

Extracts From
MILTON'S
ODE ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S
NATIVITY.

This is the month, and this the happy
morn,
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal
King,
Of wedded Maid and Virgin Mother
born,
Our great redemption from above did
bring ;
For so the holy sages once did sing,
That he our deadly forfeit should
release,
And with his Father work us a per-
petual peace.

Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy
sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant God ?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or
solemn strain,
To welcome him to this his new
abode,
Now while the heaven, by the sun's
team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approach-
ing light,
And all the spangled host keep watch
in squadrons bright ?

See, how from far, upon the eastern
road,
The star-led wizards haste with
odours sweet ;
O run, prevent them with thy humble
ode,
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet ;
Have thou the honour first thy Lord
to greet,
And join thy voice unto the Angel
qu shore
From out his secret altar touch'd
with hallow'd fire.

It was the winter wild,
While the heaven-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude
manger lies ;
Nature, in awe to him,
Had doff'd her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sym-
pathise.

The shepherds on the lawn,
Or e'er the point of dawn,
Sat simply chatting in a rustic
row ;
Full little thought they then,
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them
below .

Perhaps their loves, or else their
sheep,
Was all that did their silly thoughts
so busy keep.



THE BEARER OF GLAD TIDINGS.

When such musick sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet,
As never was by mortal finger
strook ;
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringed noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture
took ;
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs
each heavenly close.

Nature that heard such sound,
Beneath the hollow round,
Of Cynthia's seat, the aery region
thrilling,
Now was almost won,
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last
fulfilling ;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all Heaven and Earth in
happier union.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
That with long beams the shame
fac'd night array'd ;
The helmed Cherubim,
And sworded Seraphim,
Are seen in glittering ranks with
wings display'd,
Harping in loud and solemn quire,
With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's
new-born Heir.

Such musick (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of old the sons of morn-
ing sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set,
And the well-balanced world on
hinges hung ;
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their
cozy channel keep.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres,
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our
senses so ;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time ;
And let the base of Heaven's deep
organ blow ;
And, with your ninefold harmony,
Make up full consort to the angelick
symphony.

But see the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest ;
Time is our tedious song should here
have ending ;
Heaven's youngest-teemed star
Hath fix'd her polish'd car.

Her sleeping Lord with handmaid
lamp attending ;
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harness'd Angels sit in order
servicable.



BETHLEHEM.



THE SHEPHERDS.



KING DAVID.



THE STABLE.