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The Picture

Mary Mapes Dodge

A little lady, a very young knight,—
Just a girl and a boy in each other's sight,—
Oh, their smiling faces were clear and bright,
Their velvets and satins with gems bedight!
Gold and laces and pearls had she,
And he was superb as a lad could be.
Their cheeks were rosy, their hearts were light,
As they danced them a measure on Christmas night.



'T was: "Ah, my lady!" and "Yea, my lord!"
And he touched as lightly his jeweled sword
As if 't were a flower; yet he knew with pride
The trick of the weapon that decked his side.
And she — why, the very sweep of her gown
Told how, in valor and grand renown
From sire to son, through court and crown,
The name she bore had been handed down!

And what was her name? And who was the boy?—
The two who danced in their stately joy.
I do not know, and I hardly care —
Their story is neither here nor there.
For girls and boys, young, merry, and fair,

Gladden our firesides everywhere.
They thrive and flourish to-day, as then —
The little ladies, the little men!
And, grand or humble, their hearts are light
When they tread them a measure on Christmas night.

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