

THE PARTING YEAR.

Good-by, old year, good-by!
You have not brought me wealth;
You have not raised me high;
But you have left me health—
Good-by, old year, and as you go
My praises go with thee.
You leave me tolling up the hill,
I see you passing on, but still
Hope lingers here with me!

Good-by, good-by, old year!
You have not made me great;
Beyond, new tasks appear,
And I must work and wait—
Good-by, old year, but as you go
Still bear my praise away,
Since I may toll, and tolling, hold
Within my breast the faith of old
That sighs a coming day.

Good-by, old year, good-by!
You have not brought me fame;
You leave no honors I
May proudly rush to claim—
Good-by, old year—yet, as you leave,
To take my praises along,
Since I may still, through hopeful eyes
Perceive far distant glories rise
And sing a hopeful song.

Good-by, good-by, old year!
The way is rough before,
And strewn along the rear
Are dreams I'll dream no more!
Good-by, old year, and let me sing
I praise as best I can,
Since I am loved and still may love
And since thou hast not robbed me of
A fair man's faith in man!

—Chicago Record-Herald.

THE CHRISTMAS GUEST.



Cold sweeps the wind in every hill and valley,
Its kisses glaze the rivers and the sea,
It drives its steeds through avenue and alley,
And naught to see the shivering people
Yet by the hearthfire glowing
The north wind shall not rest,
Where glad hands are bestowing
Cheer for the Christmas Guest.

Then on each spirit-altar
Let votive tapers flame,
And there with song and psalter,
Be praised the wondrous Name!

And so, while love each human breast is
cheering,
Each heart shall be a lowly Bethlehem,
And each abode shall know that light en-
dearing
As helping hands shall bring it home to
them.

Such simple glad oblation
The Savior doth prefer
To rites and adoration,
Or frankincense and myrrh.

Good people all, wherever ye are dwelling,
In crowded streets or on the lonely farm,
Join in the Christmas message, sweetly
swelling,
And make each home a haven bright and
warm.
For hearts, if true and lowly,
The manger-craddles are,
Where comes the Child-Guest holy
With love, the guiding Star.

—Charles H. Crandall.

The Post-Girl's Christmas

Many and varied were the greetings given this Christmas morning to Miss Matilda Scott as her mail-wagon bumped over the frozen ruts of Cole county. The children, with bright expectant faces, waited at every post box and gave a Merry Christmas in exchange for her bundle of mail. Old Ben Todd, whose three-score years exempted him from active service on the farm, stood by the little bird house which served as post box at the corner of his field and, presenting her with an ear of red popcorn, wished her Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, with a smile on his old face, as brown and wrinkled as the apples that had lain on the ground since harvest. But he, like the children, was cheerful, expectant, even gay; it mocked her mood of bitter disappointment. More to her taste was the greeting of the Widow Brown, a forlorn-looking dame, whose sleek hair, pulled violently back from her face, seemed more than the cold, responsible for her purple nose. As she took the mail from Matilda's hand she remarked with a rueful shake of her head: "A green Christmas makes a fat graveyard." And the girl sighed in answer and drove on with anything but a holiday air. For there was a package in her bag, which light and snarl, made her heart heavy as lead. It was addressed to a certain Miss Fay Barney, and the hand was as familiar as it was dear. Had she not often admired the heavy shading, and practiced with loving emulation the curves in the capital letters? A long and tender missive was hers every week in this same handwriting, and yet—Christmas day was here, the mail all collected and no remembrance.

Instead, there was a ring in this package, diamond ring, so the open receipt read, addressed to her dearest friend, and, such was the clumsy playfulness of fate, she must be the one to deliver it.

Suddenly a voice startled her, "Merry Christmas," it said, and a strange head divided the curtains at the side of the wagon.

At the same instant the wheels came to a full stop, and Matilda's eyes, from which astonishment and fright had dried the tears, saw another stranger at the horse's head. Both were seedy and shabby, and both wore slouch hats drawn closely over their eyes.

"Merry Christmas and Happy New Year," continued the first speaker. "Can't you be civil to a feller on a holiday? No—no, that won't go; drop it," and he leveled a revolver in Matilda's face. For she was unaccustomed to the use of hers, and had bungled in an attempt to slip it from its place. Pale, but determined, and with all her wits now fully about her, Matilda stared silently into the gleaming barrel. The man at the horse's head chuckled in open admiration, then warned his companion: "Hurry up; somebody might come." The other, still pointing his weapon at the little mail carrier, urged: "Step lively, miss; some o' them things in that there sack 'll come in real handy. Christmas comes but once a year, you know."

Like lightning Matilda's brain sought about for some expedient. To gain time she demanded: "Do you know the penalty for—"

"Yep, get a move," was the laconic interruption, made still more effective by a threatening click of the trigger. All this time Matilda had kept the ring tightly clasped in her hand. By great fortune she was near the end of her route. There were only a few packages left, and this ring was, she felt sure, by far the most valuable. If she could only keep this from the men— and like a flash came an ugly thought—a temptation before which she trembled and was afraid. Why should she keep it from them? Why risk her life to save it? Have not they as much right to it as that other? But horror at the tempter's voice gave her new courage, and, as if addressing conscience rather than the thief, she spoke with sudden vigor:

"You are wicked; you are outraging

this holy day." Then as the man's careless shrug recalled her to his more practical view:

"There is nothing of value in the sack," she said. "A few cheap presents to the children in the country; are you fools to risk life and freedom for this trash? See?"

As she bent forward, the right hand, which held the ring, dropped to her side, and the folds of her dress dulled the sound of the falling box. On the floor it lay, unobserved by the intruder, who now bent over the disclosed treasures. There were no registered treasures, and the array of parcels was scant, tied for the most part, with unpractical hands, and evidently of little value. Cupidity died out of the man's eyes as he saw the meager assortment, and he gave a dissatisfied grunt.

"No good, pard—plated spoons and celluloid work boxes; I can see it from the outside."

"Well, take 'em anyway," advised the other from his position as sentry.

But the leader was more cautious. First possessing himself of Matilda's revolver, he left her, pale, trembling, but outwardly calm, while he joined his companion. His words were plain to her strained ears: "What's the use? The swag is no good—it would only be in the way."

There was no answer while, for a moment, both men stood listening.

"Sure; it's wheels, pard—let's ske-daddle."

The leader came quickly back to the wagon. "We've concluded not to bother you, seein' as it's a holiday," he said, politely. "Much obliged for this," he added, flourishing her little pearl-handled pistol. "I'll take it as a remembrance of the season. Merry Christmas!" And, lifting his hat as jauntily as if it had been a brand-new tile, he followed his comrade, who had in the meantime jumped the fence and disappeared in the underbrush beyond.

Miss Barney threw a cape hastily about her shoulders.

"Matilda is so late, mother, and I'm impatient for the mail. I'll go and meet her," she said; and she tripped out of the house and down the sodden path to the gate. Still no sign of the mail.

From the gate post she lifted the iron hoop, swung with frosted, and, slipping through the gate, peered down the road. At the moment around the turn came the wagon, swinging this way and that as the horse trotted along, the lines dangling limp over the dashboard.

"Where is Matilda?" thought Miss Barney, with a sudden sinking of the heart. For the rosy face of the post-mistress invariably peeped out, and she usually waved a cheery greeting. And then a panic seized the waiting girl, as the horse came to a full stop at the accustomed post, and still no sign of its driver. She flew to the wagon and peeped in. In a little heap, on the floor, lay Matilda, her eyes closed, lips open, her whole face white as the worsted hood she wore. Where it had fallen from her limp fingers, lay a small box addressed to Miss Fay Barney. All this the girl noticed, then she flew for help, and Matilda was promptly carried into the house, and cuddled in a big chair by a blazing fire. The warmth, the cheer revived her.

But the new glow in her veins, the sparkle in her eyes, came from a fire within, kindled by Miss Barney's words: "He addressed the ring to me. Truly, but of course it is for you. I was to give it to you Christmas day, with his love," he said, "and best wishes for a Merry Christmas."

A Hint for Christmas.
Here is a hint for those who are too poor to give many Christmas gifts: Write Christmas letters. It is the thoughtfulness and the love that count, not the gift itself. Choose among your acquaintances a dozen lonely ones, whether poor or rich, old or young, and have a letter to each ready to mail in time to reach its

destination on Christmas morning. No matter about having any news to write; just good wishes, and a title of the good words you will speak about your friend after he is dead. They will warm his heart now, which is far better. It is the season to give; and the only thing at all worth giving is oneself.—Chicago Standard.

New Year Resolutions.
Every first of January that we arrive at is an imaginary milestone in the turnpike track of human life, at once a resting place for thought and meditation and a starting point for fresh exertion in the performance of our journey. The man who does not at least propose to himself to be better this year than he was last must be either very good or very bad indeed. And only to propose to be better is something. If nothing else it is an acknowledgement of our need to be so which is the first step toward amendment.

But, in fact, to propose to oneself to do well is in some sort to do well positively, for there is no such thing as a stationary point in human endeavors. He who is not worse to-day than he was yesterday is better, and he who is not better is worse.—Charles Lamb.

A Friendship Calendar.
A friendship calendar as a Christmas gift was a source of much pleasure to an elderly lady living alone, says Good Housekeeping. At her request each one of fifty-two of her friends, representing the fifty-two weeks of the year, furnished material for every day of the seven in his week. Each one followed out his own idea for the week's calendar, contributing favorite quotations, short poems, anecdotes and reminiscences, some even adding cherished recipes. In many instances the contributions were original. Others were illustrated with small pictures cut from current magazines. The result was a perpetual calendar, each day representing the loving thought of a friend.

The Romans Use Holly.
It should prove of immense interest to students of history that the early Romans had a festival at about the time of our Christmas and that they festooned their houses with holly in honor of the god Saturn. This was called the Saturnalia, and the character of the celebration may be judged from the fact that the name is still the synonym for carousal and immorality. At this time the Romans sent their friends sprigs of holly, thus indicating their good wishes for prosperity and long life. It is related that the early Christians also decked their homes with holly at this season for the purpose of escaping persecution.

For St. Nicholas White Horse.
In Belgium the children expect the good St. Nicholas to visit them. They think he rides on a white horse, so they polish their shoes with great care, fill them with hay, oats or carrots for the saint's horse and put them in the fireplace or on a table, and in the morning, instead of the forage, they find sticks for the bad children and candies for the good ones.

Laurel for Christmas Decoration.
The laurel being an evergreen makes a striking feature in a winter landscape. Enormous quantities are used in the Christmas dressing of churches for wreaths and other decorations. Mountain laurel can be grown for decorative purposes, and it is easily cultivated. What comes to market is gathered from the wild laurel growth.

Heaviest Trade Before Xmas.
Dealers in rare coins and stamps and other similar curios always do their heaviest trade of the year just before Christmas. This is because so many curios are sold by needy people to provide money for Christmas festivities.



We are so very particular about the horse's comfort in summer. Why not in winter?

WORLD WATCHES THE BIG PACIFIC FLEET.

Greatest Naval Fighting Strength Under Flag for the Long Cruise.

FLOWER OF AMERICAN NAVY.

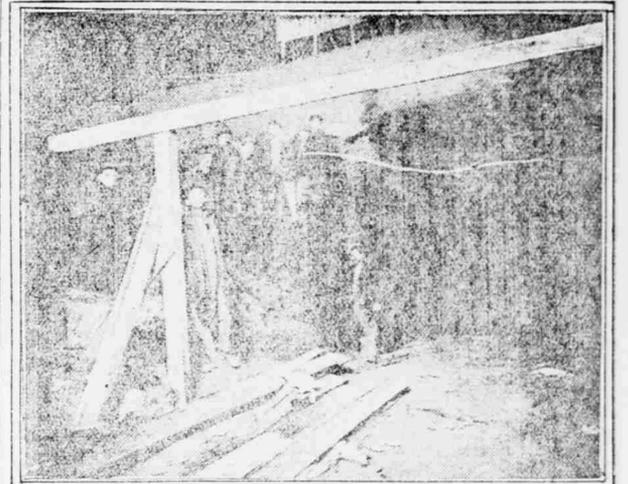
Movement Is Significant, Marking Transfer of Theater of Action from the Atlantic.

Not since the war with Spain has there been such a tense feeling in naval circles as that which marked the preparations for the departure of the great fleet, under Admiral Evans, for the Pacific. All the vessels which were to be a part of this greatest naval demonstration in our history assembled at Hampton Roads.

The President's yacht, the Mayflower, swung into historic Hampton Roads bearing President Roosevelt and the high officials of the Navy Department. Promptly sixteen huge battleships of the United States navy dressed ship and began firing the President's salute of twenty-one guns each. The Mayflower came to anchor in the roadway. Gigs and cutters put out from each battleship bearing the flag officers to the Mayflower, where they were received on deck by President Roosevelt and his official party. On their return to their ships the Mayflower hoisted anchor and proceeded down the roads toward the entrance. Here the little yacht stood out of the roadway while the same sixteen battleships passed by her, decks and fighting tops dressed and roaring from their guns another President's salute.

Bands aboard ship played the national airs. This was the farewell to the commander-in-chief of the army and navy to the American battleship squadrons, which then began their cruise to the Pacific ocean. The torpedo flotilla had already

SCENE AT THE DEATH-TRAP, WEST VIRGINIA, MINE WHERE FRIGHTFUL EXPLOSION KILLED 500 MEN.



RESCUE PARTY ABOUT TO ENTER "SHAFT 6" OF THE MONONGAH MINE.

destroyers, repair and supply ships. The progress of the fleet will be watched with interest by the whole world, and will be accompanied by the prayer that no occasion may arise for a display of that awful power of destruction which lies within its guns.

The significance of the transfer of the fleet stamps the event as an epoch in the history of the United States. It transfers the theater of action of the navy from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean for the first time since the United States became a nation. It reduces the naval representation of the country in the Atlantic from second place to the lowest place among the naval powers of the world, but it raises its representation in the Pacific ocean to the highest place, where the United States is now a poor second. Whether "for fun or for frolic," as Rear Admiral Robley Evans has expressed it, the battleships upon arrival in the Pacific will do the United States full honor.

On the journey around the Horn the battleships will pass the second torpedo boat flotilla, which sailed for the Pa-

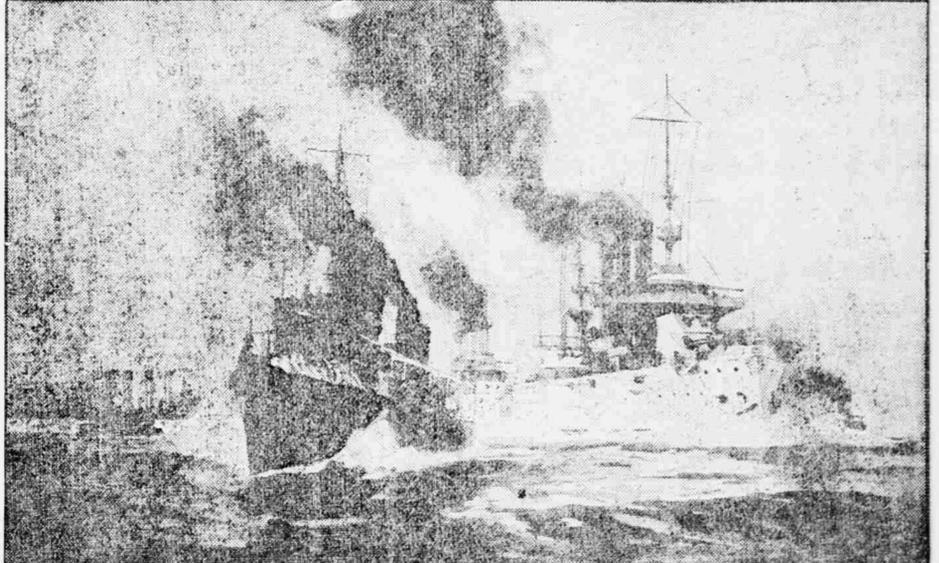
MANY FAMILIES IN WANT.

Coal Mine Disaster Makes Women and Children Destitute.

It is now evident that it is going to require a long time to complete the work of recovering all the bodies of those killed in the Monongah, W. Va., coal mine explosion. That the company recognizes this is evidenced by the fact that buildings have been erected and equipped for cooking and serving warm meals to the rescuers. Heretofore they have subsisted on coffee and cold lunches.

Distress and want among women and children dependent on the men who lost their lives, which was not recognized at first, is now being brought forcibly before the community, and it is realized that there is a great work of charity to be done. It is estimated that there are between 350 and 400 families now in want. Some of these will later receive insurance, but many have nothing to look forward to. Headed by the churches, a relief movement has been started, and a general appeal to the

THE GREAT AMERICAN PACIFIC SQUADRON.



The vessels prominent in the picture are the Battleships Washington, Tennessee and Rhode Island, and a Torpedo Boat Destroyer.

started, as its progress is so much slower than that of the battleships that two weeks more will be consumed than by the latter in the journey toward their destination—San Francisco.

All the navy yards of the Atlantic coast have been busy for weeks in fitting out the ships. At Brooklyn, New York, Boston, Norfolk, Philadelphia and Charleston painters, carpenters and machinists have participated in the great activity. High up on the smokestacks the paint brushes were moving back and forth and the sound of hammers and saws has been ceaseless. Nor has there been any chance for idling by the enlisted men. The powder magazines have had to be filled and the quantities which have been taken aboard have caused some spectators to wonder what it is all about. The large supply of ammunition is necessary because of the project to have target practice on the long journey. Then also there will be many salutes to fire and these will eat up thousands of dollars' worth of powder. Furthermore, in case an emergency should arise while the fleet is in distant waters there will be no lack of ammunition. No such emergency is expected, but the fleet "will keep its powder dry" while trusting in divine Providence.

Greatest Fighting Strength.
The fleet which Admiral Evans takes to the Pacific includes all the new battleships and the best armored cruisers. It is the flower of the American navy, far superior to that which destroyed the Spanish fleet nine years ago. The Louisiana carries the largest crew—950 officers and men. The Connecticut, which is the flagship, is the finest ship of the navy, costing \$4,600,000. Among the other battleships are the Alabama, Georgia, Kansas, Virginia, Minnesota, Ohio, Rhode Island, Kentucky and Vermont. In all there are 32 battleships and armored cruisers, besides the flotilla of torpedo boat de-

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public is being made. Many West Virginia towns have already acted and others are ready to do so.

Less than one-fourth of the total number of victims have been found. The others, undoubtedly between 300 and 400 in number, lie in unknown sections of the vast workings in the great hills that overlook the town.

Adams Pleads an Alibi.

Steve Adams, the Western Federation miner on trial at Rathdrum, Idaho, on the charge of murder, took the stand by direction of his counsel, Clarence Darrow, and set up an alibi by saying he was never in the Marble Creek country after a date prior to the dynamiting of the cabins there. The first he knew of that was in the cell with Orchard at Boise in 1906. Adams testified that while in that cell both Warden Whitney and Detective McParland had told him he "would be all right" if he would corroborate Orchard's confession implicating federation officials. The statement then made by Adams, but which he later repudiated so that it was not used in the Haywood trial, is now brought up as evidence to show the part Adams took in the murder of Fred Tyler, a claim jumper.

Can Copper Be Made?

That the recent experiments of Sir William Ramsay, the English chemist, are not likely to result in the artificial manufacture of copper is the conclusion of President Ira Remsen, who recently made an address on the subject before the Scientific Association of the Johns Hopkins university at Baltimore. Dr. Remsen said that the experiments in question indicated that the substance we call copper, and which we have hitherto regarded as a stable elementary form of matter is capable of undergoing a very slight decomposition, but while it is possible that a minute quantity of the element lithium can be obtained from copper by the action of radium emanation, the change is very slight, and it does not seem probable that any method can be devised by which it can be markedly increased.



ADMIRAL EVANS.

protected cruisers Charleston, Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Louis and the gunboat Yorktown.

Battle drill will occupy the time of the fleet for some days, no complete fleet of the American navy having been trained in sea evolutions in recent years.

In all probability a part of the fleet at least will visit Puget Sound before returning to the Atlantic coast again. No plans have been made for the return of the fleet beyond the expressed determination of the President that it shall return at some future date.