

加拿大文学选读

Selected Readings in Canadian Literature

余廷明 编



东西文化事业公司

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compiler

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The Lily Bed

ISABALLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

His cedar paddle, scented, red,
He thrust down through the lily bed;

Cloaked in a golden pause he lay,
Locked in the arms of the placid bay.

Trembled alone his bark canoe
As shocks of bursting lilies flew

Thro' the still crystal of the tide,
And smote the frail boat's birchen side,

Or, when, beside the sedges thin
Rose the sharp silver of a fin;

Or when, a wizard swift and cold,
A dragon-fly beat out in gold

And jewels all the widening rings
Of waters singing to his wings;-

Or, like a winged or burning soul,
Dropped from the gloom an oriole

On the cool wave, as to the balm
Of the Great Spirit's open palm

The freed soul flies. And silence clung
To the still hours, as tendrils hung,

In darkness carven, from the trees,
Sedge-buried to their burly knees.

Stillness sat in his lodge of leaves;
Clung golden shadows to its eaves,

And on its cone spiced floor, like maize,
Red-ripe, fell sheaves of knotted rays.

The wood, a proud and crested brave;
Bead-bright, a maiden, stood the wave.

And he had spoke his soul of love
With voice of eagle and of dove.

Of loud, strong pines his tongue was made;
His lips, soft blossoms in shade,

That kissed her silver lips-her's cool
As lilies on his inmost pool-

Till now he stood in triumph's rest,
His image painted in her breast.

One isle 'tween blue and blue did melt,---
A bead of wampum from the belt

Of Manito - a purple rise
On the far shore heaved to the skies.

His cedar paddle, scented, red,
He drew up from the lily bed;

All lily locked, all lily locked,
His light bark in the blossoms rocked.

Their cool lips round the sharp prow sang,
Their soft clasp to the frail sides sprang,

With breast and lip they wove a bar.
Stole from her lodge the Evening Star;

With golden hand she grasped the mane
Of a red cloud on her azure plain.

It by the peaked, red sunset flew;
Cool winds from its bright nostrils blew.

They swayed the high, dark trees, and low
Swept the locked lilies to and fro.

With cedar paddle, scented, red,
He pushed out from the lily bed.

[1884]

The Potato Harvest

CHARLES G.D. ROBERTS

A high bare field, brown from the plough, and borne
Aslant from sunset; amber wastes of sky
Washing the ridge; a clamour of crows that fly
In from the wide flats where the spent tides mourn
To yon their rocking roosts in pines wind-torn;
A line of grey snake-fence that zigzags by
A pond and a cattle; from the homestead high
The long deep summonings of the supper horn.

Black on the ridge, against that lonely flush,
A cart, and stoop-necked oxen; ranged beside
Some barrels; and the day-worn harvest-folk,
Here emptying their baskets, jar the hush
With hollow thunders. Down the dusk hillside
Lumbers the wain; and day fades out like smoke.
[1886]

In an Old Barn

Tons upon tons the brown-green 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 clink 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 overwhelm their pasture streams,
The frost that bites the world beyond their walls.
Warm housed, they dream of summer, well content
In day-long contemplation of their dreams.

[1893]

On the Way to the Mission

DUNCON CAMPBELL SCOTT

They dogged him all one afternoon,
Through the bright snow,
Two whitemen servants of greed;
He knew that they were there,
But he turned not his head;
He was an Indian trapper;
He planted his snow-shoes firmly,
He dragged the long toboggan
Without rest.

The three figures drifted
Like shadows in the mind of a seer;
The snow-shoes were whispers
On the threshold of awe;
The toboggan made the sound o wings,
A wood-pigeon sloping to her nest.

The Indian face was calm.
He strode with the sorrow of fore-knowledge,
But his eyes were jewels of content
Set in circles of peace.

They would have shot him;
But momentarily in the deep forest,

They saw something flit by his side
Their hearts stopped with fear.
Then the moon rose.
They would have left him to the spirit,

But they saw the long toboggan
Rounded well with furs,
With many a silver fox-skin,
With the pelts of mink and of otter.
They were the servants of greed;
When the moon grew brighter
And the spruces were dark with sleep,
They shot him.
When he fell on a shield of moonlight
One of his arms clung to his burden;
The snow was not melted:
The spirit passed away.
Then the servants of greed
Tore off the cover to count their gains;
They shuddered away into the shadows,
Hearing each the loud heart of the other.
Silence was born.

There in the tender moonlight,
As sweet as they were in life,
Glimmered the ivory features,
Of the Indian's wife.

In the manner of Montagnais women

Her hair was rolled with braid;
Under his waxen figures
A crucifix was laid.

He was drawing her down to the mission,
To bury her there in spring,
When the bloodroot comes and the windflower
To silver everything.

But as a gift of plunder
Side by side were they laid,
The moon went on to her setting
And covered them with shade.

Newfoundland

E. J. PRATT

Here the tides flow,
And here they ebb;
Not with that dull, unsinewed tread of waters
Held under bonds to move
Around unpeopled shores ---
Moon-driven through a timeless circuit
Of invasion and retreat;
But with a lusty stroke of life
Pounding at stubborn gates,
That they might run
Within the sluices of men's hearts,
Leap under throb of pulse and nerve,
And teach the sea's strong voice
To learn the harmonies of new floods,
The peal of cataract,
And the soft wash of currents
Against the resilient banks,
Or the broken rhythms from old chords
Along dark passages
That once were pathways of authentic fires.

Red is the sea-kelp on the beach,
Red as the heart's blood,
Nor is there power in tide or sun