TABLE TALKS

by Jane Andrews

Plum pudding and mince pie are among old favorites for the holiday meal. Other pies and puddings, however, have gradually entered the holiday dessert field, and several are suggested in this column.

* * *

It's a good idea, in anticipation of a busy day, to make your dessert the day before you want to serve it; or, you may want to buy it to store on your pantry shelf until the dinner hour arrives. In either case, there is a wide choice of delectable sauces from which to choose. Here are several that are suitable for either plum or fig pudding.

HARD SAUCE

½ cup softened (not melted) butter
1 cup sifted confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoon cream
½ teaspoon vanilla, lemon or almond extract

Cream butter and gradually beat in, a little at a time, the sugar. Add cream and extract. Chill.

* * *

Butterscotch Hard Sauce

Substitute ½ cup firmly packed brown sugar for confectioners' sugar in above recipe. Increase cream to 2 tablespoons, vanilla to ½ teaspoon.

* * *

FOAMY EGG SAUCE

2 eggs, separated and beaten
½ cup sugar
¼ teaspoon salt
Almond extract (to taste)
½ teaspoon grated orange peel

Beat egg yolks until thick and light colored; beat in sugar and salt, adding them gradually. Flavor to taste with almond extract, add grated orange peel. Fold in stiffly beaten egg whites. Serve at once.

* * *

Perhaps you'd like to try a steamed pumpkin pudding. It's simple to prepare, serve with hard sauce or whipped cream.

STEAMED PUMPKIN PUDDING

1½ cups sifted flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon each, soda, salt, cinnamon and ginger
½ teaspoon cloves
½ cup shortening
1 cup brown sugar
2 eggs
½ cup sour milk
½ cup cooked pumpkin

Sift together flour, baking powder, soda, salt, and spices. Cream together shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs and beat well. Add flour mixture to creamed mixture alternately with milk and pumpkin. Pour into greased 1½ quart mold. Steam. (To steam, put about 2 quarts water into large covered kettle with rack in bottom. Bring water to boil. Place pudding on rack and cover with double layer of waxed paper. Cover kettle and reduce heat so steaming is steady but gentle.) Steam 1½ hours. Remove from kettle and allow to cool 10 minutes before unmolding.

* * *

Here is an attractive date pudding that serves 8-12. It, also, is best served with your favorite sauce.

STEAMED DATE PUDDING

¾ cup shortening
1 cup sugar
1 egg
2 cups sifted flour
2 teaspoon each, soda and baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
1 cup milk
½ cup chopped nut meats
1 cup chopped dates
1 teaspoon flavoring

Cream shortening and sugar until soft and fluffy; add egg and blend thoroughly. Sift flour, soda, baking powder, and salt together. Add alternately with milk, adding flour first and last. Fold in nuts and dates. Blend in flavoring. Fill 9 custard cups half full. Cover each cup with wax paper and tie securely with cord. Steam, having water come halfway up around cups. Keep water at boiling point. Steam 1 hour. Serve warm.

* * *

Perhaps you'd like an entirely new kind of ice cream. You can make this ahead of serving time and forget it while you prepare the rest of the dinner. This recipe serves 8.

FRUIT CAKE ICE CREAM

1 quart vanilla ice cream
¼ cup diced candied pineapple
¼ cup diced candied green cherries
¼ cup diced candied red cherries
¼ cup chopped blanched almonds
½ cup macaroon crumbs
2 tablespoons apple juice

Combine all ingredients; place in refrigerator tray or freezing compartment until ice cream hardens.

* * *

If you like a zippy pie, here is one that will fill that requirement:

CRANBERRY FLUFF PIE

½ cup sugar
½ cup water
2 stiffly beaten egg whites
1 envelope unflavored gelatin
¼ cup water
½ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon almond extract
½ pint heavy cream, whipped
1 can whole cranberry sauce
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 baked pie shell

Boil sugar and ½ cup water to soft ball stage (235° F.). Beat egg whites stiff, slowly pour syrup over them, while beating. Soften gelatin in ¼ cup cold water. Dissolve over hot water. Stir into egg whites; beat 1 minute. Add salt, lemon juice, almond extract; let cool while whipping cream. Fold both together. Turn into shell. Chill until set. Combine cranberry sauce and cornstarch. Heat until clear and thickened. Cool. Spread on pie. Chill well before serving.

"Officer, are you sure that this man was drunk?"

"Well, judge, he was carrying a manhole cover and said he was taking it home to play on his victrola."

Protection Plus — Swedish soldiers will soon be equipped with bullet-proof waistcoats now being tested in Stockholm. Padded with layers of nylon and flexible glass fibers, they're designed to protect wearers from shell splinters and bullets of rifle caliber.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1. Pine
4. Shun
9. Window
13. Meadow
14. Italian island
15. Hectline
17. Coming to a look
19. Pin
20. Knickknacks
21. Shot
22. Hill
23. Twitter
27. Nonmetallic substance
29. Food
30. Article
31. Skin
32. Pertaining to
34. Atoms
36. Tomorrow
37. Mediterranean sailing vessel
39. Tins
42. Bell
43. Freaks
45. Tree-yielding fruit
47. Ghost
48. Hope dance
51. Branch of the
53. Ice
54. Lawyer
55. Tourist's delight
56. Not forth
57. Afire
58. Bluff

DOWN

1. Wild animal
2. Honey gatherer
3. Kind of measure
4. Activity
5. Manservant
6. Unless
7. Symbol for radium
8. Exhibits
9. Flowers
10. Vessels
11. Clear again
16. Chances
18. Golf stroke
20. Winter vehicle
21. Northern country
22. Small and
24. Stick-like insect
25. Hardened
26. Finished
28. Envelop
30. Wages out
33. Worship
35. Heated
38. Sin
40. Make into bale
41. Large steam
44. Submit
46. Obey
47. Spot
48. Sound
49. Ensnare
52. Lamb (comb. form)
53. Open-work
55. Swimming tool

Answer Elsewhere on This Page

Here's a Different Dessert Treat

By DOROTHY MADDOX

When cookie - and - fruit - cake satiated guests drop in during the holidays, perk up their jaded palates with a good cup of steaming tea or coffee, and a serving of hot plum pudding topped with delicious, chilled coconnut hard sauce balls.

Coconnut Hard Sauce Balls
(Makes 30 Balls)

One-third cup butter or margarine, 1 cup sifted confectioner's sugar, ½ teaspoon vanilla, 1 cup shredded coconnut, cut fine.

Cream butter, add sugar gradually, and continue creaming until light and fluffy. Add vanilla and beat well. Drop by teaspoon into coconnut and roll into ¾-inch balls.

Chill before serving with the plum pudding which should be warmed.

Treat your guests to an old holiday favourite dressed up with this delicious coconnut hard sauce.

THE FARM FRONT

by John Russell

Reproduction of the commonly-planted spruces and pines in the natural forest is accomplished by means of seeds which are produced in cones consisting of layers of scales which provide protection for the seeds. For the most part the seeds are winged, but not pines are an exception.

The steps followed by the Forest Nursery Station, Indian Head, Sask., in obtaining seed and producing seedlings of evergreens are briefly as follows:

Cones of spruce are picked in August or September before the scales separate and allow the seed to escape. Cones of pine are picked later, those of Scotch pine often being picked in early winter or towards spring. During warm days in early spring, not only does seed escape from Scotch pine cones, but the cones themselves may fall from the tree. If day temperatures are relatively high in the fall, cones of Scotch pine may open then.

* * *

Cones of jack and lodgepole pines, on the other hand, remain firmly attached to the tree, sometimes for years, and no seed escapes from the cones very readily. Cones of other pines, such as limber, red, western yellow and white, open earlier than those of Scotch pine.

Having secured the seeds they are prepared during the winter by careful flailing, followed by jamming and hand picking, if for sowing the following spring necessary. Seed is usually sown early in May in well-prepared soil containing a fair proportion of sand and leaf mould or peat moss.

* * *

The seedbed is kept well-watered for the first four or six weeks while the seeds are germinating, and during the first year, protection against damage by sun, wind or other causes is provided. Lath screens are useful for covering seedbeds.

* * *

Pine seedlings are left in the seedbed for two years and spruce seedlings for three years, after which they are lifted and given more space in nursery rows. When pine seedlings are four years old, and spruce seedlings are from five to six years old, they are considered large enough for planting in a permanent place.

* * *

In conditions are favourable, where mature evergreens are established, young trees may develop from seeds set free from cones produced by the established trees.

* * *

Continued research in poultry nutrition has brought about many changes in poultry raising in recent years. One of the most interesting from the point of view of the practical poultryman is that large amounts of corn or wheat can be substituted for oats and barley in the rations of laying hens. Rations containing high percentages of corn or wheat are commonly referred to as "high energy" or "high efficiency" rations.

* * *

High efficiency rations are not simple rations. The necessary minerals, vitamins, and amino acids must be present. Hens eat less feed. Strangely enough this reduced feed consumption is not reflected in reduced egg production, but actually results in increased feed efficiency.

* * *

Practical laying trials carried out at the Canada Experimental Farm, Kappan, N.S., indicate that birds consume less feed when fed "high efficiency" rations than when fed conventional rations. The reason for this appears to be the higher energy and lesser bulk of the high efficiency rations.

* * *

Barred Plymouth Rock laying hens on high efficiency rations required only 3.7 pounds of feed to produce a dozen eggs, as compared with 4.4 pounds of feed per dozen eggs when fed a conventional ration. This represents a saving of over ten per cent in feed. Single Comb White Leghorn hens respond in a similar manner.

* * *

The economy of feeding high efficiency rations depends on the price relationship between corn and wheat and the other grains. Whenever the price of oats and barley is running equal to or higher than corn or wheat, then more corn and wheat should be used in the ration. Where the reverse is true, the gains to be made in feeding high efficiency rations must be balanced against the extra cost of the corn and wheat. High efficiency rations do not give increased egg production. The only saving to be made is in the increased efficiency of egg production on the high efficiency rations.

Amazing Story Of Grace Kelly

If there is one star you are going to find it difficult to avoid during the next few years, it is an elegant young blonde named Grace Kelly.

The movie folk have dubbed her Hitchcock's "Golden Girl." It seems that she just can't go wrong. Producers and directors alike are clamouring for her.

Ever since she made two small parts in "Fourteen Hours" and "High Noon" she has been in constant demand. But the film that really set the ball rolling was "Mogambo," in which she appeared as Donald Sinden's wife. It was her first big role, and it seemed to knock Hollywood dizzy.

She has also appeared in "Dial M for Murder" and "Rear Window" (now on release). Both were directed by Alfred Hitchcock. The veteran "Hitch" has described her as "the best actress I have found up in Hollywood since Ingrid Bergman." She is the only actress ever to appear three times running in any one picture.

Apart from these Hitchcock productions Grace Kelly has yet to be seen in three other films: opposite William Holden in "The Bridges of Toko-Ri," with Bing Crosby in "The Country Girl," and as Stewart Granger's leading lady in "Green Fire." And it has already been announced that she is to star in M-G-M's "The Long Day," and with Robert Taylor and Lana Turner in "The Colbeh."

It's quite a remarkable record, and somehow or other she has managed to work in stage production as well, taking over the lead for a time in the Broadway production of "The Moon is Blue."

Perhaps the most unusual thing about her success is that Hollywood hasn't waited for the public's verdict on her. The decision is the usual barometer to decide an actress' fate, but Grace Kelly has gone shooting ahead without this guide. She was in fact, a star before you saw her.

One thing you can be sure about is that her dizzy spell of activity hasn't flurried her in any way. On the screen she always looks as cool as the proverbial cucumber, and it isn't a pose. No one has ever seen her look anything but cool, calm and collected.

Donald Sinden's description of her appeals to me. I was talking to him about her after he had returned from filming "Mogambo" in Africa.

"Most of us felt hot and looked hot," he remarked. "But whatever the weather was like, Grace Kelly never lost her champagne out of the ice-box air."

Her physical appearance has something to do with this, of course. Her hair is corn-coloured, and her eyes are a light clear blue. She looks as though the mountain air is playing around her the whole time. And she has the sort of temperament which rarely gets ruffled.

Why her rapid success?

The answer seems to be that she really is different from the conventional run of actresses. Cary Grant has been quoted as saying: "It's refreshing to find an actress who is a lady." Columnists have used very much the same expression. The word "lady" crops up again and again.

Hollywood, as a result, stands somewhat in awe of her. At the same time acknowledging that she can radiate a complete naturalness. On her part, she is frank enough to admit that her father, before becoming a prosperous building contractor, was an Irish bricklayer. But she herself has never known anything but luxury.

One thing on which there seems to be general agreement is that she takes her acting more seriously than almost any other star, and that she is a perfectionist.

One of the possessions she took to Africa with her on the "Mogambo" location was a book on how to speak Swahili. She had spent the previous few weeks studying it, and had already picked up a smattering of the difficult language by the time she got out there. And she was never without the book.

Of course, there was a laugh against her when she spoke to the natives in laborious Swahili, only to have them answer her in English, but she took it well.

As an actress, she is just as conscientious. She blossoms so fitely absorbed in her own characterisation, and hardly seems to be aware that anyone else exists.

The result is that her fellow-players see comparatively little of her during a production. She is too intent on studying her part at every available opportunity.

She says: "I don't think I have ever wanted to be anything except an actress."

She was only eleven when she made her first stage appearance for an amateur group in Philadelphia, where she comes from. Later on, she played leads for the same group.

So, by the time she left school, she had made up her mind to become an actress, and studied at the American Academy of Arts.

I doubt very much whether any young actress has ever bounded to such rapid success. She made Broadway with one leap from the drama school, playing the part of Raymond Massey's daughter in "The Father."

Then she did another Broadway play, followed by a few television and radio parts, which led her straight to Hollywood.

Grace herself is an excellent swimmer, but she says she really prefers skiing and riding. As you can guess, she does both superbly well.

She is also an adept at pastel sketching. In fact, it seems that she can shine at anything to which she puts her shapely hand.

Quite a girl!

MODERN PIED PIPER NEEDS NO FLUTE

Heinz Wald, champion rat-catcher of the century, is unlike his famous predecessor, the Pied Piper of Hamelin. He does not need the aid of a silver flute to catch rodents.

He does so with inimitable skill, not by a trap, but with his bare hands.

The other day Heinz, who has practised his profession for the past 18 years, caught his 300,000th rodent by hand.

The secret of his skill is known only to himself. Not even his brothers have the slightest idea of his method.

The first thing Heinz does is to study the condition of the soil. All human beings within 50 yards around have to move away from the vicinity.

Then he makes a proper study of the weather conditions. He digs a hole in the earth, and up comes his hand holding a kicking mouse, rat or mole.

There have been bets as to his ability. People have offered ten shillings for any rat or mouse he catches with his hands. But when sometimes he happens to catch 300 a day, Heinz cannot be made to accept the huge sum, due to him according to the bet.

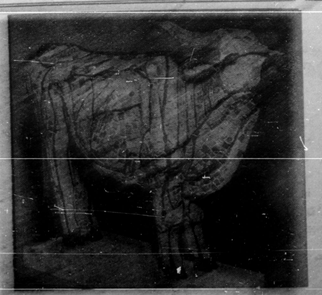
"I don't want to do people more harm than the rodents do to them," he smiles.

New Kind of "Break"

Memo posted at the Fappas Enterprises Company in Houston Texas:

TO ALL EMPLOYEES: Due to increased competition and a desire to stay in business, we find it necessary to institute a new policy. We are asking that some where between starting and quitting time and without infringing too much on the time usually devoted to Lunch Periods, Coffee Breaks, Rest Periods, Story Telling, Ticket Selling, Vacation Planning and rehashing of yesterday's TV programs, each employee endeavour to find some time that can be set aside and known as a "WORK BREAK".

Upside-down to Prevent Peeking



Glassed-in Ox — Over 2300 pieces of colored glass make a mosaic "hide" for this ox sculptured by Italian-born Sahl Swarz. The sculptor states that he added the unusual treatment to give "color and surface vibrancy" to the figure.

Merry Christmas

How to Take Care Of Xmas Gift Plants

With the approach of the Christmas holidays many of us will receive plants for gifts. Into our homes may come a gay poinsettia, a jolly little Jerusalem Cherry, a festive azalea, a cyclamen with its fluffy orchid-like blossoms, or any one of several others. If we have a friend who has separated a treasured Christmas Cactus this year, we may even get one of these favorites.

Where do these plants come from? we ask. What kind of care should each one have?

The poinsettia was discovered in 1828 growing wild in a Mexican valley by a man named J. R. Poinsett, who was minister plenipotentiary to Mexico. He was so delighted with it, he sent roots to Bertrams' garden in Philadelphia. Later Professor Graham of the Botanical Gardens at Edinburgh named it for the discoverer.

This symbol of Yuletide decoration is of the Splurge family, cousin to the Crown of Thorns plant some people raise in their homes, and to the familiar Snow on the Mountain in our gardens. Its other name is Painted Leaf. The gorgeous "blossoms" are not flowers, but simply colored bracts writes Millicent Taylor, Garden Editor of the Christian Science Monitor.

Its tropical origin tells us that it likes warmth, sun, no drafts. It will appreciate tepid spraying of the leaves (not the colored bracts) every day or two. In warm climates where it grows outdoors (Hawaii, Florida) it is a handsome shrub from two to 10 feet high.

The Jerusalem Cherry is not a cherry at all, but a cousin of the eggplant and the "Irish" potato. A native of the Old World — probably Madeira — it has been naturalized in Florida and other subtropical climates. It is sensitive to dry air, to gas, and to heat. It must have a cool room, 60 degrees, sun, and likes a daily syringing of its leaves.

The azalea comes to us from eastern Asia — China, Japan, Korea — and some varieties are native to North America. The word is Greek for dry, from the mistaken notion once held that the plant liked dry sites. Its shallow roots, in fact, mean that it needs regular watering. Give it a south window, but also coolness — 45 degrees at night, 55 by day. It likes acid soil, and is a member of the Heath family.

Our cyclamen originally came from the Mediterranean regions. Its ancestors may have originated in Greece or Syria, flowering in spring as they do there still. Its name in the Greek, Kyklaminos, was known in ancient times, and describes its roundness, the whorl of its basal stems.

It is fond of sunlight, but must be cool, and moist — a member of the primrose family. Water it from the bottom, generously, but don't let it get soggy.

The Christmas Cactus isn't a cactus at all, and should not have cactus treatment. It grows wild in the Amazon valley, perching high up in the crotches of hardwood trees like an orchid. You may have discovered, as I have, that it flowers best when used as a hanging plant. Its fountain of crablike leaves and fuchsia-like blossoms show off to best advantage from on high.

It likes manual water during December and January, and a drink of tepid water every third day. It appreciates a syringing of its leaves daily, or at least weekly, like an eastern or western exposure, and a temperature of 60 to 70. Overwatering makes it drop its buds, and it also objects to drafts.

"Gloria In Excelsis Deo"—Classic example of the Christmas Crib is this detail from the Praesepe, or Manger, which is erected each year in the apartments of Pope Pius XII, in Vatican City. Carefully detailed, the figures are scaled in size to those of St. Joseph and the Madonna, which are about one foot in height.

Manger Scene Comes Alive — Story of the Birth of the Christ Child is reverently re-enacted in the village of Rivisondoli, Italy, annually during the Christmas season on the night of the Feast of the Epiphany, Jan. 6. This was the traditional date to celebrate Christmas until the Fourth Century, when the celebration was assigned to Dec. 25. In the re-enactment pictured above, the infant is the son of a real carpenter, as was the Holy Child. Joseph is played by a 60-year-old shepherd, and a 29-year-old woman plays the Madonna.

Christmas Manger Is Italy's Cherished Gift to the World

In France it's the "Creche," in Spain the "Nacimiento," in Germany the "Krippe" and in English-speaking lands "The Crib." But, by whatever name it is known, the representation of the stable in Bethlehem on that first Christmas Night originated in Italy. St. Francis of Assisi is said to have constructed the first Praesepe, or Manger, about the year 1223 in the little village of Greccio, near Assisi. Over the centuries, the Crib was adopted by peoples of other countries in southern Europe, and then its use spread to Germany and England. Pageants came into being, their purpose to vividly present the story of the Nativity at a time when written accounts were scarce, and the majority of people illiterate. To this day some villages in Italy present the ages-old story on January 6th, Feast of the Epiphany, when tradition says that the Magi, bearing gifts, came to adore the Infant. Pictured at left and below is the First Christmas as seen by Italian craftsmen, actors and artists.

"The Holy Night" — Virgin and Child, principals of the most joyful moment in the drama of Christianity, form the radiant focal point of 15th Century artist Antonio Correggio's famous painting, "The Holy Night." The original hangs in Dresden, Germany.

Christmas Cards How They Started

Christmas cards are so much a part of the modern Yule season that one seldom stops to wonder how the idea originated and by whom.

This simple idea of wishing your friends a Merry Christmas brought honor and knighthood to the originator, Henry Cole, a middle-class Englishman.

Cole mailed his cards on a December day in 1846. The cards depicted a Victorian family assembled at the festive board and the traditional Christmas custom of giving to the poor. They also bore a now-classic greeting: "A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you."

He had a thousand of the cards struck off by a lithograph. They were such a success that plain Henry Cole subsequently became Sir Henry Cole.

The cards we send today, however, a far cry from those mailed by Cole. The cards you send and receive this year will be designed by famous names in contemporary art.

A Canadian shopping for cards this year may select scenes painted by such famous people as Winston Churchill. Britain's prime minister and famed amateur artist, and Grandma Moses, one of America's most famous artists.

The demand for cards is so great that many companies spend their entire time in designing and producing them for the holiday season.

Big Cities Copied Small-Town Idea

It was a small town that first thought of lighting an outdoor community Christmas tree.

Four communities are believed to have thought of the idea about the same time — as early as 1913. Two of them, McDonald and Germantown, were in Pennsylvania. Salem, Ore., decorated a large Sitka spruce. Riverside, Calif., illuminated a large evergreen, an Araucria.

The first national Christmas tree was in 1924 and was sponsored by the American Forestry association. The event is now televised every year.

Two of the most spectacular outdoor displays are at the White House and Rockefeller Centre. The New York display is possibly the most elaborate in the world.

But it was the small towns that first thought of the idea.

Today, nearly every community in the land has some kind of Christmas decorations. Many communities string colored lights across the street and decorate light posts with evergreens. Many suspend bells and stars at street-intersections and have dazzling community trees.

How Rudolph Rose To Popularity

That reindeer is becoming a tradition.

Once upon a time there was a reindeer with a built-in flashlight bulb for a nose. You know, Rudolph, the red-nosed reindeer. From a small beginning in 1938, the little animal with the built-in beacon has become as familiar as Humpty-Dumpty and Cinderella to youngsters everywhere.

First invented as a sales giveaway promotion for Montgomery Ward by Robert L. May, Rudolph was featured in many free booklets before he became associated with Christmas. Songwriter Johnny Marks liked the title "Rudolph, the Red Nosed Reindeer," so he wrote a song about it. He was so sure he had a success that he started his own publishing company, using "Rudolph" as his first release. Gene Autry made the initial recording, and that one record sold 2,000,000 copies.

Last year, there were 16 different recording of the song for sale, ranging from boogie-woogie by Sugar Chile Robinson to Bing Crosby, and cowboy singers.

All The World Loves A Simple Carol

The most beloved carol of the many that are sung in all parts of the world is "Silent Night" that simple and tender German song.

Its origin was unknown for many years. Recent research, however, disclosed that it was written by Joseph Mohr, an assistant priest in Oberndorf in South Germany. The melody was composed by a schoolmaster, Franz Gruber.

The poet and the composer were part of the choir that sang the carol for the first time on Christmas Eve in the Oberndorf church in 1818.

The night it was sung the small church's organ was out of order and the choir sang to the accompaniment of a guitar.

Since then the carol has been sung to the tune of almost every musical instrument in the world and in the languages of nearly all men.

Christmas Candles An Old Tradition

"To learn your luck for the year they say,
Burn a bayberry dip on Christmas day.
If the flame burn bright and the light shines clear,
Good luck will be yours through the year."

This old verse is believed in many lands around the world and is said to be one of the reasons that candles in homes are traditional around the world.

The custom is believed to have started in Ireland. As the Irish put it: "Who knows, on some Christmas Eve, Jesus and Mary and Joseph may come again, not to Palestine, but to the Holy Isle on the furtherest edge of Europe." And it is the custom that the candle can only be snuffed by one named Mary.

Their first use for Christmas is not recorded in the annals of any nation, but that the "Christ Child Candle" burned in the window on Christmas Eve is, according to an old legend, placed there to light His way if He makes an early visitation and in atonement for the night of His birth when there was no room for Him.

Don't Let Fire Spoil Your Christmas

The average Christmas tree can go up in smoke in only a minute or so and that doesn't leave much time to call for help.

A live tree with roots packed in a bucket of earth is the safest. Be sure and keep the dirt moistened. A small tree is safer than a large one and festive trimmings can make up what is lacking in size.

Don't use lighted candles. (This may seem an unnecessary precaution in this day of electric lights, but lighted candles contribute to tragic fires every year.)

Check the wiring for the tree to see that it's not frayed and is in perfect condition. The switch for turning off and on electric lights should be at some distance from the tree. Don't plug or unplug lights beneath the tree.

Don't leave tree light on when it isn't necessary and especially when the family is away from home. From time to time, check over the tree to see if needles near the lights are turning brown. If they have, move the lights.

Watch the calendar. New Year's is the day for the tree to go down. If you should extend the time, don't leave the lights on the tree for more than a half hour at a time.

Place the tree well away from stoves, radiators, and other sources of heat. When you smoke, stay away from the tree. Also be sure that the tree is secured in such a way that it cannot fall. Do not put it near a doorway where it might block an avenue of escape, should a fire occur.

Wrote Famous Poem For Family Only

Dr. Clement Clarke Moore was ashamed of his famous poem, "Night Before Christmas" and would not acknowledge that he wrote it for more than 20 years.

Today, the poem which begins—

'Twas the night before Christmas when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse:—

is one of the most beloved of all Christmas writings.

Dr. Moore was an aloof professor of Greek and Oriental literature in the Episcopal Seminary in New York. He wrote the poem on Christmas Eve 1822 and read it to his seven children.

He had not planned for the poem to go further than his own family, but a relative who was visiting the Moores put a copy in her diary. The next year the relative's father sent it to a newspaper.

Other newspapers printed the jingles and they quickly became known all over the country. The dignified Dr. Moore was embarrassed and considered it beneath a man of his scholastic standing to be the author of children's jingles.

Twenty-two years later, however, he finally publicly admitted authorship of the jingles and it was published in book form under his name for the first time.

Nativity Play With Local Scene

Round about 1930 Henri Gheon, well-known French author and playwright, founded a small acting group called "Les Compagnons des Jeux". Rehearsing in the evenings and playing mostly at week-ends, the company performed mainly religious plays. Their acting was simple and intensly sincere: amateur in the best sense of the word — using the theatre as an extension of their Christian faith.

Since they played in Church halls as well as in Paris theatres, their scenery and effects were of the simplest and their plays, too, had something of that simplicity.

Gheon himself wrote one of the most famous of these — "Christmas in the Market Place."

The play is the Nativity Story acted out by a group of roving gypsy players on a cold Christmas Eve and its modern setting and idiomatic language make the story live anew whilst maintaining the balance between the racy simplicity of the gypsy family and their personal interpretation of their great subject.

At the Crest Theatre under the direction of Basil Coleman we are promised an imaginative production with a Toronto street-scene as its setting, and carol-singing in which the audience will be invited to join.

A cast headed by Barbara Chilcott, Donald Davis Amelia Hall and Eric House will include 10-year-old Dave Snideman who has recently been highly praised for his radio and television work.

The play open on Tues., Dec. 14 and there will be performances on both Christmas Eve and Christmas night.

On December 28th, Frances Hyland and Murray Davis (who has been in England for some weeks) rejoin the company to play Beauty and the Beast in Nicholas Stuart Gray's gay version of the old fairy tale.