

directly inspired by Canadian reality. Nevertheless our poetry remains diversified and unique, which perhaps adds to its richness and interest.

Unfortunately most of our poets who, in the course of the past twenty-five years, showed signs of great promise, seem to have given up poetry and to have taken refuge in a sterile silence. Such is the case with poets like Guy Delahaye, Paul Morin and René Chopin. As for some others, if they have not ceased to write poetry, they have not collected their poems in book-form. As for Saint-Denys Garneau, he was carried off in the prime of life, and his tragic death has prevented him from fulfilling the promise shown in his Regards et Jeux dans l'espace. With his first book of poems, this young man proved himself a marvellous craftsman, creating with the simplest words and the humblest means a world of dreams and games, in which the innocence of youth did not exclude gravity. The only poets who, so far, have fulfilled their promise are Alain Grandbois, Roger Brien and François Hertel whose later works will be commented upon besides those of the new-comers: Clément Marchand, Rina Lasnier and Anne Hébert.

Throughout the rather short history of our poetry, there has been a strong romantic trend, inherited mainly from Victor Hugo. Its most important representatives were successively: Louis Fréchette, William Chapman, Charles Gill and Robert Choquette. This tradition is still very much alive today. Its most distinguished representative is Roger Brien, who celebrates in sonorous lines and ambitious poems, the eternal themes which have always haunted the imagination of the romantic poets. His last poetical undertaking, Cythère is the good side of a complex vision of which his first poem, Faust aux enfers was the evil side. After short digressions on our flora and history, this poet has now reverted to the universal themes of death and sin and the quest of truth and happiness.

While Roger Brien is a deeply Christian poet who responds to the universal spell of the Holy Writ, Clément Marchand has found personal means of expression for the experiences, aspirations and ideals of the two largest groups of the Canadian community: the peasantry and the proletariat. There are in his works three main veins: a rural vein, an urban vein and a fusion of the first two, which expresses the conflict in the soul of the poet between the country from which he comes and the city to which he gave himself.

In the rural poems are reflected the tranquillity, the steadiness and the full life of the peasants who live in harmony with nature. These peaceful visions of order and happiness are contrasted with short poems inspired by the daily joys, sufferings and habits of the common people toiling in dusty and noisy factories, wandering in narrow streets and frequenting smoky taverns. Marchand's most moving poems belong to the third group, in which he puts in opposition the pure joys and dreams of his rural childhood and his discovery of the sufferings of the city dwellers, who, "from day-break to sunset, give their flesh to the teeth of machines." Instead of indulging in fruitless lamentations, the poet tries to create a sound Christian brotherhood which could allay their sufferings and make their life worthwhile. It is in these poems, in which he expresses his experience of human grief and his dream of universal love that the poet attains to the peak of Canadian poetry.