

POETRY OF THE TIMES.

Naughty, But Sweet.
Somebody's lips were close to mine;
That tempted I couldn't resist.

The Kan a Editor.
Now doth the Western Editor
Improve each gliding minute,

A Christmas Gift.
What will I give my baby dear,
For Christmas? 'Tis a hard day!

THE HIDDEN WILL.

When they told old Ethan Vanwilt
That his days were numbered, the first
thing he said was:
"Send for Miss Work; I must see
Miss Work before I die."

Laura turned quite white when the
strange, imperative summons first
came, and then she was told that he
who sent was dying.

"What can he want? Shall you go,
Laura?" asked Pauline Ruble, who
was visiting her.

"Oh, yes, yes, poor old man! I
am sorry for him. Certainly I will go,"
Pauline put her arm around the
slight figure, and drew the golden
head down upon her shoulder.

"Little too," she thought, as she
caressed the fair face with her slim,
white hand. "Of course it is some
thing about Lewis Vanwilt."

"I had better go with you, dear, don't
you think so?"
"O, if you only will," Laura cried
eagerly.

"Mr. Work was quite an invalid, and
could not accompany her daughter, so
she, also, was very glad to have Pauline
go with her.

sealed, he told the lawyer where to
put it in his desk, which stood within
his view.

"Is it safe here?" Mr. Scribe asked.
"Is no key."

"Who would touch it?" the sick man
asked, irritably. "It would benefit
no one but Lewis, and the Vanwirts
are not thieves, whatever else they
be."

Pauline would like to have stayed
and witnessed this interview also, but
she did not dare. Laura must be
wondering greatly now where she was.

She found that Laura had come out
of the sick room so agitated that Mrs.
Becket, the housekeeper, had made
her lie down, and was now sitting
with her.

Pauline took the housekeeper's
place beside her friend, and in a short
time Laura fell asleep. As Pauline
sat there watching the white, childish
face of the girl she pretended to love,

Laura was already rich, she was
poor, and yet to her who had already
so much, the great Vanwilt property
had just been given. She envied her
the handsome lover, with whom she
was herself more than half in love,

and whom, hitherto, she had not been
without hope of winning away from
Laura.

Suddenly, as she sat there, the deep
silence was broken by the sound of
some commotion in the house—she
heard steps and excited voices.

"What can it be?" she wondered.
"Mr. Vanwilt must be worse."

She sat listening some moments,
then rose softly. Laura was still
sleeping. Pauline succeeded in opening
the door, without disturbing her,
and stole into the hall.

From the landing she could see the
servants below hurrying about with
awe-struck looks.

An impulse of ungovernable curi-
osity seized her. She watched her
chance, and, gliding down the stairs,
skipped through the open door with-
out being seen, and passed swiftly
along the veranda, till she came to
the window where she had already
spent so much time. One glance at
the bed told her what had happened.

Ethan Vanwilt was dead! A sudden
awe and horror seized her. She was
about to flee the spot, when her eyes
fell upon the desk in which she had
seen the will placed. "I wonder if it
is there yet," she thought.

"I am sure I can reach it from here.
I should know it at a glance," she
mused. She put her hand in and
raised the lid. There it was.

A wicked thought crossed her.
What if she took it.
At that thought she snatched the
will, and hiding it in the folds of her
dress, she hurriedly retraced her steps.

Ethan Vanwilt had been dead
about a month. His grandson had
entered into possession of his estate
without hindrance. There were re-
mains about a will; but when it could
not be found Mr. Scribe concluded
that the old man had destroyed it, and
refused, when questioned, to tell who
was named in it.

Pauline Ruble was still visiting
Laura Work, although, truth to tell,
her welcome had grown somewhat
cold both on Laura's part and Mrs.
Work's.

tered the drawing-room through one
of the open French windows. Laura
sat there, with her mother. She had
been crying. No one else was in the
room.

"I find," he said, "that you are
a shaking voice, that my grand-
father left his money to you. There
is the will that has been missing so
long. I hope, Laura, that you will
be a great deal happier than Mr.
Lester than you have been with him.
But he will never love you any better
than I do."

"Laura detests Robert Lester,"
cried Mrs. Work, taking in the situa-
tion at once. "She has never cared
for any one but you Lewis Vanwilt,
and you ought to know it."

"Oh my darling!" ejaculated Lew-
is, wildly; extending his arm, is it
true?"

In another instant Laura was sob-
bing on his shoulder.

Pauline went quietly to her own
room, and spent the night in packing.
When, the next morning she announced
her approaching departure, no one
objected.

THE AMERICAN CHRISTMAS.

The old "Merrie Christmas" of
England, with all its glad fun and
wild revelry, takes on a different
character when filtered through the
American mind. Retaining its mirth
and glee, it takes on a more sub-
stantial texture, so to speak. Through
all the gladness thrills a tender,
sacred sadness that is yet not sorrow,

but which just touches the day with
holy memories. In England, where
Christmas carols are sung from door
to door, where the first sounds of the
morning come in music as the children
go about and sing,

God rest you all, good gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay;
For Jesus Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas day.

The selection of Christmas gifts is a
matter so delicate, so complex, so
modified by invisible circumstances
that it is a subject impossible to out-
line, and yet there is an ever applic-
able rule, which is, after all, only a
modification of the Golden Rule—
that shall in every sense gratify
both receiver and giver, and that it
shall not wound the most delicate
feelings.

The only real reason for offer-
ing a Christmas gift is the spirit that
prompts it. Unless you have given
your friend words and loving regard,
more precious than all outward
tokens, you have no right to offer
him a Christmas gift. This is es-
pecially the festival of the family,
the house and the church, and this
manifold character may be
observed in gifts. The ideal
Christmas is to have made some
one happy, and for this the
means are as different as are the in-
dividuals. The gift should be adapted
to the circumstances of both the giver
and the recipient. To receive a costly
gift which one knows his friend
could not afford, and which will en-
tail on him many a sacrifice of needed
comforts, is a source of pain only, and
the more so that it is hardly of a na-
ture to be expressed. A gift that
brings with it a perpetual sense of ob-
ligation, is worse than valueless.

Again, luxurious presents which the
giver can afford, but which the recipi-
ent cannot afford to have, are utter-
ly out of taste and betray an absence
of thought rather than the delicate
devotion that should determine the
offering. It may, at first, seem an-
nually that one cannot afford to
generously possess an article of lux-
ury, but the less true. We all
remember the ministers' silk
stockings, which absolutely compelled
him to refresh his wardrobe, which
he could ill afford; but being the
gift of a wealthy parishioner, he dared
not offend her by not using her gift,—
the hose of those days being a
prominent article of costume. And
we all remember, too, the new parlor
carpet of Christopher Crowfield, which
ultimately entailed upon that genial
gentleman the entire refurnishing of
his by way of preserving harmony in
its appearance.

The young married
couple who are homeloving, or im-
ited but tasteful and comfortable
the gift of a diamond pin or ring
would be far less pleasure, because
it affords far less pleasure, than would
a gift of a set of books, of a fine pic-
ture, or some rare and beautiful en-
gravings. At the first reverse of for-
tune, the diamonds would be the first
thing to find their way to "uncle" in
his mysterious precincts of the three
gift balls, while books and pictures are
a joy forever in the simplest of homes.
To a boy full of fun and frolic the gift
of a pair of skates would doubtless
afford more pleasure than the gift
of that splendid new illustrated vol-
ume of Longfellow's poems. A gift
need not, either, be purely ornamental.
Articles of use are quite as ap-
propriate when mutual circumstances
indicate them. We are accused of
being a very practical nation, and
the American Christmas partakes of
this character. While we bring
rare flowers to the church and the
altar in church, while we wreath
our homes in Christmas greens, and
even have our holly and mistletoe
bough; while we make gifts of rare
and beautiful things from all parts
of the world, we do not yet forget to
send the substantial of a Christmas
dinner to those who might not rejoice
in one otherwise, nor forget the cheap
toys that make glad the hearts of the
poor and desolate little ones of earth.
The American Christmas is a complex
subject after all; it has as many phases
as it has people who celebrate it.
From an observance of the church it
has come to be a national holiday, and

its influence is toward the development
of all that is highest and most unselfish
in humanity.

Christmas offerings have their re-
actionary effect upon character. Like
the quality of mercy, they are a
blessing to him who gives and to him
who takes. The true spirit of Chris-
mas is the culture of all that is inest-
and sweetest, and highest in life. Far
beyond any greatness of achievement;
beyond any flash of material success,
are the sterner sure graces of character
which transform life, itself, into one
grand and immortal success. And,
after all, we can sing to but one un-
erring rule for the Christmas joy—to
make someone happy, some life glad
dearer than it was before, for the sake
of Him in whose name we celebrate
Christmas.

LITERARY NOTES.

The January Atlantic begins a new
volume with a number of great and
varied excellence. The first chapters
of Miss Phelps's serial story, "Friends:
A Duet," are so rigorous and interest-
ing that her readers will be impatient
for the next installment. Mr. Aldrich
contributes a most interesting paper
on "Smith," which will have a pecu-
liar interest for a host of readers. Hen-
ry James' "Portrait of a Lady," needs
no commendation to the multitude
who follow his stories with an admira-
tion which few living novelists com-
mand. John Fiske has an article on
sociology and Hero-Worship," which
takes exception very strongly and
convincingly to the article by Wil-
liam James recently published in The
Atlantic. Miss Harriet W. Preston
contributes a delightful literary-his-
torical essay on "A Symposium of
Sixty Years Ago." William M. Ros-
sett begins his series of articles on
"The Wives of Poets," with glimpses
of the wives of Euripides, Lucretius,
Ezra, Albert, Cervantes, Lopez de
Vega, and Corneille. Richard
Grant White's paper on "Sara
Bernhardt" will attract marked
attention just now. Mr. Whittier's
tender poem in memory of Lydia
Maria Child is one of the noblest and
most charming poems Mr. Whittier
has ever written. Mr. Steadman has
a fine poem on "Ye Tombs of ye Poet
Chaucer." Other poems, essays, es-
tories and an unusually varied "Con-
tributors' Club" complete a super-
number of this magazine. Now is
the time to subscribe for it. \$4 00 a
year. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Bos-
ton.

HONEY FOR THE LADIES.

Hawthorn blossoms are favorite
corsage flowers.
Kid gloves are now worn to come
up and cover the elbow.

The envelope shape muff is worn
with nearly all opera toilets.

Frosted silver is very fashionable,
and is imported in antique designs.

Chestnuts with their leaves and
their prickly burrs are seen upon Paris
bonnets.

The new peasant dresses are made
of ladies' cloth and trimmed with gay
plaids.

Thistles of spun glass studded with
diamonds are elegant ornaments for
the hair.

Leopard skins made into muffs and
flat collars are the newest furs for
young ladies.

Stamped velvet in beautiful even-
ing shades is a popular material for
ball toilets.

Large boxes of gold brocaded or
plain satin ribbons are worn at the
left side of the belt.

Amber cockroaches and grasshop-
pers with uncloud eyes, have made
their appearance.

The newest style of poke bonnets
have the brims shelving downward
instead of upward.

Stripes are rapidly taking the place
of small-figured Watteau brocades as
portions of combination toilets.

Jet is not quite so much in favor in
Paris as formerly, and hatkerchief
costumes have ceased to be fashion-
able.

"Darling," she said, "tell me
something about your first wife's
love." "Yes; but my first wife did
not ask me anything about yours."

Leap-year—She: "Are you engaged
for the German?" He (with exag-
geration): "No, I'm not." She (with
pity): "Oh, that's too bad. Good
evening. See you later."

The latest style of coiffure is to coil
the hair in tight rings at the sides of
the head, Japanese fashion, keeping
them in place with long jeweled pins
or ornaments.

The sapphire of deepest blue is the
favorite of the moment for finger
rings, and is often combined with
diamonds in hoop shades, straight
around the finger or else in a diagonal
row of stones.

The principal of a young ladies'
seminary in Syracuse has an exhaust-
ingly detailed her pupils with "the
pompant" that when alone her girls
of sixteen act like sixty.—[Puck.]

They were sitting together Sunday
evening, with an album or two be-
tween them, when she pleasantly
asked: "How would you like to have my
mother live with you?" In just five
seconds he had his hat half-way
down over his face and was looking
through the gate.

A lady recently visited a clairvoy-
ant in order to hear something about
her husband's life. The clairvoyant
said: "You must bring me some of
your husband's hair before I can go
into the land of dreams." "But,"
said the lady, "my husband is dead."

"Still," said the clairvoy-
ant, "you may pull a little more from
the sides."

Strange Burial Scene.
Detroit Free Press.

James Dykes is perhaps the most
celebrated checker player in Canada.
His wife died recently, and he at-
tempted to supplant the clergyman
and conduct the services himself.

Then followed an unusually scene at
the grave, the bystanders forcing
Dykes to stop reading. The case at-
tracted considerable attention in Can-
ada, and Dykes himself sends the fol-
lowing account of the scene to The
London Free Press:

He claims that it was his wife's re-
quest that any remarks made at the
grave should be made by himself, and
accordingly he spent a great amount
of time in preparing the following
panegyric:

My FRIENDS—We have assembled
to-day to perform the last sad rites to
the dead. I say my friends, for I verily
believe there are none present who
have come here simply to measure by
the tower he shall shed, and the an-
gush that wrings the heart of an af-
flicted husband and father.

The kind and affectionate wife, the
tender mother, at an age when the
"shadows" were still falling towards the
west, death touched her face, serene,
and she fell into that dreamless sleep
that "kisses down the eyelids still,"

She awoke on the dark, misty

ocean of eternity, whence no breeze
ever blows hitherward. But if there
be a heaven and if there be a right-
eous God, His breath must swell the
sail and direct its course to that beau-
tiful shore where sorrow is known no
more, and where happiness reigneth
forever.

O, sorrow! how close thou treadest
on the heels of enjoyment. The rose
has its thorn, the peach its worm, and
decay lies concealed in the chalice of
the flower. All earthly things are
doomed to pass away. Death is a
debt of nature we all rich and poor
alike, sooner or later must pay. When
that grim messenger on the pale horse
shall call for us, we must go. We see
the grave open to-day to receive the
tenant, and the wintered turf and the
cold clay will lie in its bosom to
sleep the sleep that knows no waking.

Born of pain but respectable pa-
rents, her heart was none the less pure,
her mind none the less noble. In the
language of the poet she "gave no
miserly all she had, a tear." Possessed
of a superior education, an insatiable
thirst for knowledge and a firm de-
termination to examine into all matters
for herself, she sagely devoured the
standard works of science and
philosophy, and formed for her-
self the basis of a religion purely
her own. No, not purely her own.
She venerated the name of Him who
said: "The world is my country, and
to do good is my religion." Although
rocked in the Catholicist cradle, she
adhered with all her heart and soul
that infamous doctrine of infidelity.

She could not believe that the
mother could be happy in heaven and
look down upon her little fair-haired
boy writhing in the red-hot agonies of
hell.

At this point she complains that
the mourners of dissent which had fol-
lowed the reading so far broke out
violently. Some of the bystanders,
vexed at the tone of her remarks,
went up to him and snatched the
paper out of his hand and bore it in
pieces, vowing that such sentiments
were utterly intolerable in a Christian
community. After this rud-
e interruption the burial was duly pre-
ceeded with. Dykes claims that
there was nothing objectionable in
the paper.

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