

THISTLES.

BY ELIZABETH GOSWYCKE ROBERTS.

The broad sea spread before us like a dream
 To which the river of our being flowed,
 I close my eyes, and Lo! the white sands gleam,
 The scent of thistles thick along the road
 Wraps round me softly like an incense-cloud
 Offered, unceasing, on the eternal hills;
 Fade far away earth's toil and tumult loud,
 And Nature's voice my troubled spirit stills.
 Again I see the waves dash in and fall
 In cool white foam along the thirsty sand,
 Again I hear the echoing laugh and call
 Where glad girls breast the breakers hand in hand
 Again I hear the poems that we said,
 We three, soft unrummuring through the ocean's roar,
 While traitor time with stealthy footsteps fled
 Unknown, unmissed, along the sunny shore.
 I see it all; the level sands, the sea,
 The dark rocks' clustered masses at our right,
 Green fields behind us, and there comes to me
 The scent of thistles through this autumn night.
 A day that I will never all forget!
 A day put by and kept like some pressed leaf,
 Or garnered grain for winter use, and yet—
 Must there be always thistles in the sheaf?

THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD.

BY HON. J. W. LONGLEY.

In celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the reign of Queen Victoria, our thoughts should be in the direction of union, of advancement, of the consolidation of the moral forces of the world. These fifty years have witnessed a great development in the British empire, but a still greater in the English race. While the British Islands have made great progress, and while the Colonies which owe allegiance to the empire have made giant strides, until some of them are now assuming national proportions, it must not be kept out of mind that there is another great English-speaking country which has pushed forward in population, wealth and power at a more rapid rate than even the empire itself. The United States to-day contain nearly one-half of the English speaking world.

Seeing the great destiny manifestly in store for our race, and the great influence it is exerting in the world in the direction of civilization, religion and peace, it is well to look forward to a re-union of the separated families in the interests of the race, and for the happiness and well-being of the world.

An unfortunate accident caused the flower of the English Colonies in North America to separate from the empire a little over one hundred years ago. The incidents attending the separation caused bitterness and ill-feeling between the parent and the offended child, and these sentiments survived for many generations. Each has lived and prospered without the other, and each is now compelled to recognize the greatness of the other.

The past fifty years have wrought a great change in the sentiments of the people of the two countries. In 1837 there was much ill-feeling in the United States against Great Britain; in 1887 there is very little. In 1837, there were few people who were friendly; in 1887 the general sentiment is friendly. The governments of the two countries are on the most cordial terms. When the citizens of the United States gathered to celebrate the centenary of the surrender of Yorktown, which secured to them their independence, they saluted the British flag amid the plaudits of the nation. When Garfield was stricken by an assassin, the British Queen conveyed the sympathy of the whole empire in touching terms to the dead President's widow. When General Grant, the hero of the Civil War, died, he was given a funeral and awarded a niche in the great national sarcophagus—Westminster Abbey. These fifty years have done much to efface the early bitterness between the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race.

Has not the time arrived when we can contemplate with satisfaction and hope a re-union between the two countries? We have faults to find with some phases of the institutions of our great neighbor, but, in the main, the United States have worked out the problem of popular government with most wonderful results. Their institutions are not retrograding, but improving. An independent class has arisen which demands, of both parties, men of pure character and patriotic aims. Events now in progress in Great Britain indicate that all the trying vicissitudes of popular government, which have so taxed the resources of American statesmen during the past century are now to be worked out in the British Islands. It has only been within the past two years that the masses have secured the exercise of the franchise, and already Hodgo upsets the calculations of the best English politicians. Upon the whole, nothing is to be feared from a union between the English-speaking people of the United States and the Empire.

On the other hand, there is much to be said in its favor. Commercially it would be mutually advantageous. The relations between the Dominion of Canada and the United States, commercially and otherwise, are such that it is sometimes difficult to ascertain the boundary lines between the two countries. As Canada increases in power and importance, the difficulties of maintaining the frontier and regulating trade are likely to multiply. But, beyond all these considerations is the higher one of the great mission of the English race. To-day we find the English language encircling the world. Wherever the English flag waves, and the English race is located,

there perch civilization, enlightenment and Christianity. There is no reason why such a people as those of the United States, who are fast becoming foremost in civilization, art, literature and culture; whose aspirations are for freedom, equality and peace; should not join hands with the empire in carrying forward the reign of justice, virtue, and universal peace and good will. Accident caused their separation one hundred years ago. Policy and the interests of mankind demand their re-union to-day.

Let no Canadian imagine that he can afford to be indifferent to the sixty millions of people who share with his country the occupancy and control of this great continent. Our interests are bound up with theirs in a thousand ways, and our fortunes are interwoven with theirs. With unrestricted commercial intercourse with them our prosperity must be greatly enhanced.

On this Jubilee year, when we are contemplating with just complacency the progress and greatness of the empire to which we belong, and have faith that a glorious future yet lies before it, it is surely not Utopian to look forward with pleasure to a re-union of all its forces. Race and language are the great base upon which rests national unity. It is a conception not more grand than practicable that the English race should be reunited in aim, mission and destiny. Such a union would contribute in large measure to the peace and well-being of the world.

CANADIAN VERSE.

BY EDMUND COLLINS, EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK "EPOCH."

Before M. Frechette came home from France, bearing the laurel crown for *Les Fleurs Bordales* and *Les Oiseaux de Neige*, people smiled when anybody spoke of "Canadian poetry." Academies are not the best judges of verse, but it seems to me that the Hundred Immortals of the French Academy certainly showed the right kind of perception when they discovered the "genuine thing" in M. Frechette's verse. They found, they said, culture, imagination, ease and the singing impulse; but, in addition to all these qualities, they recognized the presence of "*something else*" which they could not define or fathom. That something was the local flavor, the aroma of flowers unknown to French nostrils; the music of birds and breezes never heard even in the fair land of France. So they put the crown upon his head, and he returned to Canada.

Then, of course, the good people of Canada took up the question of native verse, and declared that there must be "something in it" after all. They found that M. Frechette was not the only songster even on the banks of the St. Lawrence. M. Pamphile Le May had a note and an impulse of his own; M. Pouisson trilled his Canadian song; and many others of less power were found to be singing in the French-Canadian choir; and when the public had come to recognize that we really *had* poets in Canada, they began to take stock, carefully, of every singer. Then it was that a young English-Canadian came before them with a volume of verse and asked their attention. The poet was Charles G. D. Roberts, and his book was "*Orion and Other Poems*." After reading this volume the people found that a rival had arisen for M. Frechette. Roberts had not struck as many chords as the French poet had done; his muse was not so diaphanous, his fancies were not so numerous; but his work had more of that quality which endures and takes hold of the thought of men.

Roberts' verse was stronger; its pulse was fuller; the heart in it was larger; its music was more even, and more sonorous and vibrant. Its color was richer too, and it was truer; its outline was surer and more decisive; and the imagination had stronger wings. Frechette's work was the more popular; Roberts did not write for popularity. He worked for his Art and his Ideals. His book did not make its way rapidly, but it made it surely.

Roberts, however, was not alone. Mrs McLean published a book which she named "*The Coming of the Princess*," and the delight which her volume afforded was almost constant from the line

"A little bird woke singing in the night,"

to the end of the volume.

Mr. C. P. Mulvany was not born in Canada, but the best years of his life were spent there. He associated himself with Dr. Chandler in the publication of a work which, if I remember the title correctly, was called "*Lyrics, Sonnets and Songs*." But it matters little about the name. There was evidence in this of what Mulvany might have done under more fortunate stars. But for all his lyric gifts Mulvany was a sloven; he lacked the capacity "for taking trouble," and his work was woefully uneven. But his note was as true as the song of the bobolink.

Miss Machar has written some charming things, but her piety and her didacticism have ruined her as a poet. I do not object to religion and piety, but I think that if one or the other dominates a poet that that poet should write hymns.

Charles Heavyside was a poet, and if his poem "*Saul*" had culture to the same degree as it exhibits genius it would have lived. But even the amazing imagination and the towering genius of Dore cannot save his pictures. They lack what Heavyside's verse lacks.

Charles Mair has written the finest drama ever produced in Canada, but it remains to be seen whether Canadians will "let it die" or not.

John Read is a very cultivated poet, but I find him, often, lacking in strength. Nevertheless, he has done some work which is entitled to a high place.

Charles Sangster stands probably lowest among the Canadian poets of repute; yet he is one of the very best known of them all. I find his verses