

Elm Feb^y 24th 1800.

As I know, my dear Mother, you're anxious to hear
How Johnny goes on with his measles ear,
For I'm deaf in my left ear (I cannot tell why
But many complain of the same thing as I)

You shall hear from me constantly every day,
Though my paper is large & I've nothing to say.
No wonder, dear Mother, in verse I should write,
For the amusement is great & the trouble is light,
And besides I've no doubt it will give Betty pleasure
To laugh at her brother John's playfulfooted measure.
As I sat in my flannel gown reading in bed.

A thought of a sudden came into my head,
That I'd send you some rhymes, or as others would say,
Some nonsensical stuff in the versified way.
My cough's, I think, better, & if it should mend
My illness will speedily come to an end.
For nothing else hinders, as I am assured,
My being recovered & perfectly cured.

Now you'll say - Hold your tongue, 'tis a monstrous great
You should haughtily trumpet forth thus your own fame,
And what is all this for? for nought I declare
But for saying the measles have made me look fair.
And my Nurse says my skin is more clear & more fine
Than before I had caught this disorder of mine.
And she laughing declares I so handsome shall be,
I shall captivate all the young ladies I see.
Now I think to all persons in my situation
Who by nature are brown, 'tis a precious consolation
That by doctoring the measles with some little care
They may rectify nature & make themselves fair.