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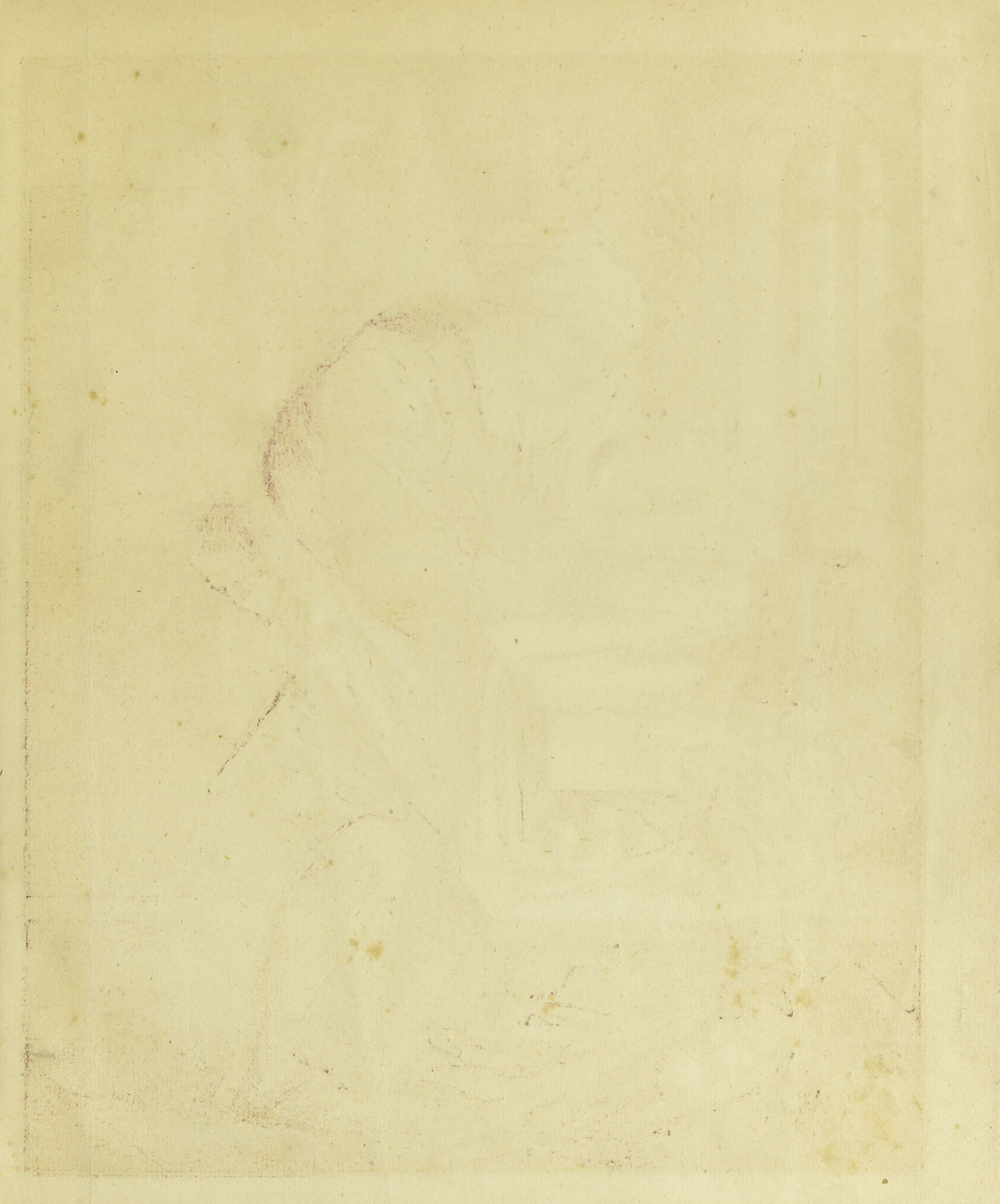
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AUNT LOUISA'S

KEEPSAKE.

COMPRISING

Sing a Song o' Sixpence.

Robin Hood & his Merry Men.

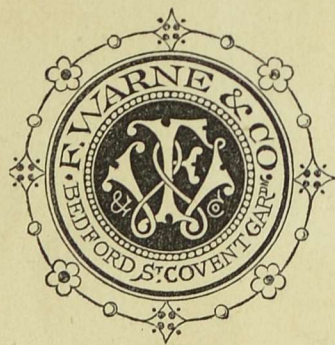
The Robin's Christmas Eve.

The Sea Side.

WITH

TWENTY-FOUR PAGES OF ILLUSTRATIONS,

Printed in Oil Colours by Kronheim and Dalziels.



LONDON :

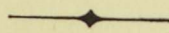
FREDERICK WARNE AND CO.

BEDFORD STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

NEW YORK: SCRIBNER, WELFORD, AND CO.

1868.

Preface.

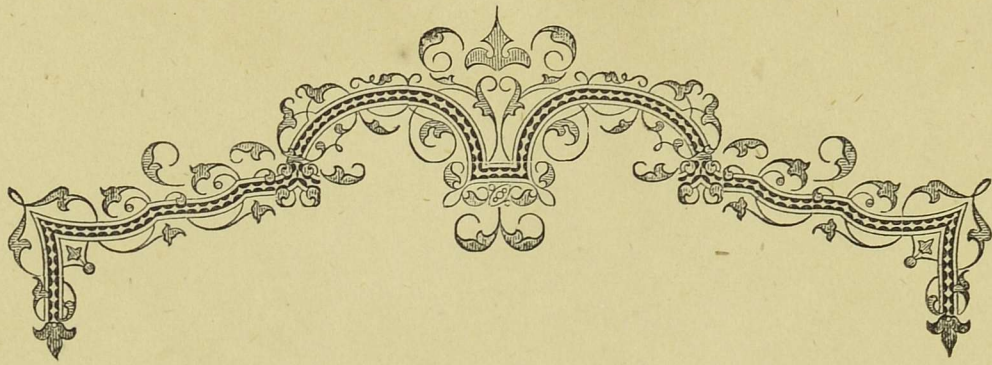


LONDON, New Year, 1868.

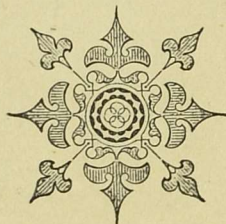
AUNT LOUISA'S KEEPSAKE is intended for all Seasons. For Winter, it offers you the story of how dear Robin Redbreast spent his Christmas Eve. For Spring, the Four-and-Twenty Blackbirds once more Sing out of their Pie. For Summer, the Story of Sherwood Forest, of Robin Hood and his Merry Men. And for Autumn, pictures of the happy holiday you all enjoy so much by the sea-side. It is hoped that all four Seasons may prove equally attractive.

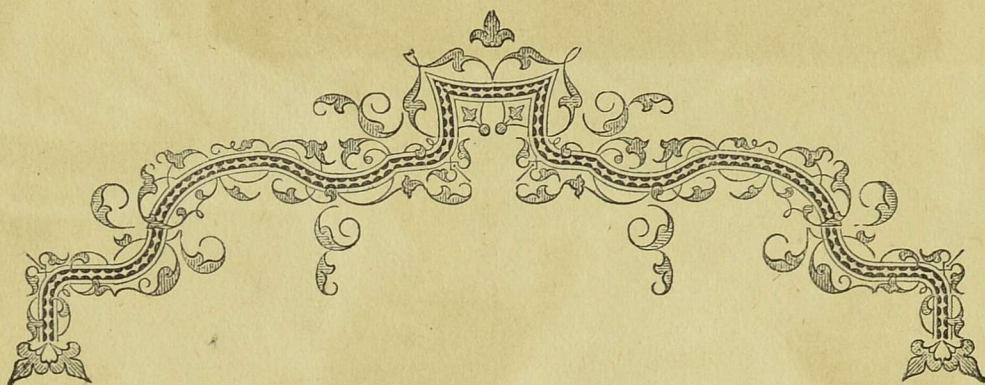
Bedford Street, Covent Garden,

SING A SONG O' SIXPENCE.

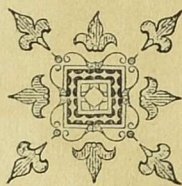


SING a song of sixpence,
A pocket full of rye;
Four and twenty blackbirds
Baked in a pie.

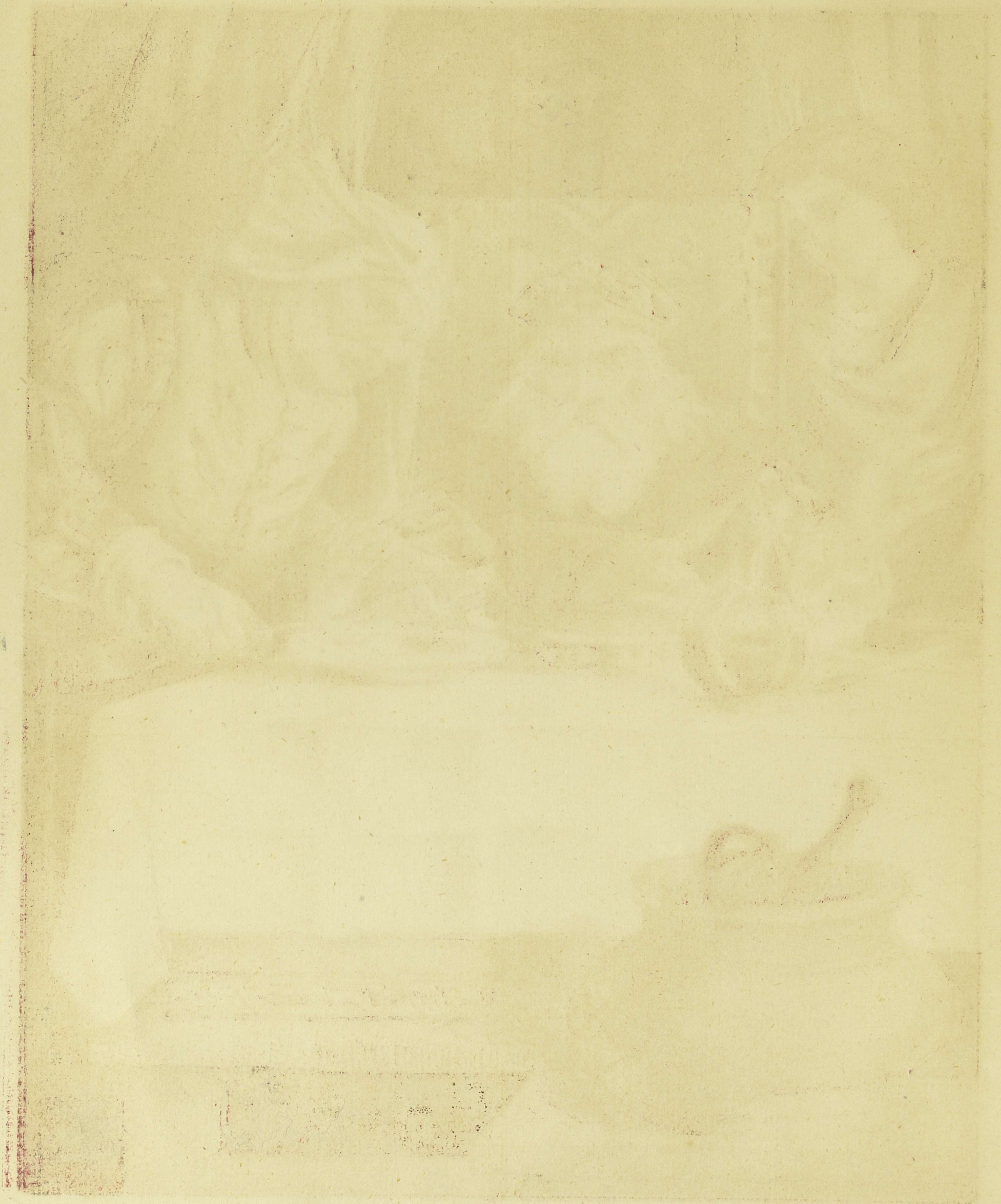


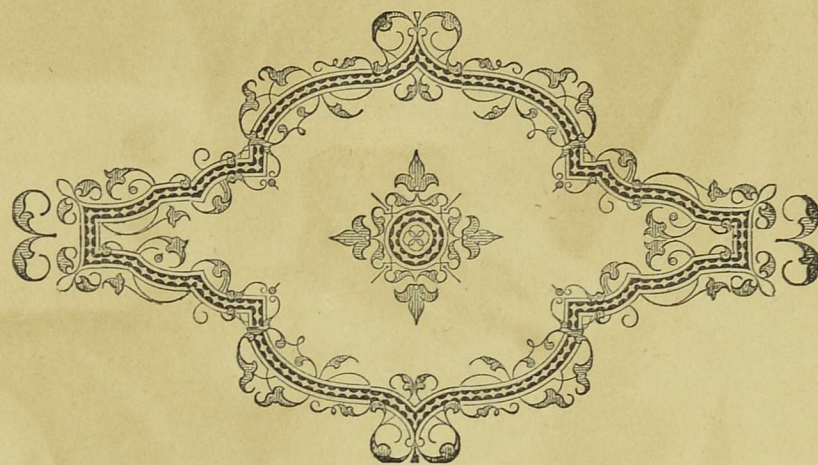


WHEN the pie was opened,
The birds began to sing;
Was not that a dainty dish
To set before the **K**ing?



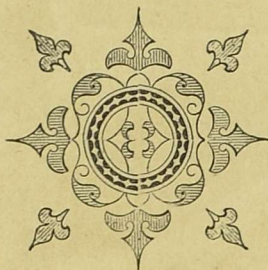




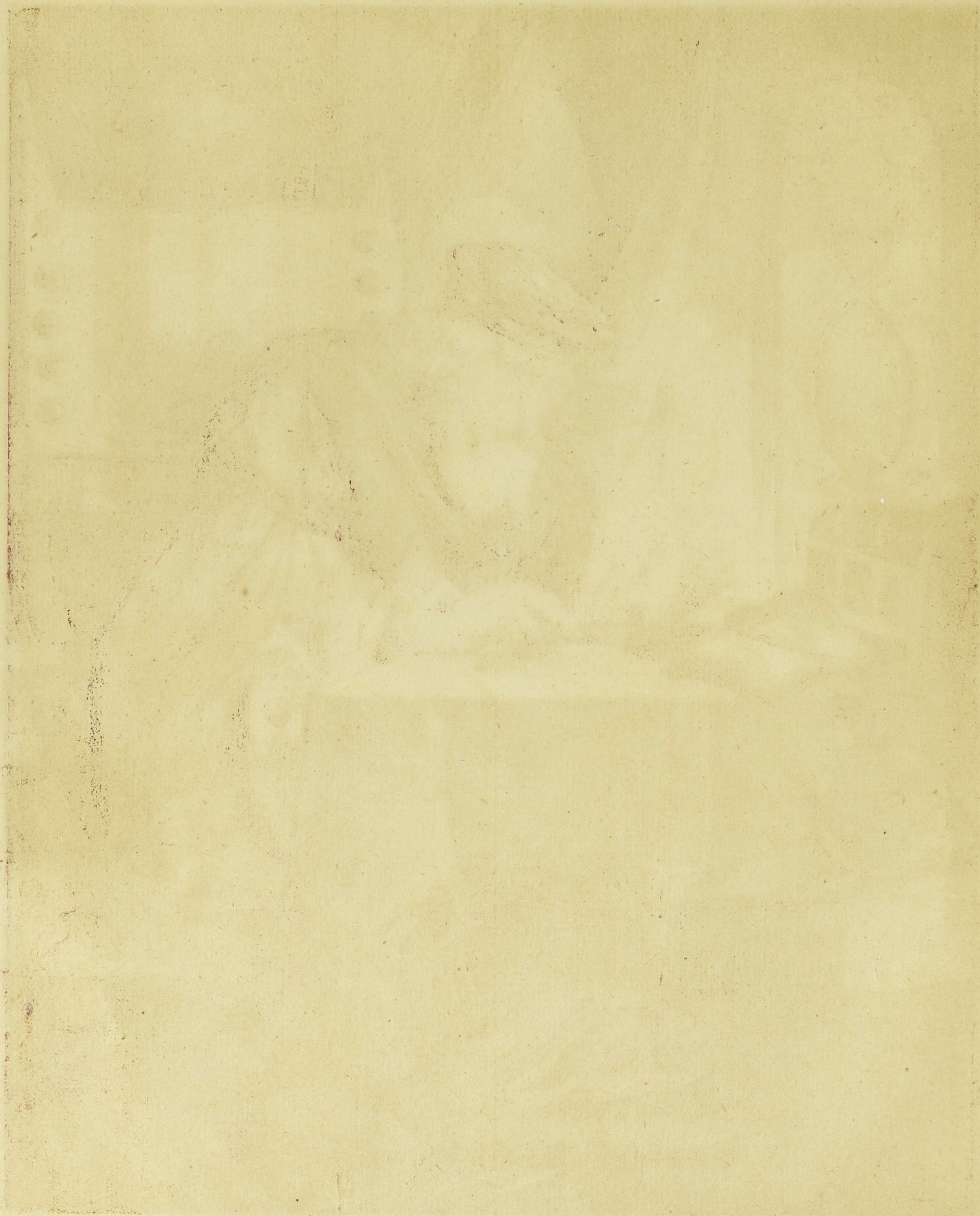


THE King was in his counting-
house,

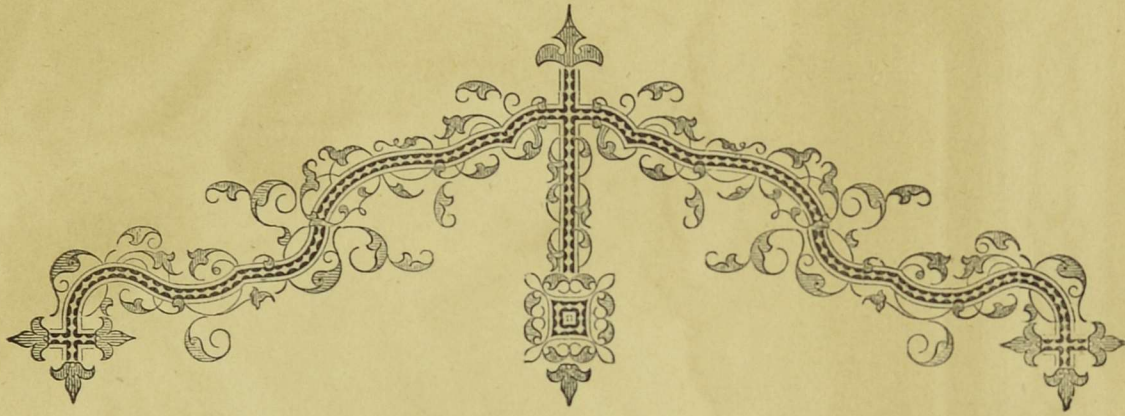
Counting out his money;



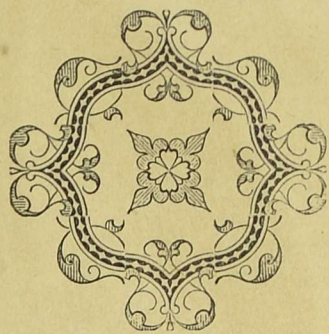




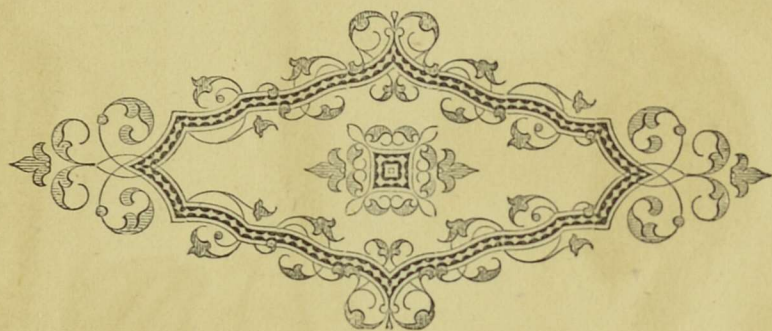




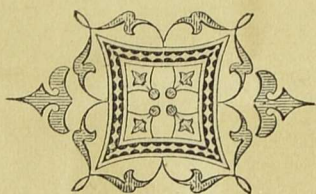
THE Queen was in the parlour,
Eating bread and honey.



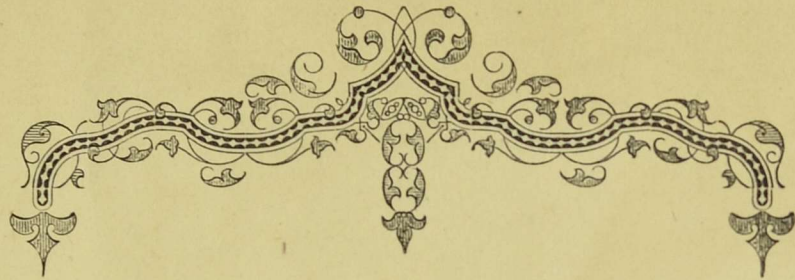




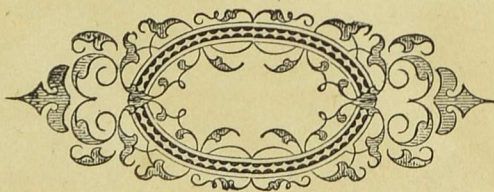
THE maid was in the garden,
Hanging out the clothes ;
By came a jackdaw,
And snapt off her nose.







THEY sent for the King's doctor,
who sewed it on again,
He sewed it on so neatly, the seam
was never seen ;
And the jackdaw for his naughtiness
deservedly was slain.



THE ROBIN'S CHRISTMAS EVE.

THE ROBIN'S CHRISTMAS EVE.

BY C. E. B.

'T WAS Christmas-time: a dreary night:
The snow fell thick and fast,
And o'er the country swept the wind,
A keen and wintry blast.

The little ones were all in bed,
Crouching beneath the clothes,
Half-trembling at the angry wind,
Which wildly fell and rose.

Old Jem the Sexton rubbed his leg,
For he had got the gout;
He said he thought it wondrous hard
That he must sally out.

Not far from Jem's, another house,
Of different size and form,
Rose high its head, defying well
The fierce and pelting storm.

It was the Squire's lordly home.
A rare old Squire he,
As brave and true an Englishman
As any one could see.

The Squire's lady and himself
Sat cozily together,
When suddenly he roused himself,
To see the kind of weather.

Lifting the shutters' ponderous bar,
He threw them open wide,
And very dark, and cold, and drear
He thought it looked outside.

Ah, Squire! little do you think
A trembling beggar's near,
Although his form you do not see,
His voice you do not hear.

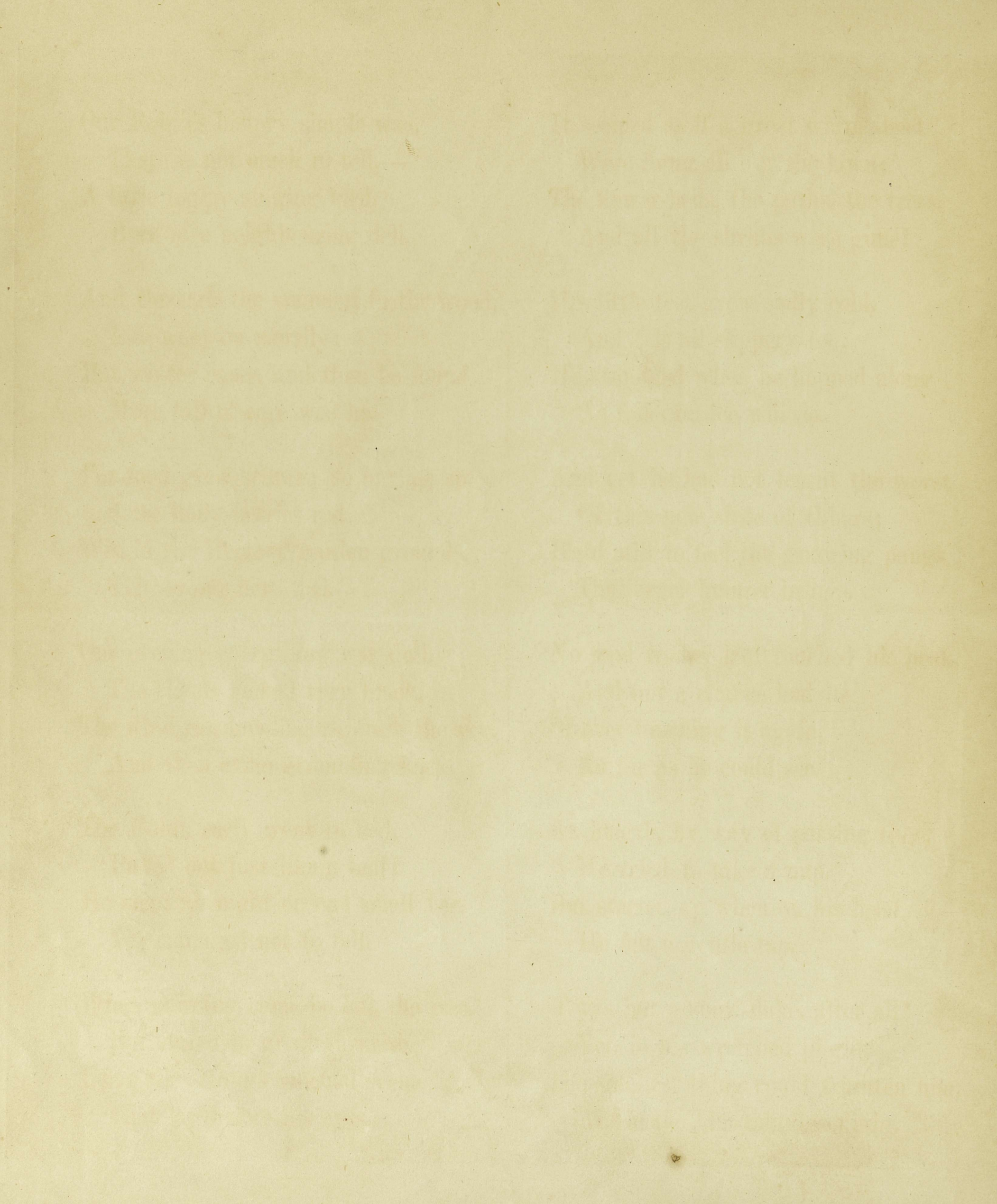
Yes, there he stands,—so very close,
He taps the window-pane;
And when he sees you turn away,
He feebly taps again.

But all in vain; the heavy bar
Was fastened as before;
The Squire's burly form retraced
His highly-polished floor.

Now, is there any one who thinks
It cannot be worth while
To write about a Robin's fate,
And treat it with a smile?

If so, I bid them to their mind
Those words of Scripture call,
Which say that not without God's will
E'en little birds can fall.





Our Robin's history simple was,
There is not much to tell,—
A little happy singing bird,
Born in a neighbouring dell.

And through the summer, in the wood,
Life went on merrily;
But winter came, and then he found
More full of care was he.

For food grew scarce; so having spied
Some holly-berries red
Within the Rectory garden grounds,
Thither our hero fled.

One evening everything was dull,
The clouds looked very black,
The wind ran howling through the sky,
And then came grumbling back.

The Robin early went to bed,
Puffed out just like a ball;
He slept all night on one small leg,
Yet managed not to fall.

When morning came he left the tree,
But stared in great surprise
Upon the strange unusual scene
That lay before his eyes.

It seemed as if a great white sheet
Were flung all o'er the lawn;
The flower-beds, the paths, the trees,
And all the shrubs were gone!

His little feet grew sadly cold,
And felt all slippery too;
He stumbled when he hopped along
As folks on ice will do.

And yet he had not learnt the worst
Of this new state of things;
He'd still to feel the gnawing pangs
That cruel hunger brings.

No food to-day had touched his beak,
And not a chance had he
Of ever touching it again,
As far as he could see.

At length, by way of passing time,
He tried to take a nap,
But started up when on his head
He felt a gentle tap.

'T was but a snow-flake, after all!
Yet, in his wretched plight,
The smallest thing could frighten him,
And make him take his flight.



But soon he found he must not hope
From these soft flakes to fly:
Down they came feathering on his head,
His back, his tail, his eye!

No gardeners appeared that day;
The Rector's step came by,
And Robin fluttered o'er the snow
To try and catch his eye.

But being Christmas Eve, perhaps
His sermons filled his mind,
For on he walked, and never heard
The little chirp behind.

Half-blinded, on and on he roamed,
Quite through the Squire's park;
At last he stood before the house,
But all was cold and dark.

Now suddenly his heart beats high!
He sees a brilliant glare,
Shutters unfurl before his eyes,
A sturdy form stands there!

He almost frantic grew, poor bird!
Fluttered, and tapped the pane,
Pressed hard his breast against the glass,
And chirped,—but all in vain!

So on he went, and as it chanced,
He passed into a lane,
And once again he saw a light
Inside a window-pane.

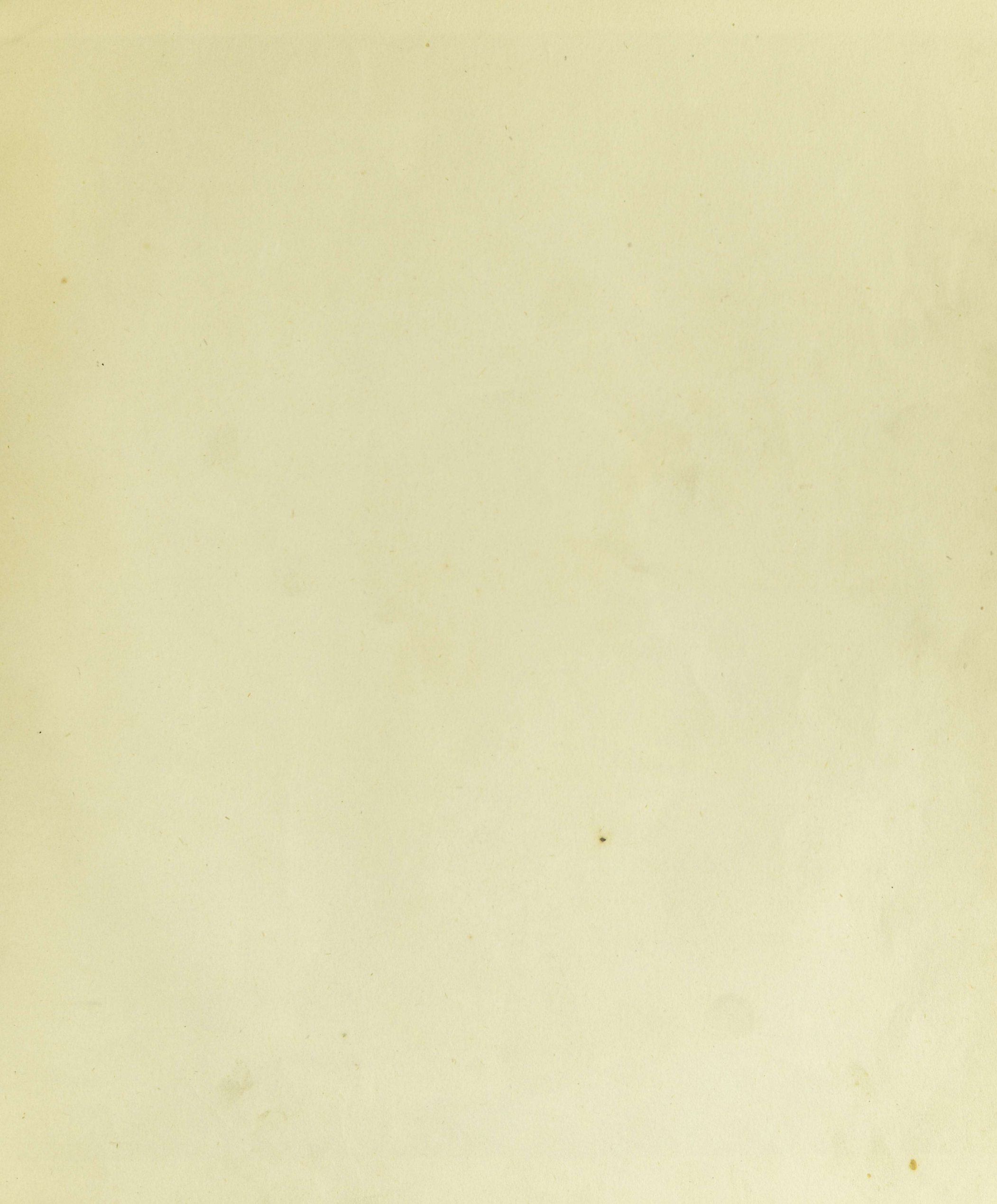
Chanced, did we say? let no such word
Upon our page appear:
Not *chance*, but watchful Providence,
Had led poor Robin here.

'Twas Jem the Sexton's house from which
Shone forth that cheering light,
For Jem had drawn the curtain back
To gaze upon the night.

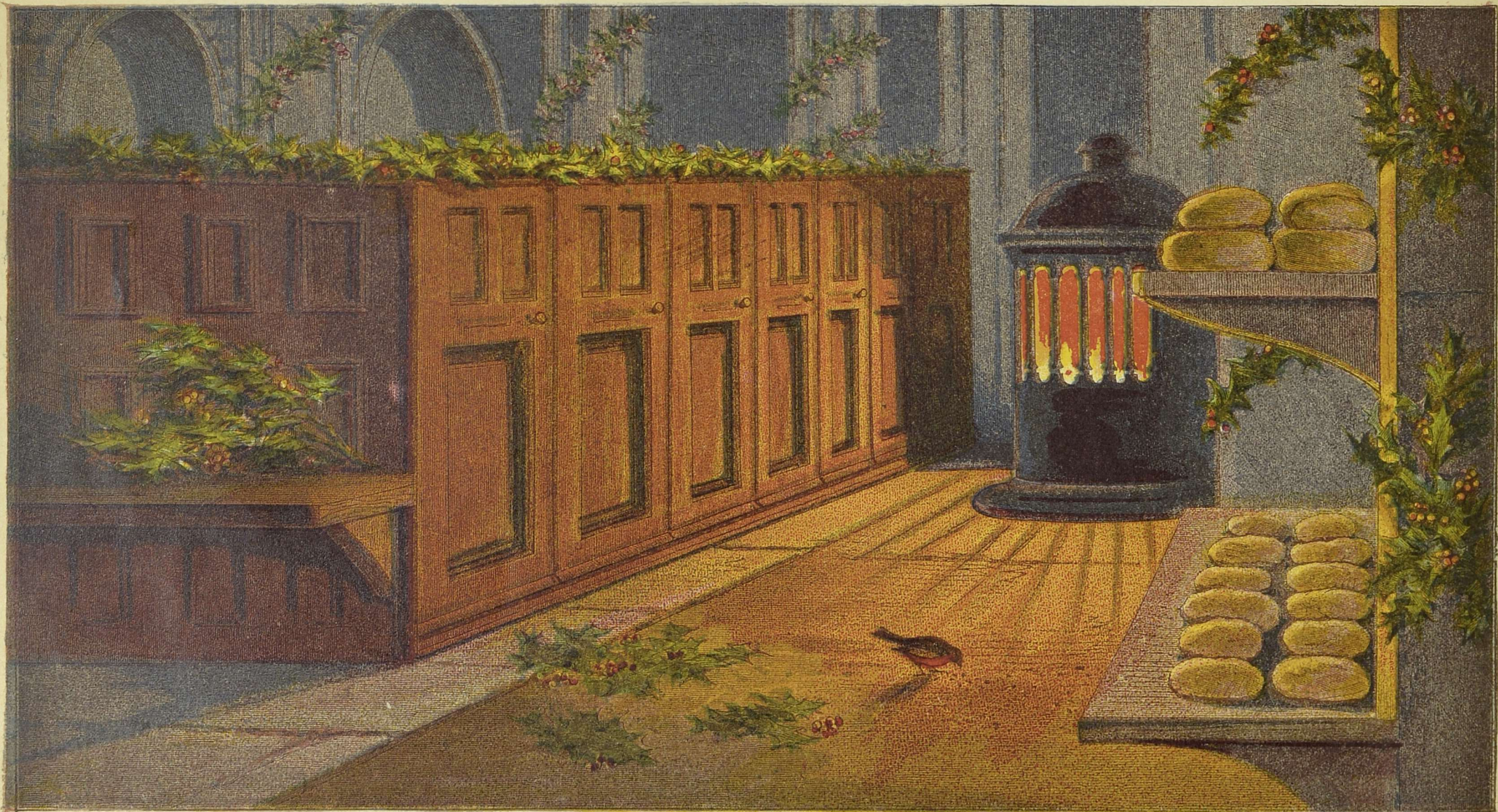
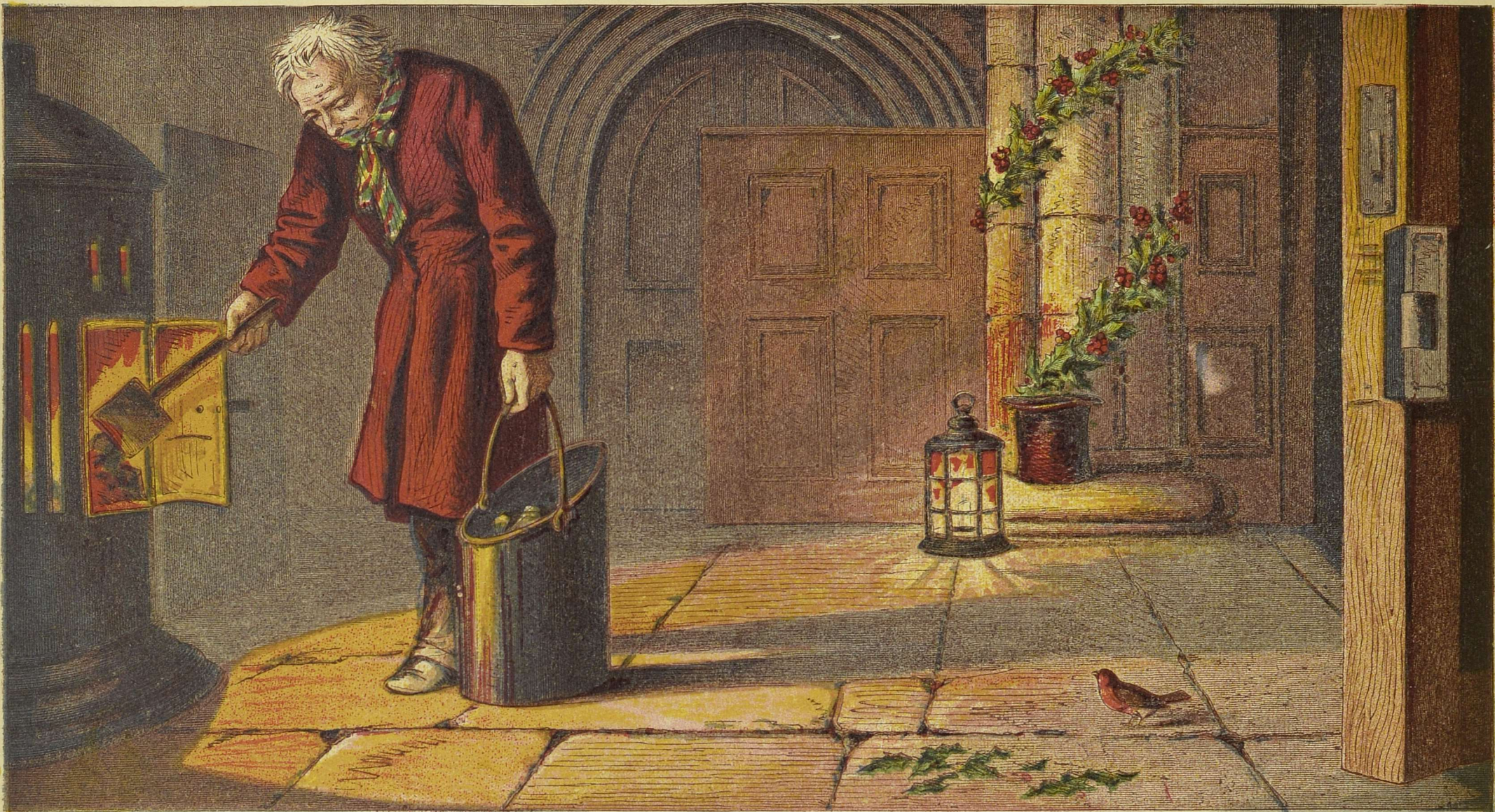
And now, with lantern in his hand,
He hobbles down the lane,
Mutt'ring and grumbling to himself,
Because his foot's in pain.

He gains the church, then for the key
Within his pocket feels,
And as he puts it in the door
Robin is at his heels.

Jem thought, when entering the church,
That he was all alone,
Nor dreamed a little stranger bird
Had to its refuge flown.







The stove had not burnt very low,
But still was warm and bright,
And round the spot whereon it stood
Threw forth a cheerful light.

Jem lost no time; he flung on coals,
And raked the ashes out,
Then hurried off to go to bed,
Still grumbling at his gout.

Now Robin from a corner hopped,
Within the fire's light;
Shivering and cold, it was to him
A most enchanting sight.

But he is almost starved, poor bird!
Food he must have, or die:
Useless it seems, alas! for that
Within these walls to try.

Yet, see! he makes a sudden dart;
His searching eye has found
The greatest treasure he could have,—
Some bread-crumbs on the ground!

Perhaps 't is thought by those who read,
Too doubtful to be true,
That just when they were wanted so
Some hand should bread-crumbs strew.

But this was how it came to pass:
An ancient dame had said
Her legacy unto the poor
Should all be spent in bread.

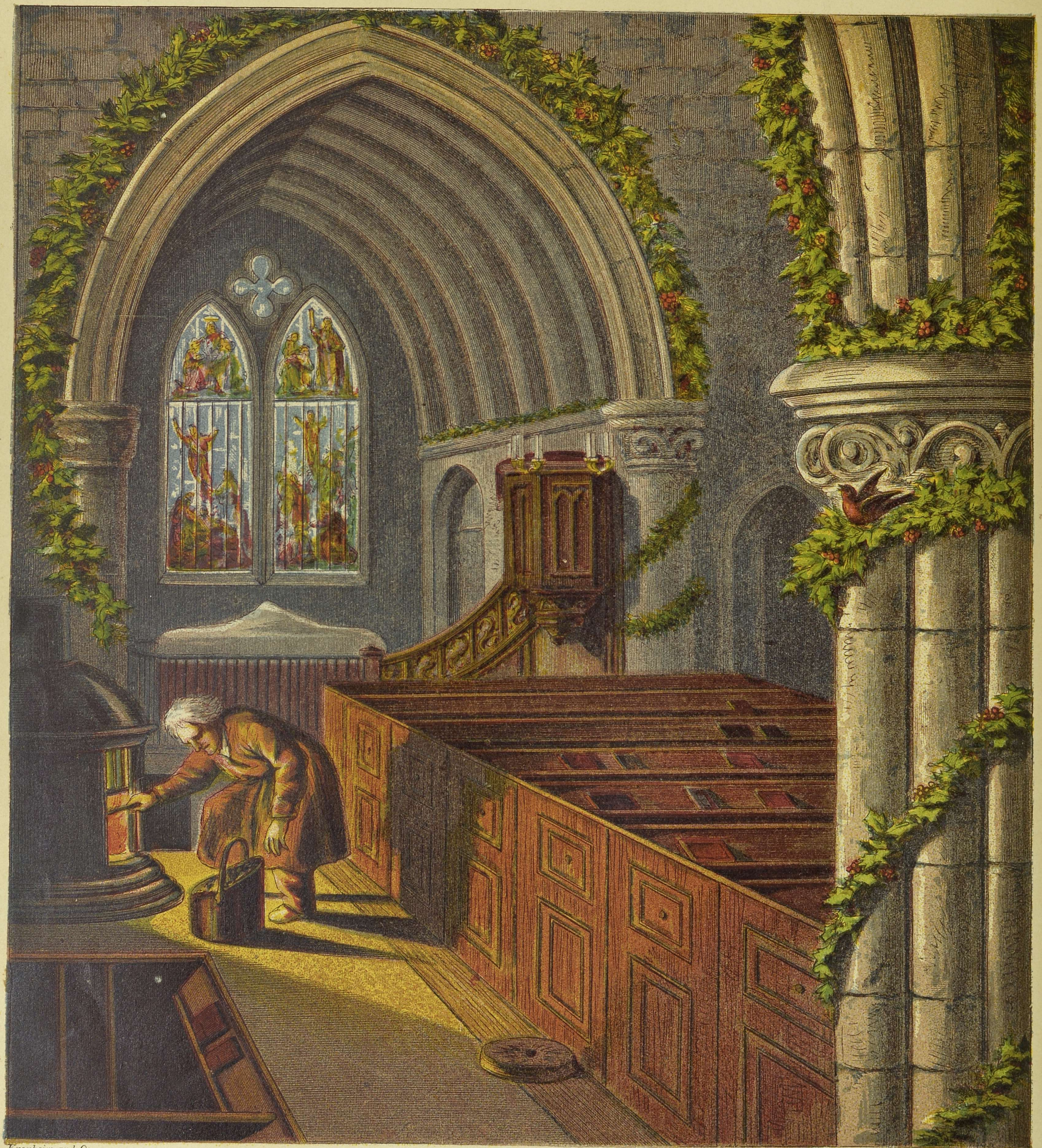
So every week twelve wheaten loaves
The Sexton brought himself,
And crumbs had doubtless fallen when
He placed them on the shelf.

Enough there were for quite a feast,
Robin was glad to find;
The hungry fellow ate them all,
Nor left one crumb behind.

He soon was quite himself again,
And it must be confessed
His first thought, being warmed and fed,
Was all about his breast.

To smooth its scarlet feathers down
Our hero did not fail,
And when he'd made it smart, he then
Attended to his tail!

Worn though he was with sheer fatigue
And being up so late,
He did not like to go to bed
In such a ruffled state.



His toilet done, he went to sleep,
And never once awoke
Till, coming in on Christmas morn,
Jem gave the stove a poke.

Then in alarm he flew away
Along the middle aisle,
And perching on the pulpit-top,
He rested there awhile.

But what an unexpected sight
Is this that meets his eyes!
The church is dressed with holly green,
To him so great a prize.

For 'mongst the leaves the berries hung,
Inviting him to eat;
On every side were hundreds more,—
A rich and endless treat.

He could not know that Christian folks
Had brought the holly green,
That so their joy for Jesu's birth
Might in this way be seen.

Now, very soon a little troop
Of children entered in:
They came to practise Christmas songs
Ere service should begin.

The Rector followed them himself,
To help the young ones on,
And teach their voices how to sing
In tune their Christmas song.

And first he charged them all to try
And feel the words they sang;
Then reading from his open book,
He thus the hymn began:

“Glory to God from all
To whom He's given breath;
Glory to God from all
Whom He has saved from death.”

Now, when the Rector's voice had ceased,
The children, led by him,
Were just about, with earnest voice,
The verse of praise to sing,

When suddenly, from high above,
Another song they hear,
And all look up in hushed amaze,
At notes so sweet and clear.

'T was Robin sitting on a spray
Of twisted holly bright;
His light weight swayed it, as he sang
His song with all his might.



His heart was full of happiness,
And this it was that drew
Praise to his Maker, in the way,
The only way, he knew.

It seemed as though he understood
The words he just had heard,
As if he felt they suited him,
Though but a little bird.

The Rector's finger lifted up,
Kept all the children still,
Their eyes uplifted to the bird
Singing with open bill.

They scarcely breathed, lest they should
One note of that sweet strain; [lose
And Robin scarcely paused before
He took it up again.

Now, when he ceased, the Rector thought
That he would say a word;
For Robin's tale had in his breast
A strong emotion stirred.

"Children," said he, "that little voice
A lesson should have taught:
It seems to me the Robin's song
Is with instruction fraught.

"He was, no doubt, in great distress;
Deep snow was all around;
He might have starved, but coming here,
Both food and shelter found.

"Seek God, my children, and when times
Of storm and trouble come,
He'll guide you as He did the bird,
And safely lead you home.

"Another lesson we may learn
From those sweet notes we heard,
That God has given voice of praise
To that unconscious bird;

"But unto us His love bestows
A far more glorious gift,
For we have *reason*, and our *souls*,
As well as voice, can lift."

The Rector paused, for now rang forth
The merry Christmas chime,
And warned them all that it was near
The usual service-time.

And we must close the Robin's tale:
'T will be a blessed thing
Should it have taught but one young voice
To praise as well as sing.

ROBIN HOOD AND HIS MERRY MEN.

ROBIN HOOD

AND HIS

MERRY-MEN.



ROBIN HOOD, Earl of Huntingdon, when quite a young man, lived at the Court of King Henry the Second. He was very rich and very generous; but he wanted prudence, and gave away and entertained so liberally, that he soon became in debt, and unable to pay all that he owed. The Abbot of St. Mary's, who had lent him money, and who was a cruel and greedy man, took advantage of Robin's wants, and would have put him in prison, but Robin fled, and hid himself in the great forest of Sherwood. He had always been very fond of archery; but now he had to use his bow, not in sport, but in earnest, to shoot the dappled deer that ran wild in the woods, for his daily food. But Robin was much beloved by the poor, to whom he had always been kind, and a number of archers gradually joined him, and made him their Captain. In the picture you will see Robin and some of his band. Robin wears an eagle's feather, because he is their chief. Little John, his Lieutenant, is blowing the horn, to call the band together; for Friar Tuck has killed a fat deer, and they will have a good supper by-and-bye. Allan-a-Dale is sitting near, with his harp, to which he will sing at the feast; and Will Scarlet, close behind him, is listening to the Friar's story of how he shot the deer.



FRIAR TUCK.

One day, as Robin Hood stood by a brook in the forest, he saw a fat Friar coming towards him.

“Here, Sir Friar,” said Robin, “it will not hurt your bare feet to wet them: carry me over the brook.”

The Friar took the Archer on his back, but when he reached the middle of the stream he threw Robin off into the water, and went on, laughing at his trick. But Robin soon overtook him, and attacked him with his quarter-staff, and the two fought for some time. At last the Outlaw blew his horn, and said, “I am Robin Hood, Friar.”

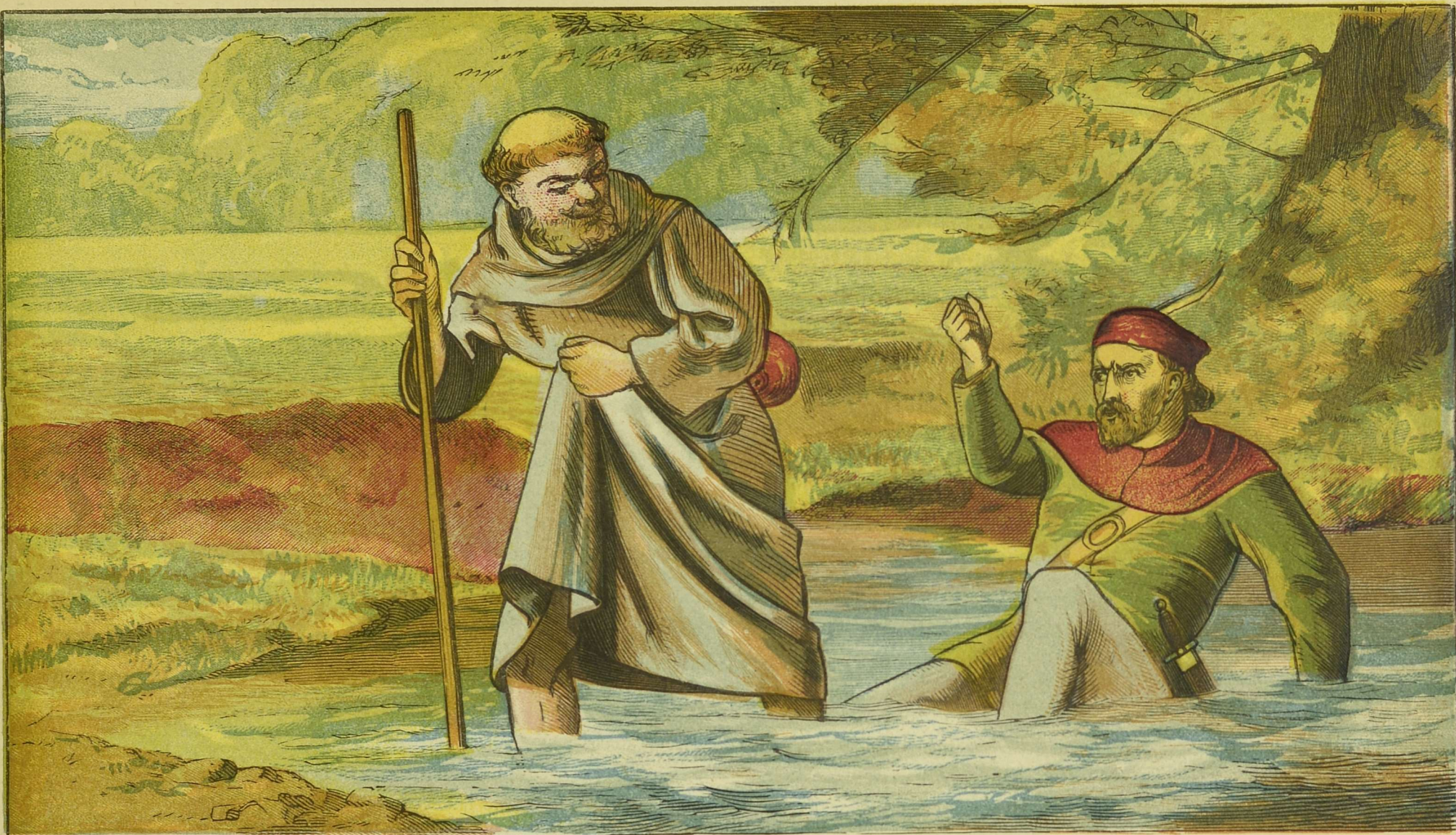
“And I am Friar Tuck, bold Robin, who would like to live with you in the greenwood and be your Chaplain,” said the Priest.

Robin laughed, and when the Merry-men came hurrying up at his call, he said to them, “Here is a new comrade. This jolly Friar wishes to join our band.”

So Friar Tuck became one of the Merry-men from that day.

LITTLE JOHN.

Robin Hood met Little John for the first time on a narrow plank, crossing a stream. There was not room for them both to pass, and neither would go back; so they agreed to fight, and see who would be first knocked into the water. The stranger, who was seven feet high, beat Robin; and then they shook hands and became friends. Robin asked John to join his band, and the youth gladly consented. When the Merry-men saw the giant, and heard that his name was John *Little*, they laughed long and loudly, and said that he was so small he should be new-christened, and called Little John. Robin Hood made this young man his Lieutenant, to rule the band whenever he happened to be away.



ALLAN-A-DALE.

One bright summer morning, as Robin was walking through the greenwood, he found a young man seated, weeping, under an oak, with a harp on the grass beside him. The kind Outlaw at once asked the stranger why he grieved, and the poor lad told him that he had been cheated out of his fortune, and had nothing left but his harp; that, in consequence of his misfortunes, the father of the maiden he was betrothed to had refused to let them marry, and had driven Allan-a-Dale from his castle. Robin bade him cease weeping, and join his band, and try to live happily in the free greenwood. So Allan-a-Dale became the Harper or Minstrel of the Merry-men.

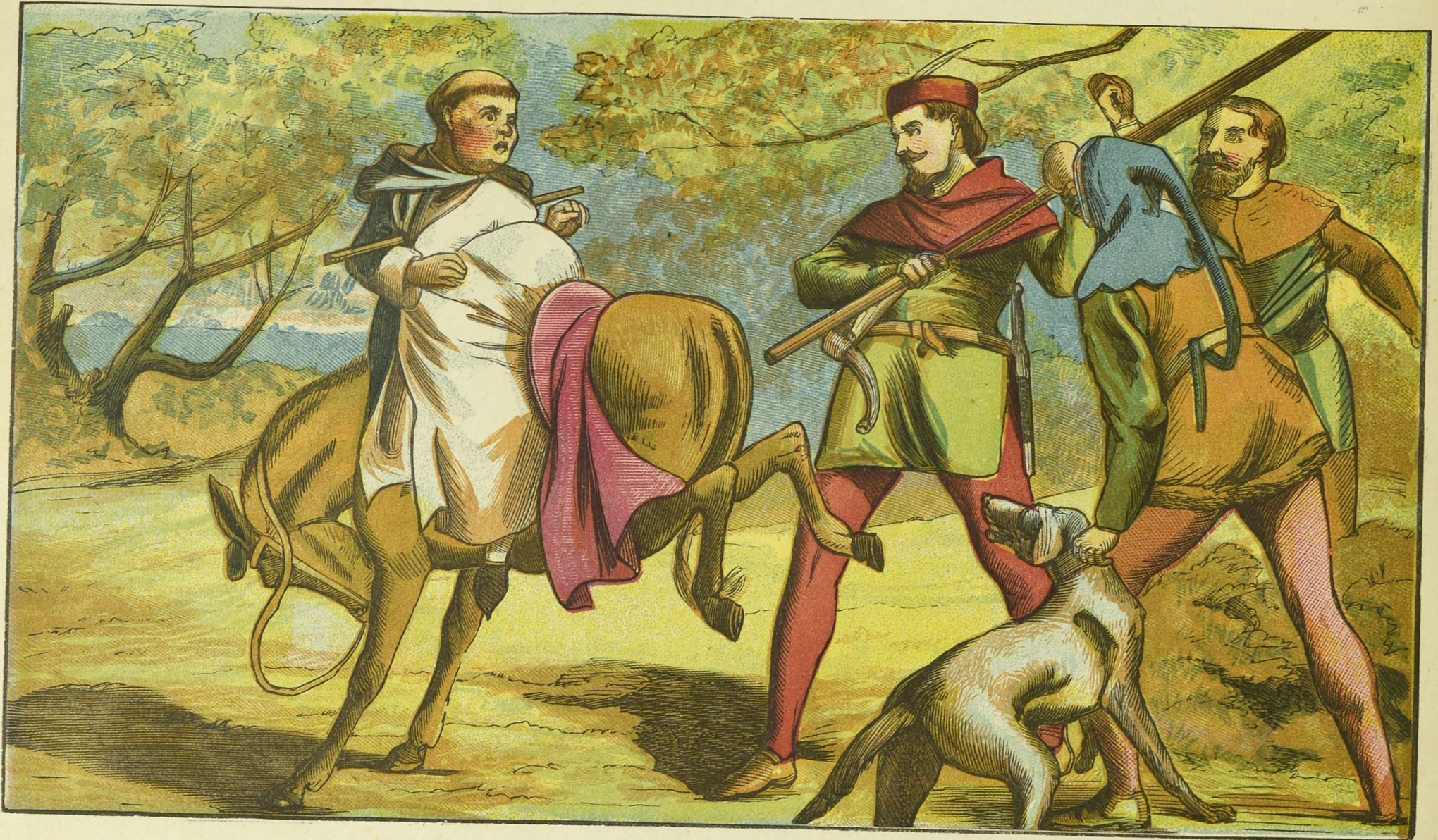


MAID MARIAN AND THE WEDDING.

Robin also, while he was rich and powerful, had been betrothed to a lady whom he greatly loved; but he had never seen her since he became an Outlaw. Still, she had not forgotten him: she thought she ought to share his poverty as she would have done his wealth; so she dressed herself like a boy, and went into the forest to seek for Robin. At last she met him, but he did not know her in boy's clothes, and with a drawn sword in her hand. Maid Marian would not tell him at first who she was: she attacked him, and fought with him, but he soon struck her sword out of her hand. Then she took off her cap, and let her golden hair fall over her shoulders, and Robin knew at once that it was Marian.

Friar Tuck married them, and they had a very gay wedding. The little forest children carried green boughs before them, and merry Sherwood rejoiced—forest fashion—at the marriage of Robin Hood and Maid Marian.





ALLAN-A-DALE'S WEDDING.

Soon after this, Allan-a-Dale heard that the father of the maiden he loved was going to make her marry a very silly old Knight, who was not at all a good man. Allan told Robin.

“We will be at the bridal,” said Robin Hood.

So early the next day the whole band set off for the chapel where the marriage was to be, and just as the wicked old Knight led the weeping bride to the altar, the horn of Robin Hood was heard outside the church. The outlaws rushed in, seized the old Knight, bound the cruel father, made Friar Tuck go to the altar, and bade him marry the fair bride to Allan-a-Dale. When the ceremony was over, Robin Hood ordered Allan to bring his wife home to the forest, that she might dwell with Marian.

THE ABBOT'S RIDE.

Robin Hood and his Merry-men did not live only by shooting the deer: they used to rob the rich travellers who passed through the woods. But they never took anything from the poor, and were ready to give to all who were in want. One day the outlaws caught a rich Abbot and his servants in the forest, took them prisoners, and brought them before Robin Hood. He was greatly surprised when he saw in the captive the wicked Abbot who had ruined him and taken all his lands.

The Abbot was dreadfully frightened when he saw Robin; he thought he should be killed for the evil he had done the Earl. But Robin was too generous for such an act: he took a very funny revenge instead. He took the Abbot's gold, and then made his men tie him on his mule with his face to the tail, and in that disgraceful posture they drove him out of the forest.



THE BLACK KNIGHT.

One day, as Robin was walking through the forest, he met a Knight on horseback, in black and rather shabby armour. Now, Robin, as I have said, did not rob the poor. He saw, also, that the Knight was a Crusader (that is, a soldier who had fought for the Holy Land), so he spoke civilly to him, and asked him to come home with him and take some refreshment. The Knight accepted the invitation, and soon they were sitting under the old oak, with some of the Merry-men, quaffing a cup of wine.

“Let us drink to the health of our good King Richard of the Lion Heart,” said Robin; and the outlaws drank the toast loyally; but the Knight did not put his goblet to his lips.

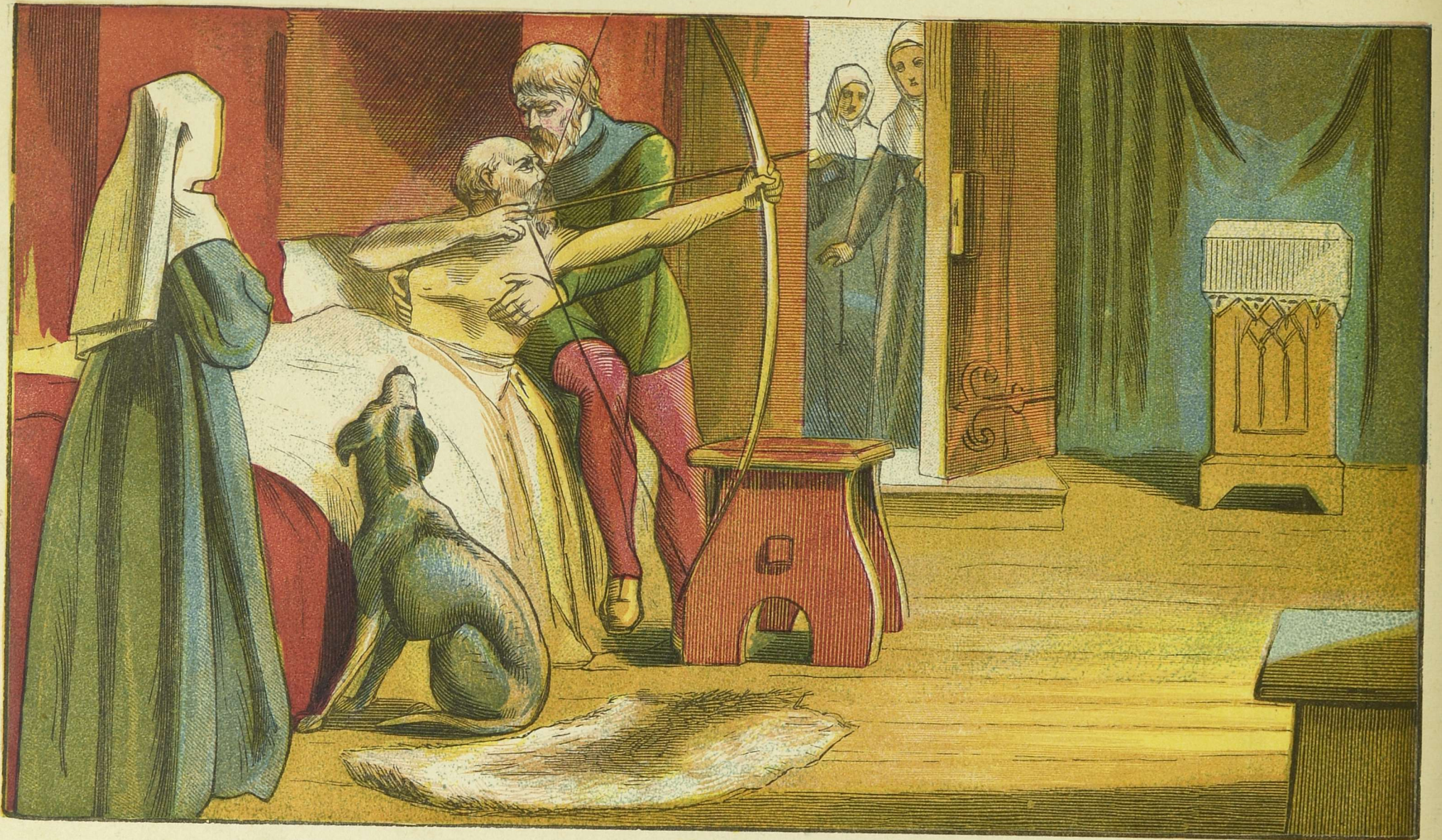
ROBIN HOOD AND KING RICHARD.

“Why do you not drink to our good King, Sir Knight?” said Robin, sternly.

“I thought you outlaws of the forest did not love King Richard,” answered the Knight.

The Merry-men all loudly exclaimed that they were true men, and no traitors. Then the Knight rose, and suddenly took off his helmet, saying, with grave majesty, “I am Richard.” There was a moment’s silence; then the outlaws fell on their knees, and begged the King’s forgiveness for robbing his subjects and killing his deer. Robin Hood also told the King all his story (he was banished before Richard became King), and the generous Monarch forgave them all, and bade them lead honest lives for the future.

Then the outlaws flung up their caps and shouted, “Long live King Richard!” till they made the forest glades ring, and startled the dappled deer from their lair.



ROBIN'S KINDNESS TO THE POOR.

The Merry-men followed King Richard to Nottingham, and soon afterwards he restored Robin Hood to his fortune and his honours. The poor had reason to rejoice that Robin was again a rich Earl, for (as he had always done when a poor Outlaw) he gave liberally to them, helping the aged, the women, and the children, and doing good to everybody. He kept together his band of three hundred archers, under the command of Little John; and they dwelt in his castle, keeping their word to King Richard, and leading honest lives; but still shooting deer in the Earl's own woods, for Robin loved better to be in the greenwood than in the town, and would rather live in the forest than at the Court.



ROBIN'S OLD AGE AND DEATH.

Robin Hood lived to a great age, in health and happiness. But at length, feeling ill and weak, he went to the Priory of Kirklees, of which his cousin was Prioress, to ask her to give him advice and help—for ladies were often skilful in medicine and healing in those days. But this wicked woman, who hated Robin, bled him too much; and when Little John came to look after his dear master, he found him dying. Robin bade him open the window, and give him his bow and arrows. Then, with a last effort of his feeble hands, the Archer shot out of the window into the forest, and bade Little John bury him wherever the arrow should fall. His faithful friend obeyed, and Robin Hood's grave was made under the green trees which he loved so well when living.

THE SEA SIDE.



BY THE SEASIDE.

ON the sands, early in the morning, with the sea breeze blowing freshly — with our spades, and dolls, and flowers, — what happy children we are! There is a pleasant sound of the great waves rippling over the smooth sands, and the white sails of the far-off ships look very pretty. Edith has brought her doll to enjoy the fresh air with her; Milly a fine bough from the red rose tree, which she means to plant in the sands. She is so young that she does not know the great sea will come creeping and creeping up, till all the sands are covered, and the poor little rose tree drowned. George has been gathering what *he* calls sea-apples; they are only coloured pebbles. He brought a book with him, but I do not think he will read much of it to-day. Little Mary is happy in digging only; that is play enough for her. Some other children are climbing into the fishermen's baskets, and pretending that they are going to sea in them. One little girl has upset her make-believe boat, and is falling out of it.

Here is Aunt Louisa bringing little Freddy to play with us. We will ask him to help us build a sand castle.



A DONKEY-RIDE ON THE SANDS.

AUNT LOUISA is giving Freddy a ride on a donkey, walking by his side herself. Freddy says that he should like to gallop all by himself over the sands; but Aunty will not let him. She thinks that he might be shaken out of his saddle. Mary and Milly have worked so hard with their spades that they are quite tired, and have lain down and fallen fast asleep on the sands. The great sea is singing their lullaby, and old Rover, who loves the seaside as much as the children do, is faithfully keeping watch very near them.

GOING FOR A SAIL.

After dinner, Aunt Anna told the little boys that she would take them out for a sail. They were very glad, and ran by her side down the sands till they came to the nicest boat she could find. It belonged to a man whose name was Cobby. But when Anna was stepping in, she looked a little afraid, and said to the boatman, "I hope we shall be quite safe, as I have the children with me." "Oh, yes, Ma'am," said Cobby. "We will take great care of you and the young gentlemen, and the sea is as smooth as a pond."



BATHING IN THE SEA.

BATHING in the sea is very nice. It is so pleasant to jump about in the cool water. Aunt Anna has carried little Mary in, and given her a dip; but Mary is frightened, and clings to her aunt. The water took away her breath and wet her pretty curls. A little of it got into her mouth, and it was very salt and nasty. Her eldest sister Ada wishes Aunt Anna to let her take the child, and put her in again; but Mary will not go to her, and aunt says she will take her into the machine, and dress her.



THE ETHIOPIAN SERENADERS.

One afternoon, papa and mamma, and the aunts, and all the children sat together under the shadow of a large fishing smack, watching the big ships sail past, and the merry little waves chase each other over the sands. Then some men came by, with black faces, very strangely dressed, and began to play and sing to amuse them.

They sang negro songs to tunes the children had often heard played on street organs. I don't think they could sing very well, but they did their best to please, and so I think they deserved the money which papa gave them.

THE TINY LIFEBOAT.

THE fisher boys who live by the great sea are merry little fellows. They love to paddle with bare feet in the water, and to sail tiny boats, which they make themselves. These two boys are sailing a boat they made themselves out of an old piece of wood which they picked up on the shore. The wind has driven it close up to the old wreck that has stood so long on the sands; and Johnny says that they must now call it the "Lifeboat," for it has gone off to help the poor ship that is on shore.



BY THE SIDE OF THE GREAT BOAT.

One morning Mary and Milly ran over the sands till they came to a large boat—they called it a big ship. And Milly said that it would be of great use to them. They could build a sand house against it; one side of which could be of wood. "The boat will make the wooden side, you see," she said. But little Mary was tired; so she sat down on the sand under the shade of the boat, and said she did not want to build a house; she liked best to sit still in a cool place.



THE RETURN FROM FISHING.

THIS poor man has been fishing. What a number of whittings he has caught! His little children are very much pleased: little Jane is leaning over the basket to touch the pretty fish; and Anne tries to count them as they slip into it. Johnny, who is sitting on the boat, helped his father to catch them. The children will have a nice supper to-night. In the sea swim the great whale, and the cruel shark, which can eat a man, and the silver herrings, and the mackerel, and the tiny sprats.



AT PLAY ON THE SANDS.

Edith has had great fun burying Mary and her doll in the sand. Mary sat down with her back against a boat, and put Dolly quite close to the sea, with a book open before her to read, if she can. Then Edith and George covered them both with sand up to their waists. Mary said it was just like going to bed, but that she should want to get up soon. Milly has been filling her bucket with shells; they are the homes in which small fish have lived. Milly thinks she should like to live in a shining shell, and float on the sea.



FISHERMEN MENDING A BOAT.

THE fishermen are mending their boat with wood and pitch. The waves have knocked in the side. The pitch will keep the water from getting between the planks. When the boat is fit to float again, they will go out and catch more fish. The fisherman is often wet and cold, when the rain falls and the storms blow. But he knows GOD can and will take care of him on the great sea, let it roar ever so loud. GOD made the deep sea and the rough wind. He can say to them, "Peace! be still;" and they must obey Him.



THE DAY'S WORK DONE.

It is sunset, and Cobby and his boy are carrying home their fish. They have caught some lobsters, which they will sell. Then they will have money to buy food and clothes for themselves. Who put the fish in the sea? GOD did. So it is GOD who gives poor fishermen their daily bread.

It is time for us to go to sleep now. To-morrow we will go down again on the sands, and dig, and build houses, and pick up the shells, which will sing us a sea song when we are at home again, far from the fresh seaside.



