



ON THE SHORE.

I HID myself out of the heat,
 Where the rocks made a nice little
 nook,
 But the children found out my retreat,
 And startled me over my book.
 "Hurrah! it's a beautiful day,
 And we're going to dig on the sands;
 We haven't a moment to stay,
 For we've plenty of work on our hands.

"The sky like a blue tent is spread,
 And the sea is so calm and so fair,
 And the wind takes one's hat from one's
 head,
 And ties such tight knots in one's hair.
 It's so nice not to have to be neat,
 With no Nurse here to bother and
 fret,
 And to paddle about with bare feet—
 And oh! it's so nice to get wet.

"Why don't you come down to the shore
 Where the waves break against the
 sea-wall?
 We were almost afraid of its roar,
 But: indeed it can't hurt one at all.
 Do look! there's a nice little pool
 Where the water's as blue as the sky;
 If you paddled you'd find it so cool,
 And we wish you would just come and
 try."

"It really is safe, Father, quite,
 For the waves have so gentle a
 touch,
 And we hold one another so tight
 And we like it ever so much.
 To sit high and dry on the beach
 On a fine day like this seems a sin;
 It's so funny to be within reach,
 And yet not to care to go in!

"There's Ida, and Harold, and John,
 Going off on their donkeys to ride;
 Even little shy Alice has gone,
 Though the donkey-boy walks by her
 side.
 Perhaps we might find you a horse,
 If you'd come for a ride with us three;
 We had donkeys at Hampstead, of
 course,
 But you can't ride them into the sea!"

The children are wondering so
 At the stuff of which grown folks are
 made;
 They think me most foolish, I know,
 For staying up here in the shade.
 I laugh and go back to my book,
 And the bairnies dance off in the
 sun;
 But—ah me! how happy they look;
 I think they've the best of the fun.

CHRISTIAN BURKE.