

NELLIE BINGHAM—"THE PET LAMB?"

"The dew was falling fast," the stars began to glitter,
I thought I heard a young man gasp, I knew I heard a maiden titter,
And looking o'er the hedge before me I espied
The fellow on his knees beseeching her to be his bride.
'Twas lonesome Nellie Bingham—(I knew her by her hair);
I spoke for her in school-days—but now another fellow's there!
Some said her hair was car-rot, (others they called it red),
Just what it was I say not—adorned was her fair head.
Her bright eyes were a-sparkling with fire all a-glow,
And while he was "a-sparking" she always answered "No!"
He told her how he liked her—her eyes were just his color;
He'd like her more if she'd be sure and make that coiffure duller.
She took this as a little slur—if him it didn't suit,
"Twas good enough," she said for her—"You nasty little brute!"
He saw thus one mistake he'd made; this time he'd try to flatter.
He thought her chin a trifle thin—'twould look much better fatter.
"I like your cheek," she said in pique, "I am as I was made."
He said this time, "It's not like mine, for yours I would not trade."
"Nobody 'axed' you, sir," she said—"You're talking like a f—!"
You've slipped your apron-strings too soon, return at once to school."
He thought he'd start another part to pay her compliment;
He said her cheeks of color were suggesting condiment!
At this she flashed her fiery eye (I thought to see him faint),
"You assified man! sneer all you can! I *only once* did 'paint!"
This time he shot another spot: A pair of atoms treat:
"I never saw your stockings, dear; I hate your giant feet!"
Her wrath was loud (she wasn't cowed) she'd never more him meet!

Alas! he saw he'd been too raw—his little girl to model,
He said so sly, with wink of eye, he's start her *self* to coddle,
His sanity—her vanity—(to both she was so blind
The former, man's urbanity—the latter, zephyr wind.)
He liked the way, he now did say—her hair was all so trim;
He didn't care what colored hair, 'twas all the same to him.
She now her wrath began to cool—(he'd started talking sense);
I drew as near as ever I dare—quite near to that hedge fence;
And listened now, (there was no row) they both were very nice;
In melted mood, their attitude—between them was no ice,
He'd changed his mind—his taste refined; "The auburn of her hair
Was all a cultured girl like her would e'er consent to wear."
So on he went (to win her bent), his former speech bewail;
She listened on (her frowns were gone) until he'd told his tale.
Among the rest he now confessed: it was in him a sin
To find such fault, he now would halt—he loved her dimpled chin!
There was no jot of all the lot, but what he did recant;
From feet to crown, all up, then down, straight up or on the slant.
In fact he liked her every way—she would in all things fit;
Her weight was light, that very night, she on his knee did sit!
I cannot tell what more was said, (I could no longer hear),
The things that came to those two heads (it made me feel so queer)
And so withdrew before they knew that I'd been standing near.
I thought I'd learnt a little bit; if ever 'twas my part
To need a wife to comfort life I'd got a wise old start;
No word of surl from tongue unfurl, so win my sweet girl's heart.

THE TWO BEARS

When they for life were man and wife
He said they'd start a zoo;
Two pets they'd keep that knew no strife;
She said: "That's up to you!"

He asked her wish: "I've you to bear."
(It was her wisdom-trait)
His choice resulted in "for-bear,"
For every bear has mate.