

Christmas on the Stage



UNDER THE MISTLETOE.

A Bank on Two Legs.
 "For more than thirty years the most popular woodsman's bank in Maine was a bank on two legs," says Major Holmes Day, author of "King Spruce." "Until he was over seventy years old Uncle Nate Swan was conductor on the Bangor and Piscataquis railroad, running between the city and Moosehead lake. With him rode the woods and driving crews. When they forgot themselves and made a racket on his train he used to cuff them into submission, and no man ever raised his hand against Uncle Nate. When the men came out of the woods with their pay most of them realized from bitter experience that the city folks would get all their money away from them in a few days. As soon as they would get aboard the train they would begin to strip ten dollar bills off their rolls and hand the money to Uncle Nate to 'sink' for them, banking it on call. They never forgot, nor did he, and in all the years there was never a dispute between Conductor Swan and any of his depositors. When they came back on his train they were sure of enough money for their fare and their tobacco at the lake outfitting store. They wouldn't have known very well what to do with more."

Her Ideal Villain.
 The following anecdote, taken from "My Story," by Hall Caine, is interesting:

Immediately after the production of "The Woman in White," when all England was admiring the arch villainy of Fosco, the author, Wilkie Collins, received a visit from a lady who congratulated him upon his success with somewhat icy cheer and then said: "But, Mr. Collins, the great failure of your book is your villain. Excuse me if I say you really do not know a villain. Your Count Fosco is a very poor one, and when next you want a character of that description I trust that you will not disdain to come to me. I know a villain and have one in my eye at this moment that would far eclipse anything that I have ever read of in books. Don't think that I am drawing upon my imagination. The man is alive and constantly under my gaze. In fact, he is my own husband." The lady was the wife of Edward Bulwer Lytton.

Fixed Bayonet In London.
 The privilege of marching through London with fixed bayonets is enjoyed by but very few regiments, such as the Royal Fusiliers, who trace their origin to Cromwell's trained bands, which in later years produced so famous a captain as John Glyn. After the Royal Fusiliers, or perhaps even before them in point of regimental seniority, come the East Kent "Buffs," now the third of the line, who claim a similar city ancestry, while the Royal Marines for some reason or other also enjoy the same fixed bayonet rights in the city. A battalion of the grenadier guards was on impressed to serve as marines, and hence they share the privilege of the men who are "soldiers and sailors too." This also explains why that grenadier battalion has for its tattoo "Rule Britannia"—as a souvenir of the time when its combative existence was of the amphibious kind.—London Standard.

Vicissitudes of a Picture.
 The vicissitudes of Leonardo da Vinci's picture, "Last Supper," reminds a correspondent of the strange experiences of Holbein's "Field of Cloth of Gold," which may be seen any day at Hampton Court palace. After the downfall of Charles I., Cromwell in order to raise funds proposed the sale of certain pictures, this among the number. The bargain was already made, but when the would be purchaser came to inspect Holbein's masterpiece he discovered that the head of Henry VIII. had been cut from the canvas. He naturally withdrew his offer, and the picture was preserved to the nation. On the restoration a nobleman confessed to having committed the theft for love of art and his country, and he returned the missing head, which now occupies its original position in the canvas. The circle made by the knife is still plainly visible.—London Chronicle.

Cold Storage Rats.
 The attendant came out of the cold storage room with an awed look. "Rats are wonderful," he said. "We thought modern plumbing would abolish them, but they live in the clean light and dryness of the best modern plumbing more comfortably than they did in the damp and filth and darkness of the past. We thought the modern ship would abolish them, but the Lusitania has as many rats as had the Columbus caravels. And here!" He made an awed gesture. "And here I find rats in our cold storage rooms at temperatures that freeze the breath and cause it to fall in the form of snow. To and fro they prowl. Their coats are thick and warm like fur, and, with frost on their whiskers, they feed heartily on meat and game frozen to rocklike hardness."—Exchange.

Fire Terms In Japan.
 Fires in Japan are so common that this destructive agency has established itself as a national institution, and a whole vocabulary has grown up to express every shade of meaning in matters fiery. The Japanese language has special terms for an incendiary fire, an accidental fire, fires starting from one's own house, a fire caught from next door, a fire which one shares with others, a fire which is burning to an end, the flame of a fire, anything—for instance, a brazier, from which a fire may arise; the side from which to attack a fire in order to extinguish it; a visit of condolence after a fire.

More Wheat to Come.
 A Chinese doctor, as a punishment for causing his patient's death, had to pay ten loads of wheat. While carrying the grain he was met by a man who asked him to come and treat a sick member of his family. "All right," said the doctor, "I will be there shortly, but in the meantime you may be getting your barn cleaned out."—Scrap Book.

Nothing.
 "Nature plans well for mankind's needs."
 "I should say so. What could be more convenient than ears to book spectacles over?"—Washington Herald.

The Soft Answer.
 He—Artists say that five feet four is the divine height for women. His Darling (crossly)—You know, I am five feet nine. He (quickly)—You are more than divine, my dear.

Laws catch flies and let hornets go free.—Anacharsis.

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Seeing Santa Claus

By LAURA FROST ARMITAGE.

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EARL (to Ruth)—Oh, I just wish we could see him.
Ruth—See whom?
Earl—Why, Santa Claus. Earl and I have just been talking about him, and we were wishing we could get a peep at him once.
Gladys—Oh, I wouldn't like to!
Dorothy—Harry and I tried it last year. We came down and hid in the front hall, but papa found us and sent us to bed.
Fred (after thinking awhile)—I've thought of something. Santa Claus wouldn't come in if he should spy us, but if he thought we were not real children he might. Couldn't we fool



"SANTA WOULDN'T COME IN IF HE SHOULD SPY US."

him by making believe we were Mother Goose children right out of the book?
Dorothy—How could we do that?
Fred—We could dress like them and then stand perfectly still as if we were made of wax or something, just the way you do in a tableau, you know. He might think it was some kind of a show of wax figures.
Earl—Oh, my! I couldn't keep as still as that.
Harry—You could if you really wanted to see Santa Claus.
Earl—Oh, I will! I will! See me! (Poses.)
Gladys—Will we have to stand so very long?
Fred—Oh, not very, very long! We must all be ready before 12 o'clock. We must dress like Mother Goose children, and I'll fix you in your places. I'll be Boy Blue. We can find some dress-up clothes in the attic.
Harry—I think I'll be Jack Horner. I can have a pie.
Dorothy—I want to be Bopeep. A cane with a book handle will do for a crook.
Gladys—May I be Miss Muffet?
Earl—What can Ruth and I be?
Fred—You might be Jack and Jill and carry a pail of water. An empty pail will do. Now let's be off and see what we can find. Then we'll go to bed, and I'll lie awake, and after papa

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