

In Quesnel and Mermet we see the expression of the French muse, which has become Canadian for a brief period. In their poems, too, we see a reflection—dim though it be—of those light, graceful and terse forms of poetry, frequently idyllic, that flourished in France during the eighteenth century.

While these poets were still making their influence felt at Quebec and Montreal, a Canadian poet—Canadian by birth—essayed to capture public attention. This was Michel Bibaud, who was born near Montreal, at the Côte des Neiges, in 1782, and died at Montreal in 1857. To Bibaud must be accorded the honour—if honour it be—of publishing the first miscellany of poems in the history of French-Canadian literature. This collection, which appeared in 1830, is entitled *Épîtres, Satires, Chansons, Épigrammes, et autres pièces en vers*. It is composed of pieces that had appeared several years previously, the first satire dating from 1817. It contains no poems that are really good. It was seldom given to Bibaud himself to be a poet; and the pieces he published are more interesting from the point of view of the history of manners and ideas than from that of art, which in him is usually commonplace.

Michel Bibaud and Denis Benjamin Viger, who contributed to *Le Spectateur*, were the representatives of French-Canadian poetry at the moment when it was venturing on its first flights. It is true these men were not great poets, but we must be thankful to those who, at the beginning of a country's history, venture to do something, and who, at the cost of their own failure, point the way to others who may yet follow and excel them.

The most important chapter of French-Canadian literary origins—dull though it often is—is composed of the prose matter in the early newspapers. Among the first to write for the journals and to influence the public mind in their diverse degrees were—Pierre Bédard and François Blanchet in *Le Canadien*; Jacques Labrie and Louis Plamondon in *Le Courrier de Québec*; Denis Benjamin Viger in *Le Canadien* and *Le Spectateur*; Michel Bibaud in *L'Aurore des Canadas* and later in his collected works; and Jacques Viger in *Le*