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Christmas Letter to Alumnus of K.S.T.C. from Brandenburg (undated)

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DEAR ALUMNUS OF K. S. T. C.:

The Christmas Season is again upon us, and I would that the spirit and ideals expressed in that heaven-born song of old, "Peace on Earth and Good Will toward Men," might fill our souls in a larger measure than ever before.

If only the war-stricken peoples of earth could hear the chimes of Christmas and breathe the atmosphere of peace and good will toward each other, what a different world we would have to-day.

What a wonderful time and opportunity to stress and to magnify the grandeur and blessedness of our Christian democratic government.

You and I have been, and still are, the beneficiaries of generations of noble ancestors. May it be said of them that they, each generation in turn, are ancestors of noble and worthy children.

While the call to arms, and the roll of drums to lift and fire the spirit of those who march away to die, are not heard in our beloved land today, there is a call which not one of us as teachers of child or youth should fail to hear and heed—a call to patriotic loyalty to our institutions of government and to the ideals for which they stand.

If those of us to whom is entrusted the sacred privilege of directing the development of the child and youth of our nation, fail to teach in some way love for our fellow-men and loyalty to our nation, the value of our services as teachers may safely be doubted.

We must all come to realize that greed, selfishness, and intolerance are man's greatest enemies; that so long as these actuate men's efforts, and direct and control their philosophies of life, we can never have "Peace on Earth and Good Will toward Men." He never loved God who hated man, and he who really loved his fellow man was never an enemy of God.

I like this little verse because it expresses in such a splendid way love of fellow-men. I hope you like it too:

ABOU BEN ADHEM

*Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,
An Angel writing in a book of gold:
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the Presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?" The Vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord,"
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay not so,"
Replied the Angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."*

*The Angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest!*

—James Henry Leigh Hunt

W. A. Brandenburg
"PREXY"