

BRIC-À-BRAC.

To John Burroughs.

(After reading "Signs and Seasons" in the March
CENTURY.)

THE genial John Burroughs is racking his brain
For a token that spring-time is coming again.
"Quod primum?" he queries; and I am the man,
sir,
Can give him an incontrovertible answer.
The very first thing in the coming of spring,
Ere crows or mosquitoes are out on the wing:
My little white mare
Is shedding her hair.

Ere *Alnus incana* hath opened a scale
Of her staminate catkins' impervious mail;
Ere sweetness doth trickle from *Acer saccharinum*,
My whiskers are grisly with pony's white hair in
'em.
My coat-sleeve will show it; my beaver also;
And neighbors and patrons will each of them know
My little white mare
Is shedding her hair.

Take notice this season, O genial John B.,
You'll find, as I tell you, as sure as can be,
That, ere the *Hepatica* opens a calyx,—
Ere *Populus*, *Corylus*, *Betula*, *Salix*,
Or *Carex* has blossomed, or grasshopper thawed,
Or button-ball bursted, or *Corvus* has cawed,
Your little white mare
Will be shedding her hair.

F. Blanchard.

Picking Berries.

'Twas in the season of the year
When clustering fruit bedecks the bramble
That gallant Paul and Laura fair
Set out upon a pleasant ramble.

They went in search of berries red,
And Paul seemed somewhat melancholy,
But dainty Laura tossed her head,
With lightsome laughter blithe and jolly.

At last they reached the destined place
Where brambles grew in wild profusion,
And lo! Paul's melancholy face
Put on a look of deep confusion;

But Laura laughed in roguish glee,
With lips that rivaled ripest cherries,
And, while Paul loitered doubtfully,
She calmly went on picking berries.

At last Paul, dawdling at his task,
With face as grave as prebendary's,
Said, "Laura, dear, I'd like to ask"—
But Laura went on picking berries.

Poor Paul stood still and twirled his hat,
His stammering tongue played queer vagaries,
Then said, "I'd like to tell you that"—
But Laura went on picking berries.

"I long have loved you," murmured he,
"With love that never, never varies."
"In that case, don't you think," said she,
"You'd better help me pick the berries?"

Stanley Wood.

Caught.

OVER the lattice there clambered a vine,
Its tendrils in arabesques tenderly clung
To the cool slender bars in the shade of the pine,
That sheltered us there where the song-sparrows
sung.

As sweet as a rose in the pale pink and blue
Of her thin fleecy robe, with a bud in her hair,
As fair as a tropic bloom fresh with the dew,
She mused by my side in the cool morning air.

How did it happen? I really don't know,
Her lips were like rosebuds—sore tempted, I
fell;—
"Oh, nobody saw us!"—I started to go,
When a wee voice,—"I seen 'oo, an' I'm doin'
to tell!"

Harold Van Santvoord.

Culture.

THE village maid, whose gentle heart
I won, those golden summer days,
Brought up in simple country ways
With store of all housewifely art,
Had little learning else to boast:
A year or two of school at most.

I knew it. Yet within her eyes,
Up-raised in loving trust to mine,
What wealth of promise seemed to shine!
What glorious possibilities!
"When my sweet girl and I are wed,
I'll cultivate her mind," I said.

We tried it in the honeymoon.
I planned a "course" of history,
Art, literature, and poetry
Combined; and every afternoon
I read to her, and gave her "talks"
On science in our evening walks.

And she—ah! when can I forget
Her look of measureless content,
Her love-lit eyes so gravely bent
Upon my face! And yet—and yet—
I sometimes felt a haunting doubt
If she knew what 'twas all about.

For oftentimes, in lightsome mood,
She'd murmur something sweet and low
That was not always *à propos*:
Her judgments, too, were often crude,
And her remarks on Locke and Kant
Were painfully irrelevant.

Somehow I can't escape a sense
Of failure: though to-day her face
Still keeps its tender, listening grace,
Its subtle, fine intelligence
(She'd look the same were I to speak
In Sanskrit or Homeric Greek!)—

I think I'll have to give it up.
I'll have to bear it, that is all!—
The first, the only drop of gall
In joy's divine, o'erflowing cup,
The one grand failure of my life!—
I cannot "cultivate" my wife!

Robertson Trowbridge.

Bits of Midsummer Metaphysics.

THESE suggestions as to the essence of a few metaphysical units are believed to be very suitable for members of summer schools of philosophy, and for all searchers after truth. They depend for their significance on the words themselves as related to the appreciative intuitivism of the reader:

Art is the joyous externalizing of inwardness.

Beauty is the joyful internalization of outwardness.

Poetry is the hampered soul leaping at verity.

Truth is the so-ness of the as-it-were.

Right is the awful yes-ness of the over-soul meditating on the how-ness of the thing.

Society is the heterogeneous, buying peace with homogeneity.

A *Thing* is simply an is-ness. *Matter* is is-ness possessed of somewhat-ness. *Mind* is am-ness.

Philosophy is the mind trying to find out its own little game.

G. F. S.

"Too Too."

THE phrase "Too too," as an intensified adverb, is common in old literature. Witness Hamlet's "too, too solid flesh," and Dekker uses it perhaps a hundred times. But I never saw "too too" standing by itself without an adjective except in one place. That phrase, which sounds so new to us, occurs in one of the oldest English plays, "A new Enterlude called Thersytes," 1537—black-letter quarto—thus:

"It is too too, mother, the pastime and good cheer,
That we shall see and have when that we come there."
(Dodsley's Old Plays. Vol. I., p. 423.)

Our modern slang crops up unexpectedly in my old reading. In Dekker's Sabromastix (1603), I find "We'd let all slide."

A. A. Ade.

At Last.

SHE tips to-and-fro in the old rocking-chair,
Her forehead is wrinkled, and white is her hair,
While her grandchildren romp in a turbulent throng
She reads the fond words of a tender love-song.

That love-song was writ her one sunshiny day
When her heart was as light as the breezes in May,
When her figure was graceful, her cheek like a rose,
And never were spectacles perched on her nose.

The lover that wrote her that sonnet, alas,
Has peacefully slept 'neath the long tangled grass
For years—and the words of his eloquent lay
"Miss Violet" reads for the first time to-day.

You ask why that poem thus lingered unseen?
He had sent it that time to a great magazine,
And the publishing man let the musical waif
Unprinted remain fifty years in the safe.

R. K. Munkittrick.

Little Tee-Hee.



It was over the sea, in the land of tea,
By the beautiful river they call Yang Tse,
To which an additional name they hang
Making the river Yang Tse Kiang,
A baby was born in a Chinese town;
But a look of scorn and a terrible frown



O'er the face of the father was seen to curl,
When he learned that his baby was only a girl.

Now the father, whose name was Hang U. High,
Was the last of the race of the great I. Ligh,
The father of Chinese history.

He was very proud of his pedigree,
And even declared that his lineage ran
In a line direct to the very first man.
His greatest ambition was now to see
Another limb on his family tree,
A boy who could finally step in his place,
Down the race-course of time to continue his race;

But alas for his hopes! "Chug um whirl! Chug um whirl!"

He muttered, which means "It's a girl! It's a girl!"

And he angrily hissed: "Clack whang bog lound!"
Which means in their language "It must be drowned!"