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THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Presidential Archives of the United States

V/E
Bell

Princess and Poet.

THE MESSAGE.

A poet sang of a Queen. His tongue.
Lightly to many lutes had rung.
"Princess and Maiden, cold,
With a chill in your eyes and heart.
And your white still beauty that keeps apart
Those who would woo you,
Those who would know
The strength of your beauty,
Maid of the snow."

So she, in her youthful glory,
Queen of the East and West.
Sung of in verse and story,
In her regal garments drest
Monarch of prairie and moorland,
Monarch of sea and coast.
With her great, grave eyes in calm surprise,
Read the Poet's courteous toast.

To those in her courts,
"I would speak," she said ;
"Bid him advance ; he shall see and dread.
The flower of my youth, and power and name,
I would add one leaf to his crown of fame.
Say I would speak with him face to face,
In the halls of my great wide palace whose dome.
With it glorious arches has rest nor place,
Where my pillars rise to my clouds and skies,
Here I would bid him meet my eyes,
Here on my beauty robed in state
Here I command you bid him wait."

So the Princess spoke,
While the warriors blood
Coursed thro' her veins in a pulsing flood.

THE TIREING.

"Bid me the tire woman,"
The Princess rose to wait,
"For my maidens send ;
To-day I shall need my State."

* * *
Softly they trooped the obedient,
Each one into their place,
June and July and August with her tender sun
kissed face,

April and May, the virgins,
September the vine-crowned bride.
Laughing and gay December,
Strong March with her haughty pride,
And sweet, sad-faced November,
Whose grey eyes, soft with tears,
With her yearning face,
Veiled in mist of lace,
Looked backward to vanished years;
Stately and jewel laden
October in matron grace,
While February the maiden
Held the snow-drops to her face.
One, in their midst as a novice,
White-cowled and pure was there,
While her slender hand amidst the band,
Clasped a silver book of prayer.

“ We bow at your feet, oh ! Princess ;
We haste to your royal hest
Fruit from your vines and gold from your mines,
Each of us bring our best.”

* * *

Aye, and they tired and robed her
In gorgeous robes of state ;
The tender green of silken sheen
And the foam-born billows of lace.
While mirrored with wealth around her

Shone the Princess' star-like face.

Binding her hair, they robed her there,
Jewelled her snow-white hands
So she held no fears midst the wealth of years,
This mistress of many lands.

Then rising, she among them,
"Bring me my crown of cost,
My strong white chains of jewels
And my courtly veil of the Frost."
Backward the tire maidens
Fell lightly one by one ;
They had robed their queen with the brightest sheen,
Could be won from Earth or Sun,
While the first born of their number
Rose white cowed with her trust,
"Madame your lands in slumber,
"Guard I, and keep from rust,
"They sleep—and I keep and watch them,
Warming their hearts at my breast.
They sleep in and over their shadows
Lies the mantle of my rest
Nay ! Stand, proud virgin beauty,
With your sun-kissed, jewelled hair,
With the wealth my sisters win you
About you everywhere.
Go in yon royal presence

And your stately step, but know—
The most precious gift my hands can lift,
To your crowning Maid of the Snow.”

Bending her brows the Princess
Bore the diadem of rime,
And the jewelled veil her winds prevail
To weave her in winter time.

THE PRESENCE.

Behold before her, her courts, and o'er her
The dome of her clouds and skies;
Behold around her, her guards surround her,
For the honor that never dies ;
Their swords beside her, what ill betide her,
Or the Majesty in her eyes.

“ Now would you speak, Sir Poet,
Seeking me face to face !
Of what all you know
My lands can show
You can find from place to place.
In my regal presence here, Sir,
Where the wealth of a nation lies,
Where the whole earth bows to my frowning brows
And my lofty mountains rise.
Your people have sought and your youth has brought

The silence my broad lands gave.
Did my white heart ache, for the echoing sake
Of the blood that your heroes gave.
For me and for mine,
Not gold nor shrine,
Can draw nearer my breast their graves,
While my greater glory lies in the story
Of that of your brave of braves.

Yet I would say, Sir Poet,
Where they and I found Fates,
That they in their rest hold me loyal best
Than your cannon about my gates.

Came they your people laden,
Seeking me from afar,
They found no frown when I shared my crown
To make them what they are,
Gifts from the mighty mountain,
Gifts from the lake and stream.
The sparkling of the fountain,
The visions that poets dream,
These were my welcome !
Found they genius and honour some ;
Some left sorrows behind them
Some wrought sorrows to come.

And I, my rivers are mighty,

My broad lands greened by God,
Gold and jewels and power and wealth of field and
sod,

Tempest and sun-shine and shower
And flowers, too, for the shrine,
While their children laugh in my meadows
Where graze they their lowing kine.

Let of your will spake you of the chill,
My white heart holds in its rest ;
I would have you know
My robes of the snow
Hold the riches that give me best
Tho' I kiss the hand of the motherland,
Sovereign—beloved and Queen

Yet I bear no yoke"—
And the Princess spoke
In the pride of her jewels' sheen.

* * *

"There are swords in my courts to protect me,
There are those in my lands that expect me
To hold my state as I ween."

"Nay ! 'tis enough, Sir Poet ;
You can lay your lips to my hand,
Your verse at our feet as you choose Sir,
We accept and understand.

May, 1897.

LALLAH BELL.

V/F
Bell, La'gh



Princess & Poet.

By ^{La'gh} E. Bell



Halifax, 1897.