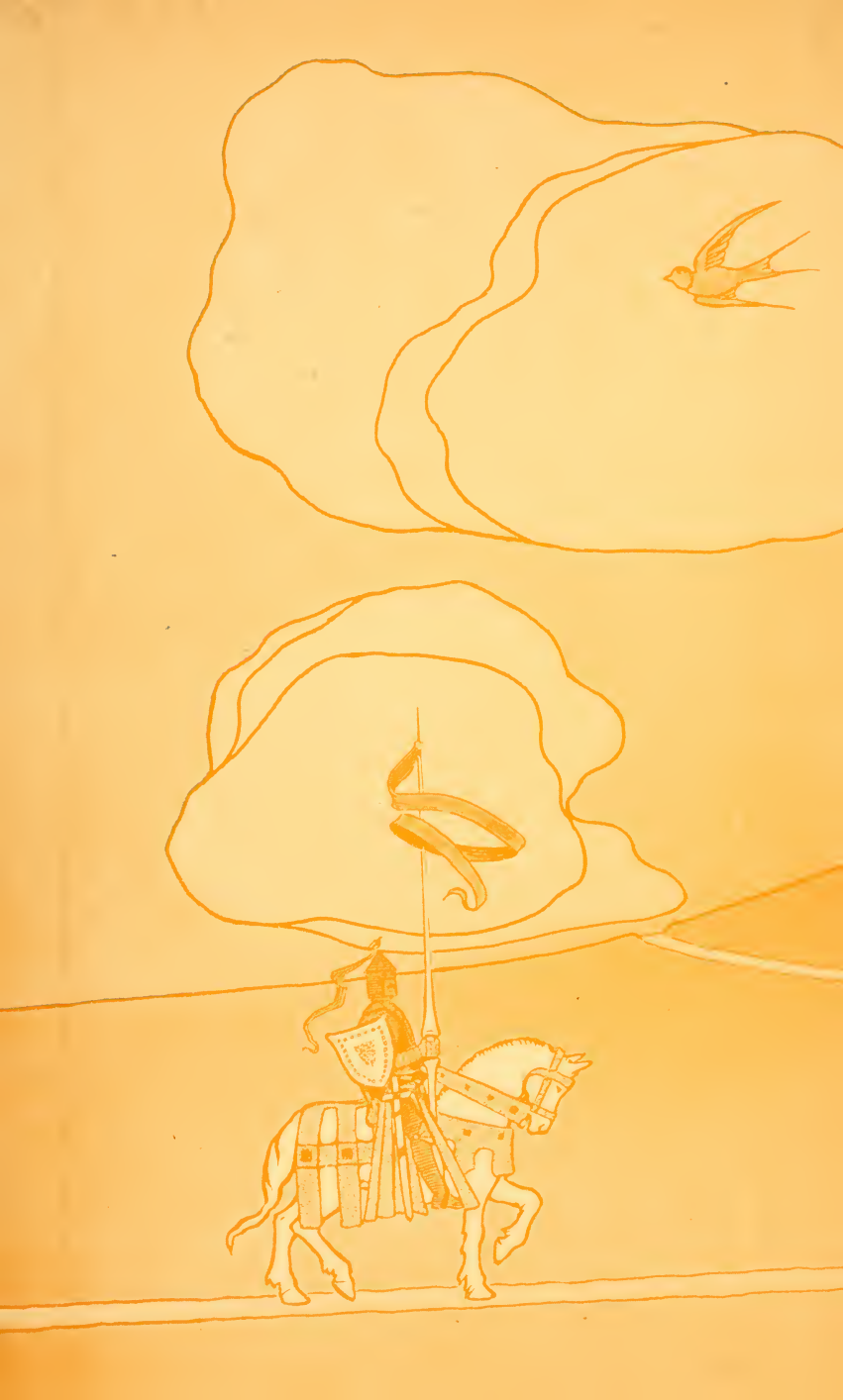
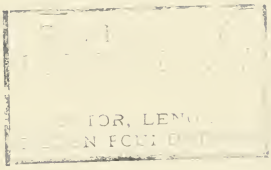
POEMS MY CHILDREN LOVE BEST OF ALL



C. Johnson

NAS



Little Annie's Garden

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POEMS

MY CHILDREN LOVE BEST OF ALL

EDITED BY CLIFTON JOHNSON

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Acknowledgment

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Introductory Note

THIS collection of poems was made primarily for children from six to twelve years of age; but inasmuch as the attraction of the best juvenile literature is by no means confined to the children themselves, I hope the volume will give pleasure to many a reader of mature years.

Most of what I have included belongs to a comparatively recent period. The possible range of selection covers a span of about six centuries. Further back the words were so different from those we now use as to be like a foreign language. But little that is suitable for children has come down to us from even half as many years ago, except nursery jingles, and those make a volume by themselves.

The first requisite of the poems admitted to these pages was that they should be interesting to the average intelligent child. Toleration is not enough. The poem capable of winning no more than that has been rejected, no matter what its graces of expression or form, or what its fame of authorship.

Children do not ordinarily care for descriptive nature poems, or the detailed depiction of character, or for unfamiliar dialect; and there is much else in the poetry commonly set before them which is beyond

the range of their experience and comprehension, and which makes a good deal of it dull reading to them. They enjoy an easily-caught rhythm, and above all things a lively story that moves rapidly forward to the climax. Narratives that have to do with animals are particularly welcome, and such have large place in the present volume. Some of the selections are portions of long poems, and I have never hesitated to omit parts of the shorter poems, when by so doing I could enhance the interest without sacrificing an artistic completeness. It has been my aim to avoid entirely subjects alien to the tastes of healthy childhood; and this means in the main the exclusion of verse that is melancholy, retrospective, sentimental, or devotional. Technically, the poetry is not always wholly admirable, but it is simple and genuine, and there is in it much of quaint fancy and rollicking entertainment.

I wish examples of the work of all the recognized poetic masters of the race could be given. Unfortunately many of them did not produce poetry of interest to little folks; but I have tried to furnish as varied a representation as possible of famous poets, and to include the favorite poems by minor writers that seem worthy and that have real charm for youthful readers. That the poems will leave agreeable impressions and memories I feel assured.

Hadley, Mass. Clifton Johnson

Poems My Children Love

COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO

A little boy got out of bed—
'Twas only six o'clock—
And out the window poked his head,
And spied a crowing cock.

The little boy said, "Mr. Bird,
Pray tell me who are you?"
And all the answer that he heard
Was, "Cock-a-doodle-doo!"

"What would you think, if you were me,"
He said, "and I were you?"
But still that bird provokingly
Cried, "Cock-a-doodle-doo!"

"Now hark to me, you stupid head,
How much is two times two?"
That old bird winked one eye, and said
Just "Cock-a-doodle-doo!"

The boy then slammed the window down,
To a fence the old bird flew,
And flapping hard his two wings brown
Cried, "Cock-a-doodle-doodle-doodle-doo!"

THE WIND AND THE LEAVES

"Come, little leaves," said the wind one day,
"Come over the meadows with me and play.
Put on your dresses of red and gold;
For summer is gone, and the days grow cold."

Soon as the leaves heard the wind's loud call,
Down they came fluttering, one and all.
O'er the brown field then they danced and flew
Singing the soft little songs they knew.

Dancing and whirling, the little leaves went,
Winter had called them, and they were content.
Soon, fast asleep on their earthy beds,
The snow laid a coverlet over their heads.

George Cooper.

DAYBREAK

A wind came up out of the sea,
And said: "O mists, make room for me!"

It hailed the ships, and cried: "Sail on,
Ye mariners, the night is gone."

And hurried landward far away,
Crying: "Awake! it is the day."

It said unto the forest: "Shout!
Hang all your leafy banners out!"

It touched the wood-bird's folded wing,
And said: "O bird, awake and sing!"

It whispered to the fields of corn:
"Bow down, and hail the coming morn!"

It shouted through the belfry tower:
"Awake, O bell! proclaim the hour."

Henry W. Longfellow.

THE PRIEST AND THE MULBERRY TREE

Did you hear of the curate who mounted his mare,
And merrily trotted along to the fair?
Of creature more tractable none ever heard,
In the height of her speed she would stop at a word;
But again with a word, when the curate said, "Hey,"
She put forth her mettle and galloped away.

As near to the gates of the city he rode,
While the sun of September all brilliantly glowed,
The good priest discovered, with eyes of desire,
A mulberry tree in a hedge of wild briar;
On boughs long and lofty, in many a green shoot,
Hung large, black and glossy, the beautiful fruit.

The curate was hungry and thirsty to boot;
He shrunk from the thorns, though he longed for the fruit;
With a word he arrested his courser's keen speed,
And he stood up erect on the back of his steed;
On the saddle he stood while the creature stood still,
And he gathered the fruit till he took his good fill.

"Sure never," he thought, "was a creature so rare,
So docile, so true, as my excellent mare;
Lo, here now I stand," and he gazed all around,
"As safe and as steady as if on the ground;
Yet how had it been, if some traveller this way,
Had, dreaming no mischief, but chanced to cry,
'Hey!' "

He stood with his head in the mulberry tree,
And he spoke out aloud in his fond reverie;
At the sound of the word the good mare made a push,
And down went the priest in the wild-briar bush.
He remembered too late, on his thorny green bed,
Much that well may be thought cannot wisely be said.

Thomas Love Peacock.

WINTER JEWELS

A million little diamonds
Twinkled on the trees;
And all the little children cried,
"A jewel, if you please!"

But while they held their hands outstretched
To catch the diamonds gay,
A million little sunbeams came
And stole them all away.

Mrs. Mary F. Butts.

THE COW AND THE ASS

Beside a green meadow a stream used to flow,
So clear, one might see the white pebbles below.
To this cooling brook the warm cattle would stray,
To stand in the shade on a hot summer's day.

A cow, quite oppressed by the heat of the sun,
Came here to refresh, as she often had done;
And standing quite still, stooping over the stream,
Was musing perhaps, or perhaps she might dream.

But soon a brown ass, of respectable look,
Came trotting up also, to taste of the brook
And to nibble a little at daisies and grass.
"How d'ye do?" said the cow. "How d'ye do?" said the ass.

"Take a seat," said the cow, gently waving her hand.
"By no means, dear madam," said he, "while you stand."
Then stooping to drink, with a complaisant bow,
"Ma'am, your health," said the ass. "Thank you, sir," said the cow.

When a few of these compliments more had been passed,
They laid themselves down on the herbage at last,
And waiting politely, as gentlemen must,
The ass held his tongue, that the cow might speak first.

Then, with a deep sigh, she directly began,
"Don't you think, Mr. Ass, we are injured by man?
'Tis a subject which lies with a weight on my mind,
We really are greatly oppressed by mankind.

"Pray what is the reason—I see none at all—
That I always must go when Jane chooses to call?
Whatever I'm doing—'tis certainly hard—
I'm forced to leave off, to be milked in the yard.

"I've no will of my own, but must do as they please,
And give them my milk to make butter and cheese.
Sometimes I endeavor to kick down the pail,
Or give her a box on the ear with my tail."

"But ma'am," said the ass, "not presuming to teach—
Oh dear, I beg pardon—pray finish your speech.
Excuse my mistake," said the courteous swain;
"Go on, and I'll not interrupt you again."

"Why, sir," said the cow, "I just want to observe,
Those hard-hearted tyrants no longer I'll serve;
But leave them forever to do as they please,
And look somewhere else for their butter and cheese."

Ass waited a moment, his answer to scan,
And then, "Not presuming to teach," he began,
"Permit me to say, since my thoughts you invite,
I always saw things in a different light.

"That you afford man an important supply,
No ass in his senses would ever deny;
But then, in return, 'tis but fair to allow,
They are of some service to you, Mistress Cow.

" 'Tis their pleasant meadow in which you repose,
And they find you a shelter from winter's cold snows.
For comforts like these, we're indebted to man;
And for him, in return, should do all that we can."

The cow, upon this, cast her eyes on the grass,
Not pleased to be schooled in this way by an ass;
"Yet," said she to herself, "though he's not very bright,
I really believe that the fellow is right."

Jane Taylor.

THE NIGHTINGALE AND GLOW-WORM

A nightingale, that all day long
Had cheered the village with his song,
Nor yet at eve his note suspended,
Nor yet when eventide was ended,
Began to feel, as well he might,
The keen demands of appetite;
When, looking eagerly around,
He spied far off upon the ground,
A something shining in the dark,
And knew the glow-worm by his spark;
So, stooping down from hawthorn top,
He thought to put him in his crop.

The worm, aware of his intent,
Harangued him thus, right eloquent—
"Did you admire my lamp," quoth he,
"As much as I your minstrelsy,
You would abhor to do me wrong,
As much as I to spoil your song;
For 'twas the self-same power divine,
Taught you to sing and me to shine;
That you with music, I with light,
Might beautify and cheer the night."
The songster heard his short oration,
And warbling out his approbation,
Released him, as my story tells,
And found a supper somewhere else.

William Cowper.

THE ALPHABET

"Come, come, my darling, I must see
How you can say your A, B, C.
Go get your book, and come to me,
And I will hear your E, F, G,
When you have said your A, B, C.

"A, B, C, D, E, F, G,
H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P,
Q, R, S, T, U, W, V,
X, Y, and Z—Oh dear me,
Yes, you can say your A, B, C."

THE ANT AND THE CRICKET

A silly young cricket, accustomed to sing
Through the warm, sunny months of gay summer and
spring,
Began to complain, when he found that at home
His cupboard was empty and winter was come.
Not a crumb to be found
On the snow-covered ground;
Not a flower could he see,
Not a leaf on a tree.

"Oh, what will become," says the cricket, "of me?"
At last by starvation and famine made bold,
All dripping with wet and all trembling with cold,
Away he set off to a miserly ant
To see if, to keep him alive, he would grant
Him shelter from rain.
A mouthful of grain
He wished only to borrow,
He'd repay it tomorrow;
If not helped, he must die of starvation and sorrow.

Says the ant to the cricket: "I'm your servant and
friend,
But we ants never borrow, we ants never lend.
Pray tell me, dear sir, did you lay nothing by

When the weather was warm?" Said the cricket,
"Not I.
My heart was so light
That I sang day and night,
For all nature looked gay."
"You sang, sir, you say?
Go then," said the ant, "and sing winter away."

Thus ending, he hastily lifted the wicket
And out of the door turned the poor little cricket.
Though this is a fable, the moral is good—
If you live without work, you must live without food.

A FLY

Baby Bye,
Here's a fly;
Let us watch him, you and I.
How he crawls
Up the walls;
Yet he never falls!
I believe with six such legs
You and I could walk on eggs.
There he goes
On his toes
Tickling baby's nose.

Spots of red
Dot his head;
Rainbows on his back are spread.
That small speck
Is his neck;
See him nod and beck.

I can show you, if you choose
Where to look to find his shoes—
Three small pairs
Made of hairs;
These he always wears.

He can eat
Bread and meat;
There's his mouth between his feet.
When it rains
He complains
On the window-panes.

Tongues to talk have you and I;
God has given the little fly
No such things;
So he sings
With his buzzing wings.

In the sun
Webs are spun,
What if he gets into one?
Little fly,
Ope your eye;
Spiders are near by;

And a secret I can tell—
Spiders never use flies well.
Then away,
Do not stay.
Little fly, good day.

Theodore Tilton.

SPRING VOICES

"Caw! caw!" says the Crow,
"Spring has come again I know;
For as sure as I am born,
There's a farmer planting corn.
I shall breakfast there, I trow,
Long before his corn can grow."

"Quack, quack!" says the Duck,
"Was there ever such good luck!
Spring has cleared the pond of ice,
And the day is warm and nice,
Just as I and Goodman Drake
Thought we'd like a swim to take."

"Croak, croak!" says the Frog,
As he leaps out from the bog;
"Spring is near, I do declare,
For the earth is warm and fair.
Croak! croak! croak! I love the spring,
When the little birdies sing."

DING DONG!

Ding dong! ding dong!
I'll sing you a song.
'Tis about a little bird.
He sat on a tree,
And he sang to me,
And I never said a word.

Ding dong! ding dong!
I'll sing you a song.
'Tis about a little mouse.
He looked very cunning
As I saw him running
About my father's house.

Ding dong! ding dong!
I'll sing you a song.
'Tis about my little kitty.
She's speckled all over,
And I know you'll love her,
For she is very pretty.

Eliza Lee Follen.

THE FOOLISH FISH

"Dear mother," said a little fish,
"Is that a worm I see?
I'm very hungry, and I wish
You'd get the worm for me."

"Sweet innocent," the mother cried,
And started from her nook,
"That worm you see is there to hide
The sharpness of a hook."

As I have heard, the little trout
Was young and foolish too,
And presently he ventured out
To learn what might be true.

Around about the worm he played,
With many a longing look,
And "Dear me!" to himself he said,
"I'm sure there is no hook."

"I think I'll give one little bite;"
And that was what he did,
And thus he died in hapless plight
By not doing as he was bid.

Ann and Jane Taylor.

READY FOR DUTY

Daffy-down-dilly came up in the cold
Through the brown mold,
Although the March breezes blew keen on her face,
Although the white snow lay on many a place.

Daffy-down-dilly had heard under ground
The sweet rushing sound
Of the streams, as they burst off their white winter chains,
Of the whistling spring winds, and the pattering rains.

"Now then," thought Daffy, deep down in her heart,
"It's time I should start!"
So she pushed her soft leaves straight up through the ground,
Till she came to the surface—and then she looked round.

There was snow all about her, gray clouds overhead;
The trees all looked dead.
Then how do you think Daffy-down-dilly felt,
When the sun would not shine, and the ice would not melt?

"Cold weather!" said Daffy, still working away;
"The earth's hard today!
But unless I can manage to lift up my head,
The people will think that Spring herself's dead!"

So little by little, she brought her leaves out,
All clustered about;
And then her bright flowers began to unfold,
Till Daffy stood robed in her spring green and gold.

Oh, Daffy-down-dilly, so brave and so true!
I wish all were like you!
So ready for duty in all sorts of weather,
And holding forth courage and beauty together.

Anna B. Warner.

THE VOICE OF SPRING

I am coming, I am coming!
Hark! the honey bee is humming;
See, the lark is soaring high
In the blue and sunny sky,
And the gnats are on the wing
Wheeling round in airy ring.

Listen! New-born lambs are bleating,
And the cawing rooks are meeting
In the elms—a noisy crowd.
All the birds are singing loud,
And the first white butterfly
In the sunshine dances by.

Look around you, look around!
Flowers in all the fields abound,
Every running stream is bright,
All the orchard trees are white,
And each small and waving shoot
Promises sweet autumn fruit.

Mary Howitt.

AFTER BLENHEIM

It was a summer evening;
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun;
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round
Which he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found;
He came to ask what he had found
That was so large and smooth and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh,
" 'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he,
"Who fell in the great victory.

"I find them in the garden,
For there's many here about;
And often when I go to plough
The ploughshare turns them out.
For many thousand men," said he,
"Were slain in that great victory."

"Now tell us what 'twas all about,"
Young Peterkin he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes;
"Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for?"

"It was the English," Kaspar cried,
"Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for
I could not well make out.
But everybody said," quoth he,
"That 'twas a famous victory.

"My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by;
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly;
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

"They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun;
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

"Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won
And our good Prince Eugene;"
—"Why 'twas a very wicked thing!"
Said little Wilhelmine;
"Nay—nay—my little girl," quoth he,
"It was a famous victory.

"And everybody praised the Duke
Who this great fight did win."
—"But what good came of it at last?"
Quoth little Peterkin:—
"Why that I cannot tell," said he,
"But 'twas a famous victory."

Robert Southey.

THE BOBOLINK

Merrily swinging on briar and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers;
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gaily drest,
Wearing a bright black wedding-coat;
White are his shoulders, and white his crest;
Hear him call in his merry note:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Look what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,
Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a patient life,
Broods in the grass while her husband sings:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.
Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she;
One weak chirp is her only note,
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
Pouring boasts from his little throat:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Never was I afraid of man;
Catch me cowardly knaves, if you can!
Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!
There as the mother sits all day,
Robert is singing with all his might:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nice good wife, that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chip the shell,
Six wide mouths are open for food;
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
Gathering seeds for the hungry brood.
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
  Sober with work, and silent with care;
Off is his holiday garment laid,
  Half forgotten that merry air:
    Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
  Nobody knows but my mate and I
  Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
    Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes; the children are grown;
  Fun and frolic no more he knows;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone;
  Off he flies, and we sing as he goes:
    "Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
  When you can pipe that merry old strain,
  Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
    Chee, chee, chee."

William Cullen Bryant.

ANNIE'S GARDEN

In little Annie's garden
  There grew all sorts of posies;
She had pinks and mignonette,
  And tulips and roses.

Sweet peas and morning glories,
A bed of violets blue,
And marigolds and asters
In Annie's garden grew.

There bees would go for honey;
There birds would sip the dew;
And there the gay-winged butterflies
And little beetles flew.

And there among her flowers
Each bright and pleasant day,
In her own pretty garden,
Little Annie went to play.

THE LADYBUG

Ladybug! ladybug! fly away home,
The glow-worm is lighting her lamp,
The dew's falling fast, and your fine speckled wings
Will be wet with the close-clinging damp.

Ladybug! ladybug! fly away home,
The field-mouse has gone to its nest,
The daisies have shut up their sweet sleepy eyes,
And the bees and the birds are at rest.

Ladybug! ladybug! fly away now,
To your home in the old willow tree.
There your children so dear have invited the ant
And a few cozy neighbors to tea.

Ladybug! ladybug! fly away home!
You're in luck if you reach it at last;
For owls are abroad and the bats are awing,
Sharp-set from their long daylight fast.

Caroline Bowles Southey.

THE PUZZLED CENTIPEDE

A centipede was happy quite,
Until a frog in fun
Said, "Pray, which leg comes after which?"
This raised her mind to such a pitch,
She lay distracted in the ditch
Considering how to run.

THE BROOK

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

I chatter over stony ways
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

I wind about, and in and out
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers,
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars,
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

Alfred Tennyson.

THE KITE THAT BROKE AWAY

Jack White flew his kite with George Brown one windy day,
And the gale broke the tail and took the kite away.

When the kite did alight in a lofty elm tree top
Jack sighed and he cried as if he ne'er would stop.

"Don't cry, wipe your eye," said George to weeping Jack.
"Stay here, never fear, I'll get the kite safe back."

Up the tree scrambled he, and soon brought down the kite.
"Many thanks, many thanks!" said little Jacky White.

TURNCOATS

Said a little black Tadpole to another,
That happened to be his elder brother,
"Pray, what strange creature is that I hear
Croaking so loud?" "A Frog, my dear,"
Said the brother, "and there he sits." "I ne'er
Saw an uglier monster, I declare,"
Cried little Taddy, wriggling his tail
In an offhand fashion that could not fail
To show his contempt. "It's really a pleasure
And satisfaction no words can measure,
To think that *we* are so smooth and slim,
So handsome, so—*very* unlike *him.*"
"To be sure," said his brother, bobbing and blinking,
"To be sure, I'm just of your way of thinking."
The air was mild, and the sun was strong,
The Tadpoles were turned to Frogs ere long;
The little one croaked, the big one croaked.
At last said the younger, "Of course, we joked
That day in the ditch; for there's no denying,
And in fact it's a truth past all replying,
That whether in mere or marsh or bog
The handsomest creature, by far, is a frog."
"To be sure," said his brother, bobbing and blinking,
"To be sure, I'm just of your way of thinking."

Thomas Westwood.

THE DANDELION

O dandelion, yellow as gold,
What do you do all day?
I just wait here in the tall green grass
Till the children come to play.

O dandelion, yellow as gold,
What do you do all night?
I wait and wait till the cool dews fall
And my hair grows long and white.

And what do you do when your hair is white,
And the children come to play?
They take me up in their dimpled hands,
And blow my hair away.

AN ALPHABET JINGLE

The A, B, C,
Is pleasant to me;
I'm learning it all the day.
Whenever I look
In a printed book
I see nothing but A, B, C.
Sing A, B, C,
Sing A, B, C,
I see nothing but A, B, C.

I'm glad to know
The fine little row
Of letters both great and small,
The D, E, F, G,
The L, M, N, O, P,
And the X, Y, Z, and all.
Sing A, B, C,
Sing R, S, T,
Sing X, Y, Z, and all.

If I can fix
These marks twenty-six
In this careless little head,
I'll read every book
As soon as I look
At the letters all over it spread.
Sing A, B, C,
Sing X, Y, Z;
And the letters all over it spread.

I now will learn
Them all in turn,
The big letters and the small;
For how can I spell
Or words pronounce well
Till I learn the letters all?
Sing A, B, C,
Sing X, Y, Z;
For I'm going to learn them all.

The bees and the flies
Have nice little eyes,
But never can read like me.
They crawl on the book,
And they seem to look
But they'll never know A, B, C.
Sing A, B, C,
Sing A, B, C,
They'll never know A, B, C.

THE CHORUS OF FROGS

"Yaup, yaup, yaup!"
Said the croaking voice of a frog:
"A rainy day
In the month of May,
And plenty of room in the bog."

"Yaup, yaup, yaup!"
Said the frog, as it hopped away:
"The insects feed
On the floating weed,
And I'm hungry for dinner today."

"Yaup, yaup, yaup!"
Said the frog as it splashed about:
"Good neighbors all,
When you hear me call,
It is odd that you do not come out."

"Yaup, yaup, yaup!"
Said the frogs: "It is charming weather;
We'll come and sup
When the moon is up,
And we'll all of us croak together."

Mrs. Hawkshaw.

LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER

A chieftain to the Highlands bound
Cries, "Boatman, do not tarry!
And I'll give thee a silver pound
To row us o'er the ferry!"

"Now, who be ye would cross Lochgyle
This dark and stormy water?"
"Oh, I'm the chief of Ulva's isle,
And this, Lord Ullin's daughter;

"And fast before her father's men
Three days we've fled together,
For should he find us in the glen,
My blood would stain the heather;

"His horsemen hard behind us ride—
Should they our steps discover,
Then who will cheer my bonny bride
When they have slain her lover?"

Out spoke the hardy Highland wight,
"I'll go, my chief, I'm ready:
It is not for your silver bright,
But for your winsome lady—

"And by my word! the bonny bird
In danger shall not tarry;
So though the waves are raging white,
I'll row you o'er the ferry."

By this the storm grew loud apace,
The water-wraith was shrieking;
And in the scowl of heaven each face
Grew dark as they were speaking.

But still as wilder blew the wind,
And as the night grew drearer,
Adown the glen rode arméd men,
Their trampling sounded nearer.

"O haste thee, haste!" the lady cries,
"Though tempests round us gather;
I'll meet the raging of the skies,
But not an angry father!"

The boat has left a stormy land,
A stormy sea before her—
When Oh! too strong for human hand
The tempest gathered o'er her.

And still they rowed amidst the roar
  Of waters fast prevailing:
Lord Ullin reached that fatal shore—
  His wrath was changed to wailing.

For, sore dismayed, through storm and shade
  His child he did discover:
One lovely hand she stretched for aid,
  And one was round her lover.

"Come back! come back!" he cried in grief
  "Across this stormy water;
And I'll forgive your Highland chief—
  My daughter! O my daughter!"

'Twas vain: the loud waves lashed the shore,
  Return or aid preventing;
The waters wild went o'er his child,
  And he was left lamenting.

Thomas Campbell.

GOOD MORNING

Baby, baby, ope your eye,
For the sun is in the sky,
And is peering once again
Through the frosty window-pane.
Little baby, do not keep
Any longer fast asleep.

Ann and Jane Taylor.

GOOD NIGHT

Baby, baby, lay your head
On your pretty little bed.
Shut your eye-peeps, now the day
And the light are gone away.
All the clothes are tucked in tight;
Little baby dear, good night.

Yes, my darling, well I know
How the bitter wind doth blow;
And the winter's snow and rain
Patter on the window-pane;
But they cannot come in here
To my little baby dear.

For the window is shut fast
Till the stormy night is past,
And the curtains I have spread
Round about your cradle-bed.
So till morning shineth bright,
Little baby dear, good night.

Ann and Jane Taylor.

DAME DUCK'S LECTURE ON EDUCATION

Close by the margin of the brook
The old duck made her nest
Of straw and leaves and withered grass
And down from her own breast.

And there she sat for four long weeks,
In rainy days and fine,
Until the ducklings all came out—
Four, five, six, seven, eight, nine!

One peeped out from beneath her wing,
One scrambled on her back;
"That's very rude," said old Dame Duck,
"Get off! quack, quack, quack, quack!"

They were a very thrifty brood,
Those ducklings, small and callow;
Their little wings were short, their down
Was mottled gray and yellow.

"'Tis crowded here," the duck remarked,
And she thrust forth her bill;
"Besides, it never suits young ducks
To keep them sitting still."

So, rising from her nest, she said,
"Now, children, look at me.
A well-bred duck should waddle thus,
From side to side—just see."

"Yes," said the little ones, and then
She went on to explain,
"A well-bred duck turns in its toes
As I do—try again."

"Yes," said the ducklings, waddling on.
"That's better," said their mother;
"But well-bred ducks walk in a row,
Straight—one behind another."

"Yes," said the little ducks once more,
All waddling in a row.
"Now to the pond," said old Dame Duck—
Splash, splash! and in they go.

THE PIN

"Dear me! what signifies a pin?
I'll leave it on the floor;
My pincushion has others in,
Mama has plenty more.
A miser will I never be,"
Said little heedless Emily.

So tripping on to giddy play,
She left the pin behind
For Betty's broom to whisk away,
Or someone else to find.
She never gave a thought, indeed,
To what she might tomorrow need.

Next day a party was to ride
To see an air-balloon;
And all the company beside
Were dressed and ready soon;
But she, poor girl, she could not stir,
For just a pin to finish her.

'Twas vainly now, with eye and hand,
She did to search begin;
There was not one—not one, the band
Of her pelisse to pin!
She cut her pincushion in two,
But not a pin had slidden through.

At last, as hunting on the floor
Over a crack she lay,
The carriage rattled to the door,
Then rattled fast away.
Poor Emily! she was not in,
For want of just a single pin!

There's hardly anything so small,
So trifling or so mean,
That we may never want at all,
For service unforseen;
And those who venture wilful waste,
May woful want expect to taste.

Ann Taylor.

YANKEE DOODLE

Father and I went down to camp,
Along with Captain Good'in
And there we saw the men and boys
As thick as hasty puddin'.

And there I saw a monster gun
  Large as a log of maple.
'Twas mounted on a little cart;
  A load for father's cattle.

And every time they shot it off
  It took a horn of powder,
And made a noise like father's gun,
  Only a great deal louder.

Cousin Simon grew so bold
  I thought he would have cocked it;
Which scared me so I hurried back
  And hung by father's pocket.

And Major Davis had a gun,
  He kind of clapped his hand on't,
And stuck a crooked stabbing iron
  Upon the little end on't.

And there I saw a pumpkin shell
  As big as mother's basin,
And every time they touched it off
  They scampered like the nation.

I saw a little barrel, too,
  The heads were made of leather;
They knocked on it with little clubs
  And called the folks together.

And there was Gen'ral Washington,
And gentlefolks about him.
They say he's grown so 'tarnal proud
He will not ride without 'em.

The flaming ribbons in his hat
They looked so very fine, ah,
I wished that they belonged to me
To give to my Jemima.

The troopers they would gallop up
And fire right in our faces.
It frightened me 'most half to death
To see them run such races.

I was so scared I ran away,
Nor stopped, as I remember,
Nor turned about till I got home,
Locked up in mother's chamber.

THE SPARROW

Glad to see you, little bird;
'Twas your plaintive chirp I heard.
What did you intend to say?
"Give me something this cold day"?

That I will, and plenty, too.
All these crumbs I saved for you.
Don't be frightened—here's a treat;
I will wait and see you eat.

Shocking tales I hear of you;
Speak, and tell me, are they true?
Thomas says you steal his wheat,
John complains his grapes you eat.

But I will not try to know
What you did so long ago.
There's your breakfast, eat away;
Come to see me every day.

THE SHOWER

Hear the rain, patter, patter,
On the pane, clatter, clatter!
Down it pours, helter, pelter;
Quick indoors! shelter, shelter!
See it gush, and roar and whirl,
Swiftly rush, eddy and swirl
Through the street, down the gutters!
How it splashes—but we don't care
Though it dashes everywhere.
We don't care, for, peeping through-
See! up there—a patch of blue!
And the sun, in spite of rain,
Has begun to smile again.

THE LITTLE GIRL WHO COULD NOT READ

I don't know my letters, and what shall I do?
For I have a nice book, but I can't read it through;
Oh dear, how I wish that my letters I knew.
I think I had better begin them today,
'Tis so very tiresome always to play.
Mama, if you please, will you teach me great A,
And then B and C, as they stand in a row,
One after another, as far as they go?
For then I can read my new story you know.
So do, mama, tell me at once, and you'll see
What a good, very good little child I shall be
To try to remember my A, B, C, D.

THE DIVERTING HISTORY OF JOHN GILPIN

John Gilpin was a citizen
  Of credit and renown.
A train-band Captain eke was he
  Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear:
  "Though wedded we have been
These twice ten tedious years, yet we
  No holiday have seen.

"Tomorrow is our wedding-day,
  And we will then repair
Unto the Bell at Edmonton,
  All in a chaise and pair.

"My sister and my sister's child,
Myself and children three,
Will fill the chaise, so you must ride
On horseback after we."

He soon replied: "I do admire
Of womankind but one,
And you are she, my dearest dear,
Therefore it shall be done.

"I am a linendraper bold
As all the world doth know,
And my good friend the calender
Will lend his horse to go."

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin, "That's well said;
And for that wine is dear,
We will be furnished with our own,
Which is both bright and clear."

John Gilpin kissed his loving wife;
O'erjoyed was he to find
That, though on pleasure she was bent,
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
But yet was not allowed
To drive up to the door, lest all
Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stayed,
  Where they did all get in,
Six precious souls, and all agog
  To dash through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,
  Were never folk so glad.
The stones did rattle underneath
  As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse's side
  Seized fast the flowing mane,
And up he got in haste to ride,
  But soon came down again;

For saddle-tree scarce reached had he,
  His journey to begin,
When, turning round his head, he saw
  Three customers come in.

So down he came; for loss of time,
  Although it grieved him sore,
Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,
  Would trouble him much more.

'Twas long before the customers
  Were suited to their mind.
When Betty screaming came down stairs,
  "The wine is left behind!"

"Good lack!" quoth he—"yet bring it me,
My leathern belt likewise,
In which I bear my trusty sword
When I do exercise."

Now Mistress Gilpin, careful soul!
Had two stone bottles found,
To hold the liquor that she loved,
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
Through which the belt he drew,
And hung a bottle on each side
To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be
Equipped from top to toe,
His long red cloak, well brushed and neat,
He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again
Upon his nimble steed,
Full slowly pacing o'er the stones
With caution and good heed.

But finding soon a smoother road
Beneath his well-shod feet,
The snorting beast began to trot,
Which galled him in his seat.

"So, fair and softly," John he cried.
But John he cried in vain;
That trot became a gallop soon,
In spite of curb and rein.

So stooping down, as needs he must
Who cannot sit upright,
He grasped the mane with both his hands,
And eke with all his might.

His horse, who never in that sort
Had handled been before,
What thing upon his back had got
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or nought,
Away went hat and wig,
He little dreamt when he set out,
Of running such a rig.

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
Like streamer long and gay,
Till loop and button failing both,
At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern
The bottles he had slung,
A bottle swinging at each side,
As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children screamed,
Up flew the windows all,
And ev'ry soul cried out, "Well done!"
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he!
His fame soon spread around—
He carries weight! he rides a race!
'Tis for a thousand pound!

And still as fast as he drew near,
'Twas wonderful to view
How in a trice the turnpike men
Their gates wide open threw.

And now as he went bowing down
His reeking head full low,
The bottles twain behind his back
Were shattered at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road
Most piteous to be seen,
Which made his horse's flanks to smoke
As they had basted been.

But still he seemed to carry weight,
With leathern girdle braced,
For all might see the bottle necks
Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington
These gambols he did play,
Until he came unto the wash
Of Edmonton so gay.

And there he threw the wash about
On both sides of the way,
Just like unto a trundling mop,
Or a wild goose at play.

At Edmonton his loving wife
From the balcony spied
Her tender husband, wond'ring much
To see how he did ride.

"Stop, stop, John Gilpin!—Here's the house!"
They all at once did cry;
"The dinner waits, and we are tired."
Said Gilpin—"So am I!'

But yet his horse was not a whit
Inclined to tarry there;
For why?—his owner had a house
Full ten miles off at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew
Shot by an archer strong;
So did he fly—which brings me to
The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin, out of breath,
And sore against his will,
Till at his friend the calender's
His horse at last stood still.

The calender, amazed to see
His neighbor in such trim,
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,
And thus accosted him:

"What news? what news? your tidings tell,
Tell me you must and shall—
Say why bareheaded you are come,
Or why you come at all?"

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,
And loved a timely joke,
And thus unto the calender
In merry guise he spoke:

"I came because your horse would come,
And if I well forbode,
My hat and wig will soon be here;
They are upon the road."

The calender, right glad to find
His friend in merry pin,
Returned him not a single word,
But to the house went in.

Whence straight he came with hat and wig,
A wig that flowed behind,
A hat not much the worse for wear,
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and in his turn
Thus showed his ready wit:
"My head is twice as big as yours,
They therefore needs must fit.

"But let me scrape the dirt away
That hangs upon your face;
And stop and eat, for well you may
Be in a hungry case."

Said John, "It is my wedding-day,
And all the world would stare,
If wife should dine at Edmonton,
And I should dine at Ware."

So turning to his horse, he said,
"I am in haste to dine,
'Twas for your pleasure you came here;
You shall go back for mine."

Ah, luckless speech, and bootless boast!
For which he paid full dear,
For while he spake a braying ass
Did sing most loud and clear;

Whereat his horse did snort, as he
  Had heard a lion roar,
And galloped off with all his might,
  As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away
  Went Gilpin's hat and wig;
He lost them sooner than at first,
  For why?—they were too big.

Now Mistress Gilpin, when she saw
  Her husband posting down
Into the country far away,
  She pulled out half a crown;

And thus unto the youth she said,
  That drove them to the Bell,
"This shall be yours when you bring back
  My husband safe and well."

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
  John coming back amain,
Whom in a trice he tried to stop
  By catching at his rein;

But not performing what he meant,
  And gladly would have done,
The frightened steed he frightened more,
  And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
  Went post boy at his heels,
The post boy's horse right glad to miss
  The lumb'ring of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road
  Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
With post boy scampering in the rear,
  They raised the hue and cry:

"Stop thief! stop thief! a highwayman!"
  Not one of them was mute;
And all and each that passed that way
  Did join in the pursuit.

And now the turnpike gates again
  Flew open in short space,
The toll-men thinking as before
  That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too,
  For he got first to town,
Nor stopped till where he had got up
  He did again get down.

Now let us sing, "Long live the king,
  And Gilpin long live he;
And when he next doth ride abroad,
  May I be there to see!"

William Cowper.

THE REASON WHY

"When I was at the party,"
Said Betty (aged just four),
"A little girl fell off her chair,
Right down upon the floor;
And all the other little girls
Began to laugh, but me—
I didn't laugh a single bit,"
Said Betty, seriously.

"Why not?" her mother asked her,
Full of delight to find
That Betty—bless her little heart!—
Had been so sweetly kind.
"Why didn't *you* laugh, darling?
Or don't you like to tell?"
"I didn't laugh," said Betty,
" 'Cause it was me that fell!"

MISCHIEF

Let those who're fond of idle tricks,
Of throwing stones and hurling bricks
And all that sort of fun,
Now hear a tale of idle Jim,
That warning they may take by him,
Nor do as he has done.

In harmless sport or healthful play
He did not pass his time away,
  Nor took his pleasure in it;
For mischief was his only joy—
No book, or work, nor even toy,
  Could please him for a minute.

If travellers passing chanced to stay
Of idle Jim to ask the way,
  He never told them right;
And then, quite hardened in his sin,
Rejoiced to see them taken in,
  And laughed with all his might.

He'd tie a string across the street,
Just to entangle people's feet
  And make them tumble down.
Indeed, he was disliked so much
That no good boy would play with such
  A nuisance to the town.

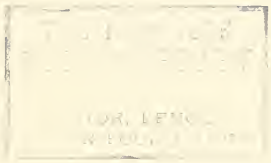
At last the neighbors in despair,
This mischief would no longer bear;
  And so—to end the tale,
This lad to cure him of his ways,
Was sent to spend some dismal days
  Within the county jail.

Jane Taylor.

THE WORM

No, little worm, you need not slip
Into your hole with such a skip,
Drawing the gravel as you glide
Over your smooth and slimy side.
I'm not a crow, poor worm, not I,
Peeping about your hole to spy
And carry you with me in the air
To give my young ones each a share.
No, and I'm not a rolling stone,
Creaking along with hollow groan;
Nor am I one of those, I'm sure,
Who care not what poor worms endure,
But trample on them as they lie,
Rather than take a step awry;
Or keep them dangling on a hook,
Choked in a dismal pond or brook,
Till some poor fish comes swimming past
And finishes their pain at last.
For my part I could never bear
Your tender flesh to hack and tear,
Forgetting, though you do not cry,
That you may feel as much as I,
If any giant should come and jump
On to my back and kill me plump,
Or run my heart through with a scythe,
And think it fun to see me writhe.

Mary and her Lamb



Oh, no, I only look about
To see you wriggling in and out,
And drawing up your shiny rings,
Instead of feet like other things.
So, little worm, you need not slip
Into your hole with such a skip.

Ann Taylor.

MARY'S LAMB

Mary had a little lamb,
Its fleece was white as snow;
And everywhere that Mary went,
The lamb was sure to go.

He followed her to school one day—
That was against the rule;
It made the children laugh and play,
To see a lamb at school.

So the teacher turned him out,
But still he lingered near,
And waited patiently about
Till Mary did appear.

Then he ran to her, and laid
His head upon her arm,
As if he said, "I'm not afraid,
You'll keep me from all harm."

"What makes the lamb love Mary so?"
The eager children cry.
"Oh, Mary loves the lamb, you know,"
The teacher did reply.

Mrs. Sarah J. Hale.

SNOW

Oh come to the window, dear brother, and see
What a change has been made in the night;
The snow is all over the big cedar tree,
And the ground, too, is covered with white;

And see the poor birds how they fly to and fro,
As they look for their breakfast again;
But the food that they seek for is hid in the snow,
And they hop about for it in vain.

Then open the window, I'll throw them some bread;
I've some left from breakfast to spare.
I wish they would come to my hand to be fed,
But they're all flown away, I declare.

Nay, now, pretty birds, don't be frightened, I pray,
You shall not be hurt, I'll engage.
I'm not come to catch you, or force you away,
Or fasten you up in a cage.

I wish you could know there's no cause for alarm,
From me you have nothing to fear.
Why, my little fingers should do you no harm,
Although you came ever so near!

Jane Taylor.

THE RAIN-MAN

Rain-man, Rain-man, come today,
Shower the meadows fresh and gay;
Dance and fall from out the sky,
Fill our cistern long since dry.

Foam the brook up to the brim,
Swell the pool where ducklings swim;
Wash the strawberries in their bed,
Make them ripe and round and red.

Send the doves that love not rain
Trooping to their cote again;
Make the chickens run and hide
'Neath the mother-wings so wide.

Rain-man, with your cloudy hat,
Come and clatter, pat, pat, pat;
O'er the roofs and chimneys, too,
Let us hear your tramping shoe.

Put your cloak on, Goodman Gray,
Come and visit us today;
Pour your buckets down the sky;
When you're through, we'll shout, "Good by!"

Augusta Larned.

COUNTRY MUSIC

The cock is crowing,
The cows are lowing,
The ducks are quacking,
The dogs are barking,
The mule is braying,
The horse is neighing,
The pigs are squeaking,
The barn door is creaking,
The sheep are baa-ing,
The boys are ha-ha-ing,
The birds are singing,
The bells are ringing,
The brook is babbling,
The geese are gabbling,
The crows are cawing,
And John is sawing,
An owl is screeching,
And Ann is teaching,
Amid all the noise.

THE WREN AND THE HEN

Said a very small wren
To a very large hen,
"Pray, why do you make such a clatter?
I never could guess
Why an egg more or less
Should be thought so important a matter.

Then answered the hen
To the very small wren,
"If I laid such small eggs as you, madam,
I would not cluck so loud,
Nor would I feel proud.
Look at these! How you'd crow if you had 'em."

CASABIANCA

The boy stood on the burning deck,
Whence all but he had fled;
The flames that lit the battle's wreck,
Shone round him o'er the dead;
Yet beautiful and bright he stood
As born to rule the storm!
A creature of heroic blood,
A proud, though child-like form!

The flames roll'd on—he would not go
Without his father's word;
That father, faint in death below,
His voice no longer heard.
He called aloud: "Say, father, say
If yet my task is done!"
He knew not that the chieftain lay
Unconscious of his son.

"Speak, father!" once again he cried,
"If I may yet be gone!"
And but the booming shots replied,
And fast the flames roll'd on.
Upon his brow he felt their breath,
And in his waving hair;
And looked from that lone post of death
In still, yet brave despair.

He shouted but once more aloud,
"My father! must I stay?"
While o'er him fast through sail and shroud
The wreathing fires made way.
They wrapped the ship in splendor wild,
They caught the flag on high,
And streamed above the gallant child
Like banners in the sky.

There came a burst of thunder-sound—
The boy—Oh where was he?
—Ask of the winds that far around
With fragments strew'd the sea,
With mast, and helm, and pennon fair,
That well had borne their part;
But the noblest thing that perish'd there
Was that young and faithful heart!

Felicia Hemans.

A GOOD PLAY

We built a ship upon the stairs
All made of the back-bedroom chairs,
And filled it full of sofa pillows
To go a-sailing on the billows.

We took a saw and several nails,
And water in the nursery pails;
And Tom said, "Let us also take
An apple and a slice of cake;"—
Which was enough for Tom and me
To go a-sailing on, till tea.

We sailed along for days and days,
And had the very best of plays;
But Tom fell out and hurt his knee,
So there was no one left but me.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

THE MAY QUEEN

You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear;
Tomorrow will be the happiest time of all the glad New Year;
Of all the glad New Year, mother, the blithest, merriest day;
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

I sleep so sound all night mother, that I shall never wake,
If you do not call me loud when the day begins to break:
And I must gather knots of flowers, and buds and garlands gay;
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The night winds come and go, mother, upon the meadow-grass,
And the happy stars above them seem to brighten as they pass;
There will not be a drop of rain the whole of the live-long day,
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

So you must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear;
Tomorrow will be the happiest time of all the glad New Year;
Tomorrow will be of all the year the blithest, merriest day;
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

Alfred Tennyson.

POLITENESS

Politeness is to do and say
The kindest thing in the kindest way.

THE PROUD CRICKET

A cricket who the same dull chirp
Repeated all day long,
Once boasted to a nightingale
Of the beauty of its song—
Just think—such bragging to a bird
Of melody the queen!
One wonders how the noisy fright
So foolish could have been.

"I do not lack admirers,"
Piped the silly little thing.
"You'd be surprised what crowds of folks
Delight to hear me sing.
Oh yes, I've listeners plenty
Who come from near and far."
The nightingale responding said,
"Pray tell me who they are?"

"They're beetles and the pretty bugs,
And surely you must know
Their judgment is most excellent
As such matters go."
"That may be very true,"
Replied the courteous bird,
"Though of their taste for music,
I confess I'd never heard;

"And I'd advise you, little friend,
To be somewhat less vain,
Nor anxious the applauses
Of the ignorant to gain.
Better music for a cricket
I perhaps never knew,
But it's not quite a nightingale's,"
She said and off she flew.

GUESSING SONG

Oh ho! oh ho! Pray, who can I be?
I sweep o'er the land, I scour o'er the sea;
I cuff the tall trees till they bow down their heads,
And I rock the wee birdies asleep in their beds.
Oh ho! oh ho! And who can I be,
That sweep o'er the land and scour o'er the sea?

I rumple the breast of the gray-headed daw,
I buffet the rook and make him cry, "Caw;"
But though I love fun, I'm so big and so strong,
At a puff of my breath the great ships sail along.
Oh ho! oh ho! and who can I be,
That sweep o'er the land and sail o'er the sea?

I swing all the weather-cocks this way and that,
I play a game of tag with a runaway hat;
But however I wander, I never can stray,
For go where I will, I've a free right of way!
Oh ho! oh ho! and who can I be,
That sweep o'er the land and scour o'er the sea?

I skim o'er the pasture, I dance up the street,
I've foes that I laugh at, and friends that I greet;
I'm known in the country, I'm named in the town,
For all the world over extends my renown.
Oh ho! oh ho! and who can I be,
That sweep o'er the land and scour o'er the sea?

Henry Johnston.

LANDING OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS

The breaking waves dashed high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against a stormy sky
Their giant branches tossed;

And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free!

The ocean eagle soared
From his nest by the white wave's foam;
And the rocking pines of the forest roared—
This was their welcome home!

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?—
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Felicia Hemans.

HOW TO GET BREAKFAST

Said the first little chick
With a queer little squirm
"I wish I could find
A fat little worm."

Said the next little chick,
With an odd little shrug,
"I wish I could find
A fat little bug."

Said the third little chick,
With a shrill little squeal,
"I wish I could find
Some nice yellow meal."

Said the fourth little chick,
With a small sigh of grief,
"I wish I could find
A little green leaf."

"See here," called the hen,
From the near garden patch,
"If you want any breakfast
Just come here and scratch."

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light,
The year is dying in the night.
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new;
Ring happy bells across the snow,
The year is going, let him go,
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Alfred Tennyson.

PAUL REVERE'S RIDE

Listen, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend: "If the British march
By land or sea from the town tonight,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light—
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said "Good night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street,
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North Church,
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the somber rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade—
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard lay the dead,
In their night-encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay—
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and somber and still.
And lo! as he looks on the belfry's height

A glimmer and then a gleam of light!
He springs to his saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in the village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet.
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the elders that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock,
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weather-cock

Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read
How the British Regulars fired and fled—
How the farmers gave them ball for ball
From behind each fence and farmyard wall,
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,—
A cry of defiance and not of fear,

A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo forevermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

Henry W. Longfellow.

MY WINTER FRIEND

The chickadee, the chickadee!
A chosen friend of mine is he.
His head and throat are glossy black,
He wears a great-coat on his back,
His vest is light—'tis almost white,
His eyes are round and clear and bright.

He picks the seeds from withered weeds;
Upon my table-crumbs he feeds;
He comes and goes through falling snows;
The freezing wind around him blows—
He heeds it not, his heart is gay
As if it were the breeze of May.

The whole day long he sings one song,
Though dark the sky may be;
And better than all other birds
I love the chickadee.

The bluebird coming in the spring,
The goldfinch with his yellow wing,
The humming bird that feeds on pinks
And roses, and the bobolinks,
The robins gay, the sparrows gray—
They all delight me while they stay.

But when, ah me! they chance to see
A red leaf on the maple tree,
They all cry, "Oh, we dread the snow!"
And spread their wings in haste to go;
And when they all have southward flown,
The chickadee remains alone.

A bird that stays in wintry days,
A friend indeed is he;
And better than all other birds
I love the chickadee.

Marian Douglas.

THE FATHER'S HOME COMING

The clock is on the stroke of six,
The father's work is done;
Sweep up the hearth, and stir the fire,
And put the kettle on.
The wild night wind is blowing cold,
'Tis dreary crossing o'er the wold.

Nay, do not close the shutters, child;
For far along the lane
The little window looks, and he
Can see it shining plain.
I've heard him say he loves to mark
The cheerful firelight through the dark.

I know he's coming by this sign,
That baby's almost wild;
See how he laughs, and crows, and stares—
Heaven bless the merry child!
His father's self in face and limb,
And father's heart is strong in him.

Hark! hark! I hear his footsteps now;
He's through the garden gate;
Run, little Bess, and ope the door,
And do not let him wait.
Shout, baby, shout! and clap your hands,
For father on the threshold stands.

Mary Howitt.

THE SQUIRRELS AND THE GUN

Five little squirrels sitting on a tree;
This one says, "What do I see?"
This one says, "I see a gun!"
This one says, "Come, let's run!"
This one says, "Let's hide in the shade!"
This one says, "I'm not afraid!"
BANG goes the gun
And the squirrels all run.

THE VIOLET

Down in a green and shady bed,
A modest violet grew;
Its stalk was bent, it hung its head,
As if to hide from view.

And yet it was a lovely flower,
Its color bright and fair;
It might have graced a rosy bower,
Instead of hiding there.

But thus it was content to bloom,
Its modest tints arrayed;
And there diffused a sweet perfume
Within the silent shade.

Jane Taylor.

MY DOG

I have a little dog,
With soft, long hair that curls,
And bright, black, sparkling eyes,
And he loves little girls.

He never snarls or bites,
His temper is so mild
And he dearly loves to play
With every little child.

And in the morning early,
He's sure—this funny pup,
To say, "Bow-wow, Miss Mary
'Tis time that you were up."

MY DOLL

I have a little doll,
  I take care of her clothes;
And she has flaxen hair,
  And her name is Rose.

She has pretty violet eyes
  And a very small nose
And a sweet little mouth,
  And her name is Rose.

She has a little bed,
  And when the daylight goes
I tuck her up in it,
  And say, "Good night, dear Rose."

WHAT THE BURDOCK WAS GOOD FOR

"Good for nothing," the farmer said,
As he made a sweep at the burdock's head;
"But then, it is best, no doubt,
To come some day and root it out."
So he lowered his scythe, and went his way
To see his corn or gather his hay;
And the weed grew safe and strong and tall
Close by the side of the garden wall.

My Doll

"Good for home," cried the little toad,
As he hopped up out of the dusty road.
He had just been having a dreadful fright—
The boy who gave it was yet in sight.
Here it was cool and dark and green,
The safest kind of a leafy screen.
The toad was happy, "For," said he,
"This burdock was plainly meant for me."

"Good for a prop," the spider thought,
And to and fro with care he wrought,
Till he fastened it well to an evergreen
And spun his cables fine between.
'Twas a beautiful bridge—a triumph of skill—
And flies came round, as idlers will.
The spider lurked in his corner dim;
The more that came the better for him.

"Good for play," said the child, perplext
To know what frolic was coming next.
So she gathered the burrs that all despised,
And her city playmates were quite surprised
To see what a beautiful basket or chair
Could be made with a little time and care.
They ranged their treasures about with pride,
And played all day by the burdock's side.

THE GOLDEN RULE

Be you to others kind and true,
As you'd have others be to you.

THE LAZY HORSE

A horse, long used to bit and bridle,
But always much disposed to idle,
Had often wished that he was able
To steal unnoticed from the stable.

He panted from his inmost soul
To be at nobody's control—
Go his own pace, slower or faster—
In short, do nothing for his master.

But yet he'd ne'er have got at large,
If Jack, who had him in his charge,
Had not, as many have before,
Forgot to shut the stable door.

Dobbin, with expectation swelling,
Now rose to quit his pleasant dwelling,
But first peeped out with cautious fear
To examine if the coast were clear.

At length he ventured from his station,
And with extreme self-approbation,
As if delivered from a load,
He galloped to the public road.

And then, unchecked by bit or rein,
He sauntered down a grassy lane;
And neighed forth many a jocund song,
In triumph, as he passed along.

But when the night began to appear,
In vain he sought some shelter near;
For well he knew he could not bear
To sleep out in the open air.

The earth was damp, the grass felt raw,
Much colder than his master's straw;
Yet on it he was forced to stretch,
A poor, cold, melancholy wretch.

As soon as day began to dawn,
Dobbin with long and weary yawn,
Arose from his dull, sleepless night,
But in low spirits and bad plight.

"If this," thought he, "is all I get,
A bed unwholesome, cold and wet;
And thus forlorn about to roam,
I think I'd better be at home."

'Twas long ere Dobbin could decide
Betwixt his wishes and his pride,
Whether to live in all this danger,
Or go back sneaking to his manger.

At last his struggling pride gave way;
The thought of savory oats and hay
To hungry stomach was a reason
Unanswerable at this season.

So off he set with look profound,
Right glad that he was homeward bound;
And trotting fast as he was able,
Soon gained once more his master's stable.

Now Dobbin, after this disaster,
Never again forsook his master,
Convinced he'd better let him mount,
Than travel on his own account.

Jane Taylor.

THE FROST

The frost looked forth one still, clear night
And whispered: "Now I shall be out of sight;
So through the valley and over the height
In silence I'll take my way.
I will not go on like that blustering train—
The wind and the snow, the hail and the rain—
Who make so much bustle and noise in vain;
But I'll be as busy as they."
Then he flew to the mountain and powdered its crest,
He lit on the trees and their boughs he dressed
With diamond beads; and over the breast
Of the quivering lake he spread
A coat of mail, that it need not fear
The downward point of many a spear
That he hung on its margin, far and near,
Where a rock could rear its head.
He went to the windows of those who slept,
And over each pane, like a fairy, crept;

Wherever he breathed, wherever he stepped,
By the light of the morn were seen
Most beautiful things; there were flowers and trees,
There were bevies of birds and swarms of bees;
There were cities and temples and towers; and these
All pictured in silver sheen.
But he did one thing that was hardly fair;
He went to the cupboard, and finding there
That all had forgotten for him to prepare—
"Now just to set them a-thinking,
I'll bite this basket of fruit," said he,
"This costly pitcher I'll burst in three;
And the glass of water they have left for me
Shall 'tchick!' to tell them I'm drinking."

Hannah Flagg Gould.

IS IT YOU?

There is a child—a boy or girl—
I'm sorry it is true—
Who doesn't mind when spoken to:
Is it—it isn't you?
Oh no, it can't be you!

I know a child—a boy or girl—
I'm loth to say I do—
Who struck a little playmate child:
Was it—it wasn't you?
I hope it wasn't you!

Mrs. Goodwin.

A GOOD THANKSGIVING

Said old Gentleman Gay, "On a Thanksgiving Day,
If you want a good time, then give something away;"
So he sent a fat turkey to Shoemaker Price,
And the shoemaker said: "What a big bird! how nice!
And, since a good dinner's before me, I ought
To give poor Widow Lee the small chicken I bought."

"This fine chicken, Oh see!" said the pleased Widow Lee,
"And the kindness that sent it, how precious to me!
I would like to make someone as happy as I—
I'll give Washwoman Biddy my big pumpkin pie."

"And Oh, sure!" Biddy said, "'tis the queen of all pies!
Just to look at its yellow face gladdens my eyes!
Now it's my turn, I think, and a sweet ginger-cake
For the motherless Finigan children I'll bake."

"A sweet-cake, all our own! 'Tis too good to be true!"
Said the Finigan children, Rose, Denny, and Hugh;
"It smells sweet of spice, and we'll carry a slice
To poor little lame Jake—who has nothing that's nice."

"Oh, I thank you, and thank you!" said little lame Jake,
"Oh what a bootiful, bootiful, bootiful cake!
And Oh, such a big slice! I will save all the crumbs,
And will give 'em to each little sparrow that comes!"

And the sparrows they twittered, as if they would say,
Like old Gentleman Gay, "On a Thanksgiving Day,
If you want a good time, then give something away."

Marian Douglas.

THE WOOD-MOUSE

Do you know the little wood-mouse,
That pretty little thing,
That sits amongst the forest leaves,
Beside the forest spring?

Its fur is red as the chestnut,
And it is small and slim,
It leads a life most innocent
Within the forest dim.

'Tis a timid, gentle creature,
And seldom comes in sight;
It has a long and wiry tail,
And eyes both black and bright.

It makes its nest of soft, dry moss,
In a hole both deep and strong;
And there it sleeps secure and warm,
The dreary winter long.

And though it keeps no calendar
It knows when flowers are springing;
And waketh to its summer life
When nightingales are singing.

Mary Howitt.

PUSSY WILLOW

Pussy Willow wakened
From her Winter nap,
For the frolic Spring Breeze
On her door did tap.

Mistress Pussy Willow
Opened wide the door;
Never had the sunshine
Seemed so bright before.

Happy little children
Cried with laugh and shout,
"Spring is coming, coming,
Pussy Willow's out."

Kate L. Brown.

THE COCK AND THE CLUCKING HEN

The cock said, "Will you walk with me,
My little wife, today?
There's barley in the barley field
And hayseed in the hay."

"Oh, thanks!" replied the clucking hen;
"But I've something else to do,
I'm busy sitting on my eggs,
I cannot walk with you.

"Cluck, cluck, cluck, cluck!"
Said the clucking hen,
"My little chicks will soon be hatched,
I'll think about it then."

The clucking hen sat on her nest—
The nest was in the hay,
And warm and snug beneath her breast
A dozen white eggs lay.

Crack, crack! went all the eggs;
Out crept the chickens small.
"Cluck!" said the clucking hen,
"Now I have you all.

"Come along, my little chicks,
I'll take a walk with *you*."
"Hello!" said the barnyard cock,
"Cock-a-doodle-doo!"

THE RUNAWAYS

Missy Trot and Master Dot
Ran away together.
Said Master Dot to Missy Trot,
"It's very cloudy weather!"
Said Missy Trot to Master Dot,
"I think it's going to rain!"
And when the first drop tumbled down,
They both ran home again.

THREE CHILDREN SLIDING ON THE ICE

Three children sliding on the ice,
One pleasant summer day;
As it fell out, they all fell in,
The rest they ran away.

Now had these children been at home,
Or sliding on dry ground,
Ten thousand pounds to penny one
They had not all been drowned.

You parents all that children have,
And you too that have none,
If you would have them safe abroad,
Pray keep them safe at home.

John Gay.

SNOW IN TOWN

Nothing is quite so quiet and clean,
As snow that falls in the night;
And isn't it jolly to jump from bed
And find the whole world white?

It lies on the window ledges,
It lies on the boughs of the trees,
While sparrows crowd at the kitchen door,
With a pitiful "If you *please!*"

No sound there is in the snowy road
From the horses' cautious feet,
And all is hushed but the postman's knocks
Rat-tatting down the street,

Till the men come round with shovels
To clear the snow away—
What a pity it is that when it falls
They never let it stay!

Rickman Mark.

THE FOX AND THE GOOSE

A fox crept into a farmyard one day,
And thus addressed an old goose, I've heard say:
"Mrs. Goose, so wondrous bright is the weather,
We'll go, if you please, ma'am, a-walking together."

"I thank you," the goose said, "yet I must decline.
When first I looked out, the morning was fine;
But sir, since you came to my door, I make bold
To tell you, the weather seems cloudy and cold."

The day was warm, the sky was clear,
No rain had fallen, no storm was near,
But the goose was too wary to venture out
While the treacherous Reynard was prowling about;
For the goose who walks with a fox, 'tis plain,
Will never come walking home again.

THE STORY OF A SNAKE

Close by the threshold of a door nailed fast
Three kittens sat; each kitten looked aghast;
I, passing swift and inattentive by,
At the three kittens cast a careless eye,
Little concerned to know what they did there,
Not deeming kittens worth a poet's care.
But presently a loud and furious hiss
Caused me to stop and to exclaim, "What's this?"
When lo! a viper there did meet my view,
With head erect and eyes of fiery hue.
Forth from his head his forkèd tongue he throws,
Darting it full against a kitten's nose!
Who, never having seen in field or house
The like, sat still and silent as a mouse,
Only projecting with attention due,
Her whiskered face, she asked him, "Who are you?"
On to the hall went I, with pace not slow
But swift as lightning, for a long Dutch hoe,
With which, well armed, I hastened to the spot
To find the viper;—but I found him not;
And turning up the leaves and shrubs around,
Found only—that he was not to be found.
But still the kittens, sitting as before,
Were watching close the bottom of the door.
"I hope," said I, "the villain I would kill
Has slipped between the door and the doorsill;

And if I make despatch, and follow hard
No doubt but I shall find him in the yard."
(For long ere now it should have been rehearsed,
'Twas in the garden that I found him first.)
Ev'n there I found him; there the full-grown cat
His head, with velvet paw, did gently pat,
As curious as the kittens erst had been
To learn what this phenomenon might mean.
Filled with heroic ardor at the sight,
And fearing every moment he would bite,
And rob our household of the only cat
That was of age to combat with a rat,
With outstretched hoe I slew him at the door,
And taught him *never to come there no more.*

William Cowper.

THE MICE

The little mice stay in their holes
And hide themselves by day;
But when the house is still at night
They all come out to play.

They climb upon the pantry shelf,
And taste of all they please;
They drink the milk that's set for cream,
And nibble bread and cheese.

But if they chance to hear the cat,
Their feast at once is done;
They scamper off to hide themselves
As fast as they can run.

OUT-OF-DOOR ARITHMETIC

Add bright buds, and sun and flowers,
New green leaves, and fitful showers
To a bare world, and the sum
Of the whole to spring will come.

Multiply these leaves by more,
And the flowers by a score,
The result, if found aright,
Will be summer, long and bright.

Then divide the flowers and sun
By gray clouds and storms begun,
And the quotient sure will be
Autumn over land and sea.

From this, then, subtract the red
Of the leaves up overhead.
Also every flower in sight,
And you've winter, cold and bright.

THE RAGGED DOLLY

Katy, my dear,
Please sit down near,
I've a short tale for you to hear.

Upon the floor,
Behind the door,
This morn I found a dolly poor.

Once she was new,
And pretty too,
With cloak and hat and frock and shoe.

But, oh dear me!
A sight to see
Has that same dolly come to be;

Her clothes all worn
And soiled and torn;
Alas, alas, she looks forlorn!

I wonder who
Has made her so.
Why, Katy, dear, can it be you?

FILIAL TRUST

The ocean wild, with awful roar,
A little ship assailed,
And pallid fear's distracting power
O'er all the crew prevailed.

Yet in the stress the captain's child
Unfrightened viewed the storm;
And cheerful, with composure smiled
At danger's threatening form.

"How can you play?" a seaman cried,
"While terrors overwhelm?"
"Why should I fear?" the boy replied,
"My father's at the helm."

THE WAY TO SCHOOL

Five minutes chasing butterflies
Way over, off the road;
Five minutes watching Willie Price
Do tricks with his pet toad;
Five minutes helping Gibbsie get
His pig back in the pen—
I wonder if it's school-time yet?
I guess I'm late again.

I think I lost a little time
Because I walked so slow
Where Johnny Watkins lost a dime
A day or two ago.
It's underneath the leaves somewhere,
And Johnny feels so blue
That I just stopped a minute there
Because he asked me to.

And then it rained a little bit,
And Dominick McPhee
Had his straw hat, and had to sit
Under a good thick tree,
Or else he'd get it spoiled and get
The top all swelled. You see,
A straw hat is not safe to wet—
His kind, especially.

And after we had saved his hat
From getting spoiled for him,
A big woodpecker came and sat
Upon a rotten limb;
And Johnny said when they're about,
Somebody told the boys,
You see a lot of worms come out
To see what makes the noise.

So then we boys all stayed about
A couple of minutes more,
In hopes to see the worms come out
Which he was rapping for;
But after he went b-r-r-r and b-r-r-r
A while, he flew away,
And Johnny said he guessed there were
No worms at home that day.

So then we hurried up, and ran
As fast as we could run,
To get there just as school began.
And just when it's begun
I had to run back to the tree
To get my slate and rule;
And yet my teacher cannot see
Why boys are late for school!

J. W. Foley.

THE IDLER AND THE WORKER

A ladybug sat in a rose's heart,
And smiled with lofty scorn
As she saw a plain-dressed ant go by
With a heavy grain of corn.

So she drew her curtains of damask around,
Adjusted her silken vest
And glanced in her mirror—a drop of dew
That lay in the rose's breast.

Then she laughed so loud that the ant looked up,
And seeing her haughty face,
Took no more notice, but travelled along
At her usual industrious pace.

But a sudden wind of autumn came,
And rudely swept the ground,
And down the rose with the ladybug bent
And scattered its petals around.

Then the houseless lady was much amazed,
For she knew not where to go,
Since cold November's surly blast
Had brought both rain and snow.

Her wings were wet and her feet were cold,
And she thought of the ant's warm cell;
And what she did in the wintry storm,
I'm sure I cannot tell.

But the careful ant was in her nest
With her little ones by her side.
She taught them all, like herself, to toil,
Nor mind the sneer of pride.

Mrs. Sigourney.

THE LAST SPEECH OF POOR PUSS

Kind masters and misses, whoever you be,
Do stop for a moment and pity poor me!
While here on my deathbed I try to relate
My many misfortunes and miseries great.

Poor thoughtless young thing! If I recollect right,
I began life in March, on a clear frosty night;
And before I could see or was half a week old,
I nearly had perished, the barn was so cold.

But this chilly spring I got pretty well over,
And moused in the stable, or played in the clover,
Or till I was weary, which seldom occurred,
Ran after my tail, which I took for a bird.

Thus time passed along till one warm summer day,
As I lay sound asleep cuddled up in the hay,
Miss Fanny crept slyly, and gripping me fast,
Declared she had caught the sweet creature at last.

Ah me! how I struggled, my freedom to gain,
But, alas! all my kicking and struggles were vain.
From this dreadful morning my sorrows arose;
Wherever I went I was followed with blows.

And then the great dog! I shall never forget him;
How often young master at poor me would set him!
And while I stood terrified, all of a quake,
Cry, "Hey, cat!" and, "Seize her, boy! give her a shake."

Sometimes when so hungry I could not forbear
Just taking a scrap that I thought they could spare,
Oh! what I suffered with beating and banging,
Or starved for a fortnight, or was threatened with hanging.

Miss Fanny was fond of a little canary,
That tempted me more than mouse, pantry, or dairy;
So, not having eaten a morsel one day,
I flew to the bird-cage and tore it away.

Now tell me, my friends, was the like ever heard,
That a cat should be killed for just catching a bird?
I am sure not the slightest suspicion I had
But that catching a mouse was exactly as bad.

Indeed, I can say, with my paw on my heart,
I would not have acted a mischievous part;
But, as dear mother Tabby was often repeating,
I thought birds and mice were on purpose for eating.

Be this as it may, when my supper was o'er,
And but a few feathers were left on the floor,
Came Fanny—and angrily scolding and crying,
She gave me these bruises of which I am dying.

Ann Taylor.

A TRAGIC STORY

There lived a sage in days of yore,
And he a handsome pigtail wore;
But wondered much, and sorrowed more,
Because it hung behind him.

He mused upon this curious case,
And swore he'd change the pigtail's place,
And have it dangling at his face,
Not dangling there behind him.

Says he, "The mystery I've found—
I'll turn me round,"—he turned him round
But still it hung behind him.

Then round and round, and out and in,
All day the puzzled sage did spin;
In vain—it mattered not a pin—
The pigtail hung behind him.

And right and left, and round about,
And up and down, and in and out
He turned; but still the pigtail stout
Hung steadily behind him.

And though his efforts never slack,
And though he twist, and twirl, and tack,
Alas! still faithful to his back,
The pigtail hangs behind him.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

A SLEIGH-RIDE

Jingle, jingle go the bells;
A right good time have we,
Across the hills and through the dells
Dear grandmama to see.

The day is bright, and on we go
As swift as swift can be,
Over the smoothly trodden snow
Dear grandmama to see.

And look, do look, for there she stands,
Aunt Mary by her side,
To welcome us with outstretched hands
After our pleasant ride.

And there are George and Will—Oh my!
The tell-tale bells they've heard,
As along the shining road we fly
With the fleetness of a bird.

WISHING

Ring-ting! I wish I were a primrose,
A bright yellow primrose, blowing in the spring!
The stooping boughs above me,
The wand'ring bee to love me,
The fern and moss to creep across,
And the elm tree for our king!

Nay—stay! I wish I were an elm tree,
A great lofty elm tree, with green leaves gay!
The winds would set them dancing,
The sun and moonshine glance in,
The birds would house among the boughs,
And sweetly sing.

Oh—no! I wish I were a robin,
A robin or a little wren, everywhere to go;
Through forest, field or garden,
Ask no leave or pardon,
Till winter comes with icy thumbs
To ruffle up our wings!

Well—tell! Where should I fly to,
Where go to sleep in the dark wood or dell?
Before a day was over,
Home comes the rover,
For mother's kiss—sweeter this
Than any other thing.

William Allingham.

ALL FOR WANT OF A NAIL

For want of a nail, the shoe was lost,
For want of a shoe, the horse was lost,
For want of the horse, the rider was lost,
For want of the rider, the battle was lost,
For want of the battle, the kingdom was lost,
And all for want of a horseshoe nail.

THE BROWN THRUSH

There's a merry brown thrush sitting up in the tree,
"He's singing to me! He's singing to me!"
And what does he say, little girl, little boy?
"Oh the world's running over with joy!
Don't you hear? Don't you see?
Hush! Look! In my tree,
I'm as happy as happy can be!"

And the brown thrush keeps singing, "A nest do you see,
And five eggs hid by me in the juniper tree?
Don't meddle! Don't touch! little girl, little boy,
Or the world will lose some of its joy!
Now I'm glad! Now I'm free!
And I always shall be,
If you do not bring sorrow to me."

Lucy Larcom.

THE NORTH WIND

The north wind doth blow, and we shall have snow;
And what will the Robin do then, poor thing?
He'll sit in a barn[1], and keep himself warm,
And hide his head under his wing, poor thing!

The north wind doth blow, and we shall have snow;
And what will the Swallow do then, poor thing?
Oh! do you not know that he's gone long ago
To a country much warmer than ours?—poor thing!

[1]The robin referred to in this verse is the English robin. Unlike our bird of the same name, he stays in barns and does not go south in the winter.

The north wind doth blow, and we shall have snow;
And what will the Honey-bee do, poor thing?
In his hive he will stay till the cold's gone away,
And then he'll come out in the spring, poor thing!

The north wind doth blow, and we shall have snow;
And what will the Dormouse[1] do then, poor thing?
Rolled up like a ball in his nest snug and small,
He'll sleep till warm weather comes back, poor thing!

The north wind doth blow, and we shall have snow;
And what will the Children do then, poor things?
When lessons are done, they'll jump, skip, and run,
And play till they make themselves warm, poor things!

Gammer Gurton.

THE LARK AND THE ROOK

"Good night, Sir Rook," said a little lark,
"The daylight fades; it will soon be dark.
I've bathed my wings in the sun's last ray,
I've sung my hymn to the dying day,
So now I haste to my quiet nook
In the dewy meadow. Good night, Sir Rook."
"Good night, poor lark," said his titled friend,
With a haughty toss and a distant bend.
"I also go to my rest profound,
But not to sleep on the cold damp ground.
The fittest place for a bird like me
Is the topmost bough of yon tall pine tree.

[1] The English dormouse resembles the common mouse, but is larger and remains torpid during the winter.

"I opened my eyes at peep of day
And saw you taking your upward way,
Dreaming your fond romantic dreams,
A tiny speck in the sun's bright beams,
Soaring too high to be seen or heard—
And said I to myself, 'What a foolish bird!'

"I trod the park with a princely air,
I filled my crop with the richest fare,
I cawed all day 'mid a lordly crew
And I made more noise in the world than you!
The sun shone down on my ebon wing;
I looked and wondered—good night, poor thing!"

"Good night, once more," said the lark's sweet voice.
"I see no cause to repent my choice,
You build your nest in the lofty pine,
But is your slumber more soft than mine?
And you make more noise in the world, 'tis true,
Yet I'm sure I'd not change places with you."

THE WEATHERCOCK'S COMPLAINT

No wonder he creaks as the winds go by,
No wonder he turns with a misty sigh;
How would you like a living earning
By turning—turning—turning—turning?
Or to stand all your life with a pole for a base
And the winds of all weathers to blow in your face?

"Creak, creak, creak," we hear him say,
"Tomorrow will be like yesterday,—
Now to the east, now to the west—
One never has any quiet or rest;
An hour of sunshine, another of rain,
It's nothing but turning and turning again."

"Creak, creak, creak," the tin bird cries,
In quite a few signs the secret lies;
When the wind's from the west, there's nothing to fear;
When the wind's from the east, a storm is near.
Can't everyone tell when the day is clear
Without keeping me turning and twisting here?"

"Creak, creak, creak," the weathercock growls,
"I think I'm the most ill-used of fowls;
I never foretold bad weather yet
But you went in while I got wet;
Say what you may, I don't think it's right
To keep me twisting from morn to night."

LITTLE BY LITTLE

"Little by little," an acorn said,
As it slowly sank in its mossy bed,
"I am improving every day
Hidden deep in the earth away."

Little by little, each day it grew,
Little by little, it sipped the dew;
Downward it sent out a thread-like root,
Up in the air sprung a tiny shoot.

Day after day, and year after year,
Little by little the leaves appear,
And the slender branches spread far and wide,
Till the mighty oak is the forest's pride.

"Little by little," said a thoughtful boy,
"Moment by moment I'll well employ;
Learning a little every day,
And not spending all my time in play;
And still this rule in my mind shall dwell—
'Whatever I do, I'll do it well.'

"Little by little, I'll learn to know
The treasured wisdom of long ago,
And one of these days perhaps we'll see
That the world will be the better for me."
And do you not think that this simple plan
Made him a wise and useful man?

WHY SOME BIRDS HOP AND OTHERS WALK

A little bird sat on a twig of a tree
A-swinging and swinging as glad as could be,
And shaking his tail, and smoothing his dress,
And having such fun as you never could guess.

And when he had finished his gay little song,
He flew down in the street and went hopping along,
This way and that way with both little feet,
While his sharp little eyes looked for something to eat.

A little boy said to him: Little bird, stop,
And tell me the reason you go with a hop.
Why don't you walk, as boys do, and men,
One foot at a time, like a dove or a hen?"

Then the little bird went with a hop, hop, hop;
And he laughed just as if his laugh never would stop;
And he said: "Little boy, there are some birds that talk,
And some birds that hop, and some birds that walk.

"Use your eyes, little boy; watch closely and see
What little birds hop, both feet, just like me,
And what little birds walk like the duck and the hen;
And when you know that you'll know more than some men.

"Every bird that can scratch in the dirt can walk;
Every bird that can wade in the water can walk;
Every bird that has claws to catch prey with can walk,
One foot at a time—that is why they can walk.

"But most little birds who can sing you a song,
Are so small that their legs are not very strong
To scratch with, or wade with, or catch things—that's why
They hop with both feet. Little boy, good by!"

J. L. Bates.

THE TASK

Whene'er a task is set for you,
Don't idly sit and view it—
Nor be content to wish it done;
Begin at once and do it.

HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD

By the shores of Gitchee Gumee,
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,
Stood the wigwam of Nokomis,
Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis.
Dark behind it rose the forest,
Rose the black and gloomy pine trees,
Rose the firs with cones upon them;
Bright before it beat the water,
Beat the clear and sunny water,
Beat the shining Big-Sea-Water.

There the wrinkled old Nokomis
Nursed the little Hiawatha,
Rocked him in his linden cradle,
Bedded soft in moss and rushes,
Safely bound with reindeer sinews.
At the door on summer evenings,
Sat the little Hiawatha;
Heard the whispering of the pine trees,
Heard the lapping of the water,
Sounds of music, words of wonder;
Saw the firefly Wah-wah-taysee,
Flitting through the dusk of evening,
With the twinkle of its candle
Lighting up the brakes and bushes;
Saw the moon rise from the water,
Rippling, rounding from the water.

Hiawatha and Old Nokomis

When he heard the owls at midnight,
Hooting, laughing in the forest,
"What is that?" he cried in terror;
"What is that," he said, "Nokomis?"
And the good Nokomis answered,
"That is but the owl and owlet
Talking in their native language,
Talking, scolding at each other.

Then the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How they built their nests in summer,
Where they hid themselves in winter,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Chickens."

Of all the beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Brothers."

Henry W. Longfellow.

THE GLUTTON

There was once a duck so much given to stuffing,
That all the day long she was panting and puffing,
And by every creature who did her great crop see,
Was thought to be galloping fast for a dropsy.

One day, after eating a plentiful dinner,
Of full twice as much as there should have been in her,
While still down her throat she was greedily roking,
Was greatly alarmed by the symptoms of choking.

Now there was an old fellow, much famed for discerning,
A drake, who had taken a liking for learning,
And high in repute with his feathery friends,
Was called Dr. Drake—for this doctor she sends.

In a hole by the barn was good Dr. Drake's shop,
Where he kept a few simples for curing the crop,
Small pebbles, and two or three different gravels,
With certain famed plants he had found in his travels.

So taking a handful of suitable things,
And brushing his topple and pluming his wings,
And putting his feathers in apple-pie order,
He went to prescribe for the lady's disorder.

"Dear sir," said the duck, with a delicate quack,
Just turning a little way round on her back,
And leaning her head on a stone in the yard,
"My case, Dr. Drake, is exceedingly hard.

"I feel so disturbed and weak and oppressed,
So squeamish and faint, such a load at my chest;
And day after day, I assure you it is hard,
To suffer with patience these pains in my gizzard."

"Give me leave," said the doctor, with medical look,
As her cold flabby paw in his fingers he took.
"By the feel of your pulse, your complaint, I've been thinking,
Must surely be owing to eating and drinking."

"Oh, no sir, believe me," the lady replied,
Alarmed for her stomach as well as her pride;
"I'm sure it arises from nothing I eat,
But I rather suspect I got wet in my feet.

"I've only been raking a bit in the gutter
Where cook has been pouring some cold melted butter
And a slice of green cabbage, and scraps of cold meat,
Just a trifle or two, that I thought I could eat.'

The doctor was just to his business proceeding,
By gentle emetics, a blister and bleeding,
When all on a sudden she rolled on her side,
Gave a terrible quack, and a struggle, and died!

Her remains were interred in a neighboring swamp
By her friends with a great deal of funeral pomp;
But I've heard, this inscription her tombstone displayed,
"Here poor Mrs. Duck, the great glutton, is laid;"
And all the young ducklings are brought by their friends
There to learn the disgrace in which gluttony ends.

Ann Taylor.

KING BRUCE AND THE SPIDER

King Bruce of Scotland flung himself down
In lonely mood to think;
'Tis true he was a monarch, and wore a crown
But his heart was beginning to sink.

For he had been trying to do a great deed,
To make his people glad;
He had tried, and tried, but couldn't succeed,
And so he became quite sad.

He flung himself down in low despair,
As grieved as man could be;
And after a while as he pondered there,
"I'll give it all up," said he.

Now just at that moment a spider dropped
With its silken cobweb clue;
And the king in the midst of thinking stopped
To see what that spider would do.

'Twas a long way up to the ceiling dome,
And it hung by a rope so fine;
That how it would get to its cobweb home
King Bruce could not divine.

It soon began to cling and crawl
Straight up with strong endeavor;
But down it came with a slippery sprawl
As near the ground as ever.

Up, up it ran, not a second it stayed
To utter the least complaint;
Till it fell still lower, and there it laid
A little dizzy and faint.

Its head grew steady—again it went,
And travelled a half-yard higher;
'Twas a delicate thread it had to tread,
A road where its feet would tire.

Again it fell and swung below,
But again it quickly mounted;
Till up and down, now fast, now slow,
Nine brave attempts were counted.

"Sure," cried the king, "that foolish thing
Will strive no more to climb;
When it toils so hard to reach and cling,
And tumbles every time."

But up the insect went once more,
Ah me! 'tis an anxious minute;
He's only a foot from his cobweb door,
Oh, say will he lose or win it?

Steadily, steadily, inch by inch
Higher and higher he got;
And a bold little run at the very last pinch
Put him into his native cot.

"Bravo, bravo!" the king cried out,
"All honor to those who try;
The spider up there defied despair,
He conquered, and why shouldn't I?"

And Bruce of Scotland braced his mind,
And gossips tell the tale,
That he tried once more as he tried before,
And that time did not fail.

Pay goodly heed, all ye who read,
And beware of saying, "I can't;"
'Tis a cowardly word, and apt to lead
To idleness, folly, and want.

Whenever you find your heart despair
Of doing some goodly thing;
Con over this strain, try bravely again,
And remember the spider and king.

Eliza Cook.

HOW THE WINDS BLOW!

High and low
The spring winds blow!
They take the kites that the boys have made,
And carry them off high into the air;
They snatch the little girls' hats away,
And toss and tangle their flowing hair.

High and low
The summer winds blow!
They dance and play with the garden flowers,
And bend the grasses and yellow grain;
They rock the bird in her hanging nest,
And dash the rain on the window-pane.

High and low
The autumn winds blow!
They frighten the bees and blossoms away,
And whirl the dry leaves over the ground;
They shake the branches of all the trees,
And scatter ripe nuts and apples around.

High and low
The winter winds blow!
They fill the hollows with drifts of snow,
And sweep on the hills a pathway clear;
They hurry the children along to school,
And whistle a song for the Happy New Year.

MY KITE

Oh, look at my kite,
Almost out of sight!
How pretty it flies,
Right up to the skies!
Pretty kite, pretty kite,
Almost out of sight,
Pray, what do you spy
In the bright blue sky?

GOD MADE THEM ALL

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.

Each little flower that opens,
Each little bird that sings,
He made their glowing colors,
He made their tiny wings.

The purple-headed mountain,
The river running by,
The sunset and the morning
That brighten up the sky;

The cold wind in the winter,
The pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden,
He made them every one.

Cecil Frances Alexander.

THE RIVULET

Run, little rivulet, run!
Summer is fairly begun.
Bear to the meadow the hymn of the pines,
And the echo that rings where the waterfall shines;
Run, little rivulet, run!

Run, little rivulet, run!
Sing to the fields of the sun
That waves in emerald, shimmers in gold,
Where you glide from your rocky ravine, crystal cold;
Run, little rivulet, run!

Run, little rivulet, run!
Sing of the flowers, every one—
Of the delicate harebell and violet blue;
Of the red mountain rosebud, all dripping with dew;
Run, little rivulet, run!

Run, little rivulet, run!
Stay not till summer is done!
Carry the city the mountain birds' glee;
Carry the joy of the hills to the sea;
Run, little rivulet, run.

Lucy Larcom.

WISHES

There was a little boy, with two little eyes,
And he had a little head that was just the proper size,
And two little arms, and two little hands;
On two little legs this little boy stands.

Now, this little boy would now and then be cross
Because that he could only be the very thing he was;
He wanted to be this, and then he wanted to be that;
His head was full of wishes underneath his little hat!

I wish I was a horse to go sixty miles an hour;
I wish I was the man that lives up in the lighthouse tower;
I wish I was a sea gull with two long wings;
I wish I was a traveller to see all sorts of things.

I wish I was a carpenter; I wish I was a lord;
I wish I was a soldier, with a pistol and a sword;
I wish, I wish, I wish I could be something else, and soon!"

But all the wishing in the world is not a bit of use;
That Little Boy this very day he stands in his own shoes;
And his father and his mother they say, "Thank the gracious powers,
Those wishes cannot wish away that Little Boy of ours!"

SPRING

The cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The plough-boy is whooping—anon—anon;
There's joy in the mountains;
There's life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing,
The rain is over and gone!

William Wordsworth.

THE DISAPPOINTED SNOWFLAKES

Four and twenty snowflakes came tumbling from the sky
And said, "Let's make a snowdrift—
We can if we but try."
So down they gently fluttered
And lighted on the ground,
And when they all were seated
They sadly looked around.
"We're very few indeed," sighed they,
"And we sometimes make mistakes;
We cannot make a snowdrift
With four and twenty flakes."
Just then the sun peeped round a cloud
And smiled at the array,
And the disappointed snowflakes
Melted quietly away.

THE ADVENTURES OF JOE DOBSON

Joe Dobson was an Englishman
  In days of Robin Hood.
A country farmer eke was he,
  In forest of Sherwood.

Joe Dobson said unto his dame,
  "I vow that I could do
More household work in any day
  Than you can do in two."

She soon replied: "I do declare
  Your words you shall fulfill.
Tomorrow you my place shall take,
  I'll to the plough and mill."

Next morning came; they sallied forth,
  Each sure of doing well,
She with her stick, he with a pail;
  The rest I soon will tell.

Away went Joe to milk the cow,
  His business to begin;
She tossed the pail and kicked his leg—
  The blood ran down his shin.

But see him now sit down to reel
  The yarn his wife had spun,
Much puzzled and perplexed was he—
  He swore it was no fun.

Next job, to boil the pot he went—
The fire he had forgot;
He ran with chips and burnt his thumb—
Oh! grievous was his lot.

Away went Joe to wash the clothes,
But sore against his will;
The water scalded both his hands,
Bad luck pursued him still.

He went to hang the clothes to dry—
It was a lovely day;
But oh, alas! a magpie came
And stole his wig away.

Then off went Dobson in despair
At losing thus his wig;
The magpie flew with rapid flight
And left it on a twig.

"Good lack!" quoth he, "I must dispatch
And haste the bread to make."
But stooping down to knead it well
His back did sorely ache.

Loud crowed the cocks, the turkeys screamed,
The geese and ducks now quacked;
Enraged for food, which Joe forgot,
He was by all attacked.

An effort then poor Dobson made
The little pigs to feed;
The old sow tripped him in the mud
In spite of all his heed.

The old dame now with speed returned—
Quite stout and blithe was she—
And found poor Joe all bruised and ill,
Fatigued as he could be.

Now Mrs. Dobson, tidy soul,
Soon set all neat and right,
Prepared the meat and drew the ale—
They bravely fared that night.

Whilst they partook this dainty meal
Joe sullenly confessed
He was convinced that wives could do
The household business best.

SNOW-BOUND

The sun that brief December day
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,
And, darkly circled, gave at noon
A sadder light than waning moon.
Slow tracing down the thickening sky
Its mute and ominous prophecy,
A portent seeming less than threat,
It sank from sight before it set.

Unwarmed by any sunset light
The gray day darkened into night,
A night made heavy with the swarm
And whirl-dance of the blinding storm,
As zigzag, wavering to and fro,
Crossed and recrossed the winged snow;
And ere the early bedtime came
The white drifts piled the window-pane,
And through the glass the clothes-line posts
Looked in like tall and sheeted ghosts.

So all night long the storm roared on:
The morning broke without a sun;
In starry flake, and pellicle,
All day the hoary meteor fell;
And, when the second morning shone,
We looked upon a world unknown,
On nothing we could call our own.
The old familiar sights of ours
Took marvellous shapes; strange domes and towers
Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,
Or garden wall, or belt of wood;
A smooth white mound the brush pile showed,
A fenceless drift what once was road.

A prompt, decisive man, no breath
Our father wasted: "Boys, a path!"
Well pleased—for when did farmer boy
Count such a summons less than joy?—
Our buskins on our feet we drew;

With mittened hands, and caps pulled low,
To guard our necks and ears from snow,
We cut the solid whiteness through.
We reached the barn with merry din
And roused the prisoned brutes within.
The old horse thrust his long head out,
And grave with wonder gazed about;
The cock his lusty greeting said,
And forth his speckled harem led.

All day the gusty north wind bore
The loosening drift its breath before;
Low circling round its southern zone,
The sun through dazzling snow mist shone.
No church bell lent its Christian tone
To the savage air, no social smoke
Curled over woods of snow-hung oak.
Beyond the circle of our hearth
No welcome sound of toil or mirth
Unbound the spell, and testified
Of human life and thought outside.

As night drew on and from the crest
Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,
The sun, a snow-blown traveller, sank
From sight beneath the smothering bank,
We piled, with care, our nightly stack
Of wood against the chimney-back,
Until the old, rude-furnished room
Burst flower-like, into rosy bloom.

Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
The frost line back with tropic heat;
The house dog on his paws outspread
Laid to the fire his drowsy head;
And, for the winter fireside meet,
Between the andirons' straddling feet,
The mug of cider simmered slow,
The apples sputtered in a row,
And, close at hand, the basket stood
With nuts from brown October's wood.

What matter how the night behaved?
What matter how the north wind raved?
Blow high, blow low, not all its snow
Could quench our hearth-fire's ruddy glow.
At last the watch that hung in view,
Ticking its weary circuit through,
Pointed with mutely warning sign
Its black hand to the hour of nine.
That sign the pleasant circle broke,
And to their beds sent all the folk.

Awhile we lay awake and heard
The wind that round the gables roared,
With now and then a ruder shock,
Which made our very bedsteads rock.

We heard the loosening clapboards tost,
The board-nails snapping in the frost;
And on us through the unplastered wall,
Felt the light-sifted snowflakes fall.
But sleep stole on, as sleep will do
When hearts are light and life is new.

Next morn we wakened with the shout
Of merry voices high and clear;
And saw the teamsters drawing near
To break the drifted highways out.
Down the long hillside treading slow
We saw the half-buried oxen go.
Before our door the straggling train
Drew up an added team to gain.
Then toiled again the cavalcade
O'er windy hill, through clogged ravine,
And woodland paths that wound between
Low-drooping pine boughs winter-weighed.

We heard once more the sleigh bells' sound,
And following where the teamsters led,
The wise old doctor went his round.
At length the village carrier bore
The village paper to our door.
Welcome to us its week-old news,
Its corner for the rustic Muse,
Its monthly gauge of snow and rain,
Its record, mingling in a breath
The wedding bell and dirge of death:

Jest, anecdote, and lovelorn tale,
The latest culprit sent to jail.
We felt the stir of hall and street,
The pulse of life that round us beat;
The chill embargo of the snow
Was melted in the genial glow,
Wide swung again our ice-locked door,
And all the world was ours once more!

John G. Whittier.

THE SPIDER

"Oh, look at that great ugly spider!" said Ann;
And screaming, she brushed it away with her fan.
" 'Tis a frightful black creature as ever can be;
I wish it would not come crawling on me."

"Indeed," said her mother, "I'll venture to say,
The poor thing will try to keep out of your way;
For after its fright, and its fall and its pain,
It has much more occasion than you to complain.

"But why should you dread the poor insect, my dear?
If it hurt you, there'd be some excuse for your fear;
But its little black legs, as it hurried away,
Only tickled your arm as they went, I dare say.

"For them to fear us we must grant to be just,
Who in less than a moment can tread them to dust;
But certainly, we have no cause for alarm;
For, were they to try, they could do us no harm.

"Now look! it has got to its home; do you see
What a delicate web it has spun in the tree?
Why here, my dear Ann, is a lesson for you;
Come learn from this spider what patience can do!

"And when at your work you are tempted to play,
Recollect what you see in this insect today.
Or else, to your shame, it may seem to be true,
That a poor spider is wiser than you."

Jane Taylor.

THE FOX AND THE CROW

To a dairy a crow
Having ventured to go,
Some food for her young ones to seek,
Flew up in the trees
With a fine piece of cheese
Which she joyfully held in her beak.

A fox who lived nigh
To the tree saw her fly,
And to share in the prize made a vow!
For having just dined
He for cheese felt inclined;
So he went and sat under the bough.

She was cunning, he knew,
But so was he, too,
And with flattery adapted his plan;
For he knew if she'd speak
It must fall from her beak.
So, bowing politely, began:

The Clouds

"'Tis a very fine day;"
(Not a word did she say)
"The wind, I believe, ma'am, is south.
A fine harvest for peas."
He then looked at the cheese,
But the crow did not open her mouth.

Sly Reynard, not tired,
Her plumage admired,
And said: "Ah, how brilliant its hue!
The voice must be fine
Of a bird so divine!
Now let me just hear it—pray do!

"Believe me, I long
To hear a sweet song."
Then to sing the crow foolishly tries;
But no sooner did squall
Than the cheese she let fall,
And the fox ran away with the prize.

Bernard Barton.

THE CLOUDS

Boats sail on the rivers,
And ships sail on the seas;
But clouds that sail across the sky
Are prettier far than these.

Christina G. Rossetti.

A WINTER VISITOR

Come here, little sparrow, and don't be afraid,
I would not harm even a feather;
Come here, little sparrow, and pick up some bread
To feed you this very cold weather.

I don't mean to hurt you, you poor little dear,
And pussy cat is not behind me;
So hop about pretty, and never you fear,
Just pick up the crumbs and don't mind me!

We've winter snows now, but the cold won't last long,
And summer we soon shall be greeting;
Oh, then, little bird, you must sing me a song
In return for the breakfast you're eating.

WHICH WAY DOES THE WIND BLOW

Which way does the wind blow,
Which way does he go?
He rides over the water,
He rides over the snow;

O'er wood and o'er valley,
And o'er rocky height,
Which the goat cannot traverse,
He taketh his flight.

He rages and tosses
In every bare tree,
As, if you look upward,
You plainly may see.

But whence the wind cometh
And whither he goes,
There's never a scholar
In England that knows.

Lucy Aikin.

BIRD TRADES

The swallow is a mason,
And underneath the eaves
He builds a nest, and plasters it
With mud and hay and leaves.

Of all the weavers that I know,
The oriole is the best;
High on the branches of the tree
She hangs her cosy nest.

The woodpecker is hard at work—
A carpenter is he—
And you may hear him hammering
His nest high up a tree.

Some little birds are miners,
Some build upon the ground,
And busy little tailors, too,
Among the birds are found.

THE MILKMAID

A milkmaid, who poised a full pail on her head,
Thus mused on her prospects in life, it is said:
"Let me see—I should think that this milk will procure
One hundred good eggs or fourscore, to be sure.

"Well then—stop a bit—it must not be forgotten,
Some of these may be broken, and some may be rotten;
But if twenty for accident should be detached,
It will leave me just sixty sound eggs to be hatched.

"Well, sixty sound eggs—no, sound chickens, I mean:
Of these some may die—we'll suppose seventeen.
Seventeen! not so many—say ten at the most,
Which will leave fifty chickens to boil or to roast.

"But then, there's their barley, how much will they need?
Why, they take but one grain at a time when they feed,
So that's a mere trifle; now then, let us see,
At a fair market price, how much money there'll be.

"Six shillings a pair—five—four—three-and-six.
To prevent all mistakes, that low price I will fix:
Now what will that make? Fifty chickens, I said—
Fifty times three-and-sixpence—*I'll ask Brother Ned.*

"Oh! but stop—three-and-sixpence a *pair* I must sell 'em;
Well, a pair is a couple—now then let us tell 'em;
A couple in fifty will go—(my poor brain!)
Why just a score times, and five pair will remain.

"Twenty-five pair of fowls—now how tiresome it is
That I can't reckon up such money as this!
Well, there's no use in trying, so let's give a guess—
I'll say twenty pounds, and *it cannot be less.*

"Twenty pounds, I am certain, will buy me a cow,
Thirty geese and two turkeys, eight pigs and a sow;
Now if these turn out well, at the end of the year,
I shall fill both my pockets with guineas, 'tis clear."

Forgetting her burden, when this she had said,
The maid superciliously tossed up her head;
When, alas! for her prospects—her milk-pail descended,
And so all her schemes for the future were ended.

This moral, I think, may be safely attached,—
"Reckon not on your chickens before they are hatched."

Jeffreys Taylor.

THE STORMY MARCH

The stormy March is come at last
With wind and cloud and changing skies;
I hear the rushing of the blast
That through the snowy valley flies.

Ah, passing few are they who speak
Wild, stormy month, in praise of thee;
Yet, though thy winds are loud and bleak,
Thou art a welcome month to me.

For thou, to northern lands, again
The glad and glorious sun dost bring,
And thou hast joined the gentle train,
And wearest the gentle name of Spring.

And, in thy reign of blast and storm,
Smiles many a long, bright, sunny day,
When the changed winds are soft and warm,
And heaven puts on the blue of May.

Thou bringest the hope of those calm skies
And that soft time of sunny showers,
When the wide bloom, on earth that lies,
Seems of a brighter world than ours.

William Cullen Bryant.

MORNING AND EVENING

Morning on the hilltops
Radiant to see!
Bobolink and blackbird
Trilling on the tree.

Ruth among the green lanes
Violets to seek;
All the little soft winds
Kissed her on the cheek.

Evening on the hilltops!
Ruth has gone to rest.
Every pretty song bird
Has hidden in its nest.

Stars in the purple sky
All their lamps alight;
Winds to the tall trees
Are whispering, "Good night."

Anna M. Wells.

THE LITTLE MOUSE

I have seen you, little mouse,
Running all about the house,
Through the hole, your tiny eye
In the wainscot peeping sly,
Hoping soon some crumbs to steal,
To make yourself a hearty meal.

Look before you venture out,
See if pussy is about.
If she's gone, you'll quickly run
To the larder for some fun;
Round about the dishes creep,
Taking into each a peep,
To choose the daintiest that's there,
'Twill be for you a generous fare.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

Half a league, half a league,
  Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
  Rode the six hundred.
"Forward the Light Brigade!
  Charge for the guns!" he said:
Into the valley of Death
  Rode the six hundred.

"Forward the Light Brigade!"
  Was there a man dismayed?
Not though the soldier knew
  Someone had blundered:
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why
Theirs but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
  Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
  Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
  Rode the six hundred.

Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air,
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
  All the world wondered;
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right through the line they broke:
Cossack and Russian
Reeled from the sabre-stroke,
  Shattered and sundered.
Then they rode back but not—
  Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
  Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of Death
  Back from the mouth of Hell.
All that was left of them—
  Left of six hundred.
When can their glory fade?
Oh, the wild charge they made!
  All the world wondered.
Honor the Light Brigade,
  Noble six hundred!

Alfred Tennyson.

THE WIND AND THE MOON

Said the Wind to the Moon, "I will blow you out.
You stare
In the air
Like a ghost in a chair,
Always looking what I am about;
I hate to be watched—I will blow you out."

The Wind blew hard, and out went the Moon.
So deep,
On a heap
Of clouds, to sleep,
Down lay the Wind, and slumbered soon—
Muttering low, "I've done for that Moon."

He turned in his bed; she was there again!
On high,
In the sky,
With her one clear eye,
The Moon shone white and alive and plain.
Said the Wind—"I will blow you out again."

The Wind blew hard, and the Moon grew dim.
"With my sledge
And my wedge
I have knocked off her edge!
If only I blow right fierce and grim,
The creature will soon be dimmer than dim."

He blew and blew, and she thinned to a thread.
"One puff
More's enough
To blow her to snuff!
One good puff more where the last was bred,
And glimmer, glimmer, glum will go the thread!"

He blew a great blast, and the thread was gone;
In the air
Nowhere
Was a moonbeam bare;
Far off and harmless the shy stars shone;
Sure and certain the Moon was gone.

The Wind, he took to his revels once more;
On down
In town,
Like a merry-mad clown,
He leaped and hallooed with whistle and roar,
"What's that?" The glimmering thread once more!

He flew in a rage—he danced and blew;
But in vain
Was the pain
Of his bursting brain;
For still the broader the Moon-scrap grew,
The broader he swelled his big cheeks and blew.

Slowly she grew—till she filled the night,
And shone
On her throne

In the sky alone,
A matchless, wonderful, silvery light,
Radiant and lovely, the Queen of the Night.

Said the Wind—"What a marvel of power am I!
With my breath,
Good faith!
I blew her to death—
First blew her away right out of the sky—
Then blew her in; what a strength have I!"

But the Moon, she knew nothing about the affair,
For, high
In the sky,
With her one white eye
Motionless, miles above the air,
She had never heard the great Wind blare.

George Macdonald.

TIME

The watch is ticking, ticking,
Ticking the minutes away;
And minutes make up the hours,
And hours make up the day.

The clock is striking, striking,
The hours so loud and clear;
The hours make up the day,
And the days make up the year.

THE DEATH OF MASTER TOMMY ROOK

A pair of steady rooks
Chose the safest of all nooks
In the hollow of a tree to build their home;
And while they kept within
They did not care a pin
For any roving sportsman who might come.

Their family of five
Were all happy and alive,
And Mrs. Rook was careful as could be
To never let them out
Till she looked all round about
And saw that they might wander far and free.

She had talked to every one
Of the dangers of a gun,
And fondly begged that none of them would stir
To take a distant flight,
At morning, noon, or night,
Before they prudently asked leave of her.

But one fine sunny day,
Toward the end of May,
Young Tommy Rook began to scorn her power,
And said that he would fly
Into the field close by,
And walk among the daisies for an hour.

"Stop, stop!" she cried, alarmed,
"I see a man that's armed,
And he will shoot you, sure as you are seen;
Wait till he goes, and then,
Secure from guns and men,
We all will have a ramble on the green."

But Master Tommy Rook,
With a very saucy look,
Perched on a twig and plumed his jetty breast
Still talking all the while
In a very pompous style,
Of doing just what he might like the best.

"I don't care one bit," said he,
"For any gun you see;
I am tired of the cautions you bestow;
I mean to have my way,
Whatever you may say,
And shall not ask when I may stay or go."

"But, my son," the Mother cried,
"I only wish to guide
Till you are wise and fit to go alone.
I have seen much more of life,
Of danger, woe and strife
Than you, my child, can possibly have known.

"Just wait ten minutes here,—
Let that man disappear;
I am sure he means to do some evil thing;

I fear you may be shot
If you leave this sheltered spot,
So pray come back, and keep beside my wing."

But Master Tommy Rook
Gave another saucy look,
And chattered out: "Don't care! don't care!
don't care!
And off he flew with glee
From his brothers in the tree,
And lighted on the field so green and fair.

He hopped about and found
All pleasant things around;
He strutted through the daisies—but alas!
A loud shot—bang— was heard,
And the wounded, silly bird
Rolled over, faint and dying, on the grass.

"There, there! I told you so!"
Cried his mother in her woe;
"I warned you with a parent's thoughtful truth;
And you see that I was right
When I tried to stop your flight,
And said you needed me to guide your youth."

Poor Master Tommy Rook
Gave a melancholy look
And cried, just as he drew his latest breath:
"Forgive me, mother dear,
And let my brothers hear
That disobedience caused my cruel death."

Now, when his lot was told,
The rooks, both young and old,
All said he should have done as he was bid—
That he well deserved his fate;
And I, who now relate
His hapless story, really think he did.

Eliza Cook.

IN SEPTEMBER

Mornings frosty grow, and cold,
Brown the grass on hill and wold;
Crows are cawing sharp and clear
When the rustling corn grows sere;
Mustering flocks of blackbirds call,
Here and there a few leaves fall.
In the meadows larks sing sweet,
Chirps the cricket at our feet,
In September.

Noons are sunny, warm and still,
A golden haze o'erhangs the hill,
Amber sunshine's on the floor
Just within the open door.
Still the crickets call and creak,
Never found, though long we seek;
Oft comes faint report of gun,
Busy flies buzz in the sun,
In September.

Evenings chilly are, and damp,
  Early lighted is the lamp;
Fire burns and kettle sings,
  Smoke ascends in thin blue rings;
On the rug the children lie,
  In the west the soft lights die,
From the elms a robin's song
  Rings out sweetly, lingers long,
    In September.

THE WIND IN A FROLIC

The wind one morning sprang up from sleep,
Saying, "Now for a frolic! now for a leap!
Now for a madcap galloping chase!
I'll make a commotion in every place!"
So it swept with a bustle right through a great town,
Creaking the signs, and scattering down
Shutters, and whisking, with merciless squalls,
Old women's bonnets and gingerbread stalls.
  Then away to the fields it went blustering and humming,
And the cattle all wondered whatever was coming.
It plucked by their tails the grave matronly cows,
And tossed the colts' manes all about their brows,
Till, offended at such a familiar salute,
They all turned their backs and stood sullenly mute.
So on it went, capering and playing its pranks;
Whistling with reeds on the broad river banks,

Smiting the water and dashing the spray
And puffing the traveller on the highway.
It was not too nice to shake up the bags
Of the beggar, and flutter his dirty rags.
'Twas so bold that it feared not to play its joke
With the doctor's wig, and the gentleman's cloak.
Through the forest it roared and cried gayly, "Now,
You sturdy old oaks, I'll make you bow!"
And it made them bow without more ado,
Or it cracked their great branches through and through.
Then it rushed like a monster o'er cottage and farm,
Striking their inmates with sudden alarm.
The turkeys they gobbled, the geese screamed aloud,
And the hens crept to roost in a terrified crowd.
But the wind had passed on, and had met in a lane
With a schoolboy, who panted and struggled in vain,
For it tossed him, and twirled him, then passed and he stood
With his hat in a pool, and his shoes in the mud.

William Howitt.

JACK FROST

Who hath killed the pretty flowers,
Born and bred in summer bowers?
Who hath chased the birds so gay,
Lark and robin, all away?
Jack Frost! Jack Frost!

Who hath chilled the rippling river?
Who doth make the old oak shiver?
Who hath wrapped the world in snow?
Who doth make the wild winds blow?
Jack Frost! Jack Frost!

Who doth freeze the traveller's toes?
Who doth pinch the schoolboy's nose?
Who doth make your fingers tingle?
Who doth make the sleigh-bells jingle?
Jack Frost! Jack Frost!

THE DAYS

The waning day is near its close,
The sun low in the west,
And all the children must ere long
Lie down for their night's rest.

In other countries far away,
The day begins to break
And many a child and many a bird
Will soon be wide awake.

But when at length round to our east
The sun is come again,
They all with haste will seek their beds
'Tis evening with them then.

THE THREE LITTLE KITTENS

Three little kittens lost their mittens,
And they began to cry,
Oh mother dear,
We very much fear,
That we have lost our mittens."

"Lost your mittens!
You naughty kittens!
Then you shall have no pie!"
"Me-ow, me-ow, me-ow!"
"No, you shall have no pie."
"Me-ow, me-ow, me-ow!"

The three little kittens found their mittens,
And they began to cry,
"Oh mother dear,
See here, see here!
See! we have found our mittens!"

"Put on your mittens,
You silly kittens,
And you shall have some pie."
"Purr-r, purr-r, purr-r,
Oh let us have the pie.
Purr-r, purr-r, purr-r!"

The three little kittens put on their mittens,
And soon ate up the pie.

"Oh mother dear,
We greatly fear
That we have soiled our mittens."

"Soiled your mittens,
You naughty kittens!"
Then they began to sigh,
"Me-ow, me-ow, me-ow!"
Then they began to sigh,
"Me-ow, me-ow, me-ow!"

The three little kittens washed their mittens,
And hung them out to dry.
"Oh mother dear,
Do you not hear,
That we have washed our mittens?"

"Washed your mittens?
Oh, you're good kittens.
But I smell a rat close by!
Hush! hush! me-ow, me-ow!
I smell a rat close by.
Me-ow, me-ow, me-ow!"

LITTLE THINGS

Little drops of water,
Little grains of sand,
Make the mighty ocean,
And the pleasant land.

Thus the little minutes,
  Humble though they be,
Make the mighty ages
  Of eternity.

Thus our little errors
  Lead the soul away
From the path of virtue,
  Off in sin to stray.

Little deeds of kindness,
  Little words of love,
Make our earth an Eden,
  Like the heaven above.

Julia A. Carney.

THE LITTLE BIRD'S COMPLAINT TO HIS MISTRESS

Here in this wiry prison where I sing
  And think of fresh green woods, and long to fly,
Unable once to try my useless wing,
  Or flaunt my feathers in the clear blue sky

Mild spring returning strews the ground with flowers,
  And hangs sweet May-buds on the hedges gay;
But no kind sunshine cheers my gloomy hours,
  Nor kind companion twitters on the spray.

Bed in Summer

Oh! how I long to stretch my listless wings,
And fly away as far as eye can see!
And from the topmost bough, where Robin sings,
Pour my wild songs, and be as blithe as he.

Kind mistress, come, with gentle, pitying hand,
Unbar that curious grate, and set me free.
Then on the whitethorn bush I'll take my stand,
And sing sweet songs to freedom and to thee.

Ann Taylor.

BED IN SUMMER

In winter I get up at night
And dress by yellow candle-light.
In summer, quite the other way,
I have to go to bed by day.

I have to go to bed and see
The birds still hopping on the tree,
Or hear the grown-up people's feet
Still going past me in the street.

And does it not seem hard to you
When all the sky is clear and blue,
And I should like so much to play,
To have to go to bed by day?

Robert Louis Stevenson.

A SPRING SONG

The spring is come!
The spring is come!
Again the earth rejoices;
All streams and rills
And green-clad hills
Lift up their cheerful voices.

The spring is come!
The spring is come!
The soft south wind is blowing;
And in the dell
Where violets dwell
The merry birds are singing.

LITTLE BILLEE

There were three sailors of Bristol city
Who took a boat and went to sea.

But first with beef and captain's biscuits
And pickled pork they loaded she.

There was gorging Jack and guzzling Jimmy,
And the youngest, he was little Billee.

Now when they got as far as the Equator
They'd nothing left but one split pea.

Says gorging Jack to guzzling Jimmy,
"I am extremely hungaree."

To gorging Jack says guzzling Jimmy,
"We've nothing left; us must eat we."

Says gorging Jack to guzzling Jimmy,
"With one another we shouldn't agree!

"There's little Bill, he's young and tender,
We're old and tough, so let's eat he."

"Oh, Bill, we're going to kill and eat you,
So undo the button of your chemie."

When Bill received this information
He used his pocket handkerchie.

"First let me say my catechism,
Which my poor mammy taught to me."

"Make haste, make haste!" says guzzling Jimmy,
While Jack pulled out his snickersnee.

So Billy went up to the main-top gallant mast,
And down he fell on his bended knee.

He scarce had come to the twelfth commandment
When up he jumps, "There's land I see;

There's Jerusalem and Madagascar,
And North and South Amerikee:—

There's the British flag a-riding at anchor,
With Admiral Napier, K. C. B."

So when they got aboard of the Admiral's,
He hanged fat Jack and flogged Jimmie:

But as for little Bill, he made him
The Captain of a Seventy-three.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

HUMANITY

I would not enter on my list of friends
(Though graced with polished manners and fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility) the man
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.

William Cowper.

GREAT, WIDE, BEAUTIFUL, WONDERFUL WORLD

Great, wide, beautiful, wonderful world,
With the wonderful water round you curled,
And the wonderful grass upon your breast—
World, you are beautifully drest.

The wonderful air is over me,
And the wonderful wind is shaking the tree—
It walks on the water, and whirls the mills,
And talks to itself on the tops of the hills.

William B. Rands.

THE RETIRED CAT

A poet's cat, sedate and grave
As poet well could wish to have,
Was much addicted to inquire
For nooks to which she might retire,
And where, secure as mouse in chink,
She might repose, or sit and think.
Sometimes ascending, debonair,
An apple tree, or lofty pear,
Lodged with convenience in the fork,
She watched the gardener at his work;
Sometimes her ease and solace sought
In an old empty watering pot;
There, wanting nothing save a fan
To seem some nymph in her sedan,
Apparelled in exactest sort,
And ready to be borne to court.

But love of change it seems has place
Not only in our wiser race;
Cats also feel, as well as we,
That passion's force, and so did she.
Her climbing, she began to find,
Exposed her too much to the wind,
And the old utensil of tin
Was cold and comfortless within:
She therefore wished, instead of those,
Some place of more serene repose,

Where neither cold might come, nor air
  Too rudely wanton with her hair,
And sought it in the likeliest mode,
  Within her master's snug abode.

A drawer, it chanced, at bottom lined
  With linen of the softest kind,
With such as merchants introduce
  From India, for the ladies' use—
A drawer impending o'er the rest,
  Half open, in the topmost chest,
Of depth enough, and none to spare,
  Invited her to slumber there.
Puss, with delight beyond expression,
  Surveyed the scene and took possession.
Recumbent at her ease, ere long,
  And lulled by her own hum-drum song,
She left the cares of life behind
  And slept as she would sleep her last;
When in came, housewifely inclined,
  The chambermaid, and shut it fast;
By no malignity impelled,
  But all unconscious whom it held.

Awakened by the shock, cried Puss:
  "Was ever cat attended thus!
The open drawer was left, I see,
  Merely to prove a nest for me;
For soon as I was well composed,
  Then came the maid, and it was closed.

How smooth these kerchiefs, and how sweet!
Oh! what a delicate retreat.
I will resign myself to rest,
'Till Sol, declining in the west,
Shall call to supper, when, no doubt,
Susan will come and let me out."

The evening came, the sun descended,
And Puss remained still unattended.
The night rolled tardily away,
(With her, indeed, 'twas never day,)
The sprightly morn her course renewed,
The evening gray again ensued;
And Puss came into mind no more
Than if entombed the day before.
With hunger pinched, and pinched for room,
She now presaged approaching doom,
Nor slept a single wink nor purred,
Conscious of jeopardy incurred.

That night, by chance, the poet watching,
Heard an inexplicable scratching;
His noble heart went pit-a-pat,
And to himself he said, "What's that?"
He drew the curtain at his side,
And forth he peeped, but nothing spied;
Yet, by his ear directed, guessed
Something imprisoned in the chest,
And, doubtful what, with prudent care
Resolved it should continue there.

At length a voice which well he knew,
A long and melancholy mew,
Saluting his poetic ears,
Consoled him and dispelled his fears.
He left his bed, he trod the floor,
And 'gan in haste the drawers explore,
The lowest first, and without stop
The rest in order, to the top;
For 'tis a truth well known to most,
That whatsoever thing is lost,
We seek it, ere it come to light,
In every cranny but the right.

Forth skipped the cat, not now replete
As erst with airy self-conceit,
Nor in her own fond apprehension
A theme for all the world's attention:
But modest, sober, cured of all
Her notions hyperbolical,
And wishing for a place of rest
Anything rather than a chest.
Then stepped the poet into bed
With this reflection in his head:

MORAL

Beware of too sublime a sense
Of your own worth and consequence!
The man who dreams himself so great,
And his importance of such weight,

That all around, in all that's done,
  Must move and act for him alone,
Will learn in school of tribulation,
  The folly of his expectation.

William Cowper.

A NONSENSE POEM

Three wise old women were they, were they,
Who went to walk on a winter day.
One carried a basket to hold some berries,
One carried a ladder to climb for cherries,
The third, and she was the wisest one,
Carried a fan to keep off the sun!

But they went so far, and they went so fast,
They quite forgot their way at last—
So one of the wise women cried in fright,
"Suppose we should meet a bear tonight!
Suppose he should eat me!"
"And me!!"
"And me!!!"
"What is to be done?" cried all the three.
"Dear, dear!" said one, "we'll climb a tree;
Then out of the way of the bears we'll be."
But there wasn't a tree for miles around,
They were too frightened to stay on the ground;
So they climbed their ladder up to the top,
And sat there screaming, "We'll drop, we'll drop!!"

But the wind was strong as wind could be,
And blew their ladder right out to sea!
So the three wise women were all afloat
In a leaky ladder instead of a boat;
And every time the waves rolled in,
Of course the poor things were wet to the skin.

Then they took their basket, the water to bail,
They put up their fan instead of a sail,
But what became of the wise women then—
Whether they ever sailed home again—
Whether they saw any bears or no—
You must find out, for I don't know.

Mrs. E. T. Corbett.

THE PARTS OF SPEECH

Three little words we often see,
The Articles, *a*, *an* and *the*.

A Noun's the name of anything,
As *school*, or *garden*, *hoop* or *swing*.

Adjectives tell the kind of noun,
As *great*, *small*, *pretty*, *white* or *brown*.

Instead of Nouns the Pronouns stand,
Her head, *his* face, *my* arm, *your* hand.

Verbs tell of something being done,
To *read*, *write*, *count*, *sing*, *jump* or *run*.

How things are done the Adverbs tell,
As *slowly*, *quickly*, *ill*, or *well*.

A Preposition stands before
A noun, as *in*, or *through* a door.

Conjunctions join the nouns together,
As men *and* children, wind *or* weather.

The Interjection shows surprise,
As *Oh* how pretty! *Ah* how wise!

J. Neale.

THE STORY OF THE LITTLE GRAY BIRD

Why do you come to my apple tree,
Little bird so gray?
Twit-twit, twit-twit, twit-twit-twee!
That was all he would say.

Why do you lock your rosy feet
So closely round the spray?
Twit-twit, twit-twit, twit-tweet!
That was all he would say.

Why on the topmost bough do you get,
Little bird so gray?
Twit-twit-twee, twit-twit-twet!
That was all he would say.

Where is your mate? Come answer me,
  Little bird so gray!
Twit-twit-twit! twit-twit-twee!
  That was all he would say.

And has she little rosy feet?
  And is her body gray?
Twit-twit-twee! twit-twit-tweet!
  That was all he would say.

And will she come with you and sit
  In my apple tree some day?
Twit-twit-twee! twit-twit-twit!
  He said as he flew away.

Alice and Phœbe Cary.

THE SPIDER AND THE FLY

"Will you walk into my parlor?"
  Said a spider to a fly.
'Tis the prettiest little parlor
  That ever you did spy.
The way into my parlor
  Is up a winding stair,
And I have many pretty things
  To show you when you're there."
"Oh no, no!" said the little fly,
  "To ask me is in vain;
For who goes up your winding stair
  Can ne'er come down again."

"I'm sure you must be weary
With soaring up so high;
Will you rest upon my little bed?"
Said the spider to the fly.
"There are pretty curtains drawn around,
The sheets are fine and thin;
And if you like to rest a while
I'll snugly tuck you in."
"Oh no, no!" said the little fly,
For I've often heard it said,
They never, never wake again
Who sleep upon your bed."

Said the cunning spider to the fly:
"Dear friend, what shall I do
To prove the warm affection
I've always felt for you?
I have within my pantry
Good store of all that's nice;
I'm sure you're very welcome—
Will you please to take a slice?"
"Oh no, no!" said the little fly,
"Kind sir, that cannot be,
I've heard what's in your pantry,
And I do not wish to see."

"Sweet creature," said the spider,
"You're witty and you're wise.
How handsome are your gauzy wings,
How brilliant are your eyes.

I have a little looking-glass
Upon my parlor shelf,
If you'll step in one moment, dear,
You may behold yourself."
"I thank you, gentle sir," she said,
"For what you're pleased to say,
And bidding you good morning now,
I'll call another day."

The spider turned him round about
And went into his den,
For well he knew the silly fly
Would soon come back again;
So he wove a subtle web
In a little corner sly,
And set his table ready
To dine upon the fly.
He went out to his door again
And merrily did sing,
"Come hither, hither, pretty fly,
With pearl and silver wing;
Your robes are green and purple
There's a crest upon your head;
Your eyes are like the diamond bright,
While mine are dull as lead."

Alas, alas! how very soon
The silly little fly,
Hearing his wily, flattering words,
Came slowly flitting by.

With buzzing wings she hung aloft,
  Then near and nearer drew—
Thought only of her brilliant eyes
  And green and purple hue,
Thought only of her crested head—
  Poor foolish thing! At last
Up jumped the cunning spider
  And fiercely held her fast.

He dragged her up his winding stair,
  Into his dismal den
Within his little parlor—but
  She ne'er came out again!
And now, dear little children,
  Who may this story read,
To idle, silly, flattering words,
  I pray you don't give heed.
Unto an evil counsellor
  Close heart and ear and eye,
And take a lesson from this tale
  Of the spider and the fly.

Mary Howitt.

TRY, TRY AGAIN

There was a young maid who said: "Why
Can't I look in my ear with my eye?
  If I give my mind to it,
  I'm sure I can do it;
You never can tell till you try."

AN EVENING LULLABY

Sleep, my baby, sleep, my boy,
Rest your little weary head.
'Tis your mother rocks her boy
In his pretty cradle bed.
Lullaby, sweet lullaby!

All the birdies now are sleeping,
Every one has gone to rest;
And my precious babe is lying
In his nice soft cradle nest.
Lullaby, sweet lullaby!

Sleep, oh sleep, my darling boy,
Wake tomorrow fresh and strong;
'Tis thy mother sits beside thee
Singing thee an evening song.
Lullaby, sweet lullaby!

PERSEVERANCE

'Tis a lesson you should heed,
Try again;
If at first you don't succeed,
Try again;
Then your courage should appear,
For if you will persevere,
You will conquer, never fear,
Try again.

Once or twice, though you should fail,
Try again;
If you would at last prevail,
Try again;
If we strive, 'tis no disgrace
Though we do not win the race.
What should we do in that case?
Try again.

If you find your task is hard,
Try again;
Time will bring you your reward,
Try again;
All that other folks can do,
Why with patience, may not you?
Only keep this rule in view,
Try again.

THE SCHOOLROOM CLOCK

There's a neat little clock,
In the schoolroom it stands,
And it points to the time
With its two little hands.

And may we, like the clock,
Keep a face clean and bright,
With hands ever ready
To do what is right.

MY LITTLE BROTHER

Little brother, baby boy,
You are very dear to me;
I am happy, full of joy,
When your smiling face I see.

How I wish that you could speak,
And could know the words I say;
Pretty stories I would seek
To amuse you every day.

Shake your rattle—here it is;
Listen to its merry voice;
And when you are tired of this
I will bring you other toys.

Mary L. Duncan.

FALLING SNOW

See the pretty snowflakes
Falling from the sky;
On the walls and housetops
Soft and thick they lie.

On the window ledges,
On the branches bare;
Now how fast they gather,
Filling all the air.

Look into the garden,
  Where the grass was green;
Covered by the snowflakes,
  Not a blade is seen.

Now the bare black bushes
  All look soft and white,
Every twig is laden—
  What a pretty sight!

THE TWO RATS

He was a rat, and she was a rat,
  And down in one hole they did dwell,
And both were as black as a witch's cat,
  And they loved one another well.

He had a tail, and she had a tail,
  Both long and curling and fine;
And each said, "Yours is the finest tail
  In the world, excepting mine."

He smelt the cheese, and she smelt the cheese,
  And they both pronounced it good;
And both remarked it would greatly add
  To the charms of their daily food.

So he ventured out, and she ventured out,
  And I saw them go with pain;
But what befell them I can not tell,
  For they never came back again.

LITTLE HEPATICA

Little Hepatica peered through the mold;
The heavens were dark and the air was cold.
"It is not nice in the world," she said,
"Oh dear, I wish I had stayed in bed!"

Little Hepatica shivered and shook—
She spied some ice on her favorite brook.
"I'll wrap myself well from the cold," she said,
"With my woolly green coat pulled over my head."

Then came a soft gentle rain dropping down,
And a pleasant smile wore the earth so brown;
And little Hepatica nodded her head,
"My coat is getting too warm," she said.

Soon the bright sun began shining like gold,
And a robin sang out so blithe and bold
The little Hepatica laughed in glee
"Why, it must be spring is here!" said she.

Isabel F. Bellows.

THE MOTHER HEN'S MISTAKE

"My dears, whatever are you at?
You ought to be at home;
I told you not to wet your feet—
I told you not to roam.

"Ah me! I'm sure you will be drowned!
I never saw such tricks!
Come home at once, and go to bed,
You naughty, naughty chicks!"

Now most of them were five days old,
But one, whose age was six—
"Please, ma'am," said he, "I think we're ducks;
I don't believe we're chicks."

Robert Ellice Mack.

THE BIRDS

Through all the summer hours,
The little birds were seen
Midst garden-blooming flowers
And in the meadows green
And in the forest bowers.

But now the flowers are dead,
The meadows fresh no more;
The trees their leaves have shed,
And summer days are o'er;
Where are the dear birds fled?

They south have taken wing
Away from frost and snow;
But with returning spring
They'll all come back, and lo!
Again we'll hear them sing.

THE RAINDROPS' RIDE

Some little drops of water
Whose home was in the sea,
To go upon a journey
Once happened to agree.

A white cloud was their carriage,
Their horse a playful breeze;
And over town and country
They rode along at ease.

But, oh! there were so many,
At last the carriage broke,
And to the ground came tumbling
Those frightened little folk.

Among the grass and flowers
They then were forced to roam,
Until a brooklet found them
And carried them all home.

COME, MY CHILDREN

Come, my children, come away,
For the sun shines bright today;
Little children, come with me,
Birds and brooks and flowers to see.

See the little lambs at play
In the meadows bright and gay;
How they leap and skip and run,
Full of frolic, full of fun!

Bring the hoop and bring the ball;
Come, with happy faces all.
Let us make a merry ring,
Talk and dance and laugh and sing.

WILD WINDS

Oh! oh! how the wild winds blow!
Blow high
Blow low
And the whirlwinds go
To chase the little leaves that fly—
Fly low and high
To hollow and to steep hillside;
They shiver in the dreary weather,
And creep in little heaps together,
And nestle close and try to hide.

Oh! oh! how the wild winds blow!
Blow low,
Blow high,
And the whirlwinds try
To find a crevice, to find a crack—
They whirl to the front, they whirl to the back;
But Tommy and Will and Baby, together,

Are snug and safe from the winter weather.
All the winds that blow
Cannot touch a toe,
Cannot twist or twirl
One silky curl;
Though they rattle the door in a noisy pack,
The blazing fires will drive them back.

Mrs. M. F. Butts.

THE POND

There was a small pond, and a pretty pond too;
About it white daisies and buttercups grew,
And dark weeping willows that stooped to the ground,
Dipped in their long branches, and shaded it round.

A party of ducks to this pond would repair,
To sport 'mid the green water-weeds that grew there.
Indeed the assembly would frequently meet
To discuss their affairs in this pleasant retreat.

One day a young chick who lived thereabout,
Stood watching to see the ducks pass in and out;
Now turning tail upward, and diving below;
She thought of all things she would like to do so.

So this foolish chicken began to declare,
"I have a great mind to venture in there.
My mother's oft told me I must not go nigh,
But really, for my part, I cannot tell why.

"Ducks have feathers and wings, and so have I too,
And my feet—I don't see why they will not do.
Though my beak is pointed, and their beaks are round,
Is that any reason that I should be drowned?

"Why then should not I swim as well as a duck?
Suppose that I venture and e'en try my luck;
For," said she, spite of all her mother had taught her,
"It's certain I'm remarkably fond of the water."

So in this poor ignorant animal flew,
And found that her dear mother's cautions were true.
She splashed and she dashed and she turned herself round
And heartily wished herself safe on the ground.

But now 'twas too late to begin to repent,
The harder she struggled, the deeper she went;
And when every effort she vainly had tried,
She slowly sank down to the bottom and died.

Jane Taylor.

BE JOLLY

Come, be jolly, jolly, jolly;
'Tis folly, folly, folly,
And only makes life harder, to complain.
The world is full of beauty
And smiling lightens duty,
Like sunshine weaving rainbows in the rain.

John Howard Jewett.

THE BAREFOOT BOY

Blessings on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy with cheek of tan!
With thy turned-up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;
With thy red lips, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace;
From my heart I give thee joy—
I was once a barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's time of June,
Crowding years in one brief noon,
When all things I heard or saw,
Me, their master, waited for.
I was rich in flowers and trees,
Humming-birds and honey-bees;
For my sport the squirrel played,
Plied the snouted owl his spade;
For my taste the blackberry cone
Purpled over hedge and stone;
Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night.
I was monarch; pomp and joy
Waited on the barefoot boy!

The Barefoot Boy

Cheerily, then, my little man,
Live and laugh, as boyhood can!
Though the flinty slopes be hard,
Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,
Every morn shall lead thee through
Fresh baptisms of the dew.
Every evening from thy feet
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat.
Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,
Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

John Greenleaf Whittier.

QUITE LIKE A STOCKING

Just as morn was fading amid her misty rings,
And every stocking was stuffed with childhood's precious things,
Old Kris Kringle looked round and saw on the elm tree bough
High hung, an oriole's nest, lonely and empty now.

"Quite like a stocking," he laughed, "hung up there in the tree,
I didn't suppose the birds expected a visit from me."
Then old Kris Kringle who loves a joke as well as the best,
Dropped a handful of snowflakes into the oriole's empty nest.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

MAY

Apple blossoms in the orchard,
Singing birds on every tree;
Grass a-growing in the meadows
Just as green as green can be;

Violets in shady places,
Innocents in smiling flocks;
Coolest ferns within the hollows,
Columbines among the rocks;

Dripping streams, delicious mosses,
Tassels on the maple trees;
Drowsy insects, humming, humming;
Golden butterflies and bees.

Caroline A. Mason.

THE TRUANT

Tommy thought there was nobody looking
When he came running over the hill;
Stopping to hide in a thicket of willows,
Till the bell in the village was still.

Tommy thought there was no one to see him,
None in the road, or the fields, or the wood,
But all the willows, and all the grasses,
And daisies could see where he stood.

All the buttercups clustering together,
All the wild roses that grew by the way
Laughed and rustled, "See Tommy, see Tommy,
Oh, Tommy plays truant today."

Bees and butterflies flying before him
Told the story deep in the wood,
"Here comes Tommy, here comes Tommy,
Here's Tommy who hasn't been good."

Saucy waves softly laughed from the river,
"Aha! Tommy had lessons today,
And yet he's so terribly lazy and dull
That he has to run away."

So it was, wherever he wandered,
And whatever he tried to do,
All things upbraided the truant lad;
And I think he deserved it—don't you?

S. A. Hudson.

JUST AS HE FEARED

There was an old man with a beard
Who said, "It is just as I feared!—
Two owls and a hen, four larks and a wren
Have all built their nests in my beard."

Edward Lear.

KINDNESS TO PUSSY

I like little pussy, her coat is so warm,
And if I don't hurt her she'll do me no harm.
So I'll not pull her tail, nor drive her away,
But pussy and I very gently will play.
She shall sit by my side, and I'll give her some food,
And she'll love me because I am gentle and good.

I'll pat little pussy, and then she will purr,
And thus show her thanks for my kindness to her.
I'll not pinch her ears, nor tread on her paws,
Lest I should provoke her to use her sharp claws.
I never will vex her, nor make her displeased,
For she doesn't like to be worried and teased.

THE SEASONS

SPRING

With March comes in the pleasant spring,
  When little birds begin to sing;
To build their nests, to hatch their brood,
  With tender care provide them food.

SUMMER

And summer comes with verdant June;
  The flowers then are in full bloom,
All nature smiles, the fields look gay;
  The weather's fine to make the hay.

AUTUMN

September comes; the golden corn
By many busy hands is shorn;
Autumn's ripe fruits, an ample store,
Are gathered in for rich and poor.

WINTER

Winter's cold frost and northern blast—
This is the season that comes last;
The snow has come, the sleigh bells ring,
And merry boys rejoice and sing.

THE SQUIRREL'S ARITHMETIC

High on the branch of a walnut tree
A bright-eyed squirrel sat.
What was he thinking so earnestly?
And what was he looking at?

The forest was green around him,
The sky blue over his head;
His nest was in a hollow limb,
And his children snug in bed.

He was doing a problem o'er and o'er,
Busily thinking was he,
How many nuts for the winter's store
He could hide in the hollow tree.

He sat so still on the swaying bough
You might have thought him asleep.
Oh, no; he was trying to reckon now
The nuts the babies could eat.

Then suddenly he frisked about,
And down the tree he ran.
"The best way," said he, "without a doubt
Is to gather all I can."

Annie Douglas Bell.

THE LITTLE BOY AND HIS BALL

"My good little fellow, don't throw your ball there,
You'll break neighbors' windows, I know;
At the end of the house there is room, and to spare,
Go round, you can have a delightful game there,
Without fearing for where you may throw."

Harry thought he might safely continue his play
With a little more care than before;
So heedless of all that his father could say,
As soon as he saw he was out of the way
Resolved to have fifty throws more.

Already as far as forty he rose,
And no mischief had happened at all;
Once more and once more, he successfully throws
But now, when he'd nearly arrived at the close,
In popped his unfortunate ball.

"I'm sure that I thought, and did not intend,"
Poor Harry was going to say;
But soon came the glazier the window to mend,
And both the bright shillings he wanted to spend
He had for his folly to pay.

Ann Taylor.

THE BLUEBIRD'S SONG

I know the song that the bluebird is singing,
Out in the apple tree where he is swinging.
Brave little fellow! the skies may be dreary—
Nothing cares he while his heart is so cheery.

Hark! how the music leaps out from his throat!
Hark! was there ever so merry a note?
Listen a while, and you'll hear what he's saying,
Up in the apple tree swinging and swaying.

"Dear little blossoms down under the snow,
You must be weary of winter, I know.
Listen, I'll sing you a message of cheer!
Summer is coming! and springtime is here!

"Little white snowdrop! I pray you arise;
Bright yellow crocus! please open your eyes,
Sweet little violets, hid from the cold,
Put on your mantles of purple and gold;
Daffodils! Daffodils! say, do you hear?—
Summer is coming, and springtime is here!"

Emily Huntington Miller.

WHO STOLE THE BIRD'S NEST?

"To whit! To whit! To whee!
Will you listen to me?
Who stole four eggs I laid,
And the nice nest I made?"

"Not I," said the Cow. "Moo-oo!
Such a thing I'd never do;
I gave you a wisp of hay;
I did not take your nest away.
Not I," said the Cow. "Moo-oo!
Such a thing I'd never do."

"To whit! To whit! To whee!
Will you listen to me?
Who stole four eggs I laid
And the nice nest I made?"

Said the Turtle Dove, "Coo, coo!
Let me speak a word too.
Who stole that pretty nest
From little Yellow Breast?"

"Not I," said the Dog. "Bow, wow!
I wouldn't be so mean, I vow.
I gave you hairs the nest to make,
And the nest I did not take.
Not I," said the Dog. "Bow, wow!
I wouldn't be so mean, I vow!"

"To whit! To whit! To whee!
Will you listen to me?
Who stole four eggs I laid,
And the nice nest I made?

"Bobolink! Bobolink!
What do you think?
Who stole a nest away
From the plum tree today?"

"Not I," said the Sheep. "Oh, no!
I wouldn't treat a poor bird so.
I gave the wool the nest to line
But the nest was none of mine.
Baa, baa!" said the Sheep. "Oh, no!
I wouldn't treat a poor bird so."

"To whit! To whit! To whee!
Will you listen to me?
Who stole four eggs I laid,
And the nice nest I made?"

"Caw! Caw!" cried the Crow,
"I would like to know
What thief took away
That bird's nest today?"

"Cluck! Cluck!" said the Hen,
"Don't ask me again.
Why, I haven't a chick
Would do such a trick.

We gave Yellow Breast
Some feathers for her nest.
I'd scorn to intrude
On her and her brood.
Cluck! Cluck!" said the Hen,
"Don't ask me again."

"Chirr-a-whirr! Chirr-a-whirr!"
The birds made a great stir
To learn the thief's name,
And all cried, "For shame!

"I would not rob a bird,"
Said little Mary Green.
"I think I never heard
Of anything so mean."

"'Tis very cruel, too,"
Said little Alice Neal.
"Do you think the robber knew
How sad the bird would feel?"

A little boy hung down his head,
And went and hid behind the bed;
For *he* stole that pretty nest
From poor little Yellow Breast,
And he felt so full of shame,
He didn't like to tell his name.

Lydia Maria Child.

MOTHER'S CHILDREN

My mother's almost crazy,
  Her children are so bad;
And great big sister Daisy
  Does make her dreadful sad,
  So she says.

And Daisy is an awful girl,
  Her nice new frock she tored;
And cause she had her hair to curl,
  Why she—why she just roared
  Yesterday.

Guess I'm sometimes awful too,
  Oh, yes I am, I know;
But what's a little girl to do
  When she doesn't want to sew,
  'Cause she can't?

She's got to cry, be cross too,
  When she's as small as me;
That's all the way she has to do,
  When she's tired—don't you see?
  'Course you do.

When I'm really good and nice
  Through all the great long day,
Papa calls me "Pearl of Price,"
  And mother's glad to say,
  "She was good."

THE ILL-NATURED BRIER

Little Miss Brier came out of the ground;
She put out her thorns and scratched everything 'round.
"I'll just try," said she,
"How bad I can be;
At picking and scratching there's few can match me."

Little Miss Brier was handsome and bright,
Her leaves were dark green and her flowers were pure white,
But all who came nigh her
Were so worried by her
They'd go out of their way to keep clear of the Brier.

Little Miss Brier was looking one day
At her neighbor, the violet, over the way;
"I wonder," said she,
"That no one pets me,
While all seem so glad little Violet to see."

A sober old Linnet, who sat on a tree,
Heard the speech of the Brier, and thus answered he:
"'Tis not that she's fair
For you may compare
In beauty, with even Miss Violet there;

"But Violet is always so pleasant and kind,
So gentle in manner, so humble in mind,
E'en the worms at her feet
She would never ill-treat
And to Bird, Bee, an Butterfly always is sweet."

The gardener's wife then the pathway came down,
And the mischievous Brier caught hold of her gown;
"Oh dear! what a tear!
My gown's spoiled, I declare.
That troublesome Brier! it has no business there;
Here, John, grub it up, throw it into the fire."
And that was the end of the ill-natured Brier.

Anna Bache.

WHO WAS SHE?

As I was going down the walk,
So pleasant, cool, and shady;
Right in the middle of the path
I met a little lady.

I made to her my sweetest bow;
She only walked on faster.
I smiled, and said, "Good morning, ma'am!"
The moment that I passed her.

She never noticed me at all;
I really felt quite slighted.
I thought, "I'll follow you, I will,
Although I'm not invited."

Perhaps you think me very rude;
But then, she looked so funny—
From head to foot all dressed in fur,
This summer day, so sunny.

I followed her the whole way home;
  Her home was in my garden,
Beneath my choicest vines—and yet,
  She never asked my pardon.

Nor would she speak a single word;
  But I overheard a miller,
Flying down the sidewalk, say,
  "There goes Miss Caterpillar!"

SUMMER WOODS

Come ye into the summer woods;
  There entereth no annoy.
All greenly wave the chestnut leaves,
  And the earth is full of joy.

I cannot tell you half the sights
  Of beauty you may see,—
The bursts of golden sunshine,
  And many a shady tree.

There, lightly swung in bowery glades,
  The honeysuckles twine;
There blooms the rose-red campion
  And the dark-blue columbine.

And many a merry bird is there,
  Unscared by lawless men;
The blue-winged jay, the woodpecker,
  And the golden-crested wren.

And far within that summer wood,
Among the leaves so green,
There flows a little gurgling brook,
The brightest e'er was seen.

There come the little gentle birds,
Without a fear of ill,
Down to the murmuring water's edge,
And freely drink their fill;

And dash about and splash about,
The merry little things;
And look askance with bright black eyes,
And flirt their dripping wings.

Oh, how my heart ran o'er with joy!
I saw that all was good,
And how we might glean up delight
All round us, if we would!

Mary Howitt.

LITTLE JACK FROST

Little Jack Frost went up the hill,
Watching the stars and the moon so still,
Watching the stars and the moon so bright,
And laughing aloud with all his might.
Little Jack Frost ran down the hill,
Late in the night when the winds were still,
Late in the fall when the leaves fell down,
Red and yellow and faded brown.

Little Jack Frost walked through the trees,
"Ah," sighed the flowers, "we freeze, we freeze."
"Ah," sighed the grasses, "we die, we die."
Said little Jack Frost, "Good by, good by."
Little Jack Frost tripped round and round,
Spreading white snow on the frozen ground,
Nipping the breezes, icing the streams,
Chilling the warmth of the sun's bright beams.

But when Dame Nature brought back the spring,
Brought back the birds to chirp and sing,
Melted the snow and warmed the sky,
Little Jack Frost went pouting by.
The flowers opened their eyes of blue,
Green buds peeped out and grasses grew;
It was so warm and scorched him so,
Little Jack Frost was glad to go.

OVER THE HILL

"Traveller, what lies over the hill?
Traveller, tell to me.
I am only a child—from the window-sill
Over I can not see."

"Child, there's a valley over there,
Pretty and wooded and shy;
And a little brook that says, 'Take care,
Or you'll fall in by and by!'

"And what comes next?—A little town,
And a towering hill again;
More hills and valleys, up and down,
And a river now and then.

"And what comes next?—A lonely moor
Without a beaten way,
And gray clouds sailing slow before
A wind that will not stay.

"And then?—Oh, rocks and yellow sand,
And a moaning sea beside.
And then?—More sea, more sea, more land,
And rivers deep and wide.

"And then?—Oh, rock and mountain and vale,
Rivers and fields and men,
Over and over—a weary tale—
And round to your home again."

George Macdonald.

THE SNOW STORM

Oh, see! the snow is falling now,
It powders all the trees,
Its flakes abound, and all around
They float upon the breeze.

Come out and play this winter day,
Amid the falling snow;
Come young and old, nor fear the cold,
Nor blustering winds that blow.

RAIN IN SUMMER

How beautiful is the rain!
After the dust and heat,
In the broad and fiery street,
In the narrow lane,
How beautiful is the rain!
How it clatters along the roofs
Like the tramp of hoofs!
How it gushes and struggles out
From the throat of the overflowing spout!

Across the window-pane
It pours and pours;
And swift and wide
With a muddy tide,
Like a river down the gutter roars
The rain, the welcome rain!

Henry W. Longfellow.

A DREAM

Once a dream did weave a shade
O'er my angel-guarded bed
That an ant had lost its way
Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled, bewildered, and forlorn,
Dark, benighted, travel-worn,
Over many a tangled spray,
All heart-broke, I heard her say:

"Oh, my children, do they cry,
Do they hear their father sigh?
Now they look abroad to see,
Now return and weep for me."

Pitying, I dropped a tear:
But I saw a glow-worm near,
Who replied, "What wailing wight
Calls the watchman of the night?

"I am set to light the ground,
While the beetle goes his round:
Follow now the beetle's hum,
Little wanderer, hie thee home!"

William Blake.

THE FROST

Someone has been in the garden
Nipping the flowers so fair.
All the green leaves are withered;
Now who do you think has been there?

Someone has been in the forest,
Opening the chestnut burrs.
Who is it dropping the chestnuts
Whenever a light wind stirs?

Someone has been on the hilltop
Chipping the moss-covered rocks.
Who has been cracking and breaking
Them into fragments and blocks?

Someone has been at the windows
Marking on every pane.
Who made those glittering pictures
Of lacework fir trees and grain?

Someone is all the time working
Out on the pond so blue,
Bridging it over with crystal.
Who is it? Can you tell who?

BIRD THOUGHTS

I lived first in a little house,
And lived there very well;
I thought the world was small and round,
And made of pale blue shell.

I lived next in a little nest,
Nor needed any other;
I thought the world was made of straw,
And brooded by my mother.

One day I fluttered from the nest
To see what I could find.
I said, "The world is made of leaves;
I have been very blind."

But now that I've flown beyond the tree,
Quite fit for grown-up labors—
I don't know of what the world *is* made,
And neither do my neighbors.

ONE THING AT A TIME

Work while you work,
  Play while you play;
That is the way
  To be cheerful and gay.

All that you do,
  Do with your might;
Things done by halves
  Are never done right.

One thing each time,
  And that done well,
Is a very good rule,
  As many can tell.

Moments are useless
  Trifled away;
So work while you work,
  And play while you play.

M. A. Stodart.

DAISIES

At evening when I go to bed
I see the stars shine overhead;
They are the little daisies white
That dot the meadow of the night.

Frank Dempster Sherman.

THE TUMBLE

Tumble down, tumble up, never mind it, my sweet.
No, no, do not pound the poor floor;
'Twas your fault that you did not stand on your feet.
Beat yourself, if you beat any more.

What a noise! and will noise make the bruised places well?
And will tears wash the hurts away?
Suppose they are sore for a little and swell,
You'll forget where they were in a day.

That's right, be a man and dry up your tears;
Come, smile, and I'll give you a kiss.
If you live in the world but a very few years
You'll meet far greater troubles than this.

Ann and Jane Taylor.

LITTLE STREAMS

Little streams, in light and shadows,
Flowing through the pasture meadows;
And in mountain hollows wild
Fretting like a peevish child;
Rippling through the forest wide,
Dancing by the green wayside;
Bearing tribute to the river,
Little streams, I love you ever.

Summer music is your flowing,
Flowering plants by you are growing,
Blue-eyed grass and green bur-reed;
Willow-herb with cotton-seed;
There the blossoming rush we meet
And the plumy meadow-sweet,
And in places deep and stilly
The white-petaled water-lily.

Down in valleys calm and lowly,
Murmuring not and gliding slowly
Through the hamlets, where all day
In your shallows children play;
Running west, or running east,
Doing good to man and beast,
Always giving, weary never,
Little streams, I love you ever.

Mary Howitt.

THE WOODPECKER

Once when the good Saint Peter
Lived in the world below
And walked about it preaching,
Just as he did, you know;

He came to the door of a cottage,
In travelling round the earth,
Where a little woman was making cakes,
And baking them on the hearth;

And being faint with fasting,
For the day was almost done,
He asked, from her store of cakes,
To give him a single one.

So she made a very little cake,
But as it baking lay,
She looked at it, and thought it seemed
Too large to give away.

Therefore she kneaded another,
And still a smaller one;
But it looked when she turned it over,
As large as the first had done.

Then she took a tiny scrap of dough,
And rolled and rolled it flat,
And baked it as thin as a wafer—
But she couldn't part with that.

For she said, "My cakes that seem too small,
When I eat of them myself,
Are yet too large to give away;"
So she put them on the shelf.

Then good Saint Peter grew angry,
For he was hungry and faint;
And surely such a woman
Was enough to provoke a saint.

And he said: "You are far too selfish
To dwell in a human form,
To have both food and shelter,
And fire to keep you warm.

"Now, you shall build as the birds do,
And shall get your scanty food
By boring, and boring, and boring,
All day in the hard, dry wood."

Then up she went through the chimney,
Never speaking a word,
And out at the top flew a woodpecker,
For she had changed to a bird.

She had worn a scarlet cap on her head,
And that was left the same,
But all the rest of her clothes were burned
Black as a coal in the flame.

And every country schoolboy
Has seen her in the wood,
Where she lives in the trees till this very day,
Boring and boring for food.

This lesson my story teaches:
Listen to pity's call,
Don't think that the little you give is great,
And the much you get is small.

Alice and Phœbe Cary.

THE HONEY BEE

How doth the little busy bee,
  Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day,
  From every opening flower.

How skillfully she builds her cell,
  How neatly moulds the wax
And labors hard to store it well
  With the sweet food she makes.

In works of labor or of skill,
  I would be busy too;
For Satan finds some mischief still
  For idle hands to do.

In books, or work, or healthful play
  Let my first years be passed
That I may give for every day
  Some good account at last.

Isaac Watts.

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the
  house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In the hope that Santa Claus soon would be there.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;
And mama in her kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled ourselves for a long winter's nap;
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I ran like a flash,
Put aside the curtains and threw up the sash.
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of daylight to objects below;
And what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver so lively and quick
I knew in a moment it must be Saint Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled and shouted and called them by name,
"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer! now, Vixen!
On Comet! on Cupid, on Dunder and Blixen!
To the top of the porch, to the top of the wall,
Now dash away! dash away, dash away all!"
As dry leaves before the autumn winds fly
And meeting an obstacle mount to the sky,
So up to the housetop the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of toys and Santa Claus, too;
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each tiny hoof.
As I drew in my head and was turning around,
Down the chimney Santa Claus came with a bound.
He was dressed all in fur from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all sprinkled with ashes and soot;

A bundle of toys was flung on his back
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.
His eyes, how they twinkled! his dimples, how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry,
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow.
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself.
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings—then turned with a jerk
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle;
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
"Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!"

Clement C. Moore.

THE HOLIDAY

Come out, come out, for merry play:
  This is the pleasant month of June,
  And we will go this afternoon
Over the hills and far away.

Hurrah! we'll have a holiday;
  And through the wood and up the glade
  We'll go in sunshine and in shade
Over the hills and far away.

The Holiday

The wild rose blooms upon the spray;
In all the sky is not a cloud;
And merry birds are singing loud
Over the hills and far away.

Not one of us behind must stay;
But little ones and all shall go,
Where summer breezes gently blow,
Over the hills and far away.

Mrs. Hawtry.

THE GIRL WHO CRIED

Winifred Waters sat and sighed
Under a weeping willow;
When she went to bed she cried,
Wetting all the pillow.

Kept on crying night and day,
Till her friends lost patience;
"What shall we do to stop her, pray?"
So said her relations.

Send her to the sandy plains,
In the zone called torrid:
Send her where it never rains,
Where the heat is horrid!

Mind that she has only flour
For her daily feeding;
Let her have a page an hour
Of the dryest reading.

When the poor girl has endured
Six months of this drying,
Winifred will come back cured,
Let us hope, of crying.

William B. Rands.

MERRY RAIN

Sprinkle, sprinkle, comes the rain,
Tapping on the window-pane!
Trickling, coursing,
Crowding, forcing
Tiny rills
To the dripping window-sills.

Laughing raindrops, light and swift,
Through the air they fall and sift;
Dancing, tripping,
Bounding, skipping
Through the street
With their thousand merry feet.

Every blade of grass around
Is a ladder to the ground;
Clinging, striding,
Slipping, sliding,
On they come
With their busy, patt'ring hum.

In the woods, by twig and spray,
To the roots they find their way;
Rushing, creeping,
Doubling, leaping,
Down they go
To the waiting life below.

O the brisk and merry rain,
Bringing gladness in its train!
Falling, glancing,
Twinkling, dancing
All around—
Listen to its cheery sound!

THE GOOD MOOLLY COW

Come, supper is ready,
Come, boys and girls, now,
For here is fresh milk
From the good moolly cow.

Have done with your fife
And your row-de-dow-dow,
And take this nice milk
From the good moolly cow.

And here is Miss Pussy,
She means by "Mee-ow,"
"Give me, too, some milk
From the good moolly cow."

When children are hungry,
Oh, who can tell how
Very much they love milk
From the good moolly cow.

So when you meet moolly,
Please say, with a bow,
"Thank you for your milk
Mrs. Good Moolly Cow."

THE MOTHER'S WORK

"Oh mother, get my bonnet, do.
I want to go and play;
And hurry, mother, tie my shoe,
Or sis will run away."

"Mother, see here, my dress is loose;
I wish you'd hook it up;
Oh dear, I want a drink so bad,
Ma, take me down the cup."

"Mother, I want a long, strong string
To make my kite fly high—
Give me more paper for the tail,
I'll make it reach the sky.

"And, mother, sew this button on
My pants—see how they look!
And mother, won't you stitch those leaves
Into my spelling book?"

'Oh mother, mother, comb my hair,
And please my face wash clean.
The girls are all a-going to walk
Into the woodland green,

"Tonight just after school—you know
The teacher said we might;
And mother, I must have some cake
And cheese, to fix things right."

"Mother, where is my jumping-rope?"
"Mother, where is my hat?"
"Mother, come help me build a house."
"Mother, John plagues the cat."

Thus, hour by hour, unceasingly
Do tasks like these intrude—
And mother, by the close of day,
Is weary and subdued.

A FOURTH OF JULY RECORD

1 was a wide-awake little boy
Who rose with the break of day.

2 were the minutes he took to dress;
Then he was off and away.

3 were his leaps when he cleared the stairs,
Although they were steep and high.

4 was the number which caused his haste,
Because it was Fourth of July!

5 were his pennies which went to buy
A package of crackers red;

6 were the matches which touched them off
And then—he was back in bed.

8 were the visits the doctor made,
Before he was whole once more.

9 were the dolorous days he spent
In sorrow and pain; but then,

0 are the seconds he'll stop to think
Before he does it again.

Lilian Dynevor Rice.

THE SPIDER AND HIS WIFE

In a dark little crack, half a yard from the ground
An honest old spider resided.
So pleasant and snug and convenient 'twas found,
That his friends came to see it from many miles round;
It seemed for his pleasure provided.

Of the cares and fatigues and distresses of life
This spider was thoroughly tired;
So, leaving those scenes of distraction and strife—
His children all settled—he came with his wife
To live in this cranny retired.

He thought that the little his wife would consume,
'Twould be easy for him to provide her;
Forgetting he lived in a gentleman's room,
Where came, every morning, a maid and a broom,
Those pitiless foes to a spider.

For when, as sometimes it would chance to befall,
The moment his web was completed,
Brush, came the great broom down the side of the wall,
And, perhaps, carried with it web, spider and all,
He thought himself cruelly treated.

One day, when their cupboard was empty and dry,
His wife, Mrs. Hairy-leg Spinner,
Said to him, "Dear, go to the cobweb and try
If you can't find the leg or the wing of a fly,
Just a bit of a relish for dinner."

Directly he went, his long search to resume,
For nothing he ever denied her.
Alas! little guessing his terrible doom.
Just then came the gentleman into the room
And saw the unfortunate spider.

So while the poor insect, in search of his pelf,
In the cobweb continued to linger,
The gentleman reached a long cane from the shelf,
For certain good reasons, best known to himself,
Preferring his stick to his finger.

Then presently poking him down to the floor,
Nor stopping at all to consider,
With one horrid crash the whole business was o'er,
The poor little spider was heard of no more,
To the lasting distress of his widow!

Jane Taylor.

SPRING

I love the pleasant spring
That wakes nature from its sleep,
And bids each living thing
Forth into daylight creep;
Those sunny days, so soft and warm
That make the little insects swarm.

And hark! the merry songs
That fill the pleasant air,
The birds, in cheerful throngs,
To build their nests prepare;
Those curious nests! I would not spoil
In foolish sport such days of toil.

Far in dark woods away
The lonely cuckoo hides,
With one soft word to say,
And not a note besides;
I like to hear the gentle bird
Keep practising its pretty word.

Now see the swarming rooks
On the fresh field alight—
Like boys at lesson books,
Chattering to say them right;
What funny talking, as they go,
Young Master Rook and Mr. Crow!

And then the ploughman sings,
Driving his polished share,
While up the skylark springs
High in the morning air.
Oh yes! I love the pleasant spring,
And so does every living thing!

Ann and Jane Taylor.

CONTENTED JOHN

One honest John Tomkins, a hedger and ditcher,
Although he was poor, did not want to be richer;
For all such vain wishes to him were prevented
By a fortunate habit of being contented.

Though cold were the weather, or dear were the food,
John never was found in a murmuring mood;
For this he was constantly heard to declare—
What he could not prevent he would cheerfully bear.

If John was afflicted with sickness or pain,
He wished himself better, but did not complain,
Nor lie down to fret in despondence and sorrow,
But said, that he hoped to be better tomorrow.

If anyone wronged him or treated him ill,
Why, John was good-natured and sociable still;
For he said, that revenging the injury done
Would be making two rogues, when there need be but one.

And thus honest John, though his station was humble,
Lived all his life long without even a grumble;
And 'twere well if some folk, who are greater and richer,
Would copy John Tomkins, the hedger and ditcher.

Jane Taylor.

SUPPOSE

Suppose, my little lady
Your doll should break her head,
Could you make it whole by crying
Till eyes and nose are red?
And wouldn't it be pleasanter
To treat it as a joke,
And say you're glad 'twas dolly's
And not your head that broke?

Suppose you're dressed for walking
And the rain comes pouring down,
Will it clear off any sooner
Because you scold and frown?
And wouldn't it be nicer
For you to smile than pout,
And so make sunshine in the house
When there is none without?

Suppose your task, my little man,
  Is very hard to get,
Will it make it any easier
  For you to sit and fret?
And isn't it, my boy or girl,
  The bravest, wisest plan
Whatever comes or doesn't come,
  To do the best you can?

Phœbe Cary.

FROGS AT SCHOOL

Twenty froggies went to school
  Down beside a rushy pool,
Twenty little coats of green
  Twenty vests all white and clean.
"We must be in time," said they;
  "First we study, then we play;
That is how we keep the rule
  When we froggies go to school."

Master Bullfrog, grave and stern,
  Called the classes in their turn;
Taught them how to nobly strive,
  Likewise how to leap and dive;
From his seat upon the log,
  Showed them how to say "Ker-chog!"
Also how to dodge a blow
  From the sticks that bad boys throw.

Twenty froggies grew up fast;
Bullfrogs they became at last;
Not one dunce among the lot,
Not one lesson they forgot;
Polished in a high degree,
As each froggie ought to be,
Now they sit on other logs,
Teaching other little frogs.

George Cooper.

IN THE MEADOW

Over in the meadow,
In the dirt, in the sun,
Lived an old mother toad
And her little toadie one.
"Wink!" said the mother;
"I wink," said the one—
So it winked and it blinked
In the dirt, in the sun.

Over in the meadow,
Where the stream runs blue,
Lived an old mother fish
And her little fishes two.
"Swim," said the mother;
"We swim," said the two—
So they swam and they leaped
Where the stream runs blue.

Over in the meadow,
In a hole in a tree,
Lived a mother bluebird
And her little birdies three.
"Sing!" said the mother;
"We sing," said the three—
So they sang, and were glad,
In the hole in the tree.

Over in the meadow,
Is a pond, and on the shore,
Lived a mother muskrat
And her little ratties four.
"Dive!" said the mother;
"We dive," said the four—
So they dived and they burrowed
In the reeds on the shore.

Over in the meadow
In a snug beehive
Lived a mother honeybee
And her little honeys five.
"Buzz!" said the mother;
"We buzz," said the five—
So they buzzed and they hummed
In the snug beehive.

Over in the meadow,
In a nest built of sticks,
Lived a black mother crow
And her little crows six.

"Caw!" said the mother;
"We caw," said the six—
So they cawed and they called
In their nest built of sticks.

Over in the meadow,
Where the grass is so even,
Lived a gay mother cricket
And her little crickets seven.
"Chirp!" said the mother;
"We chirp," said the seven—
So they chirped cheery notes
In the grass soft and even.

Over in the meadow,
By an old mossy gate,
Lived a brown mother lizard
And her little lizards eight.
"Bask!" said the mother;
"We bask," said the eight—
So they basked in the sun
By the old mossy gate.

Over in the meadow,
Where the quiet pools shine,
Lived a green mother frog
And her little froggies nine.
"Croak!" said the mother;
"We croak," said the nine—
So they croaked and they plashed
Where the quiet pools shine.

Over in the meadow,
In a dark little den,
Lived a gray mother spider
And her little spiders ten.
"Spin!" said the mother;
"We spin," said the ten—
So they spun lace webs
In their dark little den.

Over in the meadow,
In the soft summer even,
Lived a mother fire-fly
And her little flies eleven.
"Glow!" said the mother;
"We glow," said the eleven—
So they glowed like stars
In the soft summer even.

Over in the meadow,
Where the men dig and delve,
Lived a wise mother ant
And her little anties twelve.
"Toil!" said the mother;
"We toil," said the twelve—
So they toiled and were wise
Where the men dig and delve.

Olive A. Wadsworth.

THE GOURD AND THE PALM

"How old art thou?" said the garrulous gourd,
As o'er the palm tree's crest it poured
Its spreading leaves and tendrils fine,
And hung abloom in the morning shine.
"A hundred years!" the palm tree sighed.
"And I," the saucy gourd replied,
"Am at the most a hundred hours,
And overtop thee in the bowers!"

Through all the palm tree's leaves there went
A tremor as of self-content.
"I live my life," it whispering said,
"See what I see, and count the dead;
And every year, of all I've known,
A gourd above my head has grown,
And made a boast, like thine today;
Yet here *I* stand— but where are *they*?"

MEDDLESOME MATTY

One ugly trick has often spoiled
The sweetest and the best;
Matilda, though a pleasant child,
One ugly trick possessed,
Which, like a cloud before the skies,
Hid all her better qualities.

Sometimes she'd lift the tea-pot lid,
To peep at what was in it;
Or tilt the kettle, if you did
But turn your back a minute.
In vain you told her not to touch,
Her trick of meddling grew so much.

Her grandmama went out one day,
And by mistake she laid
Her spectacles and snuff-box gay
Too near the little maid.
"Ah, well!" thought Matt, "I'll try them on
As soon as grandmama is gone."

Forthwith she placed upon her nose
The glasses large and wide;
And looking round, as I suppose,
The snuff-box too she spied.
"Oh! what a pretty box is that;
I'll open it," said little Matt.

"I know that grandmama would say,
'Don't meddle with it, dear;'
But then, I think she's gone away,
And no one else is near.
Besides, what can there be amiss
In opening such a box as this?"

So thumb and finger went to work
To move the stubborn lid,
And presently a sudden jerk
The mighty mischief did
For all at once, ah! woful case,
The snuff came puffing in her face.

Poor eyes, and nose, and mouth, beside,
A dismal sight presented;
In vain, as bitterly she cried,
Her folly she repented.
In vain she ran about for ease;
She could do nothing now but sneeze.

She dashed the spectacles away,
To wipe her tingling eyes,
And as in twenty bits they lay,
Her grandmama she spies.
"Heyday! and what's the matter now?"
Says grandmama with lifted brow.

Matilda, smarting with the pain,
And tingling still, and sore,
Made many a promise to refrain
From meddling evermore.
And 'tis a fact, as I have heard,
She ever since has kept her word.

Ann Taylor.

THE WINTER BIRD

"O poor little birdie, so cold and so wet,
Say, what are you doing today?
The winter has come, and what will you eat,
And where are you going to stay?

"Your nest is so open—pray use it no more,
You certainly cannot keep warm.
Oh, come, pretty birdie, come in at our door,
And hide from the frost and the storm.

"We've clean beds to sleep on, and water to drink,
And things that to eat you'll find good;
Come, come, pretty birdie"—But what do you think?
The bird flew away to the wood.

GREEDY RICHARD

"I think I want some pies this morning,"
Said Dick, stretching himself and yawning.
So down he threw his slate and books
And sauntered to the pastry-cook's.

Once there, he cast his greedy eyes
Round on the jellies and the pies,
So to select, with anxious care,
The very nicest that was there.

At last the point was thus decided:
As his opinion was divided
'Twixt pie and jelly, being loth
Either to leave, he took them both.

Now Richard never could be pleased
To stop when hunger was appeased,
But would go on to eat still more
When he had had an ample store.

"No, that's enough," at last said Dick,
"Dear me, I feel extremely sick.
I cannot even eat this bit;
I wish I had not tasted it."

Then slowly rising from his seat,
He threw his cheesecake in the street,
And left the tempting pastry-cook's
With very discontented looks.

Just then a man with wooden leg
Met Dick, and held his hat to beg;
And while he told his mournful case,
Looked at him with imploring face.

Dick, wishing to relieve his pain,
His pockets searched, but searched in vain;
And so at last he did declare,
He had not left a farthing there.

The beggar turned with face of grief
And look of patient unbelief,
While Richard now his folly blamed,
And felt both sorry and ashamed.

"I wish," said he (but wishing's vain)
"I had my money back again,
And had not spent my all to pay
For what I only threw away.

"Another time I'll take advice
And not buy things because they're nice;
But rather save my little store,
To give to those who want it more."

Jane Taylor.

THE BIRDS AND THE HAWK

Two little birds, in search of food,
Flew o'er the fields and through the wood.
  At last a worm they spy;
But who should take the prize they strove,
Their quarrel sounded through the grove
  In notes both shrill and high.

Just then a hawk, whose piercing sight
Had marked his prey, and watched their flight,
  With certain aim descended,
And pouncing on their furious strife,
He stopped the discord with their life,
  And so the war was ended.

Thus when at variance brothers live,
And frequent words of anger give,
With spite their bosoms rending;
Ere long with someone they may meet,
Who takes advantage of their heat,
Their course in sorrow ending.

Jane Taylor.

THE LITTLE STAR

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

When the glorious sun is set,
When the grass with dew is wet,
Then you show your little light,
Twinkle, twinkle, all the night.

In the dark blue sky you keep
And often through my curtains peep;
For you never shut your eye
Till the sun is in the sky.

As your bright and tiny spark
Lights the traveller in the dark,
Though I know not what you are,
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.

Ann and Jane Taylor.

A MORTIFYING MISTAKE

I studied my tables over and over, and backward and
forward, too,
But I couldn't remember six times nine, and I didn't
know what to do
Till sister told me to play with my doll, and not to
bother my head.
"If you call her 'Fifty-four' for a while, you'll learn it
by heart," she said.

So I took my favorite, Mary Ann (though I thought
'twas a dreadful shame
To give such a perfectly lovely child such a perfectly
horrid name),
And I called her my dear little "Fifty-four" a hundred
times. I knew
The answer of six times nine as well as the answer of
two times two.

Next day Elizabeth Wigglesworth, who always acts so
proud,
Said: "Six times nine is fifty-two," and I nearly
laughed aloud!
But I wished I hadn't when teacher said,
"Now, Dorothy, tell if you can;"
For I thought of my doll, and—sakes alive!—
I answered, "*Mary Ann!*"

THANKSGIVING DAY

Over the river, and through the wood,
To grandfather's house we go;
The horse knows the way
To carry the sleigh
Through the white and drifted snow.

Over the river, and through the wood,
Oh, how the wind does blow!
It stings the toes
And bites the nose,
As over the ground we go.

Over the river, and through the wood,
Now grandmother's cap I spy!
Hurrah for the fun!
Is the pudding done?
Hurrah for the chicken pie!

Lydia Maria Child.

THE LITTLE KITE

"I never can do it," the little kite said,
As he looked at the others high over his head;
"I know I should fall if I tried to fly."
"Try," said the big kite, "only try!
Or I fear you will never learn at all."
But the little kite said, "I'm afraid I'll fall."

The big kite nodded. Said he, "Good by,
I'm off;" and he rose toward the tranquil sky.
Then the little kite's paper stirred at the sight,
And trembling he shook himself free for a flight.
First whirling and frightened, then braver grown,
Up, up he rose through the air alone,
Till the big kite looking down could see
The little one rising steadily.

Then how the little kite thrilled with pride,
As he sailed with the big kite side by side!
While far below he could see the ground,
And the boys like small spots moving round.
They rested high in the quiet air,
And only the birds and clouds were there.
"Oh, how happy I am!" the little kite cried;
"And all because I was brave and tried."

PRIDE

How proud we are, how fond to show
Our clothes, and call them rich and new,
When the poor sheep and silk-worm wore
That very clothing long before!

The tulip and the butterfly
Appear in gayer coats than I;
Let me be dressed fine as I will
Flies, worms and flowers excel me still.

Isaac Watts.

FINERY

In an elegant frock, trimmed with beautiful lace,
And hair nicely curled hanging over her face,
Young Fanny went out to the house of a friend,
With a large children's party the evening to spend.

"Ah! how they will all be delighted, I guess,
And stare with surprise at my handsome new dress!"
Thus said the vain girl, and her little heart beat,
Impatient, the happy young party to meet.

But, alas! they were all too intent on their play,
To observe the fine clothes of this lady so gay;
And thus all her trouble quite lost its design,
For they saw she was proud, but forgot she was fine.

'Twas Lucy, though only in simple white clad—
Nor trimmings, nor laces, nor jewels she had—
Whose cheerful good nature delighted them more
Than Fanny and all the fine garments she wore.

Jane Taylor.

THE WIND

I saw you toss the kites on high
And blow the birds about the sky;
And all around I heard you pass,
Like ladies' skirts across the grass—
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid.
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all—
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field and tree,
Or just a stronger child than me?
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

Robert Louis Stevenson.

THE SNAIL

"Look, father," said John, "at the lazy old snail;
He's almost an hour crawling over the pale,
Enough all one's patience to worry.
Now, if I were he, I would gallop away,
Half over the world—twenty miles in a day,
And turn business off in a hurry."

"Why, John," said his father, "that's all very well;
For though you can never inhabit a shell,
But e'en must remain a young master;
Yet these thoughts of yours may something avail;
Take a hint for yourself from your jokes on the snail,
And do your *own* work rather faster."

Jane Taylor.

MOTHER'S KISS

I sit at the window and sew and dream,
While my little boy at play
Bewiles my thoughts from hem and seam
As he frolics the livelong day;
But time and again he comes to me
With a sorrowful tale to tell,
And mother must look at the scratch or bump,
Then kiss it and make it well.

So I kiss his head, and his knee, and his arm,
And his dear little grimy hand;
Ah! who can fathom the magic charm,
And who can understand?
I must even kiss when he bites his tongue,
And love works its magic spell
For there's never a cut, nor a scratch nor a bump
But mother can kiss it well.

I'LL TRY

Two Robin Redbreasts built their nest
Within a hollow tree;
The hen sat quietly at home,
The cock sang merrily;
And all the little ones said:
"Wee, wee, wee, wee, wee, wee!"

One day the sun was warm and bright,
And shining in the sky,
Cock Robin said, "My little dears,
'Tis time you learned to fly;"
And all the little young ones said,
"I'll try, I'll try, I'll try."

I know a child, and who she is
I'll tell you by and by—
When mama says, "Do this," or "that,"
She says, "What for?" and "Why?"
She'd be a better child by far
If she would say, "I'll try."

THE QUARRELSOME KITTENS

Two little kittens one stormy night,
They began to quarrel, and they began to fight;
One had a mouse and the other had none,
And that's the way the quarrel begun.

"I'll have that mouse," said the biggest cat.
"You'll have that mouse? We'll see about that!"
"I will have that mouse," said the eldest son.
"You shan't have that mouse," said the little one.

I told you before 'twas a stormy night
When these two little kittens began to fight;
The old woman seized her sweeping broom,
And swept the two kittens right out of the room.

The ground was covered with frost and snow,
And the two little kittens had nowhere to go.
So they laid them down on the mat at the door
While the old woman finished sweeping the floor.

Then they crept in, as quiet as mice,
All wet with the snow, and as cold as ice;
For they found it was better, that stormy night
To lie down and sleep than to quarrel and fight.

LITTLE RAINDROPS

"O where do you come from,
You little drops of rain,
Pitter patter, pitter patter,
Down the window pane?

"Tell me, little raindrops,
Is that the way you play—
Pitter patter, pitter patter,
All the stormy day?

"Mother says that I must
Stay all the time in here
Until this gloomy weather
Has changed to sunshine clear.

"So I'm feeling naughty
With nothing else to do
But sit here at the window—
I'd rather play with you."

The little raindrops cannot speak;
But pitter-patter-pat
Means, "We can play on this side,
Why can't you play on that?"

Mrs. Hawkshaw.

THE BUMBLING BUMBLEBEE

One day I saw a bumblebee bumbling on a rose,
And as I stood admiring him he stung me on the nose;
My nose in pain it swelled so large it looked like a potato—
So Daddy said—though Mother thought 'twas more like a tomato.
And now dear children, this advice I hope you'll take from me,
And when you see a bumblebee, just let that bumble be.

Winifred Stoner.

WEE WILLIE'S FIRST HAIR-CUT

Last Friday, for the first time, wee Willie went with me
To the colored barber, who bowed most graciously
And asked the little fellow how should he crop his curls,
Close to his head, in medium length, or bobbed like little girls?
Wee Willie answered promptly, "My hair, please, barber, crop
Like my own dear Daddy's, wif a small round hole on top."

Winifred Stoner.

SUPPOSING

Supposing the grass should forget to grow,
And the wayside rose should forget to blow,
Because they were tired and lazy;
Supposing children forgot to be kind,
Forgot their lessons, forgot to mind—
Wouldn't the world seem crazy?

Mary N. Prescott.

WHERE IS GOD?

In the sun, the moon, and sky,
On the mountains wild and high,
In the thunder, in the rain,
In the vale, the wood, the plain,
In the little birds which sing,
God is seen in everything.

THE POLITE WAY

Good boys and girls will never say,
"*I will*," and "*Give me* these,"
Oh, no! that never is the way,
But, "Mother, if you please."

And "*If you please*," to Sister Ann,
Good boys to say are ready;
And "*Yes, sir*," to a gentleman,
And "*Yes, ma'am*" to a lady.

Elizabeth Turner.

THE GUIDE-POST

The night was dark, the sun was gone
  Behind the mountains gray,
And not a single star appeared
  To shed a silver ray.

Across the path the owlet flew
  And screamed along the blast,
And onward with a quickened step
  Benighted Henry passed.

At intervals, amid the gloom
  A flash of lightning played,
And showed the ruts with water filled,
  And the black hedges' shade.

Again, in thickest darkness plunged,
  He groped, his way to find,
And now he thought he spied beyond
  A form of horrid kind.

In deadly white it upward rose,
  Of cloak or mantle bare,
And held its naked arms across
  To catch him by the hair.

Poor Henry felt his blood run cold
  At what before him stood;
"And yet," thought he, "no harm, I'm sure
  Can happen to the good."

So, calling all his courage up,
  He to the goblin went;
And eager through the dismal gloom
  Inquiring eyes he bent.

And when he came close to the ghost
That gave him such affright,
He clapped his hands upon his side
And loudly laughed outright.

For 'twas a friendly guide-post stood
His wandering steps to guide;
And thus he found that to the good
No evil can betide.

"And well," said he, "one thing I've learnt,
Nor soon shall I forget,
Whatever frightens me again,
To march up straight to it.

"And when I hear an idle tale
Of goblin or of ghost,
I'll tell of this my lonely walk
And the tall, white guide-post.

Ann Taylor.

THE LAND OF COUNTERPANE

When I was sick and lay a-bed,
I had two pillows at my head,
And all my toys beside me lay
To keep me happy all the day.

And sometimes for an hour or so
I watched my leaden soldiers go,
With different uniforms and drills,
Among the bed-clothes, through the hills;

And sometimes sent my ships in fleets
All up and down among the sheets;
Or brought my trees and houses out,
And planted cities all about.

I was the giant great and still
That sits upon the pillow-hill
And sees before him, dale and plain,
The pleasant land of Counterpane.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

THE GREAT BROWN OWL

The brown owl sits in the ivy bush,
And she looketh wondrous wise,
With a horny beak beneath her cowl,
And a pair of large, round eyes.

She sat all day on the self-same spray,
From sunrise till sunset;
And the dim, gray light it was all too bright
For the owl to see in yet.

"Jenny-Owlet, Jenny-Owlet," said a merry little bird,
"They say you're wondrous wise;
But I don't think you see, though you're looking at me
With your large, round, shining eyes."

But night came soon, and the pale white moon
Rolled high up in the skies;
And the great brown owl flew away in her cowl,
With her large, round, shining eyes.

Mrs. Hawkshaw.

OF THE DYSPEPTIC MILLIONAIRE

heez offle ritch ann simply roals in welth
but if he hadd mi stummick ann good helth
soze he kood eet twelve pankakes at a meel
with surrup on heed give it awl ann feal
heez ritcher thenn than he ud bin befoar.
he dassent eet a hoal pi ennymoar
ur eet hott biskitts sutch uz muthur maiks
ann if he tride to eet hott griddul kakes
heed rithe in pane ann haff too go to bedd
wile i am goen owt to play instedd.

wenn he goze bi our howse somtimes i no
his happynuss is awl a hollo sho
ann tho heez ritch ann life seams to be swete
heez hungrey fore a lot uv things to eet
witch he kannt have. ann o his mornfle eyes
jusst look at u ann seam to si fore pize
ann griddul kakes witch he kan eet no moar
ann onley boys have got the stummick fore.
ann awl his welth witch seams so grate to u
kannt doo a thing to maik his stummick noo.

heed like kornbeaf ann cabbidge but he dair
not eet a thing unless his dockters thare
too pick it owt wile for mi lunch i ett
twoo kinds uv pi ann awl that i kood get
to fill me up ann tho ime offle full
uv stuf witch is kwite indigisttibul
fore millyunairs i neavur eaven hadd
the stummickake fore witch i shood be gladd
ann lurn frum it that haven munney is
full uv regretts ann dissudvantiges.

J. W. Foley.

THE TIMID LAD

Why, here's a foolish little man!
Laugh at him, donkey, if you can;
And cat, and dog, and cow, and calf,
Come every one of you and laugh.

For, only think, he runs away
If honest donkey does but bray!
And when the bull begins to bellow,
He's like a crazy little fellow.

Poor Brindle Cow can hardly pass
Along the hedge to nip the grass,
Or wag her tail to lash the flies,
But off he runs and loudly cries!
And when Dog Tray comes jumping too,
With bow, wow, wow, for how d'ye do,
And means it all for civil play,
'Tis sure to make him run away!

But all the while you're thinking, may be,
"Ah! well, but this must be a baby."
Oh! cat and dog and cow and calf,
I'm not surprised to see you laugh,
He's five years old and almost half.

Ann and Jane Taylor.

THE BELL

"Ding! Dong! Bell!"
"Why do you ring so clear?
In the early morning
Sleep to me is dear."

" 'Tis time you were up, little boy;
Early rise if you wish to be well.
No sluggard can list to my song
Of Ding! Dong! Bell!"

"Ding! Dong! Bell!"
"Why do you ring at noon,
Making me stop my play
To list to your clanging tune?"

" 'Tis dinner time now, little boy,
And laborers hurry pellmell;
Welcome to them is the sound
Of Ding! Dong! Bell!"

"Ding! Dong! Bell!"
"Again your throbbing peal
In the early evening
On my ear does steal."

"Your bedtime has come, little boy,
The end of the day I knell;
Welcome to all is the evening sound
Of Ding! Dong! Bell!"

HANG UP THE BABY'S STOCKING

Hang up the baby's stocking;
Be sure that you don't forget—
The dear little dimpled darling!—
She never saw Christmas yet.
But I've told her all about it;
And she opened her big blue eyes,
And I'm sure that she understood me,
She looked so funny and wise.

Dear, dear! what a tiny stocking!
It doesn't take much to hold
Such little pink toes as baby's
Away from the frost and cold;
But then, for the baby's Christmas
It never would do at all.
Why, Santa Claus wouldn't be looking
For anything half so small.

I know what we'll do for the baby;
I've thought of the very best plan—
I'll borrow a stocking of grandma—
The longest that ever I can—
And you'll hang it by mine, dear mama,
Right here in the corner—so;
And fasten it onto the toe.

Write: "This is the baby's stocking,
That hangs in the corner here.
You never have seen her, Santa,
For she only came this year;
But she's just the darlingest baby!
And now, before you go,
Just cram her stocking with goodies,
From the top clear down to the toe.

Emily Huntington Miller.

THE SLUGGARD

'Tis the voice of a sluggard—I heard him complain,
"You have waked me too soon; I must slumber again."
As the door on its hinges, so he on his bed
Turns his sides and his shoulders, and his heavy head.

"A little more sleep, and a little more slumber;"
Thus he wastes half his days, and his hours without number;
And when he gets up, he sits folding his hands,
Or walks about saunt'ring, or trifling he stands.

I passed by his garden, and saw the wild briar,
The thorn, and the thistle grow broader and higher.
The clothes that hang on him are turning to rags,
And his money he wastes till he starves or he begs.

I made him a visit, and hoped I might find
That he took better care for improving his mind.
He told me his dreams, talked of eating and drinking,
But he scarce reads his Bible, and never loves thinking.

Isaac Watts.

THE FROG WHO COURTED A MOUSE

There was a frog lived by a rill,
There was a mouse lived in a mill.

The froggy would a-courting go,
And thought he'd ride both to and fro.

With sword and pistol by his side
He on a squirrel got astride;

Then hastened to Miss Mouse's hall,
And there did loudly knock and call.

"Miss Mouse!" he cried, "are you within?"
"Oh yes, kind sir, and going to spin."

Quoth he, "I'm come this day to woo,
Please say that I can marry you."

"My Uncle Rat went out this morn;
I can't consent while he is gone."

Her Uncle Rat did soon return,
And said, "Who's this, I'd like to learn?"

"It is a noble, tall, straight man,
Who vows he'll wed me if he can."

"We'll have the wedding in the mill."
"Oh yes, dear Uncle, so we will."

But while they all at dinner sat,
In came the kitten and the cat.

The mouse in fright ran up the wall,
And cried, "O dear! they'll kill us all."

The cat seized Uncle by the crown,
The kitten pulled the poor mouse down.

The frog escaped, but 'twas his luck
Outside to meet a hungry duck,

Who swallowed him beneath an oak,
And said, "I've ended these fine folk."

THE UNSEEN WIND

Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I.
But when the trees bow down their heads
The wind is passing by.

Christina G. Rossetti.

THE COBWEB

A hungry spider made a web
Of thread so very fine,
A person's fingers could not feel
The slender little line.
Round-about, and round-about
And round-about it spun,
Straight across and back again
Until the web was done.

Oh, what a pretty shining web
It was, when it was done!
The little flies all came to see
It hanging in the sun.
Round-about, and round-about
And round-about they danced,
Across the web and back again
They darted and they glanced.

The hungry spider sat and watched
The happy little flies;
And he could see on every side,
He had so many eyes.
Round-about, and round-about,
And round-about they go,
Across the web and back again,
Now high they fly—now low.

"I am hungry, very hungry,"
Said the spider to a fly.
"If you were caught within the web,
You very soon should die."
But round-about, and round-about,
And round-about once more,
Across the web and back again
They flitted as before.

For all the flies were much too wise
To venture near the spider;
They flapped their little wings and flew
In circles rather wider.
Round-about, and round-about,
And round-about went they,
Across the web and back again,
And then they flew away.

SUMMER OR WINTER

I do not know which I love best,
Because when summer's here
I wish that summer time would last
Right through all of the year.

But when some morning I awake
And find earth white with snow;
Oh! then I wish the winter days
Would never, never go.

THE ROBBER KITTEN

A kitten once to its mother said,
"I'll nevermore be good,
But I'll go and be a robber fierce,
And live in a dreary wood;
Wood, wood, wood,
And live in a dreary wood!"

So off it went to the dreary wood,
And there it met a cock,
And blew its head, with a pistol, off,
Which gave it an awful shock!
Shock, shock, shock,
Which gave it an awful shock!

Soon after that it met a cat:
"Now, give to me your purse,
Or I'll shoot you through, and stab you too,
And kill you, which is worse!
Worse, worse, worse,
And kill you, which is worse!"

It climbed a tree to rob a nest
Of young and tender owls;
But the branch broke off and the kitten fell,
With six tremendous howls!
Howls, howls, howls,
With six tremendous howls!

One day it met a Robber Dog,
And they sat down to drink;
The dog did joke, and laugh, and sing,
Which made the kitten wink!
Wink, wink, wink,
Which made the kitten wink!

At last they quarrelled; then they fought,
Beneath the greenwood tree,
Till puss was felled with an awful club,
Most terrible to see!
See, see, see,
Most terrible to see!

When puss got up, its eye was shut,
And swelled, and black, and blue;
Moreover, all its bones were sore,
So it began to mew!
Mew, mew, mew,
So it began to mew!

Then up it rose, and scratched its nose,
And went home very sad;
"Oh, mother dear, behold me here,
I'll nevermore be bad,
Bad, bad, bad,
I'll nevermore be bad!"

THE LION AND THE MOUSE

A lion with the heat oppressed,
One day composed himself to rest;
But when he dozed as he intended,
A mouse, his royal back ascended;
Nor thought of harm, as Æsop tells,
Mistaking him for some one else;
And travelled over him and round him,
And might have left him as she found him
Had she not—tremble when you hear—
Tried to explore the monarch's ear!

Who straightway woke, with wrath immense,
And shook his head to cast her thence.
"You rascal, what are you about?"
Said he, when he had turned her out.
"I'll teach you soon," the lion said,
"To make a mouse-hole in my head!"
So saying, he prepared his foot
To crush the trembling tiny brute:
But she (the mouse) with tearful eye,
Implored the lion's clemency,
Who thought it best at last to give
His little prisoner a reprieve.

'Twas nearly twelve months after this,
The lion chanced his way to miss;
When pressing forward, heedless yet,
He got entangled in a net.
With dreadful rage, he stamped and tore,
And straight commenced a lordly roar;
When the poor mouse, who heard the noise,
Attended, for she knew his voice.
Then, what the lion's utmost strength
Could not effect, she did at length.
With patient labor she applied
Her teeth, the network to divide;
And so at last forth issued he,
A *lion*, by a mouse set free.

Few are as small or weak, I guess,
But may assist us in distress,
Nor shall we ever if we're wise,
The meanest, or the least despise.

Jeffreys Taylor.

CHERRIES

Under the tree the farmer said,
Smiling and shaking his wise old head;
"Cherries are ripe, but then, you know,
There's the grass to cut and the corn to hoe.
We can gather the cherries any day,
But when the sun shines we must make our hay;
Tonight, when the work has all been done,
We'll muster the boys for fruit and fun."

Up on the tree a robin said,
Perking and cocking his saucy head,
Cherries are ripe, and so to-day
We'll gather them while you make the hay;
For we are the boys with no corn to hoe,
No cows to milk, and no grass to mow."
At night the farmer said: "Here's a trick!
These roguish robins have had their pick."

F. E. Weatherly.

THE SAILOR'S CONSOLATION

One night came on a hurricane,
The sea was mountains rolling,
When Barney Buntline chewed his quid,
And said to Billy Bowline:
"A strong nor'-wester's blowing, Bill,
Hark! don't ye hear it roar now!
Lord help 'em, how I pities them
Unhappy folks on shore now.

"Foolhardy chaps as live in towns,
What danger they are all in,
And now lie quaking in their beds,
For fear the roof should fall in!

Poor creatures, how they envies us,
And wishes, I've a notion,
For our good luck in such a storm,
To be upon the ocean!
"And as for them that's out all day,
On business from their houses,
And late at night returning home,
To cheer their babes and spouses;
While you and I, Bill, on the deck
Are comfortably lying,
My eyes! what tiles and chimney-pots
About their heads are flying!

"Both you and I have oft-times heard
How men are killed and undone,
By overturns from carriages,
By thieves, and fires in London.
We know what risks these landsmen run,
From noblemen to tailors;
Then, Bill, let us thank Providence
That you and I are sailors."

Charles Dibdin.

ON THE SEA

A wet sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast,
And fills the white and rustling sail,
And bends the gallant mast;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While, like the eagle free,
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

"O for a soft and gentle wind!"
I heard a fair one cry;
But give to me the snoring breeze
And white waves heaving high;
And white waves heaving high, my boys,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon horned moon,
And lightning in yon cloud;
And hark the music, mariners—
The wind is piping loud;
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashing free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

Allan Cunningham.

Index of Titles and Authors

TRADE MARK REGISTERED

A WORD FROM THE PUBLISHER OF "MY CHILDREN'S BOOKS"

Have you ever wished that someone would publish for your children a book in which you could feel a sense of security, knowing that its influence was a real educational benefit to them? Have you in mind a special book which you know your children would thoroughly enjoy? I am devoting myself to the publishing of children's books that emphasize individuality. If I have not yet published the particular book for which you are looking, I wish you would write me about it.

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It is impossible to adequately describe the complete contents of this splendid book of children's verse. You will really have to see the collection itself to fully appreciate the sort of poems my children love best of all, and my guess is that they are for the most part the very poems you want your children to know and wish that they might be taught to memorize in connection with their other school work.

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