Ye Faire Maides Choose atte Gladde Yuletide Beneathe ye Mistletoe to Bide.

DAISY MAY CHATS ON CHRISTMAS TOPICS.

From Superstition to Society—The Sad Story of Little Tim—Gertrude Atherton's Stunning Gowns—The Opera Season.

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There is a winsome daughter of the southland in town whose every fiber vibrates with superstition. She's a dear, lovable creature, devoutly believing in "Black Monday's" current prognostications. The rhyme and reason for it all are so delightfully told by the coy sweetness that her words become "persuasive eloquence," resulting in many converts; hence the Yule log makes its initial bow to polite society in the vestibule kingdom of fragrant fagots. The little agitator contends the Christmas love, spirit and good cheer abide within but through its burning.

Mere mention of this prophetic sentiment provokes a smile, maybe of incredulity or perhaps pleasant memories. None of us who have ever spent the last days of December at our Alma homes can fail to recall "Ebony Sam," the woodchopper, and his varicolored helpers wielding their axes to the tune of "Glory, Glory, Hallelujah," or "Crope Jim, de Sho-Nie Man," as the spirit moved them. So I've come to be a real believer, and, barring the musical din which precedes the Christmas woodchopping at Pinevale, we are going to live up to the tradition.

Place the Yule log flat against the chimney. Pile high with good oak sticks until the blaze roaring up the flue is a beacon light of good cheer to the wanderer, and the Yule log will burn for twelve days. Light the fire on Christmas day. Replenish often, so that a consistent glow may be maintained throughout the nightime. Do this daily. Keep up until winding sheet surrounds our old friend of yesterday and the chiming bells do honor to the glad New Year of 1899.

It all goes well, the great guard for suddenly crackles, blazes for a brief moment, then breaks asunder. According to "Black Mammy" this prophesies health, happiness and luck for the family. We unite the household around the Yule log on that last eventful night to listen! A sudden lull, we wait for the watchers, for it is written in the "Book of Hoodoo," vaulted for by the same authority, "direct calamity will follow heed."

Fashionable boutiques and shops take on a welcoming attitude the first weeks of the month, so that stalwart or straggling wayfarers are given a continuous performance of fantastic festooning in most not topline tints. It is to eat, drink and be merry.

One great daily paper proposes to make 1,000 little ones happy by distributing Kris Kringle's bounty from its heavy laden trees. Philanthropic have sufficient suitable gifts for the army of Sunday school scholars. Men and women of high degree have given thought to the care of worn habiliaus as well as the worthy. And when we assemble about our own festive boards we will remember there is "peace on earth, good will toward men."

We are glad it's over, though. The trans cooking and tiresome trips to remote sections in search of novelties for Christmas giving have become a thing of the past, but to be regretted. I felt always like congratulating myself when I reached home after one of these autumn jaunts because of my extreme good nature.

One morning, I confess, I was cross. I'd been jaded in the rise by a bunch of fussy nondescript women, shoved and shoved incontinently by Manie's mammy striving to reach the bargain counter, whereon lay the coveted was baby "that opens and shuts its eyes," "has real hair" and is "dressed like a baby."

Because of these things and others I just reach over and get "on to your pins a stir!" Leaving the place to my subordinates, I hastened to the elevator. He knew "on us, and I was fresh they'd all to come. It's all he'll do for Christmas. The grave for for his mother is cool month's I counted on," was unanimously endorsed.

During the bundle wrapping process I talked with the good man. Tim was his boy's name. He was a Tim that truly day. Tim had neither mother nor other folk. He spent the long, weary days watching the coal cars emptying, wishing his crooked back could be made straight and his legs useful.

The private Pullman of some history told in a crowded department store strengthened every good impulse, and before the day was done I had claimed as the rickety crutch and held concerts with Mike Malone's Tim.

There stands an old house on West street, a story and a half high, directly opposite a dock for transcontinental steamers. Posted in front of a dormer window, with face closely pressed against the pane, you may see any day the vivid face of a cherub. This one is illuminated and shadowed with velvety blue eyes, circled by a tangled mass of cropped brown curls, caressing brow and cheek.

The faint finger marks of acute sufferings are perceptible. The throaty sound of the few words spoken tell the tale of deserted intellect and crippled body.

When it grows dark, Mike comes home. This day it was the same. A more than kindly light shone in his honest gray eyes, despite the extreme setting coal dust had elected for them as he footed to the present purgatory of his idol over his new found friend and tor. Only a vain tale, only an incident of every day. But what "life happiness and love without cottage? For me the acquaintance of Mike Malone and his boy Tim is a blessing in disguise, an object lesson in contentment. Such incidents are truly Christmas jays.

There are so many jolly house parties projected for out of town that New York is practically without a hostess. Nobody this week could be found for so much as a day, save the children and their homes.

Surely the Pied Piper of Hamelin is converted and has resigned his calling, for there are children, children everywhere. Statistics, notwithstanding to the contrary, I conclude this generation has done nobly. In children all has been bustle and activity, a certain impetus having been given by the unique beauty show under the auspices of the Professional Woman's league.

Everything in the nature of a to, fascinator was accoutrements as naval behoofing to be seen, and the ensemble was reminiscent of Red Cross nurses. One manufacturer made last to flourish the quadrangle charms of the vivandiere, and, lest we forget, we received a picturesque campaigning tour, furnished as a reminder in the form of "Teddy in his fighting togs."

Novels are beginning to be my daily meat and drink. I, along with other busy butterflies, will take to spinning after the gala days are over to wear the hours away.

If one may rely upon the signs of the times standing for aught, sons of Abraham have had best look to their laurels. Attention to health via physical exercise discloses dirigible drugs. The Delsarte demonstrator and the teacher of muscle grays are having an inning. Spinning and hand ball are the latest methods advocated by these instructors for all the ills to which human flesh is heir. It is said this is a progressive period, an age of wisdom and what not. If disagreeable chemical concoctions may be discarded for pleasant pastimes, proving equally beneficial, will be inclined to quote Chimonie Fadden, "wot I did" with the modesty man.

Falconry, a mediaeval sport revived in good old England, threatens to invade these shores. No particular boost is derived by its indulgence, but all women will take kindly to it for the sake of clothes. Quaint costumes are demanded, and any model can be fashioned into becomingness. Furthermore, she often hood donned by the bird of prey may proclaim the college colors of one's best young man. The cord by which you control the falcon's movements is of the softness fine, and in winding you may display grace and tact significant of husband managing qualities. Thus has the physical culturist includes in his catalogue only as a "sop to Cerberus," claiming no health giving properties for it.

Two old skirts have been seen on the promenade this week. So unusual are they that one is forced to describe in detail.

One was of biscuit brown cloth and lined green novelty suiting. The front and back widths of the cloth fitted skin tight, the sides were in the green suiting, appearing like broad stripes let in. Where it fastened, only the mollets and mahogany knew.

The other was quite as freakish in a way, and, though built entirely of like material, it resembled nothing so much as an elongated military cape all buttoned down before. Either of them is the startling to become more than a passing fancy of short duration.

Gertrude Atherton, I'm told, is bringing out with her some stunning gowns, notably a soft gray velvet, with faint pink brocade lining the graceful court train; an army blue traveling frock braided elaborately in black, having the new cape sleeve, and yet familiar on this side, and a chiffon evening dress, which is a medley of rose petals and plaited frills. Mrs. Atherton wears white a great deal, which is vastly becoming to her unusual style of blond beauty, and when indoors seldom wears colors. She goes direct to Washington to collect data for a forthcoming novel, in which American society at the capital will come in for a share of attention.

The opera season opened most auspiciously. Never has there been presented a more magnificent array of talented artists. Public and patrons alike have congratulated Manager Grau upon his successful maneuvers in harnessing outstanding features. Calve's absence is much regretted. Her continued ill health grieves us, for of her we are very fond.

Some few things I observe at the opera:

Decollete gowns are lower cut than ever.

Diamond ornaments are recruited by the Spanish back comb studded with gems of priceless value.

Women are wearing chest protectors, like unto your brother's satin shield, only greater in size.

All the men patronize the Supper club between each act. The question is, Do they eat?

Plain colored dress suits are not in evidence, but fancy vests set a pace some few ultra fashionables are following.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive," I overheard a chappie say when he extended two hands to clasp her one. I think this the latest corrupted phrase.

Daisy May

New York.

A Wonderful Change.

At Bayville, N. Y., a short while ago William Cornell, aged 64, arose in the morning a hale and hearty young bachelor, and that night retired a great-grandfather, with a daughter older than himself and a granddaughter with a child old enough to make remarks about him. He had married the Widow Overton, aged 78.

CHRISTMAS TAILOR MADE COSTUMES.

WOMEN AND THEIR WAYS.

The endless chain started by Miss Natali Schenck of Bangkok, N. Y., is not yet done unwinding. About 100 letters a day are still being received, many of them containing no money because the donor of the envelope has been torn off and the coin stolen. The chain was started last July for the purpose of raising $1,000, and the amount so far received and amounted for is $20,000.

Huckingham Smith, who was secretary of the American legation in Madrid in 1856, wrote that the tune of "Yankee Doodle" is practically derived from an ancient sword dance of Biscay. Thus this country is indebted to Spain not only for the discovery, but for a national air.

The silverware belonging to Queen Victoria's twin is valued at $2,500,000.

Women students at the University of Berlin are not allowed to wear their hair in braids down the back. Two girl students who persisted in doing this were expelled.

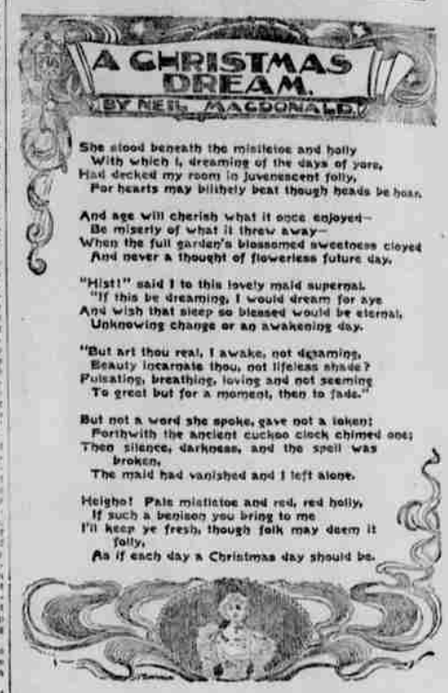
Of Count Tolstoi's three daughters, the youngest is only 11 years old. The oldest, whose name is Tatiana, is said to have shown considerable talent in painting.

The Duchess of Marlborough, who was Miss Consuelo Vanderbilt, has been chosen, it is announced, to officiate at the launching of the new English battleship Irresistible. The American flag will mark alongside the union jack, as was the case in the launching of the Formidable.

Women journalists are not wanted in Japan. At the present time it does not seem as if any of the fair subjects of the mikado desire to embark on any journalistic venture, but in case such a thing should happen, new press laws provided women from becoming publishers or editors, as "the mechanical and such work by females is neither becoming nor desirable."

Queen Wilhelmina of Holland is a firm believer in and a stout supporter of the Salvation Army. She and her mother regularly send generous checks to the organization to further the work in Holland and in its colonies.

A woman 18 years old and weighing 38 pounds is one of the most interested pupils in the Havana night school in Chicago. She is at the head of the first reader class.



Wooings and Weddings in Many Lands.

Among most of the many and very different races dwelling in Algeria it is customary to carry the bride over the threshold of her husband's dwelling. Indeed we find this peculiar marriage custom all over the world and recorded at all times. In old Rome, from whose pagan rites so many of all civilization's marriage customs come, the bride was carried home with processional, with song of voice and song of flute, and when home, her husband's home, was reached she was lifted over its threshold, and not even the hem of her garment was allowed to flutter against the fated of the door. In some isolated parts of Japan and in vast districts of China this custom prevails. We find it also in Persia and Syria, in Turkey, in Austria and in several other corners of Europe. We find it in Algeria and among the Indians of this continent.

Of the very many explanations given of the origin of this custom three seem the most reasonable. The first of these explanations and the most generally accepted is that it is purely a survival of actual marriage by capture, when the bride had to be carried in by force. The second explanation teaches that the bride is lifted into her new home lest she stumble at its threshold, which would be, or at least look, a very bad omen and which she, being shy and embarrassed, might lack the ready wit of William the Conqueror to disallow. The third explanation—and it seems the most reasonable and is voiced for by Brand in his very carefully written "Popular Antiquities of Great Britain"—is that the Romans thought it, as the Chinese and many other peoples think today, coarse and unchivalric for the newly made wife to appear willing to enter her husband's house, and hence the necessity of lifting the reluctant maiden over the important threshold.

We find a very strange custom in Tunis and other parts of Algeria. The bride walks into her new home, following her husband, who goes in backward, holding out to her a sharp knife, upon the blade of which she rests her fingers as she and he move across the threshold. The best reputed authorities upon the sociology of north Africa note this custom, but refrain from explaining it. It probably means that the wife who promises to approach her lord more nearly than he allows or to follow him with any uncertain footfall will cut her fingers.

The Kabyle women of north Africa are very handsome and are handsomely treated. The Kabyles are monogamists as well in practice as in theory. In his very readable "Mountain Life in Algeria," Mr. Dwinday gives the following vivid and authentic description of a Kabyle wedding:

"The bridegroom had gone to fetch his bride, and I waited with many others beside a stream that flowed at the foot of the village for his return. Suddenly we heard the sound of pipes and saw the marriage procession streaming from the summit of a neighboring hill and then lost from view among the trees. A few minutes later it issued from the avenue near us and ascended a slope toward the bridegroom's house. First came the pipers, then the bride, muffled up in a veil, riding a mule led by her lover. As well as I could judge, she was very young, almost a child. Then came a bevy of gorgeously dressed damsels, sparkling with silver ornaments, followed by a crowd of her friends and Kabyle Dick and Harry.

"In front of the bridegroom's house the procession stopped, the girl's friends lined both sides of the pathway and crowded about the door. The pipers marched off on one side, while the bridegroom lifted the girl from the mule and held her in his arms. The girl's friends thereupon threw earth at him when he hurried forward and carried her over the threshold through the door, beating him all the time with olive branches amid much laughter. This throwing of earth, this mock opposition and good natured scuffle appear to be a symbolized relic of marriage by capture and a living explanation of the ancient Roman custom of carrying the bride over the threshold of her lover's home.

"In the evening on such occasions the pipers and drummers are called in, and the women dance, two at a time, facing each other. Nor does a couple dance until, panting and exhausted, they step aside to make room for another. The dance has great energy of movement, though the steps are small. As women dutter before the gale so do they vibrate to the music—they shake, they shiver, they tremble. They also derive the men by clapping their hands and singing verses."

In Somaliland for seven days and nights before a marriage is celebrated bride and groom are together shut closely in an all but airtight mud hut. The hut is two rooms, and the inner room is sacred, but in the outer the young couple hold a daily reception, which is wonderfully well attended, for every one in the tribe may come, and almost every one does. Not only may any one and every one visit the incorrigible bridegroom and his bride, but each visitor may say anything and everything that he or she chooses. The jokes and the gibes, the criticisms and the advice, buried at the backbone twain are unmistakable, but they come accepted all sleekly and with apparent placidity. Presumably little lovemaking goes on within the nuptial mud hutch, for the hut is insufferable even from a Somali point of view, and the rare little rooms are kept densely shaded with the smoke of strong incense, constantly rising from metal braziers on the ground.

In Egypt there are many professional "bridal throwsters," who make very handsome incomes. Among the Egyptians the tying of the bride is a function of even more importance and ceremony than is the nuptial rite itself.