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## The Christmas Vision of Prior Oswald.

**O**SWALD, the Monk of our Holy Order, he who was Prior at Bradford, on the River Avon, in the Kingdom of Wessex, and who, as I have elsewhere written, fell into that strange sleep, wherefrom none might waken him—what time the Blessed Aldhelm communed with him, as he journeyed toward Douling, and, as it fell out, toward Heaven, and his Lord : Oswald, I say, on a certain Feast of the Nativity, beheld a dream or vision, if, indeed, such it were, which I cannot doubt, and which by command of our Lord, the Abbot, I here set down, as nearly in his words as may be.

I stood, said he, as thou knowest,—for indeed, I was deacon at that same Holy Mass whereof he spoke,—at our Altar, while the brethren, as the custom is, sang the *Credo*. And, at the *Incarnatus est*, as is meet, right, and our bounden duty, we kneeled in adoration of The Word made Flesh. Whereat, as on a sudden, darkness fell on me, and then light, not of our Altar, but as of sunshine brighter than our island knoweth, brighter than that of Rome itself. And, from the light, I passed, methought, through a lowly doorway, into a room such as I had never looked on, wherein sat a Maiden, fairer than any that the world hath seen, whom I knew, in sooth, for that Most Blessed One that should be Mother of the Son of God. Then, as I watched her at her tasks and at her prayers, there fell on her a