

# The Santiam News.

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EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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### CHRISTMAS.

AS THE NEWS VISITS its readers on the great Christian holiday, this year, a few thoughts relative to the origin of the custom of observing Christmas as the birth-day of our Savior, will not be out of place.

Centuries before the dawn of the Christian era, the 25th. day of December was observed as a festival by Pagan nations. On this day, as all know, the sun starts on its return journey from the winter solstice. Pagan nations, who were all sun worshippers, observed the day by rejoicing, feasting and the giving of gifts; just as Christian nations do at the present time.

Authorities differ widely as to locating the date of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. The Roman Emperor, Constantine, established the Roman Catholic Christian church in the third century; but December 25th. was not adopted as the birth-day of our Savior, until some time during the fourth century. Julius, the then Bishop of Rome, promulgated a decree making December 25th. the birth-day of the "Son of Righteousness." Prior to this decree, the birth of Christ was believed to have occurred, some authorities state, May 25th.; others April 19th. or 20th. In the Orient and in Egypt, January 9th. is thought to be the proper day.

The first suggestion which Christmas presents, to the minds of children at least, as well as to the lovers of children, doubtless, is the name of the venerable Santa Claus. Yet many are ignorant as to the origin of this benevolent old gentleman, which was less ancient than the festival (Christmas) which is said to keep him so busily employed.

About 500 years after the birth of Jesus, a child named Nickolas was born at Panthera, in Asia Minor. His parents were rich and of high rank. They were converts to Christianity. This son was born to them many years after their marriage. They had prayed earnestly for a son and they believed his birth was a literal answer to their prayers. By way of expressing their gratitude, they had him educated for the Christian priesthood. Before the son reached his majority, both his parents died of the plague, and the son became the inheritor of great wealth. Partly from natural tenderness, says the historian, and partly from the training he had received, he did not consider the riches bequeathed to him as his own; but as a sacred trust placed in his hands by the Giver of all Good. He fed the hungry; clothed the naked; endowed poor maidens with a marriage portion; supported and educated destitute orphans, and performed all manner of charitable works as secretly as possible. As a priest, history tells us further, he was greatly loved and revered by the poor. When he became a bishop, he continued to be as humble and benevolent as ever. After his death the church canonized him and he became the most revered of patron saints. Saint Nicholas Santa Claus or Kris Kringle, all meaning the same, were inspired by the good and benevolent patron saint. He set the example of giving of gifts and is supposed, by many children, to continue the benevolent habit at each return of Christmas day.

The sleigh drawn by reindeer—a harmless fairy story—by which Santa Claus is supposed to travel with the speed of the wind when on his benevolent missions, probably originated in the North of Europe.

Like Thanksgiving day, Christmas has a home coming feature. An assembling about the paternal fireside of the sons and daughters who have left the parental home, which makes it a day of fond and affectionate anticipation. But if, by chance, the loved ones cannot assemble about the paternal hearthstone or, mayhap, have passed on to another life, we can only have the melancholy pleasure of thoughts of the Christmases of the past.

Christmas day should inspire a benevolent spirit in the hearts of all. At the cost of but a few cents, the hearts of poor boys and girls can be filled with gladness, or the home of the more unfortunate be made more tolerable. The day should cause us to forget the sordid love of gain and of selfishness, and remind us that there is more in life than to live for self alone. It should inspire us to resolve that the world shall be made better because we have lived.

The NEWS wishes its readers a merry and happy Christmas.

### A SCALP BOUNTY WANTED.

THE NEWS is in receipt of a lot of printed matter from Foster, a postoffice well up the the South Santiam and the gist of which is an argument to have re-enacted a state bounty law for the scalps of predatory wild animals.

It is contended that there are now 500 cougars in the secret recesses of the mountains of Oregon, and that these Cougars destroy not less than 25,000 deer every year. The argument further shows the mercantile value of this large amount of deer meat, hides, etc., and show these cougars are very expensive animals for the state to permit to run at large.

It is proposed to ask the legislature to enact a scalp bounty law upon the following scale per scalp: Cougars \$25; Wolf \$25; Bear \$5; Lynx or Wild cat \$2.50; Coon \$1; Skunks, large \$1, small 50 cents; Digger squirrel or Crow, 10 cents.

Admitting a desirability for the destruction of these predatory animals, the NEWS believes a scalp bounty law on the basis above indicated, would be mischievous and would open the doors of the state treasury to wholesale graft. Indeed, the state tax levy would have to be increased several mills, in order to supply the necessary funds.

The main contention of the argument in the circular letter, is the protection of deer for the benefit of hunters. Nothing is said about the decimation of flocks by the depredations of cougars; yet we frequently hear of the loss of sheep or goats, supposed to be destroyed by these voracious animals. The plaint is to furnish pleasure for the annual hunting trips for sportsmen.

Now, the NEWS thinks a scalp bounty law based upon such claims, would be the very worst of class legislation. The principle is wrong. The state cannot undertake to protect her citizens from the ravages of voracious animals, birds and insects; for to do so would mean a taxation too burdensome to be borne by the people. Codlin moth and San Jose scale, in point of dollars and cents, inflict an injury to the fruit interests, ten times as great as that complained of on account of wild animals. The green aphid frequently destroys one-half the yield of our grain crops; and the locusts sometimes totally destroy the products of our hop fields. But the orchardists, farmers and hop growers do not think of asking protection from the state treasury against these destructive insects. Far from it. They simply go to work with spray pump at the proper time and protect themselves. Fruit, grain and hops are three of the principle products of our farmers. They are leading sources of our agricultural wealth. They supply, largely, our food stuffs and therefore, are necessities. If the state should undertake to protect the people against destructive pests, she ought to begin upon those effecting the necessities, rather than upon those which contribute to the pleasures of the people. The necessities we must have. We can exist, if we are compelled to, without the pleasures.

While all admit the advisability of destroying cougars, wolves, bears, lynxes, wildcats, skunks, squirrels and crows, and admit, also, the pleasures a mountain hunting junket affords, the expense to the state necessary to secure this result, would be enormous. True, it would afford a few professional hunters a lucrative income for a few years. But can the state afford the expense? Could not the money which would be required to pay for scalps, be extended in a way that would give the people a far greater return? For instance, the destruction of the mice and rats alone, to say nothing of other pests, would result in a much greater profit to the people.

No, the NEWS does not favor a scalp bounty law and, if the editor was a member of the legislature, he would oppose the measure.

The attempt to defeat the election of Governor Chamberlain as United States senator, by the legislature, seems now doomed to an ignominious failure. Senator Fulton has made a complete surrender of the case. He will probably, be required to give the promised "smile" when an Oregon Republican legislature elects a Democratic United States senator. The successful and orderly election of the people's choice for that high office, is a victory for the people that cannot be over estimated. It establishes firmly the principle, in Oregon, that the people shall rule. Other states will follow in our lead, until the United States senate will be forced to submit the amendment to the people, making the election of United States senator the rule in all the states. When we have a United States senate composed of senators who are indebted to the people for their election, then may we expect congressional legislation in the interests of all the people. The Aldriches, Elkinses, Penroses, Forakers and Fultons, will then be only a dream of the past. They will be remembered only as blocks to the restoration of the government to the people. Oregon should be proud of the position of leadership which the independent, progressive, non-partisan voters have given her.

Elsewhere we published an explanatory letter from President Kerr, of the O. A. C. Dr. Kerr practically admits one of the NEWS contentions, when he states that an itemized expense account is not published because of the cost, etc. The people will willingly pay the cost, Doctor, and there are plenty of print shops which would be glad to do the work. The people want to know how and for what purpose their money is being expended by the state colleges.

### DR. KERR EXPLAINS.

Corvallis Dec. 12, 1908.

EDITOR SANTIAM NEWS:  
My attention is just called to the editorial "We want to know" in the SANTIAM NEWS of December 11, 1908, in which reference is made to a desire on the part of the people for information in detail regarding expenditures by the Oregon state institutions of higher learning.

It affords me pleasure to be able to say to you that there is no secrecy in regard to the management of the Oregon Agricultural College. Whatever information may have been given in reports of the institution heretofore submitted to the Legislature, I am sure that there was no desire to withhold anything from the people. All transactions are matters of record. The accounts of receipts and expenditures are kept in the minutest detail and are audited and certified to annually. There is no expenditure for any purpose whatever except upon requisition approved by the President in accordance with the budget previously approved by the Board of Regents. The books, containing a list of all employees and their salaries, and an account of all expenditures, are open to inspection at any time. The most rigid economy is exercised in all matters involving an expenditure of money, not only as a matter of business, but also that the available funds may be used to the best possible advantage in securing efficient work throughout all departments of the institution, and in promoting the development of the resources and industries of the State. No State funds whatever are used for football or other athletics, the expenses of which are borne entirely by the students in connection with the receipts for admission to games.

Regarding the pamphlet you refer to in which no reference is made to the expenditures of the college, I desire to say that that is simply a re-print of a brief article written for the Oregon State Grange Bulletin at the request of the editor, upon the subject suggested by him.

An itemized statement of all expenditures can, of course, be printed if desired; but I call your attention to the fact that to do so will require a book of 130 to 140 pages, six by nine and one-half inches. The printing plant of the college is now crowded to its utmost capacity in printing regular bulletins; and, to do this, it is necessary to have the type set on linotype machines, either at Salem or Portland.

In conclusion, I desire to assure you that it will be a pleasure to me at any time, as I am sure it will be to the Board of Regents, to give any information that may be desired regarding the college, its management, its work and its expenditures.

Yours very truly,  
W. J. KERR.

[The above should have been published last week, but was crowded out for lack of space. We willingly give it space this week. Ed.]

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