

Verse Old and New.

A Confession.

DEAR little boy, with wondering eyes
That for the light of knowledge yearn,
Who have such faith that I am wise
And know the things that you would learn.
Though oft I shake my head and smile
To hear your childish questions flow,
I must not meet your faith with guile;
I cannot tell, I do not know.

Dear little boy, with eager heart,
Forever on the quest of truth,
Your riddles oft are past my art
To answer to your tender youth.
But some day you will understand
The things that now I cannot say,
When life shall take you by the hand
And lead you on its wondrous way.

Dear little boy, with hand in mine,
Together through the world we fare,
Where much that I would fain divine
I have not yet the strength to bear.
Like you with riddling words I ask,
Like you I hold another hand,
And haply when I do my task,
I, too, shall understand.

—P. McArthur.

The Desert.

Now mark you, God made Him an Eden,
Of old,
And made Him a man and a maid:
He gave them to live in His garden of love,
To live with Him there unafraid.
They ate of the fruits and the honey,
They took of the knowledge and lust,
Then fled from the punishment bitter
And humbled themselves in the dust

To pray and beseech Him for mercy,
As all of the penitent must.

Then, mark you, God made Him a mountain,
And, mark you, He made Him a sea,
But life took its root on the topmost crag,
Where it seemed no life could be,
And life was asworn in the deepest cave
That the ocean could fill with His tears,
And the cries and prayers and moans arose
From it all, to seek His ears—
The cries and prayers and moans of things
Alive and filled with fears.

And God was beseeched from morn till night,
And beseeched from night until day
By things that plead to save their lives
The while they fought for prey;
And nowhere peace from the walls and moans
Could God in His anguish know
Till He made Him a place, a desolate place,
Where naught of Life may grow—
A desert as bare as the new-made star,
To which He may sometimes go.

Then hark you, beware of the desert
Where only God may bide—
God all alone, and nothing of Life
In that desolate region wide.
No insect, bird or snake, is there,
No animal, grass or stone,
And all of the man who ventured to cross
Is a whitened and crumbling bone;
For this is the desert that God has made
As a place to be alone!

—Philip Verrill Mighels.

Heart's Desire.

If I could speak, and show you all that lies
Within this heart, would your heart leap and say,
"Thou hast made, ere this living mould of clay?"
Or would you kill those fairies in your eyes,
And turn away your face in cold surprise?
Would your hand find my own, and in that way
Teach me what I have told myself to-day?

—C. Fred Kenyon.

My Sweetheart in Japan.

A little figure, quaintly dressed,
In colours soft, of dove-like shade,
Tho' since I left you years have passed,
You do not from my memory fade.

I seem once more to hear the sound,
The clatter of your clogs of wood,
As you came gaily down the street,
Then stopped to eye me where I stood.

I smiled, and then you laughed aloud,
And bowed in quaintest foreign style;
You wanted me to be your friend,
To stay and play with you awhile.

Soft almond eyes, so dark, yet bright,
To mine were raised with laughing look;
I stooped beneath your parasol,
And from your lips one sly kiss took.

So through those languorous summer days
I lingered still in fair Japan,
While you played soft the samisen,
Or stayed to cool me with your fan.

O, little maid, I see you yet!
Seated on cushions, at your ease,
Trying to lip our English words,
Or teach me your queer Japanese.

Sayonara now, and fare you well,
Forget me not, O-Suna san,
For some bright future summer time,
I'll come once more to fair Japan.

—B. H. Carey.

A Summer Stream.

We met beside the ocean,
In bathing-suits attired,
She smiled on my devotion,
I worshipped—and aspired,
My cup with joy was brimming
When she permitted me
To teach her fancy swimming,
And thanked me graciously.

It did not stop at diving
And sunning on the sand,
I dared to take her driving,
And even squeezed her hand,
I dreamed that in the city
My love I might declare,
And look with scornful pity
On all her suitors there.

But lo! when I intruded
In her Manhattan set,
I might have been included
With those she'd never met,
The story needs no trimming—
I learned the difference grim
"Twixt Dorothy in swimming,
And Dorry "in the swim."

—Frank Roe Batcheller.

Dusk.

Beyond the burning rhapsody of noon
The wind's elusive harp-note in the trees,
Between the sunset and the primrose moon
There is a rapture all unknown of these—

The harmony of twilight. Nature's note,
Prolonged, pellucid, subtler far than song,
Bearing the lifted soul till it doth float
Upon the heart of night and find it strong;

Against this bar the waves of tumult fail
And tides slip back into a silent deep;
The world, beneath a white and windless sail,
Drifts outward to the vaster sea of sleep.

And thought, starlike, doth rise above
Time's shroud
To find there still 'thou twilight of my soul!

—Virginia Woodward Cloud.

Anecdotes and Sketches.

GRAVE, GAY, EPIGRAMMATIC AND OTHERWISE.

The Cause.

CREAM upon scream issued from the tiny cottage, to break the peaceful quiet of the Saturday afternoon. In haste, Police-constable 129 dashed upon the scene. A little boy in cricketing attire opened the door.

"What's up here?" demanded Police-constable 129.

"That's my brother Bill," said the boy. "He's crying because ma has such bad eyesight, and she's deaf, too!"

"Well, well," said the daring officer, as visions of a case and promotion vanished into air; "what a kind, feelin' little chap he must be!"

"Yes, he's feelin'," said the youngster; "Ma's meenin' his cricketin' trousers, and he's got them on!"

The One Essential.

One of the queerest election addresses of which we have any knowledge was published by a purveyor of beer, way up in Barrow. "Fellow Sufferers," said he, "what is the issue now before you? One says the Budget; another says the House of Lords; another Votes for Women; another Home Rule for Ireland; and so on, ad nauseam. Do not be misled. The real question before the country is Pure Beer. . . . You could do without the House of Lords; you could do without votes for women; you could do without skating rinks, football matches, flying machines, or Dreadnoughts; you could even do without Lloyd George; but you could not do without—Bounty's Beautiful Beer." One hopes it isn't all froth, anyway.

A Valuable Signature.

As is well known, Whistler's professional as well as legal signature was a butterfly. It appeared on his paintings, and was the only signature recognised at the bank. Autograph fiends schemed in vain, and would have paid handsomely for Whistler's autograph in script.

One day the painter was visited in his studio by a Jew, who appeared to be very angry. He had received Whistler's cheque for £1 5/, and wrathfully demanded a proper signature that would draw the money at the bank.

Whistler, genuinely enraged at the thought that there could be anyone so ignorant as not to know about the famous butterfly, wrote his name on the cheque, knowing that the bank would refuse it, and picturing to himself with joy the Jew's punishment in forfeiting the £1 5/ owing to him.

The next day the painter was furious on learning that within an hour the Jew had sold the rare signature for £62.

A man who had been convicted of stealing was brought before a certain judge, well-known for his tender-heartedness, to be sentenced.

"Have you ever been sentenced to imprisonment?" asked the judge, not unkindly.

"Never!" exclaimed the prisoner, suddenly bursting into tears.

"Well, well, don't cry, my man," said his Honor, consolingly, "you're going to be free."

Truly Polite.

As a truly polite nation the French undoubtedly lead the world. The other day a famous Paris dentist's servant opened the door to a workless patient. "And whom, m'sieu," he queried with tender regard, "shall I have the misery of announcing?"

Why He Couldn't.

"I can read you like a book, Lord Dabstet," said the laughing father, a wealthy publisher, who had listened to the proposal for the hand of the fair daughter.

"Like a book, sir? What do you mean?"

"You've got an attractive title, but I don't like the way you seem to be bound. Your type is bad, and your development is poor. Your principal character is not well defined, and the best place for you would be on a shelf—and a back one at that."

The Politician Bird.

Wife (reading): "Isn't this funny, my dear? Here's an article which says they have found a new species of birds in Australia which have four legs. Now, whatever do you suppose they want four legs for?"

Husband (yawning): "They are probably politicians, my love, and by this beautiful dispensation of their Creator they are enabled to stand on both sides of the fence at the same time."

"Great Caesar! old man!" exclaimed the ginner as he opened the door and found his friend's house brilliantly illuminated at noonday. "What does this mean? Why are all these blankets over the window, and why is the gas burning in the daytime?"

"Sh!" whispered Guyer cautiously; "it's a scheme of mine."

"What kind of a scheme?"
"Why, my wife is in the country, and I tell her I remain home every night and read. I've got to get rid of the gas somehow, so it will go on the bill at the end of the month."



"Is that all you've killed?"
"Yes."
"Come for a ride with me."