

A Summer Pastoral

It's hot to-day. The bees is buzzin'

Kinder don't-keer-like aroun',

An' fur off the warm air dances

O'er the parchin' roofs in town.

In the brook the cows is standin';

Childern hidin' in the hay;

Can't keep none of 'em a workin',

'Cause it's hot to-day.

It's hot to-day. The sun is blazin'

Like a great big ball o' fire;

Seems as ef instead o' settin'

It keeps mountin' higher an' higher.

I'm as triflin' as the childern,

Though I blame them lots an' scold;

I keep slippin' to the spring house,

Where the milk is rich an' cold.

The very air within its shadder
Smells o' cool an' restful things,
An' a roguish little robin
Sits above the place an' sings.
I don't mean to be a shirkin',
But I linger by the way
Longer, mebbe, than is needful,
'Cause it's hot to-day.

It's hot to-day. The horses stumble
Half asleep across the fiel's;
An' a host o' teasin' fancies
O'er my burnin' senses steals, —
Dreams o' cool rooms, curtains lowered,
An' a sofy's temptin' look;
Patter o' composin' raindrops
Or the ripple of a brook.

I strike a stump! That wakes me sudden;

Dreams all vanish into air.

Lordy! how I chew my whiskers;

'Twouldn't do fur me to swear.

But I have to be so keerful

'Bout my thoughts an' what I say;

Somethin' might slip out unheeded,

'Cause it's hot to-day.

Git up, there, Suke! you, Sal, git over!

Sakes alive! how I do sweat.

Every stitch that I've got on me,

Bet a cent, is wringin' wet.

If this keeps up, I'll lose my temper.

Gee there, Sal, you lazy brute!

Wonder who on airth this weather

Could 'a' be'n got up to suit?

You, Sam, go bring a tin o' water;

Dash it all, don't be so slow!
'Pears as ef you tuk an hour
'Tween each step to stop an' blow.
Think I want to stand a meltin'
Out here in this b'ilin' sun,
While you stop to think about it?
Lift them feet o' your'n an' run.

It ain't no use; I'm plumb fetaggled.

Come an' put this team away.

I won't plow another furrer;

It's too mortal hot to-day.

I ain't weak, nor I ain't lazy,

But I'll stand this half day's loss

'Fore I let the devil make me

Lose my patience an' git cross.