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FORETELLING FUTURE EVENTS.

So long as there are people ready to open their mouths and swallow anything and everything that others predict, just so long will fortune tellers, occultists and others of that brand reap a rich harvest.

Naturally enough the war has caused a large crop of such people to arise and to foretell all manner of things for credulous folks to swallow without question. The utterances of these prophets are usually delphic in character so that they may be interpreted as circumstances may shape. Then, too, any shrewd observer may foretell certain things with a great probability of them being fulfilled within a reasonable time. For instance, the health of the late pope was very frail for a year or two before his recent death, therefore one would be fairly safe in predicting his demise during this present year, as some chiromancers did. But those same prophets carefully abstained from stating date and day.

For the past few years, Europe, especially in the Balkan region, has been very like a powder magazine, with a live spark near the powder. One was very safe, therefore, in predicting a war this year. The prophetic gift would best have shown itself in giving the exact date of the beginning of the war and the immediate causes of it, but this was not done. In the one or two instances in which the actual date of coming events was given the fakers missed it badly. All of which goes to show that foretelling events is purely guesswork based on a shrewd observation of people and of current events.

At the return of every Christmas there is always a good deal said about the "Christmas spirit." With many the Christmas spirit means having a good time with one's own family and relatives and with no thought as to one's obligations to others. Clearly that is not the real spirit to show and it can give but little real joy to those who have it. The Christmas spirit consists in so spending the season that others may be sharers with you in the blessing you seek for yourselves. It may oftentimes involve some sacrifice, but that experience increases both the joy and the blessing. It is in order to also point out that the Christmas spirit need not be confined to this one season—it is always in order.

Let every man keep his own premises clean and tidy and he will do a good deal to make his town a better place in which to live, and it doesn't need any organization with a long sounding name to make that possible. Neither does it need a public meeting and the passing of a lot of wordy resolutions. If Columbus had waited for such things he never would have discovered America. Making a place look nice may not be so important as discovering a continent, but it is a good thing to do and it is within the power of every one to help.

THE MAN WHO "NEVER HAD A CHANCE."

He came up, a forlorn figure, and asked to be staked for a meal.

"I can't get work, I have no money, and I am almost starved," he said.

He looked it. While he was seating we talked matters over.

The burden of his story was that he "never had a chance." Born in a city slum, orphaned when young, he had ust knocked about, from job to job, often after long waits between.

"Did you go to night school?" No; he admitted he hadn't tried very hard to equip for efficiency.

"Did you ever try the church to see if it couldn't find a way to help?" No; church, he thought, wasn't for the likes of him.

"But you must know that in every city there are many lads born as poor as yourself who grab a toe-hold, use their will power, seize the open opportunities and work up. Have you really had no chance?"

For a while he sat silent. At last he said:

"I guess I wasn't born to be a hero. I just floated with the tide."

That is the hard part of the floater problem—that so many are willing to drift.

Before you grow bitter against society, before you lose your last ounce of pep, better be sure that you haven't ignored good chances to build up.

There are lots of them, everywhere. And more are being opened every day.

The old system of dealing with criminals was based upon the wrong idea, that it was almost impossible to reform a man, and that if it were possible it could be done only by treating the criminal like a brute. The result was inevitable; in almost every case the prisoner when discharged left prison a more hardened criminal than when he entered. Having learned by experience, saner methods are now in vogue and the offender is treated as a man who has morally gone astray, but in whom lies the possibility of reclamation is wisely handled. In other words, while the old system had the effect of stifling good impulses, the new system appeals to all that is best in a man in the hope that the good may at last overcome the evil. So far the results show that the new idea is right.

Andrew Carnegie says that he likes this life so much that he would like it to last eternally. A good deal of allowance has to be made for the wealthy ironmaster because he never loses any chance of expressing himself on almost every subject. Yet, in a certain sense Mr. Carnegie is right. This world is beautiful and life is gradually improving in spite of widespread war. The great essential thing is for everyone to so live that he may do something to make the world better than he found it. That, of course, means character and service; not character alone and service alone, but both. The man who meets that test gets the most good out of this life, helps others to better conditions, and puts himself in line for the after life.

War is a silly game as well as a cruel one, for it never seems to settle anything. After thousands and thousands of lives have been sacrificed and millions of money spent, it is usually left for a few men with pen and ink to make the settlement, and that could have been better done before a war than after. The peace treaties being signed by this and other nations show that that truth is dawning upon the minds of governments.

Personal liberty in the full sense of the term can never be gained in this world, for the simple reason that no one is free to do just as he pleases. Life is so enmeshed with laws and conditions that our liberty is necessarily limited, and that is well, for the welfare of all is to be considered above the convenience of the individual.

The Home Circle

Thoughts from the Editorial Pen

Christmas of the Past.

Once more we approach what ought to be the happiest day in the year, and yet for many of us it will be only the culmination of a period of mean worries, hurt-burnings and unattained hopes. Is it necessary that we so debase it?

Consider the Christmases that are past. Are any of them sweeter to remember than those of your childhood? And is it the multitude or the value of the gifts you received that made them dear? On the wonderful morning that you remember so well, there may have been some popcorn balls and home-made candy, or an orange or two, or a pair of mittens, or a set of paper dolls. Perhaps if you were a boy, there was a pair of stilts that your father had made, or a sled; or if you were getting into young girlhood, a little traveling toilet case or a jewel casket, or a workbox. There was nothing elaborate or expensive; only simple things, most of which were home-made.

Your happiness was owing not to the events of the day, but to the spirit of it; to the rosy light of imagination that lay upon you, and the feeling of mystery that lifted the day to a height above all others; the mystery of a benign presence that had been working to make you happy, and, unseen and unheard, had entered the house in the night to leave its tokens of an unselfish love.

In the story of the wise men who came out of the East, the words are these: "And when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts." It does not say that they gave themselves up to repining over what they could not bestow or went about searching anxiously for something that they did not have, but only that for their treasures—the things that they did have—they gave simply and with love. And the world has called them wise.

The old-fashioned Christmas, the best that the world has ever known—the only true Christmas—goes back more than nineteen hundred years, to Bethlehem of Judea. Let us restore and keep the spirit of it.

Limp and Empty Stockings.

Christmastide should not be cheerless for any boy or girl in this Christian land. Many a man or woman can recall the bitter disappointment brought on Christmas morning with the chilling effect it had upon the heart. If such have come to enjoy a comfortable income, they should not forget the poor at this season of good cheer. Right at the next door may be children whose stockings will hang limp and empty on Christmas morning unless some kind neighbor remembers them and remembers the stings of poverty at this season of gifts and gladness. The cup of cold water given in Christ's name, entitling the giver to distinction among the saints, includes the thoughtful provision for some poor child's joy on Christmas morn. The opportunity for bringing good cheer to some desolate household is yours now. Improve it and it will bring you joy.

When the Shepherds Watched at Night.

Some historians contend that the shepherds could not have watched by night on the Bethlehem plains in December, it being a period of great inclemency. In answer to this a well-known student says: Bethlehem is not a cold region. The mercury usually stands all the month of December at 46 degrees. Corn is sown during this time, and the grass and herbs spring up after the rains, so that the Arabs drive their flocks down from the mountains into the plains. The most delicate never make fires till about the end of November, and some pass the whole winter without them. From these facts it is established without doubt that our Saviour was born on the 25th day of December, the day which the church throughout the world has united to celebrate in honor of Christ's coming in the flesh.

Christmas.

All hail, Spirit of Christmas. Fill our hearts with freshness, joyousness and hope.

Open our eyes to a world filled with new and interesting things.

Attune our ears to the general song of good cheer and make our hearts and voices responsive to its message.

Let us know in its full measure the blessedness of the privilege both of giving and of receiving, the interchange of the Christmas message of love and remembrance.

Help us to put aside the fear, the worry and the petty strife of yesterday, and to face tomorrow with the radiant face of those who have seen the star in the east and who have

heard the angels' message, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Why We Hang Up Stockings.

The custom of hanging up the stocking on Christmas eve arose from an incident in the life of the good St. Nicholas. One day, when he was overtaken by a severe storm, he took refuge in a convent, and the next day being Christmas he preached a sermon to the nuns which they liked so much that they asked him to come the next year and preach to them again. On his second visit, which was also on a Christmas eve, before going to bed he asked each of the nuns to lend him a stocking, and he filled the stockings with sugar plums in return for their hospitality.

In these days they have churches of almost every name and belief and of practically no belief at all. If a man or any number of people form an organization and call it a church there is nothing to hinder them, even if their views run counter to those moral ethics for which a church is supposed to stand and promote. For instance, they have a so-called church in New York city which bears the startling title of "The Church of the Social Revolution." In that church they marry people not for "better or worse," nor "until death do you part," but "while love shall last." Tandem marriages will probably be quite popular in that "church."

Most of the rulers of the warring nations have been at the front lately. What a pity they didn't settle the unpleasantness between themselves while they were about it, and let their men go home to their families and business.

It does not require much searching to find the good that is in the life of everyone, however evil he may seem, and it is far better all round to find that good than to seek, carrion-like, to find the bad.

There is a prospect of a very long war in Europe, but even so, it is not unlikely that it will end before the mining trouble in Colorado is finished.

During the Final Hurried Days

Christmas Shopping

YOU WILL FIND THE

5, 10 and 15c Store

The most convenient place to shop. You can find something for everybody, and nothing over 15 cents.

Handkerchiefs, the best line you ever saw, at two for 5c, 5c, 10c and 15c. Neckties at 10c and 15c. Aprons, 15c. Handkerchief Boxes, Tie Boxes, Glove Boxes, Tie Racks, Smoking Sets at 15c. Xmas Cards, Tags and Stickers, Kitchen Utensils, Dishes and Glassware always make appropriate Xmas gifts. Yes, we have Fountain Pens at 15c.

Toys Toys Toys

This is Ashland's greatest Toy Store. While others had some difficulty in getting any toys at all, we had no trouble. Our shelves are loaded with them. A greater variety than ever.

Dolls by the thousands.

Games and Books in great variety.

No matter what others charge, our price is not over 15c.

Kohagen's 5, 10 and 15c Store

HURRY To get some of those new Drummer Samples of

Guests Linen Towels, Guest Bath Towels, Bed Spreads, Table Cloths.

Just arrived at--- **Ferguson's** The Busy Store.

The man that gets things without any effort usually lets them go the same way. It is the man who has gained by the sweat of his brow that appreciates what he has got.

Evil grows without cultivation like an unsightly weed, but goodness has to be cultivated. Fortunately goodness responds well to the treatment and pays in its beauty and value.

Staple and Fancy
Dry Goods
Sorois Shoes

VAUPEL'S
The QUALITY STORE

Butterick Patterns
GENTS' FURNISHINGS
Shoes

We Give 5% Cash Coupons With Every Cash Purchase

Your Christmas Shopping

Is a big proposition for you. Your entire Christmas purchases will be made within the next few days. Take a few minutes for careful consideration as to where it is best for you to spend the appropriation you have made for gifts.

You are influenced in your purchasing by advertisements in the newspapers of special sales here, reductions there, and so on, but you often fail to stop and consider where you get reliable merchandise and the most value for every dollar spent.

Is It Not Worth While for You to Consider:

A store to merit the continuance of your patronage should be estimated by what it stands for.

A store that backs up every argument and combines efficiency with reliability.

SUCH A STORE SHOULD BE YOUR STORE.

Thanking you for your patronage during the past year and trusting you will favor us with a continuance of the same, we wish you all A MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY NEW YEAR.

VAUPEL'S

The Best in Quality

The Lowest in Price

Store Closed Christmas Day

The Oldest National Bank in Jackson County

Member Federal Reserve System

FIRST NATIONAL BANK

Capital and Surplus \$120,000.00

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