

The Poet'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 Poet'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.

SPECIAL OFFER.

The publisher of TRUTH will give a special prize of ten dollars for the best original poem for "Dominion Day" (July 1st). The contributions are not to exceed 100 lines each, and to be sent in, addressed to Publisher of TRUTH, not later than June 15th.

THE AWARD.

The following touching poem sent by Miss Ella Brock, Bloomfield, Ont., is awarded the prize this week, and \$5 will be paid on application to TRUTH office.

My Lambs.

I loved them so,
That, when the Elder Shepherd of the fold
Came, covered with the storm, and pale and cold,
And begged for one of my sweet lambs to hold,
I bade him go.

He claimed the pet—
A little, fondling thing that to my breast
Clung always, either in quiet or unrest—
I thought of all my lambs I loved him best;
And yet, and yet

I laid him down
In those white shrouded arms with bitter tears,
For some voice told me that, in after years,
He should know naught of passion, grief or fear
As I had known.

And yet again
That Elder Shepherd came. My heart grew faint.
He claimed another lamb, with sadder plaint;
Another! She who, gentle as a saint,
Ne'er gave me pain.

At last I turned away!
There sat she, lovely as an angel's dream,
Her golden locks with sunlight all agleam,
Her holy eyes with heaven in their beam,
I knelt to pray.

"Is it thy will?
My Father, say, must this pet lamb be given?
Oh, Thou hast many such, dear Lord, in Heaven!"
And a soft voice said, "Nobly hast thou striven;
But—peace, be still."

Oh! how I wept,
And clasped her to my bosom with a wild
And yearning love—my lamb, my pleasant child?
Her, too, I gave. The little angel smiled,
And slept.

"Go! go!" I cried;
For once again that Shepherd laid his hand
Upon the noblest of our household band,
Like a pale specter there he took his stand
Close to his side.

And yet how wondrous sweet
The look with which he heard my passionate cry,
"Touch not my lamb; for him, oh, let me die!"
"A little while," he said, with smile and sigh,
"Again to meet."

Hopeless I fell;
And when I rose, the light had burned so low,
So faint I could not see my darling go;
He had not bidden me farewell, but oh;
I felt farewell.

More deeply, far,
Than if my arms had compassed that slight frame;
Though, could I but have heard him call my name,
"Dear mother!" but in Heaven 'twill be the same;
There burns my star.

No tears! no tears!
Will there a day come that I shall not weep?
For I bade my pillow in my sleep,
Yes, yes, thank God! no grief that time shall keep;
No weary years.

Ah! it is well;
Well with my lambs, and with their earthly guide.
There, pleasant rivers wander they beside,
Or strike sweet harp upon its silver tide—
Ah! it is well!

Through the dreary day
They often come from glorious light to me;
I cannot feel their touch, their faces see,
Yet my soul whispers they do come to me,
Heaven is not far away.

—For Truth.

Speak Gently.

BY LAURA S. MILLER.

Speak gently: it is better far
To rule by love than fear,
Speak gently: let no harsh words mar
The good we might do here.

I.

Speak gently: live doth whisper low
The vows that true hearts bind;
And gently friendship's accents flow,
Affection's voice is kind.

II.

Speak gently to the little child,
Its love be sure to gain;
Teach it in accents soft and mild,
It may not long remain.

III.

Speak gently to the young; for they
Will have enough to bear;
Pass through this life as best we may,
'Tis full of anxious care.

IV.

Speak gently to the aged one,
Grieve not the careless heart;
The sands of life are nearly run,
Let such in peace depart.

V.

Speak gently: kindly to the poor;
Let no harsh tone be heard;
They have enough they must endure,
Without an unkind word.

VI.

Speak gently to the erring; know
They must have sinned in vain;
Perchance unkindness made them so,
O! win them back again.

VII.

Speak gently: He who gave His life,
To bend man's stubborn will,
When elements were fierce with strife,
Said to them, "Peace! be still."

VIII.

Speak gently: 'tis a little thing
Dropped in the heart's deep well;
The good, the joy which it may bring,
Eternity shall tell.

A LESSON.

BY SUSAN M. DAY.

Three children to their mother's side had pressed,
And eager voices made their loud acclaim,
Conflicting prayers, imperious request,
Wide differing tastes, that could not be the same.

I marked with wonder, how with patience wise,
Untroubled brow, and loving, gentle smile,
She hears each one, to each she soft replies,
And all their varying wants does reconcile.

One wish she grants, another must deny,
Yet gives the pleader something in its place;
Loves all alike, sees with impartial eye,
And measures gifts to meet each suitor's case.

And thus, when once you said to me, dear friend,
That you believed in God, but not that He
To individual prayers his ear would bend,
Since oft conflicting men's desires must be—

I thought of this sweet mother, and her plan,
How she the children's wants did satisfy,
And learned how God's far wider wisdom can
Most loving grant, and tenderly deny!

Spring Triumphant.

I.

A long farewell to winter,
With all her savage train,
The rattling hail, the driving sleet,
And the howling hurricane;
Spring waves around her magic wand,
And lo! how changed the scene;
The Heaven is bright, the air is bland,
And the earth again is green.

II.

Look forth, ye smiling blossoms,
And greet the wild bees hum;
Awake, ye birds, to love and song,
Your jubilee is come!
Bound on, bound on, thou merry brook,
Nor fear that frosty crone,
Who lately turned her parting look,
And chilled thee into stone.

The Drummer's Baby.

BY HALL REID, IN "CINCINNATI DRUMMER."

He sat in the end of a parlor car,
With his hat pushed back in a careless way,
Thinking, and smoking a good cigar,
On the fast mail train the other day.
When, like a sunbeam, a happy smile
Lit up the lines of his handsome face.
(He knew I'd been watching him quite a while)
And said: "I live at the very next place."
"I was thinking just then of my little girl,
I've been on this trip some time and I'm glad
That I'm going to see my pet, little pearl;
Oh! my, how she'll laugh when she sees her dad."
"Why she?"—Good God! 'twas a terrible crash
That our car then made as she jumped the track.
It threw him against the door like a flash,
Crushing his head and breaking his back.
I raised him up, as he whispered to me,
With a tender look in his eyes so mild,
"Kiss me, old fellow; I want you, you see,
To take it from me to my little child."
"Right on your lips," he muttered; "now swear
That nothing shall touch them until its given.
Tell my wife 'twas my latest prayer
That we meet again—as you hope for Heaven!"
I kept my oath, as I kissed his pet.
She said: "Why didn't my papa come, too,
(Her little red cheeks with tears were wet)
And kiss Peary himself, 'stead of sendin' oo'?"
I tried to reply, but wept instead;
The knowledge from her I tried to keep,
As we went by the room where lay the dead,
Reposing there in his final sleep.

"Only one killed," the papers say;
Yes, but one with a heart of gold,
And widow and child he'll to-day
The loss of a love that can never grow cold.
Some call the drummer a butterfly ray,
Who carelessly of every pleasure slips.
He lives, sometimes as the people say,
But he dies with a wife's loved name on his lips.

How Easy It Is.

How easy it is to spoil a day
The thoughtless word of a cherished friend,
The selfish act of a child at play,
The strength of a will that will not bend,
The slight of a comrade, the scorn of a foe,
The smile that is full of bitter things—
They all can tarnish his golden glow,
And take the grace from his airy wings.

How easy it is to spoil a day
By the force of a thought we did not check;
Little by little we mould the day,
And little flaws may the vessel wreck.
The careless waste of a white-winged hour,
That held the blessings we long had sought,
The sudden failure of wealth or power,
And lo! the day with ill is wrought.

How easy it is to spoil a life—
And many are spoiled ere well begun—
In home-light darkened by sin and strife,
Or downward course of a cherished one;
By toil that robs the form of its grace
And undermines till health gives way;
By the peevish temper, the frowning face,
The hopes that go and the cares that stay.

A day a too long to be spent in vain;
Some good should come as the hours go by:
Some tangled maze may be made more plain,
Some lowered glance may be raised on high
And life is too short to spoil like this;
If only a prelude it may be sweet,
Let us bind together our thread of bliss
And nourish the flowers around our feet.

My Sheaves.

The time for toll is past, and night has come,
The last and saddest of the harvest eve;
Worn out with labor, long and wearisome,
Drooping and faint the reapers hasten home,
Each laden with his sheaves.

Last of the laborers, Thy feet I gain,
Lord of the harvest! and my spirit grieves,
That I am burdened not so much with grain,
As with the heaviness of heart and brain;
"Master, behold my sheaves!"

"Well I know I have more stalks than wheat,
Brambles and flowers, dry stalks and withered
leaves;
Wherefore I blush and weep, as at Thy feet
I kneel down reverently and repeat,
"Master, behold my sheaves!"

Few, light and worthless, yet their trifling weight,
Through all my frame a weary aching leave;
For long I struggled with my helpless fate,
And stayed and toiled till it was dark and late,
Yet these are all my sheaves.

And yet I gathered strength and hope anew;
For well I know Thy patient love perceives,
Nor what I did, but what I strive to do;
And though the full, ripe ears be sadly few,
Thou wilt accept my sheaves.

Daniel Webster's only Poem.

[Webster, it is said, during his whole literary life, wrote but one poem, and that was upon the death of his infant son. This son was born on Summer street, in Boston, Dec. 31, 1822, and died Dec., 1824. The poem has not appeared in print for some years. It bears the title:

LINES ON CHARLES' DEATH.

My son, thou wast my heart's delight,
Thy morn of life was gay and obtrusive,
That morn has rushed to sudden night,
Thy father's house is sad and dreary.

I held thee on my knee, my son,
And kissed thee laughing, kissed thee weeping;
But, ah! thy little life is done:
Thou'rt with thy angel sister sleeping.

The staff on which thy years should lean,
Broken ere those years came o'er me;
My funeral rites thou shouldst have seen,
But thou art in the grave before me.

Thou rearest to me no filial stone,
No parent's grave with tears beholdest;
Thou art my ancestor, my son,
And standest in heaven's account the oldest.

On earth my lot was soonest cast,
Thy generation after mine;
Thou hast thy predecessors past—
Ere I or eternity is thine.

I should have set before thine eyes
The road to heaven and showed it clear;
But thou, untaught, springst at the skies,
And leave'st thy teacher learning here.

Sweet seraph, I would learn of thee,
And hasten to partake thy bliss;
And, ah, to thy world welcome me
As erst I welcomed thee to this!

Thy father, I beheld thee born,
And led thy tottering steps with care;
Before me risen to heaven's bright morn,
My son, my father, guide me there!

—For Truth.

Lieut. Fitch.

[Killed in the battle of Batoche, and buried with military honors at Toronto on Wednesday, May 27th].

BY W. A. SHERWOOD, TORONTO.

The bells slowly peal o'er our dear native city,
And sad is the wall of its numbers for thee;
Kind hearts throb, suffering sweet solace and pity,
The loved ones are weeping o'er one they'll ne'er see.

'Tis but yesterday when thy mother caress'd thee,
And press'd a fond kiss on thy love-lighted brow,
And the prayers of thy household ascending then
blest thee—
A young patriot fell, and we weep o'er him now.

The dear names ascribed on our proud patriot scroll,
'Tis writ in thy life-blood, so youthful and rich;
Thy own guardian angel recloseth thy soul,
As we bow by the grave of our Lieutenant Fitch.

—For Truth.

The Two Soldiers.

BY A. M. JONES.

Just before the last fierce charge,
Two soldiers drew their reins,
With parting words and clasp of hand—
They ne'er might meet again.

The one he was a blue-eyed boy,
Nineteen but a month ago;
With red on his cheeks and down on his chin,
He was only a boy, you know.
The other was a dark, tall man,
Whose fat, in this world was dim;
He trusted all the more in one,
Who was all the world to him.

They rode together on many a raid,
And marched for many a mile;
And now, before they met the foe,
With a calm and peaceful smile,
They looked into each other's eyes,
With a dark and death-like gloom;
The tall dark man was the first to speak,
Saying, "Charlie, my hour has come."

"We will ride together up the hill,
But you will ride back alone,
So promise a little of trouble to take
For me, when I am gone.
There is a fair face on my breast—
I will wear it in the light—
With bright blue eyes and curling hair
And a face like the morning light."

"Like morning light was her love to me,
To gladden my lonely life;
And little cared I for the frowns of fate,
She has promised to be my wife.
Oh, write to her, Charlie, when I am gone,
Send back that fair fond face;
And tell her tenderly how I died,
And where is my resting place."

Tears filled the eyes of the blue-eyed boy,
His voice was low with pain;
"I will do your bidding, comrade mine,
If I ride back again.
But if you ride back and I am left,
You must do as much for me;
I have a mother who waits at home
Her darling boy to see."

"She prays at home, like a waiting saint,
Her hair two whits with woe;
Her heart will be broken when I am gone,
But I'll meet her soon, I know."
Just then the order came to charge,
And fight them hand to hand;
And unto a field of blood and death
Rode a bold, undaunted band.

They rode together up the hill,
Amid the shot and shell;
The rebels poured death in their trailing ranks,
And cheered them as they fell.
They all rode on with a terrific yell,
Still the heights that fair fond face;
A few whom death and carnage spared
Rode slowly back again.

But among the ones that were left behind
Was the boy with the curly hair;
And the tall dark man that rode by his side
Lay dying beside him there.

There is no one to write to that blue-eyed girl
The words her lover had said;
And the mother, too, who waits at home,
Will learn that her boy is dead.
But the last fond thought she will never know
Which curled his lip with pain;
Until she crosses the River of Death,
And stands by his side again.