

CURRENT LITERATURE.

TO THE TRUE POET.

Sweet as the sheen the dew-drops sip at dawn,
Thy purity of song hath-laved my heart;
The rhythm of its light hath inward shone
To bid the shadows from my soul depart.
As soars the lark above the fragrant mead,
To bear the breath of wild-flowers to the skies,
'Tis his to greet the sphere that purifies
Earth's sweetness by its own; and scattering seed
Of scented truth, upborne upon the wing
Of song, 'tis thine to seek an upper light
Beyond life's clouds; while we, up-gazing, sing
A timid greeting to thy venturous flight,
And long to bathe our being in the air,
Where none but thee and such sweet singers dare.

J. M. HARPER.

Respectfully inscribed To Prof. Charles G. D. ROBERTS.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

POISONS, THEIR EFFECTS AND DETECTION, A MANUAL FOR THE USE OF ANALYTICAL CHEMISTS AND EXPERTS, WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY ON THE GROWTH OF MODERN TOXICOLOGY, is the title of a new book by Alexander Winter Blyth, M.R.C.S., F.C.S., public analyst for the County of Devon, Eng., and Medical officer of health and public analyst for St. Marylebone, with tables and illustrations, in two volumes: New York, Wm. Wood & Co. These are two numbers of "Woods Library of standard medical authors," and, besides being very practical and useful works, they are highly interesting. They cover a great deal of ground, and are admirably arranged for ready reference. They complete an entirely re-written and greatly enlarged second edition of the author's "Practical Chemistry." Snake poisons and other toxic animal secretions have received notice, and much attention has been given to a subject which has been but little worked, namely, the cadaveric alkaloids. In two appendices are a *resume* of the latest methods for the identification of blood stains, and, for immediate reference in cases of emergency, an alphabetically arranged list of the more common poisons, with brief directions for treatment. As the author writes, "All medical men in practice are liable to be summoned hastily to cases of poisoning. In such emergencies not a moment is to be lost, for valua-

ble lives have ere this been sacrificed simply from the delay caused by searching for medicines and instruments, and visiting the patient unprovided with suitable remedies. Hence it is far the safest plan for every medical man to provide himself with an *antidote bag*." The bag should contain (1) Instruments; (2) Emetics; (3) Antidotes. The author informs us that it is significant that the root tox of the modern word toxicology can be traced back to a very ancient word meaning "bow" or "arrow," or, in its broadest sense, some "tool" used for slaying; hence it is no far-fetched supposition that the first poison knowledge was that of the septic poisons. Perchance the savage found that weapons soiled with the blood of former victims made wounds fatal; from this observation, the next step naturally would be that of experiment. Mr. Blyth's name is familiar as a practical, experienced and active sanitarian as well as a learned chemist. Messrs. Wood & Co. have issued but few more useful works than this one.

THE poisons known to the Asiatics were arsenic, aconite, opium, and various solanaceous plants, Mr. Blyth tells us, and then he gives us the following bearing upon the poisons of disease. There has been a myth floating through the ages that a poison exists which will slay a long time after its introduction. All modern authors have treated