

Classic Poetry Series

Arthur Clement Hilton

- poems -

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Ding Dong

By Rosina Christetti

Ding dong, Ding dong,
There goes the Gong,
Dick, come along,
'Tis time for dinner.
Wash your face,
Take your place.
Where's your grace,
You little sinner?
"Like an apple?"
"Yes I should.
Nice, nice, nicey!
Good, good, good!"

"Manners, miss,
Please behave.
Those who ask,
Shan't have."

"Those who don't,
Don't want.
I'll eat it,
You shan't."

Baby cry,
Wipe his eye.
Baby good,
Give him food.
Baby sleepy,
Go to bed.
Baby naughty,
Smack his head!

Poor little thrush,
Found dead in a bush!
When did he die?
He is rather high.
Bury him deep,
He won't keep.
Bury him well,
Or he'll smell.

What have horns? Cows and moons.
What have crests? Cocks and spoons.
What are nice? Ducks and peas.
What are nasty? Bites of fleas.
What are fast? Tides and times.
What are slow? Nursery rhymes.

Arthur Clement Hilton

Mathematics

I've really done enough of sums,
I've done so very many,
That now instead of doing sum
I'd rather not do any.
I've toiled until my fingers are
With writing out of joint;
And even now of Decimals
I cannot see the point.
Subtraction to my weary mind
Brings nothing but distraction,
And vulgar and improper I
Consider every fraction.

"Practice makes perfect," so they say.
It may be true. The fact is
That I unhappily am not
Yet perfect in my Practice.

Discount is counted troublesome
By my unlearned pate;
For cubic root I entertain
A strongly rooted hate.

The heathen worship stocks and stones;
My pious soul it shocks
To be instructed thus to take
An Interest in Stocks.

Of Algebra I fear I have
A very vague impression;
I study hard, but fail to make
Harmonical Progression.

In Euclid too I always climb
The Asses' Bridge with pain;
A superficies to me
Is anything but plane.

"Apply yourself," my master said,
When I my woes confided,
"And, when you multiply, bestow
Attention undivided."

Oh, if one master tries so hard
Tyrannical to be,
How out of all Proportion I
Should find a Rule of Three.

Arthur Clement Hilton

Nonsense Verses

By Edward Leary.

There was an old fellow of Peterhouse,
Who said, "You could not find a neater house
Than our new Combination-Room
For a mild dissipation room."

That abandoned old Fellow of Peterhouse.

There was a boat captain of Downing,
Whose crew were in danger of drowning,
But he cried, "Swim to shore,
For I'm sure that eight more
Could not be collected in Downing."

There was a young genius of Queens',
Who was fond of explosive machines,
He once blew up a door,
But he'll do it no more,
For it chanced that that door was the Dean's.

There was a young student of Caius,
Who collected black beetles and fleas,
He'd walk out in the wet
With his butterfly net,
And smile, and seem quite at his ease.

There was a young man of Sid. Sussex,
Who insisted that $w + x$
Was the same as xw ;
So they said, "Sir, we'll trouble you
To confine that idea to Sid. Sussex."

There was a young gourmand of John's,
Who'd a notion of dining on swans,
To the Backs he took big nets
To capture the cygnets,
But was told they were kept for the Dons.

There was an old Fellow of Trinity,
A Doctor well versed in Divinity,
But he took to free thinking
And then to deep drinking,
And so had to leave the vicinity.

Arthur Clement Hilton

Octopus

By Algernon Charles Sin-Burn

Strange beauty, eight-limbed and eight-handed,
Whence camest to dazzle our eyes?

With thy bosom bespangled and banded
With the hues of the seas and the skies;

Is thy home European or Asian,
O mystical monster marine?

Part molluscous and partly crustacean,
Betwixt and between.

Wast thou born to the sound of sea trumpets?
Hast thou eaten and drunk to excess

Of the sponges -- thy muffins and crumpets,
Of the seaweed -- thy mustard and cress?

Wast thou nurtured in caverns of coral,
Remote from reproof or restraint?

Art thou innocent, art thou immoral,
Sinburnian or Saint?

Lithe limbs, curling free, as a creeper

That creeps in a desolate place,
To enroll and envelop the sleeper
In a silent and stealthy embrace,
Cruel beak craning forward to bite us,
Our juices to drain and to drink,
Or to whelm us in waves of Cocytus,
Indelible ink!

O breast, that 'twere rapture to writhe on!

O arms 'twere delicious to feel
Clinging close with the crush of the Python,
When she maketh her murderous meal!
In thy eight-fold embraces enfolden,
Let our empty existence escape,
Give us death that is glorious and golden,
Crushed all out of shape!

Ah! thy red lips, lascivious and luscious,
With death in their amorous kiss,
Cling round us, and clasp us, and crush us,
With bitings of agonised bliss;
We are sick with the poison of pleasure,
Dispense us the potion of pain;
Ope thy mouth to its uttermost measure
And bite us again!

Arthur Clement Hilton

The Vulture and the Husbandman

By Louisa Caroline N.B. -- A Vulture is a rapacious and obscene bird, which destroys its prey by plucking it limb from limb with its powerful beak and talons. A Husbandman is a man in a low position of life, who supports himself by the use of the plough. -- (Johnson's Dictionary).

The rain was raining cheerfully,
As if it had been May;
The Senate-House appeared inside
Unusually gay;
And this was strange, because it was
A Viva-voce day.
The men were sitting sulkily,
Their paper work was done;
They wanted much to go away
To ride or row or run;
"It's very rude," they said, "to keep
Us here, and spoil our fun."

The papers they had finished lay
In piles of blue and white.
They answered every thing they could,
And wrote with all their might,
But, though they wrote it all by rote,
They did not write it right.

The Vulture and the Husbandman
Beside these piles did stand,
They wept like anything to see
The work they had in hand.
"If this were only finished up,"
Said they, "it would be grand!"

"If seven D's or seven C's
We give to all the crowd,
Do you suppose," the Vulture said,
"That we could get them ploughed?"
"I think so," said the Husbandman,
"But pray don't talk so loud."

"O undergraduates, come up,"
The Vulture did beseech,
"And let us see if you can learn
As well as we can teach;
We cannot do with more than two
To have a word with each."

Two Undergraduates came up,
And slowly took a seat,
They knit their brows, and bit their thumbs,
As if they found them sweet,
And this was odd, because you know
Thumbs are not good to eat.

"The time has come," the Vulture said,
"To talk of many things,
Of Accidence and Adjectives,
And names of Jewish kings,
How many notes a sackbut has,
And whether shawms have strings."

"Please, Sir," the Undergraduates said,
Turning a little blue,
"We did not know that was the sort
Of thing we had to do."
"We thank you much," the Vulture said,
"Send up another two."

Two more came up, and then two more,
And more, and more and more;
And some looked upwards at the roof,
Some down upon the floor,
But none were any wiser than
The pair that went before.

"I weep for you," the Vulture said,
"I deeply sympathise!"
With sobs and tears he gave them all
D's of the largest size,
While at the Husbandman he winked
One of his streaming eyes.

"I think," observed the Husbandman,
"We're getting on too quick.
Are we not putting down the D's
A little bit too thick?"
The Vulture said with much disgust
"Their answers make me sick."

"Now, Undergraduates," he cried,
Our fun is nearly done,
"Will anybody else come up?"
But answer came there none;
And this was scarcely odd, because
They'd ploughed them every one!

Arthur Clement Hilton