

# CHRISTMAS

Theodore Holmes

Where is the one whose coming they celebrate this season?

Out of the north huge trucks come down  
Loaded with Christmas trees tied like shells.  
The towering spires of department stores  
Are joined at their base by wreaths for the season.  
Through the jungle of buildings  
Windows glitter and shine with gifts,  
In a world where the spirit has already been crowded-out  
By its products. The din and uproar  
Of the commercial transaction broadcasting itself,  
The thundering of the herd moved by its prompting,  
Drums on the floor of the earth below.

Where is the child whose birth they remember today?

Before the church, the town hall, and the home,  
Is the floodlit scene in the manger:  
There is the plaster Virgin kneeling over the child  
In her blue cape—the steel animals look on;  
The holy angels shine with their stars  
Of silver foil in the trees.  
The carolers make their *O's* of breath.

Where is the one who came to save the world?

As a mark of its judgment sent down from heaven,  
Snow covers the rockets in their silos;  
The stored missiles sleep in their nests.  
Leaders plot how to bring down governments,  
Extend their spheres of influence, control the market—  
Technology experiments with the next device  
That will take *all* of man's life from his hands;  
Scientists lay the foundations of the *final* miracle.

Christ walking on the battlements of heaven,  
Looking into the black mists of night,  
Draws the collar of his coat tighter about him.