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Wm. A. Nicholson & Son, Bankers,

AN OLD-TIME CHRISTMAS IN THE UP-COUNTRY.

When Men Shot Muzzle-Loading Muskets, which were Often Bewitched - How the Yankees Kissed.

Spartanburg, December 2.—These days, when crowds of men, women and children are crowding the stores in which Christmas goods are displayed and preparing to make the holiday pleasant for the children, bring to the memory of older people Christmas in the former times. Even many of the humblest homes receive a visit from Santa Claus now. Seventy-five years ago there were no Christmas trees, no giving of gifts, no church services in commemoration of the day, no toy stores, no decoration of the homes, no kissing under the holly and mistletoe, and no popping of firecrackers. Up to 1850 there was not a town of any size in Spartanburg district, except "the village," as Spartanburg was called. The best people lived in the country. At Limestone Springs there were a few families that settled there, 1835 to 1840. There were few stores in the country. Goods were at first hauled from Augusta, Charleston and occasionally from Philadelphia. Clothing, shoes and house furnishing goods were not kept in stores. Firecrackers, torpedoes and all the accompaniments of a modern Christmas celebration were unknown.

CLOSING THE YEAR'S WORK.

It was always a rush to finish the year's work on the farms before Christmas. Shoes were made, and the new clothing was ready for Christmas morning. Generally the children and negroes did not get their new shoes till Christmas. If they had no old ones they went barefooted. The last work was to cut and haul in a supply of green wood and lightwood or rich pine. In one family the father said to his boys that they might have Christmas as long as they could make a back log last. Remember that the chimneys were 8 to 10 feet wide and it took two hands to put on the wood. The old man was named Buice, who gave holiday as long as a back log lasted. The boys had been fooled a time or two by trying gum and poplar. They put their heads together, and early in September they cut a black gum about a foot in diameter and put it in a creek to soak. When Christmas came it lacked much of being dry. It required four stout young men to carry it. When a week was out the back log was as good as ever. It seemed to be planted for the summer. The old man had to give in and acknowledge that his boys were too smart for him.

Instead of firecrackers and torpedoes to announce the coming of Christmas the ordinary guns were used. Only powder charges were put in. The boys of this day could not load or shoot the guns used 75 years ago. The quiet way of announcing Christmas was for an early riser—2 to 4 o'clock—to fire a gun. He would be answered by his nearest neighbors, until all in the neighborhood had hailed the day with the explosion of gun powder. But there was little fun in that. It was too tame. The usual plan was for two or three persons to get together and quietly slip up to a neighbor's house and fire a salute with the muzzles of the gun in a crack of a log house or under the door. The men in the house, if they had guns, would put on

their clothes and join the party, and by daylight there would be a lively crowd. Wine and cake were not handed as they went from house to house, but a taste of corn whiskey was taken now and then. Often they would have "a stew" after the shooting of the Christmas guns. A stew was made by pouring whiskey into a pot and adding spice, ginger and other condiments and bringing it to a boil. It was sweetened according to taste. After the morning celebration the men would divide into parties and go out to hunt such game as was to be killed. The shooting of squirrels was a favorite sport. Very often several dozen would be killed by a party of hunters. They never shot quail, or partridges, "pathridges" as they were called then. The principal guns were rifles. There were a few muskets that came down from the Revolution, and a few English single-barrel shotguns, the barrels being 48 to 58 inches long. All locks were flint and steel. Hunting was the principal outdoor sport. The hunters of that day shot off hand. Their rifles weighed 9 to 12 pounds, but they would have been ashamed to shoot with a rest.

CALVIN WHIT.

Some of the hunters of that day believed in witchcraft. Calvin Whit was an old-time shoemaker. Tall, straight, very muscular, he weighed about 200 pounds. He was a great marksman. He liked hunting better than anything else, unless it was fighting. The writer when a small boy saw him shoot twice at a squirrel and miss. He gave his head a shake and said: "My gun is bewitched." He spoke with the assurance of one who knew it. He put in the charge of powder and the bullet and cut his patching. He took from his pocket a silver coin and cut off a small piece with his knife and placed it on the bullet and rammed it home, saying, "I will bring you down. With steady aim he pulled trigger and the squirrel dropped with a hole through his head. The teachers of psychology can explain why that piece of silver removed the spell from the gun or marksman. It certainly did the work.

Very often in the old days quiltings were given during Christmas week. The young people would come in from the neighborhood. The girls would quilt during the day and the young men would come in before night. When the quilt was finished and taken from the frames some of the bolder boys would wrap it around a girl's head and he would not release her until a kiss was secured. It had to be taken by force, of course, for the girls were always opposed to such fun. At one of these quiltings a school teacher from the north showed how the yankees kissed. He selected a pretty girl and her beau and, placing two chairs back to back in the middle of the room, he caused the two to be seated. After explaining the difficulty of kissing in that position, he said it was easy enough when one knew how it was done. Just as the young man's mouth was watering with expectation, the yankee stooped down and gave the handsome girl a kiss to be remembered. It took the young man sitting with his back to her some time to find "where he was at."

GAMES IN THE OLDEN DAYS.

Playing thimble, Sister Phoebe, twistification and other innocent amusements were enjoyed. Occasionally there would be a regu-

lar "shake down," or country dance. There was generally a fiddler in the neighborhood, who was always short on strings and tunes, but he made things lively.

The Christmas dinners and suppers consisted of turkeys, chickens, sausage, spare ribs and game. Cakes and pies were abundant and the people in that day carried good appetites around with them. Canned goods and all sorts of store eatables were wanting. Another amusement for the men was shooting matches. There were no clay pigeons then and breech-loaders were unknown. Even the term "calibre" was never used and if it had been no one would have known the meaning. The bore of a rifle was designated by the number of bullets to the pound of lead. The prize at these matches was generally a best turkey or money. The shooting match was generally at a short range and many of the shooters were more than "half shot" before the close of the day.

It is said that at one of these Christmas gatherings north of Gaffney, about 1840, the crowd got hungry. There was a bushel or two of eggs in the store. A fire was built out of doors and a big pot put on and about half a bushel of eggs emptied into it. They were boiled thoroughly and with the addition of salt they were devoured. It was told of one of the men that he ate 40 eggs and drank whiskey in proportion and was ready for more next day.

THE PLANTATION CHRISTMAS.

The nearest approach to the modern celebration of Christmas before 1840 was on the plantations, where there were 20 to 40 negroes or more. The wagons were hitched up early in December, and cotton and flour were carried to Columbia. Augustus, Charleston Sugar, coffee, cheese, mackerel, brooms and red need handkerchiefs were bought. Christmas morning the negroes would assemble at the "big house" and catch all the family with "Christmas gift." The shoes were then handed out, a stout pair to each one. The women received the red bandana handkerchiefs and the men got a little tobacco. An extra quantity of flour was given out, and the older women received sugar and coffee. Frequently these negroes would bring gifts of eggs and chickens. They generally had four days to a week's holiday. They were allowed unusual liberty those days, and could fiddle and dance as late at night as they pleased. The negro boys would unite with the white boys, and when they got after a rabbit they were sure to have it. With all the dogs on the place and all the boys yelling, "Molly Cotton-tail" stood no chance at all. There was one thing in favor of the old Christmas celebrations. There were no "dark lantern carousals and debauches." The drinking was public, and if men played a game of "seven-up," it was not behind closed doors.

CHRISTMAS ON HORSEBACK.

There was another kind of amusement in the old days not confined to Christmas especially. The long winter evenings invited young men to rove around. There were no club rooms or special meeting places. As every one owned a horse and saddle, they would mount and ride around the neighborhood, going from house to house. Sometimes they would get "pretty full" after riding in the crisp, cool air an hour or two, and they would make as much noise as a band of Comanches. They had so much vitality and buoyancy that they could not be confined to the chimney corner seven nights in a week. So they would ride around as a sort of safety valve. They never did any harm and there was no malice in their frolics. As one of them expressed it, they were "just riding about and cussin' and having a good time." There were few books and papers, and no public meetings. Militia musters and church meetings were the only public gatherings. The old way of celebrating Christmas may have been severely simple, but there was a rugged honesty in the methods. There

PRIZES FOR FARMERS.

Some fifteen years ago South Carolinians Go In and Win. The prize for the largest yield of corn in the United States on one acre, and that distinction has been of continuing benefit to the State. Even at this late day inquiries are made from time to time about Capt. Drake's achievement. The national contest was arranged by the American Agriculturalist, and the same concern is now arranging for another and even greater contest. Prof. G. Johnson, the able editor of the Agriculturalist, who visited Commissioner Watson here last winter, has written the commissioner about the coming contest, and the latter is exceedingly anxious to see South Carolina participate, and accomplish even more than she did a decade and a half ago. Commissioner Watson says that it will be impossible to provide for the State prizes out of the small appropriation given his department, but he intends to take the matter up with the fertilizer manufacturers and others who should be deeply interested, and will endeavor to get them to make contributions toward the necessary prize money.

The letter of Prof. Johnson to Commissioner Watson is of special interest. He writes as follows: "I wish to call your attention to one of the greatest contests that has ever been inaugurated for the development of cereals and the amount of crops raised on the farms of this country. Your people should take a personal pride in this matter as it will be remembered that the largest corn crop ever produced on a single acre was grown in South Carolina in the American Agriculturalist contest of fifteen years ago. We believe that no single event ever produced so large an amount of advertising for South Carolina and its resources. In fact, there is hardly a week that passes, but that we have some inquiry about this great contest, and the remarkable results produced by Capt. Drake in Marlboro County in your State. I have on my desk at the present time a letter from Dr. W. L. Davenport, of Meadowview, Va., asking about this great crop. He wants all the details. I am sure that your State will come along at the top of the list, and we are especially anxious at this time to have our friends in your State take hold of this matter, showing their loyalty and local pride, and I ask you to lend all the support you possibly can in your special capacity to land South Carolina at the head of the list in this great contest.

"I trust arrangements can be made to set aside \$500, the same to be distributed in prizes to be arranged by yourself and the farmers in South Carolina, who score the highest number of points in this contest. We believe that nothing can be done that would be of greater interest and value, and we will do everything in our power to push the matter in a public way. By securing \$500 or more for this work, the fact would be announced in our manual, and the publication of it would be of great value to South Carolina farmers. I am sure that the Governor of your State would endorse this idea, and why not have a Governor's prize? We have headed the list with \$5,000 in prizes ourselves, feeling that the results will warrant it. Many large fertilizer concerns, implement manufacturers, etc., are offering additional prizes along these lines, thus making it possible for the individual to win from one to a dozen prizes.

was not as much style and parade as there is now, and there were no forced courtesies and gifts given with grudging.—Charles Petty, in News and Courier.

F. M. FARR, President.

J. D. ARTHUR, Cashier.

THE
Merchants and Planters National Bank,
Successfully Doing Business at the "Old Stand."

IT is the OLDEST Bank in Union, has a capital and surplus of \$10,000, is the only NATIONAL Bank in Union, has paid dividends amounting to \$200,000, pays FOUR per cent. interest on deposits, is the only Bank in Union inspected by an officer, has Burglar-Proof vault, and Safe with Time-Lock, pays more taxes than ALL the Banks in Union combined.

WE EARNESTLY SOLICIT YOUR BUSINESS.

For instance, a South Carolina farmer may win our grand sweepstake prize, and in addition any grand prize that your State may offer, besides the grand prizes of the fertilizer concerns, providing the crop was raised by their product; the grand prize from the implement manufacturer from whom he purchased the implement with which he cultivated his crop, etc.

"In addition a large number of live stock men are interested, and are offering freely their prizes to persons in their State, who score the largest number of points. As an illustration a large breeder of Jersey cattle has offered a thoroughbred registered Jersey heifer calf to the person securing the largest number of points in the contest from his State. I think you can clearly see the great good that will come from this contest."

Commissioner Watson would like to hear from fertilizer manufacturers, those who manufacture farming implements, breeders of cattle and others in this State, who would be willing to make contributions to the \$500, the amount necessary to have South Carolina properly represented in this contest. He thinks that this amount should easily be raised by voluntary subscriptions from such sources, and that it should be assured in a week's time. He asks that he be notified by any concerns desiring to subscribe, as at this season it is impossible to address each concern separately. If the amount is promptly subscribed a conference of the subscribers and representative farmers will be called to arrange all the details as to what prizes should be awarded within the State, also as to the handling of the fund so subscribed, and as to the conditions of the several contests.

It may be mentioned that the American Agriculturalist publications, in which the matter will be exploited, cover the entire country, and have a circulation of 230,000.—August Kohn, in News and Courier.

A PRETTY CHRISTMAS TREE.

Bogansville Sunday School and Parham School Unite in a Christmas Tree.

By unanimous consent it was agreed, and the children, parents, teachers and officers of the Bogansville Methodist Church Sunday School, and the pupils of Parham School taught by Mrs. Sallie Hyatt joined forces, and a Christmas Tree they had in the Church Monday night. The tree was a large, beautiful holly, full of red berries, all among the bright green leaves. Upon this tree was hung all of the Christmas presents and tiny Japanese lanterns were suspended, most brilliantly illuminating the varied gifts in varied hues, in lovely contrast with the foliage of the holly tree. Before distributing the presents an elaborate program was rendered by the pupils of Parham School and the Sunday School children. A number of very pretty and appropriate songs were sung, alternating with some exceedingly interesting and well rendered recitations by the children of both schools. Mrs. Hyatt gave a charming address upon the subject of education and Sunday school work which was greatly enjoyed by all. Then a committee of ladies began the distribution of presents which had been hung upon the tree, and each child was made happy. Then the name of each child was called and a bag of nice apples was given each one. The apples

were purchased by a liberal contribution of the neighbors and it took two barrels to go around, giving each child a little paper bag of apples. This was the most delightful evening spent by all present. Harmony, sweet good will and Christmas cheer prevailed, and nothing transpired to mar the pleasure of any, and all went home happy and merry as a marriage bell.

A PRETTY HOME WEDDING.

Miss Lillie Adams Becomes the Wife of Mr. Louis Seales.

Wednesday, 1 o'clock p. m., at the home of the bride's father, Mr. F. M. Adams, Adamsburg, Miss Lillie Adams was married to Mr. Louis Seales, Rev. J. R. Funderburk officiating. The attendants were: Mr. Wm. Bently with Miss Mary Vaughan, Mr. Lonnie Adams with Miss Corrie Bently. The marriage was attended by a large number of relatives and friends. Immediately after the marriage ceremony a grand reception was tendered by the father of the bride, and a most sumptuous and delicious dinner was served. The bride and groom are well known and very popular young people of the Adamsburg neighborhood and many were the congratulations and kind wishes expressed for their future happiness.

The Right of Way.

In the early days of western railway building, days not so long gone by as to be out of memory, there were many exciting races between rival roads for the possession of important mountain passes. Such a race, says the World's Work, was that between the Santa Fe and the Rio Grande roads for the right of way through Raton pass to New Mexico and the southwest.

Engineers and construction gangs worked in mad haste to get to it ahead of their rivals. The victory fell to the chief of the Santa Fe. When the Rio Grande cohorts arrived they found him alone in one of the big gorges, shovel in hand, slicing earth from an 8,000 foot hill.

"What are you doing here?" they asked.

"Constructing a railroad," he replied. He turned another shovelful of dirt, dropped the tool and hitched up his heavy cartridge belt.

"Any one who interferes with the Santa Fe does it at his own risk," he said quietly.

First the Rio Grande men laughed, and then they raged, and then they turned and went away. Their road was cut off from the south forever.

A Bath In Bubbles.

"To take a bath at Tiflis, in Russian Caucasus, is to court a never to be forgotten experience," says one who knows. "The masseur who presides over the toilet of his patrons is a weird looking figure. His head is shaved, a rag is twisted around his waist, and his feet are dyed a beautiful red. You are seized by this individual, rubbed, pushed face downward on a marble slab, and his feet in your spine and his hands upon your shoulders. Then he grinds his feet up and down your back. They are round your neck, on your head—everywhere! Then he vaults lightly off, and in a moment, from a linen bag filled with soap, he has squeezed clouds of perfumed bubbles, and you are hidden in them from head to foot as completely as if you had fallen into a snowdrift. You are not absolutely bruised, but you are clean."—Kansas City Journal.

A Bargain Rush.

"How did the manager get all those women out of that burning theater so quickly?"

"He went on the stage and announced that a man down at the entrance was giving away samples of baking powder."