

CHRISTMAS AGAIN

Christmas 1937
We shall soon hear again the bells
and the carols, the greetings and the
laughter.

This is a very happy season.
No other time or occasion has so
great an effect upon the discipline and
dispositions of men and women. There
is something about it that touches
human hearts as nothing else can.
There is much evident kindness and
goodwill. Men become brothers for a
season in the name of the Holy
Nativity.

The wonder of each Christmastime
is, that its essential keynote is not
grandeur but simplicity.

Christianity was born on a night
so long ago in distant Bethlehem. The
religion of the Christ Child has
travelled far since then and along
many roads. The very simplicities are
significant to the wondrous story of
the night when Christ was born, are
still the unchanged essentials of our
holy faith.

That first Christmas found a hand-
ful of faithful shepherds gathered at
the manger in a lowly stable. With
them, adoring, stood the Virgin
Mother and Joseph the Carpenter.

No crowds . . . No fanfare . . . No
proclamation.

In the generations which have fol-
lowed, men have sought to praise their
God by the many wonders of the
works which they have wrought.
Spacious churches of exquisite beauty
and designs; mighty organs, blending
the ancient harmonies of music
masters; magnificent bells, fashioned
that their pealing might call the sons
of men to worship; all these things
bear witness to men's great gladness
in the knowledge of their Lord. They
help provide the "atmosphere" for the
proper keeping of a modern Christ-
mas.

Vested choirs and clergy in their
robes of priestly office, with moving
dignity and solemn ritual, lead the
modern pilgrims along the Christian
road that brings them to a new-found
Bethlehem.

Bells . . . Music . . . Proclamations.
It would sometimes seem that the
old simplicities have been done away
with but in very truth, this is not
so.

The vaulted naves of splendid
churches take the place of the crum-
bling stable; marble Altars form the
modern manger but simplicity remains
and humility still triumphs amidst
the glories which men have made for
God. It is not in any of these things
that the Presence of Christ is denoted
but in the sacramental Bread.

BREAD We are back again
at the simplicities of the first Beth-
lehem, Bread is not only the staple
food of man, it is his simple food.
It can be found in the cupboard of
the poorest home as well as upon the
table of the richest man. It meets a
universal need. It is thus, in the
very simplicities of life that men find
God. The story of the Birthday of
Jesus Christ is again retold, when
men receive Him under the simple
veil of sacramental Bread.

This thought brings to our mind

a little poem.

"A Baby in a box of straw
Was all of God the Shepherds saw;
But they had heard the angels sing,
And so they worshipped Him as
King.

This Christ-Child comes to us instead
Within a little house of Bread
And, as the shepherds worshipped, we
Adore Him, in this mystery.

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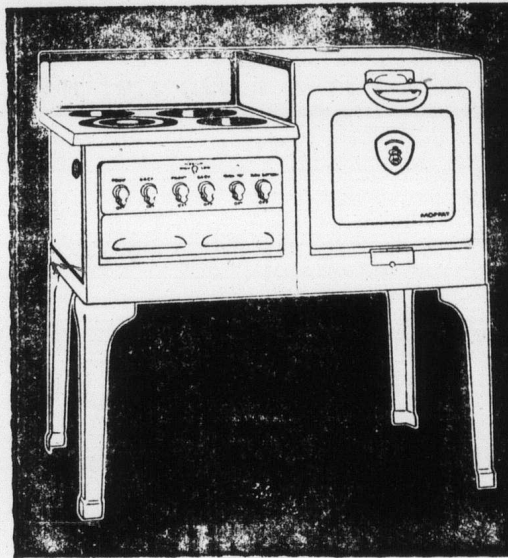
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