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The Christmas Celebration.

It is probable that the new century will not have rounded out its first quarter until the Christmas day of the period will bear no semblance of its ancestor of the nineteenth. The Christmas of today is not the Christmas of twenty-five years ago and when we stop to soberly consider what it is drifting to we stand appalled at a gala season that seems more appropriate to celebrate some great achievement of war or state-craft than as the anniversary of the natal day of the Holy Child.

Christmas has degenerated. It has been degraded by the popular clamor for excitement and festivity. By degrees it is losing all that sacred loveliness that made it once as near a day of peace on earth as possible and on which all men strove to bear good-will toward others.

The pretty old fables and myths that once delighted the childish heart, that were so pure and spiritual in their tone, are rarely retold by young mothers of today. The children, themselves, are disillusioned as to Santa Claus and his mission as a rewarder of the good; the principal thought seeming to be one of the amount of tinsel the Christmas day will bring and whether they will have more and nicer toys than their playmates next door.

These distortions are all sad, when they pass in review, but none are as deplorable as the custom of exchanging gifts, as it is practiced today. Avarice, cupidity, extravagance, all show themselves so unmistakably that we are forced to the conclusion that gifts are no longer appreciated for the sentiment they carry, but are rather measured by their intrinsic value.

It is not time for the world to arouse itself to this condition, in order that the old fashioned Holy Christmas day may be rescued and saved from the sacrilegious incursions that are being made in it.

The WATCHMAN by no means intends to convey the impression that all sorts of pleasure should be eschewed, because the season is, essentially, one of good cheer, but it does deplore all those light and frivolous entertainments that have a tendency to divert the mind from the one great and saving truth that on Christmas day a child was born, a Christ who brought peace, good-will and hope for all mankind.

It is not particularly complimentary to Congressman WANGER's attention to the welfare of his constituents that it was left to a New York Congressman to move an investigation of the causes of the death of cadet BOOZ, a resident of WANGER's district, who died a few days ago, from the effects, as his friends allege, of a hazing received at West Point. Most Congressmen would have been on hand and determined to see that the interests of his own people were properly cared for. The Republican Representative from the 7th district of Pennsylvania is not of that stripe. He seems willing to draw his salary, have a good time in Europe and leave to others the little job of inquiring into the murder of his own constituents through practices in vogue at a government institution.

Escaping Justice.

As usual in this State since ring-rule has controlled, and ring authority dominated every department of the public service, the bribery cases growing out of infamies connected with the last session of the Legislature have come to naught. On Monday last the courts at Harrisburg dropped the cases against COSTELLO, JONES, EVANS, SPATZ, MOYLES and KULP, against whom true bills for bribery, perjury and conspiracy had been found, on their agreeing to pay the costs. Just what excuse will be made for this miscarriage of justice we do not know. Sufficient, we presume, to satisfy the followers of the machine, and when these are cared for the duty of public officials in Pennsylvania, whether executive, legislative or judicial, seem to be fulfilled.

Under ordinary conditions one would imagine that if these men were guilty of the crimes for which true bills were found against them by a grand jury, that it would be criminal to allow them to escape without a trial and such punishment as their crimes deserve. On the other hand, if they are innocent it is unjust to allow the suspicion of guilt to rest upon them and unrighteously subject them to the payment of costs.

Evidently there is a screw loose in some part of the judicial machinery about Harrisburg, but as it all belongs to, and is under the control of the state machine, it is not probable that any adjustment of its rickety condition will be made.

A Green Goods Game.

There is scarcely a campaign goes by but farmers and other real estate owners are told how kindly they have been treated by having their property exempt from the payment of state taxes. There are many who give great credit to the party in power for this pretentious favoritism, and but few who understand the injustice of a tax system that exonerates any class of property from its full share of taxation.

The exemption of real estate from state taxes was not made to benefit the farmer and small house owners. It was a trick to excuse corporations from the payment of local taxation. And it worked well. Farmers imagined they were practically favored when they escaped state taxation, little thinking that in being compelled to assume all local taxation, they were accepting much more than an equal share of the public burdens.

As to how the exonerated of farm land and other real estate from state taxation, and the exonerated of corporations from local taxation favors the latter, was shown by a report made to the State Grange at its meeting in Lock Haven this present week, by Representative CREASY and Past Worthy Master RYON.

An examination of the tax records at Harrisburg shows that for the year 1899, there was collected from real estate, through county and local authorities, \$55,808,585.55. Of this sum, after deducting the licenses, personal property tax and such other taxes as are collected by the counties and paid over to the State, and to the various municipal governments, the amount of taxes paid by real estate for local and county purposes was \$43,350,416.25 on the real estate of the Commonwealth valued at \$2,628,162,336—an average rate of sixteen mills on the dollar. From corporate property for the same year the State collected \$7,833,010.48 on property valued at \$3,000,000,000 or less than three mills on the dollar.

A system of taxation that exonerates real estate from state taxes may look very fair and plausible on the surface; but when that same real estate is made to pay, in other ways, five times as much for public purposes, as is the property of corporations, farmers ought to be getting their eyes open to the kind of a green goods game that is being played upon them in this matter of taxation.

For What Is It.

A telegram from DuBois states that papers were served on Congressman HALL, on Tuesday, notifying him of the intention of Col CLEARWATER to contest his seat. We know nothing of the reliability of the telegram, but would not be surprised if such proceeding were resorted to. If it is it will not be with the expectation of unseating Mr. HALL. Its sole purpose will be that of securing a fee for ex-Congressman ARNOLD and giving Mr. CLEARWATER a little financial boost.

The expense for the campaign for CLEARWATER, last fall, was met by the Republican Campaign committee out of the \$350,000 contributed to elect Republican Congressmen in Pennsylvania and New York, by the Brewers Association, which is now getting it back in a reduction of their revenue taxes. It cost him nothing, and his itching for notoriety has grown until he is now willing to be used as a tool to secure some nice fees out of the public for the impecunious pack of politicians who are urging on a contest, provided he gets his per cent of the congressional appropriation that he expects will be made to meet the expenses of the case.

This is what he is after. It is what ARNOLD is after, and as the contest is simply a job to get a political "divvy" out of the public no one need be surprised if it is undertaken. It will not be an effort to expose fraud at the election, for nothing of the kind occurred in any county of the district. It will simply be a cold blooded attempt to rob the public of the costs and fees that can be run up in the case and for which Congress will be expected to provide.

The Fruits of Imperialistic Efforts.

The WATCHMAN last week published the fact that the last steamer to leave the Pacific coast for Manila, carried as its cargo 50,000 barrels of beer. A telegram from San Francisco printed in the papers of Tuesday last tells us that: "The transport Hancock arrived to day from Manila by way of Nagasaki with the bodies of about fifteen hundred sailors and soldiers who either died in battle or succumbed to the ravages of disease in the Philippines, China, Guam and Honolulu."

Fifty thousand barrels of beer as the outward load! Fifteen hundred dead soldiers and sailors, as the cargo home! What glory we are reaping in our efforts to spread christianity! What a path we are traveling in our endeavor to become a "world power"?

The last of old Emalmed Beer EGAN was heard on Thursday, when he was again placed on the active list, but only to be permanently retired a few moments later. EGAN had been drawing \$5,500 per year while he was suspended, but as another officer had to do his work it was hardly deemed fair to the latter, so EGAN, whose term of suspension on full pay would have lasted four years longer, was reinstated then forced onto the "worn-out" shelf, so that Col. "Jack" WESTON can be Commissary General.

The women of the country are being more in evidence every year, in their effort upon legislation. At the last session of Congress it was practically their influence that unseated BRIGHAM ROBERTS, the Utah Mormon. At this session they have already made themselves felt at Washington by knocking the disgraceful "canteen" out of the army.

Died from Mistaken Fright.

Thought She Had Swallowed Teeth and was Paralyzed.

As the result of paralysis, caused through fear that she had swallowed her false set of teeth, Mrs. Hannah Laidlaw, of East Main street, Fall River, Mass., died at the city hospital Saturday. The woman was found unconscious Wednesday night, and after regaining her speech, declared that she had swallowed her lower set of false teeth. The physicians declare that the horror the woman had shown for a surgical operation, even though assured that she had not swallowed the teeth, caused paralysis and finally death.

Americans Repulsed.

47th Regiment Lost 2 Men Killed and 2 Wounded.

MANILA, Dec. 9.—While the capture of supplies and the occupation of new points are quite numerous, those involving actual fighting are comparatively few.

A detachment of the 47th United States Volunteer Infantry from the Islands of Cantanduanes, off the southeast coast of Luzon, relinquished an attempt to land near Pandans.

On anchoring the Americans were fired upon by 60 riflemen, and after a short engagement they cut the anchor chain and sailed for Cantanduanes, with 2 killed and 2 wounded. The names have not yet been received here.

Let Us Hope Not.

Johnny was spelling his way through a marriage notice in the morning paper. "At high noon," he read, "the clergyman took his stand beneath the floral bell, and to the music of the wedding march the contradicting parties moved down the aisle." "Not 'contradicting,' Johnny," interrupted his elder sister. "Contrasting." "Well," stoutly contended Johnny, "they'll be contradicting parties after a while!"

Argument for Continuing Canteen System.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12.—In connection with its consideration of the army reorganization bill the senate committee on military affairs today listened to an argument by Adjutant General Corbin for the continuation of the present canteen system in the army. The committee has taken no formal vote on the subject but there has been more or less exchange of opinion among members, the result of which has been favorable to the retention of the present system and the elimination of the house canteen provision. The committee expects to conclude its hearings on the bill tomorrow.

ADDITIONAL LOCALS.

—There is skating on the lake at the new fair grounds and tickets are now being sold at \$1.00 each, good for twelve admissions. It is intended to have a section of the exposition building kept warm for the comfort of the skaters while on the ground.

—Among the handkerchiefs for sale at the Christmas Market and Handkerchief Fair, yesterday, in the W. C. T. U. rooms was one contributed by Mrs. William Jennings Bryan, of Nebraska. It was a fine sheer linen one, with an embroidered edge and attracted much attention.

—Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Davis, whose wedding in August at Milesburg, was the social event of the season, have moved into the Harper house on south Thomas street, recently occupied by Mrs. Margaret Alexander. Wagner Geiss and his bride, nee Goodhart, have gone to housekeeping on west High street, opposite the U. E. church.

SPECIAL FARMER'S INSTITUTES.—In addition to the two farmer's institutes to be held in Centre county, under the auspices of the State Board of Agriculture, the Pomona Grange has arranged to hold the following special institutes at the various places and times set forth.

SOUTH SIDE OF COUNTY. Centre Hall, Saturday, Dec. 15, 7 p. m. Madisonburg, Monday, Dec. 17, 1:30 p. m. Rebersburg, Monday, Dec. 17, 7 p. m. Millheim, Tuesday, Dec. 18, 1:30 p. m. Fiedler, Tuesday, Dec. 18, 7 p. m. Spring Mill, Wednesday, Dec. 19, 1:30 p. m. Potter's Mills, Wednesday, Dec. 19, 7 p. m. Victor Grange, Oak Hill, Thursday, Dec. 20, 1:30 p. m. Washington Grange, State College, Thursday, Dec. 20, 7 p. m. Pine Grove Mills, Friday, Dec. 21, 1:30 p. m. Rock Springs, Friday, Dec. 21, 7 p. m.

Speakers: Mortimer Whitehead, of New Jersey; W. F. Hill, Master of the Penna. State Grange. NORTH SIDE OF COUNTY. Howard, Saturday, Dec. 15, 1:30 p. m. Marion Grange, Jacksonville, Saturday, Dec. 15, 7 p. m. Haldersburg, Monday, Dec. 17, 1:30 p. m. Zion, Monday, Dec. 17, 7 p. m. Logan Grange, Pleasant Gap, Tuesday, Dec. 18, 1:30 p. m. Benner Grange Hall, Tuesday, Dec. 18, 7 p. m. Milesburg, Wednesday, Dec. 19, 1:30 p. m. Unionville, Thursday, Dec. 20, 1:30 p. m. Half Moon, Grange Hall, Friday, Dec. 21, 1:30 p. m. Speakers: W. B. Packard, of Bradford county, Lecturer of the State Grange; Mrs. Helen Johnson, of Erie county.

The committee of the Grange in charge of these special institutes is composed of George Dale, D. M. Campbell and Jas. P. Weaver.

The meetings will be open to all interested in agriculture. A cordial invitation to the public is extended.

MRS. FRANCES REGISTER.—Mrs. Frances Gray Register, of Laurel, Md., well known here and in Half Moon Valley, the home of her girlhood, died Sunday in Richmond Va., at her son's, where she was visiting. Her health had been failing for several years, but no one here knew how seriously ill she was and the announcement of her death caused surprise, as well as sorrow.

She was the eldest daughter of Jacob and Margaret Perdue Gray, who in their life time were honored and widely known citizens of the upper end of this county. There at the old home, just west of Gray's church, which was always noted for its generous hospitality and delightful companionship, she was born about 74 years ago. "Uncle Jacob's," as it was known throughout the valley, was especially attractive to the clergy and five of the daughters married Methodist ministers. Frances was only 17 years of age when she was united in marriage to Rev. Samuel Register, a prominent member of the Baltimore conference and most of her life was spent in or near Baltimore. A woman of unusual magnetism and charming personality she had to a marked degree the faculty of seeing the bright side of life and enthusiastically meeting its responsibilities. She was always bright and to the very last well versed in the vital questions of the day, but with it all was so considerate of others and so lovable that the friends of her school days here and girlhood have all been retained and many times multiplied.

Her husband died some years ago, but five of her children are living. Mrs. Geo. Edgar Lowrey, of Laurel, Md.; Rev. Ashby, of Buffalo, N. Y.; Sam, of Richmond, Va.; and Frank, of Troy, N. Y. Of her father's family she is survived by only two of her sisters and two half-sisters, Mrs. A. M. Barritz, of York; Mrs. Geo. Potts, of Philadelphia; and Mrs. Agnes Sellers and Mrs. F. Herlacher, of Half-moon valley. Her body was taken to Baltimore, where it was buried on Tuesday in the family burying ground by the side of her husband and son Dr. Wilson Register, whose death occurred just as he was becoming renowned.

A SISTER OF GOVERNOR CURTIN KILLED.—Mrs. Nancy Clarke, a sister of the late A. G. Curtin, met a shocking death at Torresdale, a suburb of Philadelphia, about 1 o'clock Tuesday afternoon by being run down by a passenger train on the Pennsylvania railroad.

She had been visiting her niece, Mrs. Allen Sheldon, at Torresdale, and was about to return to her home at 1010 Spruce street, Phila. While Mrs. Sheldon was purchasing a ticket the aged woman started to cross the tracks to the south-bound station. She did not notice the express bearing down upon her until her attention was called to it by the shouts of the townsmen and a shrill whistle from the locomotive. Then she seemed to become confused and turned back with fatal results. The terribly mangled body was taken at once to an undertaking establishment at Holmesburg.

Though 73 years old Mrs. Clarke was in full possession of all of her faculties and traveled about by herself without any concern. She had contemplated a trip to Reading, where she expected to spend the holidays with the family of Gen. D. M. Gregg, old family friends.

Mrs. Clarke was a full sister of the late War Governor. She was a daughter of Roland Curtin Sr., by his second wife, Jane Gregg, and was born at the old furnace home, that stood between the rolling mill and the forge during the early iron making days at Curtin. That was before the family moved to this place. Before the breaking out of the war she was married to Dr. Clarke, a practicing physician in Philadelphia, who served in the army. He died early in the seventies and Mrs. Clarke has made Philadelphia her home ever since. The only surviving member of the family is Miss Julia Curtin, also of Philadelphia.

Her remains will arrive here this morning, funeral services will be held in the old Curtin homestead at the corner of Allegheny and Howard streets. Dr. Wm. Laurie will officiate.

HE WAS BORN AT COLEVILLE.—Mr. and Mrs. Nelson A. Lucas, of Washington, D. C., will have the sympathy of many old acquaintances in this community in their hour of sad bereavement. Their eldest son Horatio S. Lucas, who was born at Coleville, August 1st, 1868, died at his home in Washington on Monday, December 10th.

John Eyer, aged 67 years, 12 months and 14 days, died at his home in Warriors-mark valley, on Monday morning. He had been in poor health for years, but his last illness dates back two months, when his condition became serious, owing to complications of dropsy and heart trouble. Deceased was one of the oldest residents of the valley and had always been an esteemed farmer. Eleven of his thirteen children survive. Among the survivors is his sister, Mrs. Ann Waite, of Thomas street, this place.

William Bowers, aged 38 years, died at his home at Cedar Springs on Tuesday morning, from the effects of a tumorous growth. He had been to Philadelphia to a hospital, but physicians there were unable to do anything for him, owing to the danger of an operation. He left a wife and seven children.



CHRISTMAS AT RIVERSEDGE.

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"I think we have been having it," said Archie.

"And there is the wassail-bowl to brew with cloves and cinnamon and cardamom and coriander."

"Was he?" said Mrs. Beardsley. "That means to say, 'well again.' It is a sort of elixir of youth, after all, a genuine wassail-bowl is, with toasted crabs and wine. We will drown our ghosts in it." "They were gruesome, Mrs. Beardsley. Really you know, you ought not. Come, we will keep up Christmas eve into Christmas morning. Did you like your buckles, Louise? as they all stirred and rose and swept out in a cluster under the curtain.

"Mrs. Murray Douglas, you are too good!" murmured Louise and Helena together, remembering their trinkets of gold filagree.

"But Fidelia has something more than the tree gave her, has she not?" And Mrs. Murray Douglas turned to Fidelia, and lifted the white hand, as if by accident, directly before Archie Bleekher's eyes, showing so for the moment the great sapphire cut in an armorial device and surrounded by a tiny coronet of brilliants. "A fine Christmas gift!" said Mrs. Murray Douglas, as Fidelia fled by. "The betrothal ring of the Vesalenys!"

"I think she has a finer Christmas gift than that," said Mrs. Beardsley, "in the heart of Prince Gabor Vesalenyi himself, don't you know?"

"Fancy!" said Miss Bleekher, "the governess!"—Harriet Prescott Spofford.

Clear Enough.

"Let's see, have they read your Uncle John's will yet?" "I think she has a finer Christmas gift than that," said Mrs. Beardsley, "in the heart of Prince Gabor Vesalenyi himself, don't you know?" "Fancy!" said Miss Bleekher, "the governess!"—Harriet Prescott Spofford.

The Doctor's Warm Reception.

That comes to Garman's next Monday night, is advertised as a sparkling comedy, full of lively dances, catchy music, and uproarious situations.

CRITICISM'S PARLOR.—This attractive and interesting device is very commendably noticed in The Sunday School Times. It represents the most ancient hook and the one always used by Christ in the Jewish synagogues. They are very appropriate for Sunday school presents, useful in any family and can be seen at Kurtz' book store or procured for 10cts. each, postpaid by addressing Rev. R. Crittenden, Bellefonte.

THE SENIOR ORATORICALS TO-DAY.—With the oratoricals at the High school this afternoon the fall session will terminate and the schools will close until Jan. 2nd, 1901. The program for this afternoon's exercises, to which everyone is invited, will be as follows: "The Rise and Fall of Nations," Walter Armstrong. "Characterfulness as a Life Power," Daisy Barnes. "The War in China," Benjamin Brown. "The Growth of the American Republic," Orie Isler. "The Two Paths," Phinette Jones. "Value of an Idea," Adeline Oliveira. "The Struggle for Civilization," Lois Rine. "Training the Mind to the Occupation," Bert Robb. "Arbitration or War," Charles Thomas. "Free Education," Wilbur Twilome. "Our Navy," Lee Walker. "Governments," John Whippo. "A Mother's Influence," Rilla Woods. "Right Makes Might," Mame Woods.

WHILE VISITING her mother at Aaronsburg recently Mrs. Ezra Bard, of Coburn, was taken suddenly ill with hemorrhage of the stomach. Her condition was very critical for a while, but she is somewhat improved now.

WHY DON'T YOU.—In a letter received yesterday morning from one of the most brilliant young men who ever left Centre county to make his home among others was this paragraph: "Can't do without the 'WATCHMAN' so send it to me another year. To get it is next door to being a resident of Centre county."

Just so. And that is one of the very reasons why it would make such an acceptable Christmas gift to some friends in a distant part of the country. It costs only \$1 a year, when paid in advance. Why don't you tell all your friends about it? MARRIAGE LICENSES.—Following the list of marriage licenses granted by orphan's court clerk, A. G. Archey, during the past week: John A. Wolf, of State College, and Emma Wilson, of Bellefonte. Charles A. Zimmermann, of Tyrone, and Armita Johnson, of Milesburg. Wimer B. Grove, of Spring Mills, and Emma J. Hockman, of Mingoville. Geo. W. F. Lane, of Sandy Ridge, and Elsie Merrell, of Philipsburg. William H. Harris, of Benore, and Caroline B. Bailey, of Stormstown. Samuel F. Yocum, of Altoona, and Mary E. Breon, of Coburn. John Gardner, of Blair county, and Francis M. Stimor, of Hanna Furnace.

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