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MORNING-EVENING-SUNDAY

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SYMBOLISM OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

On the White House lawn stands a great fir tree, to grow on and on through the years as a symbol. All over the land communities are putting out Christmas trees. Tall, slender, graceful, beautiful, and all pointing upward. A wonderful thought, indicative of the saturation of America by the Christmas Spirit.

Of course, we believe in Santa Claus, but it is not this faith we exhibit in the display of evergreen trees dedicated to the season. First of all, Americans are self-reliant. If this were not true, then the nation would never have reached its eminence. Under God, however, for our government begins with that declaration, and continues in all its ramifications with trust in Him and the reverential understanding that help comes to him who helps himself. Around the community Christmas tree will center the thought of a nation whose aim has been to better the world by example as well as by precept. That is the living proof of our sincerity in our professions.

What does the Christmas tree signify? Those who have read Dr. Van Dyke's beautiful tale, "The First Christmas Tree," have some notion of its true meaning. When the wandering monk laid his axe against the bole of the Druid oak, he struck a blow under which paganism reeled and fell. For that oak, he set up a fir tree, and giving back to the chief his son saved from the savage priests of a heathen god, he celebrated not the Yuletide, but the Christmas. Not the pleasure of a destroying god, but the Nativity of a Savior.

So the first Christmas tree became a type of deeds done for the good of men. Have we, as a race, made any headway toward the time "when all men's good is each man's aim"? Can the record and see. Note if you will what conditions prevailed before the Son of Mary was born at Bethlehem, and compare them with what is taking place today. What other page of history discloses the contributions now so generously made for the relief of suffering, the succor of the helpless that may be noted on every hand. Give little heed to the hundred-dollar gifts, but take note of the dollars, the pennies, if you will. Out of what store they have, high and low, rich and poor, give that those who have less may share with those who have something to divide.

Christmas has done something for a world that sadly needed such a celebration. The Saturnalia was grossly material in all its senses. The civilizations of the past all went down, one after another, because they lost their vision of things spiritual. On the White House lawn the great fir tree will burgeon through the coming years, a symbol of America's faith, a notice to the world that the motto on our shield is not a mere pretense, but a vital fact. Our flag, our Constitution, our whole life as a nation, is devoted to the one great purpose, to serve and to exalt the nations of the world, under the providence of God Almighty.

That is the truest significance of the symbolism of the Christmas Tree.

BROTHER CHARLIE JUMPS THE GUN.

The new state house is in the custody of the governor, not that of the commissioner of public lands and buildings. Acting on this information there was no one to say him no when Governor Bryan decided that all was ready to move the governor's office from the old to the new building. So he moved, and he also moved some of his democratic friends and fellow office-holders along with him. No republican was included in the heira.

Dan Swanson, who is commissioner of public lands and buildings, and knows something about the matter, is authority for the statement that the new state house will not be ready for occupancy in its finished portions for thirty or sixty days yet. This means that the legislature will have to sit for a while at least in the old and dingy halls so long uninhabitable and positively dangerous. The old rooms will be dingier than ever, now that the new building surrounds the old. Also, it is stated, Governor McMullen will have to move back into the old quarters.

All of this makes no difference. The present governor will go down to the future as the first to sit in the executive offices of the magnificent new state house. He has made a permanent record of this fact, by having himself photographed in the surroundings that are not yet ready for even his modest menage. We recall John H. Morehead's when he was asked to favor a plan to erect a new capitol building. "My office at Falls City is no more comfortable than this," he said, and he expressed the opinion that the old building would serve for many years. It nearly fell down before he was out of office. However, Brother Charlie was not so easily pleased with the office, so he beat the gun, in the parlance of the sportsmen, in his efforts to get into better quarters.

Experts are trying to prove that Rev. Hight is insane. They should have little trouble in showing that he was a very crude criminal.

Custer county farmers are reported to be holding their corn for feeding purposes. We opine that this will be found general over the state.

OMAHA'S GREAT TOWN HALL.

Commissioner Hopkins is asking \$75,000 for repairs to the Omaha Auditorium. That amount of money is about one-third the sum that might properly be expended on the place in order to bring into something near a really serviceable condition. Conceived in a most ambitious spirit, the Auditorium has been a source of anything but pride to the citizens from the first. Whatever its history, however, it was finally taken over by the city, as a place for great public gatherings, for entertainments, and the like. If any suggestion that it might become self-sustaining was ever held out, it was under misapprehension.

An Auditorium is not likely to be a paying investment, if it is in any way adequate to its purpose. The Omaha Auditorium is neither. It lacks many essentials of convenience and comfort. Some of the common requirements of decency are lacking. These matters have been discussed and considered and abandoned year after year, while the condition of the old structure has gone steadily backward. Now that it is to be called into requisition to house a great national gathering, some money is to be expended on repairs that have been delayed so long.

The program outlined by Commissioner Hopkins is all right as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. We hope that, now a start is made, the work will not be allowed to drop until the building is made to approach something near what it ought to be. Talk of a newer and more commodious structure on another site is not likely to come to more than talk for quite a while. The present Auditorium will very likely serve Omaha needs for many years to come. Therefore it is imperative that repairs on it be of a permanent quality and in line with a general plan for remodeling the structure and making it what it should be.

CHARLES GILBERT, MARTYR.

A step from his narrow quarters in the airplane's body into the blackness of a storm. The deadly rip of his parachute, tearing in the gale. Then a drop to certain death, down through the snow-filled air to a doom he could not avert.

That was the earthly end of Charles Gilbert, night air mail pilot. His machine had gone bad, and he was so blinded by the storm he dared not try to make a landing. On the parachute alone his life depended, and that one hope was futile. Man again lost in the contest with the elements. Just as the army aviators were lost when their balloon exploded in the storm last summer. No man will ever know the details, but the story of the disaster is roughly pieced out from the fragments of information left, mute testimonials of what did occur.

Gilbert's duty required that he make a flight from Chicago to Omaha by night. Storm threatened, but did not deter him. He faced the terror of the air, alone, because he was on public service and could not allow the regularity of that service to fail because it entailed a risk on his part.

How much thought do we give to the comfort we purchase at the cost of other men's lives? Lately we have had the example of firemen and policemen, now we add the air mail man to the list of those who expose themselves daily for what is deemed the good of society. This one man's death will not stop the air mail, any more than a mishap to a policeman disbands the police force. Such service must go on, for it is necessary to our lives. But it should not go on with so little of casual acceptance as has been given.

Charles Gilbert is a martyr, just as is every man who gives his life that the lives of others may be more fully enjoyed. He did his work well, and died at his post. That is, after all, a man's end.

WHY WE CURSE PEOPLE.

A lot of folks will smile when they read of how a Boston woman has cursed and devoted to death a New York man. Members of the hard-boiled Twentieth century society know that it is not being done. It belongs to a time when there were werewolves, and old women held communication with the prince of darkness, who could be evoked by them at pleasure. When foolish men and women gathered in the gloom of night, and "celebrated" "black mass." Knowledge has dispelled most of these foolish notions.

Yet some folks have not entirely divested themselves of the superstitions that once restricted mankind. Anyone knows it is bad luck to get hit by a street car, but how many will tempt fate by walking under a ladder? Or who picks up a pin when the head is towards him, knowing it is a sign of bad luck? Does anyone ignore a "hunch," without regret afterward?

We not only read of "curses" being called down on people, but we generally indulge in the habit. Without realizing its futility, maybe, we daily damn this, that or the other thing. Whatever gives us momentary offense or annoyance, is made the subject of an imprecation more or less terrible, which would astonish us greatly were it brought to pass.

Why do we curse people or things? Just a habit that has come down from an age when such things carried weight with them. The Boston woman may be impotent, with her black magic, but she is just following in the trail of many generations who have held her beliefs. And these curses are of the sort that was called down on the Jackdaw of Rheims: "Oh, there never was heard such a terrible curse. But what gave rise To no little surprise, No one seemed a penny the worse."

Anyway, Governor Bryan will go down to history as the first executive to occupy the new state house.

Homespun Verse

—By Omaha's Own Poet— Robert Worthington Davie

CHRISTMAS BRINGS HAPPINESS TO ALL.

'Tis a glad, weary pair That is well nigh aware Of the presents Old Santa will leave When he glides swiftly down O'er the little folks' town Late—late on Christmas eve.

In each house, out of sight, There's a chest fastened tight— And Santa knows right where it stands; He won't need a light When he comes Christmas night— He will open the lid with his hands

It won't take him long, With his muscles so strong, To plan for the morning's glad noise. He will give—as he should— All there is to the good Little girls and the good little boys.

There's a glad, weary pair That will stand proudly there When the little folks wake from their rest— And I venture to say They will be quite as gay As the ones who by Santa are blessed

Har You Kids, Shush!



Letters From Our Readers

All letters must be signed, but name will be withheld upon request. Communications of 200 words or less, will be given preference.

Endorse Action's Views. Omaha—To the Editor of The Omaha Bee: As a resident of Omaha, I take great interest in the welfare and one particular article in The Bee by one R. U. Action is a timely one and should be perused by laboring men as well as the more general, where one depends on using street cars to take him to and from his work. I had been contemplating for some time to discuss that same subject that he handles in such manner. I have no comment to make. True, I rather think he uses a fictitious name, but that cuts no figure. If he can get recognition under the alias, I must say he voices 80 per cent of the voters of Omaha and Council Bluffs. Stop for one moment and see who it is cramming these small receptacles for advertising matter in the street cars that the dear public can be huddled into believing that the street car company is on the verge of bankruptcy at 4 cents fare. I can refer you to at least three cities where a nickel and 2 cents are sufficient to meet all demands with a neat surplus, say nothing of a toll bridge as a side issue, which is a regular part of its own. Simply because a lot of clumps either bought up by the railroad or appointed by their special allies, that would permit them to believe that they should be entitled to 7 per cent on \$14,000,000 of property that this commission says they represent. Great Caesar! I shall not tamper with Mr. Action's figures. They are there to be seen; that no one can with reason dispute, only he did not go far enough. I felt tickled to the bottom of my feet when Mayor Dahlman said there would be no advance to school children's fares. That may be a shiny head, but there is something in it besides bond coupons. He voices the sentiment of every head of families in Omaha and Council Bluffs.

The railroad commission says they are entitled to 7 per cent on \$980,000. Don't be timid, gentlemen, ask and you shall receive. The other writer has handled this so nicely that I will make no attempt to tamper with his figures and it looks up a tree to me he knows pretty near what he is talking about. If I can add any embellishments to his statements, I will gladly do so. When we consider that this enormous amount is mulcted from the poorer class of people, and our noble mayor sees it plainly, is it any wonder that they hesitate in saying what they will raise the fares to, but claim they must be raised to exist.

Mr. Editor, I am in favor of, before granting any raise in street car fares; if the writer had anything to do with it, I would have the street car company place its books in hands of experts and strangers to the conditions existing. That the tender-hearted alms-giver could once again about every three years to give vent

to tears so copiously shed over this tiny operation going into bankruptcy. You remember, a short time ago this old bugbear came so close on verge of bankruptcy that it was not carried out, but through some hocus-jocus game they enlisted enough capital to expand the bridge to such an extent that would sicken the thoughts of ever getting the common herd to vote bonds for a new one, at least for some time to come. I sometimes think we are a queer people and would, in conclusion, say that Mr. Action, or whoever he may be, has our sympathy, and give them to understand we can see things even if we are blind.

J. G. WHOOPERUP. Thirty-second Ave., Omaha.

Mr. Livesey Is Alarmed. Catonsville, Md.—To the Editor of The Omaha Bee: Health Commissioner Pinto of Omaha is alarmed over the childless marriages and says that couples who have no offspring within two years after marriage ought to have their marriage annulled. Mr. Pinto ought to look into causes, our educational system is at the bottom of the thing. Its whole trend is toward the dissolution of the family and the incoming of socialism, where the family will be entirely ruled by the state.

What we now have will be no comparison to what we will have if the childless amendment becomes a law. Under the compulsory education of the present the parents have lost most of the control of their children. The amendment is just another advance that the compulsory education has prepared for. No parent will have aught to say regarding the child until it is ill, and at that time it will be beyond his control anyhow, ready only to be a vassal of the state in true socialistic fashion.

Socialists from away back have ever said: "Give us the public schools and we will give you socialism, or, if not this, revolution." True prophets they have been. The pity of it is that our millions of club women are their right-hand supporters in attaining their goal. FRANCIS B. LIVESEY.

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Does not include returns, left overs, samples or papers spoiled in printing and includes no special sales or free circulation of any kind. V. A. BRIDGE, Cir. Mgr. Subscribed and sworn to before me this 4th day of October, 1924. W. H. QUINCY, Notary Public (Seal)

SUNNY SIDE UP. Take comfort, not forget, that sunrise never failed us yet. Celia Thaxter.

Editor Ryekman of the Fremont Tribune says it isn't so, and that we exaggerated greatly. We admit it. "The correspondent who sent us that 4-cent stamp," remarks Editor Ryekman, "certainly poured hot water all over our editorial feet." Now that we have admitted our proneness to exaggerate, let "Ryck" admit that the hot water was as beneficial as the 4-cent stamp was educational.

To May Robson, wherever she may be, a Merry Christmas and a long series of Happy New Years. No wonder she carries on so beautifully. She cherishes her friends, and she does not forget. One humble newspaper worker's Christmas is made brighter because Miss Robson remembered. If some politicians we might name, but will not, had memories like May's and as lively a sense of appreciation, that same newspaper worker could have some fit with a whole truck load of Christmas baskets for the needy.

When we told our old friend, Will Guzzlem, that hundreds of men are being poisoned and made blind by Christmas booze, he simply smiled and replied: "Call the doctor and get me a dog."

If you are listening along about 10:30 this evening and hear a rumbling sound, accompanied by an earth tremor, do not be alarmed. It will be a rather rotund middle-aged man falling from a stepladder while trying to fasten a candle at the apex of a Christmas tree. That rotund stepladder has bucked with us on other similar occasions.

On Sunday last They hurried Myrtle; They drove too fast— Car turned turtle. —Birmingham News.

On Monday last They buried Looie; Looked at his gas With a lantern—hoole! —Houston (Tex.) Dispatch.

On Tuesday last They platted Toad; He always tried To hog the road. —Hastings (Neb.) Tribune.

On Wednesday last They hurried Rife; He courted it— He sassed his wife. Warren (O.) Tribune.

And Thursday morn They interred Sap; He tried to drive With her on his lap. —Nebraska City Press.

On Friday morn They interred Jay; He disputed an engine's Right of way.

Adam Bredle wants to know what the meek will do with the earth when they inherit it. It's none of Adam's business what we do with our inheritance when we get it.

If you did not do your Christmas shopping early, you may now proceed to do it surlily. And that takes all the joy out of Christmas.

Suggestion to Governor-elect McMullen: Why not drop it in the Christmas stockings of two or three friends we might name? WILL M. MAUPIN.

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