

In poetry we have some that is very good, and some that is exceeding bad. In these days nearly every sentimentalist writes verse; and he not alone writes poor verse, but he gives himself airs, adopting the affectations and the attitudes of some gymnast writers of the modern school. About a thousand silly young men in this country repeat the following line till they grow drunken and inspired:

"And his heart grew sad, that was glad, for his sweet song's sake,"

and, inspired, they go away and endeavour to write in the same strain. Not in this category is Mr. Charles G. D. Roberts. His note is original, virile, and manly. His range is wide, and his work full of sensuousness and colour, and the music of happy as well as skilful word arrangement. Dr. Mulvany is master of a rapid, nervous, passionate note. Charles Heavyside was a true, and, in some senses, a great poet. His "Saul" will always hold a place in English song. John Hunter-Duvar sings upon a sweet, antique instrument, and gives us much delicious verse, quaint and full of the flavour of the olden time. Miss Kate Seymour Maclean sings a note with the true ring and feeling, and since the publication of "The Coming of the Princess" shows distinct evidence of advance. Mr. John Reade has done some highly cultured work, through which we often hear the voice of a very sweet singer. The list might be enlarged by the names of Mr. Evan McColl, Miss Mountcastle, Mr. Barry Stratton, Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. H. K. Cockin, and several others, in all of which one will find some verse that is good, and in some, work that is frequently excellent. Mr. S. Dawson's "Study of the Princess," in literary criticism, stands foremost for its discrimination, insight and finish.

In science we have very prominent names and conspicuous work. The names of Sir William Logan and Prof. Wilson are known far and near, and Dr. Dawson has much more than a Canadian reputation. Then we have such names as Prof. Bailey, Prof. Hind, and Prof. Macoun, all industriously and skilfully garnering and putting to the general stock of English literature.

J. E. COLLINS.

TORONTO.

THEORISTS in the matter of city-planning have enjoyed advantages on this continent. They have found here, on many occasions, a clearer field for their experiments than elsewhere. In the United States, Philadelphia, Washington, and other places have been laid out from the beginning in accordance with idealistic schemes. For systematic regularity, these cities would meet with the approval of Sir Thomas More himself. In a utilitarian point of view, the results have been sufficiently satisfactory. Boston and some of the other older towns of the Union came into being casually, as it were, and spread afterwards in a cramped, circumscribed sort of way, somewhat after the manner of the old walled towns across the Atlantic, and their later inhabitants have been put to much trouble and expense in overcoming consequent inconveniences, from some of which they are not entirely freed to this day.

In Canada there have been experiences of a similar character. Through the circumstances of their original development, Quebec and Montreal, and even Kingston, are all more or less affected in the direction and dimensions of their streets, and assessments for the needful straightenings and enlargements have been heavy. Our modern Winnipegs, Brandons, Reginas, and other burghs that are to be hereafter in our great North-West, will, doubtless, profit by their acquaintance with the past of their elder civic sisters, and be saved from several public inconveniences in the future.

Happily for Toronto, the town was from the very first laid out, like Philadelphia and Washington, in accordance with the theories of the idealists, and it has had scarcely anything to correct in its general ground-plan, which was simply that of a parallelogram divided into parts by straight streets, generally sixty-six feet in width, running east and west, traversed by straight streets of about the same width, running north and south. Its site, a widely-extended, gently-sloping plain, admitted of this; and from the time of its first projection in 1793, on a very modest scale, hard by the outlet of the River Don, to the present, when, through a populous suburb and a park, the gift of a private citizen, its borders all but touch the Humber, some six miles westward of the starting-point, the germ-idea of the place has not been materially departed from. One thoroughfare, north and south, was staked out on the Toronto plain, some years ago, of the exceptional width of 132 feet, but grave persons of the period shook their heads and pronounced the notion extravagant, and even visionary. It has come to pass, nevertheless, that this thoroughfare is a reality, and its width is not considered now as being anything especially out of the way for a street which seems likely to be in the future the axis of Toronto, its dividing line into east and west.

Unfavourable to the picturesque as is the parallelogram arrangement of streets in theory, in practice a good deal of impressiveness often results therefrom, and even beauty, so long as the roadways are wide, and the building-lots continue to be spacious. Fine vistas are secured, and, in certain localities, the array of comfortable residences coming in quick succession on both sides, is a sight quite pleasant to see. The free currents of pure air, too, which this arrangement permits, and the facilities which it affords for a good system of sewers, are points in its favour.

Their city planned from the beginning on ideal lines, the inhabitants, as their riches have increased, have shown themselves well-inclined to give some play to the ideal in their practice in several respects. Their churches, for example, have become very numerous, and quite sumptuous. From several points of view, the sky-line is agreeably varied by the spires, towers, gables, turrets and pinnacles appertaining to these, while below the buildings themselves are most of them good specimens of style and substantial masonry, with extensive grounds surrounding them in several instances, tastefully planted and carefully kept; the church itself consisting not merely of a solitary temple, as formerly, but of a cluster of apartments or halls, all of them rendered necessary by the exigencies of the revived church-life everywhere in these days—schools, lecture-rooms, class-rooms, and libraries, to say nothing of appliances in some of them for the more convenient furnishing forth of acceptable mundane refreshments to large social gatherings on festive occasions.

Again, from the extraordinary multiplication of very beautiful residences on every side, round and in the town, it is evident that a high ideal of a refined domestic life is present to the minds of a great number of the well-to-do among the inhabitants. But a tendency to the ideal in another direction has, of late years particularly, asserted itself, in the deliberate pulling down of barriers and throwing open to the public view the groves and other ornamental surroundings of private residences. A laudable desire is thus shown to come near to the condition of a perfect community, wherein moral defences suffice for the protection of property, and implicit confidence is put in the civility and good will of neighbours and the public at large. To plan houses and lay out grounds from the very first so as to conform to the new practice, is now, as a matter of fact, quite common. All this is cheering as evidence of social progress. It likewise contributes to the general good appearance of the town. Already a certain noble air of spaciousness has been given to several thoroughfares and to the grounds bordering on them, an effect promoted also by the modern fashion of boulevarding.

Then again, stroll round and inspect the educational institutions of the place, from the Universities and Departmental Establishment downward, and see how many things there are in their internal and external arrangements and their respective environments, which more than come up to the imaginings and hopes of the old speculative writers on such subjects.

Or let the Benevolent Institutions be visited, the hospitals, asylums, refuges, homes for young and old, and let the general roominess and pleasantness of each be noted, or go to the fields set apart for athletic sports and games, to the parks, the grounds allotted to Industrial Exhibition purposes, or for the encouragement of horticulture; or drop in on a sunny day—and there are a great many such in this region all the year round—at the banks, at the places of business of the wholesale merchants, at the offices of the large law firms, at the chambers of the judges at Osgoode Hall, or at the great printing houses. Is there not a bright, airy, ideal aspect about them all, as seen at the present hour in their comparative newness? Are there many places where the multifarious affairs of men are carried on under conditions more favourable, on the whole, to happiness, health, and length of days?

The exceptions to the rule which will occur, are temporary, and they are engaging the attention of the proper persons. Three court houses on different sites have been seen in Toronto during its brief history, two of them abandoned, and the third about to be abandoned, not on account of decay, but from having become ill-adapted to the wants of a rapidly growing community. A fourth is to follow immediately, of dimensions and capacity suited to the city and county. In like manner at least three sets of parliamentary buildings have been seen here, also on different sites. Before many years have passed away, a fourth set, worthy of the Province, will grace Toronto.

H. S.

LORD LORNE'S "Canadian Pictures, Pen and Pencil," has just been issued in London. It is non-political, and gives a glowing account of the resources of Canada. The writer, in inviting emigration to Canada, waxed enthusiastic over the democratic institutions of the Dominion. "Canadians," he says, "know that no political agitation, however successful, could enlarge their freedom, and there is nothing to disturb their perfect peace and satisfaction."