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## LITERATURE.

### POETRY.

#### A BEAM FROM THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

By Wm. J. Rose.

Christmas-eve! the snow is whirling  
Thick and fast along the street;  
And the sky is dark and gloomy,  
Wild the wind and sharp the sleet.  
Hark! there, faintly down the pathway,  
Comes the tread of baby feet.

And behold, through all the tempest,  
Glides a tiny, childlike form;  
Weary, wandering, without shelter,  
Lost in cold, and night, and storm.  
"Whence art thou, poor little stranger,  
Through the night and through the storm?"

Far outside, the wide plain stretches,  
And beyond are hills of snow;  
High above, the black sky low'ring,  
And the river frowns below;  
Whither, whither, in the midnight,  
Little lone one wouldst thou go?"

But she hears not, and the snowdrift  
Drowns the voice that bids her stay,  
And afar along the pathway  
Speed those little feet away,  
Hurrying whither? Blessed Saviour,  
Speed those little feet away!

Feet and hands are cracked and bleeding,  
Feet and hands and head are bare,  
And the frozen sleet, like jewels,  
Clusters in her golden hair;  
Tattered garments flutter 'round her,  
Battling with the bitter air.

Ah! how shrinks the cowering infant,  
As the fierce gust chills her through!  
Feebly dies her voice of wailing;  
For her lips are stiff and blue,  
And the tears cling to her eyelids,  
Frozen there in icy dew.

Onward, through the gathering darkness  
Still she totters in her flight:  
Weary, lonely, like a Pleiad  
Wandering in the outer night,  
Is there no one, is there no one,  
Keeping for her warmth and light?

Ha! there gleams athwart the corner  
Ruddy glow from happy homes,  
And sweet, merry, childish laughter,  
Ringing on the bleak wind comes;  
For to-night they sport all hopeful,  
With the Christmas elves and gnomes.

Happy children! Happy parents!  
Bless the roof that shields you here!  
Tender father! Gentle mother!  
Loving sister! Brother dear!  
Not a frown to mar your pleasure,  
Every joy and comfort near!

Christmas-eve! the firelight dances  
On the pictured parlor-wall,  
And apart in cozy chambers,  
Gifts are ranged for one and all;  
While, below, the blazing kitchen  
Sends its cheer through court and hall.

And there, gleaming past the curtain,  
See the glittering Christmas-tree,  
Hung with golden fruits and trinkets  
For the fun that is to be!  
O, the candies! O, the treasures!  
On that glorious Christmas-tree!

Then, the table spread for feasting,  
Pies, and cakes, and comfits piled—  
Rosy apples, nuts and raisins,  
Grapes whereon the Tropic smiled,  
Heaped together—what an Eden  
For that homeless, starving child!