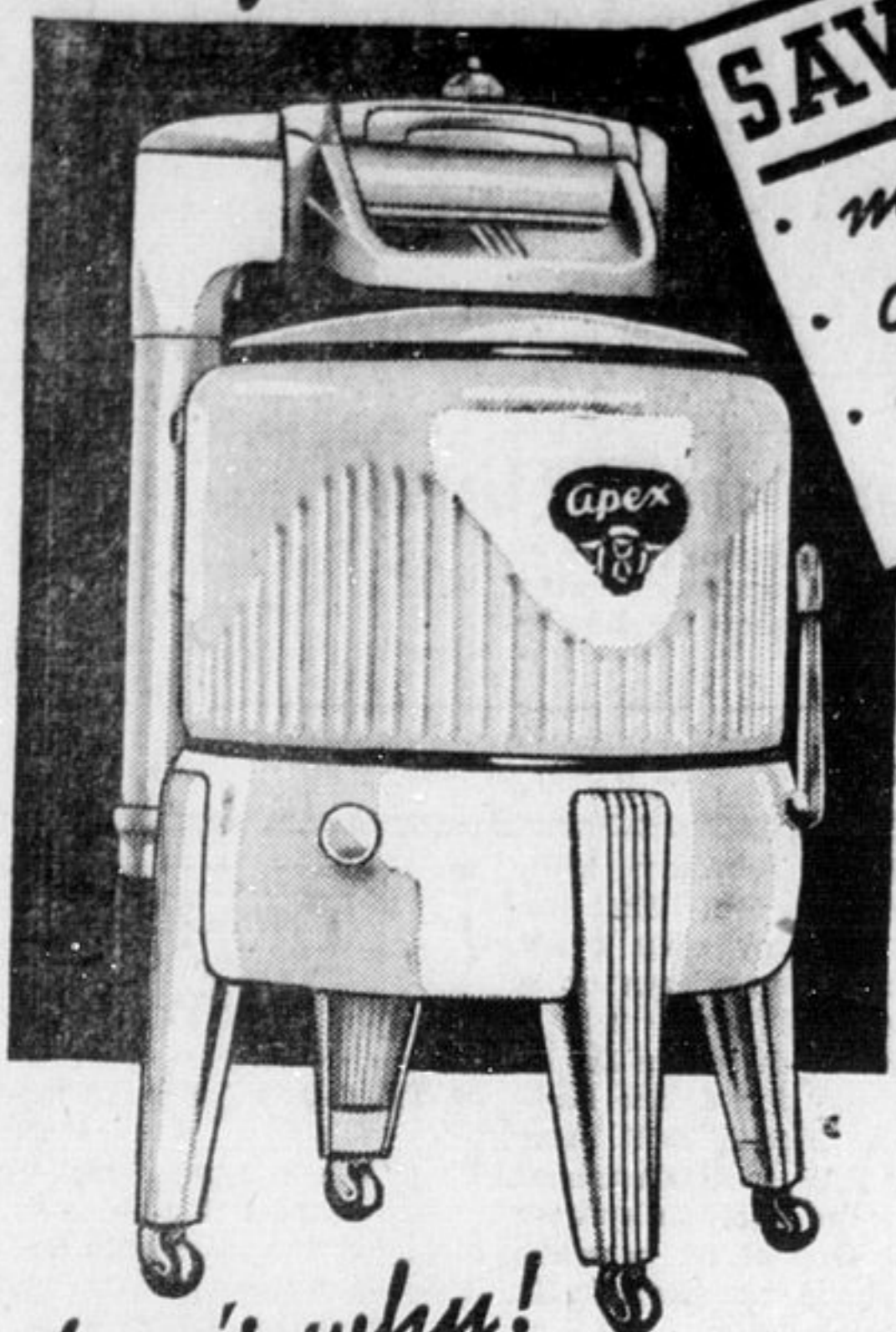


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"Night Before Christmas" Most Popular Yule Poem

The best known of all Christmas poetry is that childhood favourite, "The Night Before Christmas." Comparatively few people, though they may be able to recite the poem from beginning to end, know how it came to be written. Here is the story:

Clement Clarke Moore, son of a rich minister, was born near New York City on July 15, 1791. He attended school and college, and graduated in medicine.

In due course of time he inherited his father's property, which consisted of a large estate near New York. Being a generous man, and desiring to assist young people who wanted to gain a good education, he donated a large block of land for the erection of a college. Dr. Moore joined the teaching staff as professor of Greek and Hebrew, for which he was widely known as an accomplished scholar.

Dr. Moore's three little girls and an equal number of small boys hung up their stockings for Santa Claus to fill every Christmas Eve, just as children do nowadays. Well over 100 years ago Dr. Moore was helping his wife to pack baskets to be distributed among the poor families living nearby. When they were about to pack the last basket Mrs. Moore found that she wanted one more turkey.

"Clement," she said, turning to her husband, "go down to the market and get me another turkey."

This Dr. Moore did, and on his way home, his mind filled with legends of the Yuletide and thoughts about gifts, he suddenly found himself composing a poem about Saint Nicholas for his children. The words came to him so quickly that he had to stop every few minutes to jot down notes. He called his poem, "A Visit From Saint Nicholas." On arriving at his home he recited for the first time that favourite of all children, "The Night Before Christmas."

The poem was not published until December, 1823, when it appeared in the Troy Sentinel. Then paper after paper copied it, and it spread like wildfire all over the world.

There are many who believe that a Christmas edition is not really complete without this poem. At any rate The Advance has published it nearly every Christmas time and the years it has been omitted there have been calls for it.

Some Christmas Riddles

Why is Christmas Day like snow?—Because it can fall on any day of the week.

Which key is the most in use at Christmas?—The tur-key.

Why does mother never make a square plum pudding?—Because she wants it to go round.

Why is a dog's tail like the centre of a Christmas tree?—Because it is furthest from the bark.

What letter means life or death to a turkey?—"A" because it changes roosting into roasting.

Why is a Christmas pudding like a dusty caret?—Because it takes a lot of beating.

The Mistletoe

(By M. G. E.)

Mistletoe looks a fateful, fatal plant, with its wan leaves and ghost-like berries, the "Bane Bush", as folks of old called it.

In Norse mythology, it was with a sprig of mistletoe, flung at the bidding of the wicked Loki, that Hodur, the blind god, slew Baldur the Beautiful. And for that crime Freyda, Mother of Life, set it apart, suspended between heaven and earth.

The Druids saw the mistletoe hang, mystic, luminous, and worshipped it for that very strangeness, gathering it with many rites on the shortest day, December 21st. Caught, before it touched the ground, in the outspread robes of the Chief Druid, it was separated into small portions and divided amongst the worshippers, who carried it home and hung it over their house-doors, as a protection against winter dangers.

So here is one reason why mistletoe finds a place in our homes at Christmas. But why do lovers kiss under it? Going back to the Norse legend, we find that Freyda's spell ordained that the "Kiss of Peace" must be exchanged under the plant, to save the woes which fell upon the world with Baldur's death, and for this reason the Druids called "All Heal".

Amongst the Franks, the plant was still regarded as a peacemaker. If mortal enemies met beneath the tree where the mistletoe hung, a truce was declared for no blood must be shed there.

When Christianity spread northwards, the Church adopted and adapted many pagan rites, and, amongst others, it was long the Christianized practice to exchange a "Kiss of Peace" under the mistletoe, at a certain point in the service for Christmas Day.

Yet, even so, it was looked upon as an uncanny plant. "Tree of the Cross" they call it in Brittany, and legend said that the Cross was made from mistletoe-wood, when it grew as a forest tree, and that for this deservise to mankind, it was condemned to be a thing apart.

Soon the mistletoe relapsed into paganism. It was banished from the churches, and from church decorations, yet it retained its potency as a "Kissing Bush". That kissing was conducted as a joyous ceremony in Elizabethan days, when each swain, as he kissed, must pluck off a berry, and, when there were no more—why, no more kisses!

To Build Temple to Our Lady of Lourdes

Contributions to Be Taken Until Dec 8th, 1938

Shrine of Lourdes, Rigaud, Que.

To the Editor of The Advance, Timmins.
Dear Sir:—The last summer, the Shrines in the Province of Quebec were perhaps more frequented than ever. Let us rejoice over it; because, if our population contains elements whose ideas are a cause of anxiety, we still have serious motives of hope; the the Catholics are not afraid to show their faith.

Our Sanctuary of Lourdes, at Rigaud, was successively visited by throngs and throngs of pilgrims and never, as it was said, so many were seen plodding up the road to kneel at the feet of Our Lady.

The Golden Jubilee of the little chapel of our Canadian Lourdes was celebrated during the last pilgrimage season.

On this occasion, the desire was many a time expressed to us that this chapel too small in size should be replaced by a vast temple. The directors deem it high time to satisfy this general hope and have decided to build a temple to Our Lady.

To give this decision an immediate effect, the direction of the Shrine organizes a one-year popular subscription, from December 8, of the present year, to December 8, 1938.

We expect a kind co-operation from the faithful servants of Mary; no doubt our objective will be attained if every one does his part, however modest.

Circulars and appeals in the newspapers will be used to stimulate charity. Give generously, with a loving heart and piety. The long subscription period (one year) will enable even the poorest to present their offerings.

Fancy what a wonderful result can easily be reached if every one answers this appeal. A temple seating 1500 people will be erected above the Rock of Lourdes . . . a spacious shelter at the foot of the terraces for the days of large pilgrimages, and a dwelling for the priests in charge of the Shrine will also be built.

Why not send your subscription as a Christmas present to Our Lady? Mail it to the Reverend Father Director, Shrine of Lourdes, Rigaud, Que., Canada.

The earlier you subscribe, the better. And, as it was said by a pilgrim who takes our work at heart: "A FLOOD of generous contributions to the Shrine of Lourdes will in a near future permit the White Vision of our dream to be silhouetted on the sky of Rigaud."

Emery Picard, C.S.V.,
Director of the Shrine of Lourdes of Rigaud.

Christmas boxes got their name from the boxes—made of clay—in which, at Christmas, apprentices had the right to collect gifts of money from their masters' customers.

The giving of gifts at Christmas probably originated in one of the Christ Child stories, that of the Three Wise Men who brought to the Holy Baby gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Cost of Education Should Be Studied

Education Costs Not Increasing at Same Rate as Other Municipal Costs

Timmins, Ont., Dec. 22nd, 1937. To the Editor of The Advance, Timmins.

Dear Sir:—During the recent municipal elections throughout Ontario many references were made about the high cost of education. Such statements are undoubtedly true but may be misleading and demand our attention which previously has been seldom given.

Locally the cost of education has increased due to the great increase in the number of pupils and the consequent building programme that has been necessary. To get a picture of this increase we must make a comparison with other municipal expenditures. The following figures for Ontario are taken from the J. W. Noseworthy Report.

Increase of pupils, 1920-1935—327%.

Increase of teachers, 1920-1935—140%.

DECREASE IN COST PER PUPIL, 1920-1935—56%.

Increase in school expenditures, 1920-1935—2.3%.

Increase in other municipal expenditures, 1925-1933—24.1%.

The above figures show that due to the great increase of pupils, school boards have had to increase their expenditures to provide facilities, but

they still have not increased as much as other municipal expenditures. It must be remembered that buildings and equipment are of a higher standard now than ever before and at the same time no provision has been made for the municipality to obtain money for education other than by direct taxation. This has forced a reduction in teachers' salaries who at the same time have had their standards raised and compulsory courses added to their professional requirements. These must be taken at summer school at an expense of at least \$200 per summer.

Local educational costs cannot be compared with those of older towns since their building expenses have long since been paid and they have only upkeep and running expenses to meet while here there are heavy expenses due to rapid expansion.

These high costs of education, glaring as they may appear to be, nevertheless fade into insignificance when compared with the amount paid by the average individual in indirect taxation. A conservative estimate shows that the average householder pays at least \$400 per annum in indirect taxes on necessary commodities.

This is something that every taxpayer should consider when in a mood critical of the costs of education. The fact that we do not get a statement of taxes paid on everything we buy is no reason for forgetting that we are constantly paying indirect taxes which far surpass those paid for educational purposes.

M. C. NAPPER.

Moneta School.

May the spirit of Christmas stay with you throughout the Coming Year, and guide you to greater health, wealth and contentment than you have ever known. That is our Christmas Wish.

THE GOLDEN HUB

S. ANSARA

Gordon Block, Pine Street N.

Timmins

Plans Under Way to Rebuild Ramore Church and School

(From Northern News)

Plans are already being made for building a new church and school to replace those which were burned to the ground Tuesday morning at Ramore are announced by the Rev. Fr. Felix Leduc, parish priest.

A fierce blaze, which started, it is believed, in the school building, spread rapidly to the beautiful church building adjoining and, with no water to speak of available to fight the flames both buildings were entirely ruined. Help came from Matheson and Kirkland Lake, Chief Jack Mathieson

and seven men from the latter point making a quick run with chemical equipment.

But for the lack of wind, it is likely that the whole town would have been wiped out by the blaze, which occurred in the early evening.

Volunteers had helpers from the outside battled valiantly to prevent the flames from spreading, and Fr. Leduc and a number of parishioners took a big risk in saving a number of the sacred vessels.

Until spring worship will be conducted in the big hall.

Christmas carols originated in the eleventh century, being sung between the scenes of the miracle and mystery plays of the period.

The following members of the Medical and Dental Professions of the Porcupine District take this opportunity to extend to one and all

Sincere Good Wishes

for

A Very Merry Christmas

and

A Happy New Year

Dr. James Barry

Dr. C. R. Cushing

Dr. E. A. F. Day

Dr. Ray Hughes

Dr. C. E. Irvine

Dr. J. Martin

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