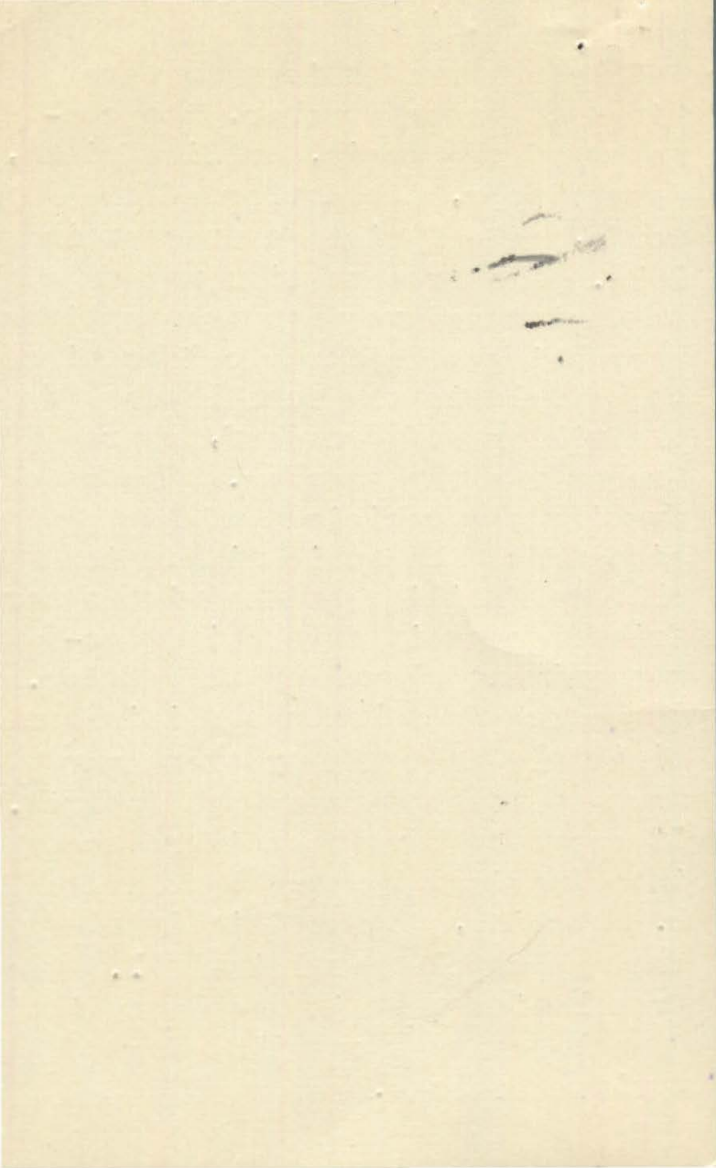


SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT

The words of this hymn were given to Franz Grueber, the composer of the music, by his friend, Joseph Mohr, the author of the words, as a Christmas present in 1818. The presentation was made on Christmas Eve when preparations were being made for a celebration to be held in the schoolhouse of the village of Arnsdorf, where Gruber was the teacher. The same evening the recipient of the gift wrote the music with which all are familiar and he with other friends sang it to a guitar accompaniment played by the author. The song was taken up by itinerant minstrels and sung by them over much of South Germany and Austria. It seems to have been introduced into American hymnody by Charles L. Hutchins, who used it in his Sunday School Hymnal in 1871. The translation used in The Methodist Hymnal has been compiled from various sources.



Joseph Mohr was born at Salzburg, Austria, Dec. 11, 1792, and died in Wagrein, Dec. 4, 1848. He was ordained a Roman Catholic priest in 1815 and spent all his life serving churches in the vicinity of his birthplace. Whether or not he wrote other hymns is not known. This is the only one that has been translated into English.

Franz Grueber, an Austrian, was born at Hochburg, Nov. 25, 1787, and like his friend, Joseph Mohr, lived all his life not far from Salzburg. He was schoolmaster in the little village of Arnsdorf and served as parish organist. It is not known that he ever wrote any other music than this tune, certainly none other which has been published. He died June 7, 1863, at Hallein.

used

Grace Ch., Croyenne, Wyo.,
Dec 15, 1957.