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The Melody of Childhood

by

Lydia Avery Coonley Ward



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THE MELODY OF CHILDHOOD



Lydia Avery Coonley Ward

THE MELODY OF CHILDHOOD

BY

LYDIA AVERY COONLEY WARD

*The earth, which feels the flowering of a thorn,
Was glad, O little child, when you were born.*

WILLIAM CANTON.

NEW YORK
JAMES T. WHITE & CO.

1921

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TO
MY GRANDCHILDREN

CONTENTS

THE MELODY OF CHILDHOOD

GOOD MORNING	1
MORNING SONG	2
WELCOME	3
WEIGHT	4
THE FIRST STEP	5
LEARNING TO WALK	6
DAYS OF THE WEEK	7
AMULET	8
COME MY DOLLY	9
HAND IN HAND	10
ROUND AND ROUND	11
TO AND FRO	12
THE CLOCK	13
THE WINDMILL	14
THE LETTER BOX	15
SONG OF THE NUT	16
ANVIL SONG	17
TWO BUCKETS	18
FIREFLIES	19
IN THE AIR	20
IN THE SKY	22

BABY MOON	25
LOTH TO GO	26
SILVER NIGHT	27
THE MINER	28
STAR SONG	29
RAINBOW	30
ORION	31
SIGNS	32
THE WIND	33
WIND AND BUD	34
WIND SONG	35
WINDY NIGHTS	36
BICYCLE SONGS	37
IN THE TREE	41
SPRING WIND	42
GUESS	43
CAPTIVE	44
BROWNIES	45
BALLOON	46
AWAKE	47
GRANDMA LETS ME	48
BREAKFAST	49
TRANSFORMATION	50
SURPRISE	51
HIDING	52
BEDTIME	53
IN THE STRAWSTACK	54
CHILD AND TREE	55
SHADOWS	56
MENAGERIE	57
DOLLY'S PARTY	58
LITTLE THINGS	59
THE SEASONS	60

I SPY RASPBERRIES	61
APRIL	62
HEPATIC BUDS	63
WAKE UP	64
PUSSY WILLOWS	65
SPRING FLOWERS	66
SPRING HAS COME	67
SPRING'S SUMMONS	68
ARBOR DAY	70
MAYDAY	71
RAIN SONG	72
AFTER THE RAIN	73
CANTERBURY BELLS	74
QUEEN ANNE'S LACE	76
DANDELION	77
POTATOES	78
FOXGLOVE	79
WARRIORS AND WIGWAMS	80
TENTS	81
WHEAT	82
SOLDIERS IN THE FIELD	83
BABY CORN	84
HARVEST	86
HARVEST SONG	87
COFFEE TREE	88
AUTUMN LEAVES	89
AUTUMN FLOWERS	90
VIOLET LADY	91
ASTERS AND BUTTERFLIES	92
HARLEQUIN	93
THANKSGIVING SONG	94
OPTIMIST	95
SNOWBALLS	96

SNOW MAN	97
SNOW FAIRIES	98
SLEIGH BELLS	99
JACK FROST	100
ICICLES	101
SILENT WORKERS	102
THE FIR TREE AND THE SNOW	103
DUTY	104
MY COMPANY	105
FIRE	106
LITTLE MISS DIGNITY	107
MY NAMESAKE	108
GIFTS	109
EMILY	110
ELIZABETH	111
VALENTINE	112
INVITATION	113
LITTLE RHYMES	114
WITCHES	115
ILLUSION	116
MY CHOICE	117
LONGFELLOW	118
COLUMBUS	119
FROEBEL	120
THE MASTER TEACHER	121
THE INNER VOICE	122
INDIAN	126
ESKIMO	127
IN JAPAN	128
THE LAPLANDER'S WEDDING RING	130
MAKING THE FLAG	131
THE FIRST FLAG	132
SALUTE	133

OUR BONNY FLAG	134
OUR FLAG	135
RED, WHITE AND BLUE	136
FLAG SONG	137
CHRISTMAS SONGS	138
CHRISTMAS CHOICE	148
BABY PINE TREE	149
CHRISTMAS TREE	150
CRADLE SONGS	151
DOLL'S CRADLE SONG	160
FLOWER'S CRADLE SONG	161
BIRDS' CRADLE SONG	162
PINE TREE'S CRADLE SONG	163
GOODBYE OLD YEAR	164
SUNDOWN	165
GOODNIGHT	166

THE MELODY OF CHILDHOOD

*Will you sing with the trees, my children?
Then come to the woods with me;
Will you dance with the flitting shadows?
Then seek where the sun shines free;
Will you play in the winter whiteness?
See! here is a ball of snow;
Do you covet a far-off brightness?
To stars and clouds we will go.
Come, fly to the palace of wonders,
You may reach it on fancy's wing;
But would you swing open the portal,
Then sing, O my children, sing!*

GOOD MORNING

A SUNBEAM touched my little bed;
"Good morning, dear," he gently said.
I opened wide my sleepy eyes,
And said "Good morning" with surprise.
"I cannot think that night is gone,
And are you sure that this is morn?"

The sunbeam laughed and shook his head.
Last night you would not go to bed,
And that is why you sleep so late,
And make me climb the window-gate
To say, "Wake up, you sleepy dear!
Wake up! God bless you! Morning's here!"

MORNING SONG

Good morning, dear baby, the seagulls are flying
Where long yellow sunbeams on blue waves are lying;
From day's golden cup the first draught they are sip-
ping,
While floating above and then downward low dipping.
Good morning, they say, baby dear, unto thee,
Come, darling, and play with the beautiful sea.

Good morning, dear baby, the sunbeams are locking
In wind-looms their needles where our boat is rocking;
And sunshine and shade o'er the waters are weaving
A silver-lace netting shy rainbows receiving;
Good morning, say sunbeam and shadow to thee,
Come, darling, and smile with the beautiful sea.

WELCOME

Did you come with the sunshine, my darling?
Did winds kiss your cheeks by the way?
For here amid snows of December
Are sunlight and roses of May.

And then did you linger, my darling,
Till stars gave their gold to the skies,
And from the dear blue of the heavens
Smiled into the blue of your eyes?

Oh, why do we love you, my darling?
For roses, or eyes that are blue?
No! while you were coming, dear baby,
Sweet love longed and waited for you.

WEIGHT

TELL me, what does the baby weigh?
Very few ounces and pounds, maybe,
But balance the heart-scales, and they say
Baby in one and the world in the other—
World is outweighed for the father and mother.
What will balance the two scales even?
Baby in one—in the other, heaven.

THE FIRST STEP

LAUGHING, crowing, fair and sweet,
Baby rises to her feet.

"Come now, darling, do not fear—
Right foot first, mamma is here!
Let your little fingers hold
My strong hand. Come now, be bold!"

Baby laughs—the dimples waken;
Right foot—left—the step is taken.

LEARNING TO WALK

COME, little darling,
Never fear!
Right foot is forward,
Come, my dear.

Now, with the left foot
Tippy toe;
Right foot again now,
So,—just so!

Well may you laugh, dear,
You will go
All your life stepping,
Heel and toe!

Carefully balanced,
Learn, my dear,
Bravely to press on,
Not to fear.

DAYS OF THE WEEK

'Tis a shy little darling that Monday brings,
Tuesday gives us a fairy who dances and sings,
Wednesday's child is steadfast and true as a star,
Thursday's child often dreams of a world afar,
Friday's darling has ever a generous heart,
And Saturday's child has a gift for art;
But when Sunday a blesséd baby brings,
We may hear the rustle of snow-white wings
As the angels come over a sunbeam's ray
To bring golden gifts down the heavenly way.
Then they crown as bonny and good and gay
The child that is born on the Sabbath day.

AMULET

HERE is an amulet, baby dear,
Cherish it, prize it,—'twill banish fear ;
Lay it in fire, it will never burn ;
Give it away, it will swiftly return ;
It will perfume your lips, it will brighten your eyes,
It will add to your beauty as each day flies ;
For this is a treasure all others above—
A charm never failing—we call it love.

COME MY DOLLY

COME, my Dolly, come with me,
Dance beneath the apple tree!
See the blossoms flying down,
Wings of pink and rosy crown!
Catch them, Dolly, in your gown,
While the sun sees you and me
Dancing 'neath the apple tree!

Some day, Dolly, you will see
Snow upon the apple tree;
White wings then will flutter down,
Covering leaves all dry and brown.
But, my Dolly, do not frown;
When Spring comes, again you'll see
Pink wings on the apple tree.

HAND IN HAND

HAND in hand, dance around
To the merry music's sound;
Out and in, up and down,
Who so gay in all the town!

Heel and toe,
To and fro,
So we go
My dearie O!

Dance and sing all the day,
Winter is as glad as May.
One, two, three—happy we,
Dancing ever merrily.

Heel and toe,
To and fro,
So we go
My dearie O!

ROUND AND ROUND

COME, my dear, dance we here,
'Tis the springtime of the year;
Gone is snow, south winds blow,
Little flow'rs their colors show.
Here we go in a row,
Come and dance, my dearie O!

Round and round on the ground,
Keeping time to music's sound;
Forward go, then bow low
As together we all go.
Here we go in a row,
Come and dance, my dearie O!

TO AND FRO

To and fro—gay we go,
Forward gliding,
Backward sliding,
Heel and toe
Here we go,
Oh, how I love dancing!

Round and round to music's sound,
Quickly turning,
Happy learning,
Heel and toe
Lightly go
When we all love dancing.

THE CLOCK

ON the wall there hangs a clock,
Pendulum swings, tick, tick, tock,
Hands move all around its face,
Never keeping the same place;
For they say to Time, "Good-bye,
We can show how fast you fly.
When you bring another day,
'Welcome,' we will gladly say;
Welcome, seconds, minutes, hours,
Bring the children sun and flowers."

THE WINDMILL

THE windmill holds its arms so high
I really think it wants to fly;
But it can only turn around
And draw the water from the ground.

Deep down there is a well, I'm told,
Where water's very clear and cold;
Turn, windmill, turn, and pump it up
And pour it in my little cup.

THE LETTER BOX

THERE'S a bright green bush with an iron stalk,
It grows by the side of a long stone walk;
It does not notice the sun or sleet,
It thrives as well in cold as in heat;
It hides its blossoms where none can see
Till a man in gray brings a magic key,
Then as soon as the green case he unlocks
The white flowers fall from the letter box.

SONG OF THE NUT

I LIVE in a little brown house,
With velvet and fur it is lined;
I am hid like a little gray mouse,
And the door is fast locked, you will find.
But when I am really full-grown,
With a shell and a sweet little core,
And my house is as hard as a stone,
Jack Frost then will open the door.

ANVIL SONG

THE anvil is busy, the iron is hot,
Sing, boys, sing!
Blow after blow on the glowing spot
Bring, boys, bring!
Quick with the hammer, and stroke on stroke
Swing, boys, swing!
Pull on the bellows and drive off the smoke.
Sing, boys, sing!

Cannon are silent on hills away,
Sing, boys, sing!
Thanks to the Giver of peace today
Bring, boys, bring!
Sound of the hammer on anvil strong
Ring, boys, ring!
Happy the hearts that to work belong,
Sing, boys, sing!

TWO BUCKETS

Two buckets were standing out in the warm sun,
In days when all buckets could speak.
Said one: "You are solemn while I'm full of fun;
I surely see tears on your cheek!"

Said the other: "I think you might easily tell
That I'm tired of this hopeless old track;
However brimful I may come from the well
I'm empty whene'er I go back!"

"Why, I was just thinking," the other replied,
"Of course it was only my whim—
That however empty I go to the well
I come back filled up to the brim!"

FIREFLIES

WE think the little stars are falling
When they have simply gone out calling;
For sometimes they grow tired of staying
Up in the blue sky, always playing.

And so their merry twinkling leaving
And wings of gauzy black receiving,
They fly into the marshy grasses
Like merry little lads and lassies.

Then o'er the meadow wide they scatter,
They light their lamps with merry chatter
And flash them out, and shine and twinkle,
And in dark shadows gold dust sprinkle.

But while these stars on earth are straying,
Across the happy marshes playing,
And with their lamps the meadow lining—
We call them only fireflies shining.

IN THE AIR

I

SUMMER rolls the warm sun over
Rows of corn and fields of clover ;
Corn shakes out its tassels red,
Clover lifts its crimson head.
Flying comes the honey bee,
"I choose clover," buzzes he.

II

THE bees carry pollen,
The wind blows seed ;
They plant the clover,
They plant the weed ;
Both grow side by side
Till the harvest's over ;
Then away goes weed—
To the barn goes clover.

III

THE late rain on the dusty road
Left muddy trace ;
And driving on we murmured at
The dark, wet place.
But ere we reached it, o'er the spot
We saw arise
On yellow wings a joyous flock
Of butterflies.

IV

ARE they yellow leaves a-flying
O'er the road where sunshine's lying?
See them flutter, see them rise!
They are yellow butterflies.

V

THE bee's a rover
In fields of clover;
When up he flies
And red top spies,
Then down he dips
And honey sips.
But when no longer he can stay,
To the busy hive he flies away.

VI

LITTLE white stars fall out of the sky
Soft breezes catch them as they go by.
With hop, skip, and whirl they merrily go
Wherever the wind plays with the snow.

VII

THE wind caught up the crystal snow
That frolicked at his side;
The stars peeped out to see him dress
The forest as a bride;
The morning sun her jewels gave,
In blue encased each gem;
The bride wore necklace, pendant, ring,
And rainbow diadem.

IN THE SKY

I

IN daytime clouds can see to float
In far-off skies of blue,
But when night comes they are afraid
That they will tumble through.
And so the angels tack them up
Between the sky's blue bars;
Then, when the golden nails shine bright,
We say: "Oh, see the stars!"

II

SWIFTLY through the evening sky
Silver moon is sailing by;
Fleecy cloudlets often try
Whether they can faster fly;
But the moon so calm and fair
Does not see that they are there

III

LITTLE stars in meadows twinkling,
Did you fall from out the skies?
Or are angels lightly sprinkling
Golden dust in daisies' eyes?
"No, you wondering little fairy,
We are lamps the fireflies carry."

IV

WHEN I lie upon my bed
Stars are twinkling overhead.
I can see their golden eyes
Shining at me with surprise;
"Little Sleepy Head," they say,
"Wake up now, 'tis time to play"
"No," I say, "I have to take
All my sleep when you're awake.
If you'll only come by day
I'll be glad enough to play."

V

THE little stars from night's dark skies
Look down at me with shining eyes,
And laugh because I always take
My sleep when they are wide awake.

"Dear little stars," I whisper low,
"I think you must the reason know;
It is that your bright eyes may keep
Their watch above me while I sleep."

VI

A SPARK from the chimney called out to a star:
"I am golden and brilliant like you.
I can skim through the air, I can shine from afar,
What more can a real star do?"
The star only smiled from the sky overhead
When the fallen spark on the ground lay dead.

VII

WHEN I was once a little girl
The moon would come to stay—
But now that I am grandmama
She peeps and runs away.

A month is such a short, short time,
To trust it is in vain;
One night the moon begins to wax,
The next she's on the wane.

VIII

THE great big golden moon hangs low
Above the pasture bars,
Then o'er the hills she rises slow
To meet the waiting stars.
But throned on high her silver face
From day to day grows old,
For when she leaves the pasture bars
She leaves her face of gold.

BABY MOON

HAVE you lost your old mother, you dear Baby Moon,
That you come here while yet it is day?

Why, the sun is just setting!

You must be forgetting
That this is no time for your play!

See! there is a pink cloud, you dear Baby Moon,
Now hide yourself in it, I pray!

Though lovely your crescent,

'Tis not at all pleasant

To think that you've stolen away.

Ah, there is your mother, you dear Baby Moon,
A shadowy form at your side.

Now closely she holds you

And fast she enfolds you;

You couldn't escape if you tried.

But wait till the sun sets, you dear Baby Moon,
And then you may play in the sky;

And when the star-faces

All shine in their places,

Your mother will bid you goodbye.

LOTH TO GO

I LISTENED one midnight and heard the moon say,
"I'll make the old earth bright as if it were day."
She lighted her lamp, and over the trees
Cast a net-work of silver—a harp for the breeze;
Then out on the mountains a white flag she swung
To rival the curtains of snow they had hung;
She peeped in my window, and all through the night
Sent silver dreams chasing o'er pillows of white;
And when the sun rising had warned her away,
She laughed as she answered: "I think I will stay!"
And so, pale and ghostly, although it is noon,
In blue sky above us still lingers the moon,—
The weary old moon—a faint crescent of white,
Now trying to turn daytime back into night.

SILVER NIGHT

LOVELY lady in the sky,
Clad in silvery white,
See the pretty grasses try
To dress like you tonight!

Skirts of silver, silver hats,
Many a dainty frill;
They are silver fairies now
'Neath the shadowy hill.

Silver-white they dance and wave
Singing windy glees;
Silver-white above their heads
Wave the answering trees.

Hidden harps make melody,
Reeds are softly blown;
Fairy queen wears silver crown,
Smiling from her throne.

Silver lady loves to play,
Golden stars for balls;
One comes here and one goes there,
Down another falls.

Silver lady in the sky,
I'll your lover be!
Silver-white my kisses fly,
Kiss your hand to me!

THE MINER

THE sun is a miner ;
His picks are bright rays ;
He silently, steadily,
Works through the days.

And see ! on the forest trees
Bright diamonds glow,
While silver sheen covers
The drift of the snow.

He mines deep in cloudland
And opals would fall—
But the lake holds a mirror
And catches them all.

Like Springtime and Summer,
These jewels are free ;
They all belong, darling,
To you and to me.

STAR SONG

DARLING, when fadeth the light of day
Then the moon's babies come out to play;
Laughing and dancing, their golden eyes
Shine in the dusk of the twilight skies.

Cometh the moon, the mother fair,
Sailing through silvery summer air,
Says to the babies: "Now hide your heads,
Quietly creep to your little beds."

Clouds are cradles for baby stars,
Lady Moon fastens their silver bars,
Tucks down the babies all warm and deep,
Then the wind comes and rocks them to sleep.

Slumber they sweet where cradles are blown,
Lady Moon smileth and saileth alone,
Singing: "When I shall be pale and old,
Then, darlings, open your eyes of gold."

RAINBOW

WHEN the rain has come down and the air is all wet,
Sometimes little sunbeams are caught in the net;
They are gay little sunbeams, they hurry to break
Each drop into pieces, then colors they take—
Red, yellow, and blue, and they toss them on high
For a wonderful arch in the blue of the sky.

At first the bright colors are only just three,
But soon there come others most lovely to see;
For they mingle red, yellow, and blue in between,
And make of them violet, orange, and green.
O beautiful rainbow, the shower and the sun
Built your bridge of gay colors for dreams to play on.

ORION

ORION down the sky's blue stairs
Steps toward the horizon's dusky rim,
And all the stars come creeping close
To see what will become of him.

Will he fall over the world's edge?
Will he be lost from out the sky?
Oh, no! to China now he takes
His sword and belt and shining eye.

And when the little children there
Wake up, they see him; but oh, please
Don't ask me what they call him, for
I have not learned to speak Chinese!

SIGNS

“Is it a wet moon or a dry?”
The farmer looked up to the sky
Where low above the hilltop swung
A crescent fair as it was young.

“If it but tip,” the farmer said,
“Until the Indian hunter red
His powder horn can hang up high
Upon its hook,—the moon is dry.

“But if the crescent downward dips
Until the horn from off it slips,
The moon,” said he, “is wet, I trow,
Goodbye to sickle, spade, and plow.”

THE WIND

THE wind is such a merry boy,
He dearly loves to play.
He comes so softly that with joy
I say: "Oh, please to stay!"
Then, full of mischief, he begins
To toss things in and out;
Over the floor my pencil spins,
My papers fly about,
Until, impatient and undone,
I say: "You naughty child, begone!"

But no, a wilful boy is he,
He hides behind my chair,
Then rushes out in sudden glee,
"O Wind, are you still there?
Why did I ask you to stay on,
Why call you sweet and dear?"
Again I cry: "Begone, begone,
I do not want you here!"
But 'tis a game that I must yield,
The umpire says he has the field.

WIND AND BUD

A WONDERFUL magician is the strong South Wind,
When he swings out the branches of the trees;
Then lo! to tip the gray
Of each cold and silent spray
He shakes out a bud to defy the northern breeze.

You scarcely can believe they are buds you perceive,
And the wind loves to shake them in your face,
Until before you know it,
(There's a cloud of pink to show it!)
My Lady Spring has come to her old place.

Last night while you were sleeping I heard a gentle
creeping,—
'Twas a crowd of babies laughing as they came.
For the sap had filled the pillows
Of the little pussy willows,
And written on their furry caps I saw your name.

WIND SONG

HERE comes the wind with a noise and a whirr,
Out on the streets he is making a stir.
Now he sends flying a fine stiff hat,
Tosses and leaves it all muddy and flat;
Turns an umbrella quite inside out,
Tears up stray papers and scatters about,
Makes big balloons out of ladies' long capes,
Skirts into sails then—the queerest of shapes.
The wind is an enemy, often we say;
We never can like it—a windy day!

The wind blows the seeds from their close little pods
And scatters them far away—rods upon rods;
He plants them where never an eye can see
Place for their growing and blooming to be.
He blows away rain, he scatters the dew,
He sweeps the earth clean and makes it all new;
He blows away sickness, he brings good health,
He comes overladen with beauty and wealth.
Oh, the wind is a friend, let us always say!
We love it! we love it!—a windy day!

WINDY NIGHTS

SOMETIMES I wake up in the night
When everybody's sleeping;
At first I keep my eyes shut tight
Then see me slowly peeping.

Why, how the trees blow all about
And how the wind is crying;
I see the white moon coming out
And all the clouds are flying.

How is it that the leaves stay on,
Is anyone a-knowing?
Why don't they shake off,—every one—
When such a wind is blowing?

I'll stop my ears and shut my eyes,
I'll not do any peeping;
With windy trees and cloudy skies
It's better to be sleeping.

BICYCLE SONGS

I

I've long owned a far away castle
On a peak in the cloud-land of Spain,
But though I am sure there's a doorway,
To enter I've tried, but in vain.
My mother's afraid of ballooning,
Not a wing has my horse on his heel,
But I've just learned to do my own flying,
And I think I can go on my wheel.

II

ON my two feet I used to run;
When long the way, it was no fun.
My breath was short, my throat was dry,
I longed to be a bird and fly.
"Dear Fairy, grant this one desire:
Oh, let me run and never tire!"

I only made that wish in fun,
For boys are always tired that run;
There are no fairies, Grandma says,
And yet through all these happy days
I never tire, for we can fly—
My little bicycle and I.

III

WHEN the sap in the willow is stirring,
When the snowdrops and crocuses bloom,
I am stifled, my brain is a-whirring,
Give me room, brothers, quick, give me room!

O prophet, ascend to your mountain!
O priest, at your altar low kneel!
But I, I will drink at life's fountain,
Come, carry me forth, my good wheel!

The wind is an ally to flying,
The sun strikes out sparks from the steel,
Avaunt now with trouble and sighing,
Joy beckons to me on my wheel.

Wait, prairies with grasses low singing!
Wait, mountains, your breath I would feel!
My heart to your shrine I am bringing;
'Tis westward ho! now on my wheel!

At last, oh, at last this is living!
The universe heard my appeal,
And the blue skies their blessing are giving
To the king who rides forth on his wheel.

IV

THE stories say there used to be
A splendid horse with wings;
I never more can be surprised
At any far off things—
When my dear bicycle and I,
As well as Pegasus, can fly.

V

I HAVE a noble comrade,
A strong and slender steed,
And never word of urging,
This servant true can need;
No oats for him in manger,
No grass or scented hay;
He never thinks of danger,
Or falters night or day.

No whip his side e'er lashes,
No spur insults his soul;
With fearless strength he dashes
Beneath my hands' control.
My comrade true, I call him—
This steed with ribs of steel,
Pray heav'n no ill befall him—
Well-tired yet tireless wheel!

VI

HURRAH! Hurrah, for my shining steed!
In pastures that fail not he loveth to feed;
His body is slender and round and light,
His ribs are of steel, well burnished and bright,
Nickel and rubber his beautiful rim,
No one can rival a gay steed like him.
Like a true Cyclops he has but one eye,
Yet like Bucephalous wingless can fly.
The rays that he sends shine through the dark night
And put the policemen, who hate him, to flight.
Heigho! Heigho, how we circle and spin!
Show us the race that we two cannot win!
We know not worry or anger or fret,
The stones in our pathway we quickly forget,
For the world is our own, won by circles of steel,
And I am a prince, when I ride on my wheel.

IN THE TREE

LADDER in the apple tree,
Children climbing up.
"Will you please take tea with me
In an acorn cup?"
"No, I thank you, I will stay
Underneath the tree today."

SPRING WIND

THE wind blew strong and soft from the south,
The lake rolled in at the valley's mouth,
The path of the sun on the water's breast
In silver shimmered from east to west.

The brown birds chirped at the break of day,
Though trees were leafless and meadows gray,
For the soft south wind blew strong to bring
The heralds that carried the banners of spring.

GUESS

WHAT are the whitest things you see?

Clouds that pass.

What is greener than the sea?

Spring's green grass.

What is blue as blue can be?

Sky above.

What's the dearest thing to me?

Heart's true love.

CAPTIVE

THEY have fastened my pretty balloon to the bed,
But I haven't let go of the string.
When I pull him, just see how he tosses his head,
The wild little shining thing!

I wish he'd go higher! he's tied to his place;
I'll jerk him! just see how he flaps!
O Mama! he's hitting me right in the face!
Shall I give him a few little slaps?

Oh, no! I will laugh, for I love my balloon,
And I know that he's only in play.
Perhaps they'll untie him, and then pretty soon
He'll fly again far, far away.

BROWNIES

THE Brownies are hidden away,
But often they come out to play;
 They help every one
 Till the work is all done,
And then they slip off before day.

In nuts and in acorns they hide,
Sometimes in the popcorn they bide;
 And many a day
 They are under the hay,
While sometimes on thistles they ride.

But most upon Hallowe'en nights,
When a boy in a gay prank delights;
 " 'Twas a Brownie," says he;
 " No indeed," answer we,
" The Brownies are good little sprites."

They all try, wherever they go,
Their love and their service to show;
 When you find your work done,
 Always say, " Oh, what fun!
The Brownies have been here, I know."

BALLOON

You pretty little red balloon,
I think you are a lovely moon
That used to stay up in the sky
To light the birds as they went by.

One day up flew a merry kite,
His string was fastened very tight;
He blew against you—first you knew
The kite was gone, the string held you.

So that was how you came to be
A red balloon, and play with me.
And that is why you always try
To fly back to your dear blue sky.

AWAKE

WHEN my Mama gets tired at night
Next day she likes to sleep;
Then after breakfast I go up
And very softly peep
Into her room; and there I see
She's fast asleep; she can't see me.

I tiptoe in and look at her;
Then her eyes open wide.
Nurse says: "What made you wake her up?"
I didn't! I just tried
To take a little, tiny peep,
And see if she was fast asleep.

GRANDMA LETS ME

I LIKE to wash my hands myself,
But nurse says I get wet;
And Mama says: "Just wait until
You're older, little pet."
But Grandma only smiles, I see,
And then she says: "Now come with me!"

She takes my hand; away we go
To her room! Oh, what joy!
Off comes my blouse, up go my sleeves,
She says: "Now, Grandma's boy,
Stand on this stool and scrub your hands,
For that's what Grandmama commands."

And then I have such lots of fun,
For Grandma gives me soaps
And towels and a nice soft sponge;
And then she says she hopes
I'll get all clean—and so do I;
I'll take an hour to scrub and dry.

BREAKFAST

WHENEVER my Mama's in bed
My nurse her breakfast brings;
And then I climb up by her side
To look at all the things.
I do not want a bite for me,
It's just to keep her company.

How good the breakfast looks! There's egg
All poached, and toast and tea;
I do not say a word—and then
Mama just looks at me,
And though I did not beg a bit
She lets me have a taste of it.

When breakfast's in the dining room
With table-cloth and chairs,
It doesn't taste one half as good
As when it goes up stairs,
And I sit on the bed, and see
My dear Mama who smiles at me.

TRANSFORMATION

WHAT shall I be today, Mama,
A monkey or a bear?
Or shall I be a lion fierce,
And have a mane for hair?

Or shall I be an elephant
With big trunk long and gray?
Or shall I be a pony-horse
And gallop far away?

I think I'll be a dog and bark,
Or be a cat and mew.
Perhaps I'd better be a lamb,
And cuddle close to you.

SURPRISE

"LIE farther over on the bed,
Mama, and shut your eyes;
Then in a minute open them;
You'll have a great surprise!"

I turn away and shut my eyes,
I hear his pattering feet;
He climbs upon the bed; he lies
Beside me, fair and sweet.

"Open your eyes!" His bonny face
Is smiling up at me.
I clasp him close; I kiss him. Then
In horror tones says he:

"You mustn't touch me! Don't you see
I'm not your boy at all!
Keep far away! You might get hurt!
I'm a wild animal!"

HIDING

HE hides behind the curtain,
His little feet stick out;
He calls: "Now find me, Grandma!
Look everywhere about!"

I peer into the corners,
I look behind each chair,
I shake the sofa pillows;
How strange he is not there!

At last impatience conquers,
Away the curtain flies;
I see his racing dimples,
I see his dancing eyes.

No future joy will rival
This ecstasy of bliss,
When I, surprised, gaze at him,
And say: "Why, here he is!"

BED TIME

My dear Mama, I love to hear
The stories of the time
When you were Grandma's little girl,
And loved to run and climb
And frolic all the livelong day
In happy summer-time.

But oh, the nicest time to me
Was when the fire was red,
And Grandma took you on her knee.
What joy! until she said:
"How late it is! Now, dear, I see
It's time to go to bed."

Mama, you can remember yet
That hour you used to dread,
When you were Grandma's little pet,
And kissing her, you said,
Just as I do, "Now let's forget
It's time to go to bed."

IN THE STRAW STACK

COME, boys and girls, now follow, follow!
In the straw stack we will hollow
Just the place for us to sit in—
Large enough for all to fit in.

If 'tis cloudy, that's no matter!
Let the rain-drops patter, patter;
We'll keep dry, all safely hidden
Where they cannot come unbidden.

When the yellow sun is shining,
Then our house has yellow lining;
'Tis a golden play-house, shaded
By a roof securely braided.

Come then, boys and girls, and follow;
Now our little room we'll hollow;
Sun and wind and rain are saying,
"Straw-stack is the place for playing!"

CHILD AND TREE

WHAT are you saying, you beautiful tree?
Leaves are all bowing and looking at me,
Breezes are rustling the grass at your feet,
Honey bees buzzing for something to eat,
Sunbeams are dancing out on the blue sea;
Beautiful tree. are you talking to me?

Yes, darling child, I am talking to you,
All my leaves nodding and saying, 'tis true
Playtime is pleasant—but never all play;
Work has its true part in every child's day.
Would you be happy, work, work like the bee;
Then you will better love playing with me.

SHADOWS

A SILHOUETTE upon the street
And one upon the wall;
Long flag poles work the horses' feet,
The driver's very tall.

His hat's an elevator shaft,
A windmill his cockade;
Whenever he lifts up his hand
It looks like Grandpa's spade.

O little things that jump up high
When I look on or back,
How is it you so quickly grow
To giants tall and black?

MENAGERIE

SOMETIMES Nursey says: "Now, my dear, come with me,

We'll go to the park, and there you will see
The lions and tigers and monkeys. You know
How their iron cages stand there, all in a long row."
Then I say, "I am tired, and I don't want to come;
I can see all the animals staying at home
If I go to the window and look at the sky
Where the white clouds like snow are a-piling up high.
For there is a lion and there is a bear
And there is a llama with long floating hair,
While an elephant holds out his trunk just as though
He wanted some peanuts to eat in the show;
And the birds—how they fly! And the fish—how they
swim

With no cages of iron that they hate to be in!
No, Nursey! The Zoo in the park you may see,
But this in the sky is much better for me!"

DOLLY'S PARTY

DEAREST dolly, let us play,
For today is dollies' day;
I will smooth your pretty hair,
Your best ribbon you shall wear,
Would you like a cup of tea?
Sit at table here with me;
Here's a chair, don't be afraid,
Just for you this party's made.

From this pretty little dish
Eat, my dolly, all you wish.
Come then, let us dance and sing
Holding hands in merry ring.
Now, my dolly, here we go,
First the heel and then the toe;
Merrily our voices ring,
Dancing, dolly, while we sing.

LITTLE THINGS

LITTLE birds, they love to fly
Toward the azure summer sky;
Little fishes love to swim
Near the flowing river's brim;
Little bees, they love to hum
Round the clover's honey-drum;
Little fireflies love to light
Lamps of gold when falls the night;
What do children love to do?
Tell me, darling, what do you?
Surely 'tis a simple thing—
Little children love to sing.

THE SEASONS

COME, children, dance and sing,
For Spring is here!
The crust of earth is breaking,
The flowers are all awaking,
Come, dance and sing!

Come, children, to the brook,
'Tis Summer time;
The forest trees are bending,
The winds their message sending,
Come to the brook!

Come, children, to the hill,
For Autumn calls!
The scarlet creeper's burning,
The vines are purple turning,
Come to the hill!

Come, children, dance and sing,
'Tis Winter now;
The snow is drifting lightly,
The fire is gleaming brightly,
Come, dance and sing!

I SPY RASPBERRIES

COME, children, come and play a game,
The prettiest one you know;
Come down below the round-house door
Where all the berries grow.

The bushes there are laden thick
With yellow, black, and red;
Such raspberries were never seen—
So Grandpa always said.

Upon the long and swaying bush
Just see them tilt and ride!
Invite them then to play "I Spy"
And see how they can hide!

The leaves are long and pointed sharp,
Each one with silver lined;
The berries hide beneath, and thorns
Mount guard; they're hard to find.

But push away the leaves, and lift
The long and prickly stem,
And there in beauty clustering
You'll have to smile at them.

They hold their thimbles up and dare
To say, "Now do your worst!"
"I spy! I'll catch you now!" you cry;
"Red Berry, you were first!"

Then when the game has all been played
And baskets heaped you see,
To all the berries be polite,
And ask them in to tea.

APRIL

LADY April with her smiles
Winter's sullen frown beguiles,
Drives the fog from off the hill,
Frees the icy mountain rill.

Lady April with her tears
Leaves the flowers on silent biers,
Starts to life the pregnant seed,
Wraps in green the russet mead.

Lady April laughs and cries,
Sun and shadow in her eyes;
Kin to March when tears have sway,
When she smiles then kin to May

HEPATICA BUDS

O BABIES, with your furry caps
All folded soft and gray,
When did you waken from your naps
And peep out into day?

How could you slip the blankets off
From your low cradle beds,
And leave no print on pillows soft
To tell where lay your heads?

Fair darlings of the April woods,
You did not care to roam,
And so we brought your cloaks and hoods
To make you quite at home.

We brought your beds, a mossy pile,
But pray do not lie down;
Just stand on tiptoe here and smile,
Pink, 'neath your caps' gray crown!

WAKE UP

WAKE up Snowdrop, Spring is here!
Wake up Crocus, Violet dear!
Put on cloak and put on hood,
For the north wind says you should;
But the south wind says: "Just wait,
You will find I'm never late."

Pussy-willows, wear your furs;
Blood-root wishes she had hers.
Here's Hepatica's soft cap
Lying in the Wind-flow'r's lap.
Come, my beauties, do not fear,
Blossom now, for Spring is here!

PUSSY WILLOWS

THE Spring is near, I know it well,
Though cold air wraps the town;
Though on the hill and in the dell
The shivering trees are brown;

Though birds are hiding still afar,
Though oak-leaves rustle dry,
Though frost is on the pasture-bar,
She's near—I'll tell you why.

A sunbeam gave a merry sign,
"Just follow me," he said;
His dancing eyes shone into mine,
I lifted up my head,

I looked across a veil of snow
And there, in hoods of gray,
The pussy willows whispered low:
"The Spring's not far away."

SPRING FLOWERS

THE crocus and anemone
Are calling from the wood;
The violet is smiling bright
As pretty violets should;
The daffodil and jonquil lift
Their golden heads to look
At little Jack a-standing in
His pulpit by the brook.

Oh, come and let us carry them
To little children dear,
Where weary on their beds of pain
They need the springtime cheer!
The song of birds, the song of bees,
We cannot carry there,
But we can let the pretty flowers
The spring's sweet message bear.

SPRING HAS COME

"THE Spring time has come," a little girl said,
But her Mother laughed—"Oh, not at all!
The trees are still brown,
And over the town
The cold air is wrapped like a pall."

"But I know it has come," the little girl said,
And her mother asked: "How do you know?"
"Why, I went out to walk
And I heard them all talk—
The gray pussies, they told me so.

"Just down where the willows peep over the fence
They whispered while all else was dumb;
And they all looked so wise
That it was a surprise
When they only said, 'Springtime has come!'

"They were cuddled up close to a tall, slender stem,
As gray as their pretty gray hoods;
And you could have heard
I am sure, every word,
Had you stood at the edge of the woods"

SPRING'S SUMMONS

WHILE Winter still wore his white helmet of snow
And pricked with his icicle sting,
A wind from the south, with a thrill soft and low,
Brought the earliest whisper of Spring.

My Violet, come! awake! oh, 'awake!
My Snowdrop, my Crocus, heigho!
I am coming, my darlings, the cover to take
From your beds that are still wrapped in snow.

Then the Crocus took out her long needle and thread
And a bit of gold cloth for her gown,
And her fingers flew fast while her bright golden head
Close over her sewing bent down.

The Snowdrop dipped into a fountain of light
A phantom of mistiest lace;
With its silvery white in the hours of the night
She covered her sweet, timid face.

But the Violet went to a secret nook
That she and the sunshine knew,
And out of its depths she quietly took
A gauze of the sky's deepest blue.

It was wrapped in a rose-petal's velvet sheen,
And she shook out each perfumed fold
And sat her down on a tuft of green
That was sheltered by mosses old.

Then with moonbeam needle and thread of dew
She fashioned her quiet gown,
And her little blue hood and her tiny blue shoe
She made by a pattern her own.

A sunbeam peeped into that nook in the wood,
And he saw her there, shy and apart,—
The Violet maid in her little blue hood,—
And he gave her his golden heart.

ARBOR DAY

FROM north and from south come the voices of trees;
From east and from west they are borne on the breeze.

We offer our fruit unto each one who comes,
Peaches, pears, apples, sweet cherries, and plums;
We hold out our arms and the birds come to rest,
And hide in our green leaves each dear little nest.

When cut by the axe we are laid at your feet
We offer in fire both our light and our heat;
Or we make you a house, wagon, sleigh, barn, or whip,
A pole for your flag, or a mast for your ship.

Oh, hear what they promise to you and to me,
And let us plant many a beautiful tree.

MAYDAY

HERE are the woods where the Mayday grows,
 Heigh ho! My Lady!
Over the hills that the sunshine knows,
Down in the dells where linger the snows,
These are the woods where the Mayday grows.
 Heigh ho! My Lady!

Nestling in green beds of soft ferny moss,
 Heigh ho! My Lady!
Windflowers and snowdrops are smiling across
Caps that the gay hepaticas toss,
While cowslips bend over the soft ferny moss.
 Heigh ho! My Lady!

Sweetest of all is the Mayday's own flower,
 Heigh ho! My Lady!
Close to the warm earth she buildeth her bower,
Roofs it with russet leaves, hiding the dower
Of pearl, pink, and perfume—sweet Mayday's own
 flower.
 Heigh ho! My Lady!

Dear is the gift that our Mayday brings,
 Heigh ho! My Lady!
Each carillon that a flower bell rings
Carries a blessing that gives the heart wings,
For Love's the best gift that the Mayday brings,
 Heigh ho! My Lady!

RAIN SONG

SPRING peeps o'er the warm hillside
Sprinkling raindrops far and wide,
Calling in the forest deep
To the blossoms fast asleep;

"Little flowers where do you hide?
Sleepy eyes must open wide!
Rain is knocking at your door,
Soon he'll patter on the floor.

Darlings come, you must wake up!
With my drops I'll fill each cup,
And the breeze your stems will shake
Till you all are wide awake!"

Windflowers then forgot their naps,
Snowdrops lifted tiny caps;
But the Mayflower, shy and sweet,
Hid beneath her russet sheet.

Yellow Crocus tossed her head.
"We were not asleep," she said,
"We all listened for your call
And we heard the raindrops fall."

Lovely Springtime only smiled,
"Oh, you darling little child,
Thinking sleep you never take
Now that you are wide awake!"

AFTER THE RAIN

ON the path that leads to school
Water stands—a little pool.
Stepping high, across we pass
And see our faces in a glass.

Muddy though our feet may be
We are glad the drops to see,
Saying, Welcome merry rain!
Do not fail to come again!

Cities may not like the rain;
Farmers smile when they complain,
Knowing well that for the wheat,
Barley, corn, and hay-fields sweet,

Rain must fall on many days,
So we sing our song of praise
Saying, Welcome, merry rain,
Do not fail to come again!

CANTERBURY BELLS

WHEN June comes laughing o'er the hills
And forests wear new velvet crowns,
Then Canterbury Belles put on
Their very prettiest, gayest gowns.

One wears a petticoat of pink,
Its ruffles edged with rosier hue;
Its gauzy bell-shape never wilts
In midday sun or evening dew.

One has a skirt of lavender
With lilac flutings, and close by
Is one in Tyrian purple robe—
The color loved by royalty.

Another comes in gown of white—
The dearest, shyest little lass
That ever happy swain could find
To dance with him upon the grass.

They all wear dainty overskirts
That need no reeds to keep in place,
Their flutings do not crush or spoil,
But sway in curving lines of grace.

In vain the maidens shake their heads,
Despairing that with ups and downs
Of all their shirrs and pretty frills
They never thought of caps with gowns.

Their wide-brimmed hats are stiffly pinned
With feathers curled and flowers between;
But Canterbury Belles outshine
Them all in tiny caps of green.

Who but those charmers would have thought
To keep the color of the trees!
Fie, Worth and Redfern! with your art
Surpassed by country styles like these!

All day the Canterbury Belles
Tip, tilt, and smile beneath their crowns;
The dark, the wrong, the sinister
Fly their bewitching caps and gowns.

With rainbow skirts and dainty caps,
When the birds sing and breezes play,
They dance the stately minuet,
Or waltzing steal our hearts away.

For oh, their dancing ecstasy!
No dreamer dreams, no poet tells
That miracle of heavenly grace—
The waltz of Canterbury Belles.

QUEEN ANNE'S LACE

A DELICATE flower by the wayside grows,
Its thousand petals are white as snows,
Its velvet heart is red as a rose.

Wherever the sunshine finds a place
It nods in the clover's smiling face.
Its name? It is really Queen Anne's Lace.

DANDELION

DANDELION builds his cottage
In the meadow grasses;
Thatches o'er the roof with yellow
Where the sunshine passes.
As the days go by, grown older,
Dandelion is far bolder;
High above his roof is set,
Fluffy white, a minaret.

POTATOES

GREEN leaves, white flowers in summer time,
And then, first thing you know,
The farmer with his long fork finds
Potatoes brown below.

FOXGLOVE

A WILD bee flew to a foxglove's bell,
"Hide me, O flower, while I seek the cell
Where your honey is kept, for I love it well."

The flower held open her cup of red
And hid in its depths the wild bee's head,
"Now sip the honey," she softly said.

The wild bee lingered that morning hour;
He drained the cup in the foxglove's bower;
She dusted his wings with her pollen's dower.

He did not wait to say adieu;
With his burden of sweets away he flew
And the wind through the empty chalice blew.

But the wild bee carried that summer day
The yellow pollen on wings of gray
To the heart of a foxglove far away.

WARRIORS AND WIGWAMS

THE farmer's field is like a fort,
The stone fence is its wall;
Within it stand the rows of corn
Like Indian warriors tall.

In summer days with every breeze
The yellow tassels wave,
And every warrior wears the plume
Dear to an Indian brave.

Then winter beats his frosty drum,
And over all the land
The corn shocks in the rustling field
Like Indian wigwams stand.

TENTS

IN summertime the corn rows bright
Like soldiers stand from morn till night.

As summer days go by, they grow
Too tired to keep all in a row,

And so they look about to find
A place to rest that suits their mind.

Then ruddy Autumn lifts her shield
And marches in upon the field.

She changes plumes from green to brown
And tells the soldiers to lie down.

And lo! the stacks of ripened corn
Become their tents from night to morn.

WHEAT

IN JUNE the field of wheat is seen
With lightly waving spires of green;
In hot July its yellow head
Bends low with prophecy of bread.
Then comes the giant harvester
With a magician's mighty power;
It cuts the wheat and binds in sheaves;
Like golden tents the reaper leaves
The stalks to stand while days go by
For sun to mellow, wind to dry.
Then loaded high upon the wain
Rides to the barn the golden grain.
The thresher in its yawning maw
Shakes out the wheat and leaves the straw;
Beside the barn the straw's stacked high,
Within the bin the wheat doth lie;
Straw, clean and sweet for stable bed,—
Wheat, ground to flour, shall make our bread.

SOLDIERS IN THE FIELD

HERE'S an army fair and clean,
Slender soldiers clad in green;
Silken plumes on helmets wave,
Sabres bristle bright and brave.

March, march, march,
To the song of the growing corn!
March, march, march,
To the beauty of earth new born!

With the harvest's royal yield
Autumn finds us in the field,
And our tents are pitched amain
To protect the golden grain.

March, march, march,
To the song of the growing corn!
March, march, march,
To the beauty of earth new born!

Gun of ours shall not destroy,
Blade of ours shall not annoy,
War at our command shall cease,
Peace and plenty shall increase.

March, march, march,
To the song of the growing corn!
March, march, march,
To the beauty of earth new born!

BABY CORN

A HAPPY Mother Stalk of corn
Held close a baby ear,
And whispered: "Cuddle close to me,
I'll keep you warm, my dear!
I'll give you petticoats of green
With many a tuck and fold
To let out daily as you grow,
For you will soon be old."

A funny little baby that,
For though it had no eye
It had a hundred mouths; 'twas well
It did not want to cry.
The mother put in each small mouth
A hollow thread of silk,
Through which the sun and rain and air
Provided baby's milk.

The petticoats were gathered close
Where all the threadlets hung,
And still as summer days went on
To Mother Stalk its clung.
And all the time it grew and grew;
Each kernel drank the milk
By day, by night, in shade, in sun,
From its own thread of silk.

And each grew strong and full and round,
And each was shining white;
The gores and seams were all let out,
The green skirts fitted tight.
The ear stood straight and large and tall,
And when it saw the sun
Held up its emerald satin gown
To say, "Your work is done."

"You're large enough," said Mother Stalk,
"And now there's no more room
For you to grow." She tied the threads
Into a soft brown plume;
It floated out upon the breeze
To greet the dewy morn,
And then the baby said: "Now I'm
A full-grown ear of corn."

HARVEST

IN the valley red and yellow,
Red and yellow on the hill;
Nuts are brown and apples mellow,
Purple grapes their perfume spill.
Come one and all from far and near
And sing the harvest of the year.

HARVEST SONG

SUMMER is gone, autumn is here,
This is the harvest for all the year.

Corn in the crib, oats in the bin,
Wheat is all threshed barley drawn in.

Carrots in cellars, beets at their side;
Full is the hayloft, what fun to hide!

Pumpkins are wearing gold from the mines,
Grapes yield their clusters fresh from the vines.

Apples are barreled, nuts laid to dry.
Frost on the garden, winter is nigh.

Father in Heaven, Thine is the hand
Giving the harvest over the land.

After we gather it we only bring
Tithe of his own wealth unto the king.

But our one treasure here we may lay,
Bringing our hearts' love Thanksgiving Day.

COFFEE TREE

THE shining leaves of coffee trees
Hang down in glossy sprays,
And coffee berries love the sun
Of Mexico's warm days.

The mother berries all are dressed
In gowns of deep, bright red,
While dainty robe of shining green
Folds down each baby head.

And so the berries love to hang
As close as close can be,—
The mothers red—the babies green—
Upon the coffee tree.

AUTUMN LEAVES

OH, see our bright, beautiful dresses
That dear Mother Nature has made!
Our green ones were faded and dusty;
She needed to dye them, she said.
We have nursed baby buds all the summer,
We have given their homes to the birds,
We have comforted every newcomer,
Although we have spoken no words.

We made every bud a safe cradle,
With velvet we cushioned them all,
So when the wind rocked them too roughly,
Not one of the babies could fall.
And now that this work is all over,
We are just getting ready to play;
And afar we will soon go a-flying
When the wind comes to blow us away.

AUTUMN FLOWERS

LITTLE yellow goldenrod
Is it just to me you nod?
Purple aster, did you speak?
Tell me what it is you seek!
Hark! the flowers together say,
"Make us into a bouquet!

"Take us, carry us afar
Where the sick and weary are!
We will sing them of the rills,
We will tell them of the hills,
Till tired eyes again grow bright,
And all heavy hearts grow light."

You shall go, O flowers fair,
Where the sick ones need your care;
They will listen while you tell
Of the hill and of the dell;
It shall be your gentle part
Joy to bring to every heart.

VIOLET LADY

I WANDERED in the meadow
One late November day
When forests lay in shadow,
Their leafless branches gray.
The withered grass was yellow,
The vine swung brown and dry,
And all the air was mellow
'Neath lazy autumn sky.

So going onward slowly
I saw beside my feet
Green fans that clustered lowly
To hide a tiny seat,
Where, in a corner shady,
As if she hid from man,
A little violet lady
Peeped from behind her fan.

ASTERS AND BUTTERFLIES

THE purple asters open golden eyes
And hold aloft their fragrant nectaries.
Swift at the signal come the butterflies,
Each on a honey cup enchanted lies,
Wings fluttering, quivering, the while he tries
To drain the nectar-depths of Paradise.
At last, with sated palate and soft sighs,
Elixir-laden, far away he flies.

HARLEQUIN

SIR Golden Rod, no longer king,
Has doffed his yellow crown,
And vaults into his sky-roofed ring
In plumes of silver brown;
For now he is Sir Harlequin,
The Autumn trophy bound to win.

His audience comes in motley clad,
Gay Barberries all in red,
While Elecampane, dark and sad,
Holds high his brown-capped head,
And Milkweed from his treasure chest
Brings forth white robes and amber crest.

The wind plays with that treasure trove—
The snow-white skirts fly out;
They frolic in the leafless grove,
And then they turn about
Sir Harlequin again to crown
As king, and Autumn's darling clown.

THANKSGIVING SONG

LITTLE children, leave your play,
Let us all give thanks today
For the harvest's golden cheer,
Earth the giver for the year.

On the hill-top, on the plain,
Autumn ripens fruit and grain;
Rosy peach and russet pear,
Fragrant apples everywhere.

Purple grapes upon the vines,
Pumpkins straight from golden mines,
Hay that cattle long to eat,
Oats and barley, corn and wheat.

Father, 'tis Thy loving hand
Gives the harvest to our land,
At Thy feet all gifts we lay,
Thine is this Thanksgiving Day.

OPTIMIST

I KNOW it must be winter
For snow is on the ground,
But soon it will be springtime
With bluebirds flying round,
And then 'twill be the summer,
And then the lovely fall,—
Whichever season's with us
I love it best of all.

SNOWBALLS

THE North Wind brings the merry snow,
The East Wind says: "I'll blow! I'll blow!"
He piles it up in drifts of white
That sunshine turns to silver bright.

This is the time to laugh and play,
I'll snowball you this very day!
I'll make the balls both round and flat
And powder them upon your hat.

A snowball here! A snowball there!
We send them flying in the air!
Oh, merry, merry is the day
When white snow tells us how to play.

SNOW MAN

LAST night while we were sound asleep
The snow fell fast—the snow piled deep.
Put on your mittens all who can,
And let us make a great snow man.

We work with shovel and with spade
Until his body strong is made.
Then come his arms, his head, his hands.
How fine he looks! How fierce he stands!

Red for his mouth and coals for eyes;
He surely ought to have a prize!
He's straight, he's tall and jolly fat;
We'll crown him with a great white hat.

SNOW FAIRIES

THE tiny flakes of snow come down,
The fairest stars in winter's crown.
They trim with white the window-sills,
They drape the trees—they deck the hills.

They fall upon the lake's gray crest,
She hides them in her shining breast;
They gather on the gray sea wall
And watch their brothers as they fall.

These fairies come from far away;
And oh, how merrily they play!
They chase each other through the air,
They whirl, they dance—now here, now there.

And then at last, tired out, they're found
In melting whiteness on the ground.
You pretty stars, I know you fall
That I may make a white snow-ball.

SLEIGH BELLS

THE bells! the bells! the merry bells!
They ring adown the hills and dells,
 With "Come along
 And join our song!
Come hear the tale our ringing tells."

Across the hills upon the snow
With crackling mirth the runners go.
 The horses neigh,
 We fly away
And laugh at all the winds that blow.

Oh, hear the harmony that wells
Where moonlight weaves her magic spells!
 Then hear the shout
 And merry rout
When ring the bells, the bells, the bells!

JACK FROST

JACK FROST is a fellow who holds in his hand
An icicle dart for a mischievous wand,
He tweaks at our noses until the tears start,
He tingles our fingers, and oh, how they smart!
He freezes our ears and he nips at our toes;
Turns our breath into smoke wherever he goes.
Yet soon we forget both his sting and his pranks,
And for all that he brings us we give him our thanks;
For we care not for cold when we're off on the ice,
And sliding down hill—oh, but isn't it nice!
Our caps may not fit and our skates may be old,
Our sweaters, worn threadbare, may let in the cold;
But boys do not care when they play all together,
For it has to be cold to make good coasting weather;
Our sleds may be faded—once red, blue, or yellow,—
Jack Frost does not care—for he's such a fine fellow!

ICICLES

I THINK that Jack Frost is a good little boy,
For he goes to school early and late;
 And with icicle pencils
 The figures he stencils
On his transparent window-pane slate.

But sometimes he's naughty and plays with his chalk,
Drawing castles and forests and streams;
 And then on the skies
 Of the window arise
The bright fairyland of our dreams.

SILENT WORKERS

Who work when we are fast asleep
The city's dirty streets to sweep?

Who in the sewer-holes are seen
Their ugly depths for us to clean?

Who steady holds on every trip
Through wind and snow the cable's grip?

Who late and early by the clocks
Takes letters out of each mail box?

What boy gets up the night before
To leave the paper at our door?

Our grateful songs shall ever be
For those who serve us silently.

THE FIR TREE AND THE SNOW

THE Fir Tree stood in his coat of green,
The sky held above him a wintry screen,
And ever his lonely heart made moan:
"Ah, woe is me, who am here alone!"

The Snow Maiden hid in the breast of a cloud,
Her robe was white as the folds of a shroud;
"Alas! I am lonely!" she said, and sighed,
"I am decked for the tomb who would fain be a bride!"

Then opened the arms of the lonely Fir,
The Snow Maiden saw them held out to her;
She gently smiled as she floated down
To set on his green head her feathery crown.

The wind whispered low with wooing voice:
"O fair Snow Maiden, thou art my choice!"
And he caught her up in a drifting whirl
That swept o'er the hillside her veil of pearl.

She sent back the wind through the forest's bars
While the Fir Tree gazed at the shining stars;
But their golden smiles as they looked down
She quickly hid with her fleecy gown.

"Come!" said the Tree, "Dear Love, I am sad;
Come to my fond heart and make me glad!"
She clasped his arms—she kissed his hands—
And laid o'er his green coat her crystal bands.

Then the Lover Tree with joy and pride
Held close to his heart his fair white bride;
And out through the sheen of her tender grace
There smiled the content of his dear green face.

DUTY

NATURE has many a lesson to teach us.
She is trying by daily signals to reach us,
Showing that all, from the smallest beginning,
Work from within—building, weaving, or spinning.
Rocks, trees, and shells and the stars brightly shining,
All through the ages their duty divining,
Grow from within, and they grow without ceasing,
Ever in glory of beauty increasing.

Child, learn the lesson that nature is showing,
Learn that each soul has to do its own growing!

MY COMPANY

I THINK while I'm little I'll make up my mind
To be just the kind of a boy that I like;
For if I am playing with Tom and with Dick
And don't like what they do I can leave pretty quick;
But when I am cross and ugly and mad
I must stay with myself all the time—and that's bad.

I'm a pretty good judge of the fellows I know,
I can see when they play fair and never tell lies,
Sometimes when I shirk or sneak off and hide,
I'm just such a boy as I cannot abide.
So the kind of a boy that I like I will be,
For I always must live with myself, don't you see!

FIRE

IN the chimney roars the fire.
Who like me can never tire?
Water floods across the plain,
Furious winds may leap amain,
But a dragon is the fire
Mounted on a raging pyre.

Here by happy chimney place
See my curling lines of grace,
How I wrap the hickory tree,
Golden chains but no more free;
Then in ashes we expire—
Noble tree and glimmering fire.

Give me apples—they are best
Roasted in my ashy nest;
Give me corn, and I will show
Kernels burst to balls of snow;
Though a dragon on a pyre
Yet am I your friendly fire.

LITTLE MISS DIGNITY

LITTLE Miss Dignity gazes at me;
Hazel eyes round as the moon hath she,
Hazel eyes deep as the quiet pool
Where the brook flows under the shadows cool.
I look and I wonder what great thought lies
Hid in the depths of those earnest eyes.

Little Miss Dignity lifts her lips;
Honey bee never such perfume sips;
The veriest nut-brown-mayde is she,
With cheeks as red as a rose can be,
And a forehead as calm as the summer days
When never a cloud o'er the blue sky plays.

Little Miss Dignity sometimes smiles,
Then every dimple a smile beguiles;
Two in her cheeks and one in her chin,
A handful for kisses to nestle in.
Ah, ravishing joy when the dimples chase
Each other across her smiling face.

Little Miss Dignity, baby dear,
Turn on the world your vision clear.
Your perfect faith is the goal of the seer,
Out from its presence flee doubt and fear,
And love will keep you serene and wise
When you look on the world from older eyes.

MY NAMESAKE

LYDIA, darling little baby
 On my knee,
Sweet inheritor of blessings
 May'st thou be!
May thine eyes see good in all things—
 Evil never!
May thy lips speak words of cheering,
 Smiling ever!
May thy hands though always busy
 Never tire!
May thy heart to all that's worthy
 Quick aspire!
May thy soul on earth find heaven,
 As it can!
May thy life be spent in loving
 God and man!

GIFTS

THE sparkling brook flowed slow beneath
A dark stone's shadow cool;
Its ripples vanished in a wreath
That framed a quiet pool;
And there the angels from the skies
Found dreamy depths for Baby's eyes.

At midnight when the moon sailed high
And mystic shadows lay
Upon the green, the wind went by
And swept the dew away,
That naught should hinder fairies there
Who spun the silk for Baby's hair.

A breeze caught up a ruddy wand
And buffeted a flower;
The velvet petals lightly spanned
Their white with color's dower;
And here today the roses speak
In beauty's flush on Baby's cheek.

* * * * *

So the liquid depths of the baby's eyes
Still dream with the angels of Paradise;
So the sheen of the dew and the moonlight fair
Are tangled still in her soft brown hair,
While the wind and the rose and the sunshine speak
In the ruddy glow of her velvet cheek.

EMILY

CHRISTMAS angels still were singing,—
Joyous New Year bells were ringing
When she came, a blessing bringing,
 Darling little fairy!
Christmas roses, leave your places!
Where are all your vaunted graces!
Hers is loveliest of faces,—
 Rose of January.

ELIZABETH

Is LITTLE Elizabeth three years old?
I could not believe it if I had not been told!
Yet I am quite sure she must be even more
When I think of the things that she knows by the
score;
For she's been just as busy as any small bee,
Do think what she's learned—and her years only three!

All by her lone self she has learned how to walk,
And all by herself she has learned how to talk;
She can put on her dress, and her stockings, and shoes,
She can button them too, if they're all very loose;
She can comb out her hair, but her mother must curl
The soft yellow locks of this dear little girl.
She can run, she can jump; through the air she can fly
When her father and uncles are tossing her high.
She can play the piano and sing like a bird,
She can jump at her white cat who says not a word.
She can romp with her dog, she can dance like a fairy
While she holds out her skirts in a manner most airy.
She can read from a book when her father is near,
But he has to read with her, I very much fear.

Now think how much work all this learning must mean
And how very busy Elizabeth's been.
I can scarcely believe, even now when I count,
That this one little girl has learned such an amount.
For each of her birthdays I'll give her a kiss,
And one more for the love that she never shall miss.

VALENTINE

I SING the garden ever fair
Where grows the candy tree;
Avaunt with apple and with pear!
The fruit that made old Adam swear
Is quite too sour for me, for me—
Is quite too sour for me.

In Nature's gardens gone to waste
Let peaches hang galore;
I leave the plum and quince in haste,
The cherry I'll not even taste
When candy's to the fore, the fore—
When candy's to the fore.

I made my way through garden locks
To find that candy tree.
I passed a wilderness of rocks
Rewarded by this dainty box
Aladdin packed for thee, for thee—
Aladdin packed for thee.

To thee, for whom I sought the tree,
I give this heart of mine,
For only thou as sweet could be
As fruit from off the candy tree.
So be my valentine, entine—
So be my valentine.

INVITATION

"If you will be my Valentine
My charming little dear,
The sun will never cease to shine
Throughout the coming year ;
Your lessons all will put themselves
Into your little pate,
The hardest sums there are you'll find
All answered on your slate.

"If you will be my Valentine
You'll see in all your walks
Fresh lemon-drops on every twig
And peanuts on the stalks,
While hot mince pies all hand in hand
Meet you at every stile
With raisins hopping on in front
And figs in single file.

But if from you I never hear
Or ever get a line,
I'll ask some other little girl
To be my Valentine."

LITTLE RHYMES

I

WHEN summer rain on the pavement falls
It bounces a thousand silver balls.

II

WHEN the little raindrops patter
All the clouds of dust they scatter.

III

THE warm and gentle summer rain
Beats softly on the window pane.

IV

FINE and soft the snow when down it falls;
Strong and hard as ice are the white snow balls.

V

BERRIES red, have no dread!
Berries white, poisonous sight!
Leaves three, quickly flee!

WITCHES

THE witches can only live, you say,
In the story-book tales for this dull prosy day?
Come then and look from the window here!
The sky above us is sombre and drear;
Of moon and of stars there is never a sign;
The rain patters down on the pavements, where shine
The piercing rays of electric light
Out into the darkness, the blackness of night.
And see! the witches have all come down
As surely as if this were Salem town.

The trees bend and quiver as low they swing
While close to their branches the witches cling;
Their long swaying forms are eerie and thin,
Over the pavement their shadows spin;
Each long black mantle and close black hat
With peakéd crown on the brim pressed flat
Glides stealthily here, and there rushes apace
To win a prize in the goblins' race.

Oh, say! do they come from the earth or the sky—
Those dancers, whose doubles as shadows fly
Till the storm is spent and a rift of light
Pierces the wings of the raven, Night?
Then ho! the electric lights flash out,
And the witches are gone with a scream and a shout;
The pavement shines with mirrors of rain
And the winds in the swaying trees complain.
But there's never a sign of the elfin power
That made of the midnight the witches' hour.

ILLUSION

ON moonlight nights whene'er I wake
The fairies play upon the lake.
Last night in water-lily boats
They skimmed across the icy floats,
And laughing winds brought snow, that whirled
The shadowy craft though sails were furled.
This morning, skies are still and gray,
They tell no tale of last night's play.
But watching eyes a sign may see
Of lily boats and revelry;
For o'er the ice the gay winds blow
In silver wreaths the flying snow,
Until like spirits of a dream
Afar and near the white veils stream
And o'er the hidden circles rest
Revealing them as their bequest—
The key to secrets of the night—
These lily-pads of dazzling white.

MY CHOICE

I WOULD love to be a laundress
In a land that I could choose;
It would be the fair Jamaica
Where I need not wear my shoes;
But can sit beneath a shade-tree,
With the mountains looking down,
The blue river for a wash-tub,
For a board, rocks gray and brown.
Beating with a wooden paddle,
Beating till the clothes are white,
Dipping in the rushing river
Till the drops run clear and bright;
Wringing out and hanging deftly
On a cactus or a vine,
Nothing needed but the moments
For the eager sun to shine.
Drying, while I sit a-cooling
Bare feet in the rushing stream;
Happy while my clothes I'm watching,
Waiting gladly while I dream.
Oh, when I become a laundress
'Twill be in Jamaica's isle,
Where the crystal streams are rushing
And the sea and mountains smile.

LONGFELLOW

A POET lived beside the sea ;
"O waves," he said, "come play with me!
O sea-shells, sing unto my ear
Until your messages I hear!
Speak to me, birds and flowers and trees!
Sing to me softly, gentle breeze!"

The waves upon the white shore rolled,
The trees and flowers their stories told ;
The shells and birds sang sweet and low :—
"Dear poet, to the children go."
The poet answered to the sea :
"The children's poet I will be."

He gave the Blacksmith's sturdy note,
And "Hiawatha's Song" he wrote ;
The "Chestnut Tree," the "Children's Hour"—
Their tales he told with tender power.
The children learned to love his name,
And so their poet he became.

COLUMBUS

COLUMBUS dreamed of distant lands
Across the stormy sea ;
He was a sailor strong and bold,
He feared not wind, he feared not cold ;
"Give me a ship," said he.

He knelt before the listening queen
And did not kneel in vain.
"Go as you will," she said, "and bring
New island trophies to your king,
A royal gift for Spain."

He sailed away with courage strong,
Hope in his heart kept place ;
He watched and waited till at last,
Across the western ocean vast,
There smiled the New World's face.

FROEBEL

A PROPHET saw a vision long ago,
To people blind he tried his dream to show;
 They thought he was benighted,
 His eager words they slighted,
So little did the foolish people know.

The prophet to his heart held close the vision;
He bowed beneath the torrents of derision;
 He dreamed of children's gladness,
 He waited—not in sadness—
Until the time he could fulfill his mission.

At last the eager little children found him,
With dance and song they gathered close around him;
 He was the blessed warden
 With key to a fair garden;
He swung the gate—for chains no longer bound him.

With blindness past we linger, not repining;
Our present joy is future hope defining;
 The circle of our years
 Is marked by smiles—not tears;
To greet the perfect day our star is shining.

THE MASTER TEACHER

THE children came to Froebel's knee;

“They are like flowers,” he said:

“Within a garden they shall see

The sunshine every day, and be

As glad of heart, as gay and free

As flowers by sunshine fed.”

Each day he gave them something new;

His fancies had no end.

From blocks and spires the bridges grew;

They sewed with thread and needle, too—

And busy, happy, well they knew

He was their truest friend.

Like children of that long ago,

We children of today

Bless Froebel's name, because we know

He was the very first to show

That children in love's sunshine grow,

And learn best through their play.

THE INNER VOICE

A True Incident in the Childhood of Theodore Parker

WHEN little Theodore was small—
A boy of four was he—
His father took him by the hand
And said, "Now come with me."

They walked afar across the farm
And talked of flower, bird, stone;
Then the good father kissed his son
And sent him home alone.

The pasture way was beautiful
That balmy day of spring;
Rhodora blossomed near the path—
A rare and lovely thing.

And there within a shallow pool,
As if his work were done,
A little spotted tortoise lay
A-basking in the sun.

The boy espied him, then drew near;
A stick was in his hand;
He lifted it to strike—to kill
The tortoise on the sand.

But suddenly his hand was stayed—
Stayed was his purpose strong;
For loud and clear he heard a voice
Say, "Stop! for that is wrong!"

Listening and wondering, the child
Held his uplifted stick.
What was this feeling, strange and new,
That made his heart beat quick?

He hurried to his mother's room,
He climbed upon her knee:
"Mother, I saw a tortoise lie
As still as still could be,

"Right in the water of our pond—
You know it is not deep—
I lifted up my stick to strike
The pretty thing asleep.

"Just then a voice spoke loud and strong—
These very words it said:
'Stop, Theodore, for that is wrong!'
I turned; I was afraid.

"I looked around; no one was near
To say a single word.
Oh, tell me, tell me, mother dear,
What was the voice I heard?"

The mother wiped a starting tear,
It was a tear of joy.
Within her arms she held him close—
Her darling little boy.

"Men call it conscience, Theodore,
But I like best to say
It is God's voice within the soul,
That shows the better way.

“Listen, obey, and it will speak
Clearer and yet more clear;
And it will always guide aright,
If you will only hear.

“But if a deaf ear you should turn—
If you should disobey—
Little by little it will fade
And vanish quite away.

“Because this heavenly Guide is yours,
My darling boy, rejoice!
Your life depends on how you heed
The little inner voice.”

* * * * *

Long years went by; the country boy
Became a stalwart man,
And in the great world did his part
As only good men can.

He was a preacher taught of God;
The Voice he still revered;
By righteous men he was beloved,
By wicked men was feared.

He stood within a stately hall,
His words were strong and brave:
“Though wealth should go, though blood
should flow,
No man shall be a slave!”

The Voice within was clarion now,
And fearlessly he hurled
Its ringing, burning, withering words
Against a coward world.

A clarion, and yet the same
That spoke in days of yore—
First heard by lonely pasture pool,
Now heard from shore to shore.

First heeded by a little child,
Now grown a Voice of might
That led a listening nation, in
Its splendid march of right.

O Mother, dead long years ago,
Your words can never die;
Their seed was sown in hero-soil
To bloom eternally.

INDIAN

INDIAN, in your blanket bound,
Indian, in your bead-chains wound,
Omaha, or Sioux, or Crow,
With your arrow and your bow,—
Tell me, do you like to roam
With the forest for your home?

When to fish and hunt you go
In the mountains white with snow,
When you pitch your pointed tent
Where the panther lately went,—
Can it be you never fear
Dangerous foes are hiding near?

Cunning little red pappoose,
Tightly strapped in cradle noose.
With your moccasins on your feet,
Blanket for your robe complete,
This fair land was all your own
Ere Columbus made it known.

ESKIMO

By the North Pole dwells, we know,
Chilly little Eskimo;
In the fields of ice alone
Stands his house of turf or stone;
Sheet of ice for window-pane—
Would not you and I complain?

Dear little Eskimo,
Leave all your ice and snow!
Come here with us to play
All through our sunny day!

Wrapped in furry clothes you go,
Little brother Eskimo;
Up above you icebergs rise,
Northern Lights are in the skies;
Winter is as dark as night,
But your stars are very bright.

Dear little Eskimo,
Leave all your ice and snow!
Come here with us to play
All through our sunny day!

Swift on snowshoes you can go,
Clever little Eskimo;
When you ride so far away,
Then the reindeer draws your sleigh.
So the snow is full of joy
For the Northern girl and boy.

Dear little Eskimo,
Leave all your ice and snow!
Come here with us to play
All through our sunny day!

IN JAPAN

IF I could but visit the Sunrise Land
That lies away over the sea,
Perhaps I could very well understand
Some things that seem strange to me.

In the land of Japan o'er the seas
Lives the wise little Japanese;
He waves a large fan
As he gracefully can
And reads backward his a-b-c's.

They sit on the floor instead of a chair,
With both their feet under them curled;
They make not a bit of a noise anywhere—
That's the hardest thing in the world.

In the land of Japan o'er the seas
Lives the wise little Japanese;
He waves a large fan
As he gracefully can
And reads backward his a-b-c's.

Together the children all love to recite,
And brothers and sisters will play
With the dear little babies from morning till night,
And so they are happy all day.

In the land of Japan o'er the seas
Lives the wise little Japanese;
He waves a large fan
As he gracefully can
And reads backward his a-b-c's.

Their houses are built out of clean yellow straw,
And they leave their shoes outside the door,
For never a mark or a spot is the law
That keeps bright the beautiful floor.

In the land of Japan o'er the seas
Lives the wise little Japanese;
He waves a large fan
As he gracefully can
And reads backward his a-b-c's.

THE LAPLANDER'S WEDDING RING

I WILL show you a wonderful wedding ring
That came from far over the sea;
It is stamped with a seal from the mint of a king,
And its circle of gold is as pure as they bring
To coin for the realm of the queen and the king
Who live away over the sea.

This ring was one that was given a bride
When she vowed fond and true wife to be;
On its shining gold crest closely hung side by side
Are the eight silver rings that she counts in her pride,
Well knowing that although the world is wide
It had held no bride happy as she.

This Lapland lover brought ring of gold
Because herds of reindeer had he;
But many a lover as brave and as bold,
Since Laplanders lived in Ostersund old,
With a circle of silver his vows has told
Because not a reindeer had he.

Of gold or silver or iron, the ring
May be that the bride doth wear;
But the eight tiny circles must always swing,
And when little children the swift years bring,
For each one a circle is cut from the ring
Until sometimes the ring is bare.

As years go on there's a tale unrolled
Only angels of Life can bring;
It may be written in silver or gold—
It may be in iron the story is told—
But a record of Love should always unfold
From the Laplander's wedding ring.

MAKING OF THE FLAG

WHEN first our fathers made the flag
They chose the colors three,
Red for the depths of heart's true love
And white for purity;

They looked afar into the sky,
They took its deepest blue,
And o'er it set the clustering stars
Whose golden light shines through.

And so they made our fearless flag,
Its stripes of white and red,
Its field of blue where stars peep through
To keep watch overhead.

THE FIRST FLAG

Who made the first flag? Betty Ross, Betty Ross!
She made it with cotton, with woolen and floss.
Who taught her the way? 'Twas our first president,
He planned and she sewed, for she knew what he
meant.

The stars had five points, for she looked up on high,
And she thought that five points had the stars in the
sky;
For each of the first Thirteen States to begin,
A red stripe, a white stripe, she counted them in.

And on the blue field she left plenty of room
For a star for each State, howe'er many might come;
So the first flag was made, and for me and for you
It is floating today in its Red, White, and Blue.

SALUTE

OUR heads we give,
Our hearts we give,
To God and native land;
Our flag shall wave
Above the brave,
And greet our loyal band.
Salute the stars,
Salute the bars,
For me and you
Red, White, and Blue,
Red, White, and Blue.

Hail, flag we love!
Wave high above
Our loving hearts and true;
On land and sea
Forever free
Our Red, and White, and Blue.
Salute the stars,
Salute the bars,
For me and you
Red, White, and Blue,
Red, White, and Blue.

OUR BONNY FLAG

Out on the breeze,
O'er land and seas,
A beautiful banner is streaming.
Shining its stars,
Splendid its bars,
Under the sunshine 'tis gleaming.
Hail to the flag,
The dear bonny flag—
The flag that is red, white, and blue!

Over the brave
Long may it wave,
Peace to the world ever bringing;
While to the stars,
Linked with the bars,
Hearts will forever be singing:
Hail to the flag,
The dear bonny flag—
The flag that is red, white, and blue!

OUR FLAG

SOME flags are red or white or green
And some are yellow too;
But the dear one that we love best
Is red and white and blue.
Then hail the flag,
The bonny flag,
Of red and white and blue.

We love our native country's flag,
To it our hearts are true,
With joy we wave above our heads
Its red and white and blue.
Then hail the flag,
The bonny flag,
Of red and white and blue.

RED WHITE AND BLUE

I THE Red, White, and Blue float above us,
The flag of the brave and the free;
Its stars and its stripes waving o'er us,
Are bright on the land and the sea.
Oh, look where the sunlight is falling
And gilding the colors anew!
The stars and the stripes they are calling,
Three cheers for the Red, White, and Blue!

In lands far away when a-roving,
The flag of our Union we see,
Our hearts to their deepest thrill moving,
Salute the dear flag of the free.
Oh, look where the sunlight is falling
And gilding the colors anew!
The stars and the stripes they are calling,
Three cheers for the Red, White, and Blue!

FLAG SONG

LIFT high the spangled banner
And float it to the breeze!
Flash out from fields of blue its stars!
Shake out its white and crimson bars!
High upon poles from forest trees,
High upon masts on open seas,
Let not a thread dishonored drag,
Swing out, swing out our country's flag!

Oh, shout! oh, sing!

Till echoes ring:

America! America!

We greet thee far, we greet thee near,
Land to our hearts forever dear.
Be ever pure thy banner's light,
Thy star of hope be ever bright;
True liberty thy watchword high,
Thy honor sacred as the sky!

Swing out the bars!

Flash out the stars!

The emblem of the brave and free,
Our flag, our flag on land and sea!

CHRISTMAS SONGS

I

WHY do bells for Christmas ring?
Why do little children sing?

Once a lovely, shining star,
Seen by shepherds from afar,
Gently moved, until its light
Made a manger's cradle bright.

There a darling baby lay,
Pillowed soft upon the hay,
And his mother sang and smiled:
"This is Christ, the holy child."

So the bells for Christmas ring,
So the little children sing.

II

BENDING o'er a cradle low
Sang a mother long ago:
"This is Christ, the holy child."
Shepherds, wise men, angels smiled.
"What care I for palace walls!
What care I for kingly halls!
In my arms the King of Kings
Listens while the angel sings:
'Peace on earth, good will for aye'
Hail the blesséd Christmas Day!"

Echoing down the ages long
Comes the herald angel's song;
Still do shepherds heed the voice,
Wise men listen and rejoice;
While to greet the King of Kings
Earth her noblest offering brings;
And the blesséd Christ is born
In each heart on Christmas morn.
Sing, then, peace, good will for aye,
Hail the blesséd Christmas Day!

III

8 A SHINING star
Came from afar
Upon a snowy morn.
An angel near
Sang, "Do not fear!
Behold! a child is born!"

Sweet Christmas then
Was given to men
To bless the winter wild.
Since in a stall
The Lord of All
Became a little child.

All hail that morn
When Christ was born!
Wreath holly, palm, and bay!
Let children sing,
Let carols ring,
To bless our Christmas Day.

IV

HARK! the bells!
Hear the bells!
Tell me why the bells are ringing,
Tell me why are children singing?

Ages ago shone a beautiful star
Over the hills of Judea afar.
Shepherds were watching the wonderful sight,
Following gladly the heavenly light,
So the star led them until it looked down
Over the hills of Bethlehem Town.
There in a manger a little child lay,—
Mother close holding its pillow of hay,
Singing and smiling: "This baby of mine
Weareth the halo of kingdom divine."

So the Christmas bells are ringing,
So are children carols singing
Hark! the bells!
Hear the bells!

V

LONG, long ago
Over the snow
Shepherds for gladness were singing.
Stars looking down
On Bethlehem town
Saw gifts the wise men were bringing.

Ah, little child!
Well that they smiled
When to the world you were given.
Christmas came then—
Joy, joy to men!
Lifting our earth up to heaven.

VI

THERE'S a thrill in the air,
There's a song in the heart;
The snow has a share,
The sunshine a part.
'Tis the day of the year
When to children is given
A glad word of cheer,
Linking earth unto heaven.

For this is the day that Christ was born.
Sing, little children, 'tis Christmas morn!

'Twas a star in the sky
That hung over a hill—
The Bethlehem signal
Of peace and goodwill.
They were wise men who heard
As the children now hear,
The angel's sweet message:
"Rise! Be of good cheer!"

For this is the day that Christ was born.
Sing, little children, 'tis Christmas morn!

VII

BELLS are ringing,
Children singing,
Wise men bringing
 Treasures rare.
Shepherds gazing,
Father praising,
Mother raising
 Grateful prayer.

Bless the dawning
Of that morning;
Angels warning
 Christ was born,
History's pages,
Bearded sages,
Hail through ages
 Christmas morn!

VIII

A MESSAGE comes on wings of light
To pierce the darkness of the night.
High in the heavens a shining star
Greets the angelic host afar.
 The glad bells ring,
 The angels sing,
This is the birthday of a king.

Oh, hear the song! ye listeners, hear!
Ye watchers, see the star appear!

Ye echoes, far the words repeat
While angel crowns lie at his feet!
O sweet bells, ring!
O glad hearts, sing!
This is the birthday of a king.

IX

BELLS are ringing in the air,
Holly branches everywhere;
Soon will come the reindeer sleigh,
Santa Klaus will drive this way.

Will he bring us stable fine,
Horses standing in a line,
Grocery store and horns and drums?
I can't wait until he comes!

Stocking hanging on the chair—
Will he surely see it there?
Fill it full of candy sweet,
Fruit and nuts for us to eat?

Billy says, he'll have a ball;
Sleds and skates he'll bring for all.
Oh, what fun it is to play
On the merry Christmas Day!

X

O'ER Bethlehem town
 A star looked down
 When shepherds watched by night,
 And wise men gazed
 With hearts amazed
 To see the wondrous sight.

“Belovéd star,
 We follow far”
 They said. An angel voice
 Upon the air
 Rang full and clear ;
 “Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice!”

A child is born!
 'Tis Christmas morn!
 Then sing, dear children, sing!
 For history's page
 In every age
 Will hail this child a king.

XI

BEAUTIFUL bells
 Merrily ring,
 Children are hailing
 Jesus their King.
 Shepherds came singing
 Led by a star ;
 Wise men came bringing
 Gifts from afar.

There in a manger
Jesus was born.
Sing then dear children,
Sweet Christmas morn.
Mistletoe bring we,
Bright holly red,
Green of the pine tree
Wreathe for his head.
Christmas is dawning,
Ring! joy bells, ring!
Birthday of Jesus!
Crown him our King!

XII

SING, little children, joyfully sing!
Leaves of green holly, red berries bring!
This is the gladdest of all life's glad days;
Lift up your voices, sing songs of praise!

Long ago, watching on Judea's hill,
Stars brightly shining, breezes all still,
Shepherds, while guarding their flocks in the night,
Heard the sweet voices of angels of light:
"Fear not, oh, fear not! Glad tidings we bring;
In holy manger there lieth a King.

Halo of glory over him shed,
Angels are guarding his low cradle bed.
Hasten, ye shepherds, the good news to tell;
Lift flaming torches, ring every bell!
Wise men are kneeling on carpet of hay,
Bringing their gifts, all encircled with bay—

Myrrh and frankincense, gold from the mine;
Their worship has made for Lord Jesus a shrine.

So the fair Christ Child in Judea born
Makes ever holy the glad Christmas morn.
Bring then the holly, red berries bring!
Sing, little children! joyfully sing!

XIII

RING bells, oh, ring!
Sing, children, sing!
This is the day when far away
O'er Bethlehem a star divine
Came above happy hills to shine,—
For then the holy child was born—
'Twas Christmas morn, 'twas Christmas morn!
So ring, bells, ring!
Sing, children, sing!

XIV

OH, sweetest month of all the year
When shepherds saw a star appear,
And in Judea one winter morn
Knew by that token Christ was born.

They saw, in manger-cradle laid,
A smiling child whose mother prayed.
The wise men brought their gifts to her,—
Gold and frankincense, fragrant myrrh,—

All for the darling Holy Child
Who lay where bins with grain were piled,—
Where cattle watched, meek, unafraid,
The halo o'er the baby head,
And angel voices sang that morn:
"Hail! hail! thrice hail! for Christ is born!"

XV

HAIL to the birthday of Jesus the King!
Sing, little children, joyfully sing!

Long ago watching their flocks in the night,
Wondering shepherds beheld a new light—
High in the glorious heavens afar,
Signal of joy, shone a beautiful star;
Gazed they enraptured, by hope and fear torn,
Till angel voices sang: Hail! Christ is born!

Far from the eastward the three wise men came,
Led, as the prophets foretold, by a flame.
In the low manger, fair, undefiled,
They found the father, the mother, the child,
And offered their gifts wreathed with holly and bay,
Hailing with gladness the first Christmas Day.

So when each new year its circle has told,
We hear repeated the story of old:
Father-love, mother-love, love of the child,
In the heart's manger find place undefiled:
For today here, not less than of old,
The beautiful Bethlehem story is told,
And in each heart on the glad Christmas morn
The heavenly love of the Christ child is born.

So, little children, joyfully sing—
Hail the glad birthday of Jesus the King!

CHRISTMAS CHOICE

A LITTLE tree on the mountain grew,
Slender and straight and tall;
The winter wind through the forest blew
And the oak tree shivered through and through,
Till its leaves to the ground did fall.

But a sturdy pine was the little tree,
And he clung to his coat of green.
"I will keep it in spite of the wind," said he,
"I will not be a slave in the forest free."
And the coat showed a silver sheen.

The little tree was so brave and bold
That the children cried: "Only see
He is silver and green in spite of the cold,
And his arms our treasures shall safely hold,
For this is our Christmas tree!"

BABY PINE TREE

THOU baby pine tree, from the wood
Where thou wert born in solitude
Too deep for sound to enter in
Of cities' ceaseless whirl and din,
What think'st thou, ruthless snatched away
From all that joyful made thy day?
Thou standest shivering here, bereft—
No spreading roots, no strong base left,
Cut off from sap's perennial flow
And with thy kindred lying low.
Despite thy startled, quivering spines,
Pallid in blue and silver lines,
A giant lifts thee from the street
With forest brothers to compete;
My lady chooses: "This shall be
The children's little Christmas tree."
Poor shrinking baby pine, thy joy
Of freedom lost, thyself a toy!
Who, who will see, when tinsel-decked
And with all rainbow-colors flecked,
With candles burning high and higher,
As if a tree were kin to fire—
Who then will see what might have been—
The baby pine a king in green,
And glorious like a monarch crowned
With wealth of cones from sky to ground!
Ah, never now! Thou knowest well
The woodman's axe rang out thy knell;
The glory of a cycle's power
Is sacrificed to one short hour
When children, with no thought for thee,
Will dance around their Christmas tree.

CHRISTMAS TREE

A LITTLE tree came down from the wood
And on a block in a parlor stood.
What he was there for he did not know,
He sighed for the mountain where he could grow;
He wanted to feel the cool winds blow—
To catch the flakes of the falling snow—
To spread his limbs to the bright blue sky—
And laugh with the squirrels as they ran by.

But he had to stand in the parlor there,
Crowded by curtain and rocking chair;
He had to wait while his limbs were hung
With gaudy balls upon tinsel strung,
And his twigs were forced, in spite of their pricks,
To hold a myriad candlesticks.
When the candles were lighted, red, yellow and blue,
He thought that their blazing would burn him through.

Then with laughter and frolic the children came—
With dance and carol and merry game—
For mid lights and tinsel they did not see
The broken heart of the little tree.

CRADLE SONGS

I

FOR LYDIA

My darling, when you came to me
'Twas on a winter day;
The winds were wild, my little child,
And blew the ships away.
With close-set sails they rode the sea
And dipped its stormy foam;
No thought I gave to wind or wave
With you, my child, at home.
Ah, lullaby, sweet lullaby,
Sleep while I sing your lullaby!

The winds across the prairie flew
And swept the surging lake;
But calm and new the world for you
To life but just awake.
You cared not if the skies were blue,
Nor felt cold winter's dart,
For warm and true our love for you
Made summer in your heart.
Ah, lullaby, sweet lullaby,
Sleep while I sing your lullaby!

II

FOR TOM JUNIOR

SHADES of night are gently falling,
Crescent moon hangs low ;
Baby lambs hear shepherd calling,
Homeward now they go.
So, my darling, leave your playing,
Come to Mother's care ;
Nature's voice is softly saying
Night falls everywhere.
Lullaby, oh, lullaby,
Sweetly sleep to lullaby.

Birds have ceased their happy singing,
Crickets chirp goodnight,
Vesper bells are softly ringing
Farewell to the light.
Angel guards their watch are holding,
Love can ne'er depart ;
Song and prayer alike enfolding
Fill the loving heart.
Lullaby, oh, lullaby,
Sweetly sleep to lullaby.

III

FOR EMILY

SEE, baby, see, there's a great gold ball
Hung on the sky in the west!
Hear, baby, hear, how they rise and fall,
Waves on the ocean's breast!
Call, baby, call o'er the white-capped sea!
Gulls fly the lower to answer thee.

See, baby, see, all the clouds are red!
Edges are trimmed with gold;
Hear, baby, hear from the ocean's bed
Riseth the mermaid cold!
Call, baby, call while she combeth her hair!
"Lullaby," answers she, "Sleep, my Fair!"

See, baby, see, swiftly fadeth the day!
Crimson and gold are lost;
Hear, baby, hear where the waters play
Under a silver frost!
Call, baby, call! and the ray's last light
Softly will answer, "Goodnight, goodnight!"

IV

FOR SARAH'S LYDIA

ROCKABYE, baby, see the leaves grow,
Tiny buds laugh as they peep through the snow;
Sleep, darling baby, hear the birds sing;
Rockabye, baby, this is bright Spring.

Rockabye, baby, see the young trees,
Hear buzzing locusts and hear humming bees;
Sleep, darling baby, wind's in the bough;
Rockabye, baby, Summertime now.

Rockabye, baby, see the moon rise,
Golden and big, in the far eastern skies;
Sleep, darling baby, harvest is near;
Rockabye, baby, Autumn is here.

Rockabye, baby, hear the wind blow
Over the hilltops, bringing the snow.
Sleep, darling baby, warm in your home;
Rockabye, baby, Winter has come.

V

FOR MARY JUNIOR

SLEEP, baby darling, nor ever fear,
Father is coming, Mother is here.
Birdies are sleeping, head under wing,
So, darling baby, sleep while I sing!

Little lambs cuddled safe from the cold;
Flower petals lying fold upon fold;
Over the prairie, mountain, and sea,
Night draws her curtain, baby, for thee.

Sleep, my own darling, in your low bed,
God's love a halo over your head;
Stars brightly shining, golden watch keep;
Angels are with thee; sleep, baby, sleep!

VI

FOR ELEANOR

Oh, hush thee, dear! The darkness soon
Will light the little stars;
For see! the golden harvest moon
Has climbed the pasture bars.
So rest thee, while the quiet sky
Bends low to hear thy lullaby.

Oh, hush thee, dear! The birdies sleep,
Head hidden under wing;
The fireflies o'er the meadow keep
Their vigils as I sing;
So sleep while harvest breezes sigh
Thy low and gentle lullaby.

Oh, hush thee, dear! The quiet night
Draws close her shadowy veil.
Sleep till Aurora swings her light
And all the stars grow pale.
Fair angels watch thee from the sky
And guard thy slumbers. Lullaby,
La lullaby, la lullaby,
So sleep, my darling, lullaby.

VII

FOR ALICE

CRESCENT new moon in the white clouds afloat,
Baby shall rock in her fair golden boat,
She shall be fisher-maid up in the sky,
Long golden rod will bend down by and bye,
Moonbeam will bring her a line from afar,
Then she can bait it with evening's bright star.

Throw in the sky-sea the long silver line,
It will catch dreams for this baby of mine.
Rockabye, rock in the beautiful boat,
Crescent moon dipping on cloud-wave afloat.
Lullaby, lullaby, moonbeam and star
Find a sweet dream in the sky-sea afar;
Bring it to baby, my darling, to keep.
Lullaby, lullaby, sleep, sweetly sleep.

VIII

FOR ELIZABETH

BABY, my darling, oh, sleep!
Mother her vigil will keep.
 Calling the moon,
 "Lady, come soon,
Sing the star-babies to sleep!"
 Lullaby! Lullaby!

Sailing far out on the sea,
Father is thinking of thee;
 Dreams that his boat,
 Cradle afloat,
Rocks while I'm singing to thee.
 Lullaby! Lullaby!

What though the stormy winds blow,
Winding the white sheets of snow!
 Here thou art warm,
 Safe from all harm,
Mother still singing, Bye low.
 Lullaby! Lullaby!

IX

FOR CYNTHIA

HUSH thee, my baby, thy cradle's a boat,
Out on the ocean it lightly doth float.
Waves gently rock thee and winds sing thy song,
Rockabye, rockabye, floating along.

Hush thee, my baby, the waves are at play,
Tossing the sunbeams through ringlets of spray,—
Catching the white clouds from blue of the sky;
Rockabye baby, bye baby, bye-bye.

Hush thee, my baby, the waves will all sleep
When the moon rises to watch o'er the deep;
Angel eyes then will look down from the sky
Watching thee, baby, oh, rockabye-bye.

DOLL'S CRADLE SONG

LAY your head upon my arm,
Shut your eyes, my dear ;
I will guard you from all harm
While you're sleeping here.
Stop your dancing, yellow curl,
Sleep, my little dolly girl ;
Lullaby, lullaby, lullaby.

Now forget about your play,
Dreams are waiting near ;
Do not let them go away—
Dream, my dolly dear.
Stop your dancing, yellow curl,
Sleep, my little dolly girl ;
Lullaby, lullaby, lullaby.

FLOWER'S CRADLE SONG

COME my little baby flower,
Bye low—bye low.
'Tis the quiet twilight hour,
Bye low—bye low.
Earth her blessing now receives,
Sleep her blanket gently weaves,
Close your petals, fold your leaves—
Bye low—bye low.

Now the dew falls sweet and damp,
Bye low—bye low.
And the firefly lights her lamp,
Bye low—bye low.
Here she comes, and when she peeps
She must find that baby sleeps,
While a fairy perfume steeps—
Bye low—bye low.

Baby, shut your golden eyes,
Bye low—bye low.
Sleep till petals pink arise,
Bye low—bye low.
While the winds your playroom sweep
Let the little firefly peep;
She will find you fast asleep—
Bye low—bye low.

BIRDS' CRADLE SONG

SLEEP, baby birdies in the nest
Beneath your mother's downy breast;
No little child has bed so soft
As your wee cradle, hung aloft
Upon a maple's branching green—
Its canopy a leafy screen.
With thistle-down its curves are lined,
With lace of moss its edges twined,
Matching the branches' grayest part,
Anchored by skill unknown to art,
As strong as iron, as light as air,
Entrusted to the breeze's care.
Thus to and fro your cradle swings
And holds your tiny, folded wings.
So sleep, dear birdies, in your nest,
Beneath your mother's downy breast.

PINE TREE'S CRADLE SONG

SLEEP, my darling little tree,
Play no longer wild and free.
Gently draw your sheaths of brown,
Droop your green spines softly down.
Cradled in the forest deep,
Sleep, my baby pine tree, sleep.

Darling baby, you will be
Tall some day like Mother tree,
And cones hang their curls of brown
From your trunk to emerald crown.
Sleep, my baby, sleep and grow.
Rockabye—bye-low—bye-low.

Little baby, do not fear,
Father Pine is standing near;
Hear the breezes playing soft
On the harp he holds aloft;
Darling, 'tis your lullaby—
Sleep my pine tree, baby bye.

GOODBYE OLD YEAR

THE Christmas Day came dressed in green,
The New Year dressed in white;
The blue lake smiled upon them both
To match the sun's delight.
The birds flew swift across the sky:
"Come, New Year! Old Year, go!"
We say goodbye to flush of green,
And hail the drifts of snow.
We greet you both with smile and sigh—
When New Years come Old Years must fly;
And so, Old Year, goodbye, goodbye!

SUNDOWN

MISTER Sun, good-night, we say,
From your face we turn away;
Go where other children wait
Till you swing your golden gate.

Now your sunset banners fly
In our shining western sky;
Clouds are dressed in robes of gold,
Colors gleam from every fold.

Pretty soon we'll go to bed,
Stars will shine then overhead,
Lady moon will give us light,
So we say, dear Sun, good-night.

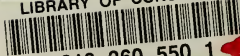
GOODNIGHT

GOODNIGHT! goodnight! the little lambs are sleeping,
The birds have hid their heads 'neath downy wings.
Goodnight! goodnight! the stars their watch are keep-
ing,
Night from afar her veil of twilight brings.

The flowers have closed their petals pink and shining,
No breath of wind's astir, the leaves are still,
The clouds show in their rifts a silver lining,
The moon looks down on quiet vale and hill.

Close your bright eyes, my darlings, softly sleeping,
Sweet dreams enfold you and no fear affright;
The angels hold you in their tender keeping,
And so God bless you, dears, goodnight—goodnight!

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