

My life is gliding downwards; It speeds swifter to the day
 When it shoots the last dark canon to the Plains of Far-away,
 But while its stream is running through the years that are to be,
 The mighty voice of Canada will ever call to me.
 I shall hear the roar of rivers where the rapids foam and tear,
 I shall smell the virgin upland with its balsam-laden air,
 And shall dream that I am riding down the winding woody vale,
 With the packer and the packhorse on the Athabaska Trail.
 I have passed the warden cities at the Eastern water-gate,
 Where the hero and the martyr laid the corner-stone of State,
 The habitant, *courreur-des-bois*—and hardy voyageur.
 Where lives a breed more strong at need to venture or endure?
 I have seen the gorge of Erie where the roaring waters run,
 I have crossed the Inland Ocean, lying golden in the sun,
 But the last and best and sweetest is the ride by hill and dale,
 With the packer and the packhorse on the Athabaska Trail.
 I'll dream again of fields of grain that stretch from sky to sky,
 And the little prairie hamlets where the cars go roaring by,
 Wooden hamlets as I saw them—noble cities still to be
 To girdle stately Canada with gems from sea to sea;
 Mother of a mighty manhood, Land of glamour and of hope,
 From the eastward sea-swept Islands to the sunny Western slope,
 Ever more my heart is with you, ever more till life shall fail,
 I'll be out with pack and packer on the Athabaska Trail.

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

Jasper park, Alberta, June 18, 1914

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