

Poems of the Out-of-Doors

Verses by various Authors on varying aspects of Nature

BY THE GASPEREAU.

BURTON W. LOCKHART.

Do you remember, dear, a night in June,
So long, so long ago,
When we were lovers, wandering with
the moon,
Beside the GasperEAU?

The river plashed and gurgled thro'
its glooms,
Slow stealing to the sea,
A silver serpent; in the apple blooms
The soft air rustled free.

And o'er the river from afar the sound
Of mellow tinkling bells
From browsing cattle stirred the echo
round
In gentle falls and swells.

No sound of human sorrow, nor of
mirth,
Streamed on that peace abroad,
And all the night leaned low upon the
earth
Like the calm face of God.

And in our hearts there breathed, like
life, a breath
Of most delicious pain,
It seemed a whisper ran from birth to
death
And back to birth again.

And bound in airy chains our shining
hours,
Past, present, and to come,
In one sweet whole, strong to defy the
powers
Of change, till Time be dumb.

Yes, you remember, dear, that night in
June,
So long, so long ago,
When we were lovers, wandering with
the moon,
Beside the GasperEAU.

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VAPOUR AND BLUE.

BY WILFRED CAMPBELL.

Domed with the azure of heaven,
Floored with a pavement of pearl,
Clothed all about with a brightness
Soft as the eyes of a girl.

Girt with a magical girdle,
Rimmed with a vapour of rest—
These are the inland waters,
These are the lakes of the west.

Voices of slumberous music,
Spirits of mist and flame,
Moonlit memories left here
By gods who long ago came.

And vanishing left but an echo
In silence of moon-dim caves,
Where haze-wrapt the August night
slumbers,
Or the wild heart of October raves.

Here where the jewels of nature
Are set in the light of God's smile,
Far from the world's wild throbbing,
I will stay me and rest awhile.

And store in my heart old music,
Melodies gathered and sung
By the genies of love and beauty
When the heart of the world was
young.

* * *

THE HOUSE OF THE TREES.

BY ETHELWYN WETHERALD.

Ope your doors and take me in,
Spirit of the wood;
Wash me clean of dust and din,
Clothe me in your mood.

Take me from the noisy light
To the sunless peace,
Where at mid-day standeth Night,
Signing Toil's release.

All your dusky twilight stores
To my senses give;
Take me in and lock the doors,
Show me how to live.

Lift your leafy roof for me,
Part your yielding walls,
Let me wander lingeringly
Through your scented halls.

Ope your doors and take me in,
Spirit of the wood;
Take me—make me next of kin
To your leafy brood.

* * *

THE PLAYGROUND OF THE SUN.

BY CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

I am for the open meadows,
Open meadows full of sun,
When the hot bees hug the clover,
The hot breezes drop and run.

I am for the uncut hayfields
Open to the cloudless blue,
For the wide unshadowed acres
Where the summer's pomps renew.

Where the grass-tops gather purple,
Where the ox-eye daisies thrive,
And the mendicants of summer
Laugh to feel themselves alive.

Where the hot scent steams and quivers,
Where the hot saps thrill and stir,
Where in leaf-cells' green pavilions
Quaint artificers confer.

Where the bobolinks are merry,
Where the beetles bask and gleam,
Where above the powdered blossoms
Powdered moth-wings poise and
dream.

Where the bead-eyed mice adventure,
In the grass-roots green and dun,
Life is good and love is eager
In the playground of the sun!

* * *

THE SONG MY PADDLE SINGS.

BY E. PAULINE JOHNSON.

West wind, blow from your prairie nest!
Blow from the mountains, blow from
the west.

The sail is idle, the sailor, too;
Oh! wind of the west, we wait for you.
Blow, blow!

I have wooed you so,
But never a favour you bestow.
You rock your cradle the hills between,
But scorn to notice my white lateen.

I stow the sail, unship the mast:
I wooed you long, but my wooing's
past;

My paddle will lull you into rest.
Oh! drowsy wind of the drowsy west,
Sleep, sleep,
By your mountain steep,
Or down where the prairie grasses
sweep!

Now fold in slumber your laggard
wings,
For soft is the song my paddle sings.

August is laughing across the sky,
Laughing while paddle, canoe and I,
Drift, drift,
Where the hills uplift
On either side of the current swift.
The river rolls in its rocky bed;
My paddle is plying its way ahead;
Dip, dip,
While the waters flip
In foam as over their breast we slip.

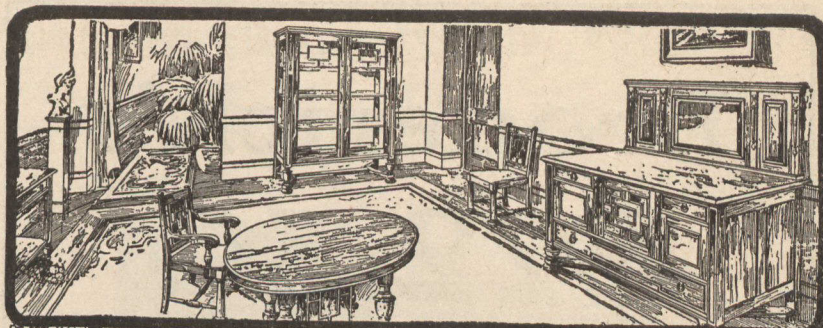
And oh, the river runs swifter now;
The eddies circle about my bow.
Swirl, swirl!
How the ripples curl
In many a dangerous pool awirl!
And forward far the rapids roar,
Fretting their margin for evermore.
Dash, dash,
With a mighty crash,
They seethe, and boil, and bound, and
splash.

Be strong, O paddle! be brave, canoe!
The reckless waves you must plunge
into.

Reel, reel,
On your trembling keel,
But never a fear my craft will feel.

We've raced the rapid, we're far ahead!
The river slips through its silent bed.
Sway, sway,
As the bubbles spray
And fall in tinkling tunes away.

And up on the hills against the sky,
A fir tree rocking its lullaby,
Swings, swings,
Its emerald wings,
Swelling the song that my paddle sings.



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