

A Christmas Carol

BY G. K. CHESTERTON

The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap,
His hair was like a light.
(O Weary, Weary were the world,
But here is all aright.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast,
His hair was like a star.
(O stern and cunning are the Kings,
But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart,
His hair was like a fire.
(O Weary, Weary is the world,
But here the world's desire.)

The Christ-child stood at Mary's knee,
His hair was like a crown,
And all the flowers looked up at Him,
And all the stars looked down.

Our Brother Is Born

BY HARRY AND ELEANOR FARJEON

Now every child that dwells on earth,
Stand up, stand up and sing;
The passing night has given birth
Unto the children's king.
Sing sweet as the flute,
Sing clear as the horn,
Sing joy for the children,
Come Christmas morn:

Little Christ Jesus
Our Brother is born.

Christmas Bells

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from the black, accursèd mouth
The cannon thundered in the South,
And with the sound
The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth stones of a continent,
And made forlorn
The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
“There is no peace on earth,” I said;
“For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!”

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
“God is not dead, nor doth He sleep!
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men!”

The Burning Babe

BY ST. ROBERT SOUTHWELL, S.J.

As I in hoary winter's night
Stood shivering in the snow,
Surprised I was with sudden heat
Which made my heart to glow;

And lifting up a fearful eye
To view what fire was near,
A pretty Babe, all burning bright,
Did in the air appear;

Who, scorched with excessive heat,
Such floods of tears did shed,
As though His floods should quench His flames,
Which with His tears were bred.

“Alas!” quoth He, “but newly born,
In fiery heats I fry,
Yet none approach to warm their hearts
Or feel my fire, but I;

“My faultless breast the furnace is;
The fuel, wounding thorns;
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke;
The ashes, shames and scorns.

“The fuel Justice layeth on,
And Mercy blows the coals,
The metal in this furnace wrought
Are men's defiled souls.

“For which, as now on fire I am,
To work them to their good,
So will I melt into a bath,
To wash them in my blood.”

With this He vanish'd out of sight
And swiftly shrunk away,
And straight I callèd unto my mind
That it was Christmas Day.