

It is the crowning achievement of Abraham's life and his legacy to his grandson, and to the new country in which they live.

Out of the past, then, comes the present made more perfect through suffering. Out of death comes life. Out of the countries sick with the disease of age, comes the new country of uncorrupted ideals:

Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness. . . . (Psalm xxx, 11).

In the Bible, a primary source for symbolic imagery in Canadian letters, the intended sacrifice and eventual salvation of Isaac and the people of Israel occur in the Book of Genesis, the beginning of a long and eventful history. Similarly, Canadian literature is in the Book of *its* Genesis, the formative stage, in which pain and pleasure, birth and death, sincerity and artifice, are intermingled. In order for the seed to germinate, Canadian writers must preserve the positive aspects of their heritage and leave behind the toxic conventions which have slowly killed the optimism of the older cultures. Inherent in the dilemma of the modern Canadian writer is the idea of the sacrifice. Consciously and unconsciously, this phenomenon has become a significant part of the early stages of the literature. It manifests itself in the death of the individual or of the spirit, where the signs of decadence must be obliterated to permit the growth of a nation, a literature, or a human being.

## COME UNAWARES

*Dora M. Pettinella*

Quick as a squirrel  
when it climbs the highest bough  
swift as a sparrow  
when it perches on the tallest eave  
natural as hate  
when it grows without reason  
strong as an eagle  
when it spots its prey  
death should come unawares  
unseen unfelt  
that we may never learn  
to distinguish its face.