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Capital \$100,000      Surplus \$100,000  
Resources \$1,700,000

Checking Accounts      Safe Deposit Vaults  
4% Interest Department      Bond Department.

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of the Community.

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## Mr. Gimlet's Best Christmas Present

CHRISTOPHER G. HAZARD



OLD Mr. Gimlet was sitting all alone by himself. The cold December wind was driving the snow against the frosty windows, and now and then it seemed to fairly screech at him. Some of the snow appeared to have got into his hair, and some of the frost into his heart, for he looked old, and cold, and grim. The firelight shadows that played on the wall were like the thoughts that went to and fro in his mind in the light of the memories of the brighter days of the past. The empty chairs reminded him of his friendlessness, the slow ticking of the old clock, as it tried to be a companion, only made him feel how lonely he was. He felt as much out of the world, as far away from its gladness as the picture of his grandfather that hung over the shelf.

Mr. Gimlet was wondering what he would get for Christmas. He had spent many years in wondering what he would get, and had gotten a good many things. No one had a better house than he, few had as much money as he had. There was a park, there was a garden; within and without and all about him were the things that money can buy. Yes, Mr. Gimlet was as rich as money and things can make a man. And yet, although all these things had not made him happy, he was wishing for more. He did not know any better than to wish for more, and though he could not think of anything that he needed, he hoped that someone would think of something or other that he might want and that might give him a gleam of real Christmas joy.

Away out on a prairie the Bump family were holding a consultation, after the children had gone to bed. At that moment the father and mother of the family were perplexed and even a good deal worried. The Bumps had been practicing farming for some time, but without anticipated results. The children didn't see anything the matter with farming. The move out of the smoky city had been an entrance into paradise for them. Donald had ten hens and a rooster. Dorothy owned two Muscovy ducks, with green feathers. Kenneth had a little pony that they called "Bigger," because they thought he would grow. Small Edith kept a flower bed that she called her "garden." There was a pony cart. They had raised a 43-pound watermelon. Father had said that the rest of the garden wouldn't amount to a hill of beans, but it had. There was apt to be enough for yum yum cake, with raisins in it, to go around. Why, it was like a perpetual picnic! And even now, with all things under the snow blanket, and the pony and the two cows safe in the



Yes, Mr. Gimlet Was as Rich as Money and Things Can Make a Man.

barn, farmer Bump had laughed with the happy, rosy children, as the dog Jake tolled up the hill with the sled, so that they all might go shouting down again. "They're a jolly bunch," said farmer Bump. But that night the Bumps were holding a consultation. Although the two cows in the barn were bare, yet there was a blanket on them. The consultation was about that blanket. Farmer Bump called it a mortgage and didn't know how he was going to pay it. No wonder it was an anxious consultation. Short crops and a mortgage! Enough to flatten out even the Bumps! But while the Bumps were talking things over, the children were having dreams. They had laid awake for a while, talking about the best place to hang up Christmas stockings, and a part of the conversation downstairs, the mortgage part, had come up to their ears. A little of the worry, too, had come with it, so that they fell asleep with a little uneasiness about

the blanket that does not keep things warm, but makes them cold, and wondering what a mortgage could be, and why no one could take it off without money. In his dream Donald heard a boy singing this song:

"Sing, little Jesus, sing for me:  
There's a mortgage on my Christmas tree."

You see, this little boy had a tree, but there wasn't a thing on it, not even a leaf. So he planned how to get something to grow upon it. Finally, he sang the song that Donald heard in his dream, and the next time he looked out there was his tree, full of red and gold apples, with leaves on all the twigs and many pretty things among them, and Donald saw it all in his dream. So, when he awoke, Donald thought he would sing the song too, and see if Jesus couldn't take the shadow of that awful mortgage away, and he sang:

"Sing, little Jesus, sing for me:  
There's a mortgage on our Christmas tree."

When Dorothy awoke she remembered that she had dreamed about writing a letter to Santa Claus, and so she went and wrote it. This was the letter:

Dear Santa Claus:  
There's something the matter with our cows. They've got a mortgage on 'em. Only money can cure 'em. Please come and cure 'em, so's we can have a Christmas tree. I will be good.  
Your hopeful  
DOROTHY.

Then, when father went to town, with the little pony, Bigger, he put the letter into the post office, only he directed it to Mrs. Bump's brother, Mr. Ephraim Gimlet.

Mr. Gimlet was very much surprised to hear from the Bumps. He had



The Next Day the Carrier Brought a Promising Looking Box.

forgotten that he had a sister, and that there were a lot of little hopeful Bumps. An old trouble had made him bitter and forgetful, and he had felt more alone in the world than he really was. As he sat again by the firelight, but on a clear and moonlit night, he mused on things past with a new tenderness in his heart and welcomed a new thought that came warmly to him and brought a lovely purpose with it. He would play Santa Claus, and give himself the surprise of making others happy!

So, the day before Christmas things happened at the Bump house. As Mr. Bump went to the wayside post box he found two letters. One of them made him sad, for it was from the man who held the mortgage, and it said that the time for payment had come. It meant to Mr. Bump, "your money, or your cows." But the other letter was from Mr. Gimlet, and it made Mr. Bump laugh until he cried, for it was a check for \$300, with some kindly, friendly words and good wishes, enough to cure the cows and all the family troubles. The next day the carrier brought a most promising looking big box from Uncle Gimlet, so that the Christmas tree was full of happy surprises for the little folks and a gift or two for the big ones. Mother made a big pie in the dishpan and the children found out what was in it. Dorothy poked a hole through the pasteboard crust and pulled out a maple sugar heart. Donald got a red sugar heart. Kenneth got a white sugar heart. Edith got a yellow sugar heart. Mother said it was Uncle Gimlet's kind heart that had made them all so happy.

Then Mr. Gimlet got another letter. It was a round robin from all the Bumps, with the little Bump names and marks upon it, too. It made the old man very happy. He was sitting among a lot of pleasant things that had been sent in for his Christmas tree, but he was not thinking very much of them. He sat with the letter in his hand and a far-off look in his eyes as he thought of the sweetness of love, and felt that the best gift that he had received was the happy surprise that he had given to the people on the prairie farm.

"Divinity" Fudge.  
Boil together two cupfuls of granulated sugar, one cupful of maple syrup, one cupful of water and a tablespoonful of vinegar until a little of it hardens when dropped in cold water, and then add a teaspoonful of vanilla and take from the fire. While this mixture has been cooking, a cupful of granulated sugar should have been put over the fire in another saucepan, with a half-cupful of cold water, and boiled until the mixture spins a thread from the tip of a spoon. This should at this stage be beaten up with the stiffly whipped whites of two eggs, and this stirred into the first preparation, which should by now have cooled slightly. Beat the two hard until they begin to stiffen, when turn in two cupfuls of chopped nut kernels. Drop on paper or pour into pans and cut in shapes desired.—Dellineator.

### THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

Vice President Coolidge Places Construction on the Greatest Event in Human History.



CHRISTMAS has but one meaning—the Nativity, writes Vice President Calvin Coolidge, in the New York Evening Post. The goodness, the justice, but also the mercy, the helping hand of God. This, the greatest event in human history, has a spiritual meaning. The Savior came to minister to the spiritual nature of man. He showed the true glory and importance of man—and helping him showed the duty of helping one another. Endowed with the power, yet He did not bestow material blessings or set up an earthly kingdom. But to follow Him gave the power to command all those.

To get the world to see the true meaning of things, that is the redemption. The creation was all declared good. It can be perverted. The enemy forever strives "out of good still to find means of evil." The material welfare of men does not come first—to make it first makes it to be destroying and destroyed. Christmas is not instituted for the purpose of earning the reward of gifts, but for giving them in their true significance. "The wages of sin is death, eternal life is the gift of God."

### GUIDES BABE OF BETHLEHEM

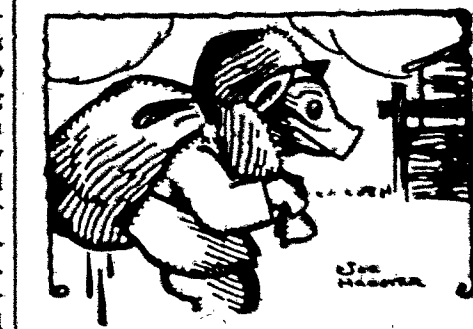
Lighted Candles in Window on Christmas Eve Will Bring Happiness, an Old Tradition.



AN OLD tradition has it that "a lighted candle set in the window on Christmas eve will guide the Babe of Bethlehem to your home, that He may bring you happiness." In some countries it has long been the custom so to mark the coming of Christmas, and John H. Stedman of Rochester, N. Y., has originated a movement to spread it in this country. In a pamphlet urging all to light the "Christ-candle" on Christmas eve he says:

"The Irish will tell you that the Christ-candle was always lighted in their homes in the Emerald Isle as it has been for years and years in Norway and Sweden. Boston has had it for a decade. In Rochester 1916 was our third celebration—the first year a few houses shone—the second over a thousand—the third nearly every one; and it has spread to town, village and country over a 40-mile radius. Many far-away homes, Wisconsin, Maine, California, Florida, kindled their candles from ours, and when you have lighted yours you will appreciate why."

The Truer Things of Life.  
We stand together at another fullness of time; perhaps it is a fullness in which material things, the man-made things, bulk largest. Perhaps it is a time in which confidence in the human seems to excel confidence in the divine. It is becoming increasingly evident that there must speedily come to men the visions of life and real values as they find their fear and larger interpretation of him whose birth the world celebrates at Christmas. There is a tragic, if inarticulate, appeal being made today for a return to the homelier, stronger and truer things of life; we are looking for a new birth of goodness that shall restore our lost peace and bring back again to earth the deeper satisfaction of the human heart.—James E. Freeman.



CHRISTMAS IN PIGVILLE  
Papa Pig—My how the children will appreciate this nice bag of mud!

Christmas Cookies.  
Cream together two cupfuls brown sugar and one-half cupful butter. Add one well-beaten egg, eight tablespoonfuls sweet milk, one saltspoonful salt, one-half teaspoonful soda dissolved in one-eighth cupful boiling water, one teaspoonful cinnamon, 2½ cupfuls rolled oats, two cupfuls flour. Mix all together and let stand for an hour, then drop a teaspoonful at a time on greased tins. Press a fat raisin on the top of each and bake in a moderate oven. This amount makes about four dozen cookies.

Novel Christmas Tree Decorations.  
Effective Christmas tree decorations can easily be made at home. Take candy sticks and dress them up in crepe paper and ribbons and thus convert them into novel candy dolls. Gilded nuts, acorns hung from the branches with colored ribbon and balls of cotton sprinkled with diamond dust, as well as rings of tiny gum-drops strung on white thread, make effective trimming.

Should Remember the Needy.  
There is another thing than Christmas shopping that should be attended to as early as possible by those who can afford it, and that is the making of Christmas donations for the poor.