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Midsummer Songs, by Various**

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND MIDSUMMER SONGS ***

**CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND
MIDSUMMER SONGS**

By American Poets

Illustrations by American Artists

Boston:

D.Lothrop & Company,

1881



Original Size



Original Size

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

AND

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CONTENTS

CHRISTMAS CAROLS.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND MIDSUMMER SONGS.

THE SILENT CHILDREN.

A DAY IN WINTER.

"TWELVE O'CLOCK, AND ALL'S WELL!"

HOLLY TREE

A TALE OF A COMET.

OH, HAPPY NIGHT!

WILLIE WEE.

ON CHRIST-DAY NIGHT.

DULCET SOUNDS.

GRACIE'S FANCIES.

WAITING A WINTER'S TALE.

CHRISTMAS.

MIDSUMMER SONGS.

["SAINT EMILY."](#)

[BLUE AND GOLD.](#)

[THE LAND OF USED-TO-BE.](#)

[A BABY SHOW.](#)

[A YOUNG INQUIRER.](#)

[IN MIDSUMMER.](#)

[A MIDSUMMER SONG.](#)

[EDITH'S LESSON.](#)

[DORRIS' SPINNING.](#)

[THE BROOK BEHIND THE WAUMBEEK HOUSE.](#)

[BOBBY LEE](#)

[SUMMER'S GOING.](#)

CHRISTMAS CAROLS.

Wake from your sleep, sweet Christians, now, and listen.

A little song

We have, so sweet it like a star doth glisten,

And dance along.

Now wake and hark: all brightly it is glowing

With yule flames merry,

And o'er it many a holly sprig is growing;

And scarlet berry.

A bough of evergreen, with wax-lights gleaming,

It bravely graces;

And o'er its lines the star that's eastward beaming

Leaves golden traces.

Also, our little song; it sweetly praiseth,

Like birds in flocks

When morning from her bed of roses raiseth

Her golden locks.

But this it is that makes most sweet our story,

When all is said:

It holds a little Child with rays of glory

Around His head.

—M. E. W.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND MIDSUMMER SONGS.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND MIDSUMMER SONGS.



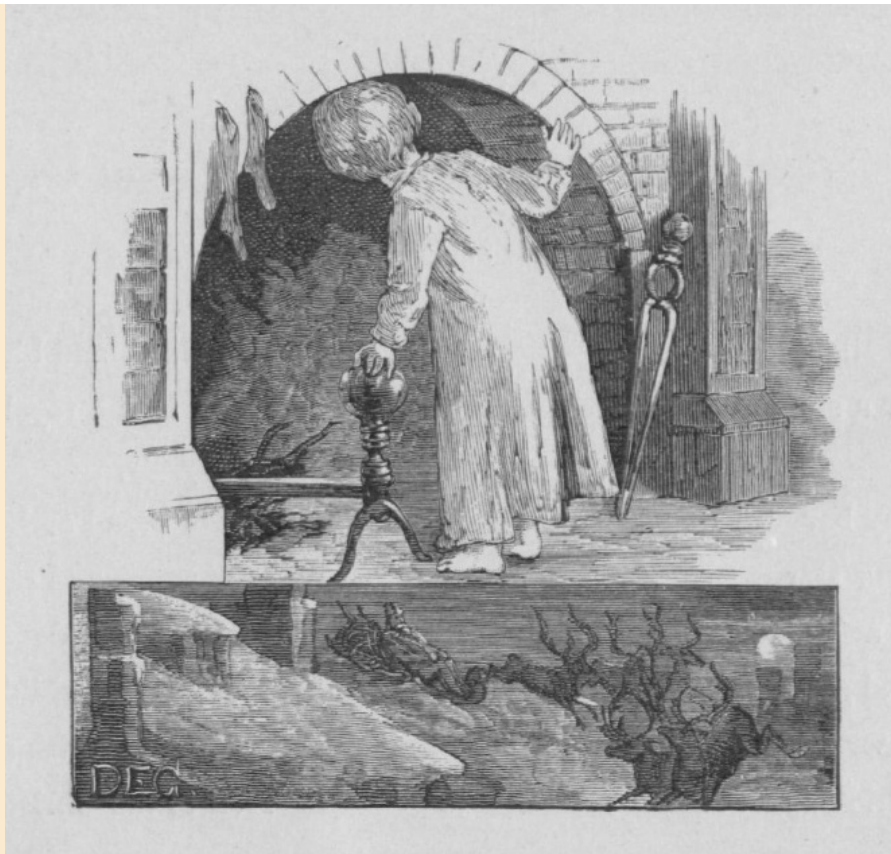
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Out of the Northland bleak and bare,
O wind with a royal roar,
Fly, fly,
Through the broad arched sky,
Flutter the snow, and rattle and cry
At every silent door—
Loud, loud, till the children hear,
And meet the day with a ringing cheer:
"Hail to the Christmas-tide!"

Into the silent waiting East
There cometh a shining light—
Far, far,
Through a dull gray bar
Closing over a dying star
That watched away the night—
Rise, rise, shine and glow,
Over a wide white world of snow,
Sun of the Christmas-tide!

Out of the four great gates of day
A tremulous music swells;
Hear, hear,
Now sweet and clear,
Over and under and far and near,
A thousand happy bells:
Joy, joy, and jubilee!
Good-will to men from sea to sea,
This merry Christmas-tide!

Lo! in the homes of every land
The children reign to-day;
They alone,
With our hearts their throne,
And never a sceptre but their own
Small hands to rule and sway!
Peace, peace—the Christ-child's love—
Flies over the world, a white, white dove,
This happy Christmas-tide!



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THE SILENT CHILDREN.

By Elizabeth Stuart Phelps.

THE light was low in the school-room;
The day before Christmas day
Had ended. It was darkening in the garden
Where the Silent Children play.

Throughout that House of Pity,
The soundless lessons said,
The noiseless sport suspended,
The voiceless tasks all read,

The little deaf-mute children,
As still as still could be,
Gathered about the master,
Sensitive, swift to see,

With their fine attentive fingers
And their wonderful, watchful eyes—
What dumb joy he would bring them
For the Christmas eve's surprise!

The lights blazed out in the school-room
The play-ground went dark as death;
The master moved in a halo;
The children held their breath:

"I show you now a wonder—
The audiphone," he said.
He spoke in their silent language,
Like the language of the dead.

And answering spake the children,
As the dead might answer too:
"But what for us, O master?
This may be good for you;

"But how is our Christmas coming
Out of a wise machine?
For not like other children's
Have our happy hours been;

"And not like other children's
Can they now or ever be!"
But the master smiled through the halo:
"Just trust a mystery,
Then to the waiting marvel
The listening children leant:
Like listeners, the shadows
Across the school-room bent,
O my children, for a little,
As those who suffer must!
Great 'tis to bear denial,
But grand it is to trust."

While Science, from her silence
Of twice three thousand years,
Gave her late salutation
To sealed human ears.



"I SHOW YOU NOW A WONDER, THE AUDIPHONE," HE SAID.

Original Size

Quick signalled then the master:
Sweet sang the hidden choir—
Their voices, wild and piercing,

Broke like a long desire

That to content has strengthened.

Glad the clear strains outrang:

"Nearer to Thee, oh, nearer!"

The pitying singers sang,

Happy that Christmas evening:

Wise was the master's choice,

Who gave the deaf-mute children

The blessed human voice.

Wise was that other Master,

Tender His purpose dim,

Who gave His Son on Christmas,

To draw us "nearer Him."

"Nearer to Thee, oh, nearer,

Nearer, my God' to Thee! "

Awestruck, the silent children

Hear the great harmony.

We are all but silent children,

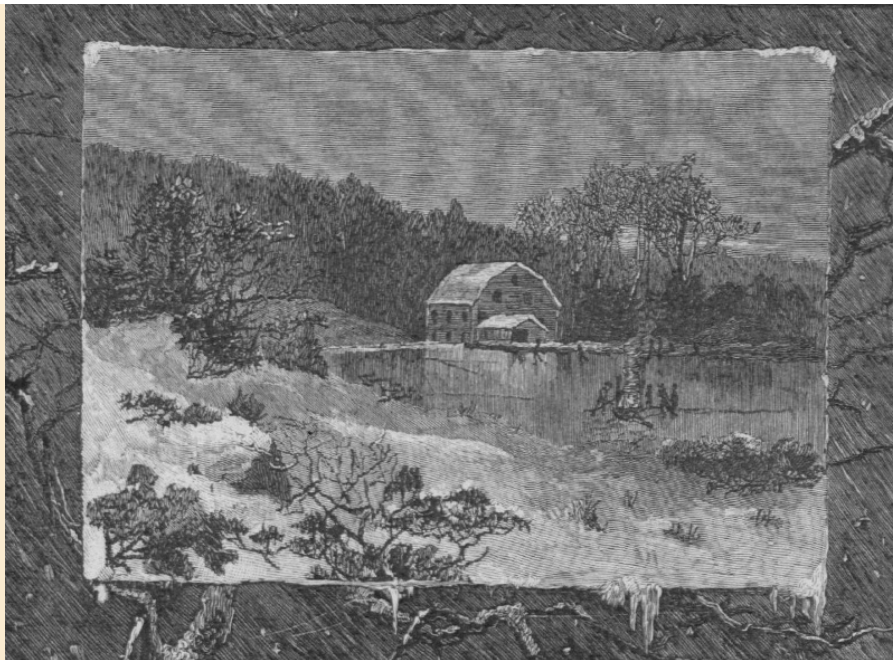
Denied and deaf and dumb

Before His unknown science—

Lord, if Thou wilt, we come!



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A DAY IN WINTER.

By Mrs. L. C. Whiton.

THROUGH the crimson fires of morning
Streaming upward in the East,
Leaps the sun, with sudden dawning,
Like a captive king released;
And December skies reflected
In the azure hue below
Seem like summer recollected
In the dreaming of the snow.—
It is winter, little children, let the summer,
singing, go!

There are crisp winds gaily blowing
From the North and from the West;
'Bove the river strongly flowing
Lies the river's frozen breast:
O'er its shining silence crashing
Skim the skaters to and fro;
And the noonday splendors flashing
In the rainbow colors show.—
It is winter, little children, let the summer,
singing, go!

When the gorgeous day is dying,
There is swept a cloud of rose
O'er the hill-tops softly lying
In the flush of sweet repose;
And the nests, all white with snowing,
In the twilight breezes blow;
And the untired moon is showing
Her bare heart to the snow.—

It is winter, little children, let the summer,
singing, go!

"TWELVE O'CLOCK, AND ALL'S WELL!"

(A Christmas Rhyme of Might-Have-Been.)

By M. S. E. P.

I KNOW of an Owl,
A story-book Owl,
And he dwells in a Cloudland tree,
So way-high-up you never see
A glimpse of the great white fowl.

And this ancient fowl,
This story-book Owl,
Sometimes to himself he speaks—
Once in a thousand years or so—
In a voice that crackles and creaks
And never is heard by the children below:
"Tu-whit! tu-whoo!
I sleep by day,
Of course I do—
It's the sensible way."

For when little children lie fast asleep,
And darkness enshrouds the world so deep,
And weary eyes close to gaze only in dreams,
This story-book bird
With the big round eyes,
Whom nothing escapes,
So knowing and wise,
Watches and peers, with never a wink,
Into crannies and nooks where one might think
No danger would come, so peaceful it seems.

And prying about, this story-book bird
In the snowy thick
Of a Christmas eve—
If you will believe—
Just in the nick
Found the strangest thing that ever you heard:
Santa Klaus asleep,
All down in a heap,
On the floor of his sleigh
Ready packed for the way!

And think of the stockings swaying
At 'leven o' the night,
With the silent firelight
All over them fitfully playing—
A dangling host
From the chimney nails
As warm as toast—
But empty, pitiful,
They promise a million wails

From just one city-full!

"Tu-whit! to-whooh!
Here's a to-do!"
Said the sleepless bird,
The wise old owl,
The watchful fowl.
He flew and he whirred,
Soft Cloudland exploring,
Led up like an arrow
By the wildest of snoring,
Till he stopped,
Then dropped
On the edge of a cloud—
Oh, the snoring was loud!—
Then stalked to that sleigh.
Ah, what a fine dose!—
He flashed out one claw, and
Tweaked Santa Klaus' nose.

Santa woke with a jump,
Sat up in his sleigh,
Rubbed his nose—
And I don't suppose
Understands to this day—
And gazing around he took in the plight,
He seized his reins in the funniest fright,
And down he came in the snowy midnight
All rosy and bright—
The great, merry elf,
Just like himself,
Bluster and noise, nonsense and fun,
With gifts for the children, everyone;
While, soft and far, every bell
Chimed "Twelve o' the clock and all's well!"
And the slumbering world might have heard
The great white wide-winged story-book bird
A-calling "Merry Christmas!" forth in glee
As he flew up to his Cloudland tree.

And the Owl never told—I alone knew—
So don't you tell, whatever you do.
How near the world came to a disaster most shocking,
Waking Christmas morning without a filled stocking!

HOLLY TREE

By Paul H. Hayne.

("Hie on the holly tree!"—Old Ballad.)

THE firelight danced and wavered
In elvish, twinkling glee
On the leaves and crimson berries
Of the great green Christmas-Tree;

And the children who gathered round it
Beheld, with marvelling eyes,

Pendant from trunk and branches
How many a precious prize,

From the shimmer of gold and silver
Through a purse's cunning net,
To the coils of a rippling necklace
That quivered with beads of jet!

But chiefly they gazed in wonder
Where flickered strangely through
The topmost leaves of the holly,
The sheen of a silken shoe!

And the eldest spake to her father:
"I have seen—yes, year by year,
On the crown of our Christmas hollies,
That small shoe glittering clear;

"But you never have told who owned it,
Nor why, so loftily set,
It shines though the fadeless verdure—
You never have told us yet!"

Twas then that the museful father
In slow sad accents said,
While the firelight hovered eerily
About his downcast head:

"My children.... you had a sister;
(It was long, long, long ago,)
She came like an Eden rosebud
'Mid the dreariest winter snow,

"And for four sweet seasons blossomed
To cheer our hearts and hearth,
When the song of the Bethlehem angels
Lured her away from earth—

"A little before she left us,
We had deftly raised to view,
On the topmost branch of the holly,
Yon glimmering, tiny shoe;

"For again 'twas the time of Christmas,
As she lay with laboring breath;
But.... our minds were blinded strangely,
And we did not dream of death.

"We knew that no toy would please her
Like a shoe, so fair and neat,
To fold, with its soft caressing,
Her delicate, sylph-like feet!

"Truly, a smile like a sunbeam
Brightened her eyes of blue,
And once.. twice.. thrice.. she tested
The charm of her fairy shoe!

"Ah! then the bright smile flickered,
Faded, and drooped away,
As faintly, in tones that faltered,

I heard our darling say:

"1 My shoe! papa, please hang it
Once more on the holly bough,
Just where I am sure to see it,
When I wake.... an hour from now!

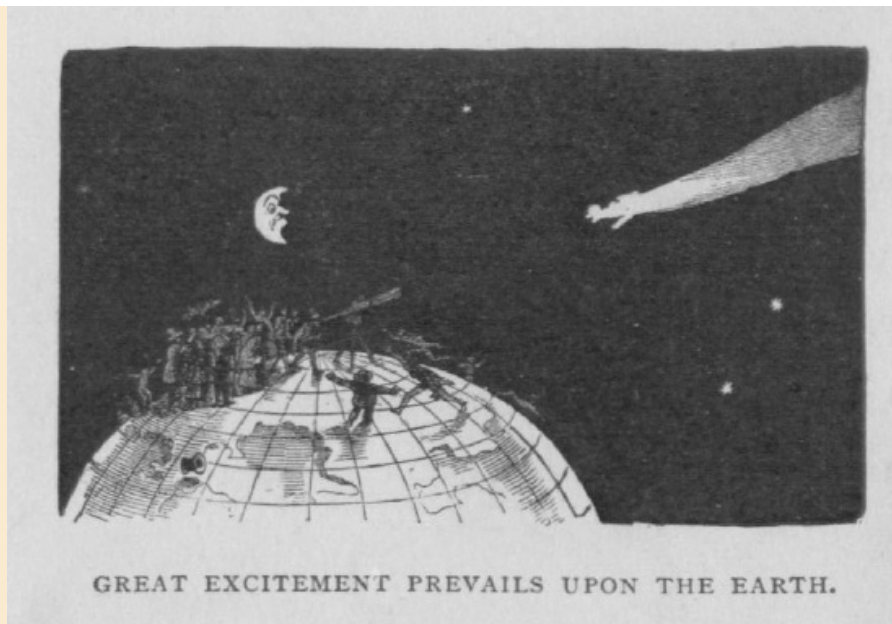
"But alas! she never wakened!
Close-shut were the eyes of blue
Whose last faint gleam had fondled
The curves of that dainty shoe!

"Ah, children, you understand me—
Your eyes are brimmed with dew,
As they watch on the Christmas holly
The sheen of a silken shoe!"

A TALE OF A COMET.

By J. T. Trowbridge.

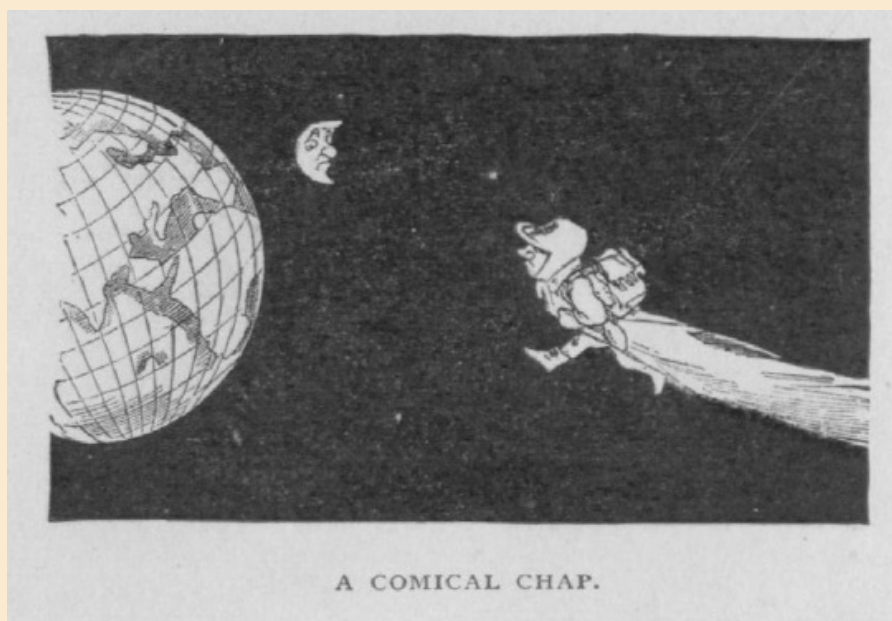
WE had seen the streaming meteors' light,
With their trails of fire, the autumn
night,
And talked of falling sky-rocks hurled
From some long-since exploded world;
Of comets frisking among the stars.
With tails like fiery trains of cars,
And asked, "Should the reckless engineer
Of some rakish comet steer
Crashing into our atmosphere,
How would the planet's shell resist him?"
Then we conversed of the solar system,
And lunar men;
And Doctor Ben
Brought out his globe, at half-past ten,
And lectured, giving conclusive reasons
For tides, eclipses, climes and seasons;
Till, weary at last, I went to bed,
With a jumble of wonderful things in my
head—
Moons and comets and meteorites,
Globes and circles and polar nights;
And there I lay thinking,
And drowsily winking
At something—a ray—thro' my bed-curtains
blinking;



Original Size

Too bright for a star, and growing still brighter,
Making the moon-lighted chamber yet lighter,
Which very much astonished the writer!

I gazed from the casement,
And wondered, with ever-increasing amazement,
What the look of alarm on the Moon's frowning
face meant.



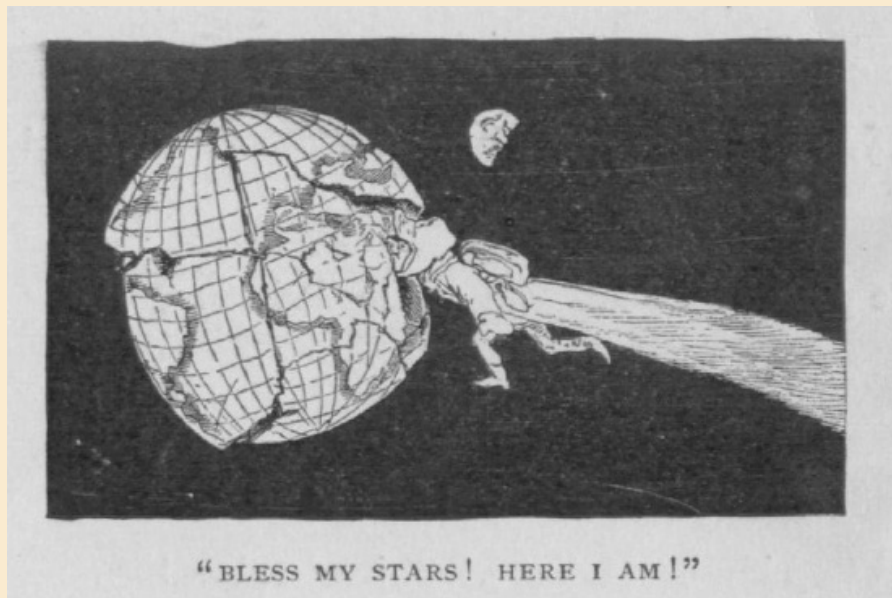
Original Size

His nose peering out from a very close cap,
His fingers in mittens, his chin in a wrap,
Like a tourist prepared for a very cold snap!

On, on he sped, through the regions of space,
With very short legs at a very long pace,
His well-filled knapsack lashed to his back,
Extra shoes and canteen strapped under his pack,
His coat-tails flying away on his track—
Entangled far off in the Pleiades,
On the horns of the Bull and Orion's knees.

For there was the Moon, and, strange to say,
There too was the Earth, just over the way,
Like the Doctor's globe, or a huge balloon,
Forty times larger, perhaps, than the Moon,
All covered with circles, and looming in space:
There were groups upon it, and every face
Was turned one way; and very long-jointed
Telescopes at the sky were pointed;—
And there, with a terrible rushing and humming
And hissing of breath, was a Comet a-coming!

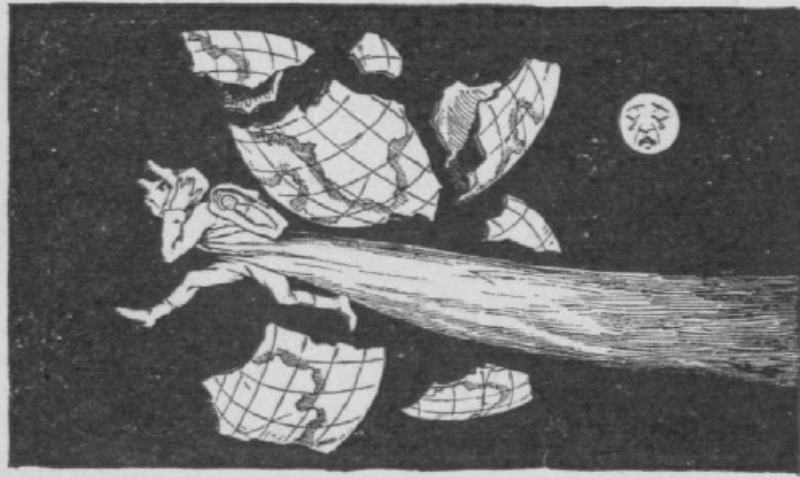
So long and so queer, and as it came nearer
It grew every moment longer and queerer!
Until I made out such a comical chap,
In a red-flannel coat with a very long flap,
On, on he came,
With nose like a flame,
So red I was sure the fellow'd been drinking
(His canteen was empty, I knew by the clinking)



Original Size

"And what can a sober Comet be thinking,"
I cried "not to see there, plain as the day,
The Earth, like a target, hung right in his way?"

The groups were beginning to hurry about,
And hustle and bustle and signal and shout,
And the Moon looked scared, while I shrieked out,



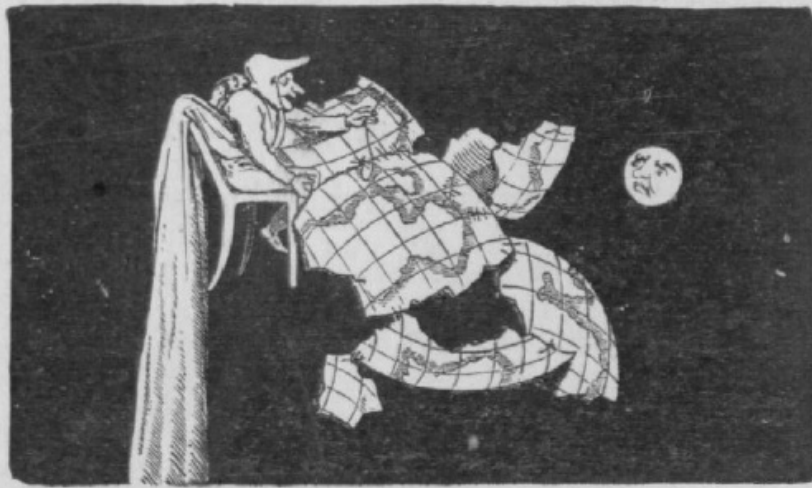
THE COMET COMES OUT THE OTHER SIDE.

Original Size

"Dear sir, I beg pardon, I don't know your name—
I pray you'll consider, and if it's the same
To you, here's a planet! I don't think you knew it;
 But, sir, it will be
 A great favor to me
And a very large circle of friends, as you see,
If you will drive round it instead of right thro' it!"

He put up his head with a stupefied stare,
 And says he, "I declare!
 No, I wasn't aware!
And I'm going at such a deuce of a rate—
I'd stop if I could, but I fear it's too late!
Bless my stars! here I am!" He had just time
 to stoop,
When through it, head-foremost, he went at a
 swoop,
As a circus rider dives through a hoop!
 With a crash,
 And a smash,
 And a roar as of thunder,
 It quivered,
 And shivered,
 And flew asunder:
The Moon, looking down, shed tragical tears;
While, winking hard and holding his ears,
The Comet came out on the other side,
Wheeled round, swore loud, and ruefully eyed
The ruin; sneezed two or three times; then drew
His long tail after him down the blue.

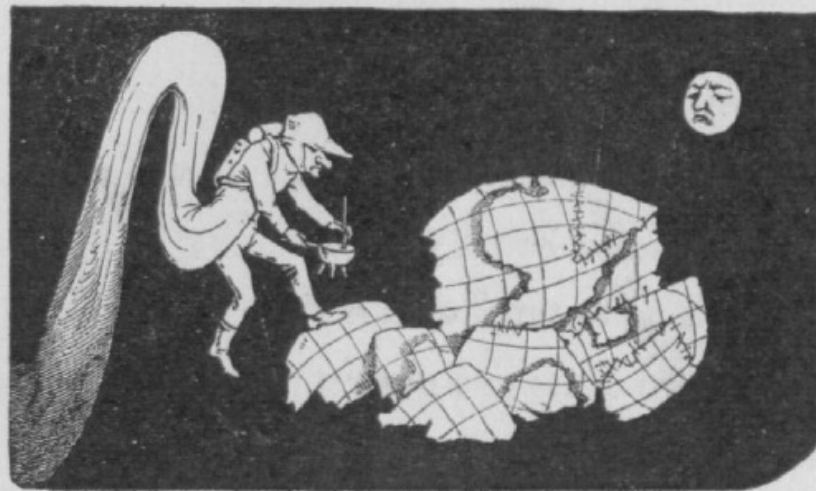
Heavens and earth! what have I done!
This does beat everything under the sun!
I don't care the wink of a star," said he,
"For all the damage done to me—"



THE COMET TRIES NEEDLE AND THREAD.

Original Size

(Feeling his nose, and then with a flirt
Carefully brushing away the dirt
From his coat and its stained and draggled skirt)—
"But look at this dear little, queer little planet!
I've done the business for her, and I van, it
Is quite too bad! The fairest of creatures—



THE COMET TRIES HIS GLUE POT.

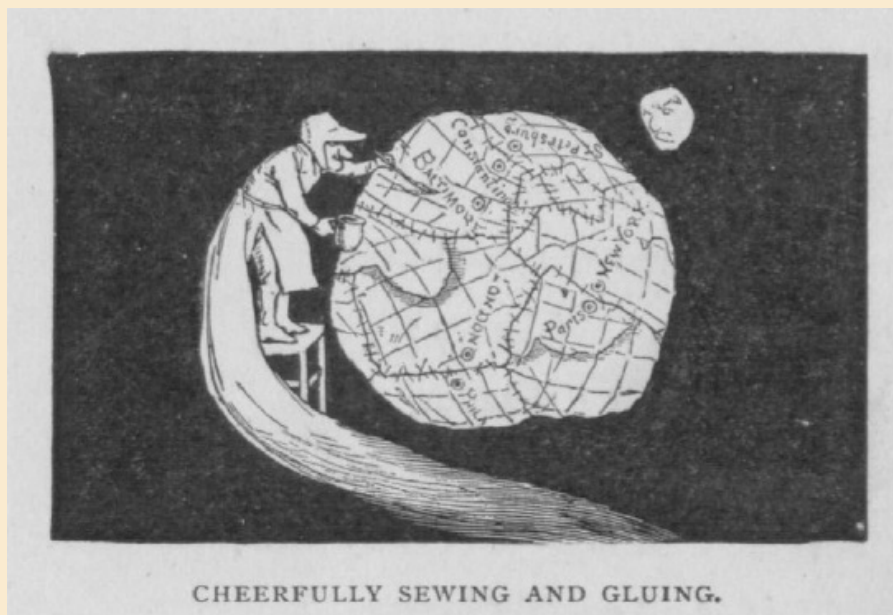
Original Size

How well I remember her pleasant features,
The smile on her face and the light in her eye,
When I've touched my hat to her, hurrying by,
Many a time, on my way through the sky!
I'd mend the poor thing if I could—and I'll try!"

How he got it, or where,
I cannot declare;
But thereupon he drew up a chair.
Hung his long coat-tail over the back,
Sat down by the pieces and opened his pack,

Brought forth from its depths a stout needle and
 thread,
 And there he sat squinting and scratching his head,
 As if rather doubtfully questioning whether
 'Twas possible ever to patch her together!
 Meanwhile—but how can I hope to tell
 Half that to my friends befell
 On the shattered and scattered shell?
 How depict the huge surprise
 Of some, at the very astonishing rise
 Of their real estate, shot off in the skies?
 How describe the flying blocks,
 The fall of steeples and railroad stocks,
 The breaking of banks, and the stopping of clocks;
 And all the various knocks and shocks;—
 Frantic reporters rushing about,
 And correspondents setting out
 In a big balloon, intending from it
 To interview our friend, the Comet!
 While the wide-awake daily press unfurled
 Its rival bulletins: "End of the World!!

Frightful collision! America hit!!!
 Full particulars! Canada hurled



Original Size

Over New England! The Union split!!!
 In INTERRUPTION OF TRAVEL AND TRADE!
 The Comet coming to our aid!"

For now the Comet—odd to see!
 Although it didn't seem odd to me—
 With thimble and glue-pot, sewing and gluing
 The shattered globe, was cheerfully doing
 All he could to restore the ruin;
 Patiently replacing all
 The scattered fragments, great and small;
 Stitching here and sticking there,
 With a hopeful smile and a satisfied air,
 Putting the planet into repair!
 When all was done, with a dexterous twirl
 Of his fingers, he set it once more a-whirl,
 While the Moon looked pleased as a smiling

girl.

Off he sped; and the planet spun
Away on its axis round the sun;
When, watching with curious eyes, I found
He hadn't made it precisely round!
The zones, moreover, were strangely mixed:
Constantinople was squeezed betwixt
St. Petersburg and Baltimore;
South Carolina and Labrador
To Massachusetts were snugly tied;
New York and Paris were side by side;
And, oddest of all earthly fates,
England was in the United States!

Greenland (he couldn't have made a greater
Mistake) was on the new equator!
While in each crack of the crust some bit
Of broken China was made to fit.

Whereupon I cried, with a wild halloo,
"Hold on! come back! this never will do!
Just see what a botch you've made!" Before
He had time to turn, with a clang and a roar,
And a glare of its one great Cyclops eye,
The Lightning Express went whizzing by



Original Size

With a rushing of steam,
And a howl and a scream,
That waked me from my curious dream;
Which the Doctor avers (and he makes it plain)
Must all have passed through my busy brain
With the passing of the midnight train!

OH, HAPPY NIGHT!

By M. E. B.

O happy night! that brings the morn
To dawn above the Lord new born,
And bids the angels sing again
Their message to the sons of men—
 We hail thee! we hail thee!

O happy manger! that hath known
This precious burden as thine own,
Beyond all gifts the world doth hold,
Of pomp and pow'r and gems and gold
 We hail thee! we hail thee! =

O happy star! whose radiance sweet
Did lead the wise men's eager feet
To seek the way, unknown, untried,
That led them to the manger's side—
We hail thee! we hail thee!

O happy day! that gave to men
The Babe Divine of Bethlehem,
The King of Kings, the Undefined,
In semblance of a little child—
We hail thee! we hail thee!

O happy Babe! whose wondrous eyes
Still hold the light of Paradise,
Look down in blessing from above
While Prince of Peace, and Lord of Love,
 We hail thee! we hail thee!

WILLIE WEE.

By Mrs. A. M. Diaz.

TWO lads were conversing as happy as kings,
 Of the coming of Christmas and all that it
 brings,
Of the Christmas-tree and its many delights,
Of the city shop-windows and other fine sights,
When out spake wee Will, sometimes called "Willie
 wee,"
Though often "sweet William," or "little Willee,"
—Four years and a half or three-quarters was he—
"Say! What kind of a tree is a Chrissermus-tree?"
And the while they discoursed, as his wonder grew',
With questions like these he followed them through:
"Does it have big branches that spread all around?
Do its roots stay deep down in the dark ground?
Does it grow, grow, grow, way up very high?
If you climb to the top will your head bump the sky?
Do any plums grow on it, or apples, or cherries?
Or any good nuts, or pretty red berries?"

Does it bloom out all over with flowers white as
snow,
As that tree does down there in our garden below?
Do robins and king-birds build nests in that tree?
And other birdies too?" asked little Willee.



Original Size

"Yes," answered Ned, wise, school-boy Ned:
"A Christmas-tree, young curly-head,
Has branches, sure, but has no roots,
And on its branches grow no fruits;
Yet bright red apples there you'll see,
And oranges of high degree—
Apples and oranges on one tree!"
"That sounds very strange," quoth little Willee.
"No flowers bloom there, snowy white,
Yet with these fruits—a curious sight—
Are oft seen flowers both red and white!
Should you climb to the top without a fall,
Your head might bump against the wall,
But not against the sky, you see,
For indoors-stands the Christmas-tree!"
"You tell very big stories," quoth little Willee.
"No birdie there doth build its nest,
No king-bird, blue-bird, robin redbreast,
Yet eggs thereon are often seen.
Of beautiful colors, pink, and green,
And purple, and lavender, fit for a queen.
Even eggs with pictures on them are found.
And with golden bands which circle around.
But from all these eggs so fair to see
Are hatched no birds in that Christmas-tree;
Instead, are hatched candy and gumdrops!" said he.
"Are you telling the truth?" asked little Willee.

"I've not told half, I do declare,
Of all those wondrous branches bear.

Bear? They bear dolls and whips and drums,
Tops, whistles, taffy, sugar-plums,
And candy sheep, and candy cats,
And candy birds, and candy rats,
And India-rubber girls and boys,
Bear trumpets and all kinds of toys,
Bear books, and jumping-jacks, and mittens,
And little cotton-flannel kittens;
And over the whole of this Christmas-tree
Candles are burning right merrily!
What think you of this? my sweet Willie-wee?"
"I think you are fooling!" said little Willee.

Next morning young Willie, with serious air,
Put earth in a flower-pot, and buried up there
A seed of an apple with very great care.
"Pray, what are you doing, you rogue Willie-wee?"
"I am planting a seed for a Chrissermas tree!
Is not that good to do?" asked little Willee.
—There came from that seed a green little shoot
Which put out its leaves and firmly took root,
And so finely did thrive that at last it was found
Too large for the house and was set in the ground,
Where it grew up, a tree, one scarcely knew how.
Look down by the wall; it is standing there now.
It blossoms in springtime, and many a nest
Has been built there by king-bird and robin redbreast;
And other birdies too oft come to the tree
And sing there and swing there, oh, so merrily;
They make it all summer our joy and delight;
And in fall of the year 'tis a beautiful sight
When the clustering wealth of its apples is seen—
Its ruby red apples all set in their green!

—And Willie? Yes, he grew up, too, young Willie-
wee,
And went as a sailor-boy over the sea.
He sailed in a ship to some far distant shore;
A storm came—and—and—we saw him no more.
It was long, long ago that deep sorrow we bore!
The lads who were talking, as happy as kings,
Of the coming of Christmas and all that it brings,
Are fathers now, so stately and tall.
Their children play by the garden wall,
And swing on the boughs of the apple tree,
Or climb to the top, the world to see;
(Some have gone from the home the world to see!)
And when autumn comes, and leaves turn brown,
And the ripened fruits are shaken down,
And here and there, on the orchard ground,
The red and the golden are heaped around—
'Tis the children who gather that tree by the wall,
And the apples from off its boughs that fall,
With kindly care are stored away,
Sure to appear on Christmas Day
In platter or basket for all to admire,
Or hung on strings before the fire,
There to swing and sputter and roast,
While many an one of the merry host
Gives a tender thought to that first Willie-wee
Who went as a sailor-boy over the sea.
The youngest of all; a new Willie-wee,

—A curly-haired rogue, and our darling is he!—
Now claims for his own uncle Will's *Christmas-tree*.
"Because," says the child, "*he* was named for *me!*"

ON CHRIST-DAY NIGHT.

By Nora Perry.

From room to room, from stair to stair;
All silken-clad; while standing there
Shut from the summer warmth and cheer,
The silken perfumed atmosphere
Of wealth and ease, a little maid
With beating heart, yet unafraid,
Enchanted, watched the fairy scene
Between the curtains' parted screen.
The fierce north wind came sweeping pa: t
And shook her with its wintry blast;
The frosty pavement of the street
Chilled to the bone her ill-clad feet;
Yet moment after moment fled
And there she stood, with lifted head,
Her eager eyes, as in a trance,
Fixed on the changes of the dance,

DULCET SOUNDS.



[Original Size](#)

STATELY mansion,
bright and gay
With festal light, made
darkness day
Far up and down the dusky
street
That Christmas night, while hurrying
feet
Sped swiftly by, nor scarce delayed
For all the dulcet sounds that
strayed
In merry measures from within,
Where harp and flute and violin,
In soft accordance, wild and sweet,
Made music for the dancers' feet.
All silken-clad those feet that kept
That time and tune, or lightly stepped
Her eager ears still drinking in

The strains of flute and violin;
And still, as sped the moments past,
Colder and colder swept the blast.



Original Size

But little heed had she, or care:
Her glance upon one vision fair,
One vision, one, beyond the rest—
A girl with roses on her breast,
And with a look upon her face,
The sweet girl-face of Heaven's own grace,
As through the dance she smiling led
Her youthful guests, with airy tread.

"Ah, would she smile on me like this
And would she give me kiss for kiss
If I could stand there at her side?"
The wistful watcher softly cried.
Even as she spoke she closer crept,
Upon the broad low terrace stept,
And nearer leaned.—Just then, just there,
A street light sent a sudden glare
Across her face.—One startled glance,
And from the changes of the dance.
With beating heart and eyes dilate.
The girlish mistress of the fête

Sprang swiftly forth.—A moment more
And through the window's opened door
Another guest was ushered in.
Her lip was pale, her cheek was thin,

No costly robe of silk and lace
Apparelled her, and O! her face
And in her dark bewildered eyes
A shock of fear and shamed surprise
Did wildly, desperately gleam,
While here and there, as in a dream,
She vaguely heard, yet did not hear,
The sound of voices far and near.

She tried to speak: some word she said
Of all her troubled doubt and dread,
Some childish word—"what would they
do?"

Then all at once a voice rang through
Her troubled doubt, her troubled fear,
"What will they do, why, this—and this!"
And on her cold lips dropped a kiss,
And found her frozen figure crept
A tender clasp.—She laughed and wept
And laughed again, for this and this,
This tender clasp, this tender kiss,
Was more than all her dream come true:
Was earth with Heaven's light shining through;
Was Christ's own promise kept aright—
His word fulfilled on Christ-day night!

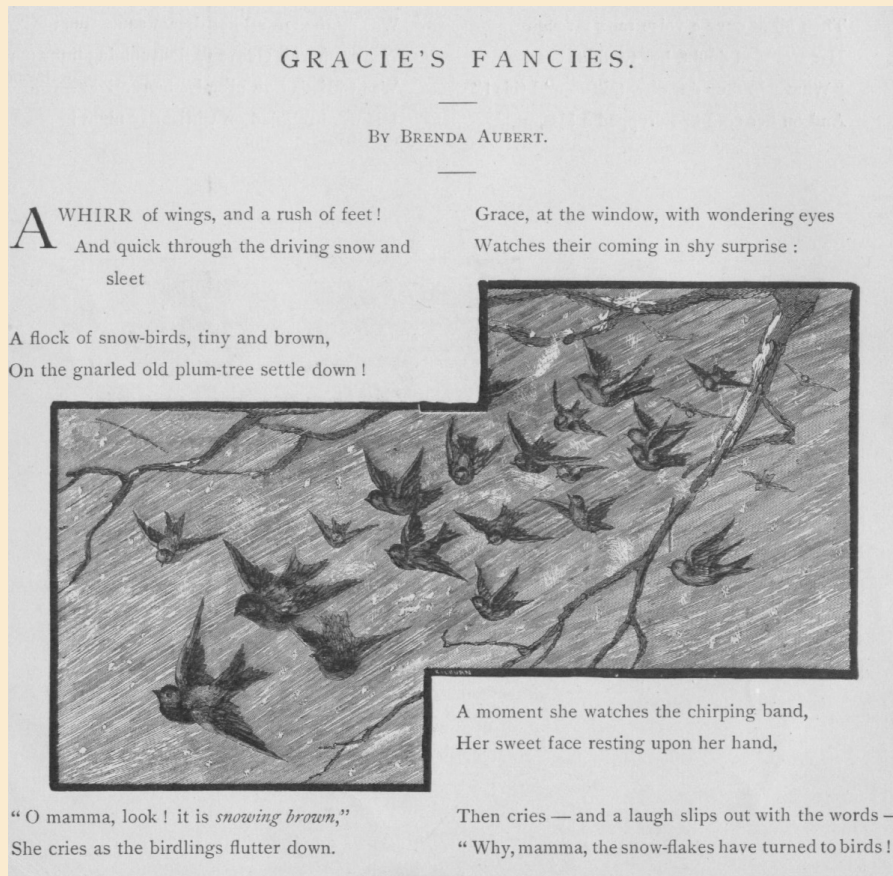


[Original Size](#)

GRACIE'S FANCIES.

By Brenda Aubert.

A WHIRR of wings, and a rush of feet!
And quick through the driving snow and
Grace, at the window, with wondering eyes
Watches their coming in shy surprise:



Original Size

A flock of snow-birds, tiny and brown,
On the gnarled old plum-tree settle down!
A moment she watches the chirping band,
Her sweet face resting upon her hand,
"O mamma, look! it is snowing brown"
She cries as the birdlings flutter down.
Then cries—and a laugh slips out with the words
"Why, mamma, the snow-flakes have turned to birds"

WAITING A WINTER'S TALE.

By Mrs. Sallie M. B. Piatt.

SOME sweet things go just to make room for
others:
The blue field-blossom hurries from the dew,
(My little maiden, hush your noisy brothers!)
And see, the wild-rose reddens where it grew!

The green leaf fades that you may see the yellow;
We have the honey when we miss the bee;
Who wants the apples, scarlet-stained and mellow,
Must give the buds upon his orchard-tree;

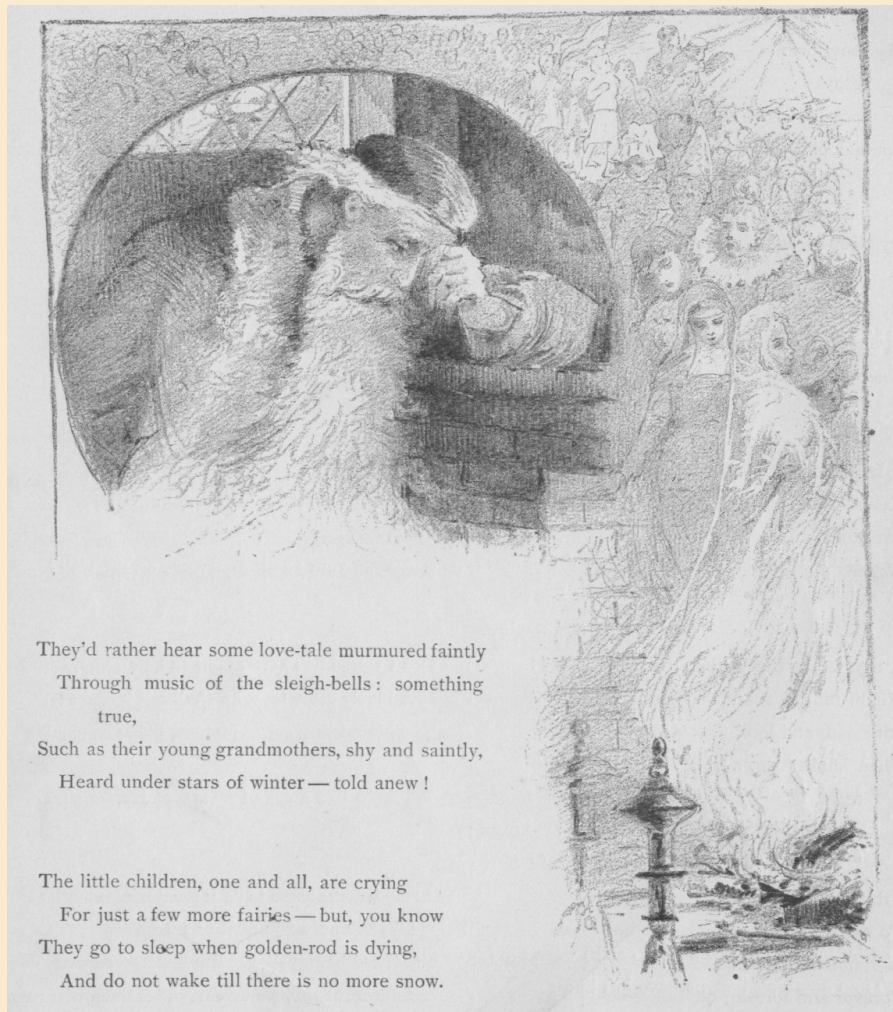
Then, for those finely painted birds that follow
The sun about and scent their songs with flowers,
We have, when frosts are sharp and rains beat hollow,
These pretty, gray crumb-gathering pets of ours;

The butterflies (you could not catch) were brighter
Than anything that we have left in air;
But these still-flying shapes of snow are whiter,
I fancy, than the very lilies were.

Then, is the glimmer of fire-flies, cold and eerie,
Far in the dusk, so pleasant after all
As is this home-lamp playing warm and cheery,
Among your shadow-pictures on the wall?

But I forget. There ought to be a story,
A lovely story! Who shall tell it, then?
The boys want war—plumes, helmets, shields and
glory—
They'd like a grand review of Homer's men.

Their jealous sisters say it's tiresome hearing
(A girl is not as patient as a boy,)
Of that old beauty—yes, the much-recurring,
About-three-thousand-years-old, Helen of Troy.



They'd rather hear some love-tale murmured faintly
Through music of the sleigh-bells: something
true,
Such as their young grandmothers, shy and saintly,
Heard under stars of winter — told anew !

The little children, one and all, are crying
For just a few more fairies — but, you know
They go to sleep when golden-rod is dying,
And do not wake till there is no more snow.

Original Size

They'd rather hear some love-tale murmured faintly

Through music of the sleigh-bells: something
true,
Such as their young grandmothers, shy and saintly,
Heard under stars of winter—told anew!
The little children, one and all, are crying
For just a few more fairies—but, you know
They go to sleep when golden-rod is dying,
And do not wake till there is no more snow.
They sleep who kept your Jersey cow from straying,
My boy, while you were deep in books and
grass:
Who tended flowers, my girl, while you were playing
Some double game, or wearing out your glass.

They sleep—but what sweet things they have been
making,
By golden moons, to give you a surprise—
Beat slower, little hearts with wonder aching,
Keep in the dark yet, all you eager eyes!

The fairies sleep. But their high lord and master
Keeps wide-awake, and watches every hearth;
Great waters freeze that he may travel faster—
He puts a girdle round about the earth!

Just now in the dim North, as he remembers
His birthday back through centuries, he appears
A trifle sad, and looks into the embers—
Then shakes down from his cheek a shower of
tears.

He thinks of little hands that reached out lightly
To catch his beard and pull it with a will,
Now round their buried rosebuds folded whitely,
Forever and forever, oh, how still!

"Ah, where are all the children? How I miss
them!
So many worlds-full are gone since I came!
I long to take them to my heart and kiss them,
And hear those still small voices laugh my name.

"Some over whom no violet yet is growing;
Some under broken marble, ages old;
Some lie full fathom five where seas are flowing;
Some, among cliffs and chasms, died a-cold;

"Some through the long Wars of the Roses faded;
Some did walk barefoot to the Holy Land;
Some show young faces with the bride's-veil
shaded;
Some touch me with the nun's all-gracious hand;

"Some in the purple with crown-jewels burning,
Some in the peasant's hodden-gray go by,
Some in forlornest prisons darkly yearning
For earth and grass, the dove's wing and the
sky.

"One sails to wake a world that has been lying
Hid in its leaves, far in the lonesome West,
In an enchanted sleep, with strange winds sighing

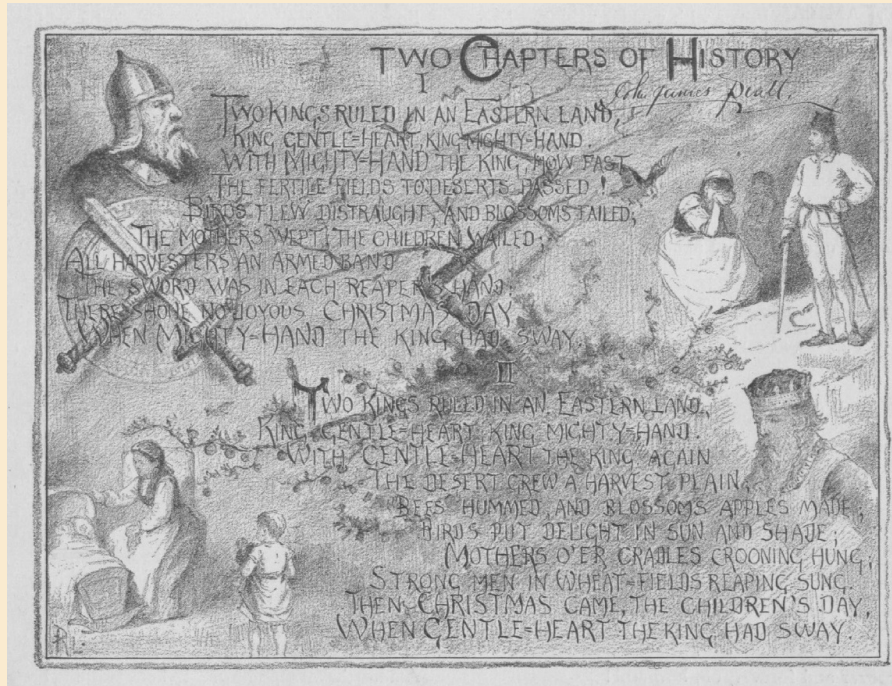
Among the strange flowers in her dreaming breast.

And One—I held Him first—the immortal Stranger!
I smell, to-night, the frankincense and myrrh;

I see the star-led wise men and the manger;
And his own Mother—I remember her!

"But—where's my cloak? Is this a time for sorrow?
... And where's the story, do you ask of me?"

To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow!
And shall you have it then? Why—we shall see!



[Original Size](#)

CHRISTMAS.

By Mrs. L. C. Whiton.

MAMMA, what is Christmas?" How can I
say?

I will try to answer you "true as true."

It is just the loveliest, lovely day,

That is steeped in rose-color all the way through!

When miniature toy-shops in stockings are found,

That are left in the chambers without a sound;

And papa gives gifts with a tender cheer;

And brother "hurrahs for the top of the year;"

And sister looks on with her wistful eyes,

With a soft, sweet smile at every surprise:

And Christmas means this:

A little child's bliss,

And the love of the dear Christ felt like a kiss.

And a piled-up glory is hard to express;
And "What is Christmas?" is wonder for all.
It is when the earth puts on holiday dress,
Made spotless fair with snowflakes that fall;
When hearts are lavish with treasures of love,
And the pale, pure stars shine brighter above;
And the dancing firelight seems to play
In the most mysterious, haunting way;
And the house fairies wander from sweet to sweet,
With an unexplored kingdom laid at their feet:
And Christmas means this:
A little child's bliss,
And the love of the dear Christ felt like a kiss.

And still "What is Christmas?" Darling, come here.
It is meant for the birthday, "true as true,"
Of a beautiful child that was born in Judea,
That His mother loved, as I love you;
That grew up to teach you how you should seek
To be in your spirit "lowly and meek,"
And onward higher and higher to go,
Till you changed to an angel, whiter than snow;
And offered freely (that all might take)
The gift of Himself for the whole world's sake!
And Christmas means this:
A little child's bliss,
And the love of the dear Christ felt like a kiss.

MIDSUMMER SONGS.

And flow, since all the little birds are singing
In bush and brake,
And all the honey flower bells dimly ringing,
And grasses shake—

And grasses shake before the reapers' coming.;
While through and through
This sweetness locusts shrill and bees are humming,
I'll sing to you

A little song, with bird-notes all a-twitter,
With honey flowing
From tilted flower-cups with dew a-glitter,
With fireflies glowing;

And over it roses in knots, and myrtle,
As thickly lay
(And violets) as on a maiden's kirtle,
A holiday.

Sweetened all through with flowers, with which 'tis filled
So full, you see
It needs (and also honey round it spilled)
A sweet song be.

—M. E. W.



"SAINT EMILY"

Original Size

"SAINT EMILY."

By E. F. Frye.

WHEN grass grows green in spring-time
And trees are budding gay,
When the breath of bursting lilacs
Makes sweet the air of May,
When cowslips fringe the brooksides,
And violets gem the dells,
And tremble mid the grasses
The wind-flower's slender bells,
When the fragrant lily rises
From its sheltering sheath of green,
In the city's narrow alleys
Saint Emily is seen.

A modest little maiden,
 She walks secure from harm;
A basket, flower-laden,
 Swings lightly on her arm,
And right and left she scatters,
 Alike to bad and good,
The beauties of the garden,
 The treasures of the wood.

When summer days drag slowly,
In languor, heat, and pain,
To those who lie in hospital,
 Never to rise again,
Dreaming, with fevered longing,
 Of shady country homes,
Where roses hang in clusters,
 And honeysuckle blooms,
From cot to cot so softly
 Moves dear Saint Emily;
And here a rose she proffers,
 And there a bud lays she.
The close abode of sickness
 She fills with fragrant bloom;
Her gentle presence passes
 Like music through the room
And many a moaning sufferer
 Hushes his sad complaint,
And follows with his weary eyes
 The movements of this saint.

When autumn paints the woodlands
 With scarlet and with gold,
When the blue gentian's lids uncloset
 In frosty meadows cold,
From the little troop of children
 That crowd some Orphan Home
The joyous shout arises,
 "Saint Emily has come!"
And round her close they gather,
 An eager little band,
While from the well-stored basket
 She fills each outstretched hand
With purple hillside asters,
 And wondrous golden-rod,
And all the lingering flowers that love
 To dress the autumn sod;
And pallid cheeks flush rosy,
 And heavy eyes grow bright,
And little hearts forlorn and lone,
 Stir with a deep delight.

And when the woods are naked,
And flowers no longer blow,
When the green nooks they love so well
 Are buried in the snow,
Not quite unknown that presence
 To children sick in bed,
Bearing bright wreaths of autumn leaves,
 And strings of berries red.
A heaven-sent mission, surely,
 To cheer the sick and poor
With bounties that the bounteous God

Has strewn beside our door—
To gladden little children,
 To comfort dying hours,
To bear to wretched hearts and homes
 The gospel of the flowers.
What marvel if glad blessings
 Surround Saint Emily!
What marvel if some loving eyes
 In her an angel see!—

And, too, what marvel if the thought
 Is borne to me and thee,
That many a kindly boy and girl
 As sweet a saint might be.



[Original Size](#)

BLUE AND GOLD.

By Mrs. Clara Doty Bates.

THE warm June day was full
 Of color as it could hold;
"Now, which is the sweetest blue,
 And which is the brightest gold,
In all that your little eyes can see,
In cloud-land, earth, or the water-world?"
I said to the children three.

We were on the fresh new grass,
 And the pretty hammock hung
Like a web between the trees,
 And in it the baby swung.
'Twas as if a spider, busy and sly,
Had spun its meshes there, white and light,
And caught a butterfly.

A moment's silence fell
On all, till Teddy guessed—
He had eyes for every bird,
And eyes, too, for its nest—
And he cried—the eager little soul—
"The bluest blue is the bluebird,
And gold is the oriole."

Then Flora, who loved flowers,
But had not spoken yet,
Whispered that gold was a crocus,
And blue a violet.

And Edith, the more emphatic one,
Said: "No; the bluest blue is the sky,
And the goldenest gold the sun!"

I pointed to the web
That swung so white and light,
In which the baby cooed
As a nestling pigeon might;
"I can answer best of all," I said,
"For there is in water-world, earth or skies
No blue so sweet as that baby's eyes,
No gold so bright as his head!"

THE LAND OF USED-TO-BE.

By James Whitcomb Riley.

AND where's the Land of Used-to-be, does little baby wonder?
Oh, we will clap a magic saddle over papa's knee,
And ride away around the world, and in and out and under,
The whole of all the golden sunny summer-time, and see!

Leisurely and lazy-like we'll jostle on our journey,
And let the pony bathe his hooves and cool them in the dew,
As he sidles down the shady way, and lags along the ferny
And the green grassy edges of the lane we travel through.

And then we'll canter on to catch the bubble of the thistle,
As it bumps among the butterflies, and glimmers down the sun,
To leave us laughing, all content to hear the robin whistle,
Or guess what Katydid is saying little Katy's done.

And pausing here a minute, where we hear the squirrel chuckle
As he darts from out the underbrush and scampers up the tree,
We will gather buds and locust-blossoms, leaves and honeysuckle,
To wreathe around our foreheads, riding into Used-to-be;

For here's the very rim of it that we go swinging over—
Don't you hear the fairy bugles, and the tinkle of the bells?
And see the baby bumble-bees that tumble in the clover,
And dangle from the tilted pinks and tipsy pimpermels?

And don't you see the merry faces of the daffodillies,

And the jolly johnny-jump-ups, and the buttercups a-glee,
And the low, lolling ripples ring around the water-lilies,
All greeting us with laughter to the Land of Used-to-be?

And here among the blossoms of the blooming vines and grasses,
With a haze forever hanging in a sky forever blue,
And with a breeze from over seas to kiss us as it passes,
We will romp around forever as the little fairies do;

For all the elves of earth and air are swarming here together—
The prankish Puck, king Oberon, and queen Titania too;
And dear old Mother Goose herself, as sunny as the weather,
Comes dancing down the dewy walks to welcome me and you!

A BABY SHOW.

By H. H.

A DROLL conversation I once overheard—
Two children, a cat, a cow, and a bird.
The names of the children were Eddie and Jane;
The names of the others I did not hear plain.
How came I to hear them? I think I won't
tell:
You may guess, if you please; and if you guess
well
You'll guess that I heard it as many a man hears,
With his fancy alone, and not with his ears.

Such a wonderful plaything never was known!
Like a real live dolly, and all for their own!
Two happier children could nowhere be found,
No, not if you travelled the whole world around.
They had drawn her this morning where daisies
grew—
White daisies, all shining and dripping with dew;
Long wreaths of the daisies, and chains, they had
made;
In the baby's lap these wreaths they had laid,

The children were drawing, with caution and care,
Their sweet baby-sister, to give her the air,
In a dainty straw wagon with wheels of bright red,
And a top of white muslin which shaded her head.
She was only one year and a few months old;
Her eyes were bright blue and her hair was like
gold;
She laughed all the time from morning till night,
Till Eddie and Jane were quite wild with delight=
And were laughing to watch her fat little hands
Untwisting and twisting the stems and the strands.
Just then, of a sudden, a lark flew by
And sang at the top of his voice in the sky;
"Ho! ho! Mr. Lark," shouted Jane, "come down here!
We're not cruel children. You may come without fear.
We've something to show you. In all your life

maybe

You'll never see anything sweet as our baby!"
'Twas an odd thing, now, for a lark to do—
I hope you won't think my story's untrue—
But this is the thing that I saw and I heard:
That lark flew right down, like a sociable bird,
As soon as they called him, and perched on a tree,
And winked with his eye at the children and me,
And laughed out, as much as a bird ever can,
As he cried, "Ha! ha! Little woman and man!

"You'll be quite surprised and astonished, maybe,
To hear that I do not think much of your baby.
Why, out in the field here I've got in my nest,
All cuddled up snug 'neath my wife's warm breast,
Four little babies—two sisters, two brothers—
And all with bright eyes, as bright as their moth-
er's;
Your baby's at least ten times older than they,
But they are all ready to fly to-day;

"They'll take care of themselves in another week,
Before your poor baby can walk or can speak.
It has often surprised me to see what poor things
All babies are that are born without wings;
And but one at a time! Dear me, my wife
Would be quite ashamed of so idle a life!"
And the lark looked as scornful as a lark knows
how,
As he swung up and down on a slender bough.

A cat had been eying him there for a while,
And sprang at him now from top of a stile.
But she missed her aim—he was quite too high;
And oh, how he laughed as he soared in the sky!
Then the cat scrambled up, disappointed and cross;
She looked all about her, and felt at a loss
What next she should do. So she took up the
thread
Of the lark's discourse, and ill-naturedly said:

"Yes, indeed, little master and miss, I declare,
It's enough to make any mother-cat stare
To see what a time you do make, to be sure.
Over one small creature, so helpless and poor
As your babies are! Why, I've six of my own:
When they were two weeks old they could run alone;
They're never afraid of dogs or of rats—
In a few weeks more they'll be full-grown cats;

"Their fur is as fine and as soft as silk—
Two gray, and three black, and one white as new
milk.
A fair fight for a mouse in my family
Is as pretty a sight as you'll ever see.
It is all very well to brag of your baby—
One of these years it will be something, maybe!"
And without even looking at the baby's face,
The cat walked away at a sleepy pace.

"Moo, Moo!" said a cow, coming up. "Moo,
Moo!

Young people, you're making a great to-do
About your baby. And the lark and the cat,
They're nothing but braggers—I wouldn't give
that."



Original Size

(And the cow snapped her tail as you'd snap your
thumb)

"For all the babies, and kittens, and birds, that come
In the course of a year! It does make me laugh
To look at them all, by the side of a calf!

"Why, my little Brindle as soon as 'twas born
Stood up on its legs, and sniffed at the corn;
Before it had been in the world an hour
It began to gambol, and canter, and scour
All over the fields. See its great shining eyes,
And its comely red hair that so glossy lies
And thick! he has never felt cold in his life;
But the wind cuts your baby's skin like a knife.

"Poor shivering things! I have pitied them oft,
All muffled and smothered in flannel soft.
Ha! ha! I am sure the stupidest gaby
Can see that a calf's ahead of a baby!"
And the cow called her calf, and tossed up her
head

Like a person quite sure of all she has said.
Then Jane looked at Eddy, and Eddy at Jane;
Said Eddy, "How mean! I declare, they're too
vain

"To live—preposterous things! They don't know
What they're talking about! I'd like them to show
a bird, or a kitten, or a learned calf.

That can kiss like our baby, or smile, or laugh!"

"Yes, indeed, so should I!" said Jane in a rage;

"The poor little thing! She's advanced for her age,
For the minister said so the other day—
She's worth a hundred kittens or calves to play.

"And as for young birds—they're pitiful things!

I saw a whole nest once, all mouths and bare wings,
And they looked jis if they'd been picked by the
cook

To broil for breakfast. I'm sure that they shook
With cold if their mother got off for a minute—
I'm glad we have flannel, and wrap babies in it!"
So the children went grumbling one to the other,
And when they reached home they told their mother.

The dear baby, asleep, in its crib she laid,
And laughed as she kissed the children, and said:

"Do you think I believe that the sun can shine
On a boy or a girl half so sweet as mine?"

The lark, and the cat, and the cow were all right—
Each baby seems best in its own mother's sight!"



THE WORLD WE KNOW IS A BRIGHT WORLD STILL,
BUT AH, FOR THE OTHER BEHIND THE HILL!

A YOUNG INQUIRER.

BY CHARLOTTE MELLEN PACKARD.

HOW does life look behind the Hill?
The earth spins round, the mountain is still,
Men and women they come and they go,
Children play in the valley below,
Winds are roaring, or winds are whist,
Sunbeams pass, there is rain and mist,
The world we know is a bright world still,
But ah, for the other behind the Hill!

A YOUNG INQUIRER.

By Charlotte Mellen Packard.

HOW does life look behind the Hill?
All the suns I have ever seen
Peeped from over a mountain screen,
Stretched a finger of rosy light
Through some crevice to paint "Good-night;"
Up the darkness the great round moon
Floated by like a red balloon,
Hung and glittered awhile, until
It went to the people behind the Hill.

The earth spins round, the mountain is still
Men and women they come and they go,
Children play in the valley below.
Winds are roaring, or winds are whist,
Sun may pass, there is rain and mist,
The world we know is a bright world still,
But ah, for the other behind the Hill!

Voices are calling me day by day—
I listen, and wonder whatever they say!
The valleys are pleasant, and days are long
With play and study, with work and song—

But a boy keeps planning for other things,
There's room in his restless body for wings,
And fancy will never fold them until
He sees for himself what is over the Hill.

But most I dream of the unknown sea
Where brave ships hasten like birds set free,
Where plunging breakers ride high and loud
Till the sailor is lost between wave and cloud.
Oh the sunny lands, and the frozen zone,
The forests where never a man is known!
There are wonders and wonders waiting still
For a boy who has never looked over the Hill!



Original Size



SILENCE OF THE MORNING'S SPLENDOR.

Original Size

IN MIDSUMMER.

By Mrs. L. C. Whiton.

I NTO silence of the morning's splendor
There is shaken a golden robin's dream;
Kissed by sunshine to divine surrender,
Bloom the snowy lilies in the stream;
Soft south winds the hidden wild flowers woo;
And between the tangled leaves in view—
Hush! I see the Summer,
Summer, Summer floating through.
Climbs the sun, with ecstasy of shining,

From the blush of rising into gold;
And the river's heart, with close defining,
Tells the same sweet story it is told;
Hills are veiled in tender mists anew;
From the liquid skies' unshadowed blue-
Hush! I see the Summer,
Summer, Summer flooding through.

A MIDSUMMER SONG.

By Mary E. Wilkins.

I WANT to sing a little song to please you,
How midsummer comes following after June,
And shall I pitch it by the lark or robin?—
For songs in midsummer should be in tune.

And shall I give it sweetness like the roses?—
For midsummer has roses, as you know,
As well as June; and sprinkled o'er with spices
From beds of pinks and poppies in a row?

Perhaps like them; or, maybe 'twould be sweeter,
My little song, and prettier sound to you,
If I should make it make you think of lilies—
For midsummer has always lilies too.

Around the meadow-sweet the bees they cluster
So thick the children pick it not for fear—
Like meadow-sweet and bees, if I could make it,
A pretty little song 'twould be to hear!

Down in the field a crowd of flowers are standing;
The locusts pipe, the flowers keep sweet and still—
With honey-balls of clover and the others,
If only I my little song could fill!

I want to sing a little song to please you
Of midsummer that's following after June,
But oh! of all her sweet, gay things, I cannot
With one put yet my little song in tune!

I think you'll have to find a child or robin,
Some ignorant and merry-hearted thing;
For, I suppose, a song of the midsummer
It takes a heart more like a bird's to sing!



AROUND THE MEADOW-SWEET, THE BEES THEY CLUSTER.

Original Size

IN THE BLACK FOREST.

By Celia Thaxter.

UP through the great Black Forest,
So wild and wonderful,
We climbed in the autumn afternoon
'Mid the shadows deep and cool.

We climbed to the Grand Duke's castle
That stood on the airy height;
Above the leagues of pine-trees dark
It shone in the yellow light.

Around the edge of her wee white cap
We saw how the peasant women
Were toiling along the way,
In the open spaces, here and there,
That steeped in the sunshine lay.

They gathered the autumn harvest—
All toil-worn and weather-browned;
They gathered the roots they had planted in spring,
And piled them up on the ground.

We heard the laughter of children,
And merrily down the road
Ran little Max with a rattling cart,
Heaped with a heavy load.

Upon orange carrots, and beets so red,
And turnips smooth and white,
With leaves of green all packed between,
Sat the little Rosel bright.

The wind -blew out her curls—
A sweeter face I have never seen

Than this happy little girl's.

A spray of the carrot's foliage fine,
Soft as a feather of green,
Drooped over her head from behind her ear.
As proud as the plume of a queen.

Light was his burden to merry Max,
With Rosel perched above,
And he gazed at her on that humble throne
With the eyes of pride and love.

With joyful laughter they passed us by,
And up through the forest of pine,
So solemn and still, we made our way
To the castle of Eberstein.
Oh, lofty the Grand Duke's castle
That looked o'er the forest gloom;
But better I love to remember
The children's rosy bloom.



Original Size

Oh, vast and dim and beautiful
Were the dark woods' shadowy aisles.
And all their silent depths seemed lit
With the children's golden smiles.
And sweet is the picture I brought away
From the wild Black Forest shade,
Of proud and happy and merry Max,
And Rosel, the little maid.

EDITH'S LESSON.

By Mrs. Margaret E. Sangster.

OUT in the meadow the scented breeze
Was full of the gossip of birds and bees;
Out in the orchard the glad things flew,
And o'er meadow and orchard the sky was blue—
The sky was blue, and the clouds were white,
And the summer morning was blithe and bright.

"

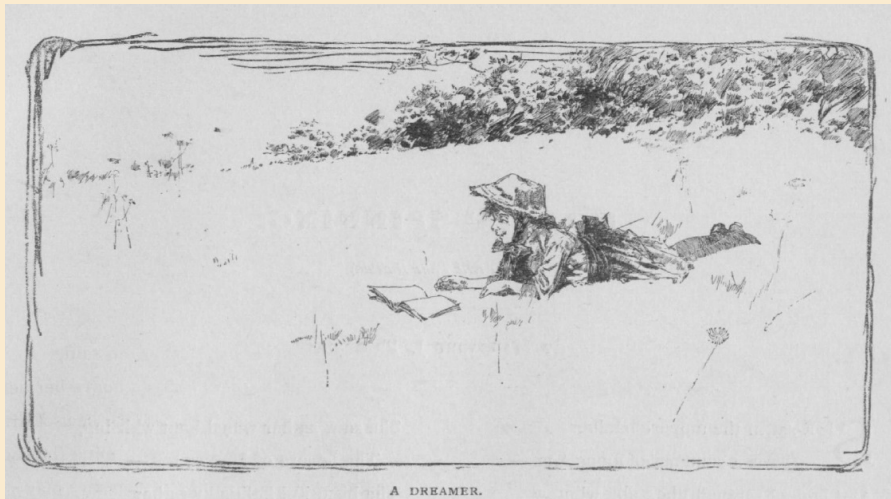
It is quite too lovely in-doors to stay,"
Said Edith, "whether I work or play."
So slate and pencil and fairy-book
Were carried forth to a cozy nook,
Where the shadows glanced, and the sunbeams shone,
And the dear little girl could be alone.

There were hard examples that must be done,
For father to see ere the set of sun;
And there was the merriest tale to read,
Of a lady fair, on a milk-white steed,—
Of a lady fair, and a stately lover,
And the charm that lay in a four-leaf clover.

"Study the lesson!" the robin said,
As he poised on the branch above her head,
With a whirr of wings like the beat of drums;
"Edith," the bee hummed, "mind the sums!"
But shadow and shine in their airy play
Coaxed for the story that matched the day.

"Any time will do for the tiresome task,"
Said Edith at last, "and I think I'll ask
Papa to excuse my Arithmetic,—
In such warm weather I might be sick
If I taxed this poor little brain of mine."
So she listened, you see, to shadow and shine;

And then full-length on the velvet grass,
She dreamed of delights that would come to pass
When she, too large for the rigid rule
Of the happy home, or the stricter school,
Should be a woman, and quite at ease
Each hour to do what she might please.



A DREAMER.

Original Size

"On silvery paper, with golden pen,"
She mused, "I'd write love-stories then,
And wherever I went, would people say,
'The gifted Edith is here to-day! '
And maybe,—for stranger things have been,—
I might Editor be of a Magazine!"
No higher flight could her fancy take,
Were the darling child asleep or awake;
And presently there in that paradise,
The lids fell over the heavy eyes,
And the noon-bell's summons, loud and clear,
Was heeded not by her slumbering ear.

How long was her nap, I do not know,
But she sauntered home when the sun was low';
Dinner was over, and father frowned,
And chided her gently for "idling round,"
While gravely he bade her be sure and see
That she solved her examples after tea.

DORRIS' SPINNING.

(An Old Time Ballad.)

By Margaret J. Preston.

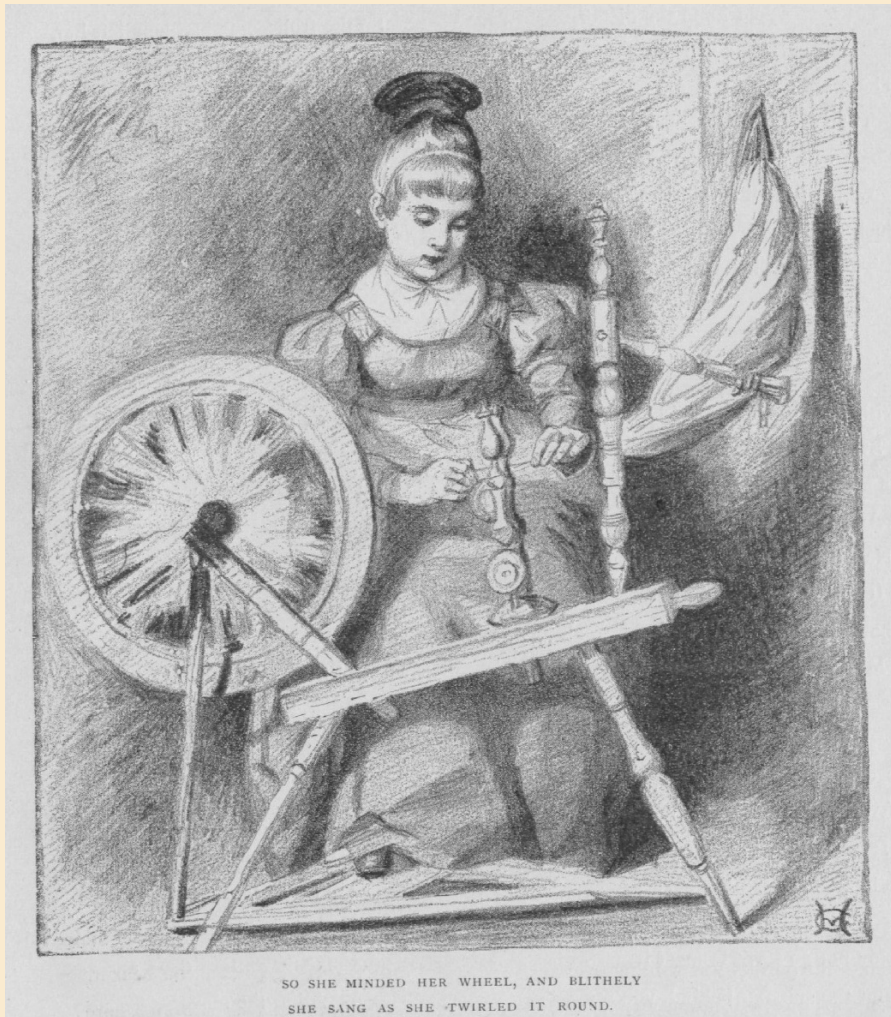
S HE sat in the upper chamber
—'Twas a summer of Long Ago—
And looked through the gable window
At the river that ran below,
And over the quiet pastures,
And up at the wide blue sky,
And envied the jay his freedom
As he lazily flitted by.

Yet patiently at her spinning,
In a halo of happy light,
Se wrought, though a shimmer rippled
The heads of the wheat in sight—
Though the garden was spilling over
Its cups on the fragrant air,
And the hollyhocks at the doorway
Had never looked half so fair.

She saw, as her wheel kept whirling,
The leisure of Nature too—
The beautiful holiday weather
Left nothing for her to do:
The cattle were idly grazing,
And even the frisky sheep,
Away in the distant meadows,
Lay under the shade asleep.

So sitting, she heard sweet laughter,
And a bevy of maidens fair,
With babble of merry voices,
Came climbing the chamber stair;

"O Dorns! how can you bear it,
To drone at your spinning here?
Why, girl! it's the heart of summer,
The goldenest time of year.



Original Size

"Put out of your hand the distaff,
This wearisome whirl relax—
There are things that are gayer, Dorris,
Than sitting and spinning flax:
Come with us away to the forest;
When it rains is the time to ply
Such tiresome tasks—and to-day is
The fifteenth day of July!"
With a face that was softly saddened,
Sweet Dorris looked up and said,
As she ravelled a bit of tangle,
And twisted again her thread,
"Nay, nay, I must do my spinning;
It wouldn't be kind or right
That the loom should be kept a-waiting;
My hanks must be done to-night.

So the frolicsome maidens left her,
With something of mild surprise
That Dorris should choose a duty,
With pleasure before her eyes;
Not dreaming that when her mother
Her "dozens" should count up-stairs,

And kiss her and say, "My darling!"
Her day would be glad as theirs.
So she minded her wheel, and blithely
She sang as she twirled it round,
And cunningly from her fingers
The delicate fibre wound;
And on through the sunny hours,
That neither were sad nor long,
She toiled in her sweet obedience,
And lightened her toil with song.

"Aye, surely, the day is lovely!
It tugs at my very heart
To look at its drifting beauty,
Nor share in its joy my part
I may not go forth to meet it,
But the summer is kind, you see,
And I think, as I sit at my spinning—
I think it will come to me!"

(*She sings.*)

"Come hither, happy birds,
With warbling woo me,
Till songs that have no words
Melt through and through me!
Come, bees, that drop and rise
Within the clover,
Where yellow butterflies
Go glancing over!

Oh, roses, red and white,
And lilies, shining
Like gilded goblets bright
With silver lining—
Each to my window send
Gifts worth the winning,
To cheer me as I bend
Above my spinning!

"Oh, ripples on the sand,
That break in beauty,
Oh, pines, that stiffly stand
Like guards on duty,

Green meadows, where, this morn,
The scythes were mowing,
Soft slopes, where, o'er the corn
The wind is blowing,

"White clouds above the hill
That sail together,
Rich summer scents that fill
This summer weather—
All bring the sweets you've found
Since morn's beginning,
And come and crowd them round
My day of spinning!"



Original Size

**THE BROOK BEHIND THE WAUMBEK
HOUSE.**

(Jefferson and White Mountains.)

By Mrs. Martha Perry Lowe.



Original Size

RUN along thy pastures, happy, happy brook,
Run along the pebbles, with a curvet and a
crook,
Sing it all the morning, and sing it afternoon,
Sing it all the starry night—that pleasant little
tune!
Are you growing modest, do you think that I shall
tire?
Do you fear that I shall go and look for something
higher?
Well I know the noisy world has music grand enough,
But I do not care for all its preludes, wild and
rough.
Well I know other music, solemn and sublime,
Voices of the ocean sounding all the depths of
time:
That is not the music I am looking for to-day,
It is you I want to hear, so frolicsome and gay.

Do not ever try to practise any modern art,
Do not even stop to think or care about your part,
Sing just as you always do, when there are none to
hear,

That will surely be the sweetest way to please my ear.

Ah, my little brook! how foolish was my thought:
All the praises of the worldling can disturb you naught.
Nothing can mislead you, or set you ill at ease,
Make you think about yourself, or of the way
to please.

Not a little fish could have made such a speech,
Not a shining fly that skims along your beach,
Not a little bird would have said such a thing—
Pardon me my foolishness, and sing again, sing!



Original Size

BOBBY LEE

ONE, two, three!
One was Bobby Lee
Sitting by the brook,
With his fishing-hook,
With his spelling-book
Thrust far aside,
Whilst loud he cried:
"For once, no school,
For once, no rule,
Bell, ring away!
This whole, whole day
I'll stop and play!"
One, two, three!
One was Mrs. Bee
Stopping just to stare
At the vision there—
Bobby by the brook
With his fishing-hook;

At the spelling-book
Thrust far aside;

THREE.

By Rosa Graham.

Whilst loud she cried:
"The livelong day
A boy to play!
I'd like to see
One little bee
Like Bobby Lee!"

One, two, three!
One was Lady Rose,
In her pretty clothes,
Staring down to see
Little Bobby Lee,
With his fishing-hook,
With his spelling-book
Thrust far aside,
Whilst loud she cried:
"The livelong day,
A boy to play!
I'd like to know,
If I did so,
How I would grow!"



"FOR ONCE, NO SCHOOL!"

SUMMER'S GOING.

By Mrs. L. C. Whiton.

LEAVES are shrinking on the trees,
Where the nests are hidden;
There's a hush among the bees,
As to roam forbidden;
There's the silk of corn that shows
Faded tangles blowing:
So that everybody knows,
Darling, summer's going.

There are insects' wings that gleam;
Locusts shrilly calling;
There are silences that seem
Into sadness falling;
There is not another rose
But the sweet-brier blowing:
So that everybody knows,
Darling, summer's going.

There's the mist that haunts the night
Into morning sailing,
Leaving filmy webs of light
On the grasses trailing;
There's the fierce red sun that glows,
Through the vapor showing:
So that everybody knows,
Darling, summer's going.

Breathe but softest little sigh.
Child, for vanished roses,
For each season, going by,
Something sweet discloses;
And if in your heart has grown
Truth to fairer blowing,
Summer then will be your own,
Spite of summer's going.

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