

THE BLOT ON THE SANCTUM FLOOR.

HE OWL on the table leaned his head
 As I entered the sanctum, and softly said,
 "Sir OWL, will you list while I read to thee
 A few little lines of poetry?"
 He wearily lifted his big round eyes,
 And gazed upon me in a mild surprise,
 "Proceed; Sir Poet, I've heard a score
 Of poems to-day—I can stand one more.
 But see that thy rhymes are from evil free,
 And fraught with good Christian piety,
 For I swear to thee by hook and by crook
 That no themes of Satan I e'er shall brook
 To stain my columns immaculate,
 I'll be free from his empire at any rate.
 Fear not, Sir OWL, for my lines can vie
 With an angel's robe for their purity,
 My theme is e'er sung in the courts above,
 For my Mss. is entitled "Love."
 He started slightly, when this he heard,
 And looked quite amused for so grim a bird.
 He doubtless thought I had seen the dross
 In the things of earth, and their tinsel gloss,
 And that, soaring away to the spirit's home,
 Had sighted my theme from the sky's blue dome.
 So he leaned him back in his easy chair
 With a most complacent, patronal air,
 And he waited to hear my numbers flow
 Like a sacred stream of the long ago,
 And bear on their breasts, as they swept along,
 The love divine of the Psalmist's song.
 As this was something quite new for me,
 It tickled his fancy mightily.
 But this thought was dethroned rather suddenly
 By the wordly strain of my poetry,
 For my rhyme I unrolled, and to read began,
 And after this fashion my numbers ran :