

MY OL' DAD.



How I wish thet m' ol' daddy
 Cud come back hyer jest t'night!
 See me togged up, peert 'n' sassy,
 Cheeks s' red 'n' eyes s' bright;
 Dancin' hyer afore th' footlights,
 Queen of uh vari'ty show;
 Wudn't he be mighty tickled?
 Lawy! Bet! I tell yuh so!

Ust ter wear er pink sun bunnit,
 W'en I was er little gell,
 Runnin' out t' dad 't noontime,
 Toatin' water from th' well.
 How 'is ol' blue eyes 'ud sparkul,
 W'en h'ed ketch me this-a-way,
 'N' cry "Ho! m' pink sun bunnit!
 Want t' ride up awn th' hay?"

Then he'd boost me awn th' wag'n,
 With 'n "Oopee daisy, pet!"
 'N' I'd cuddle in th' tim'thy,
 Ther' t' worry, fume 'n' fret;
 'N' m' dad 'ud whoop th' horses,
 Moppin' off 'is wrinkled brow,
 With 'is queer old yaller hanker—
 I kin almos' see 'm now!



Then I'd fuss 'n' scream 'n' giggle,
 Holdin' awn t' 'is coat tail;
 "Now, yuh dad! Yuh hol' them horses!"
 I'd cry out, all scart 'n' pale;
 Then he'd holler, laughin', "Whoa, ther'!"
 Whos! Yuh Dock! 'n' yuh, ol' Bill!
 Don' yuh know yur little missus
 Is afeard she'll git er spill?"

Lawy! Lawy! M' ol' daddy
 Hez been dead nigh fifteen year,
 'N' I've hed sech hard times, tell yuh;
 Long time sence I shed er tear.
 B't I wish 'e cud come back hyer,
 See me dressed up, spick 'n' span,
 Flow'rs 'n' feathers wher' the bunnit
 Ust ter keep off all th' tan.

Mebbe, though, 'e wudn't know me,
 'N' t' 'most 'ud break m' heart,
 Ef 'e shud look disapprovin',
 After all these years uppart!
 'Fraid this glare 'ud hurt 'is ol' eyes,
 'N' this music din 'is ears;
 'Fraid I cudn't see 'is wrinkles
 'Cause m' eyes 's full o' tears.

"Wait til yuh grow up, m' potty!"
 Dad, 'e often ust ter say;
 "N' yuh'll marry some rich laddie
 As'll dress yuh peert 'n' gay."
 Poor, ol' dad!—I've got th' dressin',
 Sat'ns, silks 'n' jewels—yet—
 What's thet? "Look er little brighter?"—
 Don' I wish I cud forget!

ELLA HIGGINSON.

