

things of Christ, and showing them to the soul, is God's way of reviving His own work in the heart of a sinner. It is not produced by human power, or creature excitement, or sensational stories, or beautiful music. "This is the work of God, that ye believe," and the faith that works by love is the true revival in the soul of a believer.

A Merry Christmas.

The words are blithe and full of cheer;
They never pall on any hearer,
But borne along from year to year,
From year to year, sound ever dearer.

And yet we know the words are vain;
We know the season *must* be merry,
When those long severed meet again
Beneath the white and scarlet berry

When small, but mirth-compelling jokes,
Are heard from every nook and corner,
When on the board plum-pudding smokes,
Attended by the pie of Horner.

When kissing shall by favor go,
And age declare it only folly,
That youth resorts to mistletoe,
And lovely woman stoops to holly.

When old and young, and middle-aged,
The generations all commingle;
The widowed, wedded, fresh engaged,
And, last and least, the many single.

Merry? when all around is bright,
Merry? Ay, marry now or never;
The churl who cannot laugh to-night,
Must give the habit up forever.

One week in all the fifty-two
Is little time to give to laughter;
Come, join the revel, cynic, do,
Although a cynic ever after.

Come, choose a seasonable strain,
To fit the jolly days before us,
And shout we all with might and main,
"A Merry Christmas!" is the chorus

Times for Meditation.

Our work, our occupations, our recreations, are apt to take entire possession of us, to overwhelm us, to model us into their shape, to reduce us to their level; they cling to us like our shadows; they keep us from rising out of them or above them. Remember that He is recorded as having gone up from the crowded plain to the quiet hill, and there continued all night in prayer to God; and that we are told how the disciples went to their homes, but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Surely we cannot fail if we wish to keep Him before our eyes to find even in the busiest life some still time for thought, for looking backwards and forwards, for withdrawing ourselves for a moment from the throng of common cares and pleasures to some peaceful hillside, from amidst the swarming and noisy flats of life, where we may snatch short times of insight and resolution which may be worked out in the days of hurry or perhaps of gloom.

The Christmas Spirit.

THE GREATEST HAPPINESS WILL COME FROM GIVING
HAPPINESS TO OTHERS.

"We must not allow ourselves to forget the true meaning of the Christmas spirit," writes Edward W. Bok of "The Christmas that Lies Between," in the December *Ladies' Home Journal*. "It will bring happiness to us just in proportion as we bring happiness to others. To some the day will this year bring other than happy thoughts or memories. Sorrows are harder to bear on festal days than at any other time. But no sorrow should crush the Christmas spirit from our hearts. It is not in the amount that we do, or are able to do, that we shall find happiness for ourselves and for others. The simplest pleasures and acts oftentimes make the hearts of others overflowing with happiness. To fail to do something because you feel that you cannot do much is wrong. What seems ever so trifling to you may

make some little heart sing all day long, which but for you might pass the day without a note of happiness. Don't grow impatient of the Christmas myth or legend. Keep it alive. God knows that we have few enough ideals in these investigating days of ours. Let us not disturb the Christmas traditions. It is a duty to ourselves to keep this day as unlike any other. And we can only do this by fanning into flame the smouldering embers of the Christmas spirit which is in every one of us. God implanted it there. It was good that we should have it, or He would not have given it to us. In childhood the fire burned brightly enough within us; in old age the light of Christmas will reflect in our faces and our nature. But in the meantime we must keep the spirit alive so that it may glow the warmer and softer in old age. Let us have an old-time merry Christmas this year: a real, old-fashioned, happy one. Let us make everybody forget that there is anything in the world but good fellowship and happy laughter. To the sick let us bring forgetfulness of pain; to the sorrowful, the sweet balm of a happy smile; to the aged, loving thoughts of consideration; to the poor, a suggestion of the greater material blessings which are ours. Then, as we bring light to other eyes, color to other cheeks, happiness to other hearts, we shall be happy ourselves. The Christmas spirit will keep alive within us. Our years must be spanned, not with a Christmas at either end, but with an unbroken bow of happy Yuletides, the centre brighter even than the beginning and the end. Living memories must intertwine and link together the golden curl and snowy lock. Then we will live in the full richness of the Christmas that lies between: the Yuletide of the present, the Christ Day that is now and here."

Aching Joints

Announce the presence of rheumatism, which causes untold suffering. Rheumatism is due to lactic acid in the blood. It cannot be cured by liniments and other outward applications. Hood's Sarsaparilla purifies the blood, removes the cause of rheumatism and permanently cures this disease. This is the testimony of thousands of people who once suffered the pains of rheumatism, but have actually been cured by taking Hood's Sarsaparilla. Its great power to act upon the blood and remove every impurity is the secret of the wonderful cures by Hood's Sarsaparilla.

Archbishop Temple and the Cabman.

Dr. Temple, after coming out of the House of Lords one evening, hired a cab and was driven home to Fulham. He tendered the cabman the exact legal fare, two shillings. The cabman, hoping the bishop would prove a good "fare," expostulated with his lordship and asked for another shilling. The bishop, however, firmly refused to be drawn. Thereupon the cabman became abusive, and as a Parthian shot to his lordship, who had turned on his heels to enter the palace, said:

"You call yourself the head of St. Paul's Cathedral! D'ye think St. Paul, if he were alive, and were living here with ten thousand a year, would try and do a poor cabby by giving him only two shillings for a drive from Westminster to Fulham?"

"No," said Dr. Temple; "if St. Paul were alive he would live at Lambeth Palace, where the fare from Westminster is only a shilling."

Cabby collapsed.—*Westminster Gazette*.

—What shall we say, how shall we feel, in the presence of the facts that Christmas compels us to face? Shall we "seek great things for ourselves" in the various ways of the world? Shall we think it hard to have to pass through life, it may be, without all that our heart desires, that we think our due? Shall we despair of our life, shall we sullenly undervalue its blessings and its hopes, and almost wish that we had been spared both what it gives and what it exacts, because of its grave uncertainties, and difficult problems, and threatening prospects? Shall we make ourselves unhappy, and be discontented and envious? Let it not be.

Self Help for Children.

The best thing that a father can do for his boys or a mother for her girls is to allow them, under wise guidance, to carve their own fortunes. They should be made to feel that the old home has always for them wide-open doors in case of illness or accident, but, barring these, the child should stand or fall according to his or her own energy and industry. This is by no means the usual course. Parental affection, which is so often full of unjudicious weakness, coaxes, persuades, holds up the hand, encouraging the lagging feet, and smooths out the wrinkles of existence. The misfortunes of life are almost absolutely guaranteed to the young man or woman who has somebody always at hand to brush the obstruction out of the way. It takes but a little while to learn to depend on somebody else, and wait for the helping hand that seems always ready when most needed. Indifferent success, or, what is much more common, failure, is the legitimate result of this course. It seems very hard to turn the children out to shift for themselves, and few parents have the strength or determination to do it. This is a misfortune, for there would be more strong characters, more brilliant successes, and fewer weak, babyish careers were this plan more generally adopted. As soon as the boys or girls reach a suitable age a special plan of action should be marked out for them. Absolutely imperative demand should be made upon them, and no delinquency in their duties should be excused.

Ignorant Prayers.

These hearts of ours are all full of wishes, and it is the proper use of wishes to turn them into prayers. It is the test of a wish whether we can pray it. Sinful wishes refuse to be prayed; any wish which is not sinful should be at once moderated and consecrated by being made a prayer. But when it is made into a prayer, how often may Christ say to us concerning it, "Ye know not what ye ask." Perhaps you are starting in the race of life, and the one thing which seems to you important is success. Or perhaps you have been considerably hindered and thrown back in life's competition; you have known what disappointment is, you have seen others pass you, others who set out with fewer advantages and with humbler hopes than yours; and now it is becoming a critical case; if success comes not now, if you do not make a stride or take an onward step now, life itself will have been for you a failure; and who can patiently bear that result? How natural, how right, that you should pray about these things! How natural, how right, that you should say, "Lord, if it be thy will, give me success: Lord, if it be thy will, save me from this blank of disappointment, from this shipwreck of my life: Lord, prosper; Lord, help; Lord, relieve me!" And yet has not Christ said, with reference to such matters, to many, in all times, of His faithful and cherished disciples, "In asking for success, in asking for prosperity, you know not what you ask? It is in failure that you are safest, it is in disappointment that you are closest to Me and nearest to heaven: these things are of love; these things are for good; be patient, be of good courage, so shall you win your crown!"—*Dean Vaughan*.

The festival of Christmas teems with poetry, written and unwritten. Its meaning is the truest, finest poem; all its associations are poetic; and poets have ever delighted to sing its glorious message. Its poetry thrill through thousands of hearts and homes, especially throughout the Anglo-Saxon world. Christmas has ever been dear to Englishmen. It comes at a time when gloom and silence possess the face of earth; it helps us over the dimmest part of our winter. When it has quite passed by, the lengthening days already begin to remind us that spring is waiting. After the Christmas rose we soon gather crocuses and snowdrops, which tells us that the time of violets and primroses is not far off. However much the world may change, it seem unlikely that the good old Yule will ever be forgotten. Let us still hope to preserve enough of its gladness, its charity, its peacefulness, to last for many generations.