

"My Mind to Me a Kingdom Is"

P. S. Kirby, 331 W. Huron street, Chicago, writes: "This philosophical song appears to have been famous in the sixteenth century. It is quoted by Ben Jonson in his play of 'Every Man Out of his Humour,' acted in 1599. I send it to The Commoner, as it may be interesting to its readers:"

My mind to me a kingdom is;
Such perfect joy therein I find
As far exceeds all earthly bliss
That God or Nature hath assigned.
Though much I want, that most would have
Yet still my mind forbids to crave.

Content I live, this is my stay;
I seek no more than may suffice;
I press to bear no haughty sway;
Look, what I lack my mind supplies,
Do! thus I triumph like a king,
Content with that my mind doth bring.

I see how plenty surfeits oft,
And hasty climbers soonest fall;
I see that such as sit aloft
Mishaps doth threaten most of all;
These get with toil, and keep with fear;
Such cares my mind could never bear.

No princely pomp, nor wealthy store,
No force to win the victory;
No wily wit to salve a sore,
No shape to win a lover's eye;
To none of these I yield as thrall,
For why, my mind despiseth all.

Some have too much, yet still they crave,
I little have, yet seek no more;
They are but poor, though much they have;
And I am rich with little store;
They poor, I rich; they beg, I give;
They lack, I lend; they pine, I live.

I laugh not at another's loss,
I grudge not at another's gain;
No worldly wave my mind can toss,
I brook that is another's bane,
I fear no foe, nor fawn on friend
I loath not life, nor dread mine end.

I joy not in no earthly bliss;
I weigh not Croesus' wealth a straw;
For care, I care not what it is;
I fear not fortune's fatal law,
My mind is such as may not move
For beauty bright or force of love.

I wish but what I have at will;
I wander not to seek for more;
I like the plain, I climb no hill;
In greatest storms I sit on shore
And laugh at them that toil in vain
To get what must be lost again.

I kiss not where I wish to kill;
I feign not love where most I hate;
I break no sleep to win my will;
I wait not at the mighty's gate;
I scorn no poor, I fear no rich,
I feel no want, nor have too much.

The court, ne cart, I like ne loath;
Extremes are counted worst of all;
The golden mean betwixt them both
Doth surest sit, and fears no fall;
This is my choice, for why, I find
No wealth is like a quiet mind.

My wealth is health and perfect ease,
My conscience clear my chief defense;
I never seek by bribes to please,
Nor by desert to give offense;
Thus do I live, thus will I die
Would all did so as well as I.

THE DISTANT CARES

Happy little boy, playing all day long,
There are troubles waiting patiently for you!
Gleeful little minstrel, sing your merry song
While the winds are balmy and the sky is blue!
Shame on him, oh, rosy, laughing little boy,
Who sits down to tell you in a dismal tone
That the world has troubles, that not all is joy,
And that gladness cannot always be your own.

Happy little maid, singing all the day,
Many aches are waiting to assail your heart;
You will some day wonder, sitting in dismay,
Why the fates have cast you for your bitter part.
Shame on them, oh, lovely, laughing little maid,
Who attempt to rob you of your present glee;
Play away untroubled, laugh on unafraid
Through the careless childhood God has given thee.

When my heart is glad, let my joy remain!
If you know that trouble waits to cloud my brow,
If you know tomorrow is to bring me pain,
Do not come to rudely tell me of it now.
If my hopes are futile, seek me not in haste
To impart the sorrow I will have to bear;
Oh, the precious, priceless moments that we waste
Looking sadly forward to a distant care!

—S. E. Kiser, in Chicago Record-Herald.

OVER THE HILLS

Over the hills and far away
A little boy steals from his morning's play,
And under the blossoming apple tree
He lies and he dreams of the things to be;
Of battles fought and of victories won,
Of wrongs o'erthrown and of great deeds done—
Of the valor that he shall prove some day,
Over the hills and far away—
Over the hills and far away!

Over the hills and far away
It's, oh, for the toil the livelong day!
But it mattered not to the soul aflame
With a love for riches and power and fame!
On, oh, man! while the sun is high—
On to the certain joys that lie
Yonder where blazeth the noon of day!
Over the hills and far away—
Over the hills and far away!

Over the hills and far away
An old man lingers at close of day;
Now that his journey is almost done,
His battles fought and his victories won—
The old time honesty and truth,
The trustfulness and the friends of youth,
Home and mother—where are they?
Over the hills and far away?
Over the hills and far away!

—Eugene Field.

WHEN WE GROW OLD

The tallest lilies droop at eventide,
The sweetest roses fall from off the stem;
The rarest things on earth can not abide,
And we are passing, too, away like them;
We're growing old!
We had our dreams, those rosy dreams of youth!
They faded, and 'twas well. This afterprime
Hath brought us fuller hopes; and yet, forsooth,
We drop a tear now in this later time
To think we're old.

We smile at those poor fancies of the past—
A saddened smile, almost akin to pain;
Those high desires, those purposes so vast,
Ah, our poor hearts! They can not come again!
We're growing old!

Old? Well, the heavens are old; this earth is,
too;
Old wine is best, maturest fruit most sweet;
Much have we lost, more gained, although 'tis true
We tread life's way with most uncertain feet.
We're growing old!

We move along, and scatter as we pace
Soft graces, tender hopes on every hand;
At last, with gray-streaked hair and hollow face,
We step across the boundary of the land
Where none are old.

—British Weekly.

The Evolution of a Language

It was Wellington who said "The Lord's prayer contains the sum total of religion and morals." A writer in the Houston, (Tex.) Post, says:

"Words are things," says Abbott, and the force of this receives oft illustration in daily life. A quarter of a century ago the religious world devoted a large part of its energies to controversies touching the meaning of scriptural terms and phrases. Happily that day is passed and nobler missions now engage the activities of Christianity. The evolution of governments has been characterized by an evolution of ideas which was symptomized by an evolution of words. The term democracy had a meaning to Cicero which would not be recognized by a disciple of Jefferson. Language, itself, is ever in a state of turbulent evolution and each generation delights in setting at defiance the cherished grammar of its immediate predecessor. An Englishman of the middle ages could not make himself understood by his descendants of today, and a Celt of the same period turned loose now in Ireland would not be able to secure a drink of water, unless he got it through pantomime. No better illustration could be given of the evolution of language than is furnished by the various forms in which different ages have translated the Lord's prayer. The earliest Saxon version, of which we have any record, runs as follows:
Fader ure, thu the eart on Hoefenum,
So thin nama gehagod;
To-becume thin Rice;
Gewordhe thin Willa on Eorthen swa swa on Hoefenum.
Urne ge dagwamlican Hlaf syle us today;
And forgyf us ure Gyltas swa swa we forgyfadh urun Gyltendum;
And ne gelade thu us on Costnunge.
Ac alys us of Yfle. Sothlice.

Several hundred years later, and about A. D. 900, the evolutionary process brought forth the following:

Fader unser es the is on Hoefnum,
Gihalgod bih Noma thin;
To cymeth Rice thin;
Sic Willa thin sic swa on Heafne and on Heorho;
Hlaf userne daghwamlice sel us to Dage;
And forgef us Synne use swa fastlice and ec we

forgef as eghwelce Scylde user;
And ne usih on lad thu in Costhunge;
Ah afria usih jfrom Yfle.

Three hundred years more had passed before the prayer which Christ gave to men assumed a form that would be understood by an English child of this generation, and then it ran as follows:

Oure Fader, that art in Hevenes,
Halewid be thin Name;
Thy kingdom come;
Be thi Wille done as in Hevene and in Erthe.
Gyff to us this day our Brede over other substance;
And forgyue to us our Dettis, as forgyuen to oure Dettours;
And lede us not into Temptation;
But delyue us from Yvel. Amen, that is, so be it.

When Columbus came to America he rendered it thus:

Oure Fadir that art in Hevenis,
Halewid be thi name;
Thi kingdom come to thee;
Be Thi Will done in Eerthe as in Hevene;
Glue us this day oure Breed over othre substance;
And forgive to us Dettis, as we forgiven oure Dettours;
And lede us not into Temptation;
But deliver us from Ivel. Amen.

No classic of all the ages has breathed through as many human hearts as the Lord's prayer. No sentence ever framed has passed as many children's tongues. A well-known preacher of the Methodist connection made this the theme of a sermon preached at Cleburne many years ago and took the entire prayer for his text. He spoke of the world-wide familiarity with the text of the prayer and by way of illustration, in the middle of his sermon, essayed to recite it. At the third verse he stalled, as the result of sudden nervousness and the harder he strove to get his bearings the worse his memory balked. The audience tittered and no avenue of escape was presented but to turn to the concordance, open his Bible at the prayer and read it off. That minister is still in active work and it is a safe guess that he is now so familiar with the prayer that he would recognize it in any of the forms in which it is presented above.