

AD INFINITUM.

One day an ardent youth whose whole heart burned
With feverish love that had not been returned,
Sought an alchemist for the thing he yearned.

"There is a maiden's heart that I desire,"
Said he. "Good sir, a potion I require
To kindle in her breast love's fiercest fire.

"I'd have my soft approach breed in her cheek
The tell-tale blush. I'd have her gentle, meek.
Can you inform me what's the thing I seek?

"No other maid has any charm for me.
Without her love I'll perish quick," quoth he.
"Come help me out of my extremity."

"Take this," replied the ancient patriarch,
Producing vial filled with fluid dark.
"Twill kindle in her breast the proper spark."

The lover thanked him kindly and withdrew,
And swiftly to the maid he loved he flew;
But he was back in weeks that numbered two.

"I find," quoth he; "this is most wondrous stuff.
I'd like some more, for this is not enough."
"What!" cried the old alchemist all in a huff,

"Does she not love you—long to be your bride?
What more do you desire?" The lover sighed.
"You little know the ways of men," he cried.

"The girl you mention was a winsome pearl.
She loves me, but what matters that, you churl?
I want this bottle for another girl."

TOM MASSON.

THE COMMONWEAL.

I'd like to join the commonweal, and think, perhaps, I can; as proud as Lucifer I'd feel, and big as any man. This is the way I felt and thought about two weeks ago; I hoped to join, but I did not, and now I don't feel so. I'd rather work for Calvert's son, at forty cents a day, than mosey down to Washington, and walk three fourths the way. Then I don't fancy camping out, with scarce a bit to eat, dressed in thin pants and roundabout, and nothing on my feet. The officers are cared for well, and handsomely are fed, in some grand, cosy, warm hotel—each furnished with a bed. The men lay out upon the grass, exposed to wind and rain, and so the weary hours pass, in hunger and in pain. The big-bugs in a carriage sit, or on their horses ride; they do not care a little bit for trampers at their side. I do not like to beg or steal from people on the way; but this is what the commonweal is doing—people say. What they will do I do not know in Washington, D. C., but I've concluded not to go—I'll just wait here and see.

DISAPPOINTED WITH THE OCEAN.

"I read with a good deal of surprise in *Harper's Monthly* for May that Mr. William Dean Howells was disappointed in the ocean when he first saw it, says "The Saunterer" in *Town Topics*. "He had seen lakes and bathtubs and glasses of water before that, and the everlasting sea struck him as a small affair. He turned away from the wide waters when he reached the seacoast, and found pleasure in looking at some trees that Longfellow had written verses about. I am afraid that Mr. Howells was considerably affected at that time of his life. And I hope that he has learned since then that the ocean should not be disappointing to young authors. It is a bigger thing than Longfellow's poetry, I should say, and can teach more to the mind of man than anything yet written in books. It may be all right for a writer to set it down that he was disappointed when he saw the ocean. He might add; 'And I didn't think much of the earth, either.' It looks airy and effective for a man to show that he was blase before he left school. Let it be remembered about William D. Howells that when he first looked on the ocean he was disappointed. It was nothing but water."

AT ELEVENTH AND O.

O, where is the crowd which so recently stood with gabble and bluster and blow, demanding, not work, but tobacco and food, at the corner—Eleventh and O. I met there a mason, whose piteous groan and suffering I hoped to allay; I offered a job, but he'd not touch a stone for less than four dollars a day. I went to another, whose sorrowful face depicted his poverty gaunt; I offered to him a desirable place, but he said. "It's not work that I want." I asked, then, of others their several needs, and each one averred, "I don't know," and this is the way that a fellow succeeds at the corner—Eleventh and O. Then I thought of the scripture, which closely implies that a man must his destiny carve, and in this, I believe, the true policy lies—"If a man will not work, he may starve." But where are they now, that pestiferous crowd, which stood at Eleventh and O? Have they gone to the grave yard wrapped up in a shroud—I'd give half a dollar to know.

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