

(editor's note: This paper was transcribed from a handwritten cursive copy with various difficulties. For a perfect rendition, the reader might wish to consult the original, itself a copy, in the volume entitled *Literary Club Papers*, Dec 20, 1890 to May 30, 1891)

### The Christ Dream

He was born of the hope of a nation  
Fast fading away in despair;  
His mother was lowly in station,  
His birthplace the animals share.

All was dark when on earth he descended  
All dark, all corrupt, all obscene,  
And man's nature thus broken he mended  
By a vision so pure, so serene.

That while gazing in rapt contemplation  
The lowest of mortals was drawn  
Out of self, to mysterious relation  
With this light that sprung forth from the dawn.

'Twas a dream of ideal perfection.  
Perchance of some heavenlier sphere,  
Jesus caught, as he came, the reflection,  
And dreamt that such things could be here.

To the weak, the forlorn, the defeated,  
Who die in the struggle for life,  
The sweet dream team, the spectres departed;  
They dream themselves boards of the strife.

Shall we blame them that dreamingly slumbered?  
That fashioned a future so where?  
May we rather with them had been numbered,  
Dream on to the end, if ye dare.

Oh! that glorious vision of heaven,  
That entered the soul of the maid,  
Had a lump but been ripe for the leaven,  
It, alas, came too soon or delayed.

And how terrible now the awakening,  
those castles built grandly in air,  
We know now, as they crumble are taking  
Realities with them as fair.

We awake to the darkness and terror  
That He would have hid from our dream.  
Were it better to dream on in error?  
R not all things but such as they seem?

Else we grapple with phantoms, and starting  
Unguided, and groping our way,  
Can but hope but the Christ-light, departing  
May leave one unperishing ray.

J. Remsen Bishop