

**LONDON
RHYMES**

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London Rhymes by Frederick Locker

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FREDERICK LOCKER

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BY
FREDERICK LOCKER



NEW YORK
FREDERICK A. STOKES & BROTHER
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1888

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

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ADVICE TO A POET.

*Now if you'll only take, perchance,
But half the pains to learn, that we
Still take to hide our ignorance—
How very clever you will be!*

Dear Poet, do not rhyme at all!
But if you must, don't tell your neighbours,
Or five in six, who cannot scrawl,
Will dub you "donkey" for your labours.
This epithet may seem unjust
To you, or any Verse-beggetter;—
Must we admit, I fear we must,
That nine in ten deserve no better?

Then let them bray with leathern lungs,
And match you with the beast that grazes;
Or wag their heads, and hold their tongues,
Or damn you with the faintest praises.

Be patient, for be sure you won't
 Win vogue without extreme vexation ;
 And hope for sympathy,—but don't
 Expect it from a near relation.

When strangers first approved my books,
 My kindred marvel'd what the praise meant ;
 They now wear more respectful looks,
 But can't get over their amazement.
 Indeed, they've power to wound beyond
 That wielded by the fiercest hater,
 For all the time they are so fond,—
 Which makes the aggravation greater.

• • • •

Most warblers only half express
 The threadbare thoughts they feebly utter :
 Now if they tried for something less
 They might not sink, and gasp, and flutter.
 Fly low at first,—then mount and win
 The niche for which the town's contesting ;
 And never mind your kith and kin,—
 But never give them cause for jesting.