

The Spirit of Christmas Lost

I think that most people today have forgotten the essential message of Christmas. They are concerned only with the externals, forms and appearances. That is the trouble with so much of modern life: our sense of values has become confused and obscured, and we have forgotten that it is "more blessed to give than to receive".

While hurrying through crowded streets and stores, most people have only time to glance at a carefully prepared gift list, thus losing the individuality and warmth which should be inherent in the gift. For weeks before the holiday season, newspapers, magazines and radios are full of enticing advertisements for Christmas gifts, little reminders that there are only about two more months to Christmas, so hurry to "so and so's store and buy up everything in sight", and wishy-washy Christmas popular songs. Shop windows are full of appropriate decorations and gifts destined to arouse the buying instinct of the shopper.

Even the children are not unaffected by this mass advertisement of the Yuletide season. For weeks before-hand they may be seen busily composing letters to Santa filled with long lists of the things they "want" for Christmas, and this have been taught to do by fond and doting parents.

So Christmas, it seems, instead of being a time of joy, a time to wish well-being and happiness on one's friends and relations, and above all, to bring a new seasonal vigour into Christianity, has degenerated to a time when children replenish their stocks of toys and clothes, when store-owners "rake-in" large fortunes, and when housewives and other unfortunates complain of tired feet and headaches.

It would really be much nicer if the "duty" in giving were to be swept away and gifts were given from the heart, if Christmas carols



would be sung outside one's door for sheer love of singing carols and not for pennies; and above all if people would only keep in mind the true spirit of Christmas, then I think that Christmas would again be a really merry season.

R. G.

Christmas Eve

The sky was deeply banked with clouds and the still cold light of the moon shone pale through the ragged edges. In the street below only the few snowflakes which dusted the sidewalk showed light, but here and there through the windows the gleam of Christmas trees could be seen or the brightly leaping flame of a candle.

The man, half hidden in the doorway, straightened and looked towards the neon sign which illuminated the distant corner. He moved slowly towards it, but his footsteps as he drew near hesitated and then stopped. "Not here," he murmured, yet he still halted. A stab of light blazed on the sidewalk as two men stepped out of the door and a wave of voices swept out on the air. The man waited as they approached him.

"—have to celebrate tonight cause the kids take over tomorrow. Hell of a holiday when a man can't enjoy Christmas as he wants." The voices faded down the street.

The tense figure moved forward and rounded the corner. From the intersection at the foot of the hill the sound of singing floated up to him and his step quickening he

walked towards it. A group of brightly clad carollers, their faces turned towards the passers—stood beneath the lights. His eyes gleamed as he watched them. "Here", he said, but even as he spoke his eyes fell on the small black pot one of the singers held clutched in an outstretched hand and the words ending in a sigh he turned away.

His aimless steps led him along the street and suddenly across from him the great doors of the grey stone church were flung open and a surge of people swept out. A richly furred woman stepped quickly into the car waiting at the foot of the steps. The door closed. As old woman stumbling as she turned quickly herself against the car as she fell. The fur clad figure barely glanced and the crowd ignored the small incident.

As he was yet turning the sound of high voices made him stop and watch as a group of children fled by, their leaping feet pounding on the sidewalk. Suddenly the smallest figure, catching sight of the tall silent man, wheeled and hesitated. He smiled and his eyes caught the street's dim light and threw it back. "Merry Christmas."

Christmas Everywhere

Everywhere, everywhere, its Christmas tonight
 Christmas in lands of the fir-tree and pine
 Christmas in lands of the palm tree and vine
 Christmas where snow peaks stand solemn and white.
 Christmas where cornfields stand sunny and bright
 Christmas where young children are hopeful and gay.
 Christmas where old men are patient and gray.
 Christmas where peace like a dove in his flight
 Christmas in the sky as the jets thunder on
 To complete missions of death 'til the battle is won
 Christmas on the seas, on the gale lashed bridge
 Christmas in no man's land of the hard to take ridge
 In the foxholes or at home the same stars shine bright
 Because everywhere, everywhere its Christmas tonight.
 —G. W. T.

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for information see F/LT. A. R. CRANE
 R.C.A.F. Resident Staff Officer
 Room 30
 Engineering Building