

## A Wreath of Canadian Song

ments in the future, it behooves us to preserve with all reverence the memory of the fearless band whose strains, from the midst of a state of things that does not make for the fostering of the poetic gift, inspired and cheered the first hard years of our history.

The statement, so often borne out by fact, that the earliest lisplings of a national literature are usually in verse, applies only to a limited extent to Canadian literature. And by this latter term, wherever it occurs in these pages, must be understood English-Canadian literature, which alone falls within the scope of this work.

Practically speaking, all attempt at English verse-making in Canada of which any record remains, dates from about the beginning of last century. There is a notice in an old English journal of 1759 of a poem bearing the title, "The Reduction of Louisburgh," which was written on board His Majesty's Ship "Oxford," in Louisburg Harbor, by one Valentine Neville. Also we have a record of two works by George Cockings—the one, entitled "War; an Heroic Poem. From the Taking of Minorca, by the French, to the Raising the Siege of Quebec, by General Murray," published in London in 1760; and the other, "The Conquest of Canada, or The Siege of Quebec; a Tragedy," also in London in 1766. We copy the following reference to Cockings from Duyckinck, quoted by Dr. Henry J. Morgan in the "Bibliotheca Canadensis": "We know nothing of this writer in connection with America except that he wrote a portion of his poem on War in Newfoundland, in the winter of 1758; that the second edition of his