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TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

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FIFTY-THIRD YEAR.



## Christmas Is Coming



### Christmas Day In Bethlehem

FOR weeks there has been a steady current of travel from many parts of the world in the direction of Bethlehem, and Christmas day will find within the gates of that quaint city in the Holy Land a throng eager to do reverence to the Christ in the very grotto wherein he was born. In the early centuries Christians flocked to Bethlehem in great crowds, and, although the custom of Christmas pilgrimages is to some extent a thing of the past, there are always sufficient arrivals upon the approach of the sacred anniversary to invest the little town with a livelier aspect than it displays at any other time of the year. The inhabitants, usually imbued with the stolidity and lassitude common to oriental peoples, furnish their stores and bazaars and make preparations to welcome, and it must with regret be admitted, to fleece the unwary visitors from distant lands.

To the foreigner the city presents a spectacle of great interest throughout the Christmas festivities, which, owing to a difference in calendars, extend over a fortnight. By night and by day the town is all life. Hawkers of every variety of commodity, ranging from pumpkin seeds to roses, parade the streets proclaiming their wares in strident tones and besieging tourists with a strenuousness that seems to threaten bodily harm; in the cafes—only cafes by courtesy—Arab musicians lead cat tomboys by the hour or produce

that his presence is necessary to keep the members of the various Christian sects from tearing one another to pieces. The grotto is reached by a

erred with marble and rich hangings, which can be seen but indistinctly in the dim light of the silver lamps illuminating the vault. The exact spot

was born of the Virgin Mary." There are two altars, one belonging to the Greek church, the other to the Roman Catholic, and throughout the Christ-

cell which is also besieged by Christmas pilgrims. Here it was that one of the most illustrious of the early Christians, the famous St. Jerome, spent thirty years of his life by the light of a solitary candle making the translations and commentaries which have astonished and enlightened the Christian world. When he died he was interred in the grotto where he had so long labored, and few are the tourists who leave Bethlehem without paying a visit to his grave.

As elsewhere, there are great religious services in the church throughout the Christmas season. The Roman Catholic celebration of Christmas itself precedes the Greek and Armenian. All are distinguished by a wealth of ceremony and are very lengthy. The French consul general officially attends the Roman Catholic service, heading a procession of pilgrims and prominent people of the city. The greatest rush comes, however, at the Greek service, which is of especial interest to visitors from western countries. From an early hour the church is besieged by pilgrims, many of whom, more especially those from Russia, secure positions of vantage hours before the services are to begin. There is a steady stream to and from the grotto, the worshippers crowding in at imminent risk of being overcome by the vitiated air. Sturdy guards find it an arduous task to keep a passage clear for the clergy. To the westerner the scene is one of confusion worse confounded, for the people while away the hours of waiting by smoking, chatting, jesting and not infrequently by quarreling.

With the beginning of the ceremony a certain measure of order is obtained, but it must be said that there is nothing like the air of devotion which marks church services in Anglo-Saxon countries. This is in part due to the fact that at the different altars in the church priests of different sects are officiating. The Armenian altars have been placed at the disposal of the Copts and Syrians, whose Christmas falls on the same day as that of

the Greeks and the liturgy of St. Mark, delivered in shrill, ear-splitting voices, intermingles in a most unpleasant discord with the harsh tones of the Greek liturgy. The services seldom end before 2 o'clock in the morning, and then comes a magnificent procession through the church.

Outdoors the people who have not been able to secure ingress are keeping vigil. Bonfires, illuminations and fireworks make the city a scene of great brilliancy. There are processions and pilgrimages to sacred spots, and not until dawn do the people think of seeking their beds.

Thus is Christmas ushered in at the ancient town of Bethlehem.

RALPH W. CHILSON.

**ORIGIN OF COMMON PHRASES.**

Expressions that we use nowadays metaphorically were used in their real sense in bygone days. For instance, we speak about "beating a retreat," forgetting perhaps that the phrase comes from the fact that in war time when a retreat was ordered the drums were beaten in a particular manner, just as today it is sounded on the bugle. Then, again, one speaks of going off "bag and baggage." How many know what the "baggage" was? The general idea is that it was part of the soldier's kit. In point of fact the "bag" was originally the soldier's haversack; the "baggage" was his wife. The familiar phrase, "To give the cold shoulder," originated in France, where it was the custom to serve with cold shoulder of mutton instead of hot meat a guest who had outstayed his welcome. "A feather in his cap" comes from Hungary, it being formerly the custom for the Hungarians to put a feather in their caps for every Turk they killed. The word "deadhead" is, according to some authorities, one of great antiquity. It is said that a "deadhead" was in Pompeii an individual who gained admission to an entertainment free of charge by means of a pass in the form of an ivory death's head.



CHRISTMAS PROCESSION AT BETHLEHEM.

deep stairway and is so small that it will accommodate but few people at a time, being but thirty-five feet long by about ten feet wide. The walls are cov-

where the Virgin Mary is said to have laid the infant Christ is marked by a silver star, above which runs the inscription in Latin: "Here Jesus Christ

mas season worshippers are continually to be found at both. A narrow, crooked passage runs from the grotto to a little underground

### Leander Richardson's Letter

Special Correspondence:  
New York, Dec. 14.—While Mrs. Langtry speaks with fervid enthusiasm of America and Americans in general, there's an expression of more than passing thoughtfulness in her eyes when she has occasion to refer to Cincinnati, where she encountered an inductive experience a little while ago. It was during the actress's engagement in the chief Ohio city that the announcement of Daniel Frohman's marriage came to her, and with characteristic promptness she conceived the idea of sending a wedding present to the bride and groom. Business Manager Kiraly was dispatched in search of a suitable gift, he was told to have it sent to Mrs. Langtry's apartment in the hotel. He visited a novelty shop kept by a man named Doehme, and picked out two or three articles, paying a deposit of fifty dollars upon them, and directing that they be forwarded to the Jersey Lily in order that she might make her choice of them. As none of the lot struck her fancy, they were all returned to the shopkeeper, and Kiraly began what turned out to be a wild and fruitless scramble for the return of his money. The Doehme people at first merely demurred but finally declared flat-footed that they wouldn't give back the cash on any account, and that the best Kiraly could do would be to take merchandise to the amount of his deposit. The theater management added its influence in the business manager's behalf, but it was all in vain, and before the company left town Kiraly was obliged to put his claim in the hands of a Cincinnati law firm, which at last accounts had been unable to squeeze the deposit out of the hands of the shopman. Rather small potatoes, it seems to me.

choice of material for its exhibition, "Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall" is dull when it isn't theatrical and insipid when it isn't unreal. Presumably it will be sent to the discard as soon as something better can be found to take its place.

"A Girl from Dixie," the latest of the feund Harry B. Smith's works presented at the Madison Square Theatre this week, will remind spectators of "The Liberty Bells," by the same author. It doesn't resemble that happy conceit in theme or treatment, but it is in the same light, airy and pleasing vein. Miss Irene Bentley has the leading part and plays it with charm and freshness. In fact the whole entertainment is worthy of commendation, and although it's no easy task to draw people over to the Madison Square from Broadway, "A Girl from Dixie" will doubtless have its share of patronage for some time to come.

It is a sweeping success that David Belasco has recorded at the Belasco theater with "Sweet Kitty Bellairs." The opening performance wasn't over until after 12 o'clock at night, but the curtain now comes down by 20 minutes past 11 and the audience emerges fairly saturated with the stirring spirit of the play. Henrietta Crossman has become all at once the greatest kind of a favorite with metropolitan audiences, and Edwin Stevens, through the contribution of a singularly vivid and forceful portrayal of a "character" role, is sharing with Miss Crossman the triumph of the hour. Mr. Belasco states that he will not make any more productions this season, as indeed there's no reason why he should for this one will occupy his stage profitably enough until hot weather comes.

The verdict as to the complete success of Eleanor Robson in Israel Zangwill's "Merely Mary Ann" appears to be unanimous, and the engagement of this gracious young actress at the Garden theater beginning Dec. 28, is awaited with deep interest by theater-goers whose appetite for dramatic entertainment is thus far unappeased. It was Chicago that first gave endorsement to "Merely Mary Ann," the critics lavishing such praise upon play and players that it caused eastern managers to "sit up and take notice." In turn Cleveland, Cincinnati, Baltimore and other cities, expressed similar approval until now there seems little doubt that in "Merely Mary Ann" Liebler & Co. have found another "The Christian."

William Faversham's revival of "Lord and Lady Algy" at the Criterion theater, is bringing out a series of old time Empire theater audiences. This play of R. C. Carton's is remembered as pretty nearly if not quite the best of the Empire comedies and it is a delight in every particular. Mr. Faversham's portrayal of the rather "horsey" but lovable young lord is one of his finest assumptions and it will be associated with his name as an actor long after he has abandoned the stage.

The musical novelty of the season was introduced on Monday evening by Ted D. Marks at Carnegie Hall, consisting of the Caserini orchestra of girl harpists and pianists. The program embraced selections from the most famous grand operas and the effect produced was a combination of mellowness, finish and real power. Some of the girls are very pretty, and all of them have thorough mastery of the instruments they play upon. Mme. Caserini and her associates will visit all the principal cities before the end of the season, returning to Europe in the spring to fulfill engagements already booked.

On Saturday night Nat C. Goodwin "passed up" Shakespeare, for the time being at least, and on Monday evening made his first appearance in Edwin Milton Royle's farcical comedy called "My Wife's Husbands." Speaking of the matter with a jocosity perhaps not entirely heartfelt, Goodwin said to me: "Good bye Shakespeare. Why, he broke Booth. I ought to have thought of that before I tackled him."

Liebler & Co. have added to the performance at the Princess theater, one of the strongest one act plays ever seen in this country. It is entitled "The Sacrament of Judas," and is from the pen of Louis Therselin. In the leading role of Jacques Bernes, Kyrie Bellew has found a part that once again establishes his uncommon force, together with a versatility born of long stage experience in every English-speaking country of the globe. "Raffles, the Amateur Cracksman," is one of the pronounced successes of the season. In combination with so fascinating a playlet as "The Sacrament of Judas," there is little doubt that Mr. Bellew, E. M. Holland and the remaining company in support, will stay at the Princess theater until long after Easter.

Bertha Galland, in "Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall," has entered upon her metropolitan engagement at the New York theater without causing any unwelcome degree of excitement along Broadway. This girl has unmistakable talent, but seems unfortunate in the



"THEIR VOICES RAISE IN CHRISTMAS PRAISE."

few weeks. The scene of "The Shogun" is laid in Korea where the titular character is supposed to hold a position similar to that of the Mikado in Japan. The piece is to be produced,

like all of Mr. Ade's previous works, by Henry W. Savage.

Blanche Bates in "The Darling of the Gods," has been leading all her

competitors in Boston in the volume of box office receipts. It looks as though this Japanese drama might contest for supremacy the current career of even so powerful an attraction as

Mrs. Leslie Carter in "DuBarry." During Mrs. Carter's Harlem engagement, by the by, the downtown scale of prices was exacted at the West End theater, but in spite of this assault

upon the economy of Harlemites, the house was jammed to the very doors at each performance.

William A. Brady's imperishable drama of rural life, "Way Down East," is in New York once more, at the Academy of Music, where Phoebe Davies and her associates are evidently in for a holiday season of large proportions in the matter of crowded houses. "Way Down East" seems to prosper in advancing measure with increase of its years.

Charles Frohman is at work upon two new productions—August Thomas' "The Other Girl," which comes to the Criterion Tuesday, Dec. 9, and J. M. Barrie's "Little Mary," which is to succeed Maude Adams at the Empire Monday, Jan. 4. Upon the last mentioned date Miss Adams will take up her tour of the large cities in "The Pretty Sister of Jose," which has enjoyed great success here.

It is an interesting as well as a daring experiment that is to be made at the West End theater in Harlem next week, when Mr. Savage's English grand opera company will begin a five weeks' engagement, presenting the full repertoire of works in this class at prices ranging from \$1.50 down to fifty cents. Heretofore a single week has been "the limit" at the West End, but Mr. Savage expects, by giving two operas in each week, to supply sufficient novelty to keep up the interest. This company has three complete casts of principals, and a very large chorus exclusively composed of American voices.

Frederick Thompson, of the firm of Thompson & Dundy, the builders and operators of Luna Park, by all odds the biggest amusement enterprise in existence, leaves next week for London, to be gone at least two months. Mr. Thompson expects to bring back with him a big crowd of natives, together with the trappings and embellishments to be used in a reproduction of the famous Durbur, of which all the world talked at the time of its occurrence. The procession will be participated in by no less than sixty elephants and more than one thousand individuals.

LEANDER RICHARDSON.

#### AN OFFICE BOY'S LESSON.

In a downtown real estate office the boss called up an office boy who was first in line of promotion to a clerk's desk.

"Here, John," he said, "is \$50 I want paid at once to Mr. Blank. Be sure to bring the receipt with you."

John took the roll of bills handed him by his employer and hurried away. He was obliged to travel to Harlem, and in three hours came back looking very much upset. But he handed in the receipt all right, and went to his desk. The boss looked at him curiously several times during the day, but said nothing further to him until closing-up time. Then he asked John:

"What did Mr. Blank say when you took him that money this morning?"

"Nothing," was John's response.

"Now, John," said the boss, "I want you to tell the truth. I gave you only \$25, and you brought me back a receipt for \$50. Where did you get the other \$25? I wanted to teach you a lesson before promoting you to handling cash. Never trust any man's word when he hands you a roll of bills. Count your money every time, my boy. I merely wanted to teach you a lesson in business."

"You mean old cuss!" shouted John. "I never suspected you of a trick like that. When Mr. Blank counted only \$25 I told him you said it was \$50 when you handed me the roll. He looked at me kind of queer and said: 'What are you going to do about it?'"

"Go 'n' fight home to mother," I says, 'an' get the money.'

"I went home and told mother I'd lost one of the \$5 bills, and she lent me \$25 out of dad's insurance money which I'd been saving. When I paid Mr. Blank, he says: 'Sonny, if ever you want to change your job, come to me.'"

"And I'm going to do it. Please pay me back that \$5 and what's coming to me in wages. You are losing a good office boy and Mr. Blank's getting one. That's where I'm giving you a lesson in business." —New York Times.