

# All Hallows in the West.

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## The First Christmas.

So many hill-sides, crowned with rugged rocks!  
So many simple shepherds keeping flocks  
In many moon-lit fields! but only they—  
So lone, so long ago, so far away—  
On that one Winter's night, at Bethlehem,  
To have white angels singing songs for them!  
They only—hinds wrapped in he-goats skin—  
To hear Heaven's music, bidding peace begin!  
Only for those, of countless watching eyes,  
The "Glory of the Lord" glad to so arise;  
The skies to blaze with gold and silver light  
Of seraphs by strong joy flashed into light;  
The wind for them with that strange song to swell—  
By too much happiness incredible—  
That tender anthem of good times to be,  
Then at the dawn—not daylight yet, ah me!  
"Peace upon earth! Good will!" Sung to the strings  
Of lutes celestial.

—EDWIN ARNOLD.

## The Three Gifts.

The Gospel of the Epiphany. What is it? A story of three wise men, as they are called, eastern sages, kings of Orient, who arose and travelled afar, guided mysteriously to the Holy City, and from thence to the humble birthplace of the King of Kings. There, low bending before an unearthly throne, they opened their treasures and presented unto Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Scarce a little child in our schools but knows that these three gifts had reference to the state of Christ. That was their first design; the oblation was overruled by that Providence which shapes all mortal acts to some fit end; the gold was offered to Christ because He was a king, the frankincense implied the worship due to Him as God, and the myrrh was a visible prophecy that He must suffer. The royalty, the deity, the sorrow greater than all sorrows, were shadowed forth in the three-fold gifts; so much we all, and all the little children know. But there is yet another way of looking at this, for we can turn it about and make an application to ourselves.