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**'Thou wilt compass me about with
Songs of Deliverance'
(Ps. xxxii. 7).**

I was taking the above passage in Hindustani with a munshi who is well read in Arabic. He was struck with the phrase 'compass about with songs' and remarked that this phrase reminded him of an old Arab custom of making a circle round a bard on the battlefield, in which 'circle of song' he could remain safe no matter how the battle went.

He afterwards gave me a quotation from 'Mirasim-ul-A'rab-ul Qadim' (Ancient Arabian Customs) to bear out his idea. A translation runs thus: 'In various countries in Arabia . . . a custom prevailing from ancient times was that, when one tribe was at war with another, a place of safety, a circular enclosure, marked out by pegs and stocks driven into the ground, was provided on the field of battle. In this circle those who sung ballads in praise of their party were accommodated. Even in the case of the defeat of their party the persons and belongings of the bards were held sacred by the victors.'

It may be that some such custom was in the mind of the Psalmist when he wrote, and I send

on the explanation for the judgment of any one interested.

J. R. HUDSON.

Saltash.

1 Corinthians vi. 1.

SURPRISE has often been expressed that St. Paul should describe Roman tribunals as 'unjust,' and (so far as I know) no adequate explanation has been given. The difficulty, however, is entirely due to overlooking the fact that in the New Testament the prevailing idea of *ἀδικος* is not of one who acts unfairly to others, but of one who breaks the law of God (see Mt 5⁴⁵, Lk 16^{10, 11}, Ac 24¹⁵ 1 Co 6⁹, 1 P 3¹⁸, 2 P 2⁹). Only in three instances (Lk 18¹¹, Ro 3⁵, He 6¹⁰) can it by any possibility mean 'unjust.' It is the opposite of *δικαιος*, of which the prevailing reference is God-ward rather than man-ward (see, e.g., Mt 13⁴⁹, Mk 6²⁰, Lk 17¹⁵ 15⁷). That this was St. Paul's meaning in 1 Co 6¹ is shown clearly in v.⁹, where the *ἀδικοι* are those guilty of certain specified sins (fornication, idolatry, adultery, etc.). St. Paul's point in v.¹ is simply that it is undesirable that those who obey God's law should bring their disputes before those who disregard it.

H. H. B. AYLES.

Barrow.

Entre Nous.

Laurence Binyon.

This great war seems determined to disprove the saying that the poet is born and not made. It has made men and women poets who were no poets before. But Mr. Binyon is not one of these. We knew him as a poet before the war began, we know him only as a greater poet now. The title of his new book, *The Anvil* (Elkin Mathews; 1s. net), tells the secret. All is for discipline.

THE ANVIL.

Burned from the ore's rejected dross
The iron whitens in the heat.
With plangent strokes of pain and loss
The hammers on the iron beat.
Searched by the fire, through death and dole
We feel the iron in our soul.

O dreadful Forge! if torn and bruised
The heart, more urgent comes our cry
Not to be spared but to be used,
Brain, sinew, and spirit, before we die.
Beat out the iron, edge it keen,
And shape us to the end we mean!

Muriel E. George.

We do not say there is nothing finer than the Foreword in Mrs. George's little book, *The Garden of Comfort* (S.P.C.K.; 6d. net). But the Foreword is so fine—so simple and so sufficient—that we shall quote it:

I have no skill
To speed my leaping fancy like a bird
On wings of happy song, or, deeper stirred

To wed soft harmony of words unsought
 With sudden sweet insistence of fair thought,—
 But when through empty hands the slow tears
 steal

Unkissed, uncomforted, when one doth kneel
 Heart-desolate in silence now, where twain
 Once sang together, if some halting strain
 Of mine might thrill

Sometimes above

The aching stillness, whispering tenderly,
 'Poor Heart, there is but One can comfort
 thee,

I say it, I who know; ah, hearken, thou!
 Draw near to Him, nearer than ever now!
 It is thy God! He waits for the least spark
 Of faith, of love, least reaching through the dark
 To His kind arms; 'tis not one step to go,
 'Tis but to lift thy weeping eyes and lo,
 His face of Love!'

'Thy Saviour, thine!

Friend of all friends, Who needeth but the lift
 Of the trembling heart to Him, to answer swift,
 Swifter than thought, grief's inarticulate cry,
 From His great heart of Human sympathy;
 Oh, Weeper, though from out thy life to-day,
 All joy, all hope, all friends be put away,
 This Friend remaineth, and He shall suffice
 Saviour and King, High Priest and Sacrifice;
 The Friend Divine!'

J. Laurence Rentoul.

Professor Rentoul of Melbourne has had a great opportunity in Australia's pride over her heroes, and he has not missed it. Under the title of *At the Sign of the Sword* (Melbourne: Melville & Mullen), he has published a few patriotic songs, some of which are sung already throughout the Australian continent. Other members of his family have contributed to the volume, and it is the poem of Mrs. Rentoul that we shall quote. Its title is

THREE ROSES.

My dark Rose is beckoning
 Across the moaning sea,—
 'Leave your white Rose,
 Your red Rose,
 O, come, and fight with me!'

My white Rose of boyhood,
 I leave you now and go,
 And follow *you*,
 My dark Rose,
 To fight and slay the foe!

My red Rose, my love-Rose,
 Your eyes with pain are dim;
 For the dark Rose
 Is waiting
 Beyond the Ocean rim!

My dark Rose, I follow
 For country and for kin,
 With white sword,
 My dark Rose,
 To fight with you and win!

George Abel.

A new edition has been issued of *Wylins fae my Wallet*, by the late Rev. George Abel. It contains a portrait of the author and a sympathetic short biography by Mr. Alexander Gammie (Paisley: Gardner; 2s. 6d. net). Within a fortnight of the issue of the first edition Mr. Abel suddenly died.

Ian Bernard Stoughton Holborn.

Mr. Stoughton Holborn is an architect. He contributed a remarkable article on 'Architecture' to the first volume of the *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS*, illustrating it most artistically with his own hand. Is he also a poet? This handsome and highly finished volume seems to say so. If we could quote one of the longer poems no doubt would remain. One of the shorter may serve. But the admission must be made that the shorter do not bring out the special ballad gift of the author. The title of the volume is *Children of Fancy* (Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot; 6s. net).

IN VAIN.

I cry, O Lord, for the eventless calm
 Of dim still hills,
 Where dews diffuse the silence of their balm
 For earth's loud ills,
 Where passion and the heats of struggle lie
 Hushed to unending sleep,
 And my defeated soul shall cease to try
 Wild waters running deep.

And O, fair Lord, across some mountain pool,
 The winds must play,
 Whose delicate soft fingers, dearly cool,
 My pains allay:
 Nor shall they make low murmurs in the grass
 Nor streams in music fall,
 Lest those remembered moments dare to pass
 I would no more recall.

And I will shut my eyes till all things fade ;
 Ere some faint gleam
 Of colour, flowing into lustrous shade,
 Bring back my dream,
 And light again the longing and desire
 For that which never came
 And fan the whiteness of my spirit's fire
 To a tormented flame.

Yet Lord, if such as this be heavenly bliss,
 'Tis not for me :
 Its very peace would stir my soul to miss
 The fires I flee.
 Nay, naught shall quench them, till my lips I wet
 By L  th  s hollow shore ;
 And, if it be that I shall then forget,
 I shall be I no more.

Mary G. Cherry.

While Miss Cherry is serving as Quartermaster of a Red Cross Hospital, Miss S. Gertrude Ford has edited a new volume of her poems for the series called 'Little Books of Georgian Verse.' The title is *Hill and Heather ; or, England's Heart* (Erskine Macdonald ; rs. net). Miss Cherry is English born but has Scottish blood, 'being a descendant, on her mother's side, of the Duke of Montrose.' She sings that

In a' the warld there is nae land
 Sae lo'ed as oor ain Scottish strand.

Nevertheless the example we shall give is English :

SEMPER VIRENS.

When flowers are golden and fields are green,
 When music flows from the misty hill,
 And the world is fair as it might have been
 And Life is the great Adventure still ;
 Then over the moors is borne the word
 'Mid scent of bracken and heather bright,
 The ceaseless call of the sweet brown bird—
 A song by day, and a sigh by night.

When fields are barren and bare and brown,
 When rain-storms sweep from the misty hill,
 And flowers have lost their golden gown,
 Yet Life is the great Adventure still ;
 For over the moors is heard above
 The breeze that blows o'er the heather way,
 The ceaseless call of a deathless love,
 A sigh by night, and a song by day.

C. J. Dennis.

The Bulletin (of Australia) says : 'C. J. Dennis is not only an Australian poet ; he is a poet.' The book is *The Songs of a Sentimental Bloke* (Oxford : Humphrey Milford ; 3s. 6d.). *The Bulletin* makes no boast. But how to prove it? Only by the quotation of a poem, and the assertion that one is just as good as another. But they are all too long for quotation. Let us quote the first four and the last two stanzas of :

THE KID.

My son! . . . Them words, jist like a blessed
 song,
 Is singin' in me 'eart the ole day long ;
 Over an' over ; while I'm scared I'll wake
 Out of a dream, to find it all a fake.

My son! Two little words, that, yesterdee,
 Wus jist two simple, senseless words to me,
 An' now—no man, not since the world begun,
 Made any better pray'r than that . . . My son!

My son an' blooming 'eir . . . Ours! . . . 'Ers
 an' mine!
 The finest kid in—Aw, the sun don't shine—
 Ther' ain't no joy fer me beneath the blue
 Unless I'm gazin' lovin' at them two.

A little while ago it was jist 'me'—
 A lonely, longin' streak o' misery.
 An' then 'twas 'er an' me'—Doreen, my wife!
 An' now it's 'im an' us'—sich is life.

My wife an' fam'ly! Don't it sound all right!
 That's wot I whispers to meself at night.
 Some day, I s'pose, I'll learn to say it loud
 An' careless ; kiddin' that I don't feel proud.

My son! . . . If ther's a Gawd 'Oo's leanin' near
 To watch our dilly little lives down 'ere,
 'E smiles, I guess, if 'E's a lovin' one—
 Smiles, friendly-like, to 'ear them words—My
 son!