

THE FLAME

An English visitor, Mr. A. E. SPERRIN, inspired by the Olympic Games in Mexico, has dedicated this poem to all those who took part :

I saw paper roses falling from the sky,
Thousands of pigeons, released, flew over-head.
The Olympic flag dropped from a hover-plane near-by.
Into the arena the last torch runner sped,
Running up the steps, she lit the Olympic flame,
Prelude to the opening of the games.

This brilliant flame against the Mexican sky,
Burning perpetually through night and day.
Carried across the world, raised up on high,
Within the stadium, as musicians play.
Where men and women, competing in the games,
Mingle with many who hold famous names.

The Olympic flame, which beckons to mankind
To rise above the politics on Earth.
Calling to athletes of every kind,
Irrespective of their rank or birth.
Unmindful of their colour, race or creed,
When searching for the best in stamina and speed.

Over land and sea you came, carried by hand,
Kindled from the mother-flame in ancient Greece.
Nurtured by each nation as you sped o'er its land,
Guarding with safety this emblem of peace.
Lighting the Stadium with your effulgent glow,
Bringing goodwill to the land of Mexico.

You reigned there supreme, King of Olympia,
As you rested high there upon your throne.
Games proceeded, gaining in momentum,
Within the Stadium, brilliant in tone.
As athletes ran, swam, jumped and dived,
Each giving their all, for the gold they strived.

A runner faltered in the heat of the day,
An Equestrian succeeded, while other failed.
Elated were those who led all the way;
Sadness confronted all those who had trailed.
But all men are equal, though losers maybe,
As they race beneath Olympia's canopy.

Shades-of-night blanketed the sky like a pall.
The games had ended in old Mexico.
Athletes paraded, a shrill bugle's call
Brought in the Sea-Cadets: their steps were slow.
They lowered the Olympic flag gracefully,
Bearing it away unto its destiny.

A bugler's call rang out into the night.
The Stadium echoed to the song of good-bye.
Cascading fire-works made a wondrous sight,
Staining the night-sky as they fell from high.
The flags of Greece, Olympia and Mexico
Stood out: lit by the flame, and the fire-works glow.

Into the arena athletes paraded,
Six from each Nation, walking side-by-side.
Forming a half-circle, as musicians serenaded,
Then the President on the rostrum spoke with pride.
Sombreros were waving, as the cheering throng
Serenaded, and jovially burst into song.

The Olympic flame flickered, then faded away,
As the Nation's flags were borne out of sight.
The games had run the full-length of their play;
Dying strains of music faded into the night.
Then all was silent: but the Olympic flame
Will burn forever, in the land from whence it came.

By Mr. A. E. SPERRIN

95 Gaia Lane,
Lichfield, Staffs,
England.