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Longwood University

THE FOCUS

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL

FARMVILLE, VA.

OCTOBER, 1913

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THE FOCUS

VOL. III FARMVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1913 NO. 6

Harvest Song

'Twas when the sun had reached his springtime line,
And all the earth lay fair bathed in his light,
That I passed softly through a field of corn,
And heard the tuneful leaf-blades sing their song.
"Oft have I strolled," said I, "amid the corn,
But have not heard the music in its voice—
The rustling music, crisp and delicate,
The wind-blown symphony of the springtime corn."
In summertime's warm glow of afternoon,
I walked again, amid the full-grown corn.
There rose this time, a richer, fuller song,
More than the rustling lyric of the spring—
A song spun out of teeming, verdant life.

Then passed sweet summer with her warmth of soul
Into the brilliant haze of autumn's fire.
At eve, amid the ripened corn, I stood;
And listened breathless for its twilight song.
'Twas one of life full-lived, and joy and peace—
Born in the freshness of the dawn of life,—
Strong in the noonday of the fullest bloom,
And hopeful of the harvest to the end.
The promise radiant in the fruitful grain,
Gold in the mellow light of sunset's glow—
The symphony softened low.

R. J. M.

The Return

IT would have done little good for anyone, even his anxious physician, to tell Ronald Gray not to think. He knew, better than anyone could tell him, that it was not good for a sick man nearing fifty-five to look back over his past years, especially when he wished that he had lived them differently.

But somehow, tonight—he *would* let himself think for one night and then perhaps his thoughts would not bother him. Tonight more than any other night they came crowding one over the other until the weight of them oppressed him. The sense of age—the knowledge that he was old—quite old—came too—and it had always been age that he had dreaded.

He looked about the luxuriously appointed room, at the massive furniture, the thick carpet, the expensive pictures, the open fire and then slowly, very slowly, it all faded away.

Once again he was twenty and leaving home. He had told them all good-bye and had gone to say it to her for whom he was going to win his fortune. It was in the little, old-fashioned garden that she came to meet him.

"Ronald," she said, "it is hard, I know, but you will make a way for yourself and then come back for me. And remember this, no matter how long it may be I will be waiting for you."

He could see her now as she said it, standing there among the flowers with the bright moonbeams falling on her face and showing the sorrowful gleam in her eyes. He could never forget her as she was that night. No, he had been foolish to think that he could forget.

He had left her then and gone away— gone to the city to make his way among men that he might come back to this girl who had promised to wait, no matter how long it might be.

He had been caught in the snare of the city—in its fights, in its successes, in its triumphs. He must win—win in the great struggle among men—and he did win. No one, not even his enemies—and they were not few—could say that he had not succeeded.

Ronald Gray roused himself and looked about the room. No, not even his enemies could say it. But somehow—his thoughts came crowding on—one over the other—and once again he looked into the fire.

There had been another girl—a girl who could help him to win wealth and power. He had married her—had promised to love and cherish her always, but he had not kept his promise. He had never even liked her because she had taken Margaret's place. Strange that he had never thought until now that it was not her fault. She was dead now and there was nothing left to him but their son.

There was only one person in the world on whom Ronald Gray lavished any affection and that was his son. There was only one thing in the world besides age that he dreaded and that was that his son should cease to love him. There had been a letter left by the boy's mother to be given to him when he was twenty but Ronald had never given it to him. He was afraid—afraid that it might contain some message that would turn his son from him. Twenty was so young—the same age he had been when life was fresh and new, when he had believed in its promises and allurements. His son might promise himself to hate him always if he read the letter. One made such rash promises at twenty. Why he had promised that he would come back to Margaret—but tonight . . . somehow things were all turned around—it did not seem so rash. He almost wished—but he would not allow himself to wish.

Perhaps it would be only fair to her who was dead to give the boy her letter. It was all that he could do, now. And he was sure that Margaret would have wished it. Margaret seemed to be haunting him tonight.

Yes, he would give him the letter. His hand trembled as he took it from his desk. He looked at his hand as if he resented its trembling.

He called the boy and gave him the letter—then resumed his chair and gazed again into the fire. It was strange how everything in his head seemed to turn around and around. It was strange that in the flames he seemed to see the little garden and Margaret there in the moonlight. It was strange that . . . but a cry from his boy aroused him.

"Oh, how could you? I hate you. I hate you for breaking my mother's heart."

Ronald Gray did not seem to understand the words. Hate him? What had he done that anyone should hate him? Whose heart had he broken? It was not Margaret's, for there she was—dim and far away, but there she was waiting for him with her arms outstretched and a smile on her face. It was all right now. He remembered her words, "No matter how long it may be I will be waiting for you."

"Margaret," he whispered, as his son went from the room, "Margaret, I have come back—at last."

And there was no sound in the room but the closing of the front door as his son went out into the night.

Grace Welker.

A Hard Luck Tale

YES, Tim was in hard luck just then. At least that is the way he spoke of his moneyless condition to his friend and co-worker, Billy Moran, at The Blue Ribbon Garage.

Tim and Billy had been working away together beneath a monster Studebaker that September afternoon and now, having completed the task, were comfortably lounging in the car itself for a few minutes' rest while the "boss" was out. The "boss" had a habit of "stepping out a minute" sometime in the afternoon anyway. 'Twas said that he took this time to visit a girl who lived down on—but never mind. Her name was Mamie and she was engaged to marry somebody else anyhow. The manager was, in fact, a half breed Mexican besides, and because of something, heredity, I suppose, had to race out through the back door every morning with his rifle and shoot all the tin cans out there full of holes. After this, he would swear in a generous mixture of Spanish and English, grin affably, and resume his work in the office.

But all this isn't in Tim's story or certainly that part that tells of his hard luck.

"You see, it was this way," began Tim to Moran, and then he told him all of how on the Saturday evening before a man had ordered a car to be at the Belvidere Club at eight o'clock that evening. "Send a reliable chauffeur," the voice had said to the manager, and Tim Cole was given the call.

The big, black car crawled up close to the curbing of the side walk and waited. Soon a man hastened down the steps of the Belvidere and took his place inside. His clothes were of the most recent cut, but there was nothing in his appearance to suggest the forcer of fashion. He seemed to be on more than speaking terms with barber and manicurist too. Altogether, he was one who would be put down in general terms as "a decent-looking sort

of a chap." But there was something about him that made him literally distasteful to Tim. Tim said he didn't exactly know whether it was the way he twirled his thumbs when he talked, or the slight leer in his left eye.

Still, is it a chauffeur's role to object to the personality of the firm's customers? Just so he gets his weekly fifteen dollars and another dollar or two in tips to pay up the extras he "has no kick coming," so Tim said and Billy Moran unhesitatingly assented.

"Capitol Park, Ninth Street side," was the man's order. There, near the gate, waited a modestly dressed girl. Her appearance was that of a school girl. When she had entered the car, Tim was ordered to "Go anywhere—far away!"

On and on—past the district of electric signs, out beyond the car lines, further than the street lights, and still on and on they sped.

It was close to mid-night. Tim wondered, but—a loud scream came from within the car. He quickly stopped it. Out leaped the girl, trembling and frightened.

"Oh," she cried, "don't let him hurt me! Won't you take me back home. I didn't know that such people—"

Tim stepped between her and the villain quickly.

"You scoundrel," he hissed to Tim, "I'll kill you if you interfere." Then he stepped back into the shadow.

Tim instantly assumed command of the situation. "Step inside, I'll take you home," he said to the girl.

The enraged man strode threateningly forward. Tim promptly knocked him down and took his place at the wheel, and headed for Richmond, leaving the thwarted rascal leaning against a tree "cussing like a sailor," so Tim told Moran. The girl said she lived out on Church Hill—and Tim took her home.

But the manager of The Blue Ribbon told him that the amount due on the car should be taken out of his wages or he'd get "fired." Then he went out into the back yard and shot holes in the tin cans for five minutes.

And this was Tim's "hard luck tale."

"But she is every inch a lady," said Tim to Billy confidentially. *R. J. M.*

The Last Rose of Summer

"Tis the last rose of summer!"
And God meant it so to be,
For he saved that little rosebud
For hope and memory.

Its colors rich and delicate
Are tints of sunset light,
The cream, the yellow, the orange
Are mingled in beauty quite.

Down in the heart of the blossom,
Down in the heart of the rose,
The last busy bee of the summer
Gets nectar and off he goes.

The last little bird that is with us,
Seeing one rose is left
Flies over and kisses it softly,
Ere he leaves us sad and bereft.

Old Brindle walks by the garden
And whiffs in the fragrance rare;
She strips the stem of its leaflets,
But leaves the rose hanging there.

It seems that she knew it should stay
'Till each petal drop to the earth;
Then the springtime would create anew
Its perfection of soul in rebirth.

M. A. B.

Wanted—A Wife

IT WAS just like all other country stores. The porch covering sagged between the old knotty cedar posts that supported it here and there. The usual old hand-made bench was placed in front of the store in order that the loafers might have a place to slouch on while they whittled. Now and then an old, grunting, mud-covered hog would maneuver around the door to find some chance garbage. Sometimes Conley's skinny-boned hound would slink around; and most of the time Conley was there himself. He was there this afternoon, whittling on the old bench.

"Longey," he drawled out to the store-keeper at the other end of the bench, "hev' you heard the latest? Well, I've come to the conclusion that it's jes' this: I hev' the meanest, laziest thing fer a wife that a man ever had to call his mate."

"How's that?" quizzically grunted Longey as he sprawled his clod-hoppers as far apart as his length would permit.

"Well, here's how 'tis. She woke me up this morning fussing as usual, only a little worse. She was worse'n a mad dog!" To give emphasis to this statement he emitted a mouthful of very brown tobacco juice through his teeth with such force that it must have gone at least twenty feet. (By the way, this was one of his accomplishments.)

"Well?" questioned Longey, waiting for further explanation, "what happened?"

Conley continued: "As I was saying, she was worse'n a mad dog. She jes' tore up one side and down t'other. She 'lowed as how I had come in at one o'clock last night and shut the door on the dog's tail. She said as how the hound had raised 'Jeems Henry' all night and woke her up. And jes' 'cause I was 'bout in my seventh heaven and didn't want to be disturbed for *nobody's* dog, she jes' turns hot and jumps all over me."

"Serves yo' right," grinned Longey. "I'm glad somebody had the nerve to set on yo'."

"Maybe you are," quickly responded Conley. "But lemme tell yer one thing, you'd better keep such things to yerself hereafter." Having given this warning he arose and stretched himself towards home.

It was about two o'clock when he reached the house, and sulked into the dining room to get his dinner. But no dinner was there! Neither was there any wife! She had utterly disappeared. Finally, his slow brain began to work. He put two and two together and decided that she had gone.

The news quickly spread over the neighborhood, and even two weeks afterwards it was still the subject of conversation among the "Bench-Sitters."

"Say, Longey," probed one of the loafers on the bench, "they tell me Conley's wife has lef' him. I don't blame her much. Do you?"

"No, I don't," answered Longey. "But I do feel a little sorry for Conley though. You know, he's had the devil of a time since she lef', though he ain't a bit sorry she's gone. A night or two ago he went out on a spree and somebody stole everything he had (which ain't much, if I do say so) and now the poor devil ain't got nothing. He's gettin' worser and worser all the time. I jes' believe he's agoin' to the dogs yet."

. . . . . .

Two years later the same bunch of loafers was lounging around in front of the old store.

"Say, boys," began Longey in the same old way, "hev' yer heard the latest? A factory in Norfolk burnt down t'other day and Betsie Conley's name was on the list o' the missing. The paper says she's been working at that factory a year or so."

"I wonder if Conley knows 'bout his loss!" exclaimed one of the boys.

"They say he don't call it no loss," Longey ventured to explain. "But here he comes. He can speak for himself. How about it, Conley?"

"'Bout what?"

"Your wife," answered the store-keeper.

"'Tain't nothing 'bout it, 'ceptin' she's dead—so the papers say. But, for my part, I don't think you can kill her. Now that she *is* dead I ain't caring much one way nor t'other—unless it is that she won't come back ter life."

"Whew!" exclaimed all in one breath, "Is that so?"

"Yes, *that* and some more," answered Conley. As he said this he stopped to recover a newspaper from the ground. He turned the sheets very slowly and precisely until he came to the advertising columns and asked, "Have yer seen that, boys?"

He pointed to this:

"Wanted—A wife, as soon as possible.
J. Conley, Graysville, Va."

The boys forgot to chew, and dropped their mouths open in awe.

"Yes, and that ain't all *neither*," Conley explained in a very significant tone. "She's coming on the night train and we're goin' to git married jes' as soon as she gets here."

Without waiting for further comment, Conley strode home to make his few preparations for the arrival of "her majesty." Now and then, while he was dressing he would stop to pick up a picture and gaze at it with an ardent expression. It was the one his prospective wife had sent him.

But to return to Conley, he was, by this time, very much elated with his own appearance. Bestowing one more glance on the mirror, he groped his way out of the house. In a few moments he had reached the dingy little depot only to find that the train was five minutes late. Conley was nervous anyway, but this made him worse. He paced the tiny platform and twitched his collar many times before the train arrived. When it did, he stepped awkwardly forward to assist the lone, veiled passenger to descend. He stammered a few words of greeting and finally said, "Er-er-er, if yer don't mind, er-er, we will go git married right away. The parson lives up the road 'bout throwing distance from here."

She assented very graciously—and they went.

When the marriage ceremony had been duly performed the couple trod homeward. On reaching the porch the bride complained of a headache and went in to remove her hat and veil. When she returned the bridegroom took his first look at her fair countenance. And horror of horrors! He had married his wife!

Caralyn Pope.

Living is Loving

There's a queer little, dear little hummer,
Who dwells 'mid blossoms pink;
And he works and rejoices all summer,
'Cause living is loving, I think.

There's a grave and sedate old gray mouser,
Who sleeps with a wink and a blink,
Then awakes—hunts for rats for wee Towser;
'Cause living is loving, I think.

There's a sweet-faced, modest grandmother;
Her cheeks have lost their pink.
She delights us—just telling us stories,
'Cause living is loving, I think.

George Bailey.

Sketches

THE EXTRA ONE

Yes, lady, I am an orphan. Ever since I can remember I've been one, 'cause my mamma died when I was a baby, and my papa when I was five. You haven't ever been an orphan, have you, lady? Then you don't know what it is to be one. You just feel like you are always in the way —'cause no one wants you 'specially and you are just the extra one. It seems like I've always been the extra one.

Sometimes I just wish I could go off and cry and cry— but then I can't, because I've got to stay here and mind baby, or run to the store, or wash the dishes, or something. It's always something to do, and I'm the one to do it— because I am the orphan, I suppose.

One time I just felt so bad I went off and cried and cried. I must have been gone a long time, for, when I got back, Auntie gave me a lecture about little girls running away when there was so much they could do at home to show they did appreciate having a nice home, and so many pretty clothes to wear, and plenty of good food to eat. . . . I've never been since, though I wanted to ever so bad.

But I reckon I should be thankful and not grumble— that is what Auntie says— for I don't have to wear those blue gingham aprons like the children in orphan asylums have to wear. I am mighty glad of that.

What do I want to do when I grow up? Oh! yes, ma'am, I know. I want to have a pretty little home and take two or three orphans there, and make them forget they are orphans. I want to make them feel like somebody loves them and wants them around; like somebody is going to look out for them and do something nice because they are really loved, and because it will please them; and, most of all, I want to make these orphans feel like they aren't the *extra ones*. Yes, ma'am, that is what I want to do.

B. M.

FACTORY LIFE

Just one single shaft of light from the setting sun broke the monotony of the dull gray skies that bleak December afternoon. The five o'clock whistle had just blown and the tired and ragged little wage-earners were pouring out the doors of the big cotton factory like refuse being swept before the wind.

One among this lot was very pathetic-looking indeed. She was by nature a frail, timid creature and years of toil and confinement in the dusty factory without sufficient food and clothing had left their marks.

She wound a ragged cape about her shoulders to keep out the biting wind and started toward a little hut on the outskirts of the other side of the village, which she called home.

As she passed through the principal street of the village by the homes of wealth and luxury the thought passed through her mind, "Why is it these people have so much and I have so little? Why is it that these children play while I have to work? Why is it they look down on me and jeer as I pass by, and why is it that they have happy, comfortable homes and all the love and affection that anyone could crave while I have but a log hut which the wind whistles through so loud and strong that it almost drowns the oaths of my drunken father and the scoldings of my mother?"

Absorbed thus in her thoughts, she did not observe the advancing automobile as she started to cross the corner but was whirled insensible into the gutter. As her body struck the pavement her soul entered the gates of Rest, which opened wide and she passed in to enjoy what she had missed on earth. *L. C. H.*, '16.

OPENING DAYS AT THE STATION

"Oh! here comes the train!" someone cried behind me as the train roared up to the platform. The crowd rushed to the cars as they stopped and crowded around. "Look

at that car, did you ever see anything jammed so full in your life?" Girls were pushing out of that car at both ends, while others leaned from the windows to call to friends on the platform.

"Oh, look! there's Mary. I thought she wasn't coming back. Hello, Mary, am so glad to see you back. Are you going to school?"

I turned to see the two girls I had first noticed clasping another between them. "Baggage," shouted the drayman, and "Baggage, Miss," asked the little boy with his hat in his hand. "All right, here you are." And as I turned to watch them leave I confronted a little girl with tears in her eyes and a large suitcase held tightly in one hand. She looked around for a while and finally, walking up to a girl, asked, in a very low tone, "Will you please show me the way to school?"

"Why certainly, come with me." And the next minute the girls were tramping off up the street and the train was puffing up the track. *H. C.*

JABBER

"Oh! Mary, I am so glad to see you. How are you, Lucile, dear, why didn't you ever answer my letter? Why, Katie, darling, I could hug the life out of you; kiss me. Isn't it grand to be back at old S. N. S.? Positively I adore this place! Wonder where I will be put. I wish Miss Mary would hurry up and tell me. I am so excited. And so, Mary, you are going to room in eighty-nine. That's nice; I am crazy about that room, it's so large and airy.

"Why look at Susan coming in. I didn't know she would be back this year.

"And there's Dr. Jarman. Come on, girls, I must speak to him." *E. V.*

WAITING

The girl leaned dejectedly over the desk. She was tired, dusty, confused, and above all, homesick. The laughter and gay chatter of the "old girls" only served to make her

feel more lonely and out of place. Her eyes were red and a little swollen, as if more than one cinder had gotten into them. One girl, more thoughtful than the rest, left her group of happy friends to come over and say a few pleasant words to the new girl, but the other's answers were so vague and indistinct that she was soon left to her own devices. Just then a servant entered and said, "Is Miss Green in dis yer room? Miss Mary White says fer you to come on in the office." *N. S. B.*

THE VALE OF TEARS

Such a weeping and wailing that you might have thought that the State Normal School was the worst place on the face of the earth! A dark-haired girl was writing at the table, the tears streaming down her rosy cheeks. Another girl lay across the bed, crying as if her heart would break. "I wish I had never heard of this old place. I am going to write to my papa this very minute and ask him to let me come home." *M. B.*

SCHEDULES

"Old girls, fourth year, room eight!" read Dr. Jarman in chapel. I stopped on the way to sharpen my pencil so was one of the last to reach the room. As I opened the door, the teacher, already impatient, said, "Everybody take a seat and come one at a time!" Unwillingly each girl flopped into the nearest seat, though not for one instant did she stop her chatter, chatter, chatter, which made you feel as if you were right in the tree with a hundred quarreling sparrows. The girls stayed in their seats for at least a half of one minute, after which they all, with one accord, flew to another tree, which happened to be the desk. I hesitated between two terrors. If I stayed in my seat, as the teacher had asked and as the others had not done, I would be the last to get my schedule made out. Judging by the number of girls in the room, I thought it would be about dinner time when I finished. On the other hand

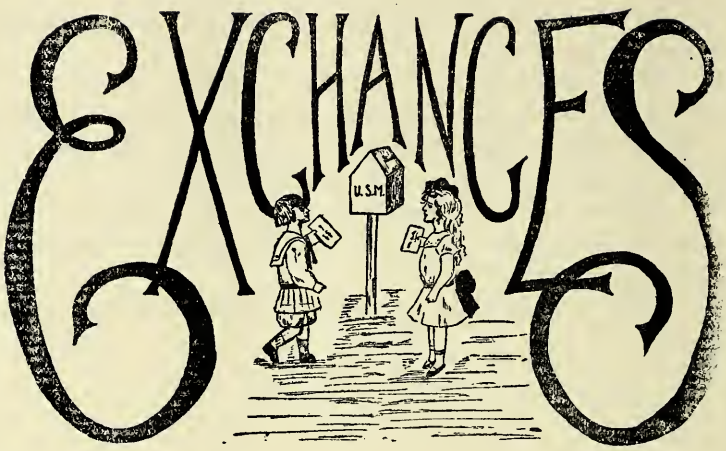
I stood the chance of being scolded by the teacher if I should jam my way up to the desk.

As I was weighing this in my mind, I noticed the other girls at the desk.

"It's my time after you, Sallie," said one. "Come here, Mary!" grabbing at the arm of the girl who had just finished her schedule, "where have you got Physics? Oh, goodness, I can't get mine there, because I have Music."

Another girl whispered excitedly to her neighbor, "She won't let Louise substitute for Geometry! I think it's downright mean."

"I tell you she's just got to let me!" flared back her neighbor.



In our Exchange Department for this year we intend to follow the policy already begun—that of dealing separately with each type of literature found in college magazines. But first we want to greet all of our old exchanges and solicit new ones. We want your help, for nothing so aids a magazine as does the right kind of criticism. Every year we aim to make our magazine better and if you doubt whether we are doing this we want to tell us about it—showing wherein we fail. Also should you see any article deserving of praise and tell us about it it would inspire us to climb higher. Therefore we want every one of our old exchanges and as many new ones as possible. We want to be one link in a chain so linked together that each link needs the others. We will do our best to help you and we want you to help us. And best wishes for a successful year for everyone of you—new and old!

The poetry in college magazines cannot be expected to compete with that poetry written by the world's poets and therefore cannot be judged by the same standards. How to obtain a standard whereby to judge is a question but it seems to us that college poetry ought to be judged

first according to its sincerity. All poetry must be sincere —must be a spontaneous outburst of the poet's soul or it cannot be called poetry.

It must be felt and then expressed. There can be nothing unreal or forced about it because in poetry more than in anything else can the distinction be felt between the sincere and heartfelt, and the insincere.

There must not be that attempt to think out a poem line by line—wondering what word will rhyme with the one already written, but there must be the idea first and then it will express itself.

It is the idea that is essential—in college poetry especially —for if the idea is there we can forgive faulty rhyme.

Rhythm, also, there must be. A good test of the rhythm of a poem is to read it aloud. Many lyric poems which seem to have this quality when read to one's self lose it entirely when read aloud.

Then, a poem, to be good, must have an appeal. It must appeal to the senses or to the emotions. This quality however springs from the one we first mentioned, for the sincere in anything has an appeal. Sincerity always finds its way straight to the heart.

We have said that college poetry must not be judged by too high standards and yet, since Matthew Arnold says that "the future of poetry is immense, because in poetry, where it is worthy of its high destinies, our race, as time goes on will find an ever surer and surer stay,"— it does seem that we cannot judge it by standards too high. For the names of the poets of the colleges now may be in time added to that list of poets known and loved the world over.

In the *Richmond College Messenger* is a poem called "God is Love." It is an unusual poem to find in a college magazine and its appeal goes straight to one's heart. It tells of a group of people gathered on the "mountain's highest crest" at "that early twilight hour that blends the sweetest of the past day with all the night holds best."

All are filled with the wonder and beauty of God's handiwork and the thought comes,

> "Who, in this deep strong air of evening
> The non-existence of a God could fear?"

The strong man feels His power through his own strength, the artist through the wondrous beauty of the setting sun, a young girl because "the fields and hills proclaim Him." It is left for the blind girl to feel His true power—the blind girl to whom the strong man's strength, the sunset and the world of nature could be but dreams—it was left for her to say,

> " 'I see it not,
> Yet never have I felt my God as now.'
> . . . . . .
> And lo, the blind girl whispered,
> 'God is Love.' "

Through its appeal we realize its sincerity. We know that the idea came first and after that the lines came easily and rhythmically, and for these reasons we like and appreciate it and hope to see more from the same writer.

"Ego," in the *William and Mary Literary Magazine*, surely breathes of that old pagan, Omar Khayyam. Matthew Arnold says that one of the best ways to judge poetry is to compare it with certain lines of the old masters —touchstones, he calls them. He says that by their use we can detect the true poetic quality. This method cannot be used in all cases, for we cannot tell whether our own personal selections of "touchstones" are those which will bring out what is bst in the poetry we are attempting to judge. But however that may be, after reading "Ego" we feel irresistibly drawn to compare it with certain passages in the "Rubaiyat." For instance "Ego" says:

> "This is the law of the ebb and the flow,
> I come and I go."

The Rubaiyat says:

"Some little talk awhile of Me and Thee
There was—and then no more of Thee and Me."

It appeals to the emotions entirely. It makes you think—really think, and after you have read it once you read it again to find out what the writer really did mean. There are no stilted lines in "Ego." It is a poem that sings "the song of a Soul—exultant, eternal and true,"—a Soul that is sufficient unto itself—dependent upon neither life nor death nor God. Of course we do not have to accept it as our doctrine any more than we accept the doctrine of the Rubaiyat in its entirety, but nevertheless it is a poem well worthy of praise.

The June number of the *Student* lacks good poetry perhaps because there was so much else to do at that time. Still when we consider that it is only a High School magazine while the two poems we have criticized were in college magazines we feel that "Memory's Urn" deserves a word of praise. The rhythm is good and also the idea, but there is no depth of thought. We read it and like it—that is all. It does not make us think.

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Sworn to and subscribed before me this 2nd day of October, 1912.

J. L. Bugg, Notary Public.

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Editorial

Welcome

At this, the beginning of our school year, while the old and the new girls are readjusting and adjusting themselves to school life, and while everyone is saying, "I'm glad to see *you*,"—"The Focus" bids *you* welcome. We welcome each new faculty member. Of course, we are happy to see those of other years again. We welcome each new student and each old one and wish a whole session full of joy in work for everyone.

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Short Ballot in School Elections

The present method of electing officers for the school organizations has not always resulted in harmonious relations between the chief officer and her assistant and the work of their offices. To prevent this unsatisfactory condition, it is proposed that in all school elections where chief officers and assistants are chosen, to elect them by the method known as the short ballot. This method consists, in brief, of the regular election of the chief representative or officer with power given her to appoint her own assistant in office.

The objections voiced by the Senior class against the introduction of the short ballot in school politics were

three in number. First, the chief officer does not, as a rule, know any student's work well enough to assume the personal responsibility of appointing her to office. Second, no student desires a position wherein she is exposed to probable adverse criticism for her actions. Third, the student body (or electors) will not give their full support to an officer whom they do not directly elect.

In answer to these statements we grant, first, that the chief officer may not know the work of any student well enough to appoint her to office, but that she *does* know the girls that she can work with best. Co-operation in any organization is highly desirable.

As to the point on adverse criticism made by some of the Seniors, we ask what difference can it make in case a chief officer appoints her best friend an assistant, if her friend is most fitted for the work? Such an appointment would rarely be made from just the standpoint of friendship, because any chief officer would hesitate to stand responsible for the work of a girl whom she knew to be inefficient.

In regard to the third argument presented, we do not understand why the students would not willingly give their support to an officer selected by the short ballot. For, if they elect one officer who, as their representative, elects another, we fail to see why any of the electors shall feel other than in honor bound to support the officer elected indirectly, as well as the one elected directly.

Another reason why we should have the short ballot is that the students will know definitely whom to hold responsible for poor work whenever it is necessary.

As a result, all of these things will tend to produce more congeniality in office, promote harmonious and profitable relations between chief officers and their assistants, and the work of their office, and give the students better protection in their organizations. Let us have the short ballot!

Grace Woodhouse, '11, is teaching music in Richmond again this year.

Emily Minnigerode, Antoinette Davis, Anne Woodroof, and Katharine Diggs, of class '13, are teaching in Lynchburg.

Evelyn Turnbull, '13, and Julia May Paulett, '10, are teaching in Charlottesville.

Married: Carrie Kyle, '06, to Frank Grayson Baldwin, on September 16, 1913.

Florence Boston, '13, is doing rural school work at Hume, Virginia.

Nell Bristow, '12, is teaching at Amherst again.

Thelma Blanton, '13, is student teacher in the second grade in the Training School.

Alice Martin, '13, is doing her first teaching in Ashland, Va.

Susie Shelton, of the class of "naughty nine," is teaching at Dendron, Va.

Myrtle Grenels, '08, is teaching at Dumbarton, Va.

HERE AND THERE

PEACE PRIZE CONTEST

During the session of 1912-13 the American School Peace League will award prizes to the Seniors in the Normal Schools of the United States who write the best essays on the following subject: "The Opportunity and Duty of the Schools in the International Peace Movement."

Essays must not exceed 5,000 words. The contest closes March 1, 1914.

There have been many changes in our faculty for this year.

Mr. J. C. Mattoon, who for several years has been teacher of Manual Arts, has gone to Bloomington, Indiana, to accept a position in the University of Indiana. Dr. E. E. Jones, who was connected with our Education Department a few years ago, is also of that faculty.

Miss Ellen G. Perkins, who was the music instructor, will spend the winter in Minnesota. Miss Christine E. Munoz will succeed her.

Miss Florence A. Meyer has gone to Mosquito, Michigan. Her place will be filled by Miss Schartle.

Miss Lula V. Walker will teach Household Arts.

Dr. Annie Veech has taken up her private practice in Louisville, Ky. We have in her place, Dr. Sarah Coker.

Miss Pauline Williamson, class '06, is teaching the fifth grade in the Training School, in Miss Alice Reed's place.

Miss Winnie Hiner, class '13, is assistant to Mr. Cox in the business office.

IT OR MISS

If Mary T. Turnbull, would Miss Adelia Dodge? If Hattie Dickey had a fight would Florence battle? If Nannie Ritsch were very wealthy, how about Annie Banks? If I should eat up everything, what would Miss Mary Peck? If Alice knew how to boast a bit, would Annie Bragg?

Miss S. (giving gym command)—Feet on shoulders—place!

Mr. Grainger—Who wrote the Fables?
New Girl—Eason.

Miss S. (calling roll)—Laura Lee Eason? Oh, are you any kin to Mr. Eason?

New Girl—Where's Mr. Coyner been for the last week? I haven't seen him on the Tennis Court?
Old Girl— Oh, he's been helping his little sisters select their winter hats.

Mary (excitedly)—Did you hear what happened at the faculty meeting last night, Sally?

Sally—No, what was it?

Mary—One of the Forman Pierce-d a Stone near the Coyner and they got a Wheeler to take a Peck of it to London.

First Lady—I understand that you are to be married soon and that your husband is a physician, then I suppose you'll always be well—for nothing.

A few days later this lady was returning her friend's call. As she was leaving, she remarked, "And since you are to marry a minister, I suppose you will always be good—for nothing."

The tax collector was having a time convincing the farmer that he should pay ten dollars on each of his goats.

"Now, sir, just show me in the law where it says that, and I'll pay it."

The collector turned to his book and read, in a loud voice, "For all property abounding or abutting on the public highway there shall be paid five dollars per front foot."

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