

### Christmas in the Laurentians

The lumbering frost-covered train shrieks to a halt and snorts with relief as the last long hill into the northernmost reaches of Quebec's Laurentian Mountains is topped.

It's cold but we are wrapped up warmly in ski togs. And thoughts of the warmth of a roaring log-fire comfort sustain us as we step into the depth of the sparkling snow.

Already the steaming train is breathing more easily. Not a breath of wind stirs the frost-laden air. No sound but the soft whinnying of the horses and the crunching snow beneath our feet breaks the immense silence. But there—a wolf howls in the distance and a quick shiver runs down our spines. We yearn even more eagerly for those blazing logs.

Out come our valises and piles upon piles of skis. At last—something is out of the coach and the train is away again, moving easily after its brief rest.

Old 'Enri pads towards us in his soft moccasins.

"Joyeux Noel," he greets us. He is glad to see us again and tells us in picturesque broken English that he "mak beeg fire et de bois." He grins expansively as he walks majestically towards the sleigh, proud of his charges.

At last we are all packed deep in the buffalo rugs that abound in the sleigh and without even a flick of the whip, the horses start. For it is cold!

Through lanes of snow covered pine and balsam we ride. The snow crunches beneath the smooth runners and the even trot of the horses. Overhead a brilliant display welcomes us as, it seems, every star in the heavens shines down in the clear, crisp air.

A mile or so and we see welcoming lights in the distance. We round the last bend in the road and all tumble from the sleigh together. For it is cold! A mad dash to the houses. No one remembers the skis or bags. But old 'Enri, he don't min' and soon shoulders the burden.

'Enri grins with delight at our appreciation of the huge Christmas tree which he has already chopped down and trimmed. With due ceremony this is decorated and the presents neatly laid out beneath it.

Twenty-five below zero! Why, we can't ski in weather like this, we say upon asking the following morning. But with a warm breakfast inside us and the Christmas presents distributed amid shouts of delight, we are soon out beneath the blue skies.

Twenty-five below zero! But not a breath of wind disturbs the clear air. A bright sun shines down from a cloudless sky and the first thing we know we are skiing and frolicking in shirt-sleeves or a light sweater. And—wonder of wonders—we have acquired a real sun-tan. Yes, with the mercury twenty-five below!

Lunch and a short rest and we are outside again. Up hill and down; steady, stiff climbs up the snow-covered mountains and then—while—down again, the skis taking us with lightning-like speed over the packed trails.

"What a perfect day," we all say as night shadows fall. Supper finished, we sit and watch the sun sink. Finally, the last golden rays are blocked by the tall porcupines of the giant trees and—night falls upon the earth drawing a mantle around.

### Christmas Day Customs

Although Christmas is celebrated in the same manner all over the world, different countries have certain customs peculiar to themselves. Germany is the one that has the greatest number of these perhaps, for German children regard Christmas with far more reverence than do those of any other nation. It was from Germany that the Christmas tree, laden with gifts was first introduced. The idea, however is really of Roman origin.

A firm belief among German children is that on December 25, animals have the gift of speech for 24 hours. Their inability to understand what they say is due, so their parents tell them, to the fact that they have misbehaved during some portion of the previous twelve months.

In Norway there is a pretty custom of providing a good dinner on Christmas Day for all domestic animals. The farmers give their horses and cows an extra supply of fodder, while sheaves of corn and dishes of grain are put out in the yard for the benefit of the birds.

One of the commonest, as well as one of the oldest, practices still associated with the observation of Christmas in England is that of burning "Yule" log. It was always lighted from a brand that had been carefully saved from the previous year's log. The word "Yule" is interesting to note, is derived from an old Anglo-Saxon one, meaning December.

There are many curious beliefs and superstitions associated in different parts of Great Britain with Christmas. One that is obtained in Devonshire is that a bright sun on December 25 means a good apple crop. In Yorkshire there is a strong feeling against being married on Christmas Day.

The villagers in remote parts of Worcestershire consider it very unlucky to have new boots or shoes in their make any time between December 8 and 25. . . . In certain parts of Scotland there is a fixed belief that the first member of the family to open the door of the house on Christmas morning will have more good luck in the next 12 months than anybody else in the house. If it does no other good the superstition is, at any rate, conducive to early rising on at least one day of the year.

### Another Good Deed

"New toys for old." Thus might the Boy Scouts paraphrase the old saying when planning what has become a very integral part of their Christmas activities in Montreal.

"New toys for old"—another slogan to be associated with their daily good deeds.

For weeks before Christmas, the Boy Scouts operate a vigorous campaign to get old, abandoned toys. These they receive in their headquarters and workshop and spend many hours in their renovation.

Old, forgotten dolls are brought back to life. A new leg is affixed to the body. The face is retouched with bright colors. Perhaps a new crop of hair is glued in place and—behold!—another Christmas gift for some poor child has been fashioned; another present bringing joy into the life of one who might otherwise have been forgotten.

This same process is adopted in the recreation of toy drums, bugles, wacans, trains, automobiles and a multitude of playthings. Night after night these boys sacrifice their time in helping Santa Claus in his superhuman task.

When the thousands of toys are finally prepared, the Scouts now undertake the task of distribution. Or they may send many parcels to various churches or charitable institutions to be included in their Christmas baskets to be sent to poor families on Christmas Day.

We talked to some of the Boy Scouts the other day. But innate modesty renders them extremely quiet on the subject of their labors. They are glad to have the

### Christmas And The Radio

As December 25 rolls around, no longer must we rely solely upon sporadic messages from the frozen reaches of the Far North to inform us of Santa Claus' progress. No longer must we wait until a few days before Christmas to hear his friendly, booming voice ring out with Yuletide greetings.

For today, a new factor has been introduced into the celebration of this festive season. The radio!

Science has now made it possible for us to tune in on our radio at home and hear Santa speak to the thousands of children that await him. We hear the jingle of his sleigh bells and the fleet gallop of his reindeer as they speed the sled, laden with gifts for everyone ever nearer the city.

As we hear his voice boom out, we can almost see his bright, rosy cheeks, his long white beard and the twinkle in his eyes as he laughs heartily in face of the cold and snow of the Northlands.

Imagine what a boon this invention is to the shut-in; to those who, for one reason or another—age, illness or infirmity—are confined to home, hospital or other institution.

Imagine their delight at hearing—many perhaps for the first time—Santa's cheering chuckle and his words of hope and solace.

Imagine the joy that is brought to such individuals by hearing on Christmas morning the joyous peep of church bells, the swell of the mighty organ, the chant of the choir and the sonorous voice of minister or priest as they celebrate with their flocks the birth of Christ.

Truly, Christmas and the radio have become inseparably linked and, until the birth of another and even more useful invention, will continue to bring closer and make more dear to thousands the ideals Christ brings to us.

### IN MERRIE ENGLAND

The English Christmas is not unlike ours, save that we do not have their pretty custom of "bringing the yule." In almost every family in England the boys and girls gather about the burning log on Christmas eve to sing carols and tell Christmas legends. Often the children who live in the country assist at the dragging in of the huge log. An English child would not feel that it was Christmas if there were not a bit of mistletoe hanging in the hall, under which the unwary are kissed soundly. Little and big eat the rich and biasing plum pudding, and all join in the singing of Christmas carols and churchgoing.

### UNDER THE MISTLETOE

"Oh, professor, see the big bunch of mistletoe I have hung on the chandelier," exclaimed the young lady, standing under it and smiling roguishly.

Young and Learned Professor (looking near-sightedly through his glasses)—Ah, yes, it is an excellent specimen of the *Viscum Album*, of the order *Loranthaceae*. It is a jointed dichotomous shrub. And that was all.

### CHRISTMAS IN DIXIE

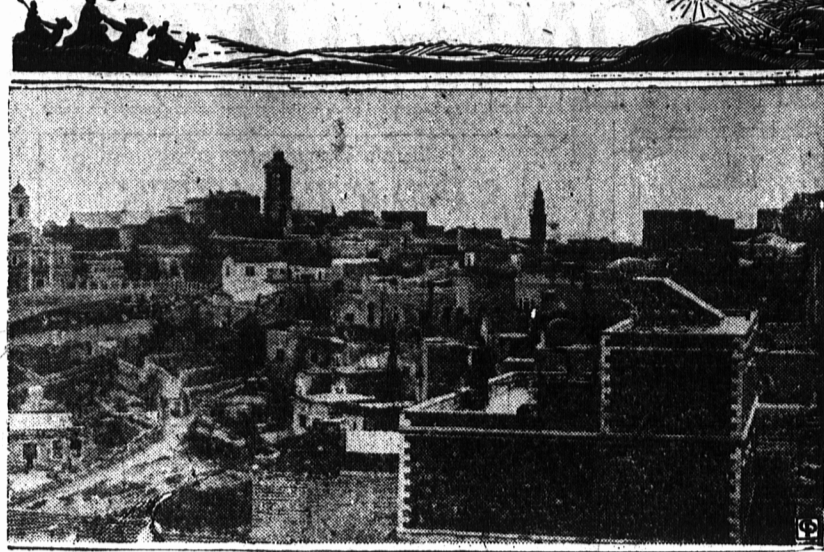
Way down South in de land ob cotton,  
An' down in de pine-tree groun',  
De possum paws an' not fogotting  
When de Christmas time comes round!

Hooraay fo' de chickens an' de hoo-ohh pone!  
Hooraay, hooraay, fo' de sweet ham bone!

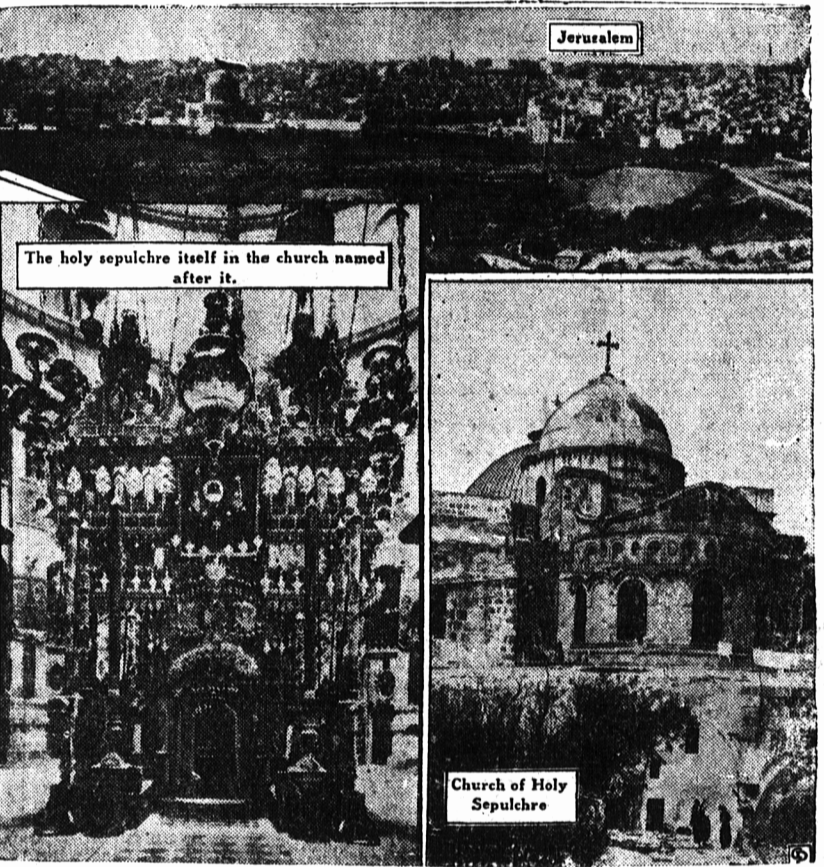
—Ladle's Weekly.

organization and facilities at their disposal for such fruitful work. It's just another good deed to them!

## Christmas in the Holy Land



The Town of Bethlehem



Church of Holy Sepulchre

Bethlehem, Jerusalem, the Holy Land—these places hold a special significance to Christian peoples the world over. It was here that Jesus of Nazareth, Christ, the Founder of Christianity, was born, lived, and preached. To these lands and these places the world turns thought on Christmas Day, birthday of Jesus.

### The Home-Made Gift

Christmas time is gift time. And during the next few days—most of us will be offering the conventional greetings to be accompanied in many instances by some more tangible expression of our friendship.

Some gifts will be home-made either from sentiment or other reasons, and there is no doubt that the home-made gift, woven with love, carries with it a far sweeter sentiment than the purchased present.

The suggestions that follow are meant only to provide ideas which, once the mind starts working, will lead the way to innumerable other thoughts along the same lines.

To commence, we might mention a new treatment for a dress hanger. This is padded and covered with rose-colored satin, over which is stretched an eleven-inch square of lace, with inserts of embroidery and an opening in the centre for the handle. The sides are caught together, also the front and back corners, and a ribbon rose is added in front. Perfume the padding of the hanger, and the little gift will be the daintiest thing imaginable.

A tiny sachet for the powder-puff, to be carried in the pocket or vanity-bag, is made as a simple, round envelope of buckram, "sealed" with a silk rose and lined with quilted perked silk.

A fancy hat-box is another attractive Christmas gift. The idea is an ordinary round hat-box covered with fancy chintz or wallpaper, and tied with handsome ribbon, arranged in a monster bow on the lid. Covering the box requires more care than skill. A striped pattern is one of the easiest to deal with as it is easy to hide joints under stripes. Cover the outside of the box first, using smooth paste or other good adhesive for the purpose, and pay particular attention to turning over the edges of chintz or paper neatly at the top and bottom of the box and the "drop" of the lid. The inside of the box can be lined with plain parchment paper.

A "cracker" pincushion with a celluloid doll on top is always acceptable. Fancy silk over a stuffing made in the ordinary way (or ribbon may be used instead of piece-silk) produces an interesting creation. Finish the ends with self-

### Why Not Always

It is not by the process of statutory enactment that the world's strife ultimately will be allayed but by a continuance, a perseverance of the message of peace that is associated with the Christmas season throughout the other three hundred and sixty-four days of each year.

It is only by constant expression of those qualities—charity, tolerance, gentleness, brotherhood and kindness—which take possession of the human heart at Christmastide, that we may learn to live by the same standards which were set for us by the Master.

Humanity is struggling for a goal unknown. During the past few years that struggle, that fight for very existence, has become intensified by the toll of economic and industrial depression. At times we wonder if that goal is not the happy time when the spirit of Christmas will, instead of being confined to a day or a season, spread out to include all days of the year.

The reason that the qualities of human kindness are so in evidence at Christmas that they seem to be in the very air we breathe, is that all these are Yuletide qualities, and that Christmas is the only day when they are so generally present that they are a natural part of daily life.

Just so long as that spirit continues dominant in the hearts of men throughout the year will the Christmas season be prolonged and continue to give its blessings to mankind.

For Christmas and happiness are synonymous.

And the true definition of happiness is doing something for others. Why not make it always?

frills or lace ones, tying them with gold braid, cut long enough to form a hanging loop. A novel idea is to make the cushion of cracker-red silk and strip it across, trellis-fashion with gold-colored bobo ribbon. The little doll must be firmly sewn, through its skirt, to the top of the pincushion.

### Question of Flowers

By FLORISE

The year is almost over and here we are again on the threshold of the greatest birthday of the year—Christmas—the birthday of One who loved us so much, who gave us Christmas the merry season it is.

So each year, according to tradition, we feel that to make the Yuletide season really merry, we must surround ourselves with its age old customs, such as decorating our homes and churches and our friends' homes with the lovely natural greens and blossoms that are with us for this season; when Merry Christmas means sending a dear old lady an old-fashioned cherry plant with its gay red berries on its bright green branches, or remembering some shut-in by sending a bright velvety poinsettia to tell them it is Christmas; feeling like children again as we hang up the shiny green holly and silver mistletoe and learning to laugh a little more at our own troubles and a little less at those of our neighbors.

Try to make this Christmas a truly flower-conscious one. Let us stop to consider that man is the only animal to whom God has given the sense of smell and let us smile and rise out of the tomb of past regrets, coming forth into the sunshine of a new faith in ourselves.

### Autobiography Of A Turkey

(Editor's Note.—With the approach of the festive Christmas season, our minds turn naturally to the more succulent features of the turkey. As far as we are able to discover, however, very little has been heard concerning the thoughts of the bird on the subject. So in order to obtain some ideas in this regard, we despatched one of our alert news-hawks to the turkey's trysting place. The following interview, which we reproduce without further comment, is the result.)

Far be it from me to wax pessimistic (Mr. Turk said when approached by our reporter) but it seems to me that these few words that I give you now will likely provide a very fitting requiem to my

### Christmas In Other Lands

**IN FREE STATE**

There are two kinds of Christmas in Ireland. In the dozen or so cities and large towns, Christmas is lively and modern as elsewhere. In the real Ireland, however, which is the wide, lovely and often lonely countryside, many of the picturesque manners and customs of the season are the same as they were centuries ago.

The big Christmas candle dressed in holly will shine out of the window of every house; cups will be left on the table overnight for the dead who may return to visit; their old homes. At Christmas, above all, the door is left open only against the wind. Everyone is welcome who chooses to call. The great church services will be crowded and the early morning scenes after Mass at Christmas will be as vivid as in Brittany or the Tyrol.

**Ireland of the Welcome**

In Ireland Christmas weather is milder than in most European countries. Hunting, horse-racing and all the field-games are a feature of the season. In Dublin and the cities there is plenty of entertainment in hotels and theatres. In the outlying places, even as far away as Achill Island in the far west, Christmas, above all, a hotel guest in little places as quiet and lovely as any in the world.

At Bundoran, Dun Laoghaire (Kingscourt), Dalkey, Graystones, Rosslare Harbour, Tramore, and many other coastal places, there will be happy company at the hotels. Killarney will, as usual, welcome the Christmas visitor.

### CHRISTMAS IN WALES

Wales has magic to offer the visitor at Christmastide.

Although modern transport has brought even the most remote outland village or town in the hill country within easy reach of England, Wales remains a "foreign" corner in the sense that it still retains its own language, ancient customs, and distinctive character.

Of course, English is spoken everywhere. But once you cross the border whether it is at Chester in the north, Hereford in the east, or Newport (Mon) in the south, you cannot fail to get that sense of adventure, even romance, which accompanies travel in an "unknown" country.

This lure is accentuated at this season of the year. Welsh folk celebrate Christmas in special ways. They hold on to many customs that are centuries old and reveal in modern characteristics at the same time.

**Cock's Crow's Service**

Music, drama, family and public festivities, and quaint celebrations of different kinds make Christmas colorful and cheerful.

The Welsh are a religious people and Christmas services at churches and chapels have a special appeal. In places, particularly in country villages, all sects join in a dawn or cock's crow service at the local church. In some cases the service starts as early as 6 a.m. and goes on till the first shafts of day come through the stained glass windows.

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The Welsh are a religious people and Christmas services at churches and chapels have a special appeal. In places, particularly in country villages, all sects join in a dawn or cock's crow service at the local church. In some cases the service starts as early as 6 a.m. and goes on till the first shafts of day come through the stained glass windows.

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