



# Literary Gems

Extract from a speech delivered in Canadian House of Commons February 4th, 1898, by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Prime Minister of Canada :—

## THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

IT WAS a triumph indeed, was that procession from Buckingham Palace to the Cathedral of St. Paul's; but it was a triumph how different, how widely different, from the triumphs of ancient Rome. Here was not a warrior coming after a campaign, laden with the gory spoils of many provinces or many kingdoms, or with thousands of slaves and prisoners fettered to his chariot—the triumphant in this case was a woman, a woman no longer in the flower of youth, but already marked by the hand of time and in her cortege were the men of many lands and of many religions—men from the black race of Africa, men from the yellow race of Asia—men from the mixed races of the West Indies, Christians, Mohommedans, Buddhists—but free men all.

Free men all, some of them wearing the uniform of the British Army and proudly marching to the strain of England's martial airs. And when in front of the noble temple, under the canopy of heaven, the vast throng reverently invoked the blessings of Almighty God for the aged Sovereign and her vast dominions a thrill passed over everyone present, and each felt in his heart the conviction, that as the Roman Empire had been built up by the force of violence, so it had been destroyed by force and violence; but that the British Empire lived, and could live ever, upon the eternal laws of freedom and justice.

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CONFESS to you that the majesty of the scriptures strikes me with admiration as the purity of the gospel has its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers, with all their pomp of diction, how mean, how contemptible

are they compared with the scripture. Is it possible that a book at once so simple and sublime should be merely the work of a man? Is it possible that the sacred personage whose history it contains should be himself a mere man? What sweetness, what purity in his manners. What sublimity in his maxims. What profound wisdom in his discourses. What presence of mind in his replies. How great the command over his passions. Where is the man, where is the philosopher who could so live and so die, without weakness, without ostentation. What prepossession, what blindness must it be to compare Socrates the son of Sophroniscus to Jesus the son of Mary. The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophizing with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for, that of Jesus, expiring in the midst of agonizing pains, abused, insulted and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared.

So Socrates, in recognizing the cup of poison, blessed the weeping executioner who administered it, but Jesus in the midst of excruciating tortures, prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus were those of God."

[Rossean, professor de foi du Vicaisi Savoyard.]

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"If you want to know what a man really is, watch him alone in the company of children. There he can show himself as he is, because here he has nothing to fear and nothing to gain. Brother is a mystery to brother and father to child. Wherever there is something to dread the petals of the soul close in, as the petals of flowers at the coming of night."

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Robert Louis Stevenson, one of the most talented and beloved of England's literary-gifted sons, was born on November 13th, 1850, at Edinburg, Scotland, and died at Apia, in the Samron Islands, on December 3rd, 1894. Far away from the home of his childhood on the strong summit of Vaea Mountain he peacefully sleeps. On the rude stone that marks his last resting place is graved his own "Requiem:"

"Under the wide and stormy sky,  
Dig the grave and let me lie,  
Glad did I live and gladly die  
And I lay me down with a will.

"This be the verse you grave for me,  
Here he lies where he longed to be,  
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,  
And the hunter home from the hill."