

THE CHINA DANCER



**THE
RHYME GARDEN**

**WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY
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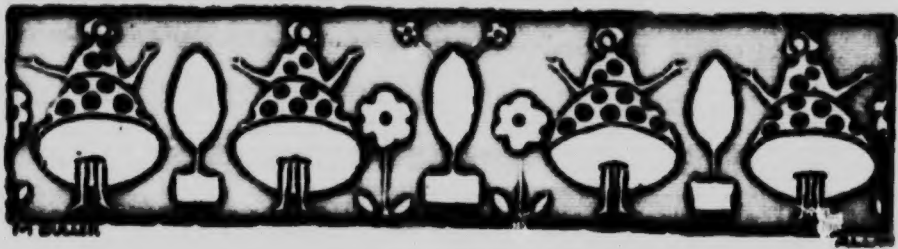
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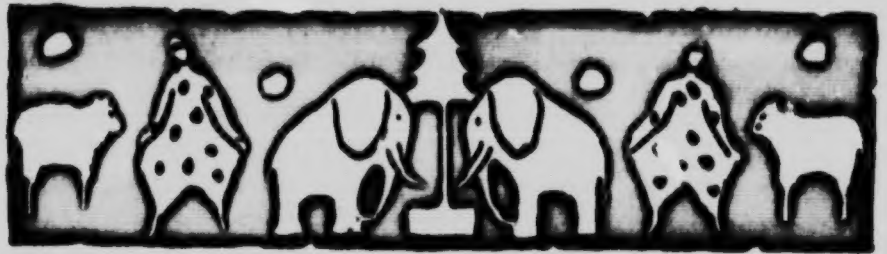
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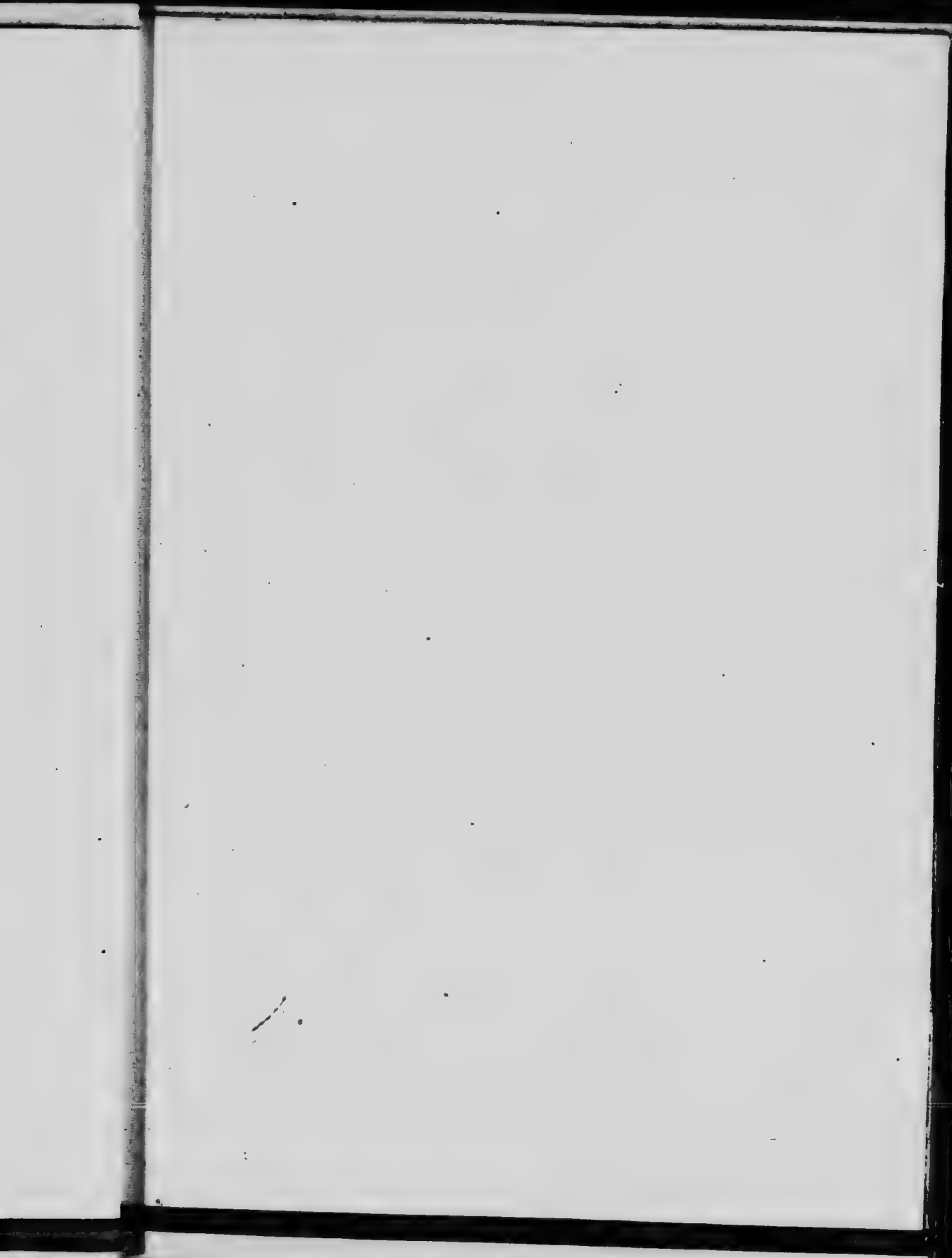
A number of these verses have appeared in the *Youth's Companion* and *St. Nicholas*, and are reprinted here by the courtesy of the editors of those journals.







THE RHYME GARDEN



SONGS FOR A PENNY

SONGS for a penny, songs for a penny,
Give me your pennies,
If you have any.
And if you haven't
What do I care?
Here I stand singing
Out in the square.

*You can buy peaches and raspberry wine,
But the wild grapes for me
Sweet and warm on the vine;*

Barefoot and tattered
My curls all unbound
Still I go singing
About and around;

*Your houses have doors
That you lock with a key,
But the meadows are open,
The meadows are free.*

SONGS FOR A PENNY

*One road to Denham
And one to Torquay,
Come, we'll go singing
Whichever it be!*



AT THE ZOO

A TOUSLED cub behind the bars
I watched while at the Zoo,
Playing and rolling with a ball,
As children like to do.

He seemed to be a friendly sort,
And so I stopped to chat.
“How do you do, young Mr. Bear?”
I said, and doffed my hat.

“Thank you for asking, stranger child,
I’m feeling very well ;
But oh, I hate this dusty cage
Far more than I can tell !”

So he replied, and then he said,
“I simply long for trees,
For deep green pools and forests cool—
Are there no more of these ?”

AT THE ZOO

He stared at me, forgot his play,
Poor jolly little bear ;
It seemed to me he was in jail
In that enclosure there.

They've taken from him all he loves—
The woods, the pools, the sun,
And in exchange, they offer him
A little currant bun !







THE SCARECROW

THE SCARECROW

THE scarecrow watched the moon come up
And laughed both long and loud,
The timid disconcerted moon
Sank back behind a cloud.

And when the morning sun shone out,
The scarecrow mocked the sun,
He laughed so much the ears of wheat
Joined gaily in his fun.

“The splendid sun and stately moon,
Why do you jeer at these,
Whose beauty every poet sings?”
I asked him. “Tell me, please.”

THE SCARECROW

The scarecrow in a softened mood,
Wept very bitterly.
He said, "I have to laugh at them
Or they would laugh at me."



AN AMBITIOUS KITTEN

I HAVE a plan," the kitten cried, "to celebrate my
name,

To write 'Belinda Wonder Cat' upon the hall of fame.
I plan to kill a hundred mice upon a single day
And then to kill as many rats, should any come my way.
I have a plan to catch a bird, an owl, maybe, or two,
To hold him with my little paw and see what he could do;
I plan to race with butterflies, to climb the highest tree,
I'll make the biggest dogs my friends, if any dogs I see;
All this and more I mean to do, *some day*,—my secret
keep,

For *now*," the little kitten said, "I think I'll take a sleep!"



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THE NEST

ALL day I watched a busy crow
A-building of her nest,
With twigs and tiny bits of fluff
Where baby crows might rest.

I wish that my mama would make
A tiny nest for me,
I'd like to have a little bed
Well hidden in a tree.

For then I'd talk with all the birds
A-singing in the pine,
A little nest beneath the moon,
Oh! wouldn't that be fine!



MY BROTHER IS A SOLDIER

MY brother is a soldier bold—
A soldier's like a king,
So fine and tall and oh, so strong,
As brave as anything !

He's always dressed in khaki clothes
With buckles made of gold ;
When he comes home I'm very good
And do what I am told.

He throws aside his gloves and whip
And takes me on his knee,
And tells me it's a splendid thing
A little boy to be.

MY BROTHER IS A SOLDIER

But when he mounts upon his horse
And gallops quickly by,
I long so much to be a man
I always want to cry.







THE NEW BONNET

THE NEW BONNET

I HAVE a new bonnet,
There's velvet upon it,
And ribbons and laces so fine,
And when I'm dressed in it
I hope every minute
The sun will continue to shine!



THE DISAGREEABLE BULLDOG

THE poodle said, "How fine I look!"
And wagged his tail for joy,
The bulldog thought that such conceit
He would at once destroy.

And so he said, "My poor young man,
You really are a sight,
With half your hair shaved off that way
You simply look a fright!"

The bulldog spoke this way because
He was a jealous beast,
And when the poodle grieved and wept
He cared not in the least.

THE DISAGREEABLE BULLDOG

He just continued mocking him :
You never would have guessed
How much he envied in his heart
The way the poodle dressed !



THE ORCHARD

THE orchard has a hundred trees,
And all so slim and fine,
Each powdered with pale apple bloom
They straightly stand in line.

The wind and raindrops love them well
And all the world besides,
I think they look exactly like
A row of little brides!



WAS IT A DREAM

AN insect lived in a narrow cocoon
(Like a poor little nun in a cell,)
But sometimes she looked at the people outside
And so there's a story to tell.

Once came a butterfly dancing about
And she called to the shy little nun,
"You're an insect like me, so why do you hide
Away from the beautiful sun?"

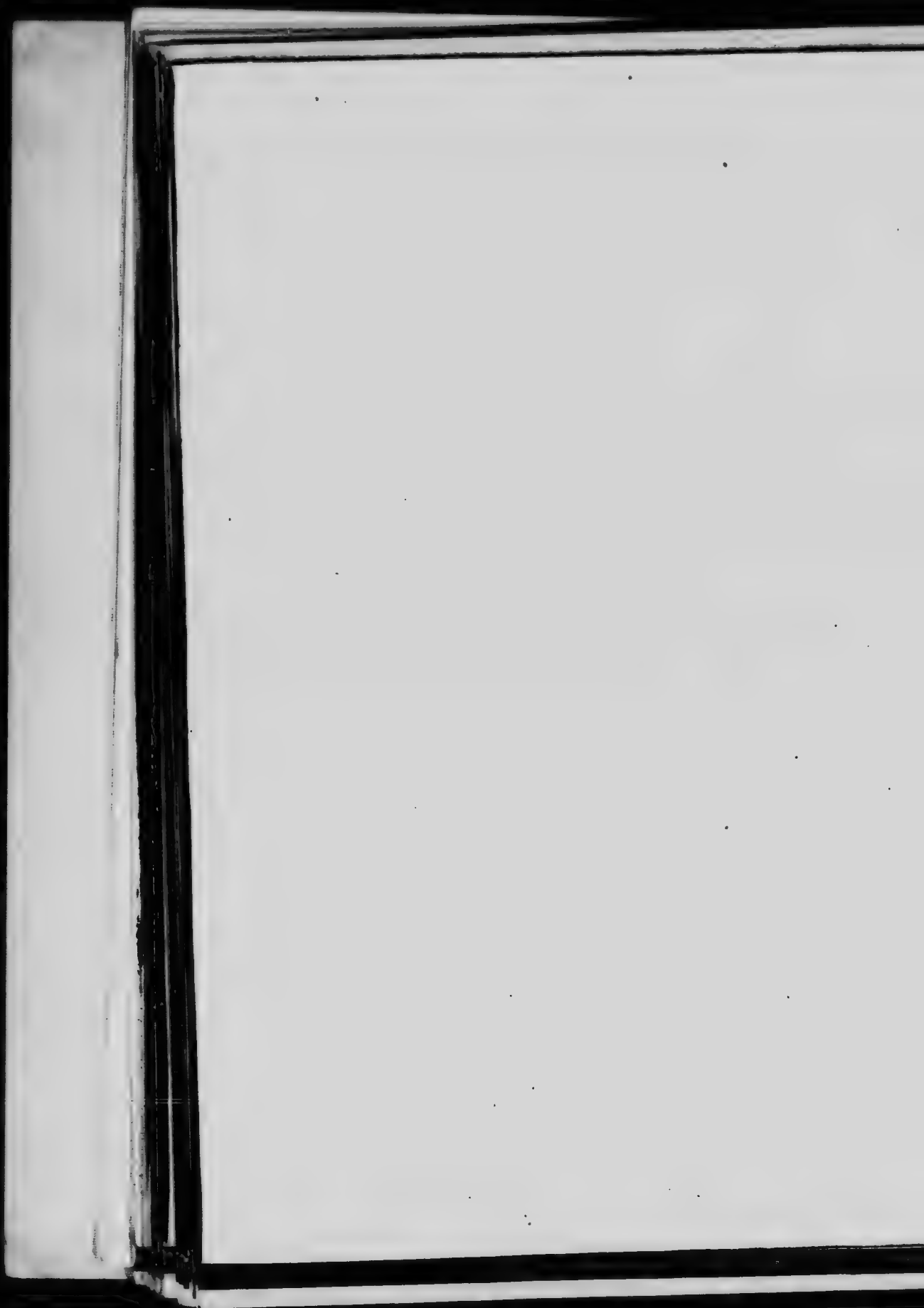
She flashed all the colours that shone in her dress—
And she told of what stuff it was made,
Then deep in the shade of the gloomy cocoon
The dear little nun was afraid.

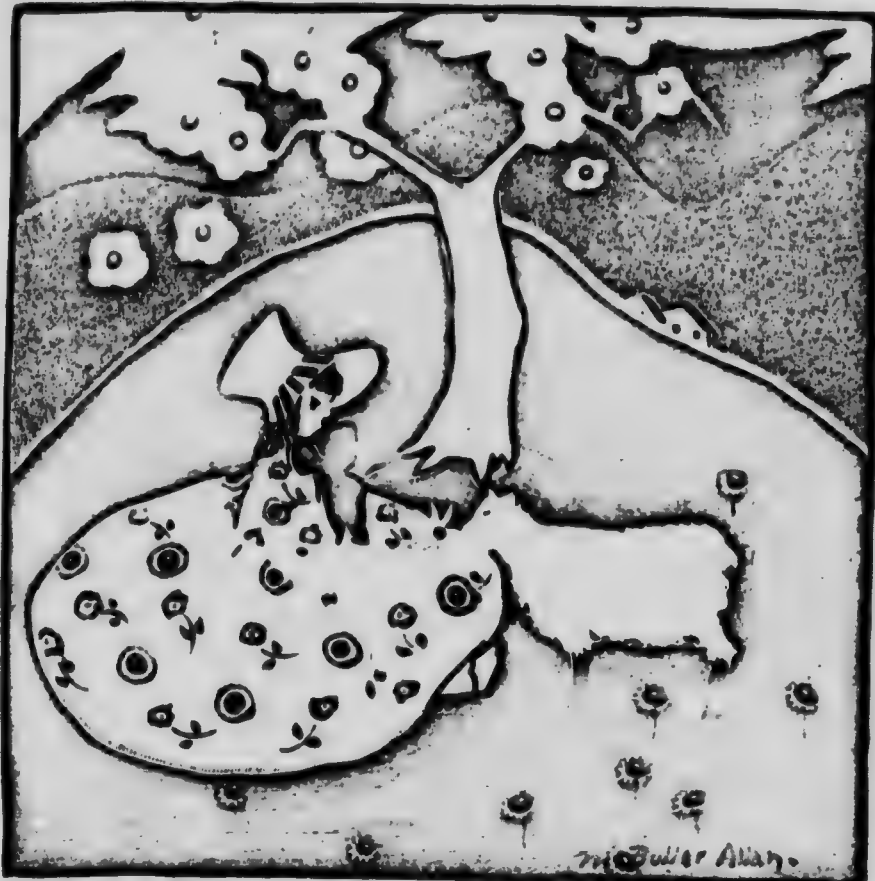
She wept, and she fell fast asleep, and she dreamt
Of a frock that was scarlet and blue. . . .
She opened the door of her dull little cell
And off in the sunshine she flew.

WAS IT A DREAM

When she woke up she was really amazed,
For she poised on the edge of a rose,
And if the cocoon was a dream or was not,
She wonders if any one knows.







IN SPRINGTIME

IN SPRING TIME

THE bees are humming near the hive
Each one is glad to be alive,
And children leap about for joy
Each little girl and little boy.

The brook is laughing in the sun
And hoping to the sea to run,
It carries past in flash and gleam
Small insects, sailing on the stream.

The flowers dance with blades of grass
And bend and sway as on we pass,
And in the cooling shower of rain
They pause, 'ere they dance off again.

IN SPRING TIME

The world is warm and green and sweet
And days like flying clouds are fleet,
Then all the stars come out at night—
A million little points of light.



MY LITTLE PLAYMATE

THE sun's my little playmate,
He has a golden face,
And though he lives in heaven
I find him in every place.

He's always in the garden
And out upon the hill,
And through my bedroom window
He comes when I am ill.

We love the scented orchard,
For there we hide and seek,
Behind a big red apple tree
His yellow eye will peck.

Upon the lake he passes
And flecks the waves with light,
And hidden in the grasses
He counts the flowers bright.

MY LITTLE PLAYMATE

But when the sky is darkened
He turns the other way,
To distant worlds he journeys
Where other children play.



A FISHY TALE

OLD Mr. Fish swam home one night,
He seemed quite dazed and looked a sight.
“Where have you been?” asked Mrs. Fish,
“You missed a tasty supper dish.”

Said he, “My dear, there hung my tail
Caught fast upon a rusty nail
A boy had baited with a fly,
I really thought that I should die!

“At last I managed to get free
And hurried home : do pardon me ;
By chance I missed a dreadful fate,
And that’s the reason I am late.”



THE BATTLEFIELD

WHEN fire is made upon the hearth,
I'm always, oh, so glad,
I watch until the clock strikes nine,—
(Which means "To bed, my lad").

I see all sorts of splendid things,
The hearth's a battlefield,
With soldiers clad in red and green,
Their leader bears a shield.

I hear the crack as rifles pop,
And the boom of cannon comes
Which scares the army in the rear,
And then I hear the drums. . . .

My little sister cannot see
My soldiers there at all,
She sees a witch, in cloak of red
Astride a camel tall.



THE BATTLEFIELD

And once she saw a butterfly,
That spread enormous wings. . . .
Now what can she be dreaming of
To see such silly things?

And in the flaming battlefield
I try to show her where
My little soldiers bravely stand
And cheer the flag they bear.

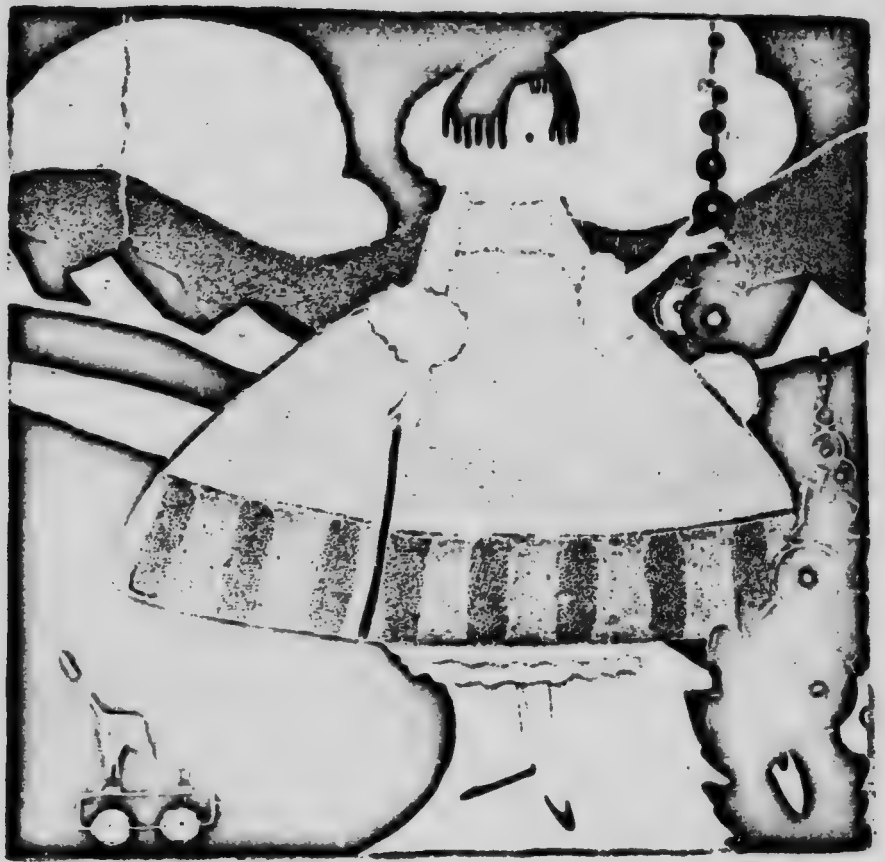
I never want to go to bed
Until the fight is done;
Of course I cannot tell who wins,
But all the same it's fun.



COLOURS

I LIKE all sorts of gaily coloured things,
Dear little insects with their jewelled wings,
A humming bird in vest of gold and blue,
And patterned meadows, made of flowers and dew.
Pears and apples good to eat,
Nice red shoes upon my feet,
Houses painted blue and white,
Gardens bathed in yellow light,
Shells of mauve and pink and green,
Fish with scales of silver sheen—
Colour is a voice that sings
In these gay and lovely things!





COLOURS

URS

THE MIRACLE

MY wish came true : the stars rained down
Upon the hills and sea,
And from the sky above the town
The moon fell straight to me.

And silver-spangled waves danced up
The star-encrusted land.
I held the moon, a yellow cup
Within my little hand.

And then, when I should have been glad,
I saw the sky's dead blue . . .
And I was sad, O, I was sad
Because my wish came true.



CASTLES IN THE AIR

IN Bubble Land the fairies roam,
I always see them there,
Castles that I build for them
Go floating through the air.

O fairies dear! your lives are short,
But in your castles blue
You laugh behind the rainbow walls,
Who wouldn't envy you?



DADDY'S NEW TOY

MY daddy is a grown-up boy,
An airship is his newest toy,
Up, up he sails, so very high
It seems as if he pierced the sky.

The motor buzzes like a bee,
And when I can no longer see
Where he has gone, I always sigh
Because he will not let me fly.

I laugh and shout and wave my hand
As slowly he descends to land,
And every day when it is bright
My daddy and his toy take flight.



THE CHINA DANCER

THE little china dancing doll
Stood just beside the clock,
And high above her tiny feet
She held her china frock.

The clock said, "Do not dance so much,
But rest a little while."
The doll replied, "I cannot rest,"
And nodded with a smile.

The clock ticked out, "Why not, why not
Be grave and slow like me?"
She answered, "Little china dolls
Must dance continually."
The clock ticked out, "Why not, why not
Take life more easily?"

THE CHINA DANCER

But all the time her twinkling feet
The sober hours beguiled,
And when at last she fell and broke,
The clock ticked out, "Poor child,
I loved her little dancing feet,
Poor child, tired child, poor child!"



BAZAAR SONG

I'LL sell you for a penny
So many, many things ;
I'll sell a little posy,
I'll sell you golden rings,
If you give me your penny
You'll quaff a glass of milk,
And for another penny
Here's honey soft as silk ;
I'll sell you for a penny
So many, many things ;
But I won't sell my kisses
For all the wealth of kings !



THE REVENGE

TWO angry sparrows in a nest
Discussed a neighbour's theft:
(He'd carried off their crumb of bread
With speed and cunning deft)

And one of them so angry grew
He cried, "I'll teach him how
I punish birds who do these things,
There's going to be a row."

He ruffled all his feathers up
And said that he would make
The wretched thief apologize
For eating up their cake.

Said he, "I'll call him out to fight,
And with my sharpened beak
I'll bite him till he trembling falls
Too terrified to speak."

THE REVENGE

But just as he had said these words
The thief came hopping near,
The bold avenger spread his wings—
His face grew pale with fear.

And suddenly he flew away.
I think perhaps he knew
That all the things he boasted of
He really could not do.



DREAMS

BENEATH the lilac Grandma sits
In shadow there and knits and knits.
It can't be any fun at all
To sit all day and make a shawl!

Sometimes she puts her knitting by
And scarcely stirs. I wonder why
Her eyes are full of tears, the while
The nodding lilac seems to smile.

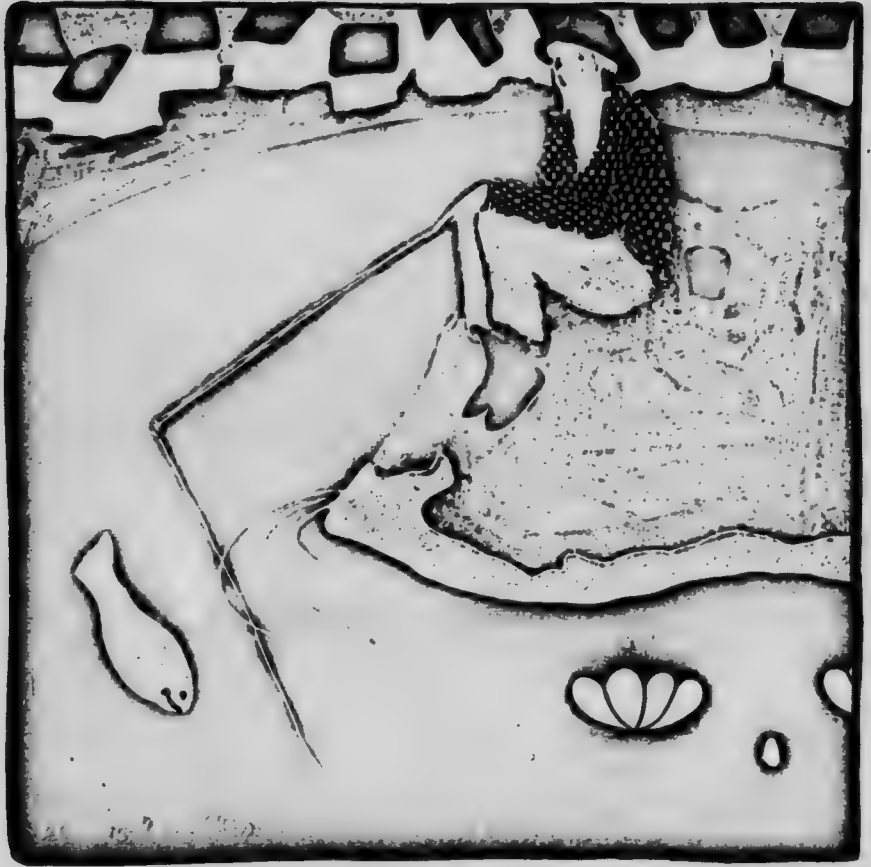
And Grandma says she dreams all day,—
My dreams at night are always gay,
And so when I see Grandma cry
I wonder why, I wonder why!



TWO POINTS OF VIEW

A FISHERMAN was talking to himself one summer
day,
(Most fishermen are much alone, and often talk this way)
And very close to where he sat a little fish swam near
And listened well to what he said and thought it very
queer.

“How beautiful this lake that mirrors clouds a-sailing
by,
And shows upon a sapphire screen the wings of birds that
fly.
There is no joy on earth like this, to sit the long day
through
Beside the changing lovely lake, so clear, so deep, so
blue.”



TWO POINTS OF VIEW

TWO POINTS OF VIEW

The little fish just waved his fins and laughed aloud in
glee,
He really was as much amused as any fish could be.
Thought he : I lead a simple life far down beneath the
foam,
Can this old man be talking of my quiet gloomy home?



VOYAGE IN A BOWL

THEY had no fear of the ocean trip
And their faces did not pale,
They silently stood on the steamer's deck
In a row beside the rail ;
They were only wooden dolls, you see,
Of course they could not quail !

The ship wasn't made of iron or steel,
But the captain said with a wink,
"I'll sleep all day, and you never need fear,
You are perfectly safe, I think."
Of a piece of wood the ship was made,
Of course it could not sink !

VOYAGE IN A BOWL

They left the coast all gleaming white,
And sailed to the other side,
A beautiful trip, most easily made,
On a perfectly even tide ;
It was only across the bowl they went,
Of course it was not wide !



THE DANCE OF THE STARS

THE lamp of the moon is illumined
And the sky is so splendidly bright,
Who can be giving the party
The stars are enjoying to-night?

The Bears, both the large and the small one,
Are capering there I can see,
And Venus appears in the distance,
As trim and as bright as can be.

A dancer comes tripping among them,
Her skirts are all shimmering white;
She doesn't stay long to delight them,
The fickle Miss Northern Light!

THE DANCE OF THE STARS

For supper they'll sip from the Dipper
The cream of the Milky white Way,
The party will last until morning . . .
Until the sun rises, they'll stay.

But who can be giving the party,
And why does he hide out of sight? . . .
I wish I could see him, I'd ask him
To let me dance with them to-night!



THE ROOSTER

THE hens were all laughing at some one's new joke,
And only the rooster was sad,
He watched and he frowned at their running around,
And the wonderful fun that they had.

But nobody spoke to him, all of the hens
Were busy in various ways ;
However, the rooster was king of the yard,
And organised most of their plays.

So he sent the poor hens on an errand at once,
The ducks he spoke forcibly to.
The geese were still laughing, quite silently now,
At the joke that was funny and new.

THE ROOSTER

But finally all of the birds were annoyed,
And silenced. They looked most depressed,
But the rooster was gay, it was always that way,
He was gay when he saddened the rest!



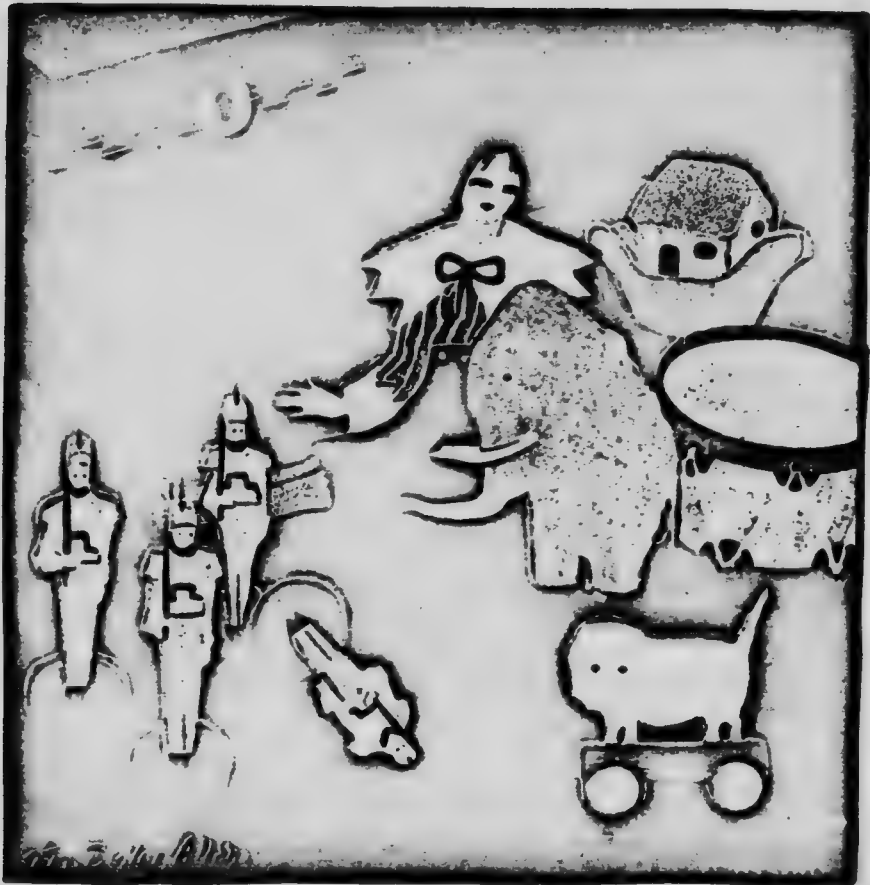
AN AFTERTHOUGHT

I'D like to be a giant tall,
Powerful and great,
I'd wear two submarines for shoes
When I walked out in state.

And dauntless, tread on ocean's depths,
The water to my knees ;
I'd bite a piece out of the moon
As if it were a cheese !

I'd pluck a dozen stars or so,
And set them in a ring,
And for a lovely posy take
The whole earth's blossoming.

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AN AFTERTHOUGHT

AN AFTERTHOUGHT

But if I were as big as that
Perhaps I wouldn't see
My soldiers, toys and little things
That are so dear to me.



THE QUESTIONER

BECAUSE I'm very small, you see,
A lot of things are puzzling me.
I'd like to know, if you can say,
What happens to the moon by day.

Last night I saw within a pool,
Drowned in the waters dark and cool,
Another moon and stars also . . .
How they got there I do not know.

The crocus wears a purple gown,
The rushes only dress in brown,
Is there a fairy who designs
The colours and the pretty lines ?

Why do some children in the street
Go walking round with naked feet,
And have to beg a little penny,
Because their fathers haven't any ?

THE QUESTIONER

If I were in a cage I'd cry ;
But my poor bird who cannot fly
Sings gaily on. Now can it be
That when he sings he thinks he's free ?

Between the bars he sees the sky,
The sun, the rain, the tree tops high,
He doesn't dream of sadder things
But chirps and folds his tiny wings.

The world is like a puzzle toy,
Because I'm such a little boy,
But when a man I grow to be
Then nothing more will puzzle me.



AT THE PARTY

WE'D like to dance so very much,
But there are five of us, you see."
"I'm sorry," said the little boy,
"There's only *one* of me!"



A MIX UP

I DREAMT an owl was fishing
Perched high upon a tree,
Although absorbed in wishing
For fish, he smiled at me.

But I was very much surprised
To see no river near,
“He must be dreaming,” I surmised,
“He can’t catch fishes here !”

I gave him just an inkling
Of what I thought was true,
He answered in a twinkling,
“ Well, aren’t you dreaming too ? ”



THE GARDEN OF WEEDS

I HADN'T any flower seeds
To plant my garden round,
But when the sun shone in the spring
I watered well the ground.

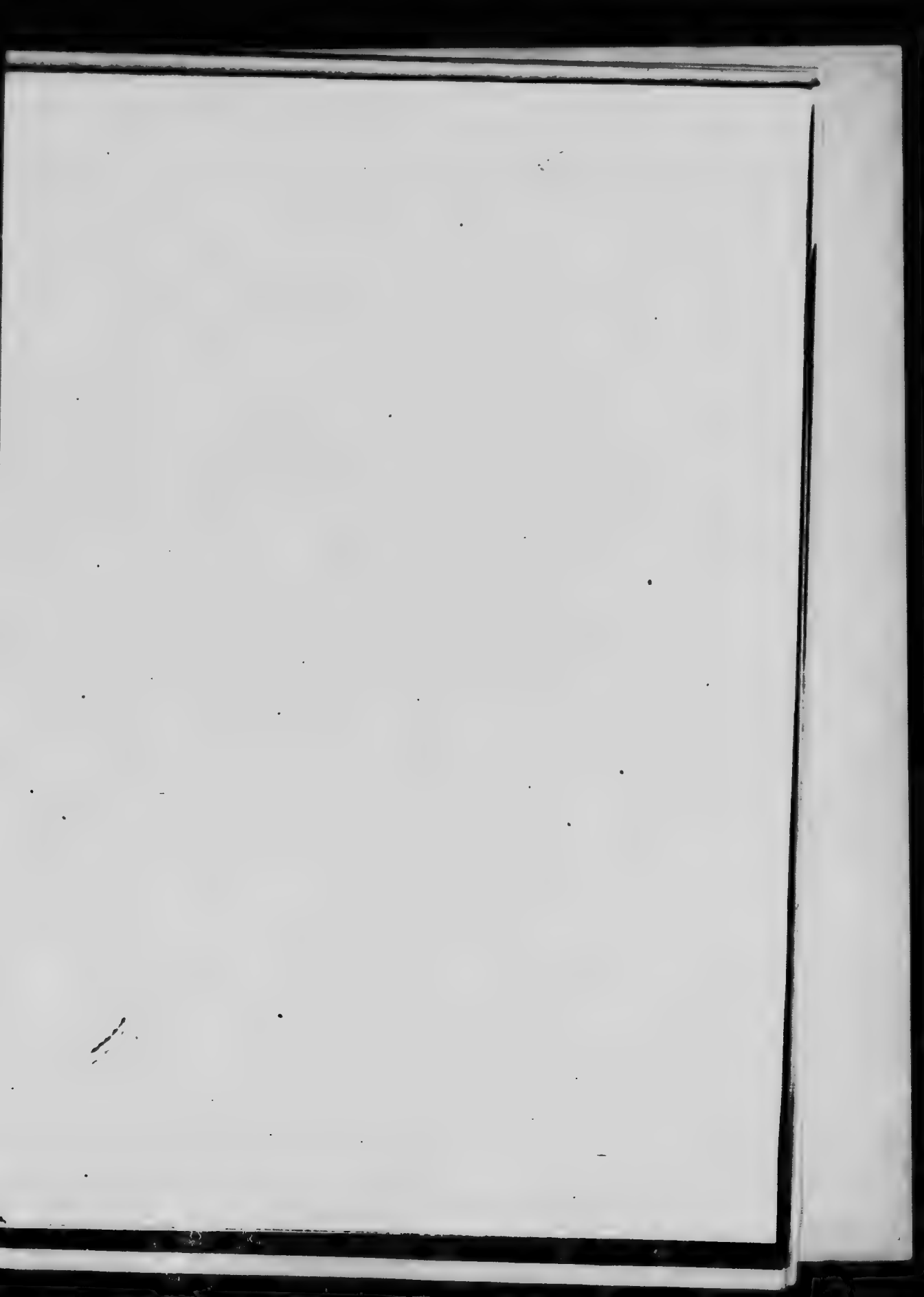
And waited for the tiny shoots
I knew would soon appear,
And now the people call them weeds . . .
I think it's very queer !

My garden may be full of weeds
But they are tall and green,
I think them just as beautiful
As flowers that I've seen.





THE GARDEN OF WEEDS



CHILD'S PRAYER

I PRAY to Thee,
I lift my hands
As children do
In countless lands,
To the far God, who understands
The little children.

Guard us from danger,
Love us well,
To poor tired people
Comfort tell ;
Look down, beyond the great church bell
On weeping children.

I pray that Thou
Will give us Light,
For Fear comes creeping
In the night ;
Unfold great wings, serenely bright
About Thy children.

CHILD'S PRAYER

My eyelids fall,
I'm half asleep . . .
My bed's so warm
And soft and deep . . .
I pray Thee, Lord, our hearts to keep
As little children.



MY PICTURE BOOK

THIS is my little picture book,
Sit down by me and let us look.
Such pretty things there are to see
I'm sure you will agree with me.
Here is the Queen who made the tarts,
The Knave comes in and off he darts
With every one. Oh, what a shame!
(But maybe I'd have done the same.)
Here's Cinderella at the ball
Beside the Prince so fine and tall
(He's sure to give her some ice-cream
And little cakes, so it will seem
Exactly like a birthday treat).
And here she's running down the street,
The Prince has found her slipper, so
He'll wed her very soon I know.
Miss Muffet next you will behold,
So frightened by the spider bold

MY PICTURE BOOK

She quite forgot her curds and whey.
And here's a Cat. The verses say
In boots he walked about the town
As foolish as a circus clown
Who makes us laugh. Look now at this,
A little boy I'd like to kiss,
His name is 'Finis' and he cries,
Poor little boy with tearful eyes.
They do not tell his story here ;
It must be very sad, I fear.

