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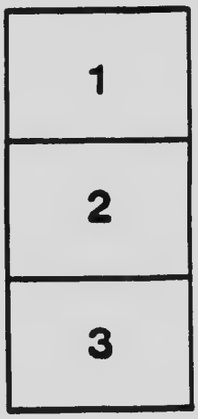

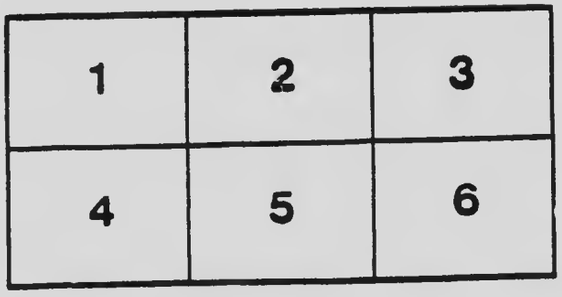

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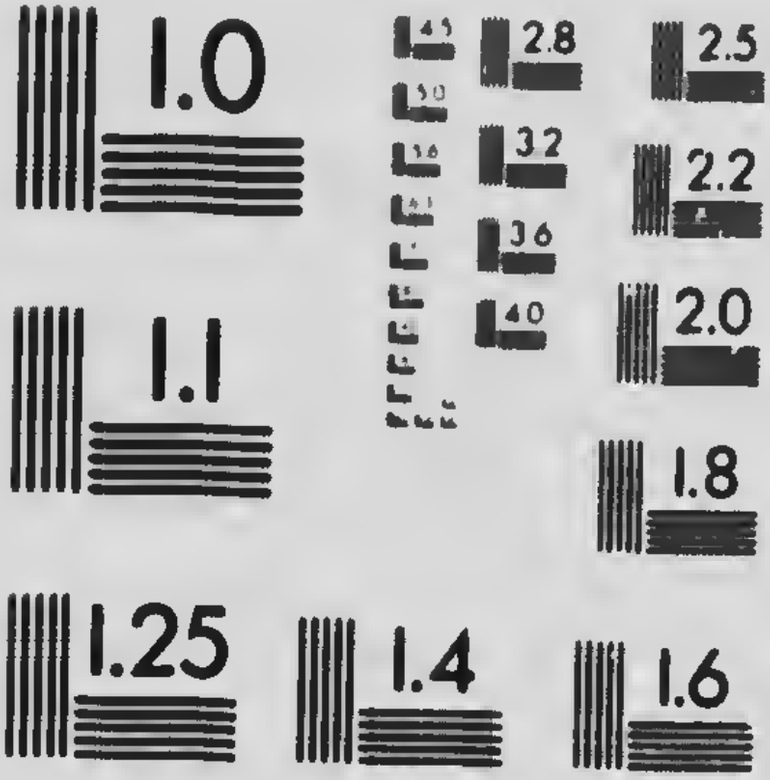

Canada, the Land of Promise

and Other Poems

By S. RUPERT BROADFOOT

In aid of Canadian Prisoners of War

Canada, the Land of Promise

and Other Poems

Canada, The Land of Promise

and Other Poems

By S. RUPERT BROADFOOT

Woodstock:
Sentinel-Review Press
1916

Friends

Were I a great and noble man—
a land-mark of my day,
I'd want a thousand, thousand minds
to feel my friendship's sway;
But since it seems in humble ways
I'll live my whole life through,
Why then I'll hope to win content
and real good friends, a few.

To the Women of Canada whose heroic self-sacrifice and constant devotion have done so much to strengthen the arms and brighten the lives of our gallant soldier lads in our own land, in the trenches, in the hospitals and in the prison camps of the enemy.

I desire to especially thank the publishers of this book and also the publishers of The Canadian Courier, Rod and Gun in Canada, The Guelph Herald, The Guelph Mercury, The O. A. C. Review, The Ottawa Free Press, The Ottawa Journal, The Scottish American, The Masonic Sun, The Toronto Sunday World, The Toronto Star, The Toronto Globe, and Hya Yaka for their kind permission to reprint such of the following verses as appeared in their columns.

S. R. B.

Ottawa, December 1st, 1916.

Index

Canada, the Land of Promise

In days of old the hardy sons
Of La Belle France braved the unknown
To plant her flag behind the gui .
Of Old Quebec: their spirit lives—
They sleep beside those pioneers
Of British freedom, they, who brought
Their heirship to a thousand years
To weld on this new soil, a nat.on.

* * * *

We are the sons of the Northland,
The finest, the best land on earth,
Massive and broad like our homeland
Aye boasting our migh and our girth—
Cradled and sung t breezes
That spawn in the . .imate North,
Hardened by rigour that freezes
The bones of the weakly brought forth.

We are the race of the big men:
Full proud of our tendons we feel,
Smiling in strength at the foemen
Meeting their guile with our steel.
Cunning are we with the sword-hand,
Good neighbours when warring shall cease,
Praying that soon o'er our own land
Will dawn a victorious peace.

Summerkiss'd by days of the fairest,
And glided by God's good sunshine,
Burthened with wealth of the rarest,
Of river, of forest and mine—
Laughing, the well-metalled mountains,
Thrice happy, the corn-planted plain,
Shouting with joy are the fountains
A prosperous fulsome refrain.

Canada's wheat fields need tilling;
She calls to the kings o'er the sea,
Send us your best, we are willing
To make them both rich men and free;
Come to us bringing good muscles
To garner the grain in the sheaves,
For want is a stranger where rustles
The wind through the green maple leaves.

Strong like the mother that bore us,
As brave as our red British blood,
Sired by fathers before us
Who conquered the bush and the flood,
Canada sends forth this message,
To o'ercrowded nation and state;—
Come all ye breeds that know honour
And enter our wide-swinging gate!

The Winds of Unrest

When earth in chains of night is bound,
And through the leaves with eerie sound
The sad wind sifts on restless wing,
Oft can you hear 'neath pine trees tall
The crooning airs of evening call
And the song that the breezes sing.

We take no slumber night or day
But lightly flit upon our way;
Along an untracked route we blow,
Caring not where our path nor why,
Obedient to a voiceless cry
Into the vast unknown we go.

This world we know. No sun-loved space
No mountain-top, nor deep-valed place,
No city with its grime oppressed,
Lake, sea nor prairie, stretching free,
By dawn or dark but what we see,
As moving on, we scorn our rest.

Responsive, as the night winds sigh
These messages when passing by,
A nameless longing fills the soul,
Lost happiness with them to seek
Where solitude and fastness speak,
And mighty unsailed oceans roll.

—O. A. College, Guelph.

Fishin's Good

I have not paid my tailor and I cannot pay the rent;
My bank account has faded and my credit all is spent;
In my threadbare trouser pockets there jingles not a cent;
Yet upon the joys of living my eye is still intent—
For fishin's good.

My clothes would stand some pressing; my straw is a last year's bet;
Of coy old Miss Fortuna then it seems that I'm no pet;
I'm a shabby down and outer, a misfit cuss; and yet
I'm still alive and kicking and can use a landing net—
And fishin's good.

A friend will lend his tackle, with his good-will and his boat;
On the fun of sculling over the inshore shoals I dote;
Astern the phantom minnow tempts the hungry 'lunge's throat:
In letters big across the sky the underwrit is wrote—
"The fishin's good."

At five o'clock you're still asleep, you office chaps and such,
I'm on the bay a-trawling: (Do I envy you? Not much.)
I see the fairy-tinted clouds that glow at dawning's touch,
And I land some hours later with a fine string in my clutch—
If fishin's good.

Sometimes with a frog or minnow, with worms or other bait;
A dozen lures I use to draw the big bass to their fate.
I guess the love of catching fish is somehow deep innate;
You'll find me casting early, night will find me casting late—
Where fishin's good.

For a change, if thick upon the bay there hangs a smoky fog,
I try the near-by trout streams, pressing through the swamp or bog
In the search for speckied beauties 'neath the grassy bank or log;
With the music of the singing reel, you bet, I'm all agog—
When fishin's good.

—Pigeon Lake.

Human Nature

Ain't it funny—in the Marchtime,
When the daylight longer grows
And the weather man is dealing
Sometimes Spring and sometimes snows,
Then you think how bright and pleasing
Is the silly season, sunny;
Pining for July and August,
Yes you are,—now aint it funny?

Ain't it odd—the Summer solstice
Finds you still unsatisfied,
Though it's twice as hot as blazes
For it's ninety-eight outside,
Then you long for good old Winter
As the hot sidewalks you plod,
Dreams of fine cool days and evenings
Rise before you,—Ain't it odd?

The Fading

On upland, lowland and meadow,
The fairy fires of Autumn burn,
The Earth-Mother's smile is tearful
In the smoke of her dying urn.
The rich flame-red and the russet,
The hope of no man-wielded brush,
Glow side by side with cedar greens
In the stilly deep woodland's hush.

The opening burrs of the chestnut,
The culls from the wind-swayed beech,
The rosy fruit in the orchard,
The partridge's call in the reach.
Say Summer is on her death bed
And the youth of a year goes by,
As she smiles in her sad sweet way
In the haze of the tender sky.

Like rubies the hawthorn berries
Deep-hued in a setting of thorns,
Red clusters toss on the sumachs
For, gala, the whole country mourns.
The night on the heels of sunset,
The last of the gay golden rod
Will stir your mind with fears of death—
The end of it all—and the sod.

—Riverside Park, Guelph.

A New Year's Prayer

O Lord, the old year is no more,
Its sullied page is turned;
With flying foot the entities
The dear dead year has spurned.

The passing bell of midnight peals,
With humble hearts we hear
The clanging tongues ring wide the news,
The birth of another year.

No survey of our faltering,
No memory of each fall
Will cancel their unworthiness.
They have passed beyond recall.

Again, we gird our armour on,
Intent our fight to win
In this clean, unlived twelvemonth, new,
That Time has ushered in.

So, with Thy kindly aid, O God,
We face the coming days,
And trust that in the paths of right
Thine arm wilt guide our ways.

From lack of Christian charity,
The unkind thought or word,
From all these petty little sins—
Deliver us, O Lord.

Canada's Hour

"To those who serve the empire at home and overseas."

'Tis Britain's hour of need
Her sons to aid her, speed,
All careless of their fate
To keep an Empire great.

Our smould'ring altar fires are deeply stirred,
The breath of destiny fans their sacred flame,
And since we're worthy of our British name,
We're ready then to play the big lion's game
And aid our Motherland by deed and word.

From many lands our stalwart sons have fared
To reap the bounty of Canadian soil—
The sons of France and England gladly shared
Its riches with the Scot and Celt; they dared
Draw sword the plundering Huns to foil.

A thousand years our flag has kissed the breeze
On many a distant shore and far-flung tide,
And for its message millions bravely died
That they might sow our British freedom wide,
And English ships might plough the Seven Seas.

And now the time has come—a chance to help—
Britannia has her back against the wall,
We were the first to answer to the call,
At Ypres we saw our bravest, bleeding, fall—
For are we not the Lion's true-born whelp?

An Empire army, see in victory's day—
South Africa, Australia, hand in hand
With Indian troops and lads from New Zealand,
And soldiers from our own Canadian land
Leading "the drive" in khaki-clad array.

'Tis Canada's hour as well,
As history's page will tell;
So blood and treasure give—
That British pacts may live!

—Ottawa, 1915.

The Silent Toast

Let us drink this last toast standing;
Silently your glasses raise—
To the care, past understanding,
Of those friends of childhood days.

To the comrades of our boyhood
Who shared all our joys and tears,
And who watched us grow to manhood
Through those happy yesteryears.

To their love that knew no ending
Since they saw our birthday dawn,
So strong and so comprehending,—
To the mothers that are gone.

—September 27th, 1913.

Why The Hoar Frost Came

I wakened early Sunday morn,
And drank in the vista pleasant
Of the hoar frost suit, that still is worn
By the trees on Nelson Crescent.

A lone star winked a message to me
When I asked him whence its source,
"It's just the steam and the foam," said he
"From the Storm King's champing horse."

A twittering sparrow looked in at me;
He chirped perhaps in play
That the winsome white would likely be
Dust blown from the Milky Way.

But I wondered still the reason why
Dame Nature had gone to the pains
To whiten the trees and buildings high
As a proof that Winter reigns.

Old Sol told me the truth at last;
May his bright beams never fail us;
Jack Frost was married some few days past
To Aurora Borealis!

—Nelson Crescent, Guelph.

Slaves

Some prefer "coffin-nails," some the cigar
When rolled of Havana leaves ripe:
But I find my solace is sweeter far
When whiffed through my old briar pipe.

Livin' Square

It is New Year's Eve in the bunk-house of a western cattle ranch. Being in a ruminative mood Alkali Ike moralizes on life as follows:—

Livin' square is no lead-pipe cinch,
In fact it's mighty hard—
This facin' things and chasin' things
Is no kid's game, old pard.

They've greased the track that leads to Hell;
You shake with loaded dice:
The easy way, the pleasy way,
Is "naughty but it's nice."

The parsons say that virtue is
It's own reward. Gee whizz!
The devil's score is something more—
By Heck, it's funny bizz!

The crooks, they seem to prosper—
They're always up to bat.
The honest mut is happy, but
He's hardly ever fat.

The deal is queer, the deck is fixed
But still we'll play it out,
And though we bust, it's up to us
To see it through, old scout.

But bet your Sunday hat on this—
It ain't no use to moan,
In this old fight 'twixt wrong and right
You're scrappin' on your own.

So when we cash in, partner,
And climb yon golden stair,
The Boss on high will show us why
It pays to do what's square.

Fellow-Crafts

She wears the mystic symbols too,
The compass and the builder's square.
She is my Mason sister fair
And I her brother craftsman true:
She wears it on her coat of blue.

I wear her name upon my heart,
Her face is constant in my mind;
And memory's picture gall'ry, kind,
Renews old scenes. Near or apart
I wear her name upon my heart.

The Month Of Moods

Fitful against my garret pane
Softly patters the April rain.
The grey air staggers 'neath its load of mist.
Along the floor and up the wall
The drawn-out shadows sleep and sprawl,
Vague in the semi-dusk with languid list.

Then Despond weaves a woof of murks,
And in the dingy corner lurks
To manacle my soul with dark depression.
The sky and air are like my mood;
And so in sympathy I brood
On life, and give my tired heart expression.

—New York, 1911.

Palace O' Dreams

In the soft and summer twilights
When the sunset and its high-lights
Change, and stress the crimson skyline with their glories dim and pale
Oft I sit and think of gone days
Seen and loved in mem'ry's fond haze,
Till I find myself in Dreamland strolling through its magic vale.

Then, by pathways flower-laden
Do we walk, my sweet dream-maiden,
While the young moon plates with silver all the lawns of No Man's Land.
Here beneath her brooding glory
Once again we learn love's story,
And we marvel at its gladness as we wander hand in [hand.
Soon our path leads to a castle
Where you live, and I, your vassal,
Count it honor to be near you and obey my queen's [desire.
Here we dwell and worship, burning
Incense to the God of Yearning,
Coming often with our off'ring to his ardent altar-fire.

Back to earth I needs must tumble,
And awaking, rail and grumble
At the cruel Fates' unkindness and their future hidden [schemes;
Though I'm heart-sick, sad and lonely,
I can run my course, if only
You will come and dwell beside me in the palace of my [dreams.

Hearts A-Seeking

Somewhere, somehow and somewhen a day's dawning
  Will open my heart to the strain of her song;
Safe in her love in Eternity's yawning
  Gulf of uncertainty still I shall be strong.
Who is she? Where is she? How shall I know her
  When from the beyond she comes to unbind me?
Winds of the world, to my arms gladly blow her;
  Stars, glow your brightest that soon she may find me.

Winds, that are westering faint fairy sunbeams,
  All heavy with perfumes and laden with dew,
Winds, that are ushering dainty wee star-gleams
  Into our ken, that Heaven's smile may shine through,
Breezes of noon-day and zephyrs of twilight,
  Bring me some token that I may yet hope on;
Search on unceasingly, world-wide in your flight,
  O, kind winds, soon find her and hasten the dawn.

Gloaming

The daylight flies; and sable night, descending,
  Envelopes city streets and buildings high,
And outlines, vague, and weird, odd shapes is lending
  The reeking roofs and stacks where swallows fly.

Omar Despondent

Begone, old ghosts, who wordily would prove
  The truth of your pet creed or dogma, fine.
Your virgin lips ne'er felt the kiss of love,
  Nor in your veins raced, maddening, the wine.

There is no hope, no rest for such as I.
  The wakeful stars wink till the cheerless dawn
Shoots its first ray along the cold, grey sky;
  But still no hour brings me oblivion.

Heart's Ease

Chum, the sun is pouring over tree-lined hills that stop the view,
Making gold the topmost leafage pouring down the slopes between,
Chasing mists that haunt the meadows, glancing off the pearls of dew,
Breaking bright o'er vernal vistas, heightening the haze of green.

Come, old comrade, early morning paints the woods with witching hues;
Feel again a boy's enjoyment in the birds and pine-sweet air;
Forget awhile your business worries; you can do it if you choose;
As we stroll the woodland aisle-ways—peace and rest await us there.

—Springfield, Mass.

The Wayfarer

The valleys are dark, the valleys are deep;
The foothills are stoney, their slopes are steep
And climbing is hard, I would rather sleep
Than struggle
I direct my march by a gleaming star;
But the goal on the mountain-top is far,
And many a fall the journey will mar
Ere night is gone.

Beset with perils thick, the way appears,
And the dust is wet with the fallen's tears;
They travelled the road through the weary years,
Then turned aside.
Yet still I hope to play a waiting game,
Earning at last a stumbling plodder's fame.
My courage wavers, I am weak and lame
And sorely tried.

Slowly as grind the gods' own storied mills,
By rocky crags, I go, and wind-swept hills;
And oh my load is heavy, sorrow fills
The passing day.
Though endless and futile it all may seem,
I will strive to cherish the well-loved dream
That the beckoning star will always gleam
To light my way.

—West Flamborough

The Wires of Nemesis

Did you ever pike at midnight on a frozen rutted road,
  Where the town lights looked a long way off and dim,
When the air was keen and crispy and necessity the goad
  That kept you crunching on with aching foot and limb?

The poles cracked with a frosty snap, the naked trees hung still
  And the welkin thick with starry points was spread.
You got a heap of comfort and perhaps a scarey thrill
  From the busy humming wires overhead.

In hollows where the cedars bunched together thick and tall,
  When you walked so fast it made your heart complain,
Then shriller sang the wires, ghostly strings that shriek and call
  And your tightened ear-drum roared with their refrain.

Then you listened for the message, jumping swift from pole to pole,
  Hearing things you thought deep buried in the past.
And you saw (you bet it hurt you) all the meanness of your soul,
  And in what a meagre mould your life was cast.

Your petty little sinning that you might have left undone,
  All the thoughtless words and fool stunts of your youth;
And you struggled on in torture, while the devils had their fun,
  For it made you bite your lips to hear the truth.

But now you reach the outskirts and your sore feet hit the walk,
  And there's solace in the thought of home and bed.
The old town's like a cemet'ry, a lonely spook, you stalk,
  Stumbling through the sleeping city of the dead.

Still the wires keep a-drumming, though their note is lower here,
And their song is not so noisy nor as bold,
As in the open country, where the sky seems awful near,
And the stars themselves are shaking with the cold.

By your window run the wires, burdened with their weight of care
And the hopes and fears of countless men and homes;
But you do not give a darn now how the other beggars fare,
When your tired brain in dreamland's valley roams.

—Dundas Road, Guelph.

Lest Ye Forget

Lest ye forget
The nicht we met
This lad and ain sma' lassie, O.
The best I ween
My e'e has seen
Sae bonnie, braw an' "classie", O.

Sae here's tae you,
Wi' hairt sae true,
An' the plays we've had thegither, O.
May friendship's flow'r
Perfume each hour
An' love's sweet bloom ne'er wither, O.

Fond mem'ries stir
For days that were
Those gladsome times so cheery O.
Sae 'tis but richt
Tae toast the nicht
Ye stole my hairt, my dearie, O.

October Woods

The signs in the woods are many
  Though the sounds in its aisles are few,
The hush of fading is on it
  And brave is its autumnal hue—
Brave with the air of soft sadness,
  Now scarcely a robin will sing,
The bush-folks sense Winter's coming
  Forgetting the promise of Spring.

Come walk in the sere bleak meadows;
  Beyond are the tree-tops tall,
Bedecked are the boughs for parting
  For Summer has gone, and it's Fall.
The sky is the blue of cobalt,
  The sun has been absent for days,
Heavy the air, and the sky-line
  Is blurred with a vaporous haze.

Wheeling crows, oh! a myriad,
  Alight in a lone yellowed beech,
Resting and clattering a moment,
  Then South to the eyesight's last reach.
'Neath the slope sleeps the river,
  It stirs at the dank East wind's breath;
The grazing cattle are listless,
  The whole tired scene reeks of death.

But on, let's cross the seared hillocks,
  And climb the old stile by the oak,
We'll enter the bush's fastness
  And gaze on its gay leafen cloak.
Emblazoned the hardy young maples,
  Their tinting is richest and best,
Chill frosts have painted their leafage
  Flame-colored from tree-trunk to crest.

Brown leaves lie inert on the path,
  Awaiting the blanket of white,
Others volplane down in thousands
  And tincture with yellow the light.
Gaunt, rear dead mullein and milk-weed,
  Top-heavy with seed-head and pod;
The thickets droop still more weary
  To rest on the rain-replete sod.

Triste thoughts come to mind unbidden—
  We murmur "Is this then the end?
Why bud and bloom and grow lovely
  If back to the dust you must tend?"
The cedars stand green and changeless
  With dignity kind yet sublime,
This hope they give if you listen,
  "Eternity comes after time!"

—Victoria Park, Guelph.

It's Up To You

When the sky is dun and grey,
    It's up to you.
When there is no easy way,
    It's up to you.
Though it's hard luck's busy day
And you find it hard to pay,
Get in the game and stay!
    It's up to you.

When you cannot raise a dime,
    It's up to you.
When your liver's marking time,
    It's up to you.
Though your failures are sublime,
Grin, to whimper is a crime,
Don't forget this little rhyme,
    It's up to you.

When you have not got a friend,
    It's up to you.
When your fortunes downward trend,
    It's up to you.
Though the gods may trouble send,
And their weight your back may bend,
Think that things are on the mend,
    It's up to you.

When you've overdrawn the bank,
    It's up to you.
When your purse is lean and lank,
    It's up to you.
Though your prospectus is rank
Don't you be a whining crank,
Even if you draw a blank,
    It's up to ycu.

When Fate sets a lively pace,
    It's up to you.
When you're losing in the race,
    It's up to you.
Though you're nearly off your base,
And you cannot win your case,
Take defeat with smiling grace,
    It's up to you.

When mistrust is in the air,
    It's up to you.
When you get the stoney stare,
    It's up to you.
You're not broke beyond repair,
Be a sport and do and dare,
Buck the line and work for fair,
    It's up to you.

Evening

The glo ning o'er the sleepy country steals,
  As through the woodland scenes, serenely fine,
We drive one evening, laughing as our wheels
  Disturb the lazy sheep and thoughtful kine.

'Tis sunset time and in the glorious west
  The golden clouds announce approaching night,
But dimmer grow the rays as to his rest
  The blazing light-god sinks down out of sight.

The tortuous sky-line's indistinctly blue;
  Above it, flame-like, bright celestial fire
Is haloing the landscape, which we view,
  And gilding far St. Agatha's church spire.

The colors change, and now instead of gold,
  Blood red's the tint which dominates the sky;
And then we see a carmine haze enfold
  The fleecy banks of clouds piled up on high.

Then in a flash the stars their faces show,
  A thousand more each moment are revealed:
And as subdued we wond'ring homeward go,
  We call the twinkling sky God's daisy field.

—Waterloo.

The Lone Trail Man

The fuss and strife of a townsman's life
  Don't suit a chap like me
And its hurry and hustle and worry and bustle
  Ain't all it's cracked up to be.

I'd sooner tramp by the Redskin's camp
  In the wilds of Temagami,
Where the air is pure and a welcome sure
  Will be found in the old tepee.

We snuggle up tight by the campfire bright
  And stare at the risin' moon;
As the embers die, we hear the cry
  Of the wakeful "black-throat" loon.

"Lonesome", you say? To some it may
  Be a bit that way, but I
Get a sort of cheer from the high note clear
  Of its weird and sad-like cry.

Where the Dipper shines o'er the lordly pines,
  And a thousand planets blink,
You can see the Hand that formed the land.
  By Jingo! It makes one think.

At the sun's first ray I goes my way
  In my silver birch canoe—
By torrent strong and portage long,
  Crossin' a country new.

The big trout teem in the rushin' stream,
  And my cast is clean and true.
My trusty gun misses hairy a one—
  Partridge or caribou.

I wander on from early dawn
  With my light prospectin' kit,
Findin' good health and sometimes wealth
  By an ole time miner's wit.

I've often been to Silver Queen,
  I've shovelled in many a mine,
Across the snow to the North I go
  For there's gold at Porcupine.

Journey I must, for the wanderlust
  Burns in my blood like fire,
For I was brung up in the wickiup
  Of a shiftless, half-breed sire.

But you may dwell in your town-house, swell,
  It's a sight too close for me,
And I'll fool round where the wolves abound—
  In the wilds of Temagami.

—Bobcaygeon.

La Mort D'Amour

All things must sometime die.
But still we wonder why
The Father gives, then takes the gift away.
Life, beauty and love's dream
Are over soon and seem
As fleeting as an Indian Summer day.

To the Unknown Gods

Ye gods, that shape our destiny, kind or unkind,
  Sweep clean, I bid you all the flotsam of my mind;
And take the tangled skein of impulse that is left
  To weave a fabric that will fill some little cleft,
High or low in the scheme of things; for this I ask
  And give me strength meet for this self-appointed task.

Let living seem a thing worth while, a trust, with me:
  Sure in the proofs of mankind's immortality,
May light be given me to dissipate all fears
  And doubts, and in the unknown of the coming years
May people say with truth, "Here surely is a man
  Who humbly fits in well with all creation's plan."

And so, ye far off gods, for moral strength I pray
  To live and build a noble manhood day by day,
Whose influence for right in ever widening waves
  Will find fair fame: for we confess we all are slaves
To what men think we are. So may I always be
  Stalwart and kind, a jewel of consistency.
—Amen. New York.

The Outlook

A fairy scene, a fairy scene,
  A vista, bright, of icy sheen;
The white sun gleams upon the wires,
  The snowy street, the coated spires.

Hielant Hospitality

Far, far awa' frae Woodstock toon,
  That jewel in North Oxford's croon,
Wi' heavy hairt an' misty e'e
  The lichts o' T'ronto noo I see.

An unco' wratch I'd ca' mysel',
  Were I to fail in wards tae tell
An' wi' fair praise this page tae gloss
  Aboot the folk at Castle Ross.

Your welcome tae a Tory lad
  Has made his gratefu' hairt fu' glad;
A kinder hostess n'er I knew
  So fain I'd send my thanks tae you.

Those happy hours in but an' ben,
  Wi' open han' ye ca'ed me frien'—
Ye used me like a prince an' a'
  A puir young student o' the law.

I'm comin' back some time, ye ken,
  Tae read ye sangs o' strath an' glen,
"The Hundred Pipers an' A' " tae sing,
  While Bonnie does the Hielant fling.

Is there a wastrel treads the earth
  Wha'd blush for shame at Scottish birth?
I least o' a', I'm ower prood
  Tae boast aboot my Hielant bluid.

My mither's faither's frae the North
  Frae Caithnesshire, a man o' worth;
His wife he chose in Aberdeen
  Where sonsie lasses dwell, I ween.

My ither forbear saw the licht
  First in auld Penpont, Kirkcudbright,
A Lowlander, baith strang an' free,
  Heir to the Bradefute hame "Glen Lee."

But fate (it seemed a wee unkind)
  Meant them tae fare forth far and find
A new hearth o'er the ragin' sea —
  'Twas brave an' gran'—'Twas Destiny!

Here in this wild Canadian land
  Wi' stout hairts ay an' wullin' hand,
They cleared the bush wi' micht an' main
  An' ne'er saw Scotia's hills again.

My ain folk, then, o' mony a clan
  Are lowland Scots or hielant men;
Their names are legion, you'll agree
  Where e'er 's a Scot, he's kin tae me.

The Bruces, Broadfoots, Hoods an' Gunns,
  The Haxtons, Scroggies, Andersons,
An' Millars, Cowans, Taylors, Smiths,
  McCreadys an' dizens mair are kiths.

For Scots are Scots the warld o'er,
  Though the Murrays ride on raids no more,
An' the kine are safe on lowland braes,
  For gone are the bluidy, fierce forays.

Our men are strang an' kind, if dour,
  Our weemen, sonsie, braw an' pure,
So if e'er I ha'e tae pick a wife
  She'll ha'e Scots bluid, ye bet your life.

—Woodstock

Welcome Tae Kaiser Wullie

Frae brae an' glen, frae toon and farm,
  Our braw lads rushed at War's alarm,
In plaid an' kilt, wi' durk an' gun,
  The Scottish sodgers banged the Hun.

In reekin' trench, on bluidy field,
  Keepin' unskaithed their thistled shield,
They'll fecht as Scots ha'e fought afore
  Till Victory sheathes their swords aince more.

Contentment

A full pouch, a pipe and a match or two,
  A blazing hearth, an easy chair and you,
A long Winter night, the wind blowing cold—
  Here's comfort and happiness, peace untold.

Lazily making large blue filmy rings,
  Thanking the Lord for the blessings He brings;
Red glows the fine-cut in my seasoned briar—
  Now is not this jolly here by the fire?

Autumn Muse

We all are poets in our inmost breast
  We feel the wonder that we would express
The sadness of an Autumn evening sky
  You all have loved it with a muse's eye.

My coign of vantage is a green-laid knoll;
  At the edge of things the lake's blue wavelets roll;
Above them hover snowy layers of cloud,
  Waiting to give the far-spent day a shroud.

A hundred shades of yellow clothe the glade;
  Poor ageing Summer's dress is brown and frayed.
The leaves must know their tale of life is told;
  Alack! Their passing makes the world look old.

And so it does e'en though October days
  Are often warm and prodigal of rays,
Which linger in the woodsy nooks and then
  Gild fair the silver birches in the glen.

A whistling youngster kicks the drifts of leaves;
  Careless is he if parting Summer grieves.
Unwitting, he, the meaning and the pain
  That swells the heartbreak of the Autumn strain.

The sumachs fluttered on the grassy bank;
  Adown its arc the sun reluctant sank;
Bronzing the Western vault its after flame,
  Blurred through the beeches as the twilight came.

And, if for me the God-of-all-good-things
  Will tune my ear to list the song Earth sings,
Humble I'll strive its note to comprehend,
  As you do now to tell its beauty, friend.

—High Park, Toronto.

A Summer Sunset

The dying fires of sunset glow;
  The reddish-crimson disk sinks low,
    Till shrouded in the greyish blue
      It altogether sinks from view.

Quick-changing then, the after-blaze,
  Dissolves into pink-tinted haze,
    Shading off to the ultramarine
      Of the higher banks of cloudy screen.

Slowly the Western winsomeness,
  Fades from sight at the wind's caress,
    And eager stars their beacons trim
      Above the circling curtain's rim.

The waving tree-tops reach up high,
  To watch the darkening of the sky,
    They nod awhile in the gloaming light,
      Then bow their heads for lo—'tis night.

—Hamilton Mountain.

The Life Beautiful

Not in the massing of mere wealth are we
  To realize true peace, and happy be,
But in the search for beauty, near and far--
  This earth is full of it as yonder star.

Beauty is all around us, look and see
  The Hand Divine in forest-flower and tree;
Perennial, fair, they live again and die,
  Rearing their verdant praise beneath the sky.

The golden sunset tingeing shore and lake,
  The summer starshine in its gloried wake,
The liquid silver in the moon's soft light,
  Behold the wonder of an August night!

Know well your fellow-men and thankful read
  In placid brow the stamp of each good deed
And noble thought and each stern walk with duty.
  In homely wrinkles there may dwell true beauty.

When disappointments come and cloud your view,
  Sink deep your sorrows in the heaven's blue.
Life is worth while, so live with eager zest
  The work is now, but in the evening—rest.

—Rochester, N.Y.

Milady's Smile

Now, see her eyes are all aglow
  And brighter than the moon-kissed snow.
Oh, laughing eyes, you tempt me so—
  Yet in your depths I see a "No."

Camping On Lac Des Isles

We pitched our camp on the Northern shore,
Leagues from the lazar city's roar,
From the noise and heat
Of the dusty street,
Journeying far to the haunts of yore.

Awake and away at the dawn's first ray,
We drank in the pink-toned breaking day
As we dragged our trawls
On the weedy shoals
And the inshore beds where the big fish play.

Off well-known points, in pastures new,
We scour the lake in our cedar canoe.
Soon the hours pass
As the wily bass
Augment our catch of a 'lunge or two.

The supper's eaten and the dishes clean,
So we laze and loaf in the woodsy screen
Till the sky grows dim
And we take our swim,
Breaking the hush of the moon-lit scene.

A slight swell laps on the stoney beach;
The stretch of green, the crane's hoarse screech,
The solitude,
And our restful mood
All voice the lesson the wilds can teach.

'Tis fine to follow a natural bent
And smoke and dream at the door of the tent—
Sensing the joys
Of vacation ploys
Till the soul grows big with a glad content.
—Gatineau Valley, Quebec.

The Speed By Night

The moon-magic is on the river, Bill,
I never saw the waters sleep so still.
They lie unwimpled in the steaming haze,
Reflecting bright the mist-enpiercing rays.

Go slow, old chap, let the canoe just drift,
The mood is on me to enjoy the gift
Of the clear blue vault and the gibbous moon,
The voice of evening and its soothing croon.

Isn't it spooky in those long dark reaches?
The bats flit by and a lone owl screeches;
All else is still—the night birds in the brake
They stir not at our paddles' swirling wake.

The banks are alternating inky shade
And bushy shores in floods of light displayed.
The moon-fire's glow on neighboring leafage plays
O winding Speed, forgive my puny praise!
—Lyon Park, Guelph.

Then, Later And After

When you climb out of the taxi,
(For you're doing it in style)
You think that you're in clover
For there's honey in her smile.
You hurry to the ballroom,
Don your pumps and find your girl,
Meet some fair ones, talk some small talk,
Mingle in the giddy whirl,
    You'll likely think,—
        "Here is my native element,
        The waxed floor is dandy fine.
        Bonnie is a perfect waltzer
        And the music is like wine.
        I could dance from now till doom
        Yes, forever and a day.
        Oh the potent sweet allurement
        In her graceful sylph-like sway!"

When the little hop is over
And you're sitting on your bed
You contemplate your programme
And the silly things you said;
You toss your wilted collar
And your nifty lawn cravat
On the chair beside your dress-coat
And your eight-plunk opera hat,
    You're apt to say,—

"Of all the dubs since Adam lived
I'm the rankest and the worst.
In this fool competition
I should get the medal first.
It always cost like blazes
When I social honors seek—
This will make an awful hole in
That lonely six a week."

When you waken in the morning,
Hours past the cold grey dawn,
You wonder if it's worth it
As you stretch and blink and yawn.
You hustle to your lecture
College cares to take again,
Feeling like a half-baked lobster
And you murmur dully then,
"I hereby resolve,—
To cut out this idle fussing,
Seeking sport in hours late.
I will go no more to dances—
Let the others dissipate.
I will stay at home and study,
Soak my dress suit in the pawn."
So you will, my gay carouser,
Till the next affair is on!"

—Osgoode Hall, Toronto.

Floodtime

On the city, sleep is falling;
  The March night air is clear and calm,
Can't you hear a deep voice calling
  In the roar of Goldie's dam?

Attendant astrals dot the blue,
  To the young moon bowing lowly,
As queen-like, Luna, passing to
  Her zenith rises slowly.

Stand upon the ruined mill-wall
  High above the rushing river,
And see the surging water-fall
  Make the moon-beams dance and quiver.

Up the stream, the smooth flat current
  Escapes from underneath the ice,
And gliding on destruction errant
  Takes the mad leap in a trice.

There beneath the downpour, moon-washed,
  Though growing smaller, day by day,
Still hang the ice stalactites splashed
  By the underwash's spray.

Thund'ring, raging, downward dashing,
  By the white spume-riders backed,
Seething, foaming, torn banks lashing,
  Races on the cataract.

Broods the moonlight on the waters,
  On the mad waves that jump and swell,
Makes you think that nothing matters,
  Binds you with its soothing spell.

There is poetry worth telling,
  And there is romance plenty too
Where the torrent devils, yelling,
  Shriek their curses up at you.

—Goldie's Dam, Guelph.

Pawns

We are just pawns in the game of chess
  The little gods are playing:
But then we rage at fate the less
  When Discord's dogs are baying.

For though the gods may play the game
  And many good pawns will fall,
Yet human love runs on the same—
  It's a force beyond them all.

The Rest Cure

The whirr of binders binding sheaves
Sifts through the close-knit wall of leaves;
The birds their bubbling notes employ,
Throating the fulsome harvest joy.

I know the cause and sweetness now
Of Omar's joy beneath the bough,
And so I love its vernal cloak
As stretched at ease, I read and smoke.

—Speedside.

The Corner of King and Yonge

Man of Babel, come to Toronto,
Hear the traffic shriek and roar,
Let your ears long used to riot
Hear some noise unknown of yore.

You, who with fantastic vision
Thought to build to reach the sky,
See our latest office building
Towering twenty stories high.

History shows on pages olden
Swinging cycles of events,
Here's at last your Tower of Babel
Leased at truly modern rents.

Here's a crowd of every nation,
Quotas from each land and clime;
Still the noise but less confusion—
See the long result of time.

You must feel at home on Yonge Street
Where it intersects with King,
Here again the hordes are striving
And the busy hammers ring.

Buy some accident insurance,
Timid man of ancient days,
Let us watch the tall policeman
Speed the pilgrims on their ways.

We admit the Big Street's narrow,
Planned by men who never knew
Visions of a great Toronto
Laws! How "Muddy York" has "grew".

Intermitting clank and rattle—
Fleming's chariots pass and cross.
You, who braved a hundred battles,
Seem bewildered, frightened, lost.

Laden drays, their drivers shouting,
Rattling on from early dawn
Halt the far from patient taxis,
Plunging, eager to be on.

Back to whence you came, old stranger,
Times have changed a bit, and so
Leave us with our Modern Babel,
Business presses. Watch us grow!

Motor-cycles, trucks and wagons,
Dodge when clangs the black patrol.
'Mid the rush the dazed old timer
Shrinks within his timid soul.

No Man's Land

Distance is mocked, and endless space made light,
Mind speaks to mind across the silent night;
And though the fleshy orbs no form descry,
The dreamer sees his fate with his mind's eye.

Birthday Greetings

Dear friend, on this your natal day
I'm glad to send you if I may,
Good wishes plenty;
The world is good, its prospects fine
And living is a game divine,
When one is twenty.

Happiness, a good full measure,
Loads of fun and lots of pleasure,
Be yours unceasing:
With more of love and less of pain,
A many friends in years to gain,
A host increasing.

The world's a lovely garden spot,
So cultivate your little plot,
Be dutiful.
Kindness is cheap and Christ-like too,
In all your thoughts and deeds may you
Be beautiful.

The Pipes of Pan

Still call to us the pipes of Pan
If we would only hearken.
They piped before the world began
Or saw the first night darken;
And though in these commercial years
'Tis hard to always hear them;
They tune the music of the spheres
And help old Atlas bear them.

Moonlight On Rideau Lake

The carmine haze on the lake grows dim;
The red sun sinks beneath the rim
Of the Portland shore, where the dying breeze
Whispers and sighs in the sleepy trees.

The blithe mosquitoes hum and dodge
Around "The Bothie's" home-like lodge,
One-stepping to the dreamy tone
Of that untiring gramophone.

Fair as a slant-slung silver shield,
Swinging across a star-flecked field,
Serene and grand, the crescent moon
Soothes wakeful whip-poor-will and loon.

Her nodding image like a water sprite
Tells of the witchery of the night,
Peers from the water up at you
Drifting along in your old canoe.

Past cottage, snug, and cosey camps,
Past woodsy banks with fire-fly lamps,
Past tree-crowned rocks and leafy brakes,
Along the moon-charmed Rideau Lakes.

A stilly peace broods o'er the lake
Unmoved except where in your wake,
A thousand star-points swirl and smile
Till glooms the shade of tree-girt isle.

You watch the moon-rays now grown pale,
Flash off the silver sides and tail
Of the big black bass or maskalunge,
Turning in air for the downward plunge.

The tired moon droops behind the shore;
So you paddle Lassie home once more,
Scorning the aid of the dim wharf light
To bid milady a shy good-night.

—The Big Rideau.

Destiny

A homing schooner on the bay,
Full-sailed, steers its eager way
To port beneath a cloudless sky.
I watch it in the hope that I,
A sailor on the treacherous sea
That mortals call grim Destiny,
May 'scape the storms that wreck and blight
And make the harbour calm and bright.

For we must each the journey make,
Though sails may burst and masts may break,
And many flashes in the dark
Of night may strike our wind-tossed bark,
'Till all seems lost and hope is dead—
When lo, a beacon beams ahead;
I trust across the angry sea
A kindly light will burn for me.

—Island Park, Toronto.

Sunset In Rockcliffe

This night of May is bonnie, Jean,
My eyes are dazed with sunset sheen,
The molten west—that wonder scene—
The work of artist hands divine,
Alas too fine for words of mine.

The gods have built a furnace there,
Banked high with rose-leaf clouds so fair
And flanked with blue ones still more rare.
Here in this mystic vale of fire
They fay each wishing heart's desire.

Pushed down by unseen fairy hands
The sun has sunk to farther lands,
To shine on Western hills and strands,
From scenes so fine he's loath to go,
And waves good-night in aftergiow.

And now the twilight broods and steals
While many a homing swallow wheels
High in the blue. One, watching, feels
The beauty of it all; and then
Describes it with a halting pen.

Constancy

When the last dawn blazons the rending sky;
The morning breezes whisper, sob and die;
The land consumes and leaves the ocean dry;
And chaos reigns and time is passing by—
Then, and till then, an endless space or two
I shall be loving, dear, still loving you.

The Weather Bore

The hoary farmer from the rack
Gets down an old almanac
That tells of storms some ten years back,
Or perhaps twenty.
He describes them all from A to Zee.
His imagination wanders free,
And you can bank that there will be
Statistics plenty.

He thinks, does this old weather bore,
That he's a Solomon in gale-ic lore;
So he talks of winters gone before
Far worse than this'n.
Of fences and houses buried in snow,
The mercury freezing at forty below.
He jabbers on with endless flow—
If you will listen.

On the sun's new spots he lays the blame
That the climate's rigours aren't the same,
As when to this fair land he came—
Long years ago.
But you rise in ire and tell him that
He's talking through his blooming hat,
For last week's storm had 'em all knocked flat—
For cold and snow.

The Court of No Appeals

Without my volition and against my own will
How often at night time when the world is so still
That the busy clock's tick is a thunderous sound,
And loud in my ear-drums I can hear my heart pound,
Do I talk to myself in a personal way
Of the trials and joys of the newly-dead day.

Myself is the jury and the judge to decide
If I, the defendant, when well and fairly tried
Have earned the court's censure or hearty acclaim;
And again I'm chief counsel and fain to explain—
"Your Lordship, my client is no worse than the rest
And he was sorely tempted, he did his small best."

At the bar of my conscience I scorn such a plea,
For crown witness of the facts, beside, I must be;
I remember each impulse, each thought in my mind;
Unwillingly I swear to each motive unkind,
And no sleek tonguester's pleading can alter the pain
Of an unworthy deed as I live it again.

You may dodge your just dues in the forums of men
And, uncaught, go on sinning again and again,
Just because you are clever and what they call 'smooth';
But I know a law court where the truth is the truth,
And all flaws are laid bare in its fierce, white limelight—
At the Court of Yourself in the dark of the night!

Inscription

in "Rhymes of a Rolling Stone."

To Service' name
And Service' fame
I add my humble plaudit.
I hope that you
Will like this too
Enough to read and laud it.

If e're the day
(For come it may)
Dawns on my first edition,
I trust that folks
Will see its jokes
And 'preciate its mission.

My halting rhymes
Perhaps are crimes
And lack a saving merit;
But if you snould
Think some are good
I prithee, then, declare it.

Dawn

The morn unfolds, the vapours of the night
Pursue each other through the ether waste,
As in the East the sun with feeble light
O'er the chill land his golden hand has traced.

The Song of The Season

Jack Frost is King; the Winter breeze,
Is blowing chill o'er hills and leas,
And whirling flakes form fairy frieze
On hillside roof and grating,
Though Mother Earth is sleeping sound
And Nature, cold, is all ice-bound,
Though heaps of snow lie all around,
Yet Phyllis will go skating.

When night's dark mantle down is thrown,
And the evening winds begin to moan,
I call, as pre-arragned by 'phone
And find the dear girl waiting,
Arrayed in sweater, snowy white,
Which well becomes her figure slight,
Depend on it, her costume's right—
When Phyllis goes a-skating.

The last waltz being played, I fear
An end of all this bliss is near;
And now I sadly sigh, "Oh dear!
I'm far from satiated."
Returning home her arm in mine,
I tell her that she's just divine,
To steal a kiss I fondly pine,
Since o'er my heart she skated.

Winter Woods

I have sung of scenes pastoral,
Called them vistas of delight,
Sketched the woods in Spring and Summer
And their sad autumnal plight.
But the time has come for telling
(And your pleasure is my boon)
Of the stilly frozen woodlands
'Neath the chill December moon.

Let us leave the crowded city,
For an evening's snowshoe tramp—
Feel the freedom of the open
Far from the stove or hydro lamp.
Here, we've passed the toll-gate's lantern,
Here at last are fields of snow;
Tie your snowshoes on securely,
Are you ready? On we go!

The North wind is blowing chilly,
Throws the snow-dust in your eyes;
And above grey clouds are scudding
'Cross the cold blue Winter skies.
Stars are scarce, the vapours hide them
As they scurry Southward bent,
Reappearing when the Stormblast
In their curtain tears a rent.

Old Jack Frost has hung his lantern
Out, that we might see the land,
Gleaming white and silver-flaming—
The wonder working of his hand.
Glows the moon on field and fences,
Bas-relieves the tree-topped ridge,
Flashes off the river's coating
And the timbers of the bridge.

We will cross it. We will enter
The silent ice-bound snow-hung wood.
Along this clearing, up the hillside,
Tracking up its driftless hood.
Bare the elms, the oaks, the maples,
Gaunt, where hung a leafy screen;
On their mother's breast they're sleeping
Save the cedar's constant green.

Shadows, creepy, steel-blue tinted,
Move with wind and changing light,
Boughs, frost-snapping, moaning spirits
Fill with witchery the night.
All this beauty leaves us speechless,
Turns to thoughtful joyous moods;
For the lonely King of Lonesome
Dwells within the Winter woods.

—Hog's Back.

The Sad Christmas

In memory of Private Stanley J. Creighton, Princess Patricia's
Canadian Light Infantry, Killed in Action
at Ypres, June 2nd, 1916.

Your sons are sleeping in a Flanders trench,
  At Yprés or on the bloody Somme.
'Twas yesterday you felt the wrench
  Of parting—the Empire's call had come.

You know Gethsemane. You passed
  An age of waiting—hopes and fears—
You saw them wounded, dying, gassed;
  To you it seemed a hundred years.

Their place is vacant. Christmastide
  This year brings not these Knights of Right.
They passed their Calvary—they died
  Like Christ, to quell the hosts of night.

Ye mothers, ye who bore our slain,
  Whose alien graves are o'er the sea,
Behold your soldiers yonder reign
  As princes with the Man of Galilee.