

*Once, when the days were holy, — in the East,
When Mary's hands — hers only, — like a priest
Anointed by Love's chrism, — robed with delight
Her Infant Son, Our Saviour, all in white,
And kneeling, held Him to her tender heart
With rapturous worship that no words impart, —
All heaven adored with her the Gift foretold.
This sacred chalice in a silken fold !*

*Ere sun or seraph shone, the Host's sweet light
Within the Father's bosom rested white,
When lightnings flashed and moon and stars awoke
The rays of mercy through a white Host broke !
Oh, marvel of Eternity, what gloom
Would shroud the world without this lily bloom !
God's fairest works would seem all stern and cold
Without the White Host in a chalice gold !*

*For here is heaven ! Lord, at thy command,
In pale wrapt awe thy holy angels stand
Around, anear they guard the sacred veil, —
We crush through wings to reach Thine altar rail !
They sing hosannas ! And our faltering words
All wet with tears are gathered in the chords !
They see Thy Glory and Thy Face behold, —
Ours is the chalice in the silken fold !*

BELLELLE GUERIN.

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