THE WORLD OF BOOKS.

A Poet of Affairs and Society, and a Poet of

An ipse dixit of our delightful Criticthe former bard of Elmwood-runs: Make thyself free of Manhood's guild;

Pull down thy barns and greater build; Pluck thou the sunset's fruit of gold, Glean from the heavens and ocean old; From fireside lone and trampling street Let thy life garner daily wheat; The epic of a man rehearse, Be something better than thy verse.

We think of one at least, who has heeded this pleasant behest, and who, in the sunny vale of his age, has gathered ripe stores both of the muse and of manhood. Bright, virile, active, warmly sympathetic, having, and meriting, hosts of friends of all ages and in all walks of life; the Muse has glanced upon him, and he has returned her salutation, as appears from this little volume,* which we have perused from red cover to red cover. These records, which belong to some fifty or sixty years, are mostly chronicles in rhyme, or addresses in which a happy personality ingenuously reveals itself; and show not only how men may in musty precinct and purlieu of the law successfully woo the muse with honor, but, remembering the ripe age of the venerable author, attest-

How far the Gulf stream of our youth may flow Into the arctic regions of our lives.

Hope lives with him, and in him is a liberal mind, while among the young, awakening spirits of the time who look prophetically out over this new Dominion to forcast its future, he stands with the gospel of goodwill in his heart and upon his lips, which he bespeaks for all the Canadian peoples. He stands for good-fellowship, moderation, and a united people, So he says:

Difference of race, or creed or tongue Should not divide Canadians, but all Should be one people striving for one end, The common good of all.

He has had long and large intercourse and acquaintance with public men and measures in the country of which he is so honorable and patriotic a citizen; and whoso reads these pages will find therein a historical outline of Canada's richest years, together with songs and friendly addresses, all showing wit, poetic art, and a vigorous, hearty nature. Some of the songs have a lilting flow, and a mingling of humor and patriotic good-fellowship, making them delightful reading, after more sugary rhymes have palled on the taste. As a fair sample, we give the "Song written at request of H. Black, Esq., and sung by Archibald Campbell, Esq., at the dinner given to A. Stewart, after he lost his election in 1834":

The mystical sign Of the proud one in three, Our good constitution, Lords, Commons and King, Which no Resolution To ruin shall bring And the Thistle, the hardy old Thistle, God bless it, The Thistle that "nemo imune lacessit" Is the type of the bearing we show to our foes Who dare to provoke Thistle, Shamrock or Rose.

There's a Rose in our wine,

And the Shamrock shall be

Nor shall Cambria's sons The occasion let slip, There's a Leek in their hats-There's no leak in our ships; And the old Constitution Forever shall be The bark of the loyal, The brave, and the free:

And the boys from the Shannon, the Tweed, and the With the sons of the Thames, all her foes shall defy; Each alike the bold treason of Joey theondemns, Let him come from Tweed, Shannon, or Wye or old

And what shall we do, Who alone upon earth Have no national name In the land of our birth; Called "Canadians" in Britain, And "Foreigners" here, We've a country we love, And we've rights that are dear. The descendants of Britons, and Britons in heart, In this true British struggle we'll all do our part, From our brethren of Europe we never will sever :-

"Here's the King, Constitution, and Stuart forever." Mr. Wicksteed is a scholarly man, a lover of the French-Canadian muse, and a graceful and faithful translator of such fine things as the Les Excommunies and Fors L'Honneur of Frechette, and of Benjamin Sulte's La Statue de Cartier, which we give as a specimen of his skill in rendering his poet's thought into a language less facile than the

French: Here in enduring bronze, Proof against time and storm, Stands he, "the mark and glass" Of patriots of his time! A head to frame his country's laws, A brow that never blanched with fear, A generous man-"a rough-barked oak," Whom Canada has not forgot! Will not forget!

Born in that long-past time When intrigue baffled right; True heir of Lafontaine He broke our galling yoke. Brave toiler for the common good, Without regret he sacrificed Health, pleasure, fortune, rest. Him Canada has not forgot

Will not forget! "The wearing cares of State Checked not his gaiety; . His pleasant strains of verse Flowed often bright and free. And once set off, true type of Jean-Baptiste, How well he sang of love and friendship's charm; His modest rhymes the artist's skill reveal, Whom Canada has not forgot,

Will not forget! "Mid treasures highest prized, His portrait decks my home; Good is it that we love to praise His steadfast will, by reason ruled.

* Waifs In Verse, by G. W. Wicksteed, Q. C., A. Bureau & Freres. 1887. † Hume of "baneful domination" memory.

Law Clerk, House of Commons of Canada. Ottawa

His story teaches virtue to our youth, For his the path that all should strive to tread: In memory's temple still he lives enshrined. Him Canada has not forgot Will not forget.

By the favor of the appreciative editor and kinsman, and genial poet, of whose work we have just been treating, we have before us a classic romance in verse,* the sweetness, pathos, harmony, simplicity, and rich picturesqueness of which are its sufficient excuse for being. The author is a scholar of excellent fancy, and no little poetic ability, deserving recognition as among the singers who do honor to the land they serve and the people to whom they commit their songs. The subject of his poem is a favorite one with Mr. Fletcher since as far back as 1863, we are told, he delivered himself speculatively in a paper on "The Lost Island of Atlantis," repeating the narrative of Plato in the Timæs and Critias, and following it with a summary of modery research and opinion on the same topic. In the process of the years, however, this learned and curious thesis has undergone transformation "into something rich and strange," and the delicate pearly digest comes to us as something richer and of higher artistic value than the first, with all the appended dicta of a De-Maury, Winchell, or Wilson. The poem itself was born in the most new and primitive part of our common country, and the hand that inscribed it is one engaged in building up the far northwestern province we know as British Columbia. "Meet nurse for a poetic child," or meet godfather, his brother-in-law, Mr. Gustavus Wicksteed, received the precious packet, after it had crossed the frith that separates Vancouver Island from the continent, traversing the rails leading to Ottawa, and with a loving interest edited it, and saw it pass from manuscript to print. We might say much of the quality of this work, but its excellence can best be shown by a synopsis of the whole, with characteristic passages. The reader will say it opens finely, with a picture distinct, and serenely beautiful:

Silent and lonely, in the summer night, Lay the great city. Through the marble str No footsteps moved: the palaces, the seats Of wealth and power, the domes of malachite, Where sculptured dragons, monsters carved in stone, Alternated with statues, clear and white, Of ancient warrior-kings, that stood in rows Along the Cyclopean porticos, Were hushed; and over all the moonlight shone.

Along the beach, beneath the massy wall, The great sea rippled drowsily; afar The headland glimmered like a misty star, Wearing a cloud-wreath for a coronal; And all the air was filled with tremulous sighs Borne from the waste of waters, musical, Yet dreamy soft, as some old Orphic hymn, That floated up, what time the day grew dim, From Dorian groves, and forest privacies.

Yet, in the voiceless silence at the hour, An awful presence moved, unseen, unheard; It glided onward in the way, and stirred The sleeper's hearts with dreams of gloomy power Visions of fear, and throbbings of despair. The plague was here. There was no house or bowe Safe from his darts: from every door had gone Some friend or father, some beloved one, Borne to his grave by the red torches' glare.

And as a lovely flower, that seems to fade In summer's heat, and bows its golden head, Turning from these fierce heavens overspread, To muse, in sadness, on some dewy glade, So many a maiden perished, white and still, And many a soft angelic face, that made The sunshine of its home, grown cold and gray Beneath the coming shadow, passed away; So warm of late, now passionless and chill.

Alas! the little children :- where was now Their laughter, many-voiced?-their sportive wile Their bounding feet, and witchery of smiles, With floating hair, and faces all aglow? Silence and fear into their play had come, Dulling each pulse and shadowing each brow; And so they wept and wondered. Side by side, Lay young and old, the bridegroom and the bride, The child and sage, all summoned to one tomb.

The greater poet called to his island the beautiful forms of Ariel and Miranda, and he who sang of Troy set a previous example for later bards to follow. So here,-

There stepped a figure of heroic mean, Fair as a goddess, stately and serene, A star-like apparition, pure and white-

forth from the palace's sculptured portals. This was the island queen, Evanæ; All unattended, save by one stout thrall, Who followed humbly at some interval. With noiseless foot she trod the marble way. So passed she on, toward the open lea That girt the town. In shadowy array The palm-trees, on her right hand, lifted high Their crests, clear cut against the opal sky, And, on her left, she heard the murmuring sea.

She passed on, halting at last by-A wayside cottage door, A lowly hut that lay 'twixt sea and land, Retired and peaceful as a hermitage, wherein her aged nurse lay dying. There she entered and stood beside the couch of her who now lay "breathing slow her life

away," while-The sinking soul, that seemed forever gone, Woke at the sudden footstep, and a thrill Of recognition o'er her features passed. Bestowing her blessing on the heads of or they, must perish. The isle is rent with "two fair children kneeling by her bed," earthquake, and sinks beneath the waves; the mother closes her eyes forever, and is in due course "laid at rest in grassy sod beside the ocean foam." In a beautiful passage our poet describes Nature's seeminglindifference to the sorrows and losses

Still shone the sun abroad; And bird and insect, butterfly and flower, Basked in the glorious splendor of the hour; Still, through the air, like footsteps of a god, Murmured the low, soft wind, and all was bright: No shadow fell on these, nor were they awed, When, through their midst, a naked human soul Passed, like an exhalation to its goal; A bubble rising to the Infinite.

ot her children:

* The Lost Island (Atlantis.) By Edward Taylor

Fletcher, P. L. S., Ottawa: A. Bureau & Freres,

She sat alone. It was an antique room, Lofty, not large; the cornice pearl-inlaid; The floor mosaic; and the wall arrayed With tapestry whose softly-shaded gloom Was lit with life-like figures, passing fair, The product of some long-torgotten loom. White marble forms, hunters and kings of old, Stood in quaint nooks, and vases of wrought gold Held richest flowers, whose perfume filled the air.

She thought of many a legendary rhyme Told by her nurse, in the long vanished days When she, a child, sat listening, with fixed gaze, To those delightful stories of old time. Here sat she, patient, on her lowly stool, And heard how, first, when struck the fated chime, Out of the deep like a fair lotus-flower, Atlantis rose, and, warmed by sun and shower, Expanded, bearing all things beautiful.

Thereon the gods came down, and dwelt with men; Through the dim avenues of giant trees They walked conversing; or on peaceful seas Sublimely trod, nor shrank from human key. The air was musical with song and mirth Of vigorous, lusty life: from glade and glen Soft clouds of incense rose; the passing hours Seemed garlanded with amaranthine flowers; Nor yet was pain or sorrow known on earth.

But a pitiable change had fallen, so "on all the land despair lay darkling, and a mournful cry went up" from the plague-stricken people; and she questioned why some god, some mighty one should not interpose, and-

Sweep, as with a conqueror's brand, This pestilence from out the heavy air, And bring back health, and joy, and all things fair, so earning, in her infancy, lasting honor, and being admitted to royalty as the sharer of her throne. This is the pivotal point in the story, for,-

Scarce had the wish been framed, when came Of sudden thunder,

and Sanadon, the deliverer, enters on the scene; and, as lord of the winds, with a mighty tempest sweeps the pestilence away. Adown the street.

With thunder-call the mad winds raved amain : Day donned in gloom, and came, and went again, And still the storm winds, furious and fleet, Coursed on above: and sun and stars were dead. Then came a change. Again with silver feet, The moonlight came and kissed each bruised flower; And morning came, and all the healing power Of freshening airs, and sunshine overhead.

So like a nightmare vision, passed away The pestilence and all its gloomy shows. The fourth day came to end: in hushed repose, The golden gloaming faded into gray, Gleaming with stars, and shadows vespertine Filled all the room where sat Evanæ. She felt his presence, murmuring, it is well: "My people live,-are saved ;-and I-am thine!"

. And they were happy through long sunny years, The island-queen and Sanadon.

> Joyous as summer-birds, they wandered oft Through regions wild and full of loveliness, Through lonely places, where the hum and stress Of cities come not, and the air was soft With balmy odors of sweet scented pines; Where, in the clear blue, the white clouds sailed

And streams flowed on through plains, or leaped in falls

From rock to rock, in broken intervals, Bordered with lotus-blooms and leafy vines.

Sometimes they went inland, and visited The mountain solitudes and privacies, Wherein the island waters had their rise: And taking, thus, some river at its head, They drifted downwards on its placid stream, Passing by caverns dark, and full of dread, By headlands frowning vast, and flowery sward, By golden sands and beds of odorous nard-And banyan groves, all wonderous as a dream

Then, borne aloft in his ærial car, The Marut brought them over sea and land Towards the rising sun, beyond the strand Of far Iberia. Shining like a star, Old Ætna raised aloft his crown of snow; But they passed onward, o'er the sandy bar Of rocky Salmydessus, white with foam, And traversed so the Euxine, near the home Of Scythians, and the broad Araxes' flow.

As they go onward, led by the Marut, or Vedic Wind-god, the voyagers of air get a sight of the "boundless plain where roved the mammoths," and of Prometheus rockchained-an

An awful shape-with brow all scored. They cross-

The Hima mountains, home of snow, The stony girdle of the world, and so Entered on Aryavartha's sacred close

Land of the marvellous; meeting, on their way, Ulysses, and others of the demi-gods, the line heroic, the "world's gray fathers," amid-

The silence of the lonely western sea, Unknown and vast, with wild waves rolling free, Beyond Pyrene, and the sunset shore.

At last they "arrive the happy isle" of their home, only to learn that doom hung over it. Sanadon hears the prohecy of its destruction, but will not leave it; as their lord, he will stay and perish with his people, or, better, for them. He provides an ark of rescue, summons workers From sunny slopes, and meads Elysian, From lonely bays, besprent with ocean foam. Soon on the brink of the sea their "fleet is

ready," the people embark. Last upon the bank, Stood Sanadon, who waved his hand, and cheered His parting friends, and bade them all farewell. They call for him to come; he must remain, a willing sacrifice to the gods; he,

Atlantis slept Far down in silence, to awake no more.

And they, the wanderers, who ventured forth To seek a home beyond the unknown sea, How fared they on their way? They lived to be Forefathers of the mighty ones of earth, Founders of world-wide realms, now vanished long. But still to them the island of their birth Was always sacred, and its memory Still lived, unfading, as the years rolled by, A germ of legend, and a theme for song.

Age followed age: great empires rose and fell; But still Evanceland Sanadon Lived in men's thoughts. and ever urged them on To deeds heroic; and there was a spell Then we are led to the palace chamber To youthful warriors in Eiridion's name; And maidens wept to hear their mothers tell The story of sweet Thya, young and fair.

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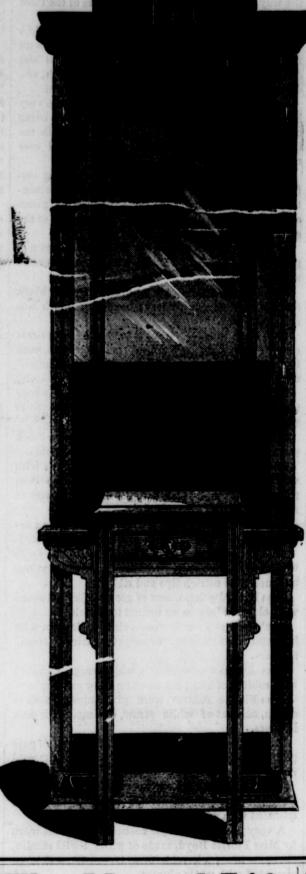
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