

DREAMLAND AND OTHER POEMS; BY CHARLES MAIR.—The genial author of the book, bearing the above title, has placed it in our hands. That the work was forthcoming we were sometime ago made aware by our contemporaries, and from what they said we were prepared for something good, nor have we been disappointed. The work shows that the author has taken great care in revising his poems before presenting them to the public, being in this instance different from many of his predecessors. The leading poem, "Dreamland," though not the best in the book, contains some very fine passages which remind one of Henry Kirke White, whose words come back upon us with all the sweetness of old and tender recollection. Take the following:

"*Lo, she was hply and most strangely fair,  
Sleek-throated like a dove, and solemn eyed,  
Her lips were, as an infant's small and sweet,  
And as an infant's were her naked feet;  
And scarf-like flowed and shimmered at each  
side,  
Her cloven tresses of untrammelled hair."*

There is throughout this poem a careful selection of words, and a unision of thought and language well adapted to the theme, which shows the poet not to have neglected those old English writers, whom so few now read or appreciate. But while we admire the undoubted evidences of genius here displayed, we cannot but notice those faults which, like weeds in a beautiful garden, offend the eye without contrasting favorably the beautiful with the uncouth. But were Mr. Mair's poems ever so much inferior as they are superior to the general standard of Canadian poetry, we could find delight in them from the broad human sympathy, and that charity which spurns no plea of exclusion of religion and creed.

And all these shapes found each its own desire,  
Whate'er its faith on earth, whate'er its creed.  
The Christian saw at last the Son unsold;  
The Prophet's God upon his creatures smiled.  
The Indian found his Manitou indeed,  
Lama his life, the Magian his Arc.

For all these souls were innocent below,  
And loved God well who loved what he had  
made;  
And, loving all things, though they found not  
truth,  
Were yet received of heav'n, and gat them youth,  
And pleasant sleep, and shelter in the shade,  
And endless mitigation of their woe.

For God, who is our Master and our Lord,  
Took pity on their helpless ignorance,  
And, for their wives, their children and their self,  
And all their idols, took them to himself,  
And clad them round with glorious circum-  
stance,  
And all the joys high heaven doth afford.

"The pines," is in our opinion the best poem in the book, in it the author rises above the even flow of pensive musing, and tosses himself as it were into the arms of the great trees, listens to their voices with the ear of a true lover of Nature, and faithfully reproduces echos of their sublime psalmody. The opening of the poem unfortunately is written in that disagreeable sing-song measure, which only Goethe could make endurable and Byron indifferently imitate, and which properly belongs to the "Come all ye" ballad style of sixty years ago. We regret that want of space compels us to limit our selection of

extracts, but we cannot refrain from giving one or two from this poem.

"When lovers are breathing a thousand vows,  
With their hearts and cheeks aglow,  
We chant a love strain 'mid our breezy boughs,  
Of a thousand years ago."

Here is a grand and appropriate stanza,  
"When the great clouds march in a mountain  
heap,  
By the light of the dwindled sun,  
We steady our heads 'gainst their misty sweep,  
And accost them one by one,  
Then our limbs they jostle in thunder-mirth,  
And the storm-fire flash again,  
But baffled and weary they sink to earth,  
And the monarch-stems remain."

"Night and Morn" is the most finished and complete piece in the volume, and contains many exquisite descriptive lines. Take the following:—

"The Moor in the wide sand-wave struck his  
spear,  
Gazed a mute prayer to Mecca and the shrine  
Where sleeps the dust of Mahomet divine,  
And slipt into the darkness of a dream."

There are many passages in the poem "Innocence" which have a sweet familiarity of tone, which we have vainly endeavored to trace through the labyrinth of memory. As a whole the work is one of the best that has yet issued from the Canadian press, and is eminently deserving of the support of all who cherish a love of the beautiful, and who desire to see our country possess a worthy literature. In our wanderings through various parts of the Dominion we were not a little amused at finding, even in the most remote districts, persons who cultivating the muses with more persistence than success, became the acknowledged bards of their neighborhood, and we believe there is not a town or village from Halifax to the Red River which does not possess its own little laureate.

And what does this indicate? That the hearts of our people are agape for that spiritual food which poetry alone can supply. Therefore should we give them that which is pure and ennobling, educating their taste for the beautiful, and by every means in our power endeavor to elevate them to a higher region of thought, and a fuller and more extensive human sympathy. The few Canadian writers, whose works are really worthy have been sadly neglected, while the cheap ravings of yellow-covered Romancers have been extensively patronised; nor can we wonder at this for the public taste in all countries is at present vicious to the verge of indecency. The drama that do lighted our fathers is now never seen, Shakespeare is on the shelf, and Sheridan forgotten, while the prurient vulgarity of the "Black Crook" realizes as much in one night as would have made Colly Cibber happy for life; for, despite the Duncial, he did what Pope couldn't—write a good play.

But, to get back to the subject in hand and conclude, we cordially recommend the poems of Charles Mair to the attention of the public; they are deserving of the support of the Canadian people; and from the author's youth and the excellence of this his first effort we are led to hope great things of him in the future. Typographically the book is very creditable to the *Citizen*

press of this city, the binding is very neat and the paper excellent. We wish the author all success and tender him our thanks for the pleasure he has given us.

Things look very gloomy in Europe at present; Spain is in the throes of a revolution which has become universal throughout the country, and by latest telegrams we learn of the flight of Queen Isabella to Franco. This rebellion is so wide spread, not only among the people of the towns and provinces but also the royal navy and troops have declared in favor of the revolutionists, that there can be no doubt but the discontent which has culminated in civil war must have a good and sufficient cause. The cause of this may be found arising from various impositions and tyrannies, which could only find toleration under Bourbon rule; and it is to be hoped that the movement under General Prim, may be successful not only for the sake of the unhappy people who have so long endured the most odious rule of any nation in Europe, but for the sake of the peace and progress of nations upon her borders. If the insurrection should be successful there is talk of placing the Duke de Montpensier on the throne, this we believe would be a grand mistake, as the Spaniards will learn to their cost. The Duke is a Bourbon, to all intents, and although he may, under the existing aspect of affairs, lay claim to liberal principles, he comes of the wrong stock; of which it was truthfully remarked long ago that it had "Run to seed."

A people who have been systematically kept in a state of ignorance, and overridden by fanatical priests and grasping government officials are not likely *per saultem* to rise to the dignity of exercising the privileges of free institutions; so we are not astonished that they should seek a mere change of tyrants instead of grasping the reality of the power they possess, and establish their liberties upon such a basis that no ruler would have the daring to attempt to overthrow them.

For a people like us, to whom perfect freedom of thought and action is a necessity of life, it is very difficult to realize the condition of the Spaniards under the mock representative institutions for the possession of which they formerly fought so hard. But the source of the evils which afflict them lies deeper than all this, and until they learn toleration and change their diet, they will never understand or enjoy freedom, either, political or otherwise. People who will live upon garlic and oil, and rob one shrine while they vow offerings to another, are unworthy a Garibaldi, though sadly in want of a Cromwell.

The Atlantic cable occasionally brings intelligence so curious and startling that we are tempted to believe the individual who concocts the stories for the press must be endowed with an imagination of exceeding