

Coronation
Ode

By
Bliss Carman



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Coronation Ode



I.

There are joy-bells over England, there are flags on London
town;
There is bunting on the channel, where the fleets go up and
down;
 There are bonfires alight
 In the pageant of the night;
There are bands that blare for splendour, and guns that speak
for might;
For another king in England is coming to the crown.

II.

As it was in Saxon Britain, and through the Norman's sway,
And with the mighty Tudors, so it must be to-day.
 For the English kings must hold
 From Alfred, great of old, —
From Sea-King and Crusader and Elizabeth the Bold,
And every free-born Commoner whose strength is England's
stay.

III.

They will take him up to Westminster, and set him in his
place;
And Church and Lords and Commons will stand before his
face,

And hear him make reply,
In the name of God most high,
To be their Faith's Defender, as it was in days gone by,
With the thousand years behind him and the glory of his race.

IV.

They will give him orb and sceptre, the chalice, spurs and
sword;
And vest him with the purple to kneel before his Lord;
Then he will rise from prayer,
In the ancient Abbey there,
And hear the world's four corners proclaim the troth they
bear,
And cry, "God save King Edward," and pledge the liegeman's
word.

V.

They will keep the old tradition that fills the world with fame;
They will hold by use and custom, and repeat the sounding
name;
And men a million strong
Will give him shout and song,
Where the trappings and the banners and the blazons move
along,
When the bells make din by day and by night the rockets
flame.

VI.

There'll be men of little learning, and men of proven worth,
Of every caste and every creed, come up from all the earth ;
 To watch him brave and fine,
 To speak of right divine, —
Plantagenet and Lancaster and Stuart in his line,
And bless the blameless memory of Her who gave him birth.

VII.

But who will stand before him, with single words and few,
And a knowledge of the morrow, and tell him straight and
 true,
 Not only by God's grace
 He comes unto his place,
The majesty of office, the reverend pride of race,
But by their will who choose him as their fathers used to do?

VIII.

By the touch of love that kindles the blood beneath the tan ;
By the loyalty they bear him because he is a man,
 Who has learned the modest way
 To serve and to obey,
Who never flinched at duty, nor shuffled with fair-play ;
And the world is held together by creed and code and clan.

IX.

Stand up, Sir, in your honour! They come from near and far,
Rajah and Chief and Councillor and Prince and Rasseldar,
 From Canada and Ind
 And the lands behind the wind,
Whose purpose none may question nor their decree rescind,
To name you King of England for the gentleman you are.

X.

Premier and peer and senator, they come from far and near,
In kilted worn war-harness, in fez and jewelled gear,
 The new-world chivalry
 Self-governing and free,
From Melbourne to Toronto and the islands of the sea,
With the burdens of the Empire, that you may give them ear.

XI.

What people are these passing to the sound of pipe and drum,
In the garments of all nations, and singing as they come?
 By the colour on the cheek,
 By the accent when they speak,
They are foreign-born and alien, and their homes are far to
 seek;
But they all come up to England, when England calls them
 home.

XII.

And these who speak the English tongue not in the English
way,
With the careless mien and temper self-assured, whose sons
are they?
 By the larger looser stride,
 By the ampler ease and pride,
By the quicker catch at laughter and the outlook keener-eyed,
They were bred beneath the tent-cloth of a wider whiter day.

XIII.

From the rough red tides of Fundy where the ships go far
inland,
To Kamloops where the hills are set as at a council grand;
 From the waving Northern light
 At the edge of polar night,
Where underneath the burnished stars the bitter trail is
bright,
To the inland seas that sparkle where goodly orchards stand.

XIV.

By prairie, swale, and barren, by jungle and lagoon.
Where endless palm-trees rustle and the creamy breakers
croon,
 By canyon, ford, and pass,
 By desert and morass,
In snows that stung like scorpions, on seas like burning glass,
By every land and water beneath the great lone moon;

XV.

Our fathers died for England at the outposts of the world;
Our mothers toiled for England where the settlers' smoke
 upcurled;

 By packet, steam, and rail,
 By portage, trek, and trail,

They bore a thing called honour in hearts that did not quail,
Till the twelve great winds of heaven saw their scarlet sign
 unfurled.

XVI.

And little did they leave us of fame or land or gold;
Yet they gave us great possessions in a heritage untold;

 For they said, "Ye shall be clean,
 Nor ever false nor mean,

For God and for your country and the honour of your Queen,
Till ye meet the death that waits you with your plighted faith
 unsold.

XVII.

"We have fought the long great battle of the liberty of man,
And only asked a goodly death uncraven in the van;

 We have journeyed travel-worn
 Through envy and through scorn,

By the faith that was within us we have stubbornly upborne,
For we saw the perfect structure behind the rough-hewn plan.

XVIII.

“ We have toiled by land and river, we have laboured on the
sea ;
If our blindness made us blunder, our courage made us free.
 We suffered or we throve,
 We delved and fought and strove.
But born to the ideals of order, law, and love,
To our birthright we were loyal, and loyal shall ye be ! ”

XIX.

O East they go and West they go, and never can they bide,
For the longing that is in them, and the whisper at their
side ;
 They may stablish hearth and home,
 But the sons will forth and roam,
As their fathers did before them, across the hollow foam,
Till strange lands lift to greet them at the edges of the tide.

XX.

They have visions of a country that sorrow never knew ;
They have rumours of a region where the heart has nought to
rue ;
 And never will they rest
 Till they reach the fabled West,
That is charted, dim but certain, in the Volume of the Breast,
And forever they are dreamers who make the dream come
true.

XXI.

In the North they are far forward, in the South they have
begun,
The English of three continents who take their rule from
none,

But follow on the gleam
Of an ancient, splendid dream,
That has manhood for its fabric, perfection for its theme, --
With freedom for its morning star, and knowledge for its sun.

XXII.

And slowly, very slowly, the gorgeous dream grows bright,
Where rise the four Democracies of Anglo-Saxon might;
The Republic, fair, alone;
The Commonwealth new-grown;
The proud, reserved Dominion with a story of her own;
And One that shall emerge at length from travail, war, and
blight.

XXIII.

O doubt not, wrong, oppression, and violence, and tears,
The ignorance and anguish and folly of the years,
Must pass and leave behind
The saner soul and mind,
And the slow ages shall evolve a loftier mankind,
When over lust and carnage the great white peace appears.

XXIV.

For surely, very surely, will come the Prince of Peace,
To still the shrieking shrapnel and bid the Maxims cease, —
 Not as invaders come
 With gun-wheel and with drum,
But with the tranquil joyance of lovers going home
Through the scented summer twilight, when the spirit has
 release.

XXV.

By sea and plain and mountain will spread the larger creed, —
The love that knows no border, the bond that knows no breed;
 For the little word of right
 Must grow with truth and might,
Till monster-hearted Mammon and his sycophants take flight,
And vex the world no longer with rapine and with greed.

XXVI.

O England, little mother by the sleepless Northern tide,
Having bred so many nations to devotion, trust, and pride,
 Very tenderly we turn
 With welling hearts that yearn
Still to fence you and defend you, still to love you and to learn
Wherein our right and title, might and majesty reside.

XXVII.

O Sir, no empty rumour comes up the earth to-day
From the kindred and the peoples and the tribes a world away;
For they know the Law will hold
And be equal as of old,
With conscience never questioned and justice never sold,
And beneath the form and letter the spirit will have play.

XXVIII.

When you hear the princely concourse take up the word and
sing,
And the Abbey of our fathers with their acclamations ring,
Know well that, true and free,
By the changeless heart's decree,
On all the winds of heaven and the currents of the sea
From the verges of the Empire will come, "God save the
King!"

BLISS CARMAN.