

The Christian Messenger.

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Song for Christmas Day.

Glorify to God in the Highest, and Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men.

Merry Christmas.

In the rush of early morn'g,
When the red burns through the gray,
And the wintry world lies waiting
For the glory of the day.
Then we hear a faint rustling
Just without upon the stair,
See two small white phantoms coming,
Catch the gleam of sunny hair.
Are they Christmas fairies stealing,
Rows of little socks to fill?
Are they angels floating hither
With their message of good-will?
What sweet spell are these elves weaving,
As like larks they chirp and sing?
Are these palms of peace from heaven
That these lovely spirits bring?
Rays feet upon the threshold,
Eager faces peeping through,
With the first red ray of sunshine,
Chaunting cherubs come in view,
Mistletoe and gleaming holly,
Symbols of a blessed day,
In their chubby hands they carry,
Streaming all along the way.
Well we know them; never weary
Of this innocent surprise,
Waiting, watching, listening always
With full hearts and tender eyes.
While our little household angels,
White and golden in the sun,
Greet us with the message old,
"Merry Christmas, every one!"

Christmas Eve.

There is a peculiar charm about Christmas Eve. Most of us feel happy and amiable in anticipation of tomorrow. One's emotions resemble those experienced on the day preceding an annual vacation, when there are welcome expectations of sea-breezes, ramblings among the rocks, and saunterings on the beach. The night before our Lord's great anniversary, putting people into a pleasant frame, renders meditation no difficult task. Here, then, we sit before candles are brought, or gas is lighted, the fire sending up flickering flames and making restless, fantastic shadows along the walls and over the carpet. Wife and children are, for the nonce, away. Is not the "festive-board" to be spread ere long, and has not bountiful Santa Claus his work to do? Holly, mistletoe, and other evergreens are wreathed around the pictures; there is a big bough, in the hall, and busy hands have arranged a row across the middle of the window, for the weather is such as to render it certain that we shall not require it opened.

Christmas again, with all its old associations—yes, its dear and beneficent associations. Who would forget them? What man wishes them obliterated? The domestic and social memories of the season are well-nigh innumerable. Of these, however, we shall not now speak; each for himself can deal with them better; a stranger intermeddles not. But the spiritual recollections of the time we may fitly think about and mention one to another. Of course they look back to the great birth. Carols, Christmas cards, and sundry other accompaniments of the period remind us of the shepherds and those glad tidings which they were privileged to hear. Plain, homely people were the first who knew of a Saviour sent into the world. Ordinary sort of persons, with rough hands, sun-burned, rustic clothing, and provincial dialect—these constituted the original "believers." The angel preaches and the angels sing, not to princes, patricians, priests, but to peasants. Is it not worthy of notice? It is really very striking when we come to realize it, only the deadening influence of familiarity prevents our seeing this. How wise, how kind that those thus honoured should be of the commonalty! For

more than an isolated reason we can see such to be the case. Thus, it is not the ineffable seal, of seal of Divine approval on honest, yet lowly toil. Who, with the echo of that first Christmas carol lingering in his ears, and the message of that first Christmas sermon fresh in his mind, dare sneer at useful but humble labour? He that does it virtually impugns the conduct of his Creator, and slight's the righteousness which bade celestial messengers proclaim their good news to the keepers of flocks. Nay, he does more, much more; he scoffs at the condition which was not shunned by Divinity itself, for it was asked of Christ, "Is not this the carpenter?" The lesson is needed. Some of our readers may fancy that the doctrine which we advocate has been so harped upon during the last quarter of a century, and so eloquently expounded by genius and learning that we are slaying the slain when we assail its opponents. Not so. There still exists a contempt of manual work which is not more apparent than it is absurd and wrong. Notice, that the shepherds, to whom the angels came, while poor, were not poverty stricken in spirit; they were men of spiritual susceptibilities and sympathies. Unquestionably they were. Observe their admirable faith; doubting nothing that was told them, they acted upon it. See how prompt they were; eagerly they set off in quest of the Divine child. Clearly, we have here a condition of mind and heart which qualified them for receiving Gospel tidings. In other words, they were waiting for the consolation of Israel. We may find their counterparts in Simon, Anna, and Nathaniel. The angels went to the fields, not to the stable. The shepherds, rather than the Saviour, were the objects of their attention. Certain painters represent the manger as surrounded by bright, adoring celestial beings; but there is nothing said of this in the narrative. That such attendants may have hovered near their King is highly probable, but the contrary, it is highly probable, but we have no proof whatever that they were visible. As regards the angels of whom we invariably think and speak at this Christmastide, we see that they repaired to the plains outside Bethlehem instead of the birthplace within it. And is not this also aptly indicative of the Divine will? Usefulness is superior to praise; or, more accurately speaking, usefulness forms the noblest expression of praise. The infant Christ could better dispense with the homage of the angels than the Shepherds with their tidings of salvation. The one-hundredth Psalm is all about thanksgiving, and has been sung by the universal Church in every age; but we should ever recollect that the one-hundred-and-first Psalm is full of the practical and first Palm is full of the practical. After calling on others to extol the Most High, the inspired songster admonishes himself to walk within his house with a perfect heart, to encourage "no wicked thing," and to take heed that his eyes "shall be upon the faithful of the land." The Puritan preacher was right when he quaintly remarked that thanksgiving is better than thanksgiving. After you have ascribed "glory to God in the highest," try what you can effect in the way of promoting "good will to men." Can't you send a little Christmas fare to some lonely invalid? Is there no poor family whose home you may brighten by a kindly, substantial gift? For once you may do well to rescind the inexorable domestic law of "never relieving anybody at the door." As to children and servants, of course this is a time when noise and misers and misanthropes neglect them. Such is the appropriate worship of the period. "The intelligence that can with full satisfaction to itself come out in eloquent speaking, in musical singing, is, after all, a small intelligence. He that works and does some poem, not he that says one, is worthy of the name of poet."

But while we think and read about the shepherds and the angels, we must not lose sight of Him without whom they would never have been known. Christmas is pre-eminently the celebration of the Incarnation. It tells us of "Christ the Lord," Christ the Jehovah, who was also "made of a woman," "the Word made flesh." And unless we err egregiously in our outlook, there is nothing that needs insisting on, wisely and sympathetically insisting on, more than this. It is the special want of the age.

Why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should become man? Is it not in unison with hu-

News from the Churches.

Onslow.

We are glad to learn that the Rev. C. H. Martell had the pleasure of baptizing five persons into the fellowship of the East Onslow Church last Sunday. He adds "There is quite a work of grace going on in our section of the church."

St. John's.

Rev. A. H. Munro, on Sunday week, preached his farewell sermon in Montreal, from 2 Corinthians, xiii, 14. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, Amen. The following is a brief statement, made in the course of the sermon:—

No minister should when he ends his pastoral labours be unable to utter from his heart this Apostolic benediction. With this I desire to close my ministry among you—a ministry of which I offer no description, no defence. Its record is on high. I thank God for all I have done or striven to do for Him in this place; for all the success with which He has honoured me; for all the failure with which He has disciplined me; for all that has put to the test my loyalty for Christ and conscience, my sincerity and manhood; for all the happy scenes, Christian joys, and social pleasures I have shared; and for all the trials I have experienced among you; and no less, for all the Christian friendships I have formed here, and which death will not terminate, but raise into the higher fellowship of heaven.

Hantsport.

We are glad to learn that the work is progressing in the Church at this place. The prayer meetings are very interesting. The Lord works in mysterious ways.

A Baptist Church recently organized in Tynside, Haldimand County, Ont., was recognized by a Council called on the 16th ult., for that purpose. The following is the statement made of the rise and standing of the organization:— Pastor Harris gave a statement that about three years ago he was asked by some of the friends if he could not preach to them on Sunday evenings, provided they could get the use of the Hall. He consented. God blessed his own truth. Last spring the friends purchased the Hall, had it painted outside and inside and properly seated. On the first of July it was dedicated free of debt. Pastor Stewart of Hamilton preached the dedication sermon. Ten were lately baptized and received into the church in Bunbrook. On the 31st Oct., a special church meeting was held when it was resolved to give the brethren and sisters of Tynside, letters of dismission for the purpose of organizing a church there. The brethren and sisters then met and formed themselves into a Regular Baptist Church, gave a call to Elder Harris to become their pastor, which he accepted. The present membership is eleven, two are received and will be baptized next week. Two more wish to join by experience, having been members of a Baptist Church formerly. Elder Stewart read the Declaration of Faith, and Elder Harris responded on behalf of the church. The council retired to consult, and it was agreed that we recognize the brethren and sisters in Tynside as a Regular Baptist Church. Pastor Hazelton gave the charge to the church and the right hand of fellowship. Pastor Stewart preached the sermon. Benediction by the pastor. The Tabernacle Meetings on Sunday last were full of interest. In the evening the pastor Rev. J. F. Avery baptized five candidates and gave them the right hand of fellowship, long before the hour of evening service people poured into the building and by seven o'clock it was packed full, there not being standing room. Enough to fill some churches had to go elsewhere. Through the service the interest was intense and the best attention given by people who must have been out of touch of their crowded position most uncomfortable. The Evangelist Mr. D. L. Chubbuck announced that on Monday evening he was going to give a talk to

News of the World.

Some important changes are made in the British Cabinet.

The following gentlemen have been appointed and on Saturday last took the oath before the Queen in Council:—Lord Derby, as Secretary of State for the Colonies; Lord Kimberley, Secretary of State for India; Lord Hartington, Secretary of State for War; Hon. Hugh C. Childers, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Hon. Wm. Gladstone was the subject of six columns in the London Times on Wednesday last, on his having completed fifty years of public life. The London press generally made him, and his work, the subject of long articles.

On the 24th of November Her Majesty held an investiture at Windsor Castle, when a number of distinguished military and naval men were invested with orders which had been conferred upon them. Several of these were well known in Halifax, having been on the N. A. & W. I. naval services.

On Wednesday last, the Royal Palace at Hampton, 15 miles from London, was found to be in flames. Damage very serious—estimated at £30,000. Some historical paintings have been destroyed, and many have been injured. A warrant has been issued for the arrest of Mr. Whalley, member of parliament, on a charge of obtaining £56 from a hotel proprietor at Ramsgate by false pretences.

The Right Hon. Mr. Forster, in a speech at Glasgow on Friday last, said he did not think the Land Act required much alteration. He was sure that the most powerful government that ever existed in England would be overthrown if it attempted to introduce home rule—which he said would never be granted as it involved absolute separation, and the great probability of civil war in Ireland.

At a meeting of the organizing committee of the Irish National League held in Dublin on Friday, Mr. Parnell offered a series of resolutions, which were adopted, recommending that no bill amending the Land Act be drafted.

Westgate now fully denies that he ever made a confession implicating himself in the Phoenix Park murders, or that he knows anything whatever about the crime.

A letter signed "Rory Hills" was received at the Home Office, threatening that within the next few days, one or more Government officers, or some other large building, would be burned in retribution for the execution of the three men in Galway for the murder of the Joyce family. The police in all Government offices have consequently been doubled.

Lord Derby, in a speech at Manchester, on Wednesday, rejected the idea of a Protectorate for Egypt; England, he said, ought not to remain in Egypt longer than absolutely to restore order.

Cetewayo has signed the Zulu settlement and will return to Zululand early in January. A British resident and military escort will accompany him to Ulandi, where he will be installed King.

The Australian mine in Creswick, Victoria, has been flooded. Twenty-two persons were drowned.

Col. Stewart, who was sent to Soudan to investigate the condition of the country, telegraphs from Khartoum, under date of the 9th inst., that the False Prophet has been repulsed at Bala Eleleid, and that Khartoum is safe. He says the first detachment of the Soudan expedition has arrived.

On Friday a thousand troops started from Cairo for Soudan. More will follow shortly.

At Cairo fifty-four political prisoners were released on Tuesday, the 12th.

The Enterprise Cotton Mills at Manayunk, Pa., were burned last week.

several employees were badly hurt in escaping.

A new bridge on the Mexican Pacific Extension Railway fell a few days ago with over 100 workmen on it. Seven were killed and many wounded.

Great fire at Hong Kong; eight hundred houses burned.

At a meeting of the Geographical Society in Paris on Sunday, Mr. DeLesseps promised that the Panama Canal would be ready to be opened in 1888.

M. Lefargue, of the *Agalite*, has been arrested in consequence of a speech by him at Berzand, inciting to pillage and murder.

At Madrid, Spain, a portion of the War Office has been burned to the ground. Twenty persons were injured, one seriously. The library and part of the archives were destroyed. The King was present during the fire and assisted in subduing the flames.

King Alfonso has authorized the Minister of Commerce and Agriculture to present a bill in the Cortes granting a credit of 20,000,000 piastres for the prosecution of public works, so as to afford employment to distressed working classes in the Southern Provinces.

Seditious proclamations have been posted in the streets of Constantinople. Several persons have been arrested in connection therewith.

The palace is practically in a state of siege. Nobody is allowed to enter unless summoned. The Sultan's alarm is owing to sedition among the troops, who are angry at the way the palace guards are paid, while they are in rage.

The Turkish Sultan has had built for his use an armored carriage, bullet and grenade proof.

The city of Athens in Greece has decided to confer the citizenship of Athens on Mr. Gladstone.

The fire at Kingston, Jamaica, yet the fire was and had in it, yet somewhat exaggerated. It is said that the loss will be about £3,000. Four hundred stores were destroyed. A private despatch says forty acres were burned over and six hundred houses were destroyed. Relief measures are being instituted at New York. Hundreds of people are rendered homeless by this dire calamity.

The Colonial Office will send Col. Crossman to Jamaica as a Royal Commissioner to inquire into the condition of the finances of the colony.

At Boston on Tuesday last Albert Palmer, Democrat, was elected Mayor over Samuel A. Green, Republican and Citizens' candidate, the present incumbent, by 2,315 plurality. The entire Board of Aldermen are Democrats.

At St. Louis, on Thursday last while the Iron Mountain freight train was being hauled up Poplar Street grade, it broke in two and fifty cars dashed down the grade, demolished several houses and caused \$15,000 damage.

At New York on Thursday the extensive depot and wharf, together with sixty cars and ten locomotives, of the Manhattan Beach Railway Company, at Bay Bridge were destroyed by fire. A large pile of lumber belonging to the Sea Beach Railway Company, adjoining the Manhattan Depot, a canal boat at the dock, the wharf and all on it were burned. The Manhattan Beach Company estimate the loss at \$300,000.

At Philadelphia, on Thursday while skating on Abbott's dam the ice suddenly gave way, and a number of children were precipitated into the water. Four children were drowned, and it is feared others shared the same fate.

While two young gentlemen and two ladies were returning from a prayer-meeting at Altoona, Pa., and walking upon the railroad track, they were struck by an engine and all were instantly killed.

At Shreveport, La., the steamboat Kate Kinney was burned on Friday with a cargo of two thousand bales of cotton. The buildings near the wharf were also destroyed. Loss \$150,000.

At Toledo, on Friday last, Hall's block, one of the finest in that city, has been burned. The loss is estimated at \$10,000,000.

At Newport, Ark., on Sunday last, sixty buildings were burned, involving the loss \$350,000.