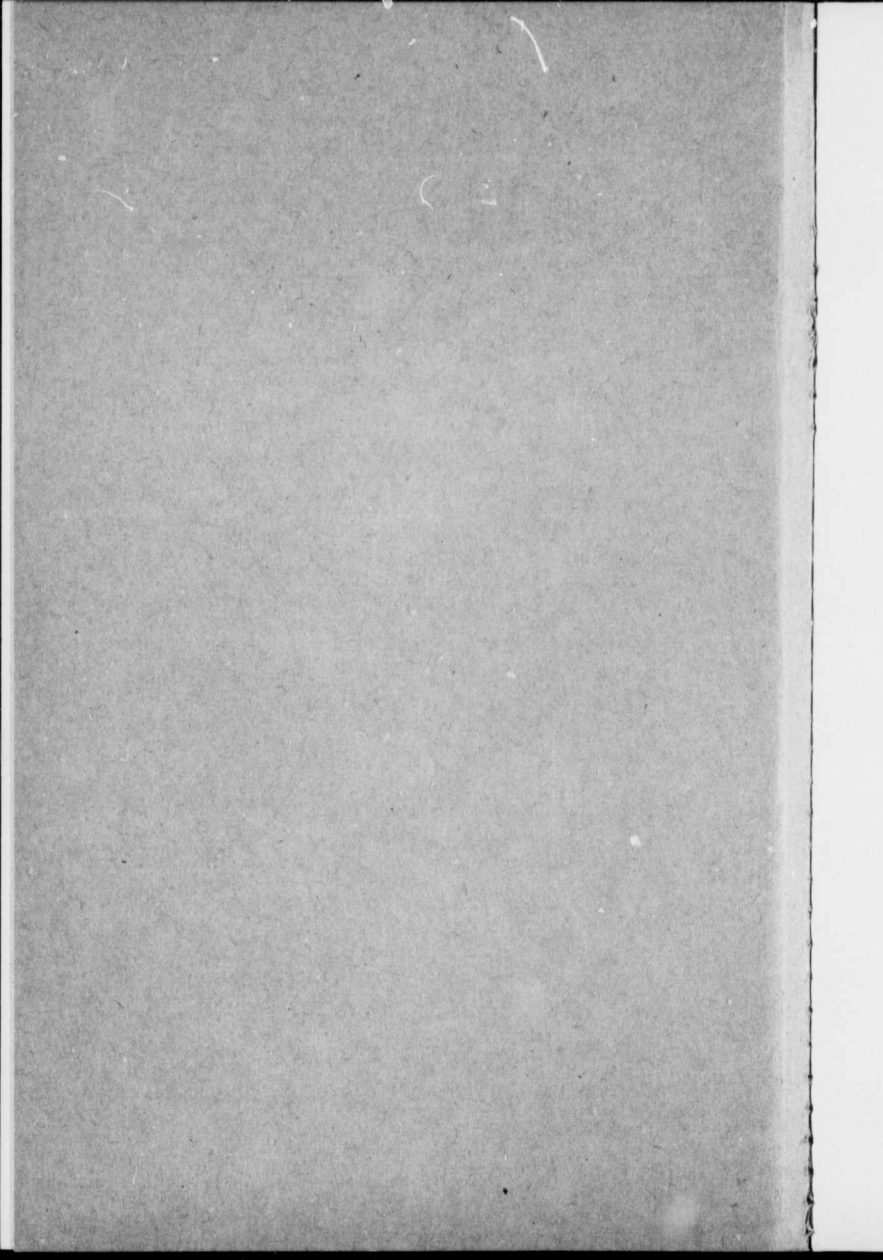


Roses of France

and Other Poems

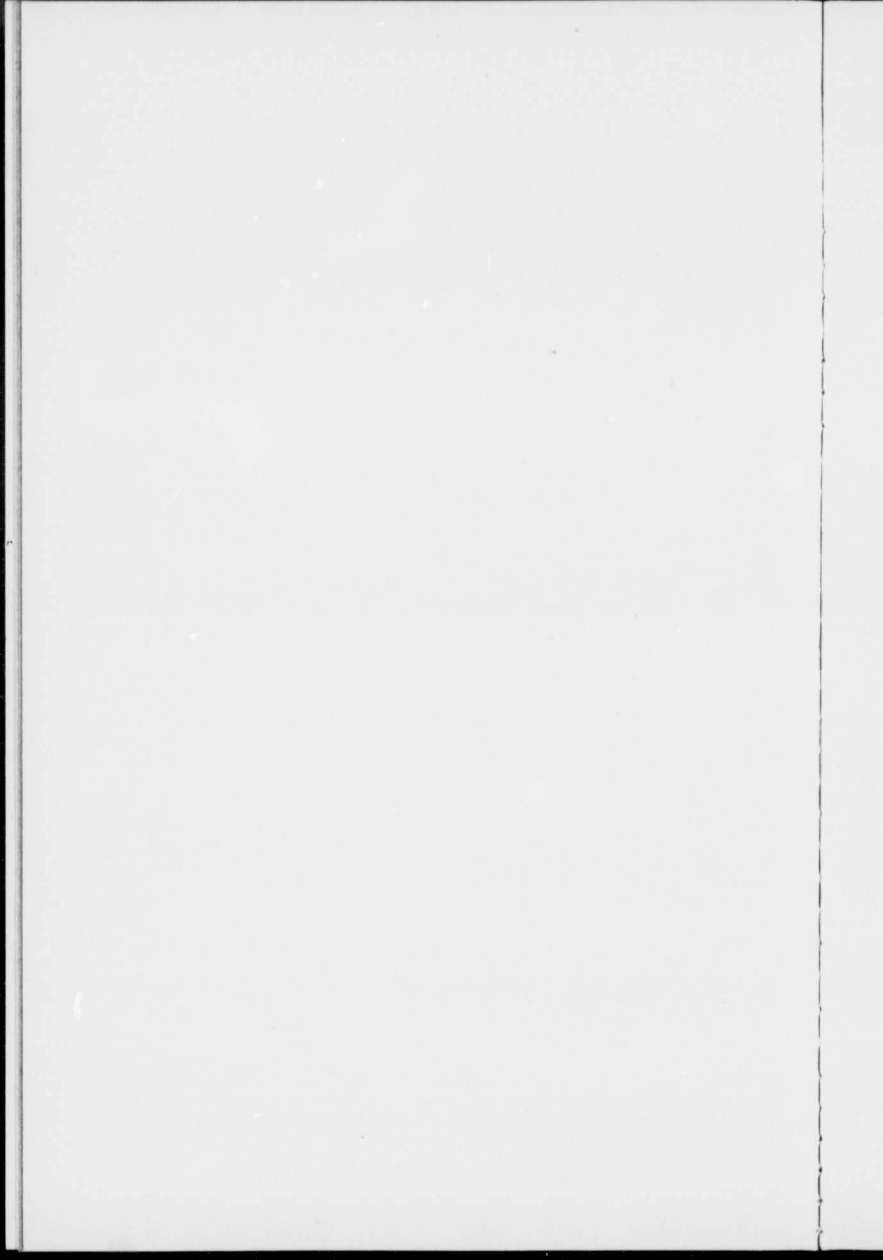
By

Mabel L. Stuart



ROSES OF FRANCE

Compliments of
Mabel L. Stuart



ROSES OF FRANCE

AND OTHER POEMS

By
MABEL L. STUART

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ROSES OF FRANCE

“WHY are your Roses red, Oh, France,
That climb the ruined sill,
That toss and bend in the lonely wind
That mourns above the hill;
That droop and sigh where the crosses stand
So ghostly white and still?”

“Ah, they are the blood of my martyred sons,
Sprung from the sodden soil—
A riot of color and perfume,
Thro' all this world turmoil,
Bearing the fragrance of brave deeds
Nor death nor time can spoil.

“There my murdered infants lie;
A church—that vast stone heap;
That gibbering wreck that moans and sighs,
Has suffered wrongs so deep
That all she craves is the healing touch
Of God's eternal sleep.

“All this, and more, had been thy fate,
Nation beyond the sea;
The vulture talons were outspread
To snatch thy liberty;
Then give me thy sons, O Canada!
For mine have died for thee!”

FOR CANADA

HERE, where the shells are falling
In their fiery rain of death,
And noxious vapors rolling,
Smite with their poisoned breath,
We dream of the distant Homeland,
Of the silver river's shine,
The sun on the golden wheat-fields,
And a peace that is divine.

The scent of the sighing pine-woods,
The wind in the maple tree,—
They touch me like a tender hand
Far across the sea.
They seem to murmur, "Courage!
The strong brown line will hold,
As the living chain rolls link by link
From the New Land to the Old."

Here, in the dim forgotten past
Rode valiant knights and true,
Searching amain with glittering spears
For daring deeds to do.
But I have seen as gallant knights
As ever couched a lance,
Die in the sodden trenches,
On the war-scarred fields of France.

Dying for you, Oh Canada,
For honor, and love, and life,
For we are the breed that never yield
Till we conquer in the strife.
And the dear "White Comrade" guides us
Thro' the valley to the height—
In life, or death, we dream of you,
Oh, Canada, to-night!

THE LAST TURNSTILE

PEARLY petals, and rose, and white,
Float on a waning breeze;
Leaves of crimson, bronze and gold
Flutter from swaying trees;
The burning sun of summer glows
Pale thro' a velvet haze,
Illumining the mezzotints
Of Autumn's golden days.

Curling petals, rustling leaves,—
Insignia of death!
Buds of spring, the summer's bloom,
Seared by a silent breath;
Yet dream we of awakening,
Of slumber-chains flung wide;
Of emerald woods, where violet-bells
In mossy hollows hide.

And we have loved these many years,
While friends have come, and passed,
Till Autumn vapors touched our souls
With chilling breath, at last;
And you have drooped beneath the frosts,
Beside the last turnstile,
And left me here to tread alone
The last, long, weary mile.

THE PRODIGAL

WAN tam I am de boss beeg man
Down on de ole Long Soo,
An' haf' ma plaintee employee
For all de work to do.
Sapree! I lef' de good ole place
Ma fortune for to sik,
An' sail away to distan' lan's
W'ere stranger voices spik;
But O de fren' dey are so scarce!
An' O ma heart is sore!—
She long an' long for Canadaw,
Blue sky an' lac once more.

De great Nor' lan' she jeer at me:
"A tenderfoot," she said.
Dose beeg saloon git all ma gole,
An' I git—jus' beeg head.
De women laf, de men dey sneer,
De lights flare up an' die,
An' I am sit upon de groun'
Beneat' de frozen sky;
An' me—I mak de beeges' fight
Was never seen befor',
Den off I walk for distan' part
To come dat way no more.

De cruel Wes' she grip ma gole,
 Bimeby, ma soul as well,
An' I haf taste befor' I die
 De bitterness of hell.
An' now she fire me—ole an' broke:
 De bes' t'ing I can do
Is wander down de lonely trail
 An' fin' de ole Long Soo.
But O! de dark is t'ick, so t'ick—
 Not wan small ray of light!
Jeanne, Jeanne! Is dat you call?
 I come—good-night—good-night.

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

AS I sit in the gleaming firelight
At dusk of a fading day,
I seem to see before me
The land of the Far-Away;
And memories ne'er forgotten
However old I grow,
Are pictured in light and shadow
In the Land of the Firelight Glow.

The old stone house with its gables,
The green of the orchard trees,
The bucket-well with its wooden trough,
The rope swing stirred in the breeze,
A hard, brown path to the highway
With a picket fence below—
Are pictured in gold and crimson,
In the Land of the Firelight Glow.

The dear familiar faces
Of those I've loved of yore,
Arise and smile upon me
With tender grace once more;
And the balm of their presence soothes me
With the love of the long ago,
Till the lonely present vanishes
In the Land of the Firelight Glow.

But we must not dwell in a Dreamland
When the work of the world's to do,
For tho' our part seem trivial,
It must be carried thro';
So up and arm for the battle!
Into the vanguard go,
Refreshed by fragrant memories
From the Land of the Firelight Glow.

THE TRYST

SOFT grey light on a summer sea,
A glow of pink in the West,
Sad waves lapping the silver shore—
Ah! this is rest, sweet rest

Dim pines murm'ring beyond the bank.
Moonlight streaming through,
A golden path o'er the ocean's breast
That leads, my love, to you.

How weary the years since you left me, dear,
And silently sped away,
When the good ship sailed thro' the golden streak
And vanished for aye and aye.

How lonely I stand on the moonlit nights
Alone by the saddening sea,
And strain my eyes for the homebound ship
That never returns to me.

Till the chill winds blow from the distant lands,
And the salt spray wets my face,
As I gaze in vain thro' the white night mists
Out into empty space.

And the bar moans low in the rising gale;
The crested breakers foam;
The storm wraith shrieks in an agony
To call wayfarers home.

Oh, the frosts of years have touched my hair,
And hope has long since fled,
But we will keep our tryst, dear heart,
When the sea gives up its dead.

THE DREAM-SHIP

OUT of the West, where the sun sinks low,
Softly swaying to and fro,
Floats a white ship of foamy cloud,
All sails set, and a banner proud,
Sailing slow, o'er an azure sea;
'Tis Baby's Boat, and it sails to me

Out from the mystic shores it glides,
Borne aloft upon airy tides,
Out from the glory of sunset glow,
Into the Lowlands where shadows grow,
There while the twilight is growing dim;
'Tis Baby's Boat, and it comes for him.

High on its prow is a silver star
Twinkling brightly from realms afar;
Golden curls on a pillow white,—
Dream-ship sailing into the night,—
Sweet-voiced angels singing low,
Into the land of dreams they go.

air,

OUR PASSING GUEST

THE sun shone softly thro' the trees,
And birds trilled thrilling melodies;
The dark halls glowed with crimson light
From oriel windows burnished bright,
Sweet day succeeded dismal night,
When Baby came.

w,

The great halls rang with shouts of mirth;
Flowers sprang fairer from the earth.
His smile bade wounded hearts grow gay;
His laugh threw sunshine on our way.
Sad night was lost in blissful day,
While Baby stayed.

The sun went out behind the hill;
The merry laugh was hushed and still.
The gloomy halls once more grew dim,
For all their sunshine came from him.
Death's shadow entered, cold and grim,
When Baby went.

All things around this lonely place
Recall to mind his wistful face,
The tiny hands outstretched in play;
Oh, let us kneel and let us pray,
"Lord Jesus, lead us in the way,
Which Baby trod."

WAITING

DIMLY do I remember—
Oh, it was years ago,
E'er life's sad December
Frosted our hair with snow—
How we two were standing,
Under a sunset sky
Amid the flowers and breezes,
Of a sweet July.

Heavy the air with perfume,
Green was the velvet sod,
Nature all reflecting
The face of Nature's God.
Ah, but the flowers have faded;
Flowers were born to die;
Life has changed so sadly
Since that sweet July.

Slow are our steps and feeble;
Long is the weary way:
Still we wait together,
The closing of the day.
Thro' the mists of the Valley,
We're groping—you and I,
Till in a blaze of glory
We see the new July.

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