

... EDITORIAL COMMENT ...

Voicing A Precious Right

It is sad that so many Canadians take their democratic privilege so lightly. The recent municipal elections in Georgetown and Esquimaux are a case in point. In Georgetown, with every office being contested, other than the public school board there was a scant 50% of the registered voters who took the trouble to indicate their preference. And this is a town which is on the threshold of explosive expansion, with major problems facing municipal bodies every day. In Esquimaux, less than 20% of the voters went to the polls to choose three of their five council members. And Esquimaux, too, which is in a transitional stage from the days when it was mainly rural, to an increasing percentage of urban residents, has a variety of problems to tax the ingenuity of its elected officials. It is not that public bodies do not get their share of news reporting in the weekly press. People should be well informed about municipal business through the pages of The Herald and the Milton

and Acton newspapers. And, from the attendance of ratepayers at the weekly council meetings here, there is a healthy interest in how we are governed. But it is startling to realize that apparently only half the people in Georgetown interest themselves enough in our council business, particularly, to help select the man who will guide Georgetown's 1966 destinies. Could it be that, in a country which has never been threatened with dictatorship, we have grown complacent, assuming that whoever is in power, we will have good government? Our newer Canadian residents, especially those who have come from countries where there is less free choice, are much more aware of the power of their vote. Their interest in politics, national, provincial and municipal, can put many of our native-born Canadians to shame. We hope those who didn't vote on December 6th will make one New Year's resolution to use their ballot next December.

A Time to Remember

In the flurry of Christmas preparations, presents, dinners, entertainment, we sometimes forget what we are really celebrating. Essentially, to residents of a Christian land, we are marking the birthday of a man whose philosophy has been continuously spreading through the world for nineteen centuries. His teachings have not always been faithfully followed. Human frailty is such that his doctrines have been twisted. There have been disagreements about the way we should carry out the Christian religion. And we are far off from creating the Utopian world which could result

if all professed Christians exemplified their faith in their daily life. Would not, then our best Christmas present to ourselves and to those with whom we come in contact, be to try to be a better Christian in years to come. First, by attending church more regularly, listening to what your minister has to say, then letting it guide your daily living. One cannot be a good plumber, doctor, papermaker or merchant without learning your job properly and constantly trying to improve your skill. Can one, then, hope to be a Christian without the same dedication.

Holiday News

The next two issues of The Herald will have a large percentage of social items about holiday visitors in town, and the visits local residents make to other communities for the holiday week-ends. Collecting these important news items is a big job for the Herald news department. And it's one for which we always ask the help of our readers.

SUGAR AND SPICE

by Bill Smiley

BENEATH THE TINSEL

Are you one of those birds who goes around in a perpetual grump at this time of year? Whether we like it or not, the celebration of Christmas has changed drastically in the last generation or so. Many people resent this and regret it. They feel that commercialism has taken over the festive season, that the true meaning of Christmas has been smothered in a swirl of electronics and gimmickry of advertising and noise and vulgarly and pure greed. I don't agree. Admitted, Christmas is no longer a simple observance of the birth of Christ. It is a complex and neurotic age. It has become a holiday of exhaustion and physicality. It is crippling. But it's a little too glib, and certainly naive, to suggest that the spirit of Christmas has been lost. Certainly, Santa Claus and Rudolph are pagan figures. Certainly some of the "Christmas" songs are nauseating. Certainly, many Christians are utter gluttons at this season. Certainly, many of the decorations and cards and gifts are in the poorest taste. But these are only material things, the outer trappings of the great festival. Beneath these gaudy robes, the bones of Christmas — the grand old carols, the simple, enthralling story — are as strong as ever. And the great heart of Christmas — the love — beats as warmly as

ever. A warm smile for your wife on Christmas morning, and the fervent remark that she's never looked lovelier, even though she resembles a camp-follower in the Crimean War. A simple announcement from your wife on Christmas morning, in the twentieth year of your marriage, when your kids are in high school or college, "Guess what, dear. We're going to have a baby." A sincere, sympathetic phone call to your neighbour on Christmas morning, when you discover that his front-lawn display, featuring Santa Claus and the Seven Dwarfs, has blown down in the night. Interposed, of course, with a few jolly "Ho! Ho! Ho!", in the spirit of the season. These are the gifts that give real joy, whether you're giving or receiving. If you have the true spirit of Christmas. Now wait a minute. Don't rush back to the store with your wife's milk stool or your kids' toys. Just in case... On Gift Giving About Trees... On the night Christ was born, legend says, all the trees burst into bloom. Thus began many stories about Christmas trees. Early folk tales described a huge tree in the midst of a forest. The tree held many candles, some straight, some upside down. At the top was an infant with a halo around his head. It was believed that the tree represented humanity. The candles, up and down, symbolized people, good and bad. The infant was the Christ Child. A warm smile for your husband and Action newspapers. And, from the attendance of ratepayers at the weekly council meetings here, there is a healthy interest in how we are governed. But it is startling to realize that apparently only half the people in Georgetown interest themselves enough in our council business, particularly, to help select the man who will guide Georgetown's 1966 destinies. Could it be that, in a country which has never been threatened with dictatorship, we have grown complacent, assuming that whoever is in power, we will have good government? Our newer Canadian residents, especially those who have come from countries where there is less free choice, are much more aware of the power of their vote. Their interest in politics, national, provincial and municipal, can put many of our native-born Canadians to shame. We hope those who didn't vote on December 6th will make one New Year's resolution to use their ballot next December.



Joyous Message of Christmas Lives Anew as Manger Scenes Symbolize Holy Night

—Joyous songs in honour of the Saviour's birth, St. Francis felt that, through the manger scene and the cheery Christmas songs, even the humblest member of the congregation could participate more fully in the observance of Christmas. Re-Creating the Nativity in Art, Song Through the years, the meaning of the manger has been enriched by hundreds of thousands of reverent re-creations. Both craftsmen and artists have been inspired by the manger and have shared their inspiration with many. The Madonnas and Child appear again and again in countless famous paintings, and the Christmas creche in miniature, created by the loving hands of skillful craftsmen, is a precious tradition in many lands, in many homes. In song, too, "the Young Child with Mary His mother" lives anew. Gathering around the manger scene, glad voices joyfully carol, "Silent Night, Holy Night! All is calm, all is bright, 'round yon Virgin Mother and Child..." His complaint was expressed in a series of poems written for a wealthy patron, at the time of the Saturnalia, the pagan festival from which came many Christmas customs. Martial, however, was not always averse to presents. After listing a large number of small gifts, such as toothpicks, figs, napkins, which had been delivered to him, he pointed out that it would have been much easier for the messenger to bring him "five pounds of silver plate." Septic Tank Pumping Weeping Tile — Trenching Gravel — Fill HALTON SANITATION SERVICES Ron and Bill McGowan 877-9235 As the people of the town gathered about the manger, the first Christmas carols were sung

Candlemas Eve is Best Time for Taking Down Holiday Greens

When is the right time to take down the Christmas greens? Before they become fire hazards is the modern belief, and that usually means soon after Christmas Day. In earlier times, however, the question was not so easily answered. Some people believed that Epiphany, or Twelfth Day, January 6th, was the proper time for removing all Christmas decorations. Others firmly contended that the greens should remain until Candlemas, February 2nd. One of those favouring the later date was, apparently, the poet Robert Herrick, who lived from 1633 to 1634. He wrote of taking down the greens in his poem, "Ceremonies for Candlemas Eve", but warned that the greens must be completely removed: "For look how many leaves there be neglected there (maids, trust to me) So many goblines you shall see."

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