

CHRISTMAS and NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS FROM KING'S COUNTY

Among Those Present Was Santa Claus

(Continued from page 6)

past—which applied to one. Only to one.

His robe stifled him. His beard bricked. He would have given worlds for a glass of water but there was all there was to be had, it seemed. But Burnicle had carefully disposed of all his presents and now lurked in the shadows watching the preparations for the play in the great dining-room.

The old Duchess of Malmminster—a spy and foxy-faced old thing—sat with a dog collar of diamonds and a mutation mink cape. "Less to keep her warm," Burnicle nudged, "than to make the others envious." The rector wore his purple vest. Sir Gregory Fletcher, financier, affected a magnificent diamond ring and occasionally professed a platinum cigarette case. "Nice haul, if it were real," thought Burnicle. "But, to my mind, that emerald's got 'em all beaten."

The emerald lay, green and deep with beauty, on the breast of Agatha, the elder sister of Lord Betwode. Her ageing skin made a perfect foil for it, a single platinum chain held it, and its historic value, since once it belonged to Queen Elizabeth the First—dazzled the mind as much as its green brilliance dazzled eyes.

A hand touched Burnicle's shoulder. Mrs. Tateleigh was there. "Your trunk call is through," she whispered. Burnicle went out, silently. He took the call and returned to his place.

When the burglar came, even Burnicle went cold. The others gasped. The Duchess grabbed her collar.

Into the half light had stepped a tall man, in shabby clothes, masked and carrying a cask.

"Nah then," he growled, "don't take any liberties. Me pal's out-

side an' I've gotta gun." Burnicle sank back. Of course—of course this was only a play. But... but, damned realistic; terrifying, somehow. "Cough up the rooks," he pointed to the august lady of Malmminster. "Kimon, missus, let's be havin' yer necklet."

Amid a babble of voices, the guests began to divest themselves of their jewellery. All except the bright-eyed Agatha. She sat serenely, eating chocolates and smiling.

The burglar had a pocket full of jewels, when he approached the indifferent lady, his cask raised.

"Nah then! Give's that acid drop, or I'll—"

"Ted Fortescue, you're an ass!" Agatha's voice came clearly. "I—er—believe the first forfeit is not too bad... You'll not comb your hair or shave for a week." The burglar groaned and pulled off his mask. "I caught you out, simply. Why didn't you think about taking off your ring, Teddy?"

Howls of merriment arose. Poor Fortescue unloaded his loot and the various owners selected their properties. The Duchess gazed as she affixed her diamonds. "Missus," she muttered, while Teddy blushed, "missus, indeed!"

"I—I'm sorry, your Grace, but—"

"Shut up, Teddy," the Duchess suddenly roared with laughter. "I thoroughly enjoyed it."

Burnicle relaxed. He found he was sweating. He wished to goodness they would stop their tomfoolery. It—it was too realistic for his liking. Far too realistic.

"Have a drink, Teddy," Lord Betwode was jubilant. Since he had arrayed himself for the occasion with a tiny cigarette case and a cheap wrist-watch, he could exult with malicious fervour. "Good show! Pity it came unstuck, but—"

"This won't," said a voice, and the lights snapped out. "This is the real MacKye." Into the firelit hearthside stepped a second "burglar." Like Fortescue, he had sidled by way of two screens from a conveniently open door. "Shall I show you?" An automatic winked in his fist. "Anyone dare me to shoot at the logs there?"

"Sammy, you ass—that's over the odds," Fortescue sounded nettled. Evidently, he felt the newcomer was not playing the game and identified him as Samuel Benet, the estate steward. "Put that gun away."

But the burglar just said, "Wrong, old boy. You've wasted your one challenge, I'm not Sam. Tip up, ladies and gentlemen—"

By the rules of the game, no one—even though they recognised the roughly clad and masked figure in the semi-darkness—could challenge him again. One by one, and with a curious quietude, as though in creeping fear, they gave the intruder their belongings.

This was too real... it—it was the genuine thing! Burnicle trembled where he sat. He heard a soft breathing near him; an agitated breathing. Mrs. Tateleigh had crept in to watch the play, and she was scared.

Burnicle chanced to touch her hand. It closed, strongly, on his own.

Backing away, the pistol still levelled, the burglar got to the door. Stupefied and serious tension held the people around the fire. Sir Gregory licked his thick lips and caressed the finger from which his noble diamond had gone. Lord Betwode—despite having been deprived of property worth only two pounds—looked oddly drawn and grey. The Duchess glared ferociously. Only Agatha was calm. Her square emerald was also gone—but she went on, eating chocolates.

Burnicle was getting to his feet. He knew what he had heard on the wire to Scotland Yard; what his trunk call to London had set in motion. He felt, dimly, this was no "play"... as the intruder had mumbled, it was the "real MacKye."

Then, all tension snapped. Suddenly, out of the doorway, the burglar returned. He emptied all his loot onto a table. He pocketed his pistol and laughed.

"There you are," he exulted, "hat round, please? My car license for one year." He pulled away his mask and revealed himself as Geoffrey Clavering, Lord

Betwode's nephew. "What an act—or—"

Amid excited babble, the house party regained, each, his or her own property. Agatha calmly reached out for another chocolate. Clavering had a drink.

Without a sound, two officers of the local police appeared. Lord Betwode shot up in astonishment. "Metcalfe! And you, Superintendent Cullins! What is all this?"

"Acting on orders received," the Superintendent saluted. He motioned to Sergeant Metcalfe who moved, quietly, to the suddenly trembling Clavering's side. "A call from Scotland Yard, m'lord."

Ex-inspector Burnicle stepped out into the light.

"Lord Betwode," he said—and he looked odd in his robes and whiskers—"I think this ends your trouble. 'Fraud the water-colour can be counted as lost. Mr. Clavering will no doubt restore the miniatures et cetera. And—"

"Burnicle! Wh-what is this? How dare you?"

"Have a look at that emerald, m'lord. The chain is the same, I'll bet. But the emerald is gone—which should sully since Miss Agatha still wore it. 'Please take it off and—'"

"I—I'll go quietly. Here, Aunt Agatha"—and Clavering passed over a great glowing emerald—"this is real; the one you are wearing is paste."

"Been in trouble more'n once," said Burnicle. "Never convicted—but known to us as a master at his hinking. Far too realistic. Bet he's copied your other stuff, to sell the real items and, eventually, restore the counterfeits... He met me in the drive. He didn't recognise me. I recognized him. And, while I sat there as Santa Claus, watching all, he didn't even trouble to my being something more than a bit of furniture, or a hired appearance—"

There was no prosecution. Clavering promised to see what Kenya had to offer. And when the police had enjoyed themselves, as police officers at Christmas sometimes do, ex-inspector John Burnicle sedately kissed Sarah Tateleigh under some mistletoe.

"A Cotswold man," she murmured. "A lonely man... and a gay clever one, too!" Her eyes twinkled in that bright Scottish way. "You wouldn't find it hard to live hereabouts again, would you...?"

"No Sarah. In fact, I'm thinking about it, seriously. He eyed the mistletoe. "Very," he said.

The characters in this story are entirely imaginary. No reference is intended to any living persons or to any public or private company. (Copyright: N. F. L.)



HOPE THAT SUSTAINS THE WORLD... If there is anything more touching and inspiring than the sight of a little boy or girl waiting patiently for the arrival of his beloved Santa Claus, the world has yet to produce it. With boundless hope, after hanging up his stockings, he finally goes to bed, knowing as surely as he knows his own mother and father, that the Giftbringer will have been there when he awakens.

Junior Magicians' Club Offers Entertainment

Conducted by the Famous and Popular Stage and T.V. King of Magic, BENSON DULAY

Anyone who can perform conjuring tricks will always be the life and soul of the party. So here are a few items of magic that should puzzle and mystify your guests this Christmas. They are all quite simple, needing very little apparatus, but let me stress the necessity of plenty of practise before you try them out "in public." Nothing is worse than a trick that doesn't work!

In this first trick, you show how a piece of string can be cut in half—and yet remain intact!

Cut and Uncut—Produce a length of string and get one of the other guests to measure it. Four feet? Good. Now then, fold the string exactly in half and take the looped end in your left hand (as in the first diagram). With the right hand, ease the looped end of the string up through the first and second fingers of the left hand and then cut it. With a dramatic flourish, place your right hand over your bunched left fist, and ask two of your guests to take

hold of the dancing ends of the string and pull. What a surprise when it comes out completely intact—and the same length as before. Four feet...!

Of course, there is a trick to it. Before you perform this illusion, conceal a small piece of the same



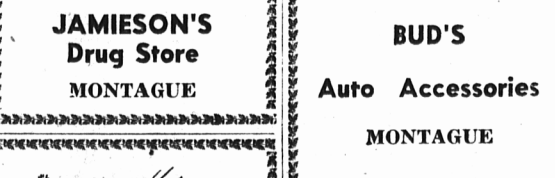
True Christmas joy comes from within the heart—may yours be light and filled with happiness this Christmas—may the New Year be bright and full of accomplishment.

CHRIS & BELLE
Dress Shoppe
MONTAGUE



TO ALL OUR FRIENDS

BUD'S
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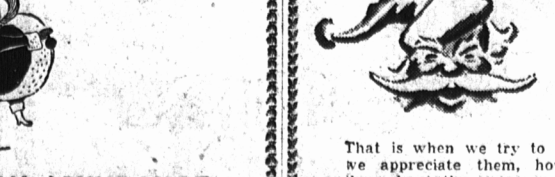
TO ALL OUR FRIENDS

JAMIESON'S
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TO ALL OUR FRIENDS

EASTERN COLD STORAGE
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type of string between the first and second fingers of your left hand. This will be kept entirely concealed when you are preparing for the trick and when you take the folded length of string into your left hand. Your hand will be kept bunched so that the onlookers will not see that it is the tiny, concealed piece of string that is eased up through the fingers, and not the real length. It is that small loop that is cut through.

The cut having been made, it is a simple matter to pass your right hand over the left, so that the two tiny pieces can be palmed and safely tucked away somewhere while your audience sit back with amazement at your apparent skill.

Plus A Pin

A pin is a valuable ally to some really mystifying magic. For instance, borrow a cigar (or a cigarette) from one of your guests and place it across the fingers of one hand, palm facing upwards. Now you tell your onlookers that you will cast a spell over the cigar so that it will not fall from your hand whatever you do. You can prove your boast by turning your palm downwards or by holding your hand perpendicular—leaving the cigar apparently stuck to your fingers.

The secret is a small pin which is gripped tightly between the middle joints of the first and second (or second and third) fingers, where it will be quite concealed from view (see the second diagram). The pin-point, of course, protrudes far enough between the fingers to stick into the cigar (or cigarette), thus preventing it from falling from your open hand.

One word of warning. Keep a

very tight grip on the pin all the time. When the trick is finished, however, it is quite simple to dislodge the pin by dropping it on the carpet.

You can use the same pin to prove your mastery over an "obedient" coin. This time, the point of the pin protrudes between the fingers towards the BACK of the hand, which you hold straight out, palm facing the floor (as in the third diagram). Now ask someone for a coin—a half crown is best, being much the same colour as the pin. Stand it up on the backs of your outstretched fingers, holding it for a few moments while you tell it to remain upright. When you remove your restraining fingers, lo and behold, there is the coin obeying your instructions—simply because it is resting against the pin.

"But that's not everything," you tell your audience. "I will now make it lie down." Which you

promptly proceed to do by gently releasing the grip on the pin between your fingers. The coin will slowly fall on to the backs of your fingers and while you are taking

(Continued on page 9)

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

GEORGETOWN TAXI
Proprietor
HOWARD WALKER

We wish to thank you for the innumerable times you've favored us with your patronage and to wish you a multitude of joys through all the seasons.

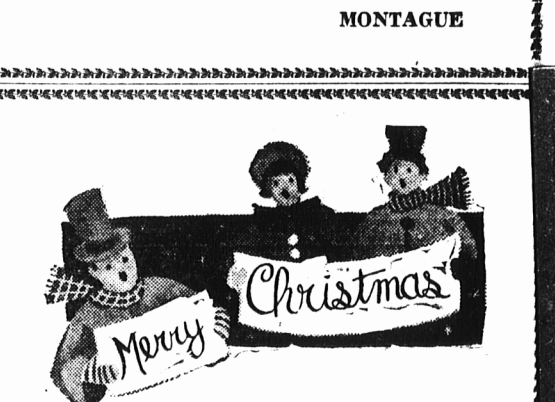
Water St. Georgetown

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Once again cheerful greetings ring 'round the world. We like the season and best of all we like to say, "A Merry Christmas to you all."



Hooley's Men's Wear
MONTAGUE



and worlds of good cheer and happiness in abundance... that's the Christmas wish we make to every one of you.

THE HAVEN RESTAURANT
MONTAGUE

With The Keenest Appreciation

of your good will and your patronage, with a sincerely repeated pledge to serve you well during the year to come.

WE SEND YOU OUR

Merriest Holiday Greetings
DOUG'S SERVICE STATION
MONTAGUE

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and A HAPPY NEW YEAR

to four friends and patrons in Souris and surrounding communities.

GREETINGS

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SOURIS

Season's Greetings

J. F. DELORY and SONS

General Merchants
Wish Everyone
A MERRY CHRISTMAS and A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

DEALERS IN
Hardware, Groceries, Dry Goods, Fishermen's Supplies—Flour & Feeds.
SEE OUR CHRISTMAS GIFTS AND TOYS

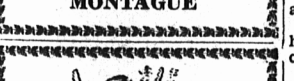
Water Street Georgetown



HE'LL BE LEAVING PRETTY SOON...

...with all kinds of gifts for nice folks, and with our most sincere wishes for a Merry Christmas.

MacLEAN'S Barber Shop
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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

BELLE'S DRESS SHOPPE
Montague

Mrs. L. H. Poole
Phone 68



Merry Christmas

May it be the kind of Christmas you like best—may it be one you will remember long with happy recollection. And may the New Year be good to you.

Montague Dairy
G. S. STEWART, Proprietor.



May all good things come to you at this Christmas season—may good fortune follow you through all the New Year.

MOSHER'S Meat Market
MONTAGUE

GREETINGS AND AN ABUNDANCE OF CHRISTMAS CHEER—

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