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CHRISTMAS 1972

CHILDREN make a long list of presents they would like to have for Christmas, amongst them perhaps a ball, a doll, a model railway or parts of it, or sports items. With big expectations they await the holy night when the candles are burning and they are allowed in. Is everything to be found under the tree or what is missing? As they grow older those presents change, the wishes become more expensive and harder to fulfil. Now, when they are fully grown, have they given up the wishing, if not the expecting of presents? Is not the major part of Christmas, though they do not realise it, still wrapped up in gift paper?

And soon after Christmas they hopefully toast to a pleasant and prosperous New Year, somehow dreaming that all will come true. That elusive racehorse win, that Mammoth Lottery, the unexpected windfall! It is just the continuation of the Christmas wishes, isn't it? For too many this offers the only joy and reason for the Season, this hollow craving for more and better things. They seem to have forgotten the message "to men of good will". They have cloaked themselves with the mantle of materialism and cannot any longer see the real reason for Christmas: The Season of giving from within oneself. To give means to go out of one's way to bring happiness. The price-tag does not come into it at all — except for the store manager. For how many will this choice present be a full cup of milk, a night-shelter without storm, a warm blanket or a loving stroke of a beloved one that himself has nothing else to give!

So if we have spent our time running the mad circle of a materialistic Christmas, would we not do well to remember that the New Year should start with a resolution that we even though perhaps only in a small way, will do our best to help our fellow-man to be happier?

Just think how much happier it will make us, our family, our neighbour, if we forget our fellow-man's shortcomings and if we do our share in spreading happiness. It is this happiness, this living up to the Boy Scout's motto "to do my best" that has motivated so many of our Compatriots. To them all, the Presidents, the Committee members, the numerous helpers and the faithful Club members, I extend my grateful thanks for all they have done.

May the real blessing of the Season bring you true Happiness and the New Year give you courage and joy to spread the message of Christ's birth in good deeds right through the whole year.

KARL BISCHOF,
President, Swiss Society of N.Z.