

FAIRIES & FLOWERS



POEMS BY FRANCES WARD

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAGGIE

à tante Sophie

très tendrement

la petite amie Maggie

Signed
by
M. M. M. M.

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MAGGIE



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PREFACE.

WHEN I cast off the burden of years and land ultimately in the back of beyond, I seem to remember that most of my companions were hurrying to grow up, so that they could cast off the shackles and assume the so-called privileges of "grown-ups." Now, after reading Miss Frances Ward's poems I am struck not dumb (but nearly) by the fact that as the world has grown older so young people have grown wiser. For what is the spirit of these verses, what is the reason why they are good to read and pleasant to keep in one's mind? The answer, I think, is that their author not only wishes to preserve the spirit of youth, but of *her* youth.

" If cats could all stay kittens,
And dogs stay puppies too,
If we could all stay children,
Oh, I'd love it, wouldn't you ? "

My reply is, as they say in Parliament, in the affirmative.

Indeed the charm of these verses lies in their freshness, their spontaneity, and occasionally (dare I say it?) in the way they are heedless of harassing rules. But they are charming as youth is charming—when it is charming. They would, I truly believe, extract a word of kindness from the Prince of Pedants, and squeeze a smile of friendliness from the King of Prigs.

Yes, the author is wise, and when she is ninety instead of nineteen she will be able to look at her work through her spectacles, and the colour she will see through them will still be that of the rose. For her verses are imbued with the spirit that never fades nor dies.

PREFACE—*continued.*

But when I come to the illustrations my dumbness gathers force. "Poems by Frances Ward. Illustrations by Maggie," I read, and I ask you solemnly to look at these illustrations and to confess that you never imagined that such modesty remained in the world. I have been fitting letters on to Maggie, Maggie R.A., Maggie A.R.A., Maggie A.R.S.A., until I gave up the task as hopeless. But who is Maggie? I know that she also is nineteen, but that is a stroke of good fortune which is happening to tens of thousands at the present moment. Surely I who commend her with a whole heart ought to know.

And yet after all I don't want to know, I hope the secret will never be revealed to me, for I would, when despondent, fain cheer myself by the thought that there is an artist called just "Maggie," who can make me smile at her will, and make me also regret that my childhood was over before King Gollywog reigned over England.

The demureness of her maidens is a joy for ever, and who can look at the girl (please notice her hand) seated lightly on the butterfly without recognizing that it is a work of rare imagination and art. Tenderness and humour are the notes of these delightful illustrations, quiet tenderness and quiet humour—two of the most fascinating notes in the world. But—dismounting from the butterfly—I return again to ponder over the ages of these magicians. Nineteen! It must be the golden age.

CHARLES TURLEY.

THE TREE WITH LEAVES OF GOLD.

I saw a tree once in the Spring,
Whose leaves were all of gold.
〈In Fairyland they're all like this,
So I'm always told.〉

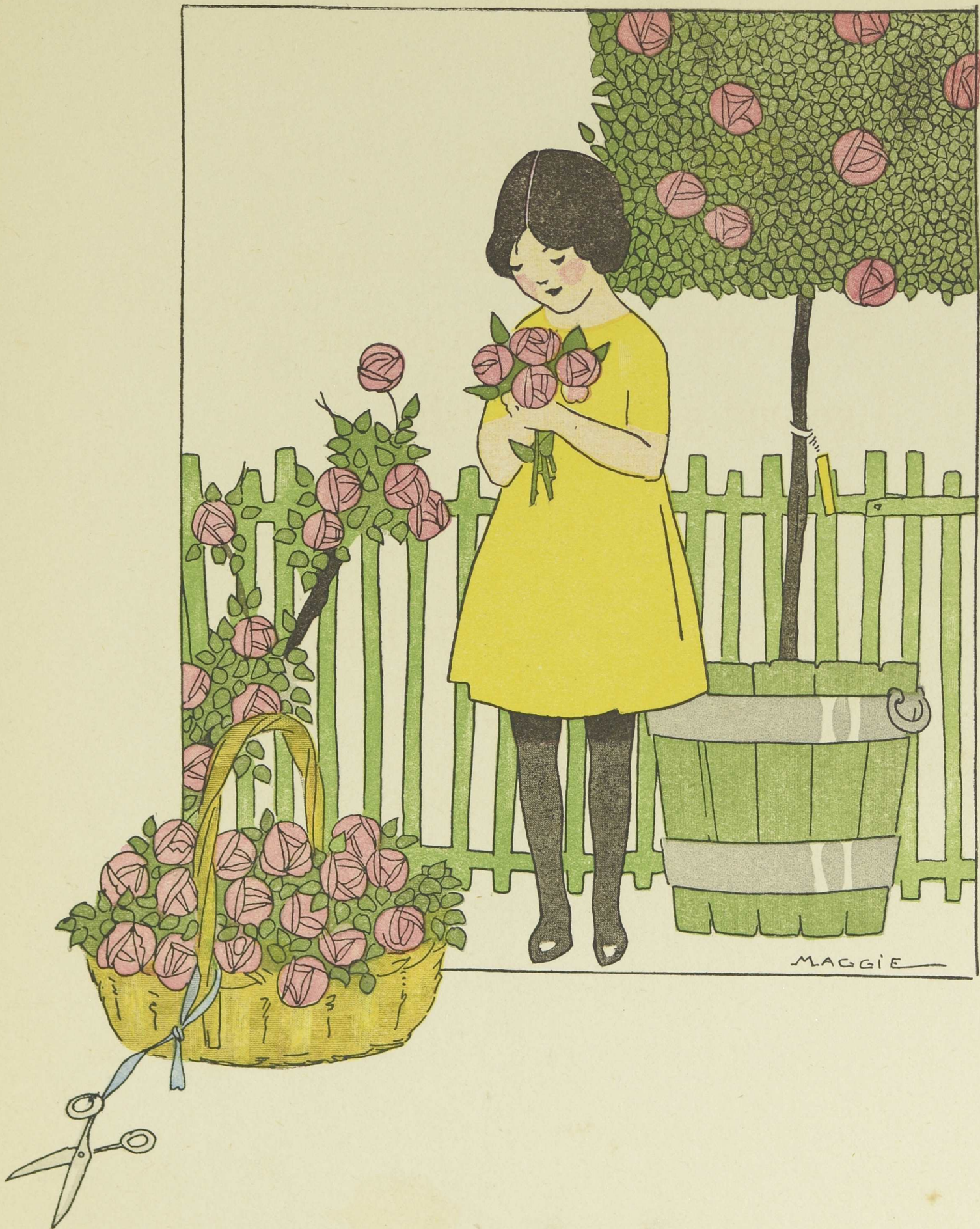
And I ran indoors to fetch my nurse
To come and see it too,
For I'd never seen a tree before
With golden leaves, have you?

But when I came to look for it
'Twas nowhere to be seen.
The sun had gone behind a cloud
And all the trees were green.

ROSES.

Every morning in the Summer,
When the roses are in bloom
I go and gather basketsfull
To put in every room.

As I look down into the heart
Of every rose that grows,
I think how glad God must have felt
When He first made a rose.



GROWING UP.

I had a little kitten,
And now it is a cat.
I cannot lift it any more,
It is so very fat.

My puppy is a dog now,
As lazy as can be,
And my brothers say they're getting
Too old to play with me.

If cats could all stay kittens,
And dogs stay puppies too,
If we could all stay children,
—Oh, I'd love it, wouldn't you?

ABOUT ANGELS.

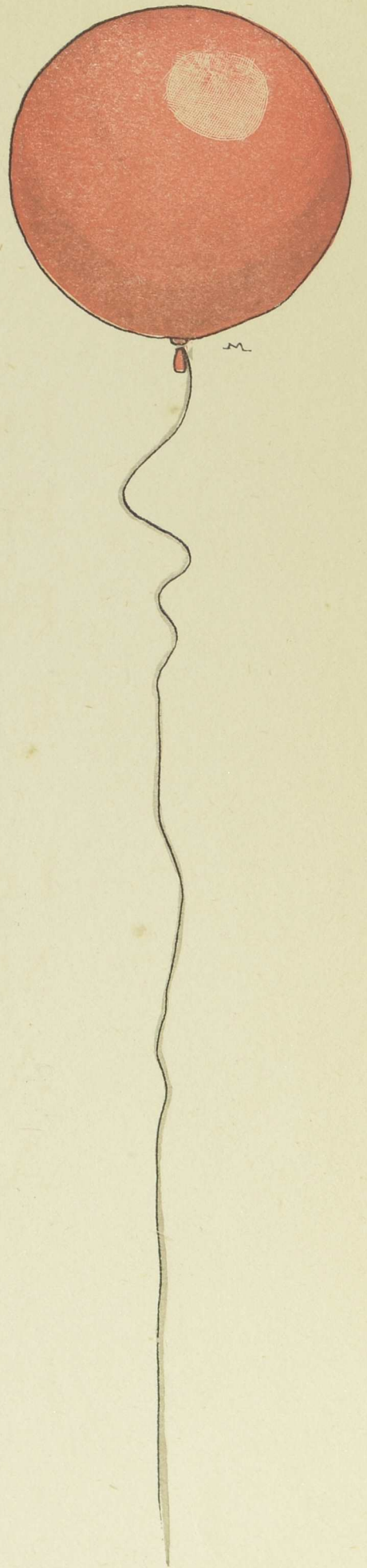
I wonder what the Angels in Heaven
Find to do the whole day long.
For there can't be very many things,
If they mayn't do any wrong.

I think they pass away their hours
Mixing the colours for new babies' eyes;
And cutting out the petals of flowers,
And painting the wings of butterflies.

CLOUDS.

I wonder how the clouds in the sky
Manage to stay up there,
I should think they would feel giddy
And fall on us down here.

I think that they are fastened up
By little golden strings,
And the strings are tied to angels,
Underneath their wings.



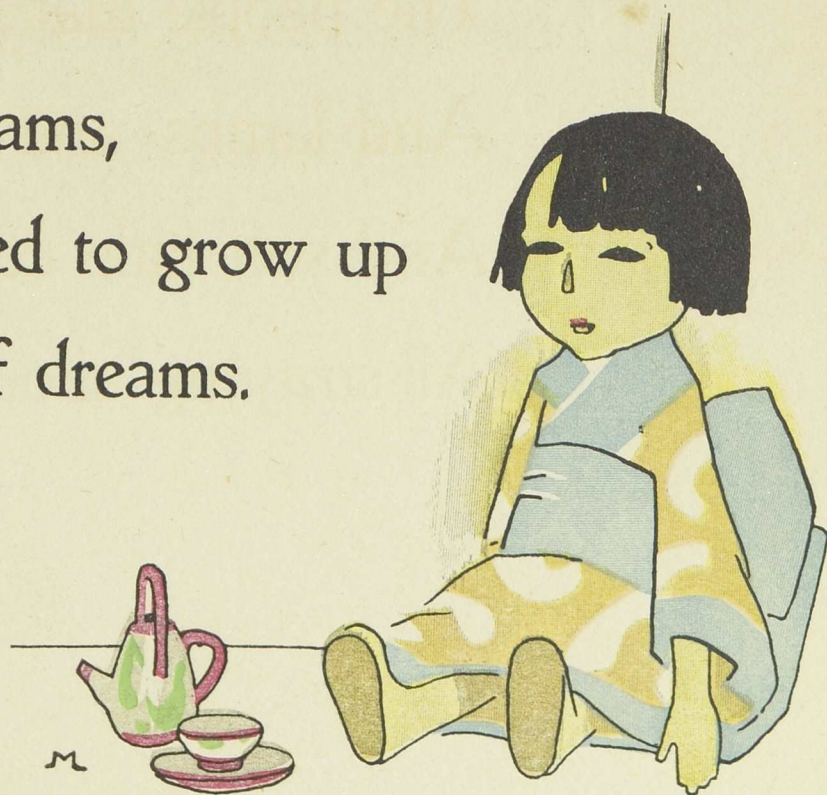
DREAMS.

I go to a beautiful country
Every night in my dreams;
There are fields there, green like velvet,
And numbers of silvery streams.

The people that live there are children
And lambs, and baby birds,
And soft little calves, and little pink pigs,
All straying about in herds.

It's always the early Spring time,
There is no Winter or cold,
For there's nothing grown up, in that
country,
So the years can never grow old!

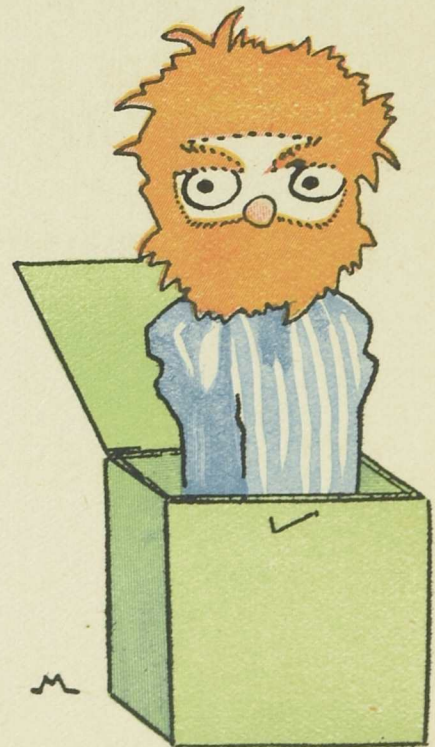
The mountains are hills and the flowers
are buds,
And all the rivers are streams,
For nothing is ever allowed to grow up
In my beautiful country of dreams.



BABIES.

Do you know what there is inside the moon
That shines so silvery bright?
I've just found out, so listen.—
I found it out last night.

I was looking from my window
At the path across the sea
That started from the silver moon
And stretched right down to me.



And suddenly there opened
In the moon a little door,
And out of it came Angels,
Millions I am sure.

And they carried babies in their arms,
As tiny as could be,
And they all came dancing down the path
That lay across the sea.



And where the silver pathway stopped,
Among the shells, and foam,
They all flew off in different ways
To find each baby's home.

And so inside the silver moon
Behind the little door,
Is where new babies come from,
Which I never knew before.



CHURCHES.

I wonder why all churches
Are made so very dim.
Sometimes you cannot scarcely see
The number of the Hymn.

When I think about the sun outside
Shining on the grass,
I think it's wrong to shut it out
By painted saints on glass.

ABOUT MY SCRIPTURE TEACHER.

Every Sunday morning

My Scripture teacher comes.

And she makes me learn the Collect,

Which is even worse than sums.

And she talks about good children,

Who do no naughty things,

She says they're angels, when they die,

With golden harps and wings.

And once I made her angry,

Her voice got loud and sharp,

'Cos I said I'd like my golliwogg

Better than a harp.



ABOUT AN ANGEL.

An Angel came to me
Once in a dream,
She came through my window
On a moonbeam.

She looked at me
And her eyes were mild
As she stood at the foot
Of my bed and smiled.

And then to the window
She softly trod,
And flew up a moonbeam
Back to God.

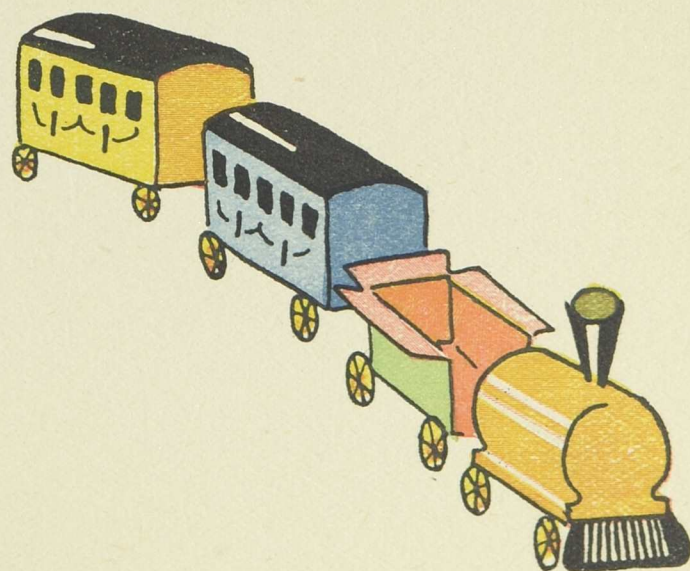


MAGGIE

THE EMPTY NEST.

One sunny day in Summer,
I was walking 'neath the trees,
When I heard an oak—tree sighing,
Though there wasn't any breeze.

I looked up through its branches,
And I whispered "Dear oak—tree,
Tell me why you're sighing,"
But it wouldn't answer me.



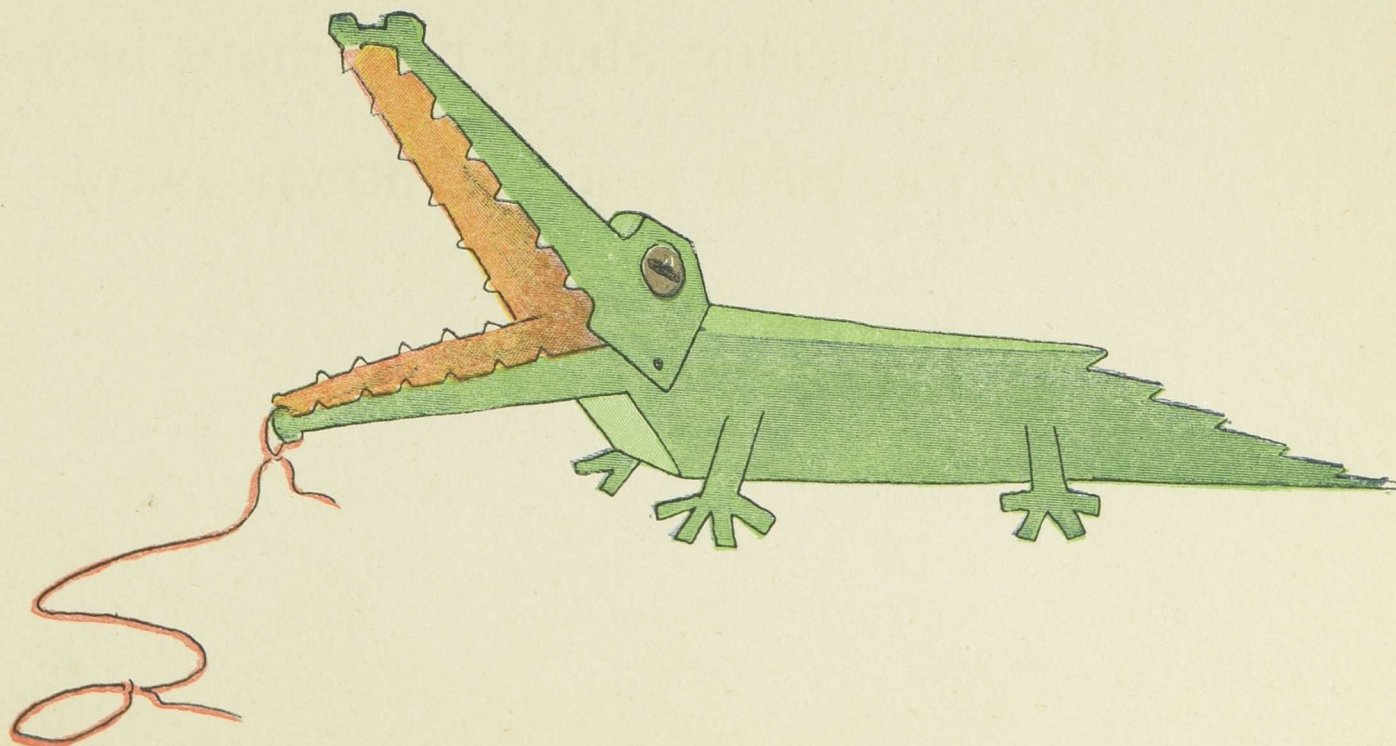
Then I climbed up in its branches,
And I sat on one to rest,
And there, among the soft green leaves,
I found an empty nest.

And I knew then why that oak-tree sighed,
Though there was no wind that day,
It was thinking about the empty nest,
And the birds that had flown away.

THE LAZY WAVE.

A little wave once in the sea
Grew tired of its lot,
And it thought it wouldn't matter
If it were there or not.

So one morning when the tide went out
It stayed inside a pool,
And slept all day among the rocks
All comfortable and cool.



But a fairy, flying past, looked down
And saw the wave quite well;
And she shut it up, as punishment,
Inside a hollow shell.

And that's why, when you hold a shell
Close up to your ear,
You hear the sound of waves inside.
—It's the Lazy Wave you hear.

ABOUT NIGHT.

Night is made of velvet,
Soft and purply blue,
Like my dress for Sundays
Was when it was new.

I think Night is a carpet
Which the Angels spread
Over all the world as we
Are going off to bed.

And they dance upon the carpet
Until it's worn away,
And when we see the light come through
We know that it is day.

ABOUT AUTUMN.

It's Autumn now, and all the leaves
Have fallen from their trees.
They dance around, upon the ground,
Merrily in the breeze.

You'd think they would be sorry
To leave their trees and fall;
But they whirl and dance the whole day long,
And do not mind at all.

But the leafless trees are sighing,
And they all look cold and sad;
And I think they must feel sorry
To see their leaves so glad.



SHADOWS.

Sometimes when it's very cold indeed
Nurse lights a fire when I go to bed,
And after she's gone, grey fairies come
And dance on the wall above my head.

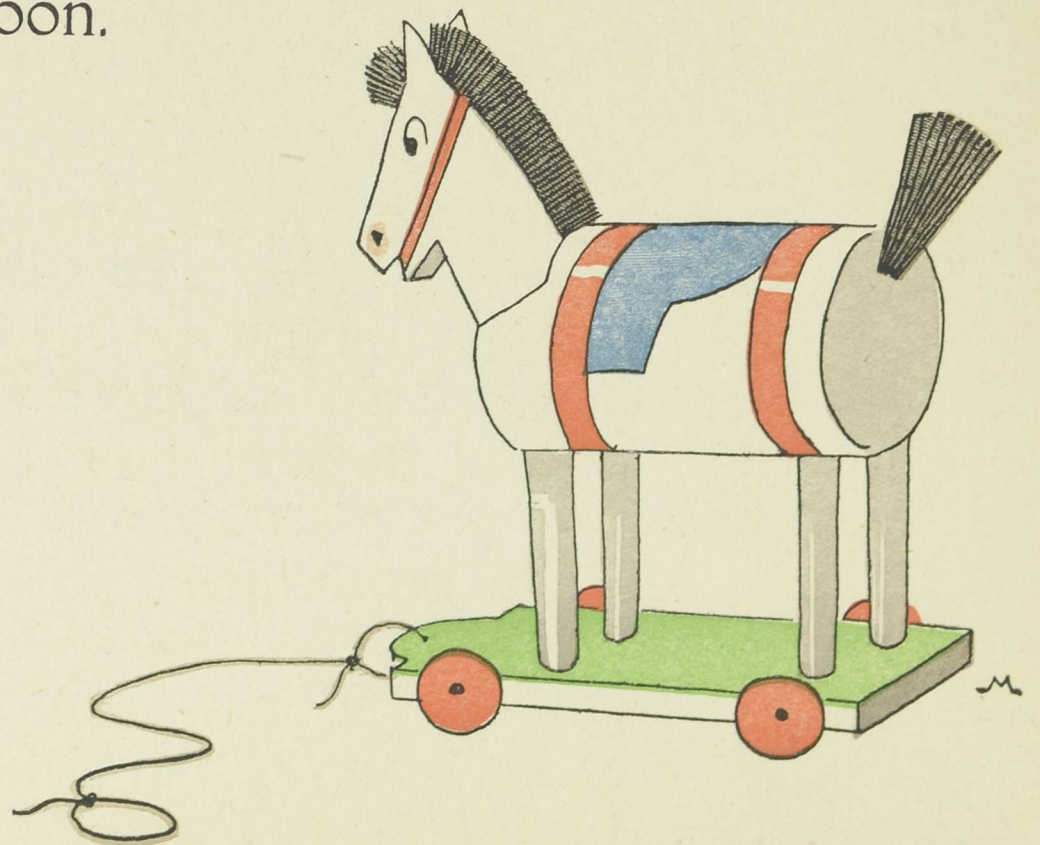
They never stand still, or rest at all,
But they dance and twirl, and jump and leap
Higher and higher, all over the wall,
Till the fire goes out, and then they sleep.

And once I softly got out of bed
To dance with the fairies on the wall,
But they went away and I bumped my head.
—They were nothing but shadows after all.

WHY THE MOON IS WHITE.

I often look up at the moon
And wonder why it's white,
Instead of golden like the stars
That twinkle all the night.

I think the souls of lilies
That bloom in the month of June
And all white birds and butterflies
Go to the moon.

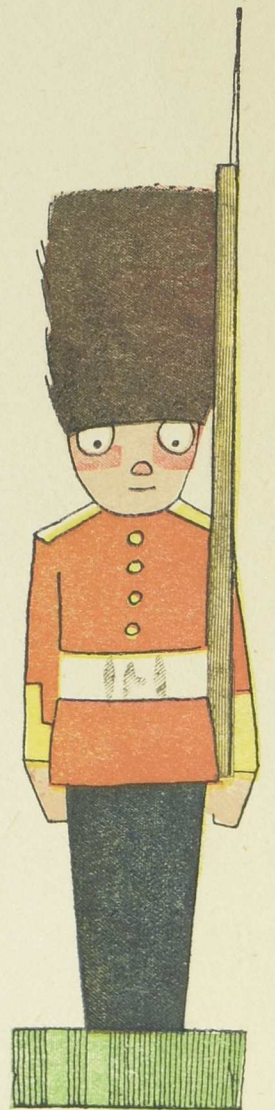


ABOUT FAIRIES.

I saw some fairies once
Sitting together,
Combing their hair
With a sparrow's feather.

Some others were dancing,
And some were singing,
And the bluebells nodded
And their bells were ringing.

But the fairies saw me
With their little bright eyes,
And they all flew away
On butterflies.



ABOUT A SNAIL.

I said once to a great big snail,
Whose house was brown and black,
"I wish that I could see inside
That house upon your back."

And the snail just stepped out of his house,
And said, in tones of pride,
"Look in, I hope you'll like it,"
So then I looked inside.

And in his little house I saw
A table and some chairs,
And a bed was in another room
Up a little flight of stairs.

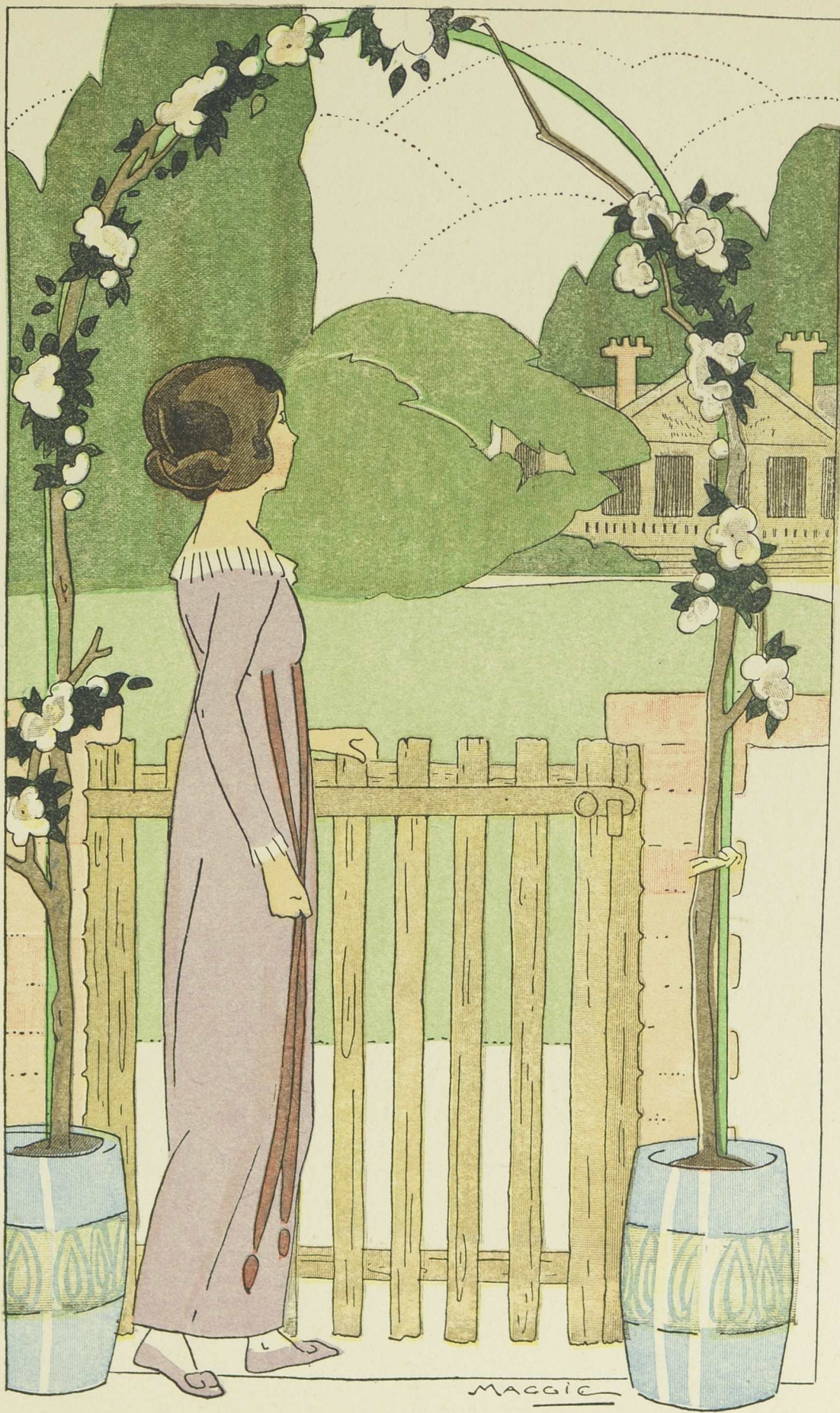
And on his table, ready
For his dinner, I suppose,
Was one of Mother's pansies
And half a yellow rose.

I think I could have stayed there
Looking in all day,
But the snail went in his house again
And slowly crawled away.

THE SILENT GARDEN.

Silent is the garden
Where we used to play,
Do the birds still sing, I wonder,
All throughout the day.

Silent are the echoes
And the paths are bare.
Are the flowers as sweet, I wonder,
As when we wandered there?



Sadder is the garden
We played in long ago,
And sadder are our hearts,
Because of all we know.

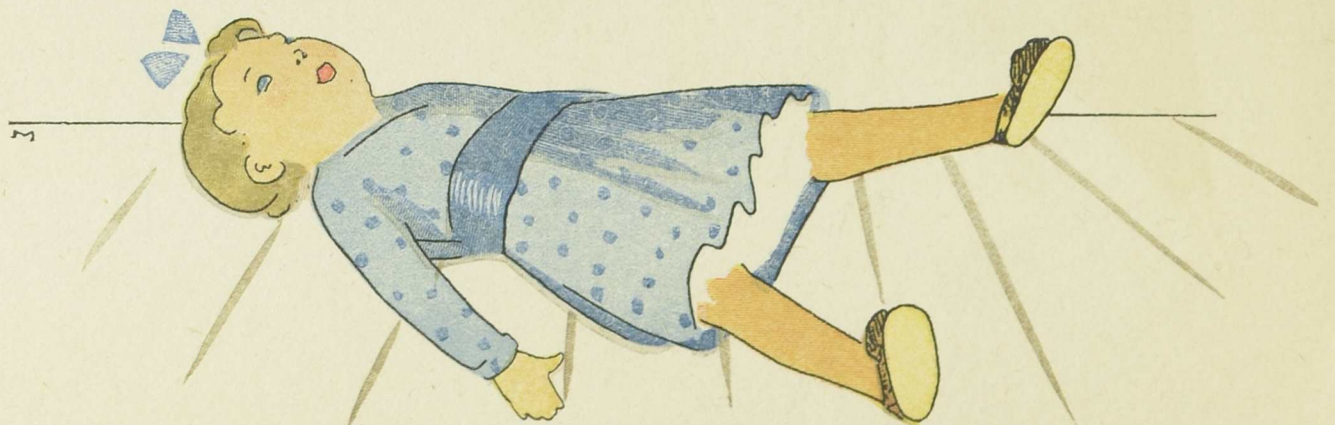
Oh that brains should have to learn,
And the soft hearts harden;
Would that we might always stay
Children, in a garden.

THE TIDE.

While we're having meals or lessons,
And while we're being dressed,
The tide is flowing in and out
Without a minute's rest.

As soon as one wave finishes
Another does begin;
The tide is always going out,
Or coming in.

All the night we lie asleep
Till morning comes once more,
But the waves are always breaking,
Breaking on the shore.





"POOR SEA."

Poor Sea, that's always moving,
How tired you must be
Of always going in or out
With never any rest.—Poor Sea.

Your waves are green with spray on top,
And you are clear and deep.
Poor Sea—why don't you ever stop
And have a little sleep?

Why don't you, when the night is dark,
And the wind is soft and low,
Why don't you rest a little while?
For nobody would know.

BLUE GRASS.

There are hills outside our garden
With a river in between,
And the grass that grows upon the hills
Looks blue instead of green.

And once I thought that I would go
And see why this was so;
So I walked and walked a long, long way—
A hundred miles, I know.

And when at last I got there
Plain green grass did I find,
And all the blue was round our house
Which I had left behind.

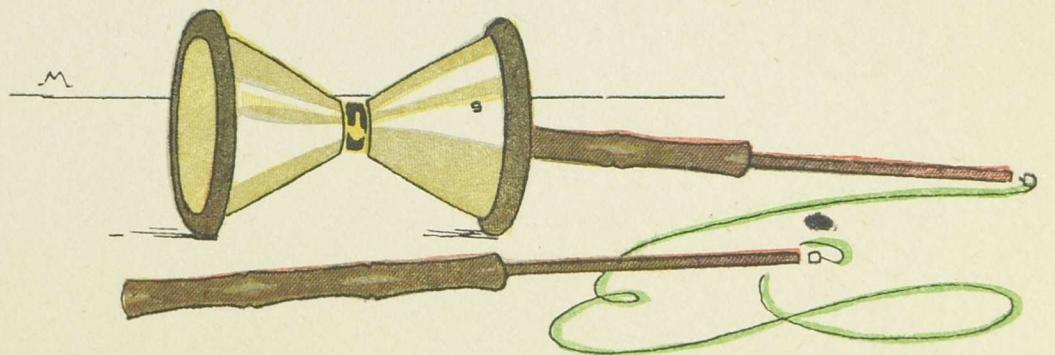


FALLING STARS.

There's a special room in Heaven
With nails all down each side,
And hanging from the nails are strings,
To which the stars are tied.

Some stars are most conceited
At being up so high,
And they hate to think they're hidden
When a cloud comes sailing by.

And they grumble sometimes to themselves
If a cloud is rather slow,
For they hate to think they can't be seen
By all the world below.



And it makes God very angry
As He watches from afar,
For He knows that clouds do much more
 good
Than any twinkling star.

So He goes into the "Star Room,"
And He cuts the cross star's strings,
And drops them out of Heaven,
For He hates all grumbling things.

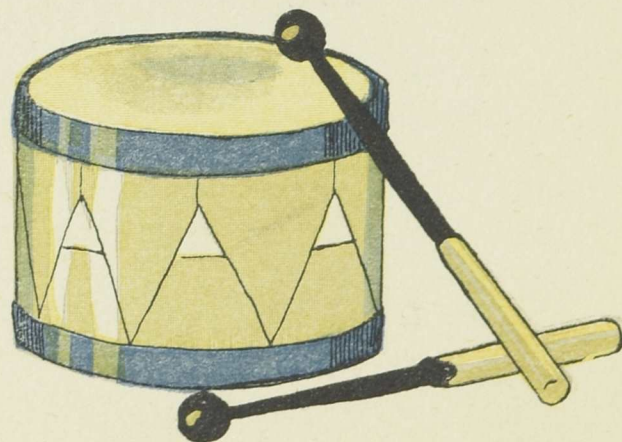
BUTTERFLIES.

How happy butterflies must be,
They pass away their hours
Talking to the birds and bees,
And kissing all the flowers.

They whisper to the little birds
Sweet things as they go by,
And they fly up through the fleecy clouds
Right into the sky.

They play with all the baby birds,
For birds are their best friends;
And all their days are happy
Until the Summer ends.

And then they hide beneath the shade
Of some rosebush and die,
And the roses drop their petals
To bury them where they lie.



CHEERFULNESS.

My brothers are cheerfulest
Making a noise,
Or spoiling and breaking
Each others toys.

And I am most cheerful,
'Tis sad, but quite true,
When I'm doing a thing
I've been told not to do.

And what I don't see,
And I wish that I could,
Is that Mother's most cheerful
When we're being good.

LARKS.

I think I've found out why the larks
Always want to fly
Right straight up to Heaven,
I think that this is why.

Children when they die, become
Angels, so they say;
And I think that they must find it hard
To be so good each day.



And I think that if they quarrel,
Or make unkind remarks,
The punishment God uses
Is to turn them into larks.

And that is why we see them
Even in the rain,
They're trying hard to find the way
Back to Heaven again.

MY FRIENDS THE APPLE-TREES.

When my brothers all go back to school,
And my sister reads all day,
There's no one I can play with
To pass the time away.

So I go into the orchard
And I talk to all the trees,
And they whisper stories to me
As they rustle in the breeze.

I climb up in their branches,
Where there's many a cosy place,
And the green leaves dance all round me
And come and kiss my face.

And when I have to go indoors
For lessons or for tea,
They sigh and seem quite sorry
To say good-bye to me.

My sister says the sighing
Is nothing but the breeze,
But I really think they're fond of me,
My friends the apple-trees.

THE THINGS I TAKE TO BED.

There are toys in the nursery cupboard
Of every kind, big and small,
But the ones that I take to bed with me
Are the ones that I love best of all.

There's my golliwogg Poppy, who's lost all
his hair,
And Louisa, my old grey cat,
And John the monkey whose head came off,
But I like him as much without that.



When I get into bed we all cuddle up
As cosy as cosy can be;
And I kiss them and hug them, I love them

so,

And I think that they're fond of me.

And though the others all laugh at me
〈It's babyish so they say〉,

I shall always, *always* take them to bed,
Till with kissing they're worn away.

FLOWERS.

In gardens, fields and shady places
Flowers lift their faces,
And look up in the sky
To smile at God on high.

And God, to show He's fond of them,
Sometimes sends a shower;
And wrapped inside each raindrop
Is a kiss for every flower.





MAGGIE

ONE DAY WHEN I'D BEEN NAUGHTY.

One day when I'd been naughty,
And Nurse was most unkind,
I went out in the garden,
And said I didn't mind.

But the flowers wouldn't look at me,
They turned the other way;
And the sun went in behind a cloud,
And all the sky was grey.

FRIENDS.

If ever I have any friend
To come to tea with me,
I have to give him all my things,
For he's a visitor, you see.

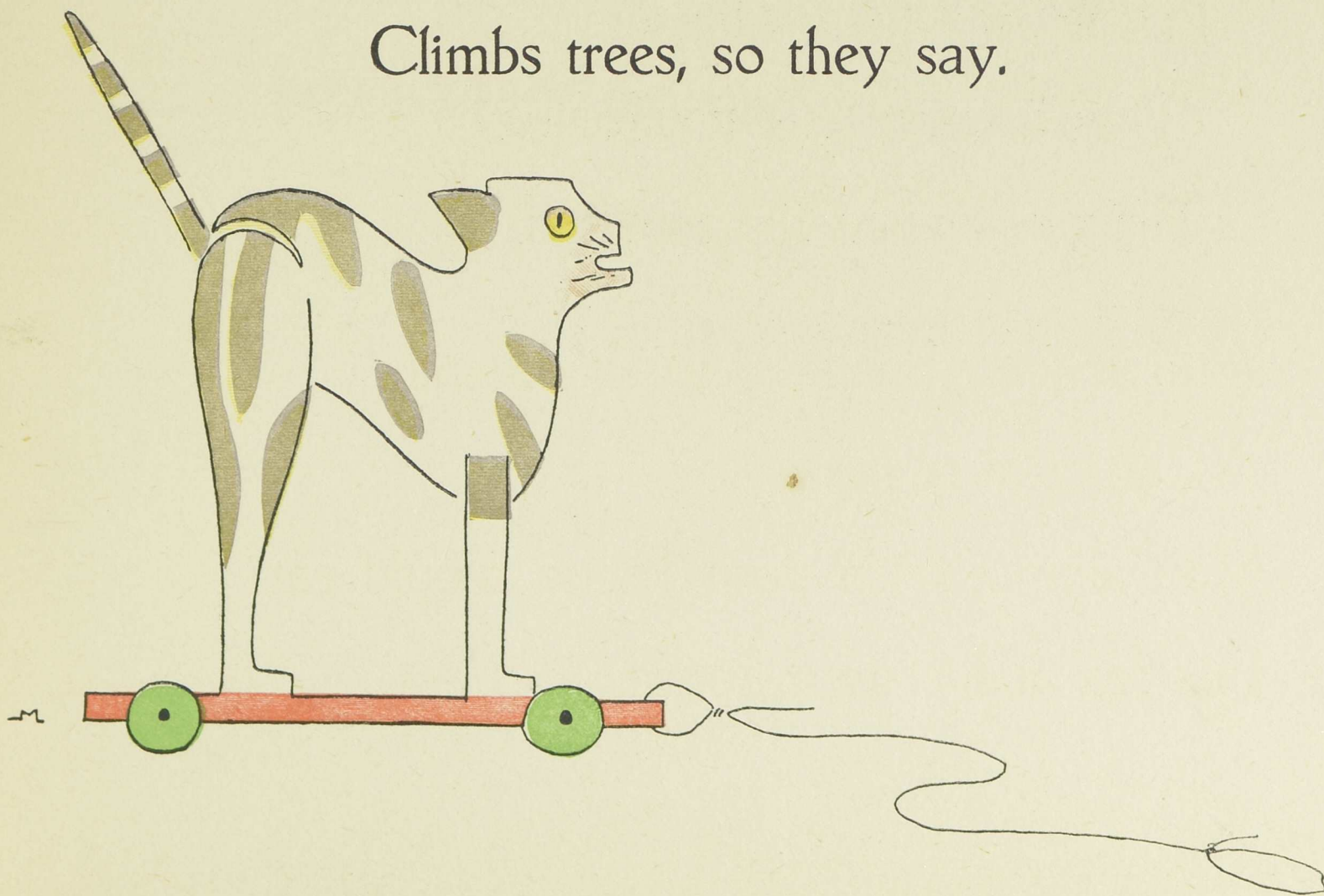
I have to take the smallest cake
And pass the tea-cups round,
And when he takes my favourite sweet
I cannot make a sound.

And when you have to sit so still,
As quiet as a mouse,
You almost wish your friend would eat
His tea at his own house.

TO THE TREES.

It is the early spring,
And all the leaves are new,
And I come, my friends, the trees,
To say good-bye to you.

For I'll soon be married, trees,
Next month's my wedding day,
And no one that is married
Climbs trees, so they say.



And though I can't myself
See why this is so,
It's what they're always telling me,
And I suppose they know.

Just tell me in a whisper
〈They'll think it is the breeze〉,
Tell me,—when I'm married,
Will you miss me, trees?

MOONBEAMS.

I wonder what moonbeams are made of,
And why they are filmy and white,
As they stretch from the moon down into
 our dreams,
As we lie asleep all night ?

Moonbeams are prayers going up to God
〈At least, so I think them to be〉,
White prayers, that go up from babies'
 hearts
As they pray at their Mother's knee.

I DREAMT I WENT TO HEAVEN.

I dreamt I went to Heaven once
Through the dark blue sky,
Past the stars and silver moon
On a butterfly.

And when we got to Heaven,
The gate was open wide,
But an angel came and stopped us
Before we got inside.

And then she closed the golden gate
As gently as could be,
And we flew down to the earth again,
For we weren't dead, you see.

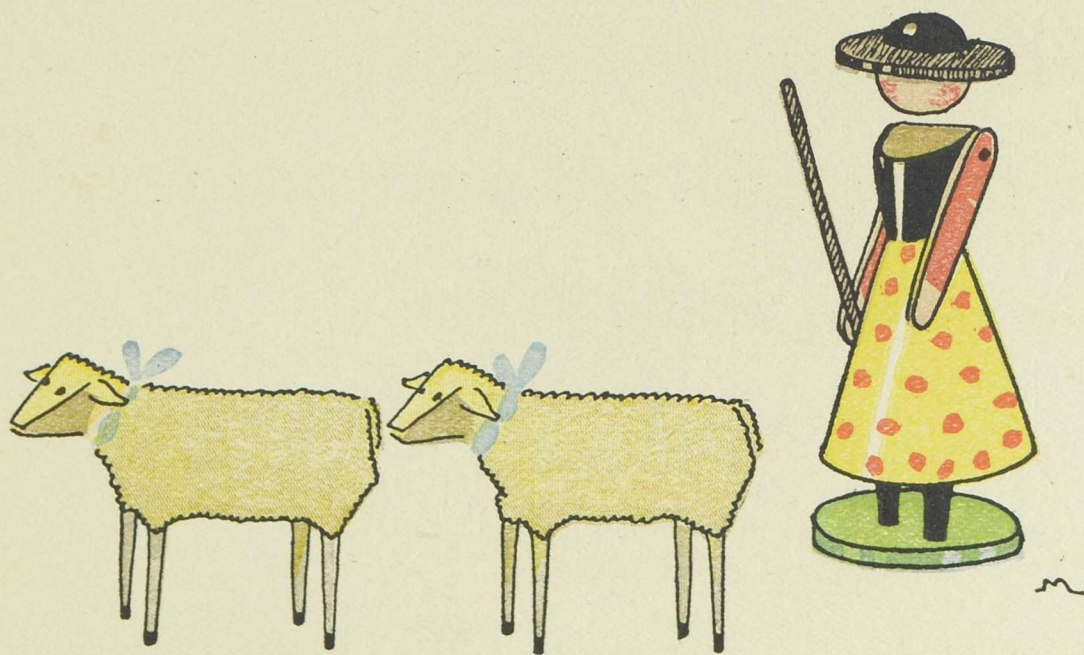


MAGGIE

THE SKY THROUGH THE LITTLE
WHITE CLOUDS IS BLUE.

The sky through the little white clouds is
blue,

'Tis the angels' eyes that are peeping through,
And when they turn their eyes away
The sky is overcast and grey.



ABOUT A NIGHTINGALE.

One evening as I was walking along,
A nightingale sang me a long, long song
About all the beautiful things he had seen,
The flowers, the birds, and the leaves turning
green.

And he sang of the roses of June,
He sang of the tree where he'd made his nest,
He sang of the twilight, and peace and rest,
And he sang of the rising moon.



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FAIRIES...
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MAGGIE