

PROGRESS.

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THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT.

It may be true, as some people contend, that Christmas is coming to have less and less of a religious significance, but the facts hardly bear out the charge. It is indeed becoming less and less of a church feast but that need not detract from its religious aspect. It all depends upon the point of view. If religion, pure and undefiled, is best shown through kindness to the widow and the fatherless, then each year deepens the religious significance of this festival. The Christmas spirit is abroad in the air, and while we may not hear of the complete conversion of any savage we do hear whisperings of the good work it is accomplishing. Antinomies are forgotten, personal woes are laid aside, and we find ourselves yielding to an irresistible impulse to brighten some life about us, and to fill the heart of some neglected child with happiness. And all of this is done, consciously or unconsciously, for the sake of a little child, who, we are told, lay cradled in a manger nearly nineteen hundred years ago. Wise men paid him homage then, and wise men of today pay homage to childhood by honoring and keeping Christmas. It is the children's festival, and he, to whom this knowledge brings no quickening of the pulse, would better take heed to his ways for it were better for him that he had a mistletoe hung about his neck and was drowned than that he offend a little one. Make the children happy now, that their after-lives may be rich in Christmas memories; gladden the lives of the poor by the cheerful word and kindly deed, and the religious significance of Christmas may well be left to take care of itself, and its beneficent influence will be felt on every side.

THE CYNIC'S CHRISTMAS.

He, who, by word or deed, adds to the sum total of human happiness, is a benefactor of the race, and has not lived in vain. By all the pleasant words we speak, all the friendly acts performed, even by the kindly thoughts we think, this sum total of happiness is increased. Therefore, even to the world-weary cynic Christmas should be a welcome season. Of course, we are presuming that the cynicism is honest, growing out of disillusionment with our civilization, and not assumed for appearance only, to cover verdant youth. With the cynicism of inexperience, we have little patience. Its very shallowness makes it far-reaching, so that nothing is free from its blighting touch. The real cynic is one who began life with high ideals and earnest hopes, that who from year to year has learned the bitter lesson that apparently ideals count for naught in this world, and that self-aggrandizement is the ruling passion of men and nations. Experience teaches him to thrust his ideals out of sight and the instructive law of self-preservation compels him to fight his own battle for existence against the world it need be. But his ideals are cherished in his inner nature and only the seeming hopelessness of their realization makes him view the world so critically and regard life as a failure. Mark you, if his ideals have been destroyed he would not know that life might be a better thing. Therefore we repeat that Christmas must be welcome a season to him as to the more thoughtful. Selfishness is thrust aside for a time and everybody seems to be intent upon making everybody else happy. The wolfish characteristics of mankind give

place for a season to the lamb-like, and each one becomes a benefactor by adding to the happiness of those about him. Once a year then the cynic takes a look at his ideals and though he may soon have to put them out of sight again that one look gives him a fresh hold on life and makes it possible to live and hope a little longer.

CANADIAN INTERESTS MUST NOT BE BARTERED.

It has been said that the Quebec-Washington Commission will adjourn for Christmas, and the members thereof take a rest from their arduous labors. It is of course fruitless to conjecture what the final outcome of the commission's deliberations will be, but judging from the rumors that have from time to time leaked out, nothing satisfactory has been accomplished yet. Events, that wide-awake, all-editorial paper of Toronto, had some forcible remarks against the rumor that the United States had been granted the use of our canals for military highway. The writer very truly said that no friendly country should ask such a favor, while to grant it would be treason. It is wise to sound the alarm in good season and worse than useless to protest after the thing has been done, so we can but thank Events for its warning note. Nevertheless, it is incredible that any man or set of men could for an instant contemplate such folly as giving a foreign nation howsoever friendly, a privilege of this sort. It would be suicidal for Canada to think of granting any terms to any outside power that would include a right to our water-ways. Our canals have been maintained at an enormous expense to our people for our own benefit and not to enable Uncle Sam to entrench himself in our midst in the event of any complications arising between our neighbour and motherland. The Canadian commissioners should remember when our national existence was threatened by the rebellion of 1885, the United States would not allow our troops to be transferred across their country although time, money and much suffering might have been saved thereby. Canada has lived and can live whether the United States is or is not willing to make reasonable terms with her. The only thing she cannot afford to do is to sell her privileges in the cheapest market and buy concessions in the dearest. What she has to offer will be a full equivalent for what he asks in return so that there can be no question of throwing in anything to boot. We hope that upon a renewal of the conference matters will be pushed to an early and equitable conclusion, or the labors of the commission cease before our national dignity is compromised.

PLEASANTLY PLANNED SURPRISE.

A Boston Gentleman Shows His Appreciation of a St. John Friend.

A pleasant surprise will be one of the many agreeable memories that Mr. and Mrs. John Walsh will retain of the Christmas of 1898. And their friends who gathered about their fireside on Thursday evening will not forget the hospitable greeting they received and the happy manner in which they were entertained. Mr. Walsh has many friends wherever he is known and as one result of the good feeling between himself and Mr. Thomas F. M. Guinness of Boston the latter planned to surprise him this year by an oil painting of himself Mrs. Walsh and their little girl. No surfer way of carrying out the surprise could have been devised than forwarding the portrait to Alderman McGoldrick with the request that Mr. Walsh's friends be invited to witness the presentation. And some score or more were quietly notified of the hour and put in an appearance much to the surprise of "Jack" who for the life of him could not imagine why so many of his intimate acquaintances were showing up. But the secret was soon out and the party gathered in the cosy parlors where a short address was read and presented with the painting to Mr. and Mrs. Walsh. The likenesses are splendid, more particularly of Mrs. Walsh, and the work is well done and handsomely framed. "The alderman" made the presentation with his usual tact and complimentary remarks followed by Mr. D. C. Clinch, Mr. John Kelly, and others present.

Good friends in the secret had provided a splendid supper which was daintily served and the guests enjoyed the beautiful Christmas cheer and goodwill which with song and jest, mirth and jollity, made up an evening of rare pleasure.

Studying Book-keeping.

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REMEMBER YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Rosario.

Finely dressed in my Christmas best,  
An' in top coat pick and new,  
An' in cap worn as a robin's nest,  
I come to me what to do.  
For there was lonely Rosario,  
An' a wondrous thing she said;  
In a charming way I be a very queer,  
But I'd rather have ye beside.

"Wh' gets the mistle over m',  
Wh' out any strain or miss;  
Why they take the occasioned fee,  
Which they call excise an' bliss."  
Then I hid my plant within my cap,  
On a white cold Christmas day;  
After a Christmas dinner nap,  
I hustled along her way.

With Christmas songs an' Christmas cheer,  
The house took wings of light,  
'Till time the runaway chariot,  
H' d' brought us to Christmas night.  
An' Ros'rine angel then as she seened,  
Smoothing my cap in play;  
Little of what it conceal'd she dream'd  
At the close of that Christmas day.

"I think it would quite become you too,  
On a sleigh try or a skate;  
For a moment try it on I please do,  
I'm going, I see it is late."  
It was on her splendid head for time,  
An' I quickly reached her then;  
"I have the mistle over you,  
Though how, you can scarcely ken."

I pressed the cap, an' the mistle hung,  
Down on her forehead white;  
An' sweeter than song by a poet sung,  
She stood in my raptur'd sight.  
A heavenly moment and all was still,  
There was no one to hear or see;  
An' she said with a calm an' yielding will  
"How nicely the cap fits me."

Beautiful Rosario none so sweet,  
The wide world o'er that year;  
Stood under a mistletoe cap complete,  
There was none on this earth so dear.  
And as long as a Christmas night draws nigh  
An' its happiness still I see,—  
I think of a long an' last good bye,  
The saddest of all to me.

CYRUS GOLDB.

The Old Farm.

I love to dream about the days  
I spent upon the farm;  
The theme is rich in memories  
That never lose their charm.  
Though early lured away by tales  
Of traffic's golden rain,  
How oft, how oft I've longed to turn  
Back to the farm again!

I've toiled for gain in busy mart  
An' scorned the paths of ease;  
I've wooed with fervor fortune's smiles,  
Across the briny seas;  
But neither labor nor wealth of Ind  
Nor fame's ambrosial wine  
Could o'er my heart the lost delights  
Of that old home of mine.

There every humble duty bore  
Of rich reward its meed,  
An' sweet approval gave a smile  
For every kindly deed;  
There peaceful sleep did wait upon  
Each day of toil and care,  
An' hope gave strength each dawning day,  
Its burden new to bear.

There peaceful scenes on every hand  
Did o'er beguile the eye;  
The woody hills, the winding streams,  
Rift cliffs an' azure sky,  
The kite, contented browsing o'er  
The blossom brodered wold;  
The swan and lambs, at wane of day,  
Returning to the fold.

All filled my little world with joy  
An' made brief sorrows fly;  
As sooths the infant's grief away  
A mother's lullaby.  
Nor soothed aims did mar the flow  
Of innocent delight,  
While honor's precept were instilled  
With love's persuasive might.

Then take me back, oh, take me back  
To that fair spot once more,  
To me more lovely than the famed  
Estate of classic lore!  
O, take me back and let me rest  
Thee safe from grief and harm,  
To spend my brief declining days  
Upon the dear old farm!

—Chicago Democrat.

Christmas Song.

Lo! ring the merry bells,  
In the morning's frosty air,  
Sweet be the news their music tells,  
As softly o'er the earth it swells:  
"Let the Christmas feast prepare!"

Bless we all that happy morn  
Afar in eastern land or old;  
While the shepherds watched for dawn,  
Of the promised Saviour born,  
Flying hosts of angels told.

In spite of prophet and of sage,  
The penal rod and Zion's flame,  
Sinned the dark despairing age,  
Sport of superstition's rage,  
Till the pitying Saviour came.

Now we keep the Christmas feast,  
Mindful of that greatest boon;  
Our hearts with charity increased,  
We spread our gifts from great to least,  
An' raise the grateful tune.

Hear the music floating by!  
Holy angels come again,  
Join we all the angels' cry;  
"Glorify to God on high!  
Peace, goodwill to men!"

The Yule-Log.

When the religious ceremonies of Christmas Eve were concluded, our ancestors were wont to kindle a monstrous fire upon the festive hearth, and feed it liberally with the Yule-log. Herrick, the poet of old English customs, thus alludes to it:

Come, bring with a noise,  
My merrie, merrie boys,  
The Christmas log to the firing.

While my good dame, she  
Bid ye all be free,  
An' drink to your heart's desiring.

With the last year's brand  
Light, the new block, and  
For good success on his spending.

On you psalties play  
That sweet luck may  
Come while the log is a tending.

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ALDERMANIC MATINEE

(CONTINUED FROM FIRST PAGE.)

ing of Sullivan taking Burke's place instead of Gilson's the alderman incidentally remarked that he had told him that he was a regular month ago, that he was on the regular force and then he asked the chief if he meant to say that Sullivan was not appointed before Burke resigned.

"Was not Sullivan," he asked "appointed on the 13th of December?" "Yes" was the reply.

"And did not Burke resign on the 14th?"

"Well, his resignation was dated on the 14th, but he signed it the day before."

Then Alderman Purdy broke in with the interrogation, "How long has Sullivan been a resident of the city?"

Of course the chief had to acknowledge that he had only been a resident since his appointment.

"Was there any other officer except Burke asked to resign?" asked Alderman Macrae.

"There was not," said the chief, "the report in the newspapers regarding the request for the resignation of officers Boyle and MacDonald was incorrect."

These were almost if not exactly the very words of the chief, and he went on somewhat hurriedly to explain his relations with the members of the force, and to express his anxiety to do everything he could for them, and he mentioned in this connection how just before he went to the bedside of Sergeant Hipwell, the oldest officer on the force, who being extremely ill, wished to see him, and, said the chief, "he spoke to me in these words,—Chief you have been kind to me, you have been kind to all the men on the force, and I wish to tell you so."

"Now," said the chief, "is not that statement a great satisfaction to me as the chief of police?"

Of course the aldermen were sorry to hear that Sergeant Hipwell was so ill as the chief represented him to be and they listened to his sympathetic story with much attention, but it did not make sufficient impression on Alderman Waring to get him off the track of his inquiries. He wanted to know why when Burke had resigned, the chief appointed Sullivan and why he did not promote a special and asked the chief in a pertinent way if he was not aware of the fact that it was the policy of the council to give the preference to the specials and why he had acted contrary to the expressed opinion and recommendation of the safety board.

"I tell you" said he "that we can not have an efficient police force without the chief and the council working in harmony."

When the chief assured him that he thought he was working in harmony with the council, the alderman remarked, "If you think that, you must be a duller man than you say Officer Burke is."

"I do not think I am any duller than the most of men are," said the chief.

"Now, chief," said Alderman in rather an impressive way, "we want to work in harmony with you and if you show a disposition to do that I want to assist you."

"Thank you, I am with you," broke in the chief and as the alderman continued his remarks he broke in again and again with the words,— "I am with you, I am with you."

Alderman Maxwell then spoke of the unfairness of making Sullivan a regular in the place of Burke, while Rankine who was a special and a good officer had been left where he was and Alderman Purdy continued in the same strain objecting to the fact that a stranger, a man who was not a taxpayer should be appointed in the place of a citizen.

Alderman Hamm asked if Sullivan was still on the force and the chief said "yes." "Well I think that is very unfair," said the alderman for Kings.

"Then," said the chief, "let me know what you want and when the regulars go out if you want the specials appointed, the specials will go in."

Alderman Purdy,— "I think you ought to know yourself when to appoint a good special."

The chief,— "Now aldermen you know how hard it is to get good men, it is as hard to get good men, or harder than it is to get good horses, and this board has had some experience with that lately." He further explained how difficult it was to get a proper age certificate.

Up to this time Alderman White had not said anything but he made a pretty careful summary of the discussion and concluded that the chief had acted "according to his light." He spoke of the chronic condition of misunderstanding that existed between the chief and the council, the latter, it seemed, wanted the force reduced to 34 men and the chief was aware of the fact. He could not reconcile the chief's actions in the past with his desire to please the council and follow out their

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wishes, but he thought it would be well that there should be no possibility of mistake in the future and that a resolution should be passed which would not be ambiguous in any way.

This about concluded the discussion on the appointments. There was some little talk about the request of Sergeant Campbell for the pay of a sergeant, but after the chief had left the room, the petition was tabled.

There was a good many amusing incidents during the afternoon and one of them was the discovery that Sullivan, the big man, who got the appointment over city residents and taxpayers was taken ill on the first night of duty and was on the sick list for three days. When the aldermen heard this there was a roar of laughter, and the chief was not a bit pleased. He did not think it was much of a laughing matter. Then another one was when Alderman Hamm asked if the chief knew of any man on the force who drank rum, and the surprising reply was, "I do not know of any man on the force who takes liquor." Taking the chief's word for it Alderman Purdy concluded that the police force was better off than the aldermanic board itself.

Alderman Hamm followed up his question by stating that in conversation with Inspector Jones he expressed his belief that whenever a raid was about to be made on houses of ill repute and saloons for illegal liquor selling they were notified, and the alderman asked the chief what he knew about it. The reply was that the statement was a very serious one and if Inspector Jones had made such a statement the chief would have had an investigation.

About this time he left the room and the aldermen after a very short discussion passed a resolution requiring that the force be reduced to 34 men without making any dismissals and that as vacancies occurred on the regular force the same be filled by competent specials.

Boyle was Asked to Resign.

The sensation caused by the statement of Chief Clarke, that no other officers had been requested to resign was not without reason. He must have known that the statement would surprise the aldermen and lower their opinion of his frankness—to say the least.

Officer Boyle was asked to resign. He was asked by the captain and the latter would not do it without the authority of the chief. Boyle was much disturbed about the matter and he lost no time in seeing his friends. They advised him to go to Recorder Skinner and get his advice. He did so and he has not resigned. More than that there is no disposition in the council to remove a man who has served the city so well and faithfully for 24 years.

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