

**MOTHER GOOSE FOR  
GROWN FOLKS. A  
CHRISTMAS READING**

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Mother Goose for grown folks. A Christmas reading by A. D. T. Whitney

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**A. D. T. WHITNEY**

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GROWN FOLKS. A  
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A CHRISTMAS READING.

# MOTHER GOOSE

FOR

## GROWN FOLKS.

A CHRISTMAS READING.

[By A. D. J. Whitney]

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## INTRODUCTORY.

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SOMEWHERE in that uncertain "long ago,"

Whose dim and vague chronology is all

That elfin tales or nursery fables know,

Rose a rare spirit, — keen, and quick, and  
quaint, —

Whom by the title, whether fact or feint,

Mythic or real, Mother Goose we call.

Of Momus and Minerva sprang the birth

That gave the laughing oracle to earth:

A brimming bowl she bears, that, frothing  
high

With sparkling nonsense, seemeth non-  
sense all;

Till, the bright, floating syllabub blown by,  
Lo, in its ruby splendor doth upshine

The crimson radiance of Olympian wine

By Pallas poured, in Jove's own banquet-  
hall.

The world was but a baby when she came ;  
So to her songs it listened, and her name  
Grew to a word of power, her voice a spell  
With charm to soothe its infant wearying  
well.

But, in a later and maturer age,  
Developed to a dignity more sage,  
Having its Shakspeares and its Words-  
worths now,

Its Southseys and its Tennysons, to wear  
A halo on the high and lordly brow,  
Or poet-laurels in the waving hair ;  
• Its Lowells, Whittiers, Longfellows, to sing  
Ballads of beauty, like the notes of spring,  
The wise and prudent ones to nursery use  
Leave the dear lyrics of old Mother Goose.

Wisdom of babes, — the nursery Shak-  
speare still, —

Cackles she ever with the same good-will :  
Uttering deep counsels in a foolish guise,  
That come as warnings, even to the wise ;  
As when, of old, the martial city slept,  
Unconscious of the wily foe that crept  
Under the midnight, till the alarm was heard  
Out from the mouth of Rome's plebeian  
bird.