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TRY US

SCOFIELD'S

A Yuletide Blessing

By Ralph Hamilton

CHRISTMAS CHEER was in the air everywhere. The sleigh bells had a special tone for Ned Graham as he sped over the glittering snow homeward bound, the melodious clang of the sleigh along the river course made perfect music to his enraptured ear, the stars appeared to

shine with a new luster—and all for him, he almost fancied, on this the first Christmas eve he could remember where peace on earth, good will to men had a real vitalizing meaning, and himself a part of it all!

Left an orphan at eight, for five years he had been the slave of a miserly old being. Then Victor Wade, a distant relative, and his wife Alice had taken Ned to their humble little home.

"You have no children of your own and a blessing will come to you for caring for this poor outcast," the village clergyman had told them, and indeed his words had come true. He nestled down into their hearts and gave them an obedience and love.

And Ned as well shared the shadow that hovered over their lives. Alice was the only daughter of the richest man in Brompton. She had married Wade against the wishes of Martin Brill, who had from that hour shut both of them out of his life.

"He can't treat my dear, good mother that way," declared Ned sturdily to a chum. "Some day I'm going to let him know how mean he is to the best two people who ever lived."

Mr. and Mrs. Wade had gone to a Christmas entertainment and Ned was speeding homeward full of holiday plans.

Dashing through the gateway Ned came to a sudden halt. A light showed in the parlor, the porch window of the room was open, and plainly visible inside was a rough-appearing man tossing over the packages grouped under the little tree.

"It's a burglar!" gasped the startled Ned, "and stealing our Christmas presents! Hey, you! get out of there or I'll shoot you full of bullets!" and



A Rough Appearing Man Tossing Over the Packages.

Ned ran to the window, drew a revolver from its case and presented it in menacing view.

The intruder turned, dashed from the room into the hall and disappeared. Vallantly triumphant, Ned went back to the parlor, for the first moment noticing a small satchel lying open on a chair. It somewhat thrilled him to observe strange-looking articles of steel within.

"Burglars' tools!" whispered Ned, fairly awed. "And here's a great big wallet stuffed full of papers and bank notes, and right across it is stamped the name of 'Martin Brill' in gilt letters. Say! This fellow must have robbed the old man before he came here."

Half an hour later Ned stood in the garden of the Brill home. Gazing into the one lighted room of the place he saw Brill tied to a chair and striving to dislodge a gag in his mouth. He was frantic; he tore his hair; incoherently he babbled forth the visit of a night marauder as Ned released him.

"You're the Wade boy, aren't you?" he quavered. "You've done me a good turn. Do another. Call the police."

"Say," interposed Ned, "if you'll come with me I'll see that you get your wallet back."

"What—why—come with you—where?"

"To your daughter's home. A funny thing has happened, and if you want your wallet back you've got to go with me there."

Half distracted, fully mystified, Martin Brill consented to the strange proposal. Arrived, Ned told his story, produced the wallet and restored it to its owner.

"Oh I had, you've won my eternal gratitude!" cried the delighted old man, but paused abruptly, his eyes fixed upon a decorated framed portrait of himself.

"Mr. Wade got the holly for that," said Ned, "and your daughter trimmed it. They do that every year."

Martin Brill sat staring at the portrait, a dim mist crossing his eyes. Ned stole quietly from the room as he heard footsteps on the front porch.

"Sh-h!" he whispered, reaching it. "Mother, you've got a visitor."

"Why, who is it?" asked Alice surprisedly.

"Santa Claus, I'm thinking," was the prompt response—and it was.

WALKING AND TALKING DOLLS

Lifelike Forms Gracefully Step Across the Floor Saying "Mamma" or "Papa."

DOLLS that walk and talk and wink and roll their eyes are Parisian Christmas novelties in toyland. These dolls seem almost human, as they walk in sprightly style across the floor saying "mamma" or "papa" just as real children would.

Walking dolls being a new invention, seem wonderful and bring screams of delight from little girls and boys, too, who watch with intense interest every step of the lifelike dolls as they are exhibited in the shops.

The machinery that moves the doll's legs is set in motion by a key that is inserted in the works at the waist line.

The voice is made active by works that are wound with a key.

The eyes move as the body sways from side to side, just as the real children's eyes roll and blink, etc.

CHRISTMAS WEEK IN ENGLAND

Time When Scattered Families Are United and Tender Memories Are Revived.

MANY and great are the changes which have occurred in England since Dickens wrote "A Christmas Carol," but they have not affected the national love for the festival and the determination to preserve unimpaired the traditional warmth and heartiness of its celebration.

Christmas week is still the great week of the year for the English people. It is the one week when scattered families are reunited, when tender memories and old associations are revived, when friend greets friend with a cheery expansiveness in striking contrast with the characteristic reserve of the English nature, so unobtrusive to those who do not know it well, apparently so distant and unsympathetic.

From Wednesday all business will be suspended, not to be resumed till Monday morning. The whole nation will give itself up to good cheer and good fellowship, and for a brief season, all strife and controversy are hushed, and peace, charity and concord reign supreme.

Substitute for a Tree.

We are not going to have a Christmas tree, writes a correspondent. To make them brilliant many pretty little ornaments are needed and they cost a good deal. My plan is for a barrel in place of a tree. I have the barrel now in a closet. It is covered with old dark green cambric and the day before the great holiday I am going to pin sprigs of evergreen and holly over it. It will look pretty gay. I think, when it is filled with the gifts that are going into it now, all prettily tied and tied, and my son as jolly Old Santa Claus stands over it to delve into its mysteries and to proclaim the names of those who are to solve them. I am sure we will enjoy our barrel as much as we would a tree.

Best of All Holidays

TAKING it all in all, it may be safely asserted that Christmas is the merriest and the best of all holidays, and one which is likely to be observed for ages yet to come. Nations may rise and fall, new beliefs and religions may sweep away the old, but that would seem, indeed, a dreary and empty year which brought no merry Christmas in its annual round. May old Father Time long spare his holiday to mankind to gladden the hearts of all with its coming, and may each Christmas be still merrier than the last.

An Ancient Christmas Dish.

An indispensable Christmas dish of ancient times was "frumenty" or "frumant." Here is the recipe for making the dish according to a faithful old chronicler: "Take clean wheat and bray it in a mortar until the hulls be all gone off, and seethe it until it burst, and take it up and let it cool; and take clean, fresh broth and sweet milk of almonds or sweet milk of kine and temper it all; and take the yolks of eggs. Boil it a little and set it down and mess it forth with fat venison or fresh mutton." Frumenty was often served alone without venison or mutton. When served by itself it was well sweetened.

A BIG JOKE

Duck: Now I hope I won't get a treatise on "How to Swim" for a Christmas gift.

A Form of Generosity.

"That fellow is kind of hard to depend on."
"He seems to be very generous."
"Yes. He's a regular Santa Claus."
"I don't understand."
"He is willing to take the credit for giving you anything you want provided someone else stand the expense."

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