

# THE VARSITY

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## MEMORIES.

No portrait of my dearest one have I,  
By skilful artist hand on canvas lined :  
Such counterfeit mine eyes need not to find  
Of her sweet face, to bring the vision nigh ;  
For as rich jewels in golden casket lie,  
Bright mem'ries safely dwell within my mind ;  
And when mine eyelids close and I am blind  
To things anear, the clasps wide open fly.

And then thy radiant face upon me beams  
With kindness and with chastity alight ;  
Thine eyes more pure than clearest mountain streams  
Shine clear with innocence like diamonds bright ;  
Precious and fair the visions that I see  
When thought looks back on memories of thee.

M.

## IN DIVERS TONES.\*

Last year Mr. Roberts contributed to THE VARSITY a short poem of remarkable beauty called "The Pipes of Pan." The poem describes a scene in the vale of Tempe.

"Tempe, vale of the gods, deep-couched amid woodland and  
woodland,  
Threaded with amber of brooks, mirrored in azure of pools,"

and relates how to this spot comes Pan, where his piping flags,  
and how he

"Fits new reeds to his mouth, with the weird earth-melody in  
them,"

and how the old outworn pipes, discarded, float adown the  
stream, with a whisper—

"What the god breathes on, the god can never wholly evade.  
God-breath lurks in each fragment forever. Dispersed by Peneus  
Wandering, caught in the ripples, wind-blown hither and there,  
Over the whole green earth and globe of sea they are scattered.  
And mortals  
Straying in cool of morn, or bodeful hasting at eve,

Spy them, and set to their lips ; blow, and fling them away !"

The legend is suggestive. In that poetical Pentecost, that  
dispersion of poetical tongues, as it were, the beautiful Acadian  
land was not unrepresented. Mr. Roberts has richly proved  
his possession of one of the Pipes of Pan,—not that his muse  
is confined to the few notes of the simple oaten pipe, but that  
the purity and freshness of his verse leave this impression ; not  
that Mr. Roberts has outgrown his love of the pastoral scenes  
and bucolic pleasures of which some of his previous songs  
gave us such happy glimpses,—for Mr. Roberts' new volume  
has in it many delightful little touches which proclaim the  
lover of nature and rustic simplicity. This characteristic of  
Mr. Roberts' muse is seen at its best in "The Sower," "The  
Footpath," "Birch and Paddle," "The Blue Violet," and  
"On the Creek." Speaking of the feeling of restfulness one

\*In Divers Tones, and Other Poems." By Charles G. D. Roberts, author of "Orion,  
Boston : D. Lothrop & Co.

experiences in changing the turmoil of the city for the summer  
quiet of the country, the poet says :

"Dear Heart, the noisy strife  
And bitter carpings cease.  
Here is the lap of life,  
Here are the lips of peace.

Afar from stir of streets,  
The city's dust and din,  
What healing silence meets  
And greets us gliding in !"

And again, the poet describes a charming little pastoral  
scene thus, in "The Sower" :

"A brown, sad-coloured hillside, where the soil,  
Fresh from the frequent harrow, deep and fine,  
Lies bare ; no break in the remote sky-line,  
Save where a flock of pigeons streams aloft,  
Startled from feed in some low-lying croft,  
Or far-off spires with yellow of sunset shine,  
And here the Sower, unwittingly divine,  
Exerts the silent forethought of his toil.

Alone he treads the glebe, his measured stride  
Dumb in the yielding soil ; and tho' small joy  
Dwell in his heavy face ; as spreads the blind  
Pale grain from his dispensing palm aside,  
This plodding churl grows great in his employ ;—  
God-like, he makes provision for mankind."

Mr. Roberts' diction is simple, and even terse in places, and  
again displays a copiousness of phrase and a lavish ornamenta-  
tion that is surprising. For his intense desire to realize appro-  
priateness of diction, Mr. Roberts, in some few instances,  
sacrifices the rhythm. But this is a trifle after all, and the  
writer has no intention of offering an opinion upon the relative  
merits of subordinating the idea to the form, or the form to  
the idea.

As an example of simple and direct verse, "Birch and  
Paddle" is one of the most noticeable. The poet delights in  
the open air, and tells how :

" . . . with souls grown clear  
In that sweet atmosphere,  
With influences serene,  
Our blood and brain washed clean,  
We've idled down the breast,  
Of broadening tides at rest,  
And marked the winds, the birds,  
The bees, the far-off herds,  
Into a drowsy tune  
Transmute the afternoon."

and asks :

"A little space for dreams  
On care-unsullied streams,—  
'Mid task and toil, a space  
To dream on Nature's face !"

As showing Mr. Roberts' command of diction, metre, and of  
decorative and descriptive epithets, the "Pipes of Pan" may  
be cited, in the writer's opinion, as the poet's *pièce de resistance*.  
The readers of THE VARSITY are already familiar with this  
poem, and will acquiesce in the truth of this statement regard-  
ing it.