

CLASSICS TO GO
THE NURSERY
RHYMES OF ENGLAND



J. O. HALLIWELL-PHILLIPPS
& WILLIAM BELL SCOTT

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PREFACE

TO THE

FIFTH EDITION.

THE great encouragement which has been given by the public to the previous editions of this little work, satisfactorily proves that, notwithstanding the extension of serious education to all but the very earliest periods of life, there still exists an undying love for the popular remnants of the ancient Scandinavian nursery literature. The infants and children of the nineteenth century have not, then, deserted the rhymes chanted so many ages since by the mothers of the North. This is a "great nursery fact"—a proof that there is contained in some of these traditional nonsense-rhymes a meaning and a romance, possibly intelligible only to very young minds, that exercise an influence on the fancy of children. It is obvious there must exist something of this kind; for no modern compositions are found to supply altogether the place of the ancient doggerel.

The nursery rhyme is the novel and light reading of the infant scholar. It occupies, with respect to the A B C, the position of a romance which relieves the mind from the cares of a riper age. The absurdity and frivolity of a rhyme may naturally be its chief attractions to the very young; and there will be something lost from the imagination of that child, whose parents insist so much on matters of fact, that the "cow" must be made, in compliance with the rules of their educational code, to jump "*under*" instead of "*over* the

moon;" while of course the little dog must be considered as "barking," not "laughing" at the circumstance.

These, or any such objections,—for it seems there are others of about equal weight,—are, it appears to me, more silly than the worst nursery rhyme the little readers will meet with in the following pages. I am quite willing to leave the question to their decision, feeling assured the catering for them has not been in vain, and that these cullings from the high-ways and bye-ways—they have been collected from nearly every county in England—will be to them real flowers, soothing the misery of many an hour of infantine adversity.



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FIRST CLASS

HISTORICAL.

I.

OLD King Cole

Was a merry old soul,
And a merry old soul was he;
He called for his pipe,
And he called for his bowl,
And he called for his fiddlers three.
Every fiddler, he had a fiddle,
And a very fine fiddle had he;
Twee tweedle dee, tweedle dee, went the fiddlers.
Oh, there's none so rare,
As can compare
With King Cole and his fiddlers three!

[The traditional Nursery Rhymes of England commence with a legendary satire on King Cole, who reigned in Britain, as the old chroniclers inform us, in the third century after Christ. According to Robert of Gloucester, he was the father of St. Helena, and if so, Butler must be wrong in ascribing an obscure origin to the celebrated mother of Constantine. King Cole was a brave and popular man in his day, and ascended the throne of Britain on the death of Asclepiod, amidst the acclamations of the people, or, as Robert of Gloucester expresses himself, the "fole was tho of this lond y-paid wel y-nou." At Colchester there is a large earthwork, supposed to have been a Roman amphitheatre, which goes popularly by the name of "King Cole's kitchen." According to Jeffrey of Monmouth, King Cole's daughter was well skilled in music, but we unfortunately have no evidence to show that her father was attached to that science, further than what is contained in the foregoing lines, which are of doubtful antiquity. The following version

of the song is of the seventeenth century, the one given above being probably a modernization:—

Good King Cole,
He call'd for his bowl,
And he call'd for fiddlers three:
And there was fiddle fiddle,
And twice fiddle fiddle,
For 'twas my lady's birth-day;
Therefore we keep holiday,
And come to be merry.]

II.

WHEN good king Arthur ruled this land,
He was a goodly king;
He stole three pecks of barley-meal,
To make a bag-pudding.

A bag-pudding the king did make,
And stuff'd it well with plums:
And in it put great lumps of fat,
As big as my two thumbs.

The king and queen did eat thereof,
And noblemen beside;
And what they could not eat that night,
The queen next morning fried.

III.

[The following song relating to Robin Hood, the celebrated outlaw, is well known at Worksop, in Nottinghamshire, where it constitutes one of the nursery series.]

ROBIN HOOD, Robin Hood,

Is in the mickle wood!
Little John, Little John,
He to the town is gone.

Robin Hood, Robin Hood,
Is telling his beads,
All in the green wood,
Among the green weeds.

Little John, Little John,
If he comes no more,
Robin Hood, Robin Hood,
He will fret full sore!

IV.

[The following lines were obtained in
Oxfordshire. The story to which it
alludes is related by Matthew Paris.]

ONE moonshiny night
As I sat high,
Waiting for one
To come by;
The boughs did bend,
My heart did ache
To see what hole the fox did make.

V.

[The following perhaps refers to
Joanna of Castile, who visited the
court of Henry the Seventh, in the
year 1506.]

I HAD a little nut tree, nothing would it bear
But a silver nutmeg and a golden pear;
The king of Spain's daughter came to visit me,
And all was because of my little nut tree.
I skipp'd over water, I danced over sea,
And all the birds in the air couldn't catch me.

VI.

[From a MS. in the old Royal Library, in the British Museum, the exact reference to which is mislaid. It is written, if I recollect rightly, in a hand of the time of Henry VIII, in an older manuscript.]

WE make no spare
Of John Hunkes' mare;
And now I
Think she will die;
He thought it good
To put her in the wood,
To seek where she might ly dry;
If the mare should chance to fale,
Then the crownes would for her sale.

VII.

[From MS. Sloane, 1489, fol. 19, written
in the time of Charles I.]

THE king of France, and four thousand men,
They drew their swords, and put them up again.

VIII.

[In a tract, called 'Pigges Corantoe, or Newes from the North,' 4to Lond. 1642, p. 3, this is called "Old Tarlton's Song." It is perhaps a parody on the popular epigram of "Jack and Jill." I do not know the period of the battle to which it appears to allude, but Tarlton died in the year 1588, so that the rhyme must be earlier.]

THE king of France went up the hill,
With twenty thousand men;
The king of France came down the hill,
And ne'er went up again.

IX.

THE king of France, with twenty thousand men,
Went up the hill, and then came down again;
The king of Spain, with twenty thousand more,
Climb'd the same hill the French had climb'd before.

X.

[Another version. The nurse sings the first line, and repeats it, time after time, until the expectant little one asks, what next? Then comes the climax.]

THE king of France, the king of France,
with forty thousand men,
Oh, they all went up the hill, and so—came
back again!

XI.

AT the siege of Belle-isle
I was there all the while,
All the while, all the while,
At the siege of Belle-isle.

XII.

[The tune to the following may be found
in the 'English Dancing Master,' 1631, p.
37.]

THE rose is red, the grass is green,
Serve Queen Bess our noble queen;
 Kitty the spinner
 Will sit down to dinner,
And eat the leg of a frog;
 All good people
 Look over the steeple,
And see the cat play with the dog.

XIII.

GOOD Queen Bess was a glorious dame,
When bonny King Jemmy from Scotland came;
We'll pepper their bodies,
Their peaceable noddies,
And give them a crack of the crown!

XIV.

[The word *tory* has changed greatly in its meaning, as it originated in the reign of Elizabeth, and represented a class of "bog-trotters," who were a compound of the knave and the highwayman. For many interesting particulars see Crofton Croker's 'Researches in the South of Ireland,' 4to, 1824, p. 52.]

Ho! Master Teague, what is your story?
I went to the wood and kill'd a *tory*;
I went to the wood and kill'd another;
Was it the same, or was it his brother?

I hunted him in, and I hunted him out,
Three times through the bog, about and about;
When out of a bush I saw his head,
So I fired my gun, and I shot him dead.

XV.

PLEASE to remember
The fifth of November,
 Gunpowder treason and plot;
I know no reason
Why gunpowder treason
 Should ever be forgot.

XVI.

[Taken from MS. Douce, 357, fol. 124. See Echard's 'History of England,' book iii, chap. 1.]

SEE saw, sack-a-day;
Monmouth is a pretie boy,
 Richmond is another,
Grafton is my onely joy,

And why should I these three destroy,
To please a pious brother!

XVII.

OVER the water, and over the lee,
And over the water to Charley.
Charley loves good ale and wine,
And Charley loves good brandy,
And Charley loves a pretty girl,
As sweet as sugar-candy.

Over the water, and over the sea,
And over the water to Charley,
I'll have none of your nasty beef,
Nor I'll have none of your barley;
But I'll have some of your very best flour;
To make a white cake for my Charley.

XVIII.

[The following is partly quoted in an old song in a MS. at Oxford, Ashmole, No. 36, fol. 113.]

As I was going by Charing Cross,
I saw a black man upon a black horse;
They told me it was King Charles the First;
Oh dear! my heart was ready to burst!

XIX.

HIGH diddle ding,
Did you hear the bells ring?
The parliament soldiers are gone to the king!
Some they did laugh, some they did cry,
To see the parliament soldiers pass by.

XX.

HIGH ding a ding, and ho ding a ding,
The parliament soldiers are gone to the king;
Some with new beavers, some with new bands,
The parliament soldiers are all to be hang'd.

XXI.

HECTOR PROTECTOR was dressed all in green;
Hector Protector was sent to the Queen.
The Queen did not like him,
Nor more did the King:
So Hector Protector was sent back again.

XXII.

[The following is a fragment of a song
on the subject, which was introduced by
Russell in the character of Jerry Sneak.]

POOR old Robinson Crusoe!
Poor old Robinson Crusoe!
They made him a coat
Of an old nanny goat,

I wonder how they could do so!
With a ring a ting tang,
And a ring a ting tang,
Poor old Robinson Crusoe!

XXIII.

[Written on occasion of the marriage of Mary, the daughter of James duke of York, afterwards James II, with the young Prince of Orange. The song from which these lines are taken may be seen in 'The Jacobite Minstrelsy,' 12mo, Glasgow, 1828, p. 28.]

WHAT is the rhyme for *poringer*?
The king he had a daughter fair,
And gave the Prince of Orange her.

XXIV.

[The following nursery song alludes to
William III and George prince of
Denmark.]

WILLIAM and Mary, George and Anne,
Four such children had never a man:
They put their father to flight and shame,
And call'd their brother a shocking bad name.

XXV.

[A song on King William the Third.]

As I walk'd by myself,

And talked to myself,
Myself said unto me,
Look to thyself,
Take care of thyself,
For nobody cares for thee.

I answer'd myself,
And said to myself
In the self-same repartee,
Look to thyself,
Or not look to thyself,
The self-same thing will be.

XXVI.

[From MS. Sloane, 1489, fol. 19, written in the time of Charles I. It appears from MS. Harl. 390, fol. 85, that these verses were written in 1626, against the Duke of Buckingham.]

THERE was a monkey climb'd up a tree,
When he fell down, then down fell he.

There was a crow sat on a stone,
When he was gone, then there was none.

There was an old wife did eat an apple,
When she had eat two, she had eat a couple.

There was a horse going to the mill,
When he went on, he stood not still.

There was a butcher cut his thumb,
When it did bleed, then blood did come.

There was a lackey ran a race,
When he ran fast, he ran apace.

There was a cobbler clowting shoon,
When they were mended, they were done.

There was a chandler making candle,
When he them strip, he did them handle.

There was a navy went into Spain,
When it return'd it came again.

XXVII.

[The following may possibly allude to
King George and the Pretender.]

JIM and George were two great lords,
They fought all in a churn;
And when that Jim got George by the nose,
Then George began to gern.

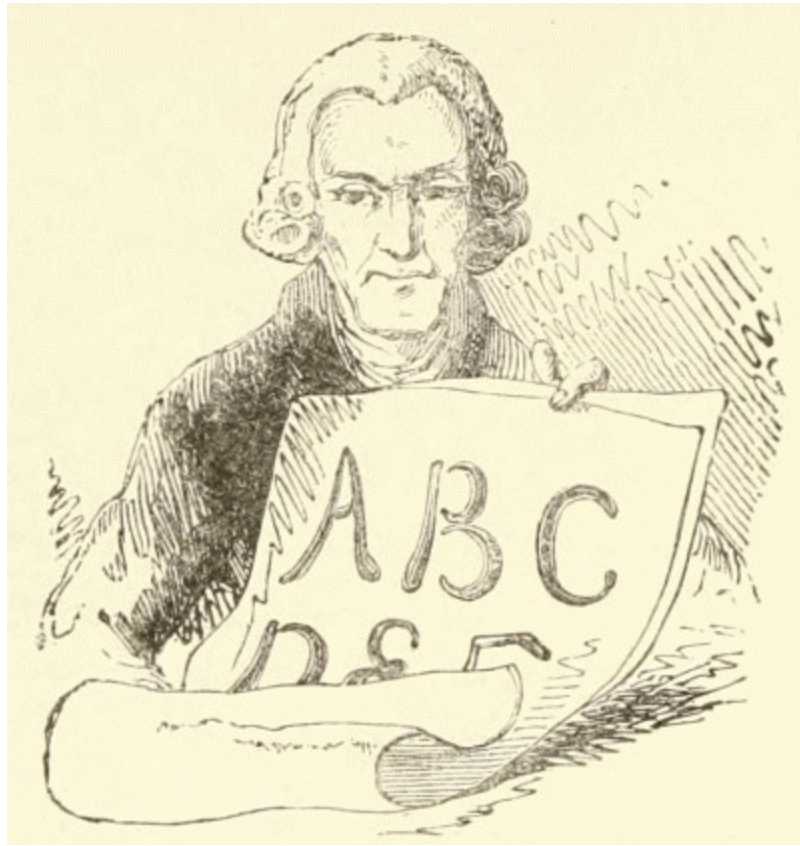
XXVIII.

LITTLE General Monk
Sat upon a trunk,
Eating a crust of bread;
There fell a hot coal
And burnt in his clothes a hole,
Now General Monk is dead.
Keep always from the fire:
If it catch your attire,
You too, like Monk, will be dead.

XXIX.

EIGHTY-EIGHT wor Kirby feight,
When nivver a man was slain;
They yatt their meaat, an drank ther drink
An sae com merrily heaam agayn.





SECOND CLASS

LITERAL.

XXX.

ONE, two, three,
I love coffee,
And Billy loves tea.
How good you be,
One, two, three.
I love coffee,
And Billy loves tea.

XXXI.

A, B, C, tumble down **D**,
The cat's in the cupboard and can't see me.

XXXII.

[*Finis.*]

F for fig, **J** for jig,
And **N** for knuckle bones,
I for John the waterman,

And **S** for sack of stones.

XXXIII.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5!
I caught a hare alive;
6, 7, 8, 9, 10!
I let her go again.

XXXIV.

GREAT **A**, little a,
Bouncing **B**!
The cat's in the cupboard,
And she can't see.

XXXV.

ONE's none;
TWO's some;
THREE's a many;
FOUR's a penny;
FIVE is a little hundred.

XXXVI.

A, B, C, and D,
Pray, playmates, agree,

E, F, and G,
Well so it shall be.
J, K, and L,
In peace we will dwell
M, N, and O,
To play let us go.
P, Q, R, and S,
Love may we possess,
W, X, and Y,
Will not quarrel or die.
Z, and amperse-and,
Go to school at command.

XXXVII.

HICKERY, dickery, **6** and **7,**
Alabone Crackabone **10** and **11,**
Spin span muskidan;
Twiddle 'um twaddle 'um, **21.**

XXXVIII.

APPLE-PIE, pudding, and pancake,
All begins with an **A.**

XXXIX.

Miss one, two, and three could never agree,
While they gossiped round a tea-caddy.

XL.

ONE, two,
Buckle my shoe;
Three, four,
Shut the door;
Five, six,
Pick up sticks;
Seven, eight,
Lay them straight;
Nine, ten,
A good fat hen;
Eleven, twelve,
Who will delve?
Thirteen, fourteen,
Maids a courting;
Fifteen, sixteen,
Maids a kissing;
Seventeen, eighteen,
Maids a waiting;
Nineteen, twenty,
My stomach's empty.

XLI.

PAT-A-CAKE, pat-a-cake, baker's man!
So I will, master, as fast as I can:
Pat it, and prick it, and mark it with T,
Put in the oven for Tommy and me.

XLII.

[Tom Thumb's Alphabet.]

A was an archer, and shot at a frog,
B was a butcher, and had a great dog.
C was a captain, all covered with lace,
D was a drunkard, and had a red face.
E was an esquire, with pride on his brow,
F was a farmer, and followed the plough.
G was a gamester, who had but ill luck,
H was a hunter and hunted a buck.
I was an innkeeper, who lov'd to bouse,
J was a joiner, and built up a house.
K was King William, once governed this land,
L was a lady, who had a white hand.
M was a miser, and hoarded up gold,
N was a nobleman, gallant and bold.
O was an oyster wench, and went about town,
P was a parson, and wore a black gown.
Q was a queen, who was fond of good flip,
R was a robber, and wanted a whip.
S was a sailor, and spent all he got,
T was a tinker, and mended a pot.
U was an usurer, a miserable elf,
V was a vintner, who drank all himself.
W was a watchman, and guarded the door.
X was expensive, and so became poor.
Y was a youth, that did not love school,
Z was a zany, a poor harmless fool.

XLIII.

A was an apple-pie;
B bit it;
C cut it;
D dealt it;
E eat it;
F fought for it;
G got it;
H had it;
J joined it;
K kept it;
L longed for it;
M mourned for it;
N nodded at it;
O opened it;
P peeped in it;
Q quartered it;
R ran for it;
S stole it;
T took it;
V viewed it;
W wanted it;
X, Y, Z, and amperse-and,
All wish'd for a piece in hand.

XLIV.

A for the ape, that we saw at the fair;
B for a blockhead, who ne'er shall go there;
C for a collyflower, white as a curd;
D for a duck, a very good bird;
E for an egg, good in pudding or pies;
F for a farmer, rich, honest, and wise;
G for a gentleman, void of all care;
H for the hound, that ran down the hare;

I for an Indian, sooty and dark;
K for the keeper, that look'd to the park;
L for a lark, that soar'd in the air;
M for a mole, that ne'er could get there;
N for Sir Nobody, ever in fault;
O for an otter, that ne'er could be caught;
P for a pudding, stuck full of plums;
Q was for quartering it, see here he comes;
R for a rook, that croak'd in the trees;
S for a sailor, that plough'd the deep seas;
T for a top, that doth prettily spin;
V for a virgin of delicate mien;
W for wealth, in gold, silver, and pence;
X for old Xenophon, noted for sense;
Y for a yew, which for ever is green;
Z for the zebra, that belongs to the queen.





THIRD CLASS

TALES.

XLV.

THE STORY OF CATSKIN.

THERE once was a gentleman grand,
Who lived at his country seat;
He wanted an heir to his land,
For he'd nothing but daughters yet.

His lady's again in the way,
So she said to her husband with joy,
"I hope some or other fine day,
To present you, my dear, with a boy."

The gentleman answered gruff,
"If 't should turn out a maid or a mouse,
For of both we have more than enough,
She shan't stay to live in my house."

The lady, at this declaration,
Almost fainted away with pain;
But what was her sad consternation,
When a sweet little girl came again.