

THE QUIET CORNER

I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library.—C. Lamb.

"'Twas the night before"—chanted the beaming Dr. Angelicus.

"But why doesn't someone commemorate in verse the morning after Christmas?" interrupted Primus Criticus, gloomily.

"Because anticipation is always greater than realization," sang the Doctor, unperturbed in his determination to enjoy a joyeux Noël. "Here it is the night before Christmas, and not one of us has yet peeped into the bulging stockings that hang from yon mantel of the Calvert Club. Let us proceed to business,"—and Dr. Angelicus gaily hummed a snatch of song as he selected the largest stocking and dumped its contents on the table.

"But this is not funny," he mumbled irately, as the first gift tumbled out, bearing his own name. It proved to be a large black frame surrounding a piece of illuminated parchment—gay with initial letters in red.

"God bless our home?" inquired Statisticus, who was busy examining his own stocking.

"No," grumbled Angelicus, rather embarrassed, and trying to hide the gift. But Tittivillus was too quick for him. He snatched it out of the Doctor's hands and held it up for the others to see. The inscription read—

"To Doctor Angelicus—one of his early poems, sacred to me and treasured these many years, which I have lovingly illuminated and framed that he may ever have this piece of beauty before him, reminding him that even in his youth, he was a Great Poet."

"Hear, Hear," said the Editor. "Read the poem aloud."

Tittivillus began in sing-song chant—

"Women now prefer the poodle
To the baby on the knee—
And a rare old-fashioned mother—
You very seldom see"—

With an angry roar Angelicus seized the frame from the grinning page boy. "Impudence," he thundered.

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"There, there," said the Editor soothingly, "let's see what Santa Claus has brought me." And he emptied his stocking on the table. A dainty red and white package fell out.

"With best wishes for a Happy Christmas from the Printers to the Editor," he read aloud with gratification. "Ah—looks like a book. Always thought those printers had good taste." The others crowded round to see, as a large black leather volume presented itself. The cover read—"My Trip Abroad—a Daily Chronicle of Twelve Months in Europe for 1925."

"The delicacy of printers in casting gentle hints is a thing to marvel at," said Doctor Angelicus, dreamily, as the rather embarrassed Editor thrust the book in his pocket.

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Just then a loud groan came from the Business Manager as he displayed a blue and gold book entitled, "How to be Happy on Nothing a Year." "It can't be done," he sighed.

Miss Anonymoncule drew forth a large package of magazines and a letter which she read aloud—

"Knowing you are The Commonweal's proof-hound, I have diligently gone through the copies of The Commonweal published up to date, and have marked in red ink all the typo-

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graphical mistakes you have overlooked. Yours in Christian feeling—An old Proof-Reader."

Sadly Miss A. opened the magazines. "The Red Sea," she sobbed, as the crimson pages fluttered.

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At this juncture, Tittivillus opened the door for two porters who carried in a very large object.

"For Miss Boadicea," the card read. Unwrapped it proved to be a chaise-longue heaped with boudoir pillows—one, the largest, of black satin embroidered in yellow with the motto—"Here I stay—Here I rest." On investigation this fancy work proved to be the work of Tittivillus's own hands.

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Hereticus was mumbling savagely over his gift—a box seat for a performance of Peter Pan, and a week's board at the Williamstown Institute of Politics.

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"But what about Tittivillus?" asked the Editor. The grinning imp, who had been feverishly awaiting permission to open his stocking, emptied out its contents, which proved to be—The Book of Etiquette, and the Social Register for 1925.

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"Here's something for Professor Hereticus—signed by Cyril B. Egan," chuckled Angelicus. "I don't know whether Mr. Egan has been making a special study of your work, Hereticus, or whether he's sent this in just because of its general appropriateness; anyhow, here it is. It is entitled Values:—

Boggs,
The Bard of Revolt,
Writes *god* with a little *g*;
But value-mindful,
Signs himself,
BOGGS
With a capital *B*!

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"It's all a bad dream," muttered the Editor. "But I'll tell you what we'll do. The Salvation Army wagon will call in a few minutes for presents for the worthy poor—"

"Thank God for the Salvation Army," said Angelicus, piously.

—THE LIBRARIAN.

CONTRIBUTORS

CLAYTON HAMILTON is prominent among the critics of the theatre in America and distinguished as an authority and a lecturer on the drama. His published works include: *The Theory of the Theatre*; *On the Trail of Stevenson*; *A Manual of the Art of Fiction*.

THOMAS F. WOODLOCK is a distinguished contributor to the reviews and author of the paper in a recent issue of *The Commonweal* on Loisy's "Duel with the Vatican."

HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON is well-known for his books: *The Fall of the Dutch Republic*, *The Rise of the Dutch Kingdom*, and *Ancient Man*.

CARLTON J. HAYES is an historian of note and a general contributor to the periodicals. His works include *Sources Relating to the Germanic Invasions*, *British Social Politics*, and *The Political and Social History of Europe*.

MARY KOLARS is distinguished as a contributor of literary essays and book reviews in the current magazines.

JOHN FORD, Justice of the Supreme Court of New York, has been a prominent agitator for moral uplift in our plays and books. He is the author of *The American Policy of Protection Applied to American Shipping* and *The Pocket Cyclopaedia of Protection*.

REVEREND FREDERICK CORCORAN of the Congregation of Passionists, is prominent among the younger poets.

THEODORE MAYNARD, poet, novelist and critic, is the author of *Our Best Poets* and *The Divine Adventure*.

MARGARET WIDDEMER is a novelist and poet, well known for her books, *Old Road to Paradise* and *The Graven Image*.

MARION CUMMINGS is a poet and essayist, and a frequent contributor to the magazines.

FREDERICK TABER COOPER is a frequent contributor of critical essays to the reviews, and the author of many books of essays.