

**THE HEART OF OAK BOOKS. IN
SEVEN VOLUMES. VOLUME III.
THIRD BOOK. FAIRY TALES,
NARRATIVES, AND POEMS; PP. 2-
169**

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CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

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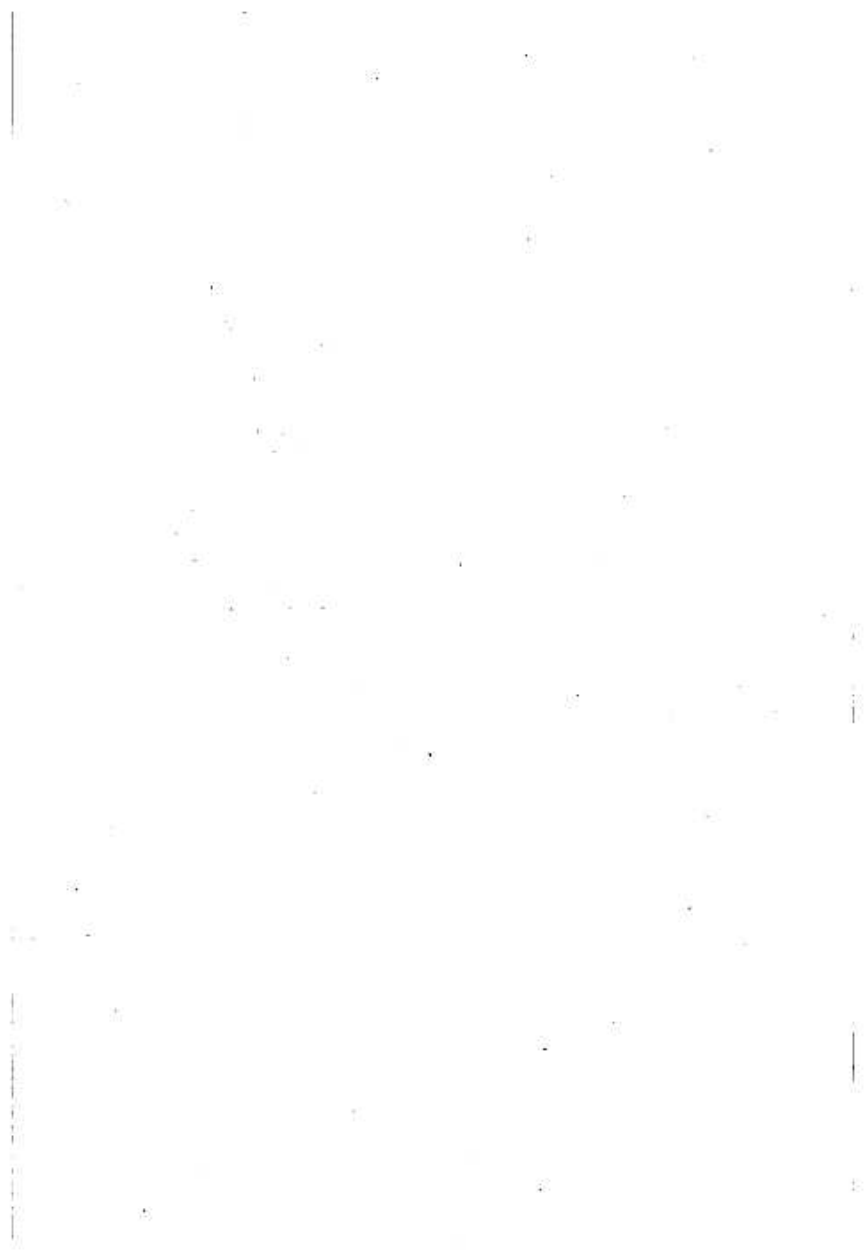
THE HEART OF OAK BOOKS

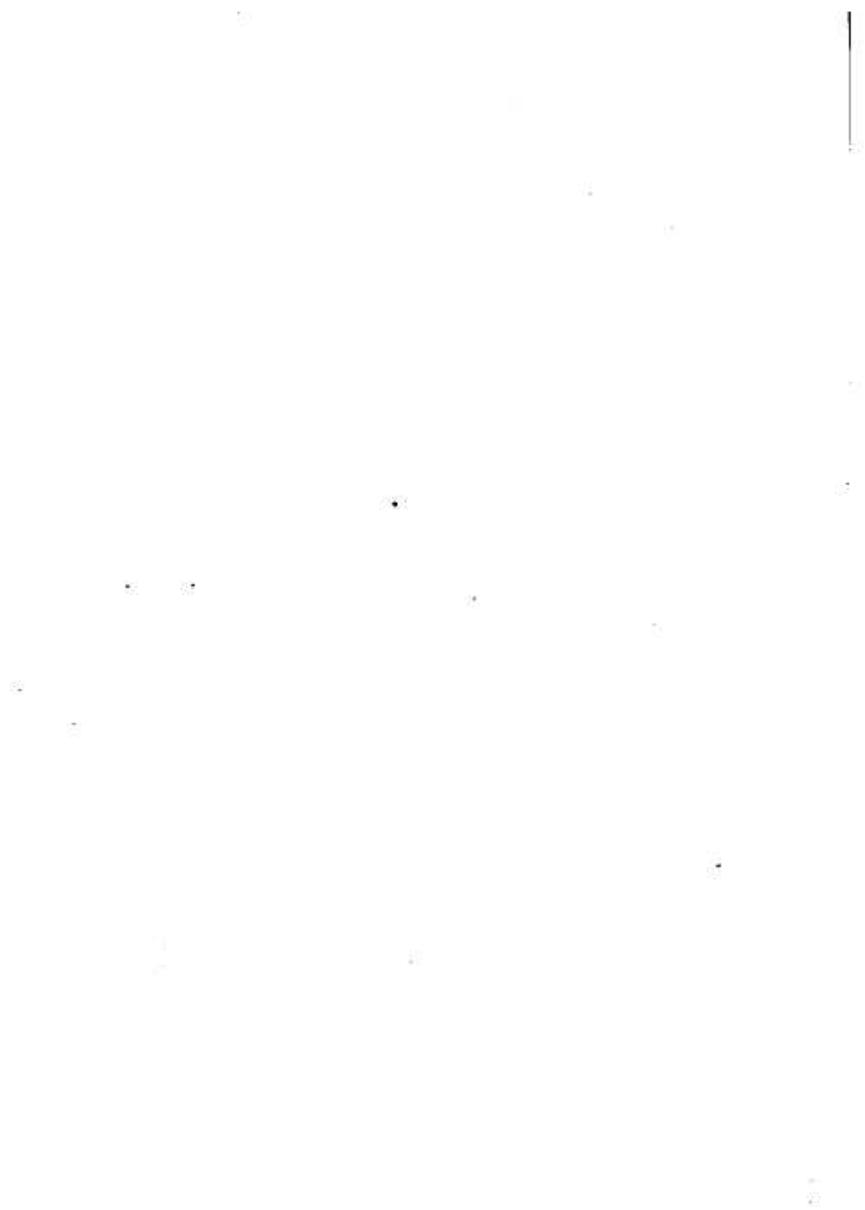
A COLLECTION OF TRADITIONAL RHYMES AND STORIES FOR CHILDREN,
AND OF MASTERPIECES OF POETRY AND PROSE FOR USE AT
HOME AND AT SCHOOL, CHOSEN WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE
TO THE CULTIVATION OF THE IMAGINATION AND THE
DEVELOPMENT OF A TASTE FOR GOOD READING

In Seven Volumes

VOLUME III









STORY-TELLING TIME.

Frontispiece

THE
HEART OF OAK BOOKS

EDITED BY
CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

Third Book

FAIRY TALES, NARRATIVES, AND POEMS

REVISED EDITION

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INTRODUCTION.

A TASTE for good reading is an acquisition the worth of which is hardly to be overestimated; and yet a majority of children, even of those favored by circumstance, grow up without it. This defect is due partly to the fault or ignorance of parents and teachers; partly, also, to the want, in many cases, of the proper means of cultivation. For this taste, like most others, is usually not so much a gift of nature as a product of cultivation. A wide difference exists, indeed, in children in respect to their natural inclination for reading, but there are few in whom it cannot be more or less developed by careful and judicious training.

This training should begin very early. Even before the child has learned the alphabet, his mother's lullaby or his nurse's song may have begun the attuning of his ear to the melodies of verse, and the quickening of his mind with pleasant fancies. As he grows older, his first reading should be made attractive to him by its ease and entertainment.

The reading lesson should never be hard or dull; nor should it be made the occasion for instruction in any specific branch of knowledge. The essential thing is that in beginning to learn to read the child should like what he reads or hears read, and that the matter should be of a sort to fix itself in his mind without wearisome effort. He should be led on by pleasure from step to step.

His very first reading should mainly consist in what may cultivate his ear for the music of verse, and may rouse his fancy. And to this end nothing is better than the rhymes and jingles which have sung themselves, generation after generation, in the nursery or on the playground. "Mother Goose"