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"The Strongest Memory is Weaker Than
the Weakest Ink".

CHARLOTTETOWN, MONDAY, DEC. 24, 1951

The Christmas Message

Why do we celebrate Christmas when there is so little outward evidence of Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Men? It is because in the idea itself there is an eternal promise of its fulfillment. It has survived two thousand years of tragic human history, and no crisis can cast a shadow dark enough to quench its light.

Bethlehem is more than a place of sacred associations. It is a loyalty, a passion of faith and love. It means "the house of bread", and the word is peculiarly fitted to carry the Christmas message of human comfort, of the intimacy of the cradle, and of the divine promise of that spiritual bread which is the staff of life eternal. Its theological implications are too profound for comment here, but like all great truths it is simple as well as profound, and can be grasped intuitively by all whose hearts are attuned to its meaning.

The second greatest Church festival of the year, Christmas should also be the greatest occasion in family life. It has, indeed, been taken over almost entirely by the children, who for the most part dictate the manner of Christmas celebration. But its inner meaning should not be lost sight of. The lighted tree, the gift giving and merry salutations, are but its outward manifestations.

"Lord Christ, beneath thy starry dome
We light this flickering lamp of home.
And where bewildering shadows throng
Uplift our prayer and evensong.
Dost thou, with heaven in thy ken,
Seek still a dwelling place with men,
Wandering the world in ceaseless quest?
O Man of Nazareth, be our guest!"

Electric Power Rates

Small users of electricity are understandably disturbed by the cost of the service under the rates established following the long enquiry into the matter of a rate base and rates for consumers of electric power. The fact is, of course, that it is most uneconomic to install electricity for consumption on a scale far below that for which the minimum charge is made.

The answer, as experience elsewhere shows, lies in taking full advantage of the power which is made available at such great initial cost. Instead of all the poles, wire and transformers being used only to light an occasional lamp it should ease the burden of farming and of housekeeping and generally contribute to the convenience and pleasure of rural life.

Like the biblical talents, electricity is not lightly to be left unused.

Veteran M.P.'s

The parliamentary life of most members of the Commons, notes an exchange, is usually not long. There is a normal turnover of about 100 at every general election, and sometimes it is much greater than that. The average is perhaps two terms of office, or about ten years. Some retire of their own volition after one or two terms of office, tired of public life, or for family or business reasons. Others lose party conventions. Even more lose elections. Thus there are few who have served 20 years or more though due to the long Liberal rule, those first elected in 1935, and still in the Commons will be close to that mark by next elections.

This makes more remarkable the fact there are members in the House now who were first elected in 1921. There are three in that category, Mr. Joseph H. Harris, Cons., Toronto-Danforth; Mr. A. C. Casselman, Cons., Grenville-Dundas, and Mr. W. J. Ward, Dauphin. Of the three, Mr. Harris is the only one who has been in the House continuously.

Mr. Casselman, elected in 1921, resigned to give his seat to Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen, then prime minister, who had been defeated in Portage La Prairie. Mr. Casselman came back in 1925 and has been in Commons ever since. Mr. Ward, who entered the House as a Progressive in 1921, being still under that banner in 1925, turned Liberal-Progressive in 1926. Defeated in 1930, he returned as a Liberal in 1935, sitting until 1945 when he was again defeated. He came back again in 1949.

Hon. C. G. Power is the real veteran of the Commons, none being able to approach his record. He was elected in 1917 and never has been defeated in Quebec South. Mr. J. F. Pouliot, Lib., Temiscouata, has

been in the Commons ever since 1924. Hon. W. Earl Rowe, Cons., Dufferin-Simcoe, first was elected in 1925, and has been a member ever since, except for a few months in 1937 when he resigned to contest the Ontario elections.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Tomorrow, Christmas.

A Merry Christmas, and, as Dickens has it, may "God bless us, everyone".

Ice conditions on the harbour are as unpredictable as the weather but it looks as if this is to be an opportunity for ice boating and outdoor skating.

Canada did not back the successful Greek candidature for a seat on the Security Council but Greece's election to that body is anything but displeasing.

It has been an exceptionally busy week, not helped any by the stormy weather and after effects. But everybody is seemingly happy, and that is what counts at Christmas.

Carol singing has revived this Christmas as it has not within memory. There is nothing like actually singing carols or hearing them sung by friends and neighbours to bring out the spirit of Christmas.

Communist cries of peace, peace, when there is no peace should not be allowed to manoeuvre us into a false position. Christendom wants the peace the Reds rant about but not at the cost of Red domination.

The fact that at least one in five Canadian soldiers in Germany will spend Christmas with a German family indicates a profound change in relationships. Germany is no longer occupied by foreign troops but protected by them.

Matthew Arnold, English poet, critic and educationalist, was born this date 1822. He had a gift for crystallizing his views in memorable phrases. His plea for "sweetness and light", his division of English society into "Barbarians", "Philistines" and "Populace" became household words. His critical works are stimulating but as a poet he stands as one of the truest of the nineteenth-century singers.

The members of Parliament detained in Ottawa as the result of the Progressive Conservative filibuster over the price fixing abolition bill, will be missed by their families at home. Of course they will have the satisfaction of knowing they sacrificed their own comfort and convenience in the interest of what the Government declare to be 15 per cent of the population—and a very valuable and insistent element which count at very much more than that at election time.

"It doesn't take much foresight to see that the day will come when steel salesmen will have to get out in the street and peddle their products," said Mr. Leslie B. Worthington, president, U. S. Steel Corporation, speaking to the Sales Executive Club of Cleveland. Since 1940, when the annual consumption of finished steel per person was 696 pounds, consumption has risen to 1,034 pounds. It is estimated that production in 1953 will make available 1,106 pounds for each person. "If we assume that the defence programme will eventually end, or level off, we are going to be left with a tremendous lot of steel to sell," said Mr. Worthington.

In the passing Saturday of Mr. Charles Chandler, the City and Province have lost one of their best and, at the same time, least conspicuous of its public men. Mr. Chandler, together with the late Mr. Fennell, carried on for many years on Sunnyside before removing to Queen St., an extensive hardware business, wholesale and retail, and was known throughout the Province for his probity, acumen and humor. He was gifted with a high sense of humor, and in the most strenuous of situations in argument and discussion, was able to relieve the tenseness with an appropriate joke and twinkle of the eye. Mr. Chandler was an independent Liberal in politics, and could not be persuaded against his judgment to answer the behests of the Party whip when he considered the policy or a particular item in it, contrary to his own convictions. He was a convinced and active church member, belonging to the Central Christian Church. A number of years ago when a movement was afoot to unite the congregation with that of the Baptists he led the opposition with the result the congregations remained apart and both prospered immeasurably. Mr. Chandler was of high mental intelligence, and had travelled extensively in Europe, the United States and Canada with the result he attained a breadth of view much above that of the average stay-at-home public men.

Is There Room, Too, For A Babe?



PUBLIC FORUM

This column is open to the discussion by correspondents of questions of interest. The Guardian does not necessarily endorse the opinion of correspondents.

THE MOST IMPORTANT GIFT

Sir,—This is a time of year for giving and receiving gifts. We are supposed to be commemorating the giving to mankind of the greatest gift that it was in the power of God to give. He gave Himself in human flesh. "I and my Father are one." "What shall we render to Him for his unspeakable gift?"

If a person of good reputation should offer me as a free gift, a cheque of a thousand dollars, I would not argue over the matter, but take it with thanks, before he changed his mind. I would carry it to the bank and have it placed in my account, or take home a part to buy coal and food. Some others might ignore the gift, regard the cheque as just a scrap of paper or have a grudge or dislike for the giver. At the same time they might be suffering want and worry.

First chapter of St. John is very precious. He came as a light into the world. It shined in the darkness. The darkness could not extinguish it. He came to His own. A few at least received Him. And to them He gave power, faith, grace, dynamic, dynamite if you will. He gave his friendship. This in essence is the Gospel. All this and more, "wine and milk without money and without price."

Is there any truth in this? Is the Bible true? There is only one way of testing the truth of all this—simply try it. The writer tried it, and can vouch for its truth. I was told of a taxi driver in Moncton who got into conversation with his passenger. The former doubted the power of willingness of God to put saving faith into the heart of any sinner. The passenger challenged him to stop the car and put God to the test. The passenger, no doubt put the words of prayer into his mouth. He offered his heart and life to God. When they arrived at the place of meeting, the new convert was invited to the front and he told what God had done for his soul and he became Christ's witness.

What direct good would it be to this man if Christ were born a thousand times in Bethlehem if never born in his own individual heart?

St. Paul tells us of the people of one of his churches. Praises them for their devotion and great liberality. They were great givers. But he adds—They first of all gave their own selves to the Lord.

I am, Sir, etc.,

Kensington, ARCH. MacKENZIE.

Old Charlottetown

(And P. E. I.)

A MILD WINTER

"The weather during the year 1850, thus far, surprises everybody. It has been more like March in England, than January and February usually are in these Provinces. We have had but two or three, what we would call cold days, all the winter. On Thursday last the Western Mail carrier started for St. Eleanors in his Waggon, and we observed Gigs during the past week on the streets of Charlottetown. The heavy rains during the early part of the week had almost rendered the ice in the harbour unsafe for travelling on."

—The Islander, Feb. 28, 1850.

Christmas Stars

(Ottawa Journal)
"And lo, the star which they saw in the East, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they departed with exceeding great joy." There are proceeding great joy. There are proceeding faith-bolstering truths that govern this universe of which Earth is but an infinitesimal bit of matter moving in an ordained groove through astral space. There are some cynical persons without anchored faith who ask factual proof of man's relationship with the Spirit that gives life and governs its fleeting years. For them one should have pity.

Lift your eyes to the Christmas stars as the year draws to a close. Winter stars glow with fires that shall never, never die; even as the fundamental goodness of the majority will eventually triumph over the selfishness and cruelty of the few. Who among men shall define the limits of time? Who can describe the search of a heart for the good, the true and the fundamental meaning of life?

Go to a hilltop on a quiet, starry evening when the Christmas spirit brings out the true potentialities of peace and goodwill in men and drains away the gross.

As one watches the glowing beauty of Jupiter, Regulus, Sirius, Mars and Venus, he glimpses the steadfastness of the universe. There is a certainty in the starry depths of a December night that promises a new world for a man when he outgrows the shortsightedness of expediency. Shepherds of old followed a guiding star and found their King and they were humble as they laid their gifts before Him.

Once again we come to the Christmas season and for a fleeting moment men will search their hearts for the understanding that gives meaning and true direction to life. The human spirit is searching desperately for security but neither words nor man-made regulations can achieve it. The Christmas stars are as true a sign today as they were long centuries ago. When one looks at the stars these December nights he catches a glimpse of the time when peace on earth and goodwill to all men shall become a reality and not a dream.

OTTAWA, Dec. 22—(CP)—A North Atlantic committee of 12 members is still considering the question of expansion of arms and economic commitments of the various member countries. External Affairs Minister Pearson told the Commons that a special committee of three drafted a report which was sent to a larger committee of 12.

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The Poet's Corner

THE CAROL OF THE POOR CHILDREN

We are the poor children, come out to see the sights
On this day of all days, on this night of nights;
The stars in merry parties are dancing in the sky.
A fine star, a new star, is shining on high!

We are the poor children, our lips are frosty blue;
We cannot sing our carol as well as rich folk do;
Our bellies are so empty we have no singing voice,
But this night of all nights good children must rejoice.

We do rejoice, we do rejoice, as hard as we can try.
A fine star, a new star is shining in the sky!
And while we sing our carol, we think of the delight
The happy kings and shepherds make in Bethlehem tonight.

Are we naked, mother, and are we starving-poor,
Oh, see what gifts the kings have brought outside the stable door;
Are we cold, mother, the ass will give his hay
To make the manger warm and keep the cruel winds away.

We are the poor children, but not so poor who sing
Our carol with our voiceless hearts to greet the new-born King,
On this night of all nights, when in the frosty sky
A new star, a kind star is shining on high!

—Richard Middleton.

The Age-Old Story

O Zion, that bringest good tidings get thee up into the high mountain: O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

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A Christmas Prayer

HELP us rightly to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the Wise Men. Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift, and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing that Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts. May the Christmas morning make us happy to be Thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Robert Louis Stevenson.



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