

CANADIANA
1875

In Memoriam.

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Queen Victoria

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Reprinted by request on the first Anniversary of her
burial, February 2, 1902.

IN MEMORIAM.

Now she is dead !
I saw her last, on that first Jubilee,
From out a tide of faces, like a sea,
Full-running, strong, and eager in its might,
And filled with all delight.
And I recalled, while yet I was a boy,
My pride and joy,
When, in Old London Town,
My father held me up to see her pass.
And then we walked about in many places
Filled with her graces.
And father spoke of seeing her, a lass,
When first she wore the crown.—
And I remember every word he said.

How they rumbled,
Those many waves of sound !
Tumbled and jumbled
Were all the peoples,
Bells rang in the steeples.
And all around
Was tramp of marshalled men,
Prince and potentate,
Young and old, of high estate,
And just common folk, like you and me,—
All elate, all as one.

Oh, but it was rare !
Brightly shone the sun,
Glad to look upon
So much devotion.
There was blare of brass,
And color, color, color, everywhere,
Generous alike to rich and poor.—
Especially to the poor !
Who have so little color in their lives,
Who live in hives,
In a mean drab hives,
Which men, alas, mismake !

And it was all for her sake !
All the pageantry and the emotion ;
All for a little old lady,
Like your mother !
Just such another,
Just as good and as sweet,—
Complete !
Whom we scarcely saw pass
Tears dimmed our eyes so, and then
There was a mighty roar,—
Never such shouting was heard in the world before !

Ten years !
In an age grown very late,
And so frail and weary and world-worn ;
Pierced by many a thorn
Of sickness and sorrow and death.

Ever doing her duty,
Holding fast to the Faith,—
Surpassing beauty !
Still firm her hand at the helm of state,—
The course of the good ship sure,
Ploughing the seas secure.

And once again
The Empire bowed before her,
Eager to adore her,
Nor longed in vain,
To share her hopes and her fears,
And her all-inclusive love,—
Her best gift from above !
To reverence the strength and the age,
Of the martyr and mother and sage.

And the tired Queen passed by,
And whithersoever she came,
Only her name,
The one name,
The Queen, the Queen !
Resounded all around her,
In mighty waves of sound it drowned her !
The sound of a people's emotion,
Of a pure, unsullied devotion.

And she passed to Wren's stately fane,
Sending a subject's prayer

To the Mighty God on High,
Free of the world's slow stain,
The humblest creature there,
And the bells rang out from every steeple,
And the woman's heart went out to her people,
Who in weal and woe
Had loved her so.

Now she is dead !
And once again Old London Town
Bows down before her ;
Before her dear cold clay, —
How strange to say !
There is no dearth of common folk
Who loved her yoke,—
Millions !

Many millions
Who never saw her face,—
That good gray face !—
And only knew her name,
Weep just the same.
And wherever the pact is kept
There are tears at the heart ;
Wherever seas that are blue
Bear outward and inward sail
'Tis the same tale—
Grief must prevail !

There is no mountain too high,
No vale too low,
But add their sigh
To our vast of woe !

But, hark, to the insistent drum !
In the purple, twilighted streets ;
And the doleful reeds and brasses,—
Music's wail !
Soul of the waves of sorrow,
That are always astir,
Never at rest,
Never still,
On any to-day,
(Only to-morrow).
For you and me,
On life's troubled sea !

Lo, they come !
See, flashing bright
The glistening silver and gold !—
Stars that spangle the night,
The black and purple night
All around.
Behold !
Her brave defenders come,—
Her boys !
Khaki and scarlet and blue,
Loyal and tried and true,

Now with grief bowed down
In grim Old London Town.
Sorrow sublime,—
Engraven in space and time !

Her boys !
And her marshal veteran,
Bobs, himself,—a man !
A very prince of Mars !
All scarred with her wars.
And her son,—The King !
And the princes of all the earth !

The slow procession passes,
And is gone like the leaves and the grasses
Of yesteryear !

W. E. Huxr