

Slow to and fro the sentry paced,  
 His musket on his shoulder,  
 But not a thought of death or war  
 Was with the brave young soldier.  
 Ah, ho! his heart was far away  
 Where, on a western prairie,  
 A rose-twined cottage stood. That night  
 The countersign was "Mary."

And there his own true love he saw,  
 Blue eyes were kindly beaming;  
 Above them, on her sun-kissed brow,  
 Her curls like sunlight gleaming,  
 And heard her singing as she churned  
 The butter in the dairy,  
 The song she loved the best. That night  
 The countersign was "Mary."

"Oh, for one kiss from her! he sighed,  
 When up the lone road glancing,  
 He spied a form, a little form,  
 With faltering steps advancing,  
 And as it neared him silently  
 He gazed at it in wonder;  
 Then dropped his musket to his hand,  
 And challenged "Who goes yonder?"

Still on it came. "Not one step more,  
 Be you man, or child, or fairy,  
 Unless you give the countersign,  
 Halt! Who goes there?" " 'Tis Mary,"  
 A sweet voice cried, and in his arms  
 The girl he'd left behind him  
 Half-fainting fell. O'er many miles  
 She'd bravely toiled to find him.

"I heard that you were wounded, dear,"  
 She sobbed: "My heart was breaking;  
 I could not stay a moment, but,  
 All other ties forsaking,  
 I travelled, by my grief made strong,  
 Kind heaven watching o'er me,  
 Until,—unhurt and well?" "Yes, love,"  
 "At last you stood before me."

"They told me that I could not pass  
 The lines to seek my lover  
 Before day fairly came; but I  
 Pressed on ere night was o'er,  
 And as I told my name, I found  
 The way free as our prairie,"  
 "Because, thank God! tonight," he said,  
 "The countersign is "Mary."

—Margaret Eytinge.

#### THE ROUND TABLE

The Round Table for September, a quarterly review of the politics of the British Empire, gives much interesting and valuable information on Imperial subjects. It contains articles on such subjects as The League of the Nations, The Promise of the Future, The Means of Victory, The Spirit of the Russian Revolution, The Montagu-Chelmsford Report making proposals for constitutional advancement in India, Canada and the Imperial Problem, and articles relating to Australia, South Africa and New Zealand. Price 65c. per copy; \$2.50 per annum. May be obtained from booksellers, or from The MacMillan Co., of Canada, 70 Bond Street, Toronto.

#### THE AMERICAN VOICE

We must admit, although with shame, that foreign observers in the United States, and foreigners who observe our tourists in Europe, are right in declaring the American voice to be the worst in the world. Hearing it all the time, we Americans do not notice how bad it is. The chief offenders are not the newsboys and other street criers who shout in our ears, but the common run of people—men and women, boys and girls, of education and social advantages, as well as those who lack both. We offend, not in our loud talking only, but in ordinary conversation. Our voices are harsh, our tones nasal. It is enough to state the fact. Anyone can verify it whose ears can distinguish between sounds that are pleasant and musical and those that are harsh and discordant.

It is easy to understand why an English girl's voice is melodious and rich, whereas that of an American girl is usually not so. Each acquires in childhood the quality of voice that she hears every day. Our voices are what they are because they are like those of our fathers, our mothers and our neighbors.

The fact points the way to the remedy. If we wish to improve the voices of Americans of the next generation we must first train the teachers, for some of the most offensively sharp and penetrating voices are those of "school-ma'ams." The work should be undertaken at once. It would be a good rule, if it were practicable, for school boards to refuse positions to all candidates whose voices are disagreeably harsh and nasal. Probably it is not practicable, for the double reason that the ears of the members of school boards are not sensitive enough to apply the test, and that the number of teachers required is greater than the number of candidates who can meet the requirements.

But our boards of education could examine and copy the system that is universal in Holland. In that country every normal school has a specialist in hygienics. Each of the large cities also has an expert who gives free instruction to school teachers. The teachers, by example and instruction, influence the voices of their pupils.