The Quiet Observer

CHRISTMAS WILL ENDURE.

Christmas is quite safe as Don Marquis has pointed out in "Life." It has been taken up by the Departmental stores and for good reasons such as appeal to store managers' Christmas will not be allowed to lapse. Santa Claus has quite usurped the place of Father Christmas and this also is the work of the departmental stores. Santa Claus or Kris Krinkle or whatever we may call him used to arrive on a sleigh drawn by reindeer. More recently he came in a motor car. Now he is said to arrive appropriately at the chimney top by airplane. At all events he gets here and manages to overlook very few, and, let us hope, only the naughty and undeserving. The season has been observed, however, from time memorial, probably since that remote period, when it is declared, one of the early races on the Lemurian continent, millions of years ago, invented the zodiac. From the earliest ages the great spiritual teachers of the earth have been associated with the Yule-tide date, and the first certain mention of Christmas as on December 25th was in 354 A.D. Various other dates have been mentioned, but there is little doubt that the presently accepted date was fixed upon to synchronize with the ancient festivals that celebrated the birth of the Sun-Gods of antiquity. Krishna, Buddha, Mithra, as well as Opheus, Zoroaster, Horns, Bel, Bacchus, Balder, Apollo, Tammuz, Quetbalcoatl, Adonis, and other reputed saviours of the world all had their births celebrated at the winter solstice when the sun stands still for three days and nights and then on December 25th turns north again to bring the spring and the new life of the year. It has always been a season of joy and gladness, and the ancient sages who associated it with the Sun of Righteousness undoubtedly wished to make the masses understand all the love and beauty and gladness on which the universe rests though they did not forget what one of their school wrote two centuries and a half ago:

Though Christ a thousand times
In Bethlehem be born,
And not within thyself
Thy soul is still forlorn.

SOCIAL SERVICE MARKS PROGRESS.

Dr. Bernet R. Brickner, the new chief Rabbi in Toronto of Holy Blossom Synagogue, made his first public appearance in that city at a Canadian Club luncheon recently and spoke on "Social Progress Through Social Service." He is a young man, under thirty, and has just become the father of an infant daughter. He is gifted with eloquence, which a powerful voice makes impressive, and his fund of common sense and evident original thought and breadth of view, indicate a distinct addition to the intellectual forces of the province. He obtained his doctorate from Columbia University and came from Cincinnati to succeed the late Rabbi Jacobs in Toronto. As a distinguished social worker he spoke with authority on the topic chosen. He opened his address with a personal note on his marriage and home life and told how his wife had been first his college chum and afterwards his sweetheart. She wanted a boy, but he wanted a girl, for he desired to see her grow up and be her mother over again. He paid a tribute to the British nation which had been the first to do justice to his people. "If we are the people of the Book the English ought to be called the people of the Bible," he said. He recalled a striking illustration of the lapse of time and the passage of great periods proposed by one writer. If our present era was likened to the face of a great clock indicating twelve hours of 20,000 years, then we stood at the point of noon of eleven hours and forty minutes of the first part of the 24 we know practically nothing. The Babylonian and Egyptian civilizations began about twenty minutes to 12 when every minute represented 833 1-3 years. At seven minutes to 12 the Greeks and Romans flourished. At one minute to twelve Bacon wrote his advancement of learning. Plato and Aristotle were our contemporaries. Shakspeare was our playmate and we might say we had Bacon for dinner. In this vast period life generated change but change and evolution were not equivalent. Progress involves the recognization and pursuit of ideals. There is a force in the world ruling it, pushing it forward. Man is imbued with a tiny spark of that divine nature. Our duty as men was to develop it so that we go in the direction dictated. When we become socially minded, said Dr. Brickner, we become truly divine. "That is my conception of social progress. When I see you and others banded together for social progress then I know that God is in the world, and that there is a divine spark in men. Philanthropy is not a means of finding the way to heaven or of helping other fellows to get there, it is not a question of saving man's soul, but of saving man." His view of civilization was that the present system was virtually turning out a race of virtual savages, drifting to a stage of intellectual lassitude and indifference. School statistics showed an alarming proportion of feeble-minded, defectives or morons. We had been living on the storage batteries of past intellectual achievement and unless we generated new force society would inevitably decay.

MR. ROWELL AND ARTICLE X

Hon. Newton Rowell has made a distinct impression in Europe by his speech setting forth the objections to Article X of the League of Nations Covenant. "Fifty thousand Canadians under the sod of France and Flanders is the price that Canada has paid for European statesmanship. It was European policy and European ambition which drenched the world in blood and precipated the situation from which we have suffered and are still suffering. We are not prepared to allow any European league to settle world problems for us." In this sentence he summed up the attitude of the new diplomacy towards the old. He voiced the sentiment of all the new-world nations. Naturally the European statesmen have not fallen in with this view with alacrity. It is not so much a reflection on them as on the system of which they are the offspring. They could have passed over a personal criticism, but that which involves their patriotism, their dominant love for their own lands and institutions does not command their sympathy when it adopts tone of disparagement. But after all this would be a purely surface consideration. The matter goes much deeper. Sir Robert Borden in corroborating the statement of Mr. Rowell on the Canadian viewpoint, calls attention to three positions to which signatories of the covenant committed themselves. These are that all existing territorial delimitations are just and expedient; that they will continue indefinitely to be just and expedient; and that the signatories will be responsible for them. It is obvious that not to accept these points would be to sacrifice everything that had not already been attained and included in the present status. To declare that all existing conditions are just and expedient is a tacit invitation to rebellion or revolution—friction or some description with all who think differently. The old difficulty of dogmatic affirmation without adequate opportunities for modification or change of view should not be perpetuated. It has led us in the past into all manner of bitterness, envy, hatred and malice. The scientific method is one of co-operation, careful enquiry, complete tolerance, total absence of prejudice and of anything but that which makes for the general welfare as well as for the special beneficiary. There is a sincere desire, among the more enlightened nations at all events, to arrive at such an order and disposition as would enable all reasonable aims to be realized without heat or pique, and without injurious expense to others. Should the great nations decree a universal and self-denying ordinance of peace the lesser nations would more readily follow such August examples than their unimplemented precepts.

MACHINERY TRADE NOW VERY QUIET

METAL MARKET ALSO HAS BROKEN, AND DEALERS ARE REFUSING TO BUY MATERIAL.

In the summary of the iron, steel, metal and machinery markets, Canadian Machinery and Manufacturing News, Toronto, makes the following comment:

A few nice orders were secured in the machine tool market during the week and these provide the bright spots. Otherwise trade was not up to the mark. Several of the principal makers have notified their agents that they will protect buyers against price declines for the coming six months. Buyers do not seem to be taking advantage of the fact that it is a buyers' market now, and they could probably come in with their requirements to much better advantage than at any time during the past three or four years.

Local warehouses have announced new prices on some lines. Bar iron and steel are selling at 5c base. Sheets and plates were also put on a lower level. There is a fairly large stock of sheets in store, quite enough to take care of the present requirements of the trade. Manufacturers still send out lists of surplus material on hand, and the peculiar situation is found at times of the dealer trying to sell the manufacturer the very materials that the manufacturer would like to see the former taking off his hands for resale.

One of the largest dealers in scrap metals notified some 3,000 firms during the week that for the present they were entirely out of the market as far as taking on anything in the line of brass, copper, zinc, lead, pelter, etc. is concerned. In fact they are out of the whole non-ferrous line, and in iron and steel they are buying only against contracts. This is the first time in the history of their business that they have sent out such notices. They intend to keep out until something definite is established as a working base in the metal market. Duting the past month they have had to write off some hundreds of thousands by way of depreciation on stock in their yards and warehouses.

DOMINION WOOL MARKET REPORT.

There has been considerable evidence during the past ten days of a general steadying of prices in the wool market. We are getting back to about pre-war prices, and there is a tendency, noted for the first time since the war commenced, toward a greater equalization of grade prices.

Movements of Canadian wools recently reported comprise considerable qualities of western fine clothing, fine stable, half-blood clothing, half-blood staple and seedy. This activity, following a very dull period, is encouraging.

The British wool market has not improved. The sales of December were not at all successful; only 10 per cent. of the offerings were sold. The Government reserve limits were reduced 10 per cent., but even at that, very few bidders came up to the reserve limit.

FOOLISH FRANCESCA

By Olive Wadsley

Savinge got in beside her and the car started.

Her confused thoughts were broken by Savinge's voice. "I think I ought to tell you," he said in rather a strained voice, "that before taking you to the opera, I am taking you to a lawyer's office where we are to be married."

Frankie had not listened to the first part of the sentence; the last words awoke her like a heavy blow. She caught Savinge's coat sleeve.

"It's a lie; you daren't do it. I won't marry you; no one can force me to—"

"I think you are wrong there," Savinge said in the same cheerfully controlled voice. "I think you will agree to marry me when I explain a few things to you.

"The first is, that there will be no 'Carmen' at the opera house tonight if you do not marry me. The car will simply drive about till midnight, that is all, and I think you will own I am strong enough to conquer any physical struggle for freedom you may make. The second reason is that I have already notified the leading papers of our marriage this evening. That is all."

Frankie cowered in a corner.

Wild thoughts of jumping from the car, of screaming, of trying to fight Savinge and escape came to her, but all the while she knew she was trapped. Either she must marry him or else make herself and Mme. Kaine a laughing stock.

Tears gathered in her eyes and fell. Savinge saw them fall, and did not take his eyes from her.

"That you should be so absolutely cowardly and despicable as to do this,' Frankie said, her eyes burning through the tears.

"I do not propose to play fast and loose with in the way you affect," Savinge said indifferently. "Neither do I"—his voice hardened—"propose to become a laughing stock on your account. Our engagement had been announced by Mme. Kain, and I do not quite see myself being twitted by all my friends tomorrow morning, when the truth is published.

"Yourself, your wounded feelings, your name," Frankie flashed at him. "And yesterday I thought I loved you!"

"You acted magnificently," he assured her bitterly.

The light of the streets flashed into the car. The clang, clang of the motor buses, and the cries of the Presse, the music from the lighted cafes.

Time was going, there was only another hour left before the opera began, and Frankie had to dress, and already she knew Mme. Kain would becoming anxious.

A sick dread clutched her at the thought of marrying Savinge—she was afraid of him now, afraid of marriage, terrified by everything. Another train of thought held her.

Mme. Kain had given her this marvelous training, had been so boundlessly generous to her she could not fail her at the last instant. The chef d'orchestre of the opera house had only given her Carmen after endless debates, and at the end of it all it was really Mme. Kain's word which had won the day.

She had been so certain of Frankie's voice that she had forced others to believe in it, too. Could she fail her. After all she had done for her, after all the forbearance and gentleness and belief?

"I'll marry you," Frankie said, "for Mme. Kain's sake. I can't go back on her, I can't fail her, and I tell you that with all my strength I loathe and despise you. So drive to your lawyer's and be quick; if I am late I will tell every one what you have done, whatever it costs me."

"You will not be late." Savinge assured her gravely. "And I told the porter at the flat to telephone to Mme. Kain as soon as we had started saying you would be a little late as you wanted to go for a drive."

Frankie flushed. He had been assured of her as that then! He had actually prepared for this thing to happen!

The ceremony at the office was so short that Frankie would almost have believed it of no value, had she not signed the paper with its government stamp and had not Savinge carefully placed a wedding ring on her finger.

CHAPTER XIII.

Bis- Bis! Bis!

They drove in silence to the theatre. What was to happen later Frankie did not know, but she did know that she meant never to go to Savinge. Carisima would help her. Save her from that.

She sat huddled up in a corner of the big car; from his corner Savinge looked at her curiously, but he did not speak.

At the opera house Mme. Kain was waiting impatiently.

"Late, Bebe, you will be late." Then to the dresser; "The frock so—then the shawl—no like this, idiot, so draped on the left—the rouge. Gott, how pale you are! Yes—so—and so—and the powder, no idiot, a bit of it on her nose, so—yes, now then the lips, yes—now the shoes, so—look at yourself, Bebe—look—"

Francesca saw herself in the large winger mirror, a small, vivid scarlet-clad being, her hair wound round her head, a scarlet passion flower stuck over one ear.

She looked wild, Bohebian, attractive, and alluring.

"My throat is absolutely dry," she said; "utterly dry."

Mme. Kaine actually laughed.

"That we know! Wait until the hour arrives and then you shall have something which make it not feel absolutely, utterly, dry. Think of that long second song; do not wait so long at that fist note in the duet, if your breath is failing; do not try to hury on, wait, let it come, it will come. The bell, I must go." She looked at herself in the mirror, a large personage, beautifully dressed, beautifully jeweled and scented.

"Adieu, moin Kind," she said with tears in her eyes.

Frankie sat quite along for the next few minutes in her dressing room. She could hear the sounds of laughter coming from some of the other rooms, which were shared, and far away the faint sound of seats falling into place.

This was perhaps the greatest night of her life, she thought; it did not seem so.

And suddenly, as she sat there, the vast impenetrable night seemed to close all round her; it was as though she was alone, a tiny unit to fight against huge massed forces that combated with her. This was real stage fright, she knew that.

She rose and walked up and down, for the time she had forgotten Leon's very existence, she was simply a singer who was to sing.

"Carmen—Car-men," she heard the caller's voice, the double roll on the r's. She caught up her shawl, her cigarettes, and ran swiftly down the corridor.

The opera house in Paris is perhaps more suited to the first production of a voice than any other in the world, it has that reputation at least, but the description should be amplified a little so that to the uninitiated it may be clear that structural excellence is not meant to be a predominating indulgence, but the audience itself.

A French audience is expressive, appreciative, in a way which no other nation quite understands, a fact which is very largely a result of the "star" performance prevalent there.

It is said that every artist feels the mood of his or her audience. Frankie felt as she came up the stage just as though some rather kindly person smiled at her.

Mme. Shubert Kain was adored by the Parisians, the girl was her protegee, the audience was pleasantly anticipative. The house was packed. Frankie had been skilfully "boomed," and all Paris which counted for anything was there.

One or two men in the stalls said something about her plainness when she appeared; then, as she began to sing, complete silence pervaded the auditorium. Her voice trembled distinctly in the first note; one note was even flat.

Mme. Kaine gripped her glasses in her hands. Then, as though fear did not exist, Frankie recovered herself.

Carmen sang as only Carmen could sing—fire, deviltry, sheer gorgeous music was in her voice. A tear slid down Mme. Kain's face making a little furrow in its powder.

"Wait, wait," she told the audience silently.

Frankie was bowing her thanks, her face alight, her hands clasping and unclasping nervously.

"Bis, bis, bis," the audience roared; no claque was needed here! "Bis—"

The curtain fell, the lights flared up long before the clapping was stilled.

The English ambassador returned the intense grip warmly. He had heard Mme. Kain sing "Carmen" in that very house ten years before, and he reminded her of the fact.

The half-dead memory of Frankie stirred faintly in his mind; little by little the ship espide came back. Cad- What a beastly dull voyage it had been- Frankie had helped to brighten it a little, at any rate.

He smiled as he remembered the moonlight walks and talks, and the child had adorned him in her rum little way, though, or course, the Paris incident, Frankie actually calling at his hotel in the evening and expecting him, like some medieval knight, to metaphorically catch her in his arms, marry her, and bear her away to an enchanted land, had been deuced annoying and too absurd!

And now she had become a celebrity apparently! He had come in very late, and had heard and seen her without connecting the adorning, shabby child of the steamer days with the girl about whom all the house was apparently going mad.

As he smoked his cigarette in the foyer, he let his memory run back over the episodes of the voyage.

He lounged back in his seat as the curtain rose, and sat with his glasses up during the whole act.

He felt neither languid nor amused as he went of the foyer when the curtain had fallen.

Not pretty, perhaps, but, by Jove, how amazingly seduisante! And what fire of life, what intense attraction! He bit the end of his short mustache, a habit he had when he was excited.

This girl, this being of flame, had once been the outre little kid who had clung to him and kissed him and actually believed his easy acceptance of her childish ardor meant anything serious.

It seemed too amazing to be true, but it was true, and if Frankie had cared for him then—

He was swept off his feet by her sudden brilliant charm, her appealing, heart-searching, liquid voice.

His usual dilettante embarkation on a love affair deserted him, leaning against the wall he hastily scrawled a note on the back of his card asking Frankie to see him for a moment; he signed the message "Kit." A louis in an attendant hand insured its safe transit.

He seat through the act memorizing every detail of that long-forgotten voyage on the troop ship, his eager vanity aflame, his sense of conquest mounting.

When a slip of paper with the word "Yes" on it, signed "Frankie," was pushed into his hand, he gave an involuntary, almost noiseless laugh of sheer triumph.

During the long wait Leon, in a box was conscious of an old woman touching his arm. He knew that some one had been pushed into the box just as the curtain rose, and he turned to hear an English voice say:

"You'll excuse me, sir, but I know Carmen."

Leon faced round swiftly, his glass in his eye. He saw a middle-aged woman in black satin heavily trimmed with bugles, smiling at him a little anxiously.

"Do you?" he asked.

"Nursed 'er when she was a baby." Mrs. Baggs said proudly. "Lived with me till madame took her up eight months ago."

"Lived with you?" Savinge repeated.

"In my boarding-'ouse, sir. Miss Frankie was in a tea shop then, was to 'ave gone on the 'alls; but was ill and lost 'er voice for a bit—lived with me, working 'ard, I tell you, sir, for more than a year."

"I should thing Miss—er—Trent would be successful in her work in any work she took up," Leon said.

"Successful!" Mrs. Baggs snorted. "Ten shillings a week, sir, you'll be generous as they're made." He could picture Frankie laughing and paying week after week.

Carmen, was singing the love-song lieve me and tips; and she paid me penny for penny all she owed every time. She's that sort, Miss Frankie, just as generous as they're made. A favorite, too; we were all fond of 'er. She was never too down to try and keep us up. You know what I mean, sir—"

The curtain rose and she stopped speaking.

Leon watched the stage; watched Frankie, his wife, the girl he had married to save himself from ridicule. He had never heard much about her life.

He had indeed rather taken it to himself for generosity; that he had been willing to marry her without knowing. Through the deadening layer of selfishness his life had created on him a thought of shame pierced.

The old woman's story or Frankie had influenced him, too: "She's as her lithe, thin body alive with infectious abandon and youth.

"Si je t'aime, prends garde a toi," and yesterday she had lain in his arm and kissed him frantically—yesterday—and since then what had re done to her? A sudden feeling of real remorse was sudden feeling of real remorse was bread in him. Frankie had given way about the marriage for Mme. Kain's sake.

All through she had given that others might take.

The curtain fell again on the thunder of applause. The last scene came on—Carmen's death scene—Carmen, who, too, gave right to the end.

Leon made a swift resolution. Love—poor, weak love—which would not be denied, came to him at last—not as a power with which he obtained, but as a power with which to give.

Beast, brute that he had been! He could have kissed Frankie's feet in his humility.

(To be continued).

Facts About Canada

Lying to the eastward of the coast line of New Brunswick is the Province of Prince Edward Island—a small portion of the Dominion—but one of its most beautiful areas. So charming did the early adventurers who came across the Atlantic find it that they sought the land from the English King. As a result in one day he virtually gave away the entire public domain to absentee landlords. At the time this seemed of little consequence, but later it was destined to delay the progress of the island a great deal. It became necessary for the local Government in the last century to repurchase the land from the overseas holders. In 1873 it was estimated that about 450,000 acres of the 1,390,720 acres given away was repurchased and transferred to actual settlers.

When the question of federation with the other provinces became a live issue one of the difficulties encountered was the land question and the Dominion was forced to make a big money grant to the island in order to provide for the administration of pubilc business. The first suggestion was a gift of $800,000 for the loss of such public lands, the proceeds of the sale of which could, as in the other British colonies, be apportioned towards local improvements and the maintenance of Government. Another suggestion in the proposals of the island electors was that the Dominion Government should assist it in the policy of buying back the Crown lands that had been alienated in the pioneer days. This agreement was ratified at length and although it was a costly process it has resulted fairly satisfactorily for Prince Edward Island. As a result, partly of the policy, partly from the natural wealth of the island and also from the thrift of its inhabitants that part of the Dominion is making rapid progress.

ONTARIO SELLS A $15,000,000 ISSUE

ORIGINAL $6,000,000 RAISED WHEN ABSORPTION WAS DISCOVERED TO BE EASY.

Ontario's bond sale came to a successful climax when the syndicate of eighteen bond houses handling the issue were able to announce, that, instead of the original $6,000,000 offered to the public, they had actually disposed of no less than $15,000,000. When it became known that the issue was meeting with unexpectedly good welcome from the investing public, it seemed desirable to extend the offering beyond the original plan, and the first step was to raise it to $12,000,000, which was afterwards again enlarged to the $15,000,000 mentioned.

The situation surrounding the Ontario issue was uncommonly interesting, and not without its anxieties to those engaged in it.

The re-listing of Victory bonds established a new level of values in Canada, and Victory bonds must always be the basis of bond values in this country. The province of Ontario loan came upon the market at a time when these new values are being established and created confidence which not only resulted in the absorption of the Ontario bonds, but had a steadying effect on the Victory bonds. Frequently during the last year or two in the United States, which is the one large free market for securities today, a new issue placed by a strong group in a comprehensive way has restored confidence, and re-opened a buying power which seemed to have disappeared.

BEST FERTILIZERS FOR POTATOES.

The advantage of the use of fertilizer are shown in the results of a potato experimental plot on the farm of Stanley Merrill, Caradoc Township. An acre of potatoes was planted in five sections. Three of the sections were treated with varying amounts of fertilizer, the other two sections being on ground on which no fertilizer was used. The yield from the whole acre was more than 200 bushels.

The greatest yield was obtained from a plot on which an average of 1,000 pounds of fertilizer to the acre was used. This section of the plot gave a yield of 300 bus. to the acre. A plot on which 750 pounds of fertilizer to the acre was used gave a yield of 216 bus. to the acre, and a plot on which 500 lbs. to the acre was used gave 187 1-2 bus. to the acre. The two plots on which no fertilizer was used showed a yield of 137 1-2 bus. to the acre.

CLAD LIKE THEIR PARENTS.

The children of Holland are dressed in exactly the same manner as their parents. In the matter of their garb there is very little variety in that country and it is sometimes difficult to determine the difference between the children and adults.