

AN ODE
ON THE DIAMOND
JUBILEE OF
CONFEDERATION
by Wilson MacDonald





THE richness of maturity has her charms—

Dusk, and the peace of twilight,
and red fruit

Heaped in an aged orchard's sun-
burnt arms,

And old men and old women
sitting mute

On sunny benches by a shadowy door,

And grasses yellow and brown and the burst pods
Of milkweed, and the outflamed goldenrods,

And seeds that break with richness at the core,
And mystic streets of cities dark with age,
And wisdom of the philosophic page.



HERE is a glory in completed life,
In rich fruition, and achievement gained,
In sweet, harmonious refuge after strife—
The glory of an evening crimson-stained.

But there is equal wonder at the spring,
And at the heart of youth, aflame with fire,
And at the joyous paean of that choir
Which, in the chancel of the morning, sing,
And at the new-born moon and April showers,
And buds that light the tapers of rich flowers.



RITAIN, my mother, rich store-
house of the mind!

Your dust is powdered history,
your trees

Are temples wherein ages are
enshrined,

Your rocks are scripted
records of the seas.

Upon your head rests well a shining crown

Fashioned by golden hammers of bard and seer.

For all you gave the earth we hold you dear—

The glory of a long and bright renown,
Song, and the blood of martyrs, and those hands
That led us to our own beloved lands.



OUR splendor is of mid-day, ours
of light

Just breaking in new wonder on
the earth.

Your wings are strong and sure
from ancient flight;

We are young falcons at our
journey's birth.

Yet some of our strong brood are high in air,
Trooping along the clouds abreast with thine—

On roads above the murmur of the pine

Where sunlight falls like showers of golden hair.

Yours are great castles, dark against the skies;

Ours are the quarries where new castles rise.



DARK, unmeasured quarries !
Who shall sing
How wide and deep your sub-
terranean flow
From whose robust and patient
loins shall spring
Great cities wrought in marble
white as snow ?

O vast domains, bewildering the mind
With frontiers dim and distant as a dream !
Land of the matchless march of lake and stream !
Land of the virile seasons ! Who shall find
A firmer rock whereon to fashion fame
For coming years and peoples to acclaim ?



AND yet the vastness of our lovely
lands,

The beauty of her acres or her
climes—

Warm on the shining Juan de
Fuca sands

Or cool and fragrant in her
northern pines—

Are not to feed our vanity or boast.

These are a splendid heritage; we made
Not one gold beam of light, nor dark of shade,

Nor one lone acre between coast and coast;
And, though our mountains march in lordly ranks,
The fool alone will boast, the wise give thanks.



OW sixty years have passed into
those shades

Wherein nor sun nor moon shall
light them more.

And through these dim and richly-
stored arcades

I lift my torch with reverence
and explore.

The startled grottoes sing around my feet,
And stalactites of memory catch my fire;
And all our dead, like one awakened choir,
Emerge from these cold caverns of retreat:
Macdonald, Cartier, Brown, and Laurier
Stand there erect, expectant of this day.



ND there, in retrospection's darken-
ing gleam,

I see that valiant company
again—

The Fathers of our Country, whose
fine dream

Welded a thousand leagues in
one domain;

And lit the ardent Saxon fires anew

In regions where her purest flame now burns:

Theirs was the probing vision that discerns,

In fog and rain, the sunlight breaking through;

And theirs the seership and prophetic powers

To sense the rise of these amazing hours.



USTERE historian of this age of
man!

Would that your faithful chron-
icle might record:

"She was a nation loved and wooed
by Pan,

And beauty in her kingdoms
was restored.

Her frontiers danced with flowers and singing trees,

Nor any gun was heard along her coast,

Nor, on her highways, any armed host,

Nor rich nor poor were found between her seas:

She was of truth a lover, and a thrall

Of justice; fair and tolerant to all."



UCH dreams are vain, but not in
vain such dreams;

For in their exaltation we arise:
And, even as water from our lakes
and streams,

We are caught up in glory to
the skies.

And, girded with new vision, we return

From the high, splendid clouds, like April showers;
And, at our touch, the flame of sleeping flowers

In the cold, hueless hearts of men will burn;
For, as in dreams of night arose the morn
So all our deathless deeds in dreams were born.



RISE then, O my Country, this
great day,
And light your eyes with that
crusading flame
Which burns all evil obstacles
away—
The pigmies of our malice and
our shame.

We have been cowards, traitors, fools and knaves;
We have been fine, heroic, strong and true;
So, in this purple hour, let us renew
Our strength and bear our hatreds to their graves—
A Kingdom, with crescendo of the sea
Sounding the golden age that is to be.