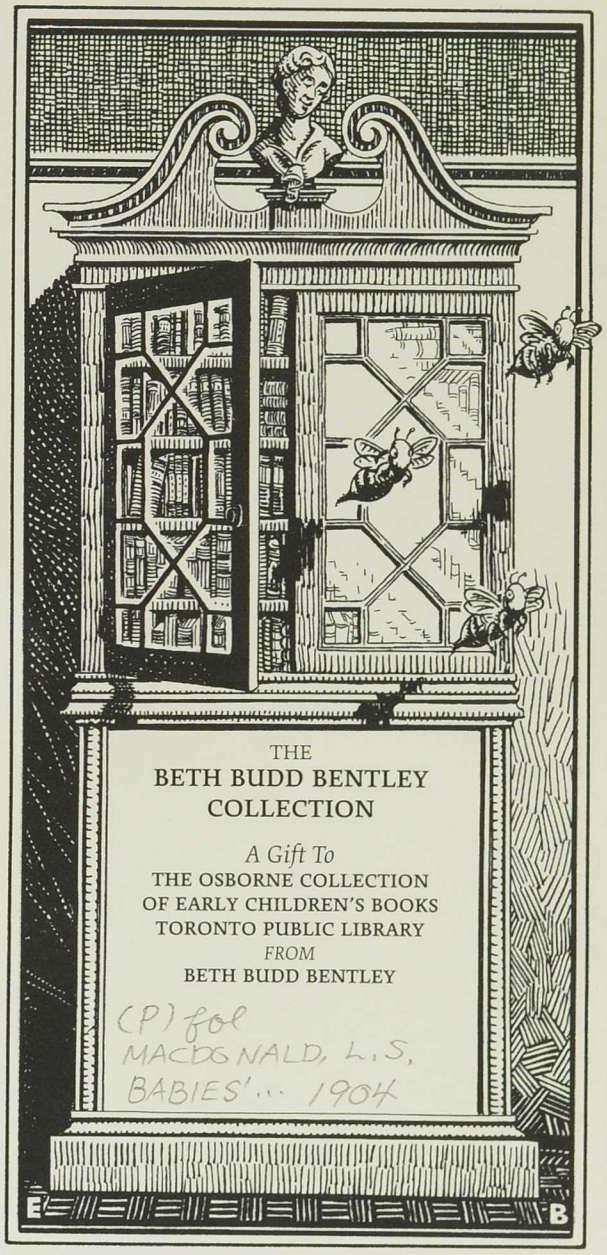


# BABIES' CLASSICS






This bookplate, designed by Eric Beddows, was commissioned by The Friends of the Osborne and Lillian H. Smith Collections in honour of Beth Budd Bentley.

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# BABIES' CLASSICS



# BABIES' CLASSICS

CHOSEN BY

LILIA SCOTT MACDONALD

ILLUSTRATED BY

ARTHUR HUGHES



LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK AND BOMBAY

1904

*The Editor desires to thank Messrs. Macmillan for kindly permitting her to include in this volume Tennyson's "Baby Song," and Kingsley's "My Little Doll" and "Valentine's Day": Messrs. Blackie and Son for a similar courtesy in the case of George MacDonald's "Baby Sermon," "Up and Down" and "Baby": and Messrs. Chatto and Windus for according her the same liberty with regard to George MacDonald's "Lesson for a Child."*

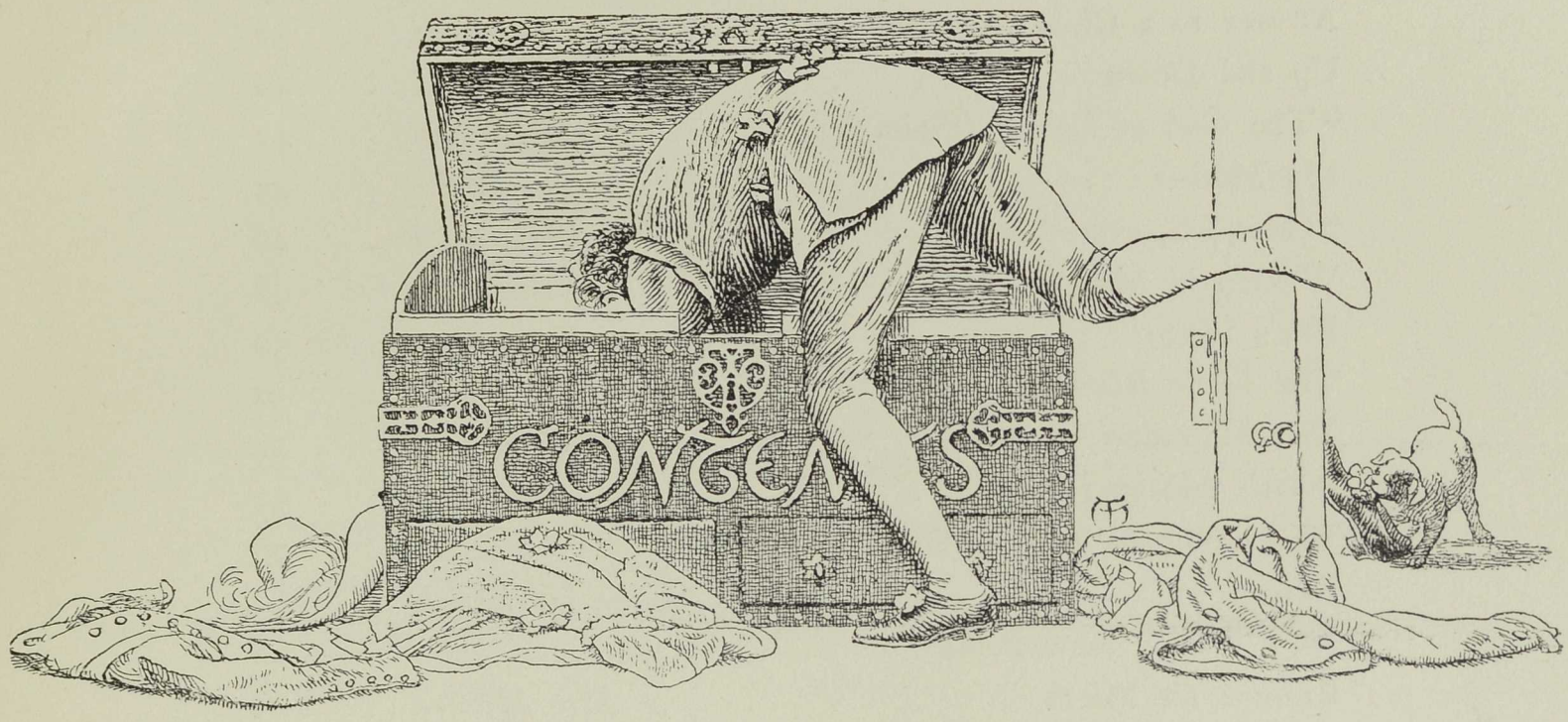
# PREFACE

MANY years ago my sister whose name is on the title-page formed the plan of publishing a small collection of the best children's poems—such as might fairly claim to be called children's classics—with the best of illustrations. She thought that children ought to know, as their grand-parents used to know, the poems of Blake, the Taylors, Mary Howitt, and others, and she wished to give them these poems in a form and dress as good as those of modern children's picture books. Since she planned this, others have had the same idea, and there is a revival of interest in the older poetry for children: but there may perhaps even now be a place for the little collection which she began and which I have completed in the way she proposed.

Some of the poems chosen may seem to the critic children's classics perhaps, but hardly babies' classics: and yet, in actual experience, more than one of those which might be judged the least childish, have been learned and loved by children who had not passed beyond the last limit of babyhood.

Had my sister lived to complete her work, she would have done it far better than I have been able to do it for her; but I feel sure that she would forgive, as all baby readers will forgive, the defects of a collection which has called forth the beautiful illustrations of Mr. Arthur Hughes.

WINIFRED TROUP.



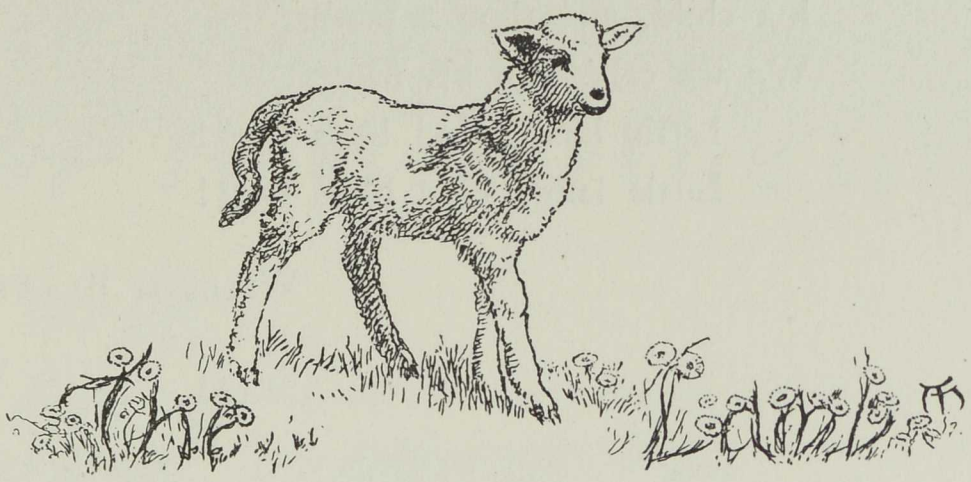


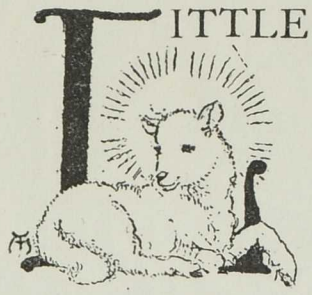
| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| The Lamb | *Blake* | 1 |
| "Where the bee sucks" | *Shakespeare* | 3 |
| The Cow | *A. and J. Taylor* | 4 |
| Baby Song | *Tennyson* | 6 |
| The Bee | *Isaac Watts* | 8 |
| The Star | *Jane Taylor* | 10 |
| The Wood-Mouse | *Mary Howitt* | 12 |
| Charles and Animals | *Jane Taylor* | 15 |
| My Little Doll | *Kingsley* | 16 |
| The Turtle-Dove's Nest | *Mrs. Hawkshaw* | 18 |
| The Field Daisy | *A. and J. Taylor* | 20 |
| A Baby Sermon | *George MacDonald* | 21 |
| Valentine's Day | *Kingsley* | 22 |
| The Chimney-Sweeper | *Blake* | 24 |
| The Notorious Glutton | *Ann Taylor* | 26 |
| "Come unto these yellow sands" | *Shakespeare* | 29 |
| "Let dogs delight" | *Isaac Watts* | 30 |
| The Sparrow's Nest | *Mary Howitt* | 32 |
| Shepherd Boy's Song | *Bunyan* | 36 |

| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| Answer to a Child's Question | *Coleridge* | 38 |
| Up and Down | *George MacDonald* | 40 |
| "The God of Love" (Psalm 23) | *George Herbert* | 42 |
| My Mother | *Ann Taylor* | 44 |
| "Over hill, over dale" | *Shakespeare* | 46 |
| Written in March | *Wordsworth* | 48 |
| Boy's Song | *James Hogg* | 50 |
| The Little Black Boy | *Blake* | 52 |
| The Migration of the Grey Squirrels | *Mary Howitt* | 54 |
| Pippa's Morning Song | *Browning* | 57 |
| The Mountain and the Squirrel | *Emerson* | 58 |
| Baby | *George MacDonald* | 60 |
| New Prince, New Pomp | *Southwell* | 62 |
| Reasons for Mirth | *Miss Mitford* | 65 |
| "O Lord in me there lieth nought" (Psalm 139) | *The Countess of Pembroke* | 66 |
| The Fountain | *Lowell* | 69 |
| The Perfect Life | *Ben Jonson* | 72 |
| On May Morning | *Milton* | 74 |
| David's Song | *Browning* | 76 |
| Lesson for a Child | *George MacDonald* | 78 |

# INDEX OF WRITERS


| | | *Pages* |
|---|---|---|
| Blake, William | (1757–1827) | 1; 24; 52 |
| Browning, Robert | (1812–1889) | 57; 76 |
| Bunyan, John | (1628–1688) | 36 |
| Coleridge, Samuel Taylor | (1772–1834) | 38 |
| Emerson, Ralph Waldo | (1803–1882) | 58 |
| Hawkshaw, Mrs. | (1812–1885) | 18 |
| Herbert, George | (1593–1632) | 42 |
| Hogg, James | (1770–1835) | 50 |
| Howitt, Mary | (1799–1888) | 12; 32; 54 |
| Jonson, Benjamin | (1573?–1637) | 72 |
| Kingsley, Charles | (1819–1875) | 16; 22 |
| Lowell, James Russell | (1819–1891) | 69 |
| MacDonald, George | (1824– ) | 21; 40; 60; 78 |
| Milton, John | (1608–1674) | 74 |
| Mitford, Miss | (1787–1855) | 65 |
| Pembroke, Mary, Countess of | (1555?–1621) | 66 |
| Shakespeare, William | (1564–1616) | 3; 29; 46 |
| Southwell, Robert | (1560–1593) | 62 |
| Taylor, Ann | (1782–1866) | 4; 20; 26; 44 |
| Taylor, Jane | (1783–1824) | 4; 10; 15; 20 |
| Tennyson, Alfred, Lord | (1809–1892) | 6 |
| Watts, Isaac | (1674–1748) | 8; 30 |
| Wordsworth, William | (1770–1850) | 48 |



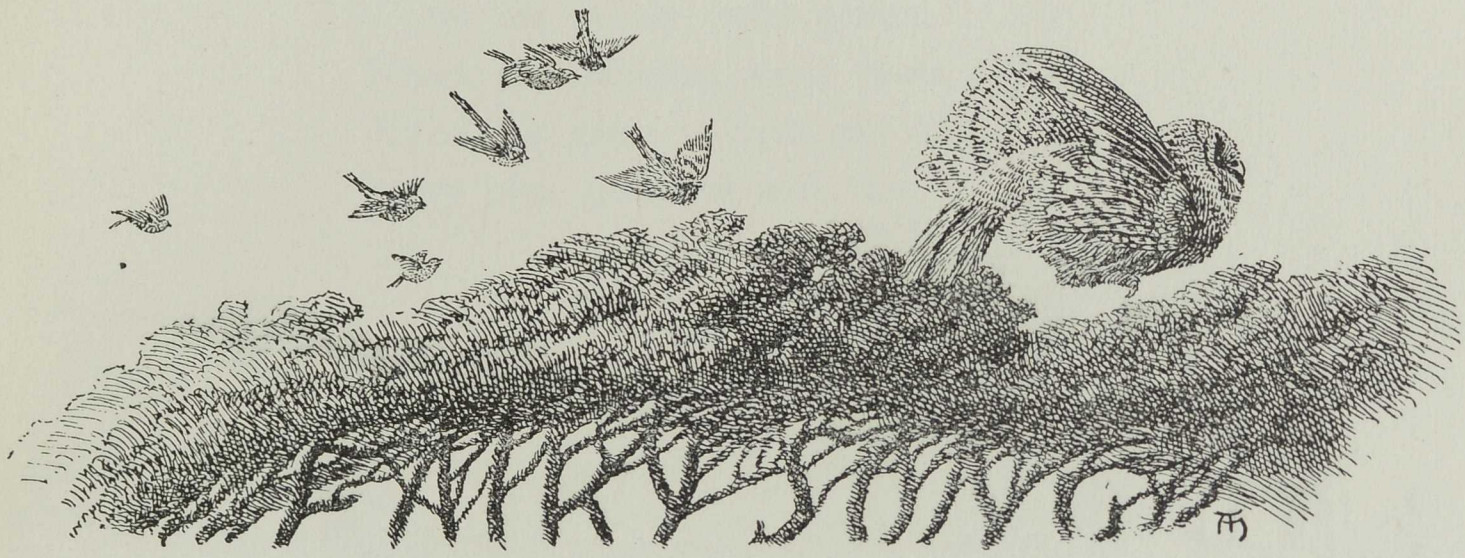



LITTLE lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee,
Gave thee life, and bade thee feed
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little lamb, I'll tell thee ;
Little lamb, I'll tell thee :
He is calléd by thy name,
For he calls himself a lamb.
He is meek, and he is mild,
He became a little child.
I a child, and thou a lamb,
We are calléd by his name.
Little lamb, God bless thee !
Little lamb, God bless thee !

WILLIAM BLAKE.

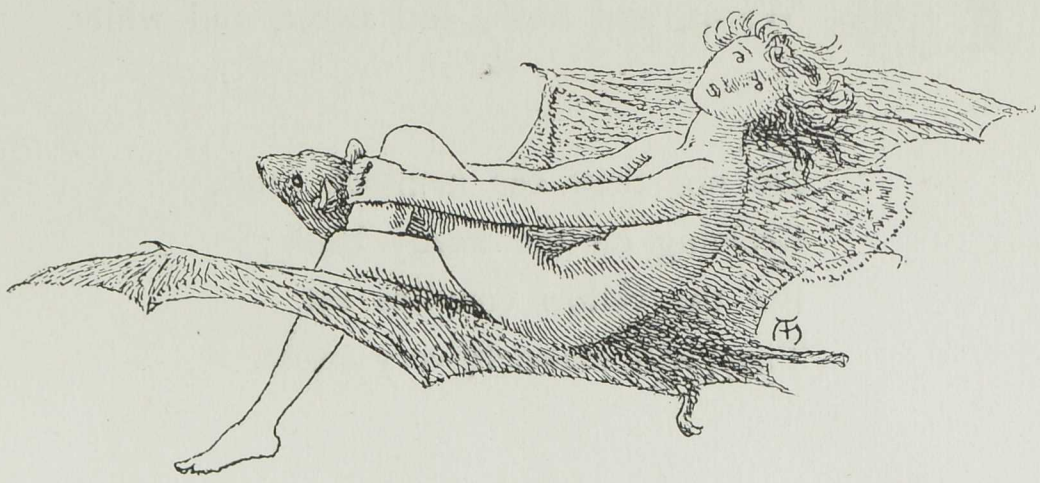







HERE the bee sucks, there suck I;
In a cowslip's bell I lie:
There I couch when owls do cry.
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily:
Merrily, merrily, shall I live now,
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

SHAKESPEARE.





# The Cow

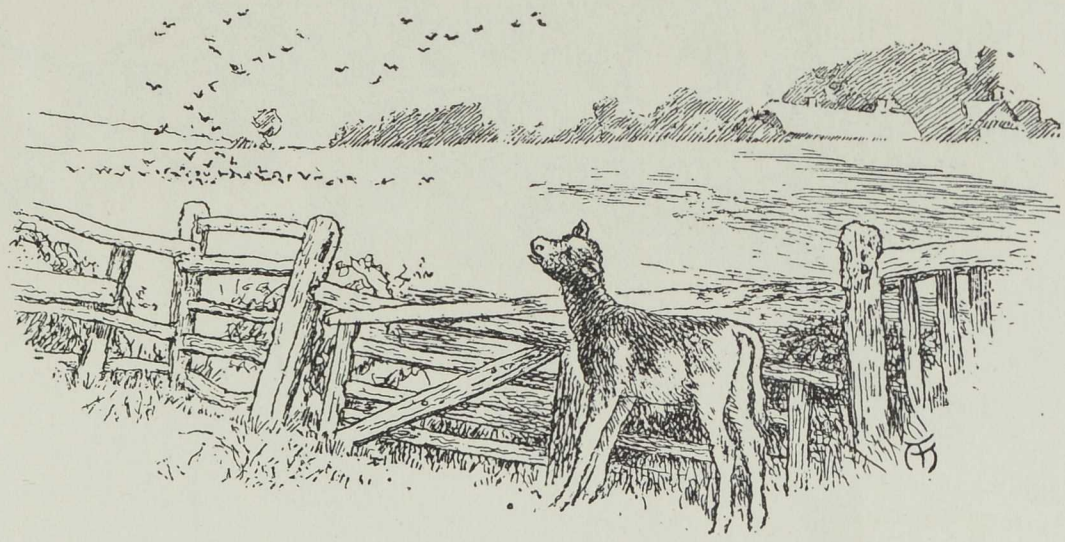


THANK you, pretty cow, that made
Such nice milk, to soak my bread ;
Ev'ry day, and ev'ry night,
Warm, and fresh, and sweet, and white.

Do not chew the hemlock rank,
Growing on the weedy bank ;
But the yellow cowslips eat,
They will make it very sweet.

Where the purple violet grows,
Where the bubbling water flows,
Where the grass is fresh and fine,
Pretty cow, go there and dine.

ANN and JANE TAYLOR.





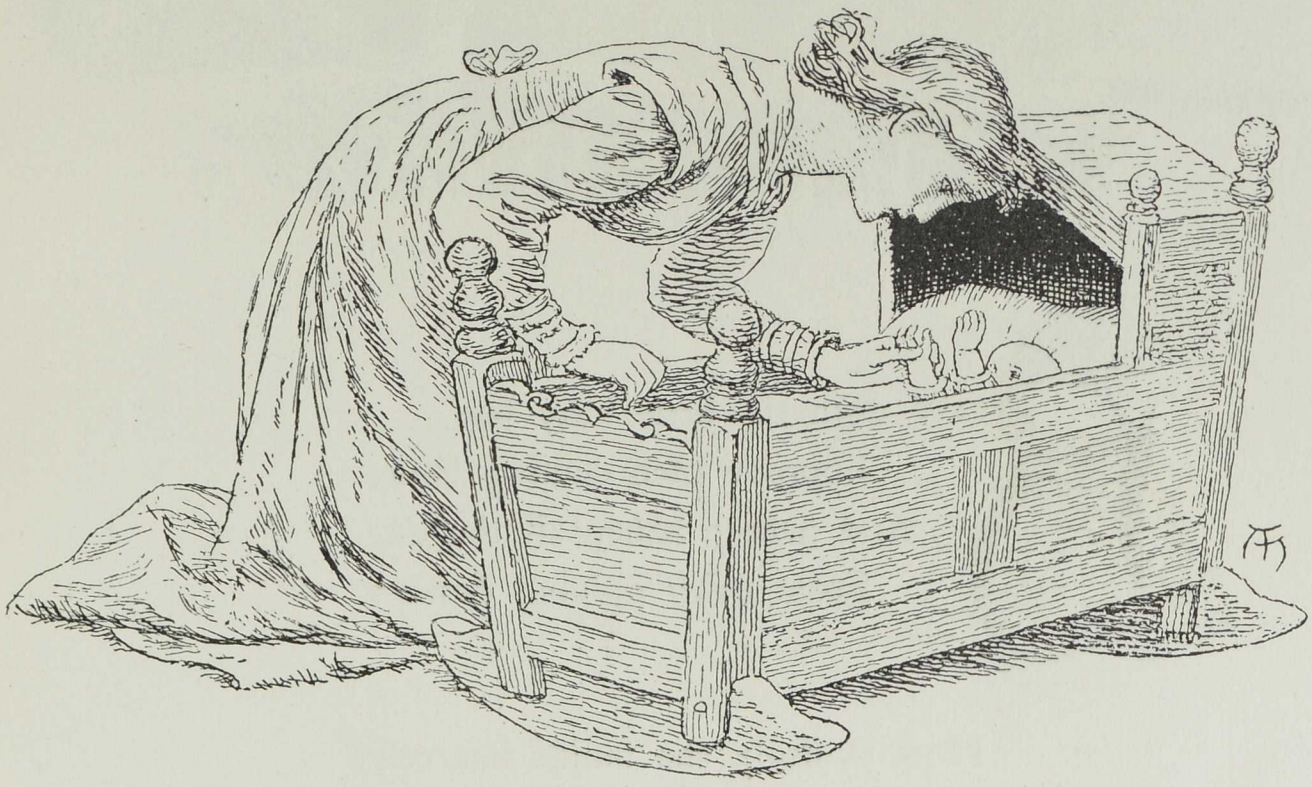
# Baby Song

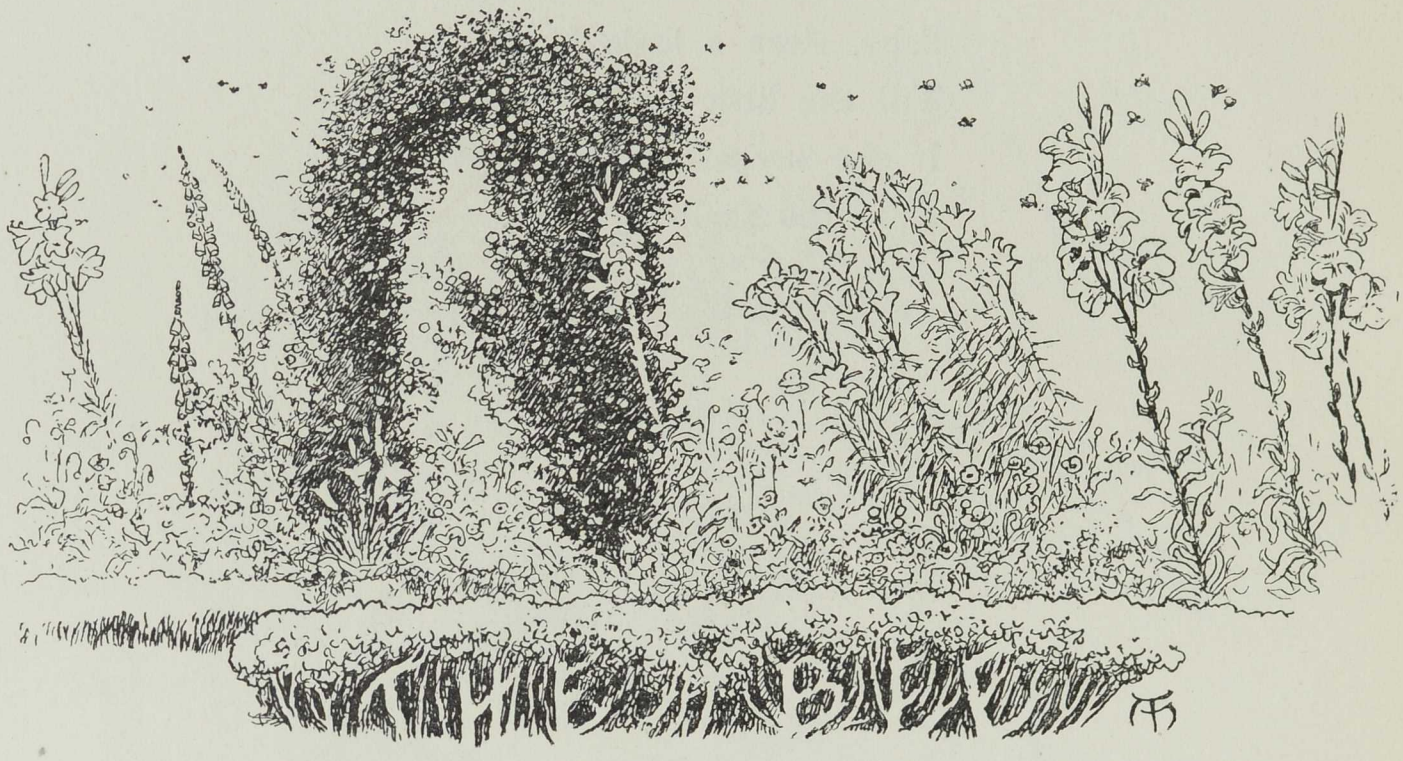


WHAT does little birdie say
In her nest at peep of day?
Let me fly, says little birdie,
Mother, let me fly away.
Birdie, rest a little longer,
Till the little wings are stronger.
So she rests a little longer,
Then she flies away.

What does little baby say
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little birdie,
Let me rise and fly away.
Baby, sleep a little longer,
Till the little limbs are stronger.
If she sleeps a little longer,
Baby too shall fly away.

TENNYSON.





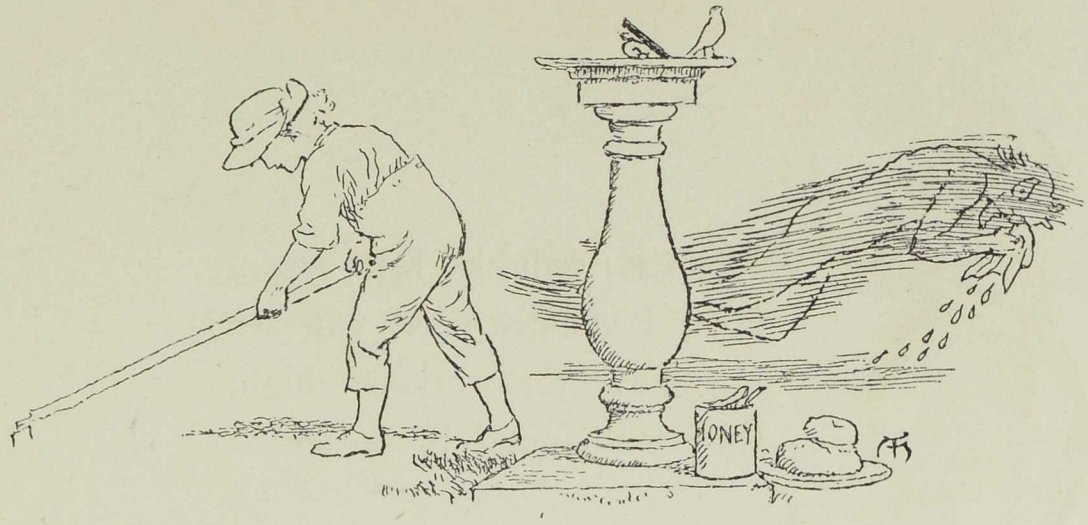
HOW doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day
From ev'ry op'ning flow'r!

How skilfully she builds her cell!
How neat she spreads the wax;
And labours hard to store it well
With the sweet food she makes.

In works of labour or of skill
I would be busy too:
For satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.

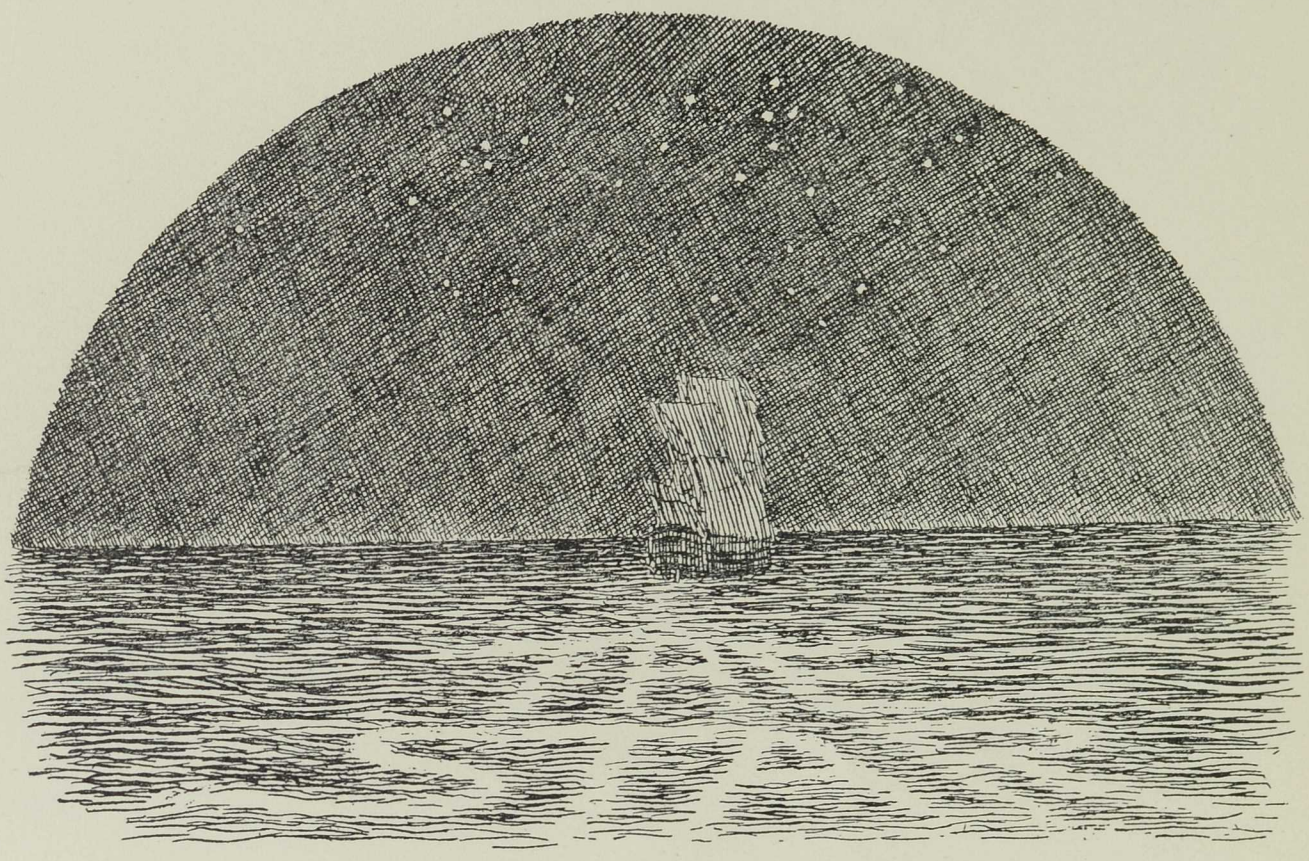
In books, or work, or healthful play
Let my first years be past,
That I may give for every day
Some good account at last.

ISAAC WATTS.






19





TWINKLE, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

When the blazing sun is gone,
When he nothing shines upon,
Then you show your little light,
Twinkle, twinkle, all the night.

In the dark blue sky you keep,
And often thro' my curtains peep,
For you never shut your eye,
Till the sun is in the sky.

'Tis your bright and tiny spark,
Lights the trav'ller in the dark :
Tho' I know not what you are,
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.

JANE TAYLOR.



# The Wood Mouse



know the little Wood-Mouse,
That pretty little thing,
That sits among the forest leaves,
Beside the forest spring?

Its fur is red as the red chestnut,
And it is small and slim;
It leads a life most innocent
Within the forest dim.

'Tis a timid, gentle creature,
  And seldom comes in sight;
It has a long and wiry tail,
  And eyes both black and bright.

It makes its nest of soft dry moss,
  In a hole so deep and strong;
And there it sleeps secure and warm,
  The dreary winter long.

And though it keeps no calendar,
  It knows when flowers are springing;
And waketh to its summer life,
  When Nightingales are singing.

Upon the boughs the Squirrel sits,
  The Wood-Mouse plays below;
And plenty of food it finds itself
  Where the beech and chestnut grow.

In the Hedge-Sparrow's nest he sits,
  When its summer brood is fled,
And picks the berries from the bough
  Of the hawthorn over-head.

I saw a little Wood-Mouse once,
  Like Oberon in his hall,
With the green, green moss beneath his feet,
  Sit under a mushroom tall.

I saw him sit and his dinner eat,
  All under the forest tree;
His dinner of chestnut ripe and red,
  And he ate it heartily.

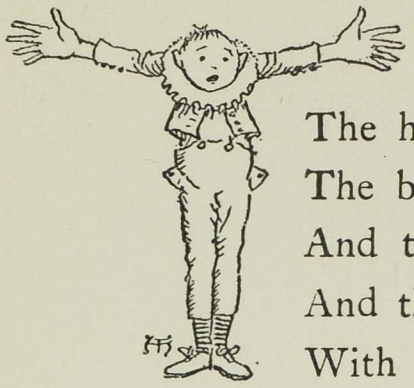
I wish you could have seen him there;
  It did my spirit good,
To see the small thing God had made
  Thus eating in the wood.

I saw that he regarded them—
  Those creatures weak and small;
Their table in the wild is spread,
  By him who cares for all!

MARY HOWITT.



# Charles and Animals



THE cow has a horn, and the fish has a gill;
The horse has a hoof, and the duck has a bill;
The bird has a wing, that on high he may sail;
And the lion a mane, and the monkey a tail;
And they swim, or they fly, or they walk, or they eat,
With fin, or with wing, or with bill, or with feet.
And Charles has two hands, with five fingers to each,
On purpose to work with, to hold and to reach;
No birds, beasts, or fishes, for work or for play,
Have anything half so convenient as they;
But if he don't use them, and *keep* them in use,
He'd better have had but two legs, like a goose.

JANE TAYLOR.

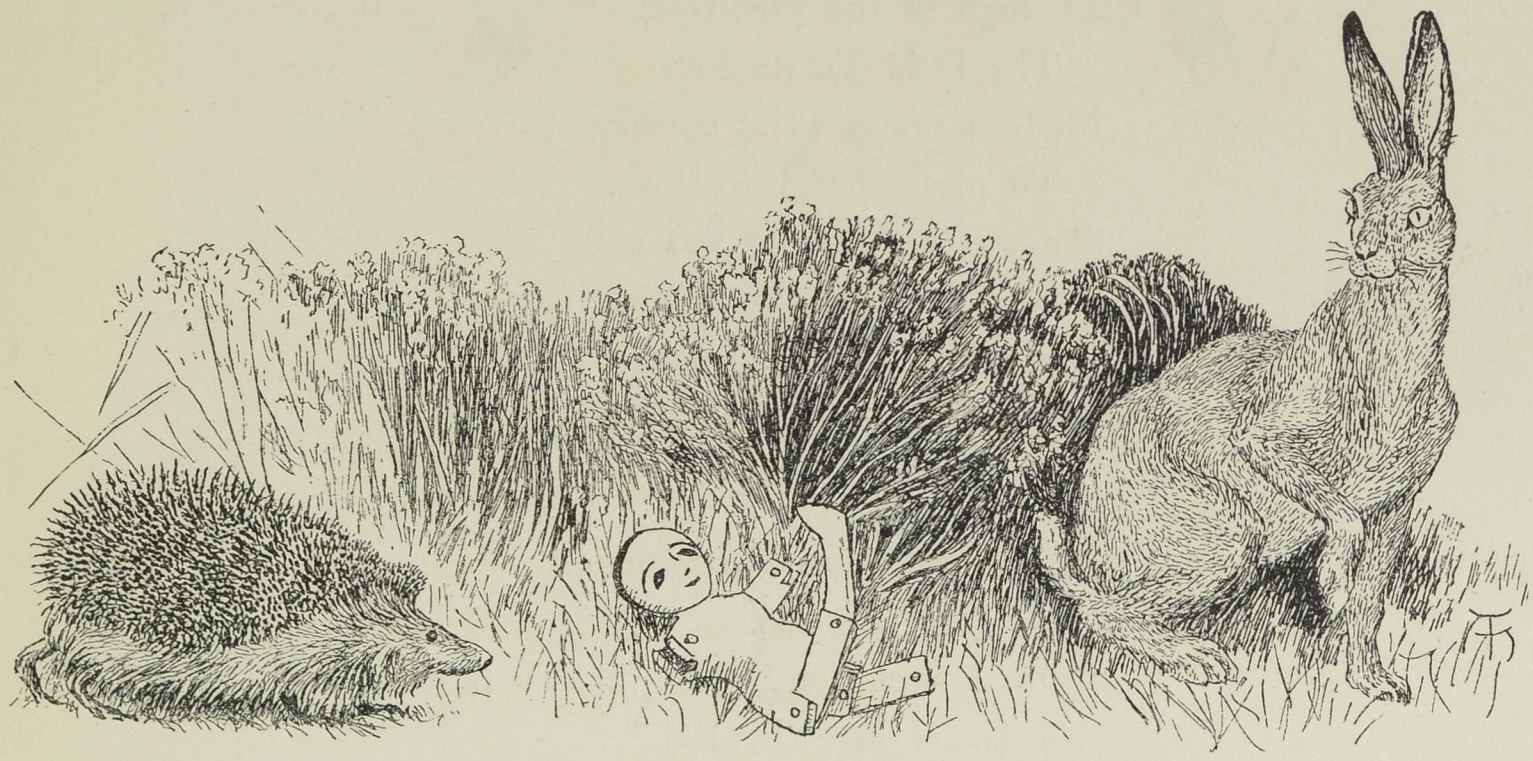





ONCE had a sweet little doll, dears,
The prettiest doll in the world ;
Her cheeks were so red and so white, dears,
And her hair was so charmingly curled.
But I lost my poor little doll, dears,
As I played in the heath one day ;
And I cried for more than a week, dears,
But I never could find where she lay.

I found my poor little doll, dears,
  As I played in the heath one day:
Folks say she is terribly changed, dears,
  For her paint is all washed away,
And her arms trodden off by the cows, dears,
  And her hair not the least bit curled:
Yet for old sakes' sake she is still, dears,
  The prettiest doll in the world.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.





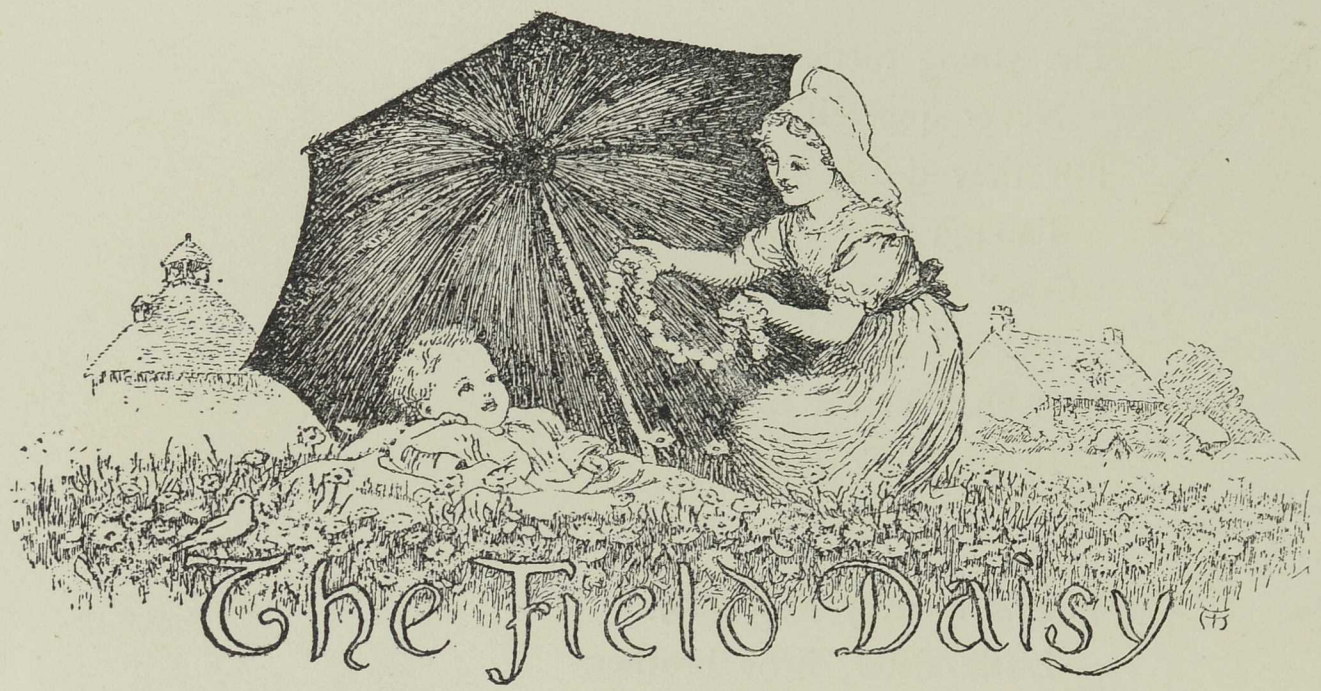

ERY high in the pine-tree,
The little Turtle-dove
Made a pretty little nursery
To please her little love.
She was gentle, she was soft,
And her large dark eye
Often turn'd to her mate,
Who was sitting close by.

"Coo," said the Turtle-dove.
"Coo," said she.
"Oh, I love thee," said the Turtle-dove.
"And I love THEE."
In the long shady branches
Of the dark pine-tree,
How happy were the doves
In their little nursery!

The young turtle-doves
  Never quarrell'd in the nest;
For they dearly loved each other,
  Though they loved their mother best.
"Coo," said the little doves.
  "Coo," said she.
And they play'd together kindly
  In the dark pine-tree.

Is this nursery of yours,
  Little sister, little brother,
Like the Turtle-dove's nest—
  Do you love one another?
Are you kind, are you gentle,
  As children ought to be?
Then the happiest of nests
  Is your own nursery.

ANN HAWKSHAW.



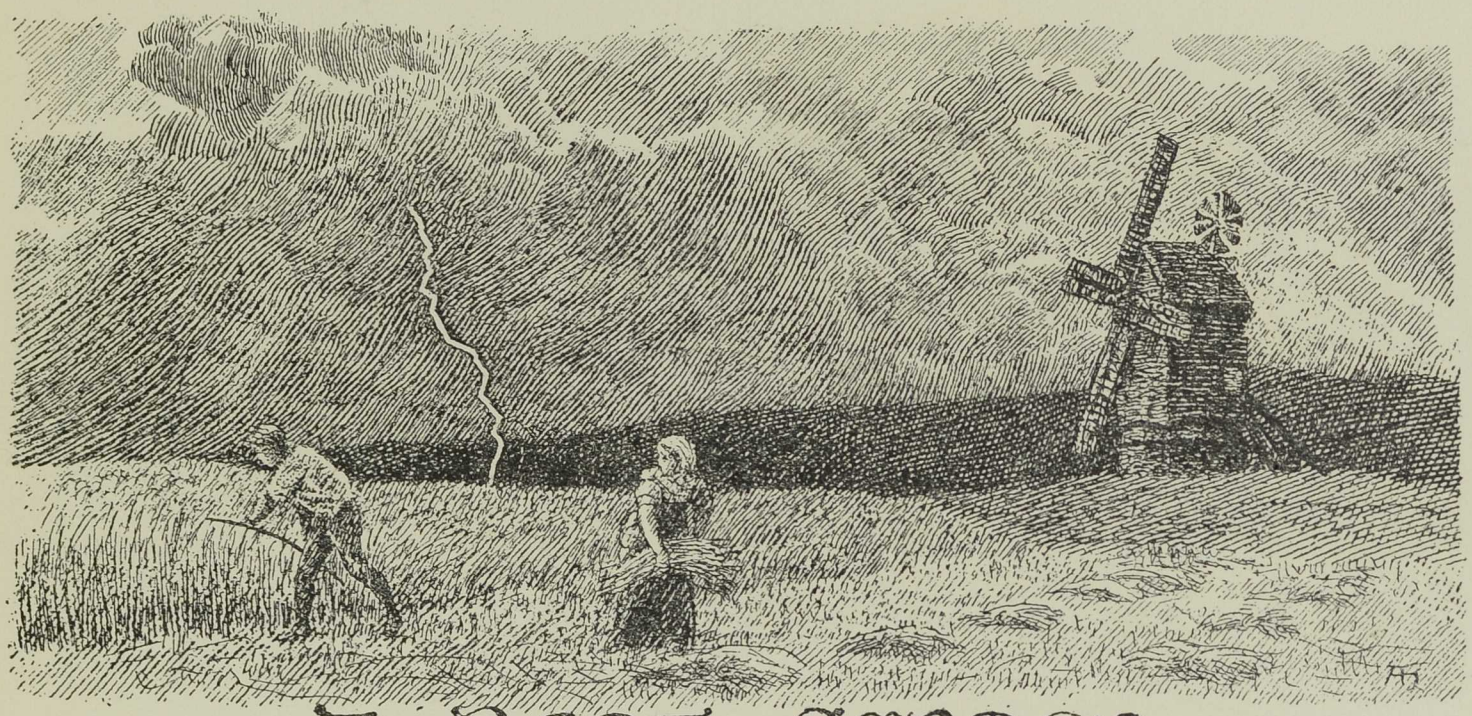
# The Field Daisy



I'm a pretty little thing,
Always coming with the spring,
In the meadows green, I'm found,
Peeping just above the ground,
And my stalk is cover'd flat,
With a white and yellow hat.

Little lady, when you pass
Lightly o'er the tender grass,
Skip about, but do not tread
On my meek and healthy head,
For I always seem to say,
"Surely winter's gone away."

ANN and JANE TAYLOR.

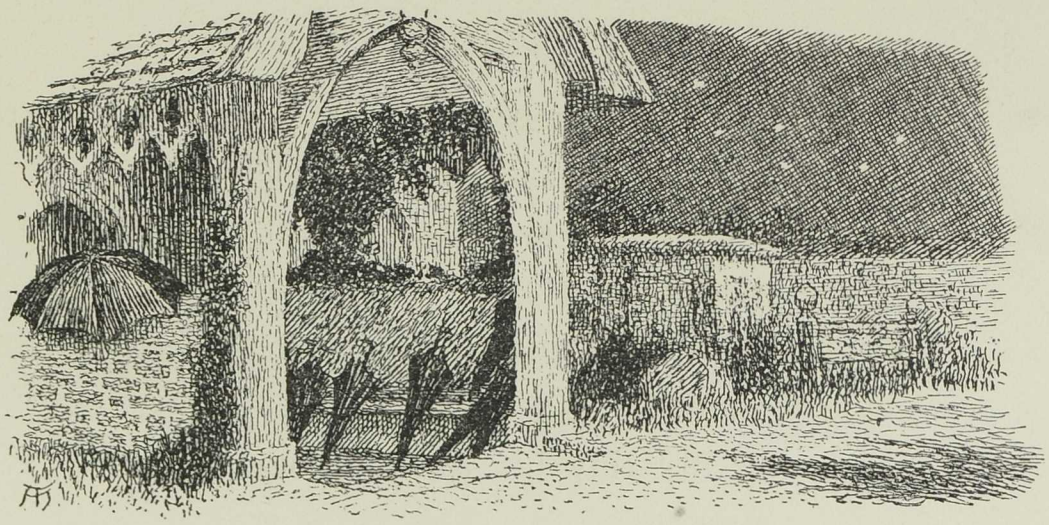


# A BABY SERMON

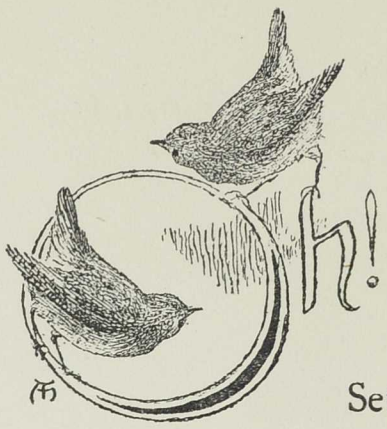


THE lightning and thunder,
They go and they come;
But the stars and the stillness
Are always at home.

GEORGE MACDONALD.



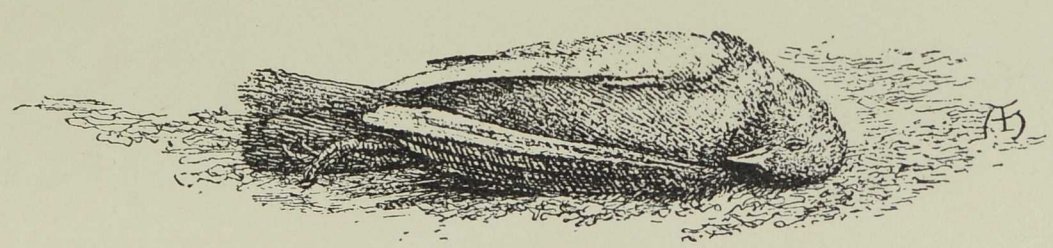


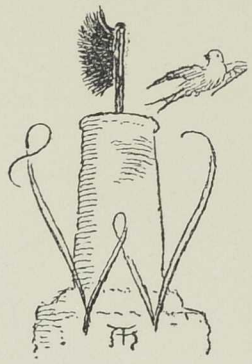
Oh! I wish I were a tiny browny bird from out the south,
Settled among the alder-holts, and twittering by the stream;
I would put my tiny tail down, and put up my tiny mouth,
And sing my tiny life away in one melodious dream.

I would sing about the blossoms, and the sunshine and
the sky,
And the tiny wife I mean to have in such a cosy nest;
And if some one came and shot me dead, why then I
could but die,
With my tiny life and tiny song just ended at their
best.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.





HEN my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry, "Weep! weep! weep! weep!"
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,
That curled like a lamb's back, was shaved; so I said,
"Hush, Tom! never mind it, for, when your head's bare,
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair."

And so he was quiet, and that very night,
As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight !—
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,
Were all of them locked up in coffins of black.

And by came an angel, who had a bright key,
And he opened the coffins and set them all free ;
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing, they run,
And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind ;
And the angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father, and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke, and we rose in the dark,
And got with our bags and our brushes to work.
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm :
So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

WILLIAM BLAKE.



A DUCK who had got such a habit of stuffing,
That all day long she was panting and puffing,
And by every creature who did her great crop see,
Was thought to be galloping fast for a dropsy ;

One day, after eating a plentiful dinner,
With full twice as much as there should have been in her,
While up to her forehead still greedily roking,
Was greatly alarmed by the symptoms of choking.

Now there was an old fellow, much famed for discerning
(A drake, who had taken a liking for learning),
And high in repute with his feathery friends,
Was called Dr. Drake: for this doctor she sends.

In a hole in a dunghill was Dr. Drake's shop,
Where he kept a few simples for curing the crop;
Small pebbles, and two or three different gravels,
With certain famed plants he had found in his travels.

So taking a handful of suitable things,
And brushing his topple and pluming his wings,
And putting his feathers in apple-pie order,
He went to prescribe for the lady's disorder.

"Dear sir," said the duck, with a delicate quack,
Just turning a little way round on her back,
And leaning her head on a stone in the yard,
"My case, Dr. Drake, is exceedingly hard.

"I feel so distended with wind, and opprest,
So squeamish and faint, such a load at my chest;
And, day after day, I assure you it is hard,
To suffer with patience these pains in my gizzard."

"Give me leave," said the doctor, with a medical look,
As her cold flabby paw in his fingers he took;
"By the feel of your pulse, your complaint, I've been
thinking,
Must surely be owing to eating and drinking."

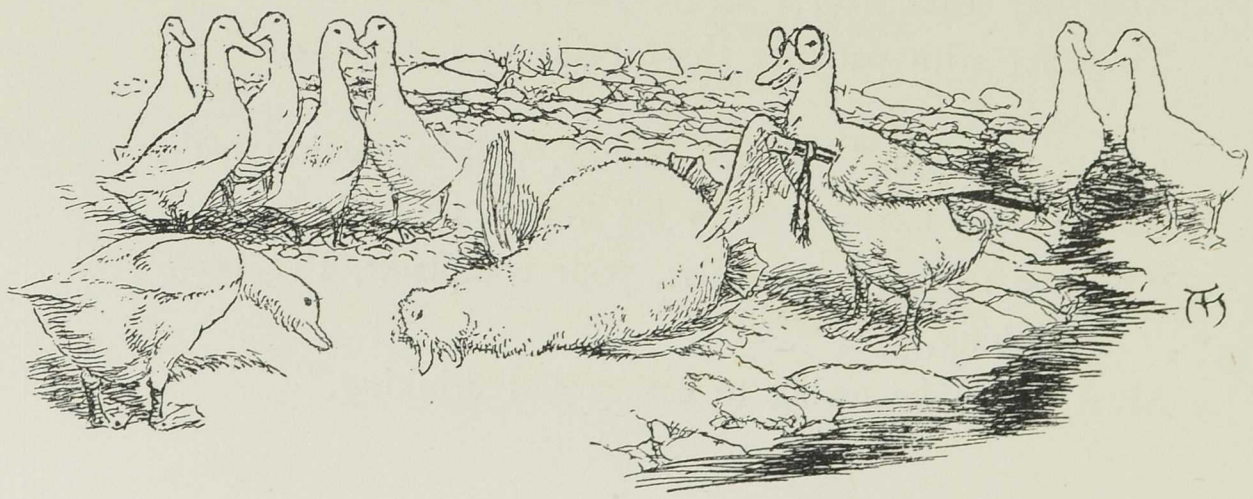
"Oh no, sir, believe me," the lady replied
(Alarmed for her stomach, as well as her pride),
"I'm sure it arises from nothing I eat,
But I rather suspect I got wet in my feet.

"I've only been raking a bit in the gutter,
Where cook has been pouring some cold melted butter,
And a slice of green cabbage, and scraps of cold meat,
Just a trifle or two, that I thought I could eat."

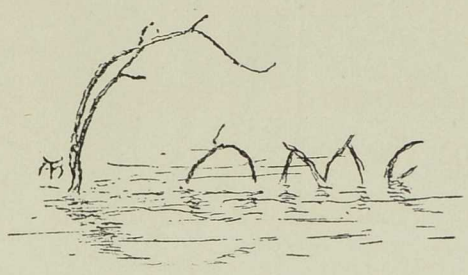
The doctor was just to his business proceeding,
By gentle emetics, a blister, and bleeding,
When all on a sudden she rolled on her side,
Gave a terrible quack, and a struggle, and died.

Her remains were interred in a neighbouring swamp,
By her friends with a great deal of funeral pomp;
But I've heard, this inscription, her tombstone displayed,
"Here poor Mrs. Duck, the great glutton, is laid;"
And all the young ducklings are brought by their friends,
There to learn the disgrace in which gluttony ends.

ANN TAYLOR.







unto these yellow sands,
And then take hands:
Court'sied when you have, and kissed
The wild waves whist,
Foot it featly here and there;
And, sweet sprites, the burden bear.

Hark, hark!
Bowgh, wowgh.
The watch-dogs bark:
Bowgh, wowgh.
Hark, hark! I hear
The strain of strutting chanticleer
Cry, Cock-a-diddle-dow.

SHAKESPEARE.



LET dogs delight to bark and bite,
For God has made them so;
Let bears and lions growl and fight,
For 'tis their nature too.

But children, you should never let
Such angry passions rise;
Your little hands were never made
To tear each other's eyes.

Let love through all your actions run,
  And all your words be mild,
Live like the blessed Virgin's son,
  That sweet and lovely child.

His soul was gentle as a lamb ;
  And as his stature grew,
He grew in favour both with man,
  And God his father too.

ISAAC WATTS.



# The Sparrow's Nest



AY, only look what I have found !
A sparrow's nest upon the ground ;
A sparrow's nest, as you may see,
Blown out of yonder old elm tree.

And what a medley thing it is !
I never saw a nest like this,—
Not neatly wove with decent care,
Of silvery moss and shining hair ;

But put together, odds and ends,
Picked up from enemies and friends ;
See, bits of thread, and bits of rag,
Just like a little rubbish-bag !

Here is a scrap of red and brown,
Like the old washer-woman's gown ;
And here is muslin, pink and green,
And bits of calico between ;



O never thinks the lady fair,
As she goes by with mincing air,
How the pert Sparrow overhead,
Has robbed her gown to make its bed !

See, hair of dog and fur of cat,
And rovings of a worsted mat,
And shreds of silks, and many a feather,
Compacted cunningly together.

Well, here has hoarding been and hiding,
And not a little good contriving,
Before a home of peace and ease
Was fashioned out of things like these !

Think, had these odds and ends been brought
To some wise man renowned for thought,
Some man, of men a very gem,
Pray what could he have done with them ?

If we had said, " Here, sir, we bring
You many a worthless little thing,
Just bits and scraps, so very small,
That they have scarcely size at all ;

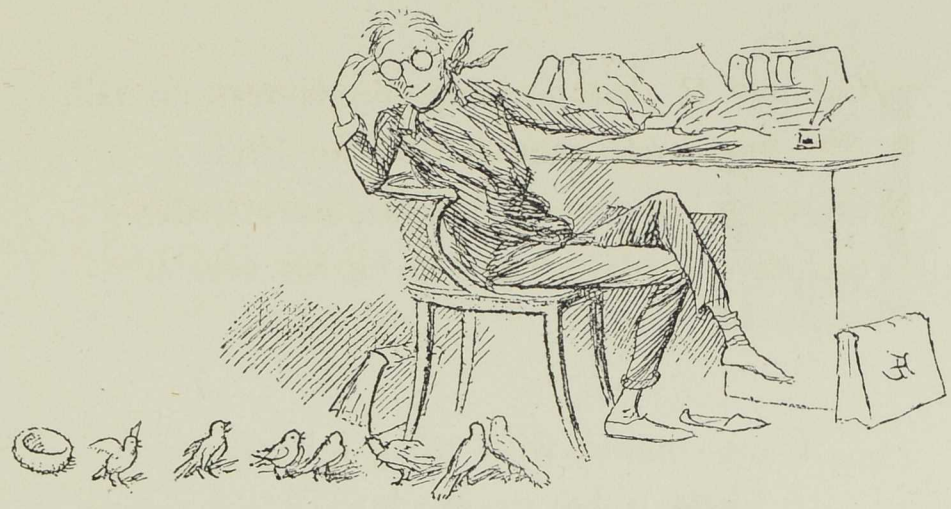
" And out of these, you must contrive
A dwelling large enough for five ;
Neat, warm, and snug ; with comfort stored ;
Where five small things may lodge and board."

How would the man of learning vast,
Have been astonished and aghast ;
And vowed that such a thing had been
Ne'er heard of, thought of, much less seen.

Ah ! man of learning, you are wrong ;
Instinct is, more than wisdom, strong ;
And he who made the sparrow, taught
This skill beyond your reach of thought.

And here, in this uncostly nest,
These little creatures have been blest ;
Nor have kings known in palaces,
Half their contentedness in this—
Poor simple dwelling as it is !

MARY HOWITT.





# Shepherd-boy's Song

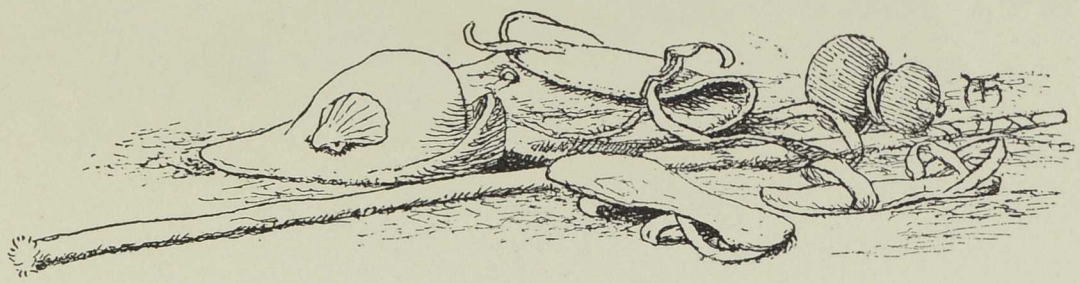


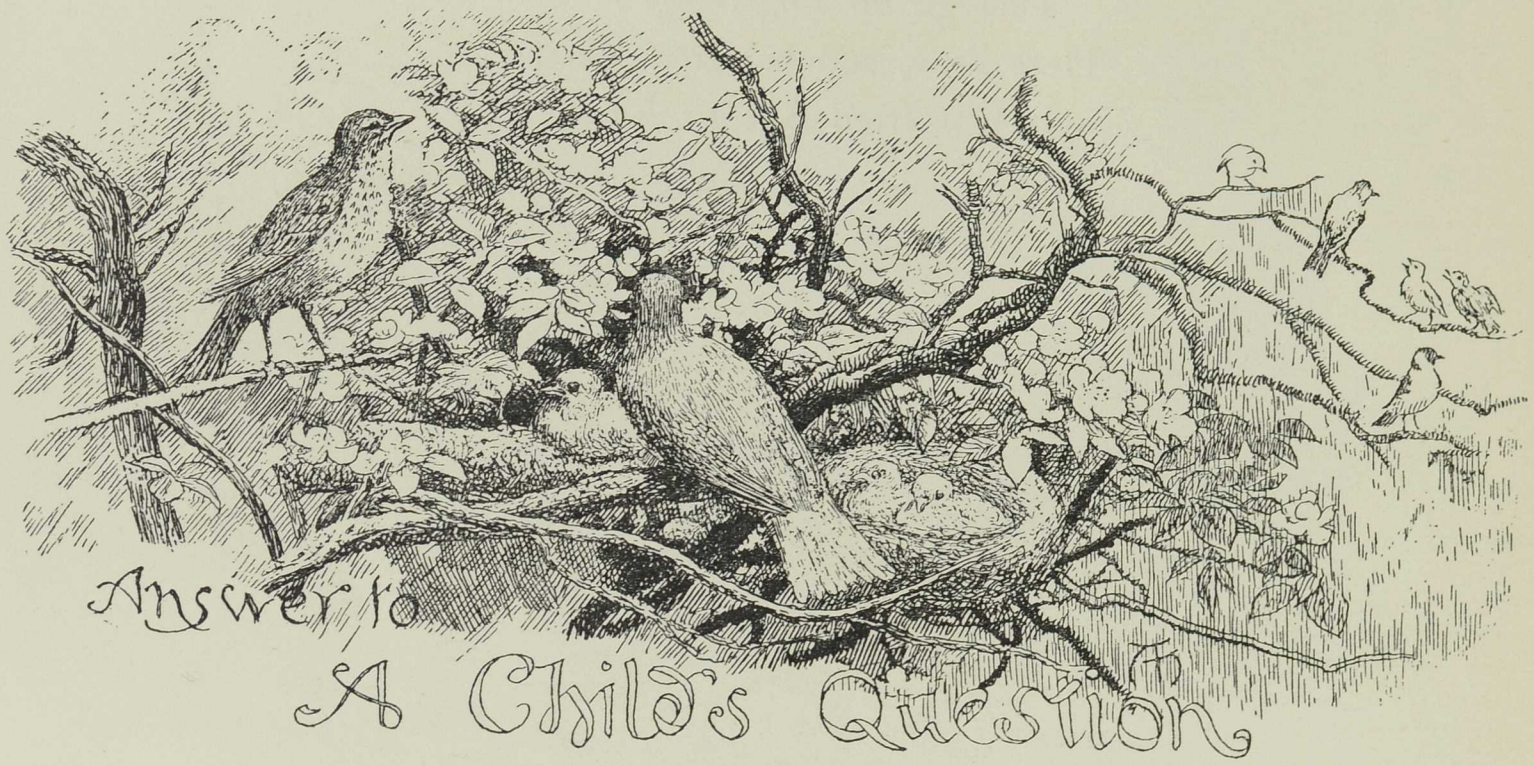
He that is down, needs fear no fall,
He that is low, no Pride:
He that is humble, ever shall
Have God to be his Guide.

I am content with what I have,
Little it be, or much:
And, Lord, contentment still I crave,
Because thou savest such.

Fulness to such a burden is
  That go on Pilgrimage :
Here little, and hereafter Bliss,
  Is best from Age to Age.

JOHN BUNYAN.





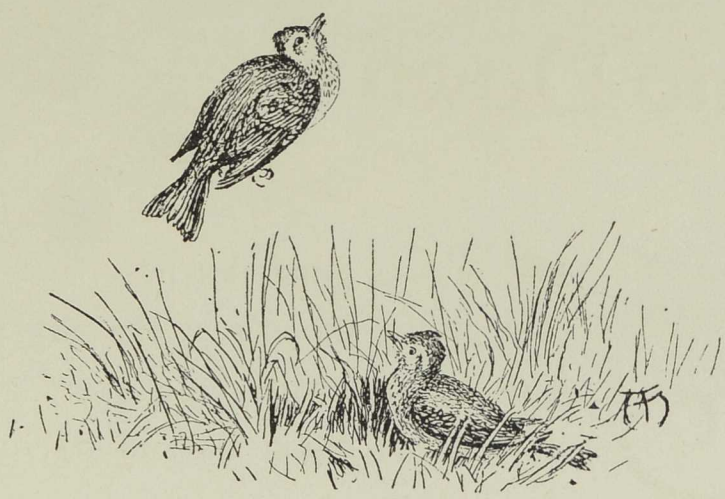
# Answer to A Child's Question

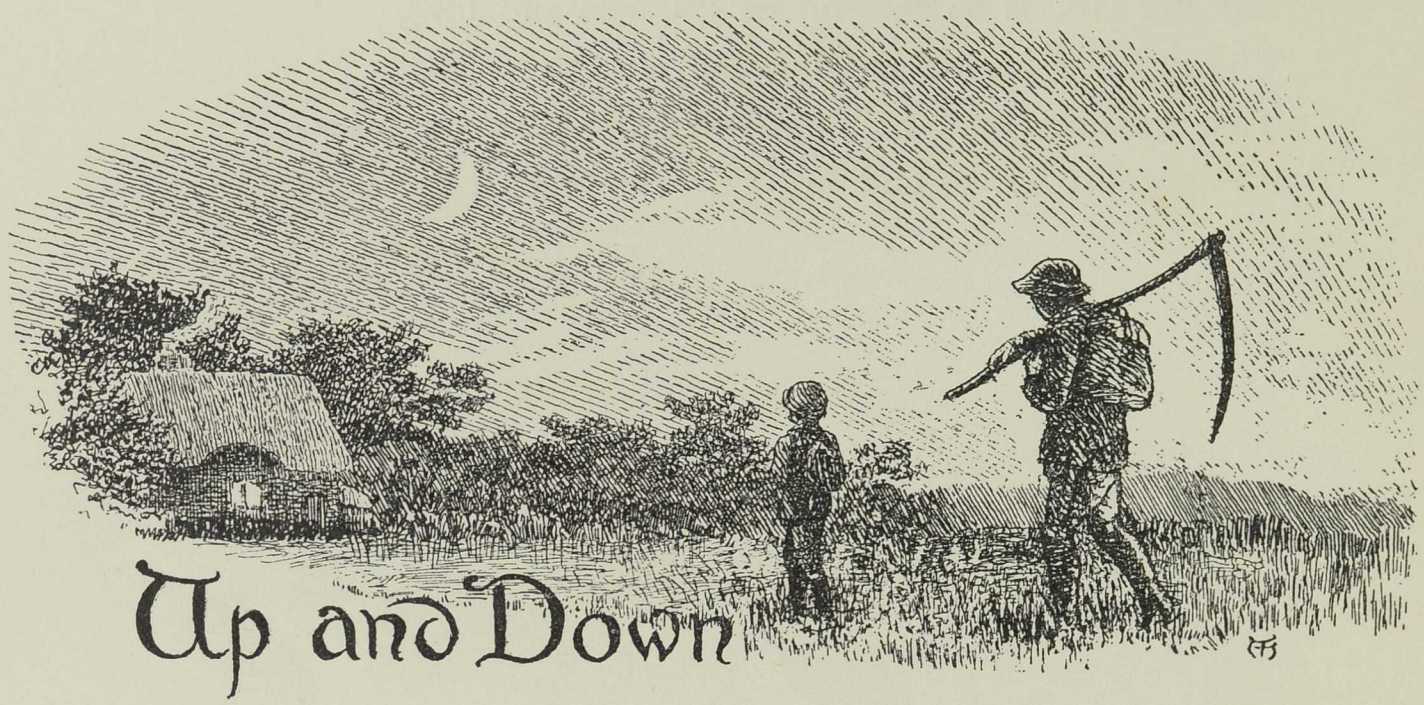


O you ask what the birds say? The sparrow, the dove,
The linnet, and thrush, say, "I love and I love!"
In the winter they're silent—the wind is so strong.
What it says I don't know, but it sings a loud song.
But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny warm weather,
And singing, and loving—all come back together.

But the lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings, and he sings ; and for ever sings he—
"I love my Love, and my Love loves me!"

S. T. Coleridge.





# Up and Down

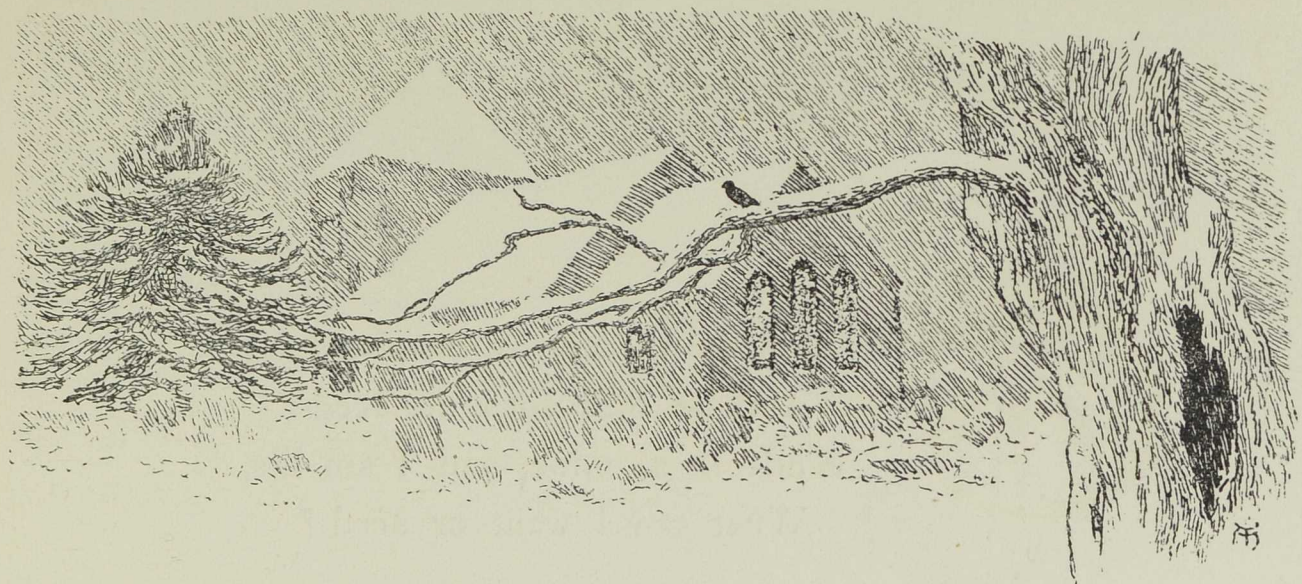
THE sun is gone down,
And the moon's in the sky ;
But the sun will come up,
And the moon be laid by.

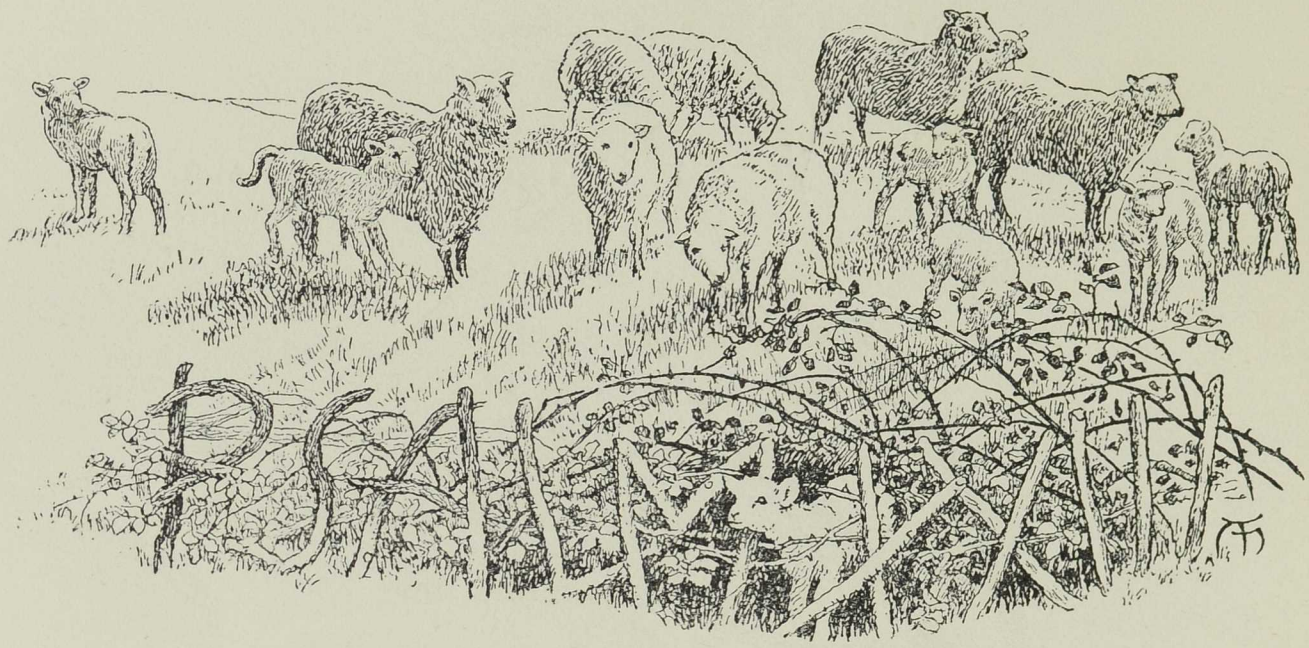
The flower is asleep,
But it is not dead ;
When the morning shines,
It will lift its head.

When winter comes,
It will die—no, no ;
It will only hide
From the frost and snow.

Sure is the summer,
  Sure is the sun ;
The night and the winter—
  Away they run !

GEORGE MACDONALD.







THE God of love my Shepherd is,
And he that doth me feed:
While he is mine, and I am his,
What can I want or need?

He leads me to the tender grass,
Where I both feed and rest;
Then to the streams that gently pass;
In both I have the best.

Or if I stray, he doth convert,
And bring my mind in frame:
And all this not for my desert,
But for his holy name.

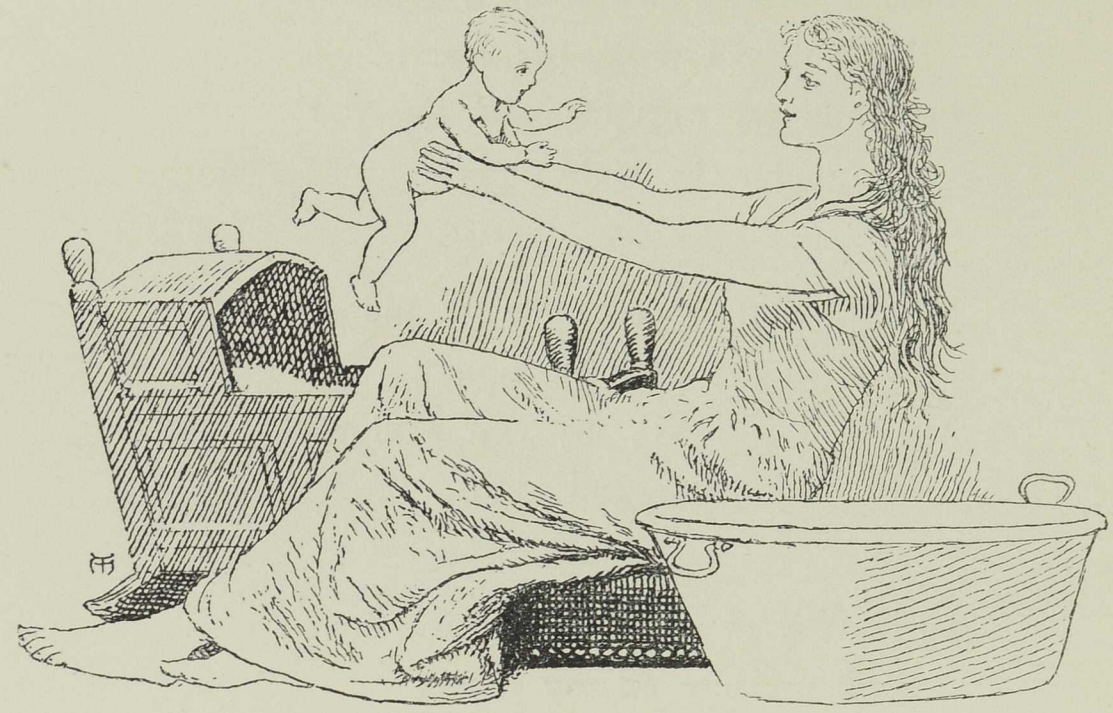
Yea, in death's shady black abode
  Well may I walk, not fear :
For thou art with me, and thy rod
  To guide, thy staff to bear.

Nay, thou dost make me sit and dine,
  E'en in my enemies' sight ;
My head with oil, my cup with wine
  Runs over day and night.

Surely thy sweet and wondrous love
  Shall measure all my days ;
And as it never shall remove,
  So neither shall my praise.

GEORGE HERBERT.







# MY MOTHER

WHO fed me from her gentle breast,
And hush'd me in her arms to rest,
And on my cheek sweet kisses prest ?
My Mother.

When sleep forsook my open eye,
Who was it sung sweet hushaby,
And rock'd me that I should not cry ?
My Mother.

When pain and sickness made me cry,
Who gazed upon my heavy eye,
And wept for fear that I should die ?
My Mother.

Who dress'd my doll in clothes so gay,
And taught me pretty how to play,
And minded all I had to say ?
My Mother.

Who ran to help me when I fell,
And would some pretty story tell,
Or kiss the place to make it well ?
My Mother.

Who taught my infant lips to pray,
And love God's holy book and day,
And walk in wisdom's pleasant way ?
My Mother.

And can I ever cease to be
Affectionate and kind to thee,
Who was so very kind to me ?
My Mother.

Ah, no ! the thought I cannot bear,
And if God please my life to spare,
I hope I shall reward thy care,
My Mother.

ANN TAYLOR.






OVER hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moonës sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green;
The cowslips tall her pensioners be;
In their gold coats spots you see;

These be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours :
I must go seek some dewdrops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

SHAKESPEARE.





# Written in March



THE cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon:
There's joy in the mountains;
There's life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.





# Boy's Song



THERE the pools are bright and deep,
Where the gray trout lies asleep,
Up the river and over the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
Where the hay lies thick and greenest,
There to track the homeward bee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
Where the shadow falls the deepest,
Where the clustering nuts fall free,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Why the boys should drive away
Little sweet maidens from the play,
Or love to banter and fight so well,
That's the thing I never could tell.

But this I know, I love to play,
Through the meadow, among the hay ;
Up the water and o'er the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

JAMES HOGG.





# The Little Black Boy



Y mother bore me in the southern wild,
And I am black, but oh my soul is white,
White as an angel is the English child,
But I am black, as if bereaved of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree,
And, sitting down before the heat of day,
She took me on her lap and kisséd me,
And, pointing to the East, began to say:

"Look on the rising sun: there God does live,
And gives his light, and gives his heat away,
And flowers and trees and beasts and men receive
Comfort in morning, joy in the noonday.

" And we are put on earth a little space,
That we may learn to bear the beams of love ;
And these black bodies and this sunburnt face
Are but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

" For, when our souls have learned the heat to bear,
The cloud will vanish, we shall hear his voice,
Saying, ' Come out from the grove, my love and care,
And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice. ' "

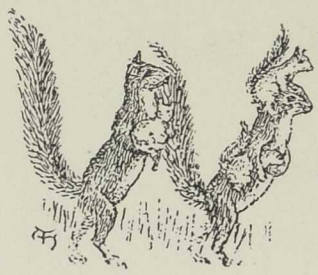
Thus did my mother say, and kisséd me,
And thus I say to little English boy.
When I from black, and he from white cloud tree,
And round the tents of God like lambs we joy,

I'll shade him from the heat till he can bear
To lean in joy upon our Father's knee ;
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,
And be like him, and he will then love me.

William Blake.



# THE GREY SQUIRRELS



WHEN in my youth I travelled
Throughout each north countrie,
Many a strange thing did I hear,
And many a strange thing see.

But nothing was there that pleased me more
Than when, in autumn brown,
I came in the depths of the pathless woods,
To the Grey Squirrels' town.

There were hundreds that in the hollow boles
Of the old, old trees did dwell,
And laid up their store hard by their door
Of the sweet mast as it fell.

But soon the hungry wild swine came,
And with thievish snouts dug up
Their buried treasure, and left them not
So much as an acorn cup!

Then did they chatter in angry mood,
And one and all decree,
Into the forests of rich stone-pine
Over hill and dale to flee.

Over hill and dale, over hill and dale,
For many a league they went;
Like a troop of undaunted travellers
Governed by one consent.

But the hawk and eagle, and peering owl,
Did dreadfully pursue;
And the farther the Grey Squirrels went,
The more their perils grew;
When lo! to cut off their pilgrimage,
A broad stream lay in view.

But then did each wondrous creature shew
His cunning and bravery;
With a piece of the pine-bark in his mouth,
Unto the stream came he,

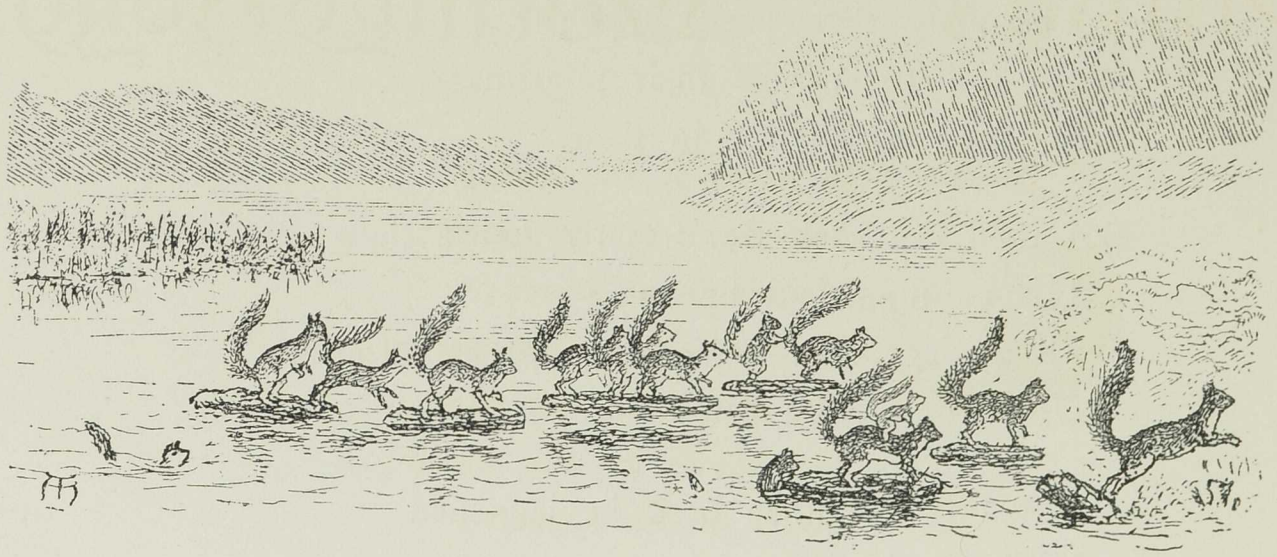
And boldly his little bark he launched,
Without the least delay;
His bushy tail was his upright sail,
And he merrily steered away.

Never was there a lovelier sight
  Than that Grey Squirrels' fleet ;
And with anxious eyes I watched to see
  What fortune it would meet.

Soon had they reached the rough mid-stream,
  And ever and anon,
I grieved to behold some small bark wrecked,
  And its little steersman gone.

But the main fleet stoutly held across ;
  I saw them leap to shore ;
They entered the woods with a cry of joy,
  For their perilous march was o'er.

MARY HOWITT.

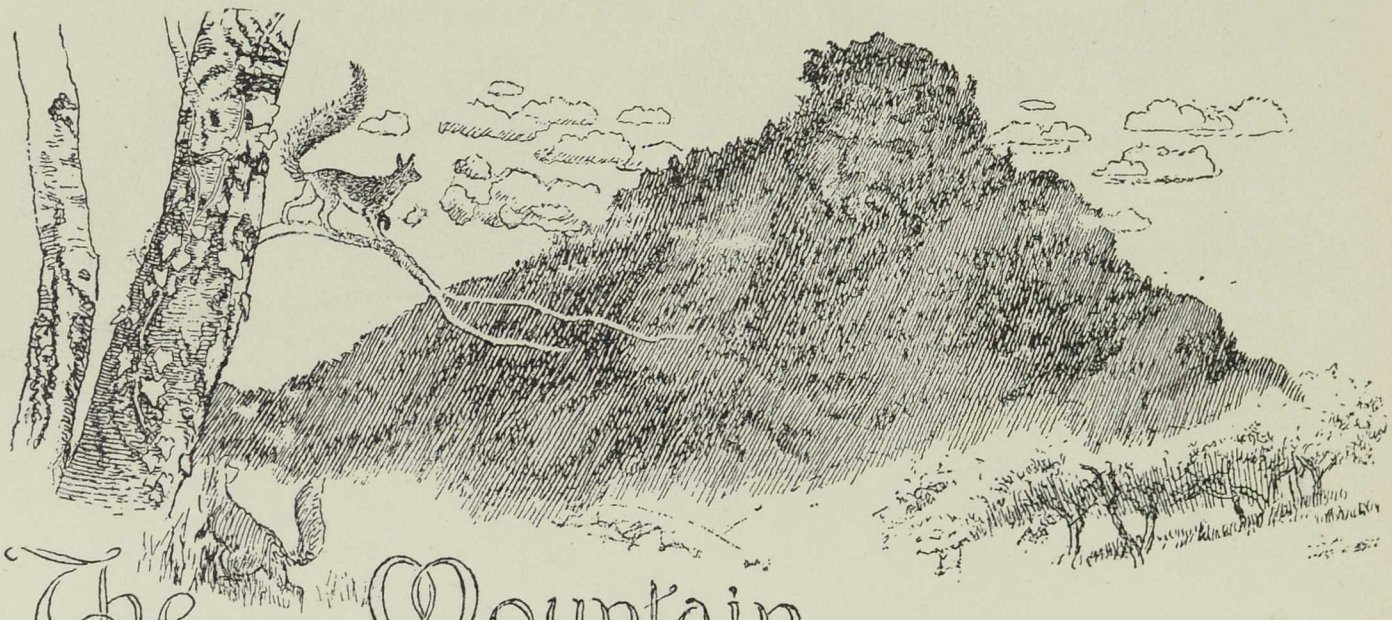




# Pippa's Morning Song

THE year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in his heaven—
All's right with the world!

ROBERT BROWNING.



# The Mountain and the Squirrel

THE mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel,
And the former called the latter "Little prig;"
Bun replied,
"You are doubtless very big,
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together
To make up a year,
And a sphere.
And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.

If I'm not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so spry :
I'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track.
Talents differ ; all is well and wisely put ;
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut."

R. W. Emerson.




WHERE did you come from, baby dear?
Out of the everywhere into here.

Where did you get your eyes so blue?
Out of the sky as I came through.

What makes the light in them sparkle and spin?
Some of the starry spikes left in.

Where did you get that little tear?
I found it waiting when I got here.

What makes your forehead so smooth and high?
A soft hand stroked it as I went by.

What makes your cheek like a warm white rose?
I saw something better than any one knows.

Whence that three-cornered smile of bliss?
Three angels gave me at once a kiss.

Where did you get this pearly ear?
God spoke, and it came out to hear.

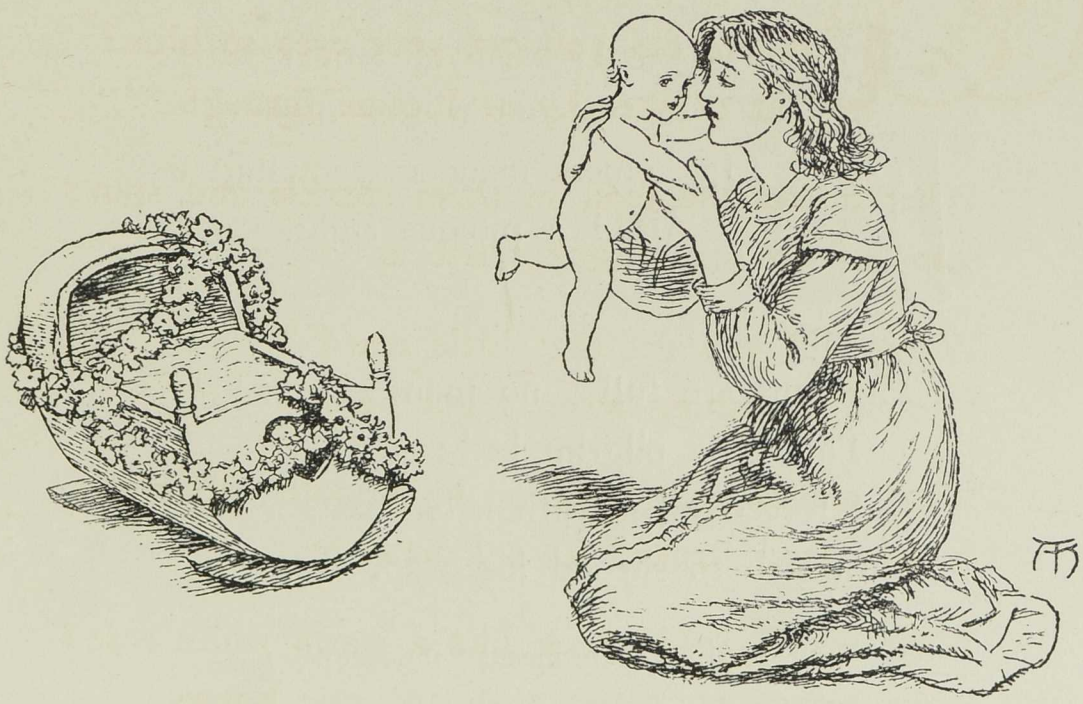
Where did you get those arms and hands?
Love made itself into hooks and bands.

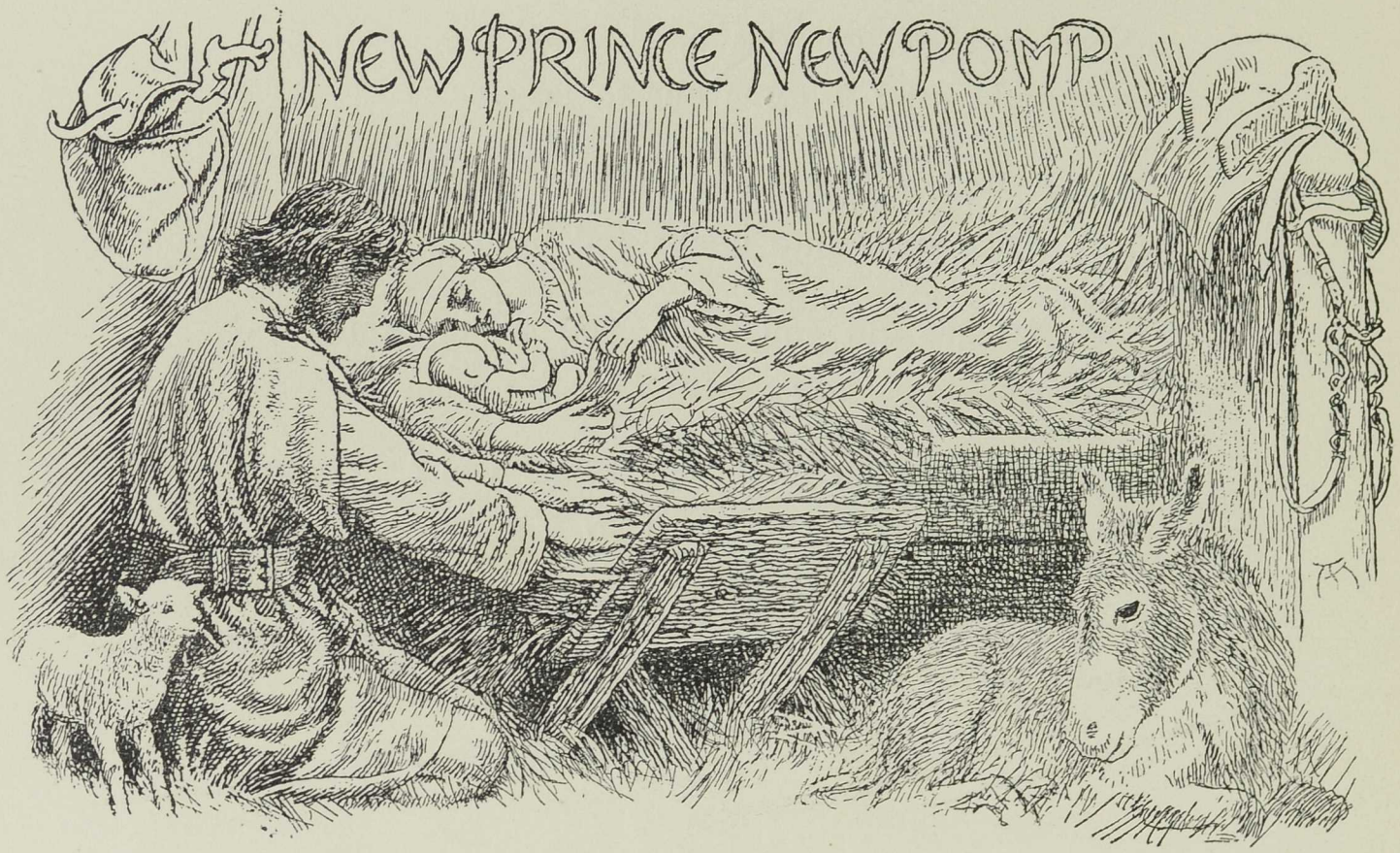
Feet, whence did you come, you darling things?
From the same box as the cherub's wings.

How did they all just come to be you?
God thought about me, and so I grew.

But how did you come to us, you dear?
God thought about you, and so I am here.

GEORGE MACDONALD.






BEHOLD a silly,* tender babe,
In freezing winter night,
In homely manger trembling lies;
Alas! a piteous sight.

The inns are full; no man will yield
This little pilgrim bed;
But forced he is with silly beasts
In crib to shroud his head.

* "Silly" here means "innocent."

Despise him not for lying there;
First what he is inquire:
An orient pearl is often found
In depth of dirty mire.

Weigh not his crib, his wooden dish,
Nor beasts that by him feed;
Weigh not his mother's poor attire,
Nor Joseph's simple weed.



This stable is a prince's court,
The crib his chair of state;
The beasts are parcel of his pomp,
The wooden dish his plate.

The persons in that poor attire
  His royal liveries wear ;
The Prince himself is come from heaven :
  This pomp is praiséd there.

With joy approach, O Christian wight ;
  Do homage to thy King ;
And highly praise this humble pomp,
  Which he from heaven doth bring.

ROBERT SOUTHWELL.



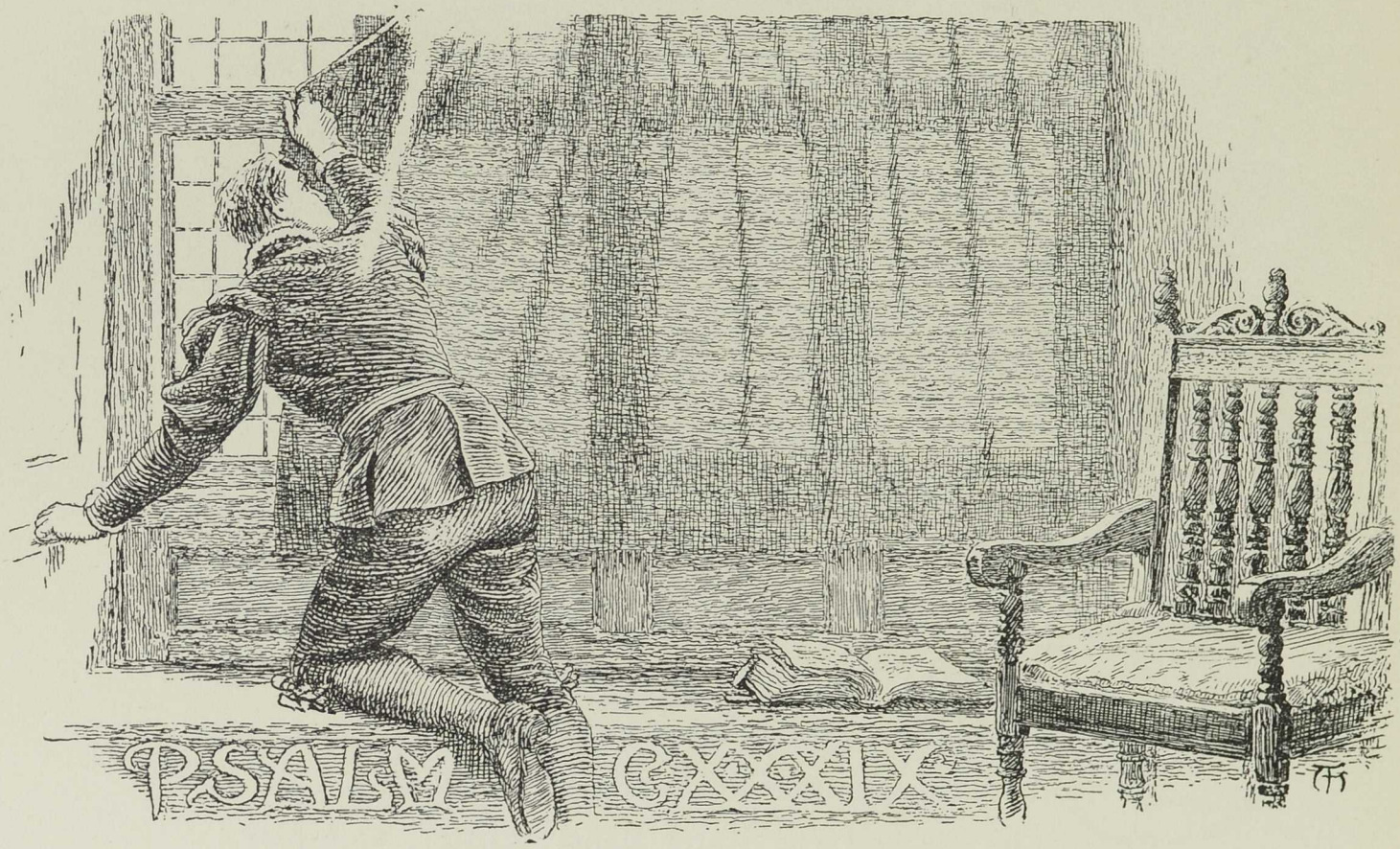
# Reasons for Mirth



THE sun is careering in glory and might,
'Mid the deep blue sky and the clouds so bright;
The billow is tossing its foam on high,
And the summer breezes go lightly by;
The air and the water dance, glitter, and play;
And why should not I be as merry as they?

The linnet is singing the wild wood through,
The fawn's bounding footsteps skim over the dew,
The butterfly flits round the blossoming tree,
And the cowslip and blue-bell are bent by the bee.
All the creatures that dwell in the forest are gay,
And why should not I be as merry as they?

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.






LORD in me there lieth nought,
But to thy search revealéd lies :
For when I sitt
Thou markest it :
No lesse thou notest when I rise :
Yea closest closett of my thought
Hath open windowes to thine eyes.

Thou walkest with me when I walk,
When to my bed for rest I go,
I find thee there,
And ev'ry where :
Not yongest thought in me doth grow,
No not one word I cast to talk,
But yet unutt'red thou dost know.

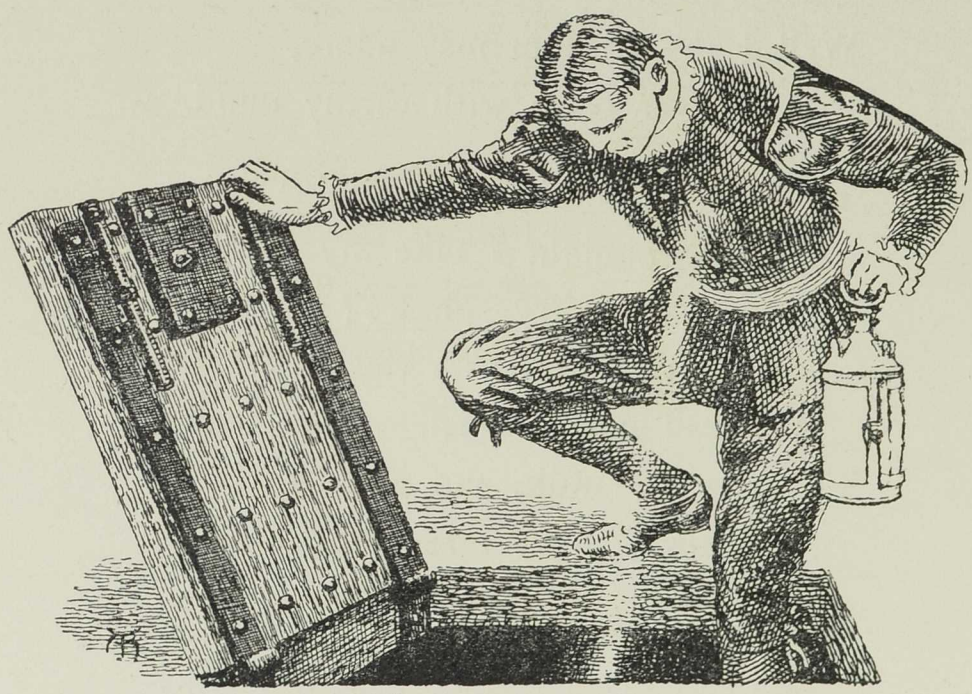
If forth I march, thou goest before,
If back I torne, thou com'st behind :
Soe forth nor back
Thy guard I lack,
Nay on me too thy hand I find.
Well I thy wisdom may adore,
But never reach with earthy mind.

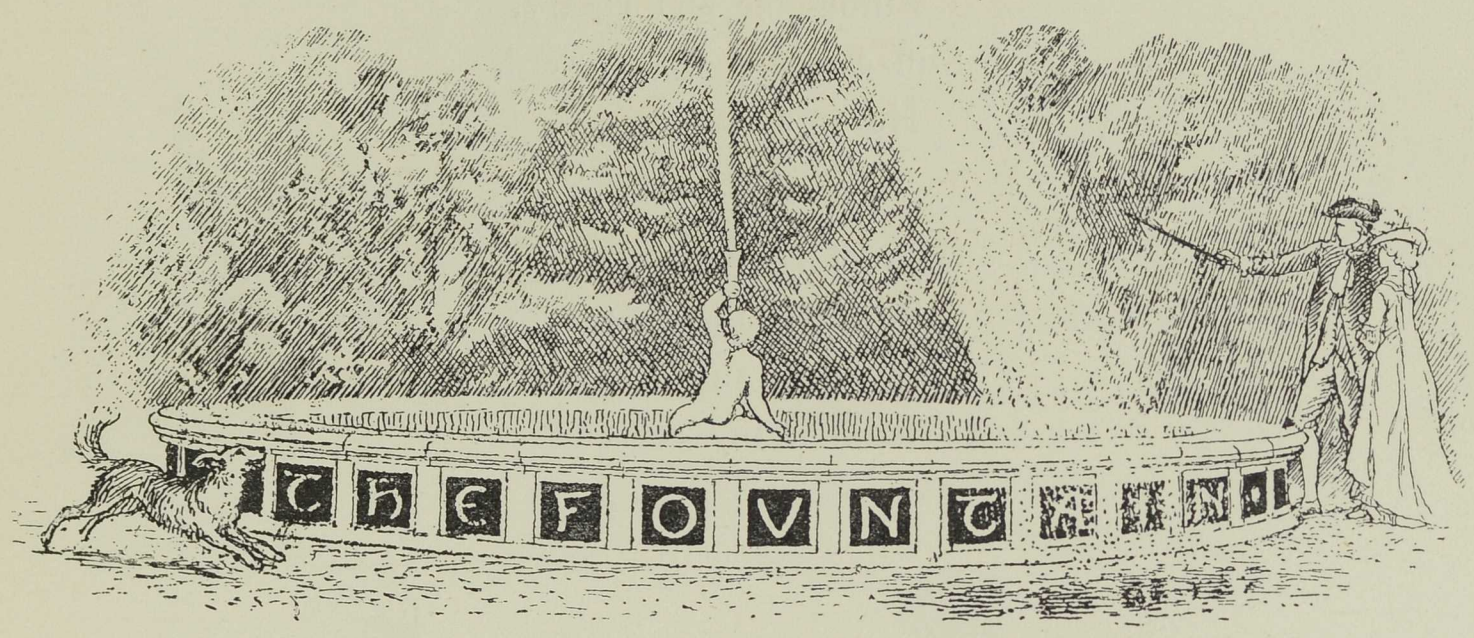
To shun thy notice, leave thine eye,
O whither might I take my way ?
To starry spheare ?
Thy throne is there.
To dead men's undelightsome stay ?
There is thy walk, and there to lye
Unknown, in vain I should assay.

O Sun, whome light nor flight can match,
Suppose thy lightfull, flightfull wings
Thou lend to me
And I could flee
As farr as thee the ev'ning brings :
Ev'n led to West he would me catch,
Nor should I lurk with western things.

Doe thou thy best, O secret night,
In sable vaile to cover me:
Thy sable vaile
Shall vainly faile:
With day unmask'd my night shall be;
For night is day, and darkness light,
O father of all lights, to thee.

THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE.








NTO the sunshine,
Full of the light,
Leaping and flashing
From morn till night;

Into the moonlight,
Whiter than snow,
Waving so flower-like
When the winds blow;

Into the starlight
Rushing in spray,
Happy at midnight,
Happy by day;

Ever in motion,
Blithesome and cheery,
Still climbing heavenward,
Never aweary ;

Glad of all weathers,
Still seeming best,
Upward or downward,
Motion thy rest ;



Full of a nature
Nothing can tame,
Changed every moment,
Ever the same ;

Ceaseless aspiring,
  Ceaseless content,
Darkness or sunshine
  Thy element;

Glorious fountain,
  Let my heart be
Fresh, changeful, constant,
  Upward, like thee!

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.




IS not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make Man better be;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere:
A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May,

Although it fall and die that night—
It was the plant and flower of Light.
In small proportions we just beauties see;
And in short measures life may perfect be.

BEN JONSON.








NOW the bright Morning-star, day's harbinger,
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
The flow'ry May, who from her green lap throws
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.
Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire
Mirth and youth and warm desire ;

Woods and groves are of thy dressing.
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing.
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

JOHN MILTON.



# DAVID'S SONG

(FROM SAUL)

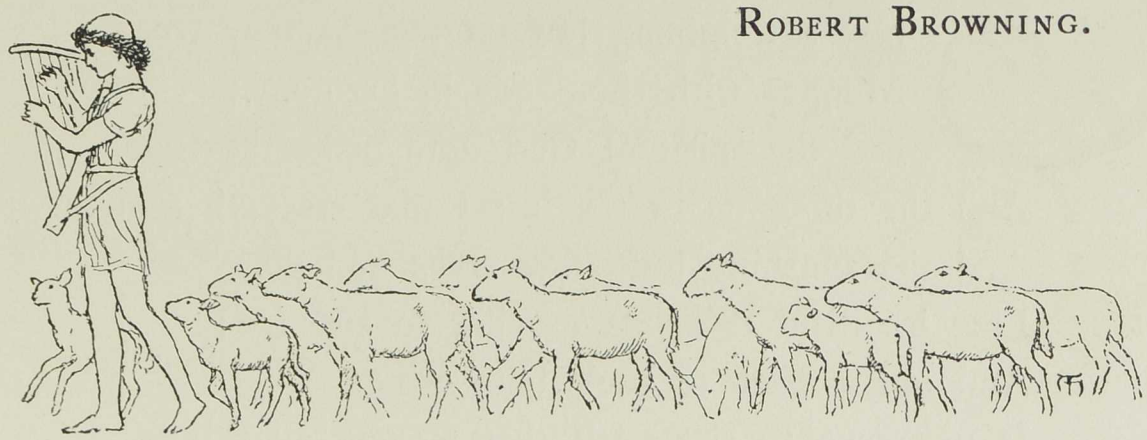


WHEN I tuned my harp,—took off the lilies we twine
round its chords
Lest they snap 'neath the stress of the noontide—those
sunbeams like swords!
And I first played the tune all our sheep know, as, one
after one,
So docile they come to the pen-door till folding be done.

They are white and untorn by the bushes, for lo, they
have fed
Where the long grasses stifle the water within the stream's
bed;
And now one after one seeks its lodging, as star follows
star
Into eve and the blue far above us,—so blue and so far!

—Then the tune, for which quails on the cornland will each
leave his mate
To fly after the player; then, what makes the crickets elate
Till for boldness they fight one another: and then, what
has weight
To set the quick jerboa a-musing outside his sand house—
There are none such as he for a wonder, half bird and
half mouse!
God made all the creatures and gave them our love and
our fear,
To give sign, we and they are his children, one family
here.

ROBERT BROWNING.





# Lesson for a Child

THERE breathes not a breath of the morning air,
But the spirit of love is moving there;
Not a trembling leaf on the shadowy tree
Mingles with thousands in harmony;
But the spirit of God doth make the sound,
And the thoughts of the insect that creepeth around.
And the sunshiny butterflies come and go,
Like beautiful thoughts moving to and fro;
And not a wave of their busy wings
Is unknown to the spirit that moveth all things.

And the long-mantled moths, that sleep at noon,
And dance in the light of the mystic moon—
All have one being that loves them all;
Not a fly in the spider's web can fall,
But he cares for the spider, and cares for the fly;
And he cares for each little child's smile or sigh.
How it can be, I cannot know;
He is wiser than I; and it must be so.

GEORGE MACDONALD.



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