

Christmas thoughts

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CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS.

Once again Christmas is close at hand and to numerous hearts it will bring a brief season of happiness and enjoyment. How many families, whose members have been dispersed and scattered far and wide, in the restless struggles of life, will be reunited and meet once again in that happy state of companionship and mutual good-will!

The passing year has alas, to many of our compatriots been a trying one, the cares and sorrows of the world have laid heavily on many shoulders, and many of the hearts that throbbed so gaily twelve months ago, have ceased to beat, many of the looks that shone so brightly then, have ceased to glow, the hands we grasped have grown cold, the eyes we sought have hidden their lustre in the grave. How many old recollections, and how many dormant sympathies, does Christmas time awaken!

Happy Christmas that can win us back to the delusion of our childhood days, that can transport our thoughts, hundreds of miles away, back to our dear ones, back to the land of our birth.

God grant, that the coming year will be for all of us a year blessed with peace amongst all nations, a year of striving to lessen the hardships under which a tired world is labouring. May the silver lining for which we so often have gazed heavenwards, appear and shed its light over the darkness in which we have tumbled during the last few months. Let courage and an unflinching determination to win through in spite of heavy odds be our Motto for 1934.

In the towns, villages and hamlets of our homeland, the bells will ring on Christmas day, spreading the glad message of goodwill amongst mankind; their sound will pierce the Alps and ride on the ocean waves and will bring to everyone of us the greetings of our country. Let us spread this inspired message, coupled with the best wishes for the land of our adoption which has accorded to us a generous hospitality, and to many of us a second home.

ST.

ck. CORNER.

Good evening, folks. I was just sitting quietly and innocently in my room last Friday night when the mail arrived and I found a letter from the Editor asking me for another of my "famous" articles. Famous. Famous. I nearly burst out shrieking in Kyburgian Kapitels. Why, not so long ago I casually said something about one of my recent articles and I was met with a stony stare. The poor fish had never even noticed it was in the paper. And after that, the Editor thinks I can turn out stuff, columns of it, just like Kyburg or ST.

I was very tempted to send a contribution to the recent correspondence between Kyburg and a Regular Reader, but this would never do, because if ck started to criticise Kb., Kb. would probably retaliate on ck and this is not done in the best journalistic circles and, of course, a paper with the reputation of the S.O. must keep up with the best traditions of the profession. Not that I agree with either of them. But I do think it is extraordinary that out of the thousands of other Regular Readers of this paper, not one thought it worth while to express his opinion and goodness knows, both of them gave you sufficient openings. And then you complain that the S.O. is dull instead of collaborating to make it a nice, bright, snappy little paper with lots of uplift and inspiring correspondence.

However, the Editor tells me that some of you liked my poem about the Swiss Banquet and as, of course, it was only a parody, I thought I would tell you something about the author and some of the other poems he wrote. Charles G. Leland was an American who wrote a number of poems in the middle part of last century which were afterwards collected in book form with the title "The Breitmann Ballads." The hero of most of the poems is Hans Breitmann a mythical German-American and the subject matter often refers to events which took place in the sixties and the seventies so that many of the ballads are distinctly dated.

Most of the poems are written in an amusing mixture of German and English, but some, for instance about Breitmann's adventures in Paris are written in a mixture of German-English and French and one dealing with his adventures in Rome is in Latin-English-German-Italian. One pleasing little ballad tells how "Der noble Ritter Hugo von Schwillensaufenstein rode out mit shper and helmet, und he coom to the panks of de Rhine." And there he met a mermaid, though I think it should be Rheinmaid, who endeavours to entice him down under the river "You'd petter coom down in de wasser, Where dere's heaps of dings to see, und hafe a shplendid dinner und dravel along mit me" and she describes to him the treasures he will find "Dere ish trunks all full mit money in ships dat vent down of old; und you

helpsh yourself, by dunder, to shimmering crowns of gold. Vot you vantsh mit your schnapps und lager? coom down into the Rhine, Der ish pottles der Kaiser Charlemagne vonce mit gold-red wine!" And then she pulled the poor sap down and he was drowned. Moral. Do not listen to strange wasser maidens on the banks of rivers.

To me, the Breitmann ballads have ever been a joy and I treasure them together with the Ingoldsby legends and the tales of a thousand Nights and one Night, and therefore I am going to introduce you to one of the most amusing which deals with the adventures of a certain Mr. C. Hagelstein with an American Insurance Company.

Ich bin ein Deutscher, und mein name is Cobus Hagelstein,
I coom from Cincinnati, and I life peyond der Rhein;
Und I tells you all a shdory dot makes me mad ash blitz,
Pout how a Yankee gompany was shvindle me to fits.

I heard about dis gompany, und vished to see dot same,
Das Lebensfeuersversicherungsgesellschaft vos ids name;
Dot is de name in Sherman — in English it will say
Dot it insures your life mit fire, ven you de money pay.

Now, I had a liddle house-line where I life so shstill ash mice,
Und yooost drei tausand dollar vos dot little pilding's price;
I vos always yooost so happy ash ein Kaiser in de land
Dill at last I kit in trouble, for mein haus vos abgebrannt.

Den I goes undo dot gompany und dells em right afay
(Das Lebensfeuersversicherungsgesellschaft), und I say,
"At last de youngest day is coom for you to plank de cash,
And you moost pay me monies, for mein haus is purned to ash."

Den de segredary answered, "All dis is fery drue,
Boot you know ve have de option to pild your house anew;
Dere ist a lot of beoples vot burns deir hanuser down,
Den coom to kit de money back all over in de town."

I look ind de bapers und I find it ash he say,
Das Lebensfeuersversicherungsgesellschaft need not bay;
So I dells em all to go aheth und pild anoder ahidore,
Und dey make me von in Yankee shstyle more petter ash pefore.

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