



Fairly well
E. Pauline Johnson - Tekahionwake

**POEMS OF EMILY
PAULINE
JOHNSON
TEKAHIONWAKE**

Fire-Flowers

And only where the forest fires have sped,
Scorching relentlessly the cool north lands,
A sweet wild flower lifts its purple head,
And, like some gentle spirit sorrow-fed,
It hides the scars with almost human hands.
And only to the heart that knows of grief,
Of desolating fire, of human pain,
There comes some purifying sweet belief,
Some fellow-feeling beautiful, if brief.
And life revives, and blossoms once again.



MOONSET

Idles the night wind through the dreaming firs,
That waking murmur low,
As some lost melody returning stirs
The love of long ago;
And through the far, cool distance, zephyr
fanned.
The moon is sinking into shadow-land.

The troubled night-bird, calling plaintively,
Wanders on restless wing;
The cedars, chanting vespers to the sea,
Await its answering,
That comes in wash of waves along the strand,
The while the moon slips into shadow-land.

O! soft responsive voices of the night
I join your minstrelsy,
And call across the fading silver light
As something calls to me;
I may not all your meaning understand,
But I have touched your soul in shadow-land.





THE GIANT OAK

And then the sound of marching armies 'woke

Amid the branches of the soldier oak,

**And tempests ceased their warring cry, and
dumb**

The lashing storms that muttered, overcome,

Choked by the heralding of battle smoke,

**When these gnarled branches beat their martial
drum.**

AUTUMN'S ORCHESTRA

(INSCRIBED TO ONE BEYOND SEAS)

Know by the thread of music woven through
This fragile web of cadences I spin,
That I have only caught these songs since you
Voiced them upon your haunting violin.



THE OVERTURE

October's orchestra plays softly on

The northern forest with its thousand strings,

And Autumn, the conductor wields anon

The Golden-rod - The baton that he swings.





THE FIRS

**There is a lonely minor chord that sings
Faintly and far along the forest ways,
When the firs finger faintly on the strings
Of that rare violin the night wind plays,
Just as it whispered once to you and me
Beneath the English pines beyond the sea.**

MOSSES



The lost wind wandering, forever grieves

Low overhead,

Above grey mosses whispering of leaves

Fallen and dead.

And through the lonely night sweeps their
refrain

Like Chopin's prelude, sobbing 'neath the rain.

THE VINE

The wild grape mantling the trail and tree,
Festoons in graceful veils its drapery,
Its tendrils cling, as clings the memory stirred
By some evasive haunting tune, twice heard.



THE MAPLE

I.

It is the blood-hued maple straight and strong,
Voicing abroad its patriotic song.

II.

Its daring colours bravely flinging forth
The ensign of the Nation of the North.





HARE-BELL

Elfin bell in azure dress,
Chiming all day long,
Ringing through the wilderness
Dulcet notes of song.
Daintiest of forest flowers
Weaving like a spell -
Music through the Autumn hours,
Little Elfin bell.

THE GIANT OAK



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Amid the branches of the soldier oak,

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The lashing storms that muttered, overcome,

Choked by the heralding of battle smoke,

When these gnarled branches beat their martial
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ASPENS

**A sweet high treble threads its silvery song,
Voice of the restless aspen, fine and thin
It trills its pure soprano, light and long -
Like the vibretto of a mandolin.**





FINALE

The cedar trees have sung their vesper hymn,
And now the music sleeps -
Its benediction falling where the dim
Dusk of the forest creeps.
Mute grows the great concerto - and the light
Of day is darkening, Good-night, Good-night.

But through the night time I shall hear within
The murmur of these trees,
The calling of your distant violin
Sobbing across the seas,
And waking wind, and star-reflected light
Shall voice my answering. Good-night, Good-
night.



Emily Pauline Johnson Tekahionwake (1861-1913)