Turned Up Her Nose at Turnips

"I'VE WRITTEN poems since I was 9 years old," writes Pauline L., of West Plains, Missouri. "I'm 87 now, and I remember those drought years when our gardens dried up. My father planted turnip seeds and mustard for greens, and they both grew very well."

Turnips

How I hated turnips
When I was just a child.
The scent of those things cooking
Nearly drove me wild.

Father filled the lard stand
And cooked them every day,
Then fed them to everything;
At least it seemed that way.

Morning, noon, and nighttime,
That turnip pot cooked on.
The whole house smelled of turnips;
The scent was loud and strong.

We fed them to the horses,
The rabbits, goats and cows,
But we had to cook 'em fancy
For chickens and the sows.

Those buried holes of turnips
Seemed to hold a ton or more;
And when the ground was frozen
The cellar held some more.

"Go carry up more turnips

and fill up every pot,”
Mother said, “They’re good for you,
But fattening, they are not.”

Oh, yes, we had to eat them,
Tho not fit for a sow.
“I’ll never cook a turnip!”
I made this solemn vow.

I kept that solemn promise,
That wherever I might roam
The poor old lowly turnip
Would never scent my home!

One year, when I was very ill,
A neighbor brought one night
A dish of food to make me strong
And tempt my appetite.

When I opened up the cover,
Much to my surprise,
I saw a bowl of turnips,
The food I so despised.

Of course, I could not let her know
My vow of years gone by,
And so, I thought I’d take a taste.
Won’t hurt me just to try.

I took a tiny sample
But not a morsel did I waste.
Has there been a change in turnips
Or have the years changed my taste?

Well, I still don’t know the answer,
Now I like them very well,

But I make a last confession—
I still don’t like their smell!