

CHRISTMAS IN THE SWISS ALPS

While nearly all the rest of Europe is bleeding to death the sturdy citizens of the mountain republic enjoy their glorious winter sports



NEAR ST. MORITZ, THE FAMOUS RESORT



A GETTING FOR WINTER SPORT

ONLY three years ago the advent of winter in the Swiss Alps was the long expected signal for the city dwellers of all parts of the world to journey forth to that beautiful land, where the season of white is the jolliest time of the year, says the Washington Star. Then came the war, cruel, devastating and ever-spreading. With wizardlike swiftness Switzerland mobilized her army and ever since the ancient Helvetian republic has been described as "an island of peace in a sea of war."

To those who know her, Switzerland in summer represents a master study in artistic color combinations; Switzerland in winter, however, is a totally different vision, radiant in dazzling, spotless white. Jack Frost has imprinted a silencing kiss upon the babbling lips of every tiny brook and mountain stream, and glistening sheets of the bluest ice cover also the limpid blue eyes of ponds and Alpine lakes. While mother earth is thus wrapped in a wonderful mantle of ice and snow, the sky above has assumed the matchless hue of a precious sapphire, and the always delicious mountain air seems to have acquired some additional qualities which rejuvenate and strengthen the whole human system and which instill into every being, young or old, an inexplicable feeling of light-hearted happiness. Very shortly, one finds everybody interested and engaged in some form of winter sport.

There is skating, of course, but many games compete now with this oldest of sports on the ice, which has, however, been developed into an art which charms the onlooker by the gracefulness of its movements, and again astonishes by the cool daring of its swift rushes.

As in summer over the lawn, so flies the tennis ball over the ice in the game of hockey. Curlers are frantically sweeping their "stones" toward the coveted goal, and the unlimited diversity of gymnastic stunts offers constant amusement for the players as well as for the onlookers.

The improved appliances for sport requirements have nearly ousted the old-fashioned herdsmen's sleds which are now only occasionally used by timid beginners. The up-to-date vehicle is the so-called skeleton, a low, yard-long toboggan, on which the rider lies flat, steering the craft with hands and feet. Like an arrow, it darts up the lead walls of the curves, and as the bewildered spectator fearfully anticipates an accident, the toboggan shoots down into the furrow and around a beautifully shaped curve.

One of the most attractive and certainly a very social sport is bob-sleighing. Long, low, padded toboggans seating as many as six persons are used and under this heavy burden the bob-sleigh shoots down its course with amazing speed. As the leader sways, almost automatically, the close-

ly crowded team bend themselves, so guiding the sleigh to the right or left; they apply a brake by letting themselves drop on the snow, or drive to greater swiftness by bending forward like jockeys. Strong iron spikes which are driven by a lever into the ice enable the leader to stop the vehicle almost instantly, but a sudden application of these brakes whirls up the ice and snow in clouds.

Skiing has taken root to an extraordinary extent in Switzerland; even the poorest youth does not want to do without skis, though they might consist of only a couple of crudely adjusted barrel staves. Thanks to the ski, the boys and girls living on remotely situated farms are now able to attend school every day; their parents are no longer isolated for the best part of the long winter months, and, thanks also to the "wooden wings of Norway," the mail and newspapers can be delivered regularly.

Sport is furthermore made easier by the different mountain railways, which in winter run toboggan trains. Thus one can travel a couple of stations upward and arrive at a starting point on a mountain road without exertion and without waste of time. Then one descends to the valley on toboggan, ski or skates, or vice versa, goes down first and returns by train to winter quarters.

Races, competitions, ski excursions, sleigh drives, ice carnivals and an equal variety of fascinating indoor entertainments transplant the happy winter visitor into a totally different world where sorrow and care seem to be banished and where every human being seems to realize that the best life after all is found right next to nature's heart.

But Christmas in Switzerland does not only indicate the time when winter sports are beginning to be at their best; it signifies for the natives a period full of sacred mystery and the anniversary of many a day particularly specified in ancient legends.

In many parts of the country the Yuletide customs and festivities still have their beginning on December 6, which is the anniversary of St. Nicholas. Markets and fairs are then held in villages and cities, and seeing that the old traditions prescribe for this day the purchasing of presents for the children, it is an event of utmost importance to all youngsters. In some districts St. Nicholas parades around in person, in an attire very similar to that of our American Santa Claus, generally carrying a bag filled with apples, prunes, nuts and homemade cookies which he distributes among the children who have been obedient during the year.

The next and in modern days the most important festive day of the whole Yule season is Christmas. History relates that it was only in the year 354 that the Roman Bishop Liberius designated December 25 as the birthday of Christ, as the Romans regarded this particular day as the birthday of the sun, and as they were

furthermore desirous of giving more religious importance to two important Roman festivals which also fell due in the same period. With the observation of Christmas day the Christkindli, described "as a lovely angel with wings," gradually started to take old Santa's place in many sections of Switzerland. Christkindli, the Christ Child, is said to come from the far North and always brings a wonderful Christmas tree, decorated with all the glittering things associated with fairyland and heavily laden with manifold gifts.

A pretty legend about the origin of the Christmas tree tells us that in the beginning of the ninth century a certain St. Winfried went to preach Christianity to the people in Scandinavia and northern Germany. One Christmas eve these people were gathered round a huge oak to offer a human sacrifice, according to the Druid priests, but St. Winfried hewed down the great tree, and as it fell there appeared in its place a tall young fir. When St. Winfried saw it he cried to the people that here was come a new tree, unstained by blood, which, in pointing to the sky, showed them what they were to worship.

"It is the Christ Child," he said. "Carry it to the castle of your chief, and in future, instead of the bloody rites of the Druids, your worship shall be in your own homes, with ceremonies that speak the message of peace and good will to all. A day will come when there shall not be a house in the North wherein on the birthday of Christ the whole family shall not gather together round the fir tree in memory of this day and to the glory of the only God."

In many parts of Switzerland the peasants are still fervent believers in mystic powers and supernatural occurrences which ancient traditions have reported to be prevalent during Christmas-time.

And when the happy Christmas days are over, there comes New Year's eve, with its jolly social and family gatherings and its marvelously effective ringing-in of the New Year, when all the church bells throughout the land are lifting up their voices for half an hour.

While Christmas of 1919 will hardly be a general day of rejoicing in many a great country in Europe, Switzerland is preparing to celebrate it in her usual way. There will be less laughter in the valleys and fewer brilliant festivities in the fashionable winter resorts above the clouds. Brotherly love and sympathy for her bleeding neighbors could not will it otherwise, but Switzerland is grateful to the fate which has so far, in spite of everything, been kind to her, and with gratitude and love she will think and take care of her soldiers watching at the front, and she will open wide her already generous heart to the many refugees whom she is sheltering and to the destitute, homeless wanderers passing through the country, to make them feel that Christmas is after all the most wonderful day of the year.

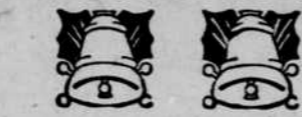
the undisturbed assurance of God himself that this thing is omnipotently provided for. Then the word "difficulty" will always and only mean your fresh triumph.—Sunday School Times.

Knew What He Was Doing.
The Photographer—"Merciful heavens, Mr. Spiffkin, can't you look a little more cheerful?" Mr. Spiffkin—"Not for this picture. I'm to send it to my wife, who is away on a visit, and if I looked too cheerful she'd take the first train home."—Puck.

shall need him to light us through the valley of shadows. Our prayer should be: "Abide with us, for it is toward evening." Then his coming will bring light and joy.—J. M. Miller.

Courageous Tommy.
Mother—"Tommy, if you eat any more of that pudding you will eat a bogie man tonight." Tommy (after a moment's reflection)—"Well, give me some more, anyhow. I might as well set my mind at rest about that story, once and for all."

Thoughts on Christmas



LAURA JEAN LIBBEY

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Christmas Wants and Worries

Do you grieve no costly offering To the lady you can make? One there is, and gifts less worthy Queens have stooped to take— The gift of a loving heart.

CHRISTMAS is coming. It is almost here. The thought brings joy to most hearts. Yet there are some in whose cup worry is mixed with pleasure. The woman of slender means who has a large number of relatives, friends and acquaintances notes the advance of that holiday with no little apprehension. It means gift giving. There's Aunt Sally's family of seven. She could not give to one without slighting the others. The same rule holds good with Brother James' family of six and Uncle Abner's family of 11, including the new baby. Her husband's relatives are quite as important. His brothers and his sisters, his cousins and his aunts, have to be remembered, and all of the little fry.

Then, there's a score of women at the club. They always send her a trifle and must be remembered in return. Altogether they foot up to over 100 gifts. Her own niece hints that she hopes Santa will bring her a pair of nice long kid party gloves. To be sure, they cost four-fifty, but they will last the whole season.

His Cousin Bess declares that she wouldn't thank Santa for anything less than a set of gold bracelets. She has been pricing them and finds that they cost from \$40 up. Hubby's mother has been piping for a new bonnet, while her own mother stands badly in need of a new pair of spectacles, a dress and a little check to help her out with her dental work. Her own children are talking about sleds, hoops, dolls, skates, etc.

The worried woman reckons it up backward and forward. It would take something like \$1,000 to cover their wants. Hubby hands out \$20 to buy Christmas gifts. With fear and trembling, she shows her list—and the cost. What he says we wouldn't dare repeat. Putting his arm around his wife, the practical man of the world gives her a bit of wholesome advice, saying: "If your relatives and friends keep in with you and only care-for you for the Christmas presents they receive, you can do very well without them. It is pleasant to remember your mother and mine with gifts each as costly as our means will permit. An inexpensive card with a cheery Christmas greeting will show the others that they were in your thoughts and should be appreciated." When Christmas giving is a drain it should not be indulged in. If others' wants bring you worries gift-making is robbed of its hearty joy.

Coming to Mother's Tree

An exile 'tome in heart and fame, A wanderer weary of the way; A stranger without love's sweet claim On any heart, go where I may.

NO MATTER how far away from home one may be when the holidays approach there is an intense longing in the heart to take a flying trip back to home and mother, though it be only for a day—that one day of all the year, Christmas. You know just how beautifully the table will be spread in the low-ceilinged, old-fashioned dining room that's turned into living room when the dishes are cleared away and the fringed, flower-besprikled worsted tablecloth takes the place of the white one. There's sure to be a Christmas tree in one corner of the room. Mother never misses having that. There's always a little present on it for each of her boys and girls—no matter how old they may be—even though they're married and far away.

It's hard to tell which misses mother most—the single man, living a rover's life, tossed by unkind fate from post to pillar, or the girl who left home years ago, in her teens, to better her fortunes in the great city. The man wanders through the streets of a strange town. He stops to look in the shop windows, bright with Yuletide toys upon a Christmas tree. "Just ten days till Christmas" reads the card upon it. He looks wistfully and thinks of home, mother and the Christmas tree she is sure to have there. Then and there he makes a desperate resolve to go home.

The white-haired woman bending over her loom in the factory, threads her way quickly through the holiday crowds to her lonely room in the basement. Flinging herself down in a chair, she covers her face with her hands. The present drifts from her. She slips into the past. Once more she is bidding mother good-bye by the day after Christmas. Father, sisters, brothers are there. Life in the city has not fulfilled her golden dreams. She secured employment—not to teach children to play on the melodeon which she understood so well, but in a factory with wages scarcely sufficient to keep soul and body together. Each year she hoped for better things, while the roses faded from her cheeks and her brown locks turned to gray. She had barely enough in her purse to pay for one month's room rent. It was always demanded in advance. Suddenly the resolve came to her so strong that she could not resist—she would go home to the scenes of her childhood, back to home and mother, and stand once more before her Christmas tree. She makes the start before her courage gives out. No wonder Christmas is a happy time. It is a family gathering, heart to heart.

God bless Christmas day!

Wrong Christmas Spirit

They ne'er considered it as loath To look a gift horse in the mouth, And very wisely would lay forth No more upon it than 'twas worth.

IF THOSE who have striven so hard to make holiday giving pleasing for others only knew of the spirit with which it is oftentimes received, it would nip much of the pleasure out of the old, time-honored custom. It would be laughable were it not so pathetic in many an instance. The wife of the clerk living in modest apartments hears the expressman's rap on the door with a thrill of pleasure. His well-to-do Aunt Hanna, from the country, has sent them an immense Christmas box.

"I do hope it's a lace centerpiece for the dining-room table, a handsome carving set, a silk dress pattern or a set of furs. I hinted so strongly to her when she was here last those were the things I hoped Santa would bring us." Hubby could not cut the strings fast enough to suit the kiddies, who gathered, open-eyed, about the great box. A note lay on top, stating that auntie had made everything in the box with her own hands. The wife's shriek of anger was drowned in the shrill cry of delight by the little ones as package after package was unwrapped. There was a canvas doll with a pretty hand-painted face that baby could fling around as much as she pleased without injury. There were scarlet knitted caps and mittens for Johnnie, a knitted sweater for Dick, a soft, fleecy wool scarf for the mother of the kiddies, and three pairs of knitted socks for their father.

"Was there ever such a lot of old frumpery as that expensively old woman has sent us? I wouldn't give them house room," declared the wife. "Aunt means well. I wouldn't give them house room," declared the wife. "Many a long, weary hour those dear old hands have spent in fashioning those gifts which you find so unwelcome."

Another ring at the bell. "It's from your mother," exclaimed the wife excitedly. "Now we shall be apt to get something of some account." The children, hearing that, held their breaths.

The package disclosed a toy engine for Baby Sue, who had never seen an engine or ridden on a train; a pair of riding boots for Master Johnnie, aged ten, who never had a horse to ride, with no prospect of ever owning such an animal; a pair of French vases for the wife, together with a pair of pink satin, be-ribboned bedroom slippers; a coat-and-trouser hanger for the head of the household.

The wife was so angry she could only sit down and cry. "What does a woman, living in a third-floor rear flat want of satin bedroom slippers?" she demanded. "I'll pitch them all out." Her husband quoted slowly: I never cast a flower away, A flower, a faded flower, A gift of one who cared for me, But it was done reluctantly.

STORE HONEY IN DRY PLACE

Do Not Make Mistake of Placing it in Cellar or Refrigerator—Get Bees Out of Supers.

After the flow is over and the honey has had a little time to ripen it can be taken from the bees and stored or marketed. Do not make the mistake of storing honey in cellars or refrigerators, for heat is better for it than cold. A dry pantry is a good place to keep it.

Set Late Cabbage.
Late cabbage may be set on the land that the old strawberry plants grew on if the ground is plowed at once.

HIS HAPPY SOLUTION.



NOW WHAT WILL I GET HER FOR CHRISTMAS?



AN AUTO WOULD BE NICE, BUT SHE MIGHT BREAK HER NECK WITH IT.



THEN THERE'S A SET OF FURS, BUT THEN HER HANDS WOULD BE SO WARM SHE WOULDN'T LET ME HOLD 'EM.



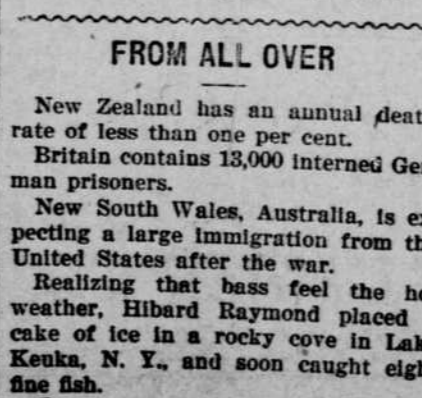
COME IN



IF YOU DON'T PAY UP YOUR FOUR WEEKS BOARD, OUT YOU GO.



OH WELL, CHRISTMAS PRESENTS ALWAYS CAUSE HARD FEELINGS ANYHOW.



FROM ALL OVER

New Zealand has an annual death rate of less than one per cent. Britain contains 13,000 interned German prisoners. New South Wales, Australia, is expecting a large immigration from the United States after the war. Realizing that bass feel the hot weather, Hilbard Raymond placed a cake of ice in a rocky cove in Lake Keuka, N. Y., and soon caught eight fine fish.

TO PURIFY WATER

BLEACHING POWDER WILL KILL UNPLEASANT ODOR.

Not a Hard Task, Nor Expensive, to Remove Disagreeable Smell From the Contents of Cistern, Says Prof. Newman.

If the cistern water has a disagreeable odor it can be made sweet and usable by treating with bleaching powder, according to P. J. Newman, assistant professor of chemistry in the Kansas State Agricultural college.

"The rain water as it comes from the roof is laden with micro-organisms, which under the right temperature conditions, grow and multiply," said Professor Newman. "When summer rains are allowed to run into the cistern this ideal temperature of these organisms proceeds rapidly. The unpleasant odor is due mainly to the life processes and decay of the bacteria." Bleaching powder, or calcium hypochlorite, can be purchased in any drug store at from 20 to 30 cents a pound. One-third to one-fourth of a pound is sufficient to treat 50 to 100 barrels of water.

The powder as it comes from the store is placed in a pail or any convenient receptacle, which is then filled with water. The mixture is stirred for a few minutes until no more of the powder will dissolve, and is allowed to settle. The mixture is then poured into the cistern.

Some of the powder will remain undissolved in the bottom of the pail. Pour in more water and repeat the process as many times as may be necessary to dissolve all the powder. Where possible it is preferable to agitate the water in the cistern while the bleaching mixture is being poured in. When used in the proportion indicated the powder is not in sufficient quantity to make the water unfit for use, nor is it dangerous in any way. It acts simply as a deodorizer and a germicide.

Jellied Veal.
One of the most delicate of all meat dishes, and one that could tempt the most dainty appetite, is jellied veal. This calls for a shin of veal. In ordering it stipulate that you want the bone well cracked. Put it all in a large kettle and just cover with water. Let it boil slowly till the meat falls from the bone. Strain off the liquor and set the meat and the liquor aside to cool. When this has occurred chop the meat very fine and add a little pepper, salt and vinegar to the liquor. Now pour this over the chopped meat, mix and pour into a dish that has been lined with slices of hard-boiled eggs. The loaf should be allowed to harden for about twenty-four hours before being served. It should then be turned on a platter and garnished with lemons or olives.

Little Fruit Puddings.
Use canned strawberries, blueberries or cut-up oranges or bananas, dried peaches or apples. Three cupfuls flour, one large tablespoonful butter, salt to taste, two tablespoonfuls sugar, enough to make thick batter, add your cupful of fruit. Fill small cups well greased two-thirds full. Place in your steamer for 30 minutes. Serve with hard butter sauce like this: Large spoonful butter, two tablespoonfuls powdered sugar mixed to a cream.

Beef and French Beans.
Pepper and salt about three pounds of brisket, put it in a stew pan with two ounces of butter and three sliced onions. Cover the pan and fry gently for 20 minutes. Then add one-half pint of water and two pounds of French beans (cut). Stew gently for four hours. Mix one tablespoonful of flour and one tablespoonful of brown sugar with a small cupful of vinegar and add this to the stew 20 minutes before serving.

Sour Cream Cocoa Cake.
Two eggs, beaten light, cup white sugar, little salt, one-half cupful thick sour cream with one-half teaspoonful soda; stirred in till it foams, two teaspoonfuls of cocoa, one of vanilla, cup and half (large) of pastry flour, and one-half teaspoonful of cream of tartar. In a dessert spoonful of cider vinegar, last thing before putting in pan. Bake in hot-toot-hot oven about thirty-five minutes.

Boiled Dressing for Cabbage.
Beat the yolks of three eggs, one-half teaspoonful of mustard, two tablespoonfuls of sugar, one-half teaspoonful of salt. Add three tablespoonfuls of butter and five tablespoonfuls of vinegar. Stir all together and cook in a double boiler until it is thick and creamy. Cool before putting it on the cabbage. Have the cabbage shredded very fine, with an onion and red or green pepper.

Compoite of Apples.
Pare and core and cut into halves six large, fine apples. To each pound add one pound of sugar, rind of two lemons and a little vinegar. Cook covered for one hour. Add one-half cupful cider and boil for half an hour, then stir in a spoonful of vanilla and let cool, arranged in a dish. Serve with whipped cream and garnish of cherries and citron.

Breakfast Pie.
Put a layer of mashed potatoes in bottom of baking dish, dot with butter and sprinkle with salt and white pepper. Add a little of the breast meat of chicken, or the white meat of any other fowl. Over this put a covering of mashed potatoes, butter sparingly and bake until top is lightly browned.

Orange Icing for Honey Cake.
Mix grated rind of one orange, one teaspoonful lemon juice, one tablespoonful orange juice and one egg yolk together, and allow the mixture to stand for an hour. Strain and add confectioner's sugar until the frosting is sufficiently thick to be spread on the cake.