

Evening Public Ledger

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Philadelphia, Wednesday, December 24, 1919

TAKE THE CITY HALL, TOO

THE councilmen who are planning to give themselves the desks and chairs in the Council chambers are not going for enough. There are electric light fixtures in the chambers to which they are entitled just as much as to the chairs and desks.

And if it is due the councilmen that they should be rewarded with the furniture they have been using, it is due to the Mayor and to the heads of the various departments that they should also have their office furniture, including the rugs and fixtures. While this thing is going on the automobiles the department heads and Mayor have been using should not be forgotten. The cars are second hand anyway. The users of them and their families have had pleasant associations with them, and for old time's sake should be allowed to keep them as their own property.

MEN OF GOOD WILL

THEY say that the correct reading of the song the shepherds heard on the first Christmas morning is "Peace on earth to men of good will."

SAFETY FIRST

FIRE MARSHAL ELLIOTT'S Christmas Eve warnings, if heeded by householders, will prevent many fires tomorrow.

Christmas decorations are inflammable at best. The Christmas trees are full of pitch and easily set on fire, as every one knows who has disposed of them on the rubbish pile in the back yard.

BEL-, BEEL- AND BAAL

AMONG the feasts that never took place that proposed by Belshazzar Baily will be prominent.

SIMS AND HIS MEDAL

IT IS difficult to blame Admiral Sims for refusing the Distinguished Service Medal awarded to him for his conduct during the war.

face of disaster. Many a commanding officer has gone down with his ship, for he knew that his career on the sea was ended when his vessel was lost.

But Secretary Daniels is said to have rejected a large number of recommendations for medals made by Admiral Sims and endorsed by the naval board and to have added to the list the names of a large number of men who under the uniform practice of the past would have been considered as worthy of special honors.

THE MAGI AT YOUR ELBOW

STILL FOLLOW THEIR STAR
Their Millions Are Everywhere Now and Their Search Is Still for Peace on Earth

"We're no right to celebrate Christmas," said the Angry Man, "because we have forgotten what it means. The world is hard-hearted and unchristian. It has no vision and it has no pity!"

THERE are always people who talk like that. And they are quite unconsciously the living proof of their own error. For, so long as there are minds in passionate indignation against wrong and folly, cruelty and unchristianity; so long as there are people who cannot but feel the sting of pain inflicted upon others, the miracle commemorated at Christmas will continue to shine before your very eyes.

The hope symbolized in these days has made a temple of every one who hates injustice. It will live and work wonders so long as there is compassion in the hearts of men.

The world just now looks like a hard-hearted sort of place—on the surface. The increasing number of people who, like the Angry Man, are dissatisfied with it, justify all the implications that began with Bethlehem.

Once there were only three men wise enough to believe in things they could not see.

Now the magi are everywhere. Their voices cannot be drowned out. They are a command and a challenge in these uncertain days. They will continue to be heard and felt by a distracted and driven civilization that each year turns to Christmas as you would turn to a green isle of peace in terrible seas.

Once a year all people are able for a day to know what life ought to be at its best: peace, a place to rest in, human trust and understanding—and things to give away!

And once a year all the people are magi. They are crowding the streets now, fleeing in railway trains to farms or flats or wherever home may be, blithely risking bankruptcy for their beliefs or for the love of something or somebody.

"They buy fripperies," said the Angry Man, "and spend their money sincerely upon other people."

When the magi begin to spend all their money upon themselves we shall begin to worry about them. Then indeed the meaning of Christmas will have vanished. For the present we are safe.

If, today, there is any one uncomfortable or without friends it is because the magi couldn't find him. They buy fripperies, it is true. It is their way, and the only way they know of buying comfort or happiness or delight for others. The nicest thing of all about the magi, whose armies are marching everywhere, is that they seldom buy anything, even fripperies, for themselves.

What is it, then, that they seek? You have only to trail a few of them around to know. Mankind always flies back at this time of the year to the true and ancient things.

So people will travel half way around the world to look again upon a face in a doorway, to feel the touch of patient hands, to hear a remembered voice, to live a moment in the life that their hearts acclaim.

So they will continue to do in an interval that sees hatred and selfishness almost wiped out of the world and faith restored. The meaning of Christmas is as clear to them now as a lamp fixed upon a high hill. If the magi find it obscured at other times of the year the fault is not theirs. They stand for it always as best they can.

"Nineteen hundred years," said the Angry Man, "and look at the world today and listen to its leaders."

We would far rather listen to the people—the people who will keep the lights burning in the homes of the world tomorrow. And we would rather listen to the magi who troop faithfully toward these guiding signs. They have been doing some wonderful things. Upon them must rest the hope of the world.

There never has been a time when they forgot the meaning of Christmas for long. That is why the times are daily becoming more critical of leaders. It is why the sick have never been friendless or without care. It is the reason for wars and crusades, hospitals and the organized pity that only lately saved whole nations from slow death.

Pity, as some one has said, is a rebel passion. And it is pity for the weak and a love of right handed down over the nineteen hundred years that has led the magi of more recent years—the ones that crowd you good-naturedly in the streets today—to batter down empires, dethrone kings and swing civilization nearer to the way in which they want it to go. They are not yet done. They still have much to do. And they will do it. They have not forgotten what Christmas means.

for them shows only how tireless and determined they are. In their various ways they are following a light that commands them onward.

And they will search the world and they will shake it until they establish peace on earth and good will among men.

SANE RUSSIA AND HER FAITH

MUCH of what has been told concerning Russia induces paralysis of thought. Sensibilities are dulled and mental processes balked by the theme of a nation gone mad. What cannot be comprehended is frequently dismissed—like the problem of squaring the circle or the nature of infinity.

And so a good many Americans of heart and feeling have been excluding Russia from the sphere of their consideration. They have not meant to be unkind, but they have been puzzled and it takes some time for action to emerge from bewilderment.

If the war had not fostered so much that is fantastic, so much which common sense in ordinary times would promptly reject, it would have been generally realized that entire nations do not go mad, and that a government, born of force and nurtured by the same agency, is not necessarily representative of millions of its people.

Speaking at the New England Society's dinner the other night, a granddaughter of General Grant painted a picture of Russia which our own citizens should have reasoned out for themselves but for the breakdown of analytical safety valves and spread of much vicious propaganda. As it is, the Princess Cantacuzene, for twenty years a resident of Russia, performed in a few fervent words no ordinary service. Her authority on the subject is not to be questioned, and when she shows us that the heart of the Russian people is sound, that bolshevism rules, not by the voice of the public but by the voice of machine guns, that right-thinking Russians by the millions will never give up the fight until representative government is attained, she speaks a language which is credible and fixes an inspiration for constructive work.

This indeed is the burden of her plea. Sane Russia, tragic, suffering Russia, Russia that has been afflicted with nearly six years of war and will not cease to struggle until redemption is achieved, must be helped. The men are there and an indomitable spirit. But famine smites the land. It lacks food and clothing and medicines. In its piteous plight it still looks to America, its traditional friend, to find a way out of the agony.

There is more in this record of affection than is generally emphasized. In every crisis in our history Russia has been pro-American, and in the Civil War this sentiment bore concrete fruit in the fleet which paid that significant visit to New York at the time when other European nations were striving to recognize the Confederacy. Moreover, these affiliations have not been one-sided. When Russia cast off czarism no nation hailed that act with quite the joy that was in America. The two great nations, long allied in diplomacy, were at last allied in spirit and ideals.

The disillusionment which followed the overthrow of Kerensky was not justified. That wavering mismanagement enabled the Bolsheviks to secure the arms which made them in the objective sense masters of Russia. But Lenin and Trotsky have not altered the character of the mass of the populace. They have not made converts of the peasantry; they have not corrupted the nature of those magnificent soldiers whose brothers were so often ruthlessly sacrificed by venal officers. Russia is not a paranoiac, but a victim of a hideous tyranny so preposterous in its plans that its downfall is inevitable.

There are several non-Bolshevik ports in Russia, notably Odessa, to which food and urgently needed supplies may be shipped. The opportunity is still at hand for Americans to think straight about a present Niobe among nations, to assist in drying her tears and to justify, at least to some extent, the pathetic trust that is placed in us.

VARE HIS OWN SANTA CLAUS

SENATOR VARE has lived too long to believe in the Santa Claus myth. He evidently holds that if you want something in your stocking on Christmas morning you must put it there yourself.

What he seems to be looking for just now is a big chunk of discord and he is exerting himself to the utmost to get it. If he can raise ructions in the new city Council he will do it. But it remains to be seen whether he gets more than he is counting on.

What Do You Know?

- QUIZ
1. Who was Lloyd George's predecessor as premier of Great Britain?
2. In what century did Hannibal live?
3. Who were the Nine Worthies?
4. Name three of the most noted of contemporary French musical composers.

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3. There are ninety-six seats in the Senate, exclusive of the Vice President's.
4. California has "Eureka" (I have found it) as its motto.
5. The transport Bayford, taking the reds to Europe, sailed under sealed orders. It was hinted that the first port of call would be in Finland.
6. Two of the most eminent British exponents of spiritualism are Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.
7. The Romans numbered their years from the year corresponding to 753 B. C.
8. The Tagus is an important river of the Iberian peninsula. It rises in Spain and empties into the Atlantic below Lisbon, Portugal.
9. A loggia is an open-sided gallery or arcade.
10. The ocarina, familiarly known as the "sweet potato," is named after a goose. "Oca" is the Italian word for that fowl and "ina" is a common Latin suffix.

MAYOR-ELECT MOORE'S LETTER

George S. Sproule, Toting a Lady's Suitcase Instead of His Own, Was Flustered When Offered City Job

CAPTAIN JOHN VIRDEN, of the Pennsylvania Delaware Pilots' Association, is a close friend of George F. Sproule, the new director of wharves, docks and ferries. They have indulged the river habit for a long time. But Captain John, like others of the new director's friends, was momentarily alarmed at possible complications arising from a comedy of errors the day Mr. Sproule left the rivers and harbors convention in Washington when Governor Sproule was also at the capital to be called into the Mayor's cabinet in Philadelphia. Sproule was not called until he reached Philadelphia, and just as he was invited into conference his mind was not altogether clear as to what was happening. Here is the story: The general secretary had arrived in Philadelphia, but he suddenly discovered that the suitcase he brought with him was not his. The contents disclosed that it belonged to a lady—possibly a lady physician. When? What would the lady say? And at the same time, where was Mr. Sproule's grip? But wait a minute. The long distance telephone is ringing. "Is this Governor Sproule?" "No, this is the secretary of the commissioner of navigation." "Well, this is the Raleigh Hotel, Washington. The Governor left here this morning and forgot his suitcase. Somebody took a lady's grip in mistake and she won't leave until she gets it." It was under these peculiar circumstances and with the dire consequences staring him in the face that Mr. Sproule was suddenly called upon to say yes or no to the directorship proposition.

NOT altogether like Benjamin Franklin in achievement, but somewhat suggestive by analogy in that he came out of Massachusetts to add to Philadelphia's scientific prestige, is Benjamin Smith Lyman, noted geologist and mining engineer, now eighty-five years of age.

Mr. Lyman, who was born at Northampton and educated at Harvard, followed up his technical studies in Paris and at Freiberg, Saxony, and then engaged in public work in India and Japan. His subsequent geological researches carried him over the United States, Europe, China and British America. He won high honors for his discoveries in China and Japan, and treasures many trophies bestowed upon him by the authorities of those countries. Author of many papers and reports of technical value, Mr. Lyman, like Franklin, pursued many special inquiries, one of which became enough of a hobby to be put into book form—the matter of diet and dishes suitable to the taste and requirements of the vegetarian.

For more than fifty-five years Mr. Lyman has subsisted upon vegetarian dishes, made up largely from his own recipes, and until recent months has been in fairly good physical condition. His flowing snow-white hair and beard closely resemble those of the late Walt Whitman.

THE Civic Club, of which Mrs. Edward W. Biddle is president, is rejoicing over the new trend in municipal affairs. For more than twenty-five years this organization of women, who like to discuss public questions and who have been striving for improved civic conditions, has been laboring to further these aims. Street cleaning, hygiene, child welfare and other topics which appeal to thoughtful women are frequent subjects of discussion and debate with the members.

N. B. KELLY, general secretary of the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, is working with the various committees of the chamber to make a greater Philadelphia. It is the purpose of this chamber to join with the Mayor-elect in forward movements, and some time during January new committees will be formed with this thought in view. The chamber has twenty-six working committees, composed of able business men who give their time freely to the discussion and working out of municipal problems. J. H. Haglow, of the City Club, also, talks of bringing the various civic bodies together with a view of pushing Philadelphia interests. Altogether it looks as if the new year would be a busy one from the municipal point of view.

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The Christmas Tobacco

By Christopher Morley
Illustrated by Charles H. Sykes

(According to an eastern legend, tobacco used to be grown in the fields outside Bethlehem)

FROM the golden aisles of riot, From the frantic jostling press, To a side street's frosty quiet Homo walked, with bitterness. All the color, bustle, glamour, Seemed to him but empty clamor.

In the great stores' teeming spaces, In the throng of Christmas Eve, He saw worried, weary faces— Told himself, "I disbelieve! Merry Christmas, Day of Days— Hypocrite commercial phrase!"

Did he have some private reason Thus so savagely to brood? Anyway, in cheerful season There he walked in cynic mood, Roaming aimless, without plan, Lonely, a disheartened man.

Christmas trees, banked high and fragrant, Breathed a whiff of balsam sweet, But the misanthropic vagrant Strode ungladdened down the street. "Holy?" cried a corner grocer— Homo drew his suitout closer.

Dusk was started, the sky blue-vaunted— People hurried home from work. Where he saw cigars he halted, By a wooden turbaned Turk, Ashamed, with empty hands, to see All carried parcels, saving he.

Queer the shop, it seemed (he entered) Stocked with candy, pipes and toys; And the dealer stood there, centered In a group of bright-cheeked boys. Urchins loltered, slowly choosing Clockwork apes they thought amusing.

Ancient 'bacconist, queer fellow— Oriental kind of chap— In complexion rather yellow, Bearded almost to his lap, Chuckling, showed the boys to please Tinselled stars for Christmas trees.

Homo waited, rather peevish, Weared of the old man's jokes; Feeling nowise Christmas Eve-ish, Said, "See here, I want some smokes. None of these rubbish toys and stars— For Christ's sake, give me some cigar!"

"What is this—a kind of toy-shop, Or a home for nicotine? Lord, is this a Yuletide joy-shop? Bunk!—the Christmas stuff, I mean. Who falls for fables any longer?— Too mild. You must have something stronger?"

The children ran. The old man, turning, Showed a dark and foreign eye, Homo, with annoyance burning, Felt ashamed, he knew not why. "The way you ask, I can't refuse you; Something special I will choose you."

On a rearward shelf he fumbled And drew out a parcel rich, Wrapped with eastern fabric, jumbled O'er with patterned silken stitch. Opened it. "Now here's a weed That's exactly what you need."

The cigars thus recommended Brittle seemed, and rather dry; But, as he had once offended, Homo drew his purse to buy— "You can have just one of these, And I'll take no money, please."

In the smoke-blued air, all hazy, Homo stared upon the face, Thinking, "Why the old man's crazy." Tossed a coin and left the place. Shut the door. Above, afar, In the evening, one great star.

Curious and most amazing (Homo thought) to see that sky— Never had he seen such blazing, Such a golden lamp on high. That cigar, too, what a flavor! What a richly pungent vapor!

Strangely, too, the air seemed milder, And, along that humble street Christmas costume was much wilder Than he had been wont to meet. Fancy dress, this part of town— Curious, that eastern gown!

In a little park he tarried— Faint the clanging of the cars; All the sky was lucent, clarid, Pallid with a foam of stars. Softly he heard the church chimes ring "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing."

What could be those strange shapes moving Silhouetted in the square? Lo! he rubbed his eyes, reproving Sense that so betrayed him there. What was that tall shambling beast, And those turbans of the East?

Down before a shabby dwelling Knelt the shape; again; a third; Strangely clad, tall figures telling Something in a foreign word. Lights gleamed; voices came from far— Then he threw down his cigar.

Crossed the park, his senses whirring, Toward the house where they had been— There, beside the curbstone, purring, Stood a shining limousine. Asked the chauffeur, standing near: "Say, what's this, a circus here?"

"Well, it might be! Can you beat it? That's the car of Doctor Bruce— And I'm saying you don't meet it Very often south of Spruce. What's the trouble? Oh" (with scorn), "Just some baby being born."

"But," said Homo, "now the fact is There were three—" "Say, friend, you're right! Never in the doctor's practice Did I see it like tonight. Two does to consult. It's queer, Three wise guys like that, down here!"

Homo looked upon the lowly Little home, one pane alight. Thinking, then he answered slowly "Hope they all come through all right. That's religion, in the end— Wish you Merry Christmas, friend!"

