

some of the greatest poems of Miss Johnson have even been left unmentioned.

One more quality which has been merely alluded to so far, is the powerful imaginative faculty that so influences her work and personality. It is the faculty which the great actor has in common with the poet, and to it may be attributed, no doubt, the dramatic ability which Miss Johnson possesses in no mean degree. The speed at which "As Redmen Die" was written has been mentioned, and is evidence of the strength with which an imagined situation takes hold of her mind: this ideal intensity is exemplified in all her longer poems, and a little poem named with a quotation from Charles G. D. Roberts, "Through Time and Better Distance" is a remarkable instance of it. It is here quoted in full, and it may be added that Miss Johnson considers the last four short stanzas the most perfect artistically that she has ever written:

"Unknown to you I walk the cheerless shore:

The cutting blast, the hurl of biting brine
May freeze and still and bind the waves
at war.

Ere you will ever know, O! heart of mine,
That I have sought reflected in the blue

Of those sea depths some shadow of
your eyes;

Have hoped the laughing winds would
sing of you;

But this is all my starving sight des-
cries:

Far out at sea a sail
Bends to the fresh'ning breeze,
Yields to the rising gale
That sweeps the seas,

Yields as a bird wind-toss't
To saltish waves that fling
Their spray, whose rime and frost
Like crystals cling

To canvas, mast and spar
Till, gleaming like a gem,
She dips beyond the far
Horizon's hem.

Lost to my longing sight.
And nothing left for me,
Save a fast coming night,
An empty sea.

It may be that in objection to my ascription of many of Miss Johnson's characteristics to her Indian blood, some may suggest that her poetic power is due rather to inheritance from white ancestors, for is not Miss Johnson a third cousin of W. D. Howells, and is she not, through her mother, related to the Howells family who are all writers? To this I reply that there are no poets in the Howells family, unless, indeed, the efforts of the great novelist—flippantly but aptly described as "tappings on the back door of his soul"—may be classed as song. What Miss Johnson does owe to her white blood is finality in the creation of her songs, and the heritage of a habit of expression. The rich and burning poetry of her Indian ancestry grafted on this unimaginative and mechanical habit of expression has brought forth the poetry as we find it; but her genius remains wholly Indian.

Any nation is slow to realize the greatness of one of its people but there are not a few among us who feel in her poetry, in her quality of spontaneous song, the germ of immortality. There is no living poetess who has her united strength and sweetness, no woman writer whose poetry is so completely the "outcome of real and intense internal feeling craving expression, and careless of everything but its own instinctive adherence to truth of matter and beauty of form—in a word, inspired"—to quote from a writer in the last number of this magazine. And to one who has been enabled to examine all Miss Johnson's poetry it does not seem a very bold assertion to make that not only is she the greatest living poetess but, were the few of the greatest women-poets of all times to be counted on the fingers of one hand, her name must be included in the number.

The consideration of sex is not a wholly desirable one to bring into literature, however, and judging Miss