

PIONEER CORNER

Is There a Santa Claus?

"Is there a Santa Claus?" - get the December issue of the "New Pioneer" and you'll find the answer right on the cover. You'll find the answer to lots of things in this issue. You'll find the answers that our delegation gave to the reporters who asked them why they came to Washington on Thanksgiving day. You will find the answers that Dan, once a boy scout, and now a Pioneer sent to his cousin explaining how he came to change his mind about the Boy Scouts and what he did about it.

And wait till you see the new installment of "On the Road." Ever hear of a Chain Gang? Speedy Learned what they are all right. Read the story and you'll find out too. Of course, there is a real Christmas story called "Christmas in Harlem," by Everett Burns—about a worker Santa Claus and his son Robert. It's hard to tell about everything in the magazine. There's so much and it's all so interesting. There is lots to learn from the December issue of the New Pioneer. After reading it through we are sure you can answer all the questions your teacher and your friends in school ask you about what you can do, how you can organize and fight against hunger, how you can demand free food in the schools, and not the kind of food that killed Ralph Gonzales either. That's another story told in the December issue of the New Pioneer. Anyhow you'd better hurry up and get one and find out for yourself whether everything I have said about the issue is true or not. Why not write and tell me or write to the New Pioneer direct and say what you think of your magazine. The address is P. O. Box 28, Sta. D, New York City.

Pioneer Pete.

We Demand

And here's something else for you to read - Carefully - and spread among your class mates and all your friends on the block. It's a booklet, a swell one too, called "We demand!" It tells the story of Anyboy and Anygirl and why they went to Washington to try and see the President and what they demanded. There is the story of Anyboy Freeman Viollette, Jr., whose father was a soldier in the World War, and got many medals for bravery. But he couldn't get a job, and he couldn't feed his kids even on the money he got from selling his medals. Freeman was hungry every day and couldn't pay attention to what the teacher was saying. And one day Freeman died—right in the class room—he died of hunger! There are many stories in this pamphlet, and at the end it tells what we are going to do about all this hunger and all this misery. Here's the end of it: "We the children of America, with the help of the Young Pioneers, who are leading us in this fight, will continue until we hear no more children crying: "We are Hungry! We want bread!" We will carry on our fight in the schools. We will gain the support of our fathers and mothers. We will make petitions for free food, and hot lunches, and collect names of our class mates and their parents for the support of these demands. We will demonstrate in the schools. We will petition the city commissioners,

the county, the state and the national government. We will fight until we hear no more of fainting and dying of hunger in the schools and at home! Until there are no more evictions for non payment of rent. Until there are no more children traveling on the road, homeless, cold and hungry. We demand, Mr. President, and we'll fight until we win!"

This story booklet only costs two cents a copy, and when you order more than a hundred you can get it for a penny a copy. Get on the job and order today from Post Office Box 28, Station D, New York City. Get your friends to order some too. On the job!

You can Do the Same

Some of the kids on a street in Brooklyn have been organized into a Junior Unemployed Council. This is the way it was done. One little girl whose mother is a good fighter in the block committee asked her mother if she was going to be able to get anything for Christmas. Of course, her mother told her she could not. This little girl went out and in one week organized over twenty boys and girls to demand baskets at Christmas time from the relief station and to back up their parents when they fight for relief. She is not a Pioneer and did this on her own. She organized the children on the block for something they wanted and needed. You can do the same!

Why Christmas?

When Catholic priests went among the Indians of South America seeking to make them work for the white men under the bluff of "saving their souls," they often found the Indians so firmly believing in their own "gods" of wood and stone, that they would not give up these gods and adopt the god of the priests. The missionaries therefore split the difference. They allowed the Indians to keep their stone and wooden idols, but merely changed the idol's name.

The same sort of scheme was carried out by the spreaders of the Christian religion wherever they went. Take the ceremony of Christmas which is now all around us. It is supposed to celebrate the birthday of a man who was born in Palestine nearly twenty centuries ago. This man saw his people oppressed and suffering under the rule of the Romans, who had conquered his country. Instead of leading the people to fight against the Romans, and drive them out, he gave up all hope of happiness on earth. Instead, he tried to turn the people's desires to happiness in other world, to which they would be taken, he said, in a few years, when the present world would be destroyed.

For 300 years after Jesus died no one celebrated his birthday. When an organized church grew up which used his ideas to mislead the people, they had forgotten all about when he was born. They did not even know the year he was born in, and they did not know the month. Some church leaders said it was in April, some in January and some in May. It surely wasn't December, for that is the rainy season in Palestine, and people did not go traveling around or watching the sheep on the plains in that weather.

Why then did they pick on December 25th as the day? It was another case of letting the heathen keep their celebration under a new name. You know that on December

21st each year an event takes place known as "winter solstice." That means the "winter sun stand." On that day the earth ceases turning an ever more southerly part of itself most directly toward the sun. Instead the earth then gets into a position such that each day the direct rays of the sun shine a little more to the north. For people living in Europe that was a very important event indeed. It meant a change in climate, longer hours of daylight, more warmth, a promise of the spring to come. In the cold far north like Norway and upper Germany, it was especially welcome. Even in Italy to the south, it was occasion for rejoicing.

So it was that the Christian preachers, as they spread over Europe, found the various races all celebrating the turn of the sun. In an old Italian region it was called the "Birth day of the Unconquered Sun." Later the Romans called it Saturnalia, and hung decorations on evergreen trees as part of the festival. The Norsemen called it Yule, and ate Yule-cake around the blazing Yule-log. And all these celebrations, in many lands, and in many tongues, took place on December 25th. That was as soon as the people could be sure that the sunshine had really "stood", and was now coming back north.

The Christian priests saw that they could not change these habits of the tribes. With fire and terror they forced the European peoples to pray to the new god, but they had to let them keep their winter-feast. So they pretended it was the supposed god's birthday, and called it Christmas.

Scranton, Pa.

Dear Pioneer Pete: I saw Marie Laino's letter in the Pioneer Corner and am very glad she agrees with me. I wish to thank her.

I would like to tell you of a discussion which occurred in the school to which I go. A girl, one day, happened to ask the teacher who she voted for. The teacher said she voted for Hoover. The girl said Hoover wasn't good as he was the cause of the depression. The teacher said he wasn't the cause of the depression, she said the war was the cause of it.

I listened to both of them and asked the teacher if I could ask her a question, and she said I could. I asked her who the men fought for and why. She said they fought to help France. I then told her they fought for the rich Wall Street men. She was angry and asked me where I heard all those lies. I told her they were all true facts and that I read good literature. Then she said so much money went to the ex-soldiers. I said, instead of getting their bonus, they got tear gas and bombs. The girl told her Roosevelt would carry out all of his promises. The teacher said he wouldn't. I asked her if Hoover carried out his promises of everything he said. She said he carried out most of them. I said he didn't because we don't have the prosperity he spoke about.

She had nothing to say so she told us all to start working. (I hope the readers will not think I'm for Roosevelt or Hoover. I'm not! I'm for Foster and I always will be.)

I hope our readers get busy and write some letters to Pioneer Pete. Come on! Comrades and write.

Comr. Nellie Monkuskie.

VAJUS

Baigiasi Su 1 d. Sausio, 1933 m.

Paskutinis Prašymas Draugų Gauti Savo Dienraščiai Tūkstantį Naujų Skaitytojų. Iki Šiol Dar Neturim Tūkstančio. Daugybė Draugų Dar Neatsiliepė į Mūsų Prašymą.

Tačiau Yra Vilties, jog iš Keliolikos Tūkstančių Dienraš. Skaitytojų, Apsiras Nors Keli Šimtai Draugų, Kurie Šiom Paskutinėm Dienom Stos į Darbą ir Sudarys Tūkstantį Naujų Skaitytojų.

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Gavę Naujas Prenumeratas Siųskite:

"LAISVĖ", 427 Lorimer Street, Brooklyn, N.Y.

