

### The Christmas-tide.

THE Happy Season is upon us, with multifarious activities, frenzied search for the right souvenir, doubtful study of exchequer, and greetings from near and far. Back of all the tumult come thoughts of friends separated by miles of land and sea now miraculously and happily bridged; and other insistent, deeper, heart-breaking memories of those we have loved and who have gone from us, and will be no more seen of men.

For many of us Christmas of 1931 spells difficulty and much vain striving. At best, for the majority it is a marking-time between one restless period of toil and endeavour and another. But, resilient, we hope the struggle may be lightened, the clouds pass. Since the last season of peace and goodwill, blows have been staggering, but there were happy days; disappointment buffeted, but we remember smiling patches of blue in the dim skies. An Eastern proverb tells us destiny waits at the end of all, and may we not take it that fortune's scales in some happy future will dip in our favour, and out of the ashes of failure will rise the phoenix of success? Hope, resurgent, rears her beautiful head. Once more in this sweet season we are aware of generosity, self-forgetfulness, chivalry to the little, the weak and the poor. "Do unto others." The great doctrine holds in the face of revolution, world crises, the Five-Year Plan. The blows have nearly knocked us out, but we limp back to the ring determined to do our darndest and win through; the future can be described but through a glass darkly, but there are flecks of radiance in the gloom. Because of human nobility, we are assured of Divine justice and compassion encompassing our troubled lives. In the words of a Victorian poet:

*Oh, yet we trust that somehow good  
Will be the final goal of ill.*

And it is in this confidence and in this belief that we wish leal and loved ones "A Happy Christmas."—H.V.L.

### A Dual Personality.

THERE was Nelly Terry, the adoring, home-loving, country-cottage mother; and there was Ellen Terry, the great actress. She was well-balanced—but she had to do as her genius dictated. Her motherly instinct would have made of her the mother of a large family. She would have grown old, kept slim, not grown tired teaching her children and her grandchildren; never acting... living. That is what Nelly longed to do; but the genius of Ellen Terry would not allow it. Hers was another fate, she was destined to act—forced to give two-thirds of her life and time to the public for whom her genius was intended.

—“Ellen Terry” by Gordon Craig.

### Afore Ye Go!

MORE than two hundred years ago the Emperor Kien Lung of China wrote for his children directions for preparing tea as it should be prepared in the Flowery Kingdom. Here they are:

“Set a teapot over a slow fire; fill it with cold water; boil it long enough to turn a lobster red; pour it on the correct quantity of tea in a porcelain vessel; allow it to remain on the leaves until the vapour evaporates, then sip it slowly, and all your sorrows will follow the vapour.”



The French priest, Pere Couplet, who lived about 1667, and who had learned the Art of Tea-Making when a missionary in China, gave the following as the secret of successful brewing:—

“Water must remain no longer on the tea than while you can chant the Miserere Psalm in a leisurely fashion. For those who can no longer say their Miserere in a leisurely fashion, three minutes by the clock, it has been found, will usually extract most of the stimu-

lating constituents and the aroma, without an excess of tannin, which makes the tea astringent.”

A modern expert in tea-making declares that the best tea is made in two warmed earthenware tea-pots. Allow an even spoonful for each cup to be poured out. Put the leaves into the hot pot, steep for three minutes in boiling water, and then strain off into the other hot pot.



## NOEL

Once a little baby lay  
In a manger, on the hay;  
Wide-eyed oxen at His feet  
Marvelled at that babe so sweet.  
Shepherds in the dead of night  
Heard a song and saw a light—  
Saw the star which swiftly led  
To that humble manger-bed.  
Wise men travelling from afar  
Also saw that wondrous star,  
Thus they came on camels' feet,  
Laid their treasures at His feet.

Oh, may we from toiling cease,  
Hear the angels' song of "Peace  
And Goodwill unto All Men,"  
As the shepherds heard it then.  
May our hearts reflect the light  
Which the Wise Men saw that night,  
And may we, on Christmas Day,  
At His feet our treasures lay.  
May we bring our gift along—  
Though it only be a song.

—O.E.H. (Blenheim).

### An Adventurous Quest.

A NOTABLE feature of the centenary meeting of the British Association in London is the evident appeal that anthropology makes to scientific women, and the long and arduous travels they undergo to find subjects for investigation. Miss Beatrice Blackwood, for instance, who is university demonstrator in Ethnology in Oxford, asked for, and was granted, leave of absence two years ago in order that she might accept an offer made to her by the Institute of Human Relations, Yale University, to go to the South Seas to study the family life and relations of a primitive community.

She lived for twelve months on two of the most northerly of the Solomon Islands group, in native villages, and accompanied her Melanesian friends on their fishing, trading, and other expeditions, in places where no white person had been before.

### The Model of All the Virtues!

EFFICIENCY is indeed unbeautiful and humourless when it lacks the sense of proportion which many women unfortunately take away from it to-day. You can spot the crushingly efficient woman immediately by her brisk, "no-nonsense" air. If she doesn't slap you heartily on the back and cry "hail-fellow-well-met," she at any rate suggests the camaraderie, and the voice is loud and unerringly clear. She looks the picture of bouncing health, and she worships hygiene—which fact she is not slow to impress on you, besides earnestly and "for your own good" advising you to follow her example. She never, or very seldom, makes a mistake. She has trained herself to speak correctly, to work correctly, to live more or less by rule of thumb.

Real efficiency is a most comfortable quality, but to be real it must also be unassuming and quiet. We can be "alive" without being hoydenish. We can be healthy and hygienic without advertising the fact and foisting our opinions on other people. We can love children and guide them without being domineering and too insistent about the carrying out of our principles. We can achieve quite as much all round by behaving simply instead of indulging in noise and bombast.

Do let us avoid the irritating tendency to become obsessed by efficiency!

### The Seasonable Strawberry.

SOME unfortunate mortals, it is understood, do not eat strawberries, while others do not like cream; but a merciful Providence, denying us many of the good things of life has ordained that the majority shall possess a more or less passionate love for both strawberries and cream. And it is interesting to remember that certain old-world princes, prelates and poets, whose names are linked in history with strawberries, if not with cream, probably never once tasted fruit of such quality as we enjoy. Only about one hundred years ago did strawberries begin to take their present form; the original strawberries being wild, small in size, pale in colour, and somewhat sour to the taste. If any man won fame by virtue of a single sentence it was surely he who wrote: "It may be that God could have made a better berry than a strawberry, but most certainly He did not."