

poets Theocritus and Virgil. This is the difference between the newer generation of Canadian poets and the older. Between Fréchette and Crémazie; Mair and Heavysege. It is possibly the difference between nature-inspired and book-inspired poetry. The zig-zag extremes of literature have all the methodic caprice of a typhoid fever chart. The Elizabethans were followed by Pope and Dryden.

But Mr. Scott, however firm may be the hold of the *fin de siècle* literary mannerisms upon him, is not a poet of manners or of form, but of feeling.

It is feeling, however, controlled by art. He does not remind one of Browning, as Mrs. S. Frances Harrison occasionally does, nor of Wordsworth, as Sangster does; but seems to have felt rather the influence of the Pre-Raphaelite school, whom he sometimes resembles, though without any like extravagances of expression. These not altogether safe influences have evidently been counteracted in good time by the purer canons of poetry, which Keats caught from the Elizabethans, and from Milton's bucolic verse, of which I have already hinted. The result on the whole is a general poetical style which has all the purity and control of Matthew Arnold, with a little less strength and considerably more sweetness.

Add to this an individuality which belongs to Mr. Scott, and to no one else in the world, and one may sit down content that he has, in general terms, described the standpoint of the poet to the reader, unfamiliar with his work; if a sense of having been guilty of an intolerable rudeness does not prevent him from feeling contented. For my own part, though to general readers there is no more facile way of conveying a clear idea of a poet than by such references as these to writers known to all, it always seems a rather heartless proceeding to resort to, and if space were forthcoming to make very elaborate extracts from the beautiful book before me, it would be more courteous, and certainly more just, to familiarize the reader with the writer's undoubted genius, in the way I suggest, than by the way of references, which I have followed.

Possibly the time may yet come when critical writing may be unnecessary and obsolete, like the hired mourners at the funeral, and the reader will insist upon going direct to the pages of the poet, without the meddlesome intervention of one who, in nine cases out of ten, is less capable of judging than they are themselves.

A few lines chosen at random will give at once a clear idea of Mr. Scott's style, and as poetry after all is a vast tessellation of phrases, I hardly think single lines beneath the dignity of particular notice—even though you, O Codrus, do raise your eyebrows at me! It was for the phrases and word compounds that Keats read Chapman.

I.

A rose leaf and a silver bee,
From some god's garden blown afar,
Go down the gold deep tranquilly.

II.

You know the joy of coming home,
After long leagues to France and Spain;
To feel the clear Canadian foam
And the Gulf water heave again.

III.

Floating your delicate freight
Out of the lilac tree,
Wind, you must waver a gossamer sail
To ferry ascent so light.

IV.

The oats hang tarnished in the golden fields.

V.

Down to St. Irénée!
It seemed as if the stars and flowers
Should all go there with me.

VI.

Then comes the lift and lull of plangent seas,
Swaying the light marsh grasses more and more.

VII.

Dawn's rosy dome,
Based deep on buried crimson into blue,
Has made the fragile cobweb drenched with dew
A net of opals veiled with dreamy fire.

Some one now shall soon taunt me with that *bon mot* of Heiroleas at the expense of the poor simpleton (Scholasticos) who was of a mind to sell his house, and finding it impossible to carry the house about with him, and the same difficulty in inducing people to go and look at it which real estate brokers have found in modern times, took a convenient brick from the wall, as a sample of the house's qualities, and tried to sell the house on the strength of the brick. But without the touch of a Burton there is something risky in the repetition of anecdotes; and I would assure you in brief that these bricks I come with are from the walls of "The Magic House," and how delicately they are pressed and smoothed you have learned, and are silent.

I have often thought that a very dainty anthology might be made in the selection of Canadian sonnets. Sangster and Heavysege have expressed themselves in this ideal form. It was his book of sonnets which Fréchette sent home to Paris to be crowned there. Lampman has written a number of sonnets so chaste and pure that I hardly think they have ever been surpassed. Mr. Scott has done little in the sonnet, but where he has chosen that form he has not marred it. Here is a train of thought, as one might call it—a brown study of the summer:

It would be sweet to think, when we are old,
Of all the pleasant days that came to pass;
That here we took the berries from the grass,
There charmed the bees with pans and smoke unrolled,
And spread the melon-nets when nights were cold,
Or pulled the blood-root in the underbrush,
And marked the ringing of the tawny thrush,
While all the west was broken, burning gold.

And so I bind with rhymes these memories;
As girls press pansies in the poet's leaves,
And find them afterwards with sweet surprise;
Or treasure petals mingled with perfume,
Loosing them in the days when April grieves—
A subtle summer in the rainy room.

Here is a lyric note. The morning has broken after the summer storm.

And now in the morning early,
The clouds are sailing by;
Clearly, oh! so clearly,
The distant mountains lie.

The wind is very mild and slow,
The clouds obey his will,
They part and part and onward go,
Travelling together still.

'Tis very sweet to be alive
On a morning that's so fair,
For nothing seems to stir or strive
In the unconscious air.

These extracts, perhaps clumsily chosen, will at least suggest the sunshine of June and the mellowness of the harvest, which is shed all through the poems. Sometimes the writer speaks with half-sad badinage, sometimes with regret, but generally the note is the note of the hope which is June's.

The piece which will perhaps become a

part of one's life is a threnody ("In a Country Churchyard") somewhat in the style of "Lycidas" or "Thanatopsis" or "Intimations of Immortality." It is pervaded by the same optimism and full of the same sonorous music. It will not suffer by mention in the same breath with these other noble and perfect utterances of poesy. The opening lines are to the following effect. I will not venture to select any particular passage.

This is the acre of unfathomed rest,
These stones, with weed and lichen bound,
enclose

No active grief, no uncompleted woes,
But only finished work and harbored quest,
And balm for ills;
And the last gold that smote the ashen west
Lies garnered here between the harvest hills.

This spot has never known the heat of toil,
Save when the angel with the mighty spade
Has turned the sod and built the house of shade;

But here old Chance is guardian of the soil:
Green leaf and gray,
The barrows blossom with the tangled spoil,
And God's own weeds are fair in God's own way.

Sweet flowers may gather in the ferny wood:
Hepaticas, the morning stars of spring;
The blood-roots with their milder ministrings,
Like planets in the lonelier solitude;

And that white throng,
Which shakes the dingles with a starry brood,
And tells the robin his forgotten song.

After the remarks with which I prefaced this paper, I shall certainly not complain that such a thing should be, and yet it does seem strange that Mr. Duncan Campbell Scott, of Ottawa, a gentleman who has lived all his life in Canada, and who is full of the new spirit of Canadian nationality, should be known in England better than at home. His last book, "The Magic House," which taken as a piece of bookmaking, is the most beautiful book I think I ever saw, was published in England and received more than usual notice there. In the United States Mr. Scott is well known and very highly appreciated. For years I have been reading his poems and naïve prose papers in the American magazines, without imagining for a moment that the author was a resident of Canada and a native of Ontario. This I ascertained incidentally. Not improbably these remarks will serve the turn of surprising others in a similar manner.

The mass of the people do not read in the library. But if Longfellow and Tennyson are the poets of the ladies' room, and Browning of the Literary Society, Wordsworth of the field and hillside and Locker of the drawing-room, Scott is the laureate of the summer, the poet of the hammock and beach, to be read in holiday pleasurings, in the mountains or by the sea or amid the lakes. On opening his page we feel

As one who long in populous city pent,
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
Forth issuing on a summer's morn to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight,

The smell of grain, or tilled grass, or kine—
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound—
If chance with nymph-like step fair virgin pass.
What pleasing seemed, for her now pleases more.

EZRA HURLBURT STAFFORD.

We should reflect, that whatever tempts the pride and vanity of ambitious persons is not so big as the smallest star which we see scattered in disorder and unregarded on the pavement of heaven.—Jeremy Taylor.