

# Literature Relevant to the Art and Historical Period

## The Duel

### (The Gingham Dog and the Calico Cat)

The gingham dog and the calico cat  
Side by side on the table sat;  
'Twas half-past twelve, and (what do you think!)  
Nor one nor t'other had slept a wink!  
The old Dutch clock and the Chinese plate  
Appeared to know as sure as fate  
There was going to be a terrible spat.  
(I wasn't there; I simply state  
What was told to me by the Chinese plate!)

The gingham dog went "Bow-wow-wow!"  
And the calico cat replied "Me-ow!"  
The air was littered, an hour or so,  
With bits of gingham and calico,  
While the old Dutch clock in the  
chimney place  
Up with its hands before its face,  
For it always dreaded a family row!  
(Now mind: I'm only telling you  
What the old Dutch clock declares is true!)

The Chinese plate looked very blue,  
And wailed, "Oh dear! What shall we do!"  
But the gingham dog and the calico cat  
Wallowed this way and tumbled that  
Employing every tooth and claw  
In the awfulest way you ever saw-  
And oh! how the gingham and calico flew!  
(Don't fancy I exaggerate!  
I got my news from the Chinese plate!)

Next morning where the two had sat  
They found no trace of dog or cat;  
And some folks think unto this day  
That burglars stole the pair away!  
But the truth about the cat and pup  
Is this: they ate each other up!  
Now what do you really think of that!  
(The old Dutch clock, it told me so,  
And that is how I came to know.)

— *Eugene Field*



Kitten illustration