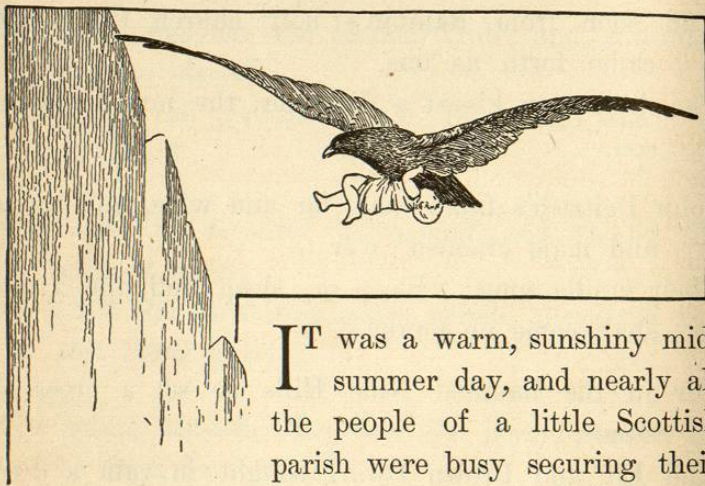


## XXXII. THE NEST OF THE GOLDEN EAGLE.

ADAPTED FROM JOHN WILSON ("CHRISTOPHER NORTH.")



IT was a warm, sunshiny mid-summer day, and nearly all the people of a little Scottish parish were busy securing their hay. Huge heaped-up wagons that almost hid from view the horses that drew them were moving in all directions toward the snug farmyards. Never before had the parish seemed so prosperous, and the balmy air resounded with song and laughter.

When the trees threw the shade of one o'clock on the green dial face of the earth, the horses were unyoked and took instantly to grazing, while groups of men, women, and children gathered under grove, bush, and hedgerow, preparing thankfully to partake of their "daily bread."

At that moment the great Golden Eagle, the pride and the pest of the parish, swooped down and flew away with something in its talons.<sup>1</sup> One single sudden female shriek was heard; then shouts and cries as if a church spire had tumbled down on a congregation at service.

"Hannah Lamond's bairn! Hannah Lamond's bairn!" was the loud, fast-spreading cry. "The eagle has taken off Hannah Lamond's bairn!"

In another instant many hundred feet were hurrying toward the mountain. Many brooks and two miles of hill and dale and copse<sup>2</sup> lay between; but in an incredibly<sup>3</sup> short time the foot of the mountain was alive with people.

The aerie<sup>4</sup> was well known, and both the old birds were visible on the rocky ledge. But who shall scale that dizzy height, which Mark Stewart, the sailor who had been at the storming of a fort, attempted in vain?

All kept gazing, weeping, wringing their hands, — some rooted to the ground, others running to and fro in dismay.

"What's the use — what's the use of any poor human efforts? We have no power but in prayer!"

<sup>1</sup> tal'ons, claws.

<sup>2</sup> copse, a thick wood of small growth.

<sup>3</sup> in-cred'i-bly, beyond belief.

<sup>4</sup> ae'rie, the high nest of a bird; an eyrie.

And many knelt down, — fathers and mothers thinking of their own babes.

Hannah Lamond had all this while been sitting on a rock, with a face perfectly white, and eyes like those of a mad person fixed on the aerie. Nobody noticed her, for even pity was lost in the agony of eyesight.

“Only last week was my sweet bairn baptized!” and on uttering these words she flew off through the bush and over the huge stones, up — up — up — faster than ever huntsman ran after escaping deer, fearless as a goat playing among the precipices. No one doubted — no one could doubt — that she soon would be dashed to pieces.

No stop, no stay. She knew not that she drew her breath; she thought not how she was ever to descend, as she climbed up — up — up to her darling.

“The God who holds me now from perishing, — will not the same God save me when my child is on my bosom?”

Down came the fierce rushing of the eagles' wings, — each savage bird dashing so close to her head that she saw the yellow of its wrathful eyes. All at once the birds quailed<sup>1</sup> and were cowed, and with loud screams flew off to the stump of an ash jutting out of a cliff a thousand feet above the cataract.

<sup>1</sup> quailed, shrank away.

A last effort, and the frantic mother, falling across the aerie in the midst of bones and blood, clasps her child, — not dead as she had feared, but unmangled, and swaddled<sup>1</sup> just as it was when she laid it down to sleep among the fresh hay in a nook of the harvest field.

Oh, what a pang of perfect blessedness passed through her heart at that faint, feeble cry! “It lives — it lives — it lives!” and baring her bosom, with loud laughter and eyes as dry stones she felt the lips of the unconscious infant once more murmuring at the fount of life and love!

But how to descend! Below were cliffs, chasms, blocks of stone, and the skeletons of old trees — far, far down, and dwindled into specks; and a thousand creatures of her own kind, stationary or running to and fro!

No hope! no hope! Here she must die; and these horrid beaks and eyes and talons will return, and her child will be devoured at last, even within the dead bosom that can protect it no more!

But suddenly a rotten branch breaks off from the crumbling rock. Her eyes watch its fall; it seemed to stop not far down on a small platform. She will follow that branch!

She bound her child to her bosom, — she remembered not how or when, but it was safe. Then,

<sup>1</sup> swad'dled, wrapped up.

scarcely daring to open her eyes, she slid down the rocks, and found herself on a small piece of firm, root-bound soil, with bushes appearing below!

With fingers suddenly strengthened into the power of iron, she swung herself down by brier, and heather, and dwarf birch. Here a loosened stone leaped over a ledge, and no sound was heard, so far down was its fall; there the pebble rattled down the rocks, and she hesitated not to follow. Her feet bounded against the huge stone that stopped them, but she felt no pain. Her body was callous<sup>1</sup> as the cliff.

Steep as the upright wall of a house was now the face of the precipice. But it was matted with ivy, centuries<sup>2</sup> old, long ago dead and without a single green leaf, but with thousands of arm-thick stems petrified<sup>3</sup> into the rock, and covering it as with a trellis. She bound her baby to her neck, and with hands and feet clung to that fearful ladder.

Turning her head and looking down, lo! all the people in the parish — so great was the multitude — on their knees! And hush! the voice of psalms! a hymn breathing the spirit of one united prayer! An unseen hand seemed fastening her hands to the ribs of ivy, and, sudden in faith that her life was

<sup>1</sup> cal'lous, hard; without feeling.

<sup>2</sup> cen'tu-ries, hundreds of years.

<sup>3</sup> pet'ri-fied, turned into stone

to be saved, she became almost as fearless as if she had been changed into a winged creature.

Again her feet touched stones and earth. The psalm was hushed; but a tremulous<sup>1</sup> sobbing voice sounded close beside her, and lo! a she-goat, with two little kids, at her feet!

"Wild heights," thought she, "do these creatures climb, but the dam will lead down her kids by the easiest paths; for, oh! even in the brute creatures, what is the power of a mother's love!" then turning her head she kissed her sleeping baby, and for the first time she wept.

Overhead frowned the front of the precipice never before touched by human hand or foot. No one had ever dreamed of climbing it; but all the rest of this part of the mountain-side, though scarred and seamed, yet gave some footing, and more than one person in the parish had reached the bottom of the cliff.

Many were now attempting it, and before the cautious mother had followed her dumb guide a hundred yards the head of one man appeared, and then the head of another, and she knew that God had delivered her and her child in safety into the care of their fellow creatures.

There had been trouble and agitation,<sup>2</sup> much sobbing and many tears, among the multitude while the

<sup>1</sup> trem'u-lous, trembling. <sup>2</sup> ag-i-ta'tion, excitement of feeling.

mother was scaling the cliffs; sublime was the shout that echoed afar the moment she reached the aerie; and now that her preservation was sure, the great crowd rustled like a wind-swept wood.

She lay as in death. "Fall back, and give her fresh air!" said the old minister of the parish; and the close circle of faces widened about her. Hannah started up from her swoon, and looking wildly around cried, "Oh, the bird, the bird! the eagle! the eagle! the eagle has carried away my bonnie wee Walter! Is there none to pursue?"

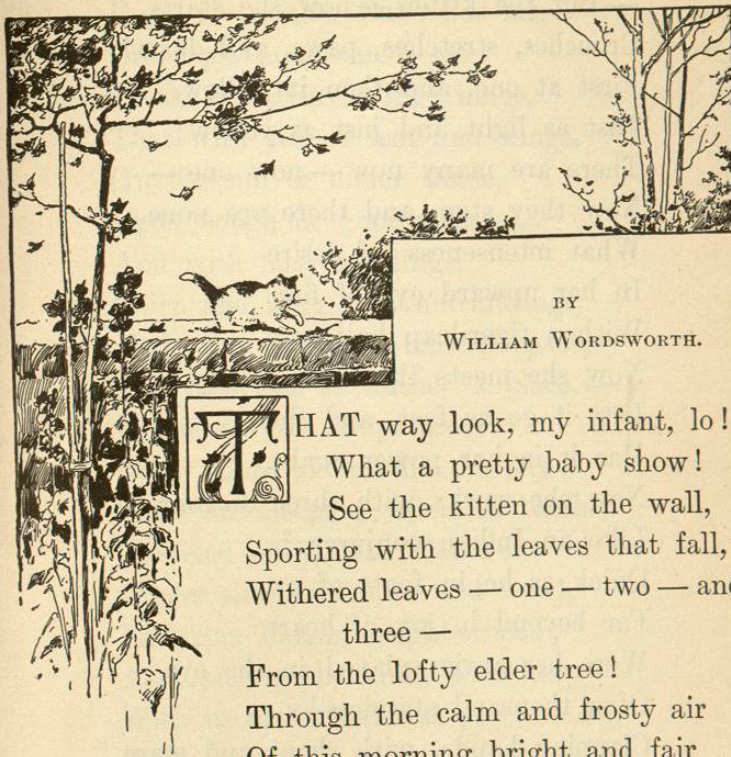
A neighbor put her baby to her breast; and, shutting her eyes and smiting her forehead, the sorely bewildered<sup>1</sup> creature said, in a low voice, "Am I awake? Oh, tell me if I'm awake, or if all this is the work of a fever or the delirium<sup>2</sup> of a dream?"

<sup>1</sup> be-wil'dered, greatly perplexed.

<sup>2</sup> de-lir'i-um, wild fancies.



## XXXIII. THE KITTEN AND THE FALLING LEAVES.



BY  
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

**W**HAT way look, my infant, lo!  
What a pretty baby show!  
See the kitten on the wall,  
Sporting with the leaves that fall,  
Withered leaves — one — two — and  
three —  
From the lofty elder tree!  
Through the calm and frosty air  
Of this morning bright and fair  
Eddying<sup>1</sup> round and round, they sink  
Softly, slowly: one might think,  
From the motions that are made,  
Every little leaf conveyed  
Sylph<sup>2</sup> or fairy hither tending,  
To this lower world descending,

<sup>1</sup> ed'dy-ing, whirling.

<sup>2</sup> sylph, a slender, fairy-like woman.

Each invisible and mute,  
 In his wavering parachute.<sup>1</sup>  
 — But the kitten — how she starts,  
 Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts!  
 First at one, and then its fellow,  
 Just as light and just as yellow;  
 There are many now — now one —  
 Now they stop, and there are none.  
 What intenseness of desire  
 In her upward eye of fire!  
 With a tiger-leap half way  
 Now she meets the coming prey,  
 Lets it go as fast, and then  
 Has it in her power again.  
 Now she works with three or four,  
 Like an Indian conjurer;<sup>2</sup>  
 Quick as he in feats of art,  
 Far beyond in joy of heart.  
 Were her antics played in the eye  
 Of a thousand standers-by,  
 Clapping hands, with shout and stare,  
 What would little Tabby care  
 For the plaudits<sup>3</sup> of the crowd?  
 Over-happy to be proud,  
 Over-wealthy in the treasure  
 Of her own exceeding pleasure.

<sup>1</sup> par'a-chute, a contrivance like an umbrella, for descending.

<sup>2</sup> con'jur-er, one who practices magic arts.

<sup>3</sup> plaud'its, applause.

'T is a pretty baby treat;  
 Nor, I deem, for me unmeet;<sup>1</sup>  
 Here, for neither Babe nor me,  
 Other playmate can I see.  
 Of the countless living things,  
 That with stir of feet and wings,  
 (In the sun or under shade,  
 Upon bough or grassy blade),  
 And with busy revelings,  
 Chirp and song, and murmurings,  
 Made this orchard's narrow space,  
 And this vale so blithe<sup>2</sup> a place, —  
 Multitudes are swept away,  
 Never more to breathe the day:  
 Some are sleeping; some in bands  
 Traveled into distant lands;  
 Others slunk to moor and wood,  
 Far from human neighborhood;  
 And, among the kinds that keep  
 With us closer fellowship,  
 With us openly abide,  
 All have laid their mirth aside.

Where is he, that giddy sprite,  
 Blue-cap, with his colors bright,  
 Who was blest as bird could be,  
 Feeding in the apple tree?

<sup>1</sup> un-meet', unfit.

<sup>2</sup> blithe. iovous.

Made such wanton<sup>1</sup> spoil and rout,  
 Turning blossoms inside out;  
 Hung, head pointing towards the ground,  
 Fluttered, perched, into a round  
 Bound himself, and then unbound;  
 Lithest,<sup>2</sup> gaudiest harlequin!<sup>3</sup>  
 Prettiest tumbler ever seen!  
 Light of heart, and light of limb,  
 What is now become of him?  
 Lambs, that through the mountains went  
 Frisking, bleating merriment,  
 When the year was in its prime,  
 They are sobered by this time.  
 If you look to vale or hill,  
 If you listen, all is still,  
 Save a little neighboring rill,  
 That from out the rocky ground  
 Strikes a solitary<sup>4</sup> sound.  
 Vainly glitter hill and plain,  
 And the air is calm in vain;  
 Vainly Morning spreads the lure<sup>5</sup>  
 Of a sky serene and pure;  
 Creature none can she decoy<sup>6</sup>  
 Into open sign of joy;  
 Is it that they have a fear  
 Of the dreary season near?

<sup>1</sup> wan'ton, free; sportive.<sup>2</sup> lith'est, most active; limberest.<sup>3</sup> har'le-quin, clown; merry-maker.<sup>4</sup> sol'i-ta-ry, single.<sup>5</sup> lure, attraction.<sup>6</sup> de-coy', entrap.

Or that other pleasures be  
 Sweeter even than gayety?

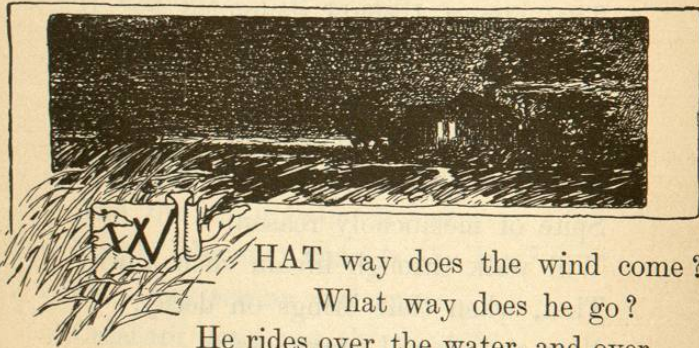
Yet, whate'er enjoyments dwell  
 In the impenetrable<sup>1</sup> cell  
 Of the silent heart which Nature  
 Furnishes to every creature;  
 Whatsoe'er we feel and know  
 Too sedate<sup>2</sup> for outward show,—  
 Such a light of gladness breaks,  
 Pretty kitten! from thy freaks;  
 Spreads with such a living grace  
 O'er my little Dora's face.  
 Yes, the sight so stirs and charms  
 Thee, Baby, laughing in my arms,  
 That almost I could repine  
 That your transports<sup>3</sup> are not mine;  
 That I do not wholly fare  
 Even as you do, thoughtless pair!  
 And I will have my careless season  
 Spite of melancholy reason,  
 Will walk through life in such a way  
 That, when time brings on decay,  
 Now and then I may possess  
 Hours of perfect gladness,  
 —Pleased by any random<sup>4</sup> toy;  
 By a kitten's busy joy,

<sup>1</sup> im-pen'e-tra-ble, that cannot be entered.<sup>2</sup> se-date', serious.<sup>3</sup> trans'ports, delights.<sup>4</sup> ran'dom, chance.

Or an infant's laughing eye  
 Sharing in the ecstasy;<sup>1</sup>  
 I would fare like that or this,  
 Find my wisdom in my bliss;  
 Keep the sprightly soul awake,  
 And have faculties<sup>2</sup> to take,  
 Even from things by sorrow wrought,  
 Matter for a jocund<sup>3</sup> thought;  
 Spite of care, and spite of grief,  
 To gambol<sup>4</sup> with Life's falling leaf.

XXXIV. A BOISTEROUS WINTER EVENING

BY DOROTHY WORDSWORTH.



WHAT way does the wind come?  
 What way does he go?  
 He rides over the water, and over  
 the snow,  
 Through wood and through vale; and o'er rocky height  
 Which the goat cannot climb, takes his sounding flight.

<sup>1</sup> ec'sta-sy, delight.

<sup>2</sup> fac'ul-ties, powers; gifts of mind.

<sup>3</sup> joc'und, jolly; gay.

<sup>4</sup> gam'bol, sport.

He tosses about in every bare tree,  
 As, if you look up, you plainly may see;  
 But how he will come, and whither he goes,  
 There's never a scholar in England knows.

He will suddenly stop in a cunning nook,  
 And ring a sharp larum;<sup>1</sup>—but, if you should look,  
 There's nothing to see but a cushion of snow  
 Round as a pillow, and whiter than milk,  
 And softer than if it were covered with silk.  
 Sometimes he'll hide in the cave of a rock,  
 Then whistle as shrill as the buzzard cock;  
 Yet seek him, and what shall you find in the place?  
 Nothing but silence and empty space,  
 Save, in a corner, a heap of dry leaves  
 That he's left, for a bed, to beggars or thieves!

As soon as 't is daylight to-morrow, with me  
 You shall go to the orchard, and then you will see  
 That he has been there, and made a great rout,<sup>2</sup>  
 And cracked the branches, and strewn them about;  
 Heaven grant that he spare but that one upright  
 twig  
 That looked up at the sky so proud and big  
 All last summer, as well you know,  
 Studded<sup>3</sup> with apples, a beautiful show!

<sup>1</sup> lar'um, an alarm; a noise to warn.

<sup>2</sup> rout, noise; tumult.

<sup>3</sup> stud'ded, thickly set, as with jewels

Hark! over the roof he makes a pause,  
And growls as if he would fix his claws  
Right in the slates, and with a huge rattle  
Drive them down, like men in a battle.

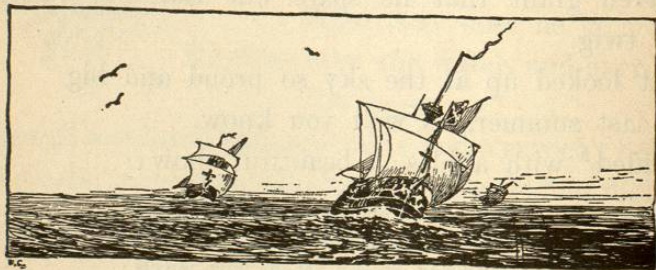
But let him range<sup>1</sup> round, — he does us no harm;  
We build up the fire, we're snug and warm;  
Untouched by his breath, see the candle shines bright  
And burns with a clear and steady light.  
Books have we to read — but that half-stifled<sup>2</sup> knell,<sup>3</sup>  
Alas! 't is the sound of the eight o'clock bell.

Come, now we'll to bed! and when we are there,  
He may work his own will, and what shall we care!  
He may knock at the door, — we'll not let him in;  
May drive at the windows, — we'll laugh at his din;  
Let him seek his own home, wherever it be;  
Here's a cozy warm house for Edward and me.

<sup>1</sup> range, rove; wander.

<sup>2</sup> half-sti-fled, half-smothered.

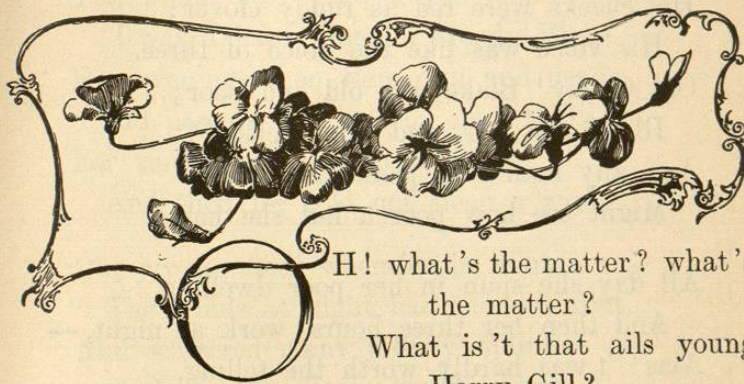
<sup>3</sup> knell, the stroke of a bell on some sad occasion.



### XXXV. GOODY BLAKE AND HARRY GILL.

A TRUE STORY.

BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.



H! what's the matter? what's  
the matter?  
What is 't that ails young  
Harry Gill?

That evermore his teeth they chatter, —  
Chatter, chatter, chatter still!  
Of waistcoats Harry has no lack,  
Good duffle gray, and flannel fine;  
He has a blanket on his back,  
And coats enough to smother nine.

In March, December, and in July,  
'T is all the same with Harry Gill;  
The neighbors tell, and tell you truly,  
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.



At night, at morning, and at noon,  
 'Tis all the same with Harry Gill;  
 Beneath the sun, beneath the moon,  
 His teeth they chatter, chatter still!

Young Harry was a lusty drover, —  
 And who so stout of limb as he?  
 His cheeks were red as ruddy clover;  
 His voice was like the voice of three.  
 Old Goody<sup>1</sup> Blake was old and poor;  
 Ill-fed she was, and thinly clad;  
 And any man who passed her door  
 Might see how poor a hut she had.

All day she spun in her poor dwelling,  
 And then her three hours' work at night, —  
 Alas! 't was hardly worth the telling,  
 It would not pay for candle-light.  
 Remote from sheltered village-green —  
 On a hill's northern side she dwelt,  
 Where from sea-blasts the hawthorns lean,  
 And hoary dews are slow to melt.

By the same fire to boil their pottage,<sup>2</sup>  
 Two poor old Dames, as I have known,  
 Will often live in one small cottage;  
 But she, poor woman! housed alone.

<sup>1</sup> Good'y, old woman.

<sup>2</sup> pot'tage, food cooked in a pot.

'T was well enough when summer came,  
 The long, warm, lightsome<sup>1</sup> summer day;  
 Then at her door the canty<sup>2</sup> dame  
 Would sit, as any linnet gay.

But when the ice our streams did fetter,<sup>3</sup>  
 Oh! then how her old bones would shake!  
 You would have said, if you had met her,  
 'T was a hard time for Goody Blake.  
 Her evenings then were dull and dead:  
 Sad case it was, as you may think,  
 For very cold to go to bed,  
 And then for cold not sleep a wink.

Oh, joy for her! whene'er in winter  
 The winds at night had made a rout,  
 And scattered many a lusty<sup>4</sup> splinter  
 And many a rotten bough about.  
 Yet never had she, well or sick,  
 As every man who knew her says,  
 A pile beforehand, turf or stick,  
 Enough to warm her for three days.

Now, when the frost was past enduring,  
 And made her poor old bones to ache,  
 Could anything be more alluring<sup>5</sup>  
 Than an old hedge to Goody Blake?

<sup>1</sup> light'-some, bright.

<sup>3</sup> fet'ter, bind.

<sup>2</sup> can'ty, talkative; sprightly.

<sup>4</sup> lust'y, large; strong.

<sup>5</sup> al-lur'ing, attractive.

And, now and then, it must be said,  
 When her old bones were cold and chill,  
 She left her fire, or left her bed,  
 To seek the hedge of Harry Gill.

Now Harry he had long suspected  
 This trespass of old Goody Blake,  
 And vowed that she should be detected,  
 That he on her would vengeance take.  
 And oft from his warm fire he'd go,  
 And to the fields his road would take;  
 And there, at night, in frost and snow,  
 He watched to seize old Goody Blake.

And once, behind a rick of barley,  
 Thus looking out did Harry stand;  
 The moon was full and shining clearly,  
 And crisp with frost the stubble land.  
 — He hears a noise, — he's all awake! —  
 Again! — on tiptoe down the hill  
 He softly creeps. 'Tis Goody Blake!  
 She's at the hedge of Harry Gill.

Right glad was he when he beheld her;  
 Stick after stick did Goody pull;  
 He stood behind a bush of elder  
 Till she had filled her apron full.  
 When with her load she turned about,  
 The by-way back again to take,

He started forward with a shout,  
 And sprang upon poor Goody Blake.

And fiercely by the arm he took her,  
 And by the arm he held her fast,  
 And fiercely by the arm he shook her,  
 And cried, "I've caught you, then, at last!"  
 Then Goody, who had nothing said,  
 Her bundle from her lap let fall;  
 And, kneeling on the sticks, she prayed  
 To God who is the judge of all.

She prayed, her withered hand uprearing,  
 While Harry held her by the arm, —  
 "God, who art never out of hearing,  
 Oh, may he never more be warm!"  
 The cold, cold moon above her head,  
 Thus on her knees did Goody pray;  
 Young Harry heard what she had said,  
 And icy cold he turned away.

He went complaining all the morrow  
 That he was cold and very chill:  
 His face was gloom, his heart was sorrow, —  
 Alas! that day for Harry Gill!  
 That day he wore a riding-coat,  
 But not a whit the warmer he:  
 Another was on Thursday brought,  
 And ere the Sabbath he had three.

'T was all in vain, a useless matter, —  
 And blankets were about him pinned;  
 Yet still his jaws and teeth they clatter,  
 Like a loose casement in the wind.  
 And Harry's flesh it fell away;  
 And all who see him say, 'T is plain,  
 That, live as long as live he may,  
 He never will be warm again.

No word to any man he utters,  
 Abed or up, to young or old;  
 But ever to himself he mutters,  
 "Poor Harry Gill is very cold."  
 Abed or up, by night or day,  
 His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
 Now think, ye farmers all, I pray,  
 Of Goody Blake and Harry Gill!

XXXVI. MARCH.

BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

THE cock is crowing, the stream is flowing,  
 The small birds twitter, the lake doth glitter,  
 The green field sleeps in the sun;  
 The oldest and youngest are at work with the  
 strongest;  
 The cattle are grazing, their heads never raising;  
 There are forty feeding like one!

XXXVII. HOW THE LEAVES CAME DOWN.

BY SUSAN COOLIDGE.



'LL tell you how the leaves  
 came down,"  
 The great Tree to his chil-  
 dren said:  
 "You're getting sleepy, Yel-  
 low and Brown,  
 Yes, very sleepy, little  
 Red.  
 It is quite time to go to  
 bed."

"Ah!" begged each silly, pouting leaf,  
 "Let us a little longer stay;  
 Dear Father Tree, behold our grief!  
 'T is such a very pleasant day,  
 We do not want to go away."

So, for just one more merry day  
 To the great Tree the leaflets clung,  
 Frolicked and danced, and had their way,  
 Upon the autumn breezes swung,  
 Whispering all their sports among —

"Perhaps the great Tree will forget,  
 And let us stay until the spring,  
 If we all beg, and coax, and fret."