MERRY CHRISTMAS 1947

Sports-And One Thing or Another

By FRANK MANN HARRIS

Like millions of other fight fans, we sat by our radio the night of the Louis-Walcott affair; and as round followed round, with the Brown Bomber showing up worse and worse, we mentally mourned the passing of probably the greatest heavyweight who ever lived. We felt really bad about it, but not quite as bad as a more youthful member of the family, who hasn't as yet been in hot water so many times as his old man, and so hasn't had a chance to become quite so hard-boiled.

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Next morning, he was just as sorrowful over the plight of Mr. Louis. "After what Walcott did to him, and the way the crowd booed him," he said, "I'll bet poor Joe feels just terrible." By this time, however, we had thought things over a trifle. "Before you go shedding any more tears over Mr. Louis, just think of this," we said. "If he'd flattened Walcott in a couple of rounds, as everybody figured him to do, he wouldn't have another opponent in sight, and a return bout wouldn't draw flies at the box office."

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"The way it is," we went on, "in a return bout he and Walcott will draw the biggest gate in history, and Louis's cut will probably be anything from half a million dollars up. Walcott did more than knock Louis onto the bosom of his britches last night—he clouted him into a fortune he otherwise wouldn't have had a chance of even fingering. So reach for the porridge, my lad, instead of a crying-towel."

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Now, a week or so later, we see no reason to revise that opinion. Joe Louis's name is removed from our Christmas shopping-list He's already had all the Christmas present any man deserves from a Lady called Luck. And if we know anything about him, he'll probably tear Mr. Walcott to pieces some fine evening in June or there-abouts!

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Bernard Shaw is to the fore again with his idea that habitual and dangerous criminals should be put out of existence quickly and painlessly—not in a spirit of revenge or as a moral lesson, but for the same reason we destroy rats, wolverines and other such creatures, because they're more peril to the world than they're worth.

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This is by no means a new notion on the part of Mr. Shaw; but again it raises roars of shocked protest from the tender-hearted. The latter much prefer our present system of catching a wounded murderer, nursing him back to life with medical attention impossible for most people to get, foiling at great expense all his attempts to commit suicide—and then hanging him, in the sacred name of Justice!

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It was fine to read about Ted Reeve speaking up so plainly in favor of Canadian football rules, as opposed to American—and to have his opinion backed by Frank Filchock. The latter is a man who should know something about the two styles, having starred in both; and Reeve's word on any sort of football just has to be respected.

We Canadians hear so many "thrilling" broadcasts of so-called United States "classics", and read so many of those illustrated articles about famous plays and players that we're in real danger of developing someting of an inferiority complex in this regard.

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For whatever value it may have we don't mind sticking in our depreciated two cents worth and saying that, either from a spectator's or a player's standpoint, we have a game that is head and shoulders above the American brand. Here, the sport still belongs, at least partly, to the players; over there, it's strictly a coaches' affair. In a recent New York pro. game fifty-five forward passes were thrown—or attempted—almost one per minute. They may call it football—we think "open air basketball" would be closer to the mark.

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Maybe you've hear it before, but recent storms and traffic tieups have resurrected the one about the truck-driver who was trying, with no success at all, to get his crate through a big drift, blaspheming loudly and vigorously as he did so, for all the world to hear. Along came a preacher who stopped, listened, then admonished. "Instead of blaspheming and misusing the name of the Almighty that way," he said, "wouldn't it be far nicer if you just said a little prayer?"

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With great effort the truck-driver choked back the retort that was rising in his throat. "O.K. Reverend," he said, "in a fix like this I'll try anything once." Bending his head and removing his cap, he muttered a few prayerful words. Then he tried to move the truck once more, and it slid through onto the open road like magic. The truck-driver just sat there, absolutely dumbfounded. His admonisher, who had been watching with great interest what went on, threw up his hands and cried in tones of utter amazement. "Well, I will be teetotally dammed!"

* * *

And as we won't have a chance of doing so again before the Great Day here's all the best to all our long-suffering readers, and to all others interested in sports. Over the years writers have tried hundreds of different ways of saying it—but nobody yet has managed to come up with any improvement on the old-time "Merry Christmas to you and yours"!

"Is Thar Gold In Them Hills?"—They still pa n for gold up in the Far North . . . although far more money is being made taking advan tage of its many other natural resources.

"THE NEW NORTH"

National Film Board Picture Vividly Portrays Modern Version of "Trail of '98" and the "Last Country of Opportunity in the Far North"

During the war, the Alaska Highway came into prominence as a defense measure against possible invasion by the Japanese. But, to Canadians, it came to mean much more than that: it meant that at last, the legendary northland of the Yukon and North-West Territories has really become a part of Canada. Save for the stories of early explorers and prospectors, it has been an unknown land, at once savage and romantic.

Last year, the National Film Board decided to show Canadians what sort of country this is, and to trace the rapid developments which have taken place there. Thus was born the film, "The New North", which is now being shown on the rural film programmes in Ontario.

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"The New North" is partly a story of transportation, always an important story in Canada. We see the new highway as it winds past such historic and romantic spots as the Peace River country, Fort St. John, Fort Nelson, the Liard River valley and the "town" of Whitehorse.

To some extent, the highway follows the famous "Trail of '98", and Whitehorse is used as a sort of base of operations. Many people who come are on the look-out for gold, but there are many other minerals to be found there. Deposits of coal, iron, oil, silver and copper are now being worked. In addition, "new" minerals, such as tungsten, is being mined, which is now used for hardening steel and making electric light filaments. There is also molybdenum, which has come to be used to make tough and deep-hardening steel.

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But miners are not the only newcomers: there are also farmers, geologists, business men, adventurers. It may seem surprising, but truck and dairy farming are now everyday occupations in the new north. Even as far north as Dawson "City" such farms are active and flourishing.

Then there is the tourist. There is a wild, strange beauty about this north country which is beginning to attract the summer visitor. The high mountains, the swift, glacier-fed streams, and the dense forests make it a summer playground equalled no where else in the world. But even more than that, undreamed-of hunting, fishing and mountain climbing opportunities are to be found at every turn. To make sure that this always remains the case, a national park of some 10,000 square miles has been set aside.

Yes, there are opportunities aplenty in the new north! It is a land of opportunity for men and women with courage and the pioneering spirit.

Serbian Christmas Falls in January

The Serbian Christmas is rich in its symbolism of Our Lord's birth in Bethlehem. It is celebrated on January 7 in accordance with Julian calendar, established in 46 B. C. and used when Christ was born.

The head of the family brings a small Christmas tree into the house and burns part of it. The sparks signify how the shepherds came into the manger to see the Christ child and warm themselves. In Europe, the Serbs place the unburned part of the tree into the barn or stable to signify fruitfulness.

In another custom, the father leads the family into the house, and they scatter straw over the floor to signify the warmth of the stable.

Prairie Provinces Want Sugar Maples

It is learned from the Dominion Experimental Station at Morden, Manitoba, that research is under way in an effort to cultivate the sugar maple tree in the prairie provinces.

Unfortunately this beautiful tree—esteemed for its value as a stately ornamental shade tree, for its wavy-grained furniture wood, and for its sugary sap—is a native to only a part of the country. Although it grows as far south as Georgia it fails to extend far north in Canada. The western boundary of its native range appears to be in the Thunder Bay hills flanking Lake Superior.

Tests made at Morden reveal that trees raised from seed obtained in Southern Ontario and Quebec are too tender to escape injury during severe Winters. Seedlings from Thunder Bay Hills, near Fort William, are doing well and produce crops of seed, unless weather is adverse for Spring blossoms.

Reduce Christmas Hazards With Care

To avoid tragic Christmas accidents in the home, the Fire Protection Institute issues these precautionary tips:

—Use a flame-proof compound to spray wreaths and other pine decorations.

—Use materials marked flame-proof for tree trimmings and home decorations if they are obtainable.

—Inspect Christmas tree lights, and repair frayed wires or loose sockets.

—Never leave Christmas lights burning unless someone is around.

—Never unwrap gifts near an open fire or flickering flame. Dispose of paper and other inflammable wrappings immediately.

Even Skunk 'Aroma' Conquered at Last

Seems almost too good to believe; but modern science has come up with something that eliminates the most offensive of odors — even that used by a skunk as means of defense.

Technically it's called alkyldimethyl - benzyl-ammonium - chloride. But don't worry about either the spelling or pronunciation. To the trade it's known as R2L. During the war it was government property, but now it's on the open market.

Proponents of R2L claim that a gallon of this solution, mixed, with 500 gallons of water, can be sprayed in a place like a fish factory and in a hour, presto, no fish odor. And anyone who has ever come into close contact with a fish factory will realize that this is no mean trick.

The method of operation is simple. Once the mixture is made it is put into a sprayer and sprayed around the premises until the odor disappears.

It can also be used at full strength. One man in charge of making the mixture popular with the public sold a gallon of his brew to a dry cleaning plant. A little later a man came in carrying a bundle on a pole in front of him and demanded that the skunk odor be eliminated from his once-upon-a-time best suit.

The dry cleaner was stumped until he remembered the R2L and then with a well-I'll-try-anything-once attitude dipped the suit into the gallon mixure. And, after drying, the suit was as sweet as a rose.

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ISSUE 51—1947

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By J. MILLAR WATT