

Then let the land rejoice,
 Let youthful voices ring,
 The time is here,
 That crowns the year;
 Oh, let us shout and sing!

F. L. P.

THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES.

Among the scenes of my early life, none remain so vivid as that of the old smithy which stood at the cross-roads. This rude and smoke-blackened structure wielded over my childish mind a more powerful fascination than the most imposing palace could command.

Wherein lay the secret of its attraction? Was it the ceaseless activity that its narrow walls enclosed? Was it the fire and the bellows? Was it the mysterious process of driving nails into a horse's foot and inflicting pain? Was it the noise of the mighty hammer upon the red-hot iron and the accompanying shower of sparks? I know not; but the picture remains the most faultless of all childish impressions.

The smith was a powerful man with a right arm that could handle the hammer of Thor. Black brows and heavy, matted hair surmounted a face of ruggedness and strength, rather than refinement. Yet he was gentle to all weak things much as a Newfoundland dog is loath to inflict pain upon any smaller breed—having for them a sort of noble contempt. Years spent in the noise of the shop had made him slightly deaf and sometimes unkind remarks were made about him in low tones. Occasionally he heard the cutting speeches, but never a sign of resentment was shown. He would hammer away, with a quiet, peculiar smile hovering around his tightly shut lips.

His influence over horses seemed magical. A farmer would bring in an ugly, wild-looking colt to have his first shoes fitted. The animal would curvet and prance into the customary place, head up, nostrils distent, ears flat. All hands would suddenly find employment outside, leaving the smith alone with the horse. With sundry pats and kind words would the animal be soothed, and after the shoeing he would walk out with the dignity of an old trooper. What charms lay in touch and tone?

The forge was a wonder; fire out—nothing but a heap of black cinders—with a touch of the bellows a blaze would spring up