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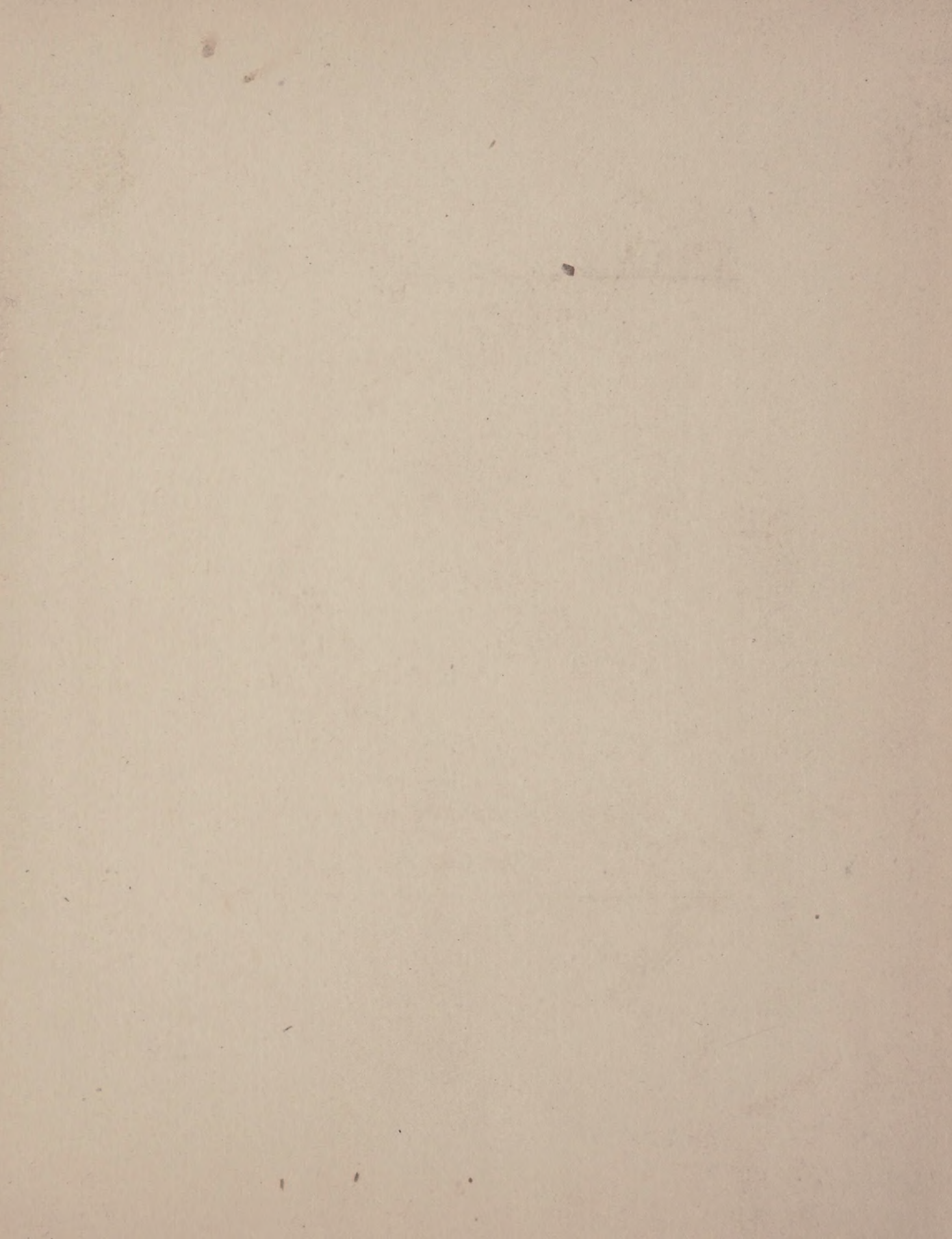
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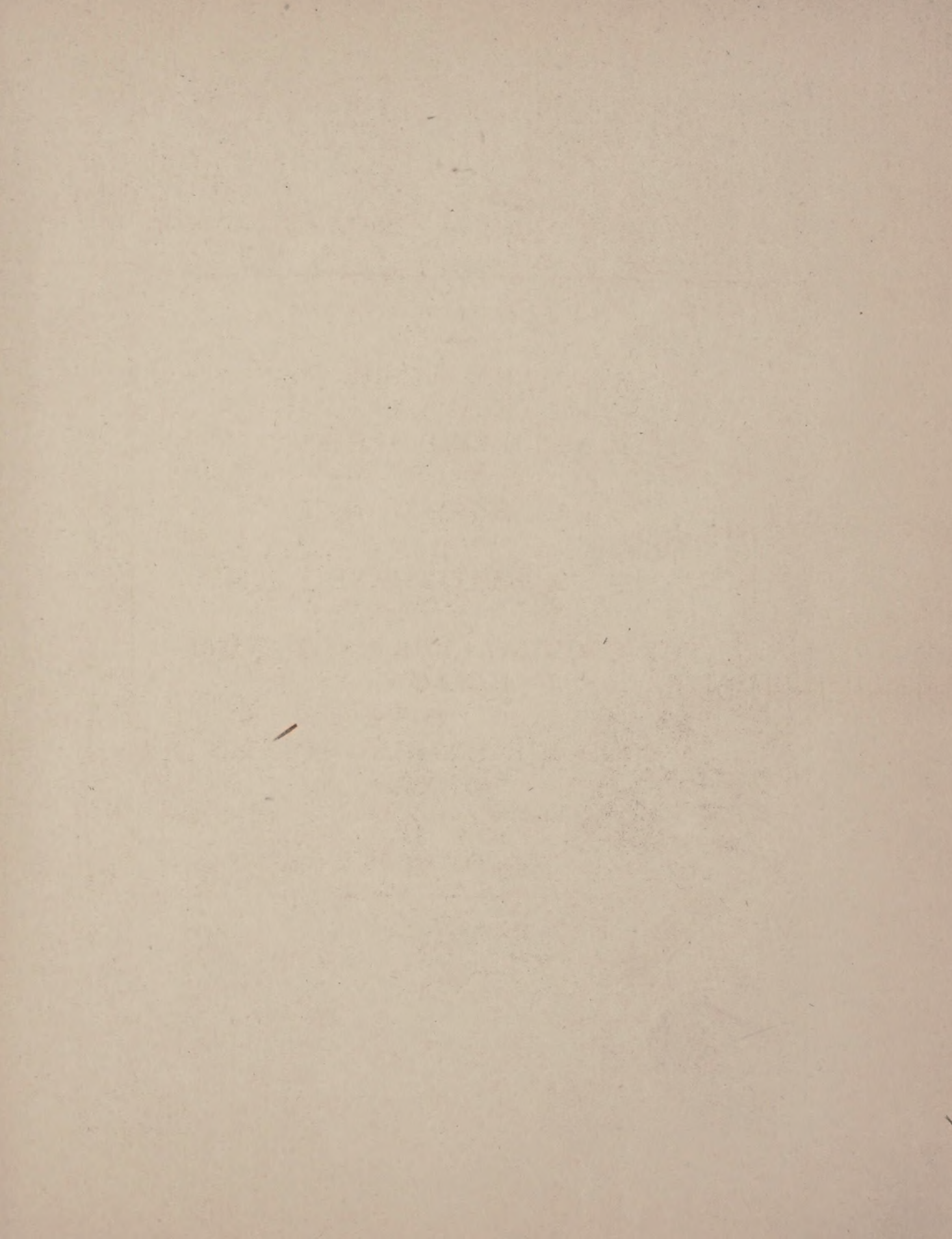
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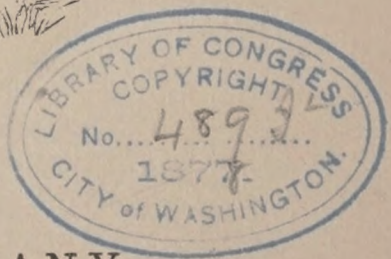
MAMMA S DOLLS.



POEMS BY
ELLA FARMAN. Pratt

PICTURES BY
C. A. NORTHAM.

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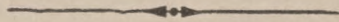
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SUGAR PLUMS.

MAMMA'S DOLLS.

“O MAMMA! were your little doll-girls ever bad
Like mine? so bad they made their little
mamma sad?

Would your dolls twitch when you combed out their
little curls? —

You said you once were small and had some dolly-
girls.

“Tell me about your dolls, and when your name was
Kit, —

Just little Kit, like me, you know. Mamma, is it
As nice to be a woman? Don't you want to be
Little again? Why didn't you save your dolls for
me?

“Did you have lots of dolls? What kind did you
like best—

The little naked ones, or those you bought all dressed?
And did your mamma give you pieces of her dress?
Oh! when she gave you silk, *then* you was glad, I
guess!”

Saved you my dolls!—should I tell you, my little Kit,
About when *I* was little Kit, you'd laugh at it.

That Kit lived miles and miles from dolly-stores; and,
worse,

Her mamma had no dolly-money in her purse.

So, Kit, what do you think that little Kit did do,—
That poor, poor Kit? Her dolls would not have done
for you!

She rolled a piece of cloth, and sewed it in a roll,
Eyes, nose, mouth, hair, — she marked them with a
piece of coal !



The pipe-stem arms were cloth, the pipe-stem legs
were cloth,
Kit's mamma took a stitch to bend the ankles both ;
And Kit felt grand to get a piece of calico
For dolly's dress — grandmamma had no silk, you
know.

“And that was all she had? mamma, I feel so bad!”

Oh, no, sweet pet, a bigger doll she often had;

She pinned a pillow in her little blanket-shawl, —

Don't laugh! she loved that soft fat dolly best of all!



“Poor mamma! if I'd lived then, I'd have give you

some

My dolls. I'm glad you staid and lived until I come,

It's made up now. Because you didn't have dolls,

you see,

When you were little, *now* you have papa and me!”

BABY'S FRIGHTS.

(What Mamma said to her little Mimi at Night).

I.

BABY'S had a dreadful day, —
This poor little Baby Mimi, —

Giants tried to run away

With this little Baby Mimi!

First a spider, black and big,

Stepped up close to Baby Mimi, —

Wished to spin a silver wig,

Try it on my Baby Mimi:

When I looked she'd spun a net,

In it sat my Baby Mimi, —

She was carrying off my pet,
Just kidnapping Baby Mimi!



Mamma slapped her with her shoe —
Didn't she slap her, Baby Mimi!
Mamma'll always fight for you,
Sweet and precious Baby Mimi!

II.

But Baby, O Baby,
What think the spider said to me?

“I have three little spiders, and they’ve not a rag
To make calls on your little girl Mimi, you see,
So I thought I’d take her, in this soft silken bag,
Just a minute to call on my spider girls three.”
Thus the spider excused herself to me.

III.

Then there was a soft gray mouse
Peeped at me and Baby Mimi—
Both alone-y in the house,
Mamma and her Baby Mimi.

Mousie ran across the floor,
Two bright eyes on Baby Mimi,
Then she hid behind the door,
All to catch my Baby Mimi.

Mamma jumped and scatted her —
Didn’t she scat her, Baby Mimi!

Mamma hears them if they stir,
To come near her Baby Mimi!

IV.

But Baby, O Baby,
What think the gray mouse said to me?
“I have four little mice in the cellar below,
And they durst n't come up — they are 'fraid as can
be —
Want to borrow your baby a minute to show
What it is that cries so — they often ask me :”
Thus the gray mouse excused herself to me.

V.

Cup and spoon down on the rug,
Eating pretty, Baby Mimi, —
Out there steps a shiny bug,
Says she, “Are you Baby Mimi?”

“ Heard you had some sweet pink toes,
Come to kiss 'em, Baby Mimi ! ” —
Hops upon the slipper-bows,
Up and bites my Baby Mimi !

Mamma 'n' Baby both did scream —
Didn't we scream, Baby Mimi !
Bug hopped into Baby's cream,
Mamma run with Baby Mimi !

VI.

But Baby, O Baby,
What think the wet bug said to me ?
“ I have four little bugs, and they've nothing to eat,
They are all just as hungry as hungry can be,
And your baby is tender and toothsome and sweet
I just stole a wee bite that my buglets might see : ”
Thus the wet bug excused herself to me.

VII.

Such a dreadful, dreadful day,
But it's night now, Baby Mimi !
Here's the white bed, where I'll lay
All tucked in, my Baby Mimi !

VIII.

And now the spider is in bed with her babies ;
And, too, the gray mouse is in bed with her babies ;
And the bug so wet is in bed with her babies ;
And in just a minute I will be with mine !



TWO LITTLE BOYS.

I.

C OSEY sits a mother by her bright hearth-side,
Rock-a-rock-a-rock her fair boy rocks a ride ;
Light she counts the silver from a silken purse,
Gayly shouts the laddie on the rocking-horse :

Outside falls the snow,
Outside the winds blow ;
The mother sings low,

“Oh, the walls of Home are builded bright and high
Reaching, warm and crimson, to the very sky.”

Rose-and-white the blankets on the many beds,
Half the snowy pillows never pressed by heads ;
Little coaties, some with fur, and some with gold,
Hanging in the fragrant closets, fold on fold :

Outside sweeps the snow,

Outside the blasts blow ;

The mother sings low,

“God is good, and Love enwraps his darlings warm —
Nestlings we, safe sleeping on Love’s mighty arm.”

All her happy heart it opens like a rose,
Warm as summer is the home amid the snows ;
In the rose the child is folded lovingly, —
Little honey-fed and downy-coated bee :

Outside whirls the snow,

Outside the drifts grow ;

The mother sings low,

“Life is good, and Home is bright, and Love is sweet,
O God, spare us Love, Home, and Life, we entreat!”

II.

Past the stately windows, silken-curtained, goes
Little ragged figure, shiv'ring through the snows,
Gravely looking up his bedroom for the night.
Everywhere are sheets and pillows piled so white,

But not this white spot,

Nor yet this white cot—

The beggar is not

Ready yet to choose one from the many streets,
Though the high white snow-loom weaves him freshest
sheets.

Wild and white and thick the midnight on the town!
Slowly round and round, and on, and up and down,
Trying marble step, and trying alley dim,—
Never does a blessed doorway ope to him,

Till 'tis a sweet lot
To seek this white cot ;
The beggar need not



Knock at anybody's frowning door for this,—
Free to him this great, white, solemn bed-room is.

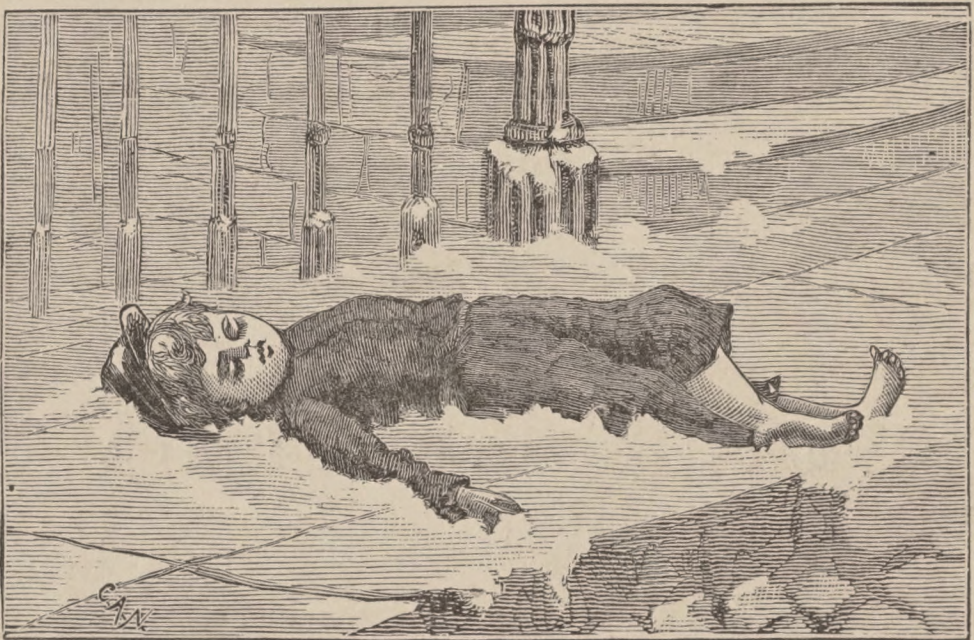
Lonesome for the little laddie it must be,
And no tender mother brings her lamp to see,
Yet the sweetest, strangest, deepest of all rest,
Settles like a dream upon the beggar's breast.

There in that wild spot,
Within his white cot,
The beggar forgot,
While the high winds piled his bed-clothes, fold on
fold,
Evermore, that he had hungered or been cold.

III.

Pale and light he soared up to the heavens fair,
While the snow lay yet upon his cold, wet hair ;
And the angels leaning on the high, bright wall,
Gravely looked they down upon the spirit small.
In the heavenly light,
Spreading golden-white,
They beheld his flight,
And said they, " Oh, little soul, why have you come ?
Little straying soul, you will be missed at home ! "

“Didn’t have no home,” said he, “and it was cold ;”
And he warmed his fingers in the air of gold.
“Would no happy people open to you theirs?
Sure we heard a grateful mother singing prayers



In the red firelight,
With her child so bright, —
Surely the sad plight
Of a wandering, homeless, starving little boy
Would have touched her in her happy, grateful joy !”

“No,” said he, “they didn’t never let me in!”

“On their heads,” the angels said, “be all the sin
On their heads, who, praising God, will not divide
With his helpless Poor their happy fireside!”

In the heavenly light

Their large eyes grew bright

With tears at the plight

Of this little soul the earth did so condemn,

And they reached and took him into heaven with
them!

IV.

In the rose-soft blankets mother’s darling lay,

Warm and soft the night, and sweeter than the day;

But his sleep was touched with tossing and annoy—

In his dream he saw the piteous beggar-boy:

Clear the gold-light gleam

Shone in on his dream,

And strange it did seem

That the little shivering spirit there should stand,
Pleading to the angels with his icy hand.

And he heard the angry angels, though he slept,
Saying 'twas his "Little Brother" that they wept ;
And his death should be upon the happy heads
Of the people with the fires and downy beds.



Oh, in the sharp gleam
That shone on his dream,
It surely did seem

That he must and that he would share all he had
With that little shivering spirit, and be glad !

And he called up to the angels in the sky,
And the angels answered to him sweet and high.
“Tell me,” cried he, “tell me and my mother—
Tell us how we’ll know a Little Brother?”

Then a grand, full gleam
Of glory did seem
To burst on his dream,

As the angels answered back, “*Remember this!*
WHO HAS LESS THAN YOU, A LITTLE BROTHER IS!”

LEARNING TO COUNT.

BABY now is three years old,
Time some wise things should be told ;
Lips that lisp, and coo, and sing,
Sure can say some useful thing.



Come and learn arithmetic —
Baby's little head is quick ;

Baby touch her pearly nose —
 “One!” that’s the way it goes.

Rosy chin — that makes “Two.”
 “UN, Two!” hear her coo!
 Blue eye here, blue eye there,
Now how many, baby fair?



Nose was “One,” chin was “Two,” —
 “*Nose is UN, tin is Two.*”
 And the two blue eyes, “Three,” “Four,”
 “*An’ a two boo eyes, FEE, FO’.*”
 Sweet as honey in the hive,
 Little upper lip counts “Five.”

Under lip, with pouting tricks,
Say it, darling, "Five," Six.'

"'Ittle honey t'icks —

Baby count 'em — FIVE, SIX."



Bless her heart, how plain she speaks!
Now we'll add the the cherry cheeks;
This cheek, sweetest ever given
To a baby, stands for "Seven."

That cheek, sweeter than its mate,
Mamma kisses it for "Eight."

"SEBEN" — see the baby wait —

"An' 'e cheek oo tiss is EIGHT!"

This ear, where the curlies twine
Round in silky rings, makes "Nine ;"
That ear — papa 'll pinch it when
Home he comes — that counts "Ten."



"Dis ea' NINE, dat ea' TEN !"

That's it! Now we'll count again :

Nose is "One ;" chin is "Two ;"
"Three" and "Four," eyes of blue ;
Lips with smiles, pouts and tricks,
(Count with me) "Five" and "Six ;"

“Seven.” “Eight,” these red cheeks ;
Ev’ry time that mamma speaks,
“Nine ” and “Ten,” each pink ear
Starts up eagerly to hear.

“ *Nose is UN, tin is TWO ;*
FEE, FO’, eyes is boo ;
Honey t’icks,
FIVE, SIX ;
SEBEN, EIGHT, *kiss ’e’ cheeks ;*
NINE, TEN, *hears oo speaks !”*

PINKIE-WINKIE'S MAMMA.

I HEARS that doll up, over-head —
I never *can* get any nap!

I guess I shall get out of bed,

And 'haps I'll give that doll a slap!

Bad doll! and here you is all dressed!

I knows you hasn't said your prayers!

You got up and put on your best,

And hurried, 'fas you could, down-stairs.

I knows, you minx, just where you thought

You'd go. Posy! don't shake your curls!

What did I say I'd do 'f I caught

You with those naughty alley-girls?

How dare you take my parasol,
Bad doll, to go a-walking in?



You thinks, because you is a doll,
Nobody 'd hurt your little skin.

O Pinkie-winkie-posy-bell!
You *is* so pretty in your little crib,

How *can* I whip — but should I tell,
My darling daughter-doll a fib?

My Pinkie didn't as she should —
Slap! slap! one, two, three!
I whips you for your little good ;
That's what *my* mamma says to *me!*

LITTLE MISS RATTLE-TE-BANG.

IT was ages ago, so the rhyme-makers sang,
That a little girl lived they called Rattle-te-Bang ;
They called her by that, since she never could stir
Without causing a slam, or a whirl, or a whirr.

There's a hammering sound to her heels and her toes,
Click-clickety-clack-clacking wherever she goes, —
Oh, I said, I believe, she lived long time ago,
For our mild modern girls don't ever walk so.

Her papa and her mamma were at their wits' end,
Every day of their lives some new mischief to mend ;

For none could be certain, not until she got through,
When she rose from her chair, what Miss Rattle
might do.

Her mamma would much rather have patched twenty
boys ;

And her papa was perfectly wild with the noise ;
So one morn, when the cars came a-puffing their way,
Why, they both stepped on board, and went steaming
away.

'Twas that year when the dish ran away with the
spoon,

And the wonderful cow jumped over the moon, —
In no other, I'm sure, could a little girl do
What Miss Rattle-ty did in an hour or two.

In a trice all the doors of the mansion went slam !
Ev'ry window flew up with a shove and a jam !
And then all of them fell, with the dreadfullest crash,
And the house, it got aired, in the general smash.

Soon the cups and the spoons struck up *jingle-and-
ring,*

And the plates and the platters broke out *tingle-a-ting,*
While the stove and the shovel, the poker and tongs,
Undertook to beat time unto both of the songs.



All the tables were seized with a cramp and a cough !
All the easy-chairs rolled till their castors came off !
All the cushions were shook into pitiful plights !
All the pussy-cats sneezed at such putting-to-rights,
For Miss Rattle rushed round with a duster and
broom,

And she scatted them all, right and left, through the
room,

While the rugs sailed high, and the curtains sailed
low,

And a very high wind blew above and below.

And wherever she turned there remained a path,
As a lion had passed through the house in his
wrath, —

But whether a lion, or a wandering bear,

It is certain some tragedy happened right there.

When her folks got rested and returned to the house,
Both the house and the garden were still as a
mouse ;

And they found but some fingers shut tight in the
door,

Nothing else, save a flounce lying torn on the floor,

And a little soft ringlet snarled fast on a nail.

At these remnants of Rattle they both gave a wail,

It *was* hard for Miss Rattle-ty's parents, no doubt,
But oh ! isn't it good that the race has died out?

For what if little girls *now* should walk with a bounce !
And how bad it would be if they sat with a jounce !
And our heads had to ache with the noise and the
 clang

That was made in the days of Miss Rattle-te-Bang !

IN THE HAYMOW.

HERE'S my girlie hid away
All aloney in the hay!

What big thoughts are troubling you,
Little Susan, Susie, Sue?

O, I see the thoughtful eye —
Black eye, I know what you spy!
And I see the listening ear —
Pink ear, I know what you hear!

Stem of hay 'twixt rosy lip —
Sweet lip, I know what you sip!
I was little once like you,
Little Susan, Susie, Sue.

She hears in the crackly hay
All the things that used to play,
Play and skip and hop and pass
In the ripe thick summer grass:



Crickets, ants, and lady-bugs, —
Every tiny thing that snugs
Low down to keep dry and warm
When it hears the thunder-storm.

Hay is full of chirps and whirrs
Wingy stirs, and mur-mur-murs,

Spidery runs, wee toad hops,
Robin's funny starts and stops.

She sees in the dry brown hay,
All the living green of May ;
This stalk was a waving blade ;
This, a silken ribbon played ;

This a daisy was ; and this
Clover that the bees did kiss ;
This a plume ; that a feather —
Gay they tossed in sunny weather.

Green and crimson, pink and white !
Light, and fragrance, and delight !
O, the honey ! O, the dew !
Meadow, what a change for you !

This the tale the hay has told :
Green turns brown and youth grows old, —
'Tis too bad to sadden you,
Little Susan, Susie, Sue !

KITTY'S COLOR.

WHAT color do I like the very best?
If I take one, must I leave out the rest?

How can a little girl like me go choose
Just one, and all the lovely others lose?

You know that in the spring I think I will
Have frocks the color of the daffodil ;

I'd have my frocks still yellow, every fold,
While beams the dandelion's starry gold ;

Maybe with buttercups I should dress yellow yet,
If it were not for darling violet ;

But with the earliest violet I see
I wish my frocks and ribbons blue to be.

Oh! dainty, dainty blue! I love the blue!

I only give up blue, rich rose, for you!

But oh! the rose! the red! the blush! the pink!

Oh! Mamma dear, does *any*-body think

Of other flowers when the rose they see?

Then, Mamma, who could censure little me

Because for rose I sometimes am untrue

To all the gold and even violet-blue?

But, should *all* flower-colors really be

In one gay glory set apart for me,

I shouldn't be content; Oh! no; for I

Should look up at the glowing sunset sky,

And I should be so envious, because

Those floating clouds of lovely, rosy gauze,

And all the webs of purple, gold and pearl,

Forbidden were to your poor flower-girl.

And if I had the gorgeous colors of the sky,
There are some other tints for which I'd sigh.

For I should want the gray, and soft, pale green,
The diamond luster and the rainbow sheen

That make the water beautiful to see
What time the sun shines on it wide and free.

Mamma, you *shall* not ask your girl to choose.
There's not one tint that I could bear to lose.

I mean to love and wear them ev'ry one.
I'm Nature's girl, no Quaker, nor a nun.

HOW MAMMA PLAYS.

JUST the sweetest thing that the children do
Is to play with mamma a-playing too ;
And “ Baby is Lost ” they think is the best,
For mamma plays that with a merry zest.

“ My baby lost ! ” Up and down mamma goes
A-peering about and following her nose ;
Inside the papers, and under the books
And all in between the covers she looks,
“ Baby ! baby ! ” calling ;
But though in her way is papa’s tall hat
She never once thinks to look under that.

She listens, she stops. She hears the wee laugh,
And around she flies the faster by half.
“Why, where can he be?” and she opens the clock,
She tumbles her baskets, she shakes papa’s sock,



“Baby! baby!” calling ;
While the children all smile at papa’s tall hat,
Though none of them go and look under that.
A sweet coo calls. Mamma darts everywhere,
She feels in her pocket to see if he’s there,

In every vase on the mantel shelf
She searches sharp for the little elf,
 “Baby! baby!” calling ;
Another coo comes from papa’s tall hat,
Yet none of them stir an inch toward that.

Somewhere he certainly must be, she knows,
So up to the china cupboard she goes ;
The covers she lifts from the sugar bowls,
The sweet, white lumps she rattles and rolls,
 “Baby! baby!” calling ;
But though there’s a stir near papa’s tall hat,
They will not so much as look toward that.

She moves the dishes, but baby is *not*
In the cream-pitcher nor in the teapot ;
And she wrings her hands and stamps on the floor,
She shakes the rugs and she opens the door,
 “Baby! baby!” calling ;

They stand with their backs to papa's tall hat,
Though the sweetest of murmurs comes from that.

The children join in the funny distress,
Till mamma, all sudden, with sweet caress
Makes a pounce right down on the tall, black hat,
And brings out baby from under that,

“Baby! baby!” calling;

And this is the end of the little play
The children would like to play every day.

WHAT PINKIE-BLUE DON'T KNOW.

MY Pinkie-Blue is as fair as a rose,
But as yet of this not a lisp she knows,

And I wouldn't have her know ;

If she knew she might prink and put on airs

And go thinking about the clothes she wears —

So I wouldn't have her know.

Pinkie-Blue wears silk, but, then, she don't know

That it's any better than calico,

And I wouldn't have her know ;

For, when she begins to turn up her nose,

No longer she'll be as sweet as a rose —

So I wouldn't have her know.

But now, with the washerwoman's baby all day
Pinkie-Blue will merrily, sweetly play,

And I wouldn't have her know



Any one could think the play wasn't right,
Or the black skin not as good as the white —

No, I wouldn't have her know.

She don't know that money is made to keep,
But she thinks it's to give to those who weep,

And I wouldn't have her know ;

And she knows not one of the reasons why
That some should be glad and that some should
sigh —

And I wouldn't have her know.

A smile is a smile with my Pinkie-Blue,
She believes that smiles are as true as true,

And I wouldn't have her know
That a smile may tell the naughtiest lies
And sweet looks say what the heart denies —

No, I wouldn't have her know.

O, yes, there is much Pinkie-Blue don't know,
But I willingly let the knowledge go,

For I wouldn't have her know ;
Since of what I've learned I would give the whole
For the wisdom born in her white, sweet soul —

No, I wouldn't have her know.

A QUESTION OF BUSINESS.

“ AIN'T I going to divide ? ”

Well, that's what I call cool, you Jack !

Lying at home here on your back, —

But then, if you think that it pays

To sleep these grand old Saturdays,

Sleep ! — but, mind, I don't divide !

“ But nutting is only fun ? ”

Of course that's easy 'nough to say ;

The woods are jolly, anyway,

And 't isn't bad to climb the trees

And shake such plumpers down as these —

O, it really is prime fun.



“I’LL SELL YOU SOME!”

Yes, I own nutting is fun, —
You hunt ’round in such golden leaves,
The squirrels scold and call you “Thieves!”
And ’tis the stillest place to lie,

And look up, far up, in the sky, —

No objections to the fun.

But — well I tell you, you Jack,

There's something else, — you tote that bag

Home as I did, and feel it sag, —

Say, Jack, see here, I'll sell you some,

If you want nuts 'thout work — yes, come,

That's the way to get 'em, Jack!

“O! you don't buy nuts that grow

In father's woods — they're half yours now?”

Just so. Only, I don't see how

You'll *get* your half unless you go

For 'em yourself; *I* shan't, I know,

Sir, *your* half is where they grow!

IN A BIRD-HOUSE.

THE little bird-wife to the window came,
And forth she looked with an anxious eye,
Where a cold and an angry sunrise flame
Stormily burned in the eastern sky ;
“ Will it be a fair day, do you think ? ” she said,
“ I am always afraid when the sky is red.”

She'd risen early, the little bird-wife,
And let Mr. Bird lie snug in bed ;
She had built the fire, she had broiled the worms,
And by starlight cold they had breakfasted.

They had planned this day on a journey to go,
Even birds rise betimes for journeys, you know.

They were going to see their daughter dear,

A flight of a dozen miles or so,

And of course it would never do to start

If the weather looked at all like snow.

Mr. Bird, he went out, and he looked each way,

He stretched, and he said, "No visits to-day."

And in he went, and sat down by the fire ;

The snow fell deep, and he slept and slept ;

The little bird-wife she tidied the house,

But whatever she did she wept and wept ;

For the little bird-grandmother wished to see

The daughter and babies in the distant tree.

PAPA'S SCARE.

THAT'S a queer umbrella over
There across the street,—
Yes, bless me! that umbrella's
Got three pairs of feet!

It goes clatter, clatter, clatter,
And it chatters, too,—
I'm afraid of live umbrellas!
What'd I better do?

Mercy sakes! that strange umbrella
It is chasing me!

Hear it call, and laugh, and giggle,
In uncanny glee!



It must be a witch-umbrella,—
How it bobs about!
How it leaps and springs and hurries,—
Hark, what did it shout?

“Wait! Wait! Papa! Papa!”

This beats all the jokes,—
Here I’ve been a-running from my
Own three little folks!

Well, how should a papa know his
Children by their feet,—

“But I did know? I was funning?”

Possibly, my sweet.

"HARRY BOY."

Well, Harry boy,
You *are* a sight, perched up on cook's dish-pan!
All smirch and smutch,
With not one little finger fit to touch,
Drumming with fork and spoon hard as you can.

You noisy boy!
Who would believe,—indeed, who *could* believe,
To look at you,
You once wore baby white and baby blue
With dainty ribbon bows to tie your sleeve?

O, Harry boy,
You little giant in your button boots,



Full three-feet-three,
Your sturdy knees bared for the world to see, —
Poor little knees criss-crossed with ancient cuts,

Such sorry knees,
So scraped, so scratched, so goldenbrown with tan ;
Your brown fists match
Them piteous well, with bruise and cut and scratch,—
You sturdy, lawless, sunburnt, little man !

My great, big boy,
I pinch your apple-cheeks, so hard and red,
And wonder how
You came by all this rich brown hair that now
Thatches, so curly-thick, your restless head ;

For, Harry boy,
This hair was gold, a pale and tender gold,
And soft as down ;
The daintiest, tiniest baby in the town
You were, — yes, *you*, you boy so big and bold.

The best one too,
You were, so good, — I'd wrap you, eyes and nose,

And you, yes, *you*,
Would sleep such naps, and then wake with a coo,
All smiles, if I but touched your rosy toes ;—

Yes *you*, great boy,
That likes to roll up, mornings, in the sheets,
And then pitch out,
Head-first, upon the floor, with such a shout
That all the people hear you in the streets.

Poor, dirty boy, —
“O, but the dirt will all wash off from clothes?”
Well, mamma prays,
No matter how you grow, all nights, all days,
Than skin and clothes sin’s soil no deeper goes!

“What do I mean?”
O, nothing. “But I do?” Well, then, keen eyes,
Mamma may mean
That you should come up-stairs and wash you clean,
(The rest — when time has made you sadly-wise!)

VACATION DAYS.

EACH year, early in the summer,
While yet 'tis blue, blue June,

Suddenly the wild birds waken,

And with a longing tune

Go song-singing of the children

That are shut from the sun :

“They are coming,” the singers carol,

“For the school-days are done !”

And they sing the song of cherries

Along the garden wall ;

And they sing the song of berries

That grow in thickets tall ;



And they sing the song of rambles,
Long rambles in the sun :
“They are coming,” the singers carol,
“For the school-days are done !”

And they sing the song of hammocks,
Hung in the deep pine trees,
Where the children brown and brighten
With swaying in the breeze—
Happy, happy little children
Just let out in the sun !
“They are coming,” the singers carol,
“For the school-days are done !”

Give the world up to the children,
Yes, near and far and wide !
Let the willing welcomes waken
Up all the country side !

Meet them, bird, and bee, and blossom,
And meet them, breeze and sun,—
Carol! carol! O, carol! carol!
That the school-days are done.

LITTLE KING JOHN.

LITTLE KING JOHN sits up in a tree,
A tip-top throne has little King John ;
But no fair queen by his side has he,
For how, pray tell, could a queen hold on ?

Little King John, O, where is your crown ?

Or, little King John, where is your hat ?

You've burnt your nose to a coffee-brown

And what'll your mother say to that ?

.

But little King John, he hugs his throne ;

The sea, the sun, the wind is sweet,

And up in the clouds, high and alone,
The tree's a wonderful wishing-seat.



Little King John is sailing his ships —
In the Open Polar Sea, perhaps ;
At least, his grand discovery-trips
Spoil all the old Geography-maps.

Little King John is leading his men,
On a gallant horse he sweeps the field,

The bands play up — and he cheers — and then
The guns! the charge! the enemy yield!

Little King John — he is grand and tall,
He looks just as the President should,
Like Washington — yes, a man, of all,
Would wish to look like him if he could.

.

Little King John, — he is scrambling down,
He barks his knees on the wishing-tree, —
At the tea-bell's sound his dreams have flown,
And naught but a hungry boy is he.

POOR FRANK.

O F all the boys at school in Birds'-nest Lane,
Our Frankie has the neatest, spryest foot,—
What is the matter, think you, with his brain
That he falls drowsy when at lessons put?
What is it — is it — ails his brain? —
That something dreadful does is plain.

Out doors his black eyes snap like wintry stars;
There is no boy like him to catch a ball;
A hand-spring, and he leaps the five-rail bars;
He is the Indian-runner of them all.

What is it ails our Frankie's brain?

I ask, and ask myself again.

The silver brooks of all the country-side,

The stones and weeds and bugs of every hill,

This queer boy knows so well he is our pride —

What's in a book to weave a spell so ill,

To dull his eyes, and dull his brain? —

It's happened so time and again.

The moment he hangs up that Highland cap

Our Frankie is a shrewdie lad no more,—

He cannot fish the rivers on a map,

Of course he *knows* that two and two make four ;

He yawns and nods o'er all that's said —

They call our Frank "Sir Sleepy Head."

He says the print is full of small black elves,

That dance and do naught else before his eyes,—

He wants to see the Facts and Folks themselves,

Or else he never shall be very wise.

Is aught the matter with his brain,

That he should reason in this strain?

MOUNTING GUARD.

This is Dotty, rosy, sweet,
Napping in the sofa-seat.

These two ladies, pretty, wee,
Dotty's dolly-daughters be.

And that's Carlo, mounting guard,
Winkless watching, harking hard.

He thinks *bow-wow*, at that fly
Lighting down on Dotty's eye.

Bow-wow, too, at little Sam
Letting that front gate go *slam!*

He lifts up a warning paw
As puss, pushing with her claw



At the lightly-swinging door,
Patters in across the floor,

Looks a bite toward papa
For his sudden *ha-ha-ha!*

Glares at the piano keys,
Snaps at mamma for her sneeze,

Eyes that baby in her lap
Just awakened from his nap —

Coo-a-coo and *goo-a-goo*,
Goo-a-goo and *coo-a-coo* —

All so loud in mamma's lap,
Never minding Dotty's nap.

'Cause it's baby no one cares,
And poor Carlo quite despairs.

How she jingles spoon and cup —
Bite her ! eat her ! chew her up !

Carlo's wild !

That dreadful child !

No use no how, —

Bow-wow, bow-wow, —

Carlo's self wakes Dotty up,

Not the baby with her cup.

THE STREET-SWEEPER.

EACH day on the street I see this broom,
It big enough is to sweep each room
In the Pope's great palace o'er the sea, —
And thousands of rooms 'tis said there be.

The boy that sweeps with the giant broom,
O, little he is to brush one room,
Yet all day works on the roaring street
In among the horses' mighty feet.

And brave he tugs with his baby-strength 2
Clean to keep the crossing's breadth and length —

His, in the world's work, shower or shine,
A path to clear for the Fair and Fine.

Such a little boy, sweet as can be
If but a mother had he to see
That the curls were curled, the hands washed white,
And the blue eyes kissed at morn and night.

For the daintiest boy would look amiss
Should he go without the mother-kiss —
'Twould show in the mouth, the cheek, the chin, —
For the mother-kisses all strike in,

And a sweet light beams out on the face,
And a dimple buds in ev'ry place
That is kissed so deep with the mother-lips,
And he tender is to the finger-tips.

But the poor broom-boy has dimples none,
He don't have kisses, no, not one,
There can't be even a hand to sew,
For ragged he is from top to toe :

Here is an elbow, there a knee,
The ten little toes can counted be,
The coat is buttoned up with a pin,
The poor wee pockets have nothing in,

A top nor a marble, ball, nor knife,
Oh, pity it is — still in his life
This baby has something else to do. —
Must earn his dinner and cook it too.

My heart breaks over you, baby-man,
I'll wish you the best that wish I can —

May the brave heart sicken not, nor die,
That looks out now from the sweet, blue eye.

My heart breaks over you, baby-man,
Yet I'll learn your wisdom, if I can —
To work in my place through shower or shine,
And grumble not at the Fair and Fine.

KITTI-KIN.

KITTI-KIN leans in the window-sill,
My little dear girl Kitti-kin ;
The snow-flakes fall, white, thick and still,
The snow brings dreams to Kitti-kin ;
Her large, bright blue eye, never it winks, —
You like to know what Kitti-kin thinks ?
What *are* you thinking, Kitti-kin ?

The snow-flakes float, down, up, and by,
The storm enchants my Kitti-kin ;
Wonderful things are kept in the sky, —
The pearly rain, sweet Kitti-kin,

The moon, the clouds of purple and rose,
The stars, the sun and these beautiful snows, —
Are these your thoughts, my Kitti-kin?



Ah, I know girls by heart ; I know
The thoughts of dreaming Kitti-kin ;
The lovely, floating fleecy snow
Means sleds and slides for Kitti-kin ;
The beautiful snow makes many ways
For little girls' plans and pleasures and plays, —
These are the thoughts of Kitti-kin.

WHAT IF ?

THREE little men on the door-steps sat,
And all three rosily sweet and fat.

From Babyland late comers were they,
Three dear little souls that should have been gay.

But there on the green lay white snow-flakes —
April weather was making mistakes.

“O, you don’t suppose,” says Dicky Dear,
“That, maybe, there won’t be flowers this year?”

“O, nobody knows,” says Tommy Jinks,
“Nobody knows what the weather thinks.”

“If nobody knows,” cried Hop-o'-my-Thumb,

“If nobody knows what's going to come,

“The rose may dress brown instead of in red,

But, sir, if she does, — *snip*, goes her head !”



And then did the three, and all in a jiff,

Sobbing begin, “What if? What if?”

“What if on trees the violets should grow,

Instead of their hiding grassy low?”

“What if there’s nothing delicious to eat?

O, what if the strawberries shouldn’t be sweet?

“And what if the cherries all green should stay?

And what if the apples should do the same way?

“And it be so cold that we cannot play,

And have in the house all summer to stay?

“And the fishes dear, with their silver gleams,

They should all freeze up in the silver streams?”

Tommy Jinks said “O!” and Dicky said “O!”

And Hop-o’-my-Thumb, he, too, said so.

“O-o-oh! oh-oh! O-o-oh! oh! oh!”

This is how those three little men said “O!”

They’d have wept till now, but the sun came out,

And up they jumped, and were off with a shout.

WHILE BABY SLEEPS.

IT'S baking-day, *bye-low-baby-bye*,
O, why don't the baby shut her eye?

Bye-low-baby-bye, on baking-day
The prettiest baby is in the way.

Bye-low-baby-bye— with measured tread
They carry the baby to her bed.

Softly close the door ; and now the house
Starts up at once as still as a mouse,

As still, O, yes, and as nimble too,
For this is the time to do and do!

The very things that baby'd think fun
Are brought out now and hurriedly done, —

The beautiful beans she'd like to pour
In musical streams all o'er the floor,

The apples, too, with the parings red —
That wind so nice round the baby's head,

And the pan of flour as soft as snow,
Pretty white stuff for baby to blow —

O, pies in rows, and cookies in heaps,
And all to be made while baby sleeps!

For Baby has come to that charming time
When she can creep and clamber and climb.

She knows 'bout sugar and spice and plums, —
You take her away and back she comes,

Creeping so fast, and laughing in glee,
And pulls herself up by mamma's knee.

And whatever mamma goes to find
The baby comes creeping close behind ;

In the cellar door she coos "*da-da,*"
Peeps down through the dark at dear mamma.

She tips the water pail on the floor,
Burns both wee hands on the oven door,

And mamma spills the molasses cup
In running to pick her baby up ;—

So *bye-low-baby-bye* ; for on baking-day
The prettiest baby is in the way.

WHICH KITTY TO KEEP.

KITTENS five had Bell and Bess,
A basketful of happiness,



A basketful of shiny furs,
And little tails, and paws, and purrs.

The merry lives had just begun,
A little week of pretty fun,
And then a voice! 'twas mamma's voice:
"Come, children, you must make your choice!"

The little girls knew what that meant!
The Mother Kitty turned so faint!
They went as sad as sad could be,
And by the basket sat the three.

Down stooped the little tender Bess,
And took one up, with a caress —
"I *would* keep that!"
Said Mother Cat.

But sweet Bell sighed; so then they chose
Again,— one like a soft white rose,—
"O, *do* keep that!"
Said Mother Cat.

“But, see, *this* purrs like anything,
It’s sweet to hear a kitty sing!”

“You *must* keep that!”

Said Mother Cat.



“And this is just as white as milk,
So warm, and shiny-soft as silk!”

“Yes, *do* keep that!”

Said Mother Cat.

So Bess held up her apron, and
Bell laid four in with careful hand,—
 “*That! that! that! that!*”
Said Mother Cat.

Then up *she* caught the other one,
The three ran fast as they could run ;
And in the barn they hid away
The whole five kitties in the hay.

A FLOWER.

I AM thankful when winter is really done,
And I empty the children all out in the sun ;
For, though pinks of perfection other women have
got,

I know mine are a dreadfully rollicking lot.

They are handsome as Raphael's own cherubs to
see,

Only Raphael has quite the advantage of me —
For so few of *his* cherubs have hands, or have feet,
That the sky where they fly is refreshingly neat.

And if *mine* were but beautiful heads with wings,
I could love them the same, and they wouldn't turn
 things
Upside down; they couldn't; then a woman might
 show
How she'd like to keep house if permitted, you know.

Yester-morning I said, as I sent them to play,
Well *perhaps* they'll be poets and artists some day;
But I own that, at present, destruction and noise
Are the outermost traits of my girls and my boys.

A muddy mosaic of their tracks on the floor,
Their jack-knives to pick up where they whittled the
 door,
Their "art-studies" to wash from the clean window-
 pane,
And the picture-papers all to fold up again.

Before noon it was still, and I stole out to see
Where my sturdy young gipseys marauding might
be ;

On the old orchard wall 'neath the apple-tree bough,
They were clinging like kittens, the five in a row.

O, you should have seen them ! for each wild little
elf

Looked seraphic enough e'en for Raphael himself ;
All a-hush they were gazing, rapt, over the wall
At the first dandelion — O, yes, that was all.

“That's a holy flower,” lisped Miss Fanny, the
dear,

(I crept close for, of course, I was longing to hear),
“To an angel it turns — I've seen it — when it dies,
Has a hundred white wings, and away then it
flies !”

Heavenly pensive, my five, they gazed at it once
more ;

I stole silently back through the work-a-day-door ;
And the sweet little priests at the shrine of the
flower,

Wore their poet-look still at the dinner-bell hour.

PUDDING AND MILK.

A DINNER for two!
It's ready at last!

Begun in the spring,
Now summer is past.

This dinner for two —
O, to just think how
The farmer-men worked
With horses and plow,
And the planting-boys,
With their nimble hoes,
A-dropping the corn
In the long, straight rows, —

In April and May,
At night, and at morn,
In June and July,
They worked in the corn!

(O, the tall green corn,
All tassél and toss!
O, the broad-leaved corn
With its tangles of floss!)

Then one August day
The green forests fell;
And the men to husk,
And the men to shell,
Were ready to work,
And worked with a will,
And got the corn ready
To carry to mill —

O, the plow and hoe,
The sickle and wheel, —
The end of their toil
Is a bag of meal,

As yellow as gold,
And as soft as silk,
And two little girls
Eating pudding-and-milk !

"All Gone."



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