

We smile when the Breton sailor
 of the submerged city tells :
 No one has seen those steeple-tops,
 no one has heard those bells.
 A sea-boat's spar, a sea-bird's cry,
 dark rocks with seaweed dressed,—
 These were the sole realities,
 and fancy did the rest.

And yet this pleasing fancy
 is no mere idle song ;
 It tells of precious truths
 which to each of us belong ;
 If only we with longing eyes
 and yearning ears begin
 To search, not in the depths outside,
 but in the depths within.

Deep in the memory of each
 a submerged city dwells,
 Echoes from which, in strangest tones,
 will all unbidden rise.
 Sometimes we try to summon them,
 yet cannot make them come ;
 Sometimes we try to silence them,
 yet cannot make them dumb.

Happy are those whose submerged past
 of purest pleasures tells,
 Which rise again as Angelus,
 or soft sweet wedding bells ;
 Who never need the solace,
 and never feel the fears,
 Of the waters of forgetfulness,
 and the ghosts of vanished years.

A. PLUMMER.

Entre Nous.

The Magical Land.

Mr. Francis Stopford's book of essays entitled *Life's Great Adventure* has been added to Messrs. Duckworth's Readers' Library (2s. 6d. net). Though the essays may be read disjointedly, they are united by a double link. In the first place, the author and his friend Epicurus are living mortals to whom the experiences come ; and in the second place, every essay has this one thought inspiring all its beauty of language and all its outlook on life, the thought that happiness can be attained only through discipline. Once there occurs a parable. This is the parable.

'Some children once asked me to write them a guide to the Magical Land ; this was the best I could do.'

Once upon a time there lay hidden in a wilderness a tiny hamlet, sheltered by green palms, bright with flowers, and cheerful with the music of running waters. Men who had seen it called this lovely spot the home of happiness, and wandering into far lands would tell of its pleasures, or make pictures of its pleasantries. Children, when they heard the beautiful stories and saw the beautiful paintings, would start of a morning to find this magical hamlet under the palm—boys and girls together in holiday attire.

They came quickly to the garden full of gay blossoms of every kind of colour and of delicious odours. They raced over the smooth lawns, picking

flowers here and there, freely, with none to say them nay. Tired, they rested on mossy banks, their hands filled with nosegays, and for sceptres they would wave a lily or an iris, and they wove themselves coronals of pink carnations, and plaited stoles of milk-white roses.

'Very soon we will come to that pleasanter,' they shouted one to another, 'which we will make our home for ever.'

Beyond the garden was a grove where the birds sang blithely.

'Let us hurry on,' the children said, 'for it must be in that grove of singing-birds.'

At the edge of the garden an old blackthorn stood forlornly. It seemed as if spring had forgotten it, for never a green leaf showed on its tangled branches, and its gnarled trunk and twisted boughs looked cruel and forbidding. A dove caught in the topmost branches struggled among the thorns.

'Let me go free, let me go free,' the bird moaned. And its silver feathers fluttered sadly through the black boughs down to the ground.

'Poor thing !' cried the girls as they saw the bird. 'Cannot you rescue it ?' they asked their brothers.

The boys would begin to climb the tree, but the branches tore their clothes, and the thorns cut deeply into their flesh.

'We cannot wait,' called out the girls ; 'our wreaths are withering. Be quick, or we must leave you.'

The boys exclaimed: 'It doesn't really matter; it's only a bird. There are lots of birds in the grove. The thorn-bush is not easy to climb. Why should we tear our clothes and hurt our hands just for a dove?'

So the children went on together, talking among themselves. 'We must not waste our time, or we shall never reach that joyland before nightfall.' But the dove struggled painfully in the thorn-bush.

Two paused by the tree: 'Poor thing!' sighed the girl as the others had sighed; 'cannot you rescue it?' The boy began to climb. He cried out as the others had cried when the thorns cut into his flesh.

'Be brave, brother,' the girl called to him. Then she looked down, and saw that the bright flowers in her hands were fading. 'I must be brave too,' she whispered to herself.

The boy fought his way to the topmost branches. It was a hard and long fight, and the fragrance had gone from the blossoms, and the crown of carnations on the girl's head was dead. But she never faltered. Still smiling, she called out: 'Be brave, brother, be brave.'

'Let me go free, let me go free,' moaned the dove.

The boy broke away the thorns that fettered the bird, and straightway it flew far away out of sight. He made his way to the ground with what speed he could, but ruefully, for he was in pain; his clothes were torn, and he had thought that the dove would have hovered above his head at least for a moment, and bestowed on him a benison.

'Grieve not, brother,' said the girl, 'it was only a bird. You have been brave. Could we see pain and pass it by when we had the strength to help? How can we reach a home of happiness if we leave unhappiness in our path?'

The girl tore the bright broiery neatly from her robe, so that the rent might not be perceived, in order to bind the boy's torn hands. She mended his garments skilfully with thorns from the thorn-bush. Other children as they ran by laughed to see their plight. But the boy and the girl heeded them not.

Now, with the others, they entered the grove of singing-birds, and gaily ran up and down the sunlit glades. Some, in pursuit of golden blossoms or of purple petals, rushed recklessly through thickets and into swamps. They drank from them whenever they were thirsty, and washed their garments in the clean waters. They looked here and there for the pleasance they sought, but found it not.

'It must be beyond the grove,' they said; 'we shall come to it presently.'

A fountain lay at the base of a black rock. The girls mirrored their fair faces in its crystal depths,

and the boys dipped their hands into its cold waters to cool their heated foreheads.

'Let me go free, let me go free,' bubbled the fountain.

And they all exclaimed: 'It were, indeed, a shame that water so clear and cool should be prisoned beneath this black rock.'

A mattock had been thrown on the ground near by. The boys laid hold of it.

'What will you give us, dull fountain, if we let you go free to chatter in the sun?'

'Blisters,' bubbled the waters.

The girls lifted up the round boulders that checked the outflow, asking: 'What will you give us, sad fountain, if we let you go free to laugh beneath the moon?'

'Bruises,' bubbled the waters.

'Shall we who seek happiness waste our time here gaining blisters and bruises, just to send one more runnel of water through the grove? 'Twere folly!' So they went on their way.

But the two who had freed the dove passed near the rock and heard the cry of the fountain. They asked, as the others had asked, for their reward.

'Blisters--bruises,' was the murmured answer.

'Who fears blisters?' shouted the boy; 'but bruises are not fit for girls.'

He seized the mattock and set to work manfully. The girl, saying nothing, quietly lifted the round boulders, but often they slipped through her hands and bruised her sorely. Once she cried out in her pain. He would have left his task to comfort her.

'Nay, brother, work on,' she said; 'we must not waste our time if we would reach the place we seek before nightfall. But our task must first be finished.'

So they toiled bravely together.

Suddenly, and, as it seemed, with a shout of triumph, the fountain leapt from his prison, and went rushing into the grove down the channel they had dug for it. So quickly did the waters go that they left behind them not even the thinnest trickle. His hands were blistered and burned, many were the bruises that marred her tender limbs.

'It were a shame,' he shouted, 'that the waters did not stay at least until they had quenched our thirst.'

'Nay, brother, it does not matter,' said the girl. 'There are other streams where we may drink. This fountain will slake the thirst of flower and fruit that would have withered and died had we not let its waters free. How can we live in a home of happiness if we do not remember the sorrows of others?'

The grove was left behind. The trees became fewer, and presently ceased. The grassy glades ran into dusty roads which perished in the sand. For the little company now wandered in a wilder-

ness upon which the afternoon sun beat fiercely. There was little shade, and the pools of water were few and brackish. They walked slowly and wearily, for they were footsore.

'Where is that pleasance?' they asked each other. And one would say, pointing to the north: 'It is there. I can see its palms shine on the horizon.' So they dropped to the north. But the palms faded away.

Another said: 'I knew you were wrong; it is to the south. Look, there is the pleasant shade of its orchards.' So to the south they went, but the orchards vanished from view. It was only the mirage of the desert taunting them in their weariness. They had lost their way.

Two among them walked straight on, saying nothing. They also were tired and footsore, and had to drink from the brackish wells, but they were not deceived by the mirage. Wounds and weariness did not overcome them so that they saw false visions; for they had learnt the lessons of pain and patience willingly in the garden beneath the thorn-tree, and of their own free-will they had tasted toil and suffering by the fountain in the grove. Wherefore in the wilderness they were strong to endure.

The sun was sinking low when they sat in the shadow of a rock, very footsore, very tired, very thirsty, but not in despair; for hope always burned brightly in their hearts. Suddenly at their feet a fountain bubbled up. They bent down and drank greedily. Its waters were sweet.

As they drank they heard them murmur: 'Blisters and bruises in the grove; refreshment in the wilderness. Prisoned beneath the black rock, there we should have remained; free, we have wandered hither.'

They rose happily, their thirst quenched, and smiled as they looked in each other's eyes, saying nothing. Now they walked on briskly, their weariness having well-nigh departed. A dove sunning itself in the sand rose before them.

The whirl of its wings whispered: 'Follow me, follow me. Caught among the thorns in the garden: I was freed, wherefore I can be a guide in the desert.'

Hand in hand they followed the flight of the dove. Soon the ground fell away, and at their feet lay a hamlet among feathery palms fair to look upon, with orchards through which sweet waters ran merrily, and where birds sang sweetly.

'It is not yet night,' they said laughingly to each other; 'yet we often thought darkness must fall before ever we should find the home of happiness. So it is really here. It is not a mirage. But it's very hard to find.'

Coronata.

Coronata (Dent; 1s. 6d.) is the title which has been given to 'a book of poems in rhyme and rhythm.' The book is gathered out of the fertile fields of English poetry from John Barbour to Maclean Watt. The collection has been made by Dr. Richard Wilson, who says of it: 'This collection of shorter poems is intended chiefly for young people who usually prefer the poem of incident but who are capable of being led to an appreciation of that "procession of sweet sounds" which enshrines the fundamental human emotions, that is to say, to poetry in all its varied forms.' It is gathered into a most attractive book, the attraction being partly due to eight artistically coloured illustrations. Most of the poems are favourites and familiar. One is not. It was found under the pillow of a soldier who, after being wounded in one of the battles of the Civil War in America, died in a South Carolina hospital. It is quoted from *Country Life* for March 27, 1915. This is the poem:

TIRED.

I lay me down to sleep
With little thought or care,
Whether my waking find me
Here or There.

A bowing burdened head
That only asks to rest,
Unquestioning upon
A loving breast.

My good right hand forgets
Its cunning now,
To march the weary march
I know not how.

I am not eager, bold,
Nor strong—all that is past;
I am ready not to do,
At last, at last.

My half-day's work is done,
And this is all my part;
I give a patient God
My patient heart,
And grasp His banner still,
Though all its blue be dim,
These stripes, no less than stars,
Lead after Him.