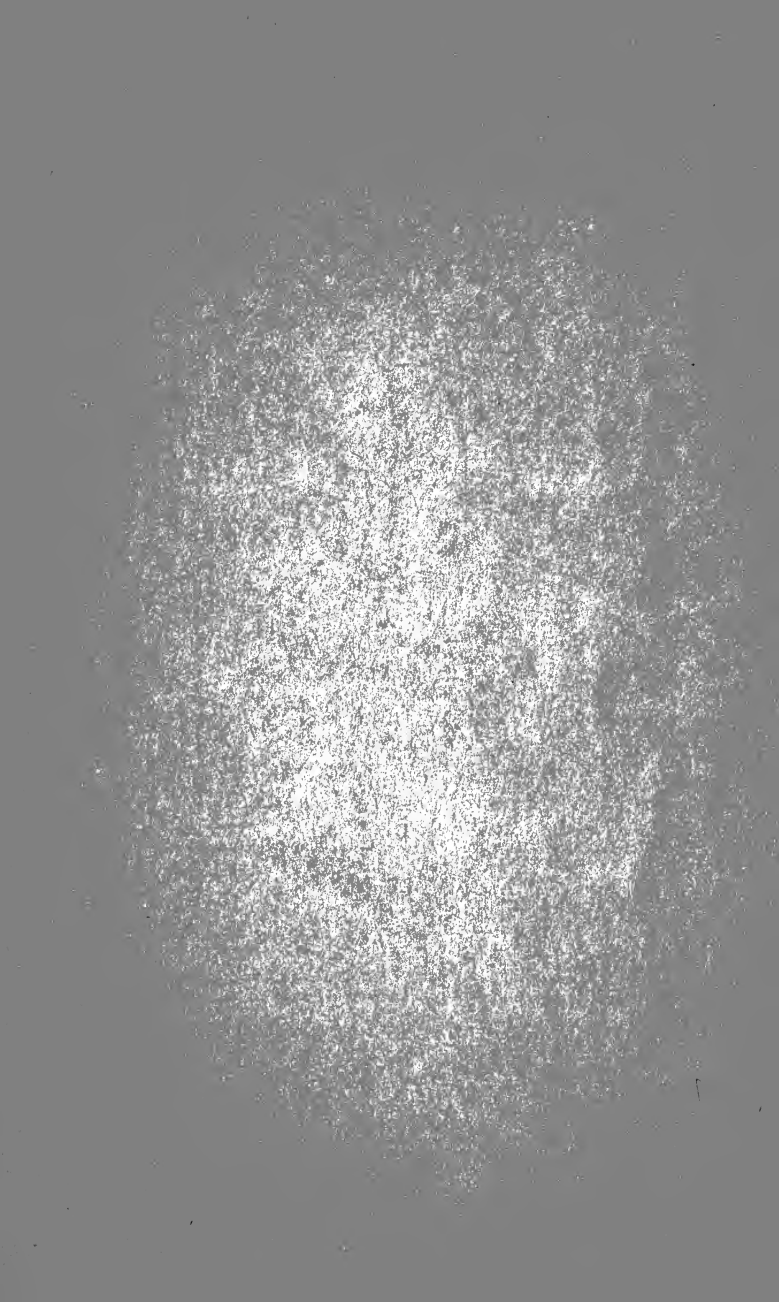
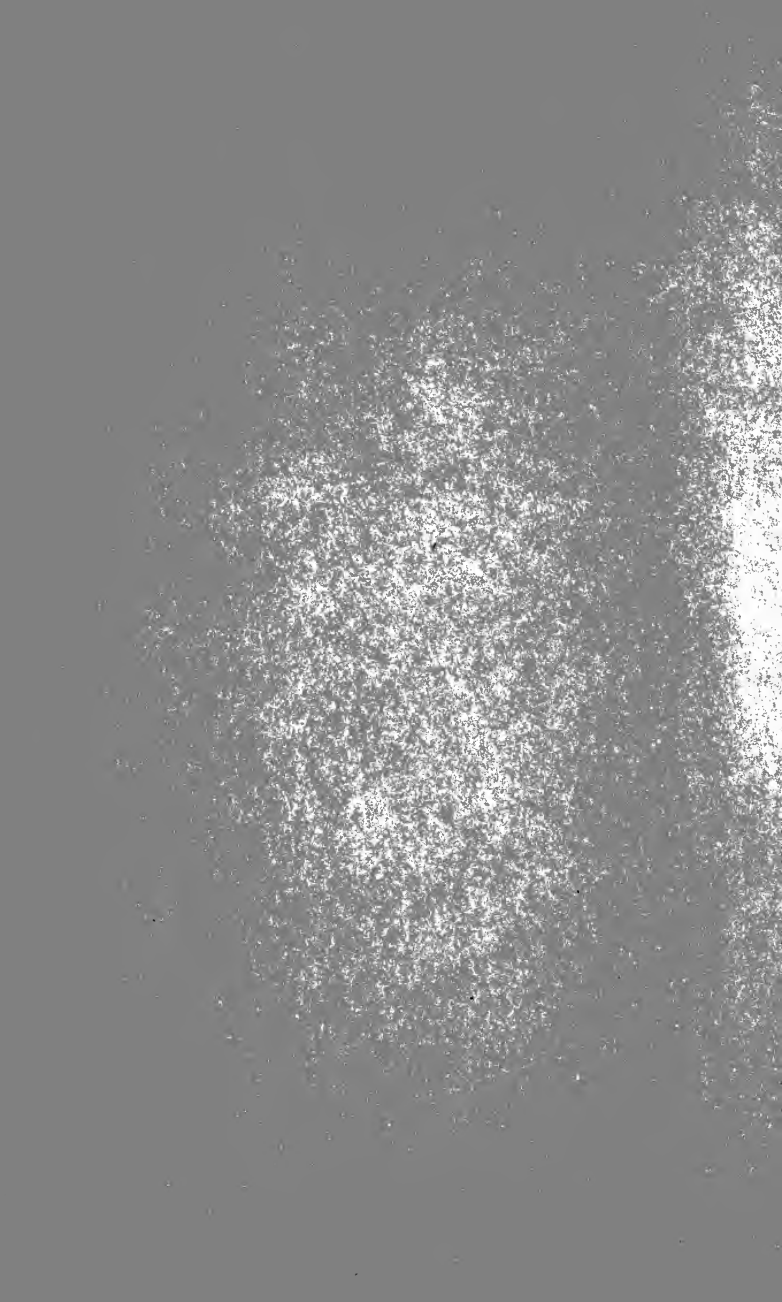


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THE LAUGHING MUSE



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ARTHUR GUTERMAN



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THE LAUGHING MUSE

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M-Q

TO YOU
ABSENTEE

FATE, THE JESTER

*The planets are bells on his motley,
He fleers at the stars in their state,
He banterers the suns burning hotly—
The Jester whose nickname is Fate.*

*The lanterns that kindle their rays with
The comets, are food for his mirth;
But, oh, how he laughs as he plays with
His mad little bauble, the Earth!*

*He looks on the atomies crowding
The face of our pitiful ball;
His form in the nebulæ shrouding,
He chuckles, unnoted of all*

*The valorous puppets that chatter
Superbly of Little and Great.
A flip of his finger would shatter
The dreams of these "Masters of Fate"—*

*He laughs at their strivings and rages
And tosses the murmuring sphere
To bowl through the zodiac-stages
That measure the groove of a Year.*

*He laughs as he trips up the maddest
Who scramble for power and place,
But laughs with the bravest and gladdest—
Fate's comrades, who laugh in his face;*

*Who laugh at themselves and their troubles
Whatever the beaker they quaff;
Who, laughing at Vanity's bubbles,
Forget not to love as they laugh;*

*Who laugh in the teeth of disaster,
Yet hope through the darkness to find
A road past the stars to a Master
Of Fate in the vastness behind.*

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GREAT ADVENTURES

THE QUEST OF THE RIBBAND

LORD RONALD was lord of a high domain
(He dwelt on the eighteenth floor).
His bride was the Beauteous Lady Jane,
A rose-colored robe she wore.

A boudoir cap o' the velvet fine
Lay soft on her tresses' gold.
She read the Advertisements line for line
To know what the Papers told:

*Of laces at Macy's, of thimbles at Gimbel's, of urns
at Stern's and churns at Hearn's, of axes at Saks's,
gold eagels at Siegel's, rubber heels at O'Neill's, fur
mittens like Peary's at Mr. McCreery's, and silver
salt-shakers at John Wanamaker's.*

“Now busk thee and boun thee, Lord Ronald!”
she cried;

“Away to the Bargain Sale



And fetch me a Bānd o' the Silk o' Pride
O' the hue o' the lilac pale!

“A Silken Band o' the width o' my hand
And rilled as the water clear;
Of yards full three its length shall be,
And its shade—like the Sample, here!”

The Sample he took from her fingers white,
He kissed her with kisses four,
And hied him away—oh, the Hardy Knight!
To the Gate o' the Mammoth Store.

To him in the rush o' that Awesome Place
Where gaping and dumb he stood,
A Floor-Walker ambled with dainty grace
And questioned him what he would.

Quoth Ronald, “Thou Floor-Walker great and
grand,
A Word in thy Pearly Ear:
Now where shall I get me a Silken Band
O' the shade o' the Sample here?”

[4]

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He patted himself on the nut-brown hair,
That Floor-Walker bright and brave;
He pointed his Thumb to the marble stair
And said, with a Gracious Wave:

*“Third aisle, right; down one flight; elevator;
escalator; eighth floor, west; trousers pressed; second
turning; wood-burning; shipping-clerk; fancy-work;
straight ahead; cake and bread; past rest-room;
near guest-room; photo-mounter; Ribbon-counter!”*

“Gramércy!” him answered Lord Ronald then,
And turned on his heel full swift,
And battled his way to that iron pen
Which Englishmen call “The Lift.”

While up through the glimmering shaft they sped
As fast as a Shooting Star,
He spake to the Youth o’ the Woolly Head
That governed the Iron Car:

“Say thou o’ the Cap that is brightly bound
Wi’ Braid o’ the Golden Fleece,

Oh, where may a Ribband o' Silk be found
That's like to my Sample Piece?"

The Galliard that governed the speeding Car
From out of his dream awoke.
He halted the Cage wi' a grinding jar,
He opened his lips and spoke:

"Mind the door! Eighth floor!—Iron-heaters, carpet-beaters; negligées, lacquer trays; princesse slips, ostrich tips; curtain-poles, bolster-rolls; Brussels nets, shaving-sets; ticket-punches, boxed lunches; office dials, graded vials; pillow-shams, smoked hams; silver gauze, rabbit paws; riding-crops, kitchen mops; opera scores, cedar oars; menu-holders, bill-folders; wax matches, window-catches; music chimes, pickled limes; paper pencils, pattern stencils; powder-jars, fine cigars; printing-presses, party dresses; p'rambulators, over-gaiters, nutmeg-graters, indicators; champagne-nippers, copper dippers, wire-clippers, carpet slippers; couches, pouches; broilers, oilers; puzzles, muzzles; biggins, piggins; pins, tins; nibs, bibs; chains, canes; balls, shawls; dotted veils, percales, wooden pails, Special Sales: New

books, view books; sets of Gibbon's, SILK RIBBONS!"

Now halted Lord Ronald and wavered long,
But thought on his Dame's behest;
And forth through the whirl of the jostling throng
He fared on his knightly Quest.

He sought for that Ribband of lilac hue
Desired of his queenly Bride.
Unswerving he held to his Purpose true,
For nothing he turned aside,

Though sirens expanded their Golden Smiles
To dazzle the Daring Man
Where hither and yon in the tangled aisles
Were Magical Scrolls which ran:

*"Rices, spices—lowest prices!" "Lamps, guimpes
— trading - stamps!" "Braids, brocades — highest
grades!" "Waists — assorted — just imported!"
"Fancy collars—seven dollars!" "Caps for nurses
—suit all purses!" "Pure confections—choice selec-
tions!" "Water - wings, garden - swings; baby-*

*wagons, crystal flagons; herbariums, aquariums;
thermometers, barometers; zoetropes, microscopes,
braided ropes, envelopes; stocks, blocks, frocks,
clocks; mixing-bowls, casseroles!"*

Right onward he pressed to a Counter, dressed
Wi' Ribbands of every shade;
And he was aware of a Maiden there
Which spake to another Maid.

But still as she chattered, that Maiden young,
And settled her combs aright,
"Now hearken, O Maid o' the Lively Tongue,"
Cried Ronald, the Hardy Knight!

"For fain would I buy wi' the Silver due,
Or else wi' the gude red Gold,
A Ribband o' Silk o' the lilac hue
That's like to the Shred I hold."

She daunted the Knight wi' a Vacant Glare
As though he were far away.
She palsied his lips wi' a Stony Stare
While ever she said her say:

“Sez I, sez you, sez they, sez he; sez I to her, sez she to me. Sez I to him, ‘We got to part!’ ‘Oh, Girlie, ain’t you got no heart?’ sez he, so sad, I nearly cried. He’d took her for a auto-ride—that Sadie! Ain’t she got a nerve! Sez I to him, ‘You don’t deserve—’ Sez he, ‘Just give a man a chance!’ Sez I, ‘You goin’ to the dance?’ Sez I to him, sez he to me; sez you, sez they, sez I, sez she.”

Lord Ronald was stout, Lord Ronald was hale,
Lord Ronald was bold, forby;
His gauntlet he set on the counter-rail;
He vaulted that Counter high!

The Ribbands, he rummaged them To and Fro,
He scattered them Fro and To,
Till he found in its wrapping as white as snow
The Ribband of lilac hue.

Then yards full three wi’ his Snickersnee
He cut of that Ribband gay;
On the Counter he told its Weight in Gold
And carried the Prize away;—

Away from the Damsel of Cold Disdain,
Away from the Mammoth Store.
And he and the Beauteous Lady Jane
Lived happily ever more.

STRICTLY GERM-PROOF

THE Antiseptic Baby and the Prophylactic Pup
Were playing in the garden when the Bunny gam-
boled up;

They looked upon the Creature with a loathing
undisguised;—

It wasn't Disinfected and it wasn't Sterilized.

They said it was a Microbe and a Hotbed of
Disease;

They steamed it in a vapor of a thousand-odd
degrees;

They froze it in a freezer that was cold as Banished
Hope

And washed it in permanganate with carbolated
soap.

In sulphureted hydrogen they steeped its wiggly
ears;

They trimmed its frisky whiskers with a pair of
hard-boiled shears;

They donned their rubber mittens and they took
it by the hand
And 'lected it a member of the Fumigated Band.

There's not a Micrococcus in the garden where
they play;

They bathe in pure iodoform a dozen times a day;
And each imbibes his rations from a Hygienic
Cup—

The Bunny and the Baby and the Prophylactic
Pup.

THE LEGEND OF THE FIRST CAM-U-EL

AN ARABIAN APOLOGUE

ACROSS the sands of Syria,
Or, possibly, Algeria,
Or some benighted neighborhood of barrenness and
drouth,
There came the Prophet Sam-u-el
Upon the Only Cam-u-el—
A bumpy, grumpy Quadruped of discontented
mouth.

The atmosphere was glutinous;
The Cam-u-el was mutinous;
He dumped the pack from off his back; with
horrid grunts and squeals
He made the desert hideous;
With strategy perfidious
He tied his neck in curlicues, he kicked his paddy
heels.

Then quoth the gentle Sam-u-el,
"You rogue, I ought to lam you well!
Though zealously I've shielded you from every
grief and woe,

It seems, to voice a platitude,
You haven't any gratitude.
I'd like to hear what cause you have for doing
thus and so!"

To him replied the Cam-u-el,
"I beg your pardon, Sam-u-el.
I know that I'm a Reprobate, I know that I'm a
Freak;

But, oh! this utter loneliness!
My too-distinguished Onliness!
Were there but other Cam-u-els I wouldn't be
Unique."

The Prophet beamed beguilingly.
"Aha," he answered, smilingly,
"You feel the need of company? I clearly under-
stand.

We'll speedily create for you
The corresponding mate for you—
Ho! presto, change-o, dinglebat!"—he waved a
potent hand,

And, lo! from out Vacuity
A second Incongruity,
To wit, a Lady Cam-u-el was born through magic
art.

Her structure anatomical,
Her form and face were comical;
She was, in short, a Cam-u-el, the other's counter-
part.

As Spaniards gaze on Aragon,
Upon that Female Paragon
So gazed the Prophet's Cam-u-el, that primal
Desert Ship.

A connoisseur meticulous,
He found her that ridiculous
He grinned from ear to auricle *until he split his lip!*

Because of his temerity
That Cam-u-el's posterity
Must wear divided upper lips through all their
solemn lives!

A prodigy astonishing
Reproachfully admonishing
Those wicked, heartless married men who ridicule
their wives.

A PROVERBIAL TRAGEDY

THE Rolling Stone and the Turning Worm
And the Cat that Looked at a King
Set forth on the Road that Leads to Rome—
For Youth will have its Fling,
The Goose will lay the Golden Eggs,
The Dog must have his Day,
And Nobody locks the Stable Door
Till the Horse is stol'n away.

But the Rolling Stone, that was never known
To Look before the Leap
Plunged down the hill to the Waters Still
That run so dark, so deep;
And the leaves were stirred by the Early Bird
Who sought his breakfast where
He marked the squirm of the Turning Worm—
And the Cat was Killed by Care!

THE HAT

It was a Gallant blithe and gay
That walked the City Street;
The Street, ywot, was hight "Broadway,"
The Gallant, "Master William Gray."
He sought an Inn, yclept "Café,"
Because he wished to eat.

He swung the Door with mickle Joy
And entered in thereat,
When came a Little Blackguard Boy
With Buttons all of Brass Alloy,
Which, much to Master Gray's Annoy,
Essayed to Check his Hat.

The pretty Hat! 'twas made of Fur,
It bore a Ribband Bow;
'Twas soft and smooth as Miniver;
That gentle Hat it seemed to purr;
And Master Gray with strong Demur
Refused to let it go.

“Thou shalt not have the Hat, pardee!
That rests upon my Brow;
A Hat it is of High Degree,
I’ve worn it both by Land and Sea,
And in its Youth it sheltered me,
And I’ll protect it now!”

Yet strove that Boy with Might and Main
And showed a Screed of Rules
Where “Check your Hat!” was written plain
And eke, “All Guests must drink Champagne.”
Quoth Master Gray in High Disdain,
“Such Laws are made for Fools!”

“Thou’dst check my Hat, forsooth?—I know
Right well the ‘why’ and ‘whence’!—
That when I boun myself to go
Thou’dst brush it hard, *mon beau chapeau*,
And smirk, and smile, and lout full low
To cozen me of Pence!”

But now the Host a strong Array
Of Waiters mustered there,

Which muttered, "Lout!" and "Country Jay!"
"Where wouldst thou hang thy Hat?" scoffed
they.

Replied this Gallant, blithe and gay,
"I' faith, beneath my Chair!"

They called the Watch with lusty Shout:
The City Watch renowned,
With Fire-lads, a sturdy Rout,
And Train-bands, too, came bustling out,
And all to tame the Stubborn Lout
Which sternly held his Ground.

"Give up the Hat," now swelled the Cry,
"As it is meet ye should!"

Whereto this Gallant made Reply,
"Come One, come All, this Hat shall fly
From its firm Base as soon as I!"

And there the Matter stood

Until Our People, Arms in Hand,
Uprose! Their wild Debates
And Tumults moved our Statesmen bland
To change the Code which rules the Land—

The Constitution great and Grand
Of These United States!

They framed a Law, those Statesmen good,
In Congress as they sat:
“Hereafter be it understood
That None that seeks an Inn for Food
Need Check his Headpiece, Cap, or Hood,
Which is to say, his Hat.”

Then chant the Praise, with joyous Din,
Of dauntless Master Gray,
Which braved the Terrors of that Inn,
The Hat-boy's Scowl, the Waiters' Grin,
And kept his Hat through Thick and Thin
Upon that Famous Day!

A TROPICAL TRAGEDY

AN Agile Ambulating Alligator

Observed upon the bank one sultry eve,

A Patronizing Prestidigitator

With *positively* nothing up his sleeve.

The Ravenous Reptilian Alligator

Remarked, "It must be deuced hot in town!"

And, winking at a Passing Legislator,

He gulped the Prestidigitator down.

Alas! the Portly Prestidigitator

Was garnished with his Implements of Art—

A Wand, a Patent Lightning Calculator,

A Rabbit and a Necromantic Chart.

Such Objects in the Saurian's Equator

Could hardly fail to put him out of trim;

In fact, the Late-repenting Alligator

Acknowledged that they disagreed with him.

And thus a Drear, Dyspeptic Alligator
Is stretched upon the Silicated Sands;
A Predigested Prestidigitator
Is what his Constitution now demands.

THE QUEST OF THE CAR

AN AUTO-BUY-O-GRAPHIC BALLAD

“Now whither and whither, Lord Ronald so gay,
And whither so free and so far?”

“I haste to the Bounds o’ the Great White Way
To choose me a Motor-Car.”

“And what of the Car that ye mean to buy—
Its name and its Pedigree?”

“Oh, ask of the Wind in the sounding Sky,
But ask not that of me!

“For it may be a Leal or a Pupmobile,
A Krag or a Biff-McClung;—
For many, ye ken, are the Motor Men
And marvelous glib of Tongue.

“It may be a Czar or a Kwiggle-Kar,
Or else, for aught I know,

A Reinhardt-Fritz or a Dunderblitz
Or a Clement-Rochefoucauld.

ROCK FERCOE

“For vowed am I to a Mission high—
To search from East to West
All Lands that are till I find the Car
Which is approved the Best.

“For I have sworn to my Lady Jane
By her milk-white hand so small
That none will I take for her sweet Sake,
Until I have seen them all!”

Lord Ronald was come to a proud Garage
That stood by a dismal Fen;
And there, by the Sound of their Persiflage,
He knew were the Motor Men.

And one there was with the Eagle Eye,
The Face of the Hatchet True,
The Shell-rimmed Glass and the Bulgar Tie
And the Collar edged with blue.

Oh, Rubies four had the Ring he wore,
His Coat had the Latest Shape;

And his Cheek, shaved clean by a Razor keen,
Was the Cheek of the Brazen Ape.

He haled the Knight by the Fingers wan
To where with Radiance crowned,
A Golden Car was throned upon
A Turning-table round.

Oh, twice he bowed and thrice he bowed
Before that Golden Chaise;
Then full and strong and loud and long
He sang its Hymn of Praise:

“Approach! Approach! redoubted Knight! Approach, oh, lucky Neophyte, and view upon this wooden Stage the Wonder of the Horseless Age; the King, the Ace, the Jack and Queen of all that runs by Gasoline; Invention’s Incandescent Star, the Unexamined Kwiggle-Kar! The Motor, first: I wish to state the Cylinders (they number eight with Tungsten Valves) are cast en bloc; and steady, steady as a Clock this Shaft of Higginbotham Steel propels the Patent Caisson Wheel which cannot slip in Mud or Mire because it wears the Skidmore Tire. Observe the Sweep from Front to Rear!—

the Spiral Bevel Axle Gear, the Floating Axle, Intake Pipe, the Carburetor (Ogham type)! Can Future Ages say too much about our Multimetall Clutch—the Brake that never disappoints, the Banning Universal Joints? Remark our patent ‘Sudden Stop’! Oh, see our Spanish Leather Top, the easy-swinging Pinchless Door, the Turkish Rug upon the Floor! The Cushions, neatly tilted there, are stuffed with Hand-picked Monkey Hair. The Roland Horn—the Oval Springs—the Case for Goggles, Gloves, and Things — Ignition — Circulation — Splash — Transmission — Spark Plug — Bumper — Dash — Magneto — Radiator — Feed — Control Equipment — Starter — Speed!—”

He gasped and he clutched at the Atmosphere,
He fell to the Parquet Floor.
Lord Ronald bequeathed him a Silent Tear
And went to the Shop Next Door.

“Come hither!” he cried to the Man in Charge,
“O thou of the Stately Mien,
And tell of the Merits both small and large
Possessed of thy Buzz machine!

“For far have I ridden and far must ride
Abroad on my Knightly Quest
To find, of all Cars in the World so wide,
That Car which is proved the Best.”

The Motor Man rose from a Mission Bench
That was of the Quartered Oak,
And, beating the Air with a Monkey Wrench,
His rhythmical Piece he spoke:

*“They brag—yet do not heed howe’er these others
boast of Safety, Smoothness, Speed, or Trips from
Coast to Coast. For even if they show a Vase for
Silken Flowers, they have not—well they know!—
a WIND SHIELD like to ours! All others in the
Field lament: ‘Alack, alas! we cannot match this
Shield which is not made of Glass’! ’Tis cut of
Crystal clear that may not crack or dim; who has
it need not fear, for naught can injure him. Be-
hold! you set it straight or slant it as you please,
at seven, twenty-eight, or forty-five Degrees! It
stops the Icy Blast, repels the Dusty Gust; it makes
the Car run fast, it keeps the Parts from Rust. It
keeps the Engine clean, it keeps the Tires sound, it*

*saves the Gasoline, it makes the Wheels go round.
With deep, despairing Groans our Rivals have to
yield! Then buy the Car that owns this Ne Plus
Ultra Shield!"*

Sore tempted was Ronald, but heaved a Sigh
And quoth as he left that Hall:
"Nay, never a Motor I dare to buy
Until I have seen them all!"

And many and fair, aye, many and rare
Were the Cars that his Eyes had seen
When he entered a Store with a Rosewood Floor—
A Place for a Royal Queen.

Each Lamp that glowed in that bright Abode
Was pure as a Maiden's Tear;
The Curtains that rolled from their Rods of Gold
Were pink as a Bashful Ear.

Of Onyx rich were the Columns, which
Were smooth as the Watered Silk,
And lighted through with the faint, far Blue
That shines on the City Milk.

And there in the Shade of its Rose-leaf Hood,
At rest in a Corner snug,
A Car that was built for a Fairy stood,
Its Wheels on a Persian Rug.

A Squire rose up from a Velvet Seat
And beamed on the Worthy Knight,
And chanted his Tale in a Voice as sweet
As the Trill of a Lark in Flight:

“Rest, happy Traveler! Gaze upon the Car that’s called the Oberon. A Beam of Light, a wingèd Flower, the Car that moves by Secret Power. What need to praise its Perfect Parts? Address it gently, and it starts. Just speak to it in kindly wise, and swiftly, softly, off it flies. Without a Murmur, Creak, or Jar, as silent as a Shooting Star it drifts along the Fragrant Miles, and when it sees a Hill it smiles! A Thing of Joy and Love and Song, it sweeps along, along, along, transporting them that ride within afar from Trouble, Toil, and Sin!”

He turned on Lord Ronald his Eye so brown
And paused in his lilting Lay.

But Ronald had fallen adown, adown,
A-swooning in Bliss away!

They gathered him up and they bore him home—
Six proper young Men and tall.
He opened one Eye as the Stair they clomb
And sighed: "I have seen them all!"

They laid him to rest in his downy Bed
To comfort his weary Brain;
And tender and cool on his fevered Head
Was the Hand of his Lady Jane.

And long did he fare, in the Realms of Dream,
Anew on his Knightly Quest.
And long did he ponder the Mighty Theme—
"Which Car shall be held the Best?"

He pondered the Words of the Motor Men,
Their Reasons of Pith and Force;
He visioned those Glorious Cars, and then
He rose and bought a Horse!

A TRACT FOR AUTOS

COME, all you little Runabouts
And gather round my Knee;
I'll tell you of a Touring Car
As bad as bad could be:

It worked its Klaxon overtime
To make a Horrid Noise
And thought it Fun to muss up Hens
And little Girls and Boys.

It used to blow its Tires out
To hear its Owner swear,
And loved to balk on Trolley Tracks
To give his Friends a Scare.

At last this naughty Touring Car
Got drunk on Too Much Oil,
And went a-boiling up the Road
As hard as it could boil,

And went a-plunging, tumbling down
A dreadful, dark Ravine;
And there it burns and burns and burns
In smelly Gasoline!

Another little Touring Car
Was very, very good;
It always minded Brake and Wheel,
And never splashed its Hood.

It wouldn't skid, nor anger Folks
By giving them a Shove,
But cooed as gently through its Horn
As any Sucking Dove.

It never grew Unmannerly
To Market-Cart or Dray,
But whispered, "Please," and, "Thank you,
Sir!"
To those that blocked its Way.

It never scattered Bolts and Plugs
About the Countryside,

But did its Level Best to be
Its Owner's Joy and Pride.

So, when 'twas Time to yield its Place
To Models fresh and new,
This lovely little Touring Car
Developed Planes and flew!

THE TALE OF A DAGHESTAN RUG

“Whatever their type of ornamentation may be, a deep and complicated symbolism, originating in Babylon and possibly India, pervades every denomination of Oriental carpets.”—SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD.

STRANGE Stories of their Simple Lives
Do Oriental Maids and Wives
Embroider, so the Dealers tell us,
In Symbols on the Rugs they sell us.

Then read the Record woven thus
By Zillah of the Caucasus,
Deciphered by my Friend, Sardjeenian,
A Most Reliable Armenian.

Among the Hills of Daghestan
That frown upon the Wayside Khan,

Her Father's Hospitable Villa,—
The Fairest of her People, Zillah,

Composed, with skilful Twist and Tug,
An *Odjaklik*, or Hearthside Rug;—

Enweaving there in those Queer Symbols
That look like Rolling-pins and Thimbles,

Her simple Joys and Hopes and Fears,
The Story of her Maiden Years.

With Entertainment to provide her
A Long-tailed Lambkin played beside her

And cropped the Mead and quaffed the Stream;—
A Cherished Pet with Fleece of Cream

But lately rescued from a Leopard
By Kurdish Kar, the Gentle Shepherd.

Along the Road from Erivan
A Warrior with Yataghan

And other Social Incidentals
Au fait among the Orientals,—

In Cutaway Capote arrayed,
Approached to woo the Mountain Maid.

“My Name,” said he, “Resplendent Zillah,
Is Ali Abdul Hassan Billah!

“I come, perhaps you understand,
To beg that Precious Gift, you Hand.

“Behold! I faint from Sheer Emotion!
Ah, let me prove my Heart’s Devotion!—

“Assign me any Awful Task;
I vow to do whate’er you ask!”

The Maiden lisped: “Your Offer’s handsome
(I know you’re worth a Prince’s Ransom);

“I *may* decide to be your Wife,—
But search me first the Tree of Life

“Which blooms through all the Seasons’ Changes
Among our bleak Caucasian Ranges,

“And cull for me the Mystic Pear
That you will find a-growing there.

“But let me warn you, Ardent Stranger,
You’ll find the Errand full of Danger!

“For first you needs must bring to Terms
The Three-horned Birds and Hunchbacked
Worms

“That lurk among the Giant Boulders
To prey on Indiscreet Beholders.

“Then must you slay a Fiercer yet—
The wild Constricting Dragonette

“That dwells beyond the Andi River.
And last,—oh, how the Mountains quiver

“If he but gives his Tail a Whisk!—
The dread Tri-cornered Basilisk!”

Low bowed the Chief of Haughty Bearing
And galloped to the Northward, swearing

To battle, conquer, seek and find.
(And Kar the Shepherd trudged behind.)

Right gallantly adventured Ali
Through Rugged Pass and Gloomy Valley.

His Sword divided into Thirds
The Hunchbacked Worms and Three-horned
Birds.

Against the Serpentine Constrictor
He likewise proved a Noble Victor.

And then he challenged, brave and brisk,
The dread Tri-cornered Basilisk,

Which, pausing not to scrutinate him,
Unlocked its Grisly Jaws, and ate him!

Oh, Fatal Meal!—Upon its Side
The Poisoned Creature writhed, and died!

Now Kar the Shepherd, sadly rueing,
Surveyed the Tragic Scene till, viewing

The Tree of Life unguarded there,
He gathered in the Mystic Pear.

Thus, laden down with Fate's Providings,
The Precious Fruit and Sorry Tidings,

He lifted up his Feet and ran
And told the Belle of Daghestan.

A Maiden who has lost a Lover
Should not too rapidly recover;

Still, Ali, that Unlucky Man,
Left Widows Five in Erivan;

And so the Philosophic Zillah
Resignedly remarked, "Bismillah!"

And since the Foes of Basilisks
Are not the Best Insurance Risks,—

She vowed no more her Hopes to jeopard
And married Kar, the Gentle Shepherd.

A PURE MATHEMATICIAN

LET Poets chant of Clouds and Things
In lonely attics!
A Nobler Lot is his, who clings
To Mathematics.

Sublime he sits, no Worldly Strife
His Bosom vexes,
Reducing all the Doubts of Life
To Y's and X's.

And naught to him's a Primrose on
The river's border;
A Parallelepipedon
Is more in order.

Let Zealots vow to do and dare
And right abuses!
He'd rather sit at home and square
Hypotenuses.

Along his straight-ruled paths he goes
Contented with 'em,
The only Rhythm that he knows,
A Logarithm!

THE POEM ON SPRING

GREAT Ali, the Sultan, I've heard—
 (Please attend to my proem!),
Was shrewd as the serpent—aye, Solon to him
 was a dunce;
 Who else could repeat every word
 Of a sermon, a poem,
Or any old thing that was spoken before him but
 once?

 While Eben al Hamid, his short
 Ethiopic attendant
And factum factotum, they say could repeat in a
 trice
 The plea of a lawyer in court
 For a guilty defendant,
Or President's Message (perhaps), if he heard it
 but twice.

Whenever a bard would intone
 An original sonnet

(For Sultans, you know, are the prey of the metrical bore),

“That’s ancient,” the Ruler would groan,
As Mehitable’s bonnet!

Now listen, and see for yourself that I’ve heard it before.”

Whereat he would echo each phrase
With precision emphatic;

And Eben, in turn, would repeat, never missing a rhyme;

The poet would slink in a daze
To his sorrowful attic,

While Eben and Ali would laugh for a week at a time.

Then Ali proclaimed in his pride:

“For reward I will measure

The weight of that poem in gold which is proved to be new.”

And many a balladist tried

For that fistful of treasure;

But penniless, puzzled, and shamed every singer withdrew.

At length came a minstrel of guile
 (From the West, so I fear me);
He tinkled his merry guitar and addressed him
to sing:

 “Your Highness,” quoth he with a smile,
 “Will it please ye to hear me?
I’ve something that’s Purely Unique—’tis a Poem
on Spring.—

 “A Genuine Triumph of Mind
 That is urgently needed
By seventeen best magazines. Have I leave to
begin?”

 “Proceed,” sighed the Sultan, resigned;
 And the Minstrel proceeded
To startle the court with this Chant of Original Sin:

 “’Tis Spring on the lily-white leas
 Of the Forest of Arden!
'Tis Spring! and the blossoms appear and the
leveret plays;
 The butterflies drift on the breeze
 To the elf-haunted garden;
The birdies of meadow and grove are rehearsing
their lays.

“‘Bo-peep! Hullychee!’ sings the Flick;
‘Korry-boo!’ moans the Chitter;
‘Quee-boggle-chee-pilli-moran!’ sobs the Killi-
koloo.

‘Ping-pong! Watchi-toodle-kerwick!’
All the Merimees twitter.
The Niblick avers, ‘Kalli-bosh, taradiddle, koroo.’

“‘Go-dum, bally-hoosh!’ is the note
Of the Ichthyosaurus.
‘Notorum-dorando!’ the blithe Hippocampus re-
plies;
‘Chim-chim-orizaba-pelote!’
Rings the jubilant chorus
Of sweet Pterodactyls that wing the cerulean skies.

“‘The Kiddle observes to his mate,
‘Borum-ago-majellum,
Elan, rododacktylos bree.’ While the somnolent
Bruff
Ascends to the heavenly gate
Chanting, ‘Ho! Parabellum
Enteuthen——’” “Help! Stop! Oh, my head!”
cried the Sultan; “Enough!

“I’ve echoed queer words, I admit,
All your brotherhood downing;
But who could repeat these uncivilized sounds you
have made!

Your poem should make quite a hit
With the students of Browning—
So bring in your Manuscript, friend, and the gold
shall be weighed.”

The Poet went forth, and returned
With his holiday sash on,
Propelling a cart with a load of the heaviest brick
On which he had graven and burned,
Babylonian fashion,
The “words” of his poem!—a mean, reprehensible
trick!

The Sultan, demurring, ’tis true,
Made an end by bestowing
The weight of that poem in gold,—a prodigious
expense.

And this have I sung unto you
For the purpose of showing
*That even Spring Poets may manifest hard common
sense!*

TRUE SPRING

WHAT, spring, because a day is fair,
Because a brook is flowing,
Because a maple here and there
A flash of red is showing,

Because the frost has lost a tooth,
And ice-packs jar and splinter?
You call it "spring" because, forsooth,
It simply isn't winter!

No, spring has gladder signs than these;
I'll know that spring is coming
When lilacs blow, when velvet bees
In apple-boughs are humming,

When softer shadows fall aslant
The fragrant meadow mazes:
I'll call it spring when I can plant
One foot on seven daisies.

AN ADIRONDACK IDYLL

'T WAS August; all the Verdant Vales
With Marigolds were decked;
The Groves were loud with Nightingales—
Or Birds to That Effect;

And Squirrels frolicked High and Low
While, from the Waters dim
Ambitious Troutlets leaped, to show
That they were in the Swim.

The Owl observed to Bashful Doves,
Too shy to bill and coo,
“Now, don't mind *me*, my Little Loves,
Proceed: To wit, to woo.”

Beneath the Birch, beneath the Spruce,
Perchance beneath the Pine,
A Maiden walked, a Fair Recluse,
The lovely Angeline.

The Daughter of a Mountain Guide,
She dwelt beside the Mere;
An Orphan since her Father died—
Mistaken for a Deer.

So, honoring in Memorie
Her Late Pro-gen-i-tor,
She idolized the Deer that he
Had been Mistaken For.

The Pretty Pet she often fed
With Caramels or Grass,
And Much the Antlered Quadruped
Esteemed the Forest Lass.

To her upon the Woodland Way
With Pleadings New and Strange
A Ranger came—their Wedding-Day
He begged her to Arrange.

But, oh! the Scornful Maiden gave
Her Answer brief and tart:
“My Deer, whom Father died to save,
Possesses all my Heart!”

A Horrid Oath that Ranger took!
(He swore beneath his Breath).
"A Rival shall I tamely brook?
Morbleu! Carr-rramba! 'sdeath!

"Her 'Dear'!—Gadzooks, I know the Man!
That lovelorn Guide shall die!"
And home the Ranger stalked, to plan
His Crime and Alibi.

That Night he watched beside her Cot;—
The Bushes cracked and swayed;—
Out rang the Deadly Rifle Shot!
Out rushed the Woeful Maid!

"Ah, Wasteful Hunter!" rose her Wails,
"To slay this Deer of mine,
All Out of Season, which entails
A Hundred-Dollar Fine!"

"Not so, not so, my Love, my Fair,"
The Ranger straight replied,
"For I (as Witnesses shall swear)
Mistook him for a Guide!

“Since I Mistook him for a Guide,
Miss, take me for your Dear!”—
The Maiden blushed, the Maiden sighed,
The Maiden deigned to hear.

And when upon the Pair the Priest
Had said his Ben-i-son,
I grieve to say, their Wedding Feast
Was mainly Ven-i-son!

A BUNGALOW

By all the winds of Summer-time! I'll seek the
nymph again
Who wakes the grass between the stones to move
the hearts of men,
Who blows a playful kiss or two of dandelion-
down,
And sends the gipsy butterfly to lure a lad from
town.

I'm going to build a bungalow,
A bing-bang bungalow,
A creeper-curtained bungalow, where hemlocks
idly dream.

I'm going to build a bungalow,
A bing-bang bungalow,
A cedar-shingled bungalow beside a mountain
stream.

The beams shall be of maple wood, the floors of
healthful pine;

The spruce, with rough and resined bark, shall
wall this house of mine;

While round about, of ample breadth, a rustic
porch shall run

Below a birchen canopy against the checkered sun.

I'm going to build a bungalow,

A bing-bang bungalow,

A forest-fragrant bungalow with room for three
or four.

I'm going to build a bungalow,

A bing-bang bungalow,

A zephyr-haunted bungalow beside a rippled
shore.

With every quick-eyed featherling that loves the
friendly wood,

With all the gentle furry folk I'll dwell in brother-
hood.

My castle roof shall bear the proof of crystal-
arrowed rain,

And Peace shall be my seneschal, and Love my
chatelaine.

I'm going to build a bungalow,

A bing-bang bungalow,

An open-hearted bungalow devoid of bolts and
bars.

I'm going to build a bungalow,

A bing-bang bungalow,

A tranquil little bungalow to rest beneath the
stars.

DORLAN'S HOME-WALK

THE ninth; last half; the score was tied,
The Hour was big with Fate,
For Neal had fanned and Kling had flied
When Dorlan toed the plate.

And every rooter drew a breath
And rose from where he sat,
For Weal or Woe, or Life or Death
Now hung on Dorlan's bat.

The Pitcher scowled; the Pitcher flung
An inshoot, swift and queer;
But Dorlan whirled his wagon-tongue
And smote the leathern sphere.

He smote the ball with might and main,
He drove it long and low,
And firstward like a railway train
He sped to beat the throw.

He reached first base with time to spare
 (The throw went high and wide),
But what a tumult rent the air
 When "Safe!" the Umpire cried.

"What!" shrieked the Pitcher, lean and tall,
 "What!" roared the Catcher stout,
"Wha-at!" yelled the Basemen one and all,
 "Ye're off! the man is out!"

The Shortstop swore, the Catcher pled,
 They waved their arms around.
The Umpire shook his bullet-head
 And sternly held his ground,

Though in the wild-eyed Fielders ran
 To tear him limb from limb
Or else to tell that erring man
 Just what they thought of *him*.

The Basemen left the bases clear
 And came to urge their case;—
So Dorlan yawned and scratched his ear
 And strolled to second base.

“Safe? Safe?” the Pitcher hissed, “Ye’re blind!”
And breathed a Naughty Word;
While Dorlan hitched his belt behind
And rambled on to third.

And throats were hoarse and words ran high
And lips were flecked with foam,
As Dorlan scanned the azure sky
And ambled on toward home.

And still he heard in dreamy bliss,
As down the line he came,
The Umpire growl, “Enough o’ this!
He’s safe. Now play the game!”

“All right. Come, boys,” the Pitcher bawled;
“Two out; now make it three!”
When Dorlan touched the plate and drawled,
“Hey! score that run fer me!”

What wrath was there, what bitter talk,
What joy and wild acclaim!
For Dorlan’s peaceful homeward walk
Had won the doubtful game.

Aye, thus the game was lost and won;
So, Athletes, great and small,
If like mischance ye fain would shun
Keep cool, don't kick, play ball.

BASEBALL IN DE PARK

THE Captain of the Neversweats was rooted in
his place,
One foot upon the tattered coat that served for
second base;
His ashen-hued habiliments were padded, hip
and knee
(The Captain of the Neversweats was all of three-
foot-three);
A mighty mitt incased his paw; he spat upon
the same
And chirped, with shouted interludes, the Story
of the Game:

“ ’Twas Sattid’y, a week ago, we played de Busy
Bees;
Dey rung a borrered pitcher in, an’ say! he wuz
de cheése!
De way he handed pretzels out wuz putty near a
crime;

He chucked dis curly inshoot-drop dat fools ye
ev'ry time.

He'd held us down to forty hits, an' t'ings wuz
lookin' blue,

Fer dey had fifty-seven runs, while we had t'irty-
two.

He'd held us down to forty hits, an' runs wuz
mighty rare;

But in de nint' we sized 'im up an' pasted 'im
fer fair.

“Foist, Dumpy Collins found his coives an'
knocked a corkin' fly;

Den Limpy picked a crackerjack an' smashed it
in de eye;

Den Skeeziicks hit de ball a swipe dat lifted off
de lid;

An' Carrots ran de bags fer home, an' cricky!
how he slid!

Dem Bees wuz stiffs! dey couldn't t'row, dey
couldn't ketch at all,

While we wuz playin' fer our lives—we couldn't
miss de ball.

“An’ did we win? Well, did we! Say! Dey
didn’t git a smell.

We chased each udder roun’ de bags—’twuz
like de carrousel.

Why, w’en we put de las’ man out an’ added up
de score

Dey hadn’t only eighty runs, an’ we had ninety-
four!

What! Lick dese lobsters? Sure we kin, at
any time o’ year!

Jes’ watch; we’ll show ye how it’s done. Hi,
Cully! put ’er here!”

A NEW MEXICAN BO-PEEP

NEAR the Llano Estacado
Famed for deeds of wild bravado,

Winsome Maraquita Fancher,
Orphan child of Bill the rancher,

Led her flock of frisky muttoms,
Fed the pretty woolly gluttons—

Lamb and wether, ewe and chilver,¹
Clothed in fleeces bright as silver.

There she rambled, much respected,
Free as air and well protected

By her ram, a big Merino,
Widely known as "Filippino."

¹First appearance of the only rhyme for "silver" in captivity!

Wise he was; the world had schooled him;
Human nature never fooled him.

Maraquita, most acutely,
Took his judgments ab-so-lutely.

Cèsar Gil, a swart vaquero,
Quite the gallant caballero

(Though his legs were slightly bandy),
Rode across the Rio Grande,

Came a-courting Maraquita,
Praising her as "*muy bonita!*"

Humbly bowing, sweetly sighing
False, false vows of love undying.

Filippino left his grazing,
Turned and viewed the scene amazing;

Charged! and, headlong hurtling, fairly
Met the Issue full and squarely.

Cèsar Gil, the dusky dandy,
Soared across the Rio Grande,

Rolling resonant "carr-rrambas!"
Still pursued by mocking lamb-baas.

So it chanced with other wooers
(False deceivers, base pursuers)—

Claude Dulane the turquoise-digger,
Faro Pete the thimble-rigger,

Denbigh Booth the tragic mummer,
Curtis Sharpe the hardware drummer,

Ellis Farnham Walsh of Reno,
Came—and fled from Filippino.

Now appeared a Handsome Stranger,
Rollo Jones, the Texas Ranger,

Bringing lots of love—a heartful!
Brave and true, but gently artful.

First he talked to Filippino,
Talked of poker, whist; and keno,

Cattle, crime, and politicians,
Calming down the Ram's suspicions.

Next, as though to serenade him,
Lively, tuneful airs he played him,—

Ragtime lilt and light fandango;—
Showed him how they dance the tango.

Then he brought, with perfect breeding,
Little gifts of dainty feeding

(Since the grass was growing sparsely)—
Carrots, turnips, beets, and parsley.

Thus the Ranger, true and clever,
Made that Ram his friend for ever.

Well, the rest was bound to follow:
Filippino, leading Rollo,

Trotted up to Maraquita.
Jones now calls her "*mi lindita.*"

Or he *did*, as I remember,
When I saw them, last November,

Eating prime Thanksgiving turkey
At their home in Albuquerque.

THE MEXICAN HAMMOCK

'Twas richly vermilion and flagrantly yellow
When brought from the region of sunlit plateaus,
But, softened by service and restfully mellow,
It swings in the grove where the rivulet flows.
Its ring-bolts are tarnished, its spreaders unvar-
nished;
It sags at an angle of forty degrees;
With needles of balsam its meshes are garnished—
The Mexican Hammock that hangs from the
trees.

The Mexican Hammock,
The grass-woven Hammock,
The trusty old Hammock
That droops from the trees.

When, sick of the city's perpetual riot,
I come for the healing that Silence bestows,

O'ershadowed by green-tasseled curtains of quiet,
It offers a bounteous depth of repose.
So softly allaying and balmily swaying,
It woos with its motion the health-laden breeze
That soon down the River of Dreams I am stray-
ing,
Adrift in the Hammock that hangs from the
trees.

The Mexican Hammock,
The grass-woven Hammock,
The friendly old Hammock
That droops from the trees.

Now crickets are hymning the Night for her
guerdon;
The dewdrops have solaced the half-opened rose.
How deeply it bends with a generous burden!
How sweet are the secrets—that nobody knows!
The words that reveal them, the tokens that
seal them,
The whispers more soft than the murmur of
bees—

The bird shall not learn them, the winds may
not steal them

Away from the Hammock that hangs from the
trees.

The crafty old Hammock,
The blessèd old Hammock,
The match-making Hammock
That droops from the trees.

A LAY OF MASSACHUSETTS BAY

THE world went well; the heavens smiled, com-
placent,

On Massachusetts Bay and parts adjacent;

The Savages, arrayed in skins of beavers,
Had been removed by providential fevers;

The fields were flourishing, and e'en the bearish
Allowed that trade and fisheries were fairish;

The Williamses, the Hutchinsons, the Quakers
And other contumacious trouble-makers,

Convinced by potent arguments, had vanished
(Imprisoned, whipped at cart-tail, hanged or
banished),

When Parson Bondish, strong in exhortation,
Arose to edify the congregation,

Beginning—(not in total self-effacement)—
With some few words of personal abasement.

“Dear Brothers,” quoth the Preacher, “in all
meekness
I come, a child of wrath and sin and weakness—”

“Amen! that’s true!” intoned a rash invader,
Defiance Cock, the surly Indian trader.

“Yea, here I stand,” resumed the scowling
Preacher,
“A Thing of Naught, a miserable creature—”

“Aye,” growled the Trader, “ye were born and
bred so;
’Tis true as Gospel—even if ye said so.”

“A Worm am I!” the Parson thundered, banging
His oaken desk—“A Wretch too bad for hanging!”

“Correct,” cried Cock, despite impending fury,
“As I will gladly prove before a jury.”

Good Bondish clenched both fists; a stout crusader,
He braved Defiance Cock, the Indian trader.

“When I,” he blared, “self-humbled, would have
cleared me
Of Pride of Flesh, thou ventur’st to beard me?”

“I own my faults, I hope to rise above them—
But no one else shall dare to tell me of them!”

Whereat, the Parson rapidly descended—
And then and there the controversy ended,

Stern Bondish preaching hours, unrelenting,
At Cock within the pillory, repenting.

And this is why I dare not tell my story—
For Boston might not think it laudatory;

And why I’ll ever strive to be complacent
Toward Massachusetts Bay and parts adjacent.

THE PILGRIMS' THANKSGIVING FEAST

THE Pilgrims landed, worthy men,
And, saved from wreck on raging seas,
They fell upon their knees, and then
Upon the Aborigines.

In thankfulness they planned a feast
On all the country might afford.
(The grace consumed an hour at least,
Whence rose the phrase, "The festive bored.")

And some through groves of pine and oak
Pursued the doe; and even so
All patriotic Yankee folk
Unceasingly pursue the dough.

They bearded bruin in his lair
Or stalked the stag in forests drear.
Alas! their festal dish was bear,
Or venison—though that was deer.

Still, native viands pleased them most—
The native maize, for that was new;
They ate the native boiled and roast
And even ate the native stew!

THE WISHBONE

ANOTHER fowl had gone the way
That turkeys go, Thanksgiving Day;

In ruins lay the pumpkin pie,
The foaming cider-jug was dry.

The merry guests had left their chairs,
The old in groups, the young in pairs,

And Mark and Prue (if one might look)
Were safe within the ingle-nook.

And Mark and Prue agreed to break
A wishbone, just for friendship's sake—

A wishbone, smooth and polished bright
As best befits the magic rite.

Each wished a wish in undertone;
With thumbs close-pressed they snapped the bone—

And none but Mark heard Prudence laugh
Because she held the larger half;

And only Prudence knew how dark
And hopeless grew the face of Mark.

“Why, Mark!” cried Prue; “since Time began
Who ever saw a six-foot man

“Become so glum and vaporish
Because he’d lost a silly wish!”

“Yes, laugh!” groaned Mark, “for *you* have won!
I’ve lost all joy beneath the sun

“And all the hope I had in life—
I wished that Prue should be my wife.”

She frowned, and then she smiled instead,
And then she tossed her curly head

And laughed outright, that shameless Prue,
“Oh, never mind! I wished that, too!”

A TRUE BILL AGAYNST CHRISTMASSE

I WILL not hear of Christmasse Cheer
Nor Christmasse Bells a-ringing!
A Christmasse Tree I loathe to see,
I'm deaf to Carol-singing.

I will not troll ye Wassail Bowl!
I love no strong Potations,
Nor Yule that brings ye Gatherings
Of Nondescript Relations.

Forbeare to show ye Mistletoe!
All Proper Men disdain it;
Ye Prettie Maid wolde scorn its Aid,
Ye Plaine One sholde not gain it.

Give Pause, give Pause to Santa Claus!
His Course is trulie shocking;
I understand he has a Hande
In Everybodie's Stocking!

Yet, void of Shame, they praise his Name
In Reams of idle Verses,
And call him kind that leaves behind
A Trail of emptie Purses.

Sharp Sorrows lie in Christmasse Pie
Which treble when they heat it.
I have no Use for Christmasse Goose
Nor Cannibals that eat it.

For Ills and Pills and Doctor's Bills
Are scarce a Cause for Laughter;
Ye Tables groan before ye Feaste,
Ye Feasters groan thereafter.

THE STOCKING

I SING of Pieter Dundervelt
In quaint New Amsterdam who dwelt

And loved a maid in beauty's bloom—
Annette DeVries von Schlagenboom.

Like all true lovers, more or less,
Our Piet inclined to bashfulness,

And when he should have pressed his suit
Was silent, speechless, dumb, and mute.

'Twas drawing near that night of nights
When good Saint Nicholas delights

To ride with gifts for old and young,
When backward Pieter found his tongue.

“Oh, will you deign, Annette,” said he,
“To take a Yuletide gift from me?”

Annette, without a thought of ill,
Replied, in Dutch, "Of course I will!"

Saint Nicholas with reindeer sleigh
Had made his rounds and gone his way,

And fair Annette, while others slept,
On tiptoe down the stairway crept

Before the dawn, her only thought
To see what gifts the Saint had brought.

And there a marvel met her eyes!
A stocking, not of common size,

But six feet long and even more
Now hung where hers had hung before,

Beneath the kitchen mantel-shelf,
And snug within was Piet himself!

The situation seemed absurd;
Annette, however, kept her word;

That is, to make the tale complete,
She took her gift and married Piet.

A BRIDGE SCANDAL

UPON the table's cloth of green
The Trey of Diamonds lay;
It lured the Knave; he loved the Queen;
For her he took the Trey.

To him the Queen of Diamonds said,
"Make haste, my darling Jack,
And fly with me!" And off they fled
In spite of all the Pack.

The King pursued; alert and quick,
He slew them with his mace!
And that's the way he turned the Trick,
For no one held the Ace!

HENRY HUDSON'S LOG

WEE anchored safe in Fathoms four
Within a Baye, and did espie
A pleasaunt, many-peopled Shore
With Lodges most amazing hie,

From where some Natives, partlie tamed,
Did come in Shallops nine or ten
To make us Speeches—these were named
“Ye Sons-in-Lawe of Famous Men.”

Ashore wee went, and soon a Band
Appeared, bedecked with Silver Starres,
Which called themselves, I understand,
“Ye Sons of Them Which Fitt in Warres.”

Another Tribe did entertaine
Our Tars at Meat within an Halle,
And they were hight, “Ye Noble Straine
Of Them Which Came Here First of Alle!”

Their Womankind in Bevies Twain
Did make us Cheere with Daunce and Song,
But eyther Group in hie Disdain
Did scorn ye other Lovelie Throng;

Yea, each called other, "Sycophants"
And "Upstarte Crewe!"—Their Rightful Names
Were "Nieces of Ancestral Aunts,"
And "Daughters of Maternal Dames."

Ye "Sons of Irish Pioneers,"
Ye "Native Sons of Foreign Kynges,"
Ye "Sons of Hessian Grenadiers,"
And Sundrie Sons of Other Thynges

About us raised a Goodlie Stir.
A Modest Folk they seemed to mee,
More Vaine of what their Fathers were
Than Proud of what theirselves might bee.

Yet more were there too Low to wear
Grand Coats-of-Arms or courtlie Masks—
An Hoste which found no Time to spare
But stronglie toiled at many Tasks.

I craved of One of Sturdie Mold,
 “What ‘Sons’ bee ye?” With Merrie Face,
“No ‘Sons’!” he cried; “in us behold
 Ye Fathers of ye Coming Race!”

WHITE MAGIC

WHEN tree-toads trill and crickets chirr
And all the marshlands faintly ring,
A Goblin flits through plumes of fir
Upon the wood-owl's velvet wing;

He fills with fern-seed, brown and dry,
His acorn pipe; when winds are whist
He lights it with a fire-fly—
And hillward blows the evening mist.

A PERSIAN APOLOGUE

To Hakim Ali, famed for potent pills,
Old Hassan came to tell his body's ills

Began the Patient: "First, O Hakim wise,
I note a certain dimness of the eyes—"

"A trifle!" laughed the Doctor; "I'll engage
'Tis merely a Concomitant of Age."

"Besides," groaned Hassan, "as it seems to me,
My hearing is not all it used to be."

"Some little touch of deafness," quoth the Sage,
"Is likewise a Concomitant of Age."

"But," quavered Hassan, "Doctor, is it right
That Wakefulness should worry me at night?"

"Quite natural," said Ali, "at this stage;—
A usual Concomitant of Age."

Then Hassan stormed: "Oh, quack, impostor, dolt,
With no more learning than my donkey's colt!—

"I tell my griefs, and, like a parrot gray,
'Concomitant of Age' is all you say!"

"Ah!" smiled the Doctor; "sudden, causeless rage
Is likewise a Concomitant of Age."

Long life to the King, who shall thrive
 like the fertile plantations!
Yea, truly! my Liege shall survive
 e'en his youngest relations!"

The King, as his visage expressed,
 was rejoiced beyond measure.
The Prophet went home with a chest
 fairly bursting with treasure.
Which proves—'tis an axiom still,
 let the Blunt-spoken weigh it—
The Tactful can say what he will,
 for he knows how to say it!

FAME

“GREAT king,” the poet cried, his rebec stringing,
“Thy name shall live forever—through my singing!”

“Poor fool,” the king replied, “that lie is hoary;
Thy songs may live — because they chant my glory!”

So each, the sword or lyre glorifying,
In turn proclaimed his work alone undying;

And while their wordy warfare shook the rafter,
Old Time stood by and held his sides for laughter!

LOGIC

THE Farmer was swinging his scythe with a will,
His Donkey was turning the primitive mill;

The Learnèd Logician of Lalli-Bazan
Stood watching the labors of Donkey and Man.

“My friend,” quoth the Solver of Tangled Affairs,
“What use is the bell that your Animal wears?”

“Why,” answered the Farmer, “it tells on the
Brute;
It rings while he moves, when he stops it is mute;

“And so, though I’m acres away at my work,
I’ll know if the gray-coated Scamp is a shirk.”

“Right well!” cried the Sage; “but supposing, in-
stead
Of working, your Donkey just waggled his head:

“The bell would still ring like a steeple possessed,
Yet how would you know he was taking a rest?”

The Farmer looked hard at the Sage (it appears
Suspecting the length of his logical ears),

Then answered him, giving his Servant a slap,
“*This* Donkey has never learned Logic!—Gid-dap!”

A HINDU RIDDLE

“WHAT fruit is good to taste when green,
And sweet when half-matured by Time,
Yet harsh when ripe? Declare, O Sage!”

“That fruit is Human Life, I ween:
So rich in Youth; in Manhood’s prime
More mellow still—but dry in Age!”

THE IRREVERENT BRAHMIN

A HINDU TRACT

A BRAHMIN, fat and debonair,
Denied the Potency of Prayer!

“Absurd!” he scoffed, “to say that Gods
At ease on high would stoop to Clods

“And heed our million warring Prayers
To regulate our small Affairs!”

This Dogmatist of early days
Was lost within a jungle’s maze,

Where, wildly ranging wide about
To find a pathway leading out,

Upon a Forest Godling’s Shrine
He chanced, o’erhung with leaf and vine,

And—wonder! horror!—crouching there
A mighty Tiger, bowed in prayer!

(Tail curled, as may be well supposed,
Paws folded, eyes devoutly closed).

“Strong God,” he heard the Tiger say,
“I pray thee, send to me a Prey!”

The trustful Tiger closed his Prayer.—
Behold! a Brahmin trembling there!

The Brahmin never scoffed a whit.
The Prayer had Answer—*He was It.*

BREAD

(FROM THE HINDUSTANI)

FOR Bread the Merchant labors long and late.
For Bread the Beggar goes from gate to gate.

For Bread the Sailor loses hearth and home;
A thousand miles away, Bread-seekers roam.

For Bread the Wild Birds fall in nets and gins.
For Bread do Men commit a thousand sins.

For Bread the Soldier dies in siege or fray.
For Bread the Minstrel carols, night and day.

For Bread Men study all that Man may know.
The House that wanteth Bread is filled with Woe.

'Tis Bread unites the Family as one;
Its lack divides the Father from the Son.

For Bread are Weddings made and Sermons said;
Of all good things, the very best is Bread.

THE STONE'S JOKE

ON Guernsey's Island, huge, alone,
Before a cavern lay a Stone;

Upon its surface carved, a screed
In characters that none could read.

At length a Stranger climbed the cliff,
A Sage, in rune and hieroglyph

Well schooled. He bent his learnèd head
Above the Stone, and thus he read:

“Come, turn me, turn me, Man of Might,
And see what now is hid from sight!”

They came with lever, jack, and chain;
They heaved and hauled with might and main;

They plied the mass with rope and crow
To find the Treasure hid below.

The great Stone turned. Its mottled, pied
And soil-discolored under side

Another runic legend bore;
And thus the Scholar read once more:

“O Gentle Friend, for many a year
On one poor side I’ve languished here

“And begged the boon for which I’ve yearned—
That some one turn me. Thanks. I’m turned.”

THE BEST AND WORST NAIL IN THE ARK

Now this is the story (and all of ye hark!)
Of what was the Best and Worst Nail in the
Ark:

When Noah was building this Ark, as ye know,
A rumble of thunder surprised him, and so
To have the boat ready in time for the rain
He took on a Wright of the Children of Cain—
A terrible sinner, like all of the rest,
And still, as a Carpenter, one of the best.

This Person was hammering hard at the stem
When up strolls the Patriarch, Japheth, and
Shem;

And what does that impudent Carpenter do
But ask to be taken as one of the crew.
Sez he, "I am wishful to sail in yer boat
Along with yer Elephant, Camel, and Goat."
But Noah he answers him, "None of yer jokes!
Ye'll stay in the wet with the rest of yer folks!"

The Carpenter grinned and the Carpenter laughed;
He watched till the Party was all of them aft,
Then screwed up one eyebrow and twisted his lip
And pulled a big nail from the bow of the Ship!
He pulled out a Nail, did that Offspring of Sin,
Which left a fine hole for the tide to creep in.

Now, up comes the Animals, marching in pairs,
And with them the Devil sneaks in unawares,—
They say with the Mule, for she hadn't a mate,—
And hides in the hold with the rest of the freight.
But whist! when the waters were boiling around
And rocking the Ark from her place on the
ground,

Old Noah stood up while the elements roared
And asked a strong Blessing on all things aboard.

Now Blessings, for cause that I needn't explain,
Are what the old Devil can't hear without pain;
And so the poor Devil tore wildly about
Prospecting in vain for a place to get out,
When what should he spy, when of reason
bereft,

But that one fine hole that the Carpenter left!



He altered his form to the shape of a Worm
And right through that nail-hole he tried for to
squirm;

But,—talk as they do of the Devil's own luck,—
As tight as a rivet the poor Devil stuck!

He stuck and he stayed for the whole of the trip
Excluding the wet from the hold of the Ship.

The waters might heave and the waters might roll,
But still the poor Devil kept plugging that hole
And saving them all from the wave and the shark,—
So *he* was the Best and Worst Nail in the Ark!

WHAT THE DEVIL SAID TO NOAH

THE world was badly scared;
The very heavens trembled;
The Ark was all prepared,
The beasts were all assembled
And driven safe within
By Noah's sons and daughters,
When lo! the Lord of Sin
Appeared upon the waters;
A gallant privateer,
He sailed a Malay proa:
"I think it's gwine to clear!"
The Devil said to Noah.

We know that things are wrong,
We strive to make them better;
Perhaps I write a song,
Perhaps you write a letter,
Perhaps we work like men
To push a worthy movement—

When up he pops again,
That Foe to All Improvement,
And, smiling on the Deer
(But winking at the Boa)—
“Aw, shucks! it’s gwine to clear!”
The Devil coos to Noah.

MIDNIGHT ALPHABET

A is the Amiable Actress,

The lobster-café's benefactress.

B is the Bibulous Bounder

Who likes to be classed as a rounder.

C is the Curious Corkscrew—

The favorite tool of New York's crew.

D is the Diligent Driver

Who will not take less than a fiver.

E is the Erring Elmiran

About to be fleeced by a siren.

F is the Fellow from Corning

Who will not go home until morning.

G is the Gimlet-eyed Gambler

In wait for the night-blooming rambler.

H is the Hefty Housebreaker
Disguised as a peaceable Quaker.

I is the 'igh-C Italian,
With hair à la Richard Le Gallienne;

J is the Jollification
His boosters will term "an Ovation."

K is a Kelt from Killarney
Who borrows a dollar on blarney.

L is the Lantern-jawed Loafer
Whom Cræsus addresses as "Shoafer!"

M is the Moonbeam so Mellow
That shines on the girl and her fellow.

N is the Nebulous Night-time
By true lovers hailed as the right time.

O is the One Osculation
That earns them the prude's reprobation.

P is the Penitent's Pillow
That feels like a hot armadillo;

Q is his Querulous Query,
"Oh, why did I gamble in Erie?"

R is the Rabid Reporter
Whose story was edited shorter.

S is the Sinful Suggestion
That slumber is out of the question.

T's for the Turbulent Taxis
That swiftly rotate on their axes.

U is the Uniformed Usher
Ejecting the lingering lush.

V is the Voice of the Victim
Condemning the caitiff who kicked him.

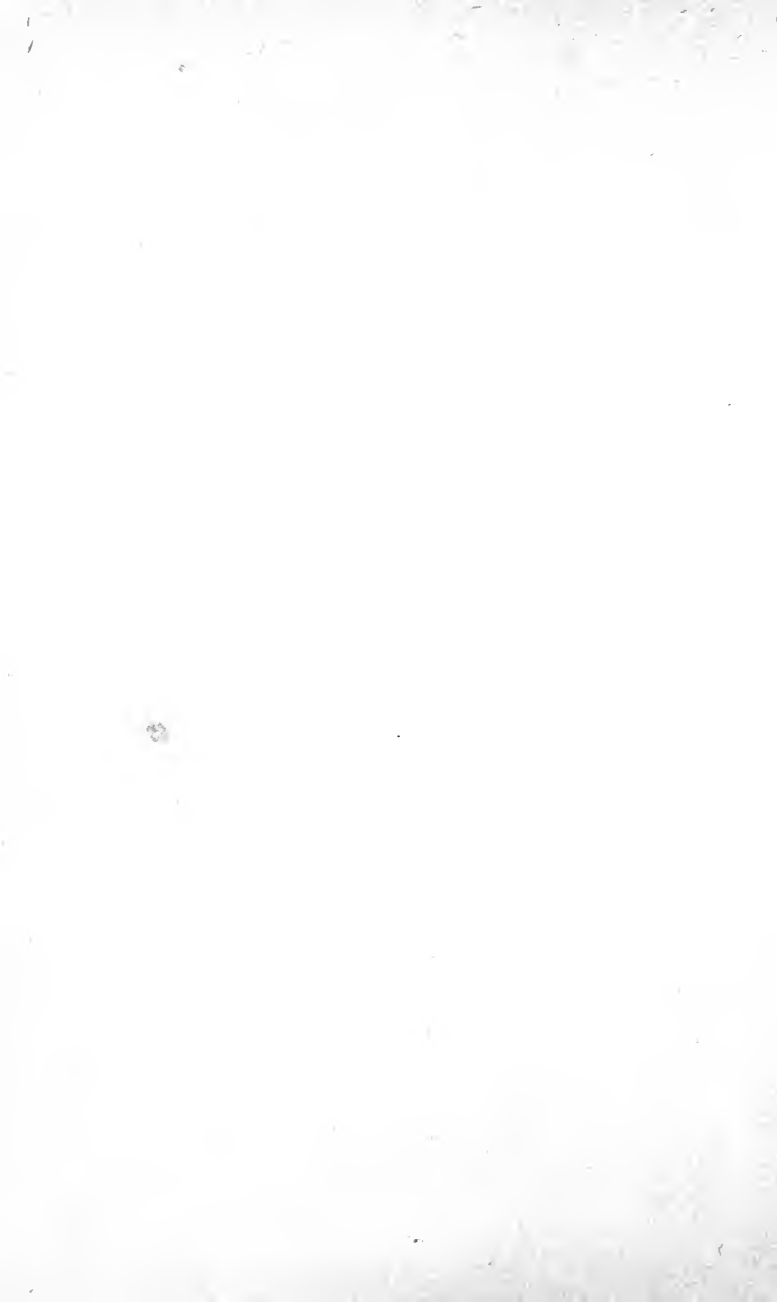
W stands for the White Way—
The Tight Way, yet scarce the Polite Way.

X is the sum that Xpresses
The fine for Xtatic Xcesses.

Y is the Yelling of Yellows
By newsboys with lungs that are bellows.

Z is the Zebra so frisky
Evoked by libations of whisky.

MAINLY FEMININE



THIS IS SHE

ON order that must be obeyed
I sing of a dear little maid;
 A mirthfully serious,
 Sober, delirious,
 Gently imperious
 Maid.

And first we'll consider her eyes
(Alike as to color and size);
 Her winkable, blinkable,
 Merrily twinkable,
 Simply unthinkable
 Eyes.

Then, having a moment to spare,
We turn our attention to hair;
 Her tendrilly-curlative,
 Tumbly-and-whirlative,
 Super-superlative
 Hair.

Forbear to dismiss with a shrug
Her nose, undeniably pug;—
Her strictly permissible,
Turn-up-like-thisable,
Urgently kissable
Pug.

Now, moving a point to the south,
We come to an Actual Mouth;
A coral, pearliferous,
Argumentiferous,
Mainly melliferous
Mouth.

Observe, underneath it, a chin,
Connoting the dimple within;
A steady, reliable,
Hardly defiable,
True, undeniable
Chin.

By all that is fair! it appears
We'd almost forgotten her ears!

Those never neglectable,
Tinted, delectable,
Highly respectable
Ears!

And last let us speak of herself,
That blithe little gipsy and elf,
Her quite unignorable,
Absence-deplorable,
Wholly adorable
Self.

THE LASSES O' LINTON

THE lasses o' Linton ha' flocked to the fair,
Wi' gowd on their bosoms an' silk in their hair,
Wi' ribbons an' laces sae winsomely drest,
An' each in the color that fits her the best.

There's Meg, the fause jilt! wi' her eyes on the
groun'—

Ye'll ne'er fin' a heart 'neath the corn-yellow gown.
While Maisie, whose Robin proves faithless, puir
lass!

Comes clad in a kirtle as green as the grass.

But Jeanie, my Jeanie, belovèd an' true,
S'all never wear aught save the heaven's ain blue;
“For green is forsaken, an' yellow's forsworn,
But blue is the bonniest color that's worn.”

FASHION

FAIR Eve devised a walking-suit
Of jungle grasses, soft and crimpy;
She thought it rather neat and cute
Till Adam grunted, "Pretty skimpy!"

A cloak of palm-leaves, sought for miles,
She made, and came to be admired;
But Adam said, "The silly styles
You women wear just make me tired!"

She built herself a little hat
Of lilies (Eve was *very* clever),
And asked him what he thought of *that?*
And Adam blurted, "Well, I *never!*"

So next she placed upon her head
A feathered three-by-four Creation.—
The little word that Adam said
Is barred from parlor conversation.

Yet Eve refused to be a dowd,
And tied an autumn-tinted sash on.
"I'll dress to please *myself!*" she vowed,
"For what does Adam know of fashion?"

"What use to seek applause from him?
He scoffs and says I cannot reason!
Well, then, *my* law shall be my whim—
And that shall change with every season."

Since when, revolving cycles bring
The gayest fashions and the queerest;
And Eve declares, "It's just the thing!"
While Adam murmurs, "Is it, dearest?"

THE WIND MAIDEN

HER lips, like roses empearled,
Gave forth a rill of laughter;
She brought the joy of the world—
Of this and that hereafter.

So free that magical art
Alone would serve to bind her,
She danced right into my heart
And locked the door behind her!

A SKETCH FROM THE LIFE

Its eyes are gray;
 Its hair is either brown
 Or black;

And, strange to say,
 Its dresses button down
 The back!

It wears a plume
 That loves to frisk around
 My ear.

It crowds the room
 With cushions in a mound
 And queer

Old rugs and lamps
 In corners à la Turque
 And things.

It steals my stamps,
 And when I want to work
 It sings!

It rides and skates—

 But then it comes and fills
 My walls
With plaques and plates
 And keeps me paying bills
 And calls.

It's firm; and if

 I should my many woes
 Deplore,
'Twould only sniff
 And perk its little nose
 Some more.

It's bright, though small;

 Its name, you may have guessed,
 Is "Wife."

But, after all,

 It gives a wondrous zest
 To life!

A WHOLE DAY!

FIVE hundred thousand leagues, I guess,
Our weary Earth has bowled through space;
And fifty thousand miles, no less,
The pallid Moon has held *her* race;

The careful Clock has ticked away
Full eighty thousand moments drear;—
So long has been the lagging Day
Since last I saw you, Vida dear!

ONE FEATHER

HER sister brought the wife a feather—

A curled, Parisian thing of beauty
(And Uncle Sam may answer whether
He did or did *not* get the duty).

The feather had to have a hat

To wreath itself upon, I take it;
For twenty dollars (cheap at that!)
Madame O'Malley deigned to make it.

So fine a hat is simply lost

Without a proper coat below it.
The coat, with all its fixings, cost
Say, ninety more—at least I owe it.

The coat was scarcely warm enough—

(A stylish cloth is rarely weighty);
But, after all, the stole and muff
Were hardly very dear at eighty.

And then a gown and shoes and things—

Here! add the bills, ye household scholars!

That little feather plumed the wings

Of pretty near three hundred dollars!

A straw may break the camel's back;

How might a feather overtax him!

I never knew before, alack,

The truth within that shop-worn maxim!

Yet, oh, for all this traitor writes,

The wealth of all the stores together

Was never worth one smile that lights

The dimpling face beneath the feather!

THE COUNTRY DANCE

TREAD of the thistledown
 Lighting on heather,—
Curls in a dancing crown
 Bursting their tether,—
Laugh of a bobolink
 Swaying on rushes,—
Breath of the meadow-pink
 Born of her blushes,—
Free as a swallow dips,
 Moving to viol-tones,
Over the mead she trips,
 Men's hearts her stepping-stones.

THE ORGAN-GRINDER LADY AND THE SCISSORS-GRINDER MAN

HER cheeks were Roman roses, and her deep,
Italian eyes
Were dark as limpid Como when the moon be-
gins to rise;
A crimson 'kerchief crowned the silken midnight
of her hair;
Her buxom little bodice was a heart-alluring
snare;
A laughing little, daffing little, merry gipsy queen,
She challenged forth your pennies with her tin-
kling tambourine.
What pocketbook resisted when her organ sang
the woe
Of Marguerite or Lucia, or the fun of Figaro!
What pulse but leaped the faster at the strains
of "Pinafore"
And swinging, Old World waltzes that the ball-
room hears no more!

So, hailed by children's laughter and the pat of
childish feet,

The Organ-Grinder Lady came in music down
the street.

With trundle-wheel and trumpet and the clamor
of his clan,

Along the flinty pavement came the Scissors-
Grinder Man,—

A yellow-headed laddie, and his cheeks were as
the wine,

His eyes as blue and dancing as the water of the
Rhine.

He trolled a Saxon ballad as he ground the shear-
ing steel,

Delighting gaping urchins with the sparkles of
the wheel;

And pleasantly and mirthfully he bobbed his
head, to greet

The Organ-Grinder Lady as she halted in the street;

Then, since there's lack of honesty in being over-
prim,

That Organ-Grinder Lady nodded blithely back
at him.

He set his wheel a-humming, by the way of sere-
nade;

She let her organ answer — and the “Wedding
March” it played!

Belike a roll of magic ran around the music-reel;
Perchance the dainty bodice caught a sparkle
from the wheel;

For, when the streets were twinkling with the
lights of eventide,

The organ and the trundle-wheel rolled slowly,
side by side,

Until, along the river where the great ships come
to land,

The Lady and the Laddie watched the starlight,
hand in hand.

And now in wedding-jacket and a black and
scarlet gown,

They trudge their rounds together through the
mazes of the town.

She makes his toil the lighter with the organ’s
mellow peal;

He makes the street the brighter with the sparkles
of the wheel;

And thus they give each other and their world
the best they can—

The Organ-Grinder Lady and the Scissors-Grinder
Man.

A GREEK SONG

It was not I that dared betray
 What none should know but you and me:
The moon beheld from heaven's way
 And told the tale to all the sea.

The ripples laughed in elvish joy
 And told the oar-blade, water-pearled;
The oar-blade told the fisher-boy,
 Who sang our love to all the world!

THE GROCERY BOY

Now what should I do when the Grocery Boy
Is knockin' an' whistlin' an' callin', "Ahoy!"
An' me with both hands of me covered with suds
A-cleanin' the panes in me oldest of duds!
"Come down!" sez he, laughin'. Sez I, "Ye can wait!
An' what are ye meanin' by comin' so late?"
"Ah, come!" sez he, coaxin'; "I tell ye no lies,
But all the pertaties have tears in their eyes
Because of the coldness of maids in these parts.
The onions are breakin' their poor little hearts;
The beans an' the leeks an' the parsley are green
With longin' for some one—ye know whom I mean;
An' see the young radishes blushin' all red,
An' look how the cabbage is hangin' its head!
Then don't ye be haughty an' don't ye be cruel,
But open the gate, now, an' take them, me jewel!"

Now what would ye do with a saucy young limb
Of a Grocery Boy that can blarney like him?

A SONG FOR SILVIUS

THE Pleiads are six and the planets are eight,
But one little star is the Pole of my fate.

Five continents broaden and seven seas foam,
But only one spot in creation is Home.

The Graces are three, while the Muses are nine;
There's only one Phoebe, and Phoebe is mine!

THE PASSIONATE SUBURBANITE
TO HIS LOVE

COMMUTE with me, Love, and be merry;
How vain in the City to dwell
When apple-trees blow in Dobbs' Ferry
And lilacs adorn New Rochelle!
White Plains is the Garden of Allah
And Pelham's the Pearl of the Sea;
There's bliss in the name of Valhalla—
Oh, fly to the Suburbs with me!

Then won't you commute on my family ticket?
To Westchester County we'll flee.

Delightful Westchester,
What place is sequester!
Oh, won't you commute, Love, with me?

I'll pluck you the earliest crocus
In Orange or Englewood fair;
We'll sport on the meads of Hohokus,
We'll ramble through Cultured Montclair;

We'll rest in Exclusive Tuxedo,
Or Nutley, for artists renowned,
And still shall I carol my credo,
"The Suburbs are Paradise Found."

Then won't you commute on my family ticket?
Perhaps you prefer New Jersey;
For who could grow weary
Of life on the Erie!

Then won't you commute, Love, with me?

The Isle 'twixt the Sound and the Ocean—
Ah, has it no Message for you?
I cannot but think with emotion
Of Flushing, Jamaica, and Kew,
Of Bayshore of youthful vacations,
Of Little Neck, Great Neck, and Quogue
And all of the other Clam Stations
Including Speonk and Patchogue.

Then come take a trip on my family ticket
Where Long Island breezes blow free.
To live on the Subway
Is surely a dub way,—
Then fly to the Suburbs with me!

OUR SUBURB

OUR Garden Spot is always bright and pretty

(Of course it's rather soggy when it rains),

And only thirty minutes from the city

(Of course you have to catch the proper
trains).

We're through with Grasping Landlords, rents,
and leases

(Of course there's still a mortgage debt to
pay).

At last we know what True Domestic Peace is

(Of course you can't *compel* a cook to stay).

Our Little Home is always nice and cozy

(Of course the furnace needs a lot of care).

The country keeps the children fresh and rosy

(Of course the schools are only middling fair).

The Country Club is glorious on Sunday

(Of course it's overcrowded now and then).

We see a play on Broadway every Monday

(Of course we have to leave at half past ten).

It's lovely having grass and trees and flowers
(Of course, at times, mosquitoes *are* a pest).
Yes, life is *life* out here in Rangeley Towers
(Of course Some People like the city best)!

LOVERS' LANE

It goes beneath a checkered arch
Of leaf and sunlight, oak and larch;
Athwart a mead of meadow-sweet,
A field of lily-bordered wheat;
Through groves of bridal birch it turns,
And mossy hollows, deep in ferns;
Then up a hill and down a glen,
From Nowhere out and back again;
And many feet have worn it plain—
That errant way of Lovers' Lane.

There, unafraid, the wood-folk play;
There wanton briers dip and sway
To catch and keep whatever comes
And make much work for clumsy thumbs
Of loosing tress and lacing shoe—
Such tasks as lovers love to do.
Of tales there told with eye or tongue
I need not tell—if ye were young—

Nor yet of castles reared in Spain
By architects of Lovers' Lane.

If Lovers' Lane ye wander through,
That roadway's rule is "two by two,"
Although the path is wondrous strait;
For here's a hedge, and there's a gate,
A brook, a stile, a quaking moss,
The strong must help the weak to cross;
Then, deep in shade ere set of sun,
Its dells are never safe for one—
Still (must the sorry truth be known?)
In Lovers' Lane I walk alone!

TWIST-RHYME ON WOMEN

SOME women walk in hobble skirts
While others sew and cobble shirts.

Equipped with pan for cake, and book,
The prudent learn to bake and cook;

Though many, seaward hurling care,
Devote their time to curling hair.

Yet all, though coyly seeming chill,
For simple youths are scheming ill;

With every eye-glance mangling ten,
They weave their webs for tangling men.

A VALENTINE

BEFORE your gate from dawn to late
The cheery postman whistles;
And every mail augments the tale
Of amorous epistles

That jingle "heart" with "part" and "dart,"
Nor fail to mention Cupid;
That rhyme "above" and "love" and "dove"—
And other things as stupid.

I pray you, spurn those lines that burn,
Despite their foolish pleading.
To flame consign each Valentine—
Except the one you're reading.

And scorn the host that sent per post
Those missives, poor and shoddy.
"They love you, too?"—Of course they do!
For so does everybody!

But, just as sure as snows are pure
And shoes are made of leather,
I do adore and love you more
Than all the rest together!

A BILL FROM CUPID

THIS Day of good Saint Valentine,
Château de Psyche,
Spain.

Miss Arabella Lovibond, 600 Lovers' Lane,
For Merchandise detailed below, to Daniel Cupid,
Debtor:

To 7,000 Compliments, conveyed per Tongue or
Letter;

To 50 Cases Deathless Love, expressed per Burn-
ing Sighs;

To 20 Cases (like above), expressed per Melting
Eyes;

To 18 dozen Fervent Vows, despatched per mail
or spoken;

To 18 dozen Flaming Hearts, irreparably broken;

To Passage 6 Despairing Swains en route to
Foreign Parts;

To 14 Arrows, snapped and spoiled on 14 Flinty
Hearts;

To 15 Locks of Human Hair (black, yellow,
brown, and sandy);
To 37 hundredweight of Tributary Candy;
To 40 Rides in Runabouts and 90 Auto Spins;
To 8 Disused Engagement Rings and 19 College
Pins;
To 60 Bales of Violets and Roses (out of season);—
Oh, well, for these and other things beyond all
Rhyme and Reason,
Please pay, to Francis Happychap, my Agent, on
Demand,
In Settlement of Claims, in full: 1 Vow, 1 Heart,
1 Hand.

THE RAG DOLLY'S VALENTINE

THOUGH others think I stare with eyes unseeing,
I've loved you, Mistress mine, so dear to me,
With all my fervent rag-and-sawdust being
Since first you took me from the Christmas
Tree.

I love you though my only frock you tear off;
I love you though you smear my face at meals;
I love you though you've washed my painted
hair off;
I love you when you drag me by the heels;
I love you though you've sewed three buttons on
me,
But most I love you when you sit upon me.

No jealous pang shall mar my pure affection;
For, while 'tis true your heart I'm forced to
share
With that Wax Doll of pink-and-white complexion,
The Pussy Cat, the Lamb and Teddy Bear,

'Tis mine alone, whate'er the time or place is,
To know your every grief and each delight;
I feel your childish wrath and warm embraces,
I share your little pillow every night.
And so, without another why or whether,
I'll love you while my stitches hold together!

ARCHITECTURAL

I'M only a Gargoyle attached to a church,
As ugly a Gargoyle as ever was known;
I lean from my Gothic, aerial perch
To gaze on that glorious vision in stone,—

The fair Caryatid just over the street
Enthroned on a pillar of porphyry red,
So mild of demeanor, so patient and sweet,
Though seventeen stories are heaped on her head!

I envy the wind that may speak to my love,
The raindrop that splashes her cheek like a tear,
The cobweb that covers her hand like a glove,
The sparrow that builds in the curve of her ear.

I would I might woo her with passionate rhymes;
But here is my duty, and here must I stay
To guard the high steeple's reverberant chimes
And frighten all frolicsome goblins away.

A BOY AND A PUP

THE Boy wears a grin,
A scratch on his chin,
A wind-rumpled thatch,
A visible patch,
A cheek like a rose,
A frecklesome nose.

The Pup, though he may
Be tawny as hay,
Is blithe as a song;
He gambols along
And waves to each friend
A wagglesome end.

With whistle and bark
They're off for a lark;
According to whim,
A hunt or a swim,
A tramp or a run
Or any old fun.

They don't care a jot
If school keeps or not,
When anything's up,
The Boy and the Pup,—
That duo of joy,
A Pup and a Boy!

ON CHERUBS

TRUE Cherubs never run in Debt
Because of Clothes and Things,
For, like some Chickens I have met,
They're built of Heads and Wings.

And Scientific Pens and Tongues
Have made it very clear
That Cherubs, since they can't have Lungs
Must always Sing by Ear.

But none of them, 'tis understood,
Will play a Naughty Prank;
And this is good, because they would
Be Difficult to Spank.

CHUMS

You see, we three,
Fred, Joe, and me,
Is chums.

When I "hullo!"
To Fred and Joe
They comes.

'Most every day
We go and play
Somewheres.

If I've a bun
And they has none,
We shares.

We all can slide;
And Fred can ride
And swim,
And make a kite!
I think a sight
Of him,

And Joey, too;—
He helps us do
 Our sums;
Because, you see,
Joe, Fred, and me
 Is chums.

A STRIKE IN FAIRYLAND

THERE'S terrible trouble in Fairyland,
I hear from a humming-bird fresh from the border,
The impudent sprites of that airy strand
Refusing to follow the good old order.

The elves have deserted both field and glade—
"So tired of tending the thankless flowers!"
The gnomes have abandoned the pick and spade,
Demanding more wages and shorter hours.

The nixes and mermaids have swum ashore;—
"The waters are damp, chill, and uninviting."
The witches will dwell in the woods no more;
Apartments they want, with electric lighting.

The monarchs are throwing their scepters down;—
"It's wearisome work,—this eternal reigning!"
The queens push their honey aside, and frown,
And all through the palaces there's complaining.

The royal-born youths of the golden clime
Play football and hockey, and each professes
The utmost aversion to wasting time
In rescuing maidens with golden tresses.

And the maidens deplorable taste evince;
Her nose in the air, each vows, defiant,
That sooner than mate with a stupid prince
She'd marry an ogre or lovely giant!

While the dragon roars from his gloomy hall
(And, oh, it isn't a theme for laughter!):
"I've swallowed the princess, crown and all,
And *I'm* to 'live happily ever after.'"

HOUSE BLESSING

STAND firm, gray Rock!
Tough-weathered Beams, hold fast!
Stanch Walls, proud Roof,
Repel the warring Blast!
Glow warm, deep Hearth,
Against the Winter's Chill;
Clear Flame of Love,
Burn brighter, warmer still!

CLEVER ANIMALS



WHY TIGERS CAN'T CLIMB

THE tale is of the Tiger and his Aunt, who is the
Cat:

They dwelt among the jungles in the shade of
Ararat.

The Cat was very clever, but the Tiger, *he* was slow;
He couldn't catch the Nilghau nor the heavy
Buffalo;

His claws were long and pointed, but his wit was
short and blunt;

He begged his Wise Relation to instruct him how
to hunt.

The Cat on velvet pattens stole along the quiet hill:
"Now this," she whispered, "Nephew, is the way
to stalk your Kill."

The Cat drew up her haunches on the mossy for-
est couch:

"And this," she said, "my Nephew, is the proper
way to crouch."

She hurtled through the shadows like a missile
from a sling:

“And that, my loving Nephew, is the only way
to spring!”

Oh, hungry was the Nephew, and the Aunt was
sleek and plump;

The Tiger at his Teacher made his first appren-
tice Jump;

He did it very ably, but the Cat, more quick
than he,

Escaped his clutching talons and ran up a cedar-
tree,

And purred upon the Snarler from the bough on
which she sat,

“How glad I am, my Nephew, that I didn’t teach
you *that!*”

And, since that Curtailed Lesson in the Rudiments
of Crime,

The most ambitious Tiger hasn’t learned the
way to climb.

PIGEON ENGLISH

WHERE beeches shade the pasture gate,
When nights grow short and days grow long,
The wood-dove woos his modest mate,
And this is all his wooing song:

“Curr-a-hoo, curr-a-hoo!
You love me and I love you.”

But wedded life is full of care.
Through all the sunny afternoon
They vainly strive, that shiftless pair,
To build their nest, while thus they croon:

“Coo-pe-coo! Coo-pe-coo!
Two sticks across, and a little bit of moss,
And that will have to do, do, do!”

When last I wandered down the lane
The little mother, all intent

To feed her greedy nestlings twain,
Was pouring forth a sad lament:

“Coo-a-roo! What shall I do?
I cannot feed my hungry Two,
Though the little red Wren
Can bring up ten
And rear them all like gentlemen!”

THE MINA-BIRD

THERE lives a little Mina on the hills of Hindustan,
The most conceited Mina of his most conceited clan.

A cowry-shell he treasures, for a cowry may be
 spent
As money;—in the market it's a hundredth of a cent.

“I'm rich!” the Mina caroled just as loud as he
 could sing;
“I'm richer than the Rajah!” (And a Rajah is
 a king!)

The Rajah was offended by this most insulting lay;
He ordered out his Army and they took the shell
 away.

“The Rajah must be hungry!” sang the Mina;
 “don't you see?
The Rajah took my cowry, for the Rajah envied me!”

The Rajah wasn't ready for this method of attack;
He disciplined his Army and they gave the cowry
back.

"I'm greater," sang the Mina, "than the mightiest
of men!
I forced the haughty Rajah to restore my wealth
again!"

The Rajah sat and pondered on his gold-incrusted
throne:
"I think," said he, "my Councilors, we'll leave
that Bird alone.

"He's rather prone to boastfulness, his voice is
void of charm,
He lacks a Sense of Humor, but he can't do any
harm."

So still the Mina magnifies his grandeur every-
where;
Which makes him very happy—and the Rajah
doesn't care.

THE CARDINAL-BIRD

WHERE snow-drifts are deepest he frolics along,
A flicker of crimson, a chirrup of song,
My Cardinal-Bird of the frost-powdered wing,
Composing new lyrics to whistle in Spring.

A plump little prelate, the park is his church;
The pulpit he loves is a cliff-sheltered birch;
And there, in his rubicund livery dressed,
Arranging his feathers and ruffling his crest,

He preaches, with most unconventional glee,
A sermon addressed to the squirrels and me,
Commending the wisdom of those that display
The brightest of colors when heavens are gray.

THE SMALL HOT ROBIN AND THE LARGE
COLD WORM

HEARKEN to a Fable of the Recent Heated
Term
On the Small Hot Robin and the Large Cold
Worm:

The Weather, you'll remember, was Indubitably
Hot,
Which the Bird seemed likewise, though the
Worm did not.

The Worm lay off and chuckled in the Trickle of
a Well
As he heard Folks' Comments on the Great Hot
Spell.

The Robin kept so busy with a Multitude of
Things
That he made Life cooler with his Flip-flap Wings.

The Selfish Worm delighted in the Mercury's
Ascent,
But the Robin never bothered where the Darned
Thing went.

A-hustling for a Dinner kept his Resolution firm,
And he looked most happy when he spied that
Worm!

He darted and he fluttered and he wriggled and
he pried,—
And he felt Much Better with the Worm inside.

So remember, when it's Torrid, that you mustn't
fret and squirm;
You want to go and hustle for a Large Cold Worm.

WHY MOSQUITOES STING

WHEN Suleiman the Glorious was judge of them
that sinned

The frail Mosquitoes brought to him a charge
against the Wind;

“O mighty King! whene’er we hold our harm-
less dance,” said they,

“The Wind comes down from Scanderoon and
sweeps us all away!”

Then Suleiman the Glorious gave word to sky
and sea:

“Oh, bid the gipsy Wind appear to controvert
the plea!”

Across the hills, across the waves, across the
deserts blown,

The Wind came down from Scanderoon to plead
before the throne.

The Wind came down from Scanderoon and bent
the cedar mast;

The frail Mosquitoes whirled away like chaff
upon the blast.

Again they strove to urge their suit before the
palace bar;

Again the band, like thistledown, was scattered
wide and far.

But yet again to Suleiman they plied the gauzy
wing:

“Behold!” the spiteful chorus jeered, “the jus-
tice of the King!

“The King of Men protects by craft the Wind
who grieves us sore;

The Sons of Men shall pay the fine—and pay it
o’er and o’er!”

And since that long-remembered day, the shrewd,
revengeful clan

With treble shrill and poisoned bill have wreaked
their wrath on Man.

THE BEE

LITTLE chemic-artisan,
Doing work no other can,
Deep in dewy nectaries,
Petal-walled refectories—
Apple-blossom, columbine,
Rose and lily, all are thine,
Yet, though oft thy weight they bear,
Dost thou know how they are fair?
Thine are sun and Summer breeze—
Hast thou aught of joy in these?

Pollen-yellow dumbledore,
Leave thy clovers tumbled o'er!
What's a lily? What's a rose?—
Down the golden lane he goes,
Drowsing forth a prosy song,
"Honey! Honey!" all day long,

Wasting life's diviner sweet,
Hiving food for drones to eat.
Oh, thou silly, silly bee!
Idle here and learn of me!

THE FIRST CAT

THE Ark on the dark, multitudinous waters
Was tossing; the rain in a cataract poured;
But Noah, his Lady, their sons and their daughters
And all the wild live stock were safely aboard.

They weren't much seasick in spite of the weather
And rather cramped quarters; they'd food to
suffice,

And all things were lovely, when, squeaking to-
gether,

There rushed from the galley a rabble of mice!

They multiplied—yes, like a warren of rabbits!
They plundered the pantry, devoured the grain;
And such were their simply unspeakable habits
That poor Mrs. Noah was well-nigh insane!

She said so in language untrammelled and forceful!
And what might have happened, the Lord only
knows!

When Noah, the kindly and ever resourceful,
Went up to the Lion and tickled his nose.

Then thrice sneezed the Lion!—and forth from
the feature

His Majesty sneezed with, there leaped in a
trice

A silky-haired, dagger-clawed, brisk little Crea-
ture—

And woe to the ravaging legions of mice!

In twenties, in thirties, in fifties she slew them
Before Mrs. Noah had time to say “scat!”

“Aha!” laughed the Skipper, who watched her
pursue them;

“I don’t know Its name, Dear; let’s call It—
A Cat!”

So, born of a sneeze in the Rain of All Ages
That deluged the mountain, the valley, and
plain,

The Cat on your hearthstone to this day presages,
By solemnly sneezing, the coming of rain!

THE KITTY AND THE CAT

A HIGHLY Cultured Tiger, both carnivorous and
nice,
Was greatly aggravated by a horde of Rodent
Mice
That showed the lack of manners uninvited to
intrude,
And played the Very Mischief with his comfort
and his food.
The Tiger, for the cleansing of his Himalayan
flat,
Installed within the domicile a Recommended Cat
Who chased the Sleek Marauders when they
gathered to the feast
(Observing due precautions not to harm them
in the least),
Which left the Tiger happy in his victuals and
his sleep,
While Pussy drew good Wages in addition to her
Keep.

Now Pussy, growing weary, took a fortnight to
recruit
Her health, and left a Kitten as a Likely Substitute.
But Kitty proved Ambitious, and, despite of grievous
wails,
Devoured all the Rodents but their whiskers and
their tails!
The Highly Cultured Tiger, being highly pleased
thereat,
Discharged, with thanks, his Servitors, the Kitty
and the Cat;
And while it's rash to credit every word a person
hears,
They say an angry Pussy boxed a hopeful Kitty's
ears.
And while I've told the legend as it runs in Hin-
dustan,
I've clean forgot the Moral—you may find it if
you can.

ETIQUETTE

THE Gossips tell a story of the Sparrow and the
Cat,
The Feline thin and hungry and the Bird exceeding
fat.
With eager, famished energy and claws of grip-
ping steel,
Puss pounced upon the Sparrow and prepared to
make a meal.

The Sparrow never struggled when he found that
he was caught
(If somewhat slow in action he was mighty quick
of thought),
But chirped in simple dignity that seemed to fit
the case,
“No Gentleman would ever eat before he’d washed
his face!”

This hint about his Manners wounded Thomas
like a knife

(For Cats are great observers of the Niceties of
Life);

He paused to lick his paws, which seemed the
Proper Thing to do,—

And, chirruping derisively, away the Sparrow flew!

In helpless, hopeless hunger at the Sparrow on
the bough,

Poor Thomas glowered longingly, and vowed a
Solemn Vow:

“Henceforth I’ll eat my dinner first, *then* wash
myself!”—And that’s

The Universal Etiquette for Educated Cats.

LITTLE LOST PUP

HE was lost!—not a shade of a doubt of that;
For he never barked at a slinking cat,
But stood in the square where the wind blew raw
With a drooping ear and a trembling paw
And a mournful look in his pleading eye
And a plaintive sniff at the passer-by
That begged as plain as a tongue could sue,
“O Mister! please may I follow you?”
Oh, the saddest of sights in a world of sin
Is a little lost pup with his tail tucked in!

Well, he won my heart (for I set great store
On my own red Bute—who is here no more),
So I whistled clear, and he trotted up,
And who so glad as that small lost pup?

Now he shares my board and he owns my bed,
And he fairly shouts when he hears my tread;
Then, if things go wrong, as they sometimes do,
And the world is cold and I'm feeling blue,

He asserts his right to assuage my woes
With a warm, red tongue and a nice, cold nose
And a silky head on my arm or knee
And a paw as soft as a paw can be.

When we rove the woods for a league about
He's as full of pranks as a school let out;
For he romps and frisks like a three months' colt,
And he runs me down like a thunderbolt.
Oh, the blithest of sights in the world so fair
Is a gay little pup with his tail in the air!

THE AMBIGUOUS DOG

THE Dog beneath the Cherry-tree
Has ways that sorely puzzle me:

Behind, he wags a friendly tail;
Before, his Growl would turn you pale!

His meaning isn't wholly clear—
Oh, is the Wag or Growl sincere?

I think I'd better not descend—
His Bite is at the Growly End.

THE TALE OF TAILS

IN Unrecorded Ages when the Minnows talked
like Whales,
The Very-Clever-Animals were destitute of Tails:
The Monkey and the 'Possum couldn't hang
'emselves to dry,
The Puppy couldn't waggle, nor the Heifer flap
a fly;
So when the Wild Geese trumpeted that Tails
could soon be had,
The Very-Clever-Animals were very, very glad.

Upon the Day Appointed, when the Quadrupedal
Rout
Were flocking to the Trysting-Place-Where-Tails-
Were-Given-Out,
The Growly Bear was settling to his wonted win-
ter nap;
He called his friend, the Rabbit, an obliging
little chap,

And pledged him by the Whiskers of the Great
Ancestral Hare
To fetch a fitting Tail-piece for a Self-respecting
Bear.

But where the Tails were given, there was such
a dreadful crush—
A mingled game of football and a bargain-counter
rush—
That Bunny, hopping wildly for his own Desired
End,
Forgot his Solemn Promise to his sleepy-headed
friend!

The Rabbit was returning to his Merry Native Vale,
Rejoicing in the flourish of a lovely, furry Tail,
When, rapidly descending from his Rocky Moun-
tain Lair,
He saw the massive figure of his friend, the Growly
Bear,
Who roared, "My Tail, O Rabbit! Let me have
it on the spot!"
"Why—" stammered out the Rabbit, "please
excuse me,—I forgot!"

Oh, Bruin swung his forepaw like a mighty iron
flail;

He smote our luckless Bunny on the Precious
Furry Tail

And shore it off completely, save a little bit of
fluff!—

Still, Honey, for a Bunny that is cotton-tail enough.

WOOD-HARVEST

YELLOWBIRD and Oriole wing to southern shores;
All the little foresters glean their winter stores.

Frost unlocks the chestnut burr, ripens the chinkapin,
All the little foresters get their harvest in.

Chipmunk in the hazel-grove crams his pouches
full;
Deermouse finds the alder fruit ripe enough to pull;

Butternut and hickory please the Squirrel well;
Apples of the wilderness fill the Woodchuck's cell.

Frisking on the mountainside, rustling down the
comb,
All the little foresters hold their Harvest Home.

COYOTE AND THE STAR

THIS is a legend from Siskiyou Bar,
About "The Coyote Who Danced with a Star."

Now, great were the deeds that Coyote had done!
Coyote had stolen the flame of the Sun;
Coyote had opened the Frost-Wizard's pen,
Releasing the Salmon, desired of men.
Coyote was proud of his craft and his might,
His fleetness of foot and his clearness of sight,
His scent, that was choicest of all that is choice,
But most was he vain of his wonderful voice!
He sat like a monarch exalted on high
Where Sisson's cold summits are keen in the sky,
And watched on the sweep of ethereal blue
The Stars and their satellites pass in review.

Aloft and alone

O'er Shasta's white cone

A mischievous Star-fairy twinkled and shone.

So lightly she danced
That, charmed and entranced,
Coyote cried boldly, "Fair, heavenly Sprite,
Permit me to join in your glorious flight;
I beg,—I demand!
Oh, reach me your hand!
Together we'll frolic o'er water and land."
How flashed the Aurora, till heaven and earth
Were gay with the glow of celestial mirth!
"O hairy Coyote! how stupid you are
To dream for a moment to dance with a Star!"

What pencil will venture—what brush will engage
To show the Coyote in justified rage?
He lifted his muzzle, he stiffened his tail,
Affrighting the Night with a quavering wail.
With yelp and with yowl,
With growl and with howl,
He startled the Owl and the Panther aprowl.
He screamed like a baby bereft of his toys;
He shattered the sky with his scandalous noise,
With his "Yap! yap! ki-yee!"
In its weird minor key,—
For never was singer remorseless as he.

All vainly the Fairy cajoled and denied;
He wouldn't hear reason. Then, wearied, she cried,
 "I wish you were dumb!
 You're crazy; but—come!"

And gingerly reached him a finger and thumb.
He leaped!—and away, like the shaft and the feather,
The Star and Coyote were flying together.

And now, as he fled with that Spirit of Light
There rushed far beneath him a glorious sight
Of ranges and cañons and barrens and plains,
Of rivers cascading with turbulent rains,
Of armies of bison, and cimmaron gray,
And legions of antelopes bounding away;
The towns of the Mandans, the Nez Percé ranches,
The Utes, Pi-Utes, the dashing Comanches
And Modocs, in-reining their snorting cayuses
And shouting to women with wickered papooses,
"Look! See!"—as they waved to that vision afar,
"The Clever Coyote, above, with a Star!"

 To caper in style
 For many a mile
Careering the heavens, was grand!—for a while.

But frostily grew on Coyote, apace,
The awe and the horror of limitless space.
He felt on his temples the grip of a vise;
The hand of his Partner seemed colder than ice.
'Twas dreadful to gaze upon mountains—like
barrows!

The tents of the Kahrocs like flint heads of arrows;
The silvery Klamath, whose broad-bosomed flow
Showed meager, 'mid hills, like the string of a bow
Relaxed after battle. Grown dizzy and numb,
He loosened his hold on the finger and thumb
And dropped to the earth like a meteor—plumb!
And lit with a—spat!

As flat as a mat!

So here is the Moral from Siskiyou Bar:
“You Callow Coyote, don't dance with no Star!”

HOMeward BOUND

THERE'S a pine-built lodge in a rocky mountain
glen

In the shag-breasted motherland that bore me;
And the West Wind calls, and I'm turning home
again

To the hills where my heart is gone before me,—

Where a lake laughs blue while the dipping paddles
gleam,

Where the wild geese are following their leader,
Where the trout leaps up from the silver of the
stream

And the buck strikes his horn against the cedar.

THE BALLAD OF THE BLACKBIRD

THE Blackbird, the Blackbird was once of snowy
white;

What gave the sooty Blackbird a coat as dark as
night?

The Blackbird, the Blackbird had music in his
throat;

What gave the croaking Blackbird a harsh, dis-
cordant note?

The Blackbird, the Blackbird had once a beak of
red;

What gave the somber Blackbird a golden beak
instead?

.

The Blackbird, the Blackbird came out to greet
the Spring;

He met a merry Magpie that bore a jeweled ring.

The Blackbird, the Blackbird would seek a gem
as brave.

“I found it,” piped the Magpie, “within the
Treasure Cave.”

The Blackbird, the Blackbird would learn where
that might be.

“To westward,” sang the Magpie, “beyond the
Opal Sea.”

The Blackbird, the Blackbird would know the
cavern’s lord.

“A Dragon,” chirped the Magpie, “protects the
Golden Hoard.”

The Blackbird, the Blackbird would brave the
Dragon’s zeal.

“Be honest,” warned the Magpie, “and *ask*, but
do not *steal*.”

The Blackbird, the Blackbird flew fast across
the wave;
Within the Sable Mountain he found the Treasure
Cave.

The Blackbird, the Blackbird went hopping down
the floor;
The ransom of a kingdom was heaped in golden
ore.

The Blackbird, the Blackbird forgot what he was
told;
His thieving beak of crimson he dipped in dust
of gold.

The Blackbird, the Blackbird fled forth in shriek-
ing woe;
The Dragon of the Treasure came roaring from
below!

The Blackbird, the Blackbird reached safety—
but, alack!
The sulphur-breathing Dragon had scorched his
plumage black!

The Blackbird, the Blackbird can never more
rejoice;
That guilty cry of terror has marred his liquid
voice.

The Blackbird, the Blackbird flies off in heavy
shame;

The gold he would have stolen defiles his beak
of flame!

THE BAT

AIRY-MOUSE, hairy mouse,
Keen-eared contràry mouse,
Come from your cavern—a star's in the sky!
Fluttering, flittering,
Eerily chittering,
Swoop on your quarry, the dusk-haunting fly.

Airy-mouse, wary mouse,
Witch-bird or fairy-mouse,
Soft through the shadow the dawn-glimmer steals;
Night's your carousing-time,
Day brings your drowsing-time;
Hence to your hollow and hang by your heels!

TEA WITH A DINOSAUR

THUNDER-LIZARD, Brontosaurus,
You that lived so long before us,
You that ruled this mundane locus
In the days of Diplodocus,
Marvel of your age—the classic
Mesozoic time, Jurassic,
Stir your sixty feet of length!
Rouse your prehistoric strength!
Lift your twenty tons anew!
They are taking tea—with you!
What effrontery! what mockery!
Rise, oh, rise and smash the crockery!

Once you roamed o'er rocks cretaceous
Feasting on the growths herbaceous,
Chewing Damarites gum
With Iguanodon, your chum.
Once you listened to the singing
Of the Pterodactyls, winging

Through the arborescent ferns.
Doing acrobatic turns,
Archæopteryx bore chorus,
When, with mighty Mososaurus
And Triceratops the proud
Through the tepid seas you plowed.

Now you hearken to the clatter
Of the tea-cups, and the chatter
Of an upstart race, as dwarfish
As a Cenozoic crawfish!
Though they say you're not carnivorous,
Wag that tail—and Lord deliver us!

Did some dragon-slaying Horus
Cause your death, great Brontosaurus?
Did the marshes cloak your glory
With their mud?—(A shameful story!)
Once you breathed, Creation's wonder,
And your footsteps woke the thunder.

Now, they treat you with disdain;
Say you had a two-pound brain,
Not an ounce of wit to spare,
And the courage of a hare!

Will you hear the shocking slander
Unrevengeful? Where's your dander?
Make these Men of Science see things!
Raise a riot 'mongst the tea-things!
Show the might you lived to glory in!
Rise! insulted Dinosaurian!

THE HUMMING-BIRD

A MORSEL of rainbow forgot by a shower
Is dashing the dew from the cardinal-flower.
Two delicate pinions delightedly drumming
Are witching the dawn with Æolian humming.
A dainty black needle is probing the roses
And proving what nectar the lily incloses.
But under the honey-vine's odorous cover
A true little bride waits her recreant lover.
Then, fie! feathered truant, 'tis time you were
 winging;
Enough of your feasting and music and singing,
And arrow your flight to that bower of rest—
Your spider-web, thistledown, maidenhair nest!

THE RABBIT OF WALES

MY riddle's a joy in a world of despair;
A cousin, they say, of the merry March hare;
He flourishes most at five hundred degrees;
His cradle's a toast and his mother's a cheese;
A troublesome, bubblesome, sweet little beast,
His fragrant enough is as good as a feast—
(For who that is mortal may grapple with two?)
When hot, he's ambrosia; when cold, he is glue.
He never had fur, feathers, features, nor scales.
The answer? Of course! 'Tis the Rabbit of Wales.

When Arthur ruled Britain with scepter and sword,
There came to the King at the festival board
A wizard unrivaled in magical spell,
Hight Morgan ap something in F-double-L.
“Bold knights and true maidens!” he said, “ye
perceive
There's nothing concealed in the folds of my
sleeve.”

Then, "Hey! presto! change!" From the helm
of King Lot
He drew forth a Viand all smoking and hot.
"This Marvel," quoth he, "'mongst the chiefs of
the dales
Of Rheidol, is known as the Rabbit of Wales."

Then reveled those lordlings, and when it beseemed
They hied them to slumber. And, soothly, they
dreamed
Of gryfons and dragons and gyaunts, and thynges,
And heathen enchaunters and Saracen kynges,
And boars that had tuishes full twenty rods long,
And jousts that were bloody and strokes that
were strong,
Of which, when ye read (an it please ye to look)
Set down in the pages of Malory's book,
Remember, that they who recounted these tales
Had banqueted free on the Rabbit of Wales.

He lives through the ages, more soothing than silk,
As potent as porter, as gentle as milk.
Unblemished of youth, he has heightened disport
In hovel and palace, in tavern and court.

When Jonson and Herrick made feasts at the
Sun,
The Boar and the Mermaid, of them he was one.
He frolicked with Shakespeare, with Chaucer
and Gower;
He's older than Merlin and Owen Glendower;
They find in the primal Devonian shales
The fossil remains of the Rabbit of Wales.

When tables are snowy, and heavenward roll
The violet smoke wreaths that comfort the soul,
He comes! from the region of skillets and spits
Upborne on the platter of rubicund Fritz.
How blithely he bubbles! How sweetly he steams!
How mellow, how yellow, how tender he seems!
So mild is his temper, we'll give it a cross;
Then feed him with mustard and berry brown
sauce,
And drink his repose in the primest of ales:
"Waes hael! to the rantipole Rabbit of Wales!"

MACARONI

'Tis made of the flour of wheat, so they say,
Although I confess to the dawnings
Of doubt how they mix it on Avenue A
Before it is dried on the awnings.

Fair Italy's sons in the family shed
Alluringly drape it and coil it;
But don't be afraid, for the microbes are dead
As nails when you properly boil it.

'Tis blithe, in the cellars of festive New York
To see how the diners assail it!
Some mince it, some reel up its lengths on a fork,
While others devoutly inhale it.

It should be absorbed to "Faniculi's" strains,
Or, maybe, to "Santa Lucia's."
All poets agree it is good for the brains.
The best may be had at Maria's.

I like it served hotter, by twenty degrees,
Than any place mentioned by Dante;
Then, quickly! Beppino, with plenty of cheese,
And don't you forget the Chianti!

THE CUCKOO

(A FABLE FOR THE DIFFIDENT)

A CUCKOO, winging toward the Town
Of Tutinghorn,
Espied a Wren that fluttered down
Upon a thorn;

And, lighting near, the silence broke
With eager words
Demanding how the village spoke
Of other birds.

“How talk they of the Nightingale?”
The Cuckoo cried.

“Her fame resounds through all the vale,”
The Wren replied.

“The Lark,” the Cuckoo hinted then,
“Wins equal praise?”
“Why, half the village,” chirped the Wren,
“Extol *his* lays.”

“Perhaps they laud the Robin, too?”

Quoth April’s bird.

“The Robin? Well, perhaps a few,”

The Wren averred.

The Cuckoo paused. “What share have I
Of praise or blame?”

“Ah,” laughed the Wren, who cannot lie,

“None breathe your name.”

The Cuckoo huffed in wounded pride;

Away he flew.

“Then must I praise *myself*,” he cried;

“Cuckoo! Cuckoo!”

TRAMPING

His heart should sing from dawn to sunset flare,
Wherever foot may tread his path may lie,
His pack must be too small to hold a care
Who takes for guide the gipsy butterfly.

At morn the thrush, at noon the tinkling brook,
At eve the cricket choir shall cheer his way;
His eye shall find delight in every nook;
The squirrels—merry gnomes in red or gray,—

The clover bent beneath the booming bees,
The woodchuck, sober monk in russet clad,
The dragon-fly athwart the culverkeys
Shall wake his love of things and make him glad.

Again along a checkered road I swing
Through friendly woods and fields where daisies
nod,
While still before me drifts on vagrant wing
The butterfly whose beauty praises God.

MERE LITERATURE

IMPUDENT INTERVIEWS

I

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

A CHEERFUL, well-appointed study at Number 10, Adelphi Terrace, London, W. C., the blaze of a crackling fire, within, rendered doubly alluring by the bluster of a detestable March night, without. Substantial furniture, a neatly arranged desk, and bookcases filled with orderly volumes, notably the works of Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Karl Marx and Plato, with dramatists old and new, suggest that the inmate is a methodical person possessed of philosophic and literary tastes. This diagnosis is borne out by the appearance of the victim himself as he stands with his back to the glow, his tall, thin, alert, Satanic figure sharply outlined against the yellow flames. How old is he? His somewhat scanty hair and beard, once red, but now almost colorless, indicate that he has emerged from

the larval stage of youthful cynicism and despondency and is now in the full enjoyment of that radiant benevolence and optimism granted only to those who have known the triumphs and accomplished promises of half a century and more. His brown suit, red tie, and soft flannel shirt, as well as the broad-brimmed Alpine hat which he has thrown upon the table, reveal the Socialist; his excessive pallor betrays confirmed vegetarianism; while his steel-blue eyes of soldierly directness give assurance that here is one who would sooner quarrel than eat a bushel of turnips. Upon the bookcase facing him stands a bronze portrait-bust, clearly of himself (for it is by the hand of no less a sculptor than Rodin), upon which his eyes fall quizzically, yet, on the whole, with great respect. To the right and left of this masterpiece are other works of art—an effigy of Ibsen upon which our Protagonist, as he speaks, confers a glance of condescending approbation; a bas-relief of Wagner, which he notices with a slight nod that seems to say, "Very well, old man; but it's lucky for you that I devoted myself to Drama instead of Opera"; and an engraving of the Strat-

ford bust of Shakespeare which must, perforce, be content with a commiserating smile that may be interpreted as signifying, "Poor chap! You meant well, but you didn't know!"

My birth? I beg you, let us call
That mystery unsolved.
In fact, I was not born at all,
But, so to speak, evolved.

My education? Books are naught;
At schools I've always spurned;
So just put down, "The man was taught";
Or, better still, "He learned."

You seek to know my aim in life?—
To write as best I can,
To stir a little wholesome strife
And hunt the Superman.

Myself, the First of Supermen,
I levitate above
Your wabbling world, and now and then
I give the thing a shove.

In motley clad ("the only wear!")
I watch with fiendish grin
Your childish bubbles float in air
And prick them with a pin.

My creed, though big and broad, insists
On ten perfervid hells,
Say one for anti-Socialists
And nine for H. G. Wells.

Ah, yes; I've written loads of stuff
From changing points of view,
And all of it is bright enough,
And much, I fear, is true.

My Works? behold them, bound in calf
Upon the middle shelf.
They're great; yet, somehow, more than half
I don't believe myself.

For what is Truth? How well I know
A jest confutes the wise!
But this, at least, I'm sure is so—
It pays to advertise!

II

RUDYARD KIPLING

WELL, take a chair, cock your feet upon the mantel-
piece

(Seeing that's your custom in the "Country of
the Free");

Though I've always been averse

My achievements to rehearse,

Yet to ease an Anxious Public I will tell the tale
of ME.

Trained in a school in the dowie dens of Devon-
shire,

Joined with wild companions full of dark
iniquity,

I concocted boyish crimes

And composed satiric rhymes

Till my college-mates and pedagogues were all
afraid of ME.

Up came a ship and they packed me back to
India,
There to run a paper like a printer on a spree;
And I wrote of many things,
Yea, of Cabbages and Kings,
For the Secrets of the Universe are openwork to
ME.

Sang I the wiles of the black and yellow Aryan,
Brahman or Mohammedan of high or low degree:
Khoda Baksh and Daoud Shah,
Gunga Din and Dana Da,—
Their polka-dotted consciences were primers unto
ME.

Sang I the ways of the furry-coated Jungle Folk;
Furthermore, the ways of the Best Society;
But, speaking man to man,
Young Mowgli and his clan
In all the prime essentials seemed the better
crowd to ME.

Sang I the feats of the heavy-footed soldier-man,
Infantry and horse, but especially of Three.

Oh, my views are often crude,
And my manners mostly rude,
But Stanley, Jock, and Terence were the best of
friends with ME.

Far went my fame, and afar I went to follow it,
Ranged the zones and continents and roved From
Sea to Sea;
And I wrote of all I saw,
And I flicked you on the raw,
But, Masterpiece or Tommyrot, you bought my
books of ME.

Oh, I have whooped for entangled Jingo politics,
Told of sordid battles and of Britons up a tree;
I have bellowed double-bass
For the Glory of the Race,
And Sovereigns and Ministers have taken tips
from ME.

Ah, I have twanged of the choo-choo car and
flying-ship,
Imaging my world and the wonder yet to be;

Electricity and Steam
And the Piston and the Beam,
And the Triple-action Whirligig are Poetry to ME.

Now what remains but to sing the Song of Calculus,
Logarithmic lullaby and algebraic glee?

I will chant in Lowland Dutch
Of Quaternions and such,
And the boundless Fourth Dimension shall delight
to honor ME!

III

JACK LONDON

IN the hurly and the burly of the Early Pleis-
tocene,

Ere the Adamistic Dynasty began,

I went roaming through the gloaming with my
little forest queen,

Not a Monkey, nor an Evoluted Man.

Oh, we teased the Woolly Bear

And we pulled the Mammoth's hair

And we took the Snarly Tiger by the paw.

Though I've lived an awful lot,

I have never quite forgot

Human Nature as I knew it in the Raw.

I'm a Railer and a Trailer and a Sailor of the Seas

(In my Present Incarnation, let me add),

Anarchistic, atavistic, pessimistic, if you please,

For I've roved around the world and found it
bad.

In the cold Alaskan camps,
On the road with grimy tramps,
On the ocean in the howling of the gale,
I have played a fitting part;
And I learned the writer's art
By inventing lies to keep me out of jail.

If you're burning to be earning over seven cents
a word

You must cultivate the Brutal and the Rude.
Write a story that is gory; milder matter is
absurd,

For the Public has no taste for Baby Food.
Give 'em Cruelty and Vice,
Give 'em Misery on Ice,
Give 'em rough-and-tumble, marlinspike, and gun;
Give 'em groans to wake the dead,
Make it Gristly, Ripe, and Red,
For they love their Mental Beefsteak underdone.

IV

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

Down in Injianny (ez you may 'uv heard before),
The sweet, ol'-fashioned roses grow about the cot-
tage door,

An' hummin'-birds go dartin' roun' the swayin'
hollyhawks,

An' daisies edge the gardin paths where Arma-
zindy walks.

The little boys plays hooky, an' they takes their
fishin'-pole,

Or you kin hear 'em splashin' in the riffled swim-
min'-hole,

An' other things is happenin' what you mustn't
write about,

Or the Publishers 'll git you

Ef you

Don't

Watch

Out!

Now dialect *is* handy ez a means o' savin' time—
It often helps a lazy bard that's lookin' fer a
rhyme;

But poetry is poetry, no matter what the tongue—
The lovin' thought, the lyric word appeals to old
an' young;

An' ef you got the hang uv it there isn't any
doubt

That the Publishers 'll git you

Ef you

Don't

Watch

Out!

LETTERS TO THE LITERATI

I

TO SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

GENTLE Sir Conan, I'll venture that few have been
Half as prodigiously lucky as you have been.
Fortune, the flirt! has been wondrously kind to
you,

Ever beneficent, sweet, and refined to you.
Doomed though you seemed—one might swear
without perjury—

Doomed to the practice of physic and surgery,
Yet, growing weary of pills and physicianing,
Off to the Arctic you packed, expeditioning.
Roving and dreaming, Ambition, that heady sin,
Gave you a spirit too restless for medicine;
That, I presume, as Romance is the quest of us,
Made you an Author—the same as the rest of us.
Ah, but the rest of us clamor distressfully,
“How do you manage the game so successfully?”

Tell us, disclose to us how under Heaven you
Squeeze from the inkpot so splendid a revenue!"
Then, when you'd published your volume that
vindicates

England's South African raid (or the Syndicate's),
Pleading that Britain's extreme bellicosity
Wasn't (as most of us think) an atrocity—
Straightway they gave you a cross with a chain
to it—

(Oh, what an honor! I could not attain to it,
Not if I lived to the age of Methusalem!)—
Made you a Knight of St. John of Jerusalem!
Faith! as a teller of tales you've the trick with
you!

Still there's a bone I've been longing to pick with
you:

Holmes is your hero of drama and serial;
All of us know where you dug the material
Whence he was molded—'tis almost a platitude;
Yet your detective, in shameless ingratitude—
Sherlock your sleuthhound with motives ulterior
Sneers at Poe's "Dupin" as "very inferior!"
Labels Gaboriau's clever "Lecoq," indeed,
Merely "a bungler," a creature to mock, indeed!

This, when your plots and your methods in story
owe

More than a trifle to Poe and Gaboriau,
Sets all the Muses of Helicon sorrowing.
Borrow, Sir Knight, but be decent in borrowing!
Still let us own that your bent is a cheery one,
Little you've written to bore or to weary one,
Plenty that's slovenly, nothing with harm in it,
Much with abundance of vigor and charm in it.
Give me detectives with brains analytical
Rather than weaklings with morals mephitical—
Stories of battles and man's intrepidity
Rather than wails of neurotic morbidity!
Give me adventures and fierce dinotheriums
Rather than Hewlett's ecstatic deliriums!
Frankly, Sir Conan, some hours I've eased with
you
And, on the whole, I am pretty well pleased with
you.

II

TO J. M. BARRIE

WHAT are you busy at, Barrie, my laddie-boy?
Is it you're golfing, pursued by a caddie-boy?
Man, are you preaching, romancing or joking
now?

What is the blend of tobacco you're smoking now?
Maybe you're writing in hoot-awa' dialect
Sketches of orthodox elders and high, elect
Kirkmen of Glasgow, or Thrums, or Glen Quharity,
Long on religion yet lacking in charity,
Banning all pleasures as covertly sinister.
Give us some news of your braw Little Minister
All in your true, Ecclefechan-Glengarry-tone—
Where is the voice that is sweeter than Barrie-
tone?

There on my table with covers all gilded up,
Peter and Wendy—the book you have builded
up

Out of the games we've all played but forgot
about,

Out of the dreams that you know such a lot
about—

Spreads, to recall to us poor ephemerides,
How once we roved in the Golden Hesperides,
Roved in our childhood when dreams were realities.

Come! Let's adventure in new principalities;

Fly through the blue empyrean, ecstatical;

Skirmish with Injuns and villains piratical;

Battle with lions and monsters reptilian;

Slip from the gnashings of jaws crocodilian;

Massacre grizzlies and tigers Hyrcanian;

Wander in wonderful caves subterranean;

Build in those underworlds marvelous palaces

Proving the dogmas of physics pure fallacies;

Dance with the mermaids and cope with those
subtle fish,

Shark and octopus and terrible cuttle-fish;

Sport in the tree-tops with monkeys that hand
to us

Mangoes and nuts and are perfectly grand to us;

Dig buried treasure in islands with cannibals;

Conquer like Cæsars, Napoleons, Hannibals!

Be but our leader, and fearless we'll follow you,
Aye, though the maw of Leviathan swallow you!

Old are the dreamers who, when they awake, be-
lieve

All that they dreamed in their childhood was
make-believe.

Older are they who, engrossed in endeavor, land
Seldom or never at all in your Neverland.

Oldest are they that forget, in their gravity,
E'en that they dreamed in their youth and de-
pravity,

Plodding and grubbing to win just a penny more,
Too dull to sigh for Arcadia any more!

Surely, such renegades we shall not show our-
selves.

Must we grow up—like them? Not if we know
ourselves!

III

TO MAURICE HEWLETT

Who's the romancer to tax our credulities?
Who but our hero, Sir Maurice de Hewlett, is!
Have I been reading your "Song of the Renny"
thing?

Sure! and it's quite too exciting for anything.
Oh, but your ladies and knights are a fancy lot—
Pikpoynts and Blanchmains, Mabilla and Lance-
ilhot,

Borrowed from legend or chivalric chronicle,
Fierce-hearted women folk, braggarts thrasonical,
Nobles as gross as the Nile hippopotami,
Lawless and lustful and skilled in phlebotomy,
Villains that stab while the victim negotiates—
Hardly the kind one prefers as associates,
Innocent maidens enmeshed in the scheme of
things—

Do you eat mince-pie to help you to dream of
things?

Faith, 'tis a bedlam, the realm that you write
about,

Freckled with castles and ladies to fight about.
Aye, 'tis a kingdom for raising the devil in,
Such as good Brother Jack London would
revel in.

Bold is your fancy and wildly pictorial,
Strangely controlled and yet phantasmagorial.
Like your old churchmen you strive to illuminize,
Yet, in creating, you only half humanize,
Making your knights and their lovely affinities
Not men and women, but fallen divinities
Driven by Fate and their passions tyrannical.
Then,—but you'll say that I'm too Puritanical.
Though your morality somewhat too porous is,
You can sling language to beat the thesauruses.
So, go ahead with your epics of greater days,
Making us glad that we're living in later days.
Sing us your Iliads, Eddas, and Odysseys,
Sing us of ladies with palpitant bodices,
Long-sworded bravos and helmeted paladins,
Troubadours, vavasours, Richards, and Saladins!
Sing us of demoiselles, proudly imperial,
Clad in some soft, gauzy, purple material;

Sing us of donjon, portcullis, and bartizan,
Sing us of battle-ax, falchion, and partisan!
Sing us of females that strangle their relatives,
Sing us of poets with pretty appellatives,
Sing of the loves of the lamellibranchia—
Anything's better than Senhouse and Sanchia!

RHYMED REVIEW

BELLA DONNA, BY ROBERT HICHENS

THE Nile: Adorn our painted scene
With dahabeeyahs, sphinxes, scarabs
And choruses of fellaheen,
Saadeyehs, donkey-boys, and Arabs.

Here Nigel Armine brought his wife,
“La Bella Donna”—not to trim it,
A lady with a checkered life,
Prepared to go beyond the limit.

Idyllic love, divine but tame,
Had left her peevish, bored, and moody,
When up the Nile Diversion came—
A Greek-Egyptian called Baroudi—

A millionaire with noble head,
Soft voice, and eyes of burning glances,
The sort of scamp expressly bred
For recent white-and-tan romances,—

Who made her woo him. Sad to state,
His love was purely Oriental;
Which means, about the lady's fate
He didn't care a continental.

They met on shadowed desert scaurs,
Baroudi's tent the couple screening.

“* * * * *”

(Observe, I quote these little stars;
Let Mr. Hichens clear their meaning).

He dropped a hint; she snatched it up.
With powdered lead in rank solution
She dosed her husband's coffee-cup
And would have wrecked his constitution.

But ere the fatal work was done
Appeared that heaven-sent physician
The famous Doctor Isaacson,
A Sherlock Holmes for intuition,

To spoil the game. With little ruth
He rent her sweet, angelic cover;
So Bella Donna owned the truth
And fled by night to join her lover.

He cast her off. In blinded haste,
Before the birds began to twitter,
She staggered far across the waste—
I hope to God a lion bit her!

DIVINA COMMEDIA

BEYOND the Pleiades:

“Your name?”

“Sam Clemens, please.”

“Don’t know you. Where in space
D’you hail from?”

“Earth.”

“What place

Is that?”

“A place for fun.”

“Hmp!—tell me what you’ve done.”

“Let’s see.—I wrote *Huck Finn*—”

“What?—Mark!—Why, come right in!”

THE YOUNG CELTIC POETS

(WITH THANKS TO G. K. CHESTERTON)

THEIR hearts are bowed with sorrow,
They love to wail and croon;
They shed big tears when they sigh, "Machree,"
Floods when they sob, "Aroon!"

For the Young Gaels of Ireland
Are the lads that drive me mad;
For half their words need foot-notes,
And half their rhymes are bad.

MAVRONE

(ONE OF THOSE SAD IRISH POEMS, WITH NOTES)

FROM Arranmore the weary miles I've come;
An' all the way I've heard
A Shrawn¹ that's kep' me silent, speechless, dumb,
Not sayin' any word.
An' was it then the Shrawn of Eire,² you'll
say,
For him that died the death on Carrisbool?
It was not that; nor was it, by the way,
The Sons of Garnim³ blitherin' their drool;

¹A Shrawn is a pure Gaelic noise, something like a groan, more like a shriek, and most like a sigh of longing.

²Eire was daughter of Carne, King of Connaught. Her lover, Murdh of the Open Hand, was captured by Greatcoat Mackintosh, King of Ulster, on the plain of Carrisbool, and made into soup. Eire's grief on this sad occasion has become proverbial.

³Garnim was second cousin to Manannan MacLir. His sons were always sad about something. There were twenty-two of them, and they were all unfortunate in love at the same time, just like a chorus at the opera. "Blitherin' their drool" is about the same as "dreeing their weird."

Nor was it any Crowdie of the Shee,¹
Or Itt, or Himm, nor wail of Barryhoo²
For Barrywhich that stilled the tongue of me.
'Twas but my own heart cryin' out for you,
Magraw!³ Bulleen, Shinnanigan, Boru,
Aroon, Machree, Aboo!⁴

¹The Shee (or "Sidhe," as I should properly spell it if you were not so ignorant) were, as everybody knows, the regular, stand-pat, organization fairies of Erin. The Crowdie was their annual convention, at which they made melancholy sounds. The Itt and Himm were the irregular, or insurgent, fairies. They *never* got any offices or patronage. See MacAlester, *Polity of the Sidhe of West Meath*, page 985.

²The Barryhoo is an ancient Celtic bird about the size of a Mavis, with lavender eyes and a black-cape tail. It continually mourns its mate (Barrywhich, feminine form), which has an hereditary predisposition to an early and tragic demise and invariably dies first.

³Magraw, a Gaelic term of endearment, often heard on the baseball fields of Donnybrook.

⁴These last six words are all that tradition has preserved of the original incantation by means of which Irish rats were rhymed to death. Thereby hangs a good Celtic tale, which I should be glad to tell you in this note; but the publishers say that being prosed to death is as bad as being rhymed to death, and that the readers won't stand for any more.

THE WRATH OF THE POET

I'M telling ye now of a hero of story—

The Seanachan, chief of the bards of his time,
That harped before Guairè the King in his glory
And proved to all Connaught the Power of Rhyme.

When all in the palace was having a gay time
The Seanachan entered, the brisk little man;
“Mille failthe!” sez the King; “ye’re as welcome
as Maytime!

And what are ye eating? and fill up yer can!

“The whisky’s forninst ye, the pot’s on the bubble;
And won’t ye be having a slice of the leg?”

“My thanks,” sez the Bard; “am I giving ye
trouble

To ask them to boil me a bit of an egg?”

They boiled him an egg and they brought it to
table;

But while he was tuning his harp for a lay,

The crafty old Rats from the cellar was able
To reach the Bard's dinner and roll it away!

And when he perceived how them Rats had been
thieving,

His wrath was tremendous, his anger was strong;
He knew that his dinner was gone past retrieving,
And hurled at the scamps all the might of his
song.

He sang of their wives and their sons and rela-
tions;

He sneered at their habits, the taints of their
blood,

He blazoned the sins of their past generations
And all their great-grandmothers back to the
Flood.

Now mind ye, the words that he used in his
jeering

Were those of a Poet well taught and well
bred;

Still, since there is always some ladies in hearing
'Tis best to forget what he sang and he said.

But, ah, the poor Rats! When those wretched
 rapscallions
 Had felt the full wrath of the Bard they'd
 defied,
They crawled from their crannies in troops and
 battalions,
And, lifting their pitiful paws up, they died!

So mark what I'm telling, ye saucy gossoon ye!
 Don't anger a Poet, whatever ye're at,
For fear he should curse ye, defame ye, lampoon ye,
 And rhyme ye to death like an old Irish Rat!

THE NEO-CELTIC CRITICISM

WASN'T ye there when the Celtic tragedians
Played to a houseful of Irish comedians—
All of them zealous in matters Hibernian,
Full of the ripest of Dublin Falernian—
All of them experts, entitled to criticize,
Laden with eggs to assist them to witticize?

Plain was the stage, and the costumes was peasant-like;

All the proceedings was easy and pleasant-like,
Till, says the Hero (a queer Irish laddie, now!),
“Sure, an’ I’m just after killin’ me daddy, now.”

Up from his seat jumped a critic meticulous:
“Bosh!” says he loudly; “’tis vile an’ ridiculous!”
And, for to prove that his judgment was plenary,
Hove a potato right into the scenery!
“Yes,” says another, “I fully agree with ye.
Erin, sweet Erin, they’re making too free with ye!

Such fabrications are false and felonious;
Here's a tomato that brands them erroneous!"
"Sir," cried a third, "yer position's invincible!"—
Hurling an egg in defense of the Principle.
"Aye," chimed a fourth, and to clinch it, upsetted a
Critical vial of pure asafœtida.
Then came a shower of erudite reasoning—
Cabbages, turnips, and pepper for seasoning—
Till, though undaunted, the Irish Melpomene
Saw all the stars in the book of astronomy.

Now to the aid of the criticized player folk
Rushed the policemen, rebutting the gayer folk,
Out through the lobby persuasively booting them,
Using their clubs in the way of confuting them.
When in discussion the Bluecoats had bested them,
Straightway *those* fine Irish critics arrested them.

Scolding the culprits, says Magistrate Corrigan,
"Don't ye be doing the like any more again.
Shut up your mouths! I don't want any speech of ye;
Ten paper dollars I'm asking from each of ye.
And, ye'll remember, when next ye are hating things,
Clubs are the old Irish means of debating things!"

THE VILLAIN PROTESTS

A NOVEL (published by Macmillan)
Is now before you; I'm the Villain.
For, though a Villain I abhor,
That's what my Author means me for.

Now, if your intellect's alert, you
Will know that I'm in love with Virtue;
Yet, all to help the story, I'm
Foredoomed to Wickedness and Crime.

A sad predestination this is—
To work for meed of groans and hisses,
To shuffle, cozen, slay and rob
And fail!—however, that's my job.

A Hero may be vain or idle
Or dissolute or homicidal;
But *he* is privileged, and so
Emerges whitewashed, pure as snow.

Then what determines who in fiction
Shall have your praise or malediction—
Yes, who shall be the Villain, who
The Hero?—Just a Point of View!

Does anybody doubt that Nero
In his own story was the hero?
While Washington, I've somewhere heard,
Was not revered by George the Third.

So, Gentle Reader, judge me rightly
And see a Hero, brave and knightly,
Resolved to foil, by hook or crook,
The Caitiff Author of this book!

My plots shall all be most successful;
I'll win the Heroine distressful
(Her love is all a body needs
To sanctify his darkest deeds).

My adversaries I'll belabor;
And when upon my flashing saber
That Other Fellow I impale,
I'll be the Hero of this tale!

OPERA IN ENGLISH: AÏDA

THE other night I went with Vida
To hear the opera, "Aïda,"
Which offers musical descriptions
Of love among the old Egyptians.
Amneris,—(lovely Madame Homer,
A star, and that is no misnomer)—
A Princess, was exceeding partial
To young Radames, brave and martial,
Whose heart, alas! was palpitating
About the royal maid-in-waiting
Aïda—(Madame Emmy Destinn,
Who really didn't look her best in
A sable frock with golden borders).
Radames, getting marching orders,
Led forth to war his gallant bowmen
And soon returned with captive foemen,
Among these luckless ones, a rather
Unruly chief, Aïda's father!

(A king of Ethiopic shepherds
Arrayed in skins of spotty leopards.)
Radames, loath to treat severely
The kin of her he loved so dearly,
Implored the priests to loose his chattel.
Radames having won a battle,
The council felt obliged to heed him.
They cheered the captive king and freed him.
The savage king proved aught but grateful;
He growled, "Your Egypt's simply hateful!
Hist! Friend Radames, take my daughter;
We'll flee afar from chains and slaughter;
Amid the pleasant desert places
I'll make you lord of other races!"
The plotters three away were winging
When all the others heard them singing
And found their song sufficient reason
To cast them into jail for treason.
Now came Amneris, half-demented;
She cried, "Radames, they've consented
To spare you if, no more a rover,
You'll swear to throw Aïda over!"
Radames (Signor E. Caruso),
Refusing stubbornly to do so,

They buried him beneath the pavement!
Aïda shared his quick begravement,
And so they perished,—Heaven love them!—
Amneris shedding tears above them.

WHAT THE EDITOR WANTS

MY dear Mr. Inkling:
We want in a twinkling
A story just tinkling .
 With humor and zest;
Not gloomy or fearful
Or morbid or tearful
But pleasant and cheerful—
 And one of your best.

The kind that we meet with
But seldom; a treat with
A plot that's replete with
 Heart interest, you know;
Original, truly;
And yet not unduly
Bizarre or unruly,
 But quite *comme il faut*.

We like brisk narrations
With bright conversations

And lively flirtations
 (That end with a ring),
Or young politicians
And maidens with missions
Who better Conditions
 And that sort of thing.

We're fond of the prattle
Of punchers of cattle;
We'll stand for the rattle
 Of guns, and a deal
Of ranch or hacienda;
Or maybe you'll send a
Romance à la Zenda
 All flashing with steel.

We trust that you're shipping
A tale simply ripping
And virile and gripping,
 Yet nothing above
Our Readers, nor slushy
Nor mushy nor gushy,
But—oh, slightly blushy,
 With plenty of love!

L'ENVOI

THE MENTORS

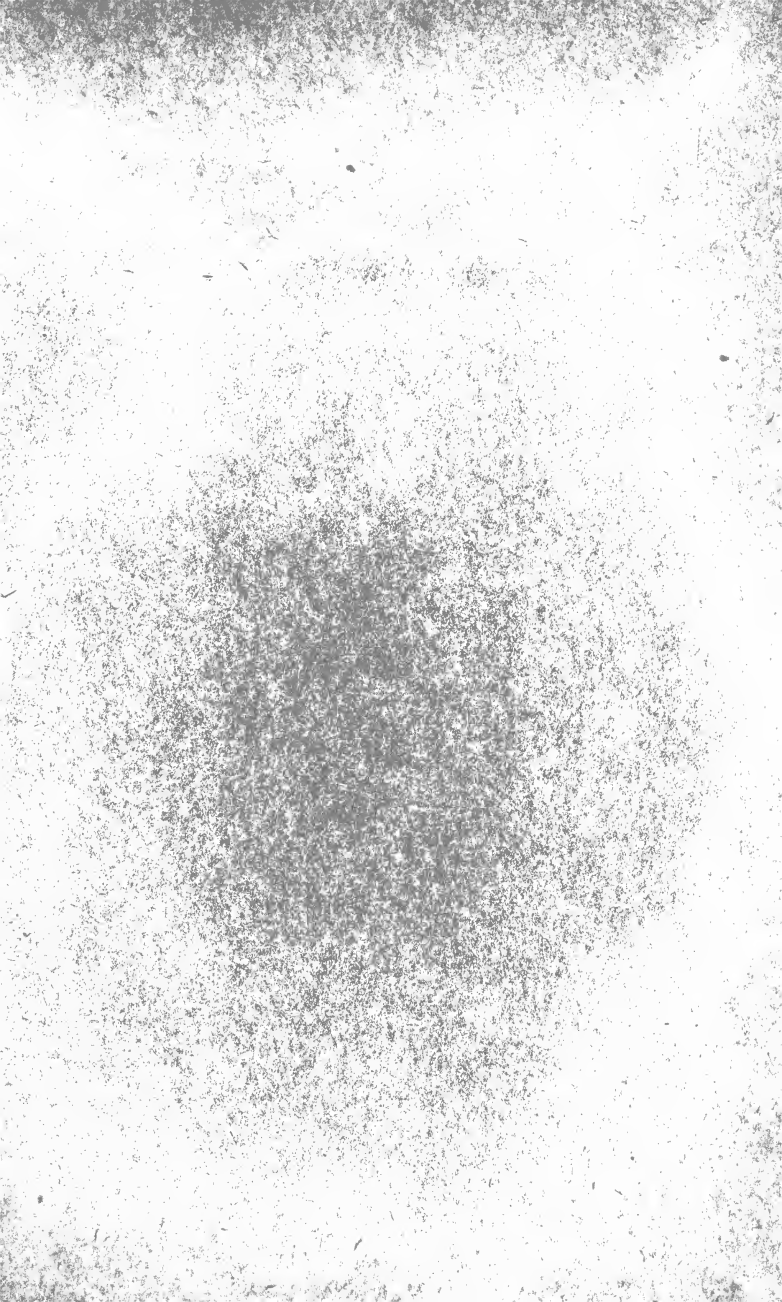
My table holds a book, well scored,
 A simple gift my mother gave;
Above my couch-head hangs a sword,
 A sword that helped to free the slave.

My shelves are bare of costly books,
 My walls of works that Art would prize,
But down upon me ever looks
 One pictured face with constant eyes.

These give me strength to speak to men
 What truth I know; they cheer Defeat,
They counsel Doubt; they rule my pen,
 Three mentors, wise and strong and sweet.

No bitter word I dare to trace,
 No craven thought, no phrase untrue,
While Book and Sword and your dear face
 Keep watch and ward on all I do.





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