

A Vision of Coral.

By JESSIE MACKAY.

Illustrated by Margaret W. Feather.

I.

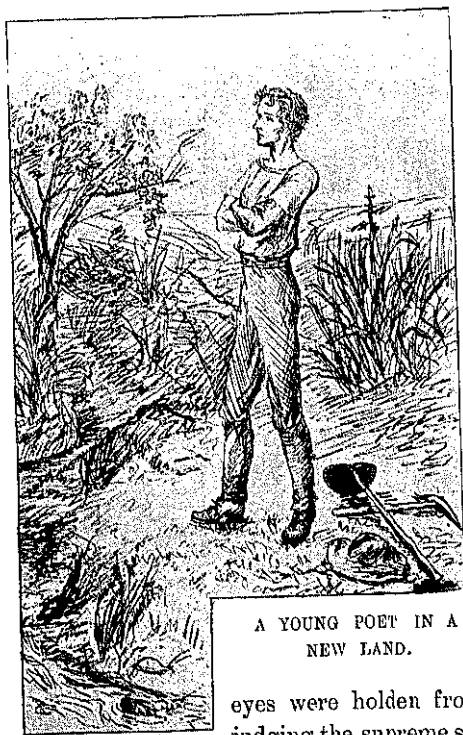
HE was a young poet in a new land, and he thought that he had bought the whole world at the price of a sonnet. But he was chafed because his own province, the only part of his world-heritage tangible and visible, was uncomprehending and narrow. He threw out songs as lavishly as the whin throws out blossom, and his

The applause of fools secretly wounded him as did the silence of the wise; and he stood on the mountain of his desire, ankle-deep in the flowers of illusion, and fell into a rhapsody with his own soul.

"I am an eagle among barnfowl," he said. "Pass quickly, unlighted years before the blind barnfowl know me for their master! Come, O my kingdom that I have bought with the unminted gold of song! I am alone and the field is wide. I shall stoop over the silver net-work of the unnamed rivers, and draw out blood red stones and shining water weeds of the wilderness to deck my dreams. I shall picture the purple gloom of untrodden glens. I shall find iron words to speak of the warrior birches in their native sombreness. I shall find white words to whisper of fairy clematis in its fleeting season. Strange veronicas by hidden streams, strange birds of the great yellow plains, strange southern pillars of green fire that guard the Ice Maiden's doors—they are all new, all mine, for the unminted gold of song. But the shackles of primitive necessity hold me; they cut into the flesh. Come quickly, day of fruition and freedom! The gods' wine of dawn runs gloriously to the brain; but, O my soul, it is cold! When the red risen sun shall strike through it, it will fly warm to the heart like the smile of a loved one. I am home sick for the faces I never saw—mine own people who have followed the Elusive, the Nameless."

II.

YEARS went by and still the poet was fast in the shackles of the primitive necessity that bound him to sheep and beeves, seed time



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NEW LAND.

eyes were holden from judging the supreme sin of touching a golden theme with words of bronze. Yet he was a true lover of the Elusive, the Nameless, that floats between earth and heaven with its roots red and deep in the savage primeval heart, and its pale, pointed blossoms seeking Orion and the Pleiades through the blue, primeval ether.