

ing from one so young in years but who must have early learned to bestow upon the Divine art that passionate study which the pure heart and exalted intellect alone can continue amid the difficulties and necessities of life. Among the many claimants to popular favour who come under the general designation of Canadian Poets none surpass Miss Melver in purity of diction, correctness of versification, sweetness of expression, or tenderness and depth of feeling. Indeed the work is a collection of gems many of which would serve as models in particular style. Shelley has said:—

"Most men
Are cradled into Poetry by wrong,—
They learn in suffering what they teach in song."

and it is impossible to read some of the refined and sadly beautiful verses contained in this book without being convinced that the fair young authoress has "learned in suffering." Perhaps it is this which gives that indescribable charm to many of the verses, apart from the fact that we are never startled by irrelevant conceits, bewildered by absurd and doubtful words, or offended by imperfections of carelessness. It is however a great pity that the typographical execution was not better attended to, that the stupid sin of an errata might have been avoided. We can however forgive these shortcomings for sake of the intrinsic merit of the poems themselves, and for the delight their perusal has given us.

The opening Poem ZELIM is founded on an incident in Spanish history related by Condé, it is written in the octava stanza, the eighth line being an Alexandrine gives it almost the fullness of the Spenserian. Take the following as a specimen not of the poem but of the composition:—

"Within the place which ye would fain forget,
Your mosques recede the invaders tread;
Long streets with dew, not that of night, are wet,
The sweet moon shineth down upon your dead:

On high, above each glittering minaret,
The symbol of your worship rears its head
That ever unto Islam bodeath loss
Spain's sacred ensign bright—the Christians' gleaming Cross.

Describing the hero we are told that
"He seems like some eternal type of youth."

But we must pass from the consideration of this to others which have for us a greater charm, only stopping to note four charming descriptive lines—

"Mark how along the furSlorras' tops
A rosy blush of timid light is stealing,
Day's golden arrow in the valley drops;
Old Antiquera throned on high revealing.

In the poem headed Poesie we find the following and think it would be impossible to express the sweet old thought in happier words—

"I hear her footstep's airy sound,
And all things change their hue;
The earth is an enchanted ground,
The sky a softer blue;

In flower that bloom and stars that shine
Her sweet, bright face smile into mine.

To those who delight in the joys of Home these poems contain a mine of untold pleasure, for throughout them we discover un-

mistakable evidence of those affections which, after all, are the highest charm of existence. As Poetry is the medium by which we hold spiritual converse with all time, to enjoy its privileges we must endeavour to rise, through our better nature, to a level with its conceptions. Herein has Miss Melver happily applied her art, for, in every page, she strikes a sympathetic chord in the heart of the reader, as she says herself,—

"The tear of sympathy, the smile of truth,
And one bright fragment from life's else dark page.

And where is he whose heart will not respond to the touching simplicity of this,—

"New stars may rise, and shine, and set,
Upon life's weary scene,
But true hearts never can forget
What one lost star hath been."

In the poem of SUDON there is a line of wonderful poetic depth and beauty,—

"Song sits among the ruins, veiled and dumb."

Although the author seems to delight in the contemplation of scenes of home and its many endearing memories, that vein of sadness, which is always to be discerned, though sometimes concealed, in "utterances of the soul" like those before us, mellow but does not mar the many sweet conceptions, as in the following verse:—

"We shall visit the pleasant places,
Where, in spring-tides long ago,
Might be seen the long lost traces
Of our footprints in the snow;
For the snow of the fallen blossoms
Our feet finds naught save dust,
But the hearts within our bosoms
Are happy with hope and trust."

In the Poem Departing Winter we have an embodiment of ideas, or, rather, a personification of elements, wherein Earth, the wind, winter, spring and the sun are endowed with human sympathy and come near to our minds in that vague and pleasing imaging which is brought to magnificent perfection in The "Prometheus Unbound" of Shelley.

He rose to go. Our fair young land had risen
In wild rebellion 'gainst his dread decrees
And reign tyrannical. She, lifting up
Her shackled hands to the relenting sky,
Had prayed for quick emancipation from
The icy fetters which had chilled her blood,
Until it had almost forgotten to flow
In her crushed veins.

The Sun propitious heard,
And mounting his winged chariot earlier
Than was his tardy wont, launched fearlessly
His golden arrows, but they missed their aim,
And glancing harmless 'gainst the frozen shield
Which the oppressor bore, with quivering touch
Smote the fair brow of Earth, until the blood
Trickled through waving tresses fast and free.
The stern old despot, as his beautiful slave
Struggled for freedom, laid his hand upon
His trumpet the North wind, and bade him
With dismal storms affright the lonely dale.
The tears which the kind Heaven rained upon
Thy afflicted Earth, congealed with horror then,
While tossing trees writhed in the mighty blast,
Like giants struggling with an unseen foe.

Guided by the loud echo which the hills
In mocking glee flung to each other, Spring,
The blue-eyed, rosy-checked and bright-haired
Spring,
With fleet foot sought the monarch's cave, and
sprang

Into his arms, and calling him her sire,
"With her warm breath melted the icy drops
Which hung, like pearls, upon his locks and
beard;—

Then she with merry carols charmed his ear
Until he said. "This sceptre be thine own!"
Oh, what could he refuse his own sweet child?
The lamb had tracked the lion to his lair,
And gained by gentleness the victory.

Gloomy he strode forth. The brown Earth sprang
up,

With generous forgiveness of past wrongs,
And caught the hem of his long trailing robe,
Eager to bid her disowned King adieu—
But he passed on, leaving the snowy shreds
Scattered upon the hill-sides.

We quote the foregoing as giving an illustration of that lively play of fancy which distinguishes most of the pieces in the volume. To those who remember the day dreams that haunted their early youth there is a world of tender and fanciful recollection in these few lines:—

— They lead me back to an enchanted land,
Where brightly gleam my stately halls along the
level strand,
And crowding fast into the port, a glorious sight
to see,
My gallant ships from many a clime come sailing
home to me.

To those who are fond of searching into the springs of thought we recommend "An Autumn Reverie" as a psychological study. In the latter pages of the book are a couple of translations from the French Canadian Poet Saulte excellently rendered, these were first published some time ago in THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW and have been highly spoken of. Before concluding our notice of this charming volume we must quote the "Sea Shell," a little poem of singular sweetness which would be remarkable in itself, even did it not tell the simple story of a great sorrow:—

HE sent me this shell from a tropical shore,
As a constant reminder of moments of yore;
And he said: "As the shell ever dreams of the
sea,
My heart is still haunted by memories of thee."

Then I placed the curved lips of his gift to my
ear,
And the waves' distant chorus rose murmuringly
near,
And I said: "Now sweet aybll the mystery tell
Of what in thy far-sounding caverns may dwell."

Then, I heard, as I listened, glad snatches of song,
But their meaning was lost as they floated along,
Till a story of shipwreck rolled in on my brain,
The wild phantom-surges its mournful refrain.

All sounds of the ocean thus cherished so well,
Were breathed by the spirit that dwelt in the
shell,
Till I said: "Ah, thy legends are many in sooth,
But tell me some tale of the friend of my youth."

Then I heard the low murmur of waves on a
beach,
Which these home-loving footsteps, oh, never
may reach,
While the lone lay of shipwreck was sung o'er
and o'er,
And the sweet song of gladness was never heard
more.

To all lovers of simplicity, purity and beauty we earnestly recommend this volume and hope the Canadian public will encourage in a befitting manner one who has given such unmistakable signs of genius,