

MARY

I.

O Mary! wert thou not a maid like me—
Only more fair, more white in purity?
I see thy face up-shining from the manger,
Like a frail lily in a drift of hay;—
Years cannot make thee seem so far away
While the same stars are bending over me
That shone o'er Bethlehem that night, and thee—
Maid-mother of thy Babe, the Heaven-sent earth-stranger.

II.

But though I lift mine eyes with gaze intent,
One orb is missing from the firmament:
That star which hung above the lovely stable
Where thou wert lying on a bed of pain;—
Through the deep Christmas dark I search in vain;—
Is there no spot burned in the memory
Of ancient night, where that one star may be?
Yet—should I see if mortal eyes were able?

III.

When my too-trusting heart is crushed and broken,
I see that star as though it were a token,
Shining through blackness on my watching soul;—
Lost to the sky, but invisibly leading me;
My shame-bent face I then no longer bide—
The wound is healed, the bitter tears are dried;
Out of the night I hear the angels sing,
The moonlight white on heavenward lifted wing;—
Star of my soul! I cannot doubt—I see!

VII.

A sudden flashing vision on mine eyes—
A black cross lifted 'gainst the leaden skies—
"I suffer, shame-bowed soul, for such as thou!"
O patient Savior of the thorn-crowned head,
I see thy mother weeping o'er her dead!—
Mary in this thou wert akin to me—
O that I had been there to comfort thee,
Or bathe with tears my Savior's bleeding brow!



MRS. ANNIE PIKE GREENWOOD,
Author of the Christmas News Prize
Poem, "Mary."

IV.

O Mary! wert thou not a maid like me?
Was there no cup of bitterness for thee—
No sorrow deeply hidden in thy heart?
Thou couldst not love so well without that grace!—
I dreamed I saw thy tender brooding face
Bent o'er thy little babe that wondrous morn,
When all the Heavens sang out that He was born!
O glorious echo of thy singing heart.

V.

About thy form the bright aureola thrown;
Around thy child a light celestial shone;
Thy hair down-flowing, and thy gentle smile!
In shaggy rows the unkempt shepherds knelt,
Their simple faces grave with awe they felt;
The wise men proffered frankincense and myrrh;
Jewels that even Herod might prefer;
And I was with them, kneeling all the while.

VI.

What could I give?—I had not gold nor gem,
Perfume nor spice in all of Bethlehem;—
In all the world was there no gift from me?
Then Mary gently spake, "Give Him thy soul!"
"My tattered soul? Ah, God! if it were whole!
See where the fingers of the world went through,
The earth-kiss on my throat!"—my sorrow grew;
"O Mary thou wert not a maid like me!"

VIII.

Mary, in this thou wert akin to me!
Not only that I loved and wept with thee,
But that my feet shall find Him through the night;
Where I have fallen, I shall rise again,
Bearing the message of "good will to men!"
Till the last gate unbarred, the tender light
Of thy fair face shall fall upon my sight!

A MOTHER'S CHRISTMAS PRAYER

By Theodosia Garrison

I.

Because this night you held Him woman-wise
With all a woman's sweetness in your eyes.
Feeling the weakling, human touch of Him
Thrill through the veil of many mysteries:

II.

Because His cheek was close against your breast,
(Oh, softer than a folded flower might rest!)
In that first swift, white hour of motherhood,
May I not speak who all of this possessed?

III.

Because this night His first frail cry and faint
Brought all your heart to answer its complaint
In that great ecstasy of tenderness
That crowns the mother holier than the saint:

IV.

Oh, tenderest mother in all heaven, hear!
Somewhere in your fair dwelling far or near
Find you this little, lonesome soul of mine,
The little soul that yesterday was here.

Not for the sake of that God crucified
Who turned strange eyes upon you ere He died,
But for the love of that small helpless One
Who knew your arms and naught of earth beside.

VI.

You who were woman—oh, I ask but this:
Because you knew the anguish and the bliss,
Comfort this little, lonesome soul of mine,
Not with the martyr, but the mother, kiss



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CHUNKS OF KNOWLEDGE.

Some German writers think there is a connection between the fact that the consumption of beer per head in Germany has trebled in twenty years and the fact that there are now almost four times as many heart disease "rejects" at the recruiting offices of the army and navy as there were in 1901.

declining steadily for years and has now reached the lowest figures on record—viz, 27 per thousand in London and 29.2 per thousand for seventy-five large towns. Were it not for a diminishing death rate, particularly among infants, the population would already be on the decrease.

Germany exported \$15,000,000 worth of toys last year. Of that sum about \$4,000,000 came from the United States. Germany is ahead in novelties of a charitable nature. In the town of Haschmann prizes are offered yearly for the men who will marry the ugliest and most crippled women and for the women over forty years who have been jilted at least twice.

A new method of teaching penmanship in the classroom has been adopted in the schools of Newark, N. J. In place of the old blank copy books the writing instructor has prepared an original set of letter cards containing capitals, small letters and figures, which are fastened to the blackboard in each room. These will be constantly before the children while the teacher gives instruction in forward slant writing.

Organ grinders in Verviers, Belgium, are by law compelled to appear every morning before the police superintendent and play their instruments. The organs which chance to be out of tune must be set in order before a license to play on the streets will be granted.

Thomas A. Edison says that axolein, produced by the burning or distillation of glycerin, to which phosphoric acid has been added, is the substance which often drives boy cigarette smokers insane. This drug is in nearly all smoking tobacco, to which glycerin is added to keep it moist. He regards this as more deleterious to the smoker than nicotine itself.

Mauna Loa, in the Sandwich Islands, 13,650 feet high, is the highest mountain which rises directly from the sea. Theater goers in Spain can purchase a separate ticket for each act and often do not stay to see more than one act at a time. It is quite the usual thing to spend four nights over a four act play, seeing one act one night, the second act a few nights later and so on.