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The SPIRIT of
COLUMBIAN

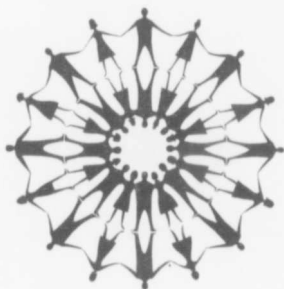


By Mabel Dixon

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The SPIRIT of COLUMBIAN



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Foreword

These little tales of the College so dear to our hearts are necessarily, in part, fiction. But they are absolutely true, in that they express the spirit which permeates Columbian, fair crown of Canada's Royal City.

They are told by the girls and boys who have entered within her gates and we trust will carry her message of the "Vision Splendid" to the girls and boys without.

For we want the young men and women of our land to know that COLUMBIAN calls from a place in the sun that is vital and glad and free from stain.

Columbian's Call

AIR:

Chorus of "*The Soldiers of the King*"

VERSE—

"We're the girls of dear Columbian,
We're ready girls, we're steady girls,
Our traditions wise, we'll keep alive,
And sing to all Columbian's call."

CHORUS—

"We're the students of Columbian,
All fair and square, we'll do and dare,
For our colors true, the white and blue,
Staunch, loyal, free, we'll soldiers be,
And when we say we've always won,
And when they ask us how it's done,
We'll proudly name our Roll of Fame,
The Honor Roll of C. M. C."

VERSE—

"We're the boys of old Columbian,
We're lucky boys, we're plucky boys,
As our comrades brave across the wave,
For our College fame, we'll play the game."

The Path of Romance

Springtime at Columbian and all our world was glad! New ferns, shy lilies of the valley, crocuses and harebells peeped out coyly from Lover's Lane. The Japonica bush flaunted flame colored blossoms. Daisies sprang upward to our swiftly moving feet as the balls flew over the tennis courts.

Suddenly we spied familiar figures beneath the heavily arched trees.

"Baskets," we cried. Rackets were dropped and much parleying ensued; eager on our part, stolidly insistent on the part of the squaw ladies.

The curiously woven straw was always a fascination not to be withstood and when our visitors turned backward through the Path of Romance their burdens were considerably lighter. They had also scored financially and the taller of the ladies ventured in a gratified monotone:

"Fine Pathway! Columbiana squaw save for paleface boys and girls."

We scented an Indian tale. These brown people were rich in legend and quaint imagery. The difficulty lay in persuading them to voice their knowledge.

"Tell us," we coaxed.

"No can tell—too fine for squaw talk. Him educate. Him tell."

Palms upward, they pointed toward the gateway, where a young Indian lad quietly waited.

"Him come from big school in Vancouver—hear about mother squaw—him speak grand talk. Him tell."

So this was the intellectual Indian boy who was studying at the University.

"May he come?" we begged of the teachers in charge. Permission given, we sent our cleverest Senior to entice his red brother inside the gates. The former returned triumphant, the inscrutable face of his companion showing neither surprise or curiosity.

"Yes," he knew the story.

"Yes," he would repeat it for the Columbian girls and boys. A comprehensive gleam at our ardor entered his grave and brooding eyes.

After the fashion of his race, we settled in a circle around the velvety lawn; the guardian squaws on the outer rim; our teachers on the inner; the tall Indian lad—a cynosure for expectant eyes.

"A thousand and many moons ago," chanted the monotonous harshly musical voice, "this land by the Sky Blue Water knew no Palefaces. The forests were deep and dark. The giant trees reached to the cloud blurs. The snow-crested mountain crags looked down on rushing torrents, unchained by the hand of the white man. The great bear and the deer listened only for the almost imperceptible footfall of the Indian. Tribes of copper colored men and slim brown women dwelt undisturbed through all the forest glades.

There were the Siwash, the Kitsilanos, the Squamish, the Capilanos and the Haidas; all of whom our poetess, Tekahionwake, has told you in her beautiful "*Legends of Vancouver*."

But there was still another tribe, brave and powerful, gentle and truth-loving. Their traditions, the tillicum had not yet revealed to the Iroquois wonder writer, when he left her for the happy hunting grounds.

These were the Columbians. Their home was beneath the mist laden fir trees and sombre pines, afterwards felled by the Palefaces for the building of this fair city of hills to which the great Queen Mother sent a royal name.

The wide field yonder where your tall brothers play the strange lacrosse game, was the gathering place for the Columbian war dances and the scene of their peace feastings. From the hills above you, they gleaned a harvest of salmon berries and the shining river below swarmed then, as now, with silver fish. Under the pine groves, they hewed their axes and tomahawks and long carved arrows. And on this ground were the tepees where the maidens kept the fire pots for their warriors.

The Columbians were as yet unconquered—fine in their instincts, generous to their foe. The braves were without peer in manliness and the

squaws deep eyed like the shadows on the mountains.

But none was more stalwart and courageous than Kedred, the Chief's young son; so swift in the forest pathways that his comrades called him "Son of the Wind."

Among the tepees which rose where the young Palefaces are now sitting, was that of Laleet, Daughter of the Noontime. Her cheeks were like autumn leaves, the blackness of her long hair held many a tawny light and the fires in her eyes were warm as the sun at noontime.

Each day she walked with the women in your Pathway of Blossoms, for it was the children who loved and the mother squaws, never a warrior brave. But at the feastings, she carried her finely cooked portions of salmon and deer to Kedred, Son of the Wind.

One evening a spent arrow fell at her slender feet. She lifted it quickly and found at its point a brown feather, tipped with the rich garnet of frost touched foliage. Looking up, she saw beneath a distant fir the tall copper colored form of Kedred, waiting, immovable. She raised her bow. Should she send the arrow back, with the feather, a token of submission to lie at his feet? No! Lifting the glinting feather, she pushed it between the dark braids of hair. She was yet to be wooed.

Each day at the rising of the sun god, he travelled the rough hewn trail to her tepee. Gifts he laid at her door—lustrous berries from the hillside, skins of savage animals caught in the heart of the forest, fresh fish snatched from the cool, sparkling waterfalls in the mountains. When the afternoon shadows crossed the sunlighted, russet patches, she heard the weird music of his lute. And at night, when the great sun god reached the western sky, he stood beneath the fir tree—waiting, silent, sphinx-like. No further could he come, for the women of this tribe must, yielding, go to meet their warrior mates.

Then, one evening in the Moon of Blossoms, an arrow fell at his feet. There was the small, brown feather tipped with flame color, that was

wont to brush the darkness of her hair. Through the tall, cathedral trees she came, in the dusk of an ending day. Her halting, reluctant voice trembled like the cry of his lute:

"Son of the Wind, all the work of my hands is for you. The loaf above the fire pot is for your enjoying and the weaving of my beads shall adorn your moccasins. I shall carry your canoe to the rushing water and glide behind you on the peace paths."

It was not meet that a Columbian warrior reveal great joy, other than in the war dance. The flicker of Kedred's eyelids hid the glow beneath.

"Daughter of the Noontime," he answered, "My canoe is light and after you glide behind me on the peace path, you shall sit beside beside me at the hearthfire and share the spoils of the hunting."

His strong, brown hands fell gently on the bent head and Laleet was his. He fashioned a new tepee, with a wide entrance, in the Pathway of Blossoms and there he took his young squaw bride. Above them the pines sang in the golden moonlight and the same melody sang in their hearts.

With the coming of autumn, came also cruel tribes from the North. In the darkness of the night, with noiseless paddles they swept up the river and fell upon the unsuspecting Columbians. The home warriors were brave. For days they fought, the sound of their war cries ringing up and down the hillsides and through the deepest glens.

But the Northern tribes were ruthless and strong. Never ending brutal hordes swept upward to this very fastness where dwelt the mother squaws, the little papoose and the slender maidens. There could be but one outcome.

The Columbians sent messengers to the savage Northerners.

"What would you have of us?" they asked. "What would you have in return for peace?"

The messengers brought back the answer.

"Give to us your greatest warrior, your swiftest chief. Send us, as a captive, your Son of the Wind. He shall be war spoil for our Northern tepees. If he come at nightfall, our paddles shall

no longer stir the seaweed of your rivers. Your children and women and young braves shall be left in peace."

The warriors sat in council; the silent, stalwart form of Kedred in their midst.

"Will you go?" they queried.

There was a dignified gesture of assent and Kedred's deep voice replied.

"I would first bid farewell to the Daughter of the Noontime."

In the Pathway of Blossoms, Laleet rose from their tepee and came forth to meet him—came to the whispering fir, where her arrow had fallen at his feet. Her slim, brown hands were locked in anguish.

"The mothers have told me, Kedred. But I shall go too. I shall bear torture by your side. For without you, there is no singing in the tree-tops."

Once more Kedred's strong fingers touched the dark braids of hair.

"Daughter of the Noontime, I, Son of the Wind, leave you here in trust. Deeds and dreams come alike to a warrior for comes always a deed from a dream. And, yesternight, as I watched in the hearth light, I dreamed that our Way of Blossoms was the future path of many youthful feet, that gay voices rose and fell on the west wind, and laughter reached the sun-warmed branches. No wanton hands must hew these trees, no savage feet trample the grass blades and kill the spreading fern fronds. Keep sacred our Pathway of Blossoms, Laleet, and be the moons many or few, I shall seek and hold you."

He was gone. Darkness crept down from the snow-crowned mountains and filled the lonely tepee of the Daughter of the Noontime. At the Northerner's command, no watch fires were lighted for the departure, but at dawning a fiercer fire crept slowly up and onward.

The treacherous enemy after gaining their captive had set fire to the hillside. In vain, the warriors fought this new foe. Filled with terror, they gathered up the squaws and brown-faced

babies, seeking refuge with the Siwash, until the flame should spend its strength.

Laleet, holding out her arms in entreaty, followed the long procession to the edge of the camping ground.

"Oh, stay and help, my people. Save Columbiana, as he would bid you—your Son of the Wind."

"You are mad, Laleet," they uttered in derision. "They torture and burn—the fire fiends. You will perish in agony." Slowly, they filed out of her ken, into the encircling smoke clouds."

The tides rose and fell, the sun god slept in the west, the night torches of good spirits crept out and the silver moon of autumn. Unceasingly worked the Indian girl. To and fro from the well of deep water to the hillside's rim, she staggered, until the long hours of toil and the ever-enveloping flame racked her young body with anguish. The wind loosened the long braids, the scorching heat fed on her glistening limbs, and the brambles cut the strong, slender feet until they too were the color of autumn leaves.

On and on crept the insidious trail of fire—nearer and nearer the Pathway of Blossoms. The breath of the fluttering serpent tore the air from Laleet's tortured lungs. Her thin red lips opened in a low chant:

"Kedred! For you! For the dream! I—must—keep sacred the Pathway—the Pathway of Blossoms."

The crawling flame licked up the last futile water drop, but there was yet one string in Laleet's harp of hope—one string. Quivering, blinded, she fell at the entrance of the Archway:

"Oh, Unconquered One," she prayed, "You, who soothe the wounds of warriors with cooling rain, listen to the prayer of your Daughter of Noon. Save these trees, these ferns and flowers for young feet to come. Mine are burned and useless, but theirs will flit lightly through the dewy shadows. Let me give my strength, my spirit for theirs, that this Pathway may live without spot or blemish, where love is touched not with evil—a Pathway hallowed and beautiful."

The low pleading ceased. A song rose in the treetops—the rain song of the Unconquered One and on Laleet's clasped hands fell the first cooling drops. Down slanted the torrents, wiping out the trail of fire. Still stood the great firs and pines, draped in mist and below them the lacy network of bending ferns.

To the fevered brain and scorched eyes of Laleet came now a vision. A glistening hand lifted itself from the river below, more luring in its call than the arm clothed in sammite, which beckoned your prince of ancient lore.

"I have breathed the flame and it is with the eyes of the hereafter I see you but I am coming—" she cried. "Wait for me, Son of the Wind."

Panting, she fell and rose again until her bleeding feet reached the river and the dying young chief on its incoming waves.

"You! The way has been long, since their broken faith made us free. You have kept the Way of Blossoms. I leap to meet you. The last trail now! Together, Laleet!"

Her tired young form slipped down to his. The waves closed. The river rushed on. The hill-sides were silent.

* * * * *

Few legends reach us from the Happy Hunting Grounds, but the Columbianas say that just at sunset or in the early moonlight, guardian spirits watch over the happiness in your Path of Romance.

* * * * *

The people of another race had left us, on the soft, green lawns of Columbian. The violet rays of late afternoon bathed us in splendor. Over our heads a bird note fluted—clear, triumphant. Came the low answer. To our listening ears, the long drawn notes were paeans:

"Laleet, my sweet,
We shall meet,
We shall meet."

And as the song birds swept out with glad wings towards the Happy Hunting Grounds, our Path

of Romance became a halo of light in the setting sun. Then the spirit of Tekahionwake's "Benedictus" fell upon us there:

"Something so tender fills the air today,
What it may be or mean no voice can say,
But all the harsh, hard things seem far away.
Something so restful lies on lake and shore,
The world seems anchored and life's petty war
Of haste and labor, gone forever more,
Something so holy lies upon the land,
Like to a blessing from some saintly hand,
A peace we feel, tho' cannot understand."

More Stately Mansions

The quietness of accomplished tasks was lulling Columbian on the wings of rest, as a small, softly robed figure crept back into the Study Hall.

Only the night light glowed dimly. The brown rockers that had lately swayed to the rhythm of French verbs and the lyrics of Byron and Keats, were empty and still. The table, erstwhile laden with classics, glistened mysteriously in semi-darkness. Only the girls of other days looked down from the walls, whispering "Sweet Sleep" to the little room of fun and dreams and lessons.

Tonight, their eyes looked out unquestioningly to the dim, further corner, where, below the College Traditions stood the girl of today. No classmate of theirs but still one of them, with but a few years between, with surely the same ideals as half forming the words she read the old College Traditions:

"A high code of honor. Reverence for sacred things * * * A recognition of the fact that superior opportunity involves greater obligations * * * That true education reveals itself in a larger, nobler service to humanity * . * *"

"I just had to read you once more," the listening faces caught the half spoken words; "I had to read you, dear C. M. C. traditions, before I tore you up in my heart and disgraced you forever. I had to come all alone and tell you what I'm going to do. I'll hate to face you afterwards—and our Lady Principal and all the others. But I'm going to—I'm going to give you up, old C. M. C. traditions, and lead all the classes, because Dad told me to lead the classes. I'm all he has and he'll be so proud of me.

And now the chance has come; this accidental finding of the lists. Oh, you will understand I can't throw them away without looking. I'll know all the questions beforehand. Dad will be sitting away up near the front at Convocation, when the President reads the results and his face will be worth it all. So, I've just come to tell you, Columbian Traditions, that you're not mine any more."

The small figure crept slowly out from the dim further corner. The pictured faces looked down sadly from the warm, brown walls:

"Let us help you, little girl of today. Let us help you to be true to the College which holds out her best to you."

But the childish face, half hidden in falling waves of hair, dropped rebelliously.

"No! I don't want to be helped. I won't be helped." The padded feet slipped down the corridor, stopping at the window.

"I'll say 'Good-night' to Daddy. His light shines away over there towards the city. He thinks I'm safe here at C. M. C. 'There are temptations everywhere, Ruth,' he told me, 'for you take yourself with you wherever you go, but Columbian is next best to a mother for my lass.'"

The slim, little fingers pushed open the wide window. Far away gleamed the lights of the city. Above glimmered the myriad stars of the Milky Way.

"How the stars shine," said the Sweetest Voice in her ear. "Little girls and big girls like to pretend—so we'll pretend that the stars are stepping stones to better things."

That was the Lady Principal's voice. Ruth glanced over her shoulder, but there were only shadows behind her. It was the living echoes, the spirit of the voice that reached her and repeated the words of their Evening Hour.

"Isn't it a wonderful sight? There's Mars, low in the western sky, and right above us is the Big Dipper with its handle pointing to the North Star. There's the great Triangle and the two stars of the famous ring nebula. Hasn't Vega a beautiful blue color? Do you notice wherever the field is dim, there is usually one bright constellation. Look at the square in Pegasus and Cygnus and Cassiopeia and Perseus along the Milky Way.

You need no hypothesis, my girls, to understand the logic of those bright stars. It is just as

if they chanted down to us the message we took for this term:

"Build thee, more stately mansions, oh, my soul,
As the swift seasons roll, leave thy low vaulted
past,
Let each new temple nobler than the last
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by Life's unresting
sea."

You all want to be free and Columbian is telling you that the way to freedom is by the road to goodness. No, you need no hypothesis, my girls, to comprehend that a Great Wisdom is behind the creation of that beautiful star-lighted heaven, and our one thing needful is to sit at the feet of that Divine Knowledge. Do you remember, Martha was troubled about many things, but Mary had the one thing needful? She sat at the feet of the Christ.

Don't forget this thing, all my girls of Columbian, and the houses you build won't be dim or mean or soiled. They will be bright and shining like the evening stars.

The echo of the Sweetest Voice ceased. Ruth's small white face looked upward, her senses newly attuned to the music of the spheres. The stars in their courses whispered back:

"Build thee more stately mansions, oh, my soul," and everywhere around her breathed the Columbian traditions.

"Oh, Daddy," quivered the low child voice, "If I lead in all the classes, I'll be in my own mean little shell. I'll be good first, then the room of my heart will be bright and clean for you. I'll take the paper back and tell her—our Lady Principal."

The door of the Blue and White Room opened gently in answer to the timid knock. The Lady Principal stood in a glow of light—the embodiment of that loved room; white for purity, blue for truth and happiness.. A spirit, strong and wise, who amidst noise was eloquently quiet! "Between

the rivers and the seas of talk she planted islands of sweet silences" where tired students might pause and walk.

"Come in, Ruth," she said. "Your eyes told me everything at Evening Hour.. I have been waiting, child, for I knew you would come."

"And I thought I was all alone, that there was no one to help me."

"But you weren't, and Columbian is always waiting to help her children if they will let her.."

"I've brought it back and I haven't looked. I'd rather have the one thing needful."

The trembling little fingers were clasped in the warm ones which drew her within the glow of the College colors, within the path that leads to mansions that are bright and shining, mansions that are building and being built upon.

"Sweet sleep," whispered the girls of other days as the door closed behind her. .

And in the silence one might hear the tiny hammerings of the comrades at work up in the domes—the comrades that had climbed ahead. .

The Hearthfire

In every home that is worthy of the title, glows the mystic warmth which we call a Hearthfire. Deducting the final letter of its given name, we still have its meaning—for its flame burns in the very heart of things.

Outside its radius, life is mere existence, but inside its radiance, we catch the incentive, the ambition, the inspiration to accomplishment that separates the clod from the being whose reach exceeds his grasp.

We are but young to strive, to comprehend the disturbing spark—but already, we have verdant plans for the lighted lamp and the girded loin.

* * * * *

The above dissertation isn't a thesis on philosophy. It is merely a prelude to an afternoon of contentment at dear old Columbian.

For our college has a Hearthfire, which not only warms us to aspirations but brings to us the joy of relaxation and playtime.

It glows in a room that lives. It isn't the stately Reception Hall, nor yet the cloistered Chapel whose warm red heart lures when the drifting rain without wraps us in shadow.

It is the cosy sanctum where dwells—the Lady of Columbian. That is our title for the President's wife. She is tall—the Lady of Columbian—with clear, glad eyes and the merriest laugh in all the world.

Behold us, then, with knitting bags and embroidery rings wending our way through the magic doorway.

From the wooded hills and valleys and canyons of British Columbia, we came to this happy room that was like the heart of a wood itself. For ferns spread their fronds from sheltered nooks and the wall tapestries and deep cushioned chairs were the color of falling foliage.

"Welcome," said the Lady of Columbian's glad eyes and kind voice. With the words, the coals

on the hearth fell apart and we gathered in a circle around the fire; girls from Lillooet and the Kootenay and gentle maidens from the Peace River District. Only one shy little girl of the Okanagan slipped into a corner by herself. She was homesick and she just didn't know how to be witty like our wonderful second year girls of Columbian.

How the bright needles flew and how we talked and laughed. The little Okanagan girl cleared her throat in a desperate effort:

"It looks like rain," she ventured timidly. A ripple rose from our gay circle:

"It not only looks like rain, but it has been raining for some time," our thoughtless young voices would have cried, but the voice of our hostess answered quickly:

"Yes, doesn't it, but it's only raining happiness in here."

"Have a cookie?" offered a Jolly Junior. "They're the Lady of Columbian's own make."

"No, thank you," was the shy, answering murmur. But we knew the warmth and comradeship of the woodsy room had crept down to the lonesome spot and little Miss Okanagan sank back cosily into her chair.

"What a pretty locket," said the same kind voice. "Is there a picture inside,"

Quickly, the clasp was unfastened and a baby face and head crowned with curls was proudly disclosed:

"My little brother! He came too, when father and mother brought me to Vancouver. It was his first car ride and he said right out loud: 'Mooch up everybody, I hasn't dot no room.'"

Little Miss Okanagan looked down quickly. There, mysteriously, on her plate reposed a plump, date cookie. She tasted and found it good. Thus Youth imbibes consolation.

"Are you going to the Open Lit?" queried the Jolly Junior of a Stately Senior.

"Haven't decided," was the reply. "Have you heard about Bing, girls?"

"No, tell us the news."

"Why—velly bad sidewalk flew up and hit him on the patee. Velly sore patee. Let me tellee you—no cakee, no cakee."

Under cover of the laughter, Kathleen of the Kootenay confided to the shy little girl in the corner:

"That's Lorrie Wrethman—Laurel Wreath—we call her. She's great; the most popular girl in school. Of course, she'll go to the Open Lit and of course, Bing will make a cake. He always does. Him likee us all velly, velly muchee."

Little Miss Okanagan laughed merrily and straightway found herself one of our circle. Iridescent gleams from the fire touched our faces as with eager eyes we watched for pictures there.

"See the blue tips in the background," said the Jolly Junior. "Those are the candles at Columbian's birthday party. Remember that night last year, girls? How everything was blue and white for our College colors—blue ribbons and blue forget-me-nots and tiny candles on the big cake the President cut! Columbian was twenty-five years old. She's such a beautiful Alma Mater and young enough to be just a girl with her children. Didn't we have the grandest time?"

They were happy memories for many in the circle and when the blue tips died away all sorts of little rainbow dancings took their place.

"Why those are the children's folkdances around the May-pole," exclaimed Kathleen of the Kootenay. "We see them each year on May Day. Look how they wind and unwind! There in the centre is the little Queen of the May. Behind are the Camp Girls and those yellow twirlings are the cornets in the big brass band. The dark shadows are the great pines that always look down on our May Day festival."

We watched breathlessly for those wondrous lights and shadows carried us backward and forward to May Day and its revels. But the shadows were softening. The rainbows were resting in a tender glow. How warm and cosy and lovely it was!

"That's because it is a home fire," said the

Lady of Columbian softly. "Even if we sought, we could never find things harsh or cruel in its gentle flame.

"See, girls, those bright little corners are the inglenooks of your own homes all over British Columbia. And there are the mother faces, tenderly watching from each. Do you hear them whisper:

"Fires that burn in quiet,
Long and brightly glow:
Flames, that rush and riot
Soon to ashes go—"

One step at a time, our little toilers. All our steps before shall guide you and

"We who know love's silence
Need no low replies,
If you love us, darlings,
Tell us with your eyes."

Our eyes answered: black and brown, gray and blue—answered all the little mothers waiting and watching from the home inglenooks.

"And we're just wanting to tell you," came the warm, appreciative tones of our Laurel Wreath, "that there's a mother heart here—a great big mother heart that cares—and an inglenook and a Hearthfire."

The silence that followed was broken by the cheery sound of Bing's clattering supper bell. We smiled, remembering that Bing liked us all "velly, velly much."

As we passed again through the welcoming doorway, little Miss Okanagan confided to us happily:

"Why Columbian is home—just home—after all."

When Music, Heavenly Muse, Was Young

"He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep, cool bed of the river,
He cut it short, did the great god Pan,
How tall it stood in the river !
This is the way, laughed the great god Pan,
Laughed, as he sat by the river,
The only way since gods began,
To make sweet music, they could succeed,
Then dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river."

* * * *

Yet half a beast was the great god Pan and he knew naught of the marvels of modern fingers or the wonders of modern vocal cords. The true gods sigh for the cost and the pain. That, for us, means the long hours of practise, when comes the enchanting call of the ball team, the lure of autumn leaves and the drifting apple blossoms of our British Columbian spring.

The cost and the pain ! Treading white keys, treading black ones ! Minor scales and major scales ! Exercises and etudes ! Voice tones for pitch, for intensity and timbre ! Alas, for fleeting dreams of operas and oratorios !

The cost and the pain ! Our teachers know it, too, through the months of bringing harmony from the chaos of our uncultured minds and finger tips. But after each lesson, Music, our ambition and goal draws a step nearer. Our fingers drop into richer chords ; our voices reach out more confidently toward the ideal tones. Bye and bye, for we who "strive and hold cheap the strain" open wide the masterpieces of Grieg, Chopin, and Gounod and our sopranos and contraltos climb to "The Shadow Song," "Some Day He'll Come" and "La Traviata."

Then, out of a clear sky rises the sun on the day when "The Examiner" arrives. All the way from the Queen City of Canada he comes, for our College is affiliated with the greatest conservatory in the wide Dominion.

There is an undertone of tensiity in the very atmosphere we breathe and awestruck greeting for the being, who holds our fate in his judgment.

The literary students, passing backward and forward on the way to Finals, suddenly lose their all absorbed important manner. We, of the Music Department, circling in hushed groups in the hall, are the "observed of all observers"—the girls of us decked in our prettiest that perhaps we may soften that stern masculine heart; the boys of us, scorning such trivial frailty in the very front trenches of our battleline, standing erect and ready.

"I'm not a bit nervous," calmly states a small, poised first-year girl.

"But nerves are necessary to the true musical temperament," comes a flying answer. "Every-thing isn't in technique. Wait till you reach our nocturnes. The soul—the soul's the thing! And I just can't express mine before a mere man."

"I'm not afraid of anything but my sight reading," confides Clio, our fair contralto; "I do hope he'll give me, 'Oh, Dry Those Tears.'"

"You've sung that advice so often that it makes our eyelids wet," retorts our sturdy boy musician.

Then lo! The door opens and one by one of us pass through the fatal portals.

The air is vibrant with sound; sound, such as would thrill with wonder and envy the great god Pan, as of old he sat by the river.

"He's fine, that examiner," the departing ones of us whisper to those of us who enter in, "and he thinks our teachers are the real thing."

So passes the day; a day of effort and striving; of cost and pain that brings a realization of value, of the processes by which musicians are shaped to their ends.

And with the lengthening shadows, goes the Great Man away—to meditate on our endeavours and to prepare the year's lists.

Through the long test our teachers have been with us, subtly and intimately helping; theirs too, the anxiety, and theirs, the responsibility.

Now, wearied, they leave us and in these quiet

moments of tense waiting comes an inspiration. The boys disappear and on their returning we reach out eager hands for their burden.

Flowers! Flowers—fragrant golden orbs of perfect song! Stately carnations for the tall piano teacher and roses for our little vocal teacher, who is like a rose herself!

We remember the old fairy tale of the time when the world was tired after a long war; a war only less cruel and heartrending than the great world war but now ended. The whole universe was so worn and weary that even music lost its power and could not bring back life from exhaustion. Then, all the musicians said, "Let us play together." They began to play and together they made more wonderful music than had ever been heard. Thus, the finest of the Arts regained its lost greatness.

So we carry flowers to our teachers with music; the low music of our voices, blending together:

"And the sun on the hill forgets to die,
The lilies revive and the dragon fly,
Comes back to dream on the river."

Life creeps up from exhaustion and all at once the doors of Columbian open wide:

"The lists! The lists! Did we pass!"

The breathless question flutters and dies, as with steady fingers our boy musician takes the folded papers.

"Pass! Pass nothing! Every single one of us has First Class Honors."

This nosegay bursts its string with weight of roses overblown and drops upon us.

It is, in truth, a nosegay wafted back from the cost and the pain of our tired, happy teachers, whose sweetest music is not in oratorios but an everyday song that loses itself in effort for us.

The day ends. And thus at Columbian:

"Music puts forth her hand,
And straight outstretches all things."

The Cross

She was our nurse at Columbian. When "Study Hour" was over and we were tired and sleepy and sometimes achy with the weight of much knowledge, she came to us.

She was little and round and sweet, with a voice and hands that loved us. She had a way of opening the window softly and quickly, saying with a twinkly smile:

"We'll let in the lights of evening—the moonbeams and all the starbeams and we'll drink in the air from the mountains, little maids."

She loved the mountains. They had a message for all of us, she said. When we couldn't straighten out the criss-cross lines in our muddled little heads, when the problems in geometry and the equations in algebra persisted in getting jumbled, we were to remember the old time message of the old time Book:

"I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help."

"Such little ailments," she told us, when she came to make us forget; "a pair of tired eyes, an arm bruised in the 'Gym,' a queer little snuffle—the ailments which fall to the lot of happy girls, who can't always remember to be careful."

"So I'm the close-at-hand mother, who tucks you in and scolds and makes you all well for tomorrow's lessons."

Her hands patted down the covers, and pulled out the curtains and brushed back stray curls from flushed foreheads.

She had a pudgy bottle of smelling salts, with a fluted cork which came out hard. We always put it back again hurriedly for one sniff was enough. "The Brain Smasher," we christened it and called for it loudly to scatter cobwebs when Genius burned.

She had a name, but we soon forgot it for we gave her a title of our own. She found us at "Recreation Hour" trying a new experiment. It wasn't a test in Physics. Perhaps she thought it

a phenomenon in Psychology. Our tallest Senior was trying to kiss two little freshettes, at one and the same time.

"Well," she asked, "Do you do this on the wholesale plan?"

The tallest Senior's cheeks were rosy red.

"It's a case of three in one," she laughed.

"Oh," came the answer, "you are so funny—you girls of the teen age—so funny and dear."

"But that's just what you are," we cried in unison, "our dear, funny little nurse."

Then she was just "Nurse Dear" to all of us and she liked it.

"You belong to us," we whispered, and her twinkly smile answered, "Yes."

But, one day, as she watched the President's little son tramping sturdily over the campus, she said:

"He's a fine laddie. I can't help being glad he was born too late for the gilded list in the Chapel. Afterwards, there will be many battles worth while for him."

"Poor boys!" she added, "all our poor boys!"

"Don't think about them," we begged. "You couldn't be 'Nurse Dear' to the boys, could you? Aren't your little girls enough?"

"I wonder," she replied.

A strange fear gripped our hearts, but the little round hands that loved us soothed it away again.

Work-time and May-time sped away. The days lengthened for approaching Convocation. "The Banquet" was just before us. Magic words to the girls and boys of Columbian! Its preliminary fragrance scented the long examination hours. We paused on the way to Finals for fascinated peerings into the great white kitchen. Glimpses of ice-cream freezers and the unmistakable smells of ham and chicken were deliciously intermingled. Their penetrating promise brightened our last struggles with Caesar and our thoughts lingered on the old Roman feastings which followed their victories.

The victory must be gained first, however, and earnest was the striving—the victory of the day's work and the victory of self. We must all of us be good enough to go to "The Banquet" and none of us must be ill.

"Nary one of you," said Nurse Dear, as she cuddled us "doon" the night before. "For would you have us listen to the music and the laughter from away up here, instead of being down there in the midst of it? Open the windows wide, little maids. There's a breath of hawthorne and a fresh breeze from the mountains.

"Are you going to speak to us, Nurse Dear?" we questioned drowsily.

"If the President asks me—and if you all stay well, Sleepy-heads," flashed back the Twinkly Smile.

"The Banquet" wasn't for outsiders, you know—just a family party that our President gives us each year.

We marched in two by two—a flutter of color and gladness. Oh, girls and boys who have been there, you need no description of our Dining Hall on that night of wonder, and girls and boys who are to come, we'll never take away the joy of your surprises.

The lights came on softly, while still the sunset tints flickered through the pines outside. A year's happiness crowded together at twilight.

"A reward," the President said, for the long hours of study, "the degrees by which we did ascend."

And after the feasting, the toasting and the music! We sang between the toasts because our hearts were full of song and none of us had to listen from an unwilling little bed in the darkness. We were all there and we caught the Twinkly Smile of our nurse, as she sat beside the latest Soldier Boy.

Then, in a sudden stillness, the beautiful, finished voice of her who taught us, who never let us

fail, sang through our festive dining hall in Verdi's deathless Farewell:

"Out of the love I bear thee
Yield I my life for thee."

Our throats tightened. The world was singing that song now. Had it a meaning here at peaceful, joyful Columbian?

The last, perfect note trembled into silence.

"Farewell," said a voice that loved us.

So the President had asked her to speak; our little nurse, who belonged to her girls.

"Farewell—a beautiful word and worthy of a toast. We live in a world of "Farewells," for all the toasts this evening have brought memories of other toasts like this, feared and loved behind me. There was the day when the other girls drank the toasts in peppermint tea and we were initiated. There was the toast when I was a little Freshette, and lost my carefully written speech under the table. Then I hadn't sense enough to sit down when I forgot it. There was the night of our Graduation Toasts when we wondered if our Dream Ships would sink or rise on the waters of life.

All our Dream Ships sink so far at times that we are afraid they will never reach the surface—when suddenly they fill their mystic white sails in the bright sunlight.

So my Dream Ship brought me to Columbian—Columbian—"that is so full of a number of things, I am sure we all should be happy as kings."

There is the personnel of Columbian—the wise, splendid influence of our President and his helper, which lies in the realm of character; the girls—all our girls—and the strong, sweet spirit who guides them; the songs they sing, and the fine personality which lies behind the choice of the beautiful words.

Then there is the outside world, the world which Wordsworth loved, and which has here the "glory and the freshness of a dream," the bending ferns that dip and drink, the tall trees, the blue

haze around the hills—the whole, wide world of lovely things.

And through it all is the tradition of Columbian which though it teaches visions fulfilled, deeds wrought, rises above the mercenary commonplace. It might be expressed in the little verse:

“Work thou for pleasure; sing or paint or carve,
The thing thou lovest, though thy body starve.
Who works for glory misses oft the goal;
Who works for money coins his very soul;
Work for work's sake, then, and it well may be,
That these things shall be added unto thee.”

I haven't mentioned the boys, and now it's perfectly right for a bachelor girl to mention “Our Boys, our Brave Boys.” I have always thought that only my girls needed me.”

Was the Twinkly Smile a trifle dim as her eyes rested on our listening faces?

“But they are good little girls, healthy little girls and they can keep well without their nurse. Now, ‘Our Boys’ need me and this is my ‘Farewell’ to Columbian.”

Columbian! The word was like a caress. “It is my Cross, that I am leaving you. It is for my Cross and out of the love I bear you, that I go. I wish I might be worthy of Columbian traditions; of the little motto that speaks to us from the Maple Leaf.”

“My girls!” Then her voice broke, the voice of our little Nurse Dear, who was deserting us. “Some day, perhaps, I'll come back to you. In the meantime, remember the message of our mountains and that—

“The Farewell always lies behind us,
And the Welcome just ahead.”

So we have lost her. Other banquets have come and gone and she has not returned to us.

Lost her! No!

For it is morning now and a voice that loves us whispers softly:

"Wake up, little Columbianites. Time for another day's lessons. There's a whiff of hawthorne, and a fresh breeze from the mountains. Open the windows wide, little maids."

We almost see her Twinkly Smile, as we rub reluctant eyes. Why, it's only the Riser, after all. But there's the Cross in our windows—her Cross, our Cross, the Cross that breathes its glad message of sunshine.

"God's in His heaven, all's right with the world."

The Roll of Honor

"It isn't worth while," uttered Gordon Benjamin over and over, as the B. C. Electric slowed up for each small station between Vancouver and New Westminster, "I should have gone straight home to Victoria. Dad and Ma Mere will be waiting. And how could the C. M. C. boys—the old crowd—know we came through today?"

His thoughts went back to the fellows, all that were left of them, with bits of their sturdy anatomy left behind "somewhere in France." But they were a cheery bunch, game to the core, true blue, like the colors of their Alma Mater.

"Home first, Bennie," they had said, "everyone's plugging out at C. M. C. Wait till Christmas closing and we'll hear the little old Honor Roll read. Some heroes, eh?"

Bennie had laughed and then limped awkwardly over to the tram car. He had no eyes for Hastings street. His heart flew before him to the Royal City and the brown outlines of Columbian, looking outward to the uplifted glory of the Rockies.

Home first! Well, it had been home to him and how he had fought, face downward on the cool dampness of the Tennis Lawn, the night he had chosen.

"Follow the dictates of your manhood," the President had said. And so these many months he had gone "over the top" for King and Country and Columbian.

Home first! But he couldn't wait. Jim would not be plugging. He would be at the Tennis Court; for the last game of the season, perhaps, on this mild, sunny November afternoon. How velvety green it would look after the early autumn rains, with the glowing, falling leaves of the Japanese plum trees fluttering overhead! She would be watching as she used to when the "champs" played. She would be in white, a blue band on her hair, the old C. M. C. colors. She was a stately Senior now.

But, perhaps, she wouldn't be glad to see him. Then, he had been the "champest champ" of all but now— He looked down at the one black shoe. Was it cowardice that kept his serious dark eyes aloof from the spot where the other foot should have been? He wouldn't play tennis again. Somehow, it made him all hoarse and choky. Curious, he should choke at tennis after watching the homeless eyes of the refugees of France. But he was only nineteen—this lad with the French mother and Canadian father. His dark eyes had held laughing lights a year ago and it had been the grandest thing in all the world to be the "champest" champion of all at dear old C. M. C.

But, perhaps, it wasn't worth while. No one would be at the station. The Doctor would probably be busy and how could he get around the campus on this old pair of cheap crutches.

There was the silver gleam of the Fraser now and the hills crowned with pine trees. The car was slowing down but a sound which rivalled that of shrapnel reached his ears.

"Hip, hip, hurroar," yelled myriads of healthy young voices. The owners of them leaped up the stairs.

"The College boys," grinned the conductor. "Nothing camouflaged about that welcome."

But Gordon was already lifted on sturdy shoulders and off up the hill. No cars for those strong young feet.

"Hip, hip, hurroar," the din continued, "for the old Tank Corps. So you've rolled it over them—so you've rolled it over them, Bennie Boy, Bennie Boy."

His cap was off, his black hair flying in the breeze. Up the hills and there was the pine grove. Around the curve and there was the Canadian flag flying over C. M. C. They must be celebrating the victory—the victory of all victories, won by "Our Splendid Men." He could celebrate too, with all the buoyancy of those swift feet beneath him.

Yonder was the Boys' Building and the baseball grounds where his ball had almost struck the little preparatory teacher, so excited over the game that she forgot the bell and the waiting Geography Class.

Past the shady entrance of Lovers' Lane they tramped. There was the spot where they had buried the bird who died of Learningitus. He and the Girl had led the long funeral procession, while the laughing teachers watched in the distance.

He cleared his throat. Funny, how these pictures gripped him after the wire entanglements and tense creepings over No Man's Land. Then he laughed as the lads beneath him swung into the old parody, at which even the President smiled tolerantly:

"In Columbian's Halls,
When the Chink bell calls,
We get out of bed, with a heavy head,
Make one wild rush for the morning's mush,
We live to eat—in joy complete,
In Columbian's Halls."

Another curve to the main entrance! It was decorated with the flags of the Allies and the blue and white of the College. Beyond was a rising murmur of voices and a glamor of color among the trees. Columbian was *en fete*. For the Great Surrender? For all the returning heroes?

"For you, Bennie Boy, Bennie Boy," cried the old crowd beneath, as they formed a triumphal line under the giant trees of the gateway.

"We're the boys of old Columbian," their voices swept out to the guardian Rockies, "We're lucky boys, we're plucky boys," and over on the lawn the girls caught up the refrain:

"We're the girls of dear Columbian,
We're ready girls, we're steady girls."

Up the drive to the rose garden and over to the Tennis Court and up the steps of a raised platform! Then the President's tall form, fine grave face and deep tones:

"Welcome home, my boy." Beside him stood the Dean with his crown of snowy hair and his gentle voice of many blessings. Around his chair they came, with outstretched hands; the President's wife, the sweet faced teachers, the kind and motherly Matron. And there was Jim. Why, everyone was there. Everyone? Yes, for close to the platform crowded the Seniors. He sought and found the blue band and the blue eyes beneath it.

"Betty!" his lips formed her name and the answering eyes were sky hued and lighted with promises. For an instant his lashes slanted downward toward the spot where that other foot should have rested but the light in hers never wavered. What are feet and hands and even eyes to the little girls who welcome back—the brave little women soldiers of Canada Land? Our battalions of life!

A hush fell over the grounds of Columbian—a welcoming hush, from the gay little holly buds in Lover's Lane to the glad, familiar, expectant faces around him. And then the President spoke:

"The Honor Roll in the Chapel," he said, "has grown longer since the night of its unveiling. That was as it should be. We have given our 'God-speed' to every son of Columbian who has fought on the soil of France. But the number of gilded stars has grown, too. And it was with sorrow they were added, for Columbian longed for the return of her Soldier Boys.

Today she has gathered her sons and daughters, not for the great Peace Celebration, which is to come later, but to welcome back the youngest of her heroes—a hero, who saved her the pain of adding two bright stars to her Flag of Honor."

The boy in his draped chair started. So they knew. The comrades he had left a short hour ago, who had owed their homecoming to him, had seen to that. Well, he was glad. Why shouldn't he be glad? They were his homefolks—his professors and teachers and chums.

"Three cheers for Bennie—Bennie—Bennie—" cried all the girls and boys of Columbian.

"Hilarious young scamps," laughed the vocal

teacher, as she marshaled her warblers and the campus was filled with song—"The Soldiers' Chorus," "God Bless Our Men," "Onward, Christian Soldiers" and then the little Chorus of their own.

He could hear the voice of the blue-eyed Senior and with transformed face, Gordon Benjamin sang with his mates:

"We're the students of Columbian,
All fair and square, we'll do and dare,
For our colors true—the white and blue,
Staunch, loyal, free, we'll soldiers be
And when we say we've always won,
And when they ask us how it's done,
We'll proudly name our Roll of Fame,
The Honor Roll of C. M. C."

Now again the hush! The President was reading aloud:

"Yes, Dad!" If it weren't for Gordon Benjamin, one of the C. M. C. boys, I wouldn't be snatching an odd moment in the dugout to send you the jolly old news.

"We had been ordered out on a night attack. The Tommies told us afterward that we finished the job like Canadians, but on the way back a stray shell got two of us. The Boches would have ended things if we had been left there until morning—but Gordon crept back in the darkness and dragged us both a long mile, over the top and under again. How he ever did it is a miracle but he was always the 'champ' at old C. M. C. 'gym.'

"All three of us had to be doctored up for a while. He left us first for the Big Tank Corps, and the day he went he said to us:

"Say boys, we never used to talk much about the advice the President and Dean gave us in Chapel, but I've thought about it lots lately. Let's remember. And see here—I'm not much on poems, but I copied this clipping for each of you, one that the Dean sent from dear old B. C. Good-bye, kids, and good luck."

"We're O.K. yet, Dad, and I believe we'll all be coming home soon, but I'm remembering and believing in the little verse. They kind of make things seem different over here."

The President paused. "Shall I read the verse, Benjamin?"

"Yes, sir," and Bennie kept his eyes fixed bravely now on the spot where the other foot should have been, as the President read:

"They say that war is hell, the great accurst,
The sin impossible to be forgiven,
Yet I can look upon it at its worst
And still see blue in heaven,
For when I note how nobly natures form,
Under the war's red stain, I deem it true,
That He who made the earthquake and the storm,
Perhaps made battles, too."

"We are here," continued the President, "to welcome a hero—back from the 'war's red stain.' It's easy enough to be a hero when the sun shines and everyone cheers, but he was a hero in the darkness of night, with only death around and above him. Perhaps he was more able to 'carry on over there because he was a champion here.' But his message to you, his schoolmates, is the story of all that enters into a day's work, done quietly and earnestly. For Benjamin hasn't given himself for a mere reward, else he would have shown you the little Croix de Guerre which he carries beneath his coat. Perhaps he'll wear it now beside a smaller decoration. It is our star for the living and in it glows all the proud affection of the home folks of Columbian."

The President paused, smiling.

The Lady Principal, whose own beautiful influence over the boys of Columbian had reached him even on the battlefields of France, stepped forward and pinned upon his coat a gilded star with a deep blue Maple Leaf glowing in its heart.

"Follow to the end," continued the President, "that cuts out pessimism for even our wounded heroes. The Maple Leaf of Columbian is a symbol of our trust in you; that the commonplace day

of little things which comes after the glory of battle will be lived in the same spirit; Rabbi Ben Ezra's consciousness of infinite good.

"Follow to the end, Benjamin. Then remember the sturdiest challenge to death ever uttered:

"I was ever a fighter, so one fight more,
The best and the last."

"Follow to the end, children of Columbian. You shall not fail of a glorious haven."

And the mountains and the sky and the trees
joined in the welcome:

"Everything's worth while, our hero,
The shapes of things, their colors, lights, shades—
The beauty and the wonder and the power,
And God made it all."

Afterword

Again we raise the veil and peer within:

The shadows have lifted "over there." You are celebrating "The Great Victory" now, for "The Day" has come; the day of thanksgiving and answered prayer to a new born world, forever free. And so we leave you thus, Columbian, with your children gathered around you, marching face forward in the reign of Peace.

We, who are far away, catch the echo of your tones, share your triumph, joy and cheers.

We touch depths undreamed of, "just a-weary-in'" for your softly sloping fields, your welcoming halls and your mist-crowned hills, but the inspiration of your existence carries us up to the heights again. You are always ours; a College of fulfilled dreams, of ideals that are "not for an age but for all time."