

Dr. Fewster's Recital Notable Event

(By Kate Eastman)

It was a memorable evening, March 5, 1927. Dr. Ernest Fewster read his poems in public for the first time; he was supported by Dr. Bliss Carman as chairman; a vote of thanks was moved by Dr. Lorne Pierce and seconded by Dr. Charles G. D. Roberts. It was unique. A new poet of power and distinction, our Canadian poet-laurate, the literary editor of the Ryerson Press, and the dean of Canadian letters formed a group never to be forgotten. Another interesting feature was the reading of a letter of appreciation from the poetess, Mrs. Annie Charlotte Dalton. Other writers present were Mr. Bromley Coleman, Mr. A. M. Stephen, Mrs. Alice Winlow, Mr. A. M. Pound, Mr. Robie Reid, Judge Howay, and others who have not had books published as yet.

To return to the speaker of the evening. The audience which packed the old Theosophical Hall had long been familiar with the physician and the President of the Vancouver Poetry Society, but the sudden appearance of the poet was like one known and loved as a laborer of earth donning his princely robes for the first time. They had been worn at home for years but few knew of them. The Poetry Society had persuaded Dr. Fewster to give a reading in answer to the demand of those who had read "My Garden Dreams." These intimate garden sketches seem to have captivated all sorts of readers, and no wonder.

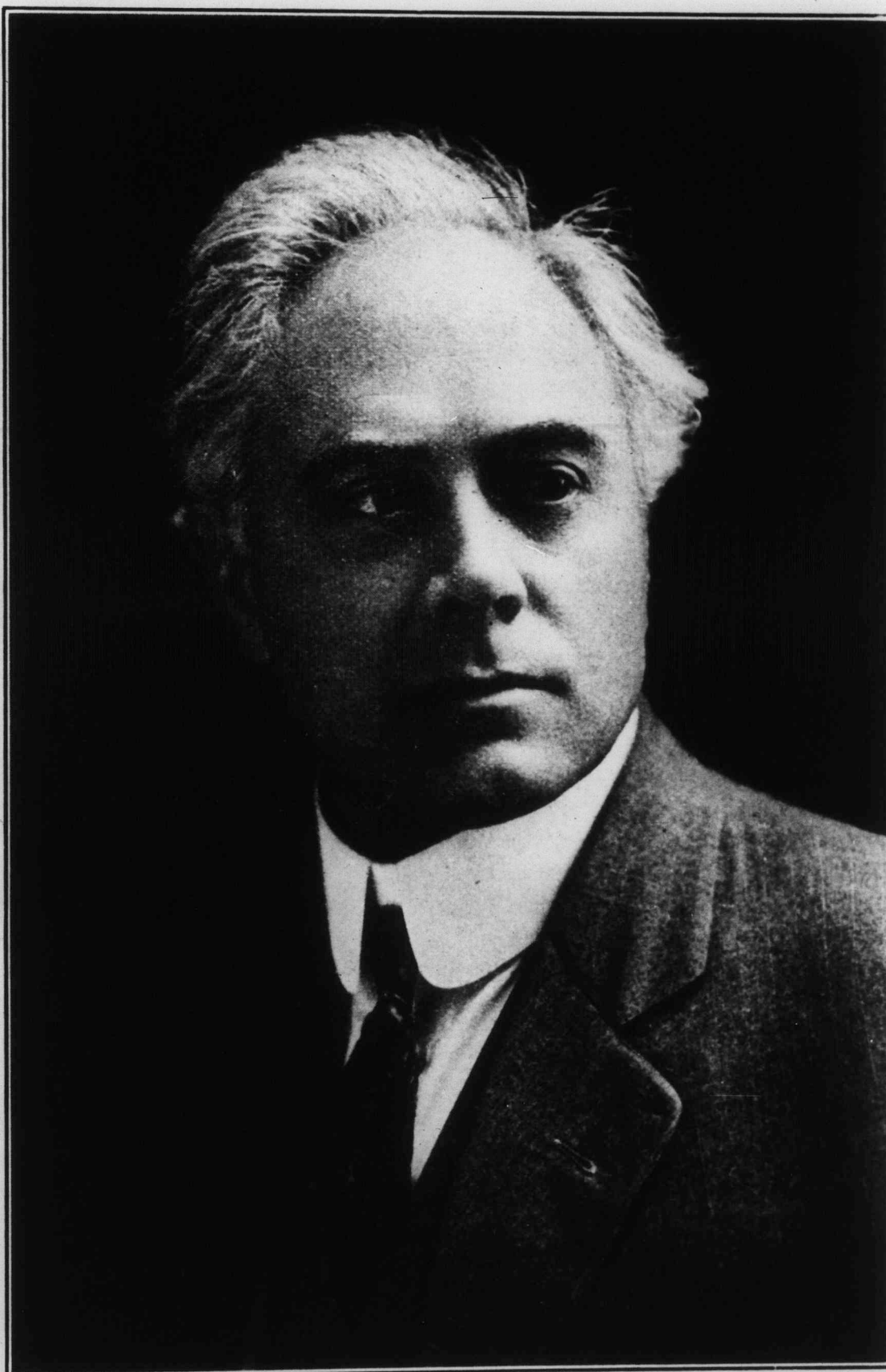
Now the poems! How we thrill to the lure of the British Columbia trails as we hear:

"There bursts in sudden glory
The Dogwood's white desire."

Then there is The Flowering Currant

"The crimson fire of the glade's deep heart"

and The Pearly Everlasting
"Mid the fireweed's ragged pillars
And the bracken's brown distress
Like broken pools of moonlight
Flutters your pearl grey dress."
The birds, too, are remembered:



DR. ERNEST FEWSTER

THE MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD

"The alder leaps to a sapphire bloom.
The trembling cedar spray
Sees an azure-flash in its ancient gloom,
A touch of the sky and away."

Nor does this lover of flowers confine himself to the flowers of the woods. There are the city fancies.

DANDELIONS

"In may the world is green and gold
And where the houses stand
Are little golden paths that lead
Right into fairyland,
Which lies not far from Granville Street,

And little feet may run
Along the paths to fairy-land
As happy as the sun."

These poems of delicate conception are followed by more rugged ones.

THE WOLF WIND

"The wind-wolves bay to the shrouded moon
As the dark night gathers in,
The grey wolf cries, the black replies
Ere the dreadful hunt begin.

* * *

So the wolf-storm springs from its cloudy lair,
Its fierce wild packs go free
To ravage and tear the shrieking woods
And worry the startled sea."

We pass on to the love poems. These retain the qualities of the nature poems, power and delicacy. The most striking was called The Chalice, a profound portrayal of the gradual spiritualization of the love relation. Space will not permit of a presentation of the thought development, but a few lines will show the unusual cadence:

"With madness he seeketh thy soul,

He drinks of thy life and returneth
As a moth to the light that burneth,
As drouth to the rain that saveth."

A poem of a less analytic character and of simpler beauty is "My Comrade."

"With you beside me then the morning breaks
Calmer than angel faces wrapt in prayer