

THE CIRCLE

OF THE YEAR

1853
Car. Sanderson,
Elizabeth.







Yours very sincerely
E. Sanderson.

The Circle of

the Year

By
ELIZABETH SANDERSON

With Four Illustrations by
L. O. ADAMS



Toronto
WILLIAM BRIGGS

1904



Yours very sincerely
E. Sanderson

The Circle of

the Year

By
ELIZABETH SANDERSON

With Four Illustrations by
L. O. ADAMS



Toronto
WILLIAM BRIGGS
1904

PS 8487

A 523

C 57

1904

JUV

PPPP



ENTERED according to Act of the Parliament
of Canada, in the year one thousand nine
hundred and four, by MARY J. SANDERSON,
at the Department of Agriculture.



To all Boys and Girls who love Nature
Especially to

Little Margaret

Our Pearl of the Southern Seas
and her Sister

Eugenie

this little book is affectionately inscribed by

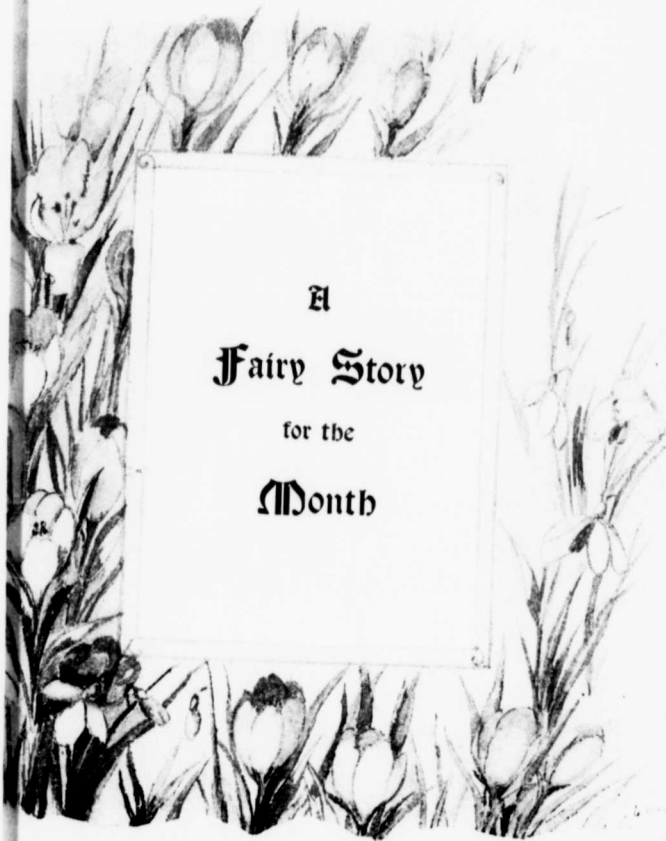
Aunt Elsbeth

PS 8
A 52
C 57
1901
JUN
PR

Contents



	PAGE
A Fairy Story for the Month - -	9
The Fairy Arch - - - - -	21
The Dance - - - - -	29
Jack the Decorator - - - - -	39



A
Fairy Story
for the
Month

1
A
C
I
:





A FAIRY STORY FOR
THE MONTH



ONCE upon a time—
By the way, did you ever notice what a power is hidden in those few short words? When we hear them we at once begin to think of those mysterious gnomes who dig deep, and live so near to the heart of Mother Earth that they catch her faintest breathings, and who are such faithful little miners that she gives to them the care of her hidden treasures, and trusts them with all her secrets; or if it be the witching

twilight hour, we can almost hear the horns from elf-land faintly blowing, while we watch the fairies come and go upon their fateful errands of love and vengeance.

Now I want you all to come with me for a little trip to that fine country called *Make-Believe-Land*, and a very fine country it is, as you will find out—if you keep your eyes shut and your ears closed to the sights and sounds of this every-day-land. Here we sometimes wish to talk a bit of poetry about the old Sun-god rising from his gorgeous couch of rose, amber and blue, and shooting golden arrows for exercise, before he starts on his daily journey. But we are quickly caught up by some wise old owl of an astronomer with “What? What? What’s that you are saying? Don’t you know it was discovered long ago that it is the earth that moves around the sun?” And then all our poetical birds of paradise die under the pelting of hard facts.

But how delightful in some leisure hour to give rein to our fancy and speed away to that happy land where the inhabitants live in air castles built of *sunbeams* and *hereafters*; where only spicy breezes blow, and the ear is charmed by the harmonious droning of sweet *May-be's* of promise as they flit from flower to flower, and never a dread in the hearts of the happy residents that some day they may show sharp stings and turn out, not *May-be's* at all, but members of that cruel family named *Might-have-been*.

"Oh, it is a dear, delightful land,
And is not so far away
That we may not sail to its sunlit strand,
No matter how short the day.
Ah, there the skies are always blue,
And hearts forget to grieve,
For there's never a dream but must come true
In the land of Make-Believe.

"There every laddie becomes a knight,
And a fairy queen each lass;
And lips learn laughter, and eyes grow bright
As the dew-drops in the grass;
For there's nothing beautiful, brave and bold
That one may not achieve,
If he once gets foot on the sands of gold
In the land of Make-Believe."

But there! You see that already I am becoming drowsy in the subtle air of this wonderful country, and forgetting my story.

Well, once upon a time, when the little gnomes were digging away down deep, they heard voices above them. "Hark!" cried one, and then they all stopped working and pricked up their ears to listen, for all the world like some of the people we know to-day.

"Wake up, little sister," one voice was saying; "it's time to get up."

"Oh, no," answered the second voice, sleepily, "I'm sure it cannot be time—it's quite dark yet."

"Oh, yes, it is really time," the first voice insisted; "the sun has been shining down into my little bed, and it is quite warm."

Then the mischievous gnomes tapped sharply with their picks.

"That's Mother Nature rapping," said the first voice; "we ought to be stirring." At that the roguish little

gnomes leaned on their picks and laughed till their sides ached.

And then the flower fairies—for it was they who had been talking—began to stir about briskly, chatting gaily as they prepared to dress themselves. “What are you going to wear?” asked the first voice. “Pure white with a touch of green,” answered the other. “I shall come up and stand right beside a little snow-bank, and the people will have such a time finding me. What is your new costume to be?”

“Oh, I am to have a beautiful yellow gown,” answered fairy No. 1, “and some poet will write verses about me. He will think that the Sun-god has kissed me, and that his gold-dust has dropped over me.” And so they chattered on with their innocent vanities, and by and by, with a host of other little fairies dressed like themselves, came bravely up into the world, looking so fresh and sweet.

Then town folk came and found them. The first was a sad-eyed woman who spent her days in a weary round of stitch, stitch, stitch—making beautiful garments for which she received but little pay. Her childhood years had been lived amongst green fields, spreading shade trees, and the music of brooks, so that Sunday morning Mother Nature whispered to her, and drew her out from the narrow streets and dingy tenements to where the flower fairies had appeared. She laid one of the little yellow beauties against the breast of her rusty black gown and, for a brief moment, forgot to grieve for the pretty human blossom that had once lain there. Months ago it had been gathered, and was being kept safely for her in the King's Garden. A man came by and stooped to pluck one of the white-robed fairies. He had been cheated by other men, and had grown hard and unbelieving, but, as he laid the little white blossom in

his note-book, he took heart of hope that truth and purity still lived. Then a little arab of the slums—worse than orphaned, but with the soul of an artist—carried one of each carefully between his unwashed fingers, and laid them beside the dark curls of his baby sister, the one precious thing life held for him. Don't you think those little flower fairies were glad that they had got up early and made themselves look so pretty when they found what pleasure they could give?

Then Mother Nature sent one of her little maidens to tell all the people that Spring had really come. She was a very timid maiden, much given to tears, and just as she was going to step out into the pathway she heard a rough voice shouting, "Oh, yes! that's just like you girls, always crying about something. Why don't you blow out as I do, and be done with it."

“ Because it wouldn't be womanly,” answered the little maid in a trembling voice, but feeling that she must say something. But the owner of the rough voice blew out some words that couldn't be spelled in our language, and that it would crack our jaws to try and pronounce, and sped around the corner at such a pace that, like Sentimental Tommy's shadow, he must have “strained a muscle.”

Then Mother Nature took the little maiden by the hand, and said, “ You just come right out, my dear. I've given that rough young chap his *marching* orders.” And the old dame laughed heartily at her own wit.

So old King Sol, who since he came to the throne had seen quite a procession of these tearful maidens, smiled kindly upon this one, and she came right out bravely into the path. The gnomes took up their picks and began to work with a will. Other

little flower fairies wakened and
began to dress themselves, and every-
body welcomed the Spring maiden.

What shall we call her ?

Cried Father Sun to his wife, Dame Earth,
"We've a grandchild born to-day.
Our dear New Year has given her birth,
And a fortune fair is the wee maid worth.
What shall we call her, I pray?"

Fairies whispered low, "Call her April."
Birdies sang aloud, "Call her April."
" 'Tis a sweet and pretty name,
And it suits her," said the Dame ;
"Father Sun, we must call her April."

Cried Father Sun, "She is most like me,
This youngest of New Year's four."
"No, no," said the Dame, "that cannot be.
April is fair, she is not like thee ;
You wait, there'll be plenty more."

Grew Father Sun cold, Mother Earth got
warm,
And steam rose up to the sky ;
'Twas sure as sure there would be a storm,
But before it burst, in sad alarm,
The baby began to cry.

Grew Father Sun warm, Mother Earth
cooled down,
As fast came the baby's tears ;
Oh, tears, such tears ! she was like to drown,
Until Sun and Earth both ceased to frown,
April smiled and forgot her fears.

C.B.S.





✻

The
Fairy Arch

✻

L. G. G.



THE FAIRY ARCH



ONCE upon a time, in the palace of old King Sol, there were seven little pages who used to be sent on messages of love and blessing all over the kingdom. Every morning they appeared before the king in pure white robes to receive his messages.

Well, one day the seven little pages were sent away down to a part of the king's realm called the Earth, where there was to be a children's party at a grand old castle. King Sol wanted them to have the happiest

kind of a time, and that was why he sent the bright little pages down with good wishes.

That was a beautiful home. Such gardens, with fountains and flowers, green grass, and great spreading shade trees.

Then the merry company of children, all in their prettiest clothes ; little boys in velvet suits with lots of pockets, and little girls in frocks of white and blue, pink and buttercup, with silk sashes and lace frills.

The little pages from the king's palace looked on in wonder thinking they must be huge flowers that had been blown off the bushes.

By and by they began to play games, the beautiful lady of the castle and the kind governess guiding and directing. But one wanted to do this, and another wanted to do that, while a third would not play at all unless she might choose her own place, and so the whole afternoon was quite spoiled.

Well, as they say about measles and whooping-cough, there must have been something "catching" about that naughty spirit, for the next morning the seven little pages were all out of sorts. One was conceited, and thought nothing could be done right without him. Another was selfish and did not care for anything but trying to get the best of whatever was going, and so the trouble spread.

Oh, how grieved the good old king was! - Ever since he had come to the throne—and that was a pretty long time—he had been trying to make everybody good and happy. So all morning he stayed behind gray curtains wondering what he could do. There was no use in punishment, that would touch only the outside of them, but he must study out some plan for teaching his little pages a lesson. So the hours went by and there he stayed behind the gray curtains, thinking, thinking.

By and by he asked his servants to hang heavy, thick, dark curtains all around the palace, and cover up the beautiful blue ceiling and walls. Then he ordered great guns to be fired, and the booming of them filled the whole kingdom. He also sent out fiery messengers who took such zigzag paths as they came down toward the earth that everybody was dodging, thinking that the message might be for them. Presently pearls and diamonds came showering down, millions and millions of them, but they were so rare and delicate that they melted away as soon as they touched the earth.

And all this time old King Sol stayed behind the heavy, thick, dark curtains, and the seven little pages were just as miserable and lonely as they could be.

But by and by there came a messenger to say that the king wanted them to go on a mission a long way off, and I tell you they

were glad enough to obey cheerfully, for they had been left to themselves so long that they were just heart-sick of it.

Well, to each of the seven little pages was given a roll, like clear white ribbon, with directions as to what they were to do, and off they started. They flew away, and away, ever so far, and then, just where the dark curtains came down and touched the earth, they fastened their ribbons in order just as they had been told. Then they flew up, and up, and up, fastening their white ribbons as they went, to the arched roof of the palace; then down, and down, and down, till they came to the spot where the dark curtains touched the earth on the other side.

Then they were just going to spread their silvery wings for flying home again when the thick, heavy, dark curtains began to fold away, and the beautiful blue walls appeared. The

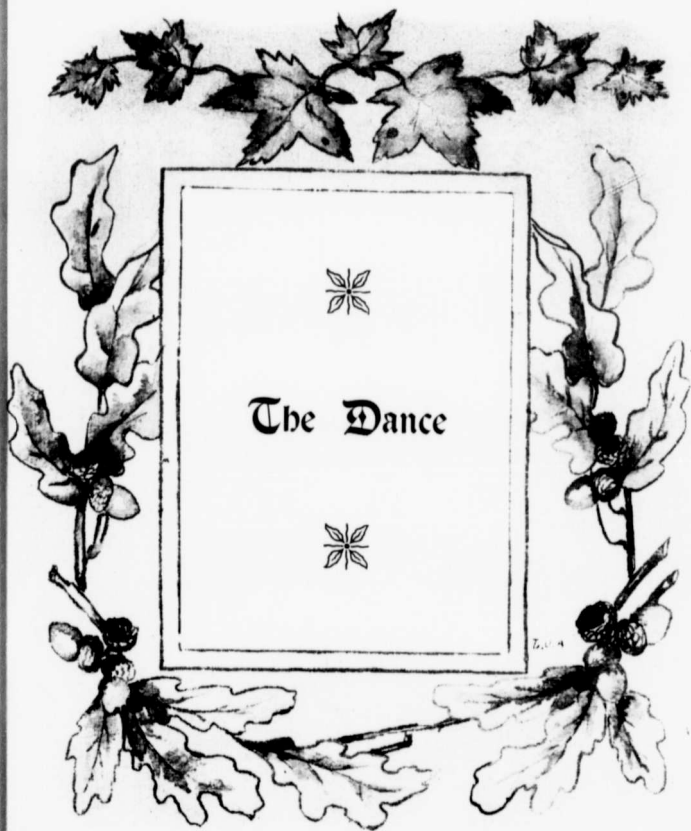
next minute the curtains about the king's throne were drawn aside, and there he sat, beaming upon all around his most radiant smile.

When the little pages turned to take a farewell look at their arch of ribbons, lo! the first had turned red, the second orange, the third yellow, the fourth green, the fifth blue, the sixth indigo, and the seventh violet.

Glancing in wonder at each other, they saw that their white robes had been changed to the same lovely colors as those in the arch.

Then they clapped their hands, crying, "It needed us all! it needed us all! and not one of us is beautiful without the king's smile."





The Dance





THE DANCE



THE sultry summer was over and golden September followed. Now October had come with its bright, mellow days and cool nights, and Madame Nature thought it would be just the time to give a grand party before November brought drenching rain and spoiled all her beautiful gardens. First, she sent out her invitations, and then set her house in order for what is called a "fashionable crush." These invitations were not in the form of notes or cards, but a host of her trusty messengers just passed from tree to

tree, whispering in low, sweet tones, for it was the leaves that were to be the guests.

Madame Nature had decided to hold the dance in her conservatory. Now, I have no doubt that we have all been in very beautiful places called by that big name, with their round, glass roofs, their fountains, palms, ferns and fragrant blossoms. But this conservatory where Madame Nature was going to hold the dance was a hundred times bigger and finer than all of them put together. The roof and walls, which were of clear blue, formed a huge dome, like an immense basin turned upside down. It was so high that a boy could fly his kite, letting it go up and up and up, until it was out of sight, and yet it would not reach the top, and it was so wide that you might walk miles, and miles and miles, and yet you would not be near the walls. Then there were trees of every kind and size, with shrubs, too many to be

counted, and flowers—such flowers! —from the tiniest forget-me-nots to calla lilies the size of your dinner plates. And through it all clear streams flowed, while here and there was a grand waterfall, or a great pond that would take you days, and days and days to sail across. Now, sometimes Madame Nature would hang up curtains of fleecy white against the blue dome, or if she thought it was too bright she would choose gray ones, and the light falling softly through these was very restful to the eyes. But it was at night this conservatory looked most bewitching, when away up in the blue roof were hung millions of little gold lamps. Sometimes there would be a beautiful big silver one shaped something like a boat; again it would be a great globe of silvery white, and the shadows that these cast from the trees and flowers made the whole place like fairyland. So you see what a delightful spot this was for a party.

Then Madame Nature asked the famous Professor Wind to arrange for the music, and to act as Master of Ceremonies. Now this old musician had formed his own family into an orchestra known as "The Gentle Breezes." He had trained them well, and you may be sure he was proud to have them play on this occasion.

Of course, there was great fluttering and excitement among those who had been invited, and the evening appointed came at last. Some of the guests came quite early, lured by the first strains of sweet music from "The Gentle Breezes," and a little later they began to gather in great numbers—hundreds and thousands. And wasn't Madame Nature thankful that she had not been obliged to send a written note to each one. Just think what a time the postman would have had delivering them!

But now, here were the guests, and, of course, each one would like to have her gown described for the Society

Column ; but then these pretty guests of Madame Nature had not a bit of jealousy in their hearts, so I may speak of a few of the loveliest dresses. First, there were the Maple Sisters, and a beautiful circle they made in their new Autumn gowns of green and yellow, yellow and crimson, crimson and brown. Then there were the Misses Poplar, looking like little sprites of pale yellow flame as they floated here and there to the music of "The Gentle Breezes." And I must say just a word about the brilliant, dainty gown of bright red worn by Miss Sumach. And among all this beauty of color moved stately Madame Oak Leaf, dressed in quiet brown.

Now this party was different from any you ever before attended. Sweet little Miss Poplar, and dainty, bright Miss Sumach, and brilliant Miss Maple did not have to sit quietly waiting for someone to come and ask them to dance. The rule was that

anyone might dance if they felt like doing so, and I assure you that when the music began in earnest they were all ready. As "The Gentle Breezes" blew their first sweet notes the leaves began to stir gently; then as the music grew fuller and faster they all rose up as if they had wings and began to fly about in graceful fashion. Then Professor Wind beat time faster and faster, "The Gentle Breezes" piped more loudly, and the leaves went into a mad whirl of enjoyment—in and out, round and round, forming such figures as no dancing master has ever attempted to contrive; touching each other gently, then floating back with such graceful bows and courtesies.

And so it went on until even strong old Professor Wind grew tired. He began to beat time a little more slowly, and the little pipers played more softly, more and more softly still, and the beautiful leaves danced more and more gently, until as the

last note of the music died away they all sank slowly down, dear little Miss Poplar and Miss Sumach resting with their bright, pretty gowns against the rich brown one of motherly Madame Oak.

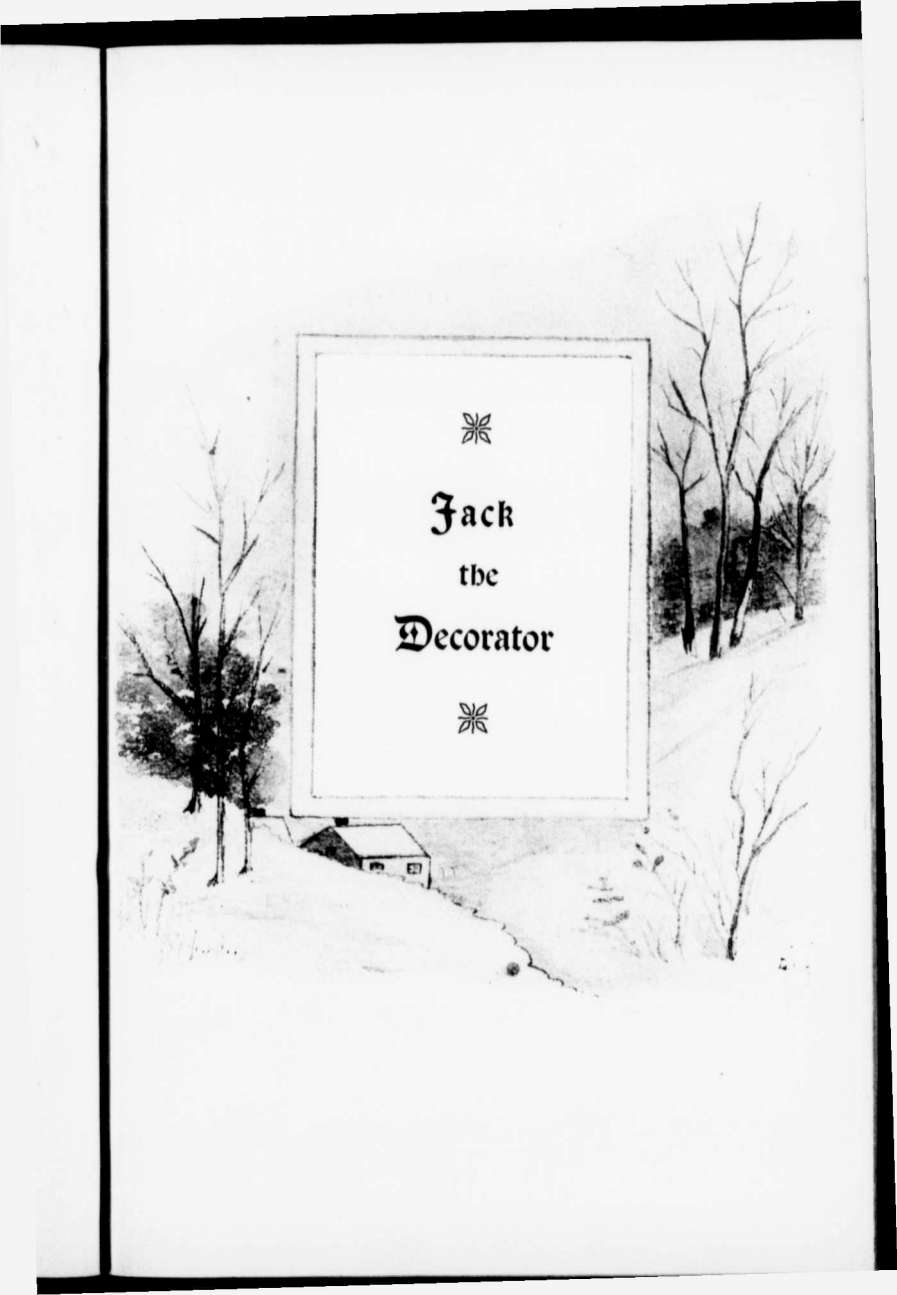
The party was over.

And now I want to whisper a little secret. They were not lady dress-makers who got up those pretty gowns. Perhaps all of you have heard about Worth's, in the city of Paris, where gentlemen contrive such wonderful costumes for ladies. Well, all these lovely gowns that the leaves wore had come straight from Madame Nature's own big store, presided over by her own son, a highly artistic young gentleman. He had a wonderful eye for color, and knew just what would become each leaf, so that was how it came about that the gowns at Madame Nature's party that night were so beautiful. Now after hearing this you may be glad to know that

we are likely to have this son of Madame Nature in town for some time. He is beginning to do other kinds of artistic work, and we shall hear more about him presently.

So we say good-bye to the leaves until next year.





✻
Jack
the
Decorator
✻





JACK THE DECORATOR



“JACK! Jack!! John Frost!!!”

“Yes, mother,” Jack answered, moving a little faster, as he always felt it wise to do whenever Dame Nature dropped his pet name and called him John.

“What is keeping you so long?” Dame Nature went on. “Why, since I sent you up there you’ve had time to do twice the work you had on hand. The people down here are asking whatever has become of you.”

"Oh, yes," Jack answered—not very respectfully, I am afraid—"it's just like those people. They are never satisfied. Last time I was down there I had to paint over a big piece of the country so as to kill off the fever germs. Some of my cold paint got on the fruit blossoms, and I hear that those people have not yet done abusing me for it."

"Oh, well," answered the dame, in a coaxing tone, for she was very fond of Jack. She had trained him herself into a first-class artistic decorator, and if you don't know what that means, ask your mother or big sister to explain. Dame Nature was very proud of Jack's work too, and when a boy's mother is proud of him, as well as fond of him, it is a very fine thing indeed.

So the dame answered, "Oh, well, never mind that now. I suppose the people didn't understand all about it, and they knew that when fall came their mouths would be watering for

preserved plums and cherries. Just come on now, like a good boy, and please them, and they'll forget that they were ever vexed with you. Here we are within a few days of Christmas and not a bit of decorating done yet. There are hundreds of pairs of skates getting quite on edge, and ready to say sharp things because there is no ice for them to cut. Old Santa Claus is grumbling because there is no snow and his reindeers are not used to travelling in the mud. He says you and I have had a soft time long enough, and that we had better get to work."

"All right, mother," answered Jack, who was really a very civil sort of a chap, though he did treat people coolly sometimes.

So that night while all the little boys and girls were asleep, Jack ran about from one place to another making his arrangements for a real white Christmas. He blew gently over all the ponds, so that when

morning came, there, sure enough, was a thin sheet of ice laid for a foundation.

But the fields and streets did not look right. There were little puddles everywhere, while everything looked dirty and not a bit like Christmas. Dame Nature knew what she was about though, and that morning she sent for all the little snow sprites. They came in rather a lazy fashion at first, sailing, sailing slowly down, each one carrying a tiny white feather, By and by, just as the little folks were going to dinner, the snow sprites began to come in great numbers, hundreds, thousands, millions of them. and such antics as they cut up, jumping, flying, dancing, chasing each other in and out in a great game of tag. Then as they came close to the ground each one dropped her beautiful little white feather, so that by the time supper was ready all the muddy places were quite covered up, and the little children went to bed to

dream of sleds and skates and of big Christmas stockings that would have fitted the man with the seven-league boots.

But there was a lot of work still for Jack the Decorator, so that night he got out all his brushes, paints and patterns, and settled down to do his very best. What pictures he left on all the windows—great trees with spreading branches, tangled ferns and rustic bridges. Then he went all over the ponds again, blowing cold breaths in every direction, and that night the sheets of ice grew thicker and thicker.

Next day the snow fairies brought another big load of little white feathers and dropped them over those already on the ground, making a great deep bed. Then the people who had been obliged to drive in carriages got out their sleighs with warm robes, and presently the air was full of music as the pretty horse bells sang : "Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle!"

How the people crowded in the great stores! And what parcels came into the homes to be stowed away in secret places, while father and mother, grandmother and aunt winked and nodded at each other like a colony of wise old owls! There were big parcels, little parcels, round parcels, square parcels, smooth parcels, bulgy parcels; parcels done up in white paper, yellow paper, brown paper, blue paper; in short, as many different kinds, shapes and colors of parcels as there were of rats that followed the pied piper of Hamelin town.

Then the morning before Christmas day the air got warmer. In the afternoon it even rained a little, and all the boys and girls began to grumble, thinking there would be no ice or snow left. But Jack the Decorator had his plans laid out, and that night, while Santa Claus was driving his reindeer at furious speed, lest he should not get all his orders

filled, Jack put the finishing touches on his beautiful Christmas picture. And what do you think? Well, early in the morning, when the children got up and scampered downstairs to find their stockings where Santa was to leave them in the different grates, they looked out and fairly shouted with delight.

Every twig, and branch, and limb on every tree and shrub was glistening white as if it was covered with diamonds, and the lawns looked as if millions of pearls had been scattered there. Then the children scurried back to bed to open their stockings, shouting, "Hurrah for Jack Frost!"

By and by, when the sun came out and shone brightly upon it all, a poet wrote some beautiful verses about the diamonds on the trees and the pearls strewn over the snow. Then an artist painted a lovely picture of the scene. Next day the sun came out brighter and brighter, and Jack Frost's diamonds began to drop from the

trees. They fell among the pearls that covered the snow, and presently they all melted together and went down out of sight. But the beautiful thoughts that poet and artist put into verse and picture did not melt away, for you know thoughts never change. The verses were set to music and sung the wide world over. Thousands saw and admired the beautiful picture, and then it was sent away to charm the people in a far country where Jack Frost does not keep Christmas.



