

## A PLEA FOR THE CHILDREN'S FAIRY LORE.

Why are the children glad with glowing faces  
To gather round us in the Christmas night,  
And talk with gleesome hearts of verdant places,  
Or dreamy reveries in the summer light?

Ah! they remember yet old tales we told them  
In flowery meads, of fairies long ago,  
Of fays and tiny elfin barks to hold them  
Quick dancing, seaward, on the brooklet's flow.

Anew the young and fresh imagination  
Finds trace of elfish presence everywhere,  
And peoples with a sweet and bright creation  
The clear blue chambers of the sunny air.

Anew the gate of many a fairy palace  
Opes to the ringing bugle of the bee,  
And every flower-cup is a golden chalice,  
Wine-filled, in some grand elfin revelry.

Quaint little eyes from grassy nooks are peering;  
Each dewy leaf is rich in magic lore;  
The foam bells, down the merry streamlet steering,  
Are fairy-frighted to some happier shore.

Stern theorists, with wisdom overreaching  
The aim of wisdom, in your precepts cold,  
And with a painful stress of callous teaching,  
That withers the young heart into the old,

What is the gain if all their flowers were perished,  
Their vision-fields forever shorn and bare,  
The mirror shattered that their young faith cherished,  
Showing the face of things so very fair?

Time hath enough of ills to undeceive them,  
And cares will crowd where dreams have dwelt before;  
Oh, therefore, while the heart is trusting, leave them  
Their happy childhood and their fairy lore!

Berlin.

J. K.

## A LITTLE DOMESTIC DIFFICULTY.

Theodora Clyde was in serious trouble, and, as is sometimes the case with women's troubles, a man was at the bottom of it. She was deeply in love—upon this fact hinged all her mental disturbance. But the object of this affection was her own husband, which, of course, as a wholly unromantic condition of affairs, makes a very poor beginning of a love story.

Less than two years ago, before she became Mrs. Clyde, she had been accounted one of the least attractive of young girls in Montreal. Pale, pedantic, puritanic, she had few admirers and no lovers. It is difficult to love a piece of ice, no matter how transparent in coloring, nor how exquisitely shaped. There is a manner which says as plainly as words, "Approach me at your peril!" and Theodora Lent possessed this manner in perfection. How she ever came to marry Jack Clyde was a mystery none of her friends attempted to unravel. Perhaps, as Mrs. Lyle, Jack's sister, rather hyperbolically observed, "the ice melted so fast under the warmth of his affection that it made a perfect flood, and swept her clean off her intellectual feet." Jack was as common as daylight, and just as welcome. He radiated a perpetual atmosphere of gladness and goodwill. He was a little rough and very slangy, but, with all his ease and freedom, he cherished a secret and lofty ideal of womanhood. The first time he met Miss Lent she wore a handful of violets on her proud little shoulder. Bending to inhale their odor, with the graceful familiarity that made him so popular with other ladies, he was surprised to see her withdraw herself very entirely,

not with any airs of affronted majesty, but with decided aversion. Jack was secretly chagrined at the open repulse. In his reiterated attempts to win some signs of approval, he fell deeply in love with her, and it is to be supposed that he won her upon the principle that constant dripping wears away the stone.

"But mark my words," said Mrs. Lyle to her brother, shortly before the wedding, "Theo does not love you. What she loves is the sensation of being loved, and she knows she isn't likely to receive that from any other man."

Jack was annoyed, but he would not gratify his sister by any exhibition of this feeling. "Flora, my child," he said, "I wouldn't advise you to go in quite so heavily for these metaphysical and abstract speculations. They are unsuited to a person of your delicate mental calibre. Now Theo is better qualified to tackle them."

"You'll find that Theo will not be apt to tackle things. She'll object to this, and won't like that, and will be down on the other, either because it is sinful and vulgar, or else because it is vulgar and sinful."

"In that case," said Jack, "your conversation will have no charms for her."

"My object," replied the lady calmly, "is not so much to please as to instruct."

For answer she received an inarticulate growl, in which an uncomplimentary reference to herself was alone distinguishable, and, of course, the result of this discussion was to make Jack more than ever determined to marry the subject of it.

So they were married in haste, and now they had leisure enough, and perhaps reason enough for repentance. It is possible that neither Mr. nor Mrs. Clyde was a very easy person to "get along with." Jack was fond of a good dinner, and good company, and plenty of both. Theo was more interested in ideas than in people, and took rather an egotistic pleasure in the society of her own thoughts. On some occasions, as the evening on which this story opens, their house was filled with invited guests, but the youthful hostess viewed the prospect with feelings which partook more of the nature of resignation than of delight. It was all for Jack's sake. But at the last moment, Jack ran across an old literary acquaintance whom he did not specially care for, but whom he invited for Theo's sake. This was Philip Ellery, a man with tired eyes and very agreeable manners, who devoted himself almost entirely to his pretty hostess. He discovered that she was a devout lover of poetry, and he listened gravely when she fell to berating the stolidity of the Canadian imagination, and questioned if there were such a being as a Canadian poet. For answer he quoted:

"Blow, summer breeze, wild fragrance bearing,  
Take with thee every sweetest thought to her to night:  
Blow softly, wake her not, her face is wearing  
A smile whose presence makes her chamber seem more bright."

Theo's fair eye's were luminous with pleasure. "Exquisite!" she exclaimed. "Please prove me in the wrong again."

"And youth forgot its passions,  
And age forgot its woe,  
And life forgot that there was death  
Before such music's flow."

"Now where is your stolid Canadian imagination!"

"I have nothing more to say," replied Theo.

"What a calamity! Then I am sorry I quoted anything."

"I am glad. There is so little poetry in our lives. Don't you think that we—all of us—have rather a stupid time of it on this earth? Slow and sordid and half blind we grope about in the darkness of every day life, until, like a flash of lightning, a poem, or picture, or strain of music suddenly illuminates the sky, and, for one divine moment, we vividly realize that the world is beautiful, the soul is immortal, and that heaven broods over us perpetually."

Across the room, from a group of young people in the corner, came Jack's loud, cheerful voice: "Well, you just bet I had a