

In boyish dreams I saw again
Bucolic belles and dames of court,
The princely youth and monkish men
Arrayed for sacrifice or sport;
Again I heard the nightingale
Sing as she sang those years ago
In her embowered Italian vale
To my revered Boccaccio.

And still I love that brown old book,
I found upon the topmost shelf—
I love it so, I let none look
Upon that treasure but myself!
And yet I have a strapping boy
Who (I have cause to know)
Would to its full extent enjoy
The friendship of Boccaccio.

But boys are, oh! so different now
From what they were when I was one!
I fear my boy would not now know how
To take that old raconteur's fun!
In your companionship O friend,
I think it wise alone to go,
Plucking the gracious fruits that bend
Where'er you lead, Boccaccio!

So rest you there upon the shelf,
Clad in your garb of faded brown;
Perhaps, sometime, my boy himself
Shall find you out and take you down,
Then may he feel the joy once more
That thrilled me, filled me years ago
When reverently I brooded o'er
The glories of Boccaccio.

From the Chap-Book.