

Another dramatist is Carroll Aikins, who produces his own plays in his famous Little Theatre at Naramata. His lyrics are those of a widely-cultured man with an artist's delight in shaping his fancies into delicate cameos. His eclectic faith renders him akin to the two poets previously discussed, and is expressed in the "Credo" which introduces his volume of lyrics:

I believe in God and Fairies,  
Hell and Heaven, hearts' desire.  
I believe in lovers' fancies,  
Morning star and sunset fire.

I believe in work and leisure,  
Idle wine and bleeding hands,  
I believe in pain and pleasure,  
Mountains of the shifting sands.

I believe in good and evil,  
Secret gift and open ill.  
I believe in truth and cavil.  
Aconite and daffodil.

I believe in woman's honor,  
Be it chaste or otherwise,  
I believe in man's endeavor,  
Though it wing in barren skies.

I believe in soul and spirit,  
Sensitive and gossamer,  
I believe in luck and merit,  
Wage-slave and adventurer.

I believe in peace and conquest,  
Orchard-close and field of strife;  
For, in mocking mood or earnest,  
I have great belief in life.

Miss Elspeth Honeyman, now Mrs. Clark, first won the public ear with her stirring war poems, which appeared in leading English and American periodicals. But war poems have little appeal for us at the moment, and besides, the writer's individual genius is better revealed in her tender little lyrics. Utter simplicity is combined with a command of musical effects as in the following very feminine piece of work.

"A little gate, a narrow path—  
Ah, how was I to guess  
Would some day glimmer thro' the years,  
The Road to Happiness?

A little house, with little rooms—  
So small it seemed to me!  
Ah, how was I to know how small  
Paradise could be!"

And here is a most delicate landscape piece, "Sea Moods:"

"Dawn, and the white mist breaking,  
Light on the sparkling sea;  
Day, and the white caps racing,  
Joyous and strong and free.

Eve, and the red sun sinking  
Into a sea of dream;  
Dying in crimson splendor,  
The ghost of a vanished gleam.

Night, and the white mist shrouding  
The shadowy edge of the deep;  
Night, and a pale moon shining,  
Night, and the world asleep."

Mrs. Clark is the only one of the poets mentioned in this article who was born and educated in British Columbia, as well as making it her home; but a pioneer of many years standing is Mrs. Lily Alice Lefevre. It is a quarter of a century since Mrs. Lefevre published "The Lion's Gate," a graceful poem on a Vancouver subject, and this season she is bringing out a collection entitled "A Garden by the Sea." She has contributed many of these poems to periodicals, under the pseudonym "Fleurance." Typical of her metrical skill and lyric charm is "Inheritance":

Child of the mountain snows  
New-fallen from heaven to earth,  
The raindrop whispers to the rose  
The secret of its birth.

Borne by the wind and tide  
From its ancestral place.  
The forest seed uplifts in pride  
The stature of its race.

Far from the sun, its sire,  
By primal forces hurled,  
Each planet guards the mirrored fire  
Whose glory lights the world.

Born of the Breath Divine.  
And Love's immortal flame,  
Why doubt and fear, oh, Soul of mine,  
Forgetful whence you came!

Returning to my contention that our novelists are minstrels in disguise, I adduce as examples, Robert Watson and R. Allison Hood. Different opinions may be held concerning Mr. Hood's "Chivalry of Keith Leicester."\* But the same cannot be said about the admirable ballade which introduces it. There is no awkwardness here, but that entirely delightful mingling of classic and English legend which is the heritage of our "pastoral" poetry:

"Fair Tempe's groves 'neath Grecian skies  
With shout and song re-echo still;  
And dancing nymphs and fauns surprise  
By rocky grot and foaming rill;  
While Pan's illusive pipings fill  
The leafy lanes—jocund appear  
His whole bright frolic crew at will—  
To such as have the vision clear.

To mortals blest with seeing eyes,  
The fairies walk in Arden still;  
The magic light of Elfland lies  
On grassy glades, on dale and hill;  
While Philomel's sweet love-notes fill  
The leafy bowers where gay appear  
Titania's court in costume chill—  
To such as have the vision clear.

Far out beneath these Western skies,  
We too may conjure up at will  
These sylph-like forms, perchance surprise.  
Some naiad mirrored in the rill;  
Or through the pine-trees, sweet but shrill  
Pan's plaintive pipes enchanted hear—  
E'en fairies dance and roundels trill—  
For such as have the vision clear."

Mr. Hood's verse has the recherche charm of the savant, whereas that of Mr. Robert Watson is robust and ebullient. His measures have an irresistible swing that sets them to natural music; but the writer does not seek to conceal

\*It is worth while noting that as we go to press it is reported that "The Chivalry of Keith Leicester" may be filmed.—Ed., B.C.M.