

The grass is just as green, Tom,—barefooted boys at play
Were sporting just as we did then, with spirits just as gay;
But the master sleeps upon the hill, which, coated o'er with snow,
Afforded us a sliding place, just twenty years ago.

The old school-house is altered now, the benches are replaced
By new ones very like the same our penknives had defaced;
But the same old bricks are in the wall, the bell swings to and fro,
Its music just the same, dear Tom, as twenty years ago.

The spring that bubbled 'neath the hill, close by the spreading beech,
Is very low—'twas once so high that we could almost reach;
And kneeling down to get a drink, dear Tom, I started so,
To see how much that I had changed since twenty years ago.

Near by the spring, upon the elm, you know I cut your name,—
Your sweetheart's just beneath it, Tom—and you did mine the same,
Some heartless wretch hath peeled the bark—'twas dying sure, but slow,
Just as the one whose name we cut, died twenty years ago.

My eyelids had been dry, Tom, but tears come in my eyes,
I thought of her I loved so well—those early broken ties,—
I visited the old church-yard, and took some flowers to strew
Upon the graves of those we loved some twenty years ago.

And some are in the church-yard laid—some sleep beneath the sea,
But few are left of our old class, excepting you and me;
And when our time shall come, Tom, and we are called to go,
I hope they'll lay us where we played just twenty years ago.

—Anonymous.

XIX. THE BLIND BOY'S BEEN AT PLAY, MOTHER.*

(By Eliza Cook.)

The Blind Boy's been at play, Mother,
And merry games we had;
We led him on our way, mother,
And every step was glad.
But when we found a starry flower,
And praised its varied hue,
A tear came trembling down his cheek,
Just like a drop of dew.

We took him to the mill, mother,
Where falling waters made
A rainbow o'er the rill, mother,
As golden sun-rays played;
But when we shouted at the scene,
And hailed the clear blue sky,
He stood quite still upon the bank,
And breathed a long, long sigh.

We asked him why he wept, mother,
When'er we found the spots
Where the periwinkle crept, mother,
O'er wild Forget-me-not's;
"Ah me!" he said, while tears ran down
As fast as summer showers,
"It is because I cannot see,
The sunshine and the flowers."

Oh, that poor sightless boy, mother,
Has taught me I am blest,
For I can look with joy, mother,
On all I love the best;
And when I see the dancing stream,
And daisies red and white,
I kneel upon the meadowed sod,
And thank my God for sight.

* Many of the following pieces are inserted chiefly for recitation by girls.