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CHRIST TODAY

I sat in the blazing firelight,
Where the embers flash and glow,
And I read the praises of Jesus,—
A strong, resistless flow
From the hearts of many singers
Who his presence and power know.

I thought of that first glad Christmas
By Bethlehem's lowly stall;
Did the shepherds or the wise men,
Who adoring there did fall,
Think that the King and Saviour
Would die on a cross for all?

And it seemed, as I sat there musing,
That he stood there in the room,
Not with great pomp or glory,
Nor wrath proclaiming doom,
But a radiance of cheer glad and home-like,
Dispersing every gloom.

But he spoke with a voice low with sadness
That echoed the pain of the rood:
"Why, oh why have we builded so slowly
The kingdom of world-brotherhood,
Where men shall to men be true neighbours
As our Father hath made them one blood?"

"There are some who in rituals praise me,
Loud chant they, and frankincense bring,
But why do they love not their brothers
Who different rituals sing?

"There are some who in creeds call me God-head,
Who name me the only true Light,
Eut why do they work not with others
Who different credos recite?

"Men gather together to seek me,
My Father's and my love to know;—
Why shun they our other true seekers,
On different trails though they go?

"There are many in anguish and terror,
In ignorance, squalor and sin,
Who are able, were hands giv'n to help them,
A rich and a free life to win.

"Why then are my foll'ers thus idle,
Or living for pleasure and greed?
Why send they small help for the suff'ring,
A little to those in great need?

"Why talk men of being true Christians,
Of following me to the end,
When a brother whose skin's a shade darker
They never will treat as a friend?

"Think ye that your culture is Christian,
When 'tis based, for its clothing and food,
On the greed of competitive getting,
On the weaker ones' anguish and blood?

"When men loose the wild lusts of slaughter,
Or armaments deadly increase,
In my name they dare say they do it,
In my name, the 'Prince of Peace'

"Yet, in spite of the strife and confusion,
Oh follow'er of mine, keep on!
As we all work together united,
The Kingdom of Love will be won.

"Keep on until all men shall know me,
Until all from the East to the West
Shall see that the way of high service
Is the true way to life, full and blest.

"Keep on in this highway unfalt'ring,
Through joy and through sorrow keep true;
Though the crosses be many and heavy
Keep on! for I'll see you through."

S. P. H.



THE SONG OF PEACE

"Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people—For to you is born this day a Saviour.... On earth peace, good will among men."

A proclamation of peace always commands attention. It is a significant thing for everybody when men stop fighting. The noise of conflict deafens the bystanders as well as the combatants. Weary of the days of jealousy, controversy and conflict, we listen with the utmost eagerness for the note announcing the possibility of peace. We welcome again at Christmas time the ringing song of the heralds of world peace. It is a blessing that the turn of the year demands our renewed attention to their message.

* Many have thought the angels' song was a decree, and have noted with doubt the centuries of conflict that have followed the birth of the Prince of Peace. But peace does not come by fiat. The peace of the Christmas declaration was the expression of an attitude, an attitude of God towards men and of the possibilities of that attitude among men themselves.

There are several kinds of peace. Some men feel that the only kind of peace worth having is that of submission. The so called peace of the Roman Empire was a peace of that kind. It takes two sides, each with some power, to make a fight. When one side gets all the power, and the other side has none, peace may ensue. I have seen this kind of enforced peace in a family: "I cannot stand the noise of those children," says the father "they must stop it or go to bed." Peace may follow such a declaration, but it is the peace of submission to superior authority. There is much of this type of peace in the world, but it is not the peace the angels sang about.

Then there is the peace of exhaustion. "Man is a fighting animal," say certain scientists. "That is the way of life for him." So men fight for the sake of fighting and when peace comes, it is because strength and resources have been exhausted for the time being. According to newspaper reports of preparations for the next war in Europe, the present peace

there seems to be of that kind. God grant that it may not be so! I have seen this type of peace in a community where two neighbours were at lawsuit with each other for a period of years until each had spent all his substance and there was nothing to do but desist. Many think that life necessarily consists in this alternating cycle of fighting—peace, peace—fighting. But the message of Christmas does not contemplate this type of peace.

There is the peace of mediation. On the school playground of my boyhood days, sometimes a violent quarrel would break out between two boys. Aroused by the swelling noise and confusion as the boys rushed to see what was going on, the principal would emerge from the school door and rapidly approaching the group would soon have each of the two combatants by the collar, dragging them away and shaking all the fight out of them. We often see this kind of peace arrive in the course of strife of communal groups. Unable to arrive at the means of peace among themselves, an outside body, like the Government, must be called upon to step in and hold the balance between them. Many are looking for the peace of divine mediation to come to the world. At the sound of a trumpet all will be changed; nations shall not make war any more; the lion and the lamb shall lie down together. The forces of heaven will intervene and bring peace to a world unable to achieve peace itself. But this is not the vision of the angel song.

There is also the peace of stagnation. Many in this world find no possibility of peace except in rest from activity. Strife is cultivated, they think, because desires are stimulated, and desires promote action in behalf of the self. So they would see men free from all desires. Yet there are fights to win even in peace, fights against disease, unnecessary poverty and the drudgery of life imposed by an unfavourable environment upon thousands of human beings. If men have life at all, why should they not ardently long for an abundant life? Men actively desiring the good, *peacemakers*, "the children of God," cannot rest in a peace of mere inaction. I have seen the stagnation of inaction settle on a community when proposals for advances have been carried through by a few enthusiasts. It is easy to follow the efforts of a special leader to get rid of the tavern; it is the Government's continued duty to attempt to abolish malaria and hookworm; but after the reformers go, the community does nothing and settles back into the peace of stagnation. Many wish to remain in a peace of this kind. They do not like to be disturbed. The old life and the old ways are good enough for them. Why this call to action? But the peace of the Christmas song is a constructive peace, calling for the active co-operation of men. Much has been written of the place of tooth and claw in Nature. The world is the theatre of a vast struggle for existence, where each living thing is equipped to fight

for its being. The tragedies of nature strike the attention and men often fail to note a deeper meaning. Any life worth while in nature is the product of co-operation. No highly developed organism lives for itself. It is what it is because things of Nature have worked together to make this organism possible. Nature is not primarily destructive fighting; it is co-operative living.

It has been supposed that the method of man's advance was the method of fighting and overcoming. The future development of a superior race has been thought to depend on the capacity of some nation to overcome all others, to fight and to win the race for the food and comforts of life. But the deeper meaning of man's progress can be found in co-operation. Co-operation means choosing to give rather than determining to get. At no period in the world's history has it been so clear as today that it is within the power of man to create through co-operation a marvelous world, transcending the imagination. The limitations upon man's power and progress are largely those which he puts upon himself through self-seeking. This is a kind of a world where co-operation and good-will count for progress.

Now this, as I see it, is the kind of peace declared in the Christmas proclamation. It is a peace of co-operation. It cannot come by fiat of men or of God. It is worked out by co-operation of God with man and man with man. It is a matter for a co-operating Saviour. The herald's

proclamation invites us to believe that peace can come in this way. There is one who can guide our feet into the way of peace.

Jesus was born into a warring world; but he was not a warrior. Jesus accepted the popular expectation that he was the promised leader; yet he did not lead his people in fighting their way out of oppression. Jesus had unquestionably a power of command and executive ability which few men have ever possessed; yet he organized no government to promote a kingdom, to set up one kind of people in authority as over against another.

Jesus' way was the way of giving instead of getting. He set forth the principle of seeking another's good, rather than determining to make secure one's own. "Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you," is not a mere theory of life; it is a practical, common sense law of conduct. Loving and doing good is promoting life for both you and your enemy; hating and seeking revenge is destructive of the good life of both.

Weary and hungry Jean Valjean, the returned convict in Hugo's *Les Miserables*, finds the world's hand against him at every turn because of his past. Mgr. Bienvenu, the Bishop, treats him as a brother and gives the embittered wretch food and shelter for a night. But the convict leaves before the morning breaks, taking with him the Bishop's cherished silver plates. Captured on suspicion by the police and brought back, he is redeemed by the active good-will of the very man he had wronged,

"But I gave you the candle sticks also," the Bishop says, "which are silver like the rest. Why did you not take them along with your plates." And the bewildered Jean Valjean mechanically takes the candle sticks too and goes away freed from his own crime by the Bishop's act and with the redeeming words ringing in his soul. "Jean Valjean, my brother, never forget that you have promised me to use this silver to become an honest man." Not revenge, not hate, not vindictiveness, not the expected retribution! A new light shone on human conduct and he caught a glimpse of the possible life, all pure and radiant, that was offered to him. Before he knew it, his hatred of men had been broken down and Jean Valjean was started on the path of peace.

So the Christmas song rings again in our ears to-day, a day dark with plots and deeds of hate and revenge. And the notes speak a message of peace to us, for we recall the harmony of a life possible to each one of us, a life of peace and good-will as was lived by Jesus. And the peace of the earth is the peace in the hearts of individual men. The jealousies and hatreds which move communities and nations to conflict begin in the thoughts and acts of individuals. If giving, not getting, be our principle of life, wars and communal strife will cease and the peace of which the angels sang will be ours.

Dr. Fosdick tells the following story. While the Turks were killing off the Armenians, a woman and her brother were pursued

down a narrow street and the brother was caught and slain before his sister's eyes. She dodged down an alley and escaped. She was a nurse and was later brought to work in a Turkish hospital. Into that hospital and under her care fate brought that same Turkish soldier who had killed her brother. It would have been easy, in his weak condition, for her to neglect him and to ensure his death. Love struggled with the spirit of revenge for the possession of her soul. Love conquered and she nursed the sick soldier as carefully as any other patient in the hospital. He had recognized the woman and one day he asked her why she had not let him die. She replied, "I am a follower of Him who said, 'Love your enemies and do them good'." He was silent a long time and at last he spoke: "I never knew there was such a religion; if that is your religion, tell me more about it, for I want it."

Do we, even though some of us may be called by the name of Christians, often act as though we never knew there was such a religion? The Christmas herald calls us again to our knees as the divine proclamation rings out to all the world, "On earth peace, good-will among men." Truly, as we look at the life of him who actively sought to save men from their worse selves of hate and enmity, we see the fuller, deeper meaning of the angels' song. We can join in the old hymn of "The dawn of a New Day hath brightened our horizon to guide our feet into the way of peace."

CHARLES WINTHROP MILLER.

A TRIP TO THE SOUTH

It was the close of the school year in 1917 and I decided to go to the Southern Province where I had friends. Colombo was my first station and a week was spent there. Business men say that it is a paradise for making money, but my experience is that it is a greater paradise for holiday seekers. How many lazy but most refreshing hours have I spent in the book-stalls of the Colombo Apothecaries, Cave's, and others dealing in books; with what envy have I looked at the beautiful buildings, and attractive titles!

Balapitiya was my next station. I was a guest of a friend who was the principal of a College there. It is a quiet town where the majority of the people are fishers. When I got about the place, I was impressed with the preponderant interest they had in arrack. There was quite a number of distilleries of various sizes. Some of the richest men were arrack renters or their descendants. This may partially account for the notoriety the place enjoys of being one of the most criminal districts in the Island.

I then went on to Galle which has a great deal to show its visitors. The ancient and famous harbour, the historic fort with ramparts all round it, the race course, and other places of interest amply repay the trouble and expense one undergoes to go there. This time I stayed into a hotel. I must confess that a hotel is the only place where one can enjoy himself outside his home. The

more magnificent the place is the more important I feel. Whenever I stay in a hotel the feeling that the entire staff from the manager downwards is at my service has come to me. In a private house, on the other hand, however much the host may try to make you comfortable, you have to move about with caution and conform to the routine of the one who is kind enough to entertain you. Dr. Samuel Johnson has expressed this feeling very well when he said: "There is no private house in which people can enjoy themselves as in a tavern. Let there be ever so great plenty of good things, ever so much grandeur, ever so much elegance, ever so much desire that everybody should be easy, in the nature of things it cannot be: there must always be some degree of care and anxiety. The master of the house is anxious to entertain his guests: the guests are anxious to be agreeable to him: and no man but a very impudent dog indeed, can as freely command what is in another man's house as if it were his own. Whereas, at a tavern there is a general freedom from anxiety; you are sure you are welcome: and the more noise you make, the more trouble you give, the more good things you call for, the welcomer you are. No servant will attend you with the alacrity with which waiters do, who are incited by the prospect of an immediate reward in proportion as they please. No, Sir; there is nothing which has yet been contrived

by man, by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn." How true these words are nearly one hundred and fifty years after they were spoken!

When in Galle I decided to walk up to Deniyaya, an important tea growing district nearly fifty five miles distant. One fine morning I left the hotel and gave my luggage in charge of a forwarding agent to be sent up by motor lorry. This kept me busy till about ten o'clock, an hour which is most unsuitable to begin a walking tour such as the one I was undertaking. But that was a delightfully cool and cloudy day most propitious for a walk.

The first ten miles is the most difficult part of such tours to persons like me who are not in training. The country along this is most pleasant. I passed by paddy fields, coconut groves, rubber plantations, and finally tea estates. The exhilarating feeling I got was the most attractive part of that trip. To see the vast expanse of greenery about me and to think that I could do whatever I chose to do for the time being, was a most pleasant thought. I felt very tired after walking about eight miles and welcomed the short rest I had in a tea boutique where I had a large plantain. After passing the thirteenth mile post I was fortunate in finding a resting place in a circuit bungalow of a wealthy Sinhalese planter, who curiously enough had met me the previous day and had offered to take me in his most luxurious motor car to my destination as he was going that way.

The walk for the rest of the 16 miles I did that day would have proved uneventful, if I had not been caught in a shower of rain. I carried no protection from the rage of the element, and, truth to speak, thoroughly enjoyed this most unexpected shower, bath for about two or three miles. I was wet through and through till I got tired of the novelty of walking in the rain. A large mansion by the road near about the 20th mile post offered me some protection. I got in hoping to remain in the portico till the shower abated. This was however denied me. The lady of the house most hospitably invited me in and discussed education. This was doubly refreshing, as she took care to send me a very liberal supply of bread and butter together with hot, steaming tea to wash that down. This lady, I found was a rich widow who was most anxious about the education of her three sons. Great was the temptation to get into the Rest House at Akuressa on the 23rd mile, but the determination to do as much of the journey on the first day prompted me to go on. I finally went on to the P. W. D. Overseer near the 29th mile post. I had walked 29 miles that day and was prepared to go further, but for the intervention of night with its attendant darkness.

I was up early the next morning and was on the road by 6 A. M. I would give anything today to get that feeling of joy I had on that morning. The road was clear and I was feeling cold. I was going higher and yet higher and

it was most refreshing. I had only to look round the most majestic hills and the sinuous rills whenever I felt tired. I walked ten miles without stopping anywhere till I got to the Rest House at Morawaka. There I had a light breakfast with a liberal supply of goat's milk, a rare delicacy.

The last stage of the walk was in keeping with the rest—most pleasant. The cool crystalline streams that flowed by served to assuage my thirst and even my hunger. We who go from the "dry" North know and can appreciate the value of good, clear water, and I was in ecstasies when I saw

these streams. The sixteen miles from the Morawaka Rest House was taken most easily and I got to my destination at about three thirty P. M. after walking every inch of the distance of about 55 miles from Galle.

I can almost hear the Editor crying "Halt", for I am afraid I have taken more space than he can afford to give me. Holidays have a charm which I can never resist. Let us hope that our most conscientious and assiduous legislator will not deprive us of this last solace.

A. M. B.



CHRISTMAS

Christmas is the world's family festival. At no other time are men so quick to own their brotherhood, so responsive to the subtle bonds of the common life they derive from the Father of all. For a brief day in December the kinship of the race becomes a reality. Men know themselves to be participants in a life which they did not create and which they all share. They recognise a fellowship which founded neither on common aims nor on individuals interest, but on the love of God.

It is easy to treat the Christmas message as a fiction of pious fancy, enchanting and beneficent, but ending with its own carols. Its fullest significance cannot be apparent to those who ignore the mystery it commemorates. If Christmas celebrates but as a picturesque

story, a legend created by the instructive homage of men in the presence of innocent childhood it may have its value and its most tender appeal, but it must be without present regenerate power and life. We may commemorate the birth of one who has swayed most mightily the history of men and give him our homage, but there would be no true Christmas Day for us. This child's birth has its own secret. In Him we see how God and man are allied, and are assured that we who share the heritage of human life may live in a unity of Divine love.

Each home in Christendom is the sanctuary of this child. He gives it sanctity and grace. Others may give an honoured place to the lares and penates of ancestral or nature worship and thus seek

to guard the domestic hearth from evil. Christians acknowledge one who shares their life and joins with them in the most intimate experiences of home. He is welcome there, for His presence brings His benediction to the family, giving its hopes and joys, its sorrows and its cares a new significance. He comes, and we learn how what is most human belongs to that which is divine, till all is quickened to a new life in the mysterious operation of the spirit.

The birth of that Child makes home a sanctuary of worship. We are like Bret Harte's rough miners bearing in our bosoms the greed of wealth or power torn by our recklessness, but the cry of the Child calms, cleanses, and transfigures our manhood, and the home becomes the shrine of purity and gentleness, the temple in which the light of the Divine Presence lines us to our knees in reference. The Home is the source of moral influence, incomparably greater than anything else. And because the prostitution of the best ever leads to the most grievous debasement, the home may be the seed plot of infinite evil. No misery riots so mordantly in the heart as the home defiled by lust or deceit. No pure flowers grow so gracefully and confidently as those which grow in the sunshine of the true home. Of every family it may be said "*It locally contains hell or heaven; there is no third place in it.*"

Every home has its influence beyond its borders. Every marriage is an act of citizenship, every birth and death has its own social

importance. On the one hand, every violation of wedlock, every renunciation of family relationship, whether by parents or children, and, on the other, every act of forbearance and of service in the home has its influence elsewhere. A vigorous national life can exist only when the purity of family life is maintained. In the last resort a nation is made or marred by its homes. The last disaster that can overtake a people is their decay. A peoples' best security is the home where the secret of family life, which is the secret of Christmas, is known in the hearts of its members.

In the Church, which is the household of faith, Christmas has its own significance. It knows that on that night of the *Angels' Anthem God and man became one in a unity wrought by the Divine Spirit, and in its distractions and weakness the Church kneels before the Child finding in its worship and its service to Him, the unity it has always professed. So long as He is recognised it cannot fail. The mighty weakness of the Child radiant in His appeal to men's hearts draws all to Himself. In their response they give Him not only their gold, frankincense, and myrrh, they give Him themselves to become as little children in the purity of their motives and the confidence of their faith.

It is the wisdom of him who would get the best out of life to see that he loses none of the grace of Christmas. The joy and friendliness of the season, the rekindling of affection in the reunion of the family circle, the charity

which bids us take care that the poor should share some of our happiness, drive us by their friendly insistence to acts of true brotherhood. Let us not neglect them. But we may not forget that behind the laughter and the fun, the good fellowship, and the generosity of this day there is a divine act. In the birth in Bethlehem that took place which is operative for ever in that alliance of the divine and human life which all may share. The home of man is larger than that formed by those who are born of the same blood. There is a home in which the

whole family of mankind are members, born of the same spirit. In the midst, the Wonderful Child appears. He takes it for granted that we are His brothers in the family of divine love. Who would wish to disappoint Him of His special joy at Christmas?

"Welcome all wonders in one sight,
Eternity shut in a span,
Summer in Winter, day in night,
Heaven in Earth, and God in man,
Great little one, whose all embracing birth,
Lifts earth to heaven, stoops heaven
to earth."

D. K. R.



ALL IS WELL THAT ENDS WELL

A CHRISTMAS STORY

It was a Christmas morning. The house in which two old people had moved about in dignified silence now throbbed with bustle and noise and was fully alive with youngsters discussing their Christmas presents. Palu, the pet of the family, excelled every one in the noise he made in blowing his own trumpet literally and metaphorically. Mr. Nallanathan, their grandfather, who was very happy in having his son's children with him at Christmas, now came to the verandah where the little pandemonium was in progress, and stretched himself in a long Singapore chair. Sugirtham, who knew her father-in-law's ways, called out: "Children, do not disturb grandpa. Come away from the verandah." But grandpa thought otherwise.

"Daughter," he said, "I have come out here on purpose to enjoy the sweet discord of the children's voices. It does the heart of a lonely old man good to hear and see the little ones at play. Does not our Poet say:

'The pipe is sweet, the lute is sweet,
say they

Who ne'er have heard their children's
prattle gay?

But the mother's warning had its effect. The children calmed down, but resourceful Leela ran towards grandpa saying coaxingly, "Tell us a story, Appapu." "Tell us a story. Do tell us a story," came from a chorus of pleading voices. To enforce their request they made a regular siege of the long chair, and Palu, bolder than

the rest, made a sudden incursion into the chair and squeezing himself alongside grand-father, said: "Do tell us a 'kismas' story."

The children caught their grand-father at the right moment indeed; for he was this morning in a reminiscent mood. "What kind of a story do you want me to tell you?" he asked.

"Tell us something connected with your celebration of Christmas when you were a boy," suggested Jayam.

"Ah, but we had no celebration of Christmas when I was a boy. We had no Christmas *palagarams*, no Christmas presents, and not even Christmas services."

"How is that?" they all asked in wonderment.

"Christmas was regarded by our Puritanical church authorities as a sort of Popish festival, and the only idea we had of it was that on *Naththar* day the people of *Parangi theru* (Jaffna Pettah), feasted, drank, and danced. Our real celebration came off on the New Year Day, which was, however, a tame affair. But I can tell you a story of a later period."

"*Achcha!*" shouted the children, and Jayam ran in to tell his elder brother and sister, who were discussing the Senior Cambridge papers set at the examination held two weeks before, at which the latter had appeared. Vijayam and Rance, who always enjoyed the reminiscences of their grandfather, came out to join the group.

"When I was a young man", began Mr. Nallanathan "—I was then of the age of Ariam, your father

—I was sensitive, impatient of criticism, and somewhat irascible"

"We have never seen you get angry," interrupted Leela.

"But now I am older and wiser," smiled grandpa.

"I had a friend whom I valued greatly, especially as he was of an opposite temperament possessed of patience and poise. He was a cultured man and something of a Tamil scholar, but extremely conservative in his views. We would discuss for hours together the topics of the day. One day at my friend's house we drifted into the highly controversial subject of the medium of instruction in Ceylon schools. My friend was of the opinion that the present medium of a foreign tongue was responsible for the poverty of original thought in this country, and contended that the vernacular was the natural medium of instruction. I eloquently discoursed on English being the key to all western knowledge and on its politically unifying effect. He in reply pointed out that Japan was getting all the western knowledge necessary without a European language as the medium of instruction, and instanced Switzerland as a single political entity in spite of three languages used as media in its schools. I then pointed out that anyway it was too late in the day to begin all over again writing new text-books in the vernacular, inventing new words for expressing modern ideas, and so on. But my friend was of the opinion that it was not too late to mend the present disgraceful state of affairs."

"And then?", said impatient Jayam, who could not follow all this high talk which was really meant for Vijayam, who was studying for his University degree.

"I am sorry I talked over your heads, dears", said Mr. Nallanathan. "To continue, my nerves were on edge that day owing to some worry or other, and I told my friend sarcastically that he was like Goldsmith's schoolmaster who 'though vanquished could argue still', and charged him with stupid conservatism. This last remark offended him greatly, and he gently retorted that I should give up my self-conceit. Self-conceit! I was dumb with fury, and left the place abruptly. For days I was restless and unhappy because of my wounded pride.

"This incident took place three months before Christmas. Three days before the Season I was sitting at my desk writing a letter to Mr. Valayutham, a friend whom I had not seen for some time, inviting him to spend the Christmas day with me. After writing to him, I could not help thinking of the friend with whom I had quarrelled. I could not still forgive him. However, I made up my mind to write to him and penned a note something like this:

'Dear Mr. Ratnavale,

As the season of peace and good-will is approaching, I cannot but think of our estrangement. I admit that I spoke to you in an excited manner, but you insulted me grossly. If our relations remain broken, you alone will have to bear the blame.'

"As I finished writing this letter, I looked up at the clock and saw that I was too late for the mail, and that there was only the barest chance of getting my letters into the coach mail-box. I hurriedly shoved in the two letters into envelopes and directed my servant to run for all he was worth to catch the coach.

"On Christmas morning I was sitting where I am now, when I saw a buggy drive up. I felt sure that Mr. Valayutham, my friend, was coming to spend the day with me. What was my surprise when I saw Mr. Ratnavale getting down! Now my brain began to work quickly. How generous of my friend to put the larger part of the blame on himself, as my unkind letter suggested! I gave him the first provocation by speaking sarcastically and furiously. He only pointed out my obstinacy. These were the thoughts that flashed through my mind. Until now my friend was the sinner; I was sinned against. But now I felt that it was all the other way. I ran down the steps to greet him. How cordial were our greetings! What a Christmas!

"When Mr. Ratnavale was about to take his leave of me in the afternoon after a very pleasant conversation, I began confusedly, 'I am heartily sorry—

Mr. Ratnavale interrupted me. 'I am sorry too'.

'But my letter,' I ventured again.

He interrupted me again: 'The less said about our quarrel the better'

"A great load was lifted off my mind. I was settling down to the enjoyment of my thoughts, when

a carriage came up the path. It was Mr. Valautham, who came with a roguish twinkle in his eyes.

'You have disappointed me', I said, 'I expected you for breakfast'.

'But you did not invite me,' said he. 'Did you not receive my letter?'

'I did receive a letter with my name on the envelope.'

'What do you mean?'

'The letter inside was addressed to Mr. Ratnavale.'

And he exploded with laughter. I was thunderstruck. Things began to clear up in my brain in a minute. The two letters evidently got exchanged. In my hurry to catch the mail, no doubt I put the letters into the wrong envelopes. Mr. Ratnavale, then, got Mr. Valayutham's letter, which was to the following effect:

'Dear Friend,

We have not cared to see each other for a good long while. We are both to blame. Let us overlook each other's failing, and have a good time on Christmas day. Won't you come and have breakfast with me?'

'I explained the mistake to Mr. Valayutham. He was highly amused and pleased with the happy ending.

'You can depend on me for keeping my mouth shut,' said he.

'Of course, I will', said I.

'But who will give me my lost breakfast?'

'You rogue, now that you are here, do you think I will let you slip through my fingers? You must have dinner with me.'

And so he did.'

Chelvam, who usually spoke little, but thought much, said: "*Appapu*, Ratnavale is the name of *Ammah's* father, is it not?"

"Yes it is, and what is more, this Ratnavale is your other grandfather".

"Oh!". exclaimed the children, and clapped their hands so loudly that Palu awoke. Jayam ran out to tell his mother the story, but found her behind the window curtain with glistening eyes, having evidently listened to the narration.

"A comedy of errors", commented Rane.

The cynical Vijayam capped it by: "It is much ado about nothing".

"But the story is as you like it," retorted Rane.

"All is well that ends well," concluded *Appapu*.

I. M. C.



BILL SMITH'S CHRISTMAS

Christmas in America is a time of giving gifts and hanging holly wreaths in windows, a time of jingling sleigh-bells and reunions of long separated families, a time of telling the tale of the Babe of Bethlehem as well as that of the rotund Santa Claus, a time of feasting and joy for all.

But let us consider how all this seems to Bill Smith, a typical American boy. We will let him speak for himself, and with a magic rivalled only by the cinema have him give his honest thoughts about Christmas at four different times in his boyhood.

PART I. AT THE AGE OF FIVE

Say! D'you know Santy Claus is commin' to our house tonight! Wish I knew what he's goin' to bring me. Ma said she'd write him a letter 'n' I told her to tell him I want an engine and train that runs on a track like Tommy's. Santy Claus brought Tommy's last year. Hope he'll bring me one this year.

Yes, an' I want a sled to go slidin' an' a gun that goes "bang" an' 'lots o' things. I'm goin' to get one of Ma's stockin's to hang up; it's so much bigger 'n mine.

An' I'm goin' to see Santy tonight, too. At the Church. An' he'll give me some candy, too, so he will, Wish't I didn't have to speak a piece, though, 'cause when you get up there on the platform everybody laughs at you.'

Georgy thinks he's smart. He says there ain't any Santy Claus. But I saw him at the Church last year an' he brought me some toy so'jers an' a rockin' horse. So I guess he'll come this year too.

PART II. AT THE AGE OF TEN

Hooray! We're goin' to have two weeks' vacation;

'No more Latin, no more French,
No more sittin' on a hard wood
bench!'

Gee! Wish I knew what Dad's goin' to give me for Christmas. Ma wants him to give me a violin, but I don't want to take music lessons. Guess Dad won't make me, neither. But I don't know what he is goin' to give me. I told him I wanted a pair o' skates an' a scout knife, an' a mechanno set, an' a bicycle; an' he looked at me kind o' queer like and said "Is that all"? I don't see what he said that for.

Say! You know Sammy Jones is an *awful* sissy! Why, he still believes in Santa Claus! He thinks he comes down the Chimney, 'n' all that. When I was a little kid, I use' to think so too, but I know better now. Course it's lots of fun for little kids, but I know it's just Ma and Pa that puts the things in my stocking. Why we hang our stockings up yet just for the fun of it, and after we kids go to bed, Dad and Ma put the things in 'em. Yes, and Dad and Ma put their stockings up too, an' I put something in them too. Yes, an even in Mary's and Johnny's. And Mary will put something in mine, but Johnny won't; he believes in Santa Claus yet. But Sammy Jones is eight years old; he ought to know better 'n to believe in Santa Claus.

I had lots of fun yesterday. I went into the stores with Ma and we got presents for Dady an' Johnny an' Mary. It was easy to

get something for the kids, 'cause Johnny was hollerin' all last week for a pop-gun, an' Mary always likes picture books. But I didn't know what to get for Dad; he never says what he wants. So I asked Mother an' she said she thought he'd like a necktie. Guess I'll have to go an' see Dad an' find out what to get Mother.

PART III. AT THE AGE OF FIFTEEN

Well, here it is, Christmas vacation already. Little Johnny has been counting the days to Christmas for the last month. I used to when I was his age, but I don't have time to think of it now.

But say, we're going to have a fine vacation with the snow good and hard packed for coasting and sleighing, and the ice clear and thick on the lake. I was down there last night and it was sure fine. We'll have some good hockey if we don't get a snow or a thaw too soon.

George says the rabbits are thick down along the creek. It's going to be fine hunting. Wish I knew whether Dad's going to give me a shot-gun or not. Mother don't want him to. She's afraid I'll kill myself, I guess. If Dad doesn't give me one I guess I'll buy one. I'm going to work in Brown's store until Christmas so I'll have kale (money) enough. Jim Harris says he'll sell his old double-barrel for ten bucks (dollars).

I've just been getting some presents for the rest of the family. Wish I knew what Mother wants. I never can seem to find out. Even Dad doesn't know.

But there's one present I got that isn't for any of our family.

Don't you tell anybody, but its for Jimmy Green. Jim's dad was killed in the big wreck at Burlington last year, and he likely won't have much of a Christmas this year. I got him a fountain pen to use in place of that scratchy steel thing of his. Guess I'll have to send it to him in the mail so he won't know where it came from.

Seems as if there's something going on 'most every night during vacation. There's the Sunday School programme Christmas Eve and our family is having a big party over at Grandpa's, Christmas night. Uncle George is coming from Greenville, and Uncle John and Aunt Mary all the way from New York. Grandma always puts on a swell feed and Uncle John is sure to pull a lot of funny stories. Maybe he'll stay a couple of days and go hunting with me. Then next Saturday our class is having a party at Mortons, and the Christian Endeavor's going to have a Watch Night party.

PART IV. AT THE AGE OF TWENTY

Well, thank goodness, that stuff's all packed now, and I've a few minutes to breathe before Jack comes to take me to the train in his flivver. Oh shucks! I forgot to put in my tooth-brush! Well, I guess I can carry it in my pocket. Hope none of the other fellows find out where I've got it, though.

Well, it's a great life if you don't weaken. I wouldn't miss going home if I had to pack a dozen times. But the rush of things here at College sure makes it hard to know whether you've gotten Christmas gifts for all the

folks you want to. Let's see, I've got the new fox-trots for Mary. She'll go wild over "Those Silvery Moon Blues." And there's the silk scarf for Dad and the belt for Johnny. Yes, and there's the book of Guest's poems I got for Grandma and Grandpa. But what on earth can I get for Mother? Guess I'll have to see if Mary can't give me an idea or two about that after I get home.

Johnny writes that the skating and hunting are both good. I guess Dad's going to give him a shot-gun. If he does, we ought to have lots of fun hunting together. Maybe we can get Dad to come along with us. It'd be good for him.

• I wonder how Dad's work is getting on. Guess I'll have to go down to the office and see if

I can't help him to clear things up so he can rest during the holidays. I wouldn't wonder either if Ma'd find me some work to do fixing things up around the house. She mentioned in a letter once about some broken boards in the coal-bin and a leak in the garage roof. It will feel good to use a hammer and saw for a while instead of a fountain pen.

But here's Jack now Grab this grip, and I'll put in the other one. . . . Step on the gas; I don't want to miss that train. I'm going home to the finest Mother and Dad that ever were. I tell you, Jack, Christmas would be worthwhile if it didn't do anything but remind a fellow that he has a home and really belongs somewhere.

S. P. H.



FESTIVALS

The other day the College Faculty was considering what days should be declared holidays in the year 1927. Besides the usual vacations, it was suggested that there should be five other holidays: two Christian, two Hindu, and one Government. In the course of the discussion it was pointed out that where there was a movable festival, either Christian or Hindu, it should be moved to coincide with the fixed one, so that instead of two Christian and two Hindu festivals on four days of the year, we may be satisfied with two days.

This, it was pointed out, would reduce our extra holidays to three in the year.

The reader of the College Magazine, unless he be a student or be one who still remembers his school-days and has a sympathy for the youngster who enjoys a holiday, would not care whether the College has three or five extra holidays. But the writer is sure the magazine-reader will be interested in a certain principle underlying the suggestion for the reduction of the number of holidays.

One of the principles underlying the suggestion is that the same day may be availed of by both Christians and Hindus for celebrating their respective festivals. For example, cannot a Christian who wants to celebrate Christmas and a Hindu who wants to celebrate the Festival of Lights known in Tamil as *Velaakedu*, both celebrate each his own festival, on the same day? The writer thinks they can. What is the justification? What is the origin of the observance of Christmas on the 25th of December? In the regions where originally Christmas was observed on the 25th of December that day had had another significance attached to it. In Scandinavia, Germany, Britain, France, Italy, etc, the day following the winter solstice was a day of rejoicing because it marked the beginning of light and life. It was a day of great rejoicing even before Christ was known in these parts. When Christ came to be remembered with gratefulness and joy by these people, they wanted to celebrate his birth-day. Not knowing the actual date of his birth what more could they do than to identify the birth of the Sun of Righteousness with that of the Sun of the Solar System? And wherever these people have taken Christianity they have made the 25th of December the Christmas Day. But is that the best day for celebrating Christmas in these regions? If not, what is a better day? Surely the day of the Festival of Lights, whatever its historical origin may have been, is a suitable day to celebrate the

birth of the Son of Light, in these regions.

Or take Easter. The name itself is a survival from old Teutonic mythology and is derived from *Eostre* or *Ostara*, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of Spring, to whom the month corresponding to our April was dedicated. Nobody knows when Christ rose from the dead; so looking about for a suitable day to celebrate the Resurrection of Christ the founders of the festival fixed upon the beginning of spring, the beginning of renewed life in Nature, as the day of the renewed life of Christ. Even today there is no agreement in Christendom as to which day in the year should be Easter-day. In our regions spring has no meaning, and therefore the identification of the resurrection of Jesus with the renewed life of nature may not be so suitable as some other event in history, mythology, or nature. One, such is the day of the victory of righteousness over sin, the day known in Tamil as *Deepavali*. Cannot the Resurrection Day or Good Friday be therefore more properly associated with *Deepavali* in these regions?

But I hear cries of alarm. The orthodox Christian says, "Ah, away with this Indian or Hindu heresy". But the writer would say, "My friend, be a little patient! You must be consistent. When the German identifies Christmas with the great Yule day and the Briton introduces into it some of the relics of his pagan worship in the form of Christmas trees and the mistletoe, you are willing to take them as Christ-ordained forms of cele-

brations, but when a better and more spiritual analogy taken from your own religious heritage is suggested to you, you raise your hands in holy horror. This is not dealing fairly by your rich spiritual heritage."

But on the other hand, the orthodox Hindu says, "What have these Christians to do with our festivals"? Two and two make four. Whose is it? Is it of the Hindu or of the Christian? Righteousness will triumph over sin. Whose is it? It is universal. And if there was a particular instance of this truth in history or in mythology, that too is universal. Even granting that the cultural and spiritual heritage of a country is a peculiar possession of the people of that country, the Hindu Saivite or Vaishnavite or any other *ite* cannot exclude the Hindu Christian from that inheritance.

Another innovation allied to the above is the introduction of new festivals into our respective calendars, Christian and Hindu. It may not be possible or wise for us to change the time of the observance of Christmas or Easter, for they are festivals observed by Christendom, and we would like to join other members of the Church throughout the world in celebrating them at the same time. But the Church in this country may very well contemplate the idea of adopting some of the Hindu Festivals which have a spiritual and religious signifi-

cance. The above-mentioned two Hindu Festivals are capable of such adaptation. But there may be others too. In the same way the suggestion may be made that Hindus introduce some of the Christian festivals into their calendar. Christmas and Easter are of universal significance and may very well be days of rejoicing for all mankind. Both Brahmos and the members of the Rama Krishna Mission do actually celebrate Christmas. The practice the writer believes may be made universal.

One word more before concluding. A few years back "C. P. A." writing to the *Morning Star* protesting against the observance of watch-night services on the 31st of December made a strong case against the practice. "C. P. A." was opposed to watch night services as such, while the writer mentions it here, not because he has no use for the service, but because he does not see the wisdom or appropriateness of holding it on the 31st of December. Of all the time of the year climatically, that is the worst season for a night festival. Moreover, whatever the English Government may do, does not our New Year begin in *Sithirai* about the middle of English April? Therefore the eve of the Hindu New Year is a more appropriate time for a watch-night service than a cold shivering December night.

J. C. A.



JAFFNA COLLEGE ATHLETIC RECORDS

As a beginning in the establishment of College Athletic Records for Jaffna College, the following list of up-to-date records is given:

Event	Record holder	Record	Date
1. 100 yd. dash	J. C. Arulampalam	11 0 s.	Mar. 27, 1926
2. 220 yd. dash	J. C. Arulampalam	25 0 s.	June 3, 1926
3. 440 yd. run	J. C. Arulampalam	55.4 s.	Mar. 27, 1926
4. 880 yd. run	T. Visuvalingam	2 m. 12 s.	June 3, 1926
5. 880 yd. mixed relay.	1926 Relay Team	1 m. 50 2. s.	June 3, 1926
6. Pole Vault	V. Muttu	9 ft. 2. in	Sep. 25, 1926
7. Run High Jump	V. Muttu	5 ft.	May 29, 1926
	P. Rajaratnam		Mar. 20, 1926
8. Run. Long Jump	V. Muttu	18 ft. 1 in.	May 29, 1926
9. Stan Long Jump	Duraisamy	8 ft. 8 ½ in.	March, 1926
10. Cricket Ball Throw	V. Muttu	314 ft.	May 29, 1926
11. Shot Put (12 lb)	T. Visuvalingam	25 ft. 9 in.	Mar. 20, 1926
12. Pull Ups	M. Sundram	20 times.	Aug. 1, 1925
13. "A" Test Total*	J. C. Arulampalam	117 points	May, 1925
14. Sargent Test†	T. Kandasamy	27 inches	October, 1926

* Sum of points made in events number 1, 7, 9 and 12

† A vertical jump striking a drum with the head, the drum being suspended the given number of inches above person's head when standing flat-footed

C. W. P.



MUSSOLINI

If in Europe there is today, one man soaring above the rest of his fellow beings it is Signor Mussolini. The wisdom of a Mazzini, the strong will of a Napoleon, and the great patriotism of a Garibaldi all combine in Mussolini and enable him to hold sway over Italy. This man with the love of his country is one who makes an indelible impression on the minds of youth. In attempting to write about him I cannot do justice to such a great man. I will only endeavour to give some facts about his life. The life of this son of a blacksmith fed by the charity of the artisans of Italy is a history most interesting to patriotic young men.

Mussolini was the son of a poor blacksmith who lived in Predapio in Romagna. He grew up in socialist surroundings and became a socialist. His ambition was to be a public school teacher, but he could not fulfil it. As a young man, he fled from Italy because he did not wish to serve in the army. He was in great distress and lived mostly on the bounty of Italian masons and street labourers. In fact, one woman, the wife of a mason, once patched up some of the old family underwear for Mussolini.

The recent history of Italy is bound up with the career of Mussolini. A few years ago he found Italy disorganised and badly ruled by the then existing Government. He wanted to check the wild spirit of liberty that was reigning in Italy by the rule of one man. He collected together a band of devoted followers and with these Black Shirts, as they are called, he made a thrilling march to Rome expelled those who were ruling there, and got control of the Capital. The King, frightened into submission, had to assent to this.

The rest of his history is a series of attempts to check all opposition against him. The Italian Parliament submitted to him and he became practically the dictator. Through his effort a series of laws were passed by which the parliament suppressed all agitation against Facism, the movement of which he was the leader. The liberty of the press, the right of free discussion, in fact, all precious things relating to the liberty of the individual has been suppressed under the rule of Mussolini. There were even political murders such as the tragic murder of Signor Orlando. In this way democracy is pushed

to the background and Italy is under one man's rule.

In foreign affairs Mussolini is aggressive and high handed. Not only does he want to strengthen his rule at home but he wants also, if possible, to establish an Italian Empire, getting control of the Mediterranean regions. But Mussolini has found out that, however ambitious he may be, he has to submit to public opinion such as is expressed in the League of Nations.

How far the rule of this dictator is going to succeed is a matter for discussion. One thing is sure; liberty will rise forth with greater force under suppression.

However, Mussolini is a sincere Italian patriot. He wants to save the Italian nation from ruin in his own way. Perhaps no statesman has come to the forefront in recent times with greater courage, determination, adventure, and romance.

J. JESURATNAM.

FORM V. A.



THE TROPICAL HEAVENS

CHAPTER VII

THE HEAVENS IN OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER.

At about 12 p. m. on the 15th of October, 11 p. m. on the 1st of November, 10 p. m. on the 15th of November, 9 p. m. on the 1st of December, 8 p. m. on the 15th of December and 7 p. m. on the 1st of January, the zodiacal constellations, Capricornus, Aquarius, Pisces, Aries, Taurus and Gemini will form an arch across the sky from west to east.

Aquarius, the Water-Bearer (நீர்ப்பட்டி) is marked by the small stars northeast and east of Capricornus. It represents the figure of a man pouring water from a pot. The two third magnitude stars Alpha and Beta (ஈசுலா) northeast of Alpha Capricorni and in a line with it represent his shoulders, Alpha being northeast of Beta. The group of four small stars, Gamma, Eta, Zeta and Pi lying east of Alpha mark the pot held in the right hand, and the four stars, Lambda, Theta, Iota and Delta, forming a quadrilateral south of them mark his body and legs. The stars to

the east and the southeast of the quadrilateral indicate the stream of water flowing from the pot. The very faint star near Beta is a magnificent ball of stars which has been compared to a "heap of fine sand."

Pisces, the Fishes (பீசு) is situated northeast of Aquarius and represents the figure of two fishes known as the Northern and Western connected by a ribbon tied to their tails. It consists of two streams of stars. The stars of one stream beginning from the border of Aquarius near the water pot and running eastward are Beta, Gamma, Iota, Omega, Epsilon Zeta (ஊசு), Mu, Nu, Xi, and Alpha, and those of the other running northward from Alpha are Pi, Eta, Rho, Chi, and Upsilon. (ஊசுபிடியமரசு பீசு : ஈசுலா பீசு)

Aries, the Ram (ஊம-பீசு), the first constellation of the zodiac, lies east of Pisces and west of Taurus and has associated with it the figure of a ram lying with its

head to the west. It may be recognized by three stars. Alpha (Arietus) (அரிசுரி) Beta, and Gamma of the second, third, and fourth magnitude, forming an obtuse triangle west of Pleiades (அரிசுரி அழகிய குழிமைந்த தெய்வம்). Alpha, the brightest marks, the right horn and the other two the left horn. The three small stars northwest of Pleiades are situated in the hinder part of the Ram.

Pegasus, the Flying Horse, lies north of Aquarius and northwest of Pisces, and represents the figure of the head and shoulders of a horse with wings. It is easily recognized by four bright stars of the second magnitude forming a square, each side of which is about fourteen degrees in length. These stars are familiarly known as the Square of Pegasus, though one of the four belongs to Andromeda, the neighbouring constellation. Markab (Alpha) (அட்டமர்) at the southeast corner marks the shoulder, Scheat (Beta) north of it the foreleg and Algenile (Gamma) at the southeast corner the wing of the horse. Eta, Nu, and Lambda lying close to Beta are of the fourth magnitude and mark the forelegs. The bright star (Enir Epsilon), west of Markab and in a line with Markab and Algenile marks the nose and Zeta and Theta, lying below the line joining Alpha and Epsilon form the neck and the head of the Horse.

Andromeda lies northeast of Pegasus and has associated with it the figure of a woman with her arms extended and chained to a rock. Alpherato (Alpha) (அ. பீரட்டம்) forms the northeast corner

of the Square of Pegasus and marks the head of Andromeda. The equinoctial colure or the meridian passing through the point of intersection of the ecliptic and the equator, passes by Alpherato and Algenib. The three stars, Epsilon, Delta, and Pi, northeast of Alpherato mark the breast, and the three, Beta (Merach), Mu, and Nu, northeast of them form the girdle, while (Gamma Almack) and others northeast of them form the feet of Andromeda. The line joining Beta Mu and Nu, is perpendicular to the line joining Alpha Beta, and Gamma. All these three are of the second magnitude. In a telescope Almack (Gamma) marking the left foot appears as three stars, one orange green and the other two diamond green. Near Nu in the girdle about five degrees from Merach (Beta) is situated a brilliant elliptical nebula which by the naked eye is sometimes mistaken for a comet. In 1885 a new star appeared in the center of the nebula and then faded away. The nebula is so large that it has been computed that light takes thirty thousand years to pass from one side of it to the other. West of it at a distance of about twenty degrees lies another nebula resembling in appearance the planet Saturn with its rings.

Cassiopeia, the Queen in the Chair, is situated directly north of Andromeda and represents a queen seated in a large chair. It is easily recognized by five bright stars disposed in a line broken into pieces which are at right angles to each other, in the form of an inverted letter W beginning at the western

extremity of the letter, they are named Beta (Caph), Alpha, Gamma, Delta, and Epsilon. Kappa in the north forms a trapezium with Beta, Alpha and Gamma, and Iota in the northeast is in a straight line with Delta and Epsilon. Beta (Caph) marking the right side of the queen, is in the equinoctial colure. Epsilon forming the eastern extremity of the letter forms her right foot and appears in the telescope as three stars, one red, one green, and one blue. In the year, 1572 at the time of the famous astronomer Tycho Brahe, the most brilliant new star on record appeared suddenly near Kappa in Cassiopeia and was visible for seventeen months. It increased in brilliancy, soon becoming equal to Venus, and clearly visible at noon-day. As Tycho Brahe made a special study of it and has left a complete account of its variation, it is known as "Tycho's Star." From the fact that new stars were observed in the same region of the sky in 945 and 1264, some people imagined that this star must be the same as the "Star of Bethlehem" and that it varied periodically with a period of 314 years.

Cepheus, the King of Ethiopia, lies west of Cassiopeia, and has associated with it the figure of a man clad in royal attire with a sceptre in the left hand and a crown on his head. He stands with one foot on the solstitial colure and the other over the Pole Star. His head is in the Milky Way and may be recognized by three stars forming an acute triangle and marking the crown. Alpha (Alderman) marks the right shoulder,

Beta (Alphirk) the girdle, Iota the left shoulder, and Zeta the head. These four stars form a well-marked trapezium. Gamma (Er Rai) close to the Pole Star forms an isosceles triangle with Beta and Eta, and marks the left knee. Between Alpha and Beta lies Mu (the Garnet Star) the reddest star visible to the naked eye in the northern hemisphere. In mythology Cassiopeia is the queen and Andromeda the daughter of Cepheus.

Cetus, the Whale, the largest constellation in the heavens, lies south of Pisces and Aries, and west of Aquarius. Mankar (Alpha) the brightest star and of the second magnitude, is southwest of the Pleiades, and with Gamma and Delta marks the head of Cetus. Beta (Deneb Daitva) the next brightest is in the loop of the tail near the border of Aquarius. The figure of the whole constellation has been compared to that of a lounge chair, Alpha, Gamma, Delta, and Omicron forming the head rest, and Zeta, Tau, Theta, Eta, and Beta the lower part of the chair. The most remarkable star in Cetus is Mira (Omicron) the "Wonderful Star" a variable situated in the neck. Most of the time it is entirely invisible to the naked eye, but at intervals of about eleven months, it shines forth as a star of the second magnitude. It attains its greatest brilliancy about forty days after it becomes visible and then takes about two months to become invisible.

Piscis Australis, the Southern Fish, is south of Aquarius, and is recognizable by the first magni-

tude star Formalhaut, marking the eye of the fish. Its light takes twenty five years to reach us.

Grus, the Crane, lies south of Piscis Australis, and is recognized by the two second magnitude stars, Alpha and Beta, and small ones joining a curved line with Beta.

Phoenix, the Mystic Bird, lies east of Grus, and northwest of the first magnitude star Achenar, and is recognized by three stars, Alpha, Beta, and Gamma forming an obtuse triangle. Alpha of Indus, Alpha and Beta of Grus, and Alpha of Phoenix are in an almost straight line, running from west to east.

Toucana, the American Goose, lies south of Grus and southwest of Achernar, and is recognized by four stars forming a trapezium. Alpha and Beta, the brightest of this constellation, form the beak and the others to the southeast the body of the goose. It contains a globular star cluster known as 47 Toucani and similar to Omega Centauri. To the unaided eye the cluster appears like a fourth magnitude star, but in reality about ten thousand stars are massed into a small space. At the center they are "compressed to a blaze of light". The inner part is rose coloured and the outer part white.

Southwest of Canopus and south of Achernar lies the pair of faint clouds known as the "Clouds of Magellan." They look like detached pieces of the Milky Way. When examined through telescopes, they are found to contain many single variable stars, globular star clusters and nebulae. The Greater Cloud contains what is known as

the Great Looped Nebula, consisting of strangely curved and twisted streamers. The globular star cluster, 47 Toucani, lies near the western edge of the Lesser Cloud.

The countless numbers of stars distributed through space which extends about us boundlessly in all directions are in the infinitely long process of evolution from extremely thin nebulous matter into suns similar to that of our solar system. Their study fills our mind with wonder and amazement and suggests the idea of infinity—infinity in time and infinity in space. The time which would have been taken for the evolution of the suns from the attenuated gas of the nebula whose origin is itself a mystery to a condition similar to that of the solar system, passing through all the various phases of the process, must have been incalculable. This incalculable period must be followed by another incalculable period, the period of geological history which itself indicates another lapse of time beyond all human imagination. Just as we cannot form an idea of the commencement and the end of time, so we cannot form an idea of the beginning and the end of space. Our sun is only one of the countless number of stars that appear in the heavens, from which to reach the nearest neighbouring star we would have to cross a great void of space to travel which light takes about four years. Again all our neighbouring stars whose distances are so immense that they appear to us as a continuous glimmer of faint light called the Milky Way form only a single

cluster in the heavens. Outside this cluster there are innumerable other clusters which again transcend in distance and imagination our finite power of imagination. As the powers of optical instruments increase our view of the heavens also increases. What has been appearing as a single star

has been revealed as a "galaxy of stars, thousands in number, with interstellar spaces so immense that thought breaks down in spanning them and imagination even cannot make the leap." Indeed "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handi-work."



ALUMNI NOTES

BY C. H. COOKE, J. P.

Mr. K. Wijayarajnam, who recently took his oaths as a Proctor, is practicing at Matala.

Mr. J. T. Amerasingham has joined Edinburgh University to prosecute his studies in Medicine.

Mr. V. Ponnampalam, Chief Clerk, Marine Department, has retired after 25 years of faithful service in the F. M. S. Government.

Mr. R. N. Asirvatham, Proctor, Ratna pura, has become an Advocate. He took his oath October 18th.

Mr. J. Supramaniam Lewis has been promoted to a position as Accounts Officer of the Government of India.

Mr. R. Thirugnanam of the tutorial staff of Maris Stella College, Negombo, has been successful in the last examination for entrance to the Training College, Colombo.

Mr. R. N. Samuel of the Commercial Corporation, Jaffna has been appointed Public Auditor under the provision of section 18th of Ordinance No. 16 of 1891.

Dr. A. E. Duraisamy, Medical Officer, Kuala Kubu, has been transferred to the District Hospital, Kuala Lumpur.

Mr. A. P. T. Winslow, who was a relief hand in the Way and Works Department, Lower District, C. G. R., has been transferred to Homagama.

Mr. S. Armstrong, Assistant Engineer, P. W. D., who was in charge of the new customs jetty, has been transferred to Kurunegalle.

Mr. T. Buell, J. P. of the American Mission School, Bombay, has been appointed Honorary Presidency Magistrate for the city.

Dr. A. Sundarampillai, Itinary Medical Officer, has been appointed to Pollennuruwa on Parangi duty.

Dr. V. Rasiah has been transferred from Mandapam to Haputala.

Mr. R. N. Manikkavasagar of the Jaffna Railway Station has been transferred to Nawalapitiya as relieving clerk.

Obituary

Mr. S. Thiruchenthurar of the Badulla Post Office passed away at Vaddukoddai on the 22nd October, 1926.



RECORD OF COLLEGE EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

14th, College reopened for the third term.

17th, Mr. Winzer, Inspector of Arts, paid his annual visit.

19, Mr. J. V. Chelliah preached a sermon on "The Relation Between Christ and Christianity"

23rd, Rev. S. H. Hieb and three students left for Colombo to take part in the A. A. meet

25th, News came that Rev. S. P. Hieb and Mas. V. Muttu came first and second respectively in the Pole Vault.

26th, The preacher for the evening service was the Rev. Dr. Isaac Tambyah.

28th, Our soccer team played the first match of the season against the Police Team.

29, Rev E. C. Dewick spent the day with us.

OCTOBER

2nd, Soccer Match, J. C. vs. J. H. C.

3rd, Mr. Nevins Selvadurai preached at the evening service.

10, Rev. H. De Klerk of the Colombo Presbyterian Mission conducted the evening service.

11th, Mr. H. S. Perera, the acting Chief Inspector of Schools, paid us a visit.

13th, The triennial inspection began.

15th, Under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A., Mr. A. Thillamathan of Vaddukodai spoke on "Manimagalay."

16th, Soccer match, J. C. vs. S. P. C.

17th, The Inter-Collegiate Fellowship took place.

24th, Rev. S. P. Hieb took charge of the evening service.

28th, Sextant Holidays began.

30th, Soccer match, J. C. vs J. C. C.

NOVEMBER

2nd, Soccer match, J. C. vs. Mr. A. P. T. Winslow's team.

4th, Theevai Day. Students enjoyed a half holiday. The teachers bade farewell to Mr. J. A. Thuraisingham at a dinner.

6th, Soccer match, J. C. vs. S. J. C.

7th, Mr. J. C. Amerasingham was the preacher in the Sunday evening service.

8th, Under the auspices of the Inter Union Mr. Natesa Pillai B. A., B. L. of Parameshwara College spoke on Tamil Literature.

11th, The students bade farewell to Mr. J. A. Thuraisingham.

12th Soccer match, J. C. vs. M. H. C.

13th, Thatchie match, Vth C. vs. Vth A.

14th Rev. J. Bicknell preached at the evening service.



JAFFNA COLLEGE CALENDER FOR 1927

Jan. 5, 8.40 A. M. First Term opens.

Feb. 18, 4 P. M. to Feb 21, 8.40 A. M.

Mid-term holidays.

April 1, 2 P. M. First Term Closes.

May 25, 8.40 A. M. Second Term Opens.

July 15, 4 P. M. to July 18, 8.40 A. M.

Mid-term holidays.

Aug. 26, 2 P. M. Second Term Closes.

Sept. 12, 8.40 A. M. Third Term Opens.

Oct. 28, 4 P. M. to Oct 31 8.40 A. M.

Mid-term holidays.

Dec. 16, 2 P. M. Third Term Closes.

Fixed holidays:

Annual Meeting of the N. E. S. in May
King's Birthday, June 3.

Theevai in October or November.

