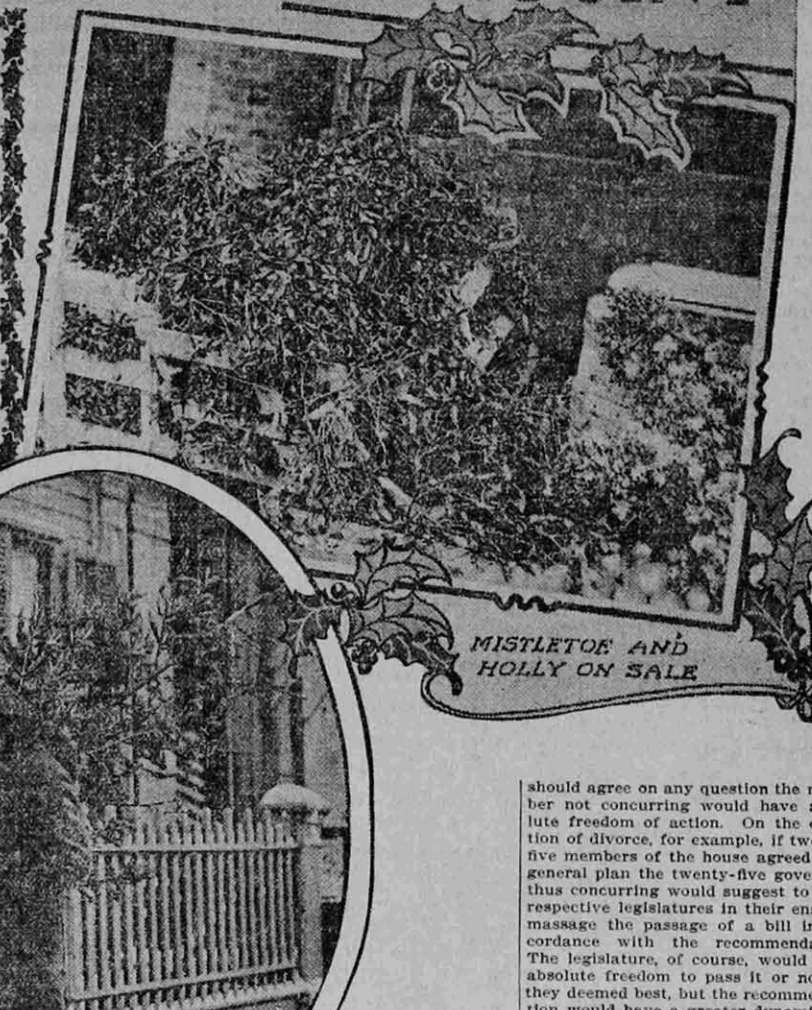


CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS FROM A COMMERCIAL VIEWPOINT



LONG before Christmas gifts are on the counters and in the shop windows the preparatory part of the season of tradition and sentiment is being worked out in the forests which furnish the decorations for homes, churches and public places of the land and which give verandah to the crowded streets.

Fifty years ago any one in a great city who wanted a Christmas tree would have walked a long distance before finding the desired article. A year ago it was roughly estimated that more than 5,000,000 Christmas trees were sold in the country. For obvious reasons New York receives and sells more of these trees and of holly and mistletoe than any city in the United States. For several weeks before the merry season sets in the streets in the lower end of Manhattan are filled with these holiday harbingers. They come by boats, mostly schooners, and by rail.

More than 75 per cent of these greens grow on the cold hillsides of eastern and northern Maine and on the mountains and in the forests of New Hampshire and Vermont. The harvesting of New York Christmas trees is done by cutting them along the Atlantic coast and conducted on an extensive scale. The work gives employment to many young farmers and timbermen at a season when money for the harvesters is not any too plentiful. For these same men who formerly hunted game in winter have been largely bereft of that source of revenue for several years.

To understand how the business has grown one need only remember that twenty-five years ago, when it began in Maine, no more than four schooners were employed to bring down the cut, and their cargoes contained less than 5,000 trees. Today there are not enough schooners to supply the demand along the coast as far as New York city. Scores of railroad trains also bring in trees from Pennsylvania, sections of the New England states that are not accessible to the coast and the interior of New York. The trees are cut in the big cities of the east are being shipped many carloads to the middle western states. Holly and mistletoe constitute another branch of the business. They come from Maryland

and Virginia, and some come from the far southwest.

Harvesting Christmas trees is not conducted in any haphazard sort of way. "Anything" will not do. The ideal tree must be intensely green, symmetrical, straight and graceful, and its limbs must be stout, so as to hold up the gifts they are designed to bear. Generally there is a large profit in harvesting these trees. If there is an average cut the cost of delivering to New York or Boston does not exceed 2 cents a tree. The price of the smallest tree in a big city seldom falls below 25 cents, and from that the price goes up to \$5, according to the height and symmetry of the tree.

Another decoration for the season is the "ground plant." It grows deep in the pine woods and among resinous needles and broken limbs. It is a creeping, vine-like plant. Children of the country gather it in the fall, sort it, press it into boxes or sacks and send it to the cities. Out of this are made wreaths, festoons and streamers into any desired shape. These make up the decorations seen all over the land.

Tree Farm of the City.
The stranger in New York city a few weeks before Christmas would be warranted in the opinion that Christmas trees, holly and other green growths constituted the principal traffic of the metropolis. Almost anything—except a large tree—intended for decoration during the Yuletide is on sale on the sidewalks, the vendors being men, women and children. But this is only a part of the stock. Over on the west side, not far from the docks, is what is called "the farm." This comprises the great open spaces along West street, that being the widest thoroughfare of

the city. Here are grouped great stacks of Christmas trees and piles of wreaths. This is the wholesale market. In the center of intersecting streets are more Christmas goods of the same sort, but on less extensive lines. From these markets the retail dealer draws his supply, and from here large consignments are shipped to country towns. A year ago it was estimated that more than 200 carloads of trees and holly and mistletoe were delivered to the New York market. There are 2,000 trees to each carload. Make your own deduction. And don't forget that these trees came by rail. The cargoes by boat are to be added.

The best seller in the Christmas tree line is the balsam fir, because, possibly, of its aromatic fragrance. Firs and spruces for the holiday trade in New York city and vicinity come from Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and the Adirondacks. In order to get them to market in time the woodcutters start the work of cutting, bunching and trimming early in October. In most cases the cuts are hauled long distances over country roads before they are shipped on trains. These trees range from six feet to twenty-five feet in height. Wholesale prices range from 75 cents a bunch (usually four trees make a bunch) up to \$25 for a single tree that measures twenty-five feet. The wholesale trade of New York city is handled by only a few concerns. One has been in the business for more than thirty-five years. Orders for the great Christmas cut are often made while people are just finishing their vacations.

Similar Christmas markets are found before the season opens in Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston and Washington. Chicago draws on the pineries of Mich-

igan for much of its stock in the way of Christmas trees and supplies a vast area in the west and northwest with greenery that adds to the merry season. Most of the trees delivered in Chicago arrive on lake schooners. In a Pennsylvania sawmill woodmen work in gangs and are in the employ of a large shipper. The contractor pays the owner of the land at the rate of from \$7.50 to \$10 an acre, taking them as "they come." The trees are loaded on large hay and bark rigged wagons, hauled to the nearest railroad station by oxen and piled in stacks or rows near the tracks, from which they are loaded on lumber cars and shipped to the large cities.

Home of Holly.
The holly used in decorations comes from Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina in cases of from 75 to 100 pounds in weight, prices ranging from \$1.50 to \$2 per case, according to quality. Much of it comes in wreaths varying in size and quality. These wreaths sell for from \$6 to \$12 per hundred. The prices are those of last year, and they will probably not vary much this year. Imported mistletoe comes mostly from Normandy, though some is obtained in England. It sells for from \$10 to \$15 per case of seventy-five pounds. The home mistletoe, which comes from the same states that produce the holly, brings from \$1 to \$2 per barrel.

The Christmas tree was sentimentally revered long before this land was discovered. Tree worship also obtained in England and France in the days of the Druids. In some form or other it is worshipped in heathen lands. It exists in Iceland. According to the re-

ords in that country, it was known in China 700 years B. C.
The first English child to enjoy a Christmas tree was Mary, daughter of Henry VIII, who was afterward known as "Bloody Mary." When she was four years old a rosemary bush, hung with red jewels and silver spangles and lighted with rushlights, was set up in the great hall of the castle for the amusement of the little princess. From this little rosemary bush the custom spread until now no English home is complete without the Christmas tree.

The extent of the Christmas tree industry, and the holly and mistletoe as well, in New York city will give an idea of the business throughout the country. A year ago the big city Christmas tree business brought in more than \$2,000,000 for these Christmas goods. Of course all were not used in the city, but that was the amount expended for trees, holly and other Christmas greens. It was estimated that between 5,000 and 6,000 people in the city were vendors of the Yuletide decorations. The same year it was estimated that St. Louis, now fourth in population, spent more than \$50,000 for the same sort of goods for the season of good will.

Besides these decorations there are wreaths of immortelles, colored according to the purchaser's fancy. From these the bells which are seen so much

in windows during the Christmas season are made. Prices of wreaths and bells from immortelles vary according to the size desired.

As the Christmas tree first became a commercial commodity in the east the following story as to how it was introduced in New York is of interest: A good many years ago the season had been a poor one for the farmer. One up in the Catskills had been hard hit. He cut down some trees that had grown at his door and shipped them to New York city, coming along with his product. He obtained the privilege of using a sidewalk downtown on which he exhibited his trees. For this privilege he paid the city \$1. He was the pioneer in the Christmas tree business in the metropolis. The Christmas tree merchant who gets a corner or any space in the great city now is lucky, and the price paid is so great that it will cut into the profit unless the sales are enormous.

FRANK H. BROOKS

Jordan's House of Governors.

A novel thing in the Jordan proposition to create a house of governors, but one that will be readily understood upon reflection, is that the majority does not bind the minority. If every member present save one

should agree on any question the member not concurring would have absolute freedom of action. On the question of divorce, for example, if twenty-five members of the house agreed on a general plan the twenty-five governors thus concurring would suggest to their respective legislatures in their ensuing message the passage of a bill in accordance with the recommendation. The legislature, of course, would have absolute freedom to pass it or not, as they deemed best, but the recommendation would have a greater dynamic effect and a stronger moral influence when each legislature knew that twenty or more other legislatures were considering the same proposed law. If eighteen states out of twenty-five passed the bill, sufficient public interest would be awakened in the others to make the matter an issue in the next campaign in the states that did not pass the bill.

In fine, Mr. Jordan suggests that the house of governors discuss vital questions concerning the welfare of the states that would require uniform action, but upon which congress could not act because the constitution affords it no power to do so. The trouble has been, according to Mr. Jordan, that while the states have had the power, no way has been provided for them to get together as states to execute the will of the people.

Rifle Grenade of Great Power.

A rifle grenade has been invented which is thought to have great possibilities. The grenade would, it is considered, prove of the very greatest value in frontier warfare in India and in bush fighting in West Africa.

Situations arise in these forms of warfare that can only be met by the use of the grenade which would not only do great destruction, but also have a demoralizing effect upon the enemy. The grenade which may be applied to any rifle without interfering with the existing mechanism, practically converts a rifle into a howitzer.

"Jerked Buffalo" Was a Delicacy.

There are no more buffalo steaks on the market, but old timers will easily recall the days when it was as easy to buy such steaks as it is to get beefsteak, and for less money. And "jerked buffalo," buffalo meat cured, was a delicacy in its day.

Mme. Palladino, Psychic Puzzle

Italian Whose Seances In Europe Mystified Scientists Comes Here to Prove Her Weird Powers

NOW comes Eusapia Palladino—medium, woman of the weird—who considers herself a Neapolitan, although some of those from the boot-shaped peninsula who know their Italy shake their heads at Naples as her cradle town, while admitting that she does come from the land of fine arts, sunny skies and spaghetti. She comes to America—the United States—as they all do, after contact with men of note on the other side. And United States folks look as they always do, to anybody or anything that has been talked about across the water. Let it be said to the credit of Americans that "flocking" does not always imply belief. Also, in behalf of the Palladino, let it be said that she, like the rest, makes motions, and things rise; they come and vamoose at her bidding, apparently, as she stretches her arms, all the while being under the scrutiny of scientific men, journalists and others who by their talk or writings spread the name of Palladino. Her seances in New York city have created a stir.

So also came, puzzled and benefited, Lulu Hurst, Annie Abbott, the Davenport brothers—remember the Davenport—Washington Irving Bishop, J. Randall Brown, James Louis Kellogg, May Pepper and others. All of these did things which caused the moderns to wonder as much as the Israelites probably wondered when Elisha caused the ax that a woodman had lost in the Jordan to come up and float on the surface.

The most recent spiritualistic arrival met, interested and to some extent associated with, in a business way at least, some noted people on the other side. It must be said for her that her meeting with these has not been recent. Some of them she knew and interested for twenty years. Among them were Lombroso, recently passed away, and Oliver Lodge, Crookes, Fermi, Sergi and others of a school that studied the occult and dived into the waters of mysticism. On this side she caused a professor at Harvard to pause. William James is the professor referred to. When he had investigated the psychic force of Mrs. Palladino he said, "I admit that she resorts to fraud at times, but will fraud explain her phenomena?"

Professor James H. Hyslop, an author of note, although somewhat skeptical, wants the mystery explained. "The Palladino case ought to be investigated thoroughly," he says. "For both the scientific man and the public the history of Mesmer ought to be a warning," he adds, "and a lesson. He created the

same excitement among the aristocracy of France that Eusapia Palladino is creating among the ignorant vulgar rich here."

Mme. Palladino, who is to tour the cities of this country at least that is the program—is fifty-four years old. She has been twice married, but retains her maiden name. For that mat-

ter, both of her husbands adopted her maiden name.

At a seance given in London Palladino was subjected to the scrutiny of members of the English Society for Psychical Research. Every care was taken to trap the Italian sorceress in any trick to which she might resort. The word "trick" by the way, is not in



EUSAPIA PALLADINO, FAMOUS ITALIAN MEDIUM.

the madame's vocabulary. Several seances were held in the committee room. One of those present was Hereward Carrington, an author and scientist of New York city, who devoted many years to the study of alleged spiritualistic phenomena. He has detected and exposed a number of fraudulent mediums. Mr. Carrington returned home after the London seances and is quoted as saying that he is as much mystified at what he saw and heard as any of the foreign investigators. "Frequently during the seances," says Mr. Carrington, "we all experienced a sensation of cold, as though a cold breeze were issuing from the cabinet curtains and blowing over us. All who have had sittings with Eusapia are convinced that this cold breeze is not subjective in character, but that it is distinctly and provably objective. It is invariably noticed by all present at about the same time, and their descriptions all agree with one another as to its nature and as to the sensations they experience when it blows upon them. This breeze sometimes seems to become denser and more solid, as it were, until it assumes the impression of icy cold fingers."

Palladino reads and writes fairly well. If not up to the standard of the purist. She speaks the Neapolitan dialect readily. When she speaks Italian she frequently mixes Neapolitan in her sentences and is given to interspersing French and even English words.

In spite of the fact that her manners are not such as would fascinate one accustomed to cultured circles, she has been received in the refined and luxurious salons of Paris and London. Of her early life she prefers not to talk. Her birthplace was an obscure town; her family had associations with a brigand; her first marriage was unhappy. No. 1 insisting that as she was a money maker she should support him. But all these things she dismisses when they are hinted at. When they are suggested a cloud comes over her countenance. Her life, she says, has been a series of successes ever since she first found herself. She did not understand her powers at first. She was afraid of herself in the beginning. "But afterward," and when she speaks in this manner she becomes elated, "everybody was converted." She has been seen in all the capitals of Europe and was surprised to learn that she was so well known in America.

Her tastes are simple. She would rather sit down to a meal in an eat side restaurant of her own people than dine at the most fashionable cafe. She is also simple in her dress. "Why care so much for money, dress, culture and accomplishments?" she asks. And then she adds, rather dramatically, "This life, after all, is not so important as most men consider it." Then her eyes grow glassy. The woman ends—the medium begins. She has been in the business thirty years. She is here to challenge Americans to disprove her powers. JOHN KERSCHER.

Zelaya, Ruler of Nicaragua

Born to Wealth, Educated, Ambitious and Merciless, He Has Become Mischief Maker of Central America



PRESIDENT ZELAYA OF NICARAGUA.

A DISTRACTED hornet in a rapidly revolving, steam heated kaleidoscope is not an altogether extravagant simile of the present condition of Jose Santos Zelaya, titular president and, it may be added, dictator of Nicaragua. Zelaya represents the militant insect. Nicaragua is the instrument containing the loose collections composed of Zelaya's supporters and the insurgents under General Juan J. Estrada.

If there ever was a time when Nicaragua was in a state of repose that is promised to last a year, it must have been when Gil Gonzalez Davila discovered the big lake in that country in 1553 or when the strip was in some superlative condition. A way back in 1552 it revolted from Spain and was annexed to the Mexican empire under

Iturbide. It has kept up the pace in one way or another ever since. Zelaya's present trouble extends beyond the confines of his carbonated country. Diplomatically, if in no other way, he is responsible for the killing of two American citizens, Leroy Cannon and Leonard Grace. They were shot to death for participation in the present revolution of Nicaragua. What brought on this revolution is a matter that does not concern any citizen of the United States. The rumormongers between Zelaya and Estrada, the latter being the head of the party opposing Zelaya.

Zelaya has ruled in Nicaragua for sixteen years. The population of the republic is roughly estimated to be a half million. The statement has been printed that of this number 10,000 have

been exiled at various times under Zelaya's administration. Long before Zelaya was elected president he was a fomenting factor in his country. When Charnora was president, the republic was in a condition of quietude that disturbed the hot blooded and active young man who is the present ruler. Zelaya undertook to agitate the lethargic natives against the government. His time, however, had not come. He was sent into exile. He found his way to Guatemala and became an ardent supporter of the restless spirit who governed there, J. Rufino Barrios. He entered the service of Barrios. He learned lessons there which enabled him to carry out the policies that have characterized his rule up to the present time. Kindred spirits were Barrios and Zelaya.

A revolution in Nicaragua was inevitable. It came, and Zelaya returned. He headed the insurgents of that uprising, and finally the government was overthrown and Zelaya came to the top.

It is conceded even by his most inveterate enemies that he is courageous. He is the boldest leader who has so far appeared in the Latin American country, except, perhaps, Castro. And he is more ambitious than was the Venezuelan ruler. One of his dreams, according to those who have studied him, is to unite the five republics of Central America and become president of all. He is fifty-one years old.

Ever since Zelaya became president the soldiery of his country have had something to do other than chasing pigs and goats, which was their former exercise and amusement. Zelaya has been better equipped for his part of rule than any Central American ruler or fighter. Up to the present trouble he has outpointed all opponents.

In spite of the comparatively small population of the country and the paucity of the natives Zelaya, according to the most recent reports, is capable of putting up a strong fight. One report is that he can easily place in the field an army of 125,000 equipped with modern rifles and artillery. Not a great while ago there were shipped to him from New Orleans 75,000 Mauser rifles and 25,000,000 rounds of ammunition. Whether this shipment succeeded in running up, outside is not definitely known. With the force of his own country, backed up by the insurgents and with the United States watching the situation Zelaya is one of the most interesting figures that has come into the world in some time and sooner or later he will have to be dealt with. S. VINTON RAMEY.