

# THE VARSITY

A Weekly Journal of Literature, University Thought and Events

VOL. XXV.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, FEBRUARY 8, 1906

No. 16

## A New Poetical Venture

### Some Undergraduate Poems



HE late Hon. David Mills once said: "There is a time in his career when the average youth drops—or soars as the case may be—into poetry. In common every day life he may be a good fellow, full of fun and

jollity, but in poetry he is a pessimist, a prophet of weird things, a writer of dirges to dead hopes. Melancholia is a symptom of the seizure, he teems with it."

In the pretty little volume, "Some Undergraduate Poems," just brought out by a group of college boys we find very little that is pessimistic or melancholy. We may therefore conclude that T. L., C. E. H. F., W.S.W., A. F. B. C., L. O., and C. A. L. are not on a plane with the "average youth." It is a significant fact that in this, the commercial age, these college students care enough about the muse to write and publish a book of verse. "Faulty!" exclaims the severe critic. Of course the work is faulty—youth is the time of promise not of fulfilment—but it has life in it and that subtle something which ever call the human touch, and which suggests real joys, real sorrows, real sympathies. A poem may be faultless in construction, finished in a way to make it a thing of beauty, but, lacking this quality it carries no message of weight. Another poem may be crudely put together, may be faulty of measure as of expression, but the thought vivid, real, it holds, gives to it a sweetness and power not to be gainsaid.

So in this little volume from the press of William Briggs the severe critic afortime mentioned will find something to condemn, and the lover of fresh thoughts, bright descriptive bits, pretty fancies and philosophies, much that is pleasing, and real, and true. There is about it a flavor of youth which more than compensates for such errors as are bound to be a part of any first venture of this sort. There is enough of real genius to be discerned in these fifty odd poems to warrant us in hoping that in the years to come not only the College which claims them, but this Canada of ours, will have reason to be proud of the lads who wrote the little volume modestly christened, "Some Undergraduate Poems."

We would close this review, or appreciation rather, with a quotation from each author represented. From A.F.B.C.'s "Water Song":

"And I in those secret places go  
Where the shy young stars come forth at night  
To see themselves in the lake's deep glass,  
Where darkness has banished the curious light,  
Oh, floating along  
To the waters song,  
Where the lake is a palace of pillared fires  
Or a city of churches with silver spires  
Drowned for eons with cross and choirs  
That still chant all night long."

From "I Cannot Understand," by T. L., who also contributes "Evening," the poem used as a frontispiece to the book.

"O Brooklet, silver string of nature's lute,  
With golden moss inlaid along thy strand  
Thou art so eloquent, but ah! so mute,  
I hear thy lay but cannot understand."

"Ishvara," by C. A. L., one of the strongest poems in the book, ends with this stanza:

"He seeks no more the outer world  
Of wealth and fame and art,  
But from the heaven within unfurled  
He sees the host of darkness hurled,  
Great Lucifer who strove to storm  
The God within his heart."

"A Vision," is by C. E. H. F., who contributes some half-dozen poems in all.

"Aweary seeking some new key  
That would unlock life's mystery,  
Myself adown I threw;

Where, as I lay, I seemed to see  
An airy form, of fay, maybe,  
A nymph with eyes of blue.

And in those azure orbs, for me,  
Lay love's world-old philosophy,  
So clear, so deep, so true."

From "Loquitur Senex," by W. S. W.:

"The door is old, world ancient  
And old are mine own hands  
That feebly grope their blindfold way,  
Along its mail-ribbed bands.