

# The King's Highway

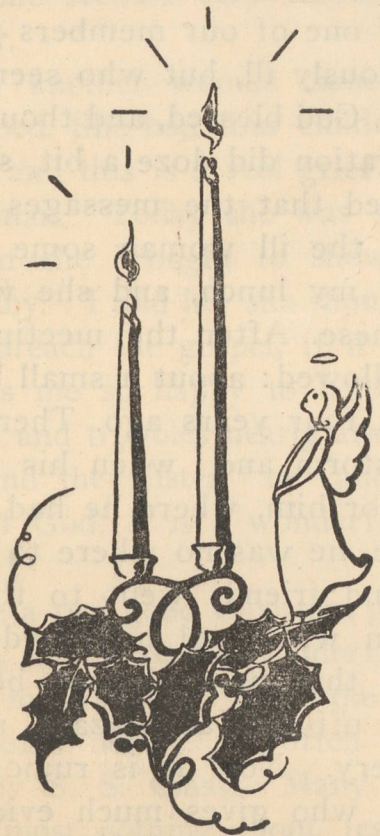
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## Christmas Greetings



### THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS RESTORED

By W. Edmund Smith

I pause in the midst of pressing work to send greetings to the readers of The Highway, wishing you all the joy that Jesus can give to make the Christmas delightful and the New Year prosperous.

This is the Christmas when the song the angels sang takes on its old-time meaning of "Peace on earth and goodwill to men." For several Christmas seasons the blessed old carols seemed to mock the sorrow and heaviness of millions of hearts and homes from which loved ones had gone to the field of battle, many of them never to return. But we still believe to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living; we firmly believed in ultimate victory, even when the British were driven from Dunkirk, and all the smaller nations, and France were under the heel of the oppressor. But now victory has come.

"And the drumbeat throbs no longer  
And the battle flags are unfurled.  
In the coming parliament of man,  
The federation of the world."

That was the vision Tennyson had long years which he so beautifully expressed in Locksley Hall.

Coming up Washington street, Boston, a few days ago, pressing my way amid a great throng of Christmas shoppers, there came rolling down upon us the tune of that glorious carol:

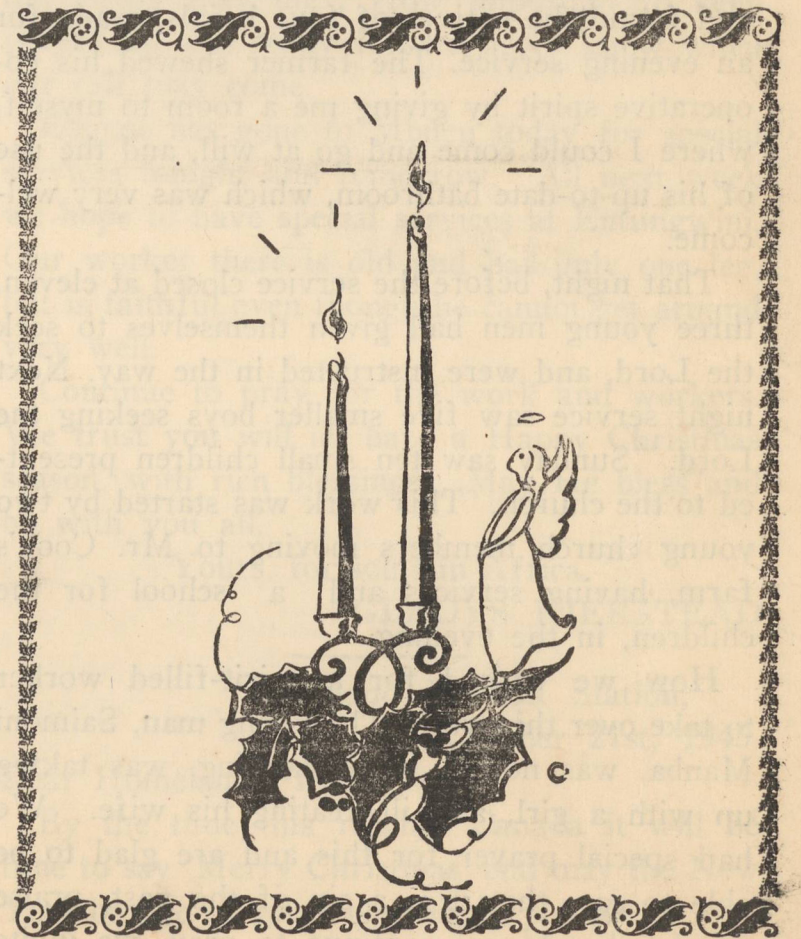
"Hark the Herald Angels sing,  
Glory to the New-born King,  
Peace on earth and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled,"

played by a Salvation Army band. It was splendid harmony and never did those strains sound so beautiful to me. Suddenly a flood of emotion came rushing into my soul. Only with great effort could I keep from sobbing like a child. But in spite of all, the tears flowed down my cheeks, tears of great joy and thanksgiving to God for the return of peace, for the coming back of the brave boys who played their part so well. But mingled with the joy there was sadness—a heartfelt sympathy for those whose loved ones made the supreme sacrifice. Some may be asking, was it worth while? Was not the sacrifice too great?

We ask what kind of a Christmas would we be enjoying now, and what would the future hold in store for us, had those outlaw nations won! All the civil and religious liberties so precious to us would have been destroyed. God had to chasten Britain and America sorely before He gave us the victory. But now we can hope for a better world. Word comes from Japan that the common people are turning to their American captors in glad co-operation, seeing in the conquest the dawning of a better day, while pouring scorn and contempt upon the militaristic group that was obsessed with imperialistic ambitions. Never were there such opportunities for the gospel as there are today in Japan.

Amid all the conflict our hearts have been inspired by the testimonies the boys sent from the scene of battle, as to the all-sufficiency of the grace of God to sustain and keep them. We read these testimonies in various religious papers and now we learn that many of the boys coming back are turning to the Christian ministry. Such men should make wonderful soldiers for Jesus Christ.

Yes, we must admit there is much sin everywhere. But remember some nineteen hundred and forty-five years ago, a few shepherds and wise men came to worship at the feet of the new-born king. Think! Today millions, with more than formal devotion, fall at His feet to crown Him Lord of all. Well did Napoleon in his lonely exile say: "Charlagne, Alexander and I founded kingdoms on the principle of force. Our kingdoms waxed and waned. Only as we were present in person to inspire our forces



was there victory. But here was a man born in a little town, of a peasant mother, in a tributary province, who lived in seclusion for thirty years and then came forth to lead a humble band up and down the land, teaching such maxims as blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. And he died upon a cross in apparent defeat. But millions today who never have seen Him, would die rather than give up their faith in Him."

We too must remember that Jesus Himself said: I came not to bring peace but a sword. I don't think he contradicted the testimony of Isaiah who called Him the Prince of Peace, or the song the angels sang. He would have us know that He came to introduce into every phase of human life, principles of righteousness that would arouse the hostility of persistently wicked men, even to make a man's foes those of his own household.

But what a joy to know that He can bring peace to troubled hearts — peace with God when we become reconciled by the blood; and the peace of God—that peace which passeth understanding when the Holy Ghost, sanctifies wholly and comes in to abide. Beloved if you have this experience, the joy of your Christmas will not be determined by circumstances or by what you get.

You will have Him as your Comfort and your Joy, and although limited in your material resources, will know the meaning of life more abundant, while those in the midst of luxury may be living in spiritual poverty.