



Concerning Books and Writers

Verse by B.C. Writers.

SERVE AND LEARN

A lantern where a sign-post gives direction;
 A torch beside a rugged boulder-stone;
 A wand of willow, stripped of bark and gleaming,
 To mark the pathway that is overgrown:
 These set, we shall find means for other service.
 The outcome, human eye may not discern.
 The world's acclaiming we would cease to covet,
 But keep as ours the motto, "Serve and Learn."
 Does this sound cold and soulless in the saying?
 Behind it stands a word of warming tone;
 With "Love" as guidance and as inspiration,
 There's heart-cheer in the work that's ours alone.
 The God of love and light and satisfaction,
 Will bless the task made ready to our hand;
 And should we fail or fall ere it is finished,
 His parent heart will surely understand.

—Annie Margaret Pike.

THE FANCIFUL GARDENER

Geranium, bright-turquoise, and verdure-green pleasant,
 I find on my canvas of twenty-foot sod
 That does not reprove me because I am buoyant
 And lean for a whisper of music abroad.
 But I am a gardener, and joy in and show it
 In moulding the plastic dear earth to my will;
 I dig in, and weed in, and rake on, and hoe it
 And up spring the flowerets to answer my skill.
 The Rain's a white maiden that, fallen from heaven,
 Flies straight to the earth and sinks gently to rest;
 She claims the first months and might speak for eleven . . .
 But clamours for April . . . our fairest and best.
 The Sun is a male that is strong beyond measure,
 Yet frail as a willow when seen behind showers;
 He smiles on my garden and fills it with treasure;
 Geranium, bright-turquoise, and many-shade flowers.

—Lyn Tallman.

THE CORAL REEF

The Coral Reef, guarding its island home,
 Its emerald-green lagoon and silver strands,
 Stronger than steel and concrete fort it stands
 'Gainst swell of sea and storm-king's rage and foam.
 Those countless coral workers never sleep;
 They toil, bequeath new life; they die, and all
 Their bodies underlie the living wall;
 The dead the living help the watch to keep.
 So seems it too with all the race of men:
 They toil, beget, and die; their strength is hurled
 Upon the levelling forces of the world.
 The fallen rise to give their strength again.
 Their souls a living wall must ever be
 'Gainst surge and storm of Time's relentless sea.

—Edwin E. Kinney.

"A GARDEN BY THE SEA" AND OTHER POEMS

"A Garden by the Sea and Other Poems" recently published in London by Arthur L. Humphreys, should be of special interest to British Columbians and to the people of Vancouver, in which city the poet, Mrs. L. A. Lefevre has been living and writing for many years. This tastefully bound volume contains the best of Mrs. Lefevre's work, and the Canadian edition that has just been published by Messrs. McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, will afford an opportunity for British Columbians to possess her poems in pleasing and compact form.

The collection contains most of the pieces which celebrate British Columbia and Vancouver, including "The Lions' Gate" and "Hail and Farewell," both so widely known in this Province. Vancouver has been fortunate, indeed, in the short space of her existence as a city, to have had three such poets as Pauline Johnson, Isabel Ecclestone Mackay and Mrs. Lefevre to illumine with the magical glamour of their fancy the wonderful scenic beauties with which Nature has endowed her. It helps to a fuller appreciation of the Lions, for instance, when we have read in the first poem mentioned, the following lines so rich in pictorial suggestion:

"We calmly rise on the amber skies
 When the sun and the sea have kissed,
 And the glory fills all the circling hills
 That glow in a rainbow mist;
 When the radiance falls on our granite walls
 And the purple peaks unfold,
 We fling to the sky from our fortress on high
 Cloud banners of crimson and gold.

"And far below where the waters flow
 The stately ships sail through,
 For the fair surprise of a city lies
 Where the forest giants grew,
 She holds the key of an empire free
 Whose glory has just begun,
 The nations meet at Vancouver's feet,
 The East and West are one."

With its fine descriptive power and the majestic sweep of the verses, it is no wonder that this poem is a general favourite.

"Eagle Pass" describes how a sudden swerve in the flight of an eagle disclosed to Walter Moberley the pass through the Rocky Mountains by which he saw in dreams, which were later to be realized:

"A great imperial highway sweep
 Across the land from sea to sea."

The poet here has handled her subject with a fine realization of its dramatic value.

The collection, however, is by no means local in its range, and shows a wide variety of subject and style. Haunting lyric quality is to be found in many of the shorter poems. "Mavis" has been set to music and was sung by the Irish tenor, John McCormack. There is the same tuneful melody of line in "Gold and Grey":

"Gold is the sunset's heart of fire
 That rosy clouds enfold,