

Inevitably out of this pooling of experience there has arisen a desire for common action and common planning, a desire which they hope to realize when they shoulder the responsibilities of peace.

'TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Tommy MacLellan, '46

When I arrived home on December 24, I was very tired; the work of the first semester and the writing of the Christmas examinations had taken their toll. As I had planned to go to Midnight Mass, and knew that it would be 2.30 a. m. before I should go to bed, I decided to rest during the afternoon. Accordingly, about two o'clock, I took a siesta. Scarcely had I closed my eyes in sleep when I was transported in dreams to four very different Christmas scenes.

Wordly Christmas

I dreamed I was in a nearby town. The picture of Christmas eve which I witnessed here was a scene of business activity. Crowds thronged the stores doing their last-minute Christmas shopping, while weary clerks strove to serve them, amidst the din and joyous shouts of children who had come to see Santa Claus. Stores were littered with Christmas cards few of which symbolized the true spirit of Christmas; and everywhere there were bright Yuletide decorations most conspicuous among which were gayly illuminated Christmas trees. While in the town's largest store, I paid a visit to Toyland to see jolly Santa Claus who was thrilling excited little children to the heart with his merry sayings, his cheery laughter, and his Christmas presents.

Desecrated Christmas

Scarcely had my visit to Toyland ended when I was wafted in fancy over the Nazi-controlled parts of dreamland. Passing over several cities of the Reich, I saw many thousands of German soldiers, all bearing on their uniformed arms the Nazi swastika and crying out, "Heil Hitler!"

What a tragic change had taken place! Their

fathers of days now past were wont to go on Christmas night in silent procession, with prayer books and rosary, to pay tribute to the Christ Child at Midnight Mass.

At length I alighted in Cologne which, to my astonishment, seemed to have escaped the destruction poured out of the heavens by the mighty bombers of the United Nations. There before me was Cologne's world-famous Gothic cathedral. I stopped and listened, for I thought I might hear the melodious strains of *Silent Night*. But this was impossible amid the deafening din about me. The land that many years ago had given this beautiful Christmas hymn to the world was now noisy with the rolling of war-machinery, with the click of Nazi heels, with the thump of the ugly goosetstep of German soldiers, and with the unholy shout, "Heil Hitler!" All had changed. The birthday of Bethlehem's Babe was being desecrated by the Nazi Fuehrer who would do violence to the nation from which the Prince of Peace had sprung, and would banish the new-born King from Germany, destroy His altars, exile or massacre His bishops, priests and religious. As with heavy heart and downcast eyes I pondered on the tragedy of what was happening in the land of Nazism, suddenly the noise ceased. Looking up, I was amazed to find that I was no longer in Cologne, but was standing in the square in front of St. Mary Major Basilica, the great Roman church that guards the precious relics of the Manger. But where was the cheery Italian chatter? Where the crowds that used to swarm to the Christmas Midnight Mass? What had happened to the heart-warming peal of the Christmas bells of St. Mary Major? "Silent night" indeed, but no "strains of heavenly joy!" Sullen Nazi soldiers, heavily armed and pagan-minded were guarding the square and. . . desecrating Christmas.

Christ's Christmas

Another experience, a most consoling one, awaited me before my dream had ended. I found myself on the outskirts of Bethlehem, that quaint old village where the Saviour was born. There, in that lowly hillside-stable, I stood beside the holy Manger, over which the Blessed Virgin Mary bent, tenderly tending the new-born Babe Who lay, wrapped in swaddling clothes, on His little bed of straw. And, with the Shepherds of Bethlehem's hills,

I saw the Christmas Star pierce the heavens, the Star which the Wise Men followed from lands afar to bring gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. I heard Heaven's choir of angels sing "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will."

Awakened by my mother, I thought I could still hear the Christmas choir of angelic voices singing, "Gloria in excelsis Deo. . . ."

A Prayer

That night at Midnight Mass, as the choir began the *Gloria*, my thoughts returned to my dream. I resolved to spend much of my Christmas Day in meditation on the circumstances of the birth of the Christ Child, so that I might know and serve Him better; and I asked the Prince of Peace to teach a materialistic world the spiritual lessons of Bethlehem, to bring to justice the Herod of present-day Germany, to restore to the people whom St. Boniface brought to the feet of the New-born King the blessing of Christian rulers, and to grant to the whole world peace, happiness, and a blessed Christmas.

GERMAN MILITARISM

Kent Macdonald, '46

When the war against Germany is won, our work will be only partly finished. We must make sure that our sacrifices shall not have been in vain. In order to do this we must get to the very root of the German Problem. And here we find a type of mind, a national disease which will require our best efforts to cure. The stamping out of German militarism will be a very difficult task.

What is this affliction which has held Germany in its clutches for so long? German militarism is something which is hard to grasp and put into words. It is a type of mind that glorifies war, and gives its possessors the idea that they are a master-race destined to conquer and rule. It began with the medieval Teutonic Knights and has been preserved through the centuries in victory and defeat until it has again broken forth in our day with a return to the primitive in an exhibition of brutality which has shocked the entire world.