A poet's first book of prose.

Convenient volumes that one can take to the fire, and that are cut up into short chapters that stimulate without taxing the brain, are always attractive to the book-lover. Sir Lewis Morris, hitherto known to readers as a poet, now offers a collection of twenty-eight short papers and addresses, which he collectively entitles "The New Rambler" (Longmans). "He will," he says in his preface, referring to himself in the third person, "be well content should his attempts in prose meet with a measure of the success awarded to those which he has only heretofore made in verse." Merely noting by the way the curious misplacing of "only" in this sentence, we pass on to the body of the book, which contains some very good reading. Especially commendable are his remarks on "The Place of Poetry in Education." Talleyrand's warning to the youth who had no taste

for whist,— "Young man, you are preparing for yourself a miserable old age,"— he thinks might also be addressed to the young person insensible to the charms of poetry. His denial that poetry requires to be clothed in metrical form, and his assertion that "much of Mr. Ruskin's *Stones of Venice*, or *Modern Painters*, and almost the whole of Mr. Carlyle's *History of the French Revolution*, is unmixed and fine poetry," will not pass unchallenged; nor will his opinion that Milton and Spenser were unfortunate in the choice of a theme for their great poems. What he says, in his strictures on current criticism of poetry, about a "conspiracy of silence" among critics, is a familiar cry; yet who but a disappointed poet would say it is not also a foolish and groundless complaint? Sir Lewis Morris, however, is far from being an unsuccessful poet, for he tells us on another page that his "Epic of Hades" "ran through three editions of 1000 copies each in its first year, and thence went steadily onward, till in the present year it has reached its fiftieth thousand or more"; and that "great lawyers not a few, the whole world, in fact, of cultivated people, and last, not least, my friend and master, Lord Tennyson, hastened to acknowledge the merit of the somewhat audacious new writer." Once upon a time, as Sir Lewis will doubtless remember, an author who complained of this diabolical "conspiracy of silence" was advised to join the conspiracy. One whose books of poetry sell to the extent of Sir Lewis's surely need not hesitate to follow the advice. Appreciative and somewhat extended mention is made of Mr. Charles Leonard Moore's half-serious, half-whimsical essay entitled "A Competitive Examination of Poets," which appeared in THE DIAL some years ago. Sir Lewis, as some will recall, has labored long in the cause of public education in Wales, besides producing rapidly-selling volumes of verse; and his experience of life and acquaintance with literature make his reflections and reminiscences and counsels well worth reading.