

Words.

FREDERICK LAMBRIDGE.

Ah me! those terrible tongues of ours!
Are we half aware of their mighty powers?
Do we ever trouble our heads at all
Where the blow may strike, or the hint
may fall?
The latest chirp of that "little bird,"
That spied story you must have heard,
We jerk them away in our gossip rash,
And somebody's glass of course goes
smash.
What fumes have been blasted and broken,
What pestilence sinks have been stirred
By a word in lightness spoken,
By only an idle word!
A sneer—a shrug—a whisper low—
They are poisoned shafts from an ambush-
ed bow;
Shot by the coward, the fool, the knave,
They pierce the mail of the great and
brave,
Vain is the buckler of wisdom or pride
To turn the pitiless point aside;
The lip may curl with a careless smile,
But the heart drips blood—drips blood the
while.
Ah me! what hearts have been broken,
What rivers of blood been stirred,
By a word in malice spoken,
By only a bitter word!
A kindly word and a tender tone—
Only to God is their virtue known!
They can lift from the dust the abject
—head,
They can turn a foe to a friend instead;
The heart close barred with passion and
pride
Will fling at their knock its portals wide,
And the hate that blights and the scorn
that sears
Will melt in the fountain of child-like
tears,
What ice-bound griefs have been broken
What rivers of love been stirred,
By a word in kindness spoken,
By only a gentle word!

A Cycle.

I.
Spring-time—is it spring-time?
Why, as I remember spring,
Almonds bloom and blackbirds sing;
Such a shower of tinted petals drifting to
the clover floor,
Such a multitudinous rapture raining from
the sycamore;
And among the orchard trees—
Acres musical with bees—
Moans a wild dove, making silence seem
more silent than before.
Yes, that is the blackbird's note;
Almond petals are afloat;
But I had not heard nor seen them, for my
heart was far away.
Birds and bees and fragrant orchards—ah!
they cannot bring the May;
For the human presence only,
That has left, my ways so lonely,
Ever can bring back the spring-time to my
autumn of to-day.
II.
Autumn—is it autumn?
I remember autumn yields
Dusty roads and stubble-fields,
Weary hills, no longer rippled o'er their
wind-swept slopes with grain,
Trees all gray with dust, that gather even
thicker till the rain;
And where noisy waters drove
Downward from the heights above,
Only bare white channels wander stonily
across the plain.
Yes, I see the hills are dry,
Stubble-fields about me lie.
What care I when in the channels of my
life once more I see
Sweetest founts, long sealed and sunken,
bursting upward, glad and free?
Hills may parch or laugh in green-
ness,
Sky be sadness or serenity,
Thou my life, my best beloved, all my
spring-time comes with thee.
—MILICENT W. SHINN, in *Californian* for
June.

Wants.

We women want so many things
And first we call for happiness,
The careless boon the hour brings,
The smile, the song, and the caress.
And when the fancy fades, we cry,
Nay, give us one on whom to spend
Our heart's desire! When Love goes by
With folded wings, we seek a friend.
And when our children come, to prove
Our hearts but slumbered, and can wake
And when they go, we're fain to love
Some other woman's for their sake.
But when both love and friendship fail,
We cry for duty, work to do;
Some end to gain beyond the pale.
Of self, some height to journey to.
And then, before our task is done,
With sudden weariness oppressed,
We leave the shining goal unwon,
And only ask for rest.
—The Atlantic.

The King's Message.

AN ALLEGORY.

In Dismal Alley, in the great City
of Evil, lived two poor little girls.
Their names were Nita and Glynne.
Dismal Alley was a bad place for chil-
dren. The tumble-down old houses
were so high that only at noon the
sun shone down into the narrow street
and at night the thoroughfare was
badly lighted. Sickness was always
there. Now and then a dreadful dis-
ease, which the physicians called by
various names, but which defied their
utmost skill, would break out and
sweep the people off by hundreds.
Everybody there was poor; almost all
were wicked. Thieves and drunkards
gamblers, and even murderers were
sheltered in damp cellars and filthy
courts. Little children, girls as well
as boys, early began to lie and steal,
and indulge in awful profanity.

This could not be said, however, of
the children I write about, for one
had virtuous parents and the other
had lately lost them. Nita lived up
four flights of stairs, in an ill-fur-
nished room; but she was not alone,
like Glynne, for her father and mother
and three younger brothers lived with
her. They had not always been there;
but ill-health and lack of employment
had driven them from a comfortable
tenement, among respectable neigh-
bors, to these haunts of want and
vice, and they strove earnestly to
keep their hearts and lives pure amidst
the surrounding corruption, for it was
rumored that the great King intended
soon to visit the city, take the good
into a better country, and destroy the
wicked place altogether. The boys
were yet too small to do much; but
Nita earned a few pence every day,
sweeping a street-crossing, where two
ways met in better portion of the
city.

Glynne swept the other crossing;
so the two became acquaintances and
then fast friends. They were not at
all alike, but no one could help loving
the gentle and unselfish Glynne, and
she had no one else to love besides
Nita. She earned barely enough to
pay for the poor lodging, black bread,
and coarse raiment which were all
she knew of the luxuries of life; but
she kept her heart pure and loving,
believing that she should soon see the
King in his beauty, and that he would
allow her to follow him to the land
that is very far off, where "the in-
habitant shall not say I am sick, for the
people that dwell therein shall be for-
given their iniquity."

One winter day the streets were so
frozen that the girls had little to do
except now and then to brush away
the slowly gathering snow; so, stamp-
ing their ill-shod feet and clapping
their bare hands for warmth, they
stood talking together.

"Such a day as this," said Glynne,
"makes me desire earnestly the speedy
coming of the King."

"No danger of his troubling him-
self to come out in the weather," re-
plied Nita. "In my mind, we shall
freeze to death for all his help. I wish
for my part, I had gold enough to buy
robes like yon lady in the carriage,
and a house like hers, and other things
to match. Then the King might come
or stay away, as pleased him best."

Even as she spoke an old man drew
near. His form was bent, his limbs
trembled, and the wind tossed the
gray locks back from his uncovered
brow. The little maidens stepped
aside, to let him pass; but the stran-
ger paused, looked from one to another,
and said:

"Know ye who I am?"
"A beggar, probably," answered
Nita; "but I have naught for thee."
The old man sighed, and was pass-
ing on.

"Stay a little," cried Glynne. "If
thou art homeless and friendless I can
well pity thee, for even so I am. If
thou art hungry besides, here is all the
money I have earned to-day. Take it
and welcome; it will buy thee a full
meal."

"Nay, keep thy pence, my child, I
am not what I seem. The King will
call for thee in just seven days. Even
now he is in the city, beholding in
disguise the wickedness which he will
shortly punish. I am the messenger,
to bid thee watch for him."

For a moment Glynne was speech-
less, but Nita cried:

"I believe thee not! Would the
great King send an old man, poorly
clad, upon his errands? Verily, his
herald will come in a chariot, with
prancing horses and servants in livery,
as befiteth his high estate. As for
thee, thou art a madman."

The stranger smiled compassionately.

"Thou knowest not the King, my
daughter. Take these bread pieces
of gold and purchase fitting raiment,
and come here on the seventh day
with thy friend. My Lord is no re-
specter of persons, but every one who
deals justly and loves mercy is accept-
ed of him."

Then he turned to Glynne, who as
yet had not power to speak for the
joy that filled her soul, and gave her
also gold.

"But why doth my Lord this great
honor to me, a poor child, who know-
eth nothing?"

"Hast thou not been told that he is
the Father of the fatherless? He hath
heard of thee."

Then the stranger left them, and
the two girls parted, without a word.

Nita's parents were rejoiced at their
daughter's good fortune, though they
cared less for the gold than for the
knowledge that she had received a
message from the King.

"To-morrow, Nita," said the moth-
er, "I will purchase for us all gar-
ments plain and warm, and we will
meet the King together."

But Nita very angrily refused say-
ing, "Thou wouldst be rude, indeed,
to meet the King unsummoned. Ver-
ily, he would punish thee. He bade
me prepare to meet the King, and
this gold was meant to measure the
cost of suitable garments. When he
wants thee he will do the like by
thee."

So she selfishly spent the whole for
gorgeous apparel, the like of which
had never before been seen in Dismal
Alley. When she brought it home,
her mother sighed and shook her
head; and when her daughter put it
on, she wept.

"Alas! my daughter, thy pride and
selfishness can never enter the far-off
country where all blessedness resides.
The King will not accept thee."

On the morning of the seventh day
Nita dressed herself and started for
the place of meeting, saying to herself
and started for the place of meeting,
saying to herself:

"How the ragged children of Dis-
mal Alley will envy me! How they
will wonder when they know where I
have gone!"

And, in truth, they all did stare at
her, and not a few followed her, jeer-
ing and mocking, and catching at her
finery, so that she was glad enough to
reach the better portion of the city,
where, for fear of the police, they did
not dare to molest her. Glynne was
not at the crossing. Hour after hour
poor Nita waited, watching for the
King, till she was almost starved and
frozen.

At last, looking across the street, a
little below her usual place, she saw
that Glynne was there, and not alone.
A little fair-haired child, clean but
coarsely clad, nestled close beside her,
under a faded cloak; for, to Nita's
surprise, her friend had on the same
old clothes. Nita was at first ashamed
to speak to her; but curiosity soon
got the better of pride, so, scornful to
gather her silken skirts about her, she
swept across the street with the air of
a princess.

Before she had time to ask a single
question, the strange old man appear-
ed. Addressing Glynne, he said:

"And why art thou still clad like a
street-sweeper? Carest thou nothing

for the favor of the King? What hast
thou done with the gold which I gave
thee?"

Then was Nita exceedingly glad
that she had been more wise, and
tried in various ways to attract notice,
but the messenger waited for Glynne's
reply.

"Indeed, sir, I am sorry, but I
could not do otherwise. When I went
to purchase rich raiment for myself, I
saw a poor little child crying in the
street, and some rude boys were
frightening and pinching him. With
one piece of gold I bribed them to let
him go, and I took him home with me.
At first I thought to take him to the
governor of the city, that the child's
parents might be found; but I reflect-
ed that he is a bad man, and though
ruling in the King's name, cares not
for justice and scoffs at mercy. So I
kept him with me, and spent the other
piece of gold in purchasing plain
clothes for him and food for both. I
had to buy coarse garments to shield
him from the covetous people who
dwell in the same house with me; for
the child's robes were fine and soft
enough to fit the prince himself, and
he wore jewels of I cannot tell you
how much value. Here, sir, is the
change I have left, and here is what
the little one wore when I found him.
Take them with the child in my stead
to the King, and beg him, if I have
found favor in his sight, to cause that
the child be restored to his parents.
As for me, I will wait patiently till
he cometh to judge the city."

While she spoke, the messenger's
face grew eager with a sudden joyful
hope, which brightened into rapture
when he saw the lost child's face. He
caught the little waif in his arms, cry-
ing aloud:

"It is he! It is the King's lost
son, for whom seven days we have
been seeking. Verily, great shall be
thy reward. Come with me."

When Nita saw that he had forgot-
ten her, she cried to him:

"Where is the promise of the
King?"

The messenger, turning, made an-
swer:

"Where is thy crippled father, thy
worn-out mother? Where are thy
little brothers? Why comest thou
alone? I gave thee gold enough to
fit them all for the royal presence, and
behold, thou comest robed like a cour-
tesan. There are rents in thy gar-
ments; yea, they are vile with the
filth of the street. Thou deservest to
be utterly cast off; yet for the sake of
thy friend, who pleadeth for thee, I
give thee one more opportunity. Go
back to Dismal Alley, and charge the
inhabitants thereof to repent, for
speedily the King will come; and
when he cometh, he that is righteous
will be righteous still, and he that is
filthy will find no fount of cleansing."

So Nita, sorely humbled, but truly
penitent, returned to Dismal Alley,
and day by day delivered her message
to the unbelieving rabble. She was
reviled and persecuted by many; but
her meekness and patience won the
hearts of a few, who shared her trials
and who rejoiced with her when they
saw the coming King. For he came
at last, with a great army, and de-
stroyed that wicked city; and all the
inhabitants perished with it, save the
few who were truly loyal and the
little ones who knew not right from
wrong. These last he carried with
him to the pleasant country, "the
land that is very far off." There Nita
and Glynne clasped hands again.
Their days of trial and toil are over.
They shall hunger no more, neither
thirst any more: for the King himself
shall feed them and lead them by the
living waters, and the snowy robes he
has provided will never soil or need
renewal. Their few days of sorrow in
the City of Evil seem like a dream,
now that they stand "forever with the
Lord."—Independent.

Pleasure is the mere accident of
our being, and work its natural and
most holy necessity.

A Brave Baby.

A woman who lives in Ashville,
Ala., writes to the *Egis*, of that place,
of a miraculous rescue of her little
three-year-old boy from drowning.
The child fell down a well, the depth
of which was thirty feet. The mother
saw him go down. She says:

"On reaching the well I was just in
time to see him rise to the top of the
water. I was alone, save three other
little children whom I sent for help.
I had, amid all the anguish of my
soul, presence of mind enough to let
the bucket down, and tell him to take
hold of, which he did. After some
minutes he let loose from weakness,
sank again, except his little head. I
lowered the bucket lower, telling him
to take hold of the rope. He ran his
hand through a ring tied on for the
purpose of sinking the bucket, and
caught the pail, and there he held on
for one and a half hours, begging me
all the time, in his baby talk to come
down and help him out. I would
say, 'Hold on, Bobbie.' 'I will,' he
would reply. At length a lady came
to my assistance, and we took a rope
and made a noose on the end of it,
and letting it down, told him what to
do. He put his foot through the
noose and drew it up around his knee.
I asked him if he could hold on. He
said he could hold on the bucket.
'Daw me out.' He holding the
bucket, the rope round his leg, I tell-
ing him not to let go, we drew him up
until I could reach his little, shivering
hands. Thus I saved my little baby
from drowning. Safe to my breast I
clasped his little shivering body, and
praised God for his mercies."—*Eg.*

That which is intolerable drudgery
to one man is mere healthful work to
another. The poet Southey, for in-
stance, toiled with his pen during
a long life, being unable to let
a day go by without untiring labor at
his desk or among his books. Yet
his unremitting toil, which would
have been insufferable, or positively
fatal, to most men, was to Southey a
happy employment in the midst of
the greatest pleasures of life. From
such an instance as this—and similar
examples could, of course, be multi-
plied indefinitely—we ought to learn
not to measure the weight of our own
labors by other people's opinion of
them, and thereby fall into a morbid
and injurious habit of self-commiser-
ation. When some one who would be
utterly unable to do work which to us
is by no means difficult, comes to us
with astonishment at the hardness of
our task, with expressions of pity for
our sad estate, and with words of ad-
miration for our endurance and long-
suffering, we have no right to conclude
that we are sadly abused martyrs or
greatly over-worked laborers, until we
find out whether we are measured by
the standard of our own powers or by
that of another's. Many a contented
and successful worker can be made to
believe himself the most abused of
mortals, simply by heeding the words
of some one whose capacities are of a
different order. Innate selfishness is
already to listen to suggestions that it
is shamefully abused or wonderfully
patient; and therefore it is worth
while, before we begin to dwell on
such suggestions to the injury of our
work and the diminishing of our hap-
piness, to stop to think whether they
come from a source which gives them
any real value.—*S. S. Times.*

Saxon Song of Summer.

Summer is coming in,
Loud sing, cuckoo;
Groweth seed, and bloweth mead,
And springeth the wood new,
Sing, cuckoo, cuckoo!
Ewe bleateth after lamb;
Loweth calf after cow;
Bullock starteth, buck departeth;
Merry sing, cuckoo;
Cuckoo, cuckoo;
Well singeth the cuckoo—
Sing ever, stop never,
Cuckoo, cuckoo;
Sing, cuckoo!
—Anonymous, about 1250.