



Christmastide



Let any one sit down and consider thoughtfully the problem presented by the celebration of Christmas Day by all civilized nations and the probabilities are that, he will find no solution at all adequate for so vast and unique a phenomenon.

There is not, nor has there ever been, any festival observed by peoples of such diversified nationalities, races and creeds. No annual celebration of such purely human interest above and apart from some special form of religious faith, has such a record of observance for centuries. The Jews, it is true, for a much longer period have kept up their Passover rites and celebrations. But, to the people of different races, to the Hebrews that festival does not appeal. Christmas, on the other hand, has no element, or phase of an exclusive character, it touches into music the chords which are common to humanity. None are too poor or too rich, too obscure or too prominent, too afflicted or too vigorous, too young, or too aged to be outside the range of a Christmas blessing.

When every political potentate in Europe, with one exception, is celebrating Christmas in the family and the Court circle, the prisoners in durance vile, and paupers in their loneliness amid a crowd domiciled under one roof, will also be vibrating with the same pulse of happiness, as this "one touch of nature" furnished by Christmas, "makes the whole world kin."

A solution of the problem thus presented of a civilized world celebrating the birth of a child some nineteen centuries ago, demands the recognition of some power higher than nature. The origin and the inspiration of Christmas postulate a supernatural, divine influence. The association of joyousness, of "becoming mirth," with a religious celebration of the profoundest significance differentiates Christianity from all other forms of religion. A happy Christmas seems to imply family gatherings brightened by the joy of children. It appeals by its sacred memories to all who are living in alienation to become reconciled. Over the whole land Christmas sends a wave of charity, of good-will, of sympathy. Under the power of this divine solvent animosities dissolve.

Were Christmas properly observed in Russia, the turmoil would cease, for oppression, injustice, class hatred, racial antagonisms would come to an end.

How different would business conditions be were debtors and creditors alike, by the honest clearance of debts, enabled to enjoy a happy Christmas! Those who like old Scrooge are too saturnine in temper, or too deeply enslaved by mercantile cares and work to enter into the spirit of Christmas, make a woful mistake. Were all their fellow creatures to become as they are this world would be a pandemonium of misery and shame.

Let us all then thankfully acknowledge the crowning gift of God's goodness in the event celebrated on Christmas Day by rejoicing and giving a stimulus to the enjoyment of all within reach of our influence.

**We very cordially send our readers our best wishes of the
season of Christmastide.**

