

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

THIS THE GENERAL THEME OF CHRISTMAS SERMONS HERE.

LARGE CONGREGATIONS AT CHURCH.

The Religious Observance of the Anniversary Very General—Spiced Music by Well-Trained Choirs—Some of the Discourses.

No years has the sacred side of Christmas been so generally observed in Richmond as this. Sunday was as truly a day of sincere worship as any year now in its last moments has seen. The people of all creeds and non-professors flocked to the churches in great numbers, and Sunday morning almost every place of worship in the city was well filled. The occasion was truly a glad one, and the people in church and out were their brightest faces. But though all there was a spirit of true devotion and reverence for the day, which marked not only the birth in human form of Jesus, but also His victory over death and the resurrection.

The ministers of the city now so old, but of which the world does not seem to grow weary of, how, 1,828 years ago, a babe was born in a manger, and how that babe had the greatest mission that ever was given to child of woman to be the Saviour of the world.

The discourses from the pulpits were all of a high order, tender, and thoughtful, making an impression for good on the people. Of especial mention, also, was the music in all the churches. The choristers had worked hard and practiced much in bringing the difficult and beautiful Christmas anthems to the best rendering, but the results repaid them. Many persons who do not go to church at all, or only rarely, went on Sunday to "hear the music." The choir thus helped the ministers.

Though it is customary to shoot cannon crackers and blow horns, Sunday was remarkably quiet. Somebody is to be thanked for a quiet day. It is no little thing that in a city of a hundred thousand people a Christmas Sunday shall be so quietly and secretly observed as day before yesterday was.

The horns were not heard at all, and the church was not an explosion of fireworks. It was as much a "Day of Rest" as any Sunday of the year—no disorder, no drunkenness, no sacrifice of the rights of others.

Anniversary of Leigh-Street School. A service of much interest and marking an epoch in the history of the Leigh-Street Baptist church Sunday morning at 10:30 o'clock.

It was the celebration of the forty-fifth birthday of the school. The Sunday school of this church is now the second largest in Richmond, and were it not for the fact that the school has sent out two others in very recent years, it would easily hold the first place. It was organized Christmas-Day, 1853. The day was Sunday, and it seemed eminently fitting that the school should observe the anniversary.

There were no usual school exercises, but at 10:30 the school and church united in the services, which took place in the main audience room of the building. Rev. M. Ashby Jones, presided, and with him on the pulpit stand were Rev. A. E. Dickenson, D. D., once a pastor of the church, and Professor Charles H. Winston, of Richmond College, who made the address of the occasion.

PROFESSOR WINSTON'S ADDRESS. Professor Winston, as usual with him on such occasions, was happy in his remarks, and doubtless helpful to many by his earnest exhortation that the school make a new and firm resolve to do still greater work during the coming year than ever. He took on new and broader than ever a note of the occasion.

Professor Winston, upon being presented by Mr. Jones, said that he found himself somewhat embarrassed in being called upon to speak to a school of children, and he said, "I will speak to the children, and you boys and girls, young ladies and young men, and sprinkled about the congregation were those like himself, whose heads were white with the frosts of many winters. He had a message for each class, but as that could not be done, he would consider them all children once more and talk to them as children. The speaker did talk on "Christmas," but he said in plain language a great many things that were wise and true for the young and old alike. When he had concluded Mr. Jones thanked Professor Winston for his address. The benediction was pronounced by Dr. Dickenson. The music rendered by the choir was appropriate and inspiring, a programme of which has already been printed in these columns.

ELECTED SCHOOL OFFICERS. In the afternoon at 3:30 o'clock, the adult members of the school met in the lecture room of the church and elected officers for the year. Mr. S. E. Woodin was chosen superintendent, Mr. R. C. Carden superintendent of the primary department, Mr. F. B. Butler, secretary, Mr. R. A. Gary, treasurer, Mr. C. H. Davis, pianist, and Mr. Duell, librarian.

The pastor of the church preached, as usual, at night, to a large congregation. The annual distribution of candy, nuts, raisins, etc., among the scholars took place yesterday morning. There was a full attendance, and the recitations, songs, and other exercises were bright and attractive. Santa Claus was on hand and gave to each person present a bag full of good wishes.

Presbyterian Young People's Celebration. In the Third Presbyterian church, at Twenty-sixth and Broad streets, a Christmas celebration for the young people was held at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The exercises were presided over by Mr. Edwin Pleasant, superintendent of the Sunday school. The Rev. James E. Cook read the Scripture lesson, and led the devotional services.

The Rev. Robert Pollok Kerr, D. D., of the First Presbyterian church, delivered an address on "Bethlehem." Dr. Kerr gave his hearers an account of a visit made to Bethlehem a few years ago. He said, in part: "Bethlehem is about fourteen miles south of Jerusalem, reached by a two-hour drive. It is a town of about 10,000 inhabitants. It is a town of three reservoirs, called 'Solomon's pools,' because built, together with an aqueduct to Jerusalem, to provide water for the capital. The pools and aqueduct are still used, and bear witness to the wonderful engineering of the wise King.

"The tomb of Rachel stands not far from the wall of Bethlehem, and near the city gate is David's well." "The history of the birth of Christ was born, is now under a church, built over the spot in the fourth century by Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great. There is little doubt about this being the actual spot where the babe was born. The exact spot of the birth is marked with a silver star set in the stone floor of the cave, or grotto. This star all devout visitors kiss. At the time of my visit, the Roman service of the Nativity was going on in the church. A choir of seventy-five monks and boys sang, and the music was most inspiring. Long ago over this venerable town of Judaea rang out the hymn, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.' This is one of the most heavenly of all places on earth."

The absence of the pastor, Rev. C. R. Hyde, in Florida, was greatly regretted. He would have been in the city, and ready by his sojourn in the flowery peninsula. The church was beautifully decorated with evergreens, conspicuous among which was a quantity of gray moss sent from Florida for the purpose by Mr. Hyde. The choir and Sunday school was beautiful and greatly enjoyed.

The Humanity of Christ. At the Second Presbyterian church there was no special Christmas music on account of the critical condition of Dr. Hoge, the beloved pastor, for whom the earnest prayers of the congregation were offered. Rev. Donald Guthrie preached a sermon suitable to Christmas season, taking for his text the words, "Behold the Man!" and for the theme of his discourse, "The Humanity of Christ in Relation to His Redeeming Work." The speaker referred to the blending of the supernatural and natural in the birth of Christ. The announcement of the archangel to the shepherds; the anthem of the Heavenly Father; the voice of the wise men; the Divine. On the other hand, the lowly manger, the mother's pangs, the coming and going of the travelling crowd, the helplessness of the Babe—these speak of the humanity of Christ. So throughout the whole of His life, the humanity of Christ is the theme of the divine and the human. On other occasions the divine had been dealt with, and Christmas was a suitable time to treat of the humanity of the Son of God.

(c) His humanity. His divinity supplied two points in regard to this—viz: The authority which characterized His preaching and the subject matter of that preaching. As God He had wandered throughout the realms of infinite truth and had gathered in His human life, which none other had been able to do, which none other could do, the reality of the God's claims on the affections of men; the practicality of the commands that the Father laid upon men, and the possibility of realizing the promises which He himself had not here, then hereafter. He was His own message—"Follow thou Me."

2. His humanity in relation to His work of reconciliation. In reconciling God and man Christ did two things: He kept the law of God in His humanity, and He endured the penalty of death. He did not turn away. He actively obeyed and He passively obeyed. In His humanity He was the Representative Man, embracing "in Himself the long unfolding of His humanity as a complete man as the one that the Lord had made "in the beginning." The speaker then, in an illustration, went on to show the necessity of this absolute perfection of manhood in Christ. He said that the only way of reconciliation. It was also in His humanity that He offered Himself as a sacrifice to God. Divinity, as such, could not suffer and die, and Christ's body and human soul became one through His humanity. He made atonement for sin; through which He fulfilled the will of God.

3. His humanity in relation to His present exaltation. He is more glorious in person now than He was before He came to earth. Then He was God, and He is God-Meet, sometimes said that Christianity takes a degrading view of human nature. Not so, it exalts it in the Redeemer to the Throne of God Almighty. He is not God, but God and Man in one glorious, Babe of Bethlehem, all-wise, all-powerful Divinity became joined to frail humanity, an eternal union was effected. This is the Christmas story: God came to earth; He talked and taught; He did and endured; He made the nature of the universe, and He linked one individual heart to Christ in an eternal union, we "shall sit with Him on His Throne."

A Sermon on the Christmas Dinner. Large congregations gathered at the First Baptist church, at the Methodist church, both morning and night. The music was of a high order and the sermons were in keeping with the spirit of the day. Dr. Tudor preached in the morning on "The Christmas Dinner." The text was, "The Christmas Dinner." The speaker said, in part: "The coming of Christ, no doubt, dated the turn of the day of this world's history towards its end and consummation. The message of the angel of the morning does not indicate the evening time, but was rather the principal meal, according to Oriental custom, after noon, near the turn of the day towards its end. The forenoon of our world was the time of the day when the world was rushing on to noon. The entire eastern Continent was known. Julius Caesar had already pushed discovery, conquest, and progress to the British Isles on the western outpost of Europe, and the Kingdoms of the East, in his possession the fairest sections of Europe, Asia, and Africa. America remained for the afternoon's work, and was duly found 1,500 years after Christ. It had been a stirring forenoon, the passionate, unceasing work of the world, the work of Abraham, under Moses, Joshua, and the Judges, had swept over covering nations and planted its own nationality in a very land of promise on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, the Kingdom of David and Solomon had won universal renown. Mearwhile, Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, and Tyre had their brilliant career. Greece and Asia Minor, the lands of letters, of enterprise, and of all warfare and civilization, had reached their full splendor. The Indies and China were hoary with age. Giant barbarians held the north of Europe. At the very centre and heart of the great Continent Rome had spread out, overshadowing the eagle wings, and had devoured with her eye of dominion the choicest seats in all the world of national grandeur, intellectual prowess, art, science, wealth, and territory, and at the very centre of this Roman empire, Christ had come, the Babe of Bethlehem, in the year of the world. The sun of all worldly glory hovered still in the meridian. The Augustan age of Rome, in which Christ appeared, is noted in history as the most brilliant of all the ages of the world. The world had reached in itself the world's forenoon, all literature and science and art and wealth and luxury; all the highest types of civilization and codes of law and systems of jurisprudence; all the valor of arms and vigor of conquest; all the grandeur of chivalry and romance and ambitious achievement; all that may be considered ennobling and glorious in man; all that must be considered low, degrading, and bestial.

NOURISHMENT OF THE SOUL. "It was high noon. The middle ages followed, the world was in the last year, which we may be tabling. Peary, Nar-

LIEBIG COMPANY'S EXTRACT

OF BEEF is a perfect tonic; it braces up the system to resist Neuritis, Glands and Inflammation; it keeps the healthy and food; its effect upon the system is lasting, and it is not a stimulant.

Spain, and spoke in language so plain as to leave no doubt as to his position on the questions involved in the contest. "Spain," he said, "stood for all that was despotic and oppressive in civil and religious government, and from the beginning of the contest until the treaty of peace was signed, and since I have been persecuted by Providence, and gradually that Providence is making itself seen. The United States, in that contest, stood for the right of the individual for civil and religious liberty. Thus faced each other the Latin and the Anglo-Saxon, and, as was inevitable, the Anglo-Saxon and that for which he stood triumphed. The spread of the civilization influences of God's Kingdom is so infinitely important that questions of political expediency, and I believe it to be God's purpose to use the people of our comparatively young but great nation to open up the countries recently under the tyrannical domination of Spain to the light which cometh through untrammelled faith in the great and ever-living Prince of Peace. I believe God has preserved this great nation for this great purpose.

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an imitation—especially imitations of Pearlina. Many are dangerous. And dangerous washing powders can never be cheap—no matter how little you pay for them. Peddlers and untrustworthy grocers will tell you the stuff they offer is "Pearline," "same as," "as good as," "made in the same factory," etc. It's false. Pearlina is the standard washing compound; never peddled; gives no prizes; simply stands on its merits as the best, safest, and most economical.

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HAMMOND, 107 East Broad Street.

WANTED, every one that is in need of a good Stove to call and inspect our line of WILSON HEATERS.

They are the best wood-burners on the market, and the price the lowest. If you do not want a stove may be you need a roof covered. We can furnish V-Crimp Corrugated Roll Steel and Tin put up in rolls. Special attention to mail orders. Call or address BALDWIN & BROWN, Opposite Old Market, Richmond, Va.

FIGHT WITH ROBBERS. THREE HIGHWAYMEN ATTEMPT TO PLUNDER A SALOON. A POLICEMAN WOUNDED. One of the Desperados Shot Through the Chest—The Other Two Make Escape—The Wounded Highwayman in Dying Condition.

TACOMA, WASH., December 25.—Policeman Brown has been wounded and an unknown highwayman probably fatally shot in a duel between three masked robbers, a policeman, and a saloon-keeper. The three highwaymen burst open Peter Pepp's saloon door, at south Twelfth and K streets, calling him to throw up his hands. Without further warning the men began firing at him. Pepp seized his revolver from a shelf and replied. Patrolman Brown heard the shooting and rushed to the scene. About a dozen shots were exchanged before one of the robbers was dropped with a bullet through his chest. His name is James Garrett, of San Francisco. He has been in Tacoma for about three weeks.

Patrolman Brown was wounded in the chin. The other two men ran out and disappeared. It is generally believed that the men are part of the gang of high waymen who have been participating in the frequent hold-ups which have occurred recently. The wounded highwayman is at the hospital in a dying condition, and unable to talk.

Virginia and Immigration. Colonel Stryck Thinks This State Should Try to Secure Settlers. Colonel Frank D. Stryck, of the Bureau of Immigration, Washington, D. C., was in Richmond to spend the Christmas holidays, and at evening Mr. Stryck came down to the city. He is an old resident of Richmond, but for a number of years has been in the government service, holding a highly responsible position in the Bureau of Immigration. He was warmly greeted by his many friends here and several entertainments were given in his honor.

Colonel Stryck is an enthusiast on questions of immigration and expressed surprise that Virginia did not strive more earnestly to secure some of the immigrants to this country. "We are," said he, "bringing to America now the best class of immigrants, and they came over, and they will make good citizens for any community in which they settle. The Western States make efforts to secure them and are very successful, but Virginia does not appear to want them. She makes a mistake, I think, in not trying for them."

THE CINCINNATI WILL REMAIN. To Take Part in Ceremony of Final Evacuation of Cuba. WASHINGTON, D. C., December 25.—It was announced at the Navy Department today that the cruiser Cincinnati would remain at Havana until after January 1st, and take part in the ceremonies attending the Spanish evacuation of Cuban territory, at the conclusion of which the vessel will go to New York. The latest reports indicate that the Cincinnati sustained no material damage during the running ground in the harbor of Santiago several days ago.

A telegram was received, saying that the collier Vigilant had arrived at Manila with her cargo on fire, but giving no details. Commodore Cromwell, commandant of the new naval station at Habana, has notified the Navy Department that he would remain at Habana until after January 1st, and take part in the ceremonies attending the Spanish evacuation of Cuban territory, at the conclusion of which the vessel will go to New York. The latest reports indicate that the Cincinnati sustained no material damage during the running ground in the harbor of Santiago several days ago.

WALTER ROSSER DEAD. Father of Tennessee Soldier Acquitted of Killing Hildebrandt. BRIDGEPORT, ALA., December 25.—Walter Rosser, Sr., father of the Tennessee soldier who was recently acquitted of killing Henry Hildebrandt, at San Francisco, is dead at his home, in Stephenson, Ala. He had arrived with his wife the day before his death, which is said to have been caused by grief and exposure. He was division superintendent of the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis railroad.

File on the Logs. (For the Dispatch.) File on the logs, pile on the logs, Let's have a roaring fire to-day; Its cheerful light will put to flight The little clouds that hide the ray.

File on the logs, pile on the logs, And gather 'round the Christmas blaze, And draw in songs old feuds, and wrongs On this, the gladdest of the days.

File on the logs, pile on the logs, The bells ring out with festive chime; Let lad and lass the glad day pass In mirth and music to its rhyme.

File on the logs, pile on the logs, Hang high the boughs of mistletoe, Where, some perchance, between the dance May pause beneath, when tired grow.

File on the logs, pile on the logs, We have a roaring fire to-day; No gloom should bide on Christmas-tide, But every heart be bright and gay.

Don't use an imitation—especially imitations of Pearlina. Many are dangerous. And dangerous washing powders can never be cheap—no matter how little you pay for them. Peddlers and untrustworthy grocers will tell you the stuff they offer is "Pearline," "same as," "as good as," "made in the same factory," etc. It's false. Pearlina is the standard washing compound; never peddled; gives no prizes; simply stands on its merits as the best, safest, and most economical.

Blooming and Decorating Plants, ROSES, Violets, and Cut Flowers.

HAMMOND, 107 East Broad Street.

WANTED, every one that is in need of a good Stove to call and inspect our line of WILSON HEATERS.

They are the best wood-burners on the market, and the price the lowest. If you do not want a stove may be you need a roof covered. We can furnish V-Crimp Corrugated Roll Steel and Tin put up in rolls. Special attention to mail orders. Call or address BALDWIN & BROWN, Opposite Old Market, Richmond, Va.

FIGHT WITH ROBBERS. THREE HIGHWAYMEN ATTEMPT TO PLUNDER A SALOON. A POLICEMAN WOUNDED. One of the Desperados Shot Through the Chest—The Other Two Make Escape—The Wounded Highwayman in Dying Condition.

TACOMA, WASH., December 25.—Policeman Brown has been wounded and an unknown highwayman probably fatally shot in a duel between three masked robbers, a policeman, and a saloon-keeper. The three highwaymen burst open Peter Pepp's saloon door, at south Twelfth and K streets, calling him to throw up his hands. Without further warning the men began firing at him. Pepp seized his revolver from a shelf and replied. Patrolman Brown heard the shooting and rushed to the scene. About a dozen shots were exchanged before one of the robbers was dropped with a bullet through his chest. His name is James Garrett, of San Francisco. He has been in Tacoma for about three weeks.

Patrolman Brown was wounded in the chin. The other two men ran out and disappeared. It is generally believed that the men are part of the gang of high waymen who have been participating in the frequent hold-ups which have occurred recently. The wounded highwayman is at the hospital in a dying condition, and unable to talk.

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