

REMINISCENCE

poems

Song

How sweet is the season, the sky how serene;
On Delaware's banks, how delightful the scene;
The Prince of the Rivers, his waves all asleep,
In silence majestic glides on to the Deep.

Away from the noise of the fife and the Drum,
And all the rude din of Bellona we come,
And a plentiful store of good humor we bring
To season our feast in the shade of Cold Spring.

A truce then to all whig and tory debate;
True lovers of Freedom contention we hate:
For the Demon of discord in vain tries his art
To possess or inflame a true Protestant heart.

True Protestant friends to fair Liberty's cause,
To decorum, good order, religion and laws,
From avarice, jealousy, perfidy, free;
We wish all the world were as happy as we.

We have wants, we confess, but are free from the care
Of those that abound, yet have nothing to spare:
Serene as the sky, as the river serene,
We are happy to want envy, malice and spleen.

While thousands around us, misled by a few,
The Phantoms of pride and ambition pursue,
With pity their fatal delusion we see;
And wish all the world were as happy as we!

Jonathan Odell (1737-1818)

In An Old Barn

Tons upon tons the brown-grey fragrant hay
O'erbrims the mows beyond the time-warped eaves,
Up to the rafters where the spider weaves,
Though few flies wander his secluded way?
Through a high chink one lonely golden ray,
Wherein the dust is dancing, slants unstirred.
In the dry hush some rustlings light are heard,
Of winter-hidden mice at furtive play.

Far down, the cattle in their shadowed stalls,
Nose-deep in clover fodder's meadowy scent,
Forget the snows that whelm their pasture streams.
The frost that lites the world beyond their walls.
Warm housed, they dream of summer, well content
In day-long contemplation of their dreams.

Sir Charles G.D. Roberts (1860-1943)

The Desiring Heart

Well I found you in the twilit garden,
Laid a lover's hand upon your shoulder,
And we both were made aware of loving
Past the reach of reason to unravel,
Or the much desiring heart to follow.

There we heard the breath among the grasses
And the gurgle of soft-running water,
Well contented with the spacious starlight,
The cool wind's touch and the deep blue distance,
Till the dawn came in with golden sandals.

Bliss Carman (1861-1929)

by

UNB's

famed alumni

I Loved Thee, Atthis

I love thee, Atthis, in the long ago,
When the great oleanders were in flower
In the broad herded meadows full of sun.
And we would often at the fall of dusk
Wander together by the silver stream,
When the soft grass-heads were all wet with dew
And purple-misked in the fading light.
And joy I knew and sorrow at thy voice,
And the superb magnificence of love -
The loneliness that saddens solitude,
And the sweet speech that makes it durable -
The bitter longing and the keen desire,
The sweet companionship through quiet days
In the slow ample beauty of the world,
And the unutterable glad release
Within the temple of the holy night.
O Atthis, how I loved thee long ago
In that fair perished summer by the sea!

Bliss Carman (1861-1929)

Philander's Song

I sat and read Anacreon.
Moved by the gay, delicious measure
I mused that lips were made for love,
And love to charm a poet's leisure.

And as I mused a maid came by
with something in her look that caught me.
Forgotten was Anacreon's line,
But not the lesson he had taught me.

Sir Charles G.D. Roberts (1860-1943)

The Foreigner

He walked by me with open eyes,
And wondered that I loved it so;
Above us stretched the grey, grey skies;
Behind us, footprints on the snow.

Before us slept a dark, dark wood
Hemlocks were there and little pines
Also, and solemn cedars stood
In even and uneven lines.

The branches of each silent tree
Bent downward, for the snow's hard weight
was pressing on them heavily;
They had not known the sun of late.

(Except when it was afternoon,
And then a sickly sun peered in
A little while; it vanished soon
And then they were as they had been.)

There was no sound (I thought I heard
The axe of some man far away)
There was no sound of bee or bird,
Or chattering squirrel as its prey.

And so he wondered I was glad.
There was one thing he could not see;
Beneath the look these dead things had
I saw Spring eyes gaze at me.

Francis Joseph Sherman (1871-1926)

The Blue Heron

In a green place lanced through
With amber and gold and blue;
A place of water and weeds
And roses pinker than dawn,
And ranks of lush young reeds,
And grasses straightly with drawn
From graven ripples of sands,
The still blue heron stands.

Smoke-blue he is, and grey
As embers of yesterday
Still he is, as death;
Like stone, or shadow of stone,
Without a pulse or breath,
Motionless and alone
There in the lily stems;
But his eyes are alive like gems.

Still as a shadow; still
Grey feather and yellow bill
Still as a mirror image made
Of mist and smoke half hid
By windless sunshine and shade,
Save when a yellow lid
Slides and is gone like a breath:
Death-still - and sudden as death.

Theodore Goodridge Roberts (1877-1953)