

# BOOKS

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WATANNA

## CANADIAN CITIES OF ROMANCE By KATHARINE HALE

I first heard of Katharine Hale's "Canadian Cities of Romance" through an English source. Mrs. Neville Chamberlain, wife of England's postmaster-general, wrote me that she was reading "a most lovely book by a Canadian poet" and a clipping from a discriminating review was sent me.

Highly praised by the English critics in its fourth edition in the United States, this charming book, concerned with our "cities of romance" should be in every Canadian home.

Katharine Hale is the author of several books of poetry, and she is also a talented professional vocalist and dramatic teacher. The wife of one of Toronto's big business men (John Garvin) she finds time each year to make a tour through Canada and the United States, singing and reciting old Canadian folk songs, tribal melodies, Canadian chansons, songs of the modern composers and poets, and original lyrics and poems from her own pen.

She is possessed of a vivid, sensitive personality, which is revealed in her poetry. Of this latest book, Charles D. Roberts has said: "Only a poet could have written it," and Basil King: "A Canadian compelled to live outside his own country, must find that this book takes him home again." Katharine Hale belongs to that limited country of whom Theophile Gautier has said: "Pour qui le monde visible existe." Nothing of charm or interest has escaped her in her pilgrimages through our cities. With the vision of an artist, and the pen of a poet, she has set down an imperishable record of the lovely remainders of our Canadian cities of romance.

It is quite possible that this book will never be listed among the "best sellers," but book lovers will find a permanent place for it on the shelf with the classics.

Many friends of the late Jean Webster, author of Daddy Long Legs and the Patty books, and niece of Mark Twain, have remarked upon the resemblance between Miss Hale and Miss Webster. There is the same charming irregularity of feature, quaintness of expression, a quality of sensitive animation that seems to pervade a personality both fine and fragile. As strange as the physical resemblance is the similarity of their handwriting, and many believe that the living poetess and singer is possessed also with that lovely human nature that distinguished and endeared Jean Webster to all who were fortunate enough to know her.

### CANADIAN COPYRIGHT BILL

The passing last month of the Canadian copyright bill has made a profound impression upon authors in Canada. Several are preparing to leave Canada and take up residence in the United States, where they declare laws are not especially leveled at their craft. The Canadian Bookman, commenting upon the act, says:

"It is felt by the authors that not only have their interests been sacrificed, but in failing to adhere in full measure to the Berne convention, the Dominion parliament has exhibited a restricted national sense, and surrendered ignominiously to the self interested demands of the printing trade interests. . . . It gives authors of

union countries, other than natives, absolute control over publications of their works in Canada. There in that provision is the rub. Authors of other countries get protection not vouchsafed to authors of our own land. The authors of Canada are wondering why they are thus discriminated against, and are convinced that the 'nigger in the woodpile' is the fact as expressed in the senate when the bill received its third reading, that there are more printers than authors in Canada, and that the desires of the former must take precedence in the eyes of legislators, in utter disregard of the principle at stake."

It is true enough as maintained by Senator Loughheed, who was one of the sponsors of this act, that there are more printers than authors in Canada. It is also true that such an act will tend to further reduce the number of authors in Canada. In "protecting" the printers and publishers at the expense and sacrifice of Canada's authors it is possible that the legislators ignored the fact that the printer is safeguarded by regular employment and steady salaries. He has his union hours and his union pay, but the author is largely dependent upon his inspiration, and seldom has a steady market for his work. The publisher on the other hand, "holds the purse" as it were. Nevertheless both publisher and printer have their dependence upon the original product of the author, and by author I use the term in the larger sense, meaning all types of writers, whose product must pass through the printing press. Without the

author, in fact, the publisher and the printer cannot exist. This act is a severe and serious blow to the Canadian author, and will have detrimental effects upon our future literature. Such an act should be exposed. The sponsors of it may find themselves pilloried in print by the pens of the very men and women they have injured. It would seem as if no statesman of a wide vision, no real well-wisher of Canada would desire to see a decrease in our literary production. Nevertheless it is a fact, that while other countries are conserving and cultivating and encouraging their talent, by this act Canada coolly opens the gate which leads to expatriation for the author or the alternative fate of a starvation livelihood in his own country.

Can anyone wonder why such authors as Arthur Stringer, Basil King, Agnes Repplier and many others live in the United States in preference to the country they love. It is simply a matter of self protection, which the adage assures us is the first law of nature. If laws were made discriminating against the lawyer, the doctor,

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# BOOKS

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the tradesman, in Canada, I have my doubts whether they would continue to function in Canada.

Arthur Stringer passed through Calgary last week, looking as big and wholesome as ever. He is living now in a lovely part of New Jersey, Mountain Lakes, which he tells me has become quite a center for the artist and writers of New York. He is writing a new novel of our prairie and ranching life. Though forced, for financial reasons, to live outside of Canada, Arthur is still wholeheartedly Canadian, and he told me that all of his future novels would be of this country. That is good news, because Arthur Stringer is one of our foremost Canadian authors and poets.

The Calgary branch of the Canadian Authors' association loses in Dr. MacRae one of its most valued members and its vice-president. Author of The History of Alberta, though not author of the Who's Who Gallery, which against his will was injected into his work by commercial interests, he is an outstanding figure in the literary and educational life of this city. The association recently honored Dr. MacRae at a banquet, where eulogistic speeches were made by such notables as his worship Mayor Webster, Consul S. C. Reat, Dr. Johnston, Dr. Scott, W. M. Davidson, Father Cameron, P. Harcourt O'Reilley and Mrs. Marshall. Witty and gay as were the speeches, an undertone of sadness at the thought of the parting from one so honored and loved was discernible, and Auld Lang Syne was sung by all standing with considerable emotion.