



CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS celebrates the birth of Christ. We are not very sure about the exact date. But we are exceedingly sure about the spirit of the festival.

The reason we celebrate Christ's birthday is because we are His followers—or strive to be—because we believe in His teachings—because we make these teachings our religion and acknowledge Him as our Lord and Master.

This is the Christmas season.

Our first duty and pleasure should be to give to the poor and give quietly and helpfully.

Do not give coldly as an obligation.

Some years ago, at the Christmas season, when a friend of the writer called on a poor family with some holiday tidbits, he noticed a turkey on the kitchen table and commented on the pleasure it would give them on Christmas Day.

"You know," said the mother, "I almost wish I didn't have that turkey. The woman who left it was so terribly impressive of the favor she was doing that it is hard for me to be grateful."

The incident stirred up our thoughts.

After all if one does a favor—or anything else for that matter—he must do it agreeably or it will bear no comfort or pleasure.

This is the Christmas spirit—the spirit of His teaching.

While not old-fashioned in every respect, we stick to the original idea of Christmas—the Christ Idea—to be more generous to the people who need help rather than those who do not need it.

Is it not related of Jesus:

"And, behold, one came and said unto him: Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?"

And Jesus said unto him: If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven."

Then we have the Biblical injunction:

"When thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do, that they may have glory

of men. But let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."

Our next pleasure should be to give to the children. Christmas should be a day of delight for them.

That is in accord with the teachings of Christ, for He said:

"Who shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth Me."

But let us not merely give to our own children, but to those children who lack the things which our own children have in abundance—the comforts and the joys which are necessary to children's health and happiness.

In preaching to His disciples, Jesus said:

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

Give generously, give helpfully, give lovingly.

Give in honor of our dear Lord's natal day.

Give in the spirit of His teaching.

Give to do good.

Give to promote happiness.

Give to spread comfort, contentment.

Give to establish an era of love and good will and peace on earth—not only towards men but among men.

Give gifts to the needy abroad.

But do not forget our own needy at home.

This is a fateful Christmas.

America holds in its strong and fateful hands much of the welfare of the peoples of the world.

That welfare can only be established by gentleness and generosity, by liberality of thought as well as of deed.

The spirit of Christ should be the spirit of America.

Give that others may live.

Give to make life worth living.

And remember the old proverb, when death softly closes your eyes:

"All you can hold in your cold, dead hand, is what you have given away."

