

Loyalty to the British crown is a conspicuous trait of this westernmost outpost of the Empire, and many of the bards I have mentioned have tuned their lyres to the patriotic theme. But the special laureate of British Columbia was the late Sir Clive Phillips-Wolley, who lived in the province for many years. His verse combines dignity with an agreeable swing, and he is particularly successful in depicting the scenery of the coast as in his "Spring" poem and in this virile "Gulf o' Georgia Boatman's Song":

"It is sun-soaked peace that the land folk crave,
And the drowsy voice of their sheep;
Give me the roar of the rousing wave
When the Sou' West harries the Deep.

When the salt o' the sea gets into your blood,
And the throb of its heart to your brain;
When the live boat lifts to the living flood,
And you flush to the kiss of the rain;

When down the valleys of gloomy grey
And over the slant sea walls
The black squalls race, the white-caps play
And the shrieking sea-bird calls—

Then my spirit stirs, and my pulses beat,
And the long-gone years come back;
Thank God to be free from the man-filled street,
And out on the Viking's track."

I have purposely retained the last place for that writer about British Columbia who is probably the most widely known and loved, E. Pauline Johnson. Coming to the coast with her literary powers fully developed, and her literary reputation established, she devoted herself to perpetuating the legends and the beauties of her new home. Such lyrics as "The Lost Lagoon" and "The Trail to Lillooet," are too familiar to need reproduction, but I shall quote her magnificent and moving last poem, "And He Said, Fight On!":

"Time and its ally, Dark Disarmament,
Have compassed me about,
Have massed their armies, and on battle bent
My forces put to rout;
But though I fight alone, and fall, and die,
Talk terms of Peace? Not I.

They war upon my fortress, and their guns
Are shattering its walls;
My army plays the cowards' part, and runs,
Pierced by a thousand balls;
They call for my surrender. I reply
'Give quarter now? Not I.'

They've shot my flag to ribbons, but in rents
It floats above the height;
Their ensign shall not crown my battlements
While I can stand and fight.
I fling defiance at them as I cry,
'Capitulate? Not I.'

Some of the more important omissions from this fragmentary sketch require a word of explanation. The dean of Canadian poets, Mr. Charles Mair, has lived at Fort Steele, B.C., for some years, but the bulk of his poetical achievements was completed before he came here, so there is nothing distinctively British Columbian in his work. The same applies to Mr. Bernard McEvoy, who published his volume of verses some twenty-five years ago in Toronto, and has since become familiar to newspaper readers in Vancouver as "Diogenes." Mr. A. N. St. J. Mildmay is in the same category

Only the inadequacies of space have prevented more extended reference to Mr. R. M. Eassie, a clever writer of

the W. S. Gilbert School, who is publishing his verses on the lumber-camp life of the coast; to Mr. Ronald Kenvyn, author of jolly longshore chanties; and to some half-dozen others. Their work can be confidently recommended as readable and artistic, and it will certainly have a place in that B. C. Anthology which will sometime appear, and toward which this slight survey may stand as a first tentative effort.

VERSE BY B. C. WRITERS

FLATTERY

Such flattery! That you should care for me
Beyond the others who adore, beyond the rest
Who equally admire, you should choose me best:
Dearest, it surely seems it cannot be
Such perfect tribute to man's vanity
That your pink blushes, dear, should be distressed
At my approach, your gayety depressed
At my departure—wondrous flattery!

Dear, let me worship, always, let me see
Your glorious hair by fond sunbeams caressed,
My inspiration be a smile from thee;
Why then, indeed, my darling, I am blessed—
My hope our perfect love eternally,
Your love possessing and by you possessed.

W. H. P.

MOTHER NATURE'S LULLABY

Rest, rest, weary ones, rest,
Rung is the evening bell,
Though light is fading from the west,
My children, all is well,
My children, all is well.

Sleep, sleep, weary ones, sleep,
Though dark the night and drear,
Thy mother will her vigil keep;
My children, do not fear,
My children, do not fear.

Rest, rest, weary ones, rest;
Thy father will come apace
Over the morning's golden crest,
And you will see his face,
And you will see his face.

Edwin E. Kinney.

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