

**THE COMING OF  
THE PRINCESS; AND  
OTHER POEMS**

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The Coming of the Princess; And Other Poems by Kate Seymour MacLean

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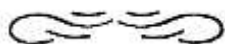


THE  
COMING OF THE PRINCESS;  
AND  
OTHER POEMS.



BY  
KATE SEYMOUR MACLEAN,  
KINGSTON, ONTARIO.

AN INTRODUCTION,  
BY THE EDITOR OF "THE CANADIAN MONTHLY."



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## INTRODUCTION.

BY G. MERCER ADAM.

THE request of the author that I should write a few words of preface to this collection of poems must be my excuse for obtruding myself upon the reader. Having frequently had the pleasure, as editor of *The Canadian Monthly*, of introducing many of Mrs. MacLean's poems to lovers of verse in the Dominion, it was thought not unfitting that I should act as foster-father to the collection of them here made, and to bespeak for the volume, at the hands at least of all Canadians, the appreciative and kindly reception due to a

"Child of the first winds and suns of a nation."

Accepting the task assigned to me, the more readily as I discern the high and sustained excellence of the collection as a whole, let me ask that the volume be received with interest, as a further and most meritorious contribution to the poetical literature of our young country (the least that can be said of the work), and with sympathy for the intellectual and moral aspirations that have called it into being.

There is truth, doubtless, in the remark, that we are enriched less by what we have than by what we hope to have. As the poetic art in Canada has had little of an appreciable past, it may therefore be thought that the songs that are to catch and retain the ear of the nation lie still in the future, and are as yet unsung. Doubtless the chords have yet to be struck that are to give to Canada the songs of her loftiest genius; but he would be an ill friend of the country's literature who would slight the achievements of the present in reaching solely after what, it is hoped, the coming time will bring.

But whatever of lyrical treasure the future may enshrine in Canadian literature, and however deserving may be the claims of the volumes of verse that have already appeared from the native press, I am bold to claim for these productions of Mrs. MacLean's muse a high place in the national collection and a warm corner in the national heart.

To discern the merit of a poem is proverbially easier than to say how and in what manner it is manifested. In a collection the task of appraisal is not so difficult. Lord Houghton has said: "There is in truth no critic of poetry but the man who enjoys it, and the amount of gratification felt is the only just measure of criticism." By this test the present volume will, in the main, be judged. Still, there are characteristics of the author's work which I may be permitted to point out. In Mrs. MacLean's



volume what quickly strikes one is not only the fact that the poems are all of a high order of merit, but that a large measure of art and instinct enters into the composition of each of them. As readily will it be recognized that they are the product of a cultivated intellect, a bright fancy, and a feeling heart. A rich spiritual life breathes throughout the work, and there are occasional manifestations of fervid impulse and ardent feeling. Yet there is no straining of expression in the poems, nor is there any loose fluency of thought. Throughout there is sustained elevation and lofty purpose. Her least work, moreover, is worthy of her, because it is always honest work. With a quiet simplicity of style, there is at the same time a fine command of language and an earnest beauty of thought. The grace and melody of the versification, indeed, few readers will fail to appreciate. Occasionally there are echoes of other poets—Jean Ingelow and Mrs. Barrett Browning, in the more subjective pieces, being oftenest suggested. But there is a voice as well as an echo—the voice of a poet in her own right. In an age so bustling and heedless as this, it were well sometimes to stop and listen to the voice. In its fine spiritualizations we shall at least be soothed and may be bettered.

But I need not dwell on the vocation of poetry or on the excellence of the poems here introduced. The one is well known to the reader: the other may soon be. Happily there is promise that Canada will ere long be

rich in her poets. They stand in the vanguard of a country's benefactors, and so should be cherished and encouraged. Of late our serial literature has given us more than blossomings. The present volume enshrines some of the maturer fruit. May it be its mission to nourish the poetic sentiment among us. May it do more! —nourish in some degree the heart of the nation, and, in the range of its influence, that of humanity

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