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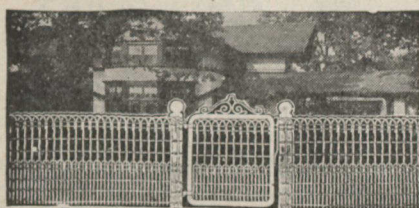
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For the Canadian Woman Who Thinks and Feels

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MURRAY SIMONSKI  
Superintending Editor

## EDITORIAL

### The Good Old Christmas Spirit

IT is only when we destroy our illusions that we become old.

The child's fresh mind enjoys simple things; he has ardour, faith and hope; he looks forward—not backward—and the future beckons with its promise. But though the glow of the Yule Log may turn our thoughts to other Christmas days long past, we may still have the self-forgetting love, the joyous, thoughtful service for others which keep the heart young; we may dream our dreams and see our visions and refuse to harbour the cynicism and disillusion which is the essence of age.

A dear old man, who taught the infant class in St. John's Sunday School, Ottawa, was passing a Home for Incurable Children one day. Glancing up he smiled whimsically. "They'll take me there some day," he said. This same old man always declared that it was his "inexhaustible store of inexperience" which kept him young. The world is full of foolish folk who want to "grow up" and to "see things as they really are," which means that they want to see hard, bare facts without the softening effect of their hidden meaning and also without recognizing their relation to other things. And these same foolish folk declare each year that this is the last time—the very last time—that they will ever give gifts, but we are glad that they are usually better than their word. No one can afford to lose the glow of good-fellowship and unselfishness which the preparation and giving of even one small gift involves. Neither can we afford to lose the spiritual growth which must result. The greatest pleasure of the spiritual man lies in self-forgetting service for the good and happiness of others.

What we wish for most at Christmas is to be remembered, just to be given a loving thought or word. No one wants to be forgotten, it is that that hurts. But there is no reason why this loving thought should not be combined with common sense in the choice of gifts. Choosing gifts is not easy since we cannot see into the mind of another, but we can try to put ourselves in their place and use our imagination in deciding what would give them the most pleasure. Sensible useful gifts are always welcome, but they lack the pure joy of receiving some dear, little frivolous thing which we have long wanted, but did not feel justified in buying for ourselves. Indeed it is these dear little frivolous things that bring with them a more lasting happiness than the most sensible gift could possibly bestow.

Turn your thoughts inward and ask yourself if you have not wanted some small thing which did not cost much, but which you did not really need. But don't go to the other extreme and buy—or worse still make—foolish things that only clutter up one's room and are neither useful nor pleasing. We all have an innate love of the beautiful—although our standards of beauty must necessarily differ—and the only excuse for anything is either utility or beauty. If we can combine these two in our gifts, so much the better, but if we must sacrifice one, then let utility go. Children can teach us much of the true spirit of giving. They give for the pure joy of it, with never a thought of return and never a thought of value. Don't spoil Christmas by letting sordid materialism creep in! Why look at your gift with an apprais-

ing eye, silently computing its cost? It was not sent you to sell and you cannot see—half-marked upon it—the thought and care and time—perhaps the self-sacrifice—that were spent upon it. Those who receive gifts in this spirit and endeavour to return others of like value are to be pitied, since they kill the love-spirit of Christmas. And besides it is in such atrociously bad taste, and why indulge in bad taste, even in our innermost thoughts?

Christmas unlocks the gates of memory and we pass within to live again many happy hallowed scenes. It brings back our first Christmas tree and the stocking that could not be made to hold enough. One of the compensations of added years and one of our greatest joys is the ability to say to those dear to us, "Do you remember?" In this we have a two-fold pleasure, the living over of the past and the happiness of the present moment. Then let us kindle the Yule Log afresh in our hearts that its light may spread out over all the coming year.

### "Don't You Remember" Letters

IT is only human nature to suffer a reaction, more or less acute, after we have experienced an anticipated pleasure, and although we would dearly like to deny it, it is nevertheless an unwelcome fact that the 26th of December is decidedly "The morning after the night before," and right here is where the thoughtful girl looking for new ways to endear herself to her friends finds her opportunity. You may have sent your gift in the usual way and at the usual time, praying that the mail and the postman would not render your minute calculations a misfit and that your precious something would find its way to the breakfast table of your dearest—for the time being anyway—at the psychological moment, but if you want to be remembered with gratitude and appreciation, write a good long gossip letter with plenty of "Don't you remembers" in it and mail it so it will be delivered on the morning of December 26th. Believe me, it will be as much appreciated as the costly gift of the day before, and more, you will be doing some one a good turn in helping them over a hard place.

Another thing worth remembering is if you have been entertained at a friend's on Christmas Day—it meant work, which was gladly and willingly undertaken and gone through either with or without help, but every one knows the look of a house the morning after, and this is just where another little kind thought comes in. If you know the family well enough, run over and help straighten up—but be sure that you are a real help and not a hindrance. If you cannot do that, then write your letter and make it something more than the usual bread and butter acknowledgment. Make it a letter worth reading, put some of yourself into it and make your hostess feel that all her thought, trouble and work was worth while since, at least, one guest enjoyed herself and was eager to tell her so. This may seem a little thing, but it will lighten the depression that is almost sure to envelop a house the morning after a party. In fact, many persons would rather have that long "Don't you remember" letter than the gift which cost you so much in time and money.

Anyone can buy and send a gift, but it is only the old well-tried friend who can say "Don't you remember."

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