

"It is Moore's great distinction that he brought into English verse something of the variety and multiplicity of musical rhythms . . . The need for fitting metre to music forced Moore into employing a wide variety of stanzas."

For his lyrics Burns was limited entirely to traditional melodies which he learned mostly by ear. Moore was more of a musician, and in his "Sacred Songs" drew upon melodies by Handel, Beethoven and Haydn, though without much success. It was left for Robert Louis Stevenson to write an outstanding lyric in English to a melody by Schubert. Stevenson took the song "Muth" from Schubert's "Winterreise," and to the melody he wrote one of his best-known lyrics, "The Vagabond"

"Give to me the life I love  
Let the lave go by me."

a lyric which admirably fits and is plainly inspired by the melody to which it was written.

The trail blazed by R. L. Stevenson opens up to the Canadian poet a country of limitless possibilities. There is an immensely rich mine of European song within the public domain, the original words of which are not sufficiently familiar to make new words jar upon the average listener. In a country such as Canada, with a population mostly of European stock, these melodies are just as much our heritage as the heritage of those who remained in Europe. Why should not the Canadian poet apply to them words descriptive of the Canadian scene or conveying atmosphere of Canadian life?

In selecting melodies, the tendency of the Canadian poet might naturally be in favor of his own original stock—Scots, Irish, English, Scandinavian, French, Ukrainian, Hungarian, German or what not? But melody has a universal appeal, and with the knowledge spread by radio and the phonograph record, the musical repertoire of the average Canadian is not confined to one country. The advantage of drawing upon an international stock of melody is that this offers a wider variety of metre.

In order to illustrate the variety of metre available through this source, I propose, with your permission, to give some examples with the aid of phonograph and lantern slide. The examples I have brought here to-day are lyrics with a Canadian theme, written to

(1) An old English country dance, the original words of which have been lost—the melody of which I have adapted to a lyric appropriate to Ontario—a *Canning Song*: