....*Onti Ora: A Metrical Romance*, by M. B. M. Toland (J. B. Lippincott & Co.), does not escape the suspicion of being commonplace by the free use of sensational elements in the plot.——*Echoes of Half a Century*, by William Pitt Palmer (G. P. Putnam's Sons), have an abundance of good material in them; but, for some reason hard to be discovered, the mental handling of the material does not seem to be poetic—at least, not highly so, and all real poetry is a thing of high degree. Here and there we catch sight of a sparkle which leads us to believe that the author might have won a place among the poets, had he determined to do so. His verses have enough of the poetic in them to have been applauded by those for whom they were written or to have made a bit in the journals of the day.——*Shakespeare's Dream, and other Poems*, by William Leighton (J. B. Lippincott & Co.), as far as the *Dream* goes, which is the chief part of the book, is a kind of prosy moralizing in verse on the Shakespearian characters, who are cast up on the earth again in a dream and made to explain their present view of themselves and their affairs. Ophelia meets Hamlet, and Hamlet meets Ophelia, Polonius appears, and they all go on together in a strain which lends countenance to the Homeric view of Hades as a very dull place. Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, and Duncan talk over their matters. Duncan has life enough in him to resent his treatment, and the residence in Hades seems to have been so far useful to Macbeth that he comes up in an admirable mood of repentance. But Othello seems to have gone down at a great pace, and to have sunk into an insipid shade, who maunders about his history and tries to make up to Desdemona with such poor stuff as this:

"Ah! pale one,
It was not I that slew thee. Pitiful
I wept, while Jealousy, more strong than I,"

did it.——*The Rhyme of the Border War*, by Thomas Brown Peacock, encounters a difficulty, which is not likely to grow less, in dealing with things unworthy to be celebrated, at least from the point of view chosen by this author.——*Persephone, and other Poems*, by Mrs. Charles Willing (J. B. Lippincott & Co.), is a very handsome volume of graceful verses. The story of "Hesperus" is very well told and has the advantage of being founded on fact.——"A War Idyl" and "The Head on Profile Mountain" strike us as good.——*Drifted Snow-Flakes* (two series in one volume) and *Thoughts that Cluster Round our Homes*, both published by E. Claxton & Company, are compilations from miscellaneous sources of verses adapted to assist and refresh weak, troubled, or discouraged souls in the journey of life. These compilations have been published before and require no special notice from us.——*Golden Links* (E. Claxton & Company) is designed for devotional use. It consists of brief pregnant and devout thoughts for the twelve hours of every day in the month. They are well chosen and their use would, no doubt, assist a devout soul in its struggle against what was known in the Mediæval Church as the *διάβολος μεσημβρινός*—the mid-day devil.——*All Round the Year: Verses from Sky Farm*, by Elaine Goodale and Dora Read Goodale (G. P. Putnam's Sons), is a modest book of graceful and tasteful poems, which lead us to expect yet better things from the authors. The opening verses on "Spring" are uncommonly good:

"O strange, sweet season of upheaving birth,
O oft-returning miracle of grace,
To whose pure sources once again we trace
Love's tides, that yearning beat the strong, self-centered earth!
No weight of ages on her swelling breast
Can dull the keen delight of opening Spring."

So too from the ode to the "Sweet-Brier":

"O untaught harmony of Summer days!
The distant tinkle of a waterfall,
The blue, blue sky, that deepens as you gaze,
The wayward rose that blossoms by the wall!

"Unspoiled and sweet in every country lane,
All dewy cool in maiden pink she blooms,
Still green and fragrant through the Summer rain,
Where freer airs are thrilled with light perfumes,

"She blossoms close beside the dusty way,
Her heart the careless passer-by may see;
Sweet is her fragrance through the burning day,
But sweeter is her open secrecy."

There is through the book evidence of a decidedly poetic power of seeing things, combined with much of the art of dainty rhythmic expression.——*Under the Olive* (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) is a little volume of elegant and finished verses, which we do not know how to describe better than by calling them Greek reproductions. They are carefully studied, as both the notes and the text show; but not so much from the original fountains of the Greek drama and epic as from modern treatises on the subject. The scholarly value of such poems is greater than their poetic value. They are too modern to be Greek and too Greek to be modern, and, with all their merit, remind one of what Dr. Johnson said of Watte's hymns—"that he had done better than any one else what no one had done well."——Mr. Richard Watson Gilder, editor of *Scribner's Monthly*, sends us a new edition of *The New Day* (Chas. Scribner's Sons), a poem constructed of sonnets and songs, instead of stanzas, and with a little prose interlude worked in, after the manner of a mediæval *chantefable*. True love runs the usual course through these songs and sonnets, with, however, some rather original variations—as, for example, when, having thrown itself down on a sofa in the dark, ostensibly to ruminate on the sweetly painful thoughts of love, but really to bait the trap for an artifice which follows, the lady fair enters the shade, and throws herself into the arms of a rival. True Love springs up, in a well-feigned frenzy, and utters a howl, much more vigorously than poetically natural. He recovers, however, quickly, and emerges into life with something the air of a hero who cannot forget that his nose has been pulled, and goes once more for the fair lady with this melting strain:

"Love first my lonely soul!
Then shall this too unworthy body of mine
Be loved by right and accident divine."

There is a fine ingenuity in this which goes beyond any lover's cunning to catch a shy maiden ever heard of. Apparently, however, it worked slowly. The lady would not jump on the touch, even to end his loneliness. At last she yields, apparently. There is some doubt about it. Then the erotic poem winds up with a yet more novel expression of the lover's frenzy, in a monologue on submission and "the path of duty, which is not sweet," but which leads from trouble in the cottage to rest in God.——*Little Songs for Little People* (A. D. F. Randolph & Co.) is another miscellaneous collection of nursery rhymes which are not in familiar use; and, like all collections of this kind, some of the poems are good, some are poor, and more belong to that intermediate class called humdrum.——Something like this we must also say of *In the Fields*, by Mary E. N. Hathaway (D. Lothrop & Co.). In the poems for children we find many highly attractive verses, though we object to the sentiment in the second stanza on p. 127, in "What I would do." It is not healthy to teach a child to turn from dreaming what it would do if it were a star to such monologues as this:

"But I know that for me other tasks have been set;
For I am a child, and can nothing else be.
I must sit at my lessons and, day after day,
Learn to read and to spell, and add one, two, and three."

——*Country Love and City Life*, by Charles Henry St. John (A. Williams & Co.), is a book of miscellaneous poems which have done duty on the lecture platform, and evoked there rounds of applause and bursts of laughter. They are closely adapted to the average popular audience. The humor is not so full and rich as that of Saxe; the verses are sometimes written in a broader and coarser vein.