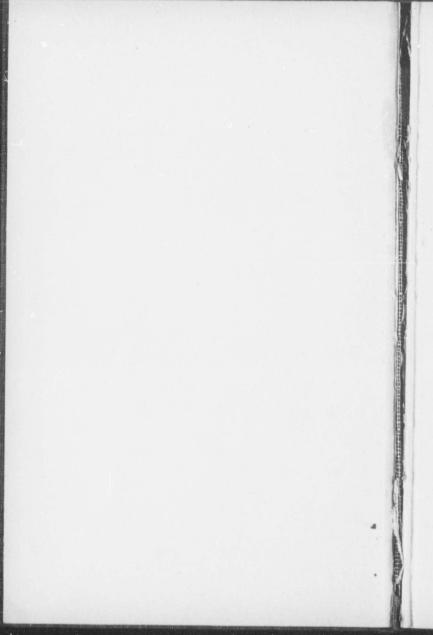
BY

ERNEST SETON-THOMPSON





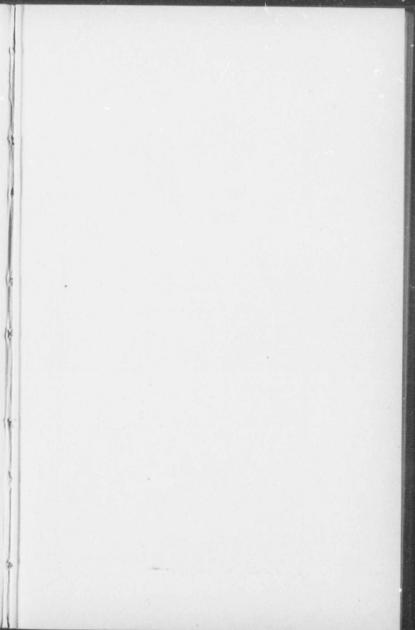




BOOKS BY ERNEST SETON-THOMPSON

Wild Animals I Have Known, 12mo, The Trail of the Sandhill Stag, 12mo, Published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

The Biography of a Grizzly, 12mo, Published by The Century Co.





ENTRANCE OF THE SPORTSMAN

THE WILD ANIMAL PLAY FOR CHILDREN

WITH

ALTERNATE READING FOR VERY YOUNG CHILDREN

BY

ERNEST SETON-THOMPSON

AUTHOR OF



WILD ANIMALS I HAVE KNOWN THE TRAIL OF THE SANDHILL STAG THE BIOGRAPHY OF A GRIZZLY ETC.

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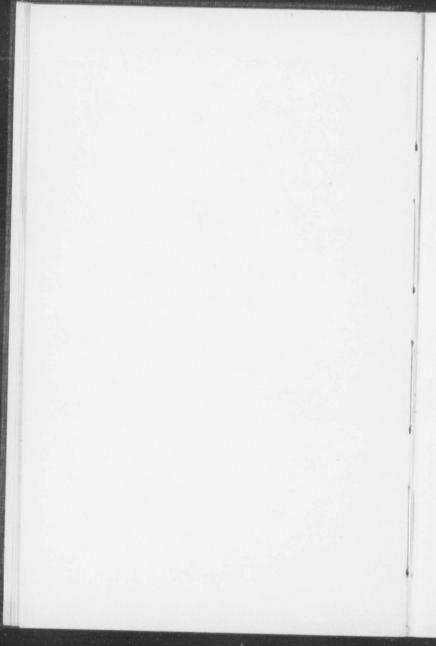
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THIS PLAY IS DEDICATED TO THE CHILDREN FOR WHOM
IT WAS WRITTEN



LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Entrance of the	SPORT	SMAN	Frontisp	piece
Suggestions for	STAGE	SETTIN	IG .	2 I
WAHB				24
Mustang .				28
BLANCA				34
Lово				35
LADY BINGO .				38
BINGO				39
VIXEN AND TIP				40
SILVERSPOT .				46
LADY SILVERSPOT				47
Brownie .				50
REDRUFF .				51
LITTLE JOHNNIE				53
MOLLY COTTONT	AIL			56
RAGGYLUG .				57
THE SPORTSMAN				60
THE ANGEL .				61
FINAL SCENE .				67



FOREWORD

This sketch was written for some children who wanted help to play the characters in my books: Wild Animals I Have Known, The Trail of the Sandbill Stag and the Biography of a Grizzly.

To enter fully into the spirit of the Play, one should know the stories in which are described these characters: Grizzly Wahb, the embodiment of matchless strength; Lobo, full of wisdom and dignity; Molly Cottontail, shy but clever; Redruff, Vixen, etc., and Little Johnnie, the bad spoiled child of the Animal World.

ERNEST SETON-THOMPSON.









I—THE ANGEL OF THE WILD THINGS:

A young woman in a white flowing robe, and over it a large cloak, which is bright or white on under side at least; a star on her forehead and a wand in her hand.

2-THE SPORTSMAN:

A big boy, with black whishers and make-up for a willain; in sporting costume with a gun, game-bag and huge knife.

DANCERS

3-MOLLY COTTONTAIL:

A sweet little rabbit-girl in white, with brown welvet or fur cape; a tiny rabbit ear and long whiskers on one side of her brown cap, and a short upturned tail of swansdown on the tail of her cape.

4-RAGGYLUG:

A boy-rabbit larger than Molly; one of his ears on cap all torn. A cotton-tail to his coat. White fur west and brown tights.

5-REDRUFF:

A boy-partridge in red or rainbow ruffs of Elisabethan style, and any rich combination of brown. On his cap a crest of feathers. From his shoulders a hig drum. He must know bow to keep time, as that goes all through.

6-Brownie:

A girl-partridge, to match Redruff, but more simply dressed. Her skirt may be banded like a partridge tail.

7-SILVERSPOT:

A boy-crow all in black or bottle green with white spot on cap, long black tails to his coat and little black wings on his shoulders.

8-LADY SILVERSPOT:

Smaller; a girl-crow in black or bottle green; Vandyke points on dress outlined with jet beads.

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

Q-VIXEN:

A girl-fox with fox mask, cap and fox tail, leading Tip by the hand.

IO-TIP:

The smallest possible little boy-fox. A two-year-old baby would do, as be is simply led around by bis mother.

11-BINGO:

A boy-dog in black, white and brown with a white Raleigh ruff, Eton jacket with little curled-up tail in middle of back.

12-LADY BINGO:

A coyote-girl in gray and brown with white slippers.

13--- Lово:

A great gray wolf, with large dignity; golden crown; wolf skin on shoulders.

14-BLANCA:

A sprightly little girl-wolf, all in white; cap with wolf ears. Dress trimmed with fur.

15-WAHB:

A large grizzly bear-boy with a trumpet formed like a club. Fur cap and gauntlet leggings, necklace of bear claws. Brown Canton flannel suit or else fur coat.

16—THE MUSTANG:

A boy all in black velvet with black flowing bair from bis cap, white lace collar and cuffs and a white star and borse-ears on bis black cap. Must be very active and prancey.

17-LITTLE JOHNNIE:

A funny little bear cub, who appears several times, but is not in the procession. His cap is fur with big ears. His costume is dark fur or Canton flannel.

THE COSTUMES

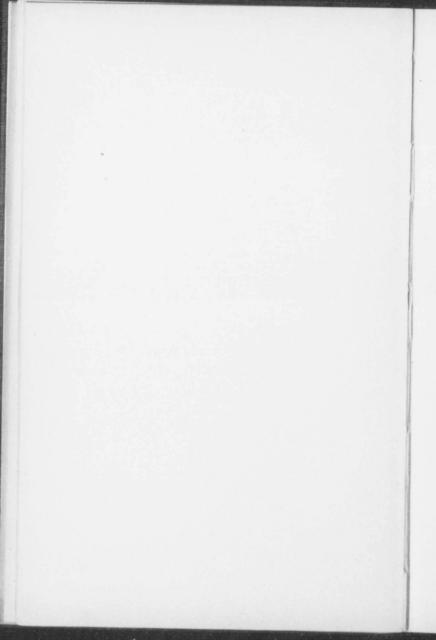
STAGE SETTING



The costumes, as well as the settings, may be reduced to mere symbols if desired, but following the main idea of the characters in "Wild Animals I Have Known."

In the back centre of the stage should be a tree large enough to hide the Angel in its hollow trunk—a wooden frame with a drape and a Christmas tree on top would do; a small bare tree for Johnnie to climb in at the left side. A few brier-rose bushes are scattered around the edges; in one is hidden the wreath of brier-roses, ready made or nearly so.

Children that sing or yodel or dance well may vary their parts to call in their gifts.





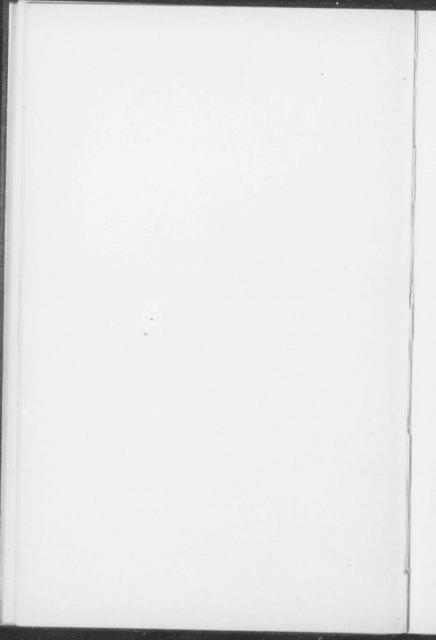




Johnnies Tree

Bush;

SUGGESTION FOR STAGE SETTING



SCENE

Enter procession. Each one bears a large spruce bough in his hand. Redruff marking time on his drum. The following is the order:

Molly and Rag,
REDRUFF AND BROWNIE,
SILVERSPOT AND HIS WIFE,
VIXEN AND TIP,
BINGO AND THE COYOTE,
LOBO AND BLANCA,
WAHB AND THE MUSTANG.

As they march around the stage they sing:

We are the lords of the forest Since ever the forest began, We rule and we fight, and we fighting die, But will never be ruled by man.

We bow to the laws of the forest,
So live our allotted span,
For the only wealth that we value is health,
And we'll never be ruled by man.

(For music see page 70.)



WAHB

A large grizzly bear-boy with a trumpet formed like a club. Fur cap and gauntlet leggings, necklace of bear claws. Brown Canton flannel suit or else fur coat.

Then the file halts, facing the audience. The Bear strides forward and speaks:

I am the terrible Grizzly
That lived on the far Piney Creek;
I held all the land from the Wiggin's Fork
strand
To the hills beyond Anderson's Peak.

The Sportsman had killed my poor mother, My sister and brothers and all. He tried to kill me, but I managed to flee, Though he wounded my foot with a ball.

And I hid far away in the mountains,
Sick, wounded, in mis'rable plight;
But I grew before long so big and so strong
No creature could face me in fight.

Then back I came out of the mountains,
Grown mighty of arm and of jaw;
And for each of my own that the Sportsman
had killed
Two hunters I smashed with my paw.

Yes! I am the terrible Grizzly Wahb,
The chief of the Grizzly Clan;
I fought many a fight, and I won by my
might,
And I never was conquered by man.

(Terrible growls. He pounds the floor with his club.)

ALTERNATE READING

I am Wahb of the Bighorn Basin, The Grizzly from whom all ran.

I fought many a fight, and I won by my might,

And I never was conquered by man.



MUSTANG

A boy all in black velvet with black flowing hair from his cap, white lace collar and cuffs and a white star and horse ears on his black cap. Must be very active and prancey.

Then the Mustang prances to the front and says:

I am the wonderful Mustang,

No creature could pace with me;
I roamed as on wings around Antelope
Springs,
Like a seabird that skims on the sea.

Ten riders came riding to rope me; Ten horses were death-ridden, then They digged a deep pit but I overleaped it As an eagle swoops over a glen.

And as long as I heeded the Angel
I was free as the breezes above,
But they laid a new snare, when my life had
grown bare,
I came at the calling of love.

In vain the Good Angel said, "Go not,"

My lone life was dreary to me,

So the Sportsman betrayed me to make me a slave,

But I leaped to my death to be free.

Neighing, stamping and prancing, he goes around to the waltz music

(see page 74), Wahb joining in always on the opposite side of the stage.

As they finish Little Johnnie comes running in, but he is hooted and shooed off by the others.

Then the procession marches and sings as before:

We are the lords of the forest Since ever the forest began, We rule and we fight, and we fighting die, But will never be ruled by man.

We bow to the laws of the forest, So live our allotted span, For the only wealth that we value is health, And we'll never be ruled by man.

ALTERNATE READING

I am the wonderful Mustang,
No creature could pace with me,
The sportsman betrayed me to
make me a slave,
But I leaped to my death to be
free.

As they approach the front again they line up as before and Lobo steps forward with Blanca and says:

I am old Lobo, the King-Wolf,
This is my beautiful wife;
I ranged on the plains that the Currumpaw drains,
And I laughed at attempts on my life.

Five years did I reign on Currumpaw,
And killed a fat cow every day;
I fed my good band on the fat of the land,
And no man could drive me away.

The hunters pursued me with bloodhounds,
I routed them fairly in fight;
Next the trappers waylay me, with poison to slay me,
And traps in my trail every night.

But I scorned all their traps and their poison,
I baffled each newly-tried plan;
I ruled with my band like a king in the
land,
And I never was conquered by man.

But they captured and murdered my Blanca, My darling, my dear, little wife;

Then I, heart-broken, died by the Currumpaw's side.

'Twas to love that I lost my life.

(Long howling of both Lobo and Blanca.)

ALTERNATE READING

I am old Lobo, the King-Wolf, This is Blanca, my beautiful wife.

I slew and I fought and I laughed at man,

'Twas to love that I lost my life.



BLANCA

A sprightly little girl-wolf, all in white; cap with wolf ears. Dress trimmed with fur.



LOBO

A great gray wolf, with large dignity; golden crown; wolf skin on shoulders.

Then Bingo comes forward with the Coyote, and says:

I am the noble Bingo,
That gloried to follow the chase;
This, by my side, is my own little bride,
A wolf of the prairie race.

My master and I were like strangers at times.

No sign of affection to see,

But down in my heart I was true to him,

And I knew he was true to me.

For I was his help when he needed help, In danger I flew to his side; He was my friend that I loved to the end, By the door of his shanty I died.

(Barking and howling, Bingo, the Coyote, Lobo and Blanca now waltz around to the music. After they have finished Little Johnnie runs in again, and this time when they all hoot at him he climbs up the small

tree on the left of the stage and sits high up, grumbling.)

The procession now forms and sings as before:

CHORUS: "We are the lords of the forest," etc.

(Barking and howling.)

ALTERNATE READING

I am the noble Bingo,
And this is my wild-wolf bride.
My master I faithfully loved, and
at last

By the door of his shanty I died.

(Barking and howling.)
(Music on page 72.)



LADY BINGO
A coyote-girl in gray and brown with white slippers.



BINGO

A boy-dog in black, white and brown with a white Raleigh ruff, Eton jacket with a little curled-up tail in middle of back.



VIXEN AND TIP

A girl-fox with fox mask, cap and fox tail, leading Tip by the hand.

The smallest possible little boy-fox. A two-year-old baby would do, as he is simply led around by his mother.

Then Vixen comes forward, leading Tip by the hand, and says:

I am the mother-fox Vixen
We lived in the Springfield Wood;
We made a nice den in the butternut glen,
A home for ourselves and our brood.

And there we were happy together,
My mate and my little ones four,
Till a cruel man found us and digged all
around us,
And murdered them there by our door.

Only my poor little Tip was saved;
To be chained like a slave to a box;
They talk of fair play—that's the sportsman's
way—
But there is no fair play for a fox.

They tortured my darling, my innocent Tip, Till they ended his life's little span,

And they follow me round with rifle and hound—
Their justice is only for man.

ALTERNATE READING

I am old Vixen of Springfield wood,

And Tip is my darling's name.

I baffled the Sportsman and shed my own blood,

To save him from slavery's shame.

(Fox barking.)

Then Silverspot and his wife come forward and he says:

I am the famous Silverspot,

The crow legions trusted in me;
I wintered my band on Niagara strand,
But returned when the rivers were free.

We lived in the Pines by Toronto,

There I drilled the young crows every
year;

I taught them their duty as soldiers and crows, And what things to seek or to fear.

For I was the wisest of all crows
That roost in the pine-wood tree:
None but the murderer sneaking at night
Was able to master me.

(Caw, caw-caw, in which Lady Silverspot joins.)

ALTERNATE READING

I am the wisest of all crows

That roost in the pine-wood

tree;

'Twas only the night assassin That was able to master me.



SILVERSPOT

A boy-crow all in black or bottle green with white spot on cap, long black tails to his coat and little black wings on his shoulders.



LADY SILVERSPOT

Smaller; a girl-crow in black or bottle green; Vandyke points on dress outlined with jet beads.

Now Redruff leads Brownie forward and says:

I am the beautiful Redruff,
This is my Brownie bride;
We lived on the hills where the Don Valley rills
Rushed down its deep flowing tide.

And together we lived and we feasted,
Or down by the water we drank;
And I drummed for the glory of feeling alive,
As we skimmed around green Castle Frank.

But the Sportsman came sneaking to harm us;
He murdered my Brownie, my bride;
There was nobody then to protect us from men,
For he tortured me until I died.

ALTERNATE READING

I am the beautiful Redruff,
This is my Brownie bride,
And I drummed in my joy till the
Sportsman came,
Till he murdered my love and
I died.

(Drumming.)

Then little Johnnie from the tree bawls out his piece:

I'm little Johnnie, the bear-cub
That lived in the Yellowstone Park;
They wanted to leave me out, they did,
But I've followed them up for a lark.

I hadn't much training to speak of,
My mamma quite spoiled me, you see,
But I'm not so slow; one thing I do know,
And that's when to shin up a tree.

Vixen, Tip, the Crows and the Partridges now waltz to music (see page 74). The procession forms as before and sings:

CHORUS: "For we are lords of the forest," etc.



BROWNIE

A girl-partridge, to match Redruff, but more simply dressed. Her skirt may be banded like a partridge tail.



REDRUFF

A boy-partridge in red or rainbow ruffs of Elizabethan style, and any rich combination of brown. On his cap a crest of feathers. From his shoulders a big drum. He must know how to keep time, as that goes all through.

Last of all, cute little Molly Cottontail comes to the front led by Rag. First of all Rag says:

I am Raggy, the Cottontail Rabbit,
That lived in old Olifant's Swamp;
I'm living there yet and, unless it is wet,
I'm out every night for a romp.

I was trained in the college of Woodcraft,
The college whose hall is the trees,
I learned how to swim, play back-track and
limb
And puzzle and side-track and freeze.

So well did I study at college,
That I know how to baffle my foes;
For Molly has taught me to run with my wits,
And trust in the Sweet Brier-rose.

Then Molly says:

I am wee, shy, Molly Cottontail,
The least of the wildwood band;
I lived with my child in a willow swamp wild,
In the midst of the Sportsman's land.



LITTLE JOHNNIE

A funny little bear cub, who appears several times, but is not in the procession. His cap is fur with big ears. His costume is dark fur or Canton flannel.

I set all my heart on my baby,
For him I was bold in the strife;
I taught him how wits may be stronger than
strength,
And loved him far more than my life.

I tricked every big, brutal enemy;
I fought when I ought, or I ran,
And at last lost my life when a blizzard was
rife,
But I never was ruled by man.

(Stamps her foot. Rag and Molly now have their waltz to the music.)
(See page 74.)

ALTERNATE READING

I am Raggy the Cottontail Rabbit, I've learned how to baffle all foes.

'Twas Molly that taught me to run with my brains And trust in the Sweet Brier-rose.

Then Molly says:

I am wee shy Molly Cottontail, The least of the wild-wood band,

I taught Rag how wits may be stronger than strength

When we lived in the Sportsman's land.

I tricked every big brutal enemy,
I fought when I ought, or I ran,
And at last lost my life when a
blizzard was rife,
But I never was ruled by man.



MOLLY COTTONTAIL

A sweet little rabbit-girl in white, with brown velvet or fur cape; a tiny rabbit ear and long whiskers on one side of her brown cap, and a short upturned tail of swansdown on the tail of her cape.



RAGGYLUG

A boy-rabbit larger than Molly; one of his ears on cap all torn. A cotton-tail to his coat. White fur vest and brown tights.

Procession marches and sings as before:

"We are the lords of the forest," etc.

Suddenly and noisily from the back of the stage appears the Sportsman. He strides forward, fires his gun and shouts loudly:

I am the sportsman, the King of the Woods, So tremble you animals all;

I have not your grit, nor your speed, nor your wit, But I'll reach you with powder and ball.

'Twas I killed the fox and the partridge, My knife for more killing I'll whet; A few got away, but for only a day, I'll kill every one of you yet.

Terrible commotion among the animals; all hide in the bushes or behind the boughs they carry, except

Wahb, Lobo, Bingo and the Mustang, who come half-way forward growling or stamping. As the Sportsman gets ready to shoot they increase their outcries, when suddenly the tree trunk flies open and out steps the Angel, throwing off her cloak and loudly crying:

"STOP!"

ALTERNATE READING

I am the Sportsman, the King of the Woods,

So tremble ye wood-dwellers all.

I have not your grit or your speed or your wit,

But I'll reach you with powder and ball.



THE SPORTSMAN

A big boy, with black whiskers and makeup for a villain; in sporting costume with a gun, gamebag and huge knife.



THE ANGEL

A young woman in a white flowing robe, and over it a large cloak, which is bright or white on under side at least; a star on her forehead and a wand in her hand.

Every one is hushed, as she says to the audience:

I am the Angel of Wild-things, And ever keep watch above them; I show them the way when they wander astray, For I love them, I love them, I love them.

Then turning on the Sportsman, she cries:

And you, merciless demon of murder, In vain to escape me you try; Enough of your crimes for the love of the crime.

You are now in my power-so die!

She points her wand at the trembling Sportsman. He falls back dead under one of the far bushes. Then all the animals come dancing joyfully and lay the boughs on him till he is buried out of sight-loose boughs

can be piled in the bushes for this purpose—singing:

We are the lords of the forest Since ever the forest began; We rule and we fight, and we fighting die, But will never be ruled by man.

We bow to the laws of the forest, So live our allotted span; For the only wealth that we value is health, And we'll never be ruled by man.

and adding this verse:

We are the lords of the forest, The last of our sorrows is fled; The Angel, our Angel, has triumphed, The Sportsman we dreaded is dead.

Then the Angel speaks:

You, Wahb, and you, Mustang, were heroes, For your courage and strength were sublime;

But you lived your own lives, and you sought your own ends,

And you failed at the final time.

You, Bingo and Lobo, were noble.

As friend or as foe you stood fast;

Lived your lives like the gods, and were heedless of odds,

But you both were defeated at last.

And Vixen, your deepest devotion failed,
With your mate and your little ones gone;
For the Sportsman relentlessly hunted them
down

And murdered them one by one.

And Redruff and King-Crow were splendid,
For beauty and wisdom are so,
And you lived as you ought and unflinchingly
fought,
But you lost on the final throw.

Here the Angel takes a wreath from the rose-bush:

But you, dear little true Molly Cottontail!
You sought the success of your son,
You trained him up right, and equipped for the fight,
And he entered the fight and he won.

Then hail Molly Cottontail, Queen of the Woods!

Her duty she did as she could; She died, so must all, but in triumph she died,

So Molly is Queen of the Wood.

Wahb and the Mustang now lift the cloak dropped by the Angel and hold it as a background against the tree, where a convenient hook holds the centre part.

All gather round. The Angel crowns Molly with a rose-wreath, then leads her in triumph to the throne formed by the root of the tree. The rest join hands and dance around in a ring, singing:

We are the lords of the forest
Since ever the forest began;
We rule and we fight, and we fighting die;
But will never be ruled by man.

We bow to the laws of the forest, So live our allotted span; For the only wealth that we value is health, And we'll never be ruled by man.

We are the lords of the forest,
The last of our sorrows is fled;
The Angel, our Angel, has triumphed,
The Sportsman we dreaded is dead.

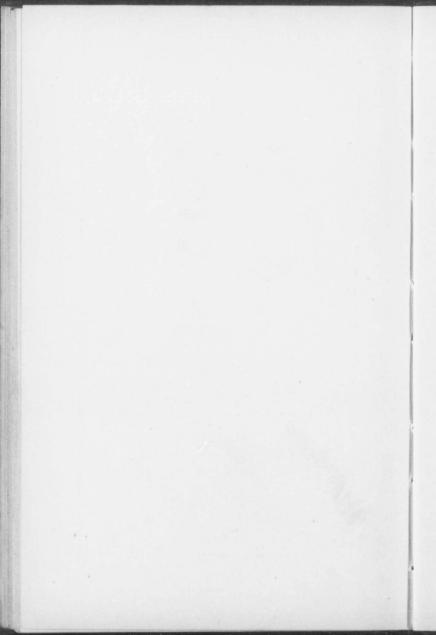
All for the last verse kneel in a ring around Molly, forming a tableau. The Angel lays her wand at Molly's feet and stands to one side of her, while Little Johnnie might sneak in and hold on to the Angel's dress or hand.

Then we are the lords of the forest
Till the last of its timber shall fall.
We will never be conquered or ruled by man,
But Molly is Queen of us all.

CURTAIN.



FINAL SCENE



$\begin{array}{c} \text{MUSIC} \\ \text{\tiny BY} \\ \\ \text{DANIEL GREGORY MASON} \end{array}$

ENTRANCE



MARCH.









Continued.



MARCH AT END



OF THE PLAY.





