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PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN.

CHRIST'S MESSAGE: What It Means After Nineteen Centuries.

CHRIST'S message of peace on earth, good will to men is nearer realization to-day than ever before. When our race was in barbarism, man was arrayed against man, clan against clan, family against family, city against city, tribe against tribe, nation against nation. Courts have taken the place of private wars.

Meanwhile there is nothing inconsistent in a Christian nation strengthening itself by land and sea. Let our army and our navy be invincible and peace is assured. Unhappily all men on the surface of this planet are not yet inspired by Christian principles. There are yet nations who imagine that might makes right, and therefore, for the sake of humanity and civilization a Christian power must be able and willing to meet strength with strength, to repel, if need be, an invading army of

or the orphan. The distinction of our time is the universal acceptance of the responsibility of prosperity to care for misfortune. The Roman world had the few highly educated and the masses densely ignorant. The Christian world has thrown the duty of education upon the state and the state is intelligently

and universally meeting the obligation placed upon it. The brotherhood of man and the peace of the world are to-day the aspirations of nations, the work of statesmen and the continuing efforts of the church.

CHAUNCEY DEPEW.

MY subject is one that has filled great libraries and galleries of art, has powerfully influenced, as no other thing could do, the history of the world; has changed the character of men's thoughts and aspirations, and must ever necessarily be interwoven with men's hopes for the future of humanity.

When the Christ-child was born, the whole world was becoming more and more conscious of a sense of decrepitude and decay.

When, in the solemn midnight, the heavens were opened and the air made luminous by the presence and musical with the voices of angelic hosts proclaiming the birth of the Messiah, the glad tidings were announced for all men everywhere, and first, with singular fitness, to the poorest and lowliest. Through his appointed teachers, from that day to this, the child who was born in Bethlehem has been preaching His life-giving gospel and proclaiming His sweet beatitudes.

For every age and each individual He has made these beatitudes attainable, and the conditions of them practicable and feasible, by His holy precepts and examples, by the aid of purifying and strengthening sacraments, by the charities and countless benefactions with which He has inspired His followers, and by the myriad images of His own perfection and goodness in the lives and teachings of holy men and women. He has taught the world to build hospitals and asylums for the solace of all the ill that flesh is heir to. He has emancipated the slave, He has raised woman from her condition of the slave and toy of man to that of his equal companion. He has given new impulse and inspiration and almost creation to the finer arts—to architecture, painting, sculpture, poetry, music, oratory—to literature and jurisprudence. He alone has made possible Magna Charta and the preamble of the Declaration of Independence. He has turned the face of the world from its wistful gaze after a fast receding mythical golden age to a confident looking for a fulfillment, in no small literal measure, of the prayer that He taught the world: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

My heart, yet bleeding from the fresh wound of the loss of the great genius who was my friend, at one time a citizen of San Francisco, but long since an adopted citizen of the world, prompts me to say that the inspiration of the thought of Henry George could have come only from the Christ-like spirit and the Christ-like love of justice and of the brotherhood which pervade that thought. It is this that has won to him the heart of the world, and that makes his monumental work not merely a philosophy, but a prophecy, a poem and a prayer.

Edw. M. Byrne

NOTHING is more misleading, or, indeed, more prejudicial to the Christian religion than Scripture misunderstood or misapplied. The canticle of the angels over the crib of Bethlehem on the night of our Redeemer's birth seems to be gainsaid by the actual history of the world since then; and the contrast between the prophecy and the event, between the peace that was announced and the endless wars that have deluged even Christian nations with blood, drives some into doubt and despair and others

THE great principles of Justice, Liberty and Equality, with the "Golden Rule," have been echoed and re-echoed around the globe through the centuries by the leaders of all great religions. It is folly to claim for any blind faith what science, reason and advancing civilization have achieved for the human race. Has this message brought "peace and good will to the starving multitudes?"

And what has this message of "peace and good will" done for woman? When the mothers of the race enjoy justice, liberty and equality, then, and not till then can they echo back the glad message of love: "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and good will to all mankind."

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON.

to look for a realization of the purposes of the Incarnation to an imaginary millennium. In reality there is no contradiction, no contrast, for there was neither prophecy nor promise of universal peace.

The Catholic reading of the Gospel is: Glory to God in the highest; Peace on earth to men of good will.

However the words "good will" be interpreted, they clearly mark a restriction, a limitation, and indicate that the peace proclaimed is personal, interior, spiritual, the peace of which the apostle speaks.

It would be interesting to examine how far the Gospel has affected the warlike passions of nations or the usages of war; but if it be maintained that Christ our Lord and the Christian religion and the cross have given only one occasion more for sanguinary conflict among the unhappy sons of men, this, instead of being an argument against Christ, is an argument for Christ.

But there are many evils besides war, many good things besides peace. Whether Christianity has or has not exerted a benign influence in the council chambers of rulers and in the tents of generals, no one can doubt that to it must be ascribed many of the blessings we enjoy.

In view of the teaching, the life, the death of him whose birthday Christmas commemorates, we must ask not what has our Lord Jesus Christ done for you and your people, but what is the Gospel life eternal? Is the Gospel the power of God unto the salvation of every one that believeth?

REV. J. J. PRENDERGAST, Rector St. Mary's Cathedral.

THE divine message of peace and good will which came to the earth with the advent of the Savior nineteen centuries ago has never been, so far as history reveals the story of the years, so potent in its influence as it is to-day. It may be regarded as the greatest of all the watchwords of Christian progress and enlightenment, for while men have differed and have even made war upon each other in their zeal or bigotry regarding articles of creed and tenets of faith, they all yielded admiration for and belief in this promise of harmony and love. The fulfillment or realization of universal amity has made more rapid and broader progress under the influence of the Christian faith than under all other creeds of religion known to man.

The great principle of international arbitration has in the last half century been time and again employed for the successful avertment of war and the adjustment of quarrels which would, if left unsettled, have been continuous causes of anxiety, danger and material loss. The growth of national as well as individual sentiment and desire is stronger, year by year, for arbitration through reason instead of by the sword. In like proportion has been the development and perfection of the codes of law, of trade and commerce toward the common goal, the attainment of justice and the maintenance of peaceful and prosperous intercourse.

We are told that "the ways of the Lord are past finding out," and in considering this working out of the prophetic promise who shall say that the modern marvels in war-making power—the giant battle-ships, the fleet and deadly torpedo, the dreadful long-range artillery, the Mitrailleuse and the magazine rifle—are not themselves means in the hands of the Almighty toward the same great merciful end? None of the great nations of the world for now more than twenty-five years have dared to war with each other, and the very perfection and power and cost of these weapons have made war almost prohibitive. Recent wars have mainly been confined to the operations of civilized nations in opening up to Christianity and enlightened intercourse the continents and countries which are encumbered by savage or barbaric races. These efforts, leading as they do to the amelioration of the condition of the subjugated peoples, may well be regarded as making for the realization of that world-wide peace which the Evangel of Christmas heralds in angelic chorus to all lands and all peoples.

LEVI P. MORTON.

"GLORY to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."—Luke ii:14.

This is the first Christmas carol. You ask, "What has it to do with us to-day?" It has everything to do with us. We cannot separate the song from the unique personality of whose nativity it was the announcement. We are in the last years of the last decade of the nineteenth century since the birth of the babe of Bethlehem. The birth of that child has had more influence on the history of the world than any other event since time began. The Christ-child was no son of distinguished parents, no heir to riches or royalty, and yet, as Richter said, "He lifted the gates of empires off their hinges and turned the streams of history into new channels." The Christ-child is lord of the world's calendar. Even creation is forgotten as the epoch from which all is to be reckoned.

The fair promise of "peace on earth and good will to all men" which the listening shepherds of Bethlehem heard from the angels singing in the sky has not found its complete fulfillment yet. Signs, such as the Alabama and other arbitrations, are not wanting that we are hastening toward the glad day of promise and prophecy, when the nations "shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks."

May God haste the day when "peace on earth and good will toward men" shall be not the song of angels merely but an accomplished fact.

REV. JOHN HEMPHILL, Calvary Presbyterian Church.