



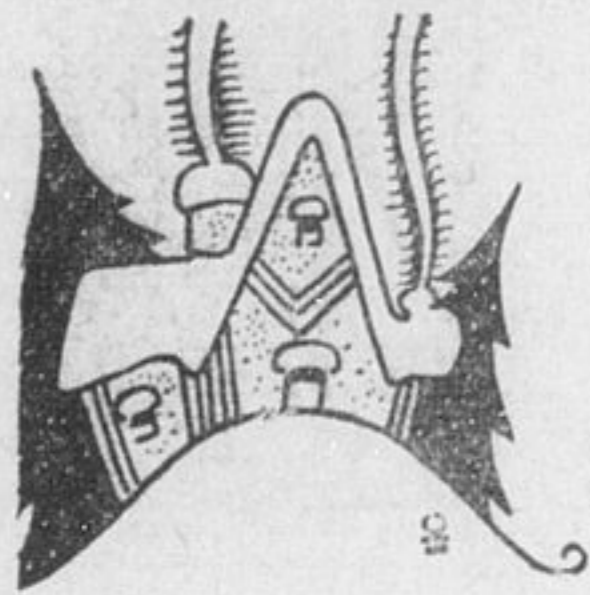
**THE OLD, OLD WISH**

A Merry Christmas  
and  
a Happy New Year  
to All.

**F. W. WOOLWORTH CO., LIMITED**

11 Third Avenue

Timmins



We are sincerely grateful for your co-operation during the year that is passing and take this opportunity to thank you and to wish you joy.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

**A. SHAHEEN**

19 Pine Street South

Phone 605

Timmins



**THE SEASON'S GREETINGS**

A Happy Christmas  
and every  
Good Wish for the  
New Year.

**FRANK FELDMAN**

GROCERIES AND PROVISIONS

112 Pine Street South

Timmins



We wish all our customers and friends a Very Merry Christmas and the Happiest of New Years.

**SHANKMAN BROS.**

92 Third Avenue

Phone 207

Timmins

**Early Celebrations of Christmas Time**

Early Christians Observed the Great Day in Secret. The Story of Christmas Through the Years.

The Christmas spirit invades all sorts of places. Thoughts of Christmas are everywhere, even in the most unexpected places. For instance, no one would look for Christmas thoughts in The National Revenue Dept., where figures and facts and hard cash are dealt in all the year round, and where a certain amount of red tape must be kept on hand all the time, or it would be just too bad. But Christmas can not be kept out of the National Revenue Department. For example, here is a Christmas article from The National Revenue Review:

Christmas! What memories the season brings in its joyous train, of merry children dancing around the gaily bedecked tree, of family reunions, of little feet pattering down the stairs in the early morning hours to see what Santa Claus left in the stockings pinned up in faith and expectant hope, of the joys of friendly fellowship and hearty greetings, and all the other things which make of Christmas the most wonderful birthday in the whole wide world. And although, as the years glide on, Christmas comes upon us, seemingly, with increasing rapidity the day of days is welcomed with all the old time zest and heartiness. It is in truth a magic season. The litch-string is out for every friendly hand.

It may be of interest at this time to look back to those early days of Christianity when Christmas festivities were beginning to take form.

The origin of celebrations of the Feast of the Nativity is necessarily lost in obscurity. The early persecuted Christians "wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth" and their celebrations were in secret. What are probably the earliest relics which give evidence of "the festive joy with which they commemorated the Nativity of Christ" are found in the Catacombs at Rome. On the rock-hewn tombs of these ancient underground cemeteries the early Christians painted the pictures of Biblical events, among others the Adoration of the Magi. The earliest record of the Nativity celebrations dates from about 180 A.D. Some churches held the festival in spring, others in January. Finally December 25 was decided upon as the most appropriate date, as almost all nations regarded the winter solstice as the turning point of the year—the beginning of the renewed life and activity of the powers of nature. At the winter solstice, also, the Norsemen held their Yule-feast in commemoration of the fiery sun-wheel.

Many of the usages of the Romans and Germans were adapted from paganism to Christianity. For instance, the old Roman feasts of Bacchanalia and Saturnalia were modified, and made to serve in honour of Christian events. Warnings were issued, however, by church authorities "against feasting to excess, dancing and crowning the door," (the latter practice derived from the heathens) and the people were urged to celebrate the festival "after the heavenly and not an earthly manner."

The gift-laden Christmas tree, the Yule log, holly, mistletoe and the was-sail-bowl were adopted from pagan usages. In ancient Britain, before the advent of Christianity, the pagans held their festivals of rejoicing during December in honour of Woden, Thor and Saturn, and many of their customs may be traced to-day in our Christmas celebrations. Some of the quaintest of these are found to-day in Icelandic Christmas customs. In this land of Thor the Yule or Jol is celebrated as a festival of light, particularly in the rural districts. The housewife makes a large number of candles, using candle forms that have been in the family for generations. From time immemorial it has been customary to present each member of a family with a candle on Christmas eve. The gift is small, but it has a real significance, for it is to symbolize the light and joy that the Christmas message is to bring.

It is the ambition of the Icelandic housewife to have every nook and corner of her home ablaze with lights on Christmas eve. Now, when oil lamps and gas lights are everywhere, and many country homes are even lighted by electricity, this is not so much of a problem, but when the Icelandic matron had to depend upon candles and small iron lamps in which floating wicks burned in cod-liver oil, the lighting of a home was no slight task. The outstanding characteristic of an Icelandic Christmas, however, is religious reverence. It colours everything. Before and during Christmas the children hear over and over again the story of the Christ Child.

Nature seems to co-operate in this sacred festival of light, for outside the northern lights in their full glory at this time of year shoot like meteors from the polar regions, making everything alive with throbbing of amber and violet, sometimes hanging like streamers of gold from the blue bowl of the sky.

Feasting has played an important part, of course, in Christmas celebrations in nearly all countries. In merry old England the favourite dish for breakfast and supper at this used to be the boar's head with an apple or orange in the mouth, and set off with rosemary, plum pudding and mince pies. We might include, also, "brawn of the tuske'd swine," peacock pies (tail feathers and all), beef, with ale, mead and wine. One marvels how the jovial old fellows got away with it all. There was apparently no dieting in those days.

As the years roll by many good old Christmas customs have disappeared, but others have arisen in their places, and so to-day the Christmas season, though lacking some of the glamour

and munificence of olden times, is just as rich and overflowing with the true spirit. And through the laughter of the children may come an echo of a voice that is still, and the loving touch of a vanished hand be gently remembered.

**Telling the World About Santa Claus**

The Answer of a Famous Old Editor to the Famous Old Question Asked by a Dear Little Girl.

Time and again the question is asked by the youngsters—"Is there a Santa Claus." This question arises every Christmas. It has been answered every Christmas since Dickens died. Possibly the best answer ever given was that by the famous old editor of The New York Sun when a little girl wrote to him asking the perennial question, "Is there a Santa Claus?" That is the question the little girl asked the big editor to answer. The Advance once before published this answer. On request it is republished herewith.

The New York Sun editor published the little girl's letter, and then he replied:—

"Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skeptical age. They do not believe, except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible to their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole truth and knowledge.

"Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas, how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no child-like faith in them; no poetry, no romance, to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

"Not believe in Santa Claus? You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see.

"Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not; but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen in the world. You may tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, not even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived can tear apart.

"Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory behind. It is real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing as real and abiding!

"No Santa Claus? Thank God! he lives and lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, may, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood."

**It was a Wet Christmas**

A friend of The Advance, who originally came from the United States, sends in the following as a Christmas rhyme that he imagines will be humorously appropriate as to what some people think Christmas will be like this year in the "land of the free and the home of the brave." Of course, it is not a true picture of the United States or any other land. In most places Christmas will be observed with feasting and jollity and home joys. But in every land there will be the occasional place where it will be true:—

'Twas the night before Christmas  
And all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring,—  
They were all on the souse.  
Some lay on the table,  
Some lay on the floor,  
'Twas a heck for a sight for Santa  
As he came through the door.

**Just Imagine! Once it was Illegal to Observe Yule**

Without doubt Christmas is the most popular festival of the year. It is the time when, above all others, the family circle makes an extra special effort to complete itself. It is a time of peace and goodwill.

Yet there is actually a period in English history when the strong arm of the law intervened to put down what was described as "superstitious festival," and all Christmas festivities were forbidden. The holly and mistletoe were ordered to be destroyed, root and branch, as "plants of the evil one."

It was Oliver Cromwell—a reformer in many ways—who tried to suppress the observance of Christmas, ordering that the "hurtful custom," as he styled it, should be ignored in the principal towns. In order to attain this end he enacted that all markets should be held on December 25th. But the Protector could not enforce the abandonment of such a time-honoured and popular custom, and his command was honoured more in the breach than the observance.

Once, when Bluff King Hal lay very ill, in December, and the nation was anxious about his recovery, by common consent it was decided to have a silent Christmas, without bells, carols, or merry-making.



GREETINGS

With sincere thanks for the patronage given us during the past year, we wish to all our customers and friends A Very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

**MRS. J. PLUTA**

LADIES' AND CHILDREN'S WEAR

25 1/2 Pine Street North

Timmins



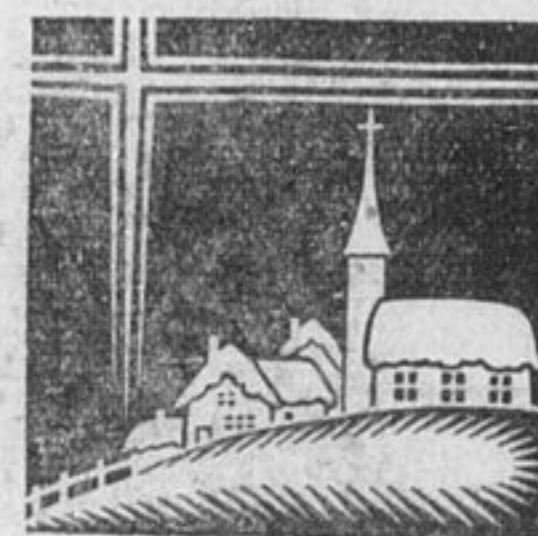
GREETINGS

May Your Christmas be Bright and Happy and Every Day in the New Year be as Happy as Christmas for you

**HILL - CLARK - FRANCIS LIMITED**

Timmins

New Liskeard



**FOR PEACE AND PLENTY**

The beauties of life be yours,—  
The hardships of life be forgotten,—  
This is our Christmas wish to all.

**JOHN W. FOGG, LIMITED**

HEAD OFFICE AND YARD

BRANCH OFFICE

Timmins, Ont.—Phone 117

Kirkland Lake—Phone 393



May Christmas bring you all the Happiness our heart can wish and the New Year the Best of Health and Prosperity

**A. J. Shragge LIMITED**

In Style and Value the Store that Sets the Pace.

Third Avenue, near Imperial Bank

Timmins