

WHEN THE OLD FLAG CAME

AND OTHER POEMS

Stephen Arnold

By [^]DOUGLAS DOBBINS

Author of

"Quarrytown," "Heart Echoes from Old Shelby"

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PREFACE.

Doubtless you have heard of the artless Irish maid who went to the postoffice and asked:

"Is ther-re anny letther fur me?"

"What name, please?" the polite postal clerk queried.

"Faith, that will be on the letther!" she replied with a slight show of resentment.

If you shall ask us why we should inflict the public with another volume of verse, the answer will be in the book itself. The author believes he has a genuine message in this book, one which the world will do well to read and ponder over.

It reflects the loftiest sentiments and the noblest aspirations of, at least, one humble, human heart. We can climb no higher. We can aspire no further. Many of the sentiments herein expressed may not coincide with your views, your bias, your prejudices. We are sorry for that. We love to be in perfect accord with all of our friends. But the Truth, as we see it, compels us, and we must not be disobedient to the heavenly vision, as poor, old, beaten-up, persecuted Paul might have said.

From our standpoint, the most beautiful ideal of all time, of all history, is the character of Jesus Christ, and the next, that of our beloved country, best typified and represented by what we call "Old Glory". We believe that no nation under the sun comes as near placing before the eyes of humanity the principles of that first ideal as our glorious union of the States. We are sorry that the great guns of this Republic should ever be trained

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to the destruction of any portion of the human race. We are thankful that our noble President tried every reasonable means of averting this sad condition. But law-violators, truce-breakers, treaty-ignorers must be punished, and we are happy to know that we have a nation and a people that are as unconquerable as God's eternal right itself!

What a pitiable situation had faced crushed, enslaved, outraged Belgium, bleeding, but heroic France, and the land of our fathers, the isles of Britain, had there been no "God's Country", no America! What a message the Old Flag carries across the seas! No wonder the French and the English wept frantic tears of joy when "the starry banner of the free" swept down their boulevards! And a part of the message that the Old Flag bore and is bearing has been caught, we trust, within the pages of this book!

THE AUTHOR.

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WHEN THE OLD FLAG CAME

(A Belgian War Story Poem)

My name is Frida Von Armon,
And I lived near the village of Ans
When the German began his invasion
And assembled his numerous clans;
Myself and my father and mother
All dwelt in a house by the way
That his armies pursued in the marching
After crushing of Liege that day.

I then was a girl scarcely twenty,
My parents were feeble and old;
My brother, a soldier of Belga,
Had fought with her regulars bold
For our home and our country so sacred,
For the honor of Albert, our king,
Till the foeman had taken the city
And crushed it within his steel ring.

But now, our resistance exhausted,
The foe had gone by like the blast,
And had left us all helpless, forsaken,
To gaze on our sorrow aghast;
And oh, my dear brother, where was he?
I shuddered and paled at the thought;
For over beyond, on the hillside,
Was the last place the Belgians fought;

And a taint in the wind and the breezes,
And a stain on the rivulet's flood,
Made me think though I fain would forget it,
Of death and the wounded and blood!

* * *

Soon the evening came and the darkness
Bringing shadows of night and their gloom,
And there settled a deep, awful silence
Save a now-and-then, air-breaking boom
Of the cannon that told how the German
Was blasting and drilling his way
Into the heart of my country
To mangle and cripple and slay!

My soul cried in bitterest anguish,
And I longed to slip out in the night
To the battlefield there in the distance
And search for my brother in spite
Of the stern command of the German
Who had published it loudly and bold:
"Civilians found out in the darkness
Will be shot!" 'Twas thus we were told!

And my father was old and decrepit,
And my mother so nervous and ill
With the day's loud bellow of cannon,
That I dared not such errand fulfill!

* * *

Oh, the anguish and fear and the horror
That came with the slow-moving hour;
I prayed to my God up in heaven
For strength to be brave and for power

To help and defend my dear brother
And bring him safe back to our fold.
I've always believed a swift answer
Came straight from the portals of gold!

For there came through the vine-latticed window
A sound soft as autumn's leaf fall,
And the voice, like the wail of a lost one,
Sounding far in the distance a call,
"Oh, Freetzy!"—my brother's pet nick-name,
The one he had used since a child!—
I ran to the door in a phrensy,
Like a person grown suddenly wild.

I tore loose the bolts and the fast'nings
That stood my swift exit before,
And held up the lamp and then listened
As I stood in the wide-opened door;
"Oh, Freetzy! oh, Freetzy!" came softly,
As soft as the wind in the trees;
Was it psychic or real sound I pondered,
Borne afar on the September breeze?

I held up the lamp still and higher,
And gazed into shadows profound,
Till I fancied my dim eyes could fathom
The way to the dank battleground;
I could hear the faint cries of the wounded,
Whom the stretchers had failed to reach still,
And "Freetzy, oh, Freetzy!" came plainly,
As it seemed, from the league-distance hill!

'Twas my brother's voice, could I doubt it?
And a fear pierced my heart like a thorn;
Was he wounded and bleeding and dying,
And calling to me sad and lorn?
I crept back once more through the doorway,
Put the lamp on the table again;
My father was lying in silence
And my mother complained of no pain.

Then out at the vine-covered portal
That faced toward the battlefield view,
I ran down the path to the roadway
Then out at the postern I flew,
And over the road to the meadow
I climbed in the night the dim stile,
Where brother and I in the by-gones
Had played and romped many a while!

I scarcely had stepped down the platform
On the side toward the near battlefield,
And taken a step in the darkness,
Ere I stumbled o'er something concealed.
What was it? Oh, God, with a shudder,
I saw 'twas the form of a man,
Some poor, wounded soldier forsaken,
Who had dropped in the battle's fierce van!

With his wounds unbound and still bleeding,
Seeking shelter and help in the night!
Should I aid him, nor hasten to brother?—
God prompted my action aright;
For so vivid had been my quick fancy
That my brother's **far** call I should greet,
That I never once thought 'twas my Andre
Whose person now lay at my feet!

I seized then the form there before me,
And with more than man's courage and strength,
I carried him back to our cottage
And laid him in bed at full length;
And joy, yet deepest affliction,
When the lamp on his features once shown,
'Twas my own dear brother, my Andre,
Who had crawled thus far all alone!

He had fought that day and was wounded,
And had lain where the battle-tide broke
Unconscious with dead all around him
Till in the night air he awoke;
Then thinking of home and his dear ones,
And the cottage just over the hill,
He had crawled thus far on his journey
Though growing each step the more ill!

* * *

Three months passed by in our cottage,
Three months of privation and woe;
Our crops and our fruits were destroyed
By the purposely wanton foe;
The German had left us no forage,
Had left us no cow and no food;
Our money was gone and no doctor
Could be found in many a rood.

And brother, poor brother, was raging
With a fever that burned like a flame,
And mother grew weaker and weaker
And father more helpless became;
I could see that my loved ones were dying
Almost for a morsel to eat;
I tried every plan I could think of,
And plied every scheme that was meet.

Soon bitterly cold came December,
With its blasts from off the North Sea;
We'd no fuel, no food and poor brother
As dangerously ill as could be;
And father and mother so poorly—
Starvation affects e'en the mind!—
There was nothing that promised assistance
Nor help in the future to find!

Do you know what it means to be starving,
Your dear ones to have all around,
Sick and helpless, beseeching,
And no way to help them be found?
No fuel when winter comes howling
With his pitiless drifts of the snow?
The strain on the body is frightful,
But that on the mind trebly so!

I looked from my window e'er hourly,
And prayed Holy Mother on high,
But no one had come but the German
Pretending to look for a spy;
He was ready to kill in a moment,
Aye, ready to shoot to the heart,
But to give Christian help or to succor,
That certainly wasn't his part!

* * *

One morning I peered from our cottage
To the village of Ans below;
I heard the clear tones of a bugle,
Saw the marching of men to and fro;

Then out at the top of a building
Like a token of peace and good will
I saw a bright banner unfolding
And riding the breeze crisp and chill!

Not the black-white-red of the German,
But a cluster of silver-white stars
In a field of azure appearing
And a series of red and white bars;
Was it beautiful? Aye, as the daybreak
That comes with the sunburst combined;
How this new banner unfurling
Had captured my heart and my mind!

"What is it?" with clasped hands I shouted
To my neighbor just over the way;
"Th' Americans have come!" she answered,
"Have come from their ships in the bay;
It's their flag!" she further informed me,
As I gazed on the beautiful sign;
'And what does it mean?' I asked her;
No words could her rapture define!

"Have they conquered the German?" I queried;
"No, no!" she answered again;
"They've not come with cannon and bloodshed,
But with loving and good will to men;
They've brought us all food in abundance
And nurses and medicine, too,
And the flag that kisses the sunshine
Is christened the Red, White and Blue!"

Holy Saints! how I wept and shouted
And prayed on my bended knees,
And almost worshipped that banner
That gracefully danced on the breeze;
And then I ran in and told brother,
"Cheer up, my dear Andre, I pray,
For some folks who love us are coming,
Not the spy-hunting German today!"

"Who are they?" he brightened up, asking;
I lifted him so he could see
Through the uncurtained window before him,
That glorious flag of the free;
He saw the bright sign in the distance,
That token of freedom and love,
And said: "It has come like the angels
From the loving all-Father above!"

* * *

And they came with food and with fuel,
And the Red Cross ladies came,
Not like the German with cannon,
Nor "the trumpet that sings of fame,"
And sweet was their coming, oh, Jesus,
They came in thy name to fulfill
That tenderest purpose of heaven
Of peace on the earth and goodwill!

And brother's wounds healed in a fortnight,
And father and mother so dear,
Though their ailments seemed hopeless when starving,
Began to look up and take cheer;

They saw **all** the world was not cruel,
Not **all** the world gloried in war,
But love was still left in God's kingdom,
And mercy had not flown afar!

* * *

"Oh, give me that token, dear Martha!"

I thus to our nurse made request,
And touched a small flag on her bosom;
She kissed me and softly caressed;
"This flag," she said, "is my safe-guard,
But, Frida, I'll give it to you,
And charge you forever to cherish
The beautiful Red, White and Blue!"

I went to our cure with my token,
The suffering Father La Sage
Who had thrice been arraigned by the Germans,
And about to be shot in their rage;
I showed him my wonderful treasure,
This glorious flag of the free,
And said: "Oh, my teacher, my pastor,
How sweet is this emblem to me!

May I treasure this flag with my rosary,
Do you think 'twould be awfully wrong?"
And he patted my head while the tear-drops
O'erflowed from his eyes swift and strong;
Then the sweet-faced priest took the emblem,
And his eyes with weeping were red,
And he held it up gently before him;
"'Tis a blessed old flag!" he said.

"The stains that e'en redden this banner
Were not wrung from tyranny's hold,
But came in the battle of freedom
From the blood of thy heroes bold;
And the white— it is purity's emblem,
The faith of the maid and the wife;
And the blue stands for truth and high honor,
More precious by far than our life!

"And the vision of stars in their beauty
Lift the mind from all sordid concerns
To the patriot's loftiest duty
Where the altar of country e'er burns;
There, there may he sacrifice truly
His life as a type of his Lord,
And e'en in the battle-shock duly
Ennoble the use of the sword!"

"Nay, daughter!" he further said kindly,
"No wrong will it do to your soul,
If you love not in selfishness, blindly,
But deep in a heart pure and whole
The flag of this great western nation,
Which prefers much rather than strife,
The peace urged by Christ's inspiration
To save and not to take—life!"

TO LIVE IN OUR FRUIT.

There was once a cherry blossom,
Blooming fair upon a tree;
It was just the prettiest posy
That ever you did see.

And just below it on the ground
A Johnny-jump-up grew—
It had a yellow spot or two,
But all the rest was blue.

And little Johnny-jump-up says,
While tears his soft eyes lave:
"It will not be so very long,
They'll put me in my grave!"

The cherry blossom, pink and white,
Then smiled with visage rare,
And says: "I'll be a cherry soon,
All red-lipped, sweet and fair."

"And then I think, if die I must,
Such fate none may dispute,
How very grand and sweet 'twill be,
To live just in my fruit!"

HUNGER.

A biscuit and cup of cold water,
When hunger attendeth the meal,
Is better than turkey and cranberry sauce,
To the one whom no craving may feel.

OH, WIND OF THE SUMMER'S SEA.

Oh, wind of the summer's sea,
The poets all rage about thee;
 Their language is strong
 Both in poem and song—
"Thy breath is the breath of the June,
From the groves of the orange and prune;
 And the sun-kissed isles
 Are cheered by thy smiles"—
And this is just part of their tune!

Oh, wind of the summer's sea,
A bit of advice I've for thee,
 For now is the time
 From yon sunnier clime,
To whisk o'er the mountain and bay,
Make haste from old ocean away,
 And our glad hearts shall sing
 Like a bluebird in spring,
When thou'rt come with thy zephyrs so gay!

Oh, wind of the summer's sea,
Let me bask in a huge slice of thee;
 From the zone of the sun
 Thy journey hast run;
And then I shall dream of the cave,
Where nightly thy blue waters rave,
 And think me at ease
 Neath the great flow'ring trees,
And blush while the mermaidens lave!

THE OLD WOODS PASTURE.

Down in the old Woods Pasture,
Where the "crick" flows 'midst the trees
Like a blade of shining silver
A-flashing in the breeze.

Where grow quaint old Sweet Williams,
Hid deep in wooded nook,
Lifting up their dainty petals
That God's children all may look.

And the lovely Johnny-jump-ups,
As skies above are blue,
And Buttercups all varnished up
With country air and dew.

'Tis here my precious youngsters,
As I sit ensconced in shade,
Will wander up and down the "crick"
Or in its waters wade.

There are folks who have ambition
To seek fame's wide renown;
Whilst others find their greatest joys
Cooped up in some old town.

But to me this life seems sweeter,
As I view it year by year,
To travel softly down the hill
With those I love so dear.

And bask in such old-fashioned scenes
Care free as birds that fly,
God's blessed, sweet, old Out-o'-Doors
Bound in by wood and sky!

THE FALL O' THE YEAR.

The Fall o' the Year has come back again,
And it's jest as delightful as't ever has been,
With the odors o' apples and must of the grape,
And the leaves all colored jest any old shape,
And plaintive Bob White whistles cheeriest when
The Fall o' the year has come back again!

The Fall o' the Year has come back again,
And I let down the bars o' the stubble field then,
And hie me away to the woods and the wold,
Where the trees are all purple, the weeds all of gold,
And somehow or other—jest how I can't tell—
I'm caught in the maze of a mystical spell,
And the breeze as it whispers in both o' my ears,
Brings back to me visions of far-away years;
And I'm happy and sad both together jest when,
The Fall o' the Year has come back again!

The Fall o' the Year has come back again,
And the weather jest sizzles no longer like sin;
And the trees in the distance are hazy and brown,
And the lazy, old cattle are standin' aroun';
And I love jest to bask in sich halcyon days,
And throw away trouble that on my soul weighs;
Ah, they tinge up the future with some sort o' hope,
Like seein' the scenes in a ka-leidoscope,
And I love all around me the tenderest when
The Fall o' the Year has come back again!

YE MERRIE CANDIDATE

I met ye gentel candidate—
Was for the house, he said;
His brow was wet with honest sweat
That trickled down his head.

"Ah, now," quoth I, "my merrie man,
Just tell me how you'll vote?"
When with a sigh he wank an eye
And 'gan to clear his throat.

"I run the Bangtown Sunday School,
And never have I yet
Heard mortal say in any way
It is a school that's 'wet'!"

"Ah, gentel one," quoth I again,
"You scarce have answered me;
Pray now declare, with no 'hot air,'
Your purpose full and free!"

"I never took in all my life
A drink of liquor, man,
The hated stuff, ain't that enough
To indicate my plan?"

But still I pressed ye gentel one
His purpose to disclose,
When with a skill that boded ill,
He went and blew his nose!

"Confound it, sir, I needs must know
Your true intent to note;
Now please to say, nor aye nor nay,
Just how you 'spect to vote!"

At last, ye merrie candidate—
I had him cornered dead—
And this I heard in falt'ring word:
"The platform, sir!" he said.

"The platform is the brewer's, knave!"
I spake forth bold and strong,
"Please don't demur!" He answered, "Sir!
I know that it is wrong!"

"You gentel, yet most wary dolt,
Is that your 'lay' at last?
You sing your song: 'I know 'tis wrong,'
And yet, they've got you fast!"

But spite of everything I'd say,
This humbel, modest man,
Or wrong or right, was wedded tight
Unto ye brewer's plan.

And then I said within my soul:
"How many can there be,
Who claim, forsooth, to love the truth,
And yet, will vote as he?"

THE HAPPIEST HOUR

"When should be one's happiest hour?"

I asked the artless child,
Who played at will midst tree and flower
Where soft winds sported mild;
He said with merry heart and voice:
"In childhood's hour we most rejoice!"

I asked it then the maiden fair
Who stood at wom'nhood's door;
And she replied in accents rare:
"Just married—ask no more!"

The statesman heard me ask it then,
And stopped 'midst wild applause,
To think it o'er and o'er again,
Then answered after pause:
"One's happiest hour, I think, should come,
When vict'ry follows campaign drum!"

The old saint stood aloof and smiled
With glance so far away;
He saw in wondrous height up-piled
A city bright as day;
Beyond the clouds, beyond the sun,
A heavenly life he saw begun,
And said in tones most deeply sweet,
Like far church bells with chime complete:
"My happiest day on earth shall be,
When I shall greet eternity!"

A POEM BY JUNE.

They say that Heaven is beautiful,
And I know it must be so;
For God never touched the lily fair
With its breast of the driven snow,
That He left one thing to be added
To make it with beauty aglow!

And the old earth, too, is beautiful;
When I walked forth this forenoon,
With the sun and the sky and the blithesome birds,
I said: "This is a poem by June,
A nature festival on ev'ry hand
With its joyous life attune!"

I've no use for a gun or a dog,
Nor a fishhook either, my man;
When the earth is a-thrill with such gladsome joy,
Do you think I'd disturb their plan—
Send pain and wounds and suffering
Amidst this merrisome clan?

And I thought if never were sin or death,
No anguish, sorrow, nor woe;
No wolf at the door to bark and to snarl—
With my loved ones around me so!—
I could spend a small-sized eternity
On this old earth below!

A PERTINENT QUERY

A grumpy old owl was he,
And he sat on the limb of a tree,
And watched at the hole
Of a soft, fluffy mole,
He hoped he could eat him, you see!

He thought the mole was a rat,
And what are you thinking of that?
And he watched until morn
For the "rat" to return
To make his repast sure and pat!

And some of the children of men
Have scarce as much sense as a hen,
For they'll watch at the hole
Of a burrowing mole
And wait till he cometh again!

E'en some of such fellows betimes
Are a making of blustering rhymes,
And expecting to win
Both of glory and "tin,"
The plaudits of ages and climes!

And some are as far out of plumb
As the owl we've mentioned, by Gum!
And they'll never strike oil,
Though for ages they toil—
Perhaps, of this number we're some!

THE LITTLE MINISTER.

"Sir, we would see Jesus!"—St. John's Gospel, XII-21.

A sweet little minister came to our fold,
Perfum-ed and dainty was he;
His shirt was as white as the frost on the wold,
His clothes were all new, his jewels of gold—
One neater you seldom would see!

And he brought in his basket so cheery and light,
Sweet flowerets from many a field;
There were posies and rosies in endless delight,
In great blooming bunches like rainbows so bright,
No finer a garden could yield!

But we were all hungry, so hungry were we,
And thirsty, oh, how can I tell,
For the bread that was promised to you and to me,
And the water of life to be given so free,
From a wonderful crystalline well!

And our dear little minister standeth afar,
He hath charge of this food from on high;
And he knows just how hungry we all of us are,
But he feeds us on blossoms though bright as a star,
When he knows we are ready to die!

Yes, we hunger and thirst, oh, shepherds of men—
The flowers are all good in their way,
But when people are starving and dying, ah, then,
Will you give them such trifles again and again,
This, this in our anguish we say!

FROM OUR BROTHER'S VIEWPOINT.

On a midnight Pullman sleeper,
The lamps burned dim and low,
While a man with a crying baby
Paced restless to and fro;
In vain he tried to soothe her,
This fretful, weeping child;
For she screamed and sobbed the louder
In her infant sorrow wild!

Then a great big Boston drummer,
With a voice like the roll of a drum,
Thrust his head from behind the curtains
And made things fairly hum:
"Here, you," he shouted fiercely,
"A fine man sure you seem,
Just take that brat to mother,
And let us sleep and dream!"

Then the poor man stopped his pacing,
And said as he stood afar,
"Her mother is there in the coffin,
In the distant baggage car!"
Then that great big Boston drummer,
With a word on his lips like a prayer,
Rolled out of berth in his night dress,
And rushed to that infant's care!

And the other restless sleepers,
Who had heard what the poor man said,
They arose to yield assistance
To the child with its mother dead!

Ah, sometimes how quickly it softens
Our fierce and implacable ire,
If we just could know from our brother's view
How it feels to be tested by fire!

When you feel like condemning your brother,
And you're saying he's this and he's that,
Just try going 'round there to see him
For a tender and heart-felt chat,
Yes, try to unravel the trouble
With a tender and Christ-like mind,
And then I am morally certain
It will stifle your strictures unkind!

THE PATIENCE OF THE OLD

The patience of the old—a blest completeness
That crowns the tide of years when ebbing mild
and low;
Unto life's latter years it gives a noiseless sweetness,
Like slippered feet that travel soft and slow.
For all the ties of life that bind them here
Have weaker grown from fleeting year to year;
The hearing gone, the eyesight dim,
And trembling seen in hand and limb!

The patience of the old—'tis thus I reason:
Their grinding work in life is almost, almost done;
Their constant toil sustained through ev'ry changing
season,
Their burdens borne in blinding rain and sun;

And then there comes the gentle, healing calm
Of vict'ries nobly won—a precious balm
That soothes the chastened, ling'ring soul,
While life's remaining moments roll!

The patience of the old—ah, blessed token;
A life serene, at peace, it tells to me and you,
Of harvests gathered in, life's duties high, unbroken,
And then the waiting for the last adieu.
God's peace is like a river deep, 'tis said,
And they submerged from foot to silver head;
The soul made all in sweet accord,
This is the spirit of the Lord!

The patience of the old— me thinks the singing,
The angel voices of the loved ones gone before,
Borne on the misty tide of years they now hear ringing,
And note above the furnace blast and roar;
Entranced they sweetly listen as they stand,
As to a message from the golden strand;
These blessed accents of the past
They hear above the raging blast!

The patience of the old—oh, grant it heaven,
When earthly scenes grow dim my fading sight before,
To me may this contentment, e'en to me! be given,
And may it go with me unto the farther shore;
Then down the jeweled aisles I'll walk enraptured,
My new-found senses blest, my new heart captured,
And see at last, no clouds between,
All wondrous patience and all love serene!

THE ANGEL IN THE STONE.

The world's greatest artist and sculptor,
Angelo, erstwhile of Rome,
Was one day passing some ruins
That chanced to be near his home.

He said to a friend who was with him,
For he seldom went forth alone;
"Behold here, this block of rough marble,
An angel is hid in this stone!"

He took then the stone to his workshop,
And with stroke of a genius so rare,
He gave to his city this angel—
Beautiful, shining and fair!

A crippled and sodden old stranger
Today passed in front of my door,
So ugly was he and so dirty,
So helpless and wretched and poor.

Then I said in my soul: This old stranger,
With such outwardly, uncouth frame,
Hath yet within him though dormant,
A spark of the heavenly flame.

And a word or a smile or a token
From the lips of a loving friend
May rouse into being an angel
To bless the sad world to its end!

In the lives of the lost ones around us,
Though outward the form be grim,
God's beautiful, shining angels
We may find and lead them to Him!

Let us take e'en such to the workshop
Of a tender and loving heart,
With the mallet and faith and its chisel
We may quickly this new life impart!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

Oh, Jim, our glorious Jim,
Here's smilin' at you through the rim
O' the best we've got, field, vine ur limb,
And our hearts grow soft and light an' trim,
An' then our heads begin to swim!

Oh, the joy bells you have rung
In days gone by when we was young,
An' life's fair barque her moorings swung,
With sweetest words that ever tongue
Had framed before, or song had sung,
A Burns the Hoosier fields among!

Jim, I've al'ays wisht that you
Could live a century ur two,
An' now an' nen your youth renew,
"Knee deep in June," with skies as blue,
An' frien's 'at's jist as leal an' true
As them your poems bring to view!

Written June 21, 1909.

THE SNOWY OWL

The snowy owl sat on a tree,
His feathers were ruffled and torn,
A bump on his head that was swollen and red
Made him feel very wretched and lorn.

He had come from the far, frozen north,
And feeling his worth in the land,
He had tested the skill of a fluttering mill
That a farmer had placed there to stand.

And a fan of said fluttering mill,
Took a smash at the head of the owl,
And hit him its best on the top of the crest,
And down went both feathers and fowl.

He lay quite a while in a trance,
Then arose with an unsmiling face,
And spluttered and croaked like a fellow half choked,
And sat down his misfortunes to trace.

"The white bear is cruel and cold!"
He said with a snap of his beak,
"But he beats half a mile this blamed thing that will
smile,
And knock off your head ere you speak!"

Then I thought that the wail of Sir Owl
Had a moral we all could well take;
For how often do we travel country and sea
Life's better conditions to make.

And find at the end of the race
The new thing we sought hard and far
Is a deal more unkind to our sensitive mind
Than the old thing we sought to debar!

THE CRESTED HILLS

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills whence cometh
my help."—Psalms CXXI-I.

Look up! look up! to the crested hills,
To the fortified hills on high,
Where the ordnance is placed and the cannon boom,
And the trained battalions lie;

Where the Captain standeth with glass in hand,
With his officers there beside,
All ready to launch, if the battle turn,
His troops like a mighty tide!

If you look to the hills with the eye of faith, |
Though fighting so far below,
You may ever be sure though the battle rage,
It will never your strength o'erthrow!

For your Captain above, with glass in hand,
Well knowing each conflict and grief,
When he sees uplifted your face to His,
Will send you an instant relief!

Oh, wonderful hills that are seen by faith,
Oh, wonderful Captain on high,
Though our lot may be cast in the valleys of earth,
We may ever know Thou art nigh!

TILLUS RUFFIN.

Tillus Ruffin's come to town,
You don't know Tillus? Hush!
He'll talk you up and talk you down,
And thrill your soul with gush;
And then to hear Till's hearty laugh,
And see him wink an eye,
I tell you those who hear him chaff
Don't stand around and sigh!

The other day, Till glanced around
And saw imprinted fair,
These very letters—I'll be bound!
"G. P. C." everywhere;
And Tillus read the message clear
That he should preach that day,
And hastened to an aged seer,
And this was heard to say:

"What meanin' have these letters bright
Which ever' whur I see;
I can't avoid 'em day or night,
They keep a hauntin' me;
The letters 'G. P. C.' I mean,
They must have this in store:
'Go preach the Christ' it is, I ween,
And lift sin's burdens sore!"

The aged seer with visage bland
Did then to Tillus say:
"Don't think that such a calling grand
Is laid before your way;

The letters 'G. P. C.' I'm sure,
You see from night to morn,
Mean simply this and nothing more,
Oh, Tillus, 'Go plow corn'!"

THAT OLD-TIME RELIGION.

Some things, they make me smile, I guess they do,
Jest to see how quare some folks air actin',
'Bout this religion that they call the "new",
And say that ever'thing's a fact in;
They want us jest to run and jump and whoop,
And leave the Rock o' Ages in a troop;
And if we don't they jist git mad and say:
"Yer narrer cause ye won't come this a way;
And then ye haven't gone to college, nuther,
To learn things taught in Rockefeller's school!"
But then we've stood beside a dear, old mother,
And heard o' Jesus and the Golden Rule;
And in my simple pate, it's fur the best
To know jest whur our holy faith to rest,
Than go a troopin' round fröm good to bad,
A chasin' ev'ry tarnal, worthless fad!

Why, don't you know it's one blamed thing ur 'nuther,
To cheat God's faithful few and steal their crown;
The precious future hope to kill and smother,
And cause our sweetest trust in Christ to down?
But don't ye let 'em ketch ye nappin', brother,
Jest anchor to the teachin' o' your mother,
In God's good time—He'll not our prayers deny!—
Ye'll see all clouds o' doubt go rollin' by!

'NOUR CHURCH.

There's the awfulest crank you ever did see,

'Nour Church;

He never is happy no way it can be,

'Nour Church;

He growls at the preacher

And ev'ry "new feature",

'Nour Church!

Only once was he happy and glad

'Nour Church;

It was at the time when the "meetin'" was had,

'Nour Church;

When he and some people

Left the great, towering steeple,

And went to the jail

And strove to prevail,

To save a poor fellow or two

Who was lost and wretched and "blue";

Then he said 'twas sweeter and richer, completer,

'Nour Church!

The rarest of songs of the sweet, vested choir,

'Nour Church,

Make him no better and lift him no higher,

'Nour Church,

But to save a lost soul from the gath'ring gloom,

That gives to his soul a mighty, big boom,

'Nour Church;

He says it is better to do,

By preacher and men in the pew,

Than throwing bouquets at the rich,

And pand'ring to self love and sich,

'Nour Church!

A WELCOME TO OLD GLORY.

I stood by the bay of Naples
 'Yond th' Atlantic's raging tide
As the sun rose o'er the city
 From the waves on the eastern side;

From off the masts and the rigging
 Of the craft that lay in the bay,
The early beams of the morning
 Flung weird shadows far away.

I noted from countless nations
 The banners of kingly pride
Shake forth their flaunting colors
 To the breezes far and wide.

I stood there a total stranger,
 Nor friend nor kindred near,
And none with whom to parley
 In the speech I hold so dear.

I saw far down the harbor
 A white-painted warship ride,
Coming in from the realms of Neptune
 A-crest of the rippling tide;

And as she passed by the fortress
 I heard then the great cannon boom,
To welcome this peerless stranger,
 And bid the ships all to make room!

And as she drew near and nearer,
 From her masthead tall and high,
She let loose a silken banner—
 Stars of gold in an azure sky!

And oh, what a flood of glory
Surged over my homesick soul
When I saw the old flag flying,
And its stars and stripes unroll!

And I thought of that matchless nation
Beyond the waves of the sea,
My country, my own loved country,
I shall ever sing of thee!

In fancy I saw her cities,
Her billowy fields of grain;
The wonderful, cloud-touching mountain,
The prairie-land and plain;

Then I thought of the deeds of her heroes,
Of her love of the right and truth;
Her laws and her schools and her freedom,
And the happy days of my youth!

And I wept and yelled like a madman
And danced all over the quay,
Just to see that old flag flying,
And to feel what it meant to me!

The people all 'round me jabbered,
Some laughed and some of them jeered,
But I pointed up to "Old Glory",
And stood in their midst and cheered!

And if they could have known the reason
I shouted and wept like mad,
And threw up my hat to "Old Glory",
Their dull hearts, too, had been glad!

Oh, Flag of the Free, forever,
The stains that e'en redden thy fold,
Are not the stains of oppression,
But the blood of thy heroes bold;

And the blue of that peerless banner
Stands for honor and home and truth,
And the white for the faith of thy women,
And the spotless names of thy youth!

A PUCKERY PERSIMMON.

I wandered in the woodland
When the autumn trees were bare,
And saw a green persimmon
Before me lying there.

I quickly seized the tempting fruit,
And placed it on my tongue,
Then swallowed down the tempting pulp,
When Gosh! what change was wrung!

For now in truth, one eye looks up,
The other glanceth down;
My erstwhile placid features
Disclose a constant frown!

This mouth of mine, Apollo's mouth,
Behold, what change is here?
For lo, 'tis drawn so far around,
I whisper in mine ear!

SWEETEST THOUGHTS OF JESUS.

When in the midnight watches,
When day's bright chariots roll,
The sweetest thoughts of Jesus
Come stealing o'er my soul;
They lead me down the ages
By storm-tossed Galilee,
And I see Time's greatest Teacher,
As he walks beside the sea!

I see the throngs before him
Hang breathless on his word,
For never truths so golden
Before on earth were heard;
I see the world's dark sorrows
Flee from before his face,
And sodden, sin-cursed people
Are healed and saved by grace!

I note each step in Jewry,
When steadfast was his face
To suffer there for human kind,
Nor seek a safer place;
Each thing He did and all He said
Is brought before my view,
That I may always know just how
To suffer and be true!

Oh, wondrous, Living Presence
Forever by my side,
I love Thy precious promise:
"With Thee I'll e'er abide,

And to Thy fond remembrance
These things I'll bring again,
How Christ has wrought and suffered
To redeem the race of men!"

Oh, blest and Holy Spirit,
Though dark waves 'round me roll,
I feel Thine inward presence
In the deep recess of soul,
And ever I am ready
Earth's treasures down to lay,
For just this sweet abiding
Forever and a day!

MR. BRYAN'S DRINK.

Some folks are makin' fun o' Billy Bryan,
Grape juice, they say, is fur too mild for them;
They want it hot to set their brains a-fryin',
It must jest burn and sizzle to the rim;

They want to cuss and swear and fairly raise the Devil,
And spend their nights in orgies mad with rum;
To pass away God's golden years in evil,
Nor help to make His precious "Kingdom Come!"

To such as them, o' course, it stands to reason,
They'd have contempt fur Billy's mild, sweet drink;
They can't commend it in nor out of season,
They want a draught that makes 'em snap and wink!

Yes, Billy's modest ways are awful tame and homely,
The gait he goes is common-place, we own,
And they could no more 'preciate this statesman comely,
Than skunks could 'preciate a bottle o' Cologne!

YE OWL AND SPARROW.

"Dost know me?" quoth ye sparrow
To ye wilde-eyed, hungry owl;
"Just wait a bit, my blithesome bird!"
Replied ye ugly fowl.

Then down beside his owlship lone,
On slender twig at hande,
Ye verdant, little, sparrow birde
Took roost at his command.

And there he rested sweetly till
Ye western landscape o'er,
Ye shades of night had settled down,
Ye birde could see no more.

And then ye ugly bubo fierce,
With chuckle in his throat,
Just swallowed down ye littel birde,
And seemed to laugh and gloat!

And later, on sequestered stump,
Ye houre was still and lone,
He cough-ed up with scarce a retch,
Some feathers, skin and bone!

And there 'tis seen unto this day
All white and bleached and spare,
A monument to verdancie,
It preacheth sermons there!

Ilk man and mother's son take heed,
And daughters, too, attend,
Sometimes an evil habit comes
Your future good to end;

And will you then, oh, wayward youth,
Despite of all I say,
Just place yourself within its power,
Nor try to run away?

Ah, if you do, this much I'll say—
My heart is all a thump!—
Such fate may come to you some day
Like that upon ye stumpe!

THE HEAVENLY SEAL.

The lamp on the cottage table
Burns with low, uncertain ray,
And the children, sadly weeping,
Throng the bed where mother lay;
But that mother passed from earth's scenes
In the night-tide dark and drear,
And she left her huddled darlings
Wrapped in sadness, crushed with fear!
But the gracious, heavenly Father,
Whether noon or night or morn,
Tempers e'er the cruel windblast,
Just to suit the lamb that's shorn;
So the Father, in His kindness,
Dropped a smile, a heavenly seal,
On those wan and wasted features
For the daylight to reveal.
And those children, on the morrow,
When they looked upon her face,
Caught a vision of the glory
Of her new, abiding place!

FAITH'S SWEETEST ARGUMENT.

“For whether in mid sea, or among the breakers of the farther shore, a wreck must mark at last the end of each and all. And every life, no matter if its every hour is rich with love, and every moment jeweled with a joy, will, at its close, become a tragedy as sad and deep and dark as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death!—Ingersoll.

I know not whence my being came, nor distance short
or far;
Nor whence this spark of life derived, from earth or
utmost star;
But this I know, I know full well, that days before I
came,
God had my early coming known and had foretold the
same!

.

And when I dropped down to the earth from hidden nest
above,
God had prepared an help for me—had given a mother's
love;
And though I was for many months an infant weak and
prone,
A surer source of helpfulness I never yet have known!

And may I not, His servant, hope in His great name
that when
This fitful life shall pass away that He will once again
Observe with care my going forth, my course and bearing
take,
And on some distant, golden shore for me a welcome
make?

And if He shall for me prepare on far-off, shining strand,
A haven 'gainst the storms of death when sails are furled
to land,
And make such warmth of welcome wait, like nest of
gentle dove,
Such tender welcome as was found in mother's perfect
love,
I shall not then, oh, Doubter, quail nor dread the awful
roar,
Of breakers dashing high above when I shall near the
shore;
Nor shall I fear that there will be a wreckage of my craft,
When such, Thy loving, tender care, surrounds me fore
and aft!

JOHN MORLEY.

John Morley lived and living, wrought in vain,
And fell and rose and fell and rose again;
And cried toward heaven in his baffled woe:
"Oh, let me win ere I'm compelled to go!"
He thought his time had come, could almost feel
The helplessness of age upon him steal!
And yet, the Powers above, with grace benign,
Had watched his course, observed his phrensy fine;
When failure had his ev'ry stroke surpassed,
They dropped the crown of sweet success at last,
And said: "Both time and fate are in our hands above,
And happiness we give away to him whom we may love,
And for thy noble striving against unnumbered odds,
We give to thee a ripe, old age and favor with the Gods!"

ONLY TWO BY FOUR.

Only Two by Four was about his size,
And he moved in a narrow sphere;
No startling vision bedazzled his eyes,
And naught that he did would the world surprise,
He cut but a small figure here!

But then, all the same, in an earnest way,
Whate'er he did was right and clean;
He traveled along from day unto day,
With a heart to love and a soul to pray,
And he sang from morn till e'en!

When at last to his journey's end he came,
The end we must meet or false or true,
There came not the crowd that worships a name,
There was heard no trumpet "that sings of fame",
Neither drums that beat a tattoo!

And the meagre few that followed his bier,
A crawling slow through the village street,
Were some humble folk who in love sincere
Had been blessed by his life and his deeds of cheer,
And his smile ever beaming and sweet!

But in vision I stood at the Golden Gate,
And behold, Two by Four drew nigh,
And all heaven awoke with a joy elate,
And smote on their harps at a wonderful rate,
I had sworn a **great man** came by!

GOT TO FLOP.

"We've got to flop!" Tom says, says he;
"We've got to flop!" Tom says to me,
"This temprunce cause gains rapid-lee!"

"We've got to flop!" I says, says I;
"I wisht you'd please to specify;
What temprunce cause?" I says, says I;
"I guess you'll have to amplify!"

"What temprunce cause, you donkey grey?
Jest see it grow from day to day,
And then ask me in foolish way,
The meanin' that my words convey!"

"It's captured cities by the score;
It's gobbled counties, yes, and more,
It's got the congress one to four,
We've got to climb the wagon, shore!"

And then Tom goes and talks a spell:
"I guess you've got to give 'em—well!
They must obey the law, nor sell
A drop of booze on Sunday, Bell!"

Ah, well, the light is shinin' through
The clouds that once obscured our view;
And if these folks do change their cue,
We'll welcome **them** with fervor, too!

"OLD NATCHRAL SELECTION."

'Way back in the dim, dusty ages so grey,
Ten trillions or more I am told,
There was nothing and nothing and nothing for aye;
Nor darkness nor heating nor cold;
Nor upward nor downward nor inward nor out;
Nor sickness nor sorrow nor sin,
Just how Nothing came to bring Something about,
With never a kinfolk nor kin,
To tell I can only begin!

Old Natchral Selection, he happened about,
He came not from heaven nor hell;
He just came from Nowhere within or without,
And he stationed himself in a cell;
But it seems he could think pretty fairly just then,
And he liked not his bearings at all,
His food it was nothing it ought to have been,
It made his old appetite pall,
And his clothing was thin in the fall!

And then he began! and he wriggled around
(He had neither mate nor a wife!)
He started a Something somewhere, I'll be bound,
And soon it was seen to be **life!**
He kept e'er a thinking and scheming along
While the cycles went by with a throb,
Till he just made us men with our soul thirst and song,
But he didn't then throw up his job,
He didn't relinquish his job!

We don't need a God nor a Savior to save,
And there's no such a folly as sin;
Old Natchral Selection, the cunning, old knave,
Has made and can make us again;
Then here's to the New, let the Old pass away,
'Tis only the fittest survive,
We'll live and be happy forever and aye,
We four and another, that's five,
Three monkeys, two donkeys—that's five!

THE POWER OF LOVE.

'Twas Pilate asked the Savior:
"Oh, what is truth, I pray?"
And after ages answered back
Unto that distant day!

And still the battle goeth on,
Like storms this April weather,
The struggle of the warmth and sun,
And wintry winds together;

And as, at last, the summer's smile,
So calm, so sweet, so cheering,
Will loosen chains of snow and ice,
The leaden skies all clearing.

So will this truth of patient Christ,
The distant ages filling,
Show to the world at last that love
Is mightier far than killing!

A HIGHER IDEAL.

(Suggested by reading the late Sam Walter Foss' clever poem entitled "The House by the Side of the Road".)

Should we live, as you say, "by the side of the road,"
And be "but a friend to man,"
We hardly should follow the worthiest line,
Or live by the princeliest plan;
For to tread in the paths of the sweetest of lives
That ever this old world trod,
We rather should choose, than the plaudits of man,
To merit the plaudits of God!

And to live by the side of the road alone,
And be "but a friend to man,"
Is too dull and too slow in this work-a-day world
To show forth the loftiest plan;
For sometimes the one who would do the most good,
And would bless and brighten the race,
Receives but the hatred and scorn of the world,
Nor honor nor treasure nor place!

My friend, the hist'ry and lives of the past
From Jesus to humble John Brown,
Will show when the world takes a higher plane,
Some martyr has laid his life down;
It has taken the toil and the sweat and the blood
That the best of our kind may give,
To lift from the ditch this stubborn race
That the Christ life within may live!

The picture you paint is too easy I fear
To show forth the noblest in men;
'Tis a struggle, a battle, a sacrifice, too,
Not to "smile" at the door of your "den";
Truth's suffering army of bold pioneers
Have marched down the steeps of the past;
They have conquered diseases and cannibal lust,
Discovered new lands so vast,
But they had more to do in the ages' swirl
Than to live at their ease and plan,
How the days should go by in "the house by the road",
While being a "friend to man"!

ERROR.

Error clothed in robes resplendant,
Often sits on golden throne,
And like Herod asks for worship,
Honor due to God alone.

As with Herod, so with Error,
At the climax of its reign,
When it claims the highest vantage,
When its boast is loud and vain,

Then the Truth, like daylight shining,
Pierces through its tinsel guise,
Shows its flesh corrupt and rotten
Only fit for worms and flies!

"JOHNY SELDOM"

I feel like writing po'try
Concerning brother, John,
And I hope you'll 'xcuse the effort.

"Johnny Seldom" was the name
We gave him long ago,
Just for fun, you know.

John's had his ups and downs
They're mostly downs—in life.

I remember when he lost his darling child,
His precious Dorothy!
She was the apple of his eye;
His honest soul was buried deep
In love for her.
It almost broke my heart
To see him struggle with a grief so poignant
In his simple-hearted way!

But after all the jolts and blows,
The disadvantages of life and birth,
For such an awkward colt,
He's come out most surprising!

Faithful in church and Sunday school,
And at the bedside of the sick
He can't be beat!

I think of Him who said:
"As ye have done to these,
The least of these, my brethren,
So have ye done to me!"

I used to feel chagrined
When Johny, in the old debates,
Would talk about the "Poke o' Rome";
I don't know what he thought was Pope,
Or who!

But I've got over that a long ago.
I look beyond mistakes in words,
And see the honest, home-spun soul behind,
Big of heart, faithful and true,
But awkward!

God bless you, "Johny Seldom"!

MRS. D. A. BREWER.

Out of the shadows and gloom of the night,
Up to the glorious, glorious light,
Where the shadows dissolve, and the day star is bright,
Weary-foot wanderer, thou didst well come!

Now as a child with a sweet blossom fair,
Climbs to the light up a dark, winding stair,
Leaving a breath of the perfume so rare,
Happy-heart journeyer, thou hast gone home!

And though thou are gone thou has left in thy train
The odors of lilies from gardens in Spain
Where old Moorish fountains splash softly amain,
So nobly and well hast thou done!

And when it shall be that our struggle is o'er,
And we take our brief trip to that time-hidden shore,
The light thou hast left us will go on before,
Till all of our journey is run!

POPE PIUS THE TENTH.

The golden bowl is broken,
And the sands of life are run ;
He sank beneath the burden
Of a life-work nobly done ;
But just before life's fastenings broke,
With glance of christian seer,
He notes those mighty armies
That on the plains appear ;
In vision sees the carnage
And hears the shrieks of pain
As flames of rage inhuman
Engulf the vast terrain ;
He sees the rivers redden
As they flash beneath the sun ;
Disease and death now fatten
Where had rugged life begun ;
And that old-time demon, Famine,
Comes stalking on behind,
And thus the hopes of all his years
Are blasted in his kind ;
And all the gentle teachings
Of the humble Nazarene
Forgotten in the rage and lust
That thrills the awful scene ;
And as he stands and weeps and prays,
Mad carnage sweeping o'er
Those lovely scenes in early life
Oft visited before,
His great and loving heart then breaks
With sorrow deep and wild
Such awful deeds of frightfulness
He left—unreconciled !

A MOONSHINE MEDITATION.

The moon I saw on yesternight
A shining crescent clear and bright,
Above the steeples shone;
The wan stars hid their twinkling light,
As 'round its beams were thrown!

And just behind the shining rim,
Moving along so faint and dim,
A pale round disc was seen
Amidst the fleecy clouds to swim,
The shadow and the sheen!

'Tis sunshine makes the crescent glow,
But earth's soft light the disc must show,
Or else 'twere darkness there;
Oh, how the dull world here below
From thence must shine most fair!

And so may I, unfit to shine
Where dwell the great in mansions fine,
Yet on some darkened soul,
My feeble rays many may fall benign,
And heal like sacred stole!

And to that one whose life they bless,
And soothe with love's sincere caress,
Though I of modest rate,
Such lowly deeds shall shine no less,
Than were I rich or great!

MY SAVIOR'S LOVE.

There are some problems, brother,
That I cannot fully solve,
Some very vexing questions
That the critics may evolve,
But I'm just content to lay them
At my Savior's blessed feet;
I'm out and out for Jesus,
Oh, His wondrous love's so sweet!

To have His love around me
And below like downy nest;
To have His love above me
Like a warm and pulsing breast;
To walk His green and flowery earth,
To breathe His blessed air,
And then to know "I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care!"

O, no grisly death can scare me,
Of the grave I'm not afraid;
No life can be a failure
With my Savior as an aid,
But groweth ever sweeter,
As I press my journey on,
Through rifted clouds His city
Shines brighter than the sun!

I'm just wrapped up in Jesus,
Each piece of armor's on;
He's big enough and grand enough,
My battle will be won,

And nothing e'er shall come between,
Oh, Christ, my love and Thee,
Or the present or the future
Is just to live with Thee!

THE HERO OF MY VERSE.

Some years ago, a donkey tried
An artist rare to be;
He had the bristles for the brush,
Enough of industry and push,
He had an eye and shapes and shades could see!

But then, but then, the donkey failed;
Must I confess, alas!
In outward circumstance he led,
But had not that inside his head,
That makes an artist differ from an ass!

How often do we see to-day,
A donkey pushed along;
We see his name in public press,
We note his form in varied dress,
We hear the awful burden of his song!

My wife, she cometh from the stair,
She would not me asperse;
She does not know what's written here,
And this she says without a fear:
"Don't make yourself the hero of your verse!"

"DISCHARGED!"

"Now Misther, yer honor", the sheriff then said,
"We caught 'um full-handed, indeed, sir, we ded;
He'd stholen a ham, 'twas a foine, joocy mate,
And had taken it home fur his fambly to ate,
And ther-re was they all, jist a atein' and fryin',
His wife and the childer that's sittin' and cryin'!"

The magistrate then from his bench good and tall,
Looked down on the culprit, his family and all;
Adjusted his glasses most carefully, too,
To bring the whole bunch of them closer to view;
"And what is the charge, Mr. Sheriff, please answer!"
"'Tis the sthalin' of mate from the home of John Hant,
sir!"

"They seem to be poor", said the magistrate then,
And he thought of the days of his boyhood and when
In a humble, log cabin with little to eat,
His father and mother had struggled to meet
The needs and the wants of a family so growing,
While the bleak winds of winter around them were
blowing!

"Did you steal?" he asked in a voice soft and low,
"And why did you steal? I just want to know?"
The poor wretch shrank from the glance of the court,
Then laughed in his face as if in great sport.
"Send me up! Send me up! If you want to, yer honor;
I knew all the time I was surely a goner!

But you see!" coming close to the magistrate's view,
"That's my wife an' my chil'ern air sittin' there, too;
They were hungry, oh, Judge, jist as chil'ern kin be,
An' I hadn't a thing fur to give 'em, you see,
So I stole 'em some meat jist to keep 'em from dyin',
I jist couldn't stan' so to hear 'em a cryin'!"

An' Judge, it may be, I'm a criminal, too,
But I'd rather a darned sight, I want to tell you,
Be punished like sin fur a crime or a wrong,
Than to have my sweet darlin's a sufferin' long
Fur the want of a wee bit of food in the larder,
Now punish me, Judge, all the quicker and harder!"

The Judge ran his fingers bestudded with gold
Through the hair that encircled his forehead so bold,
And then through the past with his memory's goad,
He stirred up the deeds that he'd done on the road,
And said in his heart and said it quite sadly:
"We every blamed one have at times acted badly;

The difference 'twixt me and this ignorant lout,
Is just that the poor cuss is simply found out;
If I had my full due as sure as dull fate,
I'd be breaking of rock in the hands of the state!"
And then to the criminal he said in low tone:
"Your wrong, sir, the commonwealth must not condone;
To punish a crime the statutes adjure it,
But mercy is given as one way to cure it!"

Then seizing a pen with a handwrite enlarged,
He wrote on his docket this legend: "Discharged!"

THEY ARE ALL FORGOTTEN.

"I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."—Isaiah LXIII-25.

I care not, oh, my Savior
For the crown of shining gold,
Nor the harp with strings a thousand
Such as David had of old;

But oh, to feel within me
As I pace the shining strand,
Thou hast my sins forgotten
When before Thy throne I stand.

I've done some deeds, oh, Master,
In thoughtless days of youth,
So wicked and so heartless
'Gainst Thee and 'gainst Thy truth;

And sometimes in the darkness
When I 'wake from startled sleep,
The specters of those by-gone years
Into my mem'ry creep!

And if I stood before Thee,
With Thy mind so clear and bright,
And felt that Thou wert thinking,
Of my past, nor clear nor white,

I fear my faith would fail me,
I might try to steal away,
Out from Thee, Thy throne so fair,
And that land of endless day!

But oh, Thy precious promise:
 "I'll remember them no more
Throughout the endless ages
 That shall break on heaven's fait shore!"

There may be some, O, Savior,
 Not half so bad as I,
Just give to them my crown and harp,
 When I shall reach the sky;

But for me that precious promise
 Will harp and crown replace,
Just let me sing in modest nook:
 "A sinner saved by grace!"

IT BECAME WUSS.

Doolins were happy
Or Doolins were sad,
He never complained that the weather was bad,
But always said
 With a pleasant grin,
"It mout be wuss than 'tever hes been!"
And he was right!

But one day Doolins
 Contracted a boil
On the end of his nose in the midst of his toil;
He couldn't be cheerful,
 No more could he grin,
And he said: "This is wuss than 't ever hes been,
 A blamed sight!"

TO HARD TACK.

(This brief poem is respectfully dedicated to Uncle Eb Harbert, of Johnson county, Indiana, who for many years, was a correspondent of the Franklin Democrat. He possessed such a boundless enthusiasm and such vivid imagination as a writer, that, had he received the advantages of an early education, he would have undoubtedly made an impression on the literary world for years to come. He died a short time ago full of years and beloved by all who knew him.)

There's no great style about ye,
Nor skill in rhyme nor sich;
You'd hardly know a measure
From a couplet or distich;

And when it comes to countin' feet,
It's jest as like as not
You'd go to work and put in ten,
When six would fill the lot;

But you're not dull in story,
Nor in fancy are you slow;
You can beat the hull creation
In a rale, poetic glow;

And it's a fact, I tell ye,
That you've sung some purty songs,
In kind of boundin', nat'ral verse,
That to Eb alone belongs!

I've sometimes wished that I could sing
With such a zeal unbounded;
'Twould tide me safe o'er all the chunks
By which I am surrounded;

I'd leap the rails that fence me in,
Float wide in fancy's sea,
And wouldn't we go a merry clip,
Old Hard Tack, you and me!
Written February 26, 1910.

MY SOUL.

I think at time of future ages,
Of the aeons yet to be;
Is this mind, like God, immortal,
Doomed to live eternally;
Lasting through the mighty cycles
That shall never cease to roll;
Always will there be two beings
God, at least, and this—my soul?

THE FLOWERS.

There are bunches of blossoms 'way out in the field
That are smelling far sweeter than clover;
And Old Bob goes out when his trappings are peeled,
And throws up his head and kicks up his heels,
And rolls himself over and over.

And his coat that had smelled of the labor and pain,
Smells sweet as the gardens before us,
And I wonder if Bob can see it as plain
As he drags out his days in a wearysome chain,
That He sendeth His flowers to restore us!

A LESSON IN FAITH.

I rise from a peaceful slumber
At the dawn of this autumn day,
And gaze at the eastern skyline
Where the morn makes her bright display.

I think of the summer departed,
With its sheen and glory of sun;
Then again, of the earlier autumn,
With its leaves of purple and dun.

Now, have we this mail of grey frost work,
Then winter comes silvery white,
As an old age weak and decrepit,
The end, it would seem, is in sight!

And yet, no ending e'er cometh,
No death of the year do we see,
For what we may think the last tussle,
Is a new life in bud and in tree.

The beautiful new resurrection,
The springtime as bride comes to earth,
And our hearts are filled with the gladness
Till we shout and sing in our mirth!

Oh, this lesson of faith sweetly given,
Stealing in at the dawning of day,
So tenders my heart to my Father,
That I just kneel down here and pray;

And I thank Him with eyes overflowing—
Such love to the children of men!—
From the winter of death he will give us
A beautiful springtime again!

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

The first part of the following story-poem was suggested to the author by hearing Comrades David S. and George M. Whitenack, who were captured during the civil war, and confined in Andersonville Prison, tell of their experience in, and escape from, this loathsome pen. They both now reside in Greenwood, Indiana.

The story-poem departs, to some extent, from the narrative they gave, but not more, perhaps, than the rules of fiction and of verse allow.

The second part of the story-poem was suggested by hearing the venerable Dr. P. W. Payne, of Franklin, Indiana, tell of his experience in passing a mob late one night engaged in hanging some poor wretch. His prayer, "Oh, Lord, have mercy on my soul!" made such an impression on the doctor, then a young man, that for weeks and weeks it rang through his ears constantly. There was no rescue, however, in the instance the doctor described.

* * *

BOBBY WHITE'S VOW

A Memorial Day Story-Poem in Two Chapters.

CHAPTER I.

From Anderson's foul prison pen
Brave Robert White came home again;

Some months had he, a captive there,
Been forced to eat the loathsome fare;

Been forced to drink the water bad;
In storm and rain no shelter had;

No voice of woman ever heard,
No mirthful laugh, no loving word;

No child's sweet call, no hearty cheer,
No pleasant sound to bless the ear.

And as he sat upon the bank
Of that foul stream whose waters stank

With offal from the Rebel camp,
And shivered in the evening's damp,

He thought of loved ones far away
Where Kankakee's mild waters lay—

His babies he had left at home
When came his country's call to roam,

His wife so patient and so true—
Ah, how their forms uprose to view!

He sat and brooded day and night
And prayed and wept his bitter plight;

His heart grew sore and sorer still,
Nor did new hope the morrow fill;

His comrades died around like sheep,
With dying men death watch to keep;

The dead alone found rest and peace,
The living prayed for such release!

At last there came to Bobby White,
A firm resolve one stormy night;

With all the fire and pent-up force
Of home-sick soul came this recourse,

That filled his utmost mental space:
To die or leave the loathsome place!

And he that night, in silence deep,
No stars above a watch to keep,

No light for guard on rude stockade
To watch the rapid ditch he made,

With half a canteen digging deep,
He threw the soft loam in a heap,

And made beneath that Rebel fence
A tunnel scant and fled he thence;

The night of twenty-ninth of May
In sixty-three, White ran away!

For hours he fled through storm and gale
The bloodhounds ever on his trail;

But dark morass and swamp and rain
Betrayed brute instinct and its train

Of fiercer ones than hound or cur
Were made in tracking him to err;

He hid in cypress swamp by day,
And on each night went on his way;

For three long nights with naught to eat,
He traveled north with bleeding feet.

At last, emerging from a wood,
He came where lonely cabin stood ;

The smoke uprolling wheel on wheel,
Gave promise of the morning meal.

He feared it was a friendless host,
And dodged around from tree to post,

Until he saw a negress stand
And shield her face with swarthy hand,

And peer adown the narrow way
That stretched out north and far away,

Then turn away from opened door,
And disappear within once more.

And did his eyes no sooner trace
The features of that lowly race,

Than did his heart with hope beat high,
He felt that kindly friends were nigh.

He knocked upon that humble door,
'Twas opened by a negress poor,

A dusky child upon her arm ;
She said "Come in!" from out the storm,

And Bobby scarce more live than dead,
Just "tumbled in" he often said ;

Here food was had and shelter free,
And nursing, care and sympathy !

A week passed by, Bob starts once more,
And as he stands beside the door,

About to quit the humble place,
He tells the "mammie" face to face:

"If ever you should chance to come
Within the range of my dear home,

Though once a slave with skin so black,
You never shall kind treatment lack;

I'll ever be a friend to you,
And you will find this promise true!"

And then old "mammie" sweetly said:
"Yo' is a man de Lawd has led

To seek dis po' ole darkey's do',
An' we so dreffle, ha'd-up, po';

But he a blessin' sho' can give
Ef we some po' man he'p to live;

I has a boy dat run away
When fus' begun dis awful fray;

Yo've hea'd me call his name befo',
His name is Sambo, Sambo Clo';

He went up no'th somewhah I know,
May be yo' see him as yo' go;

What yo' could do fo' him, yo' see,
Is jist de same as done fo' me!"

And then Bob promised good and tight,
That ne'er should come too dark a night,

Nor should such storms besiege the skies
That he would not in joy arise

And help that boy at midnight hour
By every deed within his power!

* * *

CHAPTER II

Some thirty years have passed away,
And Bobby White is grizzled, grey.

One night he went unto the town
All by himself a driving down;

Again 'tis twenty-ninth of May,
To-morrow's Decoration Day.

He stayed too late, perhaps, at most,
Some pressing business at the Post.

He heard the boys, in random way,
Discuss the news that very day;

Told of a negro in the jail,
An awful creature without fail,

Who'd just been seized by arm of law,
For crime that held the town in awe;

"And I'm afraid, it's what they say,
That he'll stretch hemp ere dawns the day!"

But Bobby gave no thought or heed
To what the gossips said, indeed,

And late that night went on his way
Unto his home, his spirits gay.

He lived two miles away from town
On gentle hillside sloping down;

But Bobby scarce had passed the line
That did the village space confine,

Than came he on a midnight crowd.
"They're bent on mischief!" he allowed;

To straggler there beside the way,
He then made haste to softly say:

"What means this throng so late at night?"
"Oh, them?" says he, "Why, they're all right!

They're out to hang a 'nigger' there;
You just keep still, you'll hear his prayer!"

And then upon the night air still,
Such awful tones, they made Bob chill,

These words from out the mob then stole:
"Oh, Lawd, hab mussy on mah soul!"

"What's his name?" asked Bobby then,
"The 'nig' that's prayin' 'mong the men?"

"His name," the man vouched-safe once more,
"His name is Sambo, Sambo Clore!"

And when Bob heard that name gone o'er
He had not heard in years before,

His heart stood still with scarce a thump,
And then began to fiercely pump.

A vision comes from far southlands,
A lonely hut before him stands,

Before his eyes as once it stood,
A little house hard by the wood,

And old black "mammie" at the door,
He sees as once he saw before,

And hears himself in earnest way
Make faithful promise, come what may,

That he would do a certain thing
Should ever ripe occasion bring;

And now her son in deep distress
Is in the hands of lawlessness,

And he had vowed a night too drear
Should never come for him to hear,

And hasten to the lad's relief—
The time had come, likewise the grief!

He leaped from out his buggy then,
And with the force of twenty men

He hurled around him, left and right,
These dark marauders of the night,

Until beside their victim stood,
Tore loose the noose, snatched off the hood,

And said in tones no fear could awe:
"When did you men become the law?"

The prisoner saw that he was free,
And like a deer began to flee,

While Bobby, like a lion at bay,
Stood 'twixt the mob and fleeing prey!

They paused a moment in their rage
To see who dared with them engage;

They saw before them but one man,
And then as one upon him ran!

(The sure inducement mobs may know
Is helplessness in prey or foe!)

And fell upon him fist and scull,
And beat and hammered to the full!

Next day when Bobby lay in bed
With plasters on his broken head,

He heard his folks in room nearby,
Say that a man confessed the lie

That had been told the day before
That almost caused the death of Clore!

And that, although an awful scrape,
The negro had made good escape;

And Bobby's eyes then filled with tears,
His mind went back for thirty years;

He sees himself, no friend around,
And chased by cruel foe and hound,

Till finding lonely cabin door,
He seeks such shelter, mean and poor,

And finds a friend with kindly heart,
Who does for him a mother's part—

A dusky face and kinky hair,
A kindly face, if not so fair!

He thought of what a debt was due
This negro mother leal and true!

And then his heart leaped high with joy—
He'd paid the debt, he'd saved her boy!

He saw in glass upon the wall
His wounded head and face and all;

The wounds that pain had given before,
Now joy and peace and comfort bore.

"Thank God!" he said, "I'm happy now,
I've made all good that old-time vow,

And 'mammie,' for your kindness when
I sore was chased by evil men,

You saved my life and sent me home,
No more from loving hearts to roam,

I've saved your boy and set him free,
Though't cost me pain and misery!"

That day White marched in no parade
Where muffled drums are softly played,

And grizzled "vets" string out afar
In faded panoply of war,

And keep the step and mark the pace
As if before great Sherman's face,

Whom they in memory can see
Through all the passing years so free,

Or march before reviewing stand
And see in mind their Lincoln grand,

As in the days of sixty-five
With he their Captain still alive;

Or feel in marching down the lane
Like noble Grant reviewed again;

Nor marched he where creped banners wave,
And flowers are strewn on many a grave,

Where sleep his fellowmen at arms,
Disturbed no more by war's alarms;

Nor elbows touched with living ones,
Who hobbled forth with flags and guns!

But though upon his bed he lay,
He kept good faith with soldier's day,

That day, by memory sweetly blest,
Wherein we walk with those at rest,

And homely, old-time music falls
Adown the past's long intervals!

Though he, indeed, on lonely grave
No flowers bestrewed that incense gave,

There's holier' scent, there's sweeter breath
Than flowers may give in life or death,

That lifts the soul above the clod,
And reaches to the soul of God,

And joins with Seraphs' voices there,
And blesses man like answered prayer—

No flowers' perfume may this exceed:
The perfume of a noble deed!

THE TROUBLE WITH JOHNY.

Johnny's sich a little feller—
'Bout as big as I;
Johnny's hair is sandy yellor,
And his laff is soft an' meller,
When he happens by;
But Johnny's got the huppin' cough,
Mamma says 'twill be all off—
Run with him again, I'll die!

THE WORDS OF LINCOLN.

I love the name of Lincoln,
His hist'ry, deeds and life;
I love to note the storm-beat course
He took in that great strife;

But sweeter far than all to me,
Like inspiration given,
His quaint and homely ut'rances,
They soothe like strains from heaven!

"God loved the common people!"
He once was heard to say,
"He made so many of them!"
It seemed to him that way.

"The people always 'wobble' right,"
Again he did declare,
In times of doubt and nation's gloom
This seems response to prayer!

"And all the people you may fool,"
This once was what he said,
"A part the time, a little while,
A **few** until they're dead,

"But you can't fool *all* the people
The whole enduring time,
For by and by they wiser grow!"
This saying is sublime!

Oh, homely prophet of our race,
Thy words akin to prayer,
Go down the swiftly passing years
In benediction rare!

THE ONLY SINNER.

I belong to the church on the corner,
Where the two great thoroughfares meet;
Where the big pipe organ pulses
With the music's lull and beat;
Where the people in silks and satins
Jostle and press in a throng;
But I am the only sinner
In a church six hundred strong!

And the pastor there in the pulpit,
As he looks down the satined aisles,
Sees only the rich and the worldly,
And there he bestows his smiles;
He loves not the poor and the humble,
But worships the great right or wrong,
And I am the only sinner
In a church six hundred strong!

They favor this new-flung preaching,
The idol and creed of the hour;
I stand by the old-time gospel,
To be preached in the Spirit's power;
They are seeking to follow each vag'rie
And fad that may wander along,
And I am the only sinner
In a church six hundred strong!

There are some who are short in virtue;
There are some that are proud and cold;
There are some who are joined to their idols,
As Ephraim was of old;

There are some who to get the dollar
Will do to their neighbor wrong;
Still, I am the only sinner
In a church six hundred strong!

And what is my sin and my sinning,
And what is this wrong they deplore?
It is this: I believe in the Bible,
And, further, am old and poor;
They treat me with scorn, they despise me,
As I press down the aisles along,
For I am the only sinner
In a church six hundred strong!

And I think as I glance down the ages
Of the Savior we worship today,
Who suffered to save a lost kingdom,
And restore who had wandered away;
Who never had done a vile action,
Who never had uttered a wrong,
And he was the only sinner
In a church some millions strong!

The thief said, gazing upon him:
"We suffer for what we have done,
But this just man here between us,
No evil hath wrought 'neath the sun!"
Then, upheld by my Savior's example,
My heart bursts forth into song,
To be thus the only sinner
In a church six hundred strong!

THE BOOKWORM'S BELIEF.

The scientist sat in his study,
And his brow was wrinkled with thought;
His mind was decidedly muddy,
And his soul with a burden fraught;

He thought of the world and its features
Of races of men and of bugs;
And noted some very strange creatures
That modern philosophy hugs;

For it now insists in believing
That the world and its living folk,
Came about by a constant conceiving
Of a substance thinner than smoke.

This nothing beginning gestation—
The result is so strange to tell!
I mention with much hesitation—
It at last brought forth a Cell.

And this Cell in wonderful motion,
New Cells began to throw out,
Till the world was—such is the notion!—
In the progress of time brought about!

The rocks were all held in solution,
And laid down a film in an age;
And man in this time of confusion,
Was nowhere, thus reasoned the sage!

In all the vastness around us
He findeth no traces of Him
Whose kindness and love e'er surround us,
From the center 'way out to the rim!

This rude and implacable muddle,
With no life nor feeling nor thought,
Was thus by a marvelous huddle
Into system and sympathy wrought!

And this is the dream of the Bookworm:
That chaos so dead and inert,
Was pregnant by whom I'm to yet learn,
Bringing forth then the quick and alert!

Ah, well, as for me, let me rather
Believe in a great and wise God,
Than my poor, little cranium bother
Embracing a notion so odd!

TWO WORTHIES QUARREL.

Said Old **Quid pro Quo**
To Old **Nunc pro Tunc**:

"You are much of a fraud,
And all of a skunk;
You never, siree, face the music quite,
But slip into place like a thief in the night!"

"Oh, that's just all right,"

Replied **Nunc pro Tunc**,

"You may call me a fraud,
You may call me a skunk;
But when I slip in, it is I, by Joe,
But when you get caught **you** are **Quid pro Quo**!"

THE MILLIONAIRES' CHURCH.

They tell me there's a church along the coast,
To which, alas! but millionaires belong;
And when a poor man comes to join their host,
They say to him at once: "You're seeking wrong;
Your bank account is too entirely low,
The house in which you live too small;
You may not hope our merry clip to go,
You must not think to trot with us at all!"

Once there was a man became persistent,
And knocked with force upon that gilded door,
And more and more he grew insistent,
It made no odds to him if he were poor.
And then the deacons told him go and pray,
"Perhaps, the Lord a message will impart,
And then you'll know to do a better way,
And seek a field from such as us apart!"

And so he went but soon came back once more;
"Hast thou a message from the Lord?" they said.
And then he told them he had prayed it o'er
With this suggestion from the Fountain Head:
"My son, don't get discouraged but be bold!"
Unto this man the Lord did kindly say:
"For I myself to get into that fold
Have tried and failed for lo, 'tis many a day!"

This o'er true tale may this suggestion yield:
Don't make your churches quite so prank and fine,
With gilded nave and rug and painted shield,
And with the rich and satin-gowned to shine;

For if it all becomes so spic and span
There is no room for honest-handed poor,
You may turn thence the lowly Son of Man,
He may, Himself, be driven from your door!

THE DEFEAT.

We never may know, oh, our Father,
As we travel earth's wearisome ways,
How the rod and the rack and the scaffold
May become sweetest angels of praise;

Nor how through our wonderful Captain,
From the harrowing gloom of defeat,
Are lighted the beacons of glory
That shine down the ages complete!

Had we stood on the brow of old Calv'ry,
And witnessed its awful despair,
We had gone to our homes in the darkness
With neither a hope nor a prayer!

But out from the gloom of that mountain,
Where the nails in our hearts leave their prints,
God has given the boon of salvation,
Truth's rallying point ever since!

Let us trust then this Captain of Ages,
Just the **deed** he requireth of me,
The **results** he most surely will garner
When the earth is no more nor the sea!

IF THERE BE NO CHRIST.

My friend, you say there is no Christ;
You say the sciences reveal
Unto the world this fact!
Why do I turn my back?
That I may conceal the tears
That fill these dim, old eyes!

Long years ago, my precious son
Dropped from the ranks of men;
If there be no Christ, ah, then,
I never more his blessed face shall see
Nor shall he call in tender tones to me
Across the wide abyss of weary years,
If there be no Christ, my friend,
If there be no Christ!

And then, my patient wife, for forty years,
Walked by my stumbling side,
Until one day they said she died;
And as she went away, of Christ she sang—
Oh, those old songs so sweetly rang
From her dear, old faithful lips!
She went to Christ in joy she said,
But if there be no Christ she's dead,
If there be no Christ, my friend,
If there be no Christ!

If there be no Christ, no Christ!
Then what is left for me,
So old and weak and scare can see?
No hope, no life, no resurrection day;
No stores in heaven, where never may

The thief break through nor steal;
Nor shall I hear the sounding peal
Of God's triumphant host!
Oh, the labor that I've lost,
No crown to follow cross,
If there be no Christ, my friend,
If there be no Christ!

I fondly hoped upon some happy shore
I'd meet my loved ones, where forevermore,
We'd dwell together in the crystal light,
Nor ever dread a coming night,
Nor shudder when the winds blew cold
Across the field so bleak and bold!
Ofttimes I'd glance where white and still
I saw the graves my darlings fill;
I chuckled with a faith made bold:
"They're not out in all that cold!"
And oh, the thought was sweet, you know,
But then, of course, it isn't so,
If there be no Christ, my friend,
If there be no Christ!

ASSURANCE.

This is achievement the sweetest
That mortal may learn or may know;
The richest and, aye, the completest
Of successes we gain here below:
To stand with Truth's perfect Assurance
When the ending may come, of our durance!

MY JEANIE AND I.

My Jeanie and I, in the gloaming,
Go strolling out through the town;
She is four and she looks like a fairy
In her bright red cap and gown.

The bulldog that growls in the alley,
The donkey that brays in the yard,
The crumpled-horn cow cannot frighten,
For papa is near her to guard;

The engine, whistling shrilly,
The motor car, thundering past,
These monsters cannot appal her,
Papa's hand's holding hers fast!

And ever she thinks, this adoring
Wee one, with her confident eyes,
That I towering up there beside her,
All-powerful am, and all-wise!

Some day she'll discover, my darling,
This papa so wise and so strong,
Is only a mortal, a weakling,
And more prone than herself to go wrong!

And I ask in my soul this question:
Will she love me then as today,
When she learns that babyhood's idol
Has, alas for me! feet of clay?

And I almost wish I were able
So to slacken Time's eagle-like flight,
That I to my Jeanie might always
Be great as she thinks me tonight!

THE LIBERTY BOND AND THE BOY SCOUT.

The Liberty Bond and the bold boy scout,
Have you taken the pains to reason 'em out?
The one is the life and the wonderful youth
Of a nation that stands for the God-given truth;
The other the sinews that truth to uphold,
And is typified best in the glittering gold;
These two put together all foes may defy
That may gather or march 'neath the azurine sky:
The life and the manhood from near and from far,
And the wealth that e'en giveth the "sinews of war"!

I, too, have a boy who wandered away
When first our great nation had joined in the fray;
His scout hat and blouse are still around home,
But his ship is now plowing the storm-beaten foam;
Out in the darkness and gloom of the night,
It may be to die for the glorious right!

I can hear him again in his confident way
As he said "Good-bye!" to his mother that day;
I can see him again as I toss in my dreams,
The sweet baby-boy, so near it all seems,
And my soul grows sick like a man far from home
For a sight of my boy on the storm-beaten foam,
And I pray with a heart softly tender and fond:
"God bless the Boy Scout and the Liberty Bond!"

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DEFEAT.

I have lain in the dust with the vanquished,
When my banner went down in despair;
And I thought in my woe
That I never might know
The day of Success, oh, how fair!

And yet, when the sun of the morrow
Came forth with his comforting light,
With a new-kindled zeal,
And a heart brave and leal,
I went forth again to the fight!

The world cannot judge of my motive,
Nor love me when thus I have failed,
But, behold, there's an Eye
That can see how I try,
And knows that I never have quailed!

And I think of that glorious heaven,
And of Him sitting high on its throne,
Who will chide not at all,
If we rise or we fall,
So long as right purpose is shown!

Oh, I shall never lie down in the shadow,
Nor crawl in the gloom of defeat,
For the promise is sure,
I shall ever endure,
And shall thus with the vict'ry meet!

A SURPRISING DISCOVERY.

My dear, little girl, in an artless way,
Was combing my hair one happy day;
Now I am her papa, as you should know,
And plump on my head is beginning to show,
A smooth, round spot as bald as a knob—
I keep it concealed, though 'tis much of a job,
By combing my hair in a proper way
And thus appear younger by many a day!

But my dear, little lass, with comb and brush
Discovered the spot, then there came a hush
In her artless talk—her very eyes
Were fixed on the spot in complete surprise,
Now, still are the comb and the brush in her hands,
For this strange thing seen her mind commands;
At last, she cries in my very ear:
"Oh, papa, papa, look here, come here!"

JUST A PLAIN ONE.

When you know a man's a donkey,
Will you go and say he's wise?
When you know a town is "flunkey,"
Will you praise it to the skies?
When you know a woman's homely,
Will you say her looks inspire?
If you will, why, you are only
Just a plain and common liar!

THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM.

The Lord my gracious shepherd is,
No want shall e'er I know;
For He shall make me down to lie,
In green and fruitful pastures by
The quiet water's flow!

My soul He buildeth up once more
That was cast down by sin;
And into paths of righteousness
For his name's sake, my soul to bless,
He leads His servant in!

And though I pace with stumbling step
The valley dark and drear,
Where shades of death around me cling,
Since Thou art nigh, I'll shout and sing,
No evil will I fear!

Thy rod and staff, they comfort me,
They give my soul great joy;
I feast me, Lord, on viands rare,
At Thy great table, such Thy care,
Nor shall my foes annoy!

Upon my head thine oil is poured;
My full cup runneth o'er;
Thy loving kindness shall endure—
Thy goodness to my soul is sure,
Till life shall be no more!

And since through all my journey here
Thy mercy shall abide,
I'll run with haste to make my home,
In Thy loved house, nor longer roam,
And there fore'er reside!

A PROBLEM IN HEREDITY.

Lily White is a kitten as white as the snow;
Smutty Black is a kitten as black as a crow;
Their papa is brindle,
Their mamma maltese;
Now, how could such parents
Have children like these?
No mortal could answer a question so hard,
But these cats and their kittens are now in our yard!

TOIL.

No rest can be sweet without labor—
"No, no, toil's a demon," you say;
But 'tis he alone that can sweeten
Repose at the end of the day!

CONTRAST.

The sunshine is never so comely
As when shining just after a storm,
Nor shelter from danger so precious
As when we are snatched from great harm!

THE DREAMS OF LONG AGO.

I sit me here beneath a tree,
Where soft winds idly blow,
And dreams of youth return to me,
The dreams of long ago;
These scenes around me 'waken
Such thoughts I cannot tell,
And back my soul is taken
By memory's magic spell!

I cannot tell how sweet to me
These visions that are given;
I only know again I see
Loved faces long in heaven;
And with those faces beaming fair
Once more I'm young and strong,
And mother with her silver hair
I see among the throng!

Oh, could I tell how sweet, how clear
These dreams from far off time
Again in mental sight appear
How you would love my rhyme!

THE RARE, OLD ARTIST.

The sun is the rarest of artists,
And a painter of views very fine,
He limns with the hues of the rainbow,
And touches with shimmer and shine;

He builds you great castles, cathedrals,
Of diamonds and gold, if you will,
The loftiest, sky-reaching mountain,
The loveliest, crystalline hill.

He don't need to have a foundation,
He builds them, oh, ever so high,
So wide and so massive in structure,
And he hangs them right there in the sky!

He don't need a paint brush or palette,
Or tablets of colors so fine;
But kisses each tower when he makes it,
And you just ought to see how 'twill shine!

I should love just to own such a castle
As I witnessed one evening last June;
It was wonderful, 'way beyond telling,
More beautiful far than the moon;

For the moon, she can only wear silver;
My castle, 'twas purple and gold,
And diamonds and blazing red rubies,
And jewels of richness untold!

And I told Uncle Ned as I stood there,
And drank in the ravishing scene,
I should like some day in the future,
To own such a priceless demesne!

And Uncle Ned said to me: "May be,—
We're told of a land fair to view,
Where mansions are built for good children,
May be one is there building for you!"

STAYIN' IN A FLAT.

They's some folks think they're livin'
When they're **stayin'** in a flat,
With the walls all frescoed purty,
An' the closets clean and pat;

An' the floors air 'iled an' shinin',
An' they's water in the sink,
An' if you'd turn some garbage in,
It wouldn't make a stink!

Where you never have to climb the stairs,
Jist take the elevator,
Nor have to hoe the garden truck,
Nor dig a sweet pertater!

Where you do your fishin' every day,
But not in lake or brook,
An' ketch the finest lot of fish
With jist a **silver hook!**

Where you have a landlord pokin' round,
With stately step an' slow,
An' if you have a child or two,
Like's not you've got to go!

No "Stromboli" or "Richelieu"
Has any charms for me,
For I love God's sweet, old country,
And I want to feel I'm free!

I love to see the settin' sun
That paints in radiant gold
The evening clouds so beautiful
As tents of night unfold!

I love to walk in summer eves
Quaint rural ways along,
And hear in far-off, distant field
The plowman's homeward song!

Oh, I'd rather live 'way down the lane,
Where woods surround the scene,
Than in some tidy, high-toned flat
With blistering streets between!

THE DOCTOR AND THE DENTIST.

The doctor was a wealthy man,
His business was prodigious;
He served the Devil fifty years,
And then became religious;
He asked the dentist 'bout **his** soul,
And **he** replied in accents droll:

"I'm thirty now", he said and grinned,
"I've twenty yet to play on,
I'll drink and swear as you have done,
Then this new role I'll lay on;
I'll go to church and shout and sing,
And gain a crown and angel wing!"

The doctor shuddered then and said:
"The past comes up to haunt me;
When e'er I seek to do good deeds,
'Tis thus they ever flaunt me;
The Devil builds a damning station
Of our past lives against salvation!"

THE END.