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Peace on Earth

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

The shepherds went their hasty way,
And found the lowly stable shed
Where the Virgin-Mother lay;
And now they checked their eager tread,
For to the Babe that at her bosom clung
A mother's song the Virgin-Mother sung.

They told her how a glorious light,
Streaming from a heavenly throng,
Around them shone, suspending night,
While, sweeter than a mother's song,
Blest angels heralded the Saviour's birth,
Glory to God on high and Peace on Earth.



She listened to the tale divine,
And closer still the Babe she pressed;
And while she cried, *The Babe is mine!*
The milk rushed faster to her breast;
Joy rose within her like a summer's morn;
Peace, Peace on Earth! the Prince of Peace is born.

Thou Mother of the Prince of Peace,
Poor, simple, and of low estate!
That strife should vanish, battle cease,

O why should this thy soul elate?
Sweet music's loudest note, the poet's story —
Didst thou ne'er love to hear of fame and glory?

And is not War a youthful king,
A stately hero clad in mail?
Beneath his footsteps laurels spring;
Him Earth's majestic monarchs hail
Their friend, their playmate! and his bold bright eye
Compels the maiden's love-confessing sigh.

"Tell this in some more courtly scene,
To maids and youths in robes of state!
I am a woman poor and mean,
And therefore is my soul elate.
War is a ruffian, all with guilt defiled,
That from the aged father tears his child!

"A murderous fiend, by fiends adored,
He kills the sire and starves the son;
The husband kills, and from her hoard
Steals all his widow's toil had won;
Plunders God's world of beauty; rends away
All safety from the night, all comfort from the day.

"Then wisely is my soul elate,
That strife should vanish, battle cease;
I'm poor and of a low estate,
The Mother of the Prince of Peace.
Joy rises in me like a summer's morn;
Peace, Peace on Earth! the Prince of Peace is born."

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