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CHRISTMAS 1896

PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN

MISS RHODA'S MEASURE.

Miss Rhoda sat in the west doorway. Her face was turned toward the sweet sky, radiant with its rays of red and golden light; it was a "withdrawing season." At Miss Rhoda's right was a field of stubble from which the wheat had been harvested. At her left the corn still stood, like Indian warriors, all over the field, waiting for the husking time. At her feet the maple leaves, so gorgeous in their autumnal plaid, were falling. Here and there the note of a stray bird which had tarried late; than its fellows fell upon her ear. There was a chill in the air; the wind was rising, and it stirred the locks of silvery hair which usually lay with such calm precision about Miss Rhoda's face. She folded her black shawl closer about her shoulders, but still she lingered.

There was a kindly voice to warn her of the dangers that might come to come to the door and say, "Come in, now, the air is chill and the fire is burning brightly." It is looking in the room without you, Miss Rhoda, was alone in the world; she had outlived those nearest and dearest to her.

In the afterglow of the lives of those who had belonged to her in the old home sweet memories lighted up the closing day, and as she looked intently at the western sky she seemed to see



HIS TOO CLOSE-FISTED.

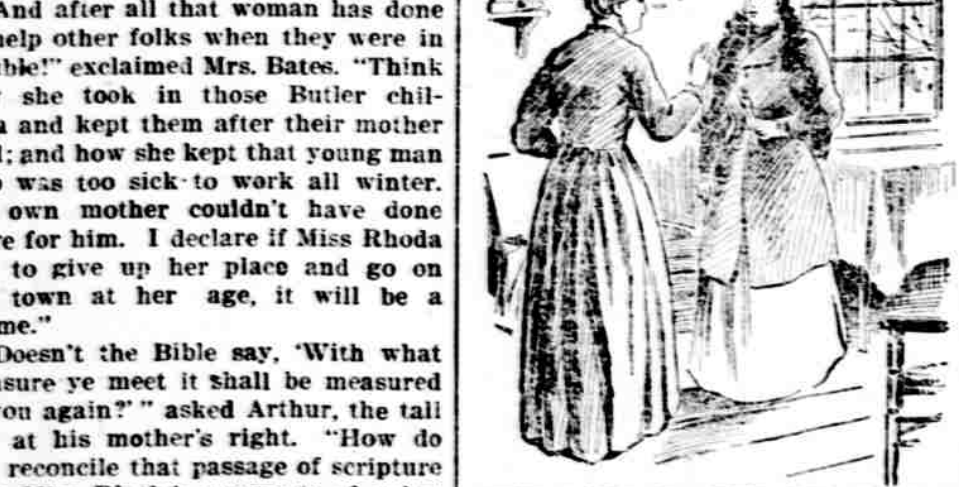
A vision of the peary gates, behind whose portals those loved ones were dwelling. Watching the red and gold light fade away, and the darkness gather, she, like Christian, "fell sick" at the glimpse of the glories and wished she could be among them.

As she turned and went into the house, there was a look on her face which, if an artist had caught it at that moment, might have inspired him to paint a picture and call it Remembrance. The most notable thing after one has grown old is the fact of remembrance. But in some lives, like that of Miss Rhoda, it is a more deeply felt fact than in others. "I was passing Miss Rhoda's house just at sunset to-night, and I saw her sitting at her west door," said Mr. Bates, as he sat down at the supper table. "I know she was trying to work out the links and knots about that mortgage on her place. But old Tom Carpenter will foreclose when the time comes. She can't expect any mercy from him; he is too close-fisted for that."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Miss Martha Bates, "what will become of her."

"She will have to go to the town-house, I suppose. It will be very hard for her; Miss Rhoda was always a high-strung woman," her brother replied.

"And after all that woman has done to help other folks when they were in trouble!" exclaimed Mrs. Bates. "Think how she took in those Butler children and kept them after their mother died; and how she kept that young man who was too sick to work all winter. An own mother couldn't have done more for him. I declare if Miss Rhoda has to give up her place and go on the town at her age, it will be a shame."



THE LORD STAYED HIS HAND.

way for me to walk. I hope he will give me strength to follow without faltering step."

"But, my dear Miss Rhoda, it is not going to be the Lord's will for you to leave your old home; you are to stay in it as long as you live."

When Miss Martha told her how her home had been secured to her, she exclaimed, "I never thought before how Abraham must have felt when he was ready to sacrifice Isaac and the Lord stayed his hand!"

It was Arthur who planned a house-warming for Miss Rhoda on Christmas eve. The young men and young women of the church and town filled her woodshed with wood and coal, and her cupboard-shelves with things useful for the necessities of the body. The fathers and mothers joined in the work of

love, and there was never such a thorough house-warming done in that locality before. A new light came into Miss Rhoda's face that Christmas. It was love-light—she was not alone in the world any longer; she belonged to her good neighbors, and they belonged to her.

When the Christmas bells rang in the church belfry on Christmas morning the people heard them with gladness, and thanked the Lord that they had been enabled to help return Miss Rhoda's measure running over full.

Christmas Kindnesses.

At this season of the year, remember that it is your duty as children, and also your privilege, to extend good will to those around you. You may promote the blessing of peace on earth by frankly forgiving those who may grieve or annoy you, by persuading enemies to be reconciled to each other, and by daily prayer to God to preserve and bless the nations of the earth from the dead.

ly horrors of war. And you may in a great many ways show good will to men. Are there not poor people within a short walk of your own door who will receive no Christmas cards, no nice presents of food or good clothing, whose children have no nice toys or picture books, of which some of you have such an abundance that you scarcely know where to find room for?—Christian Herald.

What Makes a Happy Christmas.

It does not require much money, nor indeed any money, to make a happy home circle on Christmas. The chief thing is a warm and merry heart. It will devise ways and means for filling the home with cheer, joy and gladness. A little invention, a little effort, and much love will give the day a halo brighter than tinsel and gold. God did not require extra material to paint every tree and bush in all this region a crystal whiteness the other night. He used only a little moisture and a little cold, and in the morning men exclaimed in wonder, "What beauty!" So the simple things beautify and glorify the home, and make holidays bright with joys beyond the purchase of money.—Michigan Christian Advocate.

CHRISTMAS RAPPINGS.

(By James Rolfs Haggard.)

A friend should rap at your old home door

On the Christmas morning fair,

With a present for you and your little dears,

Say, wouldn't you open, Claire?

If a boy should rap at your old home door

On the Christmas morning fair—

Your wandering boy, that you thought was lost,

Say, wouldn't you open, Claire?

If a babe should rap at your old heart door

On the Christmas morning fair,

To give you a kiss or a hug or two,

Say, wouldn't you open, Claire?

If a God should rap at your old heart door

On the Christmas morning fair,

To give you a Son with a heavenly glow,

Say, wouldn't you open, Claire?

The Season of Good Will.

The love that is in the world is a little larger after Christmas Day. "Good will toward men"—is not that the keyword of the song that was the lullaby of His manger-cradle and the melodious harmony of His life? We may differ much about Him, but on one point there will be a substantial agreement—He brought into our human life a new governing force; that is to say, he elevated to the first place the spirit of love, and fellowship, and good will. The heart of man ascends the throne where Jesus of Nazareth is known and loved. If our forms of manifesting affection by gifts be often empty, yet is there in them a large measure of this genuine and unifying good will.

The Christmas Festival.

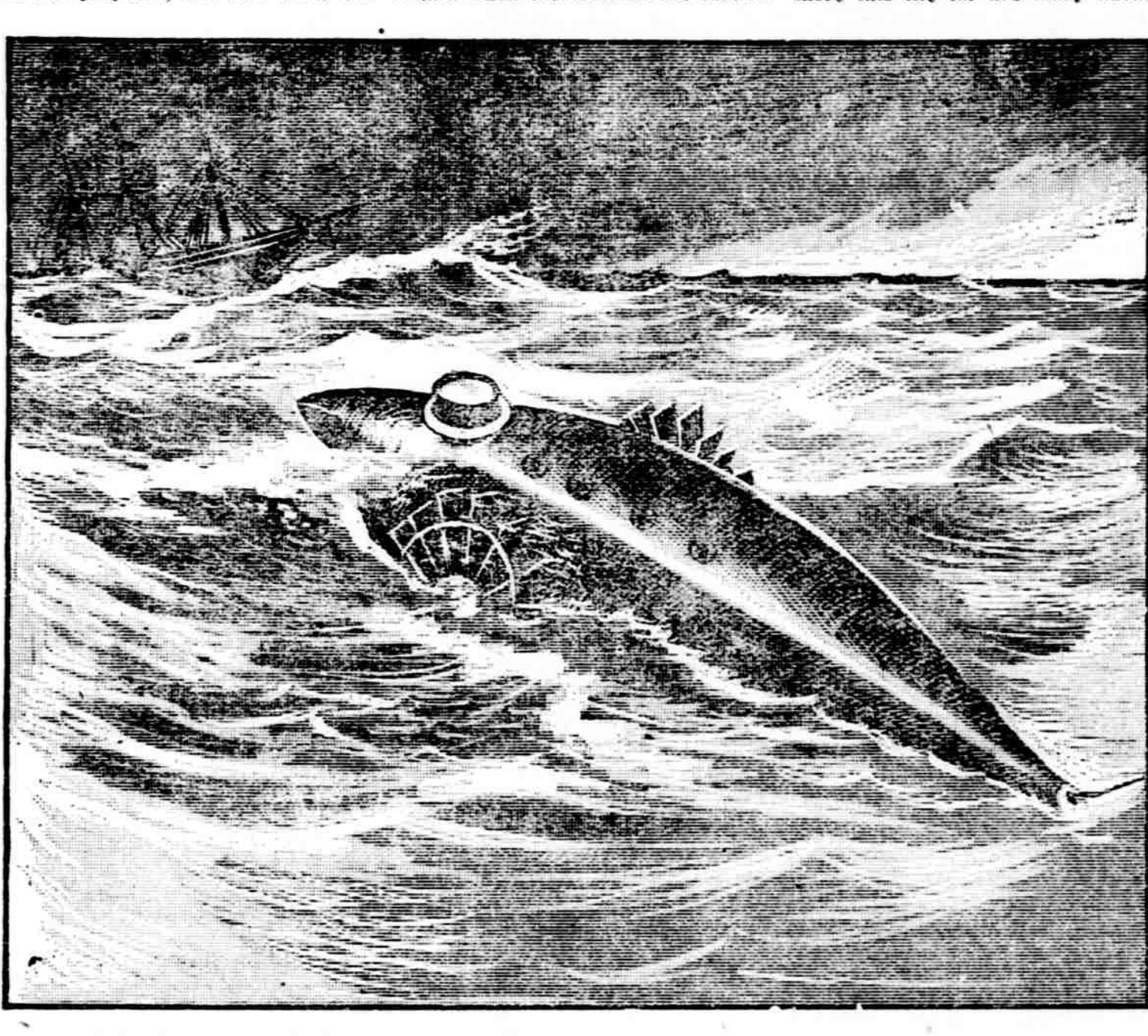
Today in every land where Christ is known, and by believers of every name, Christmas is becoming more and more the festival of festivals in which all rejoice. It is not only pre-eminently the children's festival, but at Christmas we all become children again in the home, in the school, in the orphanage, in the pulpit, and in the pew—all the people and all the children catch the inspiration of the angels' song on the plains of Bethlehem, and ignorance and prejudice melt away in the presence of the Manger, and the universal heart is filled with good will to high and low, to rich and poor alike. Not only the patient on the hospital couch, but even the prisoner in his penal cell, feels the thrill of the Bethlehem story.—Lutheran Evangelist.

Christmas to Exhibit the Christ Life.

A day set apart to the expression of patriotic feeling helps to strengthen that feeling; so a season which associates itself with the mission of Christ is not only to exhibit something of the Christ life. It is a good thing for others to know that we are thinking about them. There are, indeed, daily opportunities of expressing such feelings and giving such positive expression of sympathy, but when the custom of so using a certain time has grown up, we may use it with all other opportunities to good advantage, and all the more because there are hearts turning toward us.



The latest device for communication between a ship in distress and shore is a cigar-shaped electric boat. The great difficulty which life savers have had to contend with has been that of getting a line from the shore to the ship. Often the only means is the mortar, and when this fails the life savers are obliged to stand by and see the crew perish without being able to render them any aid. It is to overcome this and afford the life savers an opportunity to work in any kind of weather and under any conditions that this new life car is made. It was at first proposed by the inventors that this car should only carry the life line, but as their experiments demonstrated the feasibility of the plan, the interior construction of the car was changed so as to accommodate passengers. In construction the car resembles the cigar-shaped Whitehead torpedo. It is pointed at one end, while at the other there is a propeller and rudder. On either side of the raft, near the front, are two paddle wheels, which are intended to aid the propeller, and also serve the



purpose of keeping the craft in a proper position while in the water. The motive power is supplied by a motor which is placed in the forward end of the craft. When carried by ship the life car being driven off shore the paddle wheels are pointed and slightly curved, so that as they revolve in shallow water they will catch the sand. A wheel or roller is placed beneath the

SANDY HOOK AN ISLAND.

An Inlet to the Shrewsbury Cut by the Last Big Storm.

Since the big storm of October 12 and 13 swept up the coast the northern end of Sandy Hook has been transformed from a peninsula into an island. Four miles south of the old New Jersey Southern Railroad boat landing, and five miles south of the point of the Hook is the bathing resort of Highland Beach. The bathing grounds are just across the Shrewsbury river from the two big lighthouses known as Highland Lights. For a full mile the strip of beach is very narrow, and at that distance there is no point where the river and ocean are separated by more than 100 yards. Jetty and bulkheads have been erected, and many train loads of stone have been dumped there in past years to protect the railroad track from the sea. It was driven deep and well braced, and it stood the storm well. To-day it is the only connection between the mainland and the Hook. The indications are that the next storm will remove even this link, for the new inlet is becoming a very wide one. It is just as near the river and ocean as the old inlet was. In the early part of this century the bulk of the water of Shrewsbury river and its tributaries passed out into the ocean at this very point. So wide and deep was this old-time inlet that many a Yankee craft escaped British war vessels by slipping through it into the Shrewsbury. It looks as though the old inlet had come to stay, for even now it would take hundreds of train loads of stone and earth to close the breach. If the government desires complete isolation for its fortifications and proving grounds it is in a fair way to secure it.—New York Sun.

Present and Accounted For.

Just to see how his wife would "take on" Wm. McCurdy, of Allegheny City, Pa., took a dose of rough on rats. McCurdy was present when Mrs. McCurdy "took on," but he was in a coffin.

Walking with God must begin in very short steps.

Alfred, Maine, utilizes its tramps in making sewer repairs.

NELSON'S FAMOUS SIGNAL.

"England Expects Every Man to Do His Duty"

At the United Services Institute, Whitehall, at which relics connected with Trafalgar and Nelson are to be exhibited, there is a time-stained document, framed, and hung on the western wall, from which it appears that the famous signal "England expects every man to do his duty," was not wholly Nelson's, says St. James' Gazette. Lieut. Pasco, who was responsible for the signaling on the admiral's ship, makes the following statement: "His lordship came to me on the poop and, after ordering certain signals to be made, about a quarter to noon, said: 'Mr. Pasco, I want to say to the fleet: "England confides that every man will do his duty." He added: "You must be quick, for I have one more to add, which is for close action." I replied: "If your lordship will permit me to substitute "expects" for "confides" the signal will soon be completed, because the word "expects" is in the vocabulary and "confides" must be spelled. His lordship replied in haste and in seeming satisfaction: "That will do, Pasco; make it directly." As the last hoist was handed down Nelson turned to Capt. Blackwood, who was standing by him, with: "Now I can do no more. We must trust to the great Disposer of all events and the justice of our cause. I thank God for this great opportunity of doing my duty." When Lord Nelson's message had been answered by a few ships in the van he ordered me to make signal for close action and keep it up. Accordingly I hoisted No. 16 at the topgallant masthead and there it remained until shot away." Such, then, is the duty word and attested statement of Nelson's fleet captain which he gave to Col. Baylis, Q. C., who presented it to the museum.

ANIMAL REMAINS IN COAL.

Not a Single Representative of These Fossilized Creatures Living.

Most people know that coal is full of vegetable remains, but comparatively few are aware of the fact that animal and insect bodies by countless millions also go to make up the great beds of fuel that are now being so continuously drawn upon, says the St. Louis Republic. The vegetable impressions found in coal or in the shale just above the vein are very beautiful as well as numerous, not less than 1,500 different kinds of plants having been noticed in carboniferous strata in the different parts of the world. Some of these plants are very much like those now living, but the majority of them, even though found in Nova Scotia or Iceland, appear to be representatives of what are now tropical varieties. Many animal and insect remains are also fossilized and thoroughly preserved in the coal beds. These petrified creatures of the bygone age called the "coal period" are of various kinds. Huge toad-like reptiles, with beautiful teeth, small tree lizards, great fish with tremendous jaws, tiny water snails, "hundred-legged" worms and thousands of insects of the grasshopper and dragon-fly tribes are also found. The curious fact is that there is not a single representative of these fossilized creatures now living.

A Student's Joke.

J. E. Dodson, the actor, is an Englishman. "When I was at school at Harrow," he said to a reporter, "Campanini, then in the height of his fame as a tenor, sang for the first time in the city in Italian opera. If I mistake not, it was Traviata. At the end of Campanini's great aria in the third act there was a storm of applause. All the front seats in the balcony were occupied by students, and it was noticed that an almost invisible wire was strung from the middle point in the gallery horse-shoe to the top of the prompter's box at the middle of the stage. What caused most people to notice the wire was the sudden appearance on it of a floral garland of huge dimensions, which hovered on spirals several stuffed doves. The car rode gradually down the wire until it was in full view of everybody. Campanini's face was wreathed in smiles. He bowed now with his right, and again with his left hand on his chest. As the car approached the prompter's box the singer moved forward to remove it from his trolley. Then there was the keen zest of the occasion. Not only was there one wire, there were two. The second was attached to the car, and also to the hand of a particularly stalwart undergraduate. With marvelous rapidity the car shot back to the balcony. The smiles, I may add, did not tarry on Campanini's face."—Boston Transcript.

Antiseptic Handkerchiefs.

So much danger exists from contagion in the handling of infected clothing that for some time past an effort has been made to introduce handkerchiefs of paper and fiber. A substance composed of shredded fibers might be put into the form of paper pulp and run out into sheets, which would be soft, pliable, absorbent and inexpensive. Paper handkerchiefs might be made almost as cheap as toilet-paper, and would be found a most welcome addition to the equipment of invalids. Immediately upon being used they could be burned or otherwise destroyed, thereby avoiding the transmission of disease germs. Laundresses and others have frequently been inoculated by contact with the wash-tub. A scratch or any irritated spot on the skin may become a lodging place for such organisms. For this and other reasons the paper handkerchief is strongly recommended. In addition to the absorbent and inexpensive qualities, the pulp could be impregnated with some odorous and efficacious antiseptic, the value of this new departure would be largely increased.

Probably His Last.

A voter 100 years old deposited ballot No. 101 in one of the precincts of New York city. In spite of his 100 years he voted without assistance and used no glasses. The old man beamed on the judges as he handed over his neatly folded ballot and walked away. At the door he turned and said: "Well, good-by. This is probably my last vote. A hundred years is a long stretch and a teller gets pretty tired." And he was gone.

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