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AN HOUR WITH THE EDITOR

"CONSIDER THE LILIES"

We are told that if we look upon the Bible as literature we will miss much of its teachings. This may be true; but it is also true that if we lose sight of the fact that it is literature, whatever else it may be, we are apt to misread its lessons. Take the passage from which the caption of this article is quoted. Let us examine the context a little. The passage occurs in the Sermon on the Mount. The Divine Master was speaking of the comparative unimportance of material things. He began this part of his discourse by telling his hearers that "no man can serve two masters," and he mentioned as these masters, "God and mammon." In other words, if the prime object of life is material advancement, it will prevent full spiritual development. Then comes that beautiful passage, which in a literary sense can hardly be equalled and certainly cannot be surpassed in the writings of any age, beginning with the question: "Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment?" Then He refers to the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, and passing on to speak of the folly of vexing our minds with things that are at best only temporary, He closes with that strong advice not to disturb ourselves about the future, for "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." We think that no violence is done to the words of the Teacher, if we understand "evil" not as meaning wickedness, but only as the burdens of daily life. This powerful exhortation, which embraces eleven verses of the sixth chapter of Matthew's Gospel, must be read as a whole, and in reading it we must keep in mind that not only is it literature, but the very highest order of literature. To understand properly anything written or spoken we must take account of the person who utters it and the person or persons to whom it is addressed. Let us think for a moment of the circumstances under which the Sermon was delivered. Jesus had gone up an elevation and many people gathered around Him. So He sat down and talked to them. Note that He did not stand up and harrangue them. He spoke to them in very plain and simple words. In all probability we have not anything like a full report of what he said. On the face of it, the best account, which is that in Matthew, seems fragmentary, but the special part referred to in this article seems complete. It reads like one of those things that people would keep in mind and repeat to each other. We can easily imagine how the disciples and their followers, during their privations and persecutions would recall with joy these encouraging words. They were well chosen, containing simple imagery, drawing attention to the common facts of nature with which all His hearers were familiar. There is a little repetition of one idea. It was driven home by reiteration in different languages and imagery. We can take these eleven verses and analyze them, and, if we like, spell all manner of things out of them. We can prove that thrift, industry, forethought, prudence and every quality of that kind were discouraged by Jesus, and this we are very likely to do, if we forget that the passage is literature intended to press home a conviction of the folly of sacrificing the service of God for the sake of personal luxury and self-aggrandizement. The life is more than meat; the body is more than raiment. We ought to do something more with our lives than simply keep them going; we ought to remember that our bodies enshrine a soul, whose proper development ought to be our first aim.

If the teachings of Jesus are carefully read, this lesson will be found running through them all. There is not much of what is called doctrine in them. He hardly said enough of a doctrinal kind to base a school of theology upon. He possessed the ability, speaking humanly, to accomplish anything. Doubtless He was a fine specimen of vigorous mandhood. We know that He was eloquent. We have abundant evidence that He was popular. He seems to have exhibited all the qualities requisite for the successful leadership of men. He had unfaltering courage. He lived at a time when his fellow countrymen were ripe for revolt. Yet we find Him teaching the superiority of what we may call spiritual victory as over material achievements. He might easily have aroused the passions of the multitude and have ruled in the hall from which He was sent out to be executed. But with the utmost care He avoided anything of this nature. He preached self-denial, purity of life, patience under suffering, meekness, forbearance, peace.

Therefore, while it may be profitable, and we think it is, to think of the lilies as emblematical of the goodness and wisdom of God, we think that the lesson which the reference quoted was designed to teach is that there is a life, which is higher than that represented by physical enjoyment. And this life is not something to be enjoyed hereafter, but is one that may be experienced from day to day. But the figures used by Jesus ought not to be carried too far. They must not be understood as condemning reasonable care of our bodies, or commending a lazy manner of life, trusting that in some way we will get along. As we have said, we must think of the people to whom the words were addressed. They were people of Eastern Asia, the very home of poetry, where the common language of daily life abounded in imagery. We must think also of the occasion on which the words were used. It was when Jesus was announcing for the first time publicly to a large number of people, as far as we know, the principles of His teaching. He wished to impress upon them that He had not come to preach rebellion; that His object was not to set up an earthly kingdom; that His Messiahship did not mean wealth and honor to those who followed Him. Of all great teachers, He seems to have possessed in a special degree the faculty of suiting His words to those to whom they were addressed. When the rich young man came to Him, he did not tell him to take no thought of the morrow; He did not tell him that the pure in heart shall see God. He told him to sell his property and give the proceeds to the poor and follow Him. When the woman of Samaria met Him, He talked to her in a way that directly appealed to her. When He was before Pilate, He spoke as to a philosopher. If He were speaking to a congregation in Victoria today, He would probably use language very different to that addressed to the humble people who followed Him up the mountain side. But no matter to whom He spoke, there is always to be found in His sayings an exhortation to a life that shall be guided by something higher than mere physical pleasure.

The lilies are in bloom in Victoria gardens today. Their tall and graceful stems bend under their weight of beauty. Consider them. To the Divine Master they were the consummation of earthly loveliness. Yet He would have us understand that there is a higher beauty to which we may all attain. It is beauty of soul, of a soul wherein, as in some mountain lake are mirrored the snow peaks and above them the changeless blue of the sky, there may be reflected the highest qualities of human nature and the boundless love of God.

ISABELLA OF CASTILE.

The founder of Spain's greatness was Isabella of Castile. Not only so, but it was her far-seeing enterprise, which influenced the whole history of the American continent. Columbus, the navigator, hoped chiefly for the aid of Henry VII. of England to enable him to set out on his voyage of discovery, and sent his brother to His Majesty for that purpose. He was wrecked upon the way, and this led Columbus to make a last appeal to Isabella. If he had failed in this, there is no doubt that he would himself have gone to England for assistance, which he would have received, for Henry had taste and resources for such things, in which event Spain would never have attained such supremacy in the Western Hemisphere as to be able to impose her institutions upon all the regions from the United States to Cape Horn. The fate of the Aztecs and the Incas would doubtless have been different, if the conquerors of their realms had been Anglo-Saxon Protestants instead of fanatical adherents of the Church of Rome. The story that Isabella sold her jewels to obtain the funds necessary to equip the first expedition of Columbus is pleasing but like many other stories, it lacks the essential element. She obtained the money for that purpose from the ecclesiastical revenues. Isabella's credit in this regard arises from the fact that she saw an opportunity, and took advantage of it. But she has other claims to distinction, for it was chiefly through her efforts that the Moors were driven from Grenada, and although her treatment of the Jews cannot be justified by any process of reasoning, it can at least be excused because of the fanatical notions of that age. We shall not give any lengthy sketch of her career, preferring to place before our readers the estimate of her life and character formed by one of her most recent historians. Isabella was born in 1415 and died in 1504. She began her reign in 1474, having already married Ferdinand, King of Aragon. Her title to the crown was not unquestioned, for as a matter of fact she supplanted her niece on the pretence that the latter was illegitimate. Her reign was strenuous, one might almost say unprecedented and unequalled for the multiplicity of grave matters of state, absorbing religious concerns, far-reaching domestic reforms and liberal assistance to literature and art, with which she had to deal; and in respect to sorrows caused by the death of her children and her disappointed ambitions in regard to to them, her fate was an extremely sad one. Her life story is one of intense interest, but it would be impossible to do it full justice in the space available today. Therefore we give the following appreciative reference to her from Wilberforce's History of Spain:

"In 1504, Isabella, who had for some time been ailing, and who seems to have suffered from some nervous disease, was struck down suddenly by fever. She had lived a hard life. She had never spared herself, or others. The unhappy marriages of her children had cast a dark shadow over her life. But her's was not the nature to repine. Diligent, abstemious, resolute, she had borne pain and suffering, and she was not afraid to face death. Unable at length to rise from her couch, as the autumn drew to a close, she continued to transact her accustomed business, gave audience to ambassadors, chatted with privileged visitors, and, in the words of an astonished stranger, governed the world from her bed.

"At last, on the 26th of November, 1504, as the church bells of Medina del Campo were ringing out the hour of noon, the spirit of Isabella of Castile flitted away from this world; and her mortal remains were conducted by a mournful company to their last resting place under the shadow of the red towers of Alhambra. Through storm and tempest, amid earthquake and inundation, across mountain and river, the affrighted travelers wended their way. For the sun was not seen by day nor the stars by night, during three long and weary weeks, as if the very forces of nature were disturbed at the death of a giant among the princes of the earth.

"The character of Isabella has suffered to an uncommon extent from an ignorant glorification of virtues that she was far from possessing, and the concealment of those transcendent powers that made her not only one of the greatest rulers of Spain, but one of the greatest women in the history of the world. Until the opening of the treasure-house at Simancas displayed her correspondence to the world, she was only known from the extravagant but somewhat colorless panegyrics of contemporary chroniclers, who recognized at least that she was a royal lady, compelling their gallant admiration, and that she was immensely superior to her husband, whom it was necessary also to glorify, as the last Spanish sovereign of Spain.

"Isabella was one of the most demarkable characters in history. Not only was she the most masterful, and, from her own point of view, by far the most successful ruler that ever sat upon the throne of Spain, or of any of the kingdoms of the Peninsula; she stands in the front rank of the great sovereigns of Europe, and challenges comparison with the greatest women who have ever held sway in the world. A reformer and a zealot, an autocrat and a leader of men, with a handsome face and a gracious manner, scarce concealing the iron will that lay beneath, Isabella was patient in adversity, dignified in prosperity, at all times quiet, determined, thorough.

"In one particular she stands alone among the great ruling women, the conquerors and empresses of history. She is the only royal lady, save, perhaps, Maria Theresa of Hungary, who maintained through life the most amicable relations of a masterful sovereign and a devoted wife, and shared not only her bed but her throne with a husband whom she respected—a fellow-sovereign whom she neither feared nor disregarded. To command the obedience of a proud and warlike people is given to few of the great men of history. To do the bidding of another with vigor and with discretion is a task that has been but rarely accomplished by a heaven-born minister. But to conceive and carry out great designs, with one hand in the grasp of even the most loyal of companions, is a triumphant combination of energy with discretion, of the finest tact with the most indomitable resolution, that stamps Isabella of Spain as a being more vigorous than the greatest men, more discreet than the greatest women of history. Semiramis, Zenobia, Boadicea, Elizabeth of England, Catherine of Russia, not one of them was embarrassed by a partner on the throne. The husband of Isabella was not only a husband, but a king, jealous, restless, and untrustworthy. It is in this respect, and in the immense scope of her political action, that the great Queen of Castile is comparable with the bold Empress-King of Hungary rather than with any other of the great queens and royal ladies of history.

"The husband of Zenobia indeed enjoyed the title of Augustus; but it was only after his assassination that the lady earned her fame as a ruler. Catherine caused her imperial consort to be executed as a preliminary to her vigorous reign in Russia; Boadicea was the successor and not the colleague of Prasutagus; and Semiramis, though herself somewhat a mythical personage, is said to have slain both her husband and her rival in her assertion of her absolute power. Yet Isabella revolutionized the institutions of her country, religious, political, military, financial, she consolidated her dominions, humiliated her nobles, cajoled her commons, defied the Pope, reformed the clergy; she burned some ten thousand of her subjects; she deported a million more; and of the remnant she made a great nation; she brooked no man's opposition, in a reign of thirty years, and she died in the arms of the king, her husband!

"Ferdinand of Aragon was no hero. But he was a strong man; a capable ruler; a clever if a treacherous diplomatist. And to this husband and consort was Isabella faithful through life, not merely in the grosser sense of the word, to which Ferdinand for himself paid so little heed; but in every way and walk of life. She supported him in his policy; she assisted him in his intrigues; she encouraged him in his ambitious designs; she lied for him, whenever prudence required it; she worked for him at all times, as she worked for Spain. For his policy, his intrigues, his designs were all her own. Whenever the views of the king and queen were for a moment discordant, Isabella prevailed, without apparent conflict of authority. In her assumption of supremacy in the marriage contract; in her nomination of Gonsalvo de Cordova to the command of the army; in her choice of Ximinez as the primate of Spain, she carried her point, not by petulance or even by argument, but by sheer force of character; nor did she strain for one moment, even in these manifestations of her royal supremacy, the friendly and even affectionate relations that ever subsisted between herself and her husband. The love and devotion of Isabella was a thing of which the greatest of men might have well been proud. And though Ferdinand the Catholic may not fairly be counted among the greatest, he was a man wise enough to appreciate the merits of his queen, and to accept and maintain the anomalous position in which he found himself as her consort.

"In war at least it might have been supposed that the queen would occupy a subordinate position. Yet in no department of state did Isabella show to greater advantage than as the organizer of victorious armies; not as a battalador after the fashion of her distinguished ancestors in Castile and in Aragon; but as the originator of an entirely new system of military administration.

"Before her time, in Spain, war had been waged by the great nobles and their retainers in attendance upon the king. There was no such thing as uniformity of action or preparation, no central organization of any kind. Each man went into battle to fight and to forage as opportunity offered. Each commander vied with his fellow nobles in deeds of bravery, and accorded to them such support as he chose. The sovereigns exercised a general authority, and assumed the active command of the united multitude of soldiers, on rare and important occasions. If victory followed, as at the Navas de Tolosa, the soldiers were rewarded with the plunder, and took possession of the property of the enemy. If the Christians were defeated, the army melted away; and the king betook himself to the nearest shelter.

"But Isabella had no sooner assumed the title of Queen of Castile, than she was called upon to maintain her pretensions in the field. With no experience but that of a country palace, with no training but that of a country cloister, she set herself to work to organize an army. On the 1st of May, 1474, five hundred horsemen represented the entire forces of the fair usurper. By the 19th of July she had collected over forty thousand men, had armed and equipped them ready for the field, and had sent them forward under the command of Ferdinand to the frontier. Although she was at the time in delicate health, she was constantly in the saddle, riding long distances from fortress to fortress, hurrying up recruits all day, dictating letters all night, giving her zealous personal attention to every detail of armory and equipment, showing from the first that quiet energy and that natural aptitude for command that ever so constantly distinguished her. That her levies were not victorious in no way daunted her determination. A second army was raised by her, within a few weeks after the first had melted away under Ferdinand; nor would she listen to any offers of negotiation, until the enemy had been driven out of Castile.

"In the conduct of the war of Granada, with time and money at her command, her preparations were upon a very different scale. The most skilful artificers were summoned from every part of Europe to assist in the work of supplying the army with the necessary material of war. Artillery, then almost unknown to the military art, was manufactured in Spain according to the best designs. Model cannon were imported, and the necessary ammunition collected from abroad. Sword blades were forged at home. Not only a commissariat, but a field hospital—institutions till then unheard of in Spanish warfare—were organized and maintained under the personal supervision of the queen. The presence of a lady on the day of battle world, as a rule, as she rightly judged, have been rather a hinderance than a help; but she was very far from being a mere commissioner of supply. A first-rate horsewoman, she was constantly seen riding about the camp, encouraging, inspecting, directing; and in the last days of the siege of Granada, when the spirits of the troops had begun to flag, she appeared daily in complete armor, and showed herself upon more than one occasion in a post of danger on the field. The armies with which Gonsalvo de Cordoa overran Calabria, and annihilated the French at Cerignola, were prepared and despatched by Isabella; and if, in a subsequent campaign, the Great Captain was left without supplies or reinforcements, it was that the queen was already sickening to her death, broken down and worn out by her constant and enormous exertions.

"But with all her aptitude for military organization, Isabella had no love for war. Her first campaign was undertaken to make good her pretensions to the crown. The extermination of the Moslems was a matter of religious feeling and patriotic pride, rather than an object of military glory; but she refused to pursue her conquest across the Straits of Gibraltar. The expeditions to Italy were a part of Ferdinand's diplomacy, though the honor of victory must be shared between Isabella and her Great Captain. But the queen's ambition lay not in conquest abroad. On the contrary, as soon as the last province in Spain had been delivered from the foreign yoke of the Moor, she turned her attention to the peaceful development of the kingdom, and, unlettered warrior as she was, she bestowed her royal patronage upon students and studies, rather than upon the knights and nobles who had fought her battles before Granada.

"The old foundations of the universities, the new art of printing, scholarship, music, architecture found in her a generous patron, not so much from predilection as from policy. Men of letters and men of learning were welcomed at her court, not only from every part of Spain, but from every part of Europe. For herself she had little appreciation of literature. She neither knew nor cared what influence her beloved Inquisition would have upon science. But as long as the queen lived, learning was honored in Spain.

"In this, as in all things, her judgment of men was unerring. The queen who made Gonsalvo the commander-in-chief of her armies, and Ximenez the president of her council, who selected Torquemada as her grand inquisitor, and Talavera as her archbishop of Granada, made no mistake when she invited Peter Martyr to instruct her son in polite letters, and commissioned Lebrija to compose the first Castilian grammar for the use of her court.

"Her beauty of face and form are familiar. Yet vanity was unknown to her nature. Simple and abstemious in her daily life, and despising pomp for its own sake, no one could make a braver show on fitting occasions; and the richness of her apparel, the glory of her jewels, and the noble dignity of her presence, have been celebrated by subjects and strangers."

Whilst playing cards in an inn, a man lost all his money besides his watch and his overcoat. He therefore got up and went away, but returned in a few minutes.

"Gentlemen," he said, "It has just begun to rain. What will you give me for my umbrella and rubbers?"—Fliegende Blatter.

Mistress (entering kitchen)—What is the meaning of this, Lina? You regale your young man with our food, and yet you call yourself economical?

Cook—Of course I am. If I wern't you would have had to buy an iceshest long ago.—Fliegende Blatter.

THE STORY TELLER

"The first time I took snuff after we were married my wife fainted."

"What did you do?"

"I took another pinch before she came round again."—Fliegende Blaetter.

The wife of a naval officer attached to the academy at Annapolis has in her employ an Irish servant, who recently gave evidence of nostalgia.

"You ought to be contented and not pine for your old home, Bridget," said the lady of the house. "You are earning good wages, your work is light, everyone is kind to you, and you have lots of friends here."

"Yis mum," sadly replied Bridget; "but it's not the place where I be that makes me so homesick; it is the place where I don't be."—Lippincott's Magazine.

About 10 o'clock one morning two men met and began threatening and calling each other names. One finally called the other a liar, and the two men were about to grapple, when a woman opened the door and said: "Gentlemen, are you about to fight?"

"We are!" they answered together.

"Then have the kindness to wait a moment," she continued. "My husband has been sick for weeks, and is now just able to sit up. He is very downhearted this morning, and if you'll only wait till I can draw him up to the window, I know he'll be very grateful to both of you."

She disappeared into the house, and after one look into each other's faces the men smiled shook hands, and departed together.—Weekly Telegraph.

She—This dress cost 200 marks, and the tailor promised to make any alteration in it that I required.

He—Well, then, you had better ask him to alter the price.—Maggendorfer Blaetter.

"Yes," said Nagget, "a woman usually treats her husband as the average servant treats bric-a-brac."

"I'm listening," replied Mrs. Nagget. "What't the answer?"

"The more he's worth the more she tries to break him."—Catholic Standard and Times.

Sam, a negro servant of a Harrisburg family, is very ambitious to appear well informed on all subjects. His master had installed electric light throughout the house and was explaining the workings of the fluid to Sam as follows:—

"You see, the whole thing comes from the dynamo and goes into the wires and then into the lights. Now, do you understand?"

"Yes, sah," said Sam. "I understand all 'bout dem dynamos and other things, but what I wants to know is how do the kerosene squirt thro dem wicks?"—Philadelphia Ledger.

"Josiah," said Mrs. Chugwater, wiping her spectacles, "baseball must be an awful cruel game. This paper says a man named Smith was pounded all over the lot. And I guess it must have been true, for it says that in the next inning he died on second base."—Chicago Tribune.

His Preference—Do you favor any particular school of music?" asked the lady.

"Yes, indeed," replied the young man who lives in a flat. "I favor the pianissimo school."—Puck.

A good story of Dryden's autograph is told. At a recent sale of old books and curios the auctioneer said:

"This book, gentlemen, is especially valuable, as it contains a marginal note in the handwriting of John Dryden. Five pounds offered. Going—going—gone. It is yours, sir."

The autograph marginal note by the renowned scholar was as follows:

"This book is not worth the paper it is printed on."—Tatler.

Saltman—Kind of sad, isn't it, to lose sight of the land of your birth?

Squeamish—I wouldn't mind that; it's losing sight of everything you have ever eaten since your birth that's worrying me!—Pittsburg Leader.

It was in a police court in India. The client of the babu lawyer was a woman accused of assault and battery. and the attorney, attacking the opposing lawyer, delivered himself as follows:

"My learned friend, with mere wind from a teapot, thinks to browbeat me from my legs, I only seek to place my bone of contention clearly in your honor's eye. My learned friend vainly runs amuck upon the sheet anchors of my case. My poor client has been deprived of some of her valuable leather (skin), the leather of her nose. Until the witness explains what became of my client's nose leather he cannot be believed; he cannot be allowed to raise a castle in the air by beating upon a bush."—Minneapolis Journal.

"Jones is the most prominent member of our golf club."

"Why, he can't play golf."

"No, but he always pays his dues."—Cleveland Leader.

"We haven't any devilled crabs, sir," said the waiter. "I can offer you some very nice devilled eggs."

"Umph! I presume if you were out of mock-turtle soup you'd suggest some very nice mock oranges?" retorted the diner.

"Yes, sir," answered the waiter, calmly. "At least I would suggest that you give them a mock trial."—Harper's Weekly.

Jane, the bright new maid, always anxious to please, had been entrusted with the care of little aquarium in which the goldfish had always thrived very well until Jane came on the scene.

The first day she arrived she gave them fresh water, as instructed, and then left them to their own devices. But, alas, one morning the little fishes were found floating lifeless on their backs.

"Jane," cried the anxious mistress, regarding her pets with concern, "have you given the fish any fresh water lately?"

"No, ma'am. Bless their little hearts, they haven't drunk the water I gave them last month yet!"

"Brace up! What ails you?" asked the old hound.

"I just heard the master say he'd have to put me through the mill," replied the pup.

"Yes, he's going to train you for the hunting field——"

"Oh Is that it? I thought he meant the sausage mill."—Philadelphia Press.

M. Max, whose nose through many potations had assumed a rich port wine shade, saw the following advertisement in the paper:

"No more red noses! Send 1 fr. 50 to M. X., with a list of what you drink every day, and by return you will receive a positive cure for this distressing symptom."

M. Max sent his 1 fr. 50, and the following list of his daily drinks: 5 glasses white wine, 5 vermouth, 4 brandies, 4 absinthes, several bottles of red wine. In due course he received the following letter:

"Monsieur—After having studied your case I would advise you to double your drinks, and I guarantee that in six months your nose no longer will be red; it will become a bright violet."—Sourire.

Lady Visitor—I am sorry to see you here, my good friend. You appear to have had a good education.

Convict—Well, madam, I have been through Trinity College.

Lady Visitor—Is it possible?

Convict—Yes; that's the reason I'm here. They caught me as I was going through.—Penny Pictorial.

A Boston lawyer, who brought his wit from his native Dublin, while cross-examining the plaintiff in a divorce trial, brought forth the following:

"You wish to divorce this woman because she drinks?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you drink yourself?"

"That's my business!" angrily

Whereupon the unmoved lawyer asked:

"Have you any other business?"—Everybody's

Madge—They criticized my bathing dress shamefully.

Marjorie—I think they had very little to talk about.—Illustrated Bits.

A young married lady one morning gave her husband a sealed letter, which he was to read when he got to the office, says Tit-Bits. He did so, and the letter ran as follows:

"I am obliged to tell you something that may give you pain, but there is no help for it. You shall know everything, whatever may be the consequences. For the last week I have felt that it must come to this, but I have waited until the last extremity and can remain silent no longer. Do not overwhelm me with bitter reproach, for you will have to put up with your share of the trouble as well as myself."

Cold perspiration stood in thick drops on the brow of the husband, who was prepared for the worst.

Tremblingly he read on:

"Our coal is all gone. Please order a ton to be sent this afternoon. I thought you might forget it for the tenth time, and, therefore, wrote you this letter."

But he didn't forget that time!

The New Boy—You told me to come and begin work today, sir.

Grocer—Oh, yes, you can begin by catching flies, and sticking them on these sheets of "Sure-Catch-Flypaper" for the window.—Ally Sloper's Half-Holliday.

Real Dog Tired

A little incident related by the late Gen. Shafter in an article on the capture of Santiago illustrates the spirit of the American soldiers who entered Cuba, and at the same time contains a bit of humor that was none the less enjoyable because it was unconscious. The men had been in battle all day, and, weary as they were, had then walked eleven rough, muddy miles in the dark, a remarkable and arduous performance, which served to show their sterling military qualities. A correspondent noticed a corporal of the 25th colored regiment carrying a pet dog in his arms. Surprised that an overworked soldier should voluntarily burden himself, he said:

"Corporal, didn't you march all night before last?"

"Yes, sah."

"Didn't you fight all day yesterday?"

"Deed I did, sah."

"Didn't you march all last night?"

"Yes, sah."

"Then why do you carry that dog?"

"Why, boss, 'cause the dog's tired."—Youth's Companion.

Mirth at Meals

A doctor says: "Don't allow a meal to pass without a joke between each mouthful. This will enhance the value of humor to a great degree. Dinner will move along something like this: Mouthful of soap. Screams of mirth, flakes of laughter, and breadcrumbs pervading the air. Mouthful of roast duck reminds domestic humorists of something.

"Do you know why a duck goes into the water?" Long silence and more extensive eating. Domestic humorist answers it himself as follows: "For divers reasons." More bread, vegetables and general good-feeling. "Why does he come out?" No answer and no sound but that of an old joke under the table cracking its knuckles. "For sun-dry purposes," explains the ready and brainy man, looking casually at a memorandum on his cuff. More dinner, and then, "Why does he go in again?"

Nothing can be heard but the low murmur of a thinker, perhaps, as he grapples with the great problem. "To liquidate his bill." Yells of laughter, screams of delight, and astonishing feats of digestion promoted by mirth. "And why does he again come out?" More thought and mastication, then the gastric jester says: "To make a little run on the bank," and amid a general shower of vest buttons and mirth the genial, all-round tonic humorist and joy-promoter goes on.

Innocent but Infectious

A man running toward the Reading railway station, in Germantown, on Saturday, as if in great haste to make the train, was the cause of enlivening the gait of a number of other pedestrians bent on that purpose, among whom were several women who fancied they were late for the train. As the latter wore shoes of the cramped pattern, known as pumps, their discomfort in running may be imagined. When, breathless, they reached the station, they found the first runner sitting comfortably and reading a paper, with ten minutes' margin before train time. One of the women, made bold by indignation, advanced upon the cause of her anger, with the query: "What were you running for?" The answer was "For my health."—Philadelphia Record.

CURRENT VERSE

The Biggest Fish

Yew never heered me tell
Abaout thet monster? Well!
He wuz the bigrest one
I ever seen, I swun!
When I describe his size,
I can't believe my eyes;
An' I don't 'spect thet yew
Kin kurcely b'lieve it, tew.

Down Lizard crick one day
I fished an' fished away—
An' here I wanter state
I had the proper bait
An' ev'rything wuz clear
My head an' hands an' gear,
When I felt nigh the bank,
A mos' tremenjus yank.

My cork went aout o' sight,
My pole bent double quite,
The crick she b'iled an' b'iled
An' got all rough an' riled.
I straightened like a bull
An' fetched a mighty pull,
An' would yew b'lieve it? Say!
He—well, he got away!

—New York Sun.

A Parent's Plea

My little boy is eight years old,
He goes to school each day;
He doesn't mind the tasks they set—
They seem to him but play.
He heads his class at raffia work
And also takes the lead
At making dinky paper boats—
But I wish that he could read.

They teach him physiology,
And, O, it chills our hearts
To hear our little innocent
Mix up his inward parts.
He also learns astronomy
And names the stars by night—
Of course he's very up-to-date,
But I wish that he could write.

They teach him things botanical,
They teach him how to draw,
He babbles of mythology,
And gravitation's law;
And the discoveries of science
With him are quite a fad,
They tell me he's a clever boy,
But I wish that he could add.

—Peter McArthur.

The Poppyland Express

The first train leaves at 6 p.m.
For the land where the poppy blows,
And mother dear is the engineer,
And the passenger laughs and crows.

The palace car is the mother's arms;
The whistle, a low sweet strain;
The passenger winks and nods and blinks,
And goes to sleep in the train.

At 8 p.m. the next train starts
For the poppyland afar:
The summons clear falls on the ear;
"All aboard for the sleeping car."

But what is the fare to poppyland?
I hope it's not too dear.
The fare is this—a hug and a kiss,
And it's paid to the engineer.

So I ask of Him who the children took
On His knee in kindness great:
"Take charge I pray of the trains each day
That leave at 6 and 8."

"Keep watch of the passengers," thus I pray,
"For to me they are very dear;
And a special ward, O gracious Lord,
O'er the gentle engineer."

—Edgar W. Abbott.

You That Are Gone

You that are gone—we know not where,
Save that your eyes were shut in sleep,
And that your hands were waxen fair,
Hands whose warm touch we fain would keep—
You that are gone, this is to say
The hearts you left behind you yearn
And wait all patient, day by day,
For your return.

Who knows what pathway lured your feet?
It may be true 'tis yours to fare
Out where the dews and twilight meet,
Into a vast unknown, somewhere—
But this is sure, the home hearts wait
While through the mist of worlds you roam,
And sigh and say that soon or late
You will come home.

Your chair within the inglenook
Holds still its comfortable space;
Upon its arm your open book
With ribbon left to mark the place;
Your roses burst anew to bloom
And drip their jewelings of dew;
The very air, lush with perfume,
Is waiting you.

We know not, in the curtained night
Whose every shadow blurs and bars
The far-flung gleaming of the light
That comes from all the time-old stars—
We know not, but we faintly hear
Your step and we hold silence then,
With faith that ever drawing near
You come again.

They say 'tis done; that we no more
May see you smile or hear you speak,
Or catch your footfall on the floor,
Or trace the roses in your cheek;
But still we blindly send this call
To you, that somehow you may learn
That hearts and hearth are waiting all
For your return.

—Chicago Post.

For A Small Boy

O prairie, Mother of my West
Take this small waif to your broad breast.

Let his feet love your changeless ways,
To teach him firmness all his days.

Let your fields, stretching to the sky,
That sets no boundary to the eye,

Give him their own deep breadth of view,
The largeness of the cloudless blue;

Give him to drink your freshening breath
That will not brook the thought of death.

So he may go eternal young
Along your marshes, that have flung

Their yellowing willows' draperies
To the keen sweetness of the breeze—

And, prodigal of April hours,
Take benediction of her showers;

And when across the prairies come
The yellowhammer's fife and drum,

Then let him wander as he will,
From hill to ever rising hill,

From your spring mornings, warm and bright,
Surcharged with quivering, living light.

Until the hazy sun at last
Withdraws and leaves the pallid vast

Immensity of sky and moor
And gray dusk closing swift and sure

In quiet let him bow his face
Before the Presence in that space

When ghostly white the primrose stands
The spirit of your twilight lands;

See the pale jewel of the evening skies
And hear the meadow's drowsy cries,

And last sweet challenge through the dark
The clear, thin whistle of the lark.

So, prairie that I loved and blest,
The boy may know your way is best.

—Samuel McCoy, in Scribner's (July)