

GRIMKEE AND THE ARK OF NOAH

A CHRISTMAS STORY BY NINA PICTON

LITTLE JINNIE stood before Old Grimke's window. The dark plates and bronzes, the somber stuffs and hangings, had disappeared. Grimke's window was in holiday attire, and Little Jinnie wondered why.

Little Jinnie bent forward and leaned her elbows upon the narrow ledge that jutted out from the window. What a feast she saw! A tall soldier, all red and gold, stood in one corner, his musket at "shoulder arms," determination in his eye and in his rigid at-



AN OLD MAN CAME OUT OF THE SHOP. Little Jinnie started to say "Good morning," but she didn't quite like his manner.

Below him, seated on a dairy stool, was a milkmaid with a churn, and the wonderful dasher kept going up and down at regular intervals, and the milkmaid's head kept bobbing and bobbing till the white linen bows on her cap flapped like windmills.

A shepherd boy stood next to the milkmaid, and in his mouth was a long pipe or musical instrument. From time to time a loud note rang out. What queer toys! Little Jinnie almost believed that they were not toys, for the faces looked so real, and they moved and bobbed like real live people. But Grimke always had queer things in his window, different from any other shopkeeper in Broad street.

There stood a clock with a cuckoo that flew in and out and chirruped its note at certain intervals. And the wax doll in the corner, with a queen's crown on her head and a crimson velvet robe! That was the most real doll Little Jinnie had ever seen.

While she stood there, her small, thin hands and arms on the ledge, her wistful eyes peering within, an old man came out from the side of the shop and thrust his head into the window. It was Old Grimke, and he wore a fustian jacket, very snug and tight, and a queer little skullcap on his head. He looked about as if in quest of something, and his round little eyes squinted here and there as if everything was a long way off.

Little Jinnie did not move, and if Old Grimke saw her he was kind enough not to object, for he never once looked toward her, but kept squinting and moving until he saw a long, narrow house, painted green, with a small peak, which stood in the center of his window.

"Ah!" he cried, and from outside Jinnie heard his grunt of satisfaction. He moved toward the green house. In his hand he held a key, and, after fumbling and feeling about the side of the structure, he turned it about. Then he waited for something, Jinnie didn't know what, but she stared, fascinated by the old man's movements and waiting, just as much as he waited, for the revelation that she felt sure was to come.

couple of bears and two spirited looking horses. After that trooped all the animals that Little Jinnie had ever seen in her picture book, the old, thumb-eared one that the mission teacher had given her. Round and round they walked, and larger and larger grew Little Jinnie's eyes.

Old Grimke looked up. He was proud of his window, for he had taken great pains to make it attractive. Not another man in Broad street knew the children's tastes so well. All about the shelves of his little shop stood Santa Clauses, railroad cars, tin soldiers and small guns and dolls that the little ones liked. Old Grimke had been in the business for years, and he expected great profits this Christmas time.

Suddenly he spied Little Jinnie. He did not know whether she was admiring him or his window, for her eyes kept shifting from the long green toys to him, back again, and so on. A general smile overspread the face of Old Grimke. The little child outside was certainly carried away with what she saw. Old Grimke looked closer. How thin and pale she was, and quite a little tot to be alone!

The old man kept smiling and smiling, as if he knew her, and Little Jinnie advanced toward the door. Old Grimke had left his window and stood behind the counter.

"Well, little girl, what can I do for you?" he asked, bending over the counter toward the wee figure that looked appealingly upward.

"If you would tell me—"

"Yes," said Old Grimke.

"What that thing is—that house in your window. Are the animals alive?"

"That—that green house?" asked Old Grimke, leaning forward to take a peep at the window.

"Yes, sir," answered Little Jinnie.

"Why, you don't mean to tell me that you never saw a Noah's ark, child?"

Little Jinnie looked as ignorant as an infant.

"No? Why, then, you've never heard the story of the flood and Noah and the ark resting on Ararat? Dear me, dear me!" Old Grimke actually looked worried over the turn of affairs. He thought everybody knew that.

Just then some customers came in, and Old Grimke put on a businesslike air.

The child stole noiselessly out. Old Grimke did not hear her, for the ladies were asking him for humming toys, and he was not quite sure whether he had them. He turned several things over as he looked and opened the wrong boxes and packages. Old Grimke's eyes were falling him a bit. And as he looked a pair of wistful eyes, blue and heavily lashed, haunted him. While looking he was wondering where he had seen them.

"Bless me!" he cried suddenly. "That child's!"

The customers looked queerly at



"THAT'S THE THING I'VE DREAMED 'BOUT."

him, but he had found their toys, and as they examined them and approved them they did not pause to mark the puzzled glances of the shopkeeper.

Little Jinnie was unhappy. In her small, meager home she felt the need of something. If she had been older she might have known.

"Land of love," the mother cried, "the child's worryin' over sumthin'. She's that thin an' pale as ter be er shadder." The poor woman paused in her daily task of sewing and looked uneasily at the small thin one that played beside her.

Every morning the child had strayed out on the next block. The mother had watched her and felt no uneasiness. Whenever she looked in that direction she saw Little Jinnie standing against a window, looking in with all her eyes,



SALUTING THE CONVOY AT CHRISTMAS (AN ANCIENT MARITIME CUSTOM)

"Bless me!" exclaimed the mother.

"What's it now?"

And Old Grimke had seen and heard, for Little Jinnie came in every day for a moment, and between times, when nobody was buying, Old Grimke took her on his knee and told her the wonderful story of the flood. And questions had been asked and the Christmas time commented on, and Little Jinnie's eyes were wonderstruck.

"Where do you live?" he asked. Old Grimke had no children of his own. His son had died a year before.

"Down there, near the alley, in the funny little house with red windows."

It was nearing the time. For three or four days a fine snow had fallen, and the icicles hung from the window ledge in Old Grimke's window. Many of the toys had disappeared, but the Noah's ark was still there. Somehow people thought it "too expensive," yet Old Grimke felt that it was not. He staked a great deal on that ark, and the animals were not common animals; they were made of the finest wood.

All the children had seen it. Day by day they passed before his window, and the wonderful toy was wound up, and the eyes outside grew larger and larger. But now the eyes haunted Old Grimke as much as little Jinnie's.

"Bless me!" he suddenly thought. "I've not seen her for two days. That's queer. I'll look her up!"

In a dim little room, upon a couch whereon the faded coverlet was high drawn, lay Little Jinnie. The big eyes were the first thing Old Grimke saw. They were more wistful than ever. Two little hands were stretched out in pleading.

"I'm real glad to see yer," said she. "I've missed yer an' the ark too. Her voice was quite thin as she said this.

"Is that so?" Old Grimke asked, a suspicion of tears in his eyes.

"Course it's so! I've dreamed 'bout it at night till I thought it was right by me. An' I've seen the window. Oh, it's a beautiful window, Mr. Grimke!"

She always ran her voice up at 'he last syllable with a very delighted accent.

"Glad you like it," Old Grimke said. "I'm proud of the window too. I've taken lots of pains with it, I'm sure—thought 'bout it at nights, as you have, and studied how to make it attractive."

"Well, it's—jest nice. Ev'rybody says that. Mr. Grimke"—and her voice almost hushed with awe—"is the Noah's ark-rk there?"

"Yes, it's there." No one but a tradesman would have detected disappointment in his tone. "Maybe not for long, though; maybe not for long!"

"I'm sorry," said she, then dropped her subject of the ark.

Old Grimke thought that very queer. But Little Jinnie had never seemed like that before. So he dropped the subject, too, and he asked her when she would sit up.

"Oh, soon," she cried. "I'm better, ain't I, mar?"

Mrs. Conroy came in from the inner room, a smell of greases about her sleeves and hands and a worn expression on her face. "You're mendin', course ye are! The docther says as

yer'll be up Christmas. O'll be glad, sure an' O'll be!" The tired woman tried to look brighter. Even Old Grimke saw that.

"Are you glad, Jinnie?" asked Old Grimke. "Are you glad Michaelmas is comin'?" You'll be up, you know."

"De-pends," said she, and Old Grimke wondered where she had heard that word.

"If the little Christ Child will come an' if I can hear the singin' an' see the fine toys an' things an' all you've told me 'bout, Mr. Grimke, you know"—she looked excitedly into his eyes—"why, I'll be ortful glad!"

That was enough for Old Grimke. He said goodby in a very sudden manner, and Little Jinnie smiled sweetly.

When he found himself outdoors he blew his nose several times, and his glasses were so wet he couldn't see the gate before him.

Christmas morning! In Old Grimke's window some change was visible. Behind the door in Little Jinnie's home stood Old Grimke. He was peeping through the crack, and he kept up a regular pantomime as he looked into the inner room.

There sat Little Jinnie, a pretty color in her cheeks, and hugged tight in her arms was the Noah's ark.

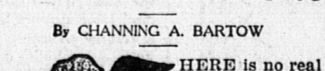
"That's the thing I've dreamed 'bout," said she to her mother. "That's the ar-r-ark. An', oh, mar, think it's been a-restin' on Rarat an' now it's a-restin' here! Oh, oh!"

Then Old Grimke rushed out and kissed her. He forgot just then that the price mark on the Noah's ark had been \$5.

JAPANESE, CHINESE AND KOREAN TOYS

By CHANNING A. BARTOW

HERE is no real Christmas in the far east, which is still essentially pagan, but the small boys and girls with the almond eyes have plenty of other holidays on which they give and receive presents and make merry in much the same manner as their western brothers and sisters on the occasion of Santa Claus' annual visit. And in the matter of toys Japanese, Chinese and Korean babies have little cause to envy their foreign friends, for not even the most marvelous mechanical products of Nuremberg surpass the products of the yellow toy-maker's ingenuity. Children the world over are very much alike in their tastes, however different in appearance, and the playthings of infant Asia bear a strong fundamental resemblance to those of young America. Most popular, of course, are dolls. The parental instinct is universal. China and Korea are great countries



CHINESE GIRL WITH HER DOLL.

for dolls, but in Japan, that paradise of children, the make believe baby is so honorably regarded that it has a special holiday, the "feast of dolls." This comes in February every year at the time of the Chinese new year. The dolls are placed on silk covered shelves in the best room in the house. Often it takes five or six shelves to hold them all. The principal participants in the feast are called the emperor and empress of Japan. They are dressed in court costumes, and the others, named for famous persons, are arranged about them. Doubtless at the coming celebration numerous doll Oyamas, Togos, Kurokis and Nogis will swell the crowds at the receptions of the mimic mikado. Silver bowls are placed before their majesties, and the child for whom the festival is kept puts fresh food in these dishes every day. At the end of three days the dolls are laid away for another year, only a few favorites being kept out for common use. Of these, one is the "lady with the six (or more) wigs," a baldheaded doll whose many changes of coiffure give her small owner endless delight.

Though this is primarily a girls' holiday, the small boy of Japan is not above playing with dolls and is especially fond of the doll theater. He is as much addicted to wooden soldiers and acrobatic toys as his counterpart in America. Marionettes are as popular in China as in Japan. Long before Punch and Judy began to charm the hearts of American youth the little children of China were laughing over the dilemmas of these two famous characters. Little booths are set up on the streets, where traveling companies present their quaint shows. They have men on horseback, soldiers, lions, tigers, dragons, snakes and curious acting frogs, all made to go through their antics by means of strings and sticks managed by the showmen. Following the feast of dolls, the Japanese boys, too, have a holiday of their own, a distinctive feature of which is the school of huge paper fishes floating over every house in which there are boys, one fish for each son. The Japanese, being great fishermen, admire certain specimens of the fin bearers very much—for instance, the carp, which swims upstream, a sign of courage and perseverance. This fish has become with the Japanese an emblem of the boys, whom their parents wish to see possessed of these qualities.

On the boys' day the toy bazaars of the city are thronged with children. Swords, guns, pistols, trumpets, horses and menageries sell like hot cakes, and firecrackers fill the air with smoke and noise. There is in Tokyo one quarter consisting of three or four streets which contains nothing but bazaars for the sale of toys. Here for a few coppers one may buy a handful of bamboo rods from the ends of which dangle the funniest imaginable caricatures on which the potent sake has worked its charm. The goggle eyed men whose heads roll on pivots are matched by jovial foxes and badgers which have also looked upon the sake when it was yellow. Toy animals of every sort—lizards, crickets and spiders—make the streets of Tokyo look like Broadway in New York the week before Christmas. A new popular toy is a Russian soldier with red hair and blue eyeballs, who performs all kinds of "stunts."

Tops and kites are always in favor in the east, and some of them are veritable works of art. The kites assume every possible form of fish, beast and bird, while the tops which transform themselves into butterflies and flowers as they spin seem to be the work of a necromancer. There is no distinction of age in flying kites and spinning tops. Old men and children may be seen together engaged in these time honored pastimes.

Asiatic babies are blessed with no end of gods who look out for their welfare, the Japanese having seven gods of happiness, one of whom, Hotei by name, corresponds closely to our St. Nicholas. Hotei is of a venerable and amiable appearance, wearing a long white beard, and carries a sack of gifts for good little boys and girls. To older persons he brings long life and is usually represented in art accompanied by a stork, which is supposed to live 1,000 years.

It is not all play and no work with the small Japanese, despite their abundance of enjoyment. A Japanese child is no sooner able to walk than he or she is called upon to act as nurse for a smaller brother or sister, if there is one. However, the "little mothers" do not seem to be troubled at all by their charges. They carry the babies on their backs, like papooses, and play ball, run races and fly kites in spite of their burdens. Strangest of all, the babies are perfectly happy and hardly ever cry, though often banged about in a way that would make an American baby howl with rage.

The business spirit of the Chinese empire is reflected in the sports of the

THE SIGN OF THE SON OF MAN

A CHRISTMAS POEM BY J.A. EDGERTON

THE night is fair over Bethlehem As amid God's lights out like a gem A strange, new star gleams out like a gem In a setting of wintry sky. It shines afar over stream and field To an eastern caravan, And three are thrilled as they see revealed The sign of the Son of Man.

SINCE that sweet night the years have flown As ripples flow on a stream, While empires out of the earth have grown To pass as a troubled dream, And weary eyes have searched the skies, As the ages onward ran, With the hope once more to recognize The sign of the Son of Man.



THE SIGN OF THE SON OF MAN.

BUT never and never men saw above Its magical gleam afar, Yet ever and ever the light of love Was shed by the golden star, For not on the skies do its bright rays burn, But the hearts of his lovers scan, And there on the heavens within discern The sign of the Son of Man.

IN mercy and peace, in the growing good That sweetens the world today, In the era of freedom and brotherhood That comes on its shining way, With the Christ-soul leading the van, Behold, 'tis in these that the spirit sees The sign of the Son of Man.

FOR ever the burden of gladness grows, And ever the sorrow dies, And ever the soul that is quickened knows A secret of sweet surprise, And ever in those of the glad new birth The eyes of the spirit scan, Revealed in a glory transcending earth, The sign of the Son of Man.

Chinese child, and small imitations of commerce play a large part in his life. Owners of toy carts organize mimic trading expeditions, while the less fortunate "keep store." The boys also play at war with ships and soldiers, and, as in Japan, one may see bands of children armed with toy guns or sticks drilling with true martial order. A regular feature of the game as it is played in China is, it is said, the alarm. "The Japanese are coming!" at which the whole pigtailed army runs as if Satan were after it. The Chinese boy is very fond of pets and often carries about with him a canary in a wooden cage or a cricket similarly imprisoned. The less active Chinese girl has many beautiful toys of porcelain, lacquer and ivory, dolls and diminutive household utensils. The girls have their games also, such as battledoor and shuttlecock and jackstones. They "turn the mill" and "churn butter" to the accompaniment of nursery rhymes centuries old.

Her Explanation. "Your honor," said the lawyer, "my client acknowledges that she struck the book agent with a piece of gas pipe, but she pleads that it was a case of mistaken identity." "How's that?" asked the judge. "Well, she thought it was her husband."