

The Christmas Drug Store

Months ago we began to plan for this year's Holiday Business. Our stock tells the story. Our store is a veritable paradise for the little ones who are looking forward to Christmas. And the older folks will be no less pleased.

Many people have always considered Christmas Gifts hard to choose, but we have made gift selection easy this season.

Toilet Articles in profusion; Books for Christmas; New Leather Goods, especially the finest line of Hand Bags and Purses in the city. Bibles make a nice present. Why not buy a Fountain Pen? A Handsome Medallion? Some Pretty Dishes? We cannot begin to enumerate the many pretty and useful gifts our store contains. And bear in mind, that THE QUALITY IS THERE.

We very cordially invite your inspection of our stock of Holiday Merchandise.

Phone 63

A. G. WANNER

Phone 63

The Christmas Shepherds

By REV. F. ELLSWORTH DAY.

"And the Shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God."—Luke 2:20.

Of all the really beautiful pictures in the Bible, relative to the birth of the Savior, this to my mind is the best. Nothing is more fascinating or thrilling, than the part the lowly shepherds took in the heralding of the birth of the Savior. If the gold is pure God does not have to put it all on the surface, but leaves only one small part revealed and minors will dig down and find it all.

God revealed this wonderful mine to lowly shepherds of old and men of all ages have been digging down into this great mine, finding the gold, the star and the shepherds told about, and that the angelic choir sang about.

But you ask me, "What message has the Christmas time for me?"

While commercialism and the spirit which turns even poetry and religion into money-getting, have invaded Christmas and degraded it with a tinsel show, and a jeweled formalism, its roots live too deep in both the Divine and human, to be withered by such a drought and its real fruitage is to brighten lives. Chase away selfishness, and bring the spirit of self-sacrifice into human lives. The appeal of God in the Child Jesus to selfishness is illustrated in George Elliot's masterpiece:

"The picture of the old weaver, soured by injustice, wrongfully suspected of crime, eating his heart out in solitude, possessed by one, consuming passion—love for the gold he was slowly accumulating, guinea by guinea, and burying under the floor of his cottage; and then, on that night when he is robbed of his idol, his golden guineas, in all his mad despair, finding on his doorstep a little child, beautiful, helpless, ap-

pealing, who becomes his savior and his sanctifier. And how did that babe save him? By stimulating him to lift himself, by awakening in him a love stronger than his greed, a tenderness he never knew before, an unselfishness that revolutionized his character."

And this to me is the spirit of Christmas. But someone will say, "Why does this Christ have such an influence upon human lives today? We can better answer in the words of Newell Dwight Hillis:

"Let us confess that eighteen centuries have produced no hand to lift pen o'er page for tarnishing his white name. No scholar or scientist, no poet or seer, but lauds his moral genius and his spotless life. Infidelity itself will not tolerate an attack upon him. With Charles Lamb, all exclaim, 'We uncover to Shakespeare, but we kneel to Christ.' With good Jean Paul, all confess, 'The Nazarene hath lifted the gates of the empire off their hinges, and turned the streams of the centuries out of their channels.' Ere we too pass away, let Benjamin Franklin's words be ours: 'His religion and morals are the best the world has ever seen, and I hope soon to see him face to face.' Carlyle's tribute was: 'He walked in Judea eighteen hundred years ago, but his sphere-melody, flowing in wild and native tones and being of a truth sphere-melody, still flows in sounds in all our hearts, modulating and divinely leading them. Looking backward we see the centuries sloping up toward Bethlehem's hill, and all the streams of civilization flow down therefrom. Looking forward, all men wise and strong feel that the hope of society's progress is in this: That at last men will translate his spirit, teaching, and

example unto all activities of the home, the market, and exchange. Then comes that sublime day toward which the whole creation moves."

And so today the spirit and teaching of Christmas is to bring anew to the world the spirit and teaching of Jesus. The proof of Christianity is Christ. But Christ is gone. "The world seeth me no more," said Jesus to his disciples; "But ye see me, and because I live ye shall live also." Paul cries aloud: "Nevertheless I live, and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Christ is still then incarnate and still walks the earth in human form. And those in whom he lives are the witnesses for Him. Never mind about apostolic succession, let those who will, dispute about such trivialities. The supreme demand of the twentieth century is for a succession of men in whom the Christ life shines with so radiant a beauty as to compel the conviction of its divinity. We love Him because He first loved us. His love—the true loving fire, enkindles ours, and when we give it vent and draught and allow it to consume the sordid selfishness that debases and disgraces us, and the better nature rises out of the ashes, and we move among men like ministering angels sent from heaven to cheer the world's sadness and brighten its gloom.

"Oh," but you say, "Why have confidence in Jesus? Wherein is the matchless power of the Babe of Bethlehem?" Oh all the greatest and noblest names of civilization's history, not a single one has been of enough importance to establish a beginning point on the dial of the world's progress.

"Only one event towers high enough above the horizon of history to serve as a landmark and a time measure for all civilized races." This event is the great center around which the centuries of the ages revolve. On the great dark cloud of sin this event placed the rainbow of hope. No other event in human history brought such a song from the angelic host of heaven.

The skeptic may ridicule the religion of the "Man of Galilee" but if he writes a check to pay his grocer, or sits down to write a letter to a friend he must acknowledge the birth of the Jewish peasant on his check or it will not be cashed, or on his letter, or it will not be understood. Why does he do this? "Custom requires it," he may say, but whence came this custom? "Law demands it," he says again, but what man or nation could make a law that would be universal in every civilized land?

A more beautiful tribute was never paid the Master than by Jean Paul Richter in these words, "He is the purest among the mighty, the mightiest among the pure, who with his pierced hands has raised empires from their foundations, turned the stream of history from its old channel, and still continues to rule and guide the ages."

Yes, Christmas brings the good

will of Jesus, driving away selfishness. May the spirit of Christmas always be yours, my dear reader, and yet, remember the sands are falling in the hour-glass. Life is but an hair-breadth; an arrow speeding to its mark; a swift ship soon to make the port; an eagle hastening to its prey; a tale that is told, and so let us say, so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

May the Master come and touch your life this Christmas time and make your life's work bright and beautiful. May you say with the poet:

"My hands were filled with many things
That I did precious hold,
As any treasure of a King's—
Silver or gems, of gold.
The Master came and touched my hands,

(The scars were in his own)
And at His feet his treasures sweet
Fell shattered, one by one.
'I must have empty hands,' said He,
'Wherewith to work My works through thee.

My hands were stained with marks of toil,
Defiled with dust of earth;
And I my work did ofttime soil,
And render little worth.
The Master came and touched my hands,

(And crimson were His own)
But when, amazed, on mine I gazed,
Lo! every stain was gone.
'I must have cleansed hands,' said He,
'Wherewith to work my works through thee.'

My hands were growing feverish
And cumbered with much care!
Trembling with haste and eagerness,
Nor folded oft in prayer.
The Master came and touched my hands,

(With healing in His own)
And calm and still to do His will
They grew—the fever gone.
'I must have quiet hands,' said He,
'Wherewith to work My works for Me.

My hands were strong in fancied strength,
But not in power divine,
And bold to take up tasks at length,
That were not His but mine.
The Master came and touched my hands,

(And might was in His own!)
But mine since then have powerless been,
Save His are laid thereon.
'And it is only thus,' said He,
'That I can work my works through thee.'

And may this be the brightest Christmas and the happiest New Year of your life, because of the Shepherds' story and the Shepherds' Christ touching your life.

In this world the most beautiful thing is charity, which gives without hope of reward or return, simply for the love of giving, and for the love of other human beings.

What Christmas Means to Me

By REV. J. R. NANNINGA.

Christmas! How thy coming stirs in us our deepest emotions. To thee we look forward with fondest anticipations. This day has taken a peculiar hold upon the people; yea, it sways and largely affects the business world. The so-called "holiday trade" in every store window is a sufficient proof of this statement.

There is no event in the history of the world that has so large and lasting left its influence upon the people in all the lands where this day is observed.

Christmas then, to me, means:

First of all, the fulfilling of prophecy. This event was foretold by prophets of old; yea, the first announcement was made by God himself in the Garden of Eden—this promise of the "woman's seed" was followed up by other promises in the patriarchal age. In the time of Moses this person is described as a "Prophet like me." It is left to Isaiah to indicate his virgin birth, and also the leading characteristics of this wonderful child. Read Isaiah 7:14 and 9:6.

The Prophet Daniel tells us the time of His birth,—Daniel 9:24; and Micah, the prophet, the place of His nativity. Read Micah 5:1.

Christmas then to me is the fulfilling of these prophecies.

Next, it means to me the beginning of the unfolding of the divine plan of redemption. Christmas is the first of the great festival days of the church. Here God's plans begin to unfold. The faithful of old were waiting for the promised redeemer. We see this from the waiting attitude of a Simon and the aged Hannah in the temple. Yet, how this should all be, they could not fully comprehend. Mary, the mother of Jesus, could not even fathom the wonders of this night. How can the finite mind follow the infinite? It required the cross and the empty tomb to open their understanding.

In the further development of my theme, I remark, Christmas means to me the coming of the invisible God to this earth. The babe of Bethlehem is "God manifest in flesh." In John 1:14 we read: "And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

To me, the Christmas Story, is the story of His holy incarnation; the invisible God is made visible in the coming of His Son. This is the story of the angel's announcement to Mary as the Gospel narrates these events. This is the constant claim of Jesus, that God is his father,—"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." In his great prayer, (John 17) He prays for the same glory He

had with the Father ere He came to this world.

The divinity of Jesus is the only explanation of the miracles of Jesus. This explains his wonderful birth, his unique life, and gives saving value to his death.

In conclusion, I will add yet, it means to me a better understanding of God. God so loved the world that he gave us his only begotten Son. Paul exclaims: "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift." Our God is a God of love. In the Old Testament the holiness of God predominates; in the New Testament love is enthroned, and God is not less holy. His holiness is hiding behind the cross of Jesus. The law came by Moses, but grace and truth was made by Jesus Christ.

Christmas is a day of joy, in that it brings the Savior Jesus, our Lord. The love of God has found the way now to be just and at the same time the justifier.

The great God offers to a world in sin the pardon in Jesus' name. Now whosoever will, may come. To me Christ is the gift of God. I must accept Him with a glad and believing heart. If I reject Him, there is nothing but the unappealing justice of God; there is no salvation, for "other name is not given whereby we must be saved."

This, then, is the day of joy. Here the angels led in the first glad anthem. The glory to God in the highest has its notes prolonged, its inspiration has ever since inspired the songs of all Christendom.

Christmas is eminently the children's day. From the gray of early dawn—it is the only day in winter when their eyes open at that hour—at the latest hour at night, let everything give way to the little autocrats whose tyranny is courted by every man and woman who has any of the essence of love in the breast. Romp and tumble and shout with them. When another Christmas comes, some of them will not be here, and those that are will by one year be that much further from the royalty that do so fittingly become them. Christmas is for the children—let every thing bend to their enjoyment.

"Except ye become as little children" is fraught with precious meaning. The kingdom of innocence is above all earthly dignities. The crown it wears brings no anguish, entails no fear. Clear-eyed and clean-hearted, the little children of the world stand on the heights nearest heaven. The condescension that brings older persons on the same plane with them is no condescension at all, but rather a coming back to one's own best estate.

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