

CANADIAN VIEWPOINT

By WILSON MACDONALD.

Anthologies—Part One. A nation owes a debt of gratitude to its first anthologist no matter how poor the anthology of his making. So it would be well to be lenient with the selection of Edward Hartley Dewart even if it were less meritorious than it is. Nor should we compare his anthology with the work of later symposiasts for almost all of them have paid tribute to the taste of Dewart by transplanting into their gardens many lyrics of his discovery. The anthology of Edward Hartley Dewart appeared in 1884. When it came from the press Elias Carman, Charles G. D. Roberts, Duncan Campbell Scott, William Wilfrid Campbell and Archibald Lampman were all under the age of five years and Theodore Harding Rand had not published anything. Prior to the birth of Dewart's book there had lived in Canada but one poet whose work bore the severe mark of authenticity and that writer, Charles Heavyside, is well represented in our first anthology. Sangster, the next best of our early poets, is given a deserved though somewhat uneven inclusion.

The greatest weakness of this anthology arises from its religious and patriotic nature of its compiler. The worst verse in the world may contain excellent advice and immortal poetry may play loosely with conventions. There was a day when poetry was considered meritorious if it contained the name of God. In this iconoclastic age we have gone to the other extreme and now the passport to the favor of certain critical circles is blasphemy of everything hitherto worshipped. It is equally difficult for an ardent churchman and an agnostic to be utterly catholic in his spirit of artistic selection. Our gruesome hymns and the atrocious verse of the Freeman, the Nation and other radical journals are proof of the double contentment. We might continue our criticism even to the rigid cut of many inclusions in Dr. Dewart's book but the courtesy we feel toward a prodigious and honest labor forbids us. Instead of weeding the garden we will note the fairest of its flowers. Happy is the appearance of Sangster's imaginative lines

which are only marred by a bombastic tendency of the period: "O Heaven-cradled mysteries! What sacred paths we've trod: Bright, jewelled, scintillations from The chariot wheels of God." and equally happy is the inclusion of the musical: "Hurrah for the rapid that merrily, merrily Gambols and leaps on its treacherous way. Soon shall we enter it, cheerily, cheerily, Pleas'd with its freshness and wet with its spray." The strongest of Heavyside's sonnets finds a place and the publication of the book was not a vain task had nothing meritorious appeared in the pages save the immortal: "Open, thy heart, thy ruddy valves; It is thy master calls. Let me go down and, curious, trace Thy labyrinthine halls." Canada, to our earlier poets, was a land "stretching from sea to sea." They delighted to speak of her "mountains grand" and her "rivers broad." To them she was ever "a land of British justice and freedom." So we can scarcely blame Dr. Dewart for much of his book when, apart from Heavyside, no poet of his day had broken free from a provincialism of ideas and expression. The mediocrity of much of our first anthology is indicative of the period in which it was compiled rather than the selective taste of its compiler.

The task of William Douw Lighthall, whose "Songs of the Great Dominion" appeared in 1889, was relieved of much pioneering by the trail already blazed by the anthology of '64. Canada of this period found her genius centralized in four or five men of real power instead of being dissipated in a vast choir of minor voices. Thus Lighthall could find in four volumes what Dewart could not obtain from forty and the fact that his anthology is infinitely superior to that of his forerunner is less to his credit than to the credit of the period. The narrower form of patriotism afflicted him even more than it did Dr. Dewart and there are not a few pages of his book that suggest a dilettante's appraisal. He includes Susanna Moodie's "Hunting Song" which possesses only the virtue of rhyme and a poem on Canada by "Fidella" which possesses no virtue at all. Could a line like: "From the Atlantic stretching wide to far Pacific's strand," find the pages of anthology did the compiler not sometimes nod? We can almost vouchsafe for robust snoring when this one made its entrance.

But we can forgive an occasional evidence of dilettantism and a patriotism that was at least in accord with the spirit of the times when we tabulate the rich discoveries of this anthologist. There was no flaw in his selective taste when he unearthed the magical lines of Logan: "A blood-red ring hung round the moon; Hung round the moon, ay me, ay me. I heard the piping of the loon; A wounded loon, ah me." One of the finest tributes to the taste of Lighthall is the continued inclusion in our recent anthologies of so many poems of his selection. His anthology was the first to include "At the Cedars" by Duncan Campbell Scott and what worthy collection of Canadian verse would now dare appear without this wistful yet powerful poem with its exquisite ending: "Baptiste, he had two daughters: One is Virginie. What God calls the other Is not known to me." The good judgment of our Montreal litterateur was again evidenced in his choice of that masterpiece of Roberts which the New Brunswick poet in all his later work has never surpassed. We even forgive the inclusion of doggerel by Helen Fairbairn in our gratitude for: "Ah, how well do I remember those wide, red fairs, above tidemark, Pale with scurf of the salt, seamed and baked in the sun."

"Now at this season the reeds are empty and idle; I see them Over the line of the dykes, over the gossiping grass." In "Songs of the great Dominion" we find such gems of verse as "Low Tide at Grand Pre" by Carman, "Heat," "The Frogs," "April" and "Clouds" by Lampman, "The Walker of the Snow" by Sangster and the lovely passage from Isabella Valancy Crawford's "Malcolm's Katie" in which appears the magical line: "The crackling rice beds scolded harsh like squaws." The strength of Lighthall's anthology is evidenced mostly in his invasion of the work of our major poets and the weakness of his book is introduced from the field of minor bards. An anthology of one hundred poems compiled in 1889 should have contained ninety-five poems by Roberts, Cameron, Carman, D. C. Scott, Lampman, Crawford and Heavyside.

The inclusion of all Canadian anthologists has been to gather the best work of each poet rather than the best Canadian poetry. Thus many superior poems of the masters are excluded to give place to the best rhyming of untalented versifiers merely because the selection from the major poets seems to the an-

thologist as already of sufficient size. (To Be Continued.)

THE TOWN WATCHMAN

What the Watchman would like in the way of flowers is to see violets growing outdoors in December. But what you like and what you get are different things.

It does seem queer that juries, which are sworn to deliver a true verdict on evidence, should be locked up. To place a guard on a jury simply means that its members are not to be trusted. It that not a nice state of affairs?

It is generally agreed that more patients are medicinally treated in the west end of the city buildings than in both city hospitals. The prescription patients are not: it for bed though.

If R. J. Bushell is chosen mayor he would be chairman of the civic finance committee. Then the Kingston industrial exhibition could come into its own.

If the exhibition's directors wish to get the goodwill of the merchants they must not sell space on the grounds to clothing and jewellery concerns to do business. Perhaps the jewellers might not mind, as one of Kingston's goldsmiths remarked that the outsiders were not selling "jewellery."

A theatre started out with a "military night" and a church goes it one better with a "missionary night."

Kingston has surely been well evangelized this week. There should be very little left for the preachers to do during the week-end, although a little scolding of their flocks will perhaps do no harm.

There were 108 infractions of the speed law dealt with in Frontenac last year, but there were perhaps ten thousand other cases that were not heard of.

When it comes to a display of roses in the late autumn we must take off our hats to "Archie" Strachan's Killarney rose bed where there are splendid blooms until the middle of November.

In the history of Kingston only two mayors have had three successive terms. These chief magistrates were John Creighton in 1863, 1864 and 1865; and John Breden in 1866, 1867 and 1868. Mayors who have sat for two terms have been William Robinson, James D. Thompson, W. M. Drennan, Dr. J. H. Bell, John McDonald Mowat, Daniel Cooper, John M. Hughes, H. C. Nickle and the present mayor, Thomas Angrove. Whether it is possible to gain a third term in these times is to be seen. The last mayor to try for a third term was W. M. Drennan, but he went down in a three-cornered fight, Dr. John Herald being elected.

An O.T.A. Meeting. Eginburg, Oct. 16.—A very enjoyable meeting in favor of the O.T.A. was held last evening in E. H. Stover's hall. Mr. Shaw acted as chairman. Mrs. John Right and Dr. McFadyen, Kingston, were the speakers of the evening. Miss Katie Barrett, Ottawa, has been visiting Mrs. Walter McFadden. Mrs. A. L. Stover accompanied relatives on a motor trip to Brockville on Sunday last. Mrs. Thomas Bearance, Kingston, and Mrs. Rose Bearance, Toronto, have been visiting at A. L. Stover's. Mr. and Mrs. H. Johnston and family, Kepler, spent Sunday at W. E. Cordukes.

The Moderation League of Ontario

President, I. F. Hellmuth, K.C

It's Time For a Change

In an advertisement dated January, 1916, the Committee of One Hundred (where is that Committee now!) stated that Ontario "wasted" \$33,000,000 annually on liquor and that if Prohibition were adopted this would be saved. In glowing terms it was told to us how many Rifles, Machine Guns, Men, Supplies, and Separation Allowances this money would pay for, if only Prohibition were made law.

It was made law. We have had eight years of so-called Prohibition.

If the law had been enforced—if Prohibition had been a fact—we should since then have saved \$264,000,000—call it two hundred and fifty million dollars.

It is quite pertinent to ask. Where has this gone?

Has the Government had it?

Have you had it?

Has the farmer had it? Has the business man had it?

Do you know anybody who has had even a share of it—excepting, of course, the Bootlegger?

In the meantime other Provinces under Government Control have had definite—not visionary—savings which were applied in reduction of taxation.

It is not proposed to go back to the days prior to 1916. There is no proposal to restore the drinking bar. All that the Moderation League ask for is the adoption by the Government of a system of control whereby the excesses arising from over-indulgence will be dealt with, whereby the revenues from the sale of liquor will go to the Province and reduce the general taxation, whereby lawlessness will cease to be profitable, whereby our young will not be tempted, and whereby decent and law-abiding men and women will be treated as such. THAT IS GOVERNMENT CONTROL.

We have had so-called Prohibition long enough. It is now time for a change.

Mark your Ballot for Government Control as follows:

1 Are you in favour of the continuance of The Ontario Temperance Act?
2 Are you in favour of the sale as a beverage of beer and spirituous liquor in sealed packages under Government control? X

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