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Christmas

Rose Terry Cooke

Here comes old Father Christmas,
With sound of fife and drums;
With mistletoe about his brows,
So merrily he comes!
His arms are full of all good cheer,
His face with laughter glows,
He shines like any household fire
Amid the cruel snows.
He is the old folks' Christmas;
He warms their hearts like wine;
He thaws their winter into spring,
And makes their faces shine.
Hurrah for Father Christmas!
Ring all the merry bells!
And bring the grandsires all around
To hear the tale he tells.



Here comes the Christmas angel,
So gentle and so calm;
As softly as the falling flakes
He comes with flute and psalm.
All in a cloud of glory,
As once upon the plain

To shepherd-boys in Jewry,
He brings good news again.
He is the young folks' Christmas;
He makes their eyes grow bright
With words of hope and tender thought,
And visions of delight.
Hail to the Christmas angel!
All peace on earth he brings;
He gathers all the youths and maids
Beneath his shining wings.

Here comes the little Christ-child,
All innocence and joy,
And bearing gifts in either hand
For every girl and boy.
He tells the tender story
About the Holy Maid,
And Jesus in the manger
Before the oxen laid.
Like any little winter bird
He sings his sweetest song,
Till all the cherubs in the sky
To hear his carol throng.
He is the children's Christmas;
They come without a call,
To gather round the gracious Child,
Who bringeth joy to all.

But who shall bring their Christmas
Who wrestle still with life?
Not grandsires, youths, or little folks,
But they who wage the strife —
The fathers and the mothers
Who fight for homes and bread,
Who watch and ward the living,
And bury all the dead?
Ah! by their side at Christmas-tide
The Lord of Christmas stands:
He smooths the furrows from their brow
With strong and tender hands.
"I take my Christmas gift," He saith,
"From thee, tired soul, and he
Who giveth to My little ones

Gives also unto Me."

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