

## Anti-Semitism Is Detrimental To The Whole World

Speaker in Montreal Tells of Jewish Persecutions in Many Lands.

Anti-Semitic feeling and Jewish persecution, practised in certain countries, has shown itself to be not only unjust to the Jews, but sharply detrimental to the people of the countries in which such feelings are fostered—a fact which can be readily seen in reviewing past history and in considering the world of today, said Olivar Asselin, editor of Le Canada, in an address to members of the Laurier Club, Montreal.

Countries in which anti-Semitic feelings had broken out openly, stated Mr. Asselin, suffered as a consequence, while in countries where the Jews were left to themselves the general prosperity of the entire land was on a sharply higher level.

He expressed the hope that the people of Canada, and particularly of the Province of Quebec, would insure their own prosperity by being fair and just to the Jews, who, he added, "look after their own, never become public charges and are a stabilizing factor in industry and commerce."

Mr. Asselin regretted that there were in the country certain people calling themselves journalists and writers who had taken upon themselves to write anti-Semitic articles and attempt to stir up a feeling of distrust and anger against the Jews. "These people," he said, "ought to be shut up in lunatic asylums."

The speaker turned back the pages of history in his address to show the roles Jewish men had played in the history of Canada and the world. The strategic importance of Jews in French-Canadian history, he stated, was sometimes forgotten by people in the main. He pointed out that in the eighteenth century it was a Jew, Abraham Gradis, who looked after the victualling of the French ships under General Montcalm, and who, for his services in this regard, was given letters patent by Louis XVI of France.

### Came Here With Wolfe

There, Mr. Asselin said, was one instance of a Jew coming to the aid of his country in time of need. He spoke also of the Hart family, which came to Canada with General Wolfe, and which figured prominently after the English conquest.

The speaker believed that the Jews, left alone and unpersecuted, made good citizens and men of character in the community. He noted the number of great English statesmen who were Jews, and the positions of responsibility they held in the other parts of the Empire.

Jews in the United States, if they had become materialistic, he said, were no more materialistic than the rest of the American people. He believed that Jews, on the whole, were as spiritual, if not sometimes more so, than other races. They were not murderers and thieves, as some people and certain so-called journalists would have the world believe. If some of them in the United States had turned into thieves, he added, it was because they were out on the streets.

### RADIO FUNERAL

Probably the first funeral service ever broadcast for the benefit of a family of listeners was presented last month by WRAK, operated by the Williamsport "Sun," Williamsport, Pa., after the state board of health had refused to allow a minister to administer the last rites for 17-year-old Jean Peters, a victim of infantile paralysis. The family heard the complete service via their receiver from the WRAK studio ten miles away.

# Christmas Cheer

By REV. BRICE D. KNOTT, B.A.

It was certainly a most happy inspiration as far as we are concerned that Christmas was fixed for mid-winter. It is a blaze of light and music in the midnight of the year. We are like travellers all weary, frozen and woebegone, who suddenly find ourselves within a circle of light and press into a cosy hostel, great fires roaring up the chimney, "and the fiddlers fiddling free."

What an oasis of melody and frolic Christmas makes in the desert of a Canadian winter! How impotent our fogs and gales, snowstorms and biting winds are against the Christmas Spirit! With this anchor we can ride out any tempest. Making merry is an art like everything else in life. Thousands of people never achieve it. It is always possible to "quench the spirit"—even the Christmas spirit. Some recluses do successfully resist all the invasions of the festive season into their homes, their pockets and their lives. They think we are a set of fools to make such children of ourselves. Why we should masquerade in cracker caps, dress up as Father Christmas, eat indigestible food and dance the Sir Roger de Coverley, these very respectable killjoys cannot perceive. They come gradually to pride themselves on their obstinacy, and to feel a sort of pharisaic satisfaction that they are not as other men, not even as these goose, turkey and pudding eaters. Their determination to keep a cheerless Christmas is a superb fatuity.

The great writer Addison was at some pains to distinguish between mirth and cheerfulness. He would have it that we could always be cheerful, but only occasionally mirthful. "Mirth," said he, "is like a flash of lightning that breaks through a gloom of clouds and glitters for a moment; cheerfulness keeps up a kind of daylight in the mind, and fills it with a steady and perpetual serenity." It is not, I think, possible to get up much of a quarrel between the gay mixx and the more Quaker-like maid Cheerfulness. It may well be, as Addison says, that the one flashes and gleams while the other shines. The one is a comet and the other a fixed star. It is quite true that we are apt to remember how the comet blazed in our dark sky, and to forget through how many black midnights the friendly star smiled out upon us. It is our poor human weakness. Familiarity breeds if not contempt, then neglect. We take the Almighty's best and commonest gifts for granted, and reserve our gratitude for the rarer and more evanescent boons. It is not quite clear to me why we should value radium just because it is so rare and think so little of some possessions which are within any man's grasp. The toys of millionaires are not more beautiful or more wonderful than many of the necessaries of the cottage.

But this idea of mirth being a rare but fascinating visitor, clothed in unusual and dazzling raiment, and paying very occasional calls at our homes, fits in with our ideal of the value of the Christmas season. Here mirth and cheerfulness are well reconciled, and they are twin guests who seldom or never fail us. That must be a dark year indeed when we cannot frame our lips to sing carols, and school our feet to frolicsomeness. They both intend to disperse the gloom of midwinter and light up the short dark days with sport and song. It is all the more difficult, therefore, to understand how it came to be that the mistletoe was woven in among our Christmas festoons. For I find, on referring to those solemn and uncontradictable authorities who deal in dogmas, that the mistletoe is of strange and weird origin. The word is apparently old Saxon for a twig or sprout. That is innocent enough, but now let the gentle reader lay this to heart: "The name seems to mean twig of darkness or mist, and to have been given from the fact that the Scandinavian sun-god Balder was slain by a twig of this plant, his death symbolizing the victory of darkness over light in the northern winters." And then to think that we have made of this death-dealing "twig of mist" a symbol of the festive spirit, and an invitation to amorous and frolicsome embraces! By the mistletoe, according to this lurid legend the brightness of the sun was extinguished, and darkness triumphed over light. Yet, I suppose, such was the ardour of the early Christian to convert everything gloomy into gladness and happiness that he even laid hold of the "twig of mist," and exercised its spirit of mischief and evil, and made it the very sign of festal mirth. After all, it may well stand for a parable of the work and mission of the Prince of Christmas.

Christmas cheer is commonly intended to suggest those luscious and perilous viands without which the average Canadian believes that his cheerfulness could not be sustained. I do not happen to remember, if I ever knew, whether Materia Medica approves or disapproves the time-honored ingredients of our Christmas repast. And though it may be shocking to say it, I hasten to add that I do not care. Some of our Puritan ancestors were, it is to be feared, inclined to be narrow in this respect. They treated Christmas fare as a pagan feast prepared in the kitchen of Bacchus. No doubt there was a good deal of coarse and unwholesome revelry associated with Christmas keeping in their day, and they were inclined to destroy the whole business rather than endeavor to reform it. But I like better to remember that when John Bunyan was lying in Bedford gaol for conscience sake, some good friend sent him in a large mince pie. John, you may be sure, had no conscientious scruples in the matter, but told them that he knew well how to distinguish God's good gifts even though at times they might be associated with undesirable habits and practices. So I love to reconstruct the picture in my own mind—John Bunyan in his cell, with its straw covered floor and its rude table from which the sheets of the "Pilgrim's Progress" had been hurriedly cleared, that the fair and appetising mince pie might grace the room and convey to John in his loneliness and privations some sense of the true spirit of the season.



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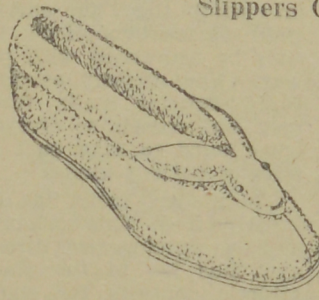


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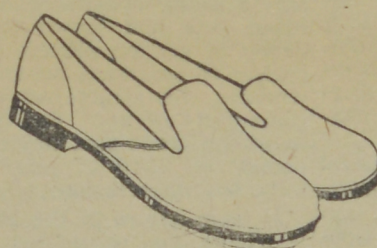
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All this is doubtless very materialistic. But may not a plum-pudding of a mince pie be an outward and visible sign of some spiritual grace? It is not mere greediness and a selfishness that is evidenced here. I am, of course, aware that:

"Little Jack Horner Sat in a corner, Eating his Christmas pie."

I lament the discreditable fact. John Bunyan may have eaten his Christmas pie alone; but, if so it was only because he had to, and could get nobody to share it with. Jack Horner conducted children to this day. No; Christmas cheer stands for the spirit of good-fellowship, sociability, genial friendship, and charity. That is why we come to associate it with thoughts of kindness. Even as we have, by the Christmas spirit, converted the "twig of mist" into a symbol of love and fun, so we have made of many a seeming evidence of luxury a real proof of unselfishness and charity. To receive and exhibit that spirit is the best way to lay hold of the fleeting figure of mirth, and detain her as a permanent guest and friend.