

# Verse Old and New.

**Oceans.**  
**W**HILE still the dusk impends,  
above the glimmering  
waste  
A tremor comes: wave after  
wave turns silvery bright:  
A sudden yellow gleam athwart the east  
is traced:  
The waning stars fade forth, swift  
perishing pyres.  
The moon lies glearily wan upon the  
front of Night.  
Then all at once upheals a flood of golden  
light.  
And a myriad waves dash forth a  
myriad throes:  
Now is the hour the amplest glory of life  
to taste.  
Out-winning towards the sun upon the  
billowy waste.  
The pure green waves with crests of  
dazzling foam ashine,  
Onward they roll: immemurably grand,  
they leet  
A wild and jubilant triumph-music all  
again!  
The sea-fowl, their white kindred of  
the spray-swept air,  
Scream joyous echoes as with wave-  
dipped pinions fleet  
They whirl before the blast or vanish  
mid blown sheet.  
In loud-resounding, strenuous, conquer-  
ing play they fare,  
Like clouds, high over head, forgotten  
lands of the brine—  
Great combing deep-sea waves with sun-  
lit foam ashine.  
On the wild wastes she lives her lawless,  
passionate life:  
Enslaved of none, the imperious mighty  
Sea!  
How glorious the music of her waves at  
leisure  
With all the winds of heaven that,  
Rerely wooing, blow!

On high she ever chants her psalm of  
Victory;  
Afar her turbulent paen tells that she  
is free:  
The tireless albatross with wings like  
foam or snow  
Flies leagues on leagues for days, and  
yet the world seems rife  
With nought save windy waves and the  
Sea's wild free life!  
How oft the strange, wild, haunting  
glamour of the Sea,  
The strange, compelling magic of her  
thrilling Voice,  
Have won me, when, 'mid lonely places,  
wild and free  
As any wand'ring wind, I have heard  
along the shore  
The wondrous ever-varying Sea-song  
loud rejoice,  
I have seen a snowy petrel, arising,  
poise  
Above the green-sloped wave, then pass  
for evermore  
From keenest sight, and I have thought  
that I might be  
Thus also deathward lured by glamour  
of the Sea.  
Hark to the long resilient surge of the  
obbing tide:  
With shingly rush and roar it foams  
adown the strand:  
The great Sea heaves her restless bosom  
far and wide—  
Headless she seems of winds and all the  
forceful laws  
That bar her empire over the usurping  
Land:  
Enough, she dreams, is her imperial  
command  
To make the very torrents, waveward  
falling, pause:  
She scorns the Bridegroom-Land, yet is  
a subject Bride  
For she must come and go with each  
securrent tide.

On moonless nights, when winds are still,  
her stealthy wanes  
Creep towards the listening land; with  
voices soft and low  
They whisper strange sea-secrets 'mid  
the hollow caves:  
A wondrous song it is that rises then  
and falls!  
Deep-buried memories of the ancient  
long-ago  
Confused strange echoes of some van-  
ished old-world woe,  
Weird prophecies reverberant round  
those wave-worn walls:  
When loud the wrathful billows roar and  
the Sea rages  
Her deepest mourning broods beneath  
the foaming waves.  
As some aerial spirit weaves a rain-bow  
veil  
Of mist, his high immortal loveliness  
to hide;  
So too thy palpitant waters, duskily pale,  
 Ofttimes takes on a sudden splendour  
wild.  
Then they sea-horses rise, fierce pranc-  
ing side by side,  
And—like the host of the dead-arisen  
—ride  
Ghastly afar to bournes where all the  
dead lie piled!  
Superb, fantastic, crowd'd with flying  
splendour frail,  
Thou, when in dreams, thou weav'st thy  
phosphorescent veil!  
Vast, vast, immeasurably vast, thy  
dreadful peace  
When heaving with slow, mighty  
breath thou leet  
In utter rest, and dost thy ministering  
winds release  
So that with folded wings they too  
subside,  
Flirting through hollow spaces, though  
the highest  
Stirs his long treacherous pinions when  
thou sigh'st!  
Then in thy soul, that doth in fathom-  
less depths abide,  
All wild desires and turbulent longings  
cease—  
Profound, immeasurable then, thy dread-  
ful peace!  
But in thy moon of night, serene as  
death, when under

The terrible silence of that arched  
dome  
Not a lost whisper ev'n of thy wandering  
thunder  
Ascends like the spiral smoke of perish-  
ing flame,  
Nor dying waves on thy swart bosom  
sinks in foam—  
Then, then the world is thine, thy  
heritage, thy home!  
What then for thee, O Sea, thou  
Terror! or what p'ine  
To call thee by, thou Sphinx, thou Mys-  
tery, thou Wonder  
Above thou art Living Death, Oblivion  
under!

— Fiona MacLeod.



## The Never Never Land.

There's a spot where skies of turquoise  
blue  
Bend over a sapphire ocean;  
Where a beach of mellow golden hue  
Is lapped by the wavelets' motion,  
To gaze on those skies and seas serene  
I've travelled on trains and coasters;  
But, alas! the spot is never seen,  
Except on the railway posters.  
There's a beach where maidens lithe and  
slim  
Attract with seductive glances,  
As they dance and play, or smoothly  
swim  
Where the creamy sea foam dances,  
On the rocks they back, like fair Undine,  
And the zephyrs soothe their  
slumbers;  
But, alas! their forms are only seen  
In the coloured summer numbers.  
There's a spot where sunshine reigns  
supreme,  
While elsewhere we're drenched with  
showers,  
Where (while we shiver 'neath East  
winds' scream)  
The residents bask 'mid flowers,  
It's Nice, and Eden, and Heav'n com-  
bined—  
A scene such as Beerbohm stages;  
But, alas! this spot I cannot find  
Except in the guide-books' pages.

— C. W. C.

# Anecdotes and Sketches.

## GRAVE, GAY, EPIGRAMMATIC AND OTHERWISE

### The Mysterious Handful.

A TROUPE of wandering musicians  
were playing before a Swiss  
hotel. At the end of the per-  
formance one of the members  
left the group, approached the leader of  
the band and pulled out a little paper  
box, which he emptied into his left hand  
while the eyes of the leader followed every  
movement.  
He then took a plate in his right hand,  
passed it around, and a large sum was  
collected, everyone meanwhile wondering  
what he held in his left hand.  
"Why, it's very simple," said the leader  
when questioned. "We are all subject to  
temptation, and to be sure of the fidelity  
of our collector he has to hold five flies in  
his left hand, and we count those when  
he returns, to make sure of the money."

### Merely Suggested.

"Keep your seats, please, ladies and  
gentlemen," said a theatrical manager,  
"there is no danger, but for some inex-  
plorable reason the gas has gone out."  
Then a boy shouted from the gallery:  
"Perhaps it didn't like the play?"

### The Irish Jury.

Some years ago, while attending the  
Colonial Assize, I witnessed a trial (said  
O'Connell) which I shall never forget. A  
wretched man was charged with the murder  
of his neighbour. The evidence was  
running strong against the prisoner; in  
fact, it was the strongest case of circum-  
stantial evidence I have ever met with.  
As a matter of fact—for of his guilt  
there was no doubt—the prisoner was  
called on for his defence. He failed, to  
the amazement of the whole court, he call-  
ed the murdered man. And the mur-  
dered man came forward!! The case  
was clear; the prisoner was innocent.

The judge told the jury it was unneces-  
sary to charge them. Yet they request-  
ed permission to retire. They returned  
to court in about two hours, when the  
foreman, with a long face, handed in a  
verdict of guilty. Every one was aston-  
ished. "Good God!" cried the judge,  
"of what is he guilty? Not of murder,  
surely?" "No, my lord," replied the  
foreman, "but if he didn't murder the  
man, sure he stole me gray mare three  
years ago."

### Absent-minded.

Absent-minded Prof. Drydust was in  
the habit of having his pet dog sit by  
his side at table, and eat from a plate  
of its own. At a grand dinner party one  
evening the Duchess of Somebody, who  
was next to him at table, wishing to at-  
tract his attention, gently pulled his  
sleeve.  
The old gentleman, interrupted in some  
abstruse mental problem, to the conster-  
nation of all present, mechanically trans-  
ferred a bone from his plate to hers, and  
exclaimed sharply:  
"Oh, get away! don't bother! Here,  
take this out on the mat and eat it!"

### "Not Understood."

The local big-wig's presence in the  
chair at an entertainment was desired,  
and two of the organisers waited upon  
him with a deferential request.  
The required promise was duly obtain-  
ed. "You may rely upon me," said the  
big man. "Friday the 25th, in the parish  
room. It's quite an unsectarian affair, I  
suppose!"  
"Bless your heart, sir," came the reply,  
"the place was only fire-washed last  
week. You won't find nothin' of the  
kind on the premises."

### A Repressed Patriot.

The late Patrick Collins, of Boston, was  
elected president of the Land League and  
visited Ireland soon afterward.  
A barber in Dublin was shaving him.  
"You're Mr. Collins, I'm thinkin'," said  
the barber respectfully.  
"I am," assented Collins through the  
soap.  
"Well, thin," declared the barber,  
flourishing his razor. "I want to tell ye  
that we've twenty thousand brave sons  
of ould Ireland ready to rise at a mo-  
ment's call and throw off the cursed yoke  
of England!"  
Collins preserved a discreet silence until  
he was shaved. As he was putting on his  
collar he asked:  
"Why don't you rise?"  
"Ah," replied the barber, "th' cursed  
constabulary won't let us!"

### Times Have Changed.

"I did not have a very nice time when  
I first went to Annabel's" little Madge  
announced on her return home. "Annabel  
was cross as she could be; she wouldn't  
let me play with her doll or touch one  
of her playthings."  
"Well," replied her mother, "when I  
was your age, had I gone to see a little  
friend and she would not let me touch  
her playthings, I should have gone  
straight home."  
"But times have changed since you  
were a little girl, mother," Madge re-  
plied after the reflection. "I stopped her  
face and stayed."

### An Unfortunate Text.

The widower had just taken his fourth  
wife, and was showing her round the  
village. Among the places visited was  
the churchyard, and the bride passed  
before a very elaborate tombstone that  
had been erected by the bridegroom.  
Being a little near-sighted she asked him  
to read the inscription, and in reverent  
tones he read:  
"Here lies Susan, beloved wife of John  
Smith; also Jane, beloved wife of John  
Smith; also Mary, beloved wife of John  
Smith."  
The paused abruptly, and the bride,  
leaning forward to see the bottom line,  
read, to her horror:  
"Be ye also ready."

### After a Nut.

"What's the child's name?" asked the  
priest of the grandfather at the christen-  
ing.  
"O' Banno," the grandfather replied.  
And he turned to the father and whis-  
pered hoarsely:  
"Wha't's the name?"  
"Hazel," replied the father.  
"Wha't?" asked the grandfather.  
"Hazel," repeated the father.  
The grandfather threw up his hands in  
dismay.  
"Wha't d'ye think ay that?" he asked  
the priest. "With the calendar ay the  
saints full ay gurril names an' him  
namin' his after a nut!"



A MAIDEN EFFORT.