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READY TO PARDON—"Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness." Neh. 9:17.

THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

What does Christmas really mean to us? By the honest answer forced from our souls our mental attitude is revealed. The world at large is so accustomed to dealing with the material phase alone that when Christmas is mentioned the vision of Santa Claus in his innumerable personations looms large—

And next in importance are the epicurean delights of the Christmas feast; the lighted tree, the distribution of gifts, the roast turkey and plum pudding with all the accessories. These invest it with a spell which no other holiday holds.

So many, even among the cultured classes, see in the day merely an occasion for merriment and feasting, harking back to the Saturnalia of the ancients—

A connection that made Christmas abhorred of the Puritans and caused them to prohibit its celebration by law.

Others see in it a day of compulsory giving, an exchange of bonbons, mementoes and courtesies, the climax of a period of strenuous shopping in congested stores. To such it is a period of looking forward with dread—looked back on with a sigh of relief—

A phase of the Christmas celebration against which Bernard Shaw, the great iconoclast, a few days ago inveighed and which he pronounced a nuisance.

But the true Christmas spirit is giving, sacrificing, self forgetting. When the idea behind the giving of presents is that of exchange it is merely another form of trade and barter. When the dawn of Christmas day means merely a day of festivity its real significance is lost.

The grasp of selfish power and possession has transcended human bounds. Its unlimited development would produce a race of demons. The uncurbed development of the martial spirit would result in chaotic destruction. The unleashed pandering to the lowest instincts of animal nature would result in degeneracy.

Christmas, the birthday of the Nazarene, whose program was pronounced in his Sermon on the Mount, is a recurring annual reminder of the fact that it is time for the human race in all lands and running through every race to face about and begin the long, slow, upward climb toward the heights of divine human nature—

To begin on the natal day of the founder of Christianity to try the practice of Christianity, which has never yet been done, in even the so-called Christian nations.

The nations of the world are pretending to consider the measures of outward peace—

But to make it a reality each individual unit in the great body of the fifteen hundred millions of people of the world must do his part. Elimination of warring impulses, of greed and avarice, of selfish desire is the first step towards the nobler humanity and the finer civilization—the real Christianity—of the future.

When the real meaning of Christmas rules the world's conscience there will be no more war and no more selfish aggrandizement—

And then the Christmas spirit will not be limited to one day, but will extend over the whole glad year. Then giving will mean giving ourselves for others—

That is the true note sounded in the song of the angels when the shepherds tending their flocks tuned in on the heavenly choir—

The giving of time and talent, of thought and purpose, of material and spiritual assistance—

This is the true meaning of Christmas.

FOR SIX WEEKS MORE

The Christmas cheer campaign is to go on, for about six weeks longer—

Till spring work begins to open up.

There is to be further continuous receipt of offerings of money and food and clothing—

And all the money goes and is to go for food and clothing, for the needy of Salem.

The Salvation Army is to keep on dispensing the food and clothing—

All of it given in the first place or bought with the money.

There is to be no expense. Not a cent. No charge of any kind. No sales of food or clothing—

Our needy people are to get the benefit of all the money, every morsel of the food, and every shred of the clothing.

And there is to be a strict accounting. Every cent is put down, by whom paid in and for what paid out; and the same with the distribution of the food and clothing.

And when the end comes, in about six weeks, every one will say this is a worth while work; a necessary work, for the good and comfort of the needy, and for the satisfaction and good of the people contributing, even the smallest amounts or articles.

Let's see to it that Salem has in her 1928 Christmas stocking a sugar factory. And that Marion county has a county agent pushing every worth while industry on the land.

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

By W. T. Rigdon

How precious was that shining star of old;
Its wealth was richer far than worlds of gold.
The lowly shepherds saw its brilliant light,
Which was their guide through that eventful night.

Its mission was to show the resting place
Where lay the cradled Savior of the race.
An infant from celestial realms above,
To teach the world that hate must yield to love.

That star, of all the stars within the sky,
Is one whose light shall never, never die.
Let Angels come with joyful, holy song
Until all earth shall hear the mighty throng.

Oh, shining star, my soul looks up to thee-
Thou showest us the one who sets us free.
May all the world, in some not distant day,
Bow to the one who in the manger lay.

Oh Jesus, richest gift from God to man,
Thy holy star shone bright in Bethlehem;
Nor may it ever lose its lustre bright
While sinful men shall need its holy light.

(Mr. and Mrs. Rigdon are spending some weeks in southern California, and the above was written for The Statesman at Long Beach in that state, and forwarded from there.—Ed).

Bligh Will Give Eighteenth Prison Program Today

Prisoners at the state penitentiary will see Frank D. Bligh's 18th annual entertainment today. Mr. Bligh will put on his regular Capitol theater program in the prison theater, with both vaudeville and moving pictures.

Eighteen years ago the first of these entertainments consisted of moving pictures projected on the stone wall of the prison dining room. Since then Mr. Bligh has made the show an annual event.

CAROLS USHER YULETIDE IN COUNTRY OVER RADIO

(Continued from page 1)

er and son, will remain intact until before breakfast inspection of the bountifullness of Santa.

Under the central and taller of the trees Mrs. Coolidge has arranged a reproduction of the scene of Nativity, while an illuminated star of Bethlehem has been placed in an east window of the room.

Five turkeys sent to the White House will have to wait their turn at the presidential board, a thirty pound Indiana gobbler having been chosen for tomorrow's dinner.

In addition to Mr. and Mrs. Frank W. Stearns of Boston, who are the house guests, other close friends of the Coolidges are expected to join them at dinner tomorrow night.

Rebecca, the Mississippi racoon that came to the White House to be a table delicacy and remained to be the pet of President Coolidge, will not be left out of the picture tomorrow. A leash collar inscribed "Rebecca, racoon of the White House," will be placed about her neck by the president. The coon has become his walking companion about the grounds in the day time and at night encounters no opposition when she climbs into Mr. Coolidge's lap at the fireside.

A canvass of official circles today disclosed that a general homeward exodus had claimed nearly all cabinet members and congressional leaders. All departments closed at noon for the week end, but in one of them Postmaster General New remained on the job with the postal force. He will be there tomorrow until noon, when the mail carriers will be free to celebrate the day.

Christmas clemency went forth tonight to 52 sailors and marines and 10 soldiers in military and federal penal institutions throughout the country, Secretaries Wilbur and Davis transmitting the orders in time to release the men for tomorrow's celebration.

LITTLE ORPHAN AWARDED CHRISTMAS CAROL PRIZE

(Continued from page 1)

and music with 800 others and what do you think? A big singing knight, Sir Walford Davies, the composer, came along and said it was the best of all and that it was "extremely beautiful," and that he was charmed with the two allelulias. The low notes of the first, he thought, were like the lowing of cattle and the higher notes of the second like angels singing.

The words and music were copyrighted and last night were broadcast in the Christmas eve program of the Temple church choir. The proceeds of the sale of the carol will go to the 11 year old orphan composer and some day she expects to marry a prine and live happily ever after.

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