

T H E O X

THE holy night that Christ was born
 The ox stood reverently apart,
 Both ruminating eaten corn,
 And pondering within his heart.

There be (he pondered) certain beasts,
 Which stand about Jehovah's throne,
 Which hearken to the Lord's behests,
 Which have no thought but Him alone.

Now I am surely one of these.
 And, since He comes to my abode,
 'Tis fitting I should bow my knees
 Before the Holy Child of God.

I hold it for a solemn troth
 I shall no more be sacrificed.
 For when to prophethood He groweth,
 I cease to symbolise the Christ,

Who is the noble Holocaust
 As anciently Himself did plan
 Himself to be the Holy Host,
 To feed and succour fallen man.

I cannot tell the Mother dear
 My joy ; but softly if I low,
 The noble Infant Christ will hear
 His bullock praise him. He will know.

JOHN GRAY.