# The ANNUNCIATION

## La Befana, Penitent Old Woman, Brings Christmas Gifts in Italy

Santa Claus doesn't visit children in Italy. It isn't because they are all naughty, but because there is no Santa Claus—in Italy.

No one runs down to a well decorated tree on Christmas morning to look for presents. Brightly colored

**La Befana still carries her presents for the Christ Child.**

flowers decorate the room instead of Christmas trees, and presents are not exchanged until January 6.

On that night, an old, old lady, La Befana, walks from house to house and leaves a present beside each little child she visits.

Exactly 1,940 years ago, according to the Italian legend, La Befana was very busy sweeping her kitchen when several men dressed like kings stopped in front of her cottage. They asked her where Bethlehem was, but she had never heard of it.

The men told her about a baby which had been born in Bethlehem, and mentioned a star which had been guiding them. The old lady wished she could accompany them when they left her in search of the infant Jesus.

But La Befana stayed home. It was getting too dark out, and besides, the baby could wait until tomorrow. Later that night she noticed the sky quivering with light. The clouds seemed to take the form of angels. All thought of sleep left her. Rising, she carefully wrapped two gifts for the Holy Baby, then ran out into the night in the direction the kings had gone.

Fast as she hurried, she had not reached Bethlehem when the star disappeared and dawn filled the sky. She frantically asked the way to Bethlehem, but no one could tell her.

And so La Befana has constantly traveled since that day, searching for the Christ Child. On the Epiphany, 12 days after Christmas, she goes from house to house, looking into the faces of babies. With each she leaves a gift, hoping that at last she will give her presents to the right child.

## Christmas Card Was Invented By a Man With Many Friends

**This is believed to be the first Christmas card. It was made in London in 1846.**

CHRISTMAS cards are almost as much a part of Christmas as Santa Claus himself, yet they have been in use less than a century.

According to most records, the first Christmas card was designed in 1846 by Mr. J. C. Horsley, a prominent member of the Royal academy of London. It was produced at the request of Sir Henry Cole, a popular man with many friends.

Sir Cole wondered how he could express his personal Christmas greeting to a thousand friends spread throughout England. After dismissing the thought of visiting each personally, or giving presents, he decided to send them each a card by mail.

One thousand hand colored cards were prepared with a picture showing a jolly family seated at a huge dinner table. Each member of the family was looking into a brimming glass which he held in his hand.

When these cards were distributed, they raised a furor among temperance proponents throughout the country. The disturbance focused nation-wide attention on the new greeting card.

It was not until several years later, however, that the first lithographed Christmas card made its appearance. Originality was almost completely lacking. The greeting was invariably "A Merry Christmas" or "A Jolly Christmas." Designs seldom had anything to do with the season, but contained pictures of birds, flowers, animals or children.

America soon adopted the British custom, and the Christmas card was born.

### *Put Proper Postage On Christmas Mail*

Unsealed Christmas cards will carry for one and one-half cents postage. These cards may bear a simple inscription, which must not be in the nature of personal correspondence. Examples: "Sincerely yours," "With Best Wishes," "Merry Christmas." Be sure the weight of the card and cover does not exceed two ounces.

Letters may not be enclosed with Christmas packages. Such enclosure would make the package first-class. In fourth class or parcel post packages, written greetings such as "Merry Christmas," with identifying names, may be enclosed. Books may bear simple non-personal dedicatory inscriptions. They are carried at a special rate of one and one-half cents per pound.

## Is There a Santa Claus?

***Here Are Two Answers to That Important Question:***

**COURSE THERE IS!**
*(And who could doubt those trusting eyes?)*

**NO THERE AIN'T!**
*(And who would argue against that determined jaw?)*

## *'Goody Tree' Will Brighten Your Home At Christmas—And It's Easy to Make*

INSTEAD of pulling out that old box of glass ornaments to decorate your Christmas tree, why not make it a "Goody Tree" this winter? It looks nice, it's lots of fun to make, and it's still more fun to eat the ornaments when Christmas is over.

Popcorn balls, cookie Santa Clauses, surprise nuts, candy canes and a dozen other delicacies can hang from the tree on Christmas morning. Instead of just looking at the pretty tree standing in the corner, you can reach out and eat some of the nice things that hang from its branches.

A Goody Tree doesn't cost very much because the few materials needed are later eaten anyway. No real work is required to make the goodies; parents and children can have a lot of fun working together to make their tree pretty.

**Popcorn Strings.**

Popcorn strings always look pretty on the tree. They're easy to make, too. Paint some popcorn with vegetable coloring. Then thread it on a piece of string, keeping a regular combination of colors, such as one red and one white, or one red and two white.

Popcorn balls can be fixed next. Boil two cups of sugar with syrup and pour over freshly buttered popcorn. Mix well and allow to cool slightly. Butter your hands thoroughly, then shape into balls. When the balls are shaped, push a string into them before you put them aside to dry. This will make them easier to hang.

Surprise nuts always make a hit with the children—and grown-ups, too. Scoop the nutmeats out of a couple dozen walnuts, being careful not to crack or break the shells. Into each two pieces of empty shell, place a little gift, such as a shiny new penny, a piece of candy, a little trinket, or even a dime. Place a piece of knotted string between the two halves before glueing them together. When the glue is dry, paint the shells bright colors. Before long, no one will remember what is inside any one of them.

Buy some nice, solid red apples and a few good looking oranges. Shine the apples until they glisten, then stack them in the shape of a pyramid at the base of the tree. Be careful to arrange the oranges and apples in some regular order or design.

**Christmas Cookies.**

When you bake Christmas cookies, put as much color into the figures as possible. Break some hard candy and put in little pieces for eyes, or make a few buttons down the front of the shirt. Push a piece of string through each cookie so it can be hung on the tree.

Lollypops may easily be made attractive. Simply tie some fancy bows made out of cellophane or colored paper around the stems. Candy canes always dress up a tree, and can be purchased almost anyplace.

If you have some tinfoil, use it to make a few small cornucopias. Shape it into the form of a cone and push a piece of string through one side. Fill the cone with little candies and it is ready to hang on the tree.

Many more things can be made for the tree. Use any ideas you might have—it will make the tree more your own.

The goodies are hung on the tree the same as regular ornaments. It is advisable, however, to place them so that small children can get at some candies without danger of pulling down the tree.

When it is all finished, the Goody Tree will probably give you the most fun out of Christmas you've had in years.

## *Illuminated Christmas Tree on Front Lawn Will Give Extra Beauty to Your Home*

AN ILLUMINATED tree in front of a house always makes it look more "homey" on Christmas eve. It need not necessarily be a pine or fir tree—it may be any evergreen standing apart or in shrubbery hugging the house.

The lighted tree or shrub not only makes the home look more beautiful, but also serves as a definite contribution to the community Christmas spirit.

There is, of course, a right and a wrong way to do this, as there is in doing everything else. The ordinary indoor Christmas tree lighting sets are not apt to prove very satisfactory, although often they serve the purpose. But much more often their exposure to the elements spells their doom. For one thing the lamps are quite small, and also because the cord or wire is not properly protected by rubber or other safety insulation that will aid it in withstanding the uncertain weather of Christmas week.

In buying such an illuminating set it is, therefore, necessary to tell the electrician from whom you are purchasing it for what purpose it is intended, and ask him to suggest the best way to connect it.

If it is to be plugged in on your house lighting circuit, make certain that the total wattage of the set does not pull the full capacity of the circuit. Particularly if that is a circuit frequently used for heating, cooking appliances, operating a piano or a phonograph or serving a charger for the radio. Otherwise, it may cause you considerable annoyance blowing fuses.

It will not be necessary to place any ornaments upon the tree, although a very few might improve the appearance. It is advisable not to place too many lights upon the tree. If they are close together, the real beauty of the tree may be lost.

## *Christmas 'Carol' Was Written for Pagan Celebration*

**Deck the halls with boughs of holly,**
**Fa la la la la, la la la la.**
**'Tis the season to be jolly,**
**Fa la la la la, la la la la.**

THIS cheerful little song which is sung during Christmas time is not dedicated to the birth of Christ, but to an old pagan celebration observed in ancient Britain centuries before it was Christianized.

The Yule festival was celebrated by the early tribes about the same time that we observe Christmas. The season was opened by bringing in the Yule log. This was followed by decorating the home with holly, then singing, dancing and feasting on plum pudding, and mince pies.

## PATTERN DEPARTMENT — SEWING CIRCLE

YOU'LL need an extra pretty afternoon frock, with many parties coming on, and teas. A frock that will make your figure look particularly slim and supple, your face fresh and appealing! That's just the kind of frock you can make for yourself with design No. 8826, in velveteen, chiffon-thin wool, spun rayon or flat crepe.

See how beautifully the princess cut makes it melt into your waistline, in a most belittling fashion! That clever skirt detailing in front is a perfect way to achieve the smart "concealed fullness." The draped bodice is not only an important fashion point, but also very becoming to slim figures, because it tends to round out the bosom. Make it of lace, or contrast or, as shown in the small sketch, of the frock fabric.

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Pattern No. 8826 is designed for sizes 12, 14, 16, 18 and 20. Size 14 requires, with short sleeves, 4⅔ yards of 39-inch material without nap; long sleeves, 4⅞ yards, ½ yard lace. Step-by-step sew chart comes with your pattern. Send order to:

SEWING CIRCLE PATTERN DEPT.
247 W. Forty-Third St. New York
Enclose 15 cents in coins for
Pattern No..... Size.....
Name .....
Address .....

## AROUND THE HOUSE

**Potatoes to be baked** in the skins will cook quicker if they are dried before being placed in the oven.

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**Pumpkin pies** will have that rich brown tint if a tablespoon of molasses is added to the filling.

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**Use needles** to pin down the pleats when pressing a pleated skirt. The needles will leave no marks when you remove them.

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**Ammonia and water** will remove red ink stains from white cloth.

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**Before squeezing the juice** from your lemons and oranges, grate the peel. Wrapped in waxed paper these gratings will keep in the refrigerator for future use in making desserts, etc.

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**Don't let any cabbage stumps** remain over winter. They harbor pests.

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**One pound** of powdered or confectioner's sugar is equivalent to 2½ cupfuls; one pound of granulated sugar equals two cupfuls.

### Happy Hours Ahead

A gift to make many happy hours for pipe and "makin's" smokers is the Prince Albert Christmas package—one full pound of ripe, rich-tasting, mellow tobacco. Colorful holiday wrappers put these popular presents in gay Christmas setting—and a handy gift card is enclosed. Your regular tobacco dealer has the one-pound gift tin of Prince Albert on display. Remember! Prince Albert is the cooler-burning tobacco—the National Joy Smoke.—Adv.

### For Busy Shoppers

Winning popular approval with busy Christmas shoppers are the two handsome gift packages of Camel cigarettes featured by local dealers. The regular Camel carton—10 packs of "20's"—comes in a colorful, holiday dress. Equally striking is the gay Camel package of 4 "flat fifties."

Both packages contain 200 cigarettes—are easy gifts to get, perfect to receive.—Adv.

### *Helpful Laughter*

Laughter is a most healthful exertion; it is one of the greatest helps to digestion with which I am acquainted; and the custom prevalent among our forefathers, of exciting it at table by jesters and buffoons, was founded on true medical principles.—Dr. Hufeland.

THE AWFUL PRICE YOU PAY FOR BEING NERVOUS

**Read These Important Facts!**

Quivering nerves can make you old, haggard, cranky—can make your life a nightmare of jealousy, self pity and "the blues."

Often such nervousness is due to female functional disorders. So take famous Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to help calm unstrung nerves and lessen functional "irregularities." For over 60 years relief-giving Pinkham's Compound has helped tens of thousands of grandmothers, mothers and daughters "in time of need." *Try it!*

### Man's Worth

Every man is worth just so much as the things are worth about which he busies himself.—Marcus Aurelius.

### One Remedy

Against the superiority of another there is no remedy but love.—Goethe.

TICKLE?

Soothe that throat tickle which comes from a cough due to a cold! Quick—get a Smith Bros. Cough Drop. (Black or Menthol—5¢.)

**Smith Bros. Cough Drops are the only drops containing VITAMIN A**

Vitamin A (Carotene) raises the resistance of mucous membranes of nose and throat to cold infections, when lack of resistance is due to Vitamin A deficiency.

YOU ARE AN INFLUENTIAL PERSON

The merchant who advertises must treat you better than the merchant who does not. He must treat you as though you were the most influential person in town.

As a matter of cold fact you are. You hold the destiny of his business in your hands. He knows it. He shows it. And you benefit by good service, by courteous treatment, by good value—and by lower prices.