

The Legend of The Xmas Tree

There is a legend that is connected with the Christmas tree. The story is told that Saint Winifred was one day in the woods cutting down one of the sacred oaks of the Druids when a terrific wind blew up and felled the tree. As it crashed to the ground it split into four pieces, and one piece fell in each direction. Directly behind and in the way of the oak, rose a young fir tree pointing its green spire to the heavens. The oak crashed to the ground but the right and undamaged when Saint Winifred saw the miraculous escape of the young fir he proclaimed it a holy tree, saying that it was a sign of endless life because its leaves are green at all times, and it should be called the tree of heaven. The right and undamaged when Saint Winifred saw the miraculous escape of the young fir he proclaimed it a holy tree, saying that it was a sign of endless life because its leaves are green at all times, and it should be called the tree of heaven.

The origin of the Christmas Tree is not exactly known. It is thought that it may be in some way connected with the great tree, Yggdrasil, of Scandinavian mythology. This tree was thought to be a gigantic evergreen tree coming to the center of the earth. In its branches were the dwelling places of the gods. The sun, moon and stars were thought to be carried by the roots were thought to be symbolic, and above in the branches a stag led ceaselessly upon the leaves, as the year feeds upon the endless stream of time. And other stags consumed the buds as the seasons consume the days and the hours. Higher up the stags built their nest and there were other animals who each stood for some thing, a woman of the world. The golden balls and pretty toys which we hang upon our trees are relics of the old symbol of the moon and sun and stars and other characters which had their connection with this old mythological tree. Some people think the Christmas tree idea is a survival of the pine trees of the Roman Saturnalia which were decorated during the Roman holiday with longues. Bacchus. But the custom may have come even farther than that, for the old Egyptians used to decorate their houses in the winter with branches of the date palm which though symbolized immortality and heaven. In the Middle Ages people thought that the stars and planets were invested in an illuminating tree. The first real Christmas tree, however, can be traced back to about 1600, when it was introduced in Germany. For about two hundred years the German Rhine valley children were the only ones who enjoyed the Christmas tree, but in about 1800 the custom was introduced in other countries, and today there is a Christmas tree in almost every Christian home, in the world over.

All About Christmas

There are lots of interesting things connected with Christmas. Its meaning and significance, its observance in other countries, its symbols and superstitions, and the date itself as of interest in an historical way. Many facts have been gathered about this great world celebration. Do you know what the word "Christmas" really means? The word is derived from the word "Christ" and the Saxon word "Messe", which means mass or feast. Christmas, therefore, means the feast of Christ and in honor of His birth in the hope of perpetuating His great spirit of love and charity and friendship is celebrated today. The celebration of the day as a great holiday dates back to pagan times, when the Winter Solstice was observed. Scandinavian mythology tells us that during the Yuletide, which falls at this same time of the year there was a peace among the gods and that all strife and work ceased. This Scandinavian idea combined with the old pagan celebration is perhaps the underlying thought in our observance of a holiday when work is stopped and peace is supposed to reign over all. Many interesting things happened on Christmas Day. In 1776 George Washington crossed the Delaware River in what is Christmas Day that the City of Nashville, Tennessee, was founded. Clara Barton, the founder of the Red Cross was born on Christmas Day.

Hanging Up The Stockings

From Italy comes the legend from which we are supposed to get the time honored custom of hanging up the Christmas stockings. Good old St. Nicholas of Padua used to throw long knitted purses tied at both ends, into the open windows of the very poor people. These purses were made of yarn, not unlike footless stockings. Finally it became the custom of the people to hang them outside their window on the night before Christmas, so that St. Nicholas could put a gift into them as he passed by. By and by, when coin became scarce, toys were put in for the children and useful presents for grown people. In the North country where it was rather chilly at Christmas time, the purses were hung on the mantelpiece, and it was believed that the good old saint would come down the chimney and fill them. When these purses were out of use, stockings were substituted and have been used ever since.

A Christmas Burglary Verses For Xmas Gifts

The night-waitman at Plympton, possessed of a due sense of his importance, was called "Sergeant" Moore. He had become aware that the distinctive title was one in general vogue with metropolitan police systems, and he was proud of the designation.

The day preceding Christmas was always one looked forward to by the doughty sergeant, for it was upon that occasion that his conscience allowed him to accept little marks of approbation. "They, these sergeants" generally prepared the bestowal of something in the shape of a gift.

"It's duty I have to attend to all night long," he told his wife. "They say there's a regular band of burglars on the move."

Now two problems of fate were to work out a strange series of circumstances in the Christmas eve events appertaining to the redoubtable sergeant. The first was that the little town jail had burned down the week previous. The second was that a new family had moved to town early in December, comprising the Waynes-father, mother, a charming daughter of seventeen and three young children. As Moore passed their place he noted that it was all dark, the family probably absent at some local entertainment, and he caught the echo of a sound resembling the tripping cover of a piece of furniture. Then from an open window a form protruded.

"Burglars!" muttered the sergeant, and made a dash for the presumable despoiler.

"Hold on!" spoke the latter excitedly. "It's all right."

"Oh, is it?" purred Moore derisively. "What's that?" and he made a grab at the protruding pocket of the young man.

"If you'll allow me to explain," began the latter. "I know the people who live here. Cordially invited you to break into the house at any hour of the night. And this new muffer and a pair of gloves. Say, you come with me," and the sergeant marched his captive to the spot.

"If you'll only let me explain," pleaded the young man, but Moore was deaf, blind to all but duty. Fifteen minutes later the captive found himself locked into a stone cellar, and the sergeant handed his key to his wife, saying:

"You might pass in a jug of water and a plate of bread to my catch through the window; it's no nash to it. I'll drop around again soon."

The young man in retirement was pacing about in the dark and anatomizing his officious captor when Mrs. Moore timidly approached the window.

"Here's some water and a little food," she said, "so you won't starve, and just as she passed the things in she uttered a shriek and crouched down trembling. Two men had suddenly appeared, real burglars this time."

"Oh, sir!" whispered the woman through the cellar window. "They may kill the children! And then there's all Tim's half yearly pay in the bureau! Please help me! Here's the key to the cellar door, and something tinkled on the floor. Something else then transpired. The released captive leaped and knocked down and tied hand and foot the prowler within the house. Then coming unawares upon the armed bandit outside he toppled him over, rendered him helpless, and seemed to enjoy the excitement of it all.

"I am Roscoe Walden and I am engaged to Ethel Wayne," he explained an hour later to the bewildered sergeant, after the latter had transferred the two criminals to limbo. "This is the first time I have visited their new home, and I got in surreptitiously to place a present on the Christmas tree as a surprise to my lady love. I don't want the Waynes to know I am in Plympton until after she finds it."

There was a rare spice of adventurous excitement for pretty Ethel in her devoted lover's unique experience when he recited the same the next morning. And meantime Sergeant Moore was gaining popularity and the community's good will by detailing his heroic act which had signalized Christmas even in the criminal who, but for him, might have had the entire town at their mercy.

Old Year—New Year

New Year, New Year, What do you bring? Your bag might hold Anything!

Old Year, Old Year, What will you do With all the hope That I gave you?

There is a moment When you meet, Like two travelers On one street.

Old Year, New Year, In the sky, Out where the winds And ghosts go by.

Old Year, Old Year, What do you say, Meeting the New on The Milky Way?

You took from me Like a thief, Larkspur joy and Juniper grief.

But you leave me One bright hour, Glad like sun on A crimson flower.

This is mine Eternally, You may not Take it from me!

New Year, New Year, What do you Hear you say him In the blue?

Old Year, Old Year, Where do you go, Out on that path Men do not know?

LOUISE DRISCOLL, N. Y. Times

When Hearts Are Trumps

Tragedy if Child Should Have Christmas Come and Go Without an Ecstasy.

If you have no child of your own, you must borrow or beg one for Christmas eve; for it is the time when the world lights its happiness with a child's joy, writes Dr. James I. Vance in the Illinois State Journal.

Only a boy may have the right of way on Christmas eve. If you do not stand with the children, you must stand aside.

What a wonderful thing is this yearning of the old world for the happiness of children that climaxes at Christmas! The better side of human nature comes to the front. We throw off our cynicism. Meanness is shamed into generosity, and for a little while on Christmas eve the tightwads of earth have a look in on paradise.

Yes, there ever a sweeter eagerness, a hot joy, a more heaven-ly anticipation, than that which all through the house is felt on Christmas eve? Every one is thinking of making somebody happy. The delicious secretiveness of it intensifies the thrill. Care is forgotten, expectation is ringing the bells. Peace is over all the world. And the hero is a child.

"Thank God for children! For such is the kingdom of heaven." "Oh, such a disappointment a child. This is most please God when we make the children happy."

If there is no child in your home, maybe there is one on your doorstep, waiting for you to be its saint on Christmas eve. There are certainly some there in the street. They are looking at the best in the wisest with wistful faces, and wondering what the lover of children will bring them. It is your time to play, and hearts are trumps!

What a tragedy if a single child in your town should have Christmas come and go without an ecstasy!

My Gift

When Santa Claus is hitching up The reindeer to his sleigh, I'm going to bring a great big bag. Of love to him and say—

Dear Santa Claus, please take this bag And on each Christmas tree The just a little bunch of love Fast with a memory.

To you dear friend I wish the best Of all good gifts that are, Good health, and wealth, and fame, and love.

The last more precious far. So search ye closely every branch And you will find my bit of love, Tied with a memory.

L. W. SNELL, in Michigan Herald

New Years Then And Now

As long as people can remember, there have been New Year parties. The old Romans gave feasts in honor of Janus, the two-faced god. One face looked back at the old, spent year, and one face looked forward to the new, fresh year. They gave presents to him and to each other with the hope that the new year would be good to them. Some of the people who lived long ago waited until the end of March to celebrate the New Year, since that was the time that the trees and grass began new life.

A Brother's Present

"There was once," said Daddy, "a boy whose name was Worthington and for short they called him Worby."

"He had a sister whom we called Minnie, and it is a story of these two I want to tell you this evening."

Nick and Nancy looked very much pleased. They loved to hear about their children, especially of boys and girls about their own ages.

"Worthington was unlike some brothers, but he was like you in that way Nick. He liked to play with his sister. His sister liked, too, to play with him. He never frightened her, but he showed her how to do things and she was never afraid when she was with him, in the fall he took her for rides in her express cart, and he made a big seat in the cart for her when he took her for slower and more stylish rides."

"He taught her to climb trees and to swim and to do tricks on the trapeze. And she, too, used to play in the snowball fights, back in the forts which he and the other boys would make."

"Well, it was summer, and Worthington was not going to school. He thought and he thought and he thought, and finally he said: 'I wonder if it couldn't be done. I will try anyway.' He worked out the whole scheme in his head, and the next day he went to his aunt who owned a garden and he said: 'Auntie, I have been thinking about something.'

"Yes," she said, "what have you been thinking about, Bobby?" For she had always called him that, ever since he had been a small boy and she had written a funny little poem for one of his birthdays where she wrote Bobby to make it rhyme with chubby.

"I think Minnie is old enough to ride a bicycle now. I would like to give her one."

"A bicycle!" exclaimed their aunt. "Why don't you suggest giving her an automobile or a motorboat with a sleeping cabin? How could you ever manage it, Bobby?" "She hadn't realized that he had thought it all out, and she stopped to hear what he had to say, for he usually had extremely sensible things to say."

"It wouldn't really be so awfully expensive, auntie, and I'd love to do it so. I would like to give it to her for Christmas. I couldn't do it before I don't believe, and besides she could look after it all winter. I think of what fun it was going to be in the summer. I have a bicycle mother and daddy gave me—and I do wish Minnie could have one, too."

"How do you think you could pay it?" Auntie asked again. She felt pretty sure by that time that he might be able to manage it, but she wondered how.



THE LOVE THAT NEVER DIES

TO WELCOME THE NEW YEAR, in the past, and for the entrance of the baby new year, who is just about to commence his earthly career.

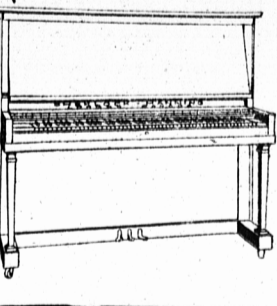
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