

Thus to our view does still recurring death
 The vanity of human strength oft show ;
 How utter our dependence on the breath
 Of Him who did on man this life bestow.

Nor may we say that life was spent in vain,
 Nor think it come to an untimely close,
 Nor 'gainst this Sovereign will may we complain,
 The work performed by each God only knows.

We humbly bow before this high decree,
 And joy that ours is not a hopeless grief,
 For there is One who has giv'n us victory
 O'er the dark grave, and from grim death relief.

—'98

NEW SONGS FOR SCHOOLS.

J. Fischer & Bro., 7 Bible House, N.Y., have sent us the following new songs :

1. The Tinker's Song. (For Boys.) J. Wiegand. Price, 40 cents.
2. The Chinese Umbrella. (For Girls.) Chorus with umbrella drill. C. H. Lewis. Price, 50 cents.
3. The Crafty Old Spider. J. Wiegand. Price, 40 cents.

They will prove very interesting to persons who are getting up entertainments at schools or social gatherings. Numbers 1 and 2 are beautiful and attractive action songs, and number 3 contains a good moral lesson for young and old. The music is very tuneful and catchy, while the accompaniments are written in an easy and graceful style.

LITERATURE.

RUDYARD KIPLING AS A SHORT-STORY TELLER.*

II.

THE leopard cannot change his spots, neither can a writer his individuality. He may write to-day in poetic form and to-morrow in prose, but underneath both prose and verse the same man appears, and he who is pre-eminent in prose is pre-eminent not by virtue of the poetic qualities of his style, but by his prose genius. Though he may wander into the fields of poesy his feet will only run swift and sure when he is on the ground suited to his nature. Scott was a prose genius; and his poetry is remembered not so much for the qualities which are peculiar to poetry as for the local colour, the romance, the chivalry, which are found in an immeasurably finer manner in his novels.

So is it with Kipling. His poetry lacks fineness and variety; it attracts by its robust strength, its striking realism, its vigorous and stirring music; but if a reader wishes to enjoy these qualities to the

full in Kipling he must seek his enjoyment, not in his poems, but in his short stories. So altogether superior are some of these short stories to the stories of any other of our modern writers that one is almost inclined to borrow an expression from Andrew Lang and let the matter rest there. Lang, in one of these fine moments when he had his appreciative mood to the fore, dismissed Kipling with the words: "Kipling—*et apres!*" He is indeed our only transcendent short-story writer, and his genius seems exhaustless in this particular vein. It might have been supposed that after he had given us all we could stand of Ortheris, Learoyd, and Mulvaney that he would have spent himself, and would become a dead letter; but while these vigorous studies were still fresh in our minds "The Jungle Books," those most wonderful fables of modern times, came to rouse our admiration at the art, the restraint, of one who seemed to scorn restraint, and to defy the finer side of art. During the past two years he has turned his versatile pen to giving life and beauty to steam and machinery. In this field he is at his best, not in a poetic study such as "McAndrew's Hymn," but in such a piece of prose as "The Ship That Found Herself," where every nut and screw, bolt and rivet, plate and beam, rod and crank, become living parts of the animate craft that feels her way blindly through the Atlantic smother from the Old World to the New.

But Mr. Kipling will hardly succeed in surpassing in interest the stories in which our old friends, Ortheris, Learoyd and Mulvaney, figure, and the very excellent *Edition Definitive* of "Soldiers' Tales," from the press of MacMillan & Co., is taken up with the same pleasure with which these same tales were welcomed six or eight years ago. Two of the tales will stand reading once a year—"The Drums of the Fore and Aft" and "The Courting of Dinah Shadd." These stories are so well known that it would be impertinence to analyze them here; but both are excellent examples of Kipling's art. He prides himself on his realism, and the world delights in calling him a realist; but these stories are in reality a triumph of idealism, or whatever you choose to call it, over realism. In "The Drums of the Fore and Aft" he has a brace of heroes, wretched little street Arabs, profane, vicious, but with one saving quality—truthfulness. As we read we find another, patriotism; and yet another, inseparable love for each other. As we close the story we have forgotten all about the realism of the barrack life, of the struggle in the mountain passes, of the closing touch where the Brigadier claims that all the honour was due to his "craft, strategy, wisdom and foresight," and keep step with the noble little ruffians as they gallantly turn the tide of battle

*Soldiers' Tales. By Rudyard Kipling. London and New York: MacMillan & Co. Toronto: The Copp Clark Co.