**Bards and Druids**

**The Britons and Their Poets**

**A lONG time after the days of the little men and big beasts there were some people called the Britons, who were not quite wild and savage, but they did everything in quite different ways from those in which we do them now. There were many kings among the Britons, and the people fought for their kings against other people and their kings. They spent a great deal of time in fighting. They were very big and strong, and had golden hair and blue eyes. They did not wear many clothes, and the men stained themselves blue. They had men of whom they thought a great deal called "Bards," who made and sang poetry for them. On the night before a fight the bards would sing to the soldiers songs about other brave soldiers in earlier times, and this made the men want to fight bravely in the battle. The Britons had not any big towns, and their houses were very small, the walls made of mud. When they were not fighting, the Britons hunted animals a great deal, and afterwards they ate them. They also grew corn and things to make bread.**

**THE BRITISH PRIESTS**

**The Britons did not know rightly about God. They thought there were a great many gods, and they used to say prayers to them among oak-trees. They even said prayers to things which were not alive, such as fire and water; and they thought a great deal of the mistletoe, which often grew on the oak-trees. They had priests called "Druids," who were the cleverest of all the Britons. They used to wear long white dresses. On special feast days they used to cut pieces of mistletoe with long golden knives, and give them out to the people, who thought that they kept them from being sick or unhappy. On the same day the Druids used to kill and burn great white oxen to please their gods.**