

SING A SONG
OF
SLEEPY HEAD

READABLE RHYMES
FOR
CURIOUS CHILDREN



JAMES W. FOLEY



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Book F698

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SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

BOYS AND GIRLS

Illustrated

VOICES OF SONG

With an Introductory Note by Theodore
Roosevelt

TALES OF THE TRAIL

A Book of Western Sketches in Verse
Illustrated by John Wolcott Adams

FRIENDLY RHYMES

Illustrated by John Wolcott Adams

E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY



SLEEPY HEAD AND THE SAND MAN

SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

*BEING READABLE RHYMES
FOR CURIOUS CHILDREN*

✓ BY

JAMES W. FOLEY ✓

AUTHOR OF "FRIENDLY RHYMES," "BOYS AND GIRLS," ETC.



NEW YORK

E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY

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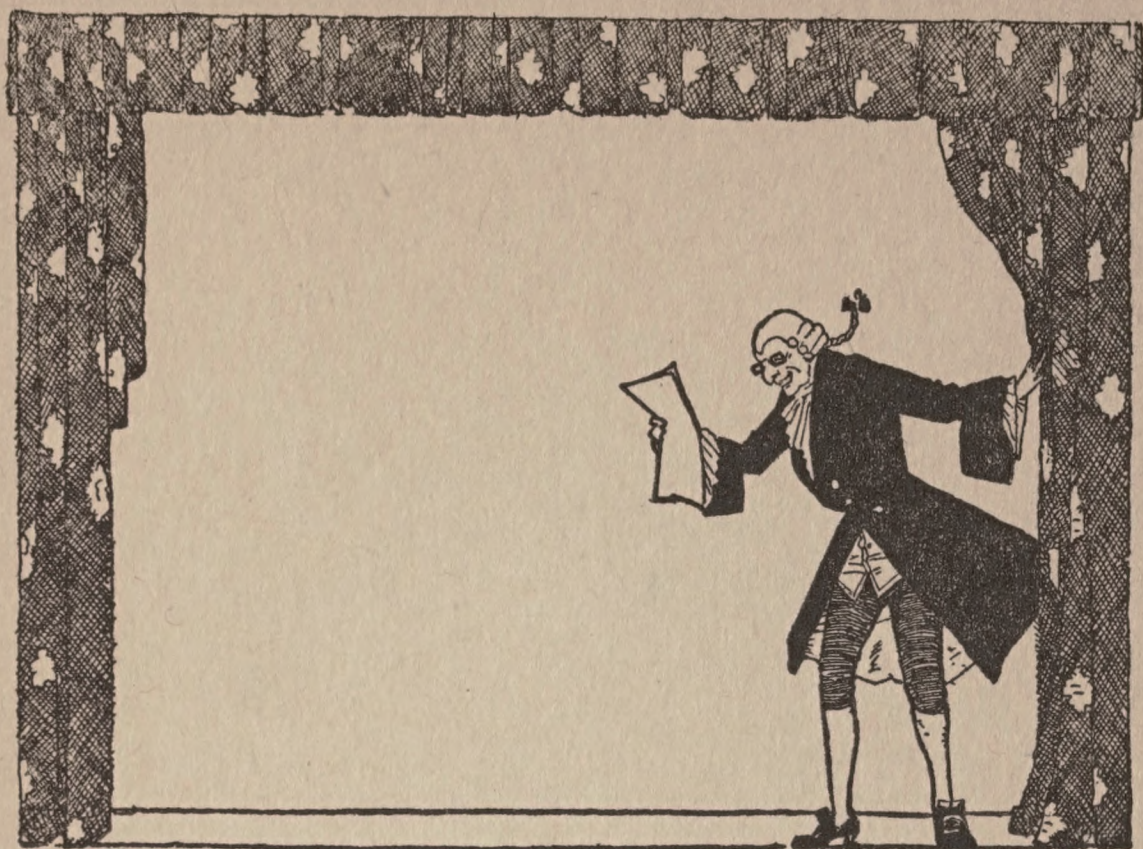
FOREWORD

THIS collection of rhymes includes a play for children and grown-ups, a romance from the enchanted land of dream, an adventure with rollicking spirit and narrative.

Old and favorite friends are encountered in strange places and fancifully adventuring. The rhyming has been done with tunefulness and good-humor, and a swinging rhythm that it may have charm in the reading. And if there is any share of the delight in the reading that there has been in the doing I shall be satisfied.

The book is dedicated to two hundred thousand school children who have laughed with me in friendly hours in school, and to those others who might have laughed had I been able to read to them all.

J. W. F.



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SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD



I

SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

A Play for Grownups and Children

CHARACTERS:

CHILDREN:

SLEEPY HEAD
SAND MAN
CAPTAIN KIDD
BLUEBEARD
MARGERY DAW
MISS MUFFET
TOPSY
ORPHAN ANNIE
BOY BLUE
TOM TUCKER
JACK HORNER
PIPER'S TOM
BABY BUNTING
CINDERELLA
SCRIBE

GROWNUPS:

MISS QUESTION MARK
OLD WOMAN
SANTA CLAUS
MOTHER OF SLEEPY HEAD

A play in rhyme with well-marked rhythm which is to be emphasized in the reading of the lines. Gestures and movements to be rhythmical and in tune with the rhythm of the spoken lines. Costuming to be in keeping with the popular conception of the characters portrayed. Costumes of the CHILDREN IN THE SHOE to be significant of need, to lend the Play the only touch of the pathetic it has. SCRIBE'S costume to be of appropriate long coat, knee trousers, silk stockings and shoes with great buckles, and topped with a powdered wig. GNOME'S costume to be of green cloak and cap, shoulders broadened and tapering down to thin legs in tights with toes of shoes turned up. Hour glass about the size of ordinary lantern. Slate to be of papier mâché attached with cord that it may be lifted off table and up through window. The accompaniment of rhythmical movement and gesture to the rhythm of the lines makes one of the interesting and fascinating elements of the play. Thus in SLEEPY HEAD'S speech:

*I've scratched my head and I've scratched my slate.
Till nine o'clock from half past eight.*

Tap smartly with pencil on table at words "scratched," "scratched," "nine" and "half." In the speech of the TEN CHILDREN on their entrance:

"We thank you Ma'am, and we're glad we came."

A bow at the word "thank" and another at the word "glad" will mark the lines with rhythmical gesture.

SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

[Enter SCRIBE from wings, with parchment and quill pen, and reads.]

SCRIBE

This is the Preface—it goes before
The book you buy in the shop or store;
It's not the tale for in every kind
Of thing the tale always comes behind.

I bid you welcome and hope you'll stay
To see the whole of our Children's Play;
I'm sure you'll say when the play is through
That we have acted as well as you.

We're all in place for we start on time,
And the whole of our Play is done in rhyme.
I'll come and tell when the Play is done,
For you might go home and miss half the fun.

I'm going now, but I wish to say
We hope you'll like our Children's Play;
We're not as old as some folks may be,
But if you act nicely, so will we!

[Exit, keeping step with rhythm of verse.]

PROLOGUE

[Drawing-room scene. Door center. French windows right and left. Large fire-place, corner left. Door left. Easy chairs either side of fire-place. Easy chair beside door, left. Huge settee, right center. Drawing-room table, right. Window, right above. Hall clock, right corner. Huge wicker basket, right center. Easy chair by table.]

SLEEPY HEAD, *with dressing gown, slippers, sits in easy chair by table scratching his head with left hand, scratching slate with pencil in right. Open book of sums before him. From draperies of window at right, above table, face of GNOME peers at SLEEPY HEAD. GNOME has tall cap, gray beard, snow on cap. Hall clock marks nine.]*

SLEEPY HEAD

I've scratched my head and I've scratched my slate
Till nine o'clock from half-past eight.

[Scratches slate vigorously as if computing.]

Oh, sums are such troublesome things!
I wish this old red slate had wings!
I wish it would fly to some place I can't see
And stay there forever and not bother me!

[Yawns. Slate rises slowly from table. Head of GNOME disappears instantly. SLEEPY HEAD looks in amazement as slate continues to rise]

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through the air and finally disappears through window above drawing room table.]

SLEEPY HEAD

Now, would you believe it? It's gone, I declare!

It flew off the table and up through the air!

Well, good riddance to it and good-bye to sums!

[Throws book high in air and lets it clatter to floor. Rapping heard at the door, center.]

There's a rap at the door and I wonder who comes!

[Gets down from chair and marches to door, center, and throws it open. Discloses queer, gnome-like figure, with cap and gray beard and cloak, with snowflakes on. GNOME bears an hour glass, carried in right hand from ring at top. Sand runs slowly through.]

SLEEPY HEAD

Good evening, Old Fellow, and how do you do?

My goodness! How funny! And who pray are you?

[GNOME enters with SLEEPY HEAD, sets down hour glass and shakes snow from cap and coat. Makes profound bow.]

GNOME

I'm very well, thank you. I'll just look about.

I won't stay a moment. I'm going right out.

8 SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

SLEEPY HEAD

If you go so quickly, then why did you call?
I don't understand why you came in at all.

GNOME

You'll know in a minute.

[Picks up hour-glass.]

No, please do not frown.

Just come over here to this chair and sit down.

*[Walks with SLEEPY HEAD to chair by table.
Sets hour glass on table. Then turns with
uplifted forefinger.]*

I know what your name is. Your name's Sleepy
Head!

It's nine o'clock now and time you were in bed!

SLEEPY HEAD

*[Rests elbow on table and watches running
sand intently.]*

I *am* getting sleepy! I'm tired from play!
I worked at my sums till my slate flew away,
Right out of that window, just then as you came.
My! I'm getting sleepy!

[Yawns deeply.]

Pray, what is *your* name?

SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD 9

GNOME

They call me the Sand Man! When there's a hard
sum

Too hard for tonight, then it's time that I come
And send slates a-flying, for hard sums will keep,
But boys will keep better if they go to sleep.

SLEEPY HEAD

Did you see my slate fly?

GNOME

I gave it the wings!
For I do all manner of marvelous things.
I dance with the letters till they are so blurred
You cannot read stories—not even a word!
And I stick your eyelids together so tight
You fall off to sleep without saying good-night!

SLEEPY HEAD

My eyes are so heavy. Please turn out the light!

[SAND MAN *turns off light on table, leaving
room dimly lighted.*]

Good-night, Mister Sand Man. I thank you!
Good-night!

[SLEEPY HEAD *sinks back in depth of easy
chair asleep. SAND MAN picks up hour glass
and tiptoes in rhythm to door. Stops and
turns.*]

10 SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

SAND MAN

He ate a great piece of mince pie, did he!
Now what will he dream of? Ha! Ha! We shall
see!

*[Exits by door, center, leaving SLEEPY HEAD
asleep in easy chair. Pause. Curtain.]*

END OF PROLOGUE

INTERLUDE

[*SCRIBE enters and reads before curtain as before.*]

SCRIBE

Now that was the Prologue—that goes between
The Preface and what is the Major Scene.
But I can't tell what it's all about,
You'll have to wait till it's acted out.

It's all a dream, as you may surmise,
Out of plum pudding and hot mince pies.
So watch the chimney and grate because,
You may, if you do, see Santa Claus!

The next is the longest scene of all,
But after they let the curtain fall,
Please keep your seats, there's a short one then,
And don't go home till I tell you when.

[*Exit as before.*]

THE DREAM

[Same scene without change. SLEEPY HEAD asleep in easy chair. Light in room suddenly becomes brighter. Sound of school-bell ringing. Enter MISS QUESTION MARK, door center. She wears prim hat, curls, great shell-rims, prim gown and carries bag. Advances to center of stage.]

MISS QUESTION MARK

The school-bell is ringing—hark!
Yes, I am Miss Question Mark!
I'm two times two and three times three,
For I am the school ma'am, don't you see?
And at nine o'clock I come
With table and rule and sum.
I set every boy a difficult task,
And I ask and ask and ask and ask.

[Takes book from bag, opens and sings.]

SONG OF THE QUESTION MARK

What did Columbus do
In fourteen ninety-two?
Why does the earth turn round each day?
How many stars in the milky way?
How many feet in a yard, please tell?
What's the degree of an icickell?



SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD 15

How many hours on the clock?
Who came to Plymouth Rock?
Make haste and answer me:
Where did they throw the tea?
How many pints will a quart cup fill?
What did they do at Bunker Hill?
What is the Arctic Zone?
Where is your collar bone?
Where is the sun when it's out of sight?
Why is it dark when it is not light?
And that's how I go on from dawn till dark,
And that's why they call me Miss Question Mark.

[Turns to remove hat, and set book and bag on table. Sees SLEEPY HEAD asleep in the chair.]

MISS QUESTION MARK

My goodness me! Here's a boy I see
Who's sound asleep as a boy can be!

[Shakes SLEEPY HEAD vigorously. Sound of school-bell is heard again.]

Come, Little Boy, it's time to tell
Your lessons now! Don't you hear the bell?

[SLEEPY HEAD opens his eyes, rubs them and yawns.]

MISS QUESTION MARK

[Beats time on table with pencil and repeats.]

What did Columbus do
In fourteen ninety-two?

16 SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

Why does the earth turn round each day?
How many stars in the milky way?
How many feet in a yard, please tell?
What's the degree of an icickell?
How many hours on the clock?
Who came to Plymouth Rock?
Make haste and answer me:
Where did they throw the tea?
How many pints will a quart cup fill?
What did they do at Bunker Hill?
What is the Arctic Zone?
Where is your collar bone?
Where is the sun when it's out of sight?
Why is it dark when it is not light?
What's two times two and three times three?
Hurry, make haste and answer me!

SLEEPY HEAD

Oh, Teacher, sums are such troublesome things
For me to do, and my slate took wings;
I saw it go up through the air,
And fly right out of the window there!

MISS QUESTION MARK

You naughty boy, to have done no sums!
What will you say when Santa Claus comes?
A dunce's cap you should surely wear
And not move out of that easy chair
Till you've answered my questions and done your
sums!

SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD 17

Or what will you say when Santa Claus comes?

[Head rises from behind easy chair at right of fireplace. Pirate's kerchief, great moustaches, face grinning broadly at SLEEPY HEAD, who points and cries in fear.]

SLEEPY HEAD

Oh, Teacher, Teacher, Teacher see
That terrible man who is grinning at me!

[Pirate chief comes from behind chair toward center of stage, swaggering. MISS QUESTION MARK turns and sees CAPTAIN KIDD, with pirate's garb, red sash with knife in belt, great boots and skull and cross-bones in white on black shirt.]

MISS QUESTION MARK

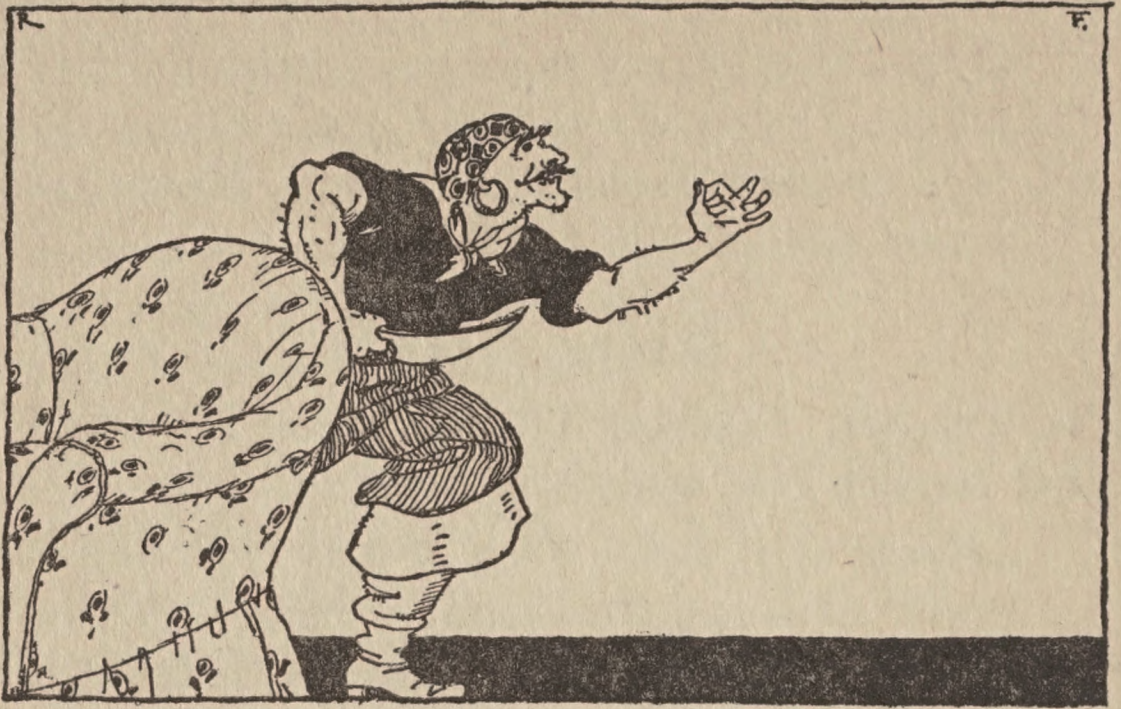
[Advances and leans over CAPTAIN KIDD.]
Well, this is a pretty howdy-do!
Pray where did you come from, and who are you?

CAPTAIN KIDD

[Looks up defiantly at MISS QUESTION MARK who retreats a step and stands with hands on hips. Sings.]

SONG—CAPTAIN KIDD AND SLEEPY HEAD

I'm the terrible Captain Kidd!
You know all the things I did!



A terrible, terrible man am I,
For once I quartered your friend, Mince Pie,
I quartered your friend, Mince Pie.

SLEEPY HEAD

Oh you terrible man, so cruel and grim!
What an awful thing to do to him!

CAPTAIN KIDD

I'm the terrible Captain Kidd!
I quartered Mince Pie and hid!
I quartered Mince Pie and I heard him groan,
And then I scuttled an Ice Cream Cone,
I scuttled an Ice Cream Cone!



SLEEPY HEAD

Oh, you terrible man, to make him groan,
And then to scuttle an ice cream cone.

CAPTAIN KIDD

I'm the terrible Captain Kidd!
I scuttled the Cone I did!
And Ginger Cake went floating by
And I bit him in two with a terrible cry!
A terrible, terrible cry!

SLEEPY HEAD

Oh you awful man, pray tell me why
You should bite him in two with a terrible cry?

CAPTAIN KIDD

I'm the terrible Captain Kidd,
And now you know why I did.
I scuttled the Cone and quartered the Pie
And bit the Cake with a terrible cry,
I'm a terrible man, that's why.

SLEEPY HEAD

I'll never, no never be friends with you—
What terrible, terrible things to do!

MISS QUESTION MARK

*[Advances and points her forefinger at CAP-
TAIN KIDD.]*

Do you know how many are two times two?
That's four—big fibs we have heard from you.
You never quartered my friend Mince Pie!
You never bit Cake with a terrible cry.
You never scuttled an Ice Cream Cone.
Go stand in the corner there alone!
Go stand in the corner, one, two, three!
You think you are awful, but look at me.
I'll give you a page of sums to do
And you'll think I am terrible when you're through!

CAPTAIN KIDD

I'm Captain Kidd! I'm a villain bold!

MISS QUESTION MARK

You do exactly as you're told!
Go stand in the corner there alone!
You never scuttled an Ice Cream Cone!

[Takes CAPTAIN KIDD by the ear, leads him to the corner by table, gets book from table and thrusts it into his hands, and leaves him with final threatening shake of forefinger. Another head rises from chair at left of fireplace, with fez, white hair, blue beard, and arm comes up waving a scimitar. SLEEPY HEAD points in fright.]

SLEEPY HEAD

Oh, Teacher, Teacher, Teacher look!
Who stepped right out of that story book
I read last night, and he's hiding there!
I saw him peep from behind that chair!
[Head disappears.]

MISS QUESTION MARK

You stay right there and I'll go and see
What mischievous personage he may be.
[Marches to easy chair and looks behind it.]
Come now from back of that easy chair!
How long have you been hiding there?

[Brings intruder from back of chair and leads him to center of stage. He has Turkish costume, with great, turn-toed slippers.]

22 SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

Why, your hair is gray and your beard is blue!
Say what are you doing and who are you?

BLUE BEARD'S SONG

Oh how can you ask me who am I,
I am the ghost of a hot mince pie,
And can't you tell when my beard is blue
As you see it is that my name is, too!

When my beard you see
You must agree
My name's Bluebeard
With a double B.

My hair is white, yes white as snow,
'Twas my eight wives that made it so,
With worry and fret—yes, ere I knew
My eight wives left me white and blue.

Yes, ere I knew
My beard was blue,
And my hair was white
From that fearful crew.

They've told such awful things of me
I'm bashful in good company,
I'm a terrible man, I am, I know,
But a terrible life has made me so.

SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD 23

With hats to buy
And bills to pay,
It's a wonder I
Am alive today.

SLEEPY HEAD

I read of you when I first began
To read. You're an awful, awful man!

CAPTAIN KIDD

He's no such terrible man as I!
I quartered your good old friend, Mince Pie
And scuttled the good ship Ice Cream Cone!

MISS QUESTION MARK

You stand in the corner there alone
And do your sums as you have been shown!
You never scuttled an Ice Cream Cone!

BLUEBEARD

He's nothing at all compared with me!
I had eight wives and a snickersnee.
And I cut their heads off, Oh, Oh, Oh!
For they entered my room when I told them no.
They swept my rugs and they made me sneeze
When I wanted to sleep and they did not please
My taste at all; they roamed about
In idleness till the fire went out.
They cooked no food and they made no beds,
So while they slept I cut off their heads,

24 SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

And now not one of them bothers me.
And here is the very snickersnee.

[*Extends scimitar.*]

MISS QUESTION MARK

Do you know your sums and your books beside?

BLUEBEARD

Well, I know how to subtract and divide.
Eight from eight leaves none, you see,
And I divide with my snickersnee.

[*Waves scimitar.*]

MISS QUESTION MARK

[*Seizes scimitar.*]

Give me that terrible snickersnee.
You think you are fearful, just look at me!
You stand right there and face the wall.
You never had any wives at all.
You're a fib, you are, and you never did
The things you say more than Captain Kidd,
Who stands in the corner there alone
And says he scuttled an Ice Cream Cone.

BLUEBEARD

I had eight wives and a snickersnee!

MISS QUESTION MARK

And now you have neither, as you see.
You're but a fib, if your beard *is* blue.

SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD 25

And nobody here is afraid of you.
How bad a man you may think to be,
You never used any snickersnee.
And you can't frighten us with your looks,
You're only a picture in story books.
You never cut off *one* wife's poor head—
You ought to be spanked and sent to bed.

[Face of OLD WOMAN is seen peering through window left center. Sharp nose, cone-shaped hat, ragged shawl, tattered gown.]

SLEEPY HEAD

Oh, Teacher, Teacher, Teacher, see
That strange Old Woman who looked at me!
There! Look! I see her face again!
She's looking right through that window pane!

MISS QUESTION MARK

[Marches to window and throws open sash door.]

We'll open the sash door wide and see!
Old Woman! Old Woman! And who can you be?
And what are you doing and where do you go?
Come right in out of the cold and snow!

[Closes sash door, marches to door at center and throws it open. Enter OLD WOMAN, snow on bonnet and shawl. She looks about fearfully.]

26 SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

MISS QUESTION MARK

Who are you, Old Woman, and what do you do?

OLD WOMAN

[With pathetic emphasis.]

I am the Old Woman who lived in the shoe.
But the sides fell in and the sole wore through
And I had no money to buy a new.
I could not rent for they knew I had
So many children, both good and bad,
So I and my children set out to roam,
Since our shoe's worn out and we have no home.
Now listen close and you shall hear
My children sing in the snowdrifts near:

CHORUS OF CHILDREN SINGING, OFF-STAGE

Home, home, sweet, sweet home!
If it's only a shoe there is no place like home!

OLD WOMAN

Thus always at Christmas we set out to roam
Till we find us a shoe like the one that was Home!

BLUEBEARD

[Turns.]

I'd be very glad, if you so incline
To offer the use of one of mine.

SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD 27

MISS QUESTION MARK

You face the wall as I bade you be,
You fib of the wives and the snickersnee.

CAPTAIN KIDD

I'm a villain bold, but I'll make a loan
Of one of the only boots I own.

MISS QUESTION MARK

You stand in the corner there alone,
You wretch who scuttled the Ice Cream Cone!

SLEEPY HEAD

Oh, Teacher, Teacher, Teacher dear!
I'll lend her one of my slippers here!

MISS QUESTION MARK

I'll use that slipper, Sir, on you,
If you leave that chair till I bid you to!

OLD WOMAN

[*Curtseys.*]

I thank you, Sirs, but I could not use
The one or all of your proffered shoes!
To live in a shoe with room to spare
Takes much more shoe than a shoe to wear.

[*Curtseys again.*]

I thank you Ma'am, for the cheer and light,
I'm warmer now and I'll say good night.

28 SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

MISS QUESTION MARK

Your children must be wet to the skin.
Go open the door and call them in.

OLD WOMAN

[*Curtseys.*]

I thank you, Ma'am, and you'll plainly see
The kind of shoe it needs to be.

[*Turns, opens door and calls.*]

Come Children, dear, they have no shoe,
But a cosy room they bid us to.
Come now by window and come by door,
Come as you never came before.
Come far, come wide, come high, come low,
Come from out of the cold and snow.

[*The children enter, some by door, some by windows, either side. MARGERY DAW, MISS MUFFET, TOPSY, BOY BLUE, JACK HORNER, TOM TUCKER, ORPHAN ANN, PIPER'S TOM, CINDERELLA and BABY BUNTING. They range themselves closely about the OLD WOMAN and look curiously about. All scantily clothed, some barelegged, MARGERY DAW with straw on her shawl, MUFFET with stains of curds and whey on her face. BOY BLUE has his horn, PIPER'S TOM a pig under his arm, CINDERELLA a ragged shawl.*]

OLD WOMAN

[*Curtseys.*]

Come Children dear, so cold and blue,
See this warm place they bid us to.
I thank you, Ma'am.

[*Turns to CHILDREN.*]

And do you the same!

CHILDREN

[*Curtseying.*]

We thank you Ma'am

[*Curtseys.*]

And we're glad we came.

OLD WOMAN

Can't you sing the song good children do,
The song we sang when we lived in the shoe?

GOOD CHILDREN'S SONG

(MISS MUFFET AND MARGERY DAW)

The nicest words we know are these:
"Excuse me, thank you, if you please,"
Whatever other words we say,
We need them, need them every day.
Don't mix them up, for if you sneeze,
You never should say "if you please"
But always say "excuse me."
If any cold kerchoo's me,
I always say "excuse me."

CHORUS OF CHILDREN

Don't mix them up for if you sneeze,
You never should say "if you please"
But always say "excuse me,"
If any cold kerchoo's me
I always say "excuse me."

The nicest things to eat are these,
Ice cream and cake and pie with cheese,
We like to eat them when we may,
We'd love to eat them every day.
But when you're offered one of these
O pray don't say "excuse me please"
But always say "I thank you"
For Mama'll surely spank you.
If you don't say "I thank you."

CHORUS OF CHILDREN

So when you're offered one of these
O pray don't say "excuse me please"
But always say "I thank you"
For Mama'll surely spank you.
If you don't say "I thank you."

MISS QUESTION MARK

Are there any more that you ought to call?

SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD 31

OLD WOMAN

[*Curtseys.*]

I thank you Ma'am
But I think that's all.

[*Advances MARGERY DAW.*]

This is See Saw, Margery Daw,
You'll plainly see she has slept on straw!

MISS QUESTION MARK

Come here, my dear, and look at me.
What do you know of the rule of three?

MARGERY DAW

Quite nothing at all, I promise you,
We had no rules when we lived in the shoe.

MISS QUESTION MARK

Take your place at the head of the line,
Remember the school days begin at nine.

[*MARGERY DAW takes place in front of settee
at center of stage, extreme right.*]

OLD WOMAN

This is Muffet with face full of curds and whey.
I never get time to wipe them away.

MISS QUESTION MARK

[Takes out kerchief and rubs vigorously.]

Please stand right there till I wipe away
Those dreadful stains of curds and whey.
Now! Plymouth Rock? Where may it be?
Make haste, make haste, and answer me.

MISS MUFFET

Was it the pebble we children knew
That was way, way down in the toe of our shoe?
For if it was, I can't say where
It is for even the shoe's not there.

MISS QUESTION MARK

Such ignorance I never saw.
Go take your place by Margery Daw.

OLD WOMAN

And this is Topsy—she lived in the shoe
Till the sides fell in and the sole wore through.

TOPSY

[Grins as MISS QUESTION MARK waves kerchief.]

Don't wipe mah face, Missy Ma'am, dat way!
Cause dat stain ain't any curds and whey.

MISS QUESTION MARK

I can plainly see you lived in the shoe!
You brought away some of the polish too!
We must brighten you and make you shine.
So take your place in the school-room line.

[TOPSY takes place next to MISS MUFFET and grins broadly.]

OLD WOMAN

[Advances CHILDREN one by one.]

Here's little Boy Blue and Orphan Ann,
And Piper's Tom with the pig who ran.
Sometimes it's very hard for me
To say which is the pig and which is he.
And Tommy Tucker, and here are more
Who came by window and came by door.
Baby Bunting all dressed in blue,
And Little Jack Horner is waiting too.
And Cinderella! My goodness me,
There seems no end to this family!
I'm very sure you never knew
How many children lived in the shoe.

[CHILDREN ranged in line before settee. MISS QUESTION MARK stands left center, facing children.]

MISS QUESTION MARK

It must have turned your hair quite gray
When they played inside on a rainy day!

34 SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

CAPTAIN KIDD

Old Woman, Old Woman, I've heard of you.
You never, no never, knew what to do.
It's well you escaped my pirate crew.
They'd have cut out the tongue and scuttled the shoe.

SLEEPY HEAD

No wonder the shoe was worn and thin,
That the sole wore through and the sides fell in
Why, any boy I've ever known
Soon wears *two* shoes out all alone.

BLUEBEARD

Old Woman, Old Woman, go read and see
What I did once with my snickersnee.
I had eight wives and a lazy crew
They were, but I knew what to do!

MISS QUESTION MARK

Silence! Now, Children, stand in line
And answer these questions all of mine.
And you, Old Woman, sit quietly by
You're quite too old, I'm sure, to try.

[OLD WOMAN *sits in easy chair, left.* MISS QUESTION MARK *marches slowly forward repeating questions and marking time with her forefinger.* OLD WOMAN *taps foot on floor and bobs head in time.* SLEEPY HEAD *bobs*

SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD 35

head in rhythm. CAPTAIN KIDD and BLUE-BEARD bob in rhythm. CHILDREN in line fall to bobbing heads and tapping feet in time till all are marking time to MISS QUESTION MARK'S gestures.]

SONG OF THE QUESTION MARK

What did Columbus do
In fourteen ninety-two?
Why does the earth turn around each day?
How many stars in the milky way?
How many feet in a yard please tell?
What's the degree of an icickell?
How many hours on the clock?
Who came to Plymouth Rock?
Make haste and answer me!
Where did they throw the tea?
How many pints will a quart cup fill?
What do you know about Bunker Hill?
Where is the Arctic Zone?
Where is your collar bone?
Where is the sun when it's out of sight?
Why is it dark when it is not light?
What's two times two and three times three?
Hurry, make haste and answer me!

MARGERY DAW

[Steps forward and bows.]

I'm sorry Ma'am, but we never knew
Columbus—he did not live in our shoe.

36 SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

So I can't answer as I'm bid—
He never told us *what* he did.

CAPTAIN KIDD

Nobody cares what Columbus did.
Why don't you ask about Captain Kidd?

MUFFET

[*Steps forward and bows.*]
We'd like to ask if you can spread
A little jam on a lot of bread?

TOPSY

[*Steps forward and grins.*]
Dey ain't any stahs in the milky way.
Dey's only cows dere eatin' hay!

TOM TUCKER

[*Steps forward.*]
We had no yard, we lived in a shoe,
So how many feet we never knew.

CINDERELLA

[*Steps forward.*]
We had no clock that we could see,
To tell how many hours there be.
We only know it's one, two, three
Four, five, six hours from lunch to tea.

SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD 37

JACK HORNER

If you'll find where the grounds may be
Perhaps that's where they threw the tea.

BLUEBEARD

I had eight wives and a snickersnee.
And eight from eight leaves nothing you see.
My name's Bluebeard with a double B!
Why don't you ask if they've heard of me?

[Jingle of sleigh-bells heard outside.]

SLEEPY HEAD

Oh Teacher, Teacher, Teacher dear!
What is that sound of bells I hear?

MISS QUESTION MARK

*[Marches to window, opens sash door and
looks out.]*

It's Santa Claus, as I do believe!
I quite forgot 'twas Christmas eve!

*[Marches back and hurries children back of
sofa, where they hide themselves.]*

Come, Children dear, you must be hid!

BLUEBEARD

Now you ask *him* what Columbus did!

MISS QUESTION MARK

[Marches to OLD WOMAN, and hides her behind chair at left.]

Old Woman, Old Woman, you hurry too!
He's coming down the chimney flue.
You don't mind that I'm sure, do you?
You'll think you're back in the same old shoe.

[Marches back, and leads SLEEPY HEAD to chair at left of fire-place, hiding him behind it.]

You stay right there while Santa Claus comes,
You naughty boy who has done no sums!

CAPTAIN KIDD

[Runs to window and peers out.]

I see him come! I see him come!
With doll and sled and horn and drum!

[Sleigh-bells jingle furiously. MISS QUESTION MARK leads BLUEBEARD to chair, right of fire-place.]

MISS QUESTION MARK

[Thrusts BLUEBEARD behind chair.]

Down, down you go and stay close hid,
Or I'll show you what Columbus did!

[Returns and leads CAPTAIN KIDD from window to basket at left. Lifts him up and thrusts him down into the basket.]

SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD 39

And you go down with Davy Jones,
You scuttler of Pies and Ice Cream Cones.
You've scuttled many a ship and crew
But now's our turn to scuttle you!

[Claps lid down on basket. Returns to center of stage and looks about.]

BLUEBEARD

[Pokes up his head from back of chair.]

Hide, Teacher, Teacher, Teacher dear!
He'll never come if he sees you here.

[MISS QUESTION MARK takes hat and bag from table, turns down light so stage is dim, and hides in recess by hall clock. Sleigh-bells outside jingle less furiously. Stamping of hoofs heard and deep voice.]

SANTA CLAUS

Whoa, Tom and Bill and Gray and Brown!

[Great clatter and noise as of body scraping inside of chimney.]

Look out below for I'm coming down!

[Shoes appear and then legs dangling in fireplace. Then body comes into view and tumbles down through opening with pack, sprawling. SANTA CLAUS picks himself up, brushes soot from clothes and looks about.]

SANTA CLAUS'S SONG

SANTA CLAUS

Oh, what a terrible squeeze!
I puff and I snort and I wheeze!
I am getting quite fat,
I am sure of that, ..
And the soot up there made me to sneeze.
But I have to be jolly, because, because,
Because, because I am Santa Claus!

[Repeats with loud laughter]

I have to be jolly because, because,
Because, because I am Santa Claus!

I have my woes to endure,
My knees are both skinned, I am sure,
For down I must go
Every chimney I know,
And call on the rich and the poor.
And I have to keep jolly because, because,
Because, because I am Santa Claus.
I have to keep jolly because, because,
Because, because I am Santa Claus.

CAPTAIN KIDD

*[Pushes up top of basket and thrusts head out.
Stage whisper to MISS QUESTION MARK.]*

Oh, Teacher, dear, this is Captain Kidd.
Why don't you ask what Columbus did?

[Head disappears instantly.]

SANTA CLAUS

[Opens pack, displays toys, and looks about room.]

A wonderful place here I see,
But where can the children be?
I saw enough tracks
To take all of my packs,
And a dozen strong fellows like me.
I don't see their stockings or clothes.
They have all gone to bed I suppose,
As good children do.

Oh, Kerchoo! Oh, Kerchoo! *[Sneezes violently.]*
That soot must have got up my nose!
Now what shall I do?

[TOPSY sneezes violently behind settee. Head rises above back of settee.]

TOPSY

Oh, Kerchoo! Oh, Kerchoo!
Dat soot must have got up mah nose!

[SANTA CLAUS looks about startledly. Sees electric light switch and turns on light.]

SANTA CLAUS

Did I hear some one sneeze?

TOPSY

It was me if you please.

[SANTA CLAUS crosses to settee, lifts TOPSY from behind it, and surveys her closely.]

42 SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

SANTA CLAUS

Why, you're soot from your top to your toes! Did
you come down that flue?

TOPSY

No, Ah sneezed after you,
Cause dat soot must have got up mah nose!

[Head of MUFFET appears from behind settee.]

MUFFET

I was all curds and whey but they wiped it away.

MARGERY DAW

I had straw once all over my clothes!

SANTA CLAUS

Who are you? Haw, haw, haw!

MARGERY DAW

I am Margery Daw, but I didn't get soot up my
nose!

*[Children come from behind settee and crowd
about SANTA CLAUS who sits down in settee
and laughs aloud.]*

SANTA CLAUS

Such a great family as I never did see.
And I've traveled the wide world all through.
Tell me who you may be? Are you one family?

CHILDREN

We're the children who lived in the shoe!

SANTA CLAUS

Have you no place to go?

MUFFET

We came in from the snow.

SANTA CLAUS

You'd have slept here all night I suppose.

MARGERY DAW

We were hiding, you see.

TOM TUCKER

And were safe as could be.

TOPSY

If dat soot hadn't got up mah nose!

SANTA CLAUS

What became of the shoe?

MARGERY DAW

[*Sadly.*]

First the sole wore right through.

44 SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD

MUFFET

[*Sadly.*]

Then the sides fell and let in the snows.

JACK HORNER

Then we came here, we did.

CINDERELLA.

And when you came, we hid.

TOPSY

Till dat soot it got up in mah nose!

SANTA CLAUS

So the shoe is worn out and you've no place to go.
Would you like a long journey with me through
the snow?

I'm just an old man and I live all alone,
With my wife, Merry Christmas, nor child of my
own.

You Ten shall be mine and shall live there with me.
All happy and merry and glad as can be.
And you shall have goodies and warm clothes to
wear.

And you shall have ribbons to wind in your hair.
And you shall have clean beds to sleep in at night.
And you shall have love to make all your hearts
light.

SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD 45

And you shall be busy and have tasks to do.
And live in my heart and not live in a shoe.
And all through the year when the twilight is deep
You'll go through the world and read children to
 sleep.
And you shall love children and they shall love you,
And laugh with the children who lived in the shoe.

ORPHAN ANNIE

But how shall we go? Is the place far away?

SANTA CLAUS

The place is quite far but out there is my sleigh.
With Snowflake and Whitefur and Crystal and
 Dew,
The reindeer, with sleighbells that jingle for you!
 [*Jingling of bells heard without.*]

CINDERELLA

We have no furs to wear.

SANTA CLAUS

I have lots of them there.

PIPER'S TOM

Where are they?

SANTA CLAUS

In my sleigh.

CHILDREN

Hip hurray!

[CHILDREN *dart out of door.* SANTA CLAUS *chuckles and sits in settee waiting.*]

SANTA CLAUS

Oh, what jolly good fun.
For my work is all done.
We'll be home before break of the day.
We'll be off in a wink
But I can't help but think
What my wife, Merry Christmas, will say!
But we've worked all our lives and we've lived all
alone,
We need these ten children to love as our own.

[*Enter CHILDREN dressed in caps, coats, mittens and furs.* SANTA CLAUS *rises and stands while they crowd about him.*]

SANTA CLAUS

Are you ready to go?

MARGERY DAW

We've been out in the snow.

ORPHAN ANNIE

We found mittens and caps and warm clothes.

SING A SONG OF SLEEPY HEAD 47

SANTA CLAUS

You look snug and so nice.

We'll be off in a trice.

See how bright the moon shines on the snows.

[SANTA CLAUS steps to window and opens it. Flood of light shows sleigh just outside. He pushes CHILDREN before him through opened windows.]

SANTA CLAUS

Now be in with you quick!

CHILDREN

Are you really Saint Nick?

SANTA CLAUS

[While CHILDREN are taking their places in sleigh.]

Yes, I am. Snuggle down. Mind your toes,

For it's frosty tonight.

Are you tucked in all right?

[All CHILDREN are snuggled in the sleigh. Face of TOPSY appears at open window and grins.]

TOPSY

I'se sure glad I got soot up mah nose!

[SANTA CLAUS flings pack over his shoulder and makes exit after turning out light. Takes seat in sleigh.]

SANTA CLAUS

Come, Whitefur and Snowflake and Crystal and
Dew.

Home now with the Children who lived in the
shoe.

[Turns to CHILDREN.]

And now, all together, with all of your might:

[Sings.]

Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!

CHILDREN

[Sing.]

Merry Christmas to all and to all a good-night!

[Sleigh moves off slowly with jingling of sleigh-bells. MISS QUESTION MARK peers from corner by clock. Top of basket rises and head of CAPTAIN KIDD appears. SLEEPY HEAD, BLUEBEARD and OLD WOMAN look out from hiding places. In distance voice is heard again and all instantly disappear.]

SANTA CLAUS

[In distance.]

Now, then, all together, with all of your might:

[Sings.]

Merry Christmas to all and to all a good-night!

CHILDREN

[Sing in distance.]

Merry Christmas to all and to all a good-night!

[Jingle of sleigh bells heard more faintly and finally dies away. Heads rise from hiding places as before. MISS QUESTION MARK comes from recess and approaches center of stage. SLEEPY HEAD comes from his chair and crosses to her.]

BLUE BEARD

Oh, Teacher dear, where were you hid?

SLEEPY HEAD

And you never asked him what Columbus did!

[Stage immediately darkened. SLEEPY HEAD resumes place in easy chair sound asleep. Clock strikes ten times. At the last stroke, French windows at right open and SAND MAN stands with hour-glass suspended from outstretched right arm. Clothes and cap covered with snowflakes. Lights show SAND MAN and SLEEPY HEAD in tableau.]

SAND MAN

SONG OF THE SANDMAN

It's ten o'clock and all is well.
I hear the sound of the village bell.
And children now are sleeping sound.
I've seen them all and made my round.
The lights are dim and the snow is deep.
So sleep, my Children, sleep! Sleep! Sleep!

*[Tableau with SAND MAN and SLEEPY HEAD.
Lights gradually dim and curtain falls.]*

END OF DREAM



INTERLUDE

[*SCRIBE enters and reads before curtain.*]

SCRIBE

That was the dream and I hope 'twas fun,
But keep your seats for the play's not done.
There's an after part of a different sort,
But it can't take long for it's very short.

We've had Preface and Prologue and Major Scene
And rhymes we have read to you in between.
The curtain will fall and then a pause,
And then perhaps there will be applause.

And if there are children like those in the shoe,
We've tried to show you what Saint Nick would do.
He'd hug them tight till their hearts were light,
And we hope you may—and now, Good-night.

[*Returns to wings, turns and says.*]

Now don't forget—the play's not o'er!
The book of it calls for one scene more!

[*Exit SCRIBE.*]

EPILOGUE

[Scene as at opening of Dream. SLEEPY HEAD asleep in chair as before. SLEEPY HEAD'S MOTHER enters from door at left. Looks about, sees SLEEPY HEAD in his easy chair, smiles and crosses stage, picks him up and recrosses stage with him in her arms. As she crosses stage SLEEPY HEAD stirs restlessly.]

SLEEPY HEAD

I'm awfully sleepy! Please turn out the light!
Good-night, Mister Sand Man. I thank you. Good-night!

[Exit MOTHER with SLEEPY HEAD, through door left.]

CURTAIN AND FINIS

ISABEL AND THE GOLDEN
SWANS



Ruth Clements Farrell



ISABEL AND THE GOLDEN SWANS

I

ASLEEP ON THE SANDS

This is the tale of Isabel,
A girl I knew, Oh, very well,
Who went alone one Summer day
Upon the sunny sands to play,
Beside the ocean, big and blue,
As little children love to do.

And this is how she fell asleep
Beside the sea, so blue and deep,
And went to visit with a Queen
Whom she had never, never seen,
Upon an island far away,
More wonderful than I could say.

She saw the strangest sights that she
Or you or I could hope to see,

Such sights as fill one with surprise
 And make us open wide our eyes.
 And she found something that was hid
 A thousand years, but how she did
 I must not tell you till it's time
 Which is the ending of this rhyme.

So in beginning let me say
 She fell asleep that Summer day
 Upon the sands, and we will then
 Begin the story right again.

II

AFLOAT WITH THE SWANS

When Isabel awoke: "Dear me!"
 She cried, "I'm far, far out at sea,
 For land is neither here nor there,
 Just water, water everywhere!"
 She looked, and, lo! she was afloat
 In such a very tiny boat
 It seemed the merest speck to be
 Far out upon the great, blue sea,
 And four white swans in harness drew
 This strange craft o'er the waters blue.
 "Dear me!" cried Isabel, "Dear me!
 How came I here far out at sea?
 I fell asleep, I did I know,
 Upon the sand not long ago,

And now I'm very far from there,
And bound I'm sure I don't know where,
Upon the deep blue sea afloat
In such a very tiny boat.
And if a storm comes up at sea,
Whatever will become of me?"

III

ON THE DEEP BLUE SEA

She rubbed her eyes again—it seemed
To her as though she must have dreamed,
But no—there were the swans who sped
Swift through the water just ahead.
The sun above was noonday high,
Nowhere a cloud in all the sky,
No sign of storm was anywhere,
And Oh, so fresh and cool the air!

"I never knew," said Isabel
"That swans could draw a boat so well,
But Oh, I wish, I wish I knew
Where we are bound, indeed I do!"

IV

THE NAVAL DOLPHIN

Just then she heard a splash beside
The boat, and looked and there she spied
A Dolphin in the water blue,
Who tipped his cap, as Dolphins do.

"Good day to you, dear Isabel,
 I hope I see you very well,"
 He said in such a friendly way,
 "I think we'll have a pleasant day.
 And while in this small boat you ride,
 If you don't mind I'll float beside
 Lest you be lonesome on the sea,
 Quite all alone except for me."

V

THE FEAR OF SHARKS

"I'm sure," said Isabel, "I'll be
 Right glad to have your company.
 I'm not accustomed, Sir, to roam
 In this strange way so far from home.
 I've seen you in my picture books,
 And I have always liked your looks,
 But never did I dream to be
 In your distinguished company.
 I'm very glad that you are you
 And not a shark I'm talking to,
 For he might eat my boat, you see,
 My four white swans and even me!"

VI

THE QUEEN'S ADMIRAL

"Oh no!" the Dolphin cried. "You'll be
 Quite safe from harm when you're with me."

For all the fish and things that swim
 Are subject to my slightest whim.
 The fierce and harmless, great and small,
 The sharks and whales, I rule them all,"
 And as he spoke, from his great fin
 A flag with starry emblems in
 Went fluttering out. "You see," said he,
 I'm flagship of the Queen's Navy,
 I'm Admiral in sole command,
 And you are safe, when I'm at hand,
 Wherever on the sea you roam,
 As though you were in bed at home."

VII

THE STARRY FLAG

He spoke with such an air of pride,
 And Isabel was open-eyed
 To see the flag, all blue and white
 That fluttered in the noonday light.

"Sir Admiral," she said, "I'd be
 Right glad if in my boat with me
 I might invite you, but I fear
 There's only room for me in here."

She took a ribbon from her hair
 And tied it to the prow: "Now there!"
 She cried as it went streaming out
 And fluttered in the breeze about,

“There is a banner, as you see,
And now you’re in command of me!”

VIII

THE FLYING FISH

The Dolphin bowed, a stately bow,
As only Admirals know how,
A gallant Admiral was he
As ever sailed the briny sea;
Forthwith he hailed a Flying Fish,
And bade him to come near: “I wish,
Sir Messenger,” he said, “that you
Would haste across the waters blue,
And tell the Queen that Isabel
Is on her way, both safe and well.
Tell her Sir Dolphin will command
Her craft until it reaches land,
And she may be of right good-cheer,
Nor need she have a single fear;
For all these years I’ve trod the deck,
I’ve never had a single wreck.”

IX

THE QUEEN’S MESSENGER

The Flying Fish politely tipped
His cap and from the gunwale slipped,

Whizzed like a rocket through the air
The message to the Queen to bear.

“I think that now you will agree
That all the creatures of the sea
Obey me when I give the word,”
The Dolphin said, “for you have heard
The way I spoke and seen the way
He came and hastened to obey.”

“It’s very wonderful,” said she,
“I did not think such things could be.”

X

ISABEL IS CURIOUS

“Sir Admiral,” said Isabel,
“I like this journey very well;
I’m not a sailor bold, like you,
Born to command a ship and crew,
But since you came here to direct
This cruise, I’m sure we’ll not be wrecked.
And when you are within my call
I will not be afraid at all.
But tell me how I came to be
Far out here on this briny sea,
For Oh, Kind Sir, I’d like to know
How came I here and where I go.
And these white swans, who draw my boat,
How came they, too, to be afloat

With me, and who gave you the news
Of me and sent you on this cruise?"

XI

The Dolphin smiled and shook his head:
"The Queen will tell you that," he said.
"She gives us our commands each day
And we have only to obey.
The swans, I don't mind telling you,
Are part and parcel of my crew
Of Naval Aides—the boat they brought
Her Majesty's own private yacht;
And she gave orders that we go
And bring you—that is all we know.
Long since have we all learned to ask
No questions, but to do the task
She may direct, and that, you know
Is why she trusts her Navy so!"

XII

ISABEL HAS A NAP

Said Isabel, "You will agree
It's all mysterious to me;
I trust you will not think me quite
Inquisitive or impolite,
But since I am not used to roam

In this strange way, so far from home,
 It is no wonder I should be
 Quite full of curiosity.
 In all my life I never yet
 Have broken rules of etiquette;
 So I beg pardon if I broke
 A naval rule when thus I spoke.
 So now if you will steer my boat
 And keep my swans and me afloat,
 I'll lie down quietly—mayhap
 'Twill do me good to get a nap.

XIII

THE JOURNEY'S END

She slept—how long I do not know,
 But heard Sir Dolphin cry: "Land ho!"
 As Naval Dolphins always do
 Whenever there is land in view.
 She saw tall palm trees waving high
 Against the very blue of sky,
 And when Sir Dolphin raised a cheer
 She knew their journey's end was near.

"I trust," the Dolphin said, "they'll do
 The highly proper thing for you,
 And send at least a Commodore
 To welcome you and me to shore."

XIV

THE COMMODORE WHALE

"I see," said Isabel, "a sail."
"Yes," said the Dolphin, "that's Sir Whale,
I was quite sure I saw him pass
The harbor entrance through my glass.
You would not think," the Dolphin said,
"A whale could stand upon his head
Or balance sidewise on one fin,
But that's what we call discipline."

"Ahoy, Sir Whale!" the Dolphin cried.
"Ahoy! Ahoy!" the Whale replied,
And with a spout of water blew
A great salute and then hove to.

"First exercise!" the Dolphin said:
The Whale stood forthwith on his head,
His great tail pointing to the sky,
Full fifty or more fathoms high.

"Now," said the Dolphin, "should he drop
That mighty bulk of his atop
Of any craft, you plainly see
That his would be the victory,
For with that sharp, uplifted fin
He'd stave the stoutest vessel in,
Until its seams were gaping wide,
And sink it in the briny tide."

“Yes, yes,” said Isabel, “I see—
Pray do not bid him fall on me,
For I confess I never saw
A Whale that filled me so with awe.”

“You never saw a Whale before
Who was a naval Commodore,”
The Dolphin said with dignity,
“He learned maneuvering from me.”

XV

ISABEL SEES THE QUEEN

The Whale with flying banners led
The way, the four great white swans sped
Behind, and in the briny tide
Sir Dolphin swam along beside.

“The Queen awaits,” the Dolphin said,
“I see the crown upon her head,
And all her ministers are near
To bid you happy welcome here.”

“I wish,” said Isabel, “I knew
Just what’s the thing for me to do
When I step out upon the shore,
I never met a Queen before.”

XVI

LORD FOX APPEARS

“This is Lord Fox,” the Dolphin said;
 Lord Fox was gaily dressed in red,
 And he took Isabel’s right hand
 As she stepped out upon the land.



“I am the Queen’s Prime Minister,”
 Lord Fox said, as he bowed to her,
 With grave and stately courtesy.
 “Her Majesty bade me to be
 In waiting and to welcome you
 As it delights me now to do.”

XVII

THE KIND QUEEN

Before the Queen they both stood now
 And Lord Fox made his gravest bow.
 While Isabel dropped on one knee
 Before her gracious Majesty.

"Arise, my dear, I wish you well,"
 The Queen said then to Isabel,
 "I'm very glad you came, my dear,
 For I am often lonesome here
 With only foxes, geese and hares,
 Whales, dolphins, tigers, lions and bears,
 And while they love me, as you see,
 I do need human company."

XVIII

THE QUEEN'S CABINET

"Excuse me, dear," she said, "if yet
 You have not met my cabinet.
 Lord Fox, you know, and from his eye
 You will observe he's very sly;
 But slyness is a trait, you know,
 Of great Prime Ministers, and so
 I need his counsel if I mean
 To be a quite successful Queen.
 As for the rest—Sir Lion there,
 Sir Owl, Sir Tiger and Sir Bear,
 And many more, some later day
 You'll meet them in a formal way."

"You will observe I call them 'Sir',"
 The Queen said, half aside, to her,
 "It's such a little thing, you see,
 But thrills them with much dignity."

XIX

THE BEAR POLICEMAN

Sir Bear approached the Queen, all dressed
In blue brass-buttoned coat and vest,
With yellow trousers, piped with red,



And a brass helmet on his head.
About his waist a belt he wore
With brilliant buckles, back and fore;
He shouted many a gruff command,
And swung a great club in his hand
To show the crowds about that he
Was one in high authority.

XX

A STOUT OLD CHAP

"Sir Bear is my policeman," said
The Queen, who smiled and bowed her head.
"He's such a stout old chap and gruff
I cannot praise him half enough.
At night you'll see him marching by
My palace with his watchful eye,
On every being round about
Until the lights are all put out.

He's very proud of his great coat
And helmet, as perchance you note,
And if you're ever out at night
'Twere well to keep Sir Bear in sight,
For at the slightest sign of harm
You'll have at hand his strong right arm
Of which my subjects, far and near,
Stand always in right wholesome fear."

XXI

THE QUEEN'S CARRIAGE

Now drew the Queen's state carriage near,
Drawn by six graceful, milk-white deer.
Sir Bear cried gruff commands and loud,
And made way for it through the crowd.

The carriage was all gold and white
 That gleamed and glittered in the light.
 The wheels were made of pearl and shell,
 Much handsomer than I can tell.

XXII

THE SNAIL COACHMAN

Sir Lion and Sir Tiger rode
 As footmen with them, in the mode
 Of kings and queens, and on the box
 Where sat the driver rode Lord Fox.

“You will no doubt be quite surprised
 To find wild beasts so civilized,”
 The Queen observed, “but have no fear,
 Sir Lion and Sir Tiger here
 I’ve trusted time and time again
 And find them perfect gentlemen.
 They get enough to eat, you see,
 So there’s no need of eating me.
 And if they harmed me, on the spot
 They’d be, as traitors should be—shot.

You see, Sir Bear thinks to provide
 Eight Bears as escort on each side,
 So I’m as safe as Queen can be,
 Each has his musket, as you see.
 And Snail, the driver on the box
 Who sits in front there with Lord Fox,

Is very careful, for you know
 A Snail's proverbially slow,
 And that is how he comes to be
 The coachman to my Majesty,
 I do not wish at all to wreck
 My coach and break my precious neck."

XXIII

THE QUEEN IS AMUSED

"It's all so strange," said Isabel,
 "And yet I like it very well,
 Although I feel a little queer
 With all these animals so near.
 I saw a lion once before
 And tiger too, and heard them roar,
 When I was at a tender age,
 But they were in a circus cage.
 But never did I think to ride
 With one of each of them outside.
 I should dislike to have," said she
 "One of the two outside of me."

And then the Queen laughed till a tear
 Rolled down her cheek. "Oh, dear! Oh, dear!"
 She cried, "I have not laughed before
 Like that in quite a year or more.
 I would not ever once have guessed
 You'd make me such a splendid jest.
 But I must have a care," she sighed,
 "A queen must be so dignified!"

XXIV

THE LAMPLIGHTER GIRAFFE

'Twas getting dusk and now the lights
Came on as they will do o'nights.
"Look out, my dear," the Queen observed
"And you will see how I am served:
The street lamps there so tall and bright
Are lighted promptly every night
By Sir Giraffe, whose height is such
He does not need a ladder much.

He marches east, west, north and south
With lighted tapers in his mouth
And without any noise or fuss
He lights our gas lamps all for us.
And equally with ease about
The peep of dawn he turns them out.
So I've appointed him to be
Lamplighter to my Majesty.
No one giraffe you've ever seen
Who was lamplighter to a queen,
I'm very sure," the Queen declared.

"I never, never should have dared
To dream that such a thing could be,"
Cried Isabel, surprisedly,
As she looked out upon the street
Where the Giraffe strode on his beat



And with his taper burning bright
Set every gas lamp soon alight.

“Giraffes would never do at all
For housework, since they are so tall,
They’d be quite apt to bump their ears
And knock down all the chandeliers.
Sometimes I use them though to clean
The outside windows,” said the Queen.
“For they can reach three stories high
With sponge and brush and not half try.

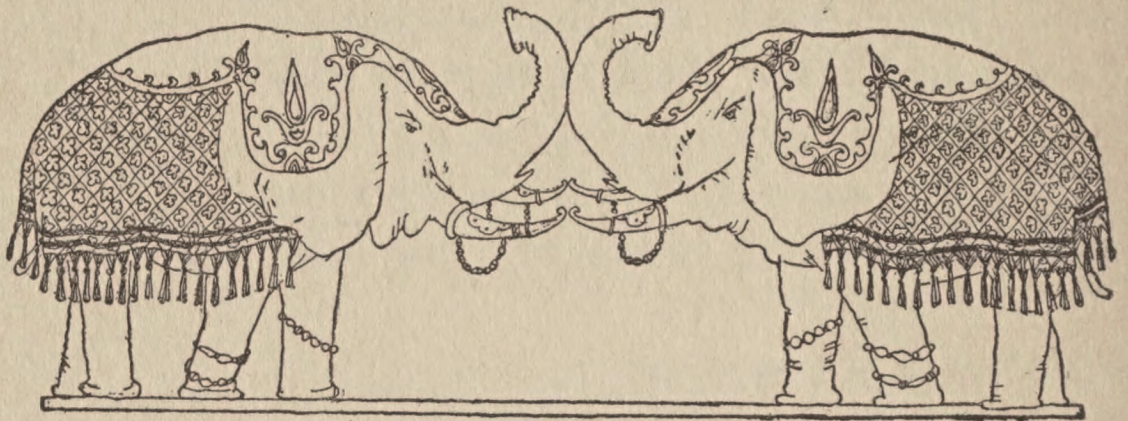
Be sure you never try to chaff
An old and dignified giraffe,
They’re so stiff-necked and that is why
They hold their heads so very high.”

XXV

THE JEWELLED ELEPHANTS

They neared the Palace, gleaming white,
Ablaze from roof to ground with light.
Two mighty elephants swung wide
The massive gates on either side,
Then knelt, each on a bended knee,
In homage to her Majesty.
Both their great trunks uplifted were,
To form an archway over her.

Each wore a gorgeous robe of red,
Embroidered with rich golden thread,
While their white tusks were all aflame
With gems of every size and name.
And every color, tint and hue
That sparkled red and green and blue.



“I’ll wager you have never seen
Such tusks as those,” declared the Queen,
“I had them set with precious gems
To sparkle just like diadems.
A jeweled elephant, you know,
Is something few real Queens can show.
Indeed, it’s something that I doubt
If many Queens have thought about.”

“I’d like to see them very well
In a parade,” said Isabel,
“But I suppose with thieves about
Someone might pry the gems all out.”

“That’s why they never go outside
The palace grounds,” the Queen replied.
“For tusks like those are very rare
And worth a fortune everywhere.”

XXVI

THE GIANT FIREFLIES

They passed the gates and wound about
The gravelled roadway, in and out,
Where giant fireflies at play
Made everything as light as day.

“I love the soft and gentle light
Of giant fireflies by night,”
The Queen observed. “You see, by day
We keep them safely put away,
And then at night we let them out
Among the trees and all about
They dart and light my grounds for me,
Oh, very economically!
As you will see, they’re very tame
And I know all of them by name.”

She put her jeweled finger through
The carriage window, quick there flew
A firefly and lighted there
And cast so bright and red a glare
That Isabel in her surprise
Put both hands up before her eyes.

“How large it is,” cried Isabel.
“That is because we feed them well,”
The Queen replied. “We’ve come to know
The more they eat the more they glow.”

You can't expect much light, say I,
From any half-starved firefly."

XXVII

THE QUEEN'S PALACE

They reached the Palace door and now
Lord Fox made them his gravest bow,
And helped them down; the door swung wide
And Isabel walked in beside
The Queen, who shut the Palace door
And threw her crown upon the floor.

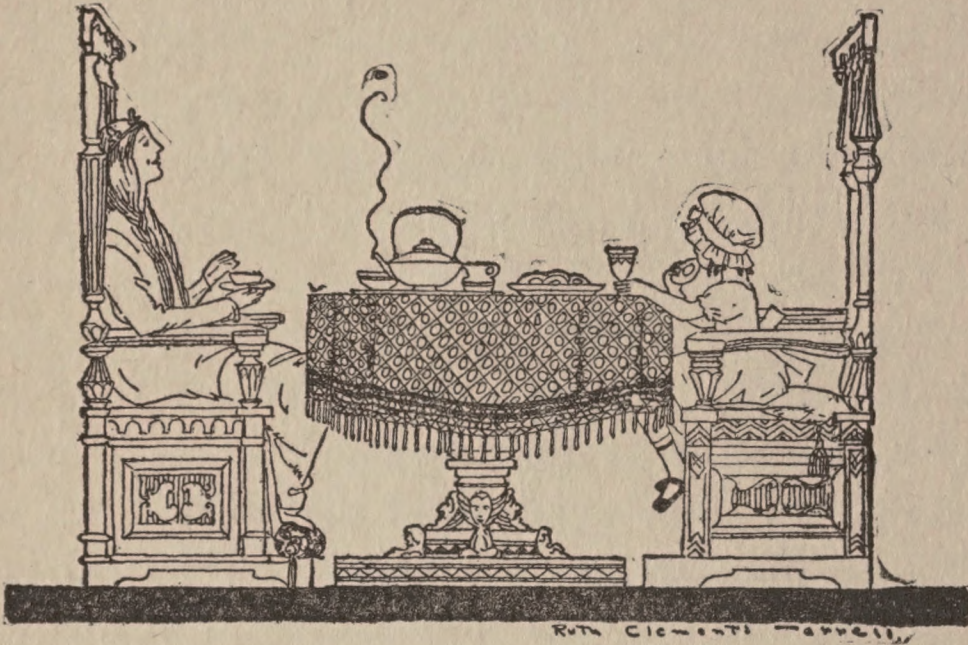
"I'm sure you're hungry, dear," said she,
"So let us have a cup of tea,
A bit of meat and plate of bread
Before it's time to go to bed."

XXVIII

THE GRAVE STORKS

She touched a bell, as queens may do,
And two Grave Storks walked slowly through
The room and laid the table soon
With cloth and silver, cup and spoon.
They spread the cloth smooth with their wings
And in their bills brought many things
Such as a queen might have for tea,
Then stood and waited patiently.

Upon each little feathered head
 A dainty cap of lace was spread,
 And each one at the serving bore
 A tiny apron down before.



“The Stork is such a solemn bird,”
 The Queen said as she deftly stirred
 A lump of sugar in her tea.
 “He lends an air of dignity
 To every simple meal he serves.
 See how he quietly observes
 My slightest need—no butler could
 Excel these birds in serving food.”

The Storks watched all the time they ate,
 Laid sandwiches upon each plate,
 And moved so stilly in and out
 You would not know they were about.
 And when the meal was done they cleared
 The table soon and disappeared.

XXIX

ISABEL GROWS TIRED

"And now, my dear," observed the Queen,
 "You're very tired, that's plainly seen,
 You've come by land and sea so far
 I do not wonder that you are.
 So I will send you off to bed
 Where you may rest your little head
 Upon the pillow through the night
 And be tomorrow fresh and bright.
 My maid, the Goose, will light the way,
 Up to the chamber, so I'll say
 Good-night, and may the bright moon's beams
 Bring you sweet rest and happy dreams."

XXX

A WONDERFUL DAY

"Good-night, dear Queen," said Isabel.
 "I do not know you very well,
 But this much I do want to say,
 I've had a splendid time today.
 I never, never thought to see
 A Naval Dolphin such as he,
 Nor did I ever see before
 A Whale who was a Commodore.

Lord Fox was more than twice polite,
Sir Bear made such a splendid sight
In his bright uniform of blue,
And yellow,—he was pleasant too.
Sir Lion and Sir Tiger were
So kind I almost heard them purr,
And your state carriage was so queer,
And quaint with its six milk-white deer.
Your coachman Snail, sedate and slow
Made me not once afraid. And, Oh!
My friends at home will think I chaff
When I tell of the tall Giraffe,
The only one I've ever seen
Who was lamplighter to a Queen.

The jeweled Elephants, how bright
Their great tusks sparkled in the light.
The giant Fireflies, how they glow
And glitter and fly to and fro.
And, last of all, the storks, so grave,
Who served the tea for us and gave
Me sandwiches and cakes and things
And brushed the crumbs off with their wings.

It's all so wonderful I seem
To have been walking in a dream,
So if you'll kiss me, Queen," she said
"I think I'd better go to bed."

XXXI

THE HOUSEMAID GOOSE

So then the Goose came tripping down
 The stair, in housemaid's cap and gown,
 With a great candlestick and marched
 Up the great stairway primly starched
 And white as snow; she held the door
 While Isabel walked in before
 To the bed-chamber snowy white
 Where she would lie to sleep that night.

Maid Goose turned down the counterpane,
 Fluffed both the pillows up again,
 When she had first set down the light,
 Then turned and gravely said: "Good-night!"

"What will they think?" mused Isabel,
 "When I go back sometime and tell
 How once a Goose-maid, starched and white
 Put me in bed and said 'Good-night.'"
 And while her wonder still was deep
 She closed her eyes and fell asleep.

XXXII

THE STORK BRINGS BREAKFAST

When Isabel awoke again
 She heard the little clock strike ten;

"Dear me!" she cried, "I fear I kept
 The breakfast waiting while I slept.
 She sprang from bed and quickly dressed
 Refreshed by such a splendid rest,
 And then she heard a rap once more
 Upon her white bed-chamber door,
 And when she opened it there stood
 A Stork with rolls and breakfast food
 And other dainties on a tray,
 Arranged in such a tempting way.

"You're very, very kind," she cried,
 "You're welcome, dear," the Stork replied,
 "And when you've done, just ring the bell.
 I hope you rested very well.
 Her Majesty, the Queen, presents
 Her very kindest compliments,
 And bids you forth to jolly fun
 Whatever time your breakfast's done."

"Pray tell the Queen I wish her well,
 I'll come straight down," said Isabel.

XXXIII

THE DANCING TURTLES

The Queen sat underneath a tree
 Upon a rustic throne, where she
 Made room for Isabel beside
 Her, for the throne was very wide.

Before her in the sunny grass
She watched a score of turtles pass
With measured tread and very slow,
The way that turtles always go.

The shell each wore upon his back
Was polished such a lustrous black,
It shone like purest ebony,
Such turtles as you seldom see.
Each turtle, too, was gaily bound
With satin ribbons twice around
From front to back and side to side,
And in the middle they were tied
Into a quite enormous bow.

“I had them decorated so
Because I like bright colors well,”
The Queen observed to Isabel.
“And now,” she said, “you have a chance
To see a score of turtles dance,
Upon the soft and sunny green,
A sight that’s very seldom seen.”

“I never knew,” said Isabel,
“A turtle with that heavy shell
Could dance at all. I’ve seen them made,
In soup but never on parade.
And turtles in a soup tureen
Could never dance upon the green.”

“Quite right you are,” the Queen observed,
“But ones like these are never served
In soup because they chance to be
The Dancing Turtles, don’t you see,
A kind that’s very, very rare
And not discovered everywhere.”

XXXIV

THE STRANGE QUARTET

Now with a quiet step and slow
Two cats, a magpie and a crow
Came down from the white palace door
And perched upon a rail before
The Queen and Isabel, and soon
Struck up a queer and plaintive tune.

“Some think their singing is so queer,
But I confess I like to hear
The songs they sing,” the Queen declared,
“No time or effort has been spared
To make their singing voices all
Harmonious and classical.
That cats have voices and the crow
And magpie, as you surely know,
There never was a bit of doubt,
The trouble is to bring them out.”

XXXV

A TURTLE DANCE

Now all the turtles in the crowd
Of turtles rose and gravely bowed,
To left and right about and soon
Were gaily tripping to the tune.
They marched by twos and marched by threes,
Their ribbons fluttering in the breeze,
They circled in and circled out,
Upon the greensward roundabout.

They danced the dances Isabel
Had learned to dance, and danced them well,
With neither awkwardness nor faults,
The schottische, polka, glide and waltz.

"It's quite refreshing," said the Queen
"To see them dancing on the green,
Because it helps me bear the weight
Of my great crown and cares of state."

"I've seen trained dogs and cats as well,
And seals and bears," said Isabel,
"I've seen a dog turn somersaults,
But never saw a turtle waltz.

I wish my friends at home could be
Here on the palace grounds with me,

And see these turtles dance. Just think,
Their shells are polished black as ink,
With streaming ribbons back and fore,
And tripping gaily by the score."

"It only shows," the Queen replied,
"What we could all do if we tried,
In making turtles glad all through
Instead of making them in stew."

XXXVI

DOCTOR WISE OWL'S SCHOOL

"Now," said the Queen, "it is my rule
To visit Doctor Wise Owl's school.
It's right out in the open air,
And we have desks and schoolbooks there,
And slates and blackboards—all of these
Beneath the boughs of leafy trees.

Of Doctor Owl you may have heard,
He's such a very wise old bird,
So full of knowledge that I doubt
If it could keep from oozing out.
He's taught so long he knows the trick
Of teaching cats arithmetic,
And other animals as well.
They learn from him to parse and spell,
Draw pictures of a flower or tree
And do real hand embroidery.

He teaches parrots how to speak
French, German, Spanish, Latin, Greek,
For he has in his wise old head
All languages alive and dead.
And you may wonder what's the use
Of mathematics to a goose,
Or complex fractions to a cat
But Doctor Owl decides all that.
Why teach a dog a silly trick
When he might learn arithmetic,
Or have him stand upon his head
When he might learn to spell instead?

You will be much surprised," she cried,
"To see one add two columns wide,
And when that simple task is through
To put down one and carry two.
Why have a pig squeal under gates
When he might better name the States?
And all our animals must be
Much better for geography.
For then each one can tell his name,
And also from what land he came,
And if he should get lost could then
Take steps to get back home again."

XXXVII

THE SPELLING DOG

"I never knew a dog to spell,
 Although I've known some very well,"
 Said Isabel. "That's, as a rule,
 Because they've never gone to school,"
 The Queen replied. "When they want cake
 Or bones or things we always make
 Them spell it out—it's sometimes slow
 But thus we find how much they know."

XXXVIII

THE ANIMAL SCHOOL

Now they both came where they could see
 A hollow in a great oak tree,
 And in the hollow, grave and wise,
 Sat Doctor Owl. His, big, round eyes
 Through great horn-spectacles looked out,
 Upon his pupils round about.
 The desks were placed in rows on rows
 Straight down in front of his hooked nose,
 And in the seats before him sat
 The Crow, the Monkey and the Cat.
 The Pig, the Ostrich and the Hare,
 The Dog, the Lion and the Bear.
 And every kind of beast and bird
 Of which you ever, ever heard.

XXXIX

THE CIPHERING PIG

“The pig is at the blackboard now,
So watch him close and you’ll see how
He learns to cipher,” said the Queen,
“Few persons that I know have seen
A pig up to the blackboard walk
And cipher with a piece of chalk.”

Then Doctor Wise Owl turned to look
Inside the covers of his book:
“How much are one and two?” said he.
The pig as quickly grunted: “Three!”
And with a crayon set it down
As you would do at school in town.

“Quite right!” said Doctor Owl. “Quite right!”
I see you’ve studied over night,
Tomorrow I will have you do
The greater sum of two and two.”

XL

THE STUPID GOOSE

“Aha, you have the same excuse,”
Said Doctor Wise Owl to the Goose.
“Each time I give you sums to do
You say they are too hard for you.”

And always give the same excuse,
That you can't learn since you're a goose.
The trouble is you like to roam
And will not take your schoolbooks home,
And you play hookey often, too,
To go in swimming—yes, you do!
You and the brown duck ran away
And went in swimming yesterday,
For see—beneath your wings how wet
The feathers there are, even yet.
So put the dunce cap on your head!”
“I am a dunce,” the dunce cap said,
In big, black letters. “Such a scene
Is well worth seeing,” said the Queen.
“The Goose is quite a stupid bird,”
Said Isabel. “I've often heard,
But never did I know they wore
A dunce cap with such words before;
I'd think he'd simply die of shame
To wear a dunce cap with his name.”

XLI

THE PARROT CLASS

Next came the parrots, red and green;
“The Reading Class,” observed the Queen,
“They love to read their lessons right
And learn with verses to recite.

I think you'll be much pleased to hear
The parrot class recite, my dear,
I often sit here while they do
And get much pleasure from it, too."

The Parrots perched upon a rail
All balanced nicely, head and tail,
And waited Doctor Wise Owl's word
Before one of them spoke or stirred.

"Green Parrot, please!" the Wise Owl said,
Green Parrot promptly raised his head
And read a poem loud and clear
Too long for me to set down here.
And hardly needed once to look
Upon the pages of his book.

"How well he reads," said Isabel.
"I could not read it half as well."
"Sometimes when I can't sleep at night
I have him read me or recite
Some fairy stories and his deep
Voice puts me quickly sound asleep,"
Explained the Queen to Isabel,
"He loves those fairy tales so well
I often find him in a nook
Of my bedchamber with a book."

Then all the parrots one by one
Read till the reading class was done,

And words they did not know right well
 The Owl made them pronounce and spell.
 And afterwards he made them speak
 Some words in Latin and in Greek
 To show how learned and how wise
 A parrot can be if he tries.

“It’s wonderful how much they know,”
 Cried Isabel. “Quite so! Quite so!”
 Agreed the Queen. “They never squawk
 With simple parrot baby talk
 Like ‘Polly wants a cracker, please.’
 And then repeat their A B C’s.
 They read big books, as you can see
 Whose words might puzzle you and me.”

XLII

THE TIMID MOUSE

The timid mouse sat in the grass,
 The smallest pupil in the class,
 And when he came up to recite
 He shivered dismally with fright,
 To see the Great Cat watching him
 With eyes all red around the rim.

The Wise Owl saw the hungry look:
 “You pay attention to your book,”
 He said severely to the cat,
 “We’ve all had quite enough of that.”

He quieted the mouse's fears
 By boxing both the Great Cat's ears.
 "Stop licking your two front feet, please,
 They smell suspiciously like cheese,"
 The Owl said to the Mouse. "The rule
 Is not to nibble cheese in school,
 A rule, it seems you never learned,
 For every time my back is turned
 I find you nibbling cheese and rind,
 No wonder you are much behind
 In all your studies—you may stay
 An hour after school each day,
 And for each time you've nibbled cheese
 Today, repeat your A B C's."

XLIII

THE BLACK BEAR COOKS

"The Black Bear makes a splendid cook,"
 The Queen said then. "And if you look
 You'll see a class of them snap beans,
 Prepare potatoes, peas and greens.
 You see they wear white coats and caps
 And hold their tin pans in their laps,
 To snap the beans in or to slice
 Potatoes to be crisp and nice.
 Instead of having idle bears
 We teach them to sweep down the stairs,
 To put the pots and kettles on,
 Scrub kitchen floors and mow the lawn.

"I'm sure not very many queens
 Have ever seen a bear string beans,"
 Said Isabel, "or learn to cook
 Such things correctly from a book."
 "Most bears have never had a chance,
 The most they've learned is how to dance,"
 Replied the Queen, "or growl in pits,
 And make a living by their wits.
 But you can see quite plainly now
 A bear can cook if he learns how!"

XLIV

SCHOOL OUT

Now school was out, the lessons through,
 And all the pupils, two by two,
 Went marching forth, the Pig, the Bear,
 The Lion, the Monkey and the Hare.
 The Camel and the Elephant,
 The Mouse, the Squirrel and the Ant.
 The Reindeer and the Kangaroo,
 The Dog, the Tiger and the Gnu,
 And many others, great and small
 Till you could scarcely count them all.

Then Doctor Wise Owl blinked his eyes:
 "It's very tiresome being wise,"
 He said and blinked his eyes again.
 Gave a great sleepy yawn and then
 Fell sound asleep as he could be
 In the great hollow of the tree.

XLV

ISABEL ASKS A QUESTION

"Good Queen, I wish," said Isabel
 "If it's no secret you might tell
 How all these wonders came to be
 That here on every hand I see.
 Why Turtles dance, how Pigs may talk
 And cipher with a bit of chalk,
 How Storks and Geese so deftly serve,
 Why Lions speak—all I observe
 Is such a puzzling thing, you see,
 Unless you solve the mystery.

XLVI

THE QUEEN'S STORY

"One time a thousand years ago,
 Or maybe more for all I know,"
 The Queen said, as they rose and walked
 Far in the green wood while they talked,
 "A king lived in this very land
 With courtiers on every hand,
 Who had a daughter, sweet and fair,
 With deep blue eyes and golden hair,
 So beautiful we'll never see
 Another Princess such as she.
 One day a Prince, so brave and tall,
 Rode straight up to the Palace wall,

With his retainers and he fell
 In love with Princess Isabel,
 And she loved him as well they say,
 And they were wed that very day."

XLVII

THE WITCH'S SPELL

"Her name was just the same as mine,"
 Cried Isabel, with eyes a-shine.
 "Yes," said the Queen, and now you know
 The reason that I love you so.
 But listen now and I will tell
 How the Brave Prince and Isabel
 Were cast beneath a spell, they say,
 Upon their very wedding day.
 How the great kingdom fell apart,
 How the king grieved and broke his heart,
 And evil came upon the land,
 That once had been so great and grand.

XLVIII

THE PRINCE'S WEDDING DAY

"It was a wondrous wedding day,"
 The Queen went on "and all was gay
 The merriest they'd ever seen,
 The children danced upon the green,

And a great wedding feast was spread
 Beneath the blue sky overhead.
 The king sent riders everywhere
 To bid his subjects all be there,
 Because the good king loved them all,
 The rich and poor and great and small."

XLIX

THE BLACK WITCH

"But in this very wood we tread
 Lived a Black Witch, with eyes all red,
 Who brewed by night a poison brew
 In a great pot as witches do.
 Her nose was like a vulture's bill,
 Her face was dark and full of ill,
 And if you saw her out at night
 Her eyes shone with a flaming light
 As though she had live coals instead
 Of eyes like we have in her head
 And she would brew till the foul steam
 Rose from the pot, and sit and scream
 All through the night until she made
 The very birds and beasts afraid."

L

THE POISON BREW

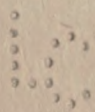
"When the king's riders went to cry
 The wedding feast, they passed her by

And then she screamed as witches do
 With rage and stirred the poison brew
 And muttered vengeance on them all
 Before that very night should fall.

So when the wedding feast was spread,
 The Prince came smiling out and led
 The Princess by the hand, his queen,
 And all sat down upon the green.
 Just then two pages rolled a cask
 Of gold, which was no easy task,
 Upon the green and set it up
 Before them with a golden cup.

“The Fairy Bountiful did ask
 Us two to roll the golden cask
 Up to the wedding feast,” they cried,
 “It has a gold cup on its side,
 And Fairy wine within and who
 Shall drink it while the sky is blue
 Shall have good fortune and ’twill bless
 Each day with joy and happiness.”

So then they drank—each lifted up
 Filled with the wine, the golden cup.
 Alas! Alas! They never knew
 It was the witch’s poison brew.
 For she had sent the cask of gold,
 And the two pages who had rolled
 The cask up to the feast were sprites,
 Who helped her stir the brew o’ nights.



LI

WHAT THE BLACK WITCH DID

And now there came a wondrous change
Upon the scene, so weird and strange
You would not think such things could be
Unless you had been there to see.
Each one who had come there to feast
Became some kind of bird and beast,
And in their horror and surprise
Filled all the air with shrieks and cries.

Some were turned into cackling fowls,
Some into swans, some into owls,
Some into mice and cats and ants
Giraffes and bears and elephants.
And every kind of bird and beast
From greatest to the very least.

All but the King who sat apart
And looked with heavy aching heart
Upon his subjects, great and small,
Saw birds and beasts and that was all.
With anguish then aloud he cried
And of a broken heart he died.
And as his eldest daughter, down
To me there came the robes and crown."

LII

“The Princess, Oh, did she fare well?
I hope she did,” cried Isabel.
The good Queen brushed away a tear:
“Alas!” she cried, “not so, my dear!
She and the Prince, as I have told,
Became two swans with plumage gold,
Whose fate it is to live until
Some one shall break the spell of ill
And by some magic set them free
To be just as they used to be.
A Prince and Princess, tall and fair,
Each with blue eyes and golden hair.”

“And will they never break the spell?
I pray they do!” said Isabel.
“I cannot say,” the Queen replied.
“The Wicked Witch, before she died,
Threw in the sea a golden shell,
And that alone could break the spell.
But who could hope to find?” said she,
“One golden shell in all the sea?”

LIII

“The Golden Swans—Oh, Queen, I pray
Will you not tell me where are they?”
Cried Isabel, “I’d like to see
Them if I might, dear Queen,” said she.

"We're going now," the Queen replied,
 "To see them; on the water wide
 You'll see them swim about as though
 Their own sad story they might know.
 And sometimes you will hear them sing,
 A sad and melancholy thing
 It is to hear, as though their wrongs
 And troubles they'd put into songs."

They came now to the sandy beach
 Where far as any eye could reach
 Was only water, blue and clear,
 And, lo! the golden swans came near,
 Such pretty and such graceful things,
 With golden sides and back and wings.

"Oh! Oh!" cried Isabel, "how bright
 Their plumage is in this clear light
 I never saw such swans before!"
 "In all the world there are no more
 I am quite sure," the Queen replied,
 "The Black Witch made but two—and died!"

LIV

THE QUEEN'S DESPAIR

"I wish indeed," said Isabel,
 "That I might find the Golden Shell,
 And break the evil spell at last

The Wicked Black Witch on them cast.”

“I wish you might,” the Queen replied,
“For it would give the Prince his bride
And such a kingdom you would see
As I have told there used to be.
With lords and ladies, gaily dressed
To do their sovereign’s behest.

And all these animals would be
Such human folk and kind as we,
The creatures you have met today
Would cast their present shapes away
And once again would all be well
And merry as a marriage bell.
But how can we expect,” said she,
“To find one shell in all the sea?”

So saying, with a weary sigh
The Queen sank on a bench near by.
“I think,” she said, “if you will keep
Me watch a while I’ll go to sleep
Upon the beach—I often do
When all my queenly tasks are through.”
“Oh, do!” said Isabel, “I pray
For it is such a perfect day
The grandest I have ever seen,
And fit, I’m sure, for any queen.”
And as she stayed a while and kept
A watch, the Queen lay down and slept.

LV

THE MELANCHOLY OYSTER

Now while she watched the Queen near by
She heard a queer and plaintive cry
And then she heard the cry again
As of some creature much in pain.
And when she looked about to see
What kind of creature it might be,
An oyster on the beach she spied
Washed up, perhaps, upon the tide.
And from his cries he seemed to be
The saddest oyster you could see
Who groaned and groaned and groaned again
As though he were in dreadful pain.

While much to Isabel's surprise
Great tears fell fast from both his eyes,
And then he spoke, and Isabel
Was more surprised to hear how well,
For words of speech quite seldom come
From oysters, since they're often dumb.

LVI

THE GLORIOUS PEARL

"Pray what is wrong?" asked Isabel.
"I have a pain inside my shell,"

The melancholy oyster cried,
 "And since I cannot look inside
 My shell there is no way, you see,
 To find what may be wrong with me.
 I think perhaps my lunch or tea
 Somehow has disagreed with me,
 So will you look inside my shell?"
 "Indeed I will," said Isabel.
 "Just turn a little on your side,"
 And as the oyster did she pried
 His shell apart and there she saw
 A pearl that filled her full of awe.
 It was so large and pure and white
 And shone so brightly in the light.

LVII

ISABEL FINDS THE GOLDEN SHELL

"Oh such a pearl!" cried Isabel,
 And took it from the oyster's shell,
 But as she did it fell apart
 And there within its pearly heart
 She saw a tiny golden shell,
 Such as the Witch cast in her spell.

She took the shell within her hand,
 And then she saw through all the land
 A change, Oh, such a wondrous change!
 Nor could I ever tell how strange.

Great towers rose, so tall and high
 They seemed to touch the very sky,
 She saw fine castles white and gold,
 As there had been in days of old.
 She looked out over the blue sea
 Where she thought the two Swans should be.
 No longer they swam to and fro,—
 A Prince and Princess bending low
 Kissed both her hands. The Prince was fair,
 The Princess with such golden hair,
 It shone and glittered in the light,
 All yellow, beautiful and bright.

No Prince was handsomer than he,
 No Princess half as fair as she.
 And then from all about there came
 Great lords and ladies, known to fame;
 In silks and velvet, richly dressed,
 To do their sovereign's behest.

LVIII

THE SPELL IS BROKEN

Now you must know that Isabel
 At last had found the golden shell,
 Which like a tiny jewel lay
 Within the pearl she found that day.
 And so it was that Isabel
 Broke the Black Witch's evil spell.

And set the Prince and Princess free
 To be as happy as could be
 With palaces on every hand
 And many lords and ladies grand.
 And all was beautiful once more
 As everything had been before.
 They drank the Witch's poison brew—
 Quite wonderful, I think—don't you?

LIX

THE GRAND BALL

Then they waked up the Queen to tell
 How they had found the Golden Shell,
 Inside the pearl the oyster brought
 Up from the sea, as like as not.
 The good Queen cried with joy to see
 The kingdom as it used to be,
 The Prince and Princess, tall and fair,
 To see the lords and ladies there.
 And in the Palace all that night
 A thousand lights burned, glad and bright.
 And there was such a ball as we
 Can never, never hope to see
 Where Isabel was gaily dressed,
 And danced with joy like all the rest.

Then just before the cock's shrill crow,
 The lords and ladies all bowed low,

To Isabel and kissed her hand,
 And why, you surely understand!
 Because she found the Golden Shell,
 And broke the Witch's evil spell.

"But now, good friends," cried Isabel,
 "It's time for me to say farewell,
 And if you'll get a boat for me
 I'll sail back home across the sea,
 To tell the wondrous things I've seen,
 I've had a splendid time, dear Queen,
 But really I must say good-day,
 My folks will think I've run away."

LX

ISABEL BACK HOME AGAIN

I wonder if you know how she
 Got home all safe and sound from sea:
 She merely opened both her eyes
 And very much to her surprise
 Was there upon the sand as though
 She'd never been away, you know.

Quick then she scampered home to tell
 About the Queen, the Golden Shell,
 And how the lords and ladies grand
 Had bowed to her and kissed her hand,
 Because she set the kingdom free
 From the Black Witch's spell, you see.

LXI

THE END

So now you know how Isabel
Once found the tiny Golden Shell,
The Black Witch cast into the sea
And set the Prince and Princess free.
And someday, maybe, you and I
Upon the sunny sand may lie,
And go to sleep, as children do,
And make a wondrous journey, too.
And when we wake, have things to tell,
Oh, quite as strange as Isabel!



THE FLIGHT OF THE STICK-
CANDY MAN



Ruth Clements Farnell

THE FLIGHT OF THE STICK CANDY MAN

The Candy Shop Man in the Village of Dee
Once made a big Stick Candy Man,
Out of all sorts of sugar and sweets, and with glee
He laughed from the time he began.
“What fun for the children,” he chuckled and said,
“When they look in my window and see
A whole Candy Man, from his toes to his head,
Such a wonderful sight it will be!”

The Candy Shop Man went to work with his wife
In his shop in the village of Dee,
And never, Oh, never in all of your life
Such a wonderful sight will you see
As the Stick Candy Man that they made in a night,
And they both of them laughed in their glee,
To think what a wonderful, wonderful sight
It would be for the children of Dee.

His head was a gum drop enormously big,
With two rock-candy crystals for eyes;
He wore a cocked hat that was shaped like a fig
Of a great and unusual size.
A body of creamy white sugar he bore
With a chocolate coat roundabout,
Set with peppermint buttons behind and before,
Such a jolly fine fellow and stout.

The Candy Shop Man spun a red sugar sash
With a beautiful bow at one side,
That gave him an air of distinction and dash,
And his cocked hat with ribbons was tied.
They fastened him safely with sharp wooden pegs
To hold him together that way,
And set him up high on two stick candy legs
In the candy shop window one day.

'Twas a wonderful sight for the children of Dee
When they passed by the window that day;
They laughed and they cheered and they shouted
with glee
And bade him to come out and play.
They stayed there so long they were near late for
school,
And when the day's lessons began
They quite forgot all about schoolbook and rule
When they thought of the Stick Candy Man.

And grown folks and parents would stop on their
way
Past the candy shop window to see
The Stick Candy Man with his red sash so gay
In the candy shop window of Dee.
Nobody e'er saw such a coat as he wore,
Such a glossy rich chocolate brown,
With its peppermint buttons behind and before
And its long swallow tails hanging down.



Now he never expected to be any more
Than a candy shop window display,
(For never I've heard in my life time before
Of a candy man running away.)
But somehow one night he felt life in his legs
And his rock candy eyes came to see,
And he found his arms swing on their queen
wooden pegs,
Such a thing as you'd say could not be.

He tilted his fig hat quite far on one side
In the jauntiest, sauciest way,
Then tightened the sash where the big bow was
tied
And kicked up his heels just in play.
He listened but all 'round about him was still,
Not a sign of the Candy Shop man,
So just as dawn came peeping over the hill
He opened the front door and ran.

His stick candy legs were a little bit new
And quite awkward and stiff at the knees,
His long chocolate coattails with mint buttons blew
Behind him and flapped in the breeze;
But he pulled his fig hat tightly down o'er his face
And so fast down the village street ran
For he knew he must run a remarkable race
To escape from the candy shop man.

Quite breathless at last from the race that he ran,
 (For he never had run one before,)
He felt he was safe from the candy shop man,
 But his feet were all blistered and sore,
For a Candy Man's feet are the tenderest kind
 So he laid him down under a tree
With the village, Oh, quite a long distance behind
 And he felt very joyous and free.

“Such a cool, shady spot for a nap,” then he cried,
 As he covered his rock candy eyes
With his fig of a hat where the ribbons were tied,
 But he waked with a start of surprise,
For a big, saucy blackbird perched right on his hat
 For a fig hat's a dainty to prize,
And pecked out great holes from the hat as he sat,
 And near pecked out the rock candy eyes.

“Alack and alas!” cried the Stick Candy Man.

 “If they peck off my hat I can see
They will peck off my head just as soon as they can
 For a gum drop's as sweet as can be.”
Then he shivered and shook with a terrible fright,
 And deep, deep in the green wood he ran,
And he made up his mind that when it should come
 night
 He'd go back to the Candy Shop Man.

But his woe was not over—'twas hardly begun,
As you'll come in a moment to see,
When deep in the shade of the green wood he'd
run

And thought he was safe as could be,
He heard many voices of girls and of boys,
With laughing and shouting and cheers,
Oh, a terrible, terrible, terrible noise
To a Candy Man's eatable ears.

He was still as a mouse, lest they find him in there
And eat him from top to his toe,
And he trembled and shook and he looked every-
where

But alas—there was no place to go.
And he wished, Oh he wished he'd not set out to
roam,

And he bitterly rued that he ran
From the safe place he had in the window at home
With the kind-hearted Candy Shop Man.

His heart beat so loud he was sure they must hear,
As he hid himself close by a tree,
Where he shivered and trembled and heard them
come near

As they played in the wood in their glee;
And then as they started to play Hide and Seek
And darted and scampered and ran
They sped through the green wood and heard a
queer squeak
Of alarm from the Stick Candy Man.

Then they set up a shout and the Candy Man fled
From the wood with a terrified cry
And through the green field that was near them he
sped

For he feared they would eat him, or try;
His striped red legs were all scratched and torn
From the brambles and thorns where he ran,
And he wished twenty times he had never been
born

Or had not been a Stick Candy Man.

Now came all the children with shouts and with
cries,

A score of them, two score and three,
They scarce could believe what they saw with their
eyes

So they set out to catch him—Ah, me!
Through fences they darted, up hillsides they
dashed,

On, on toward the Village of Dee,
And through shallow brooklets with bare feet they
splashed,

To capture and eat him you see.

Now swiftly he sped down the dusty high road
Where the good Farmer Silas drove by
And whistled and sang on the top of his load
When he heard the great clatter and cry;
The Candy Man whizzed like a thunderbolt on

As though on the wings of the wind,
A flash and a great cloud of dust—he was gone,
With the children all coming behind.

Then good Farmer Silas drove madly in chase
Till the pumpkins rolled down from his load,
And big dogs and little ran out of each place
That he passed and gave chase down the road;
Such shouting and barking, such noise and such
cries
Were not heard since the village began,
And people came staring with wide-open eyes
At the chase of the Stick Candy Man.

His rock candy eyes streamed with tears as he sped,
From the dust and the wind, and there blew
A breeze that swept off his fig hat from his head
And he kicked off each marshmallow shoe.
He tore off the coat with a rip and a rent,
And the spun sugar sash that he wore,
Till faster and faster and faster he sped
As no candy man ever before.

The children ate up the great coat that he tore
From his back, all so glossily brown;
Ate the peppermint buttons behind and before
And the long swallow tails hanging down;
They ate the fig hat that blew off of his head,
Ate the marshmallow shoes he'd had on,
'And the sash of spun sugar all gorgeous and red,
Not a crumb of his clothes but was gone.

The villagers heard the great tumult and shout
And they looked on with fear and surprise,
Saw the stick candy legs stride so mightily out,
And the glistening rock candy eyes;
The bare gum drop head—such a creature to see,
On the dusty high road as he ran,
And they'll tell you today in the village of Dee
Of the flight of the Stick Candy Man.

Then chore-boys and hucksters and idlers gave
chase

Through the streets of the Village of Dee,
Till half of the people who lived in the place
Were racing as madly as he.
Through gardens, by hedges, up streets and down
lanes
They chased and they raced and they ran,
Till Oh, there were terrible, terrible pains
In the legs of the Stick Candy Man.

They pelted with missiles his back as he sped,
And once he was sure of his doom,
For a woman ran out from a doorway ahead
And struck at him twice with a broom;
Old men turned about on the streets as they heard
The increasing clatter and cry,
But ere they were able to utter a word
The Stick Candy Man would whizz by.

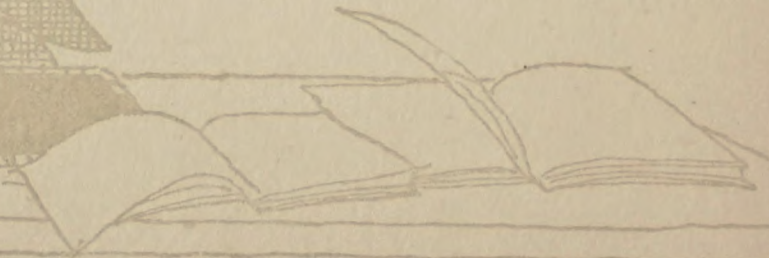
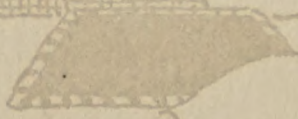
Then at last when he stumbled, with bruised,
blistered feet,
And felt he could not run much more,
He turned in despair in the long, narrow street
And dashed through a wide open door.
"Oh, save me, I pray you," he cried in dismay,
And straightway he staggered and ran
Through the shop whence that morning he'd stolen
away
To the arms of the Candy Shop Man.

The Candy Shop Man closed and bolted the door,
Ere the throng of pursuers came in,
But outside the shop was a terrible roar,
Such a clamor and clatter and din.
So the Stick Candy Man jumped straight into a
pot
Where like syrup the hot taffy ran,
And melted to sugar right there on the spot
Such an end for a Stick Candy Man!

Now the moral of this is, I think, very plain,
That a sailor should stick to the sea,
And a Stick Candy Man has quite nothing to gain,
No matter how bold he may be,
By leaving the place he was fitted to fill,
For it's all very easy to plan,
But the best plans we make will quite often go ill,
As they did with the Stick Candy Man.

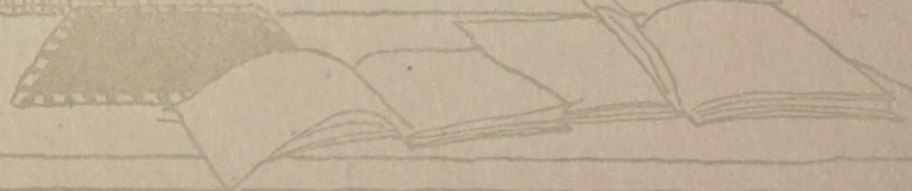








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