

Poetry.

THE SELFISH OYSTER.

There was once a selfish old Oyster,
Who lived like a monk in a cloister,
Safely housed in his shell,
Like the monk in his cell,
Though the bivalve's apartment was moister.

Anchored tight in the mud of the bay
This lazy old party did stay,
Nor cared he to roam
Very far from his home;
For exertion, he thought, did not pay.

And you will be wondering, I think,
What he did for his victuals and drink.
Well, the Oyster was sly,
And when young crabs came by,
He would catch them as quick as a wink.

Then in him the poor crabs had to stay,
Till in time they had melted away.
So the oyster got fatter,
And the crabs—but no matter—
For crabs have no souls, people say.

"And oho!" said the Oyster, said he.
"What a lucky old party I be!
Like a king in his pride
I wait here, and the tide,
Every day brings my living to me."

But there came a grim Star-fish, who spied
Our friend lying flat on his side;
For the greedy old sinner
Had just had his dinner,
And now could not run had he tried.

With a spring to the oyster he came,
And he threw his five arms round the same.
He shut off his breath,
And he squeezed him to death,
Then he ate him, nor felt any shame.

The point of this story, my dears,
Jast "as plain as a pikestaff" appears.
But please give attention,
While briefly I mention
The moral again, for your ears.

Don't be greedy and live but to eat,
Caring only for bread and for meat;
Nor selfishly dwell
All alone in your shell,—
Don't be oysters, in short, I repeat.

But you'll find it much better for you
To be kind, and unselfish, and true;
Then you'll not lack a friend
Your cause to defend,
When a Star-fish rolls into your view.

—George J. Webster; St. Nicholas.

THE LAST DAYS OF AUTUMN.

Now the growing year is over,
And the shepherd's tinkling bell
Faintly from its winter cover
Rings a low farewell
Now the birds of autumn shiver,
Where the wither'd beech-leaves quiver.
O'er the dark and lazy river.
In the rocky dell.

Now the mist is on the mountains,
Reddening in the rising sun;
Now the flowers around the fountains
Perish one by one:
Not a spire of grass is growing,
But leaves that late were glowing,
Now its blighted green are strowing
With a mantle dunn.

J. G. Percival.

CHILD MINISTRY.

"And a little child shall lead them."
Oh, the sweetness of the word!
In the grand millennial glory,
Ere the coming of our Lord.

Little children shall be helpers.
Sharers, too, in all the joy;
Gracious words their lips shall utter,
Gracious deeds their hands employ.

In those latter days of splendor,
As of old in Galilee,
Christ, the lord, will welcome children.
Love's sweet ministers to be.

Work there is for old disciples,
"Feed my lambs," Christ says to them;
But the little ones He'll cherish,
Childish love He'll ne'er condemn.

Welcome, then, dear little workers,
Bringing Christ your youth's rich dew.
If, till death, you're true and faithful,
Crowns unfading wait for you.

—Exchange.

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There is nothing makes a man suspect much, more than to know little; therefore, men should remedy suspicion by procuring to know more, and not to keep their suspicions in smother.