



Home Hunger.

NINA MOORE JAMIESON.

Oh, the spring is in the country! Don't you hear the warm rain falling
On the distant greening wheat fields,
with their faces to the sky?
Oh, the spring is in the country! I can hear it calling, calling!
But here in crowded city streets, how desolate am I!

I know the sunny corners where the dandelions are peeping—
Ah, dearer far their homely face than fairest hot-house flower!
For it's springtime in the country—and I cannot see, for weeping—
Heart-homesick for the little farm, and childhood's happy hour.

I think I see the old stump fence, decked with the grapevine tender,
The long green lane, the deep, dim bush, the bare old hill, I know
Are lovely now, and calm and still, and fresh with spring-time splendor,
And longing fills the heart of me, to bid me rise and go!

The dear wee home below the hill has now another master,
The black-ridged fields, the shouldering hill, the maples waving high,
Are mine no more forever—and my tears fall fast and faster,
For here in crowded city streets, how desolate am I!

Among the Books

"Canadian Poets."

(*Canadian Poets*, by John W. Garvin, B. A.; McClelland, Goodchild & Stewart, Publishers, Toronto. Price \$2.50.)

Many times during the course of each year, *The Farmer's Advocate* and *Home Magazine* is asked for "notes" on Canadian writers; the enquirers state that they have to prepare papers for Women's Institute meetings, Literary Societies or Church Leagues, and that no information is available. To our great regret we are invariably obliged to refuse,—our time is limited and must be devoted to the matter that is to be published in the pages of our journal. We usually try to help, however, by giving some hint as to where the needed material may be obtained, but not always has this been easy,—rural libraries seldom contain an even fair showing of the works of our writers, and symposiums in terse get-at-able form have, as a rule, been few and far between.

It is, then, with peculiar satisfaction that we recommend to-day a book that came off the press for the first time last fall, *Canadian Poets*, by John W. Garvin, B. A., of Toronto, the most complete anthology of the poets of the Dominion that is on the book-market at the present time. In its 466 pages, fifty three poets are given place,—a photo-reproduction of each, a life-sketch and a critique, with enough selections from the works of each to show his or her particular style and power.

Perhaps, because these are all Canadians, or, at least, have been so identified with Canada that they are virtually Canadian, it may be interesting to give the complete list classified according to birth-place, and in beginning it is interesting to note that in point of numbers Ontario leads. It is to be feared that we of Ontario have been accustomed to look upon our province as least poetical of all the provinces. We are inland—away from the soul-inspiring sea; we are given over to an extreme of progressive and scientific agriculture and manufacturing; we have looked upon ourselves as a

peculiarly "practical" people, little given to dream—forgetting, at times, perhaps, that in someone's dream has begun all that is practical in the world. Can it be wondered at, then, if we should preen ourselves a little to find that in this anthology Ontario is revealed as very prolific of poet-souls? Of the fifty three poets listed, twenty-seven were born within its borders. These are: Charles Sangster, born in Kingston; Charles Mair, Lanark Co.; Archibald Lampman, Morpeth; Wilfred Campbell; Berlin; S. Frances Harrison, Toronto; Duncan Campbell Scott, Ottawa; Pauline Johnson, Brantford; E. W. Thomson, Peel Co.; Ethelwyn Wetherald, Rockwood; Jean Blewett, Scotia; Helena Coleman, Toronto; Thomas O'Hagan, Toronto; Dr. Albert Watson, Peel Co.; Isabel Ecclestone Mackay, Woodstock; Thomas McInnis, Dresden; Helen Merrill, Picton; Alma McCollum, Chatham; Peter McArthur, Appin; Arthur Stringer, London; Katharine Hale, Galt; Grace Blackburn, London; George A. Mackenzie, Toronto; Norah Holland, Collingwood; Laura McCully, Toronto; Virna Sheard, Cobourg; J. Edgar Middleton, Wellington Co.; Arthur S. Bourinot, Ottawa.

Nova Scotia claims six: George Frederick Cameron, born in New Glasgow; Arthur Eaton, Kentville; Dr. John Logan, Antigonish; Annie Campbell Huestis, Halifax; Robert Norwood, New Ross; William Marshall, Liverpool. Miss L. M. Montgomery, a native of P. E. I. may be placed with this list. From New Brunswick hail the brilliant "Roberts" connection, Charles G. D. Roberts, Bliss Carman, Theodore Goodridge Roberts, Elizabeth Roberts Macdonald, and Lloyd Roberts, all born in Fredericton. From Quebec four have been chosen: Frederick George Scott, Alan Sullivan and Marian Osborne, all born in Montreal, and Florence Randal Livesay, Compton.

Dr. William H. Drummond, the most characteristic "Quebec" writer, was born in Ireland, as were also Isabella Valancy Crawford, Albert Smythe, and Father Dollard; while of the remainder given place in the book, two were born in England—two of no uncertain lustre—Marjorie Pickthall and Robert W. Service.

Of the number, three are now serving at the front,—Frederick George Scott, Charles G. D. Roberts, and Robert Service. Six are dead: Charles Sangster, Isabella Valancy Crawford, George Frederick Cameron, Pauline Johnson, Dr. Drummond, and Alma McCollum.

All this, perhaps, savours much of a catalogue, and yet Canadians cannot but be interested in the personal matters concerning those of their fellow-countrymen who have become illustrious.

In reading the volume under discussion carefully, thoughtfully, and even critically, one may be struck especially by two things, the one local, the other universal.

In the first place one cannot but be impressed with the really fine work which our Canadian poets have done, and one realizes, shapely and with regret, that as a Canadian people we have not appreciated them according to their due. We have fallen into the old weakness of failing to recognize the prophets in our own country. In admiring the distant fields, which for some strange reason always look green, we have too often failed to see the rare flowers growing among the more familiar grasses at our feet.

But we must not do this. We must not do it. How can our flowers bloom at their best if we chill them and repress them with our neglect? In the name of all that is reasonable, let us awake and stretch eager hands and turn smiling faces towards our own. And let us not

make the crass and stupid mistake of withholding our appreciation until our rarest souls are dead.—One of the most pathetic spots in Canada is a corner on King Street in Toronto, where one may stand and look up at the windows over a little grocery store, from which once looked down Isabella Valancy Crawford. There, in two little rooms, she lived with her mother, a crushed soul, unable to make a comfortable living with the pen which to-day is held worthy of long remembrance.

A picture dealer stated not long ago that the very moment an artist dies his pictures double in value.—The whole principle of the miserable business is wrong. Pictures and books are never worth more than to-day. It is a shame to starve an artist, and laud him when he is dead. The artists—the painters, poets and musicians—are really the flowers of our civilization. We shall never have too many of them. They cannot be manufactured. We shall always have the great mass of plain practical people—splendid people—to do the practical work of the world. But we cannot do without the artists any more than without the flowers and the bird-songs and the blue in the sky. To the artists it is given to express the beauty that is really in the hearts of all the people. We must have such expression. Nor must we ever permit ourselves to forget that to the poet-artist comes a mission even deeper, than this. The true poet is always a seer. The truer poet he is the less does he value art for art's sake, the more must he yield to the urge to be prophet and teacher, the more must he see that the gift he holds is in fee for the whole people, and that only by "losing himself can he find himself."—So let us search out our prophets. Were it as an index to this end alone Mr. Garvin's book should be in every community, available as a reference book. So much for the first impression of which we have spoken.

The second reflection to which we have referred, as induced by a careful reading of *Canadian Poets*, is that poetry, being a union of all the arts, must needs be the highest of them all.

In reading some of the poems, one is impressed most by the music in them. There is a lilt and rhythm to them that makes its appeal chiefly through the ear—for the ear is one of the avenues by which the soul is reached.

Take, for instance, Father Dollard's sweet "Passing of the Sidhe,"—a wail that makes one think of the sobbing of the Banshee, and the dirge of mourners in a misty Irish vale:

There is weeping on Cnoc-Aulin, and
on hoary Slieve-na-mon,
There's a weary wind careering over
haggard Knockaree;
By the broken mound of Almhinn
Sad as death the voices calling,
Calling ever, wailing ever, for the passing
of the Sidhe.

Or take Pauline Johnson's "In the Shallows"—never song of gondolier more filled with the lilt of music:

I am sailing to the leeward,
Where the current runs to seaward,
Soft and slow,
Where the sleeping river grasses
Brush my paddle as it passes
To and fro.

Or Theodore Roberts' "The Reckoning", a song to arouse men to roar of battle and clash of steel:

Ye who would challenge England—
Ye who would break the night
Of the little isle in the foggy sea
And the lion-heart in the fight—
Count well your horse and your swords,
Weigh well your valour and guns,

For they who would ride against England
Must sabre her million sons.

Then there are the poems that affect one as paintings—some fine and dainty as pastels, others bold with the color that glows and dares; some making one think of Nature's own canvases, the faint gray mists and corals of dawn, the mid-night blue of a star-glittering sky, the flaming of a tropical sunset.

Consider this as a bit of water-color—
—from Duncan Campbell Scott's "The Voice and the Dusk":

The rapture from the amber height
Floats tremblingly along the plain
Where in the reeds with fairy light
The lingering fireflies gleam again.

Buried in dingles more remote,
Or drifted from some ferny rise,
The swooning of the golden-throat
Drops in the mellow dusk and dies.

A soft wind passes lightly drawn,
A wave leaps silverly and stirs
The rustling sedge, and then is gone
Down the black cavern in the firs.

Or this, from Marjorie Pickthall's "The Pool", as a bit of haunting impressionism:

Here in the night all wonders are,
Lapped in the lift of the ripple's swing,
A silver shell and a shaken star,
And a white moth's wing.
Here the young moon, when the mists
unclose,
Swims like the bud of a golden rose.

Or this, from Florence Livesay's "Khustina—the Kerchief" as a splash of daring color:

The sun was drowning in the ocean's brine
Red, red as blood;
And in the crimson flood
A young girl sewed a handkerchief with
gold.

Embroidering in gold with stitches fine—
Like lilies white
Her cheeks will look to-night,
Like pure white lilies washed with tears.

—It is not for little that Florence Randal Livesay has been spoken of in the same breath with William Morris, embroiderer in words. Marjorie Pickthall charms by her elusiveness, Miss Livesay by her daring.

When all this has been said, there remains the poetry whose basic reason is philosophy. The poet of highest order must not be only singer and artist, giver of the pleasure that appeals to the senses. He must be a seer, not only of external things, but into the human soul, into the very depths of the Universe so far as man, with his infinite possibilities, may go. And so the greatest poet must always be in advance of the crowd, and, in his highest flights, always he must inspire, must beckon to the loiterers to follow on.

It is very gratifying, in reading through this splendid anthology of our poets, to find many who measure up to this standard. In this review, but a very few confirming passages can be noted;—there are many others which would be gladly indicated did space permit.

In Charles G. D. Roberts' "Wayfarer of Earth", the inspirational quality is very marked. Perhaps it is sufficient to quote but four lines to illustrate:

And good is Earth—
But Earth not all thy good,
O thou with seed of suns
And star-fire in thy blood.

Archibald Lampman has been well called Canada's greatest Nature poet, but even he showed that he was much