

The Post's Page.

FIVE DOLLARS

Will be given each Week for the Best Piece of Poetry Suitable for Publication in This Page.

In order that we may secure for our Poetry Page the very best productions, and as an incentive to increased interest in this department of TRUTH, we will give each week a prize of FIVE (\$5) DOLLARS to the person sending us the best piece of poetry, either selected or original. No conditions are attached to the offer whatever. Any reader of TRUTH may compete. No money is required, and the prize will be awarded to the sender of the best poem, irrespective of person or place. Address, "Editor Post's Page, TRUTH Office, Toronto, Canada." Be sure to note carefully the above address, as contributions for this page not so addressed will be liable to be overlooked. Anyone can compete, as a selection, possessing the necessary merit, will stand equally as good a chance of securing the prize as anything original. Let our readers show their appreciation of this liberal offer by a good lively competition each week.

THE AWARD.

The following touching poem, sent by Miss Mary McNeil, St. Thomas, Ont., has been awarded the prize for this week.

Guilty or not Guilty.

She stood at the bar of justice,
A creature wan and wild;
In form too small for a woman,
In features too old for a child;
For a look so worn and pathetic
Was stamped on her pale young face,
It seemed long years of suffering
Must have left that silent trace.

"Your name," said the judge as he eyed her,
With kindly look, yet keen.
"Is" "Mary McGuire, if you please, sir."
"And your age?" "I am turned fifteen."
"Well, Mary," and then from a paper
He slowly and gravely read:
"You're charged here, I am sorry to say it,
With stealing three loaves of bread."

"You look not like an offender,
And I hope that you can show
The charge to be false. Now, tell me,
Are you guilty of this, or no?"
A passionate burst of weeping
Was at first the sole reply,
But she dried her eyes in a moment,
And looked in the judge's eye.

"I will tell you how it was, sir;
My father and mother are dead,
And my little brothers and sisters
Were hungry and asked me for bread.
At first I earned it for them
By working hard all day,
But somehow times were hard, sir,
And the work all fell away."

"I could get no more employment,
The weather was bitter cold,
The young ones cried and shivered—
(Little Johnny's but four years old)—
So what was I to do, sir?
I am guilty, but do not condemn,
I took—oh, was it stealing?—
The bread to give to them."

Every man in the court room—
Gray bearded and thoughtful youth—
Knew as he looked upon her,
That the prisoner spoke the truth.
Out from their pockets came kerchiefs,
Out from their eyes sprang tears,
And out from old faded wallets,
Treasures hoarded for years.

The judge's face was a study—
The strangest you ever saw.
And he cleared his throat and murmured
Something about the law;
For one so learned in such matters—
So wise in dealing with men,
He seemed on a single question,
Sorely puzzled just then.

But no one blamed him or wondered,
When at last these words they heard
"The sentence of this young prisoner
Is, for the present, deferred!"
And no one blamed him or wondered,
When he went to her and smiled,
And tenderly led from the court room
Mary, the "guilty" child.

St. Thomas, Ont. MISS MARY MCNEIL.

The Three Little Chairs.

They sat alone by the bright wood fire
The gray-haired dame and aged sire,
Dreaming of days gone by;
The dear-drops fell on each wrinkled cheek,
They both had thoughts they could not speak,
And each heart uttered a sigh.

For their sad and tearful eyes described
Three little chairs placed side by side
Against the sitting-room wall;
Old-fashioned enough as there they stood—
Their seats of flag and their frames of wood,
With their backs so high and tall.

Then the sire shook his silvery head,
And with trembling voice he gently said:
"Mother, these empty chairs,
They bring us such sad thoughts to-night,
We'll put them forever out of sight
In the small dark room upstairs."

But she answered, "Father, not yet,
For I look at them, and I forget
That the children are away;
The boys come back, and our Mary, too,
With her apron of checkered blue,
And sit here every day."

"Johnny comes back from the billows deep;
Willie wakes from his battle field sleep
To say good-night to me;
Mary's a wife and mother no more,
But a tired child whose playtime is o'er,
And comes to rest at my knee."

"So, let them stand there, though empty now,
And every time when alone we bow
At the Father's throne to pray,
We'll ask to meet the children above,
In our Father's home of rest and love,
Where no child goeth away."

East Gloucester, Mass. MISS EVA NILES.

Say a Kind Word When You Can.

What were life without some one to cheer us
With a word or a smile on our way;
A friend who is faithfully near us,
And needs not what others may say;
The bravest of spirits have often
Half failed in the race that they ran,
For a kind word life's hardships to soften;
So say a kind word when you can.

Each one of us owns to some falling,
Though some may have more than the rest;
There's no good in needlessly railing
Against those who are striving their best.
Remember, a word spoke complaining
May blight every effort and plan;
A kind word would help in attaining;
So say a kind word when you can.

Oh! say a kind word, then, whenever
'Twill make the heart cheerful and glad;
But chiefly—forget it, oh! never—
To one who is hopeless and sad.
There's no word so easy in saying,
So begin, if you have not begun;
Oh! I never in life be delaying
To say a kind word when you can.

A Cry from an Indian Wife.

My Forest Brave, my Red skin love—farewell;
We may not meet to-morrow—who can tell
What mighty ill befall our little band,
Or what you'll suffer from the white man's hand?
Here's your knife. I thought 'twas sheathed for aye,
No roaming bison calls for to-day;
No hide of prairie cattle will it maim—
The plains are bare—seek a nobler game;
'Twill drink the life-blood of a soldier host.
Go—live and strike—no matter what the cost.
Yet stay. Revolt not at the Union Jack,
Nor take revenge upon this strippling pack
Of white faced warriors, marching west to quell
Our fallen tribe that rises to rebel.
They all are young, and beautiful, and good;
Ours to the war that spills their harmless blood.
Curse to the fate that brought them from the east
To be our chiefs—to make our nation least.
That breathes the air of this vast continent.
Still, their new rule and council is well meant.
They but forget we Indians owned the land
From ocean unto ocean; that they stand
Upon a soil that centuries ago
Was our sole kingdom, and our right alone.
They never think how they would feel to-day,
If some great nation came from far away,
Wrestling the country from their hapless braves,
Giving what they gave us—but wars and graves.
Then go, and strike for liberty and life,
And bring back honour to your Indian wife.
Your wife? Ah, what of that—who cares for me?
Who pities my poor love and agony?
What white-robed priest prays for your safety here
As prayer is said for every volunteer
That swells the ranks that Canada sends out?
Who prays for victory for the Indian scout
Who prays for our poor nation lying low?
None—therefore take your tomahawk and go.
My heart may break and burn unto its core,
Yet I am strong to bid you go to war.
But stay. My heart is not the only one
That grieves the loss of husband and of son.
Think of the mothers o'er the inland seas;
Think of the pale-faced maiden on her knees;
One pleads her God to guard some sweet-faced child
That marched on toward the North-West wild.
The other prays to shield her youth from harm,
To strengthen his young, proud uplifted arm.
Ah, how her white face quivers thus to think
Your tomahawk his life's best blood will drink.
She never thinks of my wild, aching breast,
Nor dreams of your dark face and eagle crest
Endangered by a thousand rifle balls.
My heart the target—"my warrior falls."
O I coward self—I hesitate no more.
Go forth—and win the glories of the war.

O I heart o'ertraught—O I nation lying low—
God, and fair Canada have willed it so.

Platon, Ont. PERRY WHELOCK.

"Let Sleeping Dogs Lie."

Old England's sons are English yet,
Old England's heart is strong;
And still she wears the coronet,
Aflame with sword and song.
As in their pride our fathers died,
If need be, so will we;
And wield we still, gallant who will,
The sceptre of the sea.
England, stand fast! let heart and hand be steady;
Be thy first word thy last—Ready, aye ready!

Some say we've made of trade our king,
Some say our blood is cold;
That from our lips no longer ring
The trumpet notes of old.
With gibe and jest they gather near
The sleeping lion's den;
O Tuckon fair, O Angus beware
Of these "shopkeeping" men.
England, stand fast! let heart and hand be steady;
Be thy first word thy last—Ready, aye ready!

We've Raleighs still for Raleigh's part,
We've Nelsons yet unknown;
The pulses of the Lion-heart
Beat on through Wellington.
Hold, Brisson, hold thy creed of old—
Strong foe and steadfast friend;
And still unto thy motto true,
Duty not, but defend!
England, stand fast! let heart and hand be steady;
Be thy first word thy last—Ready, aye ready!

Faint not, nor fall, ye sons of those
The bravest born of men;
Our nearest friends may be our foes
When turns the wheel again.
The while we pray, in Heaven's good day,
The reign of saints may come,
Until the dawn, with weapons drawn,
We wait the tuck of drum!
England, stand fast! let heart and hand be steady;
Be thy first word thy last—Ready, aye ready!
Martingham, Que. M. HIGGINSON.

He Doeth All Things Well.

I remember how I loved her, when a little guileless
child,
I saw her in the cradle as she looked on me and
smiled,
My cup of happiness was full, my joy no tongue can
tell,
And I blessed the Glorious Giver, He doeth all things
well.

Months passed. That bud of promise was unfolded
hour by hour;
I thought that earth had never smiled upon a fairer
flower,
So beautiful it well might grace the bower where an-
gels dwell,
And wait its fragrance to His throne, who doeth all
things well.

Years passed, that little sister was as dear as life to
me,
And woke in my unconscious heart, a wild idola-
try.
I worshipped at an earthly shrine, lured by some magic
spell,
Forgetful of the praise of Him, who doeth all things
well.

Here was the beautiful star that round my pathway
shone,
Amid the darkness vale of tears, through which we
journey on,
Its radiance obscured the light, which round His
throne doth dwell,
And I wandered far away from Him, who doeth all
things well.

That star went down in beauty; but it shineth sweet-
ly now,
In a bright and dazzling coronet that decks the
Saviour's brow;
She bowed to the Destroyer, who shafts none may
repel,
But we know, for God hath told us, He doeth all
things well.

I remember well my sorrow, as I stood beside her
bed,
Of my deep and heartfelt anguish when they told me
she was dead,
And oh! that cup of bitterness, let not my heart re-
bel—
God gave, He took, He will restore; He doeth all
things well!

—For Truth.

Legend of the River Clouds.

BY HARRIET ANN WILKINS.

Once in far-off ancient times,
Odin went through many olmes:
Sons and daughters walked with him,
Tracked the shadowy forests dim
All the day and all the night
Till they reached the long-sought height,
Where the Rainbow Bridge is spanned,
Only guide to life's best land.

Odin unto Helmdale came—
"Warder of the mystic flame,
I am Odin, ope thy gate,
As I do, we watch and wait.
We must drink of Urda's stream,
Life immortal is no dream;
Let my children, one and all,
Drink, and fear not Death's cold thrall."

Helmdale then the bolts unbent,
"Hold," cried he, "the youngest first."
So they passed on, one by one,
Till Ving-Thor, the eldest son,
Placed his foot upon the track,
Then the Warder drew him back.
"Ving, the strong, the brave, the free,
Rainbow Bridge is not for thee."

Then Ving's fair brow, flushed with wrath—
"Why am I forbid this path?
Why dost thou keep back from me
Draughts of immortality?"
"Ving, I know thee, look aside
At the river clouds so wide,
Krampt and Ermt can lead on to
Where Life's waters flow for you."

Then a flash of passion flew
From Ving's eyes of azure hue,
And in a muttered wrath he said,
"Why must I thus bow my head
To the storm, and cloud, and night?
Loose each scale of love and light,
Lose sweet Allin, loved and fair,
For she cannot follow there."

Odin spoke: "My son of strength,
Linger not for thou art length,
Shall the founts of Urda gale,
Then what matter cross or pain?"
Ving turned from the rainbow shrouds,
Plunged deep in the river clouds;
Yet he felt his feet had hold
Down beneath the waters cold.

Through the dashing of the spray
Softly gleamed the moon's bright ray,
And so, oft to his surprise,
Flashed sweet Allin's loving eyes.
When he seemed almost a wreck,
Her soft arms were round his neck;
When Hope's fires were smouldering low,
Her warm lips were on his brow.

Ving, the mighty, held his way,
Battling with the storm and spray;
Learning Krampt and Ermt to do on,
Where the horse of old have gone.
And Ving-Thor, the kind, the strong,
Found that he was chosen long
First of Odin's sons to drink
At the immortal river's brink.

This the legend: brother dear,
Is thy path mid waters drear?
For thy feet no rainbow arch?
Through the river clouds thy march?
Learn to suffer and be strong,
Heaven will help the right are long.
Krampt and Ermt shall lead thee, too,
Where Life's waters flow for you.

64 Main St., Hamilton.

—For Truth.

The Lily and the Sunbeam.

BY MRS. W. Y. BRUNTON.

Where the clear lake revealed its silvery crest,
While moonbeams glittered o'er its azure breast,
A graceful lily reared her fragile head,
Breathing sweet odours from her mossy bed;
Her petal leaves drooped o'er the starlit wave,
Seeming to woo the trembling beam it gave,
But never could the placid lake's cold kiss,
Thrill the bright lily queen with thoughts of bliss,
Nor could the fragrant breeze one sigh impart,
Whose gentle waft might move her frozen heart.
On her white breast the dew drops seemed to shine,
Like gifts of homage laid at beauty's shrine.
But who would linger o'er this weary life,
'Mid all its many scenes of pain and strife,
Without one gleam of love, one cherished form,
To feed the thoughts, and cling to 'mid the storm,
Thus, tho' the virgin lily blossomed alone,
While suitors gathered round her moonlit throne,
Still, she had dreamed of some understanding life,
Some soft mysterious link of sympathy.
The sunbeam, glided the gilded wave,
A sea-god bursting from his ocean cave;
Proudly he flung his rays o'er hill and vale,
The fading stars retired, all dim and pale;
One wand'ring sunbeam sought the lily's bower,
Kissing the petals of the stately flower,
Glowing with light and beauty from above,
He warmed her frozen heart to life and love.
And now no longer pensive and awake,
The lily drooped upon the glassy lake,
But fondly turning where the sunbeam lay;
Her fragrant soul seemed mingled with the ray,
When, lo! a threatening storm rose wild and high,
Dark lurid clouds obscured the radiant sky,
The sudden tempest sweeping o'er the vale,
Bore desolation in the howling gale;
The faithful lily, shattered by the fray,
Still sought with wistful glance the fleeting ray,
That faint and misty, scarcely pierced the cloud,
Whose saviour vapour strove its light to shroud,
'Till the rude whirlwind quenched the flickering
beam.

Like the last faint remembrance of a dream,
Then the bruised lily breathed one sorrowing sigh,
Closed her crushed leaves and bowed herself to die.
Even so with woman, 'midst affliction's storm,
Her love still lingers round the cherished form;
In joy and sunshine, misery and grief,
Her smile revives, her hand still gives relief,
And when death's angel summons him away
To brighter regions of everlasting day,
Then, like the lily, when the beam grew dim,
She bows her head, and meekly dies for him.

—For Truth.

In the Street.

MRS. M. A. MATTLAND, STRATFORD, ONT.

She was swinging on a railing,
Iron railing in "The Square,"
And she sucked the mellow orange
With a gusto that was rare;
When a greedy little Arab
With a keen and business eye,
Spied the treat and heard the sucking
As he passed the maiden by.

Then his eyes grew wide and wider,
And his thin lips spread apart,
As he watched her draw the nectar
From the pulpy yellow heart;
And he shuffled in his brogans
To a nearer, choicer spot,
Where he looked the very picture
Of the puppy in "Too Hot!"

All unconscious of her watcher
Swung the maiden to and fro;
Sucked and swung in idle languor,
Till she heard a cough below;
Then she stared in blue-eyed wonder
As she heard the gamin say—
"Hain't got nuthin' scrumptious, Heister,
And my mammy's dead to-day!"

Quick, she bounded to the pavement,
And, without a single quail,
Thrust her precious shrunken treasure
In his little dirty palm;
On the curbstone then together
Sat the pair in silence down,
While Miss Heister searched the pocket
In her thin and tattered gown.

From its depths came pippin parings—
Quite a goodly little store,
Half a biscuit, and a bull's-eye
That had service seen before;
Then her grimy face grew radiant
As she passed her gifts to Joe,
And the hungry orphan Arab
For a time forgot his woe.