

Poetry.

"CALLING THE HERD."

My love is fair as the morn
 And my love is blithe as the bird
 With her tresses of silken corn
 And her sweet voice calling the herd—
 Calling the herd from the pastures green
 With the silvery brook between.

Three stepping stones in a row—
 Too few for my love's fair feet—
 And upon them slippery mosses grow:
 She lingers with dalliance sweet
 Calling the herd from the pastures green
 With the babbling brook between

I found her there by the rill
 Between the hill and the meadow land,
 My love with the lily hand;
 But why did her voice grow still
 From calling the herd in the pastures green
 With the laughing brook between?

And the seeming blush on her cheek?—
 Was but the crimson of eventide
 Reflected there on the creek
 As we stood side by side
 Calling the herd from the pastures green
 With the tell-tale brook between.

Feb. 1883.

POETA.

The Latin quotation, *poeta nascitur, non fit*, states a principle which can justly be applied to the entire human race. The poet possesses by nature "the gift of song;" not otherwise all men are predisposed to proper avocations. Finding his true calling, the lawyer learns to brow-beat his witness, the artist acquires a skill in painting, and the sculptor develops a talent for cunning workmanship.

Happy for the human race, all men are differently constituted, and their minds bend to different affinities. What a noisy world this world would be, if all were carpenters! How wicked, but wealthy, if all were attorneys-at-law! If all were physicians, what an unhealthful atmosphere would prevail!

Thanks to the great Intelligence who doeth all things well, all occupations are distributed wisely, and upon the door of every profession is heard the continuous rap for admittance. The hand of Fate swings the poet as well as the painter, into his proper place.

Though "poets are a curious race," their rich and melodious songs raise our literature from the "Punch and Judy" sameness of prose. Like the waters that gurgled from the rock which Moses struck, poetry bubbles from the lives of the pure, and fainting souls drink it as eagerly as the famished Israelites drank the mystic waters of the wilderness.

They who cast contempt upon the muse of poetry are devoid of literary taste. They never study the works of Milton, Shakespeare, Tennyson, or any of the Goliaths of verse. The lowest doggerel is the same to them as the glorious outburst of a warm and cultivated intellect. They fail to discriminate between the songs of the Muses and those worthless effusions in which the authors aim at rhyme, and gain it at the expense of beauty, common sense, fervency of thought and all the essentials of true poetry.

The poet's heart is an open book, and all who will may read it. The gods of love, beauty, hope and song flutter from his lips, and scatter broadcast over the world the benedictions of a human heart. The poetic imagination steals from the soul like a phantom, and soars among the stars. There is a rose with another name, and its fragrance is the poetry of our being.

Poetry leaps in wild, fantastic costume from every grand and beauteous thing. It is a lovely creature who walks through the earth with fairy sandals, pointing men to the gates of heaven. It is a crystal fountain, playing in the moonbeams; kissing the twilight and whispering to the stars. It is a thousand tuneful voices waving and swelling in the good and true. It is a morning star that casts a cheering light on "Death's dark river."

In the poet's life the passions play at pleasure, and are tinctured by his surroundings. Poverty may clutch his heartstrings, and bind him with the chains of despair. The shackles of disease may clog his footsteps. Friends may prove false and pierce him with the daggers of hate, and ruin sweep his pathway of every earthly treasure. Yet he is serene; there is an inner life that grows and expands and sweetens his existence. There are hidden fountains that bubble in his soul. There are bursts of song that float in melody through his being, unheard by other ears; and when the dread spectre presses the chalice of agony to his lips, he smiles, and pillowing his head on the soft bosom of some beautiful ideality, he calmly sinks to rest.