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A Night With the Poets

By W. E. HILL

Joe and Lena are column contributors and see their stuff published, which is something these days. They work together. Last week they handled a item in an evening paper. It ran:

"Mary is a little off. She never says, 'Will you be yourself?'"

Cross section of an evening given over to the reading and discussion of current poetry. The gathered literati are becoming very restive. "After all, as the large lady at the right is thinking, one can stand just so much, be it ever so exquisite!" The young man on the extreme right is asking the tailor-made young lady if she knows any one with influence. "Any one will do, so I can get a hearing?!" "Well, replies the tailor-made girl, "I did know a proofreader, but she's not speaking to me now!"

The guest of honor at the annual open meeting of the Pre-mortal Poetry society (which has no affiliations with the Pre-mortal Poetry league) is none other than Lena J. Rae (at the right), editor in chief of "Uncle Ned’s Outdoor Page for Boys and Girls" in the Woman’s Household Delight, the magazine of a million homes. Mr. Rae will speak briefly on "The Magazine and the Home." It was the intention of the society to have Queen Marie as guest of honor, but she had a previous engagement, it seems.

Franklin and Louie, the radicals, are great friends. Their poetry is very similar. All about gold, grinding steel, smoke and grime, crunching of bones and disorganized labor. In fact, what one doesn’t think of the other does. They are worried over jury duty.

"Do you suppose I did wrong to vote?" asks Franklin.
"They say," replies Louie, "that teachers are exempt. Now, why couldn’t I say I’m teaching you French, for instance, and then you could say that you are teaching me something—drawing, say. Then we’d both be excused." O, those boys are clever!

Poets are very sensitive. They hate to be misunderstood, even in the smallest things. Here’s Lorenzo Belford, the young Lorenzo, whispering to Louie on the back steps of the school:

"Since when are your legs so big?"
"Strike true my limbs, and strange with my gait."
"Don’t get ragged against my fond bosom with coarse epithets." Well, some feud got up and said there were several rhymes in it. Imagine! When any one knows that Lorenzo never did a thing like that in his life.

Corinna Corinthia, the thirteen year old wonder, has kindly consented to read a few choice specimens from her published poems. (Autographed copies of stall at the door as you go out). There are doubts who think that Corinna never wrote "O the sea, the sea. O the cruel, crafty sea." She must have been helped by her parents, they say. But those who really know Corinna insist that she did it herself. Because her parents, they say, are too dumb to be of any use whatsoever.