

# Miss Betty's Christmas Gift

By HOPE DARING

Let me see! To-day is—yes, it is the tenth. Just two weeks from to-morrow is Christmas!

Miss Betty Dane, spinster, stood before a calendar which hung on her sitting-room wall. She was a plump little woman, upon whose face a faded pink flush still lingered. Her brown eyes were shy, and the brown hair rolled back from her brow was threaded with silver.

"Christmas!" she repeated, as she went back to her rocking chair. "I suppose a Christian woman ought not to say such a thing, but I dread the day," and Miss Betty wiped her eyes.

"I ought to be ashamed, and I am," she went on, rocking to and fro, "but it's dreadful never to have a Christmas like folks who have a family. Now I'm not repining because I'm an old maid, for I never saw the man I'd think of, not for years, anyway," the dull pink in her cheeks burned to crimson. "I haven't a relative in this part of the country, and I am so shy and bashful that I never get close to people. Sometimes I envy people, women, I mean, who get the pretty, dainty gifts that love prompts."

She sat a few minutes in silence, then resumed her half-articulate murmur: "If I was poor—I mean needy, for I am not rich—the church would send me

A little later she stood by the dresser, the shades lowered, and her purchases set out before her. After her usual fashion Miss Betty commended with herself: "You were foolish, Betty Dane, to pay a dollar and a half for a china cup and saucer when you have more than two dozen of them now. But it is a beauty," touching the fragile porcelain with a caressing finger, "and there's nothing nicer to give a woman than china. There are two handkerchiefs. They are the sheerest, softest linen, and the embroidery is beautiful. I am not so sure about the book. The girl at the store said 'The Blue Flower' was one of the best-selling books of the season. But I did something worse than buying these things."

Miss Betty paused. Her eyes sparkled, and she trembled with excitement.

"You ordered two dozen red carnations sent up to yourself on Christmas eve. Yes, you did, Betty Dane. Well, I suppose you had a right to, only it's too bad there is no one else."

With a sigh she commenced her preparations for supper. The momentary depression passed as her mind dwelt upon her day's outing. When she sat down to her supper Miss Betty was at peace with all the world.

The table was spread with snowy linen, glistening silver and pretty china. There was a quaint, old-fashioned silver teapot of fragrant hyson, bread, a pat of yellow butter, creamed potatoes, thin slices of pink ham, a dish of blackberry jam, and a plate of rich dark fruit cake.

The windows of the dining-room faced the city street. In her abstraction Miss Betty had forgotten to lower the shades.

kerchiefs she had purchased for herself.

"I suppose it is foolish to send a woman in her circumstances such a nice one," she said, in a shame-faced way to Florence, "but women like—well, they like pretty gifts on Christmas."

Florence bent her sunny head and kissed Miss Betty. "It is fear instead of foolish. Why, Miss Betty, that is the Christmas spirit, giving the best."

The day before Christmas was clear and cold. There was no snow, but the earth lay brown and bare in the grasp of the frost king. Just as the shades of evening were beginning to fall Miss Betty emerged from the church where she had been all the afternoon.

"Come home to supper in an hour, dear," she called back to Florence, who stood in the doorway, her sunny head outlined against a mass of dusky evergreens. Florence nodded a smiling assent, and Miss Betty hurried on. She stopped for the mail and found a card from the express office. Calling there she received the package for the florist.

"I am so glad I ordered the carnations," Miss Dane said to herself. "Florence will be delighted with them. In the morning she shall take a few over to Miss Bliss, who is sick. I know Florence will be pleased with the cup and saucer. It seems almost providential that I bought it, for she does love pretty china. And I'm glad I have that other handkerchief for our minister's wife. Mrs. Perry is a real lady, and she don't have any too many of the pretty things women like."

Miss Betty was home by that time. In a trice she had the stoves open and the kettle on. As she took the scarlet carnations from the box and inhaled their spicy fragrance, a gurgling laugh broke from her lips.

"What a dunce you were, Betty Dane, to go and buy yourself Christmas presents! Why, I have given them all away, but the book, and I wish there were some one to whom I could give that. I have learned that the blessedness of Christmas is in giving, not in getting."

She soon had the coffee and the water for the oysters on the stove. As she brought a dish of salad from the pantry she heard the door bell ring.

Miss Dane went forward and opened the door. A man's voice asked: "Is Miss Florence Nesbit in?"

"Miss Nesbit will be here in a few minutes. Will you walk in and wait for her?"

"Indeed I will, ma'am. I am the child's uncle, and I have just come home from a long stay abroad to find that my poor sister lost all her money before her death. The idea of Florence teaching school when I've more money than—Eh! Why, you are Betty Dane!"

Miss Betty looked up into the bronzed bearded face.

"Yes, Jack; I am Betty Dane!"

The man came a step nearer. "Betty, I was a hot-headed fool in the old days. You were right to throw me over and not to answer my letter, but it hurt. It hurts yet, Betty, for I have never loved any other woman."

The little spinster had grown very pale. Should she speak? It cost her a great effort to put aside her fatal shyness, but she did it.

"I never knew there was a letter, Jack; it did not reach me. I have been true to your memory all these years."

Florence came five minutes later. She found Miss Betty in the arms of her uncle, Jack Patterson. It took some time to explain matters. The delight of the girl almost equaled that of the elderly lover.

It was while they were at supper that Miss Betty looked up to say:

"Oh! I am so glad I bought that book! You don't understand, Jack, but I've a Christmas present ready for you."

Mr. Patterson's eyes twinkled.

"That is fine. I am sorry, Betty, that I have nothing to offer you, nothing but love."

Glad tears dimmed Miss Betty's sight. Her heart's hunger was satisfied. The perfect human gift—the image of the Gift that brought Christmas to the world—was hers.—Washington Home Magazine.

Save Us from Our Friends.

Once upon a time a man who had experienced a prosperous year in business thought it would be a gracious thing to share his good fortune with his wife, so at Christmas he presented her with the finest diamond necklace he could purchase. When the neighbors saw it they set their heads together and decided that the man had made the gift for the purpose of keeping peace in the family. They wondered what his wife had caught him at, and each invented a bit of scandal to fit the case.

Moral:—The easiest thing in this world is to be misunderstood.—J. I. O'Connell, in Town Topics.

A Christmas Nuisance.

Felice and I, we never meet From one year's end unto another; I seldom think of her, and she Has precious little use for me. Yet every Christmas—see repeat—That awful gift-exchanging bother; We're fettered to it, wrist and wrist; Each has the other on her "list." And 'though we're both heart-sick of it, We neither one would dare to quit.—By Susie M. Best, in Town Topics.

Hard on Brown.

"Jones has it in for Brown and is planning an awful revenge upon him at Christmas."

"Going to send him an infernal machine?"

"No. He's going to give Brown's children a graphophone."—Denver Times.

Thoughtful.

"How kind of papa!"

"What's he sent?"

"A quantity of presents for baby, and on each are directions what to do if he makes himself sick with it! And here are the medicines, too!"—Brooklyn Life.

# FARM AND GARDEN



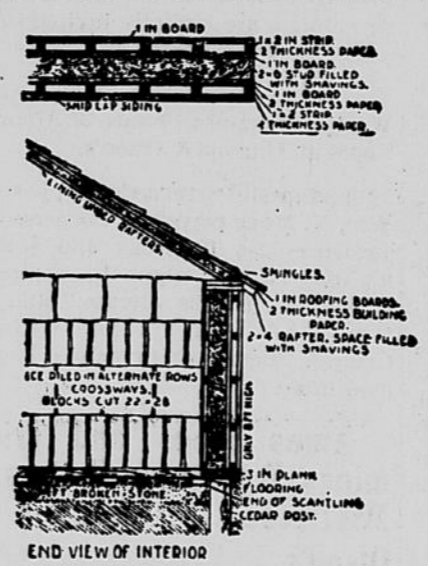
## PREPARE FOR ICE HARVEST

Plans for Storage House That Will Protect the Ice During the Hot Days of Summer.

The time of preparation for harvesting the ice crop is again at hand. Some who have employed very temporary structures for the storage of their ice in the past are now thinking of building something better and more permanent. Others will cut ice for the first time this year. We are glad to see this, as an abundance of ice on every northern farm should be considered not a luxury, but a necessity.

There are two or three weak points in the general construction of buildings for the storage of ice. The first is in making a poor foundation, thus securing a lack of drainage. The second is a kind of roof, on which the sun generates such intense heat that the inside of the house is more like an oven than a place for keeping ice. While little scope is usually given in the selection of a site there are certain precautions to be taken in order to secure a good bed of ice. The following is a very good general plan:

If the site chosen be on a little rise above the adjacent ground level, surface drainage will give no trouble; otherwise provision for it, as well as for the water from the melting ice, must be made. For preparation for the foundation of the house, which can be placed on stone or cement walls, or on cedar posts set in the ground two feet, at least, excavate at least one foot below sills, and fill with cobble stones or



very coarse gravel, the whole of the inside of the sills, smoothing off the surface with fine gravel or cinders. If the digging shows a clay soil, a drain should be put in to carry off surplus moisture, carrying drain well under the gravel. Scantlings can be bedded in the fine gravel on which to place a floor of cheap lumber, placed one inch apart to permit water to pass through.

It takes on an average from 40 to 45 cubic feet to hold a ton of ice, consequently a building 12x16 feet by 12 feet high would hold about 45 tons of ice well packed. For a house of this size use 3x12 sound plank for sills and for uprights 2x6 scantling 12 feet long, placed two feet apart, at each corner, putting in an extra piece to catch lining on the inside. On the top spike 2x6 scantling doubled for plates. On the outside of house nail sheeting of common lumber, on which tack a double thickness of building paper, then strips 1x2x12 feet long; over this a double thickness of building paper and finish with matched siding. This gives a hollow space of dead air one inch to preserve heat of the sun penetrating to inside lining, care being used to see that the space is well cut off at top and bottom. On the inside nail sheeting, filling the six-inch space with cinders, shavings or sawdust as is most convenient; over this sheeting nail a double thickness of paper, on which nail one-half inch strips again, and on these sheeting, thus making two hollow spaces of dead air one inch each and one space of six inches filled, six thicknesses of building paper, three of sheeting and one of good siding.

For the roof use 2x4 rafters, lining the underside and filling between the rafters with dry shavings; under the shingles place two thicknesses of building paper, placing a ventilator in the center of the roof, made so that it can be closed inside if desirable. The door should be made in two halves, and a door in the gable over the plate to put in and take out the ice for two top layers. The gables should be built the same as the walls. If the outside of the building is painted white it will help to keep the building cool. The following is the bill for lumber for such a house; by securing prices from your local dealer you can readily determine the cost of material:

Sills, 2 pieces, 3-12-12 equal.....	72
Sills, 2 pieces, 3-12-16 equal.....	96
Cornice boards.....	75
Studs, 32 pieces, 2-6-12 equal.....	384
Plates, 4 pieces, 2-6-12 equal.....	48
Plates, 4 pieces, 2-6-16 equal.....	64
Studding for.....	57
Gables, 4 pieces, 2-4-16 equal.....	64
Rafters, 18 pieces, 2-4-8 equal.....	108
Strips, 60 pieces, 1-2-12 equal.....	120
Three thickness sheeting over all.....	2,268
Roofing.....	225
Lining roof.....	140
Flooring.....	170
Scantling for floor, 5 pieces, 2-4-10 equal.....	35
Siding matched, 450 feet.....	135
Shingles 24 square XXX cedar.....	120
Twelve rolls sulphite building paper.....	120

In lieu of some of the dead air spaces in above some pack sawdust around the ice, leaving a space between the ice and the wall wide enough so that more sawdust can be worked down in case of any loss around the sides. In sections where sawdust is plentiful very satisfactory results may be obtained with a very cheap building by using more sawdust.—Prairie Farmer.

## CARE OF SEED CORN.

How the Vitality and Nutriment of the Seed May Be Best Preserved in Winter.

After having been properly grown and selected, seed corn may be greatly reduced in vitality by injudicious care during the winter. It is the vitality of the seed and the nutriment stored in the seed that sustains the young plants during their first week of growth, and the success of a crop depends much upon the vigor with which the young plants begin growth. By those who take pains to select seed in the fall, not many serious mistakes are made regarding its preservation, although some do not give the seed as good treatment as they might easily do, says C. P. Hartley, of the United States department of agriculture. Any means that secures a thorough drying of the seed ears soon after they ripen, before freezing weather, and keeps them dry until the seed is planted, will be a success.

It must be remembered that although seed corn is thoroughly dried, it will not remain so if exposed to a saturated atmosphere. The kernels absorb moisture, and if exposed to changes in temperature while moist, their vitality will be injured. A thorough drying of seed ears by artificial heat, if necessary, and their preservation in a dry atmosphere and at a steady temperature, is strongly recommended. In 1901 seed dried by fire and kept dry and at a steady temperature during the winter was planted, in comparison with seed from the same fields which was suspended in barns at husking time and left exposed to atmospheric conditions.

The tests were made on different soils and in different states by planting ten-acre patches, so that the well-preserved or fire-dried seed was planted in alternate rows with the air-dried seed. There was no perceptible difference in the rapidity of germination; 70.9 per cent. of the air-dried and 73.8 per cent. of the fire-dried seed grew and survived. These percentages were obtained by counts made after the plants were about eight inches high. A count made at harvest time proved that the stalks had increased by growth of suckers 19.7 per cent. in the air-dried rows and 29.4 per cent. in the fire-dried rows. The crop from each row was weighed carefully, and in all cases each fire-dried row produced more and better corn than the air-dried rows on either side of it.

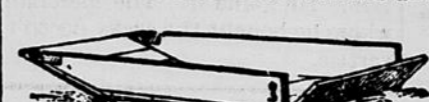
The greatest difference was on good soil on the Potomac river bottoms, where the fire-dried seed produced 18 1/2 bushels more corn per acre, the average yield from the fire-dried rows being 85.59 bushels of ear corn per acre, in comparison with 67.34 bushels from the air-dried rows. Although all the rows were planted by hand with three kernels in every hill and germinated almost equally well, as above shown, at harvest time the fire-dried rows contained 12.5 per cent. more stalks than the air-dried rows. This, however, was not the leading cause for the increased production, for the total average production per stalk in the fire-dried rows was 0.672 pound, as compared with 0.618 pound per stalk from air-dried seed.

On upland clay soil fire-dried seed produced 63.92 bushels per acre, while the air-dried seed produced 56.68; a difference of seven bushels in favor of the seed that had special care taken of it during the winter. While it may not be practicable for all growers to keep their seed corn throughout the winter by means of fire, it is possible for all to dry the seed ears thoroughly in the fall and then place them where they will remain dry.

## HANDY FARM BOAT.

This Is a Device Easily Made Which Will Also Do Service as a Sled.

A combination boat and sled for farm use is shown in the cut. A hard wood pole three or four inches in diameter is sawed in two to form the runners and



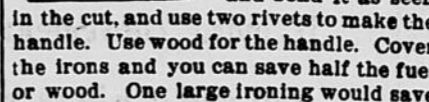
## COMBINATION BOAT AND SLED.

on this two-inch plank three or four feet long are spiked for the bottom. A two-inch plank four to six inches wide is fastened on each side. An end board may also be attached, as shown. The front end is made sloping so that it will easily slide over rough ground.—Farm and Home.

## FLAT-IRON SHIELD.

How to Utilize an Old Bread Pan So That It Will Save the Fuel Bill.

Plan for saving fuel: First take an old bread pan, or anything that will cover two or three flat-irons. Take a piece of sheet-iron and bend it as seen in the cut, and use two rivets to make the handle. Use wood for the handle. Cover the irons and you can save half the fuel or wood. One large ironing would save more fuel than a new pan made to order would cost.—Farm Journal.



## SEEDLINGS.

The dwarfing of a tree occurs by the slight disagreement between the scion and the stock.

Moss-covered trees will be much benefited by scraping and then whitewashing with lime and wood ashes. Judgment is the outgrowth of experience, yet a man may have a wide experience and yet lack in judgment.

No one business has any assurance of always proving a profitable one, because changes so frequently occur to disturb all branches of farming.

## RIGHT NOT RECOGNIZED.

Son of Busy Traveling Man Indignant at Familiarity of Strangers.

The story of the hard worked newspaper man who devoted so much of his time to his work that he did not recognize the youngest member of his family when he met the youngster unexpectedly is not without its parallel. In this case, says the New York Press, it was the baby, who, not having sufficient opportunity to become acquainted with his proud parent, made a remark which led to resolves of reformation.

A traveling man naturally gets home but once in each week, sometimes drawing a two-week trip, and in other cases being away from his home for even a longer period. He usually tries to dash in home for Sunday, and on one of these dashes, in a certain home, the young man of the family having ascertained that little some four years previously, was very bad, indeed, and finally forced the father to administer the merited, though mild, punishment. The injured youngster immediately made a wild dash for his mother, waiting at the top of his voice: "Mother, mother, mother—r; that man that comes here on Sunday has been spanking me."

## Rude Woman.

Nervey—Yes, I attended Mrs. Swellman's reception and I must say she is quite a going concern person.

"Askum—What? Why, how did you get into such a swell function as that?"

"That's what she had the rudeness to ask me."—Philadelphia Press.

## No Hope for Him.

"I'm afraid," he said, "that you are figuring on giving me a marble heart."

"Well, what did you expect?" she asked, indifferently, "Mexican oysters?"—Chicago Daily News.

## King Alfonso refuses to give more than eight hours a day to royal business.

All men going to take office chances are calling his bluff.—Baltimore American.

## Doing Great Work.

Florissant, Mo., Dec. 19th.—(Special)—That Dodd's Kidney Pills are doing a great work in curing the more terrible forms of Kidney Disease, such as Bright's Disease, Dropsy and Diabetes, everybody knows. But it must also be noted that they are doing a still greater work in wiping out thousands of cases of the earlier stages of Kidney Disease. Take for instance Mrs. Peter Barreau, of this place. She says:—

"I have been subject to pains in my back and knees for about three years, but since I have been taking Dodd's Kidney Pills I have been entirely cured."

Others here tell similar stories. In fact, in this part of Missouri there are scores of people who have cured the early symptoms of Kidney Disease with Dodd's Kidney Pills. The use of the great American Kidney Remedy thus saved not only the lives of Kidney Disease victims, but thousands of other Americans from years of sufferings.

"A burnt child dreads de fire," said Uncle Eben, "but de man dat done los' his money on a hoss race goes around lookin' for another trip."—Chicago Journal.

## A Guaranteed Cure for Piles.

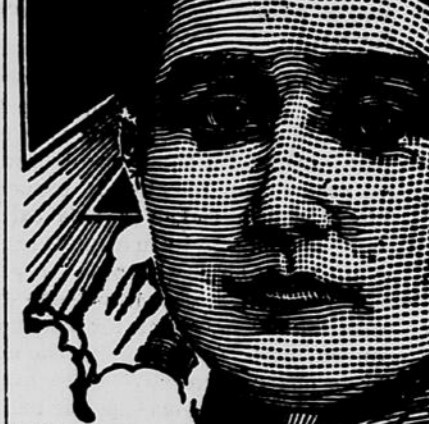
Itching, Blind, Bleeding or Protruding Piles. Your druggist will refund money if Pazo Ointment fails to cure in 6 to 14 days. 50c.

## The Russian brand of patriotism may be judged from the fact that about half the population would leave the country if they could get safely over the border.

—Philadelphia Ledger.

## HOPE FOR THE SICK.

PERUNA



MRS. HENRIETTA MARSH. A VICTIM OF LA GRIFFE.

Mrs. Henrietta A. S. Marsh, 769 W. 14th St., Los Angeles, Cal., President Woman's Benevolent Ass'n, writes: "I suffered with la grippe for seven weeks, and nothing I could do or take helped me until I tried Peruna."

"I felt at once that I had at last secured the right medicine and I kept steadily improving. Within three weeks I was fully restored, and I am glad that I gave that truly great remedy a trial. I will never be without it again."

In a letter dated August 31, 1904, Mrs. Marsh says: "I have never yet heard the efficacy of Peruna questioned. We still use it. I traveled through Kentucky and Tennessee three years ago, where I found Peruna doing its good work. Much of it is being used here also."—Henrietta A. S. Marsh.

Address Dr. Hartman, President of The Hartman Sanitarium, Columbus, Ohio.

Ask your Druggist for a free Peruna Almanac for 1905.

## PILES

ANAKESIS gives relief to all cases of PILES. It is a sure cure. For free sample address Dr. J. C. Hartman, 111 E. 11th St., New York.



"YES, JACK, I AM BETTY DANE."

a basket Christmas morning. Well, I'm thankful that I don't need that, and I always give something to help fill the baskets as well as money for the Sunday school Christmas tree. Mrs. Deacon Green will send me a mince pie. She has done it every Christmas for ten years, and I always send her a plate of my crullers. I will send Mrs. Carpenter a chicken and a few other things; she will return an elaborate note of thanks, every line beginning with a capital letter. There's Niece Tillie. She never fails to send me the new baby's picture. On the rare years when there is no new baby she sends me a card. Such things are all well enough, but they don't mean—"

Miss Betty stopped, rose, and walked aimlessly into the adjoining dining-room. After a few moments she returned to her former position. A determined look was upon her face.

"I'll do it. Why shouldn't I? The day after to-morrow I'll go to the city, and I will buy dainty little things, such presents as a woman ought to have at Christmas. I will pretend to myself that they mean the love I am so slow learning to live without."

On the morning of the second day following Miss Dane left the village on the nine o'clock train. She did not return until four.

As she walked briskly homeward from the depot, her arms filled with packages, she was overtaken by Mrs. Hall.

"Why, lands sakes, Miss Betty! You don't mean to say as you've been to the city, do you? I didn't know as you was calculatin' on goin'."

"Well, I have been there," Miss Dane answered, a little defiantly.

"What'd you go for? You've got a new hat already, and your cloak was new last winter."

"I went to do some shopping."

"Land sakes! What'd you buy?"

Miss Betty threw back her head, her brown eyes staring straight ahead of her.

"I bought Christmas gifts. Good-by, Mrs. Hall," and, turning a corner, the half-frightened spinster hurried down a street that led directly to her own door.

Mrs. Hall looked after the plump little figure, baffled curiosity depicted on her face.

"Miss Betty is altogether too close-mouthed. It ain't becomin' to a woman as lives alone."

Miss Dane soon reached her own home. It was fast growing dark, and as she entered the sitting-room the gleam of the coal stove seemed like a welcome.

"I'm glad to be back, but I am not sorry I went," she thought as she carefully laid her parcels on the bed. "It is going to be a cold night. I'll start the fires in the dining-room and kitchen before I put these things away."

She glanced that way nervously when the door bell rang.

When she opened the hall door the light from the lamp in her hand fell upon a fair girlish face framed round with sunny hair. Miss Betty recognized her caller as one of the teachers from the village school.

"Good evening, Miss Nesbit. Will you walk in?"

Florence Nesbit followed the mistress of the house to the sitting-room. As soon as she was within the room the girl began speaking:

"Oh, Miss Dane, my errand is a strange one! You know I am a stranger here, and I have been so homesick! I haven't any home—my mother went away from me a year ago. I looked in your window as I walked by. You looked so cozy and homelike, I just came in to ask you if I would board me."

"Board you! Why, I never thought of taking boarders. What put it into your head?"

Florence's lips quivered. "Just because you were alone, like myself. I wouldn't be any trouble and—oh, Miss Dane, I could be so happy here with you!"

"Where'd you board?"

"With Mrs. Elmer. There is to be a vacation of two weeks at the holidays, and I must stay there."

Miss Dane recalled what she knew of Mrs. Elmer's housekeeping and shuddered.

"You poor child! Of course you can come here. There is the other bedroom downstairs, always warm, and the place opposite me at table. Why, Miss Nesbit, I believe they have been waiting for you."

Florence threw both arms round the other's neck. "I can't thank you; there are no words to tell you what it means to me. I walked by your window three times before I could get courage enough to knock! Oh, you don't know how glad I am! It is like a beautiful Christmas present."

Miss Betty started, remembering her own longing for Christmas remembrances. Would not this girl's presence in the house be to her, in her loneliness, a gift that would partake of the Christmas spirit?

The days went by quickly. Much to Miss Betty's surprise she found herself busy with preparations for the coming holiday season.

There were the children in Florence's room. Miss Betty became almost as enthusiastic regarding the surprise planned for them as was the girl teacher. Then Miss Betty not only gave her usual contribution of money for the Sunday school tree, but she promised to go with Florence and help trim it. The basket for the church poor was filled to overflowing. To the one for Mrs. Carpenter Miss Betty added one of the hand-