

# What I Want For Christmas

By Robert G. Ingersoll

If I had the power to produce exactly what I want for next Christmas, I would have all the kings and emperors resign and allow the people to govern themselves.

I would have all the nobility drop their titles and give their lands back to the people. I would have the pope throwaway his tiara, take off his sacred vestments, and admit that he is not acting for God - is not infallible - but is just an ordinary Italian. I would have all the cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests and clergymen admit that they know nothing about theology, nothing about hell or heaven, nothing about the destiny of the human race, nothing about devils or ghosts, gods or angels. I would have them tell all their 'flocks' to think for themselves, to be manly men and womanly women, and to do all in their power to increase the sum of human happiness.

I would have all the professors in colleges, all the teachers in schools of every kind, including those in Sunday schools, agree they would teach only what they know, that they would not palm off guesses as demonstrated truths.

I would like to see all the politicians changed to statesmen - to men who long to make their country great and free - to men who care more for public good than private gain - men who long to be of use.

I would like to see all editors of papers and magazines agree to print the truth and nothing but the truth, to avoid all slander and misrepresentation, and to let the private affairs of the people alone.

I would like to see drunkenness and prohibition both abolished. I would like to see corporal punishment done away with in every home, every school, in every asylum, reformatory, and prison. Cruelty hardens and degrades, kindness reforms and ennobles.

I would like to see the millionaires unite and form a trust for the public good.

I would like to see a fair division of profits between capital and labor, so that the toiler could save enough to mingle a little June with the December of his life.

I would like to see an international court established in which to settle disputes between nations, so that armies could be disbanded and the great navies allowed to rust and rot in perfect peace .

I would like to see the whole world free - free from injustice - free from superstition.

This will do for next Christmas. The following Christmas, I may want more. (1897)