Municipal Christmas Trees

Salem is to have a big municipal Christmas tree again this year, and the Cherrians will see that it is a success, just as they do with everything they take hold of.

Everybody's Christmas tree—the municipal Christmas tree, Christmas and its spirit—should grow and shed its growth of hope and faith in every city, town and village in the land.

For his own sake, as well as for the sake of those who have no private Christmas trees of their own, everyone should help in the movement for a municipal Christmas tree. Wherever it has been erected in the past it has helped to sweeten and brighten the Christmas season. It is the focus of a town's Christmas celebration, the radiant point from which stream influences of joy and helpfulness. To it, us to them one, those whose homes are unilluminated by the private Christmas tree's wonderful glow. And from it return to their homes those to whom Christmas is a home festival, sacred and blissful, brightened and cheered by the thought that they have made Christmas better for others.

For two years the municipal Christmas tree, introduced into the United States from Europe, has stood with the custom of singing carols in the street, which revives an old-time Yule joy, for a newer, brighter and bigger Christmas festival.

Through these agencies the Christmas holiday season is taking on a new tone. It is becoming more of a public function, participated in by the organized public, and less the chimney corner celebration of the family. Not that the home Christmas is being done away with, but that the celebration which reaches "the lonesome poor and rich," that is participated in by the church, charity organizations and the municipality, is forging to the front all over the country.

Official Christmas Trees.

The biggest thing in the movement is the municipal Christmas tree, which serves as a rallying place for all who have no Christmas trees of their own and who are yet touched by the holiday spirit. It is truly "the people's Christmas tree" and worthy of celebration in every city, town, village and hamlet.

In 1912 it blazed forth for the first time. Mrs. E. D. L. Herreshoff of New York City was the woman of inspiration and vision in the east who originated the idea. She communicated her plan to her friends. It was taken up by the press and finally decided to have its first municipal Christmas tree.

Madison square was selected as the point at which the first tree should be set up. From over the mountains one 50 feet tall was ordered. It was laboriously put in place, elaborately hung with decorations, dazzling illuminated with electric lights. To these trappings of man was added a sifting down of nature's snow, which scattered countless crystals in all the branches of the small park.

At sundown the chimes burst forth from the lofty heights of the metropolitan tower near by. Soon trumpeters appeared at the different entrances of the square sounding the fanfare from "Parsifal." From the church of Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst poured forth a choir to lead the caroling. As the strains of "Stilly Night" broke upon the air there filed into the park the lonely ones from all the metropolitan millions. From sundown until midnight the star of Bethlehem twinkled from the tree-top, and the hearts of people that surged back and forth absorbed a bit of the Christmas spirit that they might not otherwise have had.

Very Successful Celebration.

So successful was the celebration of that year that New York again set up its municipal Christmas tree, and last year the festivities were much more elaborate and better organized.

No sooner had Mrs. Herreshoff announced her idea of a celebration of

Christmas than the idea was taken up in Boston. Mayor John F. Fitzgerald himself stood sponsor for it. The tree was set up in historic Boston Common, made to blaze with light, and again were the snows of heaven sifted down upon it as a benediction. The mayor himself presided over the celebration.

Hartford, Conn., got the idea last year just in time for its execution. Here again a woman was responsible. She had been reading of the new idea that was being inaugurated in New York, when, not a week before Christmas, she burst forth with the question:

"Why not Hartford?"

The time was ample. A farmer delivered the tree two days later—the largest one that had ever come to town. It was set up in front of the statehouse, and as Christmas eve came on the Foot guards awaked the echoes with the strains of "Onward, Christian Soldiers." The tree stood for a week.

The spirit of the west, which appropriates unto itself whatever germ of good is afoot in the atmosphere of the times, appeared in San Francisco with an entire group of Christmas trees at the same time that New York set up the Madison Square picture. In Golden Gate park on Christmas the breezes are as balmy and the skies as clear as in an eastern April. There gathered last year and will gather again this Christmas the celebrators of the holiday spirit. Seven Christmas trees were set up in different parts of Golden Gate park.

AT THE DOOR OF SANTA'S HOUSE

You didn't know that Santa had
At home a little pet?
He surely has—that's how he knows
What girlies' things to get!

And he was once a boy himself,
And very fond of toys,
So he remembers what he liked
And what will please the boys.
— CHARLES N. LURIE.

Irrigation A Boon to Valley

"To talk irrigation to an old-time Willamette valley farmer is very much in a class with carrying coals to Newcastle," was the remark of Mr. C. A. Elmer, who is in the city from West Stayton, where he is connected with the Willamette Valley Irrigated Lands company, which has recently completed an irrigation system to serve 20,000 acres in that vicinity. "The rain has so long prevailed that this beautiful section has if anything too much rain, that those who should know better have come to believe it, and it is evident that only the most convincing proof will change that belief.

"The past crop season had the effect of changing the minds of those in a position to see the effect of irrigation on crops in that vicinity. The area irrigated was necessarily very small, and the beneficial effects were consequently not widely advertised. But enough was done, so that it may be confidently predicted that the coming year will see a decided increase in area under irrigation. The greatest advantage from this will not be to that particular section, or to the company there, but to all this section of the state. It will bring forcibly to the attention of the farmers the advantages of this system of farming, and the water in the streams now running to waste during the dry months of summer will be used to double crops and increase the net returns from farming operations to an even greater degree.

"A recently published bulletin of the agricultural college, giving the results secured through seven years of experiment with irrigation in the Willamette valley, is fairly indicative of the importance attached to the matter. The experiments embraced the growing of alfalfa, clover, vetch, corn, potatoes, kale and some other crops, but did not include the irrigation of the various berries and tree fruits, nor of grain, nor a wide range of other farm products. Their omission I feel was unfortunate. In southern Idaho, where I have lived a good many years, and where irrigation is the rule and not the exception, we have discovered that in no case of farming is irrigation more profitably employed than in the production of the various fruits and berries. However, the results of the experiments conducted by the Corvallis institution are sufficiently startling to compel thought on the part of the farmers who have heretofore refused to even consider 'artificial rainfall' as a potent factor in profitable farming. The average net return throughout the seven years was at least double on

irrigated plots over those not irrigated.

"Although the project of the Willamette Valley Irrigated Lands company is located in this county, there are comparatively few people who have heard of it at all, or having heard, have any very clear idea of the matter. The inception of the project was in 1910, and owes its existence to the creative desire of a number of native and near-native Oregonians, who, having succeeded in business, felt the desire to develop something that would benefit the whole state, and particularly want we call the Willamette valley. It was the creative instinct that was calling into being, and to which the world owes most of its progress.

"Since its inception a very complete irrigation system has been constructed, with about seven miles of main line canal, and many miles of lateral ditches and flumes. Water is taken from the North Santiam river at Stayton, and when the system is fully completed, several thousand acres in the immediate vicinity of Salem will be under the ditch. Just at present the company is inviting the land owners in the vicinity of West Stayton, Aumsville and Turner to give irrigation farming a practical test, certain that once this is done there will come into existence in all parts of the valley, projects for the use of water in crop production."

EXPENSIVE NEUTRALITY.

What It Costs the United States to Have Its European Friends Disagreeing.

Statistics compiled in the treasury department at Washington show that up to December 1 the European war has cost the United States approximately $39,000,000 in revenue. It is estimated that in July, August and September there was a decrease due to the Underwood tariff act of approximately $5,000,000 a month.

Customs revenues, however, have been gradually increasing. During the first five days of December the receipts have been $5,121,331, compared with $3,311,986 for the same period in 1913.

England has made a large increase in its exports to this country, while the exports of France have dropped to 50 per cent of the normal and Germany's to 10 per cent. Japan, Italy, Greece and the Balkans all show a considerable increase.

Few self-made men live long enough to finish the job.

IN EARLIER DAYS.

(By Fred Lockley in Oregon Journal.)

In 1855 the legislature changed the name of Albany to Takenah. It is interesting to look back and note the changes wrought during sixty years in the communities of that day. Some of the villages, such as Portland and Seattle, are villages no longer. Skinner's is now Eugene. Marysville is Corvallis; Cincinnati, which was a serious rival of Salem, is now but a crossroads point and is known as Eola. Pacific City might well be called Ichabod, for its glory has departed. Mount sylvania, in Washington county, is now but a memory. Jennyopolis, in Benton county, is almost a myth; a ruinous barn marks the site of Santiam City. Central and Calapooya, Willamette Forks and Table Rock, all names familiar to the pioneers and places known to every circuit riding preacher of 60 years ago, have passed into history. Umpqua City, like Umpqua county, is no longer on the map, and Dardenelles has long ago departed.

I happened upon an old-time document recently, a proposal for bids for carrying the mails. It was dated 1853. It gave the postoffice and the names of the postmaster of each office. It was like an echo from the past to look over the names of the vanished places and read the names of the long gone officials. Here are a few of the offices with the names of their postmasters:

Point Clatsop, T. W. Sears; Pacific City, J. D. Holman; Chinook, W. Hall; Cascades, Dan Bradford; Sauvie's Island, Ellis Walker; Portland, E. B. Comfort; Seattle, A. A. Denny; Port-Townsend, W. F. Pettygrove; Mount-sylvain, Israel Mitchell; Dayton, Joel B. Palmer; Amity, J. B. Walling; Rickreall, Nathaniel Ford; Cincinnati, Joshua Shaw; Luckiamute, Isaac Staats; Spring Valley (Eola), Sanford Watson; Bloomington, Til Foster; Salt Creek, James B. Riggs; Jennyopolis, R. Irving; Marysville, W. St. Clair; Salem, Alfred Bell; Starr's Point, B. B. Hinton; Dallas City, William B. Gibson; Milwaukie, Lot Whitcomb; Oregon City, W. W. Buck; Santiam City, Sam S. Miller; Calapooya, H. H. Spalding; Central, Joel Ketchum; Washington Butte, John W. Bell; Champoeg, Robert Newell; Butteville, W. X. Matthieu; Willamette Forks, M. W. Akins; Skinners, Eugene F. Skinner; Dardenelles, W. G. T'Vault; Yonsalla, Jesse Applegate; Pleasant Hill, Elijah Bristow; Scottsburg, R. E. Fish; Umpqua City, S. S. Mann; Table Roc City D. M. Kenny.

What familiar names we see in this list. Such names as F. X. Matthieu, the last survivor of the famous group who, at the Wolf meeting in May, 1843, helped make Oregon a part of the

United States: Dr. Robert Newell, another of the same group who, with George Ebberts and Joe Meek were old mountain men and trappers and early settlers on Tualatin Plains; Jesse Applegate, a pioneer of 1843, who led the "cow column" to Oregon; Rev. H. H. Spalding, an associate of Dr. Marcus Whitman and a missionary at Lapwai to the Nez Perce Indians in the thirties; Lot Whitcomb the man who nearly made Milwaukie the metropolis of Oregon instead of Portland; W. G. T'Vault, Oregon's first postmaster general, editor of the Spectator and leader of the ill-fated expedition from Port Orford; General Joel Palmer, who, as Indian agent and through the list. What recollections they bring to life in the minds of all oldtimers.

turn to their cozy pews.

In many of the houses before which the singers render concerts the occupants are expecting them, and they are invited in to partake of refreshments. They can linger but a little time, for they must cover their arranged route before the chiming of the church bells ushers in a new Christmas.

CHRISTMAS WAITS AT PUBLIC CHRISTMAS TREE.

Popular Old English Custom Growing In Favor in America.

Christmas "waits," those bands of singers familiar in England for several centuries, have been less numerous in recent years, but the custom, with certain variations, is gaining ground in the United States. The municipal Christmas trees which will mark the great holiday in many towns and cities this year will have the singing of Christmas carols and anthems as a part of the exercises in connection with the trees.

The town of Burlington, N. J., has kept up the custom of the waits since colonial days. Each Christmas eve a band of vocalists, recruited from the choir of St. Mary's Episcopal church start out an hour or so before mid night and sing carols and anthems in various sections of the city. They visit the homes of the rector, the curate and members of the vestry and sing before their doors. As these homes are situated in widely separated sections of the city, the singing is heard by nearly all of the residents.

Citizens of the towns who may have retired early are usually aroused by the singing, and windows in upper floors are thrown open. As the carols are sung and the listeners at the windows yell greetings to their neighbors, close their windows and re-

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