

*All:*

So shall we learn to understand  
 The simple faith of shepherds then,  
 And, clasping kindly hand in hand,  
 Sing, "Peace on earth, good-will to men!"

—James Russell Lowell.

**Christmas Carol.**

Before the paling of the stars,  
 Before the winter morn,  
 Before the earliest cock-crow,  
 Jesus Christ was born —

Born in a stable,  
 Cradled in a manger;  
 In the world His hands had made  
 Born a stranger.

Priest and king lay fast asleep  
 In Jerusalem;  
 Young and old lay fast asleep  
 In crowded Bethlehem.

Saint and angel, ox and ass,  
 Kept a watch together,  
 Before the Christmas day-break,  
 In the winter weather.

Jesus on His mother's breast  
 In the stable cold.  
 Spotless Lamb of God was He,  
 Shepherd of the fold.

Let us kneel with Mary, maid,  
 With Joseph, bent and hoary,  
 With saint and angel, ox and ass,  
 To hail the King of Glory.

—Christina Rossetti.

**An Old French Cradle Song.**

Entre le boeuf et l'âne gris  
 Dort, dort le petit fils.  
 Mille anges divins  
 Mille séraphim  
 Volent alentour  
 De ce Dieu d'amour.

Entre les deux bras de Marie  
 Dort, dort le petit fils.  
 Mille anges, etc.

Entre les roses et les lis,  
 Dort, dort le petit fils.  
 Mille anges, etc.

—Exchange.

**A Christmas Carol.**

The Shepherds had an Angel,  
 The Wise Men had a star,  
 But what have I, a little child,  
 To guide me home from far,  
 Where glad stars sing together  
 And singing angels are?

The Wise Men left their country  
 To journey morn by morn,  
 With gold and frankincense and myrrh,  
 Because the Lord was born;  
 God sent a star to guide them  
 And sent a dream to warn.

My life is like their journey,  
 Their star is like God's book;  
 I must be like those good Wise Men  
 With heavenward heart and look:  
 But shall I give no gifts to God?—  
 What precious gifts they took!

—Christina Rossetti.

**STORIES TO BE TOLD.****Piccola.**

Piccola was a little girl who lived in a country named France, which is away across the sea. Her father and her mother worked very hard, for they were very poor. They could not afford to buy beautiful books and toys such as you have, for their little girl, although Piccola was just as fond of such things as you are. She didn't have a toy of any kind. But Christmas was near and she felt sure that something beautiful would happen to every child on Christmas day. She hoped that Santa Claus would bring her something with which she could play.

As Christmas drew nearer and nearer she became more anxious. At last Christmas Eve came. She didn't hang up her stocking as you do on Christmas Eve, but she put her wooden shoe by the fireplace. All the poor people in her country wore wooden shoes. While she was putting her shoe in what she thought was the best place, her father and her mother looked on. But they were not joyful as Piccola was. They felt sad because they hadn't anything to put into the shoe. The mother thought to herself: "Oh, if I had only a little cake to put into it!" She knew how disappointed Piccola would be in the morning if she found the shoe empty.

When Piccola was satisfied with the placing of the shoe, she went to bed. I suspect that she felt just as you feel on Christmas Eve, that she could hardly wait until the morning came.

She slept soundly all night, and just as daylight came she awoke. Then she jumped out of bed and ran to her shoe. When she had peeped into the shoe, she clapped her hands and shouted and danced for joy. What do you think she found in it? There was a little live bird in it! It was a little sparrow that had flown against the window during the night; the window was open, so it flew inside. It was shivering