

The Canadian Craftsman.*Port Hope, December 15, 1884.***CHRISTMAS.**

Once more the hallowed season of joy and thanksgiving is upon us; once more the bells ring forth their joyous peal; once more the family re-union takes place, and grey-haired grandparents tell their smiling grandchildren tales of bygone days. All is happiness,—all looks bright, as the Yule log crackles on the hearth and laughter resounds; as some coy maiden struggles beneath the mistletoe. Christmas, indeed, is a season hallowed by a thousand sacred memories, revered for a thousand quaint traditions, and loved for its time-immemorial church solemnities, and looked forward to as the period of family love and family harmony and family re-union.

To the Christian Mason and soldier of the Cross, it recalls to memory the time when, at his mother's knee, he first learnt to lip the sacred name of Jesus. It reminds him of his childhood's days, the wonderful revelations then, in simple narrative, made plain to him, of the birth of the boy in a lowly stable; the life of the Man of Sorrows, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, healing the sick, raising the dead; His death, that awful sacrifice of a dying God on the quivering aspen upon the olive-clothed summit of Calvary's Mount, surrounded by a taunting priesthood, the unbelieving Sadducee, the hypocritical Pharisee, and a ribald soldiery, while on either side nailed on a cross, was an outcast, a malefactor, a thief; the one scoffing,

the other believing; the Resurrection on the third day, His appearance to His disciples, His rebuke to the scoffers, and finally the Saviour's Ascension to "Our Father which art in heaven."

The birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of the Immanuel, all pass in view before us on Christmas day, as we trace back those hallowed seasons to our childhood's years,—years now long past and gone, never again to be retraced or recalled, and to-day, as we write, we remember we are one year nearer to our God than when we wrote our Christmas greeting last year. Every Mason, on this day, should ask himself, "Have I, during the past year, been true to my vows, faithful to my obligations? If I have not been, how base and vile a creature am I. How unfit to meet my God!" The thought is an awful one, and every brother should on this hallowed day retire to his chamber, and lay bare his heart to himself and to his Maker who knoweth his inmost secrets.

On this day, and at this season, the wealthy Hiramite should render the home of his poorer brother richer, by generous gifts and lavish smiles. He should go forth as the angel of old to do good, to cheer, to comfort. Amidst the thousands who range themselves under our banners, there are those who, from unforeseen misfortune, are being reduced to the lowest depths of penury and distress, and to such he should go with words of cheer and comfort, with tangible proof of his love and devotion to the Craft and his belief in the God-inspired principles advocated by the gentle Nazarene.