

VARIOUS

GRADED

MEMORY

SELECTIONS

Various Graded Memory Selections

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Graded Memory Selections:

Содержание

PREFACE	6
FIRST GRADE	8
THE BABY	8
THE LITTLE PLANT	10
SLEEP, BABY, SLEEP!	11
ONE, TWO, THREE	12
THREE LITTLE BUGS IN A BASKET	13
WHENEVER A LITTLE CHILD IS BORN	15
SWEET AND LOW	16
THE FERRY FOR SHADOWTOWN	17
MY SHADOW	19
QUITE LIKE A STOCKING	20
THE OWL AND THE PUSSY-CAT	21
FORGET-ME-NOT	23
WHO STOLE THE BIRD'S NEST	24
TWO LITTLE HANDS	27
THE DANDELION	28
A MILLION LITTLE DIAMONDS	29
DAISY NURSES	30
DANDELIONS	31
AT LITTLE VIRGIL'S WINDOW	32
MEMORY GEMS	33
SECOND GRADE	34

SEVEN TIMES ONE	34
CHRISTMAS EVE	36
MORNING SONG	37
SUPPOSE, MY LITTLE LADY	38
THE DAY'S EYE	40
THE NIGHT WIND	41
THE BLUE BIRD'S SONG	43
SUPPOSE	44
AUTUMN LEAVES	46
IF I WERE A SUNBEAM	47
MEADOW TALK	49
THE OLD LOVE	50
BED IN SUMMER	51
THREE COMPANIONS	52
THE WIND	53
THE MINUET.1	55
WYNKEN, BLYNKEN AND NOD.2	57
PRETTY IS THAT PRETTY DOES	59
LULLABY.3	61
THIRD GRADE	63
DISCONTENT	63
OUR FLAG	65
SONG FROM "PIPPA PASSES."	66
LITTLE BROWN HANDS	67
WINTER AND SUMMER	69
THE BROOK	70

THE WONDERFUL WORLD	73
DON'T GIVE UP	74
WE ARE SEVEN	75
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	77

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PREFACE

It is unfortunately true that the terms education and culture are not synonymous. Too often we find that the children in our public schools, while possessed of the one, are signally lacking in the other. This is a state of things that cannot be remedied by teaching mere facts. The Greeks, many years ago, found the true method of imparting the latter grace and we shall probably not be able to discover a better one to-day. Their youths learned Homer and the other great poets as a part of their daily tasks, and by thus constantly dwelling upon and storing in their minds the noblest and most beautifully expressed thought in their literature, their own mental life became at once refined and strong.

The basis of all culture lies in a pure and elevated moral nature, and so noted an authority as President Eliot, of Harvard University, has said that the short memory gems which he learned as a boy in school, have done him more good in the hour of temptation than all the sermons he ever heard preached. A fine thought or beautiful image, once stored in the mind, even if at first it is received indifferently and with little understanding, is bound to recur again and again, and its companionship will have

a sure, if unconscious, influence. The mind that has been filled in youth with many such thoughts and images will surely bear fruit in fine and gracious actions.

To the teachers who are persuaded of this truth, the present collection of poems has much to recommend it. The selections have been chosen both for their moral influence and for their permanent value as literature. They have been carefully graded to suit the needs of every class from the primary to the high school. Either the whole poem or a sufficiently long quotation has been inserted to give the child a complete mental picture.

The teacher will thus escape the difficulty of choosing among a too great abundance of riches, or the still greater one of finding for herself, with few resources, what serves her purpose. This volume has a further advantage over other books of selections. It is so moderate in price that it will be possible to place it in the hands of the children themselves.

The compilers desire to thank Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Charles Scribner's Sons, Bowen, Merrill & Co., Whittaker & Ray Co., and Doubleday & McClure Co., for their kindness in permitting the use of copyrighted material.

S. D. WATERMAN.

FIRST GRADE

THE BABY

Where did you come from, baby dear?
Out of the everywhere into the here.
Where did you get your eyes so blue?
Out of the sky as I came through.

What makes the light in them sparkle and spin?
Some of the starry spikes left in.
Where did you get that little tear?
I found it waiting when I got here.

What makes your forehead so smooth and high?
A soft hand stroked it as I went by.
What makes your cheek like a warm, white rose?
I saw something better than any one know.

Whence that three-corner'd smile of bliss?
Three angels gave me at once a kiss.
Where did you get this pearly ear?
God spoke, and it came out to hear.

Where did you get those arms and hands?

Love made itself into hooks and bands.
Feet, whence did you come, you darling things?
From the same box as the cherubs' wings.

How did they all come just to be you?
God thought of me and so I grew.
But how did you come to us, you dear?
God thought of you, and so I am here.

—*George Macdonald.*

THE LITTLE PLANT

In the heart of a seed, buried deep, so deep,
A dear little plant lay fast asleep.
“Wake,” said the sunshine, “and creep to the light.”
“Wake,” said the voice of the rain-drops bright.
The little plant heard and rose to see
What the wonderful outside world might be.

—*Anon.*

SLEEP, BABY, SLEEP!

Sleep, baby, sleep!

Thy father watches his sheep;

Thy mother is shaking the dreamland tree,

And down comes a little dream on thee.

Sleep, baby, sleep!

Sleep, baby, sleep!

The large stars are the sheep;

The little stars are the lambs, I guess;

And the gentle moon is the shepherdess.

Sleep, baby, sleep!

Sleep, baby, sleep!

Our Saviour loves His sheep;

He is the Lamb of God on high,

Who for our sakes came down to die.

Sleep, baby, sleep!

—*E. Prentiss (from the German).*

ONE, TWO, THREE

One, two, three, a bonny boat I see,
A silver boat and all afloat upon a rosy sea.
One, two, three, the riddle tell to me.
The moon afloat is the bonny boat, the sunset is the sea.

—*Margaret Johnson.*

THREE LITTLE BUGS IN A BASKET

Three little bugs in a basket,
And hardly room for two;
And one was yellow, and one was black,
And one like me or you;
The space was small, no doubt, for all,
So what should the three bugs do?

Three little bugs in a basket,
And hardly crumbs for two;
And all were selfish in their hearts,
The same as I or you.
So the strong one said, "We will eat the bread,
And that's what we will do!"

Three little bugs in a basket,
And the beds but two could hold;
And so they fell to quarreling—
The white, the black, and the gold—
And two of the bugs got under the rugs,
And one was out in the cold.

He that was left in the basket,
Without a crumb to chew,
Or a thread to wrap himself withal,
When the wind across him blew,

Pulled one of the rugs from one of the bugs,
And so the quarrel grew.

So there was war in the basket;
Ah! pity 'tis, 'tis true!
But he that was frozen and starved, at last
A strength from his weakness drew,
And pulled the rugs from both the bugs,
And killed and ate them, too!

Now when bugs live in a basket,
Though more than it well can hold,
It seems to me they had better agree—
The black, the white, and the gold—
And share what comes of beds and crumbs,
And leave no bug in the cold.

—*Alice Cary.*

WHENEVER A LITTLE CHILD IS BORN

Whenever a little child is born,
All night a soft wind rocks the corn,
One more butter-cup wakes to the morn,
Somewhere.
One more rose-bud shy will unfold,
One more grass-blade push through the mould,
One more bird's song the air will hold,
Somewhere.

—*Agnes L. Carter.*

SWEET AND LOW

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west,
Under the silver moon;
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

—*Alfred Tennyson.*

THE FERRY FOR SHADOWTOWN

Sway to and fro in the twilight gray;
This is the ferry for Shadowtown;
It always sails at the end of the day,
Just as the darkness closes down.

Rest little head, on my shoulder, so;
A sleepy kiss is the only fare;
Drifting away from the world, we go,
Baby and I in the rocking-chair.

See where the fire-logs glow and spark,
Glitter the lights of the shadowland,
The raining drops on the window, hark!
Are ripples lapping upon its strand.

There, where the mirror is glancing dim,
A lake lies shimmering, cool and still.
Blossoms are waving above its brim,
Those over there on the window-sill.

Rock slow, more slow in the dusky light,
Silently lower the anchor down:
Dear little passenger, say "Good-night."
We've reached the harbor of Shadowtown.

—*Anon.*

MY SHADOW

I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.
He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;
And I see him jump before me when I jump into my bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow—
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an India-rubber ball,
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward, you can see;
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks to me!

One morning, very early, before the sun was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in bed.

—*Robert Louis Stevenson.*

QUITE LIKE A STOCKING

Just as morn was fading amid her misty rings,
And every stocking was stuffed with childhood's precious things,
Old Kris Kringle looked round and saw on the elm tree bough
High hung, an oriole's nest, lonely and empty now.

“Quite like a stocking,” he laughed, “hung up there in the tree,
I didn't suppose the birds expected a visit from me.”
Then old Kris Kringle who loves a joke as well as the best,
Dropped a handful of snowflakes into the oriole's empty nest.

—*Anon.*

THE OWL AND THE PUSSY-CAT

The Owl and the Pussy-Cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat;
They took some honey, and plenty of money
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.
The Owl looked up to the moon above,
And sang to a small guitar,
“O lovely Pussy! O Pussy, my love!
What a beautiful Pussy you are—
You are,
What a beautiful Pussy you are!”

Pussy said to the owl, “You elegant fowl!
How wonderfully sweet you sing!
Oh, let us be married—too long we have tarried—
But what shall we do for a ring?”
They sailed away for a year and a day
To the land where the Bong-tree grows,
And there in a wood, a piggy-wig stood
With a ring in the end of his nose—
His nose,
With a ring in the end of his nose.

“Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling
Your ring?” Said the piggy, “I will.”
So they took it away, and were married next day

By the turkey who lives on the hill.
They dined upon mince and slices of quince,
Which they ate with a runcible spoon,
And hand in hand on the edge of the sand
They danced by the light of the moon—
The moon,
They danced by the light of the moon.

—*Edward Lear.*

FORGET-ME-NOT

When to the flowers so beautiful the Father gave a name
Back came a little blue-eyed one, all timidly it came;
And, standing at the Father's feet and gazing in His face
It said, in low and trembling tones and with a modest grace,
“Dear God, the name Thou gavest me, alas, I have forgot.”
The Father kindly looked Him down and said, “Forget-me-not.”

—*Anon.*

WHO STOLE THE BIRD'S NEST

“To-whit! To-whit! To-whee!
Will you listen to me?
Who stole four eggs I laid,
And the nice nest I made?”

“Not I,” said the cow, “moo-oo!
Such a thing I’d never do.
I gave you a wisp of hay,
But I did not take your nest away:
Not I,” said the cow, “moo-oo!
Such a thing I’d never do.”

“Bob-o-link! Bob-o-link!
Now, what do you think?
Who stole a nest away
From the plum tree to-day?”

“Not I,” said the dog, “bow-wow!
I wouldn’t be so mean, I vow.
I gave some hairs the nest to make,
But the nest I did not take.
Not I,” said the dog, “bow-wow!
I wouldn’t be so mean, I vow.”

“Coo-oo! Coo-coo! Coo-coo!

Let me speak a word or two:
Who stole that pretty nest,
From little Yellow-breast?"

"Not I," said the sheep; "oh, no,
I would not treat a poor bird so;
I gave wool the nest to line,
But the nest was none of mine.
Baa! Baa!" said the sheep; "oh no;
I wouldn't treat a poor bird so."

"Caw! Caw!" cried the crow,
"I should like to know
What thief took away
A bird's nest to-day."

"Cluck! Cluck!" said the hen,
"Don't ask me again;
Why, I haven't a chick
Would do such a trick.
We all gave her a feather,
And she wove them together.
I'd scorn to intrude
On her and her brood.
Cluck! Cluck!" said the hen,
"Don't ask me again."

"Chirr-a-whirr! Chirr-a-whirr!
All the birds make a stir.

Let us find out his name,
And all cry, 'For shame!'"

"I would not rob a bird!"
Said little Mary Green,
"I think I never heard
Of anything so mean!"

"It's very cruel, too,"
Said little Alice Neal,
"I wonder if he knew
How sad the bird would feel."

A little boy hung down his head,
And went and hid behind the bed:
For he stole that pretty nest
From little Yellow-Breast;
And he felt so full of shame
He did not like to tell his name.

—*Anon.*

TWO LITTLE HANDS

Two little hands so soft and white,
This is the left—this is the right.
Five little fingers stand on each,
So I can hold a plum or a peach.
But if I should grow as old as you
Lots of little things these hands can do.

—*Anon.*

THE DANDELION

O dandelion yellow as gold,
What do you do all day?
I just wait here in the tall green grass
Till the children come to play.
O dandelion yellow as gold,
What do you do all night?
I wait and wait till the cool dews fall
And my hair grows long and white.

And what do you do when your hair is white
And the children come to play?
They take me up in their dimpled hands
And blow my hair away.

—*Anon.*

A MILLION LITTLE DIAMONDS

A million little diamonds
Twinkled on the trees;
And all the little maidens said,
“A jewel, if you please!”

But while they held their hands outstretched
To catch the diamonds gay,
A million little sunbeams came
And stole them all away.

—*M. T. Butts.*

DAISY NURSES

The daisies white are nursery maids with frills upon their caps;

And daisy buds are little babes they tend upon their laps.

Sing "Heigh-ho!" while the winds sweep low,

Both nurses and babies are nodding JUST SO.

The daisy babies never cry, the nurses never scold;

They never crush the dainty frills about their cheeks of gold;

But pure and white, in gay sunlight

They're nid-nodding—pretty sight.

The daisies love the golden sun, upon the clear blue sky,

He gazes kindly down on them and winks his jolly eye;

While soft and low, all in a row,

Both nurses and babies are nodding JUST SO.

—*Anon.*

DANDELIONS

There surely is a gold mine somewhere underneath the grass,
For dandelions are popping out in every place you pass.
But if you want to gather some you'd better not delay,
For the gold will turn to silver soon and all will blow away.

—*Anon.*

AT LITTLE VIRGIL'S WINDOW

There are three green eggs in a small brown pocket,
And the breeze will swing and the gale will rock it,
Till three little birds on the thin edge teeter,
And our God be glad and our world be sweeter.

—*Edwin Markham.*

MEMORY GEMS

Do thy duty, that is best,
Leave unto the Lord the rest.

Whene'er a task is set for you,
Don't idly sit and view it—
Nor be content to wish it done;
Begin at once and do it.

Beautiful hands are those that do
Work that is earnest, brave and true,
Moment by moment, the long day through.

—*Sel.*

SECOND GRADE

SEVEN TIMES ONE

There's no dew left on the daisies and clover,
There's no rain left in heaven;
I've said my "seven times" over and over,
Seven times one are seven.

I am old, so old I can write a letter;
My birthday lessons are done;
The lambs play always, they know no better—
They are only one times one.

O moon! in the night I have seen you sailing
And shining so round and low;
You were bright, ah bright! but your light is failing,—
You are nothing now but a bow.

You moon, have you done something wrong in heaven,
That God has hidden your face?
I hope, if you have, you will soon be forgiven,
And shine again in your place.

O velvet bee, you're a dusty fellow;

You've powdered your legs with gold!
O brave marshmary buds, rich and yellow,
Give me your money to hold!

And show me your nest with the young ones in it,—
I will not steal it away;
I am old! you may trust me, linnets, linnets,—
I am seven times one to-day!

—*Jean Ingelow.*

CHRISTMAS EVE

God bless the little stockings all over the land to-night
Hung in the choicest corners, in the glory of crimson light.
The tiny scarlet stockings, with a hole in the heel and toe,
Worn by the wonderful journeys that the darlings have to go.
And Heaven pity the children, wherever their homes may be,
Who wake at the first gray dawning, an empty stocking to
see.

—*Anon.*

MORNING SONG

What does little birdie say
In her nest at peep of day?
“Let me fly,” says little birdie,
“Mother, let me fly away.”

“Birdie, rest a little longer,
Till the little wings are stronger.”
So she rests a little longer,
Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little birdie,
“Let me rise and fly away.”

“Baby, sleep a little longer,
Till the little limbs are stronger.
If she sleeps a little longer,
Baby, too, shall fly away.”

—*Alfred Tennyson.*

SUPPOSE, MY LITTLE LADY

Suppose, my little lady,
Your doll should break her head;
Could you make it whole by crying
Till your eyes and nose are red?

And wouldn't it be pleasanter
To treat it as a joke,
And say you're glad 'twas Dolly's,
And not your head, that broke?

Suppose you're dressed for walking,
And the rain comes pouring down;
Will it clear off any sooner
Because you scold and frown?

And wouldn't it be nicer
For you to smile than pout,
And so make sunshine in the house
When there is none without?

Suppose your task, my little man,
Is very hard to get;
Will it make it any easier
For you to sit and fret?

And wouldn't it be wiser,
Than waiting like a dunce,
To go to work in earnest,
And learn the thing at once?

—*Phæbe Cory.*

THE DAY'S EYE

What does the daisy see
In the breezy meadows tossing?
It sees the wide blue fields o'er head
And the little cloud flocks crossing.

What does the daisy see
Round the sunny meadows glancing?
It sees the butterflies' chase
And the filmy gnats at their dancing.

What does the daisy see
Down in the grassy thickets?
The grasshoppers green and brown,
And the shining, coal-black crickets.

It sees the bobolink's nest,
That no one else can discover,
And the brooding mother-bird
With the floating grass above her.

—*Anon.*

THE NIGHT WIND

Have you ever heard the wind go “Yoooooo”?
’Tis a pitiful sound to hear;
It seems to chill you through and through
With a strange and speechless fear.
’Tis the voice of the wind that broods outside
When folks should be asleep,
And many and many’s the time I’ve cried
To the darkness brooding far and wide
Over the land and the deep:
“Whom do you want, O lonely night,
That you wail the long hours through?”
And the night would say in its ghostly way:
“Yoooooo! Yoooooooooooo! Yoooooooooooo!”

My mother told me long ago
When I was a little lad
That when the night went wailing so,
Somebody had been bad;
And then when I was snug in bed,
Whither I had been sent,
With the blankets pulled up round my head,
I’d think of what my mother said,
And wonder what boy she meant.
And, “Who’s been bad to-day?” I’d ask
Of the wind that hoarsely blew,

And the voice would say in its meaningful way:
“Yoooooooo! Yooooooooooooo! Yooooooooooooo!”

That this was true, I must allow—
You’ll not believe it though,
Yes, though I’m quite a model now,
I was not always so.
And if you doubt what things I say,
Suppose you make the test;
Suppose that when you’ve been bad some day,
And up to bed you’re sent away
From mother and the rest—
Suppose you ask, “Who has been bad?”
And then you’ll hear what’s true;
For the wind will moan in its ruefulest tone:
“Yoooooooo! Yooooooooooooo! Yooooooooooooo!”

—*Eugene Field.*

THE BLUE BIRD'S SONG

Little white snowdrop, I pray you arise:
Bright yellow crocus, come, open your eyes:
Sweet little violets hid from the cold,
Put on your mantles of purple and gold.
Daffodils, daffodils, say, do you hear?
Summer is coming and springtime is here.

—*Anon.*

SUPPOSE

Suppose the little cowslip
Should hang its golden cup,
And say, "I'm such a tiny flower,
I'd better not grow up;"
How many a weary traveler
Would miss its fragrant smell,
And many a little child would grieve
To lose it from the dell.

Suppose the little breezes,
Upon a summer's day,
Should think themselves too small
To cool the traveler on his way;
Who would not miss the smallest
And softest ones that blow,
And think they made a great mistake,
If they were talking so?

Suppose the little dewdrop
Upon the grass should say,
"What can a little dewdrop do?
I'd better roll away."
The blade on which it rested,
Before the day was done,
Without a drop to moisten it,

Would wither in the sun.

How many deeds of kindness
A little child can do,
Although it has but little strength,
And little wisdom, too!
It wants a loving spirit,
Much more than strength, to prove
How many things a child may do
For others by its love.

—*Anon.*

AUTUMN LEAVES

“Come, little leaves,” said the wind one day;
“Come over the meadows with me, and play,
Put on your dresses of red and gold,
Summer is gone and the days grow cold.”

Soon the leaves heard the wind’s loud call,
Down they fell fluttering, one and all.
Over the brown fields they danced and flew,
Singing the soft little songs they knew.

Dancing and flying, the little leaves went;
Winter had called them, and they were content.
Soon fast asleep in their earthy beds,
The snow laid a white blanket over their heads.

—*Anon.*

IF I WERE A SUNBEAM

“If I were a sunbeam,
I know what I’d do:
I would seek white lilies
Rainy woodlands through:
I would steal among them,
Softest light I’d shed,
Until every lily
Raised its drooping head.

“If I were a sunbeam,
I know where I’d go:
Into lowliest hovels,
Dark with want and woe:
Till sad hearts looked upward,
I would shine and shine;
Then they’d think of heaven,
Their sweet home and mine.”

Art thou not a sunbeam,
Child whose life is glad
With an inner radiance
Sunshine never had?
Oh, as God has blessed thee,
Scatter rays divine!
For there is no sunbeam

But must die, or shine.

—*Lucy Larcom.*

MEADOW TALK

A bumble bee, yellow as gold
Sat perched on a red-clover top,
When a grasshopper, wiry and old,
Came along with a skip and a hop.
“Good morrow” cried he, “Mr. Bumble Bee,
You seem to have come to stop.”

“We people that work,” said the bee with a jerk,
“Find a benefit sometimes in stopping,
Only insects like you, who have nothing to do
Can keep perpetually hopping.”
The grasshopper paused on his way
And thoughtfully hunched up his knees:
“Why trouble this sunshiny day,”
Quoth he, “with reflections like these?
I follow the trade for which I was made
We all can’t be wise bumble-bees;
There’s a time to be sad and a time to be glad,
A time for both working and stopping,
For men to make money, for you to make honey,
And for me to keep constantly hopping.”

—*Caroline Leslie.*

THE OLD LOVE

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

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

—*Charles Kingsley.*

BED IN SUMMER

In winter I get up at night
And dress by yellow candle-light.
In summer, quite the other way,
I have to go to bed by day.

I have to go to bed and see
The birds still hopping on the tree,
Or hear the grown-up people's feet
Still going past me in the street.

And does it not seem hard to you,
When all the sky is clear and blue,
And I should like so much to play,
To have to go to bed by day?

—*Robert Louis Stevenson.*

THREE COMPANIONS

We go on our walk together—
Baby and dog and I—
Three little merry companions,
'Neath any sort of sky:
Blue as our baby's eyes are,
Gray like our old dog's tail;
Be it windy or cloudy or stormy,
Our courage will never fail.

Baby's a little lady;
Dog is a gentleman brave;
If he had two legs as you have,
He'd kneel to her like a slave;
As it is, he loves and protects her,
As dog and gentleman can.
I'd rather be a kind doggie,
I think, than a cruel man.

—*Dinah Mulock-Craik.*

THE WIND

I saw you toss the kites on high,
And blow the birds about the sky;
And all around I heard you pass
Like ladies' skirts across the grass—
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid.
I felt you push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all—
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

O you, that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field and tree,
Or just a stronger child than me?
O wind, a-blowing all day long,
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

—*Robert Louis Stevenson.*

Hearts like doors can open with ease
To very, very little keys;

And ne'er forget that they are these:
“I thank you, sir,” and “If you please.”

—*Sel.*

THE MINUET.¹

Grandma told me all about it,
Told me so I couldn't doubt it,
How she danced, my grandma danced; long ago—
How she held her pretty head,
How her dainty skirt she spread,
How she slowly leaned and rose—long ago.

Grandma's hair was bright and sunny,
Dimpled cheeks, too, oh, how funny!
Really quite a pretty girl—long ago.
Bless her! why, she wears a cap,
Grandma does and takes a nap
Every single day: and yet
Grandma danced the minuet—long ago.

“Modern ways are quite alarming,”
Grandma says, “but boys were charming”
(Girls and boys she means of course) “long ago.”
Brave but modest, grandly shy;
She would like to have us try
Just to feel like those who met
In the graceful minuet—long ago.

¹ From “Along the Way,” copyright 1879 by Mary Mapes Dodge, and published by Chas. Scribner's Sons.

—*Mary Mapes Dodge.*

WYNKEN, BLYNKEN AND NOD.²

Wynken, Blynken and Nod one night
Sailed off in a wooden shoe,
Sailed on a river of crystal light
Into a sea of dew.

“Where are you going?” “What do you wish?”

The old Moon asked the three.

“We come to fish for the herring fish

That live in the beautiful sea,

Nets of silver and gold have we,”

Said Wynken, Blynken and Nod.

The old Moon laughed and sang a song

As they rocked in the wooden shoe,

And the wind that sped them all night long

Ruffled the waves of dew.

The little stars were the herring fish

That lived in that beautiful sea,—

“Now cast your nets whenever you wish,

Never afeard are we!”

So cried the stars to the fishermen three—

Wynken, Blynken and Nod.

² From “Love Songs of Childhood.” Copyright, 1894, by Eugene Field. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, Chas. Scribner’s Sons.

All night long their nets they threw
To the stars in the twinkling foam.
Then down from the skies came the wooden shoe
Bringing the fishermen home.
'Twas all so pretty a sail it seemed
As if it could not be,
And some folks thought 'twas a dream they'd dreamed
Of sailing that beautiful sea.
But I can name you the fishermen three—
Wynken, Blynken and Nod.

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes
And Nod is a little head,
And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies
Is a wee one's trundle bed.
So shut your eyes while mother sings
Of wonderful sights that be,
And you shall see the beautiful things
As you rock on the misty sea,—
Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three—
Wynken, Blynken and Nod.

—*Eugene Field.*

PRETTY IS THAT PRETTY DOES

The spider wears a plain brown dress,
And she is a steady spinner;
To see her, quiet as a mouse,
Going about her silver house,
You would never, never, never guess
The way she gets her dinner.

She looks as if no thought of ill
In all her life had stirred her;
But while she moves with careful tread,
And while she spins her silken thread,
She is planning, planning, planning still
The way to do some murder.

My child, who reads this simple lay,
With eyes down-dropt and tender,
Remember the old proverb says
That pretty is which pretty does,
And that worth does not go nor stay
For poverty nor splendor.

'Tis not the house, and not the dress,
That makes the saint or sinner.
To see the spider sit and spin,
Shut with her walls of silver in,

You would never, never, never guess
The way she gets her dinner.

—*Alice Cary.*

LULLABY.³

Over the cradle the mother hung,
Softly crooning a slumber song:
And these were the simple words she sung
All the evening long.

“Cheek or chin, or knuckle or knee
Where shall the baby’s dimple be?
Where shall the angel’s finger rest
When he comes down to the baby’s nest?
Where shall the angel’s touch remain
When he awakens my babe again?”

Still as she bent and sang so low,
A murmur into her music broke:
And she paused to hear, for she could but know
The baby’s angel spoke.

“Cheek or chin, or knuckle or knee,
Where shall the baby’s dimple be?
Where shall my finger fall and rest
When I come down to the baby’s nest?
Where shall my finger touch remain

³ From “The Complete Poetical Writings of J. G. Holland,” copyright 1879-1881 by Charles Scribner’s Sons.

When I awaken your babe again?"

Silent the mother sat and dwelt
Long in the sweet delay of choice,
And then by her baby's side she knelt,
And sang with a pleasant voice:

"Not on the limb, O angel dear!
For the charm with its youth will disappear;
Not on the cheek shall the dimple be,
For the harboring smile will fade and flee;
But touch thou the chin with an impress deep,
And my baby the angel's seal shall keep."

—*J. G. Holland.*

THIRD GRADE

DISCONTENT

Down in a field one day in June, the flowers all bloomed together,

Save one who tried to hide herself, and drooped that pleasant weather.

A robin who had flown too high, and felt a little lazy,
Was resting near this buttercup who wished she was a daisy.

For daisies grow so slim and tall! She always had a passion
For wearing frills about her neck in just the daisies' fashion.
And buttercups must always be the same old tiresome color;
While daisies dress in gold and white, although their gold is duller.

“Dear Robin,” said the sad young flower, “Perhaps you'd not mind trying

To find a nice white frill for me, some day when you are flying.”

“You silly thing!” the Robin said, “I think you must be crazy; I'd rather be my honest self, than any made-up daisy.

“You're nicer in your own bright gown; the little children love

you.

Be the best buttercup you can, and think no flower above you. Though swallows leave *me* out of sight, we'd better keep our places:

Perhaps the world would all go wrong with one too many daisies.

Look bravely up into the sky and be content with knowing That God wished for a buttercup, just here where you are growing.”

—*Sarah Orne Jewett.*

OUR FLAG

There are many flags in many lands,
There are flags of every hue,
But there is no flag in any land
Like our own Red, White and Blue.
I know where the prettiest colors are,
I'm sure, if I only knew
How to get them here, I could make a flag
Of glorious Red, White and Blue.

I would cut a piece from the evening sky
Where the stars were shining through,
And use it just as it was on high
For my stars and field of Blue.
Then I want a part of a fleecy cloud
And some red from a rainbow bright,
And I'd put them together, side by side
For my stripes of Red and White.

Then "Hurrah for the Flag!" our country's flag,
Its stripes and white stars too;
There is no flag in any land
Like our own "Red, White and Blue."

—Anon.

SONG FROM “PIPPA PASSES.”

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

—*Robert Browning.*

LITTLE BROWN HANDS

They drive home the cows from the pasture,
Up through the long shady lane,
Where the quail whistles loud in the wheat-fields,
That are yellow with ripening grain.
They find, in the thick, waving grasses,
Where the scarlet-lipped strawberry grows.
They gather the earliest snowdrops,
And the first crimson buds of the rose.

They toss the new hay in the meadow;
They gather the elder-bloom white;
They find where the dusky grapes purple
In the soft-tinted October light.
They know where the apples hang ripest,
And are sweeter than Italy's wines;
They know where the fruit hangs the thickest
On the long, thorny blackberry-vines.

They gather the delicate sea-weeds,
And build tiny castles of sand;
They pick up the beautiful sea-shells—
Fairy barks that have drifted to land.
They wave from the tall, rocking tree-tops
Where the oriole's hammock-nest swings;
And at night-time are folded in slumber

By a song that a fond mother sings.

Those who toil bravely are strongest;
The humble and poor become great;
And so from these brown-handed children
Shall grow mighty rulers of state.
The pen of the author and statesman—
The noble and wise of the land—
The sword, and the chisel, and palette,
Shall be held in the little brown hand.

—*M. H. Krout.*

WINTER AND SUMMER

Oh, I wish the Winter would go,
And I wish the Summer would come,
Then the big brown farmers will hoe,
And the little brown bee will hum.

Then the robin his fife will trill,
And the wood-piper beat his drum;
And out of their tents on the hill
The little green troops will come.

Then around and over the trees
With a flutter and flirt we'll go,
A rollicking, frolicking breeze,
And away with a frisk ho! ho!

—*Anon.*

THE BROOK

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down the valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river;
For men may come, and men may go,
But I go on forever.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles;
I bubble into eddying bays;
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my bank I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come, and men may go,
But I go on forever.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me as I travel,
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come, and men may go,
But I go on forever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers,
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go
But I go on forever.

—*Tennyson.*

THE WONDERFUL WORLD

Great, wide, beautiful, wonderful World,
With the wonderful water around you curled,
And the wonderful grass upon your breast—
World, you are beautifully dressed.

The wonderful air is over me,
And the wonderful wind is shaking the tree,
It walks on the water, and whirls the mills,
And talks to itself on the tops of the hills.

You, friendly Earth, how far do you go,
With the wheatfields that nod and the rivers that flow,
With cities and gardens, and cliffs, and isles,
And people upon you for thousands of miles?

Ah, you are so great, and I am so small,
I tremble to think of you, World, at all;
And yet, when I said my prayers, to-day,
A whisper inside me seemed to say,
“You are more than the earth, though you are such a dot:
You can love and think, and the Earth can not!”

—*W. B. Rands.*

DON'T GIVE UP

If you've tried and have not won,
Never stop for crying;
All that's great and good is done
Just by patient trying.

Though young birds, in flying, fall,
Still their wings grow stronger;
And the next time they can keep
Up a little longer.

Though the sturdy oak has known
Many a blast that bowed her,
She has risen again, and grown
Loftier and prouder.

If by easy work you beat,
Who the more will prize you?
Gaining victory from defeat,
That's the test that tries you!

—*Phæbe Cary.*

WE ARE SEVEN

—A simple child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage girl:
She was eight years old, she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad:
Her eyes were fair, and very fair—
Her beauty made me glad.

“Sisters and brothers, little Maid,
How many may you be?”
“How many? Seven in all,” she said,
And wondering looked at me.

“And where are they? I pray you tell.”
She answered, “Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

“Two of us in the churchyard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And in the churchyard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother.”

“You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven! I pray you tell,
Sweet Maid, how this may be.”

Then did the little maid reply,
“Seven boys and girls are we;

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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