

Rivers of Canada

O all the little rivers that run to Hudson's Bay,
They call me and call me to follow them away.
Missinaibi, Abitibi, Little Current--where they run
Dancing and sparkling I see them in the sun.
I hear the brawling rapid, the thunder of the fall,
And when I think upon them I cannot stay at all.
At the far end of the carry, where the wilderness begins,
Set me down with my canoe-load--and forgiveness of my sins.
O all the mighty rivers beneath the Polar Star,
They call me and call me to follow them afar.

Peace and Athabasca and Coppermine and Slave,
And Yukon and Mackenzie--the highroads of the brave.

Saskatchewan, Assiniboine, the Bow and the Qu'Appelle,
And many a prairie river whose name is like a spell.

They rumor through the twilight at the edge of the unknown,
"There's a message waiting for you, and a kingdom all your own.

"The wilderness shall feed you, her gleam shall be your guide.
Come out from desolations, our path of hope is wide."

O all the headlong rivers that hurry to the West,
They call me and lure me with the joy of their unrest.

Columbia and Fraser and Bear and Kootenay,
I love their fearless reaches where winds untarnished play--

The rush of glacial water across the pebbly bar
To polished pools of azure where the hidden boulders are.

Just there, with heaven smiling, any morning I would be,
Where all the silver rivers go racing to the sea.

O well remembered rivers that sing of long ago,
Ajourneying through summer or dreaming under snow.

Among their meadow islands through placid days they glide,
And where the peaceful orchards are diked against the tide.

Tobique and Madawaska and shining Gaspereaux,
St. Croix and Nashwaak and St. John whose haunts I used to know.

And all the pleasant rivers that seek the Fundy foam,
They call me and call me to follow them home.

About the Author

Bliss Carman (1861 - 1929) Born April 15, 1861 in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Son of William Carman and Sophia Mary Bliss (Sophia Mary Bliss was a descendent of Daniel Bliss of Concord, Massachusetts, the great-grandfather of Ralph Waldo Emerson; and was the aunt of...