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King Arthur's Waes-Hael

Robert Stephen Hawker

I.

Waes-hael for knight and dame!

O! merry be their dole;

Drink-hael! in Jesu's name

We fill the tawny bowl;

But cover down the curving crest,

Mould of the orient lady's breast.



II.

Waes-hael! yet lift no lid:

Drain ye the reeds for wine!

Drink-hael! the milk was hid

That soothed that Babe divine;

Hushed, as this hollow channel flows,

He drew the balsam from the rose.

III.

Waes-hael! thus glowed the breast

Where a God yearned to cling;

Drink-hael! so Jesu pressed

Life from its mystic spring;

Then hush, and bend in reverent sign,

And breathe the thrilling reeds for wine.

IV.

Waes-hael! in shadowy scene,
Lo! Christmas children we;
Drink-hael! behold we lean
At a far Mother's knee;
To dream, that thus her bosom smiled,
And learn the lip of Bethlehem's Child.

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