

# Canadian Authors Needed to Give True Idea of Resources

Canada, Land of Snow and Ice, Idea of Americans, Says Mrs. F. Reeve to Women's Canadian Club

It is the authors of Canada who will "put her on the map" and give the people of other countries a true impression of the vast resources and opportunities to be found here, according to Mrs. Frances F. Reeve (Onota Watanna), who spoke on the "Canadian Spirit in Our Literature," at the annual reception to the new officers of the Women's Canadian club held in the Knox church parlors Wednesday afternoon.

Mrs. Reeve said in part:

It has been said that there is no such thing as a typically Canadian literature. In a measure that is quite true. How should there be, when our authors have been living in and writing of another land than Canada? Only the French-Canadian has given us something that we might term typical—the poems of Louis Fréchette, Dr. Drummond and others.

The first movement to awaken the Canadian authors to a realization of their country's need of them came when Murray Gibson founded the Canadian Authors' association. He was not contented merely to send word to the authors. He went what I think he himself termed "mining" for them. He traveled all over the country seeking them, and went across into the States to bring home our wandering sons. Authors are not as a general rule unobtainable, but their work forces them to a rigid scheme of life where they are obliged to crawl into their holes, so to speak, in order to write in peace. But there was scarcely a Canadian author who did not respond to Mr. Gibson's appeal. They came from far and near—from all parts of Canada, big and little authors.

For a long time we have been exasperated by the pernicious exploitation and misrepresentation of Canada in stories and motion picture plays written by authors who are not really Canadian, and whose knowledge of Canada, to quote from a newspaper man, is that "gained merely through train windows, or a sojourn of a day or two in the country." Spread abroad in magazines and books and sprawled upon the screen, we behold our country pictured as one vast expanse of snow and ice. I do not recall ever seeing a Canadian screen play that did not specialize on snow as the main product of Canada. I saw a picture once which showed Winnipeg as a sort of trading post, against which Indians and curious derelicts lolled, while people came to the railway station on snowshoes and skis and arrayed in parkas and mukluks, the garb of the Arctic regions.

## Have Bag of Tricks

These manufacturers of alleged Canadian stories never tire of a little bag of tricks they show the world over and over again, and call it "Canada." It goes something like this: Snow, snow, snow, icicles and icebergs, Indian maidens, noble mounted men, innocent fugitives from justice, ragged French Canucks, more snow, polar bears, sleigh dogs, prairie fires, a lone waste of land and the wolf's long howl, and to vary the monotony of the everlasting snow and blizzards, bear cubs and small wild animals cavort through the picture, which, however, must never lose its cold aspect of complete desolation. You all know the formula. Now, I ask you, how many of us have ever known such a Canada as that.

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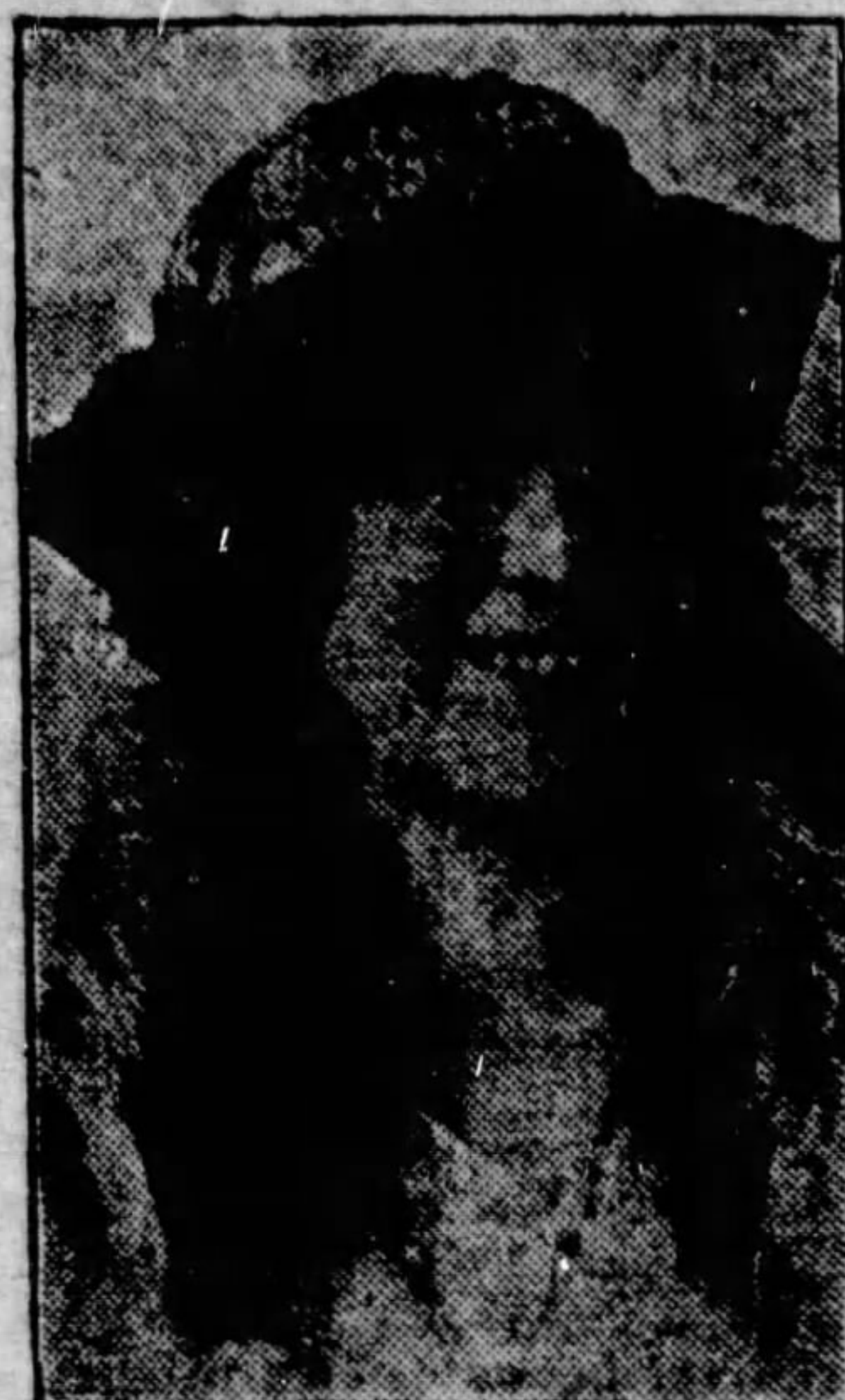
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MRS. F. F. REEVES, "Onota Watanna"

and is it not a shame that we should be thus publicly libeled?

Not so long ago a producer of plays told a Calgary audience that he had come up here to take "snow pictures" for a Canadian play—by the way that play was not written by a Canadian, but by a man who had been born in Ohio, I think, and had sojourned for a time in our mountains. This producer stated that he could not find the snow, and was obliged to go to Arizona to take his Canadian pictures there.

## Has Healthy, Cold Climate

Of course we know that in some parts of Canada we have a robust, healthy cold winter; but it is no colder than a great part of the United States, and our health, our spirits, our happiness seem not to have been affected by our cold. On the other hand there are parts of Canada where the climate is so temperate that the country blooms like the rose, and is a garden as fair as anything of which California boasts. How few people outside of Canada, however, know this. They have beaten into their system the legend of our implacable cold.

Is it any wonder, therefore, that many people are under the delusion that Alberta is located near, and has the climate of the north pole?

Who is going to correct the false impression sent abroad concerning Canada if not our writers? True, our soldiers brought us imperishable fame, but did not something rise in your throat when you read stories or saw pictures on the screen of the marching men and heroes of another nation, when our own men were limping around the streets or had come not back at all? Where was our Canadian author then? We wanted the hero to be Canadian. But don't blame the Canadian author. The ones with the most eloquent pens were living in another country.

I do not want to paint too dark a picture of the condition of our authors. We are coming up in the world. If you are good to us and read our books, amen—why, you won't know us in half a dozen years from now. Considering the size of our population, Canada is doing remarkably well so far as authors are concerned.

## Noted Canadians

Here are some names to conjure with, not only at home but abroad:

Basil King, one of the best sellers in the United States, who never gave up his Canadian citizenship, and who rushed back to Canada when the Authors' association was formed, and allied himself with the organization. Arthur Stringer, who could not write a dull line if he tried; Marjorie Pickthall, about whom the "Star Dust" made a literal halo; Bliss Carman, our poet laureate—the United States has no greater living poet than Carman; Harvey O'Higgins, one of the cleverest of writers and a famous playwright, whose productions in New York City are an annual event; Ernest Thompson Seton, world famous animal and nature stories; Agnes Laut, whom I once heard described with Ida Tarbell, as being one of the two greatest women essayists in the United States; Sir Gilbert Parker, internationally famous; Stephen Leacock. When I was in New York I was a guest at a very exclusive club, and the piece de resistance of the evening was a reading by a famous star of excerpts from Stephen Leacock's deliciously witty essays. Ralph Connor's books sell like hot cakes—they are virile, exciting, thrilling.

## Better Known in U.S.

Robert Service's poems have been read till they are threadbare. I heard them more in the States than here. Marshall Saunders' "Beautiful Joe" has had a sale of over two million copies. She is a most delightful woman, full of fire and magnetism. She was perfectly lovely to me when I was in Toronto. Murray Gibson is one of the most versatile and polished of novelists. His new book, "Pagan Love," is a remarkable achievement, and his "Conquering Hero" is of our own Rockies and the B.C. ranching country. I should have put Mr. Gibson first of all, because of the debt the authors of Canada owe to him. In Willard Mack, whose parents reside in Alberta, we have a man of distinct genius, both as a playwright and an actor. His "Tiger Rose" and "Kick In" were among the greatest New York successes in their time. I do not need to sound the praises of Nellie McClung—downright, whole-hearted Nellie! or of Mrs. Murphy. You know these authors as well as I do. Calgary should feel an especial pride in Sergeant Kendall. He has given lifelike pen pictures of one of the most romantic and heroic figures in all Canadian history—the mounted policeman. There has been a train of imitators of Kendall. His characters have been transplanted bodily into stories and film plays, but an imitation is never as good as the original, and Kendall's work stands alone. It will survive when the imitations have passed into deserved obscurity. Isn't it a pity that a man of such great talent should not be able to devote all of his time to writing. I feel sure,

## TODAY'S CALENDAR

Womans - Labor league, meeting, Robinson and Linton hall, 8 p.m.  
Knox Y.P.S., dramatic and musical evening, lower hall, 8:15 p.m.  
South Alberta Pioneer and Old-Timers' association, banquet, Palliser ballroom, 7 p.m.  
C.P.R. Male Voice choir, concert, Al Azhar temple, 8 p.m.  
Central Methodist W.M.S., meeting, 8 p.m.  
Trinity Methodist W.M.S., meeting, Mrs. McCullough, 63 New street, 8 p.m.  
Order of the Royal Purple, dance, Elks' club rooms, 9 p.m.  
Pro-Cathedral Women's Guild, whist drive, Paget hall, 8 p.m.

if he could do so, it would mean a fine thing for Canada.

## L. Adam Beck Is Woman

I thought L. Adam Beck, author of "The Key of Dreams," was a man. It appears that that is a pseudonym of a lady living in Victoria. Her book is a prose poem. She is also the author of the "Ninth Vibration" and several short stories in the Atlantic Monthly. There is a fascinating mysticism and charm about all that she writes. Then there is George F. Pringle, author of "Tillicums of the Trail," as good a book of Yukon yarns as was ever written. There is Mrs. Eccleston Mackay, Mazon de la Roche, Kerlan Keith, Arthur Heming, Hopkins Moorehouse, G. D. Roberts, Frank Packard—all big names, and extremely clever and talented writers. There is L. M. Montgomery of "Anne of Green Gables" fame. There is the Rev. H. A. Cody, Professor Wallace, Frederick William Wallace, Miss J. G. Sine and Professor Allison, not only a discriminating critic, who writes beautiful English, but a kind and helpful friend to the authors. All of these are Canadian authors. Then there is Robert Stead. Now the Canadian spirit is certainly imprisoned in the stories of this author. Stead has, in my opinion, a great deal of the element that goes to the making of a truly great writer. His books are packed full of intimate details of Canadian everyday life. His people are real, ordinary everyday people that we all know. There is a charm and poetry that permeates his work, and his last novel, "Neighbours," is an epic of western Canada. Yet Stead, like Mr. Gibson, holds a position which takes a great deal of his time, and he must need to burn the midnight oil in order to write.

## Many Canadian Authors

It is impossible to give the names of all of our Canadian authors. I am afraid I have left out many of our most illustrious and talented; and I omitted many whose work I do not know.

Besides Sergeant Kendall, Calgary has another author who is likely very soon to be heard from. I refer to Mrs. Flos Jewel Williams, whose new novel "The Judgment of Solomon" is to be published by Hodder and Stoughton, and I assure you that it is an exceedingly interesting and cleverly written book, and remarkable as a first novel.

## Mrs. Stavert Spoke

Mrs. Byrtha Stavert, who spoke on "Press Women as Nation Builders," carried out the same idea that Mrs. Reeve brought to the attention of the club. Newspaper women have made their profession one of high standards and ideals, she said, one that they are proud of, for they endeavor to serve only the best interests of the people.

The disappearance of the "yellow journals" of a few years ago, Mrs. Stavert said, is due to the stand that press women all over the continent have taken. They refuse to "muck rake" for a sensational story, and, most firmly, they refuse to use their pens to harm the woman movement.

The press gives what is demanded of it, the speaker said, and if the public wants only social news on the woman's page, social news will be given; but if the more serious things are wanted, the press women stand ready to give them to the public. The press is getting better, cleaner and finer every day, she said. Press women help in counteracting false impressions abroad in Canada—and press women can be honest-to-goodness advertisers of Canada.

## Paid Tribute to Miss Hind

Mrs. Stavert paid a high tribute to Miss Cora Hind, of the Winnipeg Free Press, who is now in the city, telling of her life in the west as a real pioneer newspaper woman. At present she is financial editor of the Free Press, and England looks to her as the absolute authority on conditions in the west.

Mrs. Miriam Green Ellis, of Edmonton, is another press woman who has made a name for herself in Canada. When false reports were reaching the east and the States in regard to conditions in the Peace River district, Mrs. Stavert said, Mrs. Ellis went into the district herself to secure the facts, bringing back pictures and historical data which has been of invaluable aid in the development of the Peace River country.

The press has a powerful influence in national life, Mrs. Stavert said, and the woman's page is increasingly important. The spirit of the press must breathe nationalism, she said, and the success or failure depends on the people.

The greatest asset of a nation, she concluded, is its deathless literature.

## WEDDINGS

### WILSON-CAHILL

A quiet wedding was solemnized by Rev. Dr. G. W. Kerby at his residence Wednesday, January 17, when Anna E. Cahill, of Vancouver, was united in marriage to Robert Wilson, of Calgary. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson will make their home at 702 Boulevard northwest.

### ARTISTIC EFFECT

A simple black silk gown, with a fitted bodice and no sleeves, has a huge corsage of flowers in mulberry and blue tone arranged in large petals embroidered in gold thread.

### SNAPPY BLOUSE

A very smart blouse of white crepe has collar, cuffs and a hip band of pleated white moire and red leather in a checker board pattern.