

nations. They therefore in studying the starry heavens looked for the promised token,—in vain for centuries.

"But fifteen years before the birth of our Lord they, for the first time, discovered a new star, remarkable not only for its position in the skies and its brilliancy, but more so, because in it they beheld the figure of a virgin seated. Five years later they again saw the star, and in it the representation of wheaten ears and grapes. Again five years passed before the reappearance of the star, which now exhibited the picture of a young mother with a babe in her arms.

"These repeated apparitions caused widespread comment, and the wise men, widely separated territorially, sent messages to one another, and came to the conclusion to examine into the wonderful matter thoroughly, and to follow the star when it reappeared.

"Thus the next five years were spent in hope and preparation, and finally in the blessed night of the Nativity of Our Saviour, the star shone again, more brilliant than ever, and showed them a picture that filled their souls with delight, for it was nothing less than the representation of the stable in Bethlehem, containing all the figures.

"They at once set out with a large retinue and costly gifts, the star acting as a guide to each of them, and bringing them together some eighty miles east of Jerusalem. The farther they journeyed the nearer the star came to them, and the more distinct the picture grew. As they approached Jerusalem the star disappeared, but leaving the city they saw it again nearer and nearer, until it stood above the cave, which they entered, prostrating themselves before the babe, and adoring Him as their Master and their God.

"The names of the three kings were: Mensor, Theokens and Seir, the one was a

descendant of Job, the other of Abraham's wife, Ketura, and the third of Jews, who at the time of the Babylonian captivity had fled the country and settled near Egypt, where they became mixed with the Chamites of Egypt. Thus the three Magi represented the three great divisions of mankind, Semites, Chamites and Japhetites.

"Being admonished in a dream not to return to their home by way of Jerusalem, they followed another route and settled on the spot, where the star had brought them together, determined to stay there, until the new King of the Jews should send them a messenger, to conduct them elsewhere.

"The King of the Jews did not send a messenger, but after the raising of Lazarus he went there Himself. Seir was dead. Mensor received him in solemn procession, and repeated his act of worship. Our Lord told them to tarry, until one of His Apostles would come to them and baptize them. Three years after the Ascension of Our Lord, St. Thomas baptized them and their followers, who then settled in the Island of Crete, where they probably suffered martyrdom."

The christian legend calls them Melchior, Caspar and Balthasar. Their bones were brought to Milan, and when Emperor Barbarossa destroyed this city, he donated the sacred relics to his chancellor, the Archbishop of Cologne, who lost no time in transferring them in solemn procession to his Cathedral, where they are venerated to-day.

A great many saw the star, comparatively few followed it. The followers were rewarded with the priceless gift of faith, the others sank back into all the abominations of Paganism. Happy we, who in our ancestors followed the star. Be it ever a beacon light of faith to us, and lead us to the true service of the Saviour, whom it revealed.