

A Virgin most pure, the prophet foretold

Text anon.

Attrib. William Knapp (c1698-1768)

Edited by Francis Roads

[♩]=144

Soprano/
Tenor
[Air]

1. A Vir - gin most pure, — the pro - phet fore - told, Should bring forth a —
 2. Through Beth - le - hem ci - ty in Je - wry it was That Jo - seph and —
 3. But Ma - ry's full time be - ing come as we find, She brought forth her —
 4. But Ma - ry, blest Ma - ry, so meek and so mild, Soon wrapt up in —
 5. To teach us hu - mi - li - ty, — all this was done, Then learn we hence -

Alto

Bass

6

S

Sa - viour, which now we be - hold. To be our re - dee - mer from
 Ma - ry to - ge - ther did pass; And there to be tax - ed with
 first - born to save all man - kind; The inns be - ing full; for this
 swadd - lings this hea - ven - ly child; Con - ten - ted, she laid him where
 forth haugh - ty pride for to shun; A man - ger's his cra - dle, who

A

B

11

S

death hell and sin, Which A - dam's trans - gres - sion in - vol - ved us in.
 Ma - ry straight - ways, Old Cae - sar com - man - ded, he quick - ly o - beys.
 hea - ven - ly guest, No place there was found where to lay him to rest.
 ox - en did feed, The great God of na - ture ap - proved of the deed.
 came from a - bove, The great God of mer - cy, of peace, and of love.

A

B

16

S

Then let us be mer - ry, cast sor - row a - way, Our Sa - viour Christ Je - sus was born on this day.

A

B

6. Then presently after the shepherds did spy
 Vast numbers of angels to stand in the sky;
 So merrily talking, so sweet they did sing,
 All glory and praise to our heavenly King.

This tune is listed in Temperley's *Hymn Tune Index* (Oxford, 1998) as Tune 1681a, and ascribed there to William Knapp, in whose publication *Anthems for Christmas Day ...* (London, 1744) it is first known to have appeared in print, and from which this edition is made. However, many versions of both text and tune are found in the folk tradition. Knapp is known to have drawn music for his publications from a variety of sources. On this and on stylistic grounds, it appears doubtful to the present editor whether this tune was composed by Knapp himself, though the harmonisation is probably his.