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O HAPPY TIME!

O happy time of all the year,
Though nature's face be chill and drear,
The birth-time of the dear Christ child
Makes warm and bright the dreary wild!

And pain of earthly woe shall cease,
As on the heart the chrism of peace
Shall fall, as gleams from out the Star
Make bright the place where shadows are.

—Emily Bugbee Johnson.

Growth of British Empire.—During the century just closing, the extent of the British Empire has increased at the rate of two acres per second. The colonial area of territory is now ninety-seven times that of the home country. In 1800 the population of the British Empire was 115 millions, while it is now 390 millions.

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Prayer by the Chimes.—The clock in the Houses of Parliament in London, says *The Observer*, has been undergoing repairs recently—the second time it has been stopped for such a purpose in over forty years. When the hours are chimed the bells are intended to express the prayer: "All through this hour, Lord, be my guide, and by Thy power no foot shall slide."

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Ocean Telegraphy.—It is only fifty years since the possibility of sending telegraphic messages under the sea was first established; and the engineer who directed the laying of the first ocean cable, from Dover to the French cliffs on the other side of the English Channel, is still living in England. The cable soon ceased to work, but it was the precursor of the Atlantic cable, which was paid out from the *Great Eastern* in 1866, and of the one hundred and seventy thousand miles of ocean cable now in operation.

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A Nineteenth Century Benefactor.—The picture on our front page commemorates one of the greatest discoveries made during the century which is now closing—the use of ether as an anesthetic, by which serious surgical operations may be performed without pain to the patient. Previous to its introduction the torture endured by those who were unfortunate enough to come under the surgeon's knife was simply indescribable. The honor of discovering ether was claimed by four men—Long, Wells, Jackson, and Morton; but if it is true, as Sydney Smith said: "He is not the inventor who first says the thing, but he who says it so long, loudly and clearly that he compels mankind to hear him," then Dr. Morton, a dentist of

Boston, deserves to be regarded as the inventor of ether as an anesthetic. He first used it in an operation in the City of Boston in 1846, and afterwards administered it successfully in several severe cases. He loudly proclaimed his deeds, and compelled mankind to hear him. When he was lying unconscious in a Boston hospital, just before his death, the chief surgeon said to the students: "Young gentlemen, you see lying before you a man who has done more for the relief of suffering than any man that has ever lived." Such a man deserves a monument as much as the statesman or the soldier.

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The Holiday Time.—The holiday season should not crowd the revival service to the rear, as it too frequently does. At this glad time when men celebrate the advent of the Saviour into the world, it should be easy to reach their hearts. Yet the devout find in increasingly difficult to divert the attention of their neighbors from vanities and frivolities at this particular time. We need more consecration, more prayer, more intelligent comprehension of the meaning of the holiday time and of the most appropriate way in which to celebrate it.

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San Francisco, 1901.—In order to develop interest in the great International Epworth League Convention to be held in San Francisco next summer, a series of stereopticon entertainments are now being given in various cities of the United States. They will be free and full of interest to those who expect to go to the Pacific coast in 1901. For those who can not go, the views of the superb scenery and cities of the far West will be the next best thing to going in person. If any of our Leagues would like to secure this entertainment, they will do well to communicate with the editor of this paper at once.

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The Closing Century.—We ought all to be thankful that we have been permitted to live in the best part of the most remarkable century this world has ever known. Nearly all the inventions which have ministered so much to human comfort and happiness, are the product of the past hundred years, and, most of all, the

moral and religious movements which blessed mankind, have been developed during the same period. In view of this we have given considerable space in this issue to "The Achievements of the Nineteenth Century," which illustrate in a remarkable manner the Saviour's words: "Other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors."

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Sermon-Hearing and Worship.—The tendency to magnify the sermon at the expense of other parts of the public service is thus described by the *Western Christian Advocate*: "Great evils have resulted from regarding sermon-hearing as the most important reason for church attendance. The sermon has been elevated to the chief place as a great discourse, standing by itself, and not as an auxiliary to worship. If the preacher is not a pulpit orator, many even of the membership, will not come at all. That he is dull they consider a sufficient and valid excuse for staying at home. It never seems to occur to them that they should go to church primarily to meet God, and not the minister. If the preacher is smart or brilliant, they may make it a great piece of virtue to go and be entertained for an hour. However, if they are a half-hour late, and miss the hymns, prayer, creed, and Scripture-reading, there is, they think, but little loss. These are but introductory exercises. The sermon is the main thing, and, like a man who just catches his train, they feel satisfied and happy. If the soprano, though, can take the high notes easily they may regret that they were not quite in time for her performance." The congregation ought to go to church with the express purpose of worshipping God, and the service should be of such a character that, altogether independent of the sermon, it would uplift and inspire those who attend.

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Enthusiasm.—Some people are afraid of anything like joy in religion. They have none themselves, and they do not love to see it in others. Their religion is something like the stars, very high and very clear, but very cold. When they see tears of anxiety or tears of joy, they cry out, "Enthusiasm! enthusiasm!" "I sat down under his shadow with a great delight." Is this enthusiasm? "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing!" If it be really in sitting under the shadow of Christ, let there be no bounds to our joy. O! if God would but open our eyes and give us simple, childlike faith to look to Jesus, to sit under his shadow, then would songs of joy arise from all our dwellings! "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice."—*McCheyne*.