

That steadfast, mournful strain, consoled
By spirits gloriously gay,
And temper of heroic mould—
What! was four years their whole short day?

Yes, only four; and not the course
Of all the centuries yet to come,
And not the infinite resource
Of nature, with her countless sum

Of figures, with her fullness vast
Of new creation evermore,
Can ever quite repeat the past,
Or just thy little self restore,

Stern law of every mortal lot,
Which man, proud man, finds hard to bear,
And builds himself I know not what
Of second life, I know not where.

But thou, when struck thine hour to go,
On us, who stood despondent by,
A meek last glance of love did'st throw,
And humbly lay thee down to die.

Yet would we keep thee in our heart—
Would fix our favourite on the scene,
Nor let thee utterly depart
And be as if thou ne'er hadst been;

And so there rise these lines of verse
On lips that rarely form them now;
While to each other we rehearse,
Such ways, such arts, such looks hadst thou;

We stroke thy broad brown paws again,
We bid thee to thy vacant chair,
We greet thee by the window pane,
We hear thy scuffle on the stair;

We see the flaps of thy large ears
Quick raised to ask which way to go;
Crossing the frozen lake appears
Thy small black figure on the snow;

Nor to us only art thou dear
Who mourn thee in thine English home;
Thou hast thine absent master's tear,
Dropt by the far Australian foam.

Thy memory lasts both here and there,
And thou shalt live as long as we,
And after that—thou dost not care;
In us was all the world to thee.

Yet, fondly zealous for thy fame,
Even to a date beyond our own
We strive to carry down thy name,
By mounded turf, and graven stone.

We lay thee, close within our reach,
Here, where the grass is smooth and warm,
Between the holly and the beech,
Where oft we watch'd thy couchant form,

Asleep, yet lending half an ear
To travellers on the Portsmouth road;
There choose we thee, O guardian dear,
Mark'd with a stone, thy last abode;

Then some, who through this garden pass,
When we too, like thyself, are clay,
Shall see thy grave upon the grass,
And stop before the stone, and say;

People who lived here long ago
Did by this stone, it seems, intend
To name for future times to know
The dacks-hound, Geist, their little friend.

BOOK NOTICES.

NOUVELLES SOIRÉES CANADIENNES. Published under the direction of
Louis H. Taché. Quebec: L. J. Demers & Frère.

The appropriate motto to this work is M. Nodier's "Hâtons-nous de raconter les délicieuses histoires du peuple avant qu'il les ait oubliées." It is a gathering of the best things that have been added to our national literature, chiefly during the past year, by French Canadian writers. The first volume of this new series was that issued for 1882, and was a revival of the old "Soirées Canadiennes," which had been discontinued twenty years before, after having been the means preserving to our literature a great quantity of valuable matter. The original series was the receptacle for those delightful "Légendes" which will keep ever fresh the name of the Abbé Casgrain. The revived work claims to be the only review devoted exclusively to original and Canadian matter. English-writing Canadians would do well to emulate their patriotic Quebec confrères in such an undertaking. Among the names, a long and distinguished list, which are represented in or connected with this volume may be mentioned particularly as being most familiar to English readers those of the Hon. P. J. O. Chauveau, the Hon. Hector Fabre, and Judge Routhier; Messieurs L. H. Fréchette, Arthur Buies, Faucher de St. Maurice, Oscar Dunn, B. Sulte, Alfred Garneau, P. Lemay, E. Gagnon, and T. Chapais. Of special value are the "Chronicles" for the different months, written for the most part by M. Chapais. M. Fréchette contributes a poem on the year 1870, and

also his fine memorial poem on Garneau, entitled "Notre Histoire." Judge Routhier writes vividly and warmly of his travels in Italy and the south of France, under the titles, "Au Pays du Soleil," and "Souvenirs de Rome." A sympathetic critical study of that lamented lyrist of such wonderful gifts, Octave Crémazie, is given by M. Chapais. The volume is printed on delicately toned paper, unbound. It is sure of a large and remunerative sale, notwithstanding the fact that its circulation will be almost confined to one Province. Small as is the French Canadian population, it is one which knows how to appreciate the works of its writers. It is owing to this, probably, that French Canadians have been more prompt than their fellow-countrymen of English race to achieve a characteristic national literature.

POEMS AND SONGS. By Evan MacColl. Toronto: Hunter, Rose & Co.

This volume, in which is gathered all the verse which Mr. MacColl has written in the English tongue, nevertheless does not represent his whole poetical achievement. His more distinctive fame has come to him as a writer of fervent Gaelic song. His work in this forceful and fiery speech is collected in a volume entitled "Clarsach Nam Beann." Among the first things to be noticed in Mr. MacColl's verse are his naturalness and his wholesome purity of tone, which are nevertheless united with a form of expression and turn of sentiment which belong distinctly to the school of Moore and Byron. The absence of careful elaboration and of marked technical finish is compensated for in part by the spontaneity of every utterance, by the direct and ardent singing impulse which is at almost all times perceptible. Mr. MacColl is an earnestly patriotic Scotchman, and in one stirring lyric he calls upon his countrymen to assert themselves and be no longer overshadowed by their English brethren. He questions if "Stands Scotland where it did;" and, in view of what he deplores as Scotch degeneracy, he seems almost to expect an answer in the negative.

"Land of the Bruce! I marvel how
With scarce a murmur comest thou
To let it seem
As if thy name
Were of the list of nations now.

* * * * *

"Up! Or evermore disown
Thy once well-won fair renown!
If, of two,
One must do,
Let the Saxon name go down."

Mr. MacColl is at his strongest when using short swift metres, in the handling of which he brings out the vim and stirring effect of which they are so capable. As an instance, take the lines on "The Findhorn." It may be fairly inferred that Mr. MacColl speaks advisedly when he thus defines a poet:—

"A player strange on life's rough stage,
Now saint, now sinner, and now sage;
A dreamer oft of creed unsound,
And yet a prophet frequent found;
A wayward wight of passions wild,
Yet tender-hearted as a child;
A spirit like the lark endowed
To sing its sweetest in a cloud;
A soul to whom, by Beauty given,
A frown is hell, a smile is heaven!
The friend of Truth, past contradiction,
And yet the very slave of Fiction;
The mortal foe of vanity,
Yet no one half so vain as he;—"

Several of Mr. MacColl's poems, such as that "On a Lady Playing the Harp," have an old-time quaintness and sweetness that are refreshing in these days of over-wrought song. In the more facile measures Mr. MacColl too often falls into commonplace; lured on by the easy movement he seems to lose his inspiration and to remain awhile unconscious of the loss. In matters of technique there are many defects, and a large number of careless rhymes are admitted. A few printer's errors have been suffered to creep in, which make hopeless confusion of two or three stanzas; but their character is obvious, and they will not be charged to the poet's account.

DEVOTEES of the fashionable art of pottery decoration owe a new debt to Miss M. Louise McLaughlin for the little volume entitled "Suggestions to China Painters," (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co.). Miss McLaughlin is the chief authority on this subject in America, as Cincinnati, owing to the rare and fine clays to be found in its vicinity, is the chosen home of the art. The little volume is before all things practical in its directions, clear, accurate, and definite. It is intended to supplement, from the author's fuller experience and more extended study, her elementary works on "China Painting" and "Pottery Decoration," which are standard textbooks in this branch of art.

MONSIGNOR CAPEL is suffering from the effects of the severe season, and has been obliged to temporarily postpone his lecturing tour.

The *Mail* prophecies that because February has "come in like lamb" it will "go out like a lion." Our contemporary has got its monthly saws mixed; and it will permit us to point out that the folk-lore in question was written of windy March. If this little slip is not attended to, the meteorological editor may be just one month ahead all the year in his notes.