

of nature. He is a worshipper of Nature and Nature's God. All her moods are alike beautiful to him. To the dun waste of a bare potato field, he can impart that dim splendor we find hovering over the peasant figures in a Millet's painting. The mood changes, and,—

“ A shimmer of sunshine, woven in pink and white,
A smell of home and honey on the breeze,”

is the glimpse of a buckwheat field lying in the sun. It is no longer a common buckwheat field, but a thing of loveliness and charm. It has been invested with a poet's power of idealization. The fine accuracy of description in “ Pumpkins in the Corn,” makes that poem another good illustration,—

“ Purple, the narrowing alleys stretched between
The spectral shocks, the purple harsh and cold,
But spotted where the gadding pumpkins run
With bursts of blaze, that startle the serene,
Like sudden voices,—globes of orange bold,
Elate to mimic the unrisen sun.”

This charm of idealization seems to be Roberts' poetic mission. That the making of ‘dull, familiar things divine,’ was one of the great needs of his generation, and that he was one to supply that need, he seems to have early realized. In a poem written while yet at college, there occurs this passage,—

“ And were this path made for my following,
Then would I work and sing, and work and sing,
And though the songs were cryings, now and then,
Of one thus singing in the midst of men,—
Where some are weary, some are weeping, some
Are hung'ring for the joys that never come :

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Yet would I deem that it were ever best
To sing them out of weariness to rest ;
Yet would I cheer them, sharing in their ills,
Weaving them dreams of waves, and skies, and hills ;
Yet would I sing of Peace, and Hope, and Truth,
Till softly o'er my soul should beam the youth,
The Morning of the World.”

From this conception, we will expect no masterpieces of original thought, or mystical dreams of imagination, but rather, simple, unassuming songs, bearing upon them the stamp of a poet's mis-