

The SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS



Columbine.

On the left, just past the weather hen's nest, and not more than two steps from the box where they keep the cuckoo, there is the long bed where roses bloom all the year round. And they grow like this so that Columbine may always have one to stick in her hair, and that odd, mocking, soft-hearted coddle, Pierrot may cull one now and again to twiddle between his teeth.

If you know the way, and the Cheshire cat will let you, you walk down the garden path, past the butterfly lime, and arrive at the nearest little cottage in Olympus.

Now this is the dwelling place of the Harlequin set—Harlequin, Columbine, Clown and Pantaloon. It is one cottage in a little colony on the lower slopes of Mount Olympus (where the high gods dwell: Jupiter and the like), and is most important because it contains the oldest inhabitants.

The Clerk of the Weather lives a little higher up. The Four Queens and Kings live in a square of pagoda-like houses, and are lived upon by the Knaves. Pierrot and Pierrette live in romantic seclusion by a pool in a tumble-down place covered with blue roses. And away behind the fields of stars where the flocks of clouds graze, there is another village where the Seven Princesses live, and the Third Son and an Ogre, and a Talking Rabbit, and all those peculiar and beautiful people who are entangled in our minds with the memories of night nurseries, and the scent of our mothers who bent over us in wonderful toilettes, and told us to go to sleep, or they'd be late for dinner.

When it gets to be about Christmas there is a sort of aroma of excitement on the lower slopes of Olympus, and, especially in the house where Harlequin lives—a delicious sense of something exciting happening.

Columbine opens the lid of the well that looks down onto the world, and there comes up a murmur of children's voices, and you can hear the quaintest things being said about the hanging up of stockings, and about Santa Claus and the likely width of chimneys, and the running power of reindeer. And there is a tremendous rustle of colored paper, and a great run on almonds and raisins, and quite respectable citizens stand in front of shop windows gazing at dolls and dolls gaze back at them, so that the citizens go back forty years at a rush, and the rush is so great sometimes that they get tears in their eyes; for memory is quicker than motor cars, and the road it travels is often dark and broken.

So Columbine leaves the top of the well open all day and all night, and all the people in her cottage sleep with their windows open, so that the sweetly laden air comes up and gives them wonderful dreams. It does more than that. It waves the branches of the Christmas tree that grows at the bottom of the garden, near the sausage frames, and very soon candles begin to bud on its branches.

Now when the candles begin to get ripe, which happens at the same time that geese and turkeys hang in rows in shops and grow rosettes all over them, Harlequin takes an old, oaken pipe from a cupboard under the stairs, and they all sit round while he puts it to his lips and blows.

As he plays, dreams come to them of their ancient days, for Harlequin is first cousin to Mercury, and wears a black mask to hide the light of his face when he visits Columbine, who is Psyche, the Soul; the Clown is Momus, the Spirit of Laughter; and Pantaloon is Charon, who has that grim work of ferrying the souls over the Styx.

There's an odd link of memories and of things held all through the centuries, but the most charming is this: Columbine is a flower-like person, and there is a flower called Columbine, and it is so called because it is like four doves with outspread wings, and the French dove is colombe, and the dove is the symbol of the soul. So the world is never allowed to forget beautiful things, even if the burden of history is borne on the back of a flower. And the god-like glow and glitter of Mercury's limbs still shows in the glistening sequins on Harlequin's clothes, parti-colored as they have always been, to show how he covered his nakedness with rags.

All this, beautified by the essence of Time, like things put away in a cedar chest, comes back when Harlequin blows on his pipe that air the shepherds learnt in Greece from Pan.

The next night Clown will take out another kind of pipe, a long churchwarden of white clay, and fill it with tobacco, and then as the fragrant clouds roll up into the rafters, memories come of all the great people of the Harlequinades they play down in the world, all inspired by them, and they see the figure of Tarlatan, who was the first clown, and invented the very clothes they now wear, hand in hand with Grimaldi, that great clown. And they seem to see all the great Italian Harlequins, and the dainty French Columbines, and the old dandies of fifteenth-century Venice whose clothes Pantaloon wears.

Do you know that elderly gentlemen in the World smell that magic tobacco, or something like it, and they forget their paunches, or their bald heads, and they sit and dream of the time they went to their first pantomime? Was it "Cinderella," or "Beauty and the Beast"? Or was it that splendid thing "Mother Goose," or that entrancing production "The Yellow Dwarf"?

Such things are conjured up by just that one pipe of tobacco smoked in the cottage on Olympus, and on that night a gentle breeze blows up through the well, laden with the poignant, eternal memories of childhood, and the candles on the Christmas tree are



Pantaloon.

all ready to be lighted. They are so ready that when Pantaloon looks out of his window before making up his face for the day he sees that the candles have burst into flame-flowers in the night.

Then Columbine takes out a pipe, and she puts some magic soap into nectar and stirs it round with the bowl of the pipe until frothy suds appear. And then she blows bubbles that float up and out of the window until they reach the Christmas tree, when they turn into great, glittering glass balls, all sorts of colors, and show pictures of the world all colored and shining.

The children in the World look up and think they see Harlequin and Columbine floating down as gently as feathers, but they don't say so because their elders would only tell them it was the clouds. But it is Harlequin and Columbine, and Pantaloon and Clown follow soon after, bringing the tree with them.

Now they're each to his Columbine to preparing that must this season, easily as a in a breeze, his magic, things must tiful now, must buy the Indies. And stirring up old memories in dull people, so that uncles must remember all their nephews in remembering when they were nephews themselves, and had a peculiar hunger at Christmas.

Columbine is awfully practical. Her sentiment extends from the joy of watching the making of baby-clothes to the pleasure of remembering to put nice soap in the spare rooms. It is she who sees that children get the right presents, and when they don't it is not her fault, but the fault of some stupid person in a shop.

It is she who suggests the secret delight of keeping presents hidden at the bottom of the wardrobe; and it is she who suggests the secret delight of peering at children when they are asleep.



There are Pagan Saints who find Arcadia everywhere. Pan pipes as much in the crowded city as on Mount Ida when the sun is high. And Columbine finds roses where the world sees thorns; and Harlequin finds magic in motor 'buses; and Pantaloon digs away for pleasant memories in the most unlikely places, and finds them bright and clean, and as good as new.

These half-gods of mine (and yours) come down at Christmas to correct the billious attitude of the rest of the year. They come to sow those seeds that grow to flowers in the hearts. They give a man instead of a being that the weights' moment had up his stock-mas Eve, and feels like to but a hole in it in the morning.

And when it is dark these four quaint figures flit through the country, city, town and village like conspirators, Harlequin tapping doors and windows with his magic wand. "Open, open!" he cries to the Spirit of Christmas. "Let the rich uncle reward his needy nephew, and the unforbearing father his repentant son. Mothers, forget to be jealous of your elder daughter's growing beauty. Children, forget your spite and naughtiness. Let's be old-fashioned. Let's believe in ghosts. I'll tell you ghost-stories, stories of yourselves when you were children and played Pirates on the stairs.

And Clown says as he taps on the doors with his red-hot poker:

"Open, open, you old grousers! And let the Spirit of Fun come into this house. Romp a bit, and lose your twopenny dignity, for pompous stiffness makes the gods laugh."

Pantaloon, taking his turn, taps with his walking-stick, and says:

"Open, open, and let in the flood of memories

of the good old times! Holly and mistletoe and robins, and church bells sounding over the snow. And hampers all packed to be sent away, and plenty to eat at home.

And then Columbine steals up to the windows, and taps them with the rose from her hair, and she whispers:

"Open, open to me all you who have no children and no friends and no hope, and I will be the warm, nestling thing you covet for your frozen hearts, and you shall feel my soft cheek against yours till the tears come and your heart takes life again. You shall give joy to other people's children. And if you have no friends who have children, are there not a thousand, thousand children who have no friends? Go to them, and give them all you can, and you will be rewarded almost more than you can bear, for there is a link between those who suffer. Are there not some you have forgotten or neglected? This lonely man, that lonely woman whom you have left uncared for, perhaps for years. Put on your hat and your coat, and put your heart on your sleeve, so that all may know your errand."

To see her pleading before black, sombre houses where a thin light shines under a blind; to see her face pressed against the window of some big mansion where a man or a woman sits alone with hearts like stone; to see her tears as she essays to melt an aching heart is to see something so touching and beautiful that one almost wonders the doors and windows are not instantly opened to admit the spirit of love she begs for so pitifully.

"Look at yourselves, Messieurs et Mesdames Importance, and remember the funny little things you used to be when you bit at coral and bells, and wore bibs, and thought everybody in the world had enough to eat; when you hated to go to bed early, and crept downstairs in your night-gowns to listen over the bannisters to the voices in the dining room; when no jam for tea was a tragedy. And when your mother's knee was the throne of justice and mercy, for you buried your head there with her hand in your hair, and forgot to be afraid of the dark."

Columbine has her own very particular work, and she calls it in her mind Secret Delights. She calls it that because she delights in making up odd names for emotions, as, for instance, when she pointed out two lovers to me one day in the spring, who were seated under a hedge, yellow-flushed with primroses; they were holding hands and looking at the hills beyond just as if some wonderful thing was about to come over the hills to tell them what their feelings meant. And the peace was so great and the moment so held that the World seemed to have stopped breathing, and something superhuman to have poured out a cup of stillness. And she called it Liquid Velvet. A Liquid Velvet moment. And I understood.

It is Columbine who watches that beautiful comedy of the newly married, who steal about their house hand-in-hand, fearful of waking the very new servants, fearful of creaking the boards as they gaze enraptured on the very new furniture, looking with joy on the very new pots and pans in the kitchen, turning the electric lights up and down all over the place to see the effect in their new bedroom. And he has a dreadful brooch for her hidden where he keeps his razors; and she has knitted him a tie he will have to wear. But it is all perfectly beautiful.

Someone wrote the other day that people who read are more interested, nowadays, in business than in love, and I'm so sorry for that man. He is more blind than I thought anybody could be. Business may be the means to an end, but Love is the beginning and the end. And it is just at this season that Love makes business; hence the shops full of gifts. Imagine a poet writing:

"Cent. per cent. the moon is rising,
Watch the stocks upon the bank;
Rubber shares are too surprising,
Speculators are surmising
Who the deuce they have to thank!"

No one can get a heartbeat out of that, and whatever your business man says, he knows he gets all the good in his life out of heartbeats.

So this Christmas Spirit creeps about the world, mocked at, scorned, but alive yet. And you who feel these things may one night see this quaint quartet at work, perhaps for a second at the corner of your street, perhaps just vanishing down the drive, or moving swiftly down a country lane. And you may say wonderingly: "It is a cobweb, a moth, and the branch of a tree, and the starlight makes them look like—like something I remember."

But I tell you who they are—Harlequin, Columbine, Clown and Pantaloon. And if you hear a child's laugh ring out suddenly, and it brings a new, quick emotion, one of them has conquered you!

The spirit of Christmas doesn't cling to presents in proportion to their cost—unless you are very rich; and if you are very rich the voice of the jeweler and of the furrier and of the motor car maker will seem to you as wise as the word of a happy poor man, though he were a philosopher.

Simple and genuine and glad—strike these notes and the chimes will be very melodiously for you and for those whom you try to make happy. And remember, you can't feign Christmas without being caught as an impostor, both by your own conscience and by the feelings of those about you. The very value of Christmas is that it puts the genuineness of everybody to an unerring test.



Harlequin.



Pierrette.



Pierrot.



Clown.

BOYS "LYNCH" ONE OF THEIR "BUNCH"

Wild West Motion Pictures Lead Youngsters to Hold a Mock Lynching Bee.

Joliet, Ill.—Moving pictures inspired ten boys to "lynch" Glenn Brown, their nine-year-old playmate, here the other day.

It was a "wild west" picture, absurd to the practical mind in its unrealities, that gave the boys their idea.

They saw in the flickering pictures a score of "cowboys," their revolvers strapped on the wrong side, while they mounted their horses also from the



His Pleas Brought Renewed Whoops.

wrong side and rode with the grace and skill of wooden Indians.

"Let's play wild west," one ten-year-old enthusiast proposed after the show. The vote was unanimous.

Wooden revolvers were fashioned. Fathers discarded hats took the place of sombreros. Broomsticks served as prancing bronchos.

"Who'll we lynch?" one asked. Glenn Brown was selected. His dark hair and eyes led to his unwilling selection by them for the role of "villain."

They tied a clothes-line under his arms and threw the rope over a branch of a tree. Whooping madly, in true moving-picture wild west fashion, they pulled him up until his feet were far from the ground.

The thin rope cut into his tender flesh. He struggled and implored his comrades to let him down. His pleas brought renewed whoops. Had not the "villain" in the moving pictures struggled and cried for mercy?

For half an hour they kept him there. Then they cut the rope and let his body fall to the ground. Their childish eyes did not see that he was unconscious. They seized the rope and dragged him for several minutes, leaving him on the ground to find his way home alone.

Physicians who examined him declared that he may be disabled permanently.

SWIMS FOR HOURS IN PACIFIC

Man Falls Overboard, but Gains Safety Upon Boat Which Has a Dead Crew.

New York.—If "Banzai," the Japanese poodle and prized possession of William Tweeddale, chief engineer of the British tramp steamer Atholl, could talk he would unfold a strange tale of the Southern Pacific.

"It was about this time last year that I was 'drowned,' according to the log of the Viscar. The Viscar had touched at Japanese ports and was kicking her way south to Singapore," said Tweeddale. "I had just been relieved of my watch at midnight, and had gone to the rail for a breath of air. I don't know, but I was taken with a sort of fainting spell. I came to with a sudden shock in the water."

"I had been swimming about six hours when I saw sweeping along toward me with all sails set, a one-masted vessel. I began to swim toward her, yelling 'Help!' every few strokes, but not an answering cry did I hear. I bumped alongside as the boat came by me. Luckily I saw a rope hanging over the side and got hold of it.

"I hung to that rope and howled for help, but nary an answer did I get. Then I climbed aboard and fell in a heap on the deck.

"I must have lain there half dead for hours, for when I came to it was daylight and something was happening to my left ear. It was a ticklish sensation and I sat up with a start, and there was a blooming puppy dog that had been licking the side of my face. That pup was Banzai.

"The vessel was a one-sticker and there were five dead Japanese aboard. I never fathomed the mystery.

"There were plenty of provisions aboard and five days later I was picked up by a steamer that took me to Hongkong."

Dowie's Son a Minister.

Chicago.—Gladstone Dowie, son of John Alexander Dowie, founder of Zion City, Ill., as the home of his religious cult, was ordained a deacon of the Episcopal church here on Sunday. He was ordained by Suffragan Bishop William E. Toll of the Chicago diocese.

KILLS 5 CHARGING BEARS IN 7 SHOTS

New York Man Has Thrilling Fight With Arctic Grizzlies.

HAD NARROW ESCAPE

Record is More Noteworthy Because of the Fact That the Hunter Fired Four Shots From the Magazine of His Rifle.

San Francisco, Cal.—Frederick K. Burnham, noted sportsman and traveler of New York, has returned to San Francisco from Alaska, where he spent three months shooting big game. Mr. Burnham had a narrow escape from death and established what is believed to be a record.

On September 12, at Cassia, near the Yukon district, Mr. Burnham killed five grizzly bears in two minutes, firing only seven shots.

It was performing this feat that Mr. Burnham had a close call for his life. He suddenly uncovered the group of grizzlies behind a clump of bushes, and the leader, a giant bear, which measured ten feet long, started for him not more than twenty feet away. He killed her with the first shot and was about to shoot another one coming in the same direction when his Eskimo guide gave the alarm of another bear charging from his left rear. Mr. Burnham turned just in time to fire two shots into the flanking bear, when only a yard away. He shot three more that charged him from the right.

The record is still more noteworthy by considering the fact that Mr. Burnham fired only four shots from the magazine of his rifle, holding one for safety and firing the last three shots by loading singly from the belt.

Mr. Burnham penetrated into a district not before visited by white men. He went up the Stikine river from Wrangle 160 miles and then proceeded 120 miles further into the interior by pack.

He was accompanied by Mrs. Burnham, who is also an expert big game



He Shot Three More.

shooter. This trip, however, was the first time she was the sole companion of her husband in the big game districts. She did her share of the killing, getting as many caribou and black sheep as Mr. Burnham.

Throughout the trip Mr. and Mrs. Burnham were accompanied by three Indian guides and they spent forty-three days in the district around the fifty-fifth parallel, to which, so far as is known, they were the first white visitors. They got seventeen bears, six caribou, four black sheep, two moose and one goat.

DAM BROKEN TO SAVE A MAN

Oregon Farmers Imperil the Season's Crop in an Effort to Save a Human Life.

Moro, Ore.—A message by telephone that a man had fallen into an irrigation reservoir near here and was drowning, brought Dr. O. J. Goffin of Moro and Dr. Sam C. Slocum of Portland to a borrowed automobile three miles over a rough and winding country in a little less than five minutes.

When they arrived at the reservoir the body of a man, Charles G. James of Portland, who had been working on the ranch of Ben Shull as harvest hand, had not been recovered. Searching could not locate the body in the depths of the reservoir, which, held back by a dam of rocks, dirt and planks, was about 40 feet wide, 600 feet long and 12 feet deep.

"Break the dam," shouted a man. "It's the only way to get the water out and find the body."

A man with an ax sprang at one of the wooden braces and began to chop. Then with drastic intensity the work of demolishing the dam began.

Then these men stood and watched the precious water of the reservoir, which meant lifegiving irrigation to their crops, flow over the dam without a protest. Their anxiety was for James.

His body was recovered and the doctors worked for two hours to resuscitate him, but in vain.