

REMEMBER A FAIRY FIDELITY.

If Christmas time could only seem
As it used to do long since;
If one could keep their hearts awake
If beaded bubbles would not break
Over the ebbling wine;
If one could hear a fancy now
The reindeer on the roof,
And know the merry nattering clank
Beside a stocking long and plump
Would stop for our behoove;
If one could trip out on a quest
With such a light and merry heart,
To find some lonely, kindly saint,
In memory of legend quaint;
Once more had done his part;
If one could hang a stocking now
Beside some fairy elf,
Cresping like childhood on a night,
And like it finding, with the light,
Each darling child, each dear desire
To find the silver stars of hope;
For us to wear, away, and bright,
Hearts that we covet for our own,
The promised white and mystic snow,
The lamp to guide us in the way;
The clock that Chariot bestow
The glad youth that is gone,
A letter from the shining shore,
From happy ones who were before,
To help us struggle on;
Ah! then we'd hang our stockings up
As well as Lou and Ben;
And if they were not full at first,
So full the gaping stitches burst;
We'd hang them up again.
—Ethel Lynn.

FARMER JOHN'S CHRISTMAS BOX.

H. S. ATWATER.

It was the afternoon before Christmas Day, and honest John Graham was packing up his butter tubs and the remainder of his Christmas marketing before returning to his expectant family far off in the quiet country.
All day long the great market-house had been full to overflowing with an eager crowd of people, busy with the buying of their Christmas cheer; and John's fat turkeys, ducks, and country, home-made sausages had been so well patronized that not one remained to burden his two strong horses, which had drawn the whole heavy load into the great city on the afternoon previous.
Many a kindly greeting of the season had been given honest John by his smiling customers; for St. Nicholas gives to all who have him a happy face and light heart in this his own festive season.
One thing yet remained to be done, and John would have sooner lost his strong right hand than have neglected this pleasant duty. There must be a nice present bought for the kind wife at home, and stop—a happy thought flashed athwart the good man's mind.
How would Margery like a new bonnet, for times had he heard his wife, and, although she had made no mention of it, John well knew in his heart that it would be the very thing to please her. Then there was his little Dolly, who with her eyes as black as a sash and bright as stars on a frosty night, had stood on tip-toe to kiss him as he sat in his wagon well rolled in a blanket to keep out the cold, and when he came down the walk to open the wide gate, kissing her hand to him until he was hidden from sight by a turn in the road.
"Poosy shall have her doll she has asked for so often, and a good big box of sugar plums too," he softly promised himself, a loving look coming into his mild brown eyes, so, calling his boy to finish his preparations for him, he sallied forth on his errand of love. He strolled along the busy streets, looking into the store-windows with wondering curiosity until a milliner's display caught his eye, and he peeped in front of the window.
His big, burly frame, with his rough overcoat, took up so much room, and he looked so utterly out of place, that many a curious, smiling look was cast upon him. He stood so long a time trying to conquer his diffidence and enter the store that a little street gossamer out, with a nasal twang, "hey, old man, which suits yer complexion best? Buy the one with the peaked top, old cabbage head."
John, thus rudely roused to a sense of his position, shook his big fist good-naturedly at the saucy urchin and entered the store. Good humor and love held high carnival in John's heart this blessed Christmas-tide and left no room for unkind feelings for any one.
The smiling saleslady, wondering at her odd customer, displayed several bonnets to John's astonished eyes, fairly bewildering him with the variety of shape, colors, feathers, and flowers, and the many other varieties that she exhibited to him. "Well, ma'am, I guess I'll have to leave it to you; I can drive a plow and manage a farm, but I can't buy a woman's bonnet."
The woman laughed heartily, and, picking out one of quiet gray silk, with a red rose and gray feather, presented it to his tired gaze, and our good farmer, glad to be quit of this herculean task (worse to him than a whole day's hay making), stretched the bonnet box and without a murmur paid the fashionable price the woman named, only too glad to get off this easily.
Next came the toy store. There he found less difficulty, and he quickly picked out an immense one almost as large as the human Dolly, and to this was added the box of goodies so dear to the heart of all little ones.
Now then he was all ready and in another half-hour was rattling over the stones of the city toward the country.
The horses, as if knowing whither

they were bound, laid their lives to their work right willingly, every now and then playfully turning toward one another and nodding, as if exchanging their ideas on the many queer sights they had seen in the wonderful, great city. John turned up the collar of his overcoat and tucked in his blanket closely around him, for he faced the wind and the sunset sky, looked angry and lowering. In fact, in less than half an hour snowflakes began to fall, at first slowly and softly, then faster and faster, until the air grew thick and misty with the quickly falling flakes.
The stout horses bent their heads to the gusts of wind that whirled the snow in their faces, and John urged them on in every tone, twice stopped and lighted his lantern, which he carried for such emergencies, and the rays fell far into the road ahead, just enough to make darkness visible.
As the horses passed at the top of a steep hill to regain breath after their long pull, John thought he heard a feeble cry on the side of the road. He listened intently and heard it repeated. He hastily snatched up the lantern and quickly proceeded in the direction from whence the sound came, and there, by the rays of the light which he carried, and all cuddled up under a blanket shawl, was a baby, about nine months of age.
"My cert!" exclaimed John, "I've found my Christmas box. Poosy, we lambkin! What hard-hearted wretch left you here to die, poor little innocent!"
The baby stopped crying and looked at him with her finger in her mouth and her great blue eyes fixed, half in wonder, half in fear, on his pitying face. John held out his arms coaxingly, and a smile came over the baby face and "Coo, coo," broke in lisping tones from the rose bud mouth. He tenderly lifted the little creature, and opening his coat folded her in close to his great warm heart.
No sound save that of the bitter wind disturbed the stillness, no track of any living being was to be found, and John, with his burden in his arms, clambered back into his wagon, and, closely nestling the little one, chirruped to his stout horses, that knew the road too well to need much watching.
Wondering, solemn thoughts came to John as he sat there with the baby in his arms, and that other little baby, who came to this world so many centuries ago that very night who was born among the dumb beasts and cradled in the manger of a stable, but who withal was Lord and Savior. And he thought how the very stars had sung for joy and how a thrill of happiness vibrated from end to end of God's fair world at the advent of the long promised King; and as these thoughts came solemnly, sweetly, thronging to his mind, his voice rang out clearly over the stormy night in the dear old Christmas hymn, "When shepherds watched their flocks by night, and he vowed that this Christmas night should shine and star and heart with his own flesh and blood. Presently his voice ceased, and looking down, he saw his baby fast asleep, her long lashes lying on her soft cheek, and quite peacefully drew out his warm buffalo-robe and cast about in his mind for a place in which to lay his sleeping charge.
The large empty box, which had borne his poultry to market, caught his eye, and placing in it his warm, comfortable, robe, he made a soft bed for his Christmas present; so he nestled her down among the skins and covered her with his overcoat.
He did not mind the cold, although his face glowed scarlet and he had to swing his arms and slap his hands to keep the blood in circulation; but he whistled merrily to his good horses, that rattled on with increased speed, and soon drew up before the gate of his farm-house.
The door was opened and the figure of a woman appeared, peering into the darkness, the light of a candle she shaded with her hand falling on the black eyes and eager face of Dolly, who stood with her head pushed out under her mother's arm.
"Margery," shouted John to his wife, "come see my Christmas box. Give the light to David and let him hold it here in the wagon. Here, give me both your hands," said John, stooping down and helping his wondering wife into the wagon, and she, quickly sleeping her rosy cheek closely to the soft skin-linings John's Christmas box.
Her mother-heart was touched, and, opening to this little, homeless waif, she brought her into her happy home. A short time she sat by her own window, who could depict Dolly's delight at this "real, live baby?" Not even the great magnificence of the new purchase or the purchase of the box of candies, some seen in her estimation, with this newly-found treasure.
The baby's quaint, serious ways were a never-failing source of delight, and Dolly would fold her ever could have got tired of her rapid baby, that could not cry or laugh or poke its little fingers into her eyes and pull her hair, and once again Margery and John grew young in watching and guarding their Christmas boy.
Years rolled on, bringing their usual changes of joy and sorrow, of good and evil fortune; had left their traces in wrinkles and gray hairs on the mid-aged man, and on the gray hair of his wife to many of the old; had changed romping school-children into strong young men and sweet, winning maidens. But the old farm-house still stood, looking very little older than it did seventeen years ago this Christmas Eve.
Surely time hath dealt gently here; these John's, as ever—his hair more

thickly mixed with grey, his brow more wrinkled, but with a soft sadness in his eyes that was new to them.
A young woman, who sat by the window lying a close, warm hood on a chubby baby, the very miniature of John, and the young mother's is a fac-simile of the Margery of old, whom, alas! we do not find. Naught but her empty place and a loving memory ever green in John's faithful heart remains of the farmer's wife.
"Well, father," said Dolly, giving her baby a hearty kiss and setting him down on the floor, "I've tied on my own hood and folded closely her warm shawl. I must be getting toward home. Ned will be wanting his supper, and it's a goodish piece to walk against this blinding wind, but I'll leave you all alone, but Charlie will soon be in. So be sure to come to-morrow night after church, and we will have a merry Christmas." So saying, Dolly picked up her fat baby with a loving squeeze, and, nodding good-by, left the house.
"So like her mother," murmured John to himself, as he turned with a sigh into his solitary home, and, tilling his pipe, he tilted himself in the warm chimney corner. The fire burned brightly on the hearth, casting a pleasant glow on the shining pattern ranged on the dresser and half illuminating the dusky corners of the large old-fashioned kitchen.
John, gazing into the coals, saw many a pleasant sight. First smiling baby face; next came a little golden-haired lassie, with a bright fairy light in her eyes, and her hair out-trotted arms to meet him, and return him, tired with his hard day's work, this faded into a slender school-girl, with large serious eyes, the very color of the mid-summer sky, hovering around him with an eager, loving, and anxious forebush his slightest wish; next came a sick-chamber, with the poor, weary, pain-worn occupant tenderly nursed and soothed by this same sweet face and gentle hand; then a sad and weary John, when all the world seemed empty and his loneliness became all but heart-breaking; but even amid this blackness was the one bright face, ever winsome and kind, and ever striving, with all the might of a loving heart, to fill the gap left by death.
"God bless my Christmas box," John murmured, softly, when there stole an arm around his neck, a voice spoke in his ear, and a soft kiss stole upon his cheek.
"Why, father, dear, how long have you been asleep? The fire is all out and your pipe, too. They kept me longer at church fixing the greens than I thought for, you should see how sorry I look. Hark, father! listen to the Christmas carol; they are practicing it for to-morrow." The golden head was drawn closely to the breast where it had lain so helplessly seventeen years ago, and in the soft glancing of the twilight, John and his Christmas baby listened with hushed breath to the mysterious, beautiful voices borne to them from the neighboring church.
Going to "Run" Dakota.
From the Chicago Herald.
"Yes, we're going to Dakota," said one of the party of eight lively young men on board a Lake Shore train, near Toledo. "We're going out to Dakota to run it."
"Run it?" queried one of the party.
"Yes, we mean to run the State, when it becomes a State. Jim over there's the Governor, Henry'll be State Treasurer, John will be Comptroller, and I guess United States Senatorship will be the good one for me." Then the whole party laughed and another spoke up.
"It isn't as bad as that, stranger. But we shall be scheming to go out to settle in two or three years, and then after we get started we're going to bring a lot more of our friends out. Some of us are lawyers, some doctors, some newspaper men, two merchants, and you can see we are all well posted in the affairs of some of these new counties. Help each other into the offices, and when the State is organized perhaps we'll be strong enough to capture something pretty good. You know it doesn't take a very large crowd of fellows that pull wool for me to make quite a stir in a little State like that. And we're all from Ohio, too. But keep it quiet, stranger, because the darned newspapers might get hold of it."
The Garfield Washington Residence.
Washington Cor. Baltimore Sun.
Mrs. Garfield has decided to retain for the present the family residence in this city on Thirteenth and F streets. A short time since a suggestion was made that it be purchased and given to the Christian Church, and presented to him simultaneously with the occupation of the Garfield Memorial Hospital on Columbus Avenue. Several handsome subscriptions were promised, and one wealthy gentleman agreed to give \$8,000 as his contribution if the purchase could be made. Mrs. Garfield was written to on the subject, when she replied that she had no objection to the purchase of the property, but now she felt reluctant to do so. The longer part of her married life, she said, had been spent in the house, and the associations and memories which clung to it were of such a character that she did not feel like letting it go out of her hands. The house is a beautiful one, and a gentleman who uses it mostly for a picture gallery.

Christmas.
In the December number of Harper's Magazine, Charles Dudley Warner, one of the most charming essayists of the day, writes:
Christmas almost turns December into May in these latitudes. It illuminates the shortest days and the darkest month of the year. The Pilgrim Fathers tried to give November a lift with Thanksgiving; but November got such a bad name in literature in England that little could be done with it. We threw in our Indian summer, but that makes only a faint impression in our apprehension over against the London fog. This fog has spread all over the English-speaking world, as all slavishly submit to it, and, through the English literature and tradition, let it color our views of life. We are mainly unconscious of the subtle influence upon our thought through the medium of what we read, and we never know how our imagination and fancy in daily life are controlled by the poet and the story-teller. November in many parts of this country is not a month to be ashamed of, and I am convinced that our feeling toward it would be very different if we were the lineal inheritors of Italian instead of English literature.
We have been more fortunate about December. The Yuletide and the merry-making in cottage and hall cast a glow over it, Germany decks it with evergreens, and, so much stronger is our imagination than our senses, we can almost hold in the rustic of Orkney a Scotch peasant when he goes to dig his sheepout of a snow-drift on Christmas-eve is that other scene.
"White shepherds watch'd their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground."
Somehow it has come about that this is the most cheerful time of the year, notwithstanding the sun has gone away on a journey, and left nature stark and laid out in white. Just at the time by the calendar when the sympathies ought to be all frozen up, lo! human nature, in disregard of the bitter season, blooms out in the sweetest flowering-time of all the year. It is a bad season for the pessimists and the utilitarian philosophers who maintain that it is the first duty of every man and woman to take care of his or her own self. Christmas comes in, not only to make December a tolerable month, but to teach that he who does most for others does most for himself, and that the man's only safe possession is that which he gets away from him. Christmas gains in vain for the free-hearted gift. Perhaps Christmas does more than any one institution to keep that old-fashioned virtue, loving-kindness, alive in the world.
The Drawer could preach a little sermon on this topic without invading any pulpit, but it is quite unnecessary. It has come about that at Christmas-time nearly every body is a practical preacher of charity, so completely does the divine contagion of it transform the so-called Christian world for the time being. If only the world would not so quickly lay its selfish and its ill will, for it on the 1st of January. Christmas is in fact a sort of electric accumulator, and we sometimes think there is enough of it condensed into a week to last the year round if it were properly distributed. Why should all the turkeys and the goose die in one holocaust? Why make a fashion of divine charity? Why not imitate the Drawer—this is a suggestion of correspondents, and not of its inventor, which seeks to diffuse geniality and good fellowship throughout the twelve months?
Christmas Humor.
The mess that children are anxious to get into—Christmas.
As the Christmas tree is bent, so is the youthful heart made glad.
Christmas is the anniversary of dyspepsia's lowest conspiracy against comfort.
Hose more despised by little children than the man who takes no stock in Santa Claus?
The man who takes unto himself a wife on Christmas eve will be sure to have well-filled stockings.
"Is Kris Kringle alive, papa?"
The small boy said,
"Ah, yes, and kicking!"
Said the fatherly head.
Christmas is rapidly coming this way, and the young man with a \$1.00 for will, as usual, be presented with a pair of No. 6 slippers.
Listen to the sleigh bells jingle!
See the merry snow-flakes mangle!
How it makes the children glad!
A royal welcome to old Kris Kringle!
If you really desire to perpetrate a practical joke upon your printer this year, just send him a amount of your subscription on Christmas.
What time the holidays roll round,
The bad boy, still in frocks,
Let a little Santa Claus draw near,
And retch his Christmas bow.
A young man who gave his girl a \$75 gold watch last Christmas, married her during the summer, and now he thinks the present was "time" well spent.
It is said that a child born on Christmas will always hate turkey and goose, and lean toward a turkey and a bacon.
She tripped over the dusky croaking,
And the wind, that fiercely blew,
An inch or so of her ankle
Exposed to the public view.
The officer on the next corner
Was heard distinctly to say,
That's the nicest little girl I've ever seen this Christmas day.
The small boy now puts in night

hours a day flattening his nose against the windows of confectionery and toy stores.
The Long Winter Evenings.
Peck's Sun.
At this season of the year when the cold weather and long evenings set in, the question arises, what shall be done to make home attractive, especially for our young people? Something must be done to counteract outside evil influences—a question that is too often left unanswered, and, as is often the case, not even thought of by parents.
And yet it is these same parents who wonder why it is their children go to the bad, never dreaming that they and not the children are to blame. No young man or woman goes deliberately to the bad, and the first step is taken in an unguarded, thoughtless moment, and ere the victim or friends are aware of it, ruin stares them in the face. The outside world presents too many attractive though questionable pleasures for all youth to withstand. To many a line the pathway of youth like the roses in a garden, but which while bright and pleasing to the eye may contain a hidden beneath their bright colors a serpent whose poisonous fangs are even sharpened to strike the blow that ends in death. One of the simplest and inexpensive methods is to cultivate a love for reading, but this cannot be done with only an old-fashioned newspaper and notes on the Scriptures for a library. A daily paper, a good weekly journal, a good history, late good novels and enough humorous reading to spice the whole, will, in slight cases, do ten times the good that a library of books can furnish strong attractions to keep the boys away from places of questionable repute and questionable practices. An evening of amusement at home is, for good influence, equal to a month's amusement elsewhere. An exchange in commenting on this subject says:
"Amusement is the proper feature of home life. It is a corrective for many evils. It does not matter so much what the amusements are, only that they shall be regularly provided. Our American homes are too sterile in amusements. The English are more considerate in this direction. We are apt to go away from home for them, and so wean the children from home. A false teaching, too, prevails on the subject. Some object to amusements as leading to gambling. It is barely possible that there may be cases where there is a true; but the fault is in the amusement, not in original propensity or bad counsel or training. If a young person has a propensity for gambling he will find how to do it. On the other hand, familiarity with certain games, under the healthful influence of home, may do much to take away a curiosity which quite often leads to gambling. How far home games may go will depend largely on the means of the family. But amusements are well spent for home amusements is well spent."
So far as amusements at home lead to gambling, as has been asserted, it does in fact, have an opposite effect. What human nature is denied, it wants, and will get it some way, but what it finds no trouble in acquiring, it does not yearn for. If boys are denied the pleasure of checkers, dominoes, etc., at home, they will go elsewhere to enjoy the game, as they are dead to the pleasures obtained, after hearing their companions telling of their enjoyment of these games. Even parties in a neighborhood, not these for indoor affairs, but the social informal parties, are productive of much good. Literary or musical societies are another. If fact there are hundreds of ways to make the long winter evenings enjoyable and attractive at home. If parents would give but a few moments thought to the subject. The good result to be derived from such a course as cited above, is too obvious to need further consideration by The Sun. Now is the time to arrange for a campaign for the good of the youth before they become wedded to the amusements to be found in only questionably moral places.
Pointers.
Carl Pretzel's Weekly.
Non-elastic rubber—A "rubber at what."
The last lay of the mosquito—When it lays dead.
Striking contrasts—White lace sleeves over negro's arms.
"Jumping at conclusions"—Reading the last chapter of a serial first.
A butcher was arrested the other day. He was caught stealing a knife.
Family traits will show, as by the following.
While little Nell the Shepherdess is watching out for lambs,
Her brother Ben the pugilist is watching out for "game."
Mother to little son whom she has sent four or five times during the day to the postoffice for mail without receiving anything; "Well, did you get anything this time?" "Oh, yes, I got something. "Well, what was it?" "Letter or paper? Give it to me quick!" "Neither. I got a cussing from the general-delivery clerk."
Mrs. George Bancroft, wife of the venerable historian, read in her 80th birthday last week. She is a very pretty lady, wonderfully well preserved, and indeed much healthier than her husband.
The "A. B." for Bachelor of Arts, on the law graduate's diploma, signifies that after the commencement to practice, he will be "Always Broke."