

WHEN CHRISTMAS COMES

When Christmas comes,
The baby, girl who scarce can speak,
The youth with bronzed and bearded cheeks,
The aged bent with weight of years,
The sorrow-stricken spent with tears,
The poor, the rich, the grave, the gay,
Who fare along life's rugged way,
Are glad of heart, when in the sky
The wondrous seraph wings sweep by.

When Christmas comes,

When Christmas comes,
The sailor on the seas afloat,
The traveller in lands remote,
The warrior by the campfire's light,
The courtier in the palace bright,
The student by the midnight lamp,
The miner deep in dust and damp,
Alike uplift, through riven skies,
The wondrous look of glad surprise.

When Christmas comes,

When Christmas comes,
In field and street, in mart and farm,
The world takes on a lovelier charm,
Sweet-scented boughs of pine and fir
Are brought, like frankincense and myrrh
To make our hallowed places meet
For hands that clasp and tones that greet,
While hearts, worth more than gold or gem,
Go forth to find their Bethlehem.

When Christmas comes,

—Margaret E. Sangster.

CHRISTMAS REJOICING

We must, I suppose, often feel, it must be so in the average course of life with some or other of us—that we are hardly in tune for the rejoicing of Christmas. The rush of gladness which it brings with it through a whole people, through all the wide realms of Christendom, deepens to many by sharp contrast

the bitterness of a recent bereavement, the sorrowful watch round a hopeless sick bed. But amid the darkness of our life, the hope of man is still on Him as fixed and sure as ever it was. He will not disappoint man of his hope. To-day bids us look up, in spite of everything, and lift up our heads. Come what may, nothing can efface the mark which Christmas has made in the rolls of time: "For us men and for our salvation, He was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man." Let us, in spite of the noise and turmoil, of fear or of sorrow, give that its due place in our hearts. Let not private trouble, nor the march of the world and the crash of its conflicting powers drown its holy call. It speaks to us, if we will but listen; it speaks as it did on that first birthday of our Lord, of the "peace beyond all understanding;" of "the joy unspeakable and full of glory," with which apostles, and saints, and martyrs went through life and death to God.—R. W. Church, in the "Anglican Pulpit Library."

SOME THOUGHTS FOR CHRISTMAS

What innumerable memories crowd in upon the mind at the mention of this great event in the life of humanity. Our thoughts, yes, even the thoughts of the careless and sin-stained, as, unbidden if not actively resisted, the recollection of lessons learned at the mother's knee, in the purity and innocence of childhood, under the shelter of the old home, forces itself upon the mind—our thoughts, I say, are insensibly carried back over the ages to the sacred spot where the Son of God became flesh and tabernacled among men.

How passing strange was that glorious scene! The eager, fussing crowd of worshippers, jostling each other in their anxiety to reach Jerusalem in time—manifesting, as is

so common even to-day, the inconsiderateness of selfish religious zeal. Each must have his proper accommodation; the strongest and most pertinacious push aside the weak and timid. Those rich and self-satisfied travellers, comfortably housed in the village inn at Bethlehem, were far too pre-occupied to give a thought to the fainting Virgin Mary, or to the Divine Babe, whose advent lit up the whole country side—nay, the world itself—with His heavenly glory. "There was no room for them in the inn."

And to-day, after the light of Christ's beauty has been shining over mankind for nearly nineteen centuries, there are thousands of hearts—not merely among the heathen in foreign lands, but in our very midst, perhaps among those who are reading these lines—that are so full of business, of pleasure, of self, that they cannot find a corner in their hearts in which the Prince of Peace may rest.

And what of those who, weighed down by the grinding torture of poverty and misery, can find no ray of brightness from the manger at Bethlehem, to pierce the cloud of grim despair which envelopes them in its hideous folds? When we think that there are thousands of men and women, yes, and little children, too—who, shivering and half-starved, uncared for and hopeless, will spend the coming Christmastide as they spend any other day—perhaps ignorant of the fact that the Son of God became Man in order to redeem them from the bondage of sin—is it not the duty of every follower of the Lord Jesus, more particularly those who will be in the enjoyment of countless luxuries, to think of their poorer brethren, and to give up one small pleasure, and determine that the fruits of that act of self-sacrifice shall be devoted to the task of relieving some sufferer, or brightening some lonely life? "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

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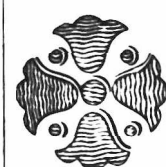
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