



THE THREE KINGS

A STAR . . . A CAVE . . . THREE KINGS

A star of wondrous magnitude and beauty might set fire to the imagination of a poet, but hardly to that of a king. He is made of "sterner stuff"; he must be a realist. About a cave, however, both king and poet are agreed. It is dank, unpleasant, the habitation of creeping things that scurry from the light, mysterious; at best, a shelter from the night with her sisters, rain and cold. Yet Epiphany is the paradox of three kings who were poets (or, of three poets who happened to be kings) at home in a cave. Drawn from out of the comfortable impotence of a spent civilization by a star which beckoned toward something beyond the ken of their experience, they had set out from their kingdoms. Encountering one another and made aware that theirs was a common quest, they had journeyed on in pursuit of the realization of an "inward vision." Where the star might lead them they knew not. Nor did they care so long as they might be true to it, to themselves, to this new born King. And so at last they came . . . and found themselves on their knees . . . in a miserable cave . . . before a Babe . . . and an ox and an ass looked dumbly on.