

MY ANSWER.

Do you know you have asked for the costliest thing
Ever made by the hand above:
A woman's heart, and a woman's life,
And a woman's wonderful love?
Do you know you have asked for this priceless thing
As a child might ask for a toy,
Demanding what others have died to win,
With the reckless dash of a boy?

You have written my lesson of duty out,
Men-like you have questioned me.
Now stand at the bar of my woman's soul,
Until I shall question thee.
You require your mutton shall always be hot,
Your socks and your shirts be whole;
I require your heart to be as true as God's stars,
And as pure as is Heaven, your soul.

You require a cook for your mutton and beef:
I require a much greater thing—
A seamstress you're wanting for socks and shirts—
I look for a man and a king—
A king for the beautiful realm called Home,
And a man that his Maker, God,
Shall look upon as He did on the first,
And say, "It is very good!"

I am fair and young, but the rose will fade
From my soft young cheek one day;
Will you love me then, 'mid the falling leaves,
As you did 'mid the blossoms of May?
Is your heart an ocean, so strong and deep,
I may launch my all on its tide?
A loving woman finds heaven or hell,
The day she becomes a bride.

I require all things that are grand and true,
All things that a man should be;
If you give this all, I would stake my life
To be all you demand of me.
If you cannot be this—a laundress and cook
You can hire—and little to pay;
But a woman's heart and a woman's life,
Are not to be won that way.

A CRIMEAN INCIDENT.

BY BAYARD TAYLOR.

"Give us a song!" the soldier cried,
The outer trenches guarding,
While the heated guns of the camps allied
Grew weary of bombarding.

The dark Redan in silent scoff
Lay grim and threatening under,
And the tawny mound of the Malakoff
No longer belched its thunder.

There was a pause; the guardman said:
"We storm the fort to-morrow;
Sing we may; another day
Will bring enough of sorrow."

They along the battery's side,
Below the smoking cannon—
Brave hearts from Severn and from Clyde,
And from the banks of Shannon.

They sang of love, and not of fame;
Forgot was Britain's glory,
Each heart recalled a different name,
But all sang "Annie Laurie."

Voice after voice caught up the song,
Until the tender passion
Rose like an anthem, rich and strong—
Their battle-eve confession.

Dear girl—her name he dare not speak,
Yet, as the song grew louder,
Something upon the soldier's cheek
Washed off the stains of powder.

Beyond the darkening ocean burned
The bloody sunset's embers,
While the Crimean valleys learned
How English love remembers.

And once again a fire of hell
Rained on the Russian quarters,
With scream of shot and burst of shell,
And bellowing of the mortars.

And Irish Nora's eyes are dim
For a singer, dumb and gory;
And English Mary mourns for him
Who sang of "Annie Laurie."

Oh, soldiers! to your honored rest
Your truth and valor bearing;
The bravest are the tenderest—
The loving are the darest.

A LITTLE DOURTEFUL.

[Evansville Journal.]

When a pair of red lips are upturned to your
own,
With no one to gossip about it,
Do you pray for endurance to let them alone?
Well, maybe you do—but I doubt it.

When a sly little hand you're permitted to seize
With a velvety softness about it,
Do you think you can drop it with never a
squeeze?
Well, maybe you can—but I doubt it.

When a tapering waist is in reach of your arm,
With a wonderful plumpness about it,
Do you argue the point 'twixt the good and the
harm?
Well, maybe you do—but I doubt it.

And if by these tricks you should capture a heart,
With a womanly sweetness about it,
Will you guard it and keep it, and act the good
part?
Well, maybe you will—but I doubt it.

How It Happened.

BY JOHN HAY.

I pray you, pardon me, Elsie.
And smile that frown away
That dims the light of your lovely face
As thunder clouds the day.
Before I thought, 'twas done—
And these great gray eyes flashed bright
and cold,
Like an icicle in the sun.

I was thinking of the summer
When we were boys and girls,
And wandering in the blossoming woods,
And the gay winds romped with your
curls;
And you seemed to me the same little
girl
I kissed in the elder path.
I kissed the little girl's lips, and alas!
I have roused a woman's wrath.

There is not so much to pardon,
For why were your lips so red?
The blonde fell in a shower of gold
From the proud, provoking head,
And the beauty that flashed from the
splendid eyes
And played round the tender mouth,
Hushed over my soul like a warm, sweet
wind
That blows from the fragrant South.

And where, after all, is the harm done?
I believe we were made to be gay,
And all of youth not given to love
Is vainly squandered away;
And strewn through life's labors,
Like gold in the desert sand,
Are love's swift kisses, and sighs and vows
And the clasp of clinging hands.

And when you are old and lonely,
In memory's magic shrine
You will see on your thin and wasting
hands,
Like gems, those kisses of mine.
And when you muse at evening,
At the sound of some vanished name,
The ghost of my kisses shall touch your
lips
And kindle your heart's flame.

KEEP THEM YOUNG.

BY JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

Oh, keep the little ones young, my dear,
Don't let them grow old too fast;
For short is the season of youth, my dear,
And soon are its pleasures past.
Oh, speak to them ever in love, my dear,
And smile at their childish ways;
For we have been young ourselves, my dear,
And we've had our foolish days.

That dear little fellow, so full of pranks,
Will soon be a man, you know;
And if he is set in a kindly soil,
In goodness and strength he'll grow.
Have patience, my dear, with his tricksome
ways.

And don't throw a cloud on his joy;
For you know there are many years for the
man,
But precious few for the boy!

And that sweet little girl!—have a care, my
dear,
That you turn not the vine astray,
That will blossom and cheer us all our lives,
If we train it in wisdom's way.

The children grow out of our clinging arms;
But the lullabies we have sung
Will ring in their ears when our lips are cold,
And keep their hearts fresh and young.

Oh, keep the little ones young, my dear,
Don't let them grow old too fast;
For short is the season of youth, my dear,
And soon are its pleasures past.
Don't hurry them into the care and strife,
And out of the dear home nest;
But let them be children as long as they can,
For the time is not long at the best.

"If I had known when your kind eyes
Met mine in parting, true and sad—
Eyes gravely tender, gently wise,
And earnest, rather more than glad—
How soon the lids would lie above,
As cold and white as sculptured stone
I should have treasured every glance—
If I had known."

"If I had known how soon for you
Drew near the ending of the fight,
And on your vision, fair and new,
Eternal peace dawned into sight,
I should have begged as love's last gift,
That you, before God's great white throne,
Would pray for your poor friend on earth—
If I had known."

You Know You Do.

When "some one's" step comes up the
walk,
Your cheeks take on a rosier hue,
And though no other hears his knock,
You hear it well—you know you do!

When "some one" talks about the grain,
And bows to pa, yet looks at you,
You see his glance—ah! 'tis plain—
And give them back—you know you do!

And though it may be very wrong
When pa is quite ignored for you,
You sing for him your prettiest song,
Your cunning thing—you know you do!

And when he talks of other girls,
Of hateful Kate and Jennie too,
You fling at him your auburn curls,
Your jealous thing—you know you do!

You keep your eye upon the clock,
And wish 'twould jump an hour or two,
So that your pa would cease his talk
And go to bed—you know you do!

And when the folks to bed have gone,
And left "some one" alone with you,
You wish the clock would stop its tongue
Or you stop it—you know you do!

He blushes deep, and looks afraid
To be thus left alone with you!
But your eyes tell there ne'er was maid
But could be wooed—you know they
do!

You peep at "some one" 'neath your curls
Until with love you burn him through,
And make him hate all other girls—
In love for you—you know you do!

And when his arm steals round your
chair,
You give a smothered scream or two,
As if you didn't want it there,
But oh, you do—you know, you do!

You nestle closer up to him,
Your head drops on his shoulder, too,
You think it nice to have a "Jim,"
Your naughty thing—you know you do!

You let him kiss your blushing cheeks;
Somehow your lips meet his lips, too;
You tempt him, silly thing, to speak,
Your wicked flirt—you know you do!

And when he timidly doth press
His wish to make a wife of you,
With happy heart you answer "Yes,"
Your darling girl—you know you do!

LITTLE MAUD.

BY THOS. B. ALDRICH.

O where is our dainty, our darling,
The daintiest darling of all?
O where is the voice on the stairway,
O where is the voice in the hall?
The little short steps in the entry,
The silvery laugh in the hall?
O where is our dainty, our darling,
The daintiest darling of all,
Little Maud!

The peaches are ripe in the orchard,
The apricots ready to fall;
And the grapes reach up to the sunshine
Over the garden wall—
But where are the lips, full and melting,
That looked up so pouting and red,
When we dangled the sun purpled branches
Of Isobel over her head?
O rosebud of woman! where are you?
She never replies to our call—
O where is our dainty, our darling,
The daintiest darling of all,
Little Maud!