

At the birth of nations, as in the early youth of the individual, imagination plays an important part. The progress of poetry was timid and uncertain. Her first tentative efforts are merely expressions of the gay and jovial sentiments of our ancestors, epigrams, odes and satires; wholesome good sense clothed often in verse of very mediocre quality; songs, rough in form and finish, brightened by the sparkle of wit and vivacity. They consisted mostly of fugitive pieces, whose brief strains reflected the popular life of the period. They betray lack of cultivation and experience, need of that leisure and classical training which is indispensable to literary work of an enduring character. The best writing of this epoch is contributed by Quesnel, Mermet and Bibauld. Michel Bibauld is the author of a volume of poems entitled "*Epitres et Satires*." The verse (it can scarcely be dignified by the name of poetry) is harsh and imperfect, the sound is constantly sacrificed to the sense, the morality may be edifying, but it certainly cannot be termed entertaining.

J. D. Mermet, captain and adjutant in the regiment of Waterville, came to Canada in 1813 with his regiment. While in the country he published quite a number of poems, some of which exhibit considerable powers of imagination. His fancy appears to have been captivated by De Salaberry's heroism. He wrote "*La Victoire de Chateauguay*" and "*Chambly*," a really fine poem which ends with an eloquent and impassioned address to the Canadian hero. Among Mermet's shorter poems we may select "*La Main*," "*L'Homme Dieu*" and "*L'Art Indéfinissable*," as especially worthy of attention.

Joseph Quesnel was born at St. Malo, 1749. The story of his life is full of incident and adventure. A sailor by profession, a wanderer from inclination, he gained his experience in many lands. He visited, at different times, Pondicherry, Madagascar, French Guinea, Brazil and the Antilles. In 1779, he was in command of a war-ship bound