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READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Christmas at Melrose

Leslie Pinckney Hill

Come home with me a little space
And browse about our ancient place,
Lay by your wonted troubles here
And have a turn of Christmas cheer.

These sober walls of weathered stone
Can tell a romance of their own,
And these wide rooms of devious line
Are kindly meant in their design.

Sometimes the north wind searches through,
But he shall not be rude to you.
We'll light a log of generous girth
For winter comfort, and the mirth

Of healthy children you shall see
About a sparkling Christmas tree.
Eleanor, leader of the fold,
Hermione with heart of gold,

Elaine with comprehending eyes,
And two more yet of coddling size,
Natalie pondering all that's said,
And Mary with the cherub head—

All these shall give you sweet content
And care-destroying merriment,
While one with true madonna grace
Moves round the glowing fire-place

Where father loves to muse aside
And grandma sits in silent pride.
And you may chafe the wasting oak,
Or freely pass the kindly joke

To mix with nuts and home-made cake
And apples set on coals to bake.
Or some fine carol we will sing



In honor of the Manger King

Or hear great Milton's organ verse

Or Plato's dialogue rehearse

What Socrates with his last breath

Sublimely said of life and death.

These dear delights we fain would share

With friend and kinsman everywhere,

And from our door see them depart

Each with a little lighter heart.

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