

was a thorough scholar, versed in the literature not only of France, but also of England, Germany, Spain and Italy. He tried also to be a business man at the same time. With his two brothers he attempted to carry on a book store at Quebec for some years. While the business lasted it was the centre of intellectual life in the City of Quebec. But his lack of knowledge of the practical things of life was his undoing, and one fine morning the city awoke to find that Cremazie had departed for parts unknown. He had gone to France to avoid his creditors, and there he died in exile in 1879. In 1882 his admirers published his poems through L'Institut Canadien de Quebec. He made popular in Quebec the works of the best French poets of his time, and thus gave a new impetus to French Canadian poetry. His own works, mostly in the epic and lyric style, are written in pure French, and are full of lofty and generous sentiment.

Louis-Frechette is, of all French Canadian poets, the one best known to English speaking Canada. In him we have the greatest of the "Classic" period of French Canadian poetry. He was born at Levis, P.Q., in 1839. He studied for the law, but drifted into journalism. He lived for some time in the United States, but returned to Canada in 1871, and entered politics. He died at Montreal in 1908. From his youth he wrote verse, his first book, "Mes loisirs" having been published in 1868. In 1880, he obtained a prize for poetry from the French Academy of Letters at Paris for his book, "Fleurs Boreales et oiseaux de Neiges"—the first instance of a Canadian writer receiving such a distinction. The action of the French Academy roused great enthusiasm in the Province of Quebec. In all his work Frechette clearly shows the influence of Victor Hugo. His "The Legend of a People," his greatest success, published in 1887, is clearly inspired by Hugo's famous epic, "The Legend of the Centuries."

Pamphile Lemay, born at Lotbiniere in 1837, was also inspired by the same group which so strongly influenced Frechette. Like Frechette, he also studied for the bar, but the lure of letters was too strong, and as librarian in the quiet Legislative Library at Quebec, he had opportunity to gratify his literary tastes. Although influenced to no small extent by the literary lights of France, his real inspiration came from his native land. His verse may not have the wide swing and noble accent of that of Frechette, but there is a deeper note of sincerity—Frechette, like Victor Hugo, is lofty, serene and impersonal; Lemay, with great tenderness, and in accents equally noble, has pictured the humble life of the Canadian farmer, his joys and sorrows and his naive legends. His first work, (published in 1863) was a translation of Longfellow's Evangeline into French verse.

The fourth of the great poets of the second era was Wm. Chapman, who, despite his English name, and his English father, was a true Frenchman in his ideals. He was born at St. Francois de Beauce in 1850. He also studied law, but became a journalist and, during his later years, was translator in the Canadian Senate at Ottawa. He died in 1917. His merit as a poet, readily recognized in France, was subject to much criticism in Quebec, especially by the younger writers. Yet he then stood, and stands now as the acknowledged rival of the great Louis Frechette.

Around these four central figures stands a number of lesser lights, who have contributed to our stock of Canadian Poetry, and whose work will repay investigation. We can only mention a few: Pierre Chaveau, the author of some fine epics; Louis Fiset, a poet of tender elegies; Alfred Garneau, whose sonnets are dainty pictures of Quebec landscapes; and Napoleon Legendre, the author of some pretty poems of home life.

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