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# The Co-operator



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**A CHRISTMAS HYMN.**  
 (By Adam McCay.)  
 Blessed are they, because indeed they mourn,  
 By hunger driven,  
 By dread of their own fellow-beings torn,  
 And by vain hatreds riven.  
 The promise and the benediction fell  
 On human woe,  
 With the most joyous hope that tongue could tell,  
 Two thousand years ago.  
 Exulting martyrs, flogged and crucified,  
 Hailed this a boon,  
 Sang loud the name of Christ, and gladly died,  
 Thinking His reign came soon.  
 Blessed was every slave, for one hope flamed  
 High in his breast,  
 Had not some God with his own voice proclaimed,  
 "Lo, I will give you rest!"  
 Yet on this very day, on every shore,  
 Men toil and mourn  
 As never in the whole sad world before  
 That promise: was it scorn?  
 Sad men, and sadder women, who have ceased  
 Even to pray,  
 Now envy the dull slave, who at the least  
 Missed terror every day;  
 Terror, of cold and ruthless fellow-men  
 Flinging them back  
 To languish, starve, or perish—who cares when?  
 The thing they call "The Sack."  
 Never, I say, since that Promise came,  
 Have men enticed  
 Their fellows to such misery,  
 And still dared speak of Christ.  
 Never, with such chill cruelty, apart  
 From hate and rage,  
 Has man so broken man's unhappy heart  
 As in this Christian age.  
 "Come unto Me!" Alas, what promise weak  
 Was written there!  
 For no inheritance is to the meek  
 Save hunger and despair.  
 All ye that labor! What has been your lot?  
 What Christmas hymn  
 For them that mourn? The promise is forgot  
 Till Christ's own name is dim.

**CONFESSIONS OF A PLUM PUDDING.**  
 "Spotted Dick," they call me way back; but, as Shakespeare says, "What's in a name?" I'm quite satisfied to be described on the bill of fare as Plum Pudding, alongside of my old chum, Mince Pie. Certainly he's a cold-blooded villain, and has killed more people than his distant relative Cholera; but, take it all in all, I consider myself the champion slaughterer of the world. I can trace my ancestors back to the Flood, and every churchyard contains the remains of many people whom I have met.  
 There is no more important personage at this season of the year than your humble servant. I am discussed by every housewife with her neighbors, and am duly eulogized by her husbands when the grocers' bills come in; but of this more anon.  
 Mrs. Smith tells Mrs. Brown, in a secret, mysterious, gunpowder-plot, under-the-breath sort of way, that "a pint of Jam-a-ker rum is the thing of all others to bring out

the flavor and 'make you wink the other eye.'"  
 Mrs. Jones tells Mrs. Robinson that she doesn't see what that Mrs. Gobbler has to be so stuck-up about, considering that her husband's cousin by his first wife was in the shop when she bought her ingredients for her Christmas pudding, and her husband and her children certainly wouldn't eat such a certainly wouldn't eat such a "Ah!" says Mrs. Higbottom to her neighbor, Mrs. Heapsobross, "we always make our puddings so rich that they fell to pieces immediately they are turned out on the dish." "Indeed!" replies Mrs. Heapsobross, "Well, our cook, who, you know, was with the Duchess of Portwyne

fant of a naked pilgrim, don't ask to see me on the same day. If I smile on you benignly, if people tell you that I am poor and plain, or that I wouldn't hurt a soul, believe them not; treat me as a tramp treats hard work.  
 There is but one individual who fears me not, who dares to laugh me to scorn, who shakes his puny fist in my face until I tremble in the pot, and fairly boll over with rage. Impregnable though I am, victor of all victors, conqueror of all conquerors, fearing neither man, woman, bird, beast, or fish, yet, when this insatiable ogre meets me on the battlefield I am indeed cowed, and have to drop down on my benumbed knees before the boy with the cast-

iron stomach. The internal or infernal machinery of this gourmand attains its full growth at the age of twelve. I do my level best to ruin his digestion, but in vain. Even after he has disposed of several thick slices of me cold, he will, instead of doubling up in agony, actually go out and swap his knife for a coconut, and just when I am grinning to myself about the hard work I am giving his gastric juice, down comes this blessed coconut in half-inch chunks, preceded, of course, by the milk, which is generally bad enough to curdle the insides of a dozen adults. I get that mad that I sometimes feel like giving up annoying people altogether. But my revenge comes surely, if slowly, when that boy grows into manhood, and has his mind upset by worldly troubles.  
**JACK KNEW.**  
 Young Jack found himself alone with the newly-arrived visitor. For a few moments he eyed her critically; then:  
 "So you're my grandmother, are you?" he asked.  
 The old lady smiled at the lad benevolently. "Yes, dear," she murmured; "on your father's side."  
 "Hum!" said young Jack. "Then you're on the wrong side; you can take my word for it. If not, you'll soon find it out for yourself!"

**THE CROSS TICKET-AGENT.**  
 As I sat in the station and gazed at the throng,  
 Among which the weak must give way to the strong,  
 I noticed that nine out of ten wished to know  
 "What time does the next train to such a place go?"  
 They had not the time to consult the time-table,  
 Or they would not be bothered—perhaps were not able.  
 The ticket man lodged so confoundedly cross  
 That at first I mistook the young man for the boss.  
 As a rule you will find that the boss is more affable  
 Than his young employee, which at times is quite laughable;  
 But perhaps if the old man were brought under fire,  
 His smiles would give out and his patience would tire;  
 For the heart of no man, I will venture, rejoices  
 When he's shot at all day by a medley of voices.  
 I thought I would ask him "what time," but I faltered  
 When I gazed in his face, and my tactics I altered:  
 With pencil and note-book I wrote—what a sin—it's  
 Just what this young chap had to bear in three minutes.  
 "What time does the next—?" "Have you got a time-table?"  
 "How soon does the train—?" "One ticket for Babel!"  
 "How much is the fare?" "Boss, give me a ticket.  
 As I'm going clean through, in my hat-band I'll stick it."  
 "Has the train gone for—?" "Choo! choo! choo! choo! choo! choo!"  
 "Run, Betsy, for Heaven's sake!"  
 "What shall I do?"  
 "I say, Mister, has—?" "One return for Bow-ning!"  
 "All aboard for Goulburn!" "Ding-a-ling-ling!"  
 "Did you find my umbrella about two weeks ago?"  
 "I say, Mister ticket man, ain't your clock slow?"  
 "Young man, d'ye mind?"  
 "This change isn't right!" "Is the train much behind?"  
 "Young fellow, you're cross!" "The train's coming, I think!"  
 "Clink-clinkety-clank!"  
 "How late do the trains?" "How early?" "How fast?"  
 "What the duce will we do if that train was the last?"  
 "Will you give me my change?" "I want to go to—"  
 "All aboard for—!" "Come, John!" "Laws sakes!" "Choo! choo!"

**A HUMAN ZOO.**  
 How often in this value of tears  
 The statement made in jest is true;  
 For many jump from this to that—  
 Just like a human kangaroo.  
 And others walk amongst their kind,  
 Expressive of eternal dumps;  
 And it requires no Sherlock Holmes  
 To know they're camels by their humps.  
 When wife to hubby sweetly brings  
 A milliner's long bill-of-fare,  
 A soft suggestion for a cheque  
 Transfers him to the grizzly bear.  
 And often in commercial spheres  
 We come upon the human skunk;  
 And many a clumsy elephant  
 Knows not the way to pack a trunk.  
 But the most common class of all,  
 When Love weaves romance round  
 A lass,  
 Is how mere men begin to play  
 For many months the perfect ass.  
 —George S. Astien.

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**A MERRY XMAS**  
 . . . and . . .  
**A Prosperous New Year**



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SINISTRA.

By LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE.

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"P'noaner!" A languid, drenched, and dispirited brakeman flattened both palms on either side of the doorway, inserting head and shoulders within the car, glanced carelessly with lack-lustre eyes at the sleeping young man, and again wailed mournfully, "P'noaner!"

mate him a man worthy of trust. This the girl did. "You might," she deliberated. "Oh, if only you could help me!"

Staff Changes and Promotions

RAILWAYS. WEEK ENDED 13-12-13.

APPOINTMENTS. Locomotive Branch.—Fitters: Sam Hill, John Dixon, Harden. Fitters' Laborers: Percy Clarke, Penrith. Storemen: Leslie T. Roberts, June.

RESIGNED OR LEFT THE SERVICE. Locomotive Branch.—Carbuilder: John Nelson, Eveleigh. Fitters: William F. Stavley, Eveleigh; John Hewitt, Goulburn.

REMOVALS. Stationmaster: Benjamin Potter, Harris Park. Night Officers: Sydney Coull, Mt. George; Richard Heald, Penrith.

PROMOTIONS. Locomotive Branch.—Storeman to Clerk: John Morris, Harden. Assistant Chargehand to Shed Chargehand: Joseph Flood, Harden.

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"THE CO-OPERATOR" Members owing 6s. to be Struck Off List. The executive has decided that unfinancial members are not to participate in any of the Association's many services.

"Well, concluded Murchison, his face clearing somewhat, 'perhaps it's just as well. I'll stay in Cleveland overnight, and take an early train back.' He paid the additional fare, and returned to his seat, wearing the sheepish expression which is the own property of young men who have done a foolish action.

"I'm proud to say. He told me you loved him dearly, and asked me to write, and break it to you gently. It was his suggestion that I should be his left hand that letter went he died. And I—I had his things, and your picture! I saw it, and—forgive me—I loved you because of it. I was sorry for you. I was afraid to tell you—afraid of hurting you. I put it off—had had news, I mean, I wrote you another letter. It was no forgery—my name is Jack. And so it went on."

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