

RIMES
to be READ



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RIMES TO BE READ

BY

J. EDMUND V. COOKE,

Author of "A PATCH OF PANSIES," Etc.



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AUTHOR'S NOTE.

TO the proprietors and editors of the New York Sun, Youth's Companion, St. Nicholas, Munsey's Magazine, Overland Monthly, Puck, Truth, New York Clipper, New York Recorder, Chicago Times-Herald, Up-to-Date, Cleveland Press, Cleveland Voice, Cycling Gazette, Traveler's Record, Pittsburg Bulletin, The New Bohemian and Iroquois Magazine, the author desires to express his thanks for the courtesy extended in granting him permission to reprint his verses previously appearing in their publications.



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To
THE PEOPLE OF THE PLATFORM

This Volume

is cordially and fraternally inscribed.

PROEM.

"I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU."

*Folks are often glad to meet other folks, you know,
But they sometimes falter when it comes to saying so ;
Or they say, " I'm glad t' see y' ;" O, so faint and low
That you wonder just how far their gladsome feelings go.*

*Say " I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU," when you mean it. Speak it out ;
Don't bite off a piece of it and leave the rest in doubt.
Let your lips know what your soul is thinking most about.*

*It doesn't take an orator to say the sentence right ;
It doesn't need much rhetoric to make you feel its might ;
It has a hundred hundred tongues which tell its meaning quite.*

*You feel it when you're going home and catch the window light,
You see it in a sweetheart's smile, flashing warm and bright,
'Tis felt in mother's morning kiss and in the last at night,
And baby's little reaching arms express the same delight.*

*" Glad to see you ! " O, you friends of dead yesterday,
Could we only hear it from your dear lips far away ;
Could we tell it into ears which mingle now with clay,
We might gain that fuller meaning which the simple words
convey.*

*Say, " I'm glad to see you," then, to friends who still are here.
Say it with that meaning which is music to the ear.
More than simply SAY it ; words are cheap, but deeds are dear ;
And men will say it back to you and make their meaning clear.*

TALES, GRAVE AND GAY.

THE STORY OF OLD GLORY.

I TELL a tale which is not new,
But O, as long as truth is true,
As long as Freedom sets the pace
Of progress for the human race,
As long as it is our intent
That All shall be the Government,
As long as Rights of Man shall be
The heritage of you and me,
As long as unslaved thought is dear,
So long will all men pause to hear
The story of Old Glory.

In seventeen seventy-six its red
First from the rising sun is shed;
In seventeen seventy-six its white
First blends along the gladdened light;
Its thirteen starry gems of heaven
Flash forth in loyal seventy-seven.
O, not of warp and woof and dye
Is born that banner of the sky!
It forms from out the heart and brain
Of Patrick Henry, Franklin, Paine!
It floats out proud and high and free
In souls of Otis, Adams, Lee!

Of Quincy, Sherman, Jefferson!
Of Hancock, Warren, Washington!
And so in valor is begun

The story of Old Glory.

Then Gage, Howe, Clinton and Burgoyne
And Hessians hired by British coin;
Cornwallis, with his lordly crest,
Rhal, Tarleton, Parker and the rest,
Strive hard to blot that flag from sight.
But, armored in their sense of right,
Come Putnam, Prescott, Allen, Stark,
Men of a strong and sturdy mark;
Come Ward, Montgomery, Schuyler, Greene.
And all the list which lies between,
From Marion to LaFayette.
Right gallantly the foe is met!
They make the flag acknowledged free,
For kingcraft's rule is not to be

The story of Old Glory.

In times of war or times of peace,
Its marches onward never cease.
'Tis borne by Clark and Lewis on
To far-off shores of Oregon.
'Tis seen on Fulton's boat, which steam
First forces up against the stream
And see! how on the air it rides
In triumph o'er Old Ironsides.

'Tis borne by Perry on the Lakes
And proud defiance nobly shakes
From Tripoli to Mexico!
Not always right, too well we know,
But all the more, then, must *we* care
That no oppression more shall share
The story of Old Glory.

Then comes the time its own stern sons
Turn on it their perverted guns.
But though Lee musters all his horde,
With Jackson's swift and sudden sword,
With Johnston's cool and cunning skill,
With Bragg and Longstreet's strenuous will;
Though Morgan makes audacious dash,
Though Stuart seems the lightning flash,
Though Hood's impetuous men are hurled
And Pickett's charge astounds the world,
Yet—Grant and Appomatox come,
And stifled is the warlike drum.
The monster, Civil Hate, is slain;
State clasps the hand of State again,
And, from the rock-bound coasts of Maine
To every sunlit Texan plain,
There echoes back, in glad refrain,
The story of Old Glory.

Still floats the flag! Its stars increase
Through the triumphant times of peace.

Still floats the flag—in 'seventy-six,
When all the nations intermix
In honor of our liberty.
Still floats the flag in 'ninety-three,
When mankind comes from earth and sea
To that Dream City of the West,
Where Art and Marvel greet the guest.
Still floats the flag and floats today,
And may its colors float alway!
Exulting that its sons are strong,
And strength's best use is righting wrong.
So be it told in speech and song—
The story of Old Glory.

I know that we are told its red
Is of the blood its heroes shed,
Its white the smoke of battle air,
Its blue the garb its soldiers wear;
But O, believe not that its stars
Are only bursting shells of wars!
Believe not that its red and white
But symbolize the stripes which smite!
Nay, let us think those stars are eyes,
Eternal, godlike, of the skies;
Its red the flame of loyalty,
Its white the badge of purity,
Its blue the blue of Freedom's sky—
And so we know shall never die
The story of Old Glory!

THE ANARCHIST.

YES, Wallace Wright was an anarchist. -Nay, sir,
hold back your blame;
And pause, O woman of high degree, before you cry
his shame;
And you, fair maid with the spotless soul, shrink not
before his name.

But why for Anarchy? Would he turn the world
from its ways of work?
Would he make the scholar a millman, or the
untaught ditcher clerk?
Did he covet the honest spoil of toil, himself content
to shirk?

Listen and know. *I* think not so, and yet it well
might be,
With a boyhood spent at a working bench instead of
a mother's knee;
With ten hours toiling daily, for a pittance, year by
year,
For children are many and cheap, my friends, and
dollars scarce and dear.

Yet he did not coarsen in mind or heart, that kin or
comrades saw,
But he worked, he thrived, matured and wived, and
still he believed in law.
Her softest wish was a law to him, and sweet was the
hard-won bread,
And the steadiest man in all the shops was Wallace
Wright, they said.

But the times grew hard and the wage was cut, and
amid the ensuing strife
The first black shadow of Anarchy came into our
workman's life,
For his bench-mate there, in the shop, was one from
the far-off Volga's side,
Who had seen his sister dragged to shame and his
father scourged till he died,
Who had seen his mother go raving mad, had seen
it all dry-eyed,
And then he had sworn such an oath of oaths that
the depths of hell replied.

And Wallace was stirred by the Russian and hon-
estly shared his grief,
But would not hear of the Red Reform with its
promise of swift relief—
Relief from the grinding greed of man, from the
wrongs of class and state,

Relief from a hundred things he saw, with the fervor of honest hate.

Yes, he knew his own and his fellows' wrongs, and his very soul grew sore,

But what of that? It was all forgot when he entered his cottage door.

Then the times waxed worse and they let men go, and Wallace among the rest.

Discharged for his long, hard service; for it made his wage the best,

And the high must go to retain the low, when price is the crucial test.

No work! 'tis a thought to rebuke the heart for its dance within the breast.

Then the Russian came.

“Are you ready now to mingle with Freedom's set?”

But Wallace had only gravely smiled and had shaken his head: “Not yet.”

Then day by day he sought for work. *Do you understand?* He sought,

As no man ever sought gold or fame, *for toil*—and he found it not.

The quick, curt word, the rough rebuff, the careless sign of the head,

Were his till his face was sharp with care and his heavy heart like lead.

And every night when he sought his home, with an
aching, haunting dread,
His wife looked up. She spoke no word, but mourn-
fully drooped her head
To hide the fear of her mother-heart, the fear that
would not be gone;
The fear for the babe unborn, whom want already
laid clutches on.

Then there came a day when they had to face the
terrible word, "Vacate!"
The owner was "Sorry of course, but then, that
didn't keep the estate."

And the Russian came.

"Are you ready, Wright?" "Not yet!" he
gasped, "not yet!
I have still my wife and hope and life! and there
must be work to get."

A wretched hovel received them. They struggled
from bad to worse,
Till death seemed only happiness and life was the
greater curse.
And then *she* sickened; her life ebbed, ebbed, and
nevermore turned its tide.
And Wallace had only wildly prayed that he might
be laid at her side,

For he knew she had died from cruel want, in a
fruitful, generous earth;
And the quiet babe at her side, he knew, was
starved before its birth.

And the Russian came.

“Well, Wallace Wright, are you still content
with life?

You talked to me of Society’s claim, and Society
killed your wife.

Society grinds and kills us all, and you will not
make it rue it.

You talked to me of your God, and He—He let
Society do it.”

Can you blame the man, who, in wild despair, pressed
lips to the lips of his dead

And arose and looked at the Russian? “Lead on!
I will go,” he said.

* * * * *

A month had passed and the Red Reform to which
he had joined his fate

Had issued its edict against a man who had earned
its cruel hate—

Who had *earned* its hate, for his wealth was used to
oppress and not to raise;

And the sterner the bargain in flesh and blood, the
more was his own self-praise.

And hence the decree of the Red Reform, with fifty
men in the plot,
Where forty and nine had voted "Kill!" and one
had voted not.
That one you know, yet his name was first to be
drawn in the fateful lot,
And his Russian friend was the second, so the Red
Reform decreed
"That the monster yield his life to man, and that
these two do the deed."

* * * * *

'Twas the fated day—a holiday—and the noisy
throng poured out,
Full-fed with the chaff of cheers and jeers, of the
sounding laugh and shout,
In that strange way that a world is gay, all heedless
of what about.

Then down the street came the day's event, the glit-
tering grand parade,
And Wallace knew that the man they sought was
one of the cavalcade.
That man was the man for whom his brow had sweat
with the wet of years,
Who had drained his life of hope and joy and left
there want and tears,

Who had taken work from his hand when work was
another name for life,
Who had taken his home from his head—from *hers*
—who had killed, yes *killed* his wife.
Half dazed, half crazed, stood Wallace Wright, with
the single thought in his head
That the life of this man of plenty would pay for
his stricken dead.

Then the Russian said: "When the carriage comes
to the crossing just below,
You spring and seize the horses' heads and I will
deal the blow;
Then shout: 'This much for the Red Reform!' but
if I should chance to miss,
As soon as I'm clear of the carriage you finish the
work with this."

And The Deed came near and nearer, when, close
at his side, a child
Cried out her baby greeting, and the doomed man
looked and smiled
And flung from his glove a kiss, as of love unselfish
and undefiled.

Lo! the purpose of Wallace vanished, like the dark
before the sun,
At the love in the wee child's laughter and the
thought if The Deed were done

How she would be robbed as he had been and the
sweet face marred with grief,
How a hate would fill the little soul for him, who
had been the thief.

Yet there was his friend, the Russian, no cause
should make betray;
And there was the man who had wronged him, who
blighted the summer day.
A moment of wavering anguish, a moment of doubt
and dread,
Then, disregarding the passing steeds, he sprang for
his friend instead.
But the terrible knife was naked. It glittered, it
rose, it sank,
But it did not find its target. 'Twas Wallace's
blood it drank,
While the crowd closed in on the Russian, who
fought them front and flank.
With curses and cries and blows they closed. Wright
madly strove to save him;
Was seized, was bound, and on him they found the
bomb that the Russian gave him.

The rest is simply, quickly told. They scented the
deeper plot
And offered Wallace a pardon's bribe, but he
answered them, "For what?"

Do you think I would bring another here to ease or
share my lot?
Betray a friend for a pardon? For a thousand
I would not,
Though you keep me here in prison walls till they
or I shall rot!"
So they juried and judged him guilty and gave him
the law's extent,
And all of his wrongs re-woke in him and his inmost
soul was rent,
Yet he smiled to the Russian a sad "Good-by," as
into his cell he went.

He did not hear the confession that the other's
tongue poured out,
As, with calm and clear conciseness which the list-
eners could not doubt,
He told the story of Wallace: how the workshop
thrust him out;
Of all the bitter battle; of how it had come about
He had cast his lot with the Red Reform; how, alone,
he plead for life
For the man the clan had sworn should die; and at
last he had stopped the knife
With his own rag-covered bosom; how he even
then proved true
To him who had pierced his body, though with
unintent, God knew!

“And this is the man,” said the Russian, “you have
dared to condemn you, *you*—
By the Lord! no soul in all the whole of your Mam-
mon-serving crew
Should think it other than honor to latch that hero’s
shoe!”

And then they remembered his boyhood days,
remembered his manhood shown
In a hundred kindly, simple acts amongst people he
had known,
Remembered the Russian’s story, yes, even a trifle
more;
Why, even the man whose life he saved said “He
wasn’t bad, at the core!”
So the Governor sent a pardon and they opened his
grated door
And found him as dead as the pitiless stone which
formed his prison floor.

They said that his wound had bled within. I doubt
it not. Ah me!
There’s many a wound which bleeds within we
haven’t the trick to see.
But they said that his face wore a smile of grace.
Was it joy to escape from earth?
Or was it for wife—and that little one, which had
starved before its birth?

CONNOR McCARTHY.

“A H, GUD marnin’’, sir, ’dade and I’m hearty and
glad that the weather is fine.

Sure it isn’t ould Connor McCarthy that’s goin’ to
mope and to whine

Because he can’t make the world over. Yes, sir,
that’s me bit of a place.

Sure I love every leaf on the clover and know every
buttercup’s face.

“Dan says its a toomble-down shanty, and not fit to
live in, says Lou;

So they’re payin’ me board. They have planty and
both of ’em free wid it, too.

And I’m takin’ me sup where they bid me, but most
of the time I’ll be found

Right here, where there’s nobody wid me—or nobody
still on the ground.

“Of course it’s an ould fellow’s notion, and yet I’m
half thinkin’ it’s true

That the girl I brought over the ocean is a-doin’ her
waitin’ here, too.

The childer see no cause fer sorrow and say I'm
a-weakenin' fast,
But young people live fer tomorrow, while ould
people live fer the past.

“The girl I brought over was Mary—my Mary,
God's peace to her soul!
And never a word went contrary and never a heart-
ache but stole
Straight back to the land it was born in, afraid of the
peace in her eyes,
Eyes soft as the stars of the mornin' and blue wid
the blue of the skies.

“And never a worriment found me, but Mary's kiss
laid it to rest.
And whin her two arms went around me, I held all
the world to me breast!
You smile, sir, because I'm revealin' what most of
us hide. But it's true,
And surely you know that same feelin', or else—well,
God's mercy on you!

“I loved her. I envied her shadow because it could
lay at her feet,
While I, wid the stock in the m'adow or down in the
corn and the wheat,

Was workin' fer bread fer the darlin'. And she was
as jealously warm
And vowed she was often fer quarrelin' wid the coat
that was touchin' me arm.

“And so we lived on here together, as happy as
childer at play,
Till Danny was born, sir, and whether I blessed or
regretted the day
I couldn't have told at your biddin'. I loved the
wee broth of a boy
As he lay there, all swaddled and hidden—ten
pounds, sir, of genuine joy!

“And yet even joy goes contrary and has a best side
and a worst,
Fer soon I was second to Mary and Danny the baby
was first.
What! jealous, you say, of a baby? That baby me
own blood and bone?
You call me a fool, sir, but maybe your love never
burned like me own.

“I was jealous; I know it; I knew it. But never a
word did I say,
But loved wife and baby all through it, and worked
fer them day after day.

But O, things had changed. Why, the garden had
lost half its green to me sight.
I felt 'most like askin' God's pardon fer bringin'
such stuff to the light.

“The long-legged calf and the cow there; the new,
nakid lamb in the field,
The shaggy, ould horse in the plow there; the corn
wid its promisin' yield
Were yesterday pictures of beauty. The common-
est rail in the fence
Seemed proud to be doin' its duty, but now 'twas
all dollars and cents.
Ah, sad is the day that must borrow its light from a
day of the past,
And sad when you turn from tomorrow to a yester-
day never to last.

“Then came baby Lucy, a-makin' a change I don't
yet understand,
But all the delight Dan had taken came back in her
wee, baby hand.
Ah, she was my bit of a fairy! Me soul warmed
again in me breast.
I was fonder of her than of Mary, and *she* learned
to love me the best,
And would turn from her mother's own shoulder and
cry to be taken by me,

And somehow that made Mary colder, but I never
noticed, you see,
For I was that taken wid Lucy. The color came
back to the sky;
The sun seemed to shine wid a use he had almost
forgotten to try,
The use, sir, of warmin' a fellow, the inside as well
as the out,
Of spendin' his glorious yellow to buy us from worry
and doubt
And all of that foolish complainin' the happiest
folks seem possessed
Forever to be entertainin', like Mary and me, wid
the rest.

"You might not have thought, had you seen us, each
one wid a child to the heart,
Those babies had come in between us and were
pushing us farther apart.
Though both of us keenly could feel it, we let it run
on to the worst;
The years failed to stop it or heal it, and one day the
awful storm burst.

"When married folks keep on a livin', each holdin'
some things from the light,
They both must do lots of forgivin' before matters
settle down right

And Mary was little on meekness and I—I could
hardly be bent,
And both counted kindness a weakness; and so she
took Danny—and went.
You've heard that she went wid another. A lie! on
me soul, 'tis a lie!
And yet, sir, in some way or other, you've heard—
but of that by and by.

“Bit by bit, sir, I sold every acre, exceptin' this lot
that you see,
A tryin' to find her and make her take money
enough to be free
From poverty's pinch, till one marnin' (it still sets
me heart beatin' hard)
Widout the least bit of a warnin' I saw a lad run up
me yard
And open me door. It was Danny! The rascal had
grown full a head.
Ah, but I was as soft as a granny and hugged him
and kissed him and said
'Your mother, Dan? Quick, don't torment me wid
waitin',' and then
He gave me the letter she sent me. I mind every
scratch of the pen.

“ ‘Dear Connor; I send you me jewel. I've kept
him as long as I could,

But now, though it's horribly cruel and hurts me,
it's all for his good.
I'm not fit to raise him, so, Connor, you make him
the man he should be.
Forgive his poor mother's dishonor and kiss little
Lucy for me.'

“That was all. But O, Father in Heaven! the words
seemed to burn in me brain
And everything else there was driven away by their
terrible pain.
'Dishonor!' No more a pure woman, nevermore
wid a right to the name,
The highest of everything human? I cried like a
child wid the shame.
And then I determined to reach her, to find her and
help her to live,
To give her a chance and to teach her that God, yes,
and I—could forgive.

“Then came every friend and relation, wid, 'Connor,
it never will do.'
'The childer,' they said, 'Reputation,' and 'Just at
their time of life, too.'
And so, for the son and the daughter, I gave up the
mother and wife,
But O, it was hard, hard to blot her quite out of me
heart and me life.

“The childer grew up. Lucy married, position and money and all.

Dan made his way easy and carried the town for recorder last fall.

‘Last fall.’ Yes, last fall in September, I heard from me Mary. She sent

And begged me to come, to remember the dear, early days we had spent

As husband and wife, and to hasten, to come widout losin’ a day.

My! my! how me ould legs went racin’ to Danny and Lucy, but they,

They said, “Send her money, but, father, you can’t carry out all yer plan.

Don’t let her come back, for we’d rather let bygones be dead, when we can.’

“ ‘Send money.’ God’s mercy! what’s money when souls are a-starvin’ to death?

Dan said if the campaign were done he wouldn’t have hindered a breath,

But now—. Ah, ‘but now;’ the same reason that always was ready to tell—

‘But now!’ Was there never a season when mercy was free from its spell?

“I went to me Mary. I found her that sick that me heart nearly broke.

She died, but *my* arms were around her. *My name*
was the last word she spoke.
She always had loved me, and better than that, she
had always been pure.
The terrible words of her letter were not what we
fancied, for sure,
Her heart was that true to her Connor, her con-
science so tender, you see,
Her leavin' her home seemed dishonor and so she
had called it to me.

"I hope you don't mind my relatin' me story. It's
nothin', but I,
I lived it, you see. Now I'm *waitin'*, yes, waitin',
contented, to die.
I've got no reproach for the livin'. I've nothin' but
love for the dead.
I hope me own past is forgiven, and as for what's
comin' ahead,
Who can tell? Maybe joy, maybe sorrow, but surely
there's some place, at last,
Where old people live for tomorrow, as well as look
into the past."

THE YOUNG MAN WAITED.

IN the room below the young man sat,
With an anxious face and a white cravat,
A throbbing heart and a silken hat,
And various other things like that,
Which he had accumulated.
And the maid of his heart was up above,
Surrounded by hat and gown and glove,
And a thousand things which women love,
But no man knoweth the names thereof—
And the young man sat and—waited.

You will scarce believe the things I tell,
But the truth thereof I know full well,
Though how may not be stated;
But I swear to you that the maiden took
A sort of a half-breed, thin stove-hook
And heated it well in the gaslight there
And thrust it into her head, or hair!
Then she took a something off the bed,
And hooked it onto her hair, or head,
And piled it high, and piled it higher,
And drove it home with staples of wire!
And the young man anxiously—waited.

Then she took a thing she called "a puff,"
And some very peculiar, whitish stuff,
And using about a half a peck,
She spread it over her face and neck,
 (Deceit was a thing she hated!)
And she looked as fair as a liliated bower,
(Or a pound of lard, or a sack of flour)
 And the young man wearily—waited.

Then she took a garment of awful shape,
And it wasn't a waist, nor yet a cape,
But it looked like a piece of ancient mail,
Or an instrument from a Russian jail,
And then with a fearful groan and gasp,
She squeezed herself in its deathly clasp—
 So fair and yet so fated!
And then with a move like I don't know what,
She tied it on with a double knot;
 And the young man woefully—waited.

Then she put on a dozen different things,
A mixture of buttons and hooks and strings,
Till she strongly resembled a notion store;
Then taking some seventeen pins, or more,
She thrust them between her ruby lips,
Then stuck them around from waist to hips,
 And never once hesitated.

And the maiden didn't know perhaps,
That the man below had had seven naps,
And that now he sleepily—waited.

And then she tried to put on her hat.
Ah me, a trying ordeal was that!
She tipped it high and she tried it low,
But every way that the thing would go
Only made her more agitated.
It wouldn't go straight and it caught her hair,
And she wished she could hire a man to swear,
But alas! the only man lingering there
Was the man who wildly—waited.

Then a little dab here and a wee pat there,
And a touch or two to her hindmost hair,
Then around the room with the utmost care
She thoughtfully circulated.
Then she siezed her gloves and a chamois skin,
Some breath perfume and a long stick pin,
A bon bon box and a cloak and some
Eau de cologne and chewing gum,
Her opera glass and a sealskin muff,
A fan and a heap of other stuff;
Then she hurried down, but ere she spoke,
Something about the maiden broke,
So she scurried back to the winding stair,
And the young man looked in wild despair,
And then he—evaporated!

BROTHERTON'S BABY.

PLEASE score one more for the human race.
There's a baby come to Brotherton's place.
It's a little bit of a pudgy imp
Of a color a cross between a shrimp
And a lobster—boiled. It has no hair
(There's a place for some, but it isn't there)
And it has the most expressionless eyes
And its nose is a most ridiculous size,
Or, rather, it's no size. Then its legs
And arms stick out like wobbly pegs.
In short, it's a misfit thing all 'round,
But chock up full of dolorous sound.

I've often pondered and wondered why
A baby's first knowledge is how to cry.
Before it can see, or smell, or feel,
Before it imbibes its earliest meal;
Eleven months before it can walk,
Seventeen months before it can talk
And even several months and a half
Before the creature knows how to laugh;
Before it can sit, or stand, or crawl,
Before it knows anything else at all,
The infant human knows how to bawl.

But Brotherton's baby has come to town
And Brotherton's house is upside down.
He has hired a nurse at "twenty per week"
To keep him reminded he mustn't speak,
And mustn't wear boots or shoes that squeak,
And mustn't as much as open a door,
For fear that the baby should stop a pore,
And mustn't drink anything wet, or damp,
As his breath might give the baby a cramp!

But Brotherton's baby has come to stay
And Brotherton came to me one day
And—most munificent mark of favor!
He said that I might call on "the little shaver."
So I went, but no sooner were we inside
Than the baby (as usual) wailed and cried
And Brotherton called "Is my laddy-waddy
A kyin' to see him's daddy-waddy,
Or is him's tumnick a'havin' baddy?"
And then he observed it was plain to see
The baby was frightened because of me.

Then the mother said "Is ze tooksy-wooksy
So 'faid of ze man and him's orsul looksy?"
And she granted me such a frosty stare
I could see my breath, when it struck the air.
And the nurse said, "Why didn't popsy-wopsy
Tell him's own little lolly-popsy

The manky-panky would visit he?"
And then all three of them glowered at me.
And so I tried to swallow my shame
And gracefully get in the popular game
By remarking, "Really, its head is fuzzy!
Er—tell me, is it a buzzy-wuzzy
Or is it a cissy-wissy child?"
—But I was the only one that smiled.

Then, after awhile, they asked my view
Concerning a name. Any name would do
If it wasn't too common, or wasn't too odd,
Wasn't too short, or wasn't too broad,
Wasn't too new and wasn't too old,
Wasn't too backward and wasn't too bold,
Wasn't too little and wasn't too long,
Wasn't too mild and wasn't too strong,
Wasn't too wild and wasn't too tame,
But just a domestic, well-bred name,
Warranted sound and gentle and kind—"
But though I willingly searched my mind,
There wasn't a name I could think or say,
From Beelzebub to Old Dog Tray,
But Mr. grunted and Mrs. sniffed,
And even the baby looked somewhat miffed.

And then they proceeded to show his points,
His style, his action, his hide, his joints,

Until I learned that the only way
Was to watch for anything they might say
And then agree, or more than agree,
So when Mrs. Brotherton said to me,
"Hasn't him dot a nice, bald head?"
"Yes, so much nicer than hair," I said.
"And hasn't him dot ze sweetest toes?"
"And so remarkably placed in rows!"
I cried, and she smiled, as if to say,
"Most toes were adjusted any old way."
"An' look at ze cheek of ze tsweet 'ittle lad."
"Immense!" I said. "Resembles his dad."
"And hasn't him dot ze tunningest eyes?"
"And how closely they correspond in size!"
Then Brotherton mentioned "Him's wonderful
head!"
"Ah, a block off the old chip there!" I said.
"An' him's rosebud mouf!" said the wife.
"Yes, but—
I thought *rosebuds* were mostly *shut*!"

Then Brotherton bridled and said "Some folks
Never seemed to learn there were jokes—and
jokes."
And his wife chimed in, "Zey wouldn't stay
To be 'boosed in such a orsul way."
And the baby screamed from his lofty seat
Some scurrillous flings I scorn to repeat!

HOW THEY HEARD LA PRIMA.

I.

THE MAN OF IT.

“DID I hear Madame Prima sing?”

Well, I noticed her quaver
And wabble and waver,
But hearing? Well, that was a different thing;
For I had a seat on the outside edge,
Jammed in as tight as a wooden wedge
In a hickory log, and there I sat,
Dodging the high, proverbial hat;
But once in awhile I'd tunnel though,
And the great La Prima met my view.
A petrified smile adorned her face,
And, being a stranger to the place,
Of course she never could find the way,
And so, like a boat in a foreign bay,
The impresario sought her side
And towed her down, in her stately pride.
Her train flowed out, like a vessel's wake;
She churned a little and gave a shake,
Came up in the wind and luffed and tacked,
While the little tug-man swiftly backed.

And the orchestra signaled "Toot!—toot! toot!"
As La Prima anchored and gave salute.
O, yes, I heard La Prima sing.

To my right sat a man with a cold and cough,
Who sneezed till his head came almost off.
And I wished it had. Then a mongrel dog,
Which seemed to be doing the town incog,
(As he wouldn't allow any name to fit,
From "Nice old doggie" to "Here you, git!")
He had some grievance against the crowd,
And proceeded to tell it, right out loud.
Then some one had brought a baby there,
Whose harmony matched its lack of hair.
It howled a very monotonous air,
And just as La Prima took high E,
It pitched its pipe in another key
And struggled to carry her up to G.
O, yes, I heard La Prima sing!

She winked and blinked and wrinkled her nose,
She opened her mouth to swallow her foes,
Sank back again to a normal pose,
Then suddenly reared and raged and rose
And wiggled and waggled and stood on her toes.
It was something marvelous, I suppose,
But we couldn't tell, as a man remarked,
Whether she coughed, or cried, or barked!
O, yes, I heard La Prima sing.

II.

THE WOMAN OF IT.

O, yes, I heard La Prima sing!
She had on a bodice
Fit for a goddess.
Indeed, the whole gown was the sweetest thing!
The waist was chiffon, and cut quite low,
And the skirt had an apron front, you know,
And the colors were lovely, cerise and green,
The prettiest shade of Nile I've seen.
Then it must have been nine yards round and fell
In those ripply folds I like so well.
Her voice? Why, soprano, I think, and O, yes!
The skirt was made of a satin *duchesse*
With a train, Marie Antoinette, I guess.
Then the bodice was also Antoinette,
With a point, you know, and the neck was set
With the dearest, sweetest, jeweled net.
O, I almost forgot her Van Dykes! They fell
From the bodice, of course, and they did look swell.
They were sapphire blue, and they matched *so* well.
Then a belt with a buckle of jeweled gold;
Of course it was hooked to make it hold,
But the buckle itself was awfully sweet.
And then, to make the whole thing complete—
Those bewitching sleeves! They were *point de gene*
And—let's see; how can I make it plain—

They had each three puffs; I think it was three;
“Was she good?” Why, I’m telling you, can’t you
see?

They were just the kind of sleeves for me.
And that *point de gene*; well you never saw
One-half the effect with *mousseline de soie*.
What did she sing? Why, I don’t know.
But I’m awfully glad I heard her, though’



THE LABORS OF HERCULES.

(Worked Over in Easy-Going Verse.)

IN ANCIENT Greece, long time ago, a man was
born—or, maybe,

I ought to say a god was born—or, better yet, a
baby.

His father's name was Jupiter; Alcmena was his
mother,

Who vowed he was "the sweetest pet," and "never
such another!"

But Juno, wife of Jupiter, pretended not to know it;
She didn't like young Hercules, and straightway
sought to show it.

She sent two horrid, monstrous snakes, to eat him
in his cradle,

Which reptiles found him sitting eating sugar with
a ladle.

They smiled to see how sweet he'd be, but lo! the
boy gave battle:

He killed them both and used their tails to make a
baby-rattle.

Then Juno let him thrive in peace; but, after he
was grown,

He found that she had kept him from a kingdom
and a throne.

Eurystheus obtained these plums, but night and
day was haunted
By tales of mighty Hercules—the hero and un-
daunted!
So, after some deep thinking, Eurystheus planned
to send him
To do a dozen labors, any one of which might end
him.

LABOR I.

The Nemean lion, accustomed to ravage
The country around, being voted too savage,
Our hero was sent to remove him from earth,
With no arms, save the two that he had at his birth.
Brave Hercules blocks up one hole of the den
And enters the other. A silence, and then
Comes a growl, and a roar and a rush, and a shock—
Like waves in the tempest they struggle and rock,
Till Hercules wins the renowned “strangle lock,”
And the lion goes down like a log or a post,
Repents of his sins, and is only a ghost.

LABOR II.

There lived at that epoch, according to story,
A terrible monster, whose principal glory
Consisted of heads, which a strict inventory
Declared to be nine; and one of the same
Was as deathless as Jove, so authorities claim.

Nothing daunted, our Hercules went forth to fight it;
He cut off one head and two others were sighted.
And thus the solution appeared to his view:
“When you take one from one, the result will be
two.”

Rather taken aback, but still thoroughly game,
He called his hired help, Iolaus by name.
Then he shaved off the heads as a man would a
beard,
And the necks (by his servant) were carefully seared,
Till the deathless head soon was left grinning alone,
And that one he buried beneath a big stone.

LABOR III.

The Arcadian stag was a curious kind,
Golden-horned, brazen-hoofed, and could outrun
the wind;
Whoever pursued him was soon left behind.
The mandate was given to capture him living,
So our hero set out without any misgiving.
All over the kingdom he followed the brute,
Till a year was consumed in the useless pursuit.
“Confound you!” said Hercules, seizing his bow,
“I’ve got something here which I’ll wager can go
As fast as two stags.” And it proved to be so.
The arrow succeeded in laying him low.
The wound wasn’t fatal, so Hercules caught him,
And into the king’s haughty presence he brought him.

LABOR IV.

The boar of Erymanthus was *de trop*
Which is French for saying how
Bores are looked on, even now.
Our hero ran the rascal through the snow,
Snared him neatly in a net,
Picked him up, like any pet,
And took him to the capital to add him to the show.

LABOR V.

Augeas, King of Elis, it appears,
Had several thousand oxen in his stable,
But hadn't cleaned the place for thirty years.
The hard taskmaster heard, pricked up his ears
And cried, "Ho! ho! my Hercules, you're able
To do great things. I give you just one day
For this spring cleaning." Stranger to dismay,
Our hero sought the stables of Augeas,
Turned into them the river named Alpheus,
And re-enforced it with the swift Peneus
These brooms soon swept the dirt away, you have
my word.
Perhaps they swept the stables with it. That I
haven't heard.

LABOR VI.

The Stymphalian birds were a horrible lot,
And everyone thought

That they ought
To be shot;
Yet no one had done it, till Hercules brought
His little snake-rattle to set them to flying
And then popped them over, as easy as lying.

LABOR VII.

A bull, sent by Neptune to die in his honor (?)
Not having been killed was made mad by the donor.
Eurystheus must have been running a "Zoo,"
And having the stag and the boar, wanted, too,
The mad bull of Crete; so he ordered "Go get him!"
Though Hercules never so much as had met him.

But our hero set sail,
Grabbed the bull by the tail,
And took him to Hellas; but not for the Garden,
For, having arrived, he then (begging his pardon
Because he had given his tail such a pull)
Set him free—and all Greece was as mad as the bull.

LABOR VIII.

Diomedes
Used to feed his
Mares on human flesh.
Hercules just cut him up,
Found the mares inclined to sup,
And fed him to them, fresh.

'Twas a most successful plan ;
Though before they liked a man
More than oats or anything,
Strange to say, this master-diet
Made them docile, kind and quiet,
To be taken to the king.

LABOR IX.

The Amazon queen had a beautiful belt.
'Twas given by Mars, and the queen justly felt
Quite proud of the trifle, but Hercules started
To see if the belt and queen couldn't be parted.
At first it appeared he had only to ask
To receive it, but this was too easy a task
To please Mrs. Juno, who stirred up a bolt
In the ranks of the Amazons. When the revolt
Was reported to Hercules, he rather thought
The queen was a traitress and covertly wrought
To undo him ; so seizing the girdle he sought,
He slew her, and thus was it bloodily bought.
Which shows that a man may be brave as the best,
And yet ungallant, when it comes to a test.

LABOR X.

Geryones had a fine herd of red cattle,
With a two-headed dog and a giant to battle
With any who trespassed upon his domain.
Dog, owner and keeper were met and were slain,

Yet Hercules still had to fight heavy odds,
(A number of men and a parcel of gods)
But in spite of them all, he conducted the string
Of handsome, red beasts to his brute of a king.

LABOR XI.

When Juno was married, the goddess of Earth
Presented some apples of excellent worth,
Made all of fine gold
From the smooth, shiny skin to the pips in the core.

(Alas! I am told
Such beautiful apples don't grow any more.)
But wealth is a worry. Nobody need doubt it,
Unless, like myself, he is always without it.
And Juno was worried until she grew pale;
Her nectar was flat, her ambrosia was stale.
The fear of a burglar had entered her head,
And so every night she looked under the bed.
No matter what Jupiter argued or said,
She'd wake him at midnight to vow and declare
There must be an apple-thief round about there.
At last, growing tired of the worry and wear,
She placed them in care
Of the sisters Hesperides, living just where
The sun sets at night.

Our hero met Atlas, who held up the height
Of the heavens in air,
And a bargain was struck that the hero should bear

The dome for a while, and the action should earn
The apples, which Atlas brought back in return.
Though I can't understand
Why a chap with a chance to steal apples at hand,
Scot-free of all blame,
Should so lose his head
As to give up his claim
And let somebody else do it for him instead.

LABOR XII.

Pluto, in his world below,
Had a great three-headed beast
Called a dog. Perhaps 'twas so,
But I doubt his breed, at least.
House-dog? Hardly. Poison-drops
Fell from out his gaping chops,
And his fangs were sharp as hate,
And he guarded Pluto's gate.

Hercules was told to fetch
This repulsive, savage wretch.
Hercules with little fuss
Seized the snarling Cerberus,
Took him to the Earth from Hades,
Scared the king in playful sport,
Showed him round to all the court,
Made him bark for all the ladies.
Then the hero let him go,
And he sank to realms below,

One head growling,
One head yowling
One head howling,
Out dog-curses,
As mythology rehearses.
And the fun
Of the Labors—all was done.
So are these doggerel verses.



GOG.

GOG was a dog who was owned by Smith—
You have heard of Smith; his first name's
Mister—

And May was a baby most seen with
Miss Maud, her grown-up, pretty sister.

So far the story is plain, no doubt,
But the rest of the tale demands reflection,
For every evening the dog went out,
And he always went in the baby's direction.

And it puzzles me and it puzzled Gog,
But you—well you are experienced, maybe—
Why the maid so longingly looked for the dog,
And the man so frequently called on the baby!

And why did the young man sigh such sighs?
And why did the maid's sweet voice grow sweeter?
And why did they seem to realize
Maud's father paid for the gas by meter?

And how distant the young man was, at the start!
(This fact, by the way, is one of the oddest)
Though they both so bashfully kept apart,
Their chairs, somehow, were not so modest!

And it puzzles me and it puzzled Gog,
But you—well, you can explain it, maybe—
Now, why did the maid caress the dog?
And why did the young man trot the baby?

And the young man said, "Dear baby, how
I love brown eyes and clear-cut features
And rare, long hair and a classic brow,
Such as nature gives some favored creatures!"

And the maiden said, "Good boy, good boy!
If I thought that dogs had understanding,
I'd tell you of eyes which give me joy;
Oh, they're beautiful eyes and most command-
ing!"

And it puzzles me and it puzzled Gog—
But your wiser sense can explain it, maybe—
For she didn't seem to describe the dog
And his remarks did not fit the baby.

And the young man said, "O baby May!
Don't you think you would like to have a brother,
Who would worship you in the wildest way
As he loves—he loves—he loves—another?"

And the maid responded, "Goggy dear,
Do you love your master? Say! is it true, sir?
For somehow, although it seems so queer,
I somehow feel that I feel like you, sir."

Then the young man said, "Now, Gog, my boy,
If you love me, give her a sign to show it;
Sit up on your haunches, grin for joy
And bark three times, and then she'll know it."

And the maiden said, "O my darling May,
If he loves me, as I love—you, so dearly,
Just pat-a-cake with your hands to say
That I may believe that he speaks sincerely."

But alas! 'twas the young man's luckless lot
To rock on the tail of the canine creature.
And the poor dog's howls and the young man's
thought
Would have shocked the soul of priest or preacher.

And then, despite what the maid could do,
The baby took a contrary notion,
And instead of patting a cake or two,
It joined the dog in a wild commotion.

And it puzzles me as it puzzled Gog,
But you—well you can explain it, maybe—
Oh, why did the young man kick the dog?
And why did the maiden spank the baby?

STORIETTES.

THE WORLD A-WHEEL.

I DREAMED this globe of sea and land
Became enameled steel;
The poles developed pedals, and
The world was now a-wheel

So, taking one of heaven's stars
From out the scarf of night,
A Saturn or perhaps a Mars,
I made a lantern-light.

But how to meet another need
It puzzled me to tell,
Until I thought 'twas true indeed
That Venus was a belle.

I mounted on my wheel and sped
For many years' ellipses
And finished several laps ahead
Of twenty-one eclipses.

Then up the sky I pumped at day
Behind the sun-god's track,
Till coasting down the westward way
I left him at my back.

So feeling somewhat parched and dry
At close of such a day,
I took the Dipper from on high
And drank the Milky Way.

'Twas all a dream, and yet I know
At least a part was real,
For looking from my window, lo!
The world *is* now a-wheel.

REVENGE.

VEN ich und Gretchen married got,
Mein olt frient Dunkelschwarzenrath,
He don'd coom vere my veddin ees,
Becos I nefer gone by hees!

Aber, I get me efen yet.
Dot Dunkelschwarzenrath is deat.
I don'd go by hees fooneral—nein!—
Becos he nefer gone by mine!

OMNI-UTILITARIAN.

QUOTH I: "Good friend, the sky is gray
And keen the air doth feel.

Where is thine outer garment pray?"

Quoth he, "I have my wheel."

"Thou lookest faint. Hast thou forgot
To take thy noonday meal?"

"Odzooks!" quoth he, "I had it not,
For I did ride my wheel."

"How fareth business? Booms it still?
Or runs it down at heel?"

"It goeth well, or goeth ill,"
Quoth he. "I have my wheel."

"It grieveth me thy sweetheart, lad,
Is deaf to thine appeal."

He answered light and grinnéd glad
"Yea, but I have my wheel."

"Poor lad! Dead are thy parents both,
The grave their bones conceal."

"Oh, yea, I speed there oft," he quoth,
"Because I have my wheel."

“How stand'st thou on affairs of state?
Which party hath thy zeal?”

“I have forgot my views of late,”
Quoth he, “I have my wheel.”

“Goest thou to church on Sabbath days
For spiritual weal?”

He gave a look of blank amaze.
Quoth he, “I have my wheel.”

I oped my mouth to question more.
Up gat his steed of steel,
And quoth he: “When I meet a bore,
I'm *glad* I have my wheel!”

COMEDY OR TRAGEDY?

(The Coquette, loquitur.)

I SAY I do not love you. I am gay
And with my laughter waft your vows away;
For you, you say you love me, smile and sigh,
And fire me with the fervor of your eye.
Ah me, the pity of our mimic play!
If only either of us did not lie!

MY LOVER SAYS.

HE SAYS I should not give a glance
To other men;
But 'tis no gift, for, by some chance,
I'm sure to get one back again—
Or two, or ten;
Besides, I only look to see
If any of them look at me.

He says I ought to see as through
My lover's eyes;
But I reply that so I do,
For where he looks there I look too;
For I am wise,
And know that he must look—to see
If any of them look at me!

MATCHED.

"I would fain have it a match."—Shakespeare.

ALPHONSE and Claribel have met,
A match will surely come;
He nurses at a cigarette,
She widely chews her gum.

Alphonse and Claribel should haste
To bid the guests convene,
For flaring colors suit his taste
And she is gaudy green.

Alphonse and Claribel should tell
Their marriage vows, methinks.
She likes a man "who looks real well,"
And he'd *out*-look the Sphinx.

Alphonse and Claribel will draw
Together well, I ween,
For when he asks her, "Have you saw?"
She answers him, "I seen."

“ACROSS THE WALNUTS AND
THE WINE.”

“OUR CLUB”—THE IRISH MEMBER'S
TOAST

THE sharp edge of hunger was turned and the
Chair
Arose to inform us we all might prepare
For a story, a toast, or any good bit
Which entered the head of an owner of wit,
And for fear Brother Milliken's tongue should grow
balky,
By mixing Kentucky with part of Milwaukee,
We'd hear from him first, and his toast was “Our
Club.”

As soon as his fellows had laughed at the rub
Which the chairman had given, the Irishman rose,
Upholding his liquid, and said, “I suppose
Ivry mother's gossoon of ye's achin' to drink
The toast to our club, so let yer bowls clink!

Yez can drink it in potcheen or drink it in watter,
An', barrin' the taste, I would say, drink the latter;
Fer if yez do not, I will give ye fair warnin',
Ye'll find that it's watter ye want in the marnin.'
But drink watter *now* an ye'll feel extry foine
An' won't be a wantin' a hat noomber noine,

Fer I'll tell ye the trut'—to the shame of the divil—
It don't do to treat the potcheen over civil.

Just as sure as ye open yer door to the cratur
He hints that his brother is finer or nater,
An' then they both say that their coosin is swater,
An' then that the family should be more complater,
An' they have a gay toime an' ye find, to yer sorra,
Though ye'll swear they were lodged in yer stomach,
 begorra,
Yet all of 'em's oop in yer head, by tomorra!

But drink to our club in what liquid ye wish;
Drink deep as a camel and free as a fish.
Though we call it a club, let that club be a staff!
Let it always be used in a brother's behalf—
A support for his need and a rest for his hand!
Though we call it a club, let that club be a wand!—
The same as thim wands that the fairies used much.
Let no heart be so hard but to melt at its touch!
As we call it a club, when we see anny wrang,
Let us take up our club an' go after it strang;
Let it swing for the right, brothers, nightly and daily,
Though we call it a club, let it be a shillaly!"

“OUR LADIES,”—THE POET'S TOAST.

“A TOAST from the poet, I think, would be pleasant,”

Cried he at the banquet's head.

“A toast from the poet!” cried every one present,
And the poet arose and said:

“Mr. Chairman, I greet you and all of your host;
My comrades, your friendship is ever my boast;
And lastly, fair ladies, 'tis you whom I toast.
Though I mention you last, it is not my intent
To reckon you least. First in worth is not meant
When we place the soft mollusk or thin *consommé*
At the top of the *menu*, and no one will say
That sherbet and fruit are at all less delicious
Just because farther down on the list than the fish is.

“Mother Eve, you remember, was last in formation,
But that proves she was apex of all the creation,
For first appeared grasses and herbs and the fruits,
And then came the fishes, the fowls and the brutes,
Then Adam; and mark you how each form grew
higher.

But still there was left something more to desire,

For though all life was there, flora, fauna and human,
Paradise could not be until also was woman.

And so she was made from a small, bony part
Which is nearest (please note well the symbol) man's
heart.

And hence, since that time, 'tis man's chiefest en-
deavor

To get back that rib, and 'twill be so forever.

“How broad is the theme of my toasting—Our
Ladies!

Proud daughters of Guelph and the Misses O'Gradys,
The Fraülein of Berlin, the Donas of Cadiz,
The Annas, the Fannies, the Adas, the Sadies,
All, *all*, in some masculine hearts are ‘*Our ladies.*’

“Our Ladies? Our mothers, queen-angels of Earth.
Our wives, or our sweethearts—tongue fails at your
worth!

O, is there a grief which o'ershadows the day,
That a woman's soft breath cannot waft it away?
O, is there a heart, adamant, austere,
Which melts not beneath a pure, womanly tear?
And what soured ascetic who does not rejoice
In the grace of her glance, of her smile, of her voice?

“O, have you an armor, so tempered, so true,
That a woman's sharp tongue cannot pierce through
and through?

And tell me of arguments, reasons or laws,
Which bear half of the weight of a woman's '*Because.*'

"Our Ladies, enduring, considerate, meek ;
Our Ladies, contrary, irrational, weak ;
Kind hearted, yet cruel ; obliging, perverse,
Which is why they are taken 'for better or worse.'

"Do you think the description is rather complex?
So it is, but just so is the feminine sex ;
Yet without the sex, Heaven itself were a Hades.
For Heaven is anywhere where are Our Ladies."



AFTER-DINNER APOLOGY OF LE COMTE
CRAPAUD.

“I WOULD you make ze little speak *avec plaisir*,
Boat eet ees not moach long zat I been here
Ant’I am timid zat I speak soam wrong,
Becos I know zis langvids not moach long.

“Zis Englees langvids I not understand me moach.
Eet ees not logical, eef I can joage,
For eet ees not long since ago zat I
Did not receif somesing for which I try;
And zen a friend of mine, he coam ant say,
‘Olt man, I seenk zat you are in ze *consommé*.’

“Boat zen anuzzer frient coam ze next minute
Ant say, ‘My boy, I moach regret you are *not* in it.’

“Ant still anuzzer frient he coam to me.
‘Ze sing ees not moach good at all,’ say he.
‘Eet ees all right zat you are left.’ How ees zat
been
Zat I am *right* and *left* ant *out* ant *in*?

“Ant so I seenk perhaps I not know well
Zis Englees langvids, or I would you tell
Ze little speak zat I s’ould like to make,
Boat I am timid zat I speak meestake.

“For eet ees soach a fonie langvids, *ou!*
Not long ago, one evening, coam to me
One ver’ good friend, as eet ees getting dark
Ant say, ‘Coam, let us go upon ze lark.’
I say ‘*Eh bien*, I go,’ for I not like to tell
Zat I not understand him ver’ moach well.
A lark? Zat ees a bird, *selon* Webstaire,
Ze gentilman zat write ze *dictionaire*;
Boat, ah! I fint I haf not understood.
I fint *zis* lark ees not a bird moach good.

“Eet ees ver’ late zat I am get to bed
Ant zen I feel so strange oap in ze head.
I am so bad I not can sleep, ant so
I rise moach early ant I go below;

Ant zere I fint my landladie who coam ant say
‘Monsieur, you get oap wiz ze lark today!’
I say ‘Non, non, madame; oh, my poor head!
Eet ees wiz zat bad bird I went to bed!
I not get oap wiz him. You are moach wrong;
I am alreaty wiz zat bird too long.’

“She laugh so moach I seenk her face ees break;
I not know why onless I speak meestake;
Ant so, I will not make ze speak tonight,
For I am timid zat I not speak right.”

QUAINT CHARACTERS.

FIN DE SIECLE.

THIS life's a hollow bubble,
Don't you know?
Just a painted piece of twouble,
Don't you know?
We come to earth to cwy,
We gwow oldeh and we sigh,
Oldeh still and then we die,
Don't you know?

It is all a howwid mix,
Don't you know?
Business, love, and politics,
Don't you know?
Clubs and pawties, cliques and sets
Fashions, follies, sins, wegwets,
Stwuggle, stwife, and cigawettes
Don't you know?

And we wowwy through each day,
Don't you know?
In a sort of, kind of, way,
Don't you know?
We are hungwy, we are fed,
Some few things are done and said,

We are tired, we go to bed,
Don't you know?

Business? O, that's beastly trade,
Don't you know?
Something's lost or something's made,
Don't you know?
And you wowwy, and you mope
And you hang youah highest hope
On the pwice, pe'haps, of soap!
Don't you know?

Politics? O, just a lawk,
Don't you know?
Just a nightmaeh in the dawk,
Don't you know?
You pe'spiah all day and night
And afteh all the fight,
Why pe'haps the w'ong man's wight,
Don't you know?

Society? Is dwess,
Don't you know?
And a sou'ce of much distwess,
Don't you know?
To detehmine what to weah,
When to go and likewise wheah
And how to pawt youah haih,
Don't you know?

Love? O, yes! You meet some gi'l,
 Don't you know?
And you get in such a whi'l,
 Don't you know?
That you kneel down on the floah
And imploah and adoah—
And it's all a beastly boah!
 Don't you know?

So theah's weally nothing in it,
 Don't you know?
And we live just for the minute,
 Don't you know?
For when you've seen and felt,
Dwank and eaten, heahd and smelt,
Why all the cawds are dealt,
 Don't you know?

You've *one* consciousness, that's all,
 Don't you know?
And *one* stomach, and it's small,
 Don't you know?
You can only weah one tie,
One eye-glass in youah eye,
And one coffin when you die,
 Don't you know?

AN UNCONVENTIONAL RUSTIC.

PO'TRY fellers says we like to drink
Worter from the ole mill stream,
Like to git down on the brink
So's it runs right down our stummik—"like a
dream,"
Says them po'try men.
Then again
They say how we love to draw it from the well,—
"Moss-bound bucket," and that sort o' thin'.
Says we much prefer a gourd, er ole sea shell,
Er a rusty dipper, made o' tin
Fer to drink it in,
But, by Gee!
Yer cut glass, Sevvers chiny stuff is good enough
fer me.

Po'try fellers says there ain't no bed
Quite so good as that un in the old homestead.
I say durn it
And dad burn it!
Durn its feather bed-tick that's so lean
Yeh sag between
All the slats and almost touch the floor
If yeh weighs ten pounds or more.

If you're thin
Not a bone fits in
To a soft spot
Like it ought,
But rubs, rubs, rubs, on some blame slat;
So if I know where *I'm* at,
Hairy, springy, couchy city beds'll do
Fer me, I jus' tell you!

Po'try fellers says if we have stacks
Of ham fer breakfas', coffee an' flap-jacks,
With a dinner of biled cabbage an' corn beef,
An' p'serves an' pie fer supper, you got lief
To have all the rest. Is 'at so?
Guess if they met me they'd likely know
That I'd take some olives, lemon ice,
Lobster salad, bullion an' a slice
Of boiled tarpot, with some tutty-frutty,
An' a little of that stuff, *a la spaghutty*,
Frummidge, ice cream an' assorted pie,
Quail on puddin', sherbet, oyster fry—
Anythin' else yeh got,
An' fetch her quick an' hot.
Coffee? No sir, take the stuff away;
Pomeroy, Chartruse, extry dry will do me any day.

Po'try fellers says we love to *walk*,
Cause its healthfuller an' lots more air
Sizzles through yer lungs, an' they talk

How when we *do* ride 'at we don't care
Fer no bridles, but jest slides
On a horse an' *gits*,
Say it sort o' fits
Us most to take straw-rides,
'R else to ride the good ole-fashioned way,
In the family shay,
Which ain't got no springs,
Ner cushions, an' which slings
You 'n yer girl together (which yeh like)
Till it steadies when yeh strike
The ole turn-pike.
Po'try fellers talks that way,
But a speakin' fer myself, I say
A tallyho, Victory *coup'* will do me any day.

Po'try fellers further says our homes
Is pomes,
Says the flicker of the fire-place is a sight
Chuck full of warm delight,
While the winter breezes kindly fans yer backs
Through the cracks;
Says the suller an' the butt'ry is the best
To keep things sweet in,
An' the sittin' room's fer rest,
An' the kitchen fer to eat in.
Says there ain't no place on earth quite like the attic,
Speshly when the weather's rainy an' rumattic,

An' it spatters on the roof an' on the pane,
(Not the rummyism doesn't, but the rain!)
Which is very slick an' pretty,
But them houses in the city,
All fixed up like ole Queen Annie's used to be,
Brown stone roof an' mansard front—by Gee!
Such a house is good enough for me!

Po'try fellers takes a lot o' pains
To show they got no brains,
But the fooliest thing they does—it seems to me—
Is to chalk
Down the darndest lot of words you ever see
An' say that's how we talk.
Gosh all hemlock! Why they chop
Half the words to pieces an' they stop
'Fore they've finished spellin' of 'em,
An' they're full of little wiggles up above 'em.
Why, ther spellin' would disgrace the dumbest fool
In the spellin class at Districk School.
An' ther grammer's the most worse you ever see
Why, if you an' me
Couldn't talk no more correcter—Geemeenee!
'Scuse me, but it makes me hot to see things wrote
that way.
Good, old Angly Saxon English talk is my ch'ice
any day.

BEFORE PLAYING TINKERTOWN.

(A DISINTERESTED CITIZEN ADVISES THE ADVANCE
AGENT.)

“SO YOU'RE goan to give a show.
Well, I s'pose you likely know
Yer own bus'ness, but I'm glad
—Ez fer me—I never had
Money in the show biz here,
Fer our folks is mighty queer.
An' you see when they first built
Our new Op'ry House, they kilt
The hull bus'ness, 'cause they give
More shows than could run—an' live.

“Give two in one week, one time.
One was minstrels. They was prime!
But what kilt us was the other;
Some blame lecturer or-ruther
Talked about a Chiny wall
An' a Pyramids an' all
That there sort o' rot. An' so,
Bein' as folks had *paid*, you know,
Fifteen cents to see a *show*,
Lots of 'em felt ruther sore
An' don't go to shows no more.

“Course your show is good? No doubt.
But you see the town's *showed out*;
Less'n three weeks back we had
Hamlet. Had it purty bad.
Actors—they was purty fair,
Speshly one with yeller hair.
He had talunt! He could shout
An' jes' drown the others out!
But the play itself was *sad*.
'Sides it was a draggy, bad
Sort of sadness. Didn't begin
To come up to ol' East Lynne!

“ Jabez Tubbs, he sez, sez he,
'I'll take ol' East Lynne fer me.
Mebbe these new plays is fine,
But I'll take the old fer mine.'
'Scuse me fer goan on this way,
But I'm feared yer show won't pay.

“It's a bad week fer a show,
'Cause most folks that gits to go
Is a-restin' up jest now
Fer the Social. An' that's how
Things most always is 'round here.
P'r'aps there's nothin' fer a year,
Then, first thing a feller knows,
We're just overrun with shows.

“P'r'aps a little later might
Find a better week an' night.
Still, I dunno, fer ye see
P'tracted meetin' soon'll be,
An' of course you know that's free,
An' of course that kills a show
Where you got to pay to go.”

A LITTLE SAUNTER.

WHEN the sun's a-comin' up 'nd ole Earth is wet,
Jest as though he'd washed his face 'nd hedn't
dried it yet;
Birds fer miles 'nd miles around chipperin' 'n'
singin',
Pigs a-gruntin' music fer the feed the man's a
bringin',
Rooster crowin' fit to split round the kitchen door,
Ans'erin' "Good mornin'," to a half a dozen
more,—
Other folks can roust around, but for me I want'er
Take a little saunter,
Fill up full of green 'nd blue in a little saunter.

When the sun's a-goin' down, lazy ez you please,
Settin' good example fer a *man* to take his ease;
Cows a-lyin,' chewin', 'nd a wobblin,' early bat
Er a sparreh, half asleep, flies a-past yer hat;
When yev hed yer supper 'nd the world seems good;
When the air, jest lazin' round, smells of piney
wood,—

'Tain't no time to roust around, 'nd fer me, I wanter
Take a little saunter,
Jest hang back 'n' let my legs take a little saunter.

When you almost *feel* the moon a-shinin' on yer back,
(See her in the warter 'nd she seems to make a track
Leadin' off to Heaven, jest a easy distance walkin')
When it's all so still, a sound seems like silence
talkin';

Starry eyes a-gawpin' like the childern's to a story;
Room fer nothin' nowhere 'ceptin' night 'nd God
'nd glory,—

I jest *dassent* roust around, 'nd I never wanter
Do no more than saunter,
Fill up full of shiny peace in a little saunter.

"IF I DIDN'T FORGET HOW OLD I WAS."

IF I DIDN'T forget how old I was,
Do you think I'd act like I often does?
Do you think I'd swing on the front-yard gate,
If I could remember that I was *eight*?

If I didn't forget how soon I'd grow
To be a big man like Uncle Joe,
Do you think my pa would have to scold
'Cuz I didn't do what I was told?

Do you think I'd set my ma so wild,
An' act so much like a little *child*,
If I didn't forget I was half-past eight?
An' would Miss Brown have to keep me late?

Miss Brown said I was "a little fiend,"
An' I didn't know what the old thing meant;
But she said 'twas becuz I played so rough,
An' it made my ma just cry—sure 'nough.

If I didn't forget, do you s'pose that I
Would ever act so's to make *her* cry?
And don't you suppose I'd behave just fine,
If I didn't forget I was going-on-nine?

If I could remember, do you suppose
I wouldn't take care of my Sunday clo'es?
An' would I get mad at my cousin Ben
Without getting right away good again?

Pa says he believes I was just *born* bad,
An' Uncle Joe says that I'm "like my dad,"
An' Aunt Lou says *she* don't suppose
I'll ever be better, but ma—she *knows*,
An' she hugs me clost with a kiss, becuz
She says, "I forgot how old I was."

A BESETTING SIN.

(AS CONFESSED BY A YOUTHFUL PENITENT.)

I SHAN'T be bad no more, I shan't! I'm goan
to be *reel* good.

I heard a preacher-man, an' he said *ever*'body could,
Ef they jus' kep a-tryin' and a-tryin', day b' day,
An' ef they *didn't* try, they'd go—some place I
mus'n't say.

Er mother says I mus'n't, 'nd so, o' course, I shan't.
Don't see why preachers says it, ef another feller
can't.

But I'm a-goin' to be *reel* good. I shan't pull
pussy's tail,

Ner tie our poor, old Nodie to a nasty, old tin pail,

Like I did once, 'cause Tommy Johnson said I didn't
dast;
I'd like to *fix* that feller, but my wickid days is past.
I shan't git mad when baby sucks the paint off all
my blocks,
Ner spend the cent pa gives me fer the missionary
box;
I'm goan to be a *martire*, and shan't be bad one
speck;
Ain't even goin' to cry no more when mother makes
me wash my neck.

Most martire fellers wasn't much. Why, any circus
man'll
Cuff them lions 'round an' do it jus' as slick as Dan'l.
Aunt Becky thinks it's somethin' great to live in
sacks 'nd ashes.
I think it's fun! An' hairy-cloth shirts! I bet they
got the rashes
'Nd wear them shirts to scratch 'em. Course that
Jony feller
inside that big, old whale, all dark like down-in-our
cellar,
He had a heap o' spunk, he had; but I tol' Aunty
Beck,
Anyhow he didn't allus have to go an' wash his neck.

That's goin' to be the worstest thing, an' orful hard,
I know,
But I'm dissolved to do it, ef I do hate it so.
It's funny hatey things is good; but I suppose it's
true,
An' things you like is mostly things you hadn't
ought to do.
An' water's cold, er ef it's het, it's het so much it's
scaldy;
An', 'sides, it wets yer collar all around yer Garry-
baldy,
An' runs all down yer back, an' then the soap gits
in yer eyes,
'Cause the towel ain't where you want it—an' *then*
sometimes I cries.
But I shan't cry no more, though p'r'aps I'll want
to, I expec',—
But when I'm *growed*—I ain't a-goan to *never* wash
my neck!

UNVERSTAENDLICH.

DHE contrariest t'ing on dhe Erd is men,
Aber vimmens arr twice so contrary again,
Andt I am yoost so contrary as you,
Andt you arr as worse as dhe worst one, too;
Now, ain'd dhat zo?

You like to haf hoonger by dinner, you say,
Aber vhy do you eadt, so dhat hoonger go 'vay?
You like to be tired, so you schleep like a top,
Andt you like to go schleep, so dhat tired feeling
shtop;
Now, ain'd dhat zo?

You like to have sugar on sauer t'ings you eadt
Andt you like to haf sauer mit dhe t'ings vhat arr
sweet.
You like to be cold vhen dhe vetter is hot.
Andt vhen it *is* cold, ach, how varm you would got!
Now, ain'd dhat zo?

How you shdare at dhe man vhat can valk up dhe
street
On his handts, yet *you* valk *twice so goodt* on your *feet*.
Vhat a long mind you haf, if I am in your debt,
Budt if you arr in mine, O, how quick you forget!
Now, ain'd dhat zo?

You vant yoost a liddle more money? Dhat's true;
Andt dhere's Mistare Vanderbilt; he vants dhat too.
You remember dhat time dhat you vish you arr
deadt?

Budt if I ttry to kill you, you boost in my headt;
Now, ain'd dhat zo?

Zo, I t'ink I pelief only half vhat I know
Andt dhe half I pelief is dhe part vhat ain'd zo.
Aber, I don'd complain, for dhat makes me no use,
For if I am a Esel, vhy you arr a goose;
Now, ain'd dhat zo?

It is bedter to laugh; it is foolish to fight
Yoost because I am wrong and because you ain'd
right.
It is bedter to laugh mit dhe world, up andt down
From dhe sole of our headt to dhe foot of our crown;
Now, ain'd dhat zo?

Zo, dhen, you laugh at me andt dhen I laugh at you,
Andt dhe more dhat you laugh vhy dhe more I
laugh, too,
Andt ve laugh till ve cry! Vhen ve cry, aber dhen,
Ve will bot' feel zo goot ve go laughing again!
Now, ain'd dhat zo?

KATIE AN' ME.

KATIE an me a'n't engaged anny moor.
Och, but the heart of me's breakin,' fer sure!
The moon has turned grane and the sun has turned
yallow,
And Oi am turned both and a different fallow
The poipe of me loiftoime is losin' its taste;
Some illigant whuskey is goin' to waste;
Me heart is that impty and also me arrum;
Pertaities an' bacon have lost all their charrum,
And Oi feel like a tombstone, wid crape on the dure,
Since Katie and me a'n't engaged anny moor.

Yit most of the world is a-movin' alang
As if there was nawthin' at all goin' wrang.
Oi notice the little pigs lie in the mud,
An' the fool of a cow is still chewin' her cud;
The shky is still blue and the grass is still bright;
The stars shine in hivin in peaceful delight;
The little waves dance on the brist of the lake;
Tim Donnelly's dead an' they're havin' a wake,
An' the world's rich in joy! and it's only me poor,
Since Katie an' me a'n't engaged anny moor.

She was always that modest and swate. Oi declare
She wud blush full as rid as her illigant hair

At the t'ought of another man stalin' the taste
Of her lips, or another man's arrum round her waist.
An' now—och, McCarney, luk out, or Oi'll break
Yer carcass in fragmints an' dance at yer wake,
As you're dancin' at Donnelly's! What shud Oi fear?
Purgatory? Not mooch, fer the same is right here.
Wid me heart on the briler, an' niver a cure,
Since Katie an' me a'n't ingaged, anny moor.

DAT GAWGY WATAHMILLON.

O, DAT Gawgy watahmillon, an' dat gal ob
Gawgy wif 'm!
She foun' 'm an' she poun' 'm an' he ripe enough to
lif' 'm.
I tote 'm to de well an' den we cool 'm in de watah,
An' we bress de Lawd foh libin', like a Gawgy niggah
ought to.
She pat him an' she punk him, like ol' mammy wif
de chillun,
An' ma haht it done keep punkin' ev'y time she
punk de millon!

I look into huh yalla eyes an' feel dat I can trus' 'm,
An' den I take de millon an' I drop 'm down an'
bus' 'm.

O, dat Gawgy watahmillon wif de sweet an' coolin'
flowin'!

Poke youah face deep down, ma honey, an' jes' keep
youah mouf a goin'.

Dar ain't no use ob *talkin'*, but I 'clar to Gord I'se
willin'

Foh to nebeh hab no heab'n 'cept dat Gawgy gal
an' millon!

- Foh dey filled de haht an' stomach ob dis happy
Gawgy niggah,

An' he couldn' be no fullah, 'less de Lohd done
make him biggah.

Lohdy, Lohd! I'se done been dreamin' an' my haht
is mos' a breakin',

An' ma lips dey is a burnin' an' ma stomach is a
achin'.

I been dreamin' ob de summah an' ma mouf is
jes' a fillin'

Foh dat honey gal ob Gawgy an' dat Gawgy watah-
millon!

“FROM GOING TO AND FRO
IN THE EARTH.”

DEAR MOTHER EARTH.

DEAR Mother Earth, full oft I long
To sing thy praises in a song;
I ache to lay me down to rest
Somewhere upon thy yielding breast,
To turn my pavement-wearied feet
Beyond the seeming endless street,
And seek some dimpled country place,
Half cool, half warm, for thy embrace;
Then kiss thee, prone upon my face,
Dear Mother Earth!

Like old Antæus long ago,
Whose strength surged up from earth below,
I feel there is a peace in thee,
Which thou dost whisper unto me,
When thus I press thee, cheek to cheek.
Thou art so strong and I so weak;
And some time there shall come a day
When tender, trembling hands shall lay
Me deep, to mingle with thy clay,
Dear Mother Earth.

Thy gift to me shall come to thee,
And as thou art, so shall I be.

I owe thee all, and so must try
To make thee better ere I die;
And as we twain are one, I see
To better self may better thee.
And so I rise from thy embrace
Revived, and with a hopeful grace,
Thus having met thee face to face,
Dear Mother Earth.

OHIO.

THERE'S a word to be heard for the old Buckeye
State

Of Ohio, Ohio, Ohio!
For 'tis dear to the ear both of lowly and great
Is Ohio, Ohio, Ohio!
Cry aloud you are proud to be counted the son
Of Ohio, Ohio, Ohio!
And heap honor upon her for all she has done—
Old Ohio, Ohio, Ohio!

*Then ho ! for Ohio, Ohio, O, ho !
We'll sing of her glory wherever we go;
Only right is the friend, only wrong is the foe,
Of Ohio, Ohio, Ohio!*

Send the shout to the outermost part of the earth
For Ohio, Ohio, Ohio!
For the soil, for the toil, and for all of the worth
Of Ohio, Ohio, Ohio!
But the most for the host she has given to fame—
Old Ohio, Ohio, Ohio!
And again for the men who have honored the name
Of Ohio, Ohio, Ohio!

*Then ho ! for Ohio, Ohio, O, ho !
We'll sing of her glory wherever we go ;
Only right is the friend, only wrong is the foe,
Of Ohio, Ohio, Ohio !*

She is crowned by the round of the lake's breezy
space,
Is Ohio, Ohio, Ohio!
And below is the flow where the river adds grace
To Ohio, Ohio, Ohio!
While between lies the green of the land that we
love—
Old Ohio, Ohio, Ohio!
And the storied Old Glory floats ever above
Our Ohio, Ohio, Ohio!

*Then ho ! for Ohio, Ohio, O, ho !
We'll sing of her glory wherever we go ;
Only right is the friend, only wrong is the foe,
Of Ohio, Ohio, Ohio !*

A MULE OF ARKANSAS.

THOU patient, plodding piece of bone and flesh'
Thou sentient something, tangled in a mesh
Of fatal being! I could weep for thee,
But thou, thou couldst as surely weep for me.

Not knowing why nor whither I am driven,
To me the urging lash is likewise given;
Hitched to this drag of life, I may not falter,
Nor wander past the pull of rein or halter.

Poor thou, poor I! yet, comrade, were we free,
The world might lose the little we may be.
Along this straitened path, perhaps 'tis best,
We may not linger and we dare not rest.

THE ORGAN GRINDER.

HE STANDS outside my window in the street,
A humble minstrel of a dozen lays,
A memory of simpler, happier days.
Dear "Home, Sweet Home," and faithless "Mar-
guerite,"

I did not know their music was so sweet;
The "Washerwoman" and the "Marsellaise,"
I know not which should have my highest praise,
Their very crudeness makes them so complete.

Weary of Wagner and his turgid notes,
Of florid Verdi's acrobatic throats,
I revel in this arm-delivered air,
Which whips a score of years from out my sight,
Refills me with a bubbling boy's delight,
And leaves me scant of pennies and of care.

THE DEAR LITTLE FOOL.

EACH man is a master in a school—
 Heigh ho, my deary!
Where he trains himself to be a fool—
 Folly is so cheery.
And he trains him well and he trains him long,
He trains him true and he trains him strong;
And this is the burden of my song—
 Wit and wisdom weary.

The man finds out that he's a fool—
 Heigh ho, my deary!
And puts himself on the dunce's stool—
 Folly grows a-weary.
And he says to himself: "You beast, you worm!
You're the biggest fool I've had this term."
And he laughs to see the poor fool squirm—
 Wisdom is so cheery.

He sets down many a sapient rule—
 Heigh ho, my deary!
For the future course of the wretched fool—
 Folly is so weary.
And the poor little fool, he says: "Ah, me!
That I was a fool I plainly see,
But never again such a fool I'll be!"—
 Wisdom is so cheery.

The man and the fool they live along—
 Heigh ho, my deary!
Till the man is weak and the fool is strong—
 Folly is so cheery.
And the little fool says: "Oh, master dear,
This never is long, and the world is drear!
Let me loose! Let me loose, and have no fear!"
 Wit and wisdom weary.

The dear little fool, he has his way—
 Folly is so cheery!
The good man laughs that the fool is gay—
 Wit and wisdom weary;
Till he finds that the fool is really he,
And the stronger the fool the worse when free,
And again he groans, "Ah, woe is me!"—
 Heigh ho, my deary!



THE MINOR ROLE.

OFT have you seen a star upon the stage
Uttering his transports of despair or rage,
Until the whole house wondered at his skill
And thundered plaudits with a hearty will.
But did you note that other player there
Who watched the leading actor's mock despair,
Who had no line to speak, or work to do,
Yet who was there to make the background true;
Whose every thought must aid (as each might mar)
The bright effulgence of the flaming star?
And did you stop to think his thankless part
Of doing nothing took the greater art?

'Tis so in life. We oftentimes admire
The man whom nothing seems to daunt or tire,
Whose energies are like battalions hurled
Against his foe (and audience!) the world.
You hardly note that other actor there,
That woman of his household—and his care,
Who can do nothing more, nor would do less,
Than live the background of his life's success—
A waiting, watching, suffering, silent soul,
Without the outlet of a leading role.
And sure am I her patient, minor part,
Doomed to do nothing, takes the greater heart.

PANACEA.

IT'S no great oddity
That one commodity
Has such demand
Throughout the land.
You know what it is, I think. Ah yes,
It is nothing more and nothing less
Than a double X brand of happiness.

Now think what a place this world would be,
What a jolly old place for you and me,
What a wonderful place if you and I
Would only try
To meet the demand with a certain supply.
Consider, my son,
How easily done,
To make one happy, only one;
A father, mother,
Sister, brother,
Or if they be supplied, why then some other.

And, my daughter, see
How well 'twould be.
Why, the thing is as plain as A B C!
If each of us were engaged in keeping
One happy soul from dawn to sleeping,

If each of us were busy in making
One soul peaceful from dusk to waking.
What a happy old place this world would be,
What a jolly old place for you and me!

And if every one else then did the same,
Why wouldn't it be the cleverest game?
But, pray, don't try
To oversupply
Somebody already floating high.
'Tis the sinking wretch we need to save,
And not the one on the topmost wave.
And remember, too,
This much—that you
And I will profit by what we do.
'Tis a curious fact, but past all doubt,
That the more of happiness one gives out
The more he has left and the more his powers.
As the gardener strips a bed of flowers
That more shall bloom, so strip your soul
That another's happiness be made whole.
And lo! in the quick-winged second after,
'Tis filled with blooms of love and laughter.

BUT O, BOYS, KNOW BOYS.

THERE'S a certain sort of pleasure in a mingling
with the boys,
In keeping up your end of it and adding to the noise
With

“Fill the cup

And lift it up

To every gallant soul of us.

Drink! drink, my men, and come again! the devil
guards the whole of us!”

There's a pleasing palpitation to the liquid of the
jugs,

As it mingles with the music of the clinking of the
mugs;

There's a pretty, pleasing popping,

When the bottles are unstopping,

And a fizzy fascination carries folly to its height.

But O, boys,

Know boys—

That folly has its flight,

And a greater fascination

Is a healthy, clean sensation

That your brain is still in session and your eye is
clear and bright,

When the time comes for waking in the morning.

There's a certain sort of pleasure in the gayety of
girls,
In the pat of pretty fingers, in the brush of beauty's
curls,

With

“Here's a glass

To any lass

Who offers tempting lips to us!

The night is kind, the world is blind, so who can
debit slips to us?”

There's a certain fascination in the giddiness of guile,
There's a certain strange temptation in the wicked-
ness of wile,

When the wicked wit is dashing

And the wicked smiles are flashing,

So if all the world be wicked, is *our* wickedness
amiss?

But O, boys,

Know boys—

There comes an end to this

And a higher fascination,

And a wholesomer sensation,

Is to realize your lips are clean and worthy of the
kiss

Of a sweetheart, wife, or mother in the morning.

ICÉD TEA.

O THERE are drinks and drinks and drinks,
Enough to drown the sea;
But of the multitude, methinks,
The best is icéd tea.

O come not here with bitter beer,
Though foamy or though flat;
And do not come with wicked rum,
To minimize one's hat.

Off with the glass of carbon gas;
It fills me full of ire,
And fizzes back along its track,
Much like a punctured tire.

Treat me no treat of sticky sweet
Called "cream with pure fruit juices";
It leaves a coat upon the throat
Too thick for summer uses.

But get a tea of such degree
Of Oriental flavor
That for a drop a man might swap
His hope of heaven's favor.

Then gently pour hot water o'er
Its tiny rolls of fragrance,
But do not stew as makers do
Who feed poor railway vagrants.

Then cool it nicely, add your ice,
And churn it in a shaker;
'Twill show a broth of creamy froth,
And be a blessed slaker.

Squeeze o'er the ice a tiny slice
Of lemon till it's tart,
And handle well your sugar shell—
And O, my pulsing heart!

O, hear the tinkle and the clink
- Of winter's cool bequeathing!
O, gaze into that amber hue,
And breathe against its breathing!

O, let it slip beyond your lip,
And for your comfort perish;
And deep within your soul shall grin,
And long the memory cherish.

O, there are drinks and drinks and drinks,
Enough to drown the sea;
But of the multitude, methinks,
The best is icéd tea.

AT A RAILROAD JUNCTION.

LO! HERE am I at Junction Town,
At slow and woful Junction Town,
Where devils laugh and angels frown
To see a traveler set down;
Where trains run only with a view
To help a restaurant or two;
Where rusty rails and barren boards
Are all the point of view affords.
But O, the barren board of all
Is that within that eating-stall!
Yes, stall, I said, and well deserved
The name! where beastly feed is served.
And so I say without compunction
My curses on this Railroad Junction.

What shall I do at Junction Town?
At drear and weary Junction Town?
The martyr's cross without the crown
Awaits the stranger here set down
O, one may wait and wait and wait,
Or one may rail against his fate,
Or eyes and ears may strain and strain,
As later, later grows the train

The while the lagging minutes mock
His witless watching of the clock ;
Or one may watch the station clerk
Performing his relentless work.
O, wretched man, of wretched function,
Existing at this Railroad Junction!

God's pity on this Junction Town,
This dead and dreadful Junction Town!
O, what nepenthe-well can drown
The cares of travelers here set down.
The thought may give some passing cheer
One may escape within a year,
Or else the sentence be commuted
And only death be executed!
And if 't be so, I only pray
There be no Resurrection Day,
For think of Gabriel coming down
And finding one at Junction Town!
And so I say, with fervent unction,
God's pity on this Railroad Junction!

OLIVER HAZARD PERRY.

“WE’VE MET the enemy and they are ours;
Two ships, two brigs, one schooner and one
sloop.”

His words charge down the years—a warlike group,
Grim, gallant, glorious! All the flowers
Matured by summer suns and autumn showers
We use to deck the memory of that group,
Born of the times when banners rise or droop
In the harsh conflict of contending powers.

But look thou, Perry! gallant man and true!
See’st thou that smoke of commerce, not of war?
Rejoice with us that now no battles mar,
And now there is no work for thee to do;
No lookout’s eye sights carnage from afar;
No dismal red is mixed with Erie’s blue.

RIP VAN WINKLE.

FONDER of Schnapps and Schneider than of right,
A shiftless, thriftless, rude, unlettered log
Who wallowed in a slimy, drunken bog;
Well-meaning and ill-acting; appetite
As dry as was his wit; a jolly wight
With follies to exhaust the catalogue;
Weak-willed, good-tempered, sinful and contrite,
Without one element of manly might,
Save that the children loved him—and his dog.

And yet he makes the laughter-laden lip
Turn to a tremble, while the hot tears flow;
Then mock its own emotion by some slip
To sudden mirth, because we love him so;
For human weakness in the rascal, Rip,
Becomes a humane strength in actor Joe.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

THE poor Old Year is dead. His work is done.
His course is sped. His last, disloyal Sun
Fled down the field, with shield upon his back,
And left the night to pall him in its black.

His old time friend, December, turned aside
And hardly stayed to mark that he had died.
And all the Weeks, who served his banner, sped
To serve the New, and cried, "The Old is dead!"

Yes, even each disdainful, little Day
Flung him the hour he owed and shrieked away.
Nor were we mortals better; even you
Called in his failing ear, "The New! The New!"

"The New!" And why the New? Ho, stand you
forth,
You little New-come. Say, why is your worth
Rung to the zenith with its wave on wave?
We find you seated on a new-made grave,
Which holds our friend, the Old Year. He and we
Shared many joys together. Some there be
Which still invoke the memory and make
That fat rogue, Laughter, hold his sides and shake.

Can I recall that feasting and that mirth
And never weep that he is gone from Earth?

And there are stronger ties, for, be it said,
We sometimes ate together bitter bread.
Oh, smiling one, too new of life to know
What friendship roots within a common woe!
But haply you may learn, and haply, too,
You will renounce the sobriquet "The New."

Poor, pale novitiate, how smooth you are!
Your skin has not the semblance of a scar.
You should have seen the Old Year! He was one
Seamed by the winter's wind and summer's sun,
Torn by the teeth of storm and scorched by fire,
Leashed in by circumstance, spurred by desire!

But he is gone, and you are come to reign.
I do not bow before you, for 'tis plain
I can not know what purpose lies within
The soft encompass of your baby skin.
Why should I cry you, and deny my friend,
Nor wait to see how your *regime* shall end?

What have you done? You were not till just now.
What are you doing? Staring at the bow
The Earth makes to you. And what will you do?
Will you avoid the false and seek the true?
Will you reward the right and ban the wrong?
Will you protect the weak and curb the strong?

Ah, little princeling! 'Tis a pretty thing
To hear the cannons roar and belfries sing
Because you come to earth, to hear your name
On every lip, together with the claim
Of all your happy worth. But there is work,
Beyond this holiday, you may not shirk.

I raise my voice and do not call you blest,
Unless this happy day foretells the rest.
Work on, toil on, press on, my little one,
And when there falls the last December sun,
Then, when all men turn from you to acclaim
Another, and a newer, fresher name,
Then you may have the measure of my praise
As you have wisely spent your wealth of days.

THE DAY OF LABOR.

ALL of you men of the arm and the hammer,
All of you women of needle and thread,
All of you children whose lesson in grammar
Is cut for the lesson of earning your bread,
This is our day.

All of you men who are lining and dotting
Over the desk where the debit is dealt,
You are of those whom the iron-dust is blotting

Under the shadow of pulley and belt;
This is our day.

All of you maidens whose fingers are chiming,
Running the tune which is written by Trade,
You are of those whom the depths are begriming
Down where the coal-food of Motion is made;
This is our day.

All of you men who are leaders and planners,
Forcing the ends of your commerce to meet,
You are enlisted beneath the same banners
As he with the paper-pack, out on the street;
This is our day.

All of you delvers and traders and thinkers,
No matter what honest calling you own,
If you be not of the robbers and slinkers,
If you be not of the hive of the drone,
This is our day.

Let it, then, stand for us all, save the shirker!
Let it, then, hasten the time on its way,
When brother to brother, and worker to worker,
Girdling their hands 'round the nations, shall say—
"This is our day!"

GRANDMOTHER'S SONG.

GRANDMOTHER'S voice was always mild,
And at everyday troubles she always smiled;
For she used to say
Frowns didn't pay,
As she had learned when the merest child.
So whenever we cried for a fancied wrong,
Grandmother used to sing this song:

"Today, today,
Let's all be gay;
Tomorrow
We may sorrow.
My dear, don't fret
For what's not yet;

For you make a trouble double when you borrow.'

Ah me! 'tis many a lonesome year
Since grandmother's song has reached my ear;
And I sigh my sigh
For the days gone by,
For *you* went with them, grandmother dear.
But I still have left your quaint old song,
And that I shall sing and pass along:

"Today, today,
Let's all be gay;

Tomorrow
We may sorrow.
My dear, don't fret
For what's not yet;
For you make a trouble double when you borrow."

LITTLE MARGGY.

WHO is grandma's dear delight?
Little Marggy.

Who is mamma's blessed sprite,
Dream of day and need of night?

Who is papa's precious bite?
Little Marggy.

Margaret we named this elf,
Little Marggy.

But all names of place or pelf,
Hohenzollern, Rothschild, Guelph,
Are as common clay to delf

To this name she named herself,
" 'ittle Mawgy."

Say, who owns this snubby nose?
" 'ittle Mawgy,"

Whose blue eyes do you suppose?

Whose soft lips which shame the rose?
Who can claim ten teenty toes?

“ ‘ittle Mawgy.”

Though you care not why nor how,
 Little Marggy,
Love is eager to endow
Blessings on your baby brow,
 Little Marggy.
May he keep as constant vow,
When you need him more than now,
 Little Marggy.

May there be some baby boy,
Busy now with top or toy,
 Little Marggy,
Growing up to bring you joy
And a love without alloy,
 Little Marggy.

One more blessing would I pray,
 Little Marggy.
May there come some blissful day
When *your* mother-lips shall say
 “Little Marggy”
To a precious piece of clay
 Like *you*, Marggy.

THE ARMIES OF THE CORN.

RANK upon rank they stood, and row on row;
Plumed, tasseled, uniformed in green,
With rations in their knapsacked husks between
The myriad blades they brandished at the foe.

Long held the brave brigades and would not yield
Till shattered by the destiny of War.

Then (gallant tribute from the conqueror!)
They stacked their arms and tented on the field.

LITTLE LOVE LYRICS.

ASSURANCE.

TODAY you turned your face away
And seemed to doubt me.
Tonight your acme of delight
Is but to flout me.
But, sweetheart, I will wait;
Love has no laggard gait,
And though he seem away,
Far off he cannot stay.
Tomorrow you will say:

“Dear heart, of all the things thou art,
The best is boldness.
Believe me not whene'er I grieve
Thy heart with coldness.
Take me within thy arms,
Shield me from doubting harms,
For I am thine alway.
My love can never stray,
And did not yesterday!”

COMPLETENESS.

I SAID, ere yesterday had fled
I loved you truly
In every part, mind, soul and heart,
Nor was it said unduly.

Yet more than that which was before
Is that which holds me,
And so today, again I say
Love wholly now enfolds me.

But O, if one least whit I grow
By joy or sorrow,
Hear, sweetheart, now my tender vow
I'll love you more tomorrow.

REITERATION.

FROM out the long ago,
There steals the beauty of a thought
A noble poet nobly wrought.
Its every word I know,
And yet I read it o'er and o'er
And every reading makes it more.

From out the dreamy past,
A grand old air, a dear old strain,
Floats back to memory again,
And memory holds it fast.
And still I love its sound as much
As though not knowing every touch.

You love me. Yes, I know;
I know it well by life and death!
I know it by your latest breath
That whispered, sweet and low.
Ah, me, the music of its vow!
O, sweetheart, say you love me, *now!*

A LITTLE SONG FOR TWO.

A SONG from me to you, you say,
A tender song for every day,
A little song for two?
Why, dearest heart, no note or word
Which I have sung and you have heard
But sings to you, to you.

To you, my love, to you, to you.
My every song is ever true,
And gladly, gladly yields its due,
As does my heart—to you!

And were there but one theme to choose,
One motive evermore to use,
It were no task to do.
I'd sing all songs of life in one,
And when the gallant strain were done
'Twould be a song to you.

To you, my love, to you, to you,
The tender strain were fully true,
And ever would it sing its due,
As does my heart—to you!

YOUR TEARS.

TWIN jeweled drops of purest ray, beyond a
prince's prize;
The brilliance of the diamond on the blueness of the
skies!
Sweet! let my eager kisses quaff away the tender
tears,
As poorer pearls from baser cups were drunk in
olden years.

YOUR VOICE.

YOU sing, and then I think, "Not wholly wrong
Was faith to picture heaven a constant song."
Yet heavenly song is but a lesser good;
More heavenly still is pure, sweet womanhood.

YOUR TOUCH.

IF KINGS uncounted knelt before you now
Into obeisance crushed,
I should not prize the hour.
I rather praise the power
Within your lightest touch which smooths the brow
Your fervent kiss has brushed.

TOUT OU RIEN.

I LOVE the happy habit of your laughter,
Care-free as any May-song of a bird,
But ever in the silence coming after,
I think: "The world has heard!"

Your smiles are like the blossoms of a garden,
With perfumed sunlight sifting in between;
Yet even then, my selfish heart will harden
And cry: "The world has seen!"

EN RAPPORT.

I WOULD tell you, sweet, a thousand things
I feel when the robin redbreast sings
And the earth is softly warm and bright
And the sky has donned its blue and white,
As once in the long ago,
But, O, dear heart, there's never a word,
By man pronounced or woman heard,
Which tells that touch, which the redbreast sings,
For words are coarse and cumbrous things,
As surely you know, you know.

If I could but think the thousand things
I feel when the springtime bluebird sings,
I would send the dream its quiet course
Like the brooks' and breezes' flow and force
From out of the long ago,
But, sweetest heart, there's never a thought
Which poet or sage has ever wrought
To tell that thrill that the bluebird sings,
For thoughts are feeble, futile things,
As surely you know, you know.

Yet truly, my own, we know the things
Which the gentle springtime softly sings;
And the happy heart leaps up in praise
Of the ceaseless flow of blessed days
From out of the long ago,
For the quivering life my lips would tell
Is all that your own soul knows so well,
As the heart-string's truest note is known
By the chording heart to that same tone,
So surely you know, you know.

LOVE'S FIRST KISSES.

THERE are no other kisses like to those.
They own the sweet of violet and rose,
The softness of the moonlight on the sea,
The thrill of music's deepest ecstasy,
The warmth of springtime—and your love for me.
They serve all good, and master every ill;
They strengthen and revive the wounded will;
They tell the inner temper "Peace; be still!"
They are the triumph of the pure and true;
They are the rapture (in one word) of you.

LOVE'S DECEIT.

WOULD it were yesterday and I were dead;
Would it were morrow and this pain were
crushed;
Or would that our today had never blushed
To read the reason that my peace has fled!
Look on this bleeding faith. See where the red
From out his tender bosom warmly gushed,
Mark how he limply lies, his glad song hushed,
Slain by the lie-tipped arrow thou hast sped.

And yet, I only suffer wrong—thou sufferest guilt,
So I forgive thee, even as thou wilt;
But O, "forgiveness" is so incomplete.
It ever leaves a bitter in the sweet;
It never quite refills the cup once spilt,
And trust tangs ever from but one deceit.

IN SORROW, NOT IN ANGER.

FAIR face, besmirched with kisses of dead men;
Proud eyes, which did not melt at their distress,
Which feign, but never know, a tenderness;
White hands, which I shall never touch again;
Sweet breath, which poisons like a stagnant fen;
Rare hair, which hides a serpent in each tress;
Rich lips, with honeyed falsehood to confess;
I scorn you now, just as I loved you then.

Yet, were it given me to sit above
Your petty world, that I might judge your shame,
(A shame you do not guess the burden of)
In calm, dispassioned judgment I should name
The penalty incurred by all your blame:
'Twere only this, that some day you should love.

ASLEEP, ADREAM, AWAKE.

A SERENADE.

A SLEEP, adream, awake—
I know not which thou art
Yet would my spirit make
A song for thee, dear heart.

O, if 'twere I asleep,
And sleeping knew not thee,
I'd rouse from out its deep
That dreams might come to me.

Or if 'twere I adream,
And dreaming knew not thee,
I would renounce the theme
For waking thought to be.

Or if 'twere I awake,
And waking knew not thee,
I'd sleep for sleep's own sake
For what were life to me?

POEMS OF PARTING.

THE PARTING POINT.

BECAUSE your way was West and mine is East,
I stand and look along the frosted track
As if by gazing I could call you back.
The Earth is clad in homespun, patched and pieced
With gray and green. The fields have had a feast
And left the fragments. Desolate and black
The river slinks away, and from the stack
There crawls an airy genie, sable-fleeced.

The naked, shivering trees re-wave "Good-by,"
The mummied leaves leap up as on we fly.
The rails grow dim and narrow in our wake,
Till half I wish, half fancy, they could make
A pair of leading strings, that they might tie
Our lives together, nevermore to break.

AT A CAR WINDOW.

"Vereint sint Liebe und Lenz."—Wagner.

AN INFANT river creeps across a field,
A level green spreads out with lazy air,
And orchard trees lift arms as if in prayer
For strength again to live, to bloom, to yield.
The patient plow has recently unsealed
This stretch of honest earth, while here and there
A pale old farm-house seems to stand and stare,
Or some low cringing thicket is revealed.
But I see none of these. My longing gaze
Wanders to where a bare wood's melting maze
Up-reaches to the sky. So all my thought
Leaves this on-rushing car where you are not,
To mass around that fading parting-spot,
Till it and I are lost in bluish haze.

THREE KISSES.

WHEN first I kissed you, dear,
The moon's bright glory mocked the
sun;

And moons! why, every star was one;
All men were good and brave and just,
All women fair, and fair to trust,
All happiness was thrall to me
And all the Earth was Arcady,
When first I kissed you, dear.

When last I kissed you, dear,
I scorned all being—save the worm
To be with you a little term.
The stars had burned to cinders all,
The sky was nothing but a pall,
God was not God, but clumsy Knave,
All Earth was but your open grave,
When last I kissed you, dear.

When next I kiss you, dear,
It may be æons hence, and you
Impalpable as Heaven's blue;
It may be soon, it may be here,
It may be on some distant sphere;

But though an atom or a soul,
Unstable dust or perfect whole ;
Though nodding violet be you
And I a drop of morning dew ;
Though suns may fade and Earth may end,
Together we shall meet and blend,
And in that blending there shall be
The Universe for you and me !
And I shall kiss you, dear.



BILL NYE.

"If we do meet again, why we shall smile."—Shakespeare.

THE curious brain, the gentle heart, are still.
Who speaks but in the tone of warmest praise?
Or who denies the laurel leaf and bays
To that plain name? He did not wail of ill,
But he was one who had the power and will
To teach the saddened earth to turn her gaze
And look on life in sunnier, happier ways;
He, Edgar Wilson—nay, say rather "Bill."

Give him the dear, familiar name of years—
Him, honest, generous-hearted and refined—
For he himself, and not his fame, endears
His memory most.

Thou true and kind!

These tributes to thy noble soul and mind—
Smiles for the past, but for the present, tears!

FOREBODING.

I SHOULD be so lonely without you, dear.
Why, even now, if you be not here
For the shortest day, there's a certain lack
Which does not vanish till you come back.
And if you were gone forever, dear,
The aching throat and the hot, swift tear
Were a feeble vent and a futile due
To the aching absence, dear, of you.

I should be so lonely without you, dear.
Kiss me again, so I know you're near!
Ah, should I reach for the old embrace
And my arms should close on a formless space!
In the midst of the world and its hollow cheer,
In the gayest throng, I should thrill with fear—
The fear of the void which the world would be
If you were gone from the earth and me.

I should be so lonely without you, dear.
Though I still might heed the passing year,
Though I still might toil from sun to sun,
What would it be when the work were done?
You would not see and you could not share,
And who, of the rest, would really care?

And if I were gone and 'twere you were left,
I know your breast were as much bereft;
And if I were away while you were here,
Though God were good and the seraphs near,
I should still be lonely without you, dear.

GOOD-BYE.

I SAY "Good-bye;" I clasp your hand;
I hope that you may understand,
For somehow I can speak no word
Beyond the commonplaces heard
On every side. My tongue had planned
A hundred partings, yet I stand,
And, empty both of gay and grand,
I say "Good-bye."

My heart-strings tighten, strand by strand;
Again I struggle to command
Some meaning speech. Your eyes are blurred,
Your lips are parted. Mine are stirred
With unborn kisses, and I—and—
I say "Good-bye."

A FEW PRESS COMMENTS.



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