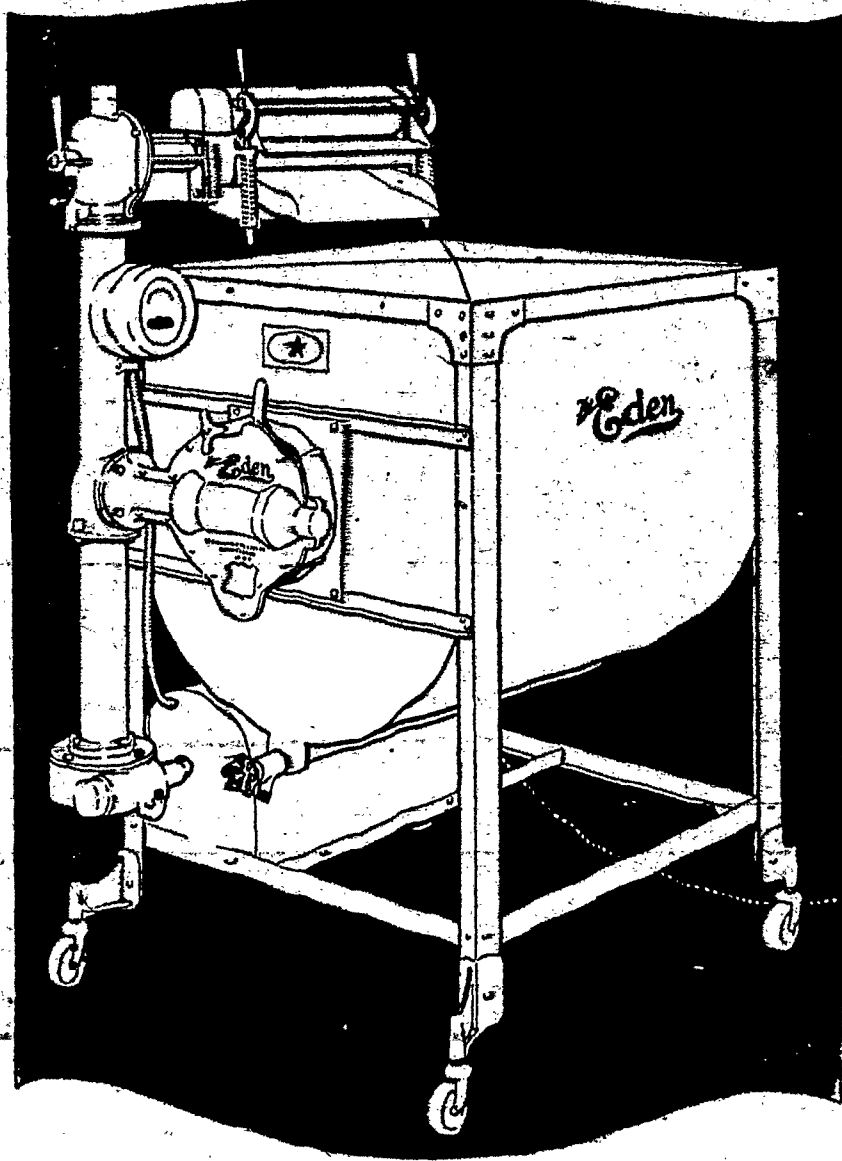


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QUAINT CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS

Cupid—Plays Part in Many of the Superstitions That Are Still Given Consideration.

Good St. Thomas never me right
And send me my true love tonight,
That I may gaze upon his face,
Then him in my fond arms embrace.

AFTER placing a piece of holly under her pillow, many a girl, in the north of England especially, repeats these lines to herself before retiring to rest on Christmas eve, according to a writer in London Tit-Bits.

Cupid plays an important part in many of the superstitions and customs that are still extant at this season. A Christmas practice among superstitious girls who wish to dream about their future lovers is that of abstaining from food or drink, or spending the whole of Christmas eve. Then after all the family have retired, they make a cake of flour, salt and water, called a "dumb cake." This they eat first before retiring to bed, in the belief that their somewhat indigestible supper will cause them to dream of their future husbands.

In the Alps there exist several charming Yuletide customs of proposing marriage by the language of flowers. If a girl accepts a bouquet of Edelweiss from a man during the period from Christmas day to New Year's eve the action denotes that she accepts him as her future husband.

Another Christmas custom in Switzerland is for the young man to place a flower pot, containing a single rose, and a note on the window sill of the girl's room when she is absent from home. He then waits for a reply. If the maid accepts the flower before New Year's eve, then the young man boldly enters the house to "ask papa." If, on the other hand, the rose is not touched, but is allowed to fade away, the proposal is rejected without a single word of love having been exchanged between the couple.

In Sardinia Christmas wooing is far more complicated. If a Sardinian father has a marriageable daughter, he would be wiser to apply to him for permission to speak to her by means of a species of telephone that has been in use for the purpose for centuries of Christians.

It is a long string with a wooden knob at each end. The girl drops one end out of her window and, the shutters being closed, places the other end to her ear. Down below her would-be lover pours words of unending devotion into her knob!

On every New Year's day in Russia a pair of marriageable girls in red dresses are all drawn up in a row and the men in another, with presents of both behind them. If the man from the looks of any

particular, or he steps out in the line, goes up to her and enters into conversation. If he is favorably received by the girl, his parents and her parents compare notes as to the marriage settlement and similar practical matters.

Many quaint superstitions are associated with the festive season in various parts of Britain. In Hertfordshire the wearing of new shoes on Christmas day is considered to be very unlucky.

THE PATCHWORK QUILT

IT WAS such a sunny December day that Marian could sit on the porch and do her Christmas sewing. This quilt was to surprise her grandmother, for old folks don't expect presents at any time of the year, least of all do they look for such a fine thing as Marian was preparing. It was gay, with silks and patches from many an old dress and the stitches were as neatly and closely put in as any dressmaker could have wished. Besides, upon every patch there was worked the name of someone whom the old lady loved. This required a good many patches and made quite a large quilt, but the child had worked long and patiently.

She was happily repaid for all her busy care when she saw a happy tear roll down Grandma's cheek as the lovely gift was unfolded, and heard her say: "Now I shall not feel so lonely at night, and what pleasant dreams I shall have, with all my friends around me."—C. G. Hazard. (© 1922, Western Newspaper Union.)

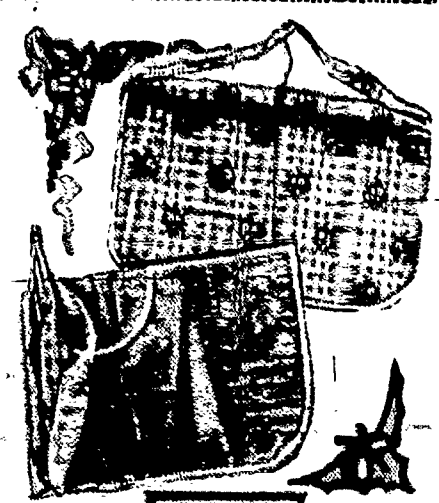
SHOPPING.

Here's a truth that's pure and pearly,
Fresher than the morning dew:
Do your shopping in a bright and early—
Do it early and get through!

A Gift Suggestion.
A pretty little Christmas gift is a towel holder, made in the same way as the elastic. Make two strips of the band, one a little longer than the other, and wind ribbon of the same shade on two large embroidered hoops and one small one. Join to the bands, small

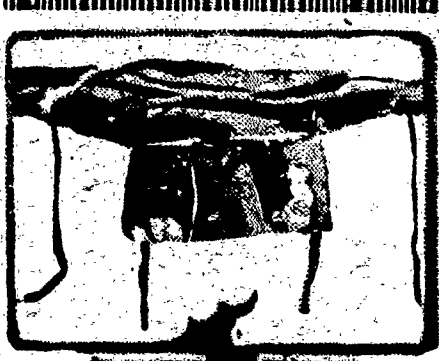
one at the top and large ones on two bottoms. Run white ribbon through the bands and finish with bows at the top of hoops. This is also nice as a table rack or hair ribbon holder.

A Pullman Hanger



Everyone who travels will like this handy Pullman hanger which folds up so that it will slip into a suitcase. It is merely a large pocket made of cretonne and plain chambray, 18 inches long and 11 inches wide and it is made over a jointed metal hanger. A large safety pin hangs from a loop of tape at each end and the plain side has a small pocket that fastens down with snap fasteners.

New Card Table Covers



Something new in card table covers will make a charming gift for the hostess. This cover is made of black satteen and provided with two little pockets of figured cretonne attached to each corner. Guests are delighted to find a parking place for their handkerchiefs, score cards, pencils, etc. Either black ribbon or braid serves for ties that fasten the cover to the table.

NOT A HOLIDAY LIKE OTHERS

Significance of Christmas is Not Lost, Its Spirit Enters into Life of World.

IT IS not likely that all of the multitude of people who eagerly and anxiously prepare to celebrate Christmas day are conscious of its significance. They know of course that it stands for the anniversary of the birth of the Founder of the Christian religion, but that thought is not uppermost in their minds. To such, for the moment, it is merely a holiday in which they wish to give gifts to persons they care for and whom they wish to please. It is a period in which they forget themselves in order to give joy to others.

In this one thing, though they may not be aware of it, they demonstrate the teaching of the One whose day they observe for unselfish thought for others is one of the great lessons taught by the Teacher of teachers who was born in Bethlehem of Judea centuries ago. There are Christmas givers today who make no sacrifice when they purchase rich gifts for family or friends; they know no self-denial, though it does not follow that they do not give all their hearts, but with the great mass of givers there is a setting aside of personal wishes and even urgent needs in order that these they love may be glad on that day of the year when all the Christian world rejoices. The self-sacrifice is as nothing compared to the end to be attained.

On the other hand, a multitude of men and women are spiritually aware of the character of the One who came to bring across the centuries to the child in the manger and see in it the dawn of a new hope to mankind, a revelation of a new life, a bond between mortal existence and the hereafter that has given comfort to martyrs and a light to the world that grows brighter with the passing of the ages. The gifts that they bestow and those they receive typify to them the greatest of all gifts to the world—the One who came to point the way to eternal life.

No Christmas for all is seeming frivolity and thoughtlessness is not a mere holiday like others. Even the light-minded and heedless ones realize a difference, and if pushed to explain would do so reverently. Under all the hurry and confusion and gaiety of the preparations and the celebration the significance of Christmas is not lost. The meaning of the Great Event whose anniversary we observe cannot be escaped. Its spirit has entered into the life of the civilized world.—Indianapolis Star.

Mysterious Mistletoe, Growing From Sturdy Tree, Looked Upon by Druids as Holy Thing.

THE mistletoe season draws near. Many boughs or pendents of this mysterious and beautiful plant will be torn from oaks and other trees and suspended from chandeliers and doors.

Many myths are associated with the mistletoe. The Druids of Britain looked upon it as a holy thing. To them the oak tree had a strong religious significance and seeing the curious plant growing out of the oak they conceived that it was the spirit of the soul of that tree. In this way it is believed that the Druids came to regard the mistletoe as the symbol of life and they therefore treated it with manifest reverence and gave it a prominent place in their religious rites. It is also believed that the Druids held the mistletoe as sacred to Frayna, the goddess of love, and that this is how it came to be associated with love-making and kissing.

The old herbalists, the forefathers of the physician, regarded the mistletoe as a thing having remarkable therapeutic properties. It was held to be good for epilepsy and for various convulsive "distempers." Many of our British and our Irish ancestors believed that the mistletoe was a charm against disease.

The mistletoe is a plant parasite, and yet not altogether a parasite. Though it would rather live off of the tree, it was the means of self-support. It fastens itself upon its host, penetrates its tissue and draws nourishment from it, often deforming it and sapping its vitality. Yet the mistletoe is a green, leafy plant; that is, it possesses the green pigment, chlorophyll, which gives the green color to normal vegetation. The presence of green leaves indicates that the mistletoe has the power, which independent green plants everywhere possess, of constructing organic foodstuffs, such as starch, out of inorganic compounds, carbon dioxide and water, utilizing sunlight as the source of energy in the process. It is, therefore, only partly a parasite so far as dependence upon its host for food is concerned, but it is none the less harmful on that account.

Dumplings for stew.
One pint flour, 3/4 teaspoonful salt, 2 heaping teaspoonfuls of baking powder, sifted together four times. Mix with one cupful of rich milk; drop by spoonfuls into the boiling stew; cover tight and do not open for 15 minutes, when they should be done. These may also be dropped on a buttered plate and cooked in a steamer over fast-boiling water, and served with stewed cranberries or any stewed fruit.

Sparkle on the Tree



Small horns of paper or tin wound with bright crepe paper and tied with sparkling tinsel, that falls in tassels from them, are among the new Christmas tree ornaments that any one can make.

Three Gifts for Men



Small and unimportant gifts are the kind that make Christmas merry. Here are three of them that men will appreciate. They are an astonished gentleman, with painted face, made of a ball of twine and wearing a stiff white collar and tie of paper, a pair of painted and initialed shoe-trees and a croton-covered ash tray, fitted with a glass bottom.