

"Of course not. But why do you ask?"

"Well—I was only thinking. But how many do learn Greek?"

"Perhaps 20,000, according to the Encyclopædia."

"And how many learn English?"

"About 100,000,000."

"And how many 20,000 are there in 100,000,000?"

"About 5,000, of course. But what of that?"

"Is not that the same as if every one in a town larger than Pictou should be compelled to spend his time in learning English words with Greek spelling, so that one boy should have the pleasure of seeing, when he comes to study Greek, that some of the English words he learned were spelled pretty much, though not exactly, like Greek?"

"You had better hold your tongue, Jim, you are a dangerous boy—to dare to question the proper way of spelling words, which I have, by dint of careful labor for years, become almost perfect in; in which I have attained more excellence than in any other subject. You conceited, radical little scamp!—keep mum, and spell *Phthisic*."

MAKING THE BEST OF IT.

IN CONCERT.

Upon the shore of life we stand
And watch the years fast glide away;
Beneath the touch of Time's stern hand
Art slowly crumbles to decay.
How short our days, how few our years,
A little while of light and gloom;
We laugh with joy, we moan with tears,
And friends consign us to the tomb;
O, make the best of it!

FIRST BOY.

While merrily the blacksmith sings,
His hammer on the anvil rings;
The marks of honest toil he bears,
The clothes are soiled and patched he wears;
What, though his face with smut and smoke
Be darkly stained, his soul is free,
And at his labor, stroke by stroke,
He hammers out his destiny;
He makes the best of it.

SECOND BOY.

The sun-browned farmer guides his plow,
Or swings his scythe in meadows fair;
The sweat is dripping from his brow,
His face is seamed with lines of care;
And yet, beneath his plain attire,
A noble heart beats true and warm.
He has enough for food and fire,
A home to shield him from the storm;
He makes the best of it.

THIRD BOY

The merchant in his counting room,
With anxious mind and face of gloom,
Sits deeply brooding o'er his schemes,
Or lost in speculative dreams.
He is a man of wealth and power,
For fortune favors him to-day;
A crash may come at any hour
And sweep his worldly gains away;
He makes the best of it.

FOURTH BOY.

With patient toil the lawyer delves
Through the dry volumes on his shelves;
Looks up his points in the reports,
Makes out his briefs, attends the courts;
He wins his laurels at the bar,
And clients come from near and far;
He goes to congress full of fame,
And sometimes wins an honored name;
And makes the best of it.

FIFTH BOY.

With pills and plasters in his hand
And spectacles upon his nose,
The doctor comes with visage bland,
To comfort all our worldly woes.
Up at all hours at night and day
To mount his steed and fly away,
He hurries to the couch of pain
Through mud and dust, through snow and rain;
He makes the best of it.

SIXTH BOY.

Within his den, with lofty air,
Tipped back in his old easy chair,
The heartless editor we find,
With frowning face and pensive mind;
He runs his fingers through his hair,
Then slyly takes a dram,
Writes some sensational affair
Or coins a "special telegram,"
And makes the best of it.

SEVENTH BOY.

His heart to God, his thoughts to man,
The pastor gives from day to day.
To boldly preach the Christian plan
That mortals may not go astray.
If he but works with conscience clear,
With willing mind and ready hand;
If he is honest and sincere,
His soul may reach the better land
He makes the best of it.

EIGHTH BOY.

The dandy comes, too vain to toil,
To forge the steel or till the soil;
Too lazy in life's harvest field
To reap the fruit that work will yield.
He looks around with cautious pains
And weds an heiress, void of brains,
Her father's hoarded wealth he shares,
They live in style and puts on airs,
And make the best of it.

FIRST GIRL.

The sweet young girl of seventeen
Sits in a soft upholstered chair
And reads the latest magazine;
With bangs of frizzes in her hair
She is the belle of all the town;
She wears a Mother Hubbard gown;
Too proud her pretty hands to soil,
She lets her mother scrub and toil,
And make the best of it.

SECOND GIRL.

An old maid sits before the fire
And sees the last faint sparks expire;
Her faith is gone, and lines of care
Have marred her features once so fair;
With hopeless heart and anxious look
She longs to find a nestling nook;
Her early suitors all are gone,
Dream on, old maid, alone dream on,
And make the best of it.

THIRD GIRL.

The good wife in the kitchen stands
With flour and pie-crust on her hands;
The floors are clean, the tinware bright,
The windows clear, the walls are white;
Her heart is light, her face is sweet,
Her eyes are bright, her home is neat;
Her daughter, rosy-cheeked and fair,
Are early taught to help her there
To make the best of it.