

Thoughts on Christmas



By
LAURA JEAN LIBBEY

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Christmas Wants and Worries

Do you grieve no costly offering
To the lady you can make?
One there is, and gifts less worthy
Queens have stooped to take—
The gift of a loving heart.

CHRISTMAS is coming. It is almost here. The thought brings joy to most hearts. Yet there are some in whose cup worry is mixed with pleasure. The woman of slender means who has a large number of relatives, friends and acquaintances notes the advance of that holiday with no little apprehension. It means gift giving. There's Aunt Sally's family of seven. She could not give to one without slighting the others. The same rule holds good with Brother James' family of six and Uncle Abner's family of 11, including the new baby. Her husband's relatives are quite as important. His brothers and his sisters, his cousins and his aunts, have to be remembered, and all of the little fry.

Then, there's a score of women at the club. They always send her a trifle and must be remembered in return. At together they foot up to over 100 gifts. Her own niece hints that she hopes Santa will bring her a pair of nice long kid party gloves. To be sure, they cost four-fifty, but they will last the whole season.

His Cousin Bess declares that she wouldn't thank Santa for anything less than a set of gold bracelets. She has been pricing them and finds that they cost from \$40 up. Hubby's mother has been piping for a new bonnet, while her own mother stands badly in need of a new pair of spectacles, a dress and a little check to help her out with her dental work. Her own children are talking about sleds, hoops, dolls, skates, etc.

The worried woman reckons it up backward and forward. It would take something like \$1,000 to cover their wants. Hubby hands out \$20 to buy Christmas gifts. With fear and trembling, she shows her list—and the cost. What he says we wouldn't dare repeat. Putting his arm around his wife, the practical man of the world gives her a bit of wholesome advice, saying: "If your relatives and friends keep in with you and only care for you for the Christmas presents they receive, you can do very well without them. It is pleasant to remember your mother and mine with gifts each as costly as our means will permit. An inexpensive card with a cheery Christmas greeting will show the others that they were in your thoughts and should be appreciated." When Christmas giving is a drain it should not be indulged in. If others' wants bring you worries gift-making is robbed of its hearty joy.

Coming to Mother's Tree

An exile lone in heart and fame,
A wanderer weary of the way,
A stranger without love's sweet claim
On any heart, go where I may.

NO MATTER how far away from home one may be when the holidays approach there is an intense longing in the heart to take a flying trip back to home and mother, though it be only for a day—that one day of all the year, Christmas. You know just how bountifully the table will be spread in the low-ceilinged, old-fashioned dining room that's turned into living room when the dishes are cleared away and the fringed, flower-hesprinkled worsted tablecloth takes the place of the white one. There's sure to be a Christmas tree in one corner of the room. Mother never misses having that. There's always a little present on it for each of her boys and girls—no matter how old they may be—even though they be married and far away.

It's hard to tell which misses mother most—the single man, living a rover's life, tossed by unkind fate from post to pillar, or the girl who left home years ago, in her teens, to better her fortunes in the great city. The man wanders through the streets of a strange town. He stops to look in the shop windows, bright with Yuletide toys upon a Christmas tree. "Just ten days till Christmas" reads the card upon it. He looks wistfully and thinks of home, mother and the Christmas tree she is sure to have there. Then and there he makes a desperate resolve to go home.

The white-haired woman bending over her loom in the factory, threads her way quickly through the holiday crowds to her lonely room in the basement. Flung in herself down in a chair, she covers her face with her hands. The present drifts from her. She slips into the past. Once more she is bidding mother good-bye by the day after Christmas. Father, sisters, brothers are there. Life in the city has not fulfilled her golden dreams. She secured employment—not to teach children to play on the melodeon which she understood so well, but in a factory with wages scarcely sufficient to keep soul and body together. Each year she hoped for better things, while the roses faded from her cheeks and her brown locks turned to gray. She had barely enough in her purse to pay for one month's room rent. It was always demanded in advance. Suddenly the resolve came to her so strong that she could not resist—she would go home to the scenes of her childhood, back to home and mother, and stand once more before her Christmas tree. She makes the start before her courage gives out. No wonder Christmas is a happy time. It is a family gathering, heart to heart.

God bless Christmas day!

Wrong Christmas Spirit

They ne'er considered it as loath
To look a gift horse in the mouth,
And very wisely would lay forth
No more upon it than 'twas worth.

IF THOSE who have striven so hard to make holiday giving pleasing for others only knew of the spirit with which it is oftentimes received, it would nip much of the pleasure out of the old, time-honored custom. It would be laughable were it not so pathetic in many an instance. The wife of the clerk living in modest apartments hears the expressman's rap on the door with a thrill of pleasure. His well-to-do Aunt Hanna, from the country, has sent them an immense Christmas box.

"I do hope it's a lace centerpiece for the dining-room table, a handsome carving set, a silk dress pattern or a set of furs. I hinted so strongly to her when she was here last those were the things I hoped Santa would bring us."

Hubby could not cut the strings fast enough to suit the kiddies, who gathered, open-eyed, about the great box. A note lay on top, stating that auntie had made everything in the box with her own hands. The wife's shriek of anger was drowned in the shrill cry of delight by the little ones as package after package was unwrapped. There was a canvas doll with a pretty hand-painted face that baby could fling around as much as she pleased without injury. There were scarlet knitted caps and mittens for Johnnie, a knitted sweater for Dick, a soft, fleecy wool scarf for the mother of the kiddies, and three pairs of knitted socks for their father.

"Was there ever such a lot of old frumpery as that that exasperating old woman has sent us? I wouldn't give them house room," declared the wife. "Aunt means well," responded her husband reprovingly. "Many a long, weary hour those dear old hands have spent in fashioning those gifts which you find so unwelcome."

Another ring at the bell. "It's from your mother," exclaimed the wife excitedly. "Now we shall be apt to get something of some account." The children, hearing that, held their breaths.

The package disclosed a toy engine for Baby Sue, who had never seen an engine or ridden on a train; a pair of riding boots for Master Johnnie, aged ten, who never had a horse to ride, with no prospect of ever owning such an animal; a pair of French vases for the wife, together with a pair of pink satin, be-ribboned bedroom slippers; a coat-and-trouser hanger for the head of the household.

The wife was so angry she could only sit down and cry. "What does a woman, living in a third-floor rear flat want of satin bedroom slippers?" she demanded. "I'll pitch them all out." Her husband quoted slowly:

I never cast a flower away. A flower, a faded flower,
A gift of one who cared for me. But it was done reluctantly.

HIS HAPPY SOLUTION.

NOW WHAT
WILL I GET
HER FOR
CHRISTMAS



1.

AN AUTO
WOULD BE
NICE, BUT SHE
MIGHT BREAK
HER NECK WITH IT.



2.

THEN THERE'S
A SET OF FURS.
BUT THEN HER
HANDS WOULD BE
SO WARM SHE
WOULDN'T LET ME
HOLD 'EM.



3.

COME
IN



4.

IF YOU
DON'T PAY
UP YOUR
FOUR WEEKS
BOARD, OUT
YOU GO.



5.

OH WELL,
CHRISTMAS
PRESENTS
ALWAYS CAUSE
HARD FEELINGS
ANYHOW.



6.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Acting Director of the Sunday School Course in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)
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LESSON FOR DECEMBER 10 FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.

LESSON TEXT—Rev. 2:1-17.
GOLDEN TEXT—Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.—Rev. 2:10.

This passage most wonderfully illustrates that dominating purpose of Paul's life. More than most lessons a map will be necessary to locate distinctly the places mentioned. There are interesting stories in connection with each of the seven cities and churches. It might be wise to give to seven different people the task of bringing information to the class regarding each one mentioned.

I. Ephesus, whose love is waning (vv. 1-7). The key word to these messages is the word "overcometh." In each of the messages our Lord describes himself in a different way according to the peculiar needs of that particular church. Here he is represented as holding the stars (messengers of the churches, Ch. 1:20) in his right hand, and keeping them secure, controlling them while he walks in the midst of the seven golden lamp stands, literally churches. The symbolism of "lamp stand" is used because the churches were intended to be light bearers as they held forth the light given by the oil of the Spirit (Math. 5:16; Phil. 2:16; Zech. 4:2-6). Ephesus was the capital of a province said to be one of the richest in the Roman empire. In it was the great temple of Diana. Here Paul had labored and had various experiences, and to Ephesus he had written a letter (See lesson 8, third quarter), but there were good things to be found in this Ephesian church (vv. 2,3). Forty years after being founded, John writes this message. He knew their "works," their general moral conduct, especially its active and passive sides through its trials, its dealing with impostors and its practical energy and enterprise; and its patience (literally steadfast assurance) in bearing witness for Christ. Jesus knew of their never wearying endurance. Surely these things would indicate pretty nearly a model church. Jesus says, "No, there is something seriously wrong," so seriously wrong that unless repented of he would remove them out of their place.

II. Smyrna, the church with a crown of life (vv. 8-11). Smyrna was 40 or 50 miles from Ephesus, and at this time a city of 250,000 inhabitants. To this church the Son of Man (Ch. 1:11) sends another message. It is interesting to note that this church and the one at Philadelphia received from the Master unqualified praise. It had works, activities; it also had tribulations, riches and poverty (for thou art rich) rich in good works, rich toward God, rich in treasures laid up in heaven; however, it was in the midst of persecution. It was here that Polycarp labored, who afterward, as bishop of Smyrna, was martyred (see v. 10). Of Polycarp it is said that rather than save his life by renouncing Christ he cried out, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he has done me no ill; how then can I blaspheme my king who hath saved me." The crown is eternal life, the crown of victory. The second death is the final condemnation which sinners undergo at the judgment seat of God.

III. Pergamos, the church in a stronghold of faith (vv. 12-17). Our glorified Lord knew that the church in Pergamos was in a peculiarly difficult situation, that it was Satan's headquarters, his "throne" (v. 13); hence they were in special need of a defender and the Lord is represented as "he that hath a sharp, two-edged sword," the word of God (Heb. 4:12-13; John 5:22). Pergamos was almost fifty miles north of Smyrna, a city of about 17,000 inhabitants, and the capital of the province. To it were brought many of the early Christians who were compelled to suffer martyrdom. Again we have a church whose works are commended, whose steadfastness is mentioned in that they "held fast to my name, and not denied the faith"—martyrs (vv. 13). However, dangers threatened them for there had been a compromise with the world and with other systems of faith, what we would call today liberalism in doctrine and breadth in view in teaching: (1) Some of their number had accepted and practiced the doctrine of Baalim (Jude 11; Num. 31:16). (2) These teachings cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel (v. 14). This was done by persuading the Israelites to join in the idolatrous feasts and revelings of the heathen, and also their impurity of worship.

In the remaining part of the chapter we have some glimpses of the remaining four churches, the good that was to be cherished and the evil that was to be overcome.

Perhaps the most suggestive of all is that of Laodicea, the lukewarm church.

Lukewarmness is one of the most deadly evils to overcome, and hence the highest and most glorious of all the promises suggested ends with "I will give him to sit down with me in my throne as I also overcame and sat down with my father in his throne" (Am. R. V.).

TO PURIFY WATER

BLEACHING POWDER WILL KILL UNPLEASANT ODOR.

Not a Hard Task, Nor Expensive, to Remove Disagreeable Smell from the Contents of Cistern, Says Prof. Newman.

If the cistern water has a disagreeable odor it can be made sweet and usable by treating with bleaching powder, according to P. J. Newman, assistant professor of chemistry in the Kansas State Agricultural college.

"The rain water as it comes from the roof is laden with micro-organisms, which under the right temperature conditions, grow and multiply," said Professor Newman. "When summer rains are allowed to run into the cistern this ideal temperature is soon reached and the development of these organisms proceeds rapidly. The unpleasant odor is due mainly to the life processes and decay of the bacteria."

Bleaching powder, or calcium hypochlorite, can be purchased in any drug store at from 20 to 30 cents a pound. One-third to one-fourth of a pound is sufficient to treat 50 to 100 barrels of water.

The powder as it comes from the store is placed in a pail or any convenient receptacle, which is then filled with water. The mixture is stirred for a few minutes until no more of the powder will dissolve, and is allowed to settle. The mixture is then poured into the cistern.

Some of the powder will remain undissolved in the bottom of the pail. Pour in more water and repeat the process as many times as may be necessary to dissolve all the powder. Where possible it is preferable to agitate the water in the cistern while the bleaching mixture is being poured in. When used in the proportion indicated the powder is not in sufficient quantity to make the water unfit for use, nor is it dangerous in any way. It acts simply as a deodorizer and a germicide.

Jellied Veal.

One of the most delicate of all meat dishes, and one that could tempt the most dainty appetite, is jellied veal. This calls for a shin of veal. In ordering it stipulate that you want the bone well cracked. Put it all in a large kettle and just cover with water. Let it boil slowly till the meat falls from the bone. Strain off the liquor and set the meat and the liquor aside to cool. When this has occurred chop the meat very fine and add a little pepper, salt and vinegar to the liquor. Now pour this over the chopped meat, mix and pour into a dish that has been lined with slices of hard-boiled eggs. The loaf should be allowed to harden for about twenty-four hours before being served. It should then be turned on a platter and garnished with lemons or olives.

Potted Ox Tongue.

One pound of cold cooked ox tongue, six tablespoonfuls of butter or fat from tongue, ground mace, made mustard, one teaspoonful of mushroom catsup, red pepper.
Crop tongue fine and put it in a basin with the butter or the fat from the tongue, if any is left; season to taste. Rub the mixture, after it has been well pounded, through a fine sieve. Press into small pots, cover with clarified butter or lard; keep in a cool place.

Beef and French Beans.

Pepper and salt about three pounds of brisket, put it in a stew pan with two ounces of butter and three sliced onions. Cover the pan and fry gently for 20 minutes. Then add one-half pint of water and two pounds of French beans (cut). Stew gently for four hours. Mix one tablespoonful of flour and one tablespoonful of brown sugar with a small cupful of vinegar and add this to the stew 20 minutes before serving.

Boiled Dressing for Cabbage.

Beat the yolks of three eggs, one-half teaspoonful of mustard, two tablespoonfuls of sugar, one-half teaspoonful of salt. Add three tablespoonfuls of butter and five tablespoonfuls of vinegar. Stir all together and cook in a double boiler until it is thick and creamy. Cool before putting it on the cabbage. Have the cabbage shredded very fine, with an onion and red or green pepper.

Sour Cream Cocoa Cake.

Two eggs, beaten light, cup white sugar, little salt, one-half cupful thick sour cream with one-half teaspoonful soda; stirred in till it foams, two teaspoonfuls of cocoa, one of vanilla, cup and half (large) of pastry flour, and one-half teaspoonful of cream of tartar, in flour. A dessert spoonful of cider vinegar, last thing before putting in pan. Bake in not-too-hot oven about thirty-five minutes.

Squab for the Invalid.

A squab cooked according to these directions won't harm the sick stomach. Clean the squab, split it open, lay on a thickly buttered pan and sprinkle over with salt and pepper. Cover with another buttered pan and steam until tender. Serve plain or with hot brown sauce.

To Improve Mustard.

Add a little drop of salad oil to mustard when it is being made. Not only will it improve the taste, but it will keep it fresh for days.

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"What is it?"
"The chemists provided the people with sympathetic foods."

GOOD FOR HUNGRY CHILDREN

Children love **Skinner's Macaroni and Spaghetti** because of its delicious taste. It is good for them and you can give them all they want. It is a great builder of bone and muscle, and does not make them nervous and irritable like meat. The most economical and nutritious food known. Made from the finest durum wheat. Write Skinner Mfg. Co., Omaha, Neb., for beautiful cook book. It is sent free to mothers.—Adv.

Twilight of the Gods.
At the base of the vast structure so patiently reared by Herbert Spencer the mists are already dense, though not as obscuring as the clouds at the mausoleum of Comte. That great charming woman, George Elliot, smiles the smile of somber ennui before the Spencer tomb, and the invisible voice of Ernest Haeckel is heard whispering: "Where is your Positivism? Where is your Rationalism? What has become of your gaseous invertebrate god? Surely there is sadly required in the cynical universities of the world a chair of irony with subtle Edgar Saltus as its first incumbent.—James Huncker in New York Sun.

To Avoid Trouble.
"There's no particular reason why you shouldn't take a cheerful view of life."

"Yes, there is," answered the pessimistic person. "I complain in self-defense."

"I don't understand."
"If I appeared happy and contented all the time reformers would accuse me of not having the interest of my fellow men at heart, so I frown and growl occasionally just to show that I belong to the progressive element."
—New Haven Journal.

A Difference.
"I hear you have been visiting friends?"
"No, Relatives."

The cheerful feeling you possess after a drink of something hot and flavory should be only the beginning of your satisfaction.

For this very reason more and more people are turning from coffee to

Instant Postum

A lessened tendency to such annoyances as nervousness and sleeplessness repays them

A ten-day trial of this delightful, flavory hot drink has assisted so many to health and comfort that your friend, the Postum drinker, will tell you its well worth while.

"There's a Reason"