

SUNSHINE

And Other Verses

FOR CHILDREN

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SUNSHINE

AND

OTHER VERSES FOR CHILDREN

BY

KATHARINE LEE BATES



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DEDICATED
TO
ALMA MATER'S GRANDCHILDREN.



But first this whisper in your ears :
I'm such a foolish book,
Read me in a corner, dears,
And don't let Grandma look.



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PART I.



SUNSHINE.



HE sun rode high, and the dear green
Earth

Was stirred in her motherly heart with
mirth ;

And to every blossom and dancing spray
She gave the grace of a holiday.

And oh ! what laughter the silver breeze
Shook from the leaves of the poplar trees !
How the streamlet, with all her sweet blue eyes,
Smiled on the sport of the dragon-flies !

The flashing humming-bird deeply dipped
In the yellow tulip ; the blithe bee sipped
From the purple, delicate cups of wine
That he found on the morning-glory vine.

The smallest fly and the least red thorn
Were fair with summer and fresh with morn,
When who should chance on the sunlit place,
But a little girl with a sulky face ?

Through all the music and merriment
She came, to trouble the world's content ;
And wheresoever her feet did pass,
A shadow fell on the gleaming grass.

She leaned out over the rivulet,
And all at once it began to fret,
And wrinkled its waves to a frown like that
She carried under her broad-brimmed hat.

A carpet shaming the wealth of earls,
Softer than satin and bright with pearls,
She crushed, nor heeded the spider's grief,
As he wiped his eyes on a clover-leaf.

'Twas Saturday, after the count of men ;
But the simple folk of meadow and glen,
Clear of the calendar's restless freak,
Keep seven Sabbaths in every week.

And thus it happened that through the dells
A soft chime floated of flower-bells,
And the child at the roots of a tall, white birch
Came on the worshippers all in church.

The brook was an organ, passing sweet ;
On the swaying bough was the choir seat ;
And the blue, blue heaven bent close to heed
The murmured words of the woodland creed.

The Reverend Buttercup leaned across
A velvet pulpit of greenest moss,
And preached a sermon, in still, small voice,
Whose text was ever, " Rejoice ! rejoice ! "

" Behold," quoth he, " how our Father's care
Hath wrought the meadow exceeding fair ;
And my jocund heart doth overrun
With fragrant summer and fervid sun.

" Behold," quoth he, " though I barely fold
In my tiny chalice a drop of gold,
How I yet reflect and, reflecting, praise
The sun on whom I have set my gaze.

" Bless God," he cried, " with a sweet perfume,
With tuneful ripple and tinted bloom,
With dance of grasses, and faces bright,
Bless God, the Giver of all delight ! "

So the preacher spake, and at every line
Nodded the listening columbine ;
And the lady's-slipper resolved that day
To walk henceforth in the upward way.

The downy owlet forgot to blink ;
The robin heard, and the bobolink,
And the wild-briar rose, who blushed to think
Of her thorny ways till her buds turned pink.

A tremulous tear, like a dew-drop, wet
The downcast eye of the violet ;
And her prayer of trustful penitence
Was wafted to heaven for frankincense.

And the little lass of the pouting lip
Smoothed, with a rosy finger-tip,
From her tangled forehead the dreary frown,
And hid her face in her ringlets brown.

But she peeped from between the wind-blown
locks
At the clink of the contribution-box ;
And when the squirrel came down the aisle,
In his acorn-cup she dropped a smile.

Then the little lass of the laughing lip
They welcomed into their fellowship ;
And many a daisy and clover-stem
Kissed her foot and her garment's hem.

And the story saith that forever more
On her soft brown tresses the maiden wore
A crown of sunshine this side of heaven,
And she kept her Sabbath day all the seven.

VACATION SONG. ✓



HAVE shut my books and hidden my
slate

And tossed my satchel across the gate.

My school is out for a season of rest,

And now for the school-room I love the best !

My school-room lies on the meadow wide,
Where under the clover the sunbeams hide,
Where the long vines cling to the mossy bars
And the daisies twinkle like fallen stars ;

Where clusters of buttercups gild the scene
Like showers of gold-dust thrown over the green,
And the wind's flying footsteps are traced, as
they pass,
By the dance of the sorrel and dip of the grass.

My lessons are written in clouds and trees,
And no one whispers, except the breeze,
That sometimes blows, from a secret place,
A stray, sweet blossom against my face.

My school-bell rings in the rippling stream,
That hides itself, like a school-boy's dream,
Under the shadow and out of sight,
But laughing still for its own delight.

My school-mates there are the birds and bees,
And the saucy squirrel, more dull than these,
For he only learns, in all the weeks,
How many chestnuts will fill his cheeks.

My teacher is patient, and never yet
A lesson of hers did I once forget,
For wonderful lore do her lips impart,
And all her lessons are learned by heart.

Oh, come ! oh, come ! or we shall be late,
And Autumn will fasten the golden gate.
Of all the school-rooms in east or west,
The school of Nature I love the best.

IN REFUGE.



HEY, for the glint of the wild-briar rose,
In the cool, green depths of the forest !
And hey for the haunt that Somebody
knows,

When the noontide sun is sorest !

Soft through the treetops the south wind goes,
With footsteps learned of the clouds, suppose ;
And playing at sentry the rose-bay glows
Amid the ferns of the forest.

Hey, for the glint of the wild-briar rose,
In the cool, green depths of the forest !
And hey for the haunt that Somebody knows,
When the noontide sun is sorest !
Over their sylvan porticoes
Squirrels gossip with sleepy crows—
The only birds that can talk in prose—
Above the ferns of the forest.

Hey, for the glint of the wild-briar rose,
In the cool, green depths of the forest !
And hey for the haunt that Somebody knows,
When the noontide sun is sorest !
The sweet-bay, crushed for a couch, bestows
Drowsy fragrance, and virtue flows
From the shadowy pines, till eyelids close
Amid the ferns of the forest.

Hey, for the glint of the wild-briar rose,
In the cool, green depths of the forest !
And hey for the haunt that Somebody knows,
When the noontide sun is sorest !
Drop your budget of cares and woes

(The wind, while you dream, will be off with
those,)
And come where never a thorn tree grows
Amid the ferns of the forest.

A SONG OF RICHES.



WHAT will you give to a barefoot lass,
Morning with breath like wine?
*Wade, bare feet! In my wide morass
Starry marigolds shine.*

Alms, sweet Noon, for a barefoot lass,
With her laughing looks aglow!
*Run, bare feet! In my fragrant grass
Golden buttercups blow.*

Gift, a gift for a barefoot lass,
O twilight hour of dreams!
*Rest, bare feet, by my lake of glass,
Where the mirrored sunset gleams.*

Homeward the weary merchants pass,
With the gold bedimmed by care.
Little they wis that the barefoot lass
Is the only millionaire.

THE RIVULET.



MORNING in roseate lines
Glimmers beyond the pines.
Blithely the blackbird sings,
Night on his dusky wings.
But see ! as he flirts them so,
'Tis the sunrise glints below,
And the joy of breaking day
Rings in his roundelay.
But bolder, merrier yet,
The song of the rivulet.

Mine is the path to the sea.
Bird and blossom and bee
Wish me well as I pass.
Rock and tangle of grass
Fret my waves as I run.
Still in shadow and sun
Seaward ever I flee
To my home in the silver sea.

Noon in the azure sky.
Even the twinkling fly
Faints on the violet's lip.
Low where the alders dip
Over the brook and lean
To ruffle the ripples sheen,

A bluebird dreamily croons
Snatches of sleepy tunes.
But softer, drowsier yet,
The song of the rivulet.


Mine is the path to the sea.
Bird and blossom and bee
Wish me well as I pass.
Rock and tangle of grass
Fret my waves as I run.
Still, in shadow and sun
Seaward ever I flee
To my home in the silver sea.

Sunset flames in the west.
Flowers are folded to rest.
The clear-toned robins invoke
God's peace on the woodland folk,
While high from the ancient oak,
Each in his scarlet cloak,
The tanagers, sparks of fire,
Vary the vesper choir.
But sweeter, holier yet,
The song of the rivulet.

Mine is the path to the sea.
Bird and blossom and bee
Wish me well as I pass.
Rock and tangle of grass

Fret my waves as I run.
 Still in shadow and sun
 Seaward ever I flee
 To my home in the silver sea.

ROBIN'S SECRET.

 IS the blithest, bonniest weather for a
 bird to flirt a feather,
 For a bird to trill and warble, all his
 wee red breast a-swell.

I've a secret. You may listen till your blue eyes
 dance and glisten,
 Little maiden, but I'll never, never, never,
 never tell.

You'll find no more wary piper, till the straw-
 berries wax riper

In December than in June—aha! all up and
 down the dell,

Where my nest is set, for certain, with a pink
 and snowy curtain,

East or west, but which I'll never, never,
 never, never tell.

You may prick me with a thistle, if you ever
 hear me whistle

How my brooding mate, whose weariness my
 carols sweet dispel,

All between the clouds and clover, apple-blossoms drooping over,
 Twitters low that I must never, never, never,
 never tell.

Oh, I swear no closer fellow stains his bill in
 cherries mellow.

Tra la la! and tirra lirra! I'm the jauntiest
 sentinel,
 Perched beside my jewel-casket, where lie hidden
 —don't you ask it,
 For of those three eggs I'll never, never,
 never, never tell.

Chirp! chirp! chirp! alack! for pity! Who
 hath marred my merry ditty?

Who hath stirred the scented petals, peeping
 in where robins dwell?

Oh, my mate! May Heaven defend her!
 Little maidens' hearts are tender,
 And I never, never, never, never, never *meant*
 to tell.

ON A RAMBLE.



COME! come! come!

Follow, lad, with me

On behind the stirring drum

Of Captain Bumblebee.

Hush ! hush ! hush !
Finger on the lip !
Between the ferns a tiny thrush
Goes running—skip, skip, skip.

Look ! look ! look !
Did ever laddie see
Softer nest in greener nook
With birdies one, two, three ?

Nay ! nay ! nay !
Curly headed thief !
If we steal the brood away,
Who will heal the grief ?

Hear ! hear ! hear
The poor brown mother's cries !
Now blessings on the gentle tear
That dims my laddie's eyes !

Come ! come ! come !
Not one wee heart shall ache
In any humblest woodland home
For mine or laddie's sake.

PHŒBE.



THE sun lies sheen on lake and lea ;
 The south wind bends the corn ;
 But what are sun and wind to me,
 A captive all forlorn ?

The wind it seeks a sheltered nest,
 Where I no more may sing ;
 The sunbeams, slanting from the west,
 Have flushed a brooding wing.

Oh, long, long, long, my faithful mate
 Shall bear the hunger-pain,
 And through the light and shadow wait
 For me to come again.

I'll send a letter to my dear
 And tell her all my grief.
 The gentle rose, that blossoms near,
 Lets fall a fragrant leaf.

A pearly feather from my breast
 I'll pluck me for a quill,
 And where the ruddy sunbeams rest,
 My little pen I'll fill.

And courteous wind, oh, waft her soon
 This silken rose-leaf white ;
 My love beneath the silver moon
 Shall con it all the night.

And oh ! if birds, as poets ween,
 If birds have hearts to break,
 The dawn shall find my bonny queen
 Death-cold for sorrow's sake.

And I shall sit with silent throat
 And drooping plumes, nor heed
 The childish tones that bid me note
 The water and the seed.

If then my captors, touched with shame,
 Set wide this gilded cage,
 Forevermore I'll call her name
 In greenwood hermitage.

LITTLE SHADOWTAIL.



HERE the ancient oak droops over
 Dewy tufts of grass and clover,
 Through its blowing leafy sprays
 Sifting light in careless rays,
 Like a spendthrift dropping gold
 From his loose, regardless hold,
 Let me pause and bid all hail
 Unto little Shadowtail.

Whist ! just where the kingbird dips,
Spreading wide the proud white tips
Of its fanlike tail,—just there,
Framed within his doorway fair,
Buttercups before it strown,
Cloth of gold, and overgrown
With those curly fronds for veil,
Sitteth little Shadowtail.

Would no humbler mansion suit,
But within the gnarly root
Of this hoar, historic tree,
Thou must gossip with the bee,
Peering through the screening ferns
At thy neighbors' wee concerns,
And upon the stranger rail,
Shrewish little Shadowtail?

Once beneath this storied oak
Eliot his message spoke,
And the Red Men, clustered round,
Knew this earth for holy ground,
Weeping at the words divine.
Was some curious sire of thine
Mocking then the preacher pale
From thy threshold, Shadowtail?

He the sermon deemed, methinks,
Dull beside the bobolinks.

'Tis an ancient quarrel, that.

Could I take thy squirrel-chat,
Or thine ears receive my wit,
Wisely would we argue it.

Yet shall mighty Truth prevail
Without me or Shadowtail.

NUTTING SONG. ✓



COME hither, come hither, O laddies and
lassies !

The daisies have folded their frills,
But the purple-eyed asters still peep from the
grasses,

And the golden-rod shines on the hills.

Though the tulips have faded, the maples are
glowing

With many a marvellous hue,

And deep in the woods where the brown leaves
are blowing,

The chestnuts are waiting for you.

We've dreamed of your coming, at even and
matin ;

We've dreamed of your coming, at noon ;

In our snug little cradles all cushioned with
 satin,
 While the wind sung our lullaby tune.
 While the wind rocked our cradles, we longed
 for the showers
 And were glad of the sunshine and dew
 That ripened our hearts for the blithe autumn
 hours,
 That sweetened our kernels for you.

Oh, hither! come hither! for keen the stars
 glistened
 Last night, and the woodlands were crossed
 By him for whose step the wych-hazel bush
 listened
 And the barberries waited,— Jack Frost.
 He rifled our caskets, the prickle-set caskets,
 And earthward the jewels he threw.
 The squirrels are filling their queer little baskets—
 Oh, come! we are waiting for you.

BABY BETH.



ROGUISH brown-eyed glances,
 That's our Baby Beth.
 Gypsy-shy advances,
 That's our Baby Beth.

Quaintest little fancies
Ever borne on breath,
Frolic-footed dances,
That's our Baby Beth.

Sunshine-tinted tresses,
That's our Baby Beth.
Dainty bits of dresses,
That's our Baby Beth.
Fearless little guesses
Into life and death,
Roseleaf-lipped caresses,
That's our Baby Beth.

BABY'S BAGGAGE.

HE train is ready. Come away
And let your labor cease.
Mamma has packed three trunks to-
day,
Papa, his new valise.
But as for Little Golden-Locks,
She only packed a chatterbox.

The baggage-master touched a cap
With shining letters decked,
And so to guard from all mishap,
The bag and trunks he checked ;

But never stayed for Golden-Locks,
Or counted in the chatterbox.

A new official sauntered soon
In slippers down the cars,
Who softly hummed a drowsy tune.
His badge was wrought in stars.
'Twas Sleep who smiled on Golden-Locks,
And checked at last the chatterbox.

THE SECRET.



THE blossoms whispered the whole night
through.
Their cups were as full as they could
hold
Of a secret sweet as the honeyed dew.

“What will you give her? and you? and you?”
Nodding their heads as each gift was told,
The blossoms whispered the whole night through.

Sighed violets twain—“For her eyes of blue
We die this night in the moonbeams cold,
Smiling to Heaven through tears of dew.”

“ My pinkest bud is my birthgift true,
 Shy kisses and lispings words to fold,”
 The rosebud whispered the whole night through.

Said a stately lily as ever grew—
 “ I yield the loveling a heart of gold ;
 White thoughts enshrine it and holy dew !”

O Baby Bud, ere your petals knew
 Earth's lightest blemish, my fragrant-souled,
 The blossoms whispered the whole night through
 Of a secret sweet—as sweet as you.

GRANDFATHER'S STORY.



STORY? A story, forsooth?
 An orange, Sir Sweet-Tooth,
 Or a sugar-plum.
 No, a story? Hum !

Grandchildren have no ruth.
 A story I'll give you, in truth.
 'Tis the tribute Age owes to Youth.

Have you heard of the Great Eclipse?
 Unless my memory trips,
 It was years ago
 Threescore or so,

Yet from mind no feature slips
Of mother, white to the lips,
Lighting the tallow-dips.

For the sun, our primal good,
Darkened at noon. The brood
Of roosting fowls
Dreamed they were owls ;
And the huddled cattle stood
Pressed to the bars, in rude
Wonder at nature's mood.

Old Rover, gaunt and glum,
Forgot to be quarrelsome,
But crouched on the mat
With the trembling cat ;
And we youngsters, each with a thumb
In the eye, flocked awestruck and dumb,
Or asked : *Was it Kingdom Come?*

Then forth from his library nook
Strode father, grasping a book
In his right hand still,
—A shepherd who ill
Could the slips of the black sheep brook.
We lambs knew less of his crook
Than his rod and his fire-flash look.

Yet now that brow austere
 Unbending, he banished our fear
 By words so wise
 That our saucer-eyes
 Waxed eager to peep and peer
 Through his glass at the troubled sphere,—
 His glass that cost me dear.

When will the memory pass?
 Just a poor smoked bit of glass,
 And we must not touch
 The smoked side,—such
 His word while, laddie and lass,
 We stood in line like a class,
 Out in the door-yard grass.

In that shadow strange and dun
 We blinked at the toiling sun,
 Each chubby hand
 Down the rosy band
 Speeding the glass, till one
 Felt his fumbling fingers run
 On the ground they were bidden shun.

Alas for the child-heart frail!
 The finger-marks told the tale.
 “*You* the culprit?” “No.”
 Down the quaking row

Swept question and answer. Pale,
 I denied it, for God might fail,
 And the sun was in a veil.

Oh, but my father's frown !
 Not my sisters' sobs could drown
 'Neath my home-spun jacket
 The traitorous racket,
 And I cringed from toe to crown,—
 Poor little bare toes brown
 In the clover burrowing down !

He spoke. Still I feel the fright,
 But the air was dusk, like night.
 " Each child as he stands
 Hold out both hands,
 Palms upward." Woe the plight !
 Yet the stains may escape his sight,—
 Then the sun burst forth in light.

Never mind the rest. My sire
 Had an arm not swift to tire.
 But, grandson of mine,
 In shade as in shine
 God's truth of your lips require,
 Lest His sun flash out in fire
 And look on you proved a liar.

IDLENESS.



AS I sat still, as I sat still,
 The milk-weed blossomed on the hill ;
 The lilies opened on the blue,
 Wind-dimpled pool ; and, stored with dew,
 Sailed overhead the cloudy ships ;
 Bees tapped the perfumed clover-tips ;
 The running river fed the mill,
 As I sat still, as I sat still.

As I stood mute, as I stood mute,
 The wavelets praised the mossy root
 Of beech and willow ; with their lays
 The birds made glad the maple-sprays ;
 The merest insects piped to please
 The bending grasses, and the breeze
 Coaxed to the sun the timid fruit,
 As I stood mute, as I stood mute.

As I dreamed on, as I dreamed on,
 Full many a gallant fight was won ;
 Full many a noble deed was wrought ;
 Full many a tone of kindness brought
 Its grateful balm to hearts that bled ;
 Full many a deathless word was said ;
 But shadows fell and day was gone,
 As I dreamed on, as I dreamed on.

FAIR WEATHER.



HE ship had rounded Sandy Hook
 With the blue-eyed peep of day ;
 But while full many a joyous look
 Was straining up the bay,
 On the steerage deck together
 A boy and a woman stood,
 Who shrank from the golden weather
 In wildered, waif-like mood.

She sighed : "This sun is sair to bide,
 These skies are na the same
 As those aboon the Firth o' Clyde
 An' the hills of our island hame."
 And the flash of the seagull's feather
 Was one with the creaming foam
 Through her tears for the soft, gray weather
 And the brooding mists of home.

The child laid cheek upon her hand,
 "Hoots, mither ! dinna greet.
 Had I ae shell frae Arran sand,
 An' a burnie, ripplin' sweet,
 An' bracken an' purple heather
 An' a bittie o' blossomin' thorn,
 I wad mak' ye bonny Scotch weather
 To brichten your heart the morn."

That nestling cheek upon her hand,
It soothed her tears to smiles.
She leaned out toward the stranger land
As to her native isles,
And said : “ Twa hearts thegether,
Altho’ the warl’ be rude,
Can mak’ their ain gude weather,
A’ out o’ tender luv’e.”



PART II.





SANTA CLAUS' RIDDLE.



F all the happy and holy times
That fill the steeples with merry chimes
And warm our hearts in the coldest
climes,
'Twas Christmas eve, as I live by rhymes.

One by one had the drowsy oaks
Wrapt about them their snow-flake cloaks,
And snugly fastened, with diamond pins,
Fleecy nightcaps beneath their chins.

The stars had kissed the hills good-night,
But lingered yet, with a taper light,
Till the chattering lips of the little streams
Were sealed with frost for their winter dreams.

And the silver moonbeams softly fell
On cots as white as the lily-bell,
Where the nested children sweetly slept,
While watch above them their angels kept.

Eyes of gray and of hazel hue,
Roguish black eyes and bonny blue,
All with their satin curtains drawn,
Peeped not once till the shining dawn.

But still through the silent eventide
Brown eyes twain were opened wide,
Where, bolt upright in his pillows, sate
A wise little wean called Curly Pate.

Not yet the lore of schools and books
Had troubled the peace of his childish looks,
But through the valleys of Fairyland
He had walked with Wisdom, hand in hand.

On midsummer eves he would hear, perchance,
The shrill, sweet pipes of the elfin dance,
And their dewy prints in the dawning trace
On tremulous carpets of cobweb lace.

He had caught the clink of the hammers fine,
Where the goblins delve in their darksome mine,
In green cocked hats of a queer design,
With crystal tears in their ruby eyne.

He had seen where the golden basket swings
At the tip of the rainbow's dazzling wings,
Full of the silver spoons that fall
Into the mouths of babies small.

He had met Jack Frost in tippet and furs,
Pricking his thumbs on the chestnut burrs,
And this learned laddie could tell, no doubt,
Why nuts fall down and friends fall out.

And now, while the dusky night waxed late,
All nid-nodding sat Curly Pate,
Scaring the dreams, whose wings of gauze
Would veil his vision from Santa Claus.

And ever he raised, by a resolute frown,
The heavy lids that came stealing down
To rest their silken fringes brown
On the rosiest cheek in Baby-Town.

Till at last, at last,—so the legend tells,—
He heard the tinkle of silver bells ;
Tinkle ! tinkle ! a jocund tune
Between the snow and the sinking moon.

Oh, then, how the heart of our hero beat !
How it throbbed in time to the music sweet,
While gaily rung on the frosted roofs
The frolicsome tramp of reindeer hoofs.

And down the chimney by swift degrees
Came worsted stockings and velvet knees,
Till from furry cap unto booted feet
Dear Saint Nicholas stood complete.

Blessings upon him ! and how he shook
His plump little sides with a mirthful look,
As he crammed, his bright, blue eyes a-twinkle,
The bairnie's sock in its every wrinkle.

May he live forever—the blithe old soul,
With cheeks so ruddy and shape so droll,
Throned on a Yule-log, crowned with holly,
The king of kindness, the friend of folly !

His task was done, and he brushed the snow
From his crispy beard, as he turned to go ;
From his crispy beard and his tresses hoar,
As he tiptoed over the moonlight floor.

But the sparkling flakes to delicious crumbs
Of frosted cakes and to sugar-plums
Changed as they fell, whereat near by
A bubble of laughter proved the spy.

Back from the chimney flashed the saint,
And stamped his feet in a rage so quaint
That from scores of pockets the dolls in glee
Popped up their curious heads to see.

“Oho !” in a terrible voice he spake,
“By the Mistletoe Bough ! a boy awake !
Now freeze my whiskers ! but in my pack
I'll stow him away for a jumping-jack.

“Wise as an owlet? Quick ! the proof !
My reindeer stamp on the snowy roof.
So read my riddle, if sage you be,
Or up the chimney you go with me.

“Name me the tree of the deepest roots,
Whose boughs are laden with sweetest fruits,
In bleakest weather which blooms aright,
And buds and bears in a single night.”

Did Curly Pate tremble? Never a whit.
Below the curls was the mother-wit ;
And well I ween that his two eyes brown
Spied the dimple beneath the frown.

So shaking shyly, with childish grace,
The ringlets soft from his winsome face,
He peeped through his lashes and answered true,
As I trow that a brave little man should do.

“Please thy Saintship, no eyes have seen
Thy wondrous orchards of evergreen ;
But where is the wean who doth not long
The whole year through for thy harvest song?

“The *Christmas Tree* hath struck deep roots
In human hearts : its wintry fruits
Are sweet with love, and the bairns believe
It buddeth and beareth on Holy Eve.”

A stir in the chimney, a crackle of frost,
 A tinkle of bells on the midnight lost ;
 And in mirth and music the riddling guest
 Had smiled and vanished, as saints know best.

But low on his pillow the laddie dear
 Sank and slumbered, till chanticleer,
 Crowing apace, bade children wake
 To bless the dawn for the Christ-child's sake.

GOODY SANTA CLAUS ON A SLEIGH-
 RIDE.



SANTA, must I tease in vain, Dear? Let
 me go and hold the reindeer,
 While you clamber down the chimneys.
 Don't look savage as a Turk !
 Why should you have all the glory of the joyous
 Christmas story,
 And poor little Goody Santa Claus have
 nothing but the work ?

It would be so very cozy, you and I, all round
 and rosy,
 Looking like two loving snowballs in our fuzzy
 Arctic furs,

Tucked in warm and snug together, whisking
through the winter weather
Where the tinkle of the sleigh-bells is the only
sound that stirs.

You just sit here and grow chubby off the good-
ies in my cubby
From December to December, till your white
beard sweeps your knees ;
For you must allow, my goodman, that you're
but a lazy woodman
And rely on me to foster all our fruitful Christ-
mas trees.

While your Saintship waxes holy, year by year,
and roly-poly,
Blessed by all the lads and lassies in the limits
of the land,
While your toes at home you're toasting, then
poor Goody must go posting
Out to plant and prune and garner, where
our fir-tree forests stand.

Oh ! but when the toil is sorest how I love our
fir-tree forest,
Heart of light and heart of beauty in the
Northland cold and dim,

All with gifts and candles laden to delight a boy
or maiden,
And its dark-green branches ever murmuring
the Christmas hymn !

Yet ask young Jack Frost, our neighbor, who
but Goody has the labor,
Feeding roots with milk and honey that the
bonbons may be sweet !
Who but Goody knows the reason why the play-
things bloom in season
And the ripened toys and trinkets rattle gaily
to her feet !

From the time the dollies budded, wiry-boned
and sawdust-blooded,
With their waxen eyelids winking when the
wind the tree-tops plied,
Have I rested for a minute, until now your pack
has in it
All the bright, abundant harvest of the merry
Christmastide ?

Santa, wouldn't it be pleasant to surprise me
with a present ?
And this ride behind the reindeer is the boon
your Goody begs ;

Think how hard my extra work is, tending the
Thanksgiving turkeys
And our flocks of rainbow chickens—those that
lay the Easter eggs.

Home to womankind is suited? Nonsense, Good-
man! Let our fruited
Orchards answer for the value of a woman
out-of-doors.

Why then bid me chase the thunder, while the
roof you're safely under,
All to fashion fire-crackers with the lightning
in their cores?

See! I've fetched my snow-flake bonnet, with
the sunrise ribbons on it;
I've not worn it since we fled from Fairyland
our wedding day;
How we sped through iceberg porches with the
Northern Lights for torches!
You were young and slender, Santa, and we
had this very sleigh.

Jump in quick, then? That's my bonny. Hey
down derry! Nonny nonny!
While I tie your fur cap closer, I will kiss your
ruddy chin.

I'm so pleased I fall to singing, just as sleigh-
bells take to ringing !

Are the cloud-spun lap-ropes ready? Tirra-
lirra ! Tuck me in.

Off across the starlight Norland, where no plant
adorns the moorland

Save the ruby-berried holly and the frolic
mistletoe !

Oh, but this is Christmas revel ! Off across the
frosted level

Where the reindeer's hoofs strike sparkles
from the crispy, crackling snow !

There's the Man i' the Moon before us, bound
to lead the Christmas chorus

With the music of the sky-waves rippling
round his silver shell—

Glimmering boat that leans and tarries with the
weight of dreams she carries

To the cots of happy children. Gentle sailor,
steer her well !

Now we pass through dusky portals to the
drowsy land of mortals ;

Snow-enfolded, silent cities stretch about us
dim and far.

Oh ! how sound the world is sleeping, midnight
watch no shepherd keeping,
Though an angel-face shines gladly down from
every golden star.

Here's a roof. I'll hold the reindeer. I sup-
pose this weather-vane, Dear,
Some one set here just on purpose for our team
to fasten to.

There's its gilded cock,—the gaby!—wants to
crow and tell the baby
We are come. Be careful, Santa ! Don't get
smothered in the flue.

Back so soon? No chimney-swallow dives but
where his mate can follow.

Bend your cold ear, Sweetheart Santa, down
to catch my whisper faint :

Would it be so very shocking if your Goody
filled a stocking

Just for once? Oh, dear ! Forgive me.
Frowns do not become a Saint.

I will peep in at the skylights, where the moon
sheds tender twilights

Equally down silken chambers and down
attics bare and bleak.

Let me shower with hailstone candies these two
dreaming boys—the dandies
In their frilled and fluted nighties, rosy cheek
to rosy cheek !

What ! No gift for this poor garret? Take a
sunset sash and wear it
O'er the rags, my pale-faced lassie, till thy
father smiles again.
He's a poet, but—oh, cruel ! he has neither
light nor fuel.
Here's a fallen star to write by, and a music-
box of rain.

So our sprightly reindeer clamber, with their
fairy sleigh of amber,
On from roof to roof, the woven shades of
night about us drawn.
On from roof to roof we twinkle, all the silver
bells a-tinkle,
Till blooms in yonder blessèd East the rose
of Christmas dawn.

Now the pack is fairly rifled, and poor Santa's
well nigh stifled ;
Yet you would not let your Goody fill a single
baby-sock ;

Yes, I know the task takes brain, Dear. I can
only hold the reindeer,
And to see me climb down chimney—it would
give your nerves a shock.

Wait! There's yet a tiny fellow, smiling lips
and curls so yellow
You would think a truant sunbeam played in
them all night. He spins
Giant tops, and flies kites higher than the gold
cathedral spire
In his dreams—the orphan bairnie, trustful
little Tatterkins.

Santa, don't pass by the urchin! Shake the
pack, and deeply search in
All your pockets. There is always one toy
more. I told you so.
Up again? Why, what's the trouble? On your
eyelash winks the bubble
Mortals call a tear, I fancy. *Holes in stock-
ing, heel and toe?*

Goodman, though your speech is crusty now and
then, there's nothing rusty
In your heart. A child's least sorrow makes
your wet eyes glisten, too ;

But I'll mend that sock so neatly it shall hold
your gifts completely.

Take the reins and let me show you what a
woman's wit can do.

Puff! I'm up again, my Deary, flushed a bit and
somewhat weary,

With my wedding snow-flake bonnet worse for
many a sooty knock ;

But be glad you let me wheedle, since, an icicle
for needle,

Threaded with the last pale moonbeam, I
have darned the laddie's sock.

Then I tucked a paint-box in it ('twas no easy
task to win it

From the Artist of the Autumn Leaves) and
frost-fruits white and sweet,

With the toys your pocket misses—oh! and
kisses upon kisses


To cherish safe from evil paths the motherless
small feet.

Chirrup! chirrup! There's a patter of soft
footsteps and a clatter

Of child voices. Speed it, reindeer, up the
sparkling Arctic Hill!

Merry Christmas, little people ! Joy-bells ring
 in every steeple,
 And Goody's gladdest of the glad. I've had
 my own sweet will.

SLUMBER FAIRIES.

USH, my little one ! Hush ! Lie down.
 Mamma will sing,—
 Sing of a boy in a wee white gown,
 Sing of a king with a golden crown,
 A crown of curls on a sweet, small head,
 And a throne as high as a trundle-bed.
 Dear little king !

Hush, my baby ! a song I know
 Softer than all,—
 A song as soft as the falling snow,
 And I will sing it so light and low,
 Baby must listen and lie as still
 As the snow-flakes lie on the quiet hill,
 Where they fall.

Does baby know, when the day grows late,
 Chilly and dim,
 The slumber-fairies, who stand and wait
 Out in the lane and beyond the gate

Pass over the lawn and open the door
And steal across the nursery floor,
Looking for him?

Such tiny fairies, with slippers white
Over their feet.
Their cloaks are gray as the early night,
But their caps are lit with a silver light,
As if a moonbeam were caught, perhaps,
And cut up small into fairy caps
Dainty and neat.

Up the side of the trundle-bed
Softly they go,
And over the pillow with gentle tread
They come to the golden baby-head.
Under his lashes he tries to peep,
But before he knows, he is fast asleep.
Isn't it so?

For they bind the baby with fairy charms
Wondrous to tell.
They loose the clasp of the dimpled arms,
And smooth his forehead with soft, small palms,
And draw their cloaks o'er his drowsy ears,
Till a fairy music is all he hears,
Pleasing him well.

They shade his eyes with a little dream.

Where did it grow?

It grew by the side of the fairy stream,

Where baby wandereth now, I deem,

With the slumber-fairies to guide his feet.

Good-night, dear laddie! Your rest be sweet!

Mamma must go.

FAIRY GUESSES.



HENCE do you guess the fairy came?

Out of the heart of a dear old dame,

Whose ruffled cap is clouds and skies.

Mother Nature we call her name.

Where do you guess the fairy stood?

Under the shade of an autumn wood,

Into an aster's dying eyes

Smiling sweet as a fairy could.

What do you guess the fairy wore?

Her grass-green silk was frayed so sore

That she hid the rents from the butterflies

With a tidy, hoarfrost pinafore.

What do you guess the fairy ate?

Out of a curious, cobweb plate

She tasted in a dainty wise

A frozen dew-drop delicate.

What do you guess the fairy said?
 When the falling oak-leaves all turn red,
 When the lonely swallow southward flies,
 'Tis time for fairies to go to bed.

What do you guess the fairy did?
 She kissed her hand and down she slid
 Where all the beautiful summer lies,
 Under a snowy blanket hid.

How do you guess the fairy sleeps?
 Well ; for whenever her blue eye peeps,
 An old nurse soothes her with lullabies,
 And she will not wake till the old nurse weeps.

FAIRY'S LULLABY.



IN lily cup I'll nest me,
 From fairy dance to rest me,
 For the silver moon
 Dips low, and soon
 Would the goblins swart molest me.

But never a gnome will mock me,
 Nor peering toad-face shock me,
 While the wind-elf blithe
 Stands on tiptoe lithe
 By the lily's stem to rock me ;

And the star-sprites lean above me,
 For all the star-sprites love me ;
 In circle fair
 Each holds in air
 His little gold torch above me.

Come, soft-winged Sleep, and kiss me,
 For the dream-land fairies miss me,
 Till thy sweet, cool lips
 Part the folded tips
 Of my lily-couch to kiss me.

But when thy spells unbind me
 The sunbeams shall not find me,
 And my dreamy nest
 Be only guessed
 By the fragrance left behind me.

FAIRY RIP VAN WINKLE.



THIS acorn cradle with fern and moss
 Elf mamma had covered over,
 And then had forgotten the path across
 The blossoming field of clover.
 For she was the wildest of all wee things,
 And loved to dance in the moonlight rings,
 Or steal her a ride on butterfly wings,—
 A genuine gypsy rover !

Streams flow,
Buds blow,
Stars peep out and twinkle.
Still deep
Thy sleep,
Fairy Rip van Winkle !

But he woke one day and with drowsy eyes
Smiled into a dewy bubble
On his cradle edge ; then in swift surprise
Cried out in a voice of trouble :
“O mamma, mamma, I don’t look right,
My cobweb nightie has grown so tight ;
My buttercup curls are daisy white ;
And over my eyebrows double
What’s this
Cross-criss
Funny little wrinkle ?”
Long gazed,
Amazed,
Fairy Rip van Winkle.

For his nap in the acorn had lasted till
A new oak forest had sprouted,
And the elves had vanished from mead and rill,
By the school-book army routed.
And the ancient baby, whose eyes could see
Never a toadstool spread for tea,
Nor lullaby-nurse of a honey-bee,
Put up his lip and pouted.

But no
 Tiptoe
 Lily bells went tinkle.
Bye-bye!
Don't cry,
Fairy Rip van Winkle!

THE WISHING-CAP.



LITTLE maid stole to a moonlight
 knoll,
 In the fairy ring to tread ;
 But the dancing fays had gone their ways
 And a gnome was there instead.

“Brown gnome, please lend me your wishing-
 cap.”

He snatched off his small, green hood
 And tossed it to her. “Many thanks, kind sir ;
 You are certainly very good.

“Seven times one ! And what shall I wish ?”

The gnome sat down on a thistle,
 With his peaked red shoon pointed up to the
 moon,
 And practiced an elfin whistle.

“I wish and I wish and I wish and I wish
That you were as rich as I,
Little brown gnome, for I’ve pennies at home,
And I don’t know what to buy.

“I wish and I wish and I wish and I wish
My heart were a wild-rose briar,
Where the bell-voiced veery, when days grow
weary,
Leads off the vesper choir.

“I wish my heart were a forest brook
A-ripple with sunshiny laughter,
Where to quench their thirst shy deer come first
And the pattering rabbits after.

“I wish my heart were a golden star
That guides o’er the creamy foam
The shimmering sails through whistling gales
To the harbor lights of home.

“I wish my heart were a blade of grass,
Where Katydids all a-row
Tilt in the sun, singing high deeds done
Of Katydids long ago.

“I wish my heart were a rosy cloud
On the sunset edge of even,

That tenderly bears the children's prayers
Through the open doors of Heaven.

“I wish my heart were as large, as large,
As large as the dome-like skies,
There's so much to love, from God above
To the little gossamer flies.”

Then the lassie gave back the small green hood
And curtsied to the gnome,
And the lilies sweet caressed her feet,
As the glow-worms lit her home.

The gnome dived under the hard, gray rocks
To the land where the gnome-folk dwell ;
A land of gold and jewels untold,
Hard by the gates of hell.

But while he sate in his wishing-cap
On the throne in his diamond castle,
Squeaked his wee brown wife, in a voice like a
fife,
“Why ! there's a tear on the tassel !”

And never a pearl from the Indian seas,
Nor emerald cold and clear,
Shed such a light through those caves of night
As the little gnome-king's tear.

BABY HAZEL'S VOYAGE.



ING NOD, King Nod, the drowsy god, is
such an idle fellow,
He sleeps away the livelong day, while
yet the sun is yellow ;
But when the sinking sun is red and robin's song
is failing,
'Tis time for him to rub his dim old eyes and go
a-sailing.

His moonshine boat is soon afloat ; a glow-worm
serves for pilot ;
On silver oars they graze the shores of many a
starry islet ;
In silver sails they catch the winds, and down
the cloudy billows
Full fast they ride before the tide to Baby Hazel's
pillows.

“Ahoy, sweet maid ! Now art afraid, with Old
King Nod for skipper,
To sail the deep and drink sweet sleep from
yonder golden dipper ?
Aboard, aboard, my dainty lass ! aboard my
silver vessel !
And thou shalt see, in dream-land tree, the little
dream-birds nestle.”

She bowed—ah me!—her rosy knee, and kissed
the old king's sceptre.
Unto his breast the child he pressed and down
the darkness swept her.
Oh, frail the skiff, the silver skiff! O Hazel
Eyes, take warning!
On Sunrise Reef 'twill come to grief. Good-
night, good-night—good-morning!

WIDE AWAKE AND FAST ASLEEP.

(One Side of the Question.)



BLITHE Summer Day came out of the
east,
And a rare little lad was he.
His lips were red from a strawberry feast,
And his eyes were blue as the sea.
His yellow hair was blown by the breeze,
Like grass in a windy place.
He had torn his jacket in climbing trees,
And he laughed all over his face.


He danced in the elm, on the leafy spray
Where the nest of the oriole swings,
Till the birdies had winked the sleep away
All under their gleaming wings.
He shook the stems of the lilies tall,
While they nodded in soft surprise
And rubbed with their fingers white and small
The dreams from their golden eyes.

The daisy hastened to wash her face
 In a drop of the crystal dew,
 And each green leaf of the woodland lace
 The kiss of the sunshine knew.
 The squirrel chattered and combed his tail
 That curls up over his spine,
 And the pinkest clover turned almost pale
 When the village clock struck nine.

For two little boys in two little beds
 Lay dozing the morning long,
 Though the sun shone in on their tangled heads
 And the birds had ended their song.
 "O dear! O dear!" sighed the Summer Day,
 "What lazy small boys I see!
 I wish—I wish they would wake and play
 With a bright little Day like me."

THE SUN OUT OF TEMPER.

(The Other Side of the Question.)

"H! I say and declare that it's really
 not fair
 For the Day-Star to call me so
 soon!"

Cried the Sun, very red, as he jumped out of bed
 And made up a face at the Moon.

So he climbed the blue skies with his thumbs in
his eyes
And his hair tumbled over his head,
And he gave a great yawn in the face of the Dawn,
Which was very bad manners, she said.

Then the Sun was ashamed to hear himself
blamed,
And being ashamed made him cross.
So he withered the wheat with his arrows of heat
And trampled the dew from the moss.
And he fumed and he fussed till the toad in the
dust
Did envy the frog in the pool
And swore he would doat on a pond-lily boat
Much more than a mushroom stool.

The flowers were faint, the trees made complaint,
And the little leaves teased for a drink,
But the Sun only stared, for all that he cared
Was to glower with never a wink ;
Till it happened one day that the World went
away,
The World and his Wife to remain
A week and no more with their Aunt by the
shore.
Said the Sun, "It is time for a rain."

60 *THE LITTLE KNIGHT IN GREEN.*

Said the Sun, "I repent, and my anger is spent.
I must cry seven days at the least."

So he tied up his head in a shabby white shred
That he tore from a cloud in the east,
And he stirred him a broth from the fogs of the
north

To save him a pain in the side,
And then he sat down in a dismal gray gown,
And oh, for the cry that he cried!

Sobbed the penitent Sun, "I have only begun.

I shall shed many tears for the loss
Of my temper. I'll shiver and cry like a river,
I'm so sorry I ever was cross.
But my patience was tried and the cause I'll
confide,

That early birds all may take warning,
For in summer 'tis true my hot temper is due
To my rising too soon in the morning."

THE LITTLE KNIGHT IN GREEN.



W^HAT fragrant-footed comer
Is stepping o'er my head?
Behold my Queen, the Summer,
Who deems her warriors dead!

Now rise, ye knights of many fights,
From out your sleep profound !
Make sharp your spears, my gallant peers,
And prick the frozen ground !

Before the White Host harm her,
We'll hurry to her aid.
We'll don our elfin armor,
And every tiny blade
Shall bear atop a dewy drop,
The lifeblood of the Frost,
Till from their King the order ring,
"Fall back ! the day is lost !"

Now shame to knighthood, brothers !
Must Summer plead in vain ?
And shall I wait till others
My crown of sunshine gain ?
Alone this day I'll dare the fray,
Alone the victory win.
In me my Queen shall find, I ween,
A sturdy paladin.

To battle, ho ! King Winter
Hath rushed on me apace.
My fragile weapons splinter
Beneath his icy mace.

I stagger back. I yield—alack !
I fall. My senses pass.
Woe worth the chance for doughtiest lance
Of all the House of Grass !

Last hope my heart gives over.
But hark ! a shout of cheer !
Don Daisy and Count Clover,
Lord Buttercup are here.
Behold ! behold ! with shield of gold
Prince Dandelion comes.
Lord Bumblebee beats valiantly
His rolling battle-drums.

My brothers quit their slumbers
And lead the van of war.
Before our swelling numbers
The foes are driven far.
The day's our own ; but overthrown,
A little knight in green,
I kiss her feet and deem it sweet
To perish for my Queen.

PART III.



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY.



ING out, sing out in the golden weather,
Sweet birds on the nodding sprays ;
Sing, wren and robin and thrush to-
gether,

Till the greenwood ring with praise.

Drop your song to the daisied grasses
And the clovers stored with wine ;
Fling it forth on the breeze that passes
The marsh where the marigolds shine.

Hide it deep in the red-lipped mosses
With the crystal dew-drops wet ;
Cast on the wings of the moth that crosses
The haunt of the violet.

Sing out, sing out till the hillside flowers
And the ferns of the valley know
That I seek, thro' the sunshiny, June-tide hours
The bonniest buds that blow.

O queen of the wildwood, rose of the briar,
Wilt thou quit thy gypsy halls
To sway in the breath of the chanting choir
And garland the chapel walls ?


O columbine, forfeit the bee's caressing ;
 Peep forth from thy leafy nook ;
 Thine head shall droop in the solemn blessing
 And shadow the Sacred Book.

For to-morrow, the pearl of the jewels seven,
 Is the whitest in all the year,
 When the angels lean from their seats in heaven
 To beckon the children near.

Up the winding path, where the church-crowned
 hill is,
 Shall we set our footprints small,
 And flock to His courts, who loved the lilies
 And noted the sparrow's fall.

Who calls not only hearts grave with duty
 And eyes with sorrowing dim,
 But the little children, in life's first beauty,
 Suffers to come unto Him.

CHILDREN'S HYMN.

 IS the month the roses spill
 On the breeze their hoarded scent ;
 Carols clear the robins trill,
 Peeping through a leafy tent.
 Blossomed sprays, wildwood lays,
 Help us voice our Sabbath praise.

He, who once on earth below
 Loved the lilies of the field,
 Heeds the roses drooping low
 For the fragrance that they yield.
 But our prayer up the air
 May a sweeter perfume bear.

He, who taketh tender note
 Of the falling sparrow, sees
 How the robin's ruby throat
 Swells with tuneful jubilees.
 But our song floateth strong
 Far above the forest throng.

For the Lord, when bird and flower
 By his grace were amply blest,
 Granted as the children's dower
 Larger hearts to love Him best.
 Fair the sprays; sweet the lays;
 Love alone is perfect praise.

CHRISTMAS CAROL.



ALMLY the Syrian starlights glisten
 Far on the valleys and mountain-bars.
 Why do the shepherds rouse and listen?
 Stirs an anthem among the stars?

Joyous melodies thrill and quiver.
 All the air is with music rife,
 Sweet as the flow of the crystal river
 Under the shade of the Tree of Life.

Swells the song till the night is holden
 Rapt in gladness and awe and love ;
 Splendors amethyst, rose and golden,
 Shed from an arch of wings above.

Soft as a silver mist retreating
 Soar and vanish the seraph throng,
 Rainbow plumes still earthward beating
 Fainting strains of the far-off song.

Fade, bright wings, on the purple even !
 Wane, oh glory, from hill and mere !
 Hence that beautiful song of Heaven
 Earth shall sing, while the angels hear.

EASTER LILIES.



ENT is past, and the lilies blow,
 Beautiful Easter lilies !
 White as the flakes of Christmas snow,
 Beautiful Easter lilies !

White as the wings of a wandering dove,
White as the sailing clouds above,
Pure on your petals the sunbeams glow,
Beautiful Easter lilies !

Oh ! were our hearts but purged of sin,
Beautiful Easter lilies !

Grace like yours might our spirits win,
Beautiful Easter lilies !

Christ arisen, from heaven above,
Be the light of Thy holy love
Shed on our souls like sunshine in
Beautiful Easter lilies !

THANKSGIVING NIGHT.



THE merry guests, who feasted long
And filled the day with laughter,
Have said farewell ; and even-song,
Sweet mother, cometh after.

I meant to count between my prayers
My blessings, but their number
Is very great ; and, unawares,
My eyelids droop with slumber.

The stars God lighted wax not dim :
 His angels never falter,
 Whose voices chant the happy hymn
 Around his holy altar.

But I am such a little child
 That often, after playing,
 Beneath thy kiss my lips have smiled,
 And slept, instead of praying.

Perchance the Lord, whose hand did press
 My hours so full of pleasure,
 Heard in my mirth the thankfulness
 My words unfitly measure.

His peace lies on my childish mood,
 Like dew on meadow daisies :
 I gave my joy for gratitude,
 And lift my love for praises.

THE EMPTY ROOM.



IS a fable of the East,
 Oft by grave-eyed merchants told,
 Resting for their frugal feast,
 Dates and fountain-water cold,
 Underneath the shadow calm
 Of the palm.

Once a sage of sages, bowed
By the griefs of many years,
Led two young disciples, vowed
Unto truth beyond their peers,
To an empty room. Surprise
Lit their eyes.

Unto each he gave a coin,
While they waited, fain to do
What the master might enjoin.
Tremulous his words, and few.
“Spend the gold and fill the bare
Chamber there.”

Sped the first with eager feet
To the gay bazaars and bought
What he deemed most rich and meet,
Woods and stuffs full deftly wrought ;
But not all their costly grace
Filled the space.

Musing deep in earnest breast,
Through the mart his fellow passed
And a candle bought : the rest
Of the gold as alms he cast ;
For the room his candle bright
Filled with light.

Quoth the sage : " By this once more
 Teach I, ere my voice is still,
 Vanity of earthly store.
 Only Allah's love can fill
 These our empty hearts. I cease.
 Go in peace."

SANDALPHON'S ROSEBUDS.



IN the herald hush of even,
 Spent with ecstasy of praising,
 From the pearl-wrought gate of heaven
 Angels twain were earthward gazing,
 And their speech, each to each,
 Was a wordless music-flow ;
 And the love-light of their eyes
 Thrilled the sunset-colored skies
 To a clearer glow.

Whist ! they cease their soft conferring,
 Rapt in looks of gladsome greeting,
 For the lower air is stirring
 Under wings of ample beating ;
 And behold ! plumed with gold
 Mounts Sandalphon, he who bears
 Mystic blossoms to the throne,
 Blossoms that on earth are known
 As the breath of prayers.

Swift they scan with earnest glances
 All his sheaf from twilight hour,
 Lilies white of saintly trances,
 Sorrow's purple passion-flower ;
 But the smile dawneth while
 Calm Sandalphon tenderly
 Shows his rosebuds, gathered where
 Children lift the voice of prayer
 At a mother's knee.

Brightly smile the angel faces,
 Knowing well how earth-freed mortals,
 Bearing still life's battle traces,
 Pressing through those pearly portals,
 Fleet of tread, fragrance-led,
 Shall in God's own garden find
 All the folded buds abloom,
 Roses shedding sweet perfume
 On heavenly wind.

THE RAINBOW PATH.



HE rain it rained a weary while,
 But when the clouds took flight,
 The setting sun flashed back a smile.
 (Good-night, dear sun, good-night !)
 And from the far horizon's breast
 An arching rainbow sprang to rest

Its hither tip on mountain crest,
A bridge of colors seven.
 Rainbow,
 I know
Thou art the path to Heaven.

The flowers that smiled by April rills
And made the summer bright
Have faded from the autumn hills.
 (Good-night, dear sun, good-night !)
But blossom-spirits sweet and fair
Are wafted by the gentle air
To bloom above in beauty rare
And weave the colors seven.
 Rainbow,
 I know
Thou art the path to Heaven.

And when along that gleaming way
We fare in sandals white
Beyond the golden gates of day,
 (Good-night, dear sun, good-night !)
We'll kiss the blossoms as we go,
And think how on the earth below
They lit the fields, ere called to glow
Within the colors seven.
 Rainbow,
 I know
Thou art the path to Heaven.



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