

heaven and earth. They traversed it with such swift and powerful wings as to time their journey, and fix the moment of their arrival.

Only once before had angel melodies resounded beneath mundane skies. When this beautiful earth was finished angels came down to see it. Then the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. But the earth was then unpeopled of human kind. Therefore, the first time that cherubic strains of angel minstrelsy charmed mortal ear was when the Bethlehem shepherds heard the song of the advent seraphs at the Syrian Christmas scene.

If Jesus had not condescended to assume our nature, one brief and terrible sentence would have summed up the whole history of Adam's race. It would have been such as this: "*The wages of sin is death.*" Over the gateway to the tomb would have been written the inexorable words: "*Who enters here leaves hope behind.*"

"But thanks be to God forever for His unspeakable gift!" Now the song begun by angels over Bethlehem shall be the joyful theme of men till time shall be no more. "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN; AND ON EARTH, PEACE TO MEN OF GOOD WILL."

"And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die."

—Gen. iii. 4.

STILL the old serpent doth deceive  
The men who dare in sin to live:  
Poor souls, they hold his promise fast  
And hope—to be all saved at last:

"Ye need not be so much afraid  
Of hell: whatever God hath said,  
Ye shall not, who on me rely,  
Not surely—not forever die."

—Charles Wesley.