

What Irvin S. Cobb Thinks about

Prehistoric Lore.

DEL RIO, TEXAS.—According to the scientists, who have a great way of naming earthly phenomena without inquiring into the wishes of the phenomena, we are now living in a terrestrial era known as the Holocene period.

This will be news to a lot of people who rather suspected we were living through a stage which might be called Chaos.

Still, it's no wonder that the world hasn't got around generally yet, because this present era is quite a young era as eras go. It's merely a few million years old, which, to our true geologist, is the same as yesterday. Mention a few million years to him and he'll say "phew!" and just snap his fingers—like that.

I wonder if the authorities would pardon a suggestion from a poor ignoramus whose acquaintance with geology is largely limited to two of its surface phases, namely: Regular paved roads and those derved detours. When we consider most of the humorous illustrations and the bulk of the humorous text printed in the average smart magazine of today, and the even spicier lines heard in smart modern plays, wouldn't it be more fitting to call it, not the Holocene, but the Obscene period?

The Law's Long Arm.

THE long arm of the law—it's a grand phrase, isn't it? So mouth-filling, so satisfying to the honest citizen's soul!

It conjures up visions of unrelenting warfare against crime, inevitable punishment for the guilty. It's the bunk!

It's the bunk because of crooked lawyers; venal policemen; complacent prosecutors; soft-hearted or corrupted jurors; witnesses, bribed or intimidated; the law's delays; reversals of fair verdicts on foolish technicalities; a false sentimentality which forgets the widow and orphan of the victim and thinks only of the family of the killer; most often of all, abuse of the powers to commute and to pardon and to parole.

These days, when I see a sentenced offender handcuffed to an officer, I find myself saying to myself, "Chances are that fellow, literally or figuratively, is wearing that decoration only temporarily."

The Passing Years.

EVERY newborn year is a rosy prospect just as nearly every dying year is a dun-colored disappointment. But without revived hope what could we look forward to except being measured for a shroud?

It seems only yesterday when 1937 was busting in, a radiant, bouncing baby-child, his arms burdened with promises, bless his little soul! After several false starts, happy days were here again. Nobody was aiming to remodel the Supreme court. Senator Ashurst told us so, and didn't he know? He didn't.

Secretary Wallace, slightly assisted by Divine Providence, would immediately have the crop situation well in hand. Grass would grow only in the street leading to the almshouse. The Wall Street boys were expecting two suckers in every pot. And the song of the bull was heard in the land—ah, the bull!

Within the 12-month the Republican party again would be a going concern. Well, if it's a going concern, the question is, where?

And now, laden with future gifts, comes 1938. How time flies! Why, before you know it, Sistine will be old enough to take a job with the radio and Buzzie will be signing testimonials.

Gambling Houses.

A ONCE famous card-sharp—not reformed, but retired—said to me:

"Show me a professional gambling house where the roulette wheel isn't crooked, where any other mechanical device is on the square, where the operatives from the bosses on down won't skin a customer—call him a sucker, if you want to; the terms are interchangeable—and I'll drop dead from shock, because no such outfit ever existed nor ever will, not so long as games can be tricked, as all of them can, and gamblers are out for the coin, as they naturally are, and the hand is quicker than the eye, which it is."

"But how about the mathematical percentage in favor of the bank—isn't that enough?" I asked.

"How about the mathematical percentage of crooked law-enforcement officers who have to be bribed?" he countered. "There's never enough coming in to satisfy those babies."

IRVIN S. COBB
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IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL Lesson

By REV. HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, Dean of the Ministry Bible Institute of Chicago, Ill.
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Lesson for December 19

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

LESSON TEXT—Luke 2:8-20.
GOLDEN TEXT—For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.—Luke 2:11.
PRIMARY TOPIC—When Jesus Came.
JUNIOR TOPIC—When Jesus Came.
INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—The Birth of Our Saviour.
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—God's Gift of a Saviour.

Few indeed are the stories that will bear retelling or the books that are worth re-reading. Rare is the song that we care to hear more than once. How significant then that we come to the observance of Christmas each year with hearts full of delight in the story of the birth of Jesus, eager again to hear the account from God's Word, and to listen with attentive souls for the sound of the angel's song in the Christmas music.

The birth of our Lord as the incarnate Saviour of men is still front page, headline news, even in 1937. The glad tidings of his coming still color the thinking and living of a world that has gone far from him, that lives today in hatred and enmity, even while outwardly recalling the coming of the One who was to bring peace on earth. We have even gone so far that men feel that the way to promote peace is to use the sword. Until the Prince of Peace himself shall reign there may be no other way. But let us be certain at this Christmas time that the tender baby hand from the cradle at Bethlehem has reached our hearts and lives, bringing us peace with God and good will toward men.

The first seven verses of our chapter relate the coming of Mary with Joseph to God's appointed place at his appointed time, for the entrance into this world of the Son of God as the "Word" that "was made flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Our lesson opens with the proclamation of the blessed good news to the shepherds in the field.

I. "Unto You Is Born . . . a Saviour" (vv. 8-14).

Christ was a great teacher, one whom the common people heard gladly, "for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes" (Mark 1:22). He was a leader among men, and lived a life which was an example beyond that of any man. But mark it well, this was not the central and essential purpose of his coming. He came as a Saviour. His mother was told before his birth that she should "call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).

It is not enough to be among the countless thousands who superficially observe Christmas with greetings and gifts. We must with the shepherds go and present ourselves in personal devotion to him. If you have not met the Lord Jesus as your own personal Saviour do it now. And if you know him, make this a Christmas in which Christ is supreme.

II. "Let Us Now Go . . . and See" (vv. 15, 16).

Their fear changed to assurance by the words of the angel, the shepherds at once "go" and "see." Would that all those who heard today did likewise. The shepherds might well have found all manner of excuses for not going. They had sheep to care for, they were not prepared for a journey. No, the urge was upon them "and they came with haste . . . and found" Jesus.

III. "When They Had Seen . . . They Made Known" (vv. 17-20).

Mary the mother of Jesus had special reason to ponder these things in her heart. But the shepherds "returned, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen."

"Let the redeemed of the Lord say so" (Ps. 107:2). When we have found the Lord Jesus we must not simply rejoice in the satisfaction and peace that has come to our own souls. We are saved to serve. The normal expression of the new life in Christ is the proclamation of the gospel to the ends of the earth. Only in that spirit do we truly keep Christmas!

To every one that sees these lines—whether editor, typesetter, or proofreader—whether a reader in the midst of the clamor of the great city or in the quiet of a distant countryside, whether old or young, whether well or on a sickbed, whether alone, far from family and friends, or in the bosom of your family, the writer of these lines extends in the name of Christ a most hearty good wish for a blessed Christmas.



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SHELLED WALNUTS ARE WIDELY USED

Extracting Kernels Is Likely To Pay — A Few Nuts Should Be Planted

Raleigh—Black walnut kernels are in demand at high class grocery stores, confectionery stores and bakeries and cracking the walnuts to obtain kernels for sale may be developed as a profitable home industry, believes R. W. Graeber extension forester at State college.

"There is a big crop of black walnuts this season," Graeber says, "all of these should be saved. If the nuts are gathered and hulled soon after falling, the surplus may be stored for market next year without loss of color or flavor. The kernels are delicious and much in demand."

Graeber pointed out the present decided lack of good walnut timber in the state and says that every landowner would do well to plant a few nuts about in odd corners on the farm. The walnut likes a rich, loam soil such as may be found in fence corners, along the edge of the field, and about the barn yard or home grounds. The tree makes a welcome shade in summer and adds to the attractiveness of the farmstead.

"We have accumulated quite a bit of information about methods of harvesting and storing black walnuts," the forester said. "We also have much information on the cracking and preparation of the walnut kernels for market. A list of markets available for the kernels also have been compiled and all of this information may be secured on application by those who have walnut trees on their farms. We have sent this material to the home and farm agents where it may be secured by those interested."

Large Egg Output Holds Down Price

Continued Flow Of Storage Products Contributes To Less Than Usual Gains

Washington—The largest fall egg production on record and a continued slow out-of-storage movement have made for a less than seasonal gain in egg prices, the bureau of Agricultural Economics reported in its December report on the poultry and egg situation.

November 1 farm flocks were the smallest for that date on government record, but production per bird was the highest on record for the seventh successive month. The second largest storage stock of eggs, fresh and frozen combined was reported as of August 1, and since then stocks have been reduced at a less than average rate.

Meanwhile, there has been a break in poultry prices, following a period of rising prices during the season of the year when prices usually decline. The farm prices of chickens, however, is still 28 percent above last year at this time, and 4 percent above the 1925-34 average. Market receipts of poultry have been heavy despite the small hatch last spring. The bureau believes that the large marketings reflect the sale of hens during a period of high chicken prices and low egg prices.

The feed situation, as represented by the feed-egg ratio at Chicago, became a little more favorable to poultrymen during November. With feed prices declining 8 percent in the month, and egg prices rising 16 percent, the relation between feed costs and egg returns has been closer to the 1925-34 average than at any time since the middle of 1936.

JAPS SINK U. S. CRAFT

Nanking, China — Although profuse official apologies followed the destruction of the United States gunboat Panay and three Standard Oil Tankers by Japanese bombing planes, diplomats are speculating on just how much longer Tokyo's excuses are likely to evade drastic action by civilized powers. All four vessels were engaged in rescuing refugees from the war zone. Five British ships were shelled at the same time, with loss of life as yet undetermined. The stock explanation by Japanese officials that ships attacked were mistaken for Chinese craft no longer carries weight because every foreign vessel in the war area is plainly marked with its national colors. It is believed that only by declaring Japan an international outlaw can her ruthless tactics be curbed.

MESJAM EVA
Readings 50c

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