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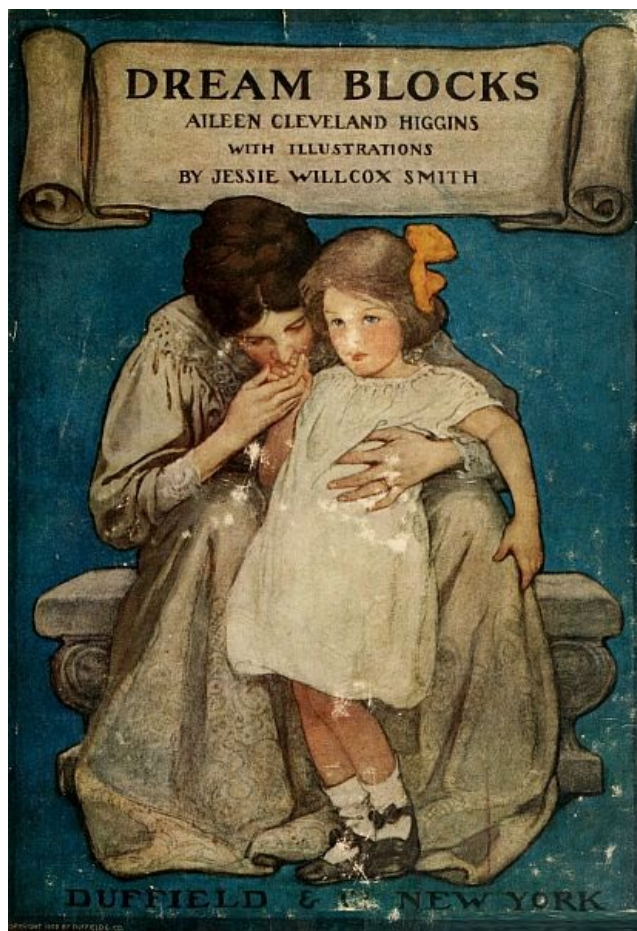
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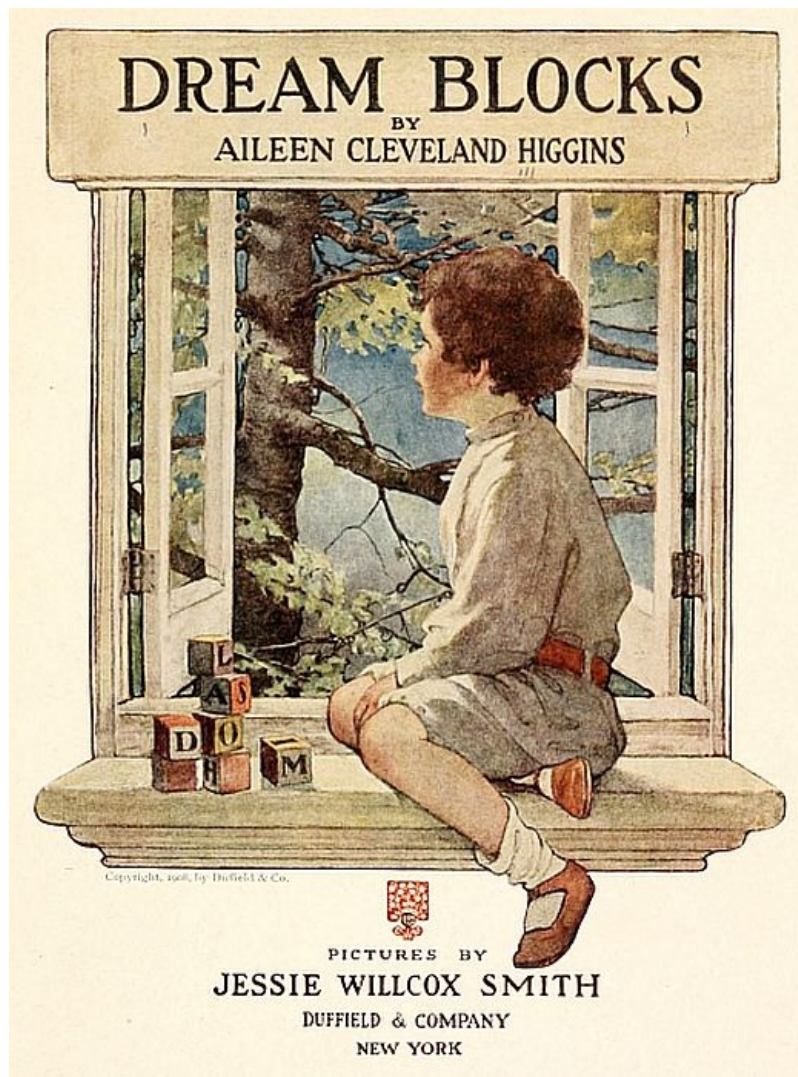
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DREAM BLOCKS



DREAM BLOCKS

AILEEN CLEVELAND HIGGINS

PICTURES BY
JESSIE WILLCOX SMITH

DUFFIELD & COMPANY
NEW YORK

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DREAM BLOCKS





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DREAM-BLOCKS



WITH dream-
blocks I can
build
A castle to the
sky.
No one can

shake it down,
Though he may try and try,
Except myself, and then,
I make another one,
And shape it as I please.
This castle-building fun
Nobody takes away,
And what I like the best—
The dream-blocks change each day.

[2]

STUPID YOU



HERE is a shining
thread
To-day in my rose-
bed—
A magic net the
fairies have outspread
To catch the dewy sweet—and yet you said
It was a cobweb there instead!



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ANAGRAMS



O-DAY when I
played
anagrams,
I spelled a long
word out—
A word named *sorrow*—then I tried
To change it all about
To make it spell another word.
My mother said, "There is a way
To make the sorrow-word spell peace."
I've tried and tried, almost all day;
I've turned the letters round and round,
This way and that, to find out how,
And yet I can not find the way,
And supper time is coming now.

DOORSTEPS



TAKE my broom and sweep
my step,
To make it smooth and
brown;
Then I sit down and wait with

Jep
Until the sun goes down.

I think some day that I may see
A little brownie elf
Peep out of there, and speak to me,
When I am by myself.

I like my roses at the side,
Much better than the flower-row
Along your path where people ride.
I leave my roses just to grow.

I like the place that's broken, too,
With splintered edges all around,
And grasses growing right up through,
That smell so fresh like dew and ground.

Your steps are nice, but then my own
Seem nicer somehow, just for me;
Pine steps are more like home than stone,
For once they lived and were a tree.



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THE BIG CLOCK



UR Big Clock goes so slow,
When I am waiting on the
stairs,
With nice, clean clothes on,
dressed to go

Out with Aunt Beth to see the bears
And funny possums at the Zoo!
But oh, at night how fast
Our Big Clock goes! It's very rude
To company, and when time's past
When I must always go to bed,
The hands just fly in wicked glee.
It strikes out long ahead
And makes them all look round at me.



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[7]

THE NEW DRESS





HAVE a very pretty dress,
It's made of pink and
white,
And there are ribbons on
it, too,
Which make it bright.

And yet I think I like it less
Than this dear other one—
The worn-out, patched-up blue
I wear when I have fun.

[8]

It clings to me as if it loved
To have me wear it every day.
The pink stands out so straight and stiff
It's in my way.

How can I get to know it well,
When it's so *Sunday*-clean?
Perhaps when it is old and stained
With dust and grass, it will not seem
So strange and dignified as now.
But then I think
I never *could* make mud pies right
If I had on my pink.

[9]

A QUESTIONING



I WONDER, when I
die,
If some one there
will see,
And hold me close,
And take good care of me,
As when I came on earth to be
A little child?

A TEST



OME day when I've
had lots to eat,
Then I should like
to be
A ragged beggar
child,
A little while, to see
If you—and *you*—are kind.

[10]

A QUANDARY



HEN they are tall
and all grown up,
I wonder where the
children go?
I wonder how one
finds the place—

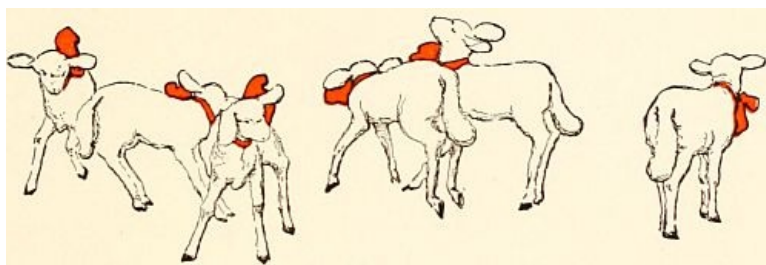
My mother says she doesn't know.

The little boy that's I, must go
To this strange meeting-place some day,
When I outgrow my starchy kilts,
And nursery things are put away.

Must I go there quite by myself?
How shall I find the proper door,
That hides so close and shuts away
The little children gone before?



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SPRING MUSIC



HEARD a violin one day—
It sounded like the Spring;
Like woolly lambs at play,
Like baby birds that sing
In snatches, when they're learning

how.

I know the one who played
Could see pink blossoms on a bough,
Where children came beneath its shade
To make white clover in a crown.
Then while they laughed there in the grass,
Soft petals fluttered down;
They hushed and saw some angels pass,
With friendly eyes that smile—
The kind that I have often seen
When mother sings awhile,
Just as I go to sleep and dream.

[12]

I held my breath and then there rose
The last sweet note so high.
I felt as when the sunshine goes—
I could not help but cry.

[13]

A COMPROMISE



WHEN I have done a
Something Wrong,
I feel ashamed to
kneel and pray.
But then the dark-
time lasts so long,

And God seems—oh, so far away!—
That when the lights are out awhile,
I clamber out of bed once more
And pour my pennies in a pile.
. . . I listen at the door,
And then I get upon my knees,
And whisper just for God to hear,
To ask him, oh, just once more, *please*,
Will he forgive and come back near,
If I will make a promise *quick*
To give my pennies to the sick?

[14]

A RAINY DAY



WHEN I woke up
and saw the rain
In blurs upon the
window-pane,
I said I hated such
a day,

Because I couldn't run and play,
Out in the sunshine and the grass.
It's queer how such a day can pass
So soon, before you know it 'most,
And while I eat my milk and toast,
Before I go to bed, I think
I've never had a day so *pink*.
Without the sun to make the shine,
This whole day long has been just mine
And Mother's, in the fireplace glow.—
Because it rained, it made it so.



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[15]



AN APPEAL TO SCIENCE



WISH the clever men who made
The whirly things with patents
on,
The telephone and phonograph,
The watch that tells how far
you've gone,
Would just invent some bottled sleep
That we could take at night,
And then again when it grows light.
It might keep little boys awake
When there is company.
All I should have to do, would be
To pour a glass of sleep to take.

[16]

The things I leave undone,
Because I haven't time enough,
The things I've only half begun—
My castle-house, my doll-queen's ruff—
I'd get quite finished in a day.
I'd have some time left over, too.
I'd have the chance to do new things.
And first of all, I'd learn to play
The games the flowers frolic through,
Each afternoon, and I'd find who
Has charge of yesterday.

I think that made-to-order dreams
Of rainbow-folk and orange-creams
Would be much nicer than the kind
Which on dark nights I always find.

[17]

THE RUNAWAY



HERE'S something
that is calling me
—
Far off from
Here—
It calls for me to come and see,
Away from Near.

Sometimes it tinkles like a bell.
Then echo songs above the blue,
And sometimes silver whistles tell
About a shining dream come true.
This call sings low of wonder-worlds.
It tells in runs and soft-blown trills
Of hidden places near that line
Where distance smooths the little hills.

[18]

The call is begging me to come.
It makes me dance and sing
Along the meadow road,
Far past the street's dust-ring.

There's something waiting just for me,
And I must go—*must go*,
Away from houses here, to see,
Where lights begin to glow.

[19]



PLAYMATES



O-DAY I met a
rabbit in the
path
Who stopped
and looked at

me,

While I was laughing at a frog
Hop sidewise from a bee.

The little rabbit's eyes laughed too.
He would have like to stay;
And if my clothes had been like his,
He might have come to play.

[20]

I wish I had a rabbit dress,
A furry one, from head to toe,
Then I could go away with him
From streets in line, all set just so.

I think my clothes are stupid things
To rob me of my friends,
But then, the kind of playmate clothes
I want, nobody lends!

[21]

THE ECHO



LAUGHED in woods down
where a brook
Ran off with little leaps,
An answer came from some
fern-nook,

And then another made me look
Off in the dark tree-deeps.

I ran to all the nooks to see
If I could find the one
Who heard me first, and answered me—
Each place was still as it could be,
As far as I could run.

[22]

Nurse said, "There's no one to be caught.
It's just the echo's glee."
But then I know that it was *not!*
The little wood-elves all forgot,
And laughed out loud with me.

THE SICK ROSE



HIS rose I
picked,
began to die,
And so,
I've brought

it back again

To where it used to live. I'll try

To make it as it was—and then,
I'll whisper to it how I care.

Why *can't* it grow now any more,
A rose with other roses there,
Upon the rosebush by the door?



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[23]

AFTERNOON



JUST since the night, the
wind has won
The last pink bud to
open bloom.

The long path whitens in the sun;
All grown folks hunt a darkened room.
Cool sweet of morning time is gone
From all the leaves and grass.
Here in this place the shade falls on,
I wait for butterflies to pass.

[24]

THE WILD



LOVE the gold-brown flutter-bird
You caught for me;
But from its song is gone a note I heard
When it was free.

And when I bring the lace-ferns home
I can not bring
The wood-charm too—the spell of that wee gnome
Which makes birds sing.

The trees you painted with your brush
Are like the real,
But that still harking of the soft leaf-hush
You could not steal.

[25]

It is the spirit of the wold—the same
That's part of me,—
The gipsy wild of me without a name,
Unhoused and free.

BUD MUSIC



KNOW when little buds
come out,
And spread their
colors all about,
They make soft music—

Yet it's true
Most people never hear. Do you?

There is the faintest, tinkly sound.
Birds fly to listen all around,
Then all the leaves stand just as still,
And sunshine dances on the hill.

[26]

FRILLS



HE dainty frills
upon my frocks
Make me all
twinkly smiles
inside.

I want to take my sweets around,—
A something in me says "Divide."

I run to give my mother dear
My nicest, clean-face kiss.
I feed the sparrows on the steps,
And think what others miss.

I put some water on my fern;
To every one I want to say
Nice *velvet* things. It is so queer
That we can dress our moods away!



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[27]

GONE SOMEWHERE





NE day a little boy,
With a poor broken toy,
And ragged clothes, went by.
He looked as if he'd like to cry,
To see my soldiers fine,
In scarlet coats, so straight in line.

Would he have liked to play with me,
Here beneath my shady tree?
I wonder, but I did not call him back again.
I thought he'd come next day the same,
And I would ask him in to play,
And when he had to go away
Give him my nicest toys—
The drum that makes the loudest noise,
My whistle, and perhaps my sword,
Or even my soldier hat with braids and cord.

[28]

But though I watch here by the gate
Until it grows quite dark and late,
I never hear his footsteps there,
The little boy is gone somewhere.

[29]

THE CHOSEN DREAM



IF I could choose a dream to-night,
I'd choose a splendid dream
About big soldiers in a fight,—
So real that it would seem
A truly one not in a book,
With flags and banners waving high
And horses with a prancing look
And powder smoke that filled the sky,
And lots of swords to flash.
Perhaps this dream would frighten me,
More than a noisy game,
If too much blood should splash,
And any soldiers die.
And yet I think I'd choose it just the same
And then wake up and cry.

[30]

HOME



YOU think my home is up the
street

In that big house with lots
of steps,

All worn in places by our feet—

With tracks that look like mine and Jep's.

You think it's where I always eat,
Where I can find my spoon and bowl,
My napkin folded clean and neat,
And milk, and sometimes jelly-roll.

You think it's where I always sleep,
Where I get in my puffy bed,
And fall right in a comfy heap,
Some nights before my prayers are said.

[31]

But that's not home—just roof and walls,
A place that anybody buys,
With shiny floors and stairs and halls.—
My home is in my mother's eyes.



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DAWN



HERE are no sounds of feet
Or wagons in the street,
So still, so beautiful,
With air so fresh and cool.
I love the dawn to come—
But oh, I know that some
Are not so glad as I,—
For they must wake to cry.

[32]

THE CITY TREE



SOLEMN, dressed-up
City Tree,
As stiff and straight as
it can be,
All cut and trimmed
and kept just so,
Is trying very hard to grow
Correctly, with its top so queer,
In front of my big window here.

It is not like my Country Tree,
Good friend of every bird and bee,
Who keep it merry company
And always sing and talk to me.
My Country Tree laughs all day long.
Its fresh leaves whisper in a song
Their secrets just for me to hear.
Its branches lean so very near
The ground, that grasses stretch and try
To meet the boughs not swung too high.
There is the place, the very best
In all the world, to play and rest.

[33]

The City Tree stands all alone
Above the clean-swept pavement stone.
No little children ever stay
Beneath its trimmed-off shade to play—
They aren't brave enough to dare,
Because it is so proper there.
There are no lady-birds about;
No crickets frolic in and out.
The City Tree is very proud,
It hasn't even looked or bowed.
We're not at all acquainted yet—
It's just as if we'd never met.

[34]

The days seem long—I wonder when
I'll see my country tree again?

A PRAYER



DEAR God, may I
not dream
The Dragon-
dream to-night,

—
And please do not forget
To make it light
On time again
For me. Amen.



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CAP AND BELLS



HEY make me laugh
and clap my hands
When they run out
in wide striped
clothes

Of white, with red and yellow bands,
With pointed caps and pointed toes,—
The "funny men" at circus shows.

[35]
[36]

I wish I knew just how a clown
Can make his mouth up in a smile,
And wrinkle in a crinkly frown
His forehead all the while,
In that queer circus style.



One day when I had cried and cried
Because I lost the picture book
Which I had made, and mother tried
To comfort me, we went and took
A walk, to see how clown men look.

[37]

I soon forgot my book, and though
I loved it just the same,
I couldn't cry and miss it so,
And think about each picture's name
When all the clown men came.



I think we ought to say our thanks,
To each of them who makes and sells
Such fun and jokes, such jigs and pranks,—
How dull we'd be without the spells
They make with cap and bells!

[38]

SUMMER'S PASSING



Y mother says that Summer's gone
away.

It seems so queer I didn't see her
go,
Or know till now; she didn't say

good-bye—

And oh, I loved her so!

Now that I know, I miss her all the time.

To-day I found this piece torn from her gown.
It fluttered softly down the path to me.

Perhaps my nurse would call it thistledown,
But grown folks often make such strange mistakes.

Nobody knows such wonder-things as I.

On fresh, dew mornings, when I used to play,

Out where the friendly rose-hedge grows so high,
The pinks and four-o'clocks would lean to me

And tell me secrets of my Summer dear.

It's lonesome now, and sad as it can be,

Since Summer is no longer here.

The Dark comes down so soon, and it is cold.

I wait and watch the sunset track,

But Mother says I'll be a year more old

Before my Summer will come back.



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WHEN YOU WAIT



O you know that
when you wait
To tell the
truth, and fear—
Until it grows

almost too late—
God leans to hear?

[39]
[40]

PUNISHMENT



OME days my doll-
child is so bad,
I have to whip her
very hard.
I put her in the corner

there,
And take away her picture-card.

She's put to bed without a kiss.
She doesn't have her way one bit,
But then, *I* am the one it hurts,
And so what is the use of it?



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FIRST PITY



I VE found a bird that's
hurt.
It flutters so and cries,
Then looks its pain at me
With such bright
frightened eyes.

Its feathers are so soft!
How quiet it is now!
I want to make it well—
I wish my hands knew how!

NIGHT



I DO not like to say good-night,
—
I hate to shut my eyes,
When fringe-beams of the
stars and moon
Make day-things play surprise.

The night is such a wonder-world,
I love it more than day.
The Dark comes close and calls. That's why
My prayers are hard to say.

[41]
[42]

HOVER-TIME



I T is the hover-time
That comes between the light
and dark.
The little squirrels climb
Into their nests in trees and hark
To rustly leaves about.
Far off, I hear new insect cries—
From things which never dare call out
In daytime: they're afraid of *Eyes*.

Out from the purply wood
The first bat circles on the fly.
Far things draw on a hood
And shadows hide the place where sky
And earth make dim their line.
The trees change shape, and soon the gray
Blurs into black; and that's the hour
When dark comes down to stay.

[43]

TREASURE CRAFT



UPON the brook, for treasure-
craft,
I sail some petals, red and
white;
They always go away from me

—
They float much faster in their flight,
Than I can run along the bank.
My precious wee bit things bear freight;

[44]

Which very soon falls overboard,
And sinks where miser-folk await
To snatch my sparkling treasure-store.
Perhaps the waters dash too high
For such a little fleet of ships,
And that may be the reason why
My crafts do not return again.

Still, I expect them any day.
I've lost some things I love the best,—
My flower-chains and ribbons gay—
But, though I miss these pretty things,
I love much more the sailing-fun,
And launch new ships when morning sings,
And rainbow mist floats in the sun.



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[45]

THE MOON PATH



IF I could walk along the path
The moonlight makes
upon the sea,
I know that I should find the
one
Who sings the Silver Song to me.

THE RING CHARM



HAVE a little charm
A gypsy gave to me,
To keep me safe from harm,
So ugly things can't see
When I am all alone.

It keeps the 'Fraid all out
When trees cry so, and moan,
And throw their leaves about.

[46]

It keeps away the Woops that creep
About my bed when I'm asleep.
And even by day my charm keeps anything
From hurting me, and that is why
I love my gypsy-ring
More than the ones I buy.

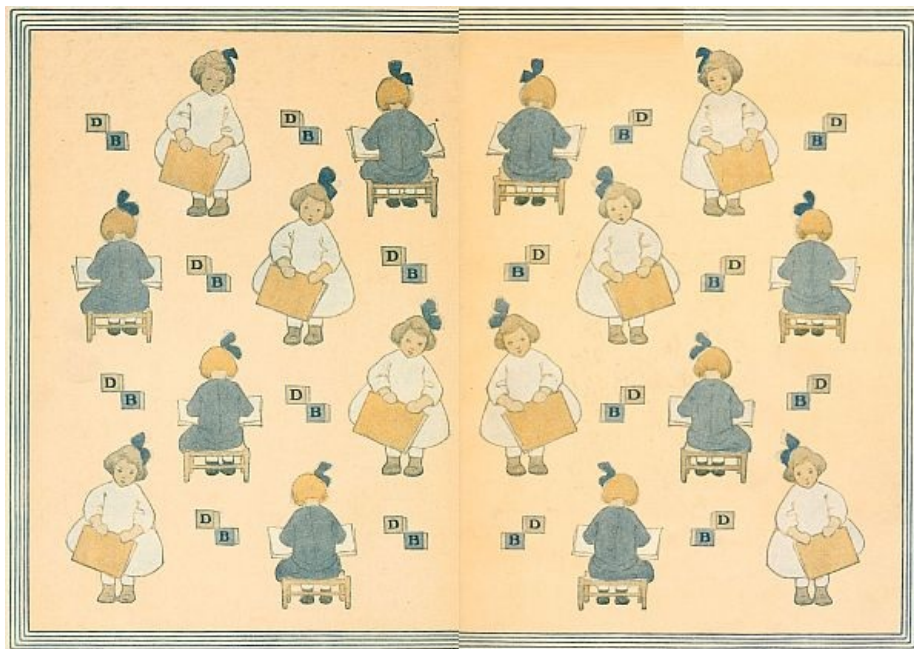
The gypsy put it on for me
And said some words so strange
I knew that they must be
Some fairy charm to change
The sad things into gay,
And keep me safe and well.
I wear it every day,
For that's to keep the spell.

[47]

Each morning when I wake,
I kiss and turn my ring
Three times for sake of luck
These wishes bring.



[48]



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