

Pro Patria

By B. Paul Neuman

LAND of the white cliff and the circling ocean,
Land of the strong, the valiant and the free,
Well may thy proud sons with their hearts' devotion
Seek to repay the debt they owe to thee.

Thou givest them health, the muscle and the vigour,
The steady poise of body and of mind,
The heart that chills not 'neath an Arctic rigour,
Nor droops before the scorching desert wind.

Thou givest them fame, a thousand memories leaping
Into the light whene'er thy name is spoken,
Thy heroes from their graven marbles keeping
Their faithful watch o'er thee and thine unbroken.

Thou givest them rugged honesty unbending,
The heart of honour and the lip of truth,
Quick-answering impulse, freely, gladly spending
The strength of manhood with the zeal of youth.

A noble

A noble heritage ! and I might claim it,
Whose life within thy very heart awoke,
But yet the prayer, whenever I would frame it,
Died on my lips before the words outbroke ;

Though kin of mine are lying where the grasses
Bow to the west wind by the Avon's side,
And daily o'er their graves the shadow passes
Of that fair church where Shakespeare's bones abide.

For far away beyond the waste of waters
There lies another, a forsaken land,
A land that mourns her exiled sons and daughters
Whose graves are strewn on every alien strand ;

A land of splendour, but of desolation,
Of glory, but a glory passed away,
Her hill-sides peopled with a buried nation,
Her fruitful plains the lawless wanderer's prey.

Yet dearer even than the hills and valleys
That wear the mantle of our English green,
By whose glad ways the mountain brooklet sallies,
Are those far heights that I have never seen ;

White Hermon glistening in the morning glory,
Dark Sinai with its single cypress tree,
Green Tabor, and that rugged promontory
Whence Carmel frowns upon the laughing sea.

This is the land of hope without fruition,
Of prophecies no welcome years fulfil,
While bound upon their dreary pilgrim mission
The heirs of promise lack their birthright still.

Yet not the whole, for hope remains undying,
And such the hopes that gather round thy name,
Dear land, it were indeed a new denying,
To set before thee, riches, power, or fame.

A little longer, and the habitations
Of exile shall re-echo to thy call,
"Return, my children, from among the nations,
Forget the years of banishment and thrall."

Then shall the footsteps of the sons of Kedar
Cease from the silent wastes of Gilead,
No ruthless hand shall raze the oak and cedar
Wherewith its swelling uplands once were clad.

No longer shall the thief and the marauder
The peaceful tillers of the soil molest,
But from rough Argob on the eastern border
To sea-washed Jaffa, all the land shall rest.

Land of the prophets, in the prophet's vision
Thy future glory far transcends thy woes,
And soon, in spite of hatred and derision,
Thy wilderness shall blossom as the rose.