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MONTHLY

The Magazine of the Canadian West

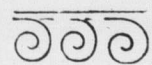
Devoted to COMMUNITY - SERVICE - FEARLESS - FAIR & FREE

Volume XVIII

JULY, 1921,

No. 2

EARTH



If this little world tonight
Suddenly should fall through space
In a hissing, headlong flight,
Shrivelling from off its face,
As it falls into the Sun,
In an instant every trace
Of the little crawling things—
Ants, philosophers, and lice,
Cattle, cockroaches, and kings,
Beggars, millionaires, and mice,
Men and maggots,—all as one
As it falls into the Sun,—
Who can say but at the same
Instant from some planet far
A child may watch us and exclaim:
“See the pretty shooting-star!”

--W.H.P.

\$1.75 One Year; \$3.00 Two Years]

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15 cents

Special Message to Our Readers

And Especially To The

Hundreds of New Subscribers

who have taken advantage of our \$1 "Get-acquainted rate," and whose names have been added to our mailing list at this time. We regret that the Printers' strike has delayed this issue, and that it has had to be published in an abridged form.

The experimental publications which have lived and died recently after appealing to the public on one basis or another—PATRIOTISM, PRIZES, PREMIUMS or SPECULATIVE INDUCEMENTS—and securing "YEARLY" subscriptions without any guarantee that they would live MONTHS, make it the more timely that we say a few words about the life and work of this magazine

THE B. C. M. NOW IN ITS TENTH YEAR,

offers no inducements in the way of camouflaged bait in lotteries or lands to secure "paid" (?) "circulation". It is being built up on the basis of giving the fullest possible value in Community Service. The aim of the publishers—and the representative editorial committee—is to issue a periodical that will exercise an interest and an influence in all that makes for human happiness.

Our tenth year motto "Into Every HOME" (worthy of the name) is therefore well chosen; for surely there is no home that is not concerned in "Social Educational, Literary or Religious" life.

MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE CLUBS, —TEACHERS

and professional educators should find an unrestricted medium in it. Men and women interested in literature and in Western Canadian writers particularly, should find something to attract in most issues. Churchmen in the pulpit and the pew—the earnest and alert men of all denominations—who are awake to the fact that the Canadian West

CANNOT BE "RUN" FROM TORONTO

or Montreal, should know that the B. C. M. is ready to serve them in the measure in which they are alive to relative values, and practical "social service".

IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

as well as in the interest of publications and publishers themselves, we think it is time that something was said and done in connection with the obtaining of "yearly subscriptions" under conditions which practically amount to false pretences. As in the case of some other things, it may be quite "legal" for publications or publishers to depend upon (or exploit) organizations, and also to accept "Yearly" subscriptions, and then treat the public as if no obligation had been undertaken; in short, to give delivery of only a few issues—or even none. But such conduct, no matter what its initial basis of oral confidence or assured capital, is not "fair-play" to the Community;—to say nothing of those periodicals which are seeking to serve that community legitimately, with due regard to obligations incurred.



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the graceful lines of youth may
be retained, attained or
regained in a

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you and assume full respon-
sibility for your satis-
faction.

Gordon Doyle
LIMITED

575 Granville St.
VANCOUVER, B. C.

The Fundamental Traits of French Character

(By H. Chodat)

"All concord's born of contraries."—(B. Jonson).

There are two ways of judging a foreign people; two distinct views may be taken of the same nation, each from an entirely different standpoint. The more usual is the outside view, the one generally adopted by the foreigners who, passing through the country the inhabitants of which he is about to describe, judge their ways and customs at first-sight, impressionistically, notes them down, compares them with the ways and customs of his own land, and finally drawing his own conclusions, forms his opinions and spreads them broadcast. This is the method which, from time immemorial, foreigners have applied in their endeavor to form a true conception of the French and their character. Judging from the results, this method can hardly be said to have obtained its object. It has failed to probe below the surface, to explain the contradictions of which French life and character are full, and the picture presented has been marked in most cases by the sharp suggestiveness of a caricature. It is as a result of such procedure that the epithets of degenerate, immoral and frivolous have so often been hurled at France by writers who were deficient in true critical acumen or in psychological imagination.

The other method of investigation is the scientific method. It is practiced all the more rarely as it demands of the foreign student a radical setting aside of his national and racial prejudices, an absolute impartiality of his critical faculty. Few people are capable of such mental effort, least of all the casual traveller who goes to Paris bent on pleasure-seeking. This method, moreover, to be practiced successfully, necessitates a deep and accurate knowledge of the life and history of the people under consideration, such a knowledge as can only be acquired after a prolonged residence in the foreign country and intimate intercourse with its people. It requires most of all real critical power, the gift of discrimination when selecting the essential elements from the bewildering richness of the material at hand, the faculty of tracing back to their primary cause with unerring certainty mental or social phenomena that often seem in contradiction with one another. If applied rigidly and with absolute intellectual honesty, this method will enable the foreign student to discover the fundamental psychological traits which lie at the root of a people's mentality and shed a flood of light on its social manifestations.

* * * * *

The task of elucidating the character of a people is not an easy one. In the case of the French it is beset with more than ordinary difficulties, the principal of which spring from some strange faults of the French themselves.

This people apparently so gay and debonair on the surface, wearing, as it were, their hearts on their sleeves, are in reality hard to penetrate. However frank they are concerning many details to which Anglo-Saxons would never dream of alluding, they will never discuss their intimate, personal, or family affairs before strangers. In all essentials they are most reserved and keep to themselves, a truth which finds confirmation in the old French proverb: "Il faut laver son linge sale en famille".

Another of the many peculiarities of the French, one that has been the cause of a great deal of misunderstanding, is the curious, strange shyness with which they conceal their inmost feelings, especially their virtues, and the delight they take in appearing light-hearted and shallow, in boldly exhibiting their vices, often in a most exaggerated form, even

boasting of defects they do not possess. They have what has been aptly called "la fanfaronade du vice." The English on the other hand cannot reconcile flippancy with profundity. They do not object to flippancy and they wallow in profundity, but they will not have them mixed. The French attitude puzzles and shocks them. Being the exact opposite of their own, it has naturally led them to judge their neighbors as far more wicked and frivolous a race than they really are.

In pursuing his research the student will of necessity have to choose a suitable field of observation. In doing so let him beware of confining his efforts to a study of Parisian social life. The latter is not representative of French life in general. The so-called Parisians are for the most part too cosmopolitan. Parisian society is largely made up of foreigners who have been attracted to the French capital by its reputation as the music-hall of the world or by the fame of its academic institutions. The University alone, shortly before the war, had as many as sixteen thousand students and there were also very large colonies of wealthy Englishmen, Americans, Germans, Russians and South-Americans. There is of course a small proportion of real French people prominent in the social life of the great city, but their purely French characteristics have not escaped the deteriorating influence of intermarriage with aliens, of the imitation of foreign customs and manners, of the hot-house atmosphere of fashionable life.

The French peasant, on the other hand, would offer a better field of observation, were it not that he is too peculiar a type. The narrowness of his life, his want of opportunity for normal mental development, and the particular character of his environment have abnormally developed certain sides of his personality while dwarfing others almost to the vanishing point.

It must be remembered, however, that the several grades of French society are not separated by such deep divergences of caste and traditional discipline as are found in England, for instance. On the contrary, the homogeneity of the French social fabric is almost a national characteristic, and the democratic ideals which have pervaded the nation since the Revolution have still further increased this uniformity of thought and action, therefore, general statements concerning French ways, customs and character, if based on observation of the large class which stands midway between the foundation and the pinnacle of the social structure, that is to say the bourgeoisie, have a far greater chance of being conclusive.

The French bourgeois has changed very little in the course of time. He is still essentially the same as he was in the seventeenth century when Moliere portrayed him in the *Chrysale* of his *Femmes Lavantes*. He still possesses the same conservatism, the same dislike of novelty, the same tenacious clinging to traditions and forms. This trait is indeed the chief characteristic of the French people as a whole.

The love of the French for ceremonial and formalism, their use of symbols and conventions, their faith in tradition and established customs strike the foreigner very forcibly from the moment he comes in contact with them. As a matter of fact this fondness for symbolism permeates French life, whether social, political or artistic. It has brought about a codification of manners so strict, so rigid as almost to amount to a ritual. Every social situation has its appropriate gestures, its almost fixed vocabulary, and the least deviation from established procedure instantly creates the possibility of its being construed as an insult.

This uniformity of expression might lead the foreign

observer to regard the French as a race totally devoid of originality. He might argue that the levelling of all individuality and personal idiosyncracies under the pressure of precedent bespeaks a lack of vitality and staying power in the race. Such an inference, however, would not stand the test of confrontation with facts.

French life is like a closely woven texture of conventions holding in check elemental forces which occasionally burst forth through the meshes of the social fabric and reveal deep-rooted racial traits which cannot be eradicated. The manifestations of these forces often stand in sharp contrast with social customs and the opposition of such antagonistic principles is what gives French life its enigmatic character.

No civilized race has ever displayed such dauntless curiosity, such intellectual fearlessness as the French; yet none has been more enslaved by social conventions and petty observances. No nation has ever risen to such height of collective magnanimity; yet none has ever revealed more individual pettiness and hardness in matters of small moment. No people is more capable as a whole of fearless decision and intrepidity in the face of overwhelming odds; yet more distrustful of risk and adventure, more afraid of the least initiative in the pursuits of daily life. No race is more passionate, more unashamed of instinct, none drinks more deeply at the sources of natural enjoyment; yet none is more stoic, more industrious and laborious. They display an exquisite sense of sociability; their politeness is the expression of extreme refinement and forbearance; yet no other people have ever displayed such utter indifference to the rights of others. They are irritable and nervous, impatient of restraint; yet capable of endless patience and dauntless calm. Such is the kaleidoscopic view that French life offers. Is it then to be wondered that France should be now reviled as a degenerate and depraved nation, now exalted as the champion of enlightenment, generosity and freedom?

A close study of the many sharp contrasts presented by the character of the French compels one to assume that it is the result of the interaction of two antagonistic forces, the one, social instinct, inherited from their Celtic and Roman ancestors, the other, fierce individualism, derived from their Frankish conquerors. No other hypothesis will offer a solution of sufficient scope.

While individualism triumphed in the Anglo-Saxon race, the social instinct strengthened by environment as constituted by geographical position and historical development, has in France more and more reduced its activities and encroached upon its field of action. The spectacle of a fearless, life-loving race, so ardently individual and so frankly realistic, struggling against the ever increasing pressure of environment is one of the most tragic that the history of human societies has ever offered.

France has had to fight for her existence ever since she became conscious of her entity as a nation. Waves of savage hordes, all the violent upheavals of a world in the making swept over earliest France and almost annihilated her. Again and again she has seen her monuments destroyed, her institutions shattered. The ground on which the destiny of the world has just been fought for is the same as those Catalaunian plains on which Attila tried to throttle her. Then, for nearly a thousand years, she had to maintain herself in the teeth of an aggressive Europe. That her people went on living, "Surviving Catalaunians offering dogged resistance to invasion, clinging to the same valley, the same river-cliff" speaks for the vitality of the race. Life under such continual menace of death has produced in an intelligent race two strong passions, pious love of the soil and an intense dread of all internal innovations which might weaken the social structure and open the door to the enemy. As a consequence of such unrelenting struggle there is at the very root of the French character "a reflex of negation, an instinctive re-

coil from the new, the untested" which makes the French the most conservative of the Western races.

To resist victoriously, the nation has required a strong centralized government and a deep sense of social discipline and solidarity. Her great kings, from Louis Capet to Louis the Fourteenth were ever strengthening her by their resistance to the disintegrating forces of feudalism. Richelieu finally broke this opposition and left France united against Europe, but deprived of the sense of individual freedom. Hence, as a result of historical evolution, the original ardent individualism of the French with its anarchistic tendencies has been counteracted by a spirit of conservatism, and the iconoclastic instinct of the freest minds in the world has found an inevitable check in the creation of a strong social instinct.

France has incarnated this instinct of human nature with unbroken continuity throughout the ages. This directing principle gives her history a deep-seated unity. Innate in the Gaul, it has developed, after fusion with Roman institutions, a disposition of interdependence and solidarity whereby the individual has been subordinated to the supremacy of society. Its development may be traced from its earliest political manifestation. It begins with the struggle of the Gallo-Roman spirit against the barbaric Frankish personality continues with the twelfth century communal movement for equality, the anti-ecclesiastical policy of Philippe-le-Bel, the national condensation of Louis XI, the Renaissance reversion to social as well as artistic ideals, to attain its maturity in the splendid efflorescence of the seventeenth century.

The "Grand Siecle", politically, socially and artistically, represents the culminating point in the evolution of the French genius. Left internally unified by Richelieu's suppression of the last vestige of feudalism and his destruction of Protestant separatist tendencies, France now stood as the most powerful political unit of Europe. Deprived of the sense of individual freedom, the nation found in artistic expression and social intercourse an outlet for its imagination, its intellectual energy and every form of creative activity. From this impulse arose the organization of polite society with the almost ritualistic etiquette of its court, the elaborateness and refinement of its manners, its salons its academies, etc. The ideal of every individual, bourgeois and aristocrat, was to be "un honnete homme" and to possess "le bel air."

The eighteenth century witnessed the slow recession of France from her position of political pre-eminence, and the gradual exhaustion of her artistic power, but the social instinct, immeasurably strengthened by historical conditions, had become the dominating trait of the French character, a trait so deeply inwrought, that not even the Revolution could permanently eradicate it.

It appears, then that historical conditions explain very largely the intensity of the social instinct among the French. A full explanation demands, however, that we take into consideration another factor just as powerful, the influence of the Catholic Church.

The chief effect of the Reformation was to strengthen the sense of personal responsibility by awakening the conscience, of all psychological forces the most powerful to originate and direct human energy. In countries where the reformation had full sway man assumed entire control of his life, his character was fortified, his personality intensified. Where the Reformation partially or totally failed, the individual entrusted the Church with the direction of his spiritual life. The consequence of this continued submission to authority was to weaken his individuality, his sense of personal responsibility, and to make more sensible his relations to his fellow-men. The bond of union between men is thus infinitely stronger in Catholic communities than in Protestant, the sense of social interdependence is keener and

individual characteristics are weaker. The Church has added the full weight of its influence to the action of historical causes in further strengthening the social sense of the French. Society has thereby been unified and made organic. That has been the direct contribution of the Catholic Church to the moulding of modern France.

Its indirect influence has not been less real. To maintain the prestige that sole control of society's spiritual life conferred upon itself, the Church was forced to separate itself, from the world and to claim the exclusive possession of the higher Christian virtues, renunciation and asceticism. While doing so, it has always shown an astonishing indulgence to society in general and society has, of course improved its opportunity and taken full advantage of such indulgence. In France this tendency to break away from moral restraint has somewhat been checked by the talent of the people for sobriety and moderation, but their outlook upon life has nevertheless been deeply affected by the toleration of the Church. Renunciation and asceticism are among the most treasured virtues of the Catholic Church, but Catholic societies, France among them, are possessed of the epicurean rather than the ascetic ideal in morals.

We have thus in France, as a result of environment, a highly organized nation whose social and mutual activities are carried to an extent and refined to a degree of which it is difficult to form an adequate idea. We have also, in the French, a people intensely organic and *solidaire* whose moral epicureanism sharply contrasts with Anglo-Saxon puritanism.

The moment we realize that in the character of the French people it is the social rather than the individual instinct which predominates, we are in a position to understand their conception of morality. French morality is a derivative of the social instinct. The abnormal development of the latter has made of morality a social rather than an individual force, and the key to its nature is to be found in the substitution of honour for duty as a principle of action.

The French view might be stated as follows:—In all matters falling within the jurisdiction of conscience the question is whether conscience decides aright, whether it is infallible. This question can only be answered in the negative. Experience tells us that conscience is often confused, often in need of enlightenment. Implicit reliance upon it often is the cause of self-deception—So the French come naturally to think little of conscience. They rely instead upon an impersonal standard, the voice of society in general, the lessons of education, the promptings of culture. Their appeal in cases of disputed decision is to posterity, to time, to public opinion: "*vox populi, vox dei*".

The substitution of public opinion, of the sense of honour, for conscience and duty as a moral standard has far-reaching consequences. It gives use to that dual system of morals which so shocks the Puritan sense of propriety. The French, and we might add all the Latin peoples, distinguish implicitly, if not outspokenly, between the wrong which involves a breach of the social order, a sin against the public conscience, and the one which injures only one or two individuals, or perhaps only the moral sense of the offender. Compare, for instance, the indulgence shown by Dante in his *Divine Comedy* to those illustrious transgressors of private morality, Paolo and Francesca, with the terrible punishments meted out to the traitors to the state or the family, to Count Ugolino, Archbishop Ruggieri, to Cassius and Brutus, all of them consigned to the lower regions of Hell. Nothing could be more significant, in fact, the whole economy of Dante's *Inferno* illustrates the sharp distinction which the Latin mind makes between offences of a private and those of a public or social character.

Whatever we may think of the French conception of morality, their system has, generally speaking, one immense advantage. It simplifies life wonderfully. Honour's

behests are clear; society knows what it esteems and what it despises. The dictates of duty are often obscure, because conscience is often confused. Therefore, in the moral sphere, the French escape that vacillation so characteristic of the Anglo-Saxons, whose life is often a struggle in comparison with which the Frenchman's is serene. He does not fear temptation, believing with Labengue that "everything is temptation to him who fears temptation." Nor does he seek to overcome it by the discipline of self-restraint. He substitutes philosophy for the latter, a philosophy generally impregnated with epicureanism, now and then stoic, but never ascetic. The Christian belief that there is in every one of us a higher nature that must be obeyed and a lower nature that must be sternly controlled does not appeal to him. He appears, in fact, to have, morally speaking, no higher or lower nature, but simply a nature. That explains why France has ever refused to accept the more ascetic forms of Christianity, that is Jansenism and Protestantism.

The slight importance the French attach to the individual conscience, and their taking temptation so lightly, have an important bearing on their actual conduct. They yield to temptation more easily and more readily than the timorous Anglo-Saxons, but their yielding is of far less consequence. It does not involve "sinning against the light". It is a specific, temporary trivial lapse, which is productive of no moral abasement, and is never followed by the general depressing effect which defeat after a struggle, in which conscience has been intensely engaged, does not fail to have. The French have a moral buoyancy unknown to the Anglo-Saxons.

Society in consequence is far less given to stern reprobation of moral errors than is the case in Anglo-Saxon communities. This moral epicureanism can be quite easily observed in French life, and French literature offers striking examples of it. As has been rightly remarked, "that favorite incident in modern romance, round which the story of Adam Bede centres, is, minus the infanticide, of course, in French literature and French life almost never taken grimly, but gently, not tragically, but simply, not as a monstrous, but as a natural error; in short, it is still in France considered as remediable as it was in Galilee 'twenty ages since.' George Eliot could never have written there." And the same is true of other yieldings to temptation.

What precedes is meant, of course, of mere peccadillos, or at the most, of such faults as affect only one or two persons. Of those offenses which have a social bearing and meet with general condemnation, the French commit as few as any other people. But in matters of small moment French society shows what must appear to the eyes of the stern moralist a laxity, a complaisance nothing short of scandalous. Take for instance, the question of veracity. A Frenchman expects his neighbor to display courtesy, consideration, sociability in his relations with him, and also sincerity in essentials, but he does not expect him to tell the exact truth if he has any motive for concealing it. Truth he does not blindly worship. Not only does he think that it must not be boldly spoken at all times, but also that it may be now and then attenuated or enlarged upon, either from a desire to spare the sensitiveness of the hearer or with the intention of appearing in a better light and thereby win the approbation of society. We may consider this an excess, but it nevertheless is the logical outcome of extreme social development. It has been said that civilization makes hypocrites of us. That is of course an exaggeration; yet it must be admitted that candor and courtesy, the desire to please and perfect openness are mutually antagonistic. The French lack in fact that blunt frankness which makes the average Englishman so concrete a personality.

Yielding easily to temptation, means, of course, to the Anglo-Saxon lack of personal discipline, of renunciation, of character. It certainly is no calumny to affirm that the

French have no genius for renouncement. The latter is opposed to their social ideal of expansion, an ideal whereby a man's greatness is measured. The success one has achieved in life is what counts with them, not the character one has built for oneself. Therefore self-sacrifice with a view to spiritual perfection, a principle in which Anglo-Saxons have the deepest faith, however little it may be met with in actual practice, seems to the French an ambition of vague significance. It is not an aim of the social instinct, and they regard it as a sort of hiding of one's light under a bushel. In short, moral discipline is, in the Anglo-Saxon mind, intimately connected with self-denial and curtailment of one's aspirations and ambitions. To the French it is synonymous with the fullest development of one's mental attributes, the greatest improvement of one's opportunities, the daring projection of one's personality into the social environment. No other conception of character could yield a more striking proof of the all-permeating influence of the social instinct.

A study of the diffusion of the social spirit throughout the fabric of French society would show how completely it has moulded manners, education, literature and art; how, in a highly organized social body where individuals "per se" are of less import than their social standing, where every field of human endeavor is sharply defined and circumscribed, and where competition is keen, character and moral discipline are decidedly less valued than capacity and intelligence, the corner-stones of social achievement and political success. Such a study would carry us, however, beyond the limits of a mere sketch. On the other hand, the few traits we have considered do not warrant us in drawing a conclusion that would be sufficiently comprehensive. The deductions which the foreign observer makes from French life are often so contradictory that it would probably take the deeper insight of blood relationship to combine them into a harmonious interpretation of French character. All that we can do is to point to the results, to French history, to French culture. In the world of ideas, in the domain of pure thought, in the sphere of artistic creation, France stands foremost. Her superiority must be admitted, in spite of her moral epicureanism, so repellent to Anglo-Saxon austerity. No amount of puritanical dogmatism can alter the facts. As Bishop Butler says: "Things are as they are and will be as they will be".

In a Library.

As at the shrine of his departed sires
Devoutly bows the son of old Cathay,
To do them honor in his reverent way,
And make them partners in his fond desires;
So come I, with my heart's deep, quiet fires
Glowing and fragrant, humble meed to pay
To those great minds of Time's vast yesterday,
Whose rich bequest in books my soul inspires.

In these fair chambers where their volumes stand
In many a rigid row, all patiently
They seem to wait and crave my friendly hand;
For at my touch their spirits wake in me
A thrill responsive, as the sunset grand
Wakes kindred glories in the adoring sea.

—Donald A. Fraser in CANADIAN BOOKMAN.

(Written in the Connaught Library, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, B. C.)

REFLECTIONS

Suggested by Pictures in Vancouver H. B. Store.

(Contributed by "K. M. C.", and passed to our readers because of the optimistic spirit revealed.)

Life "in them times" is more like a whirlpool than anything else. No matter how unconcerned, carefree, or thoughtless the person, it seems impossible to keep entirely from the whirling eddies of unrest and depression. Thoughts of disaster, or sorrow, or hopelessness; glib phrases like "economic pressure"; that mighty monster "high-cost-of-living," and the many other questionings which assail Everyman and Everywoman in the daily quest for a "living", all press down until life becomes almost intolerable. It may be just a momentary feeling, but it is then that we must have some anchor, something ideal or abstract, but real, to look up to.

Some may find a moment of respite (as the writer did) in the Hudson's Bay Store. There, just above the work-gloves counter, as the visitor lifts his eyes above silk shirts, and other garments, he sees three pictures.

These pictures have a world of rest and peace and inspiration in them, if one just takes the time to look up—it is so easy to look down. Perhaps you have just been told that there are nearly a million men out of work; that your particular trade or line of business is almost going "on the blink"—some love to tell you this—that Bolshevism or some other ism that you don't know about and therefore fear—is going to fix its talons on the throat of our civilization; in fact everything is hopeless. At such a time, just look at "Solemn Solitude" and feel the peace of that secluded sunny spot. In imagination rest your tired mind to the tune of the little brook that murmurs down to the shore, and hear the cry of the birds as they fly to and fro with the sheer joy of life. All is harmony, because all is natural.

A little farther along another masterpiece teaches us the futility of too much "hustle". Tantalum Towers stand as though to say: "Look at me. Within my walls fierce feuds were fought, great loves consummated, and yet today I stand lonely (as you see me represented here) etched against the flaming sunset sky, while those who wildly worried about life and death are but a memory!

If only we could have the poise of these dumb stones, the feeling of futurity, that all things will right themselves, and of what little avail are all our bitter anxieties.

"I to the hills will lift mine eyes" might almost be the title of the third picture, that of a huge bird soaring to greet the rising sun which is glowing over the mountain top, to flood the valley below with mellow light; to awaken the flocks and herds, and summon the busy world to work again.

May we like the sun, go forth to do our part daily to lighten the way for someone, by a smile or a cheery word.

"Be merry man, and tak not sair in mind,
The wavering of this wretchit world of sorrow:
To God be humble, and to thy friend be kind,
And with thy neighbours gladly lend and borrow,
His chance to-nicht, it may be thine to-morrow."

HOW ARE YOU FIXED?

The Wall Street Journal recently printed the following letter from a North Carolina cotton planter to a fertilizer company, which is thoroughly expressive of "present conditions":

"I received your letter about what I owes you. Now be patient. I ain't forgot you. As soon as folks pay me I'll pay you. If this was judgment Day and you no more prepared to meet your God than I am to meet your account, you sho going to hell."—THE CHRONICLE.

The Old Junk Store



On the Street of Many Nations,
Jumbled up like old relations,
With its dingy windows standing,
'Way down by the ferry landing.
Dusty, dirty, bowed and bending,
Like some crippled sailor, lending
Just that air of ancient ages,
To Life's stained and time-worn pages.

Here are treasures old and musty,
Lying in their corners dusty.
Long their art and magic vanished,
Once beloved, but long since banished.
All their old ideals shattered,
You shall see them bent and battered.
Loving hands caressed with care
All these relics old and rare.

Antique carvings, monsters finny,
Old mud idols from New Guinea;
Or a woven skirt of grass,
From some dark Hawaiian lass.
Spear and gun and feathered arrow;
Fish-hawk, crane and Java sparrow.
Sextant, compass, Master's Guide;
Lying heedless side by side.

Ancient books, by ancient scribes,
Totem poles of many tribes;
Old-time rods and fishing tackle,
Leader, trace and deadly hackle.
Helpless, heedless; useless needless;
Needless so it seems.
Dry and rotten, long forgotten,
Just a weave of dreams.

On the Street of Many Nations,
You shall find these old creations.
Just an "Old folks' home for relics;
Heathen gods and saints angelic.
Garish stores their wares are flaunting:
Here, dead yesterdays are haunting.
Here the Past shall speak to you,
By these treasures ever new.



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THE TWENTIETH CENTURY SPECTATOR
of
BRITAIN'S FARTHEST WEST.

For Community Service—Social, Educational, Literary
and Religious; but
Independent of Party, Sect or Faction.

"BE BRITISH," COLUMBIANS!

VOL. XVIII.

JULY, 1921

No. 2

NATURE AND THE NEW EDUCATION PART II

By R. S. Sherman

But enough of maxims, isolated dogmas and empirical generalizations. I shall now present to you my definite views on the form or system of education which should be adopted in order to furnish the state with desirable citizens, and produce men who are brave and strong, yet gentle, temperate, philosophical and efficient.

I would start within our present system by eliminating formal examinations and for grading purposes use the standard educational tests, or better ones if such can be devised. These tests determine, or are supposed to determine the intellectual age of the child. In other words their sole object would be to obtain a basis for grouping the children into classes.

The primary work would be conducted along modern lines as at present practised by the best teachers. Dramatization of nursery stories, song and play, conducted out of doors where possible or practicable. In the teaching of words, the child must be given a sense impression of the object, notion, or idea named or conveyed by the word. Pictures will not do. Verbal descriptions will not do. The actual object must be subjected to the child's senses. I went into a receiving class not long ago where the teacher had drawn a very good picture of a sheep on the board. I asked the pupils what it represented. Some thought it was a cow, others a pig; a few remembered that it was called a sheep; but none had actually seen a sheep. Do not let us deceive ourselves; we are not improving the minds of these children by loading their memories with words that have no actual vital meaning to them. No: the object must be perceived by the child through one or more of its senses before the word representing that object is taught. Instead of teaching words relative to spring in winter, or vice versa, I would let each season bring its own harvest of ideas, sense impressions and the words to convey or represent them. To do this you must take the children outdoors and show them and let them observe for themselves the bluebird, the swallow, the chickadee and the robin, the crocus, the daffodil, the daisy, and the buttercup; the bursting buds, the grassy glades dotted with dandelions; the glory of the sunlight and the gloom of the cloud.

In spite of the ridicule heaped upon Josh Billings and his disciples, I would make the spelling of words truly phonetic. The very alphabet would require revision. Every sound in our language should have a special character to represent it, and the same letter should not be made to represent more than one sound. Think of the vast saving of time and energy, not to mention the benefits of added clearness, accuracy and

efficiency, which this system would bring about. I fail to see any more reason for retaining our present system of orthography than there was for perpetuating the quaint English of Chaucer's time.

It would follow naturally that at an early age the children would be taught shorthand and ultimately I have no doubt short hand would replace longhand altogether. The time will no doubt come when all our books and papers will be published in shorthand. Prejudice and false sentiment are largely responsible for burdening humanity with our present cumbersome illogical system. In this direction we have made no advancement in a thousand years.

As regards Arithmetic, so dear to the hearts of parents and teachers, so dreaded by pupils of all ages, I would insist on the number sense of little children being developed by sense teaching only, and they should deal only with numbers well within their power to grasp. It is, or ought to be, a truism that all knowledge comes first through the senses. Yet for generations arithmetic seems to have been made an exception to the rule. This is wrong. Some earnest teachers not only realize that it is wrong, but are doing their best to correct it. Mr. Elmer W Reid, one of the advanced thinkers on the staff of our city schools, has published an excellent pamphlet on Arithmetic, advocating more sense teaching in this subject, and giving practical hints on handling number work in the various grades.

The primary work in Arithmetic, is far more efficient and up to date than that in the higher grades. We find that as the pupil advances, sense teaching diminishes. Quoting from Mr. Reid's pamphlet: "It is usually here (in the Junior Grade) that the small wayfarer first tires of the journey that leads to the temple of Athena. Instead of the busy work of the former grade, the blocks and splints for counting, he is placed on new rations, bare figures. He steps from the shore of concrete objects into the sea of abstract numbers. These pupils should also be made to see that Arithmetic operations function in everyday life. A column of bare figures to add is foreign to the daily experience of the child, and becomes a school task, uninteresting and without reason."

When the pupils come to deal with measures, they should be shown each unit of measure, the inch, the square inch, and the cubic inch, and so on with the foot and the yard. They be shown each unit of measure, the inch, the square inch, and the cubic inch, and so on with the foot and the yard they should have a first hand knowledge of the rod, the square rod and the acre. They should actually lay these out on the ground.

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Pint, quart, and gallon measures should be used as well as seen. These units of measure together with a set of scales, should be in every school and constantly used in the teaching of Arithmetic. This step in advance can be taken now, without waiting for an educational penticost.

Through the primary and Junior Grades I would have all work based on play, chiefly in the open air when the weather permitted. But as a provision against the exigencies of our climate, every school should be provided with ample equipment and facilities for training the senses of children indoors.

Coming to what we now demoninate as the Intermediate Grade, I would introduce radical changes in our school system. This is the grade where pupils not only lose interest but acquire a positive dislike for the school and all its works. These pupils are not only the dull ones; far from it. They are not naturally dull, but the work of the school dulls and deadens their mental powers. They are sick of it. The bold-spirits become truants, and being treated as criminals for this delinquency, they are apt to regard crime as natural avocation. Others become the plague of the teacher's life, becoming adepts at getting into mischief without getting into trouble. Still others become atrophied or stultified and drift into special classes, or serve out their sentence to the bitter end, being discharged as incurable or incapable.

From the beginning of the Intermediate Grade, boys and girls should receive separate training. Girls should be taught by women, and boys preferably by men. Only those physically unfit should be excluded from the outdoor classes which I would now form. If you can visualize a troop of boy scouts under their scoutmaster, you can grasp the main idea. Their school room would be the farm, the sea-shore, the forests and the hills, or the factory, the workshop and the mills. They would learn the valuable secrets of Nature from Nature

herself. They would become acquainted with the wild flowers, the trees, the shrubs, the birds, wild animals and insects. Their senses of sight, hearing and touch would be trained, their memories stored with real facts and experiences, which would have a vitalizing influence on their whole lives and not crammed with the vaporized imaginings of others.

Manual Training would occupy them on days unsuited to outdoors occupation. For one thing the boys would design and construct cabins in the woods, or in the mountains. These would afford endless exercises, but vitally interesting ones, in arithmetic, geometry and drawing. These cabins would be fitted up with furniture made by the boys, and used as shelters from storms, rest houses and for camping out. They would be so constructed that they might be easily taken down and rebuilt, or removed.

Several full-sized, fully equipped farms would be run entirely by school boys, and school girls. In connection with these there would be installed the old-fashioned spinning-wheels and hand looms which the children would be taught to use. They would learn many other half-forgotten handicrafts. Butter, cheese, soap, and candles, would be manufactured by the children on the farm. The area of each field would be accurately determined by the pupils themselves. The grain or other crops, planted by the children with specially selected seed, selected by themselves, would be cultivated and harvested by them, the grain would be thrashed, the roots gathered and potted or otherwise stored, the yield per acre being accurately determined. You will perhaps object that this could not be done, as there are two months' holidays during the most important farm season. But under the system I advocate, even supposing the two summer months were still kept as holidays, you would have no difficulty in getting enough boys and girls interested to

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the extent of devoting their holidays to this kind of work. I think the same thing can be said of the teachers, especially of those teachers who would be specially trained to take up this work. Indoor teaching for twelve months of the year would be intolerable; the strain could not be endured by either pupils or teachers. But I fully believe that there would be no hardship in teaching the full twelve months out of doors.

In the next place, lessons in forestry would form an important feature of the new curriculum. The public I am afraid, do not realize the importance of our forests to national welfare and prosperity. The public might think that the children's time and the people's money were being wasted. But the public will require special education along these lines. The government of Canada is doing something in that direction as it is; but it must do more. And just here, while I am on the subject, I wish to urge the necessity of educating the parent as well as the child. We all know what an advantage it is to the child to be brought up in a cultured home. By that I do not mean luxurious home—a wealthy home. Far from it, but a home where the children have the advantage of listening to good, if plain, English, receiving sympathetic encouragement and co-operation in their play, their problems and their studies, and above all love and wise discipline. I am afraid the average home falls below these simple requirements, and many parents are unfitted to bring up their own children. Propaganda seems the order of the day, and no field is more in need of this fertilizing agency than the home. Even Plato was aware of the importance of home education. He states that from the child's nurse and its mother come the first lessons, which are usually in the form of stories or fables. It is important, he thinks, that these should be of the proper kind, selected with a

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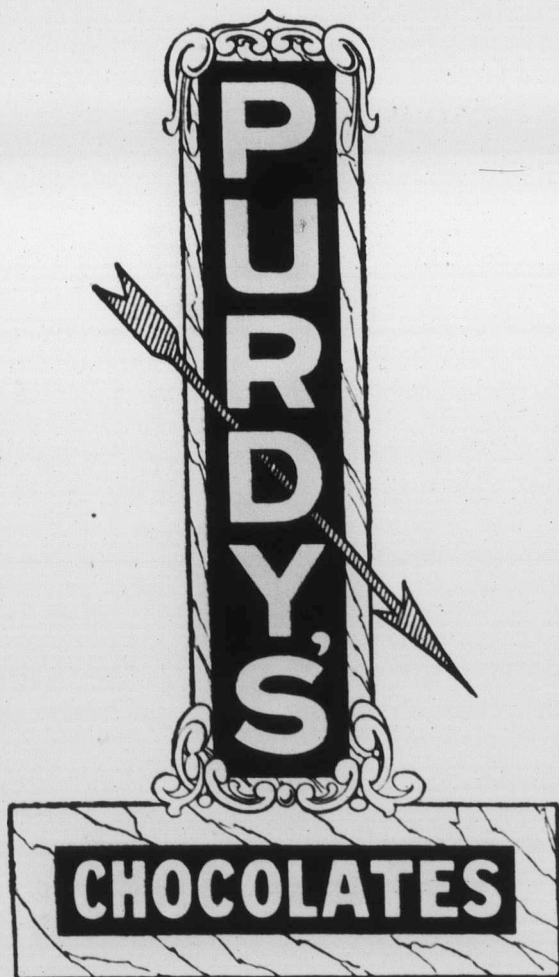
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view to developing the noblest qualities of the young mind. In order to insure to children and youths the proper kind of mental food, it will be necessary, he thinks, to prohibit authors from writing anything of an evil nature. He recommends that selections be made of the most suitable stories and that mothers be enjoined to narrate these to their little ones. Nor is it sufficient, he says, to eliminate from these stories what is evil; we must instil into them what is good; nor is the subject matter alone important, the form in which they are cast, the style of the narratives, is of great moment.

Our parent teachers' associations are potentially a step in the right direction. Co-operation between parent and teacher are essential to effective child-training. The public press and the movies are forces which might effect much good if rightly directed. At present they are a menace to good citizenship, national health and progress.

But to return. Forestry would include not only a study of our native trees, their qualities, habitat, mode of growth, their insect enemies and friends; but would deal in a practical way with the questions of fire-protection, economic lumbering, and reforestation. Associated with forestry would be a knowledge of our native birds and animals that make their homes there. The industries based upon our forest wealth would be studied at first hand; the working of the lumber camps; the activities of the local mills; the manufacture of wood pulp and paper.

Apart from the utilitarian advantages to be derived from such a training there are the aesthetic possibilities to be considered. Think of the outdoor sketching, and compare it with the art work at present attempted in our schools. Think of the stimulus to the reading of good literature afforded by life in the open. How potent and impressive

lines such as the following when read in the proper environment:

"This is the forest primeval, The murmuring pines and hemlocks, Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight, Stand like Druids of old, with voices sad and prophetic, Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms. Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighboring ocean Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest."

Simile is almost the very soul of poetry. Its effectiveness depends on how vivid to the reader are the natural facts, appearances or attributes which form the basis of the similitude.

Take the following, as an instance: "Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the woodlands. Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of heaven." To you or to me who have spent most of your lives in the open, these words are perfectly clear and subtly appealing. To others they mean nothing, and it is as futile to dissect and analyze a poetic gem as to explain a joke.

That brings me to the subject of reading and literature. As I have stated before, primary reading, as at present taught in our public schools is a great success. But when once the phonics have been learned and word recognition made easy, the function of true reading begins. And it is here where a vast improvement is possible. At present the child reads both too much and too little. Too much that is uninteresting and therefore deadening in its effects; too little that is interesting and inspiring. When once children acquire the mechanical power to read, no compulsion is necessary to get them to use that power. They are eager to read and a single book, called a reader, along with, in recent years, one or more supplementary books, also called readers, are given the child to read as a task. Now why should they be given as a task? Why not as a privilege, or a reward, or as a matter of course, as you would give the child its dinner? Some parents may be found who are foolish enough to force food on their children which is repugnant to them. Many teachers may be found who do the same thing with regard to reading. In either case harm results to the child.

Now reading under the New Education would be of a different type. The children would read what they liked, within certain limits. It would be the business of the state to see that an abundance of good and interesting reading were available. In the public school I would not insist on the child using a single text book, as such. I would not exercise him on the contents of any book. Formal history would be eliminated. When old enough to desire and appreciate them he should read Harold, Hereward the Wake, Ivanhoe, The White Company, Henry Esmond, Charles O'Malley, the Young Fur Traders, The Forge in the Forest, a Sister to Evangeline, and other historical tales. Not until he entered high school would the pupil make an analytical study of a textbook. As regards Literature I do not think there is any question that an analytical study of a work like Scott's Lady of the Lake is a detriment to the child. I should like to know of any known instance where such intensive study of literature in the public schools has given a pupil a taste

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for poetry, or increased his appreciation of it. I very much doubt if any such case can be found. But I do believe that if these children were brought up in the open, as Nature intended they should be, and were well grounded by their own observations, in the basic facts of Nature, when they came to study poetry deliberately and intensively in the High School, they would have a fund of knowledge, a cultivation of mind and emotions, which are absolutely essential to the appreciation of good literature.

There is one real difficulty in connection with the inauguration of this new system of education, the finding of teachers qualified to handle classes under the new conditions. This makes it impossible to break away from the old system except by degrees. The first step towards the inauguration of outdoor schools would be the establishment of an outdoor Normal School in connection with an outdoor model school. Such a Normal School training should extend over at least two years. In the course of a decade the old-fashioned dominance or domineer would be a thing of the past.

How are we to know men? There is no better way than that laid down in the Bible "By their works ye shall know them." By this standard gauge the products of our educational system, when it has done its best, placed its seal upon its finished work—the University graduate, or post-graduate, if you like. He may be accomplished in many abstruse subjects, he may be able to measure the distance of stars and tell their weight, calculate their orbits, he may know the alleged facts of history from the earliest record down to the last government blue-book; he may speak fluently two or three modern languages, and read as many dead ones; he may be familiar with the thoughts of every great sociologist from Plato to Lydia Pankhurst; he may be able to quote passages from all our great poets from Caedmon to Kipling. If he is a graduate in Arts, does he know art? Art in the truest and finest sense of the word is not taught in our universities. Can he discuss pictures? Does he know a good painting from a bad one? Can he readily appreciate them? Must he not first know the reputation of the artist before he dare pass judgment. You know that he has never been trained in the aesthetics of Nature. Glorious pictures may greet his eyes, in the landscape, in the street, he does not see them. He has had no training in Art. It never touches

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him. He has read the finest poems in our language, as well as in foreign literature; has he the poetic insight and intimate knowledge of Nature which makes it possible to appreciate the best in poetry, to actually feel it, the very ecstasy of it? I think not. And lacking that, he lacks the greatest good which education can bestow upon man.

I feel confident that if any fundamental changes are to be made in our system of education they will be brought about, by the activities, the interest, and the initiative of those outside the profession, who are yet vitally concerned with broad educational problems.

I regard the Natural History Society so ably organized and held together by Professor Davidson, as possessing one of the finest educational influences in the province. It is accomplishing a great good in giving a few favoured men and women the open sesame to Nature's wonderland. You know what it has done for you. I am asking you to think seriously of what a similar plan might accomplish if instituted in our public schools. If carried on through High School and University, it would result in the moulding of men and women of type hitherto undreamed of, personalities of power, god-like, knowing good from evil, and choosing good.

Owning A Home On A Pay Envelope

(By Harold Cullerne)

In these days of high building costs and lack of housing accommodation, the following article should be of interest to all desiring to own a home of their own.

This article outlines a scheme which should go far to assist the would be home-owner. The object being to "scale down" home ownership to the requirements of hundreds of home lovers who, on account of cash limitation and inexperience, are now compelled to stay out of the building field. The idea is to show the way to the ownership of the very small house, built for the smallest outlay possible, and cut to fit the young married couple or salaried young women yearning for a home of their own.

In order to do this it is suggested that several prospective owners co-operate and purchase a piece of property, say a block of land which would give 22 lots, about 49 ft. by 122 ft. each.

The persons desiring to enter into the co-operative scheme will find it more economical and desirable for the following reasons: First the property is purchased in one large block, and they obtain the benefit of this. Secondly, the 22 homes are built at one time thus affecting a saving in giving out the contract to one contractor. Thirdly, their neighbors will be carefully selected since only well recommended persons may obtain the privilege of building their homes in this community.

In this manner any group of owners can pocket the considerable savings that in developments of this kind generally go to the real estate promoter.

The type of home proposed is the "Bungalow" and "Cottage" Apartments.

The Bungalow Apartment is designed for two or more persons and while only containing three rooms, has the accommodation of a five-room bungalow, the dining alcove to some extent, taking the place of a dining room. The living Room can be made into a Bedroom, a door bed being provided in the Dressing Room for that purpose. One chimney stack serves for all flues, an economical arrangement. No basement is shown but a wood shed at the rear is provided.

As regards heating the home. The kitchen range will keep the kitchen warm, the fireplace, properly constructed, will heat the Living Room, and the Bedroom can be heated with an electric heater. The kitchen is conveniently arranged.

The "Cottage Apartment" is designed for one or two persons, the idea being that the large Living Room be used as a Bedroom. No door or wall bed has been provided but a davenport couch could be used instead. Upstairs is provision for another room which could be finished off when desired. The Bath room has been made large enough to be used as a Dressing Room. This makes a very compact plan. There is no basement but this little home can be heated in the same manner as the Bungalow Apartment.

Such dwellings have been carefully and economically planned, all waste space being eliminated. In place of laundry a combination sink could be installed or laundry tray placed along the side of the sink over which the drain board would fit and the ordinary kitchen sink put in.

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INSIGHT

I feel through my responsive being leap
A throb of the eternal loveliness,
With peace no less
Encompassing and deep
Than bathed me once at earliest dawn—
My soul awake
But held in bonds I could not break
Because my senses were not yet withdrawn
From out the tides of sleep.

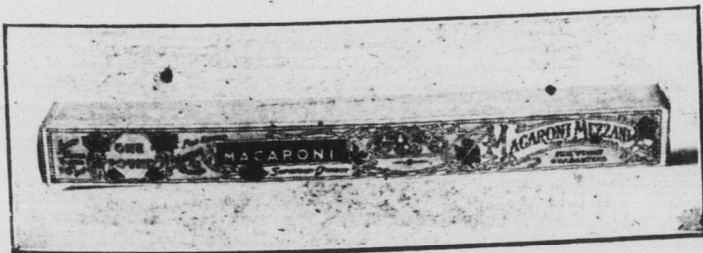
For one brief, endless moment comes the thrill,
Granting a vision of the heart of life
Free from the strife
Of Passion's war with Will;
The changeless beauty I behold
That underlies
The sight of unperceiving eyes:
The radiance my childhood saw of old
Shines forth from Nature still.

And now the gleam is past beyond recall;
Before I know the rapture it is gone.
I gaze upon
A broken, brambled wall:
Among the fallen stones appears
A phantom throng
Of memories forgotten long
But now redeemed from intervening years;
Undimmed and vivid all.

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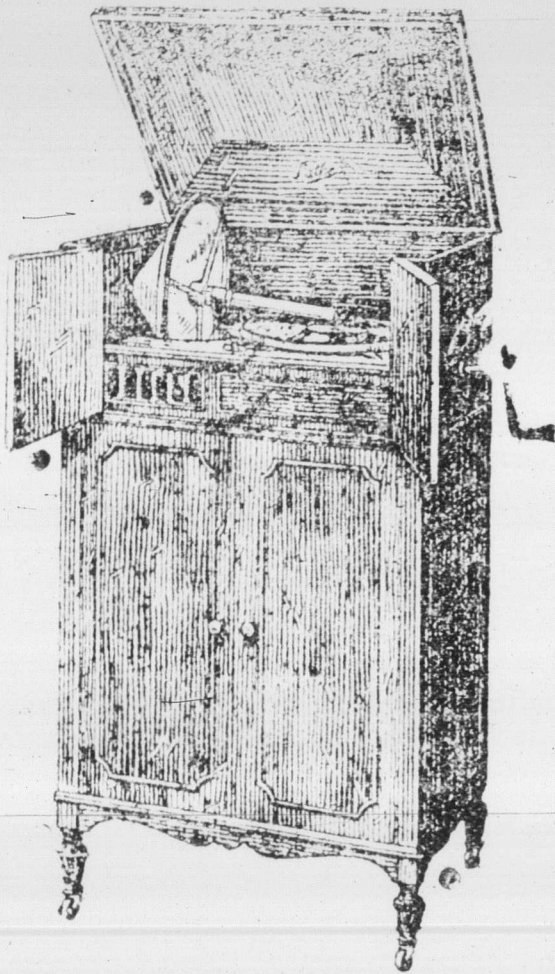
God's appeal comes not chiefly in thunder
 That sends the children home crying—
 Most of the days of the year are fine ones,
 Nor in the voracious earthquake
 Which swallows whole cities.
 It comes in the tryst-keeping mountains
 Which change cannot visit;
 In the brooks that laughed by the play-place
 Of our happy childhood,
 And still make sweet music, sea-ward hieing;
 It comes in the flowers that our down-looking eyes
 Cannot help seeing;
 In the innocent faces of children
 Unprejudiced by this selfish world;
 In the stars whose kindly twinkling
 Showed our fathers the way home.
 On scented nights of June, centuries since;
 It comes in the tender ministry of Nature
 That heals the scars of man's making;
 In the incomparable patience
 That bids Failure arise and begin anew;
 In the voice that awakes echoes
 In the halls of Memory;
 It comes in the shadow that follows wrong;
 And with the security that attends right,
 Though outvoted by mere numbers;
 In the unbeatable courage that meets suffering
 And goes with death to that place
 Where travelling is all one way,
 With no returning;
 It comes in the onward march of history,
 Now in the road, easily discerned,
 Now in the desert where sands in their drifting
 Failed to bewilder the caravan;
 But supremely does it come in Him who was a man,
 And whose hands were hard with working—
 Who died on the holy rood.

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I will go down to the sea I love, where the ships at anchor ride.
 I will go down to the sea I love, by the side of the whispering tide.
 I will read the rune of the deep sea tune, from ocean's bosom deep;
 Just I alone, 'neath a sky star-sown, and a lost world fast asleep.

I will go down to the sea I love, where the grey beach stretches far
 Through the dusk of night, my beacon light, the glow of an evening star.
 So shall I read my compass true; my course is laid for me;
 Through beating spray at break of day, and the spindthrift blowing free.

I will go down to the sea I love, tho' clouds be passing over;
 Again rejoice in the gale's strong voice, with the love of the deep sea rover,
 And the soft west wind shall bring to me, thro' the harping cordage low;
 What my heart has lost thro' life's storm tossed, when the quiet trade winds blow.

I will go down to the sea I love and set a course so true,
 That my heart shall steer to its harbour dear, and sail back home to you.
 Through the wind's sweep, and the joyous deep, and the surging seas of green,
 They call, dear lass, the wanderer home across the world between.

—Edward Wm. Towler.

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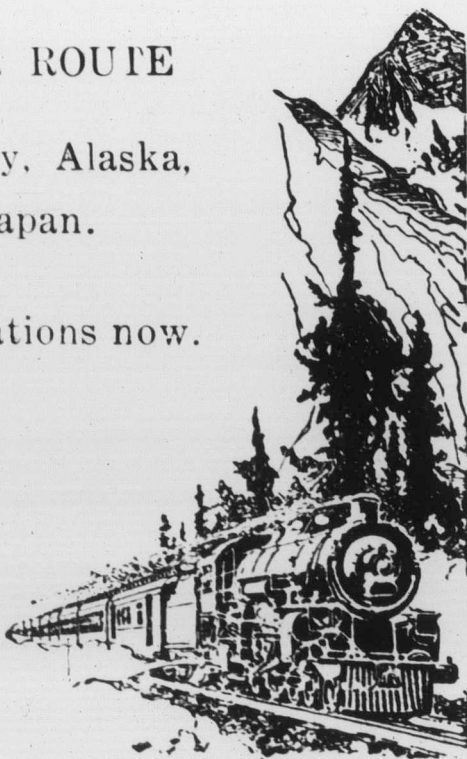
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