

Seven Pages (includes Island Life) The Day
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 "The strongest memory is weaker than the weakest ink"
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The Christmas Spirit

Even in the sorely distracted world in which we now live the Christmas message makes its appeal. This is almost a miracle in itself, and refutes the cynics more convincingly than stacks of theological arguments can do. And the secret of its appeal is not only that it generates a feeling of friendliness and good cheer, but that it speaks to something deep in the nature of each one of us—a desire for a more perfect way of life than we ordinarily achieve. It emphasizes not so much the virtues of righteousness as the virtues of charity—of generosity, friendliness and love. The stern moralist who would condemn his fellows for their sins is reminded at Christmas that charity, rather than righteousness, is the great virtue.

It is this spirit above all which animates the great ecumenical movement of our time. This is regarded as something revolutionary in the history of Christendom, but actually it is a return to the genesis of the great movement which brought men closer together in a faith which proclaimed the birth of a Saviour for each and all. A new dispensation under which there was "neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free." The glad tidings swept away all traditional concepts, even those that were most deeply rooted in the Judaism of the Old Testament; and the wonder with which they were received on the first Christmas morning, still finds expression in our carols and hymns of praise. It has been the inspiration of the world's greatest artists, and continues to bring out the most tender and holy associations and memories that we know.

At midnight tonight yet another Christmas Day will be ushered in. May it bring to all of us the pleasure that comes of thinking in terms of people rather than of things, of giving rather than of getting; and something, too, of the sufficing faith St. Paul had in mind when he spoke of it as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

The 21st Assembly

Nearly all the 121 member governments would agree on the outstanding achievement of the United Nations during its 21st General Assembly, remarks the New York Times. It was the successful effort to persuade U Thant to accept another five-year term as Secretary General and his unanimous re-election. Having been wooed assiduously by all camps, Mr. Thant starts his new term at a prestige peak, with a clearer mandate to act independently in support of the Charter. Yet his hopes for strengthening and systematizing UN peacekeeping machinery were dimmed this week when Assembly action on a Canadian plan was postponed until April because of strenuous Soviet lobbying.

UN finances, too, remain a major worry; and the "substantial voluntary contributions" for which Mr. Thant hoped have not materialized from the Soviet Union and France. His call for a universality of UN membership was rebuffed when the Assembly rejected a move to seat the Chinese Communist regime by the biggest margin since 1963. Finally, his plea for a cessation of bombing and a decline in the fighting as preliminaries for peace talks in Viet Nam was ignored by both sides, though the United States asked him to "take whatever steps you consider necessary" to bring about discussions for a cease-fire.

There were other debits on the UN ledger during the 21st Assembly. Soviet readiness to use the veto saddled the organization with a double

standard for preserving a precarious peace in the Middle East. The Security Council censured Israel for attacking Jordan, but Moscow's "nyet" blocked a rebuke to Syria that was too mild in the first place. At times the Africans, with Asian and Soviet support, seemed bent on ramming through a record number of Assembly resolutions demanding bold action in southern Africa that no one was willing to undertake.

An unprecedented action was taken by the Assembly in declaring South Africa's mandate over South-West Africa "terminated," and in setting up a fourteen-member committee to recommend "practical means" for UN administration of the territory by next April. And for the first time the Security Council voted mandatory, if limited, sanctions, to be applied against Rhodesia. The effect of either move is doubtful.

Perhaps, as the Times suggests, we should be thankful that at least a limited step on the road to disarmament was taken in the treaty prohibiting nuclear arms from outer space or celestial bodies. Negotiated at the UN through UN machinery, this unquestionably strengthened the world organization despite serious doubts on its peace ledger.

Truth And Magic

There is a thorn tree in Glastonbury that blossoms every Christmas Day. "That's only a myth," sniff the critics. "Who believes in that nowadays?" And of course, when one makes a dogmatic statement of any kind, there are always sceptics about who will say it is not true. But it could be that their own ideas of truth are too narrowly circumscribed.

A few years ago, for example, one of these wisecracks announced publication that there was no Santa Claus. In the next breath he accused Santa of corrupting the youth of the country. But a sceptic is no more entitled than anyone else to have it both ways; either Santa Claus exists or he does not. If he does not, it seems a bit thick to be accusing him of corrupting anybody.

A lot of contradictory things have been said about the Glastonbury Thorn, too. But its legend persists, and it is one that generations of wise people have taken to their hearts. The thorn blooms on Christmas Day, they say, because originally it was the staff of St. Joseph of Arimathea. When St. Joseph landed in Britain in 44 A.D. he had the Holy Grail with him. Glastonbury was an island at that time and was called Avalon. This immediately brings King Arthur into the story, and his Round Table, and Lancelot, and most important, Sir Galahad, whose heart was pure. The whole thing hangs together admirably.

When St. Joseph went ashore he had to climb a steep hill. This made him very tired; so, planting his staff on the hillside, he lay down for a rest. If anyone doubts this, let him explain the name of the hill; it has been called Wearyall Hill from that day to this. The staff, as everyone knows, took root and flourished and every year on Christmas Day its snowy blossoms blow.

Of course—as a commentator observes whose remarks we have preserved on this subject—Christmas Day has been juggled about in the calendar since then. There have been those who thought that April 19 was Christmas Day, and May 20 and November 17. All this, together with the fact that January 6 on the New Style calendar would be December 25 on the Old, would be enough to confuse any but the most remarkable tree, which the Glastonbury Thorn is. It might even confuse some of those sceptics who on some particular December 25, point disparagingly at the bloomless branches of St. Joseph's mystic staff in the ancient Vale of Avalon and jump to hasty and cynical conclusions.

EDITORIAL NOTES

A bonus for the youngsters: Prime Minister Pearson has indicated that Jan. 11 will be declared a national school holiday to mark the birthday of Sir John A. Macdonald.

Wisconsin, a major grower of Christmas trees, has four fake ones on the state capitol grounds in Madison. Each of the things is 35 feet tall and made of plastic. The Madison Chamber of Commerce, which installed them, says they are easier than natural trees to set up, and are more uniform in appearance and look more attractive in daylight. "This," thunders the Milwaukee Journal, "is heresy. Next thing you know, Alice in Dairyland will be serving imitation milk make of (horror!) vegetable oils during national dairy month."



MORE COIN DESIGNS

THE GREAT FESTIVAL

Origin Of The Date For Christmas

Thomas Donohue in the Ottawa Citizen

Aurelian, Emperor of Rome, drove through his city in 274 A. D. in a chariot drawn by four deer. He was the forerunner of Santa Claus and his reindeer.

And if Aurelian was not Father Christmas he was certainly the father of Christmas. He made December 25 the great festival of the year.

Not that Aurelian was a Christian. He was a pagan from Myria who had worked his way up in the army to become Emperor and ruled from 270 to 275. He was a sun worshipper and sought to make the sun a universal god.

So he called the first day of the week Dies Solis, the day of the sun. Hence came our Sunday. And he fixed December 25 as the great festival of the year because it comes just after the winter solstice, when the sun begins to grow stronger.

Like the heretic Pharaoh Heliopolis of 1,300 years earlier, Aurelian had no lasting success with his sun worship. But his December 25 festival survived. By about 336 it had become a Christian festival, our Christmas, in Rome. A Christian almanac of 354 A.D. affirms that on December 25 Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea. Before that, Christmas had been assigned to various other dates.

Such early Christian writers as Irenaeus (martyred in 202, about 10 years before Aurelian was born) and Gellian (flourished about 260 A.D.) say nothing of Christmas or of the date of the Nativity. Around the year 200 an Egyptian scribe, noted by Clement of Alexandria, stated that some Egyptian theologians "over-curiously" gave May 20 in the 28th year of the Emperor Augustus as the date of Christ's birth. Others assigned the date of the Nativity to April 19 or 20.

In 243 an Egyptian authority gave the date as March 28. This date appears to have been long accepted in Egypt. In 427 Paul of Emesa preached a Christmas sermon before Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria, on it. By 428 the December 25 date was accepted in the East. In due course it became universal.

The earliest use of the word Christmas (Christ's Mass) in English, as given in the Oxford English Dictionary, goes back to 1028, or well before the Norman Conquest of Henry I, the son of William the Conqueror, the chronicles record that in 1123 he kept Christmas at Westminster. Other celebrations of Christmas by Henry are recorded.

As for the reindeer that he drove through Rome, Aurelian acquired them from the king of the Goths. In those days the Goths lived north of the Black

Sea. No doubt the king had obtained the reindeer, not necessarily of first hand, from north Russia or Finland where the Samoyedes and the Lapps have been driving reindeer for ages.

IN FRANCE CANADA
 When the French settlers brought Christmas to Canada it lacked many of its modern features. Presents were given on New Year's Day, not Christmas, as they were in Scotland. The French had a Christmas dinner but without plum pudding and mince pies. Nor did they bother about the English roast beef, though they had meat pies, mince tarts and poultry. And they had seed puddings.

In England Christmas had a rather chequered career. The Puritans of the 17th century did not keep Christmas. In the days of their power under Cromwell they sought to prevent anyone else from keeping it.

Christmas came back with Charles II. When the English came to Canada they brought such Christmas trimmings as roast beef and plum puddings.

Many Christmas customs of today do not, however, go back much before Confederation. About the middle of the 19th century Christmas trees (apparently invented in Germany), Christmas cards, presents and the hanging up of children's stockings began to overrun the English-speaking world. Santa Claus and his reindeer belong to the modern period. Santa Claus seems to have come from Holland, though there he had to do with December 6, not with Christmas.

Training For A King

The Canadian Press

LONDON — Prince Charles will get his first taste of constitutional power next summer. With the Queen and Prince Philip both on a visit to Canada, at least two councillors of state must be appointed to act in the Sovereign's absence.

Under the Regency Act, the 65-year-old Queen Mother will become co-counselor. Prince Charles automatically became a councillor on his 18th birthday Nov. 14.

Who will sign any state document first, Prince Charles or his grandmother? A Buckingham Palace spokesman said:

"At this time we can't say, but I have no doubt that the question of precedence will be answered before the Queen and Prince Philip leave."

In the past, when the Queen and Prince Philip have been out of the country, the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret have acted as councillor.

But Prince Charles now supercedes Princess Margaret.

Prince Charles will be able to hold meetings of the Privy Council, attend to acts of Parliament, receive various state documents and formally receive ambassadors.

Home On The Seine

National Geographic Bulletin

A steady flow of barges on the Seine makes this river one of the most important highways in France.

Flying the river between Rouen and Paris, the awkward-looking craft keep the French capital supplied with such staples as wine, oil, and cement. Napoleon once said: "Paris, Rouen, Le Havre, are all one city of which the Seine is the main street."

The Seine seems almost reluctant to reach the sea. From its source in Burgundy, the river meanders 400 miles in a northwesterly direction before reaching its estuary on the English Channel. On a journey from Paris to Rouen, the boatman logs 144 miles; air-line distance between the two cities totals 148 miles.

Signs on the riverbanks suggest a modern highway: Parking Permitted, Caution, Dangerous Curve, and Speed to the Right. Boats encounter the same problems as cars on freeways—traffic jams and accidents.

A traffic snarl on the Seine, however, often turns into a pleasant social occasion. Crews greet each other with wine and exchange the latest gossip.

Many crews are made up of family members. It is common to see a line of washing fluttering on deck. Women frequently share the work load of the barge besides performing the standard household chores.

A broad apart, barge people prefer the slow pace of the Seine to life on land. They shop at their own grocery stores—usually at preferred dock locations—drink at their own bistros, and attend their own church. Aply the church is a barge converted into a chapel.

Children grow up on the barges. Later, they leave their floating homes to attend a special boarding school for barge children. When they are old enough to marry, the young people tend to look for mates among other river families.

FLOWERS AND FERNS
 Family life on a barge centers

Birthrate Through Ages

By Dr. Theodore E. Van Dellen
 Confinement to the primitive woman was natural and not associated with fear. She had her baby unattended and helped her self as best she could. Customs varied, but, in general, the delivery was witnessed only by women. As time went by, her mate came to her assistance and this rule still is followed among the natives of the Brazilian interior and in certain Polynesian islands.

Sometimes an attempt was made to transfer the pains to the male, hoping that the woman's sufferings might be lessened. In this practice (couvade) the husband took to his bed while his wife was in labor, groaning vehemently as a symbol of sharing the pain. In other parts of the world the husband was not wanted. Ancient midwives discouraged them from hanging around.

Prior to the 15th century all men were excluded; the attendants were women, especially those who had experienced labor. Curious men caught watching the process were killed.

History may be repeating itself with the trend-encouraging husbands to remain in the labor room with the wife. So far as I'm concerned it is an individual problem which is up to the husband, wife, physician, and law to decide. Some wives don't want the husband with them at this time. In other instances the husband balks.

Now and then the physician objects, especially the medic who has had trouble with husbands who became excited or made unreasonable demands when delivery did not progress as they thought it should.

Occasionally the husband faints and should this occur at a critical moment, it may be difficult to treat one without neglecting the other. The obstetrician considers the safe delivery of the child his primary duty. The husband is secondary. The majority of physicians, however, have no objection to making childbirth a family affair provided the life of mother and child is not jeopardized. There is no choice in some communities because the health department or the hospital forbids fathers from entering the delivery room.

SKIN GRAFT LESION
 W. A. M. writes: What causes sores to break out on grafted skin?

REPLY
 The tissues are traumatized easily during the early stages of a skin graft. Ulceration may occur because the nerve supply is lacking and just enough blood is present to keep the graft alive. Once it is rooted thoroughly, skin outbreaks of this type won't occur.

DIVERTICULOSIS
 Mrs. V. writes: I would like some information on a diverticulum, the pouch-like sac that grows in the intestines.

REPLY
 These outpocketings in the colon are common after 50. As a rule they cause no symptoms unless they become inflamed.

HORSESHOE KIDNEYS
 G. C. writes: What is a horseshoe kidney?

REPLY
 A condition in which the top or bottom of the two kidneys is fused, producing a typical horseshoe pattern. The diagnosis is made via special X-ray studies. **DIABETES AND PRESSURE**
 H. G. writes: Does diabetes cause high blood pressure?

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A Key NATO Member

By Joseph MacDween
 Canadian Press Staff Writer

Anything that threatens the political stability of Greece, a key NATO member, must be of more than passing interest to Canada and other members of the Western alliance.

They will be watching anxiously to see whether the new non-political government of banker Ioannis Paraskeviopoulos receives sufficient support for orderly administration during Greece's new period of uncertainty.

There is considerable relief that the outgoing minority government of Stephanos Stephanopoulos, 67, at least lasted long enough—15 months—to put the country on something like an even keel. Greece, which has never quite recovered from its civil war, came perilously close to having another one in mid-1965.

Paraskeviopoulos, 66, governor of the Bank of Greece, is getting to be something of an old pro in non-pro cabinets. He has served in five of them and gained much respect as head of the caretaker cabinet that organized the last Greek general election Feb. 16, 1964—the second within 15 weeks.

Again his job is to prepare for an election—this one to be held at the end of next May. And again a key figure in all calculations is former premier George Papandreu, 78, the leftist Centre Union leader, whose clash with young King Constantine and resignation in July, 1965, plunged the country into near-anarchy.

Stephanopoulos, despite defeat, can claim a measure of victory since his role ever since embarking on his brief span of power was simply to prepare the uneasy country for an election.

His downfall came at the hands of Panayotis Kanellopoulos, who unexpectedly withdrew the support of his 90-member right-wing national Radical Union which had upheld the Stephanopoulos coalition. With only 44 Liberal Democrats—who formerly belonged to Papandreu's party—behind him,

Stephanopoulos could not carry on. The defeat ostensibly resulted from the government's alleged responsibility for a ferry disaster that took 232 lives earlier this month. But observers sought a more subtle political reason.

Some leading conservatives apparently expect Papandreu's support for a radical government. There is speculation, though, that Kanellopoulos acted in collusion with Papandreu and in defiance of some members of his own party who fear early elections will give sweeping victory to Papandreu—an anti-monarchy platform—rather than to the radicals.

Papandreu's victory in February, 1964, was a virtual landslide but the king, now 28, proved stronger than his last year following a scandal involving left-wing penetration of the forces. Papandreu and leftist backers sometimes charge the king has been acting as prime minister or dictator ever since. Some Greeks go so far as to reply that if that is the case, he has been doing a fairly good job and should be officially elected to office.

MEMOR QUITS PARTY
NEW DELHI (Reuters)—V. K. Krishnan Menon, India's controversial former defence minister resigned Thursday from the ruling Congress party. The once-powerful confidant of the late prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, Menon had been associated with the party for 28 years but had become an increasingly bitter critic of the government since Nehru's daughter, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, became prime minister.

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