

Foolish Questions.

I would not swear the weest bit,
 I would not drop a briny tear,
 Although all night I had to sit
 Out in the snow—I'd feel no fear;
 If both my ears were frozen stiff
 And if my blood was frosted too;
 If no D—fool would grin and sniff,
 "Well is this cold enough for you?"
 I do not care about the way
 My fingers stiffen with the frost,
 I do not care if once a day
 In forty snowdrifts I get lost;
 But Oh; it makes me sick and sore
 When my old smeller's turning blue,
 To hear some ribald jackass roar
 "Well is this cold enough for you?"
 I plow my way thru forty feet
 Of snow, to reach my humble berth,
 Each time I saunter down the street
 When snow-flakes cover Mother Earth;
 And tho my stomach's out of plumb
 And frozen solid thru and thru;
 Some pie-faced MUTT will say, by Gum,
 "Well is this cold enough for you?"

If I could live in any land
 Wherein they make no stupid laws,
 I'd join with glee a pirate band
 And wait my chance to get my claws
 Upon the goat, who, when the cold
 Is so intense it freezes stew,
 Comes gowned in furs, with saying old,
 "Well is this cold enough for you?"
 They know it's cold enough for me,
 They see I'm like a cake of ice,
 I'm just as sick as I can be,
 They know the winter is not nice;
 And yet my nearly frozen ear
 Will catch this vapid brainless Gnu,
 Remarking, as he draweth near,
 "Well is this cold enough for you?"
 If on a chilly winter's night
 I had ten dollars in my jeans—
 The only "ten" I had to light
 My darkened home—or purchase beans,
 I'd hand it up with joyous glee—
 Although it meant my all, t'is true
 To him who would not chirp at me
 "Well is this cold enough for you?"
 "LOW-RATE."

Retrospection.

When the busy day is over and the night is drawing nigh;
 When the gloaming lures the star-dust from the blue and quiet sky,
 Then the moaning of the night-wind seems to set my heart aglow
 With a thousand tender mem'ries of the days of long ago.
 Far beyond this day's descending, thro' the silence and the fears,
 I may turn my thoughts to wrestle with the unresponsive years,
 But the quest is blind and bitter and my heart can feel the scorn,
 Of the silent, empty places and the hush of things unborn.
 So I cast my Fancy backwards to the years now passed away,
 And return where once I wandered neath the light of other days,
 Where the friends that come to greet me are the friends I used to know
 In the olden, golden glory of the days of Long Ago.

Oh! the change that knows no ceasing as the long years pass away,
 Leaving but the treasured memory of each hope that had its day;
 Oh! the strange and human mingling of old pleasure, hope and pain,
 In the aftermath that lingers where we'll never pass again!
 Let me tread the heights of sunshine and the valleys grey with gloom,
 Backward, o'er the trails I've travelled and the fields I've lost and won;
 There are goals within the future—there are heights that I would know,
 And the stepping-stones lie yonder, in the days of Long Ago.

J. Cadden.