

The Charlotte News

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1919.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

To President Wilson who has become invulnerable both to the germs that attack the body and to the senate Republicans who assault the soul and spirit of a man.

To the little children whose ecstasy is the melody of many homes, the joy of motherhood, the pride of fatherhood, the hope of life and the inspiration of attainments. May the stockings of every one of them be plentifully filled by the dear old patron saint of Santa Claus.

To the aged ones, everywhere whose backs the years are bending and whose hands are being palsied by relentless time. May the season bring to them the riches of rekindled memories and a renewal within them of their youth!

To the infirm and the disabled and the shut-ins here and yonder, to whom the delights of the holidays must be more inborn than inbrought. May their pains be soothed and their aches be relieved during these days of delight!

To the poor of the community and the unfortunate, the sight of whom is the sadness of the season, the tragedy of the Christmas. May Santa Claus not forget them this time and disappointment thus be added to the unbroken pang of their poverty.

To the various trades bodies of the city whose business it is to promote the business interests of Charlotte to the end that this may be a better city in which to live, its people alive and contented, satisfied with their environment and rejoicing in their good fortune.

To the men and women in the prisons where they would not be these holiday days if they had learned the lesson of "peace on earth and good will to men," those who are thus denied the pleasure of witnessing the happy countenances of those on the streets and in the homes and of hearing the merry laughter of little children.

To the employers generally whose year has been not only one of fatness, but one of frets as well because of the many-sided issue arising between them and those whom they employed. May the Christmas spirit get into them and make them more conscious of their obligations to their fellow-citizens and to those upon whose industry they are immediately dependent for their success.

To the employees here and everywhere who have forgotten some lessons they should never have learned and who are beginning to learn some others they should have learned long ago and who have the splendid opportunity at this moment to restore public confidence in their ambitions and to return sentiment to them in their daily struggles to get along in the world. Let them also not be unmindful that they bear upon their own shoulders an increasing obligation to give back in the form of honest toil that which they take from the storehouses of industry in the form of wages.

To the friends and patrons and readers generally of this newspaper who seem to be increasingly loyal to those in this office who are engaged in the business of developing such a paper as the public not only wants but needs. Their spirit of appreciation is stored away and cherished; their criticisms are instructive and their praises are inspiring.

To men everywhere, the joy of the season! May the message of these days bring a meaning and a purpose, the message of peace which has not yet come into the world, the message of goodwill which is not yet universally maintained. Neither war nor pestilence bring their deadly spectacles to our doors now, but strife and unrest and bitter antagonisms still prevail and these are mutilating social sympathy and taking away the sweetness of life. The spirit of the Christmas and of Him whose birthday is being remembered throughout the world bring to mind how out of time are these notes of jealousy and angry clamors and how they strike discordant against the divine mystery of the skies as the angel-songs ring down the long way of the centuries.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.

"And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.

And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, to be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, who was great with child.

And so it was that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger: because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born, this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you: ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace and good will to men."—Luke 2:1-14.

THE SHIBBOLETH OF THE SEASON.

"Peace on earth; good will to men," the Christmas shibboleth is the song of angels and not of men. For nineteen centuries these carols of the skies have been resounding throughout the universe, uttered metallically by optimists but drowned in the monotonous discord of humanity. Magic they are in meaning, but still expressive more of an ideal than a condition. The religion of Him whose coming these phrases announced to the world remains unaccepted either as a formalism or as a practice by a majority of the people of every country. Christ himself has not been allowed to possess the hearts of the people and until he completely enwraps and encircles and dominates them, there will not be a fulfillment of this prophecy of angel lips. So long as men consider themselves capable of running their lives, their business, their government and every angle of their activity without the investment of the Christ-spirit, we may as well expect the earth to be filled with wild shrieks and the sharp antagonisms of men to prevail. The fulfillment of Christianity presupposes the acceptance of that religion by the race of humanity and until it is accepted and lived by, the world will not come into possession of that sort of peace and good will which can come alone by the way of the Child of Bethlehem.

Rather sharply just now, we are thinking, the message of the angels in proclamation of His birth is being broken to us. In the purely material and physical appearance, there is no peace on the earth and good will does not maintain between man and man. It is a fact that the Great War which sent its stout negation through the Christmas season for four years has come to an end and the armies that spent their successive holidays in the trenches have gone to their homes, the men returned to their pursuits and the armament of battle thrown into the scrap-heap. The roar of the cannon has ceased and the hum of the deadly plane above is no longer heard on fearful missions of destruction and death, but the peace that has come to the world is only nominal. And America is not even nominally and formally at peace with its former enemies, while those countries that have gone through the fixed motion of signing the protocol are secretly cherishing enmities and hatreds against their old belligerents, so that the world is only ostensibly resting in the quietude of peace. There is totally lacking the spirit of tranquility and feeling of fraternalism which were prophesied as the first fruits of the war's bitter finale. And greatly more to be regretted is the truth that while battles between international armies have ceased, clashes and angry clamors have arisen among the nations themselves; brothers are estranged with brothers; households are separate from households, and classes are arrayed against classes, all making for turmoil and disquietude and unrest and bloodshed. Christmas two years ago found the sons of America lined up against the Kaiser's polished shafts; a year ago they were emerging, some of them from the struggle of the trenches, enthroned in victory; today yet others of them are found with their uniforms on, standing guard over American property and keeping the outward establishments of law and authority from falling to pieces. Bitter testimony, this, that good will prevails even in professedly Christian America and that peace spreads its placid spirit over the face of the earth! The scene has only shifted and the dimensions of the antagonism have only been delimited. Yesterday, the agonizing conflict raged from beyond the sea; today it is raging less spectacularly, but raging with as an intense passion at our front door, this spirit of enmity and estrangement. The change, therefore, is only a change of date and a change of territory; the old rebellion has suffered no mutation.

And thus the message of the angels, the gloria in excelsis, suffers a bold negation at the hands of the material appearance of things. Christianity itself does not escape the assaults of the cynics and the unbelieving for the reason that it has not yet eliminated these passions from the heart of humanity and brought us all together in a common bond of brotherhood. But the evidence of "peace on earth and good will to men" happily does not come from the crusts of material sources nor does the effectuality of the Christ depend upon the testimony of the streets. The fact of Today is the fact of Yesterday and will be the fact of Forever that the world inherently turns in its troubled moments to the Bethlehem birth and the final certainty that shines forth lustroously in the midst of this confused hour in human history is that the ideals and principles and spirit of the Prince of Peace are on the highway to victory. The real Armageddon as revealed by the centuries is spiritual and the world is this Christmas-hour in the travail of a great and epoch-making spiritual renaissance, which ought to give to the Christmas song a meaning and a message it has never known since it first fell from the lips of angels and was broken upon the rugged Judean hills. All the tempestuousness of these times, the upheavals in society, the goings to and fro of men, the commotions of classes, the churning of the State, the volcanic passions that are sweeping through the world, are only the expressions of development into the ideals of the Christ-child; they typify a movement onward and upward, toward the light of Christian truth and toward the high hills of Christian attainment. Else why the gifts that are pouring from the coffers of the rich toward the pantries and the purses of the poor, the unlimited charity that is being displayed just now and just here, right here in Charlotte, when "those in bonds" are being remembered as never before? Else why, too, the complicated evolutions in industry by which the contending factions are trying to reach up to a new and loftier level of sympathy and co-operation with one another, the sort of co-operation that comes only through observance of the Golden Rule? Else, why, finally, are there such movements among men as indicate a search uniformly for the personal touch and a merging of individual purposes into group-purposes, all destined to bring forth a practical formula by which good will can be established among men and peace in actuality will come to the earth. All of these things, despite the contradictions of the everyday appearance of things, point unerringly to the fulfillment of prophecy as uttered above the plains of Bethlehem, as words that announced the errand of the coming of the Christ whose natal day we shall celebrate and in whose all-encompassing spirit rests the hopes and aspirations of the race.

"YESTERDAY, AND TODAY, AND FOREVER"



THE FACT OF THE CHRISTMAS.

Every little child can repeat the song of the angels announcing the birth of Christmas Day. The message of the Christmas is commonly known and understood and the season is emphatic of its phrase, but the big fact behind it is seldom stressed. With the most of us, Christmas is a trembling sort of a memory hanging away back yonder in the dim centuries, an iridescent, intangible, dreamy thing upon which tradition and history have informed us. It is recessional and not processional. It is entirely back yonder. And as such it is observed. The gifting of gifts, the singing of the Christmas songs, the social pleasures that are emphasized during the holidays are all the products of the simple song of the angels, that this is a season for "peace on earth and good will," a time to lay aside spite and prejudices, to be kindly and brotherly and helpful in ministry and to have a good time, to be glad and rejoice greatly. There is no occasion that this salient truth of the Christmas should be reduced in order to arrive at a proper appreciation of another even more important truth, namely, that the first Christmas was more than a song or an experience in which only a mother and a few shepherds and "multitudes of angels" had a part; that it was a historic fact and that it remains today the central truth of all Christian experience. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour," a phrase that means a great deal more to humanity than the chanting of the angel-choir that, after long and dark centuries of paganism and idolism, "peace on earth and good will to men" had finally arrived.

There may be cause that Christmas is not regarded as a great spiritual celebration for the reason that its date is not known certainly to fall on the date of the birth of the Christ-child. Common consent rather than chronological accuracy is responsible that December 25 has been acclaimed as the date for humanity to celebrate the coming of the Messiah and thus it may be accounted for that the event does not take on the attachments of a spiritual festivity, but is, on the other hand, a season for common frivolities and social pleasures and pastimes. It's the message and not the Man which has been given pre-eminence in the celebrations of the Christmas only for the reason, we take it, that the chroniclers have not been able to identify December 25th with the date of the Bethlehem birth. The fact of the birth, however, stands out as the great peak of history and of the celebration. The men who came to Christ in His cradle were not looking in upon him merely because they were jubilant that an old order was to be overturned by reasons of His coming; or that a new dispensation of peace and good will would be delivered to the people. They were interested chiefly in the Messiahship of the Babe that had been born, eager to ascertain if He were actually the Saviour that had been promised. And, we submit, the central fact of experience today in connection with this annual event is that it is celebrative of a birth rather than a message, that it symbolizes the coming into the world of Him by whom alone the world can recover rather than it foretokens merely an era of good fellowship on this planet. This is the quieting truth of these times. We can await in patience the fulfillment of the message of that far-away angelic minstrelsy. We need not be much perturbed about the delay in the awards of prophecy that peace shall some time come to earth and that good will shall prevail if only it is accepted as incontrovertible that the Author, the very Prince of Peace, has already been born into the world and that His name is Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God and Everlasting Father. Others, myriads others, have waited for the fulfillment, have longed to witness the experience of peace and

FRATERNITY ON EARTH AND HAVE DIED,

leaving their faith to span the long stretches of expectant millenniums. And we in this magnificent era can wait, too, if supported by the faith of these fathers, these modern Simeons, who have been content to die because they had seen the salvation of the Lord

"UNTO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE."

Well-filled baskets provided by the charity of the good people of this community are going today into the homes of the poor and the deprived of Charlotte, finding their way into the prisons and almshouses and brightening the season for the aged, the infirm and those who are shut in from the pleasures of the great external world. Christmas would be worth all that it entails if it brought no other enjoyment save that of putting a white light in the clouds that hang so constantly and so conspicuously over this class of our fellow-citizens. And it ought to be vastly more enjoyable to those who provide these things than to those who receive them, for there is, after all, no contradiction of fact in the Scripture that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." The mere performance of giving gifts, especially to those in need, makes for self-respect and plants one in the direction of a genuine spiritual attainment. Christianity has no more vigorous proclamation to make than is manifested in the fulfillment of duty toward those who are in bonds. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me" is the shibboleth of practical and applied Christianity and the religion of Him whose natal day is to be celebrated tomorrow lays upon its believers no more insistent injunction than that they "bear one another's burdens and thus fulfill the law of Christ."

WE SHOULD THINK, FROM THE EVIDENCES

coming under our observation, that never before have the warm-hearted people of this community showed more tenderness and compassion and love toward those who have been stationed in the obscure places of the world and deprived by misfortune of the better and more enjoyable things of life. It would be fine to believe that there would not be a home in Charlotte on Christmas Day failing to receive its share of the fatness of the season, not a home that would not be comfortably heated and its tables abundantly provided with the toothsome edibles of the season; fine, too, to believe that there would not be an empty stocking in the whole big city when childhood wakes tomorrow morning with anxious and expectant face and makes its way to the old familiar stockings to receive the benedictions of the season's patron saint. That would be fine for the unfortunate who would thus be made to understand that they "belong" to the great family of citizens of Charlotte and are not outcasts and repudiated members of this big household. But infinitely better would it be for those who would cause such a laden Christmas to be realized that they had a part in the bestowal of these benedictions and that it was because of their kindness of heart and charity that these in bonds had been made to rejoice and be glad. The light that will shine lustroously in the faces of those to whom such a Christmas would be taken would pale before the more brilliant transfiguration in the faces of those who did their duty toward one "or the least of these."

It is the hope of this newspaper that the melody of this event shall reach the hearts of all the people; that the ecstasy that belongs so exclusively to the little children shall be denied none of them; that Santa Claus will come tonight to every household in Charlotte, forgetting not a single one and that the morrow's sun shall find the people rejoicing in the great inspiring fact of friendship and in the truth of the ages that fatherhood and motherhood are instinctive and universal and that Childhood is everlasting.

THE SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL.

The News extends to its host of friends the greetings of the season. This ought to be an exceptional Christmas and the promise is that it will be. Neither war nor pestilence hang their shadows across the faces of the people. Nominal peace at least exists on earth and no era in history has brought a greater baptism of good will to men. For these causes this Christmas should be celebrated with triumphant exultation.

The year coming so soon to its close has been filled with fatness for the people of this community. Goodness has been favored them by a kindly Providence, the barns are filled with plenty, the store-houses are well supplied and an uncommon measure of prosperity is being enjoyed by our citizens of every degree. The News, sharing in the good things that the community has been enjoying so uniformly during the past twelve-month, records its very sincere appreciation of the many tokens of the community's esteem and good-will. Its great growth has come about because of the confidence and interest of the people in its well-being and because it has been its singular mission to serve them in its chosen field as acceptably as possible. And on the eve, therefore, of the celebration when friends are remembered, when the better emotions are allowed to sway resurgent and when expressions of fellowship are appropriate, the News desires to send the greetings of the season to its widespread family of readers, and it wishes for every one of them a very Merry Christmas and a New Year of extended prosperity.

W. C. DOWD, Publisher and Gen. Man., News Publishing Company.

TO BRING BODY BACK.

Coruna, Spain, Monday, Dec. 22.—The American destroyer Thorston arrived here today to take to the United States the body of Corporal Thismorton who was killed when an American ship was torpedoed off this port in 1917.

A Lazy Liver

Causes a great deal of trouble, biliousness, constipation and sick headache. Do not put up with it; correct it at once by taking

Hood's Pills

Made by C. I. Hood Co., Lowell, Mass.

NO ISSUE OF THE NEWS THURSDAY.

There will be no edition of The News Thursday, Christmas Day. Those who constitute the working force of this newspaper are entitled to the liberties and relaxations of the Christmas holiday and for this reason publication of the paper tomorrow will be suspended.

The News takes this occasion to express in this public manner its appreciation of the loyalty of the men and women connected with this establishment, their devotion to their tasks and their unflinching co-operation in the making of this newspaper. Because of their diligent efforts and fealty to their duty, The News is coming to the close of the best year in its history of more than a quarter of a century and by the maintenance of these pleasant relations and these high ideals of service, we are inspired to the determination to allow no limit to be placed to the continued development of the paper.

In appreciation of the services of the men and women constituting the mechanical and business and editorial staffs of The News, they will not be called back to their tasks tomorrow and we express the confident hope and belief that they will have a Merry Christmas occasion.

W. C. DOWD, Publisher and Gen. Man., News Publishing Company.

F. D. A.

GREETINGS

In this festive season Let us not forget the Origin of the day, neither the Event that brought Joy—Peace—Life To all Humanity—

MAY YOU SHARE RICHLTY IN THESE HEAVEN-BORN GIFTS.

ALEXANDERS

F. D.—THOS. L.

Advertisement for Brown & Page typewriters. It features an illustration of a typewriter and text stating: 'WE ARE EXCLUSIVE DEALERS L. C. SMITH TYPEWRITERS JUST RECEIVED Shipment of 10 New Models. Get yours while they last. TYPEWRITER HEADQUARTERS BROWN & PAGE 231 South Tryon Street Phone 3767 Near Third'.