

ed, how many heroic lives have been freely sacrificed in carrying to every nation the gospel of Jesus! Men have everywhere been teaching the lesson that the principles of that gospel ought to be the foundation of the entire structure of life and effort. The question comes to us this Christmas Day: What is the amount of the influence of that perfect life upon the actual work-a-day life of the world? Is this busy world of ours listening with intent ears to the song the shepherds heard as they kept their vigil under the stars of that eastern sky? Amid the noise of earth's trafficking, amid the din of earth's battle, can we detect the sweet, clear notes of heavenly music? It will not be unprofitable for us, surely, on this day, to consider to what extent the world, now nineteen centuries older, is listening to and profiting by the teaching of Him from whose birth its age is numbered. Is the world moving with slow, tortuous, often interrupted progress towards a realization of the ideal kingdom proclaimed by the thorn-crowned Nazarene? What answer to this question do we read in the "signs of the times"?

Let us remember that what we read on the fluent page of human history will depend very much on the eyes we bring to the task. In the window of this room overlooking the village nestling in the hollow, are panes of red, of blue and of yellow. When I look through the first pane, a flood of crimson light is poured upon the scene. The warm, rich color is like that of bright curtains shutting out December's storm and cold. How different when I look through the blue pane! The sun seems to have lost all its grateful warmth. All beneath looks cold—so cold that I shiver and involuntarily turn to stir the wood fire into brighter blaze. But I turn away more quickly from the yellow pane. For it gives a tint of jaundiced melancholy to sun and snowy cloud-heaps and evergreens that crown the opposite heights.

So might one look upon the course of human events and see nothing but rose-color. The pitchy blackness of crime, the purple of pride and vanity, the smirched white of imperfect virtue would be unseen by such an observer. Or the scene might be so viewed as that the observer would see nothing but the wintry blue of hardness, and grasping and grinding miserly exaction. Nor are there wanting those whose vision shows them nothing but gloom and depression and bilious despondency. Let us avoid all these deceiving