

THE HERALD ANGEL.

BRIGHT-RAVING through the rayless night,
Like to a sudden sun upspringing,
Down-borne on wings of heavenly light
Through Juda's land glad tidings bringing :
Before whose feet the clouds dispel,
Thy herald comes, Emmanuel !

"God is with us !"—Hark, hark the sound
Proclaiming Christ's celestial birth ;
While chorus angels, hovering round,
Swell the full strain of "Peace on earth."

"God is with US !" Bowed down in awe,
The chosen shepherds heard and saw.

"Go, quit your flocks upon the wold ;
Leave the young sheep beside his dam :
This night a child is born ;—beho'd,
He is the Shepherd and the Lamb !
Arise, and go !" And swift as day
The choral voices died away.

Not so the Hera'd-Angel fled ;

But vanished s'ow, till faint and far
Upborne where fields of ether spread,
Diminished to a single star
The heavenly guest stood, radiant-bright,
To Bethlehem's walls the guiding light !

While kingly Herod quailed with fear,
Nor saw the angel in the beam,
The Wise Men gazed, and, drawing near,
Beheld fulfilled the prophet's dream :
In yon low shed, by catt'e trod,
The wondering sages owned their God.

His office done, with lessening ray
To heaven the Hera'd-Angel rose ;
But One still points the God-ward way
In these our days, as erst in those ;
From midst the starry heavens o'd
He calls us to his Father's fold.

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