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Says Canada Cannot Be Further Exploited By Parasites of Pen

"Canada has passed the stage when it can be exploited by American parasites of the pen, with their preposterous snow stories, and false pictures of life in this country."

This is the opinion of Mrs. Frank Reeves, more generally known as "Onato Watana," the author of many tales of Western and Japanese life, in speaking candidly about what she thought of the present status of Canadian literature, when interviewed this morning in the offices of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Coming from the West, where her husband is the owner of two large ranches, Mrs. Reeves is on her way to New York to direct the picture version of her latest book, "Cattle," which won widespread recognition when it appeared a short time ago. It it a western story with the groom of a Russian novel. Later she intends to return to Canada, which she believes to be the greatest unexplored field of material to be found in any part of the world.

"There is a play and a novel in every Province of the Dominion," she says.

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Mrs. Reeves discussed freely the possibilities and limitation of Canadian literature. In her opinion "a great deal too much fuss is made over second-rate local writers who really do not deserve it. Canadians are much too easily satisfied with their literature, which outside of a few things, is very mediocre. They should not boost a book because it is Canadian, but should study it for its merit and worth," she declares.

It is a great pity, Mrs. Reeves thinks that Canadian talent should be lost and suppressed in the way it is being lost and suppressed on account of the poor market. Good writers, who after all must live, find that better reward for their efforts can be obtained elsewhere, so they leave Canada to sell it. The recent copyright legislation, made on the assumption that there are more printers than writers, is, she believes, one of the worst blowes that budding genius in Canada could have received. The only encouragement given to them is in the formation of the Authors' Association the object of which is to foster Canadian Literature.

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Mrs. Reeves spoke very bitterly of American writers, who picture Canada as a great desolate wasteland where disappointed lovers and outlaws come when they desire to remove themselves as far as possible from civilization. "During a recent visit to the United States, I saw a motion picture, the story laid in Calgary," she said. "The principal scenes were in a bar room,—Calgary of course being dry at the time—where a girl in pink tights danced with a Mounted Policeman in tiger-skin chaps!"

In commenting upon her latest book, Mrs. Reeves says it is the direct antithesis of "Cattle." It is a story of sunshine and smiles, lacking the sterner realism that some critics have styled as immoral. Here Mrs. Reeves interjected a word in defense of "Cattle." "It isn't immoral," she said. "There is no such a thing as an immoral book. It may be well written, or badly written; that is all. We will stunt ourselves very much if we bann realism, and suppress the fact that sex is the biggest thing in life."

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