

# Christmas Day in Trenches to Breathe Spirit of God's Peace

**By JOHN L. BALDERSTON.**  
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London, Dec. 23.—Already there has been talk in Parliament of a Christmas Day truce on the battlefields, and the government has declined to take any action, referring the matter to the generals in the field. There will be any official cessation of hostilities is improbable but the experience of the past two years make it almost certain that little or no fighting will take place, and that in many places the enemies will greet each other in spirit of peace to the contrary.

The first war Christmas was observed by a truce all along the western front, in which the men of both armies fraternized and exchanged gifts and food and packages, even entertained one another in some instances at their messes. There was an outcry afterward from the people at home, for good Berliners could not understand how brave German heroes could shake hands or break bread with the treacherous, cowardly British, and the folk of London were most indignant that Englishmen should in any way associate with the Hun, baby killers, beasts, and assassins.

The armies smiled, but the pressure from home was strong enough last Christmas to force orders against any sort of a formal truce, and there was much less friendly intercourse than the year before.

**Story of Battlefield**

Here is a story of the battlefields which has something of the Christmas spirit in it, and I have saved it up to be told at Christmas time. The writer, a French woman, prefers to remain anonymous, and what she has written could hardly be published in the newspapers of the countries at war, which consider it their duty to foment hatred against the foe.

"The men on leave have come back to us, helmeted like legendary heroes," she writes. "When the sagger throbs of welcome has passed, sometimes a new emotion seizes us in its grip. Men who have lived in the war return from the land of the dead, and those who have come back seem to us as if they fear mingle with our love. Then, that we may be one with them and mingle once more with their thoughts, we throw ourselves into the ordinary talk of hate. We abuse the Boches—they have caused all this, they must be destroyed, we want to torture them.

"The men on leave do not seem to understand us. The Boches? they ask. They are like ourselves, poor beggars. And sometimes they try to explain things to us, quietly, as if they were talking to children. They lead us, with their tales to that narrow front where the wounded earth, torn, gorged with bodies, can no longer sustain a tree or support a house. In dark caverns, with watery noises, men are inclosed, fighting vermin, rats for each moment of sleep. Face to face with them, in similar caverns, other men, in gray uniforms and pointed helmets, live the same life, I know, and our soldiers know that there is in our soil they have dug their trenches of torture. But that these men have come to us. But they also realize that in coming to us these invaders have only obeyed an evil will which was not their will.

**Tell What They Know.**

"And the men on leave tell us what they have seen. In the Vosges Mountains they have lived for a long time

## SANTA CLAUS MAIL BURDENS UNCLE SAM

**Volume of Holiday Postal Business Shows 25 Per Cent Increase.**

With Uncle Sam's postmasters all over the country burdened beneath a volume of Christmas mail, larger by 25 per cent than in any previous holiday season, Postmaster General Burleson last night adopted heroic methods to expedite the arrival of Santa Claus on schedule. Mails in many centers have been made twenty-four hours late because of blizzards and car shortages.

To relieve congestion in numerous centers Mr. Burleson directed the railroads to impress into service fast night cars to hurry the tons of delayed mail. Hundreds of tons of parcels are held at railroad stations because of lack of cars to haul them.

Employment of fast freight equipment and a large force of mail handlers is expected to relieve congestion at affected points and permit the delivery of practically all mail matter not later than Monday morning.

Mr. Burleson's reports from superintendents showed that the present season's mail has established a new record. He said bad weather conditions had delayed trains west of Buffalo from twelve to twenty-four hours.

Serious congestion in the Chicago post-office was reported. In the past three days nearly 2,000,000 pounds of mail passed through the Chicago postoffice.

## YULE STOCKINGS NEEDED TO FILL OUT CHRISTMAS

The Central Union Mission will serve dinner to the poor tomorrow afternoon at 1 o'clock.

At 7:30 in the evening children who have no Christmas tree of their own will be guests of the mission.

More filled stockings are needed, however, and the mission is pleading with Washingtonians to subscribe for the little ones' enjoyment of Christmas. One stocking, it is said, can be filled for \$2, and \$5 will pay for ten dolls or feed 200 men in the mission's bread line, while \$10 will send a ton of coal to a destitute family as well as a good dinner.

## DISTRICT SIGNAL CORPS GRANTED YULE HOLIDAY

Members of the District Signal Corps have been given a holiday over Christmas. The company, which returned from border service Wednesday last, will be mustered out of the Federal service at 10:30 o'clock Wednesday morning. The signal men will report at the First Street Armory at 9 o'clock Tuesday morning to wrap up the company's affairs for submission to the commanding officer, Maj. March B. Stewart, U. S. A.

Capt. Glenn I. Jones, M. C., U. S. A., yesterday completed the physical examination of the officers and men of the signal company. Capt. Jones declared the men to be "the huskiest bunch he had examined for some time."

## DIXIE HIGHLANDS' NEEDS.

**Congressional Action Asked by Mountain Relief Association.**

Urgent need of rural schools for the children of southern mountain States will be impressed on a committee of Congress by a society for the relief of the poor white mountain children.

Miss Virginia Trimble, president of the society, will have the support of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Colonial Dames. Her conditions are so appalling, says Miss Trimble, that Congress should extend relief.

## WHITE HOUSE DELUGED WITH CHRISTMAS GIFTS

**President Ready to Play Santa Role. Yule Tree Being Decorated.**

Not since President Wilson has been in the White House has there been such a deluge of gifts descended on it as this Christmas. Gifts and remembrances have been brought in by the wagon load, and the mails did their share in the moving of the Christmas parcels sent to the President and his wife by admirers from all sections of the country.

Evergreens came by the barrel, as did mistletoe. Books of every description, canes, edibles, trinkets of every description, and imported candies and novelties, even turkeys, are piled high in one of the White House rooms awaiting Christmas Day.

The White House tree is being decorated, and plans for the Christmas celebration for the President's little grandniece and granddaughter are completed. Early tomorrow morning the President will play the role of Santa Claus.

Absence of social functions will mark Christmas week at the White House, as the President will entertain no one but immediate relatives. On Tuesday he will press a button that will illuminate a big Christmas celebration in Humboldt Park, Chicago.

Thousands of telegrams and letters containing holiday greetings to the President are constantly arriving.

## CANNED DRAMA SOON TO GO VIA MAIL ROUTE

At last the heroines and villains, whole battle fields, large slices of mother earth herself, and if necessary, a full size Dreadnought, are going to be sent through the mails. The Postoffice Department has permitted the "movie" producers to send their productions through the mails. And so the out-of-the-way country maid can see the latest thriller or the latest fashion, for Uncle Sam himself is going to bring them almost to the door.

Heretofore the inflammable character has forced the producers to rely solely on the express companies for transportation of their canned drama, but now they will provide themselves with spark-proof boxes made of sheet iron and take advantage of the regular parcel post rates. The new order becomes effective January 1.

## 100 OVERCOATS TO BE GIVEN.

Saks & Company will again give away 100 overcoats Christmas morning at 10 o'clock to boys with tickets. They will be admitted at the Seventh street door. The clerks will be ready to fit them properly.

This has been the annual custom of Saks & Company for thirty-three years.

A weed burner to clear the roadbed of a railroad in North Dakota, uses gasoline for fuel and is mounted on a low truck that is pushed in front of a locomotive.

## Cured His RUPTURE

I was badly ruptured while lifting a trunk a few years ago. Doctors said my only hope of cure was operation. Trusses did me no good. Finally I got hold of something that quickly and completely cured me. Years have passed and the rupture has never returned, although I am doing hard work as a carpenter. There was no operation, no loss of time, no trouble. I have nothing to sell, but will give full information about how you may find a complete cure without operation, if you write to me, Eugene M. Pullen, Carpenter, 513 Marcellus Avenue, Manassas, Va. J. Better cut the cord, and show it to any other who are ruptured—may save a life or at least stop the misery of rupture and the worry and danger of an operation.—Ad.

# GARDNER DECLARES WAR AGAINST MANN

**Repudiates Leadership Because of Indorsement of "Peace Note."**

An uncompromising fight against James R. Mann for speaker should the Republicans organize the next House was started yesterday by Representative A. P. Gardner, of Massachusetts, who announced that he would support Representative Irvine L. Lenroot, of Wisconsin, and that he repudiated Mann's leadership because of Mann's open indorsement of President Wilson's "peace note."

"I have read the indorsement which the leader of my party in Congress gave yesterday to President Wilson's offer of interference in European affairs," said a statement by Mr. Gardner yesterday. "This is the fourth or fifth time that Leader Mann has given encouragement to the Kaiser's wicked cause.

"As far as I am concerned, I will tolerate such leadership no longer. I believe that the happiness of the world requires the destruction of the dynasties of the Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns.

"For that reason, with very sincere regret, I repudiate Representative Mann's leadership. I shall support Representative Lenroot, of Wisconsin, for speaker when the next Congress convenes."

Mr. Gardner was a power in the insurrection which resulted in the de-thronement of "Uncle Joe" Cannon as "boss" of the House, and it is understood that he will put just the same energy and effort into the fight against Mann that he did against Cannon and "Cannonism."

In the same trenches. Time goes on, void and dull, their only joy, their meals, marking the rhythm of life. The Boches down below, cold gray-haired Landsturms, wait as our men do in weariness, cold and grief. And they are hungry, their food is irregular and their bread is bad. Do you know, what our men did one day when their soup was very savoury and the snow was whirling? They came out from their shelters and bombarded the poor Boches with loaves of bread, French bread, with sausages, with cheese. And the Boches showed their grinning faces with their mouths very widely open so as to eat and laugh at the same time. The officers? It was one of them who told me about it. I threatened. There was no doubt about the crime—feeding the enemy. They had to acknowledge themselves helpless to stop it.

"And the end of the story? One day our men saw some Germans gliding from their trenches, coming forward, calling. 'The mine! look out for the mine!' Our men, without believing too much in what they said, withdrew, and a moment after the earth trembled rose up and crumpled up half the trenches of our first line. This story—each soldier could tell one like it—proves that an indissoluble brotherhood unites one army with another. Comrades in arms, they fight in the same trench. They do not all acknowledge it, because they are afraid of the truth. They even excuse themselves sometimes, as my officer did, who added, 'You see they were old men. We were very fond of them. The younger men would never have done what they did.'

**Women Replace Men.**

"Beyond the daily slaughter, on each side of this barrier of horror, made of heaped-up bones, and of living bodies which suffer, there unrolls a great expanse of peaceful fields, of forests, of villages, of towns crowned with smoke. Everywhere is going on the same labor of fruitful creativeness. And in Germany as with us, women work to replace men and women watch by the hearth. From Germany and France letters are sent daily, inclosed in canvas sacks, to the soldiers. And if by chance the postbags from Germany went a few yards too far and fell in the French trenches, our soldiers would find once more, in another language, the same regrets and the same anxieties, they would recognize the same infinite pity hidden by the same courage, the same despairing helplessness.

"Soldiers know no hate. And because they have heard on the battlefield the wounded of the two camps cry out with the same eternal 'Mother!' they forget vengeance. The dying soldier forgives. He knows that he who killed him did his duty, the mere instrument of a force which destroys, like himself. He prays that his death may be the ransom of other lives. Do not let our men who return live with us in vain—let us believe them, they who know the truth about the war. They understand that revenge would strike men like themselves, and they remind us of the bond unbreakable which exists between all women. Should the soldier who has killed our son or our husband suffer or die as we wish, some woman like ourselves will feel life snatched from her. And the grief of this poor woman will add all its weight to our own grief, because this woman, this German woman, is our sister."

# MORE ADDED STARTERS IN COMMERCE CONTEST

**Additional Nominations Made for Places on Board of Directors.**

As the last days for nomination of directors of the Washington Chamber of Commerce draws near increased interest is developing.

Additional nominees posted during the week for the ten vacancies are: J. Blake Gilpin, F. A. Van Reuth, S. T. Cameron, Louis E. Bruninger, R. J. Barnshaw, Carl Droop, George W. Harris and Walter Brownley. There are forty-three candidates.

A Leftwich Sinclair, now first vice president, seems to have a clear field for the presidency. His candidacy has the endorsement of W. F. Gude, James F. Oyster, W. T. Galliber, Charles Howar, Washington Topham, Carl Droop, B. W. Gay, H. H. Glasie, Albert Schultze, Lewis J. Sattin, Robert N. Harper and John F. Glavin.

The school's committee heard H. H. Brown, of the Bureau of Education, in the matter of teachers' pensions.

**CLARA BARTON BOOKS AID MEMORIAL FUND**

"The Story of the Red Cross," written by Mrs. Clara Barton, deceased, and recently placed on special sale at several local department stores by the Clara Barton Memorial Association, was eagerly sought by Christmas buyers.

The book is a reliable history of the Red Cross, its origin and its adoption by treaty by forty-two countries before the United States was included in the num-

# CLARA BARTON BOOKS AID MEMORIAL FUND

The Prudential Insurance Company of America has made Christmas cheerier for its home office employees and industrial field men by an announcement of additional salary payments to be made in January. About \$500,000 will be disbursed in this manner. None of the officers of the company, or managers will share in the distribution.

Notice of the intention of the company reached the home office and field yesterday in the shape of letters from President Forrest F. Dryden, and were inclosed in the usual Christmas greetings sent out by him.

A patent has been granted for a twisted wire support with which an incandescent lamp can be hung on the head of a bed or upon almost any piece of furniture.

The proceeds from the sale will be added to the contributions to the Barton memorial fund.

**\$300,000 IN BONUSES.**

# Let the People of Washington Decide

## The Question of PROHIBITION in the National Capital is of Vital Interest to the Social and Business Life of Washington.

The National Capital today represents, as it should, the highest type of community in the entire United States.

Now the citizenship of the District of Columbia is made up of both of these classes, and one of the classes is in the majority. The foundation rock of this Nation is not imperial will, but the will of the people, a majority of the people.

There are those who would keep it as it is, improving with the trend of the times, but avoiding changes that are revolutionary, realizing that revolutions are of a past age and that all of their accomplishments can be as quickly attained in paths of peace and without the immediate disastrous effects that history connects with all revolutions.

Therefore, legislation so vitally affecting the social and business interests of the city of Washington should be left to the people of Washington to decide.

Then there are those dissatisfied ones who would tear down where they cannot construct; those who would enforce their will regardless of the established order of things, or the rights of others.

To say that the city of Washington is not capable of balloting on a matter as important as PROHIBITION or any other subject is to cast a reflection upon Washington which if taken seriously, which it is not, would hold the city up to the shame and scorn of every section of these truly great United States.