... Communications ...

Letters to the Editor must bear the name and address of the writer, although under certain circumstances the use of a pen name or initial for publication is permissible. The Mail Tribune reserves the right to edit all letters with a view to clarification and condensation. Letters submitted for publication must not exceed 400 words. The letters printed in this column do not necessarily represent the views of the paper; in fact the contrary is often the case.

Greatest Story

To the Editor: Looking back to the birth of the Christ child, we do not find a happy contented world. Humanity was degraded. The brutal empire of Rome filled the world. In Judea King Herod reigned over a subjugated people. His name was a byword for crime, lust, and oppression; and the slaying of the innocent babes of Bethlehem was but a minor incident in the career of this infamous tyrant.

Yet that dismal picture did not deter God from sending His Son in to the world. It was the decree of Augustus, living 1,500 miles away in the seven-hilled city, that sent Joseph and Mary on their memorable trip to Bethlehem at the appointed time, fulfilling to the letter the words of the prophet spoken 700 years before. (Micah 5:2.) A mile or so away was the field of Boaz where Ruth, the Moabitess, had gleaned. Here, too, her great-grandson, David, had kept his father's flocks. Now, a thousand years later, other shepherds were on guard when "lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:9-11).

The floodlights of heaven were turned on. The whole plain was lighted up with the bright shining of the hosts of God. Earth was hushed, as heaven listened to the song, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men. The shepherds hastened to Bethlehem and there in the manger found God's love gift to the world.

Hundreds of miles to the eastward, educated Magi who had studied the Scriptures observed the mysterious light in the sky, and journeying toward it, finally presented to the little stranger their princely gifts. To Herod that light was an omen of doom, but to the truly wise men of all ages, that light has ever been a guiding beacon to all questing souls in search of truth.

Today that light shines, with out-stretched nail-pierced hands, pleading, look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth.

F. E. Beverly
112 Geneva st.
Medford

Poets' Corner

Conducted by
Arnold Eugene Jenny

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O Little Town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasing Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

O holy Child of Bethlehem! descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

—Phillips Brooks, 1865

—◇—

Immanuel

Proclaim again our Savior's birth
Which brought God near to men of earth,
To free them from all hate and strife
And fit them for eternal life.

This, then, the meaning of Christ's birth:
That God's own peace may come on earth;
'Tis he alone can banish strife;
He is the Way, the Truth, the life.

Then sing the song, the anthem swell:
Hail, Prince of Peace, Immauel!

—Arnold Eugene Jenny

—◇—

St. Nicholas

Santa's a wonderful, lovable saint
Who continues to serve without pay or complaint.
His hair and his beard are fluffy and white
And he travels great distances, mostly at night,
In a sleigh that, though tiny, is study and strong
And his list of good children is many miles long.

His eight tiny reindeer, although frisky, are tame
And their speed puts an astronaut's space-ship to shame.
The pack that he carries has magic therein,
For the more he gives out the more flows in.
And he teaches us all a good reason for living:
In caring and sharing, in loving and giving.

—George McDonald
Dufur, Ore.

—◇—

The Unexplored

Long have I gazed into the crystal ball,
And sought the answer from the tarot cards . . .
Is this the end? Will modern Babel fall,
And man's achievements lie among the shards?
Besides, I ask, what heights are left to scale
Since we have found and loosed the atom's power?
All walls are down . . . No grain is left to flail—
The knowledge of mankind is in full flower.

Comes a revealing flash of inner light . . . .
"The unseen world, wherein man's future lies
Is unexplored; it shall come into sight
When man has learned to use the spirit's eyes—
The portion of the iceberg that you see
Is but a hint of its immensity."

—Mary Boyd Wagner
New York, N.Y.

—◇—

The Old Stole

Riches I hold in light esteem,
And love I laugh to scorn;
And lust of fame was but a dream,
That vanished with the morn.

And if I pray, the only prayer
That moves my lips for me
Is, "Leave the heart that now I bear,
And give me liberty!"

Yes, as my swift days near their goal,
'Tis all that I implore;
In life and death a chainless soul,
With courage to endure.

—Emily Bronte

Secret of Christmas

To the Editor, and all who would know the secret of Christmas:

Christmas is not in trees and toys or expensive gifts, nor even in raucous singing of Holy Night by voices unaccustomed to sacred music.

Christmas is a secret between your heart and the One who came to bring salvation to a lost world. When you experience in your heart a new birth of faith in Him, you know the secret of Christmas. We wish this secret to all as we unite in celebrating.

THE GLORIOUS BIRTH

Ring, happy bells, o'er all the earth,
A heavenly chorus sings;
Proclaim to all the glorious birth
Of Jesus, King of Kings.

In Bethlehem, in stable old,
Was born the holy child,
The Son of God, by oards foretold,
Was born of Mary, mild.

Today in spite of war and strife
The songs of men arise
In praise of Him, the Lord of life,
Whose glory fills the skies.

Sing, holy angels, sing again,
The story tell afar
Of peace on earth, good will to men,
While wise men seek the Star.

L. G. Weaver
301 Haven st.,
Medford.

Christmas

To the Editor:

Just what does Christmas mean to me?
The years have come and gone,
The children, well, they've grown, and see,
Their young have seen the dawn.
The glitter of the festive day
For generations goes,
But few there be that now can say
For certain, he that knows
Just why they place the tree within
And strew with garlands fine,
Light the candle 'midst the din
And decorate the pine;
And what about the useless toys
That clutter up the floor?
The broken parts that next annoy,
Obstruct the kitchen door?
Oh, why should we profess a day
To honor a great King,
And to our-selves present the pay
As nought to Him we bring?
Wasted effort; the blessing lost,
Why we did it; we guess.
We count the season and the cost
And discount happiness.

There is a way to Christmas joy,
Love finds the way to be
A happiness without alloy,
A peace that sets men free,
A gift to bring to that great King
That makes His smile shine down,
He wants your heart — your heart to sing,
He wants your head to crown.
Each day then is a Christmas day,
And for the children too
The family altar registers
God's Word is ever true.
Then when 'tis o'er, this Christmas day,
This world its course has run
The crown awaits, it is the pay
Surrendered hearts have won.
Surrender now, on Christmas day,
A joy you've never known—
"My heart I give to Christ," I say,
"My heart is His to own."

James Williams
P.O. Box 441
Jacksonville, Ore.

Men Are Brothers

To the Editor: Recently I called attention to the striking fact that so many "aginners" reflected the same spectrum of phobias, and wondered if some psychologist or social scientist perhaps had an explanation for this phenomenon.

In his letter of 12/12, James K. Shafer tried to guess (not very successfully and rather irrelevantly) how his pros and cons compared with mine. Of course, it's nice to have him say he occasionally agrees with me, but that's really beside the point. Ditto, the verbal detours of Mrs. Irma Henderson and L. G. Weaver on 12/18.

Mr. Shafer concedes that the UN "has done some good" but argues that it has done "immeasurable harm" in failing to make all members pay their dues and proving ineffectual in the Congo and some other places. He needs to do a better job of homework.

Tax arrears are not very unusual — even here in Jackson county! The World Court recently ruled that all members are obligated to pay their share of special peace-keeping operations, as in the Congo, as well as of the regular budget. The Finance Committee has voted that this ruling be put into effect and the Assembly did likewise this past week.

In the Congo, the UN responded to appeals from the Central government for help, and in doing so averted a communist take-over which would have provoked a dangerous East-West confrontation. It helped restore public services following their near breakdown occasioned by the Belgians' abrupt departure, and thus to stabilize the central administration. It has labored unceasingly to end the Katanga secession—repeatedly agreed to by Tshombe but as often reneged by him — without which no peaceful and permanent solution of the Congo problem is possible.

Of course, the UN has not succeeded in all its undertakings or fulfilled all our hopes. Has any governmental agency anywhere done so? If Mr. Shafer would consult the record he would be amazed at the wide range and vast amounts of good accomplished by the UN (see, for example, the thrilling account in the November Reader's Digest, pp. 257-264)—not least, its indispensable role in the recent Cuban crisis.

Finally, Mr. Shafer says "all men are my brothers, and I pray for strength to love my neighbor as myself." Admirable! But then he proceeds so to bear down on the sins of others, one is led to wonder how genuine his profession of brotherhood really is.

Arnold Eugene Jenny
Rogue Valley Manor
Medford

CD Praised

To the Editor: By means of this letter, we would like the citizens of Jackson county to know of the magnificent job performed by Maj. Gen. J. H. Hicks and his Civil Defense Corps during the flood of Dec. 2, 1962. Because of the speed and efficiency with which General Hicks mobilized his Corps, communications, as well as transportation and manpower, were available to us in a matter of minutes.

The headquarters for the Civil Defense group was set up in the Red Cross building, making it possible for Civil Defense and Red Cross to work together as a team. This communication network was so expertly manned that the Red Cross was in contact with all of the outlying communities at all times. Civil Defense had moving vans available and standing by to evacuate families from flooded areas.

Mr. Ray Briggs, Director of Civil Defense, Shady Cove, along with Mr. Howard Nutt and Mr. Ken Oliver, directed evacuations and manned communications in the Shady Cove area.

Mr. Dave Hannaford, Director of Civil Defense, Eagle Point, directed evacuations in Eagle Point.

Mr. LeRoy Webb, Director of Civil Defense, handled evacuations in the Rogue River area. These men and the volunteers who assisted in all the evacuations should be highly commended for their fine work and for the thousands of dollars they saved families by moving out furniture and household goods. Had it not been for these men, the losses in this flood would have been much greater.

The Sheriff's Reserves, commanded by Buford Johnson, General Hicks' chief deupty, was made available to assist in evacuations, and to patrol streets, county roads and highways, so that we were able to know when these various routes were open or closed by high water.

Mrs. Evelyn Conners, Red Cross disaster representative for the Pacific Area from Portland, stated that she had never seen a disaster operation work as smoothly as the team work between the Jackson County Civil Defense and the local Red Cross chapter. She also stated that the reason for this was that each group understood and knew its role and had the full cooperation of the county court and city officials.

To you, General Hicks, our most sincere thanks and gratitude for your cooperation, which makes our job at Red Cross much easier.

We hope the citizens of Jackson county realize how fortunate they are to have such a fine Civil Defense Corps under the command of such a capable man as General Hicks.

Again we would like to thank all of the above mentioned persons and all the other wonderful volunteers, too numerous to name here, who helped throughout the operation.

Elmo N. Stevenson,
Chairman, Jackson County Chapter
American Red Cross
Reuel Riams, Jr.
Disaster Chairman
Mrs. O. A. Eden
Volunteer Chairman

The Rogue River Valley (Our Valley of The Moon)

To the Editor:

When the meadow larks are singing
And the pear trees are in bloom,
There's a little bit of springtime in our
Valley of The Moon.

When the mourning doves are calling—
Calling "Come and see me soon,"—
There's a little bit of summer in our
Valley of The Moon,

When the old stag bawls his challenge
And the coyote howls at noon,
There's a little bit of autumn in our
Valley of The Moon.

When the days are dark and foggy
And we don't wake up 'til noon,
There's a little bit of winter in our
Valley of The Moon.

On a peaceful Sunday morning
When the church bells are in tune,
There's a little bit of heaven in our
Valley of The Moon.

E. G. Roseborough
610 Oakdale dr.,
Medford.

I Trim My Christmas Tree

To the Editor: When I was a little girl at Christmas, I wanted almost everything. Years have not changed me. They have changed the gifts most wanted only. So this Christmas Eve I have trimmed my tree with all the things I long for and what I hope will bring joy to others.

On the top of my tree there is a shining star, something to look up to, and recall a night in Bethlehem long ago. Then beneath it I have placed a long soft cloak, one that is long enough and wide enough to wrap one around with tolerance and keep out all the not-so-pleasant thoughts that would seek to make me unhappy. Right at the end of a green bough and within easy reach I have placed a generous and gay be-ribboned box filled with the gift of enthusiasm, a gift that is so necessary if one is not to become jaded and dull.

On the other side, wrapped in gold and festooned with ribbons of the same hue, is a wee box filled with laughter. It takes so little laughter to make life so unbelievably happy.

In the middle of the branches is a tiny package of warm glowing coral, containing a handfull of kindness. All of this should be handed out freely, because this one present never leaves the container empty, but seems to multiply as it is handed out.

A fat wicker basket near the bottom of the tree bulges somewhat. It is packed with thoughtfulness which should be freely used every day all through the year.

A very simple silver roll is nearly hidden under one of the branches, but it is especially lovely to see when one gets close. This roll is filled with cool serenity, a gift everyone would be the better for having these disturbing days and times.

An exquisite white satin box is smack in the middle of the tree and is filled with the most enchanting scent. It is called charm. Some say one has to be born with charm, but it has been demonstrated time and again it may be acquired with a bit of coaching here and there, and an ideal to follow.

Something that looks like a moon beam, and occasionally twinkles like a star, intrigues the beholder, and is really a friendly smile, always there for friend and stranger alike.

But my tree would not be complete without an extra big gay box of kind deeds, gay hello's, and running over with thankfulness to everyone that makes life so worth while.

Mrs. C. R. Nelson
416 Western Ave.
Medford

—◇—

P.S.: This is not original but was copied several years from a little Unity magazine, so I do not know who first wrote it, but thought others might enjoy it as I have.

Blew Up

To the Editor: I see where sky bolt blew up and hit a rocking chair.

Everett Acklin
Ashland, Ore.

Christmas Praise

To the Editor: "Peace on earth, good will toward men." An exaltation by all on this approaching Christmas day . . . the day Christ Our Saviour was born to guard us against all dangers of this turbulent world and to bring us the many blessings He has and shall continue to bestow upon us. "Is it not then true" that we of the United States should give praise to God Almighty for giving us his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ Our Lord, on this Christmas day?

By His bountiful gifts to all mankind, the rich, the poor and particularly those in dire need, we are especially grateful for His loving kindness administered to and by the many civic organizations who, untiringly, have devoted many hours in the rehabilitation of toys, and other items of a domestic nature to be given as gifts during this Yule tide, not forgetful of the Jackson County Public Welfare Commission, the Jackson County Court, the many local civic organizations, church groups and individuals, all extending full energy and revenue in so many ways to bring added comfort, health and happiness to our neighbors.

As of past years, this and years to come, let us all join in the rendition of carols, within your home, amongst your friends, and especially to those in hospitals, nursing homes, and other shut-ins, that they may hear your voices in exaltation of the Birth of Christ.

E. Cozad Howard
355 Grant st.
Ashland, Ore.

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