

upon every delineation of character, every graphically described event, every description of forest, mountain or glen.

His ability to directly interest the reader, to bring forward his characters with all expedition and yet with naturalness, is worthy of a dramatist. In the opening chapter of *Black Rock* we are introduced to the chief actors in the story—with the exception of Mrs. Mavor, "the miner's guardian angel"—and to many of the less prominent characters as well. In a few brief, telling sentences the missionary of *Black Rock* is set before us. "I liked Mr. Craig from the first. He had good eyes that looked straight out at you, a clean-cut strong face well set on his shoulders, and altogether an up-standing manly bearing." About this central character we see the figures of various "red-shirted shantymen"—"Old man Nelson," a crack shot with pistol and rifle, a rough, hardened, hopeless man with a desperate record, but even now showing gleams of a reviving manhood that are to be fanned into flames by the stirring practical piety, the Christ-likeness of the minister; "big Sandy M'Naughton, a Canadian Highlander from Glengarry;" "Baptiste, a wiry little French Canadian, Sandy's sworn ally and devoted admirer;" "Blaney, a good-natured jovial Irishman;" and "Keefe, a black-browed, villainous fellow-countryman of Blaney's." Here are the "two brothers Campbell just out from Argyll, typical Highlanders: Lachlan, dark, silent, melancholy, with the face of a mystic, and Angus, red-haired, quick, impulsive, and devoted to his brother, a devotion he thought proper to cover under biting sarcastic speech."

As one would naturally infer, Ralph Connor's books treat largely of men. *Black Rock* may be said to contain only one woman. So too *Sky Pilot*. In "The Man from Glengarry," now coming out as a serial, there are several women characters. But here,

as in the two former books, one stands far in advance of all the rest. Mrs. Murray, the minister's wife, from whom Ranald, the hero of the story, gets his inspiration *to do* and *to be*, is just another Mrs. Mavor, such a woman too as Gwen would have become—fearless little Gwen with her "canyon flowers." As it would be hard to imagine a nobler specimen of manhood than the ideal presented to us in Mr. Craig or The Sky Pilot or The Man from Glengarry, so it would be impossible to surpass Ralph Connor's ideal woman. High-minded, fearless, conscientious, possessing a beauty of soul, that means far more than beauty of form or feature, though these are not discarded, only second in interest and attractiveness to the ruling character in the story, she exercises an influence scarcely less potent.

In power of vivid narration no less than of successful delineation of character, Ralph Connor excels. Events stand out before us with startling distinctness. Numerous quotations might be cited—Gwen's saving of Indian Joe at the risk of her own life, the League's Revenge, when Graeme, Connor and the faithful few spoiled the despoiler, and the four-horse race, which you are to have the pleasure of hearing read this afternoon.

Another source of attraction in our author's works—and a very fruitful source it is—lies in his accurate observation and sympathetic portrayal of the varying aspects of nature. The description of the Foothills in "Sky Pilot" is justly famous. He possesses the true poetic gift: not only does he see more than the average mortal, but he is also capable of putting what he sees into words and so enables us to see it too. His clearness in description is well exemplified by the following: "The mountains rose grandly on every side, throwing up their great peaks into the sky. The clearing in which the camp stood was hewn out of a huge pine forest that filled the valley and climbed half-way up the mountain-