

The Porcupine Advance

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CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS

There is always someone to discover that Christmas is dead. It has been that way in this sad old world for 1900 odd years. And odd, indeed, some of the years have been. In the days of the Herods there were wisecracks who saw the death of Christmas. Yet Christmas lived on. Later pagan customs began to cluster round Christmas and the pessimists thought surely this would kill Christmas. Huns and vandals and other barbarians sought to kill Christmas, but died themselves. In more modern times many feared that Christmas was so commercialized that it would die of itself. It is worth remembering that commercialism can not kill Christmas. Instead, Christmas will bend commercialism to its own ends, just as it has forced the old pagan customs to carry on the good work of the Christmas spirit.

Perhaps, the reason Christmas survives all forces, is because the world has such dire need of it. That should be comfort to those who fear the wars of the gangster nations will kill Christmas. Never in the grim history of the world has mankind had greater need for Christmas than at the present time.

Until the last few days it seemed to some that Christmas this year had lost something of the force and power of other years. This week, however, it has regained its full old-time influence and effect. There is the same eagerness for goodwill, for cheerfulness, for generosity, for helping others. There is the same good humour, the same kindness. Even the shopping crowds show that Christmas is different to other seasons. Merchants and clerks are cheerful, courteous, helpful, kindly, under the most trying service and for long hours on end. Customers, too, have a patience not always displayed at other times of the year. Eager shoppers to-day show a decided contrast to a group of buyers crowded into stores at other seasons of the year.

Among British peoples there is a sort of tradition that men and women should not wear their hearts upon their sleeves. Christmas is one time of year when this tradition goes by the board, when it is not considered immodest for a man to kiss his own wife even before the children.

Christmas is a home—a family festival—and this year it should have special significance for the peoples of the British Empire, because the King and Queen so completely fill the British ideal of home and family traditions.

Christmas has become essentially a special children's festival and so is particularly a season for all, because it typifies hope, faith, friendship and goodwill.

The evil conditions in the world will not kill Christmas. Soviet Russia year ago declared war on Christmas. In lesser measure Germany tried to maim and mar Christmas. These evil forces will perish, but Christmas will remain. Instead of an evil world bringing death to Christmas, it may be necessary to observe Christmas more than once a year to bring the sad earth to its senses.

Christmas triumphs because it is of the spirit, the soul of man—greater than material force or power.

It is not too much to say that Christmas will help win the war. It will revive faith and courage and strength, and because of its goodwill, its friendship, its cheer, it will add to the strength that will be arrayed against the forces of brutality and greed and bestiality.

CHRISTMAS WISHES

There is a scene very frequently depicted on Christmas cards—deep snow, the branches of the trees covered with frost and ice. Sometimes the scene is relieved by a gaily lighted home from which comes the glow of warmth and cosy comfort. Perhaps, sturdy horses drawing a sleigh on which sit warmly clad people are added to the picture.

This year such scenes have a particular significance. Glancing at the picture, the pessimist sees winter, drifting snow, ice, bitter cold. It is a harsh world, a forbidding world, a cruel world, with its cold and its discomfort and its hardship.

The optimist, with more reasoned thought, takes in all the picture, and sees that all is not stern and cruel. He sees the cosy home with its warmth and comfort. He sees the joy of the outdoors, the charms of nature. For him there is exhilaration in the crisp air. There is beauty in the wonderful patterns traced in delicate lines by the frost on the trees. The green of the firs and the white of the snow, with the tones of the sun turning brown to gold and even using black to make gracious colour blends, makes a picture to joy the heart of the artist. Through the snow scene to the seeing eye shines the warm light of the home.

To many the picture on the Christmas card may typify the world at large to-day. To some who take in but part of the view, it is a forbidding picture. Yet by day the sun still shines and by night the stars still gleam. The sheer brutality of the gangster nations make a forbidding pros-

pect, it is true. But that is only part of the picture. The scene is relieved by the glory of self-sacrifice. Against the beasts—the Bear and the Wolf—set the nobility and the courage of the nations that still hold fast to Christmas and the Christmas spirit. The picture is not all shade and darkness. There is light and glory and beauty, too.

There will be the general wish to-day that this will be a merry Christmas for all—despite all the troubles crowding on the old world, despite all the evils of the day. Indeed, for very reason of these troubles and these grievous evils, there is the more need for this season of goodwill and generosity and faith and hope and cheer. Add to the simple and sincere wish, "a merry Christmas," the fervent hope that love of home and children, belief and trust, generosity and goodwill, and the comfort of friendship and the support of affection will give to each and all the courage to look upon the scene and see chiefly the beauty and the nobility and high ideals in the hearts of most men and women.

FINLAND SHOULD HAVE HELP

France and Britain are fighting, of course, for the defeat of national gangsterism in general, but also particularly for the restoration of Czechoslovakia and Poland. At the same time Britain and France are doing all they can to assist Finland in that brave country's effort to defend itself against the Red menace. It does seem reasonable to suggest that if there are any other powerful nations in the world to-day they owe it to humanity and freedom to give help in some form or another to assure the safety of Finland. A police officer attempting to arrest a vicious murderer has the right to call upon other law-abiding citizens for help if other crimes are attempted while he is busy at his work. Apparently, the same rule does not apply in international affairs. It would be too reasonable, too sensible to expect anything like that.

At the same time it must be irritating even to international policemen to hear a bystander cry out that a vicious criminal is harmless. That is what happened the other day in regard to the Red menace. The Chicago Daily News sang a regular carol about the impotence and harmlessness of the Soviet gangsters. The Windy City newspaper scorns the statesmen who once feared a Red menace. "But to-day," says The Chicago News, "we know there is no Red menace. There is only the same old inefficient rabble of Russians, dumb, driven, tyrannized over by new masters. Ten good French or German divisions, in all probability, could go through the whole Red army like a snow plough through slush."

If The Chicago News really believes that ten or twelve British or French divisions could plough down the whole Russian army, then no doubt the Chicago newspaper will be convinced that one United States division could settle the whole business. If this is so, why not advocate the sending of that one division and save the Finnish people from all their present unpleasantness?

It is true that Finland has faced the aggressor with a courage that has won the admiration of the world. It is true that Finland has held back the foe with a success that has seemed almost miraculous. But Finland knows to her sorrow and dear cost that there is a Red menace. Finland knows that unless help arrives, a few hundred thousand soldiers, no matter how brave or skilful, can not continue indefinitely to defend themselves from waves of millions. Thousands upon thousands of Russians have met death or capture. One of the epics of the latest war is the story of the killing of 700 Russians by a Finnish patrol of nine men with machine guns. Stated baldly, there is doubt whether it is physically possible for the few Finnish soldiers to kill off the Russian rabble as rapidly as the Soviet can drive forward more cannon fodder.

The late Martin Ringrose, of Pembroke, was famous in his day for the remark that "none are so blind as those who will not hear." With all that has been seen and heard in recent times of the Soviet gangsters, it surely is not too much to say that the newspaper that can neither see nor hear nor feel a Red menace must be dumb, indeed. The sad truth is that there is a Red menace—there has been a Red menace these many years. To Finland to-day it is a real, a living, a fearsome menace. It is a menace to all Europe, to all civilization. It is a menace, too, to all the civilized nations of the world. Stupid, it may be, but surely brilliant in comparison to those who despite all warnings, all proofs, refuse to recognize that there is a menace.

GRAVEL AND SAND—AND PLACER

In Austria last week a number were sent to internment camps for having radios in their possession, while some others were shot. In Canada the only punishment for having a radio is a fine of \$3 a year—and the programmes.

Britain still rules the seas, but the Germans haven't learned even to see the rules.

Owing to the manager and staff all having enlisted, the factory at Aberdeen for the manufacture of jokes at the expense of the Scottish has been closed down. As a consequence only old Scottish jokes will be available for the duration of the war.

The British, French and Polish have never had



"Glasses are an unusual gift—"

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

"She knew my eyes bothered me so she arranged with Mr. Curtis to have them examined and glasses made. Now I can read and sew with perfect comfort."

EYES EXAMINED
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New Type of Signal Board Being Installed on T. N. O.

Amber Added to Familiar Red and Green Signals.

Englehart, Dec. 21.—(Special to The Advance)—To be used when revised traffic rules become effective with the new year, a new type of signal board is being installed along the main line of the T. & N. O. Railway and its branches, at the various stations where operators are on duty. Where the changeover from the older system has already been made, the boards are in partial use, it is stated. The rules will provide for a speeding up of freight traffic, it is indicated.

The new signals have three colours, the familiar red and green being increased by the use of amber, and the shades are somewhat similar to those found in street traffic lights in the larger communities. The two former colours will continue to mean their time-honoured signs, while when the amber light is "on," it will mean that trains passing through are to receive orders without stopping at the station, on the "fly," as railwaymen phrase it. The board is operated from inside the station office with levers and the "go" sign is indicated by the emphares arms being vertical, instead of the old method of being lowered from the horizontal, which will remain the position for "stop." All stations, except terminals, are being so equipped, and the cost of each individual board is stated to be about \$100, plus the cost of installation.

Sudbury Man Sees Albino Mink in North Bay Area

Sudbury, Dec. 20.—What he believes was an albino mink was seen this week by Romeo Leroux, Sudbury district agricultural representative, during a motor trip in the North Bay area. Such an animal is considered a great rarity, a well-known Sudbury fur merchant stating that in 32 years he had seen only one, and it had some brown markings on the head and shoulders. "It was an exceptionally large mink," Mr. Leroux declared today. "It was practically all white. It ran across the road right in front of my car."

any doubt as to the Allies finally winning the present war. Neutral nations have held a similar opinion. Now the old paperhanger makes it unanimous. The order to sink the Graf Spee outside the harbour of Montevideo is proof positive that Hitler realizes that Germany cannot win. The Graf Spee had the alternative of submitting to internment. In that case Germany would have had the ship at the close of the war were Germany to win. The only excuse for the destruction of the Graf Spee was to prevent it becoming a prize for Britain. Although with a range of gunfire that left the British ships completely outclassed, the superior courage and seamanship of the British boats prevented the Graf Spee from attempting to fight or elude the vessels that waited for it to leave the harbour. It was a confession of fear that a fight was avoided. It was a confession that Hitler knows who will win the war that the Graf Spee was scuttled.

Life, a United States picture magazine, claims that Premier MacKenzie King told it all about Canada's part in the present war. That is much more than Canadian magazines or newspapers have been told. But such is Life!

The Ottawa Journal recently suggested that had the late Sir Charles Lindsay, the blind philanthropist, who left a four-million dollar estate to various educational and charitable institutions, been a resident of Ontario, half the estate would have been grabbed for taxation by the province. Premier Hepburn resented this suggestion very

Recalls Several Christmas Days of the Years Gone By

Gingerbread Men, Christmas Dinner at the Old Brewery Mission in Montreal.

Timmins, Dec. 20th, 1939

To the Editor of The Advance, Timmins.

Dear Sir:—The children's one cry, right now, is: "How soon will Christmas come?" I faintly remember the first Christmas that I understood. I was less than five years old, because we moved from that house when I was five. Someone gave me a gingerbread man and I kept it to look at for a long time before I ate it. When I did at last eat it, it was the sweetest thing I ever tasted. When I was older I kept my eyes open for a gingerbread man, but they seem to have stopped making them, for it was years before I saw another. When at last I did get one, it didn't taste the same.

Another Christmas I remember was when some one gave me a banjo and I plunked and plunked until I began to learn something. After a week somebody asked me what I could play. I told them I could play the first verse of "While shepherds watched."

I played it for them and they said it was good. I was pleased to hear some praise, for I had worked hard trying to learn how to play that verse, but as I told them I couldn't seem to manage the second verse.

When I grew older I was surprised to learn that people visited relatives and went to the theatre on Christmas Day. We never left the house on Christmas Day and I thought everyone else did the same.

I remember the first Christmas tree that I ever saw. I had a bag of marbles from it and was I pleased! All the marbles that I had ever had were dirty and chipped, but these were shiny and in a little green bag.

Two Christmases stand out above all others. Christmas of 1912 I was in Montreal and I managed to push in to the fourth sitting of the bums' dinner in the Old Brewery Mission. Jim Turner—the man who was running it—said, "Well boys, this year I can come

before you as a man meeting men. Last year turkeys were rather high and I felt I couldn't afford them, so I gave you boys pork and beef. All the year I haven't been able to look you boys in the face and this year I said you should have turkey if they were up in the top storey.

"I know some of you boys have been in here four times already but as long as there is a bite left you are welcome. Now before I let you eat I have a message. I have received a cablegram asking me to send Philip Leadbeater home. This is the last address he gave, so if any of you boys know Philip Leadbeater tell him to beat it round here and we will get him his passage home."

The second Christmas was in France in 1916 when instead of the sergeants bawling orders at the men, the men sat down to a chicken dinner with beer and cigarettes and a concert to follow, while the sergeants waited on them.

Christmas is sure a time to remember

and it seems to me that any Christmas which doesn't bring some memory which will live with a man all through his life is not only a Christmas wasted but a whole year wasted.

Well I wish you and all your staff and all your readers A Real Happy Jolly Christmas and Happy New Year. I remain

Yours most sincerely,
 A. J. Doling.

Kapusking Contributes Over \$7,000 to Red Cross

Kapusking has collected over \$7,000 in cash for the Red Cross, apart from monthly pledges. Last week the total taken in from subscriptions was \$6,921.50, while proceeds from a concert by the Kapusking band and some other revenue previous to the starting of the drive amounted to \$472.92.

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

Palm

DAIRIES

It Is With Pleasure At This Season Of The Year That We Wish You One and All

A Very Merry Christmas AND A Happy and Prosperous New Year

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May Hold Music Teachers' Recital Here in January

Next Meeting of Music Teachers on January 10th.

On Thursday evening, December 14, the Porcupine chapter of the Ontario Music Teachers' Association held their regular monthly meeting at the home of Mrs. C. Wilkins, 9 Floral Park.

After a lengthy discussion on a motion duly seconded it was agreed that a committee consisting of Mrs. C. Wilkins, Miss Mary McIntosh, Mr. Bender and Herbert C. Treener, should ascertain the feasibility of giving a teachers' recital early in the new year for the purpose of raising funds to pay the expenses of a delegate to the annual music teachers' convention which will be held in the spring. The matter will be finally decided at the January meeting.

On a motion duly seconded a vote of thanks was tendered to the conveners of the various subcommittees who worked on the various sections of the music festival syllabus which is now in the hands of the printer. Mrs. Gamble rendered a piano solo during the meeting entitled Valse Brillante in E Flat by F. Chopin which was well received.

It was agreed that succeeding meetings should be held on Wednesday evenings instead of Thursday as formerly. The January meeting will be held at the home of Miss Jean Wright, 201 1/2 Birch street south, Timmins, Ontario, on Wednesday 10th, at 9 p.m.

A merry Christmas to everybody—with very few exceptions in this country.