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Christmas Tide (Poem)

Eliza Cook

When the merry spring time weaves
Its peeping bloom and dewy leaves;
When the primrose opes its eye,
And the young moth flutters by;
When the plaintive turtle dove
Pours its notes of peace and love;
And the clear sun flings its glory bright and wide—
Yet, my soul will own
More joy in winter's frown,
And wake with warmer flush at Christmas tide.

The summer beams may shine
On the rich and curling vine,
And the noon-tide rays light up
The tulip's dazzling cup:
But the pearly mistletoe
And the holly-berries' glow
Are not even by the boasted rose outvied;
For the happy hearts beneath
The green and coral wreath
Love the garlands that are twined at Christmas tide.

Let the autumn days produce
Yellow corn and purple juice,
And Nature's feast be spread
In the fruitage ripe and red;
'Tis grateful to behold
Gushing grapes and fields of gold,
When cheeks are brown'd and red lips deeper dyed:
But give, oh! give to me
The winter night of glee,
The mirth and plenty seen at Christmas tide.

The northern gust may howl,
The rolling storm-cloud scowl,
King Frost may make a slave

Of the river's rapid wave,
The snow-drift choke the path,
Or the hail-shower spend its wrath;
But the sternest blast right bravely is defied,
While limbs and spirits bound
To the merry minstrel sound,
And social wood-fires blaze at Christmas tide.

The song, the laugh, the shout,
Shall mock the storm without;
And sparkling wine-foam rise
'Neath still more sparkling eyes;
The forms that rarely meet
Then hand to hand shall greet,
And soul pledge soul that leagues too long divide.
Mirth, friendship, love, and light
Shall crown the winter night,
And every glad voice welcome Christmas tide.

But while joy's echo falls
In gay and plenteous halls,
Let the poor and lowly share
The warmth, the sports, the fare;
For the one of humble lot
Must not shiver in his cot,
But claim a bounteous meed from wealth and pride.
Shed kindly blessings round,
Till no aching heart be found;
And then all hail to merry Christmas tide!



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