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MARINE

Gifts for Xmas

All Xmas Gifts must be purchased within the next day or two—Can we assist you in your selection? Our large stock of Fine China, Glass-ware and Crockery is here for your inspection.

Nippon Handpainted China is one of our special features. Here are Bon Buns, Whipped Cream Sets, Sugars and Creams, Butter Tubes, Cheese Dishes, Comports, Syrup Jars, Rose Jars, Salts and Peppers.

Royal Crown Derby, English and French China are here in different patterns.

Lamps of all kinds, Parlor, Hall, Hanging and Stand Lamps in Brass, Nickel and Glass—all prices.

Brass Goods including Jardinieres, Fern Dishes, Water Kettles, Candle Sticks, etc.

Dinner Sets 97 pieces from \$6.50 to \$50.00

Tea Sets, 42 pieces from \$3.00 to \$50.00

Toilet sets from \$1.75 to \$6.50 \$16.00.

Our 5c., 10c. and 15c. Counters offer splendid values.

Dolls at 33 1-3 off—Our immense stock of Dolls at 33 1-3 off regular prices.

Can we serve you?

Black & Co.

City Crockery—Sunnside.

STEWARTS'

Home-Made Cream Bread

has a "different" taste from ordinary bread. STEWARTS' BREAD is a

Wholesome Food

for every member of the family. It has won it's favor by it's flavor

BECAUSE

we keep the quality up.

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THE HUMOUR OF CHRISTMAS

It was a leisurely local train, that stopped everywhere and stopped long enough. At Little Dexter in the opinion of several passengers, including myself, it had stopped far too long. The stationmaster was affable and willing to explain. A friend of his was just coming down the road, and if he missed the train he would have a four-mile walk home; it would not be more than a matter of half a minute; it was the season of good-will we never knew when we might not want a helping hand ourselves; and anyhow the old train was running nearer schedule time than it had done any time for the last six weeks.

An agitated bundle of evergreen appeared on the platform. It surmounted the stationmaster's friend. Some-one leaning out of a window sarcastically exhorted him to hurry himself. He had just had time for a profane but effective reply. And then the door of my carriage was opened, and the friend was stuffed in, evergreen first, assisted from behind by a porter. The engine coughed twice and grunted on its way.

Disentangled from his evergreens, the stationmaster's friend appeared as an elderly man, small of stature, with a countenance that was at once grim and shrewd. He arranged fir, holly, and mistletoe on the seat beside him, and as he felt for his pipe addressed me:

"That lot look to you worth sixpence, mister? I'm not trying to sell."

Earlier in the day I had paid a shilling for about half the amount not so well berried. So that lot did look to me worth sixpence. The old man sucked at a decrepit briar, with the bowl broken on one side and the stem-banded with string. "That's all right then," he said. "When I comes to go into the money with my old missus, I says 'Christmas decorations, sixpence,' and she'll be satisfied. Not as I ever spent any crimsen sixpence on that lot. A man that wants stuff of that kind, and don't know how to get it for nothing, especially with the days getting dark, so early—why, I don't call him a man at all."

The disreputable old man chuckled. "The missus will have a bit of mistletoe in the house every Christmas. But I've never been allowed to take no advantage of it—not that she knew of. You're not a married man? Thought not. Too careless-looking. Ah, well, Christmas is full of fun, ain't it?"

I admitted that the season was supposed to be cheerful.

"Full of fun was what I said. We've picked out a time of year for giving presents, and what sort of time is it? Chap's got income tax, quarter's rent, pile of bills and more coming. He don't know which way to look for money. And that's when he's got to be generous. Don't affect me of course. I've got no income, not as I should care to trouble the Chancellor of the Exchequer with. I'm a weekly tenant and I pay as I go, because I've no chow. The only Christmas present I give is a bottle of port wine to the missus—one glass is her limit and it ain't mine. I'm all right. But when I see them poor crimsen classes struggling with their Christmas, it makes me laugh. Why, you couldn't pick a worse time of the year for Christmas presents than what Christmas is, not if you tried."

I ventured to suggest that his alleged upper classes enjoyed themselves in spite of that. "And why?" asked the stationmaster's friend. "Because they enjoy anything that's usual at Christmas. It's part of the joke. Why, they enjoy turkey and plum-pudding. Do you know that if turkey were tupence a pound they'd turn up their noses at it in a Salvation Army shelter; and if you tried to make your servants eat it they'd leave you? It tastes a sight too strong of nothing; it's got about as much juice in it as that hatrack; and its just about as digestible."

"And what's the matter with the pudding?"

"There's two sorts. There's the kind you can't eat, but might digest, as they give to children too young to defend themselves. There's the other kind as you can eat, and live to wish you hadn't. And those are the things as we've picked out as a special treat for Christmas. Why, it's enough to make a cat laugh. Still, one way, they carry the joke a bit too far."

"How's that?" "Harming brandy. Funny enough in its way. They sticks sprigs of holly in that pudding, and has burning brandy poured over it. The holly catches fire, tumbles over and gets mixed up with the pudding. You gets choked with charred holly prickles, and breaks your tooth on the little china baby that somebody has put in for a lark. Humorous, I dare say, but I can't help looking at the waste of it. You don't get much brandy for sixpence, and at Christmas there are gallons of it burned and wasted in this Christian country. Methylated spirit's cheap enough, ain't it?"

"Do you think it would improve the pudding?"

"Stop people from eating too much of it. Did you ever get any of those things they put in Christmas puddings? My cousin's little girl got the threepenny-piece one year. Didn't see it, and swallowed it. Had to be operated too, though that were not what she really died of. However that's by the way. What amuses me is to see people thinking they're enjoying themselves when they ain't, just because it is Christmas."

Here he was reproved for cynicism and bitterness of spirit, and told

that the children at any rate enjoyed the festive season.

"Very likely. I hope they does. Only the very young gets scared by them crackers, and they generally recover. Of course, when their papa dresses himself up as Santa Claus, and looks like nothing on the end of a stick, that's different; still there's generally somebody who knows what to do when a child's struck down in a fit through terror. And they has their Christmas-trees too, with presents hung on them, and every child gets what it don't want, and says thank you politely. I daresay some of them manages all right—them as are old enough to think they are enjoying themselves when they ain't. I'm sure they has my good wishes. This is the season of peace and good-will, this is. But it's funny how we set about getting them."

"How do you mean?"

"Well, it's what I should call short-sighted. We feeds extra and we drinks extra, and that promotes the feeling of good-will. There ain't a doubt about it. If a beggar were to come to me for a penny when I'd just finished that bottle of port wine what I gives to the missus, I should think twice before I refused him. That's not exaggeration. We're all soft-hearted at such times. When the goat out of whose garden I got this six-penny worth of green stuff sees where it's been cut, he'll be likely to lose his temper just at first; but by the time he's Christmas dinnered himself he'll feel ready to send me an invite to come back and take some more. But, as I said, it's short-sighted because it don't make allowance for next morning. You know what next morning is—when you don't want to talk to nobody except the chemist and are ready to snap at your own mother. And there's another amusing error I see a bit of at this time of the year."

"What's that?" "This here gathering of all the members of the family round the festive board, as it says in the fairy-tales. I've studied families. Where there's a family of two, one of them don't get on with the rest. When there's a family of three, two of them don't agree together, and they both go for the third for trying to reconcile them. And so on. Gather a lot of strangers round the festive board, an you might have a chance, for they don't know one another well enough to say what they really think, but with the family it's different—it's like dropping the match into the gunpowder. Still it all adds to the humour of Christmas. All the more fun for them that sits and looks on, same as you and me, mister."

The train was slowing down, and he began to gather together his stolen property preparatory to his exit at the station of the town which had the misfortune to include him among its inhabitants. Regarded as a curiosity, he had rather amused me, and in any case there was not time to say much. So I contented myself with saying he ought to be ashamed of himself. I also observed accurately,

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The foxes for this Company were selected from litters of 4, 5, and 6 so that the prospects for good prospects are bright. The stock are from strains of Frank Tuplin, Dalton, Oulton, Rayner and Tuplin-Gordon.

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