

Richards Laura Elizabeth Howe

# In My Nursery



Laura Richards  
**In My Nursery**

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# Laura E. Richards In My Nursery

To my Mother

JULIA WARD HOWE

Sweet! when first my baby ear  
Curled itself and learned to hear,  
'Twas your silver-singing voice  
Made my baby heart rejoice.

Hushed upon your tender breast,  
Soft you sang me to my rest;  
Waking, when I sought my play,  
Still your singing led the way.

Cradle songs, more soft and low  
Than the bird croons on the bough;  
Olden ballads, grave and gay,  
Warrior's chant, and lover's lay.

So my baby hours went  
In a cadence of content,  
To the music and the rhyme  
Keeping tune and keeping time.

So you taught me, too, ere long,  
All our life should be a song, —  
Should a faltering prelude be  
To the heavenly harmony;

And with gracious words and high,  
Bade me look beyond the sky,  
To the Glory throned above,  
To th' eternal Light and Love.

Many years have blossomed by:  
Far and far from childhood I;  
Yet its sunrays on me fall,  
Here among my children all.

So among my babes I go,  
Singing high and singing low;  
Striving for the silver tone

Which my memory holds alone.

If I chant my little lays  
Tunefully, be yours the praise;  
If I fail, 'tis I must rue  
Not t' have closelier followed you.

## IN MY NURSERY

In my nursery as I sit,  
To and fro the children flit:  
Rosy Alice, eldest born,  
Rosalind like summer morn,  
Sturdy Hal, as brown as berry,  
Little Julia, shy and merry,  
John the King, who rules us all,  
And the Baby sweet and small.

Flitting, flitting to and fro,  
Light they come and light they go:  
And their presence fair and young  
Still I weave into my song.  
Here rings out their merry laughter,  
Here their speech comes tripping after:  
Here their pranks, their sportive ways,  
Flash along the lyric maze,  
Till I hardly know, in fine,  
What is theirs and what is mine:  
Can but say, through wind and weather,  
They and I have wrought together.



## THE BABY'S FUTURE

What will the baby be, Mamma,  
(With a kick and a crow, and a hushaby-low).  
What will the baby be, Mamma,  
When he grows up into a man?  
Will he always kick, and always crow,  
And flourish his arms and his legs about so,  
And make up such horrible faces, you know,  
As ugly as ever he can?

The baby he may be a soldier, my dear,  
With a fife and a drum, and a rum-tiddy-tum!  
The baby he may be a soldier, my dear,  
When he grows up into a man.  
He will draw up his regiment all in a row,  
And flourish his sword in the face of the foe,  
Who will hie them away on a tremulous toe,  
As quickly as ever they can.

The baby he may be a sailor, my dear,  
With a fore and an aft, and a tight little craft  
The baby he may be a sailor, my dear,  
When he grows up into a man.  
He will hoist his sails with a "Yo! heave, ho!"  
And take in his reefs when it comes on to blow,  
And shiver his timbers and so forth, you know,  
On a genuine nautical plan.

The baby he may be a doctor, my dear,  
With a powder and pill, and a nice little bill.  
The baby he may be a doctor, my dear,  
When he grows up into a man.  
He will dose you with rhubarb, and calomel too,  
With draughts that are black and with pills that are blue;  
And the chances will be, when he's finished with you,  
You'll be worse off than when he began.

The baby he may be a lawyer, my dear,  
With a bag and a fee, and a legal decree.  
The baby he may be a lawyer, my dear,  
When he grows up into a man.  
But, oh! dear me, should I tell to you  
The terrible things that a lawyer can do,  
You would take to your heels when he came into view,  
And run from Beersheba to Dan.

## BABY'S HAND

Like a little crumpled roseleaf  
It lies on my bosom now,  
Like a tiny sunset cloudlet,  
Like a flake of rose-tinted snow;  
And the pretty, helpless fingers  
Are never a moment at rest,  
But ever are moving and straying  
About on the mother's breast:  
Trying to grasp the sunbeam  
That streams through the window high;  
Trying to catch the white garments  
Of the angels hovering by.  
And as she pats and caresses  
The dear little lovely hand,  
The mother's thoughts go forward  
Toward the future's shadowy land.  
And ever her anxious vision  
Strives to pierce each coming year,  
With a mother's height of rapture,  
With a mother's depth of fear,  
As she thinks, "In the years that are coming,  
Be they many or be they few,  
What work is the good God sending  
For this little hand to do?  
Will it always be open in giving,  
And always strong for the right?  
Will it always be ready for labor,  
Yet always gentle and light?  
Will it wield the brush or the chisel  
In the magical realms of Art?  
Will it waken the loveliest music  
To gladden the weary heart?  
Will it smooth the sufferer's pillow,  
Bring rest to his aching head?  
Will it proffer the cup of cold water?  
By it shall the hungry be fed?  
Oh! in the years that are coming,  
Be they many or be they few,  
What now is the good God sending  
For this little hand to do?"  
Thus the mother's anxious vision  
Strives to pierce each coming year,  
With a mother's height of rapture,  
With a mother's depth of fear.  
Ah! whatever may be its fortunes,

Whatever in life its part,  
This little wee hand will never loose  
Its hold on the mother's heart.

## THE FIRST TOOTH

My own little beautiful Baby,  
You're weeping most bitterly, dear!  
There'd soon be a lake, if we treasured  
Each sweet little silvery tear.

A lake? Nay! an ocean of sorrow  
Would murmur and sigh at your feet,  
And you would be drowned in your tear-drops,  
My own little Baby sweet.

But, darling, as in the wide ocean  
The divers plunge boldly down,  
And bring up the radiant pearl-drops  
To set in some royal crown,

E'en so from the sea of your sorrow,  
This dolorous "fountain of youth,"  
Will come, ere a week be over,  
A little wee pearly tooth.

And then the tears will all vanish,  
Dried up by the sunshine of smiles;  
And we'll have back our own little Alice,  
With her merriest frolics and wiles.

And whenever you laugh, my Baby,  
Through all your life's happy years,  
You'll show us the radiant pearl-drop  
That you brought from the ocean of tears.

## JOHNNY'S BY-LOW SONG

Here on our rock-away horse we go,  
Johnny and I, to a land we know, —  
Far away in the sunset gold,  
A lovelier land than can be told.

*Chorus.* Where all the flowers go niddlety nod,  
Nod, nod, niddlety nod!  
Where all the flowers go niddlety nod,  
And all the birds sing by-low!  
Lullaby, lullaby, by-low.

The gates are ivory set with pearls,  
One for the boys, and one for the girls:  
So shut your bonny two eyes of blue,  
Or else they never will let you through.

*Chorus.* Where all the flowers go niddlety nod,  
Nod, nod, niddlety nod!  
Where all the flowers go niddlety nod,  
And all the birds sing by-low!  
Lullaby, lullaby, by-low.

But what are the children all about?  
There's never a laugh and never a shout.  
Why, they all fell asleep, dear, long ago;  
For how could they keep awake, you know?

*Chorus.* When all the flowers went niddlety nod,  
Nod, nod, niddlety nod!  
When all the flowers went niddlety nod,  
And all the birds sang by-low!  
Lullaby, lullaby, by-low.

And each little brown or golden head  
Is pillowed soft in a satin bed, —  
A satin bed with sheets of silk,  
As soft as down and as white as milk.

*Chorus.* And all the flowers go niddlety nod,  
Nod, nod, niddlety nod!  
And all the flowers go niddlety nod,  
And all the birds sing by-low!  
Lullaby, lullaby, by-low.

The brook in its sleep goes babbling by,

And the fat little clouds are asleep in the sky;  
And now little Johnny is sleeping too,  
So open the gates and pass him through.

*Chorus.* Where all the flowers go niddlety nod,  
Nod, nod, niddlety nod!  
Where all the flowers go niddlety nod,  
And all the birds sing by-low!  
Lullaby, lullaby, by-low.

## BABY'S VALENTINE

Valentine, O Valentine,  
Pretty little Love of mine;  
Little Love whose yellow hair  
Makes the daffodils despair;  
Little Love whose shining eyes  
Fill the stars with sad surprise:  
Hither turn your ten wee toes,  
Each a tiny shut-up rose,  
End most fitting and complete  
For the rosy-pinky feet;  
Toddle, toddle here to me,  
For I'm waiting, do you see? —  
Waiting for to call you mine,  
Valentine, O Valentine!

Valentine, O Valentine,  
I will dress you up so fine!  
Here's a frock of tulip-leaves,  
Trimmed with lace the spider weaves;  
Here's a cap of larkspur blue,  
Just precisely made for you;  
Here's a mantle scarlet-dyed,  
Once the tiger-lily's pride,  
Spotted all with velvet black  
Like the fire-beetle's back;  
Lady-slippers on your feet,  
Now behold you all complete!  
Come and let me call you mine,  
Valentine, O Valentine!

Valentine, O Valentine,  
Now a wreath for you I'll twine.  
I will set you on a throne  
Where the damask rose has blown,  
Dropping all her velvet bloom,  
Carpeting your leafy room:  
Here while you shall sit in pride,  
Butterflies all rainbow-pied,  
Dandy beetles gold and green,  
Creeping, flying, shall be seen,  
Every bird that shakes his wings,  
Every katydid that sings,  
Wasp and bee with buzz and hum.  
Hither, hither see them come,  
Creeping all before your feet,

Rendering their homage meet.  
But 'tis I that call you mine,  
Valentine, O Valentine!



## THE RAIN

The rain came down from the sky,  
And we asked it the reason why  
It would ne'er stay away  
On washing day,  
To let our poor clothes get dry.

The rain came down on the ground,  
With a clattering, pelting sound,  
"Indeed, if I stayed  
Till you called me," it said,  
"I should not come all the year round!"

## The Ballad Of The Fairy Spoon

The little wee baby came tripping  
All out of the fairy land,  
With a nosegay of fairy flowers  
Clasped close in each little wee hand;

The flower of baby beauty,  
The flower of baby health,  
And all the blossomy sweetness  
That makes up a baby's wealth.

But still he kept sighing and sobbing,  
Sighing and sobbing away,  
Till I said, "Now what ails my Baby,  
And why does he cry all day?"

And he answered, "Oh! as I came tripping,  
I spied a rose by the way:  
And on it the loveliest dewdrop  
I'd seen since I came away.

"But as I was stooping to sip it,  
A wind came up from the south;  
And it blew my little wee spoonie  
Away from my little wee mouth."

"And what was your little wee spoonie?  
And what does my Baby mean?"  
"Oh! the little wee fairy spoonie  
That was given me by the queen.

"For whenever a baby leaves her,  
The queen she grants him a boon, —  
She fills both his hands with flowers,  
And puts in his mouth a spoon.

"And some are made of the hazel,  
And some are made of the horn;  
And some are made of the silver white,  
For the good-luck babes that are born."

"But what are they for, my Baby?"  
"Nay! that part I cannot tell!  
But send for the fairy Spoonman,  
For he knows it all right well.

"Oh! the little old fairy Spoonman,  
He lives in the white, white moon.  
Send a whisper up by a moonbeam,  
And he will be down here soon."

Then I whispered along a moonbeam  
That silvered the grass so clear,  
"Oh! little old fairy Spoonman,  
Come down and comfort my dear!"

Then something came sliding, sliding  
Down out of the white, white moon.  
And something came gliding, gliding  
Straight in at my window soon.

And there stood a little old fairy,  
All bent and withered and black,  
With a leathern apron about him,  
And a bundle of spoons at his back.

And first he looked at my baby,  
And then he looked at me;  
And then he looked at his apron,  
But never a word spake he.

"Oh! Spoonman dear," said the baby,  
"The wind blew my spoon away.  
So now will you give me another,  
You little black Spoonman, pray?"

"For I did not lose my spoonie,  
Nor drop it carelessly;  
But a wind came up to my poor little mouth,  
And blew it away from me."

"Now well for you," said the Spoonman,  
"Little Baby, if this be so.  
For if you had carelessly lost your spoon,  
Without it through life you'd go.

"And well for you, little Baby,  
If you know your spoon again.  
For but if you know the very same one,  
Your asking will be in vain.

"So say: was it made of the hazel,  
Or was it made of the horn,  
Or was it made of the silver white,  
If a good-luck babe you were born?"

"Oh! it was nor horn nor hazel,  
But all of the silver bright;  
For a good-luck babe I was born indeed,  
To be my Mammy's delight."

"Then take your spoon, little Baby,  
With the fairies' blessing free,  
For the south wind blew it around the world,  
And blew it again to me."

With that he gave to my baby  
The tiniest silver spoon.  
Then out he slipped in the moonlight,  
And we lost him from sight right soon.

Now some may think I am foolish,  
And some may think I am mad;  
But never once since that very night  
Has my baby been cross or sad.

And I counsel all anxious mothers  
Whose babies are crying in pain,  
To send for the fairy Spoonman,  
And get them their spoons again.

## SONG OF THE LITTLE WINDS

The birdies may sleep, but the winds must wake  
Early and late, for the birdies' sake.  
Kissing them, fanning them, soft and sweet,  
E'en till the dark and the dawning meet.

The flowers may sleep, but the winds must wake  
Early and late, for the flowers' sake.  
Rocking the buds on the rose-mother's breast,  
Swinging the hyacinth-bells to rest.

The children may sleep, but the winds must wake  
Early and late, for the children's sake.  
Singing so sweet in each little one's ear,  
He thinks his mother's own song to hear.

## GOOD-NIGHT SONG

Good-night, Sun! go to bed!  
Take your crown from your shining head.  
Now put on your gray night-cap,  
And shut your eyes for a good long nap.

Good-night, Sky, bright and blue!  
Not a wink of sleep for you.  
You must watch us all the night,  
With your twinkling eyes so bright.

Good-night, flowers! now shut up  
Every swinging bell and cup.  
Take your sleeping-draught of dew:  
Pleasant dreams to all of you!

Good-night, birds, that sweetly sing!  
Little head 'neath little wing!  
Every leaf upon the tree  
Soft shall sing your lullaby.

Last to you, little child,  
Sleep is coming soft and mild.  
Now he shuts your blue eyes bright:  
Little Baby dear, good-night!

## ANOTHER "GOOD-NIGHT."

Birds, birds, in the linden-tree,  
Low, low let your music be!  
Bees, bees, in the garden bloom,  
Hushed, hushed be your drowsy hum!  
Wind, wind, through the lattice waft  
Still, still, thy breathing soft!  
Flowers, sweet be the breath you shed:  
Two little children are going to bed.

Eyes, eyes, 'neath your curtains white,  
Veiled, veiled be the sunny light!  
Lips, lips, like the roses red,  
Soft, soft be your sweet prayers said!  
Feet, feet, that have danced all day,  
Now, now must your dancing stay.  
Low, low lay each golden head!  
Two little children are going to bed.

## **"A Bee Came Tumbling"**

A bee came tumbling into my ear,  
And what do you think he remarked, my dear?  
He said that two tens make up a score,  
And really and truly I knew that before.



## JINGLE

I jumped on the back of a dragon-fly,  
And flew and flew till I reached the sky.

I pulled down a cloud that was hiding the blue,  
And all the wee stars came tumbling through.

They tumbled down and they tumbled round,  
And turned into flowers as they touched the ground.

So come with me, little children, come,  
And down in the meadow I'll pick you some.

## LITTLE OLD BABY

Little old baby, pretty old baby,  
Screams and cries at his little old bath,  
Pours on the head of his little old mother  
All the full vials of baby wrath.

Little old baby, pretty old baby,  
If you could see just how queer you look, —  
Arms and legs in a knot together,  
Face twisted up in a terrible crook, —

How you would straighten out every feature,  
Masculine vanity all aflame!  
Fie! what a noise from a little wee creature!  
*Did* they abuse him! and *was* it a shame!

Little old baby, pretty old baby,  
Curls himself over and goes to sleep.  
Ah! such is life, my little old baby,  
Sleep and forget it, or wake and weep!

## BABY'S JOURNEY

Hoppety hoppety ho!  
Where shall the baby go?  
Over dale and down,  
To Limerick town,  
And there shall the baby go.

Hoppety hoppety ho!  
*How* shall the baby go?  
In a coach-and-seven,  
With grooms eleven,  
And so shall the baby go.

Hoppety hoppety ho!  
*When* shall the baby go?  
In the afternoon,  
By the light of the moon,  
And then shall the baby go.

Hoppety hoppety ho!  
*Why* shall the baby go?  
To dance a new jig,  
And to buy a new wig,  
And *that's* why the baby shall go.

## THE BUMBLEBEE

The bumblebee, the bumblebee,  
He flew to the top of the tulip-tree.  
He flew to the top, but he could not stop,  
For he had to get home to his early tea.

The bumblebee, the bumblebee,  
He flew away from the tulip-tree;  
But he made a mistake, and flew into the lake,  
And he never got home to his early tea.

## THE OWL AND THE EEL AND THE WARMING-PAN

The owl and the eel and the warming-pan,  
They went to call on the soap-fat man.  
The soap-fat man he was not within:  
He'd gone for a ride on his rolling-pin.  
So they all came back by the way of the town,  
And turned the meeting-house upside down.

## YOUNG (ONE)'S NIGHT THOUGHTS

"Hi!" said the baby.  
"Ho!" said the baby.  
"Ha!" said the baby,  
"I won't go to sleep!  
Naughty old mother,  
You make such a pothor,  
Just for to bother  
You, awake I will keep.

"Dance!" said the baby.  
"Prance!" said the baby.  
"Perchance," said the baby,  
"You think I'm a goose.  
Vainly you're dreaming  
Of rest, and your scheming  
To silence my screaming  
Is all of no use.

"Sing!" said the baby.  
"Ring!" said the baby.  
"Bring," said the baby,  
"My rattles and toys.  
Still I will weep, oh!  
Awake I will keep, oh!  
*Won't* go to sleep, oh!  
*Will* make a noise!

"Walk!" said the baby.  
"Talk!" said the baby.  
"I'll balk," said the baby,  
"Your efforts, one and all.

Still I'll be scorning,  
When, towards the morning,  
Without any warning  
Asleep I will fall."

## LITTLE SUNBEAM

Little yellow Sunbeam,  
Waking up one day,  
Down into the garden  
Took her shining way;  
Merrily went dancing  
Down the morning air,  
Shaking out the sparkles  
From her golden hair.

Little yellow Sunbeam  
Twinkled all about,  
Down among the green leaves  
Flitting in and out.  
Waking up the daisies  
From their morning doze,  
Ringing up the lily-bells,  
Knocking up the rose.

Little yellow Sunbeam,  
Climbing up the wall,  
On the baby's window  
Happened for to fall.  
In the little chamber  
As she took a peep,  
There she saw the Lovely One  
Lying fast asleep.

Little yellow Sunbeam  
Tripped into the room,  
Sweeping out the darkness  
With her golden broom.  
All the little shadows,  
Glimmering and gray,  
Gathered up their dusky skirts,  
Softly slid away.

Little yellow Sunbeam,  
Flitting to the bed,  
Merrily went dancing  
Round the baby's head.  
Suddenly there flashed out,  
To her great surprise,  
Other little sunbeams  
From the baby's eyes.

Little yellow Sunbeam  
Said, "How can this be?  
Whence these little sparklers  
So unlike to me?  
Scarce I think they can be  
Sunbeams real and true,  
For we all are yellow;  
These are lovely blue."

Little yellow Sunbeam  
Flew back to the sky.  
Running to her father,  
She began to cry:  
"Father, you must vanish!  
Run and hide your head!  
There's a brighter sun than you  
In the baby's bed."



## **BABY'S BELONGINGS**

Here are the baby's bonny blue eyes.  
What shall we give her to see?  
A calico doll and a parrotty poll,  
As funny as funny can be.

Here are the baby's little pink ears.  
What shall we give her to hear?  
A bell that will ring, and a bird that will sing,  
And a brook that goes tinkling clear.

Here is the baby's little wee nose.  
What shall we give her to smell?  
A hyacinth blue and a violet too,  
And roses and lilies as well.

Here is the baby's pretty red mouth.  
What shall we give her to eat?  
A sugary heart and a raspberry tart,  
And everything else that is sweet.

And here are the baby's little fat hands.  
What shall we give her to hold?  
A sunbeam? That's right! and a rainbow bright,  
And plenty of silver and gold.

## INFANTRY TACTICS

*Present arms!* There they are,  
Both stretched out to me.  
Strong and sturdy, smooth and white,  
Fair as arms may be.

*Ground arms!* on the floor,  
Picking up his toys:  
Breaking all within his reach,  
Busiest of boys.

*Right wheel!* off his cart,  
Left wheel too is gone.  
Horsey's head is broken off,  
Horsey's tail is torn.

*Quick step,* forward march!  
Crying, too, he comes.  
Had a battle with the cat.  
"Scratched off bofe my fums!"

*Shoulder arms!* Here at last,  
Round my neck they close.  
Poor little soldier boy  
Off to quarters goes.

## **BABY BO**

Fly away, fly away, Birdie oh!  
Bring something home to my Baby Bo!  
Bring him a feather and bring him a song,  
And sing to him sweetly all the day long.

Hoppety, kickety, Grasshopper oh!  
Bring something home to my Baby Bo!  
Bring him a thistle and bring him a thorn,  
Hop over his head and then be gone.

Howlibus, gowlibus, Doggibus oh!  
Bring something home to my Baby Bo!  
Bring him a snarl and bring him a snap,  
And bring him a posy to put in his cap.

Twinkily, winkily, Firefly oh!  
Bring something home to my Baby Bo!  
Bring him a moonbeam and bring him a star,  
Then twinkily, winkily, fly away far.

## THE DIFFERENCE

Eight fingers,  
Ten toes,  
Two eyes,  
And one nose.  
Baby said  
When she smelt the rose,  
"Oh! what a pity  
I've only one nose!"

Ten teeth  
In even rows,  
Three dimples,  
And one nose.  
Baby said  
When she smelt the snuff,  
"Deary me!  
One nose is enough."

## LITTLE JOHN BOTTLEJOHN

Little John Bottlejohn lived on the hill,  
And a blithe little man was he.  
And he won the heart of a pretty mermaid  
Who lived in the deep blue sea.  
And every evening she used to sit  
And sing on the rocks by the sea,  
"Oh! little John Bottlejohn, pretty John Bottlejohn,  
Won't you come out to me?"

Little John Bottlejohn heard her song,  
And he opened his little door.  
And he hopped and he skipped, and he skipped and he hopped,  
Until he came down to the shore.  
And there on the rocks sat the little mermaid,  
And still she was singing so free,  
"Oh! little John Bottlejohn, pretty John Bottlejohn,  
Won't you come out to me?"

Little John Bottlejohn made a bow,  
And the mermaid, she made one too,  
And she said, "Oh! I never saw any one half  
So perfectly sweet as you!  
In my lovely home 'neath the ocean foam,  
How happy we both might be!  
Oh! little John Bottlejohn, pretty John Bottlejohn,  
Won't you come down with me?"

Little John Bottlejohn said, "Oh yes!  
I'll willingly go with you.  
And I never shall quail at the sight of your tail,  
For perhaps I may grow one too."  
So he took her hand, and he left the land,  
And plunged in the foaming main.  
And little John Bottlejohn, pretty John Bottlejohn,  
Never was seen again.

## JEMIMA BROWN

### I

Bring her here, my little Alice,  
Poor Jemima Brown!  
Make the little cradle ready!  
Softly lay her down!  
Once she lived in ease and comfort,  
Slept on couch of down;  
Now upon the floor she's lying,  
Poor Jemima Brown!

### II

Once she was a lovely dolly,  
Rosy-cheeked and fair,  
With her eyes of brightest azure  
And her golden hair;  
Now, alas! no hair's remaining  
On her poor old crown;  
And the crown itself is broken,  
Poor Jemima Brown!

### III

Once her legs were smooth and comely,  
And her nose was straight;  
And that arm, now hanging lonely,  
Had, methinks, a mate.  
And she was as finely dressed as  
Any doll in town.  
Now she's old, forlorn, and ragged,  
Poor Jemima Brown!

### IV

Yet be kind to her, my Alice;  
'Tis no fault of hers

If her wilful little mistress  
Other dolls prefers.  
Did *she* pull her pretty hair out?  
Did *she* break her crown?  
Did *she* pull her arms and legs off,  
Poor Jemima Brown?

**V**

Little hands that did the mischief,  
You must do your best  
Now to give the poor old dolly  
Comfortable rest.  
So we'll make the cradle ready,  
And we'll lay her down;  
And we'll ask Papa to mend her,  
Poor Jemima Brown!

## ALICE'S SUPPER

Far down in the meadow the wheat grows green,  
And the reapers are whetting their sickles so keen;  
And this is the song that I hear them sing,  
While cheery and loud their voices ring:  
"'Tis the finest wheat that ever did grow!  
And it is for Alice's supper, ho! ho!"

Far down in the valley the old mill stands,  
And the miller is rubbing his dusty white hands;  
And these are the words of the miller's lay,  
As he watches the millstones a-grinding away:  
"'Tis the finest flour that money can buy,  
And it is for Alice's supper, hi! hi!"

Downstairs in the kitchen the fire doth glow,  
And Maggie is kneading the soft white dough,  
And this is the song that she's singing to-day,  
While merry and busy she's working away:  
"'Tis the finest dough, by near or by far,  
And it is for Alice's supper, ha! ha!"

And now to the nursery comes Nannie at last,  
And what in her hand is she bringing so fast?  
'Tis a plate full of something all yellow and white,  
And she sings as she comes with her smile so bright:  
"'Tis the best bread-and-butter I ever did see!  
And it is for Alice's supper, he! he!"



## TODDLEKINS

Butterfly,  
Flutter by,  
Through the summer air;  
Roses bloom,  
Sweet perfume  
Shedding everywhere;  
Robins sing,  
Bluebells ring  
Greeting to my dear,  
When her sweet  
Tiny feet  
Bring her toddling here.

Pitapat!  
Little fat  
Funny baby toes!  
Do not stumble,  
Or she'll tumble  
On her baby nose.  
Closer cling,  
Little thing,  
To your mother's side,  
Baby mine,  
Fair and fine,  
Mother's joy and pride.

## BOBBILY BOO AND WOLLYPOTUMP

Bobbily Boo, the king so free,  
He used to drink the Mango tea.  
Mango tea and coffee, too,  
He drank them both till his nose turned blue.

Wollypotump, the queen so high,  
She used to eat the Gumbo pie.  
Gumbo pie and Gumbo cake,  
She ate them both till her teeth did break.

Bobbily Boo and Wollypotump,  
Each called the other a greedy frump.  
And when these terrible words were said,  
They sat and cried till they both were dead.

## SLEEPYLAND

Baby's been in Sleepyland,  
Over the hills, over the hills.  
Baby's been in Sleepyland  
All the rainy morning.  
From the cradle where she lay,  
Up she jumped and flew away,  
For Sleepyland is bright and gay  
Every rainy morning.

What did you see in Sleepyland,  
Baby littlest, Baby prettiest?  
What did you see in Sleepyland,  
All the rainy morning?  
Saw the sun that shone so twinkily,  
Saw the grass that waved so crinkily,  
Saw the brook that flowed so tinkily,  
All the lovely morning.

What did you hear in Sleepyland,  
Over the hills, over the hills?  
What did you hear in Sleepyland,  
All the rainy morning?  
Heard the winds that wooed so wooingly,  
Heard the doves that cooed so cooingly,  
Heard the cows that mooed so mooingly,  
All the lovely morning.

What did you do in Sleepyland,  
Baby littlest, Baby prettiest?  
What did you do in Sleepyland,  
All the rainy morning?  
Sang a song with a blue canary,  
Danced a dance with a golden fairy,  
Rode about on a cinnamon beary,  
All the lovely morning.

Would I could go to Sleepyland,  
Over the hills, over the hills;  
Would I could go to Sleepyland,  
Every rainy morning.  
But to Sleepyland, as I have been told,  
No one may go after three years old,  
So poor old Mammy stays out in the cold,  
Every rainy morning.

## **Little Brown Bobby**

Little Brown Bobby sat on the barn floor  
Little Brown Bobby looked in at the door,  
Little Brown Bobby said "Lackaday!  
Who'll drive me this little brown bobby away?"  
Little Brown Bobby said "Shoo! shoo! shoo!"  
Little Brown Bobby said "Moo! moo! moo!"  
This frightened them so that both of them cried,  
And wished they were back at their Mammy's side!

## PHIL'S SECRET

I know a little girl,  
But I won't tell who!  
Her hair is of the gold,  
And her eyes are of the blue.  
Her smile is of the sweet,  
And her heart is of the true.  
Such a pretty little girl! —  
But I won't tell who.

I see her every day,  
But I won't tell where!  
It may be in the lane,  
By the thorn-tree there.  
It may be in the garden,  
By the rose-beds fair.  
Such a pretty little girl! —  
But I won't tell where.

I'll marry her some day,  
But I won't tell when!  
The very smallest boys  
Make the very biggest men.  
When I'm as tall as father,  
You may ask about it then.  
Such a pretty little girl! —  
But I won't tell when.

## A SONG FOR HAL

Once I saw a little boat, and a pretty, pretty boat,  
When daybreak the hills was adorning,  
And into it I jumped, and away I did float,  
So very, very early in the morning.

*Chorus.* And every little wave had its nightcap on,  
Its nightcap, white cap, nightcap on.  
And every little wave had its nightcap on,  
So very, very early in the morning.

All the fishes were asleep in their caves cool and deep,  
When the ripple round my keel flashed a warning.  
Said the minnow to the skate, "We must certainly be late,  
Though I thought 'twas very early in the morning."

*Chorus.* For every little wave has its nightcap on,  
Its nightcap, white cap, nightcap on.  
For every little wave has its nightcap on,  
So very, very early in the morning.

The lobster darkly green soon appeared upon the scene,  
And pearly drops his claws were adorning.  
Quoth he, "May I be boiled, if I'll have my slumber spoiled,  
So very, very early in the morning!"

*Chorus.* For every little wave has its nightcap on,  
Its nightcap, white cap, nightcap on,  
For every little wave has its nightcap on,  
So very, very early in the morning.

Said the sturgeon to the eel, "Just imagine how I feel,  
Thus roused without a syllable of warning.  
People ought to let us know when a-sailing they would go,  
So very, very early in the morning."

*Chorus.* When every little wave has its nightcap on,  
Its nightcap, white cap, nightcap on.  
When every little wave has its nightcap on,  
So very, very early in the morning.

Just then up jumped the sun, and the fishes every one  
For their laziness at once fell a-mourning.  
But I stayed to hear no more, for my boat had reached the shore,  
So very, very early in the morning.

*Chorus.* And every little wave took its nightcap off,  
Its nightcap, white cap, nightcap off.  
And every little wave took its nightcap off,  
And courtesied to the sun in the morning.

## THE FAIRIES

Is it true, my mother?  
Can it really be,  
That the little fairies  
Every day you see?  
Oh! the little fairies,  
Wonderful and wise,  
Have you really seen them  
With your own two eyes?

Tell me where their home is,  
Dearest mother mine.  
Is it in the garden  
'Neath the clustering vine?  
Is it in the meadow,  
'Mid the grasses tall?  
Is it by the brookside,  
Sweetest place of all?

Deep within the woodland,  
Shall I find them then, —  
Pretty little maidens,  
Pretty little men;  
Curled among the roseleaves,  
Stretched along the fern,  
Where no wind can shake them,  
And no sunbeams burn?

Does the little queen live  
In a great red rose,  
Twenty elves to fan her  
When to sleep she goes;  
Coverlet of lilies  
Sprinkled o'er with pearls,  
Golden stars a-twinkling  
In her golden curls?

Do they paint the flowers?  
Do they teach the birds  
All their lovely music,  
With its strange, sweet words?  
Oh! but tell me, mother!  
Is it really true?  
And when next you seek them,  
Will you take me too?



True it is, my darling,  
True as true can be,  
That the little fairies  
Every day I see,  
Not within the meadow,  
Not in woodland gloom,  
But in brightest sunshine,  
In this very room.

Singing like the robin,  
Chirping like the wren,  
Pretty little maidens,  
Pretty little men;  
Leaning o'er my shoulder,  
Swinging on my chair,  
Oh! the little fairies,  
I see them everywhere.

Peeping at the window,  
Peeping at the door,  
If I bid them scamper,  
Peeping all the more.  
Little sweetest voices  
Laughing merrily,  
Oh! the little fairies,  
They'll never let me be.

Tugging at my apron,  
Twitching at my gown,  
Climbing up into my lap,  
Rumble-tumbling down.  
Naughty little blue eyes,  
Full of impish glee,  
Oh! the little fairies,  
They'll never let me be!

All are kings and queens, dear,  
Every smallest one;  
And on mother's knee here  
Is their regal throne.  
Look into the glass, dear!  
One of them you'll see.  
Oh! the little fairies,  
God bless them all for me!

## THE QUEEN OF THE ORKNEY ISLANDS

Oh! the Queen of the Orkney Islands,  
She's travelling over the sea:  
She's bringing a beautiful cuttlefish,  
To play with my baby and me.

Oh! his head is three miles long, my dear,  
His tail is three miles short.  
And when he goes out he wriggles his snout,  
In a way that no cuttlefish ought.

Oh! the Queen of the Orkney Islands,  
She rides on a sea-green whale.  
He takes her a mile, with an elegant smile,  
At every flip of his tail.

He can snuffle and snore like a Highlandman,  
And swear like a Portugee;  
He can amble and prance like a peer of France,  
And lie like a heathen Chinee.

## QUEEN OF THE ORKNEY ISLANDS

Oh! the Queen of the Orkney Islands,  
She dresses in wonderful taste.  
The sea-serpent coils, all painted in oils,  
Around her bee-yu-tiful waist.

Oh! her gown is made of the green sea-kale;  
And though she knows nothing of feet,  
She can manage her train, with an air of disdain,  
In a way that is perfectly sweet.

Oh! the Queen of the Orkney Islands,  
She's travelling over the main.  
So we'll hire a hack, and we'll take her straight back  
To her beautiful Islands again.

## **BABY'S WAYS**

Toddle, toddle, waddle, waddle,  
On her little pinky toes.  
Stumble, stumble, pitch and tumble,  
That's the way the baby goes.

Prattle, prattle, rattle, rattle,  
Little shouts and little shrieks,  
Tears, with laughter coming after,  
That's the way the baby speaks.

Playing, toying, still enjoying  
Every sweet that Nature gives.  
Smiling, weeping, waking, sleeping,  
That's the way the baby lives.

## POT AND KETTLE

**[To be read to little boys and girls who quarrel with each other.]**

"Oho! Oho!" said the pot to the kettle,  
"You're dirty and ugly and black!  
Sure no one would think you were made of metal,  
Except when you're given a crack."

"Not so! not so!" kettle said to the pot.  
"'Tis your own dirty image you see.  
For I am so clear, without blemish or blot,  
That your blackness is mirrored in me."

## PUNKYDOODLE AND JOLLAPIN

Oh, Pillykin Willykin Winky Wee!  
How does the Emperor take his tea?  
He takes it with melons, he takes it with milk,  
He takes it with syrup and sassafras silk.  
He takes it without, he takes it within.  
Oh, Punkydoodle and Jollapin!

Oh, Pillykin Willykin Winky Wee!  
How does the Cardinal take his tea?  
He takes it in Latin, he takes it in Greek,  
He takes it just seventy times in the week.  
He takes it so strong that it makes him grin.  
Oh, Punkydoodle and Jollapin!

Oh, Pillykin Willykin Winky Wee!  
How does the Admiral take his tea?  
He takes it with splices, he takes it with spars,  
He takes it with jokers and jolly jack tars.  
And he stirs it round with a dolphin's fin.  
Oh, Punkydoodle and Jollapin!

Oh, Pillykin Willykin Winky Wee!  
How does the President take his tea?  
He takes it in bed, he takes it in school,  
He takes it in Congress against the rule.  
He takes it with brandy, and thinks it no sin.  
Oh, Punkydoodle and Jollapin!

## MRS. SNIPKIN AND MRS. WOBBLECHIN

Skinny Mrs. Snipkin,  
With her little pipkin,  
Sat by the fireside a-warming of her toes.  
Fat Mrs. Wobblechin,  
With her little doublechin,  
Sat by the window a-cooling of her nose.

Says this one to that one,  
"Oh! you silly fat one,  
*Will* you shut the window down? You're freezing me to death!"  
Says that one to t'other one,  
"Good gracious, how you bother one!  
There isn't air enough for me to draw my precious breath!"

Skinny Mrs. Snipkin,  
Took her little pipkin,  
Threw it straight across the room as hard as she could throw;  
Hit Mrs. Wobblechin  
On her little doublechin,  
And out of the window a-tumble she did go.

## MY SUNBEAMS

Oh, what shall we do for the Lovely  
This rainy, rainy day?  
Oh! how shall we make the baby laugh,  
When everything's dull and gray?

The sun has gone on a picnic,  
The moon has gone to bed,  
The tiresome sky does nothing but cry,  
As if its best friend were dead.

Come hither, come hither, my Sunbeams!  
Come one, and two, and three;  
And now in a trice we'll have the room  
As sunny as sunny can be.

Come, dimpling, dimpling Dumpling,  
Come, Rosy, Posy Rose,  
Come, little boy Billy a-toddlng round  
On little fat tottering toes.

Now twinkle, now twinkle, my Sunbeams!  
Now twinkle and laugh and dance,  
And brush me the gloom straight out of the room,  
Nor leave it the ghost of a chance.

Aha! see the Lovely smile now!  
Aha! see her jump and crow!  
As round and round, with laugh and dance,  
My three merry Sunbeams go.

And who cares now for the raindrops?  
Who cares for the gloomy day,  
When each little heart is doing its part  
To make us all glad and gay?

You moon, you may stay in bed now;  
You sun, you may wander and roam;  
And cry away, cry, you tiresome sky!  
We've plenty of sunshine at home!



## IN THE CLOSET

They've took away the ball,  
Oh dear!  
And I'll never get it back,  
I fear.  
And now they've gone away,  
And left me for to stay  
All alone the livelong day,  
In here.

It was my ball, anyhow,  
Not his:  
For he never had a ball  
Like this.  
Such a coward you'll not see,  
E'en if you should live to be  
Old as Deuteronomy,  
As he is.

I'm sure I meant no harm,  
None at all!  
I just held out my hand  
For the ball,  
And – somehow – it hit his head.  
Then his nose it went and bled,  
And as if I 'd killed him dead  
He did bawl.

Mother said I was a naughty  
Little wretch.  
And Aunt Jane said the police  
She would fetch.  
And that nurse, who's always glad  
Of a chance to make me mad,  
Said, "indeed she never *had*  
Seen sech!"

No! I never, never *will*  
Be good!  
I'll go and be a babe  
In the wood.  
I'll run away to sea,  
And a pirate I will be.  
Then they'll never *dare* call me  
Rough and rude.

How hungry I am getting!  
Let me see!  
I wonder what they're going to have  
For tea.  
Of course there will be jam  
And – oh! that potted ham!  
How unfortunate I am!  
Dear me!

Oh! it's growing very dark  
In here.  
And that shadow in the corner  
Looks so queer!  
Won't they bring me any light?  
Must I stay in here all night?  
I shall surely die of fright.  
Oh dear!

Mother, darling, will you *never*  
Come back?  
*Oh! I'm sorry that I hit him*  
*Such a crack!*  
Hark! yes, 'tis her voice I hear!  
Now good-by to every fear!  
For she's calling me her dear  
Little Jack!

## **BED-TIME**

How many toes has the tootsey foot?  
One, two, three, four, five.  
Shut them all up in the little red sock,  
Snugger than bees in a hive.

How many fingers has little wee hand?  
Four, and a little wee thumb.  
Shut them up under the bedclothes tight,  
For fear that Jack Frost should come.

How many eyes has the Baby Bo?  
Two, so shining and bright.  
Shut them up under the little white lids.  
And kiss them a loving good-night.

## BIRD-SONG

Sweet! sweet! sweet! sweet!  
Sing we in the morning,  
Sending up to heaven's blue our happy waking song;  
Daily, gayly, our tiny home adorning,  
Working all so merrily the whole day long.

Sweet! sweet! sweet! sweet!  
Sing we in the noontide;  
Half the day is over now, half our work is done;  
Neatly, featly, the moss and twigs are blended,  
Feather, flower, leaf, and stems, all added one by one.

Sweet! sweet! sweet! sweet!  
Sing we in the evening;  
Happy day is past, past, happy night begun;  
Wooing, cooing, we nestle 'mid the branches,  
Sinking down to rest with the sinking of the sun.

Soft, soft, soft, soft,  
Sleep we through the still night;  
Tiny head 'neath tiny wing comfortably curled,  
Singing, springing, with the breath of morning,  
Waking up once more to all the wonder of the world.

## GEOGRAPHI

**[Air: *There was a maid in my countree.*]**

There was a man in Manitobá,  
The only man that ever was thar;  
His name was Nicholas Jones McGee,  
And he loved a maid in Mirimichi.

*Chorus.* Sing ha! ha! ha! for Manitobá!  
Sing he! he! he! for Mirimichi!  
Sing hi! hi! hi! for Geographi!  
And that's the lesson for you and me.

There was a man in New Mexico,  
He lost his grandmother out in the snow;  
But his heart was light, and his ways were free,  
So he bought him another in Santa Fé.

*Chorus.* Sing ho! ho! ho! for New Mexico!  
Sing he! he! he! for Santa Fé!  
Sing hi! hi! hi! for Geographi!  
And that's the lesson for you and me.

There was a man in Austra-li-a,  
He sat and wept on the new-mown hay;  
He jumped on the tail of a kangaroo.  
And rode till he came to Kalamazoo.

*Chorus.* Sing hey! hey! hey! for Austra-li-a!  
Sing hoo! hoo! hoo! for Kalamazoo!  
Sing hi! hi! hi! for Geographi!  
And that's the lesson for me and you.

There was a man in Jiggerajum,  
He went to sea in a kettle-drum;  
He sailed away to the Salisbury Shore,  
And I never set eyes on that man any more.

*Chorus.* Sing hum! hum! hum! for Jiggerajum!  
Sing haw! haw! haw! for the Salisbury Shore!  
Sing hi! hi! hi! for Geographi!  
And that's the lesson the whole world o'er.

## HIGGLEDY-PIGGLEDY

Higgledy-piggledy went to school,  
Looking so nice and neat!  
Clean little mittens on clean little hands,  
Clean little shoes on his feet.  
Jacket and trousers all nicely brushed,  
Collar and cuffs like snow.  
"See that you come home as neat to-night,  
Higgledy-piggledy oh!"

Higgledy-piggledy came from school,  
In such a woful plight,  
All the people he met on the road  
Ran screaming away with fright.  
One shoe gone for ever and aye,  
T'other one stiff with mud,  
Dirt-spattered jacket half torn from his back,  
Mittens both lost in the wood.

Higgledy-piggledy stayed in bed  
All a long, pleasant day,  
While his father fished for his other boot  
In the roadside mud and clay.  
All day long his mother must mend,  
Wash and iron and sew,  
Before she can make him fit to be seen,  
Higgledy-piggledy oh!

## BELINDA BLONDE

Belinda Blonde was a beautiful doll,  
With rosy-red cheeks and a flaxen poll.  
Her lips were red, and her eyes were blue,  
But to say she was happy would not be true;  
For she pined for love of the great big Jack  
Who lived in the Box so grim and black.

She never had looked on the Jack his face;  
But she fancied it shining with beauty and grace,  
And all the day long she would murmur and pout,  
Because Jack-in-the-box would never come out.

"Oh, beautiful, beautiful Jack-in-the-box,  
Undo your bolts and undo your locks!  
The cupboard is shut, and there's no one about:  
Oh! Jack-in-the-box, jump out! jump out!"

But alas! alas! for Belinda Blonde,  
And alas! alas! for her dreamings fond.  
There soon was an end to all her doubt,  
For Jack-in-the-box really *did* jump out, —

Out with a crash and out with a spring,  
Half black and half scarlet, a horrible thing.  
Out with a yell and a shriek and a shout,  
His great goggle-eyes glaring wildly about.

"And what did Belinda do?" you say.  
Alas! before she could get out of the way,  
The monster struck her full on the head,  
And with pain and with terror she fell down dead.

## MORAL

Now all you dolls, both little and big,  
With china crown and with curling wig,  
Before you give way to affection fond,  
Remember the fate of Belinda Blonde!  
And unless you're fond of terrible knocks,  
*Don't* set your heart on a Jack-in-the-box!

## TOMMY'S DREAM; OR, THE GEOGRAPHY DEMON

I hate my geography lesson!  
It's nothing but nonsense and names.  
To bother me so every Thursday,  
I think it's the greatest of shames.  
The brooklets flow into the rivers,  
The rivers flow into the sea;  
For my part, I hope they enjoy it!  
But what does it matter to me?  
Of late even more I've disliked it,  
More thoroughly odious it seems,  
Ever since that sad night of last winter,  
When I had that most frightful of dreams.  
I'd studied two hours that evening,  
On mountains and rivers and lakes;

When I'd promised to go down to Grandpa's,  
For one of Aunt Susan's plum-cakes.



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