

is not a man who would not fall down on his knees and bless God for the Liturgy of the Church of England.

HYMN BEFORE ACTION.

The earth is full of anger,
The seas are dark with wrath,
The Nations in their harness
Go up against our path :
Ere yet we loose the legions—
Ere yet we draw the blade,
Jehovah of the thunders,
Lord God of Battles, aid !

High lust and froward bearing,
Proud heart, rebellious brow—
Deaf ear and soul uncaring,
We seek Thy mercy now !
The sinner that forswore Thee,
The fool that passed Thee by,
Our times are known before Thee—
Lord, grant us strength to die !

For those who kneel beside us
At altars not Thine own,
Who lack the lights that guide us,
Lord, let their faith atone.
If wrong we did to call them,
By honor bound they came ;
Let not Thy wrath befall them,
But deal to us the blame.

From panic, pride and terror,
Revenge that knows no rein,
Light haste and lawless error,
Protect us yet again.
Cloak Thou our undeserving,
Make firm the shuddering breath,
In silence and unswerving,
To taste Thy lesser death !

E'en now their vanguard gathers,
E'en now we face the fray—
As Thou didst help our fathers,
Help Thou our host to-day !
Fulfilled of signs and wonders,
In life, in death made clear—
Jehovah of the Thunders,
Lord God of Battles, hear !

—Rudyard Kipling.

THE CHRIST-LIGHT IN THE HOME.

By THE LATE RIGHT REV. BISHOP WYNNE, D.D.

We read at Christmastide how "the people that walked in darkness saw a great light"; how "the glory of the Lord" shone around the shepherds in their midnight watch. We read of Him who is "the brightness of His Father's glory," who is "the Light which shineth in darkness." All these Christmas lessons are gathered together in our Master's own words,

"I am the Bright and Morning Star."

In imaginary pictures of the Nativity by the old masters, we generally see a background of darkness; the stable barely visible in the shadow; then from the Babe lying in the manger there issues a brilliant radiance, lighting up the faces of those who kneel in adoring attitudes around. The actual scene at the Nativity was, of course, very different from this. There was no visible glory around the Babe. He came in simple and perfect Humanity; more truly glorious thus; giving an interest to every human birth, and a sweet sacredness to every human mother, and elevating every human life by its being lived in the same conditions as Christ's life. But still the old pictures express a great symbolic truth. From that lowly cradle there did issue a Light which illumines still all who kneel around it. To the eye of faith the humble shed in which the Saviour of the world was born was lit up by the soft shining of Him who says, "I am the Bright and Morning Star."

Can we have a truer, better Christmas wish than this—that the rays of "the Bright and Morning Star" may fall upon our own hearts and homes, and the hearts and homes of others too, at this Christmastide?

We all know full well there are certain things that darken homes, and certain things that brighten them. It is easy to see what kind of things darken the home—cross tempers, selfishness, wilfulness, obstinacy, caprice, impatience, discontent. These bring shadow to the brow and gloom to the countenance. These make the young people of the home surly, sullen, and disrespectful, and the elders peevish, unreasonable, and unjust. These make masters and mistresses hard and inconsiderate, and servants grumbling and unprincipled. These bring deep darkness over any home where they are allowed to dwell unchecked. And there is only one thing that can chase away such shadows. It is the Light from heaven—the Light from Him who says, "I am the Bright and Morning Star."

Yes; the Christ-light in the

home *alone* can make home happy. The Christ-light, the Lord Himself honoured, the influence of His wishes felt, the restraining power of His teaching moulding the character; tempers subdued for His sake, self-will controlled, self-conceit kept down with a strong hand, angry and harsh-judging words silenced, mutual bearing and forbearing, kindness, courtesy, consideration for others, proceeding from thought of Christ and wish to do His will; these are the things that make the home bright.

Even one person in a household, thoroughly influenced by the love of Christ, and walking in the light of His presence, will bring wonderful brightness to a whole family. They hardly know what makes home so pleasant. What is it? It is the light from "the Bright and Morning Star." It glistens in the kind eyes and pleasant countenance of a humble follower of Jesus; and sullenness, gloom, and ill-humour flee before it like shadows before the breaking day.

May the Christ-light thus shine in all our homes on Christmas Day. May we see more and more clearly that Christ is indeed to us, as sinners and sorrowers, "the Bright and Morning Star," the true Gospel Light which brings pardon and peace, and love and joy, and every grace of the Spirit of Holiness, to all who welcome Him.

THOUGHTS ON ADVENT.

"It is the peculiar computation of the Church to begin her year, and to revive the annual course of her services, with this time of Advent. For she neither follows the sun nor moon, to number her days and measure her seasons according to their revolution; but JESUS CHRIST being to her as the only Sun and Light whereby she is guided, following His course alone, she begins, and counts on her year with Him. When this Sun of Righteousness, therefore, doth arise—that is, when His coming and incarnation are first propounded to us—then begins the year of the Church, and from thence are all her other days and times computed."—Hook.