

# The Spirit of Service

By CLIFFORD R. BLOOM

Once again Christmas is with us, and in every civilized land sprays of holly and mistletoe, glossy wreaths of laurel and red, fragrant boughs of spruce and pine and brightly glowing tapers—all have given evidence that the Spirit of Christmas is abroad in the land, and stand as symbols of that Love which was able to transform even a lowly stable behind an inn into the holiest of human sanctuaries—a home.

Whatever may be a man's religious belief or sect, in whatever regard he may hold that Splendid Figure in the manger at Bethlehem, if he be any kind of right-thinking man he could not fail to be exalted at the jubilant voice of Christmas, with its message of Peace and Hope and Love to all mankind.

Surely, it is a beautiful thing to have a day out of all the year when Love reigns supreme and only Good Will is the creed of every heart. Surely it is a fine thing to have a season of the year when avarice is forgotten and our better selves are allowed to stand unmasked and unashamed before the world. And never in all the history of the world has there been a greater need than now for the perpetuation of the Spirit of Christmas, not just for one day or season alone, but for every day of every year.

Now, only short months since the guns were silenced in the last of three terrible wars, which were to end all wars, Peace still sees an endless file of marching men. Military rivalry and political intrigue are in the fore. Sparks of hate are fanned into flame all because the Spirit of Christmas, Good Will, Friendship and Human Service have not yet found their way into the hearts of many men.

So here is a challenge—it is only when all men shall know Good Will that a lasting Peace shall be known. Then will the essential interests of human life be ser-

ved and promoted by co-operation rather than by competition. Mutual respect and good will will take the place of distrust. Sympathy and service will lighten the burden of suffering humanity and the Golden Rule, instead of merely being a beautiful sentiment, shall become the binding obligation of all.

Then too, shall the Spirit of Service find itself in the heart of every life, and we shall know a fine national self-respect instead of boastful conceit and jingoistic cries against fancied insults to our flag. A true spirit of Friendship and Service alone can energize the activities of any state and safeguard the liberty of its citizens.

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### Romance and Tragedy at Keokuk

A charming, although pathetic, tale of an early Iowa settlement in Lee county is told of an attractive Indian maiden who met a white doctor in a romantic way and they were married. It is related that in 1820, LaMoliese, a French trader, had a station at what was afterward Sandusky, six miles above Keokuk, in that county. The same year, a cabin was built where the city of Keokuk now is located, by Dr. Samuel C. Muir, a surgeon in the United States army. His romantic marriage and subsequent life are the subject of the narrative.

While stationed at a military post on the Upper Mississippi, the post was visited by a beautiful Indian maiden—whose native name, unfortunately, has not been preserved—who, in her dreams, had observed a white man unmoor his canoe, paddle it across the river, and come directly to her lodge. She felt assured, according to the superstitious belief of her race, that in her dreams she had seen her future husband, and had come to the fort to find him.

Meeting Dr. Muir, she instantly recognized him as the hero of her dream, which, with childlike innocence and simplicity, she related to him. Her dream was indeed prophetic. Charmed with Sophia's (the

name he subsequently gave her) beauty, innocence and devotion, the doctor was captivated and honorably married her; but after awhile the sneers and jibes of his brother officers—less honorable than he, perhaps—made him feel ashamed of his dark-skinned wife, and when his regiment was ordered down the river to Bellefontaine, it was said he embraced the opportunity to rid himself of her, never expecting to see her again, and little dreaming that she would have the courage to follow him.

But, with her infant child, this intrepid wife and mother, started alone in her canoe, and after many days of weary labor and a lonely journey of 900 miles, she at last reached him. She afterward remarked, when speaking of this toilsome journey down the river in search of her husband: "When I got there I was all perished away—so thin!" The doctor, touched by such unexampled devotion, took her to his heart, and ever after, until his death, treated her with marked respect and affection. She always presided at his table with grace and dignity, but never abandoned her native style of dress. Later when he was stationed at Fort Edward, now Warsaw, the senseless ridicule of some of his brother officers on account of his Indian wife induced him to resign his commission.

Dr. Muir then built a cabin where Keokuk is now situated and made a claim to some land. This claim he leased to Otis Reynolds and John Culver, of St. Louis, and went to Galena, then known as La Pointe, where he practiced medicine for ten years, when he returned to Keokuk.

His Indian wife bore him four children—Louise, James, Mary and Sophia. Dr. Muir died suddenly of cholera, in 1832, but left his property in such a condition that it was soon wasted in vexatious litigation, and his brave and faithful wife, left friendless and penniless, became discouraged, and with her two younger children, disappeared. It was said that she returned to her people on the Upper Missouri.

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