

THE CLICKING OF THE REEL

GEORGE DAVID STEWART

All nature moves in harmony,
And, to attentive ears,
There comes, the poets tell us,
The "music of the spheres."
But nature's music ne'er awakes
That rapture which I feel
When, with the river's murmur, blends
The clicking of the reel.

You may sing the Bells of Shandon,
Or the bells of San Michel;
Their mystic power o'er mortals,
Their wondrous seething spell—
In some dim and vast cathedral
Of the mighty organ's peal—
But these sounds sink 'neath the magic
Of the clicking of the reel.

When fleecy clouds obscure the sun,
Or when the Arctic haze,
Silent and swift from far Belle Isle—
A light of other days—
Or when across the Pollock Pool
The shades of evening steal,
The air with melody is full—
'Tis the clicking of the reel.

Dame Fortune's but a fickle jade,
Her favours you may miss;
Some other fellow wins the maid,
Some other man the kiss.
Let both go hang! I'll take my chance
On the turn of Fortune's wheel
When a Salmo Salar takes the fly
And turns the humming reel.

To land him 'tis ecstatic joy,
Peer of all earthly bliss;
And what alluring agony
To make a scare a miss:
But these transports transcendental
Are as nought to those I feel
When the rumble of the fight is on,
The clicking of the reel.

And when I'm crossing Jordan
It shall be my dearest wish
To obtain a heavenly order
Permitting me to fish.
There'll be fewer tears, less sighing,
Less reluctance by a deal,
And I'll land with colours flying,
To the clicking of the reel.