

Lucy Gertrude Clarkin**"Poets"**

*Some are like meteors, transient flames
that quickly blaze and die,
Some are like torches set to light
the roads men travel by;
Some are like flick'ring candle beams
and such a one am I.*

—L. G. C.

For the past twenty-one years, *Red and White* has been privileged to present on the initial page of each issue a poem from the skilled and experienced hand of the subject of this short appreciation. As a result, the value of our magazine has been greatly enhanced and this regular feature of each production is eagerly awaited by a large number of our subscribers. We take this opportunity of sincerely thanking her from our pages and, at the same time, of presenting a short sketch which may, despite the deficiencies of the writer, be of interest to many readers.

Perhaps the native environment of a family rich in literary abilities explains the precocious facility and early enthusiasm for making verse which our subject showed—even while receiving her schooling at St. Joseph's Convent in Charlottetown. The work of the young girl definitely showed promise and she was encouraged to persist. Within a few years after the completion of her formal education some of her poems were of such calibre as to be published in several well-known Catholic magazines.

It was her good fortune about this time to spend a few years under the tutelage of her brother, then Father Francis C. Kelley, while visiting him in his parish at Lapeer, Mich. No doubt the illustrious author of such widely-read books as *Blood-Drenched Altars*, *Problem Island*, and others,—the present Bishop of Oklohoma—could be of great assistance to a young author. Seeking that cultural background which is so valuable in writing she took advantage of the proximity of the Chicago Art School to take courses in art and painting at that institution.

Returning to Charlottetown her successes continued and after her marriage Mrs. Clarkin continued her literary efforts as a hobby to home life. The excellence and maturity which attended her efforts is easily recognized by their

appearance on the pages of such magazines as: Extension, Ave Maria, Catholic World, Classic, Canadian, The Canadian League and others.

In 1922 she had published a compilation of her poems in an attractive volume under the beautiful title "Way O'Dreams." This collection of carefully selected and arranged poems brought into relief the true worth and versatility of the author. Besides the excellence of the style in which the poems are couched, other notable characteristics are a simple beauty of thought and a sound basis of practical philosophy. The sensitive and cultured touch of the true poet is felt throughout the whole book.

Since this publication she has been adding steadily to her laurels through writing and other literary effort. Instrumental in the organization of a branch of the Catholic Poetry Society in Charlottetown several years ago, she has been its president since that time, and through this society has been the means of stimulating intense interest among its members in poetry of a high order. The official organ of this continent wide society, "The Spirit," has honoured her with a distinction given few of its members—that of publishing two poems by the same author.

To converse with Mrs. Clarkin amid the scholarly yet simple atmosphere of her home is always a pleasure. Particularly in this age when conversation is so slipshod and superficial is it refreshing to meet one who, although conversant with many celebrities in a highly intellectual field, remains unaffected and open-minded and converses with a sincerity of manner and a touch of genuine wit that is quite disarming.

The poem heading this article was one which she added to her usual contribution "to fill up a space." It is a worthy example of her artistry and brings into striking relief that humility characteristic of the author which has won for her fame and friends. In closing, we wish her continued health and success and, in addition to offering our sincerest gratitude for all that she has done for *Red and White*, express the hope that as Alumni of St. Dunstan's we shall long enjoy the privilege of opening it to read on its first page a poem by Lucy Gertrude Clarkin.

—J. A. M., '38



Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.

—Shakespeare.