

CHRISTMAS AS IT IS CELEBRATED IN BETHLEHEM TODAY

Day is to the People of Bethlehem the Anniversary of the Birth of Their Fellow Townsman and Is Purely Local.

By Frederic J. Haak.

Washington, Dec. 25.—Nowhere on earth does Christmas have such a deep significance as in the tiny Syrian city of Bethlehem, for it is here that Jesus was born. In Bethlehem the festival has retained its purely religious character, and the customs and ceremonies associated with its celebration are distinctly Christian and Oriental. In America the religious ceremonial observance of Christmas is overshadowed by holiday customs which are the lineal descendants of Teutonic myths. The Christmas spirit is a Christmas spirit, and there is no need to expel Santa Claus on the ground that he was once a pagan. Nevertheless, it is interesting to observe how the birthday of Jesus is celebrated in his native town.

Early for Christmas.

Today is Christmas to but few people of Bethlehem. For a majority of the Bethlehemites are communicants of the Greek Orthodox church, which holds to the Julian calendar, and which will celebrate Christmas 13 days hence.

But today is Christmas wherever the Gregorian calendar is in use, and it is Christmas to the Roman Catholics and to the Protestants of Bethlehem. There are, perhaps, a thousand Catholics and a hundred Protestants among the natives of the town. To them Christmas is a day of rest and enjoyment, celebrated by the consumption of liberal quantities of the peculiar wine for which Bethlehem is famous among Syrians and infamously among Europeans and Americans. It is a gala day, and the truly beautiful girl of Bethlehem wears her dress of gold coins, her necklaces of silver five-franc pieces, and her bracelets of bronze money; for every girl wears her dowry in money more plainly to be seen. From the top of her jaunty little bonnet falls a veil, not over her face as the Moslem women would wear it, but over her shoulder, which veil proclaims that Bethlehem is the town of her nativity. It was such a veil that Ruth wore when she won the heart of Boaz, who was mayor of Bethlehem, something over 2000 years ago.

Beautiful Celebration.

The celebration which today engrosses the Latin church population of Bethlehem will on the Greek Christmas be extended to the entire city. For Latins as well as Greeks join in the popular observance of old Christmas. The Latin Christmas which we observe in America, is however, the occasion of the most beautiful ceremonial celebration of all the year in Bethlehem, a city where ceremonial never ceases and where religious adoration is literally perpetual. As in all the Catholic world, Christmas is ushered in by the solemn and inspiring midnight mass. On the day before Christmas the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, who is the head of the Franciscan order in Palestine, the order which has charge of all the sacred Latin shrines in the Holy Land, escorted by the consul general of France, leads the processional of Bethlehem over the miles of roadway, by the convent of St. Elijah and the tomb of Rachel, to Bethlehem. The procession is made up of all the Latin priests and monks from the various churches and convents of Jerusalem. It is met in the market place of Bethlehem by the Franciscan monks who guard the Latin interests in the Church of the Nativity, and who are the priests of the parish church of St. Catherine, who is under the roof of the great Church of the Nativity.

Best Women for Talking.

There is a boys' choir, made up of sturdy, ruddy-faced boys of Bethlehem, who are the worthy successors of David himself in Psalmody. The bands play and the choir chants as the solemn processional forms at 10 o'clock at night and marches into the Latin chapel of the church. Here are gathered all of the native Catholics of the city, most of whom are women. The women chatter and gossip and laugh, and seemingly have none of that sense of propriety which western Catholics possess to so marked a degree. The chatter is permitted to go on for a while, and then one or two women, Franciscan nuns, who are in the church and chastise the offending frivolous women by beating them with the cords of their robes.

In Palestine the Catholic churches for the most part imitate the Greek customs and have no seats in church, so that the worshippers either stand or kneel. In none of the churches in the Holy Land does the congregation seem to have any obligation to keep quiet. But it must not be inferred that they are not devout, for, on the contrary, the greater portion of the disturbance is caused by an excess of religious fervor. This high emotionalism finds expression in shouting and in swaying the body to music, just as perverted religious excitement affects southern negroes at a Baptist campmeeting in Georgia.

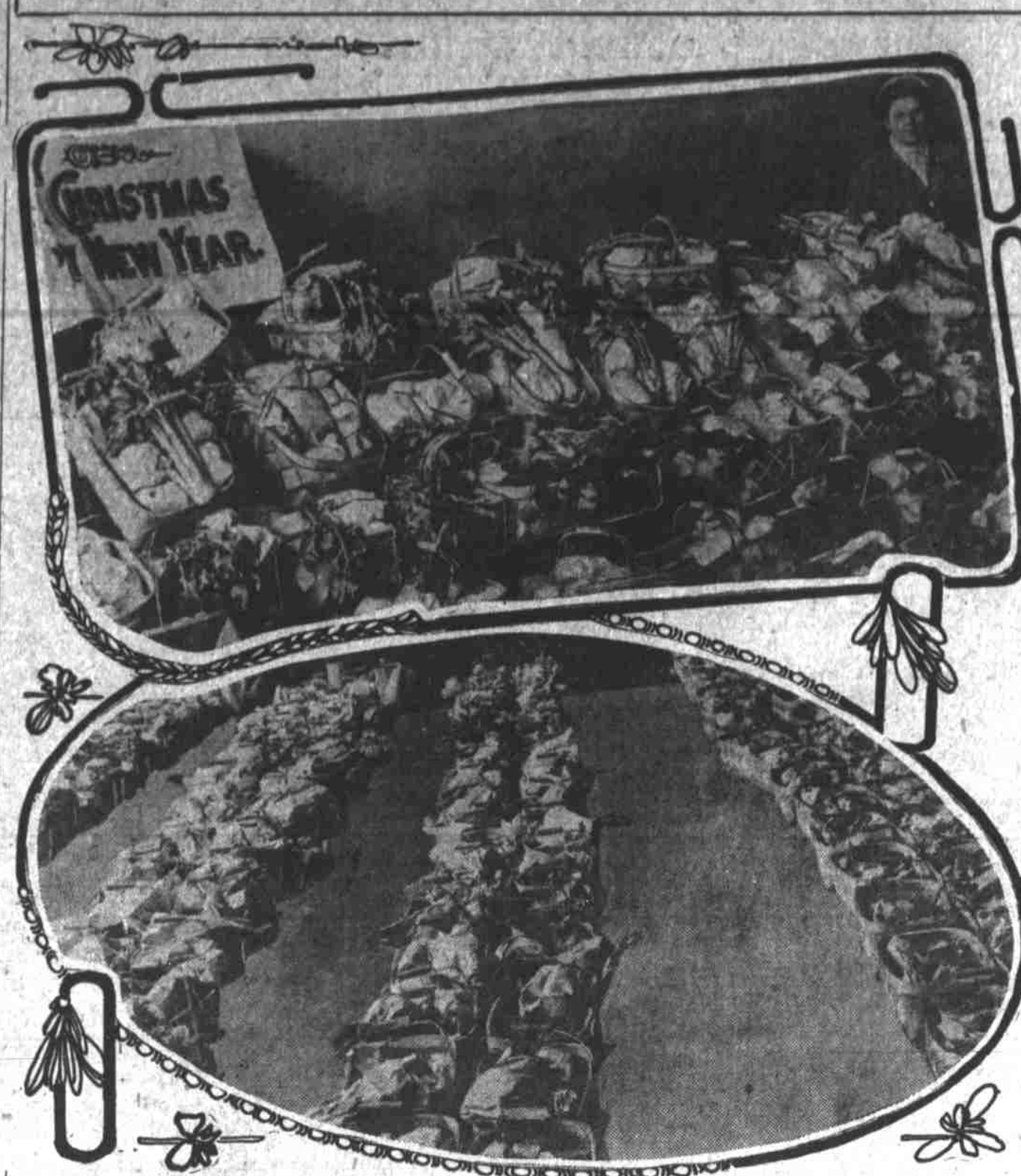
Midnight Mass.

Just at midnight the procession of priests, headed by the Patriarch, and followed by as many of the people as can crowd in, descends the stairs to the Grotto to the Nativity, the veritable spot where Jesus was born. Each priest carries a candle and the huge group in the Latin chapel peals the music of the midnight mass. On this occasion the Greeks permit the Catholics to use a portion of their part of the church for the processional. A carpet is laid down and the Catholics walk on it. It is lined on both sides by rows of Greek priests, who keep careful watch lest any Catholic should step off the carpet and thus desecrate the Holy Place.

No Wooden Manger.

The Patriarch halts first at the Shrine of the Manger, a spot possessed exclusively by the Latins. The wooden manger in which it is believed that the infant Jesus was laid, was removed centuries ago to Rome, where it is exhibited every Christmas. The manger

CHRISTMAS BASKETS BRING GOOD CHEER



Upper picture shows baskets heaped with good things ready to go to the poor from the Volunteers of America headquarters. Lower picture—Double lines of baskets at the Salvation Army headquarters ready for delivery.

Portland's poor are today enjoying the baskets of good things prepared for them by the Salvation Army and the Volunteers of America. It was not the intention of these organizations to let any worthy family miss a Christmas dinner. About 260 baskets were sent out

in the church at Bethlehem is built of precious marble. The procession again halts at the altar, erected where the Three Wise Men knelt to make their gifts to the infant Redeemer. At last the Patriarch comes to the Grotto, and here celebrates the mass in the sanctuary of the Nativity. The Grotto is packed to suffocation by the crowd, the air is filled with the smoke of the candles, it is impossible to hear, and the celebration is anything but impressive. After the Patriarch has withdrawn there is usually a long line of visiting priests from every country who desire to celebrate mass on Christmas day in the birthplace of the Savior. They take their turn and the mass is repeated over and over again all through the night and until noon on Christmas day.

Those who have assisted in this Christmas celebration declare that wherever there is a Catholic church in all the world and wherever the midnight mass is said or sung under proper conditions, the occasion is more solemn and impressive than in this suffocating cave which was a stable 1900 years ago.

Catholics Control Church.

The Roman Catholics obtained possession of the principal control of the Church of the Nativity in the year 1099, upon the success of the Crusaders' invasion of Palestine. Baldwin, King of Jerusalem, was crowned in the Church of the Nativity on Christmas day, 1101. The church was made the seat of the Episcopate of Bethlehem in the twelfth century and so continued until 1672, when the Greeks and other Oriental sects dispossessed the Latins. The Catholics were not again permitted to have any share in the church until 1862. Ever since that time when St. Louis was king of France, the French nation has been the titular protector of the Latin Christians in Palestine. This fiction was made a reality in 1852 by the Emperor Napoleon III, who obtained from the sultan of Turkey a decree giving the Franciscan Catholic order a portion of the Church of the Nativity.

No Santa Claus There.

It was alleged that the Greek priests had stolen the silver star which marked the birthplace of the Savior, and the Catholics of Vienna sent to Palestine a star to be set in the Grotto. Napoleon III, demanded and obtained from the sultan the keys to the Grotto and permission to set in the place where Christ was born a silver star ornamented with the arms of the empire of France. This caused terrific indignation among the eastern churches, which was shared by the Russian nation and emperor. The Crimean war was the result. Nowadays Greeks, Armenians and Latins keep constant guard in the church, and with the aid of Mohammedan soldiers, the peace is preserved. The people of Bethlehem know nothing of Santa Claus; they have no custom of giving Christmas gifts, they have no Christmas trees, no mistletoe, no holly wreaths. All these things we have inherited from our pagan ancestors of Northern Europe. Christmas is the annual celebration of the visit of the Three Wise Men, of the appearance of the Heavenly Host to the Shepherds, and of the Birth of Jesus. And to them Jesus is not only the Son of God the Redeemer of the World, the founder of their religion, and the most sublime being of the ages, but he is also Jesus the Son of Mary, who was born in their town. And there is nothing irreverent or sacrilegious in the pride with which these people claim Je-

sus Christ as a fellow townsman. Christmas in Bethlehem is the local celebration of a local event.

Tomorrow—The Holy Land. VI. The City of Processions.

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Is Best for Oregonians

PORTLAND SHOULD PREPARE FOR BIG CANAL SHIPPING

Joseph N. Teal Returns From National Rivers and Harbors Congress With Good News—Oregon Stands High.

That Portland should at once make steps to prepare her harbor for an immense shipping business is the opinion of Joseph N. Teal, one of several Oregon delegates to the National Rivers and Harbors congress held at Washington, D. C., who has returned. The congress closed with the assurance that the large projects underway and proposed for water transportation will be pushed to completion as rapidly as possible.

"Necessity for public ownership of docks and facilities of that character was brought out at the congress," said Mr. Teal this morning, "and sentiment was unanimous that this matter needs immediate attention if benefits coming from the improvements of the rivers and harbors are to be fully enjoyed. I wish to emphasize this fact, for with the approach of the completion of the Panama canal we should be in a position to draw the full benefits of water transportation, and this will be impossible unless we have proper landing facilities."

Calls People's Attention.

"Some years ago the attention of the people of Portland was directed to the necessity of securing ground in the northern part of the city as common terminal station owned by the municipality, through which all the railroads could operate. No serious attention was given the suggestion and the result is that all of this property, which could have been bought very cheaply, has now passed into the hands of the several railroads, each purchase making it more difficult for other railroads to get into the city."

"Exactly the same results will follow unless the city secures dock property without delay. In my judgment this matter should be given immediate attention, as bonds for this purpose were voted some years ago. I see no reason why a matter of this importance should be allowed to drag along, for it is the absolute certainty that the docks and facilities will have to be provided if we are to get the full benefit that our position on the seaboard and on navigable waterways entitles us to."

Oregon Recognized.

"Speaking briefly of the congress, I can say that Oregon, having participated in the movement from its inception is naturally given very full recognition in everything that goes on, and during the course of the year an active acquaintanceship has been extended. Oregon is very widely known."

"In my opinion the meeting was the largest and most successful ever held, and every indication is that the policy urged by this organization for sufficient money for works of improvement and carrying them on continuously will be accepted and probably adopted at this present congress."

"Delegates not only from Oregon, but from the entire Pacific northwest were treated with every possible consideration and courtesy, and this section has no better friend than the Honorable Joseph E. Ransdell, president of the organization, and who is also a member of the Rivers and Harbors committee of the house. Mr. Ransdell seems to take about as much interest in the affairs of this district as in the affairs of his own section, Louisiana."

"We also had a hearing before the Rivers and Harbors committee of the house, by far the most satisfactory ever attended. Delegates from the three northwestern states, with their senators and members of congress, being present. We were given ample time to present our needs of this section in connection with river and harbor work and the entire matter was thoroughly gone into."

Favorable Action Expected.

"I look for favorable action upon our northwestern projects. General Marshall, chief of engineers, is very familiar with our needs and requirements, and he is strongly impressed with the benefits that would come from them."

"The convention was composed of 3000 delegates from all over the states, and I was agreeably surprised in learning how well Oregon is known and how well she stands in other sections of the country. I was asked many questions about the initiative and referendum and the direct vote for senators, etc., and in substantially every case they would invariably say, 'Oregon is years ahead of the rest of the country.'"

"Instead of the state being looked upon as peculiar and full of vagaries and foolish notions from a governmental standpoint, if the opinion of the people I met is of any consequence, the situation is quite contrary, and this state is looked upon everywhere as a leader in the movement for better government."

"In view of the fact that the delegates came from all over and were men of high standing in their respective communities, I think their opinion means a good deal."

State Has Influence.

"Another factor that adds to Oregon's influence is that she has done so much for herself in the way of river improvements and transportation matters. It is very hard to refuse fair appropriations to a community which is helping itself in a way that Oregon has."

Mr. Teal left here November 15, and

since that time has been extremely busy attending to several matters of deep importance to this section. He was delegate to the National Conservation committee, which met at Washington, D. C., and transacted a great deal of important business, took testimony before the master in chancery at St. Paul in the eastern lumber rate case, and appeared in the distributive rate case of Portland, Seattle and Tacoma before the interstate railroad commission at Washington, D. C. Arguments in the lumber rate case, Mr. Teal stated, will probably follow in February.

GYROSCOPE AIRSHIP TO BE TRIED OUT

(United Press Leased Wire.) San Francisco, Dec. 25.—A delay in the assembling of the Hudson-O'Brien monoplane made necessary the postponement of the trial trip of the machine yesterday, and the inventors hope to conquer the air today. They will test the aeroplane on the Foothill boulevard in Oakland.

Clifton O'Brien and John Hudson, the inventors, declare there is no doubt of the monoplane's success. Built along the lines of the Blériot machine and being propelled by a revolving engine that

acts as a gyroscope, thus doing away with the necessity of a balancing weight, the constructors say they will have no trouble sending the machine through the air at high speed. O'Brien will pilot the aeroplane on its trial trip, and promises a three and a half mile flight across San Francisco bay Sunday, if all works well.

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PEACE, IF IT COST WAR WITH CHINA

Judge Dunne of San Francisco Would Wipe Out China-town If Necessary.

(United Press Leased Wire.) San Francisco, Dec. 25.—That he would exterminate San Francisco's Chinatown, at the cost of trouble with China, if the action would result in the preservation of peace in the community, was the statement made on the bench yesterday by Judge Frank Dunne of the California superior court.

In denying the motion for bail of Tong King Chong, charged with the murder of Yee Fung Woo on November 2, during the height of the tong war that has been raging in the state for two months, Judge Dunne said: "I consider it my duty to preserve order in the community. I would favor a movement to wipe out Chinatown if such a proceeding would help to preserve order, even though it cost international complications."

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WOMAN MAY DIE FROM BURNS; REFUSES AID

(United Press Leased Wire.) Los Angeles, Dec. 25.—Because she would not allow her children to approach and extinguish the fire that was consuming her clothing and roasting her alive, for fear their garments would become ignited also, Mrs. Polly Bolotin of 225 North Anderson street is at the receiving hospital, probably fatally burned. Physicians say it will be a miracle if she survives.

She was lighting a kerosene lamp, which broke, and the burning oil ignited her garments. A moment later she was a living torch. Her children, three small girls, rushed to her aid, but she screamed for them to keep away, then rushed from the house to escape them. Shrieking in agony as the fire ate into her flesh, the mother refused to allow neighbors to aid her until certain that her children were uninjured.

When the blazing garments were finally torn from her body she was barely conscious.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPERS SEE MAN KILLED

(United Press Leased Wire.) San Francisco, Dec. 25.—R. G. Sharp, a laborer, was killed on a streetcar track last night. His body, nearly cut in two, lies on a slab in the morgue. Sharp was run down by a Fillmore street car while trying to evade a throng of holiday shoppers. He had plenty of time to escape but appeared dazed and stood staring at the car until it struck him and threw him under the wheels. His screams of agony created a stampede among the thousands of women who saw the accident. He lived but a few minutes.

Temple Commandery Celebrates

MANY CHRISTMAS WEDDINGS IN LINN

(Special Dispatch to The Journal.) Albany, Or., Dec. 25.—Christmas weddings will be numerous in Linn county, as the record for the issuing of marriage licenses was broken yesterday by the county clerk when he issued six.

W. D. Duffield of Mill City and Miss Hazel M. Smith of Mill City were married by County Judge Duncan yesterday. Other persons who secured licenses and who will be wedded today are: William E. Adams of Portland and Hettie L. Overman of Jalsey; Fred A. Zell of Shaniko and Vera D. Morgan of Lebanon; S. D. Leabo of Lebanon and Martha E. Carow of Lebanon; Charles K. Spring of Albany and Sarah E. Preston of Lebanon; E. H. Kleborn of Chehalis, Wash., and Edith Velma Bloomfield of Lebanon.

NO MORE SUB ROSA UNHITCHINGS AT RENO

(United Press Leased Wire.) Reno, Nev., Dec. 25.—Judge Pike, who sits in the divorce court of Washoe county, yesterday decided that no more secret separations would be granted by him. Hereafter, said the jurist, hearings would be open to press and public to a limited extent, of course—or there would be no hearings.

The mandate reached the divorce colony very early today. It came as a shock, and knocked the underpinning from beneath many air castles that were built of sealed testimony, secret hearings and freedom.

In the future, Judge Pike ruled, New York would know the testimony on which some of its "400" sped for divorce, unless extenuating circumstances connected with the nature of it should demand privacy.

Examined for Insanity. (Special Dispatch to The Journal.) Hood River, Or., Dec. 25.—Jacob Wyrwick of Cascade Locks was brought to Hood River last night, charged with being insane. He was examined here today and will be retained until Monday, when another examination will be made. He is a young man of about 30 years of age.

A little Diapiesin will make you feel fine in five minutes.

The question as to how long you are going to continue to suffer from indigestion, dyspepsia or out-of-order stomach, is merely a matter of how soon you begin taking some Diapiesin.

If your stomach is lacking in digestive power, why not help the stomach to do its work, not with drastic drugs, but a reinforcement of digestive agents, such as are naturally at work in the stomach.

People with weak stomachs should take a little Diapiesin occasionally, and there will be no more indigestion, but feeling like a lump of lead in the stomach, no heartburn, sour risings, Gas on Stomach or Belching of undigested food, Headaches, Dizziness or Sick Stomach, and besides what you eat will not ferment and poison your breath with nauseous odors. All these symptoms resulting from a sour, out-of-order stomach, and Diapiesin are generally relieved five minutes after taking a little Diapiesin.

Go to your druggist and get a 50-cent case of Page's Diapiesin now, and you will always go to the table with a hearty appetite, and what you eat will taste good because your stomach and intestines will be clean and fresh, and you will know there are not going to be any more bad nights and miserable days for you. They freshen you and make you live like life is worth living.