

Mountains into full view. Nothing could exceed the beauty and impressiveness of some of the peaks rising on the opposite side of the narrow valley from the very waters of the creek, so that the eye can follow their gradual ascent from base to summit, without the effort it is necessary to employ in order to obtain a glimpse of Mount Carroll; I actually sat on the floor of the Pullman, as we passed below this giant, and even then strained my neck to its severest tension to reach the top-most point. We began now to see the course of the snow-slides (of which much is said and thought at this particular season). These were marked by an undergrowth of vivid green, showing where all the forest trees had been swept away by the weight of the descending mass. The railroad at this point creeps up the side of a mountain, down which some lovely cascades dash in soft threads of silvery water. I fail to trace their source, or to see the top of the height above on that side; their junction with the creek below is also lost to sight amid the woods and rocks covering the foot of the slope. Some of the finest bridges on the line have been constructed to cross these same cascades, or creeks, as they are called; that over Mountain Creek is 1,100 feet long, supported by massive trestles, and that over Stony Creek is 290 feet above the water.

Near here we came upon the commencement of the snow-sheds that have been built by the C. P. R. Co. to protect their road from the snow-slides above referred to, and which have been wont to descend the very mountain side, along which the rails are laid. The sheds extend over some five miles of the track in the worst places, observed and located last winter by engineers stationed at different points for the purpose, and they are the most solid structures imaginable. We saw them in all stages of development, from the mere shell to the complete building. They are raised against one side of the mountain in a sort of crib-work, filled in with earth and stones, and inclined to meet the ground above the cutting. The inside wall, next to the rails, is composed of solid sawed and hewn logs a foot square, laid horizontally upon wooden blocks separating the timbers from each other by a space of four inches; these beams appear to be all fitted and welded together like a child's puzzle, and are sheeted over with four-inch planks, as a finish. The opposite, or lower, side of the shed is a strong structure of posts a foot square, also sheeted in with planks; these support the sloping roof, likewise composed of solid beams resting in brackets, and of four-inch boards. These sheds required 22,000,000 feet of lumber, and employed 3,500 men. Their general effect is one of marvellous power and endurance, and they will, no doubt, be severely tested by the mighty rush of avalanches of snow during the winter, which will slide down the mountain sides, and continue their course over the roofs of the sheds to the valley below. Naturally, much of the scenery is lost in this succession of wooden tunnels, perversely occurring at some of the finest points of view: to obviate this disadvantage the Company will construct a summer track outside the line of sheds.

After we passed the summit proper, marked by an extensive wooden and tent town, we came in sight of Mount Carroll, a most stupendous peak, 5,558 feet above the railway, and 9,440 feet above the level of the sea. It lies upon the west side of the line; indeed the train passes so immediately below it that I strained my neck almost to dislocation in the endeavour to realise its vast proportions. Here, also, is seen Mount Sir Donald, the highest elevation upon the line, 6,980 feet above it, and 10,645 feet above the sea. In the immediate neighbourhood is Mount Hermit, 4,983 feet above the railway, and 9,063 feet above the sea; it derives its name from a curious conformation of rock resembling the figure of a hermit draped in a long cloak, and sharply defined against the sky.

At one o'clock we reached the Glacier Hotel, close to the station of that name, three miles west of the summit of the Selkirks. It is a most artistic building, somewhat of the Swiss chalet style, built by the enterprise of the C. P. R. Co., and intended as a summer resort for many who will now be enabled for the first time to enjoy genuine Canadian mountain air. No more lovely spot could have been selected for its situation, commanding as it does a veritable, though much disputed, sea of mountains of the grandest description; the peaks of those above-mentioned are all in view, while not a mile from the hotel lies a large glacier, a sea of green, glittering ice. There were both bear and elk close to the hotel last summer, an attraction to sportsmen in search of big game. The beauty of the locality is sufficiently vouched for by the fact that it was unanimously chosen, six months ago, by four artists as their sketching ground. Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Forbes, Mr. Fraser, of Boston, and Mr. Aiken, a Scotch painter, all rallied round the Glacier Hotel, though, owing to its unfinished condition, they were obliged to content themselves with canvas roofs. We lunched in a stationary dining-car at Glacier, and returned to Donald by the express from the coast in the afternoon. E. S.

#### ISABELLA VALANCEY CRAWFORD.

THE subject of this brief sketch died at her residence, on John Street, in this city, on Saturday, the 12th of this month. In her death Canada has lost one of her most original, powerful, and inspired singers, albeit unknown to the general public of the Dominion, and I very much fear to the literary few among us who sometimes give a passing thought to Canadian literature. For what that latter phrase means, this is not the place to discuss it, and, indeed, enough has been said about the matter, of which, curiously, little has been to the point. One thing is clear, that when a book, superior to the average milk-and-water run of colonial productions, appears, it is the duty of the press, of the trade, of the reading public as well as of the literary few, to give such a book the warmest welcome and the friendliest

treatment in their power. The one book by which I am assured the late Miss Crawford would wish herself to be known is such a one—so superior, in fact, to even works by contemporaneous American and English writers (if it will be believed) that I find a great difficulty in referring to it at all. A Canadian book can be viewed in two ways: it can be regarded as simply a Canadian book, and valued accordingly for its treatment and choice of Canadian subjects, or it can be compared with books published in other countries with regard to conception, execution, style, and weight and value of thought. How many Canadian books can be reviewed under the latter heading? Possibly three or four, certainly not more than half a dozen. The names of Heavysege, Sangster, Kirby, Prof. Roberts, Mrs. Maclean, among our English-Canadian writers, occur to me. Two or three of these names are slightly, though favourably, known in England and in occasional circles in the States—I speak, of course, here only of *belles lettres* properly considered; that is, poetry and lighter prose. It would not hurt us if these names were a little more known amongst ourselves, and with them the name of Isabella Valancey Crawford, author of "Old Spooks's Pass," and other poems. There can be no mistake about Miss Crawford's rank as a poet. Her work fulfils the most arduous conditions that the modern school can impose. There is scholarship in her book (a rare thing in Canada); there is that intimate knowledge of Nature and all natural processes which belongs so divinely to Tennyson, and which the more erotic poets show so much indifference to; there is a positive riot of imagery, warm, dazzling, and mostly correct; there is a wonderful command over various trying forms of verse, and there is a deep, spiritual vein under all the overlying charms of metre and rhetoric that proclaim the thinker as well as the versifier. The very highest qualities of the poet meet in her best work, notably, "Malcolm's Katie," a story in blank verse of about fifteen hundred lines; in "The Helot," a lurid picture of Spartan aggression, told in four hundred lines of simple but impressive quatrains, and in one or two highly original shorter pieces, such as "The Ghosts of the Trees" and "March." The subjects are mostly drawn from old-world sources, and exhibit a variety and degree of culture which entitle the book to the consideration of the world, and not one public alone. Here are "Roses in Madrid"—

Roses, Senors, roses!  
Love is subtly hid  
In the fragrant roses  
Blown in gay Madrid.

Catch the roses, Senors,  
Light on finger-tips;  
He who buys red roses  
Dreams of crimson lips.

Tinkle! my fresh roses,  
With the rare dew wet;  
Clink! my crisp, red roses,  
Like a castanet!

And here La Bouquetière sings in Paris while the guillotine crashes down momentarily behind her:

Buy my flowers, citizens—  
Here's a Parma violet;  
Ah! why is my white rose red?  
'Tis the blood of a grisette.

She sold her flowers by the quay—  
Brown her eyes and fair her hair;  
Sixteen summers old, I think—  
With a quaint, Provincial air.  
*Vogue la galère!* she's gone the way  
That flesh as well as flowers must stray.

And here the Roman rose-seller:

Not from Paestum come my roses; Patrons, see  
My flowers are Roman-blown. Marcus Lucius, thou  
To-day dost wed; buy roses, roses, roses,  
To mingle with the nuptial myrtle . . .  
. . . Virginia.

Here's a rose that has a canker in't, and yet  
It is most glorious dyed, and sweeter smells  
Than those death hath not touched. . . .

. . . Priestess, priestess,  
Thy ivory chariot stay. . . .

Thus I make  
My roses Oracles. O hark! the cymbals beat  
In god-like silver bursts of sound; I go  
To see great Caesar leading Glory home  
From Campus Martius to the Capitol!

There are many more glimpses of Spain and Italy, all vivid, highly coloured, and correct. Very different in manner are the following extracts from the "Helot":

Day was at her high unrest,  
Fevered with the wine of light;  
Loosing all her golden vest,  
Reeled she toward the coming night.

Neck-curved, serpent, silent, scaled,  
With locked rainbows stole the sea  
On the sleek, long beaches; wail'd  
Doves from column and from tree.

And different again these superb bits of blank verse—

. . . The lean, lank lion peals  
His midnight thunders over lone, red plains,  
Long-ridged, and crested on their dusty waves  
With fires from moons red-hearted as the sun.

O, am I breeding that false thing, a heart?  
Making my breast all tender for the fangs  
Of sharp remorse to plunge their hot fire in.