

## CHRISTMAS POEMS.

## THE APPROACH OF CHRISTMAS.

When rosemary, and bays, the poet's crown,  
Are bawled, in frequent cries, through all the town;  
Then judge the festival of Christmas near,—  
Christmas, the joyous period of the year.  
Now, with bright holly all your temples strew,  
With laurel green, and sacred mistletoe,  
Now, heaven-born Charity! thy blessings shed;  
Bid meagre Want uprear her sickly head;  
Bid shivering limbs be warm; let Plenty's bowl  
In humble roofs make glad the needy soul!  
See, see! the heaven-born maid her blessings shed;  
Lo! meagre Want uprears her sickly head;  
Clothed are the naked, and the needy glad,  
While selfish Avarice alone is sad.

JOHN GAY.



CHARITY.

## BOAR'S HEAD CAROL.

From an ancient book of Christmas Carols, printed by Wynkin de Worde.

*Caput Apri defero**Reddens laudes Domino.*

The Boar's head in hand bring I,  
With garlands gay and rosemary;  
I pray you all sing merrily,  
*Qui estis in convivio.*

The boar's head, I understand,  
Is the chief service in this land;  
Look wherever it be found,  
*Servite cum cantico.*

Be glad, lords, both more or less,  
For this hath ordained our steward  
To cheer you all this Christmas,  
The boar's head with mustard.



BOAR'S HEAD FEAST OF THE OLDEN TIME.



CHRISTMAS PARTY.

## CHURCH BELLS.

Wake me to-night, my mother dear,  
That I may hear  
The Christmas Bells, so soft and clear,  
To high and low glad tidings tell,  
How God the Father loved us well,  
How God the Eternal Son  
Came to undo what we had done;  
How God the Paraclete,  
Who in the chaste womb formed the Babe so sweet,  
In power and glory came, the birth to aid and greet.

Wake me, that I the twelvemonth long  
May hear the song  
About with me in the world's throng;  
That treasured joys of Christmas tide  
May with mine hour of gloom abide;  
The Christmas Carol ring  
Deep in my heart, when I would sing;  
Each of the twelve good days  
Its earnest yield of duteous love and praise,  
Ensuring happy months, and hallowing common ways.

Wake me again, my mother dear,  
That I may hear  
The peal of the departing year.  
O well I love, the step of Time  
Should move to that familiar chime:  
Fair fall the tones that steep  
The Old Year in the dews of sleep,  
The New guide softly in,  
With hopes to sweet, sad memories akin!  
Long may that soothing cadence ear, heart, conscience win.

JOHN KERLE.



BELL RINGERS.

## CHRISTMAS IS A COMING.

(From "Round about our Coal Fire," 1734.)

O you merry, merry souls,  
Christmas is a coming;  
We shall have flowing bowls,  
Dancing, piping, drumming.

Delicate minced pies,  
To feast every virgin,  
Capon and goose likewise,  
Brawn, and dish of sturgeon.

Then for your Christmas-box  
Sweet plum-cakes and money,  
Delicate Holland smocks,  
Kisses sweet as honey.

Hey for the Christmas ball,  
Where we shall be jolly;  
Coupling short and tall,  
Kate, Dick, Ralph, and Molly.

Then to the hop we'll go,  
Where we'll jig and caper;  
Dancers all a-row,  
Will shall pay the scraper.

Hodge shall dance with Prue,  
Keeping time with kisses;  
We'll have a jovial crew  
Of sweet smirking misses.