

THE FOOL'S SEARCH

EPISODE IN JOSTLING THROUGH OF CHRISTMAS SHOPPERS.

Order for Purchase of a Fool's Calendar Brings Funny Experiences—Men, Women and Children All Are Mad.



HEY are all mad; men, women, children, spinsters and bachelors, clerks and clerks, drivers and delivery boys, it would seem there could be no madder, merrier time.

The funniest things happen, if one only had time to dwell on them and laugh over them, but such enjoyment is denied in these days of strain and struggle.

In a moment of thoughtless good-nature we promised to do the

family shopping. Among the thousand and one commissions handed over in immediate response to the thoughtless good-nature was the order for purchase of "The Fool's Calendar." We set forth, a list three-times forty long in our groaning, much-abused hand-bag, and entered the first shop come upon, in our sub-consciousness feeling that we, like the rest of the jostlers, fitted in pretty well with the title of that calendar. Down the aisle came a rattled-looking, half-distracted, generally disturbed gentleman whose province seemed the directing of frenzied fanciers to the respective departments of their fancy, but the Christmas spirit so possessed him he was not quite himself, not able to place his "Madames" and "Sirs." As short-skirted, rose-wreathed hatted, he steered his way, he glanced with wrinkled brow and questioning worry to what might be our demand. "Do you sell calendars here?" We asked in heat of hurry, to which he replied glibly, "Yes, Sir," and never knew he was not using the usual form of address to a woman. He led us then with rapid step to the calendar square, where spread out and arose floor, roof and pillars of calendars, it would seem every time—chronicler for every taste. And then feeling very like a fool ourselves, we asked in a low voice, "Have you 'The Fool's Calendar'?" "No," says he, "But, and a gleam of keen intellect lights his eye, 'We have 'Saints and Sinners.'"

We wanted to shriek with laughter, we forgot all the hurry and not-money-enough or time-enough. It paid for all the crowding and mobbing and back-ache and heart-ache of the day. Funny enough was the woman encountered in mid-afternoon entering the much-advertised, much-crowded book-room of a department store in haste to get at the forty-eight centers and thirty-niners; she was high and broad and muscular, an Amazon that need not have put on extra effort to make her way—but the spirit of Christmas—the modern—was strong upon her, and as we passed her on the way out into blessed out-of-doors, even in our hurry we could not but notice her wild look, her panting breath, her elbows out on defensive and offensive the way in which she marched on, unswervingly, unrelentingly, like an avalanche, toward the bargain books.

Overheard at the book counter: "Don't you think a nice little book like this is a good present to give?" "A little book? What is the name?" "Why I don't know, but it's a nice little book in clean white binding. I believe I'll get a dozen. A dozen, please, and see that they're all fresh." The calendar square again. Women madly struggling; another Amazon, this one brow-beating a pale-faced girl afflicted with a cold and, wearing a too-much Christmas air: "Can't you get me envelopes to put those calendars in?"—dimensions of calendars 18 by 24 inches—"It's so hard when you get home to hunt around and pack things. I wouldn't have bought the calendars if I hadn't thought you would pack 'em. Say, take that new one out of that nice box, hang it up and give me the box. Not allowed to? What's the dif, they'll never know." And the pale-faced clerk bends to the Amazon's will.

A large, canny, prosperous gentleman at a candy store, carefully selecting and considering purchase of 25 cents worth of Kindergarten mixed.

Brave, foolish, big-hearted shop girls many spending their present-alls, and drawing on the future, to make a Christmas for the army at home. We do a generous deed, one that calls for large sacrifice. We have gone down town all saddled, all bridled, for the day's work, three neat long pencils neatly sharpened to long points, when we become one of a mob assailing the enclosure where blank-books, tissue-paper, holly-stickers and all that are confirmed from the greedy hands of thousands hungry to get their share for the urgent necessity of doing up gifts with approved ornate complexity. The clerks here all pale and gripped looking; one, so wee and pallid, has momentarily lost her reason because of the loss of her pencil. A line of people wait with feverish impatience, scowls deepen, muttered growls are heard, the wee, pallid girl grows more pallid and gripped looking. With mighty effort of the will,

we hand forth one of those precious, neat, long-pointed pencils; the pale face glows, the tension of the crowd lessens, we feel ourselves both private and public benefactor.

Another pale-faced, gripped looking clerk, this one standing looking wistfully at cases where bright silver gleams through the glass. "Give me a spoon for a child, something cheap." And she herself needs a pair of shoes!

Husband and wife shopping in unwonted personal partnership, always the talk of what "It" will like. The Child. And the sight of the deeply interested faces of the many husband-and-wife groups, sets us to believe, after all. There is method in the general madness, for who would not be a fool for The Child's sake!

KATHERINE POPE.

OLD STORIES OF CHRISTMAS

Some Have Interest, Freshness and Beauty That Keep Them Always New.

There are some so-called "old stories" that are really not old, for they have an interest, a freshness and a beauty that keep them always new. Of such are the story of Christmas and all the legends and tales that belong to the great festival.

There is a legend in Germany that when Eve plucked the fatal apple the leaves of the tree immediately shriveled into needle points and its bright green turned dark. The nature of the tree changed and it became an evergreen, in all seasons preaching the story of man's fall through that first act of disobedience. Only on Christmas does it bloom brightly with lights and become beautiful with love gifts. The curse is turned into a blessing by the coming of the Christ child, and thus we have our Christmas tree.

The visits of St. Nicholas to the homes of the people on Christmas eve as an annual custom grew out of a festival in honor of Hertha, a Norse goddess. At this festival the house was decorated with evergreens and an altar of stone was set up at the end of the hall, where the family assembled. From Hertha's stone we get our word "hearthstone." On the stones so set up were heaped fir branches, which were set afire, and through the smoke and flame Hertha was supposed to descend and influence the direction of the flames, from which were predicted the fortunes of those present.

EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY

Throw Forebodings to the Winds and Let Christmas Season Be One of Joy.

Let joy reign! Let care go to the dogs. Throw forebodings to the winds! Christmas comes but once a year. Let the young folks enjoy it to the full! Let the old folks stop their croaking about rheumatism for that day at least, and remember the time when they, too, were young and could dance with the merriest.

And let the little stockings be filled, and let us all bear with equanimity the blowing on toy trumpets, and the tooting on mouth organs, and the drumming on sixpenny-halfpenny drums, which are sure to follow! The boys can be boys but once, and what is a boy if he cannot make a noise? And so the years go on, and one Christmas follows another, and we eat and drink and are merry; we greet our friends, and we part with them, and our lives march along, and through faith in the sacrifice which our Christmas day commemorates we look forward to a more perfect Christmas when the guests shall gather in the Father's house.



Crippled. Beggar (piteously)—Please help a poor cripple at this festive season, sir.

Kind Old Gent (handing him some money)—Bless me! Why, of course. How are you crippled, my poor fellow?

Beggar (pocketing the money)—Financially crippled, sir.

Christmas Giving. There are a great many people in the world whom we know more or less, but to whom for various reasons we cannot very well send a Christmas gift. But there is hardly one, in all the circles of our acquaintances, with whom we may not exchange the touch of Christmas life.

In the outer circles, cheerful greetings, courtesy, consideration; in the inner circles, sympathetic interest, the hearty congratulations, honest encouragement; in the innermost circles, comradeship, helpfulness, tenderness.

After all, Christmas-living is the best kind of Christmas giving.—Henry Van Dyke.

Just a Smart Boy.

There is nothing the matter with the small boy who presents his mother with a pair of felt slippers for Christmas. He is just a smart boy, that is all.

A CHRISTMAS HYMN

DONATION CAUSES CONSTERNATION IN CHURCH.

Little Ad Slipped Into Stately Anthem by Charitable Summer Cottager Breaks Up Christmas Day Services in Confusion.



IT WAS a charitable summer cottager who put up the money for a new church at the summer resort of X—, down on the Atlantic coast. The village parson was grateful beyond words, for the old structure had been an eyesore to the folk who desired of all things to attract wealthy summer resorters.

But when the season was over and the new church was finished his reverence discovered that no provision had been made for hymnbooks. The congregation was notably poor and not in the habit of pinching itself for the sake of charity, so the outlook for a supply of new books was very precarious. It was, a late summer man—a man of reputed wealth and influence in the distant city whence he hailed—who came to the relief of the devout clergyman.

"I'll buy hymn books for the church," said he, "and send them down to you—on one condition—that you let me insert a small ad. that will really not be noticeable. It's an ad. that I assure you will bring great comfort to your flock."

The simple country divine pondered the offer carefully, and finally, after a vestry meeting, it was decided that there could be no possible sin in accepting such an offer. The donor was a man of such integrity and character that the rest was assured.

"Well, the books came down from the city, 100 of them, finer than anything the people had dreamed of. They were still very new at Christmas—in fact, had never been in use until that day. In great pride, the parson called out the number of the good old favorite Christmas hymn: "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing."

The congregation, equipped with their new books, turned the pages rapidly and were ready. The organ struck up the tune that everybody knew. And lustily sang the people, gazed steadfastly on the written words:

"Hark the herald angels sing,
Faker's pills are just the thing."
The parson listened, looked, brushed his hand over his eyes, and a moment's panic passed over the church. But it passed. Then on into another verse they plunged:

"Peace on earth and mercy mild
Two for a man, and one for a child," rang the impious words. The parson coughed, closed his book, and the service broke up in confusion. Everybody had forgot that the generous hymn book man was interested in a patent medicine.

Christmas Superstitions.

The United States is almost poverty stricken in so far as its collection of superstitions is concerned, our early settlers having failed to import many from Europe, and not adopting those of the Indians. Of course some of us don't like to see the new moon over the left shoulder, or start on a journey on Friday, and the like, but few of us take even these very seriously. We must go to "the old countries" to get superstitions with any genuine thrill in them. There are a number which have to do with Christmas.

In North Germany, where the practical yet poetic spinning wheel still hums in the cottages, one must not spin during the 12 nights of Christmas lest he or she walk after death. (To the American reader it may occur that this would probably be more disturbing to others than to one's self.) If the spinning is done after sunset on Saturday, mice will eat the work. If one wishes to have money and good luck all the year, one should not fail to eat herring on New Year's day.

Rustling of Leaves.

Until a few years ago Hampshire rustics used to sit till 12 o'clock on old Christmas night, and as soon as they heard the leaves rustling they went to the nearest constable to watch the animals get up and lie down on the other side. The idea of watching the animals arose from the belief that at 12 o'clock on the night of the Nativity oxen knelt in their stalls in honor of the event; that the rustling of the leaves refers to the tradition that thorn trees blossom at midnight to commemorate the Saviour's birth.

Cornish folk believe that sheep turn to the east and bow their heads on old Christmas night in memory of the sheep belonging to the shepherds at Bethlehem, and in Yorkshire bees hum in their hives on the same occasion.

A Christmas Absent.

Father—Sammy, what is your teacher going to give you for a Christmas present?
Sammy—A holiday.
Father—I should call that an ab- instead of a present.

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A POLICE CHIEF IN EXILE

Lupoukhine, Former Court Favorite, Is Now a Broken Down Wreck in Siberia.

Two Germans who have been traveling in Siberia gave an account of the life of exile led by M. Lupoukhine, formerly chief of police in Russia.

For many years M. Lupoukhine was one of the most influential men in the Russian empire, a favorite at court, the confidant of cabinet ministers and a favorite of St. Petersburg society. While at the height of his popularity he was suddenly exposed as a treacherous servant of the czar, dismissed from the government service and sentenced to lifelong banishment to Siberia.

It was alleged against him that he organized plots against the czar in order that he as chief of police, might have the glory of discovering them and saving his imperial master's life. He was also guilty of many other irregularities.

The two travelers found M. Lupoukhine living in Danilovka, a small village some 500 miles from the nearest railway, which can only be reached by a carriage journey of 17 days through a desolate region. The ex-pole chief, who formerly occupied a palatial official residence in the Russian capital, now lives in a little log hut consisting of four rooms, badly lighted, insufficiently ventilated and too loosely built to afford adequate protection against the rigors of the Siberian winter.

The exile himself is now a broken-down, feeble, unhappy man, a wreck of his former self. He has done his best to make one of his rooms resemble in some degree a study, and on the wall he has hung in large printed letters "Thy Will Be Done." Nearly all the inhabitants of Danilovka are political exiles, and M. Lupoukhine enjoys a privileged position among them by reason of the fact that the governor of the province when making his occasional rounds shakes hands with him.

WONDERFUL BIRDS' HOTEL

An Ingenious American Spends Over Four Years in Making Edifice.

Arthur E. Dunning, one of the staff of the American embassy at Berlin, has devoted his spare time since 1908 to building a wonderful bird house. The Hotel Canary, as he calls it, contains 22 rooms, and has a window garden with a fountain, also two conservatories.

It is 75 inches long, by 15 inches wide, and including a tower is 51 inches high. All the rooms have the modern improvements, such as electric light and running water. They are equipped with automatic feeding

dishes. In the winter garden are two elevators running to the second floor and with four sliding doors giving access to the surrounding rooms.

Batteries for the electric lights are in the machine room, which also contains the apparatus for running the elevators, a reservoir for water with a capacity of one gallon and a switchboard for the lights on the third floor. The tower room, which is not occupied by guests, is fitted with an electric chandelier and bell and is reached by means of a spiral staircase from the third story. It also contains the means of controlling the water in the reservoir.

At the back of the structure is the food supply box, from which different mixtures of seeds are distributed to the fortunate inmates of this birds' hotel, while immediately to the right and left are the places into which the seed is poured for the rooms. It may be added that some of the rooms are provided with balconies and that the flags bear the initials H. C. The whole building is a marvel of ingenuity and constructive skill.

Luxury of French Prisons.

Last week I spoke of the intelligent deputy who is hoping to introduce the cat o' nine tails into France. Today comes to light facts showing the luxury in which French apaches live when they are the guests of the state. The French criminal is taken to a prison called Fresnes palace, and here he is housed far better than any common French soldier, though the latter may have served his country ever so valiantly, while the former has supposedly done the reverse.

The cells are steam heated at an always level temperature, and statistics show us that in a garrison and a prison each holding the same number of inmates, where in 1909 the consumption of coal for the garrison was 18 wagonloads, the prison consumed 300 wagonloads. So, to quote Clement Vautel, our brave French soldiers "shiver around a fire meagerly fed with a few pieces of coal from time to time, while our criminals stretch themselves in lazy luxury before a cozy hot steam pipe."—London Court Journal.

Rice and Curry.

Rice and curry is the national dish of India. Just barely enough curry is fluffed, and each grain when cooked is covered up all by itself of snowy lightness. Small quantities of meat, or dried fish, are served with the curry sauce, freshly made of coconut water, peppers, turmeric, etc. The west African and West Indian do not use curry, but season by boiling it with a piece of salt fish, salt pork or chicken. Polished rice is a cheat, and eaten exclusively is deadly, so should by right and law be kept out of New York.

Ashland, the home of Augusta Evans Wilson, the author of "St. Elmo," and other books, combines the salient features of the Greek revival in its later phases with West Indian ideas. It well illustrates the class of work executed some ten or twenty years before the Civil war when the white columns of the classic revival and the double-deck veranda from Bermuda had so adapted themselves to one another as to produce something similar, yet different, something typically American—a type and a prototype.

One can but wonder, however, in reviewing the matter, what the southern planter would have built had not Greek ideas been dominant in the architecture of the day. Certainly nothing could have more perfectly suited the climate, and the large, yet simple purposes of his life, or his tastes, which were as a rule more or less grandiose. One must have a veranda in the south, so why have it extend all around the house and be done with it? One must have posts to support the roof of the veranda, so why not have Greek columns instead, since they were the fashion? The proposition was beautifully simple, so simple indeed that once introduced, this style spread with remarkable rapidity. The grandeur of its effect and the simplicity with which it was obtained were both in its favor. The more columns the southern planter used, the better he liked it, and since one was copying Greek temples why not copy the greatest temples of all, the temple of Theseus or the Parthenon and be done with it? Hence the popularity of the peristyle.

SUMMONED BACK TO EARTH

Imaginative Man Is Just Beginning to Feel Like a God When His Wife Calls.

The imaginative new blood on his front steps and discarded learnedly with the man across the street, and his subject was the development of aviation.

"They'll work it out all right in time," said the man over the way.

"Of course they will," replied the man on the steps. "I believe the time is coming when an aviator will rise up through the air envelope that surrounds our globe, and get up so high above it that he can hang there in space and watch the earth and its air whirl around beneath him, and when he gets ready to descend he can alight wherever he blamed pleases."

"That's magnificent!" said the man across the street.

"You bet it is," the neighbor on the steps replied. "It makes a man feel like a god!" Just then the door behind him was thrown open and a commanding female figure appeared in the doorway. "If you got through your fool talk, Henry," said a shrill voice, "you'd better come in to your dinner."