

BOYS AND GIRLS

Wild Flowers.

Scarce known by name, they dot the ground

With motley colors, starry forms.
In them the sunset skies are found
That follow after storms;
And blurs of crimson, blue and gold,
Their graceful chalices unfold,
While 'mid the dead leaves pile and pent
Humbly they live and die content.

Huge oaks above them lift their heads
And drop the acorn, shed the leaf;
The harvest field far round them sheds
Plenty in many a sheaf.
And they, half fragrant, brighten earth,
Low in the shadows where there's dearth

Of pain or pleasure, love or life,
Far from the world's mad, ceaseless strife.

They speak no message, act no part,
They have no works to show;
Deep hidden here they touch no heart,
And do not ask to know;
Yet if one meet the eye of man
It all unfolds the master plan—
The power that painted this fair bloom,
For man can have no futile doom.
—Charles W. Stevenson, in New York Observer.

The City of Silence.

Ancient Greece, hundreds of years ago, was divided into several independent states. One of these was Sparta and the men of Sparta were wonderfully strong and brave, and so warlike that all the neighboring cities and states were much in fear of these fierce men, who fought for the love of fighting.

Now, about twenty miles south of Sparta there was another city, called Amyclae, which was still free, although constantly in dread of being captured by its northern neighbors. There were constant reports that the Spartans were coming, and the people were in such an excitement every time these false reports were spread that at last the leading Amyclaeans passed a law forbidding any one to mention Sparta by name on pain of death.

But at last the Spartans did come, and, although some of the Amyclaeans heard of their approach, they were afraid to give warning to their friends, for fear of the punishment threatened.

So the Spartans attacked the city, which was, of course, not in a state of defense, and it was taken and the people made captives to their enemies.

That was a time when strict obedience to a law caused dire results, was it not?

Secret of a Water Light.

If you were to announce some evening that you could stick a lighted candle into a glass of water until it was submerged almost up to the wick, and that the candle would not go out, but would burn down to the very end of its wick instead, wouldn't everybody laugh at you?

Get a candle; drive a very small



The Candle in the Glass.

nail into the bottom end. The candle should be about three inches long. Fill a glass with water; light the candle and stick it into the glass. The candle floats and the nail weighs

down the end, which results in the candle floating perpendicularly, as shown in the illustration.

But what is to prevent it from burning down to the surface of the water and going out?

That is the secret of the trick, and not one person in a hundred would think of the true cause, which is very simple and natural.

The candle loses its weight as it burns; the remaining portion, growing lighter, keeps rising to the top, pulling the nail up with it; the water maintains the same distance from the wick it had in the beginning of the experiment, and the candle burns merrily away until it reaches the end of its wick, when there will still be enough tallow left to support the nail—if it is small enough—and then it is your turn to laugh.

Trick With a Tumbler.

Cut an orange into halves and from one half remove the pulp, leaving the



Position of the Orange.

peel entire in the form of a hollow hemisphere or cup. With a penknife or a toothpick bore two holes in the bottom of this cup and put it into a tumbler, forcing it down about half way.

The tumbler should be a little smaller than the orange used, so that you will have to squeeze the peel-cup a little in order to get it in.

Then it will press firmly against the glass and stay where you put it instead of dropping to the bottom. Put the cup in right side up, that is, with the yellow peel below, and pour red wine into it. The wine will run through the holes, and you must keep on pouring until the level of the wine in the glass just touches the bottom of the cup. Now fill the rest of the glass above the orange cup with water, and await results.

Soon you will see a thin red jet of wine rising like a fountain through the water from one of the holes. At the same time, though you cannot see it so well, a colorless stream of water flows downward through the other hole.

The two liquids do not mix much, but merely exchange places, so that in a few minutes the lower part of the glass, below the cup, will contain the water, and the upper part will be filled with wine.

This is as it should be, because water is heavier than wine and naturally goes to the bottom. The curious thing is that the wine and water do not mix, but each selects one hole for itself. It is like the trick with the candle burning in a lamp chimney with a partition at the top, so that cold fresh air goes down on one side, while the hot air and smoke escape on the other.

Oil may be substituted for the wine, or you may fill the bottom of the glass with water, and then pour in milk or some thin-colored syrup.

A Buried City.

You will find a city buried within two words in one of the lines of the following stanza. It is a city far from this country. Can you tell what it is?

Vain is this Orient beauty's smile,
Too far these weary travelers roam;
Hope kindles not at fairest wile
Which fails to bring the western home.

Rule of the Incas

The government of the Incas is said to have been the most enlightened despotism that ever existed and about the nearest approach to a Utopia which has yet been reached by any people, says the Scientific American. There was allotted to each man free of charge a dwelling site and an extended area of land for him to till and cultivate for the maintenance of his family. The surplus of products from this tract, left over from the immediate needs of the owner, was given as a tribute to the Inca government, and used for religious, charitable and other purposes at their sovereign city of Cuzco. Under their wise and just civic administration, crime and public corruption and theft were not known. In Cuzco it is stated that a resident with 100 bars of silver and gold piled up in his house, left it wide open, only placing a small stick across the door as a sign that the master was out—and nobody went in. Agriculture was a chief pursuit followed. Cotton, beans, maize and cocoa were raised by the coast people. On the plateau the domestication of the llama and alpaca was the favorite occupation.

The whole tribe was divided into numerous clans. The powers of administration centered in the elective dignitaries, a military leader and the head of the religious system. There was also a council of chiefs. None of these offices was hereditary and could not be occupied by sons unless they

were especially chosen for the position. The succession of the chief Inca did not fall upon the shoulders of his child. This was due to the clan organization, which governed the affairs of state. A man could not marry a woman of his own clan, but had to select one from another. This was the main unit for holding the tribe together. Woman had no choice in public affairs, but ruled supreme in the home. She was admitted to esoteric societies, of which there were many. They also practiced healing and became priestesses. Many complicated and elaborate ceremonial and religious rites were observed and feasts and offerings of some kind were of almost daily occurrence, and the preparation for the observance of these occupied a great deal of the time of the people. Contrary to statements hitherto made, the sun was not the chief object of worship, but the moon, stars, thunder, lightning and natural objects and phenomena were included in the religious code. In Cuzco some forty different shrines existed.

What height Inca culture might have reached had it been allowed to follow a natural course of development is one of conjecture and speculation. Judging from their cyclopean architectural remains and from the splendid examples of their technique, which is so strikingly displayed in the specimens obtained, it seems most likely that they would have kept abreast of the ancient Mexicans.

Great Woman Rules China

When the time came for adieu, her majesty mingled with her guests, the emperor following closely; and as Mrs. Conger got beyond me I stepped aside for royalty. Imagine my astonishment when the empress dowager turned, took me by both hands, stroked my arm and inquired how I liked China and how long I would remain, concluding by asking me to come and see her again when I returned to visit Mrs. Conger! I did not lose my equanimity, but studied this most remarkable woman at closest range.

Could she of dignified mien, deep-set unflinching eyes, rare smile and melodious voice be the most despotic female sovereign in the history of the world? Has she two distinctly opposite natures? Is this the secret of her marvelous power? Born in obscurity, the daughter of a minor officer, a favorite concubine of the harem, young and inexperienced, she reached

the pinnacle of authority by incredible ability, shrewdness and daring.

Through all the intrigue of the Chinese court since she first usurped the throne she has borne a charmed life, and her enemies have arisen only to disappear with terrible swiftness, while her autocracy remains unchallenged. With relentless will she has stripped the emperor of the last vestige of the legitimate authority, which, for a brief period, he had exercised under the wise guidance of Kang Yu Wei, absolutely controlling his every word and act, as well as the earthly destiny of 400,000,000 of subjects.

And this most fascinating hostess, urging us to "stay longer" and "come again," annihilating conventionality and precedent, was Tsi An the Great, woman ruler in this land of Confucius, where to be a woman, according to the philosophy of the Great Sage, is to be despised among men!—The Century.

Geniuses in the Home

Should geniuses marry? For sure!
Especially warblers who sing
In metrical measures—get onto the pleasures
Of something like this in the spring—
"Adelbert Montessor McSwat,
The stair carpet's out on the grass;
O! why do you falter? For what
Did I marry a poet, alas?"
(Adelbert Montessor, poor bard!
He raises the dust in the yard,
As he swipes the ingrains to the musical strain—
"B'gee! but this grilling is hard.")

Should geniuses marry? You bet!
Especially sculpturers who "skulp,"
For what can be better than marital fetter
To smash all his dreams into pulp?
"Augustus De Lancy Soapine,
Please give that Apollo the go;
I think you are awfully mean—
The stovepipe has tumbled, you know."
(Augustus de Lancy, poor wight!
He pounds the stovepipe with delight,
As he lifts a soft lay in cadence so gay—
"Great Scott! but these joints are tight.")

Should geniuses marry? Why cert!
Especially fellows who paint;
For what could be nicer, more fitting,
sufficer
Than this? Do you follow my plaint?
"J. Ultramarine Angelo,
The water pipe's bursted once more;
Quit painting and hasten below—
The baby's afloat on the floor."
(J. Ultramarine plugs the hole
With his finger while fretting his soul;
Alack! the waves creep and he's soaking knee deep
As he squats there alone in the coal.)

Should geniuses marry? They must!
Especially musical ones;
The violin player, the piano slayer,
As well as the lesser small guns,
"Olle Bulley Corneto Von Squeak,
The butcher, the baker are here;
I wish you would go down and speak,
And tell them we've gone for a year."
(Olle Bulley Corneto he dumps
Out his notes—but, alas, they're not trumps;
He rips out his hair and dissembles in air,
And into the next county jumps.)
—Horace Seymour Keller in New York Herald.