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HOW FAR TO BETHLEHEM?

"How far is it to Bethlehem town?" Just over Jerusalem hills adown, Past lovely Rachel's white-domed tomb— Sweet shrine of motherhood's young doom.

It isn't far to Bethlehem town— Just over the dusty roads adown, Past Wise Men's well, still offering Cool draughts from welcome wayside spring;

Past shepherds with their futes of reed That charm the woolly sheep they lead; Past boys with kites on hilltops flying, And soon you're there where Bethlehem's lying

Sunned white and sweet on olive slopes, Gold-lighted still with Judah's hopes.

And so we find the Shepherd's field And plain that gave rich Boaz yield; And look where Herod's villa stood. We thrill that earthly parenthood Could foster Christ who was all-good; And thrill that Bethlehem town today Looks down on Christmas homes that pray.

It isn't far to Bethlehem town! It's anywhere that Christ comes down And finds in people's friendly face A welcome and abiding place. The road to Bethlehem runs right through The homes of folks like me and you. —By Madeline Sweeney Miller

REASON FOR ANCIENT FAITH IN MISTLETOE

Idolatry had not advanced far among the Celts, and their images or gods were rudely carved logs or simple weapons of one sort or another. Their chief ceremonial object was the mistletoe, that white berried creeper which has captured the imagination of primitive people all over the world.

Sir James G. Frazer, in that most fascinating book in all the literature of comparative religions, "The Golden Bough," has tried to give the reason for the peculiar veneration attached to this plant. He maintains it is because the mistletoe has not roots in the polluted earth but seems to grow magically between heaven and earth.

By that sorry clutching at conclusions which is all that primitive man has of logic, this plant, dangling down from the sky, is therefore thought to be endowed with magic properties. Whenever the Druids discovered it growing on an oak tree, they would approach with great awe and ceremonial pomp and cut it down with a golden sickle.

They would be careful to catch it before it fell to the earth, and then they would use it to make a potion for the fertilizing of barren women and cattle, and for the cure of epilepsy, ulcers, poisoning and almost every other human ailment.

When Animals Kneel.—There are many superstitions connected with Christmas night. One of them is the legend that the oxen kneel in their stalls to worship the infant Christ at midnight of His birthday.

Mistletoe and Kissing.—The mistletoe and kissing are always inseparably connected in the minds of Europeans, and as far back as tradition and history can go the quaint berried plant and kissing have always gone hand in hand together.

Singing Christmas Carols.—Christmas carols were sung as far back as 1521 and were said to be the songs sung by angels at the birth of Christ.

The old custom of singing carols in the streets was revived in 1917. In 1918 thirty cities co-operated. It is expected that carols will be sung this Christmas eve on the streets, in the parks, as well as in the churches, schools and public institutions of communities.

St. Nicholas.—St. Nicholas, as the patron saint of Christmas, seems to have been adopted by America; Father Christmas is indigenous to Britain, Santa Claus to Germany, and Kriss Kringle to Holland, but they all seem to be variants of the first-named.

The First Christmas Cards.—In 1836 the King of England sent cards of greeting to his friends and this started the custom. In England, too, was first started the nice customs of saying Merry Christmas and of decorating the house.

Do not allow your house to be without a flower at the Christmas season. Beautiful potted primroses and cyclamens, and any cut flowers in season, are to be had at the Half Moon gardens. 49-2t

—Subscribe for the Watchman.

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QUITE NATURAL

She doesn't like
 A shady joke.
 She doesn't neck.
 She doesn't smoke.
 She doesn't swear.
 She never firts.
 She doesn't wear
 Those shortened skirts.
 She doesn't dance,
 She doesn't sing,
 And she's in pants
 Don't mean a thing.
 She doesn't use
 The beauty salves,
 But won't refuse
 To show her calves.
 You ask her name?
 Well, that's a wow—
 She's not a dame.
 She's a dairy cow.

THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

The season of Christmas is at hand. In every city, town and hamlet in the United States the people have been busy during the past few weeks, seeking something to present to the loved ones at home and abroad. For it is at this time of year that we seek especially to remember those who are near and dear to us either by ties of blood or friendship.

The Christmas custom is an old one, ante-dating our Christian civilization. And when the Christian fathers converted the savage tribes who formed the ancestors of most of us, they changed pagan customs to Christian ones. So now Christmas day observing the birth of the Christian Savior, is quite properly the day on which we hang up the stocking, trim the tree and radiate peace, good cheer and brotherly love.

And because this Christmas season is so time-honored, we have come to regard it as a matter of course. Few of us therefore ever stop to consider what might happen to our economic system if this Christmas season with its customs were suddenly in some supernatural manner, wiped out of our human existence.

For every year factories in Europe and America are busy manufacturing Christmas goods, giving employment to hundreds of thousands of people everywhere. Then these goods find themselves on the shelves of the merchants in the United States and every other civilized land, and are sold to the people who observe the Christmas season. December consequently is the biggest retail business month of the year, and hundreds of millions annually are spent to make the Christmas season a real holiday.

It is easy to see that if the Christmas spirit were suddenly to disappear there would be a real economic calamity in every Christian nation. As stimulant to production nothing can surpass the Christmas spirit.

The economic loss, however, would not be in any degree so great as the ethical loss. For the good cheer, and generosity of Christmas send a fine impulse over the world, lasting a great deal longer than the Christmas season itself. When Christmas means to our children and to the memory of our own childhood is worth a thousand times what it costs. And the spirit of goodwill which Christmas engenders, to save nothing of its purely religious phase, is worth another thousand times the cost.

RABBIT FUR POPULAR.

Rabbit fur is used more extensively by the fur trade than any other kind, according to D. Monroe Green, biologist in the Biological Survey. With the disappearance of many of the fine-pelted fur bearers from many parts of the United States the use of rabbit skins is steadily increasing. More than 100,000,000 rabbit skins are now utilized annually in this country, about 98 per cent of which are imported. Of this number, says Green, about 55,000, dressed and dyed are made into fur garments and into trimmings for women's coats, suits and dresses. The remainder, not being suitable for garments, are used as linings for men's and boy's gloves and in the manufacture of felt which is used chiefly in making hats.

Aided by modern processes American fur dressers and dyers have become so expert in changing the colors and appearance of furs that in many instances the pelt of the rabbit, under a variety of trade names, which are listed in a bulletin issued by the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., is replacing other skins more costly and attractive, such as ermine, seal, beaver and leopard. Methods of handling rabbit skins from the time the pelt is removed until it reaches the raw-fur market or is tanned for home use, are described in the bulletin referred to, including methods of killing and skinning, stretching, drying and preserving, sorting and grading, marketing, packing and shipping and tanning. Copies of the bulletin can be obtained free as long as the supply lasts by writing to the department.

PEOPLE I'D LIKE TO MEET

The man who glues his eyes on a picture.
 The man who flings himself out of the door.
 The man who pierces you with a glance.
 The man who shoots across the street.
 The man who sinks into a chair.
 The man whose breath comes in short pants.
 The man who knits his brows.
 The man who steals a glance from under his hat.

PEACE AND GOOD WILL

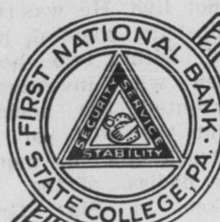
The real Christmas spirit is not the spirit of extravagant expense, of covetous delight. To be peaceful with God and with our fellow-creatures; to be willing to do good for Him and for them—that is the peace and good will which can make our lives a continuous Christmas feast. It costs nothing; it hurts no one; it wins heaven and earth; it gives "glory to God in the highest." The oldest Christmas wish is still the best—Peace and good will.—Herald and Presbyterian.

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In Tune with Christmas

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