

CHRISTMAS, ITS ORIGIN AND MEANINGS.

Years, with their sunshine, their shadows and festivities, come and go like sea waves. If the new is old, it is equally true that the old is new, a new realization upon each returning Christmas. How the aged and the young welcome this festival day!

I wish you a merry Christmas! How these happy, inspiring words, all afire with good cheer, ring out from the lips of the million. How this anniversary takes the aged, whose hairs are silvered with the frosts of many winters, back to the dreamland of their youth! How it reminds them of those old family gatherings, when the youth, the children and the scattered relatives flock back to the old homestead, reminding us so forcibly of those tender words, "Mother Home and Heaven." How it reminds us of that auspicious night in a far distant land when the star appeared in the east and the angels sung to the watching shepherds, "Peace on earth and good will toward men."

WHAT DOES CHRISTMAS REALLY MEAN?

Let us look back through the historic pages. In ancient times noted persons, kings and orators, after their death, were exalted, honored and worshipped as gods. This was especially true in oriental lands; and secondly in so called pagan lands. And it is evident that some of the Christian festivals were borrowed from the pagans and held at or about the same time. For instance, Saturn (Chronos), was honored as a god and his season of festivity was called the Saturnalia – a Roman festival, and celebrated on the 17th and 19th of December. When this empire became powerful this festival lasted for seven days.

Bunsen informs us that it was late in December when Gautama Buddha was born. His birth was celebrated and is still celebrated among the Buddhists of China. In Egypt Horus, son of Isis, was born in December. And Greece, in the winter solstice, celebrated the birth of Dionysus, while Persia honored the birth of Mithras, said to have occurred in December. That the Hebrew Christians, coming into racial relations with Greeks and Romans, adopted many expressions derived from the Pagan philosophy and Pagan ceremonies, no scholar will dispute; and Spiritualists, being eclectics, do the same thing.

From the mysteries connected with the Druids, or the Scandinavians, a strange ceremony was practiced, relating to the Yule-log. This was quite a long back of hard wood, placed across the fireplace, which, when it began blazing, the candles were lighted, the holly branches were waved, and the songs of jollification commenced.

In those very quiet old days of our motherland, the English enthused far more over Christmas than they do now, and in a more material and jolly way. Those old times have given place to sunny social gatherings, beautiful floral decorations, renewal of former friendships and most sumptuous health imparting meals.

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What changes since then! No railroads, no telegraphs, no telephones, no typewriters, no electric lights then, though those old scenes and sermons and blighting dogmas of damnation in our boyhood years have vanished into an abysmal past; Christmas, with its merriment, its shouting's, its gladsome gatherings, its homestead festivals, still lives. Things rooted in principles and great characters, heaven inspired, never die.

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES OF THE CHRIST.

Human life at longest is brief. We brought nothing material into this world and we can take nothing material out of it: and it is of little consequence whether anyone were born in a palace or a peasant's hut. It is reported that Jesus, the Christ, was born in a manger; and yet, in a few hundred years, proud, imperial Rome trembled from her foundations because of the psychic forces concealed in that manger. Christmas points the thinking mind back to that humble birth to that man, medium and martyr, who, while going about doing good, had not where to lay his head, and Christmas in all enlightened countries honor that inspired martyr.

It is absolutely amazing how this character strikes the minds of different people. To the uncultured and atheistic agnostic, Jesus never lived – he was a mere myth; to the great German, Strauss, he was a wise Rabbi; to the great Jewish Rabbi, Akiba, he was a magician; to the illustrious Renan, a sublime moral teacher: to Fourier, a warm-hearted socialist; to Fenelon, a most rapt mystic: to Thomas Paine, the most sincere of philanthropists; to Mueller, the harmony of all history; to Emerson, the transcendental prophet: to Parker, a fellow brother and self-sacrificing reformer; to A. J. Davis, the great Syrian seer; to Mrs. Cora Richmond, the messenger from heaven; to Col. Ingersoll, he was one of the “most generous and self-denying men, for whom I feel only admiration and respect.” [To us, He was a Yogi and Jivan-mukta, *Ed. L. T.*]

The above illustrious and highly unfolded men and women express my conceptions of that Judean Christ, who, using the inspired words of that eminent speaker and author, W. J. Colville, is undoubtedly “the reigning power of the moral universe.”

While orthodox sectarians, calling themselves Christians, make Jesus of Nazareth a God, or at least a third part of God in the Trinity, Spiritualists and liberalists in America consider Jesus a highly inspired man, begotten naturally, yet on a higher spiritual plane of consciousness than the masses of mankind – that is to say, in the conception, the parties were governed more by love, pure spiritual love, than selfish gratification or beastly lust. Every conception should be immaculate, having within the germinal possibilities of a forthcoming Christ – the word Christ, meaning the anointed, the illumined, the heavenly inspired. Jesus was a man, a medium and martyr, and was called The Christ after being baptized and anointed. The world has had many Christ's in the past ages: and as the world develops and unfolds, there will be more Christen souls as Saviors, such as Krishna, Gautama, Buddha, The Christ, Lord Gauranga etc. Give these saviors all the honor their due.

Finally, on this calm Christmas evening, with heart warm with affection and a soul overflowing with love and kindness, I say to you, friends and acquaintances in this and

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foreign lands, A Merry Christmas – and may peace and prosperity and the choicest blessings of heaven rest upon and abide with you.

J. M. P.
