

on this being known, the students at Kingston were congratulated by letter on the improved state of things, so different from what the telegram had seemed to indicate, and they were told that the telegram would not have been answered at all, had it not been supposed that the trouble had ended, and the hope was very warmly expressed that the future of the school might be far more prosperous than the past.

"ORION AND OTHER POEMS."

There now lies upon our desk a volume of Canadian song, the first fruits of a newly risen Canadian singer, and its title is "Orion and Other Poems." We should be, indeed, unworthy the name Canadian did we not tell our readers with some measure of pride that a new singer has risen among them, of whom not we but the motherland might well be proud. Mr. Charles G. D. Roberts, M.A., of Fredericton, N.B., son of Rev. G. Goodridge Roberts, Rector of St. Anne's, in New Brunswick's capital, is the author of the work. The imprint is of J. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia. It has been too long the custom in this country to read anything of native birth with a contemptuous lip, and afterwards in pity to say a kindly word for it in a patronizing spirit. This has been especially, and lamentably the case with our great leading newspapers, who unfortunately, have more to do with the forming of literary tastes and judgment throughout the country than all our schools and colleges combined. Several discriminating newspapers have borne genuine tribute to the volume before us, but it was left to *Scribner's Magazine*, the *New York Independent*, and leading journals of the press of London, England, to tell Canada that she had in Mr. Roberts a poet of whom any country or any literature might be proud, and pointed out—as two or three of these papers did—how such a scholar and writer would adorn one of our College chairs. We verily believe had Mathew Arnold, or Tennyson, been born in Toronto, or the City of Fredericton, they might have sung their souls away, and not a corporal's guard of the public have heard of them through the Canadian press. For ourselves, we have read the leading poets of our age with some attention, and no little reverence, and we do not hesitate to put the author of "Orion" on the same seat with Mathew Arnold and the other great singers and writers of the day. And though a good many miles separate us from Mr. Roberts, the thrill of pride is not less in us; because he is of ourselves—a Canadian.

This, however, is only our opinion. We shall quote a few extracts from the volume and let the reader judge. Upon the first page we find an invocation "To the Spirit of Song." We shall quote it all. In our poor judgment the whole realm of English song contains nothing more full of the true poet's music.

— White as fleeces blown across the hollow heaven
Fold on fold thy garments wrap thy shining limbs.

Deep thy gaze as morning's, flamed through vapours riven,
Bright thine hair as day's, that of the ether swims.
Surely I have seen the majesty and wonder,
Beauty, might and splendour up the Soul of Song;
Surely I have felt the spell that lifts asunder
Soul from body when lips faint and thought is strong;
Surely I have heard
The ample silence stirred
By intensest music from no throat of bird,—
Smitten down before thy feet
From the paths of heaven sweet
Lowly I await the song upon my lips conferred."

This surely is the poet's song; a speech and a music "conferred;" the true note that reveals itself as the precious stone among base imitations. The chief poem, and that which gives name to the volume is "Orion." Our readers are acquainted, we doubt not, with this old classic story; but told in brief it is this: CEnopion was the King of Chios—the same island that was shattered but two years ago by earthquake—and he had a daughter of surpassing loveliness, the "maiden lipped, snow-breasted Merope," to use Mr. Robert's words. Orion was a hunter, god-like in appearance, tall and brave, and he, loving Merope, asked her of her father, who consented to his suit on the condition that he rid his dominions of wild beasts. This the hunter did, and having accomplished his toil, came out of the mountain jungles to claim his bride. The following lines describe his coming through the golden glow of the morning:

— Meanwhile from out a neighbour gorge, which spake
Rough torrent thunders through its cloak of pines,
Along the shore came one who seemed to wear
The grandeur of the mountains for a robe,
The torrent's strength for girdle, and for crown
The sea's calm for dread fury capable."

We have made the italics. It is surely not too much to say that we have not in the whole scope of English song any greater lines than these. Then the god-like hunter comes into the presence of the king and tells him the labours he has performed.

— With skins of lions, leopards, bears,
Lynxes and wolves, I come, O King, fulfilling
My pledge, and seeking the delayed fulfilling
Of some long hopes. For now the mountain lairs
Are empty, and the valley folds secure.
The inland jungles shall be vexed no more
With muffled roarings through the cloudy night,
And heavy splashings in the misty pools:
The echo peopled crags shall howl no more,
With hungry yelpings mid the hoary firs.

— Your maidens will not fear to quit by night
Their cottages to meet their shepherd lads.

We should like to quote more, for the merit in all would ask a place, but we must pass on. The king was treacherous. He told the hunter, as he poured out a cup in which he mixed a subtle "colchian drug" to

— Drink this, in pledge
Of those deep draughts for which thou art athirst,
And now I go to bid the maid be glad."

And then the hunter went down to the strand by the sea, and heavy grew