

PRESCIENCE

(General Wolfe at Halifax)

1759

NORMA E. SMITH

The water's song is sweet tonight,
Outside the casement of this room,
It fills me with the calm delight
Kent's roses give when red with bloom.

The candle flame, an orange sprite,
Dances within its plain wax gown,
Now low, now rising to a height
As if to charm my thoughtful frown.

Between the casement's parted lips,
The harbour's breath steals gently in,
While on the moored and swaying ships
A fog veil settles, grey and thin.

Upon the table as I write,
Arbutus blossoms smile and blush,
Cool as the dew-lipped dawn, and bright,
They babble of the greenwood's hush.

The tide is drifting slowly out,
Its silver fingers leave the bar,
My heart is in yon freighted boat,
Bound for a Country dear, and far.

An unknown Voice from out the gloom,
Wakens a tocsin in my soul,
It warns of battle and of doom,
That Fate's drum beats a muffled roll.

It whispers from the violet sky,
Of future victory to come,
The rushing sound of feet that fly,
Throb in that sad and phantom drum.

The valued prize, the great success,
The laurels which may bind my brow,
All that a soldier can possess,
Must England's be, as I am now.

England, these wistful eyes of mine,
Only in dreams will I behold,
All that is in me, loyal, fine,
Is your white strength, and your rich gold.