GRADED POETRY READERS, THIRD YEAR

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Graded Poetry Readers, Third Year by Katherine D. Blake & Georgia Alexander

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THIRD YEAR

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INTRODUCTION

POETRY is the chosen language of childhood and youth. The baby repeats words again and again for the mere joy of their sound: the melody of nursery rhymes gives a delight which is quite independent of the meaning of the words. Not until youth approaches maturity is there an equal pleasure in the rounded periods of elegant prose. It is in childhood therefore that the young mind should be stored with poems whose rhythm will be a present delight and whose beautiful thoughts will not lose their charm in later years.

The selections for the lowest grades are addressed primarily to the feeling for verbal beauty, the recognition of which in the mind of the child is fundamental to the plan of this work. The editors have felt that the inclusion of critical notes in these little books intended for elementary school children would be not only superfluous, but, in the degree in which critical comment drew the child's attention from the text, subversive of the desired result. Nor are there any notes on methods. The best way to teach children to love a poem is to read it inspiringly to them. The French say: "The ear is the pathway to the heart." A poem should be so read that it will sing itself in the hearts of the listening children.

In the brief biographies appended to the later books the human element has been brought out. An effect has been made to call attention to the education of the poet and his equipment for his life work rather than to the literary qualities of his style.



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THIRD YEAR - FIRST HALF

EDWARD LEAR ENGLAND, 1812-1888

The Owl and the Pussy-Cat

The Owl and the Pussy-Cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat.
They took some honey and plenty

They took some honey, and plenty of money

Wrapped up in a five-pound note.

The Owl looked up to the moon above, And sang to a small guitar,

"O lovely Pussy! O Pussy, my love!

What a beautiful Pussy you are, — You are;

What a beautiful Pussy you are!"

10

Pussy said to the Owl, "You elegant fowl!

How wonderful sweet you sing!

Oh let us be married, — too long we have tarried, —

But what shall we do for a ring?"
They sailed away for a year and a day
To the land where the Bong-tree grows,
And there in a wood, a piggy-wig stood
With a ring in the end of his nose,
His nose;

With a ring in the end of his nose.

"Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling

Your ring?" Said the piggy, "I will." So they took it away, and were married next day

By the turkey who lives on the hill. They dined upon mince and slices of quince,

Which they ate with a runcible spoon,

15 And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,
They danced by the light of the moon,
The moon;

They danced by the light of the moon.