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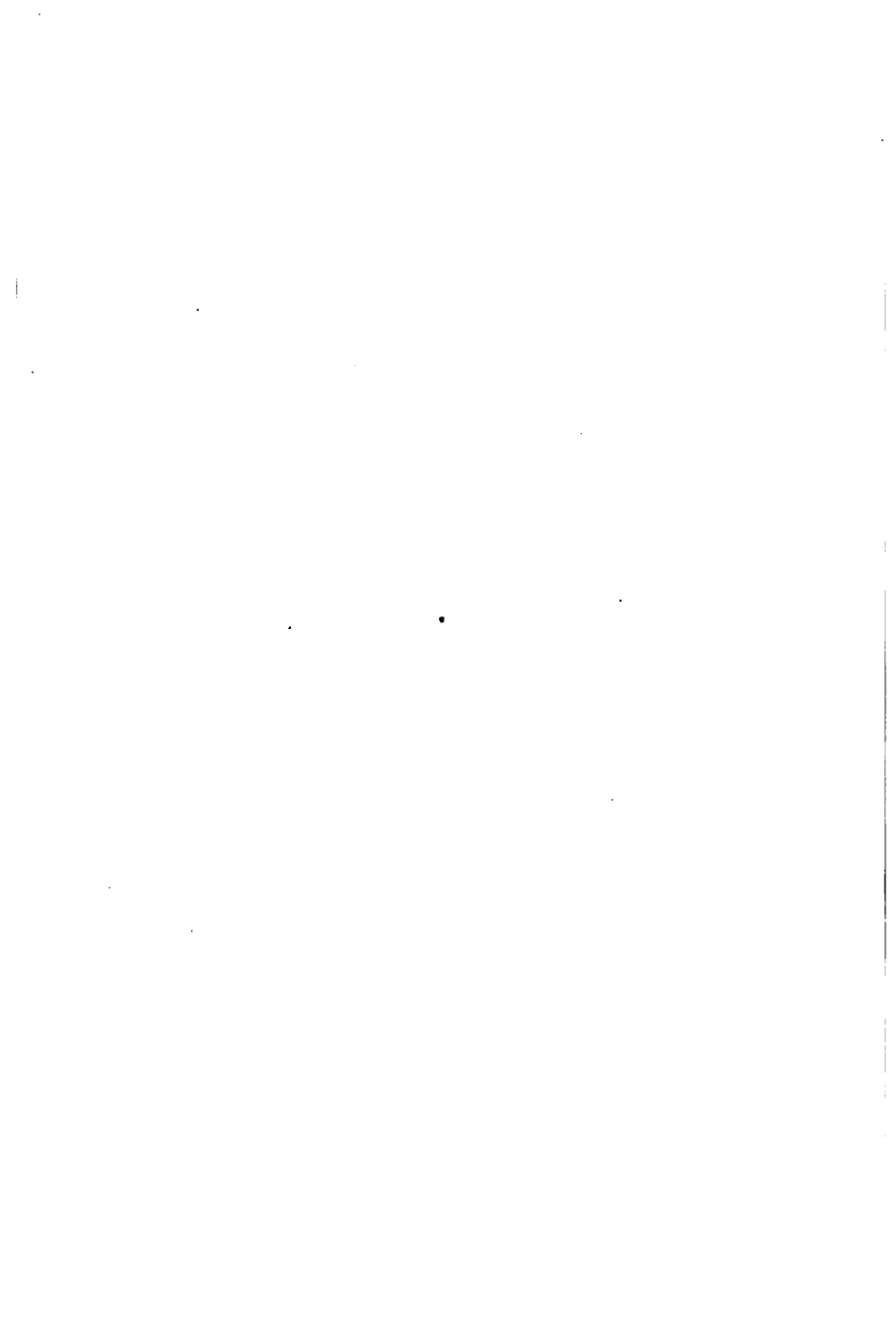
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ECLECTIC SCHOOL READINGS

PROSE AND VERSE
FOR
CHILDREN



NEW YORK · CINCINNATI · CHICAGO
AMERICAN · BOOK · COMPANY

ECLECTIC SCHOOL READINGS

PROSE AND VERSE
FOR CHILDREN

BY
KATHARINE PYLE

WITH PICTURES BY THE AUTHOR

NEW YORK ❖ CINCINNATI ❖ CHICAGO
AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY

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June 12, 1929

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KATHARINE PYLE

PROSE AND VERSE—PYLE

W. P. 2

PREFACE.

ANY one who has been out of touch with schools for several years, and who casually picks up a child's reader of to-day, can hardly help being impressed by the difference between the present schoolbooks and those of a generation ago. Far more attention is now paid to awakening the child's interest. Even the reading books for the smaller children are no longer a dull array of words—a necessary vocabulary that must be mastered before the learner can advance to things of genuine interest or pleasure.

Imagination is no longer shut out by the click of the schoolroom latch, but is now considered a valuable factor in leading a child on and up to those realities of life which are so much higher and more beautiful than any mere creation of the imagination can be.

It is this consideration that has induced the author of this little volume to collect in book form the following tales and verses, some of them imaginative almost to the verge of the fantastic. Not all are of this character, however. They deal as well with the little incidents of child life, or tell of the doings and fates of animals that have come under the author's notice.

But even in tales the most imaginative or fantastic there

are lessons that may be instilled into a child's mind besides the knowledge of spelling or the meaning of words.

The vocabulary used in this collection is somewhat larger than that usually introduced in schoolbooks of the grade for which this volume is intended, but if there is enough interest in the stories and verses to hold the child's attention and make him wish to read on, this will hardly be esteemed a drawback.

The greater number of these tales and rhymes have already appeared in print. For the permission to republish them thanks are due to the Century Company, to Messrs. Harper & Brothers, and to the editors of "Vogue," the "Outlook," and the "Independent."

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SEPTEMBER.

FAREWELL, farewell to summer time,
The long, bright holiday.
The children have their lessons now,
And cannot always play.

The goldenrod is in the fields,
The cardinal flower burns bright ;
The sun is down by six o'clock,
And then it soon is night.

But in the pleasant afternoons,
When lessons all are said,
There still are left some hours or so
Before 'tis time for bed.

The children shout ; their cheeks are red ;
They jump about and run.
The sweetest hours for play are those
When work has been well done.

THE KEY TO THE BOX.

"WHAT would you do," said the little key
To the teakwood box, "except for me?"

The teakwood box gave a gentle creak
To the little key, but it did not speak.

"I believe," said the key, "that I will hide
In the crack down by the chimney side,

"Just so this proud old box may see
How little it's worth except for me."

It was long, long afterward, in a crack
They found the key, and they brought it back;

And it thought, as it chuckled and laughed to itself,
"Now I'll be good to the box on the shelf."

But the little key stopped with a shiver and shock,
For there was a bright new key in the lock;

And the old box said, "I am sorry, you see,
But the place is filled, my poor little key."



THE NOAH'S ARK.

THE Noah's Ark's a pleasant place,
With windows on each side;
And half the painted wooden roof
Is hinged, and opens wide.

And often Noah and his wife,
In dresses green and blue,
Take out their animals to walk
In rows of two and two.

Now Noah was a cheerful man;
He always wore a smile:
But Mrs. Noah used to fret
And worry all the while.

Sometimes she'd fret because the
wolf
Was looking thin and brown,
Or else because the elephant
So often tumbled down.



And when she'd reached the ark at last,
She'd roll and scratch about
To count the animals, for fear
Some might have been left out.

Good Mr. Noah often said,
"Don't worry so, my dear,
Or very soon your pretty paint
Will all wear off, I fear."

"Oh, dear!" she'd cry, "this cow is scratched!
The sheep is on its head!"
And so she'd fret in spite of all
That Mr. Noah said.

And so poor Mrs. Noah's paint
Began to scratch and fade,
While Mr. Noah still looked fresh
As when he first was made.

HOW THE SHOES WENT TO THE PICNIC.

JOHNNY BROWN and Sam Johnson had been out in the country catching fish for Johnny's aquarium.

As they came home they were very happy, for they had had great luck at their fishing. In the pail that Johnny carried were several minnows, three small catfish, and a sunfish. Best of all, there was a tiny, tiny water turtle, no larger than a silver twenty-five cent piece.

Every now and then the boys stopped and took off the cover of the pail to look at their prizes. Then the fish darted about wildly, bumping their noses against the shiny tin sides of the pail.

The stream where the boys had gone fishing was about two miles out in the country. It had not seemed far going to it, but it was harder coming back with the pail full of water and fish. Besides, they had tramped up and down through the weeds, and clambered from rock to rock, till they were tired out.

There was quite a wide creek that the boys had to cross before they reached the town.

"Let's not go round by the bridge; it's so much farther," said Sam. "We can cross over the dam."

"All right," said Johnny, "if the water isn't going over it. Papa said I wasn't to cross the dam unless it was dry."

This dam was built across the creek almost opposite to the street where the Browns and the Johnsons lived, and so it was a much shorter way for the boys. When the creek was low it was very easy to cross there, stepping from rock to rock.

So now, instead of following the road, the two little boys cut across the fields and down the wooded bank to the dam. But when they arrived there they found that the water was running over it in narrow, shallow waterfalls.

"Oh, pshaw! We'll have to go round, after all," said Johnny.

"No, we won't; I'll tell you what we'll do: we'll take off our shoes and stockings, and then we can wade," said Sam.

Johnny still hesitated. He was afraid his mother would

scold him. Sam, however, was sure that Mr. Brown had only been afraid Johnny would spoil his shoes, and that if they went barefoot it would be all right.

Johnny did not want to go round by the bridge any more than Sam did, and presently he agreed to Sam's plan.



The two little boys sat down, and, unlacing their shoes, took them off. The stockings they stuffed into their pockets, but they carried their shoes and the pail and fishing net in their hands as they started across the dam.

All went well till they were halfway over. Then Johnny stepped on a loose stone, it turned with

him, and as he threw up his arm to save himself his shoes flew from his hand over the dam and into the water below.

"Oh, my shoes! my shoes!" shrieked Johnny, dropping the pail, and scrambling across the dam and down to the bank of the creek.

"What's the matter?" asked Sam, who had been walking ahead and had not seen the accident.

"Oh, I dropped my shoes over!" cried Johnny.

The two boys clambered out as far as they could on the rocks below the dam, and hunted everywhere for the shoes; but they could not find them. Perhaps they had

drifted a little way, or had gone farther than Johnny thought.

Johnny cried, the tears rolling down his round, freckled cheeks. "I'm afraid Mamma'll be awfully mad," he said. "They were my best shoes, too."

He stopped crying after a time, and wiped his eyes on a very grimy handkerchief. Then he and Sam went home, two very sad little boys, Johnny paddling along in his bare feet.

Mrs. Brown did not punish Johnny. She felt sorry for him, though she was displeased at first.

She said, however, that he would have to wear his old shoes to the school picnic the next day, as it wasn't convenient to buy him a new pair just then.

The shoes that were lost went to the picnic, however, though Johnny never knew it.

Just below the dam, on the other side of the creek, was a row of little frame shanties where poor people lived. The petunias and wandering Jews in their front yards were always dusty from passing wagons.

In one of these houses lived Mrs. Malloy and her two children, Tim and Katie.

Mrs. Malloy was a widow, and she did washing and ironing, and sometimes went out for a day's work, to earn money to support herself and her children. She was very poor.

Mrs. Malloy did Mrs. Brown's washing, and Johnny's mother often gave her old jackets or suits of Johnny's for Tim to wear.

The two little boys went to the same school, and it seemed very funny to Johnny to see Tim coming into the

schoolroom sometimes dressed in the suits that he himself had worn.

The day that Johnny and Sammy went out fishing, Tim was feeling very sad. The next day would be the day for the school picnic. All the boys were going except Tim, and he couldn't go because his shoes were entirely worn out.

It was all right to run about the country in his bare feet, but he couldn't go to the picnic that way.

"I wish I had some shoes," he said sadly, as he sat on the kitchen step rubbing the ears of his dog Rover.

"I'd ask Mrs. Johnson for a pair if only she hadn't just given me that dress to make over for Katie. Like as not she has some old ones of Johnny's, but I don't like to ask her for them just now."

"Well," said Tim, "all the boys are going to the picnic; I wish I was going, too;" and a tear rolled down his cheek and dropped on Rover's rough head.

Mrs. Malloy looked very sober. "Get out your shoes, Tim," she said, "and we'll look at them again. Maybe we can fix them so you can go."

But when they looked at the shoes, they were so worn out that there was nothing to be done. They weren't worth enough to be picked out of an ash barrel.

"Maybe I can get you a pair next month," said Mrs. Malloy.

"Yes; but that'll be too late for the picnic," sniffed Tim.

"Well, never mind; you're too big a boy to fret and cry over that. Now take your little sister out and play with her, for I've got this extra wash, and she keeps getting under my feet every minute."

So Tim took his little sister out for a walk. They went down to the edge of the creek, which was their favorite playing place.

Here they had built a little wall from rock to rock with pebbles and moss and roots of grass. In the pool thus made they had several snails; and Tim used to catch fish and put in it, but the fish always got away.

When they went down there that day they found that someone had broken down the walls, and so they set about building them up again.



While they were at work

Tim said: "There's something funny out near that rock. You wait here, Katie; I want to see what it is."

He rolled up his trousers, and waded out to where the black thing was lying wedged in between two rocks.

When he came nearer he saw that it was a shoe. He picked it up, and as he did so the mate to it was dragged up out of the water. Johnny had tied the strings together so as to carry them more easily.

"Oh, Katie, Katie!" screamed Tim, hurrying back to the bank so fast that he slipped and almost fell into the water. "It's a pair of shoes!"

The two children rushed home in wild excitement, Tim almost crying with joy. "Oh, Mother, see what I found!" he cried. "And I do believe they'll fit me!"

Mrs. Malloy, however, was not so eager. "Well, to

think of that, now!" she said. "Some of the children up above here must have lost them. You put on your cap, Tim, and run up and ask about it. I've no doubt some mother is worrying enough over it."

"But can't I keep them, Mother?" asked Tim, almost crying with disappointment. "They're mine if I found them."

"Of course they are not yours," said Mrs. Malloy, "if you can find who lost them."

Tim felt very sad as he put on his hat and went out to make inquiries. But his heart rose as at one house after another they said that they knew nothing about them.

When he came back he was capering with joy.

"They don't belong to anybody, so *now* I can have them, can't I, Mother?" he shouted.

"Yes, you can keep them now," answered his mother, almost as happy over it as Tim.

She had been drying the shoes and rubbing them with grease and softening them, and when she finished they were almost as good as new.

Tim wore them to the picnic the next day. He told several of the boys how he had found them, but Johnny, who came late, happened to be one of those who didn't hear of it.

Johnny had on his old shoes, and he felt a little ashamed of them whenever he thought about them, which wasn't often; but Tim felt very proud, and he never had had so fine a time at a picnic as he had at that one.



OCTOBER.

WE took a box of luncheon,
One fine October day,
And in the windy country
We wandered far away.

We built a fire of brushwood
Beneath the sheltering hill;
Among the rustling cornshocks
The wind was never still.

We played that we were gypsies,
Who never sleep in beds,
But lie beside their fires
With stars above their heads.

We talked about the springtime,
When kites are out once more;
We talked about the summer,
And playing on the shore;

We talked about the winter,
With ice and snow and sleighs:
But best of all seemed autumn,
With windy, gypsy days.

THE SAD TALE OF A MOUSE.

ONE time when my mamma was ill
And could not move about,
A mouse peeped from the closet door,
And then came stealing out.



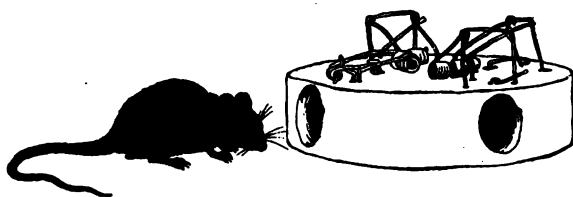
Mamma said not to frighten it,
And so it came next day,
And ate the crumbs she dropped
for it
In such a cunning way!

That little mouse it grew as tame,
As tame as it could be ;
'Twould sit and hold the crumbs, and eat
Out where we all could see.

Mamma said it was company
When she was there alone,
And that it was the cutest mouse
That she had ever known.

At last Mamma was well again,
And came downstairs once more ;
But still she fed the little mouse
Just as she had before.

And then I did a dreadful thing—
I'm sure I don't know why :
I set a trap to catch that mouse
When nobody was by.



I'd scarcely closed the closet door
Before I heard a snap.
I was afraid to go and look
At what was in the trap.

At last I looked. The mouse was there.
"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" I said;
And when I touched its little tail
I found that it was dead.

I never told a single soul;
I carried it away.
I felt so very sad and strange
I did not want to play.

But after that, for quite a while,
Mamma so often said,
"Where can our little mouse have gone?
I fear it must be dead!"

But oh, I'd give my toys and all
To have that little mouse
Alive, the way it used to be,
And running round the house.

THE TOYS TALK OF THE WORLD.

"I SHOULD like," said the vase from the china store,
"To have seen the world a little more.

"When they brought me here I was wrapped up tight,
But they say it is really a lovely sight."

"Yes," said a little plaster bird;
"That is exactly what I have heard;

“ There are thousands of trees, and oh, what a sight
It must be when the candles are all alight!”

The fat top rolled on his other side.

“ It is not in the least like that,” he cried.

“ Except myself and the kite and ball,
None of you know of the world at all.

“ There are houses and pavements hard and red,
And everything spins around,” he said ;

“ Sometimes it goes slowly, and sometimes fast,
And often it stops with a bump at last.”

The wooden donkey nodded his head ;

“ I had heard the world was like that,” he said.

The kite and the ball exchanged a smile,
But they did not speak ; it was not worth while.

SOMEBODY.

THERE was always a great hubbub and stir when the Bruce children were getting ready for school. There were six of them, and slates had to be cleaned off, books strapped together, and luncheons put up. After they had gone, the house seemed very quiet with only Elsie and Mother, and sometimes Aunt Jessie, in it.

Elsie was six years old, but she was not strong. The

doctor said it would be better for her not to go to school for a year or so.

She had a family of dolls and a great many picture books and games, but she was often lonely.

She used to play "pretend" a great deal. She pretended keeping house, and going to school, and a great many things. But the thing she pretended oftenest was that if she did not do certain things a witch would catch her.

She would say to herself, "If I don't stick this pin in the cushion the witch will catch me," and then she would hurry and put it in the cushion. Or, "If I don't step on that green square in the carpet the witch will catch me."

Often she played this way until she grew so frightened she would race over the house crying, "Mamma, Mamma, where are you?" and when she found her mother she would stay close by her side to be safe from the witch.

But after a while Elsie began to pretend it was something else instead of the witch that would catch her.

When the children were getting ready for school they would often say, "Somebody has"—done this or that: "Somebody has upset my satchel," or, "Somebody has torn my book;" and once when dog Towser came in with his head cut and bloody they said, "Somebody has hit him with a stone."

Elsie did not quite understand, and she began to feel as if Somebody were a very terrible person, more wicked even than the witch. So now, instead of pretending that the witch would catch her, she said, "Somebody will catch me."

The little girl slept in the hall bedroom next to her

mamma. One night, while her mother was undressing her, her sister Annie rushed in, looking very much frightened, and cried out, half sobbing: "Oh, Mamma, please come! I am sure somebody is on the roof outside my window."

"Oh, no," said her mamma; "I don't think any one can be there; but I will come and see."

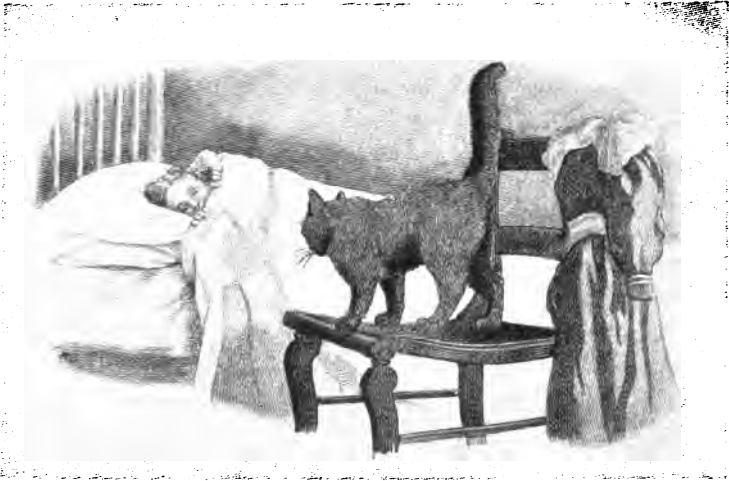
As Elsie was partly undressed, her mother put her down by the register and left her there, going out with Annie, and closing the door behind her.

Now Elsie felt sure that *Somebody* was trying to get her. She thought: "Perhaps he is in the house right now. Perhaps he is coming along the hall. In a minute perhaps he will turn the knob and come in!" She held her breath and listened. She grew so frightened that when her mamma came back the little girl was trembling all over.

Her mamma was worried. She thought the child had caught cold, and gave her some aconite. "There was no one there," said her mamma; "I was sure there was not." But Elsie did not feel sure.

It was the very next night that the little girl was wakened from a sound sleep by a soft thump on the floor. She turned over in bed and listened. Something was moving softly about the room. It rustled her clothes and knocked over a shoe. What could it be? It must—oh, it must be *Somebody*!

Elsie was so frightened she could hardly breathe. Suddenly something gave a jump, and she saw two great round yellow eyes staring at her from the chair beside the bed. It was really only the cat, but Elsie never thought



of that; she only thought of Somebody. She dived under the covers, and lay there trembling in the blackness until, after a long time, she fell asleep.

It was after she was asleep that Aunt Jessie, who was paying them a visit, came stealing into the little girl's room for something; but Elsie did not waken.

When she opened her eyes it was morning, and her brothers and sisters were talking and laughing in the room beyond. They always had a merry time when Aunt Jessie was with them, and by the time breakfast was over Elsie had forgotten all about her fright.

That afternoon Aunt Jessie and Mamma took her out shopping with them.

As they walked home it was getting dark. Mamma looked down at her skirt. "I think somebody must have stepped on my skirt," she said. "It is all muddy."

Then Elsie thought of the night before. She held her mother's hand with both of hers. "Mamma, Mamma," she whispered, "I do think Somebody was in my room last night. I know Somebody was."

"Why, it was I," said Aunt Jessie. "Did you hear me, pussy? I went in very quietly, so as not to waken you."

Elsie could not believe her.

"Oh, no," she cried; "it was Somebody; I know it was Somebody."

Aunt Jessie laughed. "I was that somebody," she said; "but I am sorry if I woke you. I tried to steal about very quietly."

Elsie looked up at Aunt Jessie to see if she were joking, but she was not. It seemed to the little girl as if her aunt's smiling face looked strange and white in the twilight, and her teeth glistened. Elsie thought of the stories her aunt had told of the witch women who had lovely faces, and when you went behind them you saw they were hollow like a dough trough. It was too dreadful to believe that Aunt Jessie, who told them beautiful stories and made them doll dresses, should be Somebody.

That night, when Mamma was putting Elsie to bed, the little girl reached up and drew her mother down to her. "Mamma," she whispered, "it wasn't Aunt Jessie, was it?"

"What wasn't Aunt Jessie?" said the mother.

"It wasn't Aunt Jessie who was in my room last night."

"Why, yes," said Mamma; "I don't think any one else was in here."

Elsie quietly turned over and hid her face in the pillow.

After her mother had turned down the light and gone

out she cried because they said Aunt Jessie was a Somebody.

After that, when Aunt Jessie was telling the children stories, Elsie never asked to sit in her lap, as she used to do. If she was alone and heard her aunt coming she hid or ran away, she was so much afraid of her. Once the little girl hid in the closet among her mother's dresses, and Aunt Jessie came to that very closet for a dressing sack.

Elsie heard her coming nearer and nearer, stopping at the door; the door opened, and then Elsie brushed out past her and ran downstairs as fast as she could go.

It made Aunt Jessie very sorry to think her little Elsie did not love her any more. She didn't know why it was.

After a while the aunt went home. But still the little girl was very unhappy. She pretended about Aunt Jessie and Somebody, and fretted and frightened herself.

At last she fell ill; she had the measles.

Elsie was very sick for a while. When the little girl was getting better a letter came from her grandmamma, saying she had broken her arm, and wanted Mamma to come to her.

The mother and father talked it over in the room next to where Elsie was. "I don't see how I can leave home," said Mamma; "and yet I feel as if I ought to go."

"Yes," said Papa; "I certainly think you ought to go. Elsie will soon be well, and there will always be somebody to take care of her. There is Jessie."

"Oh, if Jessie could come," said the mother, "I should be perfectly willing to leave Elsie in her care—though the child would have nothing to do with her the last time she

was here. I can't understand it. Jessie is always so sweet and loving with the children."

"You may be sure Elsie will be all right with her," said Papa. "We will telegraph to-day for her to come."

So the next day, though Elsie cried, her mother drove away to the cars, and in the afternoon Aunt Jessie came.

Mamma was away a long time, but Elsie never had such a pleasant time before. Aunt Jessie painted paper dolls for her; she played tea party with little crackers and



lemonade; she told Elsie stories, and sang to her. The little girl thought she would never feel afraid of Somebody again, even at night.

And Somebody did so many kind things. Somebody sent her some grapes; Somebody left a bunch of flowers by her when she was asleep; Somebody set her doll house in order.

The night before Mamma came home Aunt Jessie had put Elsie to bed. The little girl took Aunt Jessie's hand and kissed it. "Isn't Somebody good to little girls?" she said. "But, Aunt Jessie, I think you are the bestest Somebody of all."

After Elsie was well again she would sometimes play "pretend," but she did not get frightened any more. Even when she played that the witch was coming she did not feel afraid, for when she began to be frightened she would say to herself: "No, it isn't the witch; it is Somebody; and I wish Somebody *would* come."



NOVEMBER.

Now the cold wind rattles
In the icy sedge,
And the sparrows ruffle
In the leafless hedge.

Past the wood and meadow,
On the frozen pool
All the boys go skating,
When they come from school.

The river, too, was frozen;
I saw it far away,
And wished that I could trace it,
Skating night and day,

Up to where the icebergs,
On the polar sea,
Float, like glittering castles,
Waiting there for me.

TALK ON THE BOOKSHELF.

THE little toy shepherdess looked up
Where the books stood in a row.
"I wish I could hear them talk," she said,
"For it must be fine, I know."

"Oh, yes," the brave tin soldier said;
"They are quiet enough all day;
But I've heard, when the children are all asleep,
They talk in a wondrous way."

And now it was night, and all was still;
Up on the bookcase shelves
The books began to stretch their backs
And talk among themselves.

"I wish," said the smallest book of all,
"You would not crowd me so;
I'm squeezed so tight I scarce can breathe;
It's because I'm small, I know."

"It's not my fault," a fat book said;
"I'm crowded so myself
I cannot stir; you little books
Should be kept off the shelf."

“ My fairy tales,” another said,
“ Kept buzzing so inside
I scarcely slept a wink last night,
Although I tried and tried.”

“ Oh, go to sleep,” said a lesson book.
“ It’s enough to work all day
Without your talking, too, at night;
So go to sleep, I say.”

“ Ah,” the shepherdess sighed, “ now they’re
going to sleep;
How happy their dreams must be!
I wish that I could be a book
And live on the shelf,” said she.

MASTER REDVEST.

IN a little hut on the edge of a deep forest, far beyond the hills, lived a woodcutter and his two children, Thomas and Ellen.

Thomas was a plain, stout lad, who was out chopping wood with his father all day; but Ellen was as good to look at as an apple. In spite of her pretty looks, however, little Ellen had to work as hard as anybody, for the woodcutter was very poor.

All day long, while her father and Thomas were out in the forest, little Ellen was busy about the house. She had the fire to make, the table to set, the bread to bake, the rooms to sweep, and when everything else was done she

knitted stockings to sell to the people in the village beyond the hills.

One bitterly cold morning, when Ellen was alone in the house, she breathed on the window pane and made a round hole in the frost that covered it.

Then she put her eye to the hole and looked out.

The snow was whirling over the hills, and the glass was as cold as ice when her nose touched it. She saw the gray, snowy sky, and the white world outside; and then she saw a half-frozen robin perched on the window sill.

"Oh, the poor bird!" cried Ellen; and opening the door, she ran out through the snow, took the robin in her hands, and brought it in where it was warm.

At first she was afraid the bird was dead; but presently its heart began to beat and it opened its bright, black eyes, and then it fluttered over to the back of a chair, where it perched.

"Oh, what a dear little bird!" cried Ellen, clapping her hands. "I'll keep it for company for me through the long, lonely winter."

That evening, as soon as the woodcutter and Thomas came home, Ellen cried: "See what I found in the snow! Now I will have something to keep me company all the long day."

"A fine, plump bird," said Thomas, greedily. "He'd make a nice tidbit for supper."

"No, no!" cried Ellen. "You shall not touch him! He's mine."

"Let him alone, Thomas," said the father. "The child shall keep him, if she wants to. Who knows but that he may bring us good luck?"

When Ellen put the supper on the table, she scattered a part of her bread on the hearth for the bird, and it flew down and ate hungrily.

Very soon after supper was over, the woodcutter and the children went to bed, leaving Master Redvest perched on the back of a chair with his head under his wing.

The next morning when Ellen awoke it was still very early; but she slipped from her bed and dressed in haste, shivering and shuddering with the cold, for she had the fire to make and the porridge to cook for breakfast.

As she dressed she wondered whether Master Redvest was awake yet, and almost before the last button was buttoned she ran to the kitchen door and threw it open.

There she stopped, staring about her in surprise.

In the kitchen the fire was already burning merrily, the porridge was bubbling in the pot, the table was set, and everything was as neat as a new pin.

"Why, who can have done this?" cried Ellen. "It must have been Thomas."

But no; Thomas was only then awakening, for she could hear him yawning and stretching in bed.

Ellen wondered and wondered, and when her father and Thomas came in and she told them, they wondered too; and Master Redvest turned his head on one side and watched them with his round black eyes.

After the woodcutter and Thomas had gone off into the forest with their axes, Ellen went in to make the beds. But they had already been made!

So it went all day. The house was set in order, and Ellen had never so much as to lift a finger. But no matter how she ran from room to room, not a living person

could she see, but only the robin, that fluttered here and there.

“It must be fairies,” said the woodcutter, when he and Thomas came home, and Ellen told him about it; “but if so, it is plain to see that they mean to help us, so we will say our prayers like good Christians, and fear no evil.”

That night, as usual, the woodcutter and Thomas fell asleep the moment they were in bed; but as for Ellen, she lay awake a long time, twisting and turning.

As she lay there with her eyes wide open, it suddenly seemed to her that she heard some one stirring in the next room.

Slipping from bed, she stole softly to the kitchen door and opened it.

At first she saw nothing but the kitchen, motionless and silent in the moonlight. Then she saw, moving softly about through the room and setting things in order, the strangest little man that her eyes had ever rested on.

He was scarcely six inches high, and he was dressed in a brown coat, brown breeches, a red vest, and long yellow stockings. His eyes were round and black, and his nose as sharp as the beak of a bird.

Presently, as he moved about, he began to sing to himself very softly and sadly:

“Alack, alack!
I wish I were back
And under the fairy hill;
But the snow is white,
And the door shut tight,
And the hard frost locks it still.

“ Alack is me!
How glad I'll be
When the warm spring days begin!
For the hill door then
Will open again—
Will open and let me in.”

When Ellen heard the little man in brown singing this song she knew very well who he was.

He was one of the fairies who live down under the hills.

Every now and then, through the summer, the fairies open the hill houses to let in the air and light; but when the frosts begin their houses are shut up tight, and are not opened again until the spring.

Somehow or other, when the hills were shut that winter Master Redvest had been fastened out. Then there was nothing for him to do but to change himself into a robin and fly about the world till spring came and the hills opened once more.

Knowing that Master Redvest did not want mortal eyes to see him in his true shape, little Ellen stole away to her bed again very softly, and never told anybody what she had seen, for she did not want to make the little hill man angry.

After this the days went pleasantly enough for Ellen. She did not trouble herself about anything but her knitting, and now she had time to do twice as much of that as she had before, for all the housework was done for her by Master Redvest.

This was in the winter time; but as spring drew near good Master Redvest began to grow restless, flying from

window to window, and looking out at the garden and the sky.

At last came the warm days when the snows melted and ran trickling down the hills in little rivulets, and the ground was soft like sponge under the feet.



Then the robin flew to the window, and pecked and beat his wings against the glass.

“Oh, little Red-vest,” said Ellen, sadly, “are you so eager to leave me?” Still, she would not keep the bird if he wished to go, so she opened the window.

Master Redvest gave a glad cry. For a moment he lingered; then, spreading his wings, he flew out through the window, away and away, dipping and rising through the sunny air.

Little Ellen looked after him until she could see him no more, and when she turned away from the window there were tears in her eyes.

It was some time after this that Ellen was trudging home one evening with an empty basket on her arm.

She had been to the village to sell her knitting, and now she was coming back by the light of the moon, that hung above her as round and yellow as a cheese.

Her heart was as light as her basket, for her pocket was full of good pennies, that clinked together as she walked. They were what the people in the village had paid her for her knitting.

Presently Ellen began to hum a little song to herself as she walked :

“ Yellow moon, so bright and high,
Like a penny in the sky,
Say, what is it that I chink
In my pocket, do you think?

“ Yellow moon, so round and bright,
Shining in the quiet night,
You cannot buy food and drink
Like the pennies that I chink.

“ Yellow moon, before 'tis day
You will have to fade away ;
But the pennies that I chink—”

Little Ellen suddenly stopped short, staring before her in wonder.

The side of the hill up which she was about to walk had opened just like a great door, and there inside were the fairy folk, sure enough.

They were queer little fellows, the tallest of them not a foot high, and they were all dressed just as Master Redvest had been—in brown coat, brown breeches, red vest, and long yellow stockings.

Hand in hand, they were dancing round what looked to

Ellen like a great heap of dead leaves. She could see them quite plainly in the moonlight, and as they danced they sang together.

Suddenly in the midst of their singing one of the little men caught sight of Ellen where she crouched beside a rock, looking at them, her empty basket in her hand.

"Look! look!" he cried. "Human eyes are watching us!"

In a moment all the little men came running out, and gathered around the child with angry looks and gestures, so that Ellen felt quite frightened. "What do you want here?" they cried. "Have you come to steal our treasure?"

"Oh, dear, good little men, I didn't mean any harm," cried Ellen, trembling at their angry looks.

"Why are you here, then?" cried the dwarfs, drawing closer around her, and looking still more angry.

Suddenly one of the little men, who had only just come up, began to push and elbow his way through the crowd to Ellen's side.

"Stop! stop!" he cried in a loud, shrill voice. "I know this child well. It is little Ellen—the one who gave me food and shelter all through the winter while I was a bird."

"Dear Master Redvest," cried Ellen, almost weeping, "don't let them hurt me."

"That they shall not," cried Master Redvest, for it was he. "And, more than that, you shall now be rewarded for all the kindness you showed me. Quick, brothers! help me to fill her basket with treasure."

As soon as the little men found that Ellen was the child

who had sheltered Redvest, their angry frowns changed to kind looks, and they ran to the heap of dead leaves, and gathering up armfuls of them, began to fill Ellen's basket.

The next thing that Ellen knew, she was standing alone on top of the hill nearest her home.

Below her lay the hut, its windows shining with the red firelight within. Ellen looked around her, but there was no one in sight. The moon was sinking low, and suddenly she felt afraid.



Without stopping to empty her basket of the dead leaves that filled it, the child started to run down the hillside.

As she ran, however, the basket she carried weighed heavier and heavier, until her arm felt as though it would break, and she was all out of breath.

Ellen thought she would stop and empty the basket, and then run on again. She could not think what made the leaves so heavy.

As she turned it upside down, clinkety-clink! chink!

It was not leaves, but bright, shining gold pieces, that poured from the basket in the moonlight.

It was fairy treasure.

When, some little while afterwards, Ellen opened the door of the hut, the woodcutter and Thomas were surprised to see her bending under the weight of the basket.

But they were more surprised when she poured out on the table before them the golden treasure.

“What is this?” cried the woodcutter.

Ellen told them that it was a gift from the hill men; and when they counted the gold pieces they found that the grateful fairies had given them enough to make them rich for all their lives.



DECEMBER.

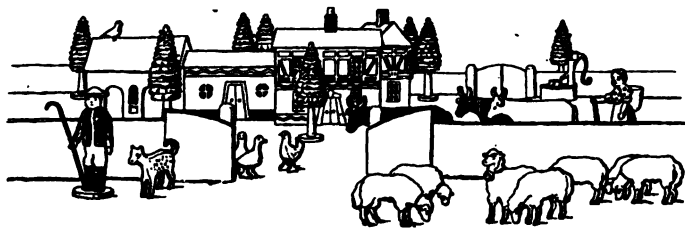
ON Christmas day, when prayers were said,
And all our breakfasts done,
We set our toys out on the floor
And played there in the sun.

The nursery smelled of Christmas tree;
And round it, where it stood,
The shepherds watched their flocks of sheep—
All made of painted wood.

Outside the streets were white with snow,
And now and then a sleigh
Went dashing past with noisy bells;
We heard them at our play.

We did not quarrel once all day.
Mamma and Grandma said
They liked to be in where we were,
So pleasantly we played!

I do not see how any child
Is cross on Christmas day,
When all the lovely toys are new,
And every one can play.



THE CHRISTMAS ANGEL.

CARELESS Ann had gone away
And left her farmyard out:
Cows and horses, white and gray,
Were scattered all about;
Shepherdess and shepherds too,
Painted all in red and blue.

Then, from the closet where they kept
 Old broken toys and books,
 Wearily a dolly crept,
 And woeful were her looks;
 Her plaster nose and cheeks were
 worn,
 Her frock was all besmirched and torn.



Up the yellow carpet lane,
 Where trees stood stiff and straight,
 Wearily the dolly crept
 To the farmyard gate:
 All the plaster figures stared,
 As across the yard she fared.

Only Susan, round and pink,
 Milked the wooden cow,
 Gave the stranger milk to drink—
 Marked her lofty brow;
 Raised the gray horse from his side,
 That the weary one might ride.



But upon the morrow night,—
 Such a sight to see! —
 All the candles were alight
 On the Christmas tree.
 There, repainted, good as
 new,
 Hung the doll, in gold and
 blue,

Swinging from the topmost bough,
So that all might see,
For she was the angel now
Of the Christmas tree;
And always, as she twisted round,
She smiled at Susan on the ground.

A CHRISTMAS STAR.

“COME now, my dear little stars,” said Mother Moon,
“and I will tell you the Christmas story.”

Every morning for a week before Christmas Mother Moon used to call all the little stars around her and tell them a story.

It was always the same story, but the stars never wearied of it. It was the story of the Christmas Star—the star of Bethlehem.

When Mother Moon had finished the story the little stars always said: “And the star is shining still, isn’t it, Mother Moon, even if we can’t see it?”

And Mother Moon would answer: “Yes, my dears; only now it shines for men’s hearts instead of their eyes.”

Then the stars would bid the Mother Moon good night, and put on their little blue nightcaps and go to bed in the sky chamber; for the stars’ bedtime is when people down on the earth are beginning to waken and see that it is morning.

But that particular morning when the little stars said

good night and went quietly away, one golden star still lingered beside Mother Moon.

“What is the matter, my little star?” asked the Mother Moon. “Why don’t you go with your little sisters?”

“Oh, Mother Moon,” said the golden star, “I am so sad! I wish I could shine for some one’s heart, like that star of wonder that you tell us about.”

“Why, aren’t you happy up here in the sky country?” asked Mother Moon.

“Yes, I have been very happy,” said the star; “but tonight it seems just as if I must find some heart to shine for.”

“Then, if that is so,” said Mother Moon, “the time has come, my little star, for you to go through the Wonder Entry.”

“The Wonder Entry! What is that?” asked the star. But the Mother Moon made no answer.

Rising, she took the little star by the hand and led it to a door that it had never seen before.

The Moon Mother opened the door, and there was a long, dark entry, and at the far end was shining a little speck of light.

“What is this?” asked the star.

“It is the Wonder Entry; and it is through this that you must go to find the heart where you belong,” said the Mother Moon.

Then the little star was afraid.

It longed to go through the entry as it had never longed for anything before; and yet it was afraid, and clung to the Mother Moon.

But very gently, almost sadly, the Mother Moon drew her hand away. “Go, my child,” she said.

Then, wondering and trembling, the little star stepped into the Wonder Entry, and the door of the sky house closed behind it.

The next thing the star knew, it was hanging in a toy shop with a whole row of other stars, blue and red and silver. It itself was gold.

The shop smelled of evergreen, and was full of Christmas shoppers, men and women and children; but of them all, the star looked at no one but a little boy standing in front of the counter; for as soon as the star saw the child it knew that he was the one to whom it belonged.

The little boy was standing beside a sweet-faced woman in a long black veil, and he was not looking at anything in particular.

The star shook and trembled on the string that held it, because it was afraid lest the child would not see it, or lest, if he did, he would not know it as his star.

The lady had a number of toys on the counter before her, and she was saying: "Now I think we have presents for every one: there's the doll for Lou, and the game for Ned, and the music box for May; and then, the rocking-horse and the sled."

Suddenly the little boy caught her by the hand. "Oh, Mother!" he said. He had seen the star.

"Well, what is it, darling?" asked the lady.

"Oh, Mother, just see that star up there; I wish—oh, I *do* wish I had it!"

"Oh, my dear, we have so many things for the Christmas tree," said the mother.

"Yes, I know, but I *do want* that star," said the child.

"Very well," said the mother, smiling; "then we will take that too."



So the star was taken down from the place where it hung and wrapped up in a piece of paper, and all the while it thrilled with joy, for now it belonged to the little boy.

It was not until the afternoon before Christmas, when the tree was being decorated, that the golden star was unwrapped and taken out from the paper.

"Here is something else," said the sweet-faced lady. "We must hang this on the tree. Paul took such a fancy to it that I had to get it for him. He will never be satisfied unless we hang it on, too."

"Oh, yes," said some one else who was helping to decorate the tree; "we will hang it here on the very top."

So the little star was hung on the highest branch of the Christmas tree.

That evening all the candles were lighted on the tree, and there were so many that they fairly dazzled the eyes; and the gold and silver balls, the fairies and the glass fruits, shone and twinkled in the light; and high above them all shone the golden star.



At seven o'clock a bell was rung, and then the folding

doors of the room where the Christmas tree stood were thrown open, and a crowd of children came trooping in.

They laughed and shouted and pointed, and all talked together; and after a while there was music, and presents were taken from the tree and given to the children.

How different it all was from the great, wide, still sky house!

But the star had never been so happy in all its life; for the little boy was there.

He stood apart from the other children, looking up at the star with his hands clasped behind him, and he did not seem to care for the toys and the games.

At last it was all over. The lights were put out, the children went home, and the house grew still.

Then the ornaments on the tree began to talk among themselves.

"So that is all over," said a silver ball. "It was very gay this evening—the gayest Christmas I remember."

"Yes," said a glass bunch of grapes; "the best of it is over. Of course people will come to look at us for several days yet, but it won't be like this evening."

"And then I suppose we'll be laid away again for another year," said a paper fairy. "Really, it seems hardly worth while. Such a few days out of the year, and then to be shut up in the dark box again! I almost wish I were a paper doll."

The bunch of grapes was wrong, though, in saying that people would come to look at the Christmas tree the next few days, for it stood neglected in the library, and nobody came near it. Everybody in the house went about very quietly, with anxious faces; for the little boy was ill.

At last, one evening, a woman came into the room with a servant. The woman wore the cap and apron of a nurse.

"That is it," she said, pointing up to the golden star.

The servant climbed up on some steps and took down the star and put it in the nurse's hand, and she carried it out into the hall and upstairs to a room where the little boy lay.

The sweet-faced lady was sitting by the bed, and as the nurse came in she held out her hand for the star.

"Is this what you wanted, my darling?" she asked, bending over the little boy.

The child nodded, and held out his hands for the star; and as he clasped it a wonderful, shining smile came over his face.

The next morning the little boy's room was very still and dark.

The golden piece of paper that had been the star lay on a table beside the bed, its five points very sharp and bright.

But it was not the real star, any more than a person's body is the real person.

The real star was living and shining now in the little boy's heart, and it had gone out with him into a new and more beautiful sky country than it had ever known before—the sky country where the little child angels live, each one carrying in its heart its own particular star.

THE CHRISTMAS DOLLS.

'Twas Christmas eve; the little girl
Was fast asleep upstairs,
And in the nursery three fine dolls
Sat in three little chairs.

They all had come as Christmas gifts,
And all of them were new.
Their Paris frocks were made of silk;
Their eyes were large and blue.

Close by sat old Jemima doll;
She was but pale at best;
Her hair was thin, her nose was worn,
And she was plainly dressed.

The new dolls never noticed her;
They never winked nor bowed;
They only talked among themselves,
Because they were so proud.

"To-morrow," said the largest doll,
"How pleased the child will be!
I don't suppose she's ever seen
Such handsome dolls as we."

“ Ah,” said the doll with scarlet shoes,
“ I only hope we’ll find
She does not leave us lying round,
And that she’s neat and kind.”

“ I’ve heard of children,” said the third,
“ Who hardly seemed to know
Dolls must be handled carefully ;
I hope she is not so.”

Jemima smiled her plaster smile ;
“ You’re all so new,” she said,
“ And all so fine, I should not think
That you would feel afraid.”

The new dolls turned and looked at her ;
They gazed with haughty stare,
As if they had not seen before
A doll was sitting there.

“ We’re not at all afraid,” said one ;
“ We’re quite too fine and new ;
But you perhaps may find that now
She’ll scarcely care for you.”

The old doll shook her head and smiled ;
She smiled, although she knew
Her plaster nose was almost gone,
Her eyes no longer blue.

When Christmas dawned, in ran the child;
And there, all gay and bright,
The new dolls sat and smiled at her;
They were a lovely sight!

She praised their cheeks, their eyes, their curls,
The way that they were dressed;
But all the while the old, worn doll
She clasped close to her breast.



JANUARY.

THE shrill wind blew about the house
And through the pines all night ;
The snowflakes whirled across the fields
And hid the fence from sight.

By dawn the drifts had blown so deep
No horse nor sleigh could go.
The dog house and the chicken coops
Were buried in the snow.

There was no thought of school that day;
We worked with shovels, all,
And cleared a path from house to barn;
The snow was like a wall.

I wished our house was covered up
Like that one in a book
My grandma showed to me one day
Beside the chimney nook.

The story said the chimney top
Just showed above the snow,
And all day long the lamps were lit
Down in the house below.

THE BUTTON FAMILY.

THERE'S not a single toy
Is pleasanter at play
Than are the little buttons
Aunt Jane keeps put away.



The little brother buttons
Are never rude nor rough;
And though the box is full,
There's always room enough.

There's one round mother button,
 A father button, too ;
 And several sister buttons—
 White china, specked with blue.



The bright brass-button uncle
 Has truly been to war ;
 He's lost his shank, but twinkles
 As gaily as before.

But big or little buttons
 There's one they love the best ;
 A baby button, smaller
 Than any of the rest.

The little baby button
 Is very sweet and bright ;
 It's almost like a pearl,
 So smooth it is, and bright.



One day the box upset,
 And all fell on the ground ;
 Then how the buttons skipped
 And spun and ran around !

When all were gathered up
 And safely home once more,
 They cried, " What fun we had
 Out on the nursery floor ! "

ONLY A CUR.

ONE stormy winter night, while the Johnsons were sitting cozily around the library fire, they heard a dog howling over in the open lot near their house.

The wind came roaring down the chimney and the sleet beat upon the windows, and through the noise of the storm sounded the howling, now fainter, now louder.

"Just listen to that poor thing," said Mrs. Johnson. "It must be some lost dog."

"A bad night for an animal to be lost," said Mr. Johnson, as a sudden blast of wind rattled the windows.



"Oh, father," said little Susie, "I wish you'd go and get him; he must be so cold!"

"Go and get him!" said Johnny, scornfully. "I guess you'd like to go out in a storm like this, wouldn't you? Go on with the story, Father, won't you?" For Mr. Johnson was telling the children a story before they went to bed.

"Well, after that," Mr. Johnson went on, "the man climbed into the oven, and the two big white bears lay down in front of it,"—and so on to the end of the story.

As he finished, the howling, which seemed to have stopped for a while, began again, nearer the house.

"Oh, that *poor* dog!" sighed Susie.

Mr. Johnson suddenly arose, putting the little girl down from his lap. "I'm going out to get that dog," he said; "he must be freezing to death."

"Oh, my dear, it's such a dreadful night for you to go out," cried Mrs. Johnson.

"It's just as bad a night for the dog;" and Mr. Johnson went out into the hall and began putting on his overshoes and hat and coat.

"Well, wrap this scarf around your head, anyway," said Mrs. Johnson. "Nobody will see you."

So presently Mr. Johnson, well bundled up, went out into the night.

"Oh, I do hope he'll find it," said Johnny. "Wouldn't it be fun! Mother, may we stay up to see?"

"Oh, yes—please, Mother," begged Susie.

The mother said they might; and when Mr. Johnson, not long afterwards, was heard fumbling at the lock, both children ran out to let him in.

His coat was white, and he stopped to stamp off the snow from his shoes. In his arms he carried a poor little half-frozen cur.

"Oh, what an ugly dog!" said Mrs. Johnson, as her husband put it down.

It was indeed very ugly. It had coarse yellow hair, and there was a great scar on one side, with no hair on it.

Susie and Johnny were delighted with it, and patted the poor little trembling creature; but even they couldn't say it was pretty.

After a while the children were sent off to bed, and the little cur was taken downstairs to spend the night in the kitchen. In the morning, in spite of all that Susie and Johnny could say, Mrs. Johnson gave the dog to their washerwoman, who promised to take good care of it.

The washerwoman was a fat, good-natured negro with a large family of children, and they all welcomed Jack, as they named the cur, and made him one of the family.

They were fond of him, but Jack was never happy there.

He never forgot the Johnsons, and whenever he met them he would rush up and jump about, or throw himself on his back on the ground, whining with delight. Then he would try to follow them home, and when they drove him back would look after them sadly and reproachfully.

"Oh, Mother, please let us take him back," said Susie, after one of these meetings. "I'm sure he isn't happy there, and we haven't any dog."

"But he's so ugly," said Mrs. Johnson. "If we have a dog, I'd like one a little prettier than Jack."

Susie begged so hard, however, that at last Mrs. Johnson told her that if the washerwoman was willing to sell him for a quarter the little girl might buy him back.

The washerwoman was quite ready to do this, and so Susie went down to her shanty for him. The little children cried to see their playmate go, but there never was a happier dog than Jack as he followed Susie back to his first home, afraid every minute lest he should be sent away.

But when he was once settled in his home with the Johnsons, what a change came over Jack!

He grew so proud that he would hardly notice the

negroes who had been so kind to him. His tail, which used to hang limp and straight, was now curled over his back; and if a dog stopped him in the street, he would growl so fiercely that the stranger would think he must be three times as big as he looked, and would be glad to get away without being torn to pieces.

Jack thought himself one of the Johnson family; and when Johnny's and Susie's elder brother Harry married, Jack used to go down about twice a week to visit Mrs. Harry.

He would trot off quietly by himself, and bark at the door until they let him in.

Then he would wag how do you do to the mistress, saunter through the rooms to see what was going on, and come trotting home again after an hour or so.

These visits were very pleasant, but at last there came a change.

A very young dog, twice the size of Jack, came to live with Mr. and Mrs. Harry.

Jack rather liked this at first, as the new dog, Ponto, was very much afraid of Jack, and eager to play with him. He would run up and try to lick Jack's head, and when the smaller dog snarled, Ponto would throw himself on the ground and roll about as if to say, "Oh, please don't hurt me!"

But a day came when Jack tried once too often to take a bone from Ponto. The large dog turned on him, upset him into a pot of red paint that had been left standing beside the porch, and ended by rolling him down the terrace into the street.

Jack was so angry that he never, never went there again.

Jack did not like common-looking dogs or poor people. With a handsome, well-bred dog, particularly if it were large, he would be pleasant and polite; but with gutter dogs he was fierce and quarrelsome, no matter what their size.

One day Jack went into a shop where there was a large looking-glass at one side.

Jack had never seen his reflection before, and as he walked toward the looking-glass, what should he see but what seemed to be an ugly yellow cur, with a great scar on his side, walking toward him.

How could Jack think that the ugly dog was himself? The hair rose on his back, and he walked up and down before the mirror, snarling fiercely.

All the people in the shop laughed. Jack began to look very uncomfortable. He felt that something was wrong, though he couldn't tell just what, and putting his tail between his legs, he slunk out of the shop and rushed for home.

The end of little Jack was pitiful, and yet it was fine and beautiful too, like all heroism. For Jack proved himself a hero, if he was only a yellow cur.

One of Susie's old hats had been thrown into the ash barrel, and from the barrel had been blown down to a wet place on the ground. There it froze fast.

That night, when Johnny opened the door to call Jack in, the air was white with snowflakes.

Again and again he called, but he was only answered by a volley of barks. The naughty little fellow was not ready to come. There was a silence, and then the kitchen door opened and shut.

"He has gone into the kitchen," said Johnny, hurrying back to the warm fireside all a-shiver.

But Jack had not gone into the kitchen.

They found him under a little heap of snow the next morning, guarding, even to death, Susie's old worn-out hat.

So, as he came out of the winter's night he went out into it again, his little spirit speeding through the cold and darkness to the heaven that Mr. Johnson said he thought there must be for such dog heroes as Jack.

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FEBRUARY.

SUNSETS red and quiet air ;
Ponds are ice and trees are bare ;
Fields are frozen far and near ;
February days are here.
Bitter cold the night draws down
On the country and the town,
But in cheerful warmth we sit,
And the nursery lamp is lit.

Then, when mother stops our play,
Father puts his book away,
And he makes upon the wall
Shadow pictures for us all.
There a rabbit wags its ears ;
Or a grinning face appears ;

Or a swan with feathered wings;
Ships and many other things;
Last of all a nightcapped head—
Then we know it's time for bed.

THE DREAM OF THE TOY.

THE dream man lost a dream one night—
A dream meant for a boy;
It fluttered round awhile, and then
It settled on a toy.

The toy dreamed that it stood in class
With quite a row of boys;
The teacher rapped upon his desk
And cried, "Less noise! Less noise!"

Then, pointing at the little toy,
He said, "Next boy, 'foretell.'"
"Oh, please, sir," cried the little toy,
"I don't know how to spell;

"Indeed, I don't know how it is!
I'm sure I am a toy,
Although I seem to be in school,
And dressed up like a boy."

“What’s that! What’s that!” the master cried;
In dreadful tones he spoke;
He strode across the schoolroom floor,
And then—the toy awoke.

There lay the nursery, very still;
The shelf was overhead;
The Noah’s Ark was fastened up;
The children were in bed.

There lay the dolls, the books, the ball;
“Oh, dear me!” sighed the toy,
“I’ve just had such a dreadful dream!
I dreamed I was a boy.”

THE STORY OF A DOLL HOUSE.

MANY long years ago, when the people who are grandmothers and grandfathers to-day were children, a little brother and sister had a playhouse in a closet.

It was a sheet closet, and on the upper shelves were great rolls of homespun linen.

The two lower shelves were given to the children, and there for a while they kept their toys and boxes very neatly, and they tacked pictures upon the wall, just above the shelves, to make them look pretty.

Boys are not so careful and tidy in their ways as little girls, however, and by and by the brother began to store

all kinds of queer things in the playhouse: bits of stick fit for whittling; an old dog collar for which he had traded his jackknife; pieces of string and fishing line; a rusty key; and many other odds and ends such as little boys like to collect.

It annoyed the little girl to have all these things littered about on the neat shelves; and the mother, as she sat in her rocking-chair at the nursery window, with her basket of sewing beside her, saw it all, and felt sorry for her little daughter.

One day, after the children had started for school with their books tucked under their arms, and two red apples and some gingerbread in their baskets, she put on her bonnet and shawl, and went down the street to the carpenter's.

She described to the carpenter exactly what she wanted, and he said:

"Yes, yes; yes, ma'am. A slanting roof, and six windows—yes, ma'am. And a wooden stand—yes, ma'am. I will have it done for you next week."

And next week the carpenter's boy brought something to the house on a wheelbarrow, while the children were away at school.

It was a playhouse; a large playhouse; a playhouse with two chimneys and real glass windows. It was two stories high, and almost more than the boy could wheel.

The mother had it carried up to her room and put behind the high-post bed, where it was hidden by the white valance.

All that morning she was busy tacking and pasting and cutting; and all the while the children were at school, thinking of nothing at all but their lessons.

It was Saturday and a half holiday (for in those days children had only half holidays on Saturdays), and about noon the children came home.

Upstairs they clattered, and burst into the nursery, and then stood quite still in the doorway and looked.

The nursery was very quiet, with the chairs and tables in their places, and two squares of yellow sunlight on the carpet; but there, in the middle of the floor, stood a wonderful little house, painted to look just as if it were built of bricks, with chimneys and glass windows, a slanting black roof and a white door.

It was the little house that the carpenter's boy had wheeled home on the wheelbarrow; but now it was furnished, and had black-and-yellow silk curtains at the windows, and carpets on the floors, and one of Ann's own dolls was looking through the little square panes, for it was her home.

There was a key in a keyhole above the first story windows of the doll house. The children turned it, and the whole front of the house swung open, windows and all. Then they could see just what was inside.

There was an upstairs and a downstairs. Upstairs there was a mantelpiece and fireplace, a round black tin stove, and a high-post bed with curtains and a valance. There was a clock standing on a chest of drawers under the looking-glass. There were pictures about the room, and a cozy stuffed chair stood by the bed for Grandmamma Doll to rest in when she came upstairs out of breath.

Downstairs there was another fireplace, a round center table decorated with pictures, and a sofa. And there was Grandmamma Doll herself sitting in the green rocking-



chair. There was a folding table that was just the thing for dollies to sit around while they drank a social cup of tea.

While the little boy and girl were looking at the play-house their mother came in and stood smiling on them from the doorway.

That is the story of a real doll house.

Yes, of a real doll house—a dear old-fashioned doll house.

As one opens the front of it, a faint, pleasant odor of long ago breathes forth, like that which hangs about the boxes and piece bags of kind old ladies.

As one looks in the looking-glasses one thinks of all the little girls whose chubby faces have been reflected there: Ann in her short-waisted, long-skirted dresses; little nieces of hers in pantalets and pigtails; and now others,

with crisp white aprons and curls, peer in with eager curiosity at the old-time doll house.

What fun they have had with it! How many times, on stormy days, when the rain beat on the nursery windows and swept in whitening gusts over the wet trees on



the lawn, the front of the dollies' house has swung back, and little folks have played happily with it for whole mornings at a time! How often they have pretended a dolly was ill, and have laid her in the fresh, white-sheeted feather bed under the chintz curtains; and then, while the nurse warmed up her food on the tin stove, Grandmamma Doll has had her green rocking-chair brought upstairs, and has sat at the bedside and rocked and rocked, while the other dolls went about very softly, and the nurse kept the baby quiet below.

Not long ago there was a fair to raise a fund for a hos-

pital. There, in a room specially set apart for them, were dolls by dozens and dozens, all standing in rows and dressed in their best; for the one that was the finest of all was to receive a prize. And there, too, among all the fine dolls, and in the midst of the noise and glare of light, stood the dim old doll house.

The key had been turned in the lock and the front had been swung back.

There were the round tin stove, the high-post bed, and the clock; there were the folding table and the sofa, and there were the silk-covered chairs.

A crowd of faces peered in—young and old; people pointed and smiled. It was a noisy crowd, and the yellow-faced dolls, in their old-fashioned dresses, sitting in the quiet rooms, looked out strangely with their black wooden eyes through the odor of long ago.

My face, too, peered in upon that old Quaker doll family. I, too, wondered and pointed with the rest; and then I thought how other children, old and young, might perhaps care to look through my eyes into those faded rooms. So I drew pictures of it all, and afterwards I made portraits of the dear jointed and ragdolls; and here they are.



A WAIF.

IT was Bridget who found the poor thin little kitten crouching against the wooden hydrant near the kitchen door, and brought it in to the stove, that it might get dry and warm.

Bridget had a tender heart for all animals, but especially for cats.

She shut Thomas Jefferson, the sleek tiger puss, up in the pantry, so that he could not hurt the strange kitten, and then set down before it a saucer of milk and some scraps of meat. But though the kitten acted as if it were hungry, it would not eat, for some reason or other.

A little later the mistress of the house came down to the kitchen on some errand, and there she saw the little stray crouched under the table beside the plate of food, and Bridget standing looking at him anxiously.

"Why, Bridget," she said, "where did that kitten come from?"

"I found it in the yard, mem," answered the cook, "and the poor thing looked so hungry that I brought it in; but it seems like it couldn't eat. There must be something the matter with it."

She pushed the saucer toward the kitten, and it roused itself from the doze into which it had sunk to put its nose down into the milk. Then it sneezed, and, drawing back, began to scratch and rub the side of its head with its paw.

"I wonder if there can be anything stuck in its throat?" said the mistress.

“Mebbe there is, mem,” said Bridget; and with that she sat down, and lifting the kitten into her lap, she gently pried its mouth open and put her little finger in between its teeth.

“How can you handle that dirty little thing so?” cried the mistress; and a moment after, “Oh, take care! You’ll hurt it.”

“Oh, mem!” cried Bridget, excitedly, “there is—there’s something stuck in the roof of its mouth.”



She got her little finger under whatever it was, and pulled; but it was wedged so tightly in the upper part of the kitten’s mouth that she had great trouble in loosening it. She must have hurt the kitten, for it gave a little mew, but did not try to escape from her hands, seeming to know that she would help it if she could.

A moment after the cook pulled out a three-cornered bone that had been wedged in the roof of the little thing’s mouth in such a way that it could not use its tongue either to eat or drink.

As soon as Bridget put the kitten down, it ran over to

the saucer of milk, and began lapping and lapping as if it never would get enough. The little thing had been starving to death with food before it!

The next morning, when the mistress of the house came downstairs, she found the kitten curled up beside the stove, purring and blinking with comfort.

"You're not going to keep that wretched little thing, Bridget, are you?" she asked.

"Oh, mem, it's a nice, clean little thing," said Bridget, "and Tom's getting used to it now, if he did box it at first. And then it seems like it belonged to me after me pulling the bone out."

So Spotty, as Bridget named him, lived in the kitchen, and from the first seemed to recognize in the cook his own especial friend.

Spotty was not a beautiful kitten, by any means, and its sufferings appeared to have broken its spirit completely; but Bridget grew very fond of it, partly, perhaps, because of the love that it showed for her. It followed her all over the house, if it was allowed to, and if she shut it out of the room where she was it always waited patiently at the door. When she sat sewing, it would settle itself on the edge of her skirt, and sit there, purring with a vigor and strength of voice that Thomas Jefferson, large and sleek as he was, could never rival.

Thomas was not very gentle with Spotty. When he was playful, he hid back of doors or in corners, and suddenly leaped out upon the kitten, to roll it head over heels.

When in a bad humor, he eased his feelings by boxing Spotty's ears or driving it away from the food. "It's a

nice little cat," said Bridget, "but it hasn't any spunk." Even Bridget, in spite of her fondness for it, did not guess for a long time what a hero the meek little Spotty really was.

One warm day, some months after the kitten came to live there, Bridget had left the outer door of the kitchen open while she went into the pantry to measure out some flour. She was still busy there when she suddenly heard a loud rattle of crockery in the kitchen beyond, and then a yelp and the hissing and spitting of a cat.

Running out in haste, her hands still covered with flour, she found that a strange dog had come in to steal a roast of beef that was lying on the table.

Tom, safe on top of the dresser, was arching his back and growling, his tail like a chimney brush; but little Spotty had flown at the dog, and was driving it from the kitchen.

After this adventure the little cat seemed to have gained a certain amount of self-assertion; and the next time Tom boxed its ears Spotty turned on him so fiercely that the bully was terrified out of his wits, and flew from the kitchen, never pausing until he had reached a refuge under the dining room sideboard.

It was a proud day for Spotty when he killed his first mouse. He brought it as an offering to Bridget, jumping up in her lap, as she sat at her work, and dropping it upon her sewing, to her terror and disgust.

One night he went over to the stable and killed three rats, and when the cook opened the kitchen door the next morning Spotty was waiting for her. The three bodies were laid on the threshold side by side, and Spotty rubbed

himself proudly around Bridget's feet, purring and blinking up at her as though he could not be quite proud or satisfied unless she was pleased too.

At this time Bridget was engaged to be married; and the last few months that she was out at service she was very busy hemming sheets and towels, and making little things for her home.

"I suppose you will want to take Spotty with you when you go?" said the mistress of the house.

"Oh, yes, mem," said Bridget. "Spotty'd never in the world be contented anywheres but wid me. I've never seen his like, he's so fond of me."

"But he's very fond of this kitchen, too," said the mistress. "Don't you think he'll miss it?"

"Not if he's wid me," said Bridget, confidently.

So the very day that Bridget was married, she carried Spotty with her to her new home, done up in a meal bag and mewing dolefully all the way.

All Spotty's old friends thought that now they would see him no more; but the next morning Martha, the new cook, heard a mewing at the kitchen door, and as soon as she opened it Spotty darted in.

He prowled about the kitchen in a lost way, and then, seeing the stair door open, he slid through it and ran on upstairs to the room where Bridget used to sleep.

There he waited, mewing until the mistress, who had heard of his return, came up and opened the door for him. She followed him in, curious to see what he would do. The cat wandered about the room, raised itself on its hind legs to look into a half-open drawer, went into the closet, where it prowled about among Martha's shoes and boxes,

and then, coming out, went over to the mistress and, looking up into her face, mewed pitifully, asking as plainly as in so many words why Bridget was not there.

It was in vain that the mistress of the house took him down into the library and petted him. He would not stay with her, and soon stole out to wander sadly about the house.

"Martha," said the mistress, at last, "I wish that when you have done your work you would take Spotty back to Bridget—that is, if you don't mind carrying him through the streets."

"No, ma'am; I don't mind," said the willing Martha. "I'd just as lief take him now, if you want me to."

So the cat was sent back to his owner, and reached her just as she was putting on her bonnet to go in search of him. She was much mortified at Spotty's leaving her, and sent word to the mistress that she would keep him shut up for a while until he grew used to his new quarters.

However, he got away the very next day, and came back to his old home, mewing at the door until they let him in. He ran up to Bridget's old room, as before, and there they left him in peace to get such comfort as he could from the empty room.

An hour or so afterwards Bridget came in search of him, and the mistress of the house went upstairs with her to see if he was still there.

When they entered the room they found him sitting in the rocking-chair where Bridget used to sit, and as soon as she came over toward him he showed the wildest pleasure, rolling, purring, and writhing over on his back; then he jumped down and rubbed against Bridget's skirts, mewing with joy.

Bridget had brought a basket with her to carry him back, and as soon as he was put in it he seemed to know that he was being carried away again, and mewed most pitifully.

That was the last time he tried to return to his old home. He seemed to feel it was of no use.

But his character was quite changed, and he grew to be but little better than a gutter cat. He often spent a whole day and night away from home, sometimes coming back with the marks of a street fight upon him.

He was always fond of Bridget, but as long as he lived he never returned to his old ways; never again was he content to spend the day cozily nestled upon her skirt, keeping time with his purring to the busy glint of her needle, as in the old days.

Even when he grew old and feeble he cared but little for home, liking better to spend his days upon the back fence, where he could watch the doings of the busy world.



MARCH.

It was raining hard when I went to bed ;
The creek was over its banks, they said ;

And in the morning, far and wide,
The meadows were flooded on every side.

There was water over the yard below,
And it looked like a place I did not know ;

The wind swept by with a rushing sound,
And the dog house floated around and round.

When father went out to the barn, that day,
I thought he'd surely be swept away.

In rubber boots he stepped from the door,
And the water was up to his knees and more.

I thought if the flood should never go down
We'd build a boat and we'd row to town;

For there we would buy our bread and meat
And pies and all good things to eat,

And living here for all our days,
We should almost be like castaways.

HOW THE LITTLE KITE LEARNED TO FLY.

"I NEVER can do it," the little kite said,
As he looked at the others high over his head;
"I know I should fall if I tried to fly."
"Try," said the big kite; "only try!
Or I fear you never will learn at all."
But the little kite said, "I'm afraid I'll fall."
The big kite nodded: "Ah, well, good-by;
I'm off;" and he rose toward the tranquil sky.
Then the little kite's paper stirred at the sight,
And trembling he shook himself free for flight.
First whirling and frightened, then braver grown,
Up, up he rose through the air alone,
Till the big kite, looking down, could see
The little one rising steadily.

Then how the little kite thrilled with pride,
As he sailed with the big kite, side by side!
While far below he could see the ground,
And the boys like small spots moving round.
They rested high in the quiet air,
And only the birds and clouds were there.
“Oh, how happy I am!” the little kite cried;
“And all because I was brave, and tried.”



OLD MOTHER BLACK.

OLD Mother Black was a very fine cat,
As gentle and sleek as could be;
No mouse ever dared venture out from the wall,
Such an excellent mouser was she.



Oh, why should the children have
dressed her in clothes—
A frock and a bonnet—one
day?
Old Mother Black was too grave
and sedate
To care to take part in such play.

They took Mother Black, still all dressed in
the clothes,
And set her up straight in a chair.
The two little dolls simply
sat and looked
on,
Their eyes in a wide
china stare.



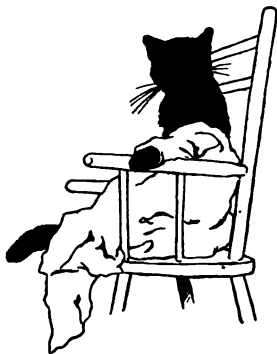
The children set all the small toy dishes out,
With bread, and with water for tea.
The dolls were so shocked they ate never a crumb,
And Mother Black—neither would she.



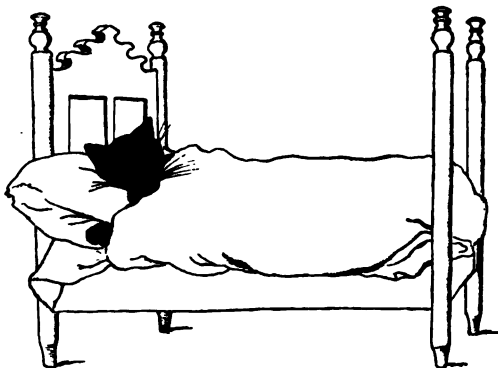
They took Mother
Black, still all
dressed in the
clothes—
They took off the
hat from her
head.

They said, "Come, now, let us pretend it is night,"
And they tucked Mother Black into bed.

Then laughing, the children ran out of the room
And left Mother Black all alone.
Her nerves were so shaken she never once stirred,
But lay there as still as a stone.



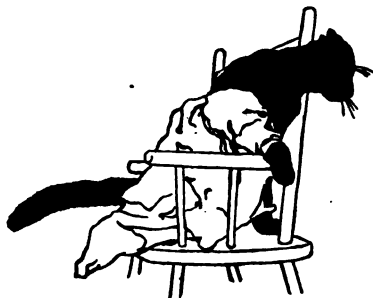
Little Miss Mouse stuck her nose from the wall.
"Oh, ho! The old cat is in bed.



I'll just venture out for the bread they have left;
I think I may safely," she said.

But little Miss Mouse had scarce tasted a crumb
Before the cat sprang from the bed.
Alas! her paws caught in the bedclothes and frock,
And tumbled her heels over head.

Oh, how all the little mice chuckled and laughed
At seeing old Mother Black fall!
Even the children who'd dressed her in clothes
Could hear how they squeaked in the wall.



THE PRINCE'S CHOICE.

HIGH up in a gray windy castle lived Father Time and his three daughters, Past, Present, and Future.

Past and Future were very beautiful, and wore fine clothes, and never had to do anything except what they wished. As for Present, she was at work all day in the kitchen, and was dressed scarcely better than a scullery maid.

One day a Prince came riding up to the castle to ask for one of Father Time's daughters as a wife, and Father Time was ready enough to let him in.

A feast was set out for the Prince, and Future sat at his right hand and Past at his left.



As for Present, she waited on them all; and often, as she served them, she sighed; for the Prince was very handsome, and she would have liked to sit at the table with him, too.

"And now," said Father Time, after the feast was ended, "which of my daughters will you choose for a wife?"

The Prince looked at Past, and he looked at Future, and it seemed to him that Future was the more beautiful of the two.

"I would choose you," he said, "but first I must know whether you are able to do anything that will make you fit to be a Prince's bride."

"Yes," said Future, "for I can make the most beautiful clothes that were ever seen, and I make them out of nothing at all."

"I should like to see that," said the Prince; so Future sat down and began to cut and snip and sew, and presently there lay a suit of clothes that shone like satin and were crusted over with precious stones; and all of these she had made out of nothing at all.

That seemed to the Prince a fine thing; so he took

Future up behind him on his great white horse, and away he rode toward his own kingdom.

But the way was long and weary, and the sun beat down hot upon the Prince's head, and at the first village they reached he thought to get down and rest.



All the little boys, however, began pointing at him and shouting: "Look! Look at the beggar on horseback!"

And even the old people stared and laughed.

Then the Prince looked down, and there all the beautiful clothes that Future had made him had fallen into rags that even a beggar would not want to wear, and the jewels had melted away.

The Prince said never a word, but he was so ashamed that he turned his horse's head and rode back the way he had come as fast as he could.

When he reached Father Time's castle, he lifted Future down from his horse and led her into the hall. "She who makes me clothes that fall into rags with one day of wearing is no fit wife for me," said the Prince.

"Well, well," said Father Time, "there is Past; and, after all, I think she will suit you better than Future."

So another feast was set for the Prince, and this time Past sat upon his right hand and Future on his left; but Present stood behind them and waited on them all, and as she looked at the Prince she sighed more deeply than ever.

After the feast was ended the Prince turned to Past.

"If I were to marry you," he said, "what could you do that would be fit for a Prince's wife?"

"I can sing such songs," said Past, "that he who listens to them will feel neither hunger nor cold nor grief nor weariness."

That seemed to the Prince even a better thing than to make fine clothes out of nothing at all, so he took Past up behind him on his great white horse, and away he rode toward his own kingdom.

As for Present, she looked from the window and watched them riding away, and the tears ran down her cheeks as she looked.

The Prince rode on for a while with Past behind him, and then he said, "Now sing to me."

So Past laid her head on his shoulder and began to sing.

The song she sang was so sweet that the Prince quite forgot whence he had come or where he was going; and so at last, when Past ended her song and he looked about him, he found he had missed his way. They were down in a great black chasm, with rocks all about them. How they had come there the Prince could not tell, nor could he tell how to get out of it.

"Sing, Past," he cried. "Sing again, and sing us out of this great black chasm."

But Past was frightened, and only clung to him and began to weep.

There is no knowing whether they would ever have gotten out if the Prince had not heard Present calling the cows home; so he followed the sound of her voice, and presently he came to an opening in the chasm.

He rode out of this opening, and there he was right in front of Father Time's castle again.

He rode up to the door, and lifted Past down in a hurry. "She who would sing me into such a black chasm as that is no wife for me," he said.

And now for the third time a feast was set for the Prince, and after it was ended he turned to Father Time. "Have you no daughters but these two?" he asked.

"Yes," said Father Time; "I have one other daughter, and it is she who has cooked the feast and waited on you."

The Prince looked at Present, but she did not seem beautiful to him.

Still, he asked her, as he had asked the others, what she could do.

"I can bake and I can sew," said Present, "I can spin and I can weave, and I can keep a house tidy and clean."

Well, that did not seem much for a Prince's wife, but still the Prince took her up behind him on his horse, and away they rode, and this time they reached the Prince's kingdom without any mishap.

Trouble was awaiting him there, however, for he had been away so long that his people had forgotten him, and a false king had taken his throne and was reigning there in the Prince's place.

There was nothing left for the Prince to do but to take care of the geese belonging to the castle.

So he and Present lived in the gooseherd's hut, and every day he drove the geese out to the fields, while Present stayed at home and cooked and spun and kept the house in order.

All she asked of the Prince was that, as he followed the

geese, he should gather up the feathers that fell from them and bring them home to her; and this the Prince did every day.

At last Present had a great heap of goose feathers; and then one night, while the Prince was fast asleep, she arose and out of the feathers she made herself a pair of wings.

These she fastened on her shoulders, and opening a window she flew out into the starry night and away and away to the palace where the false king lived.

The false king was fast asleep; and Present flew in through the window and looked about her. There on a chair beside his bed were the royal robes, the royal crown, and the royal scepter.

These Present took, and flying out again as she had come, she hastened home, and hid them and her goose-feather wings in a closet.

In the morning the Prince began to stretch and yawn, and then he opened his eyes.

"Alas, alas!" he said, "but I dreamed that I was sitting on my throne again, and that you were beside me, Present, as my queen. More than that, I dreamed that you were the most beautiful queen in all the world."

"Never mind about that now," said Present, "but get up and eat your breakfast, for there is much for you to do to-day."

So the Prince ate his porridge, and then he was about to take his gooseherd's staff; but Present bade him stay. "The time has come," she said, "for you to go up and claim your own again from the false king."

The Prince laughed aloud. "And how," he said, "can

I go up to the palace dressed in these rags instead of in a kingly robe?"

"The robe shall be yours," said Present.

"But even if I had the robe, who will believe I am the true Prince unless I have a crown to wear?"

"The crown, also, you shall have," said Present.

"But if I had the robe and the crown, how can I govern my people unless I have a scepter to show my kingly power?"



Then Present opened the cupboard door and brought out the royal robe, the royal crown,

and the royal scepter, and laid them before the Prince; and when he saw them he wondered. "These once were mine," he said, "but never did I think to see them again. How came they here?"

"They came neither by sea nor by land," said Present, "but as they once were yours so are they now."

The Prince put them on, and then indeed he looked the king he was.

Still he hesitated. "But you, Present," he said,— "how can you go up with me to the palace as my queen?"

Then Present threw aside her rags, and there she stood dressed all in cloth of gold, and more beautiful than the morning.

The Prince looked at her and looked at her, and could not take his eyes away. "Who are you?" he asked.

"I am as I always was," said Present, "only now at last you see me in my true shape."

Then the Prince took Present by the hand, and they went away together toward the city.

As soon as the guards saw them they flung open all the gates, and the Prince and Present went on through the city with crowds following them.

They went into the palace and mounted the throne together hand in hand; and all the people shouted with joy because the true Prince had come back to claim his own again. But the false king was driven away and out of the country.



APRIL.

THEY promised me a flower bed
That should be truly mine,
Out in the garden by the wall,
Beneath the ivy vine.

The boxwood bush would have to stay ;
The daily rosebush, too ;
But for the rest they'd let me plant
Just what I chose to do.

Though not a daffodil was up
The garden smelled of spring,
And from the trees beyond the wall
I heard the blackbirds sing.

I worked there all the afternoon ;
The sun shone warm and still.
I set it thick with flower seeds
And roots of daffodil.

And all the while I dug I planned
That when my flowers grew
I'd train them in a lovely bower,
And cut a window through.

When visitors drove out from town
I'd bring them there to see ;
Perhaps I'd give them each some flowers,
And then how pleased they'd be!

But I forgot the bed for weeks,
And when I came at last,
The flowers all were choked and dead,
The weeds had grown so fast.

A FAIRY TALE.



THIS is the Princess
 With golden hair,
 And this is the wicked
 Stepmothère.

She builds a lofty
 Tower of bricks,
 And there the beauteous
 Princess sticks.



And now comes by
 A gallant Knight,
 In uniform
 Of red and white.



He sees the Princess'
 Face above ;
 His manly heart
 Is pierced with love ;



But vain his love ;
 He has no power
 To save the Princess
 From the tower.

And now a lovely
Fairy see.
(She once was on
A Christmas tree.)



The clock strikes twelve,
The witching hour;
She waves her wand:
Down falls the tower!

Down falls the tower,
But nothing harms.
He clasps the Princess
In his arms.



The Fairy cries
" Away, away!
The housemaid stirs;
'Tis break of day."



LOKI THE RACCOON.

WHEN Loki, my raccoon, was given to me he was a little helpless baby thing, no larger than a kitten.

He was too young even to know how to drink the saucer of milk that was set before him, though he was so hungry that he whined pitifully.

We had to feed him with milk from a bottle with a soft roll of muslin put into the mouth of it for him to suck.



At first Loki did not understand what the bottle was for, and turned his head aside and struggled when we tried to feed him. But when he once got the taste of the milk on his tongue, he seized the roll of muslin, and sucked and pulled, crying because the milk would not come fast enough.

When his little stomach was full and comfortable he began to blink sleepily, and to make a queer little sound almost such as a bird might—a croon of satisfaction.

We put him into a basket in which a soft, warm bed had been made for him, and there the little creature curled up and went to sleep as placidly as though he were in the nest out in the woods with all his little brothers and sisters and his mother to cuddle up against.

The next time Loki was hungry there was no trouble in getting him to suck the milk through the rag, and in two or three days he knew the look of the bottle and hailed it with eager squeals. He would rush to me as soon as he saw I had it, climb up my skirts and along my sleeve, and then, clasping his paws about my hand, would swing over on his back and hang there, his teeth clinched on the rag.

He always fretted and whined if the milk didn't come fast enough, and crooned cheerfully when he began to get enough.

As he grew older we fed him on bread and milk, bits of meat, nuts, and fruit.

He was a cleanly little creature, and if he could get to

a basin of water he always washed things before he ate them. Then, after he had finished, he would wash his little paws, rubbing them round and round each other just as a person does his hands.

He liked to bathe and swim, too, going almost wild with delight over the first big tub of water he was allowed to get into.



Loki was an affectionate little animal. When he was sleepy he liked to cuddle up in my arms, holding my finger in his soft little paws, hairy outside, but inside as smooth and soft as satin.

When he was wide awake he was too full of life and mischief to rest quiet for more than a minute or so.

As I sat reading he would climb up my chair, sometimes perching on the back of it and pulling out my hairpins one by one.

Sometimes he would steal quietly along the arm of the chair and nip my fingers. If I didn't pay any attention he would bite harder and harder until I cried "Ouch!" and then away he would rush, hiding under something, and peeping out until he saw I was reading again, and then back he would come.

Loki was very inquisitive, and he delighted in breaking things and pulling them to pieces.

There was a drawer in the bookcase that was kept full of toys for children who might be visiting in the house, and Loki liked nothing better than to be allowed to get into this drawer.

He would pick up one thing after another, turning it

over and over and examining it. He would pull at it, try his teeth on it, and then lay it down and pick up something else.

He ran up and down the keys of the piano, seeming to enjoy the noise he made; and the sewing machine was of great interest to him. Once it was left open, and he took out all the little slides and shuttles and screws he could, so we had to have a man come to put it in order again.



He could climb and jump like a monkey, and it was very hard to keep things out of his reach.

Sometimes his habit of climbing got him into trouble.

I came home, one day, to find him flying up and down and about the house, almost crazy with terror at a piece of fly paper that had stuck to his tail; and I had a great time catching him and taking it off. We had thought the fly paper was out of his reach on the kitchen mantel, but sometimes it seemed as if there were no place where he couldn't get, somehow or other.

Loki's especial playmate was a great Saint Bernard dog named Barry.

Loki was scarcely as big as Barry's head (for he never grew to a raccoon's full size), but he was not in the least afraid of his huge playfellow.

When Barry had a bone, Loki would try to take it from him, pulling the dog's lips apart, and trying to pry open those great jaws with his little claws. Barry would wait until he thought Loki was not looking, and then would

begin to gnaw his bone; but quick as a wink the raccoon's little hairy arm would be in his mouth, trying to pull the morsel away.

Poor Barry would growl and snarl, and try in vain to frighten Loki away; but he was always very careful not to hurt him.

It generally ended in the raccoon's getting the bone; and then Barry would stand watching him, the water dripping from his mouth.

Loki liked to climb up on Barry's back and swing from his ears and collar; and then, when he was quite tired out by his pranks, he would curl up between the paws of the huge dog, and sleep away peacefully, certain that Barry would protect him from all dangers.

Loki's teeth were very sharp, and sometimes he would bite his playmate so hard as to make him whine. Then the little coon had to be punished. Barry never liked to see that, though, and he would come up and poke me with his nose, wagging his tail and looking at me pleadingly as though to say, "Please don't hurt him; he's so little."

Though Loki was ready enough to use his sharp little teeth, he was very much afraid of being hurt himself.

One time I brought a little stray kitten, half his size, into the house, and he was so afraid that he hid under my skirts, making a queer, snuffing noise in his throat.

The kitten paid no attention to him, but began to lap up a saucer of milk that was given it.

Seeing this, Loki slowly and warily came out. He went nearer and nearer to the saucer of milk. At last he began to dabble his paws in it, and then, reaching over, pulled the kitten's ears with his milky paws.

This was too much for puss, and she gave him a sharp box that sent him back crying with fright, and he would not go near her again.

Loki was not afraid, however, when Barry was there to take care of him.

One moonlight night there was a great sound of quarrelling out in the street in front of the house.

It was Barry and Loki in the midst of several strange dogs, growling and snarling, and seeming to dare them to come on. But the raccoon was very careful to keep directly between Barry's front paws all the while.

The two looked so fierce that the strange dogs all slunk away without daring to fight them.

As Loki grew older he grew more and more mischievous, until at last we hardly knew what to do with him.

It seemed cruel to chain him or cage him, and he began to wander into the neighbors' houses.

One neighbor, who had a bantam chicken, was afraid to let it out of the cellar because Loki caught it once and pulled its tail out.

He slept through the day in another neighbor's arbor, coming home at dusk as we sat out on our lawn, always making us feel anew what a strange, untamed animal he was, as he came toward us through the twilight.

But it was worse still when he began to visit a friend's house, climbing in through the window, and pulling the things off the tables and bureaus. He almost frightened her new housemaid into a fit, for she had never seen a raccoon before, and thought he was a new and dreadful kind of rat.

At last he grew so troublesome that we decided we

must send him away, and it seemed as though the best place of all would be the zoölogical gardens.

So he was boxed up, one day, and sent off.

Only once more did I ever see Loki. That was one day when I took a child I knew up to the zoölogical gardens.

We stopped in front of the raccoons' cage, and as they all pressed up against the bars, stretching out their paws for the peanuts we gave them, it seemed to me that I recognized one of them as Loki.

I called him in the old way, "Coonie, coonie, coonie!" and reaching over, I scratched his little furry ear and cheek, and I felt sure he knew me, too.

I never saw him again, and I never want to.

I know he is very contented there with all the other raccoons; but I can't help being afraid that when he saw me he longed for his liberty and the home where he had been so happy and free, so I feel that I said my last good-by to Loki that day.

MAY.



I CLIMBED and I climbed to the top of
the tree ;
High up in the branches I stood.
Below in the field was a man with his
plow,
And I called him as loud as I could.

He stopped and he looked at the fields
and the lane,
But no one at all could he see ;
For he never once thought, as he won-
dered and stared,
I was up in the top of the tree.

I swung and I swayed with the tree in
the wind ;
I was not afraid I would fall.
The maple buds put out their little green
wings,
And nobody saw me at all.

WAKENING.

I DREAMED I stepped in a little gray boat;
The sky above was gray;
Out over the sea from the dreamland shore
I was drifting and drifting away.

The dreamland shore was growing dim,
Though I strained my eyes to see;
And the dream child, too, was fading away
Who had played all night with me.



The dream child waved its shadowy hand,
And wept to see me go. "Farewell!
Farewell!" I heard him cry.
"You are going to wake, I know."

And then the shore had faded away ;
There were only my boat and me,
And the wind and the sail, and the sky above,
And the soundless dreamland sea.

My boat ran up on a smooth white beach,
And faded away like smoke ;
That beach was my own little nursery bed,
And I opened my eyes and woke.

So often, now, when I'm going to sleep,
I wish I could see once more
The cove where the little gray boat is moored
And the dream child plays on the shore ;

But in dreamland none can choose his path
Or find his friends again—
And the little dream child by the dreamland sea
Will wait for me in vain.

MORE WAYS THAN ONE.

THE brook flows down past the field, around the hill,
and through the wood.

There are all sorts of things in the brook : water cress
and snails, and little darting fishes, eelgrass and crawfish,
and under a stone where the water is cool and deep a little
brown lizard used to live.

The lizard was a busy little thing, always anxious about

something or other. She told the crawfish when to shed their shells; she showed the snails where to find dead leaves; and she attended to every one else's business as well as her own.

One day when she was crawling up the stream, she saw a tadpole lying in a sunny shallow, with its nose almost out of the water.

"That tadpole oughtn't to lie there in the sun," said the lizard to herself. "It's too warm. I think I'll tell him." So she crawled up to where the tadpole was lying.

As she came nearer she heard the tadpole whispering softly to himself. "Oh, how beautiful! how beautiful!" he was saying.

"What is so beautiful?" asked the lizard, curiously, looking about her.

"That singing!" cried the tadpole. "Don't you hear it?"

And now that the lizard listened, she did indeed hear a perfect chorus of birds singing their morning songs in wood and field and thicket.

"Yes, it's pretty enough," said the lizard. "But you oughtn't to be lying here in the hot sun. You'll make yourself sick."

The tadpole only wriggled impatiently, and then lay still, listening. But presently he turned his little dull eyes on the lizard. "I suppose you have often seen birds coming down to the stream to bathe," he said. "Do you think I look anything like one?"

"Like a bird!" cried the lizard. "No, you don't."

"Well, I don't see why not," said the tadpole. "To be sure, I haven't any legs, but I have a tail."

"Yes," said the lizard; "but birds have beaks and feathers and wings as well, and you haven't anything but a body and a tail."

"That is true," said the tadpole, and he sighed heavily.

As the lizard had said, it was warm up in the shallow where the tadpole lay; but she was curious now as to why the tadpole should want to look like a bird, so she settled herself down more comfortably, and went on talking.

"Now, I should like to know," she said, "why you want to look like a bird."

At first the tadpole made no answer; he seemed to be either shy or dull; but when the lizard asked him again, he said: "I don't know."

Then he was silent again; and the lizard was about to go away when the tadpole suddenly went on: "It's because there seems to be something inside of me that must sing, and I've tried and tried, until all the fishes and even the snails laugh at me, and I can't make a sound. I think if I only had legs, and could hop about like a bird, I could do it."

"But I don't see why you should want to sing," said the lizard. "I never did."

Still, the tadpole seemed so grieved about it that she felt sorry for him, and stayed there in the shallow talking to him for quite a long time; and the next morning she went to see him again.

This was the beginning of a friendship between the two; and though the lizard could not understand why the tadpole should wish to sing, she never made fun of him, but tried to think of some plan by which he might learn to do it.

Once she suggested that if he were only up on the shore he might be able to do something about it. So he wriggled himself up half out of the water; but almost immediately he grew so sick that the lizard had to pull him back again by his tail, feeling terribly frightened, all the while, lest it should break.

It was the very next morning that the lizard found the tadpole in a state of wild excitement. "Oh, Lizard, Lizard!" he cried, shaking all over from his nose to his tail. "Just look at me! I'm getting legs!"

It was true. There they were, still very small and weak, but really legs! The lizard and the tadpole had been too busy talking over how to make them grow to notice that they were already budding.

They were still more excited when, soon afterwards, they saw near the front part of the tadpole's body two more little buds; and the lizard was sure these would prove to be wings.

It was a terrible blow to them when they found these were not wings at all, but more legs. "Now it's all over," cried the tadpole, in despair. "It was bad enough to not have wings; but now that I'm getting legs this way, there's no knowing where it'll end."

The lizard, too, was almost hopeless, until suddenly she remembered a crawfish she had known who had lost one of his legs in a fight, and it had hardly hurt him at all. She said perhaps she could pull the tadpole's front legs off the same way.

He was quite willing for her to try, but at the first twitch she gave he cried out, "Ouch! that hurts!" so the lizard had to stop.



She still thought, however, that something could have been done about it if the tadpole had not been such a coward and had let her pull harder.

But worse was to follow.

One morning, before the lizard was up, the tadpole came wriggling over to the door of her house.

"Lizard, Lizard, come out here!" he cried. Then, as soon as she came out, he begged her to get a piece of eelgrass and measure his tail.

"I've been afraid it was shrinking for some time," he said, "and now I'm almost sure of it. I have such strange feelings, too. Sometimes I feel as though I must have air, and I get up on a stone so that I'm almost out of the water, and only then am I comfortable."

Hastily the lizard got the eelgrass and measured. Then they sat staring at each other in dismay. The tail was almost gone!



Still, the lizard would not give up all hope.

That same crawfish that had lost a leg lived farther down the stream, and he was very old and wise. She would get him to come and look at the tadpole and give his advice.

So the kindly little lizard bustled away, and soon she came back to where the tadpole was lying, and the crawfish came with her, twiddling his feelers, and staring both ways with his goggle eyes.

"Sick tadpole!" he cried. "This is no tadpole!" Then, coming closer, the crawfish went on: "Why are you lying here? Why aren't you over in the swamp singing with all the rest of them? Don't you know you're a frog?"

"A frog!" cried the lizard.

But the young tadpole frog leaped clear out of the brook with a joyous cry.

"A frog!" he shouted. "Why, that's the best of all! If that's true I must say good-by, little Lizard. Hey for the wide green swamp and the loud frog chorus under the light of the moon! Good-by, little friend, good-by! I shall never forget what you have done for me."

So the frog went away to join his brothers.

The little lizard felt quite lonely for a while after the frog had gone; but she comforted herself by thinking how happy he must be.

Often in the twilight, or when the moon was bright, she listened to the chorus of frogs as they sang over in the swamp, and wondered if the one who sang so much louder and deeper than the rest was the little frog who had tried so hard to be a bird.

"After all," she said to herself, "there are more ways of singing than one."



JUNE.

THE robins and blackbirds awoke me at dawn,
Out in the wet orchard beyond the green lawn.

For there they were holding a grand jubilee,
And no one had wakened to hear it but me.

The blue morning-glories were sprinkled with dew ;
There were hundreds of spider webs wet with it, too,

And pussy cat, out by the lilacs, I saw,
Was stopping to shake off the drops from her paw.

I dressed in the silence as still as a mouse,
And stole down the stairway and out of the house.

There, still in the dawning, the garden paths lay
Where yesterday evening we shouted at play.

By the borders of boxwood and under the trees
There was nothing astir but the birds and the bees.

“If all the wide world had been made just for me,”
I thought, “what a wonderful thing it would be.”

THE LAND WHERE THE LAZYBIRD FLAPS.

SAID John to Peter, one day: “I hear
There’s a land in the west—and it lies quite near—
Where hot tarts grow on the tartlet tree,
And roasts are as tame as they can be.

“There’s a golden mist on everything;
The No-works play in the sand and sing;
The grass is green, and the sun shines bright,
And there’s never a storm by day or night.

“For the lazybird flaps above all day,
And blows the tempests and rain away.
Oh, come! let us sail to that beautiful land
Where the No-works play on the golden sand.”

So they set their sails and they bore away
Till they came to the spot where the island lay—
To the beautiful island down in the west,
To the land where the lazybird builds its nest.

In that beautiful land where the skies are clear
Did John and Peter live for a year;
And they feasted on feasts that were fit for a king,
While they learned the song that the No-works sing.

But John and Peter one morning woke,
And cold and stormy the dawning broke;
The wind was shrill and the skies were gray:
For the lazybird—it had flown away.

And, while they stared, from the windy east
Came, gnashing and growling, the duty-beast!
A most terrible beast he was to see,
And he caught them both by the wild-tart tree.

He bore them away to his far-off den—
Ah! they'll never escape from those rocks again—
From those rocks, where only at night, poor things,
Can they dream of the song that the No-work sings.

THE WISHING STAR.

LITTLE Ann was always wishing for things. She wished she lived in the city; she wished she had a new doll; she wished she had a red frock like Mary's and a brown hat like Jane's; she wished she was grown up and she wished she was a baby. From morning till night it was wish—wish—wish.

“Do stop wishing, my dear,” said her mother, “and try to enjoy what you have.”

But nothing that was said made any difference to Ann. She only stopped to catch her breath, and then she began wishing again.

One summer her Uncle Tom came out from the town to spend a week with them in the country. After supper they all sat out on the broad porch while the light faded away and the stars twinkled out one by one.

Ann sat between her father and Uncle Tom, expecting every moment to hear her mother say, “Time for bed, my little daughter.”

“I wish I didn't have to go to bed,” thought Ann.

“Oh, what a beautiful falling star!” cried Cousin Julia, a grown-up young lady who was visiting at Ann's house, too. “I never saw one last so long.”

“Now, Ann, if you could only find that star you might have any wish you chose to make,” said Uncle Tom.

“Could I, truly?” asked Ann, peering up through the darkness at her uncle's face to see if he were joking; but he did not look as though he were.

“Why, don't you know?” he said. “If you find a

fallen star and pick it up, the first wish that's made on it comes true; at least, so I've heard."

"I wish I could find it," said Cousin Julia, who had been very silent all the evening. "I know what I'd wish for. I'd wish to find the stone I lost from my ring."

"What! you don't mean your diamond ring?" cried Uncle Tom, quickly.

"Yes; I lost the stone from it while we were out walking last evening, and I was out looking for it all the morning. I think I've been over every step of the way twice."

"Oh, Julia!" said her uncle, reproachfully. "Why should you have worn it, in the country, at any rate?"

"I know I shouldn't have," said Julia; "but how could I think of anything happening to it?"

They were still talking about the ring when Mamma said: "Time for bed, my little Ann."

Slowly and unwillingly Ann arose and kissed Papa and then the rest of the circle. She lingered when she came to her uncle. "Uncle Tom," she whispered, "shall I truly and really get my wish if I find the star?"

"If you find it and bring it home with you," said Uncle Tom, gravely; "only you mustn't tell any one."

"Oh, Tom, don't fill Ann's head with such nonsense," said her mamma.

"But it's true," said Uncle Tom. "If she finds that star and brings it home herself she will get the first wish that's made on it."

And then Ann went off to bed.

"Do you know, Mary," said Ann, while her nurse was undressing her, "if you see a star fall, and find it and bring it home, you can have any wish you choose?"

"So I've heard tell," said the nurse.

"Well, then, Mary, I think I'll get my wish; because I saw just exactly where a star fell to-night, and it was a big one, too. It fell right down behind the hill over beyond the chestnut tree. I'm going to look for it to-morrow."

"I hope you'll find it," said Mary; and then Ann's mamma came in to hear the little girl say her prayers, and to kiss her good night.

The next morning was bright and clear. It would have been very sad if it had been rainy, for Ann meant to go out and find the star that day. She had not forgotten.

She ate her breakfast in great haste, and as soon as she had finished, she got her sunbonnet and put it on and ran out of doors.

"Where are you going, Ann?" called her brother Tommy.

"Oh, somewhere!" said Ann.

"I don't want you to go into the toolhouse, because my hen's setting there," said Tommy, who was older than Ann.

"I'm not going there," said Ann; "I'm going somewhere else; but I can't tell you where, because Uncle Tom said it wouldn't come true if I did."

Uncle Tom himself and Cousin Julia were sitting over in the shady part of the porch. "I do wonder if it's possible that child believed what you told her last night, and has gone to look for the star?" said Julia.

"What a joke if she has!" Uncle Tom cried. But Julia said: "Oh, call her back! it's a shame to let her go out to look for it."

"It won't hurt her," said Uncle Tom, "and she has all the fun of thinking she may find it."

Meanwhile Ann, in her sunbonnet, had run down to the gate and opened it. She crossed the road, climbed the fence, went up the hill, past the chestnut tree, and down the other side to the marsh meadow.



Here she began to go more slowly.

It must have been about here that the star had fallen.

She walked on, looking sharply on this side and on that; but it was not until she had almost reached the turnstile that she really found the star. Then she saw it lying beside a great clump of grass, and sparkling in the sunlight like a drop of dew.

Though Ann had thought she might find it, she could hardly believe it was true when she really picked up the wishing star and held it in her hand.

It was not so large as she had thought it would be; it was no larger than a pea: but she knew it by its brightness and by the wonderful colors that flashed from it—red and blue and green.

She stood still, looking at it as it lay in her hand.

Now that she had really found it,—now that she could have anything in all the wide world that she chose,—she wondered what she should wish for.

Should she wish to be grown up? But her little cousins Alice and Susie were coming to visit her the next week, and if she were grown up she couldn't play with them.

She might wish for a doll that could walk and talk; but then, she had dolls already.

She turned over one wish after another in her mind, and at last she thought the best thing would be for her to keep the star and think awhile. She must be very careful not to be in too much of a hurry, like the lady in the fairy tale—the one who got only a black pudding for her three wishes.

So Ann pulled out her little handkerchief, wrapped the wishing star in it, and put it back in her pocket again. She mustn't let any one know she had it.

She went home very slowly, thinking hard all the way. She would wish for something that would surprise and please everybody very much; only she couldn't quite think what it should be.

As she came up the steps of the porch Uncle Tom called to her teasingly: "Did you find it?" But without answering, Ann ran past him and into the house.

"Oh, don't tease her," said Cousin Julia; "it's a shame."

"Very well; I won't," promised Uncle Tom. "I won't say anything more to her about it."

The little girl carried the wishing star up to her room, and tucked it, still wrapped up in her handkerchief, down

into the corner of her bureau drawer, where no one would see it.

That afternoon, when Ann came downstairs freshly dressed and ready for tea, her mother was sitting out on the porch alone. "Where's Cousin Julia?" asked the little girl. "She promised to read me a story before supper."

"She's gone out with your uncle to look for the stone she lost from her ring," said her mamma.

The little girl sat down on the steps, and began to look at the pictures in a book while she waited.

She had looked at them all twice over before Cousin Julia and Uncle Tom came back.

"Did you find it?" called Mamma, going to the edge of the porch to meet them.

Cousin Julia only shook her head. She looked very unhappy.

"Cousin Julia, are you going to read to me now?" asked little Ann.

"No, not just now, dear," said her cousin, going on into the house.

"Poor Julia!" said Uncle Tom, after she had gone. "She is so unhappy over it."

"Yes," said Mamma. "She could hardly keep from crying when she told me about it, poor child!"

Suddenly, as little Ann stood there listening, a wonderful thought came to her. If she were to give the wishing star to Cousin Julia, then she could get her diamond back, for she could wish for that.

The little girl hesitated. There were so many things she might wish for herself! But Cousin Julia was so kind,

and made her such pretty paper dolls, and read her fairy tales. Yet, it was her own wishing star. She had hunted for it and found it herself. Then she remembered how sad Cousin Julia had looked.

Putting down the book in a great hurry, Ann ran upstairs, took out the handkerchief with the wishing star still in it, and flew over to Cousin Julia's room.

She was in such haste that she forgot to knock, but ran right in.

Cousin Julia was standing beside the window, wiping her eyes. "What do you want, little Ann?" she said. "I can't have you in here just now, dear."

"It's your ring, Cousin Julia," cried the little girl, eagerly, running to her side and putting the handkerchief into her hand. "You may wish for it, 'cause I'm going to let you have my wishing star."

"What do you mean, child?" said Cousin Julia, looking dazed.

"Your diamond," said Ann. "You must wish for it, you know."

"Of course I wish for it," said Cousin Julia.

"Then look in the handkerchief," cried the child, triumphantly.

Still without in the least understanding what Ann meant, Cousin Julia began to unwrap the handkerchief.

Suddenly she gave a cry of amazement and joy. "My diamond!" she cried. "Oh, it can't be true! Oh, you dear duck of a child, *where* did you find it?"

"But—but that's the wishing star," faltered little Ann, as she saw her cousin holding in her fingers the bright, clear thing that she had found that morning in the grass.

“Oh, my darling, how happy I am!” cried Julia, throwing her arms about the little girl, and kissing first her and then the sparkling stone.

And that was what it really was! Not a wishing star at all, but only the diamond that Cousin Julia had lost down in the meadow, and that Ann had found.

It proved almost as good as a wishing star to the little girl, however, for when her cousin went back to the city she took the child with her, and in the finest toy shop there she let Ann choose from among all the beautiful dolls and toys the thing she wanted most, and made her a present of it.

But that was the only wishing star Ann ever found.



JULY.

PAST the meadows, parched and brown,
We drove across the hills to town
 To see the big parade ;
The sunny pavements burned our feet ;
It was so noisy in the street
 That Tommy felt afraid.

Through the crowds, with fife and drum
And flags, we saw the soldiers come,
 And boys marched either side ;
And one big fat man rode ahead
Who had a sword, and Billy said,
 “ They’re captains when they ride.”

They carried flags, red, white, and blue.
I wished I was a soldier, too ;
 Then, when the big drum beat
The people all would run to see,
And little boys would stare at me
 As we marched up the street.



THE CIRCUS PARADE.

ONE day we took our lunches
And all went driving down
To see the big procession
Parading through the town.

The people lined the pavements ;
Along the curb they sat ;
Some woman with a parasol
Knocked off Eliza's hat.

The boys climbed up the lamp-posts,
And up the awnings, too ;
They shouted and they whistled
To every one they knew.

The people were so noisy,
All talking in the street,
I thought I heard the music
And heard the big drums beat.



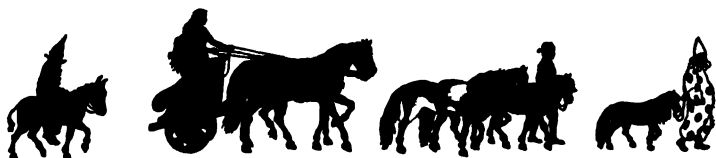
Some boy cried out, " It's coming! "
I pushed with all the rest.
It only was a wagon—
" Salvation Oil's the Best."

Tommy began to whimper—
It was so hot that day!—
Until, upon a sudden,
The folks all looked one way,

And down the street came something,
All big and gray and slow—
The elephants and camels.
At last it was THE SHOW.

The banners waved and glittered ;
The horses trotted gay ;
The elephants all swung their trunks ;
The band began to play.

And on a golden chariot,
Far, far up, all alone,
There sat a lovely lady
Upon a gilded throne.



Then came the spotted ponies ;
They trotted brisk and small ;
And one a clown was leading,
The littlest of all.

Next was a cage of lions,
And, dressed in spangles bright,
There sat a man among them.
Indeed, it was a sight!

Another band ; and wagons
Still rumbling, rumbling past ;
And then a crowd of little boys ;
And then—that was the last.

That night, when all were sleeping,
And everything was still,
I heard a circus wagon
Come jolting up the hill.

Another and another
Went rumbling through the night,
And then two elephants passed by,
Close covered out of sight.

When all had passed the tollgate
I jumped back into bed;
But all that night the sound of wheels
Kept rumbling through my head.

THE TOAD'S JEWEL.

TOUGHSKIN, the toad, sat at the door of his house,
and as he sat there he swelled himself with pride.

It was only the day before that two men, walking along the road, had stopped and looked at him.

"What place has such an ugly thing in such a beautiful morning?" said one man.

"Yes, it is ugly enough," said the other, who wore spectacles and had a wise, kind face; "but you know the old saying, that every toad carries a jewel in his head."

Then it was that the toad was filled with pride. "Who would have thought it?" he said to himself. "And yet,

all along I felt that I was somehow different from all the other meadow things."

Presently a bird lighted on a bush near Toughskin and began to sing in praise of the beautiful morning:

"Bright the sky is shining;
Clouds are shining, too.
Bright on every flower
Shines the morning dew."

"If you really want to see something that shines, you ought to see the jewel I have in my head," said the toad.

"Have you a jewel in your head?" asked the bird.

"Do you mean to say that, with all your journeyings about the world, you didn't know that? Certainly I have. Come down here beside me, and perhaps you may see it shining through my eyes."



The bird hopped down close to the toad

and looked into his eyes, and, sure enough, they were beautiful and brilliant as though there were really a jewel back of them.

"Yes, I can see that," said the bird.

"Then, if you want to sing of something bright, sing of the jewel in my head."

So the little bird flew up on the bush with a flutter of its wings, and sang again :

“ Bright the sky is shining ;
Clouds are shining, too ;
Bright on every flower
Shines the morning dew.

“ Shining is the rainbow,
Blue and green and red ;
Brightest is the jewel
Hid in Toughskin's head !”

Then Toughskin swelled himself up more proudly than ever. “ What a wonderful toad I am !” he said to himself.

The bird flew farther on down the road, still singing of the jewel in Toughskin's head, and telling every one of it.

After a while the bees that hummed over the clover field, the butterflies busy sucking thistle honey, and even the little flies that buzzed and shot about through the sunshine, had heard of the jewel in the toad's head ; and Toughskin grew as proud as a king, so that he would hardly speak to any of them.

One day two robbers came walking down the road, and they sat down on the wall near Toughskin's house to rest.

Toughskin looked and looked at them, trying to swell himself up so that they would notice him.

“ Good morning,” he said, at last.

The robbers paid no attention to him.

“ I suppose you've heard about me,” went on Toughskin.

Still the robbers paid no more attention than if they hadn't heard.

"Not that it's anything to think much of," said Toughskin, "only the birds and the bees and the flies are so foolish they seem to have been making a great to-do about the jewel I have in my head, and I thought perhaps you had heard of it."

"What's that?" asked the older robber.

"About a jewel I have in my head," said foolish Toughskin, all in a flutter to think the men were listening to him. "To be sure, I've never seen it myself, but I've heard it's a fine jewel, and as big as a hazelnut. Indeed, it ought to be, from the way it makes my poor head ache at times. I can fairly feel it shining there."

The two robbers put their heads together and began whispering, while Toughskin sat blinking up at them in silly pride.

Presently, however, the robbers began to look at him so strangely that Toughskin grew quite nervous. Then he heard one of them whisper, "Once we have him, a stout oak staff will soon fetch it out."

The truth was that as soon as the robbers heard of the jewel in the toad's head, they began to want it, and determined to have it, even if they had to beat the toad himself to death to get it.

Suddenly the younger of the two men bent down and made a clutch at Toughskin.

But the toad was too quick for him.

Like a flash it tumbled backward into its house, and began scrambling down into the darkness out of their reach.

The robbers, however, would not give up so easily.

One of them watched the door of the hole while the other ran and got two sharp sticks to dig the toad out.

Now, Toughskin's house had two openings. One was beside the wall in the road, but the other was quite a distance away, in a grassy field; and it was to this second opening, unknown to the robbers, that Toughskin made his way.



He hurried along, trembling and panting, and when he reached the opening he poked his nose out very slowly and cautiously and looked about him.

The field was sunny and still, except for the buzzing of insects, and a little ladybug was crawling slowly up a stem of grass.

Over in the road, with only the wall between, the toad could hear the robbers digging and muttering to themselves.

Trembling in every leg, Toughskin crawled out of the hole, and then hurried away through the grass, thinking every moment that he heard the footsteps of the robbers in pursuit of him. But when at last the men dug under the wall and found the other opening, Toughskin was far, far away, where they could never find him.

All that day the toad journeyed on, until at last he reached a wide hillside near a wood, where no one had ever heard of him or the jewel in his head.

Here Toughskin found a hole beside a fallen log, and here he made his home.

Sometimes he would hear the birds and the butterflies that flew over him saying to each other, "Just look at that poor toad down there by the log. How sad he must be, so ugly and so poor!"

And Toughskin would look up at them with his shining eyes, and blink contentedly; but never again did he even so much as whisper about the jewel he carried in his head.

MY DREAM.

I HAD a wonderful dream last night,
For I dreamed that I had strayed
Through a shadowy valley, dim and far,
To the land where dreams are made.

There on the left I saw a house,
Gloomy and dark and tall;
A black nightmare with fiery eyes
Was tied beside the wall.

There were letters carved above the door
In a grinning gargoye's shade;
And I read the words: "IN HERE ARE DREAMS
FOR NAUGHTY CHILDREN MADE."

Upon the right a castle stood,
With domes and turrets too;
And the walls with varying colors shone,
As the glistening bubbles do.

Within were lights and music soft,
And the door was opened wide.
Through it an angel stepped and looked
About on every side.

And a troop of little children came,
In white, with naked feet;
The angel led them in, and I
Was left there in the street;

But I read these words above the door
In letters bright and clear
That shone like gold: "GOOD CHILDREN'S DREAMS
ARE MADE FOR THEM IN HERE."

No more I saw, for then I was drawn
Into a cavern deep,
Soundless and dark, and the name of it
Was the Cave of Dreamless Sleep.

WUZZA.

NOBODY thought Wuzza was a beautiful cat. That is, nobody but the cook and her friends. They used to admire her.

She was a stumpy little cat. Her body was stumpy, her legs were stumpy, and her tail was very stumpy. She looked as though she had been meant to be a white cat, and then some one had upset an inkbottle over her. One



ear and one eye were black, and this gave her face a crooked, one-sided look. Her hind legs were so fat they made one think of sausages dressed in long black stockings.

Wuzza's playmate was a black dog named Carlo. They used to

race and tear through the halls and around the furniture like mad things. Then, when Wuzza was tired, she would give him a sharp scratch, and run in under the kitchen stove.

Carlo would stand before it, barking and trying to lure her out. If she did not come, he would shut his eyes, squeeze under the stove, catch her by her neck or tail, or any way he could, and pull her out, struggling and spitting.

Then their play would begin again, and go on until

Wuzza took refuge up on the dresser, where he could not reach her.

Though Wuzza often scratched Carlo herself, she always helped him in other quarrels.

Carlo often got into street fights. Wuzza knew his bark or yelp a block away, and she would fly out, down the street, and into the midst of the fight. That almost always ended it, for there are very few dogs that are not afraid of an angry cat.

Wuzza grew to have quite a taste for fighting, and would not allow any dog, big or little, to come into her yard.



That is, no dog except Jack, a little English terrier whom she had known since her kittenhood. He was a dignified little dog, treating her always with distant respect.

Wuzza would sit with her front paws curled under her, and her tail lashing, and glower at him as he nosed about the yard.

Only twice did Wuzza allow herself to lose her temper with Jack. Once was when he quarreled with Carlo over a bone, and then she took Carlo's part, and flew upon the terrier so suddenly that she sent him rolling over and over down the garden terrace and into the street.

The other time was when her master and mistress left home, and she was sent on a visit to the terrier's owner.

Wuzza was carried to her new home wrapped in a red shawl, and people turned to stare at the lumpy, moving bundle from which came such angry growls.

Her first act, on being set free, was to fly at the terrier, who was innocently standing near and watching the shawl being unwrapped.

Taken by surprise, he fled with a dismal yelp, with Wuzza after him, scratching and spitting.

Either she was homesick, or everything around her was so strange that it soured Wuzza's temper.

Every day after that, about noon, she sat on the porch; and the moment the terrier appeared, trotting home after his master from the office, she flew at him.

He generally came into the house with Wuzza riding on his back, and ran under the sofa to scrape her off. Then she would retreat to the depths of a chair, and sit there glaring at him.

The little terrier had grown very unhappy before Wuzza's mistress came back and took the cat home.

Wuzza was far from being a perfect character. Not only was she short of temper, but she was a great thief, and very inquisitive.

Never a bundle or a box came into the house that Wuzza did not try to get her nose into. She would crawl over it, and claw and tear at the paper, and would not be contented until it was opened and she was allowed to see what was inside.

Her favorite place to sit was on top of a screen between the dining room and library. From there she could oversee everything that went on in the house, from the banging of the kitchen door to the arrival of visitors.

Wuzza enjoyed nothing more than rummaging through closets and among her mistress's clothes.

Once her mistress, opening a closet door, found a silk

waist lying on the floor. "That naughty cat!" she said to herself. "She has been among my things again."

She stooped to pick up the waist. It was very heavy; one sleeve dragged like lead. Then she saw, sticking out from the cuff of it, Wuzza's face, the eyes bulging out, the mouth open. The cat was almost choked.

Crawling over the hooks where the clothes hung, she had lost her balance and fallen down the big sleeve to the narrow part; there she hung, wedged and strangling.

When her mistress pulled her out, Wuzza lay for a while quite limp and helpless; and it was a long time before she ventured in among the clothes again.

Wuzza was a fine mouser, but she was even fonder of out-of-doors hunting.

Even in the hottest midsummer days she would go out in the open lot nearby, and crawl through the rank weeds like some stealthy wild animal, and come home across the sunny, glaring street with a grasshopper or a beetle in her mouth.

The insect was generally alive; and Wuzza's mistress was not willing to have the cat torture it, so she would take it from her.

Then Wuzza would lie on the porch for a while, panting, and as soon as she had rested would sally out again.

Wuzza's son Dicky was even a greater hunter than she. He went for larger game—robins, blackbirds, and sparrows.



He was a very different-looking cat from his mother, being very long-legged and thin, and as black as jet, with not a white hair on him.

It was a great cross to Wuzza that Dicky should be so much larger than she.

Every morning at breakfast time a chair would be drawn up to the table, and the two cats would get up on it and watch for such small morsels as were offered them.

The great thing was to get on the edge of the chair nearest the table. If Wuzza got there Dicky could look over her head; if Dicky squeezed in before her, poor little Wuzza bobbed and stretched in vain. She could only catch fleeting glimpses of the table and the knives and forks.

Sometimes, after she had been bobbing and stretching in this way for a while, she would suddenly lose her temper, and box Dicky's ears so sharply that he would jump down and run out into the kitchen in a fright.

When they sat on the crossbar of the fence together, Dicky could look over very comfortably; but Wuzza had to stand on her hind legs to see what was going on beyond.

Again and again she would watch Dicky from the ground below, as he sat up on the crossbar, and then she would jump up beside him, and crane and stretch her neck, trying to see over, too; and when she couldn't she would grow so angry, her tail would lash back and forth.

One blazing hot July day, Wuzza and Dicky had gone hunting over in the lot. Dicky soon grew weary, and came home to sleep away the heated hours in the cool shade of the grapevines; but Wuzza was tireless.

Again and again she brought in some poor live grasshopper or cricket, and each time her mistress took it from her; but as soon as Wuzza had rested a few minutes she would be off again.

Then Wuzza stayed away for a long time, and her mistress forgot all about her. Lunch time came and went, and still Wuzza was not thought of.

It was not until evening that they began to wonder where she was. Then Wuzza's mistress went to the front porch and called her: "Wuzz! Wuzz! Wuzz!" There was no answer. Only Dicky came running around the corner of the house and mewed inquiringly.

"Wuzz! Wuzz! Wuzz!" But still she did not come.

They had seen the last of poor old Wuzza.

What became of her they never knew. Perhaps she resented having the grasshoppers taken from her, and decided to seek some other home. Perhaps some one stole her. Or she may have been overcome by the heat. But, whatever the reason was, she never came back again.

The terrier can now quarrel with Carlo undisturbed; the grasshoppers whirl among the weeds uncaught; and at mealtimes Dicky sits alone on the chair which poor old Wuzza used to share with him.



AUGUST.

DEEP in the wood I made a house
Where no one knew the way ;
I carpeted the floor with moss,
And there I loved to play.

I heard the gurgling of the brook ;
At times an acorn fell ;
And far away a robin sang,
Deep in a lonesome dell.

I set a rock with acorn cups ;
So quietly I played,
A rabbit hopped across the grass
And did not seem afraid.

That night, when all the stars were
 out,
 I at my window stood,
 And thought how dark my house
 must be
 Down in the silent wood.

THE SEA PRINCESS.

IN a palace of pearl and seaweed
 Set round with shining shells,
 Under the deeps of the ocean,
 The little sea princess dwells.

Sometimes she sees the sha-
 dows
 Of great whales passing by,
 Or white-winged vessels sail-
 ing
 Between the sea and sky.

And when through the
 waves she rises,
 Beyond the break-
 ers' roar
 She hears the shouts
 of the children
 At play on the
 sandy shore ;



Or sees the ships' sides tower
Above like a wet black wall;
Or shouts to the roaring breakers,
And answers the sea gull's call.

But down in the quiet waters
Better she loves to play,
Making a seaweed garden,
Purple and green and gray;

Stringing with pearls a necklace,
Or learning curious spells
From the water witch, gray and ancient,
And hearing the tales she tells.

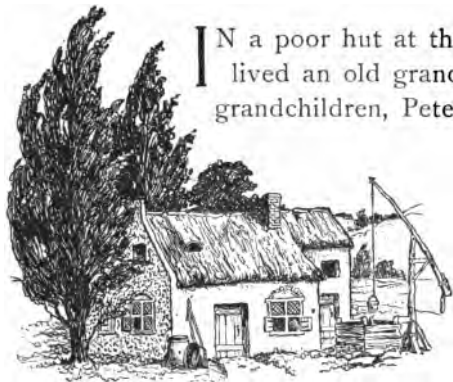
Out in the stable her sea horse
Champs in his crystal stall,
And fishes with scales that glisten
Come leaping forth at her call.

So the little sea princess
Is busy and happy all day,
Just as the human children
Are busy and happy at play.

And when the darkness gathers
Over the lonely deep,
On a bed of velvet seaweed
The princess is rocked to sleep.

THE HILL MOTHER.

PART I.



I N a poor hut at the foot of a mountain lived an old grandmother and her two grandchildren, Peter and Roselein; and in the castle on top of the mountain lived the children's uncle.

Their uncle was a great baron and very rich; but the grandmother was so poor that often she could scarcely get enough bread for the children to eat.

Sometimes when Peter and Roselein were out gathering firewood, their uncle would come riding by on his great black horse. When he saw the two children he would scowl at them so fiercely that Roselein trembled and shrank away. But Peter would stand up boldly and stare straight back into his uncle's eyes.

Whenever the grandmother heard that the children had met the baron, she would say: "Oh, be careful, Peter. Your uncle, the baron, wishes you no good. Try to keep out of his sight as much as you can."



The truth of the matter was, the baron had no right to the castle and all the wealth that he held. They had

belonged to Peter's father. But when he died Peter was too little to claim them, so the wicked uncle had seized everything.

While Peter was still a child it was easy for his uncle to keep him out of his rights. But when he grew to be a man it would be quite a different thing. Then there would be a score to settle.

That was why the baron hated his nephew, and was always turning over and over in his mind plans for ridding himself of the boy altogether.



One day, when Peter had gone to the village that lay over beyond the mountain, Roselein and the grandmother sat knitting, alone together in the hut.

"Tell me, grandmother," said the little girl, "who is the Hill Mother?"

The grandmother stopped knitting, and dropped her hands in her lap. "Now, who has been telling thee of the old Hill Mother?" she asked.

"My uncle, the baron," said Roselein. "He met Peter and me in the forest yesterday, and he stopped and asked us how we did. Then he said that he wondered that a stout lad like Peter was willing to be so poor when there was all the gold of the old Hill Mother's to be found for the seeking."

"Yes, yes," cried the grandmother, angrily; "your uncle, the Herr Baron, would be glad enough to have Peter set out to look for the Hill Mother's gold, for he knows that those who find it never come home again."

“But why do they never come home, grandmother?” asked Roselein. “And who is the Hill Mother?”

Then the grandmother told Roselein that the Hill Mother was an old woman who lived under a hill beyond the Desolate Rocks.

There she hoarded a treasure greater than any one ever had seen. All through the year she kept it hidden away under the hill; but every midsummer night when the moon was at the full she brought it out and counted it there in the moonlight. Then, if any one found her, he might ask of her anything he wished and she would grant it. Only, when she had granted it, he was in her power, and must go down with her under the hill.

As the grandmother ended, Peter's voice was heard singing gayly outside:

“Though feet may be weary,
And rough be the road,
A heart that is merry
Will lighten the load.

“Though forests be lonely,
Though twilight be gray,
A heart that is merry
Will lighten the way.”

“There comes Peter now,” cried Roselein, joyfully, running to open the door for him; for the two children loved each other dearly.

“Mind!” cried the grandmother, “no word to Peter about the Hill Mother.”

As the lad came in he carried a bundle under his arm,

and in his hand he held something that he laid proudly on the table.

"Look, grandmother," he said. "Here are ten broad pennies for you that the miller paid me to-day, and here is a great loaf of fresh bread that his wife gave me."

Instead of seeming glad, however, the grandmother hid her face in her hands and began to weep bitterly.

"Oh, grandmother! what is the matter?" cried the children.

"Alas, alas!" said the grandmother. "Of what use are ten pennies to us, when it is as much silver, and more, that we shall need to-night? Have you forgotten that this evening your uncle, the baron, will come for the rent we owe him for this hut?"

"Oh, but you have a whole bag of pennies laid away," said Peter, bravely; "and even if that is not enough, I will tell the baron how hard I will work to make up the rest, and he will surely wait awhile."

"You little know him," said the grandmother. "Nothing would please him better than to turn us out into the world; for then he would hope never to see you again."

Now Roselein, who was standing at the window, cried that even then her uncle was coming, riding toward the hut on his great black horse.

The grandmother dried her eyes hastily. Hardly had she time to wipe away her tears before there was a loud knocking at the door. In a moment it was thrown open, and the baron strode in.

"Well, dame," said he, with a scowling glance at the children, "I suppose you have the money you owe me all ready."

"Alas, no!" said the grandmother, trembling.

"What!" cried the baron, in a great voice, "you haven't?"

"I have a part of it," said the grandmother. Rising, she hobbled over to a great press that stood at one side of the room. From this she brought out a bag of pennies and emptied them on the table. "Look," she said; "I have managed to save this much, and if you will only have patience—"

"Patience!" cried the baron. "What have I to do with patience? Did I not tell you that to-day I must have the money, or out into the world you must go?"

But now Peter stepped forward. "My grandmother is old," he said, "but I am strong and young. If you will only wait awhile I will surely be able to earn enough to pay you."

The baron looked at the boy as though he hated the sight of him. "If you are so anxious to help your grandmother," he said, "why don't you go out in search of the old Hill Mother? If you could only find her you would never have to lack for anything."

"The Hill Mother!" said Peter.

But the grandmother cried hastily: "No, no; let us have no talk of the Hill Mother. We will go, as you say, and no doubt Heaven will offer us some shelter for our heads. Never listen to him, Peter."

"Hush, grandmother," said Peter. "Let me hear what my uncle has to say about the Hill Mother."

"This is what I have to say," said the baron. "The



old Hill Mother has more gold than she can count in a year, and she is ready to grant any wish they may make to those who find her. This is midsummer, and to-morrow night the moon is at the full, and she will be out with her treasure in the moonlight. All you have to do is to find her, and then you can ask for enough gold to make you rich for all your life."

"Do not listen to him, Peter!" cried the grandmother; but again Peter bade her be still.

"Even if I set out in search of the Hill Mother, I shouldn't know where to find her."

"That is easily told. She lives beyond the forest and past the Desolate Rocks, and any one that journeys there may find her."

"But what will become of my grandmother and Roselein while I am away?"

"If you will go in search of the Hill Mother," said his uncle, "I, on my part, will promise that they shall stay here until you come back."

"Very well, then," said Peter; "I will go."

"Oh, no, no! Oh, my little Peter!" cried the grandmother.

But the baron turned on his heel with a harsh laugh. "Remember, Peter, you have promised," he cried. "To-morrow I shall come back to see that you have kept your word, and if you have not, out you must go. Yes, and your old grandmother and Roselein, too."

They heard the baron still laughing as he mounted his great black horse outside and rode away.

The grandmother dropped her face on the table and began to sob bitterly; but Peter comforted her.

"Never fear for me, grandmother," he said. "Be sure I will find some way to escape from the old Hill Mother."

"But even if you do," his grandmother cried, "there are her servants, the little hill men, to be reckoned with. They will dance about you and bewitch you, so that you can neither remember the way you came nor where your home is."

"If that be so," said Peter, "I must take something with me to mark the way. Then, even if I do forget, I can still follow the marks. But what shall I take?"

He looked about the poor room, and his eyes fell on the bag of money. "The bag of pennies! Yes, I will take them, and drop them along the way. Then I can follow them back."

So, kissing his grandmother and sister tenderly, Peter set out bravely with the bag of pennies in search of the Hill Mother.

PART II.

PETER journeyed on and on through the forest and beyond, until he came to a wide gray country where there was nothing but rocks and twisted thorn bushes.

These were the Desolate Rocks.

And now the way grew so rough that Peter could hardly go on. As for his shoes, they were quite worn through; there were great holes in the soles of them.

Still, he thought of the grandmother and Roselein, and on he went, singing to himself to keep up his spirits:



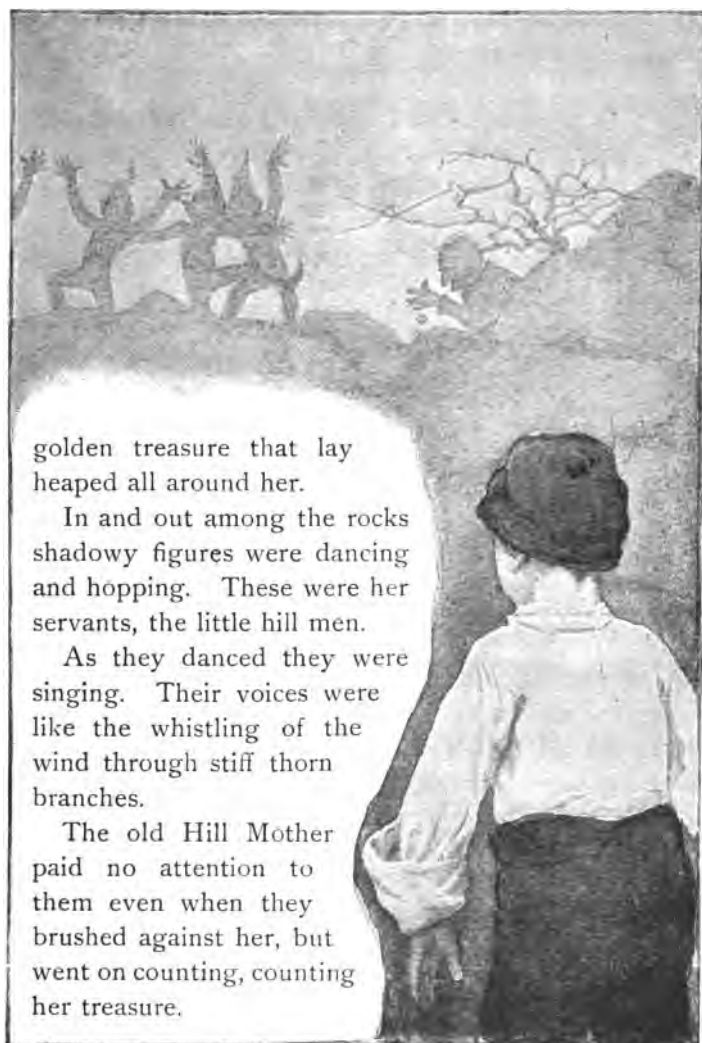
“ Past the Desolate Rocks,
Over brier and stone,
Through mist and through moonlight
I wander alone.

“ The moon’s sinking low,
And the bats are all out,
But brave heart and true heart
Should never feel doubt.”

Suddenly Peter saw before him the strangest looking thorn bush he had ever seen.

He stopped and looked at it. Presently it began to move, and then he saw that it was no thorn bush, after all, but an old woman, very gray and bent. It was the Hill Mother!

She sat there in the moonlight, counting a great



golden treasure that lay heaped all around her.

In and out among the rocks shadowy figures were dancing and hopping. These were her servants, the little hill men.

As they danced they were singing. Their voices were like the whistling of the wind through stiff thorn branches.

The old Hill Mother paid no attention to them even when they brushed against her, but went on counting, counting her treasure.

Peter, hidden among the rocks, lay watching and listening to the hill men's song:

“As black as a thorn bush, and withered and old,
See the old Hill Mother counting her gold.
Old woman, old woman, is all of it thine?”

The Hill Mother paid no heed to them, but counted on:

“One hundred, twelve hundred, two thousand and nine—”

Again the hill men sang:

“Deep under the hills, with the rocks overhead,
The hammers are beating, the fires burn red.
Old Hill Mother, say, shall we never be free?”

Still the Hill Mother counted on:

“A thousand, twelve thousand, a million and three—”

Now the hill men began calling to each other from among the rocks:

“Is the old Hill Mother richer than she was last year when the moon was full?”

“She is a thousand times richer.”

“Did our hairy hands work well for her?”

“Our hairy hands worked well.”

Again they began dancing about and singing:

“See the old Hill Mother counting alone,
As dry as a leaf and as cold as a stone!
The moonlight is fading, the night has grown late.”

"Two million, ten million and thirty and eight—"
counted the Hill Mother.

The hill men began to shout to each other again from among the rocks:

"Has a mist come over the moon, or is it sinking low?"

"It is sinking low."

"Has it yet touched the forest beyond the Desolate Rocks?"

"It still swings clear."

"Then there is yet time for the old Hill Mother to count her treasure," shouted all together.

As they began dancing again, one of them spied Peter, hidden behind a rock.

"Look, look, Long Nose," cried one to another; "there is something hiding behind a rock. Look and tell us what it is, for you are the one who came last from the world beyond the forest."

"I look through the moonlight," said Long Nose, "and I see what it is. It is a human being such as we once used to be."

"How has he come hither?"

"Even as we did, long ago."

"Why does he bend and stoop as he comes?"

"He is looking for the Hill Mother's treasure, just as we did."

Shrilly the little men began singing again:

"Who is it comes hither while dews are still cold?

One seeking the Hill Mother, seeking her gold.

He has found her—has found her! His journey is done."

"Ten billion, twelve billion and twenty and one—" counted the Hill Mother.

"Old Hill Mother, old Hill Mother, look up," shouted the hill men, "for some one is coming."

Then the old Hill Mother raised her head and looked about her.

Her eyes were small and dim.

When she saw Peter she rose, and the gold pieces in her apron fell clinking among the rocks.

"Who are you, and what are you seeking here among the Desolate Rocks?" she asked.

Peter told her that he had come there in search of the old Hill Mother.

"Then you need look no farther," said the Hill Mother, "for I am she. And now why have you come and what would you have of me?"

"I would have you grant me a wish," said Peter.

"That I will," said the Hill Mother, "only you must make haste, for the moment yonder moon drops out of sight I must hide under the hill again and take my treasure with me."

Peter had his wish all ready, but first there was one thing he wanted to know. If the Hill Mother granted his wish, would he have to go down under the hill with her and live there, too?

"And what if you should?" said the Hill Mother. "Down under the hill it is wide and warm, and there you will see more treasure than you have ever dreamed of."

That might be true, but Peter said he could not go down under the hill with her, for his grandmother and his little sister Roselein were watching for him at home.

If wishing a wish would make him go down under the hill, he would have to go home without it.

"Ask me your wish, ask me your wish!" cried the Hill Mother.

But Peter would not.

"Then come, my little hill men," cried the Hill Mother. "Weave about him in and out and round and round until he forgets the way he came, for he shall never go home from the Desolate Rocks."

Before Peter could escape, the little hill men had joined hands in a circle about him, and they began spinning round and round so fast that Peter's head spun and he grew so dizzy that he could hardly stand.

As they danced they sang in their strange, windy voices:

"Wing of bat and claw of beast;
East be west and west be east.

"Eager hands and gaping mouth,
South be north and north be south.

"Think not, Peter, to steal away;
The Hill Mother speaks, and all obey."

Then the hill men broke from the circle, each whirling away by himself.

But Peter stood with his hands to his head. Think and think as he would, he could not remember the way home.

"Now you have forgotten the way you came," cried the Hill Mother; "so you had better ask me your wish,

and then come down under the hill with me willingly, for come you must."

"Very well," said Peter. "Then my wish is that you should fill my shoe with gold."

The old Hill Mother clapped her hands and laughed until the rocks echoed. The hill men, too, laughed shrilly and clapped their shadowy hands.

"Aöe! Aöe!" they cried. "He might have asked for the half of her treasure, and now for as much as his shoe will hold he will go down and live with her under the hill forever!"

But Peter slipped off his worn-out shoe and held it out to the Hill Mother.

"There it is," he said. "Now fill it!"

Still chuckling, the Hill Mother picked up a double handful of gold and poured it into the shoe, thinking to fill it at once.

But the gold all ran through the hole in the sole, and left it as empty as ever.

"Look, look, old Hill Mother," cried the hill men; "the gold is all running out."

Then the Hill Mother knew that she had been tricked. "But I will fill it yet!" she cried.

With mad haste she poured more gold into the shoe, and more and more. But it was no use. The shoe was still empty.

Lower and lower sank the moon, and more and more wildly the Hill Mother gathered her treasure and poured it into the shoe. Suddenly the moonlight was gone. The moon had sunk behind the forest, and a cock crew.

The Hill Mother gave a shrill cry.

“ A hole in the shoe! A hole in the shoe!
So what could the old Hill Mother do?

“ The night has passed and the cocks do crow;
He has fooled the Hill Mother. Woe! ah, woe!”

she cried. Wailing and wringing her hands, she fled away into the hill, and it closed behind her.

But the little hill men jumped about among the rocks.

“ Now, Peter, the treasure is all yours,” they cried; “ but what good will that do you? You have forgotten the way home, so you will have to stay here with us among the rocks forever.”

But Peter was not afraid. “ I may have forgotten,” he said, “ but I can still find my way home. All I have to do is to follow the pennies that I dropped as I came.”

When the hill men heard that, they gathered around Peter, begging him to take them home with him, and promising to be his faithful servants if he would. They, too, had once lived in the world whence he had come, but none of them knew the way home. The Hill Mother had bewitched them and made them forget.

Peter was willing, and in haste the hill men brought from among the rocks the bags they had brought with them when they came, long ago, in search of the Hill Mother's gold.

These they filled with treasure, and then, shouldering them as though they were packs, they followed Peter as he traced his way among the rocks, following the pennies he had dropped, back toward the forest and his home.

PART III.

AT home, Peter's old grandmother was very sad, and Roselein could hardly see to spin, her tears fell so fast. They could not bear to think of little Peter wandering alone among the Desolate Rocks.

Over and over again the next morning Roselein kept asking, "Oh, grandmother, do you think Peter will come back to-day?"

But the old grandmother could not say.

While they were still talking of him, there came a loud knocking at the door.

Roselein ran to open it; but before she could reach it, it was thrown open, and her uncle, the baron, stalked in.

He gave a sharp glance about the room. "So you are alone," he said. "Then that idle Peter of yours has really gone in search of the Hill Mother."

"Alas, yes," said the grandmother, sighing heavily.

"Why, how is this, dame?" said the baron. "You ought to be thankful that you and the girl have a roof over your heads, instead of grieving for that good-for-nothing lad."

"I would rather be out in the forest with Peter than in a palace without him," the grandmother said.

"Tut, tut," began the baron; but Roselein started to her feet and stood listening.

"Oh, grandmother," she cried joyfully, "don't you hear a sound of singing? I am sure it is Peter's voice."

All listened, and, sure enough, they could hear the sound of singing. But it was not Peter's voice alone; others were singing with him. They could hear the words:

“Eigh-oh, Eigh-oh!
We merrily go
Through the forest and homeward, oh!
A golden pack
Is on every back,
So merrily follow the homeward track!”

And now the door was thrown open, and Peter came in, followed by the train of hill men.

Then how the grandmother and Roselein kissed him and hung about him, weeping with joy.

As for the baron, he was ready to burst with rage and envy when he saw all the treasure the faithful hill men had brought home for Peter.

“If you could get all that gold, I will get a thousand times more!” he cried; and rushing from the house, he sprang upon his great black horse, and rode away to the Desolate Rocks in search of the old Hill Mother. As he has never come back, he must be wandering among the rocks still.

Peter and the grandmother and Roselein went up to live in the castle; for it was rightfully theirs, and now there was no one to keep them out of it.

Peter gave each of the little hill men enough to make him rich for life, and would have sent them back to their homes; but they had grown so fond of him that they begged to be allowed to stay with him.

Peter was willing, and so the little hill men lived in the castle too, and were his faithful servants as long as they lived.

THE MAGIC SWORD.

NOTES TO AID IN ACTING THE PLAY.

THE jars of candy, Noah's Ark, and music box for the first act are painted scenery, and should be in such proportion to the actors as the real ones would be to the toys— that is, five or six feet in height.

The doll house furniture in the second and third acts should be of the usual size, but copied as closely as possible from toy furniture.

The gestures and movements of the actors should be stiff and mechanical, as toys might be supposed to move.

The Bear's costume can be hired at a costumer's; but if this is not convenient, a suit may be made of brown Canton flannel, sewed into a loose shape somewhat like that of a little child's night garment, the sleeves and legs ending in mittens and stockings of the same material. Make a mask of cardboard resembling in shape a blunt cornucopia, cover with Canton flannel, and end it in a hood that draws over the head. Sew ears of flannel on in the proper places. A bearskin rug may be fastened about the body over this costume, and the whole sewed up the back with large stitches that will rip easily.

Jack wears a mask encircled with stiff white hair, and a harlequin suit. In the second act he may wear the same suit, or a long narrow gown of checked calico, and a pointed cap of the same material, with the same mask as in the first act.

Rosaline has a blond wig; her cheeks are painted very red, and her eyebrows are painted, highly arched. Her costume for the first act is a slip of white paper muslin, trimmed with coarse lace, through which are run pink ribbons. In the second act she wears a pale pink slip.

The Old Dolls are dressed in stiff, old-fashioned silk frocks, have very red cheeks, arched eyebrows, and smoothly banded black wigs.

The Toy Soldiers are costumed in imitation of the wooden soldiers that may be bought at any toyshop.

ACT I.

SCENE.—Shelf in old Mother Candytop's toyshop. Jars of differently colored stick candy, a Noah's Ark, and a music box in the background. Wooden SOLDIERS are standing in a row. There is a harlequin JUMPING JACK, and against the wall leans a beautiful DOLL, wrapped up as high as the arms in brown paper and twine. A clock strikes twelve. For an instant afterwards all remains as it was; then the music box plays for a short time, the TOY SOLDIERS present arms, and the DOLL turns her head stiffly from side to side, and looks about her.

JUMPING JACK. Now the mother of the toys is fast asleep in bed; the shop is shut up so that people could not come in to buy, if they wished to; and we toys can have things all our own way. Hey, there! you soldiers, what are you about?

TOY CAPTAIN. Don't interrupt us. I must keep my soldiers in good drill, for who knows but that we may be sold almost any day?

JUMPING JACK. Stupid things! Just as if it would make any difference if you were! You would have to keep just as still if you were in the nursery as you are here.

TOY CAPTAIN. Attention! Present arms! Shoulder arms! Forward, march!

[TOY SOLDIERS march off.

JUMPING JACK. How I hate them all! They are so stupid! Now I'll make a face at that doll, and scare her. (*Makes a face.*)

DOLL. (*Covering her face with her hands.*) Oh, oh! There is that dreadful Jumping Jack again! I hate the sight of him! Please stop making faces at me!

JUMPING JACK. Then why don't you come and talk with me?

DOLL. You're so wicked that I'm afraid. You made such faces at the plaster cat that it split all down the back, and had to be thrown out on the ash heap.

JUMPING JACK. Then you'd better take care, or maybe I'll make faces at you.

DOLL. No, no; you mustn't, you wicked toy!

JUMPING JACK. (*Fiercely.*) Yes, I will—unless you talk with me.

[Enter the FAIRY PRINCE. He is dressed in a tunic of shimmering silk, and wears a sword at his side.

FAIRY PRINCE. Star gleam,
And moonbeam!

Quick as a flash I slip through the window, and here I am! But what a strange place it is! (*Looking at the Noah's Ark.*) Never before did I see a house like that—no bigger than a fairy's house might be. (*Examining the music box, which plays for a moment or two.*) And such a queer chest, with music coming from inside of it! (*Sees the DOLL.*) Oh, you beautiful fairy! Who are you?



DOLL. I am a doll.

FAIRY PRINCE. A doll! What is a doll? Pray tell me.

JUMPING JACK. A poor thing made of wax and cloth and sawdust.

FAIRY PRINCE. Oh, beautiful Doll, come with me to the court of the Fairy Queen, and she will change you into a real fairy; and you shall be named Rosaline; for your cheeks are as pink as rose leaves, and not a fairy in all the court is so beautiful as you.

DOLL. Indeed, I will gladly go with you.

JUMPING JACK. Ah, but wait a bit; for I shall have something to say to that first.

FAIRY PRINCE. You?

JUMPING JACK. Yes, I, the Jumping Jack of the toy shelf! I have frightened the toy horse till he could not stand; I have made such a face at a toy cat that it split; and if you try to take the Doll away I will make a face at her, too; and then—aha!

FAIRY PRINCE. Then out, my Magic Sword! (*He draws it, and points it at the JUMPING JACK.*)

Magic blade, and hilt of gold,
Work the charm as thou art told!

Let his face be stiff as if made of wood, so that he cannot stretch or twist it!

JUMPING JACK. Ow! Ow! He has bewitched me so that I cannot move my face at all!

FAIRY PRINCE. And now, beautiful Doll, let us away!

DOLL. Yes, but see! I am so wrapped up in paper and tied about with string that I cannot move.

FAIRY PRINCE. Then come once more, my Magic Sword!

[He cuts through the string, and lays the sword down beside him while he helps the DOLL to unwrap and step from the paper. Then he drops on one knee and takes her hand in his. At this moment the JUMPING JACK creeps up and steals the Magic Sword, hiding it behind him.]

FAIRY PRINCE. There! You are free. And now away—away to the court of the Fairy Queen!



JUMPING JACK. But first let me see if the Magic Sword will work for me as well as for you. (*Pointing it toward them.*)

Magic blade, and hilt of gold,
Work the charm as thou art told!

Let the Doll sleep and forget everything until to-morrow night, when the toys awake again!

DOLL. Oh, I am going to sleep! I feel that I'm going to sleep! My eyelids weigh like lead. Farewell, Fairy Prince, farewell—farewell! (*She sleeps.*)

FAIRY PRINCE. (*Springing toward the JUMPING JACK.*) Ah, wretched toy! Give me back my sword.

JUMPING JACK. (*Pointing the sword at the Prince.*) Stop! (*The PRINCE stands, unable to move.*) What fate is there bad enough for you? You shall be changed into a mechanical bear; and in that shape you shall wander through the world until you hold the Fairy Sword in

your hand once more, and when that time comes you may turn its shining blade toward me. Ha, ha!

[The FAIRY PRINCE shrinks back in dread; and the JUMPING JACK stands, holding the Magic Sword triumphantly above him, while the music box plays in the background.

ACT II.

SCENE.—The doll house. The OLD DOLLS are sitting in a row in three red wooden chairs. The NEW DOLL, ROSALINE, sits in the rocking chair beside the table. At one side of the room stands a large square chest covered with green-and-white checked paper, and fastened with a hook — like that of the well-known toy Jack-in-a-box.

The cuckoo clock is heard crying the hour of twelve in the nursery outside. There is a moment of silence, and then the OLD DOLLS rise stiffly, and the NEW DOLL turns her head from side to side, and looks about her.

NEW DOLL. Where am I?

OLD DOLLS. This is the doll house.

NEW DOLL. And how did I come here?

OLD DOLLS. You came here all done up in paper, just as we did long ago; for yesterday was Christmas.

NEW DOLL. And am I to live here always?

OLD DOLLS. Yes; you will live here until you break; and you will be the mistress of the whole house, because you are so beautiful and new.

NEW DOLL. (*Sighing.*) Ah, me!

FIRST OLD DOLL. Why do you sigh?

NEW DOLL. I sigh when I think of the Fairy Prince, and how he, too, told me that I was beautiful.

FIRST OLD DOLL. We have never seen a fairy prince; but we have as neat and tidy a little doll house as any one would wish to see.

SECOND OLD DOLL. Yes; and look at the little tables and chairs, and the little gilt clock, that looks almost real.

NEW DOLL. Yes; it is very lovely. Ah, if the Fairy Prince could but see it!

FIRST OLD DOLL. And look at the sideboard full of little china dishes, pink china ham, china chicken, and shiny china bread!

NEW DOLL. And what is in that box over yonder?

SECOND OLD DOLL. We don't know. It was a Christmas present, but it doesn't belong in the doll house.

NEW DOLL. Then why was it put here?

SECOND OLD DOLL. That we don't know, either.

NEW DOLL. Let us look in it. It may be that there is something in it more beautiful even than all the rest—something such as they do not have even in Fairyland.

OLD DOLLS. (*Anxiously.*) Better not open it.

JACK. (*Sings inside the box.*)

Open the lid! Open the lid!

Here inside of the box I'm hid.

Oh, what a wonderful sight you'll see,

If you only will open the lid for me!

NEW DOLL. Whatever it may be inside there, it is asking me to let it out.

OLD DOLLS. *Do not* open it!

JACK. (*Sings inside the box.*)

Everything in the house is thine.

Open, then, beautiful Rosaline!

NEW DOLL. Do you hear? Whoever it is is calling me by the name that the Fairy Prince gave me. And now indeed I must open it; for who knows but what it may be the Fairy Prince himself?

[She unbooks the lid. The JUMPING JACK flies up with a squeak. The DOLLS shriek.

JACK. Not the Fairy Prince, beautiful Rosaline; but nevertheless it is one who carries the Prince's Magic Sword. Don't you remember an old friend like me?

NEW DOLL. Alas! I remember you indeed. You are the Jumping Jack.



JACK. Yes, the Jumping Jack himself. With the Prince's sword I made myself a box, and fastened myself in and followed you here; now that you have let me out, you are in my power once more!

OLD DOLLS. Shut the lid! Oh, shut the lid and fasten him in once more!

[JACK steps out of the box, presses down the lid and hooks it noisily.

JACK. I can close the lid and fasten it myself. (*Turning to the DOLL.*) Ah, lovely Doll, you thought you had escaped me; but it is not so easy to free yourself from Jumping Jack, ugly and despised though he may be. (*The DOLLS hide their faces, trembling.*) Not quite so beautiful here as in the Fairies' court, perhaps; but still, it will

do as a makeshift. And we will live here always, just as the Dolls said; and you shall be my servants: for I am still the master of the Magic Sword!

ACT III.

SCENE.—The doll house. JACK is eating at the table. The DOLLS are serving him.

JACK. (*Pushing back his chair.*) My spring and whiskers! but that was the best meal I've had for many a long day. A china ham, a china chicken, and a whole china loaf! Here, you lazy Dolls, you may put the dishes away now. (*Stretches and gapes.*) How sleepy I feel! Oh, what a soft sofa! Just the place for a nap; and, Rosaline, you shall sit at my head and sing me to sleep.

[He stretches himself on the sofa. The NEW DOLL sits at his head and sings.

ROSALINE.

The shelf was gay, and the moon was bright,
When I saw the Fairy Prince one night.

Now sadly I think of him and weep—
Jumping Jack, are you yet asleep?

(JACK *yawns.*)

His eyes were as bright as bright could be,
Like the shining balls on the Christmas tree;
But he vanished away while I slumbered deep—
Jumping Jack, are you yet asleep?

(JACK *snores.*)

[A soft knocking is heard at the door.

ROSALINE. Hark! Some one is knocking.

[Soft knocking again. The mechanical BEAR sings outside.

BEAR.

Black and grim in my hairy hide,
I wander over the nursery wide.
What care I if I sleep or wake?
Ah, if my stitches would but break!

ROSALINE. There is some one singing outside. Look from the window and tell me who it is; but step softly, for the Jack is asleep!

FIRST OLD DOLL. I see nothing but the great nursery window, and the mantelpiece high up above the housetop; and I hear nothing but the ticking of the cuckoo clock in the nursery outside.

BEAR. (*Sings.*)

The nursery's dark and the nursery's wide,
And my works they grumble and growl inside.
Who would guess, as they look at me,
How bright and slender I used to be?

ROSALINE. There! I hear it again. Look once more, and tell me, do you still see nothing?

SECOND OLD DOLL. I see nothing but the pattern of the nursery carpet, and the two great, black, hollow shoes that the child Ann took off last night.

BEAR. (*Sings.*)

As fair she was as a doll could be:
Her cheeks were red, and she smiled at me.
Would she know me under this hair of mine—
The beautiful waxen Rosaline?

ROSALINE. Now I can bear it no longer! I must see for myself who it is singing outside, even if the Jack should waken.

[She goes on tiptoe to the door and opens it. The mechanical BEAR stands without.

ROSALINE. Ah! What a terrible bear!

[She tries to shut the door, but he slips his hairy paw within so that it will not close.

BEAR. Wait but a moment, beautiful Rosaline.

ROSALINE. What do you want here?

BEAR. Only to come in and rest awhile.

ROSALINE. No, no; that you cannot do; for if my master were to waken and find you here, he would be in a fine rage.

BEAR. But I will step so softly on my padded feet that he will not so much as turn in his sleep.

ROSALINE. Then come in.

[She opens the door, and the BEAR enters.

OLD DOLLS. Oh, how ugly he is!

BEAR. Ah, I seemed fine enough to you, Rosaline, when we met on the shelf in the toyshop!

ROSALINE. Who are you?

BEAR. Alas! have you forgotten the Fairy Prince?

ROSALINE. But you are not the Fairy Prince!

BEAR. Yes, I am he; and it was because of you that the wicked Jumping Jack turned me into a mechanical bear.

ROSALINE. Alas! alas! that it should be so! But fly, Fairy Prince; for the Jumping Jack is here!

BEAR. Here?

ROSALINE. Yes; he is asleep on yonder sofa.

BEAR. (*Eagerly.*) Then he must have my Magic Sword with him.

ROSALINE. I have not seen it.

BEAR. We must look for it; for if I can only find it all may yet be well!

ROSALINE. But if he should waken!

BEAR. We will move about very softly.

[They all hunt about.

BEAR. What is in that chest?

ROSALINE. That is the chest the Jack came in.

[BEAR works and works at the hook with his hairy paws.

BEAR. Alas! I cannot unhook it with these clumsy paws.

[ROSALINE unhooks the box. The BEAR throws back the lid, and with a glad cry lifts from it his Magic Sword.



BEAR. My Magic Sword! My Magic Sword! And are you once more mine?

[The JACK begins to stir and waken.

ROSALINE. He is awakening! We are lost!

BEAR. Not yet. Quick! Take the Magic Sword and rip up the stitches along my back!

ROSALINE. (*Shuddering.*) Ah, I cannot do that!

BEAR. Quick, or we are indeed lost!

[ROSALINE takes the sword and cuts the stitches. The FAIRY PRINCE throws aside the bearskin, and steps forth. JACK rises, and stands staring at him stupidly.

ALL. The Fairy Prince!

FAIRY PRINCE. And now let us see whether the Magic Sword will still serve me. (*He points it toward the JACK.*)

Magic blade, and hilt of gold,
Work the charm as thou art told!

[The JACK springs toward him with a cry, and then stands as though bewitched.

FAIRY PRINCE. Henceforth you shall have no power to twist your face; you shall have no home but the chest; and you shall be known, not as the Jumping Jack, but as the Jack-in-a-box.

JACK. No, no!

FAIRY PRINCE. Now, into the box with you!

[Bewailing and wringing his hands, the JACK climbs into the box, where he stands stiff and motionless as plaster.

FAIRY PRINCE. And now, lovely Rosaline, let us away!

OLD DOLLS. But shall we never see you again?

ROSALINE. Yes, yes; when I am a fairy I will often come to see you. You will see me come slipping in through the window on a moonbeam, to tell you of the happy life in the Fairy world.

[A cock crows.

FAIRY PRINCE. Hark! The cock crows! The housemaid stirs, and the night moth is looking for a hollow where he may hide.

PRINCE AND ROSALINE. Away—away to Fairyland!

CURTAIN.

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