

How good God is! He has brought us safely through the year now past, and allowed us to enter upon another with all its opportunities for happiness and usefulness. With the New Year, gladness and thankfulness fill our hearts—thankfulness for the blessings of the past and present, gladness at the prospects for the future. The winter, with the merry sleigh bells and joyous shouts of sleighing or skating parties, is not yet over; then comes spring with all its beauteous freshness of sunlight and budding life; then summer, with its yellow ripened harvest fields; and autumn, when nature prepares to retire to her winter rest. All, all planned by our Father for our needs, for our pleasure. How shall we receive His gifts? How shall we, His children, show our appreciation of His goodness? By seeking His pleasure as He seeks ours, by praising Him with heart and life and voice, by walking in the path where he would have us walk—the path of love.

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ONE after another the snowflakes fall. Many of the first to come melt and disappear, having apparently done no good. But this is not so, they have served their purpose, they have cooled the spot where they alighted and made it ready for a succeeding snowflake to remain visibly and usefully. One by one we do our duty in life. There is a work to be accomplished in building up the kingdom of truth, the Kingdom of God. As His messenger one of us is sent to deal with some man, but our efforts seem to do no good, the individual remains as he was. But we have done our duty, and he has been prepared for the next, and the next, and the next who shall be sent to him. Finally he is won. The first messenger has done his duty in preparing as much as the last who is said to have won him, for it was not the last but all together who won him. Without the work of the first, apparently so unsuccessful, the work of the last, apparently so successful, would have been impossible. In God's temple many of the stones are hidden from sight in the foundation, but none are hidden from God's sight, and the little noticed and al-

most unseen workmen who patiently lay the foundations of His Church in different lands have a glory peculiarly their own, a glory equal to, if not superior, to that of those workmen who many years later, and in brighter sunlight, erect the superstructure of the temple.

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AT this season of Epiphany, when we are reminded of the manifestation of the Lord Jesus to the Gentiles, our thoughts naturally turn to the vast numbers of the Gentile world that even yet have not heard that the Christ has come.

We think of the wise men of the East, in the olden time, journeying all the way to Jerusalem and asking, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" Then of their going on to Bethlehem still led by the star, and finding the child (disappointed a little, perhaps, at first by his humble surroundings), yet falling down and worshipping, and gladly presenting their treasures of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

What good news it is to think that the Lord Jesus is not only "The King of the Jews," but also the Saviour of the world; and how gladly His disciples should give of their treasures to-day to make this truth known.

We do not wonder, then, that many heralds are travelling over land and sea, pushing their way back into the dark places of the earth, that all people may soon learn that Christ came "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of His people Israel."

"Tell it out, among the heathen, Jesus reigns above;

Tell it out, among the nations, that His name is love.

Tell it out, among the highways, and the lanes at home;

Let it ring across the mountains, and the ocean's foam—

Like the sound of many waters may our glad shout be—

Till it echo, and re-echo, from the islands of the sea."

TAKEN IN TOW.

A man once said to himself, half mechanically, half legally, and with just as much conscience as made him miserable, "I must attend to my religious duties and give a copper in the dish when they come to

my pew, and, by a little prayer and reading, I must get to heaven anyhow." "No you can't," said an old sailor, who was listening, "that's not on the program; no man can set himself to get to heaven; no man ever did. Every adult soul has been brought to heaven, taken in tow, so to speak, by one who knew how to do it. There is only one who knows, only one who can, and that is the lonely Lord Jesus. I say lonely, for no one was so much cut off from all help and sympathy as was the Man of Sorrows when He came and accomplished our redemptive work. "When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand."

Think of Him walking the deck alone, keeping watch alone, working out the problem of our eternal salvation alone, bringing individual souls into port, all alone; pleading at the right hand of God for all his people all alone. This is enough to make us bless Him forever.

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THE GOSPEL FEAST.

Luke xiv. 15-21

A MEDITATION.

How long the preparation for this feast. God does nothing in a hurry.

How ample, adapted, and ready it is. It begins with pardon, ends with eternal glory. It is interesting to mark how we come to share in this great feast. We have no right and no merit, for sin has deprived us of this. We come because we are invited, we receive because the blessings are offered.

But mark how the invitation was treated. It was very urgent, very sincere; none considered it a delusion, no one said, "I don't believe there is any feast at all." It was suited to their wants, but they made excuses. Now these were lawful and proper, but they were misplaced. It is very lawful to buy oxen, to hold a piece of land, or to get married, but lawful things become unlawful when they are put into an unlawful place. God must be first or not at all. And with what polite hesitation some people put off the day of decision for Christ. "I pray thee