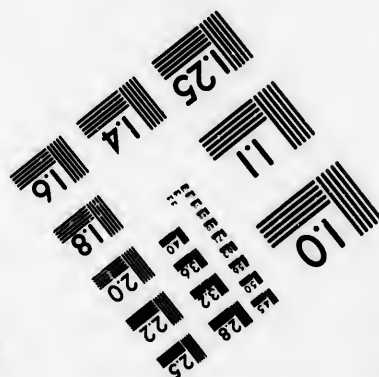
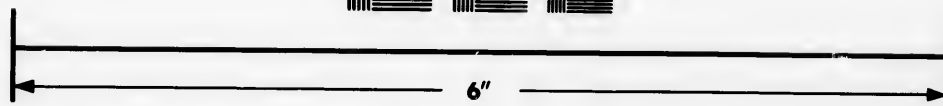
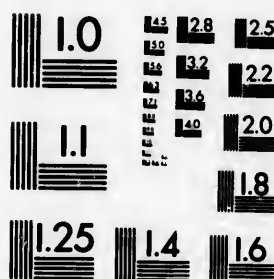


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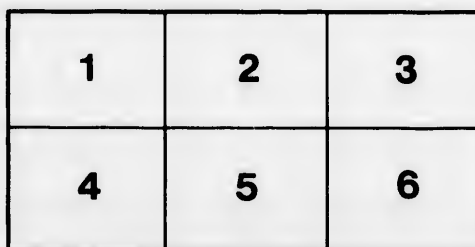
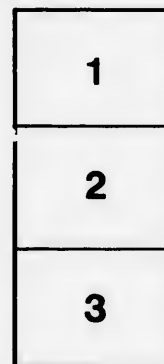
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THE  
RED RIVER VOYAGEUR  
*And Other Poems*

BY  
JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

AND OTHER  
AMERICAN POETS

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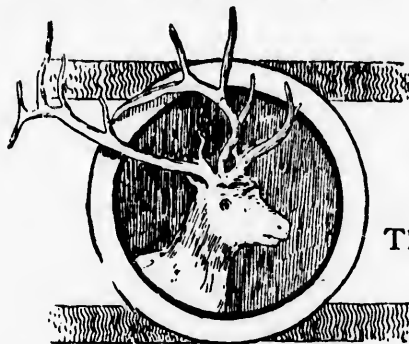
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## The Red River Voyageur

[Suggested by reading the following passage in *Minnesota and its Resources*, by J. Wesley Bond: 'As I pass slowly along the lonely road that leads me from thee, Selkirk, mine eyes do turn continually to gaze upon the smiling, golden fields, and thy lofty towers, now burnished with thy rays of the departing sun, while the sweet vesper bell reverberates afar and strikes so mournfully pleasant upon mine ear. I feel satisfied that, though absent thousands of weary miles, my thoughts will always dwell on thee with rapturous emotions.' At midnight, with the last stroke of the clock ushering in the 17th of December, 1891, the 84th anniversary of Whittier's birth, the bells of St. Boniface rang a joyous peal.]



UT and in the river  
is winding  
The links of its long,  
red chain,  
Through belts of dusky  
pine-land  
And gusty leagues  
of plain.

Only, at times, a smoke-wreath  
With the drifting cloud-rack joins,—  
The smoke of the hunting-lodges  
Of the wild Assiniboins !

Drearily blows the north-wind  
From the land of ice and snow ;  
The eyes that look are weary,  
And heavy the hands that row.



And with one foot on the water,  
And one upon the shore,  
The Angel of Shadow gives warning  
That day shall be no more.

Is it the clang of wild-geese ?  
Is it the Indian's yell,  
That lends to the voice of the north-wind  
The tones of a far-off bell ?

The voyageur smiles as he listens  
To the scound that grows apace ;  
Well he knows the vesper ringing  
Of the bells of St. Boniface.

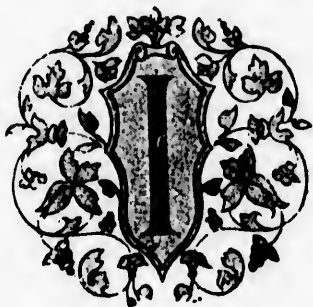
The bells of the Roman Mission,  
That call from their turrets twain,  
To the boatman on the river,  
To the hunter on the plain !

Even so in our mortal journey,  
The bitter north-winds blow,  
And thus upon life's Red River  
Our hearts, as oarsmen, row.

And when the Angel of Shadow  
Rests his feet on wave and shore,  
And our eyes grow dim with watching  
And our hearts faint at the oar,

Happy is he who heareth  
The signal of his release  
In the bells of the Holy City,  
The chimes of eternal peace !

## My Psalm



MOURN no more my  
vanished years :  
Beneath a tender rain,  
An April rain of smiles  
and tears,  
My heart is young  
again.

The west-winds blow, and, singing low,  
I hear the glad streams run ;  
The windows of my soul I throw  
Wide open to the sun.

No longer forward nor behind  
I look in hope or fear ;  
But, grateful, take the good I find,  
The best of now and here.

I plough no more a desert land,  
To harvest weed and tare ;  
The manna dropping from God's hand  
Rebukes my painful care.

I break my pilgrim staff, I lay  
Aside the toiling oar ;  
The angel sought so far away  
I welcome at my door.

The airs of spring may never play  
Among the ripening corn,  
Nor freshness of the flowers of May  
Blow through the autumn morn ;

Yet shall the blue-eyed gentian look  
Through fring'd lids to heaven,  
And the pale aster in the brook  
Shall see its image given ;—

The woods shall wear their robes of praise,  
The south-wind softly sigh,  
And sweet, calm days in golden haze  
Melt down the amber sky.

Not less shall manly deed and word  
Rebuke an age of wrong ;  
The graven flowers that wreath the sword  
Make not the blade less strong.

But smiting hands shall learn to heal,—  
To build as to destroy ;  
Nor less my heart for others feel  
That I the more enjoy.

All as God wills, who wisely heeds  
To give or to withhold,  
And knoweth more of all my needs  
Than all my prayers have told !

Enough that blessings undeserved  
Have marked my erring track ;

That wheresoe'er my feet have swerved,  
His chastening turned me back ;

That more and more a Providence  
Of love is understood,  
Making the springs of time and sense  
Sweet with eternal good ;—

That death seems but a covered way  
Which opens into light,  
Wherein no blinded child can stray  
Beyond the Father's sight ;

That care and trial seem at last,  
Through Memory's sunset air,  
Like mountain-ranges overpast,  
In purple distance fair ;

That all the jarring notes of life  
Seem blending in a psalm,  
And all the angles of its strife  
Slow rounding into calm.

And so the shadows fall apart,  
And so the west-winds play ;  
And all the windows of my heart  
I open to the day.

## My Playmate

[When written, this poem bore the title *Eleanor*, and when first printed *The Playmate*.]

THE pines were dark on Ramoth hill,  
Their song was soft and low ;  
The blossoms in the sweet May wind  
Were falling like the snow.

The blossoms drifted at our feet,  
The orchard birds sang clear ;  
The sweetest and the saddest day  
It seemed of all the year.

For, more to me than birds or flowers,  
My playmate left her home,  
And took with her the laughing spring,  
The music and the bloom.

She kissed the lips of kith and kin,  
She laid her hand in mine ;  
What more could ask the bashful boy  
Who fed her father's kine ?

She left us in the bloom of May :  
The constant years told o'er  
Their seasons with as sweet May morns,  
But she came back no more.

I walk, with noiseless feet, the round  
Of uneventful years ;  
Still o'er and o'er I sow the spring  
And reap the autumn ears.

She lives where all the golden year  
Her summer roses blow ;  
The dusky children of the sun  
Before her come and go.

There haply with her jewelled hands  
She smooths her silken gown,—  
No more the homespun lap wherein  
I shook the walnuts down.

The wild grapes wait us by the brook,  
The brown nuts on the hill,  
And still the May-day flowers make sweet  
The woods of Follymill.

The lilies blossom in the pond,  
The bird builds in the tree,  
The dark pines sing on Ramoth hill  
The slow song of the sea.

I wonder if she thinks of them,  
And how the old time seems,—  
If ever the pines of Ramoth wood  
Are sounding in her dreams.

I see her face, I hear her voice ;  
Does she remember mine ?  
And what to her is now the boy  
Who fed her father's kine ?

What cares she that the orioles build  
For other eyes than ours,—  
That other hands with nuts are filled,  
And other laps with flowers ?

O playmate in the golden time !  
Our mossy seat is green,  
Its fringing violets blossom yet,  
The old trees o'er it lean.

The winds so sweet with birch and fern  
A sweeter memory blow ;  
And there in spring the veeries sing  
The song of long ago.

And still the pines of Ramoth wood  
Are moaning like the sea,—  
The moaning of the sea of change  
Between myself and thee !

## Barbara Frietchie

This poem was written in strict conformity to the account of the incident as I had it from respectable and trustworthy sources. It has since been the subject of a good deal of conflicting testimony, and the story was probably incorrect in some of its details. It is admitted by all that Barbara Frietchie was no myth, but a worthy and highly esteemed gentlewoman, intensely loyal and a hater of the Slavery Rebellion, holding her Union flag sacred and keeping it with her Bible; that when the Confederates halted before her house, and entered her door-yard, she denounced them in vigorous language, shook her cane in their faces, and drove them out; and when General Burnside's troops followed close upon Jackson's, she waved her flag and cheered them. It is stated that May Quantrell, a brave and loyal lady in another part of the city, did wave her flag in sight of the Confederates. It is possible that there has been a blending of the two incidents.

**U**P from the meadows rich with corn,  
Clear in the cool September morn,  
The clustered spires of Frederick  
stand  
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.  
  
Round them orchards sweep,  
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,  
  
Fair as the garden of the Lord  
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,  
  
On that pleasant morn of the early fall  
When Lee marched over the mountain-wall;  
  
Over the mountains winding down,  
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.  
  
Forty flags with their silver stars,  
Forty flags with their crimson bars,



Flapped in the morning wind : the sun  
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,  
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten ;

Bravest of all in Frederick town,  
She took up the flag the men hauled down ;

In her attic window the staff she set,  
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,  
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat left and right  
He glanced ; the old flag met his sight.

' Halt ! '—the dust-brown ranks stood fast.  
' Fire ! '—out blazed the rifle-blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash ;  
It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff  
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the window-sill,  
And shook it forth with a royal will.

' Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,  
But spare your country's flag,' she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,  
Over the face of the leader came ;

The nobler nature within him stirred  
To life at that woman's deed and word ;

'Who touches a hair of yon gray head  
Dies like a dog ! March on !' he said.

All day long through Frederick street  
Sounded the tread of marching feet :

All day long that free flag tost  
Over the heads of the rebel host.

Ever its torn folds rose and fell  
On the loyal winds that loved it well ;

And through the hill-gaps sunset light  
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,  
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.

Honor to her ! and let a tear  
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.

Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,  
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave !

Peace and order and beauty draw  
Round thy symbol of light and law ;

And ever the stars above look down  
On thy stars below in Frederick town !

## St. Gregory's Guest



TALE for Roman guides to tell  
To careless, sight-worn travellers still,  
Who pause beside the narrow cell  
Of Gregory, on the Cælian Hill.

One day before the monk's door came  
A beggar, stretching empty palms,  
Fainting and fast-sick, in the name  
Of the Most Holy, asking alms.

And the monk answered, 'All I have  
In this poor cell of mine I give,  
The silver cup my mother gave ;  
In Christ's name take thou it and live.'

Years passed ; and, called at last to bear  
The pastoral crook and keys of Rome,  
The poor monk, in St. Peter's chair,  
Sat the crowned lord of Christendom.

'Prepare a feast,' St. Gregory cried,  
'And let twelve beggars sit thereat.'  
The beggars came, and one beside,  
An unknown stranger with them sat.

'I asked thee not,' the Pontiff spake,  
'O stranger ; but if need be thine,

I bid thee welcome, for the sake  
Of Him who is thy Lord and mine.'

A grave, calm face the stranger raised,  
Like His who on Gennesaret trod,  
Or His on whom the Chaldeans gazed,  
Whose form was as the Son of God.

'Know'st thou,' he said, 'thy gift of old?'  
And in the hand he lifted up  
The Pontiff marveled to behold  
Once more his mother's silver cup.

'Thy prayers and alms have risen, and  
bloom  
Sweetly among the flowers of heaven.  
I am 'The Wonderful,' through whom  
Whate'er thou askest shall be given.'

He spake and vanished. Gregory fell  
With his twelve guests in mute accord,  
Prone on their faces, knowing well  
Their eyes of flesh had seen the Lord.

The old-time legend is not vain ;  
Nor vain thou art, Verona's Paul,  
Telling it o'er and o'er again  
On gray Vicenza's frescoed wall.

Still wheresoever pity shares  
Its bread with sorrow, want, and sin,  
And love the beggar's feast prepares,  
The uninvited Guest comes in.

Unheard, because our ears are dull,  
Unseen, because our eyes are dim,  
He walks our earth, The Wonderful,  
And all good deeds are done to Him.

## Skipper Ireson's Ride

In the valuable and carefully prepared *History of Marblehead*, published in 1879 by Samuel Roads, Jr., it is stated that the crew of Captain Ireson, rather than himself, were responsible for the abandonment of the disabled vessel. To screen themselves they charged their captain with the crime. In view of this the writer of the ballad addressed the following letter to the historian:—

OAK KNOLL, DANVERS, *5mo.* 18, 1880.

MY DEAR FRIEND; I heartily thank thee for a copy of thy *History of Marblehead*. I have read it with great interest and think good use has been made of the abundant material. No town in Essex County has a record more honorable than Marblehead; no one has done more to develop the industrial interests of our New England seaboard, and certainly none have given such evidence of self-sacrificing patriotism. I am g'ad the story of it has been at last told, and told so well. I have now no doubt that thy version of Skipper Ireson's ride is the correct one. My verse was founded solely on a fragment of rhyme which I heard from one of my early schoolmates, a native of Marblehead.

I supposed the story to which it referred dated back at least a century. I knew nothing of the participators, and the narrative of the ballad was pure fancy. I am glad for the sake of truth and justice that the real facts are given in thy book. I certainly would not knowingly do injustice to any one, dead or living.

I am very truly thy friend,

JOHN G. WHITTIER.



Of all the rides since the birth of time,  
Told in story or sung in rhyme,—  
On Apuleius's Golden Ass,  
Or one-eyed Calendar's horse of brass,  
Witch astride of a human back,  
Islam's prophet on Al Borák,—  
The strangest ride that ever was sped  
Was Ireson's, out from Marblehead!  
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead!

Body of turkey. head of owl,  
Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,  
Feathered and ruffled in every part,  
Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.  
Scores of women, old and young,  
Strong of muscle, and glib of tongue,  
Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,  
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain :  
    ' Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
    Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt  
    By the women o' Morble'ead !'

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,  
Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,  
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase  
Bacchus round some antique vase,  
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,  
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,  
With conch-shells blowing and fish-horn's twang,  
Over and over the Mænads sang :  
    ' Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
    Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt  
    By the women o' Morble'ead !'

Small pity for him !— He sailed away  
From a leaking ship, in Chaleur Bay,—  
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,  
With his own town's-people on her deck !  
    ' Lay by ! lay by !' they called to him,  
Back he answered, ' Sink or swim !  
Brag of your catch of fish again !'  
And off he sailed through the fog and rain !

Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead !

Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur  
That wreck shall lie for evermore.  
Mother and sister, wife and maid,  
Looked from the rocks of Marblehead  
Over the moaning and rainy sea.—  
Looked for the coming that might not be !  
What did the winds and the sea-birds say  
Of the cruel captain who sailed away ?—  
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead !

Through the street, on either side,  
Up flew windows, doors swung wide ;  
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives gray,  
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.  
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,  
Hulks of old sailors run aground,  
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,  
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain :  
‘ Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt  
By the women o' Morble'ead ! ’

Sweetly along the Salem road  
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.  
Little the wicked skipper knew  
Of the fields so green and the sky so blue.



Riding there in his sorry trim,  
 Like an Indian idol glum and grim,  
 Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear  
 Of voices shouting, far and near :  
 ' Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
 Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt  
 By the women o' Morble'ead !'

' Hear me, neighbors !' at last he cried,—  
 ' What to me is this noisy ride ?  
 What is the shame that clothes the skin  
 To the nameless horror that lives within ?  
 Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,  
 And hear a cry from a reeling deck !  
 Hate me and curse me,—I only dread  
 The hand of God and the face of the dead !'  
 Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
 Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
 By the women of Marblehead !

Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea  
 Said, ' God has touched him ! why should we ?'  
 Said an old wife mourning her only son,  
 ' Cut the rogue's tether and let him run !'  
 So with soft relentings and rude excuse,  
 Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose,  
 And gave him a cloak to hide him in,  
 And left him alone with his shame and sin.  
 Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
 Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
 By the women of Marblehead !

## The Three Bells



BENEATH the low-hung  
 night cloud  
 That raked her splint-  
 ering mast,  
 The good ship settled  
 slowly,  
 The cruel leak gained fast.

Over the awful ocean  
 Her signal guns pealed out.  
 Dear God ! was that Thy answer  
 From the horror round about ?

A voice came down the wild wind,  
 'Ho ! ship ahoy !' its cry :  
 'Our stout Three Bells of Glasgow  
 Shall lay till daylight by !'

Hour after hour crept slowly,  
 Yet on the heaving swells  
 Tossed up and down the ship-lights,  
 The lights of the Three Bells !

And ship to ship made signals,  
 Man answered back to man,  
 While oft, to cheer and hearten,  
 The Three Bells nearer ran ;

And the captain from her taffrail  
 Sent down his hopeful cry :

'Take heart ! Hold on !' he shouted ;  
'The Three Bells shall lay by !'

All night across the waters  
The tossing lights shone clear ;  
All night from reeling taffrail  
The Three Bells sent her cheer.

And when the dreary watches  
Of storm and darkness passed,  
Just as the wreck lurched under,  
All souls were saved at last.

Sail on, Three Bells, forever,  
In grateful memory sail !  
Ring on, Three Bells of Rescue,  
Above the wave and gale !

Type of the Love eternal,  
Repeat the Master's cry,  
As tossing through our darkness  
The lights of God draw nigh !

## Red Riding-Hood



N the wide lawn the snow lay deep,  
Ridged o'er with many a drifted  
heap ;

The wind that through the pine-  
trees sung,

The naked elm-boughs tossed and swung ;  
While, through the window, frosty-starred,  
Against the sunset purple barred,  
We saw the sombre crow flap by,  
The hawk's gray fleck along the sky.  
The crested blue-jay flitting swift,  
The squirrel poising on the drift,  
Erect, alert, his broad gray tail  
Set to the north wind like a sail.

It came to pass, our little lass,  
With flattened face against the glass,  
And eyes in which the tender dew  
Of pity shone, stood gazing through  
The narrow space her rosy lips  
Had melted from the frost's eclipse :  
'Oh, see,' she cried, 'the poor blue-jays  
What is it that the black crow says ?  
The squirrel lifts his little legs  
Because he has no hands, and begs ;  
He's asking for my nuts, I know :  
May I not feed them on the snow ?'

Half lost within her boots, her head  
Warm-sheltered in her hood of red,

Her plaid skirt close about her drawn,  
She floundered down the wintry lawn ;  
Now struggling through the misty veil  
Blown round her by the shrieking gale ;  
Now sinking in a drift so low  
Her scarlet hood could scarcely show  
Its dash of color on the snow.  
She dropped for bird and beast forlorn  
Her little store of nuts and corn,  
And thus her timid guests bespoke :  
' Come, squirrel, from your hollow oak,—  
Come, black old crow,—come, poor blue-jay,  
Before your supper's blown away !  
Don't be afraid, we all are good ;  
And I'm mamma's Red Riding-Hood !'

O Thou, whose care is over all,  
Who heedest even the sparrow's fall,  
Keep in the little maiden's breast  
The pity which is now its guest !  
Let not her cultured years make less  
The childhood charm of tenderness,  
But let her feel as well as know,  
Nor harder with her polish grow !  
Unmoved by sentimental grief  
That wails along some printed leaf,  
But, prompt with kindly word and deed  
To own the claims of all who need,  
Let the grown woman's self make good  
The promise of Red Riding-Hood.

## The Robin



Y old Welsh neighbor over the  
way  
Crept slowly out in the sun  
of spring,  
Pushed from her ears the locks  
of gray,

And listened to hear the robin sing.

Her grandson, playing at marbles, stopped,  
And, cruel in sport, as boys will be,  
Tossed a stone at the bird, who hopped  
From bough to bough in the apple tree.

'Nay!' said the grandmother; 'have you not  
heard,

My poor, bad boy! of the fiery pit,  
And how, drop by drop, this merciful bird  
Carries the water that quenches it?

'He brings cool dew in his little bill,  
And lets it fall on the souls of sin:  
You can see the mark on his red breast still  
Of fires that scorch as he drops it in.

'My poor Bron rhuddyn! my breast-burned  
bird,

Singing so sweetly from limb to limb,  
Very dear to the heart of Our Lord  
Is he who pities the lost like Him!'

'Amen!' I said to the beautiful myth ;  
'Sing, bird of God, in my heart as well :  
Each good thought is a drop wherewith  
To cool and lessen the fires of hell.

'Prayers of love like rain-drops fall,  
Tears of pity are cooling dew,  
And dear to the heart of Our Lord are all  
Who suffer like Him in the good they do !'



## The Fish I Didn't Catch



HE old homestead nestled under a long range of low hills. It was surrounded by woods in all directions, save to the south-east, where a break in the leafy wall revealed a vista of low, green meadows, picturesque with wooded islands and jutting capes of upland. Through these a small brook, noisy enough as it foamed, rippled, and laughed down its rocky falls by our garden-side, wound, silently, to a larger stream known as the County Brook.

In spring mornings the blackbirds and bob-o'-links made the meadows musical with song ; and on summer nights we loved to watch the white wreaths of fog rising and drifting in the pale moonlight, like troops of ghosts, with the fireflies throwing up ever and anon signals of their coming. But the brook was far more attractive for its sheltered bathing places, clear and white-sanded ; and weedy places, where the shy pickerel loved to linger ; and deep pools, where the stupid sucker stirred the black mud with his fins.

It was a quiet, romantic little river. There had, so tradition said, once been a witch-meeting on its banks, of six little old women in short, sky-blue cloaks ; and a ghost had been seen bobbing for eels under County Bridge. It turned the mills to grind our corn, and we drove our sheep to it for the



spring washing. On its banks we could find the earliest and latest wild flowers, from the pale blue, three-lobed hepatica and small delicate wood, to the bloom of the witch-hazel burning in the leafless October woods.

Yet, after all, I think the chief attraction of the brook for my brother and myself was the fine fishing it afforded. Our uncle, who lived with us, was a quiet, genial man, much given to hunting and fishing; and it was one of the great pleasures of our young life to accompany him on his expeditions. I remember our first fishing excursion as if it were yesterday. I have been happy many times, but never more intensely so than when I received my first fishing pole, and trudged off with my uncle through the woods and meadows. It was a sweet day of early summer; the long afternoon shadows of the trees lay cool across our path; the leaves seemed greener, the flowers brighter, the birds merrier than ever before. My uncle knew where the best haunts of the pickerel were, and placed me at the most favorable point. I threw out my line, and waited for a bite, moving the bait in rapid jerks on the surface of the pool. Nothing came of it. "Try again," said my uncle. Suddenly the bait sank out of sight. "Now for it," thought I; "Here is a fish at last." I made a strong pull, and brought up a tangle of weeds. Again and again I cast out my line with aching arms, and drew it back empty. I looked to my uncle appealingly. "Try once more," said he; "we fishermen must

have patience." Suddenly something tugged at my line, and swept off with it into deep water. Jerking it up, I saw a fine pickerel wriggling in the sun. "Uncle!" I cried, looking back in uncontrollable excitement, "I've got a fish!" "Not yet," said my uncle. As he spoke there was a splash in the water; I caught the arrowy gleam of a scared fish shooting into the middle of the stream; my hook hung empty from the line. I had lost my fish.

Overcome by my great and bitter disappointment, I sat down on the nearest hassock, and for a time refused to be comforted, even by my uncle's assurance that there were more fish in the brook. He refitted my bait, and putting the pole again in my hands, told me to try my luck once more.

"But remember, boy," he said, with his shrewd smile, "never brag of catching a fish until he is on dry ground, I've seen older folks doing that in more ways than one, and so making fools of themselves. Its no use to boast of anything until it's done, nor then either, for it speaks for itself."

How often since I have been reminded of the fish I did not catch! When I hear people boasting of a work that is not yet done, and trying to anticipate credit which belongs to actual achievement, I call to mind the scene at the brook side, and the wise caution of my uncle in that particular instance takes the form of a proverb of universal application: "Never brag of your fish before you catch him."

## Farm-yard Song

J. T. TROWBRIDGE



VER the hill the farm-boy goes,  
His shadow lengthens along  
the land,  
A giant staff in a giant hand ;  
In the poplar-tree, above the  
spring,

The katydid begins to sing ;  
The early dews are falling ;—  
Into the stone-heap darts the mink ;  
The swallows skim the river's brink ;  
And home to the woodland fly the crows,  
When over the hill the farm-boy goes,  
Cheerily calling :—

“Co', boss ! co', boss ! co' ! co' ! co' !”  
Farther, farther over the hill,  
Faintly calling, calling still :—  
“Co', boss ! co', boss ! co' ! co' !”

Into the yard the farmer goes,  
With grateful heart, at the close of day ;  
Harness and chain are hung away ;  
In the wagon-shed stand yoke and plough ;  
The straw's in the stack, the hay in the mow,  
The cooling dews are falling ;  
The friendly sheep his welcome bleat,  
The pigs come grunting to his feet,  
The whinnying mare her master knows,

When into the yard the farmer goes,  
His cattle calling :—  
“Co', boss !” co', boss ! co', co', co' !”  
While still the cow-boy, far away,  
Goes seeking those that have gone astray,—  
“Co', boss ! co', boss ! co' ! co' !”

Now to her task the milkmaid goes.  
The cattle come crowding through the gate,  
Lowling, pushing, little and great ;  
About the trough, by the farm-yard pump,  
The frolicsome yearlings frisk and jump,  
While the pleasant dews are falling ;  
The new milch-heifer is quick and shy,  
But the old cow waits with tranquil eye ;  
And the white stream into the bright pail flows,  
When to her task the milkmaid goes,  
Soothingly calling,—  
“So, boss ! so, boss ! so ! so ! so !”  
The cheerful milkmaid takes her stool,  
And sits and milks in the twilight cool,  
Saying “So ! so, boss ! so ! so !”

To supper at last the farmer goes.  
The apples are pared, the paper read,  
The stories are told, then all to bed.  
Without, the crickets' ceaseless song  
Makes shrill the silence all night long ;  
The heavy dews are falling.  
The housewife's hand has turned the lock ;  
Drowsily ticks the kitchen clock ;  
The household sinks to deep repose ;

But still in sleep the farm-boy goes  
Singing, calling,—  
“Co', boss ! co', boss ! co' ! co' ! co' !”  
And oft the milkmaid, in her dreams,  
Drums in the pail with the flashing streams,  
Murmuring, “So, boss ! so !”

## Farmer John

J. T. TROWBRIDGE

**H**OME from his journey, Farmer John  
Arrived this morning safe and  
sound ;  
His black coat off, and his old  
clothes on,  
“Now I'm myself,” says Farmer John ;  
And he thinks, “I'll look around.”  
Up leaps the dog : “Get down, you pup !  
Are you so glad you would eat me up ?”  
The old cow lows at the gate to greet him ;  
The horses prick up their ears to meet him.  
“Well, well, old Bay !  
Ha, ha, old Gray !  
Do you get good feed when I'm away ?”  
“You haven't a rib,” says Farmer John ;  
“The cattle are looking round and sleek ;  
The colt is going to be a roan,  
And a beauty, too ; how he has grown ;

We'll wean the calf in a week."  
Says Farmer John, "When I've been off,  
To call you again about the trough,  
And water you and pet you while you drink,  
Is a greater comfort than you can think !"

And he pats old Bay  
And he slaps old Gray ;  
"Ah ! this is the comfort of going away."

"For after all," says Farmer John,  
"The best of a journey is getting home ,  
I've seen great sights, but I would not give  
This spot, and the peaceful life I live,  
For all their Paris and Rome ;  
These hills for the city's stifled air,  
And big hotels and bustle and glare ;—  
Land all houses and roads all stones,  
That deafen your ears and batter your bones !  
Would you, old Bay ?  
Would you, old Gray ?  
That's what one gets by going away."

"There Money is king," says Farmer John,  
"And Fashion is queen ; and its very queer  
To see how sometimes, while the man  
Is raking and scraping all he can,  
The wife spends every year,  
Enough, you would think, for a score of wives,  
To keep them in luxury all their lives !  
The town is a perfect Babylon  
To a quiet chap," says Farmer John.

“You see, old Bay,  
You see, old Gray,  
I’m wiser than when I went away.”

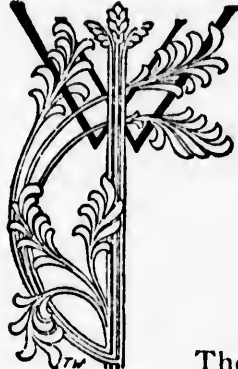
“I’ve found out this,” says Farmer John,  
“That happiness is not bought and sold,  
And clutched in a life of waste and hurry,  
In nights of pleasure and days of worry,  
And wealth isn’t all in gold,  
Mortgage and stocks, and ten per cent.,  
But in simple ways and sweet content,  
Few wants, pure hopes, and noble ends,  
Some land to till, and a few good friends,  
Like you, old Bay,  
And you, old Gray,—  
That’s what I’ve learned by going away.”

And a happy man is Farmer John,—  
O a rich and happy man is he !  
He sees the peas and pumpkins growing,  
The corn in tassel, the buckwheat blowing,  
• And fruit on vine and tree ;  
The large kind oxen look their thanks,  
As he rubs their foreheads and strokes their flanks;  
The doves light round him, and strut and coo ;  
Says Farmer John, “ I’ll take you, too,—  
And you, old Bay,  
And you, old Gray,  
Next time I travel so far away.”

# The Singing Leaves

A BALLAD

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

“HAT fairings will ye that I  
bring ?”  
Said the King to his  
daughters three ;  
“ For I to Vanity Fair am  
bound,  
Now say what shall they  
be ? ”

Then up and spake the eldest  
daughter,  
That lady tall and grand :  
“ Oh, bring me pearls and diamonds great,  
And gold rings for my hand.”

Thereafter spake the second daughter,  
That was both white and red :  
“ For me bring silks that will stand alone,  
And a gold comb for my head.”

Then came the turn of the least daughter,  
That was whiter than thistle-down,  
And among the gold of her blithesome hair  
Dim shone the golden crown.

“ There came a bird this morning,  
And sang 'neath my bower eaves,



Till I dreamed, as his music made me,  
‘ Ask thou for the Singing Leaves.’ ”

Then the brow of the King swelled crimson  
With a flush of angry scorn :

“ Well have ye spoken, my two eldest,  
And chosen as ye were born ;

“ But she, like a thing of peasant race,  
That is happy binding the sheaves ; ”

Then he saw her dead mother in her face,  
And said, “ Thou shalt have thy leaves.”

## II

He mounted and rode three days and nights  
Till he came to Vanity Fair,  
And 'twas easy to buy the gems and the silk,  
But no Singing Leaves were there.

Then deep in the greenwood rode he,  
And asked of every tree,  
“ Oh, if you have ever a Singing Leaf,  
I pray you give it me ! ”

But the trees all kept their counsel,  
And never a word said they,  
Only there sighed from the pine-tops  
A music of seas far away.

Only the pattering aspen  
Made a sound of growing rain,  
That fell ever faster and faster,  
Then faltered to silence again.

"Oh, where shall I find a little foot-page  
That would win both hose and shoon,  
And will bring to me the Singing Leaves  
If they grow under the moon?"

Then lightly turned him Walter the page,  
By the stirrup as he ran ;

"Now pledge you me the truesome word  
Of a king and a gentleman,

"That you will give me the first, first thing  
You meet at your castle-gate,  
And the Princess shall get the Singing Leaves,  
Or mine be a traitor's fate."

The King's head dropt upon his breast  
A moment, as it might be ;

"'Twill be my dog," he thought, and said,  
"My faith I plight to thee."

Then Walter took from next his heart  
A packet small and thin,

"Now give you this to the Princess Anne,  
The Singing Leaves are therein."

### III

As the King rode in at his castle-gate,  
A maiden to meet him ran,  
And "Welcome, father !" she laughed and cried  
Together, the Princess Anne.

"Lo, here the Singing Leaves," quoth he,  
"And woe, but they cost me dear !"

She took the packet, and the smile  
Deepened down beneath the tear.

It deepened down till it reached her heart,  
And then gushed up again,  
And lighted her tears as the sudden sun  
Transfigures the summer rain.

And the first Leaf, when it was opened,  
Sang : " I am Walter the page,  
And the songs I sing 'neath thy window  
Are my only heritage."

And the second Leaf sang : " But in the land  
That is neither on earth nor sea,  
My lute and I are lords of more  
Than thrice this kingdom's fee."

And the third Leaf sang : " Be mine ! Be mine "   
And ever it sang, " Be mine ! "   
Then sweeter it sang and ever sweeter,  
And said, " I am thine, thine, thine ! "

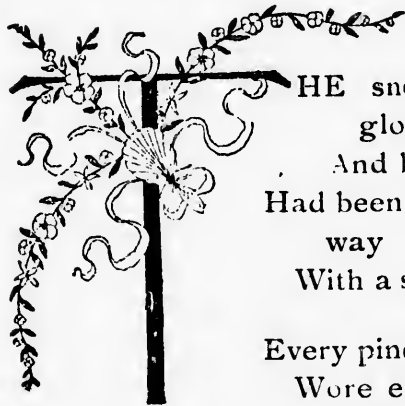
At the first Leaf she grew pale enough,  
At the second she turned aside,  
At the third, 'twas as if a lily flushed  
With a rose's red heart's tide.

" Good counsel gave the bird," said she,  
" I have my hope thrice o'er,  
For they sing to my very heart," she said,  
" And it sings to them evermore."

She brought to him her beauty and truth,  
 But and broad earldoms three,  
 And he made her queen of the broader lands  
 He held of his lute in fee.

## The First Snow-Fall

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL



HE snow had begun in the  
 gloaming,  
 And busily all the night  
 Had been heaping field and high-  
 way  
 With a silence deep and white.

Every pine, and fir, and hemlock  
 Wore ermine too dear for an  
 earl,

And the poorest twig on the elm tree  
 Was ridged inch-deep with pearl.

From the sheds new-roofed with Carrara  
 Came Chanticleer's muffled crow ;  
 The stiff rails were softened to swan's down,  
 And still fluttered down the snow.

I stood and watched by the window  
 The noiseless work of the sky,

And the sudden flurries of snow-birds,  
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn,  
Where a little headstone stood,  
How the flakes were folding it gently,  
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,  
Saying "Father, who makes it snow?"  
And I told of the good All Father  
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snow-fall,  
And thought of the leaden sky  
That arched o'er our first great sorrow,  
When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience  
That fell from that cloud-like snow,  
Flake by flake, healing and hiding  
The scar of our deep-plunged woe.

And again to the child I whispered,  
"The snow that husheth all,  
Darling, the merciful Father  
Alone can make it fall."

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her ;  
And she, kissing back, could not know  
That *my* kiss was given to her sister,  
Folded close under deepening snow.

## The Finding of the Lyre

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL



HERE lay upon the ocean's  
shore

What once a tortoise  
served to cover ;

A year and more, with  
rush and roar,

The surf had rolled it  
over,

Had played with it, and  
flung it by,

As wind and weather might decide it,  
Then tossed it high where sand-drifts dry  
Cheap burial might provide it.

It rested there to bleach or tan,  
The rains had soaked, the suns had burned it ;  
With many a ban the fisherman  
Had stumbled o'er and spurned it ;  
And there the fisher-girl would stay,  
Conjecturing with her brother  
How in their play the poor estray  
Might serve some use or other.

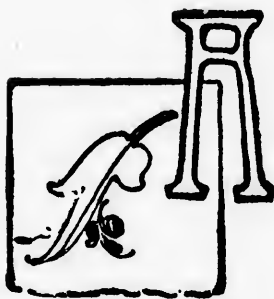
So there it lay, through wet or dry  
As empty as the last new sonnet,  
Till by and by came Mercury,  
And, having mused upon it,

"Why here," cried he, "the thing of things  
In shape, material, and dimension !  
Give it but strings, and lo, it sings,  
A wonderful invention !"

So said, so done ; the chords he strained,  
And, as his fingers o'er them hovered,  
The shell disdained a soul had gained,  
The lyre had been discovered.  
O empty world that round us lies,  
Dead shell, of soul and thought forsaken,  
Brought we but eyes like Mercury's,  
In thee what songs should waken !

## Yussouf

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL



STRANGER came one night  
to Yussouf's tent,  
Saying, "Behold one outcast  
and in dread,  
Against whose life the bow of  
power is bent,  
Who flies, and hath not where  
to lay his head ;

I come to thee for shelter and for food,  
To Yussouf, called through all our tribes 'The  
Good.' "

"This tent is mine," said Yussouf, "but no more  
Than it is God's ; come in, be at peace ;  
Freely shalt thou partake of all my store,  
As I of His, who buildeth over these,  
Our tents, His glorious roof of night and day,  
And at whose door none ever yet heard Nay."

So Yussouf entertained his guest that night,  
And waking him ere day, said, "Here is gold ;  
My swiftest horse is saddled for thy flight ;  
Depart before the prying day grows bold."  
As one lamp lights another, nor grows less,  
So nobleness enkindleth nobleness.

That inward light the stranger's face made grand  
Which shines from all self conquest. Kneeling low,  
He bowed his forehead upon Yussouf's hand,  
Sobbing "O Sheik, I cannot leave thee so ;  
I will repay thee ; all this thou hast done  
Unto that Ibrahim who slew thy son !"

"Take thrice the gold," said Yussouf ; for with  
thee,  
Into the desert, never to return,  
My one black thought shall ride away from me.  
First-born, for whom, by day and night, I yearn,  
Balanced and just are all of God's decrees ;  
Thou art avenged, my first-born ; sleep in peace !"



## Aladdin

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL



WHEN I was a beggarly  
boy,  
And lived in a cellar  
damp,  
I had not a friend nor  
a toy,  
But I had Aladdin's  
lamp ;  
When I could not  
sleep for the cold,

I had fire enough in my brain,  
And builded, with roofs of gold,  
My beautiful castles in Spain !

Since then I have toiled day and night,  
I have money and power good store,  
But I'd give all my lamps of silver bright  
For the one that is mine no more ;  
Take, Fortune, whatever you choose,  
You gave, and may snatch again ;  
I have nothing 'twould pain me to lose,  
For I own no more castles in Spain !

## Dawn Angels

MADAME DARMESTETER



ALL night I watch'd, awake,  
for morning ;  
At last the East grew  
all aflame,  
The birds for welcome  
sang, or warning,  
And with their singing  
morning came.

Along the green-gold heavens drifted  
Pale wandering souls that shun the light,  
Whose cloudy pinions, torn and rifted,  
Had beat the bars of Heaven all night.

These cluster'd round the moon ; but higher  
A troop of shining spirits went,  
Who were not made of wind or fire,  
But some divine dream-element.

Some held the Light, while those remaining  
Shook out their harvest-color'd wings,  
A faint unusual music raining  
(Whose sound was Light) on earthly things.

They sang, and as a mighty river  
Their voices washed the night away ;  
From East to West ran one white shiver,  
And waxen strong their song was Day.

## Le Roi Est Mort

MADAME DARMESTETER

**A**ND shall I weep that Love's  
no more,  
And magnify his reign?  
Sure never mortal man  
before

Would have his grief again.  
Farewell the long-continued ache,  
The days a-dream, the nights awake,  
I will rejoice and merry make,  
And never more complain.

King Love is dead and gone for aye,  
Who ruled with might and main,  
For with a bitter word one day,  
I found my tyrant slain,  
And he in Heatheness was bred,  
Nor ever was baptized, 'tis said,  
Nor is of any creed, and dead  
Can never rise again.

# The Scarecrow and the Robins

CELIA THAXTER.



HE farmer looked at his  
cherry-tree,  
With thick buds cluster-  
ed on every bough,  
"I wish I could cheat the  
robins," said he,  
"If somebody only  
would show me how!

"I'll make a terrible scarecrow, grim,  
With threatening arms and with bristling  
head ;  
And up in the tree I'll fasten him,  
To frighten them half to death," he said.

He fashioned a scarecrow all tattered and  
torn,—  
Oh, 'twas a horrible thing to see !  
And very early, one summer morn,  
He set it up in his cherry-tree.

The blossoms were white as the light sea-foam.  
The beautiful tree was a lovely sight ;  
But the scarecrow stood there so much at home  
That the birds flew screaming away in fright.

But the robins, watching him day after day,  
With head on one side and eyes so bright,  
Surveying the monster, began to say,  
"Why should this fellow our prospects blight?"

"He never moves round for the roughest  
weather,  
He's a harmless, comical, tough old fellow,  
Let's all go into the tree together,  
For he won't budge till the fruit is mellow."

So up they flew ; and the sauciest pair  
'Mid the shady branches peered and perked,  
Selected a spot with the utmost care,  
And all day merrily sang and worked.

And where do you think they built their nest ?  
In the scarecrow's pocket, if you please,  
That, half-concealed on his ragged breast,  
Made a charming covert of safety and ease !

By the time the cherries were ruby-red,  
A thriving family, hungry and brisk,  
The whole long day on the ripe food, fed.  
'Twas so convenient ! they saw no risk !

Until the children were ready to fly,  
All undisturbed they lived in the tree ;  
For nobody thought to look at the guy  
For a robin's flourishing family !

## The Sandpiper

CELIA THAXTER

**A**CROSS the lonely beach we flit,  
One little sandpiper and I ;  
And fast I gather bit by bit,  
The scattered driftwood,  
bleached and dry.

The wild waves reach their hands for it,  
The wild wind raves, the tide runs high,  
As up and down the beach we flit,—  
One little sandpiper and I.

Above our heads the sullen clouds  
Scud black and swift across the sky ;  
Like silent ghosts in misty shrouds  
Stand out the white lighthouses high.  
Almost as far as eye can reach  
I see the close-reefed vessels fly,  
As fast we flit along the beach,—  
One little sandpiper and I.

I watch him as he skims along  
Uttering his sweet and mournful cry ;  
He starts not at my fitful song,  
Nor flash of fluttering drapery.  
He has no thought of any wrong ;  
He scans me with a fearless eye ;  
Staunch friends are we, well-tried and strong,  
The little sandpiper and I.

Comrade, where wilt thou be to-night  
When the loosed storms break furiously ?  
My driftwood fire will burn so bright !  
To what warm shelter canst thou fly ?  
I do not fear for thee, though wroth  
The tempest rushes through the sky ;  
For are we not God's children both,  
Thou, little sandpiper, and I ?

## August

CELIA THAXTER

**B**UTTERCUP nodded and said  
good-bye,  
Clover and Daisy went off to-  
gether,  
But the fragrant water-lilies lie  
Yet moored in the golden August weather.  
  
The swallows chatter about their flight,  
The cricket chirps like a rare good fellow,  
The asters twinkle in clusters bright,  
While the corn grows ripe and the apples  
mellow.

## Baby Bell

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

## I

**H**AVE you not heard the poets tell  
 How came the dainty Baby  
 Bell  
 Into this world of ours?  
 The gates of heaven  
 were left ajar:

With folded hands and dreamy eyes,  
 Wandering out of Paradise,  
 She saw this planet, like a star,  
     Hung in the glistening depths of even—  
 Its bridges, running to and fro,  
 O'er which the white-winged Angels go,  
     Bearing the holy Dead to heaven.  
 She touched a bridge of flowers—those feet,  
 So light they did not bend the bells  
 Of the celestial asphodels,  
 They fell like dew upon the flowers:  
 Then all the air grew strangely sweet!  
 And thus came dainty Baby Bell  
     Into this world of ours.

## II

She came and brought delicious May.  
     The swallows built beneath the eaves;  
     Like sunlight, in and out the leaves  
 The robins went, the livelong day;



The lily swung its noiseless bell ;  
And o'er the porch the trembling vine  
Seemed bursting with its veins of wine.  
How sweetly, softly, twilight fell !  
O, earth was full of singing birds  
And opening springtide flowers,  
When the dainty Baby Bell  
Came to this world of ours !

## III

O Baby, dainty Baby Bell,  
How fair she grew from day to day !  
What woman-nature filled her eyes,  
What poetry within them lay—  
Those deep and tender twilight eyes,  
So full of meaning, pure and bright  
As if she yet stood in the light  
Of those oped gates of Paradise.  
And so we loved her more and more ;  
Ah, never in our hearts before  
Was love so lovely born !  
We felt we had a link between  
This real world and that unseen—  
The land beyond the morn ;  
And for the love of those dear eyes,  
For love of her whom God led forth,  
(The mother's being ceased on earth  
When Baby came from Paradise,)—  
For love of Him who smote our lives,  
And woke the chords of joy and pain,  
We said, *Dear Christ!*—our hearts bent down  
Like violets after rain.

## IV

And now the orchards, which were white  
 And red with blossoms when she came,  
 Were rich in autumn's mellow prime ;  
 The clustered apples burnt like flame,  
 The soft-cheeked peaches blushed and fell,  
 The folded chestnut burst its shell,  
 The grapes hung purpling in the grange :  
 And time wrought just as rich a change  
 In little Baby Bell.  
 Her lissome form more perfect grew,  
 And in her features we could trace,  
 In softened curves, her mother's face.  
 Her angel-nature ripened too :  
 We thought her lovely when she came,  
 But she was holy, saintly now . . . .  
 Around her pale angelic brow  
 We saw a slender ring of flame !

## V

God's hand had taken away the seal  
 That held the portals of her speech ;  
 And oft she said a few strange words  
 Whose meaning lay beyond our reach.  
 She never was a child to us,  
 We never held her being's key ;  
 We could not teach her holy things ;  
 She was Christ's self in purity.

## VI

It came upon us by degrees,  
 We saw its shadow ere it fell—

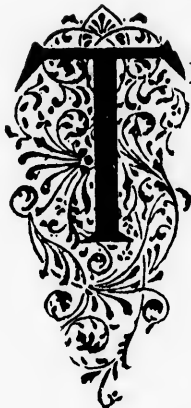
The knowledge that our God had sent  
His messenger for Baby Bell.  
We shuddered with unlanguage pain,  
And all our hopes were changed to fears,  
And all our thoughts ran into tears  
Like sunshine into rain.  
We cried aloud in our belief,  
"O, smite us gently, gently, God !  
Teach us to bend and kiss the rod,  
And perfect grow through grief."  
Ah ! how we loved her, God can tell ;  
Her heart was folded deep in ours,  
Our hearts are broken, Baby Bell !

## VII

At last he came, the messenger,  
The messenger from unseen lands :  
And what did dainty Baby Bell ?  
She only crossed her little hands,  
She only looked more meek and fair !  
We parted back her silken hair,  
We wove the roses round her brow—  
White buds, the summer's drifted snow,—  
Wrapt her from head to foot in flowers . . .  
And thus went dainty Baby Bell  
Out of this world of ours !

## Alec Yeaton's Son

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH



HE wind it wailed, the wind it  
moaned,

And the white caps flecked  
the sea ;

"An' I would to God," the  
skipper groaned,

"I had not my boy with me!"

Snug in the stern-sheets, little  
John

Laughed as the scud swept by ;  
But the skipper's sunburnt cheek grew wan  
As he watched the wicked sky.

"Would he were at his mother's side !"

And the skipper's eyes were dim.

"Good Lord in heaven, if ill betide,  
What would become of him !

"For me—my muscles are as steel,

For me let hap what may :

I might make shift upon the keel  
Until the break o' day.

"But he, he is so weak and small,  
So young, scarce learned to stand—

O pitying Father of us all,  
I trust him in Thy hand !

“ For Thou, who markest from on high  
A sparrow's fall—each one !—  
Surely, O Lord, Thou'lt have an eye  
On Alec Yeaton's son ! ”

Then, steady, helm ! Right straight he sailed  
Towards the headland light :  
The wind it moaned, the wind it wailed,  
And black, black fell the night.

Then burst a storm to make one quail  
Though housed from winds and waves—  
They who could tell about that gale  
Must rise from watery graves !

Sudden it came, as sudden went ;  
Ere half the night was sped,  
The winds were hushed, the waves were spent,  
And the stars shone overhead.

Now, as the morning mist grew thin,  
The folk on Gloucester shore  
Saw a little figure floating in  
Secure, on a broken oar !

Up rose the cry, “ A wreck ! a wreck !  
Pull, mates, and waste no breath ! ”—  
They knew it, though 'twas but a speck  
Upon the edge of death !

Long did they marvel in the town  
At God His strange decree,  
That let the stalwart skipper drown  
And the little child go free !

## Our Almanac

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH



ROBINS in the  
tree-tops,  
Blossoms in  
the grass;  
Green things a-  
growing  
Everywhere you  
pass ;

Sudden little breezes ;  
Showers of silver dew ;  
Black bough and bent twig  
Budding out anew !  
Pine tree and willow tree,  
Fringed elm, and larch,  
Don't you think that May-time's  
Pleasanter than March ?

Apples in the orchard,  
Mellowing one by one ;  
Strawberries upturning  
Soft cheeks to the sun ;  
Roses, faint with sweetness ;  
Lilies, fair of face ;  
Drowsy scents and murmurs  
Haunting every place ;  
Lengths of golden sunshine ;  
Moonlight bright as day—

Don't you think that Summer's  
Pleasanter than May ?

Roger in the corn-patch,  
Whistling negro songs ;  
Pussy by the hearth-side,  
Romping with the tongs ;  
Chestnuts in the ashes,  
Bursting through the rind ;  
Red-leaf and gold-leaf,  
Rustling down the wind ;  
Mother " doin' peaches "   
All the afternoon—  
Don't you think that Autumn's  
Pleasanter than June ?

Little fairy snow-flakes,  
Dancing in the flue :  
Old Mr. Santa Claus,  
What is keeping you ?  
Twilight and firelight ;  
Shadows come and go ;  
Merry chime of sleigh-bells,  
Tinkling through the snow ;  
Mother knitting stockings,  
(Pussy has the ball !)—  
Don't you think that Winter's  
Pleasanter than all ?

## England

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

**W**HILE men pay reverence to mighty things,  
They must revere thee, thou blue-cinctured isle

Of England—not to-day, but this long while  
In the front of nations, Mother of great kings,  
Soldiers, and poets. Round thee the Sea flings  
His steel bright arm, and shields thee from the guile  
And hurt of France. Secure, with august smile,  
Thou sittest, and the East its tribute brings.  
Some say thy old-time power is on the wane,  
Thy moon of grandeur fill'd, contracts at length—  
They see it darkening down from less to less.  
Let but a hostile hand make threat again,  
And they shall see thee in thy ancient strength,  
Each iron sinew quivering, lioness !



## ROCOCO

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

**B**Y studying my lady's eyes  
I've grown so learned  
day by day,  
So Machiavelian in this  
wise,

That when I send her flowers I say

To each small flower (no matter what,  
Geranium, pink, or tuberose,  
Syringa, or forget-me-not,  
Or violet) before it goes ;

"Be not triumphant, little flower,  
When on her haughty heart you lie,  
But modestly enjoy your hour :  
She'll weary of you by and by."



