

familiar faces,' until our gladness is turned into tears, and the heart aches painfully at the mere mention of the once joyous season. But even through this darkness there is a light, shining out strongly upon our grief. It is Christmas day, and He whose birth caused us to set that time apart for rejoicing and love, came to this poor earth, taking its humanities and sorrows upon himself, that ours might be cancelled forever; pointing out a passage from its gloom and grief, to the winterless country above; taking desolation from the grave, and shewing us how far beyond its darkness those we loved so well are sheltered, from the tempest and trials of life. Thankfully indeed may we celebrate this advent time, for it brought in truth 'tidings of great joy to all people,' not only through time, but for eternity.

Christmas has been a subject for the Poet, the Painter, the Divine, the Moralist, the Philosopher and the Philanthropist. It is endeared more or less to every heart. The poor hail it as a time of good gifts and sympathies from their fellow-men. Hands and hearts act then in liberal unison, and there is scarcely a dwelling that has not some token to mark the day as one of peace and rejoicing. Long may Christmas be green in the love and enjoyment of all. Holy and happy time! And well may every other month in the year envy December the glorious privilege of being set apart for the anniversary of the Saviour's birth. This places a crown of summer upon its wintry brow. For the time, the poor man looks up cheered and comforted, and the dying year smiles out a joyful farewell, while the peace and beauty of Christmas gilds its expiring hours!

We are standing upon the threshold of another stage in the highway of Time. The recording angel is about to seal up his book for the closing year. We have but one month more to look over our account, and see that the balance be in our favour. The close of any period induces melancholy reflections, and though we are often called to part with the old year during our short span of existence, still the feelings it brings are always sad, and we tremble at what another may have in store for us. Friends that smiled upon us when this one was new, have been taken away, diminishing the links that bind us to our earthly home. The book of life has added other dark pencil marks to its already stained pages, and as we look upon the leaves yet to be filled, we would gladly trace a brighter record there. Solemn indeed is the 'farewell month of the vanishing year,' and we cling to its few remaining days, grieved to part with a period which may have brought us little joy, but is yet endeared by a thousand sorrows. Every heart has its own record, and the chronicle often has a backward glance as December journeys on. But alas! we lay the volume down as we took it, and it remains clasped and forgotten until the close of a succeeding year once more unfolds the accusing register.