

**POEMS EVERY CHILD  
SHOULD KNOW**



**POEMS EVERY  
CHILD SHOULD  
KNOW**

**BY**

**MARY E. BURT**

**YESTERDAY'S CLASSICS  
CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA**

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## PREFACE

IS THIS another collection of stupid poems that children cannot use? Will they look hopelessly through this volume for poems that suit them? Will they say despairingly, "This is too long," and "That is too hard," and "I don't like that because it is not interesting"?

Are there three or four pleasing poems and are all the rest put in to fill up the book? Nay, verily! The poems in this collection are those that children love. With the exception of seven, they are short enough for children to commit to memory without wearying themselves or losing interest in the poem. If one boy learns "The Overland Mail," or "The Recruit," or "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod," or "The Song in Camp," or "Old Ironsides," or "I Have a Little Shadow," or "The Tournament," or "The Duel," nine boys out of ten will be eager to follow him. I know, because I have tried it a dozen times. Every boy loves "Paul Revere's Ride" (alas! I have not been able to include it), and is ambitious to learn it, but only boys having a quick memory will persevere to the end. Shall the slower boy be deprived of the pleasure of reading the whole poem and getting its inspiring sentiment and learning as many stanzas as his mind will take? No, indeed. Half of such a poem is better than none. Let the slow boy learn and recite as many stanzas as he can

and the boy of quick memory follow him up with the rest. It does not help the slow boy's memory to keep it down entirely or deprive it of its smaller activity because he cannot learn the whole. Some people will invariably give the slow child a very short poem. It is often better to divide a long poem among the children, letting each child learn a part. The sustained interest of a long poem is worth while. "The Merman," "The Battle of Ivry," "Horatius at the Bridge," "Krinken," "The Skeleton in Armour," "The Raven" and "Hervé Riel" may all profitably be learned that way. Nevertheless, the child enjoys most the poem that is just long enough, and there is much to be said in favour of the selection that is adapted, in length, to the average mind; for the child hesitates in the presence of quantity rather than in the presence of subtle thought. I make claim for this collection that it is made up of poems that the majority of children will learn of their own free will. There are people who believe that in the matter of learning poetry there is no "*ought*," but this is a false belief. There is a *duty*, even there; for every American citizen *ought* to know the great national songs that keep alive the spirit of patriotism. Children should build for their future—and get, while they are children, what only the fresh imagination of the child can assimilate.

They should store up an untold wealth of heroic sentiment; they should acquire the habit of carrying a literary quality in their conversation; they should carry a heart full of the fresh and delightful associations and memories connected with poetry hours to brighten mature years. They should develop their memories while they have memories to develop.

Will the boy who took every poetry hour for a whole school year to learn "Henry of Navarre" ever regret it, or will the children who listened to it? No. It was fresh every week and they brought fresh interest in listening. The boy will always love it because he used to love it. There were boys who scrambled for the right to recite "The Tournament," "The Charge of the Light Brigade," "The Star-Spangled Banner," and so on. The boy who was first to reach the front had the privilege. The triumph of getting the chance to recite added to the zest of it. Will they ever forget it?

I know Lowell's "The Finding of the Lyre." Attention, Sir Knights! See who can learn it first as I say it to you. But I find that I have forgotten a line of it, so you may open your books and teach it to me. Now, I can recite every word of it. How much of it can you repeat from memory? One boy can say it all. Nearly every child has learned the most of it. Now, it will be easy for you to learn it alone. And Memory, the Goddess Beautiful, will henceforth go with you to recall this happy hour.

MARY E. BURT.

*The John A. Browning School, 1904.*





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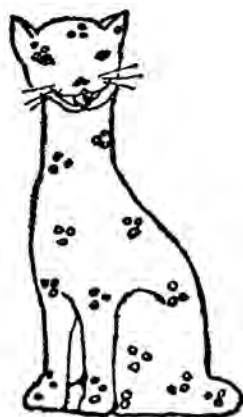
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*Part I*  
*The Budding Moment*





## The Arrow and the Song

I shot an arrow into the air,  
It fell to earth, I knew not where;  
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight  
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,  
It fell to earth, I knew not where;  
For who has sight so keen and strong  
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak  
I found the arrow, still unbroke;  
And the song, from beginning to end,  
I found again in the heart of a friend.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

## **The Babie**

Nae shoon to hide her tiny taes,  
Nae stockin' on her feet;  
Her supple ankles white as snaw,  
Or early blossoms sweet.

Her simple dress o' sprinkled pink,  
Her double, dimplit chin,  
Her puckered lips, and baummy mou',  
With na ane tooth within.

Her een sae like her mither's een,  
Twa gentle, liquid things;  
Her face is like an angel's face:  
We're glad she has nae wings.

JEREMIAH EAMES RANKIN.

## **Let Dogs Delight to Bark and Bite**

Let dogs delight to bark and bite,  
For God hath made them so;  
Let bears and lions growl and fight,  
For 'tis their nature too.

## *THE BUDDING MOMENT*

But, children, you should never let  
Such angry passions rise;  
Your little hands were never made  
To tear each other's eyes.

ISAAC WATTS.

## **Little Things**

Little drops of water,  
Little grains of sand,  
Make the mighty ocean  
And the pleasant land.

Thus the little minutes,  
Humble though they be,  
Make the mighty ages  
Of eternity.

EBENEZER COBHAM BREWER.

## **He Prayeth Best**

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell  
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!  
He prayeth well who loveth well  
Both man and bird and beast.

*POEMS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW*

He prayeth best who loveth best  
    All things, both great and small:  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
    He made and loveth all.

SAMUEL T. COLERIDGE.

## **Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star**

Twinkle, twinkle, little star!  
How I wonder what you are,  
Up above the world so high,  
Like a diamond in the sky.

When the glorious sun is set,  
When the grass with dew is wet,  
Then you show your little light,  
Twinkle, twinkle all the night.

In the dark-blue sky you keep,  
And often through my curtains peep,  
For you never shut your eye,  
Till the sun is in the sky.

As your bright and tiny spark  
Guides the traveller in the dark,  
Though I know not what you are,  
Twinkle, twinkle, little star!

*THE BUDDING MOMENT*

**Pippa**

The year's at the spring,  
The day's at the morn;  
Morning's at seven;  
The hillside'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.

**The Days of the Month**

Thirty days hath September,  
April, June, and November;  
February has twenty-eight alone.  
All the rest have thirty-one,  
Excepting leap-year—that's the time  
When February's days are twenty-nine.

OLD SONG.

## True Royalty

There was never a Queen like Balkis,  
From here to the wide world's end;  
But Balkis talked to a butterfly  
As you would talk to a friend.

There was never a King like Solomon,  
Not since the world began;  
But Solomon talked to a butterfly  
As a man would talk to a man.

*She* was Queen of Sabaea—  
And *he* was Asia's Lord—  
But they both of 'em talked to butterflies  
When they took their walks abroad.

RUDYARD KIPLING.  
(In "The Just So Stories.")

## Playing Robinson Crusoe

Pussy can sit by the fire and sing,  
Pussy can climb a tree,  
Or play with a silly old cork and string  
To 'muse herself, not me.  
But I like Binkie, my dog, because  
He knows how to behave;



## *THE BUDDING MOMENT*

So, Binkie's the same as the First Friend was,  
And I am the Man in the Cave.

Pussy will play Man-Friday till  
It's time to wet her paw  
And make her walk on the window-sill  
(For the footprint Crusoe saw);  
Then she fluffles her tail and mews,  
And scratches and won't attend.  
But Binkie will play whatever I choose,  
And he is my true First Friend.

Pussy will rub my knees with her head,  
Pretending she loves me hard;  
But the very minute I go to my bed  
Pussy runs out in the yard.  
And there she stays till the morning-light;  
So I know it is only pretend;  
But Binkie, he snores at my feet all night,  
And he is my Firstest Friend!

RUDYARD KIPLING.  
(In "The Just So Stories.")

## **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.

*POEMS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW*

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.

## **Little White Lily**

Little White Lily  
Sat by a stone,  
Drooping and waiting  
Till the sun shone.  
Little White Lily  
Sunshine has fed;  
Little White Lily  
Is lifting her head.

*THE BUDDING MOMENT*

Little White Lily  
Said: "It is good  
Little White Lily's  
Clothing and food."  
Little White Lily  
Dressed like a bride!  
Shining with whiteness,  
And crownèd beside!

Little White Lily  
Drooping with pain,  
Waiting and waiting  
For the wet rain.  
Little White Lily  
Holdeth her cup;  
Rain is fast falling  
And filling it up.

Little White Lily  
Said: "Good again,  
When I am thirsty  
To have the nice rain.  
Now I am stronger,  
Now I am cool;  
Heat cannot burn me,  
My veins are so full."

Little White Lily  
Smells very sweet;  
On her head sunshine,  
Rain at her feet.

*POEMS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW*

Thanks to the sunshine,  
Thanks to the rain,  
Little White Lily  
Is happy again.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

## **How the Leaves Came Down**

“I’ll tell you how the leaves came down,”  
The great Tree to his children said:  
“You’re getting sleepy, Yellow and Brown,  
Yes, very sleepy, little Red.  
It is quite time to go to bed.”

“Ah!” begged each silly, pouting leaf,  
“Let us a little longer stay;  
Dear Father Tree, behold our grief!  
’Tis such a very pleasant day,  
We do not want to go away.”

So, for just one more merry day  
To the great Tree the leaflets clung,  
Frolicked and danced, and had their way,  
Upon the autumn breezes swung,  
Whispering all their sports among—

“Perhaps the great Tree will forget,  
And let us stay until the spring,  
If we all beg, and coax, and fret.”

## *THE BUDDING MOMENT*

But the great Tree did no such thing;  
He smiled to hear their whispering.

“Come, children, all to bed,” he cried;  
And ere the leaves could urge their prayer,  
He shook his head, and far and wide,  
Fluttering and rustling everywhere,  
Down sped the leaflets through the air.

I saw them; on the ground they lay,  
Golden and red, a huddled swarm,  
Waiting till one from far away,  
White bedclothes heaped upon her arm,  
Should come to wrap them safe and warm.

The great bare Tree looked down and smiled.  
“Good-night, dear little leaves,” he said.  
And from below each sleepy child  
Replied, “Good-night,” and murmured,  
“It is so nice to go to bed!”

SUSAN COOLIDGE.

## **Willie Winkie**

Wee Willie Winkie rins through the town,  
Up-stairs and doon-stairs, in his nicht-gown,  
Tirlin’ at the window, cryin’ at the lock,  
“Are the weans in their bed?—for it’s now ten o’clock.”

*POEMS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW*

Hey, Willie Winkie! are ye comin' ben?  
The cat's singin' gay thrums to the sleepin' hen,  
The doug's speldered on the floor, and disna gie a cheep;  
But here's a waukrife laddie that winna fa' asleep.

Onything but sleep, ye rogue! glow'rin' like the moon,  
Rattlin' in an airn jug wi' an airn spoon,  
Rumblin' tumblin' roun' about, crowin' like a cock,  
Skirlin' like a kenna-what—wauknin' sleepin' folk.

Hey, Willie Winkie! the wean's in a creel!  
Waumblin' aff a body's knee like a vera eel,  
Ruggin' at the cat's lug, and ravellin' a' her thrums,—  
Hey, Willie Winkie!—See, there he comes!

Wearie is the mither that has a storie wean,  
A wee stumpie stoussie that canna rin his lane,  
That has a battle aye wi' sleep before he'll close an ee;  
But a kiss frae aff his rosy lips gies strength anew to me.

WILLIAM MILLER.

## **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,

*THE BUDDING MOMENT*

“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 wonderful 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.

## **Wynken, Blynken, and Nod**

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, and what do you wish?”  
The old moon asked the three.  
“We have come to fish for the herring-fish  
That live in this 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 the beautiful sea.  
“Now cast your nets wherever you wish,—  
Never afraid are we!”  
So cried the stars to the fishermen three,  
Wynken,  
Blynken,  
And Nod.

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:



## THE BUDDING MOMENT

'Twas all so pretty a sail, it seemed  
As if it could not be;  
And some folk thought 'twas a dream they'd dreamed  
Of sailing that beautiful sea;  
But I shall 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.

## The Duel

The gingham dog and the calico cat  
Side by side on the table sat;  
'Twas half-past twelve, and (what do you think!)  
Nor one nor t'other had slept a wink!

POEMS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW

The old Dutch clock and the Chinese plate  
Appeared to know as sure as fate  
There was going to be a terrible spat.  
*(I wasn't there; I simply state  
What was told to me by the Chinese plate!)*

The gingham dog went “bow-wow-wow!”  
And the calico cat replied “mee-ow!”  
The air was littered, an hour or so,  
With bits of gingham and calico,  
While the old Dutch clock in the chimney-place  
Up with its hands before its face,  
For it always dreaded a family row!  
*(Now mind: I'm only telling you  
What the old Dutch clock declares is true!)*

The Chinese plate looked very blue,  
And wailed, “Oh, dear! what shall we do!”  
But the gingham dog and the calico cat  
Wallowed this way and tumbled that,  
Employing every tooth and claw  
In the awfulest way you ever saw—  
And, oh! how the gingham and calico flew!  
*(Don't fancy I exaggerate!  
I got my views from the Chinese plate!)*

Next morning where the two had sat  
They found no trace of the dog or cat;  
And some folks think unto this day  
That burglars stole the pair away!  
But the truth about the cat and the pup  
Is this: They ate each other up!

*THE BUDDING MOMENT*

Now what do you really think of that!  
*(The old Dutch clock it told me so,  
And that is how I came to know.)*

EUGENE FIELD.

## **The Boy Who Never Told a Lie**

Once there was a little boy,  
    With curly hair and pleasant eye—  
A boy who always told the truth,  
    And never, never told a lie.

And when he trotted off to school,  
    The children all about would cry,  
“There goes the curly-headed boy—  
    The boy that never tells a lie.”

And everybody loved him so,  
    Because he always told the truth,  
That every day, as he grew up,  
    ’Twas said, “There goes the honest youth.”

And when the people that stood near  
    Would turn to ask the reason why,  
The answer would be always this:  
    “Because he never tells a lie.”

## **Love Between Brothers and Sisters**

Whatever brawls disturb the street,  
    There should be peace at home;  
Where sisters dwell and brothers meet,  
    Quarrels should never come.

Birds in their little nests agree;  
    And 'tis a shameful sight,  
When children of one family  
    Fall out and chide and fight.

ISAAC WATTS.

## **The Bluebell of Scotland**

Oh where! and oh where! is your Highland laddie gone?  
He's gone to fight the French for King George upon the  
    throne;  
And it's oh! in my heart how I wish him safe at home.

Oh where! and oh where! does your Highland laddie dwell?  
He dwells in merry Scotland at the sign of the Bluebell;  
And it's oh! in my heart that I love my laddie well.

## **If I Had But Two Little Wings**

If I had but two little wings  
And were a little feathery bird,  
To you I'd fly, my dear!  
But thoughts like these are idle things  
And I stay here.

But in my sleep to you I fly:  
I'm always with you in my sleep!  
The world is all one's own.  
And then one wakes, and where am I?  
All, all alone.

SAMUEL T. COLERIDGE.

## **A Farewell**

My fairest child, I have no song to give you;  
No lark could pipe to skies so dull and gray;  
Yet, ere we part, one lesson I can leave you  
For every day.

Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever;  
Do noble things, not dream them all day long;  
And so make life, death, and that vast forever  
One grand, sweet song.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

## Casabianca

The boy stood on the burning deck,  
Whence all but him had fled;  
The flame that lit the battle's wreck  
Shone round him o'er the dead.

Yet beautiful and bright he stood,  
As born to rule the storm;  
A creature of heroic blood,  
A proud though childlike form.

The flames rolled on—he would not go  
Without his father's word;  
That father, faint in death below,  
His voice no longer heard.

He called aloud, "Say, father, say  
If yet my task is done?"  
He knew not that the chieftain lay  
Unconscious of his son.

"Speak, father!" once again he cried,  
"If I may yet be gone!"  
And but the booming shots replied,  
And fast the flames rolled on.

Upon his brow he felt their breath,  
And in his waving hair;  
And looked from that lone post of death  
In still, yet brave despair.

## *THE BUDDING MOMENT*

And shouted but once more aloud  
    “My father! must I stay?”  
While o’er him fast, through sail and shroud,  
    The wreathing fires made way.

They wrapt the ship in splendour wild,  
    They caught the flag on high,  
And streamed above the gallant child  
    Like banners in the sky.

Then came a burst of thunder sound—  
    The boy—oh! where was he?  
—Ask of the winds that far around  
    With fragments strew the sea;

With mast, and helm, and pennon fair.  
    That well had borne their part—  
But the noblest thing that perished there  
    Was that young, faithful heart.

FELICIA HEMANS.

## **The Captain’s Daughter**

We were crowded in the cabin,  
    Not a soul would dare to sleep,—  
It was midnight on the waters,  
    And a storm was on the deep.

*POEMS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW*

'Tis a fearful thing in winter  
To be shattered by the blast,  
And to hear the rattling trumpet  
Thunder, "Cut away the mast!"

So we shuddered there in silence,—  
For the stoutest held his breath,  
While the hungry sea was roaring  
And the breakers talked with Death.

As thus we sat in darkness,  
Each one busy with his prayers,  
"We are lost!" the captain shouted  
As he staggered down the stairs.

But his little daughter whispered,  
As she took his icy hand,  
"Isn't God upon the ocean,  
Just the same as on the land?"

Then we kissed the little maiden.  
And we spoke in better cheer,  
And we anchored safe in harbour  
When the morn was shining clear.

JAMES T. FIELDS.



## **The Village Blacksmith**

Under a spreading chestnut-tree  
The village smithy stands;  
The smith, a mighty man is he,  
With large and sinewy hands;  
And the muscles of his brawny arms  
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long;  
His face is like the tan;  
His brow is wet with honest sweat,  
He earns whate'er he can,  
And looks the whole world in the face,  
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,  
You can hear his bellows blow;  
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,  
With measured beat and slow,  
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,  
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school  
Look in at the open door;  
They love to see the flaming forge,  
And hear the bellows roar,  
And catch the burning sparks that fly  
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

*POEMS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW*

He goes on Sunday to the church,  
    And sits among his boys;  
He hears the parson pray and preach,  
    He hears his daughter's voice  
Singing in the village choir,  
    And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,  
    Singing in Paradise!  
He needs must think of her once more,  
    How in the grave she lies;  
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes  
    A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling,—rejoicing,—sorrowing,  
    Onward through life he goes;  
Each morning sees some task begin,  
    Each evening sees it close;  
Something attempted, something done,  
    Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,  
    For the lesson thou hast taught!  
Thus at the flaming forge of life  
    Our fortunes must be wrought;  
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped  
    Each burning deed and thought.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

*THE BUDDING MOMENT*

## **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 dropping 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 Violet**

Down in a green and shady bed  
    A modest violet grew;  
Its stalk was bent, it hung its head,  
    As if to hide from view.

*POEMS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW*

And yet it was a lovely flower,  
    No colours bright and fair;  
It might have graced a rosy bower,  
    Instead of hiding there.

Yet there it was content to bloom,  
    In modest tints arrayed;  
And there diffused its sweet perfume,  
    Within the silent shade.

Then let me to the valley go,  
    This pretty flower to see;  
That I may also learn to grow  
    In sweet humility.

JANE TAYLOR.

## **The Rainbow**

**(A FRAGMENT)**

My heart leaps up when I behold  
    A rainbow in the sky;  
So was it when my life began,  
So is it now I am a man,  
So be it when I shall grow old,  
    Or let me die!  
The child is father of the man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

## A Visit from St. Nicholas

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through  
the house  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;  
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,  
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;  
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,  
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;  
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,  
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,  
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.  
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow  
Gave the luster of mid-day to objects below,  
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,  
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer.  
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,  
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.  
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:  
"Now, *Dasher!* now, *Dancer!* now, *Prancer* and *Vixen!*  
On, *Comet!* on, *Cupid!* on, *Donder* and *Blitzen!*  
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!  
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"  
As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;  
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,

POEMS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW

With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas, too.  
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof  
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.  
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,  
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.  
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;  
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,  
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.  
His eyes—how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!  
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,  
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow;  
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,  
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath;  
He had a broad face and a little round belly,  
That shook when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly.  
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,  
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;  
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;  
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,  
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,  
And laying his finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;  
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew like the down on a thistle.  
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,  
*“Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night.”*

CLEMENT CLARKE MOORE.

## The Star-Spangled Banner

O! say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,  
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last  
gleaming—  
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous  
fight,  
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly  
streaming!  
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,  
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;  
O! say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave  
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

On that shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep,  
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,  
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,  
As it fitfully blows, now conceals, now discloses?  
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,  
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream;  
'Tis the star-spangled banner; O long may it wave  
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore  
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion  
A home and a country should leave us no more?  
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps'  
pollution.  
No refuge could save the hireling and slave  
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave;

POEMS EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW

And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave  
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

O! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand  
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation!  
Blest with victory and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land  
Praise the power that hath made and preserved us a  
nation.

Then conquer we must, for our cause it is just,  
And this be our motto—*"In God is our trust"*:  
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave  
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY.

## Father William

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,  
"And your hair has become very white;  
And yet you incessantly stand on your head—  
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

"In my youth," Father William replied to his son,  
"I feared it might injure the brain;  
But now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,  
Why, I do it again and again."



*THE BUDDING MOMENT*

“You are old,” said the youth, “as I mentioned before,  
And have grown most uncommonly fat;  
Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door—  
Pray, what is the reason of that?”

“In my youth,” said the sage, as he shook his gray locks,  
“I kept all my limbs very supple  
By the use of this ointment—one shilling the box—  
Allow me to sell you a couple.”

“You are old,” said the youth, “and your jaws are too weak  
For anything tougher than suet;  
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak:  
Pray, how did you manage to do it?”

“In my youth,” said his father, “I took to the law,  
And argued each case with my wife;  
And the muscular strength which it gave to my jaw  
Has lasted the rest of my life.”

“You are old,” said the youth; “one would hardly suppose  
That your eye was as steady as ever;  
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose—  
What made you so awfully clever?”

“I have answered three questions, and that is enough,”  
Said his father, “don’t give yourself airs!  
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?  
Be off, or I’ll kick you down-stairs!”

LEWIS CARROLL.  
 (“Alice in Wonderland.”)

## The Nightingale and the Glow-Worm

A nightingale, that all day long  
Had cheered the village with his song,  
Nor yet at eve his note suspended,  
Nor yet when eventide was ended,  
Began to feel, as well he might,  
The keen demands of appetite;  
When, looking eagerly around,  
He spied far off, upon the ground,  
A something shining in the dark,  
And knew the glow-worm by his spark;  
So, stooping down from hawthorn top,  
He thought to put him in his crop.  
The worm, aware of his intent,  
Harangued him thus, right eloquent:  
“Did you admire my lamp,” quoth he,  
“As much as I your minstrelsy,  
You would abhor to do me wrong,  
As much as I to spoil your song;  
For ’twas the self-same power divine,  
Taught you to sing and me to shine;  
That you with music, I with light,  
Might beautify and cheer the night.”  
The songster heard his short oration,  
And warbling out his approbation,  
Released him, as my story tells,  
And found a supper somewhere else.

WILLIAM COWPER.