

CHAPTER X

SOME OF PHEBE'S RHYMES

THE RAT AND THE MILL



LITTLE rat lived in
the side of a hill—
Sing Ho! for the
fields of corn—

And all the summer he ate his fill
And ran about at his own sweet will
And said he was glad he was born
Near a field of corn, near a field of
corn,

He said he was glad he was born.

JANET AND HER DEAR PHEBE

The little rat in the side of the hill—

Sing Ho! for the summer-time—

Took cold in winter and got a chill

And crept to the engine-room at the
mill

And found there a warmer clime—

Sing Ho! for the summer-time—

He found there a warmer clime.

The little rat grew big at the mill—

Sing Ho! for the summer-time—

From workmen's lunches he ate his fill,

And he might, perhaps, have lived there
still,

But the boiler that made the warmer
clime

Exploded—alas, what a dreadful
time—

And ended the rat and the rhyme.

SOME OF PHEBE'S RHYMES

MY AUNT

My auntie at her wedding
Had gifts all nice to use:
A house and many dishes
Did ever bride refuse?
But auntie said, a-weeping,
"Ide rather live out-doors
Than wash so many dishes
'And sweep so many floors."

My aunt has many dresses—
I think she calls them "gowns"—
You'd hardly see their equal
In many little towns.
But aunty says—a-weeping—
"Ide rather dress in skins
Than gowns with tails a-dragging;
I wear them for my sins."

JANET AND HER DEAR PHEBE

My auntie has a carriage
That makes the people stare,
With silver-plated harness
For Jack, the horse, to wear.
But auntie says, in earnest,
“Ide rather walk all day,
Than sit up and be gazed at
In this indecent way.”

My auntie has a garden
Laid out in rings and rows
‘All pruned and kept in order,
With walks that you’d suppose
Were made with wax and rollers,
And yet, my aunt declares:
“Ide rather have a forest
Where things don’t grow in squares.”

SOME OF PHEBE'S RHYMES

When things are very fixy
She'd rather have them plain;
When she is in a city
She wants a country lane.
And so, I shouldn't wonder
If, on some Christmas-day,
She turned into a Santa Claus
And gave her things away.

THE SHADOW-BIRD

Up in the tree a truly-bird
Is flying round and round,
And as he moves from twig to twig
There follows on the ground
A kind of little picture-bird
That never makes a sound;—

But—only—pictures aren't alive,
And this can fly as fast
And fly as far as the other bird
When it is going past;—
But—only—when the sun goes down
This birdie doesn't last.

SUCCEEDING

A goose hid her eggs in the hay,
But the egg-hunter took them away,
And gave her, instead,
A door-knob of lead,
Which she sat on three weeks and a day.

Then a kitten ran under her wing—
A desolate, motherless thing—
Said the goose,—“Here is double
Reward for my trouble—
Four legs and a new kind of sing.”