

# THE OLD FOLKS' CHRISTMAS



That won't be any Christmas fun around our house this year, for Sandy Claws in passing by, 'll just lean down his ear, and when he feels the chimney's cold, he'll grunt: 'I'll put right on; No need o' stoppin' in to Clay's, The children's all gone.'

An' 't I've seed the time when he 'ud hev to lump hisse'?

To fill the stockin' hangin' up, He'll ask o' chimney she's?

An' me an' ma'd be up till twelve, He'll say, 'a poppin' co'n,

No use o' seub-like doll's now; The children's all gone.

I uper feel plump like a boy, To see them young 'uns sit, An' talk o' 'Chri'mus bein' nigh, An' wonder what they'd git, An' fix theire's ves to stay awake, 'Till Sandy kem along!

That's no one watches for him now, The children's all gone.

They're all grow'd up an' married off, Exceptin' little Joe.

They spoke for him up yander, An' we had to leave him go, 'Tuz we'll hev to lose him, But now we're glad that's one Theer's still a little shaver, Though the children's all gone.

An' settin' yere this Chri'mus night, I sez to ma, it seemed, Ez if I sensed his rosy face, Right whar the freight gleamed, An' ma, she 'towed that mebbe he Had lent us back our own, Cuz Chri'mus an't a smeller w'en The children's all gone.

It kinder made my bones thaw out, To judge that w'en we die, We'll find our little tad ag'in, Not grow'd a smitch more high, I want him like he uster be, Jest big enough to run, I won't stay up thar—er I find The children's all gone.

—New York Ledger.



### BILLY'S TELEPHONE GIRL

THE city editor sat at his table hard at work, when the green-shaded electric lamp revealed Billy McGuffy, the nearest reporter, approaching, embarrassed and apologetic in demeanor.

"Mr. Banwell," he began, "could I have two passes for the theater to-night?"

"Passes for two?" responded Banwell, staring hard. "Two! Oh, Jonesey, come here, quick! Billy's gone wrong. He wants theater tickets for two!"

chuckled the editor, throwing out the coveted pasteboards, and Billy, blushing like a girl, fled from the office, followed by Jones' solemn warning:

"Billy, my son, pause and reflect."

Billy made his way down the street till



"IT WAS EVIDENT SHE HAD A TEMPER OF HER OWN."

he reached a tall building that rose from a corner, entered it, took the elevator to the top floor, and paused at the open door of a great brilliantly-lighted room. Facing the wall, on high stools, sat some dozens of girls, apparently playing games with pegs on a continuous brass checker board that extended around the room. The girls had small round discs fastened to their ears, but hands free to place the pegs or ring up a subscriber. It was the city telephone exchange.

Perhaps it was the free magnetism of electricity of the place, or Billy's hypnotic glance that made one girl turn her head, smile and gracefully slipping from the tall stool come quickly into the hall.

Billy narrated how he had just got theater tickets, and exhibited them. The telephone girl took them to look at.

"Why, Billy," she said, after a pause, "these tickets are for the 24th."

"Of course, Christmas eve; that's all right, isn't it?"

"I'm on duty. Why didn't you telephone to me, and ask what night I could go? You knew I was at the end of your wire, and you would have done it, if you cared anything for me," and down went the tickets to the floor. It was evident that pretty Sadie had a temper of her own.

She turned with dignity, and left Billy standing there. The quarrel had come on so suddenly that he hardly realized it was all over. Then, feeling as if all the world had suddenly turned to ice and ink he mournfully regained the street.

Sadie sat at her work, as the night went on, listening to calls from people who wished "Merry Christmas" over the wires, and wondered why hers did not come. Then, about 1 o'clock, a sharp ring came in. No, it was not Billy's voice!

"Give me one-naught-six-four, quick!" Now, it invariably irritates a telephone girl to be told to be quick. She is always quick. The "quick" aroused Miss Sadie's temper, but she said nothing; 1,064 was the number of the Blade editorial rooms, the rival of Billy's paper.

"Hello! that you, Barker?" continued the voice. "Say, there's the biggest thing on to-night, and we've got the deadwood on the Argus, if we work it right. There's been a Christmas eve tragedy in the Italian quarter at 708 Bremer street. Two men are dead, and one's so bad he'll die before morning."

"Who's on that beat for the Argus?" came the breathless inquiry.

"Oh, I've fixed that—Billy McGuffy, and I've got him out the way. I had a fellow tell him there was a frightful accident out at Bloomfield, and he thinks he's got a scoop on it. Take the murder case; here's the details."

Sadie had made up her mind what to do. She knew she was wrong, but—poor Billy! She had been on the newspaper wires long enough to know the value of time to a morning paper. She listened carefully to the message, then she rang up the Argus.

"Hello, Banwell, city editor," she said. "Take a frightful tragedy in the Italian quarter. Billy—Billy McGuffy."

"All right; hurry it along. Say, Billy, you're scared—you talk like a girl."

"It's enough to scare anybody—two men dead and another on the way."

Sadie gave the full particulars, rang off abruptly, and sat back looking scared herself at what she had dared to do.

About 4 o'clock a call came from the Argus office, and Sadie's answer had a tremble in it.

"Hello," sounded Billy's voice. "Is that you? Merry Christmas. I just got back from running down a rumor. Do we make up, Sadie?"

"Well, I'll be free at 6 o'clock, and then you may come over and see me home."

At the Argus office, Billy just arrived from his bootless errand, stayed all alone till daylight. As he started after Sadie the watchman handed him a copy of the paper damp from the press. He read the startling headlines:

### AWFUL CHRISTMAS TRAGEDY.

Two Men Instantly Killed in a Brawl, and a Third Dies This Morning.

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" wailed Billy. "I'm a goner! Right in my district, too! Here I was fooling about the suburbs, and Banwell so short-handed. Well, it's all up with Bill McGuffy."

He rushed to the telephone exchange building, where he found Sadie at the door waiting for him.

"Oh, Billy!" she cried; "I've done the most dreadful thing."

"So have I."

"But I'll lose my situation if I'm found out."

"I'm found out now," sighed Billy, "and my situation is as good as gone. But tell me about your trouble first," and Sadie, told him as they walked along.

"Yes, Billy," she said, as Billy accused himself of being a fool (they were standing in the porch of her home now); "yes, Billy, you're green. You never know enough to do the right thing at the right time."

"Oh, don't I?" said Billy, and he kissed her as they stood there.

"Oh, Billy," she cried, catching her breath, "I did not think you had the courage."

All of which shows that a young man on a daily paper learns many things; at time goes on, which thought passed



## THE BLIZZARD

CHRISTMAS ON THE GREAT PLAINS.

IT was Christmas eve, and the wind blew keen across the prairies that lie between Fort Dodge, on the Arkansas, under the hill.

And the straggling hamlet of Purdyville, where dwelt Niles Nelson, who rode that day from his home to the northward, far away over the bunch grass, bare and brown, into the bustling frontier town.

The night was dark—not a star on high—And a blizzard blowing up there in the sky. Niles Nelson stepped out into the street; The wind was driving a blinding sheet Of powdery snow right into his face. But Niles was happy; he left the place With a glow in his heart, for little Moll, His baby daughter, would get her doll, The Christmas gift he had promised long. Niles Nelson, troling a Christmas song, And facing the north wind, sturdily rode, While past him the Storm Fiend's coursers strode.

The snow grows deeper, the night more wild, When he hears the wall of a little child,

## AN IDEAL CHRISTMAS DINNER

MENU

Oysters.  
Petites Marmites, St James  
Cream of Artichokes ..... Morlaissienne

FISH  
Boiled Pompano, Moulin Rouge  
Filet of Salmon à la Doris  
Carp, Scandinavian style ..... Smelts à la Meise  
Hot-house cucumbers

CELERY, Radishes, Olives, Salted Almonds.

RELEVÉ  
Saddle of Mutton, Piemontaise  
Tenderloin of Beef, Larded, with Green Pease  
Smithfield Ham, au Supreme, à l'Americaine

ENTREES  
Sweetbreads Idealistique à la Grand Chicken  
à la Cèciliaire  
Salmis of Woodcock, Avignonnaise Filet of Partridge  
Lamb Cutlets, à la Chèvalier ..... à la Marie Antoinette  
Sorbet Monte Carlo

ROASTS  
Rhode Island Turkey, Stuffed with Chestnuts  
Diced Onions  
Suckling Pig, à la Bourgeoise, with Apple Sauce  
Baked Sweet Potatoes

VEGETABLES  
Boiled White Potatoes, Stewed Squash, Stewed Turnips  
Celery Stewed in Cream, Fried Egg Plant, Green Corn

PASTRY  
English Plum Pudding, Mince Pie, Chantreluse d'Oranges

DESSERT  
Molasses Grapes, Oranges, White Mocha Ice Cream,  
Nuts and Raisins, Tosted Crackers, Cheese  
Coffee

rest on the prairie and doomed to die if heaven prove deaf to his feeble cry. He leaps from his pony, he searches long; He feels it; he has it within his strong, Rough hands; he presses it to his breast—A place of shelter, a place of rest. "Don't cry, little honey, you'll catch more cold."

And he wrapped the child in many a fold of his blanket course, and he hugged it tight To his big, broad breast, but the blizzard's blight Still strove to wither its tender life. He mounted his pony, and then the strife With the wild wind, and the blinding snow, And the biting cold (that the plainmen know When the Storm Fiend flies) began once more, And under his breath Niles Nelson swore.

Then a silence fell in the tumult wild, And he heard the voice of the little child: "Now I lay me down to sleep; I pray the Lord my soul to keep;

"My God, how can I? Oh, Niles, she's dead." "Dead?" "Yes, Niles, she's lost in the snow; To-day was pleasant, and Mollie would go on the prairie to play, and she didn't come back. When the night shut down, all stormy and black, I set the lamp on the window sill, Rushed into the storm and sought her until The blizzard drifted me back to the door, That shall open for Mollie, our Mollie, no more."

Niles Nelson stood like a statue of stone; Then he raised his hand and said, with a groan: "Is there a God that will kill a child And bring its father across the wild Of wintry plains to save from death The child of another?" He drew his breath With a savage hiss, as he snatched away The blanket in which the baby lay. The blue eyes open; the rose lips call: "Oh, papa, you're home! Now I want my doll."

### CANDIES FOR CHRISTMAS.

Sweetmeats for the Delicitation of the Boys and Girls.

It would not seem Christmas to the little people without candy, any more than it would without dolls, and even older ones would have the same feeling if something sweet were missing. There are many pretty ways of serving bon-bons with the Christmas dinner. Pretty dishes filled with them can be placed upon the table. Dainty bags of various colored silks, with sprays of flowers painted upon them and filled with bon-bons, either with dinner card attached or name painted upon them, are pleasing souvenirs. The variety of candies that can be made at home is infinite as to color, shape and flavor. The purity and cheapness of these manufactures are worthy of consideration, also. Here are a few good recipes:

French vanilla cream—Break into a bowl the white of one or more eggs, as is required by the quantity you wish to make and add to it an equal quantity of cold water; then stir in the finest powdered or confectioners' sugar until it is stiff enough to mold into shape with the fingers. Flavor with vanilla to taste. After it is formed into balls, cubes or lozenges, place upon plates to dry. Candies made without cooking are not as good the first day. This cream is the foundation of all the French creams.

Nut creams—Chop almonds, hickory-nuts, butternuts or English walnuts quite fine. Make the French cream, and before adding all the sugar while the cream is still quite soft, stir into it the nuts, and then form into balls, bars or squares. Three or four kinds of nuts may be mixed together.

Maple sugar creams—Grate maple sugar, mix it in quantities to suit the taste, with French cream, adding enough confectioners' sugar to mold into any shape desired. Walnut creams are sometimes made with maple sugar, and are delicious.

Orange drops—Grate the rind of one orange and squeeze the juice, taking care to reject the seeds. Add to this a pinch of tartaric acid; stir in confectioners' sugar until it is stiff enough to form into

## JOHNNY AND JENNY.

### THE BRAKEMAN'S STORY OF ONE NEW YEAR'S EVE.

It Was To'd in the Caboose of a Cattle Train Between Stations—What Came of Holding the Front" of No. 6 in a Storm of Sleet.



A Sad Romance.

I was so quiet outside that when the long freight train could come to a standstill with an awkward jerk, we could almost hear the drifting flakes as they fell. The soft snow fell spluttered fitfully in the old-fashioned, cast iron stove. With a knowing precisely why, we sat mostly in silence. We were four hours behind time.

Sitting in the little red caboose, rumbling along through a blind fog of snow with a flying express at our heels gave an uncanny sensation. The drummer who had boarded the train at Dubuque sat morosely on a pile of grips. A couple of shippers anxiously discussed the prospects for getting their stock to market. At the entrance of Joe, the brakeman, however, the glum little party seemed to thaw. He swung down off the roof in a cheery sort of fashion.

"Joe," said one of the shippers, "be we going to reach Chicago in time for a New Year's dinner?"

"Isn't this good enough for you to live in? How'd you like to be out brakin' to-night?"

"Tain't no snap, that's a fact."

"No, you bet it ain't," said Joe, decisively. "But this ain't a patching to what it is sometimes. Somehow to-night reminds me of the night after New Year's two years ago. That was when we brought Johnny Haines home. Guess you must 'a known Johnny," he added, turning to the shipper.

"Nope. Heard of him. Go on, Joe. What was the story?"

"Not much of a one," Joe replied deprecatingly. "Just a brakeman's yarn. The first day I ever saw Johnny Haines I thought he was about the handsomest I had ever set eyes on. He came up on No. 6 on her first trip, and there wasn't a girl along the road that hadn't a smile for him as he went by. One of the fellows told us Johnny belonged to a good family, but got kicked out for some reason or other."

Joe stopped, pulled vigorously at his pipe for a few minutes, and finally the rather husky voice went on:

"Up the road not very far from here there is a pretty little farm and right at the corner of it was a water tank. It happened that on this farm there was a dark-eyed little girl who was the idol of all the boys along the road. To woo was to win with Johnny, and regular as the train passed the farm Jenny was always there to meet him. Things ran along through the summer and fall, and we found out that Johnny had been promised a raise, and along about the holidays he was going to get married. I used to notice, though, that every once in a while his brow would cloud up, as if he was thinking of something that hurt him."

"We had a big train that New Year's Eve, and with the snow and sleet and the cold it gave us no end of trouble. She parted three or four times, and it was dangerous work setting brakes or getting down to make couplings. Several times we thought we were stalled in drifts. We wanted to get through to Chicago, for the next day was New Year's, and all hands had a day off. Johnny and I fought like beavers against the cold. I was more anxious about him than myself, and was warning him how a sudden fling might send a man flying down under the wheels, when the whistle sounded down brakes. Johnny ran ahead, the car tops being slippery as glass. I looked up, and through the snow and the dark I recognized the water tank. Just at that moment the train gave a frightful jerk, and I saw the engine go rearing in the air, a lantern swing wildly and go down. I went flat on the car and hung there for dear life. We stopped in ten or twenty yards and I swung off the car like mad."

"Something made me feel that Johnny had gone under the wheels, and when I crawled ahead a few cars there I found him, lying all white and still. We picked him up and started to carry him to the house—where Jenny lived. I saw that the wheels had gone over him both ways. A white little face came to the door and looked at us a moment, but Jenny didn't faint or cry. 'We just carried him in and put him on the bed and she took charge of him. One of the boys rode over to get a doctor. Johnny lay very quiet, until the doctor's examination was finished, and then pulling Jenny's hand weakly, he said in a husky voice, 'Little girl, I want to go home.' And that he insisted on all the rest of the night. We decided to put

The Day in Richmond.

The following extract from the "Diary of a Refugee," describing a Christmas in Richmond in 1864, portrays graphically the meager provision for Christmas festivities it was possible to make in the capital of the Confederacy:

"Dec. 26, 1864. The sad Christmas has passed away. J. and C. were with us, and very cheerful. We exerted ourselves to be so, too. The church services in the morning were sweet and comforting. St. Paul's was dressed most elaborately and beautifully with evergreens; all looked as usual, but there is much sadness on account of the failure of the South to keep Sherman back.

"When we got home our family circle was small but pleasant. We had aspired to a turkey, but finding the prices range from \$50 to \$100 in the market on Saturday we contented ourselves with roast beef, and the various little dishes which Confederate times made us believe are tolerable substitutes for the viands of better days.

"At night I treated our little party to tea and ginger cakes, two very rare indulgences, and but for the sorghum grown in our own fields the cakes would have been an impossible indulgence. Nothing but the fact that Christmas comes but once a year would make such extravagance at all excusable.

"Poor fellows, how they enjoy our plain dinners when they come. Two meals a day has become the rule among refugees and many citizens from dire necessity. The want of our accustomed tea and coffee is very much felt by the leaders. The rule with us is only to have tea when sickness makes it necessary. A country lady from one of the few spots in Virginia where the enemy has never been, and where they retain their comforts, asked me gravely why we did not substitute milk for tea. She could hardly believe me when I told her that we had not had milk more than twice in eighteen months, and then it was sent by a country friend. It is now \$4 a quart."



"LITTLE GIRL, I WANT TO GO HOME."

him on board the morning express. All Jenny would tell us was that his father lived in Cincinnati. But she gave the conductor an address for a wire. We didn't think that he would last the journey, and about half way down he suddenly clutched Jenny's hand hard. The little girl threw herself upon him sobbing as if her heart would break. Poor Johnny was gone."

Joe paused a moment and looked into the fire.

"Well," he said, "to cut it short, when we got to Chicago Johnny's father was there. I led him to where the boy lay. He looked very hard at the little girl who sat there sobbing, and said, slowly, 'Is this—Jenny?' And then he took her very quietly in his arms and kissed her."

### Patent New Year's Resolves.

I will get up and dress when the breakfast bell rings.

I will not complain when everything goes to suit me.

I will treat my wife as politely as though she was a perfect stranger.

I will strive to be more thoughtful for my own comfort, that others, seeing me happy, may also endeavor to be contented.

I will not spend so much money this year on the useless frivolities of life.

I will endeavor to impress upon my family the duty of greeting, with cheerful voices and laughing faces, the father of a family when he returns home, wearied with the depressing cares and labors of a long business day.

I will go out by myself oftener, in order that my family may enjoy the tranquil and improving pleasure of a long, uninterrupted evening in the quiet sanctity of a happy home.

I must be more unselfish, and take better care of myself that I may long be spared to be the joy and light of the home which it has pleased an appreciative Providence to bestow upon me.

I will pay my pew rent this year, if I have to deny myself a new overcoat, and my children have to go without shoes. I feel that we have not heretofore sufficiently denied ourselves in little luxuries

for the sake of maintaining a good appearance at church.

I will be, in all things, an affectionate husband, a loving father, a good provider; and I will rear up a family that will love and respect me, and render to me prompt and cheerful obedience, with perfect deference to my comfort, or I will break their backs in the attempt.—Burdette, in Ladies' Home Journal.

### An Ocular Demonstration.