



The smiling face of William J. Jeffords was seen on our streets yesterday. He lives in Cincinnati, and has done well. It is his first visit to his old home in twenty years. He is stopping with his aged parents, Captain and Mrs. W. J. Jeffords.

That is just a homely news item clipped from a country paper. It has some thoughts in it for you, Mr. Busy Man. Nearly all of us live in the future. We are on the right side of 50, and have, we hope, many long years before us. If we are rich we hope to become richer. If we are poor we hope to become wealthy, and few people who consider old age and a completed career as something distant stop to think of the duty we owe to the old folks "down in the country." That is where the majority of the successful business men came from. In thousands of cases father and mother are still on the old farm, content to die where they have lived, far from the strife of city life, close to the soil and nature.

This year you should slip a few things into a grip, catch the last train and spend Christmas at home. It will be different from other Christmases, for hospitality means much in the country. It's genuine. It's un-mixed with business considerations. Your father or the hired man will meet you at the depot, and on the way to the old home on the farm he will tell you of the things you did when you were a boy.

He'll point out the old schoolhouse where you learned your a-b-c's and had some of the easiness licked out of you, and the little old church where a preacher preached brimstone and fire in a way that made your flesh cringe and you didn't dare sleep alone.

It will all come back to you. You had almost forgotten that you were a boy, hadn't you? You'll fill your lungs with pure air, feel the stinging breeze against your face and your heart will begin to throb with good impulses. Here everything seems to be honest and real and good.

And the welcome! Don't be ashamed of the tears that wet your cheeks. An old man with snowy locks, trembling with affection, a grand old woman, your mother, who weeps softly, as women do, because her heart is filled with happiness.

You couldn't make that woman believe that you ever had a petty meanness; that you had even thought wrong; that you took a narrow view of life, or that you had carried that embittered your existence.

You couldn't convince that old man that in the world could be found a smarter "boy." Love forgets faults and exalts virtues. To their your little successes seem like triumphs.

Don't forget the little room. You occupied it as a boy. You slept well in those days. You hadn't a care. You were free, and you were sound in mind, morals and body. It is good to think of those things. It is good to think of Christmas Day, of the gifts and the pleasure and good will that went with them, of the dinner and the long table, surrounded by relatives and neighbors, too poor to have their own Christmas dinners.

And when the gray old man bows his head, and with the faith of a child, says: "We thank thee, O Lord, for the mercies thou hast shown us," the simple prayer that follows will appeal to all that is good in you and give you new hope, new life, new courage.—Cincinnati Post.

ON THE MAIN LINE.

THE city's streets were thronged. Crowds of Christmas shoppers hurried to and fro. Electric lights from the big stores shone on their rosy and happy faces, and the younger ones laughingly shook the snow from their hair and capes. Charlie Wemper noted all this as with his hand on the controller he held the big suburban car in check. It was crowded to the doors as it started on its trip into the country with its human freight. The passengers were in a merry mood. They had remained until the last car, the opera run, and were going to their homes on the line, with their arms full of bundles and their hearts filled with good cheer.

All this swept through the brain of the tired motorman, and there was no answering smile as gay laughter reached him through the closed doors of the vestibule. Here it was Christmas eve. He had had fairly steady runs up to the time the summer business began to slack off, when the time table changed and he went on the board as first extra. A wife and two little ones at home had to be fed and clothed, and his 20 cents an hour, with an average of six hours a day, had not placed him in a position of affluence, nor enabled him to look forward to the glad Christmas time with any degree of joy. He thought of the scant supply of coal in the shed, the almost depleted larder and empty purse with pay day still more than a week off, and sighed to himself.

"Eight dollars and a half coming to me," he said, as he almost savagely swung around to six points, the car felt the current and sprang forward along the shining ribbons of steel which showed up in the glow of the headlight in the endless stretch of white ahead. The city had been left behind and the farm houses quickly slid back into the shadows as the car sped by. The shining rails no longer showed up ahead. It was all a dead level of white. The swiftly-falling snow had covered with its mantle the rails of the line, but the wheels still sunk through it and clutched the rail drunk in the electric fluid. Thoroughly acquainted with the road, and with the car under perfect control,

Wemper, one of the most careful, but also one of the newest men on the road, had no misgivings as he sped along the snow covered way. Suddenly ahead there was a bluish light which seemed to dance in the air. "My God, what's this?" he exclaimed as he sprang from his seat white as the driven snow which surrounded the car. He shut off the current and put on the air with such force as to bring the car almost to a standstill, and throw the passengers from their seats. Quickly the controller swung around and the car slowly started to move backward. To the man in the vestibule it seemed an age before the wheels began to revolve backward. The car was on a long but abrupt curve. Wemper knew what the bluish light meant. It was an inbound coming toward him at full speed.

What caused the mixup Wemper did not know, but he did know that he was caught on that curve meant certain death to himself and the sixty odd passengers on the car. The headlight of the approaching car now loomed into view. It was coming at breakneck speed, but Wemper's car with its load of human beings was now also speeding backward. There had been no orders at the last telephone booth and the out-bound car was supposed to have a clear track. Whatever the error, it was a palpable fact that the coming car was upon him. There seemed to be no effort on the part of the man in the other vestibule to

anger, for it was a dead hand that held the controller, and the stars was one of combined madness and death. Not a living soul was on the inbound car. Turning off the current, Wemper took the controller from the stifling fingers and ran back to the sub-station, about a quarter of a mile, and the power was once more turned on. During his absence the truth was discovered and when he came back to the well-lighted and comparatively uninjured car, a cheer went up. The men passengers grabbed him by the hand, while the women shed tears of gratitude. His own eyes moistened and a lump came in his throat as he thought of the cottage and its occupants. Coupling the two cars the journey was resumed and the passengers began to get off. As they did so every one dropped something in the hat at the door. When the end of the run was reached, a man came forward. In his hand he held a hat which was stuffed full of bills and silver. Taking a slip of paper from his pocket the passenger folded it and turned it with the other contents of the hat, into the cap of the astonished Wemper.

"Take this with a Merry Christmas and a God bless you from the passengers you saved from death," he said, and then left the car. His eyes glistening, Wemper counted the treasure. There was over a hundred dollars in money. The slip of paper was the check of a prominent banker of the town at the end of the line for \$100.

three numbers added together gives the largest sum total with the first prize. "Christmas candles" is a good old time game. A lighted candle is placed upon a table. The player is blindfolded and stationed with his back to the candle, about a foot from it. He's then told to take three steps forward, turn around three times, then to walk four steps toward the candle and blow it out. His attempt to do so will probably be as amusing to the audience as disconcerting to himself.

CHRISTMAS IN SERBIA.

Santa Claus Receives Presents Instead of Giving Them. In Serbia they keep Christmas eve in a somewhat peculiar way. The father of the family goes into the wood and cuts down a straight young oak, choosing the most perfect he can find. He brings it in, saying, "Good evening and a happy Christmas," to which those present say, "May God grant both to thee, and mayest thou have riches and honor!" Then they throw over him grains of corn. Presently the young tree is placed upon the coals, where it remains until Christmas morning, which they salute by repeated firings of a pistol.

The national dish in Serbia is pork. The poorest family in Serbia will pinch themselves all through the year so as to have money enough to buy a pig at Christmas. Skewered to a long piece

CUTTING CHRISTMAS TREES.



attempt to check the speed and the most Kemper could hope to do was to lessen the force of the collision. On came the opposite car until less than 100 feet. It was one of the newest and most powerful on the road and Kemper's heart dropped as he realized that fact. The passengers by this time had ascertained they were speeding back, and the conductor had his hands full striving to check the panic.

Looking now right into the vestibule of the opposing car, Wemper saw a livid face with glaring eyes. One strong, bony hand clutched the controller, trying to force it still farther around to get more speed. There was a terrible smile on the white face. The man was mad. A cold sweat broke out on the forehead of Wemper. A cottage within which sat a woman smoothing the hair of a little boy while her body swayed gently to and fro as she lulled the baby to sleep, came before his vision. Who would fill the empty larder now? Who replenish the dwindling coal pile? A groan burst from him as they pursued and pursued, sped by the power station and back over the switch. There was no danger from behind and they dashed on back into darkness, leaving the sub-station keeper rooted to the spot with astonishment. The fatal race was drawing to a close. Not ten feet now intervened between the headlights of the two cars when suddenly there was pitch darkness. The speed of the cars slackened and the wild inbound pently came upon the special. There was a crashing of glass as the two headlights, now dull and dark, came together; a slight jar and the danger was passed. The sub-station tender with a heaven-born gleam of common sense had stopped the machinery and turned off the power.

Springing from the vestibule as soon as he realized what had happened, Wemper climbed into the vestibule of the other car, livid with rage at the danger into which the other motorman had placed him. There was no need for his

"A Christmas for the wee ones, after all," exclaimed Wemper, his face lighting up. "Here, Bill," he shouted to the conductor. "We go whacks on the cash." Bill was loth to accept, but finally consented and there were two merry Christmases on the Main Line. — Detroit Free Press

Ring Out the Old, Ring in the New.



Pat—Why is th' owid year loike a whet towel, Nora, darlint?
Nora—Why?
Pat—Because they always ring it out.

Two Christmas Games.

A Yuletide version of the donkey party is played thus: On a sheet scotch or paste a design of a Christmas tree. Have each branch of the tree terminate in a circle containing a number, using the numbers from one to ten or one to twenty-five, according to the size of the tree. Each person playing is blindfolded in turn and is given a rosette with which he must "decorate the tree." Each person aims to pin his or her rosette on or near to the highest number of the tree. Each competitor has three trials, the three numbers to which he pins nearest being written down to his credit by the hostess, who keeps tally. The one whose

of wood, the pig is turned over a blazing fire until cooked, the guests watching the process with increasing interest. After dinner stories are told and songs sung. Santa Claus, who, in the person of an honored guest, is present to receive instead of to give presents, departs, after the feast, decorated with a long ring of cakes around his neck and laden with such gifts as his friends can bestow.

A Good Riddance.

When the New Year in at the front door peeps, And out at the back door the Old Year creeps, I hope he will carry away on his back A load as big as a peddler's pack; And we'll stow away in his baggage then Some things that we never shall want again. We will put in the pucky little punt That drives all the merry dimples out, And the crazy scowls that up and down Fold nice little foreheads right into a frown; And the little quarrels that spoil the plays, And the little grumbles on rainy days, And the bent-up plus, and the teasing jokes That never seem funny to other folks; And the stones that are tossed—be sure of that— At robin rebreast and pussy cat. And we'll throw in the bag some cross little "don'ts," And most of the "can'ts" and all of the "won'ts," And the grumpy words that should not be said. When mamma calls, "It is time for bed," If we get all these in the Old Year's pack, And shut it so tight that they can't come To-morrow morning we'll surely see A Happy New Year for you and me. —Youth's Companion.

Tough Luck.

"After all," said the busy merchant, "Christmas comes but once a year." "Yes," rejoined the old man who had seven children and nineteen grandchildren, "and I'm heartily glad of it."

Inherited Mistrust.

"Bessie, have you written your letter to Santa Claus?" "Yes, ma; but don't you go an' give it to pa to mail."

ONE WEEK OF WAR.

JAPS MAKE GOOD USE OF 203-METER HILL.

From Its Summit They Are Able to Destroy the Port Arthur Fleet—Future of the Siege Pr.blematical—Baltic Squadron Ordered to Halt.

The Japanese have made good use of 203-Meter Hill, which they captured. It took them just four days to get large guns mounted in safe positions at the summit, and then they began to bombard the Russian battleships in the harbor. They had been wasting great quantities of ammunition on those ships for weeks past, but as their fire was then from the north the ships could get protection behind Peiyu Hill. Under the new conditions the Japanese fire was from the west, and the ships could get no shelter except by going outside the harbor and hiding behind Tiger's Tail Peninsula, which for reasons best known to themselves they did not care to do.

As General Nogi's reports of the damage done to the Russian ships are sent in great detail, we may assume, says the Chicago Record-Herald, that they are accurate, though of course the observations are made from hill-tops four or five miles distant. Of the Russian battleships, the Polieda, Poltava, Retvizan and Peresviet are all reported sunk, or, rather, submerged in whole or in part at their anchorage. The Sevastopol, the only remaining battleship, lies in such position that the Japanese are not sure whether they have damaged it or not. The two cruisers, the Bayan and the Pallada, are reported as aground or badly listed, and both have been on fire. The gunboats and destroyers are so small that they make hard targets to hit, but those of them not already destroyed can hardly hope to escape long.

This is a most inglorious end for a battle fleet, but we may be sure that it has not been tamely accepted because of any lack of courage on the part of the Russian officers or men. A more natural explanation of their refusal to make a sortie is probably that the sailors could not be spared to die at sea when they were so greatly needed to help man the fortifications of the city. Perhaps, also, it may have been the case that the naval guns had long since been removed for use in the forts, and that the ships had been without repairs so long that they could not be effectively maneuvered at sea.

As to the future of the siege, one theory is that the Japanese, having no longer any fear of the fleet at Port Arthur, and having made sure that no other Russian ships can enter the harbor and live, will now trust to the slow process of starvation to capture the town. Instead of renewing their assaults. Such may be their decision, but, on the other hand, they seem to be pushing their trenches and tunnels steadily forward, and a desire to have the houses in the city for the army to live in during the winter may make an assault seem worth their while. Certainly the sufferings of winter life in the trenches would be very great.

A few days ago it was announced that the Czar had ordered the dispatch to the Pacific of a third squadron, to be made up of two nearly completed battleships and five old ones, with a number of cruisers and torpedo boat destroyers. There comes now a report that the Czar, disregarding the opposition of the grand dukes, has ordered Admiral Rojestvensky, the commander of the Baltic fleet, not to go on to the far east. Nothing definite is known as to his whereabouts, but he is probably near Madagascar. If such an order really has been given, it can only mean that the Emperor has his doubts as to whether Admiral Rojestvensky, with his present force, is assured of a victory over the Japanese fleet, and deems it wise to hold him back until he can be re-enforced. At this time of the year Vladivostok, the only port held by the Russians, is frozen up. It is not a good base of operations, nor will it be a good place to retire to in event of reverses.

Kouropatkin and Oyama still confront each other in strong entrenchments along the line of the Shakhe River, and there is nothing in the accounts of the skirmishes which come to us from day to day to justify any inference as to their intentions. Little fights seem to occur impartially at all points of the line. Lone Tree Hill, which the Russians call Poutloff Hill, is, however, singled out for special attention, as the Japanese are reported as bombarding it at least once or twice a week.

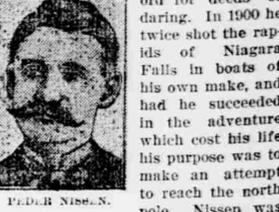
While the armies are quiescent Kouropatkin is availing himself of the opportunity to reorganize his forces. Since the departure of Alexieff he has had a free hand. At the present time he has probably 300,000 men all told, but when his reorganization is complete he expects to have three armies of 150,000 men each, which he can march, army to army, against the commands of Oku, Nodzu and Kuroki.

War News in Brief.

Russian Cossacks surprised the Japanese near Lidiatoun, and captured eight guns. The Japanese lost 15,000 men in the storming of 203 Meter Hill, at Port Arthur. Japan has protested against the action of Russia in supplying Russian warships with coal. Fighting continues on both flanks of the Russian army in Manchuria, and there is heavy artillery firing on the Russian center and right.



THE PUBLIC EYE.

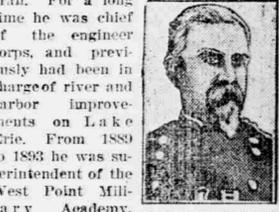


Peder Nissen, who sacrificed his life in an attempt to roll across Lake Michigan in a strange craft of his own invention, had a record for deeds of daring. In 1900 he twice shot the rapids of Niagara Falls in boats of his own make, and had he succeeded in the adventure which cost his life his purpose was to make an attempt to reach the north pole. Nissen was born in Denmark forty-three years ago, but came to this country while a youth and was educated here. He was the inventor of a number of novelties and labor-saving devices, and once conducted a business college in Chicago. He was a graduate of the Indiana State Normal College at Valparaiso.

The Rev. Wilson S. Fritch, late pastor of the Pilgrim church at Attleboro, Mass., will go on the stage. His first appearance will be in the character of Hamlet.

The late Alexander Mayer-Kohn, a Berlin banker, was the owner of one of the largest autograph collections in the world.

General James H. Wilson, who has been appointed chairman of the Inaugural committee, is a celebrated veteran. For a long time he was chief of the engineer corps, and previously had been in charge of river and harbor improvements on Lake Erie. From 1889 to 1893 he was superintendent of the West Point Military Academy. GEN. J. H. WILSON

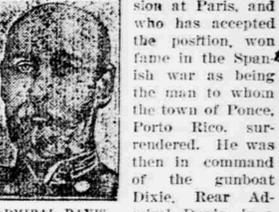


whence he was graduated in 1860. General Wilson made a brilliant record during the civil war, being brevetted on several occasions for gallant conduct. For a time he left the service and engaged in railway and engineering operations, but soon was reappointed. He was born in Southern Illinois in September, 1837.

Dr. Leo Vogel, appointed Swiss minister at Washington, will be the youngest diplomat of his rank at the national capital.

Verestchagin was at once the kindest and the wisest of men. He loved newspaper notices.

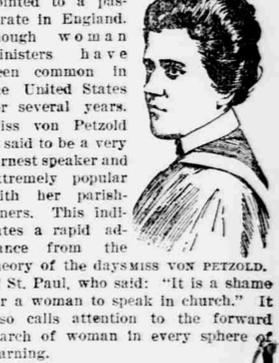
Rear Admiral Charles Henry Davis, who has been appointed to serve on the Anglo-Russian North Sea commission at Paris, and who has accepted the position, won fame in the Spanish war as being the man to whom the town of Ponce, Porto Rico, surrendered. He was then in command of the gunboat Dixie. Rear Admiral Davis is a native of Massachusetts and was graduated from the naval academy in 1861. He has been connected with several expeditions to determine differences in longitude. For a short time he served as superintendent of the naval observatory.



Prof. Koch, at present in Paris, proposes to make Paris his permanent home. He will visit German South Africa on a government mission shortly. It is stated that Mrs. Ott and Hirsch, who attended the wife of the Czar when he heir to the Russian throne was born, received \$50,000 each. Miss Gertrude von Petzold, M. A., has accepted a call to the Unitarian Church at Leicester, Eng. She is the first woman appointed to a pastorate in England, though women ministers have been common in the United States for several years. Miss von Petzold is said to be a very earnest speaker and extremely popular with her parishioners. This indicates a rapid advance from the theory of the days of St. Paul, who said: "It is a shame for a woman to speak in church." It also calls attention to the forward march of woman in every sphere of learning.

The little band of English students of the literature and history of Spain has lost one of its most brilliant members in the death of Henry Butler Clarke. He was not 40 when he died.

Sir Richard Sankel estimates that Ireland's bogs contain the equivalent of 5,000,000,000 tons of coal.



The story that Gen. Kuroki's father was a Pole has been exploded. Kuroki is an old Japanese name; it is derived from kuroi (black) and ki (wood, or tree).