A MESSAGE OF PEACE

A bewildered mind fails this year to grasp the meaning of th Christmas message, the message of peace and good will to men. To the watching shepherds the Christmas song of the angels was surprisingly sweet. The message of peace, two thousand years later. comes with a deeper and greater significance. The watching shep herds have given place to the watching soldiers, and from many at eery place they scan the heavens, and in weariness of spirit long for music less dismal than that of shot and shell.

The message of peace comes in 1916 from a new and unlooked for source-the counsels of the war lords. These lords would have the world believe that the spirit of the Eternal One is influencing them while they do unspeakable things. Men have asked what Christ would do were He to visit earth and view that which is the very incarnation of evil. The late W. T. Stead tried to imagine what Christ would think if he returned to certain cities, alleged Christian cities, adorned with churches and cathedrals and many of the institutions which Christianity inspire; and Stead failed most signally to express any conviction but his own. It was condemnatory of much that he saw and heard. The Christ could not, in his opinion, approve of the acts of even some church men. What would Christ do or say if Henow walked the earth, or if He stood in the shadows while the Kaiser, the unctuous pretender, addressing his troops, ground his teeth, clenched his fists, scowled most savagely, and straffed England?

Frederick Palmer, in his First Year of the War, tells the simple and pathetic story of a Christmas in Belgium. It was early morning. The people, in fear and trepidation, gathered within a little church. They knelt in holy mass. A Bavarian soldier entered. He stood apart from the rest. He was of their faith. He professed to have the same brotherly love. He bowed in worship. But he was sick of the war. So were all of those that were present. The had one solace in common. Yet if the Bavarian were asked to give up Belgium he would have answered, "Not after all we have suffered to take it." While the Belgians were supposed to be engrossed in prayer they thought "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," and Palmer's aconoclastic conclusion is, "Christians have a peculiar way of applying Christianity."

The world, then, does not, and cannot, interpret the Christ life while present conditions prevail, and one wonders if the war will make conditions worse or better. One sits down with unbiased feelings to study "Belgium and Germany." It is only one of the special publications which depict the dislocation of society by the war. The story is sordid, sorrowful, saddening. There is the absence of anything which would suggest the existence of a Christian spirit. The furies of battle, surpassing all that the disordered imagination can conceive, robbed the land of every semblance of civilization. Church and cloister, wherein the litanies of the ages have been sung, are in ruins. The last vestige of religious refinement has been blotted out.

The evidences of Christianity, as we once understood and interpreted it, are absent; and it may be, as some British divine has put it, that the holocaust is the usual preliminary for accomplishment to that purification of life which is deemed so absolutely necessary. Great Britain has been passing through the purgatorial fires that must purge her of many things. The social life of the nation has been shockingly laid bare, and it has been, in places, made repulsive enough. Hence, when war was declared, and the infatuation of the masses had passed away-when they realized that the traditions of the past were challenged, that the flower of the land had been cut down, and mourning brought to thousands of people—the church was looked to as never before. It may be that God, in His infinite goodness, did send the war as the one thing needful, and the only thing that, in its terrible toll, would chasten the people and call them to repentance.

At any rate, there has been a revival of religion, and once more -in the Old Land more than this, for the ravages of war have not yet apparently wrought their most corrective lesson in Canada—the Christ will be worshipped in the heart with a new devotion. He comes, too, at an opportune time. Away across the sea, in lands that have been stripped of their beauty, in danger and in solitude, sit many today thinking of home and fireside and loved ones. They are wonderfully cheery. They are doing the hardest kind of service without murmuring, and this is simply astonishing, in view of their privations, their sufferings, and the needs of the hour. Not a jarring note is heard in all the messages that find their way across the Atlantic. In every letter there is the assurance "All is Well," and it brings the desired comfort. Trench life in the winter is incomprehensible to any one who has not tasted of it. It can be borne, but from the heart of every soldier there must arise the prayer, "Oh, God, if it be Thy will, let this carnage of war come to an end," and those at home can, as if by telepathic communication, read the appeal and add "Amen." If Christ visits the battlefield to-night He must find many a one to cheer and bless.

God only knows whether the sacrificial fires have burned long enough and flercely enough to consume and relieve the world of its dross, but let us hope that the end is near. The peace that will come some time is the peace which the Great and Eternal Father will dictate, and He only will know when this will be. In the meantime, let us have faith in Him, in His immutable justice, in His love and compassion, and act in the belief that He doeth all things well. Christmas has its tender message, and it has been beautifully expressed in the following lines of an anonymous poet:

THE CHRISTMAS BELLS.

The merry bells of Christmas ring through the frosty air Glad, beautiful and holy-a promise and a prayer,-Their lovely voices falling

On human hearts, are calling:

" Children, fling your hearts away for Santa Claus to wear."

The bells of Christmas whisper as the darkeness turns to day: --"O Comrades, fill the world with love and chase the gloom away; Where human hearts are sighing. And human hopes are dying.

Make music till the lonely ones grow young and bright and gay."

The bells on Christmas morning peal forth a tender song: "O Brothers, join your hearts as one and cheer the world along: Let your faith and joy go mingling.

Through your worship and your singing. Till they leave God's peace and beauty on the heart-ache of the

The Christmas bells are beating at the heart of You and Me: "O ye who dwell in happiness, lift up your hearts to see How God gives into your keeping

All the sad ones who are weeping,-Have you hung a stocking for them on your gleaming Christmas tree?"

O Bells of Christmas, ringing down the glory of the sky, Our listening souls renew again the dreams that cannot die,-By the living sacred token

Of God's love, unblurred, unbroken, Our love shall gleam to-day for every long heart and eye.

"Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!" Bells and hearts together And the weary earth grows lovely with the song the angels sing,

As you and I are giving All the rapture of our living

To the little lonely corners where the Christmas sorrows cling. -Odd Fellows' Review.

"PLECKED" IN EXAMS

Lady Medical Students Who Wanted to Go Overseas.

Toronto, Dec. 16 .- The problem of the four fifth-year lady medical students who applied for commissions to go overseas with their male said. colleagues, which has been puzzling the military authorities inamuch as military regulations do not permit of man because the right one faile to this, has been solved by the action propose.

of the university examiners who have "plucked" the young ladies. A report that the "plucking" was done with a view of keeping them at home is emphatically denied by Dr. McPherson, of the Faculty of Medicine. "They failed to qualify." he

lived forever. And many a girl marries the a rong

The British Whig



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READING MEN'S MINDS.

ABC

Audit Bureau of Circulations

The motives of the Kaiser in counselling the appeals for peace, through the neutrals, cannot be surmised. Lloyd George, who is a kind of prophet, and certainly speaks with prophetic power, will mentally dissect the proposition and give out the result in his speech.

The premier-and one stops as he writes the term to reflect upon the marvelous rise of the man from the much-abused faddist to the great dictator-has to pacify two important divisions of the people. One is the Nationalist party. It represents those who have lost some of their admiration for the premier, and probably lost some of their faith. since he has accepted Sir Edward Carson as a colleague. Sir Edward and the Redmonds never pulled. There is less likelihood of them pulling now, as there will be more than ever suspicion of his designs upon

Lloyd-George has been allied practically since he became a public man. He has made rapid changes. He has been somewhat radical, with a liking for labor and social problems, but he has always been a liberal. Whenever he has strayed, in the accomplishment of his plans, he always wound up in the liberal camp, and as the man who, next to Asquith, was equal to every party toning up. Now he is surrounded by unionists! dozen in a poolroom

who never, it is said, change their political faith, who may concede something for a while, but not very much at any time and for very long. . Lastly there is a party outside of England whose leader wants to know what the little Welshman thinks. This is the Kaiser. He may have essayed to humbug Britain's new premier, but he did this at a time when his purpose may be easily measured. The Lloyd George war cabinet is one of greater energy. greater directness of power, greater skill in the conduct of the war, and there will not be any halt at the Kaiser's invitation. The German offer is regarded as a sign of weakness. A similar sign on the part of Lloyd George would work his ruin.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Bethmann-Hollweg's latest pie ures are not at all flattering. ooks like a man who is not enjoying he peace that passeth understanding.

It looks as if the Allies' war mahine in the Balkans may slip another cog. Which would be bad for more

A deputation of liquor men told One year, delivered in city \$6.00 Premier Gouin of Quebec that prohibition would not produce the de-One year, to United States\$2.50 sired results. Sir Lomar pointed to \$1.00 results in Ontario and Manitoba. He said that something would happen shortly, but just what it would be he did not indrcate.

> A deputation of wholesale merchants, who went to Quebec to oppose the anti-liquor legislation, said that living was not high. It was a pure invention, a stretch of imagination, to think so. Prices were up a bit, but so were wages and profits, and the people were enjoying themselves. Is that it?

Inspector Cowley, of Toronto, has demonstrated, from statistics, that the child who begins his public school education at seven years of age makes greater progress than the one who begins at five years of age. There what is the use of organizing classes for younger children if they are beter at home for a couple of years?

MINISTER FINED FOR TREPASS St. Marys Proprietor Resentful of Search of Premises.

Stratford, Dec. 16. - Damages to the extent of \$1 with costs, according to the divisional scale, were awarded James A. McLaren, a St. Marys hotel-keeper, in his action in the county court against Rev. John Knight of Hensall, for trepass.

The action arcse over a search for liquor made of the premises by the chief of police of St. Marys and the defendant. No liquor was found and The other party is that with which the plaintiff claimed that the reputation of his bouse was impaired by reason of the search.

To Spend Christmas at Front. London, Dec. 16 .- Arrangements have been concluded for a party of Canadian journalists to spend Christ mas at the Canadian front France.

Many a man's wife dresses stylish ly because his creditors can afford it A boy in a schoolroom is worth a

Waiting For The Train, spun religion than trying to teach that it was taking a week off.

about human nature is the trustful ery and tat something, but all a way time-table and its simple, pellu- form of cuss word to hurl at the railway time-table is about as ac- religion while waiting for a train curate as a barometer with a broken that has run into a hard frost four

scious grace of a peg-legged man ing.

doing the hesitation waltz. When-Waiting for the train is a flour- ever this happens every station on ishing American industry which the line is congested with people who calls for more patience and home- relied on the time-table and found

table manners to the brainless burro. There is nothing so conducive to The passenger trains of this coun- rising temperature in the human try are operated by schedules which mind as to scramble to the station are not supposed to vary over one- through three feet of new-mown thousandth of an inch. These sched- snow, carrying two 80-pound grips ules are printed in plain type in a and a frost-bitten nose, and find time-table which can be understood that the train is not expected until by anybody who is in his right mind the spring thaw sets in. When a and has the assistance of a station woman is caught in this fashion agent. One of the sweetest things she can pull out a mess of embroidchildlike confidence which the aver- man can do is to sit around and age American reposes in the rail- think up some new and improved railway company. More people have In the winter time, however, the been deprived of a good batch of leg. Every now and then snow will miles out of town than in any other fall in front of the engine, in its way, which teaches us that a railslow, ingratiating manner, and cause way station in the winter time is it to hitch along with the uncon- a poor place to start a camp meet-

Rippling Rhymes

LIFE IS SHORT



The span of life is much too brief, the years too Gift. Our stock is new fast are jumping; we're in the sere and yellow leaf before we've started humping. But yesterday, it seems to me, mad pastry I was making; and now I'm old as eras from \$1.25 up to Plain. I can be, my bent limbs feebly shaking. But yesterday I want to school, and scrapped with vulgar frac- \$25.00; each one guaran- Stuffed with Pimentos. tions; and now old age begins to cool my zeal for user teed to give entire satis- Stuffed with Celery. ful actions. If I could live five hundred years, my funeral would find me a household word in all the faction. Would be pleas- Stuffed with Celery and is our "stockin" trade spheres—a name I'd leave behind me. But just when one is getting wise, in shape to cut much clover, his ed to show you our stock. works get bulky and he dies, and his career is over. Man lives a youthful score of years, in which he's merely growing; a score, before he disappears, in which he's merely going. The years in which he puts up grass are but a fleeting thirty; fate takes from him fate should act so dirty! And yet it's useless to repine, or halt in our endeavor; let's try to make a job as fine as though we

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The Somme Overcoat \$22.50.

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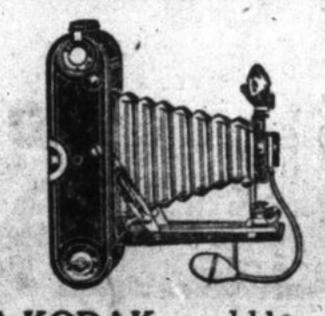
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