

Selected Poetry

A Child's Christmas Song

There's Christmas in the air, dears,
And there's Christmas in the street
Where sleigh bells tune their chiming
To the horses' flying feet.

There's Christmas in the house, dears,
For we're setting up the tree
And hanging up the stockings
So that Santa Clause may see!

There's Christmas in the church, dears,
Where the humble manger stands
And children kneel to pray there
And kiss His little hands.

There's Christmas in our hearts, dears,
And it thrills us through and through
To love and live and give, dears,
As the Christ Child taught us to!

—PAULINE FROST RAFTER.

The Cardinal Flower

O'er the dark woodland pool Lobelia hung—
A burning spot amid a world of shade;
And the dim surface with her flame she made
Kin to that sea the man of Patmos sung,

Mingled with fire. Each brilliant, cloven tongue
Found a reflection; the undistinguished glade
Shone with a twofold brightness, and each blade
And spire took beauty from the gleam she flung.

Upon that sanguine bloom who still may chance
Nor know some portion of their first surprise
Who greeted it and sent it home to France
To show what marvels grew beyond the seas—
Know, too, that spite of silks and precious dyes,
Richelieu was not arrayed like one of these?

—G. S. B., in the *New York Tribune*.

Teddo Wells, Deceased

Times I think I'm not the man—
Must be some mistake.
Me that was so spick and span,
Cute and wideawake!
Now so beat and crotchety—
Sixty-five, at least—
Knockin' round the presbytery,
Groomin' for the priest,
Choppin' wood, and ringin' bells,
Dodgin' work and takin' spells!
Me all right, one Ed'ard Wells
(Late Teddo Wells, deceased)
Wheelin' barrows round the yard,
Gammon to be workin' hard,
A-groomin' for the priest!

Trainin' prads was Teddo's game
Made a tidy bit.
Everybody knew the name,
Teddo Wells was "It."
Bought that bit of property

(Value since increased),
Gettin' on tremendously,
Married by the priest.
Papers full of Teddo Wells,
Trainin' horses for the swells;
Since redooiced to ringin' bells
(Teddo Wells, deceased)
Shinin' boots and learnin' sense,
Nælin' palin's on the fence,
A-groomin' for the priest.

Lost that bit of property,
Ended up in smoke—
Too much "Jimmie Hennessy"—
Down, and stony-broke.
Used to think he knew the game
Till they had him fleeced.
"Mud" is this 'ere hero's name,
Workin' for the priest—
Unbeknown to sports and swells;
They've no time for Ed'ard Wells,
Up the spout and ringin' bells
As "Teddo Wells, deceased";
Never noticed up the town,
Never asked to keep one down—
Groomin' for the priest.

Times I stops a cove to chat,
One as gamed and spieled;
Chips me in the curate's hat,
"Six to four the field."
"What-o! Teddo Wells," sez he,
"Him that horses leased,
Owned that bit of property,
Groomin' for the priest?"
"Guessin' eggs and seen the shells;
Brains," sez I, "and breedin' tells,
This old gent is Ed'ard Wells,
Late Teddo Wells, deceased.
Ringin' bells is Ed'ard's game,
Openin' doors and closin' same,
Called 'groomin' for the priest."

Never see a horse nohow,
Just an old machine;
Always in a tearin' row
With this Josephine.
Got an eye that makes you feel
Well and truly p'liced,
Follerin' out upon your heels,
A-goin' to tell the priest.
"Can't smoke here now, Ed'ard Wells,
That old pipe offensive smells;
Go and smoke outside," she yells.
So Teddo Wells, deceased,
Him that once was in the boom,
Wood-heap has for smokin' room—
A-groomin' for the priest.

Times I says it's all a joke
Someone's puttin' up;
Me dead-beat and stony-broke,
Me that won a cup,
Owned that bit of property,
Them good horses leased!
Kickin' round the presbytery
A-groomin' for the priest!
Choppin' wood and ringin' bells,
Curby-hocked and takin' spells!
Me it is, one Ed'ard Wells,
(Late Teddo Wells, deceased)
Smokin' hard and talkin' free
Of the man he used to be,
And groomin' for the priest.
—JOHN O'BRIEN, in *Around the Borec Log*.



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