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The Wandering Minstrel

Margaret Hamilton

What ho, within! Good honest folk,
Here's one will sing you ballads quaint
As carven shapes of fiend and saint
That deck your beams of blackened oak.
What ho, mine host! Here's one at last
Who comes to solace all your guests
With merry songs that made their nests
Among the gables of the Past.



Then let him in; he knows the way
To sweeten loaf and brighten fire;
He sings of crested knight and squire,
Of lovely dame and friendly fay;
Of turbaned Paynims dark and fierce,
Of elfin circles emerald green,
Of blades by wizard art made keen,
And shields no mortal dart could pierce.

And though your coin must pay his pains,
Not all for gold he plies his art,
But holiday is in his heart
E'en while he stands and counts his gains.

To him should every door unbar

At Christmas-tide; for then he sings
Old chansons of the three wise Kings
Of Orient, and the mystic Star.
"Noë!! Noë!!" the carol rings
Through cold blue night, afar, afar,
And bears to cots where shepherds are
White thoughts that throng on angel-wings.

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