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Bliss Carman Canadian Poet

It may not be generally known that Bliss Carman, Canadian poet, is seriously ill of tuberculosis at Saranac Lake, N.Y. Some people argue that Carman is not a Canadian poet because he has lived most of his life in New York City. Do not suggest this to any Carman enthusiast or he will hit you. Ask Peter McArthur, or Arthur Stringer, both of whom were pals of his in New York. Read his poems—at least some of the most famous are Canadian in subject. Every editor in Canada should know "The Ships of Grey St. John." Here is the poem:

Smile, you inland hills and rivers,
Flush, you mountains, in the dawn,
But my roving heart is seaward
With the ships of grey St. John.

Fair the land lies, full of August,
Meadow island, shingly bar,
Open barns and breezy twilight,
Peace and the mild evening star.

Gently now this greatest country
The old habitus takes on
But my wintry heart is outbound
With the great ships of St. John.

Once in your wide arms you held me
Till the man-child was a man,
Canada, great nurse and mother,
Of the young, sea-roving clan.

Always your bright face above me
Through the dreams of boyhood
shoes,
New far alien countries call me
With the ships of grey St. John.

Swing, you tides, up out of Fundy,
Blow, you white fogs, in from sea,
I was born to be your fellow,
You were bred to pilot me.

At the touch of your strong fingers
Doubt, the derelict, has gone;
Sane and glad I clear the headland,
With the white ships of St. John.

Loyalists, my fathers, builded
This grey port of the grey sea,
When the duty to ideals
Could not let well being be.

When the breadth of scarlet bunting
Fits the wreath of maple on,
I must cheer too—slip my moorings
With the ships of grey St. John.

Fearless-hearted port of heroes,
Be a word to lift the world,
Till the many see the signal
Of the few once more unfurled.

Past the lighthouse, past the nun-
buoy,
Past the crimson rising sun,
There are dreams go down the harbor
With the tall ships of St. John.

In the morning I am with them
As they clear the island bar—
Fate till speak by speak the midday
Has forgotten where they are.

But I sight a vaster sea-line,
Wider leeway, longer run,
Whose discoverers return not
With the ships of grey St. John.

There's real passion for nature in
this. No shipping firm ever could use
it for advertising. It has nothing to
do with caroes. Just ships and how

they make a man feel. A few hundred poems like that here and there in Canada would make this country get a size in the imagination that caroes never give it. And for 25 years Carman has been turning out poetry at an average of a volume a year.

But neither the poet nor the newspaperman has seen each other. Carman's birthplace was Fredericton, N.B. He graduated from college down there and from both Edinburgh and Harvard, studied law, practiced as a civil engineer and taught school. He was afterwards an editor and drifted down to New York, where for years he was the principal figure in elevated Bohemia. New York never went wild over Carman. It just knew him. Always if any tourist asked, "By the way, have you any poet in this burg, any more the real thing than Le Gallienne?" there was somebody to answer, "Oh, sure! There's Bliss Carman. He's the real thing in pure poetry there is since Walt Whitman and Whitcomb Riley. He looks like a statue by Rodin. He never has any money. Got brains enough to be one of the biggest editors in America. Ask Kennelley, his publisher. He'll tell you. But Carman just prefers to use his brains in singing verse with ideas in it. So he's always hard up. Where does he hail from, you say? Oh, from up Canada way, somewhere round St. John. Yes, he talks a lot about Canada. Why didn't he stay there? Oh, well, if a man's going to half starve on poetry it's far more interesting to do it in a big town like New York."

A few of Carman's well-wishers in Toronto recently raised a fund for his benefit and there is still work to do along that line for the man who is the personal friend of John Burroughs and L. Gallienne and was of Whitcomb Riley and Theodore Roosevelt, and has never become a naturalized citizen of the United States.

Both Had Cause to Give Thanks. The following story has been told by our esteemed fellow citizen, James L. Hughes, himself.

On one occasion Hughes was traveling in New York. When he reached the frontier he was accosted by the U. S. immigration official as is the usual custom.

"Are you an American?" inquired the officer.

"Yes," replied James L., "and a Canadian, thank God!"

"What you are staying long in the States?" next asked the man in uniform.

"No," replied Mr. Hughes, "not very long."

"Thank God!" ejaculated the immigration officer.—Toronto Star.

Russia's Eye Crop. In spite of her primitive agricultural methods Russia produces 51 per cent. of the world's rye, 25 per cent. of the world's oats, 33 per cent. of the world's barley and 22 per cent. of the world's wheat.

For, in Asia Magazine. Notwithstanding the primitive character of her rural economy, Russia had in 1918, 23,862,000 horses, 51,355,000 sheep, 23,862,000 sheep, and 14,132,000 pigs. It will be perceived that she was considerably ahead of the United States both in horses and sheep and had almost as many head of cattle. Nor can there be any question about the vast possibilities of the still unexplored mineral deposits of the country. Russia is rich in coal, iron ore, manganese, copper, gold, platinum, asbestos, salt and asphalt and that by no means exhausts the enumeration. In the thirty years between 1885 and 1915 the production of coal, iron ore and copper increased about eightfold, that of zinc threefold, while that of gold and salt nearly doubled. Russia has practically a monopoly in platinum, the most valuable of metals, and she produces about one-fourth as much gold as South Africa. She is the second largest producer of mineral oil, and her production of copper would, under proper direction, easily exceed that of any other country in the world. During the last hundred years, the population of Russia has been exactly quadrupled. Should Russia's population increase in the same ratio in the next hundred years, and it may easily do so if the vast latent resources of the country are adequately utilized, the great commonwealth that will face the year 2020 would have within the limits of the Russia of 1914, a population of more than 700,000,000. The Co-operatives are probably not dawning their vision by any such outlook, but they are, according to the declarations of their leaders, calmly awaiting the advent of internal peace in Russia, in the full consciousness that no economic future of that tremendous aggregate of material wealth and population can be conceived without assisting to them a leading role in its upbuilding.

Tablets From Babylon. A group of valuable historic tablets from the excavations of the city of Babylon, bearing dates as far back as three and a half centuries before the Christian era, was recently secured by Stanford University. Several of the pieces carry the distinct prints of the fingers which moulded them over 4,000 years ago. One sundried contract bears the name of Darius, the Persian King of Babylon and is dated in the second year of his reign. The system of characters on the tablets is composed of horizontal, vertical or oblique triangular strokes. The cuneiform writing, it is said, was first adopted by the Babylonians after its invention by the Sumerians, and was used by them from about 4500 B.C. It passed from them to the Assyrians who used it with some changes, notably in recording the life and death of the kings on the surface of terra cotta bricks.

Eastern Lamps. There have arrived at Borsal on lamps which are to be hung in the sanctuary in the parish church, St. the London Times. They are the gift of Donald Maxwell, a former churchwarden, who bought the lamps in Damascus early in 1914. When the war broke out the lamps were given up for lost. Soon after the Holy Land fell into Lord Allenby's hands, Maxwell was again in Damascus and found the lamps. They had been used by their maker, a Syrian Christian, under a heap of rubbish at the back of his shop, which the Turk turned into a mustard factory.

Locks and keys of brass and iron have been found in the ruins of Pompeii.

HE LOOKS FORWARD.

Lord Montagu Expects Big Things of Aviation.

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu is certainly one of the pioneers of aviation, as far as patronage and interest are concerned. When most men were regarding it as an amiable hobby of a few inventive enthusiasts, Lord Montagu was anxiously discerning to travel from England to America to see the first airplane constructed by the Wright brothers. To be sure, he told a London audience the other day that the machine was nothing worth to look at; it had the appearance, in fact, of being fastened with wire from a soda water bottle, and fashioned of a few tin cans and parts of a drawing-room curtain. But this did not dim his faith. For Lord Montagu was looking forward, some seventeen years ago, when he inspected the Wright brothers' machine, and he is still looking forward.

He looks forward, in the near future, to an airgram service between London and Paris, and a little later on, to one between London and Delhi. He looks forward to the early establishment of six great imperial routes, from England to all parts of the British Commonwealth; England to Canada, via Newfoundland; England to West Africa, via France and Spain; England to Egypt, India, and the Cape, via France, Italy, and Egypt; England to Australia and New Zealand, via India, Burma, and the Federated Malay States; England to Hong Kong, via India and Burma; and England to the South Sea Islands, via Australia.

In this tremendous system Lord Montagu sees England herself as a terminus, but Egypt as the great world junction. Egypt, Lord Montagu evidently considers, is adapted and destined to become a kind of Clapham Junction of the air. Immunity from fog, immunity from high winds, and a clear sky most of the time make Egyptian conditions for aviation ideal, whilst geographically the land of the Nile is obviously the aerial clearing house for three continents. Lord Montagu is ahead of his time, of course, but then so are all pioneers.

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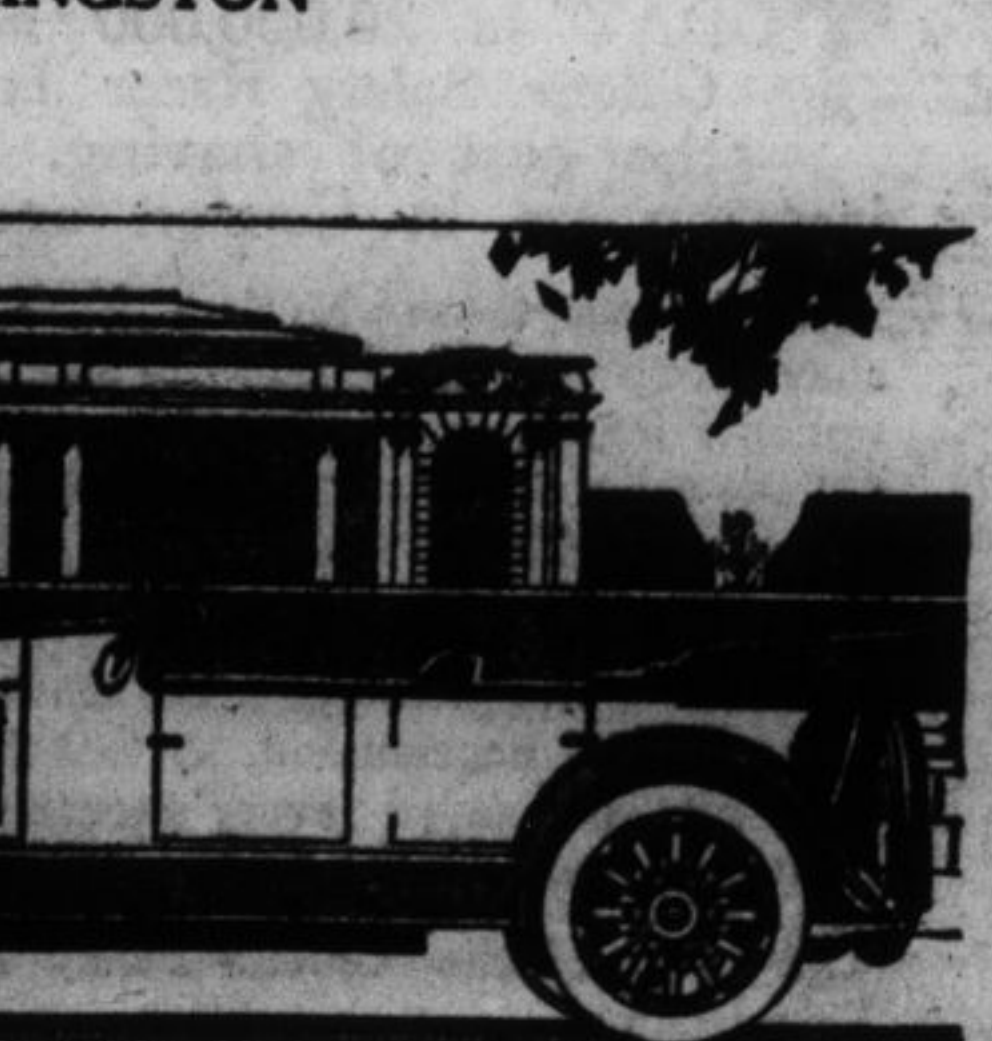
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