



A POEM FOR CHILDREN. BY C. C. MOORE.

I WAS the night before Christ-
 mas, when all through
 the house
 Not a creature was stirring,
 not even a mouse ;
 The stockings were hung
 by the chimney with care,
 In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be
 there ;
 The children were nestled all snug in their
 beds,
 While visions of sugar-plums danced in
 their heads ;
 And mamma in her kerchief, and I in my
 cap,
 Had just settled our brains for a long
 winter's nap—
 When out on the lawn there arose such a
 clatter,
 I sprang from my bed to see what was the
 matter.
 Away to the window I flew like a flash,
 Tore open the shutters, and threw up the
 sash.
 The moon, on the breast of the new-fallen
 snow,
 Gave a lustre of mid-day to objects below ;
 When, what to my wondering eyes should
 appear,
 But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny rein-
 deer,

With a little, old driver, so lively and
 quick,
 I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
 More rapid than eagles, his coursers they
 came,
 And he whistled, and shouted, and called
 them by name ;
 " Now, Dasher ! now, Dancer ! now, Prancer
 and Vixen !



On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donder and
Blitzen!
To the top of the porch, to the top of the
wall!
Now dash away! dash away, dash away
all!"
As dry leaves that before the wild hurri-
cane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to
the sky,
So, up to the housetop, the coursers they
flew,



With the sleighful of toys—and St.
Nicholas too.
And then in a twinkling I heard on the
roof
The prancing and pawing of each little
hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning
around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with
a bound.
He was dressed all in fur from his head to
his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with
ashes and soot;



A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a pedlar just opening
his pack.
His eyes how they twinkled! His dimples
how merry!



His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a
cherry ;
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a
bow,
And the beard on his chin was as white as
the snow.
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his
teeth,
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a
wreath.
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
That shook, when he laughed, like a bowl
full of jelly.
He was chubby and plump—a right jolly
old elf ;
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of
myself.

A wink of his eye, and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to
dread.
He spoke not a word, but went straight to
his work,
And filled all the stockings ; then turned
with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a
whistle,
And away they all flew, like the down of a
thistle ;
But I heard him exclaim, ere they drove
out of sight—
“ Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good
night ! ”

