

band struck up "Haste to the Wedding," while a solitary fife, that had concealed itself among the bushes, broke in with "See the Conquering Hero Comes!" A large party of friends and neighbours crowded on to the lawn to receive the bride and bridegroom. Squire Arnley and old Mr. Samos proclaimed the "welcome home," in right royal style, and Frank, the irrepressible, claimed the first kiss—after the master—of the mistress, as she stepped within her own hall.

Nor was pretty Louisa Samos jealous, for was not Lieutenant Arnley, of Her Majesty's Own, soon to be hers?

THE END.

ROBERT BROWNING.

Bright rosebuds were blushing on the cheek of June when I determined last summer to spend my holidays upon the shores of Lake Huron, and watch the rhythmic flow of its measured waves. How pleasant it would be, I pictured to myself, sitting in the golden eventide beside the lake with a volume of Tennyson, Longfellow or Matthew Arnold in my hand. There, while turning the pages of the authors of "In Memoriam," "Evangeline," and "Rugby Chapel," I could rest my eye at times upon the pulsing heart of the deep and behold life symbolized in the throbbing, restless billows which beat in murmuring cadence at my feet. I packed away in my valise the treasured volumes of my choice, and remembered too that the letter of a literary friend recommended that I should devote considerable time to the reading of Wordsworth and Browning. Wordsworth, the poet of reflection and contemplation, the interpreter of nature, who undertook "to explore the virtue which resides in the symbol, to describe objects as they affect the human heart, to show how the inflowing world is a material image through which the sovereign mind holds intercourse with man." What a favour would be mine to hold converse with such a divinely-gifted character! And Browning, the metaphysician, eccentric if you will, of complex thought and method, subtle and penetrating, before all a thinker reaching us through thought rather than emotion, dramatic in his lyrics and lyrical in his dramas, full of concreteness, but greatly deficient in music and warmth! Such is the character of England's great poet, who yielded up but a few weeks ago his spirit in one of the chief cities of his beloved Italy, whose rich resources of mediæval art and history he so closely studied.

Following then the advice of my literary friend, in due time I found myself on Huron's pebbly beach with a copy of Browning in my hand. I knew what Edmund Clarence Stedman and Prof. Corson, and our own Canadian critic, Prof. Alexander, thought of Browning, and I now determined to hold personal converse with the literary spirit of England's great poet. And, gentle reader, what do you think? I opened the volume at the beautiful lyric, "Evelyn Hope." But you will ask, Is Browning successful as a writer of lyrics? In the essentials of a great lyric writer I think he is. Read "The Cavalier Tunes," "Ratisbon," "The Lost Leader," and "How they brought the good news from Ghent to Aix," and tell me if you do not discover in them lyrical swing, melody, fire and finish. Such choruses as:

"Marching along, fifty score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen singing this song!"

King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
Give a rouse: Here's, in Hell's despite now,
King Charles!"

show that Browning can embody in lyric verse the spirit of an historic period. Here is a typical poem from Browning, entitled "My Star:"

"All that I know
Of a certain star
Is it can throw
(Like the angled spar)
Now a dart of red,
Now a dart of blue;
Till my friends have said
They would fain see, too,

My star that darts the red and the blue!
Then it stops like a bird; like a flower, hangs furred;
They must solace themselves with the Saturn above it.
What matter to me if their star is a world?
Mine has opened its soul to me; therefore I love it."

There is little doubt but Browning is the most original and unequal poet of the Victorian age of literature. "Paracelsus," which he published at the age of twenty-three, is the most characteristic work of his genius. It is a metaphysical dialogue, the story of a thwarted soul that would know and enjoy, that would drink deep at the fountains both of knowledge and pleasure. The poem has all Browning's characteristic merits and defects. In it he displays gifts equal to those of any Victorian poet; nor is there wanting in it a tedious garrulity, which is peculiarly a literary vice of Browning. Says Stedman: "'Paracelsus' is meant to illustrate the growth and progress of a lofty spirit groping in the darkness of his time. He first aspires to knowledge, and fails; then to pleasure and knowledge, and equally fails—to human eyes." Browning is essentially the poet of monologue. He is no dramatist in the true sense of the word. His is a study of the inner drama of the soul manifested through an objective presentation of life and character. His method and manner as a soul-analyst can be admirably studied in "My Last Duchess," a poem pregnant with most subtle suggestiveness. The Duke, addressing the person sent by the Count to make arrangements about the dowry, etc., of his daughter, shows him a portrait of his deceased wife:—

"That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus."

The great English poet who went to Italy in 1832, rummaged among the monasteries of Lombardy and Venice, and studied mediæval history and art, passed away a few weeks ago, leaving to the world the glorious heritage of his richly gifted mind, while whisperings of immortal fame greeted his dying ears.

"Shakespeare is not our poet, but the world's,
Therefore on him no speech! and brief for thee,
Browning! Since Chaucer was alive and hale,
No man hath walked along our roads with step
So active, so enquiring eye, or tongue
So varied in discourse. But warmer climes
Give brighter plumage, stronger wing; the breeze
Of Alpine heights thou playest with, borne on
Beyond Sorrento and Amalfi, where
The Siren waits thee, singing song for song."

THOMAS O'HAGAN.

Walkerton, Ont.

FORGET ME NOT.

(From the French of Alfred de Musset.)

Remember me, when Morn with trembling light
Opes her enchanted palace to the Sun;
Remember me, when silver-mantled Night
In silence passes, like a pensive nun.
Whene'er with ecstasy thy bosom heaves,
Or dreams beguile thee in the summer eves,
Then, from the woodland lone
Hear a low-whispered tone,
Forget me not!

Remember me, when unrelenting Fate
Hath forced us two for evermore to part:
When years of exile leave me desolate
And sorrow blights this fond despairing heart;
Think of my hapless love, my last farewell—
Absence and time true passion cannot quell,
And, while my heart still beats,
Each throb for thee repeats,
Forget me not!

Remember me, when 'neath the chilly tomb
My weary heart is wrapt in slumber deep:
Remember me, when pale blue flowerets bloom
O'er the green turf that shrouds my dreamless sleep.
I shall not see thee, but from realms above
My soul shall watch thee with a sister's love,
And oft, when none are nigh,
A voice at night shall sigh,
Forget me not!

Montreal.

GEO. MURRAY.

MR. LAMPMAN'S POEMS.

We have already given a portion of Mr. Wm. Sharp's review in the *Academy* of Mr. Archibald Lampman's volume, "Among the Millet." As our readers may recall, it is extremely favourable. In Mr. Sharp's judgment, Mr. Lampman "is unmistakably the poet." He pronounces him, Professor Roberts and Mr. Bliss Carman the ablest among the younger poets of either the United States or Canada. Pursuing the criticism of Mr. Lampman's work into fuller detail, he writes as follows:—

A vividly realistic touch greatly heightens the effect he seeks to produce. The following lines, from "Among the Timothy," are characteristic:

"Not far to fieldward in the central heat,
Shadowing the clover a pale poplar stands
With glimmering leaves that, when the wind comes beat
Together like innumerable small hands,
And with the calm, as in vague dreams astray,
Hang wan and silver-grey."

The crickets creak, and through the noon-day glow,
That crazy fiddler of the hot mid-year,
The dry cicada plies his wiry bow
In long-spun cadence, thin and dusty sere:
From the green grass the small grasshoppers' din
Spreads soft and silvery thin:
And ever and anon a murmur steals
Into mine ears of toil that moves away,
The crackling rustle of the pitch-fork'd hay
And lazy jerk of wheels."

The book is full of colour, as here, from "April":

"The creamy sun at even scatters down
A gold-green mist across the murmuring town."

Or this strong silhouette:

"... across the ever-cloven soil
Strong horses labour, steaming in the sun,
Down the long furrows with slow straining toil,
Turning the brown clean layers; and one by one
The crows gloom over them till daylight done
Finds them asleep somewhere in dusky lines
Beyond the wheatlands in the northern pines."

Several of the sonnets are fine, and two in particular—"A Night of Storm" and "The Railway Station"—I should like to quote; but I must take leave of Mr. Lampman's interesting and promising volume by quoting one of his most characteristic poems in its entirety:

"HEAT."

"From plains that reel to southward, dim,
The road runs by me white and bare,
Up the steep hill it seems to swim
Beyond and melt into the glare.
Upward half way, or it may be
Nearer the summit, slowly steals
A hay-cart, moving dustily
With idly clacking wheels."

"By his cart's side the waggoner
Sits slouching slowly at his ease,
Half-hidden in the windless blur
Of white dust puffing to his knees:
This waggon on the height above,
From sky to sky on either hand,
Is the sole thing that seems to move
In all the heat-held land."

"Beyond me in the fields the sun
Soaks in the grass and hath his will;
I count the marguerites one by one;
Even the buttercups are still.
On the brook yonder not a breath
Disturbs the spider or the midge,
The water-bugs draw close beneath
The cool gloom of the bridge."

"Where the far elm-tree shadows flood
Dark patches in the burning grass,
The cows, each with her peaceful cud,
Lie waiting for the heat to pass.
From somewhere on the slope near by
Into the pale depth of the noon,
A wandering thrush slides leisurely
His thin revolving tune."

"In intervals of dream I hear
The cricket from the droughty ground;
The grasshoppers spin into mine ear
A small innumerable sound.
I lift mine eyes sometimes to gaze:
The burning sky-line blinds my sight;
The woods far off are blue with haze;
The hills are drenched in light."

"And yet to me not this or that
Is always sharp or always sweet;
In the sloped shadow of my hat
I lean at rest, and drain the heat;
Nay more, I think some blessed power
Hath brought me wandering idly here:
In the full furnace of this hour
My thoughts grow keen and clear."