

## Literary Notes

THE conferring of the C.M.G. distinction upon Mr. Martin J. Griffin, the Parliamentary Librarian at Ottawa, is a recognition by the Sovereign of literary talent, and will be acknowledged by those Canadians who know Mr. Griffin's writings as a deserved honour gracefully bestowed. Mr. Griffin began his career in the newspaper world, but his taste for literary research induced him to enter a broader field of effort, and he became known as an authority in matters pertaining to history and literature. His appointment to the direction of the Library at Ottawa was made in a happy moment, and he has since given his valuable services to this department, contributing an occasional article of criticism or comment to the Saturday issues of Montreal and Toronto papers. A personality of pronounced vigour and keen discernment is felt in Mr. Griffin's judgment of books and events.

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A reviewer writing in New York "Life" has discovered, he believes, the secret of Ralph Connor's popularity, and asserts that all told his six tales have found purchasers for 1,500,000 copies, representing several times that number of readers. Lucky Ralph! He has made the foothills blossom like the rose and yield royalties that Corelli might covet, while the stern and rugged County of Glengarry has proved a gold mine to its fortunate exploiter. But to return to "Life." The discoverer of the secret declares:

"We see in Ralph Connor our Luther Burbank of literature. To the Dead Sea fruit of fiction he has grafted the early-blooming persimmon of the timely tract, and the product thereof, though a trifle pulpy and suggesting the propinquity of the pumpkin patch, is wholesome and filling and digestible. That it is marketable goes without saying. The Kansas City journalist gets near the truth when he says: 'People who would scarcely sit through a sermon read them (the Connor novels) as do those strictly religious folk who do not yet accept fiction as quite a legitimate form of literature.'"

\* \*

Ralph Connor does not believe in the good young man who dies or who sings, "I want to be an angel." He believes in the good young man who fights to a finish, and who, however he may fail as a lover, is no "dastard in war." It has been pointed out that the women depicted in these novels are a colourless community. But so are the women in the fiction of some really great writers. Hence that little circumstance need not worry the popular Winnipeg pastor.

\* \*

Mrs. Isabel Ecclestone Mackay, an Ontario writer, is doing excellent work for several New York magazines, both in verse and short story. She is also contributing to periodicals and the press in her own land. She recently won the prize of one hundred dollars offered by the Toronto "Globe" for the best poem on a historical theme.

\* \*

"The Church Choir" has suddenly bloomed as a practically new publication, the first issue of the third volume being a highly creditable number in paper, matter and literary form. Not only the choir, but the organ, the orchestra, the individual voice and general musical matters are discussed in this attractive journal, which is thoroughly modern in its practical and bright tone of treatment. Not the least pleasing feature is the introduction of the words and music of "Even Song," by Peter C. Kennedy. Toronto: James Acton Publishing Co.

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A new weekly set out from Vancouver on June 15th with the title, "B.C. Saturday Sunset." Mr. J. P. McConnell, well-known in Toronto and Montreal newspaper circles, is the editor of this Western weekly, and introduces himself to his readers in frank and original fashion. Finance, sport and society are brightly treated in this attractive journal.

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