

THE MISTLETOE BOUGH

Words by Thomas Haines Bayley, Music by Sir Henry Bishop (c.1840).
Legend ascribed to Constance Seymour's marriage to Harry Lovell.

The mistletoe hung in the castle hall
The holly branch shone on the old oak wall.
The Baron's retainers were blithe and gay,
All keeping the Christmas holiday.
And the Baron beheld with a father's pride
His beautiful child, young Lovell's bride.
And she, with her bright eyes seemed to be
The star of the goodly company.

Oh, the mistletoe bough. Oh, the mistletoe bough.

"I'm weary of dancing, now," she cried;
"Here, tarry a moment, I'll hide, I'll hide,
And, Lovell, be sure thou'rt the first to trace
The clue to my secret hiding place."
Away she ran, and her friends began
Each tower to search and each nook to scan.
And young Lovell cried, "Where dost thou hide?
I'm lonesy without you, my own dear bride."

Oh, the mistletoe bough. Oh, the mistletoe bough.

They sought her that night, they sought her next day,
They sought her in vain till a week passed away.
In the highest, the lowest, the loneliest spot,
Young Lovell sought wildly, but found her not.
The years passed by and their grief at last
Was told as a sorrowful tale long past.
And when Lovell appeared, all the children cried,
"See the old man weeps for his fairy bride."

Oh, the mistletoe bough. Oh, the mistletoe bough.

At length, an old chest that had long laid hid
Was found in the castle; they raised the lid.
A skeleton form lay mouldering there
In the bridal wreath of a lady so fair.
Oh sad was her fate when in sportive jest
She hid from her lord in the old oak chest,
It closed with a spring and the bridal bloom,
Lay withering there in a living tomb.

Oh, the mistletoe bough. Oh, the mistletoe bough.