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Christmas

A hush seems to have fallen upon this noisy world for awhile. Of strife, in its worst form, represented by the clash of steel, the thunders of artillery, and the tramp of armed men, there is none to-day. There are no wars and no serious rumours of war. The whole world seems to be waiting, and listening to catch once more the distant echoes of the song, sung by the angels nineteen hundred and ten years ago: GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, ON EARTH PEACE, TO MEN OF GOOD WILL.

For this respite from international warfare all Christendom may well sing

IN EXCELSIS GLORIA.

Not the least of the hopes of the Christian Church is that of the thousand years of peace, when all nations, and peoples, and kindreds, and tongues, shall recognize, the sway of the Prince of Peace, in the Kingdom of Heaven—upon earth.

That the last great war has been fought, no thoughtful man believes, but nevertheless even the nations which regard war as necessary to their own preservation, no longer contemplate its possibility except with the profoundest regret.

That the Christmas bells this year will ring upon a world absolutely at peace with itself, with God and man, is unhappily not the case, simply because men have not yet learned the lesson and acquired the spirit of Christmas.

The spirit of Christmas is the essential spirit of all Christianity, and when that has entered into the heart of mankind, there will be an end not only of international war, but of strife in every form.

Christmas is pre-eminently the children's feast, and sometimes we hear their elders envying the rapturous enjoyment of the youngsters, at Christmas time. To all of us, Christmas is very much what we make it. If, led by a Little Child, we "become as little children," the happiness of Christmas is ours, in spite of years, and independently of surrounding circumstances and conditions. Wealth alone cannot make, nor can poverty alone mar, our Christmastide. It is not the most expensively dressed Christmas Tree that bears the richest fruit.

Giving and feasting are the characteristic observances of Christmas. "Eat of the fat and drink of the sweet, and forget not to send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared," is a scriptural injunction peculiarly appropriate to the season. In the matter of giving, the modern tendency is to do too much, rather than too little, and the besetting temptation seems to be in the direction of ostentation rather than in that of meanness. Yet the man who can give and does not give, at Christmas, has in some way missed the spirit of the season. The highest and most appropriate type of giving for Christmas, is that done in the spirit, in which Melchior, Kaspar and Balthasar bestowed their gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh upon the Infant Jesus, the gift to the Christ-Child Himself, in the person of "one of the least of these His brethren." The family gift is indispensable, the gift of love or friendship all commendable, the highest the most appropriate gift of all, for Christmas, surely, is the gift laid in the manger of the stable of Bethlehem, whether it be the gold, the frankincense and the myrrh of the rich, or the prayers and good wishes of the poor.

This is the time of year for remembering, and for—forgetting; for preaching by word and by deed, the Gospel of Peace. Let our: "Happy Christmas" be no perfunctory greeting, but let us do our best to make it for one and all

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS.