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THE BOOK OF
FAIRY POETRY



WARWICK GOBLE

“ And, sweetly singing round about thy bed,
Strew all their blessings on thy sleeping head.”

THE BOOK OF FAIRY POETRY

EDITED BY
DORA OWEN

ILLUSTRATED BY
WARWICK GOBLE

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PART I

Fairy Stories

FAIRY BREAD

COME up here, O dusty feet !
Here is fairy bread to eat,
Here in my retiring room,
Children, you may dine
On the golden smell of broom
And the shade of pine ;
And when you have eaten well,
Fairy stories hear and tell.

R. L. STEVENSON.

Thomas the Rhymer

TRUE Thomas lay on Huntlie bank ;
A ferlie spied he wi' his ee ;
There he saw a lady bright
Come riding down by the Eildon Tree.

Her skirt was o' the grass-green silk,
Her mantle o' the velvet fine ;
At ilka tett of her horse's mane
Hung fifty siller bells and nine.

True Thomas, he pu'd aff his cap,
And louted low down to his knee,
“ Hail to thee, Mary, Queen of Heaven !
For thy peer on earth could never be.”—

“ O no, O no, Thomas,” she said,
“ That name does not belong to me ;
I'm but the Queen o' fair Elfland,
That hither have come to visit thee.

“ Harp and carp, Thomas,” she said ;
“ Harp and carp along wi' me ;
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
Sure of your bodie I shall be.”—

“ Betide me weal, betide me woe,
That weird shall never daunton me.”—
Syne he has kiss'd her on the lips,
All underneath the Eildon Tree.

“ Now, ye maun go wi' me,” she said ;
“ Now, Thomas, ye maun go wi' me ;
And ye maun serve me seven years,
Through weal or woe as may chance to be.”

THE BOOK OF FAIRY POETRY

She's mounted on her milk-white steed ;
 And she's ta'en Thomas up behind :
 And aye, whene'er her bridle rang,
 The steed gaed swifter than the wind.

O they rade on, and farther on ;
 The steed gaed swifter than the wind ;
 Until they reach'd a desert wide,
 And living land was left behind.

“ Now, Thomas, light down, light down,” she said,
 “ And lean your head upon my knee ;
 Abide ye there a little space,
 And I will shew you ferlies three.

“ O see ye not yon narrow road,
 So thick beset wi' thorns and briars ?
 That is the path of righteousness,
 Though after it but few enquires.

“ And see ye not yon braid braid road,
 That lies across the lily leven ?
 That is the path of wickedness,
 Though some call it the road to heaven.

“ And see not ye yon bonny road,
 That winds about the ferny brae ?
 That is the road to fair Elfland,
 Where thou and I this night maun gae.

“ But, Thomas, ye sall haud your tongue,
 Whatever ye may hear or see ;
 For, speak ye word in Elfin-land,
 Ye'll ne'er win back to your ain countrie.”

O they rade on, and further on,
 And they waded rivers abune the knee ;
 And they saw neither sun nor moon,
 But they heard the roaring of a sea.

It was mirk, mirk night, there was nae starlight,
 They waded through red blude to the knee ;
 For a' the blude that's shed on the earth
 Rins through the springs o' that countrie.

Syne they came to a garden green,
 And she pu'd an apple frae a tree ;
 "Take this for thy wages, Thomas," she said ;
 "It will give thee the tongue that can never lee."

"My tongue is my ain," then Thomas he said ;
 "A gudely gift ye wad gie to me !
 I neither dought to buy or sell
 At fair or tryst where I might be.

"I dought neither speak to prince or peer,
 Nor ask of grace from fair ladye !"—
 "Now, haud thy peace, Thomas," she said,
 "For as I say, so must it be."

He has gotten a coat of the even cloth,
 And a pair o' shoon of the velvet green ;
 And till seven years were come and gane,
 True Thomas on earth was never seen.

Tamlane

O, I forbid ye, maidens a',
 Who are sae sweet and fair,
 To come or gae by Carterhaugh,
 For young Tamlane is there.

Fair Janet sat within her bower,
 Sewing her silken seam,
 And wished to be in Carterhaugh,
 Amang the leaves sae green.

She let the seam fa' to her foot.
 The needle to her tae,
 And she's awa' to Carterhaugh,
 As quickly as she may.

She hadna' pu'd a wild-flower,
 A flower but barely three,
 When up he started, young Tamlane,
 Says "Lady, let a-be !

"What gars ye pu' the flowers, Janet ?
 What gars ye break the tree ?
 Or why come ye to Carterhaugh,
 Without the leave o' me ?"

"O I will pu' the flowers," she says,
 "And I will break the tree,
 And I will come to Carterhaugh,
 And ask nae leave o' thee."

But when she came to her father's ha',
 She looked sae wan and pale
 They thought the lady had gotten a fright
 Or with sickness sair did ail.

.

"O gin my Love were an earthly knight,
 As he is an elfin gay,
 I wadna gie my ain true Love
 For ony lord that we hae !"

She prink'd hersell and preen'd hersell
 By the ae light o' the moon,
 And she's awa to Carterhaugh,
 To speak wi' young Tamlane.

No sooner had she pu'd a leaf,
 A leaf but only twae,
 When up he started, young Tamlane,
 Says, "Lady, thou pu's nae mae !"

“ O tell me truth, Tamlane ! ” she says,
“ A word ye mauna lee ;
Were ever ye in a holy chapel,
Or sain’d in Christentee ? ”

“ The truth I’ll tell to thee, Janet,
A word I winna lee ;
I am a knight’s and a lady’s son,
And was sain’d as well as thee.

“ But once it fell upon a day,
As hunting I did ride,
As I rade east and o’er yon hill,
Strange chance did me betide.

“ There blew a drowsy, drowsy wind,
Dead sleep upon me fell,
The Queen of Fairies she was there
And took me to hersell.

“ And never would I tire, Janet,
In fairy-land to dwell ;
But aye at every seven years
They pay the teind to hell ;
And though the Queen mak’s much o’ me,
I fear ’twill be mysell.

“ To-morrow night it’s Hallowe’en,
Our fairy court will ride,
Through England and through Scotland baith,
And through the world sae wide ;
And if that ye wad borrow me,
At Miles Cross ye maun bide.

“ Ye’ll gae into the Miles Moss
Atween twelve hours and one ;
Tak’ holy water in your hand,
And cast a compass roun’.”

“ But how shall I ken thee, Tamlane,
 Or how shall I thee know,
 Amang sae mony unearthly knights,
 The like I never saw ? ”

“ The first court that comes along
 Ye’ll let them a’ pass by ;
 The second court that comes along
 Salute them reverently.

“ The third court that comes along
 Is clad in robes of green,
 And it’s the head court o’ them a’,
 And in it rides the Queen ;

“ And I upon a milk-white steed
 Wi a bright star in my crown ;
 Because I am a christened knight
 They gave me that renown.

“ My right hand will be gloved, Janet,
 My left hand will be bare ;
 And when ye see these tokens
 Ye’ll ken that I am there.

“ Ye’ll seize upon me at a spring,
 And to the ground I’ll fa’,
 And then ye’ll hear a ruefu’ cry
 That Tamlane he’s awa.

“ They’ll turn me cauld in your arms, Janet,
 As ice on a frozen lake ;
 But haud me fast, let me not pass,
 Gin ye would be my maik.

“ They’ll turn me in your arms, Janet,
 An adder and an aske ;
 They’ll turn me in your arms, Janet,
 A bayle that burns fast ;

They'll shape me in your arms, Janet,
 A dove, but and a swan ;
 And at last they'll shape me in your arms
 A mother-naked man :
 Cast your green mantle over me,
 And sae sall I be wan."

The very next night unto Miles Moss
 Fair Janet she is gone,
 And she stands beside the Miles Cross
 Atween twelve hours and one.

There's holy water in her hand,
 She casts a compass round ;
 And soon she saw a fairy band
 Come riding o'er the mound.

And first gaed by the black, black steed,
 And then gaed by the brown ;
 But fast she gript the milk-white steed
 And pu'd the rider down.

She pu'd him frae the milk-white steed,
 And loot the bridle fa' ;
 And up there rase an eldritch cry,
 " He's won amang us a' ! "

They turned him in fair Janet's arms
 Like ice on frozen lake ;
 They turned him into a burning fire,
 An adder, and a snake.

They shaped him in her arms at last
 A mother-naked man ;
 She cuist her mantle over him,
 And sae her true-love wan.

Up then and spak' the Queen o' Fairies,
 Out o' a bush o' broom,
 " She that has borrow'd young Tamlane,
 Has gotten a stately groom ! "

Up then and spak' the Queen o' Fairies,
 Out o' a bush o' rye,
 "She's ta'en awa the bonniest knight
 In a' my companie !

"But had I kenn'd, Tamlane," she says,
 "A lady wad borrow'd thee,
 I wad ta'en out thy twa grey e'en,
 Put in twa e'en o' tree.

"Had I but kenn'd, Tamlane," she says,
 "Before we cam' frae hame,
 I wad ta'en out your heart o' flesh,
 Put in a heart of stane.

"Had I but had the wit yestreen
 That I have coft this day,
 I'd paid my teind seven times to hell
 Ere you'd been won away !"

Kilmeny

The Thirteenth Bard's Song

BONNY Kilmeny gaed up the glen ;
 But it wasna to meet Duneira's men,
 Nor the rosy monk of the isle to see,
 For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.
 It was only to hear the yorlin sing,
 And pu' the cress-flower round the spring ;
 The scarlet hypp and the hind-berrye,
 And the nut that hung frae the hazel tree ;
 For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.
 But lang may her minny look o'er the wa' ;
 And lang may she seek i' the greenwood shaw ;
 Lang the laird o' Duneira blame,
 And lang, lang greet or Kilmeny come hame !

When many a day had come and fled,
 When grief grew calm, and hope was dead,
 When mass for Kilmeny's soul had been sung,
 When the bedesman had pray'd and the dead-bell rung,
 Late, late in a gloaming, when all was still,
 When the fringe was red on the westlin hill,
 The wood was sere, the moon i' the wane,
 The reek o' the cot hung o'er the plain,
 Like a little wee cloud in the world its lane ;
 When the ingle lowed wi' an eiry leme—
 Late, late in the gloaming Kilmeny came hame !

“ Kilmeny, Kilmeny, where have you been ?
 Lang hae we sought baith holt and dean ;
 By linn, by ford, by greenwood tree,
 Yet you are halesome and fair to see.
 Where gat ye that joup o' the lily sheen ?
 That bonnie snood o' the birk sae green ?
 And those roses, the fairest that ever were seen ?
 Kilmeny, Kilmeny, where have you been ? ”

Kilmeny look'd up wi' a lovely grace,
 But nae smile was seen on Kilmeny's face ;
 As still was her look, and as still was her e'e,
 As the stillness that lay on the emerant lea,
 Or the mist that sleeps on a waveless sea.
 For Kilmeny had been, she kened not where,
 And Kilmeny had seen what she could not declare ;
 Kilmeny had been where the cock never crew,
 Where the rain never fell, and the wind never blew.
 But it seemed as the harp of the sky had rung,
 And the airs of heaven played round her tongue,
 When she spoke of the lovely forms she had seen,
 And a land where sin had never been ;
 A land of love and a land of light,
 Withouten sun, or moon, or night ;
 Where the river swa'd a living stream,
 And the light a pure and cloudless beam ;
 The land of vision, it would seem,
 A still, an everlasting dream.

In yon green wood there is a waik,
 And in that waik there is a wene,
 And in that wene there is a maikè ;
 That neither has flesh, nor blood, nor bane ;
 And down in yon greenwood he walks his lane.

In that green wene Kilmeny lay,
 Her bosom hap'd wi' flowerets gay ;
 But the air was soft, and the silence deep,
 And bonny Kilmeny fell sound asleep.
 She kenned nae mair, nor open'd her e'e,
 Till wak'd by the hymns of a far countrie.

She woke on a couch of silk sae slim,
 All striped wi' the bars of the rainbow's rim ;
 And lovely beings round were rife,
 Who erst had travelled mortal life ;
 And aye they smiled and 'gan to speer,
 " What spirit has brought this mortal here ? "

" Lang have I journeyed the world wide,"
 A meek and reverend fere replied ;
 " Baith night and day I have watched the fair.
 Eident a thousand years and mair.
 Yes, I have watched o'er ilk degree,
 Wherever blooms feminitye ;
 And sinless virgin, free of stain
 In mind and body, found I nane.
 Never since the banquet of time
 Found I a virgin in her prime,
 Till late this bonny maiden I saw,
 As spotless as the morning snaw ;
 Full twenty years she has lived as free
 As the spirits that sojourn in this countrie :
 I have brought her away from the snares of men,
 That sin or death she never may ken."

They clasped her waist, and her hands sae fair,
 They kissed her cheeks, and they kemmed her hair ;

And round came many a blooming fere,
 Saying, " Bonny Kilmeny, ye're welcome here !
 Women are freed of the liltand scorn :
 O blessed be the day Kilmeny was born !
 Now shall the land of the spirits see,
 Now shall it ken what a woman may be !
 Many a lang year, in sorrow and pain,
 Many a lang year through the world we've gane,
 Commissioned to watch fair woman-kind,
 For it's they who nurse the immortal mind.
 We have watched their steps as the dawning shone,
 And deep in the greenwood walks alone ;
 By lily bower and silken bed,
 The viewless tears have o'er them shed ;
 Have soothed their ardent minds to sleep,
 Or left the couch of love to weep.
 We have seen ! we have seen ! but the time maun come,
 And the angels will weep at the day of doom !

" O would the fairest of mortal kind
 Aye keep these holy truths in mind,
 That kindred spirits their motions see,
 Who watch their ways with anxious e'e,
 And grieve for the guilt of humanity !
 O, sweet to Heaven the maiden's prayer,
 And the sigh that heaves a bosom sae fair !
 And dear to Heaven the words of truth
 And the praise of virtue frae beauty's mouth !
 And dear to the viewless forms of air,
 The mind that kythes as the body fair !

" O, bonny Kilmeny ! free frae stain,
 If ever you seek the world again,
 That world of sin, of sorrow, and fear,
 O tell of the joys that are waiting here ;
 And tell of the signs you shall shortly see ;
 Of the times that are now, and the times that shall be."

They lifted Kilmeny, they led her away,
 And she walked in the light of a sunless day ;

The sky was a dome of crystal bright,
 The fountain of vision, and fountain of light ;
 The emerald fields were of dazzling glow,
 And the flowers of everlasting blow.
 Then deep in the stream her body they laid,
 That her youth and her beauty never might fade ;
 And they smil'd on Heaven, when they saw her lie
 In the stream of life that wandered by.
 And she heard a song, she heard it sung,
 She ken'd not where, but sae sweetly it rung,
 It fell on the ear like a dream of the morn,—
 “ O blest be the day Kilmeny was born !
 Now shall the land of the spirits see,
 Now shall it ken what a woman may be !
 The sun that shines on the world sae bright,
 A borrowed gleid frae the fountain of light ;
 And the moon that sleeks the sky sae dun,
 Like a gouden bow or a beamless sun,
 Shall wear away and be seen nae mair,
 And the angels shall miss them travelling the air.
 But lang, lang after, baith nicht and day,
 When the sun and the world have clyed away ;
 When the sinner has gane to his waesome doom,
 Kilmeny shall smile in eternal bloom ! ”

They bore her away, she wist not how,
 For she felt not arm nor rest below ;
 But so swift they wained her through the light,
 'Twas like the motion of sound or sight ;
 They seemed to split the gales of air,
 And yet nor gale nor breeze was there.
 Unnumbered groves below them grew,
 They came, they passed, and backward flew,
 Like floods of blossoms gliding on,
 A moment seen, in a moment gone.
 O, never vales to mortal view
 Appeared like those o'er which they flew,
 That land to human spirits given,
 The lowermost vales of the storied heaven ;
 From thence they can view the world below,

And heaven's blue gates with sapphires glow.
More glory yet unmeet to know.

They bore her far to a mountain green,
To see what mortal never had seen,
And they seated her high on a purple sward,
And bade her heed what she saw and heard,
And note the changes the spirits wrought,
For now she lived in the land of thought.
She looked, and she saw nor sun nor skies,
But a crystal dome of a thousand dyes :
She looked, and she saw nae land aright,
But an endless whirl of glory and light,
And radiant beings went and came,
Far swifter than wind, or the linkèd flame.
She hid her e'en frae the dazzling view ;
She looked again, and the scene was new.

She saw a sun in a summer sky,
And clouds of amber sailing by ;
A lovely land beneath her lay,
And that land had glens and mountains grey ;
And that land had valleys and hoary piles,
And marled seas and a thousand isles.
Its fields were speckled, its forests green,
And its lakes were all of a dazzling sheen,
Like magic mirrors, where slumbering lay
The sun, and the sky, and the cloudlet grey ;
Which heaved and trembled and gently swung,
On every shore they seemed to be hung :
For there they were seen on their downward plain
A thousand times and a thousand again ;
In winding lake, and placid firth,
Little peaceful heavens in the bosom of earth.

Kilmeny sighed and seemed to grieve,
For she found her heart to that land did cleave ;
She saw the corn wave on the vale ;
She saw the deer run down the dale ;
She saw the plaid and the broad claymore,

And the brows that the badge of freedom bore,—
And she thought she had seen the land before.

But to sing the sights Kilmeny saw,
So far surpassing nature's law,
The singer's voice wad sink away,
And the string of his harp wad cease to play.
But she saw till the sorrows of man were by,
And all was love and harmony ;—
Till the stars of heaven fell calmly away,
Like flakes of snaw on a winter day.

Then Kilmeny begged again to see
The friends she had left in her ain countrie,
To tell of the place where she had been,
And the glories that lay in the land unseen ;
To warn the living maidens fair,
The loved of heaven, the spirits' care,
That all whose minds unmeled remain
Shall bloom in beauty when time is gane.

With distant music, soft and deep,
They lulled Kilmeny sound asleep ;
And when she awakened, she lay her lane,
All happed with flowers, in the greenwood wene.
When seven long years had come and fled,
When grief was calm, and hope was dead,
When scarce was remembered Kilmeny's name,
Late, late in a gloamin' Kilmeny came hame.
And O, her beauty was fair to see,
But still and steadfast was her ee !
Such beauty bard may never declare,
For there was no pride nor passion there ;
And the soft desire of maiden's een
In that mild face could never be seen.
Her seymar was the lily flower,
And her cheek the moss-rose in the shower ;
And her voice like the distant melodye,
That floats along the twilight sea.



WARWICK GOBLE

“ The dun deer wooed with manner bland,
And covered beneath her lily hand.”

But she loved to raik the lanely glen,
And keep afar frae the haunts of men,
Her holy hymns unheard to sing,
To suck the flowers, and drink the spring ;
But wherever her peaceful form appeared,
The wild beasts of the hill were cheered ;
The wolf played blythely round the field,
The lordly bison lowed, and kneeled ;
The dun deer wooed with manner bland,
And cowered beneath her lily hand.
And when at eve the woodlands rung,
When hymns of other worlds she sung
In ecstasy of sweet devotion,
O, then the glen was all in motion !
The wild beasts of the forest came,
Broke from their bughts and faulds the tame,
And goved around, charmed and amazed ;
Even the dull cattle crooned and gazed,
And murmured, and looked with anxious pain
For something the mystery to explain.
The buzzard came with the throstle-cock ;
The corby left her houf in the rock ;
The blackbird along wi' the eagle flew ;
The hind came tripping o'er the dew ;
The wolf and the kid their raik began,
And the tod and the lamb and the leveret ran ;
The hawk and the hern attour them hung,
And the merle and the mavis forhooyed their young ;
And all in a peaceful ring were hurled—
It was like an eve in a sinless world !

When a month and a day had come and gane,
Kilmeny sought the greenwood wene ;
There laid her down on the leaves sae green,
And Kilmeny on earth was never mair seen.
But O ! the words that fell frae her mouth
Were words of wonder, and words of truth !
But all the land were in fear and dread,
For they kendna whether she was living or dead.

It wasna her hame, and she couldna remain ;
 She left this world of sorrow and pain,
 And returned to the land of thought again.

JAMES HOGG.

Alice Brand

MERRY it is in the good greenwood,
 When the mavis and merle are singing,
 When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry
 And the hunter's horn is ringing.

“ O Alice Brand, my native land
 Is lost for love of you ;
 And we must hold by wood and wold,
 As outlaws wont to do.

“ O Alice, 'twas all for thy locks so bright,
 And 'twas all for thine eyes so blue,
 That on the night of our luckless flight,
 Thy brother bold I slew.

“ Now must I teach to hew the beech
 The hand that held the glaive,
 For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
 And stakes to fence our cave.

“ And for vest of pall, thy fingers small,
 That wont on harp to stray,
 A cloak must shear from the slaughter'd deer,
 To keep the cold away.”—

“ O Richard ! if my brother died,
 'Twas but a fatal chance ;
 For darkling was the battle tried,
 And fortune sped the lance.

“ If pall and vair no more I wear,
 Nor thou the crimson sheen,
 As warm, we'll say, is the russet grey,
 As gay the forest green.

“ And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
 And lost thy native land,
 Still Alice has her own Richard,
 And he his Alice Brand.”

’Tis merry, ’tis merry, in good greenwood,
 So blithe Lady Alice is singing ;
 On the beech’s pride, and oak’s brown side,
 Lord Richard’s axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
 Who won’d within the hill,—
 Like wind in the porch of a ruin’d church,
 His voice was ghostly shrill.

“ Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
 Our moonlight circle’s screen ?
 Or who comes here to chase the deer,
 Beloved of our Elfin Queen ?
 Or who may dare on wold to wear
 The fairies’ fatal green ?

“ Up, Urgan, up ! to yon mortal hie,
 For thou wert christen’d man ;
 For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
 For mutter’d word or ban.

“ Lay on him the curse of the wither’d heart,
 The curse of the sleepless eye ;
 Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
 Nor yet find leave to die.”

’Tis merry, ’tis merry, in good greenwood,
 Though the birds have still’d their singing ;
 The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
 And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
 Before Lord Richard stands,
 And, as he cross'd and bless'd himself,
 "I fear not sign," quoth the grisly elf,
 "That is made with bloody hands."

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
 That woman, void of fear,—
 "And if there's blood upon his hand,
 'Tis but the blood of deer."—



"Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
 It cleaves unto his hand,
 The stain of thine own kindly blood,
 The blood of Ethert Brand."

Then forward stepp'd she, Alice Brand,
 And made the holy sign,—
 "And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
 A spotless hand is mine.

"And I conjure thee, Demon elf,
 By Him whom Demons fear,
 To show us whence thou art thyself,
 And what thine errand here?"—

“ ’Tis merry, ’tis merry, in Fairy-land,
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by their monarch’s side,
With bit and bridle ringing :

“ And gaily shines the Fairy-land—
But all is glistening show,
Like the idle gleam that December’s beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

“ And fading, like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

“ It was between the night and day,
When the Fairy King has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And, ’twixt life and death, was snatch’d away
To the joyless Elfin bower.

“ But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mold,
As fair a form as thine.”

She cross’d him once—she cross’d him twice—
That lady was so brave ;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She cross’d him thrice, that lady bold ;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mold,
Her brother, Ethert Brand !

Merry it is in good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
But merrier were they in Dunfermline grey,
When all the bells were ringing.

WALTER SCOTT.

The Ferlie

A FERLIE cam' ben to me yestreen,
 A lady jimp an' sma',
 Wi' a milk-white snood an' a kirtle green,
 Yellow an' roun were her bonny e'en,
 And she said, "Will ye come awa' ?"

"Will ye gang wi' me to the Elfyn Knowe,
 To milk our queenie's coo ?"
 "Na, na," quo' I, "I maun shear my sheep,
 I've my barn to bigg, an' my corn to reap,
 Sae I canna come the noo."

The ferlie skirled as she turned to gae,
 For an angry elf was she,
 "O a wilfu' man maun hae his way,
 An' I mak' sma' doot but ye'll rue the day
 That ye wouldna gang wi' me."

"O, ance again will ye speir at me
 An' I'll aiblins come awa' ?"
 "O I'll come again to your yetts," quo' she,
 "When broom blaws bricht on yon rowan-tree
 An' the laverock sings i' th' snaw !"

GRAHAM R. TOMSON.

The Fairies

UP the airy mountain,
 Down the rushy glen,
 We daren't go a-hunting
 For fear of little men ;
 Wee folk, good folk,
 Trooping all together ;
 Green jacket, red cap,
 And white owl's feather !



• “ Will ye gang wi’ me to the Elflyn Knowe.”



Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide-foam ;
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
All night awake.

High on the hill-top
The old King sits ;
He is now so old and gray
He's nigh lost his wits.
With a bridge of white mist
Columbkil he crosses,
On his stately journeys
From Slieveleague to Rosses ;
Or going up with music
On cold starry nights,
To sup with the Queen
Of the gay Northern Lights.

They stole little Bridget
For seven years long ;
When she came down again
Her friends were all gone.
They took her lightly back,
Between the night and morrow,
They thought that she was fast asleep,
But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
Deep within the lake,
On a bed of flag-leaves,
Watching till she wake.

By the craggy hill-side,
Through the mosses bare,
They have planted thorn-trees
For pleasure here and there.

Is any man so daring
 As dig them up in spite,
 He shall find their sharpest thorns
 In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,
 Down the rushy glen,
 We daren't go a-hunting
 For fear of little men ;
 Wee folk, good folk,
 Trooping all together ;
 Green jacket, red cap,
 And white owl's feather !

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

The Lupracaun, or Fairy Shoemaker

LITTLE Cowboy, what have you heard,
 Up on the lonely rath's green mound ?
 Only the plaintive yellow bird
 Sighing in sultry fields around,
 Chary, chary, chary, chee-ee !—
 Only the grasshopper and the bee ?—
 “ Tip-tap, rip-rap,
 Tick-a-tack-too !
 Scarlet leather, sewn together,
 This will make a shoe.
 Left, right, pull it tight,
 Summer days are warm ;
 Underground in winter,
 Laughing at the storm ! ”
 Lay your ear close to the hill.
 Do you not catch the tiny clamour,
 Busy click of an elfin hammer,
 Voice of the Lupracaun singing shrill
 As he merrily plies his trade ?
 He's a span

And a quarter in height.
Get him in sight, hold him tight,
And you're a made
Man !

You watch your cattle the summer day,
Sup on potatoes, sleep in the hay ;



How would you like to roll in your carriage,
Look for a duchess's daughter in marriage ?
Seize the Shoemaker—then you may !

“ Big boots a-hunting,
Sandals in the hall,
White for a wedding feast,
Pink for a ball.

This way, that way,
So we make a shoe ;
Getting rich every stitch,
Tick-tack-too ! ”

“ And some they played with the water,
And rolled it down the hill ;
‘ And this,’ they said, ‘ shall speedily turn
The poor old miller’s mill ;

“ ‘ For there has been no water,
Ever since the first of May ;
And a busy man shall the miller be
By the dawning of the day !

“ ‘ Oh, the miller, how he will laugh,
When he sees the mill-dam rise !
The jolly old miller, how he will laugh,
Till the tears fill both his eyes ! ’

“ And some they seized the little winds,
That sounded over the hill,
And each put a horn into his mouth,
And blew so sharp and shrill :—

“ ‘ And there,’ said they, ‘ the merry winds go,
Away from every horn ;
And those shall clear the mildew dank
From the blind old widow’s corn.

“ ‘ Oh, the poor blind old widow—
Though she has been blind so long,
She’ll be merry enough when the mildew’s gone,
And the corn stands stiff and strong.’

“ And some they brought the brown lintseed,
And flung it down from the Low—
‘ And this,’ said they, ‘ by the sunrise,
In the weaver’s croft shall grow !

“ ‘ Oh, the poor, lame weaver,
How will he laugh outright,
When he sees his dwindling flax-field
All full of flowers by night ! ’

“ And then upspoke a brownie,
With a long beard on his chin—
‘ I have spun up all the tow,’ said he,
‘ And I want some more to spin.

“ ‘ I’ve spun a piece of hempen cloth,
And I want to spin another—
A little sheet for Mary’s bed,
And an apron for her mother !’

“ And with that I could not help but laugh,
And I laughed out loud and free :
And then on the top of the Caldon-Low,
There was no one left but me.

“ And all on the top of the Caldon Low,
The mists were cold and grey,
And nothing I saw but the mossy stones
That round about me lay.

“ But, as I came down from the hill-top,
I heard, afar below,
How busy the jolly miller was,
And how merry the wheel did go.

“ And I peeped into the widow’s field ;
And, sure enough, was seen
The yellow ears of the mildewed corn
All standing stiff and green.

“ And down by the weaver’s cot I stole,
To see if the flax were high ;
But I saw the weaver at his gate,
With the good news in his eye !

“ Now, this is all I heard, mother,
And all that I did see ;
So, prithee, make my bed, mother,
For I’m tired as I can be.”

MARY HOWITT.

The Fairy Well of Lagnanay

MOURNFULLY, sing mournfully—
 “ O listen, Ellen, sister dear ;
 Is there no help at all for me,
 But only ceaseless sigh and tear ?
 Why did not he who left me here,
 With stolen hope steal memory ?
 O listen, Ellen, sister dear,
 (Mournfully, sing mournfully)—
 I'll go away to Sleamish hill,
 I'll pluck the fairy hawthorn tree,
 And let the spirits work their will ;
 I care not if for good or ill,
 So they but lay the memory
 Which all my heart is haunting still !
 (Mournfully, sing mournfully)—
 The Fairies are a silent race,
 And pale as lily flowers to see ;
 I care not for a blanched face,
 Nor wandering in a dreaming place,
 So I but banish memory :—
 I wish I were with Anna Grace ! ”
 Mournfully, sing mournfully !—

Hearken to my tale of woe—
 'Twas thus to weeping Ellen Con
 Her sister said in accents low,
 Her only sister, Una bawn :
 'Twas in their bed before the dawn,
 And Ellen answered sad and slow,—
 “ Oh Una, Una, be not drawn
 (Hearken to my tale of woe)—
 To this unholy grief I pray,
 Which makes me sick at heart to know,
 And I will help you if I may :
 —The Fairy Well of Lagnanay—

Lie nearer me, I tremble so,—
 Una, I've heard wise women say
 (Hearken to my tale of woe)—
 That if before the dews arise,
 True maiden in its icy flow
 With pure hand bathe her bosom thrice,
 Three lady-brackens pluck likewise,
 And three times round the fountain go,
 She straight forgets her tears and sighs.”
 Hearken to my tale of woe !

All, alas ! and well-away !
 “ Oh, sister Ellen, sister sweet,
 Come with me to the hill I pray,
 And I will prove that blessed freet ! ”
 They rose with soft and silent feet,
 They left their mother where she lay,
 Their mother and her care discreet,
 (All, alas ! and well-away !)
 And soon they reached the Fairy Well,
 The mountain's eye, clear, cold, and grey,
 Wide open in the dreary fell :
 How long they stood 'twere vain to tell,
 At last upon the point of day,
 Bawn Una bares her bosom's swell,
 (All, alas ! and well-away !)
 Thrice o'er her shrinking breasts she laves
 The gliding glance that will not stay
 Of subtly-streaming fairy waves :—
 And now the charm three brackens craves,
 She plucks them in their fringed array :—
 Now round the well her fate she braves,
 (All, alas ! and well-away !)

Save us all from Fairy thrall !
 Ellen sees her face the rim
 Twice and thrice, and that is all—
 Fount and hill and maiden swim,
 All together melting dim !

"Una ! Una !" thou may'st call,
 Sister sad ! but lith or limb
 (Save us all from Fairy thrall !)
 Never again of Una bawn
 Where now she walks in dreamy hall
 Shall eye of mortal look upon !
 Oh ! can it be the guard was gone,
 That better guard than shield or wall ?
 Who knows on earth save Turlagh Daune ?
 (Save us all from Fairy thrall !)
 Behold the banks are green and bare,
 No pit is here wherein to fall :
 Aye—at the fount you well may stare,
 But nought save pebbles smooth is there,
 And small streams twirling one and all.
 Hie thee home, and be thy pray'r,
 Save us all from Fairy thrall !

SAMUEL FERGUSON.

The Kelpie of Corrievreckan

HE mounted his steed of the water clear,
 And sat on his saddle of sea-weed sere ;
 He held his bridle of strings of pearl,
 Dug out of the depths where the sea-snakes curl.

He put on his vest of the whirlpool froth,
 Soft and dainty as velvet cloth,
 And donn'd his mantle of sand so white,
 And grasp'd his sword of the coral bright.

And away he gallop'd, a horseman free,
 Spurring his steed through the stormy sea,
 Clearing the billows with bound and leap
 Away, away, o'er the foaming deep !

By Scarba's rock, by Lunga's shore,
By Garveloch isles where the breakers roar,
With his horse's hoofs he dash'd the spray,
And on to Loch Buy, away, away !

On to Loch Buy all day he rode,
And reach'd the shore as sunset glow'd,
And stopp'd to hear the sounds of joy
That rose from the hills and glens of Moy.

The morrow was May, and on the green
They'd lit the fire of Beltan E'en,
And danced around, and piled it high
With peat and heather and pine-logs dry.

A piper play'd a lightsome reel,
And timed the dance with toe and heel ;
While wives look'd on, as lad and lass
Trode it merrily o'er the grass.

And Jessie (fickle and fair was she)
Sat with Evan beneath a tree,
And smiled with mingled love and pride,
And half agreed to be his bride.

The Kelpie gallop'd o'er the green—
He seemed a knight of noble mien,
And old and young stood up to see,
And wonder'd who the knight could be.

His flowing locks were auburn bright,
His cheeks were ruddy, his eyes flash'd light ;
And as he sprang from his good gray steed,
He look'd a gallant youth indeed.

And Jessie's fickle heart beat high,
As she caught the stranger's glancing eye :
And when he smiled, " Ah well," thought she,
" I wish this knight came courting me ! "

He took two steps towards her seat—
 “ Wilt thou be mine, O maiden sweet ? ”
 He took her lily-white hand, and sigh'd,
 “ Maiden, maiden, be my bride ! ”

And Jessie blush'd, and whisper'd soft—
 “ Meet me to-night when the moon's aloft ;
 I've dream'd, fair knight, long time of thee—
 I thought thou camest courting me.”

When the moon her yellow horn display'd,
 Alone to the trysting went the maid ;
 When all the stars were shining bright,
 Alone to the trysting went the knight.

“ I have loved thee long, I have loved thee well,
 Maiden, oh more than words can tell !
 Maiden, thine eyes like diamonds shine ;
 Maiden, maiden, be thou mine ! ”

“ Fair sir, thy suit I'll ne'er deny—
 Though poor my lot, my hopes are high ;
 I scorn a lover of low degree—
 None but a knight shall marry me.”

He took her by the hand so white,
 And gave her a ring of the gold so bright ;
 “ Maiden, whose eyes like diamonds shine—
 Maiden, maiden, now thou'rt mine ! ”

He lifted her on his steed of gray,
 And they rode till morning away—
 Over the mountain and over the moor,
 And over the rocks, to the dark sea-shore.

“ We have ridden east, we have ridden west—
 I'm weary, fair knight, and I fain would rest.
 Say, is thy dwelling beyond the sea ?
 Hast thou a good ship waiting for me ? ”



“ Down to the rocks where the serpents creep.”

“ I have no dwelling beyond the sea,
 I have no good ship waiting for thee ;
 Thou shalt sleep with me on a couch of foam,
 And the depths of the ocean shall be thy home.”

The gray steed plunged in the billows clear,
 And the maiden's shrieks were sad to hear.
 “ Maiden, whose eyes like diamonds shine—
 Maiden, maiden, now thou'rt mine ! ”

Loud the cold sea-blast did blow,
 As they sank 'mid the angry waves below—
 Down to the rocks where the serpents creep,
 Twice five hundred fathoms deep.

At morn a fisherman, sailing by,
 Saw her pale corpse floating high ;
 He knew the maid by her yellow hair
 And her lily skin so soft and fair.

Under a rock on Scarba's shore,
 Where the wild winds sigh and the breakers roar,
 They dug her a grave by the water clear,
 Among the sea-weed salt and sere.

And every year at Beltan E'en,
 The Kelpie gallops across the green,
 On a steed as fleet as the wintry wind,
 With Jessie's mournful ghost behind.

CHARLES MACKAY.

The Brownie of Blednoch

THERE cam a strange wight to our town-en',
 An' the fient a body did him ken ;
 He tirlid na lang, but he glided ben
 Wi' a dreary, dreary hum.

His face did glare like the glow o' the west,
 When the drumlie cloud has it half o'ercast ;
 Or the strugglin' moon when she's sair distrest.
 O sirs, 'twas Aiken-drum.

I trow the bauldest stood aback,
 Wi' a gape an' a glower till their lugs did crack,
 As the shapeless phantom mum'ling spak—
 “ Hae ye wark for Aiken-drum ? ”

Oh, had ye seen the bairnies' fright,
 As they stared at this wild and unyirthly wight,
 As he stauket in 'tween the dark and the light,
 And graned out, “ Aiken-drum ! ”

The black dog, growling, covered his tail,
 The lassie swarfed, loot fa' the pail ;
 Rob's lingle brak as he mendit the flail,
 At the sight o' Aiken-drum.

His matted head on his breast did rest,
 A lang blue beard wan'ered down like a vest ;
 But the glare o' his ee hath nae bard exprest,
 Nor the skimes o' Aiken-drum.

Roun' his hairy form there was naething seen
 But a philabeg o' the rashes green,
 An' his knotted knees played aye knoit between—
 What a sight was Aiken-drum !

On his wauchie arms three claws did meet,
 As they trailed on the grun' by his taeless feet ;
 E'en the old gudeman himsel' did sweat
 To look at Aiken-drum.

But he drew a score, himsel' did sain ;
 The auld wife tried, but her tongue was gane ;
 While the young one closer clasped her wean,
 And turned frae Aiken-drum.

But the canny auld wife cam till her breath,
 And she thocht the Bible might ward aff scaith,
 Be it banshee, bogle, ghaist, or wraith—
 But it feared na Aiken-drum.

“ His presence protect us ! ” quoth the old gudeman ;
 “ What wad ye, where won ye, by sea or by lan’ ?
 I conjure ye, speak, by the beuk in my han’ ! ”
 What a grane gae Aiken-drum !

“ I lived in a lan’ where we saw nae sky,
 I dwelt in a spot where a burn rins na by ;
 But I’se dwell now wi’ you if ye like to try—
 Hae ye wark for Aiken-drum ?

“ I’ll shiel a’ your sheep i’ the mornin’ sune,
 I’ll berry your crap by the light o’ the moon,
 An’ ba the bairns wi’ an unkenned tune,
 If ye’ll keep puir Aiken-drum.

“ I’ll loup the linn where ye canna wade,
 I’ll kirn the kirn, an’ I’ll turn the bread ;
 An’ the wildest filly that ever ran rede,
 I’se tame’t,” quoth Aiken-drum.

“ To wear the tod frae the flock on the fell,
 To gather the dew frae the heather-bell,
 An’ to look at my face i’ your clear crystal well,
 Might gie pleasure to Aiken-drum.

“ I’se seek nae guids, gear, bond, nor mark ;
 I use nae beddin’, shoon, nor sark ;
 But a cogfu’ o’ brose ’tween the light an’ the dark,
 Is the wage o’ Aiken-drum.”

Quoth the wylie auld wife : “ The thing speaks weel ;
 Our workers are scant—we hae routh o’ meal ;
 Gif he’ll do as he says—be he man, be he deil—
 Now ! we’ll try this Aiken-drum.”

But the wenches skirled : “ He’s no be here !
 His eldritch look gars us swarf wi’ fear ;
 An’ the fient a ane will the house come near,
 If they think but o’ Aiken-drum.”

“ Puir clipmalabors ! ye hae little wit ;
 Is’t na Hallowmas now, an’ the crap out yet ? ”
 Sae she silenced them a’ wi’ a stamp o’ her fit—
 “ Sit yer wa’s down, Aiken-drum.”



Roun’ a’ that side what wark was dune
 By the streamer’s gleam, or the glance o’ the moon ;
 A word, or a wish, an’ the brownie cam sune,
 Sae helpfu’ was Aiken-drum. . . .

On Blednoch banks, an’ on crystal Cree,
 For mony a day a toiled wight was he ;
 While the bairns played harmless roun’ his knee,
 Sae social was Aiken-drum.

But a new-made wife, fu’ o’ rippish freaks,
 Fond o’ a’ things feat for the first five weeks,
 Laid a mouldy pair o’ her ain man’s brecks
 By the brose o’ Aiken-drum.

Let the learned decide when they convene
 What spell was him an' the breeks between ;
 For frae that day forth he was nae mair seen,
 An' sair missed was Aiken-drum.

He was heard by a herd gaun by Thrieve,
 Crying : " Lang, lang now may I greet an' grieve :
 For, alas ! I hae gotten baith fee an' leave—
 Oh, luckless Aiken-drum."

WILLIAM NICHOLSON.

Goblin Market

MORNING and evening
 Maids heard the goblins cry :
 " Come buy our orchard fruits,
 Come buy, come buy :
 Apples and quinces,
 Lemons and oranges,
 Plump unpecked cherries,
 Melons and raspberries,
 Bloom-down-cheeked peaches,
 Swart-headed mulberries,
 Wild free-born cranberries,
 Crab-apples, dewberries,
 Pine-apples, blackberries,
 Apricots, strawberries ;—
 All ripe together
 In summer weather,—
 Morns that pass by,
 Fair eves that fly ;
 Come buy, come buy :
 Our grapes fresh from the vine,
 Pomegranates full and fine,
 Dates and sharp bullaces,
 Rare pears and greengages,
 Damsons and bilberries,
 Taste them and try :

Currants and gooseberries,
 Bright-fire-like barberries,
 Figs to fill your mouth,
 Citrons from the South,
 Sweet to tongue and sound to eye ;
 Come buy, come buy."

Evening by evening
 Among the brookside rushes,
 Laura bowed her head to hear,
 Lizzie veiled her blushes :
 Crouching close together
 In the cooling weather,
 With clasping arms and cautioning lips,
 With tingling cheeks and finger tips.
 " Lie close," Laura said,
 Pricking up her golden head :
 " We must not look at goblin men,
 We must not buy their fruits :
 Who knows upon what soil they fed
 Their hungry thirsty roots ? "
 " Come buy," call the goblins
 Hobbling down the glen.
 " Oh," cried Lizzie, " Laura, Laura,
 You should not peep at goblin men."
 Lizzie covered up her eyes,
 Covered close lest they should look ;
 Laura reared her glossy head,
 And whispered like the restless brook :
 " Look, Lizzie, look, Lizzie,
 Down the glen tramp little men.
 One hauls a basket,
 One bears a plate,
 One lugs a golden dish
 Of many pounds weight.
 How fair the vine must grow
 Whose grapes are so luscious ;
 How warm the wind must blow
 Through those fruit bushes."
 " No," said Lizzie : " No, no, no ;

Their offers should not charm us,
Their evil gifts would harm us.”
She thrust a dimpled finger
In each ear, shut eyes and ran :
Curious Laura chose to linger
Wondering at each merchant man.
One had a cat’s face,
One whisked a tail,
One tramped at a rat’s pace,
One crawled like a snail,
One like a wombat prowled obtuse and furry,
One like a ratel tumbled hurry skurry.
She heard a voice like voice of doves
Cooing all together :
They sounded kind and full of loves
In the pleasant weather.

Laura stretched her gleaming neck
Like a rush-imbedded swan,
Like a lily from the beck,
Like a moonlit poplar branch,
Like a vessel at the launch
When its last restraint is gone.

Backwards up the mossy glen
Turned and trooped the goblin men,
With their shrill repeated cry,
“ Come buy, come buy.”
When they reached where Laura was
They stood stock still upon the moss,
Leering at each other,
Brother with queer brother ;
Signalling each other,
Brother with sly brother.
One set his basket down,
One reared his plate ;
One began to weave a crown
Of tendrils, leaves and rough nuts brown
(Men sell not such in any town) ;

One heaved the golden weight
 Of dish and fruit to offer her :
 " Come buy, come buy," was still their cry.
 Laura stared but did not stir,
 Longed but had no money :
 The whisk-tailed merchant bade her taste
 In tones as smooth as honey,
 The cat-faced purr'd,
 The rat-paced spoke a word
 Of welcome, and the snail-paced even was heard ;
 One parrot-voiced and jolly
 Cried " Pretty Goblin " still for " Pretty Polly " ;—
 One whistled like a bird.

But sweet-tooth Laura spoke in haste :
 " Good folk, I have no coin ;
 To take were to purloin :
 I have no copper in my purse,
 I have no silver either,
 And all my gold is on the furze
 That shakes in windy weather
 Above the rusty heather."
 " You have much gold upon your head,"
 They answered all together :
 " Buy from us with a golden curl."
 She clipped a precious golden lock,
 She dropped a tear more rare than pearl,
 Then sucked their fruit globes fair or red :
 Sweeter than honey from the rock,
 Stronger than man-rejoicing wine,
 Clearer than water flowed that juice ;
 She never tasted such before,
 How should it cloy with length of use ?
 She sucked and sucked and sucked the more
 Fruits which that unknown orchard bore ;
 She sucked until her lips were sore ;
 Then flung the emptied rinds away
 But gathered up one kernel-stone,
 And knew not was it night or day
 As she turned home alone.



“ Buy from us with a golden curl.”

Lizzie met her at the gate
Full of wise upbraidings :
“ Dear, you should not stay so late,
Twilight is not good for maidens ;
Should not loiter in the glen
In the haunts of goblin men.
Do you not remember Jeanie,
How she met them in the moonlight,
Took their gifts both choice and many,
Ate their fruits and wore their flowers
Plucked from bowers
Where summer ripens at all hours ?
But ever in the noonlight
She pined and pined away ;
Sought them by night and day,
Found them no more but dwindled and grew gray ;
Then fell with the first snow,
While to this day no grass will grow
Where she lies low :
I planted daisies there a year ago
That never blow.
You should not loiter so.”
“ Nay, hush,” said Laura :
“ Nay, hush, my sister :
I ate and ate my fill,
Yet my mouth waters still ;
To-morrow night I will
Buy more ” : and kissed her :
“ Have done with sorrow ;
I’ll bring you plums to-morrow
Fresh on their mother twigs,
Cherries worth getting ;
You cannot think what figs
My teeth have met in,
What melons icy-cold
Piled on a dish of gold
Too huge for me to hold,
What peaches with a velvet nap,
Pellucid grapes without one seed :
Odorous indeed must be the mead

Whereon they grow, and pure the wave they drink
 With lilies at the brink,
 And sugar-sweet their sap.”

Golden head by golden head,
 Like two pigeons in one nest
 Folded in each other's wings,
 They lay down in their curtained bed :
 Like two blossoms on one stem,
 Like two flakes of new-fall'n snow,
 Like two wands of ivory
 Tipped with gold for awful kings.
 Moon and stars gazed in at them,
 Wind sang to them lullaby,
 Lumbering owls forbore to fly,
 Not a bat flapped to and fro
 Round their rest :
 Cheek to cheek and breast to breast
 Locked together in one nest.

Early in the morning
 When the first cock crowed his warning,
 Neat like bees, as sweet and busy,
 Laura rose with Lizzie :
 Fetched in honey, milked the cows,
 Aired and set to rights the house,
 Kneaded cakes of whitest wheat,
 Cakes for dainty mouths to eat,
 Next churned butter, whipped up cream,
 Fed their poultry, sat and sewed ;
 Talked as modest maidens should :
 Lizzie with an open heart,
 Laura in an absent dream,
 One content, one sick in part ;
 One warbling for the mere bright day's delight,
 One longing for the night.

At length slow evening came :
 They went with pitchers to the reedy brook ;
 Lizzie most placid in her look,
 Laura most like a leaping flame.

They drew the gurgling water from its deep ;
Lizzie plucked purple and rich golden flags,
Then turning homewards said : “ The sunset flushes
Those furthest loftiest crags ;
Come, Laura, not another maiden lags,
No wilful squirrel wags,
The beasts and birds are fast asleep.”
But Laura loitered still among the rushes
And said the bank was steep.

And said the hour was early still,
The dew not fall'n, the wind not chill :
Listening ever, but not catching
The customary cry,
“ Come buy, come buy,”
With its iterated jingle
Of sugar-baited words :
Not for all her watching
Once discerning even one goblin
Racing, whisking, tumbling, hobbling ;
Let alone the herds
That used to tramp along the glen,
In groups or single,
Of brisk fruit-merchant men.

Till Lizzie urged, “ O Laura, come ;
I hear the fruit-call but I dare not look :
You should not loiter longer at this brook :
Come with me home.
The stars rise, the moon bends her arc,
Each glowworm winks her spark,
Let us get home before the night grows dark :
For clouds may gather
Though this is summer weather,
Put out the lights and drench us through ;
Then if we lost our way what should we do ? ”

Laura turned cold as stone
To find her sister heard that cry alone,
That goblin cry,
“ Come buy our fruits, come buy.”

THE BOOK OF FAIRY POETRY

Must she then buy no more such dainty fruits ?
 Must she no more that succous pasture find,
 Gone deaf and blind ?
 Her tree of life drooped from the root :
 She said not one word in her heart's sore ache ;
 But peering through the dimness, naught discerning,
 Trudged home, her pitcher dripping all the way ;
 So crept to bed, and lay
 Silent till Lizzie slept ;
 Then sat up in a passionate yearning,
 And gnashed her teeth for baulked desire, and wept
 As if her heart would break.

Day after day, night after night,
 Laura kept watch in vain
 In sullen silence of exceeding pain.
 She never caught again the goblin cry :
 " Come buy, come buy " ;—
 She never spied the goblin men
 Hawking their fruits along the glen :
 But when the noon waxed bright
 Her hair grew thin and gray ;
 She dwindled, as the fair full moon doth turn
 To swift decay and burn
 Her fire away.

One day remembering her kernel-stone
 She set it by a wall that faced the south ;
 Dewed it with tears, hoped for a root,
 Watched for a waxing shoot,
 But there came none ;
 It never saw the sun,
 It never felt the trickling moisture run :
 While with sunk eyes and faded mouth
 She dreamed of melons, as a traveller sees
 False waves in desert drouth
 With shade of leaf-crowned trees,
 And burns the thirstier in the sandful breeze.

She no more swept the house,
 Tended the fowls or cows,
 Fetched honey, kneaded cakes of wheat,
 Brought water from the brook :
 But sat down listless in the chimney-nook
 And would not eat.

Tender Lizzie could not bear
 To watch her sister's cankerous care
 Yet not to share.
 She night and morning
 Caught the goblins' cry :
 " Come buy our orchard fruits,
 Come buy, come buy " :—
 Beside the brook, along the glen,
 She heard the tramp of goblin men,
 The voice and stir
 Poor Laura could not hear ;
 Longed to buy fruit to comfort her,
 But feared to pay too dear.
 She thought of Jeanie in her grave,
 Who should have been a bride :
 But who for joys brides hope to have
 Fell sick and died
 In her gay prime,
 In earliest Winter time,
 With the first glazing rime,
 With the first snow-fall of crisp Winter time.

Till Laura dwindling
 Seemed knocking at Death's door :
 Then Lizzie weighed no more
 Better and worse ;
 But put a silver penny in her purse,
 Kissed Laura, crossed the heath with clumps of furze
 At twilight, halted by the brook :
 And for the first time in her life
 Began to listen and look.

Laughed every goblin
 When they spied her peeping :
 Came towards her hobbling,
 Flying, running, leaping,
 Puffing and blowing,
 Chuckling, clapping, crowing,
 Clucking and gobbling,
 Mopping and mowing,
 Full of airs and graces,
 Pulling wry faces,
 Demure grimaces,
 Cat-like and rat-like,
 Ratel- and wombat-like,
 Snail-paced in a hurry,
 Parrot-voiced and whistler,
 Helter skelter, hurry skurry,
 Chattering like magpies,
 Fluttering like pigeons,
 Gliding like fishes,—
 Hugged her and kissed her,
 Squeezed and caressed her :
 Stretched up their dishes,
 Panniers and plates :
 “ Look at our apples
 Russet and dun,
 Bob at our cherries,
 Bite at our peaches,
 Citrons and dates,
 Grapes for the asking,
 Pears red with basking
 Out in the sun,
 Plums on their twigs ;
 Pluck them and suck them.
 Pomegranates, figs.”—

“ Good folk,” said Lizzie,
 Mindful of Jeanie :
 “ Give me much and many ” :—
 Held out her apron,
 Tossed them her penny.

“Nay, take a seat with us,
Honour and eat with us,”
They answered grinning :
“Our feast is but beginning.
Night yet is early,
Warm and dew-pearly,
Wakeful and starry :
Such fruits as these
No man can carry ;
Half their bloom would fly,
Half their dew would dry,
Half their flavour would pass by.
Sit down and feast with us,
Be welcome guest with us,
Cheer you and rest with us.”—
“Thank you,” said Lizzie : “But one waits
At home alone for me :
So without further parleying,
If you will not sell me any
Of your fruits though much and many,
Give me back my silver penny
I tossed you for a fee.”—
They began to scratch their pates,
No longer wagging, purring,
But visibly demurring,
Grunting and snarling.
One called her proud,
Cross-grained, uncivil ;
Their tones waxed loud,
Their looks were evil.
Lashing their tails
They trod and hustled her,
Elbowed and jostled her,
Clawed with their nails,
Barking, mewling, hissing, mocking,
Tore her gown and soiled her stocking,
Twitched her hair out by the roots,
Stamped upon her tender feet,
Held her hands and squeezed their fruits
Against her mouth to make her eat.

White and golden Lizzie stood,
 Like a lily in a flood,—
 Like a rock of blue-veined stone
 Lashed by tides obstreperously,—
 Like a beacon left alone
 In a hoary roaring sea,
 Sending up a golden fire,—
 Like a fruit-crowned orange-tree
 White with blossoms honey-sweet
 Sore beset by wasp and bee,—
 Like a royal virgin town
 Topped with gilded dome and spire
 Close beleaguered by a fleet
 Mad to tug her standard down.

One may lead a horse to water,
 Twenty cannot make him drink.
 Though the goblins cuffed and caught her,
 Coaxed and fought her,
 Bullied and besought her,
 Scratched her, pinched her black as ink,
 Kicked and knocked her,
 Mauled and mocked her,
 Lizzie uttered not a word ;
 Would not open lip from lip
 Lest they should cram a mouthful in :
 But laughed in heart to feel the drip
 Of juice that syrupped all her face,
 And lodged in dimples of her chin,
 And streaked her neck which quaked like curd.
 At last the evil people
 Worn out by her resistance
 Flung back her penny, kicked their fruit
 Along whichever road they took,
 Not leaving root or stone or shoot ;
 Some writhed into the ground,
 Some dived into the brook
 With ring and ripple,
 Some scudded on the gale without a sound,
 Some vanished in the distance.

In a smart, ache, tingle,
 Lizzie went her way ;
 Knew not was it night or day ;
 Sprang up the bank, tore thro' the furze,
 Threaded copse and dingle,
 And heard her penny jingle
 Bouncing in her purse,—
 Its bounce was music to her ear.
 She ran and ran
 As if she feared some goblin man
 Dogged her with gibe or curse
 Or something worse :
 But not one goblin skurried after,
 Nor was she pricked by fear ;
 The kind heart made her windy-paced
 That urged her home quite out of breath with haste
 And inward laughter.

She cried " Laura," up the garden,
 " Did you miss me ?
 Come and kiss me.
 Never mind my bruises,
 Hug me, kiss me, suck my juices
 Squeezed from goblin fruits for you,
 Goblin pulp and goblin dew.
 Eat me, drink me, love me ;
 Laura, make much of me :
 For your sake I have braved the glen
 And had to do with goblin merchant men."

Laura started from her chair,
 Flung her arms up in the air,
 Clutched her hair :
 " Lizzie, Lizzie, have you tasted
 For my sake the fruit forbidden ?
 Must your light like mine be hidden,
 Your young life like mine be wasted,
 Undone in mine undoing
 And ruined in my ruin,
 Thirsty, cankered, goblin-ridden ?"—

She clung about her sister,
 Kissed and kissed and kissed her :
 Tears once again
 Refreshed her shrunken eyes,
 Dropping like rain
 After long sultry drouth ;
 Shaking with aguish fear, and pain,
 She kissed and kissed her with a hungry mouth.

Her lips began to scorch,
 That juice was wormwood to her tongue,
 She loathed the feast :
 Writhing as one possessed she leaped and sung,
 Rent all her robe, and wrung
 Her hands in lamentable haste,
 And beat her breast.
 Her locks streamed like the torch
 Borne by a racer at full speed,
 Or like the mane of horses in their flight,
 Or like an eagle when she stems the light
 Straight toward the sun,
 Or like a caged thing freed,
 Or like a flying flag when armies run.

Swift fire spread through her veins, knocked at her heart,
 Met the fire smouldering there
 And overbore its lesser flame ;
 She gorged on bitterness without a name :
 Ah ! fool, to choose such part
 Of soul-consuming care !
 Sense failed in the mortal strife :
 Like the watch-tower of a town
 Which an earthquake shatters down,
 Like a lightning-stricken mast,
 Like a wind-uprooted tree
 Spun about,
 Like a foam-topped waterspout
 Cast down headlong in the sea,
 She fell at last ;

Pleasure past and anguish past,
Is it death or is it life ?

Life out of death.
That night long Lizzie watched by her,
Counted her pulse's flagging stir,
Felt for her breath,
Held water to her lips, and cooled her face
With tears and fanning leaves :
But when the first birds chirped about their eaves,
And early reapers plodded to the place
Of golden sheaves,
And dew-wet grass
Bowed in the morning winds so brisk to pass,
And new buds with new day
Opened of cup-like lilies on the stream,
Laura awoke as from a dream,
Laughed in the innocent old way,
Hugged Lizzie but not twice or thrice ;
Her gleaming locks showed not one thread of gray
Her breath was sweet as May
And light danced in her eyes.

Days, weeks, months, years,
Afterwards, when both were wives
With children of their own ;
Their mother-hearts beset with fears,
Their lives bound up in tender lives ;
Laura would call the little ones
And tell them of her early prime,
Those pleasant days long gone
Of not-returning time :
Would talk about the haunted glen,
The wicked, quaint fruit-merchant men,
Their fruits like honey to the throat
But poison in the blood ;
(Men sell not such in any town :)
Would tell them how her sister stood
In deadly peril to do her good,
And win the fiery antidote :

Then joining hands to little hands
 Would bid them cling together,
 " For there is no friend like a sister
 In calm or stormy weather ;
 To cheer one on the tedious way,
 To fetch one if one goes astray,
 To lift one if one totters down,
 To strengthen whilst one stands."

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

La Belle Dame Sans Merci

O WHAT can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
 Alone and palely loitering !
 The sedge has wither'd from the lake,
 And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
 So haggard and so woe-begone ?
 The squirrel's granary is full,
 And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow
 With anguish moist and fever dew,
 And on thy cheeks a fading rose
 Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,
 Full beautiful—a faery's child,
 Her hair was long, her foot was light,
 And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
 And bracelets too, and fragrant zone ;
 She look'd at me as she did love,
 And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.



She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said—
“ I love thee true.”

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept, and sigh'd full sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lulled me asleep,
 And there I dream'd—Ah! woe betide
 The latest dream I ever dream'd
 On the cold hill's side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
 Pale warriors, death-pale were they all ;
 They cried—" La Belle Dame sans Merci
 Hath thee in thrall ! "

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
 With horrid warning gaped wide,
 And I awoke and found me here,
 On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here,
 Alone and palely loitering,
 Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,
 And no birds sing.

JOHN KEATS.

The Forsaken Merman

COME, dear children, let us away ;
 Down and away below !
 Now my brothers call from the bay,
 Now the great winds shoreward blow,
 Now the salt tides seaward flow ;
 Now the wild white horses play,
 Champ and chafe and toss in the spray,
 Children dear, let us away !
 This way, this way !

Call her once before you go—
 Call once yet !
 In a voice that she will know :
 " Margaret ! Margaret ! "
 Children's voices should be dear
 (Call once more) to a mother's ear ;

Children's voices, wild with pain—
Surely she will come again !
Call her once and come away ;
This way, this way !
“ Mother dear, we cannot stay !
The wild white horses foam and fret.”
Margaret ! Margaret !

Come, dear children, come away down ;
Call no more !
One last look at the white-wall'd town,
And the little grey church on the windy shore ;
Then come down !
She will not come though you call all day ;
Come away, come away !

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay ?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell ?

Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep ;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground ;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine ;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye ?
When did music come this way ?
Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away ?
Once she sate with you and me,

On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
 And the youngest sate on her knee.
 She comb'd its bright hair, and tended it well,
 When down swung the sound of a far-off bell.
 She sigh'd, she look'd up through the clear green sea ;
 She said : " I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
 In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
 'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me !
 And I lose my poor soul, Merman ! here with thee."
 I said : " Go up, dear heart, through the waves ;
 Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves ! "
 She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.
 Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, were we long alone ?
 " The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan ;
 Long prayers," I said, " in the world they say ;
 Come ! " I said ; and we rose through the surf in the bay.
 We went up the beach, by the sandy down
 Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-wall'd town ;
 Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,
 To the little grey church on the windy hill.
 From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
 But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
 We climbed on the graves, on the stones worn with rains,
 And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded panes.
 She sate by the pillar ; we saw her clear ;
 " Margaret, hist ! come quick, we are here !
 Dear heart," I said, " we are long alone ;
 The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan ! "
 But, ah, she gave me never a look,
 For her eyes were seal'd to the holy book !
 Loud prays the priest ; shut stands the door.
 Come away, children, call no more !
 Come away, come down, call no more !

Down, down, down !
 Down to the depths of the sea !
 She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
 Singing most joyfully.

Hark what she sings : “ O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy !
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well ;
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun ! ”
And so she sings her fill.
Singing most joyfully,
Till the spindle drops from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
And over the sand at the sea ;
And her eyes are set in a stare ;
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh ;
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children ;
Come children, come down !
The hoarse wind blows colder ;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door ;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing : “ Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she !
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea.”

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,

When clear falls the moonlight,
 When spring-tides are low ;
 When sweet airs come seaward
 From heaths starr'd with broom,
 And high rocks throw mildly
 On the blanch'd sands a gloom ;
 Up the still, glistening beaches,
 Up the creeks we will hie,
 Over banks of bright seaweed
 The ebb-tide leaves dry.
 We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
 At the white, sleeping town ;
 At the church on the hill-side—
 And then come back down.
 Singing : “ There dwells a loved one,
 But cruel is she !
 She left lonely for ever
 The kings of the sea.”

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

From “ The Coming of Arthur ”

“ BUT let me tell thee now another tale :
 For Bleys, our Merlin's master, as they say,
 Died but of late, and sent his cry to me,
 To hear him speak before he left his life.
 Shrunk like a fairy changeling lay the mage,
 And when I enter'd told me that himself
 And Merlin ever served about the king,
 Uther, before he died, and on the night
 When Uther in Tintagil past away
 Moaning and wailing for an heir, the two
 Left the still king, and paassing forth to breathe,
 Then from the castle gateway by the chasm
 Descending thro' the dismal night—a night
 In which the bounds of heaven and earth were lost—
 Beheld, so high upon the dreary deeps
 It seem'd in heaven, a ship, the shape thereof

A dragon wing'd, and all from stem to stern
 Bright with a shining people on the decks,
 And gone as soon as seen. And then the two
 Dropt to the cove, and watch'd the great sea fall,
 Wave after wave, each mightier than the last,
 Till last, a ninth one, gathering half the deep
 And full of voices, slowly rose and plunged
 Roaring, and all the wave was in a flame:
 And down the wave and in the flame was borne
 A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's feet,
 Who stoopt and caught the babe, and cried

‘The King!

Here is an heir for Uther!’ And the fringe
 Of that great breaker, sweeping up the strand,
 Lash'd at the wizard as he spake the word,
 And all at once all round him rose in fire,
 So that the child and he were clothed in fire.
 And presently thereafter follow'd calm,
 Free sky and stars: ‘And this same child,’ he said,
 ‘Is he who reigns; nor could I part in peace
 Till this were told.’ And saying this the seer
 Went thro' the strait and dreadful pass of death,
 Not ever to be question'd any more
 Save on the further side; but when I met
 Merlin, and ask'd him if these things were truth—
 The shining dragon and the naked child
 Descending in the glory of the seas—
 He laugh'd as is his wont, and answer'd me
 In riddling triplets of old time, and said:

“ ‘Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow in the sky!

A young man will be wiser by and by;

An old man's wit may wander ere he die.

Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow on the lea!

And truth is this to me, and that to thee;

And truth or clothed or naked let it be.

Rain, sun, and rain! and the free blossom blows;

Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he who knows?

From the great deep to the great deep he goes.’ ”

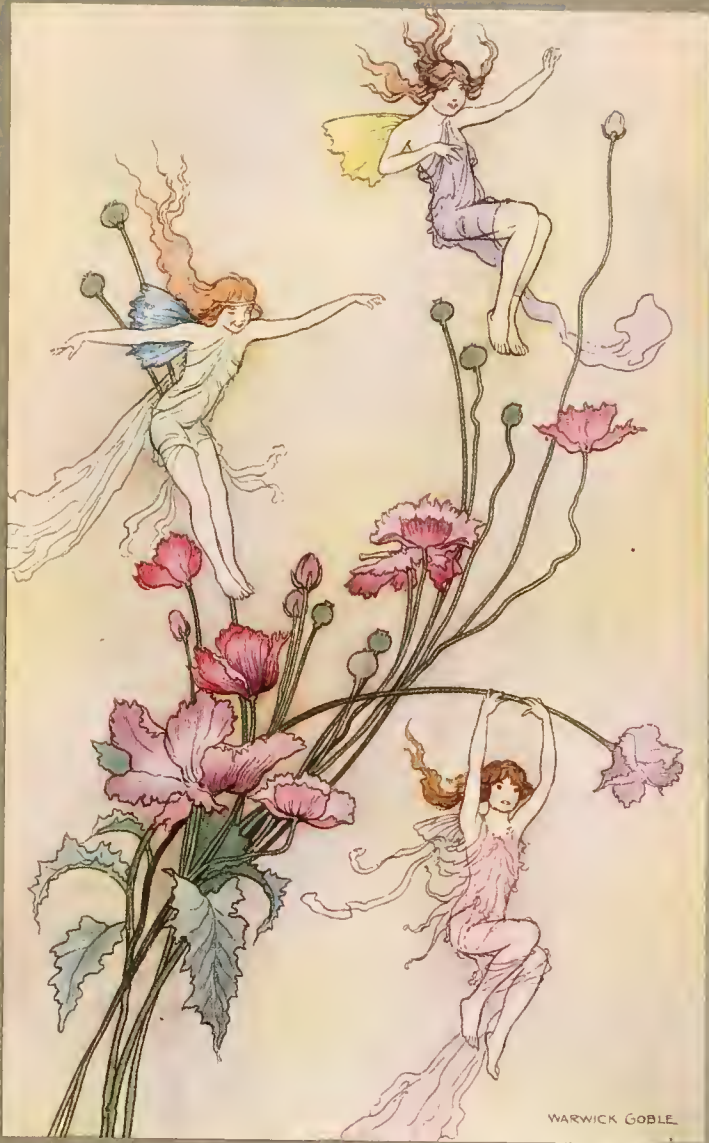
ALFRED TENNYSON.

A Fairy Revel, before the coming of Guinevere

He said

That as he rode, an hour or maybe twain
 After the sunset, down the coast, he heard
 Strange music, and he paused, and turning—there
 All down the lonely coast of Lyonesse,
 Each with a beacon-star upon his head,
 And with a wild sea-light about his feet,
 We saw them—headland after headland flame
 Far on into the rich heart of the west :
 And in the light the white mermaiden swam
 And strong man-breasted things stood from the sea
 And sent a deep sea-voice thro' all the land
 To which the little sloes of chasm and cleft
 Made answer, sounding like a distant horn.
 So said my father—yea, and furthermore,
 Next morning, while he past the dimlit woods
 Himself beheld three spirits mad with joy
 Come dashing down on a tall wayside flower
 That shook beneath them, as the thistle shakes
 When three gray linnets wrangle for the seed :
 And still at evenings on before his horse
 The flickering fairy-circle wheeled and broke
 Flying, for all the land was full of life.
 And when at last he came to Camelot,
 A wreath of airy dancers hand in hand
 Swung round the lighted lantern of the hall ;
 And in the hall itself was such a feast
 As never man had dreamed ; for every knight
 Had whatsoever meat he longed for served
 By hands unseen : and even as he said
 Down in the cellars merry bloated things
 Shoulder'd the spigot, straddling on the butts
 While the wine ran ; so glad were spirits and men
 Before the coming of the sinful Queen.

ALFRED TENNYSON.



WARWICK GOBLE.

“ Three spirits mad with joy
Come dashing down on a tall wayside flower.”

From "The Passing of Arthur"

THEN saw they how there hove a dusky barge
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them ; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms,
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold : and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, " Place me in the barge " ;
So to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And called him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood : for all his face was white
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east ;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset ; and the light and lustrous curls—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust ;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the King ;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies, and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere :
 “ Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go ?
 Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes ?
 For now I see the true old times are dead,
 When every morning brought a noble chance,
 And every chance brought out a noble knight.
 Such times have not since been the light that led
 The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
 But now the whole Round Table is dissolved
 Which was an image of the mighty world ;
 And I, the last, go forth companionless,
 And the days darken round me, and the years,
 Among new men, strange faces, other minds.”

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge :
 “ The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
 And God fulfils himself in many ways,
 Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
 Comfort thyself : what comfort is in me ?
 I have lived my life, and that which I have done
 May He within himself make pure ! but thou,
 If thou shouldst never see my face again,
 Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
 Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
 Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
 For what are men better than sheep or goats
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
 Both for themselves and those who call them friend ?
 For so the whole round earth is every way
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
 But now farewell. I am going a long way
 With these thou seest—if indeed I go
 (For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)—
 To the island-valley of Avilion ;
 Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
 Nor ever winds blow loudly ; but it lies
 Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
 And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
 Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.”

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
 Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
 That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
 Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
 With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
 Revolving many memories, till the hull
 Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
 And on the mere the wailing died away.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

Merlin and the Fay Vivian

WHAT tale did Iseult to the children say,
 Under the hollies, that bright winter's day ?

She told them of the fairy-haunted land
 Away the other side of Brittany,
 Beyond the heaths, edged by the lonely sea ;
 Of the deep forest-glades of Broceliande,
 Through whose green boughs the golden sunshine creeps,
 Where Merlin by the enchanted thorn-tree sleeps.
 For here he came with the fay Vivian,
 One April, when the warm days first began.
 He was on foot, and that false fay, his friend,
 On her white palfrey ; here he met his end,
 In these lone sylvan glades, that April-day.
 This tale of Merlin and the lovely fay
 Was the one Iseult chose, and she brought clear
 Before the children's fancy him and her.

Blowing between the stems, the forest-air
 Had loosen'd the brown locks of Vivian's hair,
 Which play'd on her flush'd cheek, and her blue eyes
 Sparkled with mocking glee and exercise.
 Her palfrey's flanks were mired and bathed in sweat,
 For they had travell'd far and not stopp'd yet.
 A briar in that tangled wilderness
 Had scored her white right hand, which she allows

To rest unglowed on her green riding-dress ;
 The other warded off the drooping boughs.
 But still she chatted on, with her blue eyes
 Fix'd full on Merlin's face, her stately prize.
 Her 'haviour had the morning's fresh clear grace,
 The spirit of the woods was in her face ;
 She looked so witching fair, that learned wight
 Forgot his craft, and his best wits took flight,
 And he grew fond, and eager to obey
 His mistress, use her empire as she may.

They came to where the brushwood ceased, and day
 Peer'd 'twixt the stems ; and the ground broke away,
 In a sloped sward down to a brawling brook.
 And up as high as where they stood to look
 On the brook's farther side was clear ; but then
 The underwood and trees began again.
 This open glen was studded thick with thorns
 Then white with blossom ; and you saw the horns,
 Through last year's fern, of the shy fallow-deer
 Who come at noon down to the water here.
 You saw the bright-eyed squirrels dart along
 Under the thorns on the green sward ; and strong
 The blackbird whistled from the dingles near,
 And the weird chipping of the woodpecker
 Rang lonelily and sharp ; the sky was fair,
 And a fresh breath of spring stirr'd everywhere.
 Merlin and Vivian stopp'd on the slope's brow,
 To gaze on the light sea of leaf and bough
 Which glistening plays all round them, lone and mild,
 As if to itself the quiet forest smiled.
 Upon the brow-top grew a thorn, and here
 The grass was dry and moss'd, and you saw clear
 Across the hollow ; white anemonies
 Starr'd the cool turf, and clumps of primroses
 Ran out from the dark underwood behind.
 No fairer resting-place a man could find.
 " Here let us halt," said Merlin then ; and she
 Nodded, and tied her palfrey to a tree.

They sate them down together, and a sleep
 Fell upon Merlin, more like death, so deep.
 Her finger on her lips, then Vivian rose,
 And from her brown-lock'd head the wimple throws,
 And takes it in her hand, and waves it over
 The blossom'd thorn-tree and her sleeping lover.
 Nine times she waved the fluttering wimple round,
 And made a little plot of magic ground ;
 And in that daisied circle, as men say,
 Is Merlin prisoner till the judgment-day ;
 But she herself whither she will can rove—
 For she was passing weary of his love.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

THE VEAIRIES

SIMON AN' SAMEL

- Simon.* There's what the vo'k do call a veäiry ring
 Out there, lo'k zee. Why, 'tis an oddish thing.
- Samel.* Ah! zoo do seem. I wunder how do come!
 What is it that do meäke it, I do wonder?
- Simon.* Be hang'd if I can tell, I'm sure! But zome
 Do zay do come by lightnen when do thunder ;
 An' zome do say sich rings as thik ring there is,
 Do grow in dancen-tracks o' little veairies,
 That in the nights o' zummer or o' spring
 Do come by moonlight, when noo other veet
 Do tread the dewy grass, but theirs, an' meet
 An' dance away together in a ring.
- Samel.* An' who d'ye think do work the fiddlestick?
 A little veairy too, or else wold Nick?
- Simon.* Why, they do zay, that at the veairies' ball,
 There's nar a fiddle that's a-hear'd at all ;
 But they do play upon a little pipe
 A-meade o' kexes or o' straws, dead ripe,
 A-stuck in row (zome short an' longer zome)
 Wi' slime o' snails, or bits o' plum-tree gum,

- An' meake sich music that to hear it sound,
You'd stick so still's a pollard to the ground.
- Samel.* What do em dance ? 'Tis plain by thease green wheels,
They don't frisk in an' out in dree-hand reels ;
Vor else, instead o' thease here girt round O,
They'd cut us out a figure aight, d'ye know.
- Simon.* Oh ! they ha' jigs to fit their little veet,
They woulden dance, you know, at their fine ball
The dree an' vow'r han' reels that we do sprawl
An' kick about in, when we men do meet.
- Samel.* An' zoo have zome vo'k, in their midnight rambles,
A-catch'd the veairies, then, in theasen gambols.
- Simon.* Why, yes ; but they be off lik' any shot,
So soon's a man's a-comen near the spot.
- Samel.* But in the day-time where do veairies hide ?
Where be their hwomes, then ? where do veairies bide ?
- Simon.* Oh ! they do get away down under ground,
In hollow pleazen where they can't be vound.
But still my gramfer, many years agoo,
(He liv'd at Grenley-farm, and milk' a deairy),
If what the wolder vo'k do tell is true,
Woone mornen early vound a veairy.
- Samel.* An' did he stop, then, wi' the good wold bvoy ?
Or did he soon contrive to slip away ?
- Simon.* Why, when the vo'k were all asleep, a-bed,
The veairies us'd to come, as 'tis a-zaid,
Avore the vire wer cwold, an' dance an hour
Or two at dead o' night upon the vloer ;
Var they, by only utteren a word
Or charm, can come down chimney lik' a bird ;
Or draw their bodies out so long an' narrow,
That they can vlee drough keyholes lik' an arrow.
An' zoo woone midnight, when the moon did drow
His light drough window, roun' the vloer below,
An' crickets roun' the bricken he'th did zing,
They come an' danced about the hall in ring ;
An' tapp'd, drough little holes noo eyes could spy
A kag o' poor aunt's mead a-stannen by.
An' woone o'm drink'd so much, he coulden mind
The word he wer to zay to meake en small ;



“ Oh ! they do get away down under ground,
In hollow pleazen where they can't be vound.”

He got a-dather'd zoo, that after all
 Out t'others went an' left en back behind.
 An' after he'd a-beat about his head
 Agean the keyhole till he were half dead,
 He laid down all along upon the vloor
 Till gramfer, comen down, unlocked the door :
 An' then he zeed en ('twer enough to frighten en)
 Bolt out o' door, an' down the road lik' lightenen.

WILLIAM BARNES.

What the Toys do at Night

LOOKING from the window in the middle of the night,—
 Looking at the garden in the moon's delicious light,—
 Looking at the little lawn that must itself surprise,
 Shining like a silver thing beneath the silver skies,—

Looking at the pretty buds that are so fast asleep,
 Each is shut so very tight I'm sure it cannot peep ;
 Each coquettish rosebud, each little lily-cup,
 Nid, nid, noddin', just as if it never could wake up.

Nid, nid, noddin', fast asleep—so slips the night away ;
 Nid, nid, noddin',—cunning things ! I think it's only play ;
 As the clocks are striking twelve—oh, how extremely sly !—
 All the blossoms open wide, and out the Fairies fly !

Out the little fairies fly upon their scented wings,
 Float about and shake themselves—delicious little things !
 All the blossoms shut again ; and now I think, perhaps,
 Lily-cup and blushing rose may really take their naps.

Out the little fairies fly and flutter in the air :
 Oh, how lovely is the world, with moonlight everywhere !
 Moonlight, moonlight everywhere ! and in its tender gleam
 Pretty fairies poised about, like fairies in a dream.

Oh, what are they waiting for ? See how they look about,
 Beck'ning at the windows, as if something should come out ;

Stamping their impatient feet, they gather into bands,
Beck'ning at the windows with their little eager hands.

Then a window opens : yes a window in the house ;
Not a living creature up—I have not heard a mouse.
In all the world, can any one either guess or plan
What came from the window then ? No, no one ever can !



Wooden horses, waxen dollies, soldiers, wood and tin ;
Noah's Ark of birds and beasties ; tops that hum and spin ;
Little china tea-things and delightful dinner sets ;
Trumpets, drums and baby-houses, balls in coloured nets !

Through the window open wide, they make their solemn march,
All along the gravel-walk, beneath the trellised arch ;
All along the gravel-walk the stately columns pass,
And the toys and fairies meet upon the silver grass !

Did you know it ?—could you tell it ?—had you ever guessed
 How your daylight treasures are by fairies' touch caressed ?
 How your daylight treasures are the fairies' moonlight joys ?
 'Twas a lovely meeting 'twixt the fairies and the toys !

'Twas a lovely meeting, and the moon enjoyed the sight ;
 All the fairies kissed the toys in innocent delight ;
 Then they played so happily, until the break of day,
 When the toys marched home again—the fairies flew away !

ANONYMOUS.

Pixy Work

“ MAIDENS, maidens,” piped the pixies,
 “ We are peeping at your sweeping,
 Leave your toil and take your leisure ;
 We will work for you with pleasure.
 Leave your churning and your spinning,
 Hear the violins beginning,
 See the Maypole-strings a-flutter.
 Leave your cheeses ; leave your butter ;
 Out, and hie you to the green ;
 We will work for you this e'en.”

Merry Meg set off a-running,
 Milly after, gay with laughter.
 Marion, with braided curls,
 Flew to join the other girls.
 Only Molly, fair and kind,
 Stayed a little while behind,
 Setting in the ingle seat
 Violets and honey sweet,
 Cream and syrup, mixed with care,
 For the pixies' dainty fare.

When she vanished through the orchard,
 Fairies, airy, shy, and wary,
 Peeped like mice at set of sun :
 Stealthy, creeping one by one

Out of cupboard, down from rafter,
 Through the chimney, with soft laughter.
 Tapping panels, creaking doors,
 Dropping daisies through elf-bores,
 Setting silver bells a-jingle,
 Leaping lightly to the ingle.

One, with black hair flower-knotted,
 Sits a-spinning, while the dinning
 Wheel makes music to her song.
 Others to the dairy throng,
 Skimming, with light wings a-flutter,
 Richest cream for sweetest butter.
 One mounts bareback on a broom,
 Rides it up and down the room,
 Sweeping, sweeping merrily,
 As the west wind sweeps the sea.

Then they circle round the fire,
 Dreaming by the embers gleaming ;
 So they sit with clasped knees,
 Rocking, rocking at their ease,
 Till one brings, with dainty care,
 Molly's bowl of creamy fare.
 Dipping flowers in her cup,
 So the merry fairies sup ;
 Sip and laugh, and laugh and tip
 Loving cups from lip to lip.

Then they see the maidens coming
 Through the clover, revels over.
 Milly, Meg and Marion
 Laugh to find their labours done,
 Doff their garlands, jest and joke,
 And forget the fairy folk
 Hiding in the dark above ;
 Only Molly, quick to love,
 Prays for pixies, with kind eyes—
 Pixies, barred from Paradise.

FLORENCE HARRISON.

Berries

THERE was an old woman
 Went blackberry picking
 Along the hedges
 From Weep to Wicking.
 Half a pottle—
 No more she had got,
 When out steps a Fairy
 From her green grot ;
 And says, “ Well, Jill,
 Would ’ee pick ’ee mo ? ”
 And Jill, she curtseys,
 And looks just so.
 “ Be off,” says the Fairy,
 “ As quick as you can,
 Over the meadows
 To the little green lane,
 That dips to the hayfields
 Of Farmer Grimes :
 I’ve berried those hedges
 A score of times ;
 Bushel on bushel
 I’ll promise ’ee, Jill,
 This side of supper
 If ’ee pick with a will.”
 She glints very bright,
 And speaks her fair ;
 Then lo, and behold !
 She had faded in air.

Be sure Old Goodie
 She trots betimes
 Over the meadows
 To Farmer Grimes.
 And never was queen
 With jewellery rich

As those same hedges
 From twig to ditch ;
 Like Dutchmen's coffers,
 Fruit, thorn, and flower—
 They shone like William
 And Mary's bower.
 And be sure Old Goodie
 Went back to Weep,
 So tired with her basket
 She scarce could creep.
 When she comes in the dusk
 To her cottage door,
 There's Towser wagging
 As never before,
 To see his Missus
 So glad to be
 Come from her fruit-picking
 Back to he.
 As soon as next morning
 Dawn was grey,
 The pot on the hob
 Was simmering away ;
 And all in a stew
 And a hugger-mugger
 Towser and Jill
 A-boiling of sugar,
 And the dark clear fruit
 That from Faerie came,
 For syrup and jelly
 And blackberry jam.

Twelve jolly gallipots
 Jill put by ;
 And one little teeny one,
 One inch high ;
 And that she's hidden
 A good thumb deep,
 Half way over
 From Wicking to Weep.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

Peak and Puke

FROM his cradle in the glamourie
 They have stolen my wee brother,
 Housed a changeling in his swaddlings
 For to fret mine own poor mother.
 Pules it in the candle-light
 Wi' a cheek so lean and white,
 Chinkling up its eyne so wee
 Wailing shrill at her an' me.
 It we'll neither rock nor tend
 Till the Silent Silent send,
 Lapping in their waesome arms
 Him they stole with spells and charms,
 Till they take this changeling creature
 Back to its own fairy nature—
 Cry ! Cry! as long as may be,
 Ye shall ne'er be woman's baby !

WALTER DE LA MARE.

The Honey-Robbers

THERE were two Fairies, Gimmul and Mel,
 Loved Earth Man's honey passing well ;
 Oft at the hives of his tame bees
 They would their sugary thirst appease.

When even began to darken to night,
 They would hie along in the fading light,
 With elf-locked hair and scarlet lips,
 And small stone knives to slit the skeps,
 So softly not a bee inside
 Should hear the woven straw divide.
 And then with sly and greedy thumbs
 Would rifle the sweet honeycombs.
 And drowsily drone to drone would say,
 " A cold, cold wind blows in this way ; "

And the great Queen would turn her head
 From face to face, astonished,
 And, though her maids with comb and brush
 Would comb and soothe and whisper, "Hush!"
 About the hive would shrilly go
 A keening—keening, to and fro;
 At which those robbers 'neath the trees
 Would taunt and mock the honey-bees,
 And through their sticky teeth would buzz
 Just as an angry hornet docs.
 And when this Gimmul and this Mel,
 Had munched and sucked and swilled their fill,
 Or ever Man's first cock could crow
 Back to their Faerie Mounds they'd go,
 Edging across the twilight air,
 Thieves of a guise remotely fair.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

The Three Beggars

'Twas autumn daybreak gold and wild,
 While past St Ann's grey tower they shuffled,
 Three beggars spied a fairy-child
 In crimson mantle muffled.

The daybreak lighted up her face
 All pink, and sharp, and emerald-eyed;
 She looked on them a little space,
 And shrill as hautboy cried:—

"O three tall footsore men of rags
 Which walking this gold morn I see,
 What will ye give me from your bags
 For fairy kisses three?"

The first, that was a reddish man,
 Out of his bundle takes a crust:
 "La, by the tombstones of St Ann,
 There's fee, if fee ye must!"



“ Instead of crust a peacock pie.”

The second, that was a chestnut man,
 Out of his bundle draws a bone :
 " La, by the belfry of St Ann,
 And all my breakfast gone ! "

The third, that was a yellow man,
 Out of his bundle picks a groat,
 " La, by the Angel of St Ann,
 And I must go without. "

That changeling, lean and icy-lipped,
 Touched crust, and bone, and groat, and lo !
 Beneath her finger taper-tipped
 The magic all ran through.

Instead of crust a peacock pie,
 Instead of bone sweet venison,
 Instead of groat a white lillie
 With seven blooms thereon.

And each fair cup was deep with wine :
 Such was the changeling's charity,
 The sweet feast was enough for nine,
 But not too much for three.

O toothsome meat in jelly froze !
 O tender haunch of elfin stag !
 O rich the odour that arose !
 O plump with scraps each bag !

There, in the daybreak gold and wild,
 Each merry-hearted beggar man
 Drank deep unto the fairy child,
 And blessed the good St Ann.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

The Love-Talker

I KNOW not what way he came, no shadow fell behind,
 But all the sighing rushes swayed beneath a fairy wind :
 The thrush ceased its singing, a mist crept about,
 We two clung together—with the world shut out.

Beyond the ghostly mist I could hear my cattle low,
 The little cow from Ballina, clean as driven snow,
 The dun cow from Kerry, the roan from Inisheer,
 Oh, pitiful their calling—and his whispers in my ear !

His eyes were a fire ; his words were a snare ;
 I cried my mother's name, but no help was there ;
 I made the blessed Sign : then he gave a dreary moan,
 A wisp of cloud went floating by, and I stood alone.

ETHNA CARBERY.

The Hills of Ruel

“ OVER the hills and far away ”—
 That is the tune I heard one day,
 When heather-drowsy I lay and listened
 And watched where the stealthy sea-tide glistened.

Beside me there on the Hills of Ruel
 An old man stooped and gathered fuel—
 And I asked him this : if his son were dead,
 As the folk in Glendaruel all said,
 How could he still believe that never
 Duncan had crossed the shadowy river ?
 Forth from his breast the old man drew
 A lute that once on a rowan tree grew ;

And, speaking no words, began to play
 "Over the hills and far away."

"But how do you know," I said, thereafter,
 "That Duncan has heard the fairy-laughter?
 How do you know he has followed the cruel
 Honey-sweet folk of the Hills of Ruel?"
 "How do I know?" the old man said,
 "Sure I knew well my boy's not dead,
 For late on the morrow they hid him, there
 Where the black earth moistens his yellow hair,
 I saw him alow on the moor close by,
 I watched him low on the hillside lie,
 An' I heard him laughin' wild up there,
 An' talk, talk, talkin' beneath his hair—
 For down his face his long hair lay
 But I saw it was cold and ashen-gray,
 Ay, laughin' and talkin' wild he was,
 An' that to a Shadow out on the grass,
 A Shadow that made my blood go chill,
 For, never its like have I seen on the hill.
 An' the moon came up, and the stars grew white,
 An' the hills grew black in the bloom o' the night.
 An' I watched till the death-star sank in the moon,
 An' the moonmaid fled with her moonwhite shoon,
 Then the Shadow that was on the moorside there
 Rose up and shook its shadowy hair;
 And Duncan he laughed no more, but grey
 As the rainy dust of a rainy day,
 Went over the hills and far away."

"Over the hills and far away"—
 That is the tune I heard one day.
 O that I too might hear the cruel
 Honey-sweet folk of the Hills of Ruel.

FIONA MACLEOD.

The Host of the Air

O'DRISCOLL drove with a song
The wild duck and the drake
From the tall and tufted reeds
Of the drear Hart Lake.

And he saw how the reeds grew dark
At the coming of night tide,
And he dreamed of the long dim hair
Of Bridget his bride.

He heard while he sang and dreamed
A piper piping away,
And never was piping so sad,
And never was piping so gay.

And he saw young men and young girls
Who danced on a level place
And Bridget his bride among them,
With a sad and a gay face.

The dancers crowded about him,
And many a sweet thing said,
And a young man brought him red wine
And a young girl white bread.

But Bridget drew him by the sleeve,
Away from the merry bands,
To old men playing at cards
With a twinkling of ancient hands.

The bread and the wine had a doom,
For these were the host of the air ;
He sat and played in a dream
Of her long dim hair.

He played with the merry old men
 And thought not of evil chance,
 Until one bore Bridget his bride
 Away from the merry dance.

He bore her away in his arms,
 The handsomest young man there,
 And his neck and his breast and his arms
 Were drowned in her long dim hair.

O'Driscoll scattered the cards
 And out of his dream awoke :
 Old men and young men and young girls
 Were gone like a drifting smoke.

But he heard high up in the air
 A piper piping away,
 And never was piping so sad,
 And never was piping so gay.

W. B. YEATS.

The Stolen Child

WHERE dips the rocky highland
 Of Sleuth Wood in the lake,
 There lies a leafy island
 Where flapping herons wake
 The drowsy water-rats ;
 There we've hid our faery vats
 Full of berries,
 And of reddest stolen cherries.
*Come away, O human child !
 To the waters and the wild
 With a faery, hand in hand,
 For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.*

Where the wave of moonlight glosses
 The dim gray sands with light,
 Far off by furthest Rosses
 We foot it all the night,

Weaving olden dances,
 Mingling hands and mingling glances
 Till the moon has taken flight ;
 To and fro we leap
 And chase the frothy bubbles,
 While the world is full of troubles
 And is anxious in its sleep.
*Come away, O human child !
 To the waters and the wild
 With a faery, hand in hand,
 For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.*

Where the wandering water gushes
 From the hills above Glen-Car,
 In pools among the rushes
 That scarce could bathe a star,
 We seek for slumbering trout
 And whispering in their ears
 Give them unquiet dreams ;
 Leaning softly out
 From ferns that drop their tears
 Over the young streams,
*Come away, O human child !
 To the waters and the wild
 With a faery, hand in hand,
 For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.*

Away with us he's going,
 The solemn-eyed :
 He'll hear no more the lowing
 Of the calves on the warm hillside ;
 Or the kettle on the hob
 Sing peace into his breast,
 Or see the brown mice bob
 Round and round the oatmeal-chest.
*For he comes, the human child,
 To the waters and the wild
 With a faery, hand in hand,
 From a world more full of weeping than he can understand.*

W. B. YEATS.



PART II

Fairy Songs, Dances, and Talk

BE not afeard ; the isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about mine ears ; and sometimes voices,
That if I then had waked after long sleep,
Will make me sleep again : and then, in dreaming,
The clouds, methought, would open and show riches
Ready to drop upon me ; that, when I wak'd,
I cried to dream again.

THE FAIRY AND HIS MASTER

Ariel. Before you can say, *Come*, and *go*,
And breathe twice ; and cry, *so, so* ;
Each one, tripping on his toe,
Will be here with mop and mowe :
Do you love me, master ? no.

Prospero. Dearly, my delicate Ariel.

SHAKESPEARE.

The Fairies' Dance

DARE you haunt our hallow'd green ?
None but fairies here are seen.
Down and sleep.
Wake and weep,
Pinch him black, and pinch him blue,
That seeks to steal a lover true !
When you come to hear us sing,
Or to tread our fairy ring,
Pinch him black, and pinch him blue !
O thus our nails shall handle you !

The Elves' Dance

ROUND about in a fair ring-a,
Thus we dance and thus we sing-a ;
Trip and go, to and fro,
Over this green-a ;
All about, in and out,
Over this green-a.

The Urchins' Dance

By the moon we sport and play,
With the night begins our day :
As we frisk the dew doth fall ;
Trip it, little urchins all !
Lightly as the little bee,
Two by two, and three by three :
And about go we, and about go we !

Old Song

LET us in a lover's round
 Circle all this hallowed ground ;
 Softly, softly trip and go,
 The light-foot Fairies jet it so.
 Forward then, and back again,
 Here and there and everywhere,
 Winding to and fro,
 Skipping high and louting low ;
 And, like lovers, hand in hand,
 March around and make a stand.

Fairy Revels

- Omnes.* Pinch him, pinch him, black and blue,
 Saucy mortals must not view
 What the queen of stars is doing,
 Nor pry into our fairy wooing.
- 1 *Fairy.* Pinch him blue—
 2 *Fairy.* And pinch him black—
 3 *Fairy.* Let him not lack
 Sharp nails to pinch him blue and red,
 Till sleep has rocked his addlehead.
- 4 *Fairy.* For the trespass he hath done
 Spots o'er all his flesh shall run.
 Kiss Endymion, kiss his eyes,
 Then to our midnight heidegyes.

JOHN LYLY.

The Fairy Queen

COME, follow, follow me,
 You, fairy elves that be :
 Which circle on the green,
 Come follow Mab your queen.
 Hand in hand let's dance around,
 For this place is fairy ground.

When mortals are at rest,
And snoring in their nest ;
Unheard, and unespied,
Through key-holes we do glide ;
Over tables, stools, and shelves,
We trip it with our fairy elves.

And, if the house be foul
With platter, dish, or bowl,
Up stairs we nimbly creep,
And find the sluts asleep :
There we pinch their arms and thighs ;
None escapes, nor none espies.

But if the house be swept,
And from uncleanness kept,
We praise the household maid,
And duly she is paid :
For we use before we go
To drop a tester in her shoe.

Upon a mushroom's head
Our table-cloth we spread ;
A grain of rye, or wheat,
Is manchet, which we eat ;
Pearly drops of dew we drink
In acorn cups fill'd to the brink.

The brains of nightingales,
With unctuous fat of snails,
Between two cockles stew'd,
Is meat that's easily chew'd ;
Tails of worms, and marrow of mice,
Do make a dish that's wondrous nice.

The grasshopper, gnat and fly,
Serve for our minstrelsy ;
Grace said, we dance a while,
And so the time beguile :
And if the moon doth hide her head,
The glow-worm lights us home to bed.

On tops of dewy grass
 So nimbly do we pass ;
 The young and tender stalk
 Ne'er bends when we do walk :
 Yet in the morning may be seen,
 Where we the night before have been.

Robin Good-fellow

FROM Oberon, in fairy land,
 The king of ghosts and shadows there,
 Mad Robin I, at his command,
 Am sent to view the night-sports here.
 What revel rout
 Is kept about,
 In every corner where I go,
 I will o'ersee,
 And merry be,
 And make good sport, with ho, ho, ho !

More swift than lightning can I fly
 About this aery welkin soon,
 And, in a minute's space, descry
 Each thing that's done below the moon.
 There's not a hag,
 Or ghost shall wag,
 Or cry, ware Goblins ! where I go ;
 But Robin I
 Their feats will spy,
 And send them home, with ho, ho, ho !

Whene'er such wanderers I meet,
 As from their night-sports they trudge home ;
 With counterfeiting voice I greet
 And call them on, with me to roam
 Thro' woods, thro' lakes,
 Thro' bogs, thro' brakes ;

Or else, unseen, with them I go,
All in the nick
To play some trick
And frolick it, with ho, ho, ho !

Sometimes I meet them like a man ;
Sometimes an ox, sometimes a hound ;
And to a horse I turn me can ;
To trip and trot about them round.
But if, to ride,
My back they stride,
More swift than wind away I go,
O'er hedge and lands,
Thro' pools and ponds
I whirry, laughing ho, ho, ho !

When lads and lassies merry be,
With possets and with juncates fine ;
Unseen of all the company,
I eat their cakes, and sip their wine ;
And, to make sport,
I puff and snort ;
And out the candles I do blow ;
The maids I kiss :
They shriek—Who's this ?
I answer nought, but ho, ho, ho !

Yet now and then, the maids to please,
At midnight I card up their wool ;
And while they sleep, and take their ease,
With wheel to thread their flax I pull.
I grind at mill
Their malt up still ;
I dress their hemp, I spin their tow,
If any wake,
And would me take,
I wend me, laughing, ho, ho, ho !

When any need to borrow ought,
We lend them what they do require :
And for the use demand we nought ;
Our own is all we do desire.

If to repay,
 They do delay,
 Abroad amongst them then I go,
 And night by night,
 I them affright
 With pinchings, dreams, and ho, ho, ho !

When lazy queans have nought to do,
 But study how to cog and lie ;
 To make debate and mischief too,
 'Twixt one another secretly :
 I mark their gloze,
 And it disclose,
 To them whom they have wronged so ;
 When I have done,
 I get me gone,
 And leave them scolding, ho, ho, ho !

When men do traps and engines set
 In loop-holes, where the vermin creep,
 Who from their folds and houses get,
 Their ducks, and geese, and lambs and sheep ;
 I spy the gin,
 And enter in,
 And seem a vermin taken so ;
 But when they there
 Approach me near
 I leap out laughing, ho, ho, ho !

By wells and rills, in meadows green,
 We nightly dance our hey-day guise ;
 And to our fairy king and queen
 We chant our moon-light minstrelsies.
 When larks 'gin sing,
 Away we fling ;
 And babes new born steal as we go,
 And elves in bed
 We leave instead,
 And wend us laughing, ho, ho, ho !

From hag-bred Merlin's time have I
 Thus nightly revell'd to and fro :
 And for my pranks men call me by
 The name of Robin Good-fellow.
 Fiends, ghosts, and sprites,
 Who haunt the nights,
 The hags and goblins do me know ;
 And beldames old
 My feats have told ;
 So *Vale, Vale* ; ho, ho, ho !

Ariel's Songs

WHERE the bee sucks, there suck I ;
 In a cowslip's bell I lie :
 There I couch when owls do cry,
 On the bat's back I do fly
 After summer merrily ;
 Merrily, merrily, shall I live now,
 Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

* * *

Come unto these yellow sands
 And then take hands :
 Court'sied when you have, and kiss'd,
 (The wild waves whist)
 Foot it featly here and there ;
 And, sweet sprites, the burden bear.
 Hark, hark !

Bowgh, wowgh.

The watch-dogs bark :

Bowgh, wowgh.

Hark, hark ! I hear

The strain of strutting chanticlere
 Cry, cock-a-doodle-doo.

* * *

Full fathom five thy father lies ;
 Of his bones are coral made ;

Those are pearls, that were his eyes ;
 Nothing of him that doth fade,
 But doth suffer a sea-change
 Into something rich and strange.
 Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell :
 Hark ! now I hear them,—ding-dong, bell.

Ding-dong, bell.

SHAKESPEARE.

Fairy Orders for the Night

FAIRIES, black, grey, green, and white,
 You moon-shine revellers, and shades of night,
 You orphan heirs of fixed destiny,
 Attend your office, and your quality.—
 Crier Hobgoblin, make the fairy o-yes.
 Elves, list your names ; silence, you airy toys.
Cricket, to Windsor chimnies shalt thou leap :
 Where fires thou find'st unrak'd, and hearths unswept,
 There pinch the maids as blue as bilberry :
 Our radiant queen hates sluts and sluttery.
 Where's *Pede*?—Go you, and where you find a maid,
 That, ere she sleep, has thrice her prayers said,
 Raise up the organs of her fantasy,
 Sleep she as sound as careless infancy :
 But those as sleep, and think not on their sins,
 Pinch them, arms, legs, backs, shoulders, sides, and shins.
 About, about ;
 Search Windsor Castle, elves, within and out :
 Strew good luck, ouphes, on every sacred room ;
 That it may stand till the perpetual doom,
 In state as wholesome, as in state 'tis fit ;
 Worthy the owner, and the owner it.
 The several chairs of order look you scour
 With juice of balm, and every precious flower ;
 Each fair instalment, coat, and several crest,
 With royal blazon, evermore be blest !
 And nightly, meadow-fairies, look you sing,
 Like to the Garter's compass, in a ring :



“ Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell :
Hark ! now I hear them,—ding-dong, bell.”

The expresse that it bears, green let it be,
 More fertile-fresh than all the field to see ;
 And, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, write,
 In emerald tufts, flowers purple, blue, and white ;
 Like sapphire, pearl, and rich embroidery,
 Buckled below fair knighthood's bending knee :
 Fairies use flowers for their charactery,
 Away ; disperse : But, till 'tis one o'clock,
 Our dance of custom, round about the oak
 Of Herne the hunter, let us not forget.

Pray you, lock hand in hand ; yourselves in order set :
 And twenty glow-worms shall our lanterns be,
 To guide our measure round about the tree.

SHAKESPEARE.

The Enchanter

Pro. Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves ;
 And ye, that on the sands with printless foot
 Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him,
 When he comes back ; you demy-puppets, that
 By moon-shine do the green-sour ringlets make,
 Whereof the ewe not bites ; and you, whose pastime
 Is to make midnight-mushrooms ; that rejoice
 To hear the solemn curfew ; by whose aid
 (Weak masters though you be) I have be-dimm'd
 The noon-tide sun, call'd forth the mutinous winds,
 And 'twixt the green sea and the azur'd vault
 Set roaring war : to the dread rattling thunder
 Have I given fire, and rifted Jove's stout oak
 With his own bolt : the strong-bas'd promontory
 Have I made shake ; and by the spurs pluck'd up
 The pine, and cedar : graves, at my command,
 Have wak'd their sleepers ; oped, and led them forth
 By my so potent art : But this rough magick
 I here abjure : and, when I have requir'd
 Some heavenly musick, (which even now I do,
 To work mine end upon their senses, that

This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,
 Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
 And deeper than did ever plummet sound,
 I'll drown my book.

SHAKESPEARE.

Caliban plagued by Fairies

*Enter CALIBAN, with a burden of wood.
 A noise of thunder heard.*

Cal. All the infections that the sun sucks up
 From bogs, fens, flats, on Prosper fall, and make him



By inch-meal a disease ! His spirits hear me,
 And yet I needs must curse. But they'll nor pinch,
 Fright me with urchin shows, pitch me i' the mire,
 Nor lead me, like a fire-brand, in the dark
 Out of my way, unless he bid them ; but
 For every trifle are they set upon me :
 Sometime like apes, that moe and chatter at me,
 And after, bite me ; then like hedge-hogs, which
 Lie tumbling in my bare-foot way, and mount

Their bristles at my foot-fall ; sometime am I
 All wound with adders, who, with cloven tongues,
 Do hiss me into madness :—Lo ! now ! lo !
 Here comes a spirit of his ; and to torment me,
 For bringing wood in slowly : I'll fall flat ;
 Perchance he will not mind me.

SHAKESPEARE.

Fairy Scenes from “Midsummer Night's Dream”

A Wood near Athens.

Enter a Fairy at one door, and Puck at another.

Puck. How now, spirit ! whither wander you ?

Fai. Over hill, over dale,
 Thorough bush, thorough briar,
 Over park, over pale,
 Thorough flood, thorough fire,
 I do wander every where,
 Swifter than the moon's sphere ;
 And I serve the fairy queen,
 To dew her orbs upon the green :
 The cowslips tall her pensioners be ;
 In their gold coats spots you see ;
 Those be rubies, fairy favours,
 In those freckles live their savours :

I must go seek some dew-drops here,
 And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
 Farewell, thou lob of spirits, I'll be gone ;
 Our queen and all her elves come here anon,

Puck. The king doth keep his revels here to-night ;
 Take heed, the queen come not within his sight,
 For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,
 Because that she, as her attendant, hath

A lovely boy, stol'n from an Indian king ;
 She never had so sweet a changeling :
 And jealous Oberon would have the child
 Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild :
 But she, perforce, withholds the loved boy,
 Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy :
 And now they never meet in grove, or green,
 By fountain clear, or spangled star-light sheen,
 But they do square ; that all their elves, for fear,
 Creep into acorn cups, and hide them there.

Fai. Either I mistake your shape and making quite.
 Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite,
 Call'd Robin Goodfellow : are you not he,
 That fright the maidens of the villagery ;
 Skim milk ; and sometimes labour in the quern,
 And bootless make the breathless housewife churn ;
 And sometimes make the drink to bear no barm ;
 Misdread night-wanderers, laughing at their harm ?
 Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,
 You do their work, and they shall have good luck
 Are not you he ?

Puck. Thou speak'st aright ;
 I am that merry wanderer of the night.
 I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,
 When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
 Neighing in likeness of a silly foal :
 And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
 In very likeness of a roasted crab ;
 And, when she drinks, against her lips I bob,
 And on her wither'd dew-lap pour the ale.
 The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
 Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me ;
 Then slip I from her, and down topples she,
 And *tailor* cries, and falls into a cough ;
 And then the whole quire hold their hips, and laugh ;
 And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and swear
 A merrier hour was never wasted there.—
 But room, Fairy, here comes Oberon.

Fai. And here my mistress :—'Would that he were gone !

*Enter OBERON, at one door, with his train, and
TITANIA, at another, with hers.*

Obe. Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

Tita. What, jealous Oberon? Fairy, skip hence;
I have forsworn his bed and company.

Obe. Tarry, rash wanton: Am not I thy lord?

Tita. Then I must be thy lady: But I know
When thou hast stol'n away from fairy land,
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,
Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest steep of India?
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
Your buskin'd mistress, and your warrior love,
To Theseus must be wedded; and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

Obe. How canst thou thus, for shame, Titania,
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night,
And make him with fair Æglé break his faith,
With Ariadne, and Antiopa?

Tita. These are the forgeries of jealousy:
And never since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
By paved fountain, or by rushy brook,
Or on the beached margent of the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs; which falling in the land,
Have every pelting river made so proud,
That they have overborne their continents:
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
The ploughman lost his sweat; and the green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard:
The fold stands empty in the drowned field,

And crows are fatted with the murrain flock ;
 The nine men's morris is fill'd up with mud ;
 And the quaint mazes in the wanton green,
 For lack of tread, are undistinguishable :
 The human mortals want their winter here ;
 No night is now with hymn or carol blest :—
 Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,
 Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
 That rheumatick diseases do abound :
 And thorough this distemperature, we see
 The seasons alter : hoary-headed frosts
 Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose ;
 And on old Hyem's chin, and icy crown,
 An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
 Is, as in mockery, set : The spring, the summer,
 The childing autumn, angry winter, change
 Their wonted liveries ; and the 'mazed world,
 By their increase, now knows not which is which :
 And this same progeny of evils comes
 From our debate, from our dissension ;
 We are their parents and original.

Obe. Do you amend it then ; it lies in you :
 Why should Titania cross her Oberon ?
 I do but beg a little changeling boy,
 To be my henchman.

Tita. Set your heart at rest,
 The fairy land buys not the child of me.
 His mother was a vot'ress of my order :
 And, in the spiced Indian air, by night,
 Full often hath she gossip'd by my side ;
 And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
 Marking the embarked traders on the flood ;
 But she, being mortal, of that boy did die ;
 And, for her sake, I do rear up her boy ;
 And, for her sake, I will not part with him.

Obe. How long within this wood intend you stay ?

Tita. Perchance, till after Theseus' wedding-day.
 If you will patiently dance in our round,
 And see our moonlight revels, go with us ;
 If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

Obe. Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

Tita. Not for thy kingdom.—Fairies, away :

We shall chide downright, if I longer stay.

[*Exeunt TITANIA and her train.*]

Obe. Well, go thy way : thou shalt not from this grove,

Till I torment thee for this injury.—

My gentle Puck, come hither : Thou remember'st

Since once I sat upon a promontory,

And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back,

Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,

That the rude sea grew civil at her song ;

And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,

To hear the sea-maid's musick.

Puck.

I remember.

Obe. That very time I saw, but thou could'st not,

Flying between the cold moon and the earth,

Cupid all arm'd : A certain aim he took

At a fair vestal, throned by the west ;

And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,

As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts :

But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft

Quench'd in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moon ;

And the imperial vot'ress passed on,

In maiden meditation, fancy-free.

Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell :

It fell upon a little western flower,—

Before, milk-white ; now purple with love's wound—

And maidens call it love-in-idleness.

Fetch me that flower ; the herb I show'd thee once :

The juice of it on sleeping eye-lids laid,

Will make or man or woman madly dote

Upon the next live creature that it sees.

Fetch me this herb : and be thou here again,

Ere the Leviathan can swim a league.

Puck. I'll put a girdle round about the earth

In forty minutes.

[*Exit PUCK.*]

Obe. Having once this juice,

I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,

And drop the liquor of it in her eyes :

The next thing then she waking looks upon,

(Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
 On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,)
 She shall pursue it with the soul of love.
 And ere I take this charm off from her sight,
 (As I can take it with another herb,)
 I'll make her render up her page to me.

[*Re-enter* PUCK.]

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

Puck. Ay, there it is.

Obe.

I pray thee, give it me.

I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
 Where ox-lips and the nodding violet grows;
 Quite over-canopied with lush woodbine,
 With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine:
 There sleeps Titania, some time of the night,
 Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;
 And there the snake throws her enamell'd skin,
 Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in:
 And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,
 And make her full of hateful fantasies.

[*Exeunt*

Another part of the Wood.

Enter TITANIA, *with her train.*

Tita. Come, now a roundel, and a fairy song;
 Then, for the third part of a minute, hence;
 Some, to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds;
 Some, war with rear-mice for their leathern wings,
 To make my small elves coats; and some, keep back
 The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots and wonders
 At our quaint spirits: Sing me now asleep;
 Then to your offices, and let me rest.

SONG

I Fai. *You spotted snakes, with double tongue,
 Thorny hedge-hogs, be not seen;
 Newts, and blind-worms, do no wrong;
 Come not near our fairy queen:*



“Wake, when some vile thing is near.”

CHORUS. *Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby ;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby ; lulla, lulla, lullaby :
Never harm, nor spell, nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh ;
So, good night, with lullaby.*

II

2 Fai. *Weaving spiders, come not here ;
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence ;
Beetles black, approach not near ;
Worm, nor snail, do no offence.*

CHORUS. *Philomel, with melody, &c.*

1 Fai. Hence, away ; now all is well :
One, aloof, stand sentinel.

[Exeunt Fairies. TITANIA sleeps.]

Enter OBERON.

Obe. What thou seest, when thou dost wake,

[Squeezes the flower on TITANIA's eye-lids.]

Do it for thy true love take ;
Love, and languish for his sake :
Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,
Pard, or boar with bristled hair,
In thy eye that shall appear
When thou wak'st, it is thy dear ;
Wake, when some vile thing is near.

[Exit.]

Enter BOTTOM and other Clowns to rehearse a play.

Enter PUCK behind.

Puck. What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,
So near the cradle of the fairy queen ?
What, a play toward ? I'll be an auditor ;
An actor too, perhaps, if I see cause.

[Exit BOTTOM, followed by PUCK.]

Re-enter PUCK, and BOTTOM with an Ass's head.

Puck. I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round,
Through bog, through bush, through brake, through brier ;
Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,
A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire ;
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn. [Exit.

[BOTTOM sings.

Tita. What angel wakes me from my flowery bed ? [Waking.

[BOTTOM sings again.

Tita. I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again :
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note,
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape ;
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me,
On the first view, to say, to swear, I love thee.
Out of this wood do not desire to go ;
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.
I am a spirit of no common rate :
The summer still doth tend upon my state,
And I do love thee : therefore, go with me ;
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee ;
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,
And sing, while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep ;
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so,
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.—
Peas-blossom ! Cobweb ! Moth ! and Mustard-seed !

Enter four Fairies.

1 *Fai.* Ready.

2 *Fai.* And I.

3 *Fai.* And I.

4 *Fai.* Where shall we go ?

Tita. Be kind and courteous to this gentleman ;
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes ;
Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries ;
The honey bags steal from the humble-bees,
And, for night-tapers, crop their waxen thighs,

And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,
 To have my love to bed, and to arise ;
 And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,
 To fan the moon-beams from his sleeping eyes :
 Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

1 *Fai.* Hail, mortal !

2 *Fai.* Hail !

3 *Fai.* Hail !

4 *Fai.* Hail !

Tita. Come wait upon him ; lead him to my bower.

The moon, methinks, looks with a watery eye ;
 And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
 Lamenting some enforced chastity.
 Tie up my love's tongue, bring him silently.

[*Exeunt.*]

Another part of the Wood.

Enter OBERON.

Obe. I wonder, if Titania be awak'd ;
 Then, what it was that next came in her eye,
 Which she must dote on in extremity.

Enter Puck.

Here comes my messenger.—How now, mad spirit ?
 What night-rule now about this haunted grove ?

Puck. My mistress with a monster is in love.
 Near to her close and consecrated bower,
 While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
 A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,
 That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
 Were met together to rehearse a play,
 Intended for great Theseus' nuptial day.
 The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,
 Who Pyramus presented, in their sport
 Forsook his scene, and enter'd in a brake :
 When I did him at this advantage take,
 An ass's nowl I fixed on his head ;
 Anon, his Thisbe must be answered,
 And forth my mimick comes : When they him spy,
 As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,

Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,
 Rising and cawing at the gun's report
 Sever themselves, and madly sweep the sky ;
 So, at his sight, away his fellows fly ;
 And, at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls ;
 He murder cries, and help from Athens calls.
 Their sense, thus weak, lost with their fears, thus strong,
 Made senseless things begin to do them wrong :
 For briers and thorns at their apparel snatch ;
 Some, sleeves ; some, hats : from yielders all things catch.
 I led them on in this distracted fear,
 And left sweet Pyramus translated there :
 When in that moment (so it came to pass,
 Titania wak'd, and straightway lov'd an ass.

Obe. This falls out better than I could devise.
 I'll to my queen, and beg her Indian boy ;
 And then I will her charmed eye release
 From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

Puck. My fairy lord, this must be done with haste ;
 For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,
 And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger ;
 At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,
 Troop home to church-yards : and the spirits all,
 That in cross-ways and floods have burial,
 Already to their wormy beds are gone ;
 For fear lest day should look their shames upon,
 They wilfully themselves exile from light,
 And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

Obe. But we are spirits of another sort :
 I with the Morning's Love have oft made sport :
 And, like a forester, the groves may tread,
 Even till the eastern gate, all fiery red,
 Opening on Neptune with fair blessed beams,
 Turns into yellow gold his salt-green streams.
 But, notwithstanding, haste ; make no delay :
 We may effect this business yet ere day.

[*Exit OBE.*

Puck. Up and down, up and down
 I will lead them up and down :
 I am fear'd in field and town ;
 Goblin, lead them up and down.

On the ground
 Sleep sound :
 I'll apply
 To your eye,
 Gentle lover, remedy.
 And the country proverb known,
 That every man should take his own,
 In your waking shall be shown :
 Jack shall have Jill ;
 Nought shall go ill ;

The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well.

[*Exit* PUCK.]

Enter TITANIA and BOTTOM, Fairies attending ; OBERON
behind unseen.

Tita. Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,
 While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,
 And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,
 And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.
 What, wilt thou hear some musick, my sweet love ?
 Or, say, sweet love, what thou desir'st to eat.
 I have a venturous fairy that shall seek
 The squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee new nuts.
 Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms.
 Fairies, begone, and be all ways away.

[*Exeunt* Fairies.]

So doth the woodbine, the sweet honeysuckle,
 Gently entwist,—the female ivy so
 Enrings the barked fingers of the elm.
 O, how I love thee ! how I dote on thee !

[*They sleep.*]

OBERON *advances.* *Enter* PUCK.

Obe. Welcome, good Robin. See'st thou this sweet sight ?
 Her dotage now I do begin to pity.
 For meeting her of late, behind the wood,
 Seeking sweet savours for this hateful fool,
 I did upbraid her, and fall out with her :
 For she his hairy temples then had rounded
 With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers ;
 And that same dew, which sometime on the buds

Was wont to swell, like round and orient pearls,
 Stood now within the pretty flowrets' eyes,
 Like tears, that did their own disgrace bewail.
 When I had, at my pleasure, taunted her,
 And she, in mild terms, begg'd my patience,
 I then did ask of her her changeling child ;
 Which straight she gave me, and her fairy sent
 To bear him to my bower in fairy land.
 And now I have the boy, I will undo
 This hateful imperfection of her eyes.
 And, gentle Puck, take this transformed scalp
 From off the head of this Athenian swain ;
 That he awaking when the others do,
 May all to Athens back again repair ;
 And think no more of this night's accidents,
 But as the fierce vexation of a dream.
 But first I will release the fairy queen.

Be, as thou wast wont to be ;

[*Touching her eyes with an herb.*]

See, as thou wast wont to see :

Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower

Hath such force and blessed power.

Now, my Titania ; wake you, my sweet queen.

Tita. My Oberon ! what visions have I seen !

Methought I was enamour'd of an ass.

Obe. There lies your love.

Tita.

How came these things to pass ?

O, how mine eyes do loathe his visage now !

Obe. Silence, a while.—Robin, take off this head.

Titania, musick call ; and strike more dead

Than common sleep, of all these five the sense.

Tita. Musick, ho ! musick, such as charmeth sleep.

Puck. Now, when thou wak'st, with thine own fool's eyes
 peep.

Obe. Sound, musick. [*Still musick.*] Come, my queen,
 take hands with me,

And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.

Now thou and I are new in amity.

Puck. Fairy king, attend and mark ;

I do hear the morning lark.

Obe. Then, my queen, in silence sad,
Trip we after the night's shade :
We the globe can compass soon,
Swifter than the wand'ring moon.

Tita. Come, my lord ; and in our flight,
Tell me how it came this night,
That I sleeping here was found,
With these mortals, on the ground.

[*Exeunt.*

SHAKESPEARE.

The Eighth Nimphall

*A Nymph is married to a Fay,
Great preparations for the day,
All rites of nuptials they recite you,
To the bridal and invite you.*

Mertilla. But will our Tita wed this fay ?

Claia. Yea, and to-morrow is the day.

Mertilla. But why should she bestow herself
Upon this dwarfish fairy elf ?

Claia. Why, by her smallness, you may find
That she is of the Fairy kind,
And therefore apt to choose her make
Whence she did her beginning take :
Besides he's deft and wondrous airy,
And of the noblest of the Faery ;
Chief of the crickets of much fame,
In Faery a most ancient name.
But to be brief, 'tis clearly done ;
The pretty wench is wooed and won.

Cloris. If this be so, let us provide
The ornaments to fit our bride ;
Queen Mab will look she should be drest
In those attires we think our best ;
Therefore some curious things let's give her
Ere to her spouse we her deliver.

Mertilla. I'll have a jewel for her ear
(Which for my sake I'll have her wear) ;

'Tshall be a dewdrop, and therein,
 Of Cupids I will have a twin,
 Which struggling with their wings shall break
 The bubble, out of which shall leak
 So sweet a liquor as shall move
 Each thing that smells to be in love.

Claira. Believe me, girls, this will be fine,
 And to this pendant then take mine :
 A cup in fashion of a fly,
 Of the lynx's piercing eye,
 Wherein there sticks a sunny ray,
 Shot in through the clearest day,
 Whose brightness Venus' self did move
 Therein to put her drink of Love,
 Which for more strength she did distil ;
 The limbeck was a phœnix' quill.
 At this cup's delicious brink,
 A fly approaching but to drink,
 Like amber or some precious gum
 It transparent doth become.

Cloris. For jewels for her ears she's sped ;
 But for a dressing for her head,
 I think for her I have a tire
 That all fairies shall admire.
 The yellows in the full-blown rose,
 Which in the top it doth enclose,
 Like drops of gold ore shall be hung
 Upon her tresses ; and among
 Those scattered seeds (the eye to please)
 The wings of the cantharides ;
 With some o' th' rainbow that doth rail
 Those moons in the peacock's tail :
 Whose dainty colours being mixt
 With the other beauties, and so fixt,
 Her lovely tresses shall appear
 As though upon a flame they were.
 And to be sure she shall be gay,
 We'll take those feathers from the jay,
 About her eyes in circlets set,
 To be our Tita's coronet.

Mertilla. Then, dainty girls I make no doubt
 But we shall neatly send her out,
 But let's among ourselves agree
 Of what her wedding gown shall be.

Claiia. Of pansy, pink, and primrose leaves
 Most curiously laid on threaves,
 And all embroidery to supply
 Powdered with flowers of rosemary.
 A trail about the skirt shall run,
 The silk-worm's finest, newly spun,
 And every seam the nymphs shall sew
 With the smallest of the spinner's clue ;
 And having done their work, again
 These to the Church shall bear her train,
 Which for our Tita we will make
 Of the cast slough of a snake,
 Which quivering as the wind doth blow
 The Sun shall it like tinsel shew.

Cloris. And being led to meet her mate,
 To make sure that she want no state,
 Moons from the peacocks tail we'll shred
 With feathers from the pheasant's head,
 Mixed with the plume of (so high price)
 The precious bird of Paradise ;
 Which to make up our nymphs shall ply
 Into a curious canopy,
 Borne o'er her head (by our enquiry)
 By Elves, the fittest of the Faery.

Mertilla. But all this while we have forgot
 Her buskins, neighbours, have we not ?

Claiia. We had ; for those I'll fit her now :
 They shall be of the lady-cow ;
 The dainty shell upon her back
 Of crimson strew'd with spots of black,
 Which as she holds as stately pace
 Her leg will wonderfully grace.

Cloris. But then for music of the best ?
 This must be thought on for the feast.

Mertilla. The nightingale, of birds most choice,
 To do her best shall strain her voice,

And to this bird to make a set
 The mavis, merle and robinet,
 The lark, the linnet and the thrush
 That make a quire of every bush.
 But for still music we will keep
 The wren and titmouse, which to sleep
 Shall sing the bride when she's alone,
 The rest into their chambers gone ;
 And like those upon ropes that walk,
 On gossamer from stalk to stalk
 The tripping fairy tricks shall play
 The evening of the wedding day.

Thus far we handsomely have gone :

Now for our Prothalamion
 Or Marriage song, of all the rest
 A thing that much must grace our feast.
 Let us practise then to sing it
 Ere we before the assembly bring it :
 We in dialogues must do it ;
 Then, my dainty girls, set to it.

Claia. This day must Tita married be :
 Come, nymphs, this nuptial let us see.

Mertilla. But is it certain that ye say ?
 Will she wed the noble fay ?

Cloris. Sprinkle the dainty flowers with dews
 Such as the gods at banquets use :
 Let herbs and weeds turn all to roses
 And make proud the posts with posies :
 Shoot your sweets into the air,
 Charge the morning to be fair,

Claia. } For our Tita is this day

Mertilla. } To be married to a fay.

Claia. By whom then shall our bride be led
 To the temple to be wed ?

Mertilla. Only by yourself and I :
 Who that roomth should else supply ?

Cloris. Come, bright girls, come altogether
 And bring all your offerings hither,
 Ye most brave and buxom bevy
 All your goodly graces levy :

Come in majesty and state
Our bridal here to celebrate.

Mertilla. } For our Tita is this day

Claia. } Married to a noble fay.

Claia. Whose lot will't be the way to strow
On which to church our bride must go ?

Mertilla. That, I think, as fit'st of all
To lively Lelipa will fall.

Cloris. Summon all the sweets that are
To this nuptial to repair
Till with their throngs themselves they smother,
Strongly stifling one another,
And at last they all consume
And vanish in one rich perfume.

Mertilla. } For our Tita is this day

Claia. } Married to a noble fay.

Mertilla. But coming back when she is wed,
Who breaks the cake above her head ?

Claia. That shall Mertilla, for she's tallest,
And our Tita is the smallest.

Cloris. Violins, strike up aloud,
Ply the gittern, scour the crowd,
Let the nimble hand belabour
The whistling pipe and drumbling tabor ;
To the full the bagpipe rack
Till the swelling leather crack.

Mertilla. For our Tita is this day
Married to a noble fay.

Claia. But when to dine she takes her seat
What shall be our Tita's meat ?

Mertilla. The gods this feast as to begin,
Have sent of their ambrosia in.

Cloris. Then serve we up the straw's rich berry,
The Respas and Elisian cherry ;
The virgin honey from the flowers
In Hybla wrought in Flora's bowers ;
Full bowls of nectar, and no girl
Carouse but in dissolved pearl.

Mertilla. For our Tita is this day
Married to a noble fay.

Cloris. In masques, in dances and delight,
 And rear banquets spend the night ;
 Then about the room we ramble,
 Scatter nuts and for them scramble,
 Over stools and tables tumble,
 Never think of noise nor rumble.

Mertilla. } For our Tita is this day
Claira. } Married to a noble fay.

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

Song

WE, that are of purer fire,
 Imitate the starry quire,



Who, in their nightly watchful spheres,
 Lead in swift round the months and years.
 The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
 Now to the moon in wavering morrice move ;

And on the tawny sands and shelves
 Trip the pert fairies and the dapper elves,
 By dimpled brook and fountain-brim,
 The wood-nymphs, decked with daisies trim,
 Their merry wakes and pastimes keep :
 What hath night to do with sleep ?

JOHN MILTON.

Song

SABRINA fair,
 Listen where thou art sitting
 Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
 In twisted braids of lilies knitting
 The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair ;
 Listen for dear honour's sake,
 Goddess of the silver lake,
 Listen and save !

By the rushy-fring'd bank,
 Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
 My sliding chariot stays,
 Thick set with agate, and the azurn sheen
 Of turkis blue, and emerald green,
 That in the channel strays :
 Whilst from off the waters fleet
 Thus I set my printless feet
 O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
 That bends not as I tread.
 Gentle swain, at thy request
 I am here !

JOHN MILTON.

The Elfin Pedlar

LADY and gentlemen fays, come buy !
 No pedlar has such a rich packet as I.

Who wants a gown
 Of purple fold,
 Embroidered down
 The seams with gold ?
 See here !—a Tulip richly laced
 To please a royal fairy's taste !

Who wants a cap
 Of crimson grand ?
 By great good hap
 I've one on hand :
 Look, sir !—a Cock's-comb, flowering red,
 'Tis just the thing, sir, for your head !

Who wants a frock
 Of vestal hue ?
 Or snowy smock ?—



Fair maid, do you ?
 O me !—a Ladysmock so white !
 Your bosom's self is not more bright !

Who wants to sport
 A slender limb ?
 I've every sort
 Of hose for him :
 Both scarlet, striped, and yellow ones :
 This Woodbine makes such pantaloons !

Who wants—(hush ! hush !)
 A box of paint ?
 'Twill give a blush
 Yet leave no taint :
 This Rose with natural rouge is fill'd,
 From its own dewy leaves distill'd.

Then lady and gentlemen fays, come buy !
 You never will meet such a merchant as I !

GEORGE DARLEY.

Songs from "Prince Brightkin."

SCENE : *A Forest in Fairyland.*

DAWN.

First Fairy.

FAIRIES and ELVES !
 Shadows of night
 Pale and grow thin,
 Branches are stirr'd ;
 Rouse up yourselves ;
 Sing to the light,
 Fairies, begin,—
 Hark, there's a bird !

Second.

For dreams are now fading,
 Old thoughts in new morning :
 Dull spectres and goblins
 To dungeon must fly.
 The starry night changeth,
 Its low stars are setting,
 Its lofty stars dwindle
 And hide in the sky.

First.

Fairies, awake !
 Light on the hills !
 Blossom and grass
 Tremble with dew !

Gambols the snake,
 Merry bird shrills,
 Honey-bees pass,
 Morning is new.

Second.

Pure joy of the cloudlets,
 All rippled in crimson !
 Afar over world's edge
 The night-fear is roll'd ;
 O look how the Great One
 Uplifts himself kingly ;
 At once the wide morning
 Is flooded with gold !

First.

Fairies, arouse !
 Mix with your song
 Harplet and pipe,
 Thrilling and clear.
 Swarm on the boughs !
 Chant in a throng !
 Morning is ripe,
 Waiting to hear.

Second.

The merle and the skylark
 Will hush for our chorus,
 Quick wavelets of music,
 Begin them anon !
 Good-luck comes to all things
 That hear us and hearken,—
 Our myriads of voices
 Commingling in one.

General Chorus.

Golden, golden
 Light unfolding,
 Busily, merrily, work and play,
 In flowery meadows,
 And forest-shadows,
 All the length of a summer day !
 All the length of a summer day !

Sprightly, lightly,
 Sing we rightly !
 Moments brightly hurry away !
 Fruit-tree blossoms,
 And roses' bosoms—
 Clear blue sky of a summer day !
 Dear blue sky of a summer day !

Springlets, brooklets,
 Greeny nooklets,
 Hill and valley, and salt-sea spray !
 Comrade rovers,
 Fairy lovers,—
 All the length of a summer day !
 All the livelong summer day !

The Noon Call

HEAR the call !
 Fays, be still !
 Noon is deep
 On vale and hill.
 Stir no sound
 The Forest round !
 Let all things hush
 That fly or creep,—
 Tree and bush,
 Air and ground !
 Hear the call !
 Silence keep !
 One and all
 Hush and sleep !

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

Song from "The Culprit Fay"

OUPHE and goblin ! imp and sprite !
 Elf of eve ! and starry Fay !
 Ye that love the moon's soft light,
 Hither—hither wend your way ;
 Twine ye in a jocund ring,
 Sing and trip it merrily,
 Hand to hand, and wing to wing,
 Round the wild witch-hazel tree.

Hail the wanderer again,
 With dance and song, and lute and lyre,
 Pure his wing and strong his chain,
 And doubly bright his fairy fire.
 Twine ye in an airy round,
 Brush the dew and print the lea ;
 Skip and gambol, hop and bound,
 Round the wild witch-hazel tree.

The beetle guards our holy ground,
 He flies about this haunted place,
 And if mortal there be found,
 He hums in his ears and flaps his face :
 The leaf-harp sounds our roundelay,
 The owlet's eyes our lanterns be ;
 Thus we sing, and dance, and play,
 Round the wild witch-hazel tree.

But hark ! from tower on tree-top high,
 The sentry elf his call has made,
 A streak is in the Eastern sky,
 Shapes of moonlight ! flit and fade !
 The hill-tops gleam in morning's spring,
 The skylark shakes his dappled wing,
 The day-glimpse glimmers on the lawn,
 The cock has crowed, and the Fays are gone.

J. RODMAN DRAKE.

Owlspiegle and Cockledemoy

Owlspiegle. Cockledemoy,
 My boy, my boy.
Cockledemoy. Here, father, here.



Owl. Now the polestar's red and burning,
 And the witch's spindle turning,
 Appear, appear !
 Cockledemoy !
 My boy, my boy,
 We'll sport us here—
Cock. Our gambols play
 Like elve and fay ;
Owl. And domineer,

- Cock.* Laugh, frolic, and frisk till the morning appear.
Lift latch—open clasp—
Shoot bolt—and burst hasp !
- Owl.* Cockledemoy !
My boy, my boy,
What wilt thou do that will give thee joy ?
Wilt thou ride on the midnight owl ?
- Cock.* No, for the weather is stormy and foul.
- Owl.* Cockledemoy !
My boy, my boy,
What wilt thou do that can give thee joy ?
With a needle for sword, and a thimble for a hat,
Wilt thou fight a traverse with the castle cat ?
- Cock.* Oh no ! she has claws, and I like not that.
- Owl.* Cockledemoy !
My boy, my boy,
What shall we do that can give thee joy ?
Shall we go seek for a cuckoo's nest ?
- Cock.* That's best, that's best !
- Both.* About, about,
Like an elvish scout,
The cuckoo's a gull, and we'll soon find him out.
- Owl.* Cockledemoy, my hope, my care,
Where art thou now, O tell me where ?
- Cock.* Up in the sky,
On the bonny dragonfly,
Come, father, come you too—
She has four wings, and strength enow,
And her long body has room for two.

WALTER SCOTT.

Fairy Song

WHAT I am I must not show—
What I am thou couldst not know—
Something betwixt heaven and hell—
Something that neither stood nor fell—
Something that through thy wit or will
May work thee good—may work thee ill.

Neither substance quite, nor shadow,
 Haunting lonely moor and meadow,
 Dancing by the haunted spring,
 Riding on the whirlwind's wing ;
 Aping in fantastic fashion
 Every change of human passion,
 While o'er our frozen minds they pass,
 Like shadows from the mirror'd glass.
 Wayward, fickle, is our mood,
 Hovering betwixt bad and good,
 Happier than brief-dated man,
 Living ten times o'er his span ;
 Far less happy, for we have
 Help nor hope beyond the grave !

WALTER SCOTT.

Fairies on the Sea-shore

First Fairy. My home and haunt are in every leaf
 Whose life is a summer day bright and brief—
 I live in the depths of the tulip's bower,
 I wear a wreath of the cistus flower,
 I drink the dew of the blue harebell,
 I know the breath of the violet well,
 The white and the azure violet ;
 But I know not which is the sweetest yet,
 I have kiss'd the cheek of the rose,
 I have watch'd the lily uncloze,
 My silver mine is the almond tree,
 Who will come dwell with flower and me ?

Chorus of Fairies. Dance we our round, 'tis a summer night,
 And our steps are led by the glow-worm's light.

Second Fairy. My dwelling is in the serpentine
 Of the rainbow's colour'd line,—
 See how its rose and amber clings
 To the many hues of my radiant wings ;

Mine is the step that bids the earth
 Give to the iris flower its birth,
 And mine the golden cup to hide,
 Where the last faint hue of the rainbow died.
 Search the depths of an Indian mine,—
 Where are the colours to match with mine ?

Chorus. Dance we round, for the gale is bringing
 Songs the summer rose is singing.

Third Fairy. I float on the breath of a minstrel's lute,
 Or the wandering sounds of a distant flute,
 Linger I over the tones that swell
 From the pink-veined chords of an ocean-shell ;
 I love the skylark's morning hymn,
 Or the nightingale heard at the twilight dim,
 The echo, the fountain's melody,—
 These, oh ! these are the spells for me !

Chorus. Hail to the summer night of June ;
 See ! yonder has risen our ladye moon.

Fourth Fairy. My palace is in the coral cave
 Set with spars by the ocean wave ;
 Would ye have gems, then seek them there,—
 There found I the pearls that bind my hair.
 I and the wind together can roam
 Over the green waves and their white foam,—
 See, I have got this silver shell,
 Mark how my breath will its smallness swell,
 For the Nautilus is my boat
 In which I over the waters float :
 The moon is shining over the sea,—
 Who is there will come and sail with me ?

Chorus of Fairies. Our noontide sleep is on leaf and flower
 Our revels are held in a moonlit hour,—



“ For the Nautilus is my boat
In which I over the waters float.”

What is there sweet, what is there fair,
 And we are not the dwellers there ?
 Dance we round, for the morning light
 Will put us and our glow-worm lamps to flight !

L. E. LONDON.

The Conceited Elf

First Elf. But where is Nephon ? Who can tell ?
Seventh Elf. How wondrous grand he's grown of late !
Eighth Elf. And walks so high ! and slaps his pate
 Ten times a moment, as the state
 Of fairyland depended on him,
 Or titmice had agreed to crown him.
Third Elf. And takes such mighty airs upon him
 As I can witness : 'Twas but now
 I challenged him to ride the bough,
 When pursing bigly—"Silly thou !
 Trouble me not," said he, and stalked
 As stiff as if a radish walked
 Past me, forsooth !
First Elf. He has not talked
 Of anybody but himself
 This mortal day.
Second Elf. Conceited elf !
 Would he were bottled on a shelf !

GEORGE DARLEY.

Song of Four Fairies

FIRE, AIR, EARTH, and WATER,

SALAMANDER, ZEPHYR, DUSKETHA, AND BREAMA.

Sal. Happy, happy glowing fire !
Zep. Fragrant air ! delicious light !
Dus. Let me to my gloom retire !
Bre. I to green-weed rivers bright !

- Sal.* Happy, happy glowing fire !
 Dazzling bowers of soft retire,
 Ever let my nourish'd wing,
 Like a bat's, still wandering,
 Faintly fan your fiery spaces,
 Spirit sole in deadly places.
 In unhaunted roar and blaze,
 Open eyes that never daze,
 Let me see the myriad shapes
 Of men, and beasts, and fish, and apes,
 Portray'd in many a fiery den,
 And wrought by spumy bitumen
 On the deep intenser roof,
 Arched every way aloof,
 Let me breathe upon their skies,
 And anger their live tapestries ;
 Free from cold, and every care,
 Of chilly rain, and shivering air.
- Zep.* Spirit of Fire ! away ! away !
 Or your very roundelay
 Will sear my plumage newly budded
 From its quilled sheath, all studded
 With the self-same dews that fell
 On the May-grown Asphodel.
 Spirit of Fire—away ! away !
- Bre.* Spirit of Fire—away ! away !
 Zephyr, blue-eyed fairy, turn,
 And see my cool sedge-buried urn,
 Where it rests its mossy brim
 'Mid water-mint and cresses dim ;
 And the flowers, in sweet troubles,
 Lift their eyes above the bubbles,
 Like our Queen, when she would please
 To sleep, and Oberon *will* tease.
 Love me, blue-eyed Fairy ! true,
 Soothly I am sick for you.
- Zep.* Gentle Breama ! by the first
 Violet young nature nurst,
 I will bathe myself with thee,
 So you sometimes follow me

To my home, far, far, in west,
 Beyond the nimble-wheeled quest
 Of the golden-browed sun :
 Come with me, o'er tops of trees,
 To my fragrant palaces,
 Where they ever floating are
 Beneath the cherish of a star
 Call'd Vesper, who with silver veil
 Ever hides his brilliance pale,
 Ever gently-drows'd doth keep
 Twilight for the Fayes to sleep.
 Fear not that your watery hair
 Will thirst in drouthy ringlets there ;
 Clouds of stored summer rains
 Thou shalt taste, before the stains
 Of the mountain soil they take,
 And too unlucent for thee make.
 I love thee, crystal Fairy, true !
 Sooth I am as sick for you !

Sal.

Out, ye aguish Fairies, out !
 Chilly lovers, what a rout
 Keep ye with your frozen breath,
 Colder than the mortal death.
 Adder-eyed Dusketha, speak,
 Shall we leave these, and go seek
 In the earth's wide entrails old
 Couches warm as theirs are cold ?
 O for a fiery gloom and thee,
 Dusketha, so enchantingly
 Freckle-wing'd and lizard-sided !

Dus.

By thee, Sprite, will I be guided !
 I care not for cold or heat ;
 Frost and flame, or sparks, or sleet,
 To my essence are the same ;—
 But I honour more the flame.
 Sprite of Fire, I follow thee
 Wheresoever it may be,
 To the torrid spouts and fountains,
 Underneath earth-quake'd mountains
 Or, at thy supreme desire,

Touch the very pulse of fire
 With my bare unlidde eyes.
Sal. Sweet Dusketha ! paradise !
 Off, ye icy Spirits, fly !
 Frosty creatures of the sky !
Dus. Breathe upon them, fiery sprite !
Zep. } Away ! away to our delight !
Bre. }
Sal. Go, feed on icicles, while we
 Bedded in tongue-flames will be.
Dus. Lead me to these feverous glooms,
 Sprite of Fire !
Bre. Me to the blooms,
 Blue-eyed Zephyr, of those flowers,
 Far in the west where the May-cloud lowers ;
 And the beams of still Vesper, when winds are all wist,
 Are shed through the rain and the milder mist,
 And twilight your floating bowers.

JOHN KEATS

Two Fairies in a Garden

1. " Whither goest, brother Elf ? "
2. " The sun is weak—to warm myself
 In a thick red tulip's core.
 Whither thou ? "
1. " Till day be o'er,
 To the dim and deep snow-palace
 Of the closest lily-chalice,
 Where is veil'd the light of noon
 To be like my Lady's moon.
 Thou art of the day, I ween ? "
2. " Yet I not disown our Queen,
 Nor at Lysc' am backward found,
 When the mighty Feast comes round ;



“ Off, ye icy Spirits, fly ! ”



When She spreads abroad her power
 To proclaim a midnight hour
 For the pale blue Fays like thee
 And the ruddy Elves like me
 To mingle in a charmèd ring
 With a perfect welcoming ;
 Guarded from the moon-stroke cold,
 And wisp that scares us on the wold."

1. " Swift that Night is drawing near,
 When your abrupt and jovial cheer,
 Mixes in our misty dance,
 Meeting else by rarest chance.
 We love dark undew'd recesses
 Of the leafy wildernesses,
 Or to hide in some cold flow'r,
 Shelter'd from the sunlight hour,
 And more afflictive mortal eye."

2. " Gladly, gladly, do I spy
 Human children playing nigh,
 Feel, and so must you, the grace
 Of a loving human face.
 Else why come you in this place ?
 O, my Sister, if we might
 Show ourselves to mortal sight
 Far more often ! if they knew
 Half the friendly turns we do !
 Even now, a gentle thought
 Would pay my service dimly wrought,
 Round these winding garden-walks,
 Fruits and flow'rs and leaves and stalks.
 Paler favourites of the noon,
 Can ye give or take such boon ? "

1. " Chantings, Brother, hear you might,
 Softly sung through still of night ;
 Calling from the wëird North
 Dreams like distant echoes forth,

Till through curtain'd shades they creep,
 To inlay the gloomy floor of sleep
 For babes, and souls that babe-like are :
 So we bless them from afar
 Like a faint but favouring star.
 —But tell me how in fields or bowers
 Thou hast spent these morning hours ? ”

2. “ Through the tall hedge I have been,
 Shadowy wall of crusted green,
 Within whose heart the birds are seen.
 Speeding swiftly thence away
 To the crowning chestnut-spray,
 I watch'd a Tyrant steal along
 Would slay the sweet Thrush in her song ;
 Warned, she soon broke off from singing,
 There we left the branchlet swinging.
 Whispering Robin, down the walk,
 News of poisoning, pouncing Hawk,
 The Sycamore I next must strew
 On every leaf with honey-dew.
 And hither now from clouds I run,
 For all my morning work is done.”

1. “ Alas, I wither in the sun,
 Witless drawn to leave my nest
 Ere the day be laid to rest !
 But to-night we lightly troop
 By the young Moon's silver hoop ;
 Weaving wide our later ranks
 As on evening river-banks
 Shifting clouds of midges glance
 Through mazes of their airy dance :
 O might you come, O might you see
 All our shadow'd revelry !
 Yet the next night shall be rarer,
 Next and next and next, still fairer ;
 We are waxing every night,
 Till our joy be full and bright ;

Then as slowly do we wane
 With gentle loss that makes no pain.
 For thus are we with life endued :
 Ye, I trow, have rougher food."

2. " Yes : with fragrant soul we're fed
 Of every flower whose cheek is red,



Shunning yellow, blue, and white ;
 And southward go, at the nightingale's flight
 Many the Faery Nations be.
 Oh ! how I long, I long to see
 The moonèd midnight of our Feast
 Flushing amber through the east,
 When every cap in Elfindom
 Into that great ring shall come,
 Owl and Elf and Fairy blended,
 Till th' imperial time be ended !
 Even those fantastic Sprites
 Lay aside their dear delights

Of freakish mischief and annoyance
 In the universal joyance,
 One of whom I saw of late
 As I peep'd through window-grate,
 (Under roof I may not enter)
 Haunt the housewife to torment her,
 Tangle up her skein of silk,
 Throw a mouse into her milk,
 Hide her thimble, scorch her roast,
 Quickly drive her mad almost ;
 And I too vex'd, because I would
 Have brought her succour if I could.
 —But where shall this be holden, say ?
 Far away ? ”

1. “ O, far away,
 Over river must we fly,
 Over the sea and the mountain high,
 Over city, seen afar
 Like a low and misty star,—
 Soon beneath us glittering
 Like million spark-worms. But our wing,
 For the flight will ne'er suffice.
 Some are training Flittermice,
 I a Silver Moth.”

2. “ Beware
 How I'll thrid the vaulted air !
 A Dragon-fly with glassy wings,
 Born beside the meadow-springs,
 That can arrow-swiftly glide,
 Thorough the glowing eventide,
 Nor at twilight-fall grow slack,
 Shall bear me on his long blue back.
 Dew-stars, meteors of the night,
 May not strike him with affright,
 He can needle through the wood,
 That's like a green earth-chained cloud,

Mountain-summits deftly rake,
 Draw swift line o'er plain and lake.
 If at Lysco I be last,
 Other elves must journey fast.
 Lu a vo ! ”

1. “ But, Elf, I rede,
 Of all your Herbs take special heed.
 Our Mistress tholes no garden flowers,
 Though we have freedom of these bowers.
 Tell me what you mean to treasure,
 Each in 's atom ? ”

2. “ Gold-of-Pleasure,
 Medic, Plumeseed, Fountain-arrow,
 Vervain, Hungry-grass, and Yarrow,
 Quatrefoil and Melilot.”

1. “ These are well. And I have got
 Moonwort and the Filmy Fern,
 Gather'd nicely on the turn.
 Wo to Fairy that shall bring
 Bugloss for an offering,
 'Toad-flax, Barley of the Wall,
 Enchanter's Nightshade, worst of all.
 —Oh, brother, hush ! I faint with fear !
 A mortal footstep threatens near.”

2. “ None can see us, none can hear
 Yet, to make thee less afraid,
 Hush we both as thou hast pray'd.
 I will seek the verse to spell
 Written round my dark flow'r's bell,
 To sing at sunset. So, Farewell ! ”

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

The Mermaid

I

Who would be
 A mermaid fair,
 Singing alone,
 Combing her hair
 Under the sea,
 In a golden curl
 With a comb of pearl,
 On a throne ?

2

I would be a mermaid fair ;
 I would sing to myself the whole of the day ;
 With a comb of pearl I would comb my hair ;
 And still as I comb'd I would sing and say,
 " Who is it loves me ? who loves me not ? "

I would comb my hair till my ringlets would fall
 Low adown, low adown,
 From under my starry sea-bud crown
 Low adown, and around,
 And I should look like a fountain of gold
 Springing alone
 With a shrill inner sound,
 Over the throne
 In the midst of the hall ;

Till that great sea-snake under the sea
 From his coiled sleeps in the central deeps
 Would slowly trail himself sevenfold
 Round the hall where I sate, and look in at the gate
 With his large calm eyes for the love of me.
 And all the mermen under the sea
 Would feel their immortality
 Die in their hearts for the love of me.



WARWICK GOBLE

“ And I should look like a fountain of gold.”

3

But at night I would wander away, away,
 I would fling on each side my low-flowing locks
 And lightly vault from the throne and play
 With the mermen in and out of the rocks ;
 We would run to and fro, and hide and seek,
 On the broad sea-wolds in the crimson shells,
 Whose silvery spikes are nighest the sea.
 But if any came near I would call, and shriek,
 And adown the steep like a wave I would leap
 From the diamond-ledges that jut from the dells ;
 For I would not be kiss'd by all who would list,
 Of the bold merry mermen under the sea ;
 They would sue me, and woo me, and flatter me,
 In the purple twilights under the sea ;
 But the king of them all would carry me,
 Woo me, and win me, and marry me,
 In the branching jaspers under the sea ;
 Then all the dry pied things that be
 In the hueless mosses under the sea
 Would curl round my silver feet silently,
 All looking up for the love of me.
 And if I should carol aloud, from aloft
 All things that are forked, and horned, and soft
 Would lean out from the hollow sphere of the sea,
 All looking down for the love of me.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

The Merman

I

Who would be
 A merman bold,
 Sitting alone,
 Singing alone,
 Under the sea,
 With a crown of gold,
 On a throne ?

2

I would be a merman bold ;
 I would sit and sing the whole of the day ;
 I would fill the sea-halls with a voice of power ;
 But at night I would roam abroad and play
 With the mermaids in and out of the rocks,
 Dressing their hair with the white sea-flower ;
 And holding them back by their flowing locks
 I would kiss them often under the sea,
 And kiss them again till they kiss'd me
 Laughingly, laughingly ;
 And then we would wander away, away
 To the pale-green sea-groves straight and high,
 Chasing each other merrily.

3

There would be neither moon nor star ;
 But the wave would make music above us afar—
 Low thunder and light in the magic night—
 Neither moon nor star.
 We would call aloud in the dreamy dells,
 Call to each other and whoop and cry
 All night, merrily, merrily ;
 They would pelt me with starry spangles and shells,
 Laughing and clapping their hands between,
 All night, merrily, merrily ;
 But I would throw to them back in mine
 Turkis and agate and almondine :
 Then leaping out upon them unseen
 I would kiss them often under the sea,
 And kiss them again till they kiss'd me
 Laughingly, laughingly.
 Oh ! what a happy life were mine
 Under the hollow-hung ocean green !
 Soft are the moss-beds under the sea ;
 We would live merrily, merrily.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

The Sea-fairies

SLOW sail'd the weary mariners and saw,
 Betwixt the green brink and the running foam,
 Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms prest
 To little harps of gold ; and while they mused,
 Whispering to each other half in fear,
 Shrill music reach'd them on the middle sea.



Whither away, whither away, whither away ? fly no more,
 Whither away from the high green field, and the happy blossoming
 shore ?
 Day and night to the billow the fountain calls :
 Down shower the gambolling waterfalls
 From wandering over the lea ;
 Out of the live-green heart of the dells
 They freshen the silvery-crimson shells,
 And thick with white bells the clover-hill swells
 High over the full-toned sea :
 O hither, come hither and furl your sails,
 Come hither to me and to me :
 Hither, come hither and frolic and play ;

Here it is only the mew that wails ;
 We will sing to you all the day ;
 Mariner, mariner, furl your sails,
 For here are the blissful downs and dales,
 And merrily, merrily carol the gales,
 And the spangle dances in bight and bay,
 And the rainbow forms and flies on the land
 Over the islands free ;
 And the rainbow lives in the curve of the sand ;
 Hither, come hither and see ;
 And the rainbow hangs on the poising wave,
 And sweet is the colour of cove and cave,
 And sweet shall your welcome be ;
 O hither, come hither, and be our lords,
 For merry brides are we :
 We will kiss sweet kisses, and speak sweet words :
 O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
 With pleasure and love and jubilee ;
 O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten
 When the sharp clear twang of the golden chords
 Runs up the ridged sea.
 Who can light on as happy a shore
 All the world o'er, all the world o'er ?
 Whither away ? listen and stay : mariner, mariner, fly no more.
ALFRED TENNYSON.

The Moon Child

A LITTLE lonely child am I
 That have not any soul :
 God made me but a homeless wave,
 Without a goal.

A seal my father was, a seal
 That once was man :
 My mother loved him, though he was
 'Neath mortal ban.

He took a wave and drowned her,
 She took a wave and lifted him :
 And I was born where shadows are,
 I' the sea-depths dim.

All through the sunny blue-sweet hours
 I swim and glide in waters green :
 Never by day the mournful shores
 By me are seen.

But when the gloom is on the wave
 A shell unto the shore I bring ;
 And then upon the rocks I sit
 And plaintive sing.

O what is this wild song I sing,
 With meanings strange and dim ?
 No soul am I, a wave am I,
 And sing the Moon-child's hymn.

FIONA MACLEOD.

Mider's Song

How beautiful they are,
 The lordly ones
 Who dwell in the hills,
 In the hollow hills.

They have faces like flowers
 And their breath is wind
 That blows over grass
 Filled with dewy clover.

Their limbs are more white
 Than shafts of moonshine :
 They are more fleet
 Than the March wind.

They laugh and are glad
 And are terrible :
 When their lances shake
 Every green reed quivers.

How beautiful they are,
 How beautiful,
 The lordly ones
 In the hollow hills.

I would go back
 To the Country of the Young,
 And see again
 The lances of the Shee,

As they keep their hosting
 With laughing cries
 In pale places
 Under the moon.

FIONA MACLEOD.

Fairy Lullaby

(Old Irish)

O WOMAN, washing by the river !
 Hushaby, babe not mine !
 My woeful wail wilt pity never ?
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 A year this day I was snatched for ever,
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 To the green hill-fort where thorn-trees shiver,
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 Shoheen, shoheen, shoheen, shoheen,
 Sho-hu-lo, sho-hu-lo,
 Shoheen, shoheen, shoheen, shoheen,
 'Tis not thou, my baby, O.

'Tis there the fairy court is holden,
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 And there is new ale, there is olden,
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 And there are combs of honey golden,
 Hushaby, babe not mine,
 And there lie men in bonds enfolden,
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 Shoheen, etc.

How many there, of fairest faces !
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 Bright-eyed boys with manly graces !
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 Gold-haired girls with curling tresses !
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 There, mothers nurse with sad caresses,
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 Shoheen, etc.

Ah, bid my husband haste to-morrow,
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 A waxen taper he shall borrow,
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 A black knife bring to cross my sorrow,
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 And stab their first steed coming thoro',
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 Shoheen, etc.

Say, pluck the herb where gate-thorns quiver.
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 And wish a wish that God deliver,
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 If he come not then—he need come never,
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 For they'll make me Fairy Queen for ever !
 Hushaby, babe not mine.
 Shoheen, etc.

Trans. E. SIGERSON.

The Fairies' Lullaby

(*Old Irish*)

My mirth and merriment, soft and sweet art thou,
 Child of the race of Conn art thou ;
 My mirth and merriment, soft and sweet art thou,
 Of the race of Coll and Conn art thou.

My smooth green rush, my laughter sweet,
 My little plant in the rocky cleft,
 Were it not for the spell on thy tiny feet
 Thou wouldst not here be left,
 Not thou.

Of the race of Coll and Conn art thou,
 My laughter sweet and low art thou ;
 As you crow on my knee,
 I would lift you with me,
 Were it not for the mark that is on your feet
 I would lift you away, and away with me.

Trans. E. HALL.

A Faery Song

WE who are old, old and gay,
 O so old !
 Thousands of years, thousands of years,
 If all were told :

Give to these children, new from the world,
 Silence and love ;
 And the long dew-dropping hours of the night,
 And the stars above :

Give to these children, new from the world,
Rest far from men.
Is anything better, anything better ?
Tell us it then :

Us who are old, old and gay,
O so old !
Thousands of years, thousands of years,
If all were told.

W. B. YEATS.

PART III

Fairyland and Fairy Lore

THE HORSEMAN.

I HEARD a horseman
Ride over the hill ;
The moon shone clear,
The night was still ;
His helm was silver,
And pale was he ;
And the horse he rode
Was of ivory.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

Ariel. You fools ! I and my fellows
Are ministers of fate : the elements
Of whom your swords are temper'd, may as well
Wound the loud winds, or with be-mock'd-at stabs
Kill the still-closing waters, as diminish
One dowle that's in my plume ; my fellow-ministers
Are like invulnerable.

SHAKESPEARE.

The Fairies' Farewell

FAREWELL rewards and fairies !
Good housewives now may say ;
For now foul sluts in dairies
Do fare as well as they :



And though they sweep their hearths no less
Than maids were wont to do,
Yet who of late for cleanliness
Finds sixpence in her shoe ?

At morning and at evening both
 You merry were and glad ;
 So little care of sleep and sloth
 These pretty ladies had.
 When Tom came home from labour
 Or Ciss to milking rose,
 Then merrily went their tabor,
 And nimbly went their toes.

Witness those rings and roundelays
 Of theirs, which yet remain,
 Were footed in queen Mary's days
 On many a grassy plain.
 But since of late Elizabeth
 And later James came in ;
 They never danced on any heath,
 As when the time hath been.

A tell-tale in their company
 They never could endure ;
 And whoso kept not secretly
 Their mirth, was punished sure ;
 It was a just and christian deed
 To pinch such black and blue :
 O how the commonwealth doth need
 Such justices as you !

BISHOP CORBET.

Nimphidia the Court of Fairy

The Fairy Palace

THIS palace standeth in the air,
 By necromancy placed there,
 That it no tempest needs to fear
 Which way soe'er it blow it ;
 And somewhat southward toward the noon,
 Whence lies a way up to the moon,
 And thence the fairies can as soon
 Pass to the earth below it.

The walls of spiders' legs are made,
 Well mortised and finely laid ;
 He was the master of his trade
 It curiously that builded :
 The windows of the eyes of cats,
 And for the roof, instead of slats,
 Is covered with the skins of bats
 With moonshine that are gilded.

Fairy Frolics

Hence shadows, seeming idle shapes
 Of little frisking elves and apes,
 To earth do make their wanton 'scapes
 As hope of pastime hastes them :
 Which maids think on the hearth they see,
 When fires well-near consumed be,
 There dancing hays by two and three
 Just as their fancy casts them.

These make our girls their sluttery rue
 By pinching them both black and blue,
 And put a penny in their shoe
 The house for cleanly sweeping :
 And in their courses make that round
 In meadows and in marshes found,
 Of them so call'd the fairy ground,
 Of which they have the keeping.

The Fairy Pigwiggin Arms for the Fight

And quickly arms him for the field,
 A little cockle-shell his shield,
 Which he could very bravely wield,
 Yet could it not be pierced :
 His spear a bent both stiff and strong
 And well-near of two inches long,
 The pile was of a house-fly's tongue
 Whose sharpness naught reversed.

And puts him on a coat of mail,
 Which was of a fish's scale,
 That when his foe should him assail
 No point should be prevailing :
 His rapier was a hornet's sting,
 It was a very dangerous thing ;
 For if he chanced to hurt the King
 It would be long in healing.

His helmet was a beetle's head,
 Most horrible and full of dread,
 That able was to strike one dead,
 Yet did it well become him ;
 And for a plume a horse's hair,
 Which, being tossed with the air,
 Had force to strike his foe with fear
 And turn his weapon from him.

Himself he on an earwig set,
 Yet scarce he on his back could get,
 So oft and high he did corvet
 Ere he himself could settle :
 He made him turn and stop and bound,
 To gallop and to trot the round ;
 He scarce could stand on any ground,
 He was so full of mettle.

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

Lirope the Bright

THESE sprightly gallants lov'd a lass
 Called Lirope the bright ;
 In the whole world there scarcely was
 So delicate a wight.
 There was no beauty so divine
 That ever nymph did grace,
 But it beyond itself did shine
 In her more heavenly face.
 What form she pleased each thing would take
 That e'er she did behold ;



“What form she pleased each thing would take
That e'er she did behold.”

Of pebbles she could diamonds make,
 Gross iron turn to gold.
 Such power there with her presence came
 Stern tempests she allayed ;
 The cruel tiger she could tame,
 The raging torrents stayed.
 She chid, she cherished, she gave life,
 Again she made to die ;
 She raised a war, appeased a strife
 With turning of her eye.
 Some said a god did her beget,
 But much deceived were they ;
 Her father was a rivulet,
 Her mother was a fay.
 Her lineaments, so fine that were,
 She from the fairy took ;
 Her beauties and complexion clear
 By nature from the brook.

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

Christmas Tide

It faded on the crowing of the cock.
 Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
 Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
 This bird of dawning singeth all night long :
 And then they say no spirit dares stir abroad ;
 The nights are wholesome ; then no planets strike.
 No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
 So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

“ O then, I see ”

O THEN, I see, Queen Mab hath been with you.
 She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes
 In shape no bigger than an agate stone
 On the forefinger of an alderman ;

Drawn with a team of little atomies
Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep :
Her wagon spokes made of long spinners' legs ;
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers ;
The traces, of the smallest spider's web ;
The collars, of the moonshine's watery beams ;
Her whip, of cricket's bone, the lash, of film ;
Her wagoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm,
Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid :
Her chariot is an empty hazel nut,
Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,
Time out of mind the fairies' coachmakers.
And in this state she gallops night by night,
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love ;
On courtiers' knees that dream on court'sies straight ;
O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees ;
O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream ;
Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.
Sometimes she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,
And then dreams he of smelling out a suit :
And sometime comes she with a tithepig's tail,
Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies asleep,
Then he dreams of another benefice.
Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,
Of healths five fathoms deep ; and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes ;
And being thus frightened, swears a prayer or two,
And sleeps again. This is that very Mab,
That plaits the manes of horses in the night ;
And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs ;
Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

The Fairy Banquet

. . . THESE twain
 By a round little hole had soon descried
 A trim feat room, about a fathom wide,
 As much in height, and twice as much in length,
 Out of the main rock cut by artful strength.
 The two-leaved door was of the mother-pearl,
 Hinged and nailed with gold. Full many a girl
 Of the sweet fairy line, wrought in the loom
 That fitted those rich hangings clad the room.

The floor could of respect complain no loss,
 But neatly covered with discoloured moss,
 Woven into stories, might for such a piece
 Vie with the richest carpets brought from Greece.

A little mushroom (that was now grown thinner,
 By being one time shaven for the dinner
 Of one of Spain's grave grandees, and that day
 Out of his greatness' larder stol'n away)

This mushroom (on a frame of wax y-pight,
 Wherein was wrought the strange and cruel fight
 Betwixt the troublous commonwealth of flies,
 And the sly spider with industrious thighs)
 Served for a table ; then a little elf
 (If possible, far lesser than itself),
 Brought in the covering made of white rose-leaves,
 And (wrought together with the spinner's sleeves)
 Met in the table's middle in right angles ;
 The trenchers were of little silver spangles ;
 The salt, the small bone of a fish's back,
 Whereon in little was expressed the wrack
 Of that deploréd mouse, from whence hath sprung
 That furious battle Homer whilom sung
 Betwixt the frogs and mice ; so neatly wrought,
 You could not work it lesser in a thought.

Then on the table, for their bread, was put
The milk-white kernels of the hazel-nut ;

The ewer and basin were, as fitting well,
A periwinkle and a cockle-shell :
The glasses pure, and thinner than we can
See from the sea-betrothed Venetian,
Were all of ice not made to overlast
One supper, and betwixt two cowslips cast :
A prettier fashion hath not yet been told,
So neat the glass was, and so feat the mould.

A little spruce elf then (just of the set
Of the French dancer or such marionette)
Clad in a suit of rush, woven like a mat,
A monkshood flow'r then serving for a hat :
Under a cloak made of the spider's loom :
This fairy (with them held a lusty groom)
Brought in his bottles ; neater were there none.
And every bottle was a cherry-stone.
To each a seed-pearl served for a screw,
And most of them were filled with early dew.
Some choicer ones, as for the king most meet,
Held mel-dew and the honeysuckle's sweet.

The Fairy Musicians

THE treble was a three-mouthed grasshopper,
Well-tutored by a skilful chorister :
An ancient master, that did use to play
The friskings which the lambs do dance in May.
And long time was the chiefest called to sing,
When on the plains the fairies made a ring ;
Then a field-cricket, with a note full clean,
Sweet and unforced and softly sung the mean,
To whose accord, and with no mickle labour,
A pretty fairy played upon a tabor :
The case was of a hazel-nut, the heads
A bat's wing dressed, the snares were silver threads ;

A little stiffened lamprey's skin did suit
 All the rest well, and served them for a flute ;
 And to all these a deep well-breasted gnat,
 That had good sides, knew well his sharp and flat,
 Sung a good compass, making no wry face,—
 Was there as fittest for a chamber-bass.

These choice musicians to their merry king
 Gave all the pleasures which their art could bring.

WILLIAM BROWNE.

Oberon's Feast

A LITTLE mushroom-table spread,
 After short prayers they set on bread,
 A moon-parched grain of purest wheat,
 With some small glitt'ring grit, to eat
 His choice bits with ; then in a trice
 They make a feast less great than nice.
 But all this while his eye is served,
 We must not think his ear was starved ;
 But that there was in place to stir
 His spleen, the chirring grasshopper,
 The merry cricket, puling fly,
 The piping gnat for minstrelsy.
 And now, we must imagine first,
 The elves present, to quench his thirst,
 A pure seed-pearl of infant dew,
 Brought and besweetened in a blue
 And pregnant violet ; which done,
 His kitling eyes begin to run
 Quite through the table, where he spies
 The horns of papery butterflies,
 Of which he eats ; and tastes a little
 Of that we call the cuckoo's spittle.
 A little fuz-ball pudding stands
 By, yet not blessed by his hands,
 That was too coarse ; but then forthwith
 He ventures boldly on the pith

Of sugared rush, and eats the sag
 And well be-strutted bee's sweet bag ;
 Gladding his palate with some store
 Of emmets' eggs ; what would he more,
 But beards of mice, a newt's stewed thigh,
 A bloated earwig, and a fly ;
 With the red-capped worm, that's shut
 Within the concave of a nut,
 Brown as his tooth. A little moth,
 Late fattened in a piece of cloth ;
 With withered cherries, mandrake's ears,
 Mole's eyes ; to these the slain stag's tears ;
 The unctuous dewlaps of a snail,
 The broke-heart of a nightingale
 O'ercome in music ; with a wine
 Ne'er ravished from the flattering vine,
 But gently pressed from the soft side
 Of the most sweet and dainty bride,
 Brought in a dainty daisy, which
 He fully quaffs up to bewitch
 His blood to height ; this done, commended
 Grace by his priest ; the feast is ended.

ROBERT HERRICK.

The Fairy King

WHEN the monthly horned queen
 Grew jealous that the stars had seen
 Her rising from Endymion's arms,
 In rage she threw her misty charms
 Into the bosom of the night,
 To dim their curious, prying sight ;
 Then did the dwarfish fairy elves,
 Having first attired themselves,
 Prepare to dress their Oberon King
 In light robes fit for revelling :
 With a cobweb shirt more thin,
 Than ever spider since could spin,

Bleached to the whiteness of the snow,
By the stormy winds that blow
In the vast and frozen air
No shirt half so fine, so fair.
A rich waistcoat they did bring,
Made of the trout-fly's gilded wing :
At which his elfship 'gan to fret,
Swearing it would make him sweat
Even with its weight : he needs would wear
A waistcoat wrought of downy hair,
New shaven from an eunuch's chin,
That pleas'd him well, 'twas wondrous thin ;
The outside of his doublet was
Made of the four-leav'd, true lov'd, grass
Changed into so fine a gloss,
With the oil of crispy moss,
It made a rainbow in the night,
Which gave a lustre passing light :
On every seam there was a lace
Drawn by the unctuous snail's slow pace
To which the fin'st, pur'st silver thread
Compared, did look like dull pale lead.
Each button was a sparkling eye
Ta'en from the speckled adder's fry ;
And for coolness next the skin,
'Twas with white poppy lined within.
His breeches of the fleece was wrought,
Which from Colchos Jason brought ;
Spun into so fine a yarn,
No mortal wight might it discern,
Weaved by Arachne on her loom,
Just before she had her doom.
A rich mantle he did wear,
Made of tinsel gossamer ;
Beflowered over with a few
Diamond stars of morning dew ;
Dyed crimson in a maiden's blush ;
Lin'd with humble-bee's soft plush.
His cap was all of ladies' love,
So wondrous light that it would move,

If any humming gnat or fly
 Buzz'd the air in passing by.
 About his neck a wreath of pearl
 Dropt from the eyes of some poor girl,
 Pinched, because she had forgot
 To leave clean water in the pot.
 And for's feather he did wear,
 Old Nisus' fatal purple hair,
 The sword y-girded to his thigh
 Was smallest blade of finest rye ;
 A pair of buskins they did bring
 Of the cowlady's coral wing,
 Powdered o'er with spots of jet,
 And lin'd with purple violet.
 His belt was made of myrtle leaves,
 Plaited in small curious threaves,
 Beset with amber cowslip's studs,
 And fringed about with daisy buds,
 In which his bugle horn was hung,
 Made of the babbling Echo's tongue,
 Which set unto his moon-burnt lip
 He winds, and then his fairies skip ;
 At that the lazy drone 'gan sound,
 And each did trip a fairy round.

SIR SIMEON STEWARD.

Queen Mab

THIS is Mab, the mistress Fairy,
 That doth nightly rob the dairy,
 And can help or hurt the churning,
 As she please without discerning.

She that pinches country wenches,
 If they rub not clean their benches,
 And with sharper nails remembers
 When they rake not up their embers :

But if so they chance to feast her,
In a shoe she drops a tester.

This is she that empties cradles,
Takes out children, puts in ladders :
Trains forth midwives in their slumber,
With a sieve the holes to number ;
And then leads them from her burrows,
Home through ponds and water-furrows.



She can start our Franklin's daughters,
In their sleep, with shrieks and laughters ;
And on sweet St Anna's night,
Feed them with a promised sight,
Some of husbands, some of lovers,
Which an empty dream discovers.

BEN JONSON.

The Fairies

IF ye will with Mab find grace,
 Set each platter in his place ;
 Rake the fire up, and get
 Water in, ere sun be set.
 Wash your pails and cleanse your dairies,
 Sluts are loathsome to the fairies ;
 Sweep your house : Who doth not so,
 Mab will pinch her by the toe.

ROBERT HERRICK.

The Beggar to Mab, the Fairy Queen

PLEASE your Grace, from out your store
 Give an alms to one that's poor,
 That your mickle may have more.
 Black I'm grown for want of meat,
 Give me then an ant to eat,
 Or the cleft ear of a mouse
 Over-sour'd in drink of souse ;
 Or, sweet lady, reach to me
 The abdomen of a bee ;
 Or commend a cricket's hip,
 Or his huckson, to my scrip ;
 Give for bread, a little bit
 Of a pease that 'gins to chit,
 And my full thanks take for it.
 Flour of fuz-balls, that's too good
 For a man in needy-hood ;
 But the meal of mill-dust can
 Well content a craving man ;
 Any orts the elves refuse
 Well will serve the beggar's use.
 But if this may seem too much
 For an alms, then give me such

Little bits that nestle there
 In the pris'ner's pannier.
 So a blessing light upon
 You, and mighty Oberon ;
 That you plenty last till when
 I return your alms again.

ROBERT HERRICK.

From the Night-Piece to Julia

HER eyes the glow-worm lend thee,
 The shooting stars attend thee ;
 And the elves also,
 Whose little eyes glow
 Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.

No Will-o'-th'-Wisp mis-light thee,
 Nor snake or slow-worm bite thee ;
 But on, on thy way,
 Not making a stay,
 Since ghost there's none to affright thee.

ROBERT HERRICK.

“Good Luck befriend thee ”

Good luck befriend thee, Son ; for at thy birth
 The faery ladies danced upon the hearth.
 The drowsy nurse hath sworn she did them spy
 Come tripping to the room where thou didst lie,
 And, sweetly singing round about thy bed,
 Strew all their blessings on thy sleeping head.
 She heard them give thee this, that thou shouldst still
 From eyes of mortals walk invisible.

JOHN MILTON.

“Some say no evil thing”

SOME say no evil thing that walks by night,
 In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
 Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost,
 That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,
 No goblin or swart faery of the mine,
 Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.

JOHN MILTON.

“Sometimes, with secure delight”

SOMETIMES, with secure delight,
 The upland hamlets will invite,
 When the merry bells ring round,
 And jocund rebecks sound
 To many a youth and many a maid
 Dancing in the chequered shade,
 And young and old come forth to play
 On a sunshine holiday,
 Till the live-long daylight fail :
 Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
 With stories told of many a feat,
 How Faery Mab the junkets eat.
 She was pinched, and pulled, she said ;
 And he, by Friar's lantern led,
 Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
 To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
 When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
 His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
 That ten day-labourers could not end ;
 Then lies him down, the lubber fiend,
 And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
 Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
 And crop-full out of doors he flings,
 Ere the first cock his matin rings.

JOHN MILTON.

Damon the Mower

I AM the mower Damon, known
 Through all the meadows I have mown.
 On me the morn her dew distils
 Before her darling daffodils ;
 And if at noon my toil me heat,
 The sun himself licks off my sweat ;
 While, going home, the evening sweet
 In cowslip-water bathes my feet.

Nor am I so deformed to sight,
 If in my scythe I lookèd right ;
 In which I see my picture done,
 As in a crescent moon the sun.
 The deathless fairies take me oft
 To lead them in their dances soft ;
 And when I tune myself to sing,
 About me they contract their ring.

ANDREW MARVELL.

“ Benighted Travellers ”

BENIGHTED travellers now lose their way
 Whom Will-of-the-wisp bewitches ;
 About and about he leads them astray
 Through bogs, through hedges and ditches.
 SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT.

The Elfin Gathering

HAVE you not oft, in the still wind,
 Heard sylvan notes of a strange kind,
 That rose one moment, and then fell
 Swooning away like a far knell ?
 Listen !—that wave of perfume broke
 Into sea-music, as I spoke,

Fainter than that which seems to roar
 On the moon's silver-sanded shore,
 When through the silence of the night
 Is heard the ebb and flow of light.
 O shut the eye, and ope the ear !
 Do you not hear, or think you hear,
 A wide hush o'er the woodland pass
 Like distant waving fields of grass ?—
 Voices !—ho ! ho ! a band is coming,
 Loud as ten thousand bees a-humming,
 Or ranks of little merry men
 Tromboning deeply from the glen,
 And now as if they changed, and rung
 Their citterns small, and riband-slung,
 Over their gallant shoulders hung !—
 A chant ! a chant ! that swoons and swells
 Like soft winds jangling meadow-bells :

But mixt with whoops, and infant-laughter,
 Shouts following one another after.

Small shouts, indeed, as wild-bees knew
 Both how to hum, and hollo too.
 What ! is the living meadow sown
 With dragon teeth, as long ago ?
 Or is an army on the plains
 Of this sweet clime, to fight with cranes ?
 Helmet and hauberk, pike and lance,
 Gorget and glaive through the long grass glance ;
 Red-men, and blue-men, and buff-men, small,
 Loud-mouthed captains, and ensigns tall,
 Grenadiers, light-bobs, inch-people all,
 They come ! they come ! with martial blore
 Clearing a terrible path before ;
 Ruffle the high-peaked flags i' the wind,
 Mourn the long-answering trumpets behind,
 Telling how deep the close files are—
 Make way for the stalv art sons of war !
 Hurrah ! the buff-cheeked bugle band,
 Each with a loud reed in his hand !

Hurrah ! the pattering company,
 Each with a drum-bell at his knee !
 Hurrah ! the sash-capt cymbal swingers !
 Hurrah ! the klinge-klangle ringers !
 Hurrah ! hurrah ! the elf-knights enter,
 Each with his grasshopper at a canter !
 His tough spear of a wild oat made,
 His good sword of a grassy blade,
 His buckram suit of shining laurel,
 His shield of bark, embossed with coral ;
 See how the plummy champion keeps
 His proud steed clambering on his hips,
 With foaming jaw pinn'd to his breast,
 Blood-rolling eyes, and arched crest ;
 Over his and his rider's head
 A broad sheet butterfly banner spread.

.
 Hard on the prancing heels of these
 Come on the pigmy Thyades !
 Mimics and mummers, masqueraders,
 Soft flutists, and sweet serenaders
 Guitarring o'er the level green,
 Or tapping the parched tambourine,
 As swaying to, and swaying fro,
 Over the stooping flowers they go,
 That laugh within their greeny breasts
 To feel such light feet on their crests,
 And even themselves a-dancing seem
 Under the weight that presses them.
 But hark ! the trumpet's royal clangour
 Strikes silence with a voice of anger :
 Raising its broad mouth to the sun,
 As he would bring Apollo down,
 The in-backed, swoln, elf-winder fills
 With its great roar the fairy hills ;
 Each woodland tuft for terror shakes,
 The field mouse in her mansion quakes,
 The heart-struck wren falls through the branches,
 Wide stares the earwig on his haunches ;

From trees, which mortals take for flowers,
 Leaves of all hues fall off in showers ;
 So strong the blast, the voice so dread,
 'Twould wake the very fairy dead !

GEORGE DARLEY.

Popular Rhymes of Scotland

Will-o'-the-Wisp

SPUNKY, Spunky, ye're a jumping light,
 Ye ne'er tak home the school-weans right ;
 But through the rough moss, and owre the hag-pen,
 Ye drown the ill anes in your watery den !

Gin ye ca' me imp or elf,
 I rede ye, look weel to yourself ;
 Gin ye ca' me fairy,
 I'll work ye muckle tarrie ;
 Gin gude neighbour ye ca' me,
 Then gude neighbour I will be ;
 But gin ye ca' me seely wight,
 I'll be your friend both day and night.

He wha tills the fairies' green,
 Nae luck again shall hae ;
 And he wha spills the fairies' ring,
 Betide him want and wae ;
 For weirdless days and weary nights
 Are his till his deeing day !

Friday

THIS is the day when the fairy kind
 Sit weeping alone for their hopeless lot,
 And the wood-maiden sighs to the sighing wind,
 And the mermaid weeps in her crystal grot ;
 For this is a day that the deed was wrought,
 In which we have neither part nor share,

For the children of clay was salvation bought,
But not for the forms of sea or air !
And ever the mortal is most forlorn,
Who meeteth our race on the Friday morn.

WALTER SCOTT

The Fountain of the Fairies

THERE is a fountain in the forest call'd
The Fountain of the Fairies ; when a child
With a delightful wonder I have heard
Tales of the elfin tribe who on its banks
Hold midnight revelry. An ancient oak,
The goodliest of the forest, grows beside ;
Alone it stands, upon a green grass plat,
By the woods bounded like some little isle.
It ever hath been deem'd their favourite tree,
They love to lie and rock upon its leaves,
And bask in moonshine. Here the woodman leads
His boy, and showing him the green-sward mark'd
With darker circlets, says the midnight dance
Hath traced the rings, and bids him spare the tree.
Fancy had cast a spell upon the place
Which made it holy ; and the villagers
Would say that never evil thing approach'd
Unpunish'd there. The strange and fearful pleasure
Which fill'd me by that solitary spring,
Ceased not in riper years ; and now it wakes
Deeper delight, and more mysterious awe.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

From “The Plea of the Midsummer Fairies”

It was a shady and sequester'd scene,
Like those famed gardens of Boccaccio,
Planted with his own laurels ever green,
And roses that for endless summer blow ;
And there were founting springs to overflow

Their marble basins,—and cool green arcades
 Of tall o'erarching sycamores, to throw
 Athwart the dappled path their dancing shades,—
 With timid coney's cropping the green blades.

And there were crystal pools, peopled with fish,
 Argent and gold ; and some of Tyrian skin,
 Some crimson-barr'd ;—and ever at a wish
 They rose obsequious till the wave grew thin
 As glass upon their backs, and then dived in,
 Quenching their ardent scales in watery gloom ;
 Whilst others with fresh hues row'd forth to win
 My changeable regard,—for so we doom
 Things born of thought to vanish or to bloom.

And there were many birds of many dyes,
 From tree to tree still faring to and fro,
 And stately peacocks with their splendid eyes,
 And gorgeous pheasants with their golden glow,
 Like Iris just bedabbled in her bow,
 Besides some vocalists, without a name,
 That oft on fairy errands come and go,
 With accents magical ; and all were tame,
 And peckled at my hand where'er I came.

And for my sylvan company, in lieu
 Of Pampinea with her lively peers,
 Sat Queen Titania with her pretty crew,
 All in their liveries quaint, with elfin gears,
 For she was gracious to my childish years,
 And made me free of her enchanted round ;
 Wherefore this dreamy scene she still endears,
 And plants her court upon a verdant mound,
 Fenced with umbrageous woods and groves profound.

“ Ah me,” she cries, “ was ever moonlight seen
 So clear and tender for our midnight trips ?
 Go some one forth, and with a trump convence
 My lieges all ! ”—Away the goblin skips
 A pace or two apart, and deftly strips



“ But Puck was seated on a spider’s thread.”

The ruddy skin from a sweet rose's cheek,
Then blows the shuddering leaf between his lips,
Making it utter forth a shrill small shriek,
Like a fray'd bird in the grey owlet's beak.

And lo! upon my fix'd delighted ken
Appear'd the loyal Fays.—Some by degrees
Crept from the primrose buds that open'd then,
And some from bell-shap'd blossoms like the bees,
Some from the dewy meads, and rushy leas,
Flew up like chafers when the rustics pass ;
Some from the rivers, others from tall trees
Dropp'd, like shed blossoms, silent to the grass,
Spirits and elfins small, of every class.

Peri and Pixy, and quaint Puck the Antic,
Brought Robin Goodfellow, that merry swain ;
And stealthy Mab, queen of old realms romantic,
Came too, from distance, in her tiny wain,
Fresh dripping from a cloud—some bloomy rain,
Then circling the bright Moon, had washed her car,
And still bedew'd it with a various stain :
Lastly came Ariel, shooting from a star,
Who bears all fairy embassies afar.

“ Alas,” quoth she, “ ye know our fairy lives
Are leased upon the fickle faith of men ;
Not measured out against fate's mortal knives,
Like human gossamers, we perish when
We fade, and are forgot in worldly ken.

* * *

Pity it was to hear the elfins' wail
Rise up in concert from their mingled dread ;
Pity it was to see them, all so pale,
Gaze on the grass as for a dying bed ;—
But Puck was seated on a spider's thread,
That hung between two branches of a briar,
And 'gan to swing and gambol heels o'er head,
Like any Southwark tumbler on a wire,
For him no present grief could long inspire. TOM HOOD.

Flower-Fairies

FLOWER-FAIRIES—have you found them,
When the summer's dusk is falling,
With the glow-worms watching round them ;
Have you heard them softly calling ?

Silent stand they through the noonlight,
In their flower-shapes, fair and quiet ;
But they hie them forth by moonlight,
Ready then to sing and riot.

I have heard them ; I have seen them,—
Light from their bright petals raying ;
And the trees bent down to screen them,
Great, wise trees, too old for playing.

Hundreds of them, all together,—
Flashing flocks of flying fairies,—
Crowding through the summer weather,
Seeking where the coolest air is.

And they tell the trees that know them,
As upon their boughs they hover,
Of the things that chance below them,—
How the Rose has a new lover.

And the gay Rose laughs, protesting,
“ Neighbour Lily is as fickle.”
Then they search where birds are nesting,
And their feathers softly tickle.

Then away they all dance, sweeping,
Having drunk their fill of gladness.
But the trees, their night-watch keeping,
Thrill with tender, pitying sadness ;

For they know of bleak December,
 When each bough left cold and bare is,—
 When they only shall remember
 The bright visits of the fairies,—

When the roses and the lilies
 Shall be gone, to come back never,
 From the land where all so still is
 That they sleep and sleep for ever.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

The Elf Toper

EACH twilight-come
 At beetle-drum
 For nectar he a-hunting goes,
 The twisted bine
 He stoops for wine,
 Or sups it fresh from off the rose.

From night to morn
 His amber horn
 He fills at every honey-fountain,
 And draineth up
 Each flowery cup
 That brims with balm on mead or mountain.

GEORGE DARLEY.

Lob Lie by the Fire

HE squats by the fire
 On his three-legged stool,
 When all in the house
 With slumber are full.

And he warms his great hands
 Hanging loose from each knee,
 And he whistles as soft
 As the night wind at sea.

For his work now is done ;
All the water is sweet ;
He has turned each brown loaf,
And breathed magic on it.

The milk in the pan
And the bacon on beam
He has " spelled " with his thumb,
And bewitched has the dream.

Not a mouse, not a moth,
Not a spider but sat,
And quaked as it wondered
What next he'd be at.

Now hunched by the fire
While the embers burn low,
He nods until daybreak,
And at daybreak he'll go.

Soon the first cock will 'light
From his perch and point high
His beak at the Ploughboy
Grown pale in the sky ;

And crow will he shrill ;
Then, meek as a mouse,
Lob will rise up and shuffle
Straight out of the house.

His supper for breakfast ;
For wages his work ;
And to warm his great hands
Just an hour in the mirk.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

The Fairy Lough

LOUGHAREEMA ! Loughareema
 Lies so high among the heather ;
 A little lough, a dark lough,
 The wather's black an' deep.
 Ould herons go a-fishin' there,
 An' sea-gulls all together
 Float roun' the one green island
 On the fairy lough asleep.

Loughareema, Loughareema ;
 When the sun goes down at seven,
 When the hills are dark and airy,
 'Tis a curlew whistles sweet !
 Then somethin' rustles all the reeds
 That stand so thick an' even ;
 A little wave runs up the shore
 An' flees, as if on feet.

Loughareema, Loughareema !
 Stars come out, an' stars are hidin' ;
 The wather whispers on the stones,
 The flittherin' moths are free.
 On'st before the mornin' light
 The Horsemen will come ridin'
 Roun' an' roun' the fairy lough,
 An' no one there to see.

MOIRA O'NEILL.

The Truants

ERE my heart beats too coldly and faintly
 To remember sad things, yet be gay,
 I would sing a brief song of the world's little children
 Magic hath stolen away.

The primroses scattered by April,
 The stars of the wide Milky Way,
 Cannot outnumber the hosts of the children
 Magic hath stolen away.

The buttercup green of the meadows,
 The snow of the blossoming may,
 Lovelier are not than the legion of children
 Magic hath stolen away.

The waves tossing surf in the moonbeam,
 The albatross lone on the spray,
 Alone know the tears wept in vain for the children
 Magic hath stolen away.

In vain : for at hush of the evening,
 When the stars twinkle into the grey,
 Seems to echo the far-away calling of children
 Magic hath stolen away.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

The Ruin

WHEN the last colours of the day
 Have from their burning ebbed away,
 About that ruin, cold and lone,
 The cricket shrills from stone to stone ;
 And scattering o'er its darkened green,
 Bands of the fairies may be seen,
 Chattering like grasshoppers, their feet
 Dancing a thistledown dance round it :
 While the great gold of the mild moon
 Tinges their tiny acorn shoon.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

From the Hills of Dream

ACROSS the silent stream
 Where the slumber-shadows go,
 From the dim blue Hills of Dream
 I have heard the west wind blow.

Who hath seen that fragrant land,
 Who hath seen that unscanned west ?
 Only the listless hand
 And the unpulsing breast.

But when the west wind blows
 I see moon-lances gleam,
 Where the Host of Faerie flows
 Athwart the Hills of Dream.

And a strange song I have heard
 By a shadowy stream,
 And the singing of a snow-white bird
 On the Hills of Dream.

FIONA MACLEOD.

Dreams within Dreams

I HAVE gone out and seen the lands of Faery,
 And have found sorrow and peace and beauty there,
 And have not known one from the other, but found each
 Lovely and gracious alike, delicate and fair.

“ They are children of one mother, she that is called Longing,
 Desire, Love,” one told me : and another, “ her secret name
 Is Wisdom ” : and another, “ they are not three but one ” :
 And another, “ touch them not, seek them not, they are wind
 and flame.”

I have come back from the hidden, silent lands of Faery
 And have forgotten the music of its ancient streams :
 And now flame and wind and the long, grey, wandering wave
 And beauty and peace and sorrow are dreams within dreams.
 FIONA MACLEOD.

The Lords of Shadow

WHERE the water whispers 'mid the shadowy rowan-trees
 I have heard the Hidden People like the hum of swarming bees :
 And when the moon has risen and the brown burn glisters grey
 I have seen the Green Host marching in laughing disarray.

Dalua then must sure have blown a sudden magic air
 Or with the mystic dew have sealed my eyes from seeing fair :
 For the great Lords of Shadow who tread the deeps of night
 Are no frail puny folk who move in dread of mortal sight.

For sure Dalua laughed alow, Dalua the fairy Fool,
 When with his wildfire eyes he saw me 'neath the rowan-shadowed
 pool :
 His touch can make the chords of life a bitter jangling tune,
 The false glows true, the true glows false, beneath his moontide
 rune.

The laughter of the Hidden Host is terrible to hear,
 The Hounds of Death would harry me at lifting of a spear :
 Mayhap Dalua made for me the hum of swarming bees
 And sealed my eyes with dew beneath the shadowy rowan-trees.
 FIONA MACLEOD.

The Nightingale in Fairyland

THOU wast not born for death, immortal Bird !
 No hungry generations tread thee down ;
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard
 In ancient days by emperor and clown ;
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when sick for home,

She stood in tears amid the alien corn ;
 The same that oft-times hath
 Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

JOHN KEATS.

From " A Vision of Mermaids "

.
 I know not why, but know that sadness dwells
 On Mermaids—whether that they ring the knells
 Of sea-men whelm'd in chasms of the mid-main,
 As poets sing ; or that it is a pain
 To know the dusk depths of the ponderous sea,
 The miles profound of solid green, and be
 With loath'd cold fishes, far from man, or what ;—
 I know the sadness, but the cause know not.

GERARD HOPKINS.

The Fairy Boy

A LITTLE Fairy in a tree
 Wrinkled his wee face at me :
 And he sang a song of joy
 All about a little boy,
 Who upon a winter night,
 On a midnight long ago,
 Had been wrapt away from sight
 Of the world and all its woe :
 Wrapt away,
 Snapt away
 To a place where children play
 In the sunlight every day.
 Where the winter is forbidden,
 Where no child may older grow,
 Where a flower is never hidden
 Underneath a pall of snow ;

Dancing gaily
 Free from sorrow,
 Under dancing summer skies,
 Where no grim mysterious morrow
 Ever comes to terrorise.

MOIRA O'NEILL

“Children, children, don't forget”

CHILDREN, children, don't forget
 There are elves and fairies yet.



Where the knotty hawthorn grows
 Look for prints of fairy toes.
 Where the grassy rings are green
 Moonlight dances shall be seen.
 Watch and wait : O lucky you,
 If you find a fairy shoe :
 For a ransom he will pay,
 Hobbling barefoot all the day.
 Lay it on his mushroom seat,
 Wish your wish, and go your way.
 If your wish should be discreet,
 Never fear but he will pay.

DORA OWEN.

The Fairy Minister

PEOPLE of Peace ! A peaceful man,
 Well worthy of your love was he,
 Who, while the roaring Garry ran
 Red with the life-blood of Dundee,
 While coats were turning, crowns were falling,
 Wandered along his valley still,
 And heard your mystic voices calling
 From fairy-knowe and haunted hill.
 He heard, he saw, he knew too well
 The secrets of your fairy-clan.
 You stole him from the haunted dell,
 Who nevermore was seen of man.
 Now far from heaven, and safe from hell,
 Unknown of earth, he wanders free.
 Would that he might return and tell
 Of his mysterious company !
 For we have tired the Folk of Peace ;
 No morn they tax our corn and oil ;
 Their dances on the moorland cease,
 The Brownie stints his wonted toil.
 No more shall any shepherd meet
 The ladies of the fairy-clan,
 Nor are their deathly kisses sweet
 On lips of any earthly man.
 And half I envy him, who now
 Clothed in her Court's enchanted green,
 By moonlit loch or mountain's brow
 Is Chaplain to the Fairy Queen.

ANDREW LANG.

Goblin Feet

I AM off down the road
 Where the fairy lanterns glowed
 And the little pretty flittermice are flying :
 A slender band of grey
 It runs creepily away,
 And the hedges and the grasses are a-sighing,

The air is full of wings
 And of blundering beetle-things
 That warn you with their whirring and their humming.
 O! I hear the tiny horns
 Of enchanted leprechauns
 And the padding feet of many gnomes a-coming!

O! the lights : O! the gleams : O! the little tinkly sounds :
 O! the rustle of their noiseless little robes :
 O! the echo of their feet—of their little happy feet ;
 O! their swinging lamps in little starlit globes.

I must follow in their train
 Down the crooked fairy-lane
 Where the coney-rabbits long ago have gone,
 And where silverly they sing
 In a moving moonlit ring
 All a-twinkle with the jewels they have on.
 They are fading round the turn
 Where the glow-worms palely burn
 And the echo of their padding feet is dying!
 O! it's knocking at my heart—
 Let me go! O let me start!
 For the little magic hours are all a-flying.

O! the warmth! O! the hum! O! the colours in the dark!
 O! the gauzy wings of golden honey-flies!
 O! the music of their feet—of their dancing goblin feet!
 O! the magic! O! the sorrow when it dies.

J. R. R. TOLKIEN.

The Last Fay

I HAVE wandered where the cuckoo fills
 The woodland with her magic voice :
 I have wandered on the brows of hills
 Where the last heavenward larks rejoice :



“ And the padding feet of many gnomes a-coming ! ”

Far I have wandered by the wave,
By shadowy loch and swaying stream,
But never have I found the grave
Of him who made me a wandering Dream.
If I could find that lonely place
And him who lies asleep therein,
I'd bow my head and kiss his face
And sleep and rest and peace would win.

He made me, he who lies asleep
Hidden in some forgotten spot
Where winds sweep and rains weep
And foot of wayfarer cometh not :
He made me, Merlin, ages ago,
He shaped me in an idle hour,
He made a heart of fire to glow
And hid it in an April shower !
For I am but a shower that calls
A thin sweet song of rain, and pass :
Even the wind-whirled leaf that falls
Lingers awhile within the grass,
But I am blown from hill to vale,
From vale to hill like a bird's cry
That shepherds hear a far-off wail
And wood-folk as a drowsy sigh.

And I am tired, whom Merlin made.
I would lie down in the heart of June
And fall asleep in a leafy shade
And wake not till in the Faery Moon
Merlin shall rise our lord and king,
To leave for aye the tribes of Man,
And let the clarion summons ring
The kingdom of the Immortal Clan.
If but in some green place I'd see
An ancient, tangled, moss-like beard
And half-buried boulder of a knee
I should not flutter away afeared !

With leap of joy, with low glad cry
 I'd sink beside the sleeper fair :
 He would not grudge my fading sigh
 In the ancient stillness brooding there.

FIONA MACLEOD.

The Horns of Elfland

THE splendour falls on castle walls
 And snowy summits old in story ;
 The long light shakes across the lakes,
 And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
 Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
 Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,
 And thinner, clearer, farther going !
 O sweet and far from cliff and scar
 The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !
 Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying :
 Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

ALFRED TENNYSON.



