

Prefatory Note

The work included herein has been done under difficulties. It is the grist of the years from the publication of "Mary Magdalene and Other Poems," in 1914, until now. Some of the friends who inspired my work are dead,—grief has knocked at the door. Sam Wood, naturalist, has gone along. Emmanuel Tasse, of Ottawa, whose wife composed and brought out our war song, died the following year. "The Bridge of Gold" was written for him whilst he was still with us. Of our boys who went to the war some of the dearest and best are dead or missing.

My thanks to Dr. Watson for his nature poetry, which suggested my title piece, "The Bird of Dawn." He made the first copy on his own typewriter in red letter. Again, to John Garvin, of "Canadian Poets" fame, that unwearying philanthropist to every one of us, genius or scribbler, a very personal feeling of kindness because of his tactful effort to find me work when I was poor and dejected.

Now for my own experiences. Our Toronto Health Department assures the public with hearty good-will that open cess-pools and stagnant swamps are all right if we do not go out and actually "tag" them. So the city Roads Department left one for several seasons in front of my house, and charged me \$75.00 more per year taxes for local improvements from that day forward. Later on, when I had lost about fifteen pounds weight, my physicians diagnosed variously. My ideas had become lurid, incidentally. Some opined that my whole career had shown a defective mind; others said I was nervous. One man most unfortunately read my book and decided I had "putries," or something spelled like that.

The edition of the department's pamphlet lying before me tells what little harm a swamp can do. The man who had it in his front yard moved away, as the bull frogs made too much noise, and he had either to swim or to go in and out by the rear entrance. Now, the delicatessen lady who, I allege, gets the better of us when we both forget to count (fresh evidence!), pretends to recognize "fever-an-ager" (I spell as recommended to Canadians by the Toronto World), but this may be to encourage me to buy more pop and buns than I ought.

On account of all this I spent some time at the public expense three years ago in a hospital (euphemism!) especially designed for