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## MORE CHRISTMAS.

Students of history tell us that Christmas was superimposed upon an ancient Norse festival, and that the gift-making, feasting and gathering of families are survivals of that pre-historic celebration. Other historians point to the noteworthy fact that Christianity died or was smothered in its early home, Asia Minor and North-east Africa, while the so-called barbarians of Europe not only gave it a home and preserved it in greater or less purity, but have been the means of sending missionaries back to its birth-place and throughout the world.

Christmas is thus an annual representation, a drama, as it were, in which the course of the greatest movement in history is compendiously shown. Much, if not all, that is good in the old heathen customs of our virile, conquering ancestors, survives with us, but transfused with the light and warmth of a religion whose one word is Love.

That old errors are still existent, that the transformation of the barbarian is not complete, even after two thousand years, is all too clearly seen in the sickening light of the lurid skies of Europe and Northern Asia and South Africa. Nevertheless we feel and know that, if our civilization has lasted for two thousand years as against a thousand of the best that went before it; if its influence overspreads the world instead of being confined to a single city or to a number of subject provinces; if its strongest elements are shedding their dearest blood that men may be free and not dominated by institutions or by other men, it is because our civilization, whatever strength it may draw from the social customs of our heathen ancestors, is, in aspiration at least, a Christian civilization.

"Christmas as usual" is the word that comes to us from those who would lead the public thought.

In such a year as this it should be Christmas more than usual. It is the spirit of Christmas that must save the world, the spirit of good-will and universal brotherhood. However much that spirit may need—as the world generally seems to think it does need—the protection of the arm of power in order that it may spread its healing among the nations, yet nobody doubts that the world will succeed, when success shall come, not by universal war, but by universal peace. If we are not to be overcome of evil there is no way open to us but to overcome evil with good.

War, they tell us, brings out the highest qualities in men,—fortitude, self-forgetfulness, regard for the common good. It is a form of exaltation. But exaltation cannot last forever. This is not a world of sublimities but a world of commonplaces; for otherwise the farmer could never overcome his awe of nature sufficiently to go on with his work; the mariner would be so completely under the spell of the ocean that he could not steer his craft; the man of the city would be dumb and dazed in the presence of souls on their way from the unknown to the unknown.

After war must come peace—that is what war is for. Called down