

A BABE IS BORN

(CHRISTMAS : EPIPHANY)

Nowell, *el, el, el,*
Now is well, that ever was woe.

(M. S.)

English Traditional.

15th century.

A BABE is born all of a may,
To bring salvation unto us.
To him we sing both night and day
Veni creator Spiritus.

- 2 At Bethlehem, that blessèd place,
The child of bliss now born he was ;
And him to serve God give us grace,
O lux beata Trinitas.
- 3 There came three kings out of the East,
To worship the King that is so free,
With gold and myrrh and frankincense,
A solis ortus cardine.
- 4 The shepherds heard an angel's cry,
A merry song that night sung he.
' Why are ye so sore aghast ? '
Jam ortus solis cardine.
5. The angels came down with one cry,
A fair song that night sung they
In the worship of that child :
Gloria tibi Domine.

1. may] maid. *Veni creator*] Come, creator Spirit : the Whitsun hymns, *E.H.* 153, 154, 156. 2. *O lux beata*] O Trinity, blessed light : Evening hymn, *E.H.* 164. 3. *A solis ortus cardine*] Risen from the quarter of the sun : Christmas hymn, *E.H.* 18. 4. Orig. 'The herdes heardyn'. 5. *Gloria tibi Domine*] Glory to thee, O Lord.

Sloane MS. 2593, first half of the fifteenth century. Another version in Richard Hill's MS. (cf. No. 36), 'There is a child born of a may'. We have altered, in v. 1, 'In the savasyoun of us', with Bramley and Stainer, who preserved the tune, and in 4, 'A merye song then sungyn he', and similarly in 5.