



CAROLS BEFORE MASS

It came upon the midnight clear *(Book no. 314)*

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, goodwill to men from heaven's all gracious King!"
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled;
and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world: above its
sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing, and ever o'er its Babel
sounds the blessed angels sing.

O ye beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow;
Look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing:
Oh rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,
when the new heaven and earth shall own the Prince of Peace, their King,
and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.