

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Two Monterey Christmases

On Jan. 3, 1915, there appeared in the Monterey Cypress a special Christmas story telling of the production of an ancient Spanish Biblical drama which had been played in Monterey many years ago and which was revived under the direction of Father Ramon Mestres for the pleasure of the people of the community, it was portrayed in Mission Hall on Sunday afternoon previous to the review which we read with great interest while searching for other old time stories of Monterey.

This ancient Spanish drama "Pastores" played here every Christmastide in the mission days, had been, translated from Spanish by the priest of San Carlos Church, and the members of Junipero Serra Club took part. "The play was greatly enhanced' by exquisite symphonic music by an orchestra under the direction of Prof. D. E. Nofan. The music alone was a rare treat," the reporter believed.

It will be entertaining to all old timers to read the list of the members of Junipero Serra Club who took part in "Pastores." The infant Jesus was portrayed by a mission statue, the Blessed Virgin Mary by Marta Antonia Field; St Joseph by Clarence Rudolph; the angels were Julia and Clarice Sparolini, Kathleen Doud and Grace Rudolph; Angel Gabriel by Marie Rudolph. The Magi kings were: Malchor, P. J. Dougherty; Balthesor, Louis Rudolph; Gaspar, Charles Kiernan; King Herod, Felipe Gonzales; Lucifer, Daniel McAnaney; Shepherd girl of Judea, Ruth Chaine; Bartolo, John Harkins; Borrego, John Lindsay.

The three kings acted in a dignified and creditable manner as did also their attendants. These latter parts were taken by Raymond Rudolph, Ben Watson, Moses Diaz, and Manuel Enos, according to the report in The Cypress.

The role of the mischief maker from the lower regions, "Lucifer," was faithfully portrayed and cleverly interpreted by Daniel McAnaney. His ally, Herod, was well acted by Felipe Gonzales. both characters amusing the children in the large audience.

The shepherds caravan in the production of "Pastores" 43 years ago, was made up of Gila, Benjamin, Aristas,

lassh, Susan and Nelot, acted by Ruth Chaine, Frank Enos, Harold Camp and Donald McAnaney.

"We have had one of the most pleasant Christmas times during the past week Monterey has seen for years." wrote the editor of the Monterey Sentinel in 1855.

After that introduction our reporter of the holidays of more than 100 years ago went on to tell more of the event. "Our population being mostly Catholic, great preparations were made at the old Presidio church of Our Lady of Refugio, which for the last 100-years and over has been the scene of every high religious ceremony in our ancient pueblo.

"On Christmas eve our zealous cura had the church fitted up in a manner highly creditable to his taste. With a very pleasant forethought of his, as we took it, large piles of wood had been stacked close by the church and was set a burning for the double purposes of illumination and warming the gentle during the night, which was bitter cold with a dry, old-fashioned full moon riding high through the clear sky, unobscured with a single cloud.

"At 12 midnight people began to flock toward the church, to attend the Mass of Chanticleer of San Pedro - or, as the Spanish call it, Misa de Galo.

"The Rev. Padre was received by the orchestra, with music from the piano. The ceremony of the Mass was done in excellent order and effect; the music and the signing of the service being performed by the new choir of ladies and gentlemen with great credit, and so as to give pleasure to all not effected with the splenetic of California. There was one, who in high humor, had never known the night so cold, the earth so hard, or his nose so brittle - when it thawed the doctor sewed it up and he is doing very well for a sailor 70 years old.

"In the evening a first-rate, old-fashioned baile came off, where girls and boys tripped the nimble toe, and a right merry fun, without discord, prevailed until half-past one in the morning - when the musicians and company agreed mutually to turn out and go home."