



BOPEEP.

Time-battered, silent, sad, obscure,
Neglected, shaggy, shy and poor,
He came,
A pilgrim o'er the world's hard ways,
Unseen by fortune's gentle gaze,
Or fame.
His hair is white as winter's rime,
Or heads of dandelion time
That fly.
His wrinkled shoes beside him flung,
His old, thin coat above them hung
To dry.
The busy firelight o'er him plays;
He holds out to the warming blaze
His hand.
The piteous need of care and bread
The cramped, blue fingers, scarce outspread,
Command.
He murmurs in his sleep. He sighs
Of youth's lost days, of summer skies—
Sweet dream!
He wanders through the leafy glade,
And rests within the cooler shade
Of stream.
Not always sick, and poor, and old,
Not always homeless in the cold;
Not so.

Dim traces of life's roseate years,
Of man's best hopes and saddest fears,
Still show.
Again his boyhood's home he sees,
The faces dear, the arching trees,
The wall,
Where, year by year, the marks made new
Proclaimed how fast each upward grew,
So tall.
Again he walks the path beside
Of her, who came each eventide—
Bopeep—
Who, as her namesake did of old,
With gentle hand led to the fold
Her sheep.
The burning logs in ruin fall.
He starting, wakes. He thanks us all.
He's gone.
A sad-eyed wanderer again,
He hurries on through snow and rain,
Alone.
May peace those poor, worn feet attend.
May blessings on his head descend,
We say.
Hopes shall be gained of long past years,
And soothed be all heart rending fears,
Some day.

ROSE WILCOX.