

The white moon through the window seemed to gaze
On the pure face and eyes the singer raised;
The storm-wind hushed the clamor of its ways;
God seemed to stoop to hear Himself thus praised,
And breathless all the Brothers stood, and still
Reached longing souls out to the music's thrill.

Old years came back, and half-remembered hours,
Dreams of delights that never were to be,
Mothers' remembered kiss, the funeral flowers
Laid on the grave of life's felicity;
An infinite dear passion of regret [wet.
Swept through their hearts, and left their eyelids

The Birds beat ever at the window, till
They break the pane, and so could entrance win;
Their slender feet clung to the window-sill,
And though with them the bitter air came in,
The monks were glad that the birds too should hear,
Since to God's creatures all His praise is dear.

The lovely music waxed and waned, and sank,
And brought less conscious sadness in its train,
Unrecognized despair that thinks to thank
God for a joy renounced, a chosen pain—
And deems that peace which is but stifled life
Dulled by a too-prolonged unfruitful strife.

When service done, the Brothers gathered round
To thank the singer—modest-eyed, said he:
"Not mine the grace, if grace indeed abound;
God gave the power, if any power there be;
If I in hymn or psalm clear voice can raise,
As His the gift, so His be all the praise!"

That night—the Abbot lying on his bed—
A sudden flood of radiance on him fell,
Poured from the crucifix above his head,
And cast a storm of light across his cell—
And in the fullest fervor of the light
An angel stood, glittering, and great, and white.

His wings a thousand rainbow clouds seem'd made,
A thousand lamps of love shone in his eyes,
The light of dawn upon his brows was laid,
Odors of thousand flowers of Paradise
Filled all the cell, and through the heart there stirred
A sense of music that could not be heard.

The Angel spoke—his voice was low and sweet
As the sea's murmur on low-lying shore—
Or whisper of the wind in ripened wheat:
"Brother," he said, "the God we both adore
Has sent me down to ask, is all not right?—
Why was Magnificat not sung to-night?"

Tranced in the joy the Angel's presence brought,
The Abbot answered: "All these weary years
We have sung our best—but always have we
thought

Our voices were unworthy heavenly ears;
And so to-night we found a clearer tongue,
And by it the Magnificat was sung."

The Angel answered, "All these happy years
In heaven has your Magnificat been heard;
This night alone, the angels' listening ears
Of all its music caught not a single word.
Say, who is he whose goodness is not strong
Enough to bear the burden of his song?"

The Abbot named his name. "Ah, why," he cried.
"Have angels heard not what we found so dear?"
"Only pure hearts," the angel's voice replied,
"Can carry human songs up to God's ear;
To-night in heaven was missed the sweetest praise
That ever rises from earth's mud-stained maze.

"The monk who sang Magnificat is filled
With lust of praise, and with hypocrisy;
He sings for earth—in heaven his notes are stilled
By muffling weight of deadening vanity;
His heart is chained to earth, and cannot bear
His singing higher than the listening air!"

"From purest hearts most perfect music springs,
And while you mourned your voices were not
sweet,
Marred by the accident of earthly things,—
In heaven, God, listening, judged your song
complete.

The sweetest of earth's music came from you,
The music of a noble life and rue!"

Noel, Noel!

By Eliza Wills.

"They saw the young child . . . and fell down and worshipped him."

COME, ye Christians, come and pay
Homage to your King to-day;
Cradled in a manger, see,
Sleeps an infant peacefully;
Christ, God's only Son and Heir,
Is the Infant sleeping there.

Ne'er before such sight was seen
As now meets our gaze I ween.
Heralded by angels bright,
Came the Prince of Life and Light;
Oxen turn their patient eyes
Where the Infant Godman lies.

Lo, a star its rays down shed
O'er this royal Infant's bed,
There He lies in humble state,
Heeded not by rich and great;
Listen, all heaven's angels sing,
"Peace on earth Christ comes to bring."

Hark, their voices swell and ring,
"Glory be to God," they sing,
"Peace, good will from God on high
To all men on earth," they cry;
"God comes down with men to dwell,
Jesus Christ, Emmanuel."

Bring your gifts of gold most rare,
Frankincense and myrrh prepare,
Lay them in the manger down,
Thorns shall form His earthly crown;
On this earth, His throne shall be
But a cross on Calvary.

Gold, the altar of your heart
For His temple set apart;
Myrrh, the broken contrite prayer
Which to Him is offered there;
Frankincense, the song of praise
Which you daily, hourly raise.

Come, ye Christians, come and pay
Homage to your King to-day;
He is now in lowly guise,
He shall reign o'er earth and skies;
Sing your Christmas Noel sing,
Glory, glory, Christ is King!

Toronto, Ont.