

**THE REJECTED
VOICE: A SONG OF
GENIUS SLAIN**

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The Rejected Voice: A Song of Genius Slain by Nelson Gardner

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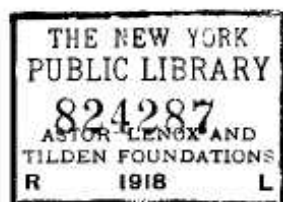
★ By NELSON GARDNER

The Great Columbian Poem at Last has Appeared,
and Mighty Song Once More is With Us

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PROEM

The composer of this Prometheian book must pay with his life
the prophet's debt to envy, and not while he lives will his
song be accepted:

But by death will his lyre be only uplifted, and not all the false
hearts under heaven can prevent the coming of the day when
his now rejected works will everywhere be read.

Also has he completed an Indian epic poem whose lines exceed
in number seven thousand.

Were this work placed before the public truly impartial, men no
more would lament the decline of poetry, for here is the
greatest song of love and war that ever was composed;

But in seeking a publisher he offers pearls in vain.

Follows an excerpt descriptive of the Mohegan heroine of this
forest romance:

"A maiden nor audacious nor demure,
With lip like summer but with heart snow pure.
Thus well in her were mingled earth and air,—
One lending force, the other making fair.
When forth she stepped, in skin of deer attired,
The heart respected while the eye admired.

Beads on her bosom sparkled as she breathed,
And round her royal throat three times were wreathed.
A zone of shells encircled twice her waist,
And moccasins, that favored rest or haste,
On buoyant feet in glade and glen she wore,
While in her hand a bow she often bore:

But not one song of summer did she still,

"For cruelty ne'er hateful made her skill;
 And birds that in affright from others flew
 Round her would tamely flock, as if they knew
 That she their sister was, and had a soul
 That like bright wings could soar, and loathed control
 As nobly as did they, and had a heart
 That like the linnet's sang; and no sly art
 Required she to bring them to her hand,
 For birds feel more than mortals understand.

In sooth we say
 That stainless maids are of diviner clay
 Than other beings that below are born.
 One in a desert singly might adorn
 The land that barren lies, or still more dear
 Make any cherished place, and saint and seer
 The majesty of maidenhood must own,
 For lovely is virginity alone:

And primrose, violet, and daffodil,
 Soon though they die, in dreams enchant us still.
 They, being very fair, are therefore frail,
 But follow blooms that not so quickly fail,
 Though autumn wither all, and partly lost
 May be their fragrance even ere the frost:

Nor is youth's charm a superficial gift
 Because its flight, alas, is all too swift.

Trees rich in balsam shared with her their health,
 On body, yea, and soul, bestowing wealth
 Exceeding other boon. As bright she grew

"As blossoms that at dawn are laved with dew ;
For fragrance of surrounding shrubs and flowers
Her soul all day absorbed, while shadowed bowers
Life's currents all kept cool. Where drank the Deer,
Her eyes reflected oft cold streams and clear,
And brightened were thereby."

The Chief of Mohawks next is portrayed:—

"In panther skin he gallantly was drest,
And scarlet was his sanguinary crest—
His crest held always high: yea, plumes bright red
Like flames arose, and flared above his head,
Fleet was his foot, though broad he was, and tall,
And warlike, warlike, was his aspect all,
Not marble, nay, nor bronze, took ever mould
Expressing heart more proud than his, or bold.

With spear and shield in bushes laid aside
Did he toward Sylvan Star in secret glide.
She saw him not, nor felt she any fear,
As drew the furtive Chief of Foemen near.

He came as creeps a cougar on a fawn,
And man might not defend, nor woman warn ;
For marked not any earthly eye the foe
That threatened her whose conscience was as snow ;
But when the enemy was very nigh,
She turned, and saw, and raised one piercing cry,
And even as the heavens heard the sound
The Mohawk reached her with a lightning bound."

By their prolonged rejection of the composer's song will the literary tribunals of his day themselves ultimately be judged. Well it is for Columbia the Great that the vigorous legions of the land resemble not at all the cults that live by the tongue and the pen.

The composition of this book occupied a score of years.

EXHORTATION

From Erebus far off the battle cloud

At last hath swooped upon us, and the glare
Of scarlet lightning, leagued with thunder loud,
Makes red the sea, and bids new coasts beware.

Vain in these madding days hath been our prayer
For democratic peace. The guilt of kings
Upon ourselves the fiery whirlwind brings.
Prepare, prepare, Columbia, thy blade!
Sharp make thy steel, lest sharper steel invade.