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Other Child-Verses, by Mary Eleanor Wilkins Freeman**

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK ONCE UPON A TIME, AND OTHER CHILD-VERSES ***

**ONCE UPON A TIME AND OTHER
CHILD-VERSES**

By Mary E. Wilkins

**Author Of "The Pot Of Gold," "Jane Field," "A New England Nun," "An Humble
Romance," "Pembroke," Etc.**

Illustrated By Etheldred B. Barry

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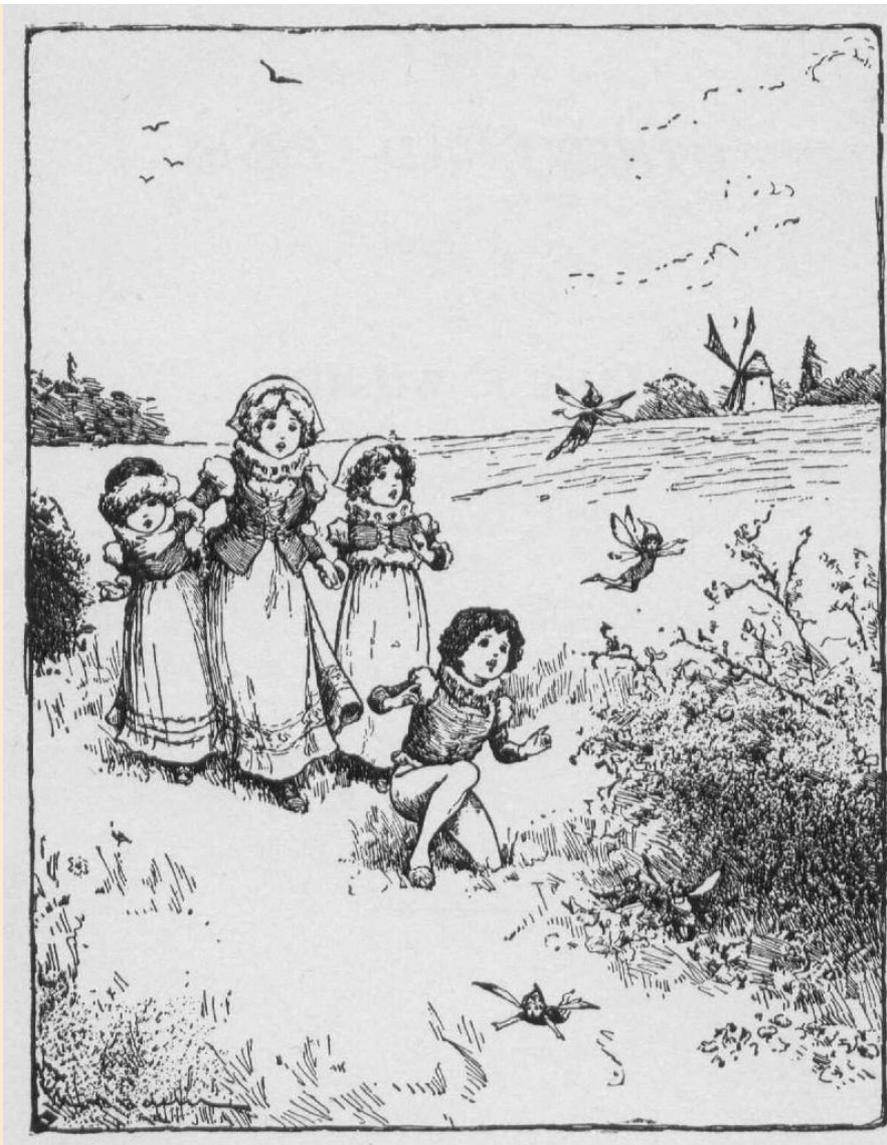
ONCE UPON A TIME

AND OTHER CHILD-VERSES

MARY E. WILKINS



Original



Original

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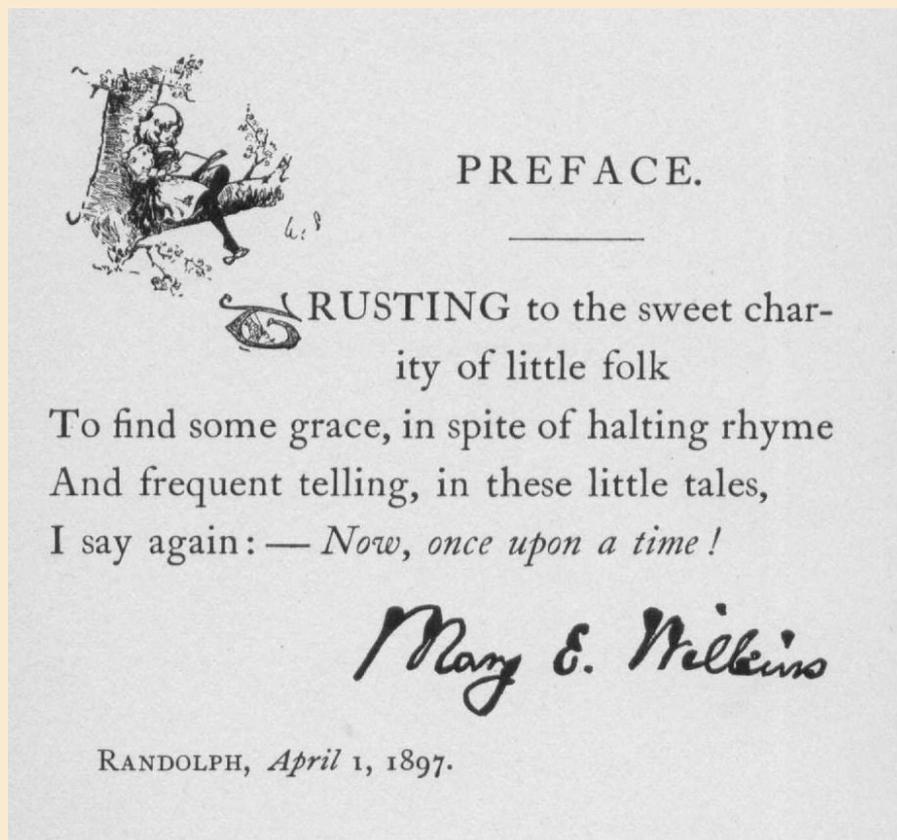
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TRUSTING to the sweet charity of little folk
To find some grace, in spite of halting rhyme
And frequent telling, in these little tales,
I say again:—Now, once upon a time!



Original

ONCE UPON A TIME

NOW, once upon a time, a nest of fairies
Was in a meadow 'neath a wild rose-
tree;
And, once upon a time, the violets clustered
So thick around it one could scarcely see;
And, once upon a time, a troop of children
Came dancing by upon the flowery ground;
And, once upon a time, the nest of fairies,
With shouts of joy and wonderment they
found;
And, once upon a time, the fairies fluttered
On purple winglets, shimmering in the sun;
And, once upon a time, the nest forsaking,
They flew off thro' the violets, every one;
And, once upon a time, the children followed
With loud halloos along the meadow green;
And, once upon a time, the fairies vanished,
And never more could one of them be seen;
And, once upon a time, the children sought
them
For many a day, but fruitless was their quest,

For, once upon a time, amid the violets,
They only found the fairies' empty nest.

THE SICK FAIRY.

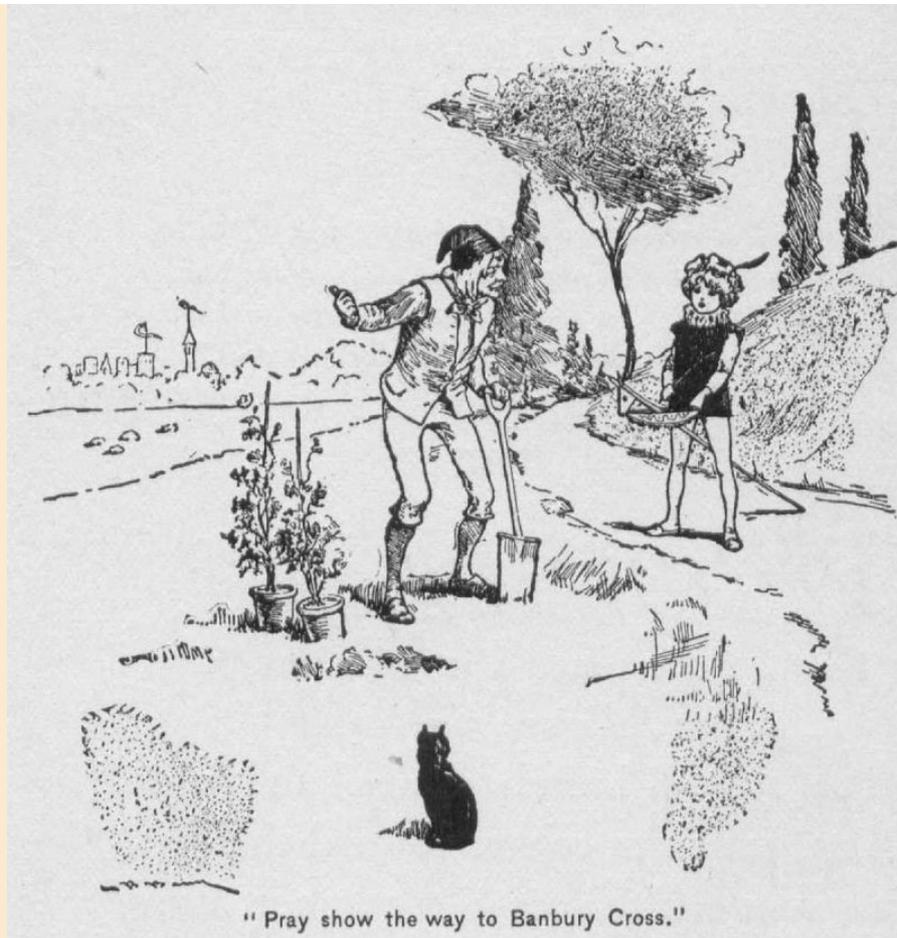
BREW some tea o' cowslips, make some
poppy-gruel,
Serve it in a buttercup—ah, 'tis very cruel,
That she is so ailing, pretty Violetta!
Locust, stop your violin, till she's feeling better.

THE ENCHANTED TALE OF BANBURY CROSS.

*"Ride a cock-horse to Banbury Cross,
To see an old woman jump on a white horse;
With rings on her fingers and bells on her toes,
She shall make music wherever she goes."*

—Old Nursery Rhyme.

PRAY show the way to Banbury Cross,"
Silver bells are ringing ;
"To find the place I'm at a loss,"
Silver bells are ringing.
"Pass six tall hollyhocks red and white;
Then, turn the corner toward the right,
Pass four white roses; turn once more,
Go by a bed of gilly-flower,
And one of primrose; turn again
Where, glittering with silver rain,
There is a violet-bank; then pass
A meadow green with velvet grass,



Original

Where lovely lights and shadows play,
And white lambs frolic all the day,
Where blooming trees their branches toss—
Then will you come to Banbury Cross."

The white horse arched his slender neck,
Silver bells are ringing;
Snow-white he was without a speck,
Silver bells are ringing.

An old wife held his bridle-rein,
(The king was there with all his train),
Her gray hair fluttered in the wind,
Her gaze turned inward on her mind;
And not one face seemed she to see
In all that goodly company.
Gems sparkled on her withered hands;
Her ankles gleamed with silver bands
On which sweet silver bells were hung,
And always, when she stirred, they rung.

The white horse waited for the start,
Silver bells are ringing;

Before him leapt his fiery heart,
Silver bells are ringing.
Up on his back the old wife sprung,
Her silver bells, how sweet
they rung!
She gave her milk-white
steed the rein,
And round they swept,

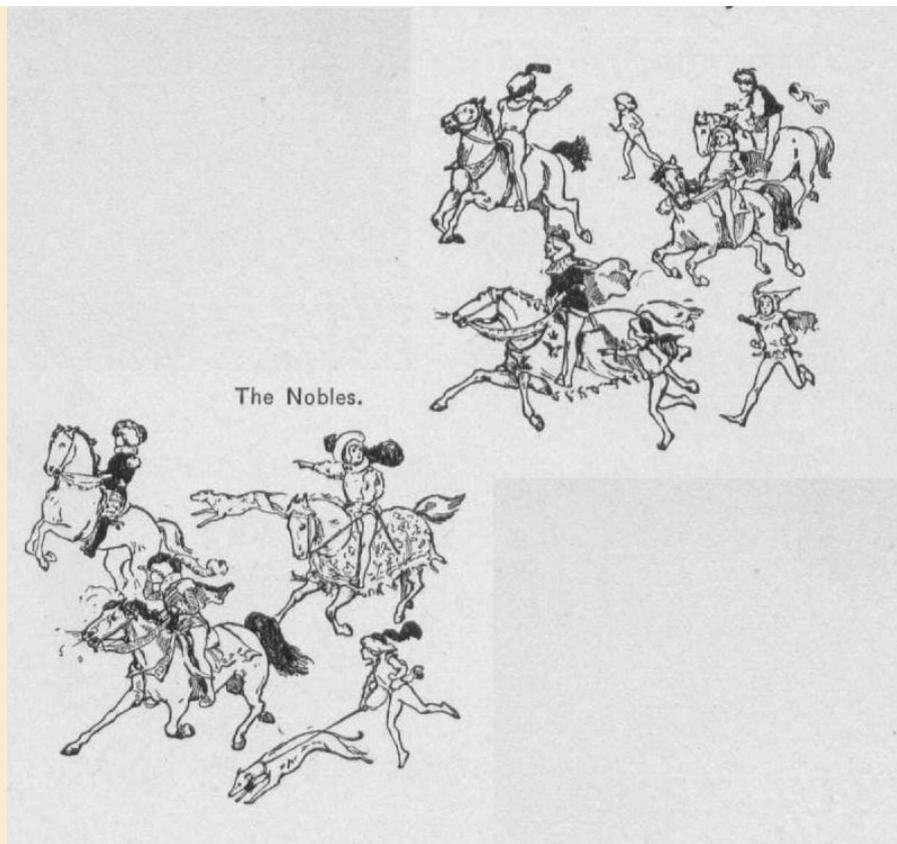


[Original Size](#)

and round again.
A merry sight it was
to see,
And the silver bells
The Old Wife.
rang lustily.
The gallant horse with gold was shod;
So fleetly leapt he o'er the sod,
He passed the king before he knew,
And past his flying shadow flew.

A pretty sight it was, forsooth,
Silver bells are ringing;
For dame and children, maid and youth,
Silver bells are ringing.
The princess laughed out with delight,
And clapped her hands, so lily-white—
The darling princess, sweet was she
As any flowering hawthorn-tree.
She stood beside her sire, the king,
And heard the silvery music ring,
And watched the white horse, o'er the
Sweep round, and round, and round again
Until the old wife slacked his pace
Before the princess' wondering face,

Then snatched her up before they knew,
Silver bells are ringing;
And with her from their vision flew,
Silver bells are ringing.
The nobles to their saddles spring
And follow, headed by the king!
But, when they reach it, it is gone
The white dew falls, the sun is set,
And no trace of the princess yet.
They gallop over meadows green;
They leap the bars that lie between;



Original

Thro' the cool woodland ride they now,
 'Neath rustling branches, bending low;
 The silver music draws them
 Along the beams of moonlight pale,
 Silver bells are ringing;
 In violet shadows in the vale,
 Silver bells are ringing.
 "Return with us, oh, gracious king!



Original Size

This search is but a bootless thing.
 A spell is laid upon our minds,
 Our thoughts are tossed as by the winds,
 And deeper o'er our senses swells
 The music of those silver bells!
 Return, oh, king, ere 'tis
 late;
 The Wise Man by the
 palace gate
 Will give to thee his
 kindly aid,

So shalt thou find the
 royal maid."
 They galloped back o'er hill and dale,
 Silver bells are ringing;
 In soft gusts came the southern gale,
 Silver bells are ringing.

The trembling king knelt down before
 The Wise Man at the palace-door:
 "Oh, Wise Man! art thou truly wise—
 Find out my child with thy bright eyes!"
 "Thy daughter clings to carven stone,
 White dove-wings from her shoulders
 grown;
 In downy dove-plumes is she drest;

They shine like jewels on her breast;
She sits beneath the minster eaves,
Amongst the clustering ivy leaves."

"She was so full of angel-love,"

Silver bells are ringing;

"They could but make her a white dove,"

Silver bells are ringing.

The king stood 'neath the minster wall,
And loudly on his child did call.

A snow-white dove beneath the eaves,
Looked down from 'mongst the ivy leaves,
Then flew down to the monarch's breast,
And, sorely panting, there did rest.

Then spake the Wise Man by his side:

"Oh, king, canst thou subdue thy pride,
And hang thy crown beneath the eaves,
Amongst the clustering ivy leaves

"In thine unhappy daughter's place?"

Silver bells are ringing;



"For thus she'll find her maiden grace,"

Silver bells are ringing.

The jewels in the royal
crown,

Out from the dark
green ivy shone!

The white dove softly
folds her wings,

Then lightly to the ground
she springs—

[Original Size](#)

A princess, sweeter than before,

For being a white dove an hour.

They went home through the happy town,

The king forgot his royal crown,

And soon, beneath the minster eaves,

'Twas hidden by the ivy leaves.

A-BERRYING.

NOW Susan Jane a-berrying goes,
With her dipper and pail a-berry-
ing goes—

Now Susan Jane creeps dolefully home, and
mournfully hangs her head;

For she tumbled down and bumped her
nose,

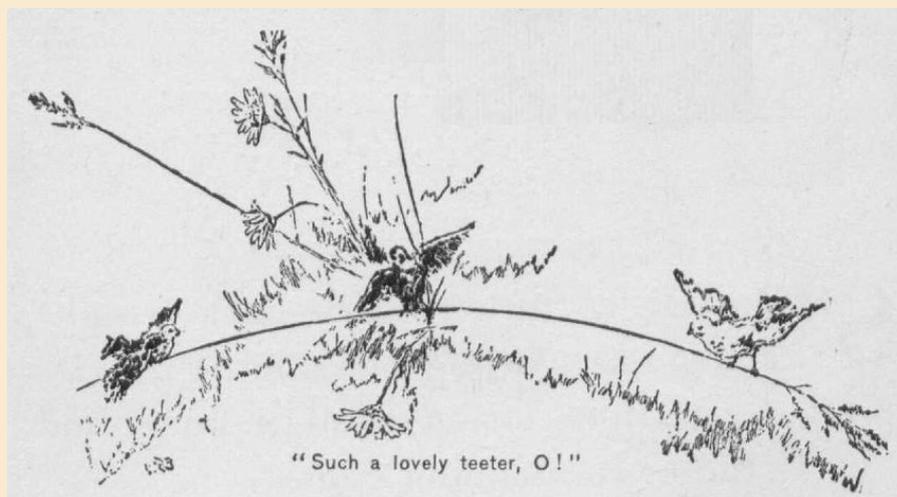
She tore her frock and she stubbed her toes,
And the blueberries all were green, alas! and
the blackberries all were red!

TWO MOODS.

MEADOWS shadowy and sunny,
Pink with clover, sweet with honey,
Green with grass that shakes and swings,
Rustling 'till it almost sings,
From her open window show
For a pleasant mile or so.
She with earnest, pensive look,
Bending o'er an open book,
Her own happy self forgets
Following a story-child's
Pretty pleasures and regrets.
Straightening up her golden head,
Now she sees the fields instead,
Where the grass and clover stir,
And her glad self and her day
Radiantly come back to her.

THE THREE MARGERY DAWS.

SEE-SAW, see-saw, up and down we gay-
ly go!
See-saw, see-saw, such a lovely teeter, O!
See-saw, see-saw,
grass across a daisy-stalk—



Original

Up and down the robins teetered with their
silvery talk.
See-saw, see-saw! robins, they know how to
play
See-saw, see-saw, as well as children any day;
See-saw, see-saw! lads and lassies, don't you
know,
Grass across a daisy-stalk makes a lovely
teeter, O!

A LITTLE SEAMSTRESS.

SHE sat in her little rocking-chair, a-sigh-
ing and twirling her thumbs:
"Oh, everything for my doll is done, and
never to mending comes!
I haven't a morsel of sewing!—dear mother,
in all the town,
Can't you find me one doll, no matter how
small, who will wear out her gown?"

THE GOLDEN SLIPPERS.



[*Original Size*](#)

MY lady's ready for the ball;
But she's lost her golden slippers,
And the servants scurry all,
From the pantry, from the hall,
Brooms in hand, and spoons and dippers.
Ah, my lady's golden slippers!
Footman, cook, and housemaid—run!
Hunt ye nimbly, every one!
Round they whirl, the lightsome trippers,
And the music has begun:
Ah, my lady's golden slippers!

Hurry, hurry; for she yet,
If ye find her golden slippers,
May lead off the minuet
With the Prince of Popinet,
Foremost of the stately steppers.

Ah, my lady's golden slippers!
Guess ye where they found them all!
Dancing bravely at the ball,



Original

Of themselves, these frisky slippers,
 Wheeling at the fiddle's call—
Ah, my lady's golden slippers!

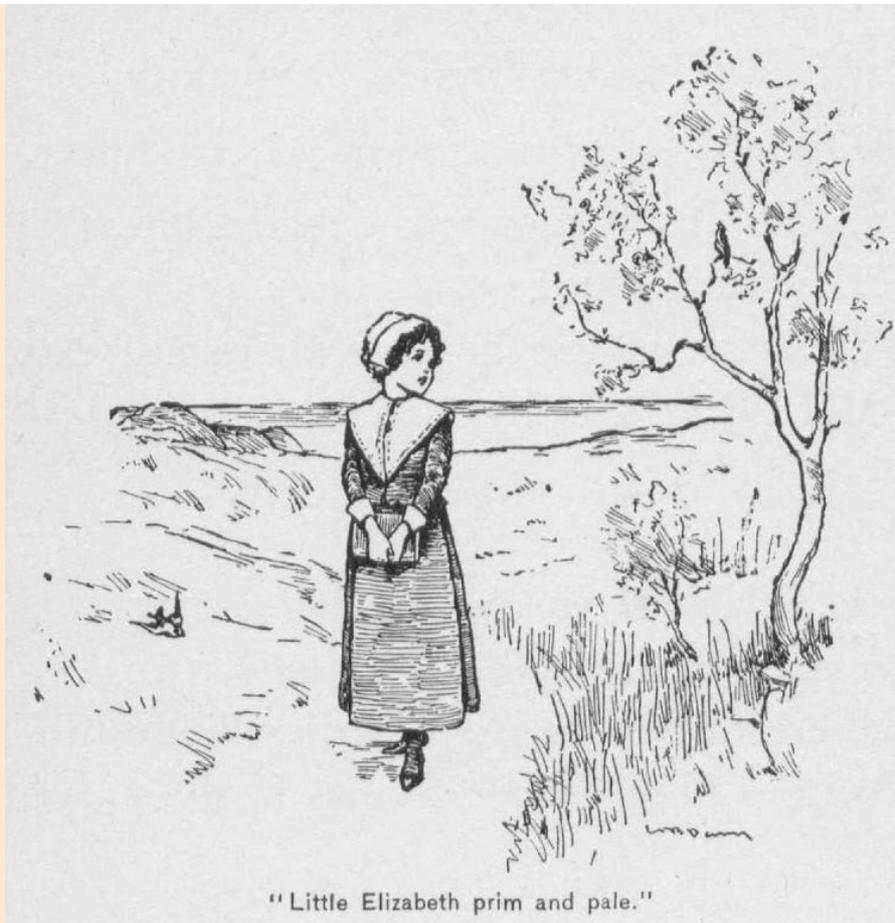
THE TITHING-MAN.

BONNY sweet-marjoram was in flower,
 The pinks had come with their spices
 sweet;
Thro' the village sounded the Sabbath-bell,
 And the reverent people flocked down the
 street.

Little Elizabeth, prim and pale,
 A decorous little Puritan maid,
Walked soberly up the meeting-house hill,
 With a look on her face as if she prayed.

Her catechism was in her hand,
 Unvexed was she by the scholar's art;
Her simple lesson she simply learned,
 And loved the Father with all her heart.

Her little kerchief was white as snow,
 Like a rose she looked in her Sunday gown



Original

As she soberly climbed the meeting-house
hill,
With her pretty eyes east meekly down.

Little Elizabeth sat alone
In the queer old-fashioned oaken pew,
And earnestly on the parson bent
Her modest, innocent eyes of blue.

But, ah! the sermon was deep and long,
The parson spoke with a weary drone;
And she heard the honey-bees out of doors
Hum, in a drowsy monotone;

The very wind had a sleepy sound—
Little Elizabeth began to nod,
Though she told herself 'twas a dreadful thing
To fall asleep in the house of God.

"My fourthly is," the parson droned;—
"I pray the Lord my soul to keep,"
Mused little Elizabeth in a maze—
And then—ah me! she fell asleep.

The tithing-man crept down the aisle
In solemn state, with his awful rod,
To chide the folk in the meeting-house
Who dared to whisper, or smile, or nod.

Little Elizabeth soundly slept,
All by herself, in the oaken pew,
With the heavy gold-fringed eyelids drooped
Over her innocent eyes of blue.

Close to her tiptoed the tithing-man,
And over her reached his awful rod,
And poked the little Puritan maid
For falling asleep in the house of God.

Dear little Elizabeth, prim and pale!
How her poor heart jumped when she
woke and found
The dreaded tithing-man at her side,
And the queer poke-bonnets all turning
round!

Then she sat straight up in the old oak pew,
Grave and pale as a lily-flower;
But she thought the people all looked at her,
While all their eyes did lower and glower;

And, going home, she fancied the birds
Called back and forth, with a knowing nod:
"There's the little maid whom the tithing-
man
Caught fast asleep in the house of God."

THE BARLEY-CANDY BOY.

O THE Barley-Candy Boy! O the Bar-
ley-Candy Boy!
Who lived in the toy-man's window, 'tis little
he had of joy!
For he could not eat a bit of sweet, nor any
sugar at all,
Unless he ran a fearful risk of being a can-
nibal.

DOWN IN THE CLOVER.

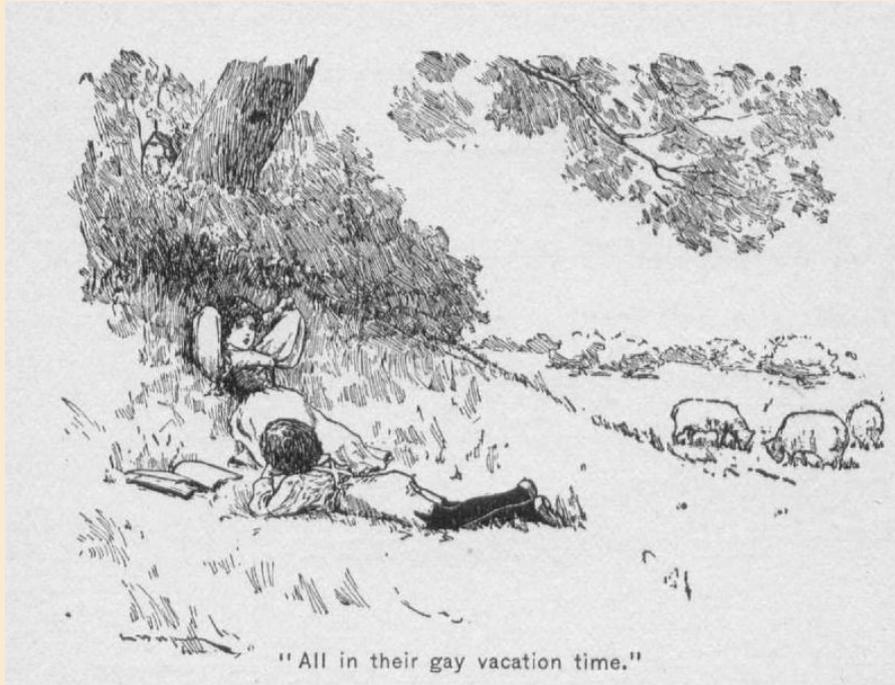
(*A Duet, with Sheep Obligato.*)

M ID feeding lambs and springing grass
There sat a little lad and lass,
A green umbrella overhead,
The flickering shade of boughs instead,
And read a book of fairy rhyme,
All in their gay vacation time.

Quoth he: "The dearest, queerest story
Was that one of the fairy prince,
Who sailed down stream in his pearl dory,
Neath boughs of rose and flowering quince,

To save the lovely princess whom
The wicked, white-haired, old witch-lady
Kept in a tower of awful gloom,
Deep in a magic forest shady:

How proud he tossed his plumèd head
Before the witch's door, and said "—



Original

Sheep: Ba-a, ba-a! Honey-sweet the clover's
blowing
Ba-a, ba-a! Juicy-green the grass is
growing.

"I think," quoth she, "there's one that's
better:

About that little fairy girl,
Who bound the ogre with a fetter
Of spiderwort and grass and pearl;
Then singing in the gateway sat,
Till up the road the prince came prancing,
A jewelled feather in his hat,
And set the cherry-boughs a-dancing.
How low he bent his handsome head
Before the fairy girl, and said "—

Sheep: Ba-a, ba-a! Who the day so sweetly
passes
As a lamb who never stops,
But from dawn to twilight crops
Clover-heads and dewy grasses?

"Well, by and by I think I'll be
A fairy prince as brave as he:
I'll wind a silver bugle clear,
Low and dim you'll hear it, dear;
A sword with jewelled hilt I'll bear,
A cap and heron-plume I'll wear,

And I will rescue you," quoth



At the Witch's Tower.

he.
"Fast to the witch's tower I'll
And beat upon the gate, and
cry
Sheep: Ba-a, ba-a! Sweet the
simple life we're leading,
In the sweet green pasture
feeding!

Then quoth the little reader
fair.
"I've changed my mind, for I don't dare
To stay there in the witch's tower;
I'll be the dame who found a flower
Of gold and rubies—in the tale—
And sold it for a fairy veil,

Original Size

Which made her look so sweet and true
That she was dearly loved; then you "—
Sheep: Ba-a, ba-a! Turn the juicy morsel over.
Who would be a lad or lass,
If he could his summer pass
As the sheep amongst the clover?
Grasshoppers on daisies teeter,
Dew-drops clovers sweeten sweeter.
Who can care for stupid tales,
Fairy horns and f airy veils,
Fairy princess, fairy prince?
Yet we must not blame them, since
(Turn the juicy morsel over)
They cannot be sheep in clover.

THE BALLAD OF THE BLACK-SMITH'S SONS.

I.

CLING, clang,—"Whoa, my bonny gray
mare!
Whoa,"—cling, clang,—"my bay!
But the black and the sorrel must stay unshod,
While my two fair sons are away."

II.

While the blacksmith spake, his fair sons
came,
And stood in the smithy door—
"Now where have ye been, my two fair sons,
For your father has missed ye sore? "

III.

Then pleasantly spake the younger son,
With the eyes of dreamy blue:
"O Father, we've been in a land as bright

As the glint o' the morning dew! "

IV.

Then his brother twinkled his gay black eyes,
And he spake up merry and bold:
"Hey, Father, we've been in the fairy land,
Where the horses are shod wi' gold!"

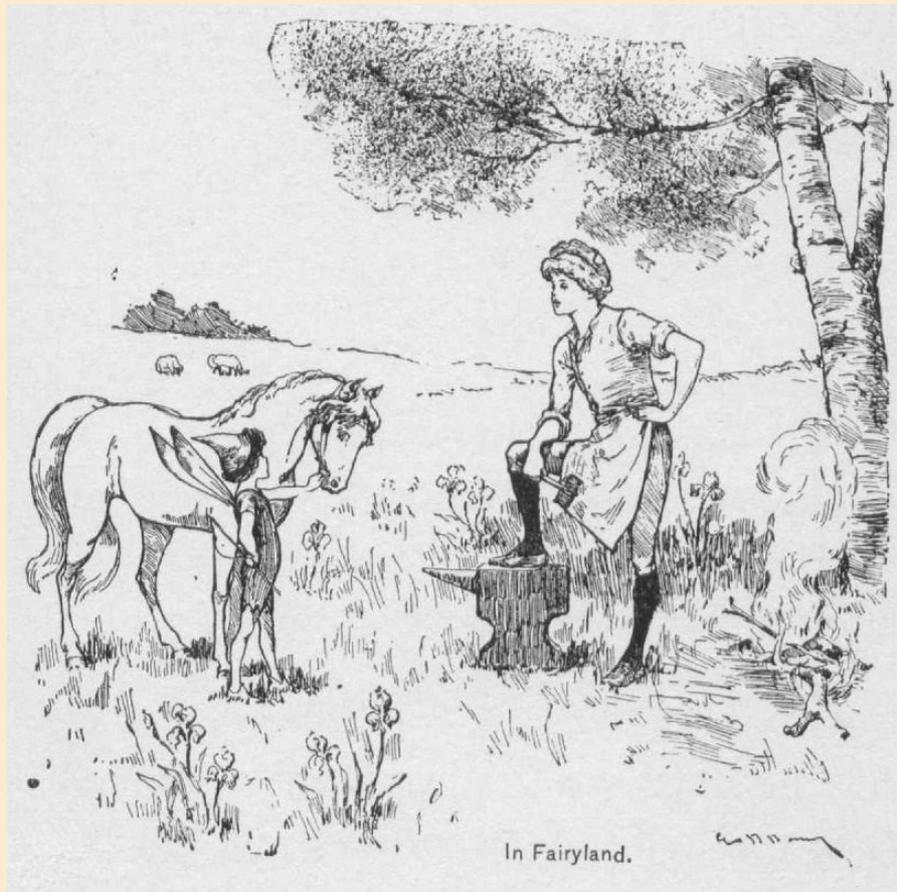
V.

"An' what did ye there in Fairyland,
O my two fair sons, I pray?"
"We shod for them, Father, their fairy steeds,
All in a month an' a day.

VI.

"An', Father, we shod them wi' virgin gold;
Each nail had a diamond head;
All the steeds were as white as the clear moon-
light,
An' in fields o' lilies they fed."

"An' what was the sum o' the fairy hire,
O my two fair sons, I pray?"



Original

"A seed of a wonderful fairy flower,
They gave to us each for pay! "

VIII.

"An' what will ye do wi' the seeds, fair
sons?"

"We will sow i' the light, green spring,
An' maybe a golden rose will toss,
Or a silver lily will swing."

IX.

"Now,"—cling, clang,—"whoa, my bonny
gray mare!

Whoa,"—cling, clang,—"my bay!
An' the sorrel an' black, now my sons are
back,
Can be shod "—cling, clang,—"to-day."

X.

Oh! the smith's sons planted the fairy seeds
When the light, green spring came round,
Through the sunlit hours, 'twixt the April
showers,
In the best of the garden ground.

XI.

Then the white rains wove with the long
light-beams,
Till a stalk, like a slim green flame,
Pierced the garden mould: a leaf unrolled;
And another beside it came.

XII.

Then the brothers tended their fairy plants
Till they shot up brave and tall,
And the leaves grew thick. "Now soon shall
we pick
A rose like a golden ball;

XIII.

"Or else we shall see a lily, maybe,
With a bell o' bright silver cast,"
They thought; and they cried with joy and
When the blossom-buds shaped at last.

XIV.

"Now, heyday!" shouted the elder son,
And he danced in the garden walk,
"A hat I will buy, as a steeple high,
An' the neighbors will stare an' talk.

XV.

"Heyday! I will buy me a brave gold chain,
An' a waistcoat o' satin fine,

A ruff o' lace, an' a pony an' chaise,
An' a bottle o' red old wine!"

XVI.

But his brother looked up in the blue spring
sky,
And his yellow curls shone in the sun—
"O joy! If I hold but my fairy gold,
My father's toil is done!"

XVII.

"He shall hammer no more with his tired
old hands,
He shall shoe not the bay nor the gray;
But shall live as he please, an' sit at his ease,
A-resting the livelong day."

XVIII.

Alas, and alas! When it came to pass
That the bud to a flower was grown,
It was pallid and green,—no blossom so mean
In the country side was known.

XIX.

Then angrily hurried the elder son,
And hustled his up by the root;
And it gave out a sound, as it left the ground,
Like the shriek of a fairy flute.

XX.

But he flung it over the garden wall;
And he cried, with a scowling brow:
"No waistcoat fine, an' no bottle o' wine—
I have labored for naught, I trow! "

XXI.

"Now,"—cling, clang,—"whoa, my bonny
gray mare!
Cling, clang,—"whoa, my bay!
But the sorrel an' white must wait to-night,
For one son sulks all day."

XXII

But the blue-eyed son till the summer was
done
Cared well for his fairy-flower;
He weeded and watered, and killed the
grub
Would its delicate leaves devour.

XXIII.

Then forth to his garden he went one day,
And the fairy plant was dead;
The leaves were black in the white frost-
light,
And the stalk was a shrivelled shred.

XXIV.

"Now, never a rose like a golden ball,
Nor a silver lily shall blow;
But never I'll mind, for I'm sure to find
More gold, if I work, I know."

XXV

Then he tenderly pulled up the fairy plant,
And lo, in the frosty mould,
Like a star from the skies to his dazzled eyes,
Was blazing a bulb of gold!

XXVI.

"Now,"—cling, clang,—"whoa, my bonny
gray mare!
Or gallop or trot, as ye may!
This happy old smith will shoe ye no more,
For he sits at his ease, all day! "

A VALENTINE FOR BABY.

*The rose is red, the violet's blue,
Pinks are pretty, and so are you."*

THE rose is red, my rosy dear;
But that you as yet hardly know,
Since you have only been with us
Four of the times when roses blow.

The violet's blue, my blue-eyed love;
Yet that, perhaps, you hardly knew,
Since you have only four times passed
The violets in their hoods of blue.

The pinks are pretty, baby queen,
And so are you; but that, also,
From being here so short a time,
Perhaps you've hardly learned to know.

THE FAIRY FLAG.

A Skye Folk-lore Story.

BEYOND the purple gloom of moors,
Beyond the blueness of the sea,
Beyond the range of chalk-white cliffs,
The sun was setting peacefully.

The fairy, on a grassy knoll,
Sat dreaming, singing to the cows:
"Knee-deep in clumps of plummy ferns,
Knee-deep in rustling grasses browse!

"The chieftain slays his foeman's clan,
The lady broiders in the hall;
I sit here singing to the cows,
And am the gayest one of all!

"Now of the clumps of spicy fern,
Now of the juicy grasses taste!"
The fairy wore a grass-green gown,
With golden girdle at her waist;

Her winsome little face upturned,
Her soft gold hair all round her streamed;
Her small pink cheeks like roses burned,
Her wild blue eyes like jewels beamed.

She struck a little harp o' pearl,
As to the browsing kine she sung:
All lightly o'er the fairy bridge
Beyond, a bonnie laddie sprung.

He had Prince Charlie's yellow locks,
His gay blue eyes and lovesome way:
Son of the great Macleod was he—
The castle just beyond him lay.

The fairy lilted loud and sweet,
The laddie turned him round to see;
She lifted up her little face,
And sweet, and sweet, and sweet, smiled
she.



Thro' the heather.

[Original Size](#)

The laddie thro' the heather
ran,
His tartan blowing out behind,
The little fairy, gowned in green,
Wi' little harp o' pearl, to find.

And since you are a mortal bairn,
And yet have shunned me not," she said,
A fairy gift I'll give to thee,
To-morrow, when the west is red.

"And since you have a bonny face,
I'll give to thee a fairy kiss,
To take the bitter from thy woe,
And add a sweetness to thy bliss."

She kissed the laddie's blushing cheek,
And all the air grew sweet around,
As if a million flowers bloomed out—
And then she vanished from the ground.

The western sky all roses was,
And round the "Macleod's Maidens" feet
Foam-wreaths to wreaths of roses turned.
The fairy lilted loud and sweet;

The laddie o'er the fairy bridge,
Came running lightly to her side:
"And have you brought the fairy gift
You promised me last night?" he cried.

The flag was green as springtide sward
What time the sun upon it lies,
And shot with threads of glittering gold,
And filled with spots of gold, like eyes.

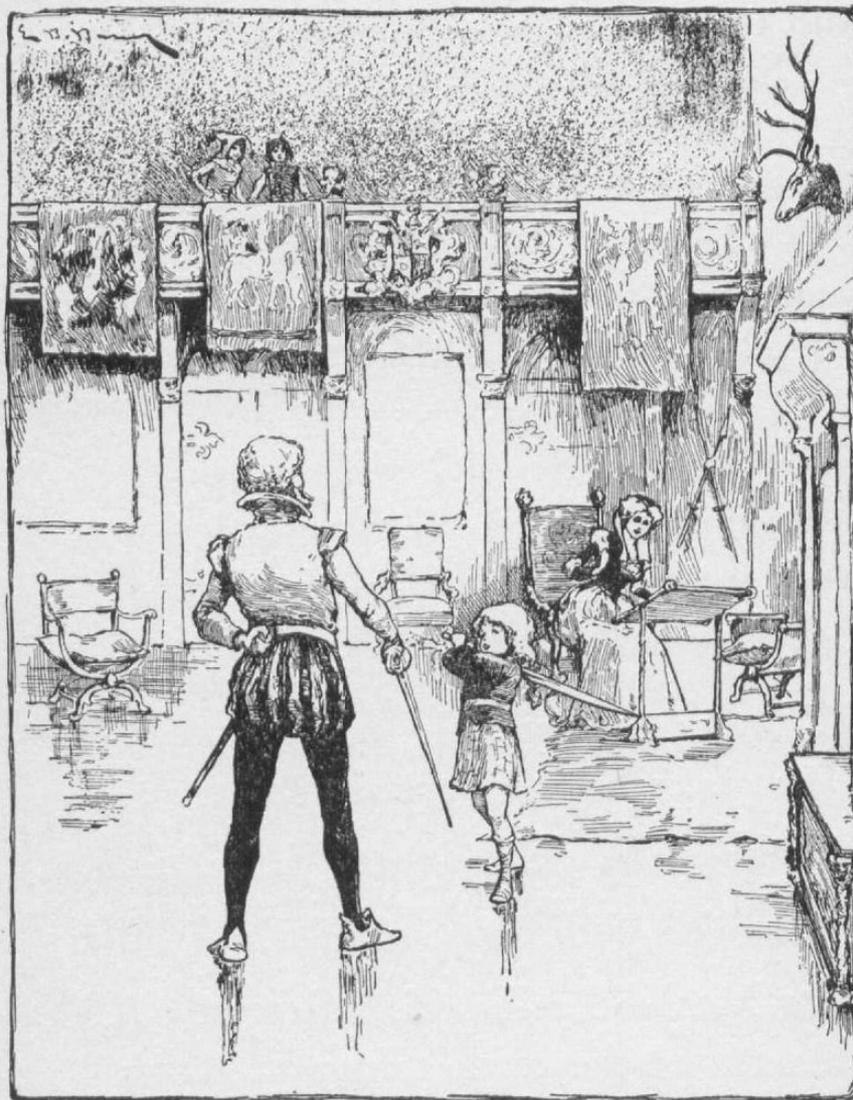
She put it in the laddie's hand:
"Once waved, 'twill bring thee thy desire,
And twice, and thrice—but not again;
Then cast it, worthless, in the fire!"

A shadow o'er her gown o' green,
A shadow o'er her winsome face,
A shadow o'er her golden hair,
Came softly creeping on apace.

The fairy through the shadow shone,
And struck her little harp o' pearl;
Then vanished in the shadow's heart,
Wi' golden and wi' rosy swirl.

The laddie held the fairy flag,
Alone in twilight gray and cold;
And stood and looked, his wond'ring eyes
All filled with dancing motes of gold.

The laddie's yellow beard had grown;
He'd wedded with a lady fair;



"A little son, with his same bonnie yellow hair."

Original

And he had got a little son,
With his same bonnie yellow hair.

And alway had the fairy's kiss,
She gave to him so long ago,
Added a sweetness to his bliss,
And ta'en the bitter from his woe.

But never yet the fairy flag
Had waved upon the castle wall;
For with his stalwart arm and sword,
His troubles he had breasted all.

"Oh, where's my little laddie gone?"
The lady left her 'broidery frame;
Through every castle window peered,
With tearful eyes, the gentle dame.

Then Macleod called his followers out,
And loud the castle trumpets blew:
"Oh, Macleod's heir is strayed awa',
And on the heather falls the dew,

"And on the heather falls the dew;
Shadows are floating o'er the sea.



Original

Oh, where's my little laddie gone:
I pray ye bring him back to me!

They searched along the chalk-white cliffs,
Upon the dizzy hanging paths;
They sought him on their breezy tops,
Along the strips of grassy straths.

They called "Macleod" adown the hill;
They called "Macleod" adown the vale;
They hailed the shepherd with his flock,
The maiden with her milking-pail.

They searched Dunvergan castle thro';
Each dungeon in the thick stone wall
They peered within, but only found
The prisoned foemen, grim and tall.

His mother looked out o'er the sea,
To where the "Macleod's Maidens" stand,
To see, above the foam-wreaths, rise
His yellow head and waving hand.

The laddie came not, when the moon
With all the stars sailed out in sight,
And "Macleod's Tables," tops of snow,
Were cloth of silver in her light.

"Bring out, bring out the fairy flag!

I'll wave it from the topmost tower!
There'll come no direr need than this,
For Macleod's race has lost its flower!"

Macleod then waved the fairy flag;
It looked a net of golden wire;
Its streaks of gold and spots of gold
All linked and curled like tongues of fire.

There came a twang o' pearly harp,
There came a lilting loud and sweet;
And softly o'er the fairy bridge
There came the dance o' slender feet.

There danced along the fairy bridge
A spot i' the golden light apace:
The laddie at the castle gate
Stood lifting up his bonnie face.

"Oh, I ha' wandered by the burn,
And I ha' wandered by the glen;
A little leddy all in green,"
He said, "has led me home again."

Macleod close furled the fairy flag:
"Ye've served me once in blessed stead,
But sorely I'll be pressed again
Ere I will wave ye twice!" he said.



[Original Size](#)

All day the chief had held the field,
Nor quailed until the sun sank low:
His followers, bleeding, round him lay,
And he was hemmed in by the foe.

Oh, life is sweet! "exclaimed Macleod;
"I love my bairn and lady dear:
I'll wave again the fairy flag—
But will it bring me succor here?"

Macleod waved high the fairy flag;
His foemen reeled back at the sight;

For in their cruel eyes there danced
Great spots and bars of golden light.

There came a twang o' pearly harp,
There came a lilting loud and sweet;
And Macleod's foemen turned and fled,
The hills all rang with flying feet.

Macleod furled close the fairy flag:
"Ye've served me twice in blessed stead,
But I shall in the churchyard lie
Ere I will wave ye thrice!" he said.

"For if I thrice should wave the flag,
And thrice should get my heart's desire,
Next day might come a sorer need,
When it were ashes in the fire."

Macleod kept well his word: he fought

For life on many a bloody plain;
He tossed in peril on the sea,
Nor waved the fairy flag again.

The hand that waved the fairy flag,
The lips the fairy kissed, are still:
Macleod low in the churchyard lies,
And deaf to lilting sweet and shrill.

But still his kin in misty Skye
The fairy flag in keeping hold;
And sometime from the castle wall
May flash its spots and bars of gold.

But dire indeed shall be the need,
And every other hope be slain,
Before a Macleod of the Isle
Shall wave the fairy flag again.

THE SPOILED DARLING.

OH the ruffles there were on that little
dress, Fanny!
Her mamma does dress her so sweetly, you
know;
And the prettiest sash of pale rose-colored
satin
Tied at her waist in a butterfly-bow.

And her soft, flossy hair, almost a rose-yellow,
Like the roses we had in our garden last year,
Cut short round the fairest blue-veined little
forehead—
Oh, if Miss Marion wasn't a dear!

Just perfect she was, the mite of a darling,
From her flower of a head to her pink
slipper-toes!
You will laugh, but she seemed as I looked
at her, Fanny,
A little girl copied right after a rose!

Well, you know how it is: they have petted
the darling,
Her papa and mamma, her uncles and
aunts—
Till, saving the moon, which they can't get
for princes,
There isn't a thing but she has if she wants.

So, last night at the Christmas-tree, Fanny,
—It was so funny I laugh at it now—
There was Miss Marion sweeter than honey,
All in her ruffles and butterfly-bow;

She had presents, I thought, enough for a

dozen,
But she seemed heavy-hearted in spite of
it all;
Her sweet little mouth was all of a quiver,
And there was a teardrop just ready to
fall.

The aunts and the cousins all round her came
crowding;
"And what is the matter, my darling, my
dear?"
She didn't look sulky, but grieved; and I
saw it
Roll down her pink cheek, that trembling
tear;

And she lisped out so honest, "Mamie and
Bessie,
And the rest, have pwesents—and 'twas
my Tristmas-tree;
And when I tame in, I fought that the pwes-
ents—
The whole of them on it—of tourse were
for me! "

I scarcely could blame her—she didn't seem
angry,
But grieved to the heart, the queer little
mite!
And 'twasn't her fault—she'd been fed so
much honey,
All the sweet in the world she took as her
right.

THE BROWNIE'S XMAS.

THE Brownie who lives in the forest,
Oh, the Christmas bells they ring!
Has done for the farmer's children
Full many a kindly thing:

When their cows were lost in the gloaming,
He has driven them safely home;
He has led their bees to the flowers,
To fill up their golden comb;

At her spinning the little sister
Had napped till the setting sun—
She awoke, and the kindly Brownie
Had gotten it neatly done;

Oh, the Christmas bells they are ringing!
The mother she was away,
And the Brownie played with the baby,
And tended it all the day;



The little sister napping.

Original

The Brownie who lives in the torest,
 Oh, the Christmas bells they ring!
Has done for the farmer's children
Full many a kindly thing.
'Tis true that they never spied him,
 Though their eyes were so sharp and bright,
But there were the tasks all nicely done,
 And never a soul in sight.

But the poor little friendly Brownie,
 His life was a weary thing;
For he never had been in holy church
 And heard the children sing;

And he never had had a Christmas,
 Nor bent in prayer his knee;
He had lived for a thousand years,
 And all weary-worn was he.

Or that was the story the children
 Had heard at their mother's side;
And together they talked it over,
 One merry Christmas-tide.

The pitiful little sister
 With her braids of paly gold,
And the little elder brother,
 And the darling five-year-old,

All stood in the western window—
 'Twas toward the close of day—
And they talked about the Brownie
 While resting from their play.

"The Brownie, he has no Christmas,"
 The dear little sister said;
A-shaking sadly as she spoke
 Her glossy, yellow head;

"The Brownie, he has no Christmas;
 While so many gifts had we,
Last night they fairly bent to the floor
 The boughs of the Christmas-tree."

Then the little elder brother,
 He spake up in his turn,
His sweet blue eyes were beaming,
 And his cheeks began to burn:

"Let us make up for the Brownie
 A Christmas bundle now,
To leave in the forest pathway
 Where the great oak branches bow.

"We'll mark it, 'For the Brownie,'
 And 'A Merry Christmas Day! '
And he will be sure to find it,
 For he must go home that way!"

Then the tender little sister
 With her braids of paly gold,
And the little elder brother,
 And the darling five-year-old,

Made up a Christmas bundle
 All tied with ribbons gay,
And marked it, "For the Brownie,"
 With "A Merry Christmas Day!"

And then in the winter twilight,
 With shouts of loving glee,
They hied to the wood, and left their gift
 Under the great oak-tree.

While the farmer's fair little children
 Slept sweet that Christmas night,
Two wanderers through the forest
 Came in the clear moonlight.

And neither of them was the Brownie,
 But sorry were both as he;
And their hearts, with every footstep,
 Were aching heavily.

A slender man with an organ
 Strapped on by a leathern band,
And a little girl with a tambourine
 A-holding close to his hand.

And the little girl with the tambourine,—
 Her gown was thin and old;

And she toiled through the great white forest,
A-shining with the cold.

"And what is there here to do?" she said;
"I'm froze i' the light o' the moon!
Shall we play to these sad old forest trees
Some merry and jigging tune?"

"And, father, you know it is Christmas-time;
And had we staid i' the town,
And I gone to one o' the Christmas-trees,
A gift might have fallen down!

"You cannot certainly know it would not!
I'd ha' gone right under the tree I
Are you sure that never one Christmas
Is meant for you and me?"

"These dry, dead leaves," he answered her,
"Which the forest casteth down,
Are more than you'd get from a Christmas-tree
In the merry and thoughtless town.

"Though to-night be the Christ's own birth-
day night,
And all the world has grace,
There is not a home in all the world
Which has for us a place."

Slow plodding adown the forest path,
"Now, what is this?" he said;
Then he lifted the children's bundle,
And "For the Brownie," read.

The tears came into his weary eyes:
"Now if this be done," said he,
"Somewhere in the world perhaps there is
A place for you and me!"

Then the bundle he opened softly:
"This is children's tender thought;
Their own little Christmas presents
They have to the Brownie brought.

"If there lives such tender pity
Toward a thing so dim and low,

There must be kindness left on earth
Of which I did not know.



Original

"Oh, children, there's never a Brownie
That sorry, uncanny thing;

But nearest and next are the homeless
When the Christmas joy-bells ring."

Loud laughed the little daughter,
As she gathered the toys in her gown:
"Oh, father, this oak is my Christmas-tree,
And my present has fallen down!"

Then away they went through the forest,
The wanderers, hand in hand;
And the snow, they were both so merry,
It glinted like golden sand.

Down the forest the elder brother,
In the morning clear and cold,
Came leading the little sister,
And the darling five-year-old.

"Oh," he cries, "he's taken the bundle!"
As carefully round he peers;
"And the Brownie has gotten a Christmas
After a thousand years!"

THE CHRISTMAS BALL.

THE fiddlers were scraping so cheerily, O,
With a one, two, three, and a one, two, three,
And the children were dancing so merrily, O,
All under the shade of the Christmas-tree.

O, bonny the fruit on its branches which
grows!
And the mistletoe bough from the ceiling hung!
The fiddlers they rosined their squeaking
bows,
And the brave little lads their partners
swung.

Oh, the fiddlers they played such a merry tune,
With a one, two, three, and a one, two, three,
And the children they blossomed like roses
in June,
All under the boughs of the Christmas-tree.



The girl-fairy in cobweb frock.

[Original Size](#)

And the fiddlers were scrap-
ing so merrily, O,
With a one, two, three, and
a one, two, three;
And the children were dan-
cing so cheerily, O,
All under the shade of the
Christmas-tree—

The girl-fairy in cobweb
frock.
When, all of a sudden, a fairy-
land crew
Came whirling airily into the room,
As light as the fluffy balls, they flew,
Which fly from the purple thistle-bloom.

There were little girl-fairies in cobweb frocks
All spun by spiders from golden threads,
With butterfly-wings and glistening locks,
And wreaths of dewdrops around their
heads!



The boy-fairy in jewelled coat.

There were little boy-fairies in jew-
elled coats
Of pansy velvet, of cost un-
told,
With chains of daisies around
their throats,
And their heads all powdered
with lily-gold!
The boy-fairy in jewelled
coat.
The fiddlers they laughed till
they scarce could see,
And then they fiddled so cheerily, O,
And the fairies and children around the tree,
They all went tripping so merrily, O.

The fiddlers they boxed up their fiddles all;
The fairies they silently flew away;
But every child at the Christmas ball
Had danced with a fairy first, they say.

So they told their mothers—and did not you
Ever have such a lovely time at your play,
My boy and my girl, that it seemed quite true
That you'd played with a fairy all the day?

THE PURITAN DOLL.

OUR Puritan fathers, stern and good,
Had never a holiday;
Sober and earnest seemed life to them—
They only stopped working to pray.

And the little Puritan maidens learned
Their catechisms through;
And spun their stents, and wove, themselves,
Their garments of homely blue.

And they never made merry on Christmas
Day—
That savored of Pope and Rome;
And there was never a Christmas-tree
In any Puritan home.

There never was woven a Christmas wreath,
Carols the children never sung,
And Christmas Eve, in the chimney-place,
There was never a stocking hung.

Sweet little Ruth, with her flaxen hair
All neatly braided and tied,
Was sitting one old December day
At her pretty mother's side.

She listened, speaking never a word,
With her serious, thoughtful look,
To the Christmas story her mother read
Out of the good old Book.

"I'll tell thee, Ruth!" her mother cried,
Herself scarce more than a girl,
As she smoothed her little daughter's hair,
Lest it straggle out into a curl,

"If thy stent be spun each day this week,
And thou toil like the busy bee,
A Christmas present on Christmas Day
I promise to give to thee."

And then she talked of those merry times
She never could quite forget;
The Christmas cheer, the holly and yule—

She was hardly a Puritan yet.

She talked of those dear old English days,
With tears in her loving eyes;
And little Ruth heard like a Puritan child,
With a quiet though glad surprise.

But nevertheless she thought of her gift,
As much as would any of you;
And busily round, each day of the week,
Her little spinning-wheel flew.

Tired little Ruth! but oh, she thought
She was paid for it after all,
When her mother gave her on Christmas Day
A little Puritan doll.

'Twas made of a piece of a homespun sheet,
Dressed in a homespun gown
Cut just like Ruth's, and a little cap
With a stiff white muslin crown.

A primly folded muslin cape—
I don't think one of you all
Would have been so bold as to dare to play
With that dignified Puritan doll.

Dear little Ruth showed her delight
In her pretty, quiet way;
She sat on her stool in the great fire-place,
And held her doll all day.

And then (she always said "good-night"
When the shadows began to fall,
She was so happy she went to sleep
Still holding her Puritan doll.

THE GIFT THAT NONE COULD SEE.

THERE are silver pines on the win-
dow-pane,
A forest of them," said he;
"And a huntsman is there with a silver horn,
Which he bloweth right merrily.

"And there are a flock of silver ducks
A-flying over his head;
And a silver sea and a silver hill
In the distance away," he said.

"And all this is on the window-pane,
My pretty mamma, true as true!"
She lovingly smiled; but she looked not up,
And faster her needle flew.

A dear little fellow the speaker was—

Silver and jewels and gold,
Lilies and roses and honey-flowers,
In a sweet little bundle rolled.

He stood by the frosty window-pane
Till he tired of the silver trees,
The huntsman blowing his silver horn,
The hills and the silver seas;

And he breathed on the flock of silver ducks,
Till he melted them quite away;
And he saw the street, and the people pass—
And the morrow was Christmas Day.

"The children are out, and they laugh and
shout,
I know what it's for," said he;
"And they're dragging along, my pretty
mamma,
A fir for a Christmas-tree."

He came and stood by his mother's side:
"To-night it is Christmas Eve;
And is there a gift somewhere for me.
Gold mamma, do you believe?"

Still the needle sped in her slender hands:
"My little sweetheart," said she,
"The Christ Child has planned this Christ-
mas, for you,
His gift that you cannot see."

The boy looked up with a sweet, wise look
On his beautiful baby-face:
"Then my stocking I'll hang for the Christ
Child's gift,
To-night, in the chimney-place."

On Christmas morning the city through,
The children were queens and kings,
With their royal treasures bursting o'er
With wonderful, lovely things.

But the merriest child in the city full,
And the fullest of all with glee,
Was the one whom the dear Christ Child
had brought
The gift that he could not see.

"Quite empty it looks, oh my gold mamma,
The stocking I hung last night!"
"So then it is full of the Christ Child's
gift."
And she smiled till his face grew bright.

"Now, sweetheart," she said, with a patient
look
On her delicate, weary face,
"I must go and carry my sewing home,
And leave thee a little space.

"Now stay with thy sweet thoughts, heart's delight

And I soon will be back to thee."
"I'll play, while you're gone, my pretty
mamma,
With my gift that I cannot see."

He watched his mother pass down the street;
Then he looked at the window-pane
Where a garden of new frost-flowers had
bloomed
While he on his bed had lain.

Then he tenderly took up his empty sock,
And quietly sat awhile,
Holding it fast, and eying it
With his innocent, trusting smile.

"I am tired of waiting," he said at last;
"I think I will go and meet
My pretty mamma, and come with her
A little way down the street.

"And I'll carry with me, to keep it safe,
My gift that I cannot see."
And down the street 'mid the chattering crowd,
He trotted right merrily.



"My stocking is full to the top, kind sir."

Original

"And where are you going, you dear little
man?
They called to him as he passed;
"That empty stocking why do you hold
In your little hand so fast?"

Then he looked at them with his honest eyes,
And answered sturdily:
"My stocking is full to the top, kind sirs,
Of the gift that I cannot see."

They would stare and laugh, but he trudged
With his stocking fast in his hand:
"And I wonder why 'tis that the people all
Seem not to understand!"

"Oh, my heart's little flower!" she cried to
him,
A-hurrying down the street;
"And why are you out on the street alone?
And where are you going, my sweet?"

"I was coming to meet you, my pretty
mamma,
With my gift that I cannot see;
But tell me, why do the people laugh,
And stare at my gift and me?"

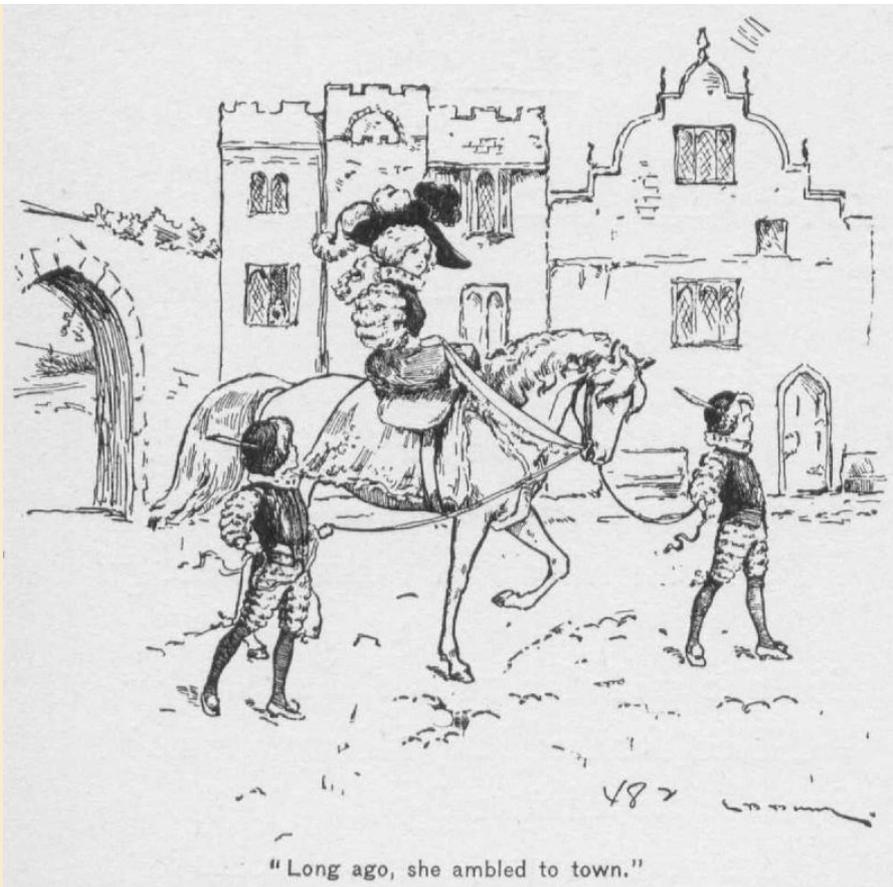
Like the Maid at her Son, in the Altar-piece,
So loving she looked, and mild:
"Because, dear heart, of all that you met,
Not one was a little child."

O thou who art grieving at Christmas-tide,
The lesson is meant for thee;
That thou mayst get Christ's loveliest gifts
In ways thou canst not see;

And how, although no earthly good
Seems into thy lot to fall,
Hast thou a trusting child-like heart,
Thou hast the best of all.

A LITTLE CALLER.

LONG, long ago, she ambled to town, her
flaxen curls bobbed up and down,



"Long ago, she ambled to town."

Original

Her best blue ribbons fluttered gay, and she
had some calling-cards of her own—
Long, long ago, the people cried, "There
rides the sweet little Arabella,
She goes for to make a wedding-call, to-day,
on the Prince and Cinderella!"

KATY-DID—KATY-DIDN'T.

WHO was Katy, who was she,
That you prate of her so long?
Was she just a little lassie
Full of smiles and wiles and song?

Did she spill the cups o' dew
Filled for helpless, thirsty posies?
Did she tie a butterfly
Just beyond the reach o' roses?

Slandered she some sweet dumb thing?
Called a tulip dull and plain,
Said the clover had no fragrance,
And the lily had a stain?

Did she mock the pansies' faces,
Or a grandpa-longlegs flout?
Did she chase the frightened fireflies
Till their pretty lamps went out?

Well, whatever 'twas, O Katy!
We believe no harm of you;
And we'll join your staunch defenders,
Singing "Katy-didn't," too.

SLIDING DOWN HILL.

THERE is ice on the hill, hurrah, hurrah!
We can slide quite down to the pas-
ture-bar,
Where the cows at night, in the summer
weather,
Would stand a-waiting and lowing together.
"Tie your tippet closer, John,"
That was what their mother said;
"All of you put mittens on—
The broom will answer for a sled!"

They had never a sled, but dragged in its room,
Just as gayly, behind them, the worn kitchen-
broom;
John, Sammy, and Tom, and their sweet lit-
tle sister,
With her cheeks cherry-red, where the wind
had kissed her.
"You can watch, sis, that's enough,"
That was what her brother's said;
"Keep your hands warm in your muff—
Girls can't slide without a sled! "

"Oh! where in the world is there aught so nice
As to slide down the pasture-hill on the ice?
Quite down to the bar, sis, see, we are going,
Where the cows each night in summer stood lowing.

"If I were a boy, like you—"
This was what their sister said,
Watching as they downward flew—
"I would make a girl a sled!"

LITTLE PEACHLING.

A Japanese Folk-lore Story.

AT the foot of the Golden Dragon Hill,
Ages ago, in a snug little house
With a roof of dark-brown, velvety thatch,
There lived an old woodman and his spouse.

One morning his bill-hook the old man took:

"To the mountain, to cut me a fagot, I'll
hie,

While you, O Koyo, the linen can wash

In the river which rushes and gurgles by."

Oh! the merry old man to the mountain hied,

Past young rice-fields in the morning sun,

Toward the dark fir-trees on the mountain side,

Standing forth in its silence, every one.

From wild camellias and white plum-trees,

In his twinkling old eyes the spider-webs

swung;

And he merrily brushed by the green bam-

boos,

With his bill-hook over his shoulder hung.

And a uguisu sang in a tall cherry-tree

As the smiling old wife to the river-side

went:

"Oh, red is the sun!" she cheerily sang,

As she patiently over her washing bent.

"Oh, red is the sun! and the rice-fields green—

Now what is that in the river I see?

It's the rosiest peach in the whole of Japan;

And it's coming a-floating, a-floating to me.

"Now, here is a feast for my darling old man,

Oh, the great Shogun not a finer can get!

Some stewed lily-bulbs, and this beautiful peach,

When he comes home from work, before

him I'll set."

Soon down from the mountain the old man

came,

And fast on his back his fagot was bound.

"Oh! hasten you, husband," his loving wife

cried,

And taste this beautiful peach that I found."

But just as he took it the peach split in

twain,

And a fat little baby with raven-black hair

Was cradled right in the heart of the peach,

And lay a-twinkling and blinking there.

"Oh! you brave little boy, you shall be our

own son;

And Momotaro shall have for a name,

Or Little Peachling, since out of a peach,

You dear little fellow, this morning you

came."

Oh! the rice-fields blossomed for twenty years,

While the gurgling old river amongst them

ran;

Oh! for twenty years grew the slim bamboo,

And Little Peachling was grown to a man.

"Some millet-dumplings pray make for me,"

To his good foster-mother he said one
day,
"And off to the ogres' castle I'll go,
And the whole of their treasure will bring
away.

"As thick in the ogres' treasure-vaults
The jewels are lying as sea-shore sands;
With blue snow-gates on the mountain-top,
The ogres' castle all proudly stands—

"With blue snow-gates that are stronger than
steel;
But I will enter, and bring to you
The wealth from the ogres' treasure-vaults,
Hung over with pearls, like flowers with
dew."

"I have made you the dumplings," his good
mother said,
"But I fear lest the ogres should do you
a harm."
But the little Peachling danced gayly away,
With the millet-dumplings under his arm.

A dog leapt out of a cluster of pines:
"And what have you there, Little Peachling,
pray?"

"The best millet-dumplings in all Japan,
And I'm to the ogres' castle away."

"For one of your dumplings with you I'll go,
And the ogres' castle will help subdue."



"And what have you there, Little Peachling, pray?"

Original

"Well, you can bark at the castle-gate;
So here is a dumpling, friend dog, for you."

An ape swung down from a roadside tree:
"Kia, kia, what have you, I say?"
"The best millet-dumplings in all Japan,
And I'm to the ogres' castle away."

"One of your dumplings pray give to me,
And the ogres' castle I'll help subdue."
"Well, you can climb o'er the castle-gate;
So here is a dumpling, friend ape, for you."

"Ken, ken=," cried a pheasant, "and what have
you there,
Little Peachling, tucked in your girdle, I
pray?"
"The best millet-dumplings in all Japan,
And I'm to the ogres' castle away."

"For one of your dumplings with you I'll go,
And the ogres' castle will help subdue,"
"Well, you can fly o'er the castle-gate;
So here is a dumpling, friend pheasant, for
you."

Oh, the castle stood high on the mountain-

top,
And over its turrets a hurricane blew;
But up to its terrible blue snow-gates
Little Peachling marched with his retinue.

Then the ogres swarmed out on the castle-
towers,
The drums beat loud, and the trumpets
brayed,
And magical arrows came rustling around—
But our brave little rônin was not afraid.

For his pheasant flew over the castle-wall,
And his ape undid the castle-gate;
And brave Little Peachling, his dog at heel,
Into the castle then marched in state.

His little dog snapped at the ogres' heels;
His pheasant picked at their round green
eyes;
And his ape tweaked away at the ogres' locks,
As only an ape can do when he tries.

And the little rônin, around him he laid,
With his muramasa so thick and fast,
That the king of the ogres was prisoner
made;
And the ogres' castle was taken at last.

Oh, measures of pearls and wedges of gold!
Oh, the jars of musk and the coral-bars,
Amber and emeralds, tortoise-shells,
And diamonds shining like strings of stars!

Gold-brocade coats, and wonderful gems
That regulated the green sea-tide!
It's always the loveliest things in the world
Which the treasure-castles of ogres hide.

With the treasures, the dog, the pheasant and
ape,
Little Peachling home to his parents ran;
And the old woodman and his loving wife
Were the happiest couple in all Japan.

A SWING.

O THEY made her a swing on a gossamer-
tree, on the lowest bough of a gossamer-tree;
And she swung so far, I have heard, she could
see
The next year's rose and honey-bee, and the
gifts on the next year's Christmas-tree—
But I fear 'tis a story, O dear me!

THE YOUNGEST TELLS HER STORY.

YOU think that I can't tell a story—
Just wait—no! 't isn't 'bout Jack
Mory;
This morning, it was early quite,
I saw a little fairy knight,

With silver boots and silver shield,
A-tramping through the clover-field.
He held a spear that looked like grass,
But 'twas a truly spear of glass;
A silver bugle at his lips,
He played with tiny finger-tips;
He held a flag o' grass-green silk;
A branch of lilies white as milk;

He held—"How many hands had he?"
You're cruel to make fun of me!
No! I won't tell another bit;
You've lost the sweetest part of it!

A SONG.

SING a song of a little lass (red blow the
roses, O),
About a lovely little lass, who was so like a
rose, you know,
(Red blow the roses, O), so very like when
placed together,
They only told her from a rose because she
bloomed in winter weather.

HER PROOF.

SHE lifted her finger with gesture slow:
"'Tis true, for certain and sure, I know,
And I think when I say so you ought to be-
lieve—
They kneel in their stalls on Christmas Eve.

"The red one, the white one, the speckled
and brown,
When the clock strikes twelve, will all kneel
down;
And it happens so every Christmas Eve,
—Well, I'll tell you this, if you *won't* believe:

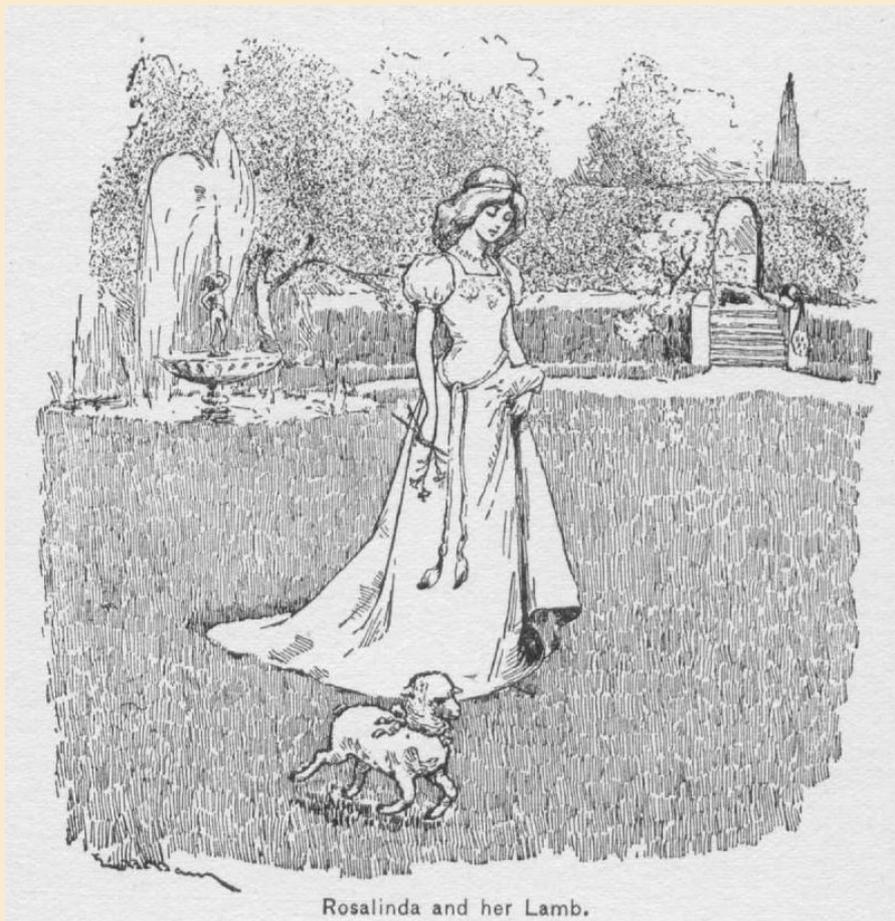
"Once, ages and ages ago it was,
I thought I would see for myself, because
I doubted a little, just like you,
Whether or no the story was true;

"And so one Christmas Eve I staid
Awake till twelve—Oh, I was afraid!
The wind was a-blowing, and no moon shone,
But I went to the stable myself, alone.

"And when I had slid the big doors back
I couldn't go in, it was so black;
But—solemn and true—I do declare
I heard the cows when they knelt down! There!"

ROSALINDA'S LAMB.

THE Princess Rosalinda's lamb-
Silken is his fleece, they say,



Original

And he feeds on pinks alway.
Round his neck's a golden band,
"Rosalinda" 's on it writ,
And a padlock fastens it.
Oh! of pinks he is so sweet,

And he has such dainty feet—
The Princess Rosalinda's lamb!

If you find him, you who read,
And him to his mistress lead,
Rich reward she offers you:
Lovely china mug of blue,
Coral beads, a turquoise ring,
Silver bangles—anything
That you choose to have in mind;
Ah, you're lucky if you find
Princess Rosalinda's lamb!

THE BABY'S REVERY.

AN exquisite little maiden
With a head like a golden flower,
She soberly stood at the window
In the still, white twilight hour.

"Of what are you thinking, sweetheart?
She was such a little child,
She could not answer the question;
She only dimpled and smiled.

But I wondered, as she frolicked,
Her mystic revery o'er,
Was she a rose-shade less a child
Than she had been before?

Was she pausing, as a rose-bud
Seems pausing while it grows?
Had I caught the blooming minute
Of a little human rose?

A SILLY BOY.

O, A little boy sailed in a sugar-bowl,
with silver spoons for oars,



Original

And his hold was full of sugar, the French-
man's tea to sweeten;
But when he safely moored his craft beside
those foreign shores—
Alas, that silly little boy, his cargo he had
eaten!

A PRETTY AMBITION.

THE mackerel-man drives down the street,
With mackerel to sell,
A-calling out with lusty shout:
"Ha-il, Mack-e-rel!"

When I'm a man I mean to drive
A wagon full of posies,
And sing so sweet to all I meet:
"Hail, Hyacinths and Roses!"

THE SNOWFLAKE TREE.

THE hawthorn is dead, the rose-leaves
have fled
On the north wind over the sea:
Now the petals will fall that are rarest of all,
Sweetheart, from the Snowflake Tree.

The Tree, it doth stand in that marvellous
land
Whose shore like a sapphire gleams,
Where a crown hangs high in the northern
sky,
Forth raying its golden beams.

It tosses its boughs with their crystallizing
blows;
They crackle and tinkle for glee
When the north wind shrieks round the
awful peaks,
On the shores of the polar sea.

And never a bird its blossoms has stirred,
Or built on its branches a nest;
For the perfume which floats from the blossoms'
throats
Would freeze the song in its breast.

And my own little bird, were her goldilocks
stirred
By the wind thro' its branches which blows,
With her songs silenced all, forever would fall
Asleep on the silver snows.

But our hearth burns bright, little sweetheart,
to-night,
And we're far from the Snowflake Tree;
Thou canst nestle in bed thy little gold head,
And thy songs shall awaken with thee.

DOROTHY'S DREAM.

SHE sat on her little wooden stool,
With a wistful, thoughtful face,
Her blue eyes staring straight ahead
Into the chimney-place
Where the oaken logs that winter night sent
up a merry blaze.

"Now, what is the thought, Maid Dorothy,
You think so long, I pray?"
"Oh, mother! last night I dreamed a dream
About that Christmas Day

Which they have in the green old England
over the sea, you say.

And I thought I had hung up a stocking
Right over the chimney there;
And it was not one of the coarse blue socks
I knit myself to wear—
But fine and soft; and, on the sides, some silk-
en 'broidery fair.

"And out of the stocking I pulled a book—
And it was a sin, you'll say—
But my old 'New England Primer'
I thought I would throw away;
For it was not a book like this one, but had
covers and pictures gay.

"And I pulled out a doll with real brown hair
In satins and laces drest—
Oh! she truly cried, and she closed her eyes
When I laid her down to rest.
But I made up my mind I would always love
my old poppet the best.

"Oh! I'm sure that the Governor's lady
Has never one ribbon so fine
As some in that stocking; of blue and gold
And crimson like elder-wine.
I could have tied up my hair with them if
they had been really mine.

"But"—soberly said Maid Dorothy,
A hundred years ago,
"It was a dream—and dreams of course
By opposites always go;
And such fine things will never be in this vain
world, I know."

TIGER LILIES.

HOW keepeth my lady the weeds from
her posies,
All in the gay summer-time!
Why is it the rose-chafer eats not her roses
From the song of the lark till the four-o'clock
closes?

Five fierce lily-tigers in spotted cuirasses
She posteth at each of her green garden-
passes,
And they frighten away the chafers and
grasses,
All in the gay summer-time.



In my lady's garden.

Original

THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF MAMMA.

O MAMMA dear, just listen!
I ran away, you know;
I saw the grasses glisten,
A-bowing to me so.
The clovers shook their pink heads too—
You wouldn't care I ran away,
If how they did you only knew!
And I was dressed as much as they—
They didn't mind a bit—and Oh,
I saw there, fastened to the grass
With little shiny ropes of glass.
A spider's web! Mamma, you know
You've always said that spiders ate
For breakfast little frightened flies,
For which they long had laid in wait,
A-watching with their cruel eyes—



"You wouldn't care I ran away,
If how they did you only knew!"

Original

Well, mamma, in that spider's web—
Somebody told it wrong to you—
There wasn't any fly at all!
Mamma, you will believe it's true;
Everything for breakfast there
Was clover-tops and drops of dew!"

BUTTERFLIES.

IF we, my deary, were butterflies, with purple
winglets and golden eyes,
We would not adore the roses away, and no-
body else, on a sunny day.
If we, my baby, were butterflies, with purple
winglets and golden eyes,
Far away, far away, over land or sea, we would
come to the honey we love in thee.

AN OLD MAXIM.

COME, "Sivertongue," and hear the tale
Of that little girl of yore,



Seen but never heard.

[Original Size](#)

Who sat up in a straight-
backed chair
With her tiptoes on
the floor,
And listened to her eld-
ers,
Like a little voiceless
bird:
Dear little model las-
sie,
Who was seen, but
never heard.

NANNY'S SEARCH.

ONANNY, my dear little Nanny! and
where have you been to-day?
Y our little coat's old, and the wind blows cold,
and where have you been, I pray?"
"Dear Granny, I've been to the forest to look
for a Christmas-tree—
Santa Claus is so kind, I thought I would find
one growing there wild, maybe,
Full of cakes, with a doll, and candy, and all
for a wee little body like me."

GRANDMOTHER'S STORY.

NOW hang up your sunbonnet, Marthy,
And get out your patchwork square,
And sit down here and sew for a while
In your little rocking-chair,

And hear me tell you a story
Of a little girl I knew,
Who made a whole quilt of patchwork
When she wasn't as big as you."

DOLLY'S FAN.

DOLLY had a silken fan,
Crimson, with a feather border,
And she—Oh! so airily—
Used to sway it from and toward her.

Dolly, seated in her pew,
Many wondering eyes were scanning;
Tilting up her dainty chin
Toward the parson, softly fanning.

Every little girl in church,
—Pity 'tis to tell such folly—
While the parson preached and prayed,
Tried to fan herself like Dolly!

A PORTRAIT

WHO is that young and gentle dame who
stands in yonder gilded frame,



In the gilded frame.

Clad in a simple muslin gown whose 'broi-
dered frills hang limply down,
Blue ribbons in her yellow
curls, around her neck a string of pearls—
Her
eyes
blue stars in
ancient gloom, a-seeking you all o'er the room,
As if to call sweet memories to her?—
My grandmother, before I knew her.

[Original Size](#)

CARAWAY.

PAST the lavender-bed and the parsley,
Close to the wall where the sweet-brier
blows,
Green grows the caraway Grandma planted,
Though scarce one lover to-day it knows.

When dear old Grandma her "meetin' bun-
nit"
Had carefully tied, on the Sabbath Day,
She always put in her best-gown pocket
A generous handful of caraway.

For the dear old soul would grow a-weary
To sit so long in the cushionless pew;
And oft the parson's doctrinal sermon
Would trouble her tender feelings too

And when she had heard so much "election"
That her heart for the others began to bleed,



"A generous handful of caraway."

Original

She sensed the better God's love behind it
By eating a bit of her "meetin' seed."
Solemn and mild upraised to the parson
Was her dear old face on the Sabbath Day;
She drank the sweet there was in the sermon
—The bitter she flavored with caraway.

Though caraway is not fair to look at,
Though you may not fancy its taste indeed,
Yet still it shall grow there down in the garden
Because it was Grandma's "meetin' seed."

TWO LITTLE BIRDS IN BLUE.

TWO little birdies all in blue
Airily flitted the garden thro'.
(Pink blows the brier in summer-weather.)
And they could whistle a rondel true
Which all of the neighbors loved and knew
(Pink blows the brier in summer-weather.)

Now through the garden the north wind
goes,
And the bush is bent to the ground with
snows.

(Black turns the brier in winter-weather.)

Where are the little blue birds—who knows?
And where, oh where! is the pink brier-rose?
(Ah! sweet things come and depart together!)

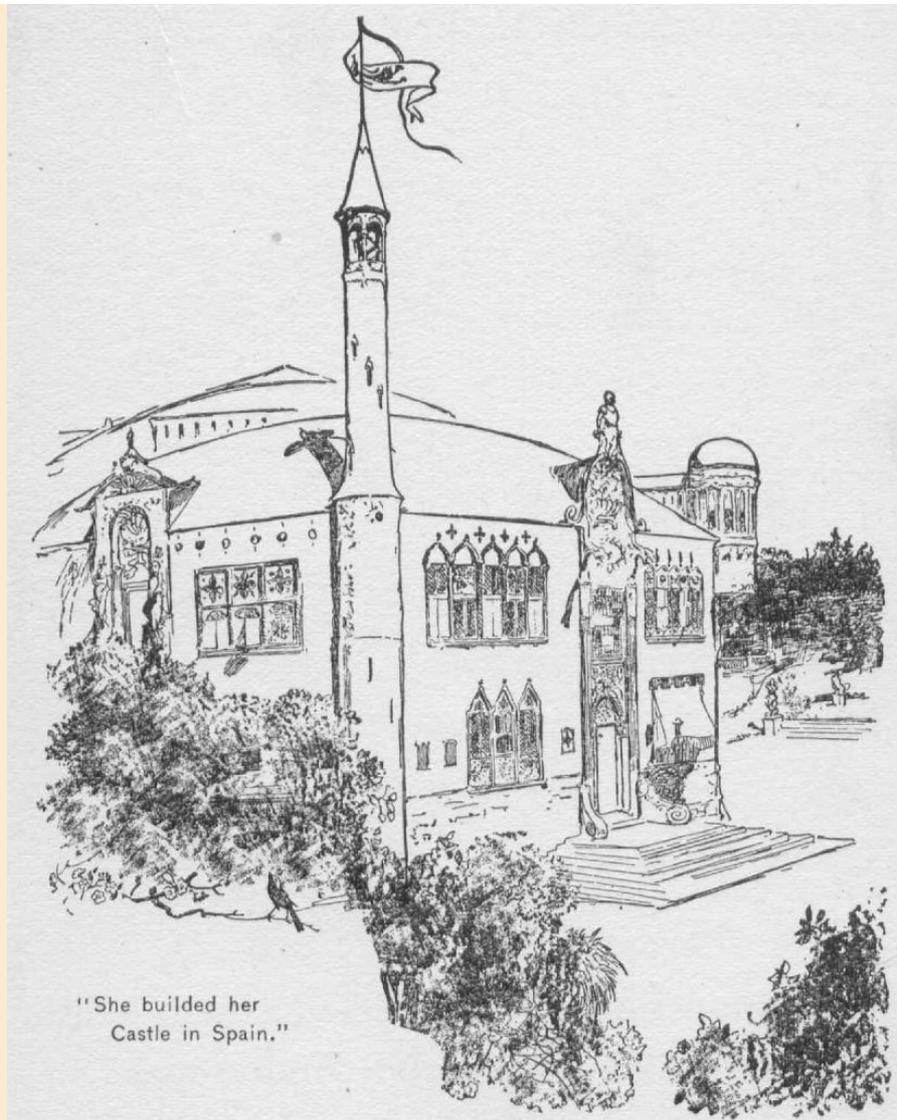
A CASTLE IN SPAIN.

THE draggled lilies were beaten down
As if by a prancing hoof;
The roses swayed, and the warm rain came,
Like the patter of pearls, on the roof.

Up in the garret the darling sat
In her little gown of blue,
With her lily cheeks and her rosebud lips,
And dreamed as she loved to do.

Bundles of herbs from the rafters hung;
There was many a quaint old chest,
A cradle of oak, and a spinning-wheel,
In the chimney a swallow's nest.

The darling she sat in a straight-backed chair,
With her face 'gainst the window-pane,
Her little hands folded across her lap,
And she builded her Castle in Spain.



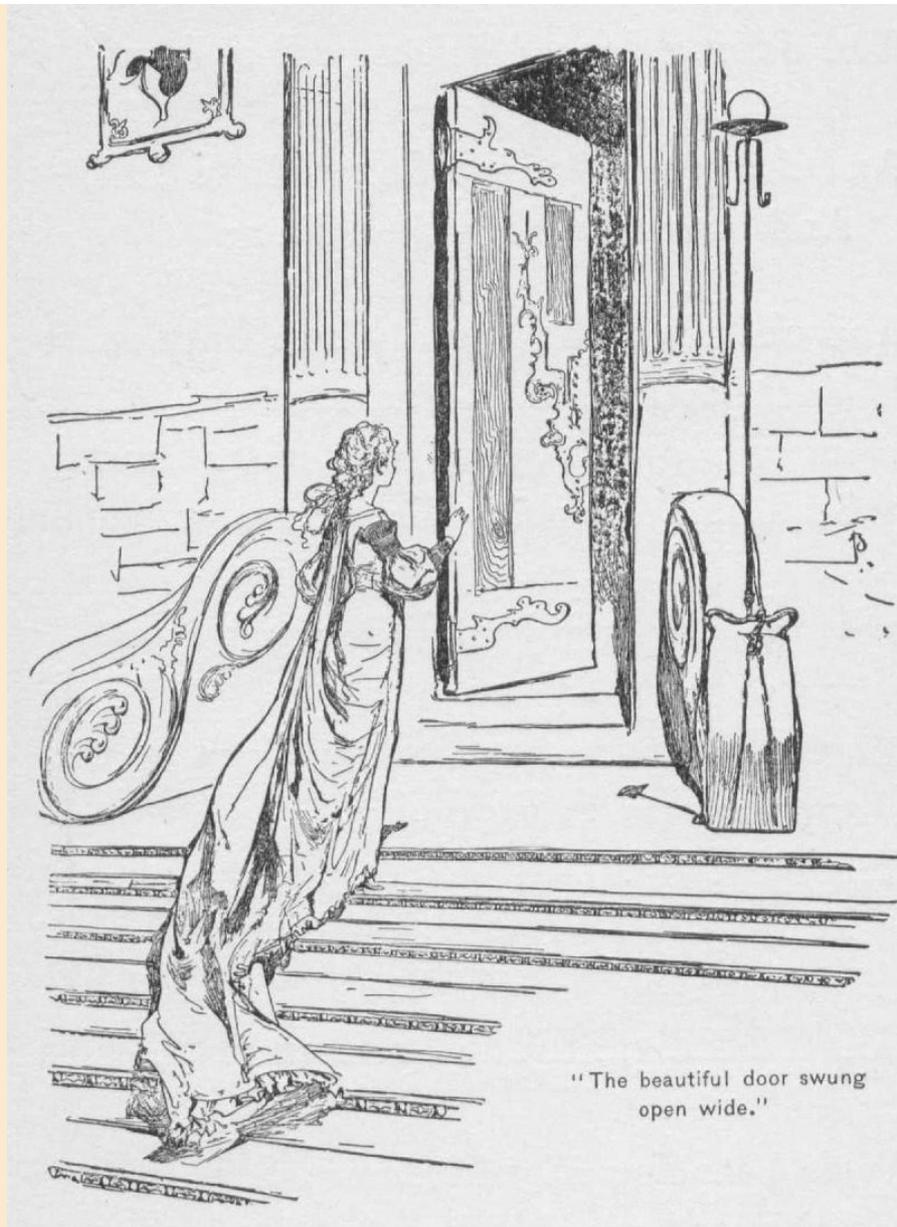
Original

And never a magic palace rose,
 In the days of the Moorish kings,
As fair as the Castle the darling built
 From her sweet imaginings.

Rosy and green were the walls, like the
 heart
 Of a murmuring ocean-shell;
There were jewelled spires, and a slender
 tower
 With a swinging silver bell.

And up to the gold-hasped door there ran,
 On a carven ivory stair,
The darling herself in rosy silk,
 With pearls in her yellow hair.

Then the beautiful door swung open wide,
 And she entered a marble hall
Where marble nymphs, with golden lamps,
 Stood ranged against the wall.



Original

The darling danced like a puff o' down
Over the marble floor,
And she gleefully sped from hall to hall,
And opened each golden door;

And chambers she found whose lofty walls
With jewels were all acrust,
With windows of pearl, and ivory floors
Scattered over with diamond-dust.

And oft up a staircase rail she saw
A flowering garland twist,
With ruby lilies, and roses of gold,
And myrtle of amethyst.

(The south wind blew; on the garret-roof
Fell faster the summer rain;)
A wonderful garden the darling found
Around the Castle in Spain:

Apple-branches all white with flowers,
A hive of stingless bees,
Robins, with nests of woven gold,
On the boughs of the cherry-trees;



She "danced down a flowery path."

Original

Lilies as tall as the darling's self,
Of silver and gold and blue,
Banks of primrose and mignonette,
And violets wet with dew;

Poppies, with bees asleep in their cups,
Tulips of purple and red,
Honeysuckles and humming-birds,
Rose-branches over her head;

A velvet sward in an open space,
A fountain of tinkling pearls;
And the darling herself in a violet gown,
With hyacinths in her curls,

With her apron full of roses and pearls,
Singing a song so clear
That the bees and the yellow butterflies
Came flying round to hear.

Then the darling danced down a flowery path,
Still singing her song so sweet,
With hawthorn branches on either hand,
And crocuses under feet.

And she found a beautiful blue-eyed prince
Asleep in a thicket dim,
Caught in a bramble-rose which grew
By magic over him.

Thro' the leaves and roses she scarce could see
His head with its flaxen curls,
His rosy cheeks, and his velvet coat
With its buttons of milky pearls.

And the poor little prince, if he chanced to
stir
As he dreamed in his magic sleep,
Was pierced by a thorn of the bramble-rose—
And the darling began to weep.

Then a bright tear dropt on the bramble-rose,
And away from the prince it fell,
And he woke from his sleep—and loud and
sweet
Rang the chimes of the Castle bell!

The darling sat in her straight-backed chair,
With her soft cheeks flushing red;
And she sighed, for the prince and the castle
fair
And the roses and pearls had fled.

She wistfully looked thro' the rain-splashed
pane:
"'Tis a sad and stormy day,
And not so much as a rose have I brought
From my Castle in Spain away!"

She did not know as she sat and watched,
The darling, the pattering rain—
On her soft little cheek she carried a rose,
A rose from her Castle in Spain.

AT THE DREAMLAND GATE.

THE winds go down in peace, dear child,
The birds are circling o'er the sea;
The Dreamland gate before thee swings
With murmur soft as drowsy bee;
Now enter in, dear child, nor fear,
nor fear lest harm should come to thee.

Beyond the gate I cannot go,
But here I'll stand, nor stir away,
While, with the Dreamland children, thou
Shalt frolic till the break of day;
Fear not to enter in, dear child; for close be-
side the gate I'll stay.

And if in Dreamland's lovely woods

Some harmless giant lay in wait,
Some straggler from thy fairy tales,
He'll take to flight disconsolate—
Just say, "Away! or I will tell my mother
at the Dreamland gate!"

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

DEAR Nanny in her Christmas hood
With fluffy swansdown round the face,
Wearing her pretty Christmas gown
And little frill of dainty lace,
Came with her mother into church, on
Christmas Eve, with timid grace.

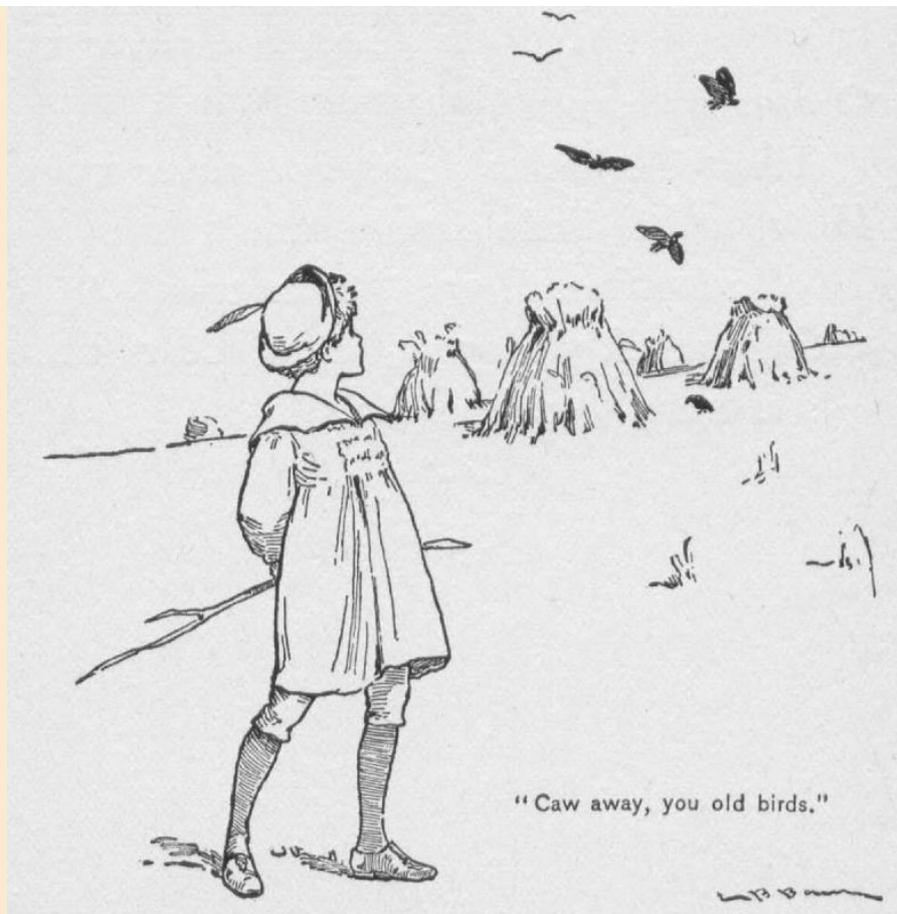
Dear Nanny sat there in her pew,
The Christmas-greens with music stirred,
The choir sang like a nest of larks,
But never once she caught a word.
For she was singing to herself, and hers was
all the song she heard.

"My muff, my hood!" dear Nanny sang,
"My coat, my dress, my golden ring,
My waxen doll, my picture-book,
My stocking full of everything"—
So sang the sober little maid, so softly no one
heard her sing.

O sweetly carolled forth the choir
Their Christmas songs, and never knew
How, in her little simple tune
Which after all was just as true,
A-sitting meekly down below dear little
Nanny carolled too.

CROW—WARNINGS.

NO, it won't rain to-morrow! well, what
if the crows
From that withered
old cornfield fly,



Original

A-cawing for rain—let them caw, if they
like,
With all of that blue in the sky!
Caw away, you old birds, in your rusty black
cloaks!
I know that you're not speaking true!
There are not enough clouds in the world,
in a night
To cover up all of that blue!

THE OUT-DOORS GIRL.

SING a song of a queer little girl who lived
all alone in the green out-of-doors:
She made her a necklace of cranberries, and
a gown of the red corn-flowers,
And she made her a beautiful oak-leaf cap,
and a swing of a wild grape-vine;
And merrily-o all day she swung out of shade
into gold sunshine.

THE BEGGAR KING.

"Hark! hark! hark! the dogs do bark!
The Beggars have come to town,
Some in rags, and some in tags,
And some in velvet gowns."

Old Nursery Rhyme.

HALF frantic, down the city streets
The barking dogs they tore;
The dust it flew, and no man knew
The like of it before.

The St. Bernard's deep booming bass,
The hound's sepulchral howl,
The terrier-whelp's staccato yelp,
And the bull-dog's massive growl,

In chorus sounded thro' the town:
The windows up they went,

Thro' every space a gaping face
Inquiringly was bent.

The burgher's daughter clean forgot
Her snood of silk and pearls,
And, full of dread, popped out her head,
With its tumbled yellow curls.

A rosebud smote her on the lips:
Down went the rattling blind;
But still the maid, all curious, staid,
And slyly peeped behind.

A handsome lord, with smiling lips,
Leaned from the opposite tower;
Two withered hags, in dirt and rags,
Did from their garret glower.

The tailor left his goose to see,
And got his coat ablaze;
Three peasant maids, with shining braids,
Looked on in wild amaze.

The emperor's palace windows high,
All open they were set—
From the gray stone red jewels shone,
All gold and violet.

The ladies of the emperor's court
Leaned out with stately grace;
And each began her peacock fan
To wave before her face.

"*Hark! hark! hark! the dogs do bark!*"
The emperor left his throne
At the uproar, and on the floor
He dropped his emerald crown.

The dogs press round the city-gates,
The guards they wave them back;

But all in vain, with might and main
Dance round the yelping pack.

Hark! hark! hark! o'er growl and bark
There sounds a trumpet-call!
Now, rat-tat-tat; pray, what is' that
Outside the city-wall?

Airs from the Beggar's Opera
On broken fiddles played;
On pans they drum and wildly strum,
Filched from a dairy-maid.

With tenor-whine, and basso-groan,
The chorus is complete;
And, far and wide, there sounds beside
The tramp of many feet!

"*Hark! hark! hark! the dogs do bark!*"
Ah, what a horrid din!
The Beggars wait outside the gate,
And clamor to get in.

A herald to the emperor rode:
"Save! save the emerald crown!
For, hark! hark! hark! the dogs do bark!
The Beggars storm the town!"

The emperor donned his clinking mail,
Called out his royal guard,
The city-gate, with furious rate,
Went galloping toward.

A captain with a flag of truce
Thus parleyed on the wall:
"Why do ye wait outside the gate,
And why so loudly call?"

He spoke, then eyed them with dismay;
For o'er the valley spread
The clamoring crowd, and stern and proud
A king rode at their head.

In mothy ermine he was drest;
As sad a horse he rode,
With jaunty air, quite *débonnaire*,
As ever man bestrode.

The Beggars stumped and limped behind,
With wails and whines and moans—
"*Some in rags, and some in tags,*
And some in velvet gowns."

A great court-beauty's splendid dress
Was there, all soiled and frayed;
The scarf, once bright, a belted knight
Wore at his accolade;

A queen's silk hose; a bishop's robe;
A monarch's funeral-pall;
The shoes, all mud, a prince-o'-the-blood
Had danced in at a ball.

The Beggars stumped and limped along,
 Aping their old-time grace:
Upon the wind, flew out behind,
 Ribbons of silk and lace.

A wretched company it was
 Around the city gate—
The sour and sad, the sick and bad,
 And all disconsolate.

But in the wretched company
 There was one dainty thing:
A maiden, white as still moonlight,
 Who rode beside the king.

Her hands were full of apple-flowers
 Plucked in the country lanes;
Her little feet, like lilies sweet,
 O'erlaced with violet veins,

Hung down beneath her tattered dress;
 A bank of lilies, showed
Her shoulders fair; her dusky hair
 Down to her girdle flowed.

Up spoke the haughty Beggar King:
 "I want no parleying word!
Bid come to me, right speedily,
 The emperor, your Lord!"

Wide open flew the city-gate!
 Out rode the emperor bold;
His war-horse pranced and lightly danced
 Upon his hoofs of gold.

"What wouldst thou, O Beggar King!
 What wouldst thou with me?
For all the gold the town doth hold
 Would not suffice for thee."

"Beholdest thou my daughter dear,
 O emperor! by my side?
Though wild the rose, it sweetly grows,
 And she shall be thy bride,

"And thou shalt seat her on thy throne
 When thou thy troth hast pledged,
Her beauty grace with gems and lace,
 And robes with ermine edged;

"Or else, on thee, O emperor!
 Like locusts we'll come down,
And naught that's fair or rich or rare
 We'll leave within the town!"



The Maid who rode beside the King.

Original

"The children all shall lack for food,
And the lords and ladies pine;
For we will eat your dainties sweet,
And drink your red old wine!

"Now, what say'st thou, O emperor?—
Wed thou mv daughter dear,
To-morrow day, by dawning gray,
Thy borders shall be clear."

The emperor looked upon the maid:
She shyly dropped her head;
Her apple-flowers fell down in showers,
Her soft white cheeks grew red.

The emperor loved her at the sight:
"I take your terms!" cried he;
"Nor wilt thou fear, O maiden dear!
To wed to-night with me?"

Her long, dark lashes swept her cheek;
A word she could not find,
For to and fro her thoughts did blow,
Like lilies in a wind.
She toward him reached her little hand,

Then—drew it back again;
She smiled and sighed—all satisfied,
He grasped her bridle-rein.

Then clattered courtiers thro' the street,
Fast ran the folk, I ween,
And under feet strewed roses sweet,
And boughs of apple-green.

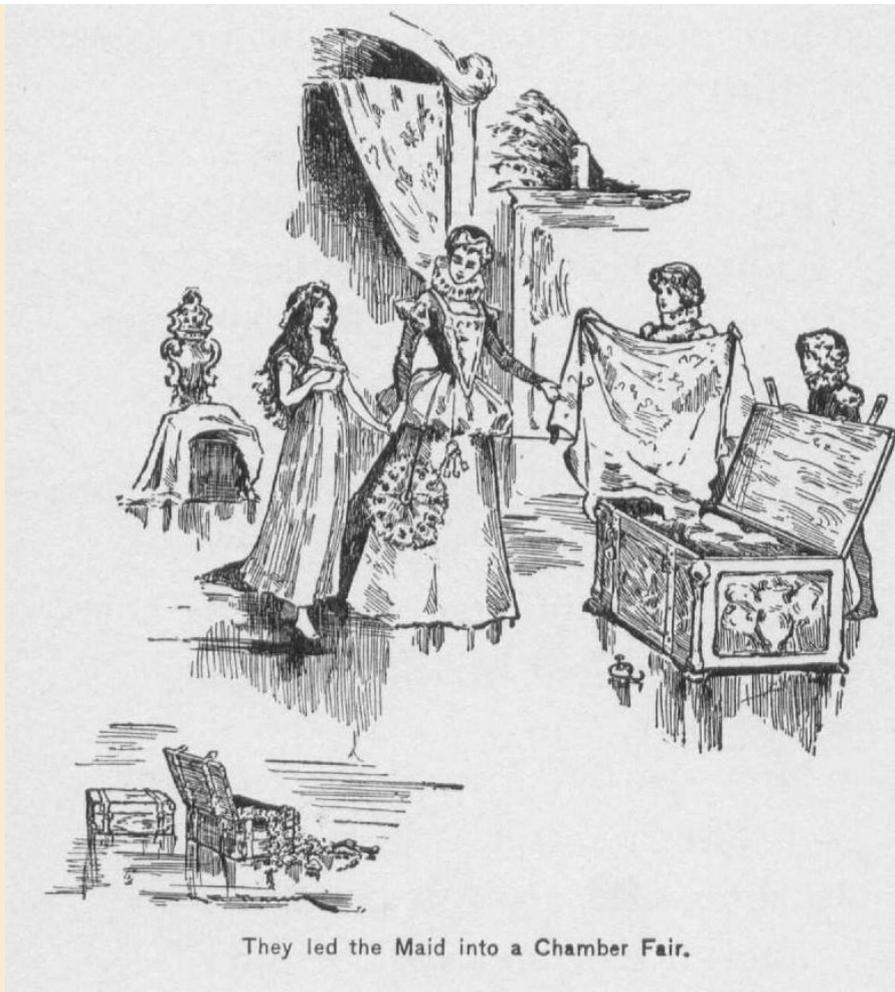
The emperor, on his gold-shod horse,
Came pacing thro' the town,
And by his side his timid bride
Rode in her tattered gown.

A crocus-broidered petticoat,
Robes stiff with threads of gold,
The maids found soon, and satin shoon,
And lace in spices rolled.
They led the trembling beggar-maid
All gently up the stair,
Thro' golden doors with sills of flowers,
Into a chamber fair.

They loosed from her her faded gear;
They kissed her gentle face;
From head to feet clad her so sweet
In linen fine and lace;

They clasped her golden-threaded robe—
"Darling, thou art so fair!"
With strings of pearls, amid the curls,
They dressed her flowing hair.

"Now, pardy!" cried the emperor,
"The rose-tree is in flower!
In the world green was never seen
Queen half so sweet before!"
The people, dressed as for a feast,
Thronged round the palace doors;



Original

The minstrels sung, the joy-bells rung,
The roses fell in showers.
The Beggar King looked toward the town:
"Farewell, my daughter dear!"
The east was gray—he rode away,
And swallowed down a tear.

CHRISTMAS-TIDE.

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.



[Original](#)

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.

WANTED, A MAP.

ANOTHER map, an please you, sir!
For why, we cannot understand,
In all your great geography
There is no map of Fairyland.

Another map, an please you, sir!
And, afterward, describe in full
How Fairyland is famed for pearls,
And fleeces made from golden wool,

And prancing, gold-shod, milk-white steeds
With bridles set with jewel-eyes:
Tell how the Fairy rivers run,
And where the Fairy mountains rise,

And of the Fairy-folk, their ways
And customs—if it please you, sir;
Then, of the journey there, how long
For any speedy traveller.

Another map, an please you, sir!
And would you kindly not delay;
Sister and I would dearly like
To learn our lesson there, to-day!

THE PRIZE.

HIE to the meadow, my dearies three,
And hunt for some sweet, pretty
thing for me!
There's a cake in the oven with almonds
and spice,

And raisins and citron, and all that's nice,
To pay for the sweetest, my dearies three!"
When home from the field came the dearies </>
three,

One brought to her mother a wild rose-tree;
And another brought her a blue jay's feather
And one of a gray goose, tied together,
And she was sure of the prize, was she.

But the last little girl of the dearies three
Had sucked a clover-bell like a bee,
And tasted a columbine's honeyed tips
To sweeten a kiss for her mother's lips;
And she got the beautiful cake for tea.

PUSSY-WILLOW.

PUSSY, pussy, pussy!" there she stood
a-calling,
"Pussy, pussy, pussy!" Her voice rang sweet,
and shrill-o.
Yet still her pussy lingered; but, on a bush
beside her,
Crept softly out in answer, a little pussy-
willow.

THE TRUE AND LAST STORY OF LITTLE BOY BLUE.

LITTLE white clouds flew east thro' the sky,
The bee, with his honey-sacks, scurried by
En route to his hive with his stolen sweet,
With the gold of roses caught round his feet;
And the farmer's dear little daughter, too,
Came tripping along in her ribbons blue;
And the sweet little girl had a silver tongue,
And she sang, as she came, a sweet little song:
"At Whitehall waited the Prince's boat;
The lark unravelled his silver note
As the river and garden he soared above;
The brave knight thought of his absent love.
"The world wags merrily on, 'tis said,
And the prince and the knight and the lark
dead.



The farmer's dear little daughter.

Original

Then the little girl stopped to take a breath,
With never a thought of love or death.

Green apple-boughs met o'er the country lane:
She sang her sweet little song again;
In the meadow beside her red clover grew,
And yellow-winged butterflies o'er it flew;

And here and there moved a woolly back,
For there were the farmer's sheep, alack!
And the blue-eyed boy, who was told to keep
Out of the clover the frolic sheep,

Under the hay-stack sleeping lay,
The golden noon of that summer day.
"Alack, alack!" cried the little girl,
"See Rosie and Lily and Star and Pearl,

"And all the lambs in the clover-patch!
The five-barred gate he did not latch.
Oh, where are you wand'ring, little Boy Blue?
How my father would scold if he ever knew!

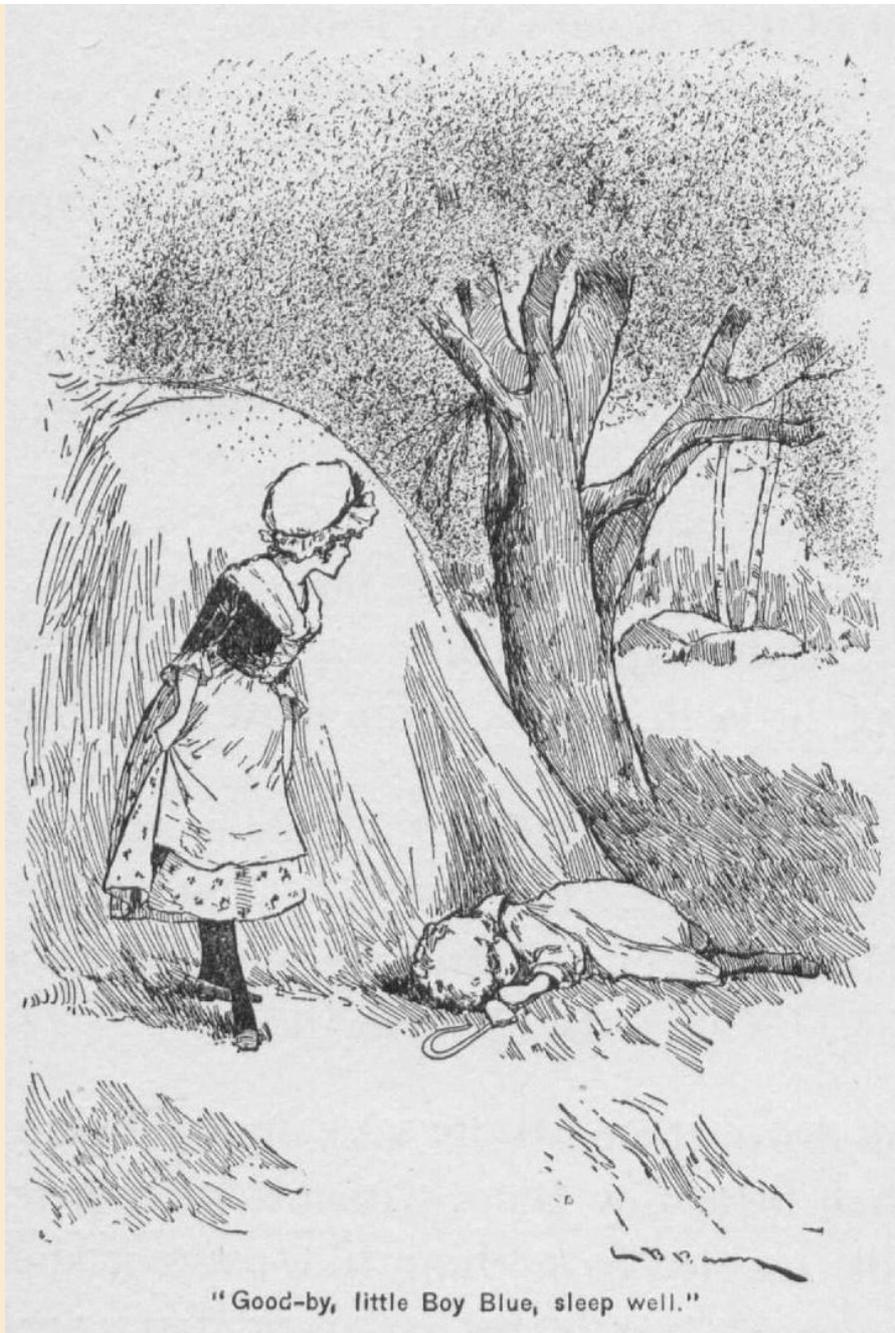
"Ho, Rosie! Rosie! out of the clover!
Lily! Lily! you naughty rover,
Out of the clover! out, I say!
Violet! Violet! Lady May! "

Here and there, with her shrill, sweet shout,
At last she had driven the sheep all out;
Then she carefully shut the five-barred gate;
And little Boy Blue, with his curly pate,

Still untroubled by aught like sheep,
Lay 'neath the hay-stack fast asleep.
Oh, what is that rustling amongst the corn?
Oh! little Boy Blue, come blow your horn!

"The cows are eating the golden grain!"
The little boy stirred—then slept again.
"Ho! Buttercup! Buttercup! out of the corn!
Daisy! Clover-leaf! Silver-horn!"

She drove them all out and shut the gate;
Then little Boy Blue, with his curly pate,
Still troubled by nothing like cows or sheep,
She spied, 'neath the hay-stack, fast asleep.



" Good-by, little Boy Blue, sleep well."

Original

The dear little girl, with artless joy,
Stood looking down at the sleeping boy,
"I have saved him a whipping, I know,"
 she said,—
"H ow the little curls shine on his pretty head!

"He ought to remember my father's sheep,
But he looks so lovely there, fast asleep—
Good-by, little Boy Blue, sleep well,
The sheep are all safe, and I'll never tell! "

Then she kept on her way thro' the fragrant
 lane,
And she sang her sweet little song again.
Little Boy Blue woke by and by,
When the sun was scarcely a half-hour high,

And rubbing his blue eyes, dim with sleep,
Slowly home he drove the cows and sheep;
Then he ate his supper and went to bed
With never a thought in his pretty head;

And he lived till his bonny gold hair was gray.
But the little maiden—ah, well-a-day!
*"Here lieth a sweet maid, aged ten,
Robins and violets come again."*

THE DANDELION-ORACLE.

SHE, a little serious lassie still believing all
she sees,
Now consults a dandelion as an Oracle of
Greece:
"Dandelion, tell me true! is my mother
wanting me? "—
Blowing, every feathered seedlet floats out
like a boat to sea—
"I must go now; mother wants me." Rude-
ness of this latter day!
She has gayly trotted home, and—flung the
oracle away.

THE CHRISTMAS THRUSH.

I WILL sing for you, dearie, a song that I
know
Of a ruby-eyed thrush, of a silver-tailed
thrush,
Who sat on a spray of a dry willow-bush,
And sang to a queen in a palace of snow.
The thrush's wing-feathers were jewel and
blue,
And he spread them alway on a Christmas
Day,
When he sang to the queen on his willow
spray—
O dearie, the honey-sweet song he knew!
At her palace window the queen would stay
So pinky and fair with her curly gold hair;
She merrily rocked in a crystal chair,
And never a queen was half so gay.

You want the queen in her palace of snow,
And the ruby-eyed thrush, the silver-tailed
thrush,
Who sat on a spray of a dry willow-bush?
Why, dearie, it's only a song, you know!

BUTTERCUP TALK.

I 'LL hold the buttercup under your chin
so, you fair little baby-o!
Ah, you will love butter, day out and in, for
there's a gold light on your dimple-o:
And you shall have butter so good and sweet.
Ho! Silverhorn, feed on the clover and
grass,
For the buttercup says my love will love but-
ter, and the buttercup's saying will come
to pass!



"The buttercup says my love will love butter."

Original

WEE WILLIE WINKIE

HO, Willie Winkie, and hey, Willie
Winkie!
Now through the window there floats,
All laden with cargoes of beautiful dreams,
A fleet of poppy-boats.

"The stars, they are swimming like golden
swans,
And the moon, she has climbed the steep,
And now through her silver ocean rides
A thousand fathoms deep.

"Like an arrow of light down the milky way,
Straight over the moonlit sea,
With its crimson sails puffed out with wind,
The fleet it sails to thee.

"And the child whom his mother has kissed
good-night,
And the soonest shall fall asleep,
The loveliest dream in the poppy-boats
Will get for his own to keep.

"But ho, Willie Winkie; and hey, Willie
Winkie!
The child that will keep awake,
The worst and the ugliest dream in the fleet
Is the dream he will have to take.

"Rose-leaves round the window, they rustle
so soft;
All things that are little and sweet—
The rose-bud babies and all the flowers—
They wait for the poppy fleet.

"Grass waves o'er the sparrow asleep in her
nest;
The robins are sleeping all;
And the echoes have died from the clouds
away
Of the skylark's silver call.

"White doves are asleep in the tall bell-tower;
The sky-lark sleeps in his nest;
And the baby-prince has gone to sleep
Up on the fair Queen's breast.

"Oho, Willie Winkie; and hey, Willie
Winkie!
The moonbeams they sleep on the sea:
Catch the loveliest dreams in the poppy-fleet,
And here is a kiss for thee."

Wee Willie Winkie sat up in bed,
Stubbornly shaking his curly head,
When his mother had shut the door:
"Is the Prince asleep? I would like to see;
Is the robin asleep in the cherry-tree,
And every little flower?"

"The flowers are awake and play with the
bees,
The robins, they sing in the cherry-trees,
And the Prince is the gladdest of all;
For he's merry and wide awake, of course,
He is prancing about on his rocking-horse,
Or else he is playing at ball."

Wee Willie Winkie sat up in bed,
Stubbornly shaking his curly head—
The moon shone bright as day;
"I'll run through the town myself," said he,
"And see if they all asleep can be—
I think they are all at play!"

Wee Willie Winkie—no shoes on his feet,
No hat on his head—ran down the street,
And he called at every lock:
"Are your babies asleep in their cradles now?
Do your lilies asleep in the night-wind blow?
For 'tis now ten o'clock!"

Wee Willie Winkie in his nightgown,
Little fat, rosy boy, ran thro' the town,
His curly head damp with dew:



[Original](#)

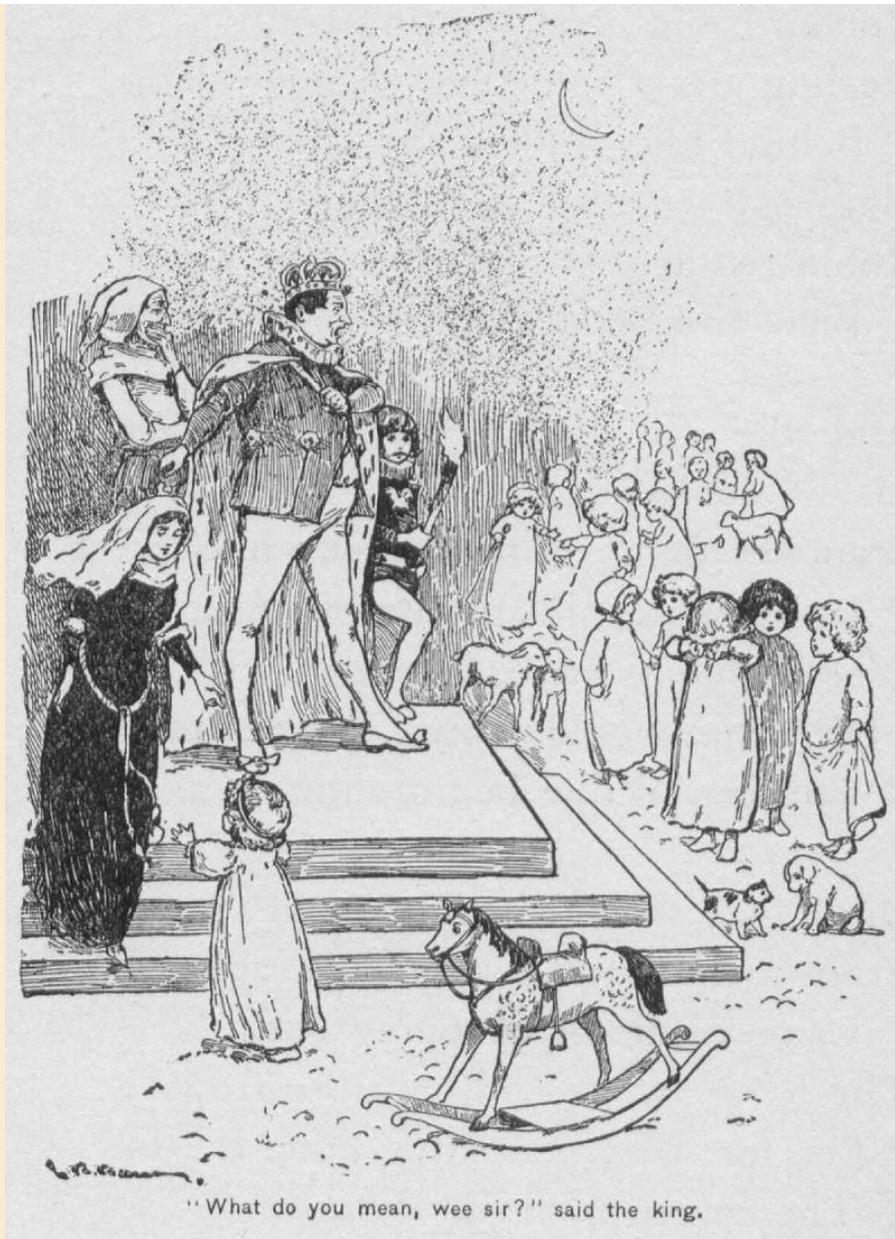
"Are the robins and babies and rosies all

Abed and asleep?" he loud would call—
"If they are, I'll go too!"

To Wee Willie Winkie, who loudly tapped
At the window-panes where the babies napped,
A strange thing did befall;
For the white-haired babies, the birds and
flowers
Who had slept and dreamed through the eve-
ning hours,
He awoke from their slumbers all.

And everything that was little and sweet
Came trooping out on the moonlit street,
All crying out with glee;
And through the streets of the silent town
With Wee Willie Winkie ran up and down,
As merry as they could be.

Wee Willie Winkie marched at the head,
Poor little wight, quite pale with dread,
A long line after him:
Twittering larks and murmuring bees,
Dandelions blown on the evening breeze,
And tiger-lilies grim;



"What do you mean, wee sir?" said the king.

Original

Cooing babies, and bleating lambs
Stealing away from their sleeping dams,
 Behind him ambled and crept;
Singing treetoads and katydids,
Robin red-breasts and frolicsome kids,
 Flew and hopped and leaped;

And the gay little Prince was there, of
 course,
Prancing along on his rocking-horse,
 In his white silk nightgown fine.
Wee Willie Winkie, he shook with fear:
"Oh, what would I give, my mamma dear,
 To sleep in that bed of mine! "

Quite over the town the tumult spread:
From many a window a nightcapped head
 Came cautiously popping out;
The King awoke and began to frown;
"The foe, they are riding upon the town!"
 The courtiers all did shout.

Wee Willie Winkie came up the street,
Crying aloud, on his little bare feet,

With his train to the palace door;
"Queer sights I have seen," quoth slowly the
 Ring,
"But I never have seen, by my signet-ring,
 A sight like this before!

"And what do you mean, I pray, wee sir,
That the whole of the town you wake and stir
 At ten o'clock of the night?
That the babies, and birds, and lambs, and all,
From their cradles into the street you call,
 And give folks such a fright?

"And you've waked the Prince," halloed the
 King,
"And now will I, by my signet-ring"—
 Wee Willie, he screamed aloud,
And lo! in his crib he was lying alone,
And in at his window the great moon shone
 Through a silver and amber cloud.

"Now ho, Willie Winkie; and hey, Willie
 Winkie!
 And what is the matter, my dear?
And weep not, my rose and my lily and dove,
 For thy mother is with thee here!"

Wee Willie Winkie sat up in bed,
Soberly shaking his curly head,
 With a sob in his pretty throat:
"I went to sleep the last," said he,
"And the worst of the dreams has come to me
 In any poppy-boat!

"But after this, I'll be first of all!
I'll go to bed when the shadows fall,
 And the stars begin to peep!
Then the loveliest dream in the poppy fleet,
That will fill the room like a rose with sweet,
 I will get for my own to keep!"

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