

A Nut to Crack.

There was an old woman who lived in a hut
About the size of a hickory nut;
The walls were thick and the ceiling low,
And seldom outside did the old woman go.

She took no paper, and in no book
Of any sort was she seen to look;
Yet she imagined she knew much more
Than man or woman had known before.

Still she lives in her little hut
About the size of a hickory nut,
At peace with herself, and quite content
With the way in which her days are spent.

Little it troubles her, I suppose,
Because so very little she knows;
For, keeping her doors and windows shut,
She has shrivelled up in her hickory nut.

And you, my dear, will no wiser grow,
If you rest contented with what you know,—
But, a pitiful object, you will dwell,
Shut up inside your hickory shell.

—Selected.

The Message of the Snowflake.

"The snowflake kissed me,
As on it sped,
And told me a story,"
The little maid said.
"I didn't mind it,
So soft and cold,
And here is the story
The snowflake told:—

"You won't believe it,
I almost know,
But I was a raindrop
Before I was snow.
I fell by the roadside,
And there I lay,
Till the sun drew me up
Through the air one day.

"On a cloud I floated,
Till cold I grew,
Then I turned to a snowflake,
And flew down to you.
And this is my message,
So sweet and sure.
Be pure like the snowflake;
Be pure, be pure."

Do you know

Why the snow

Is hurrying through the garden so?

Just to spread

A nice soft bed

For the sleepy little flower's head

To cuddle up the baby ferns and smooth the lily's sheet,

And tuck a warm white blanket down around the roses'
feet.

—Selected.

A Little Boy's Wish.

When winter comes, the people say,
"Oh, shut the door!" and when,
As sometimes happens, I forget,
They call me back again.

It takes till summer-time to learn;
And then things change about,
And "Leave it open" is the cry
When I go in or out.

I try to be a pleasant boy,
And do just as I ought,
But when things are so hard to learn,
I wish they might stay taught!

—Werner's Magazine.

It isn't helfy to woke little boys up so quick,
Dey forgets w'ere dey is w'en you do,
'Cause deys sand in deir eyes, an' de winkers will stick,
An' their thinkers is tangled up, too.
An' de p'ace w'ere dey cuddles in is so wom
An' de pillers so comfy an' sof,
'At I don't fink its wight for nobody to come
An' des pull all de comforters off.

—Jack Bennett.

Mary's Lamb "Up to Date."

If Mary's little lamb, my dears,
Had lived in "naughty-nine,"
The little, fleeting woolly thing,
Would have met a better fate.

For if it followed her to school,
The teacher kind would say:
"Why, Mary, dear, I'm glad he's here,
I think we'll let him stay."

The children all would gather round
Discussing every feature.
As though a treasure they had found,
They'd talk about the creature.

They'd draw a picture of it, too,
'Twould really do them credit,
And then a story each would write,
'Twould please you if you read it.

The lamb would be allowed to roam
Around the room at pleasure,
And when at noon it trotted home,
It's joy would know no measure.

I'm glad that time a change has wrought
Regarding education,
Now children's minds are used for thought,
Their eyes for observation.

—Selected.

A business man received the following telegram, and
had difficulty in reading it:

It was and I said not or.

Can you read it so as to make sense?