

**RILEY  
SONGS O'CHEER**

**JAMES  
WHITCOMB  
RILEY**

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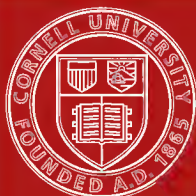
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RILEY  
SONGS O' CHEER

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

WITH PICTURES BY  
WILL VAWTER



NEW YORK  
GROSSET & DUNLAP  
PUBLISHERS

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by

James Whitcomb Riley  
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## DEDICATION

To

BLISS CARMAN

*HE is the morning's poet—  
The bard of mount and moor,  
The minstrel fine of dewy shine,  
The dawning's troubadour:*

*The brother of the bluebird,  
'Mid blossoms, throng on throng,  
Whose singing calls, o'er orchard walls,  
Seem glitterings of song:*

*He meets, with brow uncovered,  
The sunrise through the mist,  
With raptured eyes that range the skies  
And seas of amethyst:*

*The brambled rose clings to him;  
The breezy wood receives  
Him as the guest she loves the best  
And laughs through all her leaves:*

*Pan and his nymphs and dryads  
They hear, in breathless pause,  
This earth-born wight lilt his delight,  
And envy him because . . . .*

*He is the morning's poet—  
The bard of mount and moor,  
The minstrel fine of dewy shine,  
The dawning's troubadour.*

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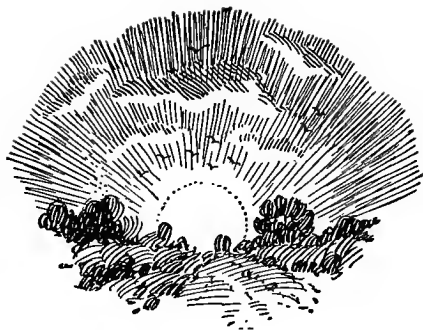
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**RILEY SONGS O' CHEER**



## SONGS O' CHEER

MY GRAMPA he's a-allus sayin',  
    "Sing a song o' cheer!"—  
And, wunst I says "What kind *is* them?"  
    He says,—“The kind to *hear*.—  
'Cause they're the songs that *Nature* sings,  
    In ever' bird that twitters!”  
“Well, *whipperwills* and *doves*,” says I.  
    “Hain't over-cheery critters!”  
“Then don't you sing like *them*,” he says—  
    “Ner *guinny-hens*, my dear—  
Ner *peafowls* nuther (drat the boy!)  
    *You sing a song o' cheer!*”  
I can't sing nothin' anyhow;  
    But, comin' home, to' rds night,  
I kindo'-sorto' kep' a-whistlin'  
    “Old—Bob—White!”



## THE RAPTURE OF THE YEAR

**W**HILE skies glint bright with bluest light  
Through clouds that race o'er field and  
town,  
And leaves go dancing left and right,  
And orchard apples tumble down;  
While school-girls sweet, in lane or street,  
Lean 'gainst the wind and feel and hear  
Its glad heart like a lover's beat,—  
So reigns the rapture of the year.

THE RAPTURE OF THE YEAR

*Then ho! and hey! and whoop-hooray!*  
*Though winter clouds be looming,*  
*Remember a November day*  
*Is merrier than mildest May*  
*With all her blossoms blooming.*

While birds in scattered flight are blown  
Aloft and lost in dusky mist,  
And truant boys scud home alone  
'Neath skies of gold and amethyst;  
While twilight falls, and Echo calls  
Across the haunted atmosphere,  
With low, sweet laughs at intervals,—  
So reigns the rapture of the year.

*Then ho! and hey! and whoop-hooray!*  
*Though winter clouds be looming,*  
*Remember a November day*  
*Is merrier than mildest May*  
*With all her blossoms blooming.*







## THE BLOSSOMS ON THE TREES

**B**LOSSOMS crimson, white, or blue,  
Purple, pink, and every hue,  
From sunny skies, to tintings drowned  
In dusky drops of dew,  
I praise you all, wherever found,  
And love you through and through;—  
*But, Blossoms On The Trees,*  
With your breath upon the breeze,  
There's nothing all the world around  
As half as sweet as you!

THE BLOSSOMS ON THE TREES

Could the rhymer only wring  
All the sweetness to the lees  
Of all the kisses clustering  
In juicy Used-to-bes,  
To dip his rhymes therein and sing  
The blossoms on the trees,—  
“O Blossoms on the Trees,”  
He would twitter, trill, and coo,  
“However sweet, such songs as these  
Are not as sweet as you:—  
For you are *blooming* melodies  
The *eyes* may listen to!”







## GRANNY

**G**RANNY'S come to our house,  
And ho! my lawzy-daisy!  
All the childern round the place  
Is ist a-runnin' crazy!  
Fetched a cake fer little Jake,  
And fetched a pie fer Nanny,  
And fetched a pear fer all the pack  
That runs to kiss their Granny!

Lucy Ellen's in her lap,  
And Wade and Silas Walker  
Both's a-ridin' on her foot,  
And 'Pollos on the rocker;  
And Marthy's twins, from Aunt Marinn's,  
And little Orphant Annie,  
All's a-eatin' gingerbread  
And giggle-un at Granny!

## GRANNY

Tells us all the fairy tales  
Ever thought er wundered —  
And 'bundance o' other stories —  
Bet she knows a hunderd! —  
Bob's the one fer "Whittington,"  
And "Golden Locks" fer Fanny!  
Hear 'em laugh and clap their hands,  
Listenin' at Granny!

"Jack the Giant-Killer" 's good;  
And "Bean-Stalk" 's another! —  
So's the one of "Cinderell'"  
And her old godmother; —  
That-un's best of all the rest —  
Bestest one of any, —  
Where the mices scampers home  
Like we runs to Granny!

Granny's come to our house,  
Ho! my lawzy-daisy!  
All the childern round the place  
Is ist a-runnin' crazy!  
Fetched a cake fer little Jake,  
And fetched a pie fer Nanny,  
And fetched a pear fer all the pack  
That runs to kiss their Granny!







### A HYMB OF FAITH

*So ran the honest, earnest prayer  
Of old Benj. Johnson, pleading there.*

O THOU that doth all things devise  
And fashon fer the best,  
He'p us who sees with mortul eyes  
To overlook the rest.

They's times, of course, we grope in doubt,  
And in afflictions sore ;  
So knock the louder, Lord, without,  
And we'll unlock the door.

Make us to feel, when times looks bad  
And tears in pittty melts,  
Thou wast the only he'p we had  
When they was nothin' else

A HYMB OF FAITH

Death comes alike to ev'ry man  
That ever was borned on earth;  
Then let us do the best we can  
To live fer all life's wurth.

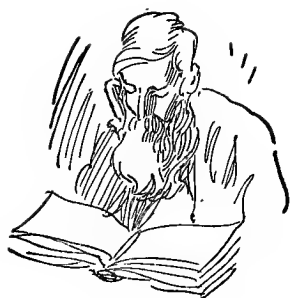
Ef storms and tempusts dred to see  
Makes black the heavens ore,  
They done the same in Galilee  
Two thousand years before.

But after all, the golden sun  
Poured out its floods on them  
That watched and waited fer the One  
Then borned in Bethlyham.

Also, the star of Holy Writ  
Made noonday of the night,  
Whilse other stars that looked at it  
Was envious with delight.

The sages then in wurship bowed,  
From ev'ry clime so fare;  
O, sinner, think of that glad crowd  
That congergated thare!







A HYMB OF FAITH

They was content to fall in ranks  
With One that knowed the way  
From good old Jurden's stormy banks  
Clean up to Jedgmunt Day.

No matter, then, how all is mixed  
In our near-sighted eyes,  
All things is fer the best, and fixed  
Out straight in Paradise.

Then take things as God sends 'em here,  
And, ef we live er die,  
Be more and more contenteder,  
Without a-astin' why.

O Thou that doth all things devise  
And fashon fer the best,  
He'p us who sees with mortul eyes  
To overlook the rest.



### THE LOVELY CHILD

LILIES are both pure and fair,  
Growing midst the roses there—  
Roses, too, both red and pink,  
Are quite beautiful, I think.

But of all bright blossoms — best —  
Purest — fairest — loveliest,—  
Could there be a sweeter thing  
Than a primrose, blossoming?







### AN OLD MAN'S MEMORY

**T**HE delights of our childhood is soon passed away,  
And our gloryus youth it departs,—  
And yit, dead and burried, they's blossoms of May  
Ore theyr medderland graves in our harts.  
So, friends of my bare-footed days on the farm,  
Whether truant in city er not,  
God prosper you, same as He's prosperin' me,  
Whilse your past haint despised er fergot !

AN OLD MAN'S MEMORY

Oh! they's nothin', at morn, that's as grand unto me  
As the glorys of Nachur so fare,—  
With the Spring in the breeze, and the bloom in the trees  
And the hum of the bees ev'rywhere!  
The green in the woods, and the birds in the boughs,  
And the dew spangled over the fields;  
And the bah of the sheep and the bawl of the cows  
And the call from the house to your meals!

Then ho! fer your brekfast! and ho! fer the toil  
That waiteth alike man and beast!  
Oh! it's soon with my team I'll be turnin' up soil,  
Whilse the sun shoulders up in the East  
Ore the tops of the ellums and beeches and oaks,  
To smile his godspeed on the plow,  
And the furry and seed, and the Man in his need,  
And the joy of the swet of his brow!









## MISTER HOP-TOAD

**H**OWDY, Mister Hop-Toad! Glad to see you out!  
Bin a month o' Sund'ys sence I seen you hereabout.  
Kind o' bin a-layin' in, from the frost and snow?  
Good to see you out ag'in, it's bin so long ago!  
Plows like slicin' cheese, and sod's loppin' over even;  
Loam's like gingerbread, and clods's softer'n deceivin'—  
Mister Hop-Toad, honest-true — Springtime — don't  
you love it?  
You old rusty rascal you, at the bottom of it!

Oh, oh, oh!  
I grabs up my old hoe;  
But I sees *you*,  
And s' I, "Ooh-oo!  
Howdy, Mister Hop-Toad! How-dee-do!"

MISTER HOP-TOAD

Make yourse'f more cumfo'bler — square round at your  
ease —

Don't set saggin' slanchwise, with your nose below your  
knees.

Swell that fat old throat o' yourn and lemme see you  
swaller;

Straighten up and h'ist your head! — *You* don't owe a  
dollar! —

Hain't no mor'gage on your land — ner no taxes, nuther;  
*You* don't haf to work no roads — even ef you'd ruther!  
'F I was you, and *fixed* like you, I raily wouldn't keer  
To swop fer life and hop right in the presidential cheer!

Oh, oh, oh!

I hauls back my old hoe;

But I sees *you*,

And s' I, "Ooh-oo!"

Howdy, Mister Hop-Toad! How-dee-do!"

Long about next Aprile, hoppin' down the furry,  
Won't you mind I ast you what 'peared to be the  
hurry? —

Won't you mind I hooked my hoe and hauled you back  
and smiled? —

W'y, bless you, Mister Hop-Toad, I love you like a child!





MISTER HOP-TOAD

S'pose I'd want to 'flict you any more'n what you air?—  
S'pose I think you got no rights 'cept the warts you  
wear?

Hulk, sulk, and blink away, you old bloat-eyed rowdy!—  
Hain't you got a word to say?—Won't you tell me  
“Howdy”?

Oh, oh, oh!

I swish round my old hoe;

But I sees *you*,

And s' I, “Ooh-oo!”

Howdy, Mister Hop-Toad! How-dee-do!”





## LAUGHTER

WITHIN the cosiest corner of my dreams  
He sits, high-throned above all gods that be  
Portrayed in marble-cold mythology,  
Since from his joyous eyes a twinkle gleams  
So warm with life and light it ever seems  
Spraying in mists of sunshine over me,  
And mingled with such rippling ecstasy  
As overleaps his lips in laughing streams.  
Ho! look on him, and say if he be old  
Or youthful! Hand in hand with gray old Time  
He toddled when an infant; and, behold!—  
He hath not aged, but to the lusty prime  
Of babyhood,—his brow a trifle bold—  
His hair a ravelled nimbus of gray gold.



### THE LITTLE-RED-APPLE TREE

**T**HE Little-red-apple Tree!—  
O The Little-red-apple Tree!  
When I was the little-est bit of a boy  
And you were a boy with me!  
The bluebird's flight from the topmost boughs,  
And the boys up there—so high  
That we rocked over the roof of the house  
And whooped as the winds went by!

THE LITTLE-RED-APPLE TREE

Hey! The Little-red-apple Tree!  
With the garden-beds below,  
And the old grape-arbor so welcomingly  
Hiding the rake and hoe!  
Hiding, too, as the sun dripped through  
In spatters of wasted gold,  
Frank and Amy away from you  
And me in the days of old!

The Little-red-apple Tree!—  
In the edge of the garden-spot,  
Where the apples fell so lavishly  
Into the neighbor's lot;—  
So do I think of you alway,  
Brother of mine, as the tree,—  
Giving the ripest wealth of your love  
To the world as well as me.

Ho! The Little-red-apple Tree!  
Sweet as its juiciest fruit  
Spanged on the palate spicily,  
And rolled o'er the tongue to boot,  
Is the memory still and the joy  
Of The Little-red-apple Tree,  
When I was the little-est bit of a boy  
And you were a boy with me!









### WHO BIDES HIS TIME

WHO bides his time, and day by day  
Faces defeat full patiently,  
And lifts a mirthful roundelay,  
However poor his fortunes be,—  
He will not fail in any qualm  
Of poverty — the paltry dime  
It will grow golden in his palm,  
Who bides his time.

WHO BIDES HIS TIME

Who bides his time—he tastes the sweet  
Of honey in the saltiest tear ;  
And though he fares with slowest feet,  
Joy runs to meet him, drawing near ;  
The birds are heralds of his cause ;  
And, like a never-ending rhyme,  
The roadsides bloom in his applause,  
Who bides his time.

Who bides his time, and fevers not  
In the hot race that none achieves,  
Shall wear cool-wreathen laurel, wrought  
With crimson berries in the leaves ;  
And he shall reign a goodly king,  
And sway his hand o'er every clime  
With peace writ on his signet-ring,  
Who bides his time.







## BABYHOOD

**H** EIGH-HO! Babyhood! Tell me where you linger!  
Let's toddle home again, for we have gone astray;  
Take this eager hand of mine and lead me by the finger  
Back to the lotus-lands of the far-away!

Turn back the leaves of life.—Don't read the story.—  
Let's find the pictures, and fancy all the rest;  
We can fill the written pages with a brighter glory  
Than old Time, the story-teller, at his very best.

## BABYHOOD

Turn to the brook where the honeysuckle tipping  
O'er its vase of perfume spills it on the breeze,  
And the bee and humming-bird in ecstasy are sipping  
From the fairy-flagons of the blooming locust-trees.

Turn to the lane where we used to "teeter-totter,"  
Printing little foot-palms in the mellow mould—  
Laughing at the lazy cattle wading in the water  
Where the ripples dimple round the buttercups of gold.

Where the dusky turtle lies basking on the gravel  
Of the sunny sand-bar in the middle tide,  
And the ghostly dragon-fly pauses in his travel  
To rest like a blossom where the water-lily died.

Heigh-ho! Babyhood! Tell me where you linger!  
Let's toddle home again, for we have gone astray;  
Take this eager hand of mine and lead me by the finger  
Back to the lotus-lands of the far-away!







## OUR QUEER OLD WORLD

*Fer them 'at's here in airliest infant stages,  
It's a hard world:*  
*Fer them 'at gits the knucks of boyhood's ages,  
It's a mean world:*  
*Fer them 'at nothin's good enough they're gittin',  
It's a bad world:*  
*Fer them 'at learns at last what's right and fittin',  
It's a good world.*

THE HIRED MAN.

**I**T'S a purty hard world you find, my child —  
It's a purty hard world you find!  
You fight, little rascal! and kick and squall,  
And snort out medicine, spoon and all!  
When you're here longer you'll change yer mind  
And simmer down sorto' half-rickonciled.  
But *now* — Jee!-  
*My!*-mun-nee!  
It's a purty hard world, my child!

OUR QUEER OLD WORLD

It's a purty mean world you're in, my lad —

It's a purty mean world you're in!

We know, of course, in your schoolboy-days

It's a world of too many troublesome ways

Of tryin' things over and startin' ag'in,—

Yit *your* chance beats what your *parents* had.

But *now* — O!

Fire-and-tow!

It's a purty mean world, my lad!

It's a purty bad world you've struck, young chap —

It's a purty bad world you've struck —

But *study* the cards that you hold, you know,

And your hopes will sprout and your mustache grow,

And your store-clothes likely will change your  
luck,

And you'll rake a rich ladybird into yer lap!

But *now*— Doubt

All things out.—

It's a purty mean world, young chap!





OUR QUWER OLD WORLD

It's a purty good world this is, old man —

It's a purty good world this is!

For all its follies and shows and lies —

It's rainy weather, and cheeks likewise,

And age, hard-hearin' and rheumatiz.—

*We're* not a-faultin' the Lord's own plan —

All things jest

At their best.—

It's a purty good world, old man!



## THE FIRST BLUEBIRD

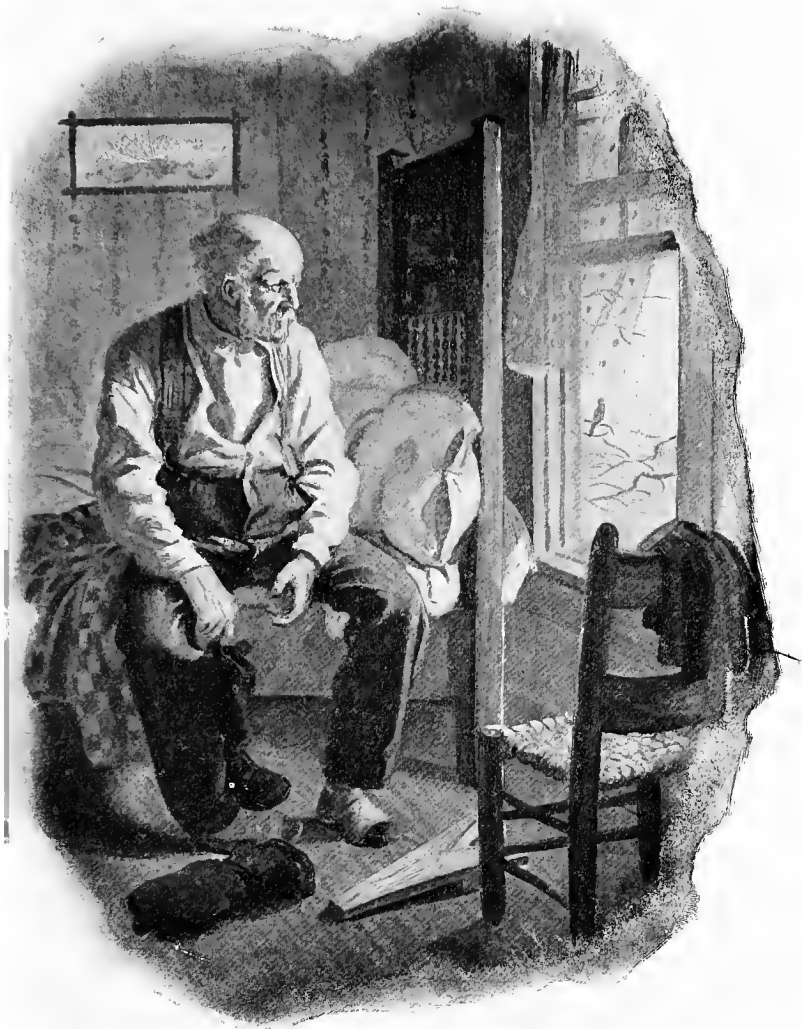
*The very first bluebird of Spring,  
As old Benj. Johnson heard him sing.*

JEST rain and snow! and rain again!  
And dribble! drip! and blow!  
Then snow! and thaw! and slush! and then —  
Some more rain and snow!

This morning I was 'most afeard  
To *wake* up — when, i jing!  
I seen the sun shine out and heerd  
The first bluebird of Spring! —  
Mother she'd raised the winder some; —  
And in acrost the orchurd come,  
Soft as a angel's wing,  
A breezy, treesy, beesy hum,  
Too sweet fer anything!

The winter's shroud was rent a-part —  
The sun bust forth in glee,—  
And when that *bluebird* sung, my hart  
Hopped out o' bed with me!









## MY PHILOSOFY

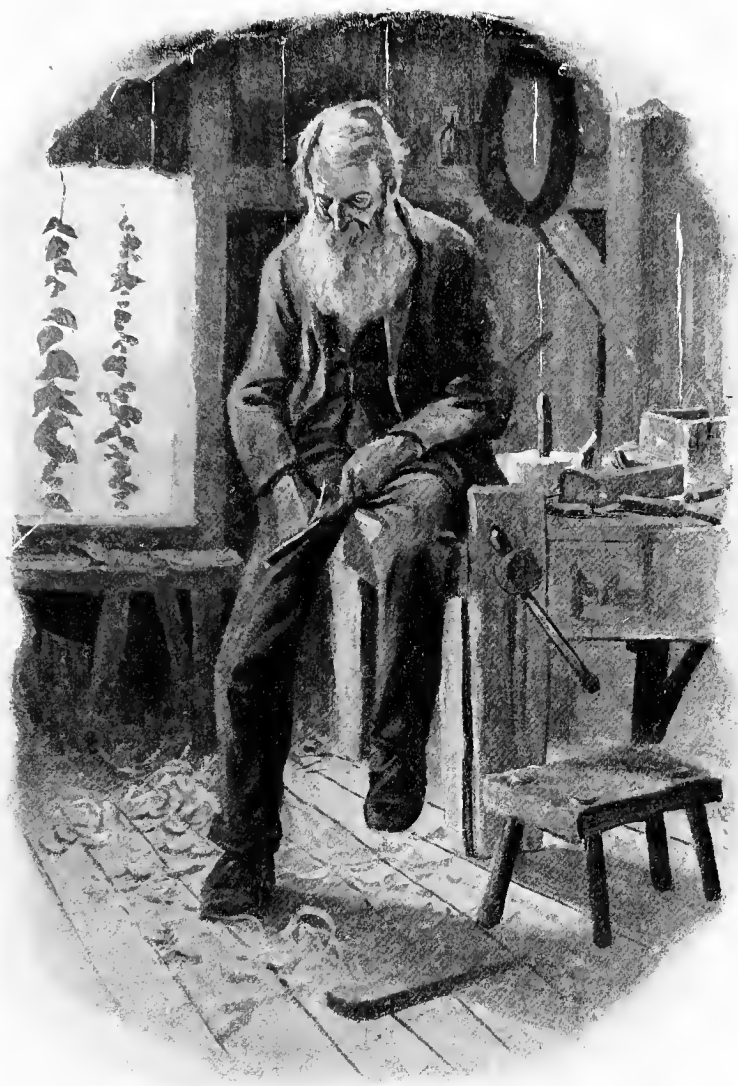
I AIN'T, ner don't p'tend to be,  
Much posted on filosofy;  
But there is times when, all alone,  
I work out idees of my own.  
And of these same there is a tew  
I'd like to jest refer to you—  
Pervidin' that you don't object  
To listen clos't and rickollect.

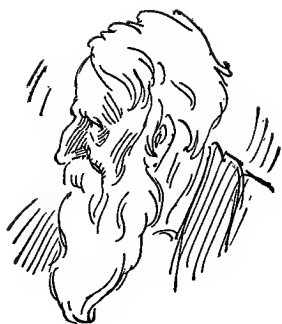
MY PHILOSOFY

I allus argy that a man  
Who does about the best he can  
Is plenty good enough to suit  
This lower mundane institute —  
No matter ef his daily walk  
Is subject fer his neighbor's talk,  
And critic-minds of ev'ry whim  
Jest all git up and go fer him!

I knowed a feller onc't that had  
The yellor-janders mighty bad,—  
And each and ev'ry friend he'd meet  
Would stop and give him some receet  
Fer cuorin' of 'em. But he'd say  
He kindo' thought they'd go away  
Without no medicin', and boast  
That he'd git well without one doste.

He kep' a-yellerin' on — and they  
Perdicti'u' that he'd die some day  
Before he knowed it! Tuk his bed,  
The feller did, and lost his head  
And wundered in his mind a spell —  
Then rallied, and, at last, got well;  
But ev'ry friend that said he'd die  
Went back on him eternally!





## MY PHILOSOFY

Its natchurl enough, I guess,  
When some gits more and some gits less,  
Fer them-uns on the slimmest side  
To claim it ain't a fare divide;  
And I've knowed some to lay and wait,  
And git up soon, and set up late,  
To ketch some feller they could hate  
Fer goin' at a faster gait.

The signs is bad when folks commence  
A-findin' fault with Providence,  
And balkin' 'cause the earth don't shake  
At ev'ry prancin' step they take.  
No man is grate tel he can see  
How less than little he would be  
Ef stripped to self, and stark and bare  
He hung his sign out anywhere.

My doctern is to lay aside  
Contentions, and be satisfied:  
Jest do your best, and praise er blame  
That follers that, counts jest the same.  
I've allus noticed grate success  
Is mixed with troubles, more er less,  
And it's the man who does the best  
That gits more kicks than all the rest.



## A SONG OF THE ROAD

O I WILL walk with you, my lad, whichever way you  
fare,  
You'll have me, too, the side o' you, with heart as light  
as air;  
No care for where the road you take's a-leadin'—*any-*  
*where,*—  
It can but be a joyful ja'nt the whilst *you* journey there.  
The road you take's the path o' love, an' that's the bridth  
o' two—  
An' I will walk with you, my lad—O I will walk with  
you.

Ho! I will walk with you, my lad,  
Be weather black or blue  
Or roadsides frost or dew, my lad—  
O I will walk with you.







A SONG OF THE ROAD

Aye, glad, my lad, I'll walk with you, whatever winds  
may blow,  
Or summer blossoms stay our steps, or blinding drifts of  
snow ;  
The way that you set face an' foot 's the way that I  
will go,  
An' brave I'll be, abreast o' ye, the Saints an' Angels  
know !  
With loyal hand in loyal hand, an' one heart made o'  
two,  
Through summer's gold, or winter's cold, it's I will walk  
with you.

Sure, I will walk with you, my lad,  
As love ordains me to,—  
To Heaven's door, an' through, my lad,  
O I will walk with you.



## AWAY

I CANNOT say, and I will not say  
That he is dead.—He is just away!

With a cheery smile, and a wave of the hand  
He has wandered into an unknown land,

And left us dreaming how very fair  
It needs must be, since he lingers there.

And you — O you, who the wildest yearn  
For the old-time step and the glad return,—

Think of him faring on, as dear  
In the love of There as the love of Here;

And loyal still, as he gave the blows  
Of his warrior-strength to his country's foes





## AWAY

Mild and gentle, as he was brave,—  
When the sweetest love of his life he gave  
To simple things:— Where the violets grew  
Blue as the eyes they were likened to,  
The touches of his hands have strayed  
As reverently as his lips have prayed:  
When the little brown thrush that harshly chirred  
Was dear to him as the mocking-bird;  
And he pitied as much as a man in pain  
A writhing honey-bee wet with rain.—  
Think of him still as the same, I say:  
He is not dead — he is just away!

## THE LIGHT OF LOVE

**T**HE clouds have deepened o'er the night  
Till, through the dark profound,  
The moon is but a stain of light  
And all the stars are drowned;  
And all the stars are drowned, my love,  
And all the skies are drear;  
But what care we for light above,  
If light of love is here?

The wind is like a wounded thing  
That beats about the gloom  
With baffled breast and drooping wing  
And wail of deepest doom;  
And wail of deepest doom, my love;  
But what have we to fear  
From night, or rain, or winds above,  
With love and laughter here?









## THE ALL-GOLDEN

### I

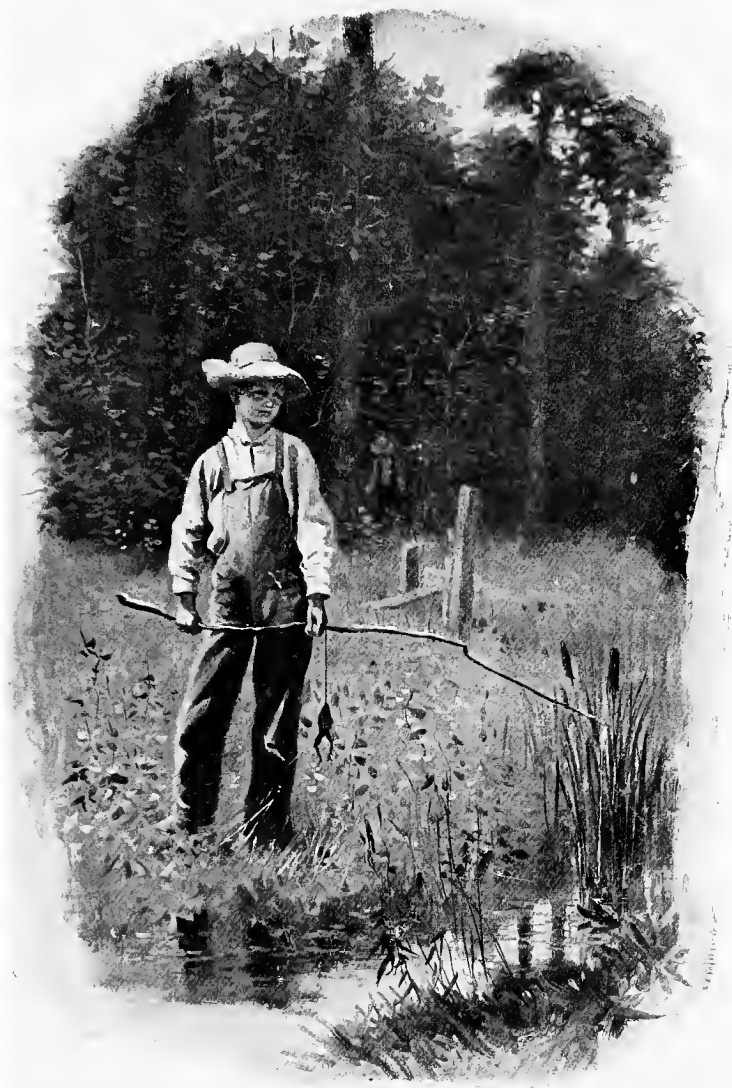
**T**HROUGH every happy line I sing  
I feel the tonic of the Spring.  
The day is like an old-time face  
That gleams across some grassy place;  
An old-time face — an old-time chum  
Who rises from the grave to come  
And lure me back along the ways  
Of time's all-golden yesterdays.  
Sweet day! to thus remind me of  
The truant boy I used to love —  
To set once more his finger-tips  
Against the blossom of his lips,  
And pipe for me the signal known  
By none but him and me alone!

II

I see, across the school-room floor,  
The shadow of the open door,  
And dancing dust and sunshine blent  
Slanting the way the morning went,  
And beckoning my thoughts afar  
Where reeds and running waters are;  
Where amber-colored bayous glass  
The half-drown'd weeds and wisps of grass,  
Where sprawling frogs, in loveless key,  
Sing on and on incessantly.  
Against the green wood's dim expanse  
The cattail tilts its tufted lance,  
While on its tip — one might declare  
The white "snake-feeder" blossomed there!

III

I catch my breath as children do  
In woodland swings when life is new  
And all the blood is warm as wine  
And tingles with a tang divine.





THE ALL-GOLDEN

My soul soars up the atmosphere  
And sings aloud where God can hear,  
And all my being leans intent  
To mark His smiling wonderment.  
O gracious dream, and gracious time,  
And gracious theme, and gracious rhyme—  
When buds of Spring begin to blow  
In blossoms that we used to know  
And lure us back along the ways  
Of time's all-golden yesterdays!



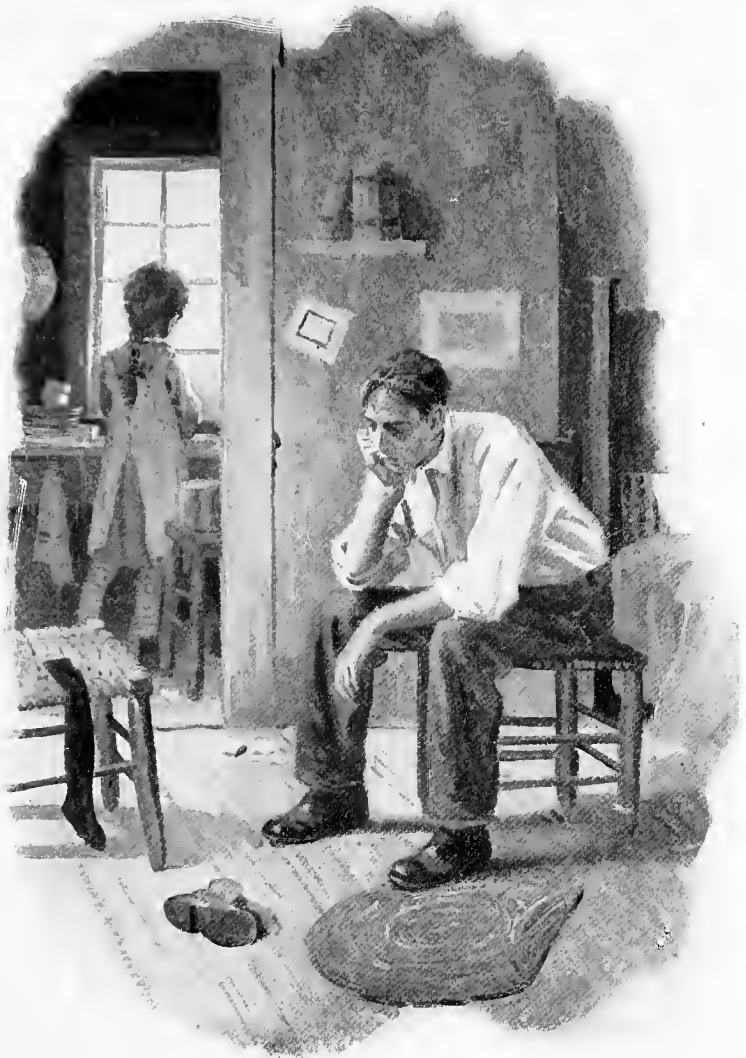
## UNLESS

WHO has not wanted, does not guess  
What plenty is.— Who has not groped  
In depths of doubt and hopelessness,  
Has never truly hoped.—  
Unless, sometimes, a shadow falls  
Upon his mirth, and veils his sight,  
And from the darkness drifts the light  
Of love at intervals.

And that most dear of everything,  
I hold, is love; and who can sit  
With lightest heart and laugh and sing,  
Knows not the worth of it.—  
Unless, in some strange throng, perchance,  
He feels how thrilling sweet it is,  
One yearning look that answers his —  
The troth of glance and glance.

Who knows not pain, knows not, alas!  
What pleasure is.— Who knows not of  
The bitter cup that will not pass,  
Knows not the taste of love.  
O souls that thirst, and hearts that fast,  
And natures faint with famishing,  
God lift and lead and safely bring  
You to your own at last!









## WHATEVER THE WEATHER MAY BE

“**W**HATEVER the weather may be,” says he —  
“ Whatever the weather may be,  
It’s plaze, if ye will, an’ I’ll say me say,—  
Supposin’ to-day was the winterest day,  
Wud the weather be changing because ye cried,  
Or the snow be grass were ye crucified?  
The best is to make yer own summer,” says he,  
“ Whatever the weather may be,” says he —  
“ Whatever the weather may be!

WHATEVER THE WEATHER MAY BE

“ Whatever the weather may be,” says he —

“ Whatever the weather may be,

It’s the songs ye sing, an’ the smiles ye wear,

That’s a-makin’ the sun shine everywhere;

An’ the world of gloom is a world of glee,

Wid the bird in the bush, an’ the bud in the tree,

An’ the fruit on the stim o’ the bough,” says he,

“ Whatever the weather may be,” says he —

“ Whatever the weather may be!

“ Whatever the weather may be,” says he —

“ Whatever the weather may be,

Ye can bring the Spring, wid its green an’ gold,

An’ the grass in the grove where the snow lies cold

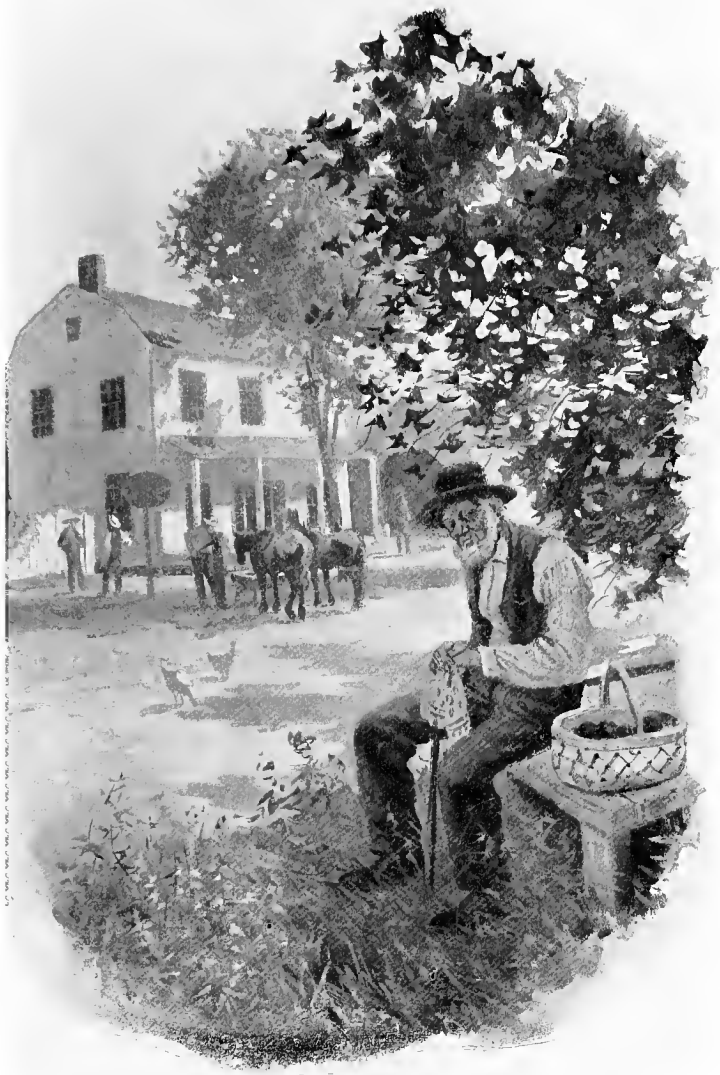
An’ ye’ll warm yer back, wid a smiling face,

As ye sit at yer heart, like an owld fire-place,

An’ toast the toes o’ yer sowl,” says he,

“ Whatever the weather may be,” says he —

“ Whatever the weather may be!”





## A SUMMER'S DAY

*A summer day — so seems it,  
As old Benj. Johnson dreams it.*

THE Summer's putt the idy in  
My head that I'm a boy again;  
And all around's so bright and gay  
I want to putt my team away,  
And jest git out whare I can lay  
And soak my hide full of the day!  
But work is work, and must be done —  
Yit, as I work, I have my fun,  
Jest fancyin' these furries here  
Is childhood's paths onc't more so dear:—  
And so I walk through medder-lands,  
And country lanes, and swampy trails  
Whare long bullrushes bresh my hands;  
And, tilted on the ridered rails  
Of deadnin' fences, "Old Bob White"  
Whissels his name in high delight  
And whirrs away. I wunder still,  
Whichever way a boy's feet will —

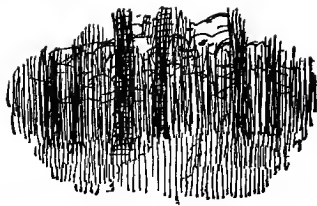
A SUMMER'S DAY

Whare trees has fell, with tangled tops  
Whare dead leaves shakes, I stop fer breth,  
Heerin' the acorn as it drops —  
H'istin' my chin up still as deth,  
And watchin' clos't, with upturned eyes,  
The tree where Mr. Squirrel tries  
To hide hisse'f above the limb,  
But lets his own tale tell on him.  
I wunder on in deeper glooms —  
Git hungry, hearin' female cries  
From old farm-houses, whare perfumes  
Of harvest dinners seems to rise  
And ta'nt a feller, hart and brane,  
With memories he can't explane.

I wunder through the underbresh,  
Whare pig-tracks, pintin' to'rds the crick,  
Is picked and printed in the fresh  
Black bottom-lands, like wimmern pick  
Theyr pie-crusts with a fork, some way,  
When bakin' fer camp-meetin' day.  
I wunder on and on and on,  
Tel my gray hair and beard is gone,

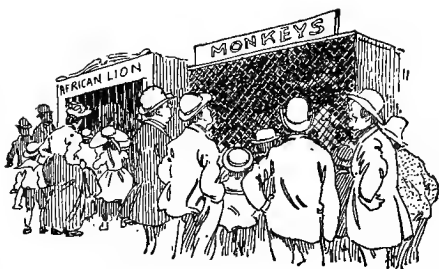






A SUMMER'S DAY

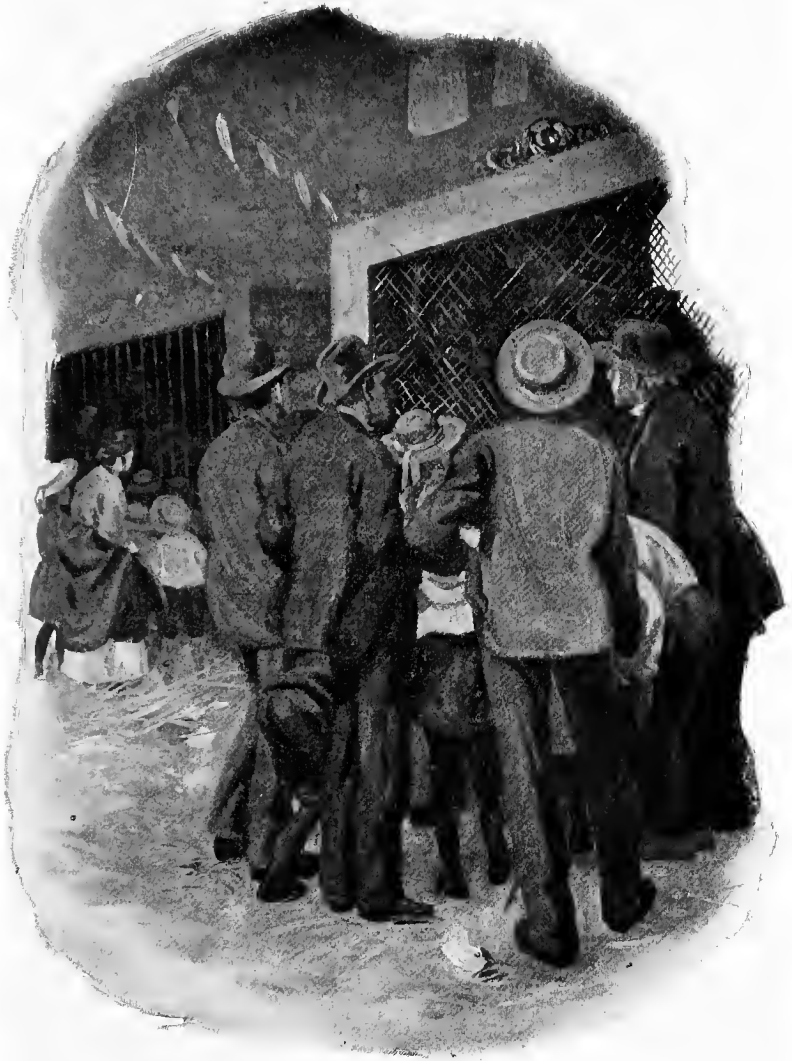
And ev'ry wrinkle on my brow  
Is rubbed clean out and shadded now  
With curls as brown and fare and fine  
As tenderls of the wild grape-vine  
That ust' to climb the highest tree  
To keep the ripest ones fer me.  
I wunder still, and here I am  
Wadin' the ford below the dam —  
The worter chucklin' round my knee  
    At hornet-welt and bramble-scratch,  
And me a-slippin' 'crost to see  
    Ef Tyner's plums is ripe, and size  
The old man's wortermelon-patch,  
    With juicy mouth and drouthy eyes.  
Then, after sich a day of mirth  
And happiness as worlds is wurth —  
    So tired that heaven seems nigh about,—  
The sweetest tiredness on earth  
    Is to git home and flatten out —  
So tired you can't lay flat enough,  
And sorto' wish that you could spred  
Out like molasses on the bed  
And jest drip off the aidges in  
The dreams that never comes again.



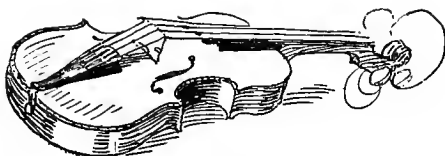
## THE FUNNIEST THING IN THE WORLD

THE funniest thing in the world, I know,  
Is watchin' the monkeys 'at's in the show! —  
Jumpin' an' runnin' an' racin' roun',  
'Way up the top o' the pole; nen down!  
First they're here, an' nen they're there,  
An' ist a'most any an' ever'where! —  
Screechin' an' scratchin' wherever they go,  
They're the funniest thing in the world, I know!

They're the funniest thing in the world, I think: —  
Funny to watch 'em eat an' drink;  
Funny to watch 'em a-watchin' us,  
An' actin' most like grown folks does! —  
Funny to watch 'em p'tend to be  
Skeerd at their tail 'at they happen to see; —  
But the funniest thing in the world they do  
Is never 'to laugh, like me an' you!







## MY FIDDLE

*Old Benj. Johnson's fiddle-playin'  
'S most as common as he's sayin'.*

**M**Y fiddle? — Well, I kindo' keep her handy, don't  
you know!

Though I ain't so much inclined to tromp the strings and  
switch the bow

As I was before the timber of my elbows got so dry,  
And my fingers was more limber-like and caperish and  
spry;

Yit I can plonk and plunk and plink,

And tune her up and play,

And jest lean back and laugh and wink

At ev'ry rainy day!

## MY FIDDLE

My playin' 's only middlin'—tunes I picked up when a  
boy —

The kindo'-sorto' fiddlin' that the folks calls "corda-  
roy";

"The Old Fat Gal," and "Rye-straw," and "My Sail-  
yor's on the Sea,"

Is the old cowtillions I "saw" when the ch'ice is left to  
me;

And so I plunk and plonk and plink

And rosum-up my bow

And play the tunes that makes you think

The devil's in your toe!

I was allus a romancin', do-less boy, to tell the truth,  
A-fiddlin' and a-dancin', and a-wastin' of my youth,  
And a-actin' and a-cuttin'-up all sorts o' silly pranks  
That wasn't worth a button o' anybody's thanks!

But they tell me, when I ust to plink

And plonk and plunk and play,

My music seemed to have the kink

O' drivin' cares away!







## MY FIDDLE

That's how this here old fiddle's won my hart's indurin'  
love! —

From the strings acrost her middle, to the schreechin'  
keys above —

From her "apern," over "bridge," and to the ribbon  
round her throat,

She's a woin', cooin' pigeon, singin' "Love me" ev'ry  
note!

And so I pat her neck, and plink

Her strings with lovin' hands,—

And, list'nin' clos't, I sometimes think

She kindo' understands!





### THE HEREAFTER

**H**EREAFTER! O we need not waste  
Our smiles or tears, whate'er befall:  
No happiness but holds a taste  
Of something sweeter, after all;—  
No depth of agony but feels  
Some fragment of abiding trust,—  
Whatever death unlocks or seals,  
The mute Beyond is just.



## WE TO SIGH INSTEAD OF SING

“**R**AIN and rain! and rain and rain!”  
Yesterday we muttered  
Grimly as the grim refrain  
That the thunders uttered:  
All the heavens under cloud—  
All the sunshine sleeping;  
All the grasses limply bowed  
With their weight of weeping.

WE TO SIGH INSTEAD OF SING

Sigh and sigh! and sigh and sigh!  
Never end of sighing;  
Rain and rain for our reply —  
Hopes half-drowned and dying;  
Peering through the window-pane,  
Naught but endless raining —  
Endless sighing, and, as vain,  
Endlessly complaining.

Shine and shine! and shine and shine!  
Ah! *to-day* the splendor! —  
All this glory yours and mine —  
God! but God is tender!  
We to sigh instead of sing,  
*Yesterday*, in sorrow,  
While the Lord was fashioning  
This for our To-morrow!



### DAN PAINE

OLD friend of mine, whose chiming name  
Has been the burthen of a rhyme  
Within my heart since first I came  
To know thee in thy mellow prime:  
With warm emotions in my breast  
That can but coldly be expressed,  
And hopes and wishes wild and vain,  
I reach my hand to thee, Dan Paine.

DAN PAINE

In fancy, as I sit alone  
In gloomy fellowship with care,  
I hear again thy cheery tone,  
And wheel for thee an easy chair ;  
And from my hand the pencil falls —  
My book upon the carpet sprawls,  
As eager soul and heart and brain,  
Leap up to welcome thee, Dan Paine.

A something gentle in thy mien,  
A something tender in thy voice,  
Has made my trouble so serene,  
I can but weep, from very choice.  
And even then my tears, I guess,  
Hold more of sweet than bitterness,  
And more of gleaming shine than rain,  
Because of thy bright smile, Dan Paine.

The wrinkles that the years have spun  
And tangled round thy tawny face,  
Are kinked with laughter, every one,  
And fashioned in a mirthful grace :  
And though the twinkle of thine eyes  
Is keen as frost when Summer dies,  
It can not long as frost remain  
While thy warm soul shines out, Dan Paine

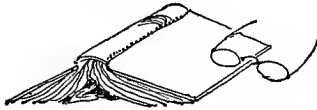






DAN PAINE

And so I drain a health to thee :—  
    May merry Joy and jolly Mirth  
Like children clamber on thy knee,  
    And ride thee round the happy earth!  
    And when, at last, the hand of Fate  
    Shall lift the latch of Canaan's gate,  
    And usher me in thy domain,  
    Smile on me just as now, Dan Paine.



## DAWN, NOON AND DEWFALL

### I

**D**AWN, noon and dewfall! Bluebird and robin  
Up and at it airly, and the orchard-blossoms bob-  
bin'!

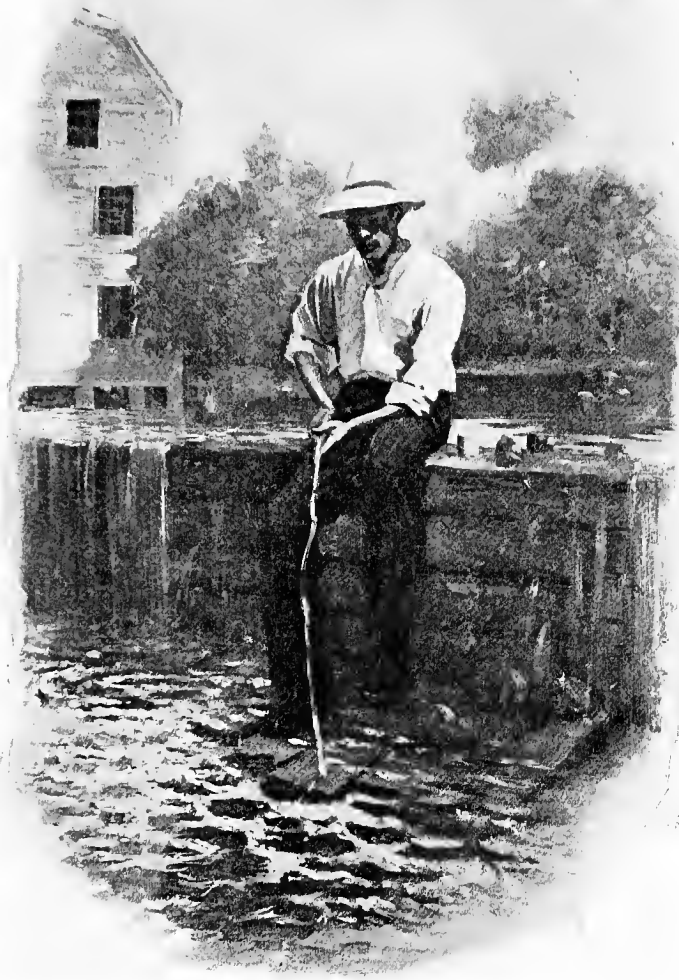
Peekin' from the winder, half-awake, and wishin'  
I could go to sleep ag'in as well as go a-fishin'!

### II

On the apern o' the dam, legs a-danglin' over,  
Drowsy-like with sound o' worter and the smell o' clover:  
Fish all out a-visitin'—'cept some dratted minnor!  
Yes, and mill shet down at last and hands is gone to  
dinner.

### III

Trompin' home acrost the fields: Lightnin'-bugs a-  
blinkin'  
In the wheat like sparks o' things feller keeps a-think-  
in':—  
Mother waitin' supper, and the childern there to cherr  
me;  
And fiddle on the kitchen-wall a-jist a-eechin' fer me!





## KISSING THE ROD

O HEART of mine, we shouldn't  
Worry so!  
What we've missed of calm we couldn't  
Have, you know!  
What we've met of stormy pain,  
And of sorrow's driving rain,  
We can better meet again,  
If it blow!

We have erred in that dark hour  
We have known,  
When our tears fell with the shower,  
All alone! —  
Were not shine and shower blent  
As the gracious Master meant? —  
Let us temper our content  
With His own.

For, we know, not every morrow  
Can be sad;  
So, forgetting all the sorrow  
We have had,  
Let us fold away our fears,  
And put by our foolish tears,  
And through all the coming years  
Just be glad.



## AT UTTER LOAF

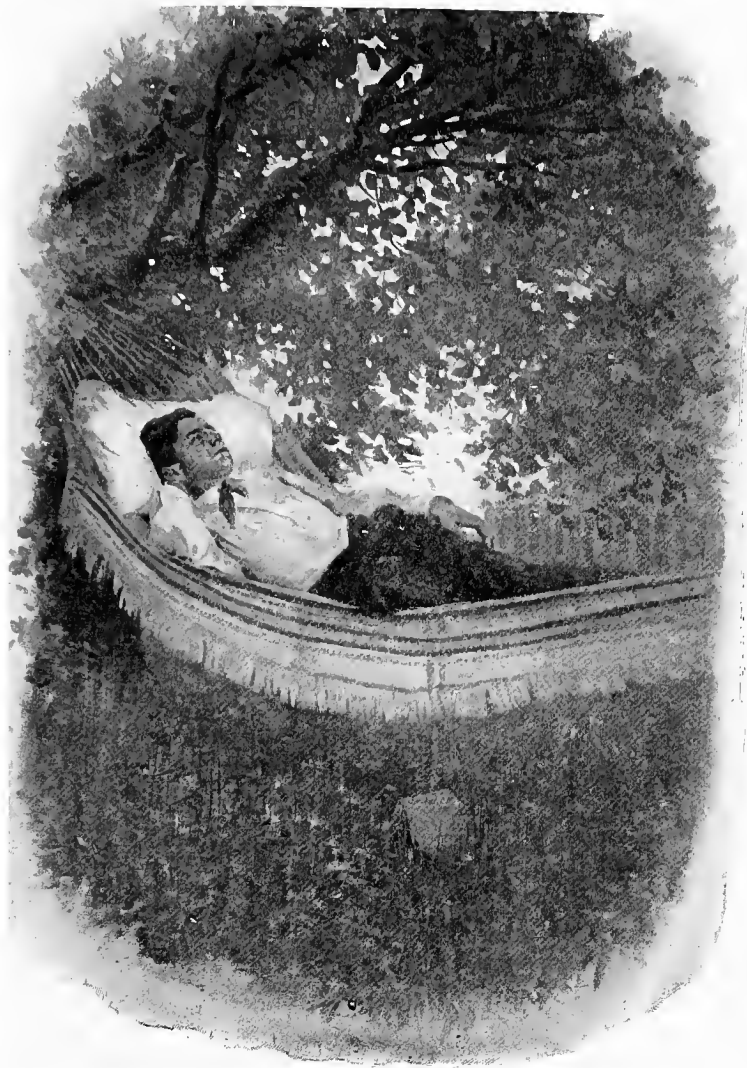
### I

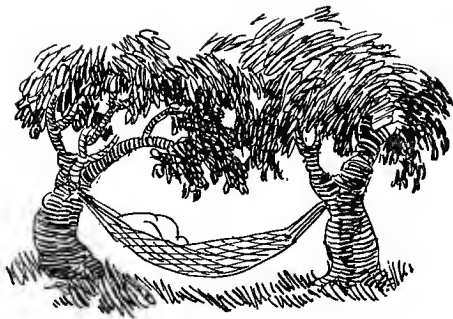
AN afternoon as ripe with heat  
As might the golden pippin be  
With mellowness if at my feet  
It dropped now from the apple-tree  
My hammock swings in lazily.

### II

The boughs about me spread a shade  
That shields me from the sun, but weaves  
With breezy shuttles through the leaves  
Blue rifts of skies, to gleam and fade  
Upon the eyes that only see  
Just of themselves, all drowsily







AT UTTER LOAF

III

Above me drifts the fallen skein  
Of some tired spider, looped and blown,  
As fragile as a strand of rain,  
Across the air, and upward thrown  
By breaths of hayfields newly mown —  
So glimmering it is and fine,  
I doubt these drowsy eyes of mine.

IV

Far-off and faint as voices pent  
In mines and heard from underground,  
Come murmurs as of discontent,  
And clamorings of sullen sound  
The city sends me, as, I guess,  
To vex me, though they do but bless  
Me in my drowsy fastnesses.

V

I have no care. I only know  
My hammock hides and holds me here  
In lands of shade a prisoner:  
While lazily the breezes blow  
Light leaves of sunshine over me,  
And back and forth and to and fro  
I swing, enwrapped in some hushed glee,  
Smiling at all things drowsily.

## A BOY'S MOTHER

**M**Y Mother she's so good to me,  
Ef I was good as I could be,  
I couldn't be as good — no, sir! —  
Can't any boy be good as her!

She loves me when I'm glad er sad;  
She loves me when I'm good er bad;  
An', what's a funniest thing, she says  
She loves me when she punishes.

I don't like her to punish me.—  
That don't hurt,— but it hurts to see  
Her cryin'.—Nen *I* cry; an' nen  
We *bofe* cry an' be good again.

She loves me when she cuts an' sews  
My little cloak an' Sund'y clothes;  
An' when my Pa comes home to tea,  
She loves him most as much as me.

She laughs an' tells him all I said,  
An' grabs me up an' pats my head;  
An' I hug *her*, an' hug my Pa  
An' love him purt' nigh much as Ma.







## EXCEEDING ALL

**L**ONG LIFE'S a lovely thing to know,  
With lovely health and wealth, forsooth,  
And lovely name and fame — But O  
The loveliness of Youth!



## WHILE THE HEART BEATS YOUNG

**W**HILE the heart beats young! — O the splendor of  
the Spring,  
With all her dewy jewels on, is not so fair a thing!  
The fairest, rarest morning of the blossom-time of May  
Is not so sweet a season as the season of to-day  
While Youth's diviner climate folds and holds us, close  
caressed,  
As we feel our mothers with us by the touch of face and  
breast; —  
Our bare feet in the meadows, and our fancies up among  
The airy clouds of morning — while the heart beats  
young.







WHILE THE HEART BEATS YOUNG

While the heart beats young and our pulses leap and  
dance,  
With every day a holiday and life a glad romance,—  
We hear the birds with wonder, and with wonder watch  
their flight —  
Standing, still the more enchanted, both of hearing and  
of sight,  
When they have vanished wholly,— for, in fancy, wing-  
to-wing  
We fly to Heaven with them; and, returning, still we sing  
The praises of this *lower* Heaven with tireless voice and  
tongue,  
Even as the Master sanctions — while the heart beats  
young.

While the heart beats young!—While the heart beats  
young!  
O green and gold old Earth of ours, with azure overhung  
And looped with rainbows! — grant us yet this grassy lap  
of thine —  
We would be still thy children, through the shower and  
the shine!  
So pray we, lispings, whispering, in childish love and  
trust,  
With our beseeching hands and faces lifted from the dust  
By fervor of the poem, all unwritten and unsung,  
Thou givest us in answer, while the heart beats young.



## THE TWINS

ONE'S the pictur' of his Pa,  
And the *other* of her Ma —  
Jes the bossiest pair o' babies 'at a mortal ever  
saw!

And we love 'em as the bees  
Loves the blossoms of the trees  
A-ridin' and a-rompin' in the breeze!

One's got her Mammy's eyes —  
Soft and blue as Apurl-skies —  
With the same sort of a *smile*, like — Yes, and  
mouth about her size,—  
Dimples, too, in cheek and chin,  
'At my lips jes *wallers* in,  
A-goin' to work, er gittin' home ag'in!





## THE TWINS

And the *other* — Well, they say  
That he's got his Daddy's way  
O' bein' ruther soberfied, er ruther extry gay,—  
That he either cries his best,  
Er he laughs his howlin'est —  
Like all he lacked was buttons and a vest!

Look at *her!* — and look at *him!* —  
Talk about yer “Cheru-bim!”  
Roll 'em up in dreams together, rosy arm and  
chubby limb!  
O we love 'em as the bees  
Loves the blossoms of the trees,  
A-ridin' and a-rompin' in the breeze!





## THE WILLOW

WHO shall sing a simple ditty all about the Willow,  
Dainty-fine and delicate as any bending spray  
That dandles high the happy bird that flutters there to  
trill a

Tremulously tender song of greeting to the May.

Bravest, too, of all the trees!—none to match your  
daring,—

First of greens to greet the Spring and lead in leafy  
sheen;—

Aye, and you're the last—almost into winter wearing  
Still the leaf of loyalty—still the badge of green.

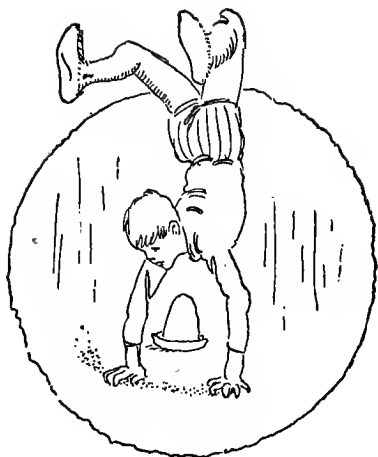
Ah, my lovely Willow!—let the Waters lilt your  
graces,—

They alone with limpid kisses lave your leaves above,  
Flashing back your sylvan beauty, and in shady places  
Peering up with glimmering pebbles, like the eyes of  
love.









### BILLY MILLER'S. CIRCUS-SHOW.

**A**T Billy Miller's Circus-Show —  
In their old stable where it's at —  
The boys pays twenty pins to go,  
An' gits their money's-worth at that! —  
'Cause Billy he can climb and chalk  
His stockin'-feet an' purt'-nigh walk  
'A tight-rope — yes, an' ef he fall  
He'll ketch, an' "skin a cat" —'at's all!

BILLY MILLER'S CIRCUS SHOW

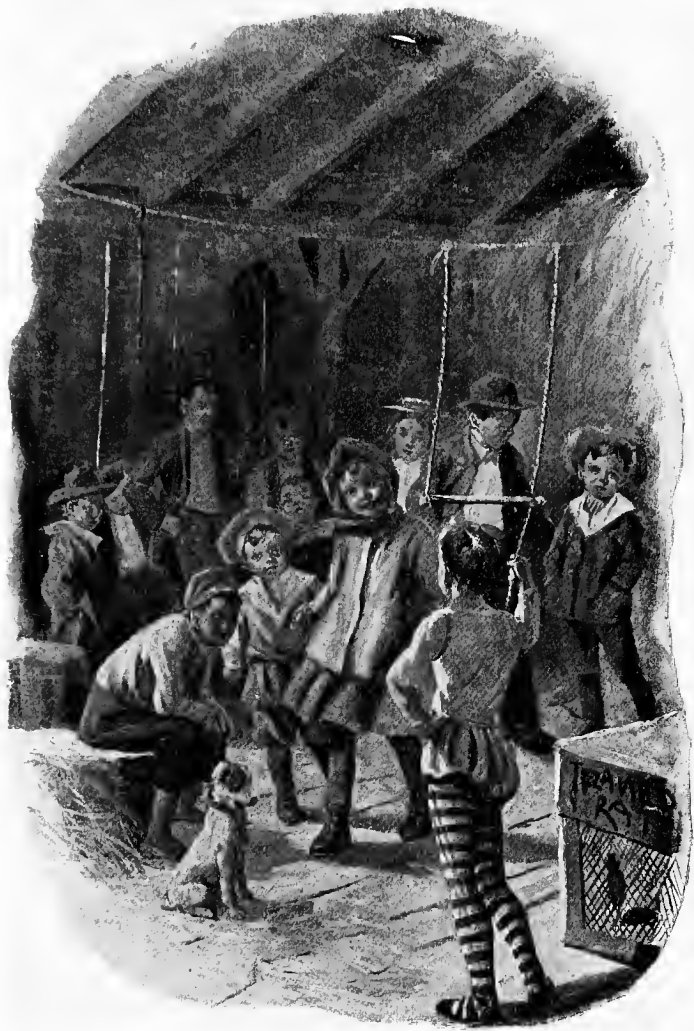
He ain't afeard to swing and hang  
Ist by his legs! — an' mayby stop  
An' yell "Look out!" an' nen — k-spang! —  
He'll let loose, upside-down, an' drop  
Wite on his hands! An' nen he'll do  
"Contortion-acts" — ist limber through  
As "Injarubber Mens" 'at goes  
With shore-fer-certain circus-shows!

At Billy Miller's Circus-Show

He's got a circus-ring — an' they's  
A dressin'-room,— so's he can go  
An' dress an' paint-up when he plays  
He's somepin' else; —'cause sometimes he's  
"Ringmaster" — bossin' like he please —  
An' sometimes "Ephalunt" — er "Bare-  
Back Rider," prancin' out o' there!

An' sometimes — an' the best of all! —

He's "The Old Clown," an' got on clo'es  
All stripud,— an' white hat, all tall  
An' peakud — like in shore-'nuff shows,—  
An' got three-cornered red-marks, too,  
On his white cheeks — like all Clowns do!  
An' you'd ist *die*, the way he sings  
An' dances an' says funny things!







## THE HIRED MAN'S FAITH IN CHILDREN

[ BELIEVE *all* childern's good,  
Ef they're only *understood*,—  
Even *bad* ones, 'pears to me,  
'S jes as good as they kin be!



### A NOON INTERVAL

A DEEP, delicious hush in earth and sky —  
A gracious lull — since, from its waking,  
The morn has been a feverish, restless thing  
In which the pulse of Summer ran too high  
And riotous, as though its heart went nigh  
To bursting with delights past uttering:  
Now — as an o'erjoyed child may cease to sing  
All falteringly at play, with drowsy eye  
Draining the pictures of a fairy-tale  
To brim his dreams with — there comes o'er the day  
A loathful silence wherein all sounds fail  
Like loitering tones of some faint roundelay . . .  
No wakeful effort longer may avail —  
The wand waves, and the dozer sinks away.







## A PASSING HAIL

LET us rest ourselves a bit!  
Worry? — wave your hand to it —  
Kiss your finger-tips, and smile  
It farewell a little while.

Weary of the weary way  
We have come from Yesterday,  
Let us fret us not, instead,  
Of the weary way ahead.

Let us pause and catch our breath  
On the hither side of death,  
While we see the tender shoots  
Of the grasses — not the roots,—

While we yet look down — not up —  
To seek out the buttercup  
And the daisy where they wave  
O'er the green home of the grave.

A PASSING HAIL

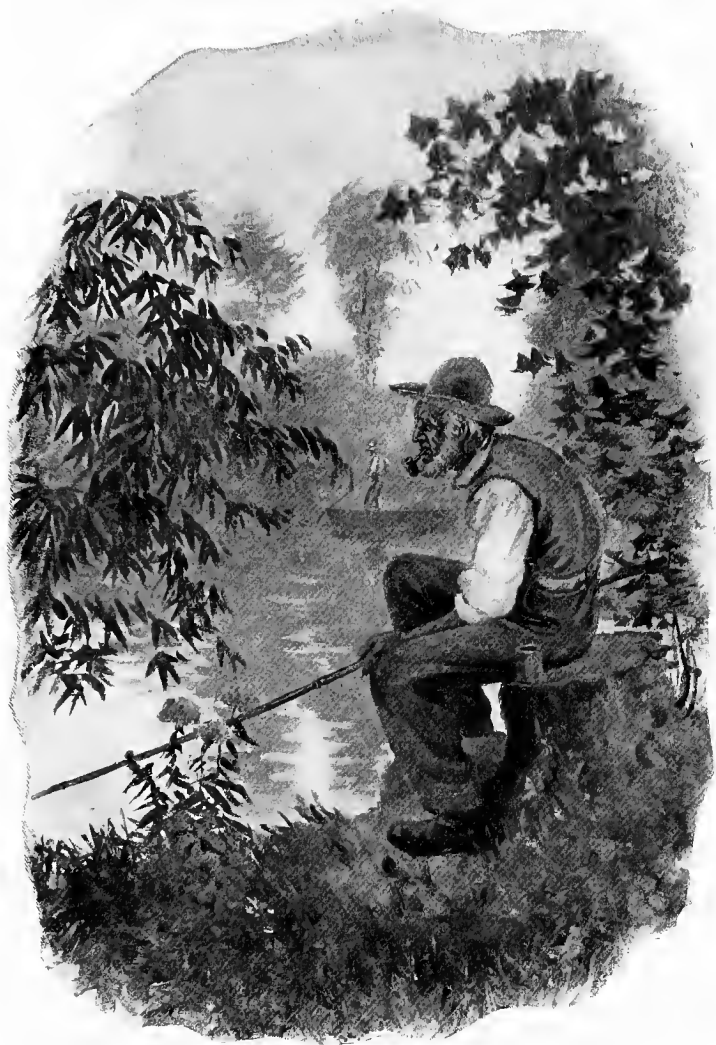
Let us launch us smoothly on  
The soft billows of the lawn,  
And drift out across the main  
Of our childish dreams again :

Voyage off, beneath the trees,  
O'er the field's enchanted seas,  
Where the lilies are our sails,  
And our sea-gulls, nightingales :

Where no wilder storm shall beat  
Than the wind that waves the wheat,  
And no tempest-burst above  
The old laughs we used to love :

Lose all troubles — gain release,  
Languor, and exceeding peace,  
Cruising idly o'er the vast,  
Calm mid-ocean of the Past.

Let us rest ourselves a bit!  
Worry? — Wave your hand to it —  
Kiss your finger-tips, and smile  
It farewell a little while.







ON ANY ORDINARY MAN IN A HIGH STATE  
OF LAUGHTURE AND DELIGHT

*Let the old man laugh and be  
Blest therefor eternally!*

**A**S it's give' me to perceive,  
I most certin'y believe  
When a man's jest glad plum' through,  
God's pleased with him, same as you.



## THERE WAS A CHERRY-TREE

**T**HERE was a cherry-tree. Its bloomy snows  
Cool even now the fevered sight that knows  
No more its airy visions of pure joy —  
As when you were a boy.

There was a cherry-tree. The Bluejay set  
His blue against its white — O blue as jet  
He seemed there then! — But *now* — Whoever knew  
He was so pale a blue!

There was a cherry-tree — Our child-eyes saw  
The miracle: — Its pure white snows did thaw  
Into a crimson fruitage, far too sweet  
But for a boy to eat.

There was a cherry-tree, give thanks and joy! —  
There was a bloom of snow — There was a boy —  
There was a Bluejay of the realest blue —  
And fruit for both of you.









### AT BROAD RIPPLE

**O**H, LUXURY! Beyond the heat  
And dust of town, with dangling feet,  
Astride the rock below the dam,  
In the cool shadows where the calm  
Rests on the stream again, and all  
Is silent save the waterfall,—  
I bait my hook and cast my line,  
And feel the best of life is mine.

AT BROAD RIPPLE

No high ambition may I claim —  
I angle not for lordly game  
Of trout, or bass, or wary bream —  
A black perch reaches the extreme  
Of my desires; and “goggle-eyes”  
Are not a thing that I despise;  
A sunfish, or a “chub,” or “cat” —  
A “silver-side” — yea, even that!

In eloquent tranquillity  
The waters lisp and talk to me.  
Sometimes, far out, the surface breaks,  
As some proud bass an instant shakes  
His glittering armor in the sun,  
And romping ripples, one by one,  
Come dallying across the space  
Where undulates my smiling face.

The river's story flowing by,  
Forever sweet to ear and eye,  
Forever tenderly begun —  
Forever new and never done.  
Thus lulled and sheltered in a shade  
Where never feverish cares invade,  
I bait my hook and cast my line,  
And feel the best of life is mine.

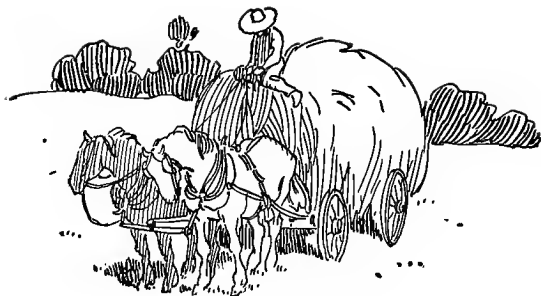






### LITTLE DAVID

THE mother of the little boy that sleeps  
Has blest assurance, even as she weeps :  
She knows her little boy has now no pain —  
No further ache, in body, heart or brain ;  
All sorrow is lulled for him — all distress  
Passed into utter peace and restfulness.—  
All health that heretofore has been denied —  
All happiness, all hope, and all beside  
Of childish longing, now he clasps and keeps  
In voiceless joy — the little boy that sleeps.



## A FULL HARVEST

*Jes' you listen and look wise  
'N' let the old man sermonize!*

SEEMS like a feller'd ort 'o jes' to-day  
Git down and roll and waller, don't you know  
In that-air stubble, and flop up and crow,  
Seein' sich craps! I'll undertake to say  
There 're no wheat's ever turned out thataway  
Afore this season! — Folks is keerless tho',  
And too fergitful — 'caze we'd ort 'o show  
More thankfulness! — Jes' looky hyonder, hey? —  
And watch that little reaper wadin' thue  
That last old yaller hunk o' harvest-ground —  
Jes' natchur'ly a-slicin' it in-two  
Like honey-comb and gaumin' it around  
The field — like it had nothin' else to do  
On'y jes' waste it all on me and you!







LET SOMETHING GOOD BE SAID

WHEN over the fair fame of friend or foe  
The shadow of disgrace shall fall; instead  
Of words of blame, or proof of thus and so,  
Let something good be said.

Forget not that no fellow-being yet  
May fall so low but love may lift his head:  
Even the cheek of shame with tears is wet,  
If something good be said.

No generous heart may vainly turn aside  
In ways of sympathy; no soul so dead  
But may awaken strong and glorified,  
If something good be said.

And so I charge ye, by the thorny crown,  
And by the cross on which the Savior bled,  
'And by your own souls' hope of fair renown,  
Let something good be said!

## HER SMILE OF CHEER AND VOICE OF SONG

ANNA HARRIS RANDALL

SPRING fails, in all its bravery of brilliant gold and  
green,—

The sun, the grass, the leafing tree, and all the dazzling  
scene

Of dewy morning — orchard blooms,  
And woodland blossoms and perfumes  
With bird-songs sown between.

Yea, since *she* smiles not any more, so every flowery thing  
Fades, and the birds seem brooding o'er her silence as  
they sing —

Her smile of cheer and voice of song  
Seemed so divinely to belong  
To ever-joyous Spring!

Nay, still she smiles.— Our eyes are blurred and see not  
through our tears:

And still her rapturous voice is heard, tho' not of mortal  
ears:—

Now ever doth she smile and sing  
Where Heaven's unending Clime of Spring  
Reclaims those 'gifts of hers.







A CHRISTMAS CAROL

CHRIST used to be like you and me,  
When just a lad in Galilee,—  
So when we pray, on Christmas Day,  
He favors first the prayers we say:  
Then waste no tear, but pray with cheer,  
This gladdest day of all the year :

O BROTHER MINE of birth Divine,  
Upon this natal day of Thine  
Bear with our stress of happiness  
Nor count our reverence the less  
Because with glee and jubilee  
Our hearts go singing up to Thee.

## THE HARPER

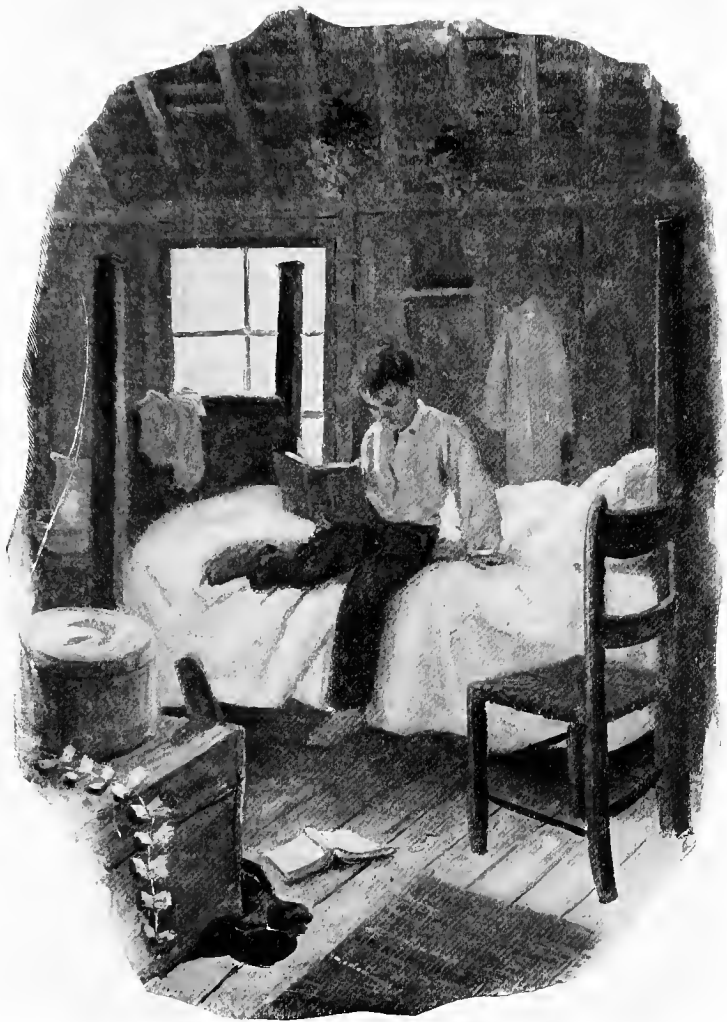
LIKE a drift of faded blossoms  
Caught in a slanting rain,  
His fingers glimpsed down the strings of his harp  
In a tremulous refrain:

Patter and tinkle, and drip and drip!  
Ah! but the chords were rainy sweet!  
And I closed my eyes and I bit my lip,  
As he played there in the street.

Patter, and drip, and tinkle!  
And there was the little bed  
In the corner of the garret,  
And the rafters overhead!

And there was the little window —  
Tinkle, and drip, and drip! —  
The rain above, and a mother's love,  
And God's companionship!









## THE SCHOOLBOYS' FAVORITE

*Over the river and through the wood,  
Now Grandmother's cap I spy!  
Hurrah for the fun! Is the pudding done?  
Hurrah for the pumpkin-pie!*

— OLD SCHOOL READER.

**F**ER any boy 'at's little as me,  
Er any little girl,  
That-un's the goodest poetry-piece  
In any book in the worl'!  
An' ef grown-peoples wuz little ag'in  
I bet they'd say so, too,  
Ef *they'd* go see *their* ole Gran'ma  
Like our Pa lets *us* do!

THE SCHOOLBOY'S FAVORITE

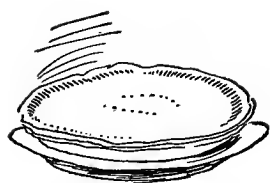
*Over the river an' through the wood,  
Now Gran'mother's cap I spy!  
Hurrah fer the fun! — Is the puddin' done? —  
Hurrah fer the punkin-pie!*

An' 'll tell you *why* 'at's the goodest piece:  
'Cause it's ist like *we* go  
To *our* Gran'ma's, a-visitun there,  
When our Pa he says so;  
An' Ma she fixes my little cape-coat  
An' little fuzz-cap; an' Pa  
He tucks me away — an' yells "*Hoo-ray!*" —  
An' whacks Ole Gray, an' drives the sleigh  
Fastest you ever saw!

*Over the river an' through the wood,  
Now Gran'mother's cap I spy!  
Hurrah fer the fun! — Is the puddin' done? —  
Hurrah fer the punkin-pie!*

An' Pa ist snuggles me 'tween his knees —  
An' I he'p hold the lines,  
An' peek out over the buffalo-robe; —  
An' the wind ist *blows!* — an' the snow ist *snows!*  
An' the sun ist shines! an' shines! —





THE SCHOOLBOY'S FAVORITE

An' th' ole horse tosses his head an' coughs

The frost back in our face.—

An' I' ruther go to my Gran'ma's

Than any cther place!

*Over the river an' through the wood,*

*Now Gran'mother's cap I spy!*

*Hurrah fer the fun! — Is the puddin' done? —*

*Hurrah fer the punkin-pie!*

An' all the peoples they is in town

Watches us whizzin' past

To go a-visitun *our* Gran'ma's,

Like we all went there last; —

But *they* can't go, like ist *our* folks

An' Johnny an' Lotty, an' three

Er four neighbor-childerns, an' Rober-ut Volney

An' Charley an' Maggy an' me!

*Over the river an' through the wood,*

*Now Gran'mother's cap I spy!*

*Hurrah fer the fun! — Is the puddin' done? —*

*Hurrah fer the punkin-pie!*



## AUTUMN

AS a harvester, at dusk,  
Faring down some woody trail  
Leading homeward through the musk  
Of May-apple and pawpaw,  
Hazel-bush, and spice and haw,—  
So comes Autumn, swart and hale,  
Drooped of frame and slow of stride,  
But withal an air of pride  
Looming up in stature far  
Higher than his shoulders are;  
Weary both in arm and limb,  
Yet the wholesome heart of him  
Sheer at rest and satisfied.







## AUTUMN

Greet him as with glee of drums  
And glad cymbals, as he comes!  
Robe him fair, O Rain and Shine!  
He the Emperor — the King —  
Royal lord of everything  
Sagging Plenty's granary floors  
And out-bulging all her doors;  
He the god of corn and wine,  
Honey, milk, and fruit and oil —  
Lord of feast, as lord of toil —  
Jocund host of yours and mine!

Ho! the revel of his laugh! —  
Half is sound of winds, and half  
Roar of ruddy blazes drawn  
Up the throats of chimneys wide.  
Circling which, from side to side,  
Faces — lit as by the Dawn,  
With her highest tintings on  
Tip of nose, and cheek, and chin —  
Smile at some old fairy-tale  
Of enchanted lovers, in  
Silken gown and coat of mail,

## AUTUMN

With a retinue of elves  
Merry as their very selves,  
Trooping ever, hand in hand,  
Down the dales of Wonderland.

Then the glory of his song! —  
Lifting up his dreamy eyes —  
Singing haze across the skies;  
Singing clouds that trail along  
Towering tops of trees that seize  
Tufts of them to stanch the breeze;  
Singing slanted strands of rain  
In between the sky and earth,  
For the lyre to mate the mirth  
And the might of his refrain:  
Singing southward-flying birds  
Down to us, and afterwards  
Singing them to flight again;  
Singing blushes to the cheeks  
Of the leaves upon the trees —  
Singing on and changing these  
Into pallor, slowly wrought,  
Till the little, moaning creeks  
Bear them to their last farewell,





## AUTUMN

As Elaine the lovable  
Was borne down to Lancelot.—  
Singing drip of tears, and then  
Drying them with smiles again.

Singing apple, peach and grape,  
Into roundest, plumpest shape,  
Rosy ripeness to the face  
Of the pippin; and the grace  
Of the dainty stamin-tip  
To the huge bulk of the pear,  
Pendant in the green caress  
Of the leaves, and glowing through  
With the tawny laziness  
Of the gold that Ophir knew,—  
Haply, too, within its rind  
Such a cleft as bees may find,  
Bungling on it half aware,  
And wherein to see them sip  
Fancy lifts an oozy lip,  
And the singer's falter there.

Sweet as swallows swimming through  
Eddyings of dusk and dew,

## AUTUMN

Singing happy scenes of home  
Back to sight of eager eyes  
That have longed for them to come,  
Till their coming is surprise  
Uttered only by the rush  
Of quick tears and prayerful hush:  
Singing on, in clearer key,  
Hearty palms of you and me  
Into grasps that tingle still  
Rapturous, and ever will!  
Singing twank and twang of strings —  
Trill of flute and clarinet  
In a melody that rings  
Like the tunes we used to play,  
And our dreams are playing yet!  
Singing lovers, long astray,  
Each to each; and, sweeter things,—  
Singing in their marriage-day,  
And a banquet holding all  
These delights for festival.









## THERE IS EVER A SONG SOMEWHERE

THERE is ever a song somewhere, my dear;  
There is ever a something sings away:  
There's the song of the lark when the skies are clear  
And the song of the thrush when the skies are gray  
The sunshine showers across the grain,  
And the bluebird trills in the orchard tree;  
And in and out, when the eaves drip rain,  
The swallows are twittering ceaselessly.

THERE IS EVER A SONG SOMEWHERE

There is ever a song somewhere, my dear,  
Be the skies above or dark or fair,  
There is ever a song that our hearts may hear —  
There is ever a song somewhere, my dear —  
There is ever a song somewhere!

There is ever a song somewhere, my dear,  
In the midnight black, or the mid-day blue;  
The robin pipes when the sun is here,  
And the cricket chirrup the whole night through  
The buds may blow, and the fruit may grow,  
And the autumn leaves drop crisp and scar;  
But whether the sun, or the rain, or the snow,  
There is ever a song somewhere, my dear.

There is ever a song somewhere, my dear,  
Be the skies above or dark or fair,  
There is ever a song that our hearts may hear—  
There is ever a song somewhere, my dear —  
There is ever a song somewhere!







GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE

“**G**OD bless us every one!” prayed Tiny Tim,  
Crippled and dwarfed of body, yet so tall  
Of soul, we tiptoe earth to look on him.  
High towering over all.

GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE

He loved the loveless world, nor dreamed indeed  
That it at best could give to him, the while,  
But pitying glances, when his only need  
Was but a cheery smile.

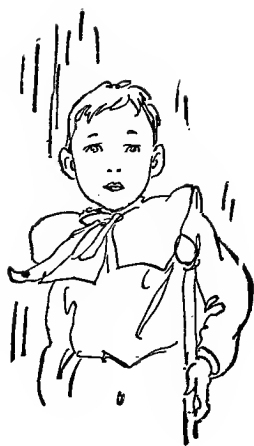
And thus he prayed, "God bless us every one!"—  
Enfolding all the creeds within the span  
Of his child-heart; and so, despising none,  
Was nearer saint than man.

I like to fancy God, in Paradise,  
Lifting a finger o'er the rhythmic swing  
Of chiming harp and song, with eager eyes  
Turned earthward, listening —

The Anthem stilled — the Angels leaning there  
Above the golden walls — the morning sun  
Of Christmas bursting flower-like with the prayer,  
"God bless us every one!"







## THE PRAYER PERFECT

DEAR Lord! kind Lord!  
Gracious Lord! I pray  
Thou wilt look on all I love,  
Tenderly to-day!  
Weed their hearts of weariness;  
Scatter every care  
Down a wake of angel-wings  
Winnowing the air.

Bring unto the sorrowing  
All release from pain;  
Let the lips of laughter  
Overflow again;  
And with all the needy  
O divide, I pray,  
This vast treasure of content  
That is mine to-day!









