

sought and exhorted her to appear amongst her people once more. One set of verses in this vein, which deserves better than to be obscured by time, ran as follows:

The Queen's Speech. What It Ought To Be*

My Lords and Gentlemen,
I've stay'd away from London much too long.
My error I can see, I own 'tis wrong;
So now I've come to assert the people's rights,
And not allow young ladies to dress so much in tights;
But let them take their proper female gear,
That I may see them in this bright new year....

Few occasions existed for the celebration of happy events in the life of the Royal Family during the years of the Queen's semi-retirement. Thus the marriage of the Prince of Wales in 1863 called forth even more verse tributes than usual, and one, printed in blue ink on white silk, became quite lyrical:

The bright bold blood of Denmark leaps
In Alexandra's vein!
The genius of Gotha sweeps
Thro' Royal Albert's brain!

Nevertheless, Queen Victoria always remained popular, particularly with the naval-minded of her poets. One such verse-smith offered the following tribute to his Sovereign:

A long reign to QUEEN VIC:!-- she's a regular brick
Through thin and through thick -- to her Throne
we'll stick.

It was during the lifetime of the great Queen that the modern industrial and mechanical world was born, and this material advance was also reflected in poetic tributes to Royalty. It was Alfred Lord Tennyson's successor as Poet Laureate, Alfred Austin, who wrote, concerning the typhoid fever which laid low the Prince of Wales in 1871:

Across the wires the electric message came,
"He is no better; he is much the same."

*Ca. 1863.

It must be admitted, however, that it was her beloved Scottish subjects who achieved the apex of royal adulation in rhyme. The renowned bard, William MacGonagall, penned an *Ode To The Queen On Her Jubilee (1887)* which read in part as follows:

And as this is her first Jubilee Year,
And will be her last, I rather fear,
Therefore sound drums and trumpets cheerfully,
Until the echoes are heard o'er land and sea.

MacGonagall's poetry found a ready sale through street broadsheets, and he decided to present a volume of his collected works to the Queen, to do which he made a long journey, on foot, to --

Balmoral Castle magnificent to be seen,
Highland home of the Empress of India, Great
Britain's Queen.

The Sovereign was, however, to see many more 24th's of May roll by, and it fell to another Scot, Roy Dalziel, to celebrate the *Diamond Jubilee 1897* as follows:

QUEEN VICTORIA sixty years the Monarch of our Realm
Shows the grand old lady has kept a steady helm,
She often tacked, she never backed, she always
heaved her lead,
And never turned into her bunk when breakers were ahead.

It is doubtful, however, whether this tribute gave the Queen any more enjoyment than MacGonagall's masterpiece of 1887 which concluded as follows:

And let the innocent voices of the children at home
or abroad,
Ascend with cheerful shouts to the throne of God;
Because a good and charitable Sovereign she has been.

Therefore ye sons of Britain come join with me
And welcome in our noble Queen's Jubilee,
Because she has been a faithful Queen ye must confess,
There hasn't been her equal since the days of Queen Bess.
Therefore let all her lieges shout and cheer,
God save our Gracious Queen! for many a year;
Let such be the cry in the peasant's cot and hall,
With stentorian voices as loud as they can bawl.