

THE LACE PATTERN CONTEST

*Lived long ago, in a French town,
A girl—lace-maker poor—
With shoes worn down, in patched-up gown,
And hunger at her door.*

*Heralds one day throughout the land
Proclaimed a great contest—
Purse of gold from the Queen's own hand
For the lace pattern best.*

*You may be sure that many sought
So grand a prize to win:
The poor lace maker drew and wrought
Till she was sick and thin.*

*At last a lovely pattern grew
Like magic 'neath her hand,
And when she'd finished it she knew
Fine winning chance she'd stound.*

*Just then a neighbor girl stepped in;
The pattern met her eye;
Thought she this pattern's sure to win,
And heaved a jealous sigh.*

*With joyful heart the poor girl took
The lovely pattern in;
The judge said, with a puzzled look,
" 'Tis strange, here is its twin!"*

*The neighbor girl it copied had—
Now was not that a sin?
The poor girl turned away heart-sad;
Her eyes with tears therein.*