

ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY.—FROM MILTON.

This is the morn; and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing,
That he our deadly forfeit should release.
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious form, that light insufferable,
And that far beaming blaze of Majesty,
Wherewith he went at heaven's high council-
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity, [table
He laid aside, and here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day, [clay.
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal

Say, heavenly muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant-God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
To welcome him to this his new abode,
Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light
And all the spangled host keep watch in equa-
dron bright?

See, how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet:
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode,
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet;
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the angel-choir, [fir.
From out his secret altar touch'd with hallow'd

THE HYMN.

It was the winter-wind,
While the heaven-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature in awe to him,
Had doff'd her gaudy trim,
With her great master so to sympathise;
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.
Only with speeches fair,
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow;
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.
But he, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace: [sliding
She, crown'd with olive green, came softly
Down through the turning sphere,
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;
And waving wide her myrtle wand, [land.
She strikes an universal peace through sea and

No war, or battle's sound,
Was heard the world around:
The idle spear and shield were high up hung;
The hooked chariot stood
Unus'd with hostile blood;
The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovereign Lord was

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kiss,
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fix'd in steadfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence;
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer hath open warn'd them thence;
But in their gimmering orbs did glow, [go.
Until the Lord himself bespake, and hid them

And, though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
The sun himself withheld his wanton speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame [need:
The new-enlighten'd world no more should
He saw a greater Sun appear [could hear,
Than this bright throne, or burning axletree,

The shepherds on the lawn,
Or o'er the point of dawn,
Sat simply chaunting in a rustic row;
Full little thought they then,
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below;
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep, [keep.
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet,
As never was by mortal finger strook;
Divinely warbled voice
Answering the stringed noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took;
The air, such pleasure loth to lose, [venly close
With thousand echoes still prolongs each hea-
Nature that heard such sound.
Beneath the hollow round
Of Cynthia's seat, the acry region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling
She knew such harmony alone [union.
Could hold all heaven and earth in happier