

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1921

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CHRISTMAS

Never since the dawn of history has there been so great reason for rejoicing over the wide diffusion of that spirit which makes for peace on earth and which prompts men and women to recognize the virtue of sacrifice and service. It is easy for one who places over the pages of a newspaper and sees the daily record of crime, injustice, misery and suffering, and of petty wars or threatened strife, to assert that there is no peace and that man has failed to realize the dreams of peace and philanthropy; but, the thinking individual, who surveys the past and regards the present in its relation to past and future, cannot fail to observe the signs of a remarkable change. Whether it be in a matter affecting social relations in a community or the relations of one nation to another, the elements of human nature must be reckoned with, and gradual change accepted as all that is within the range of possibility. Taking this broad and backward-looking view as well as forward-looking view of human affairs, the effect of the spirit which makes for brotherhood is as obvious in international affairs as in community life. Humanity is on a higher plane than it was a few years ago. It is not merely the desire for self-preservation, rudely awakened in the agony of a great war and seeking expression in conferences and agreements. The whole nature of man revolved against the horrors of war, and cried out that these must end. When the representatives of different nations came together they found that they had much more in common than they had dreamed; and, where selfish interests were expected by some to prevail entirely, there was revealed a spirit of emulation in the promotion of peace and good will which has aroused the highest hopes. It would be contrary to human experience to expect radical changes of a permanent nature, but precedent follows precedent in quite a wonderful way, to warrant the conviction that progress is to be continuous along the path that leads to happier times for humanity.

It is opportune that in the midst of grave deliberations affecting the future of the world there should be a brief season devoted to the spirit of the Christmas festival. But for a great service and a great sacrifice this festival would not be observed. It carries the mind back to Galilee and to Him who is called the Prince of Peace. It establishes a common ground of interest among the nations. It enthrones the child as the object of universal solicitude. It awakens memories and softens the hardness of so much of human experience. It rebuilds the altar of home, that is the foundation of society. It calls upon those who have to consider the needs of those who have not, and it creates a bond of kindly human sympathy that runs like an electric current round the whole wide world.

DEALING WITH BOYS

The press related a few days ago the story of a juvenile crime organization that was rounded up in St. Thomas, Ontario. The sequel is very interesting. The boys were brought into the police court and a despatch says: "The organization has been absorbed by the St. Thomas Kiwanis Club, over to the 16-year-old robber chief, who designated himself 'the King of Diamonds.' Two of the lads were committed to the Ontario Reformatory Saturday, but today his worship expressed a willingness to defer the commitments in order to give the Kiwanians an opportunity to try out their experiment."

During the last few years the efficacy of a big-brother movement in dealing with delinquent boys has been fully demonstrated in many cities. In some cities Rotarians have boys from the juvenile court paroled to them. In St. Thomas the Kiwanis Club is making the experiment, and there is every reason to believe that in the great majority of cases its work will succeed. There is no more hopeful sign of boy-life development among right lines than the increasing interest of men in the welfare of boys. They should not wait, however, until the boys have committed a crime before discovering their existence. St. John has two boys' clubs with a large membership. How many men take the trouble to visit either club and offer a little personal assistance—say once a fortnight or even once a month? And St. John is still without a proper juvenile court and probation system. There are many ways of helping boys in St. John. How many men are really interested in boy-welfare to the extent that they give a little of their own time and thought to the work?

AN IMPORTANT MEETING.

The public meeting to be held on Tuesday evening next in Pythian Castle to discuss the unemployment situation would not have been called but for the fact that those to whom the workers appeal, or to whom the condition of families is known through personal contact, are concerned that there is widespread necessity for relief that should take the form of work. The action now proposed by the city council will provide for only a portion of those who are in need of work and wages. It is not disputed that there are men who will not work if they can dodge it without too much personal suffering, and who would cheerfully throw their responsibility for the care of their families upon the public; and that there are other men who want to choose their task and fix the pay. They are always with us; but there are many hundreds of others who will be very reasonable, and very grateful for an opportunity by their own labor to get their families safely through the next three months. These pastors of churches and representatives of benevolent organizations are not seeing double. They would not speak if speech were not justified. This is an emergency, and it is also a community problem. We are prone to say that the east is better than the west, but if the published reports be true there are as many unemployed in St. John today as in Calgary. When we are there twelve hundred are registered here as unemployed; we do not tell the whole story, for all have not registered. Citizens who are interested in community welfare, both men and women, should take an interest in Tuesday night's meeting, and get a fuller knowledge of the actual conditions, at the same time offering any helpful suggestions in regard to ways of providing work.

The answer to the blue ruin talk of Conservative orators and newspapers during the long election campaign is found in the complacency with which the country has accepted a change which leaves these prophets of evil in a hopeless minority. The Canadian mind is not as easily disturbed by economic changes as formerly. Experience since 1911 has had a remarkably studying effect. Nobody fears a new regime. The country is safe.

The view is generally expressed in Canadian business circles that the worst of the depression is over, and that a sure if slow recovery is on the way. Similar views regarding the situation in the United States are expressed in that country. Recovery must be slow because of world-conditions, but it is satisfactory to know that a feeling of confidence regarding the future prevails.

It is now apparent that there are two sides to the question regarding the cost to the consumer of hydro-electric power. The discussion grows more and more interesting. It would be passing strange if the development at Musquash held out no hope to the users of light and power.

The Times extends to all its sincere wishes for an enjoyable Christmas, made more so for those who are fortunate by practical sympathy toward those who are in the shadow of misfortune.

The skating championships are only three weeks away. With favorable weather they will mean much for St. John, the home of fast skaters.

A COLOSSAL TASK.

The British royal commission on wheat supplies has issued its first report on the purchase and distribution of cereals during the last years of war and the period following the Armistice. It shows, according to advice received by the Bankers Trust Company, of New York, from its English information service, that the purchase and sale transactions effected on behalf of the United Kingdom amounted to about \$1,400,000,000, and purchases were made on behalf of Allied and other European powers to the value of \$250,000,000. The commission became responsible for effecting purchases for Italy and France, and later for British dependencies, other Allied countries and neutrals, and after the Armistice a good deal of work was undertaken for ex-enemy countries.

Difficult by the addition of maize, rye, barley and potato flour to wheat flour, was considered justifiable not only by the saving in breadstuffs but from the point of view of health. The commissioners report that every reduction of a penny in the price of the loaf in Great Britain represented an annual charge of \$18,000,000 on the exchequer.

ICEBERG WAS AN ACROBAT. Not far from the spot where Titanic was sunk by an iceberg in April, 1912, a fleet of 14 icebergs, some of them rising to more than 100 feet above the water line, were sighted by the steamship Munaries on a recent voyage.

GIVE ME THIS DAY.

(Rev. George Scott)
Give me this day the open mind,
A kindly heart, a tongue discreet,
That to the curious hour may find
My record wholly clean and sweet.

Give me this day the fortitude
That suffers all, and suffers long,
That bears perversion of the good
In evil minds and still is strong.

Give me this day that I may see,
Unclouded in life's humbler way,
The many broken gems there be
Down trodden in the miry clay.

Give me this day the open hands,
The ready sympathetic mind,
The steadfast soul that understands
My foremost duty to be kind.

Give me this day that I may hear
With thankfulness, may I be wise,
To carry to the homes of care
Some gladness for be-clouded eyes.

Give me this day that I may know,
This happy holy Christmas tide,
Some goodly deed there hands are shown,
Some hungry spirit satisfied.

Give me this day and all the days,
A tongue discreet, a ready mind,
To speak the word of healing peace,
And be to thoughtless follies blind.

That so my pathway through the year
Be marked by kindly deeds and wise,
And perfect love that knows not fear,
And all enfolding charities.

LIGHTER VEIN.

No Public Clamor Yet.
Gwendolyn—And is he really going to marry all that money?
John—Absolutely.

Gwendolyn—Has the engagement been formally announced?
John—No. Just informally—among his creditors.

Maybe.
"I see that your wife has promised to give the city a reform administration if she is elected mayor?"
"Yes, maybe she will, maybe she will. She promised to obey when she married me, too."

"How did you happen to become a burglar?" asked the welfare worker.
"By easy stages," replied No. 9876.

"I first bought a soft drink concession at a county fair, then I drove a taxicab available. After that I promoted wrestling bouts and almost before I knew it I was breaking into people's houses."

No War Without Her.
"Do you believe that old saying, 'Unlucky in Love, Lucky in War'?"
"Nonsense! If you don't get the girl there won't be any war."

A doctor had been called to see a man who was very ill. He examined him, and said to the nurse: "You must watch this case very closely through the night and tell me all the symptoms when I come back in the morning."

The man became very ill in the night and talked a lot of nonsense in his fever. When the doctor returned in the morning he said to the nurse: "Tell me exactly what happened after I left."

"You were hardly out of the room," she began, "when I said: 'When did that old fool say he was coming back again?' Those were the last sensible words the patient spoke."

First Things Today.
The first thing some people want when they get a little money is a car; then the first thing they want when they get a car is a little money.—American Lumberman.

Only Shady Spot.
A very stout woman, bustling through the park on a hot day, became aware that she was being followed by a roughly dressed lad.

What do you mean by following me in this manner?" she demanded, indignantly.
The boy hung back a little. But when the woman resumed her walk he again took up his position directly behind her.

"Look here," she exclaimed, wheeling angrily, "if you don't go away at once, I shall call a policeman!"
The unfortunate lad looked at her appealingly. "For goodness sake, kind lady, have mercy on me, and don't call a policeman. You're the only shady spot in the park."—Tit-Bits, London.

Will Be Brought Back to Canada.
Case of Scottish Family Deported Some Months Ago was Fought Out.

Montreal, Dec. 24.—A Scottish family named Galloway, deported some months ago after being held up by the immigration officials at Quebec, will be returned to Canada at the expense of the federal government, according to a statement made here last night by Lieut.-Col. H. R. Lordy, acting secretary-treasurer of the British Immigration Aid Association, which contested the case from the outset.

The family had sailed from Glasgow and had been passed as medically fit, though it was then known that the two boys were suffering from ringworm. When they reached Quebec the medical authorities turned them out on this account. The father was allowed to remain, but the mother and two boys were deported. They will now be brought back to Canada.

PUBLIC MEETING TO CONSIDER PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT

Much interest is being taken in plans for a public meeting called for next Tuesday night at 8 o'clock in the Knights of Pythias Hall, which has been offered free of charge to further consider the question of unemployment in the city. The meeting will be under the auspices of the Pythians.

The speakers will be Rev. Canon Armstrong, Father Duke, Rev. H. E. Thomas and others who have knowledge of the situation. Mrs. Frank S. White, president of the Red Cross, is a committee to get a speaker or speakers to represent the Red Cross and Victorian Order of Nurses. The maritime province representative of the Dominion Labor Bureau, who is now in the city, will wait over for the meeting. After the speeches, suggestions will be asked for regarding the best course to pursue. It is expected there will be a large attendance.

IN MEMORIAM

ARTHUR PEARSON
Friend of the Blind.
—Yemmits, in Toronto Telegram.



THE LATE ARTHUR PEARSON.

Massey Hall for an hour and a half on Sunday afternoon was transformed from a concert hall to a temple whose worshippers united in song, exhortation and devotion to music to bless the memory of Sir Arthur Pearson—the founder of Hope's Golden Gateway for the Blind—Saint Dunstan's.

Tearing in from the snow-clad streets we were greeted by music reminiscent of Christmastide, played by Captain Slater's Highlanders' Band. But complacent thoughts of the festive season are broken by sight of a little group of blind men, women and children being led to their places in the hall. The heart-strings tighten as we mark—for we cannot look away—the upraised sightless eyes, searching as it were for something far beyond the limits of the city and the snow.

A Little Picture.

The voluntary ended, white-clad chorister of St. Simon's move in reverent procession to their seats on the platform. It is a simple but beautiful little picture. Klaid, uniformed bandmen with their shining instruments occupy the foreground of the stage with the choir of fifty-four ranked high behind. Very sweetly, almost imperceptibly, Purcell's tender anthem, "Thou Knowest, Lord, the Secrets of Our Hearts," breaks upon our ears and hearts. The confidence in their diatonic harmony of the Old English music contrasts bravely with the sadness of its occasional minor cadences.

The boys' voices are pure and sweet as those of nightingales, and their singing throughout is animated by a spirit of devotion and reverence that never falters.

The invocation prayer of Captain J. E. Gibson has the quality born of the faith of those who do not easily forget. It is irradiated with phrases from the incomparable liturgy of our heroic forefathers, and closes with the words: "Prayer repeated by all present. The forty-sixth Psalm is read, that grand old song that breathes fear of God and of nothing else in earth or hell. Its close: 'Be still and know that I am God'—a much needed reminder that there is a force still possible without the popular sanction of majorities, Parliamentary or otherwise."

Captain W. A. Cameron, in his brief eloquent address, reminds us that purity and optimism are the characteristics of a great life. "That Florence lost a dignified 'Lord Mayor' when Dante was exiled, but that the world won a 'Divine Comedy' instead. That the publishing world lost a noble pillar when Arthur Pearson lost his sight, but that St. Dunstan's was the blessed recompense. That it is service and character that God delights to honor, and that in the long run the world honors always and only those who are honored of Him."

And here we think for a moment or two of those of us who can see. We turned happily into Massey Hall an hour ago from the city streets, silent and glittering in the new fallen snow. To us the fleecy cloud, the azure sky, the rosy dawn and blood red sunset are commonplace of everyday life. We can delight at this time particularly in pictures of dark green firs and cedars flecked with white whiteness as by fairy touch.

Every moment of the day it is ours to mark the merry smile and winsome loveliness in the eyes of those we love better than life. The duldest of us can converse in the mystical language of the landscape. We are not alone. Suppose, in one short moment, all this was taken out of our life. Suppose the blind were pulled down upon our windows, cutting us to live henceforth in one long day of night. Live there until the dawn—the dawn that Arthur Pearson knows today.

How would it go with us? To see and to hear Captain Edward Baker on the platform there is to think all this, and a thousandfold more that cannot be told.

In Our Darkest Hour.
How would it go with us? How has it gone with him? Arthur Pearson needs no cenotaph when such a witness can bear such testimony, for never was there a happier face turned to an audience than Captain Baker's, whose sight was lost in the service of Canada and the Empire. Never were the tones and cadences of the human voice more hopeful, calm and courageous than his this Sunday afternoon.

He speaks for himself, for the hundred and seventy Canadian soldiers blinded, as he was, in the war. And he speaks for all to whom the joy of God's blessed sunshine is denied.
"Sir Arthur Pearson came to me in my darkest hour," he says. "He left us . . . in our memorial service today we record our sense of loss . . . But we need no cenotaph to keep his memory green; it is in our hearts and our lives."

"Lest We Forget."
Too true, Captain Baker! The cenotaph and memorials and monuments are for us. For us "more fortunate ones" who see so much and think so little. Who talk so bravely and forget so easily. We must always be reminded of what we owe to men like Sir Arthur Pearson. We must not forget, and today there are those who didn't even so much as make one speech—cheap as it was—on your behalf in your absence, who are the "chosen of the people" to honor your memory.

Captain Baker concludes: "My heart is too full to say what I feel. His own message of hope is what inspires me and my companions. . . . I can say, with him who has gone. . . . 'Out of the darkness covering me, . . . I thank whatever gods there be for my unconquerable soul.'"

The Music.
"O God our Help," "The Saints of God," and Kipling's Recessional were the hymns we sang, played by the Highlanders' band. But the singing of the boys and the choir of St. Simon's, under George Crawford, in Tertius Noble's "Souls of the Righteous," is what lingers longest in the memory. Penitent and Victorian choristers have sung in Massey Hall, but the boys of neither choir could excel those of St. Simon's. Their tone is the purest and sweetest possible, brilliant in the upper register and rich and mellow in the lower. Every word they sing floats clearly around the hall with a conviction that only perfect naturalness can convey.

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To eyes of men unwise they seem to die—
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