THE PEOPLE'S FORUM

Letters to the Editor

Absence of "Brotherly Love"

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—I have read several letters in your paper regarding the absence of "brotherly love" existing in this big city, as well as one defending the position Philadelphians take as to strangers. It is an interesting discussion and I should like to see more letters on the subject.

One of your correspondents says that a stranger has no reason to expect any courtesy unless he has some direct question to ask. I disagree with him. If he wants to be directed some place and he needs to do is to ask the policeman. That is a part of that gentleman's duty. If you are only expected to ask a "direct question" how far would such small opportunity go toward giving to Philadelphia the title of "City of Brotherly Love"?

Such a courtesy one would expect, mind I say, in the Fiji Islands, if they were able to understand our language. There are many other courtesies we owe one another, and especially a duty we owe to strangers to make them feel at home in our midst. We may not be expected to take them into our home without knowing them, but we should. Philadelphians be considered as stupid that they cannot recognize if the person addressing them is going to hold them up or not.

This act of courtesy to strangers seems wanting in our churches, our schools, at our public entertainments, on the street cars and indeed it seems at present no matter where we may be. I have felt it in the Philadelphia churches in better large cities any show of recognition either from pastor or congregation. I have met it at the Christian Associations, where no one paid me any attention, and if I made an attempt to speak to some one, to really see if I was still able to speak, I have been turned cold.

Surely I do not enter the churches or the Christian Associations with the intention of a hold-up, and yet the people seem made me feel that way. I have been living here several years, but as yet have found no friendly point extended to me in any way, except, I might say, the few times I have wandered from the institutions where I should be ashamed to go in a good rush, clear state, where I am having to find some congenial spirit.

Is there any wonder that people get wrong in a city like this? They are not given a welcome in the right places, and I believe it is in this way that many wayward young men make their start, especially those who come to the city stranger, and have no school companions or church companions to depend upon for the guide of their lives. I POST THE COUNTRY.

Philadelphia, December 19, 1921.

Medals as Bok Prizes

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—I read with great interest on page 8, column 5, in the Evening Public Ledger of December 17, 1921, regarding the 10 prizes which have been offered for patriotism and women for prayer. I would like to suggest to him, through your valuable paper, if he would present to every patriotism or fireman who has been commended for bravery since he has been in the department a gold or silver star, to be worn on the lapel of his coat, or a bronze star on other days.

By that little emblem it would show the general public how many brave men we have in the department, and it would put pep in the younger men so that they might be on the alert to obtain such an emblem. Hoping this will meet with your approval.

FREDERICK G. HARRIS.

Philadelphia, December 19, 1921.

The Pardoning of Debs

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—It certainly was amusing to read the letter in your valuable paper the other evening, especially as it was from a specialized ex-lieutenant, who says he was surprised, pained and grieved by a recent announcement that certain officers of the American Legion had petitioned President Harding to pardon Eugene V. Debs, on the ground that he was as honest in his opinions as they were in theirs. I want to tell this writer that this ex-lieutenant is just a little more so. There never was a more honest man than Eugene V. Debs—honest to principle—and for his very honesty and frankness he was put in prison. He spoke only for the rights of the people and what our Declaration of Independence proclaims.

I am not a Socialist, but just following up what Dr. Debs said and the report of the Debs amnesty lobby and in Washington and the Senate action of Mr. Borah, which went to Attorney General Daugherty, which should have been brought out in our daily papers, also what Senator Gore and other Senators said.

I cannot understand how any fair minded man or woman can be so ignorant, narrow-minded and prejudiced. Perhaps our "lieutenant" does not know that it is a disgrace to all the world to have such a noble character as Mr. Debs behind prison bars. There should be a monument erected for such a character, equal to a Washington or a Lincoln monument. I am glad to note he justice and intelligence expressed by our Senators.

MRS. J. A. QUINTON.

Pleasant Mills, Pa., December 15, 1921.

To Find Happiness in Life

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—As a reader of your paper I was very much interested in the piece entitled "W. C. S." in last Saturday's paper. He surely has the right spirit, for I have found the only way to be really happy is to do for others when you are sure there is no reward coming to you for doing it.

May I write a few lines regarding myself? The terrible flu of October, 1918, entered our home and robbed us of a loved one, and I can truthfully state here that if it had not been for Red Cross and the canteen work I would have lost my reason. We have not located here and in this way I am coming in my application to join the War Mothers' Association.

So if you carry out "W. C. S.'s" idea you will find the true happiness in life. I only wish I was able to do more, paying back in part what I owe for more good in this world.

REASON.

Philadelphia, December 19, 1921.

Letters to the Editor should be as brief and to the point as possible, avoiding anything that would open a denominational or sectarian discussion.

No attention will be paid to anonymous letters. Names and addresses must be signed as an evidence of good faith, although names will not be printed if request is made that they be omitted.

The publication of a letter is not to be taken as an indorsement of its views by this paper.

Communications will not be returned unless accompanied by postage, nor will manuscript be saved.

How to Make Christmas Worth While

A Good Suggestion

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—I would like to make a suggestion through which, I think, a great majority of children of the poor could be reached at this period, although the suggestion may come a little late. Why would it not be possible for the big stores this year, or in future years, to have a "Christmas for the Poor" counter, to which shoppers could go after they have provided for their own families, and there make their contribution to the poor? I believe there are thousands of people who never give to the poor at Christmas, not because they would not wish to do so, but because they do not want to take the trouble and do not know how to go about it.

My suggestion would be that at the "Christmas for the Poor" counter there should be gifts of every character from five cents to $5, and they should be so arranged that the person wishing to make the purchase could do so with speed, and he should be given a little card upon which he could place his name as the donor. If he desired to do so, it would not be a difficult matter for the store to see that these presents were properly distributed in their stores through their regular or any other distribution point such as one of the city armories, where only poor children would be admitted through card, the cards tak'n up so that no child would get more than one present.

If all the stores would do this they would find it profitable business, and they could easily sell enough toys to go all around and to the poor, and if they would not care to handle the distribution, or if it was not possible to do the distribution from one central point a certain point in each ward of the city could be named, with the same system as mentioned above followed, and in this way it would not be possible to miss one child in this city unless they were too indifferent to go for their present.

Mrs. W. L. EDWARDS.

Philadelphia, December 19, 1921.

Indiscriminate "Christmas-carding"

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—I quite agree with your correspondent who complains of the indiscriminate way in which Christmas cards are sent out each year. It is one of the most annoying customs that have crept into the celebration of this holiday, and the only way to break up the habit of indiscriminate sending is for the recipient not to rush out and get a card to return, but to simply ignore the receipt.

There should be a limit in sending Christmas cards just as there is in sending Christmas presents. The card industry has advanced to such an extent that they are now made most elaborate and expensive, and to send even to those you wish particularly to remember requires quite an outlay of money. Christmas cards, like Christmas gifts, are also being reckoned there days through their commercial value rather than the intent for which they were originated.

If we could only bring ourselves to the state of mind wherein we would only make gifts, moderate in price, to those who are near and dear to us, and send cards to only such friends whom we are desirous of having feel that they are in our minds, it would relieve us of much bother at this period, and we would have a far happier Christmas period. Mrs. W. L. YORKE.

Philadelphia, December 20, 1921.

A List of the Needy

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—It appears to me that there has been a slip-up somewhere this year in the absence of printed lists of worthy poor in the newspapers, as has been done in past years, thus debarring many of us who would be inclined to give from finding some one who is worthy to receive. We read in the papers about the great poverty in the city and yet how difficult it is to observe it anywhere.

The city this year seems to be filled in the busy thoroughfares with prosperous-looking shoppers, and if my observation is correct, they are spending their money liberally. But there must be a great many poor to whom Christmas will mean nothing unless they are assisted by those more fortunate. It seems to me that this year, for some reason or other, it is harder than ever before to locate the needy.

It is not possible for the most of us to go into the sections where the unemployed live and find those who are in need ourselves. Organized charity is one source through which to secure the names of such families, but from past experience I have found them very loath to give out any information, but exact that all donations must pass through the hands of that organization. Many of us desire to distribute our gifts individually, for it is in the personal visit that we find the great pleasure in giving, in watching the conduct of the happy children when they receive the unexpected gifts.

In past years I have watched the newspapers and would find a number of letters from poor children, which were addressed to Santa Claus. I would select my little Christmas wards from such letters, but I have not seen one letter of this character this year. The hospitals and homes contain many worthy children, to whom we might play Santa Claus, but most of these institutions are denominational, and I have found that each church cares for its own kiddies in this respect, and they are often so loaded down with presents and filled with all sorts of good things to eat that I feel that I would like to reach a few children who will not be favored through this source, and if it is not too late, why don't you, through your paper, point out to us some other method through which we can reach this class?

D. A. O.

Philadelphia, December 20, 1921.

Leave Judgment to God

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—In reply to one signing himself "J. T. M." the people who look at red in a suspicious manner have such a guilty conscience themselves that they suspect every one they do not know, or any one whom they have been able to pick up a piece of gossip in order to enlarge it. The world is full of their kind, but the man who has work to do pays no attention to them, but goes about his business. It is only the filthy man or woman who stares at another, anyway, and they will always be with us.

Remember, it is always the small mind and narrow one that is always hunting gossip and meddling with others' affairs. They adopt a "holier-than-thou" attitude on the outside, but it would not be well for any one to examine the inside workings of their minds. The pure in heart look upon every one as God's creatures, whether they are right or wrong, as they are broad enough to understand that no one can live another's life or understand the circumstances of that life; they therefore do not judge another, but leave that to the God who understands all our ills. V. V. Z.

Philadelphia, December 20, 1921.

The Danger of War

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—The splendid achievement of the Washington Conference should emphasize the need for a society of nations to enforce the terms imposed and prevent another world war, which disarmament alone cannot do. This thought is happily expressed in "The Great Deception," by Samuel Colcord, from which I quote the following passage:

"Disarmament alone, large as its measure would be an incalculable blessing in that it would remove some of the greatest temptations to war and lift from the backs of men an insufferable load. But disarmament alone will not put an end to such or any manner of wars, the horrors of another world catastrophe. There were wars—yes, in the world's prime—when navies were made of small sailing ships and galley-oar boats. All the artillery of the armies of Alexander, Caesar and Napoleon did not throw as much deadly explosive in all their wars as was hurled in one hour of the war out of which we have scarcely emerged. Yet there were terribly destructive and desolating wars in their day. If disarmament should be made complete and universal (which it will not be), let another world war ensue, and as if over night, new engines of destruction will appear before which their combined armies, could they be reassembled, would flee in terror or be annihilated. We need to wake to the truth that only by a vital and permanent joining of the nations in an effective union to forbid and provide against it can mankind be saved from another conflagration which will leave the world in ashes."

We cannot take this thought too much to heart. J. T. M.

Philadelphia, December 18, 1921.

Dancing and Christianity

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—One of your readers, a Sunday school teacher, asks the question whether a consistent member of the Methodist Church is doing wrong if she dances. I see no more sin in dancing than there is in turning the house of God into a marketing place or a picture show, as is the case with most churches today. If some of these sponsors of the Church would read their Bible, perhaps they would not try to be better than our Saviour Himself. Life is what one makes it, whether at a dance or any other place. I go to dances and I also read my Bible. Why do not ministers preach on some parts of their Bible? It is because they dare not hurt the feelings of a part of their flock on account of the almighty dollar. I say go ahead, "J. D. L.," and dance. Christianity does not direct your going through life wearing a long face and wrapped in gloom. W. L. T.

Philadelphia, December 18, 1921.

Questions Answered

Canadian Lottery

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—Will you please settle in the Evening Public Ledger a friendly argument? A claims that the Canadian Government runs a lottery to help pay her war debts. B claims that no such lottery is being run by the Canadian Government. JOHN C. HANCOCK.

Philadelphia, December 14, 1921.

So far as we can find there is no Canadian Government lottery, the money to be used for any purpose. Governments do not run lotteries as a rule.

Author of Poem

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—Some time ago you printed a poem called "The Dying Californian." I clipped it and have just reread it, and would like to know the author as well as the incident that called out this poem. W. L. D.

Philadelphia, December 18, 1921.

"The Dying Californian" was written by Captain Chase upon receiving a letter telling of the death of his brother-in-law, Brown Owen, who died on his passage to California by sea in the days before there was an overland route.

Dependent Soldier's Mother

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—If a soldier's mother is dependent upon him, and for this reason the soldier obtains a discharge, what provision is made concerning his transportation? T. T. L.

Camp Dix, N. J., December 18, 1921.

On discharge for dependency, transportation is not paid by the Government.

Dagger Scene in English Commons

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—Please tell me when the famous "dagger scene" occurred in the English House of Commons. A. L. LYONS.

Chester, Pa., December 16, 1921.

During the French Revolution Burke created a sensation by suddenly throwing a dagger upon the floor of the House of Commons, saying: "There is French fraternity for you. Such is the poignard which French Jacobins would plunge in the heart of our sovereign." Sheridan threw great ridicule upon this theatrical exhibition.

First Missionaries in Japan

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—Who was the first Christian missionary sent to Japan? W. L. GORDON.

Philadelphia, December 19, 1921.

The Jesuit Francis Xavier, who was afterward canonized, was the first Christian missionary to Japan. He landed at Kagoshima on the 15th of August, 1549, and remained in Japan until November 20, 1551.

The Nearest Fixed Star

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—How far from the earth is the nearest fixed star and what is its name? T. L. M.

Philadelphia, December 14, 1921.

So far as is known at present, Alpha Centauri is nearest. This star appears to be at about 271,400 times the sun's distance from the earth, or about twenty-five billions of miles away.

A Shakespeare Play Burned

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—Is it correct that Shakespeare wrote a play which was entitled "All Is True"? E. L. D.

Philadelphia, December 18, 1921.

It is said that Shakespeare wrote such a play, but that the burning of the Globe Theatre in 1613, while the piece was being played, destroyed the manuscript. Probably parts of "All Is True" were incorporated in "Henry VIII."

Poems and Songs Desired

Jennie McNeil's Ride

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—I will appreciate it if you will publish in your People's Forum the poem containing the following as its first stanza:

"Paul Revere was a soldier bold,
Oft have his valorous deeds been told.
But why should men have all the fame,
When a loving patriot waits for them?
Just listen to me while I reveal
The dashing ride of Jennie McNeil."

G. W. C.

Philadelphia, December 18, 1921.

We will print this poem, provided a reader will send it in, and it is not too long, but often descriptive poems of this character require too much space in their printing.

A Parody on "Maryland"

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—I am very anxious to find the words of an old campaign song, sung during Lincoln's second campaign, to the tune of "Maryland, My Maryland." I know only the following lines:

"The people cry with one accord,
Death, death to all the rebel horde;
The people conquer by the sword,
Abraham, our Abraham."

C. C. V.

Philadelphia, December 17, 1921.

"Poor Child"

To the Editor of the Evening Public Ledger:

Sir—Can any reader locate these lines for me?

Poor child the prayer, begun by faith,
Grew to a low, despairing cry
Of utter misery, "Let me die!
Oh, take me from scornful eyes,
And hide me where the cruel speech
And mocking fingers may not reach."

(Mrs.) L. W. LORD.

Philadelphia, December 17, 1921.

"T. H. M." hopes some reader will be able to send in the words of the song containing the lines:

"O'Brien and his turkey
On a Broadway car did ride."

"Mrs. L. E. R." would like to get the poem entitled "The City Policeman."

The People's Forum will appear daily in the Evening Public Ledger, and also in the Sunday Public Ledger. Letters discussing timely topics will be printed, as well as requested poems, and questions of general interest will be answered.

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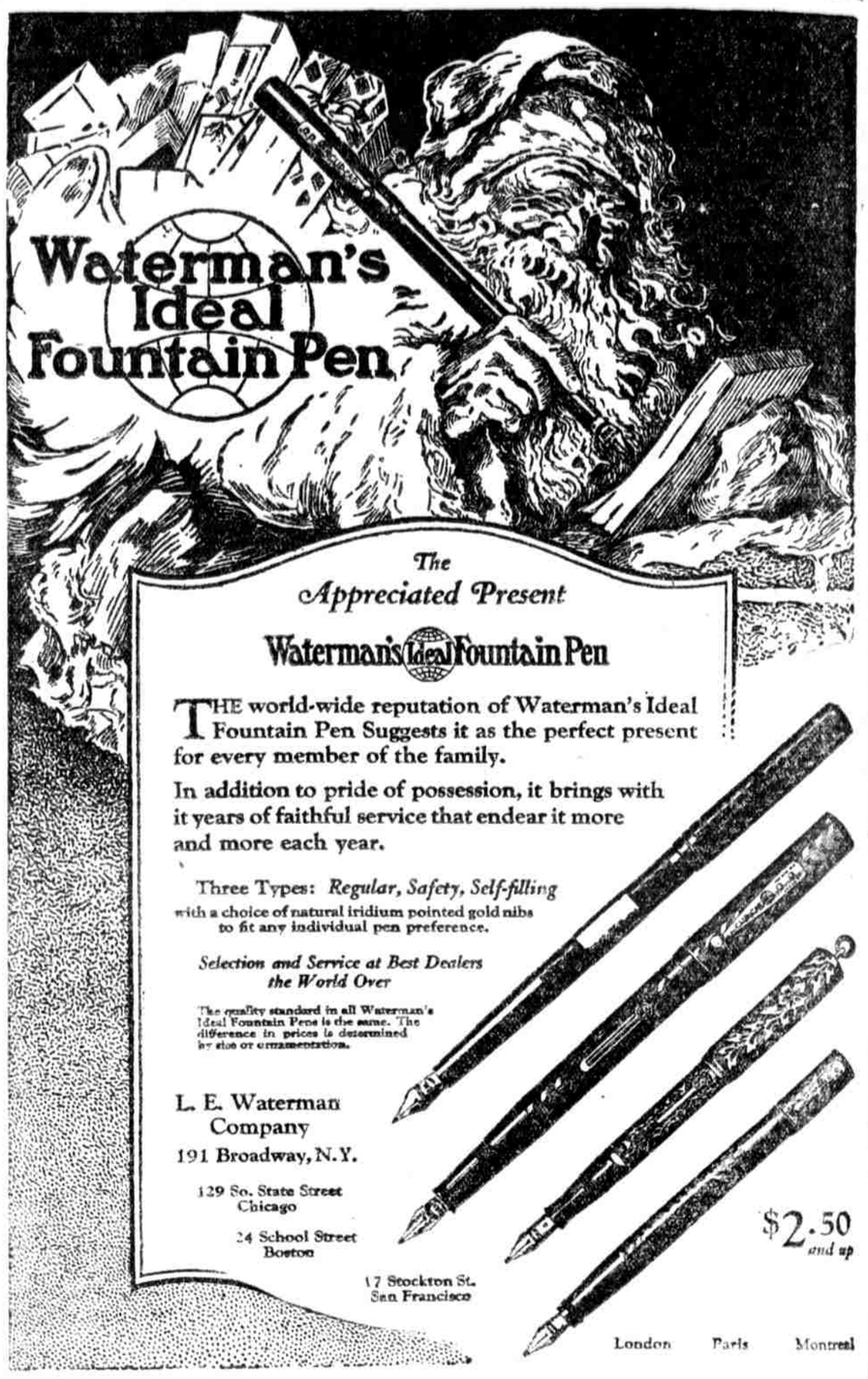

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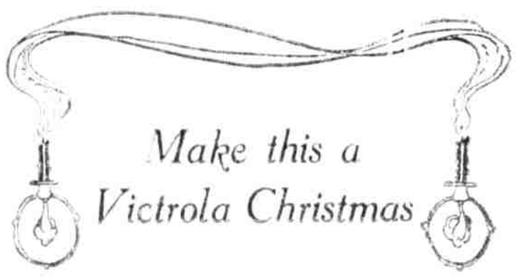

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