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Scott on Christmas

There is no better or more graphic description of the festivities of Christmas Eve than that by Sir Walter Scott.

"O, Christmas Eve the bells were rung:
On Christmas Eve the Mass was sung;
That only night, in all the year,
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.
The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;
The hall was dressed with holly green.
Worth to the wood did merry men go
To gather in the mistletoe.
Then opened wide the baron's hall
To vassal, tenant, self and all.
Power laid his rod of rule aside
And ceremony defied his pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner choose.
All hailed with uncontrolled delight,
And general voice the happy night
That to the cottage as the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down!
The fire, with well dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide;
The huge hall-table's oaken face
Scrubbed till it shone, the day to grace.
Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and Lord.
Then was brought in the lusty brawn!
By old blue-coated servant man;
Then the grim boar's head frowned on
high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.
Well can the green garbed ranger tell;
What dogs before his death he tore,
And all the baiting of the boar.
There the huge sirloin reeked hard by



No matter how busy Santa is he finds it pays to read The Guardian.



"Home With the Children"—The Poirier Family.

Plum porridge stood, and Christmas pye;
Nor failed Old Scotland to produce,
At such high tide her savoury geese.
Then came the merry maskers in
And carols roared with blithesome din;
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note and strong,
Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery.
White shirts supplied the masquerade
And snuffed cheeks the visors made.
But, oh! what maskers, richly dight,
Can boast of bosoms half so light.
England was Merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
"Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale,
"Twas Christmas told the merriest tale:
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year."



Puritan Christmas

During the Commonwealth, when puritanical feelings held iron sway over the rulers of the land, and rife rampant in high places, many strong attempts were made to put down what they were pleased to term superstitious festivals, and amongst these was that of Christmas Day. So determined was the Puritan party to sweep away all vestiges of evil creeds and evil deeds, that they were resolved to make one grand attempt upon the time-honoured season of Christmas. The Holly and the Mistletoe-bough were to be cut up root and branch, as plants of the Evil One. Cakes and ale were held to be impious libations to superstition; and the Roundheads would have none of it. Accordingly, we learn that, in the year 1647, the Cromwell party ordered throughout the principal towns and cities of the country, by the mouth of the common crier, that Christmas Day should no longer be observed—it being a superstitious and hurtful custom; and that in place thereof, and the more effectually to work a change, markets should be held on the 25th day of December.

This was attacking the people, especially the country folks, in their most sensitive part. It was hardly to be expected that they would quietly submit to such a bereavement; nor did they, as the still-existing "News-letters" of those days amply testify:



Even Santa Claus must have a Guardian.

REFLECTIONS

Beware of the meek man, for meekness is the mark of might.—The Bohemian.

A good way to make money is not to lose it.—New York Press.

The man who doesn't want what he hasn't got, has all he wants and is happy.—Chicago News.

The golden calf will always be worshipped, tho it wear a tail like a monkey or the ears of an ass.—American Magazine.

A broken heart is not what it is cracked up to be.—The Bohemian.

Most people would far rather listen to undeserved praise than to merited criticism.—Chicago News.

PETER PUTOFF--HE ALWAYS FORGETS

