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# THE RUBÁIYÁT OF A BACHELOR

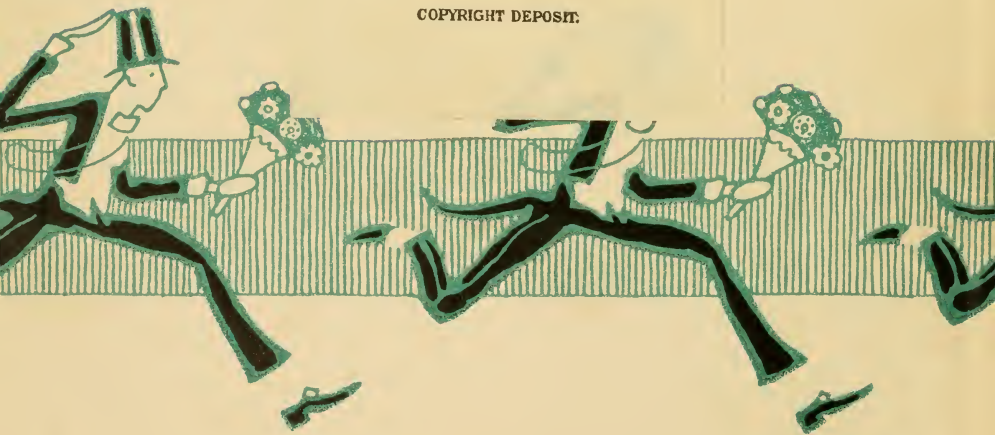


HELEN·ROWLAND



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THE RUBÁIYÁT  
OF F. A. BACHELOR









PROMISED TO PAY A WOMAN'S BILLS FOR LIFE.



# THE RUBÁIYÁT OF F. A. BACHELOR



BY HELEN ROWLAND

DECORATIONS ○○○○ BY ○○○○ HAROLD ○○○○ SPEAKMAN

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NEW YORK

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no 1.

TO  
MY HUSBAND  
WILLIAM HILL-BRERETON  
THIS LITTLE BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY  
DEDICATED





**W**AKE! For the Spring has scattered into flight

The Vows of Lent, and bids the heart be light.

Bring on the Roast, and take the Fish away!

The Season calls—and Woman's eyes are bright!

[7]



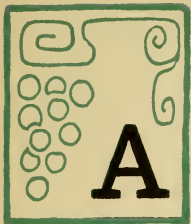


**B**

EFORE the phantom of Pale  
Winter died,  
Methought the Voice of Spring  
within me cried,  
“When Hymen’s rose-decked  
altars glow within,  
Why nods the laggard *Bachelor*  
outside?”

[ 8 ]





AND, at the Signal, I who stood  
before

In idle musing, shouted, "Say no  
more!

You know how little while  
we have to Love—

And Love's light Hand is knock-  
ing at the door!"

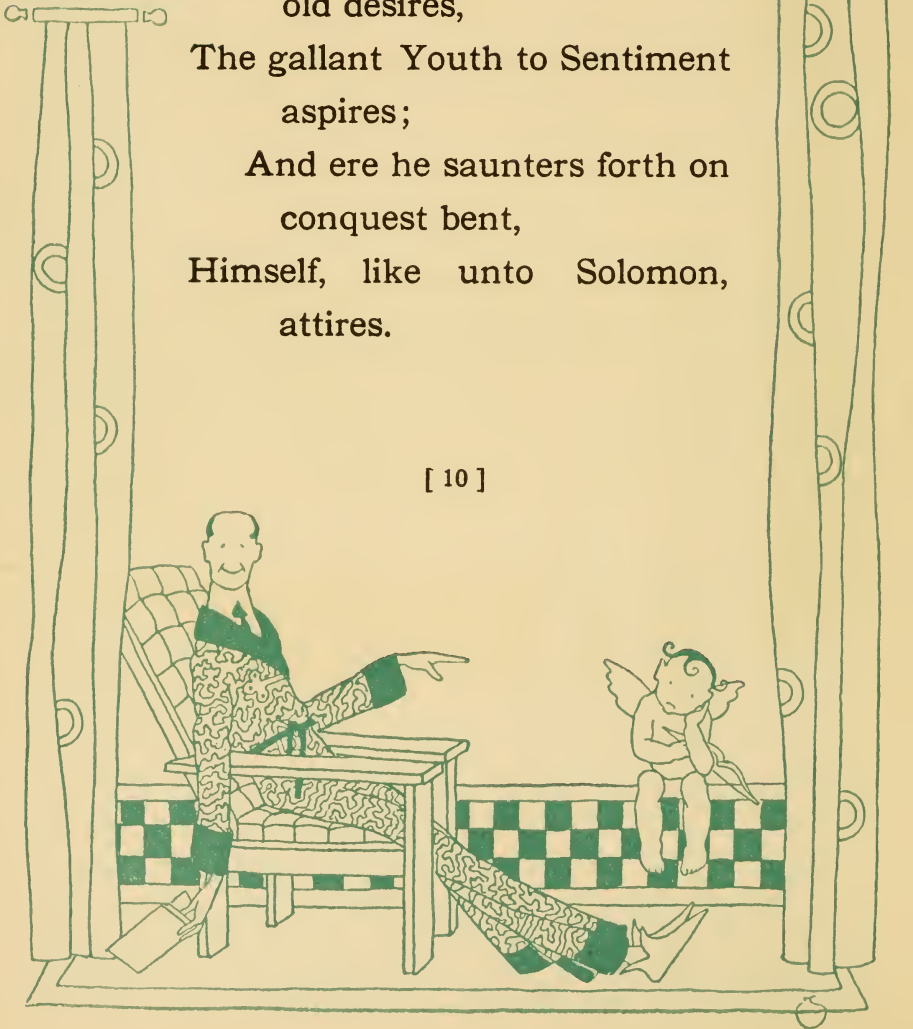
[ 9 ]



**N**

OW, the New Moon reviving  
old desires,  
The gallant Youth to Sentiment  
aspires;  
And ere he saunters forth on  
conquest bent,  
Himself, like unto Solomon,  
attires.

[ 10 ]

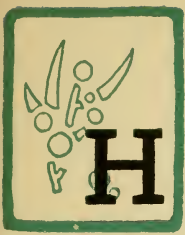






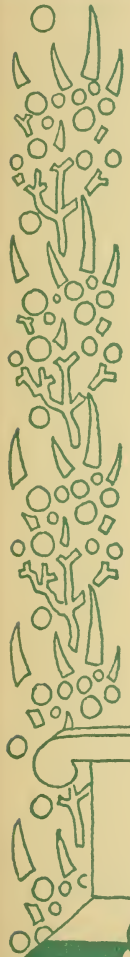
HIS WINTER GARMENTS HUNG—WHERE, NO ONE KNOWS!


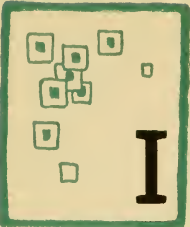




OW blithely through the smiling  
throng he goes,  
His Winter garments hung—  
where, no one knows!  
A Symphony in radiant scarfs  
and hose,  
Wrought t'inspire a maiden's  
“Ah's!” and “Oh's!”

[ 13 ]





**I** NTO a new Flirtation, why not  
knowing,  
Nor whence, his heart with mad-  
ness overflowing;  
Then out of it—and thence,  
without a pause,  
Into *another*, willy-nilly blowing.

[ 14 ]





HAT if the conscience feel, per-  
chance, a sting?

No danger waits him—save the  
*Wedding Ring* :

A Kiss is not the sin that  
yesterday

It was—for that was *Lent*, and  
this is *Spring*!

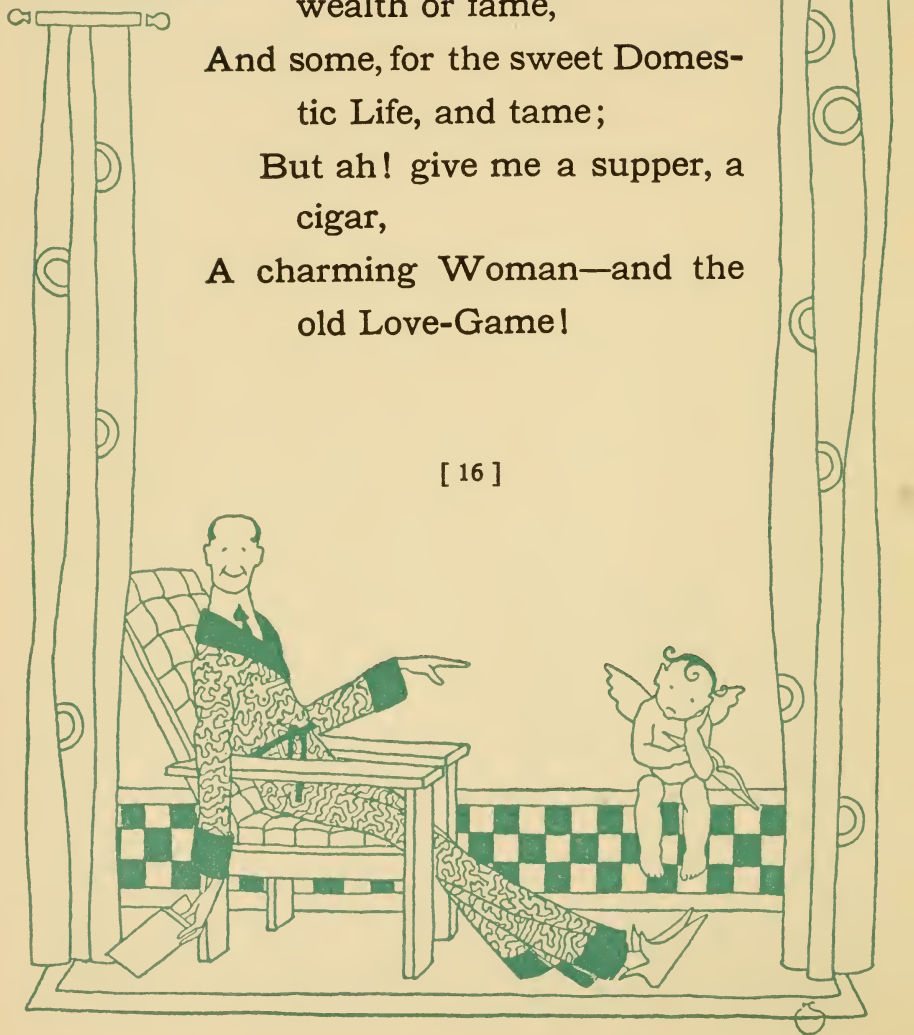
[ 15 ]



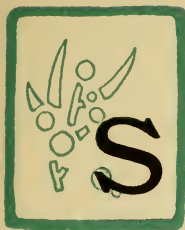


SOME simple ones may sigh for  
wealth or fame,  
And some, for the sweet Domes-  
tic Life, and tame;  
But ah! give me a supper, a  
cigar,  
A charming Woman—and the  
old Love-Game!

[ 16 ]







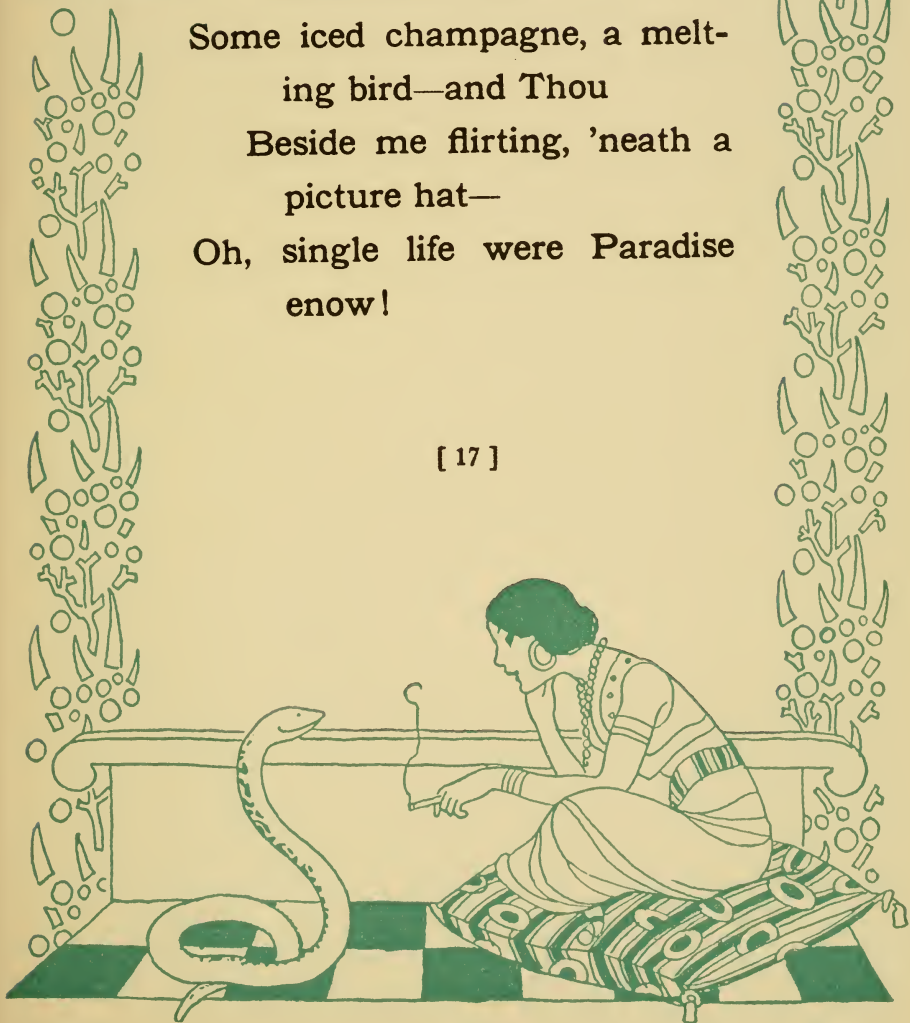
SOME blue points on the half-  
shell, in a row,

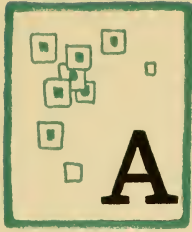
Some iced champagne, a melt-  
ing bird—and Thou

Beside me flirting, 'neath a  
picture hat—

Oh, single life were Paradise  
enow!

[ 17 ]





COZY-CORNER tête-à-tête—  
what bliss!

A murmured word, a sigh, a  
stolen kiss—

Ah, tell me, does the Prom-  
ised Paradise

Hold anything one-half so sweet  
as this?

[ 18 ]







A

AND yet, since I am made of  
common clay,  
One charm I'd add to this divine  
array;  
Lord make me *careful*, and  
whate'er betide,  
Without proposing, let me slip  
away!

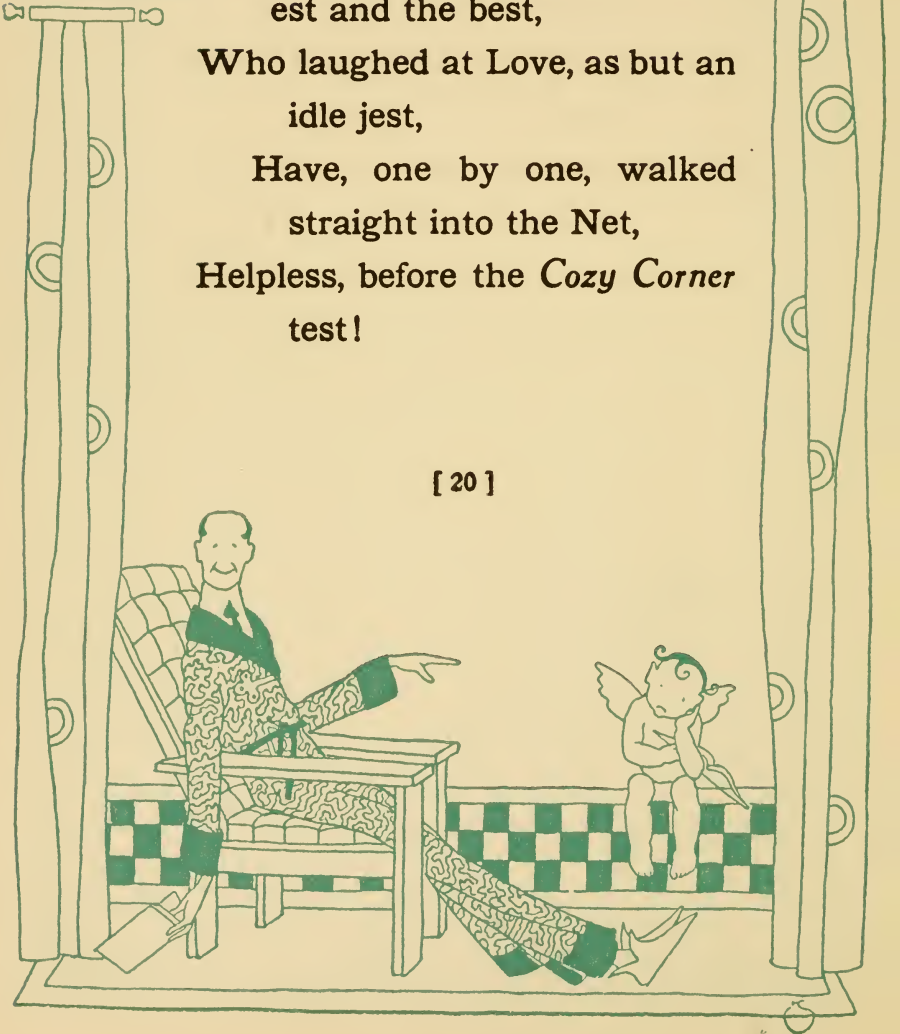
[ 19 ]

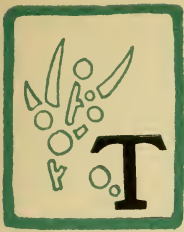




OR, some I've known, the brav-  
est and the best,  
Who laughed at Love, as but an  
idle jest,  
Have, one by one, walked  
straight into the Net,  
Helpless, before the *Cozy Corner*  
test!

[ 20 ]





HUS, oft, beside some damsel  
fond and fair,

I've sat, thrilled by the perfume  
of her hair,

And madly longed to mur-  
mur, lip-to-lip,

"Beloved, marry me!"—but did  
not dare!

[ 21 ]

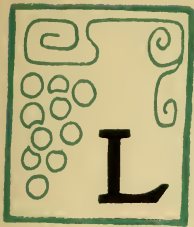




FOR some I've wooed, when I  
felt blithe and gay,  
Have looked so *different*, when  
we met next day,  
That I have simply stopped  
to say, "So charmed!"  
And shuddering, sped hurriedly  
away!

[ 22 ]



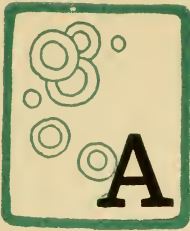


LOOK to the Married Men! Alas,  
their gains  
Are neither here nor there, for all  
their pains.

For wedding bells are rung—  
and loudly rung  
To drown the clanking of the  
*Marriage Chains!*

[ 23 ]





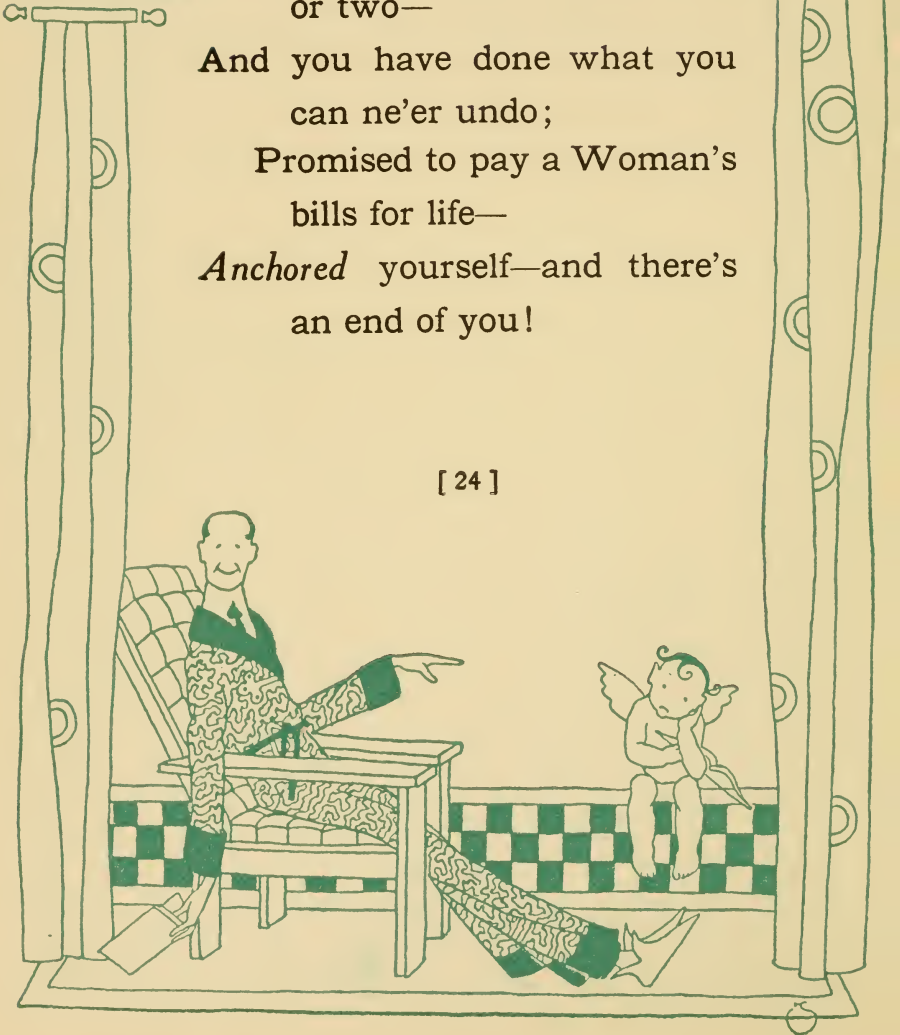
**A** MOMENT'S halt—a little word  
or two—

And you have done what you  
can ne'er undo;

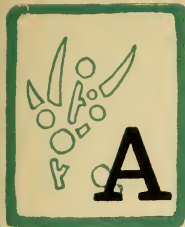
Promised to pay a Woman's  
bills for life—

*Anchored* yourself—and there's  
an end of you!

[ 24 ]







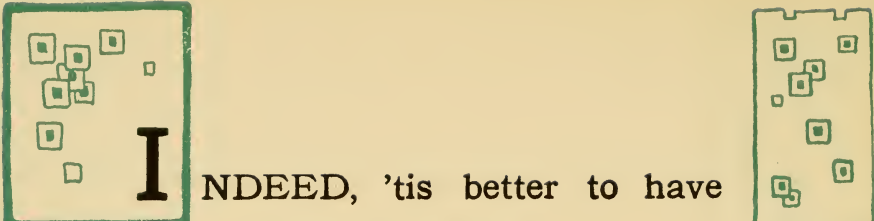
**A**ND we, who now make merry  
at the gloom

Of those who thus have gone to  
meet their doom—

May we, ourselves, not some  
day follow suit,  
Ourselves to be the Butt of jests  
—for whom?

[ 25 ]



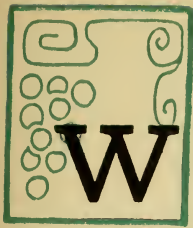


**I**NDEED, 'tis better to have  
loved and lost—  
Taken the Kiss and fled, at any  
cost,  
Than to have loved and mar-  
ried, and for aye,  
Thereafter, by a *Woman*, to be  
bossed.

[ 26 ]

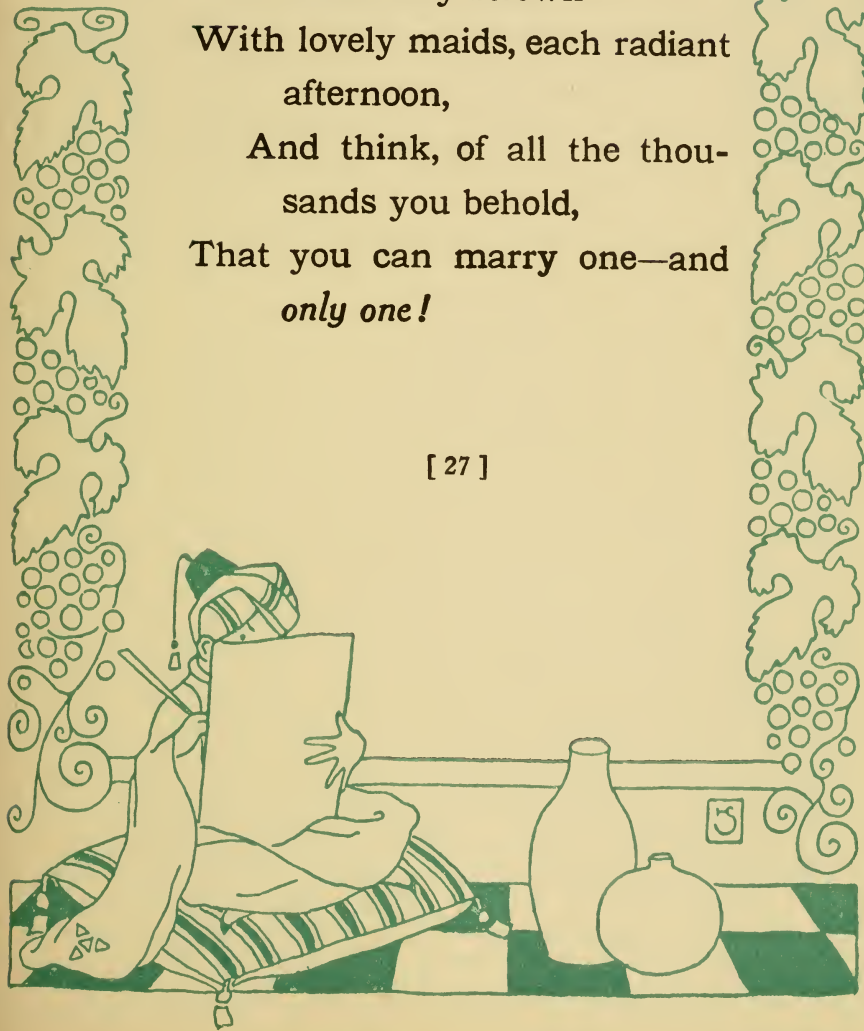






WITH me, along that strip of  
Broadway strewn  
With lovely maids, each radiant  
afternoon,  
And think, of all the thou-  
sands you behold,  
That you can marry one—and  
*only one!*

[ 27 ]

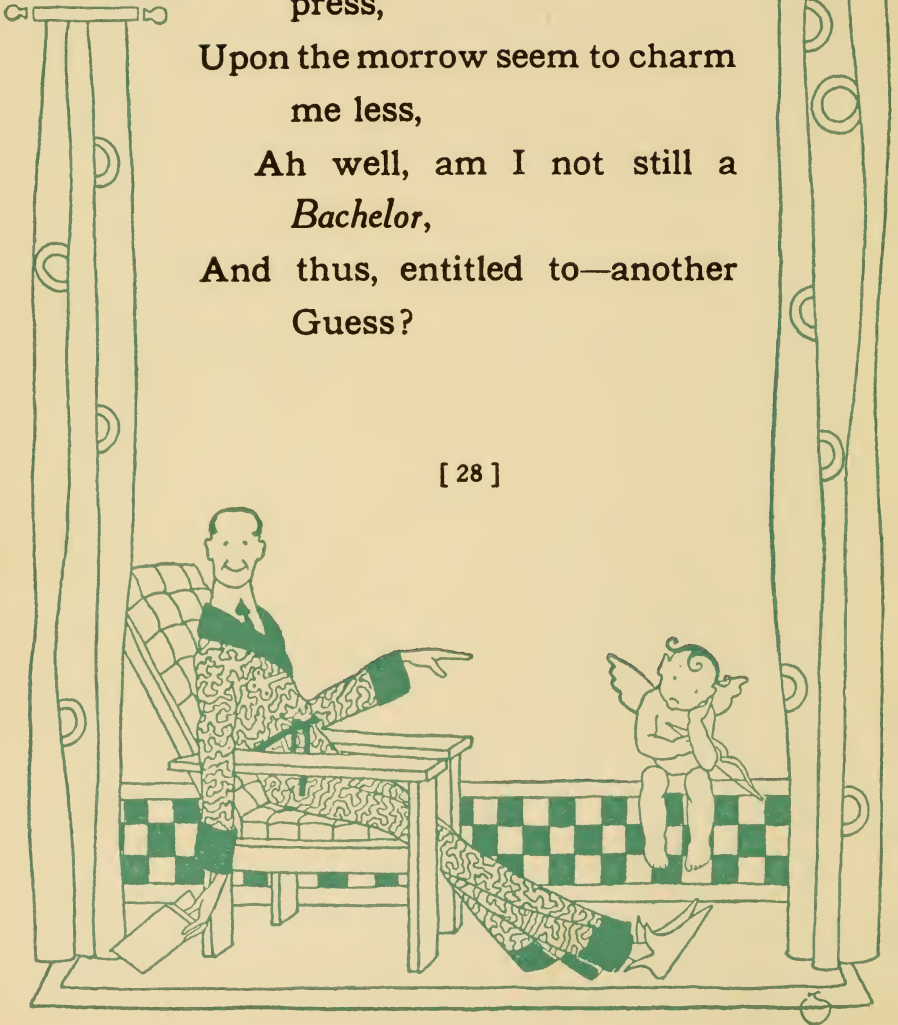


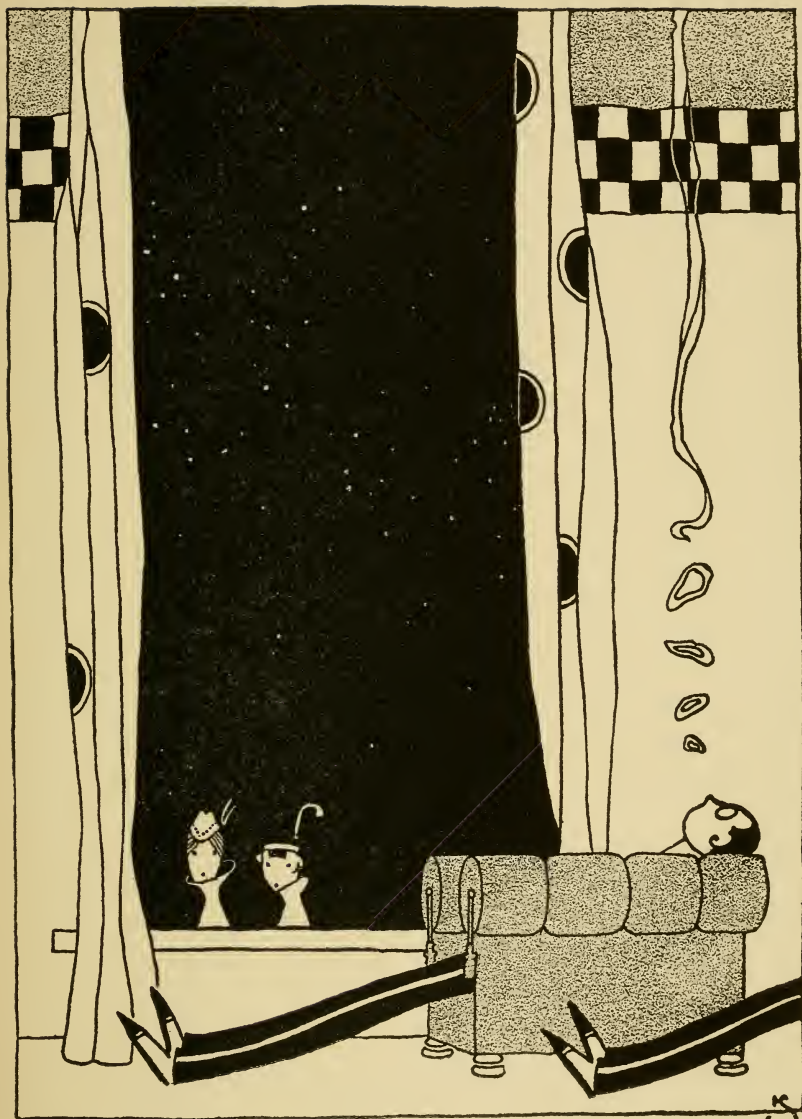


**B**

UT, if the lip I kiss, the hand I  
press,  
Upon the morrow seem to charm  
me less,  
Ah well, am I not still a  
*Bachelor*,  
And thus, entitled to—another  
Guess?

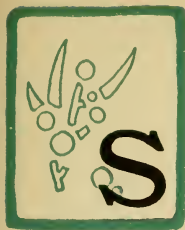
[ 28 ]





SOME FOR THE COMFORTS OF A CLUB MAY SIGH.

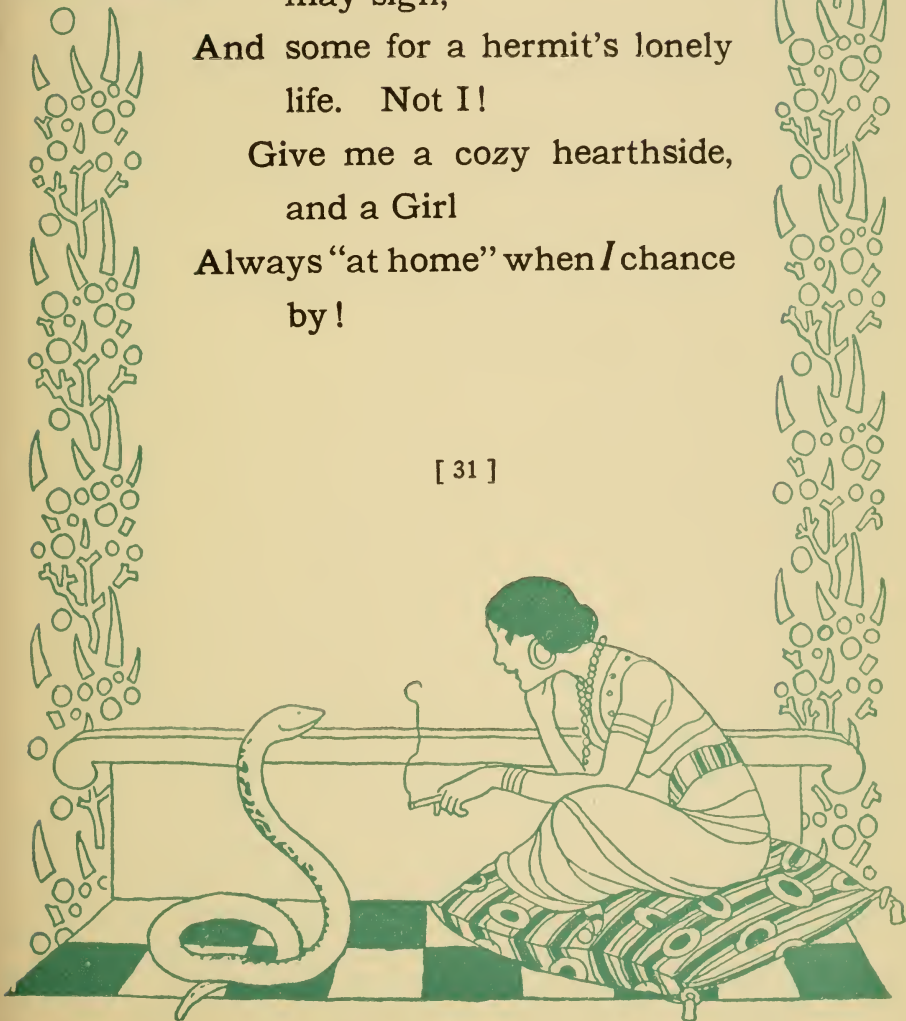


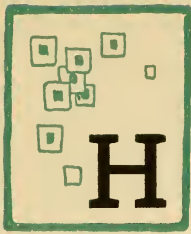


OME for the comforts of a club  
may sigh,  
And some for a hermit's lonely  
life. Not I!

Give me a cozy hearthside,  
and a Girl  
Always "at home" when / chance  
by!

[ 31 ]



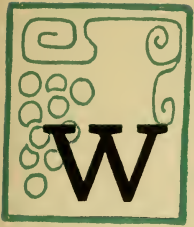


HER cushioned chair a spot  
where I may curl  
My weary form, and rest, beyond  
the whirl  
Of madd'ning cares; to rise  
at half-past ten,  
And call next night—upon *an-*  
*other girl!*

[ 32 ]







WHY, if a man can thus, at ease,  
abide

Each evening by a different dam-  
sel's side,

Were't not a shame—were't  
not a shame, for him

To any *one*, forever to be tied?

[ 33 ]

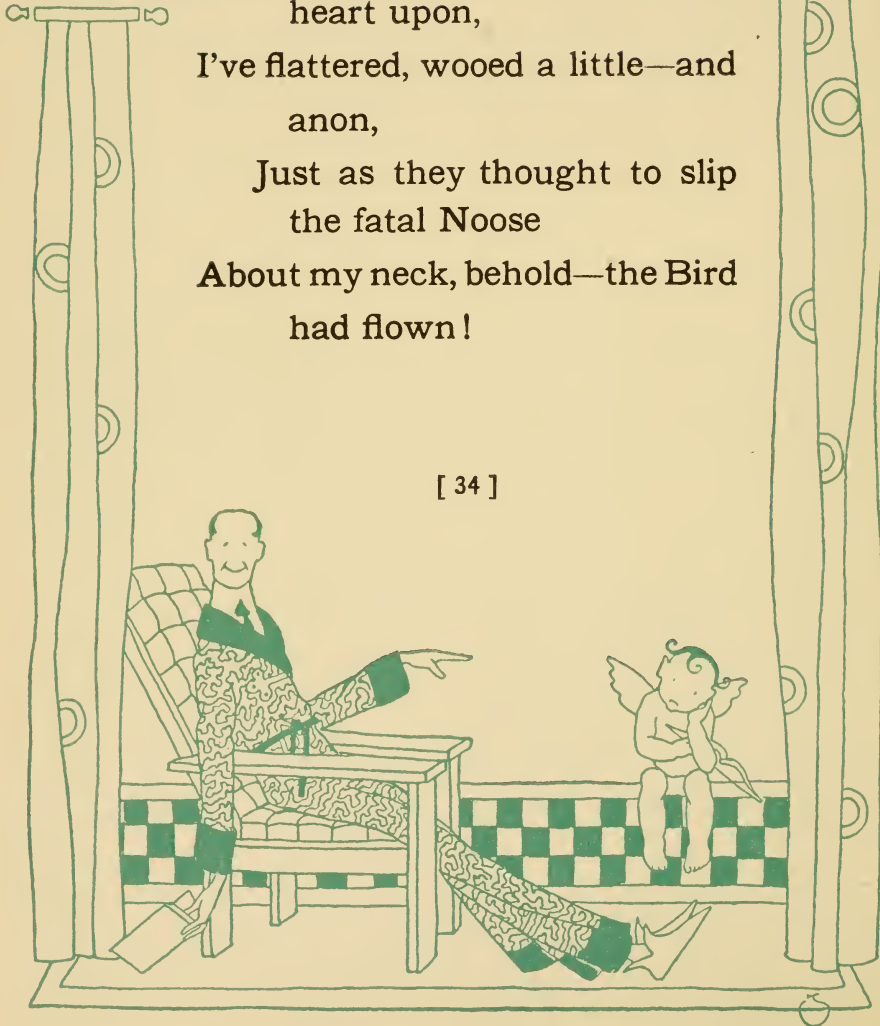




**A**

ND so, the girls I've set my  
heart upon,  
I've flattered, wooed a little—and  
anon,  
Just as they thought to slip  
the fatal Noose  
About my neck, behold—the Bird  
had flown!

[ 34 ]







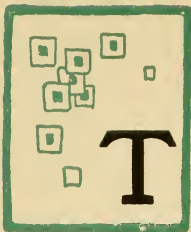
OR this the argument that I submit—

Refute it, if you can, with all your wit!

That Luck in Love, for such as you and I,  
Consists in safely keeping *out* of it!

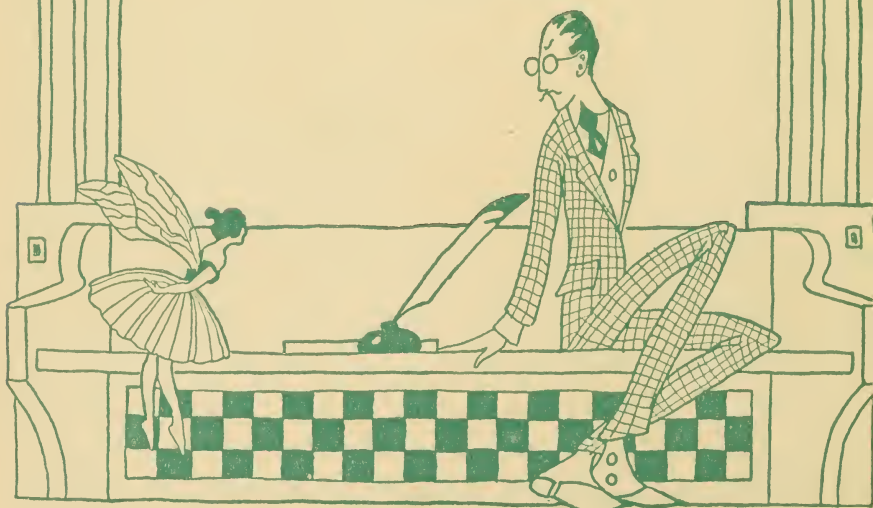
. . . . .





HIS morn, I've quaffed at least  
a quart or more  
Of water—yet am thirsty as be-  
fore;  
And that dark taste still lin-  
gers in the mouth  
With which, last night, I refor-  
mation swore.

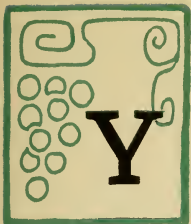
[ 36 ]





SOME ANGEL, WITH A SAVING DRINK.





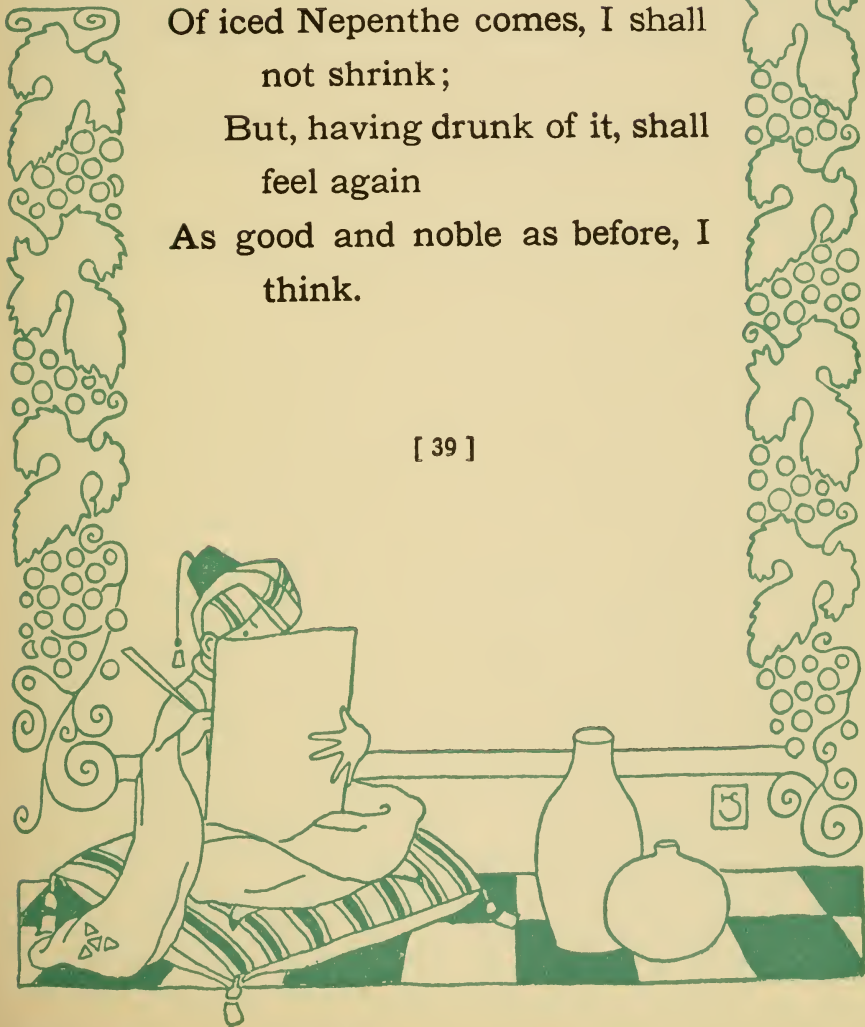
YET, when some Angel, with a  
saving drink

Of iced Nepenthe comes, I shall  
not shrink;

But, having drunk of it, shall  
feel again

As good and noble as before, I  
think.

[ 39 ]





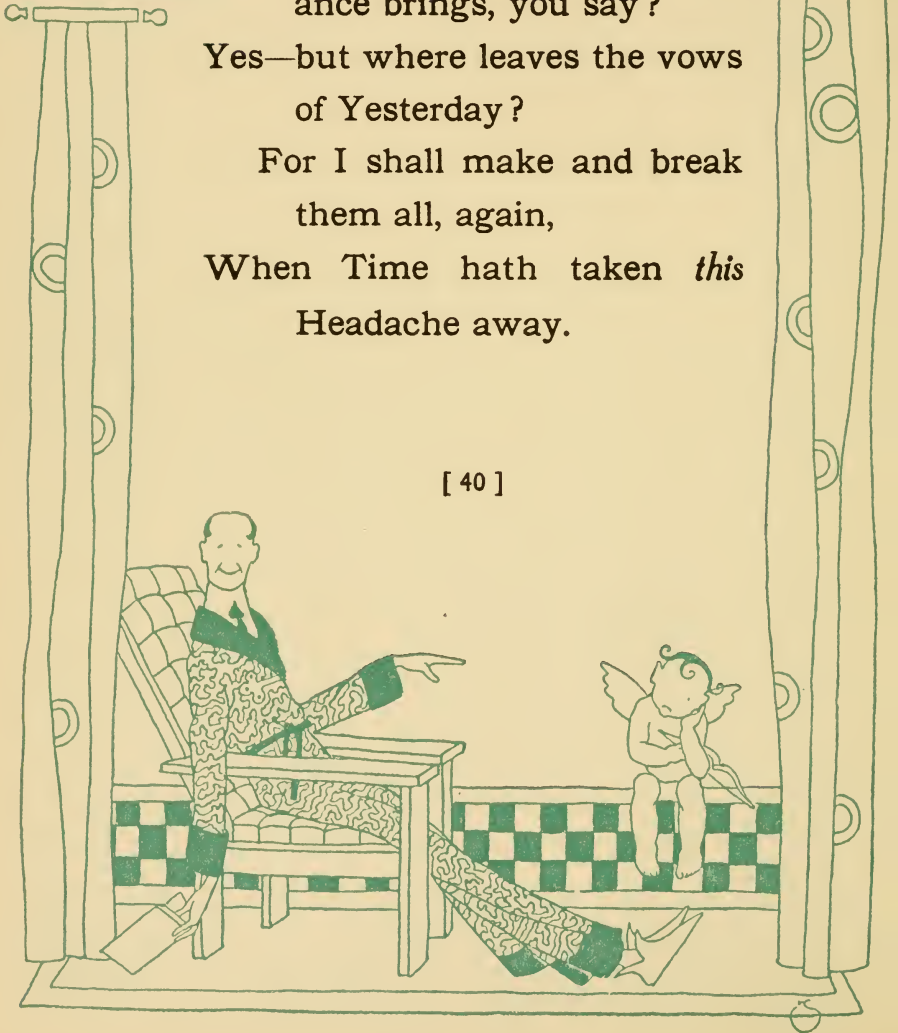
E

ACH morn some fresh repent-  
ance brings, you say?

Yes—but where leaves the vows  
of Yesterday?

For I shall make and break  
them all, again,  
When Time hath taken *this*  
Headache away.

[ 40 ]





WHAT if my conscience seem an  
idle joke—

My good resolves all disappear  
in smoke?

This thought remains—and  
is it not enough?—

*I do not wear the Matrimonial  
Yoke!*

[ 41 ]



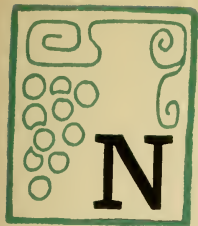




AY! There is no one waiting  
at the door,  
Whene'er I wander in at half-  
past four,  
No one to question, no one to  
accuse,  
No one, my shocking frailty to  
deplore!

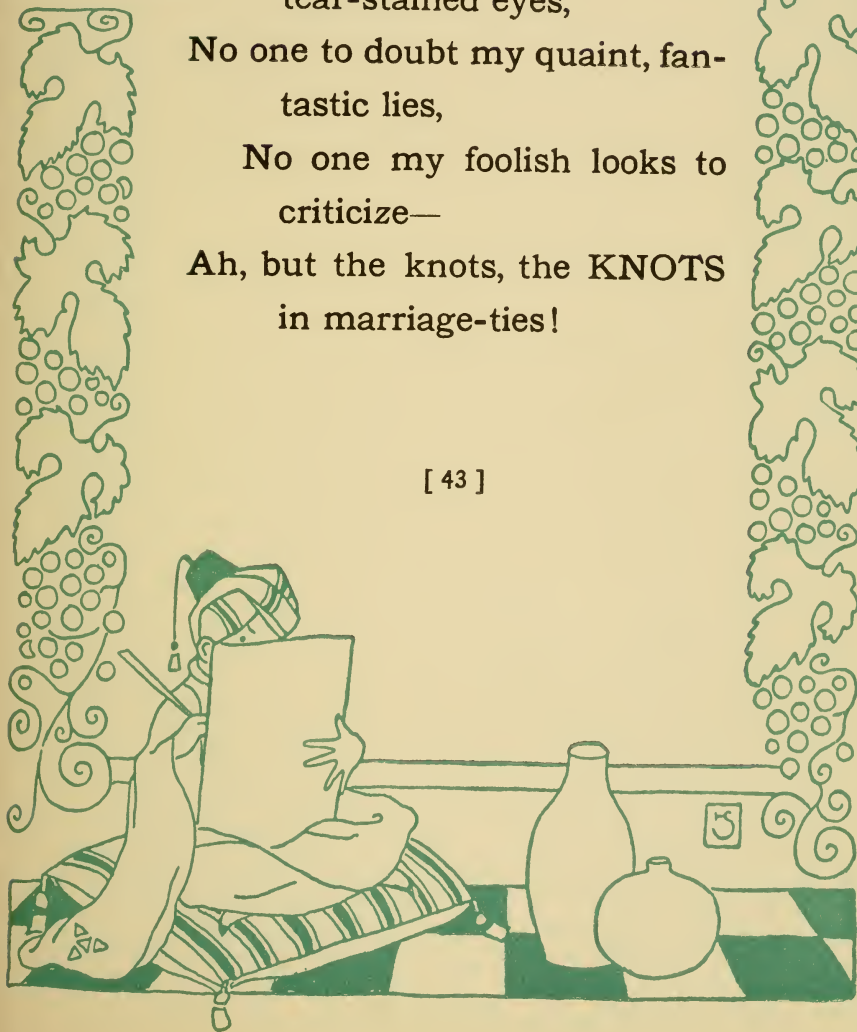
[ 42 ]





O one to greet me with her  
tear-stained eyes,  
No one to doubt my quaint, fan-  
tastic lies,  
No one my foolish looks to  
criticize—  
Ah, but the knots, the **KNOTS**  
in marriage-ties!

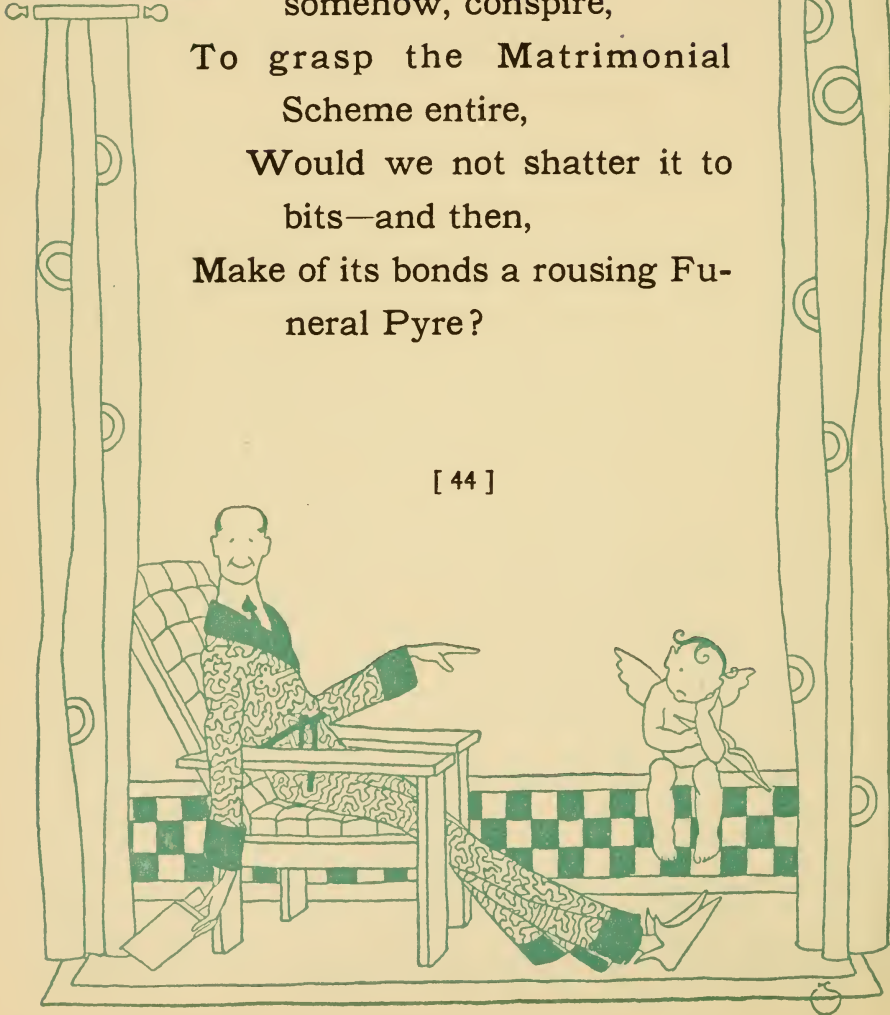
[ 43 ]





O H Friend, could you and I,  
somehow, conspire,  
To grasp the Matrimonial  
Scheme entire,  
Would we not shatter it to  
bits—and then,  
Make of its bonds a rousing Fu-  
neral Pyre?

[ 44 ]



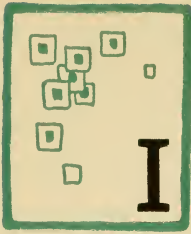


**M**

YSELF, when young, did ea-  
gerly frequent  
The weddings of my friends on  
Bondage bent ;  
But evermore thanked Fate,  
when I escaped  
Scot-free, by that same door  
wherein I went.

[ 45 ]

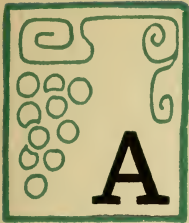




**I**NTO the fatal compact, why  
not knowing,  
I've seen them go, nor dream  
where they were going;  
Then out again, with shouts  
of "Westward, ho!"  
The bitter seeds of *Alimony* sow-  
ing!

[ 46 ]





A

H well, they say that, some-  
times, side by side,

A cat and dog may peacefully  
abide.

Perhaps—perhaps. But that  
is only when

That cat and dog are not *together*  
tied!

[ 47 ]

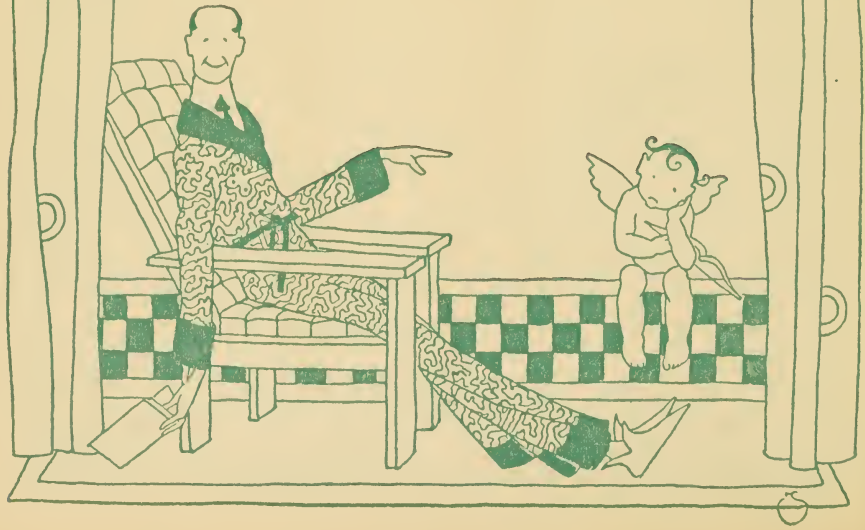






FT, to some patient married  
man I turn,  
The secret of his dumb content  
to learn,  
But lip-to-ear, he mutters,  
"Fool, beware!"  
*This* is the path, whence there is  
no return!"

[ 48 ]







BUT, LIP-TO-EAR, HE MUTTERS, "FOOL, BEWARE!"





H, threats of Hell, and hopes of  
Paradise!

One thing is certain—when a  
Husband dies,

No wife shall greet him  
*there* with “Where’s” or  
“Why’s”

Nor mock with laughter his  
most subtle lies!

[ 51 ]



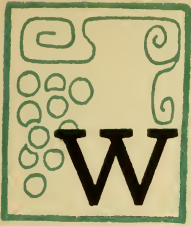
N

O matter whether up or down  
he goes,  
He neither cares nor questions, I  
suppose ;  
Since Death can hold no bit-  
terness for him,  
Because—because—Oh well, he  
knows, HE KNOWS!

. . . . .

[ 52 ]



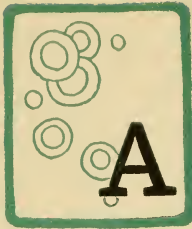


WOULD you the spangle of exist-  
ence spend  
In Matrimony? Slow about, my  
Friend!

A maiden's hair is more oft  
false than true,  
And on the chemist may her  
blush depend.

[ 53 ]





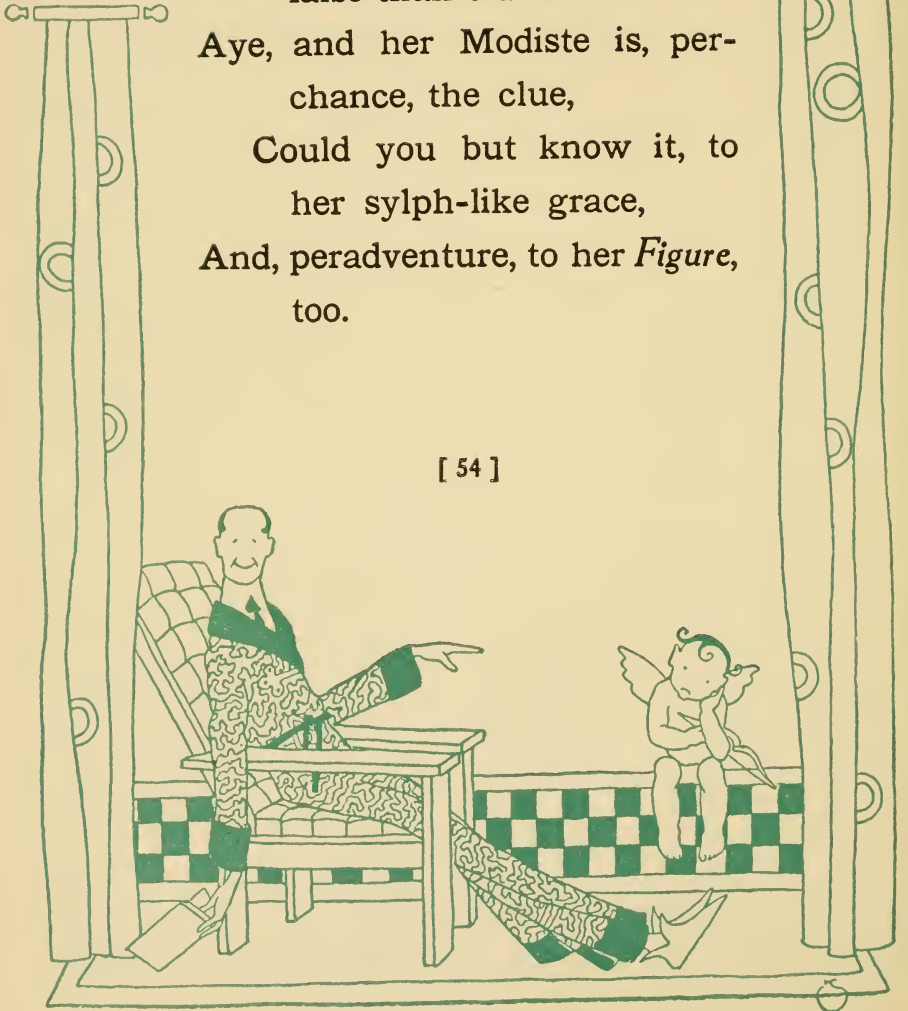
MAIDEN'S hair is more oft  
false than true!

Aye, and her Modiste is, per-  
chance, the clue,

Could you but know it, to  
her sylph-like grace,

And, peradventure, to her *Figure*,  
too.

[ 54 ]







WHY, for this NOTHING, then,  
should you provoke  
The gods, or lightly don the gall-  
ing yoke  
Of unpermitted pleasure, un-  
der pain  
Of Alimony-until-Death, if  
broke?

[ 55 ]



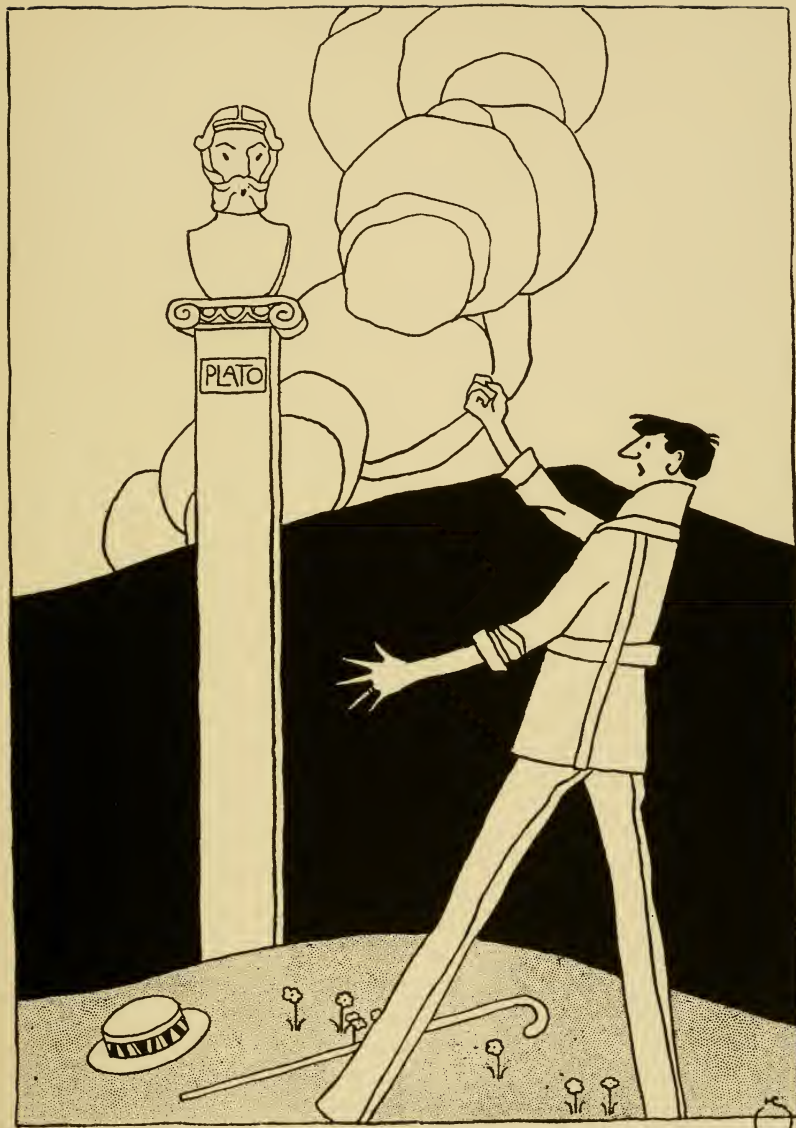


W

HY, when to-day your bills are  
promptly paid,  
Assume the whims of some ca-  
pricious maid,  
Incur the debts you never did  
contract,  
And yet must settle? Oh, the  
sorry trade!

[ 56 ]





I SWORE—BUT WAS I SOBER WHEN I SWORE?





T

O "settle down and marry," oft  
of yore,  
I swore—but was I sober when  
I swore?  
And then there came another  
girl—and I  
Turned gaily to the old Love-  
Game, once more.

[ 59 ]

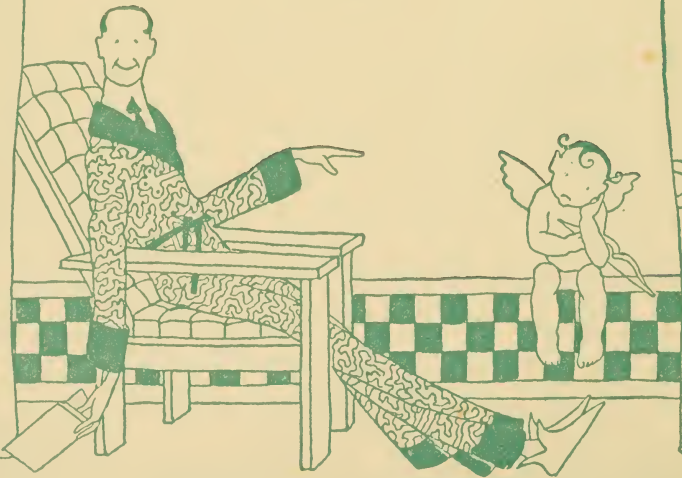




**A**

ND, much as I repented things  
like this,  
And fondly dreamed of sweet  
Domestic Bliss,  
I sometimes wonder what a  
wife can give,  
One half so thrilling as a stolen  
kiss!

[ 60 ]





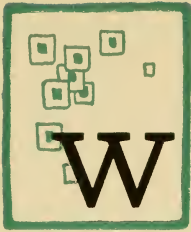
ET, if the hair should vanish  
from my brow,  
My girth, in time, to great dimen-  
sions grow—

If youth's sweet-scented  
"Buds" should pass me by,  
Accounting me an antiquated  
beau—

[ 61 ]







HY then, some winged angel,  
ere too late—

Some maiden verging onto twen-  
ty-eight—

Will gladly take what's left of  
me, I trow,

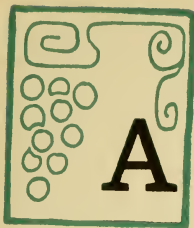
And, leading me to wedlock,  
thank her Fate!

. . . . .

[ 62 ]



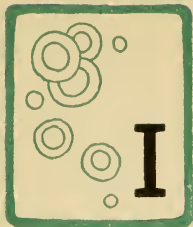




LAS, for those who may to-day  
prepare  
The wedding trousseau for the  
morrow's wear,  
A voice of warning cried,  
"There's many a slip  
Betwixt the Altar and the Soli-  
taire!"

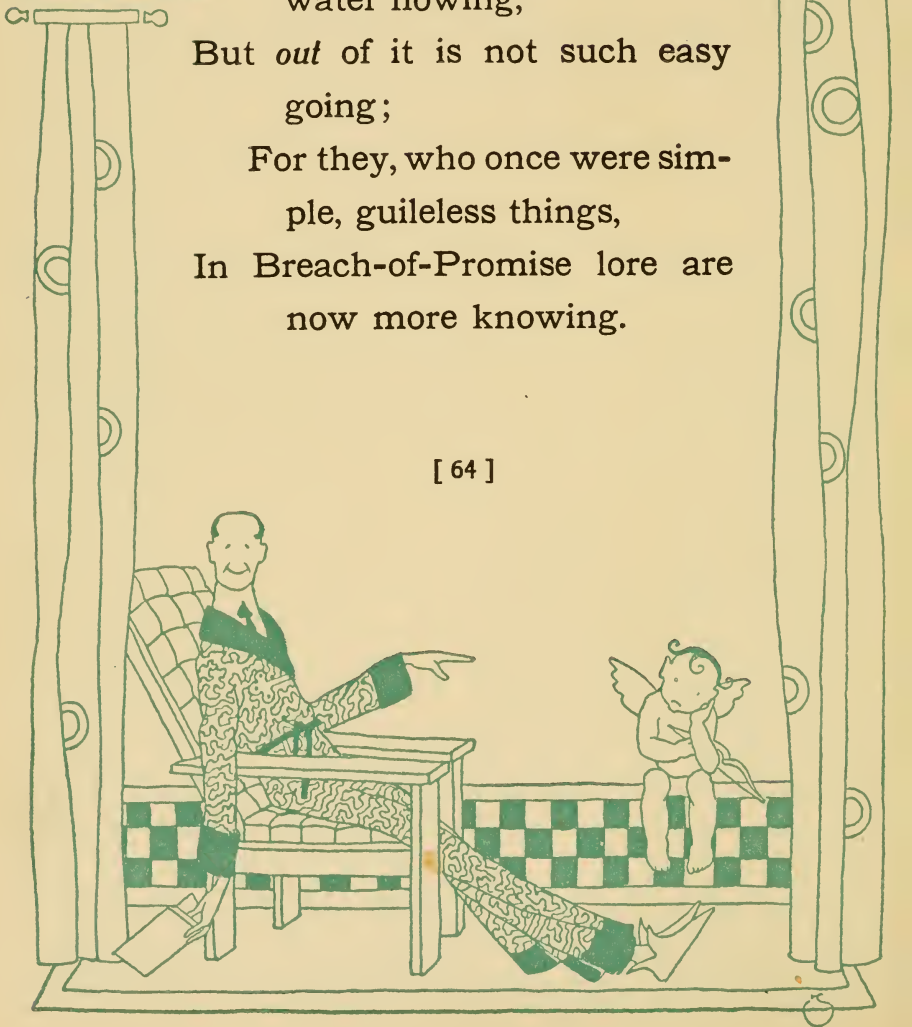
[ 63 ]

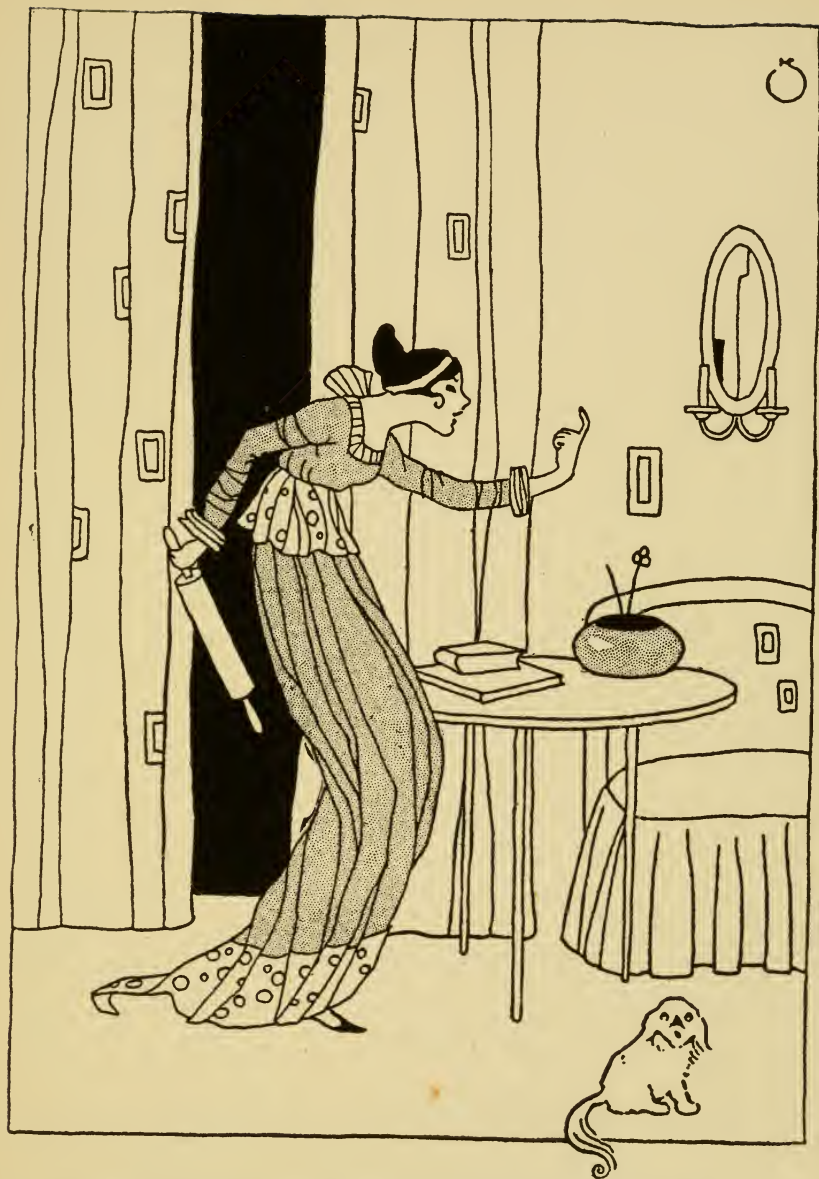




INTO this pact, man glides like  
water flowing,  
But *out* of it is not such easy  
going;  
For they, who once were sim-  
ple, guileless things,  
In Breach-of-Promise lore are  
now more knowing.

[ 64 ]





WHAT! WOULD YOU CAST A LOVING WOMAN HENCE?





HAT! Would you cast a love-  
ing Woman hence?

Thou, Fickle One, prepare for  
penitence!

Full many a golden ducat  
shall you pay  
To drown the memory of such  
insolence.

[ 67 ]





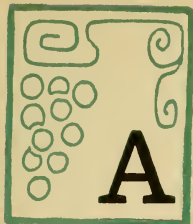
A

ND every note, that, in your  
cups, you write,  
In cold black Type, perchance  
shall see the light ;  
While all the World, across  
its coffee urn,  
Shall titter gaily at the sorry  
sight.

[ 68 ]







H yes! For all the papers,  
which discussed  
Your wedding plans, shall turn  
your cake to crust,  
Publish your letters and your  
photographs,  
And trail your Egotism in the  
dust!

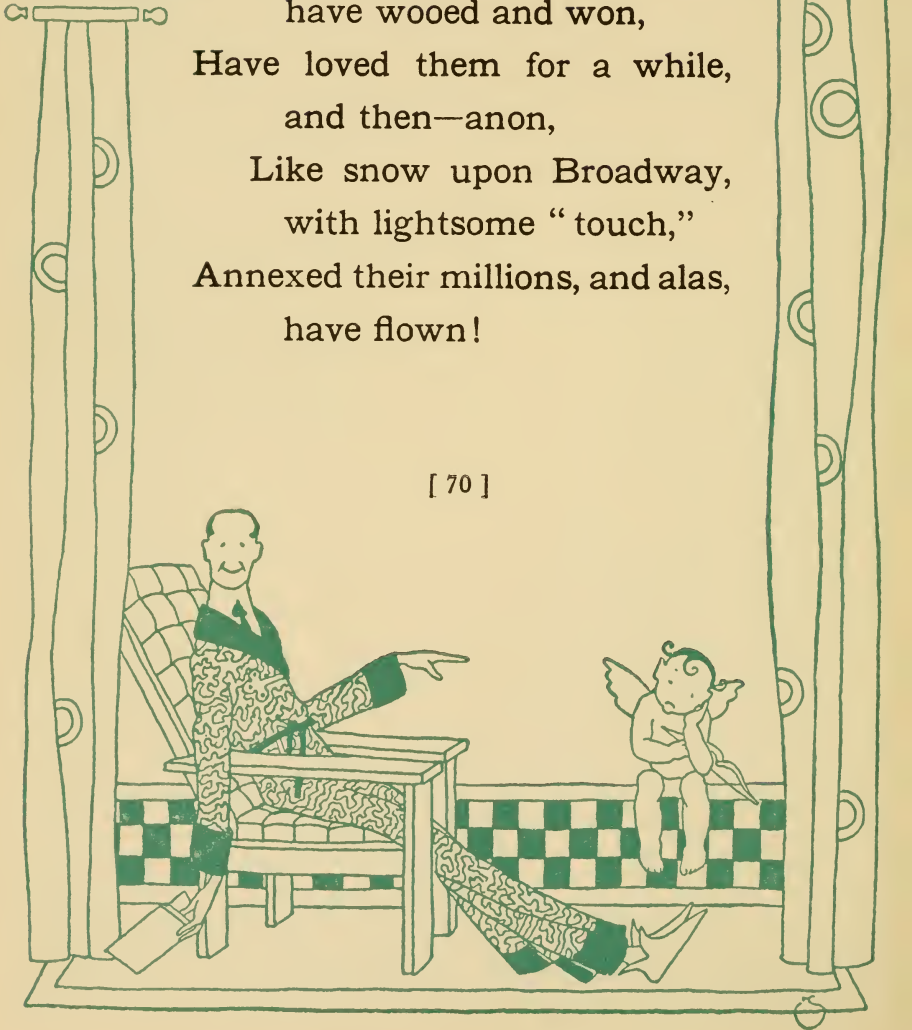
[ 69 ]

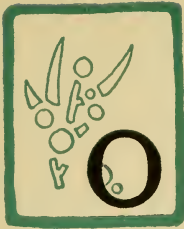




HE Opera Queens, that men  
have wooed and won,  
Have loved them for a while,  
and then—anon,  
Like snow upon Broadway,  
with lightsome “touch,”  
Annexed their millions, and alas,  
have flown!

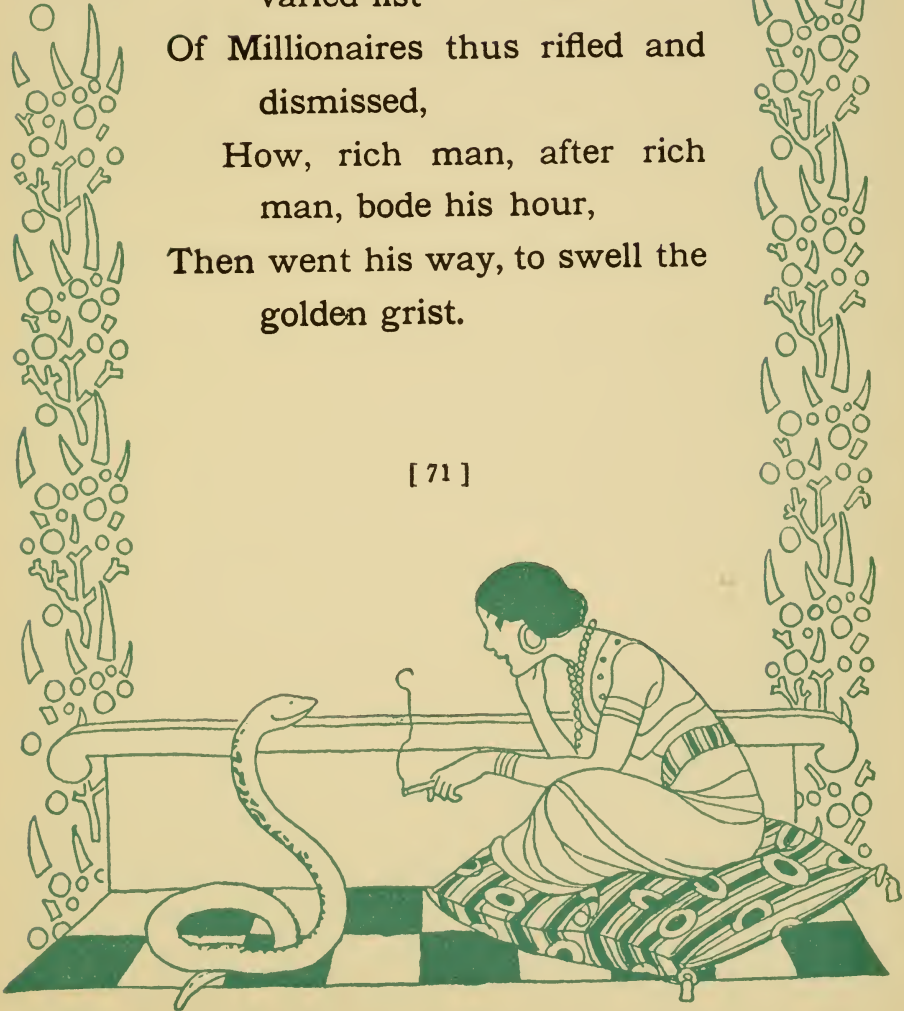
[ 70 ]





H look you, in the long and  
varied list  
Of Millionaires thus rifled and  
dismissed,  
How, rich man, after rich  
man, bode his hour,  
Then went his way, to swell the  
golden grist.

[ 71 ]





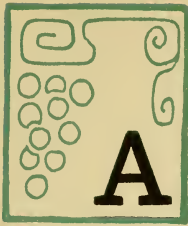
WHAT Diva's rubies ever glow  
so red

As when some Gilded Chappie  
hath been bled?

And every diamond the Show  
Girl wears,  
Dropped in her lap, when some  
Fool lost his head.

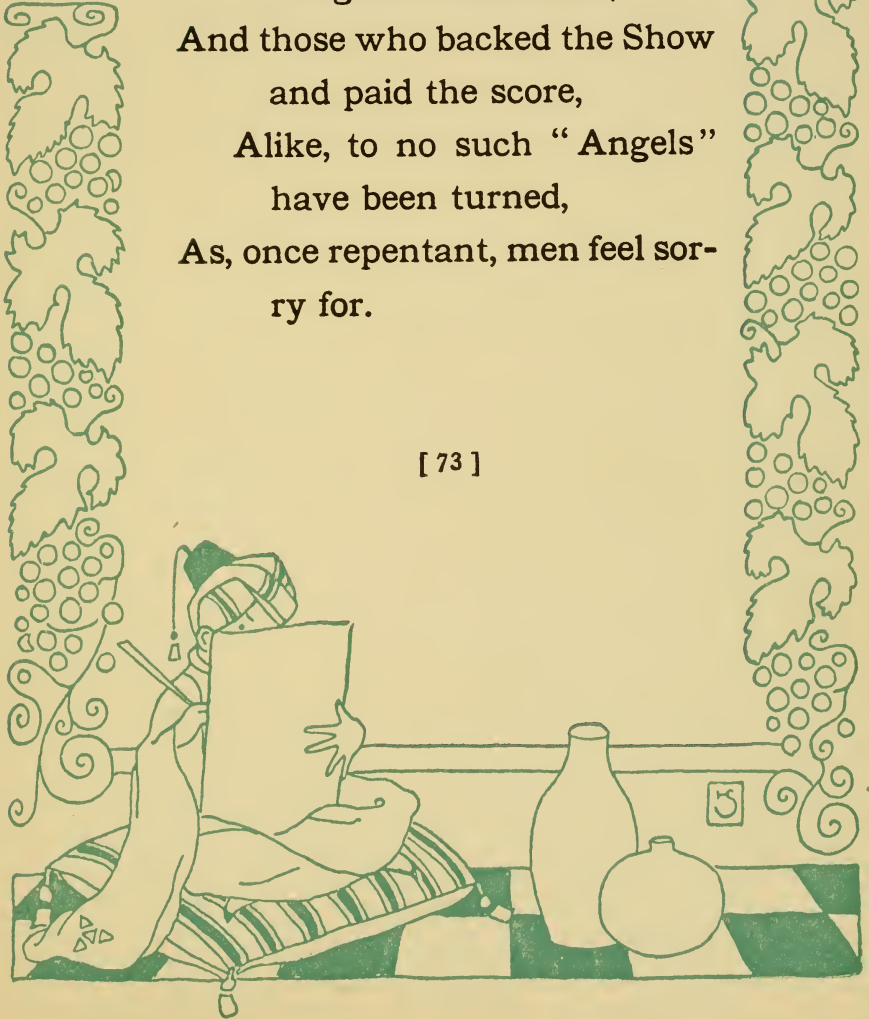
[ 72 ]





AND those who hung around  
the green-room door,  
And those who backed the Show  
and paid the score,  
Alike, to no such "Angels"  
have been turned,  
As, once repentant, men feel sor-  
ry for.

[ 73 ]

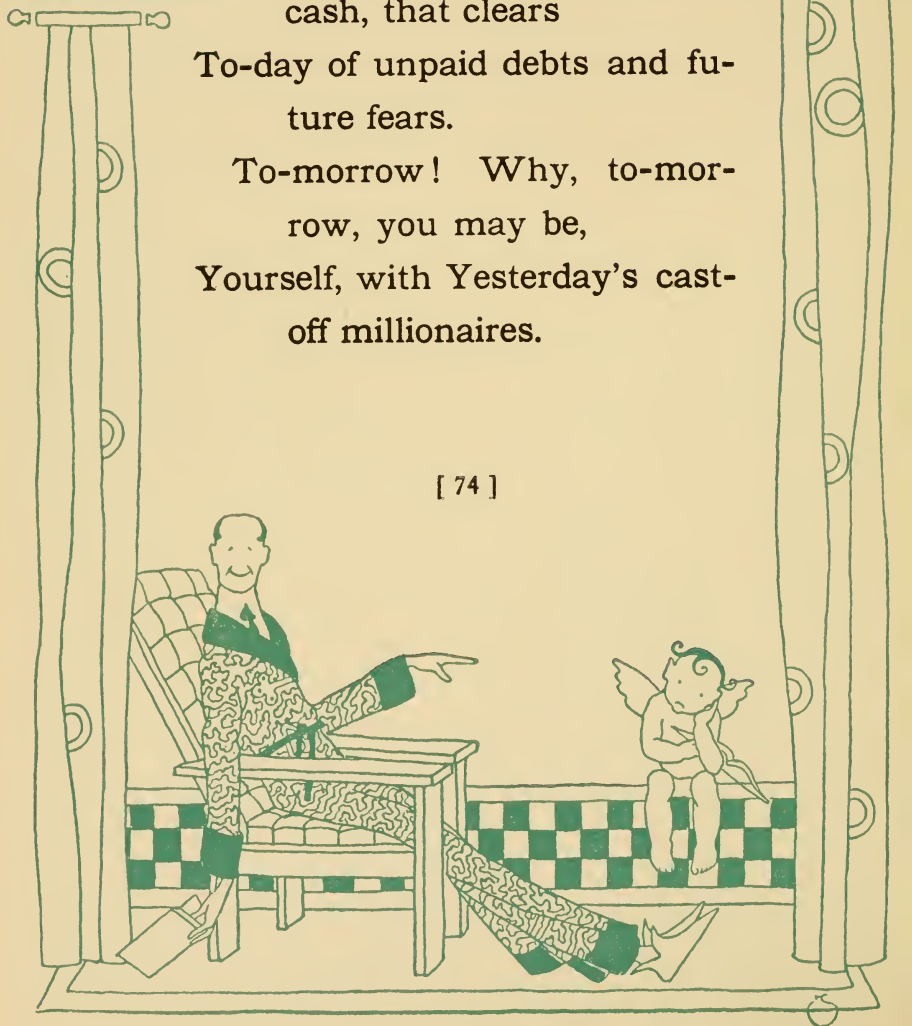




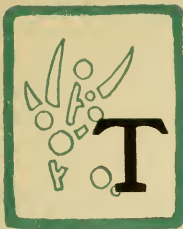
H, my Good Fellow, keep the  
cash, that clears  
To-day of unpaid debts and fu-  
ture fears.

To-morrow! Why, to-mor-  
row, you may be,  
Yourself, with Yesterday's cast-  
off millionaires.

[ 74 ]







**T**HEN, make the most of what  
you still may spend,  
Ere you, too, into bankruptcy  
descend,  
Bill upon bill, and under bill,  
to lie,  
Sans Cash, sans Love, sans Lady  
—What an end!

. . . . .

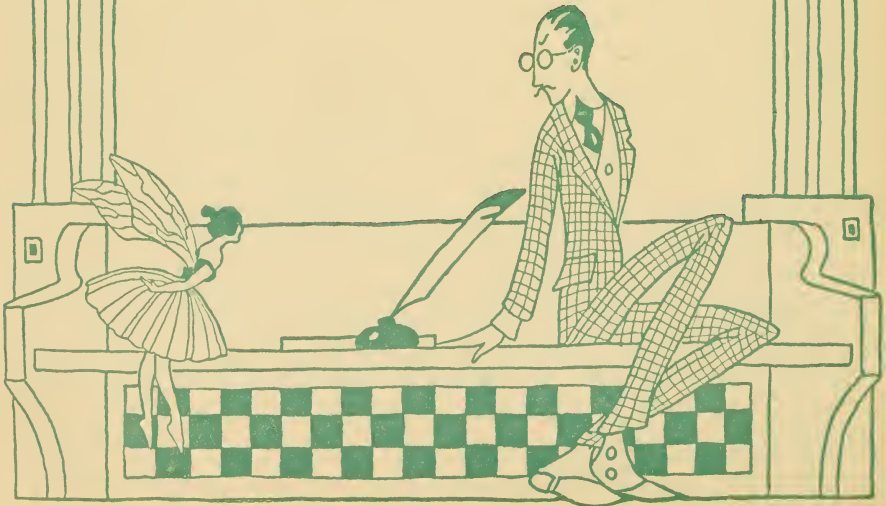
[ 75 ]

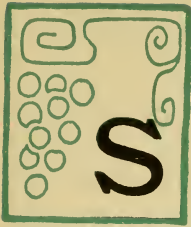


W

ASTE not your evenings in the  
vain pursuit  
Of this or that girl. Bitter-  
sweet the fruit!  
Better be jocund with them,  
one and all,  
And loving *many*, thus your love  
dilute.

[ 76 ]





SOME, with vivacity have sought  
to charm

Away my fears, and still my  
soul's alarm ;

To win me subtly, with a  
smile or sigh,

Or sweet appealing touch upon  
the arm.

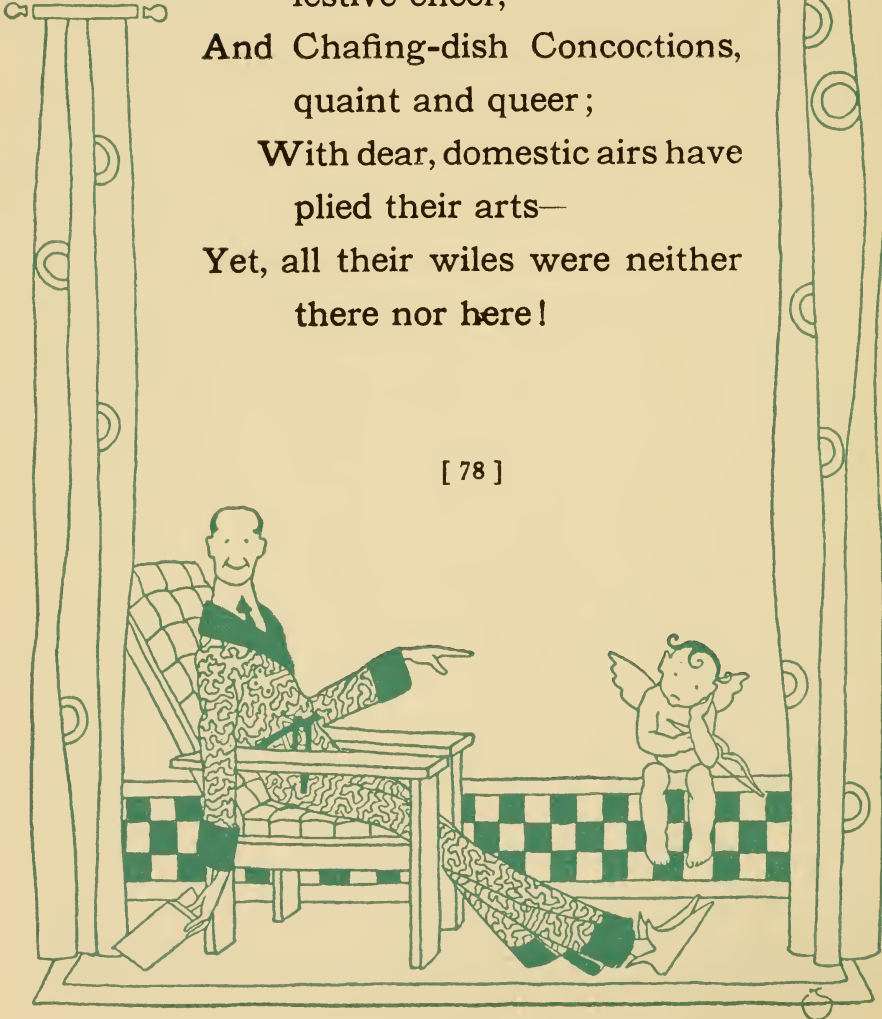
[ 77 ]





**O** **THERS** have tempted me with  
festive cheer,  
And Chafing-dish Concoctions,  
quaint and queer ;  
With dear, domestic airs have  
plied their arts—  
Yet, all their wiles were neither  
there nor here!

[ 78 ]

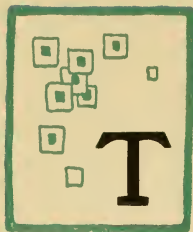




UT when *Platonic Friendship*  
they have tried,  
Then, to the gods for Mercy, have  
I cried!  
For, in the Husband-hunt, all  
other snares  
Sink into Nothingness, *this* game  
beside!

[ 79 ]





HERE is the Trap, from which  
you may not flee;  
There is the Net, through which  
no man may see.  
Some jest at "love," some talk  
of "chums," and then,  
Into the Consommé, for thee and  
me!

[ 80 ]

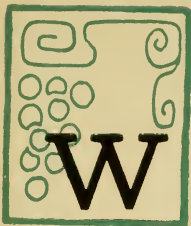






THERE IS THE TRAP, FROM WHICH YOU MAY NOT FLEE.





**W**HETHER to Church, or to the  
Magistrate,  
You follow, after that, 'tis all too  
late!

For, from your Pipe-dream,  
you, at last, shall wake,  
**A MARRIED MAN**, to rail in  
vain at Fate!

[ 83 ]





LOVE, but the Vision of a dear  
desire!

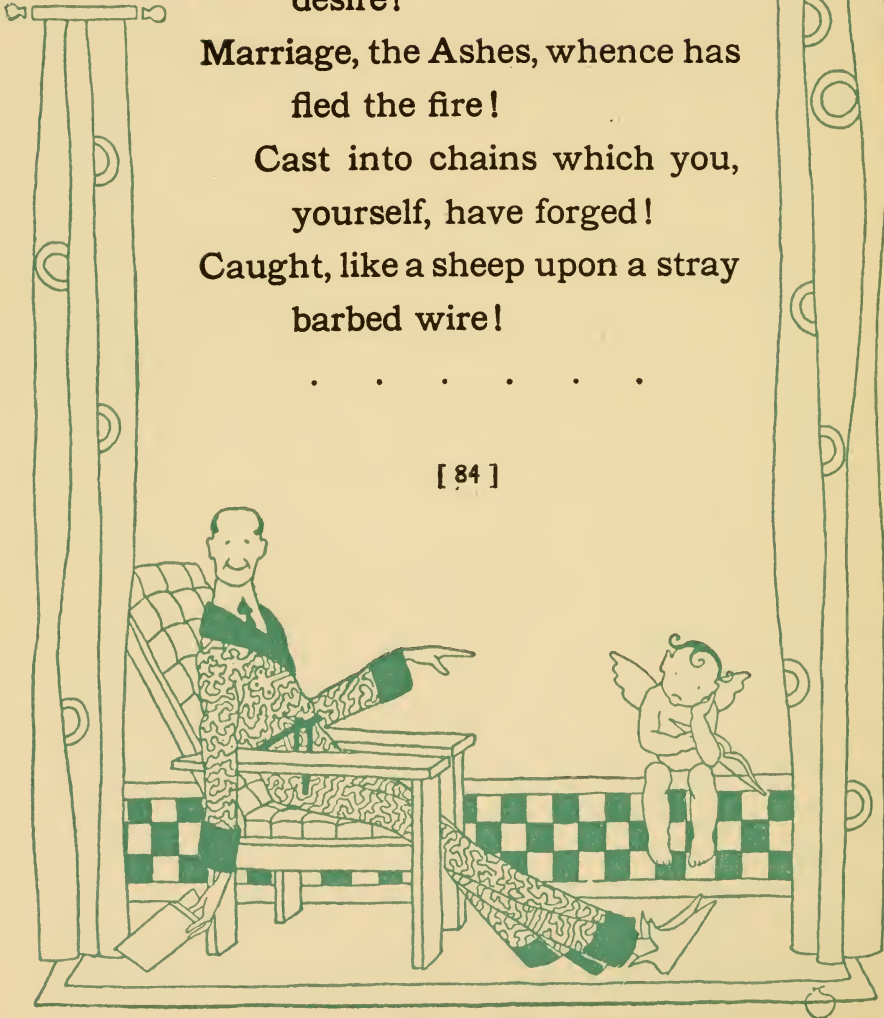
Marriage, the Ashes, whence has  
fled the fire!

Cast into chains which you,  
yourself, have forged!

Caught, like a sheep upon a stray  
barbed wire!

. . . . .

[ 84 ]





H Thou, who first the Apple  
Tree didst shake,  
And e'en in Eden flirted with  
the Snake,  
Still, as in that first moment  
'neath the Bough,  
Dost thou, to-day, of Man a  
puppet make!

[ 85 ]





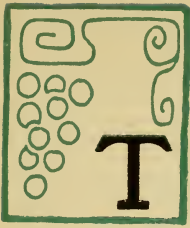
**B**

UT this I know—whether the  
one True Mate,  
Or just some Fluffy Thing with  
hook and bait,  
Eve-like, tempt *me*—one flash  
of Common Sense,  
And all her sorcery shall be too  
late!

[ 86 ]







HEN, let her never look for me,  
again ;

For, once escaped, how many  
moons shall wane,  
And wax and wane full oft,  
while still she looks  
Down that same street—but ah,  
for ME, in vain !

[ 87 ]





ET, much as I have played the  
Infidel,

If, as the fated Pitcher to the  
Well,

*Too oft* to Love's empyrean  
Font I stray,

To fall, at last, beneath some  
Siren's spell,

[ :88 ]

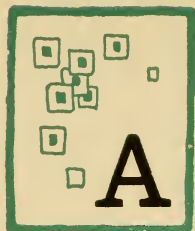




**T**HEN, in your mercy, Friend,  
forbear to smile,  
And with the grape my last few  
hours beguile,  
Or, let me in some Caravan-  
serie,  
My Cynic's soul to *shackles* recon-  
cile.

[ 89 ]





A

ND when, with me, some fair,  
triumphant lass,  
Up to the rose-decked Altar-  
Rail shall pass,  
And, in her joyous errand,  
reach the spot,  
Where we're made *One*—oh,  
drain a silent glass!  
Tamam.

[ 90 ]





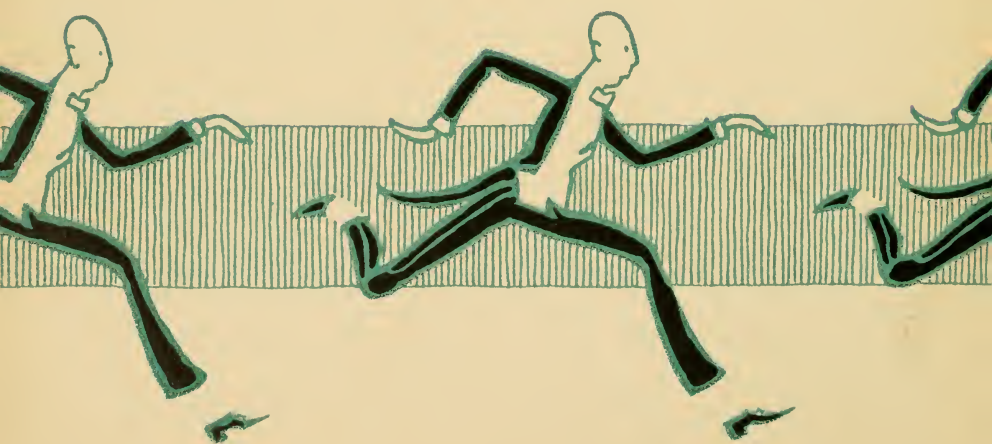






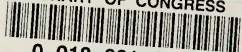








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