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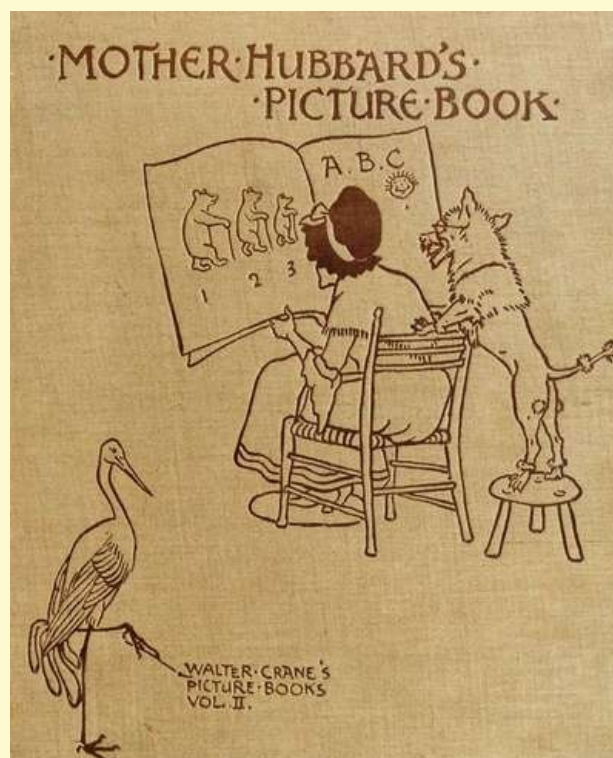
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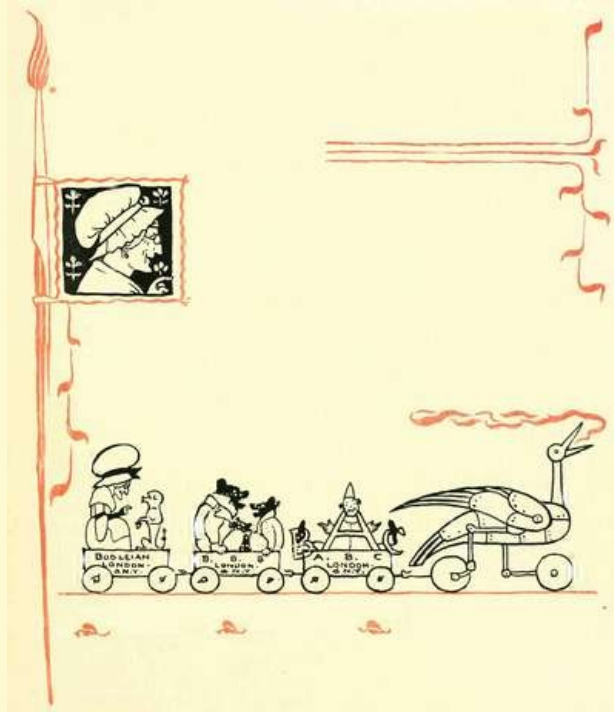




HER NECK DID SHE CRANE,
AS SHE LOOKED UP THE LANE
TO SEE THE THREE BEARS PASS BY.
THEY ALL WENT IN, ODDLY,
AT THE HEAD OF THE BODLEY
AN A.B.C. FOR TO BUY.



SHE WENT RATHER NEARER
TO GET A GOOD LOOK,
AND WHEN SHE CAME BACK
HE HAD RUN THROUGH HER BOOK!



MOTHER HUBBARD HER PICTURE BOOK

CONTAINING:

**MOTHER HUBBARD,
THE THREE BEARS, &
THE ABSURD A.B.C.**

WITH THE ORIGINAL COLOURED PICTURES, AN
ILLUSTRATED PREFACE & ODDS & END PAPERS,
NEVER BEFORE PRINTED.

BY WALTER CRANE

JOHN LANE. THE BODLEY HEAD. LONDON & NEW
YORK.

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MOTHER HUBBARD

THE THREE BEARS

THE ABSURD A.B.C.



PREFACE



OTHER HUBBARD, as we all know, had a cupboard which she found bare on one occasion.

Well, this is Mother Hubbard's Picture Book, and it's rather bearish, too, for there are no less than THREE BEARS therein.

But you must not suppose that the book is altogether bear, because there are other things in it.

There's Apple pie, for instance to my certain knowledge, and "victuals and drink" of sorts, as well—but I must not let the cat out of the bag (or the cupboard) all at once—besides Mother Hubbard's clever dog is still feeding it, for his day (in spite of muzzles) is not over yet, and he is up to all his old tricks.

When you are tired of him, and if you can manage to get past the Three Bears, you will find the rest as ABSURDly easy as A.B.C. and probably meet many old friends on the way.

Walter Crane



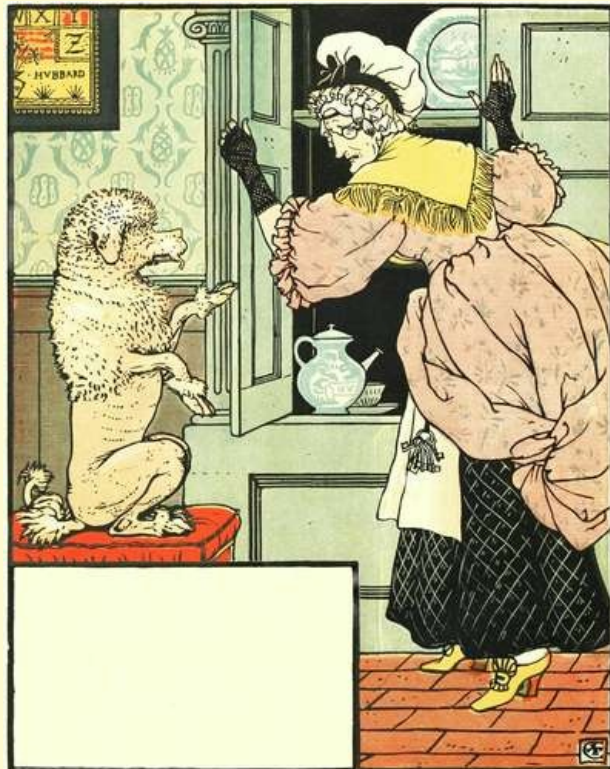
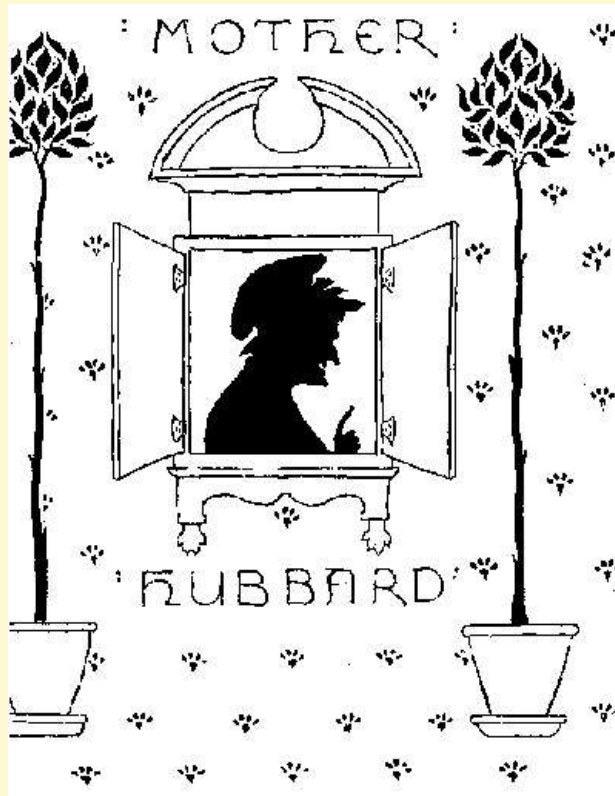
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WALTER CRANE'S PICTURE BOOKS RE-ISSUE

MOTHER HUBBARD.



JOHN LANE



Old Mother Hubbard
Went to the cupboard
To get her poor Dog a bone;
But when she came there
The cupboard was bare,
And so the poor Dog had none.



She went to the baker's
To buy him some bread,
But when she came back,
The poor Dog was dead.

She went to the joiner's
To buy him a coffin,
But when she came back,
The poor Dog was laughing.



She took a clean dish
To get him some tripe,
But when she came back,
He was smoking a pipe.

She went to the ale-house
To get him some beer,
But when she came back,
The Dog sat in a chair.

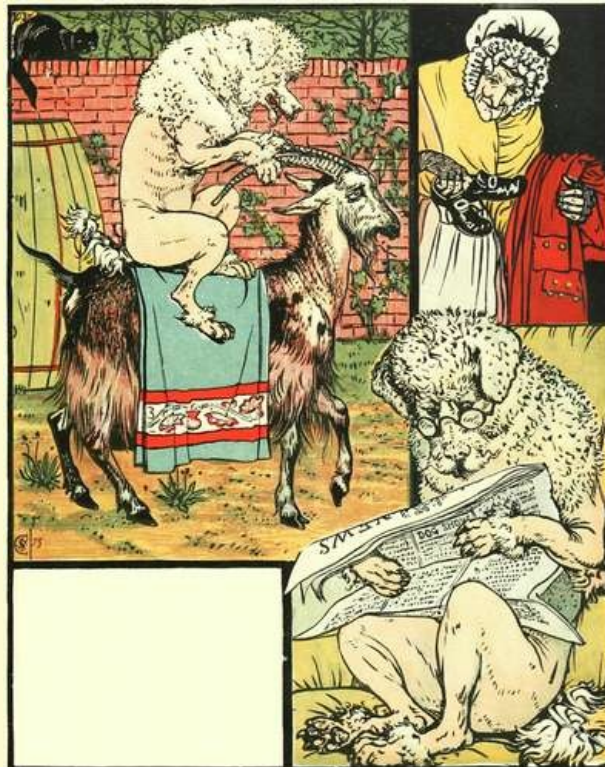


She went to the tavern
For white wine and red,
But when she came back,
The Dog stood on his head.

She went to the hatter's,
To buy him a hat,
But when she came back,
He was feeding the cat.

She went to the barber's
To buy him a wig,
But when she came back,
He was dancing a jig.

She went to the fruiterer's
To buy him some fruit,
But when she came back,
He was playing the flute.



She went to the tailor's
To buy him a coat,
But when she came back,
He was riding a goat.

She went to the cobbler's
To buy him some shoes,
But when she came back,
He was reading the news.



She went to the sempstress
To buy him some linen,
But when she came back,
The Dog was a-spinning.

She went to the hosier's
To buy him some hose,
But when she came back,
He was drest in his clothes.

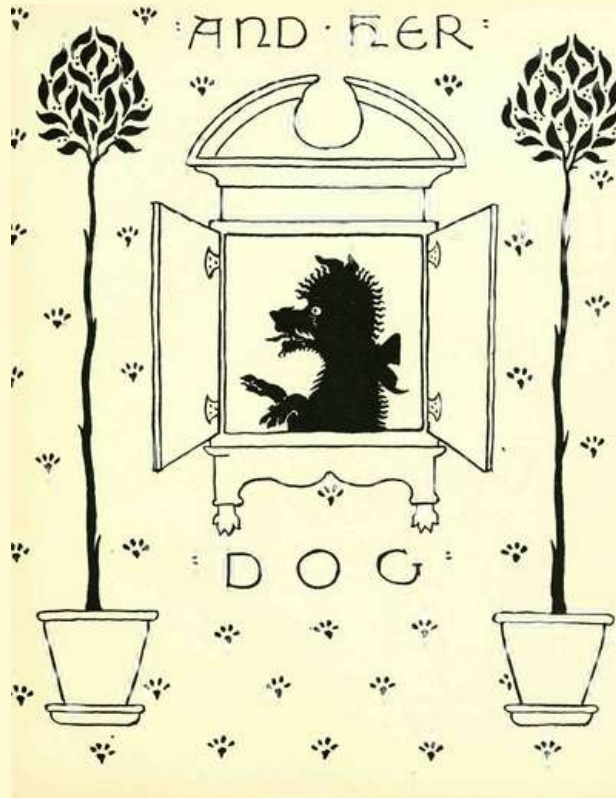


The Dame made a curtsey,
The Dog made a bow;
The Dame said, "Your servant,"

The Dog said, "Bow wow!"

This wonderful Dog
Was Dame Hubbard's delight,
He could sing, he could dance.
He could read, he could write.

She gave him rich dainties
Whenever he fed,
And erected a monument
When he was dead.



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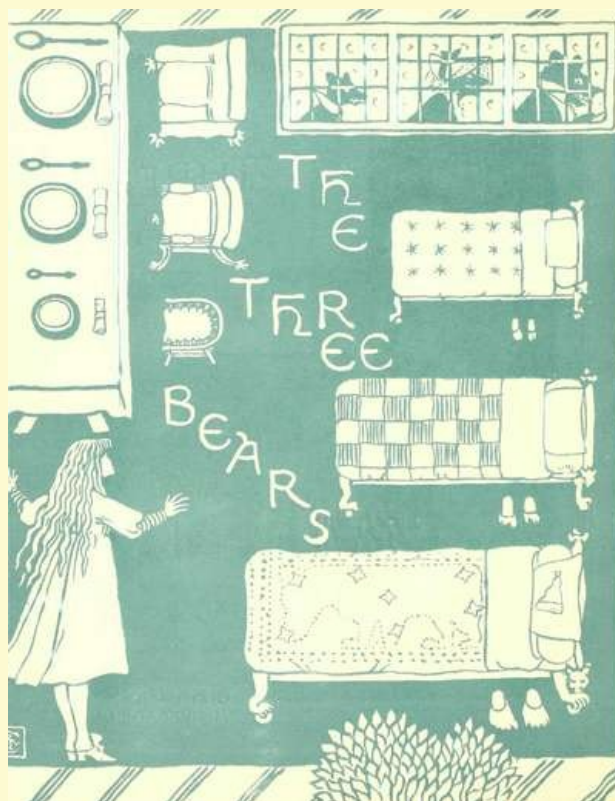
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THE THREE BEARS



JOHN LANE
THE BODLEY HEAD
LONDON & NEW YORK





THE THREE BEARS.

Some time ago, ere we were born or thought of,
There lived a little girl, who liked to roam
Through lonely woods and lanes, unknown,
unsought of
Such folk who like to stop and stay at home.
She found out curious things in all her travel
And one of her adventures I will tell:
Once, in a wood she saw a path of gravel,
Which led to a small cottage in a dell.



And, as the door stood open, in walked boldly,
This child, whose name was Silverlocks, I'm
told;
There was nobody there to treat her coldly,

No friend to call her back, no nurse to scold.
She found herself within a parlour charming;
And there upon the table there were placed
Three basins, sending up a smell so warming,
That she at once felt hungry, and must taste.
The largest basin first, but hot and biting
The soup was in it, and the second too;
The smallest basin tasted so inviting,
That up she ate it all, with small ado.



And next she saw three chairs, and tried to sit in
The biggest, but it was too hard and high;
The middle one she scarcely seemed to fit in,
But in the smallest chair sat easily;
And rocked herself, her ease and comfort taking,
Singing the pretty songs she knew so well;
When, oh! the little chair cracked loud, and,
breaking,
Gave way all suddenly, and down she fell.



"Ah, well," she thought, "there may be beds to
lie on
Upstairs; I think I'll go at once and see."

And so there were; she said aloud, "I'll try one,
For I am tired and sleepy as can be."
The biggest bed was not of feathers, surely,
It was so hard; and so she tried the next,
And found it little better; but securely
She slept upon the smallest one, unvext.
The little house belonged to bears, not persons;
The Father Bear, so very rough and large;
The Mother Bear (I have known many worse
ones);
And then the little Cub, their only charge.
They had gone for a walk before their dinner;
Returning, Father growled, "Who's touched
my soup?"
"Who's touched my soup?" said Mother, with
voice thinner;
"But mine," said little Cub, "is finished up!"
They turned to draw their chairs a little nearer;
"Who's sat in my chair?" growled the Father
Bear;
"Who's sat in my chair?" said the Mother,
clearer;
And squeaked the little Cub, "Who's broken
my small chair?"



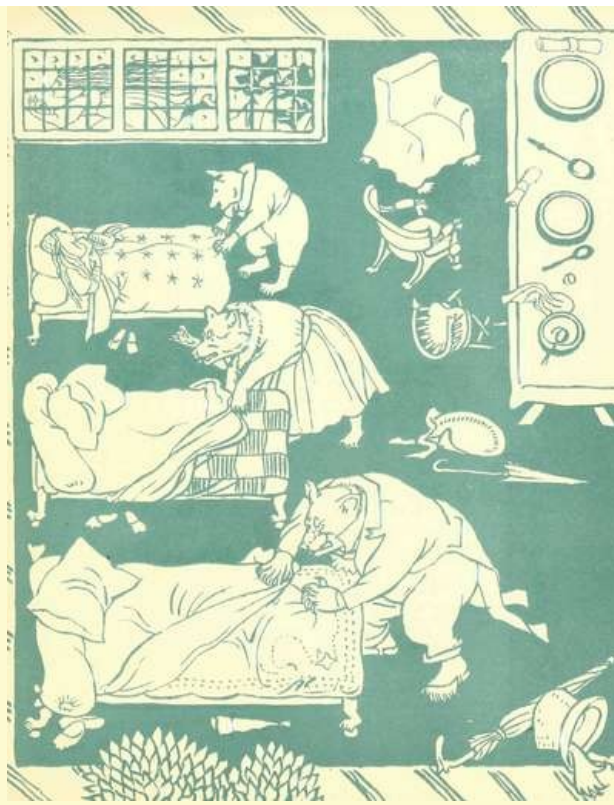
They rushed upstairs, and Father Bruin,
growling,
Cried out, "Who's lain upon my bed?"
"Who's lain on mine?" cried Mother Bruin,
howling;



“But some one *lies* on mine!” the small Bear said.
“We’ll kill the child, and eat her for our dinner,”
The Father growled; but said the Mother,
“No;
For supper she shall be, and I will skin her.”
“No,” said the little Cub, “we’ll let her go.”



So Silverlocks, in sudden terror flying,
Reached home; and when the Nurse the
story hears,
She says, “You are in luck, there’s no denying,
To get away in safety from
THREE BEARS.”



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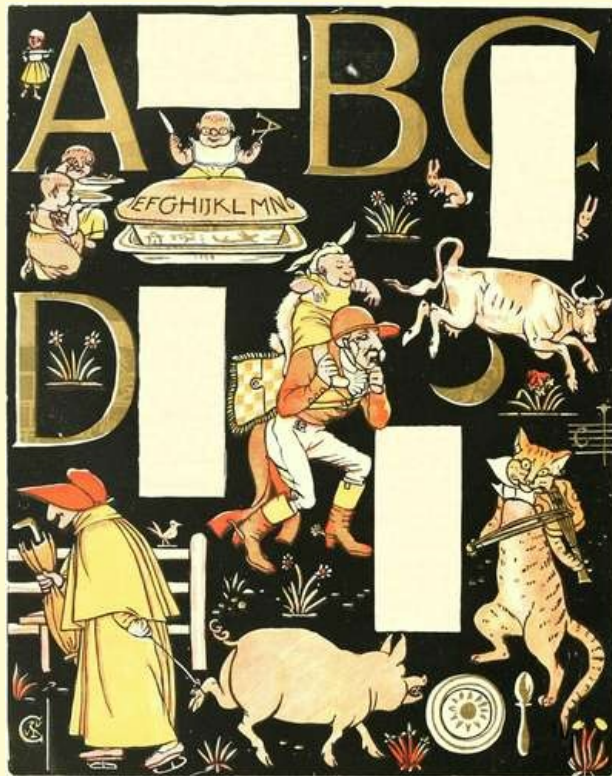
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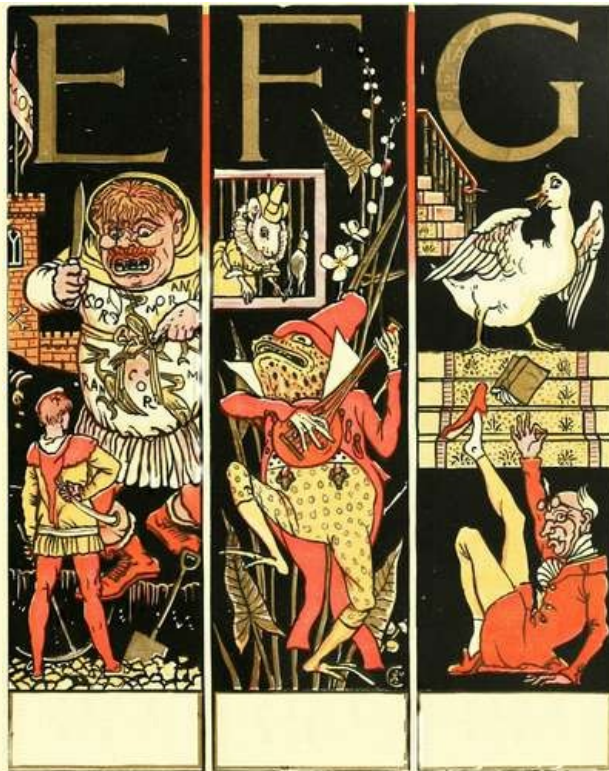


A for the APPLE or Alphabet pie,
Which all get a slice of. Come taste it & try.

B is the BABY who gave Mr. Bunting
Full many a long day's rabbit skin hunting.

C for the CAT that played on the fiddle
When cows jumped higher than 'Heigh Diddle
Diddle!'

D for the DAME with her pig at the stile,
'Tis said they got over, but not yet a while.



E for the Englishman, ready to make fast
The giant who wanted to have him for breakfast.

F for the Frog in the story you know,
Begun with a wooing but ending in woe.

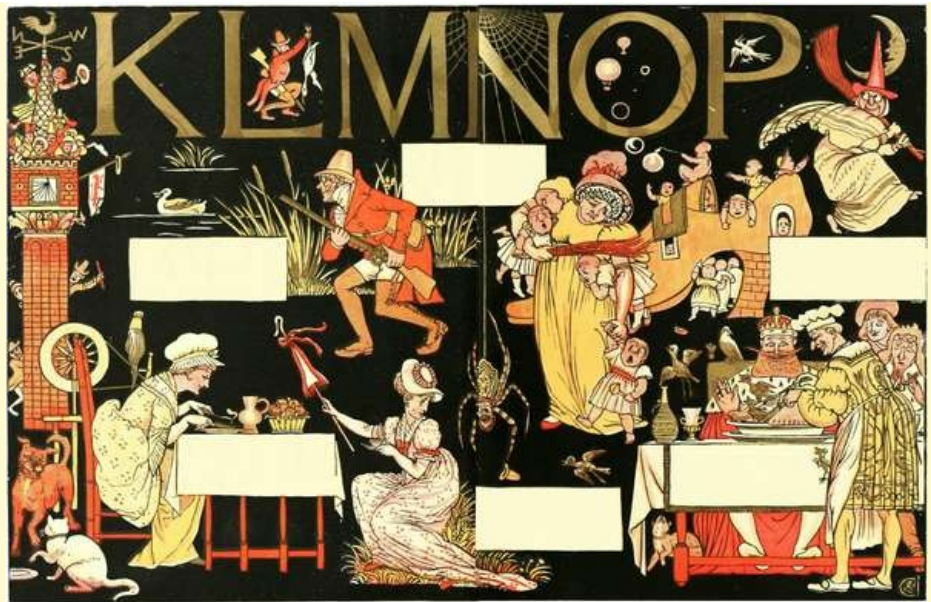
G for Goosey Gander who wandered upstairs,
And met the old man who objected to prayers.



H for poor Humpty who after his fall,
Felt obliged to resign his seat on the wall.

I for the Inn where they wouldn't give beer,
To one with too much and no money, I fear.

J does for poor Jack and also for Jill,
Who had so disastrous a tumble down hill.



K for calm Kitty, at dinner who sat,
While all the good folks watched the dog & the
cat.

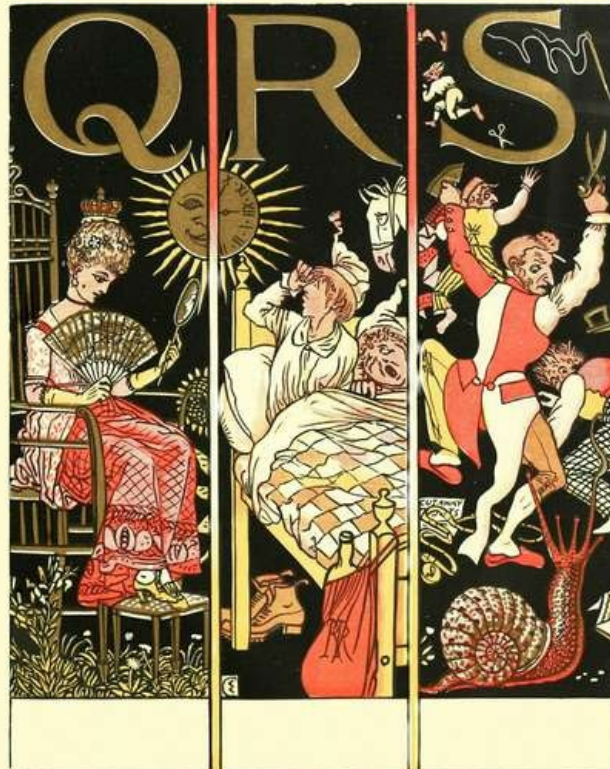
L for Little man, gun and bullets complete,
Who shot the poor duck and was proud of the
feat.

M for Miss Muffet, with that horrid spider,
Just dropped into tea and a chat beside her.

N for the Numerous children, they who
Were often too much for their mother in Shoe.

O the Old person that cobwebs did spy,
And went up to sweep 'em Oh ever so high!

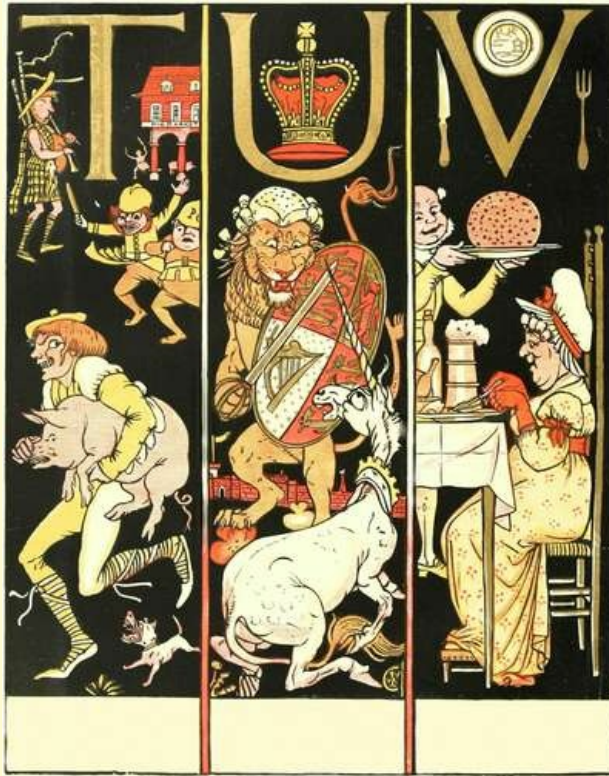
P for the Pie made of blackbirds to sing,
A song fit for supper, a dish for a king.



Q for Queen Anne who sat in the sun
Till she, more than the lily resembled the bun.

R stands for Richard & Robert, those men
Who didn't get up one fine morning till ten!

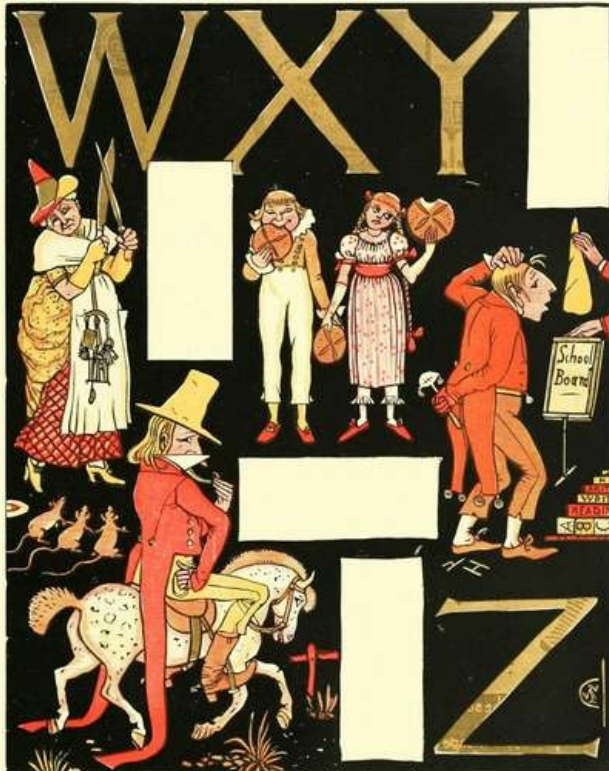
S for the Snail that showed wonderful fight,
Putting no less than twenty-four tailors to flight!



T stands for Tom, the son of the piper,
May his principles change as his years grow
riper.

U for the Unicorn, keeping his eye on
The coveted crown, and its counsel the Lion.

V is for Victuals, including the drink,
The old woman lived on surprising to think!



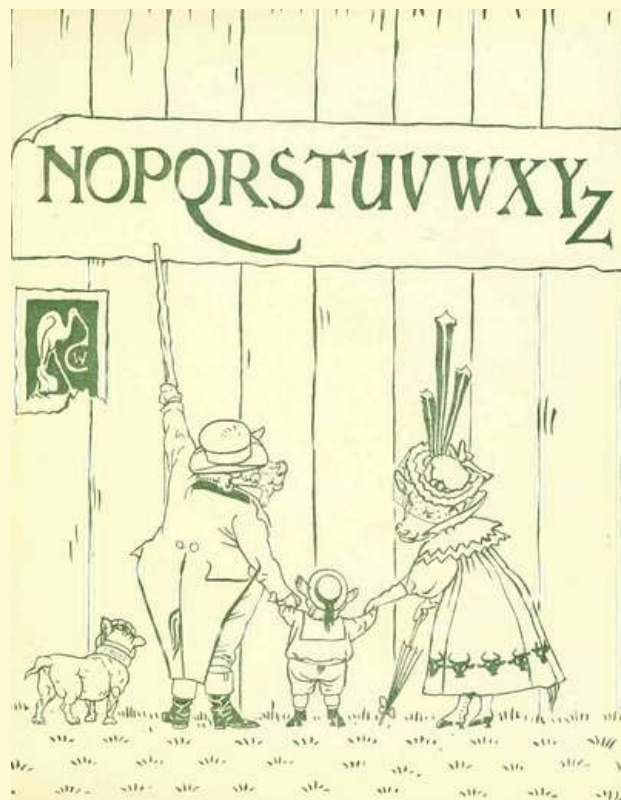
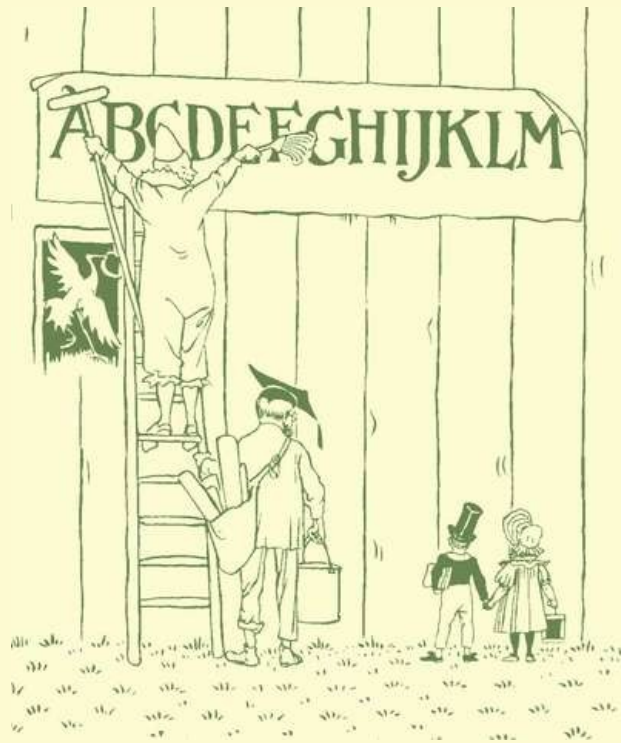
W for the WOMAN who not over nice,
Made very short work of the three blind mice.

X is the X that is found upon buns,
Which daughters not liking may come in for

sons.

Y for Yankee Doodle of ancient renown,
Both he & his pony that took him to town.

Z for the Zany who looked like a fool,
For when he was young he neglected his school.



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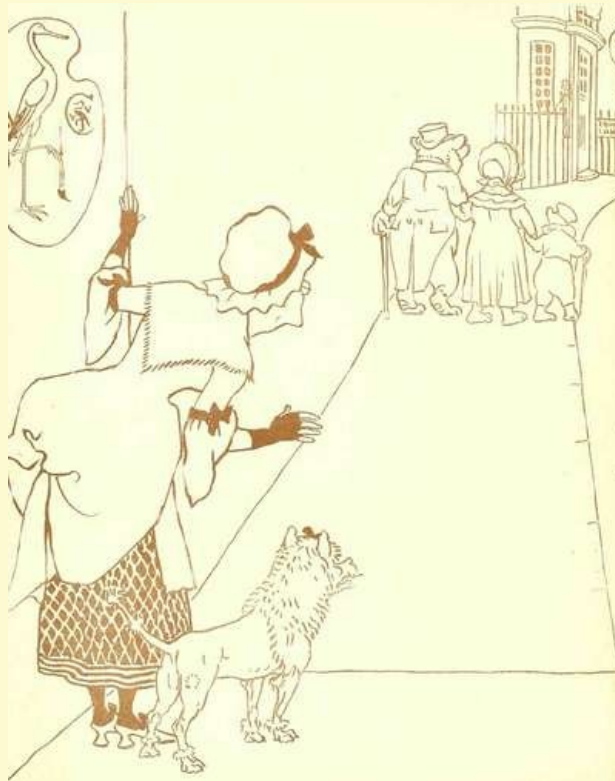
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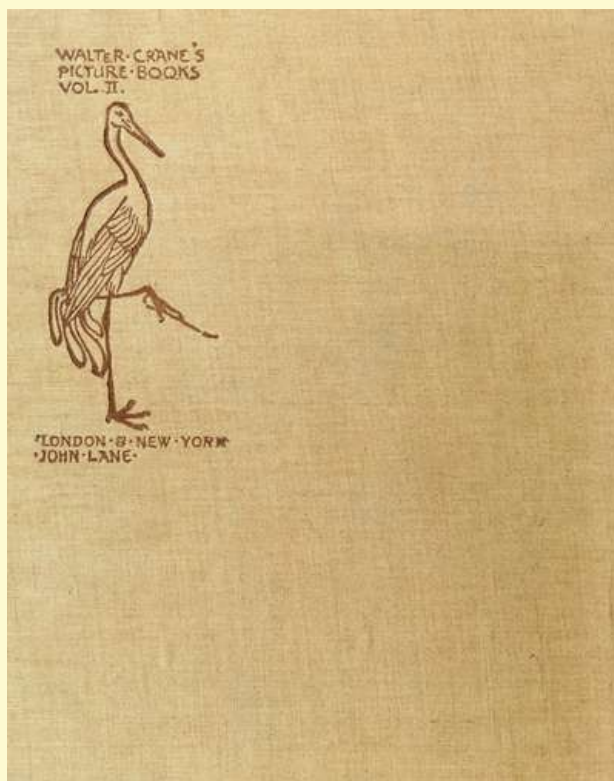
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Transcriber's notes:

Table of Contents added to aid navigation.

In the original, the text was interlaced with the illustrations. In this etext it has been placed below the associated illustration.

Punctuation and spacing "A.B.C." has been used for all occurrences.

Full stops or commas have been added where omitted at the ends of lines.

In *The Absurd A.B.C.*, the positions of the apostrophes have been corrected in “Full many a long day’s rabbit skin hunting” and “went up to sweep ‘em”

The illustration immediately following *The Absurd A.B.C.* (page 64), a poster of the letters A to M, was omitted from the original images on the Internet Archive. It has been obtained from a separately published version of *The Absurd A.B.C.* at Project Gutenberg.

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