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A Christmas Vision

Selected

On Christmas Eve 'mid all the joyous glee
That in my plenteousness surrounded me,
I happened by some chance to turn mine eye
Out through a window wreath that hung near by
And as I glanced through it into the night
I seemed to see, lit by some holy light,
A childish face with wistful, smiling lips
That thrilled me to my very finger tips.

Two eager hands stretched forth called as in stress,
To me to carry help to helplessness,
And in the sad eyes of that child I saw
In all its loveliness, the Christmas law—
Not a command, no everlasting must
Upon reluctance for its teaching thrust,
But just a pleading hint to him who runs
That all who suffer are God's little ones.

And then the picture in the wreath was gone,
And in its place, the Eastern star-beams shone—
The same that nineteen centuries ago
Led on the wise men with their heavenly glow;
And e'en as they, I wandered through the drifts
And into lowly places carried gifts
To cheer, and give release, and pay my due
Unto my Lord through them that suffer rue.

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