

# THE ROANOKE NEWS.

JOHN W. SLEDGE, PROPRIETOR

A NEWSPAPER FOR THE PEOPLE.

TERMS:—\$1.50 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE

VOL. XXXVI.

WELDON, N. C., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1901.

NO. 33

## CASTORIA

The Kind You Have Always Bought, and which has been in use for over 30 years, has borne the signature of **Chas. H. Fletcher** and has been made under his personal supervision since its infancy. Allow no one to deceive you in this. All Counterfeits, Imitations and "Just-as-good" are but experiments that trifle with and endanger the health of Infants and Children—Experience against Experiment.

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### REFLECTIONS OF CHRISTMAS.

The Time for Moral Stock-Taking—Mankind Is Surely Advancing.

In spite of the persistent sounding of the note of pessimism, the discerning eye sees abundant evidence for the belief that the gospel of peace on earth and good will toward men is conquering the minds and hearts of civilized humanity. Christmas comes but once a year, and it is an occasion for moral stock-taking and for a review of the work done by toiling, weak, inconsistent, erring beings beset and surrounded with temptations. Do we follow in our daily lives and social, political and industrial activities the sublime, perfect creed summed up in the golden rule of Christian ethics?

None will have the hardihood to assert that we are true to the religious and moral truths we profess, says the Chicago Post, but are we at least moving toward the ideal? No query is more timely, more vital, more solemn. But a sober-minded view of society will suggest a positive answer. We are advancing, though slowly and with many a fall, occasional reactions and even sins against the light. Mankind is certainly becoming kinder, more merciful and more sympathetic. There is more good will and sincere devotion to peace and brotherhood than at any former period.

Our age has been described as one of questioning, searching of hearts, decline of mere dogmas and the embroilment of reason and science. But the ethical elements of religion—and they are the essential, the sliding elements—have never been more firmly rooted and more profoundly recognized than now. That wealth is a trust, to be administered for the general good, is no longer the Utopian suggestion of a few, but the growing theory and practice. Public opinion enforces the higher, the moral duties of wealth with even greater rigor than the state does the purely legal obligations attaching thereto. The rich man is, indeed, without honor who fails to provide to the extent of his capacity for the wants of the less fortunate, and in this country the annual contributions toward the maintenance of educational, charitable and other public institutions reach colossal proportions. It is true that society needs more justice and less beneficence, but justice is an intellectual problem to be gradually solved, whereas the manifestation of the noblest virtues of evolution, a good will, is a guaranty of the eventual triumph of the altruistic ideal.

In great affairs and in small, in national and neighborhood relations, the still, small voice of conscience is steadily resisting evil impulses and compelling submission to the moral law. And slowly but surely this submission loses the character of compulsion and becomes spontaneous, inevitable. This is a stimulating reflection for the holy and grateful season, and a true one.

### THE GOSPEL OF PEACE.

Mankind Did Not Fully Understand It Until Christ Was Born.

What is tenderest and best in the heart of man is evoked when the keys of memory are touched and the song of the Christ-day is sounded. It is the music of the home and the loved, a glad, if subdued, melody recalling the earliest days of recollection—an eager rush for well-filled pendant stockings, for the laden Christmas tree, with its gifts for all of the household. Aye, and the eager rushing about the house with merry about and joyous greeting for all. Then, the home-coming of the absent and the gathering of all about the family board.

Whether the corridors of our memory mansion be long or short—our lives be many or few, the harmonies ring along them just the same, telling of the presence in the heart of that which is old as immortality, and which shall never die—love. There, then, this Christmas day, this Christmas day, and every Christmas day, is present in the heart this love for the home, with its inmates, for friends and for humanity.

The Christ-day practice of opening the heart to unselfish influences is born of the teachings of Him whose birth the day commemorates. His life, beautiful, the life rounded, the only completely perfect life. He taught the lessons of love, gentleness, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, benevolence, chastity and self-denial. What is lighter and best in humanity is of His teaching, and from the latter has come the Christian home, the best development of unselfish affection and contentment to be found among men.

The Christ-day is attuned to melody that ever shall thrill the soul and cause it to bring forth what is best in it. The herald song of the angels to the shepherds on the plain is fresher, stronger, clearer, more harmonious than ever, in the light of the newer blessings which have come from the Gospel of His peace. The lesson of real humanity, refined, Divine altruism, and not the coarser sort sometimes called by His name, was unheard of until from His peace on the Mount of Beatitudes He gave it forth, music sweeter than angels ever sang, that higher song that man lives not unto himself alone, and that the greatest happiness is that which comes of doing good unto others.

Peace on earth! good will to men! That higher song which lifts man above himself and makes him but little lower than the angels.

The Christ theme will never die. First heard on the plains of Bethlehem, with the frowning Herod-temple but three miles away, within whose walls were heard the teachings of the law of revenge and love of self, heard there for the first time, it has been sounding ever since, spreading wider and wider, until now it compasses the whole earth. In Christ's day Rome had waxed to its noon of majesty, yet Rome passed and was not. On that kingdom rose other kingdoms, which perished in their turn. Since He lived one system after another system of philosophy has been built up, only to be torn down again. But the words of the Christ be abide, and they shall stand forever, influencing men to nobler lives and higher results in living. His Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and of its duration there shall be no end.

Meet and right is it, then, that the Christ-day shall be one of gladness to the human heart; that the children shall take part in it, since He loved them and blessed them, and that gifts shall be exchanged in token of that love for one another, which He bore for all humanity.

### Christmas Superstitions.

To be born on Christmas day is, according to an old superstition, to be lucky all one's life.

The great event of the Christmas dinner 400 or 500 years ago was the entry of the chief cook bearing the bear's head, garnished with rosemary.

In C-r-wal Christmas eve is a special holiday with children, who are allowed to sit up till midnight and drink to the "Mock"—as the Yule log is called there.

The Twelfth Cake was formerly made full of plums and with a bean and a pea. Whoever got the former was king and whoever found the latter was queen of the ceremonies.—New York Herald.

### Baby's Birth.

How many a woman dates a life of chronic invalidism from baby's birth. She tries different doctors and different medicines with little benefit. Then, fortunately her attention is called to the remarkable cures resulting from the use of Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription, and she gives the medicine a trial. Her experience is that of ninety-eight women out of every hundred who use "Favorite Prescription" for womanly ills—she is cured.

Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription is peculiarly a mother's medicine. Its use before maternity makes the baby's advent practically painless. It gives the mother strength to nurse her child. It cures diseases peculiar to women and cures them permanently.

There is no alcohol, opium, cocaine or any other narcotic in "Favorite Prescription." It is purely a vegetable preparation and cannot disagree with the weakest constitution.

Mrs. Emerson Allen, of Dorset, Ontario, Ont., writes: "I can truly say that I think Dr. Pierce's medicine the best I have ever used. I was in very poor health for a long time, getting from the birth of my little girl. I tried different doctors and different medicines. I derived very much more benefit from your medicine than from any other. I have tried 'Golden Medical Discovery' and 'Always Keep the Pellets in the House'."

Dr. Pierce's Common Sense Medical Adviser, paper bound, is sent free on receipt of 21 one-cent stamps to pay expense of mailing only. Address Dr. R. V. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y.

### BEST FOR THE BOWELS

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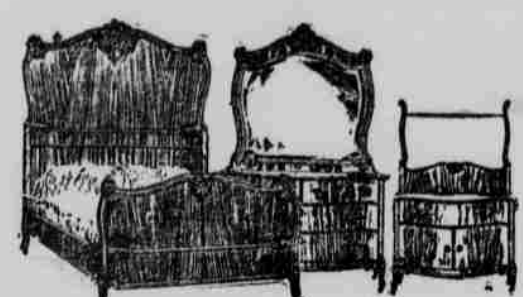
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### A PLANTATION CHRISTMAS.

FRANK L. STANTON.

We knowed we'd heah de music er the Chris'mus bells a-ringin' By de col' win's an de snowballs dat de angels wuz a-flingin'; By de way de fire talked it ter de chillun high en low, En de tracks dat Major Rabbit lef' behind 'im in de snow.

De settlement wuz buzzin' lak a beehive, up en down—  
Sich highfalutin' fixin's—sich a mighty stirrin' roun'!  
Sich bakin' er de 'possums, paradin' er de pies,  
Made de lil' pickaninnies show de whittin' er dey eyes.

We had de Chris'mus feelin' en we 'lowed de whole plantation  
Would have a dinner what would be a hongry man's salvation!  
Dar wuz thinnin' out er Turkeys whar you use to see dem roam;  
De Rabbit quit housekeepin' en de 'Possum warn't at home!

De table wuz de longes'—stretchin' out so fur away  
It made you think er sundown shakin' han's wid break er day!  
Des piled up wid de plenty—f'um 'possum down ter pie,  
En ever'body eatin' lak de hed-dit ger er by en by.

En all de time de fiddler wuz a makin' music fine  
En watchin' er de dishes ez we pass 'um down de line;  
En we kept in er de fidget ez dat fiddle-bow he swing,  
We up en lef' de dinner en we hop inter de ring!

Sister Johnson, 'pear ter lead us: She weigh three hundred pound!  
En she took up wid de notion dat she'd swing de deacons' roun';  
En ter see 'em des a-gwine! . . . Dey sholy peared ter fly,  
Lak de flo' wuz made er rubber, en would bounce 'um ter de sky!

'Peared lak de whole plantation wuz scrougin' in de do',  
En de niggers on de outside lak blackbirds in de snow;  
En de banjer en de fiddle beat de bes' er all de ban's,  
De white folks des a-laughin' en a-clappin' er dey han's!

Sich dancin' en sich eatin'! . . . de country's good ter you  
When you full er halleluyer en de pie en 'possum, too;  
En ef its wid some ailment I got ter reach de sky,  
I hopes de jury'll lay it ter Chris'mus Possum Pie!

### THE BRIGHT, SWEET SEASON.

FRANK L. STANTON.

Its good to be a-livin' 'most any time o' year,  
When Spring is weavin' garlands fer all folks to wear;  
But in de merry season when Christmas comes along,  
Life then goes to de chorus of a jubilatin' song!

You clean fergit de sorrow—you leave de bitter strife,  
An' reap in brighter gardens de richest blooms o' life;  
When your feet are in a fidget to a lively fiddle's sound,  
There's joy enough believers, to reach de world around!

The weather's jest so bracin'—de twinkle o' de frost,  
'Pears like it recompenses fer all de roses lost;  
The homes there in de valley, where de blue smoke up ards curls,  
And de halleluia singin' on de brisk ride with de girls!

Oh, its good to be a livin', beneath a sky o' blue,  
When all your toil's rewarded, an' all your dreams come true!  
All in de juicy season when Christmas comes along,  
An' life goes to de chorus of a jubilatin' soag!

### THE REASON WHY.

MAJORIE MOORE.

"I heard a story lately, which I think is very queer!"  
And Robert's self was on my lap, his lips were on my ear—  
"A dreadful, dreadful story"—a sudden, awful pause—  
Somebody said the other day there ain't no Santa Claus.

Would you believe it, auntie? They said 'twas all a trick  
About the tiny reindeer and the visits of Saint Nick,  
That all the chimneys were too small, the stoves were all too hot,  
And lots of just such stuff as that, I can't remember what.

They said that years and years ago, with fireplaces wide,  
And all the doors upon the latch in all the countryside,  
Both old and young for myths and dreams had quite a pretty passion,  
But now belief in Santa Claus had all gone out of fashion.

And when I cried that I could prove 'twas all a wicked lie,  
They only shrugged their shoulders and said I'd better try;  
I never will believe it, I know it can't be true!  
For if I've never seen him, say, auntie, haven't you?

Ah, yes, my little questioner, quite often—in my dreams,  
Though when I wake I only see de cold, white, still moon-beams;  
Dozing I often think I hear the sound of horn and hoof,  
And waking find de elm-tree boughs a-tapping on de roof.

But I have other reasons than those plain to eye and ear  
For trustin' in de story that we hold so true and dear;  
I never shall outgrow it, nor lose my faith, because  
The world will never get beyond a need of Santa Claus.

### WHO IS SANTA CLAUS?

Tradition Answers With A Pretty Story.

It is frequently asked, "Who is Santa Claus?" Here is a story about him that lets light upon his real character. He was bishop of Myra and died about the year 326. Among his parishioners (so runs one story) there lived a certain nobleman who had three daughters. From being rich he became so poor that there seemed to him no means of obtaining food for his daughters but by sacrificing them to a dishonorable life. Over and over again the thought came into his mind to tell them so, but shame and sorrow held him dumb. Meanwhile the maidens wept continually, not knowing what to do and having no bread to eat, and their father became more and more desperate. When St. Nicholas heard of this, he thought it a shame that such a thing should happen to a Christian land. Therefore one night when the maidens were asleep and their father alone sat watching and weeping he took a handful of gold and tying it up in a handkerchief repaired to the nobleman's dwelling. He considered how he might bestow it without making himself known, and while he stood irresolute the moon coming from behind a cloud showed him an open window. So he threw in the gold, and it fell at the feet of the father, who, when he found it, returned thanks and presented it to his eldest daughter as her wedding portion. A second time St. Nicholas collected a similar sum, and again he threw it in by night. So a wedding portion was provided for the second daughter. But the curiosity of the old nobleman was now excited. He greatly desired to know who it was that came to his aid. Therefore he determined to watch. When the good saint came for the third time and prepared to throw in the third portion, he was discovered, for the nobleman seized him by the skirt of his robe and flung himself at his feet, saying, "Oh, Nicholas, servant of God, why seek to hide thyself?" And he kissed his feet and hands. But St. Nicholas made him promise that he would tell no man.

### When the Hair Falls Out

accompanied by mucous patches in the mouth, eruptions on the skin, sore throat, copper colored spots, swollen glands, aching muscles and bones, the disease is making rapid headway, and far worse symptoms will follow unless the blood is promptly and effectually cleansed of this violent destructive poison.

S. S. S. is the only safe and infallible cure for this disease. The only antidote for this specific poison. It cures the worst cases thoroughly and permanently.

**My Condition Could Have Been No Worse.**

In the fall of 1893 I contracted Blood Poison. I tried three doctors, but their treatment did me no good. I was getting worse all the time; my hair came out, sores appeared in my throat and mouth, my body was almost covered with copper colored spots and offensive sores. I suffered severely from rheumatic pains in my shoulders and arms. My condition could have been no worse. Only those afflicted can understand my sufferings. I had about lost all hope of ever being well again when I decided to try S. S. S. but must confess I had little faith with me. After taking the first bottle I noticed a change in my condition. This was truly encouraging, and I determined to give S. S. S. a thorough trial. From that time on the improvement was rapid; S. S. S. seemed to have the disease completely under control; the sores and ulcers healed and I was soon free from all signs of the disorder. I have been strong and healthy ever since.

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