

is clear and easy to read and which has sufficient elevation to make emerge even to the casual reader the real importance of the subject. While possessing value as a statement of material and political progress, the greater value of the work is in its fairness. Its tone and temper are politically constructive. These qualities are shown in sentences like the following: "It would be unjust and stupid to suggest that in negotiating the agreement with the United States the leaders of the Liberal party designed to affect the political destiny of Canada. It would be equally unjust and equally stupid to suggest that the masses of the Liberal party are less loyal to the idea of Canadian nationality or less devoted to the Empire than the masses of the Conservative party."

"There will be a disposition in the Western people to regard the East as inactive and unenterprising."

Like all Western populations they will be restless under restraint and aggressive in the assertion of their own opinions and interests. Hence it is the supreme duty of Canadian statesmen to give sympathetic and adequate consideration to Western grievances and to withhold no concession which can

be granted without sacrifice of national interests, in certain confidence that the West will respond to evidences of good-will with capacity in the government of the country."

Sir Richard Cartwright's *Reminiscences* are as yet only just come from the printing press. Canadians have hardly had an opportunity of forming an opinion as to this legacy left by the veteran politician. The ties of family life are dear in Canada and amongst Canadians the Cartwright family is known for the strength of its family affection. Sir Richard's *Reminiscences*, however, are wholly political in character, and it is as political history that they will be judged. The book has been written in the form of interviews, questions put by a reporter and answers given by Sir Richard. The period covered is from his entrance into political life down to 1896. Nothing is said of Canadian politics during the time when the Liberal party was in power. Praise must be given to the literary style of the book. Sir Richard was known as a master of expression and his *Reminiscences* justify this opinion. Politically Sir Richard's *Reminiscences* are likely to create a sensation in Canada. The

book from beginning to end seeks to justify in the minutest particular every opinion held at any time by Sir Richard. It attacks the enemy—the opposite political party—with ferocity. It will, it is to be feared, increase party bitterness in Canada. This is to be deplored. What we need in Canada is not the power to magnify other people's faults, but the ability to forget them. One sincerely regrets the bitter character of two such volumes as the *Reminiscences* of Goldwin Smith and of Sir Richard Cartwright.

Less important books are the two short biographies of Wolfe and Montcalm, by Colonel Wood, of Quebec. They are excellent and very readable biographies. During the year Colonel Wood published in the *Quarterly Review* an account of the St. Lawrence River, which certainly should be preserved in permanent form. The *Selkirk Mountains*, by Mr. A. O. Wheeler and Mrs. Elizabeth Parker, is a fine, although somewhat slight, contribution to the literature of mountaineering. It is accurate, scientific, and shows the pleasure of an expert in his own subject. In this way good books are written.

The Work of Canadian Poets

SEASONS come when those who keep a little space on their book shelves for new volumes of Canadian verse find their reward. This season is such a time. No one will grudge room for a brief account of the Canadian poetry of 1912. The chief poetical publications of the year are: *In Northern Skies*, by Mrs. Harrison (Seranus); *Strangers and Foreigners*, by Miss Lois Saunders, of Kingston; *The Poetical Works of William Henry Drummond*; *Rhymes of a Rolling Stone*, by Robert Service; and *Flint and Feather*, by Miss E. Pauline Johnson. Besides these, a volume of 250 pages is given to the criticism of Bliss Carman's work, by Mr. H. D. C. Lee, who chose this topic for his *these de doctorat* at the University of Rennes. Mr. Lee seems to be a New Englander. He says that he is not a Canadian. Bliss Carman he describes as a Canadian poet of pure New England descent. Two volumes of the year are new and complete editions of a poet's work. This is the first time Dr. Drummond's poetry has appeared in one volume. It is accompanied by "an appreciation," written by Neil Munro, the Scottish novelist. Miss Johnson is not likely to add anything to the poems which appear in *Flint and Feather*. She is very ill. Her work is published here in the form in which it is likely to remain. The new verse of the year is by Mrs. Harrison, Miss Saunders and Mr. Service. It should be noted, however, that very little of the work of "In Northern Skies" is recent. Miss Saunders' volume is a collection of translations. Mr. Service's book is left as the one representative of poetry written within the year, or at most the past two years. Mr. Lee's "Bliss Carman: A Study in Canadian Poetry," is as modern as may be. Its author says in his preface that it is the first study of its kind in English literature. If he means by this, the first volume given to a single Canadian poet, he may be correct. Professor Cappon, of Queen's, published his "Studies in Canadian Poetry" in 1905.

Two of the poems of *In Northern Skies*—"In March," "April"—which is a paper-covered pamphlet of twenty pages, are Mrs. Harrison's work at its best. All her poetry reaches a high standard. The melody is clear. The poems are not marred by blunders as Canadian poetry often is. The note of personal feeling is high and intense. In the present volume the villanelle "Lucette" is new. Mrs. Harrison was one of the first Canadian writers, if not the first, to perceive the value of the French strain in Canadian poetry. She touches it always finely.

I seem to see you still, Lucette,
Down in the vale of the Richelieu,
'Tis fifteen years since last we met.

Little gold cross and chain of jet—
Dark red skirt and apron blue,
I seem to see you still, Lucette.

Miss Saunders' volume of translations, *Strangers and Foreigners*, with its felicitous title, promises well and the promise is made good. The translations have a delicate grace and carefulness. The originals are taken from French, Italian and German. Baudelaire, Verlaine, Ruckert, Heine, Carducci and Petrarch are most frequently chosen by the translator, but there are translations from less known writers. The following shows Miss

Saunders' fine accomplishment as a translator. The original is by Hermann Lingg:

Remember thou the debtor art

Of poor men who lack everything,

And who might claim from thee a part

In all the gifts that earth can bring.

If through thy life the streams of blessing

In golden fulness gently glide,

Let none about thy window pressing

Gaze on thy feast unsatisfied.

Fright not the wild bird from his singing,

Behind thee let some gleaners abide,

And in the vineyard leave some clusters clinging.

Is there any common trait which makes the work of Miss Johnson, Drummond, Carman and Service, Canadian poetry? Reading the volumes published



Sui Sin Far (Edith Eaton) has written "Mrs. Spring Fragrance," a collection of Chinese sketches in Canada and the United States, by a woman who is herself a Canadian half Chinese.



Robert Barr (Luke Sharp) died a few weeks ago after writing a small library of adventure and humour. He was born in Western Ontario and got his first experience as a Canadian humourist by writing for the Detroit Free Press a series of sketches entitled "A Rough Ride Round the Lakes."

this year, one cannot help but believe there is. Mr. Lee in his study of Carman's poetry says that Carman has three characteristics which make for artistic righteousness: craving for adventure, passion for beauty, tenderness of heart. Mr. Munro, writing of Drummond, says that romantic charm and adventure are at the heart of his work. "He was himself an unspoiled and eternal boy!" Romance and passion breathe in every line of Miss Johnson's poetry. The romance of the North is the soul of Service's song. Add to this romance and adventure, the quality of mystery which is so alluring in Carman's work and Miss Johnson's and in "Rhymes from a Rolling Stone"; and the deepest character of Canadian verse has been found, one believes. The wide, the far, the supremely beautiful, are there across the horizon, just beyond one's sight. But if you set out to find them you will surely find them. You will not be disappointed. This is the secret which the poet reveals. Romance and adventure and mystery have made what there is so far of Canadian poetry.

Mr. Lee's criticism is an excellent study. It is somewhat pedantic, naturally since it is a thesis. One cannot wholly accept his theory that Bliss Carman is the result of New England inspiration. Yet it is a pleasure to find Bliss Carman's fine poetry so well understood and so faithfully annotated. Mr. Lee's bibliography is a useful piece of work. His list of English Canadian poets, however, is quite incomplete.

Nothing needs to be said here of Dr. Drummond's work, of which the present is a complete and definitive edition. He is well-beloved in his own country and other parts of the world. We have great need of Canadian writers who love men as well as Dr. Drummond did. So familiar are his works that the titles of his poems bring an emotion of past affections still powerful. "Leetle Bateese" is every child.

Miss Johnson's work is not nearly so well known. She is the most romantic figure in Canadian letters, an Indian princess with poetical genius. The present edition is dignified and beautiful and contains all her poetical work. There can be no other such Indian poet as she has been. It seems hardly possible but that some of her work will survive to tell the world of fiery heart and high courage and pride which could not stoop.

"Rhymes of a Rolling Stone" has only one rival as the Canadian book of the year. What a world of difference there is between Mr. Service's verse, hot and careless, unrestrained, sometimes jingling, but with fragments of splendid imagination, and written, not so much with knowledge of the heart of man, as out of that heart itself, reckless, daring, adventuring, forgetting, turning back, sometimes hard and sometimes humble, but turning back to that from which it came—what a difference between this and the inimitable, keen, happy humour of Leacock's *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town*. People will read both of them. They cannot help it. Perhaps the greatest thing Mr. Service has done is to make his books of poetry vastly popular. Sometimes what he writes is not poetry, but sometimes it is. When it is, romance of the north, mystery of the unknown, imagination, and his human people, make the book a living spring of verse. There are blemishes, sometimes so harsh that it seems inconceivable the writer should not have noticed them. But anyone who writes lines like these is a poet.