

The Russell Leader

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THE WONDER OF CHRISTMAS.

Once more unnumbered millions turn their hearts to the manger where a puny infant lay upon the Virgin Mother's breast. Long centuries have passed since then. The kings of a hundred thrones have gone by. The great ones and the mighty ones of the ages have sunk into the sea of oblivion. But Time, the great Destroyer, has failed to quench the ever-growing brightness of that marvelous birth. Still once a year the big, busy Western world turns with awe to face the Mystic East and greet the Day-spring from on high who came to visit us. The bells of a nation peal when a Prince Royal is born or the birthday of a nation's independence is celebrated. But at Christmas time the bells of a hundred nations and the songs of a hundred races sing out the world over. The ghastly cleavage in the Christian world for the nonce disappears, Protestants and Catholics, East and West, the summery Southland, the wintry North, monarchies and republics, even Hebrews and Heathens conjoin in one great harmony of friendly joy to celebrate the glorious day with gifts, and greetings, and generous deeds. And the wonder of it is, it never wanes. More stockings than ever are hung. More festive lights are lit, and candles. More Christmas trees and presents are given year by year. There are more loving gifts and laughter. More generous charity. Its echoes roll from soul to soul, and its glory will, and can never fade.

Ever and ever as the birthday of birth-days comes again there are new loyalties of youth, new cadences of maiden songs, new carol voices of old and young. Again our kingly offerings of gold and frankincense and myrrh from the open treasure boxes of loving hearts laid down before Him. The gladness of friendships old and forgivenesses new are known by myriad hearts. Once more mysterious impulses open purses and unloose sympathies for the sorrowing, the needy, the aged, the orphan, the widowed and the poor. Once more the happiness of the few becomes the happiness of many.

The host that followed Alexander, and Caesar, and Alaric and Napoleon have long since passed away, but today an army that no man can number, clothed in the garment of love and joy and peace, of faith and hope, of meekness and sacrificial joy are following Him.

CHRISTMAS IS SEASON OF REGENERATED FEELING.

It is a beautiful arrangement, derived from days of yore, that this festival which commemorates the announcement of the reign of peace and love, has been made the season for gathering together of family connections, and drawing closer again those bands of kindred hearts, which the cares and pleasures and sorrows of the world are continually operating to cast loose; of calling back the children of the family, who have launched forth in life, and wandered widely asunder once more to assemble about the parental hearth, that rallying place of the affections, there to grow young and loving again among the endearing mementoes of childhood.

There is something in the very season of the year that gives a charm to the festivity of Christmas. At other times we derive a great portion of our pleasures from the same beauties of nature. Our feelings sally forth and dissipate themselves over the sunny landscape, and we "live abroad and everywhere." The song of the bird, the murmur of the stream, the breathing fragrance of the spring, the soft voluptuousness of the summer, the golden pomp of autumn earth with its mantle of refreshing green and heaven with its deep, delicious blue and its cloudy magnificence, all fill us with mute but exquisite delight, and we revel in the luxury of mere sensation. But in the depth of winter when nature lies despoiled of every charm, and wrapped in her shroud of sheeted snow, we turn for our gratification to moral sources. The dreariness and desolation of the landscape, the short gloomy days and darksome nights while they circumscribe our wanderings, shut in our feelings also from rambling abroad, and make us more keenly disposed for the pleasure of the social circle. Our thoughts are more concentrated; our friendly sympathies more aroused. We feel more sensibly the charm of each other's society, and are brought more closely together by dependance on each other for enjoyment. Heart calleth unto heart; and we draw our pleasure from the deep wells of loving kindness which lie in the quiet recess of our bosoms; and which,

when resorted to, furnish forth the pure elements of domestic felicity.

Christmas is a period of delightful excitement. It is gratifying to see that home feeling completely aroused which holds so powerful a place in every bosom. The preparation making on every side for the social board that is again to unite friends and kindred; the presents of good cheer passing and repassing, those tokens of regard, and quickeners of kind feelings; the evergreens distributed about houses and churches, emblems of peace and gladness; all these have the most pleasing effect in producing fond associations, and kindly benevolent sympathies.

Amidst the general call to happiness, the bustle of the spirits and stir of the affections, which prevail at this period, what bosom can remain insensible? It is, indeed, the season of regenerated feeling—the season for kindling not merely the fire of hospitality in the hall but the genial flame of charity in the heart.

WISE KINGS BOW BEFORE KING OF KINGS.

It is related in an old tale that out of the East came three men to pay splendid homage to the Savior. Some say these were three of the Magi, but another legend says these were three mighty kings.

The first of the three kings was Melchior, King of Nubia, whose gift was gold; the second, Balthazar, King of Chaldea, who offered incense; and the third was Jasper, King of Tarshish, a man of giant stature and "a black Ethiopie" whose gift was myrrh.

For the gift of gold was in testimony of His royalty as King of the Jews; but the offering of myrrh alluded to the sorrows which in the humiliating condition of a man the Redeemer vouchsafed to take upon Him.

The legend says these three kings rode before a gaily-caparisoned train of mules, camels and horses loaded with rich treasure, and guarded by a mighty retinue of warders, glittering with gold and gems, and armed with bright weapons of Damascus steel.

For they had heard that He was born who was to be Savior of the World and the King of Kings. And each of these three Kings left his throne that he might hasten to the tiny town of Bethlehem in Judea, there to lay gifts at His feet and worship. To them was given a bright star to guide them, and when they came to Bethlehem they sought out the place where He lay and knelt before Him.

And while the time-colored manuscripts are strangely silent on the point, theirs must have been an exaltation of spirit and a curious feeling of reverence as these grim rulers of many bowed their stiff necks in homage before the humble Child.

Then when their mission was ended back to Tarshish and Chaldea and Nubia went the three, and each again ascended his throne there to meditate on what he had witnessed. For they had been privileged to see a wonder that was to encircle the world, bringing to troubled mankind a new hope, and a spirit of charity and humility and fair dealing.

And perhaps they glimpsed dimly that we today would still follow the custom they established and that we would bear each other gifts in commemoration of their pilgrimage long ago, and each in keeping with his own outlook on life. And that in so doing we would reawaken and rekindle within ourselves the loyalty they paid the Child at Bethlehem.

Now the origins of this story are lost in the mists of time, and we shall never know whether the three who came out of the East were the Magi or the three Kings. But today in Cologne Cathedral occasionally the heavy doors of a chapel are opened, the lamps are lighted illuminating a dazzling wealth of gilded and jeweled sculpture and a magnificent reliquary enriched with gems and enamels where sleep the three Kings, whom many believe once looked upon the Savior.

CHRISTMAS LONG AGO

Christmas is not far away,
And we remember long ago
We hitched the horses to the sleigh
And gaily drove them o'er the snow,
With jingling bells and silver swells
Which held a Christmas glow.
And mother with her happy smile
Had long prepared for Christmas;
To make the day worth while.

'Neath the old fireplace,
The stockings they hung there,
And father aged, but happy,
In the old arm chair;
And mother sweetly singing a grand old
Christmas carol—
"Peace on earth, goodwill toward men,"
Till all joined a melodious choir;
And the ones who rose with hope to view
Our humble gifts, we were entwined
With loving kindness in a way
That made us feel that God was kind.

We still remember meagre gifts
And were satisfied with simple things:
Wax candles on a Christmas tree
And home-popped corn in crimson strings;
The fragrance of spiced cookies that were
made to have on hand,
And a very large turkey was roasting in the pan
And best of all a welcome was hanging o'er
the door
Made of pines and holly shines which formed
an Eastern star.

Was there ever such a friendly place?
It held us all bound fast;
Close to the love of that welcoming face,
A home that belongs to the past.
—Contributed by C.A., Iroquois.

The Ottawa Spotlight

By Spectator

OTTAWA, Dec. 21st—The volume of our foreign trade continues to be cramped by the short wheat crop of the past season. Our wheat sales are smaller than last year because there's less to sell. However, the records of our sales of all products in foreign markets make satisfactory reading.

For twelve months ending October exports amounted to 1150 million dollars compared with 980 million in the previous 12 months, while imports were 794 million compared with 610 million. Exports rose 16 per cent, and imports 30 per cent. Exports showed an increase of 170 million and imports 184 million. Although Canada, being a debtor country, needs a favorable balance of trade, this so-called favorable balance appears to be still too high. Imports from the United States hold a reasonable ratio to our exports from that country, but imports from some other countries and particularly from countries of the British Commonwealth are still too low.

Exports to British Empire countries in the past twelve months amounted to 512 million dollars and imports from these countries 231 million, that is less than half. Exports to the United Kingdom were 410 million and imports 145 million. If we analyze our exports to the United Kingdom it is found that agricultural and vegetable products (grain being the main item) account for 163 million dollars; animal and animal products (bacon being the largest single commodity) 80 million; wood, and wood products (sawn lumber, the principal item under this head) 43 million, and non-ferrous minerals (copper, nickel, etc.) 94 million dollars. The main classes of imports from the United Kingdom were textiles 52 million dollars and iron and its products, covering a wide field of machinery etc., 29 million.

In the case of other Empire countries, exports do not always exceed imports. Some tropical and sub-tropical countries which supply us with such commodities as rubber, tea, coffee, sugar and tropical fruits sell us much more than we buy from them. For example the Straits Settlements sold us last year 15 million dollars worth and bought from us 2 and a half million. Our sales to British Guiana were one million and a half and our purchases from this South American British country were between 5 and 6 million. Our exports to Jamaica were 4 million and our imports 6 million. From British India our imports were 9 million while our exports were a little over 4 and a half million.

With our sister dominions the balance of trade favors Canada pretty strongly. In the case of Australia exports were 31 million, imports 12 million; South Africa exports 17 million, imports 7 million; New Zealand exports 15 million and imports 8 million, all figures being taken to the nearest million dollars. In proportion, however, imports from these dominions rose more sharply than exports to them during the past year. In the case, for example, of New Zealand imports rose \$3,380,000 nearly 80 per cent, while exports increased \$3,117,000, a gain of about 35 per cent. With South Africa also not only was the percentage increase in imports much larger than in exports but in actual dollars and cents the gain in imports was greater.

Our trade figures with the United States show exports of 486 million compared with 392 million in the previous year, while imports from that country were 477 million compared with 351 million. This rapid increase gives ground for satisfaction. It attests the advantage of our trade pact with the United States. The new pact now projected with the United States will probably further stimulate trade. It is good for our consuming public to get goods cheaper; it helps farmers and other producers by giving them wider markets for their products. But the situation also gives rise to thoughts of the future. What about the dislocation in business in case another government coming into power at Washington should cancel or seriously amend the agreement? Does this growing trade increase our economic dependence on the United States? What about our other markets? Is there a danger that we are putting too many eggs in one basket? Are we in danger of losing our important markets in other countries unless our imports from those countries increase? The situation gives food for earnest thought. It would seem as if we must not let down on our efforts to increase our trade throughout the world, both on the export and import line.

KEEPING TREE FRESH

If a Christmas tree is set in water when it first comes into the house and is kept in water while it is part of the Christmas decoration, it will remain fresh and green for at least a week longer. Water should be replaced as it evaporates. If the base of a Christmas tree is trimmed with a sharp knife just before it is mounted, the pores will be left open, allowing water to rise in the stem to the living cells which are still trying to provide the tree with food and moisture. Spruce and fir retain their needles longer than most other Christmas trees.

THE REAL SANTA CLAUS

This Christmas spirit is the real Santa Claus—a spirit that is universal—that grows stronger with the years—that brings out the best in us—a spirit that is made up of kindly thought and deeds, of hallowed memories and of "Good Will" to all.

BOOKS THAT MATTER

A Weekly Feature Furnished by the Assoc'n. of Canadian Bookmen and the Weekly Newspapers' Assoc'n.

WOMEN ADVENTURERS

By Claris Edwin Silcox

Last Flight: By Amelia Earhart: (Toronto: George J. McLeod). Price, \$2.75.

And Then the Storm: By Sister Monica: (Toronto: Longmans). Price, \$3.00.

Here are two very different books by American women. One is by the late distinguished aviatrix; the other by an Ursuline nun. Both narrate adventure well worth reading.

"LAST FLIGHT"

Amelia Earhart was a vivacious tomboy with an inherent joie de vivre and a strangely unfeminine love of machinery even though it involved grimy hands. Her unkempt hair invited Wm. Allen White's editorial advice: "You certainly need to comb your hair; now is the time to get the tangles out and give it a good straightening. So in the long, lone watches over the gray and melancholy ocean, comb your head, kid, comb your head."

She had intended her book to be called "World Flight," but that was made impossible by the silence of the South Pacific. As she completed various laps in her journey, she despatched the log of her airship, the "Electra," together with other interesting bits of description to her husband, George Putnam. This continued up to her departure from Lae in New Guinea for Howland Island—never reached! Her husband edited these reports with remarkable skill, and while certain sections reveal the somewhat piecemeal method of composition, the book does reveal in the ensemble a very extraordinary and debonair personality.

In the introductory chapter she tells how she became interested in flying. Canadians will learn that an important episode in her flying career took place in 1918 at the Canadian National Exhibition. With a friend, she was watching some stunt flying when the aviator tried deliberately to frighten them by swooping down upon them. She says: "that little red airplane said something to me as it swished by." One suspects if she may not also have said something to that little red airplane!

The book contains some outstanding details of her major flights, including shrewd observations on countries and peoples visited enroute. Thus she watches the innate dignity of African natives and asks: "What have we in the U.S. done to these proud people, so handsome and intelligent in the setting of their own country?" In another compact sentence she gives us the significance of Singapore. In at least one passage she reveals an unusual sensitivity to beauty. She is flying over Northern Brazil and has climbed above the clouds and the rain into fair weather. The aviator can find the weather he wants, she says, at one level or another. She can see the slanting rain beneath him.

"AND THEN THE STORM"

Sister Monica went to Spain from the U.S. to examine the source material for a life of Francisco de Toledo, the great Viceroy of Spain in the New World. Her researches carried her to Madrid, Seville (where the Archives of the Indies are stored) Avila famed for Santa Teresa, Toledo (where she witnessed the Mozarabic rite), Valla-adolid and Palos, whence Columbus sailed. Only those who have themselves known the charm of Spain may appreciate the delicate descriptions of the author who is always simpatica. There are many Spanish phrases in the book and the reader unfamiliar with Spanish may often wish for a glossary, but Sister Monica has caught and imparted the beauty and mystery of Spain while, on the whole, she has not been uncritical of the culture which fascinates her. In dealing with the revolution, her sympathies are obviously with the rebels, and many of her readers will find themselves unable to follow her in her expostions of the role played by the Catholic Church in Spain. Nevertheless, they do well to read her interpretation.

Spain is to most Anglo-Saxons and to almost all Protestants an enigma. To understand it, one must know the history of its cultural development. As Sister Monica says: "infuse into this Celt-Iberian stock, Greek blood, then some Phoenician, Carthaginian and Roman; on this base lay a superstructure of Gothic Christian and of Saracen Mohammedanism, and how shall you name the result? Poverty, squalor, disease, vice, filth, decay may abound, as in

all quasi-oriental districts, but romance will spring out of the sky's radiance, the air's languor, the gorgeousness of soil and vegetation, clothing it like a vine with beauty."

We North Americans need to read such interpretations of Spain as this, for we must not forget that it was Spain and Portugal who laid the foundations of European civilization in the New World. Theirs was a great culture, but somewhere there was a fatal flaw. Was it the individualism of Spanish character? Was it religious intolerance and fanaticism? Was it the climate? Was it the sheer greed of the landed gentry? Was it the gold and silver of Peruvian mines which corrupted the original Spanish virtues? Who knows?

We doubt if Sister Monica can give us the real answer to this question, but she does give us so much else for which we are thankful that we overlook what may be her own inevitable partialities. Her book confirms our longfelt suspicion that Catholic education in the U.S. is destined to produce some outstanding writers in the immediate future. They have a sense of form, and a delicate sensitivity to certain realities of the spirit which too many of the realists do not understand. But we are not hopeful about the future in Spain. Sister Monica concludes: "It is not forgotten how Spain's unreadiness for new conditions lost to her her colonies; her present unreadiness may strike deep at the root of her national faith." We think it will, no matter who wins, but whose is the responsibility?

NIGHT BEST TIME TO VISIT DENTIST

"Go to the dentist around 6 p.m. It hurts less than during any other hour of the day!"

This is the quintessence of years of scientific research on what is called the "rhythm of the day" by Dr. K. Jores, of Berlin University. Dr. Jores investigated meticulously and with a large number of people the fluctuations the human organism is subjected to in the course of one day and discovered that they proceed in certain periods and intervals or with a certain rhythm.

Thus, the young scholar, for instance, established for first time that blood pressure, respiration and the functioning of quite a number of organs proceed in circles of definitely fixed rhythms, which were recorded day by day and for every two hours.

Based on these experiments, Dr. Jores in co-operation with Dr. Freese a dentist, investigated the sensibility of the tooth nerves over the period of 24 hours, and with clock-like regularity, came to the result that the nerves react best and cause less pain in the late afternoon hours around 6 p.m. while remaining most indifferent during the middle morning hours beginning around 9 a.m.

The sense of smell in birds is not very acute. It is doubtful if this sense is of much use to them.

LISTEN...
on Friday Night
"CANADA-1937"
IMPERIAL TOBACCO'S
INSPIRING PROGRAM
FRIDAY 10 P.M. E.S.T.
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FARE AND A QUARTER
FOR THE ROUND TRIP
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FARE AND A THIRD
FOR THE ROUND TRIP
Good going Tuesday, Dec. 21st until Sunday, Jan. 2nd, inclusive. Return limit to leave destination not later than midnight Friday, Jan. 7th, 1938.
Full information from any agent.
CANADIAN NATIONAL

THE RUSSELL LEADER Makes An Ideal Christmas Gift

FOR FRIEND OR RELATIVE AT A DISTANCE

BRINGING AS IT DOES—WEEK BY WEEK—THE LATEST AND MOST COMPLETE ACCOUNT OF NEWS EVENTS OF RUSSELL VILLAGE AND VICINITY. Gladden the hearts of those away from home with this regular weekly letter. Just say the word and we will make certain that "that certain someone" receives their home paper—accompanied by a suitable gift card with your name attached—on Christmas Day—and for 52 weeks after.