

sensibility, with equal leisure and application, could accomplish as respectable a body of verse. At his best Carman is a poet's poet; Roberts' *forte* is imaginative prose. The best things in Canadian verse have been done by the French, who have the gift of song as such, or by the Indians, as in the case of Pauline Johnson when she is fundamentally Indian and realizes intimately her racial sense of haunting presences in the natural world. First-rate poetry may come from Canadians, but it will come only through a Celtic Renaissance. In Canada to-day, however, the Kelt, the natural poet, is silent. The causes of this silence are not, as in Ireland, political bondage, or self-shame and ignorance politically induced, but these two: *the disenfranchisement of love, and the decay of natural piety.*

This is not a theory: it is brute fact. I note that in my native land among the Kelts love, even the filial grace of a pure kiss of affection, is tabooed as unmanly; and the exercise of the poetic faculty is equally tabooed as silly. And thus the young Kelt, who by nature is preeminently a lover and a poet, as he is taught by example to feel ashamed to express love and consequently suppresses the faculty until it atrophies or dies, so is he ashamed to express his imaginative vision of reality until the poetic faculty in him also atrophies or dies. But both love and poetry have their seat and inspiration in the deepest function of our nature, the idealizing faculty or imagination. The greatest thing in the world is love, because its ultimate object is the heart of the universe, immortal Love or the Deity. It was the loving faculty, that it might feel at home in the world, first peopled the universe with spiritual presences, with divinity. If we stifle the faculty of love, we kill not only poetry as a mere mundane exercise, but also the very soul of religion. For religion is only a natural lively sense and acknowledgment of divinity in the world; and pure poetry is only the emotional expression in rhythmic form of the reality of the