



Archibald Lampman.
(From a medallion.)

The Passing of Spring.

(By Archibald Lampman.)

No longer in the meadow coigns shall blow
The creamy blood-root in her suit of gray,
But all the first strange flowers have passed away,
Gone with the child-like dreams that touched us so;
April is spent, and summer soon shall go,
Swift as a shadow o'er the heads of men,
And autumn with the painted leaves;
When fires are set, and windows blind with snow,
We shall remember with a yearning pang,
How in the poplars the first robins sang,
The wind-flowers risen from their leafy cots,
When life was gay and spring was at the helm,
The maple full of little crimson knots
And all that delicate blossoming of the elm.

Canadian Poets.

THE POET OF THE FIELDS.

(By Clayton Duff.)

Another poet to be called away before his work was done was Archibald Lampman. He was still under forty when, in February, 1899, an illness brought on by over-exertion while taking part in a canoeing expedition, ended in his death. Lampman was one of a group of Ottawa poets who have shed lustre on the capital city. He was born at Morpeth, near Lake Erie, in Kent County, where his father was rector, a man of culture, with an especial taste for poetry. Archibald had the advantage of living, during most of his childhood, at Gore's Landing, on Rice Lake, a region of much natural beauty, and as he was shut out by ill-health from the usual active life of boyhood, the reflective side of his nature had an unusual chance to develop. At that time he had as a teacher a man of somewhat remarkable personality, Mr. F. W. Barron, M. A., father of Judge Barron, of Stratford, who was the principal of a Grammar School at Gore's Landing. Later on the family lived at Cobourg, and a correspondent of the Toronto Mail and Empire writes, that on one occasion, when attending church there, she observed, sitting near her, a boy who was making grimaces for the amusement of a smaller companion. At the close of the service she asked the younger boy who his friend was. "That's Archie Lampman," he replied. "He's awfully clever at school, but when he's out he's just like another fellow." Lampman graduated from Trinity College, Toronto, as a man with a future. He spent a troubled

year teaching in a High School at Orangeville, but from there he escaped to the Post-office Department at Ottawa, where he was employed until his death. While not in a sense congenial, this occupation gave him an assured income, and a fair proportion of leisure in which to follow his true vocation as a man of letters.

At the time of Lampman's death, his friend, Wilfred Campbell, wrote a noble eulogy in his memory entitled, "Rereave-ment of the Fields," and this phrase suggests better than a detailed description, the striking characteristic of his poetry. While many of Lampman's poems, especially his sonnets, are on ethical themes, noble as poetry and impressive as teachings, and while he has written some of the best of Canadian ballads and poetic narratives, yet it is as a nature poet that Lampman is most notable. No other Canadian poet is so intimate with the woods and aspects of nature as we in Ontario know them. The first feeling on opening a volume of Lampman is one of surprise and pleasure at finding the very birds and blossoms, the fields and woods and skies we have loved since childhood described in verse, whose beauty gives a new charm to the familiar and the known. There is the bobolink, "Sprinkling his music about the meadows," the bold robin that

"Whistles and warbles disconnectedly,
As if he were too happy and too free
To tune his notes and sing a perfect measure."

The poet shows us where
"The blood-root kindles at dawn,
Her spiritual taper of snow,"

and we see "The daisies in great meadows swing and shine," or

"The delicate, thought-wrapped buttercups that glide
Like sparks of fire above the waving grass."

He is even more happy in conveying the feeling of earth's varying moods, the first snow, the wakening rain, the midsummer heat, or the raptures of spring when

"The meadows are greening as if
They never were green before."

Perhaps one reason why Lampman speaks to us so familiarly is because his life was, in a literal sense, provincial. He had little of that cosmopolitan experience that comes to some literary men. Occasionally his holidays may have taken him farther afield than the borders of Ontario, but by preference they were spent in the northern wilderness, of which Ottawa is the gateway, and the inspiration for most of his poems was apparently gained from the countryside within easy reach of his city home. While "The bell-tongued city with its glorious towers" appealed to his sense of beauty, more dear to him was the wood-cutter's hut in the forest solitude, the deserted dwelling that he describes with such sympathy and charm,—

"And all summer long, round the lonely hut, the black earth burgeons and breeds,
Till the spaces are filled with the tall-plumed ferns and the triumphing forest weeds;
The thick, wild raspberries, hem its walls, and stretching on either hand,
The red-ribbed stems and the giant leaves of the sovereign spikenard stand.
So lonely and silent it is, so withered and warped by the sun and snow,
You would think it the fruit of some dead man's toil a hundred years ago;

And he who finds it suddenly there as he wanders far and alone
Is touched with a sweet and beautiful sense of something, come and gone,
The sense of a struggling life in the waste, and the mark of a soul's command
The going and coming of vanished feet, the touch of a human hand."

Lampman was very exact in his method, and his descriptive poetry is full of carefully-observed detail. Bliss Carman conveys a picture by a flash of suggestion, and sometimes makes a more vivid impression on the reader's mind than Lampman with all his conscientious care; but, on the other hand, the latter poet, by his very minuteness, often seems to enhance and prolong the charm of his theme.

While there is a pensive note in much of his verse which reveals a sensitive mind, there is also a serenity borrowed from the largeness and peace of nature, and the simplicity and sweetness of his own spirit, and the poet has his moods of exaltation and lyric joy in such poems as "After Rain" and "Amor Vitae," that carry the sighing spirit away from wintry gloom and imprisoning walls to the glorious world of which he sings,—

"Through miles of shadow and soft heat,
Where field and fallow, fence and tree,
Were all one world of greenery.
I heard the robin singing sweet,
The sparrow piping silverly,
The thrushes at the forest's hem;
And as I went I sang with them."

Men Notable in Canadian History.

Champlain—Continued.

And now for some years the history of Quebec is a history of kaleidoscopically changing events. The fur company was suppressed by the viceroy, Montmorency, and given into the hands of the Huguenot De Caen brothers. On the succession of the Duc de Ventadour to the viceroyalty, the Jesuits, so famed afterwards in the annals of martyrdom, Brebeuf, Masse and Lalemant, were sent out to the colonies; then finally, when the powerful personality of Richelieu became supreme in France the famous Company of One Hundred Associates was formed. In return for the monopoly of the fur-trade, this company, of which Champlain was a member, pledged itself to bring in two or three hundred tradesmen, and, within fifteen years to establish 4,000 colonists in the country, all Huguenots to be debarred.

KIRKE'S FLEET.

Champlain was re-appointed lieutenant-governor, and hoped that at last real progress would be made, but an ominous cloud was gathering on the horizon. While the little band of Frenchmen at Quebec were anxiously waiting for the provisions and men expected from France, news came that an English fleet was off the Saguenay. What this might mean was, of course, evident enough, for not long before war had been declared between England and France.

Almost immediately following the announcement came a message from the English admiral, David Kirke, demanding that the fort of Quebec be surrendered.

There were only fifty pounds of gunpowder in the fort, but Champlain determined upon presenting a bold front, feasted the messengers ostentatiously, although the town "was on an allowance of only seven ounces of bread per day," and assigned every man to his post. Kirke, however, made no ad-

vance this time. Satisfied with the capture, off the Saguenay, of four armed vessels and eighteen transports with supplies for the colony, and evidently deceived by the front assumed at Quebec, he sailed away again.

With their supplies cut off, the sufferings of the little company at the fort may be well imagined. Before spring seven ounces of pounded peas was the daily ration for each, and all foraged the woods for roots and acorns. The root known as Solomon's Seal, was, it is recorded, the one most in demand.

THE ENGLISH CAPTURE QUEBEC.

On the 19th of July, 1629, an Indian brought the news that three ships were again sailing up the river. Champlain was alone when the word came, for all the rest were away, fishing or searching for roots. As they came straggling in—sixteen in all, starved and ragged—they were ordered to their posts, and in the meantime the English ships, in command of two brothers of David Kirke, anchored below and a boat approached demanding the surrender of the fortress. Overpowered by numbers, the French were forced to capitulate; Lewis Kirke, landed, and, amid the roar of cannon, the British flag was floated over the Plains of Abraham.

Champlain begged to be sent to Tadoussac, where the main squadron, five ships under command of David Kirke, was anchored. His request was granted, and he appears to have been treated as a much-honored prisoner, as he writes in his journal of having gone along the shore with the Admiral shooting "larks."

On the way down the river, the squadron met a French vessel, and after a hot fight she also was added to the English prize.

TREATY OF ST. GERMAIN-EN-LAYE.

On arriving in Plymouth Champlain, probably no less than Admiral Kirke, was astounded to learn that peace had been restored some time before, and that "all conquests made by the fleets or armies of either France or England after the 24th of April, 1629, must be restored." It was three years, however, before matters were finally settled and, by the treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye, signed on March 27th, 1632, Quebec, indeed all Canada, Cape Breton and Acadia were restored to France.

Notwithstanding the hardships and worries that he had come through Champlain was still hopeful as persevering, and the last of May, 1633, saw him back again in his fort on the rock above the St. Lawrence.

During the last years of his life in Canada, however, little of spectacular importance occurred. The Company of One Hundred Associates, crippled by the capture of the expedition in 1628, was on the verge of bankruptcy and able to do but little, and there were few others interested in the welfare of the new world. Champlain alone toiled indefatigably for it and its people. As religious as patriotic, he still cherished his dream of a continent of Christianized red men and flourishing settlements of happy and prosperous Frenchmen, and none fought so bitterly as he against the idea that the wilds of Canada should be made a dumping ground for undesirables from the home-land, a process by which, as held by its advocates, "New France might be peopled and Old France purified."

Once more he got a few enthusiasts to raise a fund and send out an expedition, with which came the Jesuits, Father Paul le Jeune, and Anne de la Noue, but he was not long to witness the success of this new venture. He was stricken with paralysis. For ten weeks, we are told, he lay unable to even sign