

passed some crisis in its history; the day on which the chief ruler saw the light, or ascended the throne, —these are epochs regarded as worthy of commemoration, and by their observance the nation's heart is stirred, and the nation's patriotism is intensified. But to Christian hearts there is no anniversary like Christmas, for on that day we commemorate an event that is celebrated not merely by an individual, or even by a nation, but by the whole civilized world. There are those, indeed, who say (the wish being father to the thought) that Christianity is a thing of the past, and that Christ is fast losing His hold upon the world's heart; but the very reverse is true. His name is more widely known, His truth more fully believed, than ever before; and Christmas day, 1886, will be celebrated by more people, and with a fuller appreciation of its meaning, than in any former year.

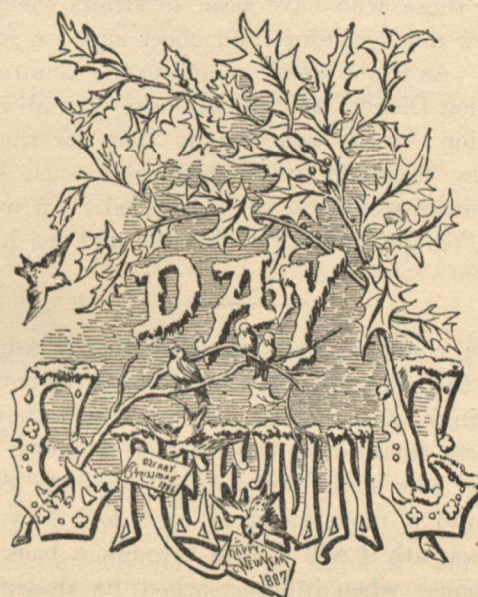
It is an inspiring thought to all Christian hearts, that they form part of an innumerable host who joyfully celebrate the birth of their common Lord. Because of Christ's birth there is gladness all over the world. The event will be celebrated in the palaces of kings, and in the homes of the poor; in stately cathedrals, and in village churches. It will be celebrated by the Indian in his wigwam, and by the Hottentot in his kraal; by the Eskimo in his Arctic forest, and by the South Sea Islander beneath the shadow of his palms. The Arab in his tent will tell the story, and the Hindu by the Ganges will join in the song. Every language under heaven will blend in the chorus, and no discord will mar the sweetness of the strain; for the name of Jesus will be the key-note of the music, and the love of Jesus shall tune each tongue; and from myriad worshippers one universal anthem of rejoicing shall rise towards heaven, till listening angels join in responsive measure, and the worship of earth and heaven shall blend in one. For as the angels first celebrated the event itself, it may still remain a red-letter day in kalendar of Heaven.

Think not the event we celebrate is but a half-forgotten memory, a worn-out spell. The Babe of the Manger is living yet, and still the angels are singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

"Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing."

That song is a prophecy! It tells of a coming time when God's purpose in the redemption of the world shall be accomplished; when glory to God and peace to men shall be blessed realities. Every Christmas brings it nearer; every gospel message, every earnest prayer, every kindly deed, helps on the time.

"For lo! the days are hastening on
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years
Comes round the Age of Gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing."



HOLIDAY GREETINGS AND HINTS.

CORDIAL GREETINGS, such as become this happy season, we send to one and all; but chiefly to the lonely toilers on isolated stations, whose only cheer, perhaps, will be the memory of other Christmas days, when friends were many and cares were few; brightened, however, by the consciousness that present toils and sacrifices are all for His sake who "came not to be ministered unto but to minister." Would God that with the greetings we could send to many a humble mission home some more substantial token of remembrance, as an evidence that its inmates are not forgotten in the sympathies, the prayers, and the gifts of the Church.

We have no wish to put our missionaries in the position of paupers, or recipients of charity. Far rather would we see them receiving such remuneration for their self-denying work as would enable them to 'provide things honest in the sight of all men.' But