

activities of his outstanding career, but the greatest tribute of all will be the lives of those young Canadians who, thrilled by his idealism as a public servant, will give to their country lives truly appreciative of the greatness, honour, and responsibility of representing in any capacity the British Crown and, like their proto-type, "above all, honest."

An able leader, a sincere friend, a true patriot, an esteemed citizen, an invaluable example of what a man should be as member of a community and head of a home therein, we leave him to his rest knowing that He, whose sleepless eye sees and infinite Love approves all deeds of service "done in the flesh," will reward His servant who hath now "fallen asleep."

"My Garden Dreams"

Graphic Publishers, Ottawa. By Ernest P. Fewster. Price \$2.00.

(Reviewed by D. L. Ross, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan)

That a Garden Book should be bound in a delightful shade of green might be expected, but the marginal illustrations of flowers on every page (by E. W. Harrold) constitute a delightful surprise. The format of the book has, in fact, been altered to accommodate them; it is wider, but on a library shelf it stands agreeably at the height of its neighbors. Cover and jacket were designed by Alan B. Beddoe.

One wonders if this really delightful book were long in the making; it has such a charming—and rare—air of unhurried ease, just as a book of essays on flowers should have. Someone said not long ago—during Book Week, I think it was—that when Canada produced more essays, we should feel that her literature had advanced a further step. Several Canadian essay-books have been published this season, all excellent; but "My Garden Dreams" is probably the most original.

Not content with delineating for us the charms of his garden, making it so real, in fact, that with snow piled deeply about us, we still catch whiffs of delicious perfume from these far-away flowers, Dr. Fewster has embodied the spirits that may dwell in lovely blossoms, and let them tell us their delightful histories. It is whimsical, but it is charming. And then the author slips almost unnoticed into the sober realities of life and tells of his neighbor's dog; or of what to plant in some favorite shady nook. This diversity of style serves only to enhance the elusive charm of the book.

It is entertaining from cover to cover, an eminently "quotable" sort of book, one that it would be sheer joy to read aloud. Let us sample it at our leisure. Do you wish some practical advice on early spring blossoms? Here is a bit about snowdrops:

"Snowdrops dislike moving. They love their old home. Put them in a light soil with good drainage, with plenty of leaves scattered over them in the winter for leaf mould, and they will greet you, year after year, when you least look for them."

This is practical enough, but see what follows:

"They are the surprise flowers of the garden, for they rarely say 'We are coming' as so many flowers do, but 'Good Morning, you see we are here' Only two things you must not try to do with them. They will not be forced, nor will their bulbs live very long out of the ground. . . . You may punch holes in your lawn and drop the bulbs in them, or far better, plant them in clumps in your woods or among the shrubs of your garden and be certain of their blooming. They are contented flowers."

Among the most attractive passages to my mind are those describing rain, or dew, or starlight in a garden:

"There was a heavy dew in my garden this morning and every plant had a sheen upon it like faint gossamer. The Nasturtiums wore pearls of it on their leaves and tiny globes dotted their petals. But my Lady Rose . . . is a disdainful beauty and dislikes a wet gown!"

I should like to quote more of that passage, but here is one about rain:

"This morning it was raining. . . . all my little Pansies had their faces washed, and they look like a group of children at a party."

How delightfully this recalls that wonderful pansy garden in San Diego with its myriad lovely flower-faces, a very large party, indeed, one would say!

Real children enter the garden story, too:—

"Children make chains from all sorts of flowers—Clovers, Dandelions, Bennets—and they fill their dimpled hands with Buttercups, Primroses and Violets; but for very little children nothing can equal a Daisy chain around their necks, nor a posy of Daisies for the hot chubby fingers to clasp."

The chapter on lilies contains this sentence about the stars:

"My garden under the stars is not the same garden it is under the sun. . . . There come sweet spirits to my garden at night. . . ."

But this chapter in its turn is eclipsed by that which describes "My Canterbury Bells." There is a fine bit of philosophy here about the first garden and its two gardeners. "The fact

is," says the author, "that because of their tainted vision, Eden had ceased to exist for them."

The things Dr. Fewster can relate about the real names of plants, their meanings and origins, add a good deal to the interest of the book. But some people who have been miscalling a number of the flowers all their lives are going to get a tremendous shock. Let us hope it leads them to mend the error of their ways! Dr. Fewster suggests a remedy, "I am not advocating a special course in botany or flower-nomenclature, but I think that the average man and woman should have what one may call a general working knowledge of their surroundings, which would naturally include flowers. . . . Our children are all educated to be teachers, and poor teachers at that, and not to be men and women with a commonsense knowledge of the world. Fifty years ago practically all the country folks and a large percentage of city people knew not only the wild and garden flowers by name, but most of the birds as well. They had few schools then."

You will have seen that the essays are many-sided; that may be because they reflect several sides of the personality of their creator; a great deal of the time the poet speaks, sometimes the amateur gardener, occasionally the physician, often the scholar, more than once the keen critic of modern civilization.

But it is as the raconteur that this essayist excels, and strange to say the terms in this instance are not in the least contradictory. The stories seem to tell themselves! Stories of knights of old, armour-clad, leaving for the Wars, the father saying farewell to his loved ones, taking a sprig of Wallflower from the wee fat fist of the baby daughter he was never to see again; Stories of the shepherd kings known to the Chaldean Crocus of old; stories of the lover, and the fat friar, who gave him a spray of Wild Aster as a token from his Lady Fair; stories of the little children of Babylon who plucked Tulip blossoms by the shores of the Euphrates. But I must leave some of the stories for the reader to discover!

There is only one fault about Dr. Fewster's altogether lovable book; that is, most of us will find our gardens disappointing after reading of his, for after all, very few of us can dwell in a climate as salutary for flowers as that of British Columbia.