

# Democratic Watchman

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P. GRAY MEKE, Editor.

## Christmas Sleighting Song.

There's a loving lure in the pine cone's ember  
In the tender voice and the lifted strain;  
But despise the joys of the dear December—  
The carol, the gamour, the Yule log's glow—  
I'd rather be where the night winds rilly  
And blow their bugles, a-ho, heigh-ho,  
Down the valley asleighting with Sally  
Over the crispy snow!

Forsooth it's jolly under the holly  
When the feet of the dancers trip in time,  
And there's never a touch of melancholy  
When the fiddle follows the cello's rhyme,  
But for all the fun and for all the folly,  
And for all the hanging of the mistletoe,  
I'd rather be where the night winds rilly  
And blow their bugles, a-ho, heigh-ho,  
Down the valley asleighting with Sally  
Over the crispy snow!

—Clinton Scollard.

## PRINCESS LILITH.

Now, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.

Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east and are come to worship him.

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, Go and search diligently for the young child, and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

Being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth.—Matthew 2, 1-16.

The Princess Lilith, daughter of King Herod, mused as she reclined upon a bed of purple, and the negress Noun waved a fan of feathers over her forehead, and the cat Astaroth slept at her feet.

Princess Lilith was 15 years of age. Her eyes were as deep as the water of a cistern, and her mouth was like a cyclamen flower.

She mused of her mother, Queen Miriam, who died when Lilith was still a little more than a baby. She did not know that her father had killed her in a fit of jealousy, but she knew that he kept her body in the depths of a secret chamber, embalmed in honey and spices, and that he still wept for her.

She mused upon her father, King Herod, taciturn and always ill. Sometimes he shut himself up in his chamber, and there one could hear him scream aloud. It was because he thought he saw those whom he had caused to die—his stepbrother, Kostobar; his wife, Miriam; his sons, Aristobulus and Alexander, Lilith's brothers; his stepmother, Alexandra; her son, Antipater; the doctor of law, Bababab-Bouta; and many others. Although Lilith knew nothing of all this, her father always inspired her with great terror.

She mused upon the Messiah looked for by the Jews and of whom she had heard so much from her nurse, Egla, now dead. And, although the Messiah would be king in Herod's place, she said to herself that she would very much like to see him.

Lastly she mused upon little Hozael, the son of her foster sister, Zebonda, who lived in Bethlehem. Hozael was a year old. He laughed merrily and was beginning to talk. Lilith loved him tenderly, and almost every day she ordered her mules to be harnessed into her cedar chariot and went with the negress Noun to visit the little Hozael.

Lilith mused upon all these things, and then it seemed to her that she was very much alone in the world and that without little Hozael she would be very sad.

die with the others, for the soldiers will search every house."

"But I am very sure that little Hozael is not the Messiah. How could he be the Messiah? He is the son of my foster sister."

"Ask your father to spare him," said Zebonda.

"I dare not," said Lilith. Then she resumed: "I shall go myself with Noun and get little Hozael and hide him in my room. Then he will be very safe, for the king almost never comes there."

Lilith ordered the mules to be harnessed into her cedar chariot, sped to Bethlehem with Noun, entered the home of her foster sister Zebonda and said: "It is a long time since I have seen Hozael. I should like to carry him to my palace and keep him for a day and a night. The baby is weaned and has no longer need of thy care. I will give him a dress of hyacinth and a collar of pearls." She said nothing to Zebonda of what she had learned from Zebonda, so afraid was she of the king.

But she noticed that Zebonda's face shone with unwonted joy.

"Why art thou so joyous?" Zebonda hesitated a moment, then replied, "I am joyous, Princess Lilith, because you love my son."

"And thy husband—where is he?" Lilith asked.

Again Zebonda hesitated and answered, "He has gone to gather his flocks upon the mountain side."

Noun hid the little Hozael under her long veils, and Lilith and the good negress returned to the palace just as the sun was setting.

When Lilith reached her chamber, she took Hozael upon her lap, and the baby laughed and tried to pull the little princess' long ear pendants. But suddenly Noun, who was preparing some corn gruel for the child in the next room, rushed in crying: "The king! Here comes the king!"

Lilith had only time to hide Hozael in a large basket and cover him with a pile of silks and bright wools before King Herod entered with a slow, heavy tread, the chains and plates of gold, with which he was covered, shaking with each movement. His back was bent, and his bloodshot eyes glared in his terrible face. His chin shook so with the palsy that his bristly beard seemed to shudder. He said to Lilith, "Whence comest thou?"

She replied, "From Jericho." And she raised toward the king her eyes, as calm as the water of a cistern.

"Oh, how she resembles her!" murmured Herod.

At this moment a little cry came from the basket.

"Will you keep quiet?" said Lilith to the cat Astaroth, who slept on the rug. Then she said to the king: "My father, you seem troubled. Would you like me to sing to you?"

And taking her sither, she sang him a song about roses.

And the king murmured, "Oh, that voice!"

Then he fled, as if struck with fear, because Lilith's voice and eyes recalled to him the voice and eyes of Queen Miriam.

Lilith went into the garden and found old Zabulon weeping.

"Why dost thou weep, old Zabulon?" "You know the cause, Princess Lilith. I weep because the king wishes to kill the little child who is the Messiah."

"But," said Lilith, "if he is really the Messiah, men cannot have the power to kill him."

"God wishes us to help him," replied Zabulon. "Princess, you, who are so good and so compassionate, should warn the father and mother of this little child."

"But where shall I find them?" "Question the people of Bethlehem."

"But ought I to save one who will chase my father from this palace, one by whom I may some day become a poor prisoner or a beggar in the streets?"

"That day is far removed," said Zabulon, "and the Messiah is now only a tiny babe, more helpless even than little Hozael."

"But are you sure that he is the Messiah?" demanded Lilith.

"Yes," said Zabulon, "because he was born in Bethlehem at the time appointed by the prophets and the wise men have seen his star."

"He must be very beautiful, although he is so small. Don't you think so, Zabulon?"

"It is written that he shall be the most beautiful among the children of men."

"I shall go to see him," said Lilith.

When night came, Lilith enveloped herself in long black veils, and the bracelets and circles of gold upon her arms and ankles, the collars about her neck and the precious stones with which she was covered shone through her veils as softly as the stars in the sky. And thus Lilith resembled the night, whose name she bore, for in Hebrew "Lilith" signifies "the night."

She left the palace secretly with the negress Noun, and as she walked she mused: "I should not want the Messiah to take the crown from my father because it would be very hard for me not to live in a beautiful palace any more and not to have any more soft rugs and pretty dresses and perfumes and jewels. But still I do not want them to kill this little newborn child. So I shall tell my father that I have discovered its hiding place, and as a recompense for this service I shall entreat him to spare the child and keep him in his palace. Thus he cannot harm us, and if he is really the Messiah he will let us share his power."

Lilith found Zebonda and her husband, Methouel, in prayer. Both seemed filled with great joy. Lilith betrothed her of a ruse.

"Hozael is very well," said she, "and I shall bring him back to you tomorrow. But since you know where to find the Messiah lead me to him. I am come to adore him."

Methouel was a simple man, little disposed to think ill of others, so he re-

plied, "I will show you the way, Princess Lilith."

When they reached the spot where the infant lay, Lilith was greatly astonished, for she had expected to see something extraordinary and magnificent without knowing exactly what, and she only saw a hut built against a rock and in this hut an ass, an ox, a man who appeared to be a workman, a woman of the people, beautiful, yes, but pale and delicate and poorly clad. And in the manger, lying upon a straw, was a little child, whom at first glance she thought like any other child. But when she drew nearer she saw its eyes, and in those eyes a look not that of a babe, an infinite sweetness more than human, and she became aware that the stable was only lighted by the light which emanated from him.

She said to the young mother, "What is your name?"

"Miryam."

"And your little boy?"

"Jesus."

"He seems to be very good."

"He means sometimes, but he never cries."

"Will you let me kiss him?"

"Yes, madam," said Miryam.

Lilith stooped and kissed the child upon the forehead, and Miryam was a little vexed that she did not kneel.

"So," said Lilith, "this little child is the Messiah?"

"You have said it, madam."

"And he will be King of the Jews?"

"It is for that that God has sent him."

"But then he will make war and kill many men, and he will dethrone King Herod or his successor?"

"No," said Miryam, "for his kingdom is not of this world. He will have neither palaces nor treasures. He will not inflict taxes upon the people, and he will live like the poorest fisherman on the lake of Genesareth. He will be the servant of the poor and the humble. He will heal the sick and comfort the afflicted. He will teach truth and justice. It is over hearts, not bodies, that he will reign. He will suffer to teach us the price of suffering. He will be the King of Love, for he will love all men. And he will teach those who are tormented with a longing which this world cannot satisfy where their poor hearts can find peace and joy. And no doubt he will have a throne."

"Ah, now you see!" said Lilith, still resisting.

"But," resumed Miryam, "the throne will be a cross. He will die upon a cross to expiate the sins of men so that God, his Father, may have pity upon them."

Lilith listened in astonishment. Slowly she turned her head toward the manger. The babe was gazing at her, and, vanquished by the caress of those deep eyes, she murmured, "No one ever told me those things before," and falling upon her knees she adored him.

"I know," said Lilith as she rose, "that King Herod will search for the child to kill him. Take the ass and fly. I will pay its master."

Following the narrow paths which wound in and out among the round hills the little company soon reached the plain.

"Here," said the princess, "I must leave you. I am the Princess Lilith, daughter of King Herod. Remember me."

And as they disappeared in the darkness of the night, Joseph leading the ass upon which sat Miryam holding the infant Jesus in her arm, Lilith followed with her eyes the aureole encircling his divine brow. As the pale, mysterious light disappeared behind a forest of cypresses Lilith heard the tramp of horses' hoofs and the clanking of swords upon the opposite road. It was the squadron of Roman soldiers marching toward Bethlehem.

Every one knows that the Princess Lilith was one of the holy women who followed Jesus on the day of his sacrifice and that little Hozael was one of the first disciples of Christ, the Saviour.

—Translated From the French by V. M. in Romance.

**Bull for the Poor.**  
In May, 1861, George Staverton left a sum of money to purchase a bull, which he gave to the poor of Wokingham town and parish. The animal was to be boiled, the hide and the offal to be sold, and the proceeds expended in the purchase of shoes and stockings, to be bestowed upon poor children. Up to the year 1823 a bull was regularly boiled on the 21st of December in the market place of Wokingham. But in that year the corporation of the town determined upon discontinuing such a proceeding, which has since accordingly been omitted. At Christmas, 1835, a mob broke open during the night the place where one of the animals was kept and boiled it, in spite of the magistrates' endeavors to prevent them, and similar attempts have since been made on other occasions.—Boston Herald.

**Vipers Lose Their Venom on Christmas.**  
In Calabria, south Italy, it is believed that Calabria will not bite on Christmas day, or that if they do their bite is harmless, the poison being neutralized by the sanctity of the day.

**French Christmas Carol.**  
Noel Noel  
At darkest night on man was shed  
Thy heavenly brightness, Blessed Child,  
Be this night fair about thy bed,  
And around it may the winds blow mild.  
Noel Noel

**Fast fall our tears as here we see**  
Thy cradle rude, thy chamber bare,  
For us thou choicest poverty,  
For us all mortal woes didst share.

**An angel band, with harps of gold,**  
Descend, O Child, to give thee praise,  
Thy manger with thy wings unfold  
And chant for thee their heavenly lays.  
Noel Noel

**Oh Christ, upon my grateful heart**  
Pour out the fullness of thy grace,  
Be life to light face be my part,  
And after death to see thy face.  
Noel Noel

**He Is Coming.**  
Yes, he, thy King, is coming  
To end thy woes and wrongs,  
To give thee joy for mourning,  
To turn thy sighs to songs;  
To lift thee from thy sadness,  
To set thee on the throne,  
Messiah's chosen nation,  
His best beloved one.  
—Reformed Church Messenger.

—Subscriber for the WATCHMAN.

**GOLDEN MISTLETOE.**  
The Wonderful Tree in a Beautiful Grove. Legends of the Gloomy Vale and Death of Balder the Beautiful—Ancient Beliefs That Trees Could Feel Pain—Roman and Greek Mythology.  
Und grun des Lebens goldner Baum.—Faust.  
The sacred books of the Buddhists prove that in the early days of their religion a question which deeply agitated the minds of the learned was whether or not the trees had souls, says a writer in the Philadelphia Ledger. The controversy raged strongly, for the belief was widespread that in injuring or mutilating a tree proportionate pain was inflicted on its spirit's nature. The same idea creeps out again and again in Greek and Roman mythology, and the folklore of every country and people in Europe is full of it, and at such seasons as Christmas these primitive customs are actually practiced. The numerous German and English songs and offerings to the apple trees are still heard and seen on every Christmas. Ovid in his "Metamorphoses" tells the beautiful story of Erichon's impious attack on the grove of Ceres and how the Greek dryads and hamadryads had their lives linked to a tree, and as "this withers and dies they themselves fall away and cease to be. Any injury to bough or twig is felt as a wound, and a wholesale hewing down puts an end to them at once. A cry of anguish escapes them when the cruel ax comes near."

It was this established belief that produced such lines as:  
Loud through the air resounds the woodman's stroke,  
When, lo! a voice breaks from the groaning oak,  
Spare, spare my life, a trembling virgin spare!  
Oh, listen to the hamadryad's prayer!  
No longer let that fearful ax resound,  
Preserve the tree to which my life is bound.  
See, from the lark my blood in torrents flows.  
I faint, I sink, I perish from your blows.

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