

## Notes to Rossetti's Satirical Verse on *Christmas-Eve*

1. Myrrh - A bitter, aromatic gum resin exuded by various Arabian and African trees of the genus *Commiphora* (family Burseraceae), esp. *C. abyssinica* and *C. myrrha*, which was formerly important esp. in perfumery and as an ingredient of incense. Also in *Pharmacol.*: a tincture made from this, used medicinally as an astringent and expectorant. and in figurative contexts. Balm; sweetness; something which soothes, heals, or preserves
2. Sandal - A kind of half-shoe of red leather, silk, etc., richly embroidered and fastened with straps and bands, forming part of the regalia of a sovereign or of the official dress of a bishop or abbot.
3. Virgil / Ovid – Roman poets
4. Hesiod / Melesigines – Greek poets ('Melesigines' another name for Homer!)
5. Ashantee - One of the Akan peoples of West Africa; a member of this people. Also, their language.
6. Alnaschar - the name of a beggar in the Arabian Nights who destroys his means of livelihood because he indulges in visions of riches and grandeur – (in a reverie, he kicks over the basket containing glass he was selling, causing them to fall and shatter)
7. Lascar - (Freq. with capital initial.) An East Indian sailor. Anglo-Indian. 'A tent-pitcher'; also, an inferior class of artilleryman (more fully gun-lascar).
8. Ezra & Nahum – Old Testament Scribe and Minor Prophet (I think Rossetti is confusing them with Elijah)
9. Simon Griessart -?
10. Tophet - Proper name of a place near Gehenna or the Valley of the Son or Children of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, where, according to Jer. xix. 4, etc., the Jews made human sacrifices to strange gods. Later it was used as a place for the deposit of refuse, and became symbolic of the torments of hell. The place of punishment for the wicked after death; the place of eternal fire; hell, Gehenna.
11. Japhet - ? (Jeptha?)
12. Jared – Son of Mahalaleel and father of Enoch. Lived for 962 years.