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## HAS TONIC EFFECT THE HOLY MANGER

Christmas Day Pleasures Are of Benefit to People.

Mental State Does Everybody Good and Festivity Equals Prescription of Physician.

CLOSE observers in the ranks of the medical profession have noted one very interesting fact concerning the Christmas season—that it generally has a good tonic effect upon their patients. In explanation of this the London Lancet says that since Christmas has come to be regarded as a time for good cheer, a universal feeling of contentment and happiness is engendered at this time of joyousness, routine is for a while relieved, a certain freshness is given to the daily round, differences of opinion are sunk, and a charitable spirit prevails. Is it, by the way, hoping for too much, asks the Lancet, that the season of good fellowship should leave some lasting effect upon the manners and methods of all?

It may not be easy to trace exactly why the sense of exhilaration and well-being comes with the advent of Christmas, for the psychological factors concerned are not simple. But the main point is that the mental state does everybody good, and the annual festivity is just as excellent an institution as the prescription of the physician which gives tone and vigor to the struggler in life's race. There is no need nowadays, thanks to the good sense of the people and the counsels of their medical advisers, to indulge about the evils of a stupid indulgence in food, alcohol and tobacco on a festive occasion such as the present. Practically everybody realizes the great physiological advantages of being wise on a merry occasion.

Many more persons than formerly feel where use ends and abuse begins and they act sensibly accordingly; and so far from it being a crime to make the season festive by enjoying, on a little extended scale perhaps, the creature comforts of life, some decided good is done to both the mental and physical health of the individual. The festive season may, therefore, be welcomed, which brings cheer to thousands, which induces the generous and charitable to brace the mental and physical functions of the community at large, giving it the opportunity of relinquishing its business and its worries for a time, to start again refreshed and ready for "the trivial round, the common task." The prescription "A Merry Christmas" is sound so long as the "signature" of good sense is observed.

## A YULE MESSAGE

Christmas Spirit, Peace and Good Will Should Prevail.

Time to Be Happy and to Aid Others in the Enjoyment of the Season's Cheer.

On earth, peace, good will.—Luke 2:14.

SURELY there is a mystic tie between spirit and nature, between heaven and earth, between God and man. Not strange is it, then, that on the night of the most wondrous birth time has seen, the age sealed skies should part and song of angels entrance the watchers on Bethlehem's plains.

What is the secret of the unwonted charm brought by this brightest day in time's calendar? Why is the season charged with such gladness? Why do men and women feel that they can lay down their vexing burdens and their faces smile again with the faith and joy of childhood's care-free days?

It is the rapt influence of the angelic song on the natal night, "Peace on Earth." To a humanity distracted, troubled by doubts and fears, wounded by sin and smitten by conscience, God sends a message: "Fear not, I am your Father. I give you a Savior from sin and misery. You are my children. My heavenly peace I breathe upon you." And in this sweet pledge of divine remembrance and Fatherly love—of God at peace with men—a wave of tranquil joy floods the world.

But, again, it is an evangel to man of peace with himself. Every man finds discord in his own being. His innermost personality is the seat of antagonisms. He is an instrument out of tune. The primal harmony of his spirit is broken. He is at war with himself. His baser strives with his higher nature. Soul and body war against each other. But "on earth peace" chants the seraphic choir. Regard the image of God stamped upon you. Put down the low and base. Let the spirit rule and the body serve.

Finally, the Christmastide should breathe the spirit of peace in our business and in all the relations of life. Especially in our homes we can cultivate the Christmas spirit, displacing their frequent discontents, fault findings and contentions with peace and good will.

For this glad time, at least, let us all be better men and women; less selfish, more kindly, easier to live with. And how much happier will we be if this Christmas spirit—its cheery glow and kindly warmth—stay with us all through the year!—Junius B. Remensnyder.

Plenty of Mistletoe.  
The mistletoe supply is plentiful this year, but, as the girls say, what of it?

"Prespio," Instead of Christmas Tree, in Italy and Spain.

It is Representation of the Place Where Baby Christ Lay in Bethlehem.

GIRLS and boys of Italy and Spain, which are called the Latin countries, never hang up their stockings at Christmas time, nor do they have Christmas trees. Kris Kringle and Santa Claus are German saints and the Christmas tree came out of the German forests long, long ago, when the nations of northern Europe were forest tribes. It is the northern people—the Germans, Scandinavians and English, all of whom are descended from old Teutonic tribes—who keep Christmas as Americans do.

Instead of the Christmas tree, Italian and Spanish boys and girls have the prespio. "Prespio" means manger, and it is a representation of the manger where the baby Christ lay in Bethlehem. It is presented in different ways. Sometimes it shows only the inside of the barn where the Baby and His mother lay, with Joseph, the Three Wise Men and the animals about. Sometimes it shows a hillside, with the Wise Men coming on foot or horseback, or on donkeys, bringing their gifts to the stable. Sometimes the manger is small—not more than a foot square. Sometimes it is large enough to occupy the whole end of a room. It is built on a board foundation and is made of wood, with earth, pebbles, dried grass and leaves for the outdoor scenes. The figures are carved of wood, or perhaps little dolls are used, all very carefully and elaborately dressed by the girls. Sometimes brooks and lakes are ingeniously represented with paper, glass or tinsel. Sometimes the whole is rough and rude, but again it is very neatly and beautifully done, and is quaint and interesting when all complete.

The French, who are half Latin and half Teutonic in their makeup, mix the customs of both races in their Christmas keeping. They build the manger and they also give the children presents; only, instead of hanging her stocking, little French Babette puts out her shoes. The French call the manger "creche," and in country villages in France companies of children still go from house to house on Christmas eve, carrying the creche and singing Christmas carols. Sometimes they help to build a beautiful large creche in the village church, over which they are very proud and delighted.

## THE CHRISTMAS TABLE

Little Things That Add Much to Success of Home Day.

How the Housewife Can Prepare Delicacies That Will Appeal to Both Old and Young.

THE housewife can indulge in these excursive imaginings, however, only in the earliest of her preparations for the Christmas dinner, says Country Life in America. Soon she must closely consider the feast which will be suitable to her own household and purse. If she is a wise housewife, she will not make her festive over-elaborate, whatever the size of her income. She will want something more than "wine and wafers and a rose," but she will find that, if she puts her own best efforts into the decorations, and caters with a thought for the tastes and fancies and little memories of those she is to serve, she will have a charming dinner, whatever the number of its courses.

Much of the pleasure of the Christmas dinner depends upon small things. This is the occasion for the most choice of the jelly and pickles which have been stored up in the summer. Of course, there must be celery and cranberry sauce, and the housewife will, if possible, have some small thing that is new to her household—a little luxury that comes in glass, if the cost must not be heavy, or, if she need not think of that, some far-fetched dainty with the international interest of coming from Japan or from the Philippines.

Dessert allows ample opportunity for small pleasures and surprises. One can hardly believe a child's happiness complete without raisins and almonds to eat in the sandwiches and as philopenas. One always hopes to see the old-fashioned kinds of candy at Christmas—striped sticks and clear sticks, and barley sugar, chocolate creams, and gum-drops. They are pretty for the table, and not bad for children, and older people like them for the sake of long-ago Christmas.

## A LINE O' CHEER

By John Kendrick Bangs.

RESOLUTION.

PURE dust am I, and unto dust  
Some day, somewhere, return  
I must.  
But while I have the breath of life  
No bit of blatant windy strife,  
Or blast of wrong,  
Dust though I be,  
Shall ever blow me  
Along.  
And land me high and dry  
In some wayfarer's eye.  
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