

sides, and then frayed out in scattered and stunted trees." The same quality of clearness garnished still more by poetic fancy, is found in this description of a night at the lumber camp :

"The moon rode high over the peaks of the mountains, flooding the narrow valley with mellow light. Under her magic the rugged peaks softened their harsh lines and seemed to lean lovingly toward us. The dark pine masses stood silent as 'a breathless adoration ; the dazzling snow lay like a garment over all the open spaces in soft waving folds, and crowned every stump with a quaintly shaped night cap. Above the camps the smoke curled up from the camp-fires, standing like pillars of cloud that kept watch while men slept. And high over all the deep blue night sky, with its star jewels, sprang like the roof of a great cathedral from range to range, covering us in its kindly shelter."

It is shown too in the description of the canyon :

"And through the canyon the Little Swan sang its song to rocks and flowers and overhanging trees, a song of many tones, deep booming where it took its first sheer plunge, gay-chattering where it threw itself down the rugged rocks, and soft-murmuring where it lingered about the roots of the loving, listening elms. A cool, sweet soothing place it was, with all its shades, and sounds and silences, and, lest it should be sad to any, the sharp, quick sunbeams danced and laughed down through all its leaves upon mosses, flowers and rocks."

But Ralph Connor does not stop with mere description of external nature, adorned though it is with a wealth of imagination. He goes deeper and with Wordsworth draws comfort and courage from real communion with the spirit of nature. I quote :

"And ever the little river sang its cheerful courage, fearing not the great mountains that threatened to bar its passage to the sea. Mrs. Mavor heard the song and her courage rose."

Perhaps the most beautiful of all is the Pilot's story of the canyon flowers. Lest I should try your patience too severely, I refrain from quoting.

No account of Ralph Connor's literary work could be considered even approximately complete, if it did not make mention of the prominent place given to music, and especially to song.

His men and women are, for the most part, singing men and women. One could imagine that love of music is a ruling passion in the author's soul. It is by her magnetic power in song that Mrs. Mavor gains the Open Sesame to the miners' hearts, and thrills the hearts and gladdens the lives of the Edinburgh poor in the "hunger-haunted Cowgate closes." It is the Pilot's singing, more than anything else, that wins Gwen's father, the lonely "Old Timer." It is as if the author said : "Music is one of the most potent influences in the uplifting of fallen humanity," and who will say he is not right?

Turning from the consideration of Ralph Connor's thought and methods to his mode of expression, what do we find? Simple, forceful words, idiomatic English, sentences that are usually short and never involved. Conversations abound and are masterly examples of animation and spontaneity. Here and there the Scotch, Irish and English brogues—or dialects, it may be—add to the reality and oftentimes to the humour of the whole. The humorous and the pathetic are found in close juxtaposition. Extracts written in what may be termed poetic prose, are not infrequent. The author's keen appreciation of the beauty of nature furnishes him with many apt metaphors and rare similes. In re-reading the books in the preparation of this paper, I jotted down the following gems, a few out of many : "His face was strong and calm as the hills on a summer morning." "Our lives are like flowers. In dying they abide not alone, but sow themselves and bloom again with each returning spring and ever more and more." "The years that bring us many ills and that pass so stormfully over us, bear away with them the ugliness, the weariness, the pain that are theirs, but the beauty, the sweetness, the rest they leave untouched for these are eternal. As the mountains that near at hand, stand jagged and scarred, in the far distance