

the innate poetry of the mother's own being.

Every mother is a poet, conscious, as she sings her lullaby by the cradled treasure; or unconscious, as, degraded, wretched, hopeless and helpless, she leaves her offspring to perish by the wayside. Only in the latter instance has the cruelty of chance, or the inhumanity of man, turned the beauty into pathos, and acidulated the wine of poesy with the misery of the commonplace. Somewhere she, too, shall strike the true chord and the true strain will flow.

Every child is a poet, poet laureate by Divine right. He holds within his hand, "grains of the golden sand," indeed; the sand that rims on the one hand the confines of innocence and fancy, a realm of light and bloom; that transmits on the other, in some vague and inaccessible way, faint yet suggestive lisplings and murmurs and voicings from the eternal sea.

"The rainbow comes and goes,  
And lovely is the rose,  
The moon doth with delight  
Look round her when the heavens are bare,  
Waters on a starry night  
Are beautiful and fair;  
The sunshine is a glorious birth;  
But yet I know, where'er I go,  
That there hath past away a glory from the earth."

Ay, the glory of childhood. The child walks the earth the fairy prince; his subjects are all created things; his heritage the whole fair earth; his chariot is the swaying bough; his minions are the butterflies; his triumphal arch is the rainbow; his minister, the sun. There is a wide difference between the king and the peasant; between the princeling of twelve and the peasant boy of the same age; there is none, only, perhaps, the footsteps of the peasant boy are, in some instances, a few paces nearer paradise.

"Trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home:  
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!"

Every youth is a poet; Ay, and every maiden, telling each to each in the gloaming, the old time tale which never grows old, listening to the un-ageing lisp of leaves, and the never ceasing murmur of waters, and counting the endless heart pulses, silent yet blessed; as did the first youth and maiden, as will do the last youth and maiden.

The man of mature years is a poet and so is the woman; using "their dearest action in the tented field" for country and for honour, tending with soft hands alien wounds on foreign shores, preaching peace from never silent pulpits, raising the fallen in pestilence-stricken tenements, doing high work in lofty station, or, uncomplaining, tilling thankless soils, or burrowing in cavernous mines, smiting the poetry from the rock, or wringing the substance which makes the heart-music in golden harvests from the furrow.

The old man is a poet and so is his dame. She, with her comely face to the sunshine, and her back to the years; he, with his honest hands, horny with toil, or brow-wrinkled with the thought of lustrums, thought for his race and its weal, and the crests of both ennobled with a diadem more rare than potentate or herald can bestow, the snows of an honourable and honoured age.

Every dying man is a poet, tracing with significant yet silent symbols the *Finis* of the poem of life.

Every waif and vagrant and out-cast and scamp and ruffian of humanity is a poet, inscribing unwritten poems of power and pathos upon unknown hearts, animating fearless souls to the conflict of right with wrong, of greed with misery, of virtue with vice, of oppression with degradation and suffering.

There is no one so lofty, there is no one so humble, but may lay claim to the title of poet; no youth, no age,