

open windows. They are singing a delightful little ditty, it matters not what. The music is there! That is enough. We know the poetry is there also, though we cannot distinguish the words.

The song is ended and there is a hush. A change of lessons probably. And then the song breaks in once more; but, surely not a Canadian, nor even a western strain. This one resembles more the monotonous chant of far-away, star-lit Hindostan. Listen! Twice one *are* two, twice two *are* four, twice three *are* six, twice four *are* eight, so on till twelve times twelve is reached. The ponderous, leaden-footed mammoth of mathematical complexity, tripping, or trying to trip, to the jingle of a lullaby.

Here are three pictures, word-pictures, well or ill-drawn, as you will; a tropical scene, a marine, both by starlight, and a simple, rustic panel, with the western dews yet shimmering on its pigments.

And now for the moral.

Each of these pictures is animated by a soul, and in each case is the soul a simple, unsophisticated one; a half-naked denizen of an Eastern plateau, a bare-throated son of Neptune, with the arm of Achilles and the frankness of a child—a child itself, piping its morning music to the tremendous libretto of the multiplication table.

And with each soul is associated a song, that is, with each life is incorporated some poetry. And that song, that poetry is its rest. The coolie has ceased to delve and sow and gather. He rests, to sing. The sailor has ceased to hand and reef and steer, he too rests, to sing. The child, although at labour, has to be persuaded that its labour is partly rest, and so he sings, and to him it is relaxation. Figures float on gossamer wings, and the multiplication table, yea, that most abstruse and confound-

ing equation: $11 \text{ times } 11 = 121$, solves itself to the pulsings of a madrigal.

I fancy I hear some one say, I do not quite see the moral.

Then I must elaborate it. In this prosaic clime it is too much the fashion with a class to belittle poetry, indeed, to ignore it altogether. The troubadour is long dead, so too is the minnesinger. The lover here, now-a-days, instead of lilting odes to his listening mistress' eyebrow by the light of the moon, listens himself, a dull and sombre swain enough, to the musical jingle of his inamorata's money bags, that failing, so, but too frequently, does the swain.

There is not much money in poetry, so the practical adult masses ignore it. Only the few truly esteem it, for only the few understand it, or attempt to understand it. But worse sometimes follows in the wake of this unsympathetic attitude towards the muse; from simple neglect, the disaffected pass to aversion and a hostile demeanour to all things metrical and æsthetical. "I don't see any thing in pō-try (*sic*)" says one. "I hate it," chirps another. "Well, it's all a senseless jingle of words," grunts a third. "I never could understand it," simpers a fourth. So on, *ad infinitum*.

Of what is all this a proof? The artificiality, or coarseness, or utter soul-lack of these lives into which no poetry enters. For, observe, the poet is most like the child, and poetry is always dearest to the child-heart, and, next to the child, to the simpler minded inhabitants of this mundane sphere; as instance, the Asiatic coolie and the sailor, two types I have specially culled from a sufficiently large area of unsophisticated human nature. Being natural, these types appreciate that which is natural as a means of instruction or relaxation. This means of instruction or relaxation is gener-