

art, so this religious festival gives an annual impetus to it. And just as there are appropriate poems innumerable, so also there are appropriate paintings and frescos all over the world. Then think of the thousands of highly artistic Christmas cards that are turned out annually. In this particular it seems each year as if artistic ability could go no further, and yet it seems only to surpass itself in each succeeding year. For this reason the interest in the cards, however beautiful, is only too transient; and the old cards are soon laid away out of sight. It seems a pity that this should be so; that a thing of beauty should "blush unseen," or fail to be a "joy forever." But if the Christmas cards surpass themselves each year, how can one sufficiently praise the great illustrated journals. They eclipse itself. As we have what is called fugitive literature, so I suppose Christmas cards and Christmas journalism might be termed a species of *fugitive art*, but none the less high art.



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But after all, one of the chief features of the season is its good-fellowship and humanitarianism. It seems at this time as if we were really beginning to learn to love our neighbour as ourself. So that all the turkeys given to the poor, and all the kind things done and kind words spoken tend to wheel the world around one notch nearer the millennium. The world is not indifferent to epicurean pleasures, and at this season is inclined to deal graciously with its appetite; and there is the good-fellowship of the table. And finally among the sweetest of all the sweet features of Christmas is the appro-

priate music of the sanctuary. In the sanctuary and out of it are heard the manifold voices of Christmas,—

Christmas sounds are in the air,
Mirth and music everywhere,
Wintry winds like trumpets blare,
Cracking ground and creaking bough,—
Hark, the frost is snapping now;
Thus does nature's tymbal go.
Now the sleigh-bells ringing clear
Speak the wintry season here
To enhance the Christmas cheer.
Church-bells now in deeper voice
Ring their rounds in cadence choice
Bidding the wide world rejoice.
Deep the organ's baritone
Pipes the swelling chorus on;
Mark, all voices blent in one.
See, the fireside's red, red glow
Crackling roars, and stories go
Round the hearth of ghosts and snow.
Clicking plates in melody,
Clink to jolly company,
Ladle, cup and all agree.
Rippling, happy note so gay,
Laughter trills its tunesome lay,
Welcoming this happy day.
And all hearts from clime to clime
Dance together keeping time
With the flooding Christmas chime,
Till its peals ascending high
Pierce the portals of the sky
With the thanks our songs imply.

William H. S. Walker

