

years of age, the McCaigs removed to Upper Canada, then in the far west. They settled in Hamilton for a time, but in 1840 they found their way into the veritable bush, in the southern portion of what is now the county of Wellington. Here for fifteen years young Donald remained with his parents, assisting them to hew out a home "in the forest primeval"; but with an ardent desire to improve his educational standing he left home in 1855, during the summer session of which year he attended the Toronto Normal School. For some time after this he taught in Waterloo county, but returned to the Normal School in 1858, and succeeded in obtaining the highest grade of certificate, after which he taught in the county of Wellington until 1864. About this time he entered into partnership with his friend, Mr. McMillan, and for seven years successfully managed Rockwood Academy, an institution whose fame for a long period was more than local in the Province of Ontario. About 1871, he had the temerity to enter the lists and break a lance with no less an antagonist than John Stuart Mill. No doubt he had some trepidation as to the result, for his "Reply to Mill, on the Subjection of Women," appeared anonymously; but his fears were allayed on this score when the *Athenaeum* and other high class periodicals bestowed unstinted praise on his production.

For several years subsequent to this time he acted as principal in Berlin, Galt, and Ottawa public schools, but finally gave up teaching and devoted his attention to an excellent farm, of which he had, some years previously, become proprietor, in the township of Eramosa, Wellington county. In 1886 he received the appointment of Public School Inspector for the District of Algoma, in which occupation he is at present engaged.

Although McCaig has only just blossomed as the author of a volume, it will be readily understood that he had made many Parnassian flights "long, long ago." Some of these appeared in local papers, and one of his best first saw the light in Dent's *Arcturus*. In 1885 he wrote the prize poem, "Moods of Burns," for the Toronto Caledonian Society.

The little volume bearing the alliterative title of *Milestone Moods and Memories*, from the press of Hunter, Rose &

Co., contains many truly poetic gems, notably "The Tramp," already referred to as having appeared in *Arcturus*. He has no word of scorn for the homeless wanderer—he pictures him rather as an unfortunate—as the victim of circumstances too strong for a weak will to overcome, but who, nevertheless, remained intensely human as he sat

"On a stone by the wayside, half naked and cold,  
And soured in the struggle for life."

Perhaps few of us have ever given any member of what Goldsmith calls the "vagrant train" credit for retrospection any more than for providence—not so our poet, who writes:—

"But he thought, while the night, and the darkness and gloom,  
That gathered around him so fast,  
Hid the moon and the stars in their cloud-shrouded tomb,  
Of the fair, but the far distant past!  
Around him a vision of beauty arose,  
Unpainted, unpencill'd by art,—  
His home, father, mother, sweet peace and repose,  
From the sad repertoire of the heart!"

"And brightly the visions came gliding along,  
Through the warm golden gates of the day,—  
With voices of childhood, and music, and song,  
Like echoes from lands far away.  
And the glad ringing laughter of girlhood was there,  
And one 'mong the others so dear,  
That o'er his life's record, too black for despair,  
Flowed the sad, sacred joy of a tear!"

In the midst of thoughts like these, the tramp dies.

"In the dark, si lent night, thus his spirit had flown,  
Like the sigh of a low passing breath;  
Life's bubble had burst, and another gone down  
In the deep, shoreless ocean of death!"

Although the poem is a short one, consisting of only eight double verses, space is too limited to quote from it any further. As an effective piece for recitation, our language holds few things in this vein that are its superior.

The first poem in the book is called *In Memoriam*, but the title is so threadbare that one hardly expects to find much under it. This poem, however, contains some beautiful thoughts, delightfully expressed, and the poet's own experiences and aspirations are evidently the theme. The first verse strikes the key note: