

So do they come and sit, night after night,
Talking of me to thee till I forget
That they are mere illusions and the past
Is gone forever. They have vanished now,
And I am all alone, and thou art—where ?
My love, good angels bear thee my good night ! ”

When I had read once, I paused in admiration and astonishment. I read again, and still the wonder grew. Here was a kind of triple sonnet, written in blank verse, and signed with fictitious initials: but I felt there was a soul in them. The reflection I made was: “The man who wrote these lines is a poet, and I will hear of him again.” Five or six years elapsed, when in 1870 appeared the “Prophecy of Merlin,” by John Reade. I procured one of the first copies, and, after attentive reading, my judgment was confirmed. King Arthur has been borne away in a barge to the vale of Avalon, and Sir Bedivere, the last of the Knights of the Round Table, lifts up his voice upon the beach and weeps. Merlin comes forth, and, after staunching his wound, consoles him with a prophecy of the happy days that are to replace the golden era of Camelot. Three queens shall reign in the favored land, a triple sisterhood beneath one crown,—Britain, and Albyn, and green Innisfail. The description of the arts and sciences in this new time is of surpassing beauty. Merlin then gives a glowing description of Prince Albert, the consort of this Queen; adds a brilliant picture of the Crystal Palace and the first London Exhibition; makes a touching allusion to Canada, “the far land beneath the setting sun;” and concludes with a tribute to Prince Arthur, who had, at that time, passed a year among us. After this, Merlin disappears and leaves Sir Bedivere alone upon the strand among the dead. Merlin goes and Bedivere is solitary, but we are happy, because we are in possession of the most perfect poem ever written in Canada, a fit pendant to Tennyson’s “Idyls of the King.” The same volume contains a number of other beautiful compositions. Those bearing on Scriptural subjects, such as Vashti, Balaam, Rizpah, Jubal and Jephthah, being specially remarkable. In a magazine article, published a few years ago,