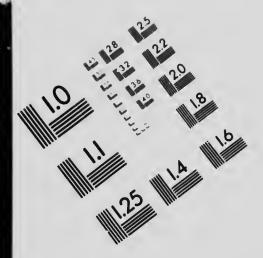
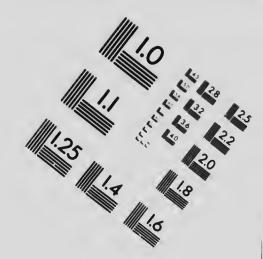
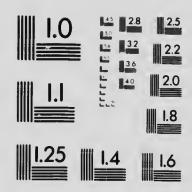
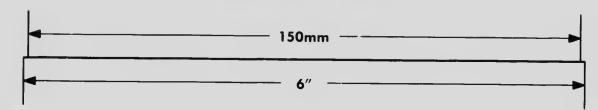
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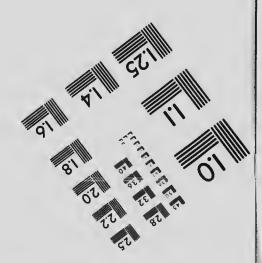






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THE MAPLE GROVE AND OTHER POEMS

BÝ MELITA AITKEN



THE MAPLE GROVE AND OTHER POEMS



The Maple Grove

And Other Poems

By Melita Aitken

WARWICK BROS. & RUTTER, LIMITED PRINTERS TORONTO

Posto

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PRINTED IN CANADA

TO MY COUNTRY

AND TO

THE MEMORY OF

MY DEAR PARENTS



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PRIMUS



DEAR CANADA

DEAR Canada, my Canada, My heart is one with thee! Each throb of mine Keeps time with thine In tuneful harmony.

Dear Canada, my Canada, Whate'er may be in store! Thy sons of old Were true and bold, And will be evermore.

Dear Canada, my Canada If any foes thou hast! They who are brave Will fight, and save Thy freedom to the last.

Dear Canada, my Canada If aught could ever be! This heart of mine, Would mourn with thine, The days of chivalry.

LOYALTY

TOOK in my arms a bunch of maple leaves And kissed them ere I put them down; I took but one from out the lot, And sitting down with drawn up knees, Held it before and pondered o'er it: Fair emblem of a fairer land! I traced it all around the edge, And marked the veining with my finger tip. I saw in it great beauty, strength and power, (A goodly three for any nation's dower.) Fair balancing of parts on either side, No prejudices shown in any place; An outline clearly cut and sharp, With just enough of pinnacles to climb, To make the struggle keen, even sublime; The veins that got their life from out the stem, Which drew it from the great, big mother heart, Did hold the leaf so fixed upon its base, That all the storms of hades, could not part: I kissed it ere I pv ' down again.

ONTARIO

CANADA is youthful, Canada is young, Of her different climates, plenty has been sung; But there's one old province not by any sea, Good, old Ontario, is the place for me!

REFRAIN

Ontario, Ontario, is the place for me! Sing it out, sing it out, far o'er land and sea! Some folks like the prairie, others like B.C., But good, old Ontario, is the place for me!

With her lakes and rivers, fruitful land to till, Boasting not of mountains, only wooded hill; Manly sports in winter, summer's sunny skies, Seldom hear complaining, seldom many sighs.

Prosperous towns and cities, busy as a bee, Singing birds and flowers, pretty as you'll see, Happy dads and mothers, boys and girls so free, Good, old Ontario, is the place for me!

SAULT STE. MARIE

S AULT STE. MARIE, by the river, How my heart still turns to thee! To the white house, that is standing, Shaded o'er by tall spruce tree; Many happy days I wandered With a loved one by my side; But in distant lands he's lying, Far beyond the rolling tide.

Out along the winding by-ways,
To the Silver Creek canyon,
Then across to beauteous Gros Cap
That is lying, feet high, on
Lake Superior's cold waters,
Grander lake, you'll never see!
Sault Ste. Marie, by the river,
I am thinking still of thee.

To the land of "Hiawatha,"
Down along the river shore,
Trodden by 'one,' who has made it
Immortal for evermore!
These, and other scenes as luring,
Round about thee, everywhere,
Help to fill along life's pathway,
Help to drive away dull care.

Fairy lights, that shine at even
On the river, either side,
Warning stately ships of danger
As along they quickly glide;
Industries, that give the nations,
Products from the earth, and tree;
Wondrous locks, that through are passing,
Food-stuffs, grown from sea to sea.

Though in distant lands I wander, E'en, perchance, across the sea—Often times I'll sit and ponder O'er the white house and spruce tree; And when I have run the limit Of the web of life for me,—Sault Ste. Marie, by the river, I'll be thinking still of thee.

THE PRAIRIE

AM a mighty slice of this old earth! I lie beyond the sight of any vision! The mind can scarcely grasp my bounds, I am so strong in size! I lie beneath the canopy of heaven, a giant! No sound disturbs my solitude, Unless it be the coyote's lonely yelp. The prairie chicken calling to its mate, The tramp of buffalo on its way to drink: I wait for man! My pulses beat, I rise to greet the prairie scooner; And stretch my arms to grasp the bands Of steel, that lie across my bosom, And hold them-fast! My green takes on a livelier hue! The perfumes of the rose and lily Rise like incense on the air To greet the con . g stranger! The upturned, virgin sod gives forth A pungent odor of things to be! I welcome man! I take the yellow seed, that's thrown to me, I hold it for a while to make it mine; And then I send it forth In waving fields of green! And when the summer's sun Has turned the green to golden yellow,-A harvest fit for kings! I give to man!

WEST-BOUND

R OLLING across the prairie, way out to the land of the free,

Passing the rose and thistle, lily, anemone;

But the sweetest flower, is the dear girl by my side,

Who to make a home for a Westerner, yesterday became my bride.

As the dew-drop pearls the rose leaf, so the love light pearls her eye,

As the speedy train bends sage bush, quickly passing by,

So the love of maiden bends the dear girl by my side, Who to make a home for a Westerner, yesterday became my bride.

Willing to share in the struggle of tilling the virgin soil,

Willing to bear the burden of loneliness and toil;
Bravest among brave women, this dear girl by my side,
Who to make a home for a Westerner, yesterday became my bride.

ner;



IN MUSKOKA



THE AUTUMN DELL

I F there's a place the fairies love to dwell, 'Tis in Muskoka, in an Autumn dell! To gambol here, and there, in mass of color, And play at hide and seek with one another.

Scarce tipping toe to leaf that falls so light Upon the path the sun ships on so bright, They flit about in scene which quite entrances, And shout and swing about in merry dances.

Such magic color placed, by Master hand, To give a heavenly touch to this fair land! If you would get soul-filled with love, O mortal, Go forth and enter in this fairy portal!

MUSKOKA IN OCTOBER

AKE a lake and smooth it down Calm as any mirror, Round it place a hill or two, Homestead, maple groves a few, Rocky point with stately pine, Here and there along the line A cool sequestered bay And don't forget at either end To let a river find its way. Get your palette and your brush With heaps and heaps of color, Golden yellows, reds and blue, You need not any other. Splash it round most everywhere, Yellow here and ruddy there, Take a sporting chance That blue and yellow on the way Will get quite mixed And top the pines across the bay. Right in front of you behold An island—touch it up with gold. Birch and poplar need bright yellow; Fill your brush with brilliant red. Toss it well up overhead, Right across to maple groves— Twill make them look so warm and cosy. Your shadows now, the hillside's double; Paint them in rich, deep and clear cutBut the colors must be sporting!
Every tone and every hue,
A whole gamut come to view!
Even down at the foot of the lake
A hazy purple.
Now sit back and look it over—
That's Muskoka in October

THE MAPLE GROVE

I.

TIS "Mardi Gras" in the grove to-day, The leaves are tumbling about in play; Old Boreas shakes his sides with laughter; The trees keep up an endless chatter.

Jewels that are bright, and jewels that are rare Fall lightly down through the sun-kissed air; Ruby and topaz vie with each other, Showing their best to earth, their mother.

Never bride with confetti showered; Never maiden more richly dowered; Than the hillside with these pearls of heaven Filling the atmosphere with leaven.

The chipmunks all get frightened and stay Under the branches out of the way; The bees and butterflies dodge in and out Wondering what it is all about! 'Tis "Mardi Gras" in the grove to-day; So all the birds, and the fairies say.

II.

Color so enhancing, color so entrancing, Color that is settled everywhere; See it on the tree-top, See it on the hillside, See it even in the limped air.

Color so bewitching, color so enriching, Color so bewildering to the soul; Hear it on the heart strings, On the fairy bands' wings, Perfect strain to make a perfect whole.

Color so uplifting, color ever shifting, Color so stupendous to the eye; Feel it in the sunshine, Feel it in the shadows, Feel, that you will feel it up on high.

III.

Come fairies dance a merry lilt with me, I feel a part of this enchanting scene; Come circle widely round this maple tree You'll scarcely find a finer one, I ween.

We'll garland us with wreathes of such bright hue. That rival Ariadae's bright crown; Or even the stars, that are so high above, If they from out the sky could tumble down.

Trip the light fantastic all together, And heel and toe it lightly here with me; Make the evening zephyrs madly jealous, By winding quickly round this maple tree.

More zest to your tune, you elfin fiddlers!
Now pay attention to my light demand,
Sing and shout, and make the strain so merry,
We'll wheedle out the fairy, echo band.

The shadows of the night are softly falling, The whip-poor-wills' tuned up. I'm loath you see, For other lights, that silently are calling, To leave this beauteous fairyland to thee.

V.

I went out again to the grove to-day!
How is it that I cannot stay away?
The fallen leaves have turned a darker tone,
And from their depth of ankle-deep,
Bold, flaunting ferns, in crescent-shape,
Have come into their own.

I wandered, here and there, in pensive mood, Or watched my dog run through the leaf-stripped wood;

And now, since all the Autumn leaves have flown, 'Tween trunks and boughs, a lake unseen Before from out the wooded slope,

Has come into its own.

I could not help but parallel the two,
The life of nature,—and the life we woo—
Often, with patient toil and quite unknown,
When other lights have flickered out,
A man, grown great in solitude,
Will come into his own.

I walked, as far as the gate to-night, Through the grove: It was so calm and still! No sound did break that stillness, Save the crunching of the leaves Beneath my feet. The leaves! the leaves! Which few short days ago made beauty's realm; O I was loath to foot them down: A perfume rose from off them, Like incense offered on the altar of His footstool; 'Twas like some, vast cathedral, Whose roof did rival heaven's dome! So holy 'twas I stood awhile, With face uplift, in silent prayer; And as I turned to wend my way, A moth did cross my path; And, in the sky, a crescent moon Was closing down to rest.

ed



UNFORGOTTEN



THE OUT-GOING

DOWN by the roadside a poor mother's standing, Watching a long line of khaki appear, Tears from her sad eyes are softly falling. As she sees the long line drawing near: When out on the air comes a voice young and clear—

"Don't weep mother dear for me! Be a good soldier too, To my country I'm true, I'll come back to it and to you."

Near by a cottage a young wife is waiting, Clasped in her arms her young baby so dear, Sorrow soon chases the light from her eyes, As she sees the long line drawing near; When out on the air, comes a voice strong and clear—

"Don't weep little wife for me! Be a good soldier too, To my country I'r; true, I'll come back to it and to you."

Out in the trenches a battle is raging.

Fear strikes the hearts of the bravest ones there!

Dumb with amazement, they gaze with wonder.

As they see a strange cloud drawing near;

When out on the air, comes a voice loud and clear—

"Old England we will obey!
We are good soldiers too,
To our country we're true,
We'll fight hard for it and for you."

THE RESULT

THE poppies, now blooming in Flanders' Field, Are purple and gold and red! The purple, the royal deeds uphold Of soldiers, now lying dead; But the life of the flower, Is the life of the soul. That went where heroes have trod: And the stories of royal deeds achieved Are told by the angels of God. Gold is the worth of the brave young lives Struck down in the battle's din! Paradise opened wide its gates And let the freed soul in. Purple and gold have told their part! What does the red poppy say? 'Red is the blood of the pulsing hearts, So still at the end of the fray.'

REQUIEM

WHY so sad this heart of mine Everywhere it wanders?
One, who is so dear to me,
Is going o'er to Flanders.

Why so sad this heart of mine Everywhere it wanders? One, who is so dear to me, Is fighting o'er in Flanders.

Why so sad this heart of mine Everywhere it wanders? One, who is so dear to me, Is lying o'er in Flanders.

HUSBAND O' MINE

S MILING eyes, that always looked with love, On one he held most dear; Tender eyes, so gentle and so kind, When troubles near.

Smiling eyes, that saw in vision clear, He heard his country's cry; Tender eyes, so clouded o'er with pain, That last good bye.

Smiling eyes, that cheered his home-sick lads, Fighting, "out over there":
Tender eyes, when o'er their fallen forms, Breathed silent prayer.

Smiling eyes, on that last, awful night, His task and duty filled; Tender eyes, so quiet and so cold, When heart-beat stilled.

TEDDY

S WEET as cherub from the skies, Golden hair and light blue eyes, Baby looking wondrous wise! Was Teddy.

Winning love where'er he went, Always smiling sweet content, Perfect child, in every bent, Was Teddy.

Happy-hearted free from care, Full of sport, and full of dare, Regular boy, with curly hair, Was Teddy.

Studious, thoughtful, always true, At first glance, one always knew Gentleman in every view, Lad Teddy.

Hark there's war cry in the air!
"Country needs me right out there."
'Listed on his eight enth year,
Did Teddy.

"Make you sergeant," said the chief.
"Pardon sir, I'd just so lief
Be a private." Very brief,
Said Teddy.

Proudly marching, went away.

Loving hearts were sad that day,
They could only hope and pray
For Teddy.

Did his duty like a man,
Fought as only hero can.
"Killed in action," message ran,
"Your Teddy."

"Beautiful in death," they said,
"Spoke of mother, sister, dad."
Before in Flander's Field, they laid,
Our Teddy.

WHEN LOVE IS DONE

WE are so sad at times, My heart and I! No sunshine in the air; No blueness in the sky; Ah me! the world is drear, When love is done.

They tell us "'twas for best,"
My heart and I.
"He died a noble death;
He heeded country's cry";
Ah me! the world is drear
When love is done.

We try to be content, My heart and I. We wander o'er the street, Nor heed the passer-by; Ah me! the world is drear, When love is done.

SADNESS

WHITE sail and white gull,
And white sand on the shore;
But oh, my heart is sad!
For one I'll see no more.

Grey sky and grey hills, That lie along the shore: But oh, my heart is sad! For one I'll see no more.

Silent night, and red light, That gleams upon the shore; But oh, my heart is sad! For one I'll see no more.

PEACE

O N the day appointed,
Shining, bright and clear,
Peace, on snowy pinions,
Hovering, shall appear,
In her arms outstretching,
Laurel wreaths are wound,
For our heroes sleeping
In the silent ground.

We, with pulses throbbing,
As she draws still near,
Stop the heart's wild sobbing,
Drive away the fear,
Rise with shouts of welcome
From the tear-stained mound,
Watch the laurel dropping
On the silent ground.

On that day of gladness,
When our Christ shall come
To this world of sadness
From His heavenly home,
Then shall rise our heroes
With their laurel crowned,
A triumphant army
From the silent ground.



MISCELLANEOUS



A HYMN OF PRAISE

C LET me sing
A hymn of praise to Thee,
Thou Mighty One,
King over land, and sea!
Sing of Thy gifts,
And wondrous love, so free,
Sing of the grace divine,
Which reacheth, e'en to me.

O, let me tell
To every living thing,
Tell of that life,
Which like a hidden thing,
Sends forth its strength
In silence unto me;
But joyous songs of praise
Which rise right up to Thee.

O, let me sing
A hymn of praise to Thee,
Thou Mighty One,
King over land and sea!
Sing of the life
That only comes from Thee;
Sing of Thy love divine,
Which gave that life to me.

NOT WORTHY

AM not worthy, Lord, To boldly come to Thee! I will creep gently up, And touch the hands That suffered so for me.

I am not worthy, Lord,
To raise mine eyes to Thee!
I will creep closer still,
And kiss the hands
That suffered so for me.

I am not worthy, Lord, That Thou should'st gaze on me! And lift me to Thine arms With those dear hands, And hold me close to Thee.

I am not worthy, Lord, That Thou should'st bend to me! And clasp me closer still, That my sad heart Might rest alone on Thee.

A HAPPY MOOD

I AM in such a happy mood to-day!
There is bright sunshine in the air;
The birds are singing everywhere;
I scarce can get my feet to bear in mind,
That they have left their childhood far behind.

I wander o'er the fields, like child at play; I feel brighter every hour, As I pick the way-side flower; The very air seems tingling with delight; The swallows whirl around in happy flight.

Such simple pleasures cheer my weary soul, I have had so much of sorrow, Dreading every to-morrow;
But I have learned to cast on Him, my care, Who suffered for me and the cross did bear.

That's why I'm in a happy mood to-day—Just because there is love divine!
Just because there is sun to shine!
I try to leave the fret of life behind,
And bow submission to the Master mind.

A POEM

A simple, little birch!

If only artist hand were there to paint,
'Twould the whole world enrich;
The part that faced the sunshine was deep yellow,
For early frost had driven out the green.
The shadows were of light brown, hazy
With stars of gold from sunshine in between;
The stem, from ground to top was yellow-grey,
But in among the leaves a warmer brown,
Which gave an accent that was only mete
To make this tree a poem, from tip right down.

TWO SEASONS

THERE is a sadness round about me, my beloved, A greyness in the sky that should be blue!
All the leaves are falling, falling;
All the kine are calling, calling;
And my heart calls, dear, for you.

There is a gladness round about me, my beloved, Sunshine has chased the shadows all away! Pussy-willows nodding, nodding; Merry songsters plodding, plodding; And your heart mine, dear, for aye.

LAKE SHADOWS

A BOAT came, sailing o'er the lake, Leaving a path behind, Cutting the shadows, right in two, Making them hard to find.

You may row boat, you may go boat, Shadows will come again; Just as surely as comes the sun, After a day of rain.

A BIT OF SHAMROCK

J UST a bit of shamrock, from old Erin's isle!

The memories around it cheer my heart up with a smile,

'Twas there I met my Mary, with loving eyes of blue. And 'twas there that Mary promised, to me she'd ere be true.

Just a bit of shamrock from old Erin's isle!
But the memories around it sadden my heart awhile;
The loving hearts that live there, the tender ones that die,

But beneath the green of Ireland contentedly they lie.

Just a bit of shanrock from old Erin's isle!

The memories around it cheer my heart up with a smile,

For me and my dear Mary across the sea will roam, To live again in Erin, in our dear, old, Irish home.

RED DESERT OF WYOMING

AM the primal state of Nature! No hand, has yet, unlocked the secret Hidden deep beneath my burning sands; I give, from out that hidden spring of life, A song of praise, to Him, who giveth all, The deeper tones, the red, red sand and sage so green, The lighter ones, from flowers of gold and purple; These four make up a double harmony! As if one, whole, were not enough To praise the Great Creator. I breathe more freely than the sands Which lie beneath my towering height; I struggle hard to keep the life within; For I await another generation. When other fields have given forth their fruit, And science, bounding forth by giant strides,-Shall penetrate the secret of my bosom, Then, issuing forth, will come with mighty power, A life grown strong from years of deep suppression! And the onlooking world Shall wonder at my fertile yield!

MAN O' WAR

A NOTHER Kenilworth has come to fame! And Windsor, that old established battlement, Has now a rival! A notable event, short days ago, Of such a scene was chequered off It will be hard to double. To Man o' War we raise the glass! No centaur ever ran so good a race, No centaur god at such an easy pace, No horse, mere horse, did pit so fine a point, And strain his rival to his every joint. "Super" and well said "super" hark! They've given seven lengths credit to his mark. Full fitting was it of the men to bring A golden cup to quench his thirst therein, But kingly sport best metes a kingly crown, And surely king, this horse of such renown, Sir Barton, too, tho' next to him who won, Has risen in fame and will be better known. These two have broken records out of sight. And turned them topsy-turvy. Take off your hats to Man o' War! And place him on a pedestal so high, That they who now—who were— And those who may be, Can point to him and say: "He won the race of centuries."

TO A STRAWBERRY BLOSSOM IN OCTOBER

THOU puny, pallid sickling!
Thou wilt perish in the chilly blast!
Think thou to bear fruit now,
When all thy fellows seeded have
For another generation?

Thou bold, fragile, little thing!
Thou hast missed thy time by three months past!
I'll pluck thee to me now,
And carry thee along with me
To a warmer destination.

AFTER THE QUARREL

SPEAK to me, dear, with words of love,
The same as yester' eve,
To see you there, so cold and stern,
Doth all my spirit grieve;
Mine was the fault, too hasty, I,
I should have asked you, "how," and, "why,"
Instead, I blamed you! gave no chance!
And won the scorn you gave to me.

Turn to me, dear, that I may see
The gold glint of your hair;
Your snowy brow; those eyes of blue;
Your rosy cheek so fair;
That little mouth, of coral hue,
With pearly teeth just showing through!
Ah! now you smile, come to me sweet,
And lay your dear head,—just so,—there.

LOVE

I'VE seen fond love;
I've seen true love;
Love that makes the day seem glad.
I've seen blind love;
I've seen jealous love;
Love that makes the heart go mad.
I've seen strong love;
I've seen simple love;
Give me—kind love!

CLOUDS

JUST a passing shower, The sun is out again, All the stones and puddles Are smiling after the rain.

Just a childish sorrow,
Hardly a passing pain,
See, the smiles, and dimples,
Are coming right out again!

FATE

D ID you think, when I met you, that day, sweetheart,

Under the old apple tree,

That my heart-beats thrilled with a strange delight, As you raised your dear eyes to me?

Did you think, when we strolled down the winding lane,

That into my life had come,

The girl I so oft had seen in my dreams, The girl, I'd make queen of my home?

Did you think, that I loved you that day, sweetheart, Under the old apple tree?

When my eyes met yours, in that first shy glance, Did you think you'd ever love me?

Did you think that two paths merged in one, sweetheart,

Cn that bright, summer-time day,
That fate had united your heart with mine,
In a love that would last for aye?

MARJORY

M ARJORY stands, by the window pane, Throwing me out her kisses; Quickly I throw them back again! Marjory never misses.

Coy Marjory, through the window pane, Sends out her loving glances! Again I send them back again, Her every look entrances.

Cruel Marjory, through the window pane,
Smiles at another laddie!
Marjory is, ———— but ten!
I'm, ————— her daddy!

BRITONS ARISE

BRITONS arise!
The trumpet call is sounding through your land.
To arms! To arms!
Muster as men of old;
Keep what you have and hold:
Fight hard for Freedom's cause;
Fight hard for humane laws,
Honor and glory.

Britons arise!
The "German peril" is standing at your door.
To arms! To arms!
Down with the "iron heel,"
Down with the warship's keel;
Strike hard the "man of God,"
Strike hard with iron rod,
Maintain your glory.

Britons arise!
The men of other days are calling you.
To arms! To arms!
Bring forth a Nelson now.
Show Teutons when and how
Britannia rules the sea
Nor ever bends the knee
To other glory.

Britons arise!
The anxious world is looking now to you.
To arms! To arms!
Is there a Waterloo?
Show what your men can do
Fighting for Freedom's cause,
Fighting for humane laws,

England and glory.

nd.

THE POPLAR

W HAT is the matter with the poplar tree?
All a quiver! all a shiver!
Seems as frightened as she can be!

Is it the tall, green spruce that is sitting Close by her side, rousing her pride? And is she only coquetting?

DREAMING

I'VE been dreaming, quietly dreaming, Of a day that, perhaps, may be!
When a lad, with dark eyes gleaming,
Turns his look of love on me;
In his hands are jewels rare,
From a world of wealth, for me.
Shall my heart attune to these?
If my dream comes true!

I've been dreaming, quietly dreaming, Of a day that perhaps may be!
When a lad, with dark eyes pleading, Turns his look of love on me;
In his hands are treasures rare,
Heart, and soul, alive for me.
Ah! my heart will tune to these;
If my dream comes true!

DISCONTENT

WISH I were that little bird Sitting on the tree!"
Said the cow to the dog.
"Then you'd never have a chance To get a nip at me."

"I wish I were that great big cow Out there in the clover!" Said the bird to the cat. "Then I'd catch you on my horn And toss you right over!"

BEWARE

THE brain is one great, mighty resovoir!
Where good and bad come tumbling in together:
The good, by working hard, can quite put out the bad.

And vice versa!

The bad can circumvent the good,
And shove it out of sight.

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