

The Pines

By CHARLES MAIR, Victoria, B.C.

O heard ye the pines in their solitude sigh,
When the winds were awakened and night was nigh?
When the elms breathed out a sorrowful tale,
Which was wafted away on the wings of the gale;

When the aspen leaf whispered a legend dread,
And the willows waved darkly over the dead;
And the poplar shone with a silvery gleam,
And trembled like one in a troublesome dream;

And the cypresses murmured of grief and woe,
And the linden waved solemnly to and fro,
And the sumach seemed wrapt in a golden mist,
And the soft maple blushed where the frost had kissed;

And the spectral birch stood alone in the gloom,
Like an unquiet spirit uprist from the tomb;
And the cedar outstretched its lone arms to the earth,
To feed with sweet moisture the place of its birth;

And the hemlock, uplifted above the crowd,
Drunk deeply of mist at the brink of a cloud;
And the balsams, with curtains of shaggy green,
Like tents in the distance were dimly seen.

I heard the pines in their solitude crying,
When the winds were awakened, and day was dying;
And fiercer the storm grew, and darker its pall,
But the voice of the pines was louder than all.

The Voice of the Pines

We fear not the thunder, we fear not the rain,
For our stems are stout and long;
Nor the growling winds, though they blow amain,
For our roots are great and strong.
Our voice is eternal, our song sublime,
Its theme is the days of yore—
Back thousands of years of misty time,
When we first grew old and hoar!

Deep down in the crevice our roots were hid,
And our limbs were thick and green
Ere Cheops had built his pyramid,
Or the Sphinx's form was seen.
Whole forests have flourished within our ken,
Which withered upon the plain;
And cities and race after race of men
Have risen and sunk again.

We stand all aloof, for the giant's strength
Craveth naught from lesser powers;
'Tis the shrub that loveth the fertile ground,
But the sturdy rock is ours!
We tower aloft where the hunters lag
By the weary mountain side,
By the jaggy cliff, by the grimy crag,
And the chasms yawning wide.

We commune with the stars through the paly night,
For we love to talk with them;
The wind is our harp and the marvellous light
Of the moon our diadem.
And when lovers are breathing a thousand vows,
With their hearts and cheeks aglow,
We chant a love strain, 'mid our breezy boughs,
Of a thousand years ago!

Cold Winter, who flinches the flying leaf,
And steals the floweret's sheen,
Can injure us not, nor work us grief,
Nor make our tops less green.
And Spring, who awakens his sleeping train
By meadow and hill and lea,
Brings no new life to our old domain,
Unfading, stern and free.

The pasage of years doth not move us much,
And Time himself grows old
Ere we bow to his flight, or feel his touch
In our "limbs of giant mold".
The leafed woods fall, by decay opprest;
The loftiest feel his stroke!
But the burden of age doth lightly rest
On the ancient forest folk!

Sublime in our solitude, changeless, vast,
While men build, work and save,
We mock—for their years glide away to the past,
And we grimly look on their grave.
Our voice is eternal, our song sublime,
For its theme is the days of yore—
Back thousands of years of misty time,
When we first grew old and hoar.

A Tribute to the Hospitality of Vancouver

The spirits of the Past, some say,
Still guide our thoughts, unknowing,
As constant winds direct the way
In which young trees are growing.

We doubt not that the primal urge
Upheld the great sea-rover,
Who searched the Western Sea's wide surge
Its secrets to discover.

Yet had he felt the spirit strong
Of those in future ages,
Whose home his name should pass along
Enhanced in History's pages;
And had he known the welcome free
Now given to the stranger,
The bounteous hospitality,
Outspread before each ranger,

How could he then have said farewell,
And sailed away so blindly,
And never left a tongue to tell
Of gracious acts and kindly?

JENNIE STORK HILL, *Edmonton, Alberta.*

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