

# A CORONATION ODE

(Written at the time of the Coronation of King Edward.)

By BLISS CARMAN

There are joy-bells over England, there are flags on London town;  
There is bunting on the Channel, where the fleets go up and down;  
There are bonfires alight  
In the pageant of the night;  
There are bands that blare for splendour, and guns that speak  
for might;  
For another king in England is coming to the crown.

What people are these passing to the sound of pipe and drum;  
In the garments of all nations, and singing as they come?  
By the colour of the cheek,  
By the accent when they speak,  
They are foreign-born and alien, and their homes are far to seek;  
But they all come up to England, when England calls them home.

And these who speak the English tongue not in the English way,  
With the careless mien and temper self-assured, whose sons are they?  
By the larger, looser stride,  
By the ampler ease and pride,  
By the quicker catch at laughter and the outlook keener-eyed,  
They were bred beneath the tent-cloth of a wider, whiter day.

From the rough red tides of Fundy where the ships go far inland,  
To Kamloops where the hills are set as at a council grand;  
From the waving Northern light  
At the edge of polar night,  
Where underneath the burnished stars the bitter trail is bright,  
To the inland seas that sparkle where goodly orchards stand;

By prairie, swale and barren; by jungle and lagoon,  
Where endless palm-trees rustle and the creamy breakers croon,  
By canon, ford, and pass,  
By desert and morass,  
In snows like stinging lashes, on seas like burning glass,  
By every land and water beneath the great lone moon;

Our fathers died for England at the out-posts of the world;  
Our mothers toiled for England where the settler's smoke upcurled;  
By packet, steam, and rail,  
By portage, trek, and trail,  
They bore a thing called honour in hearts that did not quail,  
Till the twelve great winds of heaven saw their scarlet sign unfurled.

O East they go and West they go, and never can they bide,  
For the longing that is in them, and the whisper at their side!  
They may 'stablish hearth and home.  
But the sons will forth and roam,  
As their fathers did before them, across the hollow foam,  
Till strange lands lift to greet them at the edges of the tide.

They have visions of a country that sorrow never knew;  
They have rumours of a region where the heart has naught to rue;  
And never will they rest  
Till they reach the fabled West,  
That is charted, dim but certain, in the Volume of the Breast,  
And for ever they are dreamers who make the dream come true.

O doubt not, wrong, oppression, and violence, and tears,  
The ignorance and anguish and folly of the years  
Must pass and leave a mind  
More sane, a soul more kind,  
And the slow ages shall evolve a loftier mankind,  
When over lust and carnage the great white peace appears.

For surely, very surely, will come the Prince of Peace,  
To still the shrieking shrapnel and bid the Maxims cease—  
Not as invaders come  
With gun-wheel and with drum,  
But with the tranquil joyance of lovers going home  
Through the scented summer twilight, when the spirit has release.

By sea and plain and mountain will spread the larger creed—  
The love that knows no border, the bond that knows no breed;  
For the little word of right  
Must grow with truth and might,  
Till monster-hearted Mammon and his sycophants take flight,  
And vex the world no longer with rapine and with greed.

O England, little mother, by the sleepless Northern tide,  
Who hast bred so many nations to devotion, trust, and pride,  
Very tenderly we turn  
With willing hearts that yearn  
Still to love you and defend you,—let the sons of men discern  
Wherein your right and title, might and majesty reside!

O Sir, no empty rumour comes up the earth to-day  
From the kindred and the peoples and the tribes a world away;  
For they know the law will hold  
And be equal as of old,  
With conscience never questioned and justice never sold,  
And beneath the form and letter the spirit will have play.

When you hear the princely concourse take up the word and sing,  
And the Abbey of our fathers with acclamations ring,  
Know well that, true and free,  
By the changeless hearts' decree,  
On all the winds of heaven and the currents of the sea  
From the verges of the Empire will come,  
"God save the King!"

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