

BOOK NOTICES.

Venice and other Verse. By ALAN SULLIVAN.

This little work of about fifty pages, printed beautifully by The J. E. Bryant Co., Toronto, is a welcome addition to the poems which Mr. Sullivan has already given us in similar form. Mr. Sullivan has undoubted poetic genius, and, although young, has avoided both imitation of other poets in form and manner, and the prevalent vague and obscure treatment, which in poetry may be likened to the impressionist school in painting, and which is one of the defects of much of the American poetry of the day, and of not a little of the Canadian, including the poetry of some of our best writers of verse. The tone is wholesome, vigorous, non-pessimistic, and the subject matter is very varied. From the exquisite beauty of the *Lago di Como*, and chastened sentiment of the English Cemetery at Rome, he turns and treats with equal grace of the lumbering scenes of Canadian backwoods, or addresses in witty metaphor :

Fair Nocotia,

“ While her dull priest, O brier brown of mine,
His fading red morocco cloister keeps.”

There is the spirit of joyousness, which, while characteristic of the youthful period of life in which the author now is, also seems to be a characteristic belonging essentially to his mind, and which will probably be marked through all his future life. Pensive sadness, too, is asked in many of the poems, and in one at least, *Then and Now*, the strongest and tenderest of sorrows is expressed with a passion and beauty not often equalled in Canadian or other verse. An intense love of beauty pervades the poems, as for example in *Venice* and *Villa D'Este*. spiritual strength is shown in eminent degree in *Oceans Twain*. *The River Drive* has a true Canadian ring, with the colors of the woods, and the rough vigor of pioneer life about it. The little volume is modestly presented to the public in *L'Envoi* :

“ Take friend, the lines, though phrase and
rhyme

Lack subtle turning, finer skill,
Expression of a thought sublime,
Record of deed sublimer still.

If something of that pure deep tone,
The west wind whispers to a pine
When all its tasselled top is blown,
Be woven in a song of mine,

Or, if I catch the peace that sleeps
In stormy depths, or silver lake,
When the white moon her vigil keeps,
And all the Northern Lights awake,

Or, if one kindly thought be stirred,
One moment's rest be found from pain,
If memory lingers on one word,
It has not all been writ in vain.”

We hope for much from Mr. Alan Sullivan.

The Paradise of the Pacific: Sketches of Hawaiian Scenery and Life. By Rev. H. H. GOWEN, late Chinese missionary in Honolulu London, Skeffington & Son, 163 Piccadilly, W. Crown 8vo., 180 pp.

This is an interesting book, characterized by the descriptive ability which is so marked in the magazine and other writings of the author. The views taken by the author, of Hawaiian life and affairs, are broad and sympathetic. Many details of Hawaiian life are given, which at any time are interesting, but especially at present, in view of the prominence into which recent political changes have brought the islands. Altogether the work is that of a close and intelligent observer, and it presents much that is new to the public, especially with regard to the foreign elements of Hawaii, and their influence on the national life and character.

