

# Christmas at the Hacienda Americana

LAWRENCE HOSMER, '16

There was great commotion at the Hacienda Americana. The residents of the Hacienda were going to celebrate Christmas in the good old English style.

Mr. Landon Hayes of Omaha had leased the big estate for ten years and had brought his family down while Madero was in power, believing that the trouble was over. He soon found, however, that the country was no safer than it was during the war time.

They decided to stay, nevertheless, unless the brigands actually threatened their district. "Of course," said Mr. Hayes to his better half, "the patriotic bandits were—and are—a trifle annoying and bold, but shucks! they'll never bother the Hacienda Americana, in plain sight of Mexico City!"

They had invited a party of their friends from the States to spend the Yuletide with them, and here we find them preparing for Christmas. On this particular morning old and young were industriously decking the old ranch house with the trappings of Christmas. "Bob!" called one of the girls to young Hayes, "haven't you any holly in this black-and-tan country? We can't have a proper Christmas without holly, can we, girls?"

"No, nor without mistletoe." This in a quiet but determined tone from Margaret McGuire, in the next room.

Consequently four of the boys had gone in Bailey's automobile, (automobiles are scarce as gallinae dentae in that part of Mexico) on a quest for any and all holly-like berries which they might find.

Even the peons showed an interest in life—and indeed, were there not two fine deer and sheep, to say nothing of a dozen hens, dressed and ready to be barbecued? What sort of thing was this barbecue, anyhow? Well, it would not cost them anything, and they would have plenty of free tobacco! Viva!

No one at the Hacienda saw four horsemen top a low hill near the horse-herd. For that matter no one but the peon in charge of the horses noticed their approach. They noticed that the peon was alone, however, and shot him several times. After that he did not notice anything. Well, a dead peon is as happy as a live one. The horsemen cut out about twenty steeds from the herd and drove them over the hill. Curiously enough, no one saw them do it. About an hour later all the appropriated horses had riders. An army was forming!

A little later the army galloped over the hill and surrounded the hacienda. It was a complete surprise, and capture was effected without a shot being fired, except that one hero, who had never used a rifle before, shot part of his horse's ear off while trying to lock the breech.

The whole army was a trifle nervous; so they did not ransack the house. They just went through the pockets of their captives. Just then a soldier discovered the barbecue materials in the spring-house.

Provisiones! bravo!

The upholders of liberty requisitioned two more horses for pack animals, and soon had them loaded. Then they rounded up the large flock of sheep, and the whole caravan set off along the road to the south.

About two miles from the Hacienda, and about a quarter of a mile ahead of the army, a puncture in Bailey's off front tire necessitated a stop.

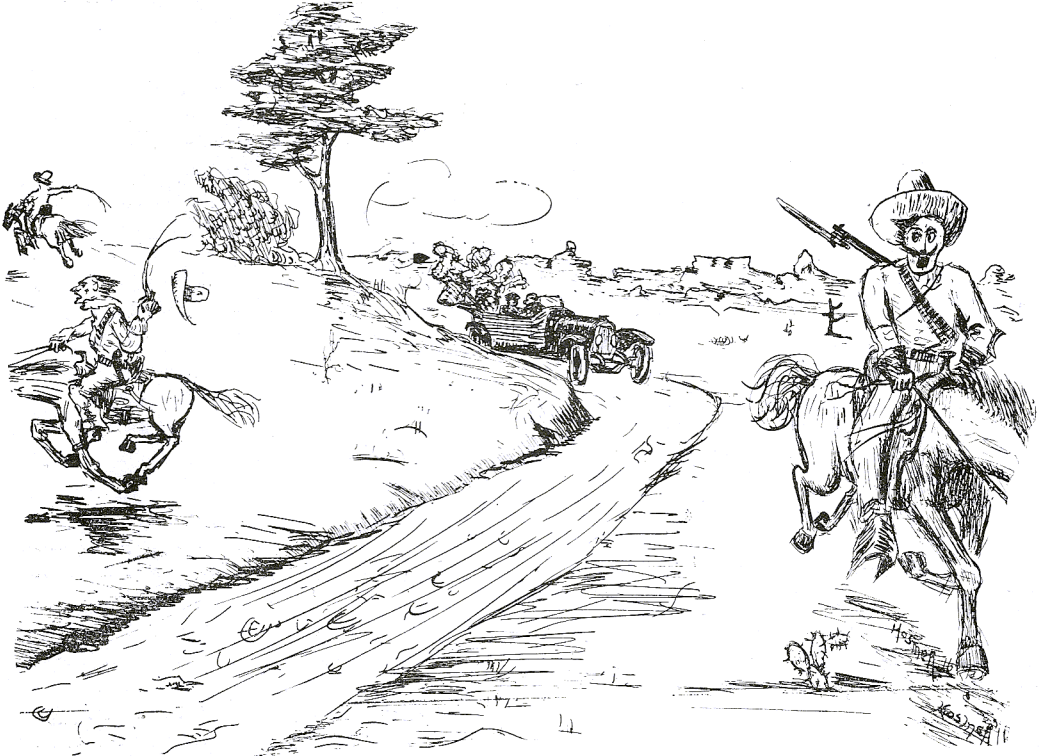
General Podnizza Orinocoos and his staff comprising half of his army had left the other half to attend the commissary department and had ridden ahead to escape the dust. As they approached a bend in the road, flanked by trees, they were suddenly halted by a sharp metallic sound ahead of them. The aver-

age American would have told you that it sounded like the cranking of an auto, but to a Mexican warrior and his staff it sounded like clamping the breech of a gatling.

With throbbing hearts and palpitating bosoms the warriors strained their ears! Again! Then—el diablo! It has come! The rattling roar of the gatling! They're gone!

Off the road, across the ridge and away to the eastward fly the sons of liberty.

Inopportune flight, for 'tis toward the City, and they run slap into a troop of Federals, who promptly capture them and put them to work on the



**Off the road, across the ridge and away to the eastward fly the sons of liberty.**

road. The pack horses run back to the Hacienda. The sheep—bother! well, they came home, too, just as Bo-Peep's did.

Around the bend dashes a touring car loaded with berries, and manned by four innocent, happy youths. They arrive at the Hacienda, with mistletoe enough to go around.

Viva el Christmas!

Peace around Mexico City and the Hacienda, and good will to men!

# The Capture

IRENE CARY, '14

The through passengers for San Francisco had settled back in their seats as the noonday train left Livermore.

A young fellow dressed in baggy gray trousers and checkered cap swung upon the train as it started. As he entered, his alert, quick glance took in the whole of the car. He flung himself down on the small seat near the door, removed his cap, and wiped the perspiration from his brow.

Near the middle of the car sat several girls, hats off, the wind which came in from the open window blowing their hair about their faces. Their gay voices sounded all over the car, innocently informing the amused passengers that they were going off to boarding school.

A tall, black-haired girl in the group sat facing the door, on the arm of one of the seats, her arm around her schoolmate, and her feet swinging in the aisle. Raising her eyes, she met the glance of the young man who had just entered. With a start, she stared a moment, then whispered something to her companions.

"What's the matter?" asked Florence, a plump, rosy-cheeked girl, with eyes that portrayed her mischievousness. On turning around, she, too, caught the restless glance of the young man on the end seat; but he quickly withdrew his gaze.

Suddenly Mary Grayson's brown eyes dilated, and her chin dropped, revealing the elaborate gold filling in a lower incisor.

"Ge—e!" she breathed, tensely.

"Look!" Yes. It is!" she exclaimed, her eyes growing still larger and her brow wrinkling in surprise.

"What?" asked Josephine, turning sharply around. Seeing the young man behind her, her face dimpled, and she winked.

"Who is he? Won't you introduce us?" she asked, putting her arm around Frances and giving her a squeeze.

"Introduce you! I should say not. Why, it's Jake Ross! You know—" she was cut short by Florence.

"Jake Ross? Oh, it is! Why he's the one who forged the checks and the officers are out for him.

"The one you sent me the clipping about?" asked Frances.

"Yes, and— wasn't there a reward offered?"

At this moment, the young man nervously glanced over his shoulder at the girls, then hurriedly got up and left the car.

"There he goes! I bet he heard; and now he'll get away," said May, leaping to her feet.

"Don't let him get away! There goes the conductor; hurry and tell him."

May squeezed past the girls and started down the aisle. The rest watched her breathlessly. She stopped suddenly and began talking to a man, whose face the girls could not see.

"It's Mr. Brook," said one joyously, as a gentleman arose and followed May back to their seat; "he will know what to do!"

Mr. Brook, a tall, gaunt man about forty, hesitated, wanted to be sure, and finally summoned the conductor.

The fat jolly conductor came up smiling good naturedly, "What can I do for the young ladies?" he asked, rubbing his plump hands together—one of them was minus a finger. The smile left his face, when he heard the story, and his brow wrinkled.

Still he scoffed a little—train officials are apt to be cynical. "Well, you

don't say so! Where is the mysterious man?"

"I'm afraid he heard us talking, for he went out hurriedly. Probably he's in the smoker," said May. She was one of the giddiest of the girls at Miss Hamlin's School for Young Ladies, but she had determination enough.

"Come with us, young lady, and point him out." The conductor had chanced to read the newspaper article describing the forger, and began to think there might be something in it.

"Come on, girls," said May. "Let's follow."

As they filed down the aisle of the car, passengers turned and curiously started. One old man got up and even followed them.

"Roberta, you're as white as a sheet," said Nell, whose own teeth chattered together nervously.

When they got to the smoker, May was saying, "Yes. He is over there—the man with his cap pulled over his face."

"That seems rather suspicious. I'm pretty sure that's he," said Mr. Brook. The train whistled at the moment and the girls missed some of the conversation.

"The brakeman will help keep an eye on him, mister," said the conductor. "I will telegraph to Niles for an officer to meet the train."

"Do you really think it is he?" asked Roberta, slipping her arm around May.

"Think! we know it. But don't say anything more now. We will go back into the car and take our seats," said May in a tone of dignified importance.

We followed her back into our coach meekly. May had a good head on her shoulders, we acknowledged. We could scarcely wait for the outcome.

"I wonder if the officer will be there. What if he shouldn't meet us? He would get away, after all"—such was the tenor of the talk.

The curious old man that had followed us came up just then and said, "What is the matter girls? If you'd tell me, I could probably help you."

"No, thank you," said Florence. "Everything has been attended to. Indeed he would like to come in on the reward," she whispered. They wondered if May weren't good for a lot of theatre parties, with all that money.

"I'd like to know what was the matter," he looked wistfully at the girls.

"Oh, nothing!" said May, sharply.

They all giggled when he left, and were so proud of May for answering him in that way.

"The next stop is Niles," yelled the brakeman.

Their hearts stood still for fear the officer would not be there.

The train stopped with a jerk. There was considerable confusion—a number of passengers getting off and on the train.

"I bet that's the sheriff or whatever you call him, now," said Nell, poking her head out of the window.

It was, sure enough. The two men hurried forward to the smoker.

May got up, quite pale with excitement. "Don't any you girls follow," she said. "It will cause too much commotion; I'll have to go, of course." May sailed down the aisle.

"Well, I like that!" said Florence. "Let's go any way; she's not our boss."

When they got into the blue atmosphere of the smoker they saw a crowd around the officer, who stood over the frightened culprit. May was in the midst, her eyes blazing now with the righteous indignation of a law-abiding citizen.

The young man looked up as the officer showed him his star. His face grew quite white, and his shifty eyes seemed to look for means of escape.

"Jake Ross, you are under arrest," said the officer severely.

The inquisitive old man hearing the word "arrest," squeezed himself through the crowd, and eyed the young fellow over his silver-rimmed spectacles.

"W'y, that ain't his name," he said; "that's my niece's fellow from Tracy City."

"He's right! He's right!" cried the scared young man; "I'm William Simpson from Tracy."

The crowd roared with laughter.

"Well, that's all right," said the officer, patting the young fellow on the back, and trying to cover his confusion with a laugh.

"See here, Bill, what'd you come into the smoker for? I thought you'd promised somebody not to smoke," said the old man, jocularly.

"I don't smoke; really I've kept my promise," he said. "I left the car because those girls were flirting with me, and— and I thought you might tell Molly," he said shyly.

The girls led by the crestfallen May sneaked back into our car.

## DAMON AND PYTHIAS

ISABEL De YOUNG, '16

In the court of Dionysus,  
Tyrant king of Syracuse,  
Lived true Pythias, friend to Damon;  
Each for each his life would lose.

When the tyrant, fearing Pythias,  
Had condemned him soon to die,  
Pythias begged to have permission,  
Just to bid his friends good-bye.

Dionysus stern refused him,  
Till brave Damon pledged to stay  
Locked in prison, and to take death,  
If his friend should stay away.

Slowly passed the days for Damon,  
Locked up guiltless for his friend;  
As his doom approached, no Pythias  
Came to make his waiting end.

Damon's faith in Pythias' promise  
Never wavered to the last.  
On the final day came Pythias,  
Came to save his friend, steadfast.

Pleased by this faith, the tyrant  
Brought their bondage to an end;  
Then he humbly knelt before them,  
Begging he might be their friend.

# The Big Dipper is Empty

ELMER BROWN, '17

Professor Keen Gazeinsky, the highest authority on astronomy, has recently discovered that the Big Dipper is empty. This is how it happened.

The other day Apollo and Vulcan came over to visit Earth. They started early in the morning and arrived about noon.

Landing on the top of a sky scraper in New York, they were amazed to see a man with the queerest machine, which proved to be an aeroplane. Well, they made a close examination of the machine, and determined to have one for themselves; so Vulcan went home to his forge and constructed a dandy aeroplane.

Apollo took it to use in his daily journey through the heavens. It was much easier to control than the horses and that old chariot.

One evening Apollo and Vulcan planned a joy ride. Apollo went farther north than he had ever gone in his daily journey.

And the usual accident occurred. As they were humming along enjoying themselves, they came to the Milky Way. They attempted to cross it; but in the attempt the propeller became tangled, and beat the Milky Way into butter! As the machine was struggling to relieve itself, the butter gave way, and the aeroplane dashed forth at such tremendous speed that it over-turned the Big Dipper, and Vulcan was hurled to Earth. That's why Vulcan is going on crutches, and the Big Dipper is empty.

## IT'S EASY

MERRITT JORZ, '16

Had I an ear for **rime**  
I'd spend most all my **time**  
In setting thoughts **sublime**  
To lilting rhythmic **chime**.

I'd tell the simple **tale**  
Of flower and grassy **swale**,  
Of pond where cowslips **pale**,  
Of hill and sheltered **vale**.

I'd tell of roaring **seas**,  
Of winds in flight o'er **leas**,  
Of drowsy hum of **bees**,  
Of shrubs and leafy **trees**.

I'd tell of sunset **gold**,  
All Nature's truths, unfold,  
From tiniest leaflet's **fold**  
To life's majestic **mold**.

But rime at last gives **way**  
To Morpheus' deadly **sway**;  
Respects to him I **pay**—  
Me down to sleep I **lay**.