



PEOPLE WHO HAVE NO CHRISTMAS
PHOTOS BY A STAFF ARTIST

MAHA, like every large city, contains many people to whom Christmas is but a word. They will have small part in the holiday cheer. The roast turkey will not be for them; many don't know the meaning of ingle-nook, while the soft glow of the wood fire in the grate, the cozy chimney corner and the pleasure of entertaining the guest are but fragments, of use only to make atmosphere for an old English ghost story.

And these are not necessarily the poor of the city's population. In these days of systematic charities there are few indeed whose destitution places them beyond the pale of Yuletide cheer. It is rather those whose duties compel them to work 365 days in the year and for whom Sunday, Christmas or the Fourth of July has no significance which does not attach to any other day of the cycle. These, who represent fully one-fourth of the city's working population, realize fully that Christmas, electricity and steam do not mix. They understand that the times are so swift nowadays that they acquire such an impetus between stations that the airbrakes don't take effect until the holiday is left out of sight around the curve. And then there's nothing to stop for.

No Rest for the Trainmen.

So the soldiers and sailors, in dreary camps "under alien skies," are not the only ones entitled to a nation's thoughts at this cheerful season. There are the railroad and street railway trainmen, for instance, and the hundreds employed in round house, switch yard and car barn. They must do their day's work, because there is traffic, passenger and freight to be attended to on Christmas as any other day. So they work almost within smell of the Christmas feast, yet may not partake of it.

"Passenger traffic usually is not as heavy on Christmas as on other days of the year," said an old locomotive engineer the other day, as he oiled up preparatory to taking

out his train. "As a general thing people don't like to travel on Christmas and they seldom do unless it's in case of death or sickness. But this rule applies more particularly to the through trains. The local trains, those that stop at nearly all of the small stations along the line, carry a good many persons who have gone to eat Christmas dinner at the home of some friend or relative in a neighboring town. This is pretty tough on the conductor and brakemen, who have to sit and listen to stories about festivities that they can't share, but after a man has been away from home a few years, living at boarding houses and restaurants, he don't mind it much. Besides, those of us that are married usually find a little of the Christmas left over when we get home."

A motorman, who had stood at the controller of his car through several holiday seasons, was of the opinion that Christmas makes little difference in his business. "We carry just about as many people on that day as any other," said he, "and, except that the crowds are as a rule better dressed than on the ordinary week day, you wouldn't know it was Christmas. They're all going to and from church or to and from the home of some friend, where they have taken dinner. In the evening the traffic is generally pretty heavy, as it seems that nearly every other family in the residence districts is entertaining a party of friends."

Police Walk Their Beats.

It is probable that those connected in various ways with transportation facilities constitute the most numerous class of all the great army of workers who are kept away from their firesides on Christmas day. The next in point of numerical strength, perhaps, is made up of policemen, firemen and private watchmen. They know no day and no night, to say nothing of a holiday. An Omaha bluecoat has observed in his long experience that Christmas eve and Christmas night afford favorable opportunities for burglaries because so

many in the residence districts are away from home until early in the morning. "During the day, though," he added, "Christmas is usually as quiet in our line as the average Sunday. The 'plain drunk' is the only kind of a misdemeanor that gives us much trouble. But there are usually lots of 'plain drunks.' The temptation to stow away Tom and Jerry and hot Scotch on Christmas is too strong to be resisted, especially by those who are feeling blue because they can't celebrate the day in a more satisfactory manner."

Telephone girls and telegraph operators must patiently pursue the routine of their duties and juggle lightning while the church choirs are singing hosannas. The big mercantile establishments which furnish most of the work for the telegraph companies are resting Christmas, so there is not the usual rush of business, but the wires are kept busy, nevertheless, flashing greetings and congratulations for the Christmas wedding is on in a thousand cities and hamlets throughout the land. The same in a measure is true of the telephone company.

"It is the party line that is busiest on Christmas day," said a telephone girl, "and it is used mostly by children and young people engaged in arranging the details for house-warmings. The downtown offices and stores being closed for the most part we're not bothered much from that source."

Hungry Must Be Fed.

Of all persons who are in a position to study human nature on Christmas the waiters in hotel and restaurant are perhaps the best situated, though no doubt they find such research a poor substitute for the comforts of the family circle. A waitress in a downtown restaurant says: "It's enough to give one the blues to see the faces of those we have to serve on Christmas. It isn't that the dinner isn't good enough, because the restaurants, even the cheapest of them, aim to set out something a little extra on that day. But the people

who have to take their dinners at a public house are all absent-minded. You can easily see that their thoughts are a thousand miles away, more or less, probably with the company about the table at the old homestead. As a usual thing they don't linger long at their meals. They sit down at a table by themselves, if possible and generally get as far away from the street as they can. Then they mince over a few dishes, stare at the ceiling, drum on the cloth and go away."

Nurses in the hospitals and in the sick rooms of private homes have a dreary time of it on Christmas, as invalids are disposed to be somewhat peevish on that day. "We can always count on a hard day's work Christmas," said one of them. "The house is full of visitors from morning till night. Some come bringing flowers and others things to eat. The food never fails to be disastrous to patients on diet, but most of them plead so hard to be permitted to eat it that we haven't the heart to refuse."

Other Busy Bodies.

The smelter employes have read of New England's yule logs, roast goose, holly, plum pudding and mistletoe, but they know that to let the fire go out in the furnace will be disastrous, so they keep on shoveling coal and try to forget that it's Christmas. Cigar dealers and drug clerks represent another large class which sit in darkness on the occasion of the Savior's natal day. Theatrical people try to be a little more vivacious than usual, but the afternoon matinee gives little time for the digestion of a dinner.

In addition to these, there is the man who operates the steam heating plant. Some of the tenants may think to carry a plate of good things into his dungeon, but this is enjoying Christmas under difficulties. Then, there are those who work in the operating department of the water-works, the men who toil for the electric light and gas companies, the phlegmatic

driver of the public conveyance and, finally, the preacher. Christmas to him means the day when he is to deliver his carefully prepared sermons, both morning and evening.

Christmas Eve

Sir Walter Scott, in "Marmion,"
On Christmas Eve the bells were rung;
On Christmas Eve the mass was sung;
That only night, in all the year,
Saw the staid priest the chalice rear.
The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;
The hall was dressed with holly green;
Forth to the wood did merry-men go,
To gather in the mistletoe.
Then opened wide the baron's hall
To kinsal, tenant, serf and all;
Power laid his rod of rule aside,
And Ceremony doffed his pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner choose.
The lord, undercoating, share
The vulgar game of "post and pair."
The vulgar game of "post and pair."
By old blue-coated serving man;
And general voice, the happy night,
That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down!
The fire, with well dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide;
The huge hall table's oaken face,
Scrubbed till it shone, the day to grace,
Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and lord.
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,
By old blue-coated serving man;
Then the grim boar's head frowned on high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.
Well can the green-barged ranger tell,
How, when and where the monster fell;
What dogs before his death he tore,
And all the baiting of the boar.
The wassal round in good brown bowls,
Garnished with ribbons, blithely trowls.
There the huge airloin rocked hard by
Plum porridge stood, and Christmas-pye;
Nor failed old Scotland to produce,
At such high-tide, her savoury goose.
Then came the merry masquers in,
And carols roared with blithesome din;
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note, and strong.
Who lists may in their mummings see
Traces of ancient mystery;
White skirts supplied the masquerade,
And smutted cheeks the visors made;
But oh! what masquers, richly dight,
Can boast of bosoms half so light!
England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'Twas Christmas brought the merriest ale;
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.