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MERRY CHRISTMAS

Some of the smartest lads in the business tried for years to write something original, startling, sensational, stupendous, about this Merry Christmas affair. Failing to find anything that filled the bill better than "Merry Christmas!" they suggested that Christmas was outdated, that it had passed its usefulness, that it was commercialized and lost. Still "Merry Christmas" prevailed—prevailed over distortion, abuse, neglect, denial. Merry Christmas is here, and the men who were once Scrooges are the ones who say it the loudest and the oftenest.

If ever there was a year in the world when it would seem that "Merry Christmas" would be killed by its natural enemies, or die of sorrow, this is the year. It is a Festival of Peace in a world of War—a time of goodwill and good humor in an era of hate and brutality and meanness. But it is the very array of hostile forces against Merry Christmas that makes Merry Christmas so necessary, so vital to the world at large to-day. Merry Christmas lives because without it, the world could not live.

Peace, goodwill, joy—these are so closely linked with Merry Christmas that there is danger of overlooking one of the greatest factors in a truly Merry Christmas—Hope. Hope is one of the fundamentals of Merry Christmas. The greeting to a friend or acquaintance "Merry Christmas!" carries more than thought of a good dinner and a good time. With the wish goes the unconscious hope that the joy of Christmas time will follow on to the New Year and to the years to come. There is something about "Merry Christmas"—some power, some influence, some inspiration—that makes the greeting sincere—from the heart—where other salutations may be formal or without force.

A man may say "Good day to you!" and be careless as to what sort of a day it is and indifferent as to whether or not you get your share of the sun. But when he says "Merry Christmas!" he really means it—for the moment at least. How hearty are the Merry Christmas greetings even from those at other times unfriendly! True hope for others flourishes at Christmas time. A man will not only wish you a Merry Christmas—he will actually do something to help you have it. Isn't that the truth? The pity is that the season could not be made longer, and the observance of it universal.

Some nations have forbidden the observance of Christmas by laws and decrees. Perhaps, in this fact may be found the reason for all the evil, the brutality, the treachery, the debauchery, that is troubling the world these times. When the next war is settled, it might be well to put in the peace terms a clause requiring the honest observance of Christmas in all offending countries. The Christmas spirit would do more than armaments to keep peace from seeking refuge in dugouts.

There are problems at home and abroad to-day. The Spirit of Merry Christmas would solve them if given full sway here and in every other land. Thought for the other fellow, goodwill, kindness, service, hope, these are the ingredients of Merry Christmas. The hope of Christmas is always for a better world, a kinder world, a happier world. Hold fast to Merry Christmas. Pin your faith on the Hope of Merry Christmas.

To one and all and everybody and all their friends and relatives—Merry Christmas!

THE TRUTH ABOUT SANTA CLAUS

Every year at this season there is some poor misguided soul to rise up and say that children "should be told the truth about Santa Claus!" Did you ever stop to think what a foolish suggestion that is? There are few children, indeed, who do not "know the truth about Santa Claus"—know it, in fact, much better than the average adult. Really, it might not be too much to say that only the children actually do "know the truth about Santa Claus." In many cases, instead of parents attempting to tell their children what they imagine to be the "truth about Santa Claus," it would be infinitely more sensible to have the youngsters tell the adults what are the actual facts about this well-known and much-beloved gentleman, Mr. Santa Claus.

"Do you believe in Santa Claus?" a wise mother was asked by her little girl who had been unfortunate one Christmas time in associating with the underprivileged child of rich parents who had told their poor offspring that Santa Claus was as non-existent as an animal with as long a neck as a giraffe. "I certainly do believe in Santa Claus!" the wise mother replied, and in response to further queries and the mean doubts planted in the little girl's mind, explained that Santa Claus was a spirit—a good spirit—the spirit of Christmas. That it was really silly to deny his existence with all the evidence to the contrary, and that Santa

Claus spread kindness and thought for others and helpfulness and joy around, and so should be encouraged, not questioned—helped, not debunked. Reference was made to the beloved doll carried by the little girl and to the games she loved to play, with the hint that the reality of these things of the fancy was on a par with the truth about Santa Claus. That little girl grew into womanhood, enjoying the joys of Christmas time as children may, and knowing in her heart of hearts the truth about Santa Claus.

Another mother in her lesser wisdom told her little lad of seven what she thought to be the "truth about Santa Claus." In a friendly interview the youngster was given the popular question, "Do you believe in Santa Claus?" "No," he said at first, "my mother told me the truth about Santa Claus!" There was a slight hesitation and then he said confidentially as between friends who had imagination and insight into the real things of life, "But you know—" But what he said was said in confidence.

It may sound noble, though stern, perhaps, to talk at large about telling the children "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth" about everything. A little thought will show how impractical, how absurd such a practice would be. Indeed, if anyone will give The Advance the name of any parent who tells the children the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth about everything, this newspaper will see to it that the offending parent is prosecuted for contributing to the delinquency of children. Imagine the mother telling her poor child the truth about everything—for instance, feeling it her bounden duty to inform the child that when she greeted Mrs. Jones so warmly, the truth was that she felt more like scratching the old cat's eyes out. Anyway, the youngster likely knows far more about it than the mother dreams. The best any mother could do would be to present what she had tricked herself into believing that she thought to be the truth, and all the time the wise youngster would know better.

Parents who feel they should "tell the truth about Santa Claus," should first be sure they know themselves. Then they should be sure the children didn't know all about it long ago. Childhood with its innocent fancy, its vivid imagination, its deep intuition may be safely left to "know the truth about Santa Claus"—to know it with a faith and belief and surety that may well make mere adults envious and regretful. Work and worry, sadness and sin, have dulled the perceptions of too many adults for them to presume too much to teach the children the truth about the glorious facts of the fancy and the imagination. The adult who would teach the child "the truth about Santa Claus" is liable to be punished by having a child who will try to teach his grandmother the right way to suck eggs.

FROM THE NEW WAR FRONT

Last week The Advance noted the new world war—a war against all modern precedents formally declared and announced. This was the war where Hon. Mr. Howe, Hon. Mr. Rogers, Hon. Wm. Lyon Mackenzie King, Hon. Mr. Hepburn, Hon. Arthur Roebuck, and all the other ministers of the King and Hepburn cabinets, together with a few rank outsiders, singly and severally declared war against some of each other but chiefly against Hon. Mr. Hepburn and Hon. Mr. King, or words to that effect. That may appear a little mixed and indefinite, but that's just the kind of war it is.

Anyway this new declared war has crowded all other wars off the front page, especially the front page of The Globe and Mail, which is for Hon. Mr. Hepburn and his cohorts, and from the front page of the certain or uncertain Toronto newspaper which is for Hon. Mr. Roebuck and Tim Buck, in full, and for Hon. Mr. King and his followers, in part. But please don't ask what part, for this is the joyous Christmas time.

How goes the battle? Well there is lots of news from the front, and the affront. Hon. Mr. King held a council of war at Ottawa and the whole Liberal caucus is reported in despatches as being with Hon. Mr. King to the death. But whose death is not so clear.

That may cover what may be termed the Government side in this uncivil war. What about the rebels or revolutionists? Well from his stronghold near St. Thomas General Hepburn breathes forth defiance and disdain. The Liberal caucus at Ottawa was held behind closed doors, he says, and the opposing hosts there were so afraid that not a man of them declared himself in public. They were all afraid to come out under a white flag even, or disguised as Red Cross nurses.

Then, from "apparently reliable sources," perhaps from "an official high in command," or something like that, as the war despatches phrase it, there comes an unofficial communication—and in The Globe and Mail at that—that the leader of the insurgent forces, or the resurgent forces, or what you will, is in such a state of health that he may be forced to resign. This is putting a serious phase on the great war that will not be enjoyed by any. It is to be hoped that it is a base canard, without foundation. Even those who will line up against Premier Hepburn in a fight between the two parties in the province or between the two parties in the Liberal party would sincerely regret if ill-health troubled him. Unfortunately there appears to be some grounds for the suggestion that Premier Hepburn is not enjoying good health. To The Globe and Mail reporter he admitted that he



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but my daughter was very thoughtful in giving them to me for Christmas.

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Where Canada Gets Its Christmas Toys

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In securing material for its Christmas number each year The Advance searches libraries, magazines, newspapers and other sources for Christmas material. It might be thought that a journal like The National Review, issued by the National Revenue Department at Ottawa, would not be considered. But that would be a decided mistake for The National Review not only has a literary flavour much contrary to any old ideas about "dry-as-dust" government documents, but also it has the Christmas spirit. In the current issue of The National Service Review there are many very pleasing Christmas articles well worth reproducing. Here's one that deals with the gifts in Santa's pack:

The Festival of the Children

The stockings were hung by the chimney with care.

In the hope that St. Nicholas soon would be there.

Saint Nicholas, alias Santa Claus, will soon be on his way again with his bulging pack of toys to gladden the hearts of Canadian children this Christmas. His visit is awaited eagerly by the army of good little boys and girls (how good they can be at this season!) So the Editor has put together some notes as to what may be found in his bulging pack this year, when he arrives on his sleigh with his eight familiar reindeer.

In addition to toys manufactured in Canada many are imported, chiefly from the United States and the United Kingdom. During the past fiscal year the Dominion imported several million dollars worth of amusement and sporting goods. Under this head were mechanical metal toys to the value of \$274,425, largely from the United States; metal juvenile construction sets coming for the most part from the United Kingdom, imports from all countries totalling \$36,303. Game tables and boards imported were valued in all at \$282,030, coming mostly from the United States, while dolls brought in totalled \$141,801 in value. These dolls were made principally in Germany and the United States, although Japan and the United Kingdom also contributed.

was "feeling miserable"—and he did not add that he did not feel half as miserable as some of his opponents really were. He cannot be in his usual health surely.

There is a touch of hope, however, in another announcement in The Globe and Mail. This announcement suggests that while Premier Hepburn asserts that the Dominion Liberal party cannot read him out of that association because he has not been a member for the past two years, still he can and does read Hon. Arthur Roebuck out of the provincial Liberal party. Further Premier Hepburn has decreed that Hon. Mr. Roebuck must take a place in the straight opposition corner of the legislature when the next session opens. The premier should feel better after that.

And now the war will have to look after itself until after Christmas! In the meantime it is the popular feeling to wish Hon. Mr. Hepburn early return to complete and robust health, and to wish him and all his friends and Mr. King and all his friends, and everybody else, a Merry Christmas and a Glad New Year.

GRAVEL AND SAND—AND PLACER

To one and all a Merry Christmas and a Glad New Year.

The German Nazis pride themselves on their hard practical sense and logic, and no sentimental nonsense. If they considered hard facts they

Imports of game balls of all kinds amounted to \$154,490, coming for the most part from the United Kingdom, United States and Japan. Other toy imports in the past fiscal year were valued at \$1,139,401, coming principally from the United States, Japan and Germany.

Canada in turn exported toys during the past fiscal year to the value of \$367,403, an increase of \$87,563, compared with 1936-37. Exports to the United Kingdom alone were valued at \$250,496, lesser amounts going to British South Africa, New Zealand and Australia.

So much for the statistical end of the story. Now glance at a description of some of the toys themselves which are likely to come to the above mentioned good little boys and girls of Canada and the United States. And when father has finished running the electric train and enjoyed himself with other mechanical toys, the children will have a chance. For men are but boys, grown tall.

The work of filling Santa's pack each year is a major industry and costs many millions of dollars. And toys, like fashions in women's clothes, must be kept abreast of the times. No sooner are new inventions on the market than toy duplicates appear. Small television telephone sets make it possible by an ingenious arrangement of mirrors for the users to see each other. Ventriloquism, of the old music-hall variety, is in the forefront of modern entertainment, and replicas of the talkative little dummy with the silk hat and monocle are to be seen on many toy shelves. This toy can be made to talk by any child who follows the simple instructions. Industrial and transportation toys bulk large in the 1938 pack—streamlined, pipe size motor cars humming like real engines; electric buttons with melodious honks, instead of horns, for velocipedes; headlights which can be dimmed or brightened; speedometers on bicycles; free wheeling on juvenile carts; and doll carriages equipped with safety brakes.

One of the most popular toys today, on this continent at least, is a mechanical construction set invented by a young English clerk who, one Christmas eve, while travelling from London to Birmingham noticed a steam crane at work and conceived the idea of making construction kits to reproduce practical machinery on a small scale. That was nearly forty years ago. Today the factory in England which makes these kits comprises a five-acre block of buildings, employing about 2,000 skilled workers and turning out thousands of mechanical sets and clockwork trains a year. There are factories also in the United States.

Among the many innovations are roller skates with foot grips and noise muffling devices, railroad trains with illuminated passenger cars, two deck observation cars, authentic whistles and complete freight car equipment. Scale models are procurable for reproducing famous ships, while trains and automobile racers, and airplane building sets and airport sets are in great demand. By means of a new version of the electric eye an electric

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would note the truth that no nation in history ever persecuted the Jewish people without losing caste in the world and eventually falling on evil days.

Employees of the Hollinger Mine certainly have cause to believe that there is a Santa Claus.

Despatches tell of a sort of rebellion in the Chamberlain party in Britain. "Copy cats!"

Hon. Mr. Hepburn is reported as considering a voyage to Australia to study that country's plan of financial set-up. Evidently Hon. Mr. Hepburn doesn't think much of the overseas mail service.

A Liberal caucus at Ottawa this week passed a resolution affirming its complete confidence in the leadership of Hon. Mackenzie King and its full support of him and his policies, if any. This is nice, all right, but not very effective in case the people of the Dominion vote confidence and support of Hon. Dr. Manion at the next election.

Newspapers have published pictures of the King's Christmas card, of the one being sent out by the Governor-General, and even facsimiles of the Christmas cards of some of the provincial Lieutenant-Governors. What the public is interested in, however, is the Christmas greeting that Hon. Mitchell Hepburn will send this year to Hon. Wm. Lyon Mackenzie King.

Christmas Again

To the Christmas greetings and good wishes of the President, General Manager and Staff of Imperial Bank of Canada at Head Office, Toronto, the manager and staff of this branch add their personal greetings to all friends of the bank in this locality, and extend to them personally the good old wish: "A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

IMPERIAL BANK OF CANADA

Head Office: Toronto

H. C. SCARTH,
Manager Timmins Branch

rain is controlled by a wave of the hand. A boom is on in toyland building equipment, which includes complete landscape gardening sets. A B C blocks are made now with grooved surfaces so that when they are made into towering edifices they will be tip-proof. There is also a new type of gun which, instead of shooting holes in the windows, shoots designs on the walls. The toy piano which children have always loved has been augmented by a record organ, reproduced to playing scale, with authentic musical tone and a scope of three or four octaves. Archery, an old-time favourite, has staged a comeback.

The realm of natural science, invaded but a few years ago by toy-makers and then in a comparatively simple degree, has become one of the favourite fields for new toys. This year there will be many gifts such as miniature polariscopes, giving youthful inquirers a chance to test light phenomena and study the mysteries of refraction. Another such toy instrument magnifies all sorts of molecular explosions in full colour, using the principle of the projecting microscope. Brilliant explosions are accomplished with safety by magnifying the reactions of such simple household staples as lemon juice and soda.

Then there are the parlour games the adult demand for which has sent them up greatly in the sales rank, and here is a great increase in educational play sets, dolls, games, and books sponsored by comic characters and radio and film stars. And lastly, speaking of dolls, they now walk gracefully, boast finger nails, and have long hair for expert coiffuring. They are dressed in up-to-the-minute styles.

A YULETIDE THOUGHT

It's good to have money and the things that money can buy, but it's good to check up once in a while and make sure that you haven't lost the things that money can't buy.

Sudbury Star: Blessed is the husband who has developed the knack of listening to his wife and the radio at the same time.

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TIMMINS

Christmas Evergreens

Still green are trees that bear the cone,
Though this is winter weather;
Still green the pine, still green the pine,
All green and gay together.
Still green when other trees are bare?
I think I know the reason:
I would not do for all to sleep
So near the Christmas season.

Some must have branches green just then

For men to cut and gather;
From them will rise the fairy trees
Where children dance together
For happiness, and marvel at
The magic fruit they're bearing
Of twinkling lights and gifts to please,
The whole bright time wearing.

When other trees all stark and bare
Are through the winter sleeping,
The evergreens are wide awake,
The Christmas season keeping.
Toronto. RUDOLPH STEWART

Fredericton Recorder and Times: Evidently Hon. Peter Heenan and ex-Hon. Harry Mills are not the only locomotive engineers who have attained some standing in public life. T. J. O'Neill, Liberal M.P. for Kamloops is in hospital in that British Columbian centre suffering from scalds received in the derailment of the C.P.R. locomotive that he was driving.