

At "Thirty Love" Retire.

In a recent issue of the *Evening Journal* a writer, holding a self-allotted brief to generously subscribe himself "Civil Servant," advocated the "compulsory retirement" of women in the Service at thirty years of age. "This," he gallantly remarked, "would rid the Service of the old maids." Retired at thirty, women "would marry before it is too late, and become mothers and house-keepers," instead of "consecrating themselves to the service of Mammon." . . . "When a lady clerk passes a certain age," confessed this ingenuously human gentleman, "sometimes her male associates at least do not care for her to be around, and would be glad if she would make room for some *sweet sixteen*." . . . "Even the Chief, old and grey, much prefers a pretty, young, rosy-cheeked stenographer to an elderly crust with nerves and cranky ways, and, most of all, her faded looks." This angular-minded idealist, with apparently quite unconscious humor, naively declared that "the Civil Service is no place for men of vim and ambition!" Well, *à bon chat, bon rat!*

The Answer.

I.

So! Ere I turn this "awkward corner," Thirty,
 Into a street where Life at last begins,—
 Where, if I'm coy, coquettishly alert, I
 May meet my Fate, to bear him "heavenly twins,"—
 I'll say good-bye to Laura, Belle and Gertie,
 Whose "twenties," chiefest of official sins,
 Will stay the hand of "Fate" a few years later,
 Thanks to joint Father Time and each girl's mater.

II.

Here, at my matchless Katishavian elbow,
 Sits Winnie Winter, pallid, proud and plain.
 Ten years or so agone Death struck a fell blow
 O'er Winnie's heart, but never died the pain.
 Her father, who had never had a hell show—
 A "civil" servant of the King in vain—
 Slipped off this mortal coil—Death's deal high-handed—
 And left young Winnie and her mother stranded.

III.

"Here at my elbow" is poetic license;
 For in my modest single "third-floor back,"
 I, labouring, rhyme, cheered by a cup of Hyson's,
 Like, or unlike, some reportorial hack.
 Were I not maid tea-total (in no sly sense)
 My Muse might bear the wit my wits must lack.
 Had I Lord Byron's gin—I've stole his stanza—
 My end (tis Truth) might end extravaganza.