

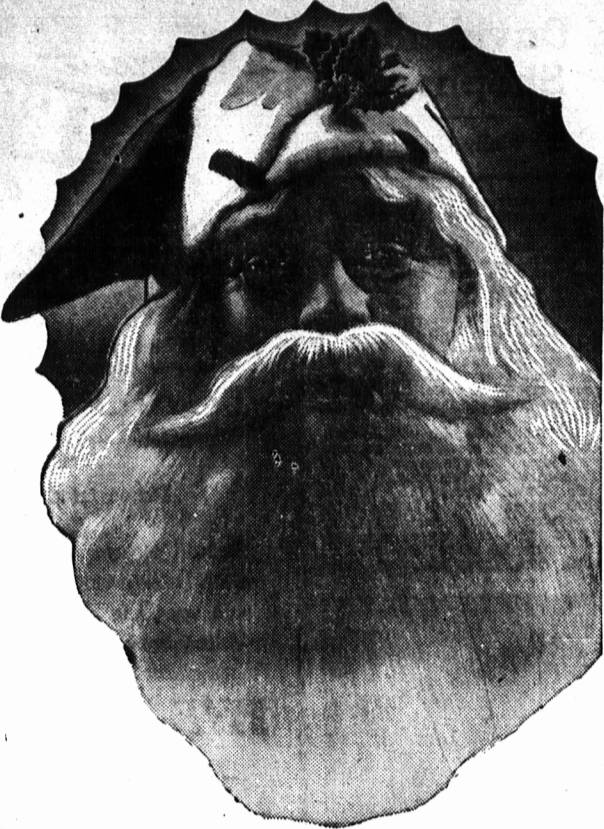


Betty Price dabbed a spot of rouge on each cheek, touched the places lightly for a natural effect, then dipped in the perfume bottle and rubbed the back of her small ears.

Tilting back the blurred mirror, she surveyed herself critically. The effect seemed entirely satisfactory. Betty sighed ecstatically. "I look like a million dollars," she breathed. "I—I can almost convince myself that I am a great lady to-night."

Carefully her silver-slipped feet descended the narrow stairs. She must get away as quickly as possible. What would the unromantic Mr. and Mrs. James Barstow say if they saw the Cinderella of their kitchen arrayed in garments like these? Betty chuckled at the thought. They would think she had gone crazy if they found out that she had spent a whole month's salary to rent the things she was wearing, and to buy a ticket for the opera. "But they never will find out," she told herself, as she carefully closed the back door behind her.

At the corner, she waited for a cab. On the way down, she heard the voice of Christmas everywhere. She saw its symbols in shop windows; in arches of green



First Christmas Carol

Christmas is the time when men are drawn together in a great unity. Much of this may be attributed to our response to familiar songs, sung year after year to commemorate the advent of a little Child on earth. The first Christmas carol ever heard, we like to believe, came over the fields of Bethlehem, when Christ was born—glory to God on high, and on earth, peace, good will toward men."

But it was 1,200 years later that St. Francis of Assisi and his brothers took up the singing in public of carols at Christmas to combat the unbelief of their time. With lighted tapers they went about the streets of the small Italian village pouring out their hearts in songs of praise. In the 800 years since then the singing of Christmas carols has gone around the world. Wherever Christianity is known, carol singing follows.

The simple vision of a mother lulling her babe to sleep gives Christmas music its strength. Some sing as a tribute to their religious faith, others as a custom they enjoy. But whatever the reason, the important thing is that more and more people do it. From such widely different sources as churches, theatres, schools, clubs, radio stations come the words of Away in a Manger Silent Night, Joy to the World, Little Town of Bethlehem, Hark the Herald Angels Sing, and Come All Ye Faithful, sung by soloists, choirs, choruses or the voices of school children. So each year new joy is expressed through old channels—Frances Grinstead.

SANTA IS UP-TO-DATE.

Some Day Might Use Radio Energy to Distribute His Gifts.

Santa Claus is a decidedly progressive old chap. He keeps abreast of the times, and in his work employs only modern-day methods. Once he went plodding over the fields in a sleigh no faster or than reindeers could gallop. It took him a long time but he managed to make the rounds.

Then came the automobile. Santa got a big red one and hitched trailers on behind. He could get around faster. He carried bigger loads, got to more homes and made more children happy. When airplanes flew over the North Pole Santa got another idea. He believed that planes would be better for his long trips and for skipping from housetop to housetop. He is hardly built for an air pilot, but nobody flies faster nor farther than plump, old Santa.

He does not fancy zeppelins, but he is sure that in another year or two he may be able to broadcast Christmas to the children by radio. As soon as carriers are invented to fly through the air directed and landed by radio energy, old Santa will sit on his mountain of northern ice and broadcast an up-to-date Christmas to all the world.

Something About Carols.

In 1521 Wynken de Worde printed the first known set of the Christmas carols. The carol was originally a joyous dance, a sign of liberation from the religious austerity of the Puritan era. Percy Dearmer, writing in "The Oxford Book of Carols," says "The carol, by forsaking the timeless contemplative melodies of the church, began the era of modern music, which throughout has been based on the dance." The word "carol" is from "cantare," to sing and "rola" a joyful interjection.

ETERNAL FOE OF CRUELTY

Much as Christmas has meant to humanity, it has meant no less to those lovelier fellow creatures who share with men life's joys and sorrows. Whatever the burden of suffering that rests upon the animal world to-day, it is less by many fold than it was before that night when a little child was born in the stable of a Bethlehem inn. The spirit of Christmas is the eternal foe of cruelty. No man who yields to his kindly eyes upon the least of those living things that have capacity for pain.

er. They seemed to have so much in common. He had read widely—the type of books she liked; he took an interest in so many things she liked; seemed to be as romantic and visionary as herself. But he spoke no word to indicate that he wanted to see her again. She had been foolish to expect it. Gloom enveloped the world for Betty next morning. As if to add to her humiliation and misery, a clogged-up drain was sending oozy brown water back into the sink. Her feet dragged across the floor as she answered the plumber's knock.

Then the world spun dizzily around her for a moment. A rush of joy of wonder, lifted her heart. Her Prince was standing in the doorway, his evening clothes replaced by clean blue overalls, his good-looking face wrinkled in bewilderment. "I—I thought you were—" he stammered.

Santa Claus Who Lived

There are many legends, but few facts now in existence concerning the life of St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, whose corrupted name, Santa Claus, is especially dear to children.

He was born in the city of Parara in Lycia towards the end of the third century. He died on December 6th, 352 at Myra. In the course of his 60 or 70 years of life he earned an international reputation as the most remarkable man of his time.

He was received into the Church at a very early age and while still a young priest he started his limited work by restoring a dead sailor to life. About this time, too, he became famous for his generosity, the outstanding example being the case of the poor nobleman of Parara, who was so penniless and proud that his three beautiful daughters were starving. The problem was to give assistance without giving offence. The young Nicholas, who was rich, took a purse of gold on three successive nights and dropped each one through a grating into the nobleman's house. From this kindly act is derived the custom giving presents at Christmas and the idea of the arrival of Santa Claus at dead of night with gifts. The original grating has now become the chimney. Gifts were always associated with the name of St. Nicholas because of his many charities.

St. Nicholas is the patron saint of all children, scholars, parish clerks, travellers, thieves merchants sailors and pawnbrokers, having rendered some special service to each class. It has been suggested that the curious trade sign of the pawnbroker is symbolic of the three purses St. Nicholas gave to the nobleman of Parara, but it is now fairly well established that the three golden balls are relics of the days when Lombard's monopolised the money-lending profession.



Her prince was standing in the doorway, his evening clothes replaced by clean blue overalls, and red strings across the streets. She told herself it must be the Christmas feeling in the air that made her do this daring thing. It was utterly ridiculous to dress up like a great lady, but one had to be different at Christmas. And it had been pretty dull for Betty since she had to accept the work she was doing. It offered very little inspiration.

The story of the opera took her back to a medieval world. In a few moments she was completely lost in its atmosphere, so much so that she failed to notice that the man seated at her right was sending admiring glances in her direction. When the curtain went up, he learned over and spoke.

"I love this," he said simply. "I do, too," Betty answered, with a little catch in her voice. It seemed incredible that he was speaking to her. He was really acting as if she belonged. By the time the curtain went up again they were calling each other Prince and Princess; taking the names of the two leading characters on the stage.

As the great drama moved to its close Betty tried to hurry away. She didn't want her Prince to find out what an impostor she was. But he had taken hold of her arm. "Couldn't we go and have some coffee?" he suggested. "I know I'm a stranger to you, but—but it's Christmas—and—" "I should say 'no,'" Betty told herself. "I should even tell him the truth about myself." Instead, she accompanied him to the coffee shop across the street. She couldn't deny herself this one hour of happiness. After it was over, well—Betty would not let her thoughts go further. She almost forgot that she was playing a part as they sat together.



Christmas Eve

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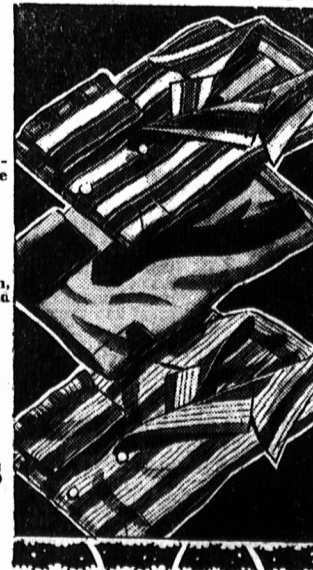
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