

CHRISTMAS GREETING.

THE DESERET NEWS has only good wishes and kindly feelings for all mankind at this season of general fraternization. We hail the day observed by common consent in Christendom as the anniversary of the Savior's birth, with joyful conviction that it is, above all others, a day that brings brotherhood and redemption nearer to humanity. The influence of the great Nazarene is such that it benefits the race wherever it penetrates, and at the close of the nineteenth century it still surrounds the Christmas season and tends to unite and gladden the souls of men.

The struggles and strifes that are incident to a world where truth and error, good and evil are struggling for the mastery, are relinquished for the time, when Christmas comes, and opposing clans and cliques drop their weapons, mental and material, and heartily wish each other happiness and prosperity. This must have a salutary effect as the years roll on, and the result will be the fulfillment of the choral prophecy of the angels, on the plains of Bethlehem near two thousand years ago.

This is not only the season for kind feelings, for forgiveness of injuries, for the coming home of the absent and prodigal, but for the exercise of that charity which includes all that the term can be made to signify: Magnanimity to friend and foe, lenience to erring humanity, generosity of feeling and act, benevolence to those who are in need. The poor should be remembered. No one, at this time of festivity, should suffer lack. The Master whose birth we celebrate left as a legacy to His followers the succor of the needy and distressed.

The little ones are properly the recipients of gifts at Christmas. Christ took children in His arms and blessed them. "Of such," He said, "is the Kingdom of heaven." It is a splendid custom to make their hearts glad on the birthday of the Redeemer and make the associations of the time and the event so pleasant to them. That is a lesson in Christianity that cannot fail to make a proper impression.

It is pleasing to contemplate the fact that each succeeding Christmas is bringing the nations nearer together and diffusing among them the spirit of goodwill. It augurs the approach of that glorious day when Christ shall be King of the whole earth and all nations shall be gathered under the white wings of peace.

The DESERET NEWS wishes a happy Christmas to all people. To its subscribers it extends most cordial greet-

ing and special congratulations, and hopes that nothing will mar their happiness, but that joy will make every home a delight and every heart gay. May the Christmas of '91 be the best they have ever celebrated!

"PEACE ON EARTH."

In the memorable night, when the Great King was born and the shepherds on the fertile fields around Bethlehem were guarding their flocks, a heavenly chorus filled the air with melodious strains and the theme of their anthem was "Peace on Earth." This was prophetic and descriptive. It expressed the purpose for which the new-born infant had come; the nature of the work He would accomplish, and foretold the final result of the advent of the Son of God—the triumph of peace among men.

The diffusion of the principles which Christ taught resulted in peace wherever they were accepted. This is observed in the first century, so long as the supernatural power remained with the teaching. People became united. The separating walls were broken down. Hatred between nations gave way to brotherly love, inasmuch as converted Jews extended a hand of fellowship to devout gentiles. The proud Roman recognized in the despised Barbarian a brother. Class distinctions were eliminated, when, in the first glow of enthusiasm, none claimed his worldly possessions, but brought them to the altar of the Lord for just and judicious distribution according to the needs of everybody. Women, who before the advent of Christ were looked upon as inferior beings, were by His examples and teachings elevated to the position of true companion of man. Woman became "a sister" instead of a servant. Even the slaves were, by Christianity, lifted up to a social position in which they were no longer serfs but "brethren." Under the influence of the doctrines of Christ Philemon can embrace his slave Onesimus and with him partake of the holy emblems of unity, love and peace. This condition of the first churches was so marked, that even the heathens noticed it as a distinctive peculiarity.

But mankind was not, at that early age, prepared for the establishment of a universal reign of peace. As Christianity became popular, its real nature was never grasped by the multitudes. These were content with the outward forms. The poison of pagan philosophy was slowly poured into the simple but sublime rites of Christ. The Spirit withdrew and the embalmed corpse was all that remained, and this

carefully wrapped up in glittering formulas—in a cultus of scarlet and purple, like a royal mummy from Egypt, was introduced occasionally to heighten the solemnities of certain family festivities, while in the intervals between these, it was hid away in a dark, cold grave. With the progress of this transformation, peace fled and contentions again took possession of men.

History teaches us that the glimpse of heavenly light that illuminated the earth at the advent of Christ was followed by dark ages. During these, not peace but the sword reigns. Savage tribes, from the wilds of Asia, break the Roman empire into fragments. "Christians" with the sword in their hands drive heathen nations down into the water of baptism. "Heretics" are tortured, roasted to death or otherwise martyred, by people boasting of "orthodoxy." Crusaders are drenching the plains of the Holy Land in blood, and all such carnage is done in the sacred name, "ad majorem Dei gloriam." What brush could paint, what pen describe the horrors connected with the religion that falsely bears the name of Him whose advent was described as the ushering in of peace on earth.

After the lapse of almost two thousand years, the spirit of war is still active among men. At the present time the whole earth, and, curiously enough, the "Christian" world in particular, seems to be under the influence of that spirit which is opposed to peace. Revolutions, insurrections, diplomatic ruptures are the order of the day. South America is torn by dissensions and strifes. Europe trembles under the march of her vast armies. Implements of war have reached a perfection, surpassing the holdest dreams of pre-Christian conquerors. All this would seem to discourage the hope in men that peace will ultimately be established. But it will certainly come. And some signs of its approach have already appeared.

The influence of the teachings of the Prince of Peace has not been altogether in vain. Millions are now longing for a re-modeling of the social conditions on a basis of truth and justice. This century is marked by occasional outbursts of demands for peace.

In 1815, what is known as the "Holy Alliance" was formed by the principal powers of Europe, Austria, Prussia and Russia, the Emperor of the latter country, Alexander, taking the initiative. The document which formed the basis of the agreement is a most remarkable one. It says in part: "According to the words of the Scriptures, which