

CHRISTMAS

Mary, a Virgin, was chosen by God above all others to become the Mother of His beloved Son. Joseph was made their protector and guardian. In obedience to an edict for enrolment which was issued by Cæsar Augustus, Joseph with his espoused wife left his humble dwelling in Nazareth and proceeded over eighty miles of rough country to the city of David, Bethlehem. On their arrival they could not obtain lodging with relatives, friends or at the inn, so they took refuge in a cave of limestone without the city gates. Thus Our Lord was born; then His Virgin Mother wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger. What a birth-place! What a crib for the Son of God! What a throne for the King of kings!

The birth of Christ is pictured to us as taking place in the month of December. On this cold winter night the most beautiful present that the human race has ever received was given to it. Mary and Joseph alone were His court until the shepherds came to adore Him. He was kept warm by the breath of the animals that were sheltered in the cave. Holy Scripture tells us that on that night the angelic choirs sang out praise to God and also a choir of angels appeared to a body of shepherds on the hillside and told them of the birth of the Messiah. Thus was born Christ, the Son of David, the Saviour long foretold by the Hebrew prophets, the long awaited Redeemer of the Jewish race. Thus was accomplished the greatest, the most incomprehensible and the most wonderful of all mysteries wrought by the Almighty.

Twenty centuries ago the same constellations that are now blazing in the heavens looked down and trembled, as the angels clove their way among them and sang together the praises of the Most High. It is a strange, a most stupendous thought—that these stars looked down then as now on Bethlehem; then they saw, they wondered and they were still. Abyss called out to abyss, the