

TIMING HER

(Written to an old folk-tune)

Lalage's coming:

Where is she now, O?

Turning to bow, O,

And smile, is she,

Just at parting,

Parting, parting,

As she is starting

To come to me?

Where is she now, O,

Now, and now, O,

Shadowing a bough, O,

Of hedge or tree

As she is rushing,

Rushing, rushing,

Gossamers brushing

To come to me?

Lalage's coming;

Where is she now, O;

Climbing the brow, O,

Of hills I see?
Yes, she is nearing,
Nearing, nearing,
Weather unfearing
To come to me.

Near is she now, O,
Now, and now, O;
Milk the rich cow, O,
Forward the tea;
Shake the down bed for her,
Linen sheets spread for her,
Drape round the head for her
Coming to me.

Lalage's coming,
She's nearer now, O,
End anyhow, O,
To-day's husbandry!
Would a gilt chair were mine,
Slippers of vair were mine,
Brushes for hair were mine
Of ivory!

What will she think, O,
She who's so comely,

Viewing how homely
A sort are we!
Nothing resplendent,
No prompt attendant,
Not one dependent
Pertaining to me!

Lalage's coming;
Where is she now, O?
Fain I'd avow, O,
Full honestly
Nought here's enough for her,
All is too rough for her,
Even my love for her
Poor in degree.

She's nearer now, O,
Still nearer now, O,
She 'tis, I vow, O,
Passing the lea.
Rush down to meet her there,
Call out and greet her there,
Never a sweeter there
Crossed to me!

Lalage's come; aye,

Come is she now, O! . . .

Does Heaven allow, O,

A meeting to be?

Yes, she is here now,

Here now, here now,

Nothing to fear now,

Here's Lalage!