur, don't ask me to do anything!" she answered, fretfully, and Arthur moved away a little; for never in his life before had he heard his mother speak like that.

But the next instant she reached out her arm, and snatched him passionately to her heart.

"Arthur, dear, mother is sorry that she spoke like that to you," and she kissed the little cold face, while her tears—so near the surface—rained over her own face and his. "I am tired, but that is no reason for my speaking crossly to you; and mother will mend the stocking before she goes to bed."

Arthur put his arms around her neck. "You'll have a happy Christmas," he said, looking up into her face with beaming eyes; and her tears started afresh as she looked at his hopeful face and thought of the gloomy prospect.

"I wish I could make a fire and warm you before you go to bed," she said, rubbing his blue cheeks with her cold fingers, "and give you something to eat."

"I ain't much hungry," he answered, with a brave smile.

"If I finish this coat in time I shall get something to eat, and I will wake you up and give you some," and kissing him, she turned back to her work and began that weary stitch, stitch.

Arthur hung up his stocking, and going back to his mother pulled the shawl away a little and kissed her on the neck—a form of caress which did not interfere with the needle—and with a bright face opened the bedroom door and shut himself in. How cold it was! for the door had been shut all day, that what heat there was might be kept in the kitchen. He would like to have opened it, for a ray of light from his mother's dim lamp, but it would make her colder; so he kicked off his shoes, not parting with very much else, for it was too cold to undress, and jumped into bed and in a few minutes was fast asleep.

dreaming, perhaps, of Christmas feasting and Santa Claus.

Arthur had not been dreaming long when a low knock startled Mrs. Hill.

What could it mean? And she trembled a little as she walked to the door and opened it.

A kind-faced man with merry blue eyes was standing there; he had very fat pockets, and a sled in one hand and a parcel in the other; and Mrs. Hill trembled more than ever, but from quite another emotion than fear.

Mr. Morris explained his errand; and as he stepped into the room there was a sound of other footsteps in the little entry, but he shut the door and unloaded his pockets and laid his parcels down.

"My children sent these things to Arthur," he said, laughing, as bags of candy, nuts and raisins came out in company with "jumping-jacks" and picture books. "I hope Arthur won't be offended," and he drew a little doll from the depths of one pocket.

"My children are all girls, and the youngest one looked so disappointed when I suggested that a doll was not just the thing for a boy that I concluded to bring it along."

Mrs. Hill had hardly spoken; her eyes required a great deal of attention, and her lips had an overmastering tendency to tremble; Mr. Morris, to relieve her, looked as little as possible in her direction.

But finally there was an end to apples and oranges, toys, strings of popcorn and candy, and the rest of his errand must be accomplished; so clearing his throat, and looking hard at the ceiling, he said:

"My wife thought the nicest thing for the mother would be a ton of coal and a barrel of flour."

in the bedroom door, his eyes still blinking, looking from the chimney to the table, and from the table back to the chimney, and then up to his mother's face.

She drew him to the stove, and sitting down took him on her lap.

"I didn't 'spect so much!" he exclaimed, finding his tongue at last; "but ain't it jolly—jolly!" and clapping his hands together he threw his arms so tightly around his mother's neck that he nearly stopped her breath and gave her a sounding kiss.

"The stockin's full—an' you mended the hole!" and he got down on the floor and peered up under it. "It's all sewed tight!" Then he pulled down the sled and skates, tried on the mittens, wound the scarf around his neck, seraped acquaintance with the candy, and took a bite out of a shining apple.

Words! words were weak for the expression of his satisfaction; so he danced up and down the room, and clapped his hands, and laughed and whistled, and finally turned a somersault, in the intensity of his joy.

Then he and his mother had their Christmas supper in the warm room, with the fire-light shining through the cracks of the usually grim old stove. And they talked of this glad evening—for somehow the bitterness of its beginning had passed from the mother's mind, and the old carol which sings that "night is passed," most fitly expressed the thought of her thankful heart.

"I can see a star!" Arthur cried, and sure enough, the frost had melted a little, and a star was peeping in; oh, more than one! two, three—yes, several shining down on the poor little home, as they had shone, long years before, on lonely Jude, and telling again the old yet ever new story of the Christ-child's birth, and of love and peace on earth.—Annie J. Holland, in Household Monthly.

CHRISTMAS GIVING.

Let It Be with a Loving Heart, and Nothing That You Regret.

It has been nearly two thousand years since the first beautiful Christmas gift came on earth, and it was received with gladness and joy by shepherd and king alike. To-day, in memory of that, I give you some little trifle, because I love you, but I give it to you ungraciously so scarcely like to take it. A pretty way to send a gift is to do it up in one of the colored tissue papers, tie it with the extremely narrow ribbon that can be bought for a few pennies, the whole twelve yards, and so give your friend the pleasure of untying the mysterious box, of removing the pretty ribbons and of coming to the surprise at last, the something for which she has longed for many a day. I know a woman who has wanted a pin-cushion ten years, who in that time has gotten two diamond bracelets and innumerable rings, but the long-looked-for pin-cushion has never come. She still hopes for it, and believes that this year will certainly bring it. You say: "Why not buy it?" Well, now, who ever bought a pin-cushion without the intention of giving it to somebody else? It is always a something given to you and not bought.

Give with a loving and full heart, and never, under any circumstances, give that which you begrudge. Such a gift will bear no fruit for you, not even the honest fruit of thanks. You can quote as many times as you want that "Unto him that hath shall be given," and so it shall, because it is just this way, my friend: You possess the gifts of gentleness and graciousness, of politeness and of goodness, and these are gifts that call others to them. If people are cross and disagreeable there is very slight inclination to wish them a merry Christmas; if they are irritable and snappish nobody cares whether they are blessed with a Christmas present or not; but unto her who hath the graces which I have cited will certainly come a basket full of good gifts, "pressed down, shaken together, and running over."—Ruth Ashmore, in Ladies' Home Journal.

ALWAYS ADMIRING IT.



Clara—Did you get my Christmas card, dear?

Maud—Yes; and I have always admired that card so much. I told Ethel Swansdown when she sent it to me last year that I thought it was so pretty.—N. Y. Mail and Express.

Measure for Measure.

"It's not the right sort of feeling, perhaps, but at Christmas I like to give just as valuable presents as I receive."

"So do I. My wife is going to give me a hundred-dollar dressing gown, and I am going to give her a hundred-dollar check to pay for it."—Life.

Equal to the Emergency.

Miss Pinkey—A toilet set is entirely too young for my grandfather.

Clerk (in silver novelty department)—We also have them with fewer teeth in the combs.—Jewelers' Weekly.

SEVEN MEN SLAIN.

Cattle Thieves and Officers Fight with the Above Result.

CHEYENNE, Wyo., Dec. 21.—Meager particulars have reached here by mail of the killing of seven persons in the Big Horn basin a few days ago. The basin is situated near the Yellowstone park and almost inaccessible from the south during the winter. Hyattville, the scene of the trouble, is 90 miles from Buffalo, which in turn is about 30 miles off the railroad. According to the story Bill Nutter and Jim Huff went into the basin to arrest some cattle thieves. Nutter was himself under arrest on a charge of stealing in Fremont county, while Huff, whose reputation is rather poor, is said to have been a deputy United States marshal. These men came across three alleged cattle thieves whom they were after, near Hyattville, which has not more than half a dozen houses. The encounter was desperate from the start and was maintained with rifles and finally with six-shooters. Upon its conclusion not only the cattle thieves but the officers lay dead on the prairie, everybody completely riddled with bullets.

According to the same story Ira Walker and Asa Shuck were found at the head of Norwood, in the same section, with sixty head of stolen cattle in their possession. Both men were subsequently found shot in the back, but by whom is not known, although it is believed they met their fate at the hands of some officers of the law. Both men were rather notorious characters. Walker was the man who was credited with having killed Hank Lovett on Shell creek last summer. Lovett was a Texan and operated at horse stealing in the Black Hills until the country got too hot for him and then went to the basin.

VOTE OF ALL THE STATES.

Figures Showing How the Four National Candidates Were Supported.

Following is a corrected table showing the total votes by states for the recent election:

STATES.	Cleveland.	Harrison.	Wheeler.	Bidwell.
Alabama.....	138,834	4,384	85,191	239
Arkansas.....	87,834	46,884	11,831	113
California.....	117,948	117,756	27,706	7,157
Colorado.....	38,626	53,581	1,638	
Connecticut.....	82,385	77,025	806	4,025
Delaware.....	29,143	18,065	4,845	565
Florida.....	129,386	48,305	42,939	983
Georgia.....	185,317	8,790	10,430	280
Idaho.....	829,307	896,398	23,307	25,130
Illinois.....	392,740	253,615	22,208	13,050
Indiana.....	196,307	212,796	20,566	6,402
Iowa.....	183,977	157,336	13,774	2,736
Kentucky.....	175,424	138,423	23,503	6,385
Louisiana.....	87,622	103,225	26,564	3,063
Maine.....	49,944	18,833	7,239	512
Maryland.....	113,866	62,730	7,096	877
Massachusetts.....	176,813	202,814	1,706	7,607
Michigan.....	306,290	232,708	19,732	20,569
Minnesota.....	180,519	123,736	20,308	14,017
Mississippi.....	40,237	1,406	10,356	910
Missouri.....	268,306	228,918	41,213	4,331
Montana.....	17,536	18,333	8,714	512
Nebraska.....	24,943	87,313	83,134	4,902
Nevada.....	740	2,630	7,230	125
New Hampshire.....	49,381	45,638	902	1,297
New Jersey.....	171,042	156,008	909	8,133
New York.....	659,908	600,459	16,430	38,193
N. Carolina.....	133,900	106,346	44,732	2,636
North Dakota.....	163,977	157,336	13,774	2,736
Ohio.....	401,461	402,711	14,840	26,012
Oregon.....	13,070	34,609	29,081	15,421
Rhode Island.....	433,394	516,911	2,714	1,212
South Carolina.....	54,698	13,384	2,410	
South Dakota.....	9,081	34,888	25,544	8,344
Tennessee.....	136,477	99,972	9,433	1,132
Texas.....	239,148	77,475	96,688	2,165
Vermont.....	16,325	37,992	12,371	1,415
Virginia.....	163,977	157,336	13,774	2,736
Washington.....	29,922	36,461	12,371	1,415
West Virginia.....	81,468	80,283	4,165	2,130
Wisconsin.....	177,336	170,731	9,969	81,132
Wyoming.....	8,454	8,454	7,723	388
Totals.....	5,373,734	5,144,409	1,016,359	288,801

Total vote cast, 12,047,561.
Cleveland's plurality, 433,325.

*Fusion.
*Wing, socialists-labor, 17,933.

EXPRESS OFFICE ROBBED.

THE THIEVES HAD KEYS TO THE OFFICE and the Safe, and Secured \$7,000.

PORT HURON, Mich., Dec. 21.—One of the boldest and most daring robberies that ever occurred in this vicinity was perpetrated at Sarnia Tuesday, when \$7,000 were taken out of the safe in the office while the clerk was at dinner. The robbers made good their escape, apparently without leaving a single tangible clue. Thomas Cook, Jr., agent of the company, has been sick abed for the last few days and the office was in charge of James McMahon. At 12:35 o'clock McMahon locked everything valuable in the office safe, which is an old-fashioned key-lock affair, and after locking the front door went for his dinner. Upon his return, at 12:55, he found the door of the safe open with a key sticking in the keyhole and \$7,000 in currency missing. The perpetrators of the robbery gained entrance through a rear door in the basement, which had been left open for the delivery of some coal.

SOUVENIRS IN BIG DEMAND.

Speculators Obtain Five Dollars for the First of the Columbian Half-Dollars.

CHICAGO, Dec. 21.—Columbian souvenir half-dollars are in great demand and the supply is exceedingly limited. The first subscribers for the coins, whose orders were taken months ago, called at the office of Treasurer Seoberger and carried their treasures away in little canvas bags. Comparatively few of these found their way into circulation, however. Those that were taken by business houses were distributed among employees, who will hold the coins as keepsakes and prize them as coming from the first lot shipped to Chicago. Some of those that did get into circulation brought big premiums from people anxious to possess one of the first consignment. They were sold by the speculators in some of the hotels for as much as five dollars apiece.

SHOT WIFE AND SON.

The Crazy Deed of a Cincinnati Man While Drunk.

CINCINNATI, Dec. 21.—Tuesday night Charles Hazard, an employee in the Shell insurance agency at 13 West Third street, shot his stepson, Gabriel Benson, and his wife, Kate Hazard. There was no provocation. Hazard was crazy drunk and shot like a maniac. Benson lives at Indianapolis and has been here since Sunday visiting his mother. He received three wounds, and Mrs. Kate Hazard, his mother, was shot twice. It is believed neither can survive. Hazard is lying dead drunk in a prison cell.

Left That for Her.

Kingley—I suppose you have bought all of your wife's Christmas presents, haven't you?

Bingo—All but one.

Kingley—Which one?

Bingo—Mine.—Mail and Express.

THE PACE THAT KILLS.

It Is Traveled by a Young St. Louis—City Treasurer's Forerunner's Son and Assistant Kills Himself After Recklessly Squandering a Large Sum of the City's Cash—His Shortage About \$63,000—His Father Deceased and Banned.

ST. LOUIS, Dec. 20.—Deposed, a shortage in his accounts of \$63,020.16, his son dead—a suicide—with absolute ruin staring him in the face, Michael J. Foerstel, until Monday night city treasurer of St. Louis, is one of the most miserable of men.

An investigation of his affairs, precipitated by the events to be related, resulted in the discovery of the shortage given, the immediate removal of the then treasurer by Acting Mayor C. P. Walbridge, and the appointment as temporary treasurer of Charles Parsons, the best-known banker of the city, who immediately gave the required bond of \$500,000 and assumed the position.

It was but little after dawn Monday when suicide added its dark intimations to the cloud of charges, counter charges, denials and half-suppressed scandal which has been hanging over the office of the treasurer of the city of St. Louis for weeks past.

Edward Foerstel, first assistant and son of Michael J. Foerstel, city treasurer, at 8 o'clock Monday morning shot himself in the right temple, the ball passing through the brain, lodging under the skin on the left side and causing death a few hours later.

For weeks past stories of peculiar doings in the treasurer's office have been afloat. There have been suits brought against the treasurer by money lenders notorious for their usurious charges, assertions regarding real estate deals of the treasurer and his son and allegations of use of the city money by some one who recouped the treasury previous to the regular examinations by borrowing from the shysters who at last sued the treasurer himself on notes which he declared to be forgeries.

Monday morning about 6:05 o'clock the announcement was made that fire had been kindled shortly before in the city treasurer's office, where, with the doors of the vaults wide open, a too apparent attempt had been made to destroy everything in that office and so forever conceal the guilt of anyone who should be guilty of wrong doing. Scarcely two hours later came the news of Foerstel's suicide. Then the situation began to clear itself. Fortunately for the city, prompt discovery of the blaze enabled its quick control, with the destruction, so far as known, of only some old papers and furniture.

Of the cash on hand the young suicide was custodian. His death has closed his lips, but the last act of his life surrounds him with evidence of guilt. The attempt to burn the city hall is construed by the police as the act of a guilty man, whose only chance to escape detection was in the destruction of the records in the city treasurer's office, of which he had control. The evidence shows that he occupied his room after midnight, and left it at an early hour in the morning. His movements after leaving the house cannot be traced until a point after the quenching of the fire is reached. It is known that about 6:30 he borrowed the revolver with which he committed suicide from James Harrison, a friend, and the theory is that he had learned of the failure of his plot to destroy evidences of his guilt and was thereby forced to resort to death as the only escape.

Young Foerstel's record is that of a wild young man and plunger. On horses he was a heavy bettor, placing \$1,000 or more at a time. He was also interested in real estate deals beyond his capacity to handle, as is shown by recent developments in court proceedings. He was generally liked, only about 23 years old, but old in experience for his years. In his capacity as assistant treasurer of the city of St. Louis over \$10,000,000 in city funds and securities passed through his hands each year. He was treasurer of two large building associations, the Phoenix and Home Comfort, but his accounts with these are said to be all right. He was also senior member of Foerstel & Saxton, handling the lock whip-socket, manufactured by the Novelty company.

Late Monday night the investigation of the city treasurer's accounts was completed, his books being checked with those of the comptroller and the banks holding city deposits. As a result of this searching inquiry an embezzlement of \$63,020.16 was discovered, and the action already noted taken. In this phase of the affair but little except sympathy for ex-Treasurer Foerstel is heard. It is settled by the inquiry that he, personally, is innocent of wrong doing. His son sunk the whole sum in frantic real-estate deals, the extent of which it will take weeks to unravel. But the father is a broken and ruined man, who suffers punishment for the son's wrong doing.

Convention of Working Girls.

NEW YORK, Dec. 20.—A national convention of working girls in the different branches of the linen industry will be held January 8. Delegates will be present from Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Cleveland, Troy, Lowell, St. Louis, New York and Brooklyn, representing, it is said, about 15,000 working girls. Among the matters to be discussed are the enforcement of the factory and anti-sweating bills, the prison-labor bill, the immigration question and the best methods of inducing girls to join the union.

Lady Miles' Safe Ransacked and Jewels Valued at \$165,000 Taken.

LONDON, Dec. 20.—While Sir Cecil Miles and his family were at dinner at their country seat, Leigh Court, near Bristol, Sunday, burglars entered the mansion unobserved and went straight to Lady Miles' apartments, where she had left jewels valued at \$165,000 in an unlocked safe. They ransacked the safe, but took only the jewels, not burdening themselves with silver articles and valuable papers. Lady Miles found the room in confusion when she returned. The police were at once notified, but the ransacked safe was empty.