

ABOU BEN ADHEM.

ONE night  
 About Ben Adhem  
 Saw a sight—  
 An angel bright.  
 He thought he had 'em.  
 He 'd been asleep,  
 But up he woke,  
 And to the angel  
 Thus he spoke:  
 «You seem to be writing.  
 What 's it about?»  
 The angel answered  
 Quite low, no shout:  
 «Of those who love the Lord I write the names.»  
 «And am I there?» he asked, and felt ashamed;  
 For the angel said, «No,»  
 And turned round to go.  
 But Adams said:  
 «Hold on a minute!  
 I want to be in it.  
 When you 're writing again,  
 Say I love my fellow-men.»  
 Adams, or Adhem, was accustomed to be obeyed;  
 And when the angel came next night he said:  
 «I think you 'll find I 've (got you on the list.)»  
 And, lo! Benjamin Adams' name led all the rist!

We are constrained to say that humor is not Miss More's best hold.

It speaks much for her powers of condensation that she has been able to squeeze «Curfew Must Not Ring To-night» into the limits of four six-line stanzas, and yet spill little juice. The original poem contained ten stanzas.

We do Miss More the honor of printing her version in full. It must be confessed that she does better work in the condensing business than in the rhyming line, although «prison» and «his 'n» remind one of «The Flight of the Duchess.» It is worthy of note, by the way, that, with the exception of «Caliban Upon Setebos,» which Miss More has boiled down into ballad form (eight verses), she has left Browning severely alone. This is a pity. What hidden beauties might she not have brought to light if she had put him in her press!

But to the curfew.

«CURFEW MUST NOT RING TO-NIGHT.»

DAYLIGHT was nearing its close,  
 Over in England one day.  
 The sexton his curfew to ring  
 Was wearily wending his way;  
 And Bessie (far from being a fright)  
 Said: «Curfew must not ring to-night.»

«Beyond those gloomy walls,  
 In that old prison,  
 My lover lies, and at curfew  
 Death will be his 'n.  
 He fought on the wrong side in the fight—  
 Curfew must not ring to-night.»

The sexton he said to sweet Bess:  
 «My dear, it 's a lifelong habit  
 At sunset to go to the bell-rope  
 And as soon as I see it to grab it.  
 Your lover has got in a place that is tight,  
 But curfew has got to ring to-night.»

«I can't break a habit at once.»  
 Sweet Bessie said never a word.

She left the old man's side,  
 And off to the belfry she hurried.  
 You can guess the rest—it 's as people recite;  
 Anyhow, curfew did n't ring that night!

There is a Kipling-like rush in her version of «The Charge of the Light Brigade.»

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

THE six hundred rode out to the valley of death,  
 And fast went their chargers, and short was their breath.  
 At a blunder  
 They wonder,  
 But ride on like thunder;  
 And, as the poet saith,  
 «Into the valley of death  
 Rode the six hundred.»

Into the cannon  
 Rode Captain Shannon  
 And Patrick Gannon,  
 And five ninety-eight brave souls beside 'em;  
 But when they rode back,  
 Alas and alack!  
 Honor was theirs; but, woe betide 'em,  
 Many were dead.  
 As the poet said,  
 «Came . . . back . . . all that was left of them—  
 Left of six hundred.»

Ne'er will their glory fade,  
 Ne'er will the story vanish,  
 Till from school-books they banish  
 «The Charge of the Light Brigade.»

It seems to us that Miss More's prefatory notes are very ingenuous. This one is especially naive:

The rhythm of «The Old Clock on the Stairs» has somehow never satisfied me. The other day I was reading a sacred but very curious poem by W. S. Gilbert, called «The Bishop of Runtfoof,» and it struck me that here was the proper meter for Longfellow's poem; and I have said in four stanzas what it took him nine to say. I have changed the refrain of «Forever—never, never—forever» to «Tick-tock,» because that is more like what a clock says, and poetry should aim to be like life. I always try to make it so.—R. L. M.

THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS.

A SHORT way away from the village street  
 A colonial structure rises, neat.  
 It is the old family country-seat,  
 And solid as a rock.  
 The trees they spread their budding leaves,  
 And fling strange old shadows upon the eaves,  
 Just like a lot of broken sieves,  
 And the clock says «Tick-tock.»

Just half-way up the stairs it 's placed.  
 Its hands are always on the race;  
 They chase each other round its face—  
 The face of the eight-day clock.  
 And all day long, like a big fat monk  
 Whose hands are in his pockets sunk,  
 Or like a sailor in his bunk,  
 The clock it says «Tick-tock.»

And whether there 's births or deaths or marriages,  
 And people come afoot or in carriages,  
 In spite of sickness' awful ravages,  
 Which gives a dreadful shock,—  
 Because they never forget to wind it,