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Chestertown Transcript.

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UNDER STAM'S HALL, CHESTERTOWN, MD.

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BOOTS, SHOES AND RUBBER GOODS

Men, Women and Children, in all Styles and at PRICES TO DEFY COMPETITION. We invite you to inspect our stock, believing we can at all times suit you both as to price and quality. I am still selling the genuine RIVETED SHOE for both Men and Boys, and as THE SHORE. We also handle the justly Celebrated Snag Proof RUBBER keep everything pertaining to a well regulated Shoe Store. We have also nice lot of UMBRELLAS, which will be handled at bottom figures.

Very respectfully,

THOMAS G. WROTH

UNDER STAM'S HALL.

IN THE OLDEN TIME.

"What did they do in the olden time?"
Asks blue eyed Belle, as to and fro
She rocks while the joy bells clash and chime;
"What did they do in the long ago,
When Christmas came with its snow and rime,
In the brave old days of romance, you know,
And powder and patches and furbelows
And buckled shoes with the funny toes?"

I look at the dreamy, questioning face
And the starry eyes upturned to mine,
And feel the spell of her girlish grace.
Some sweet sensation I can't define
Draws me nearer the fireplace,
Nearer the maid, demure, divine,
And I can thank my stars and the mistletoe
That I did not live in that long ago.

"In the olden time," I at last explain,
Hovering over her rocking chair,
"The joys of the dance began to wane,
And the gallant lords and the ladies fair
Roamed through the palace halls again,
Daintily dressed and debonair,
And the lover sat down by the firelight's glow,
Just—just—as we are doing, you know."

"And then," asks Belle, with downcast eyes.
"And then, Sir Hubert (imagine me,
If you can, appareled in lordly guise)
Knelt down as I am doing, you see,
And put his arm, as you may surmise,
Around her so—quite tenderly,
And under the mistletoe a kiss
He gave her something like this—and this!"
—Unidentified.

A TETE-A-TETE DINNER.

"Any letters for me, porter?" said Capt. Deerhurst as he entered his club at noon on Christmas day.

"Yes, sir; two, and a telegram."

The captain took them, and selecting a letter—the address of which was in a feminine handwriting—opened it in preference to the telegram. Evidently the contents, which were brief, were pleasing, and he wore a satisfied smile as he walked over to the fire and pitched the missive into it. The purport of the telegram was not so satisfactory, and a near bystander might have heard Deerhurst make use of a big, very big, D. Like the letter the telegraphic message was also short, and merely said, "Coming home this afternoon; youngest has measles—Maria." The sender was Capt. Deerhurst's wife, and his most intimate friend would have been puzzled to discover why it should have so disconcerted him.

To the world in general the Deerhursts were a model couple. He a retired officer, with ample means and in the prime of life, a handsome, good figured man of forty. She some ten years younger, and if not exactly handsome still a fairly good looking woman. They had been married some years, and, although not blessed with a family, none of their acquaintances would have dared to hint that matrimony was a failure in their case. They seemed to understand one another thoroughly. Mrs. Deerhurst had just been a little talked about in consequence of her being seen so much with young Lornton; Deerhurst did not seem to mind. He apparently kept himself amused with Mrs. Vernon, a clever little grass widow.

Both went much into society during the season, and, as Deerhurst was passionately fond of racing—a pursuit his large income enabled him to enjoy with ease—he frequently preferred Ascot and Newmarket to accompanying his wife to garden parties or the park. On many of these occasions she was escorted by Lornton and others of her male friends, and Deerhurst always made a particular point of being gracious to her cavaliers, thanking them for the trouble they took in looking after Mrs. Deerhurst—and, in fact, her friends were his. Racing, nowadays, is so much patronized by ladies that it was not to be supposed that Capt. Deerhurst held himself aloof from the fair dames he met at Sandown park and other race meetings, and, being a gallant man, he found plenty of time to squire them about the paddock and advise them as to their trifling speculations. Mrs. Deerhurst was not particularly fond of horse racing, and at any time would go to a concert or spend the afternoon at Hurlingham rather than accompany her husband to his favorite sport. Her husband's female acquaintances were consequently not all known to her; she was too much a woman of the world to stigmatize them as fast, but in her own mind she no doubt considered them as ladies whom it was all very well for Deerhurst to know on a racecourse, but she had no desire to become intimate with them. This Christmas Mrs. Deerhurst had arranged to spend in the country with an old school friend who had married a rector of some distant parish. Her husband did not care to go, as he professed that the worthy clergyman, his spouse and the large family bored him to death. He decided to remain in town until they started for the south, which they had settled to do early in January. Christmas in London en garcon seemed to suit Capt. Deerhurst admirably.

It is true there had been no racing, although he was due at some sporting meeting on Boxing Day; but he and some club friends had done the round of the theatres where light entertainments were the leading attraction, and had not denied themselves a visit to the Empire or Alhambra. Christmas day itself was bound to be a somewhat dull one, as it always is in London, where one lacks the cheery parties that assemble in country houses or the renewal of old ties among our relations. Capt. Deerhurst had thoughtfully provided for this, and had arranged a little tete-a-tete dinner with Mrs. Vernon, who happened also to be passing through town, and whom he had seen much of during the past season. She, like Deerhurst, loved horse racing next to gambling at Monte Carlo, and for a woman was wonderfully au fait with the sport; consequently she was a great favorite with sporting men, as she could converse sensibly on matters which to the average lady are unknown subjects. Hers was the letter which had so delighted Deerhurst when he arrived at his club, only to find his scheme thwarted by the telegram from his wife. As he walked into the smoking room he was terribly vexed, for he did not see how he could possibly keep his engagement, which he was the more anxious to do as it was only after considerable solicitation that he had prevailed on Mrs. Vernon to accept his invitation. As he had put it to her, there was no one in town and not a soul would be any the wiser. And now, what possible excuse could he make? His first thought was to go home, pack up his things as if he was going out of town, but a few moments' reflection showed him that this was out of the question; his wife would know that he had gone away after the receipt of her telegram, and it was not without misgivings that Capt. Deerhurst wended his way home to receive his wife.

"What brings you back so suddenly?" said he, rather ungraciously, as he greeted his wife.

"As I told you in my wire Jane's youngest, Tommy, was seized with measles, and although I did not mind, and would just as soon have stayed, Jane packed me off. It was an awful bore and a terribly cold journey. Fortunately I saw Mr. Lornton on the platform at Rugby and made him get into my compartment, so that I had company part of the way."

"And no doubt very agreeable," hazarded Deerhurst.

"Agreeable, of course he was. Mr. Lornton always is," replied Mrs. Deerhurst, warming one of her shapely feet on the fender. "More so than my lord and master seems to be," added she.

"Well, it is a nuisance having one's arrangements spoilt," began Deerhurst.

"Arrangements? What arrangements can you have on a Christmas day that you can't put on one side?"

"Fact is," replied Deerhurst, "I have promised to dine at the club with Fuddleby and one or two others who are stranded in London, and I don't quite know how to get out of it."

"Very simply; say your wife's come to town and you must give her dinner," said Mrs. Deerhurst. Deerhurst shook his head. "Afraid they wouldn't believe it. They'd think I was crying off."

"But, my dear George, [illegible] There's no one here who [illegible] chop, and I doubt if the[illegible] in the house. You know nearly all the servants are away for their holiday; I have even told Smithers she may go to her friend's for to-night."

"Couldn't you go and dine with your sister?"

"I doubt if they are in town, and, if they are, I don't care about forcing myself on them uninvited. No; you must take me to some restaurant. A tete-a-tete dinner with me will be a novelty, and I will let you go to the club early if you want to."

"My dear, I can't possibly throw over Fuddleby"——

"George, it isn't Fuddleby; it's someone else. It's all fudge about not throwing him over; why, you have done it dozens of times."

"All the more reason why I should not let him be alone at this season."

"Very well, then, bring the man with you. He is an odious old proser, but I suppose I must put up with him."

This was a facer for Deerhurst, who began to stammer out something—his confusion naturally confirming his wife's suspicions.

"Look here, George;" said she, "Fuddleby or no Fuddleby, you have some reason for not dining with me tonight. Well and good; I shall not ask for the confidence you deny me. Go and dine with your friends"—this with great scorn—"I shall choose my own companions also," and with this she swept from the room. After some cogitation she evolved the following letter:

DEAR MR. LORNTON—I am in a fix and want your assistance. It is really an absurd confession to make, but I am in need of a Christmas dinner! George has foolishly made an engagement for tonight that he cannot break; we have no servants, and, if we had, I do not feel a bit like dining at home. Will you take pity on me, and give me something to eat at some nice quiet place—although I suppose all places will be quiet to-night? Of course if you are otherwise engaged do not hesitate to tell me, and I will try and put up with my solitude. Yours very truly,

Bearer waits. MARIA DEERHURST.

This note she dispatched by a cab to Lornton's club, and she was not long in receiving his reply, which was somewhat gushing, as Lornton could not but feel flattered at the apparent interest Mrs. Deerhurst took in him. He would order dinner, he said, at the New Restaurant, and await her there at 7:30. Lornton was one of the class of young men whose sole aim in life seems to be to display their devotion to other men's wives. He was really quite of the tame cat order of cavaliers, although in his own mind quite a Don Juan. At heart he probably meant no harm, and the very last thing he would think of would be that his marked attention to a married woman should in any way compromise her. Mrs. Deerhurst, who was a clever little woman, had, no doubt, thoroughly probed Lornton's character; he was useful to her in a dozen different ways, escorted her to various places of amusement in the absence of her husband, sent her books, flowers and music; and, however much her friends may have misconstrued his attentions, she felt perfectly safe with him. He never bored her with any pretense of love making; indeed he was, alone with her, rather shy than otherwise, and apparently was quite content to be her slave and execute her slight commands. Still, now that she had achieved her purpose, Mrs. Deerhurst regretted what she had done, and half a dozen times before the evening came was on the point of making some excuse and not going.

There was no knowing how the man might take her request; his escort to the opera was one thing, but dining alone in a private room quite another. True, he had always been most respectful, and she had no reason to suppose that he would take advantage of the situation. Yet sometimes these quiet youths forgot themselves, and she admitted to herself that if he should she could hardly blame him; she had certainly given him every encouragement. Then she determined that she would send to the club for her husband and insist on his giving up his friends. It was, she felt, humiliating, especially as he seemed so bent on keeping his engagement. Recollection of her husband's obstinacy, however, proved too much for her rather late good resolutions, and 7:30 saw her in a cab on her way to the restaurant. Meanwhile, Deerhurst was at his club, and in a not much more enviable state of mind than his spouse. He, too, felt that he was about to do a very stupid thing. Mrs. Vernon, he reflected, was a very jolly woman, but he saw her quite often enough without going the length of dining with her tete-a-tete. And a faint suspicion, very manlike, but very mean, crossed his mind that she was not quite all she should be in accepting his invitation. He, too, would have given a good deal to have been able to make some decent excuse and have put her off. He fidgeted about the club until it was time for him to go and dress, and just as he was leaving he was really more pleased than annoyed to receive a note from Mrs. Vernon. She could not come! An old aunt had been taken ill, and she had to go to her at once. The regrets expressed by the writer were hardly believed by George Deerhurst. She, too, he was sure, was only making a flimsy excuse; she had evidently thought better of the proposed breach of the convenance, and had decided not to risk it. With a light heart George dashed home in a cab, but he was too late. Mrs. Deerhurst had sent for a hansom, but the servant had not heard the address given to the cabman.

"I suppose she has gone to her sister's," said Deerhurst to himself. "I would go, too, only I hate the whole lot so. I suppose I must go and dine alone at the club. I wonder where the deuce Fuddleby is to be found?"

Slowly he walked back to his club feeling very disgusted, as naturally on such nights the clubs are deserted; even the most lonely of men find some hospitable mahogany under which they are welcome to place their legs. There was not a soul he knew there and he was obliged to order a lonely dinner, to the evident annoyance of the waiters, who had looked forward to enjoying themselves in the lower regions. While he was waiting for it to be prepared who should run into the room but little Dick Merton.

"Hallo, George, what are you doing here? You look as lively as a hermit."

Deerhurst explained that a guest had thrown him over and that he was doomed to a lonely evening.

"Nonsense, my boy," said Dick; "come and dine with us. Wife's in the cab outside, and she'll be delighted. Come along."

Deerhurst, nothing loth, apologized for not being dressed and followed Dick out.

* * * * * * *

Mrs. Deerhurst arrived at the New Restaurant and was shown into the room engaged by "Monsieur Longtoun," that being the nearest the German waiter could get to Lornton's name. Lornton had not arrived, so she sat down to wait. She more than ever began to regret the foolish step she had taken. The tawdry looking furniture of the room and the chimney glass with dozens of names scratched all over it made her shudder. The waiter, too, wore an impertinent grin as he asked her, with familiarity bordering on contempt, if he should get her any refreshment. When he had left the room she suddenly made up her mind not to stop. She flung open the door and almost fell into the arms of her husband and the Mertons.

"Maria!"

"George!"

Little Dick Merton, glancing at the table, which was laid for two, took in the situation at a glance.

"My dear Mrs. Deerhurst," said he, giving his wife a pinch that almost made her scream, "so sorry we are late, but I had to stop at the club on the way, where I picked up your husband. Ha! ha! George, confess this is a surprise. You little thought you were going to dine with your wife. Come along. This is the wrong room; ours is No. 10."

George was surprised; so was Mrs. Merton.

Mrs. Deerhurst was the first to find her voice. "But where is Mr. Fuddleby?" said she.

"Fuddleby!" stammered Deerhurst. "Oh, he threw me over—gout or something—and I should have dined alone had it not been for Dick's kindness."

The party had a very pleasant evening, but not before Dick had slipped out on the plea of interviewing the managers, and explained the state of affairs to a very disconsolate person who looked very like Mr. Lornton. Mrs. Deerhurst now counts the Mertons as her dearest friends, and both she and her husband have profited by the lesson of that Christmas night. Neither of them has since contrived a tete-a-tete dinner unknown to the other—at least, when both have been in town together.—Lady's Pictorial.

OLD ENGLISH CHRISTMAS SAWS.

After Christmas comes Lent.

A warm Christmas, a cold Easter.

Now's now, but Yule's in winter.

A light Christmas, a heavy sheaf.

A Yule feast may be quit at Pasch.

A green Christmas, a white Easter.

He hath eaten many a Christmas pie.

They keep Christmas all the year.

A green Christmas makes a fat grave yard.

It smells of Muscadel, like an English Christmas.

Christmas, long looked for, comes at last.

A wind on Christmas day, trees will bring much fruit.

St. Andrew the King, three weeks and three days before Christmas comes in.

If Christmas finds a bridge he'll break it; if he finds none he'll make one.

The devil makes his Christmas pie of lawyers' tongues and clerks' fingers.

If ice will bear a man before Christmas it will not bear him afterward.

He that maketh at Christmas a dog his larder, and in March a pig his gardener, and in May a fool a keeper of wise counsel, he shall never have a good larder, fair garden, nor well kept counsel.

The shepherd would rather see his wife enter the stable on Christmas day than the sun.

If the sun shines through the apple tree on Christmas day there will be an abundant crop the following year.

Christmas comes but once a year,
And when it comes it brings good cheer.

At Christmas time, or a little after,
A crab in the hedge, and thanks to the grafter.

Bounce, buckram, velvet's dear,
Christmas comes but once a year.

If Christmas day on a Sunday fall,
A troublous winter we shall have all;
If Christmas on a Monday be
Then a great winter we shall see.

Yule is come, and Yule is gone,
And we have feasted well;
So Jack must to his flail again,
And Jenny to her wheel.

Old Christmas Customs.

Ever since the Fifth century Dec. 25 has been our Christ day; and from Roman Saturnalia, from Druids of Britain, from mystical German legends and homely English customs, we have drawn the charms and graces and fantastical devices with which we clothe our tenderest thoughts and holiest reverence for the entrance of the Saviour of the world into human life.

From Scandinavians, who in winter built immense fires on the hill tops in honor of the sun's return, we borrowed the yule log. And it became an English custom to preserve a bit of one year's yule log to light the fire on the great hearth at the following Christmas-tide, in token of warmth and plenty to abide in the household throughout the year. When the log was ready to be brought in the youngest child of the family was seated upon it, and all the rest assembled to witness its entrance, drawn by the merry retainers, and to prepare it for the lighting.

The passing of the "wassail cup"—a bowl of spiced ale—was something always expected, and he was a niggard indeed who would not take a hearty "sup" from the huge common vessel, and leave a douceur in the hand of the maiden who brought it, and often enough another sweet memento on her not unwilling lips.

The wassailing of the orchard trees (a Devonshire custom),

That they may beare
Full many a plum,
Full many a peare,

is sometimes wrongly quoted as a Christmas observance, but it was upon "Twelfth Night"—in January—that the trees were "made drunken with the dregs of a good sop."—New York Commercial Advertiser.

[illegible] Prophecy.

It was on Sunday last, and Johnny's father, to punish him, said he would send word to Santa Claus not to bring him anything. The small boy was rather broken up for a while, but presently he was seen hard at work writing what looked like a long letter.

"What are you doing?" his father asked.

"I'm writing to Santa Claus, papa."

"It's of no use. I'll tell him not to bring you anything."

Then the small boy brought over his letter: "Deere Santy Clas, You nednt bring anything to mee this yere. I hav bin a veery badd booy. But plees bring mi good pappa a box of ciggars and a wooly horse withe a long tale, an a drumm, an a horn, and a wagin, an a bigg box of candy, an annythin else you can think ov."—Exchange.

Christmas Stockings.

It is better to have your stocking filled than to have to fill one.—Judge.

Fat girls fill stockings the best—Waterloo Observer.

Don't expect to find a brown stone front in your stocking.—Philadelphia Call.

Christmas evolution — from stock to stocking.—Goodall's Sun.

A good motto for Christmas stocking fillers—Sock et tuum.—Pittsburg Chronicle.

What most people will find in their Christmas stockings — Corns. — Lowell Courier.

The children are already hunting up the biggest stockings that are to be found.—Boston Post.

It is more pleasure to fill a stocking than to hang one up.—Hartford Post.

Took After Her Father.

"Yes, I am saving up for Christmas, I am," said a Hartford little girl. "I've got fourteen cents now, and I'm going to buy papa something, mamma something, aunty something, and everybody I know something."

"I'm afraid, my dear, your purse will hardly hold out."

"That's just what papa said about your purse yesterday."

We are all about in the same boat during these days.—Selected.

Santa Claus Will Come Down.

Little Johnny—Ma, does Santa Claus keep chimneys for sale?

Ma—Perhaps he does. Do you want to buy one?

"Not yet, ma."

"Why not yet?"

"Tause his price is too high. I'll wait till Tismus and then"——

"Then what, dear?"

"Then Santa Claus will come down in his chimney, won't he?"—Unidentified.

He Couldn't Muffle It.

The stocking of his little girl he filled with sweets and toys,
And with a pair of brand new skates he stuffed his little boy's;
Within the stocking of his wife he placed a handsome pin,
And in his mother-in-law's a wrap for muffling her chin.
—Exchange.

AS AYER'S SARSAPARILLA outstrips all other blood-purifiers in popular favor, so Ayer's Almanac is the most universally familiar publication of the world. It is printed in ten languages and the annual issue exceeds fourteen millions of copies. Ask your druggist for it.

SUBSCRIPTION [illegible] TRANSCRIPT [illegible] dollar per year [illegible]

Christmas Land.

When Christmas white comes in the night
And lines the lawn, the glebe and glade,
Then dozing lads and lassies haste
To reach, in dreams, the land of taste
Along the fields of jujube paste,
Across the streams of lemonade.

A moment seems a day in dreams,
A minute for a month avails,
Until they reach that honeyed land
Where sugar takes the place of sand,
And gumdrop trees on every hand
Are plundered by vanilla gales.

The hills are made of marmalade,
And jellied into dales and dells;
The peaks in taffy ridges rise
Where soda fountains fizz to skies,
Where bushes bend with custard pies,
And trees hang low with caramels.

The streams that leap a-down the steep
Are melting creams of frozen ice;
And these in rivulets begun
With "mallows" softened by the run
Into the sponge cake valley's sun,
With everything that's sweet and nice.

Then o'er the mead with eager greed
The youngsters flit like sunny gleams;
But ere a single sip they take
The jelly mountain starts to quake.
It topples—tumbles; they awake,
And—that's the way it is with dreams.
—Lippincott's Magazine.

Her Charms.

To the valleys of New Hampshire
To spend Christmas I shall go,
Where the frost king reigns supremely,
And the world is white with snow.

Not because I love the country,
But the sweet maid of the mill,
Whom I played with in my childhood,
Lives in the old homestead still.

Way I love her you will wonder,
For she's neither rich nor wise,
Yet she has one trait that charms me,
She knows how to make mince pies.
—Floating.

CHRISTMAS IN PERU.

THE GREAT FESTIVAL IN A SUMMER-LIKE SETTING.

It Comes in the Height of the Outdoor Bathing Season and Is Celebrated Amid Blooming Wild Flowers—A Solemn Religious Holiday.

As the season consecrated by all Christian peoples, of whatever race or clime, draws near, how few of us realize how differently it is observed according to the position of the observer on this globe of ours, itself so small an atom in the immensity of the universe! The northern nations of Europe welcome it with good cheer and social gatherings; the dwellers on English soil with yule log and mistletoe; our own people with wreaths of evergreen and holly, and among all these there lingers the fragrance of the ancient traditions of good old St. Nicholas, the children's friend, with team of reindeer and burden of toys, which the legends tell were meant for distribution among the good little children.

But this is talk too serious for Christmastide. How do our neighbors of warmer climes keep the festival? For them Santa Claus and his outfit would be a mystery too deep to be penetrated. The only snow they have ever seen lies miles away on the slopes of their volcanoes. They have never heard the merry jingle of the sleigh bell or the keen ring of the skate on a frosty morning, while a snow storm would astonish them as much as we should be amazed by the importation of one of their earthquakes.

Let us take a peep at Peru, our lovely southern sister. Blessed with a climate almost perfect, where the heliotrope grows wild on the hillside and flowers bloom all the year round, there is no more genial, kindly, hospitable people on earth. Lima, the capital, is renowned for the beauty and grace of its ladies, and the children are like animated Christmas cards. There is no jealousy of the foreigner. He is welcomed, entertained and treated kindly and fairly by the government and the people. Life in Peru is of a quieter, gentler character than as we know it in the hurry and rush of our business eagerness, and one who has lived among them and learned to appreciate their lovable qualities will often send back a grateful glance of retrospection,

As travelers oft look back at eve, when eastward darkly going,
To gaze upon the light they leave still faint behind them glowing.

Among the Anglo-Saxon dwellers in Peru Santa Claus is not forgotten, and the approach of Christmas is looked forward to with eager expectation in many a childish breast. The fabled shoe of the ancient dame with her numerous progeny, the glass slipper of Cinderella, and the trials and triumphs of the Sleeping Beauty, are as familiar to them as to our own little ones. Perhaps some who may read these lines may remember a dozen years ago to have seen the parlors of one of the leading foreign families in Lima filled with a delighted audience to witness the debut of the daughter of the house as Cinderella, the beautiful child bearing herself with as perfect self possession as the bride of the prince as she afterward showed when, at the drawing room of her majesty, in London, she bowed before the queen, herself the fairest among them all.

But Peru lies a few degrees south of the equator, and while the American boy is burnishing his skates or putting his sled in order, his Peruvian brother is hastening to the seashore, and the summer bathing season is at its height. Christmas gifts are not so plentiful, the shops not so crowded with puzzled customers, nor their windows so filled with dazzling novelties as with us; but a beautiful custom obtains there, as throughout all South American countries. As the season rolls on apace and the sacred anniversary draws nigh, one of the largest rooms is set apart, and a stage improvised, on which is built up, in varying degrees of detail, according to the ability of the family, a representation of the scene at Bethlehem, with all its surroundings faithfully shown. In the distance are the shepherds watching their flocks—the wise men of the east in royal robes, bringing gifts from afar, and in the foreground the humble manger, with the holy family grouped around the cradle, while the star of Bethlehem shines brightly in the sky above. Gold, silver and jewels are lavished on the decoration of the scene, days are devoted to perfecting its smallest detail, and on Christmas eve, and for days thereafter, friends and visitors are admitted to gaze and admire.

At the Christmas season in Lima—coming as it does at midsummer—the skies are cloudless and the air is tempered by the breeze from the Pacific, which rolls placidly along the shores of Peru. As the brief twilight of the tropics fades, the jeweled cross of the southern hemisphere rises in the sky, the avenues of the plaza begin to fill, bright eyes flash brief glances of recognition, friends exchange pleasant greetings as they meet, the well trained bands of the garrison play softly in the summer air, until at last the sweet voiced bell of the cathedral tolls the "Animas." There is a momentary hush, a whispered prayer for the souls of loved ones gone before, the crowd begins to melt silently away, and as the moon rises soft and full over the distant peaks of the Andes we turn from the scene, [illegible] with us a pleasant memory of a [illegible] Peru.—Ex-Mayor Grace in [illegible]

THE DAY OUT ON A RANCH

THEODORE ROOSEVELT TELLS OF AN EXPERIENCE IN THE WEST.

Having an Empty Larder the Ranchmen Set Out to Hunt Deer—They Strike Trail, Secure the Game and Get a Cold Ducking.

One December, while I was out on my ranch, so much work had to be done that it was within a week of Christmas before we were able to take any thought for the Christmas dinner. The winter set in late that year and there had been comparatively little cold weather, but one day the ice on the river had been sufficiently strong to enable us to haul up a wagon load of flour, with enough salt pork to last through the winter, and a very few cans of tinned goods to be used at special feasts. We had some bushels of potatoes, the heroic victors of a struggle for existence, in which the rest of our garden vegetables had succumbed to drouth, frost and grasshoppers; and we also had some wild plums and dried elk venison. But we had no fresh meat, and so one day my foreman and I agreed to make a hunt on the morrow.

The air was bitterly chill; the cold had been severe for two days, so that the river ice would again bear horses; it had already frozen once and then again thawed. Beneath the light covering of powdery snow we could feel the rough ground like wrinkled iron under the horses' hoofs. There was no moon, but the stars shone brilliantly down through the cold, clear air, and our willing horses galloped swiftly across the long bottom on which the ranch house stood, threading their way deftly among the clumps of sprawling sage brush. A mile off we crossed the river, the ice cracking with noises like pistol shots as our horses picked their way gingerly over it.

As the dawn reddened, and it became light enough to see objects some little way off, we began to sit erect in our saddles and to scan the hillsides sharply for sight of feeding deer. Hitherto we had seen no deer tracks save inside the bulberry bushes by the river, and we knew that the deer which lived in that impenetrable jungle were cunning white tails, and in such a place could only be hunted by the aid of a hound. But just before sunrise we came on three lines of heart shaped footmarks in the snow, which showed where as many deer had just crossed a little plain ahead of us. They were walking leisurely, and from the lay of the land we believed we would find them over the ridge, where there was a brush coulie. Riding to one side of the trail we topped the little ridge just as the sun flamed up a burning ball of crimson beyond the snowy waste at our backs. Almost immediately afterward my companion leaped from his horse and raised his rifle, and as he pulled the trigger I saw through the twigs of a brush patch to our left the erect, startled head of a young black tail doe as she turned to look at us, her great, mule like ears thrown forward.

The ball broke her neck, and she turned a complete somersault down the hill, while a sudden smashing of underbrush told of the flight of her terrified companions. We both laughed and called out "Dinner!" as we sprang down toward her, and in a few minutes she was dressed and hung up by the hind legs on a small ash tree.

No sooner was the sun up than a warm west wind began to blow in our faces. The weather had suddenly changed, and before an hour the snow was beginning to thaw and to leave patches of bare ground on the hillsides. We left our coats with our horses, and struck off on foot for a group of high buttes cut up by the cedar canyons and gorges in which we knew the old bucks loved to lie. It was noon before we saw anything more. We lunched at a clear spring—not needing much time, for all we had to do was to drink a draught of icy water and munch a strip of dried venison.

Shortly afterward, as we were moving along a hillside with silent caution, we came to a sheer canyon, of which the opposite face was broken by little ledges grown up with wind beaten cedars. As we peered over the edge my companion touched my arm and pointed silently to one of the ledges, and instantly I caught the glint of a buck's horns as he lay half behind an old tree trunk. A slight shift of position gave me a fair shot slanting down between his shoulders, and, though he struggled to his feet, he did not go fifty yards after receiving the bullet.

This was all we could carry. Leading the horses around, we packed the buck behind my companion's saddle, and then rode back by the doe, which I put behind mine. But we were not destined to r[illegible] without a slic[illegible] to the [illegible] less of the [illegible] was a sudd[illegible] horses and [illegible] in the wat[illegible] However, it [illegible] sults followe[illegible] chilly bath. [illegible] returning tri[illegible] dinner.—Phi[illegible]

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