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A Christmas Prayer

Cyril William Winterbotham

NOT yet for us may Christmas bring
Good-will to men, and peace;
In our dark sky no angels sing,
Not yet the great release
For men, when war shall cease.

So must the guns our carols make,
Our gifts must bullets be,
For us no Christmas bells shall wake;
These ruined homes shall see
No Christmas revelry.

In hardened hearts we fain would greet
The Babe at Christmas born,
But lo, He comes with pierced feet,
Wearing a crown of thorn,—
His side a spear has torn.



For tired eyes are all too dim,
Our hearts too full of pain,
Our ears too deaf to hear the hymn
Which angels sing in vain,
"The Christ is born again."

O Jesus, pitiful, draw near,
That even we may see
The Little Child who knew not fear;
Thus would we picture Thee
Unmarred by agony.

O'er death and pain triumphant yet
Bid Thou Thy harpers play,
That we may hear them, and forget
Sorrow and all dismay,
And welcome Thee to stay
With us on Christmas Day.

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