

## Christmas Chimes

### When Christmas Comes

For thee, my small one, trinkets and new toys,  
The wine of life and all its keenest joys,

When Christmas comes.  
For me, the broken playthings of the past  
That in my weary hands I still hold fast,  
When Christmas comes.

For thee, fair hopes of all that yet may be,  
And tender dreams of sweetest mystery,  
When Christmas comes.  
For thee, the future in a golden haze,  
For me, the memory of some bygone days,  
When Christmas comes.

For thee, the things that lightly come and go,  
For thee, the holly and the mistletoe,  
When Christmas comes.  
For me, the smiles that are akin to tears,  
For me, the frosts and snows of many years,  
When Christmas comes.

For thee, the twinkling candles bright and gay,  
For me, the purple shadows and the gray,  
When Christmas comes.  
For thee, the friends that greet thee at the door,  
For me, the faces I shall see no more,  
When Christmas comes.

But ah, for both of us the mystic star  
That leadeth back to Bethlehem afar,  
When Christmas comes.  
For both of us the Child they saw of old,  
That evermore His mother's arms enfold,  
When Christmas comes.

### The First Christmas

The first Christmas was celebrated in heaven before earth knew there ever was to be a Christmas. Its principal characteristic seems to have been a great, over-running joy.

"Swift through the vast expanse it flew,  
And loud the echo rolled;  
The theme, the joy, the song, was new,  
'Twas more than heaven could hold."

It set the angels singing and shouting like old-time Methodists. Indeed, old-time shouting Methodists are only re-enacting the emotions and expressions of the angels.

Our Christmas joys should be more than we can hold. They should overflow to friends, neighbors, enemies, and all the world.—Bishop Warren.

### The Light

No light ever gladdened this old earth like the light of the Star of Bethlehem. Even if the prophecy had had its utmost fulfilment in centuries that have passed since the first Christmas dawn, still the prophet would have been justified in his ecstatic cry, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light!"

Think of the lands that have emerged from brutality, ignorance, and degradation, and have grown to freedom, enlightenment and peace under its steady ray. Think of childhood protected, of womanhood uplifted, of manhood ennobled; think of the lives it has blessed, the characters it has wrought, the humanity it has made God-like. See how its light has shone into prisons and cast out their cruelties; how it has touched the task of the toiler and glorified it, how it has shone into graves and banished their gloom. Look at the charities, beautiful and mani-

fold, that have sprung into being everywhere for Christ's sake. Surely, whether we have admitted Him to our own hearts or not, we can scarcely refuse to confess that "the light of the world is Jesus."

### Keeping Christmas

How shall we keep this Christmas? For it cannot be questioned that there is a wrong as well as a right way to observe the Christmas time. There is a way which, even in giving, withholds; and there is a joy which tends to despair. Surely, one cannot walk through the streets and go into the shops of our great cities at Christmas time without feeling impressed that the spirit of the season is being lost in the form; that the fine spiritual essence of giving is being absorbed in gift-making. Between the two there may, or may not, be a great gulf fixed. It all depends upon whether or not the spirit of giving is in the gift, and the gift itself is an expression of one's self to one's neighbor's self. Gifts from a sense of duty; gifts because we received from the same person last year, and must, therefore, repay; gifts beyond one's means; gifts that are a mere concession to the fashion of gift-making; gifts that are a bid for a costlier gift next year because given to someone of wealth and position for whom we have no special affection, while at the same time we ignore the poor neighbor who has actual needs; all these and countless other forms which we need not enumerate may surely be listed among the wrong methods of observing Christmas day. No wonder the season brings care lines, where it should smooth them. It has been made a kind of clearing-house for social obligations; a "form of godliness" which, too often, lacks the power thereof; a "function" instead of a privilege; an irksome duty instead of a glad vision into the fullness of life and love.

### Wind Up With the Spiritual

Christmas stands not only for love, but for faith—an all-conquering faith, that looks beyond the material and winds up the year with the spiritual. Thanksgiving has summed up the season of planting and reaping. Christmas goes far above the physical life, and bids us understand that we are something more than creatures who eat and drink. The grand idea that is here celebrated is self-sacrifice; and, no matter what our creed may be, we shall agree that the loftiest conception of humanity is to yield self-seeking for the good of the whole.