

Christmas Don'ts

Don't leave the cost mark on presents.

Don't let Christmas giving deteriorate into a trade.

Don't let money dominate your Christmas giving.

Don't embarrass yourself by giving more than you can afford.

Don't expect to receive as much as you give. The odds are on the dis-appointment.

Don't acquire your Yuletide before the fun of Christmas actually begins. No Christmas is fulfilled when the calendar is filled full.

Don't be the first to tell a child there is no Santa Claus. If you have to be about it, be as attractively as your education will permit.

Don't eat your Christmas dinner in a restaurant if you can find any old home that you may eat it in, for a Christmas dinner in a home is worth twice the bush.

Don't let your Christmas go by with out giving some sort of present to a child. The excuse that you must be children will not suffice. You can know plenty of them between now and the day of days.

Don't decide to abstain from giving just because you cannot afford expensive presents. The thoughtfulness of your gift, the interest you take in those to whom you give, are the principal things. The intrinsic value of your gift counts very little.

Don't give things because they are cheap and make a big show for the money. As a rule, it is a dangerous thing to pick up a lot of all sorts of things at bargain sales for Christmas presents. If you do there is always the temptation to make inappropriate gifts.

A CHRISTMAS HYMN

No tramp of marching armies
No banners flapping far,
A lamp within a stable,
And in the sky a star.

Their hymns of peace and praise
To earth the angels brought,
Their "Gloria In Excelsis"
To earth the angels taught.

When in the lowly manger
The holy mother held,
In tender adoration
Her Babe of Heaven laid.

Born lowly in the darkness,
And none so poor as he,
The little children of the poor
His very own shall be.

No rush of hostile armies,
But just the huddling sleep,
The angels singing of the Christ,
And all the world asleep.

No flame of conquering banners,
No legions sent afar,
A lamp within a stable,
And in the sky a star.

—Margaret E. Sangster to Collier Weekly.

Service Is Spirit of Christmas

A curious thing comes to my mind concerning what I have a word to say, and that is apropos of honesty. No one has a right to give away anything except what may be in excess of the just demands upon the income. The butcher, the baker, the dry goods man, needs the money as surely as does the enthusiastic woman eager to make a pretty gift or the lover to bestow upon his sweetheart what he knows is her heart's desire. Successful Christmas giving should mean self sacrifice, and it is often a greater sacrifice to deny oneself the privilege of expenditure than to do just what one has in mind. I believe that from the nursery days this theory should be inculcated, and as the coming to this world of our blessed Lord was one great act of sacrifice, so in planning for our Christmas gifts each child in the family should be encouraged to something of self sacrifice in the gathering together of the money for his gifts. I like to picture the old-fashioned Virginia home, where round the library table through the fall months the children of the household and the kinsfolk and acquaintances who might be within the doors, busied themselves in the preparation of quaint nothings which should carry on Christmas morn the sweet words of Spring remembrance. Julia Holmes Smith, M. D. in Pilgrim.

Baskets of Dainties

Take the grape baskets to fill with dainties and see what charming Christmas gifts can be made. Line the baskets with dark green tissue paper and fill them with oranges, red apples, nuts, clusters of raisins, figs, dates, grapes and candy. Small glasses of jelly, homemade cookies, individual cheese pies or plum puddings add to the value.

To the Cynics

Christmas comes but once a year
Do not make a jest of it
This a season of giving when
Cynics spoil the zest of it.
Now a respite, brief repose,
Let us make the best of it,
Drown our many weary woes,
Christmas, we are blest of it.

Christmas Comes but Once a Year

Children love the zest of it
Now a message kind we hear
Hearken to hehest of it
Just good will and wishes kind
And your love, the best of it
If we're poor—well, never mind,
Laugh we will and jest of it.

Christmas Comes but Once a Year

Money's not the test of it,
Hearts alone can help and cheer,
Christ has made the best of it,
Whatever may befall,
Sorrow or the rest of it,
Merry Christmas comes to all,
Even those who jest of it.
—New York Times.

FUN IN "FUTURES."

Fortune Telling For the Christmas Party.

Anything in the nature of fortune telling is always popular, and, notwithstanding denials, there is a vein of superstition in every one's character. No game is more heartily entered into than one dealing ostensibly with fate or the future. Be it intricate or simple, it is fully enjoyed. In the game of futures great fun is sure to ensue, because the futures can be previously arranged to suit the conditions of certain people, although generally the one in charge of the web of fate knows as little of what will be revealed as the individual himself. From a given center cords of all colors and conditions, no two alike, extend in every direction upstairs, downstairs, and almost in my lady's chamber, across each other here and there, often being knotted together at these points of intersection. Each searcher winds up his cord as he proceeds and unweaves difficulties in the way of knots to be untied and round and round windings to be unwound he encounters. When he finally reaches his future it usually proves to be a coin a toy a book of nursery tales or some article of absolute absurdity. This he takes back to the individual who started him in pursuit of his fate who must be clever enough to give him quite a little information as to what will or will not happen, basing her remarks on the "future" he found at the end of the cord. Each future thus found to be considered significant of other things.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS TREE.

Custom Originated With Northerners Hanging the Stockings.

Across the English Channel, where the Gauls and the Franks and the northern observed the stern rites of the severe religion of a strong hearted race, trees formed an important part in the festive observance of the feast days. The pine tree—ever in all ages an object of deserved admiration—was greatly revered by the northern folk. At the time of the midwinter celebration the northern hung gifts upon the tree for their gods. As is readily seen when the early fathers of the church, in the 4th century, introduced the message of peace it was easy to change the idea of gifts proffered to deities into a custom where offerings were made to the Christian God. Thus from such humble beginnings began the cherished customs which are our heritage of today. Gift-giving on the birthday of Christ may be logically traced to that observance prevalent in the middle ages of having Christmas boxes wherein offerings were placed for the priests. Christmas boxes gradually became an institution in Christian families as well. Hanging up the stockings on Christmas eve, as the institution of good St. Nicholas, old Santa Claus, is of purely Christian origin and started in Germany many hundred years ago. It has become one of the most cherished of the Christmas customs of the civilized world.—National Monthly.

The Blessed Christmas Time.

I walked in the world today, dear Lord,
Midst worth and wealth and fame,
Clasped hands with power and beauty,
Lord,
With loveliness and name. ***
I walked in the world today, dear Lord,
Midst perfume rich and rare,
Earth's choicest exotics poured costly breath
Upon the heavy air. ***
I walked in the world today, my Lord,
Through crowded hall and mart,
Where fruit or loom and press and brush,
Each vie for glory's part. ***
I have come apart from the world, dear Lord,
Where the mighty rule and shine,
To find sweet joy at thy blessed side,
To feast on things divine.
Oh, the world is poor! I am rich tonight,
As I walk in the path of the star's clear light,
And I need no share in the great world's fame.
I am crowned in the faith of the star,
Child's name. —Christian Work.

Christmas Trees For Manila From Alge

Great Christmas trees with all their pristine freshness and with the fragrance of the balsam still clinging to them, as green as when they were cut in the Alps, arrive in Manila every Christmas season. By a special scientific process the trees when they arrive to be placed on sale by the Manila merchants are still green and fresh, having been preserved in all their beauty and fragrance by a chemical bath which does not impair the trees in any way and will preserve them for many years.—Manila Times.

Yuletide Common Sense.

Cut out all presents given from custom. Many a girl is bankrupt or over-worked because she has not laid "the ghosts of a Christmas past." There is no sense in giving a present to a girl because you started to exchange with her ten years back. If you have drifted apart she will be as glad to stop the custom as you are.

When Expressing Gifts.

For packing the gift that is to be expressed a good strong box is absolutely necessary, made of wood, if you can possibly get it. If not, heavy cardboard will have to do. The box must be plenty large enough, giving ample room for packing.

Sensible Gift Giving.

Stop thoughtless giving. It is a waste of money, and no one thanks you. Far better an appropriate trifle than a costly present for which the recipient has no use.

The Yuletide Gift

A favorite poem made into a booklet makes a charming gift.

A flat leather pen-wiper for his desk makes an appropriate souvenir for the business man or woman.

A bookkin case with three bookkins is a useful Christmas gift for the needle woman.

A homemade booklet of a dozen reliable chafing dish recipes will be prized by the housewife.

A blotter, the upper side made of a picture postcard of yourself, is a simple yet valued gift for an intimate friend.

CHRISTMAS.

Christmas comes but once a year
Let us enjoy it while it here
Eat your turkey, woe not fear
Never to be reached a year.
Should you feel a little queer
After ways or wailing gear
New and old a new yere
Take a pull at a Aleck law-eat,
He'll to your laces to eat
Wallas a chook of sausage meat
Nothing near nothing sweet.
Toss a wack on shrobbled corn
Never smoked since he was born
Water is not ever drinks
Living low but huchly thinks
Christmas turkey, Christmas pie
Christmas pudding, Christmas sigh
Merry Christmas, Merry week,
Happy New Year, Merry neck.

PRETTY CHRISTMAS TABLE.

An Old-Fashioned Party For the Children.

The arrangement of a table at a Yuletide party was quite unusual inasmuch as it was an old-fashioned square one lengthened to accommodate twelve children. It was pushed back against the wall and at the back was the largest sized Yule log candy box, resting on a fest of holly and mistletoe.

As a poser, called the "Lord of Misrule" and attached to the front end of the log by red ribbons were six dolls dressed to represent the first six months of the year. Following after the log were six more figures dressed like the last six months. At each plate were a holy pine covered horn and a wee tree lit with red wax tapers.

The children were to blow out the candles making a wish for each one. If they got out with the very first puff the wish will come true. A white and red Christmas ribbon goes to each plate fastened by a spray of holly. Then each child looks at the dolls and says which one he or she thinks represents the month in which they were born.

If there should be two in the same month the one who is the oldest gets the doll for that month. As there is one for each guest, a satisfactory adjustment is easily made. The Yule log also contains small favors for each guest.

English Plum Pudding.

For those who want their plum puddings homemade the following recipe may prove useful.
—Take one half pound of finely shredded suet, one-half pound of washed and dried currants, three-fourths of a pound of stoned raisins, four tablespoons of dried and sifted bread crumbs, three tablespoons of warm sifted flour, five ounces of loaf sugar, three eggs, three ounces of shredded citron, one-half ounce grated and a teaspoonful of brandy. Mix these well together, adding enough milk to make it of nice consistency, and boil for six or eight hours.
This pudding keeps admirably, and when it is not to be used for some time it should be boiled, say, for six hours and then hung from a hook in the storeroom until about to be used when it should again be placed in the pan and boiled for an hour and a half at two hours longer.

It may be boiled in a mold, a basin or a loaf and must be kept in which ever is chosen until ready to be served.

A Mean Holiday Spirit.

Do not gauge your Christmas giving. There is nothing more despicable than to work off the back numbers or the shabby useless gifts on the girl who "needs everything" and spend a small fortune on those who can spend on themselves.

Christmas Eve.

The hour of time where the frost's gray time
In fantastic glam'our lies
A sheet of light and gleaming white
That mirrors the starry'd skies
A great old star in the heavens afar
And a moon reel up the hills:
The stars set out as an age fulfilled
And the night with hush thrilled.

The carolers sing as the church bells ring
While up to the organ loft
The "sacred cross" as the calm, sweet tone
Comes swelling but ever soft.
The message flies through the changing air
By changing time and tongue,
But ever the same as the tale that came
The shepherd men among
Where the shepherds and the laurel bough
And the holy and bay are twined,
Where the hearth fire gleams as in ancient dreams,
One age is but in mind
As in modern dreams the hearth fire gleams
So under the chimney still
The carolers sing as the lower tongues swing
Man's peace and God's good will.
—Stephen Chalmers.



THE NATIVITY

By JAMES A. EDGERTON

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THE time and clime are both afar
Wherein the wise men saw the star
Whose mystic light
Across the night
Has rendered all the ages bright,
And yet the story is as young
As when it first was said and sung
With bated breath
In Nazareth
To charm the sorrow out of death.

THE things of Beauty and of Truth
Are dowered with eternal youth,
Are ever new
The ages through
And fresh with heaven's morning dew.
The story of the Christ Child's birth
Stirs something in us not of earth,
That lifts and heals,
Life's book unseals,
A man unto himself reveals.

Forworn were the Christ is born
In such new era's shining morn
When new grow free
His star we see
The guiding light of liberty.
In each advance of truth and good,
Of helpfulness and brotherhood,
He leads the van
To build his plan
Of heaven in the heart of man.



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