

Three Little Maids from
School.



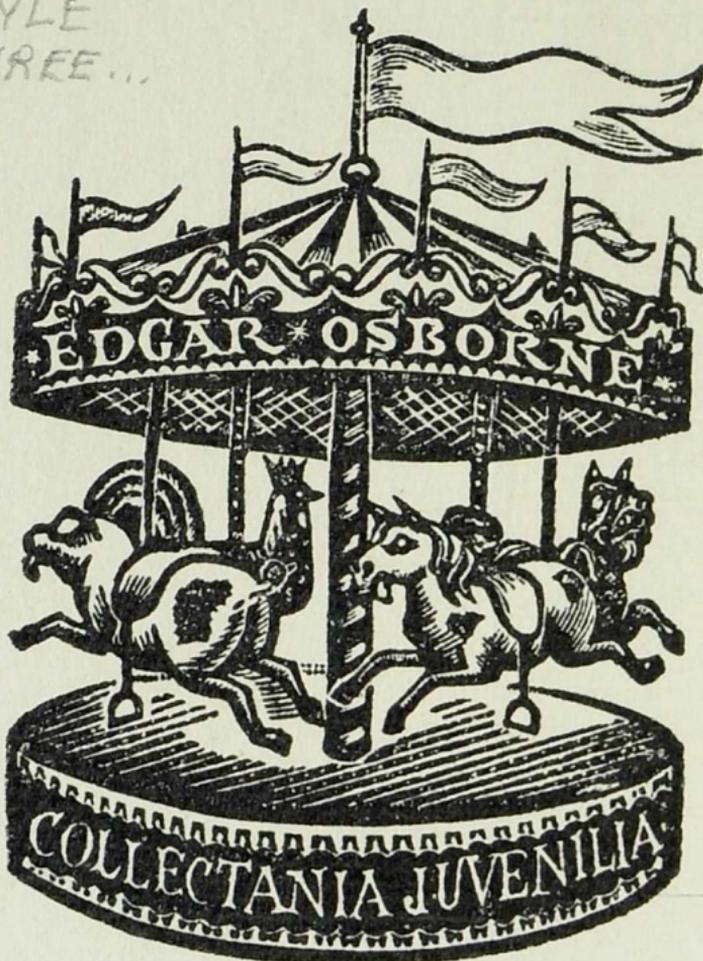
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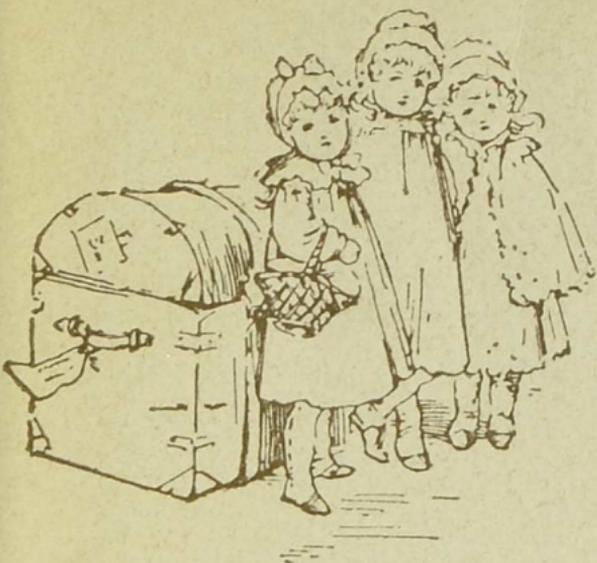
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THREE LITTLE MAIDS
FROM SCHOOL.

HURRAH! Hurrah! Hurrah!
“Children,” cried Miss Pearl with a jump, “you must not shout like that!”
“Oh! but you don’t know what’s happened,” exclaimed the three little maids.
“It’s the beautifulest thing in the world,” said Nancie.





“And we’ve got it here,” went on Daisy.

“Yes, a weal live letter from Ganma, asking us to spend Kismas wif her,” explained Lucy.

Miss Pearl, who was head-mistress of the

nicest boarding-school in London, could not help sharing her pupils’ joy; for their parents were far, far away in India, and everybody knows that “school” is not a very “funny” place wherein to spend your Christmas holidays.

So the kind-hearted lady helped to pack up a big trunk with many nice dresses and a few pinafores, and only wished that her three



darlings were inside that trunk with the lid down; and then, you see, she could have addressed it: "Mrs. Grandmother, Hollytree Farm," and been certain that her charges would arrive there quite safely.

Grandmother was delighted to see them,



and hugged them a little, and kissed them a great deal; then, because Daisy sneezed, and Lucy yawned, and Nancie was tired after the journey, she sent them to bed very early.

Next morning Grandma was awakened by sweet voices singing a Christmas Carol out-



side her bedroom door. Miss Pearl had trained her pupils to sing it quite prettily, and it so delighted Grandma that she decided to give them a present. And what do you think it was? Well, a dear little dog named Fido!

The children were frantic with delight, and after breakfast they scampered round the farm

and through the village—Fido first—for he knew of several nice places.

Fido led the way to where some children were making a huge Snow-man, and our little maids, nothing loth, joined in the sport.

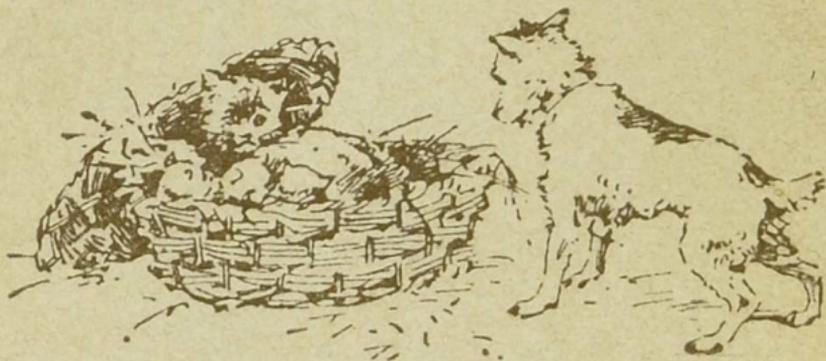
Oh! but it was such fun!

One day they all went off to a pond to skate—I mean Daisy and Lucy went first, Nancie and Fido followed. They would have gone together, only Fido had so many claims upon his time. He knew some rabbits who lived in a hole near the orchard. He sniffed round *their* house. He remembered a cat who kept four kittens in a hamper. He wanted to have a lark with *those* kittens, but their mamma objected, and scratched him. He knew a young lady dog



with whom he often picked a bone on Tuesdays. She was away from *her* kennel, but her master being nigh, he flung a stick at Fido. So when Fido had finished his round of calls, and was coaxed into the belief that it was his duty to follow Nancie, it was rather late.

When he got to the pond, Fido did not like sliding. He thought it slow and somewhat risky, so he kept one bright eye on Nancie, and another on a break in the hedge, and when Nancie took a very long slide—he took a very short one—through the hedge! And away he ran like mad!





"Where's Fido? Have you seen Fido? Oh! my dear little dog!" cried Daisy.

"Our poor lost pet!" sobbed Lucy.

"The naughty little thing," said Nancie.

Coming home, breathless with haste, to tell Grandmamma of the misfortune, Lucy stumbled against a pump; Daisy lost her way and asked a farmer to tell her where *she* lived; but Nancie came direct and told Grandmamma the truth.



All that afternoon they looked round the house and searched about the farm, but no Fido could they see; so tired and very sorrowful they prepared to go to bed.

"Good-night, Grandmamma."

"Good-night, darlings. Now don't fret about Fido.



To-morrow I will send the bellman round. We will be sure to find the truant!"

This cheered tiny Lucy. She dried her eyes. "I'll they dud-night to Dolly," she said, "else she won't sleep a wink!"

Running to the playroom and stooping down to kiss her neglected pet—what do you think she saw? Why Fido, fast asleep in Dolly's cot—and Dolly on the floor!

"Fido!" cried the three little maids in a breath.

"Bow-wow-wow!" which was, I think, a doggie's way of saying "Forgive me."

Marie Boyle.

