

# **A CHRISTMAS GARLAND**

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A Christmas garland by Max Beerbohm

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**MAX BEERBOHM**

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A CHRISTMAS  
GARLAND *woven*  
by MAX BEERBOHM



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## NOTE

*Stevenson, in one of his essays, tells us how he "played the sedulous ape" to Hazlitt, Sir Thomas Browne, Montaigne, and other writers of the past. And the compositors of all our higher-toned newspapers keep the foregoing sentence set up in type always, so constantly does it come tripping off the pens of all higher-toned reviewers. Nor ever do I read it without a fresh thrill of respect for the young Stevenson. I, in my own very inferior boyhood, found it hard to revel in so much as a single page of any writer earlier than Thackeray. This disability I did not shake off, alas, after I left school. There seemed to be so many live authors worth reading. I gave precedence to them, and, not being much of a reader, never had time to grapple with the old masters. Meanwhile, I was already writing a little on my own account. I had had some sort of aptitude for Latin prose and*

## NOTE

*Latin verse. I wondered often whether those two things, essential though they were (and are) to the making of a decent style in English prose, sufficed for the making of a style more than decent. I felt that I must have other models. And thus I acquired the habit of aping, now and again, quite sedulously, this or that live writer—sometimes, it must be admitted, in the hope of learning rather what to avoid. I acquired, too, the habit of publishing these patient little efforts. Some of them appeared in "The Saturday Review" many years ago; others appeared there more recently. I have selected, by kind permission of the Editor, one from the earlier lot, and seven from the later. The other nine in this book are printed for the first time. The book itself may be taken as a sign that I think my own style is, at length, more or less formed.*

M. B.

Rapallo, 1912.

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