World's Unrest and Christmas Peace

Bethlehem is real. It is a place to which travelers may go. I have been there myself within the last six months. Myriads of devout pilgrims from the Western Hemisphere will turn their steps thither as soon as the present paralysis of normal life is cured. New highways have been opened by the war, so that one may now go from London to Bethlehem by rail, with only two brief ferriages on the way.

Bethlehem is in itself not the most beautiful of Judean towns; probably that distinction to-day belongs to Ain Karim, where Elizabeth dwelt and John the Baptist, the kinsman of Jesus, was born, and where Mary went to visit her cousin before the birth of the babe of either. To-day Bethlehem has lost much of its Oriental character, because of the many modern Christian buildings in it, which devotion and missionary zeal have reared. The population is mostly Christian; and the main industries are the working in mother-of-pearl and olive wood. Bethlehemites are distinctive in both dress and appearance, probably owing to Crusader blood and influence.

A Pen Picture of Bethlehem.

On a terraced hillside, with the limestone rock outcropping, and vineyards tucked away on tiny ledges, and olive trees growing on the stormy soil, is built the "little town of Bethlehem," with its gray, square, flat-roofed, limestone houses, standing almost solidly along narrow streets. Through the doorway the visitor from Jerusalem, which is only five miles away, may see the men and women toiling at primitive lathes amid the dust of mother-of-pearl. Alas, the workers are not many now, for war and starvation took a heavy toll of Bethlehem. The shops where mother-of-pearl articles are sold are few and meagre, and their principal sale is of regimental badges to the British soldiers.

British troops guard the town of Bethlehem to-day and keep watch by the Manger. For long years Turkish soldiers guarded the Church of the Nativity, which housed the ecclesiastics of three warring Christian faiths —Greeks, Latins and Armenians. Now a genial Tommy stands at the entrance to the crypt containing the Manger, "to keep the priests from scrappin', and from swipin' each other's lamps," he says. Sectarian strife shows at its worst at the Church of the Nativity and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

The oldest Christian edifice in the world covers the traditional and universally accepted site of the Manger. On the hillside was the village khan, where Mary and Joseph lodged, and the stable, as is still the usage, was the cave room cut into the limestone, with the Manger hewn out of the living rock. Outwardly the church is unprepossessing, with a door so small that it admits but one person at a time. Within, the partition which ecclesiastical jealousy had erected, has been removed by British influence, and the proportions of the church as it was in Crusader times may be seen. The entrance to the subterranean Manger-crypt is down through a side chapel.

The Storied Hills.

While the town of Bethlehem has entirely changed, the surrounding scenery remains the same. These are the very hills upon which the shepherds watched their flocks by night. These fields, across which we looked at a glorious moon arising above the mountains of Moab, beyond the opalescent waters of the Dead Sea, were once flooded with a celestial glow more wonderful than the sunsets we have watched here. Silent now at eventide, the echoing hills then resounded to the strains of an angelic chorus.

It was here, on the very spot where we stand, that the greatest of messages, straight from heaven, was heard by a group of workmen:—

"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace among men, in whom he is well pleased."

To the traveller standing on a Bethlehem hillside the sweet old story seems newly real. It was a place event, as well as a universal message. When we localize it we understand more vividly its ever-present meaning. The old carol seems like an interpretation written yesterday:—

"It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold;
'Peace on the earth, good will to men,
From heaven's all-gracious King'.
The world in solemn stillness lay,
To hear the angels sing.

"Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wings,
And ever o'er its Babel-sounds
The blessed angels sing.

"And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow,—
Look now! for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing;
O rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing.

"For lo, the days are hastening on,
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world gives back the song
Which now the angels sing."

Christmas Help for To-day.

Whatever makes that first Christmas real and near is a message for our own day, for we need to hear, above the clash of class, the strife of strikes, the pandemonium of profiteering and the harried hunt for happiness, the old, old truth sung by the angels over Bethlehem's little hills that the Peacemaker has come and that good will has been incarnated in a manger. That is the most present and practical and important of all words for our day. To find a solution of our riddles, the calming of our unrest, the way of light in our hour of darkness, we need but to go back to Bethlehem and find the reality of Christmas.

Our time's turmoil takes a thousand forms; its real need is only one. Camouflaged by humanity's hectic pursuits of pleasure is a deep-flowing desire for real peace—peace among men and peace in the human heart. We are weary of war, and much of our current restlessness is only a reaction against its work and its woes. We think we want easier lives and pleasanter times and greater prosperity; in truth, our need is for peace of spirit and for an era of good will among all men.

Until our overwrought and light-seeking world follows the shepherds to the place of the Christ it will not be healed of its fret and its fears. The love of God, made personal and near in Christ, is alone sufficient to satisfy the present quest. If red-stained Russia, distraught Europe and bewildered Asia and perturbed America could only hear, as if for the first time and in fullest reality, the message of Christmas they would not need revolution or Bolshevism or any of the desperate remedies they are now seeking.

For the Christmas truth is the truth of a living and supreme God, interested in man; of a loving Saviour, making clear the character of God, and of a divine spirit of good will which alone can bring in that golden age which is best described as the Kingdom of Heaven. The brotherhood toward which the race struggles will be realized only when Christmas Day has truly broken everywhere.—Wm. T. Ellis.

A Chance For a Million!

NO HOPE OF RELIEF FROM H. C. L.

Export Trade Being Fostered at Expense of Consumer.

A despatch from Winnipeg says:—There is no hope of relief from present high prices for some time to come, according to a statement just issued by members of the Board of Commerce. There will be no relief, the commissioners declare, until international trade conditions return to normal.

"With the high price of wheat and mill feeds and the creating of the foreign demand for all products, it is hopeless for some time to expect any relief from present price conditions," the commissioners assert.

Present conditions have been seized upon by some dealers to profiteer, the board charges, but all high prices are not the result of profiteering. Many are due to natural increases forced by conditions growing out of the war. That export trade is being fostered to the benefit of the manufacturers and producers at the expense of the consumer, is another allegation.

Captain Alcock, Daring Aviator, Injured

A despatch from London says:—Captain Sir John Alcock, who made the first non-stop airplane flight across the Atlantic Ocean, has been seriously injured, according to a Lloyd's despatch from Rouen. His plane crashed near Oottevrard, in the Department of Zine-Inferieure, Normandy.

Miss A. E. Marty, M.A.

A graduate of Queen's University, who has the distinction of being the only woman School Inspector in Ontario. The honorary degree of LL. D. was recently conferred upon Miss Marty by her Alma Mater.

Cardinal Mercier Honored in Paris

A despatchf rom Paris says:—Cardinal Mercier, Primate of Belgium, was recently received at the Academy of Moral and Political Science here. The president of the academy, in an address, exalted the heroic attitude in the war of Belgium and her King, and eulogized the patriotic firmness of Cardinal Mercier during the German occupation of the Belgian kingdom.

Cardinal Mercier in response praised King Albert for the leadership of his people, and paid tribute to France and her allies, who, he declared, offered their gold and blood, mixed with the tears of their wives and mothers, in order that respect for the given word, for justice and loyalty, as against passing material interests, might triumph in the world.

SEES FILMS OF PRINCE'S TOUR

Royal Family View C.P.R. Movie in Albert Hall.

A despatch from London says:—The Albert Hall was crowded on Wednesday afternoon when the King and Queen and Princess Mary and the younger princes attended a display given by the Canadian Pacific Railway on behalf of the London hospitals, of films depicting the Prince of Wales' Canadian tour. Sir George Perley presided, and the Royal party remained during the greater part of the show. The audience maintained a running fire of enthusiasm as the pictures of every town the Prince visited were shown.

The show was repeated at night to another large audience, and was presided over by Sir McLaren Brown.

British Air Policy Defined.

A despatch from London says:—Winston Churchill, Secretary for War, has prepared a scheme for the Royal Air Force organizations in peace time based on the expenditure of £15,000,000 ($75,000,000) yearly. The main outlines provide for one flight squadron for each division of the army, to co-operate with the troops in all stages of their training, besides three general service squadrons, and also one or more squadrons for co-operation with the artillery.

The fleet will have permanently three airplane squadrons and two seaplane squadrons. India will have eight service squadrons, Mesopotamia three and Egypt seven, while the naval bases at Malta, in the eastern Mediterranean and probably Alexandria, will each have one small seaplane unit.

EIGHT OCEAN LINERS SAFE AFTER BATTLE WITH ATLANTIC GALES

Delayed Vessels Reach New York With 17,000 Passengers —Roughest Trip Ever Made, Says One Captain.

A despatch from New York says:—Substantial evidence of the fierce winter storms which have prevailed for the last ten days along the steamer lanes between this country and Europe was shown by eight big passenger liners which arrived here on Thursday with more than 17,000 belated passengers. Hulls encrusted with ice, rigging covered with sleet and salt from spray caked on funnels, prefaced the stories told by ships' officers of high winds and gigantic waves that swept their vessels from stem to stern.

The ships arriving were the Rotterdam from Holland, via Plymouth; the Baltic, Royal George, Carmania and Caronia from British ports via Halifax; the Lafayette from Havre, Hergensjford from Norway, and Europia from Genoa. All were from three to five days overdue, and some of them reached port too late to dock before to-morrow morning.

The first of the big liners to come in to her dock was the Rotterdam, which reached quarantine late last night. She was three days late and her master, Captain J. Baron, declared that the trip was the roughest he had ever made. His declaration was supported by Rear Admiral Andrew T. Long of the United States Navy, who returned after escorting the King and Queen of the Belgians back to their country.

Admiral Long said that one week ago, when in mid-Atlantic, the weather was so rough that the big liner was rocked like a cradle. One of the passengers was thrown to the deck and suffered a broken leg. On board the ship were five stowaways who were scared from their hiding places by the rough weather.

The Carmania, another of the belated ships, had to put in at Halifax to repair damages caused by collision at sea with another ship during a fog off the Grand Banks.

The Caronia, from Southampton, was close to the Carmania when the accident occurred and she responded to her wireless calls by putting about and going to her assistance. The tendered help was not needed, but she accompanied her into Halifax.

Duke of Hamilton's Art Treasures Bring Million

A despatch from Lanarkshire, Scotland, says:—Hamilton Palace, seat of the late Duke of Hamilton and Brandon, who was premier Duke of Scotland, is being dismantled and even the furnishings sold at auction. Remarkable prices have been realized from the sale of pictures and jewels. The total aggregated the equivalent of $1,277,700.

Most notable among the paintings was that of the "Beckworth Children," by Romney, which brought $260,000.

Other prices were $24,000 for the Charles II. oak balustrade, $15,000 for the panelling in the old state dining room, and $9,750 for the seventeenth century oak panelling of the picture gallery.

The black marble staircase, which consists of a double flight of steps and a gallery, failed to find a purchaser.

The palace stands in the heart of the Lanarkshire coal mining district, immortalized by Scott in one of his most spirited ballads. It was built in 1822 to 1829, and one of its marvels was a portico of monolith Corinthian columns which were copied from the Temple of Vespasian at Rome. The foundations of the palace have become so affected by time that it was found necessary to dismantle the historic edifice.

His Second Tour Begins in March

A despatch from London says:—Another overseas tour is being planned for the Prince of Wales. In a recent speech he announced that the King was sending him to Australia and New Zealand. He will probably sail next March, and be away six or seven months.

Rudyard Kipling.

On behalf of the Imperial War Graves Commission he has written an earnest appeal to those visiting the French and Flanders battlefields to observe reverence for the dead. "This is holy ground," says Kipling, "and must not be run over with levity."

Women workers in France now average about $2 a day, while before the war they were earning less than 40 cents a day.

THRIFT CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED IN U. S.

Women Organized to Fight High Cost of Living.

A despatch from Washington says:—An army of 4,000,000 women representing ten national organizations, has been organized by the savings divisions of the treasury department to enter the fight against the high cost of living.

Beginning January 1 and extending to April 1, a great thrift campaign will be conducted in an effort to induce women to keep strict accounts of their daily expenditures in order to study of them to eliminate unnecessary items. According to the plans, amounts saved by this means would be invested in Government securities.

Women's organizations which have been enlisted in the campaign include the Association of College Alumnae, Daughters of the American Revolution, General Federation of Women's Clubs, National Catholic War Council, National Congress of Mothers and Parent-Teacher Associations, National Council of Jewish Women, National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, National League for Women's Service, Woman's Department of the National Civic Federation, and the Y.W.C.A.

NFLD. DOG SAVED 92 PERSONS

Swam to Shore With Life Line From Wrecked Steamer.

A despatch from Curling, Nfld., says:—The passengers and crew of the coastal steamer Ethie, numbering 92 persons, were brought ashore on a life-line which was run out from the ship by a Newfoundland dog after their vessel hit upon Martin's Point.

Boats could not make the hazardous passage from the stranded steamer. All effort to shoot the line ashore failed when the line became caught. Men did not dare attempt the trip through the waters, and so the dog was put overboard. The dog bravely took the line in its teeth and battled against the rough sea, the line being released.

With block and tackle the Ethie's crew, aided by fishermen on the shore, rigged a life-saving device, using a boatswain's chair for a carriage. One by one in this chair 91 of the 92 persons aboard were hauled to safety. A baby sixteen months old was pulled ashore in a mail bag.

The Ethie, which had been engaged in the coastal service between Curling and Labrador ports, went ashore last Wednesday during a gale while bound south. The wreck was not reported here until the shipwrecked passengers and crew arrived from Bonne Bay, all wires having gone down in the storm.

Weekly Airship Service From London to America

A despatch from London says:—A weekly airship service to America is contemplated by a combination of aviation firms, which are credited with the intention of acquiring the R-34 and her sister ship, the R.-39. These are being altered to meet passenger and cargo requirements.

British Government Spends Over $15,000,000 Per Day

A despatch from London says:—The average daily expenditure of the Government from April 1 to November 30, was reduced to £3,099,000, as compared with more than £7,000,000 during the war. Freight traffic expenditures were reduced to £50,000,000, as compared with £68,500,000 prior to the war.

Saskatoon Has a Chinook, and Fuel Outlook Improves

A despatch from Saskatoon says:—A chinook struck Saskatoon on Thursday night and snow is melting rapidly in the warm sun. Gerald Graham, Assistant for Northern Saskatchewan to the Fuel Administrator, says the fuel situation in this district is much improved, and the prospect of several days of fairly mild weather promised a chance to get a little reserve supply.

BRINGING UP FATHER