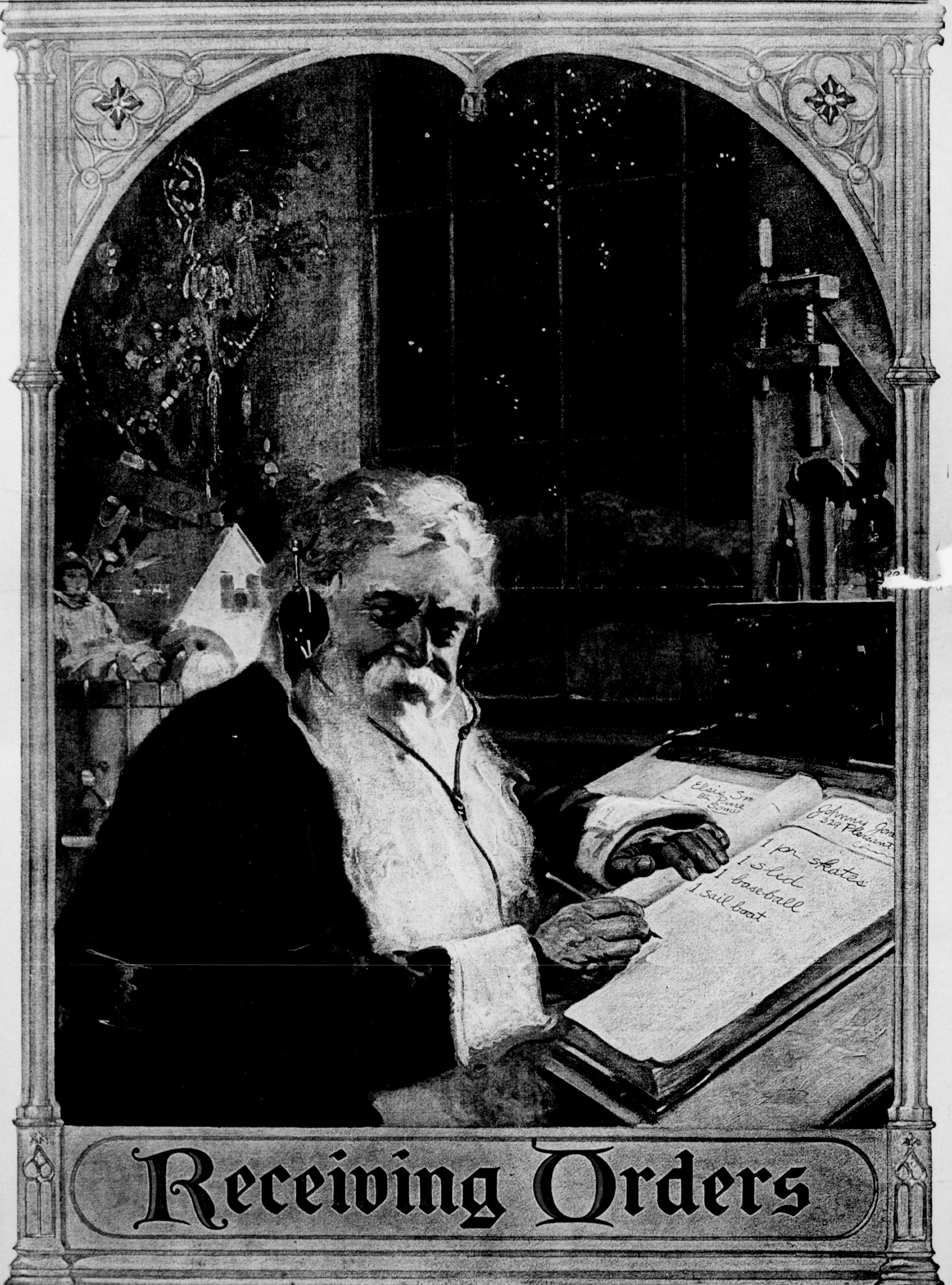


THE MERKEL MAIL

VOL. 35—NO. 42

MERKEL, TEXAS, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1923

28 PAGES



Receiving Orders



It Means More to Us
Than The Dawn
Of a New Year



It means the beginning of another year of service to the people of this section. It gives us pleasant memories as we turn back the hands of time and recount our past experiences. You have helped this business to grow and as we grow we have tried to increase our usefulness in our sphere.

We thank all of our loyal patrons and assure you that each day of 1924 will find us planning and building for you to make this Bank the institution you want it to be.

Accept our best wishes for a New Year of good times, good health and contentment.

Farmers State Bank
The Bank of Guaranteed Deposits.

Merry Christmas

A Happy New Year

Cold type cannot carry the warm message that is in our hearts for our patrons, but as we are deprived the pleasure of meeting all face-to-face, we send a message thru the medium of the press.



We are genuinely sincere when we thank you for your business in 1923. For your loyal support, your confidence and for the many evidences of good will shown throughout the past year, we are indeed very grateful. These manifestations are a great incentive to us for the future and we assure you that with that friendly spirit ever in mind, we strive even more to excel that which is attained.

May the New Year be good to you in health and true happiness.

Fred Guitar Gin

The Days of Happy Hearts

Christmas 1923

May it find you at your best so that the sweetest and best sentiments of the time will be in your heart. It is a day that derives its particular charm by the deeds of service done to others.

May you, in the fullness of your heart, have an ample portion of the joys of the season that will abide with you on through peaceful, contented days of a new year of real prosperity.

With sincere appreciation of your past patronage we tender our greetings.

Dr. S. W. Johnson
DENTIST

MUSIC AND EXPRESSION DEPARTMENTS GIVE EXCELENT RECITAL

On last Friday evening a large crowd gathered at the High School Auditorium to hear the pupils of Misses Lucy Tracy, Expression teacher; Ona Fae Bland, Voice teacher, and Roberta Gay, Piano teacher, in recital.

From the first number to the last, each was very enjoyable and interesting. The program was well planned and worked out. There was splendid vocal, and Piano numbers and very interesting readings, making the program varied and different.

Every pupil in the recital showed excellent training, and improvement. There was not a single one on the entire program that lacked spirit or enthusiasm. Indeed, it was a very splendidly rendered program.

May the teachers and the pupils of these departments know that their efforts were highly appreciated and enjoyed, and that they may again favor the public with another such evening of pleasure.

The proceeds from the recital went to the P. T. A. and amounted to \$45.35.

NEW MEXICO FARM FOR SALE

320 acres Patented land, fenced and cross fenced. 80 acres in farm; all good land 10 miles of county seat; 1 mile to school, on public road. Four room house, large porch, nice shade trees, big dugout, well of fine water. Water piped to house, lot, and pasture. 120 feet good barns, Blacksmith Shop, smoke house. Can have all for \$2,000. \$1500 Cash, 5 years to pay balance. Must sell. See E. D. Coats. Adv.

David, small son of Mr. and Mrs. S. D. Gambell, underwent an operation for tonsillitis and adenoids at an Abilene Sanitarium last week, and is now at home getting along nicely.

Buy Useful Gifts



Get him or her something that will be of some benefit throughout the year.

We also have Tricycles, Little Autos, Wagons, Air Rifles, Pop Guns, Cap Pistols, Foot Balls, Basket Balls, Base Balls, and Base Ball Supplies for the kiddies.

Start your wife's Bank Account by giving her an Incubator for Christmas.

Silverware, Cut Glass, Imported China, Colored Glassware, Aluminum Ware, Carving Sets, Oil Stoves in Cook and Heaters, Fire Place Grates, Perculators, Electric Irons, Thermos Bottles and Jugs, Coleman Lights and Lanterns, Razors, Pocket Knives, Scissors, Daisy Churns, Guns, Amunition, Hunting Coats, Sewing Machines, Bath Tubs, Kitchen Sinks, Lavatories.

Oh! If you don't want any of these, come on around here, we have what you want.

Liberty Hardware Company

The Only Exclusive Hardware Store in Merkel

PRE-INVENTORY AND X-MAS SALE CONTINUED

CLOSES MONDAY
NIGHT, DECEMBER 24TH

CLOSES MONDAY
NIGHT, DECEMBER 24TH

Because of the bad weather we feel that a great many people have been disappointed in not being able to attend the best Sale we have ever put on in Merkel. We want every man, woman and child in our trade territory to make our Store a visit during this Continued Sale, which closes December 24.

Don't Forget the Place is WOODROOF-BRAGG Store

Extra Special

- All pure Table Linen, extra wide, worth \$3.00, on sale at \$1.39
- All Ladies Sweaters at ACTUAL COST
- All Wool Goods at Wholesale Prices.
- Ladies and Mens Underwear at Greatly REDUCED PRICES.
- One Lot Mens \$1.50 Outing Night Shirts on sale at 98c

Extra Special

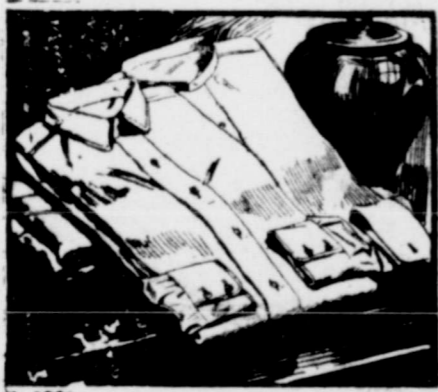
- Ladies Ready-to-wear Prices Reduced to please the Customer.
- One Lot of Ladies Pumps and Oxfords worth \$2.50 and \$3.50, reduced to clean up at \$1.00
- Ladies \$1.50 Silk Hose 98c
- Boys and Girls \$1.25 Union suits on sale at 95c
- Good Grade Outing 15c

Extra Special

- We have had a most wonderful Shoe trade. Price and Quality did it. Look over the odd lots on tables with price cards.
- One Lot Mens \$7.50 to \$10 Shoes at .. \$3.95
- One Lot Mens \$6.00 to \$8.00 Shoes at \$2.45
- One Lot Mens \$2.50 to \$5.00 Hats at .. \$1.00
- One Lot Mens \$1.50 to \$2.50 Shirts at \$1.00
- One Lot of Mens Odd Vests to clean up at Each 25c

GIFTS *for* EVERYONE

X-mas comes but once a year, bringing its message of peace and good will to all, and as the wise men of old gave gifts to the babe in the manger, so do we commemorate his birth by giving remembrances to our loved ones and to those less fortunate than ourselves. Make this the happiest X-mas you've ever known by giving practical gifts bought at this Store.



**PUT SHIRTS
ON YOUR
GIFT LIST**

—No man ever had too many—especially will he appreciate one from our new stock that will not fade.

Mens' Pajamas

And House Shoes are on sale. Both make acceptable gifts.

—A big shipment of mens and boys Ties and Linen Handkerchiefs were added to our Xmas showing this week.



**DAINTY
NEW
Handkerchiefs
and LADIES'
HANDBAGS**



—Make useful gifts that last a whole year. Put these on your list and come to this store for a big selection.
—Ladies and Childrens felt House Shoes are practical gifts, on sale at 95c and \$1.25

REMEMBER! Sale closes Monday, December 24th. If you fail to take advantage of this Sale, you have lost money.

The Woodroof-Bragg Co.

"The Place Most People Trade"

THE MERKEL MAIL

VOL. 35. NO. 42.

MERKEL, TEXAS, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1923.



Christmas Greetings

*Land of the North,
December 13th, 1923.*

Dear Children—

I am on my way from the snow-bound land of the North, and am due to arrive in Texas Christmas Eve. If you have been good children I will put something in your stockings to make you happy. I love you and wish all of you a Merry Christmas.

*Affectionately Yours,
Santa Claus.*

A Christmas Hunt and Dinner

Deer, Turkey, Quail, Cooked and Served
Christmas Day in the Hills of Southwest Texas
By AUSTIN CALLAN.

Tom McCoy seemingly enjoyed his pipe better than anything else. It had a short stem, a black bowl and a strong scent, and no one could endure it as well as Tom, yet it was not altogether a love for the weed that kept him so busy puffing away at that antique briar-root. Along in the fall of the year, when the winter-winds would begin to winnow the fallen leaves across the old lanes, this old hunter would hunch down with his pipe in his mouth and as he sent blue rings up towards the sky would see a camp-fire out under the stars and a big buck hanging up in a tree. That was what he liked in life of all.

Just about a week before Christmas I happened to drop in on Tom, who, by the way was the watch-maker and gunsmith of the community. He was seated before his work-bench probing into the vitals of an Ingersoll which had something the matter with the carburetor, or some other part of it, and wouldn't run.

"What you doing, Tom?" I asked. "O, piddling with an old worn-out biscuit that couldn't keep time if a brass band were to play for it," he answered.

"Been out this season?" "Nope, but I'm getting ready," he replied. "Come an' go along. Three of us calculate spending ten days out on the divide twist Bear Creek and the forks of the Llano river, in Kimball county, Texas. We'll make our camp at Nigger Head hill; Old Bench says deer and turkey both are plentiful in them parts."

I jumped at the chance, and about noon the next day Tom, McCoy, D. G. Benchoff, Charley Graham and myself were off. My contribution to the "munitions of war" was a sixteen gauge shotgun and several boxes of shells. The high-power rifles appealed to me and I wanted to kill a buck just as bad as any one of the outfit, but at the same time I was hungry and in case we fell down on getting venison, I intended to slip around and make a shock-formation charge on a covey of Bob Whites.

In addition to the armament, we carried along a complete cooking outfit and a generous supply of coffee, flour, bacon, spuds and Mary Jane syrup. Tom, who always acted as quartermaster, explained that he did not distrust the hunting ability of the boys, especially "Old Bench," but that the powder might get wet, and besides he liked a change occasionally when in camp.

Ideal Camping Spot.

It was late when we reached the chosen place, and a blue bank of clouds piled up along the north warned us to hustle for shelter. Fortunately we found a thicket which had an opening to the south, where there were a few big trees along near the center and plenty of wood. No more ideal spot could have

been selected for such a camp. In fact, nothing was missing but water, and it was less than a mile to where we could go and fill our keg from a clear, bubbling spring.

A big fire was built and supper prepared, after which we lounged around in camp until midnight, telling stories of other hunts, discussing the merits of certain rifles and digressing occasionally to pass judgment on the ability of friends of ours to get the right kind of a kick in their juvenile experiences with home brew.

Shortly after we retired it began snowing, but we had an abundance of bedding and "tarps" were pulled up over us so that no discomfort whatever was experienced. A snow storm is rare in that section of Texas. Perhaps the ground is not covered with snow on an average of once in three years. Daybreak, however, brought to us the recollection of a certain poem written in the long ago by James G. Whit-tier. We were truly snow-bound, some six or eight inches covered the surface of the earth, and every limb or blade of grass was beautifully upholstered in pure white.

Immediately after partaking of breakfast, consisting of strong black coffee steaming hot, camp biscuits, broiled bacon and molasses, I took one of the high-power rifles and set out to make good the old story that "the early bird catches the worm." Not over three hundred yards from camp I saw deer tracks, and was assured that at least we were in a big game country. Nigger Head hill was not far away and I directed my steps in that direction. The snow had ceased falling. Climbing up one slope of the peak I could see for miles in every direction, and I noted that there was a wooded point only a short distance across a deep ravine. It was covered with cedar trees, and while I was standing there watching the occasional sun-gleams as they shot from behind the clouds and set a million dia-

monds to twinkling, a big buck walked out into the open space.

No prettier picture ever met the gaze of a mortal. Nature was at her best and robed in her grandest garments, and occupying a central position on the "screen" was this beauty of the wilds.

"Cracked Down."

For a time I looked on in admiration, forgetting that there was such a splendid limb back at camp to hang meat on. The virgin charm of the scene, the wild setting untouched by anything of man's creation, these fairly captivated me. But after a while my "animal instinct"

and commenced training his Long Tom on my buck, I knew that somebody's shooting record was going to smash, and that it wouldn't be his. I was in hopes, however, that he would miss for I did not relish the "guying" I knew would follow. But Tom didn't miss; in fact "miss" wasn't his name. The buck ran for a short distance and fell. We reached him about the same time. Apparently the big fellow was dead, but when Tom thrust a knife into his neck he threw his horns up with such great force that they almost broke that veteran hunter's leg.

Tom went back to the camp and got

were satisfied; that night as we sat around the fire we planned to refrain over and cook our Christmas dinner in camp. Benchoff declared that it would not seem like Christmas without egg-nog, and Charley said that he could do without the egg-nog but that we had to have a turkey to keep him from getting lonesome.

Having made a failure at getting venison, I decided to redeem myself in a conquest against the turkeys, and the next day I shouldered a shotgun and went out to look for a roost. A pecan grove about two miles from camp rewarded me. At a glance I knew some of the great American birds had roosted there the night before, so I concealed myself, and lay in wait for them.

Just about dusk the turkeys commenced flying into the trees and I "knocked down" four, one of which we named the Sultan and decided to bake for our dinner.

Primitive Christmas Dinner.

When Christmas day arrived we had five bucks hanging up in camp, besides the turkeys and a large number of quail, and we had something else, too. Tom had found a bee tree and brought in some fine looking honey. The only thing that puzzled us was how to cook the turkey; the dutch oven we had was not half big enough. Charley suggested that we wrap it up in a wet sheet and roast it like you do a calf's head by burying it in the hot ashes and coals. This proved very successful, and dressing was made to go with it. Tom found some pecans when he went to cut the bee tree and these we added in with the onions and sage and corn bread.

Some of the venison was also baked and some of it was broiled Bill Cody fashion; that is done by throwing big thick slices into a hot skillet and letting it sear on both sides, driving the juices to the center. When you are reasonably sure that it is done through and through, you scrape off the charred sides and put the steak into a platter with plenty of butter on it and keep in a warm place until the butter is melted or absorbed.

A dozen quail, too, were made into a pot pie and served steaming hot. It was such a meal as would have satisfied a king. Even the biscuits were fluffy and fine and served as a desert with our wild honey.

It was a great hunt we had—a great hunt and a great feast served on a great day. Everything was simple, clean, fresh, and in keeping with an occasion marking the dawn of a world's light of hope, freedom and good will. When we had finished, Tom lighted his pipe again and the blue rings of smoke, as they rose above the camp table, grew wider and thinner, floating away on the winds, while four hunters gazed into the dying camp fire, silent and thoughtful.



"Four Hunters Gazed into the Dying Campfire, Silent and Thoughtful."

returned; I felt hungry for venison and that buck defiantly standing up there with his nose in the air breathing the fresh aroma of the morning, seemed to say to me: "Crack down!"

Well, I "cracked," but I only succeeded in spoiling the pose of the noble animal. My bullet went astray, and that buck simply folded his rocking-chair antlers back on his weathers and took to the lowlands.

Tom McCoy was several hundred yards off in the valley when I fired and the deer seemed to run directly toward him, but stopped within shooting distance. From my position I could plainly see both the hunter and the deer, and when Tom laid his pipe in the snow

a horse. It was one of the biggest bucks I had ever seen and the two of us could not have packed him. It was while we were walking along leading the horse with "our" prize tied across him that the ordeal came, which I knew was coming sooner or later. "What made you miss?" Tom asked. "You sure had a pretty shot and that is said to be the best gun in Menard county."

"It's the ammunition," I declared. "You can't hardly get a good cartridge since the war. Some German spies must have gotten into the factories."

Benchoff and Charlie returned at night empty handed. They had spent the day in the hills without even seeing a deer. But we had made good and all

The Tournament in Texas

Once Staged as a Red-Blooded Contest
During Christmas Week Celebrations.

It was before the advent of the automobile, or the moving picture, or the radio, that the tournament played a prominent part in Texas Christmas celebrations. In those days a man talked about his favorite saddle horse, rather than his Stutz or Henry, and the screen star of his choice was neither Norma Talmadge, Marion Davies, Mary Pickford nor any of the rest of the now famous moving players of America. It was some shy little lassie with dazzling eyes flashing from beneath a sunbonnet, on whose brow he hoped to place the laurels won by his skillful riding in a red-blooded tournament contest.

Back a Quarter of a Century.

We will have to go back at least a quarter of a century to find the tournament a popular part of the Christmas program in civilian life, although the cavalry branch of the army still stages it occasionally. The contest is for real horsemen, for men of the saddle who must learn to master the art, poise and daring while riding at full speed.

The auto has its advantages in shortening distance, in expediting business and in making travel more convenient and comfortable. But it certainly sounded taps for the old fashioned tournament contest, because it turned our saddle ponies out on the range and gave us a citizenship which has permanently abandoned the stirrup for the clutch and the bridle reins for a steering-wheel.

The last big tournament Christmas celebration I remember, under the old order of things, took place in 1897 at Menardville, a beautiful little town in Menard county, in the stock country of Southwest Texas. Men participated in it who afterwards came to be known as cattle kings and who were rated at the banks as "seven figure financiers." They led in the thought and influence and social life of the city; they were real builders. But their most skillful accomplishment was riding and the tournament afforded them the best public opportunity to show how well they could ride.

The way to stage a tournament contest, was by erecting high

smooth course, for 100 or 200 yards, the distance to be determined by those persons most interested. A cross-piece or arm was nailed to the post and a ring suspended from this arm at a height along about a man's breast as he sat on a horse. Then each participant was furnished with a long lance, and, at a given signal, he would dash down the track full speed catching as many of the rings as he could on the point of his lance. He had to make the distance in a time agreed upon by the judges, and the one who secured the greatest number of rings was decorated the winner.

The game originated in France about the twelfth century and was a favorite with the royalty. All through history it has been popular, but more especially during those days when Knighthood was in flower. It came to America with the Pilgrim Fathers and Washington's soldiers amused themselves with such contests that bleak winter spent at Valley Forge. Col. Robert E. Lee is said to have been the first man to introduce it into Texas.

To an onlooker the game seems easy enough, but, indeed, it takes a cool head and a steady arm to lift a single ring when the horse is running. Only those who are red-blooded and experienced have a chance to win. The uninitiated and the "faint-hearted" had just as well stay out of the game.

In many of the contests of the old days the successful man was not only given a handsome purse for his dexterity, but he was presented a wreath as a favor, by "the queen of beauty," or "lady of the tournament," who was chosen before the contest was staged, and it was customary for the winner to gallantly place this wreath upon the brow of his best girl. This often-times made the riding more spirited. Two fellows contending for the favor of the same girl would become rivals and exert every energy to "string the most beads"

a bright hope vanished when some unfortunate aspirant lost his goal.

In ancient times one side would be matched against another and blunt swords or spears were used instead of the poles of later days. The kings would attend such events and they were held all the way from the Black Forest of Germany to the banks of Loch Lomond, where a MacAlpin rode against a MacGregor.

Winner Leads the Grand March

The tournament held Christmas day, at Menard, 25 years ago, was for a purse



"With a Long Lance, He Would Dash Down the Track at Full Speed."

of one hundred dollars to the winner, and in addition to this, it was announced that the one contestant who captured the purse, and the girl chosen to wear the wreath, should lead the grand march at the Christmas ball. No program of those days was considered complete without this feature, and to have the distinction of leading the grand march was an honor practically as great as that of being chosen caller for the quadrille.

The contestants were... who is now a member

executive committee of the Cattle Raisers' Association, Frank Wilhelm, Jesse Burnam, Max Russell, Will Wilkerson and others whose names are very familiar in the cattle kingdom of Texas. Mears rode Red Bird, as pretty a saddle horse as ever graced the open prairies, and the black and gold which adorned the lance Ed carried was also worn by one of the prettiest belles of the city. That night these two led the grand march, made up of the frontier's fairest and bravest, while Phillippi's orchestra played the Washington Post march.

For lack of better accommodations, the public dances of that period were always held in the courthouse and on special occasions a big supper would be served. This particular night, Mrs. Ed Sieker arranged that part of the program and the main delicacy of the feast consisted of roast turkeys killed by Mr. Sieker on Saline creek, in the south edge of Menard county.

It cost just one dollar a couple to participate in all of the joys of this celebration, including the banquet, while such an amount today would be nothing more than one insignificant tip, several of which might become necessary during the course of one evening. In fact, no part of the Christmas entertainment of that time was expensive. If you rode in the tournament the entrance fee was never over \$5.00, and if your girl was present and you made any kind of a showing, it was well worth it.

Turkey Shoots Were Popular.

"Turkey Shoots" was another one of the sports which figured prominently in the Christmas celebrations of the early days. You did not shoot at turkeys, however, but at a target, either with a rifle or a pistol, the scorer of the most "eyes" winning the turkeys. Contests of this kind drew a large number of spectators, especially with the frontier, and the most of the frontier boys and knew

Besides the tournament, the dance and these turkey shoots, which formed a part of that last big Yuletide celebration, back there when the cowboys were on the range instead of in the Rodeo, the Christmas tree served a gladdening purpose and all kinds of presents adorned its green bowers from a sparkling piece of cutglass to a pair of home-knit yarn socks. And I do not mention this last article with any disdain. Sometimes those yarn socks carried with them a mother's love which is the holiest gift that can be given.

But really the Christmas tree of that day and time, when in fruitful regrowth was a funny looking concern. As a committee would decorate the tree and the decorations would be all home-made. Cranberries and pop-corn were strung on strong cords and a lot of colored crepe paper, cut into ringlets by left hands comprised the principal part of the ornamentation. And there was another committee to see that no child in the community should fail to be remembered by good old Santa Claus, for even then the old man seemed to have a longer and a stronger arm when he stopped in front of a castle than when he stopped in front of a cabin.

The presents would generally be something useful. The girls would make their "beau-lovers" neckties out of black ribbon, which gave the tree the appearance of one great gibbet where a lot of unfortunates had been hung, while the boys would pick such presents as might prove useful in after years—wall-pockets, picture frames, photo albums and the like, and maybe there would be a wash-board for mother and a pipe for dear old dad.

Of course it would be considered "tacky" today. Even in the remotest regions we have learned "the big town stuff," and if the parents of today were to take their children to the same kind of a tree they would doubtless be told where to "get off." We have moved up and on into a more expensive atmosphere. But as more modern Yuletides come 'round that we celebrate in a

(Continued on Page 4, Column 5)

A Review of the Year of 1923

By W. N. BEARD



The people of Texas can well look forward to a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. They have been blessed during 1923 with fairly good crop yields, with increased

business activity in practically all lines and with a health record far ahead of last year.

This year's cotton crop, produced at less cost than in several years and marketed at prices which brought a profit to the farmers, has ushered in a period of unusual prosperity throughout the state. Much ready money has been placed in circulation, merchants report a heavy fall trade and banks show a large gain in deposits and a corresponding decrease in loans.

County banks, by reason of the paying power of farmer customers, have been able to liquidate their indebtedness. Rural deposits are now larger than at any time since 1919, the year of inflation and abnormal prosperity. County banks have lowest ratio of local loans compared to deposits in many years.

Government gin statistics show that Texas produced this year 40 per cent of the entire cotton crop of the United States, and the crop, including the seed, sold at prices that have already put in the pockets of our Texas farmers over \$600,000,000.

The best evidence of prosperity is the paying of old debts. The year of 1923 will go down in history as a year in which Texans materially reduced their indebtedness. Some merchants report debts paid by customers who have been in arrears from five to ten years.

And what is even more beneficial, our people have learned a lesson in economy. The lean years of the past, following several years of world war inflation, have taught them to conserve their resources, to eliminate waste, to spend less and to save more.

Not only did Texas produce the best cotton crop in the south, but other crops as well. Estimates forecast by the United States Department of Agriculture, puts the Texas cotton crop production of 1923 at 3,800,000 bales, wheat crop 16,375,000 bushels, corn crop 151,750,000 bushels, oat crop 49,824,000 bushels, barley crop 2,400,000 bushels, rye crop 348,000 bushels, tame hay crop 987,000 tons, wild hay crop 201,000 tons, broom corn crop 5,700 tons, rice crop 5,143,000 bushels.

Besides the foregoing crops, our farmers have had fairly good crops of sweet and Irish potatoes, ribbon cane, sorghum, peanuts, garden vegetables, berries, etc. A Cass county, East Texas, farmer contracted to sell his output of

1,800 gallons of ribbon cane syrup before he had completed the making of the syrup.

South Texas has planted a spinach crop of 10,315 acres, 1,635 acres more than last year, and the crop will move in carload lots to eastern markets from January to March, 1924.

While on the subject of crops, it is interesting to know that our farmers are giving more attention to seed selection and fertilization than formerly—better cotton seed, better corn seed, etc. A farmer near Tyler has captured a prize for raising eight bales of cotton from five acres of fertilized and well cultivated land.

Agricultural possibilities are so infinite in Texas that we may expect many wonderful yields of field and truck crops as intensive cultivation is more generally adopted.

This has been a \$1,000,000,000.00 crop year for grand old Texas, and we now lead all other states in value of farm crops for 1923.

West Texas is doing her part in adding to the wealth of Texas agriculturally by cutting up her large ranches into small farms and by extending the cotton belt into the upper Panhandle. A gin has been recently erected at Dalhart, 81 miles from Amarillo and 407 miles from Fort Worth.

This brief review of the progress of the farming interests of Texas during 1923 is important, in that the prosperity and wealth of Texas comes mainly from the soil, and her people cannot become permanently prosperous and happy without abundant field crop yields.

While looking backward, with unassuming pride, upon the general progress of our state during 1923, no one thing affords greater satisfaction than the progress spiritually and educationally. We have built more new and better

churches, more new and better schools and colleges, more new and better homes. The school districts of our state issued approximately \$10,000,000 in bonds during the scholastic year ending August 31, 1923.

Millions of dollars in bonds also have been voted and issued for good roads, and much progress made this year in good road building. Some counties in Texas have highways extending entirely through them, built of solid

purpose of developing the gold and platinum mine located five miles from Llano. This mine has been idle for the past fifteen years, but now it is to be worked under the name of the Llano Gold and Rare Metal Company. The potash deposits near Odessa has interested eastern capitalists and core tests reveal these deposits in paying quantities. New lignite fields have been discovered and old fields are being worked more actively.

The State Comptroller's department puts the total yield of crude oil in Texas during 1923 at 77,530,332 barrels, valued at \$134,586,000.00. Approximately sixty-five new oil fields have been brought in since January 1, 1923, including the Powell field, near Corsicana, which at peak production, was flowing 300,000 barrels of crude oil per day.

In this limited review no account is taken of the advancement in fine livestock breeding and raising, fine poultry breeding and raising, dairying, horticulture, etc.

It is now suggested that Texas should celebrate its one-hundredth anniversary by a centennial exposition. Much interest has been manifested throughout the state in this movement, and the newspapers have given freely of their space in an endeavor to remind all Texans that a glorious opportunity awaits them to advertise the greatness of Texas by promoting a centennial exposition.

Texas also heads all other states in the creation of new wealth from farms, ranches, mines, oil, forests, and fisheries. While these sources of new wealth are seemingly inexhaustible, yet we should, at this time of retrospection, consider conserving these natural resources by replanting our cut over forests, rebuilding our depleted soils

and preventing unnecessary waste in gas and oil production.

These notable achievements of the passing year should inspire all Texans to face the New Year with supreme confidence and faith—faith in our unlimited resources and in our workmen—whether the workmen be tillers of the soil or tillers of the lathe and trowel, whether the workmen be dealers in merchandise or directors of schools and colleges, public officials, or ministers of the gospel. All Texans should believe in Texas and its matchless possibilities, should unite and stand shoulder to shoulder in forwarding the interests of their respective counties and communities, to the end that Texas may grow and continue to prosper and hold its commanding place among the great states of the United States.

Texas folks, therefore, both children and grown-ups, should look forward to the holidays with joy and thankfulness because of our splendid progress in the past, our abundance in the present, and our promise in the future. We truly, and in all sincerity, have reason to rejoice with grateful hearts, and be merry, at this glad Yuletide season of the year or our Lord, nineteen hundred and twenty-three.

THE MAGIC OF CHRISTMAS.

The magic of the Christmas season is the element of suspense that enters into it. The beauty of it—all the fun of it—would be spoiled were all the packages to be opened the week before Christmas or even the day before Christmas.

Isn't that the greatest philosophy of all? asks a writer in the Philadelphia Ledger.

While we have our hazy dreams of the golden treasures we hope some day to attain, we don't want to know all that is in store for us until we actually realize them. Anticipation is ever so much better than realization. Familiarity breeds contempt when the treasures of life become commonplace.

What we want is more of the old-fashioned Christmas spirit; less of fact and more of faith, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Somewhere in a magazine story occurs this phrase: "It's all that keeps us going—the belief there's something better waiting if we can only catch up with it."

Let's not insist on knowing all the gifts in store for us.

Before Christianity came in peopled used to fear that the sun was dying when the days grew short and dark in the month that is now December, and when the days lengthened, they used to rejoice because the sun was coming back to them.

THE ABSENT ONE

By FRANK L. STANTON

"I'm thinking of you in the Christmas,"
It rings like a tender refrain;
The sky is so blue,
Like the dear eyes of you,
And still do the lilies remain.

"I'm thinking of you at Christmas."
The halls with the holly are red;
And where do you stay
On this beautiful day,
Where the light on your pathway is shed?

Do the lilies bloom for you, dearest?
Under skies that are darkened or blue;
In a far-away land
Does some tender kind hand
Lift a flower of Christmas to you?

Oh, the bells o'er the wide world are ringing,
And the skies bend in beauty of blue;
But a thought from the past
Liveth with me at last;
In the Christmas I'm thinking of you!

ment, asphalt or gravel. Nothing can contribute more to the happiness and contentment of our citizens than well constructed and well maintained highways.

The mineral and forest resources of the state continue to attract investors from all over the world, and this year has revealed greater wealth of the mines and the forests of Texas. A \$500,000.00 corporation has been organized at Llano, Llano county, for the

portunity awaits them to advertise the greatness of Texas by promoting a centennial exposition.

Texas also heads all other states in the creation of new wealth from farms, ranches, mines, oil, forests, and fisheries. While these sources of new wealth are seemingly inexhaustible, yet we should, at this time of retrospection, consider conserving these natural resources by replanting our cut over forests, rebuilding our depleted soils

THE PRINCE OF PEACE

By An American Mother

The civilized world wants peace. Diplomats and statesmen, sitting in their high places, may theorize, and military leaders may sound their dark warnings. But if civilization civilizes, if education educates, we should know by this time that war is stupid, wasteful and unnecessary. We, the average men and women of America, should insist that the institution of war be abolished forever and that nations find some saner, safer way of settling their differences.

This is a season when all the world should be thinking of peace. It is a time of good will among men. It is a time when we will be most ready to accept the new rendering of an old and a very beautiful sentiment: "Peace on earth to men of good will!"

The method of settling international disputes by arbitration has been tried and found not wanting. Argentina and Chile at one end of the world, Norway and Sweden at the other, have settled disputes by arbitration. Denmark treaties with Italy, Portugal and the Netherlands withhold however vital, from reason's way. The Casa Blanca dispute between France and Germany, the Aland Islands question, the North Atlantic fisheries case, the Alabama claim—all these have been settled by arbitration. In fact, within the last century two hundred and fifty international disputes have been settled in this way.

And there is a case near home, a perfect object lesson in the methods by which international peace may be secured and maintained, a political wisdom that has created a transcontinental boundary between the United States and Canada nearly 4000 miles long, in which for many years there has been no need of a single fort, a single soldier or a single gun.

This agreement has stood every test—it has withstood the strain of politics as well as the threat of big business interests. It works. It is working today.

Perhaps the most majestic symbol of peace in the world is "The Christ of the Andes." Standing as it does on a snow-crowned crest of the Andes

on the border line between Chile and Argentine, it makes a peculiarly impressive appeal for universal peace. It was inspired by a woman, Madame Angelina de Oliveira Cesar de Costa, founder and president of the South American Association for Universal Peace. Madame de Costa has received the two highest orders from Holy See, one of them the order "Pro Ecclesia et Histoire Internationale" of Paris. No story can be more beautiful or more inspiring than this of the erection of this figure of the Prince of Peace, dominating with its gesture of reconciliation. And certainly none is more fitting at this Christmas season.

Argentine and Chile had had serious differences concerning certain boundaries and the two countries were on the verge of war. European shipyards were busy with orders for gigantic battle ships of the latest models, and a tax of 5 per cent was levied to provide the cost. The dispute had already cost the contestants great sums of money, and much thought and energy had been put into it. Such controversies not only breed blind and unreasoning hatred, but divert the mind and heart of nations from constructive and wholesome things.

At last it was agreed that arbitration should be left to His Majesty King Edward VII of England, and the terms decided upon by the commission of distinguished men appointed by him were happily accepted by both Argentine and Chile. By the terms of the treaty armaments were reduced and the shipbuilding program was halted. The money thus saved was turned to more practical and constructive purposes, and many public utilities were benefited and improved.

The transformed her largest arsenal into a school of arts and crafts. War-

ships were dismantled and added to the commercial flotilla. Disarmament was real, friendships began to take the place of hatreds.



Majestic Symbol of Peace, on the Crest of the Andes, Inspired by a Woman.

It was upon the occasion of the signing of this treaty that Madame de Oliveira suggested that a bronze statue of Christ the Redeemer should be erect-

ed on the border line of the two countries, not only as a symbol of permanent peace between Argentine and Chile, but as a plea for universal peace. The suggestion was made to the presidents of the two countries, who welcomed the idea cordially, and so enthusiastic was the response that in a very short time the young sculptor of Buenos Aires, Sr. Mateo Alonso, had finished the work.

The occasion of the dedication was remarkable. Chilean bands played the Argentine national hymn, and the Argentine band played the national hymn of Chile.

"These mountains will reverse themselves," said one of the speakers, "before Chileans and Argentines will forget their promise of peace sworn at the feet of Christ the Redeemer." Madame de Oliveira did not stop her magnificent work in the interest of world peace with the erection of this statue in 1904. She went to Europe and through her efforts a reproduction of the Christ of the Andes, by M. Lagas, was erected at The Hague in 1913.

Men have been fumbling at this job of ending war long enough. The first Hague conference was called in 1899 by Nicholas II of Russia, to the end that war might cease. In 1907 the second Hague conference was held. Between this and the recent Washington conference we have had conferences and councils and commissions at numerous times, and still war threatens.

And what a war the next will be if predictions are half fulfilled. Mr. Edison was asked if it were true that the entire population of London could be killed by gas within twelve hours. "The thing could be done in twelve hours." It is said that America is ready for the 1919 campaign.

dozen one-ton bombs loaded with Lewisite gas could eliminate all life in Berlin.

Shall we not then turn, at this beautiful Christmas time, toward South America where that majestic figure of the Prince of Peace stands as a beautiful reminder of universal friendliness. He alone realized this sublime thought of fraternity which should over-shadow all bitterness, and eliminate all hatreds. His indeed is a creed, for all classes, and for all time—"Peace on earth to men of good will."

THE TOURNAMENT IN TEXAS

(Continued From Page 2)

grander way—appreciating every new and better gift and believing that in spite of it all this is the golden age of history—we cannot help looking back occasionally and "kinder half-way" longing for some of the plain old-fashioned things of a quarter century ago.

We cannot bring back the past, and we do especially care to do so, but sometimes we find ourselves pushing open the gate that leads into the Garden of the Past and looking around among the half-dead shrubbery and unkempt vines, where shadows fall on a broken caprock and wild birds flit through fading leaves; as we stand there in memory's land, we feel the loss of a simplicity which marked without marring old time Christmas celebrations.

WHY DO WE DECORATE OUR CHRISTMAS TREE?

Ancient sun worshippers used to decorate trees, because they thought a spreading tree was like the sun rising, higher and higher, in the heavens. They used lights to signify the lightning; apples, nuts and balls to signify the sun, moon and stars, and figures of animal sacrifices which were made to their gods. The angels, cross, etc., which we added were put in by Christians to commemorate Christ. The star is a symbol of the star which led the Wise Men to Bethlehem.

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It is not generally known that, besides Christians, there are many other people who keep December 25 as a festival for different reasons. The Persians, the Hindus, even the Egyptians, do so, and even among the Arabs the "beardless rider" moves about in disguise, playing amusing pranks and collecting gifts.

The celebration of Christmas is strangely erratic from a geographical standpoint. Thus, in Northern Europe the Scandinavian people keep it religiously, but their nextdoor neighbors, the Russians, pay comparatively little attention to it, reserving their rejoicings for New Year's Day and still more for Easter.

To Latin nations, however, Christmas has not the significance which nations made up of the people of German stock attach to it. In South America, France, Spain and Portugal the festivities do not compare in heartiness and cheer with the English or Scandinavian Christmas.

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Although the festival of Christmas is Christian, it has borrowed many rites from the old pagan festivities.

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Christmas Giving



Christmas festivities and Christmas ideals, more than all others, should be kept unchanged from year to year. We cannot hope to improve upon the splendid old customs which have been handed down to us thru the ages. It has always been a time of rejoicing a time for giving as well as receiving.

The Christmas spirit fell among black times during the long, weary years of the war. The holiday season came to be dreaded more than the dullest and hardest of worktimes. It was quite impossible for those at home to give gifts and be gay when the boys were in the trenches. It seemed like sacrilege to use the precious sugar for making Christmas cakes and candies. So we changed our Christmas customs to suit the exigencies of the times.

There are many ways of presenting a gift. First of all, be on time. A Christmas gift should be presented on Christmas and not two or three days afterward. Start early enough to make your gifts so you will be thru on time. Start some time before Christmas and save every bit of pretty and attractive paper that comes in the house. Also save all the gay little pictures you can, and hunt for more. You will be surprised at what pretty packages you can make from brown wrapping paper with a bright picture on top and all tied with bright ribbon.

If you haven't any attractive paper in the house, invest a few cents in some bright-colored tissue paper. Then buy some gold passepartout binding. Wrap your gifts in bright red or green tissue paper and bind them round with the gold or silver paper. But first cut the binding down thru the center or it will be a bit too wide.

The making of gift boxes is a fascinating business. If you are going to give a little gift you will be giving a double gift if you present it in a box that can be kept on the desk or dressing table as a trinket box. Take an ordinary box and cover it with either brown wrapping paper or any fairly heavy paper of a bright color. Paste a pretty picture on the top of the box and paste a little border of good paper about it.

Of course these times are expensive, and most certainly we should save our pennies! But don't you really agree that taking thought for our relatives and best friends just once a year is not too often? And that any less would amount to none at all.

Savings count for nothing when weighed in the balance with the Christmas joy to both giver and receiver of the simple and thoughtfully planned Christmas gift.

"Christmas giving is too much of a strain on me. I haven't the strength to worry over a lot of gifts."

Do I hear you say that? Well, dear reader, let me argue with you. I do not ask that you worry over your gifts. I merely ask that you plan them carefully. Nor does that mean such a great deal. Give only to those who are without loved ones.

For Christmas without Christmas giving would not be Christmas.

When one takes thought for one's friends at Yuletide, one not only saves money and gives useful things, but at the same time gives part of one's own self.

When you think over what to send Mary, remember that she is just starting out housekeeping and that you noticed there was a shortage of neat little chambray aprons in the immediate vicinity of her kitchen. Then send her an apron instead of a piece of frippery sent just so you had "something" to send and which will only suffer total inattention and uselessness the whole year thru while it is collecting dust in some obscure spot.

Christmas giving is a very balanced proposition. There are three things that enter into it—thought, patience and money. Skimp on one and you will have to add just that much more of the other. The wisely chosen gift uses these three things in just the right proportions.

Emerson had the right idea when he said that the only gift is a portion of one's self, reflecting the individuality of the giver.

Let us make this Christmas a "Sane-and-Simple Gift" one. Giving is a gracious art and one which is put to the test at Christmas time. In these days of strain and hurry and unrest, let us not forget that gentle art, which really is the art nearest and dearest to the heart of Merry Christmas!

Workbag Chat Making Clever Gifts With Needlecraft



Well, I hope you have a Merry Christmas—I wish it to you with emphatic good-will—and I trust that all the many stitches taken in your needlework gifts will be appreciated. It's a very hackneyed saying that no one appreciates the time spent upon needlework gifts but the one who makes them, and I really don't think that's so. It's like a lot of other bromides that sound true but really aren't. We mustn't consent to believe things just because someone has said them over and over again before we were born. In this day of rush and hurry and so many outside interests lots of girls and women have little time, too little time, for making with their needles the pretty things they would like to have. One has only to price hand-made things in the shops or they wouldn't pay the prices the shops are compelled to ask for anything that takes so large an amount of labor. All or which is to say that anything you needle-lovers have sacrificed in time to make during the pre-holidays I just know will give double the pleasure of many a bought gift.

A Family Gift.
I wonder if it's possible that there is yet a gift or two which you haven't had time to make, possibly a family gift. If that is so, you will want to make something that will take very little time, won't you? Had you ever thought of the possibilities of curtain net? It makes so many delightfully gifts and is so decorative in itself that one doesn't have to do a lot of stitchery upon it. And let me whisper something to you: Many of the things can be made from old curtain net, too. If it is in good condition it will look just as smart as the new when it is made up into the gifts. For example, if you have a pair of net curtains you aren't using, one side will make a charming bureau scarf and you may like to make a boudoir pillow from the other. Cut the scarf the size you wish and place a one-inch hem about the edges. At the top of the hem run a narrow ribbon—French blue or old rose will be effective—and place about three tiny pink

ribbon roses, the kind bought by the yard, in each corner. If you do not wish to go to all this expense, simply run a long basting stitch of rose, or blue wool, about the top of the hem. A double row of the wool about half an inch apart will look even better. Be careful, if the double row is used, to have the stitches the same length and placed exactly one under the other. The boudoir pillow can be made to match. If it is round it should be shirred about the edges with about an inch or two-inch frill of the net and the ribbon or wool placed over the line of shirring. A bow of several loops of the ribbon can be placed in the center of the round pillow to cover the terminal of the shirring there. The pillow may have a colored covering under the net, if you wish, as may also the bureau scarf, but neither is necessary. The scarf, perhaps two scarfs, and the pillow make a nice set, but they can be given separately if you are rushed for time, and added to upon other gift days. A little oblong pillow is, of course, simpler to make and takes less material. Leave a straight one-inch flange all about the edges and place a line of the wool or ribbon over the stitching; lacing the ribbon in and out.

Let me whisper something to you: if you have an old black satin frock that isn't good for wearing any more, make some simply fascinating cushions from it. A black satin cushion (you may use black silk, if you haven't satin) is just the most effective thing in a room, no matter what the color scheme. Black in interior decoration, you see, always serves to emphasize whatever scheme it is added to. The square cushions are good, and are smart; but personally, I prefer the round, shirred ones. A touch of gold somewhere on a black pillow makes it doubly effective. I would not advise combining it with any color if you would have it keep all its smartness. In this way you could make an inexpensive Christmas gift.

I really must tell you about the most amusing of collar button boxes I have seen. It is five inches high and is of hand-painted wood. It is filled with two gold-plated collar buttons and the following verse is attached: "Here comes little Sally Sutton To help you out when you need a Button."

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THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT:—Thou shalt not kill.
—Exodus 20:13.

WOMAN'S PAGE

MRS. MARGARET STUTE

THE CHRISTMAS TABLE.

The center of interest for Christmas (outside of the Christmas tree) is the dining table. Mother's interest is principally the dinner itself, then the decorations. With a little planning and foresight the most modest home may present an artistically arranged table with little expense.

Simplicity is the keynote to a well arranged table. Never over-do the thing.

The best linen and silver are always in evidence. First a "silent cloth" is used, then the table cloth. An embroidered center piece can be used also.

Silver must be placed correctly in order to be attractive.

For the ordinary dinner the following description is sufficient:

To the right of the plate is placed the knife, sharp edge towards plate, then as many tea spoons as are needed, coffee spoon next to knife, then salad fork (if to be served after soup) last from plate is placed fork for pie or cake (if to be served) then fork for the main dinner. The butter knife is laid on butter plate if they are used; if omitted, knife is also.

All of the plates are placed in front of who ever is to serve; except where service plates are used.

Glasses are placed at the right of the plate near the point of the knife.

Napkins are placed at the left of the forks, if first course is served before seating the guest. If not served until seated, then napkin is placed between knife and fork or on service plate, if used.

Dinners today are served with much less formality than formerly. There are several reasons for this, namely, because the scarcity of reliable help, and then during and following the war people became less formal in every way.

Flowers (never artificial ones on a home table) can be used to good advantage for decoration. If tall flowers are selected only a very few are used. Usually a bud vase or a very small vase for the center piece.

Narrow strips of green and red paper can be fastened to the base of the vase and let them radiate symmetrically to the edge of the table and fall over the edge. Cotton may be "fluffed" and sprinkled with artificial "snow" and placed at the base of the vase. Colored candles in pretty holders may be used with this decoration.

Another novel way of decorating the Christmas table is as follows:

A Santa Claus doll that will stand is placed in the center. Cotton used as snow is put around the feet. Colored ribbons are attached to a press-on, that is placed at each plate, with a card bearing the name of the guest and other end fastened in the doll's hand.

Still another is where a miniature Christmas tree is made of a single bough and fastened in crossed piece of wood (the same as a large tree) and tiny candles placed here and there. These were lighted just before the guests came into the dining room. Place a paper thick enough to catch the dripping tallow. Cover with a white cloth or cotton.

Another very artistic decoration is accomplished by using a basket of fruit as a center piece. A pretty basket is selected and filled with the best fruit available, the finest red apples, beautiful oranges, bananas, green and Malaga grapes, kumquats, if they are on the market, and often a ripe pineapple is used for the center of the basket and the rest of the fruit placed around it. The basket can be trimmed with rhododendron leaves, or any other fall leaves, or sprays of pine and little cones.

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HOUSE DECORATIONS

To give a hearty welcome to all who enter our doors on Christmas day is the chief aim of every good housewife. No other season of the year gives her such an opportunity to display her talents and radiate good cheer and happiness.

To commence with, each member of the family must join hands and work together in order to assure success. For there is mistletoe to gather, apples and oranges to prepare, and all the jolly duties for a "Merry Christmas."

Most people in Texas are exceptionally fortunate in one respect. As about all they have to do is to go out into the country and they can gather all the mistletoe needed for decorating. Of course, the "early bird" always gathers the best mistletoe. So lay in your supply early, because no Christmas is complete without it.

The keynote of decorations should be found in the living room, or parlor, which ever is to be used the most during the day.

With a few cents spent wisely and a little fore-thought, any house can present a glowing and hearty welcome.

In the living room a center of interest must be chosen. Perhaps it will be a centrally suspended chandelier, perhaps an open fire place, or the Christmas tree. Which ever it is, lay the most emphasis at this spot. Red and green being the favorite colors for Christmas decorations, many beautiful ideas can be worked out.

One artistic room I have in mind was where the chandelier was used as the center of interest. A large red ball was suspended from it (but a pretty bunch of mistletoe can be used as well). Cotton was fluffed and sprinkled with artificial snow. This was banked on top of the bell (or mistletoe) and little flakes placed here and there on the lights and cord. Two streamers of red and two of green Christmas cords were run from the top of the bell to the four corners of the room, the colors alternating. Tiny bits of cotton were placed on these. In the corners pretty bunches of mistletoe were fastened to the wall with tiny tacks (so as not to spoil the wall) and these were flecked with cotton. By the fireplace a pretty tree was placed and decorated with the usual Christmas tinsel. There were pretty candles, red apples and yellow oranges suspended on colored twine and all the other various and sundry things used.

Dried red peppers were placed here and there among the green to give a colorful effect. Small limbs with autumn leaves were placed in the corners and over the pictures and mantle. Holly can be used at almost any place. Tiny red bells and miniature Santa Claus may be hung in the windows or holly wreaths.

The dining room must present a bower of loveliness and hospitality. Here holly, mistletoe, pine boughs, cones and any other "natural" decoration can be used in profusion. However, the table is the center of interest and other decorations must blend with it or the effect will be lost. Less red is used on the walls and in the windows as it will detract from the table which should be the most conspicuous.

Don't forget a bunch of mistletoe above each door. It will look pretty and afford much merriment for the old as well as the young.

A last word of warning, don't forget to put away carefully after the holidays all decorations that are not perishable. Wrap in colored tissue paper. They are best put in a covered wooden box that can be fastened securely, so as to keep away from rats and mice. Camphor or moth balls are good to use. Don't let the children see them again until next year and they will be as good as new.

A CHRISTMAS THOUGHT.

Who seeks for heaven alone to save his soul, May keep the path, but will not reach the goal; While he who walks in love may wander far, Yet God will bring him where the blessed are.

CHRISTMAS RECIPES.

ROASTED TURKEY.

A turkey should be killed two or three days before used if the weather is cool or ice is available for use. Do not truss for twenty-four hours, only remove the craw. Always singe before "drawing" the bird. When ready to cook—after it has been singed and trussed wash thoroughly inside and out; salt inside and out. Fill with dry dressing. Rub flour over turkey, place a piece of salt pork on breast and brown flour slightly. Pour two cups of hot water over turkey. Baste often and turn over in pan. Bake in a moderate oven.

Dry Dressing.

1 1/2 to 2 loaves of white bread, cut in cubes, add one small onion, chopped fine, season with salt, pepper and sage, add two or three hard boiled eggs (chopped). Over this pour 1/4 pound of melted butter. Toss all together and fill turkey. Sew turkey up. Place balance of dressing around turkey.

SWEET POTATO PIE.

3 or 4 medium size sweet potatoes
1 teaspoon nutmeg
1 cup milk
1 tablespoon flour (sifted)
1/2 teaspoon allspice
1 orange (juice)
2 or 3 eggs, yolks (well beaten)
2 tablespoons butter (melted)
Sweeten to taste (usually about 1 cup)

Boil potato until thoroughly done, pare and press through a colander. To this add the other ingredients in the order named.

Pie Crust.

1 1/2 cup sifted flour
1/4 cup lard
1/2 teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons cold water
1/2 teaspoon baking powder

Sift dry ingredients, add the lard and thoroughly mix. To this add water and toss on slightly floured board and roll to desired thickness. Before putting into oven puncture crust several times with fork tines so as to release air under crust. Bake in a hot oven until crust begins to brown. Then put in filling. Cook for fifteen or twenty minutes in a moderate oven or until nicely browned.

Beat the whites of the eggs, until stiff, add 1 tablespoon sugar for each egg and a little orange juice. Spread over top of pie and brown in a slow oven.

CHRISTMAS FRUIT CAKE

This recipe is one handed down in our family for generations. As my mother gave it to me, I am passing it on to you. It will not hurt the most delicate stomach.

1 cup bread sponge
1 cup sugar
1/2 cup butter
Mix these all thoroughly, then add:
1 cup dates
1 cup raisins and figs
1 cup nuts
2 cups flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon allspice
1 teaspoon soda dissolved in 3 tablespoonfuls cold water.

Stir mixture thoroughly. Do not make too thick as the cake will be too dry. Pour into a pie pan and let rise one hour. Bake in moderate oven for forty minutes. If pan is lined with greased brown paper the cake will not stick.

RAISIN FUDGE.

2 squares of unsweetened chocolates
2 cups sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup milk
1 tablespoon butter
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
1/2 cupful Sun-Maid raisins
Melt chocolate, add sugar, salt, milk. Stir until mixture boils and sugar is dissolved.

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THE MERKEL MAIL

VOL. 35. NO. 42.

MERKEL, TEXAS, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1923.



Christmas Greetings

Land-of-the-North,
December 13th 1923.

Dear Children—
I am on my way from the snow-bound land of the North, and am due to arrive in Texas Christmas Eve. If you have been good children I will put something in your stockings to make you happy. I love you and wish all of you a Merry Christmas.
Affectionately Yours,
Santa Claus.

MERRY

A Christmas Hunt and Dinner

Deer, Turkey, Quail, Cooked and Served Christmas Day in the Hills of Southwest Texas
By AUSTIN CALLAN.

Tom McCoy, seemingly enjoyed his pipe better than anything else. It had a short stem, a black bowl and a strong scent, and no one could endure it as well as Tom, yet it was not altogether a love for the weed that kept him so busy puffing away at that antique briar-root. Along in the fall of the year, when the winter-winds would begin to winnow the fallen leaves across the old lanes, this old hunter would hunch down with his pipe in his mouth and as he sent blue rings up towards the sky would see a camp-fire out under the stars and a big buck hanging-up in a tree. That was what he liked in life best of all.

Just about a week before Christmas I happened to drop in on Tom, who, by the way was the watch-maker and gunsmith of the community. He was seated before his work-bench probing into the vitals of an Ingersoll which had something the matter with the carburetor, or some other part of it, and wouldn't run.

"What you doing, Tom?" I asked. "O, piddling' with an old worn-out biscuit that couldn't keep time if a brass band were to play for it," he answered.

"Been out this season?" "Nope, but I'm getting ready," he replied. "Come an' go along. Three of us calculate spending ten days out on the divide twixt Bear Creek and the forks of the Llano river, in Kimball county, Texas. We'll make our camp at Nigger Head hill; Old Bench says deer and turkey both are plentiful in them parts."

I jumped at the chance, and about noon the next day Tom, McCoy, D. G. Benchoff, Charley Graham and myself were off. My contribution to the "munitions of war" was a sixteen gauge shotgun and several boxes of shells. The high-power rifles appealed to me and I wanted to kill a buck just as bad as any one of the outfit, but at the same time I was hungry and in case we fell down on getting venison, I intended to slip around and make a shock-formation charge on a covey of Bob Whites.

In addition to the armament, we carried along a complete cooking outfit and a generous supply of coffee, flour, bacon, spuds and Mary Jane syrup. Tom, who always acted as quartermaster, explained that he did not distrust the hunting ability of the boys, especially "Old Bench," but that the powder might get wet, and besides he liked a change occasionally when in camp.

Ideal Camping Spot.

It was late when we reached the chosen place, and a blue bank of clouds piled up along the north warned us to hustle for shelter. Fortunately we found a thicket which had an opening to the south, where there were a few big trees along near the center and plenty of wood. No more ideal spot could have

been selected for such a camp. In fact, nothing was missing but water, and it was less than a mile to where we could go and fill our keg from a clear, bubbling spring.

A big fire was built and supper prepared, after which we lounged around in camp until midnight, telling stories of other hunts, discussing the merits of certain rifles and digressing occasionally to pass judgment on the ability of friends of ours to get the right kind of a kick in their juvenile experiences with home brew.

Shortly after we retired it began snowing, but we had an abundance of bedding and "tarps" were pulled up over us so that no discomfort whatever was experienced. A snow storm is rare in that section of Texas. Perhaps the ground is not covered with snow on an average of once in three years. Daybreak, however, brought to us the recollection of a certain poem written in the long ago by James G. Whit-tier. We were truly snow-bound, some six or eight inches covered the surface of the earth, and every limb or blade of grass was beautifully upholstered in pure white.

Immediately after partaking of breakfast, consisting of strong black coffee steaming hot, camp biscuits, broiled bacon and molasses, I took one of the high-power rifles and set out to make good the old story that "the early bird catches the worm." Not over three hundred yards from camp I saw deer tracks, and was assured that at least we were in a big game country. Nigger Head hill was not far away and I directed my steps in that direction. The snow had ceased falling. Climbing up one slope of the peak I could see for miles in every direction, and I noted that there was a wooded point only a short distance across a deep ravine. It was covered with cedar trees, and while I was standing there watching the occasional sun-glimts as they shot from behind the clouds and set a million dia-

monds to twinkling, a big buck walked out into the open space.

No prettier picture ever met the gaze of a mortal. Nature was at her best and robed in her grandest garments, and occupying a central position on the "screen" was this beauty of the wilds.

"Cracked Down."

For a time I looked on in admiration, forgetting that there was such a splendid limb back at camp to hang meat on. The virgin charm of the scene, the wild setting untouched by anything of man's creation, these fairly captivated me. But after a while my "animal instinct"

and commenced training his Long Tom on my buck, I knew that somebody's shooting record was going to smash, and that it wouldn't be his. I was in hopes, however, that he would miss for I did not relish the "guying" I knew would follow. But Tom didn't miss; in fact "miss" wasn't his name. The buck ran for a short distance and fell. We reached him about the same time. Apparently the big fellow was dead, but when Tom thrust a knife into his neck he threw his horns up with such great force that they almost broke that veteran hunter's leg.

Tom went back to the camp and got

were satisfied; that night as we sat around the fire we planned to remain over and cook our Christmas dinner in camp. Benchoff declared that it would not seem like Christmas without egg-nog, and Charley said that he could do without the egg-nog but that we had to have a turkey to keep him from getting lonesome.

Having made a failure at getting venison, I decided to redeem myself in a conquest against the turkeys, and the next day I shouldered a shotgun and went out to look for a roost. A pecan grove about two miles from camp rewarded me. At a glance I knew some of the great American birds had roosted there the night before, so I concealed myself, and lay in wait for them.

Just about dusk the turkeys commenced flying into the trees and I "knocked down" four, one of which we named the Sultan and decided to bake for our dinner.

Primitive Christmas Dinner.

When Christmas day arrived we had five bucks hanging up in camp, besides the turkeys and a large number of quail, and we had something else, too. Tom had found a bee tree and brought in some fine looking honey. The only thing that puzzled us was how to cook the turkey; the dutch oven we had was not half big enough. Charley suggested that we wrap it up in a wet sheet and roast it like you do a calf's head by burying it in the hot ashes and coals. This proved very successful, and dressing was made to go with it. Tom found some pecans when he went to cut the bee tree and these we added in with the onions and sage and corn bread.

Some of the venison was also baked and some of it was broiled Bill Cody fashion; that is done by throwing big thick slices into a hot skillet and letting it sear on both sides, driving the juices to the center. When you are reasonably sure that it is done through and through, you scrape off the charred sides and put the steak into a platter with plenty of butter on it and keep in a warm place until the butter is melted or absorbed.

A dozen quail, too, were made into a pot pie and served steaming hot. It was such a meal as would have satisfied a king. Even the biscuits were fluffy and fine and served as a desert with our wild honey.

It was a great hunt we had—a great hunt and a great feast served on a great day. Everything was simple, clean, fresh, and in keeping with an occasion marking the dawn of a world's light of hope, freedom and good will. When we had finished, Tom lit his pipe again and the blue rings of smoke, as they rose above the camp table, grew wider and thinner, floating away on the winds, while four hunters gazed into the dying camp fire, silent and thoughtful.



"Four Hunters Gazed into the Dying Campfire, Silent and Thoughtful."

returned; I felt hungry for venison and that buck defiantly standing up there with his nose in the air breathing the fresh aroma of the morning, seemed to say to me: "Crack down!"

Well, I "cracked," but I only succeeded in spoiling the pose of the noble animal. My bullet went astray, and that buck simply folded his rocking-chair antlers back on his weathers and took to the lowlands.

Tom McCoy was several hundred yards off in the valley when I fired and the deer seemed to run directly toward him, but stopped within shooting distance. From my position I could plainly see both the hunter and the deer, and when Tom laid his pipe in the snow

a horse. It was one of the biggest bucks I had ever seen and the two of us could not have packed him. It was while we were walking along leading the horse with "our" prize-tied across him that the ordeal came, which I knew was coming sooner or later. "What made you miss?" Tom asked. "You sure had a pretty shot and that is said to be the best gun in Menard county."

"It's the ammunition," I declared. "You can't hardly get a good cartridge since the war. Some German spies must have gotten into the factories."

Benchoff and Charlie returned at night empty handed. They had spent the day in the hills without even seeing a deer. But we had made good and all

The Tournament in Texas

Once Staged as a Red-Blooded Contest During Christmas Week Celebrations.

It was before the advent of the automobile, or the moving picture, or the radio, that the tournament played a prominent part in Texas Christmas celebrations. In those days a man talked about his favorite saddle horse, rather than his Stutz or Henry, and the screen star of his choice was neither Norma Talmadge, Marion Davies, Mary Pickford nor any of the rest of the now famous moving players of America. It was some shy little lassie with dazzling eyes flashing from beneath a sunbonnet, on whose brow he hoped to place the laurels won by his skillful riding in a red-blooded tournament contest.

Back a Quarter of a Century.

We will have to go back at least a quarter of a century to find the tournament a popular part of the Christmas program in civilian life, although the cavalry branch of the army still stages it occasionally. The contest is for real horsemen, for men of the saddle who must learn to master the art, poise and daring while riding at full speed.

The auto has its advantages in shortening distance, in expediting business and in making travel more convenient and comfortable. But it certainly sounded taps for the old fashioned tournament contest, because it turned our saddle ponies out on the range and gave us a citizenship which has permanently abandoned the stirrup for the clutch and the bridle reins for a steering-wheel.

The last big tournament Christmas celebration I remember, under the old order of things, took place in 1897 at Menardville, a beautiful little town in Menard county, in the stock country of Southwest Texas. Men participated in it who afterwards came to be known as cattle kings and who were rated at the banks as "seven figure financiers." They led in the thought and influence and social life of the city; they were real builders. But their most skillful accomplishment was riding and the tournament afforded them the best public opportunity to show how well they could ride.

The way to stage a tournament contest, was by erecting high polls along a

smooth course, for 100 or 200 yards, the distance to be determined by those persons most interested. A cross-piece or arm was nailed to the post and a ring suspended from this arm at a height along about a man's breast as he sat on a horse. Then each participant was furnished with a long lance, and, at a given signal, he would dash down the track full speed catching, as many of the rings as he could on the point of his lance. He had to make the distance in a time agreed upon by the judges, and the one who secured the greatest number of rings was decorated the winner.

The game originated in France about the twelfth century, and was a favorite with the royalty. All through history it has been popular, but more especially during those days when Knighthood was in flower. It came to America with the Pilgrim Fathers and Washington's soldiers amused themselves with such contests that bleak winter spent at Valley Forge. Col. Robert E. Lee is said to have been the first man to introduce it into Texas.

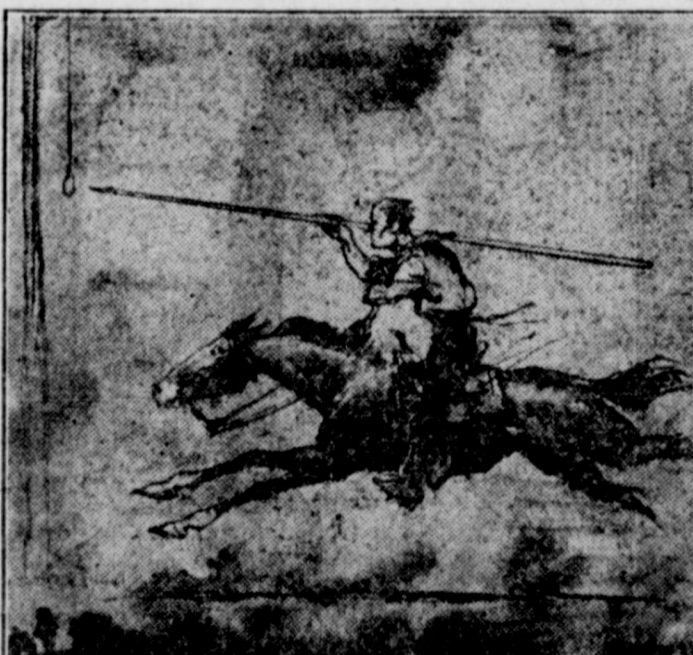
To an onlooker the game seems easy enough, but, indeed, it takes a cool head and a steady arm to lift a single ring when the horse is running. Only those who are red-blooded and experienced have a chance to win. The uninitiated and the "faint-hearted" had just as well stay out of the game.

In many of the contests of the old days the successful man was not only given a handsome purse for his dexterity, but he was presented a wreath as a favor, by "the queen of beauty," or "lady of the tournament," who was chosen before the contest was staged, and it was customary for the winner to gallantly place this wreath upon the brow of his best girl. This often-times made the riding more spirited. Two fellows contending for the favor of the same girl would become rivals and exert every energy to "string the most beads" in order to secure her smiles. Many hearts were won that way, and many

a bright hope vanished when some unfortunate aspirant lost his goal.

In ancient times one side would be matched against another and blunt swords or spears were used instead of the poles of later days. The kings would attend such events and they were held all the way from the Black Forest of Germany to the banks of Loch Lomond, where a MacAlpin rode against a MacGregor.

Winner Leads the Grand March
The tournament held Christmas day, at Menard, 25 years ago, was for a purse



"With a Long Lance, He Would Dash Down the Track at Full Speed."

of one hundred dollars to the winner, and in addition to this, it was announced that the one contestant who captured the purse, and the girl chosen to wear the wreath, should lead the grand march at the Christmas ball. No program of those days was considered complete without this feature, and to have the distinction of leading the grand march was an honor practically as great as that of being chosen caller for the quadrille.

Among the contestants were Ed Mears, who is now a member of the ex-

ecutive committee of the Cattle Raisers' Association, Frank Wilhelm, Jesse Burnam, Max Russell, Will Wilkerson and others whose names are very familiar in the cattle kingdom of Texas. Mears rode Red Bird, as pretty a saddle horse as ever graced the open prairies, and the black and gold which adorned the lance Ed carried was also worn by one of the prettiest belles of the city. That night these two led the grand march, made up of the frontier's fairest and bravest, while Phillippi's orchestra played the Washington Post march.

For lack of better accommodations, the public dances of that period were always held in the courthouse and on special occasions a big supper would be served. This particular night, Mrs. Ed Sieker arranged that part of the program and the main delicacy of the feast consisted of roast turkeys killed by Mr. Sieker on Saline creek, in the south edge of Menard county.

It cost just one dollar a couple to participate in all of the joys of this celebration, including the banquet, while such an amount today would be nothing more than one insignificant tip, several of which might become necessary during the course of one evening. In fact, no part of the Christmas entertainment of that time was expensive. If you rode in the tournament the entrance fee was never over \$5.00, and if your girl was present and you made any kind of a showing, it was well worth it.

Turkey Shoots Were Popular.

"Turkey Shoots" was another one of the sports which figured prominently in the Christmas celebrations of the early days. You did not shoot at turkeys, however, but at a target, either with a rifle or a pistol, the scorer of the most "bulleeyes" winning the turkeys. Contests of this kind drew a large crowd and there were always any number of good shots, especially with the six-shooter, because most of the frontiersmen packed a "hog-leg" and knew how to bore a straight with it.

Besides the tournament, the dance and these turkey shoots, which formed a part of that last big Yuletide celebration, back there when the cowboys were on the range instead of in the Rodeo, the Christmas tree served a gladdening purpose and all kinds of presents adorned its green bowers from a sparkling piece of cutglass to a pair of home-knit yarn socks. And I do not mention this last article with any disdain. Sometimes those yarn socks carried with them a mother's love which is the holiest gift that can be given.

But really the Christmas tree of that day and time, when in fruitful regalia, was a funny looking concern. As a rule, a committee would decorate the tree and the decorations would be all home made. Cranberries and pop-corn were strung on strong cords and a lot of colored crepe paper, cut into ringlets by deft hands comprised the principal part of the ornamentation. And there was another committee to see that no child in the community should fail to be remembered by good old Santa Claus, for even then the old man seemed to have a longer and a stronger arm when he stopped in front of a castle than when he stopped in front of a cabin.

The presents would generally be something useful. The girls would make their "beau-lovers" neckties out of black ribbon, which gave the tree the appearance of one great gibbet where a lot of unfortunates had been hung, while the boys would pick such presents as might prove useful in after years—wall-pockets, picture frames, photo albums and the like, and maybe there would be a wash-board for mother and a pipe for dear old dad.

Of course it would be considered "tacky" today. Even in the remotest regions we have learned "the big town stuff," and if the parents of today were to take their children to the same kind of a tree they would doubtless be told where to "get off." We have moved up and on into a more expensive atmosphere. But as more modern Yuletides come 'round that we celebrate in a

(Continued on Page 4, Column 5)

A Review of the Year of 1923

By W. N. BEARD



The people of Texas can well look forward to a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. They have been blessed during 1923 with fairly good crop yields, with increased business activity in practically all lines and with a health record far ahead of last year.

This year's cotton crop, produced at less cost than in several years and marketed at prices which brought a profit to the farmers, has ushered in a period of unusual prosperity throughout the state. Much ready money has been placed in circulation, merchants report a heavy fall trade and banks show a large gain in deposits and a corresponding decrease in loans. County banks, by reason of the paying power of farmer customers, have been able to liquidate their indebtedness. Rural deposits are now larger than at any time since 1919, the year of inflation and abnormal prosperity. County banks have lowest ratio of local loans compared to deposits in many years.

Government gin statistics show that Texas produced this year 40 per cent of the entire cotton crop of the United States, and the crop, including the seed, sold at prices that have already put in the pockets of our Texas farmers over \$600,000,000.

The best evidence of prosperity is the paying of old debts. The year of 1923 will go down in history as a year in which Texans materially reduced their indebtedness. Some merchants report debts paid by customers who have been in arrears from five to ten years.

And what is even more beneficial, our people have learned a lesson in economy. The lean years of the past, following several years of world war inflation, have taught them to conserve their resources, to eliminate waste, to spend less and to save more.

Not only did Texas produce the best cotton crop in the south, but other crops as well. Estimates forecast by the United States Department of Agriculture, puts the Texas cotton crop production of 1923 at 3,800,000 bales, wheat crop 16,375,000 bushels, corn crop 151,750,000 bushels, oat crop 49,824,000 bushels, barley crop 2,400,000 bushels, rye crop 348,000 bushels, tame hay crop 987,000 tons, wild hay crop 201,000 tons, broom corn crop 5,700 tons, rice crop 5,143,000 bushels.

Besides the foregoing crops, our farmers have had fairly good crops of sweet and Irish potatoes, ribbon cane, sorghum, peanuts, garden vegetables, berries, etc. A Cass county, East Texas, farmer contracted to sell his output of

1,800 gallons of ribbon cane syrup before he had completed the making of the syrup.

South Texas has planted a spinach crop of 10,315 acres, 1,635 acres more than last year, and the crop will move in carload lots to eastern markets from January to March, 1924.

While on the subject of crops, it is interesting to know that our farmers are giving more attention to seed selection and fertilization than formerly—better cotton seed, better corn seed, etc. A farmer near Tyler has captured a prize for raising eight bales of cotton from five acres of fertilized and well cultivated land.

Agricultural possibilities are so infinite in Texas that we may expect many wonderful yields of field and truck crops as intensive cultivation is more generally adopted.

This has been an \$1,000,000,000 crop year for grand old Texas, and we now lead all other states in value of farm crops for 1923.

West Texas is doing her part in adding to the wealth of Texas agriculturally by cutting up her large ranches into small farms and by extending the cotton belt into the upper Panhandle. A gin has been recently erected at Dalhart, 81 miles from Amarillo and 407 miles from Fort Worth.

This brief review of the progress of the farming interests of Texas during 1923 is important, in that the prosperity and wealth of Texas comes mainly from the soil, and her people cannot become permanently prosperous and happy without abundant field crop yields.

While looking backward, with unassuming pride, upon the general progress of our state during 1923, no one thing affords greater satisfaction than the progress spiritually and educationally. We have built more new and better

churches, more new and better schools and colleges, more new and better homes. The school districts of our state issued approximately \$10,000,000 in bonds during the scholastic year ending August 31, 1923.

Millions of dollars in bonds also have been voted and issued for good roads, and much progress made this year in good road building. Some counties in Texas have highways extending entirely through them, built of solid

purpose of developing the gold and platinum mine located five miles from Llano. This mine has been idle for the past fifteen years, but now it is to be worked under the name of the Llano Gold and Rare Metal Company. The potash deposits near Odessa has interested eastern capitalists and core tests reveal these deposits in paying quantities. New lignite fields have been discovered and old fields are being worked more actively.

The State Comptroller's department puts the total yield of crude oil in Texas during 1923 at 77,530,382 barrels, valued at \$134,586,000.00. Approximately sixty-five new oil fields have been brought in since January 1, 1923, including the Powell field, near Corsicana, which at peak production, was flowing 300,000 barrels of crude oil per day.

In this limited review no account is taken of the advancement in fine livestock breeding and raising, fine poultry breeding and raising, dairying, horticulture, etc.

It is now suggested that Texas should celebrate its one-hundredth anniversary by a centennial exposition. Much interest has been manifested throughout the state in this movement, and the newspapers have given freely of their space in an endeavor to remind all Texans that a glorious opportunity awaits them to advertise the greatness of Texas by promoting a centennial exposition.

Texas also heads all other states in the creation of new wealth from farms, ranches, mines, oil, forests, and fisheries. While these sources of new wealth are seemingly inexhaustible, yet we should, at this time of retrospection, consider conserving these natural resources by replanting our cut over forests, rebuilding our depleted soils

and preventing unnecessary waste in gas and oil production.

These notable achievements of the passing year should inspire all Texans to face the New Year with supreme confidence and faith—faith in our unlimited resources and in our workmen—whether the workmen be tillers of the soil or tillers of the lathe and trowel, whether the workmen be dealers in merchandise or directors of schools and colleges, public officials, or ministers of the gospel. All Texans should believe in Texas and its matchless possibilities, should unite and stand shoulder to shoulder in forwarding the interests of their respective counties and communities, to the end that Texas may grow and continue to prosper and hold its commanding place among the great states of the United States.

Texas folks, therefore, both children and grown-ups, should look forward to the holidays with joy and thankfulness because of our splendid progress in the past, our abundance in the present, and our promise in the future. We truly, and in all sincerity, have reason to rejoice with grateful hearts, and be merry, at this glad Yuletide season of the year or our Lord, nineteen hundred and twenty-three.

THE MAGIC OF CHRISTMAS.

The magic of the Christmas season is the element of suspense that enters into it. The beauty of it—all the fun of it—would be spoiled were all the packages to be opened the week before Christmas or even the day before Christmas.

Isn't that the greatest philosophy of all? asks a writer in the Philadelphia Ledger.

While we have our hazy dreams of the golden treasures we hope some day to attain, we don't want to know all that is in store for us until we actually realize them. Anticipation is ever so much better than realization. Familiarity breeds contempt when the treasures of life become commonplace.

What we want is more of the old-fashioned Christmas spirit; less of fact and more of faith, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Somewhere in a magazine story occurs this phrase: "It's all that keeps us going—the belief there's something better waiting if we can only catch up with it."

Let's not insist on knowing all the gifts in store for us.

Before Christianity came in peopled used to fear that the sun was dying when the days grew short and dark in the month that is now December, and when the days lengthened, they used to rejoice because the sun was coming back to them.

THE ABSENT ONE

By FRANK L. STANTON

"I'm thinking of you in the Christmas,"
It rings like a tender refrain;
The sky is so blue,
Like the dear eyes of you,
And still do the lilies remain.

"I'm thinking of you at Christmas."
The halls with the holly are red;
And where do you stay
On this beautiful day,
Where the light on your pathway is shed?

Do the lilies bloom for you, dearest?
Under skies that are darkened or blue;
In a far-away land
Does some tender kind hand
Lift a flower of Christmas to you?

Oh, the bells o'er the wide world are ringing,
And the skies bend in beauty of blue;
But a thought from the past
Liveth with me at last;
In the Christmas I'm thinking of you!

cement, asphalt or gravel. Nothing can contribute more to the happiness and contentment of our citizens than well constructed and well maintained highways.

The mineral and forest resources of the state continue to attract investors from all over the world, and this year has revealed greater wealth of the mines and the forests of Texas. A \$500,000.00 corporation has been organized at Llano, Llano county, for the

portunity awaits them to advertise the greatness of Texas by promoting a centennial exposition.

Texas also heads all other states in the creation of new wealth from farms, ranches, mines, oil, forests, and fisheries. While these sources of new wealth are seemingly inexhaustible, yet we should, at this time of retrospection, consider conserving these natural resources by replanting our cut over forests, rebuilding our depleted soils

THE PRINCE OF PEACE

By An American Mother

The civilized world wants peace. Diplomats and statesmen, sitting in their high places, may theorize, and military leaders may sound their dark warnings. But if civilization civilizes, if education educates, we should know by this time that war is stupid, wasteful and unnecessary. We, the average men and women of America, should insist that the institution of war be abolished forever and that nations find some saner, safer way of settling their differences.

This is a season when all the world should be thinking of peace. It is a time of good will among men. It is a time when we will be most ready to accept the new rendering of an old and a very beautiful sentiment: "Peace on earth to men of good will!"

The method of settling international disputes by arbitration has been tried and found not wanting. Argentina and Chile at one end of the world, Norway and Sweden at the other, have settled their disputes by arbitration. Denmark's three treaties with Italy, Portugal and The Netherlands withhold no clause, however vital, from reason's peaceful sway. The Casa Blanca dispute between France and Germany, the Venezuela question, the North Atlantic fisheries case, the Alabama claims—all these have been settled by arbitration. In fact, within the last century two hundred and fifty international disputes have been settled in this way.

And there is a case near home, a perfect object lesson in the methods by which international peace may be secured and maintained, a political wisdom that has created a transcontinental boundary between the United States and Canada nearly 4000 miles long, in which for many years there has been no need of a single fort, a single soldier or a single gun.

This agreement has stood every test—it has withstood the strain of politics as well as the threat of big business interests. It works. It is working today.

Perhaps the most majestic symbol of peace in the world is "The Christ of the Andes." Standing as it does on a snow-crowned crest of the Andes, just

on the border line between Chile and Argentina, it makes a peculiarly impressive appeal for universal peace. It was inspired by a woman, Madame Angelina de Oliveira Cesar de Costa, founder and president of the South American Association for Universal Peace. Madame de Costa has received the two highest orders from Holy See, one of them the order "Pro Ecclesia of the 'Societe Academique d'Histoire Internationale' of Paris. No story can be more beautiful or more inspiring than this of the erection of this figure of the Prince of Peace, dominating with its gesture of reconciliation. And certainly none is more fitting at this Christmas season.

Argentine and Chile had had serious differences concerning certain boundaries and the two countries were on the verge of war. European shipyards were busy with orders for gigantic battle ships of the latest models, and a tax of 5 per cent was levied to provide the cost. The dispute had already cost the contestants great sums of money, and much thought and energy had been put into it. Such controversies not only breed blind and unreasoning hatred, but divert the mind and heart of nations from constructive and wholesome things.

At last it was agreed that arbitration should be left to His Majesty King Edward VII of England, and the terms decided upon by the commission of distinguished men appointed by him were happily accepted by both Argentine and Chile. By the terms of the treaty armaments were reduced and the shipbuilding program was halted. The money thus saved was turned to more practical and constructive purposes, and many public utilities were benefited and improved. Chile transformed her largest arsenal into a school of arts and sciences. War-

ships were dismantled and added to the commercial flotilla. Disarmament was real, friendships began to take the place of hatreds.



Majestic Symbol of Peace, on the Crest of the Andes, Inspired by a Woman.

It was upon the occasion of the signing of this treaty that Madame de Oliveira suggested that a bronze statue of Christ the Redeemer should be erect-

ed on the border line of the two countries, not only as a symbol of permanent peace between Argentine and Chile, but as a plea for universal peace. The

suggestion was made to the presidents of the two countries, who welcomed the idea cordially, and so enthusiastic was the response that in a very short time the young sculptor of Buenos Aires, Sr. Mateo Alonso, had finished the work.

The occasion of the dedication was remarkable. Chilean bands played the Argentine national hymn, and the Argentine band played the national hymn of Chile.

"These mountains will reverse themselves," said one of the speakers, "before Chileans and Argentines will forget their promise of peace sworn at the feet of Christ the Redeemer." Madame de Oliveira did not stop her magnificent work in the interest of world peace with the erection of this statue in 1904. She went to Europe and through her efforts a reproduction of the Christ of the Andes, by M. Lagas, was erected at The Hague in 1913.

Men have been fumbling at this job of ending war long enough. The first Hague conference was called in 1899 by Nicholas II of Russia, to the end that war might cease. In 1907 the second Hague conference was held. Between this and the recent Washington conference we have had conferences and councils and commissions at numerous times, and still war threatens.

And what a war the next will be if predictions are half fulfilled. Mr. Edison was asked if it were true that the entire population of London could be killed by gas within twelve hours, and he replied, "The thing could be done in three hours." It is said that Americans had already for the 1919 campaign the Lewisite gas and that a

dozen one-ton bombs loaded with Lewisite gas could eliminate all life in Berlin.

Shall we not then turn, at this beautiful Christmas time, toward South America where that majestic figure of the Prince of Peace stands as a beautiful reminder of universal friendliness. He alone realized this sublime thought of fraternity which should overshadow all bitterness, and eliminate all hatreds. His indeed is a creed, for all classes, and for all time—"Peace on earth to men of good will."

THE TOURNAMENT IN TEXAS

(Continued From Page 2)


grander way—appreciating every new and better gift and believing that in spite of it all this is the golden age of history—we cannot help looking back occasionally and "kinder half-way" longing for some of the plain old-fashioned things of a quarter century ago.

We cannot bring back the past, and we do especially care to do so, but sometimes we find ourselves pushing open the gate that leads into the Garden of the Past and looking around among the half-dead shrubbery and unkempt vines, where shadows fall on a broken caprock and wild birds flit through fading leaves; as we stand there in memory's land, we feel the loss of a simplicity which marked without marring old time Christmas celebrations.

WHY DO WE DECORATE OUR CHRISTMAS TREE?

Ancient sun worshippers used to decorate trees, because they thought a spreading tree was like the sun rising, higher and higher, in the heavens. They used lights to signify the lightning; apples, nuts and balls to signify the sun, moon and stars, and figures of animal sacrifices which were made to their gods. The angels, cross, etc., which we added were put in by Christians to commemorate Christ. The star is a symbol of the star which led the Wise Men to Bethlehem.

D Y O



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THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT:—Thou shalt not kill.
—Exodus 20:13.

WOMAN'S PAGE
MRS. MARGARET STUTE

THE CHRISTMAS TABLE.

The center of interest for Christmas (outside of the Christmas tree) is the dining table. Mother's interest is principally the dinner itself, then the decorations. With a little planning and foresight the most modest home may present an artistically arranged table with little expense.

Simplicity is the keynote to a well arranged table. Never over-do the thing. The best linen and silver are always in evidence. First a "silent cloth" is used, then the table cloth. An embroidered center piece can be used also.

Silver must be placed correctly in order to be attractive. For the ordinary dinner the following description is sufficient: To the right of the plate is placed the knife, sharp edge towards plate, then as many tea spoons as are needed, coffee spoon next to knife, then salad fork (if to be served after soup) last from plate is placed soup spoon. On the left of the plate is placed fork for pie or cake (if to be served) then fork for the main dinner. The butter knife is laid on butter plate if they are used; if omitted, knife is also.

All of the plates are placed in front of who ever is to serve; except where service plates are used. Glasses are placed at the right of the plate near the point of the knife. Napkins are placed at the left of the forks, if first course is served before seating the guest. If not served until seated, then napkin is placed between knife and fork or on service plate, if used. Dinners today are served with much less formality than formerly. There are several reasons for this, namely, because the scarcity of reliable help, and then during and following the war people became less formal in every way.

Flowers (never artificial ones on a home table) can be used to good advantage for decoration. If tall flowers are selected only a very few are used. Usually a bud vase or a very small vase for the center piece.

Narrow strips of green and red paper can be fastened to the base of the vase and let them radiate symmetrically to the edge of the table and fall over the edge. Cotton may be "fluffed" and sprinkled with artificial "snow" and placed at the base of the vase. Colored candles in pretty holders may be used with this decoration.

Another novel way of decorating the Christmas table is as follows: A Santa Claus doll that will stand is placed in the center. Cotton used as snow is put around the feet. Colored ribbons are attached to a present, that is placed at each plate, with a card bearing the name of the guest and other end fastened in the doll's hand.

Still another is where a miniature Christmas tree is made of a single bough and fastened in crossed piece of wood (the same as a large tree) and tiny candles placed here and there. These were lighted just before the guests came into the dining room. Place a paper thick enough to catch the dripping tallow. Cover with a white cloth or cotton.

Another very artistic decoration is accomplished by using a basket of fruit as a center piece. A pretty basket is selected and filled with the best fruit available, the finest red apples, beautiful oranges, bananas, green and Malaga grapes, kumquats, if they are on the market, and often a ripe pineapple is used for the center of the basket and the rest of the fruit placed around it. The basket can be trimmed with rhododendron leaves, or any other fall leaves, or sprays of pine and little cones. Here is wishing you the most successful Christmas dinner of your life.

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HOUSE DECORATIONS

To give a hearty welcome to all who enter our doors on Christmas day is the chief aim of every good housewife. No other season of the year gives her such an opportunity to display her talents and radiate good cheer and happiness. To commence with, each member of the family must join hands and work together in order to assure success. For there is mistletoe to gather, apples and oranges to prepare, and all the jolly duties for a "Merry Christmas."

Most people in Texas are exceptionally fortunate in one respect. As about all they have to do is to go out into the country and they can gather all the mistletoe needed for decorating. Of course, the "early bird" always gathers the best mistletoe. So lay in your supply early, because no Christmas is complete without it.

The keynote of decorations should be found in the living room, or parlor, which ever is to be used the most during the day. With a few cents spent wisely and a little fore-thought, any house can present a glowing and hearty welcome.

In the living room a center of interest must be chosen. Perhaps it will be a centrally suspended chandelier, perhaps an open fire place, or the Christmas tree. Which ever it is, lay the most emphasis at this spot. Red and green being the favorite colors for Christmas decorations, many beautiful ideas can be worked out.

One artistic room I have in mind was where the chandelier was used as the center of interest. A large red ball was suspended from it (but a pretty bunch of mistletoe can be used as well). Cotton was fluffed and sprinkled with artificial snow. This was banked on top of the bell (or mistletoe) and little flakes placed here and there on the lights and cord. Two streamers of red and two of green Christmas cords were run from the top of the bell to the four corners of the room, the colors alternating. Tiny bits of cotton were placed on these. In the corners pretty bunches of mistletoe were fastened to the wall with tiny tacks (so as not to spoil the wall) and these were flecked with cotton. By the fireplace a pretty tree was placed and decorated with the usual Christmas tinsel. There were pretty candles, red apples and yellow oranges suspended on colored twine and all the other various and sundry things used. Dried red peppers were placed here and there among the green to give a colorful effect.

Small limbs with autumn leaves were placed in the corners and over the pictures and mantle. Holly can be used at almost any place. Tiny red bells and miniature Santa Claus may be hung in the windows or holly wreaths. The dining room must present a bower of loveliness and hospitality. Here holly, mistletoe, pine boughs, cones and any other "natural" decoration can be used in profusion. However, the table is the center of interest and other decorations must blend with it or the effect will be lost. Less red is used on the walls and in the windows as it will detract from the table which should be the most conspicuous. Don't forget a bunch of mistletoe above each door. It will look pretty and afford much merriment for the old as well as the young. A last word of warning, don't forget to put away carefully after the holidays all decorations that are not perishable. Wrap in colored tissue paper. They are best put in a covered wooden box that can be fastened securely, so as to keep away from rats and mice. Camphor or moth balls are good to use. Don't let the children see them again until next year and they will be as good as new.

A CHRISTMAS THOUGHT.
Who seeks for heaven alone to save his soul, May keep the path, but will not reach the goal; While he who walks in love may wander far, Yet God will bring him where the blessed are.

CHRISTMAS RECIPES.

ROASTED TURKEY.
A turkey should be killed two or three days before used if the weather is cool or ice is available for use. Do not truss for twenty-four hours, only remove the craw. Always singe before "drawing" the bird. When ready to cook—after it has been singed and trussed wash thoroughly inside and out; salt inside and out. Fill with dry dressing. Rub flour over turkey, place a piece of salt pork on breast and brown flour slightly. Pour two cups of hot water over turkey. Baste often and turn over in pan. Bake in a moderate oven.

Dry Dressing.
1 1/2 to 2 loaves of white bread, cut in cubes, add one small onion, chopped fine, season with salt, pepper and sage, add two or three hard boiled eggs (chopped). Over this pour 1/2 pound of melted butter. Toss all together and fill turkey. Sew turkey up. Place balance of dressing around turkey.

SWEET POTATO PIE.
3 or 4 medium size sweet potatoes
1 teaspoon nutmeg
1 cup milk
1 cup sugar
1 tablespoon flour (sifted)
1/2 teaspoon allspice
1 orange (juice)
2 or 3 eggs, yolks (well beaten)
2 tablespoons butter (melted)
Sweeten to taste (usually about 1 cup)
Boil potato until thoroughly done, pare and press through a colander. To this add the other ingredients in the order named.

Pie Crust.
1 1/2 cup sifted flour
1/2 cup lard
1/2 teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons cold water
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
Sift dry ingredients, add the lard and thoroughly mix. To this add water and toss on slightly floured board and roll to desired thickness. Before putting into oven puncture crust several times with fork tines so as to release air under crust. Bake in a hot oven until crust begins to brown. Then put in filling. Cook for fifteen or twenty minutes in a moderate oven or until nicely browned. Beat the whites of the eggs until stiff, add 1 tablespoon sugar for each egg and a little orange juice. Spread over top of pie and brown in a slow oven.

CHRISTMAS MENUS.
"NO. 1."
Fruit Cocktail
Celery stalks stuffed with peanut butter
Olives
Thin Meat Broth
Roast Turkey
Mashed Potatoes Gravy
Brussels sprouts, sauce piquante
Rolls—Butter balls
Cranberry Sauce
Fruit Cake
Coffee
"NO. 2."
Half Grapefruit with cherry garnish
Olives
Stuffed or Roast Pork
Gravy
Potatoes on the half-shell
Baked squash
Grape jelly
Rolls—Butter balls
Jellied fruit salad with whipped cream
Mince Pie—Cheese
Coffee

CHRISTMAS FRUIT CAKE
This recipe is one handed down in our family for generations. As my mother gave it to me, I am passing it on to you. It will not hurt the most delicate stomach.
1 cup bread sponge
1 cup sugar
1/2 cup butter
1 cup dates
1 cup raisins and figs
1 cup nuts
2 cups flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon allspice
1 teaspoon soda dissolved in 3 tablespoonfuls cold water.
Stir mixture thoroughly. Do not make too thick as the cake will be too dry. Pour into a pie pan and let rise one hour. Bake in moderate oven for forty minutes. If pan is lined with greased brown paper the cake will not stick.

RAISIN FUDGE.
2 squares of unsweetened chocolates
2 cups sugar
1 tablespoon butter
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup milk
1/2 cupful Sun-Maid raisins
Melt chocolate, add sugar, salt, milk. Stir until mixture boils and sugar is dissolved.

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The folks we love so well
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A Merry Christmas to All

—AND IT WILL BE A MERRY CHRISTMAS
IF YOU DO YOUR SHOPPING AT OUR STORE

At this time of each year one's thoughts turn to the thoughts of kindness, remembrance and to the grand thought of giving cheer to others. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." During the year's struggles that have passed our thoughts have been but in a single vein, "To Receive," yet there comes a time in every year when our thoughts turn to giving—giving to our friends, our relatives, our loved ones, and even our enemies, for at this time our happiness lies in giving—cheerful giving.

The spirit of Christmas seems to be reflected in every article in our store. Never before have we had such a Yuletide showing of suitable Christmas Gifts.

You may search the entire city but nowhere will you find better quality, more value for your money, or more helpful service in the appropriate selection for your gifts than here.

We have prepared for you, we are expecting you, we are looking for you, don't fail us or we will be disappointed. If you need anything now phone us; phone calls receive our personal attention.

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**Put Christmas Wreath
in Its Rightful Place**

HEY were putting up the Christmas tree in the village community house with happy anticipations. Meanwhile two little folks and a dog were enjoying themselves on a big ice cake along the bay shore. As the ice moved off with the tide the children laughed with delight, but Pluto, after dropping his tail and thinking a moment, surprised them by giving a running leap into the water and striking out for the shore.

Not long after, Sim Gannett opened the door of his boat house to see what the dog was barking about and was greeted with a shower as Pluto shook himself. Then the dog ran in, stood upon his hind legs and begged, cocking his eyes towards the open door. As Sim did not understand this Pluto caught hold of his coat and pulled him towards the doorway. Thinking that the dog meant something, Sim, finally looked out and saw the ice floating seaward with the two small figures upon it.

It did not take the old fisherman long to get his boat down to the water and push it out through the floating ice, and soon two youngsters and a happy dog were huddled up in the bow of the returning boat.

After the carols were sung that night, they put the holly wreath that had graced the top of the tree upon Sim Gannett's neck, but Sim took it off and put it upon Pluto and he acted as though he knew that he deserved it.—Christopher G. Hazard.
(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

**Gay Christmas Thrill
the Greatest of All**

HE love in our hearts toward our fellow men; the happy, expectant, gay eagerness of children and their joyous, merry voices; the pure, white, soft beauty of snow; the deeply refreshing aroma of the forests which for a brief period we bring into our homes; the cheer of the home fireplace; the bringing together of all members of the family; the quiet and the enthusiasm of Christmas shoppers; the stores, decorated and looking their best in holiday attire; the cordial, heartfelt greetings which are extended to us and which we extend to others; the renewing of old-time friendships by the sending of a bright Christmas card; the generosity in our souls toward all; the carols which ring out the Christmas spirit of ardent worship; the bright, significant stars twinkling down from the heavens above; the simplicity and the beauty of the Christmas season; all form a part of the great Christmas thrill. There is no thrill in the world like unto it!—Mary

A MERRY, MERRY

Christmas

The Joyous
Season Is
Welcome

What joy Christmas brings to the world. It fills our hearts with higher, nobler thoughts and inspires the best that is in us. May it be real to you, bringing happiness that will endure for time to come—that is our wish for you.

We cannot pass the season without an expression of our deepest lasting appreciation for the patronage given during 1923. May it be our privilege to serve you through a happy, prosperous New Year.

White House Cafe

Lutie Sanders Shorty Holloway

G. L. Tucker moved Saturday into the residence he recently acquired on the south side.

There was a large crowd in town Saturday and all merchants did a fine business.

FREE VOTING COUPON IN THE MERKEL MAIL
"Everybody Wins" Grand Prize Distribution

I hereby cast 100 FREE VOTES to the credit of
Miss, Mr. or Mrs.

Address

This coupon, neatly clipped out, name and address of the candidate filled in, and mailed or delivered to the Election Department of the Merkel Mail, Merkel, Texas, will count as 100 FREE VOTES. It does not cost anything to cast these coupons for your favorite candidate, and you are not restricted in any sense in voting them. Get all you can and send them in. They count. Do not Roll or Fold. Deliver in Flat packages. This coupon must be voted before December 22.

**NOT WHAT HE
EXPECTED**

LITTLE DICK was too young to spell—he went entirely by sound. Consequently he suffered a great disappointment on Christmas morning. When he beheld his Christmas tree he said solemnly: "You said it would be a fir tree, daddy!"
"It is a fir tree," answered his father.
"But I thought it was going to look like my kitty!" wailed Dick.—Martha B. Thomas.
(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

**A Late "It" Arrival
Came Just in Time**

EVERYONE was watching, waiting, hoping. They all hoped "it" would surely arrive on time.

They hoped "it" would not fail them.

"It" helped the Christmas season so much.

Everyone and everything loved "it." The children loved "it," the grown-ups loved "it."

The trees of the forest loved "it." And then "it" arrived. "It" arrived late—almost when everyone was giving "it" up. But even though "it" was a late arrival "it" was not too late for Christmas day. "It" came late Christmas eve.

And haven't you guessed what "it" was?

SNOW of course!—Mary Graham Bonner.
(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT

Christmas spirit necessarily finds many men and women stranded on the shore, off somewhere, far from the general happiness.

Nevertheless, words of Chandos are vital. "The faculty for happiness is a gift, in any temperament, whose wisdom and whose beauty this world too little recognizes." Chandos' thought is not easy for a certain type of mortal to cultivate, but the holiday spirit may to an extent help out. Self-recognition was soundly urged by Marcus Aurelius many centuries ago, and writings of other Stoics preach tranquillity and harmony through the philosophy that says, "It may all be for the best."

A shipwrecked sailor, buried on this coast,
Holds you set sail!
Pull many a gallant barque, where he was lost,
Weathered the gale.

**AUTOMOBILE
SERVICE**

We are prepared to give to the Automobile owner as good as the best in Auto Repair work—and we are Specialists in
QUICK TIRE AND RADIATOR WORK

We sell the famous MICHELIN TIRE AND TUBE, absolutely guaranteed. Also Gas and Accessories.

Boney & Middleton
Front Street

**Give Something
Electrical**



The day-after-day convenience of an Electrical Appliance Gift adds to the appreciation of the recipient, so why not make sure your Gift will meet this approval by choosing from our present showing.

West Texas Utilities Company

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING MADE EASY

AT

MERKEL DRUG CO

Do Your Christmas Shopping Early
(Of course you've heard this before, but its your interest to do so)

You will be able to get just the gifts you want while our stocks are complete, and too, you will avoid being in that PUSH and RUSH that is always at the last. Our stock of gifts as heretofore, consists of only USEFUL and SUBSTANTIAL remembrances. This year we are prepared to serve the Christmas Shopper better than we have in the years past. Our stock is MORE COMPLETE; there is a GREATER VARIETY; and above all priced lower as compared to previous seasons.

SUGGESTIONS:

We submit a partial list of our stock as suggestions for gifts for the entire family:

<p>For Ladies:</p> <p>Perfumes</p> <p>Toilet Sets</p> <p>Mary Garden Mavis</p> <p>Toilet Water</p> <p>Houbigants, Cotys, Carons</p> <p>Black and White Narcissus</p> <p>Toilet Cases</p> <p>Compacts and Vanities</p> <p>Face Powders</p> <p>Stationery</p> <p>Candies</p> <p>Thermos Bottles</p> <p>Kodaks</p> <p>Kodak Albums</p> <p>Desk Lamps</p> <p>Fountain Pens and Pencils</p> <p>Bud Vases</p> <p>Incense Burners</p> <p>Ivory Comb and Brush Sets</p> <p>Assortment Ivory Manicure Sets</p>	<p>Silverware</p> <p>Glassware</p> <p>For Children</p> <p>Bibles</p> <p>Flash Lights</p> <p>Games</p> <p>Kodaks</p> <p>Candies</p> <p>Stationery</p> <p>Comb and Brush Sets</p> <p>Vanities</p> <p>Purses</p> <p>Perfumes</p> <p>Toilet water</p> <p>Toilet Sets</p> <p>Fountain Pens and Pencils</p> <p>For Babies</p> <p>Infant Sets</p> <p>Toilet Sets</p> <p>Dolls</p>	<p>For Men:</p> <p>Pipes</p> <p>Cigars</p> <p>Cigarettes</p> <p>Cigar and Cigarette Holder</p> <p>Smokers' Sets and Stands</p> <p>Humidors</p> <p>Flash Lights</p> <p>Thermos Bottles</p> <p>Fountain Pens and Pencils</p> <p>Toilet Sets</p> <p>Compact Traveling Sets</p> <p>Military Sets</p> <p>Shaving Sets</p> <p>Toilet Water</p> <p>Razors</p> <p>Shaving Brushes</p> <p>Purses and Bill Folds</p> <p>Kodaks</p> <p>Bibles</p> <p>Testaments</p> <p>Hot Water Bottles</p>
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Our Christmas Days as They Used to Be

SOMETIMES it seems as if the "elder days" were the best. Think of their Christmases! Where is the grace and generosity of those times? The warm welcome, the large cordiality, the mellow fun of innocent celebrations!

Perhaps we look back through the softening glow of distance, but there is a romance, a delicate, fine flavor of something which indeed seems lost to us now.

How the neighbors rode through the snow on horseback to large gatherings! How the pretty girls were muffled in rugs and furs, skimming over the road in sleighs! How the bells rippled and rang! And how the wide doors flew open to greet these guests!

Light of candles . . . breath of pine wreaths . . . sprigs of holly . . . and the high thrill of holiday thoughts.

Laughing faces . . . graceful and the Virginia reel in the evening.

It is a heartsome thing to think about. Let us try to insert some of this gentle beauty and spirit into our Christmas day. We have not the leisure and spaciousness of those times, but hearts can reflect just as truly the invisible yet invincible power of love and loveliness!—Martha B. Thomas.

(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

Old Yuletide Hymn Favorite Everywhere

HERE is scarcely a church of any denomination that does not some time during the Christmas season echo the strains of that beautiful and soul-inspiring hymn, "O, come all ye faithful." It seems to be a favorite at Yuletide in every land and in every clime, whether it is sung as above referred to, or in its original form as the "Adeste Fideles."

The hymn was first given to the world in the Thirteenth century by a Franciscan monk, but did not gain world-wide popularity for a long time after. The English translation was made by Canon Frederick Oakley over sixty years ago. Since that time the hymn has been translated into the language of every nation and the sweet and lofty words ring out at Christmas time in many remote places.

But while the English translation has superseded the original Latin to a great extent, yet the beauty of the original composition is such that there are many who still prefer to hear it even though the language is not their own.—Katherine Edelman.

(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

We Send Our Warmest

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

—to those loyal and true friends who have made it possible for us to do business.

May the glow of the lights of Christmas shine brightly in your place of abode and when old Father Time rings back the curtains

May The New Year Start You to Higher Success

and continue you on this road until you have achieved the degree of success you desire.

We thank one and all for business of the past.

ED'S PLACE
E. L. TURNER, Prop.

Freedom of Worship

Plans are being made by the Baptist congregation of Merkel for a great day with them in this city, on December 30, when they will dedicate their handsome church building and burn the note which will have been paid in full by that time. It is also expected that Rev. Ira L. Parrack, who was the able and popular pastor before and after the new building was built will be here and have charge of the services of that day. It is also hoped that the new pastor, Rev. Albertson will arrive in the city by that time and be here to take part in the celebration.—Merkel Mail.

Without the churches, America would collapse. This nation is founded on the church, not one church but on the right to worship God according to the

dictates of one's conscience. The trouble is, however, that most people don't follow the lead of their conscience they much prefer to go their way as they want, rather than as they ought. There is room in America for freedom of worship, and when the time arrives when people are ordered to worship in this church or that church, then you can count on it, that there is going to be such bitterness that the nation will be torn asunder.—Abilene Reporter.

CORN! CORN!

I will have two car loads of good ear corn between now and January 1st. See J. C. Mason. It

Miss Mary Katherine Campbell, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. Ben Campbell who has been teaching at Wingate, Texas will be home today for the holidays.

REAL SPIRIT

IF THE real spirit of Christmas is within us we will, indeed, find that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and we will give out of the fullness of our hearts and because of the joy that giving brings us, instead of from any other motive. So to get the real joy of giving and to receive the richness of the Christmas spirit in fullest measure, give because your heart prompts you to and forget all else.—Katherine Edelman.

(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

"It Is More Blessed to Give Than Receive"

HIS has nothing to do with banks or savings accounts; but more money is saved at Christmas time than any other time of the year. Yes, saved. That may sound absurd to a lot of people who have spent all their money buying presents for their families and friends and neighbors, but it is true just the same. How? Why, because giving is the finest sort of saving, and not only saving, but investing. Every good gift is a permanent gain to the giver; it is better than a bank book carrying the same amount, for a gift is more truly a saving than credit account on a bank ledger. If you want to save your money, give it away—wisely. Does that sound unreasonable? Remember, it is more blessed to give than receive.—F. H. Sweet.

(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

AUNT MEHITABLE'S PRESENT

Aunt Mehitable had a powerful and active imagination that often kept her awake. She was ever creating difficulties by imagining them and making things crooked by trying to straighten them out. "Hiram," said she, "I can't think what has got into George; I didn't like the way he looked at us this morning."

"Probably he was thinking of somebody else," answered her brother.

"George," began his aunt the next day, "what was the matter with you yesterday morning, you looked sourer 'n pickles."

"Nethin' was the matter with me," said the boy, "I was puzzlin' over your Christmas present." Then he added, "Since you're so mighty suspicious, I guess I'll give it up." But remembering her goodness of heart, George relented, and, when the day that shines away all unpleasantness came round, Aunt Mehitable had a new nightcap! —C. G. Hazard.

(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

A Wish

"I HAVE TAKEN Cardui for run-down, worn-out condition, nervousness and sleeplessness, and I was weak too," says Mrs. Silvie Estes, of Jennings, Okla. "Cardui did me just lots of good—so much that I gave it to my daughter. She complained of a soreness in her sides and back. She took three bottles of Cardui and her condition was much better.

"We have lived here, near Jennings, for 26 years, and now we have our own home in town. I have had to work pretty hard, as this country wasn't built up, and it made it hard on us.

"I WISH I could tell weak women of Cardui—the medicine that helped give me the strength to go on and do my work." This card fulfils her wish.

CARDUI
The Woman's Tonic

WE TENDER

TO OUR GOOD FRIENDS AND PATRONS

GREETINGS

AND WISH YOU THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON

May the Yuletide season be one of real joy and comfort to you and may the New Year open your pathway to a pleasant and profitable experience each day.

We come with thankful hearts to tender our greetings and thanks to our friends and patrons wherever you may be. We hope we may serve you during 1924.

Sam Swann
GINNER

LAYING HENS PAY
 Make 'em Lay and Pay---Feed
 . MARTIN EGG PRODUCER .
 And get more Eggs or your
 money back
 Martin's Roup Tablets, Blue Bug
 Remedy and Taroline Guar-
 anteed by
SANDERS DRUG STORE

RAWELIGH'S PRODUCTS
 When in need of any of the
 celebrated and well known Raw-
 leigh Products call on me at the
 McGhee Hamburger stand on
 Main Street or Phone 147. Sat-
 isfaction guaranteed or money
 refunded. E. B. Barnes. 16t8p

It is always better for the bor-
 rower and for the depositor to
 do business with a conservative
 bank. The Farmers and Mer-
 chants National Bank solicits
 your business on that basis and
 will have plenty of money to
 supply the needs of its custo-
 mers.

HONOR ROLL

The following pupils of the
 Merkel Public Schools have nei-
 ther been tardy nor absent,
 have made at least 90 percent
 in Department, have not made
 less than 75 percent on any sub-
 ject, and have made a general
 average of 90 percent or more
 for the period ending Novem-
 ber 30, 1923.

High First (Miss Yates)
 Jack Stanford, 94; Frances Ad-
 cock, 94; Howard Stanley, 93;
 Vivian Lassiter, 93; Mabel Mor-
 ton, 93; Ira Marshall, 92; Allen
 Edwards, 90.

2nd Grade (Miss Harrison)
 Imogene Middleton, 92; Joyce
 Wheeler, 91; Guinn Tipton, 90;
 Mardell Shouse, 90.

2nd Grade (Miss Pogue)
 Duncan Briggs, 92; Lucille
 Campbell, 92; Myrtle Dyess, 91
 Opal Huskey, 91; Nell Hughes,
 90; Meyer Mellinger, 90;
 3rd Grade (Miss Martin)
 Ross Ferrier, 93; Willie Evelyn
 Boaz, 93; Nell Durham, 92;
 Burrell Chany, 91; Ward Berry
 Hamm, 90; Dorothy Deutschman,
 90; Ida Mae Derstine, 93;
 3rd Grade (Miss Coats)
 Edna Marshall, 91; Alvin Skur-
 lock, 91; Roy Robins, 91; Isador
 Mellinger, 91, Maurine White,
 90; Buck Wilson, 90; Lelia Pat-
 terson, 90.

4th Grade (Miss Scott)
 Joel Darsey, 95; Louise Booth,
 94; Hazel Highsmith, 94; Mat-
 tie Lou Largent, 94; Mary Lig-
 on, 94; Fred A. Baker, 92; Fann-
 ie V. Jones, 92; Elsie Lassater,
 91; Thelma Jones, 91; Beth
 Hamm, 91; Velma Lee Holden,
 90.

4th Grade (Miss Joiner)
 Leo Tucker, 95; Elvis Richard-
 son, 94; Marie Stanford, 93;
 Ola Smith, 93; Holley Perry, 92
 Vera Richie, 92; Byron Patter-
 son, 92; Thelma Price, 91; Ka-
 thleen Mashburn, 91; Clara
 Louise Miller, 91, Ruby Lee
 Slater, 90.

5th Grade (Miss Ellis)
 Frances Frederickson, 94; Trac-
 ey Campbell, 93; Weldon Coats,
 93; Missie Dye, 92; Fred Gui-
 tar, 91; Milton Case, 91; Mild-
 red Bird, 91; J. T. Darsey, 91;
 Selma Jones, 90.

5th Grade (Miss Compere)
 Edith Smith, 95; Florence Lig-
 on, 94; Nadine Tippett, 94;
 Clarence Sharp, 93; Mabelle Lig-
 on, 93; B. P. Middleton, 92;
 E. L. Turner, 90.

6th Grade (Miss Duke)
 Addie Fae Patterson, 95; Les-
 ter Patterson, 94; Norma Shan-
 non, 92; Bernice Lasater, 90;
 Elsie Richie, 90; William Shep-
 pard, 90;

6th Grade (Miss Conway)
 Imogene Agnew, 95; Irene
 Campbell, 94; Mary Ellen Ash-
 by, 93; Mary Comegy, 93; Hel-
 en Compton, 92; Frances Col-
 lins, 92; Raymond Earthman,

92; Eleanor Hamilton, 91;
 7th Grade (Mrs. Sublett)
 John Dee Coats, 96; Iris Gar-
 rett, 96; Flora Frances Ander-
 son, 95; Berdelle Adcock, 94;
 Eunice Bird, 93; Ruby Fae Gol-
 laday, 90; Mary Cole, 90.

7th Grade (Mrs. Jackson)
 Sterling Sheppard, 97; (High-
 est in entire School) Vera Mat-
 lock, 96; Burnis Tucker, 95;
 Elizabeth Harkrider, 95; Ribijo
 Higgins, 94; Roy Propst, 94;
 Mildred Hamm, 93; Mildred
 Holloway, 93; Durwood Owens,
 91; Deshazo Simpson, 90; Irene
 Perry, 90.

8th Grade
 Pauline Chinn, 96; Tommie Dur-
 ham, 94; Hazel Coats, 93; Intha
 Bird, 92; Mary Hughes, 92;
 Clyde Mayfield, 92; Joe Cypert,
 91; Dorothy Higgins, 91; Van
 Hines McSpadden, 91; Joe Ben
 Ashby, 90; Helen Booth, 90;
 Linnie Wilson, 90; Dennis Wilk-
 ins, 90.

9th Grade—
 Eva Mae Johnson, 95; Ruth Jen-
 kens, 93; Ona Tatum, 93; Haz-
 el Bell, 93; Lola Dennis, 92;
 Emma Toombs, 92; Isla Mae
 Hughes, 91; Mary Derstine, 91
 Edith Baker, 91.

10th Grade—
 Lucille Guitar, 96; Doris Dur-
 ham, 94; Effie Grayson, 93;
 Ona Fae Rose, 93; Lois Higgins
 92; W. L. Harkrider, 92; Clyde
 Matthews, 92; James Harris,
 91; Hallie Pike, 91; Clesby Pat-
 terson, 91; Mary Butman, 90;
 Lucille Hogg, 90.

11th Grade (Seniors)
 Johnnie Sears, 96; Spencer
 Bird, 93; Merrill Collins, 93;
 Maurine Tipton, 93; Gladys
 Middleton, 92; Harry McCand-
 less, 90; Nell Swann, 90.

There are 142 names in the
 above list, and this is the period
 which includes the examination
 grades. The standard for the
 honor roll is high, and those
 reaching this standard must be
 extra ordinary in scholarship
 and perfect in attendance. Let's
 see that the list is even larger
 next grade period.

Yours, Truly, Roger A. Burgess

Len Sublett

Water well Driller,
 all work guaranteed
 first-class.

Merkel, Texas

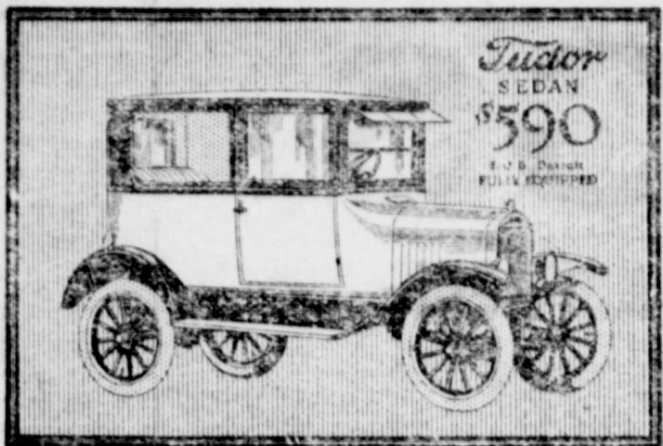
**REAL ESTATE, FARM LOANS
 FIRE INSURANCE**

There is just one day when it is wise
 to insure. Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow
 may be too late. Today, the day Before
 you may suffer a loss by fire, or Theft, is
 the one wise day to cover yourself fully
 with insurance.

Today we can protect you from to-
 morrow's possible loss. Today is the only
 day you can be sure you are in time. Call
 on us today—be insured in time.

W. O. BONEY
 MERKEL, TEXAS

Consult your Insurance Agent as you would your Lawyer.



Give One For Christmas

The Tudor Sedan is a gift
 every member of the fam-
 ily will share. It adds to
 daily happiness. It will
 extend the joyous spirit of
 Christmas to every day of
 the year.

This new Ford type is of
 an exceptionally pleasing
 design. Wide doors open-
 ing forward, folding right
 front seat, and a roomy
 interior make it a conven-
 ient car to use; its high

radiator, broad cowl, sun
 visor, and large windows
 make it stylish in appear-
 ance. Yet it is sold at the
 lowest price ever asked for
 a Sedan—only \$590 f.o.b.
 Detroit.

The rich, permanent luster
 of its finish, the quiet good
 taste of its upholstery, and
 the ornamental treatment
 of its full-nickel hard-
 ware, all help to make it a
 car you are proud to drive.

This Car can be obtained through the Ford Weekly Purchase Plan.

MERKEL MOTOR CO.

Ford
 CARS, TRUCKS, TRACTORS

RULES AND REGULATIONS

- 1—Campaign is now open and will extend over a period of about six weeks—closing Saturday, January 19.
- 2—Any reputable man, woman or child in Taylor or adjoining counties is eligible to enter this election and compete for a prize. Nominations may be made at any time during the election.
- 3—No employee or near relative of any employee of the Merkel Mail is eligible to enter this distribution. The Merkel Mail reserves the right to reject any nominations.
- 4—Candidates are not confined to their own particular town or community in which to secure votes and subscriptions, but may take orders anywhere in this State or United States.
- 5—Cash must accompany all orders where votes are desired. There will be no exceptions to this rule. Candidates will be allowed to collect subscriptions and renewals as well as entirely new subscriptions, and votes will be issued on both alike.
- 6—Votes are free. It costs the subscribers nothing extra to vote for their favorite. Subscribers should ask for votes when paying subscriptions; otherwise they waive this privilege.
- 7—Votes cannot be purchased. Every cent accepted through Election Department must represent subscriptions.
- 8—Votes are not transferable. Candidates cannot withdraw in favor of another candidate. Should a candidate withdraw from the race his or her votes will be cancelled. Neither will it be permissible for candidates to give or transfer subscriptions to another candidate. Votes on such transferred subscriptions will be subject to disqualification, at the discretion of the management.
- 9—Any collusion on the part of the candidates to nullify competition, or any other combination arrangement or effort to the detriment of candidates or this newspaper will not be tolerated. Any candidate or candidates entering into or taking part in such an agreement or effort will forfeit all rights to a prize commission.
- 10—Any ballots issued on subscriptions may be held in reserve and voted at the discretion of the candidate. The printed coupons appearing from day to day in the paper must be voted before the expiration date appearing thereon.
- 11—In the event of a tie for any of the prizes, a prize identical in value will be given each tying contestant.
- 12—No statement or promise made by any solicitor, agent or candidate varying from the rules and statements published through the columns of this newspaper will be recognized by the publisher.
- 13—In case of typographical or other error, it is understood that neither the publisher or the campaign manager shall be held responsible, except for the necessary correction upon the same.
- 14—Every candidate is an authorized agent of the Merkel Mail, and as such may collect subscription pay-

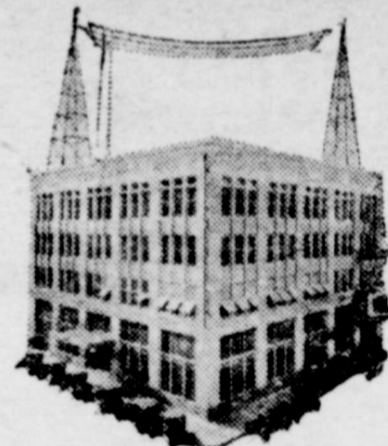
- ments from present as well as from new subscriber.
- 15—It is distinctly understood and agreed that candidates will be responsible for all moneys collected, and that they will remit amounts in full at frequent intervals or on demand to the Campaign Department.
- 16—There will be several big prizes awarded, besides a 15 per cent cash commission to all ACTIVE non-prize winners, but it is distinctly understood that in the event ANY candidate becomes INACTIVE, failing to make semi-weekly cash reports, he or she will, at the discretion of the management, become disqualified and thereby forfeit all right to a prize or a commission. This rule is absolute.
- 17—To insure absolute fairness in the awarding of prizes, the race will be brought to a close under "sealed ballot box" system, and will be under the personal supervision of two or more judges selected from within Taylor County. During the entire last period of the election, the box—locked and sealed—will repose in the vaults of a local bank, where candidates and their friends will deposit their final collections and reserve votes. And not until the race has been declared closed will the seals be broken, the box unlocked, and the judges begin the final count. In this way not even the campaign manager can possibly know the voting strength of the respective candidates, which precludes any possibility of favoritism and insures fairness to the minutest degree.
- 18—The Merkel Mail reserves the right to amend or add to the rules of this election, if necessary, for the protection of the interests of both the candidates and this newspaper. The right is also reserved to increase and add to the list of prizes.
- 19—The Merkel Mail guarantees fair and impartial treatment to all candidates, but should any question arise the decision of the management will be absolute and final. In accepting nomination, candidates agree to abide by the above conditions.

TO THE PUBLIC

The Merkel Mail is giving this mammoth prize election, and the management of this newspaper positively guarantees absolute fair and impartial treatment to all who participate.

This is easily the most worthy and most liberal prize offering ever made the newspaper-reading public of this territory, and it now rests with the enterprising hustlers to get busy and get their share of the good things offered. This is YOUR opportunity to secure without one penny of cost prizes that would ordinarily take months, even years, of self denial and saving to acquire—and here they are offered to you in exchange for just your spare time and efforts the next six weeks. It will behoove prospective participants to enter their names NOW and be among the first in the field. Remember, EVERYBODY WINS in this great distribution, and your prize will be just as great as you wish to make it. It is truly the best spare-moment proposition ever offered our readers.

ANNOUNCING ANNUAL



STAR-TELEGRAM
 Home of Radio WBAP

**BARGAIN
 DAYS**

From Now Until
 December 15th

ON THE

STAR-TELEGRAM

Fort Worth's Only Texas Owned Newspaper

MORNING EDITION

Correct Produce
 and Poultry
 Prices

COMPLETE
 MARKETS

Quick News
 and Market
 Service

DURING BARGAIN DAYS—Now Until Dec. 15th—
 the Rate Has Been Reduced Daily and
 Sunday one year, from \$10.00 to..... **\$7.45**

Daily Except Sunday one year from
 \$8.00 to..... **\$5.95**

Political Campaign Next Year

During the coming exciting political campaign
 in Texas, a metropolitan Texas owned newspa-
 per which will report the entire race, completely
 and impartially, is a necessity if you wish to
 be as well informed as your neighbor.

TEN LEASED WIRES

The big Sunday paper prints many exclusive clean
 features suitable for all the family. Be sure and
 include it in your order.

Circulation Largest in Texas.

Over 95,000 Daily—110,000 Sunday
 Now Higher Than Ever Before.

Save Money—Order Today



Service

Courtesy

GREETINGS

THE ARRIVAL OF THIS SEASON BRINGS RENEWED APPRECIATION OF OLD ASSOCIATIONS AND THE VALUE OF NEW FRIENDS

The spirit of the season prompts us to extend greetings and good wishes to our faithful old friends and cherished new friends and those whose good will and friendship we strive earnestly to deserve. The opportunity is taken to express to you this feeling of friendship and to acknowledge the pleasure derived from our business relations during the year about to close.

May Christmas be merry for you and yours and may the joy of the season light your pathway to peace, happiness, prosperity and contentment through the New Year.

Hamilton & Case

Prompt

Reliable



AT THIS SEASON OF THE YEAR

Our thoughts turn to those whose loyalty in patronage and otherwise supporting this Cafe by their kind words of commendation has helped us to grow and make progress in a business way, so we come to thank you and to ask for a continuation of our pleasant relations.

We wish you—
A JOYOUS YULETIDE SEASON AND A
HAPPY, CONTENTED, PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR.

THE CITY CAFE

B. C. Hancock D. L. Shepard

ONE O'CLOCK LUNCHEON TUESDAY

In a race between Buicks, Paiges, and Fords, in the Baptist Sunday School, the Buicks won, so the Paiges and Fords entertained the Buicks with a one o'clock luncheon, Tuesday, in the basement of the church.

Mrs. A. E. Brown, Driver of the Fords, met the guests at the entrance to the basement, and conducted them into the main auditorium.

The basement was beautifully decorated in red and green festoons, Christmas bells, and bowls of Narcissus and on the tables were hand-painted candles, in Mahogany candle sticks, and baskets of Chrysanthemums.

The guests found their places by prettily appointed Christmas place cards.

The tables were presided over by Mesdames Earl Lassiter, Twyman Collins, Ollie Dye, and A. R. Booth, who served a tempting three-course luncheon, consisting of: Roast turkey, dressing, cranberry sauce, gravy, pickles, celery, English peas, wheat bread, fruit salad, cherry pie a-la-mode, and hot coffee. The plate favors were little tin automobiles, with the Buick name on the radiator.

At the conclusion of the luncheon, Mrs. Sam Swann representing the Paiges, arose and in her most gracious manner, toasted the Buicks, in the following well chosen words:

"Buicks, here's to you who out-ran the rest, Even tho' we did our very best, For we ran so hard, and we ran so fast,

First thing we knew, we were out of gas!

So that is the reason you won the race,

And are now holding the honored place!"

Mrs. Ergeal Meador, as Driver for the Buicks, responded, with the following:

"We thank you for your kind words,

Your toast and good "eats" too.— And since you are so very kind,

We have a toast for you! The Buicks then all arose, and holding their glasses, toasted the Paiges and Fords with:

"Here's to you, ole' friends— We're mighty glad to greet you:

And now that the race is o'er, We're mighty glad we beat you!

But we're glad you're not discouraged,

And hope to hear you sing: That tho' this once you lost the victory,

You still are in the ring! So let us all work the harder, And make the race complete,

For perhaps next time we gather,

We'll give YOU the treat!"

Mesdames A. R. Booth and Earl Lassiter rendered a vocal duet, "In the Garden of Your Heart", followed by a duet by Mesdames Lytton Howard and Burl Scott, who responded to an encore, with "Whispering Hope."

After a business session of the T. E. L. Class, in which they voted to put on another contest, to culminate the Sunday before Geo. Washington's birthday and the losing side to entertain the winners, on the evening of the 22nd of February, the Buicks gave yells to the Paiges and Fords and Mrs. Burl Scott, in behalf of the Buicks expressed appreciation for the entertainment, and about twenty-five guests took their departure.

NOTICE

Dr. Miller and family will be away for the Hollidays. The Doctor is going east to purchase some electrical apparatuses and other office equipment and to attend Hospital clinics. Mrs. Miller and daughter will visit in San Antonio. They leave December 20th.

Dr. Miller.

The Merriest Day Ever

That's Our Wish for You for Christmas

The Brightest Year Ever

That's Our Wish for You for the New Year

We are proud to live in such a city as ours and to do business with such a people. Please accept our thanks for the good business given us in 1923. We solicit a continuation of your trade with the assurance that we will try to serve you even better than in the past.

Burton-Lingo Co.

Dealers in Lumber, Builders Hardware, Window Glass, Paints and Oils

1924 GREETINGS

We wish to thank our many friends from the fullness of our hearts for their patronage during the year just closing and wish each and every one a

New Year Filled With Many Rich Blessings

L. J. Renfro
The Tailor

YOUNG COUPLE EARN \$10,000 A YEAR

ABILENE, Texas.—A young man and his wife, sweethearts in Draughon's College a few years ago, now have combined incomes of nearly ten thousand dollars a year as a result of the world-famous Draughon Training. Many similar instances could be given, it is stated. The College guarantees good beginning positions, and its thorough training insures rapid promotion to ambitious young men and women. Its free catalog No. 10 will be an inspiration to you. Write for it and Guarantee Contract, today, addressing J. D. Miracle, Supt. Box 38, Abilene, Texas, or Box 1593, Wichita Falls, Texas.

Miss Anna Bickley who is teaching in the Mount Pleasant school spent the week end with home folks here.

METHODIST DAY AT WHITE CHURCH

Sunday will be our day at White Church. We are very eager that a good attendance be on hand for the morning service. This will be our last service before Quarterly conference in January. A collection will be taken in the interest of the Methodist Orphanage at Waco. Services at eleven in the morning. Sunday school and preaching services in the evening also Epworth League.

M. R. Pike

There are men, some of them fathers, in the world, (some who live in Merkel) who would sneakily wreck and ruin the lives of their neighbors' fair daughters, but who would rant and go into a murderous rage should some other beast and brute bring to their own door shame and disgrace.

How Four Old Maids Have Real Christmas

THEY were a family of old maids—four sisters. But they were the jolliest, nicest old maids I ever knew. I always swore it, and now I know it. What do you think they did for Christmas? Did they have a tree for themselves and exchange costly presents with each other, and then eat a turkey with dressing and pies, alone in their charming white dining room? Not a bit of it. They know what Christmas was meant for, and they acted on the knowing. Their friends tell me they have done it every year; but since I'm only a new acquaintance, comparatively, I couldn't know that.

They invite in a dozen children who wouldn't ordinarily have a Christmas tree at all and give their presents to them. And then those twelve, poor little mites sit down at the table in the old maids' charming white dining room, and the old maids themselves serve them with turkey and all the fixings. And they don't do it for charity either. They do it because they adore children, and making them happy is to them a treat. You see, from their cradles, these four old maid sisters were blessed with the Christmas spirit, a spirit that lasts all the year around when it is genuine.

But why should I call them "old maids"? That term is in such disrepute? They are four angels! And knowing that, I am going to try my luck, some time when I can get the courage, and ask one of them, the one I happen to be in love with, to "have me." Perhaps if I make the proposal within the Christmas season she'll remember she's a Christmas angel, and take me. Don't laugh at my audacity. Anything may happen at Christmas time! For Christmas is a magical time. Even a child can tell you that.—Ethel Cook Elliot.

(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

That Plum Pudding and Some Twisted Mottoes

LOUISE loved jokes. She caught people with questions and puzzled them with conundrums. So she had arranged a program that centered about the Christmas plum pudding. When that came upon the table each one was to put in his thumb and pull out a plum in the shape of a twisted motto; there they were, all around the sides of the platter.

Father was first, unfolding his plum he read off the pit of it and, as if to moderate the coming merriment, said "All is not laugh that titters."

Then mother read hers: "It's a wrong turkey that has no turning." As this did not apply to the bird that had just disappeared, the self-satisfied smile of the cook behind the door did not come off.

Then Aunt Mary: "A hitch in time saves nine." This reference to Bob's trousers asserted his independence of suspenders, but caused his relative to remind him that he was not as needless of stitches as he thought, upon which he replied that he could depend upon that tailor who had advertised "pants a dollars and a half a leg, seats free."

Then Susan: "We never miss the swatter till the flies go by." This was a fly paper upon a dead subject and it was filed for future reference.

Bob's plum was also laid on the table after he had read: "A strolling boy catches no horse." A sentiment that he was inclined to think a little too personal.

Louise had the last plum and declared: "All's well that ends well." Expressing the traveler's satisfaction with terra firma, less terror and more firmer.

But the pudding was cooling and that was no joke, so, as the temperature fell, they fell to.—Christopher G. Hazard.

(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

A CHRISTMAS THOUGHT

The greater happiness of the Christmas season is a direct result of the greater participation of men and women in the spirit of Christ. For then weakness has a power over strength; and then the laughter in the eyes of little children seems a better thing than our own good; and then the tired routine in the lives of those around us looks out upon us through enigmatic eyes, and we understand better, we pity, we cease to condemn—we would even ameliorate, we would show that we see and understand—and so we offer the dumb gift which mutely tells what our words could never tell; and then in our hearts, in our households, in our little world, there is Christmas joy and peace—earth's highest happiness.—Sister M. Fides Shepperson in Pittsburgh Dispatch.

THE GENUINE SPIRIT

The genuine holiday spirit consists not only in wishing a merry Christmas, but in making one.

MOTHERS' CHRISTMAS

After receiving her gifts, mother's Christmas will be devoted largely to washing an extra number of dishes.

NEVER TOO HIGH

It might be different with a lot of things around Christmas, but the mistletoe is never too high.

That Mask Which Grew on Mr. Philetus' Face

PHILETUS SOLEMNOLLY could not understand why the children did not like him. He gave them good advice. He patted them upon their heads. He expressed the hope that they would be successful in life as he had been. He promised them rewards if they would believe themselves as he wanted them to. Yet they came to his school unwillingly and went home from it gladly. They were respectful, but unsmiling.

It was with hope, but not without difficulty, that a friend persuaded Philetus to officiate as Santa Claus at the Christmas festival and to assume the traditional garb of the part. Philetus did not see much use in such fanciful doings, but yielded to solicitation and appeared upon the occasion with as much grace as a feeling of foolishness would allow. His spare form was now rotund, his sober garments had become gay, and the jolly mask that had been adjusted to his long face gave him quite a new expression.

As the joy among the children progressed and the spirit of fun and frolic mounted high Philetus began to experience a change of heart. To his amazement he began having a good time himself and to feel like a real Saint Nicholas. For this reason, perhaps, he overexerted himself to such an extent that his mask fell off and it was revealed to the surprised audience that it had been contradicting the face of Mr. Solemncolly.

This was really the best feature of the evening, and it proved to have a permanence about it, for, from that time, the Philetus phiz shortened, and broadened, and fattened, and colored up, until it came to look a good deal like the face of that old fairy who is always young and kindly.

So the mask that fell off left its imprint and stayed on, and Philetus, able to be merry, became the familiar friend of the children.—Christopher G. Hazard.

(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

THE THREE "F'S"

THE important thing about Christmas is the way you feel. Not bodily feeling, but heart-feeling.

And the heart-feeling should be one of fun, faith and frolic. Fun for as many as you can reach.

Faith in the fun of giving. Frolic with the nearest and dearest.

A Christmas filled with these three "F's" will shed sparks of happiness on many a day to come.

There is too much running about to find pleasure when the greatest joy can be found on our own thresholds.

If we are determined to seek it.—Martha B. Thomas.

(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

GOOD IDEA



He—Don't you think it would be a good idea to hang up some mistletoe?
She—Christmas is several weeks away.

He—Yes, but we could be practicing.

HER CHRISTMAS TRIP

The family were going away for Christmas to their old home in the beautiful country which they loved so much. They hadn't gone back at Christmas time for ever and ever so long.

They said, at first, they would give their faithful, wonderful cook a check and a holiday, and then they asked her if she would like the Christmas trip as her Christmas present.

Would she indeed? Just because she was no longer a child it didn't mean that she couldn't enjoy as a child!

She went and she loved it all—even the over-crowded trains, the hurrying masses of people in the jammed stations—for wasn't it her Christmas trip?

She, too, was a part of the great holiday travel!—M. G. Bonner.

(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

SPEAKING OF FUEL

A Christmas gift for the man with the average domestic supply of coal: A magnifying glass, a pair of tweezers and the framed motto, "Keep the home fires burning."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

THE RIGHT SPIRIT

Put the Christmas spirit into your politics and keep the partisan spirit out of your Christmas.

THOSE SLIPPERS

Grandfather is pretty sure it will be a pair of slippers. All that remains to be decided is how many pairs.

To Our Friends and Patrons

We Extend Our Sincere Greetings of the Season

W. B. PETTY
BARBER SHOP

GOLAN TO HAVE BOX UPPER DEC. 22ND.

There will be a box supper at the Golan Methodist Church Saturday evening, December 22nd, at 7:30 p. m.

Everyone is cordially invited to come with pockets full of money.

We want to get money to pay for our new piano that has just been bought for our church, and we're going to get it that very night. You are urged to be present.

Bettie Byrom

Miss Ganevera Middleton who is one of the excellent teachers at Mount Pleasant School was at home Saturday and Sunday visiting relatives and friends.

FOUND—A leather glove, for right hand. Owner may get same at Merkel Mail office by paying for this notice.

Shaky Nerves

Jangling nerves and quivering muscles are quickly calmed by FORCE Tonic. It quiets and soothes nerve-racked bodies by restoring lost energy and strength.

Force Tonic
It Makes For Strength!

YULETIDE GREETINGS

TO OUR LOYAL PATRONS AND FRIENDS

May the sound of Christmas bells bring glad tidings to you and may the holly wreath prove a symbol of happiness for you. We wish you the happiest sort of a Christmas and a New Year full of health, happiness and prosperity.

We are sincerely thankful for the business entrusted to us the past year and ask for a continuation of same during 1924.

W. F. Hamblett
Groceries

We Pause Today And Look Back

And as we recount the experiences of the days and years we have been in business we find but little to regret and much to be thankful for. We are deeply grateful that so many have shown their confidence in us.

As we look to the future we are thinking of how we can serve you better and we hope we will be given the opportunity.

JOY TO YOU FOR CHRISTMAS PEACE, HEALTH AND PLENTY FOR THE NEW YEAR

Bob Martin's Grocery

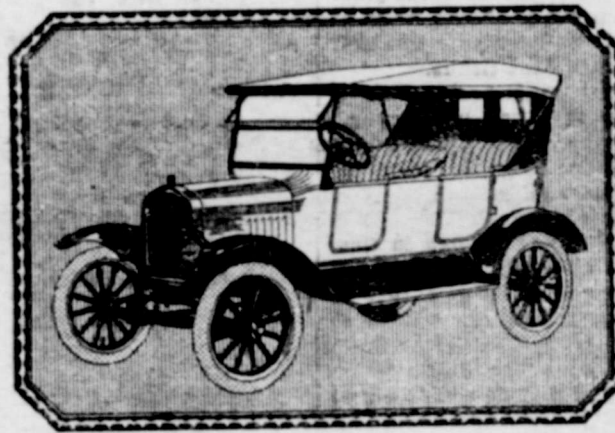
\$1,500 GIFT DISTRIBUTION

FREE—New Ford Touring Car—FREE

In a six weeks' circulation-building and vote-collecting campaign announced in last week's paper, all prizes, Automobile, cash and other nice prizes, are open to men and women—married or single—and boys and girls of the more ambitious sort, residing in Taylor and adjoining counties. It costs nothing to win the valuable prizes offered. It is not even required that you be a Merkel Mail reader or subscriber; and you **POSITIVELY CANNOT LOSE**. Every active participant will be rewarded for his or her efforts. Read this page carefully, every word of it. Then clip the coupons in this paper and then send them in for your friends or for yourself. Do it now—**TODAY**. A good start is a battle half won. Begin gathering votes and ride in your own new automobile within a few weeks. The campaign office at the Merkel Mail office is open every day and night until 9 o'clock. The telephone number is 61. Call us up right now.

**WE WANT A REPRESENTATIVE IN EVERY TOWN AND
COMMUNITY IN TAYLOR AND ADJOINING COUNTIES.**

Here Are The Valuable Prizes



LATEST MODEL FORD TOURING CAR

Purchased from Merkel Motor Co.

BEAUTIFUL DIAMOND RING
Bought from Sanders Drug Store

**LIFE SCHOLARSHIP IN DRAUGHON'S
BUSINESS COLLEGE AT ABILENE**

BEAUTIFUL DIAMOND RING
Bought from Sanders Drug Store

LADIES' BEAUTIFUL WRIST WATCH
Bought from Merkel Drug Co.

Eight Hundred Dollars Cash

A special fund of \$800 in cash has been appropriated to be distributed in the form of salaries among non-prize winners on a fifteen per cent basis. Any candidate who remains active through the campaign, making regular report, but fails to win one of the prizes offered will participate in this commission feature. Think of it! Fifteen per cent of every subscription you collect goes into your own pocket if you fail to win a prize. This arrangement assures compensation to all candidates and means there will be no losers in this race. Can anything be more fair or liberal than this? Get into the campaign early while votes count the most and subscriptions are easiest to secure, and win one of the valuable gifts

For Further Information Call, Phone or Write Campaign Manager

THE MERKEL MAIL

TELEPHONE 61

MERKEL, TEXAS



CHRISTMAS RATES AGAIN!

Our Holiday Excursion Tickets to all points in Louisiana and Texas will be on sale Dec. 20 to 24 inclusive, good until Jan. 7th to return.

SEE YOUR LOCAL AGENT FOR DETAILS OR WRITE

GEO. D. HUNTER,
General Passenger Agent
DALLAS

CITATION BY PUBLICATION

THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF TAYLOR

IN JUSTICE COURT OF
TAYLOR COUNTY TEXAS
TO THE SHERIFF OR ANY
CONSTABLE OF TAYLOR
COUNTY TEXAS, GREETING

You are hereby commanded to summon Izella Logan, Feme Sole, by making publication of this citation once in each week for four weeks previous to the return day hereof, in some Newspaper published in your county, if there be a newspaper published there in, but if not, then in the nearest county where a newspaper is published to appear at the next regular term of the Justice Court of Precinct No. 5 in Taylor County, Texas, to be holden at the Court house, thereof in Merkel, on the 4th Monday in December 1923, the same being the 24th day of December A. D. 1923; Then and there to answer a petition filed in said Court on the 21st day of Nov. 1923, in suit, numbered on the Docket of said Court No. 37, wherein J. N. Shelton is Plaintiff and Mrs. Izella Logan is defendant, said petition alleging that defendant contracted with plaintiff for a house to store her said household goods, junk, and sundries of every kind and nature, at a rental of \$6.00 per month, and Plaintiff has stored said stuff for a period of 12 months at \$6.00 per month, and she is now due the plaintiff \$72.00 for storage.

Herein fail not, but have you before said court on the said first day of the next term thereof, this writ, with your return thereon, showing how you have executed the same.

Given under my hand, this the 21st day of Nov. A. D. 1923.
W. W. Wheeler
J. P. Prec. No. 5, Taylor County, Texas.
2314

Answer a petition filed in said Court on the 21st day of Nov. 1923, in suit, numbered on the Docket of said Court No. 37, wherein J. N. Shelton is Plaintiff and Mrs. Izella Logan is defendant, said petition alleging that defendant contracted with plaintiff for a house to store her said household goods, junk, and sundries of every kind and nature, at a rental of \$6.00 per month, and Plaintiff has stored said stuff for a period of 12 months at \$6.00 per month, and she is now due the plaintiff \$72.00 for storage.

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Given under my hand, this the 21st day of Nov. A. D. 1923.
W. W. Wheeler
J. P. Prec. No. 5, Taylor County, Texas.
2314

With Christmas Love Came Understanding

"Well, girls, I have made it up with Beatrice," Ann, "the hard-boiled" of the office, yanked off her coat and hat and placed them in the locker that ranged across the end of the room.

No one paid much attention to Ann usually. She was of such an explosive nature, and said such irresponsible things, that she was not taken seriously. But the break between Ann and Beatrice had been of long standing and had been commented upon so much by Ann that her announcement caused the other girls to look up questioningly.

"That's a fact," continued Ann, "and I am so ashamed of my treatment of her this long time."

"How did it come about?" asked Sadie, assistant to the department manager.

"Well," exclaimed Ann, "I will have to confess my beastly nature, before I can tell you how it happened. In a spirit of spite I sent Beatrice a Christmas present, which no one but good little Ben could ever have accepted as anything but an insult. It makes no difference what it was. Today noon I met her on the street and she stopped me to thank me for the present."

"It was not the present so much, Ann, that came by mail," said she. "What made me feel good was that you had been thinking of me." Then she took hold of my hand to caress it and said, "It was not any kind of a present that I wanted most from you, Ann, but your love and companionship and sympathy. I have been hungry for you, Ann, and you had no right to take yourself away from me. I give you my love for Christmas—will you give me yours? And little Ann, the hard-boiled, cried right on the street. What do you think of that, girls?"

"The day of miracles is not past, it seems," commented one.

"And now do you know what?" This from Ann. The girls waited expectantly for further information from the erratic one.

"Well, I always thought Christmas was to get people to spend lots of money to send things to other people that they did not want," rattled off Ann. "Now I have a new understanding of Christmas since my most loyal friend has asked me only for my love and she sure is going to get it."—C. F. Wadsworth.

(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

Ireland Hunts Wrens Day After Christmas

IN IRELAND Boxing Day (the day after Christmas) is known as St. Stephen's day. On this day there is practiced an old custom that has come down through the ages and which is called "hunting the wren." A crowd of grown boys with blackened faces and dressed in the most grotesque costumes seek out a wren, which is the smallest of all birds in Ireland, and carrying it with them go from house to house all over their particular part of the country, asking, or rather singing a request for a little help with the celebration which takes place in the village that evening. There are several verses which they use, the following being a sample of their kind:

The wren, the wren, the king of all birds,
St. Stephen's day, she was caught in the furze,
Although she is little her family is great,
So please try your pocket and give us a treat (treat)
Sing holly, sing ivy, sing ivy, sing holly,
Just a drop to drown melancholy,
And if you draw it of the best
I hope in Heaven your soul will rest
And if you draw it of the small
It will not agree with the wren boys at all.

And so much is the spirit of hospitality and good will in evidence at Christmas time that they very seldom meet with a refusal and by evening the pile of small silver pieces has grown into large enough proportions to warrant a big celebration at which all the young folks in the district make merry.—Katherine Edelman.
(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

CHRISTMAS CANDLES

It is a pleasant custom, when the Christmas tree is lighted and its many candles fall to give all the needed cheer, to light a candle from its fires and give the taller candles on the shelf and on the table a share in the happy illumination.—C. G. Hazard.
(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

THE OPTIMIST'S VIEW

The optimist reflects that the shopping rush would be much more uncomfortable if Christmas came on July 25.

IT TAKES COURAGE

The true diplomatist is one who can say "Just what I needed" while speculating on his chances at the exchange counter.

THE POSTMAN SETS THE PACE

There would be merriment enough for all if everybody worked as hard in distributing holiday cheer as the postman.

Receiving Christmas Gifts Is a Fine Art

OF COURSE, every gift given means also a gift received. Christmas always has two sides, and certainly there is great joy in receiving the tokens of love and friendship that come to us, not because of their money value, for most gifts are bought for small sums, but because they convey to us an expression of someone's affection. I heard a young girl remark when a little gift came to her, "Well, that didn't break anyone's bank." What a pity. As if Christmas could have in it great joy for anyone who looked for the price tag on a gift. Our character is likely to be revealed by the spirit of our receiving quite as well as by the spirit of our giving. It is this fine art of receiving well that will not only make Christmas the more joyous, but will also be an all-year virtue. If it is cultivated in our hearts.—F. H. Sweet.
(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

LIKE MANY OTHERS



"She says her husband attends church regularly."
"Yes, he goes with her to the Christmas service every year."

SAFETY FIRST

The Christmas shoppers hesitated at the crowded street crossing. To try to get over seemed like an attempt to dodge fate. Automobiles dashed by in a continuous procession. The tall policeman, however, convoyed a group across like a battleship leading a flock of schooners. But one old lady lingered, afraid to launch away, until courage came with the policeman's assurance: "Come right along, ma'am, you're just as safe with me as if you was in God's pocket!"—C. G. Hazard.
(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

MAY THE CHRISTMAS BELLS SOUND

Happiness to You and Your Household

O'er every home throughout this peaceful and prosperous nation the benign spirit of Christmas settlelike a benediction. Gladness prevails, generous acts and kindness is seen on every hand. How we all welcome the Yuletide days.

In the true spirit of the season we send our greetings to friends and patrons and wish you a New Year that will be better than you have ever before experienced. We thank each of you for business of the past and hope we are privileged to serve you during 1924.

F. P. HAMM
GINNER

CORN! CORN!

I will have two car loads of good ear corn between now and January 1st. See J. C. Mason.
FOR SALE—Span of good work mules. See W. L. Diltz Sr. or W. L. Jr. at the Farmers State Bank.

NEW FEED STORE

We have opened a new feed store on Kent street, and can fill your wants in this line. Will be glad to have your business. Phone 161. Gazzaway and Polly.

Read the Classified Column.

You Are Cordially Invited

Ford Display Week

From December 10th to 15th

TWO NEW MODELS

During this entire week all Ford Models will be on display, and the show rooms will be attractively arranged. Musical program each evening from 8:00 to 10:00. Orchestra and Radio. A change each evening.

We want every person in Merkel community to visit our show room this Display Week. We will endeavor to make it worth your while

Merkel Motor Co.
Ford Dealers



1923



A HAPPY NEW YEAR

TO ALL

1924

WE TAKE THIS MEASURE OF
Thanking You For Your Business
During The Past Year, Be It
Large or Small.

We Appreciate
Our Friends

And will always try to treat you in such a
way that you will know our appreciation is sincere

May 1924 Bring You True Happiness and
Lasting Prosperity

CHAS. WEST
Barber Shop

**It Has Been
a Pleasure For
Us to Serve You**

We take this method of expressing our thanks to the citizens of this community for the business entrusted to us this year, and to assure you it has been a pleasure to serve you.

Accept our sincere wish for an Enjoyable Christmas and a New Year to Your Liking.

E. L. ASH

1924 AUTO SEALS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED

The law requires all Autos and Trucks to be registered by January 1st. In order to register Autos, you will have to furnish me with the following information: Make of auto, model or year made, engine number, and State Highway number. For Trucks, you must give make of Truck, year made, Horse Power, Actual weight of Truck, carrying capacity, motor or engine number, also Highway number. I cannot register without this information. Please bring the necessary information to avoid delay in registering.

D. T. Harkrider, Collector.

Mr. Kenneth Watkins is at home from attending school at Rice Institute, Houston, Texas. We learn that Kenneth had to return home on account of weak eyes. We hope that he may soon recover and return to school.

M. E. SUNDAY SCHOOL NOTES

We are indeed pleased to note that with each Sunday our Sunday school is growing nicely, and on last Sunday morning there were 272 present, but still there are many who do not meet with us regularly. Let us urge that all be present next Sunday and help to make the number 300 or better. And then next Sunday is "Orphans Day", so we urge that every father and mother come and bring every member of the family, and let each one, old or young bring a small offering so that we may all have a part in sending a nice offering from the Merkel Methodist church. Yes, let's help to make the little orphan children—Methodist orphans hearts glad at this Christmas time. Let's show our appreciation of the health and prosperity, with which we have been blessed. L. W. Cox, Supt.

California Adopts Gay Christmas Berry

ROYAL to its own products, California has adopted the "Christmas berry" as its holly, and from some points of similarity it makes a very good substitute for the well-known holly of the eastern states.

The California holly—Christmas berry—toyon—is not very similar to the regular holly in structure, but the tint of the leaves and of the berries approximates the colors afforded by the regular sort.

The leaves of the California holly are not of the form of holly leaves, but the berries easily suggest the regular species. To make the effect seem more real, some florists of coast cities mix the berries of the California holly with the prickly foliage of the live oak.

The shrubs of the California holly grow 4 to 25 feet tall, and the flowers appear in July and August, and the berries, which grow in large clusters similar to cherries, are ripe by Thanksgiving and remain on the trees for some time; although they do not keep well after being plucked.

The plant is common in most of the southern half of the state, and at Christmas time the rich cardinal berries contrasted with the full green of the foliage adds a gay note to the florists' windows and the baskets of the street vendors.

The berries have a rather pleasant taste, somewhat acid and astringent, and are "sometimes eaten by the Indians with great relish," according to Mary Elizabeth Parsons Cunningham, in "Wild Flowers of California."

Such has been the wild scramble for California holly at Christmas times in recent years that it has been necessary to protect the shrubs by law, it now being a misdemeanor to gather the holly in the hills and along the highways without the permission of the owner of the property. Landowners, however, usually are willing for motor parties to avail themselves of a reasonable supply of the rich red and green decorating material for home use, but dealers are often at a loss to supply the demand at Christmas time.—C. F. Wadsworth.

(©, 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

Mysterious Kindness Bound Up in a Bundle

AFTER the joyous excitements of Christmas Day they all sat about the blazing hearth fire with happy reminiscent thoughts and called upon the doctor to tell them a story.

"I will," he said, "upon one condition each one of you must throw a

small fagot upon the blaze and tell a story as long as it burns, then I will tell my story.

So they did, and pleasant and laughing interest went round until the turn came to the doctor.

"Well," said he, as he threw a larger fagot into the fire, "my story is not yet a day old, and still it is not a little one, for, as I went my round of calls this morning I was surprised to see a large bundle lying in front of the door of a cottage by the roadside that looked as if it were in need of paint and everything else. Curious to understand the matter, I stopped to investigate it and discovered by a card that was pinned upon the wrapper that the bundle was designed for Mrs. Cafferty. Knocking upon the door, I at last induced the woman herself to open it. Reading the card to her, I lifted the bundle into the room, whereupon she called out in a loud voice: 'Here, you, Mike, Nora, Rose, Timothy, Patrick, Bridget and Kate, come here you spalpeens and see what the leprechauns have brought ye.'

"They came, from above, below, and from all sides they came, and it is many a day since I have seen as much joy as came out of the mysterious kindness that was bound up in the good things of that bundle."

Before they went to bed they voted the doctor's story the best Christmas story of them all.—Christopher G. Hazard.

(©, 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

CHRISTMAS ALONE

A fellow that is far away from his home folks on Christmas day may make an effort to be gay, but doesn't have much luck, says a writer. For though he occupies no chair, across the miles his heart is there, with mother, dad and sis to share the dressing and something in his throat grows tight and makes him dream of home.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CAROL

Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

Chorus:

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men.—St. Luke's Gospel.

SOME PEOPLE

Some grownups are so childish that they do not even believe in Santa Claus.

ON SHOPPERS' LIST

The next event in the shoppers'

Christmas Rug Sale

Why not give a Congoleum Rug for Christmas? Something the whole family will enjoy. Specially priced from now until Christmas, 9x12 size, new patterns, \$14.95 Floor Lamps, Special, 15 per cent discount on all lamps.

SEWING BASKETS, a beautiful assortment specially priced for the Holidays.

CEDAR CHEST, an excellent gift.

Smokers, baby chairs, tricycles, jingle cars, and many more useful gifts for the little folks. Make our store your headquarters during Christmas week.

REMEMBER, December 22, we sell the Dining Suite for only \$1.00. Ask for your coupons.

Barrow Furniture Company

May Your Stocking of Hope Be Filled to Overflowing

AND YOUR FONDEST DESIRES BE REALITIES IN 1924

To our large circle of Friends and Patrons:—

We come now as the old year is passing and the dawn of a New Year is before us to tell you how we appreciate your loyalty to this business and to wish you a full measure of Health, Happiness and Prosperity.

Let us all work together to make our city shine in 1924 as a star in a cloudless sky.

Let us serve you during 1924.

Merkel Ice Company

E. E. LESLIE, Manager

1923--1924

We are appreciative for all that came our way in 1923 at the hands of what we believe to be the best set of patrons in the state and we come now to thank you and to wish you the richest and best set of patrons in the state and we come now

We hope we will be honored by your continued patronage, good will and co-operation.

Planters' Gin Co.

J. M. TOOMBS, Mgr.
Merkel, Texas.

THE MERKEL MAIL

VOL. 35—NO. 42

MERKEL, TEXAS, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1923

28 PAGES

SUBSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN STARTS SLOWLY

MISS TRACY'S PUPILS IN RECITAL

The Expression Department of the Merkel High school will give a Christmas Program at the High School Auditorium on Tuesday evening, December 18, 1923, beginning at 7:30 o'clock. There will be no admission charge.

1. A Sled Playlet, Harold Boney, Jim Patterson, Lester Patterson, Clara Louise Miller, Artie Lee Agnew, Margarette Turner, E. L. Turner, Ola Smith, Nell Durham, and Bettie Lou Grimes.

2. A Christmas Story by Clara Louise Miller.

3. Musical reading, "Little Old Fashioned Girl" by Flora Frances Anderson.

4. In the Pantry, Mabel Dixon by Nell Durham

5. Poem, At Christmas, by Edgar A. Guest, Lester Patterson.

6. Musical reading, The Boy who Stuttered and the Girl who Lipped, Margarette and E. L. Turner.

7. Song of the New Year, by Riley, Tommie Durham.

8. Play—"On Christmas Eve" by Constance Mackay.

Little Girl, Artie Lee Agnew
Wendy Clara Louise Miller
Alice in Wonderland, Margarette . . . Turner.

Robinson Curso, Jack Patterson
Girl from the North Wind, Lunell Lamar

Traveler from Bagdad, E. L. Turner.

Hansel, Jim Patterson.

Gretel, Betty Lou Brimes.

Tush-A-Bye-Lady, Flora Frances Anderson.

Santa Claus, Harold Boney.

The Mother, Tommie Durham

9. On Going Home for Christmas, by Edgar A. Guest, Lunell Lamar.

NEXT LYCEUM AT COZY DEC. 20TH

It must be admitted it takes a pretty good sleight-of-hand artist to fool his brothers in the profession. Some time ago, Kater, the noted magician who will appear here on December 20th at the Cozy Theatre, gave one of his programs before a gathering of fellow artists on an annual "get-together" meeting. Kater uncorked his inexhaustible supply of sleight-of-hand tricks of prestidigitation. The fellow tricksters blinked their eyes in admiration, for Kater had a new line of stuff which they did not know existed.

One of the editors of 'Sphinx' official magazine for magicians, had a few interesting statements to make concerning the art of Kater. Here is what he said: "Kater is great—he does more than the usual four-people company. His illusions are delightful and unlike most programs of magic, there is absolutely no tricking. That is one reason why Kater goes big." From the interest already manifested in the appearance of Kater in this community, good seats will be at a premium on Thursday evening, December 20th.

The above program is the third of a lyceum course being given under the auspices of the Merkel Cemetery Association. Bring your season tickets. In connection with the program by Kater, Mr. Groene will show pictures. The house will open promptly at seven o'clock, and the program by Kater will begin promptly at eight o'clock. Admission without season ticket will be 20, 40 and 60 cents. Remember the date—Thursday, December 20th, eight o'clock, at the Cozy Theatre.

NEW HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING PROPOSED

Owing to the fact that the Merkel Public Schools are crowded to overflowing it being necessary to use the Old Christian church frame structure for two of the grades, and which does not care for the crowded condition, the members of the school board realizing that something must be done to relieve the situation for another year, have upon the petition of many qualified voters ordered an election for the voting of bonds with which to buy a site, built and equip a new and up-to-date building suitable to care for the school children of this city and adjoining community, and a description of which is given herewith, along with a photo of the proposed building. The building plans have been worked out by Hon. David S. Castle, of Abilene, who is one of the best architects in the state.

The bond issue will be for \$40,000 and will run serially; making it possible to pay off a bond each year. We are also informed that the voting of the bonds will not raise the tax of any taxpayer in the district, as sufficient tax has already been voted and levied, and which will be explained to the voters at the proper time.

The New High School Building, contemplated for the City of Merkel, Texas, will probably be two story in height and of semi-fire proof construction. The School Board has in mind a modern building in every respect, designed on a unit plan which can be enlarged from time to time as the growth of the city requires.

It is the intention to provide departments in this building as follows:

Complete department for Home Economics, which will consist of Cooking Laboratory, Sewing and Fitting room, and possibly a model Dining Room, Kitchen, and Bed Room.

A Commercial Department consisting of two or three rooms for instruction in Bookkeeping, Shorthand, Typewriting and Banking.

The Science Department will be equipped with two Laboratories and One Lecture Room, also Dark Room and Apparatus Room. These rooms will accommodate courses in Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Physical Geography and Vocational Agriculture. The Lecture Room will

PRESBYTERIANS TO HAVE XMAS TREE

The Presbyterian Church is planning a community Christmas Tree on Christmas Eve night. We do not want to think of Christmas time as an occasion for exchange of presents, but in the spirit of Him who came to minister. We want to minister. To this end we will seek to provide a Christmas gift for every child in Merkel who is not provided for. We will be glad to have the help and cooperation of every man and woman in Merkel, who desires to be a servant of "Good Cheer." Sunday, December 16 all the regular services of the day. We will be glad to welcome all our friends at the services next Sunday. Fred S. Rogers, Pastor.

There was a large crowd in town Saturday and all merchants did a fine business.

have raised seats and equipped for a Stereopticon.

Recessed Lockers will be provided in the Corridors of Building and each student enrolled in High School will be assigned one of these lockers for his individual use. This locker will become what is termed the Student's Home Station. Former practices in planning High School Buildings provided a seat for each student enrolled, in the study hall or some of the class rooms, which was termed the student's home station. As each student is attending recitations or classes at least one half of the school day, the seats used as his Home Station, by the former practice, were vacant this portion of the day, at the same time the student was occupying a seat in some of the other departments in the building. With this arrangement it was necessary to provide practically two seats in the building for each student.

By the use of the locker system it is possible to provide seats in the study hall for approximately one-half of the students enrolled and thus affect a material saving in the seating space required in the study hall. In other words, with this system the study halls can be made about half of the size required by the former practice.

In addition to the above departments there will be Offices, Book Rooms, and Toilet Rooms. The building proper will be constructed with a concrete foundation to grade. The exterior walls to be of vitrified face

Recent Rains and Cold Weather Prevents Candidates Entering, and Those Entered Have Been Unable To Do But Little

MORE CANDIDATES WANTED

There is Much Interest in the Campaign, But Very Few Candidates Have Entered. Everybody Wins in This Campaign

Why it is? With the Merkel Mail putting up over \$1,500 in a new Ford Touring Car and other prizes, the great campaign has not seen candidates entering as they should.

Perhaps it is because it is new. Perhaps it is because the prizes are so stupendous that one can hardly believe it all.

Anyway, no matter why, someone, maybe you, is losing a wonderful opportunity.

Awards will positively be made, no matter whether there are 100 candidates, or one candidate.

Now, with very few candidates is the time to cash in, to get a lead. It is easy now. A worker one with real ambition and pep, can take a lead that will be hard to overcome on the home stretch. More votes are given on subscriptions now than later. That too, helps.

OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

The pessimist sees only the hole in the doughnuts, while the optimist—well, you know the rest. Look for the beautiful if you would have it—cash in on opportunities that are offered you if you would profit accordingly.

Such an opportunity—the equal of which is seldom offered to you—is now being presented to you. In a few short weeks from now the Merkel Mail will reward all the energetic hustlers of this country, and the opportunity existing for more "live wire" campaigners to enter the election and make themselves important factors and winners of the grand prizes, is actually calling aloud. Why, it's anybody's opportunity for the automobile.

Here is an opportunity, surely for a man or woman who looks

brick trimmed with stone trimmings.

A modern Steam Heating Plant will be provided for.

It is the intention to re-arrange the upper story of the present school building and convert same into a large, well lighted Auditorium, with stage at the West end.

The completion of these improvements will give Merkel a school plant adequate for requirements for many years to

at a thing from a business standpoint, and who arrives at a conclusion as to its merits by the way it appears to them as a business proposition. Some person can earn upward of \$85 a week during the next five weeks. How? that for a business proposition?

Election Just Starting

The Completion, which is just starting, is open to any reputable man or woman or child in Taylor or adjoining counties. All that is necessary to enter the race is to clip the nomination blank, appearing in this issue, fill in your name and address, and mail or bring it to the election headquarters of the Merkel Mail. This coupon entitles you or the person whom you nominate to 5,000 free votes, and gives you a flying start on the road to success. Upon receipt of the nomination coupon at the office, a complete working outfit, together with detailed information, will be sent or given you.

Thus equipped, you have but to see your friends and neighbors, relatives and acquaintances, and have them save the free voting coupons from the papers and cast their votes for you when they pay up their subscriptions to the Merkel Mail. Votes will be allowed on all subscriptions, whether new or renewal.

The names of the candidates who have been entered will be published in next weeks paper. Thus far very few persons have been nominated considering the number and value of the prizes to be distributed. There is plenty of room and there are plenty of prizes for more active candidates.

The Merkel Mail Campaign office is open each evening until 9 o'clock.

come, and in keeping with modern educational ideals.

It is the intention to beautify the grounds and provide Basket Ball, Tennis Courts and Experimental Gardens and give students of this school all the advantages to be found in schools of our larger cities.

NEWSPAPER BARGAIN DAYS HERE

This writer is pleased to acknowledge the receipt of an invitation to attend the "Ford Display Week", during which time the public will have the privilege of viewing all the newest and latest model Ford cars, and not only that, but all who attend this "Open House" reception between the hours of 8:00 p. m. and 10:00 p. m. will have the privilege of enjoying a fine orchestra and radio program.

It's going to be a big thing and manager Scott is going to see that every one who attends has a good time. And listen, folks, the beautiful, new, 1924 model Ford Touring car that is going to be given away by the Merkel Mail on January 19, will be on display, so we would be glad that you give it the once over while viewing the other popular model cars.

FORD DISPLAY WEEK MERKEL MOTOR CO.

We are glad to call attention of our readers and the public that Newspaper Bargain Days are now in full sway, and that you can save money by subscribing for your daily papers at the Merkel Mail Office.

The Abilene Reporter's price for the Daily and Sunday is \$3.65 and the Merkel Mail alone, is \$1.50, but we can send them both to you for one year at \$4.50. You save 65 cents by getting them in a club.

The Fort Worth Star-Telegram is \$7.45 for the daily and Sunday and the Merkel Mail is \$1.50 per year, making a total of \$9.95 to take them separately, but to get them together we make them both for one year at \$7.80. Renew now.

11. Read the Classified Column.

NOMINATION BLANK IN THE MERKEL MAIL'S "EVERYBODY WINS" CAMPAIGN

GOOD FOR 5,000 VOTES

I HEREBY ENTER AND CAST 5,000 VOTES FOR

MISS (MR. OR MRS.)

ADDRESS

as a candidate in the Merkel Mail's "Everybody Wins" prize distribution.

NOTE—Only one nomination blank accepted for each candidate nominated.



Merkel, Texas, December 11th, 1923

To the People of Merkel and Merkel Trade Territory:

We are approaching the close of the old year and we would not wish it to pass without thanking the loyal patrons of the Bank for their confidence, loyalty and support, and to acknowledge their part in the fine prosperity that has come to this institution in the year 1923.

We wish each and every one of the people of the Merkel Territory a very Happy Christmas, and we trust as you sit about your firesides and make a summary of the happenings of 1923, that you may find much to be thankful for and little to regret; nor would we want the New Year to be ushered in, without wishing you a full measure of prosperity and a fine contentment of mind in the knowledge that you are determined to do your best, in that every act that you shall perform shall have some relation to the future.

We are lending the influences of this Bank towards economy and thrift; and are offering its resources toward increasing the material wealth of this part of Taylor County. Each officer and employee of this institution is anxious to have a share in the material, spiritual and moral welfare of this community.

May all the apparent calamities of the Old Year be translated into blessings in the New. This Bank will continue to handle its affairs in such a manner as to merit your confidence, and be worthy of your loyalty, we invite you to consult us freely, to make our Banking house your headquarters when in town and to take advantage of the splendid service which we hope to offer.

Sincerely yours,

Farmers & Merchants. Nat. Bank

J. T. WARREN, President-Director.

G. F. WEST, Vice-Pres.-Director.

HENRY JAMES, Vice-Pres.-Director.

L. R. THOMPSON, Cashier-Director.

Sam Butman, Sr., Director.

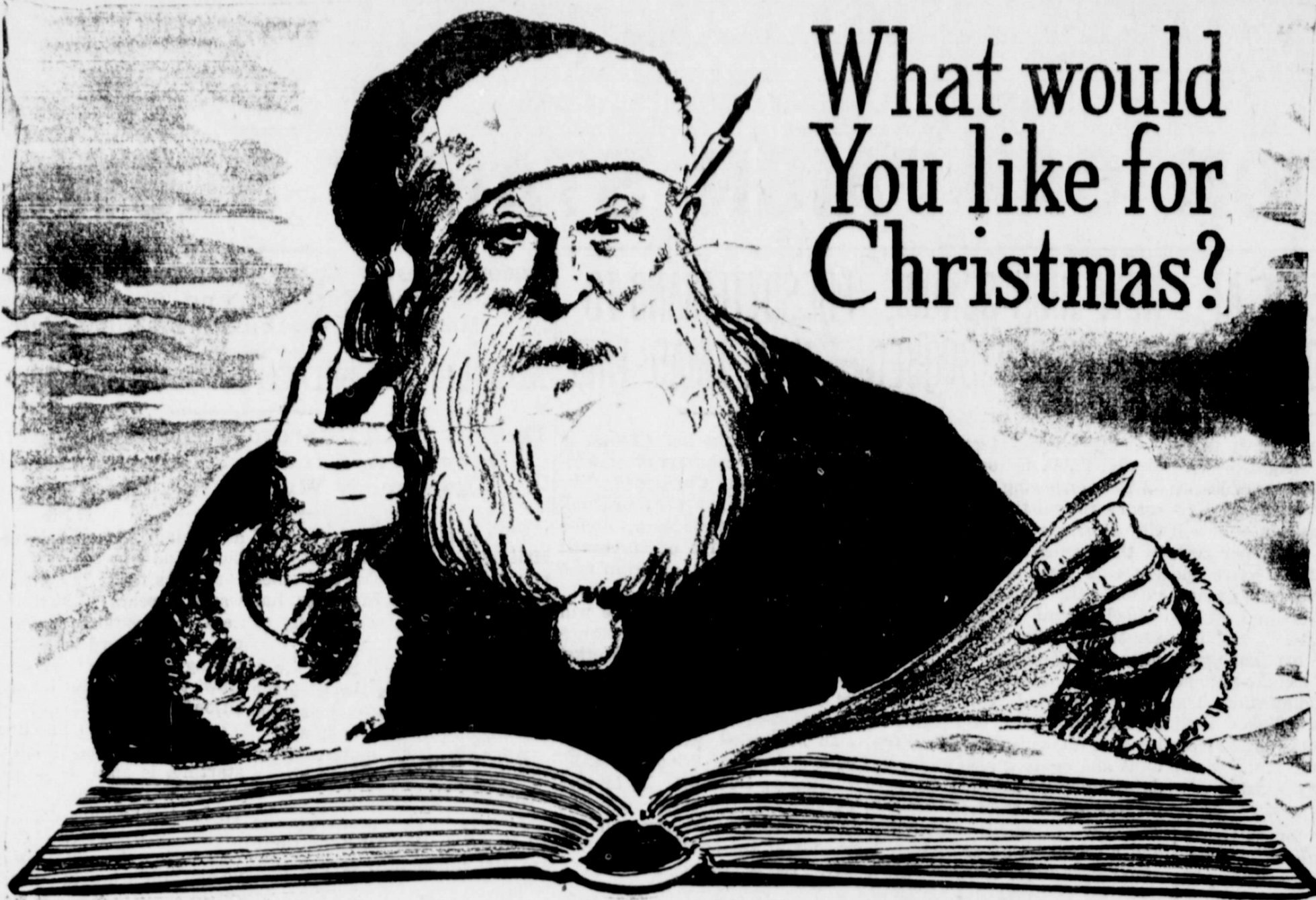
Booth Warren, Assistant Cashier.

Owen Ellis, Assistant Cashier.

J. T. Howard, Bookkeeper.

E. Yates Brown, Bookkeeper.

Rosie Laney, Stenographer.



What would You like for Christmas?

We now have a Large Stock of X-mas Goods on Display. You will find in our showing something for all members of the family, consisting of Toys for the Children. For the older boy, Guns, Tricycles, wagons, etc. For the older girl, Ivory Sets, Cut Glass, Water Sets, and the latest thing in Novelty Glassware, and other goods that will please Father and Mother. We will be pleased to have **Everybody** come and see our stock. We will have plenty of help to wait on you.

Since closing out Groceries, we are now enlarging our Hardware stock. It is our intention to carry a more complete stock of Hardware in the future than we have in the past. Before buying Hardware elsewhere, get our prices as we at all times keep our prices as low as like goods can be bought. You trade appreciated at all times.

Yours for business,

Crown Hardware Company

THE PLOTTER

By JANE JORDAN

(©, 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

MRS. CALICOT leaned back in her chair and sighed.

"It is most disappointing," she told her friend. "I must confess, when I invited Rowena to pay me a visit I had Rupert in mind. He is such a dear, worthy brother. So I planned to bring two desolate hearts together?"

"Why, Aunt Cora," she said—I had begged her to call me aunt—I don't believe your brother has ever had a girl in his life. He is so terribly grateful for a little kindness. Of course I was angry at Rowena's obtuseness and lack of fine appreciation."

Mrs. Mills laughed. "Forgive me, Cora," she begged. "You must feel badly indeed when you drop into the sentimental. I'm going to advise you, by proxy, if you still desire this silly young person for a sister-in-law. I have a little friend stopping here who is well versed in the ways of love, and, alas, in its management. Prudie-Prudie-Peach, my boys wickedly call her, has captured from other of my indignant young friends their supposedly assured suitors. She is engaged herself to a man in Boston."

Prudence Wharton was called in consultation. Prudence came. Rupert's sister, seeing her, drew a breath of admiration. Prudie was like fresh sweet pinks in an old-fashioned garden; impish, yet kindly little soul. She spread her silk accordion skirt and listened to the confidence. Then she nodded her small head with its quaint, high coiffure.

"I know just how Rowena feels," she said. "We all like to think there has been competition, else how can we be sure that we may retain that which we have won? Don't you see? If we have vanquished, we may ever vanquish."

The elder ladies looked their indecision. Prudie went on:

"I recall having met Mr. Rupert Fleming at a reception. He was in attendance upon a really lovely girl—your Rowena, no doubt. She seemed, now I recollect, languidly aware of his preference. Mr. Fleming had eyes for no one else. I know, for I tried to charm him for a half hour in the library; heard of his fame as a deep-writer. He followed Miss Webster about as one hypnotized. And she flirted, to torment him, because of his dog-like devotion; yes, she did." Prudie laughed back at her listeners.

Suddenly a pucker knitted her brows. "Do you suppose," she asked Rupert's sister, "that your brother is catching this afternoon on Miss Rowena?"

"He will be at our home for dinner this evening," Rowena's hostess replied.

"All right and good," the reader of human hearts answered. "You will excuse me now, please." She flashed a placating smile and vanished.

"Leave the problem to Prudie," Mrs. Mills advised.

Dinner was about to be served in the Calicot home that evening when Mr. Rupert Fleming was called to the telephone. Miss Rowena handed the receiver over to her lover. She had first been asked for, and a pleasing feminine voice had explained to her announcing Miss Webster speaking. "Thank you, I wanted to locate Mr. Fleming through you."

Therefore, it may have been absent-y or it may have been purposely that Rowena waited in the neighborhood of the telephone. Rupert took up the receiver briskly and the vibrant girlish voice that called him reached Rowena as distinctly as though she also were receiving the message:

"This is Miss Wharton—Prudie Wharton. You remember meeting me at the Merton reception, Mr. Fleming? You could give me so little time because Miss Webster happened to be with you. And I wanted so to know about your wonderful book—and we have a mutual acquaintance in Boston who will insist on hearing all about you at first hand. So won't you promise me a call very soon? I am a guest at Mrs. Mills this time. Auntie Sue is in New York. I usually visit there. Can you come here tomorrow afternoon for tea? Mrs. Mills will send her car. She does not like her guests to be disappointed when they have set their hearts upon a thing. You will come, Mr. Fleming?"

Rupert stood, frantically trying to recall Miss Wharton, who remembered him so well—who was so astonishingly anxious to see him. Trying to think "who in thunder" the mutual friend in Boston might be, he answered lamely: "Just a moment please, Miss Webster is here." That sounded strange, and he hastily added: "I have several engagements with Miss Webster; she will know if I am free tomorrow afternoon." He turned confusedly to the woman he loved. His glance was coldly received.

"Go, if you want to," said Rowena, in an unnatural tone.

Rupert was hopelessly troubled. Women were queer. Here was Rowena, all coldness in a moment; here was Rowena, her usually calm eyes deep with reproach.

"Do you want me to go?" he stammered.

"If you'd rather be with that girl than me, Rupert," she said.

His arms went around her. Surrounding Rowena's head dropped on his breast.

Prudie, at the other end of the wire, turned from the silent messenger. "It's all right," she told Mrs. Mills.

Mr. A. J. Hartley, route one, returned last week from a trip to the Plains where he visited friends and relatives.

J. E. Hill of Midland was here last week a guest at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Lassiter.

If you want to buy land see J. A. Janes. 14t2p

Ed. Teaff came in last week from his visit to relatives in Bell county. We are glad to learn that he has improved very much in health since going down there.

Senior Epworth League

Subject—The Mission of the Minister.

Leader—Julia Martin.

Hymn.

Scripture—John xx 21-23; Tim. iv 1-5.

Hymn

What the church expects of its minister—Loring Hamblett.

What the church offers the minister, Sie Hamm.

Preacher's salaries, Blanche Durham.

What do I owe my Pastor? Marie Williamson.

Reading—Lola Dennis

Business

League Benediction.

Remember the Time—5:30

BUYS MRS. C. L. CASH TAILOR SHOP

Mr. J. W. Schindler, of Shiner, Texas, last week closed a deal for the purchase of the Mrs. C. L. Cash Tailor Shop and Monday of this week took charge of same.

Mr. Schindler, we are told is an experienced and first class Tailor and also comes to our city as a good citizen and business man. We welcome him and his family to our city. We also regret to learn that Mrs. Cash is planning to possibly leave Merkel, but join her many friends here in wishing for her health, happiness, and prosperity where ever she may decide to locate. She left first of the week for a prospecting trip to the Plains.

Read the Classified Column.

Intermediate B. Y. P. U.

Subject: The Southern Baptist Convention.

Leader, Gladys Deutschman.

Introduction by leader.

1. Spirit of Southern Baptist convention, by Clyde Mayfield.

2. Foreign mission Board, China, and Japan, by Joe Ben Ashby.

3. Mexico, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, and Argentina, by Helen Booth.

4. Africa, Italy, Spain, Jugo, Slavia, and Hungary, by Delbert Polly.

5. Roumania, Russia, and Syria and Palestine, by Thelma Condon.

6. Home Mission board by Fannie Bell Boaz.

7. Co-operative Missions, enlistment and evangelism, by Eunice Bird.

8. Mountain school, Foreigners, Indians and Negroes, by Ray Garrett.

9. Cuba and Panama, Soldiers and Seamen and Tubercular sanatorium, by Agnes Sanders.

10. Southern Baptist Theological seminary, by Durwood Owens.

11. The Woman's missionary unions, by Lucille Owens.

12. Sunday School Board by Charlie Largent.

13. Layman's missionary movements, by Alfride Tittle.

14. Education Board, by Lewis Tucker.

15. The ministerial relief and annuities Board, by Mrs. E. Yates Brown.

16. Inter-Board commission, by Mr. E. Yates Brown.

17. Closing song and prayer

R. L. GRIMES GOES TO MERKEL BANK

R. L. Grimes, who has been with the Winters State Bank for nine years, has resigned his position as active vice-president of that institution to accept the cashiership of the Farmers State Bank of Merkel, and he is now on the job in his new location. Mr. Grimes' family will follow in a few days.

Thus Winters loses a citizen who is in every way one of the best. He has labored faithfully with the Winters State Bank, working up to his high position from bookkeeper and he has the full confidence and esteem of everyone who has had any dealing with him.

Carl Henslee has stepped up to the position vacated by Mr. Grimes and H. W. Robinson Jr. in turn takes the former position of Mr. Henslee. Thus the responsible positions readily found men to fill them who will conduct their respective duties in a manner becoming this, the leading bank in Runkells county.—Winters Enterprise.

Buy that boy an all wool two-pants suit for Christmas. You can get them at a big reduction now at BROWN'S. It

Mr. Lee Acuff, returned first of the week from a trip to Lubbock, where he was called last Saturday on account of the serious illness of his mother. We are glad to learn that she had improved very much when Mr. Acuff departed for home.

Rugs and Linoleums Most Practical of Gifts



If you would choose a Gift for your home that is decidedly practical as well as economical, plan to inspect our showing of Floor Coverings, soon

The utmost in value giving is represented in our complete display of these needed home articles that buying what you need is easily arranged

At Very Lowest Price.

J. T. Darsey Co.

THE FARMERS STATE BANK

THIS BANK

—is thankful for the many friendships it has made during its existence as a financial institution.

As we view the growth and development of our surrounding community we are indeed thankful that we have been able to be one of the active factors in this great advancement.

And again we are thankful that the coming years will bring new friendships in addition to the old, and an even greater desire to carry on our share of the active duties that make us singly better citizens, and collectively a better commonwealth.

FARMERS STATE BANK
Merkel, Texas

"There is no Substitute For Safety"

Secure your Money by Depositing in a State Bank

The Merkel Mail
Published Every Friday Morning by
THE MERKEL MAIL PRINTING COMPANY, INC.
THOMAS DURHAM, Editor and Manager

SUBSCRIPTION \$1.50 PER YEAR
TELEPHONE No. 61

Entered at the postoffice at Merkel, Texas as second class mail matter.

ALL ADVERTISEMENTS MUST BE IN THIS OFFICE BY SIX O'CLOCK P. M. WEDNESDAY FOR INSERTION IN THAT WEEK'S ISSUE OF THE MAIL

Foreign Advertising Representative
THE AMERICAN PRESS ASSOCIATION

Thoughtless man—Yes many men often make remarks regarding young girls and ladies who chance to pass along the street from day to day. Just recently two ladies of this city were on the streets which had for its purpose the up building of the city and the promotion of the future interest of the boys and girls of every father and mother in the town and community. And they were passing from business house to business house presenting their cause to the tax payers, yes just going about among those who should be their friends and neighbors; where your wife, my wife—yes the wife of any man should meet courtesy, where she should feel that she could go with the assurance that not only was she among friends, but among those who would really protect her. But what we started out to show was that, man, many of them, were prone to make remarks about a passing girl or a woman that was unjust to them and unmanly of a gentleman. Yes, often in his thoughtlessness make remarks about the other fellows wife or daughter that would cause him to feel like committing murder if the same remark should be made about his wife or daughter. And while these ladies above mentioned were making the rounds in of their mission, yes believing that they were doing something that would in the future help to

make better men and women of the girls and boys of today. And while they were talking and presenting their proposition to one man, yes one of the best and most influential citizens of the community, another man, a good man, a man who is not only agood citizen, but a man who has a nice family, a man who is a church member, yes an official in that church, and this good man did not recognize the ladies so he stepped over to a friend standing by and asked this question "Who are those Janes". And this friend, happened to be the husband of one of the ladies, and of course it hurt. The man no doubt thought the ladies were strangers in the city, and no doubt meant no real disrespect anyway, but the episode just illustrates how often we make remarks that are improper and often hurt. How can we fathers expect the younger generations to respect and reverence and respect the women and girls unless we set the example by both word and action.

BIG RODEO HERE ON DEC. 24 AND 25

Malone Brothers, expert and nationally known Rodeo men, who make Merkel their home, announce that on December 24 and 25 there will be a big Rodeo bronc busting, steer riding etc. in Merkel, and it is expected that there will be a large crowd present to witness the performance.

Watch for circular making complete announcement of the affair.

SCHOOL CLOSES FOR THE HOLIDAYS

On account of the law compelling all public school teachers to attend County Institute for one week in the year, and the fact that the teachers of the Merkel School will go to Stamford to attend the district institute which meets there next week, the schools closed in this city today for the holidays.

Beauty of the Snow at the Yule Season

THE beauty of snow is not on wide, glaring expanses, on level, unbroken plains. The eye could not endure, nor the heart accept, the blinding monotony of such conditions.

The beauty of snow lies in contrast. Who has not seen long, bluish shadows creep over it at sunset? Or marked with delight, the thin pencilings of bare branches shifting over its surface by moonlight? Snow requires change, interruptions, so to speak, to bring out its character. The ruggedness of hills makes the valleys yet more peaceful. The stark, rough "glory of the trees" leads decision to a landscape; the thinnest, wind-whipped edges weave patterns of indescribable frailty on the pages of the snow.

So it is with Christmas. We could hardly live up to Christmas every day in the year. The whole meaning would become worn and threadbare through constant association. When it does come, it should stand out by contrast, in great and shining beauty. The worries, fruits, failures and disappointments of the months just gone should lend the proper "shadowing," so that the purity of the day stands out in white distinction.

And if the heart must ache a little, as all hearts do no matter how good the happiness, let the pain be the pencilings of branches on the matchless page of Christmas, giving it added beauty and character.—Martin B. Thomas.

Magic of Christmas Sweeps Entire World

THE magic of Christmas lies over the world today, changing the dreary commonplace events of yesterday into things of wonder and delight and filling the earth with happiness and joy and cheer. It permeates the whole earth from end to end and mankind in every land and in every clime responds to it in the fullest measure. For into our hearts at this time there comes a beautiful something that raises us above ourselves and brings us to greater heights than we ever reach at any other time. For with the magic of Christmas time man buries self in trying to promote the happiness and well-being of others and in doing this finds greatest happiness for himself also. For it seems as if the more we give of love, of service and of ourselves the fuller grows the store from which we draw upon and the richer we grow in the things that make for our own happiness. Let us then allow the magic of Christmastime to fall upon us so deeply that it may not only stay with us at this time but through all the days to follow.—Katherine Edelman.

UNDER THE OUTSIDE

GRASS keeps green under the snow. Delicate blossoms hide away in ugly seeds. Who can believe the twisted apple-tree will be just in a start of pink petals in the spring?

There must be many a warm and true heart cased in a frosty exterior. If we believed more in the covered and less in the covering, we should make Christmas a day truly bright with peace and good will.—Martha B. Thomas.

Eringing in the Yule Log for a Merry Feast

ONE of the most delightful of the Christmas ceremonies was bringing in the Yule-log. According to an English writer, this was a massive piece of wood, frequently the rugged and grotesquely marked root of a tree. It was drawn through the forest with shouting and laughter, while each wayfarer reverently saluted it, since he knew it to be full of good promises and that in its flames would be burnt out old wrongs and heart-burnings. As it came into the great hall, the living-room of the old castle, each member of the family sat upon or saluted it in turn, and sang a Yule-song, after which all drank to a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. A favorite Yule-song began with:

Welcome be ye that are here,
Welcome all, and make good cheer,
Welcome all, another year,
Welcome Yule. —F. H. Sweet.

A FAIR EXCHANGE

Laura and Tommy often had important discussions on serious subjects. Christmas evening found them in grave colloquy. There seemed to be a slight ambiguity about who gave them gifts, God or their father. It was a matter which could not be settled. Finally Laura said in a superior tone:

"You know, Tommy, that daddy isn't our only father; we have two."
Tommy appeared surprised. "Who's the other one?" he asked.
"God," answered Laura succinctly. Tommy gave the occasion much reflection. Then he said earnestly: "Well, I wish Daddy would go to heaven for a while and let God come down and stay with us—I'd like to get acquainted!"—M. E. Thomas.

STRANGE WAYS OF SLEEPING

Every Kind of Animal Adopts Some Particular Posture in Which to Rest.

Every kind of animal, including man, seems to have adopted some particular posture in which to sleep. Long legged birds, such as storks and gulls, have been observed to sleep balanced on one leg. Most birds, however, sleep with their heads turned round over their backs. Often their beaks are hidden among the feathers between the wing and the body. Some curious exceptions to this rule is the owl which sleeps sitting on a branch, and certain Indian parrots and bats which sleep only when suspended from a tree. The duck is the most unconventional of all. This bird sleeps on the open water, and during its slumbers paddles itself with one foot in circles to avoid drifting to the shore.

Such a bulky animal as the sloth sleeps upside down, hanging by its four feet and with its head tucked between the forelegs. The posture of the domestic cat is typical of many other animals. Foxes and wolves sleep curled up with their noses and the soles of their feet all close together and often covered by their tails. Some animals sleep with their eyes open, others with them closed. A dog, especially an old one, occasionally sleeps while standing; a horse often does, while an elephant never lies down to sleep. Salmon and goldfish are said never to sleep.

ERULE PIONEER IN WILDS

Explorer Is Now Credited With Discovery of Superior and the Other Lakes.

Although his name is not enshrined in history along with those of Champlain, LaSalle, Radisson, Marquette, Joliet, and many other explorers, Etienne Brule (with an acute accent on the initial E and on the final e of the surname) is said to have been the real discoverer of the Great Lakes of America, including Superior, the largest body of fresh water in the world. Brule antedates most of these great discoverers by many years. He is said to have discovered the Great Lakes more than 200 years ago.

Brule had no gift of writing, and no personal account remains of what must have been one of the outstanding careers of adventure this adventurous continent has produced. In late life Brule was denounced by Champlain as "abandoned," as one who "lived without religion." It is believed by some persons that the judgment of subsequent historical writers has been warped by Champlain's criticism of Brule's morals. They say that if Brule succumbed to the customs of the native Indians, it was because he was sent among them at a tender age by Champlain himself.

Having it Both Ways.

The head of a girl with red hair, painted with charm and great dexterity, caught my eye. The picture was in that interesting gallery, the Rue de la Boetie, and I was tempted to enter the shop and asked the price. The price was so high that I remarked on it.

The dealer smiled in agreement. "But you see," he explained, "the painter is dead. Finished. There can be no more of his work, and therefore it costs much."

I made a tour of the walls and found another picture, this time a landscape, very simple but true and beautifully composed. It was signed "Grosjean." I asked the price of it also, and as with the other the price was so high that I remarked on it.

The dealer smiled in agreement. "But you see," he explained, "the painter is alive, and living is expensive. It is necessary therefore to charge much."—Punch.

Rival to Monte Carlo.

Helgoland, the little island in the North sea, seeks the laurels and income of Monte Carlo.

The island resort is about to build a gambling casino, which, it is hoped, will bring sufficient earnings to the local government to make all the island folks free from taxation, just as the residents of Monaco, the principality where the Monte Carlo casino is located, are free from taxes.

This is to all intents and purposes a declaration of war by Germany against France, so far as getting the tourist gambling business of Europe is concerned.

Helgoland has always been a favorite resort, largely patronized because of its beach. Now, in addition, the local government plans to erect a casino which will draw a new and wealthier class to its shores.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

A Difficult Task.

"You know Wombat, the author?"
"We are acquainted."

"That baby of his has some cute expressions."

"Yes, Wombat confided to me the other day that Mrs. Wombat wanted it no."

"Huh?"
"So Wombat taught 'em to the baby, and he says he had a deuce of a time doing it, too."

Contradiction of Terms.

"You say our friend has a queer record?"

"Father," replied Senator Sorghum. "Can't we put him across as a dark horse?"

"Perhaps. But you'll have to white-wash him first."

The Way We Feel Toward Our Patrons

We never have considered a transaction closed with the mere exchange of our goods and service for money. We prefer to think that business means more than buying and selling—that it means the opportunity for making and holding friends.

And this being true we come now to express our appreciation of the friendly spirit you have shown us and to extend to you our best wishes for a Christmas of joy and a new year in which your laudable undertakings may each be crowned with success. And may we hope to receive your patronage during 1924.

J. T. DENNIS

Receiving Christmas Gifts Is a Fine Art

OF COURSE every gift given means also a gift received. Christmas always has two sides, and certainly there is great joy in receiving the tokens of love and friendship that come to us, not because of their money value, for most gifts are bought for small sums, but because they convey to us an expression of someone's affection. I heard a young girl remark when a little gift came to her, "Well, that didn't break anyone's bank." What a pity. As if Christmas could have in it great joy for anyone who looked for the price tag on a gift. Our character is likely to be revealed by the spirit of our receiving quite as well as by the spirit of our giving. It is this fine art of receiving well that will not only make Christmas the more joyous, but will also be an all-year virtue. If it is cultivated in our hearts.—F. H. Sweet.

LIKE MANY OTHERS



"She says her husband attends church regularly."
"Yes, he goes with her to the Christmas service every year."

SAFETY FIRST

The Christmas shoppers hesitated at the crowded street crossing. To try to get over seemed like an attempt to dodge fate. Automobiles dashed by in a continuous procession. The tall policeman, however, convoyed a group across like a battleship landing a flock of schooners. But one old lady lingered, afraid to launch away, until courage came with the policeman's assurance: "Come right along, ma'am, you're just as safe with me as if you was in God's pocket!"—C. G. Hazard.

REAL SPIRIT

IF THE real spirit of Christmas is within us we will, indeed, find that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and we will give out of the fullness of our hearts and because of the joy that giving brings us, instead of from any other motive. So to get the real joy of giving and to receive the richness of the Christmas spirit in fullest measure, give because your heart prompts you to and forget all else.—Katherine Edelman.

"It Is More Blessed to Give Than Receive"

HIS has nothing to do with banks or savings accounts; but more money is saved at Christmas time than any other time of the year. Yes, saved. That may sound absurd to a lot of people who have spent all their money buying presents for their families and friends and neighbors, but it is true just the same. How? Why, because giving is the finest sort of saving, and not only saving, but investing. Every good gift is a permanent gain to the giver; it is better than a bank book carrying the same amount, for a gift is more truly a saving than credit account on a bank ledger. If you want to save your money, give it away—wisely. Does that sound unreasonable? Remember, it is more blessed to give than receive.—F. H. Sweet.

AUNT MEHTABLE'S PRESENT

Aunt Mehtable had a powerful and active imagination that often kept her awake. She was ever creating difficulties by imagining them and making things crooked by trying, to straighten them out. "Hiram," said she, "I can't think what has got into George; I didn't like the way he looked at us this morning."

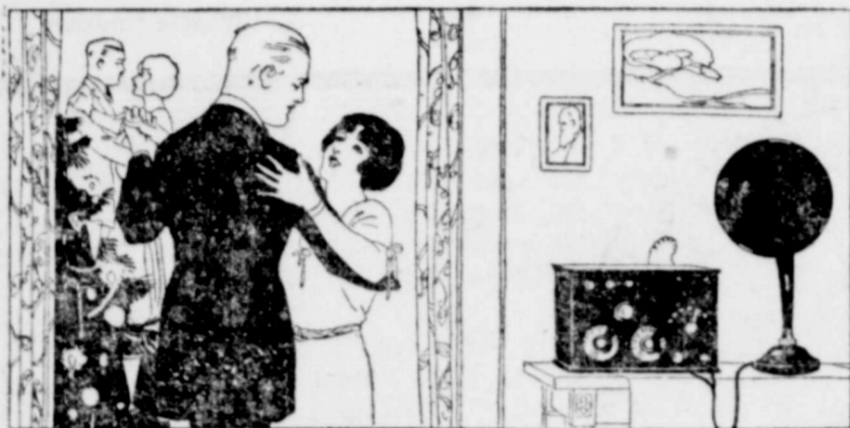
"Probably he was thinking of somebody else," answered her brother.

"George," began his aunt the next day, "what was the matter with you yesterday morning, you looked sourer 'n pickles."

"Nothin' was the matter with me," said the boy, "I was puzzlin' over your Christmas present." Then he added, "Since you're so mighty suspicious, I guess I'll give it up." But remembering her goodness of heart, George relented, and when the day that shined away all unpleasantness came round, Aunt Mehtable had a new nightgown.—C. G. Hazard.

GIFTS for EVERYONE

Here is the logical place to buy your gifts. Every department of our stock is resplendent with articles suitable for Christmas giving--useful gifts--gifts that will be appreciated by the recipient.



RADIO IN THE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

Radio has dispelled the dread of long winter nights, has brought into the home the world's best music and the speeches of great men. What more appropriate gift for the home? You'll find in our store such sets as Crossley, Westinghouse, Federal and Murad. If he should like to make his set, let us fit you up an assortment of parts. We know just what you need.

SOMETHING FOR THE CAR FOR CHRISTMAS

What more appreciable Gift for the Car Owner than some much needed, highly appreciated Accessory for the car. You'll find our Accessory Department brim-full of useful Gifts. Look over the list and come in and let us show you.



ELECTRICAL GIFTS

Gifts Electrical make ideal Gifts for women. We have just those appliances that will be most appreciated.

- Boudoir Lamps, Curling Irons, Table Stoves, Sad Irons
- Toasters, Percolators, Portable Lamps

SOMETHING FOR THE CAR FOR CHRISTMAS

- Speedometers, Clocks, Spot Lights, Visors, Chains,
- Motometers, Lock Caps, Locking Wheels, Klaxon Horn,
- Alemite Lubricators, Pumps, Camp Stoves, Thermol-
- ware Jugs, Step Plates, Dash Lamps, Pedal Pads, Ac-
- celerators, Gasolene Gauges, Exhaust Horns,
- Foot Warmers, Windshield Wipers, Jacks

WEST COMPANY

"Twenty-five Years of Better Service"

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE

FOR SALE—1 double Disc plow practically new. Sanders make. See J. I. Ferd, Stith, Tex. 7t2p

FOR SALE—A-1 Jersey Milk Cow. Fresh. See Mrs. Annie Casseau. 1tp

FOR SALE OR TRADE—Eight room house. Phone 18. Possession immediately if wanted. 1tp

FOR SALE—Wood. I have some cord wood to sell in French Pasture. CSee T. J. Amason, Route 4. 7t4p

FOR SALE—New, fresh tires, all the popular sizes, at the lowest prices ever offered on quality products. Our reputation is your guarantee.—West Company. 1t

FOR SALE—Three sections of land four miles South of Abilene on pike road. Tracts cut large or small to suit purchaser. Terms easy. See W. C. Lasley—Abilene, Texas. 7t4

FOR SALE—80 acrs land 6 miles east of Lawn, Texas. 30 or 35 in cultivation. All fenced. 2 room house, good well water. If sold by January 1st, \$1,000 will buy it. Might take good team in on it. See W. I. Avery, Merkel. 7t2p

FOR SALE—My home which is

well improved. 5 room house well and windmill, good cistern. Barn and other buildings. 134 acres of good level land. No Johnson grass. 115 in cultivation, all tillable. 1-2 mile of good school; 10 miles north east of Merkel; 12 miles north west of Abilene. \$85.00 per acre. J. D. Andrews, Merkel, Route 4. 1tp

WANTED

WANTED—A Good milk cow See J. P. Sharp. 1tp

WANTED—Hands to grub 30 acres of land. S. F. Haynes. 1tp

WANTED—Good second hand Piano. Must be worth the money. E. D. Coats. 1t

WANTED—Grubbing done by the acre, 2 miles south east of Merkel. A. M. Giles. 1t

WANTED—Men to clear land by the acre or cord. Sam Butman Sr. 7t2

WANTED—Farm and Ranch hand, by the month. Must have experience. Sam Butman Sr. 7t2

WANTED—Two ladies, high school graduates for educational work; only few hours weekly; no selling. Guaranteed salary plus commission. No experience necessary. Also two ladies for permanent traveling position, guaranteed salary, expenses and commission. Inquire for Miss Aline Moody at the Woodrum Hotel, Friday only. 1t

LOST

LOST—A mud chain, weed De-Luxe for Overland car, in Merkel. Finder leave at Merkel Mail office. W. T. Bird. 1tp

LOST—An Elgin, seven jewel, open face watch, in the city of Merkel last Saturday night. Finder, please return to J. T. Dennis' Store. Robert Dennis. 1tp

FOUND

FOUND—A leather glove, for right hand. Owner may get same at Merkel Mail office by paying for this notice.

HOG KILLING TIME

We have a big stock of the best Meat Salt, Spices, Sage etc. for the putting down and preserving of your meat. Call and let us tell you about it.

Also a fresh supply of Hormell Hams, at wholesale prices. Buy now and save money. All other goods as good as the best and as cheap as the cheapest. J. D. Porter, successor to John S. Hughes. 1tpd.

Mr. G. M. Sharp, one of this city's pioneer business men and most excellent citizens returned first of the week from a visit to his father who resides at Stephenville, and is now 84 years of age. And their many friends will regret to learn that the senior Mr. Sharp had the misfortune of losing his home some time ago by fire.

SHOES for any member of the family at a great saving NOW.—Brown Dry Goods Company. 1t office.

FERRASAL RELIEVES MAN LOSING POSITION

"About three weeks ago I was nearly down with indigestion and almost unable to hold my position. Have been bothered with indigestion, gas, etc., for years, started to taking FERRASAL and began to improve from the very first dose. And now I haven't felt better in several years, and gained seven pounds in the last two weeks. A. Dee Phelps. 517 Liberty St. Dallas, Texas.

Excess acid causes indigestion. FERRASAL neutralizes this acid at the source and aids nature in passing it out of the system. If neglected, excess acids often result in ulcers, cancer, chronic bowel disorders, catarrh constipation, kidney trouble and rheumatism. Take FERRASAL regularly night and morning for a month. It will improve your health or your druggist will refund your money. 50c per box.



50c per box at Merkel Drug Co.

COTTON IS TOO HIGH

Don't discard your old mattress, bring them in and have them made new, the sanitary way. Ticks furnished, \$4.80 and up. The Sanitary Mattress Factory, opposite the Merkel Mail Bank. 1tp

OPENS HOTEL HERE

Messrs. R. M. Dulin and W. O. Walker, of Roby, have leased the Crenshaw building on Kent street, known as the old Lone Star Hotel, and which building was purchased by the Fulwiler Motor Company of Abilene, last fall, and which they have had remodeled and put in good clean and upto date shape.

We are informed that the new proprietors are experienced hotel men, and will no doubt conduct same in an up to date manner.

Listen folks! Watch for that Magnolia Turkey. Besides the fact that the turkey is free to the person catching it, that person will get five gallons of gas free. Magnolia Filling Station. It

Rain! Rain! we never saw so much rain—in West Texas, and while it gives this country the best season possibly ever known here at this time of the year, there has been so much of it the past few weeks, months, we are almost tempted to wish for just a little spell of dry weather, for that has always been one reason we liked West, Texas—so much more sunshine and bright days than rainy, cloudy ones.

Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Morton, of Oklahoma City, were here this week guests of Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Warren. Mr. and Mrs. Morton are on their way to South Texas to spend the winter.

FOR SALE—Span of good work mules. See W. L. Diltz Sr. or W. L. Jr. at the Farmers State Bank. 1tp

PROFESSIONAL

THOS. C. WILSON
The Jeweler

Watches, Clocks and Jewelry Repaired

All Work Guaranteed

Located at Merkel Drug Co.

DR. R. I. GRIMES

Physician and Surgeon

Hours 10 to 12 a.m. 2 to 5 p.m.

Phones 105-163 Res. 165

DR. S. W. JOHNSON.

Surgeon Dentist

Office over Farmers State Bank

Office Phone 306

G. W. JOHNSON

Insurance—Notary Public

Over Woodroof—Bragg's Store.

Merkel —:— Texas

W. W. WHEELER

Real Estate, Fire, Accident and Tornado Insurance Agent. Notary Public.

Office over Crown Hardware Co. Merkel —:— Texas

Read the Classified Column.

1923 -- 1924

**GOOD WISHES TO
OUR FRIENDS**

Our friendships are our greatest asset, and the spirit of the holidays, with its time-honored customs, provides opportunity for us to greet you.

We extend our most cordial greetings and best wishes for your peace, prosperity and happiness, and for those whose happiness depends upon you.

PATTERSON & BAKER
City Meat Market

**Story of a Stocking
That Was So Empty**

ACOB SCRIM was accounted a prosperous man. Early in life he had adopted a motto of get-there-activeness that had apparently served him well. He could survey premises that yielded good rentals to him, mortgages that were a first claim upon good farms, stocks and bonds that were called gilt-edged. Sitting in his dingy office he did not appear to have any very exacting business, but his clients found that there was plenty of exaction before they were done with him. It was a favorite amusement with him during the intervals of occupation to go over his books, gloat over his securities, and refinger a stock of gold that he kept to assure himself of the reality of his power and the possibilities of his life, should he ever care to use them. This glittering illusion he strangely kept in an old stocking, hard by another in the massive safe, the second containing a collection of gems that he lived to handle without letting any of them slip through his fingers.

He was thus amusing himself one Christmas Eve, all unconscious of the radiance and radiant hopes and purposes that filled the atmosphere outside and ever surged through his room in which he sat, and all unable to tune in with any of them, when he seemed to see upon the wall a handwriting and to hear a voice that interpreted it to him, saying: "Oh poor dupe of falsity! When will you hang up a stocking emptied by benevolence and make an investment in real happiness? When will you serve love, that it may present you with his best gifts? Are there none who need but cannot have in this great city? Are there no hopeful children who will creep down to disappointment on Christmas morning? Power of light and heat, of truth and love, of purest happiness is in these humbles that you handle, but your heart is shriveled up into nothingness. You have lost your income and must leave your principal. Come with me."

Was it a dream? Who can say? But they found him there the next morning, cold with a new coldness and grasping with a futile hand the full stocking that was so empty!—Christopher G. Hazard.
(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

IN A SMALL village every Christmas eve the organist of the little church and some of the girls and boys of the choir go forth and sing carols. They go to homes where there are older people, perhaps where they cannot get out during the winter time, and they give their Christmas concert. And they sing under the windows of these homes so that their voices sound truly as carols sung under the stars on the night before Christmas. A simple enough thing to do, perhaps, but very lovely. It brings pleasure to those who hear the carols and those who sing them, love this Christmas-time festival of their very own.—Mary Graham Bonner.
(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

THE TRADE



The Christmas gift she gave to me,
From it I ne'er will part.
I gave her a diamond;
And she gave to me her heart.

DESERT HOLLY

Though not profuse enough for general gathering at Christmas time, and not as suitable as the regular holly for wreath-making purposes, the desert holly (Perezia nana) of the Southwest is a peculiar little plant with stiff, smooth, dull bluish-green leaves with prickly edges, like holly leaves, but not so stiff. The plant bears one light purplish-pink flower, the head about an inch long, with purplish bracts. The plant grows but two or three inches high, and looks somewhat like a little sprig stuck in the sand. Another plant with bluish-white leaves and erroneously called "desert holly" is sometimes used for wreaths on the Pacific coast.—C. F. Wadsworth.
(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

THE REASON OF REINDEER

"I know why Santa Claus has reindeer," announced little Mary.
"Why?" asked her mother.
"Cause they have Christmas trees growing on their heads!"—M. B. Thomas.
(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)

IT'S A GOOD TRYOUT

The man who has tried to hide some gifts from the wife or kids knows how futile is the attempt to secrete the jewelry from burglars.

A GENEROUS PRAYER

There is no finer Christmas sentiment than the words of my Father: "God bless us, every one."

COZY THEATRE

Matinee Saturday 2 to 5:30

<p>Friday MARTIN JOHNSON'S JUNGLE PICTURES The pictures of the kind on the screen Made in the Wilds of Africa Also— Christie Comedy</p>	<p>Saturday WILLIAM S. HART in "THE SOUL OF HATE" Also— Fox Sunshine Comedy And— Mutt and Jeff</p>
<p>Monday and Tuesday A GOLDWYN FEATURE And— Capitol Comedy</p>	<p>Wednesday and Thursday A PARAMOUNT FEATURE And— Christie Comedy</p>

FOOTBALL BOYS WITH COACH EXTEND THANKS

The members of the Merkel High School Foot Ball team and their able coach, I. L. Jackson, have asked this paper to extend their thanks and appreciation to the local business men and citizens in general, who have aided and co-operated with them this year in their effort to give this city a sure enough foot ball team. And this paper takes this opportunity to commend the boys and Mr. Jackson for their able and earnest efforts, in that they have really made the best record of any team the school has had for many years.

FARM BUREAU MEMBERS

You are requested to bring all cotton by the 22nd of December, as Platform manager will quit on that date. C. W. Simpson, Secretary. Itp

READ THE ADDS AND SEE WHO APPRECIATES YOUR TRADE

In this week's paper and the next issue, our readers will find many Christmas and New Year Greetings from the various business and professional men of Merkel, who extend the season's greetings as well as expressions of thanks to the patrons and friends.

The fact that these firms have bought and paid for space in this paper to so express their thanks, shows that they sincerely appreciate the business you have given the past year just coming to a close. So, this paper hopes that our readers, every one of them, will look carefully through the paper this week and next and see how our merchants appreciate your business.

Now is the time to buy him that suit or overcoat. A gift that is worth while. Brown Dry Goods Co. It

Call 159!

for **Kerosene, Gasoline or
Magnolia Ford Oil.**

Joyous Yuletide

SPECIAL

To the one catching the Magnolia Turkey December 15th we will give five gallons of gasoline and drain and refill your crank case with Magnolia FORD OIL

FREE!

Magnolia Filling Station

NOTICE OF BOND ELECTION

Notice is hereby given THAT an election will be held at the Fire Station in the town of Merkel, within the Merkel Independent school District on the 18th day of January 1924 to determine whether the bonds of said district shall be issued to the amount of \$40,000.00 payable serially as follows, to wit:—\$1000.00 on the first day of February, 1925, and \$1000.00 on the first day of February each and every year there after to and including the year 1964 and bearing interest at the rate of 8 percent per annum for the purpose of constructing and equipping a public free school building of brick material, and purchasing a site therefor within said district, and if there shall be \$1000.00 annually levied and collected on all taxable property in said district for the current year and annually thereafter while said bonds or any of them are outstanding, a tax sufficient to pay the current interest and provide a sinking fund sufficient to pay the principal at maturity.

B. C. Gaither has been appointed manager of said election which shall be held as nearly as possible in conformity with the general election laws of the state.

No person shall vote at said election unless he be a qualified voter under the Constitution and laws of the state of Texas and a tax payer in said Merkel Independent School District.

Those in favor of the issuance of the bonds and the levying of the tax shall write or print on their ballots "FOR THE BONDS AND THE TAX;" and those against the issuance of the bonds and the levying of the tax shall write or print on their ballots, "AGAINST BONDS AND THE TAX."

Said election was ordered by the board of trustees of said Merkel Independent School District by order passed on the 10th day of December 1923 and this notice is issued pursuant to said order.

Dated this 10th day of December 1923.

Signed:—R. O. Anderson, President of the Board of Trustees of Merkel Independent

School District.
ATTEST:—W. O. Boney, Secretary of Board of Trustees of the Merkel Independent School District. 1423.

Junior B. Y. P. U. Program

1. Introduction, by Harold Boney.
 2. Prince Adonijah covets the Throne, by Benjamin Sheppard.
 3. Nathan learns Adonijah's Plans, By Clara Louise Miller.
 4. David plans a feast for Solomon, By D. O. Huddleston.
 5. Solomon is anointed king, by Thelma Miller.
 6. Adonijah takes refuge in the Tabernacle, by O. B. Boden.
 7. Solomon pardons Adonijah, by John Frazier.
 8. David's farewell address, by Kenneth Mayfield.
 9. David gives Solomon the plans of the Temple, by William Sheppard.
- Every one come. A hearty welcome to all.

Now is the time to buy him that suit or overcoat. A gift that is worth while. Brown Dry Goods Co.

We Have---

a little institution around here on the corner called The Merkel Garage, and we want you, our patrons to know that you are at home here, at our place of business, and that you have co-operated with us by your Loyalty and Patronage until now we feel that we owe you an expression of Thanks and Good-will, so

Here's Hoping That You and Yours May Have a

Merry Christmas

Prosperous New Year

Is the Wish of
Joe Ridenbauch, Ed Gant, Frank O'Briant,
Mechanics
Davis Jones, Sid Coats, Floyd Chaney,
Front Men

Merkel Garage
Ross Ferrier H. L. Propst
Phone 123

**STYLE, FAD or FANCY WILL NEVER
DECREE A BETTER EXPRESSION
THAN THE GOOD OLD WISH—**

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



To those who have patronized us in the past we come with this message of appreciation and good wishes. We try always to show our appreciation, large or small.

As we make our entry into the New Year may we do so with confidence and kindness warmed with the fire of good will which this Christmas has kindled in all our hearts. May we live in the belief that "That Best is Yet to Come."

SOUTHSIDE ELECTRIC GIN
L. L. MURRAY, Manager
J. P. SHARP, Bookkeeper

METHODIST CHURCH

Remember next Sunday is Orphans day and bring an offering and help to take care of God's little ones.

The Church conference has done its work as best it knew how and we find that we have Four hundred and thirty members. We may have made some mistakes but we did the best we could. Come now and let's make it five hundred members by Conference. What do you say? We can do it.

The congregations have increased with every service and we are having almost a house full every time, but some are not coming. We will look for you next Sunday and have a seat for you. Will you come and occupy it?

Our Sunday School has also increased with every Sunday but we haven't reached our three hundred yet. We must do this before the year is out, provided we have any weather.

The Leagues are doing some fine work and want your help. Are you a youngster? And have you been attending? They are looking for you next Sunday afternoon to help swell the crowd. "BE A BOOSTER" for your league.

Our First Quarterly Conference will convene next Tuesday evening, December 18th, at the church. Let's have every thing ready for a great conference.

DO YOU MISS THE CHURCH? A Man misses a closed bank according to the amount he has on deposit in it. The CHURCH will be missed little by those who put little into the CHURCH. "Let the good work go on."
T. J. Rea Pastor

Listen folks! Watch for that Magnolia Turkey. Besides the fact that the turkey is free to the person catching it, that person will get five gallons of gas free. Magnolia Filling Station. It

If you want to sell land see J. A. Janes. 14t2p.

Christmas March Was Played by Minister

THE minister had hung up his stocking, too. The sprites that put into it a candy cane, a lollipop, a ball, an apple and a motor car that would go, had added a mouth organ, most appropriate and perhaps most needed of all gifts, for what other mouth should so dispense harmony?

Then, after breakfast, came the procession into the parlor and onto the wonderful tree. First, little Sarah, with the early and aided steps of her one year and the big eyes of her first Christmas tree. Then demure Helen, blowing her own horn for once, then big Sarah and all the uncles, aunts and cousins, then father and mother, and then the minister, playing his new march upon his new organ.

When they were all seated in the happy circle they asked for the words of that new tune and here they are:

If birds could sing in Christmas trees, If they could hum with happy bees, If they were sweet with all the spice of all things beautiful and nice, They could not altogether be More full of love than this, our tree. Chorus.—March, march to the Christmas tree. It has a loving gift for thee.

Then they all sang it, after which the beautiful tree yielded its fruit.—Christopher G. Hazard.
(© 1922, Western Newspaper Union.)

Christmas Telegrams Add Yuletide Cheer

HE WAS always busy, always rushing, always hurrying. He always had so many things to attend to and so many people were constantly pressing it upon his time with this demand, with that, which required attention.

He wished he could see more of his friends. His friends wished they could see more of him. He was the sort they would like to see more of and at times they were a little annoyed that he was so busy.

He was busier than was really normal. They said he had no time for the pleasant things of life and that he could neither enjoy things himself nor could he be enjoyed because he was always having so much to do.

But he took time for one thing. He never failed to take time for it.

Every Christmas he sent all his friends beautiful Christmas telegrams of cheer. He thought of them and he remembered them and every Christmas morning as his friends opened their gay Christmas telegrams they would say:

"He always finds time to think of me on Christmas morning, anyway! What a pleasure this is!"—Mary Graham Boudin.
(© 1922, Western Newspaper Union.)

Who Is Your Neighbor? A Good Christmas Game

THIS is a very lively Christmas game, and one especially useful in an emergency, for it can be played without preparation of any kind. Arrange as many chairs as there are players in the form of a circle. When this has been done the party must divide into sides, one side being blindfolded and taking possession of the chairs in such a way that each has a vacant chair at his right hand.

The other side then move silently into the middle of the circle, and at a given signal they must all mysteriously and noiselessly seat themselves in the vacant chairs. At the word "sing" the unblindfolded players must all start singing. A well-known tune may be arranged beforehand, or they may all sing anything that happens to occur to them at the time.

All endeavor to disguise their voices as much as possible. The blindfolded players must listen attentively, the object of each being to guess correctly who his singing right-hand neighbor is.

Those whose guesses are correct have their bandages removed, and change places with their singing neighbors. The unsuccessful guessers must try again. One guess only is allowed each time.—F. H. Sweet.
(© 1922, Western Newspaper Union.)

There Is Satisfaction in Trust in the Future

HE was shabby and old and stooped. As she walked along the streets people turned and looked after her with pitying eyes and thought to themselves what a hard lot hers must be. Yet, had they but known the truth she needed no pity, for, although poor in material wealth, she was far richer in other things than many of those who looked upon her with compassion. For her heart was full of contentment, she had a childlike faith and trust in the future and she was content with her lot in life, realizing that while she lacked many of the things which wealth could buy, God had given her many other gifts instead: The fullness of years, good health, a little freedom to call her own, an income which, if very meager, was enough to supply her with necessities, and, best of all, the ability to see and enjoy the things which were hers. So, while the merry Christmas throng looked at her pityingly as they passed, she went serenely on her way as happy and as much at peace with everything as if all the earth was hers.—Katherine Edelman.
(© 1922, Western Newspaper Union.)

"Merry Christmas," the Big Policeman's Wish

THE big policeman standing in the middle of the road there where two streets cross isn't just a part of the street furniture like the hydrant or the bridge, of course; but I had seen him there so many times a day, week in, week out, season in, season out, I had quite forgotten that he was human like myself, perhaps a little more tired, but perhaps a little happier. But I woke up on Christmas day last year to his reality as a human being.

I was crossing the street with a very gloomy heart. Everything with my life seemed to have gone wrong, and the crisis had been reached this Christmas day. My eyes were downcast at the dirty, slushy snow underfoot, and I gave a glance at no one.

Then suddenly, out of the sky, out of the nowhere, came a deep-voiced, hopeful, "Merry Christmas!" Yes, there was the big policeman merry Christmasing me, and as though he meant it, too. In my surprise, I gave it back heartily, "Merry Christmas, yourself."

And with that cheerful spoken word bursting automatically from my surprised lips the day changed. There was a miracle for you! Not out of the New Testament, but out of today, this day of policeman and hydrants—and the Christmas spirit. On the opposite curb I met happiness face to face. In what form it came does not matter. That is my heart's secret. But it came! And this I know, it would not have come, or coming, I would have surely missed it, had I not lifted my eyes to return the big policeman's "Merry Christmas," and had not the surprised smile stayed with me until I reached that curb.

The policeman this Christmas is to me a symbol. Never again will he be part of the street furniture.—Ethel Cook Elliot.
(© 1922, Western Newspaper Union.)

THE KINDLY STAR

THE little boy was afraid of the dark, but, as he looked out through the low window, upon the panes of which Mr. Frost was making his pictures, he saw a bright star that was winking at him with a most friendly and assuring light. It shone through his tears and seemed to say that it would watch over his sleep. So he shut his eyes, and, stilling his sobs, the better to hear the carol singers across the street, was safely away to slumber and a dream. The dream lady looked like his mother, all dressed in a robe that glistened and sparkled like snow, and she was bringing him the hope of his heart, the sled that was to take him so delightfully down the hill. And when he woke so early on Christmas morning he found that his dream had come true.—Christopher G. Hazard.
(© 1922, Western Newspaper Union.)

MODERN SIMPLICITY



At Christmas time, I do not wish for costly gifts, or rare; Just bring a bit of mistletoe And place it in my hair—Of course I'd want the "follow-up" To be a solitaire.

A PAINFUL EXPERIMENT

Having his Christmas joke, Harry Simpkins changed the road sign just a little, to more perfectly express his holiday sentiment. The reading had been, "Go Slow, School Ahead," but when Harry left it the wording ran, "Go Slow To School Ahead." But afterwards the teacher taught Harry that this was too much.—C. G. Hazard.
(© 1922, Western Newspaper Union.)

THAT MONEY QUESTION

Unfortunately, those who have the most Christmas spirit to make others happy are shy of funds; and probably if they had the funds, they'd be shy of the spirit. The reason lots of folks have piles of money is because they are careful about spending it.

A PRESENT FOR KITTY

"I'd like to give my kitty a radio," declared small Lucy. "What for?" inquired her father. "So she can enjoy all the cat-canta over the world!"—M. B. Thomas.
(© 1922, Western Newspaper Union.)

ALWAYS SOMEONE THERE

When a man tries to sneak a few gifts into the house it seems that the family is always congregated around the front door.

A PLEASURE

It is our pleasure to wish you The Season's Greetings and a New Year Overflowing with happiness and prosperity.

YOURS FOR SERVICE
IN 1924

Alfred H. Ligon,

Agent, Abilene Steam Laundry

PARENT TEACHER CLUB

The Parent Teachers Club did not have their regular meeting on last Wednesday afternoon on account of the weather conditions.

There will not be another meeting of the P. T. A.'s until the regular meeting time in January.

We wish to extend thanks and appreciation to the expression, music and voice departments who gave us such an excellent program on last Friday evening. Many of the large crowd who attended this program have expressed their appreciation of it and also expressed a wish that that we may have more of this kind of entertainment. The proceeds, \$45.35 went to the Library Fund of the P. T. A. And we thank you.

Intermediate League Program

Subject: Living Heroes.
Leader: Erma Lee Rae.

Songs
Scripture lesson (Heb. 11 1-2)
Dr. J. C. C. Newton—Louis Tucker.

Robert A. Hardie—Stella Wifson.

Prayer
Dr. D. L. Mumpower—Clara Lee Tarbutton.

Miss Rebeca Toland—Intha Bird.

Solo.
James L. Kennedy, Mary Ellen Smith.

Announcements
League Benediction

Buy that boy an all wool two-pants suit for Christmas. You can get them at a big reduction now at BROWN'S. 1t

BAPTIST ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday School at 10:00 a. m.
Preaching at 11:00 o'clock and at 7:00 in the evenging.

All B. Y. P. U.'s meet at 6:00 p. m.

Visitors welcome to all services.

SHOES for any member of the family at a great saving NOW.—Brown Dry Goods Company.

313 EGGS IN 365 DAYS

313 eggs in 365 days, the record of a Single White Leghorn Hen, owned by P. E. Payne of Stephenville, Texas. This is official record and makes this the CHAMPION hen of the South. Mr. Payne has 38 other hens that have laid from 250 to 292 eggs in the year. These hens were fed Superior Feeds exclusively. These Feeds handled by T. J. R. Swafford. Phone 44. 1t



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