

NEW BOOKS.

'PERSEPHONE AND OTHER POEMS,' BY K. MCCOSH CLARK.*

IT is with anticipatory feelings of pleasure that we take up the volume of poems bearing the above title. For the memory of Mrs McCosh Clark's 'A Southern Cross Fairy Tale' still lingers in New Zealand, and further contributions to current literature from the same pen command attention and excite interest. No disappointment awaits the peruser of 'Persephone and Other Poems'; rather, indeed, in this case does the realisation exceed the anticipation. Mrs McCosh Clark has given to the world a thoroughly readable book of poetry. There is a pure, clear ring about these poems, a healthy tone, a light and graceful touch which makes them specially acceptable at a time when women writers are soiling their hands with all kinds of questionable productions in the shape of literary matter. Take, for instance, the title poem, Persephone, and the description of the maiden:—

Luxuriant tresses fell
In clouds of golden splendour to her feet,
And standing close to me, in the pale light,
I saw the white gleam of the outstretched arms,
The rounded neck, the sinuous lines, the grace
Of perfect womanhood: And what more fair?
But in her eyes there lay the veiled light
That shines when love is purified by pain.

Here is conveyed an excellent idea of what a woman's beauty might be in aptly and carefully chosen words which cannot be condemned by the most fastidious reader. But despite this avoidance of the modern method of introducing unpleasant topics into books intended for general perusal, the volume is not in the least namby-pamby. On the contrary, some of the poems are vigorous and manly in style, bracing and elevating in tone.

IN ECHO AND NARCISUS.

O youth,
Or fame, see but yourselves: ye waste your strength,
If naught but self reflects in all ye see!
Strength ever grows through love, and when 'tis merged
Into some other life outside your own,
It straight forgets its selfish aims, and seeks
To work a wider good.

A great man's fame
With clarion sound is heralded from age
To age, and as the centuries roll on
And myriads of lesser lives pass by
And are forgot, his name yet lives on lips
Of men, sounding through all hereafters.

Quite in a different style, and marked by a naturalness

and daintiness of touch and fresh country scents which is very attractive, is the poem entitled:

A FARM IDYL.

She was a maiden rosy—bright as any posy,
He was nothing but a ploughboy, rough and strong—
But he loved to walk beside her, where the drooping boughs
Could hide her,
And the daffodils kept nodding all day long!

No queen he thought was fairer—no grace was ever rarer,
As she carried her bright pall and milking stool;
But, ah! he could not utter what he thought, but only stutter,
And the daffodils kept nodding 'He's a fool!'

One day as he was sitting close to Molly busy knitting,
She dropped a stitch just in the stocking heel;
He blurted out, 'A lover should that lost stitch recover!'—
And the daffodils kept nodding 'He should kneel.'

But in his clumsy fingers the needle stiffly lingers,
Till Molly, all impatient of delay,
Said, 'If you really are my lover, why do you not discover
That I mean far more than any girl can say?'

He laid the knitting lightly on the settle shining brightly,
As he looked into the pretty hazel eyes,
And he sighed, 'If you do love me, don't speak, but gently shove
me,
And the daffodils kept nodding in surprise.

So red as any clover, she got closer to her lover,
And looked into the embers burning low,
And her blushes said, 'I'd miss ye, Johnny dear, why don't you
kiss me,
And the daffodils they nodded 'Ay, just so!'

Some of the love poems are very pretty, such as the one beginning,

'Dear, draw my lips to thine in sweetest bliss,'

and 'Edelweiss.'

There is not wanting, too, the pathos in Mrs McCosh Clark's poetry without which no true poet ever sings:

Yes, surely dear ones from the shadow land
Soothe with their mystic presence those who mourn,
And hover o'er us, as we wailing stand
Gazing beyond life's bourne.

For often in the silent brooding hour,
Some subtle sweetness mingles with our pain,
And, warm, in fancy, long-lost kisses shower
Upon our lips again,

And again in 'The Bells':—

Ah! snow! fall gently on the new-turned sod,
Where I have left my cherished one with God.

Of the more ambitious poems, 'Niobe,' 'Socrates,' etc., we have no space to speak, but they can be left with confidence to the warm approval of an appreciative public, who cannot do better when they want to enrich their postural libraries or send an acceptable gift to a friend than purchase a copy of 'Persephone.'

The volume is prettily bound in green and white touched

with gold. The paper is of the fashionable rough style, and the printing is acceptably clear; all of which conduce to the pleasure of adding these poems to one's own or one's friend's collection.

London: Sampson Low, Marston and Company.

'FOLLOW ME 'OME.'

THERE was no one like 'im, 'Orse or Foot,
Nor any o' the Guns I knew;
An' because it was so, why, o' course 'e went an' died,
Which is just what the best men do.

So it's knock out your pipes an' follow me!
An' it's finish up your swipes an' follow me!
Oh, 'ark to the big drum callin'—
Follow me—follow me 'ome!

'Is mare she neigs the 'ole day long,
She paws the 'ole night through,
An' she won't take 'er feed 'cause o' waitin' for 'is step,
Which is just what a beast would do.

'Is girl she goes with a bombardier,
Before 'er month is through, (hooked,
An' the banns are up in church, for she's got the beggar
Which is just what a girl would do.

We fought 'bout a dog—last week it were—
No more than a round or two;
But I strook 'im cruel 'ard, an' I wish I 'adn't now,
Which is just what a man can't do.

'E was all that I 'ad in the way of a friend,
An' I've 'ad to find one new;
But I'd give my pay an' stripe for to get the beggar back
Which it's just too late to do.

So it's knock out your pipes an' follow me,
An' it's finish off your swipes an' follow me.
Oh, 'ark to the files a crawlin'!
Follow me—follow me 'ome!

Take 'im away! 'E's gone where the best men go.
Take 'im away! An' the gun wheels turnin' slow.
Take 'im away! There's more from the place 'e come.
Take 'im away, with the limber an' the drum.

For it's 'Three rounds blank' an' follow me,
An' it's 'Thirteen rank' an' follow me;
Oh, passin' the love o' woman,
Follow me—follow me 'ome!

RUDYARD KIPLING.

PEARS

Soap Makers



By Special Appointment
TO
HER MAJESTY

The Queen

AND



HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE
Prince of Wales.

Mr. John L. Milton

Senior Surgeon
St. John's Hospital for the Skin, London.

"From time to time I have tried very many different soaps and after five-and-twenty years careful observation in many thousands of cases, both in hospital and private practice, have no hesitation in stating that none have answered so well or proved so beneficial to the skin as PEAR'S SOAP. Time and more extended trials have only served to ratify this opinion which I first expressed upwards of ten years ago, and to increase my confidence in this admirable preparation."

**PROFESSOR
Sir Erasmus Wilson**

Late President
Royal College of Surgeons, England.

"The use of a good soap is certainly calculated to preserve the skin in health, to maintain its complexion and tone, and prevent it falling into wrinkles. PEAR'S is a name engraved on the memory of the oldest inhabitant; and PEAR'S SOAP is an article of the nicest and most careful manufacture, and one of the most refreshing and agreeable of balms for the skin."